

Permitting decisions - Surrender

We have decided to accept the surrender of the permit for Rugeley Ash Lagoons and Rugeley Ash Storage Lagoons operated by Rugeley Power Limited.

The permit numbers are EPR/JP3139SG and EPR/UP3699VZ.

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid any pollution risk and to return the site to a satisfactory state. We consider in reaching this decision that we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

Purpose of this document

This decision document provides a record of the decision-making process. It summarises the decision-making process to show how the main relevant factors have been taken into account.

This decision document provides a record of the decision-making process. It:

- highlights key issues in the determination,
- summarises the decision-making process in the decisions considerations section to show how all relevant factors have been taken into account.

Key issues of the decision

History

Constructed in 1981, for the storage and long-term placement of coal combustion ashes and licensed under PPC in 1993, the site consists of three former lagoons.

All activities permitted under the environmental permit ceased in 2016. The site has been restored by levelling and grass seeding.

Waste area and depth

The ash lagoons cover c. 25 hectares. The depth of the ash is between 6 and 9 m. 1.6 million tonnes of non-hazardous pulverised fuel ash (PFA) and flue bottom ash (FBA) were permitted.

Decommissioning

The site was decommissioned from 2017 in accordance with the Lagoon Closure Plan. A discontinuation certificate was issued for the lagoons in April 2022.

Intrusive investigations undertaken to support the redevelopment of the site identified asbestos in four locations in the south of the site and also within the North Bank. The site inspection CAR from dated 22/11/2023 reports “a large part of the bank has been removed, levelled and capped with 6F2 aggregate”. Based on this and site photos we conclude that where required for permit surrender the asbestos has been removed.

Groundwater

Groundwater monitoring data provided conforms the site is compliant with respect to groundwater monitoring. Since the landfill ceased accepting waste in 2016, concentrations of arsenic, boron, cadmium, mercury, and molybdenum have been stable and below their Control (Action) Levels.

Surface Waters

Quarterly monitoring data (2014-2016) indicate that there were no breaches of the specified limit values for the parameters recorded (cadmium, mercury, and total suspended solids). Since decommissioning there have been no surface water discharges.

Compliance

A Compliance Assessment Report formed part of the Surrender Application that indicates “No instances of permit non-compliance have been identified or recorded”. A series of photos show the restored site ready for (re)development.

Decision considerations

Confidential information

A claim for commercial or industrial confidentiality has not been made.

The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on confidentiality.

Identifying confidential information

We have not identified information provided as part of the application that we consider to be confidential.

The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on confidentiality.

Agreed closure & aftercare plan

We are satisfied that the agreed closure and aftercare plan has been implemented.

Pollution risk

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid a pollution risk resulting from the operation of the regulated facility.

Satisfactory state

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to return the site of the regulated facility to a satisfactory state, having regard to the state of the site before the facility was put into operation.

Growth duty

We have considered our duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth set out in section 108(1) of the Deregulation Act 2015 and the guidance issued under section 110 of that Act in deciding whether to accept this permit surrender.