

Permitting decisions- Surrender

We have decided to accept the surrender of the permit for Merseyside Works -, Oil Sites Road, Ellesmere Port, CH65 4EZ operated by GREIF UK LTD.

The permit number is EPR/GP3235WS/S005

The decision was issued on 18/02/2026

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:

- 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

The initially submitted Site Condition Report did not clearly demonstrate whether soil gas and/or water quality monitoring had been undertaken to a sufficient standard, that would demonstrate that there has been no change in the condition of the land.

Further interpretation of the information was provided through sampling results taken in 2023 by the Applicant dated 20th January 2026. Additional information regarding the required clean up from the 2018 CAR (Compliance Assessment Report) was provided within the response to further information requested GP3235WP 02012026 dated January 2026.

The absence of recent up groundwater gradient sample data, it has not been possible for the Applicant to compare the up and down gradient data to determine whether any changes in groundwater quality are attributable to activities on the site.

The available sample data is limited and does not account for factors that may influenced the differences in contaminants concentrations between 2014 and 2023. The data presented shows that there has been some deterioration in the groundwater quality when compared with the samples taken in 2023.

The monitoring data shows that the following contaminants have increased in concentration:

- Arsenic 7.4 and 7.3 ug/l in WS08 and WS10 respectively.
- Zinc 23 ug/l in WS10.
- Total Dissolved Chromium by 2.3 ug/l in WS02.
- Nickel in WS08 5 ug/l.
- Naphthalene 0.03 ug/l in WS02, 0.07 ug/l in WS08 and 0.086 ug/l in WS10.
- Fluoranthene 0.079 ug/l in WS02.
- Pyrene 0.045 ug/l in WS02 and an increase from above laboratory limit of detection in WS08.
- Benzo(a)anthracene – not possible to evaluate due to laboratory limit of detection (LoD) being higher in 2014.

The Applicant has provided explanatory information related to site activities, drainage, spill response and management. The site is location within an industrial area and there are potential sources of contamination in close proximity to the Greif site. Groundwater sample data is limited and does not allow for a full evaluation of long-term trends. The increased observed are mostly marginal and are not recorded in consistently in monitoring wells, with the exception of naphthalene which (appears to have been tested in 2023 with a higher laboratory LOD method than 2014) show a maximum increase in concentration of 0.086 ug/l.

The applicant provided relevant information, and we are satisfied and considers that the information submitted is sufficient for the purposes of this determination.

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.

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.