

Davidstow Creamery - Variation of Environmental Permit

Permit Number: **EPR/BN6137IK/V013**

16 January 2026

Purpose of this Briefing:

We, the Environment Agency, have written this briefing to invite you to comment on the draft environmental permit variation and draft decision document for Davidstow Creamery.

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. Please email us at DCISenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk if you would like to be removed from our mailing list.

- Dairy Crest Limited (part of Saputo Dairy UK) applied to us to vary their permit in 2023, to increase cheese production.
- We need to vary their permit as we are concerned about the impacts on the River Inny, caused by the treated wastewater from the Davidstow site.
- We have also reviewed their processes against the Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the Food, Drink and Milk industries.
- We now think we will issue Dairy Crest Limited with the new permit. We welcome your comments on the draft permit variation and draft decision document during our consultation period.
- This briefing note explains the changes in more detail, what we can and can't consider while we determine this application and how you can send us your comments.

Introduction

Davidstow Creamery, operated by Dairy Crest Limited, produces Cathedral City Cheese and other dairy products. It is the largest cheese manufacturer in UK, producing over 100 tonnes of cheese a day. Until recently, the site also produced demineralised whey powder for use in infant milk formula.

The site operates under an Installations Environmental Regulations Permit and discharges from its wastewater treatment plant to the River Inny, a tributary of the River Tamar.

The environmental performance of the on-site waste-water processing facility (WPF) had been poor for several years until around the middle of 2022.



A view of Davidstow Creamery

The proposed changes

The permit review incorporates four main elements:

- A review initiated by us to address concerns about the impact on the River Inny.
- An application from Dairy Crest [Ltd Limited](#) to increase their cheese production capacity - from 9.6 to 11.4 tonnes per hour.
- Several operational updates and improvements, mostly related to the waste-water processing facility (WPF) and changes to the way the boilers are used.
- We have reviewed the site's processes against the updated Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the Food, Drink and Milk industries, published in 2020.

In September 2025, Dairy Crest informed us that they would no longer be producing Demineralised Whey Powder (DWP). They reverted operations back to the production of Sweet Whey Powder, similar to their operations prior to 2016. It was the demineralisation part of this process that primarily contributed to the poor performance of the WPF and pollution of the River Inny. As a result, the ability to operate a demineralisation process has not been included in the draft permit variation.

This briefing note explains more about the draft permit variation and draft decision document, and how you can comment on them during our public consultation, which opens on **16 January** and will run until **13 February 2026**.

What did we consider as we determined the permit?

The decision document explains our decisions as we determined the permit. It provides the answers to the questions and concerns you raised with us during our first consultation in May/June 2023.

If you would like a shorter, non-technical summary of the key points, please visit the Davidstow Creamery section (in the grey information bar) on our Engagement HQ webpage: [Devon, Cornwall, Isles of Scilly Regulated Industry Sites | Engage Environment Agency](#)



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: [PL32 9XW, DAIRY CREST LIMITED, EPR/BN6137IK/V013: environmental permit consultation - Environment Agency - Citizen Space](#)

This consultation will be open until **13 February**. 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

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

We must receive your comments by **11:59pm on 13 February 2026**.

We will then review all the comments received before deciding whether to issue the varied 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.

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.