

Bletchley Landfill site

30 September 2020

The following briefing note is intended to provide feedback in relation to complaints about malodours and litter from Bletchley Landfill.

The site

Bletchley landfill is operated by FCC Waste Services (UK) Limited under Environmental Permit EPR/BM4635IH. The site, a large former clay extraction quarry associated with brick making, has held environmental permits for several decades. The current permit allows the operation of landfilling, a leachate treatment facility that discharges to sewer, and use of spark ignition engines to generate electricity from the landfill gas extracted from the site.

Complaints

The Environment Agency has received a number of reports relating to unpleasant odours and litter emanating from Bletchley landfill. Please be assured that we take all reports very seriously. Our officers have responded to some of these complaints and attended both the site and the local area to undertake assessments for odour and litter. To date we have identified a small number of breaches of the Environmental Permit and the operator has been scored for these. We have set the operator a number of actions to take that should help to reduce the likelihood of both odour and litter escaping the site.

Given the nature of the activity at Bletchley landfill it is not reasonable to expect zero odour however the operator is required, under their Environmental Permit, to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable measures to prevent, or where that is not possible, to reduce emissions of odour from the site.

Health concerns

The human nose is very sensitive to odours and often detects odorous chemicals at concentrations in air which pose no risk to health, however it is acknowledged that chronic environmental odours can be unpleasant and affect wellbeing.

Whilst the Environment Agency is the primary regulating body for Bletchley landfill we are not health experts and as such rely on Public Health England (PHE) to provide advice on health impacts. PHE have published a study on the health impacts of living close to a landfill which is available at the link below. Overall it concludes that living close to a well-managed landfill site does not pose a significant risk to human health:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landfill-sites-impact-on-health-from-emissions>

customer service line **03708 506 506**

floodline **03459 88 11 88**

incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

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Next Steps

Please continue to log any amenity issues such as litter or odours that are at levels that cause you a nuisance using our Freephone incident hotline on **0800 80 70 60**. This helps ensure we have an accurate picture of the extent of the problem and allows us to investigate further.

We log all these calls even though we may not be able to send an officer out to the site. There is no action our officers could take to instantly reduce the odour, which can be exacerbated by certain weather conditions.

Our officers will continue to attend the site on a regular basis and we are liaising with the site operator to identify further improvements that can be put in place to further reduce the potential for off-site odours or litter. We are currently unable to provide a timescale on when odours will be reduced to levels that do not cause a nuisance as this work is ongoing, however we anticipate improvements from mid-October 2020.