

Permitting Decisions- Variation

We have decided to grant the variation for Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant operated by BWSC Generation Services UK Ltd

The variation number is EPR/DP3030XH/V008

The permit was issued on 29/02/2024. The variation is to remove a percentage limit on the type of raw material accepted and to allow a fuel trial using a variety of new-to-plant sustainable fuel source, the trial will include new operating system and a new dsear.

We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements and that the permit will ensure that the appropriate level of environmental protection is provided.

Purpose of this document

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 decision considerations section to show how the main relevant factors have been taken into account.
- shows how we have considered the consultation responses

Unless the decision document specifies otherwise, we have accepted the applicant's proposals.

Read the permitting decisions in conjunction with the environmental permit and the variation notice.

Key issues of the decision

Fuel Trial

We have permitted the applicant to undertake a fuel trial to use the following as part of the Biomass.

- Straw (original fuel)
- Virgin Based Wood
- Olive pellets/ pomace
- Miscanthus (original fuel)
- Bamboo
- Spelt husks.
- Sunflower husks
- Oat husks

The changes will have an effect on the operational procedures. We have reviewed the operator's air quality modelling, and we are satisfied the emissions, associated emission limits will not change and so the risk to the environment will not change.

Phases of Fuel trial

The estimated contribution of the product during the trials is expected to be in the range of 20-70%, with the balance being baled and/or chipped product.

Stage 1

The first stage part of the fuel trial is expected to be up to 3 months duration.

Stage 2

Any second stage fuel trial would be in the region of 6-12 months duration.

The permit condition change

Table 2.1 has been altered to reflect the change in raw material to be added to the types of fuel to be used.

Table S2.1 Raw materials and fuels	
Raw materials and fuel description	Specification
Gas oil	Less than 0.1% w/w sulphur content
Dedicated energy crops (Miscanthus, Short Rotational Coppice or other as agreed in writing with the Environment Agency)	Any specification to be agreed in writing with the Environment Agency following the outcome of biomass combustion trials.

Table S2.2 has been amended to remove a 22% limit on the acceptance of woodchip and/or miscanthus.

Table S2.2 Permitted waste types and quantities for combustion	
Maximum quantity	270,000 tonnes of straw and other fuel type as specified in the Fuel trial protocol plan.
Waste code	Description
02 01	Wastes from agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, forestry, hunting and fishing.
02 01 03	plant-tissue waste
02 01 07	wastes from forestry
03 01	Wastes from wood processing and the production of panels and furniture
03 01 05	sawdust, shavings, cuttings, wood, particle board, and veneer other than those mentioned in 03 01 04
19 12	Wastes from the mechanical treatment of waste (for example, sorting, crushing, compacting, pelletising) not otherwise specified
19 12 07	clean wood, free from preservatives or coatings and which meet the requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive Article 3 (31) 2010/75/EU

We are satisfied that this limit can be removed from the permit because, with no effect on the emissions profile of the site.

The original limit of 22% miscanthus as part of the fuel makeup, the rest being straw. The fuel trial intends to vary the percentage above this limit of the non-straw portion of the fuel.

The 22% was initially used to control the ratio between the moisture level in the fuel and calorific value, changing these factors will change to heat output of the plant, but the company states that fuel trial will not change and so the running profile will not change.

The above explains why we have accepted this variation.

The annual tonnage has been increased from 250,000 to 270,00 tonnages to account for the lower calorific value of the alternative fuel sources, this will not affect the emissions from the plant as no change has been made to the ELV's.

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.

Nature conservation, landscape, heritage and protected species and habitat designations

The application site is not within our screening distances for these designations.

Environmental risk

We have reviewed the operator's assessment of the environmental risk from the facility.

The operator's risk assessment is satisfactory.

General operating techniques

We have reviewed the techniques used by the operator and compared these with the relevant guidance notes and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.

