

Notes of Clayton Hall Landfill Site Local Liaison Group – Eaves Green Community Centre, Chorley
Tuesday 24 April 2018 – 6:00pm

Present:

Mark Clifford (MC) Chairman – Vice Chairman of Clayton Le Woods Parish Council
Steve Grieve (SG) – General Manager – Quercia
Ian McSpirit (IM) – Senior Operations & Technical Manager – Quercia
Councillor Eric Bell (EB) – Chorley Council
Matt Lynch (ML) – Chorley Council
Angela Baron (AB) – Assistant Secretary Residents’ Committee
David Clough (DC) – Residents’ Committee
Sue Clough (SC) – Residents’ Committee
John Neville (JN) – Environment Agency
Sakthi Karunanithi – Director Public Health England LCC

Apologies:

Matthew Barlow – Quercia Ltd
Dr. John Asbury (JA) – Public Health England
Andrew Howard (AH) – Environmental Health Officer
Michael Green – Lancashire County Council
Paul Walmsley – Chorley Council

1 Amended minutes of last meeting agreed.

2 Matters arising

Questions in advance of the meeting had been sent out and a full response to be circulated with minutes.

3 Current situation

IM stated that the lining works to south eastern flank was progressing and were expected to be complete by Saturday. Pin wells were to be installed following this which would extract gas captured by the lining works. Existing capping continued to be monitored and is in good condition with no damage found. Gas continued to be extracted from the rest of the site with balancing and monitoring been carried out by Quercia and YLEM. Site engineering works continued on the development area. Plans for recommencing waste acceptance were due to be submitted to the EA by Friday.

3.1 SC asked where did the odours come from on Saturday. IM replied that there had been an excavator sat on top of the south eastern area and it was believed the weight of this had squeezed gas out of the site.

MC said that he had been on site on that day and that he had observed this.

EB said that he had received an email regarding the height of the site and asked whether the height had been increased. ML stated that he had also had an email concerning this and had had a response from LCC stating that the levels were acceptable. MC commented that he had been on site and hadn’t seen any additional material at the top of the site.

DC commented that residents whose properties backed onto the site could not see Winter Hill any more and MC also commented that residents had mentioned that they could no

longer see the sea. AB commented that concerns would be raised if people were used to seeing a landmark and that landmark could then no longer be seen.

MC said that concerns had been raised about the EA statement that had been released in relation to future tipping. MC said that he could see how it would work around existing gas wells but concern had been raised about the tone of the publication and the description concerning removing the existing cap from this area. JN said that the information was from the Multi Agency Group (MAG) and that they had to provide information that had a factual basis and it would be for Quercia to explain the methodology in detail. MC commented that he felt as though he was stuck in the middle and if this information was being released then it should be a full explanation. JN accepted that MC was correct to raise this at the group and confirmed that the facts were correct.

SK spoke concerning the MAG and the agencies and that they were aware of the activities and the various pressures and recognised the risks and concerns to local residents. .

MC raised a point that the weekly update on the Quercia website had not been done and SG confirmed that he had thought that it had already been done. DC checked online and confirmed that the update was not present. SG stated that he would ensure that it was done immediately. (Action SG)

DC raised an issue concerning the tone of the updates and the suggestion that Quercia may need to cut through further waste in order to complete engineering works. MC stated that he had been on site to understand the works and that he would release a further explanation.

MC also asked how long the tipping in the area along the eastern flank would continue. SG responded that waste would need to be found and that the waste type would be such that were permitted under the site permit and that Quercia would look to fill it as quickly as possible with permitted materials. SG also confirmed that the company would only be filling in narrow strips so that the activity could be controlled.

SC asked why this needed to be done. SG stated that it needed to be filled in order to get to permitted and required levels. SC asked why this was not done previously and SG said that the aim was to hit the desired landform and that the permitted levels had changed in agreement with LCC in 2016. SC asked how old the cap was in the existing area and it was confirmed that it was approximately six years old.

ML asked about the site levels again as he had been told that there was no head space and could this be confirmed. IM responded that the site was at level.

EB asked whether the site would settle in the future and both IM and JN responded that yes it was normal for sites to settle.

EB asked what material would be brought onto site in the future and whether any domestic waste would be included and SG responded that the company had to agree with the EA the methodology to bring waste into the site and that it would only bring permitted waste. The proposals for this were due to be submitted by the end of the week.

MC raised a concern that the site had suffered with birds and rats in the past and asked how this would be managed and expressed concerns from local residents with regard to impact.

EB added that in the past there had been assurances that domestic waste would not be brought to site in the future and that he was concerned if there was a possibility that it may start again. SG responded that the permit requires plans to be in place to control vermin and that Quercia would take all necessary control measures.

MC commented that he believed it would only be industrial waste in the future such as the fines material that he had seen previously. SG commented that we would not be bringing into the site raw domestic waste and that any material received of this type would already have been pre-processed.

