Permitting Decisions - Bespoke Permit

We have decided to grant the permit for Rainham II Waste Recovery Facility operated by SHARPSMART LIMITED.

The application is for the operation of sharps bin wash plant, repackaging (bulking) of emptied sharps, storing of hazardous waste and a clinical waste transfer station. The total quantity of wastes accepted at the site shall not exceed 21,900 tonnes per year.

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 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.

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.

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:

- Local Authority
- Health and safety executive – HSE
- UK Health Security Agency
- Local sewerage undertaker and/or local water undertaker
- Local Authority – Planning

No responses were received.

Operator

We are satisfied that the applicant (now the operator) is the person who will have control over the operation of the facility after the grant of the permit. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on legal operator for environmental permits.

The regulated facility

We considered the extent and nature of the facility at the site in accordance with RGN2 ‘Understanding the meaning of regulated facility’, Appendix 2 of RGN2

‘Defining the scope of the installation’ and Appendix 1 of RGN 2 ‘Interpretation of Schedule 1’.

The extent of the facility 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.

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 satisfactory. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on site condition reports and baseline reporting under the Industrial Emissions Directive.

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.

We have assessed the application and its potential to affect sites of nature conservation, landscape, heritage, protected species and habitat designations identified in the nature conservation screening report as part of the permitting process.

We consider that the application will not affect any site of nature conservation, landscape and heritage, and/or protected species or habitats identified.

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 BAT Reference document and guidance notes and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.

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

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’.

Waste types

We have specified the permitted waste types, descriptions and quantities, which can be accepted at the regulated facility.

We are satisfied that the operator can accept these wastes for the following reasons:

- they are suitable for the proposed activities
- the proposed infrastructure is appropriate; and

- the environmental risk assessment is acceptable.

Emission Limits

We have decided that emission limits are not required in the permit.

No emission limit values have been included for emissions to air from the sharps repackaging/bin wash plant extraction systems. Emissions testing from the equivalent operational plant demonstrates low pollutant concentrations and therefore no BAT-AELs or other regulatory emission standards are required for the point source emissions to air. Emissions will be controlled through the use of HEPA filtration, preventative maintenance, operational controls and the requirements of the environmental management system.

No emission limit values have been included for emissions to sewer. Bin-washing process waters are discharged to sewer, however medicines, sharps and other contents are removed or decanted from the reusable sharps bins and repackaged before washing and disinfection. They are therefore not discharged to sewer, on the assumption that medicinal residues and needles remain within or with the syringe body.

Monitoring

We have decided that monitoring is not required in the permit.

The Operator supplied emissions monitoring data on two existing air emission points, A4 (HEPA filter) and A5 (hot air vent), at the equivalent Spennymoor facility which showed low pollutant concentrations. The Operator also confirmed that the same design specifications are proposed for the Rainham II site as part of this application.

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.

A full review of the management system is undertaken during compliance checks.

Technical Competence

Technical competence is required for activities permitted.

The operator is a member of the WAMITAB scheme**.**

We are satisfied that the operator is technically competent.

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.

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.