



Colours Dyers, update

For consideration by:

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

Date: 22 March 2022

Lead Director: Neighbourhood and Environmental Services

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Saffron
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1. Purpose of report

To give an update on a factory that was called to Scrutiny by means of the formal petition process in relation to Colours Dyers, Greenhithe Road, Leicester.

2. Summary

A formal petition was brought to the health and well being scrutiny commission in September 2021. This petition received a formal response from the Commission; however, further questions were raised in relation to health implications caused by the factory, Colours Dyer, Greenhithe Road, Leicester.

3. Recommendation

To await the joint site inspection by the EA and LCC, following which options for further assessment will be clearer. These should include an update on the OMP (Odour Management Plan) and any further stack monitoring.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

This premises has been a dyeworks for a long time and has been the source of odour and noise complaints over the years. The company falls under the remit of the EA in terms of operation under the PPC Act 1999 and has an A1 permit to operate. This permit contains a number of conditions that the operators must comply with, and these include noise, odour, water, and energy efficiency.

Figure 1 shows the location of Colours Dyers, on Greenhithe Road, off Aylestone Road. As is the case with most dyeworks, it is located next to the river soar, and also within a mixed industrial and residential locality.

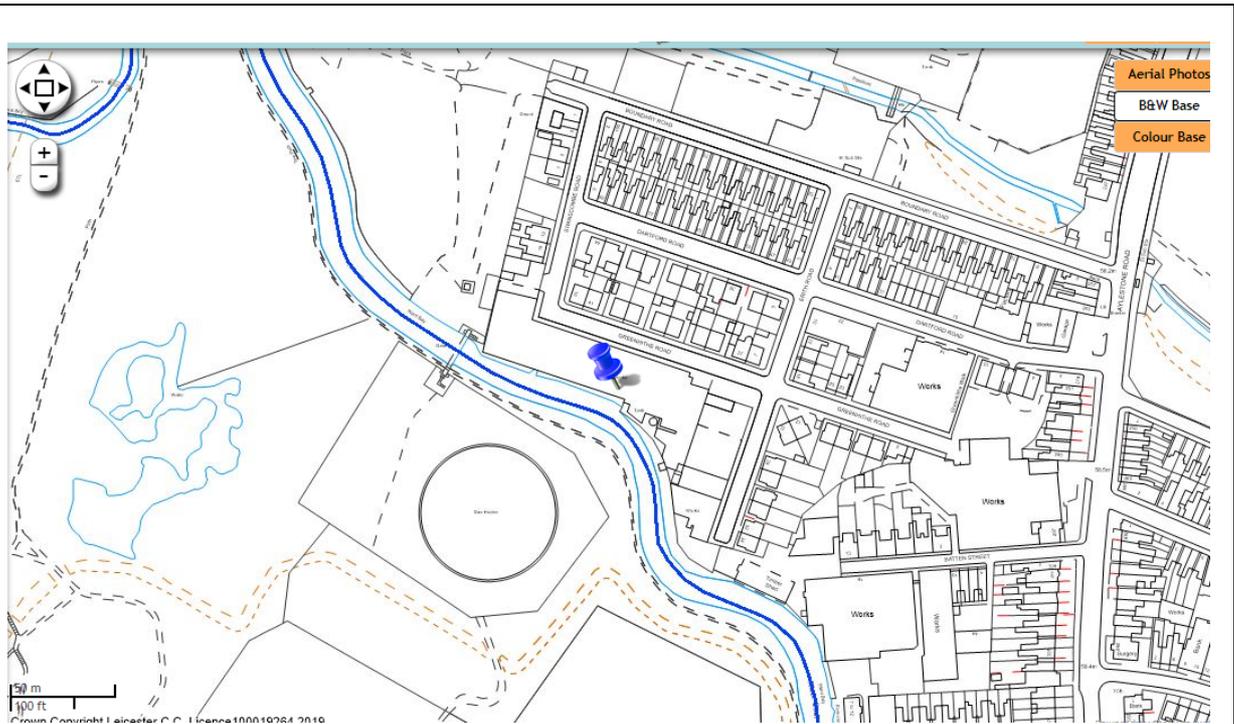


Figure 1 – Location of Colours Dyers

Following the FOIA request and health scrutiny questions in autumn 2021, more information has been requested of the EA in relation to this site.

