

Natural Resources Wales Permitting Decisions

Biffa Waste Services Limited (Cardiff Waste Management Resource Centre)

Decision Document

Application for a Full Surrender

The application number is: PAN-029743

The surrender number is: EPR/SP3031SJ/S003

The applicant / operator is: Biffa Waste Services Limited

**The Installation is located at: Cardiff Waste Management Resource Centre,
Curran Embankment, Riverside, Cardiff, CF10 5FX**

Purpose of this document

This decision document:

- explains how the application has been determined
- provides a record of the decision-making process
- shows how all relevant factors have been taken into account

Unless the decision document specifies otherwise, we have accepted the applicant's proposals.

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1. Executive summary

1.1. Application summary

Biffa Waste Services Limited has applied for a full surrender of its environmental permit.

1.2. Our decision

We have decided to accept the surrender of the permit for Cardiff Waste Management Resource Centre, Curran Embankment, Riverside, Cardiff, CF10 5FX operated by Biffa Waste Services Limited.

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid any pollution risk and to return the site to a satisfactory state.

We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

2. Receipt of the application

The application was accepted as duly made on 24/12/2025. This means we considered it was in the correct form and contained sufficient information for us to begin our determination, but not that it necessarily contained all the information we would need to complete that determination.

3. Confidential information

The applicant made no claim for commercial confidentiality, and we have not received information in relation to the application that appears to be confidential in relation to any party.

4. Legislation

The surrender will be granted, under Regulation 25 of the EPR. The Environmental Permitting regime is a legal vehicle which delivers most of the relevant legal requirements for activities falling within its scope. In particular, the regulated facility is:

- an *installation* as described by the IED;
- subject to aspects of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which also have to be addressed.

We address the legal requirements directly where relevant in the body of this document. NRW is satisfied that the decision on this application is consistent with its general purpose of pursuing the sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR) in relation to Wales and applying the principles of SMNR. In particular, NRW acknowledges that it is a principle of sustainable management to take action to prevent significant damage to ecosystems. We consider that, in granting the surrender a high level of protection will be delivered for the environment and human health.

5. The Site

5.1. Pollution risk

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid a pollution risk resulting from the operation of the regulated facility.

As part of the decommissioning and removal of pollution risk, the operator implemented a number of measures. These included the clearance of internal and external areas of the site, including the removal of all wastes, redundant waste handling equipment, and cleaning of surfaces. The drainage network was cleaned, and included all drainage lines, bunds, gulleys and the interceptor. The operator confirmed that as a result, no pollution potential from the permitted waste management activities remains on the site. Evidence of this was provided in the form of photos and waste transfer notes. In addition, the cease of all operations and removal off site of all wastes was confirmed by an officer from NRW who carried out a final inspection. The officer also confirmed during the surrender application process that no further inspections are required and there are no outstanding compliance issues at the site.

The operator has confirmed that it adopted a lifetime records approach whilst the site was in operation. An example of this is the submission of a summary of compliance inspections reports, CAR's. These reports were made by officers of NRW following routine inspections during the lifetime of the permit. The majority of the CAR form entries refer to minor spillages, none referred to a major spillage or major incident. The operator has provided site-inspection records dating back to 1995, as well as a summary of the daily checks undertaken across the site - including the drum storage area, associated bunding and hardstanding. These routine inspections were in place as part of the Management System and confirms that throughout the life of the site the external surfaced areas were subject to regular inspection and maintenance.

To conclude, it is understood that there were no incidents which may have affected the land during the life of the Permit and the site has a good record of permit compliance.

5.2. Satisfactory state

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to return the site of the regulated facility to a satisfactory state.

In coming to this decision, we have had regard to the state of the site before the facility was put into operation.

The site's previous use before the facility was put into operation was as a metal foundry. Two site investigations were carried out at the site, one prior to the issue of the current permit and the second prior to development of the newer (eastern) part of the Site. The analysis showed elevated concentrations of heavy metals which the operator confirms to be consistent with the site's previous land use as a foundry. Elevated concentrations of sulphate were also found. The report confirms that this may be attributable to the general construction and demolition debris found in the soil below the initial hardcore. The operator advised that these previous site investigation reports are no longer available, and NRW have also been unable to retrieve copies.

In support of the surrender application, the operator instructed an independent consultant to carry out chemical testing of the soil at the site. A total of 7 borehole

locations were attempted, however the concrete was demonstrated to be in excess of 470mm and so only one sample of soil was taken. The consultant noted that the extensive thickness of concrete which exists beneath the site would have provided protection to media beneath from any spillages, providing a barrier to migration of pollutants.

Chemical testing of the soil sample was compared against published Generic Assessment Criteria (GAC), which are human-health-based screening values derived for different land-use scenarios. The results showed no exceedances of the GAC for either commercial end use or the more conservative residential land-use scenario with plant uptake. GAC relate only to the assessment of potential risks to human health and do not provide an assessment of risks to controlled waters or ecological receptors. However, the absence of any exceedances provides confidence that contaminant concentrations in the soil sample are low. While GAC cannot be used as a direct measure of environmental risk, results below these thresholds indicate that contaminants are present only at background or very low levels. The report concluded that as a consequence of the inspection and investigation in connection with the surrender of the Permit, the condition of the land can be considered to be in a satisfactory state. We are in agreement with this conclusion.

Based on the records-based approach and low risk to groundwater, we are satisfied that sufficient information has been supplied to show that pollution risk has been removed and that the site is in a satisfactory state.