

Permitting Decisions - Variation

We have decided to grant the variation for Acornfield Road Waste Management Centre operated by Future Industrial Service Limited.

The variation number is EPR/VP3936UG/V010.

The permit was issued on 31/03/26.

The variation is for the addition of the following installation and waste operation activities:

1. Section 5.3(a)(ii) – hazardous waste installation carrying out physico-chemical treatment, and
 - Physical treatment of non-hazardous waste.

The installation and waste operation activities are for the recovery of air pollution control residue (APCr) filter cake produced on site. The APCr filter cake is recovered by mixing it with cement, sand and water and by pelletisation to produce aggregates that can be used within the construction industry.

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

Surface water management from the APCr filter cake storage and treatment areas

Surface water generated from the APCr filter cake storage and treatment areas is collected and recirculated within the treatment process. Some of collected water is reused in other on-site activities. Any excess water (after reused) is collected and stored in the existing tanks at the site, and/or in one of the new tanks before being discharged through the existing drainage system at the site.

The existing permit already allows treatment and discharge of site generated surface-water run-off to sewer. The variation does not introduce a new point-source emission or alter the existing discharge arrangement at the site.

The APCr filter cake is generated at the site from existing permitted activities. APCr is washed under the existing site activities. The filter cake which is the residual waste from the washing activity is used in the treatment process authorised in this variation. Other than cement and sand, no chemicals are introduced into the APCr filter cake pelletisation process. It is therefore considered that the existing wastewater treatment arrangements will remain unchanged and will not be affected by wastewater from the pelletisation process.

In addition, cement is stored in a silo fitted with dust filter, and the pelletised APCr filter cake is kept in covered bays. These controls limit the potential for contaminated run-off, so surface-water run-off from the new activities is expected to contain minimal pollutants in comparison to those generated from the already permitted APCr washing operations.

Dust emission control

Some of the machinery used in the APCr filter cake pelletisation processes is not fully enclosed; however, the environmental risk from dust emissions is reduced by the operational controls in place. The operator limits drop heights and vehicle movements within the treatment area, and most plant and equipment are enclosed. The cement is stored in silo fitted with abatement filter, and the material handled during processing has a high moisture content. Pellets derived from the treatment process are stored in covered bays and the treatment area is below ground level, which reduces the potential for wind whip. Screening of the pelletised waste is carried out while the material is damp, and the pellets are cured under cover, which further minimises the likelihood of fugitive dust emissions.

Although these measures reduce risk, the degree of enclosure and the design of the trommel require further assessment to ensure they meet relevant BAT and appropriate measures. For this reason, we have included an improvement condition (IC10) which requires the operator to monitor dust and assess the risk if dust emissions at locations adjacent to the trommel and conveyer and submit a report to the Environment Agency for approval.

Decision considerations

Confidential information

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

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.

Consultation

The consultation requirements were identified in accordance with the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (2016) and our public participation statement.

The application was publicised on the GOV.UK website.

We consulted the following organisations:

- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council Environmental Protection Department – Response received.
- Local Authority Planning – No response received.

- Director of PH/UKHSA - Response received; no significant concerns.
- Health and Safety Executive - No response received.

The comments and our responses are summarised in the [consultation responses](#) section.

The regulated facility

We considered the extent and nature of the facilities at the site in accordance with RGN2 'Understanding the meaning of regulated facility', Appendix 2 of RGN2 'Defining the scope of the installation'.

The extent of the facilities is defined in the site plan and in the permit. The activities are defined in table S1.1 of the permit.

The site

The operator has provided a plan which we consider to be satisfactory.

This shows the extent of the site of the facility.

The plan is included in the permit.

Site condition report

The operator has provided a description of the condition of the site, which we consider is not satisfactory. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on site condition reports and baseline reporting under the Industrial Emissions Directive.

We have advised the operator what measures they need to take to improve the site condition report. The operator should have provided site-specific baseline data, as the assessment they submitted relies on generic assumptions rather than evidence from the site itself.

They have agreed to the position that the new permitted area of the site should be treated as uncontaminated. They also agreed that if any contamination be discovered upon the surrender of the permit, it would be deemed to have resulted from their operation. This will apply if such contamination is from substances produced or released from the site's activities.

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

We have checked the location of the application to assess if it is within the screening distances we consider relevant for impacts on nature conservation,

landscape, heritage, protected species and habitat designations. The application 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 provisions of the Waste Treatment BAT Conclusions, Chemical Waste Appropriate Measures and Non-hazardous and Inert Waste Appropriate Measures and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.

The operator has provided information to support compliance with the Waste Treatment BAT Reference document. We have assessed the information provided and we are satisfied that the operator has demonstrated compliance with the European Commission, establishing Best Available Techniques (BAT) Conclusions (Batch) for Waste Treatment, as detailed in document reference C (2018) 5070, Chemical waste: appropriate measures for permitted facilities, and Non-hazardous and inert waste: appropriate measures for permitted facilities updated 1 August 2023.