The formal response from the EA related to three main areas:

1. Current Permit

Colours Dyers and Finishers Ltd (Colours) were issued with an environmental permit in 2003 for the pre-treating and dyeing of fabrics and textiles in a plant with a treatment capacity of more than 10 tonnes per day.

The environmental permit has a number of conditions, which are designed to protect the environment and human health and minimise the impact of the plant. The permit does not contain any emission limits on the chimneys (stacks), because these were deemed low risk. The standards under which the plant was permitted at that time were standards adopted in the UK and across the European Union. All Textile plants were permitted under these standards. Whilst the standard did not require Colours to monitor their emissions, The EA at the time put an Improvement Condition in the permit, requiring Colours to undertake some monitoring of their stenter stack. Following the monitoring, the EA then required Colours to undertake a risk assessment, using that data.

The stenter stack was monitored for benzene in 2006, as an indicator of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). When the benzene results were entered into the risk assessment, the conclusion was that the impact from the stenter stack was 'insignificant'. No Environmental Quality Standard (EQS), Environmental Assessment Levels (EAL) or Statutory Emission Limit Values (ELV) were breached.

2. Future updates to standards for textile sector

The new European Union standards for Textile plants, which are likely to be implemented by the UK do place emission limits on air emissions from dye houses. The standards are still in draft and it's unclear if Colours will be required to monitor their emissions and be subject to an emission limit.

Notwithstanding the above, we feel that it would be useful to carry out a further monitoring exercise of the stenter stack at Colours, given that it's been 15 years since the last one. As I said before, there isn't a condition in the permit requiring Colours to undertake monitoring. If they are unwilling to do some monitoring voluntarily, we will look at the regulatory options available to us to get some monitoring carried out.

3. Complaints and assessment of odour

In the last two years, prior to September 2021 we received 4 complaints from residents about the smell from Colours. Since September we have received 8 complaints from residents, as well as press interest from the Leicester Mercury and letters from the local MP, Jon Ashworth and the Deputy Mayor of Leicester City Council, Adam Clarke.

We carried out an on-site inspection of Colours on 17 September this year, which included undertaking some odour monitoring in the streets around the site. During the odour monitoring we did experience odour from Colours. The intensity of an odour is measured using a scale from 0-6, with 0 being 'not perceptible' to 6 being 'offensive'. Our officers described the odour from Colours as being 'distinct' with an intensity of 3 on the odour scale. Officers noted that the odour was transient; noticeable when the stenter stack from Colours was emitting a coloured plume. When the stack emission was not visible, the odour dissipated.

4. Assessment of pollution from the site

As detailed above, the site operates under an Environmental Permit, issued by the Environment Agency. There are a large number of different processes that require permits, and these are undertaken using the specific 'sector guidance notes'. These guidance notes use current scientific knowledge and also the impact of any pollutant on different receptors, in this case the human receptor. In the case of large processes like this one, the guidance includes emissions to air, water, land, energy efficiency, and other health and safety issues.

Prior to the granting of a permit the company are required to submit plans for all areas of the proposed permit. In the case of emissions to air, samples will be taken from the chimney to ascertain levels of pollution. These are then compared to the objective levels stated in the guidance. The EA use modelling software to predict the impact of these emission, and in the case of Colours Dyers, this modelling gave a 'low impact' likelihood. This outcome meant that the company didn't have to conduct regular stack monitoring, due to the low levels of pollution emitted from the chimney.

Future proposals

- Joint site inspection to be undertaken by EA and LCC. (Postponed from the 11 March 2022 due to EA Officers sickness)
- Following this meeting, more information will be provided in terms of the OMP (Odour Management Plan), updates to the sector guidance and thus the permit, and also whether further stack monitoring is proposed.
- LCC to gather information in terms of costs of undertaking this monitoring (it is noted that LCC do not have jurisdiction in this matter, as the process is permitted by the EA)
- Joint Comms between EA and LCC in relation to pollution concerns and reporting mechanisms.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no immediate financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report. The cost associated with any potential future monitoring will need to be considered as and when such proposals are brought forward.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

Potential difficulties in undertaking stack monitoring, as EA are the regulating Authority, and they should lead on requesting this work be undertaken.

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

None

5.4 Equalities Implications

There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the report as it is for update.

Equalities Officer Ext 37 4148

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None