

# Keeping You Informed

## Peckfield Landfill Site

July 2024

Significant Environment Agency staff resources continue to be used to regulate the landfill site and manage the public correspondence generated. We understand what a frustrating situation this is for local residents and hope that this update provides some further information around what is currently happening at the site.

### What is happening on site?

Throughout July, the Operator, Caird Peckfield Limited (CPL), has started to re-lay sections of the engineered capping that we identified as defective. Those areas requiring the remediation are on the top of the site and the flank facing The Crescent. Sections of as-yet uncapped waste will also be capped as part of the ongoing works. The cap plays an important role in containing odours. The work involves cutting out sections of the plastic, which will expose the waste underneath. Suitable soils will be placed on top of the waste before new plastic capping is placed above this. All the biodegradable waste previously exposed to the air is now covered with a soil layer. The cap is then placed and welded on top of this to seal the site, followed by the placement of more soils as part of the lower levels of the final restoration layer.

To speed up the progress of the works, we asked CPL to increase their working hours to remediate the site, so you may see staff working outside of normal hours, including Saturdays. You may also see increased vehicle activity as plant used in the engineering works is moved to the areas being worked on.

We have specialist officers on site most days checking the work is completed to the required standard. Our role is to ensure the operator is installing infrastructure that is fit for purpose and will protect the environment and residents into the future. The operator is responsible for checking the infrastructure is performing as designed and to repair where it is not.

Works are also being undertaken by CPL to replace defective pumps in some leachate wells,

and to seal any leaks identified that are emitting gas.

We are also working closely with the gas contractor in relation to the gas extraction system that generates electricity. As soon as areas are capped, these will be made accessible for the additional works needed on the gas extraction system. These are to identify leaks and ensure gas is being extracted efficiently. Additional gas wells may need to be installed to adequately cover all sections of the site. An assessment of this is currently taking place. We are aware that work to clear the build-up of liquid in above ground gas pipelines is ongoing to ensure the flow of gas generated in the waste is collected as designed.

### Why is this happening?

Our Regulatory Officers identified a number of deficiencies during inspections.

### What to expect

As the work involves activities within areas where landfill gas is generated, certain parts of the gas extraction (suction) system must be turned off or disconnected for health and safety reasons. Areas where the gas extraction is not operating are sources for the escape of gas, and therefore odour. Therefore, until all the works are finished, you should expect odours to be emitted.

Please note that the timescales for this work cannot be accurately defined. The work is dependent on the availability of suitable soils, and the weather. Capping works cannot progress when the conditions are wet and, following wet weather, soils need to dry out before they can be used.

## Update on our enforcement action

The deadlines in the enforcement notice reported in previous updates have expired and there are still ongoing non-compliances with the environmental permit conditions. As a result, we are continuing our investigations and considering enforcement action in accordance with our **Enforcement and Sanctions Policy**. We are not currently able to expand on the detail surrounding these investigations.

We have issued two information notices in the last few months relating to the capping (issued to CPL) process and landfill gas management (issued to Flexitricity Ltd, the 3rd party landfill gas contractor). We decided to issue these after identifying gaps in the documentation relating to these matters. This information is needed for us to comprehensively assess whether CPL is undertaking the work adequately or whether the processes in place need reviewing and amending. One of the information notices was partially complied with (CPL), the other fully complied with (Flexitricity). We are considering next steps in relation to the partially complied information notice.

We continually review our options for requiring CPL to make improvements under enforcement notices. However, this option is not always open to us due to the way the current legislation is written, or where the issuing of a notice would not be achievable. There are numerous aspects we must consider when issuing a notice, such as whether the deadlines are achievable. Issuing a notice with deadlines for undertaking permanent capping works is problematic with respect to the impact of the weather and other unforeseen delays. If an operator falls foul of a notice because we have failed to be fair in our approach, this can undermine our future regulation and enforcement processes.

## Reporting to us

We would encourage all residents affected by the odour to report this via our reporting hotline 0800 807060. Accurate, reliable, and timely reports are crucial in helping us to assess the ongoing impact the landfill is having, and we thank those who take the time to do this.

Please continue to report any odour and distinguish between the different types of odour if possible. If waste odours are experienced outside of normal working hours for the site, please include this detail.

We also have a dedicated email address you can contact us on – please email [micklefield@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:micklefield@environment-agency.gov.uk) .

## Note on landfills

Peckfield landfill site accepted waste that decomposes and produces gas and liquids. Landfill sites collect and burn the gas to produce electricity and collect the liquids for onward disposal or treatment.

Landfills contain the waste, gas and liquids by constructing networks of pipes and wells and installing a protective cap over the top. Peckfield landfill does not currently have all the containment systems in place and functioning correctly, and this is why you are smelling the gas in your homes and gardens.

More technical information can be found in the drop-down sections of the Citizen Space webpage.

## Additional information

Further information on the site, landfills, our role as the regulator, and copies of some key documents (including inspection reports), can be found on the Citizen Space page at [Peckfield Landfill Site - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](https://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/citizen-space/peckfield-landfill-site).