

Walleys Quarry Landfill

Liaison Committee Meeting

20th February 2020 – 6pm – St George’s Centre

Present:

Simon Tagg (STagg)
Neil Goodwin (NG)
Nick Bromley (NB)
Dave Jones (DJ)
Marion Reddish (MR)
Darren Walters (DW)
Steve Thomason (ST)
Tim Lowe (TL)
Jon Clewes (JC)
Nigel Bowen (NB)
Henryk Adamczuk (HA)
Dean Broadhurst (DB)
Sam Boden (SB – notetaker)

Apologies:

Elaine Moulton (*Nick Bromley from NUL Planning*)
Brian Johnson
Angela Drakakis-Smith (ADS)
Ian Barnett
Sarah Dennis (*Steve Thomason and Tim Lowe from EA*)
Poolfields Residents Association Representative
Amelia Rout

Not in attendance (no apologies received)

Jan Siery
Tony Eagles

1. Introductions

All members introduced themselves.

2. Apologies

Apologies received as mentioned above.

3. Minutes of last meeting

ADS sent in comments regarding previous minutes - read out and summarised:

5&6 – odour question related to tipped waste once cell complete, not from cell prep. work.

11 – odour could not be ‘located’ as coming from the site. Issue with term ‘substantiated’. EA and other agencies have an important task of monitoring sites and this site is sensitive due to proximity to housing. Important that public confidence is maintained in such agencies.

Minutes agreed by all.

4. Matters Arising

• **Re highway concerns.** *ST: Urban clearway/ double yellow lines falls outside of County Council’s £7k budget, can put a case forward for this issue to be looked at on a larger scale and see if this can be priority to look at. NG to pass on comments made at the meeting [ACTION – NG]*

STagg – contacted local highways officer. Have meeting to discuss priorities over next 6-7 months and will raise this. Cost may be reviewed/ ‘clubbed together’ as sides of the road are in different council areas. Double yellow lines may be considered (urban clearway would not be, as this is not done in the Borough).

NG – spoke to highways liaison officers, no response as yet.

HA – mentioned problem on Silverdale Road with parking close to small businesses. DB advised situation being monitored regularly, but the vehicles using the road/ parking up are not exclusively using Red's site (can check number plates against vehicles coming into site, thanks passed to HA for his submission of number plate information).

- **Re highway concerns.** Red Industries to look at signage at the entrance to remind drivers of appropriate behaviour [ACTION – RED INDUSTRIES]

SB/ DB – Signage has been delivered and is ready to be installed reminding drivers of safe and appropriate behaviour. Cross hatching installed at the entrance to the site as a no waiting zone.

- STagg to send through the details of the **Scrutiny Committee** including the process, objectives etc. [ACTION – STagg]

STagg – Believe some info sent? [Red still awaiting some info]. Meeting between Red and Council Chief Exec w/c 24th Feb.

- Invite to send someone to the Liaison Meeting as a representative for **Poolfields RA** to be extended [ACTION – RED INDUSTRIES].

SB - Invitation was sent to the Poolfields Residents Association (organisers of Stop the Stink campaign). Response received: "Unfortunately, we will not be attending as we will not be in the area"

- Invite to be sent again to **Tony Eagles** along with suggestion an alternative representative be sent if he is not available [ACTION – RED INDUSTRIES]

SB – Invitation sent, along with suggestion of an alternative representative to be sent if Mr Eagles is not available. No response received.

- **Re permit variation.** Link to comments to be sent to ADS [ACTION – DW]

ADS advised by email this had not been received.

Comments available online [web address: https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/st5-6dh-red-industries-limited/consultation/published_select_respondent]

- Re Sumitomo's request to have a **representative on the Committee**. Red to review and report back to the Committee. [ACTION – RED INDUSTRIES]

SB – Invitation sent to original requester. No response received.

5. Red Industries Update

NB:

- Focus has been outside the area over the last few months due to recent acquisitions. This has been taking up management's time and is expected to complete end Feb.
- Progressing well with site works
- Capital approved for clay liner works and other development works. Documentation submitted and approved by the EA. Landfill operates on a containment system, all waste and any product from decomposition is contained within the clay liner (impermeable material). This holds the leachate within the site so it can be pumped within the sealed system to the leachate treatment plant and treated as per the site permit. The containment has to be installed and approved by the EA before operations can move into the additional cells in the site.

