

Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0040857

Permit being assessed: BW9999IG.

For: Chirk Particleboard Factory, held by Kronospan Ltd

At: Chirk Particleboard Holyhead Road , Chirk, Wrexham, Clwyd, LL14 5NT.

Type of assessment carried out: Audit, Reason: Other.

On 16/12/2022 between 10:30 and 15:30.

Parts of permit assessed: Noise procedures, sources and IC40

NRW Lead Officer: Paul Challender, accompanied by Stuart Ross.

Report sent to: Chelsey Barker, Deputy HSE Manager on 30/12/2022.

1. Summary of our findings (full details in section 4)

Part of permitted activity assessed (criteria)	Assessment result	Permit condition
A1 - Specified by permit	Assessed (A)	
B5 - Infrastructure - Plant and equipment	Assessed (A)	
C1 - General Management - Staff competency/training	Assessed (A)	
C2 - General Management - Management system and operating procedures	Assessed (A)	
F2 - Amenity - Noise	Action only (X)	
G2 - Monitoring and Records, Maintenance and Reporting - Records of activity, site diary/journal/events	Assessed (A)	
G4 - Monitoring and Records, Maintenance and Reporting - Reporting and notification to Natural Resources Wales	Assessed (A)	

Result types are explained in more detail in the 'Important Information' section below.

Total number of non-compliances recorded	Total non-compliance score
0	0

How we use the non-compliance score to calculate your annual fee is explained in the 'Important Information' section below.

2. What action is required?

Criteria	Action needed	Complete by
F2	Action 1 – Advise NRW of the steps you intend to take to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the report 'Noise Complaint Investigation - Crogen, Chirk',.	31/01/2023

Action criteria codes are listed in the 'Important information' section below.

3. What will happen next?

Any non-compliance we have identified and recorded on this form is an offence. It can result in criminal prosecution and/or suspension or revocation of your permit.

At this time, we do not intend to take any further action.

This statement does not stop us from taking additional enforcement action if further relevant information comes to light or offences continue.

4. Details of our assessment

This was an pre-arranged visit by the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) officers Stuart Ross and Paul Challender to the Kronospan, Chirk site. This inspection served as a preliminary review of noise procedures at the site with the operator since the entire operation at Chirk had been consolidated into one site wide Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 (EPR) installation permit. The NRW officers met with relevant Kronospan health, safety & environment (HSE) representatives for the management of amenity issues at the site.

During the inspection existing noise control procedures and requirements were discussed including the the applicable permit conditions, existing operating techniques, legacy improvement conditions (ICs), existing noise management plan (NMP) and the forthcoming requirement to submit a new revise NMP to satisfy IC40 of the recently issued NRW EPR permit which, now covers all operations at Kronospan, Chirk.

Furthermore, how Kronospan handles noise reports raised by site staff and members of the public was assessed. The Kronospan HSE department records all complaints, investigates potential sources and logs all follow up actions and engages with reporters of noise issues in an effort to identify and reduce the impact from any identified sources of polluting noise. Officers were able to view these records and discuss with the relevant staff how these reports were handled and when possible, resolved.

Kronospan's health, safety & environmental team have access to appropriate noise monitoring equipment and have plans to potentially improve this capability. Relevant Kronospan staff have received appropriate training in this equipment and could discuss relevant parameters with regard to noise measurement confidently. Kronospan also retains a noise consultant for specialist work who regularly assesses the site as a whole and advises on particular issues as and when appropriate.

Noise reports received by NRW since permit issue were also discussed and implemented resolutions were discussed and viewed as appropriate. Noise reports were received by NRW on the day of the inspection and the inspecting officers were witness to some of the stages of the handling of these reports.

The NRW officers were also taken to areas of interest to them within the permitted area to observe process areas and items of plant which, could be the source of off-site reports of noise and implemented mitigations. The operator was also able to show the officers items of plant that had been subject to temporary noise abatement whilst permanent solutions were being tendered for from appropriately qualified acoustic engineers. Implemented temporary noise abatement was of a high standard.

During the day of the inspection visit the inspecting officers attended the locations of the day's noise reports to make observations. Polluting noise was not detected during these observations.

NRW looks forward to the forthcoming submission of the new NMP.

Further to the inspection, Kronospan forwarded to NRW a Technical Note written by Noise & Vibration Consultants (NVC) titled 'Noise Complaint Investigation - Crogen, Chirk', dated 03/08/22. The technical note was written in response to reports of noise within a property in Crogen.

NVC made observations and collected sound data within the property 02/08/22 and observed 'distinctive third octave band peaks between 160 to 200Hz and a peak at 1.25kHz'. FFT analysis identified peaks within these third octave bands at 170 -180Hz and 1350Hz.

The report states that NVC measurements during October 2019 and November 2020 were reviewed and the plant that showed any significant energy at 160Hz-200Hz and at 1.25kHz bands were as follows:

- a) MF Press ventilation fans on rooftop
- b) Plant on Chipboard building rooftop (i.e. Intake Fan for Heat Exchanger next to K8 bypass valve and Grecon Zone 2 Fan)

NVC conclude that *'the frequency signature of the peak noise measured at the complainant's property would indicate that the MF Press and possibly plant on the Chipboard production plant rooftop may be the cause'* and go on to recommend that *'before carrying out any potential remedial attenuation works, the ideal approach to establish if this is definitely the source of the complaint, would be to shut-down the associated plant for a short period during night-time under suitable wind and weather conditions and see if the complainant can still hear the sound'*.

