

Walleys Quarry Landfill Site

17 December 2021

We have developed this weekly update to help keep the community of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and wider area, up-to-date with developments around our regulation of Walleys Quarry Landfill.

Walleys Quarry Ltd is responsible as the operator for the hydrogen sulphide emissions escaping from its site. As the environmental regulator we are committed to making sure the operator tackles the problems at Walley's Quarry Landfill, to improve things for everyone, as quickly as possible. Our regulatory team continues to put pressure on the operator to take the necessary measures to resolve the hydrogen sulphide issues.

News in brief

Judicial Review Appeal decision

The Environment Agency's appeal was allowed, and the claimant's cross-appeal was dismissed. The decision can be viewed here [Richards v The Environment Agency & ors - YouTube](#) and the Court's full reasoning will be made available in due course. We have released the following statement to the media:

The emissions of Hydrogen Sulphide from Walleys Quarry have had a big impact on the local community. We remain determined to do all we can to protect and support them. We will continue to work with the operator, the local authorities and all the other responsible bodies to that end. We have been acting throughout on advice from Public Health England (now the UK Health Security Agency) and will continue to do so.

We have required, and continue to require, Walleys Quarry Ltd to make substantial changes to the way in which it operates. Following our interventions there has been a clear downward trend in hydrogen sulphide levels recorded at our air quality monitoring stations in recent months, with most sites showing concentrations below the WHO annoyance threshold most of the time – and three of our four monitoring sites showing concentrations are now below the long-term (lifetime) health-based guidance value. These improvements do not diminish in any way our continued focus on bringing those emissions under control and ensuring they remain so.

At the end of October 2021, the Court of Appeal granted permission for the Environment Agency to appeal aspects of the High Court Judgment relating to the appropriate role of the Court when considering judicial review and remedies involving regulatory decisions. The Environment Agency appealed because the High Court ruling had potentially far-reaching effects beyond the immediate case.

We welcome the Court's decision today and for providing some certainty for the parties so quickly after the hearing. We must await the reasoned Judgment before we are able to comment further. Today's decision, and the appeal process itself, has not affected and will not affect our determination to tackle the problems at Walleys Quarry.

A new odour pollution reporting form for Walleys Quarry

We have developed a new online form to report incidents of odour coming from Walleys Quarry. This replaces our old reporting form which is now no longer in use. Most of the questions remain the same, but we have made some updates to make it easier to use, and more accessible.

When completing the new form, you will still receive a unique reference number each time you report an incident. You will still be able to make multiple odour reports. Using the form will be the easiest and quickest way for you to report odour from Walleys Quarry.

