



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Environment Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 12 February 2025

Landfill management in Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Overton - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement
Lead Director:	Dean Sargeant – Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services
Service Area:	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services
Report Author:	Adam Brookes – Service Delivery Manager: Highways, Engineering & Project Delivery
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 384000 Email: adam.brookes@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	SMT – 4 February 2025 Environment Scrutiny Committee – 12 February 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Environment Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1 Note the role of the council in landfill activity and the proactive and ongoing management of landfill operations across the borough;
- 1.2 Note progress and timescales in relation to the emerging Contaminated Land Strategy.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the management and monitoring of land fill operations across Telford and Wrekin.
- 2.2 This report also provides an update on the work currently underway to refresh the Contaminated Land Strategy.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Landfill is a one of the oldest and common forms of waste disposal. While a significant proportion of waste is recycled, treated or used for energy, in 2022 over 7% of local authority collected waste was sent to landfill¹. The UK household recycling rate is currently 43%² with Telford and Wrekin above the national average at 48%.
- 3.2 There are many landfill operations across the country; in Telford and Wrekin there are two active land fill sites in operation; one the east of the borough (Granville Woodhouse) at Redhill and the other in the centre of the borough (New Acres) in Trench Lock. Both sites are regulated by the Environment Agency by way of Environmental Permit; such permits contain conditions that control the operations carried out at the sites. As Planning Authority, Telford & Wrekin Council ensure both sites operate in accordance with conditions of planning which includes hours of operation, noise/dust monitoring and land restoration.
- 3.3 New Acres, located in Trench Lock, is managed by Michelmersh Brick (UK) Limited. The site is classified as an inert landfill, meaning it handles low risk non-hazardous waste that relates to the restoration of clay that is quarried for use in Blockley's bricks. This site was issued a waste permit in 2006 which is expected to expire in 2032. Should the mining of clay cease before this time, the council will be notified, and restoration of the site will start.
- 3.4 Granville Woodhouse landfill (known locally as Redhill Landfill) is an active landfill located off Grange Lane in Redhill, on the eastern side of the borough. This area has been an operational landfill since 1991 and since 2019 has been managed by Potters (Midlands) Ltd. The landfill receives a variety of domestic and commercial waste including non-hazardous biodegradable waste.
- 3.5 Active landfill operations can emit odours periodically with the main source being waste breaking down. At Granville Woodhouse landfill, the Environment Agency recognise that odour emanating from the site escalated in March 2024; in response the Environment Agency undertook odour monitoring in the community while working with the site operator to resolve the situation. In parallel, the council

¹ [Local authority collected waste management - annual results 2022/23 - GOV.UK](#)

² [UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK](#)

completed odour monitoring in the community with the results published on the council's web pages.

- 3.6 The Environment Agency agreed a corrective action plan with the site operator to improve landfill gas management and odour control. This was in parallel to ensuring permanent sealing (capping) of the waste which began in June 2024 and is now complete. Waste has continued to be deposited at the site in waste cells through 2024; these completed cells are now full of waste and the Environment Agency continues to oversee operations at the site while ensuring completed areas are permanently capped and gas management systems are operational and working effectively.
- 3.7 The operator is currently filling the second to last cell of the landfill. The next step will be starting the engineering works to prepare the final cell ready for filling.
- 3.8 Throughout 2024, the council worked with the Environment Agency and UK Health Security Agency to ensure resident concerns regarding odour from this site were heard and that action was being taken. In addition, the council organised a residents meeting in May 2024 that provided opportunity for residents to ask questions directly to the site operator, the Environment Agency and UK Health Security Agency.
- 3.9 In addition to active landfills there are many closed landfills across the country. Closed landfills are sites that historically have been used for waste disposal which are no longer used. These sites are managed and monitored by the landowner to ensure any risks to the environment or public associated with waste contained is mitigated. The Environment Agency regulate the management and monitoring of closed landfill sites and publish details of closed landfill sites on their website.
- 3.10 There are approximately 90 closed landfill sites that are known across the borough. A number are areas of land filled with inert materials, such as bricks, concrete and other construction materials which pre-date environmental regulations requiring waste permits. There are closed landfill sites within land owned by the Council and private landowners majority of which do not require on-going management or maintenance.
- 3.11 There are two known closed landfill sites in the Borough that are subject to on-going active management. One site, Candles Landfill, in the west of the borough in Little Wenlock, is a site owned and managed by Veolia and operated under licence from 1997 to 2015. This site is subject to on-going maintenance to manage landfill gases and leachate.
- 3.12 The second site, Stoneyhill, is a closed landfill site also in the west of the borough in Lightmoor. The site was operated by Shropshire County Council between 1985