SB:

- Second community newsletter due to be circulated to over 17,000 homes starting w/c 24th Feb.
- Landfill Communities Fund – approved funding for four new projects at the end of last year:
 - St Mary's Church Knutton for wall repairs
 - 7th Day Church Hanley for furniture
 - New Vic Theatre - £20k funding towards new auditorium seating as part of a larger project
 - Portland Inn CIC – to help restore a derelict building so it can be turned into a permanent community spaceOver £1.3million has been awarded to projects within the local area.

ST noted (as it was his first time attending the Walleys Liaison Meeting) that there weren't many local residents at the meeting.

Some couldn't attend, others had been invited but had declined/ not responded. Also, note included in the community newsletter that the group is looking for more people to come forward.

6. Site Update

DB:

- Inputs lower than normal – which is usual for this time of year
- Same waste streams being taken as have always been received
- Working in northern area of the site currently
- Project to extend containment liner will go from SE/ SW - NE this year. Work due to start in next 4 weeks.
- Offloading area being developed – expected to commence use next 7-8 weeks.
- Have started to drill new gas wells. Agreed with the EA. Due to end next week.
[DW requested that NUL EHO are informed in advance – ACTION Red]
- Weather has made it more difficult to get vehicles about on site – but not really impacted the site and have managed to continue as normal.

DW questioned possible road debris and reports of mud on the road/ vehicles not being cleaned prior to leaving the site.

DB/ JC – road sweeper is in operation 6 hours per day as normal. Wheel wash is maintained, cleaned, and working as per design. Have been made aware of pictures of a muddy vehicle and mud on the road – however when that number plate was checked, that vehicle was not one that came to the landfill.

NG also had complaint about mud on the highway. No number plate or vehicle information provided, so cannot verify if had/ hadn't come from the landfill. Did an unannounced check of the area following this complaint, highway found to be in suitable condition.

NB/ JC – if number plate or identifying information is available, Red can check and take action as needed (have banned drivers who have not adhered to transport rules). Without this information, can't verify origin and act.

7. EA Update

TL:

- Air quality report has been produced containing lots of detail and information. Has been emailed out and posted to certain residents. Also available on the Citizen Space website where all reports, FAQs etc. are being shared *[web link:*

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/walleys-quarry-landfill-sliverdale/>

- All concentrations below health limits.
- For 1% of monitoring period, exceeded the limit where an odour could be perceived.
- Will continue to carry out monitoring of the site as usual including unannounced visits and odour tours. Gas monitor (FID Device) taken out in the area to detect any flammable gases (methane etc.) as well as odours using the nose. This also helps pick up gas leaks (non-landfill related) in the area, which can be relayed back to the gas company.
- Engineering works underway – this has been agreed with the EA.
- No nuisance odours picked up. Transient odours occasionally picked up. People may be 'upset' by transient odours, so trying to get out to reassure the local community and keep them informed.
- Taking a more proactive approach engaging with the local community. EA officers in the area to see complainants closer to the time of complaint being made, talking to the public, and raising profile of what's happening at the site.

HA queried statistical confidence levels for particulates from the AMU report and how figure of 31 days was calculated. ST advised AQS for particulates should be measured for 365 days, rather than part of a year. The monitoring was carried out over 118 days, projected from this to a full year, to get the 31 days mentioned in the report.

STagg: EA report states there is odour from direction of the landfill site and these were below health limits, but reports on social media show residents see these odours as an annoyance. EA states that there is no failing on the part of Red, but says there are odours being detected. Questioned if Red accepted there was odour from the landfill site. DW asked if systems to manage odour are effective.

NB advised Red are a compliant business. Aware there are complaints. Aware landfill sites can cause odour. Red are a compliant business operating within the requirements of permit and regulation.

ST advised no landfill will be odour free. Red are using appropriate measures to minimise and control odours as required by the environmental permit.

DW – important to acknowledge that even from well regulated, well run site, there will occasionally be odours.

TL – EA are trying to decrease response times to attend complaints so can identify anything in the area. Odours can be transient, so person may smell an odour but it's gone before officers attend the location.

JC/ DB – Red are sometimes out in the area twice a day completing odour tours and site staff are encouraged to report any odours. A strict approved odour management plan is followed. Have been out at the time of complaint coming through and Red/ EA couldn't detect the odour at the location the complainant reported. May be a transient odour.

DW raised the point that it's important to get the message across to the public in layman terms.

