

Decision document variation

We have decided to grant the variation for Brierlow Lime Works operated by Lhoist UK Limited.

The variation number is EPR/BK9571IU/V008.

The permit was issued on 30/07/2026.

The variation is for an additional lime hydrator.

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 summarises the decision-making process to show how the main relevant factors have been taken into account. We have assessed the aspects that are changing as part of this variation, we have not revisited any other sections of the permit.

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.

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.

Consultation

No consultation was necessary for this application.

The site

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

These show the extent of the site of the facility including the discharge points.

The plan is included in the permit.

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 within our screening distances for these designations.

The nearest protected sites are located approximately 1 km and 2 km from the proposed plant, with the SAC approximately 1 km from the installation and the SSSI approximately 2 km away. There is no increase in site capacity. All handling of dusty materials continues to take place within enclosed buildings.

Given the nature of the proposed change, the absence of any increase in dust-generating activities, and the distance to the designated sites, there is no credible pathway for impacts arising from fugitive dust emissions, including dust deposition or smothering.

On this basis, we conclude that the proposed change has no potential to have an impact on the SAC or SSI.

The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance.

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

The operator has provided information to support compliance with the BAT Reference document. We have assessed the information provided and we are satisfied that the operator has demonstrated compliance with BATc.

BAT Ref.	BAT Requirement	Specific Measures
BAT 1	In order to improve the overall environmental performance, BAT is to elaborate and implement an environmental management system (EMS) that incorporates all of the following features:	The installation has a fully implemented EMS consistent with ISO 14001 principles, used to plan, manage and continuously improve environmental performance across all site activities.
i	Commitment of the management, including senior management	Senior management provide visible leadership, allocate resources, and take responsibility for environmental performance and compliance.
ii	Definition of an environmental policy that includes the continuous improvement of the installation by the management	A written environmental policy is in place, endorsed by senior management, committing to legal compliance, pollution prevention, and continual improvement.
iii	Planning and establishing the necessary procedures, objectives and targets, in conjunction with financial planning and investment	Environmental objectives and targets are established through a structured planning process integrated with business planning, budgeting, and investment decisions.
iv	Implementation of procedures paying particular attention to: (a) structure and responsibility; (b) training, awareness and competence; (c) communication; (d) employee involvement; (e) documentation; (f) efficient process control; (g) maintenance programmes; (h) emergency preparedness and response; (i) safeguarding compliance with environmental legislation	The operator implements and maintains an integrated environmental management and control procedure that sets a clear organisational structure with defined roles and accountability; ensures proportionate training and competence; establishes effective communication; promotes employee involvement; maintains controlled documentation; applies efficient process control; operates planned maintenance programmes; sustains emergency preparedness; and safeguards compliance with environmental legislation and BAT requirements.
v	Checking performance and taking corrective action, paying particular attention to: (a) monitoring and measurement; (b) corrective and preventative action; (c) maintenance of records; (d) independent internal and external auditing	Performance is verified through monitoring, inspections and audits. Non-conformities trigger corrective and preventive actions. Records are maintained and independent audits confirm EMS conformity and effectiveness.
vi	Review of the EMS and its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness by senior management	Management reviews are routinely conducted to evaluate EMS effectiveness and identify improvement actions.

BAT Ref.	BAT Requirement	Specific Measures
vii	Following the development of cleaner technologies	The installation monitors emerging cleaner technologies and assesses their applicability for improving environmental performance.
viii	Consideration for the environmental impacts from the eventual decommissioning of the installation at the stage of designing a new plant, and throughout its operating life	Decommissioning considerations are incorporated into plant design and lifecycle planning, with measures identified to minimise future environmental impacts.
ix	Application of sectoral benchmarking on a regular basis	Sectoral benchmarking is conducted regularly to compare performance and identify areas for improvement.
BAT 2	In order to reduce/minimise noise emissions during the manufacturing processes for cement, lime and magnesium oxide, BAT is to use a combination of specified noise control techniques	Noise emissions are reduced through a combination of engineering controls, including strategic equipment placement, acoustic enclosures, vibration isolation, impact absorbent linings, soundproofed buildings, noise barriers, silencers, insulated ducts, controlled airflow, decoupling of noise sources, soundproofed compressor modules, rubber mill shields, and the use of buildings or vegetation as buffers to protect sensitive receptors.
BAT 32	Carry out monitoring and measurements of process parameters and emissions on a regular basis and monitor emissions in accordance with relevant EN standards, including continuous or periodic measurements of dust emissions	Periodic monitoring of particulate matter in accordance with extant EP Table S3.2 is undertaken in accordance with permit conditions and relevant standards.
BAT 34	In order to minimise electrical energy consumption, BAT is to use one or a combination of the following techniques: (a) power management systems; (b) optimised grain size of limestone; (c) high efficiency electrical equipment	High efficiency motors and variable speed drives are used, and auxiliary systems are optimised to minimise electrical energy use.
BAT 35	In order to minimise limestone consumption, BAT is to use one or a combination of specified techniques	Limestone particle size is controlled, and raw material feed systems are optimised to avoid over consumption.
BAT 40	In order to reduce diffuse dust emissions, BAT is to use a combination of specified dust control techniques	All relevant techniques are employed. Fabric filters are used on the Sorbacal® plant emission points.