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² [UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK](#)

to 1991 and was issued a waste disposal licence in 1984 to accept controlled waste. The controlled wastes were mainly domestic, commercial and industrial. Lesser amounts of other wastes such as medical, surgical and veterinary wastes were also permitted.

- 3.13 Ownership of Stoneyhill passed from Shropshire County Council to Telford & Wrekin Council in 1998. Telford & Wrekin Council own and manage the site and is supported by a specialist contractor who leads day to day management.
- 3.14 The council proactively manages the site with continuous monitoring throughout the year. The key elements to manage are methane gas and water which is known as 'leachate'. Landfill leachate is essentially surface water and ground water which mixes with the waste within the landfill. Both gas and leachate are collected through a series of complex wells and infrastructure across the site. The methane gas, generated from the decomposition process, is burned in a controlled method via a flare. The leachate is pumped separately and collected in a holding tank; this fluid is then continually circulated to remove dissolved methane gas contained within it. It is then tested and, once compliant, discharged under licence into the Severn Trent Water sewage system.
- 3.15 To be compliant for safe discharge into the sewage system, testing is undertaken to ensure quality control standards (set by Severn Trent Water) are met. This includes compliance with maximum limits of specific chemicals present in the liquid. The infrastructure on site ensures that both gas and leachate are managed in a controlled manner.
- 3.16 In managing Stoneyhill, the council undertakes regular and comprehensive testing to ensure compliance with environmental standards. Such testing includes but is not limited to:
- Weekly leachate testing prior to discharge into the sewage system (Severn Trent Water also undertake frequent testing);
 - Groundwater samples are taken from wells within the site and ponds to the north and east of the main site on a quarterly basis;
 - Gas analysis is carried out on a weekly basis;
 - A full round of gas monitoring is carried out around the perimeter of the landfill on a quarterly basis;
 - Tests for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) (industrial products or chemicals) is carried out annually
- 3.17 From the suite of testing completed, there has been no data which has presented cause for concern. In addition to the above, the council undertakes wider testing in nearby watercourses/bodies to test for chemicals and key indicators of possible

harm to the environment. Testing results to date have identified no contamination arising from the site.

3.18 Since closure, the former landfill area has naturally re-established itself which now supports numerous species of mammals, reptiles and birds.

3.19 To support with public knowledge and understanding of how the site is managed, the council has published information on dedicated web pages which includes background information as well as testing results. This page is regularly updated with testing information.

3.20 In 2008 following detailed assessment and review, the Environment Agency concluded that Stoneyhill closed landfill is not considered a harm to the environment or the public and therefore the site is not designated as contaminated land under the Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

3.21 Under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Local Authorities have a statutory duty to prepare, implement and keep under periodic review a Contaminated Land Strategy.

3.22 The purpose of a Contaminated Land Strategy is to meet the overall objective of the Governments policy on contaminated land and the Part 2A regime is:

- To identify and remove unacceptable risks to human health and the environment;
- To seek to ensure that contaminated land is made suitable for its current use;
- To ensure that the burdens faced by individuals, companies and society as a whole are proportionate, manageable and compatible with the principles or sustainable development

3.23 The council is currently reviewing and updating the 2013 Contaminated Land Strategy which contains information about land use characteristics of the Borough while setting out the council's approach to dealing with land contamination over the next 5 years.

3.24 Once approved, the refreshed Contaminated Land Strategy will be published on the council's website in summer 2025.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 The council is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment to ensure all neighbourhoods are a great place to live.

4.2 The council continues to work with partners such as the Environment Agency and UK Health Security Agency as part of its proactive management of operational and closed landfill sites. This ensures such operations are compliant with environmental legislation and that they remain low risk to the community and environment.