ML asked about the site getting back to normal and enquired as to some respite for residents. ML noted that ongoing monitoring continued but had serious concerns about residents having some respite. ML noted that although physical health effects were likely to be short term asked how residents' overall health was being considered.

ML asked for the operators to stop taking waste for the remainder of the year to offer some respite to residents who have suffered from odours. ML noted that although information had been given regarding physical health effects, he had asked how residents overall health had been considered.

SG responded that the company was very much aware of the impact on local residents however Quercia is a commercial business and that the company had committed and will continue to commit all it could to resolving the issue but stated that the company also still needed to operate. SG went on to say that there would be no benefit to the site closing as it stands as it needs to be filled as the current shape would not satisfy EA or planning authority requirements.

AB said that questions had been submitted by the independent consultant that they had employed and that they had been aimed at different parties. AB stated that the consultant had initially wanted to meet with everyone but was unfortunately in hospital and could not travel for a while and that she wanted to raise a point that she was still awaiting answers from the initial questions. AB then read out a statement from the consultant which was to be forwarded for inclusion in the notes. (Action AB)

JN responded to AB's previous questions and statement from the landfill gas consultant and stated that the EA had an ongoing investigation and that some information that normally may be shared could not be because of this. JN needed time to consider a response. JN went onto to discuss the MAG who are discussing the sulphur dioxide issue in the scientific cell. The residents' consultant, Kieron, had been invited to be a part of this discussion but was unavailable as was in hospital. JN continued to state that the sulphur dioxide was a new/additional issue over and above the original issues on site and that sulphur dioxide in the area would not just be coming from the landfill but areas close to roads etc could contribute to this and that any monitoring would need to be carefully modelled.

3.2 Odour Monitoring Results

JN then went on to discuss the odour monitoring results. The highest the EA had picked up had been on the previous late Thursday night into Friday morning at 19 ppb and that on Saturday they had seen 11 ppb. In terms of the number of odour complaints that had been

received 16 were received on Wednesday, 6 on Thursday, 17 on Friday, 24 on Saturday, 1 on Sunday and 1 on Monday. On Tuesday there had been one which was some distance away from the site. JN continued with the issue that had been raised concerning the burning smell and confirmed that EA officers had been on site and seen a number of sources of smoke in the local area away from the site. The EA visited Leyland Golf Club who were burning material which was a permissible activity and the EA have offered advice as to how this may impact the Club's neighbours. JN also commented that there were a number of locations within the vicinity that had fires burning overnight and where appropriate the EA had offered/were offering advice.

SC asked if Facebook was being monitored as people had stopped ringing the phone number as nothing was getting done. JN stated that the EA did monitor Facebook but did not respond or engage on there and the aim of the drop in session on Friday was to give residents the opportunity to speak about issues they are experiencing.

JN stated that what had just been discussed covered the monitoring results, complaints and regulatory control position so the meeting moved onto 4.1.

- 4.1 MC stated that he wanted to direct a question to SK which was PHE had initially released a statement stating that there would be no ill effects and why was this changed to say that there may be some short term effects but no long terms ones. MC questioned why this was released without having data to support it from the EA or the gas monitors. SK responded that the information message came out of PHE and that was the message expected from landfill incidents similar to this in the past. SK was asking the question of PHE about why it was released so early but acknowledged the quality standards were not being breached so the information was felt to be suitable at the time. There were still lots of questions to be answered regarding the impact and that the advice was still valid from PHE. There was ongoing discussion about the possible short term effects and the health survey results were being used to verify symptoms against the data on exposure levels. SK continued to talk about the survey results stating that one of the key messages concerned metal health and wellbeing and he was asking PHE to clarify the difference between the effects and the physical effects of exposure. SK closed by saying the advice is they still don't consider that there will be any medium or long term health impacts.

ML commented that Lyndsay Hoyle had spoken to PHE about timescales and had made two points, one was that the current advice only concerned hydrogen sulphide and questioned whether any other gases should be considered and the second was although medium to long term health effects may be fine what were the risks of short term exposure to higher levels as concern had been raised concerning breathing difficulties. ML also made the point that current advice focused on the physical symptoms but not metal wellbeing and that this needed to be considered.

- ML commented that Lyndsay Hoyle had spoken to PHE about timescales and had made two points, one was that the current advice only concerned hydrogen sulphide and questioned whether any other gases should be considered and the second was whilst the levels of H₂S did not breach WHO's 24 hour it did breach the parts per billion for shorter periods and what is the impact of short periods of exposure to these increased levels as concerns had been raised concerning breathing difficulties. ML also made the point that current advice focused on the physical symptoms but not metal wellbeing and that this needed to be considered.

SK said that he had raised similar issues within PHE and that other gases are being monitored and these are VOCs or hydro-carbons and was awaiting a response to see if anything else was appropriate. JN responded that in incidents such as this involving landfill sites, hydrogen sulphide was the usual parameter to be monitored.

