

Keeping You Informed

July 2022

Our role is to protect and improve the environment so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of a clean, safe and healthy place to live

We are responsible for protecting the environment by regulating waste storage treatment and disposal

**This briefing will give you information and an update on the current situation regarding the regulation of Biowise Limited
EPR/PP3096ZA**

Odour Issues in Willerby/Kirk Ella/Cottingham

We have seen a marked increase in reports made to our incident line from 20 June 2022.

We sent officers out to the area and found the odour was originating from the restoration of the closed landfill operated by Dispit Limited.

Dispit Limited were blending and screening off specification compost with soil, as part of the closed landfills restoration. Our landfill team inspected the site and ensured the blending activity was stopped, landfill officers continue to work with Dispit Limited to ensure the restoration is managed in a way that minimises any potential odour impacts from the works.

Biowise Limited: Site Inspection

A site inspection was carried out at Biowise on 30th June 2022. During this inspection, Biowise was fully operational and treating green and food waste in the enclosed building and maturing the compost in the open. Wastes observed in the treatment building were correct and within the storage limits set out in Biowise's odour management plan. A new enclosure had been provided for an external leachate tank, we requested this during our last inspection, and it was found to be providing a good level of odour containment. The maturing composting operations were all under aeration except for one bay which in the process of being filled. The operations, quantities and conditions of the compost material were in line the requirements of the sites current permit and odour management plan.

Odour monitoring before and after this inspection found some faint compost odours downwind of the facility, these odours were localised, intermittent and typical of a residual background odour from a compliant industrial composting activity. Evidence from the site visit and off-site monitoring did not find any incorrect processing or mismanagement of waste material taking place.

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88

Biowise Limited: Best Available Techniques (BAT) Review

The permit review to incorporate the current best available techniques is progressing. The review has covered the following site operations relating to odour mitigation onsite:

- A review of the whole composting process to ensure all appropriate methods are in place to monitor the production of the compost to a product standard;
- Characterisation of the waste gas emissions from the outdoor compost storage and a quantitative impact of assessment of those emissions;
- A review of the odour mitigation requirements on the shredding and screening of the compost material;
- Review of odour mitigation for leachate storage and management to prevent /or minimise odour emissions;
- Procedures for the pre acceptance and rejection of unsuitable waste materials;
- Review of housekeeping measures – maintenance and cleaning schedules;
- Review of the aeration system, biofilter and scrubbing methods for the in-vessel composting area; and
- Review of the odour management plan.

Much of this work has been completed and we have recently notified Biowise Limited that we consider that the area of the site for maturing compost is not in compliance with the revised BAT conclusions, with respect to the reduction of odour emissions at the installation. The permit is still under review but we have notified Biowise Limited that the following measures are required:

- Use of semi-permeable membrane covers on potentially odorous, aerated static piles;
- Covering of vehicles transporting waste materials within the site and out of site;
- Increasing the residence time of waste in the IVC tunnels;
- Increased temperature monitoring in compost piles;
- Increased monitoring points of waste piles; and
- Reduction in the use of leachate on post sanitised material on site.

In relation to screening operations we have requested proposals with appropriate timescales for achieving compliance with BAT with respect to containment, collection and treatment of diffuse emissions from the screening operations currently undertaken externally on site.

We are expecting the operator to respond to these requirements towards the end of July and will provide a further update in early August.

All our correspondence with the operator related to the BAT review and permit variation is currently being updated and will available shortly via the citizen space link below.

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/hu10-6ts-biowise-limited/>

Health Concerns

Some incident reports received in recent weeks have expressed concerns over health and safety from odours being detected in and around Willerby, Kirk Ella and Cottingham. The main risk to humans from the composting process arises from the potential for elevated bioaerosols. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who are the leading authority on this matter, have found little evidence from studies that the composting operations make any major contribution to the overall bioaerosol concentrations at distances over 250m from source activities. Further information on bioaerosols can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (www.hse.gov.uk).

The Environment Agency is unable to advise on health matters, if residents have concerns regarding their health, they should seek professional medical advice.

Next Steps

We will continue to regulate Biowise in line with their current environmental permit conditions during the remainder of the permit review and decision-making process. We will continue to keep you informed regarding our regulation of the site, investigations of odour and the application and permit review process.

Other Sources of Odour



We continue to work with ERYC, who carry out their own visits to assess statutory nuisance. For issues relating to land spreading and/or other statutory nuisances please contact the Local Authority, East Riding County Council:

Tel: (01482) 393939

Website: www.eastriding.gov.uk/environment/pollution/air-pollution/smells-odours-and-dust/

Contact Us

General enquiries

PO Box 544
Rotherham
S60 1BY
United Kingdom

Email - enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Telephone 03708 506 506 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

Environment incident hotline Telephone (24 hour service)

0800 80 70 60

Floodline Telephone (24 hour service) 0345 988 1188

Type talk (for the hard of hearing) 0345 602 634

