

# Davidstow Creamery - Variation of Environmental Permit

Permit Number: **EPR/BN6137IK/V011**

**Briefing May 2023**

## Purpose of this Briefing:

We, the Environment Agency, have written this briefing to inform you about an application to vary the environmental permit for Davidstow Creamery and explain what our next steps will be.

We have sent it to you as you have previously shown an interest in this site. Please feel free to share this briefing to other interested parties.

- Dairy Crest Limited (part of Saputo Dairy UK) have applied to us to vary their permit
- We now welcome your comments on their application during our consultation period
- We also intend to make our own changes to the permit to ensure that it protects the environment and people.
- This briefing note explains how you can send us your comments on this application
- This briefing note also explains what we can and can't consider while we determine this application

## Introduction

Davidstow Creamery produces Cathedral City Cheese and other dairy products. It is the largest cheese manufacturer in UK, producing over 100 tonnes of cheese a day.

The site also produces demineralised whey powder for use in infant milk formula. It has been in operation for around 70 years in its current location and discharges treated waste water to the River Inny.

## What changes are proposed

Davidstow Creamery is operated by Dairy Crest Limited. The Operator has applied to vary their permit for the site to authorise an increase cheese production capacity - from 9.6 to 11.4 tonnes per hour. In addition, several operational updates and improvements are included in the application. Most relate to the nearby effluent treatment plant (WPF – water processing facility).

In addition to the permit variation the Operator has applied for, the Environment Agency is undertaking an Agency Initiated permit Variation (AIV) to implement the latest legal requirements and to review the limits and parameters associated with the current discharge of treated waste water. We will ensure these sufficiently protect the River Inny. The possible variations are separate and not reliant on each other but we intend to consider them together, so far as practical, so that we would only need to vary the permit once in respect of all.

The application to vary the permit was duly made on 13 April 2023. 'Duly made' means that the application has enough relevant supporting information to allow us to start assessing it. We have a legal obligation to fairly consider any properly submitted permit application. This briefing note explains more about the variation application by Dairy Crest Limited, and how you can comment on it during our public consultation, which opens on Monday 15 May 2023 and will run until Tuesday 27 June 2023.

## The Environmental Permitting Process

### What is our role?

We assess all permit applications to make sure they meet the requirements of the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Dairy Crest Limited cannot increase cheese production at the site without us varying their environmental permit. If granted, a permit variation would ensure that they use best available techniques, to prevent pollution and to minimise impacts on the environment and people.

### What do Dairy Crest Limited need to do to be granted a permit variation?

Dairy Crest Limited will need to demonstrate they are putting in place the necessary measures to protect people and the environment. The variation application is accompanied by documents which detail how the applicant intends to protect people and the wider environment. The plans will describe the measures to be taken to control the risks identified. The Operator will need to show that what they propose uses the Best Available Technique for preventing or minimising emissions and impacts on the environment. It is expected that the Company will continuously review and improve their plans.

### How do we assess an environmental permit application?

When we consider a permit variation we review the proposal and whether it will have an adverse impact on people and the natural environment. If we decide to vary a permit we set any necessary additional conditions to protect people and the environment. In order to achieve the objectives of the conditions the operator will need to show that they will use the current Best Available Techniques (BAT) which are set out in the [BAT Reference Document](#).

### What issues can we consider in the consultation?

We have committed to deal with the site as a Site of High Public Interest. This means that, in consulting on the environmental permit application, we recognise the amount of public interest already shown in this site. We can only consider issues covered by the environmental permit and can only consider relevant factors and information in our permitting decision. These include but are not limited to

- General operation of the site
- Emissions to air and water
- Pollution to surface and groundwater
- Noise
- Odour

### How can you comment in the consultation?

We now invite you to comment on this permit application. The permit application can be viewed online on our Consultation Portal, Citizen Space:

Online: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/pl32-9xw-dairy-crest-limited/>



This consultation will be open until 27 June 2023. If you need to access a paper copy of the permit variation application, please contact our Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506. We may charge to cover copying costs.

You can send us your comments using our online consultation portal, Citizen Space, or by:

Email: [pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Post: Environment Agency Permitting and Support Centre, Land Team, Quadrant 2, 99 Parkway Avenue, Sheffield, S9 4WF.

We must receive your comments by 5pm on Tuesday 27 June 2023.

We will then review all the comments received before making a draft decision on whether to vary the environmental permit. We will write to you again to inform you when the consultation closes, and again to inform you of our decision. If we decide to refuse the variation, or they consider any conditions we impose are unreasonable, Dairy Crest Limited has the right to appeal this decision. If we think we might grant the permit variation, you will have another opportunity to read and comment on our draft decision in a second consultation.

Please be aware that we will put all comments received (with personal data redacted) on our public register unless you specifically ask us not to.

We welcome feedback from everyone who has a view on the application, regardless of their age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief or their sexual orientation.