EB raised concerns that he had had direct contact from a local resident who was concerned about her neighbour's child and the possible long term impacts as this child had been born whilst the incident was ongoing. JN and SK both confirmed that they had spoken directly with this particular resident and had discussed the issue in depth.

SC stated she noted the PHE were not in attendance at this meeting and that at the last meeting had said that the results of the health survey were due out but yet they still hadn't been released. SK stated that he would chase this as he had expected it to be done and that he would action this. (Action SK)

AB raised a comment about AACHEN syndrome which occurs where gas that can then enter properties from underground and then gas levels are raised when the home is heated and they then fill the property with gas. SK stated the main concern was around air borne emissions and it was expected to be worse outdoors than indoors and that what AB was describing had not been part of the discussions and that they looked forward to the residents' consultant's comments and adding knowledge the current situation. (Action AB) SK confirmed that it would be the Scientific Group who would look at this issue.

SK stated that the role of the MAG was being discussed going forward and that one of the next decisions was to decide on the criteria for the incident to be passed back to the EA. SK highlighted that the MAG would still be present but not be working to an emergency response. JN stated that the EA was keen to host a drop in session as this would explain how regulation would move forward with its partners and that as the incident moved out of the emergency phase that they would continue to work closely with the MAG partners. As it moved forward and the emergency responses stood down the MAG group would still meet and the incident would still remain a priority within all the organisations.

JN said that he was aware that the drop in sessions had been organised for Friday and was also aware that it was a pre-election period and that all parties were invited to attend but that there would be careful control of the participants to ensure that the session remained focused on the incident at Clayton Hall.

AB asked how the invitations were going out and JN stated that they were mainly using the Facebook group to get the message out and thanked them for their co-operation and that the EA would be posting out invitations to all complainants that they held details for.

SG commented that Quercia would not be in attendance and that it would continue to use the channels detailed in its communication plan and would continue to use the Liaison Group to engage with the local community. He continued that he did not believe it would be beneficial for Quercia and other parties to be at the meeting at this time.

AB asked if anybody objected to the landfill gas consultant attending the next meeting. SG considered that this meeting was not the correct forum but that his team would be happy to meet with the consultant separately outside of the liaison meeting.

4.2 EA Website

JN confirmed that the EA website would continue to be in use for the foreseeable future.

4.3 Social Media

The Facebook group were asked to encourage the residents to report the smells when they occurred so that this could be recorded. The group noted some comments about the accuracy of the reports and were thanked for their efforts to ensure the accuracy of the reporting.

4.4 Communications Plan

SG confirmed that this plan was in place and that a site update would be out today. SG confirmed that weekly updates would continue on the website with tweets also being used to provide updates. SG also stated that visits to the site were welcome depending upon the availability of people to host them and if the group could consider who may be interested the company would look to make arrangements.

5.1 Site Development Works

SG stated that an amended plan would be submitted to the Quercia board for approval and that the company was looking to cap a large area that had not been included in this year's plans however in order to do this he needed to request additional capital but once capped it would allow greater gas capture for the area. SG stated that the capping would potentially take place in August with gas capture starting in September.

5.2 Waste Input Plan

SG stated that a plan was to be submitted to the EA for agreement. SC asked whether waste would be taken from the end of April. SG responded that a draft plan was going into the EA at the end of this week and would need to be agreed but that the informal expectation was that it would mid-May for the start of waste input.

AB said that she believed that there was a Regulation 36 in place and could it be shared. JN stated that he believed that this was already on the Citizen Space website as it was a public document but that he would check and that he would make sure it was there.

EB raised a comment that the site was very close to housing and asked was there anything in the permit that could restrict the activities and did the permit consider the neighbours and allow any extra controls given the proximity. JN said the planning permission from LCC allowed the site to exist and also allowed the houses to be built next to an existing site. The permit controls what happens and those controls take into account the proximity so things such as the tipping plan that were being discussed previously were actually over and above the requirements of the permit and that Quercia were acting fairly cautiously in getting this plan approved by the EA.

6 Community Support – Landfill Community Fund

A decision was made by the Liaison Group that a subcommittee be set up to discuss any future benefits that could be gained but this would be delayed until after local elections.

MC asked if SG had spoken with the Board about the offer for additional funding. SG stated he was working on his preferred route which was the Landfill Community Fund and once he understood fully how that was working any application for additional funding by Quercia directly would be considered.

MC stated again his declared interest as he has an association with the Lancashire Wildlife Trust who were the current beneficiaries but he was keen to see that the existing funding was not cut and that additional funding would be considered.

The meeting was called to a close and there was no other business. The date of the next meeting was set at 16 May, 6.00pm to 7.30pm at Chorley Town Hall although this was to be confirmed by MC