



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Nigel Bowen
Chief Executive Officer
Red Industries
Borough House
Berkeley Court
Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 1TT

19th March 2021

Dear Mr Bowen

Open Letter: Significant Breach at Walley's Quarry Landfill

It is with regret that I write to you in these terms. I am writing following the Environment Agency's findings in their Compliance Assessment Report, and in the wake of the intolerable levels of odour in Newcastle in recent weeks, which would appear to be a direct result of the significant (CCS2) breach that the Environment Agency identified.

I also note the two other minor breaches the Environment Agency has recently identified, and therefore I am pleased that the EA will be closely monitoring your progress over the next seven days, and will make decisions about further action as necessary. I note that over the last two days I – and they – have continued to receive very many reports of strong levels of odour.

I also note Councillor Alan White's open letter to your company of 10th March, in which he deplored the condition of the public roads around the landfill, and stated that these "appear to be clear breaches of the planning conditions of your site". I concur with Cllr White's opinion, and trust that your company will make every effort to prevent a recurrence.

Yesterday evening's council meeting, and the associated evidence that was submitted to it, clearly demonstrates the significant negative impact that odours from your site are having on local residents, institutions, and businesses. This cannot continue.

Further, in the report of the Council's Scrutiny Review Committee, I was perturbed to read the detailed 16-paragraph description of your company's evasive and high-handed "engagement" with their process. I would encourage your company to start engaging more constructively with both the council and with local residents.

In light of all the above, but in particular the significant breach the Environment Agency identified, I would be most grateful to learn of what plans your company has to compensate local residents for your failings, and to make reparations to local institutions, such as schools.

I am also hugely concerned that local businesses, and particularly those in the hospitality sector, may face reduced demand when they re-open after Covid because the odour is directly affecting the town centre. I am sure your company will be taking advice as to how to address their potential claims.

I appreciate that you have only recently taken over as Chief Executive, and that you now have quite a lot on your plate. Not only do you have to deal with this serious breach, you will need to repair the corporate culture you inherited that enabled it to occur. But you will understand that I must speak up for my residents who have suffered, and are suffering, because of the actions and inactions of your company.

It is incumbent on you to set out, as soon as possible, the measures you will take to alleviate the odour that is blighting Newcastle-under-Lyme, and to explain what compensation you will be offering to my constituents in light of your company's recent multiple breaches.

I will be sharing this letter with the media and the local community, and I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Bell', written in a cursive style.

Aaron Bell MP
Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme