

Frequently Asked Questions - Kronospan Variation and Consolidated Permit

What are the Government Directions?

The activities at the Kronospan site, that are regulated by the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 (EPR) have been the subject of various Directions from Government. The first Direction was in 2003, which split regulation of the site between Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and the Environment Agency Wales (now subsumed into Natural Resources Wales (NRW)).

In March 2018 the Welsh Government issued a further Direction requiring NRW to consolidate the two regulator's permits into one, and then subsequently conduct all future regulatory functions in relation to that permit. This will essentially 'normalise' the regulation of the site, in that all relevant activities will be regulated by a single environmental regulator, NRW.

After the consolidated permit is issued, the site will no longer be subject to a Ministerial Direction and Wrexham County Borough Council will no longer regulate activities at the site.

What is the variation notice and the consolidated permit?

We have determined Kronospan's variation application and taken the two current permits for the site and merged them into one draft permit. The variation notice specifies the new activities made to the original permits. The consolidated permit is a complete up to date permit for all EPR regulated activities at the site.

The current Wrexham Permit WCBC/IPPC/03/KR(V3) covers particleboard and medium density fibre board production, two biomass plants, sawmill, and laminated flooring line, as well as some heat generating plant. Raw material deliveries, storage and waste handling, processing and storage are directly associated activities in the permit.

The current NRW permit (EPR/BW9999IG) covers the manufacture of formaldehyde by catalytic oxidation of methanol, manufacture of urea-formaldehyde and melamine-urea-formaldehyde resin and the operation of natural gas fired combustion plant. The VITS paper impregnation process and operation of surface water lagoons 1, 2, and 3 are directly associated activities in the permit.

In consolidating all activities into one permit, we have undertaken a thorough assessment to ensure the permit conditions and emission limits are compliant with EPR, the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) and BAT. This included an audit and assessment of a fully consolidated air dispersion modelling report for the whole site, including plant and process investments at the site since October 2014, when the current version of the WCBC permit was issued.

This provides a baseline for all emissions to air from the site and has allowed us to carry out a full human health and ecological assessment of releases to air. This is explained further in our draft decision document.

The draft permit documents can be viewed through NRW's online [consultation hub](#) where we have added it as a key document.

Why did it take so long?

Since receiving Kronospan's application in 2018 and commencing our detailed determination, we have requested a significant amount of further information from Kronospan Ltd. to help with our assessments and ensure that they will comply with BAT.

This included detailed information about their company structure, various activities, operating procedures, emissions and emission points. More requests for detailed information arose as we gained a better understanding of the current activities, including plant and process investments at the site since October 2014.

We had a duty to ensure that we undertook a complete and thorough assessment of all current activities at the site before completing our determination, to ensure that a legally robust decision is made, prior NRW taking on overall environmental regulation of the site.

Does the storage of raw material pose a future fire risk?

We have assessed Kronospan's Fire Prevention and Mitigation Plan (FPMP) for the log storage yard fully during our determination and have consulted with the Fire and Rescue Service. Their response is saved on our [online public register](#) and can be viewed through NRW's online [consultation hub](#) where we have added it as a key document. We have inserted several improvement conditions into the draft permit that Kronospan Ltd. will have to comply with.

Why was the proposal for a new orientated strand board production line not included in the determination and consolidated permit?

A proposal for a new orientated strand board production line was included in Kronospan's original application. However, because of the Covid-19 pandemic they were unable to carry out representative background noise monitoring around the site to support their application and so this was removed from the determination.

We have requested that Kronospan Ltd. submit a new variation application for their updated proposals for a new orientated strand board production line. We will determine this variation application in line with our usual process, which includes advertising and consultation.

How can I take part in this consultation?

Through NRW's online [consultation hub](#), you can view the draft consolidated permit and decision document online and submit your comments in response to the consultation. The consultation hub is open for a 4-week period, from 16 June until 17 July.

How have you raised awareness of the consultation?

We have provided a press release to the local press to inform the public of the consultation and how they can respond. We have also informed local politicians of the consultation.

We have published posts on social media informing the public of the consultation and how to respond and have advertised the consultation on our website.

Previous experience shows that this is the most effective way of informing the local community.

For further information please refer to our [public participation statement](#), which explains why and how we consult on our draft permitting and licencing decisions.

What happens during and after the consultation ends?

We have placed the draft consolidated permit and decision document on our public register and are holding a 4-week public consultation for people to review and comment on the documents, submit any relevant information which may not have been considered and challenge any shortcomings.

We will take all relevant comments and information into account. You can find out more about what is relevant in our decision making process in our [public participation statement](#). We will explain how we have considered all comments within our decision document. We will not finalise and issue the consolidated permit until this consultation process is complete.

Where do I find further information on the application?

You can access all documents associated with the application via our [online public register](#). The existing permit number is BW9999IG/V008, the application number is PAN-002755.

The key documents can be viewed through NRW's online [consultation hub](#).

Why can't I access some documents from the online public register?

You may need to download software applications to view certain documents on our on-line system, for example, if your email system isn't compatible with Outlook.

If you don't want to do this, or if you need a document in a different or more accessible format, please contact us via enquiries@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk. This may take time to process and there could be a charge.

What organisations have you consulted with?

Throughout the course of our lengthy determination, we consulted with the following organisations at least once:

- Public Health Wales
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

- North Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Wrexham County Borough Council (Planning and Environmental Protection Departments)
- Canal and River Trust
- Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
- Food Standards Agency

Key Messages

- We have undertaken an extensive and thorough assessment of activities at the site, to ensure permit conditions and emission limits are compliant with EPR, the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) and BAT.
- The consolidated permit imposes new tighter limits and higher environmental standards because of the Wood Panels BAT and our assessments.
- We requested a fully consolidated air dispersion model for the entire site and have carried out a detailed audit and assessment of this modelling. This provides a baseline for all air emissions from the site and has allowed us to carry out a full human health and ecological assessment.
- The consolidated permit is a baseline for future improvements at the site.
- Before we will allow any proposed new EPR activities at the site, the operator will be required to apply to NRW for a permit variation detailing their proposals.