

# Keeping you informed

## Odour issues from Acumen Waste Services Ltd

June 2023

**Our aim is to protect and improve the environment so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of a clean, safe and healthy place to live, work and play.**

**We issue environmental permits that set standards for those operating waste facilities. Sites with environmental permits must adhere to conditions set out in these permits in order to minimise their impact on the environment and the local community.**

### Background

The Environment Agency has recently received an increase in the number of odour reports from the Escrick and Riccall areas. These reports suggest the majority of odours originate from The Old Brick and Tile Works on Riccall Road in Escrick.

There are five active environmental permits in this location:

1. A closed non-hazardous landfill site operated by Biffa Waste Services Ltd.
2. Escrick Soil Landfill Site, an active inert landfill site operated by Escrick Environmental Services Ltd. This permit authorises the disposal of inert waste at the site as part of the overall scheme to restore the former mineral workings to defined restoration levels allowed under planning. The inert wastes to be used as part of the activities authorised in this permit consist of material from excavations, construction/demolition wastes and similar industrial wastes that are inert.
3. Escrick Aggregate Treatment Plant, a permit operated by Escrick Environmental Services Ltd. This permit authorises two waste activities: Standard Rules SR2010 No.17 for the storage of wastes to be used in land treatment (storage of waste prior to use) and Standard Rules SR2010 No.12 for the treatment of waste to produce soil, soil substitutes and aggregates.
4. Escrick Recreational Facility, a site which is operated by Escrick Environmental Services

and no longer accepts waste. The permit is in the process of being surrendered.

5. Escrick Waste Treatment Facility, a bespoke waste permit operated by Acumen Waste Services Ltd authorising the treatment of wastes for recovery as soil, a soil substitute or an aggregate.

Our inspections suggest the odours may be coming from the waste activities at the Acumen Waste Services site.

### Our response

We take pollution from odours at permitted waste sites seriously and recognise this can be distressing for affected communities.

Our officers have inspected sites in the Escrick area after receiving reports of odours. During the inspections we found several incidences where Acumen Waste Services Limited have not complied with the conditions in their permit to operate the site. These are likely to be contributing to the odours. We have held discussions with the operator to set out an action plan to resolve the problem.

We have seen some beneficial changes to working practices since our inspection. However, there is no quick solution to this issue and we anticipate it will be some time before the problem with odours is fully resolved.

Our investigation is ongoing. Our officers are continuing to carry out odour monitoring in the affected areas and carrying out regular inspections to make sure that the operator ensures their activities comply with the conditions on their permit.

### What happens next?

The operator will continue to develop and implement plans to bring about compliance with their permit, including reducing odorous emissions.

In order to achieve this, waste needs to be handled. This work has already started and is likely to continue for some time. As the waste is disturbed it may release more emissions, increasing the intensity of odours.

If you have noticed that the smell from this site has increased in the last couple of weeks, this may be why. We understand the impact that the odour is having on local residents.

We are engaging with Acumen Waste Services Ltd to make sure their compliance plan is appropriate and to ensure that, as far as possible, the impact of the odour is minimised whilst the plan is implemented.

## How can you help?

Please keep reporting any incidences of odours to us. The reports we receive to our incident hotline are important in helping us assess the problem. Our staff will log the specific details of pollution that you are experiencing.

If you are able to report incidences of odours immediately, this will help us respond. As these odours appear to be intermittent, assessment can be difficult if reports are received many hours after detection. Whilst we recognise that it may be inconvenient to report it as soon as you smell it, we are better able to respond when reports are made as soon as you notice them. Descriptions of the odour, what it smells like to you, can also be extremely helpful in identifying the origin.

**Please ring our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60. It is operational 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.**

Although we are unable to attend in response to every call and cannot resolve this nuisance immediately, reported incidents is one way in which we assess how a site is performing and whether improvements are working.

We are unable to provide feedback to calls on our incident hotline and will send out a further briefing note when there is an update to works on site.

## Who are we speaking to?

We are keeping the local office for the parliamentary constituency and ward councillors informed about the current situation by providing this briefing note.

We have sent this briefing note to anyone who has reported incidents regarding this site; If you know anyone who would be interested in this briefing, please do pass it on.

**If you wish to receive future newsletter on this matter, please provide your email address by emailing [yorkshirewaste@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:yorkshirewaste@environment-agency.gov.uk) and quote Escrick Newsletter in the subject.**