

# Environment Agency Bulletin

## Highmoor Landfill site

Issue 5, April 2008

The Environment Agency continues to be disappointed in the management of the site over recent months. We are undertaking an audit of their management systems to identify any changes that need to be made.

We have formally contacted Paul Levett, Veolia's Managing Director for Recycling, Disposal and Energy Recovery to advise him of the audit and the need for improvements to be made to rectify the ongoing problems.

### In our letter we said:-

"... it appears to me that the site controls are in fact deteriorating rather than improving with new and predictable incidents occurring, all with potential environmental impacts e.g. continued high leachate levels, landfill gas pipework freezing, and discharges from site drainage going directly into the local brook.

Your staff have given me, my team and the local community repeated reassurances over the last few months that all these issues are being dealt with. Unfortunately as you can see there is little evidence to support their continued optimism and at this stage I have little confidence in your current management systems and arrangements.

To help address this situation I have asked my team to undertake an audit of your company management systems as a means of establishing how the repeat failures and incidents we are observing at Highmoor are being reviewed and addressed."

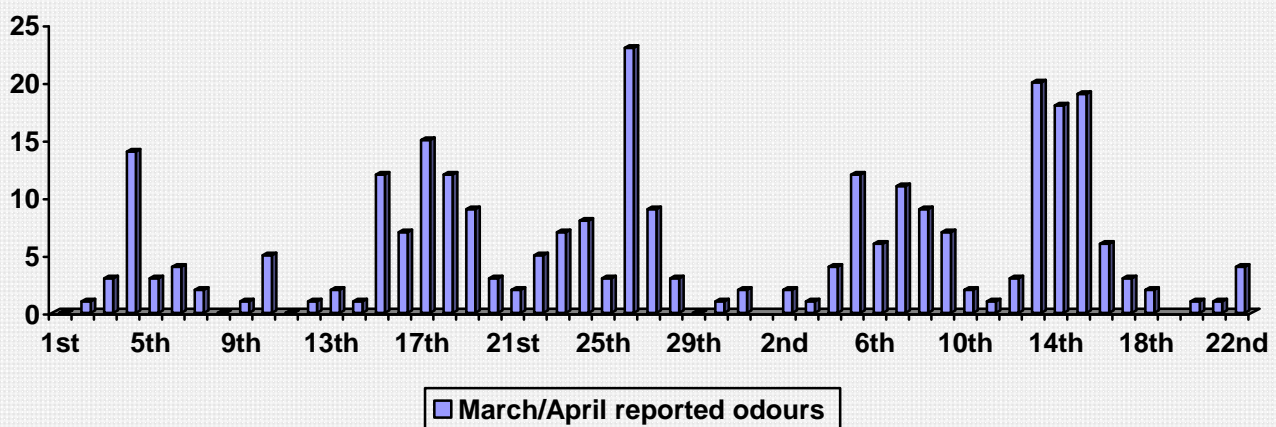
A meeting has been arranged with Mr Levett for the 13 May, we will give you feedback in our next bulletin.

### Enforcement action

We are aware of the frustrations the ongoing problems are causing local residents. In addition to the audit of the company management systems we are continuing to build up a case of evidence regarding incidents at the site. In all instances, where there are breaches of permit conditions, we will carry out enforcement action in line with our Enforcement and Prosecution Policy.

### Reported odours

Residents have continued to call us, to report odours noted in the vicinity of the site. For most of the period since the last update, the Hydrogen sulphide measurement device has been working and recording gas levels off site. The results of which are available on request.

