

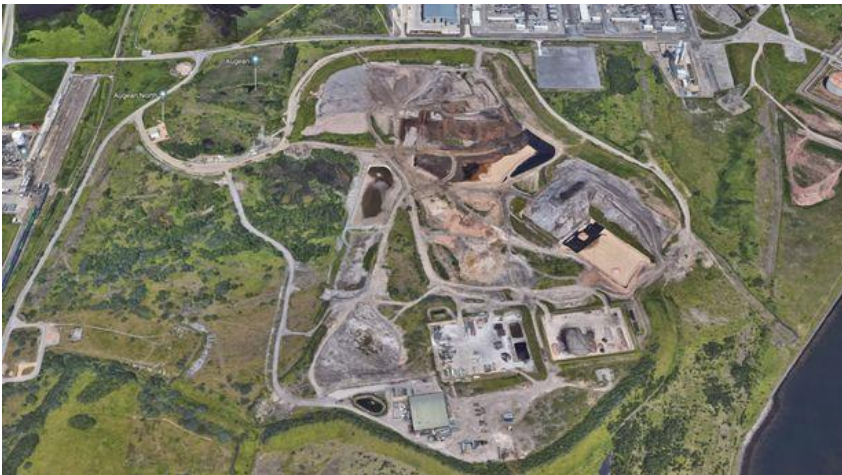
# Environmental Permit Application to dispose of Low Level Radioactive Wastes at Port Clarence Landfill

September 2019

## Background

The Environment Agency has received an application from Augean North Ltd to accept Low Level Radioactive Wastes (LLW) for disposal at the Port Clarence Landfill Site.

The existing Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) permitted landfill site has been receiving and disposing of both hazardous and non-hazardous wastes for over 20 years. For the last 3 years the site has also accepted some very low level radioactive wastes under an exemption from EPR i.e. for which an EPR permit is not required. This is allowed as the radioactivity levels are sufficiently low and come from natural sources. The waste deposited to date has consisted largely of chemical manufacturing wastes from the processing of waste ores on Teesside.



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## Our role

As the leading organisation working to protect the environment, it is our role to regulate discharges and radioactive waste disposal at the Port Clarence site. We ensure that people and the environment are protected, both now and in the future. We do this by only permitting applications that demonstrate adequate protection of people and the environment and where we are able to permit disposals, by setting controls and limits within conditions in an Environmental Permit.

## The EPR permit application

The operator is proposing to dispose of radioactive wastes, outside of the scope of the current exemption, and to do this they must apply to the Environment Agency for an EPR permit. The radioactive content of the waste proposed for disposal are limited to the LLW range.

LLW contains small amounts of radioactive substances. It includes waste generated by industry and hospitals or items such as clothes and building materials used in nuclear facilities. The International Atomic

Energy Authority (IAEA) considers that this waste requires minimal isolation and is suitable for disposal in near surface disposal facilities such as landfill. The disposal of these wastes by landfill is consistent with UK government policy and is subject to regulatory controls provided by an EPR permit

The application for the permit must be supported by a robust environmental safety case, which considers the radiological risks from the site, as well as a hydrogeological risk assessment. We will review these as part of our determination process and only permit disposals if they adequately demonstrate safety for people and the environment both during operations and into the future.

### **Public consultation**

As we are expecting this application to be of high public interest, we are carrying out a consultation. This gives people the opportunity to understand the proposals, our permitting controls and process, and to review the application documents. It is also an opportunity for people to provide us with any information that they think is relevant to our decision making.

The 12 week consultation starts on 20 September 2019 and ends on 13 December 2019 and can be found at

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/north-east/port-clarence-landfill-permit-application>

Once the consultation closes, we will review all the comments received and then produce our proposed decision for that application, taking those comments into account. We will then also consult regarding our proposed decision on the permit application.

We will not issue a permit unless we are satisfied that it is safe for people and the environment and within the limits that we consider acceptable for disposal of this type of waste.

### **Who to contact**

If you have any questions regarding this briefing, please contact Nuclear Regulation Group North on 020 3025 5873 or by email at [Nuclear@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Nuclear@environment-agency.gov.uk).