4.3 The council is currently refreshing the Contaminated Land Strategy in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This will bring together a five-year Contaminated Land Strategy with supporting action plan that will be refreshed on an annual basis.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 Working with regulatory partners, the council ensures land fill operations (whether open or closed) function in accordance with relevant legislation (environmental or planning) and industry best practice.

5.2 The council is required to prepare, implement and keep under periodic review a Contaminated Land Strategy. A refresh of the current strategy will bring together a five-year Contaminated Land Strategy complete with supporting action plan that will be refreshed on an annual basis.

6.0 Key Risks

6.1 There are risks associated with landfill sites but this is mitigated through well-established environmental legislation and industry best practice. Proactive management and monitoring of both open and closed land fill operations by specialist contractors ensures compliance and mitigates potential risks to the environment and community.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 Management of active and closed landfill sites supports the following priorities:

- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community;
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy;
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live;
- Our natural environment is protected, and the Council is taking a leading role in tackling the climate emergency

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, since 2009 the council has invested over £2m into Stoneyhill in infrastructure updates and general site management. The need for further capital

investment will be reviewed as required should the need to upgrade the infrastructure be required.

- 8.3 While the Environment Agency are the regulator of Redhill Landfill site, Telford & Wrekin Council commissioned odour monitoring within the local community with costs incurred being met through existing budgets. Review and update of the contaminated land strategy is also being met through existing budgets.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 Part 2A of the Environmental protection Act 1990 provides a means of dealing with unacceptable risks posed by land contamination to human health and the environment, and enforcing authorities should seek to find and deal with such land. Under Part 2A the starting point should be that land is not contaminated land unless there is reason to consider otherwise. Only land where unacceptable risks are clearly identified, after a risk assessment has been undertaken in accordance with statutory guidance, should be considered as meeting the Part 2A definition of contaminated land.
- 9.2 Enforcing authorities (such as the council) should seek to use Part 2A only where no appropriate alternative solution exists. The Part 2A regime is one of several ways in which land contamination can be addressed. Other legislative regimes may also provide a means of dealing with land contamination issues to include active land fill sites, such as building regulations, planning and environmental legislation. Frequently, active sites are operated under permit by the Environment Agency.
- 9.3 Under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Local Authorities are required to prepare, implement and keep under periodic review a Contaminated Land Strategy. This work is currently underway with approval anticipated in summer 2025.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 This report covers the whole Borough with all wards being affected.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The household recycling rate in Telford and Wrekin is above the England average and the council continues to encourage residents to maximise their recycling opportunity. While residents of Telford and Wrekin continue to play their part, nationally reducing waste and maximising recycling is an effective way to reduce the volume of material being disposed at landfill.
- 11.2 Working with regulatory partners, the council ensures land fill operations (whether open or closed) function in accordance with relevant legislation (environmental or planning) and industry best practice.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

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² [UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK](#)

12.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 The council ensures landfill operations (whether open or closed) function in accordance with relevant legislation (environmental or planning) and industry best practice. This is to minimise the possible impacts on the community and environment.

13.2 Climate change, particularly prolonged and more frequent rainfall, can impact on the operation and management of landfill sites – whether open or closed.

13.3 At Granville Woodhouse landfill, saturated ground has impacted on the ability for the operator to complete final capping works and installation of gas extraction equipment as originally planned. Such conditions have presented operational challenges which the operator continues to try and overcome.

13.4 Rainfall and saturated ground can also impact on closed landfill sites and the volume of leachate that needs to be extracted from sites. If required at Stoneyhill, the council will consider effective ways to manage the process of increased volumes of leachate should the need arise.

13.5 Once approved, a regular review and update of the Contaminated Land Strategy will ensure any possible impacts on the environment are effectively managed and mitigated.

14.0 Background Papers

Granville Woodhouse Landfill Information – Telford & Wrekin Council web pages:
[Granville landfill site, Redhill - Granville landfill site, Redhill - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

Granville Woodhouse Landfill Information – Environment Agency web pages:
[Granville Woodhouse Landfill Information Page - Environment Agency - Citizen Space](#)

Stoneyhill landfill site – Telford & Wrekin Council information web pages:
[Introduction - Stoneyhill landfill site - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

15.0 Appendices

None.

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Finance	07/02/2025	07/02/2025	MB
Legal	07/02/2025	07/02/2025	SH
Director	07/02/2025	07/02/2025	DS

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