BAT Ref.	BAT Requirement	Specific Measures
BAT 41	In order to minimise/prevent diffuse dust emissions from bulk storage areas, BAT is to use one or a combination of specified techniques	Relevant techniques are employed on site including enclosed silos/covered stores with local extraction and fabric filters.
BAT 42	In order to reduce channelled dust emissions from dusty operations other than kiln firing processes, BAT is to use a fabric filter or wet scrubber and a maintenance management system	Fabric filters are fitted to relevant emission points with continuous control (for example pressure drop and leak tests). Fabric filters are maintained through a planned maintenance programme, and critical spares are held on site.
BAT 54	In order to reduce solid wastes and save raw materials, BAT is to: (a) reuse collected dust or particulate matter; (b) utilise off specification quicklime and hydrated lime in products	Lime dusts and fines are returned to the process or reused where feasible; off specification material is managed to minimise waste.

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

Operating techniques for emissions that screen out as insignificant

Emissions of particulate matter 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.

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.

Noise management

In line with the Environment Agency's Noise Advisory Tool, a Noise Impact Assessment or Noise Management Plan is not required to support this variation.

A Noise Impact Assessment was submitted to support the application and concluded that the proposed lime hydration plant would increase noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receptor by only 1 dBA and is therefore not expected to result in an adverse noise impact.

The site was assessed in its entirety during the most recent permit review and was found to be meeting BAT requirements.

We have reviewed the Noise Impact Assessment and agree with its conclusion that the proposed development is not expected to result in an adverse noise impact at the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

Dust management

A Dust Emission Management Plan is not required to support this variation.

A Dust and Emissions Management Plan was submitted in support of the application. The Environment Agency is satisfied that appropriate measures are in place to manage and minimise fugitive dust emissions from the installation and proposed variation. The site was assessed in its entirety during the permit review and was found to be meeting BAT requirements, and no concerns have been identified in relation to dust impacts arising from the proposed variation.

The proposed variation is not expected to increase production capacity or result in an increase in vehicle movements. The variation will introduce new plant and equipment to enable the production of Sorbacal; however, the expectation is that existing standard hydrate production will be converted to Sorbacal production rather than increasing overall output. Therefore, the Environment Agency does not consider that the variation will lead to a material increase in fugitive dust emissions.

Improvement programme

The extant improvement conditions have not been completed and are therefore retained.

Emission limits, monitoring and reporting

Emission Limit Values (ELVs) and monitoring requirements have been added for particulate matter, using the methods and frequencies below.

Release Point	Substance	Emission limit value	Monitoring frequency	Monitoring method
A17	Particulate matter	10 mg/m ³	In accordance with a maintenance management system	-
A18	Particulate matter	10 mg/m ³	BS EN 13284-1	Annually

A17 air flow is <10,000 m³/hr, therefore in accordance with BAT 5, it is not required to be tested using the BS EN monitoring standard.

Reporting requirements have also been added to the permit for A18.

The requirements align with the BAT-AEL for fabric filters in BAT 42 of the BAT Conclusions for the Production of Cement, Lime and Magnesium Oxide 2023/163/EU.

Based on the information in the application, we are satisfied that the operator's techniques, personnel and equipment have either MCERTS certification or MCERTS accreditation, as appropriate.

Emission Point A19 is associated with residual hot air generated by the existing combined heat and power (CHP) heat exchanger.

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.

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.