Table S1.2 Operating techniques		
Description	Parts	Date Received
Application DP3030XH/	The response to section 2.1 and 2.2 in the Application.	19/11/07
Response to Schedule 4 Notice	Response to question 7 detailing pre-acceptance and acceptance procedures.	30/05/08
Additional information received	Item 1 on waste acceptance criteria.	27/08/08
Variation application EPR/DP3030XH/V002	Responses to Parts C2 and C3 of the application form.	02/08/11
Response to Schedule 5 Notice	Information received regarding the ELV for short term carbon monoxide and clarifying installation address.	26/09/11
Variation application EPR/DP3030XH/V003	Responses to Parts C2 and C3 of the application form and referenced supporting documentation: EP Variation Supporting Information, Sections 3, 4, 5 & 7, Appendices A & B.	28/05/13
Response to regulation 60(1) Notice – request for information dated 17/12/14	Compliance route Annex V, Part 1 – ELV for oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and dust and operating techniques identified in response to questions 2 (IED compliance route), 4 (configuration of each LCP), 5 (net rated thermal input), 6 (definition of minimum start-up load and minimum shut-down mode) and 9 (regarding proposed emission limit values).	Received 31/03/15
Receipt of additional information to the Regulation 60(1) Notice. requested by letter dated 11/06/15	Compliance route(s) and operating techniques identified in response to questions 1 (date of operational commencement of LCP), 5 (method by which the net rated thermal input figure was derived), 6 (details of how the minimum start-up load and minimum shutdown load was derived),	Received 01/07/15
Receipt of additional information to the regulation 60(1) Notice. requested by letter dated 11/06/15	Compliance route(s) and operating techniques identified in response to question 1 (Date of commercial operation of the plant).	07/07/15
Variation application for alternative fuel trials EPR/DP3030XH/V008 22/03/2022	The variation brings in the removal of the 22% limitation on non-straw fuel. In line with application document. EA 'Trial Protocol Plan' – A (Alternative Biomass Products)	02/02/2024

Operating techniques for emissions that screen out as insignificant.

Emissions of [pollutant(s) name(s)] have been screened out as insignificant, and so we agree that the applicant's proposed techniques are Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the installation.

We consider that the emission limits included in the installation permit reflect the BAT for the sector.

Odour management

We have reviewed the odour management plan in accordance with our guidance on odour management.

We consider that the odour management plan is satisfactory, and we approve this plan.

We have approved the odour management plan as we consider it to be appropriate measures based on information available to us at the current time. The applicant should not take our approval of this plan to mean that the measures in the plan are considered to cover every circumstance throughout the life of the permit.

The applicant should keep the plans under constant review and revise them annually or if necessary, sooner if there have been complaints arising from operations on site or if circumstances change. This is in accordance with our guidance 'Control and monitor emissions for your environmental permit'.

Noise and vibration management

We have reviewed the noise and vibration management plan in accordance with our guidance on noise assessment and control.

We consider that the noise and vibration management plan is satisfactory, and we approve this plan.

We have approved the noise and vibration management plan as we consider it to be appropriate measures based on information available to us at the current time. The applicant should not take our approval of this plan to mean that the measures in the plan are considered to cover every circumstance throughout the life of the permit.

The applicant should keep the plans under constant review and revise them annually or if necessary, sooner if there have been complaints arising from operations on site or if circumstances change. This is in accordance with our guidance 'Control and monitor emissions for your environmental permit'.

The plan has been incorporated into the operating techniques S1.2.

Emission limits

No emission limits have been added, amended, or deleted as a result of this variation.

Monitoring has not changed as a result of this variation.

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 grant this permit variation.

Paragraph 1.3 of the guidance says:

“The primary role of regulators, in delivering regulation, is to achieve the regulatory outcomes for which they are responsible. For a number of regulators, these regulatory outcomes include an explicit reference to development or growth. The growth duty establishes economic growth as a factor that all specified regulators should have regard to, alongside the delivery of the protections set out in the relevant legislation.”

We have addressed the legislative requirements and environmental standards to be set for this operation in the body of the decision document above. The guidance is clear at paragraph 1.5 that the growth duty does not legitimise non-compliance and its purpose is not to achieve or pursue economic growth at the expense of necessary protections.

We consider the requirements and standards we have set in this permit are reasonable and necessary to avoid a risk of an unacceptable level of pollution. This also promotes growth amongst legitimate operators because the standards applied to the operator are consistent across businesses in this sector and have been set to achieve the required legislative standards.

Responses from organisations listed in the consultation section.

The following summarises the responses to consultation with other organisations, [our notice on GOV.UK for the public, newspaper advertising] and the way in which we have considered these in the determination process.

Response received from North Kesteven District Council.

Brief summary of issues raised: Historic reports of low frequency noise complaints, which the company had activity investigated.

Summary of actions taken: the council asked if a proactive noise management plan can be maintained at the site.