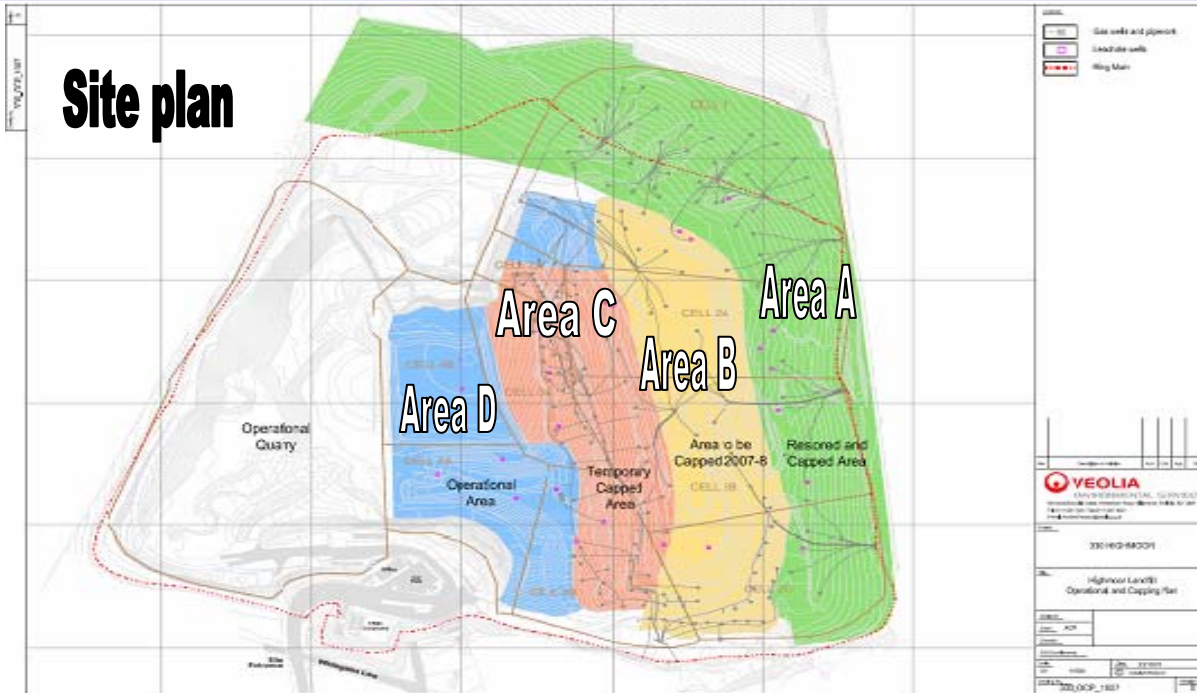


Complaint numbers were particularly high over the weekend of Sunday 13 April, 2008. There were no apparent problems with gas engines, flares or pipework. However, due to the lack of capping on the site the operators were unable to prevent gas escaping through the uncapped areas across the site at the end of the sunny, still day, as temperatures and pressure suddenly dropped.

## Update on current site operations

### Landfill Gas

- 11 new gas wells are currently being drilled on Cell 4A and 4B and will be connected into the extraction system to improve control of gas coming through the operational cell (**Area D**).
- Works to connect new deep gas wells in Phase 2 and 3 (**Area B**) is progressing well - another 6 wells have been connected in April.
- Veolia intend to install a "high temperature" flare to replace the temporary flare on site which presently burns the poor quality gas pulled from leachate chambers. This will improve gas control and the burn quality.
- 30 new "pin wells" (small, shallow sacrificial wells to take gas from problem areas) have been installed along the temporary waste slopes, to improve gas extraction (**Area C**).



### Capping

Progress with the capping on-site has been restricted by the bad weather and unfortunately, the extremely high winds experienced on the weekend of 15 March resulted in damage to 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of the cap. This was a major setback to the progress of the capping, and wet and windy weather since then has continued to restrict the capping plan.

### Leachate storage tank cover

A new odour control cover has been fitted to the leachate storage tank to minimise any potential emissions from the tank. The cover fully seals the tank and includes a carbon filter to remove any odours whilst the tank is being filled or leachate is being removed by tankers.

### Surface Water

New settlement lagoons and drainage channels have been constructed within the quarry area to remove suspended solids. A 'Siltbuster' Unit has been purchased to further filter surface water, prior to it being pumped into the newly constructed storage lagoon. The new surface water storage lagoon is now completed and is fully operational.

### Gas Compound

Infinis, who operate the gas compound, applied to us in April to vary their permit to install a fourth gas engine and a second gas flare. The extra flare is needed to provide backup in case the engines or main flare go off-line for any reason. Planning permission is required from Oldham MBC.

### Public meeting

We have been approached by local councillors to attend a public meeting in May on the situation at Highmoor. Given the performance at the site recently we agree that a public meeting will be of value to residents and we are happy to attend to answer any questions you have.

### Resident's Liaison Panel Meeting

Residents, Veolia staff and Environment Agency representatives had their regular meeting on 15 April 2008. Ian Craven, the landfill site manager gave an update on capping and gas extraction progress (summary above). If you have any issues you wish to raise about this site or would like a copy of the most recent minutes, you can contact local residents Tony Mather (Thurston Clough Area) 01457 870940; Peter Booth (Scouthead and Huddersfield Rd) 01457 870492 or Muriel Rowley (Doctor Lane Area) 01457 875396.

Thank you for taking the time to read the latest bulletin, as always if you have any queries that Veolia or Infinis cannot answer please do not hesitate to forward them to [Antony.Pool@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Antony.Pool@environment-agency.gov.uk)