NB – this is the purpose of this meeting, so that information can be shared appropriately.

MR – was in local area at 10.59 yesterday and detected a potent odour. Didn't report as didn't have time to call in or ring up. Odours not being a health hazard is different to it being unpleasant.

NB – problem we have is that reports can't be verified if we're being notified over a day after the time. It's important people do report any odours they detect at the time they detect them so we can look into it.

STagg – could there be reporting ‘fatigue’ as residents feel there has been no improvement and people stop reporting.

ST – complaints are shared with Red so they can carry out an investigation. If officers in the area at the time of a live complaint – can try to get out quickly, where possible, to investigate. Odour may be transient – it doesn’t mean people can’t smell something, but that it’s transient. AMU had live data – over 51% of the time the wind was blowing in the direction of the AMU so will have picked up accurate data, which has been included in the report.

JC – important that people keep reporting as this could help act as an ‘early warning system’ in the future if a genuine engineering issue develops – such as that seen at another site where there was an identified infrastructure problem.

Reporting of odours – Council have set up portal (20/02) for people to report, these complaints will be automatically sent to Red. Officers from the Borough Council trying to attend as quickly as possible when a complaint comes in – looking at having someone on-call during the night. When officers have been out, worst odour detected was a 2/6.

[DW to provide Red & EA with a breakdown of complaints – when received, plotted on a map with wind direction etc. – ACTION DW] Need to be careful that numbers are not being duplicated/ triplicated if reports are coming in to the EA, Red and also the Council.

DJ - reporting fatigue may be due to the number of channels people need to report through – if reporting through the Borough Council, all agencies will receive a copy.

JC – all complaints investigated on the same basis following the approved odour management plan regardless of whether complaint goes to the Borough Council, EA, or Red directly. Copy of Red’s approved odour management plan is a publicly available document.

Site Manager’s number provided if people want to contact site directly (also on the board outside the entrance to the site).

STagg – a PR exercise is needed to really get the message out there and communicate with people. Social media reports suggest information is not being shared. Joint effort needed to spread information.

PHE message is seemingly not being shared that there is no affect to health.

JC – that is the purpose of these meetings for representatives to share the relevant information. Copies of the minutes, permits, and a range of other information is available online [web address: www.redindustries.co.uk/walleys-landfill-community/] Information should be shared with the local community by the committee members.

Red have produced a second community newsletter to keep people informed.

EA have uploaded documents to the Citizen Space and are being more proactive in their approach. Newsletter is produced monthly about the site.

All stressed the importance of sharing the information with the local public.

8. Newcastle-under-Lyme EHO Update

DW:

- Been made aware from PHE that this isn’t a health concern –there is no health implication from a well-regulated landfill site.
- Local MP is holding Westminster debate on general odours – sponsored by Amanda Millings from Cannock. Have given the MP briefing notes, background info etc. Red have also had a meeting with the MP and shared information.
- Aware Cannock council held a Scrutiny Committee Meeting – this was a very useful controlled, planned process enabling organised communication between the site operators, regulator, councillors and community representatives.
- Building work on Hampton Field due to start first half of the year.

9. Staffordshire Planning Update

Nothing to add

10. Newcastle-under-Lyme Planning Update

NB: Hamptons site has planning permission for 133 houses. Extensive groundwork and remediation to take place – estimated 4-5years until completed.

JC asked if it would be clear to potential purchasers that there was a landfill nearby?

NG/ DW – may not turn up in searches depending on the searches requested.

DW – may come back as a regulated process in searches, but people would need to fully read the information.

People likely to Google the area, so should be aware.

STagg: People on new housing area reporting issues with unadopted roads (street lighting etc.) more than with landfill.

11. Local Councillor and Residents' Representatives Comments

Nothing from attendees.

Statement provided by ADS on behalf of TRA:

We understand that there is to be a debate in Parliament on this issue although we are not sure what it will actually be about. The TRA maintains its position that the site should be filled as quickly as possible and that it should not be closed before the terms of the permit have been satisfied. It is the responsibility of the EA and any other monitoring agency to ensure that this done efficiently and without undue nuisance and loss of amenity to those living nearby and for them to work closely with Red Industries to ensure this. To close the site prematurely would, in our view, be dangerous and irresponsible. This is the TRA position and remains so unless there is strong evidence and informed fact that would change this view.

12. AOB

None

13. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 16th April at 3pm. Location TBC.

Meeting concludes 7.15pm.