

Walleys Quarry Landfill

Proposed variation of the current Environmental Permit

What is the background to the permit variation application?

Walleys Quarry Ltd (formerly named Red Industries RM Ltd) applied to the Environment Agency on 7 July 2020 to vary the conditions of its current environmental permit (Ref. DP3734DC) to allow changes to approved landfill operations. The application has subsequently been amended.

An application of this kind does not require consultation. However, given the level of interest from the community in operations at the site, we have decided to carry out a consultation before we reach a final decision. We have published the draft variation along with our draft decision document.

What exactly is Walleys Quarry Ltd proposing to change?

- Removal of carbon dioxide compliance limits for 12 specified perimeter gas monitoring boreholes and application of alternative borehole-specific action levels together with an increase of the methane compliance limit in borehole BH17D; and
- Inclusion of use of a geosynthetic capping system as an operating technique.

What is the Environment Agency now proposing to do and why?

We have carefully considered the application by Walleys Quarry Ltd (“the applicant”). We are satisfied that the proposed changes will still provide a high level of protection for the environment. The changes will not adversely affect odour or ongoing efforts to address this issue. As a result, we are minded to accept the applicant’s proposals and vary the current permit conditions to incorporate the requested changes.

Our detailed reasoning for the above proposed decision is set out in our **draft decision document**.

Commenting on our proposed decision

We welcome any comments if you have specific environmental concerns or issues which relate to the proposed changes. Any further action that may be required to address other operational issues will be addressed separately as part of our ongoing regulation. We understand many people want to see the site closed. However, stopping operations in this way could result in landfill gas emissions escaping from the site for longer.

Permitting and assessing permit variations is a legal process, rather like the process for determining a planning application. This means there are very specific things that can be considered when we assess an application. For this reason, we are only able to take into account comments that relate to the proposed changes outlined in the decision document and not wider concerns relating to the site as a whole. We will not respond individually to responses.

Occasionally during consultations for applications at high profile sites, campaign groups have encouraged individuals to submit multiple objections or responses repeating the same concerns or issues. Please be aware that, as we follow a strict legal process when assessing permit applications, the number of times a comment or concern is raised cannot influence the outcome of an Environmental Permit application.

Our draft permit variation notice and draft decision document can be viewed on-line at the address below. **Please note this link will only go 'live' from 21/02/2022.** Consultation comments can also be submitted via the same link:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/st5-6dh-walleys-quarry-landfill-site-epr-dp3734dc/>

Alternatively, you can return consultation comments:

By e-mail to: PSCpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk

In light of the exceptional circumstances associated with the site and the level of public interest in our regulation of it, together with our determination to be open and transparent, on this occasion we have also decided to:

- make a full copy of the variation application available to be viewed by at our office at Sentinel House, 9 Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Lichfield, Staffs. WS13 8RR to make an appointment please email engagement_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk
- make a full copy of the variation application available to be viewed at Newcastle Library, Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire ST5 1BL

The Environment Agency will look to make all responses publicly available after the consultation, unless you have specifically requested that we keep your response confidential. We will not publish names of individuals who respond.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we may be required to share your response to this consultation, but will not include any personal information. If you have requested your response is kept confidential, we may still be required to provide a summary of it.

How long is the consultation period?

The consultation period on the permit application runs from 21/02/2022 to 21/03/2022.

Further information

Should you wish to discuss the application in more detail, arrange a visit to speak to one of our staff or you wish to receive copies of Public Register information relating to the variation application, in the first instance please contact our Customers & Engagement Team on tel: 02030 251 583 or by e-mail: engagement_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk

Permit application history

The original application to vary the permit was made on 7 July 2020.

The original permit variation application requested the following:

- Increase in leachate level limits to 14 m above the cell base in Cells 1 - 4;
- Removal of carbon dioxide compliance limits in 12 perimeter gas monitoring boreholes and application of alternative borehole-specific action levels together with an increase to the methane compliance limit in one borehole - BH17D; and

- Inclusion of use of geosynthetic capping system in operating techniques.

The application was amended on 15 January 2021 to also include the following:

- Suspension of monitoring requirements in leachate chambers within Cell 1 until the re-drilling can be facilitated; and
- Addition of a fourth gas engine.

Subsequently, the application was amended on 17 August 2021 to remove the following aspects from the application:

- Increase in leachate level limits to 14 m above the cell base;
- Suspension of monitoring requirements in leachate chambers within Cell 1; and
- Addition of a fourth gas engine.