<https://report-walleys-quarry-smell.service.gov.uk/>

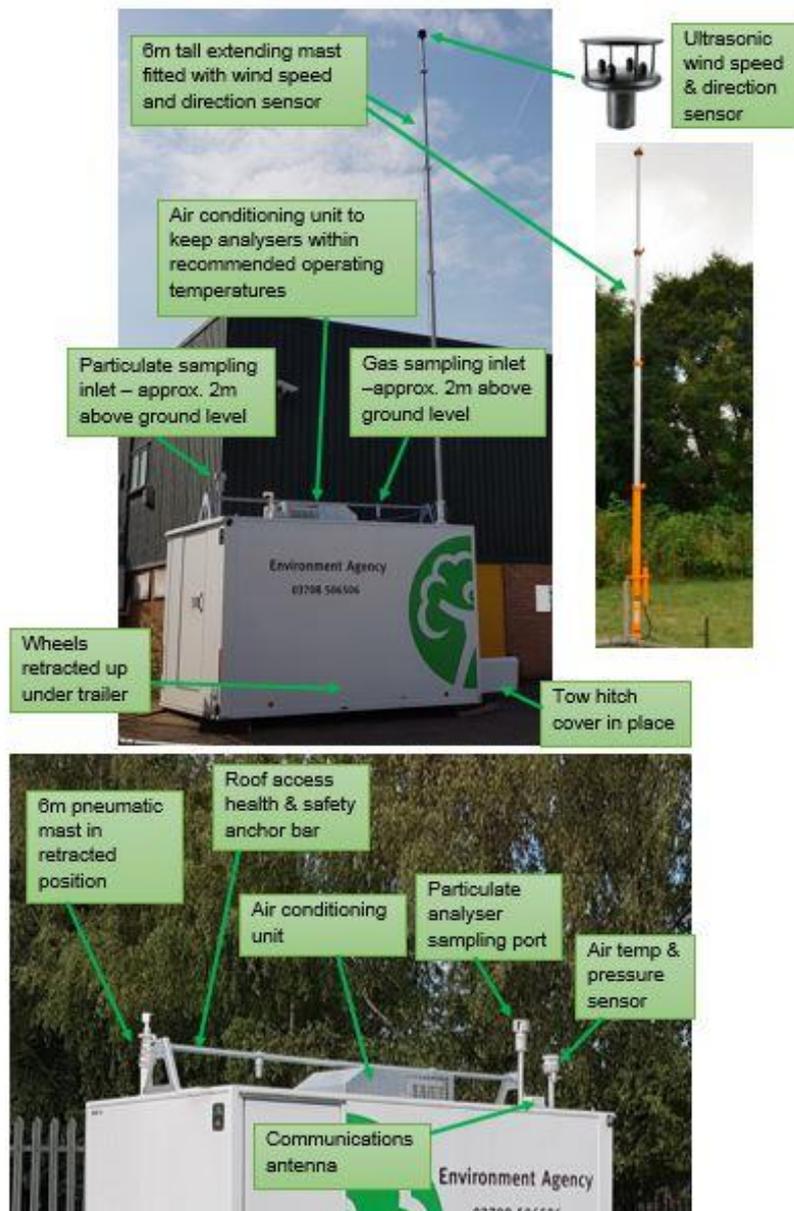
Christmas publishing schedule

We will be publishing the last weekly update of this year on Thursday 23 December. Our next edition will be available on 6 January 2022.

Our Mobile Air Quality Monitoring units

The Environment Agency currently has four mobile monitoring facilities ("MMFs") stationed around Walley's Quarry Landfill Site. We have recently received some queries about how our mobile monitoring (MMFs) work. The graphic below shows the features of the units.

The anatomy of the Environment Agency's Mobile Monitoring Facilities (MMFs)



Latest hydrogen sulphide levels

Last week (6 – 12 December) raw data collected from our ambient air mobile monitoring stations (MMFs) showed:

- The levels remained below the World Health Organisation's 24-hour average health guideline level ($150\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or 107ppb) to protect against short-term health effects.
- They were above the World Health Organisation's 30-minute average odour annoyance guideline level ($7\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or 5ppb) for the following periods of time:

MMF1 - Silverdale Cemetery = 0.6%

MMF2 - Silverdale Road = 0%
MMF6 - Newcastle-under-Lyme Fire Station = 0.9%
MMF9 - Galingale View = 2.4%

It is important to note that this is raw data. This means the data is indicative. We do not rely upon raw data for our regulatory work, but instead rely on the Monthly Air Quality Monitoring reports, which is based on rectified data.

We do expect to see short term fluctuations in the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide leaving the site at times. The causes can include factors such as the temporary impact of improvement works being carried out on site and changes in the weather. In particular as we approach the colder seasons air temperatures start to drop. Landfill gas emissions will rise in the atmosphere less readily in colder weather and with less dispersion, the potential for causing odour nuisance is greater. By contrast, in warmer weather, when the gases are naturally more diluted due to the higher temperatures and rising air.

This means the improvements that have been carried out at Walley's Quarry Landfill, to reduce odour, could be less noticeable as we move towards the end of the year. However, it is important to note that despite short term spikes, the overall trend in the levels of hydrogen sulphide concentrations in the ambient air continues to reduce.

The amount of landfill gas captured and processed on site remains at a very high rate with CLP, the gas contractor running both engines on full power, generating around 2000 KWh electricity, with two enclosed landfill gas flares operational on a 24/7 basis.

Our action and the improvements we've required Walleys Quarry Ltd to take since March 2021 has seen a significant reduction in hydrogen sulphide escaping the site, but there is still more for Walleys Quarry Ltd to do in reducing hydrogen sulphide levels to those assessed to be safe by the UK Health Security Agency.

In total we received 94 odour reports this week (6-12 December).

We remain committed to continuing to use our regulatory powers to require Walleys Quarry Ltd to further control hydrogen sulphide emissions.

Publishing recent correspondence

If you have a question you can email us at enquiries_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk.

To report odour please call us on 0800 80 70 60 or use our [online reporting form](#)

In future, we are planning to share some of the key questions people have emailed us, for everyone to access on these pages.

We are updating the information on this webpage every week. To receive notifications, email your contact details to: Engagement_WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk and we will add you to our mailing list.

See [Staffordshire County Council website](#) for information on public health impacts of odours in the Silverdale and wider Newcastle under Lyme area.

Walleys Quarry website: <https://walleysquarry.co.uk/>