Action 1 – Advise NRW of the steps you intend to take to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the above report. Please do so by 31/01/23.

If you have any queries about this report, or to discuss completion of any actions, please contact the NRW Officer named above.

Important information

Legal status of this report

Your permit is issued to you under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. You have a responsibility to comply with the conditions of your permit and prevent pollution/harm of the environment. You must also ensure that you comply with any other relevant legislation that may apply to your site's operations.

This report explains the findings of our assessment and any action you are required to take. We categorise non-compliance using our guidance for assessing non-compliance at regulated sites.

When we find potential non-compliance/s we will normally give you advice on how to maintain compliance.

To correct non-compliance, we may:

- require you to take specific actions
- issue a notice
- review the conditions of your permit.

Any advice and guidance we give will be without prejudice to any other enforcement response that we consider may be required.

Assessment results and non-compliance categories (used in section 1):

Assessment result	Description
Assessed (A)	Assessed or assessed in part, no evidence of non-compliance found
Action only (X)	Action only relating to the activity assessment
Ongoing (O)	Ongoing non-compliance, not scored

Non-compliance category	Description	Score
C1 Major	Potential to have a major, serious, persistent and/or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	60
C2 Significant	Potential to have a significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	31
C3 Minor	Potential to have a minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	4
C4 No environmental impact	Non-compliance at a regulated site that cannot foreseeably have any impact on the environment, people and/or property	0.1

How we use assessment scores

The number and severity of non-compliances recorded in a year will affect your annual subsistence fee the following year. A non-compliance factor is added to your site's Operator

Performance Risk Appraisal (OPRA) score when we calculate your fee to reflect the additional resource we use to assess permit compliance.

What are suspended scores?

In line with our guidance, we may suspend scores for up to six months to allow time for remedial action to be taken. Suspended scores will be re-instated if the action is not completed.

Full list of Industry and Waste action criteria (used in section 1 and 2):

A: Permitted activities

- A1 Specified by permit

B: Infrastructure

- B1 Infrastructure – Engineering for prevention and control of emissions
- B2 Infrastructure – Closure and decommissioning
- B3 Infrastructure – Site drainage engineering (clean and foul)
- B4 Infrastructure – Containment of stored materials
- B5 Infrastructure – Plant and equipment

C: General management

- C1 General management – Staff competency/training
- C2 General management – Management system and operating procedures
- C3 General management – Materials acceptance
- C4 General management – Storage, handling, labelling and segregation

D: Incident management

- D1 Incident management – Site security
- D2 Incident management – Accidents, emergency and incident planning

E: Emissions

- E1 Emissions – Air
- E2 Emissions – Land and groundwater
- E3 Emissions – Surface water
- E4 Emissions – Sewer
- E5 Emissions – Waste

F: Amenity

- F1 Amenity – Odour
- F2 Amenity – Noise
- F3 Amenity – Dust/fibres/particulates and litter
- F4 Amenity – Pests/birds and scavengers
- F5 Amenity – Deposits on road

G: Monitoring and records, maintenance and reporting

- G1 Monitoring and records, maintenance and reporting – Monitoring of emissions and environment
- G2 Monitoring and records, maintenance and reporting – Records of activity, site diary/journal/events
- G3 Monitoring and records, maintenance and reporting – Maintenance records
- G4 Monitoring and records, maintenance and reporting – Reporting and notification to Natural Resources Wales

H: Resources efficiency

- H1 Resource efficiency – Efficient use of raw materials
- H2 Resource efficiency – Energy efficiency

Enforcement response

Any permit condition non-compliance is an offence and we may take legal action against you. Action we take can include prosecution, serving a notice on you and/or suspension or revocation of your permit. See our Enforcement and Sanctions Guidance for further information.

Data protection notice

You should make sure that anyone named in this report knows that the information it contains will be processed by Natural Resources Wales to fulfil its regulatory and monitoring functions and to maintain the relevant public register(s).

We may also use and/or disclose the report in connection with:

- offering or providing you with our literature or services relating to environmental matters
- consulting with the public, public bodies and other organisations (e.g. Health and Safety Executive, local authorities) on environmental issues
- carrying out statistical analysis, research and development on environmental issues
- providing public register information to enquirers
- investigating possible breaches of environmental law
- assessing customer service satisfaction and improving our service
- Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations requests.

We may also pass it on to our agents or representatives to do these things on our behalf.

Disclosure of information – this report will be available to view on-line

If you think this report contains commercially confidential information that should not be placed on our public register, you must contact your local Natural Resources Wales office within **fifteen working days** of receiving this report, using the contact details in the accompanying email or letter. You must give a full explanation of why it should not be added to our public register, including specifying which information is commercially confidential. We will assess your request and respond to you within 20 working days to let you know if we agree to your request.

What do I do if I disagree with the report or have a complaint?

If you disagree with this compliance assessment report, you should contact the lead officer without delay to discuss your concerns.

If you are unable to resolve the issue with the lead officer or their line manager you should contact our Customer Contact team on 0300 065 3000 (Monday to Friday 08:00 – 18:00), or email enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk for details of how to raise your dispute further through our Complaints and Commendations procedure.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales by phone on 0300 7900203 or by email at ask@ombudsman.wales

Welsh Language Standards

We are committed to establishing Natural Resources Wales as a naturally bilingual organisation. We will provide compliance reports in your preferred language.