The operating techniques that the applicant must use are specified in table S1.2 in the environmental permit.

National Air Pollution Control Programme

We have considered the National Air Pollution Control Programme as required by the National Emissions Ceilings Regulations 2018. By setting emission limit values in line with technical guidance we are minimising emissions to air. This will aid the delivery of national air quality targets. We do not consider that we need to include any additional conditions in this permit.

Dust management

We have reviewed the dust and emission management plan in accordance with our guidance on emissions management plans for dust.

We consider that the dust and emission management plan is satisfactory and we approve this plan.

We have approved the dust and emission 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 table S1.2 of the environmental permit.

Raw materials

We have specified limits and controls on the use of raw materials and fuels.

Improvement programme

Based on the information on the application, we consider that we need to include an improvement programme.

We have included improvement condition IC10 in the permit which requires the operator to submit further information on dust emissions from the treatment area and to confirm the estimations and assumptions used in the variation application. The operator will confirm whether the existing design and control measures are sufficient to minimise fugitive dust emissions and whether they align with relevant BAT standards, Chemical Waste Appropriate Measures and the Non-hazardous Waste Appropriate Measures for permitted facilities. If improvements are required, the operator must implement those measures within a specified timeframe.

Monitoring

We have decided that monitoring should be added for the following parameters, using the methods detailed and to the frequencies specified:

Monitoring requirements for dust at a location adjacent to the trommel and conveyor have been included to ensure the operator maintains effective control of dust emissions.

These monitoring requirements have been included to demonstrate that dust levels are being managed appropriately and that the abatement and control measures in place are operating as intended.

Reporting

We have added reporting in the permit for the following parameters:

- Hazardous waste treated for recovery.
- Non-hazardous waste treated for recovery.
- Produced aggregate.

We made these decisions in accordance with the Chemical waste: appropriate measures for permitted facilities, Non-hazardous and inert waste: appropriate measures for permitted facilities Published 12 July 2021 and BAT Conclusions for the Waste Treatment industry sector published on 10 August 2018 in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Management system

We are not aware of any reason to consider that the operator will not have the management system to enable it to comply with the permit conditions.

The decision was taken in accordance with the guidance on operator competence and how to develop a management system for environmental permits.

Technical competence

Technical competence is required for activities permitted.

The operator is a member of the CIWM/WAMITAB scheme.

We are satisfied that the operator is technically competent.

Previous performance

We have assessed operator competence. There is no known reason to consider the applicant will not comply with the permit conditions.

No relevant convictions were found. The operator satisfies the criteria in our guidance on operator competence.

Financial competence

There is no known reason to consider that the operator will not be financially able to comply with the permit conditions.

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.

Consultation Responses

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

Responses from organisations listed in the consultation section

Response received from Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Brief summary of issues raised: Please ensure a dust and odour management plans are reviewed and in place.

Summary of actions taken: We have received and approved Dust management Plan submitted by the operator. We have also included the relevant conditions and Improvement Condition IC10 in the permit to prevent and control dust emissions and to ensure site operations are monitored.

We did not require an OMP. The APCr undergoes repeated washing under an existing permitted activity. The residual APCr filter cake that arrives at the aggregate pelletisation area is a low-odour material. The activity mixes APCr filter cake with sand, cement and water, and the hydration process encapsulates fines and suppresses emissions.

Based on the site operations and the absence of odour generating substances, there is no reasonably foreseeable risk of odour pollution at receptors. We consider that an OMP is not required.

Response received from Director of PH/UKHSA

Brief summary of issues raised: The variation will not lead to a significant change in emissions, and based on the information in the application, UKHSA has no significant concerns.

Summary of actions taken: We reviewed the application, assessed the proposed variation, evaluated the supporting evidence, and confirmed that there are no significant changes to emissions.

Representations from individual members of the public

Brief summary of issues raised: The representation raises concerns about incorporating APCr into aggregate products because APCr contains persistent and toxic substances, including lead, metals, dioxins, furans, PFAS and other PMT substances. It questions whether distributing materials containing these contaminants into the wider environment is good practice and suggests that applications of this type should not be approved and that similar historic approvals should be reassessed.

Summary of actions taken: We have included relevant conditions in the permit to prevent and control the risk of pollution at the site and to ensure that the site operations are monitored.

The operator proposes to treat the waste in order to contain the contaminants. We have reviewed the proposal and consider the treatment method to be acceptable. The pelletisation process is a stabilisation process that binds, solidifies and stabilises the contaminants within the treated material. This reduces mobility and prevents the contaminants from leaching from the final product during its intended use.

The operator has shown, through their risk assessment and the supporting evidence provided, that the treatment method is suitable to prevent releases to the environment. We consider the proposed treatment to be appropriate for the type of waste and the contaminants present.

The permit includes the relevant conditions and control measures needed to ensure that the site operation is monitored effectively for compliance.

The permit does not cover the use of the treated material. The treated material is still considered waste, and the operator is required to obtain proper authorisation to cover its use.