Augean

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2018

Amendment to ENRMF Development Consent Order Approved

Due to changes in the waste market in recent years and an increase in methods of treating and recovering waste materials at installations like the Soil Treatment and Recovery Facility sited within the East Northants Resource Management Facility (ENRMF), Augean applied for an amendment to its 2013 Development Consent Order (DCO) to allow an increased throughput to the plant in February 2018.

A notification approving the amendment has been received from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirming that he has made an Order to amend the 2013 Development Consent Order with effect from 22 June 2018.

This allows Augean to increase the volume of wastes that can be imported into the Soil Treatment and Recovery Facility to 200,000 tonnes per annum. There will be no change to the overall input rate to the ENRMF as a whole, which will remain at 250,000 tonnes per annum.

Increased use of the Soil Treatment and Recovery Facility means that more waste will be treated and recovered in a beneficial way and less waste will be directly landfilled. This results in a more sustainable approach by reducing any polluting potential the waste may have and making the most efficient use of resources both through the recovery of materials and preservation of the landfill capacity for waste materials for which there is no alternative other than disposal.

Species Rich Grassland at Port Clarence

As well as being home to the landfill and Waste Recovery Park, the Port Clarence site is also home to some species rich habitats for a diverse range of flora and fauna.

In the southern part of the site are areas of grassland known as Slag Grassland, which are very rich in lime. Many varieties of vegetation thrive in this kind of environment, from mosses and lichens to herbs and grasses. Wildflowers are also a prominent feature ranging from the relatively common, such as bird's-foot-trefoil, to rarer species such as the northern marsh orchid and fragrant orchid. This in turn provides an important habitat for many birds, insects and butterflies especially. In particular, species such as the dingy skipper, grayling, small heath and wall butterflies, which have otherwise declining populations, are flourishing on the Slag Grassland.

Amazingly, these areas owe their origins and biodiversity just as much to industry as to Mother Nature. As part of the steel making process once very common in the area, blast furnaces produced lime-based wastes which were historically used as infill in these areas of the site. Because this waste was free draining, rich in lime but poor in nutrients, it unintentionally created conditions that are very similar to calcareous grassland, found naturally over limestone or chalk rock, and so supports the same types of species.

Annual ENRMF Open Day in October

This October, the East Northants Resource Management Facility (ENRMF) will once again be welcoming visitors from the local community so that they could see for themselves how a modern, engineered landfill site is operated and monitored as well as seeing the state-of-the-art laboratory and nationally significant soil treatment plant.

The Open Day will be held on Saturday 13 October 2018 between 9am and 12pm. We realise that not everyone who may want to visit the site will be able to come on that day, so we would like to remind you that Augean has an open-door policy at all of its sites and a visit can be arranged at any time throughout the year, by appointment, with the site manager.

Pedestrian Safety

Augean makes health and safety a priority on all our sites to ensure the well-being of our employees and visitors to a site. We actively want to challenge and change the perception of an industry that historically has a poor record and reputation in this respect.

An area we have been focussing on recently is the interaction between pedestrians and moving vehicles, as the potential for collisions is a significant concern. Surveys have been recently conducted at our sites at Paisley, Avonmouth, Port Clarence and East Kent to identify and resolve potential hot spots with higher risk for both pedestrians and site traffic.

We did not want to impose blanket rules across all sites as this would not necessarily solve issues on all sites. Instead, we looked at areas and tasks carried out specific to each site that were of higher risk, so that problems could be looked at and addressed in a tailor-made manner. For example, you would think that a one-way system would reduce risk. However, on one site it was identified that a one-way system was potentially causing more risk by taking traffic through a congested area that a two-way system would make unnecessary.

An important part of improving health and safety is the ability to listen and then acting on the information or concern that is raised. The knowledge and experience of everyone at Augean is invaluable. We continuously encourage people to think about how we can improve the way things are done, whether it is through a near miss or by observing when something has not been done well and, indeed, recognising and sharing when something has been done better. We also want everyone, regardless of seniority, to feel empowered enough to intervene when they think that something is not being done safely or correctly.

The Bioremediation Process at Port Clarence

At the Port Clarence Waste Recovery Park, we have permission to use a number of innovative techniques to treat waste materials. It is now just over a year since the installation of a bioremediation plant, the latest process to be added to the Waste Recovery Park's capabilities. Bioremediation is a waste management technique to remove contaminants from waste material, in this case from soils. The contaminants are mainly organic compounds known as hydrocarbons, which can include things like solvents, oils and petroleum.

Because the contaminants are organic in nature they can be used by other organisms as a form of fuel and energy. Bioremediation works in exactly this way, by the controlled introduction of naturally occurring bacteria to the soils which then essentially 'eat' the contaminants and render them either less or completely harmless, by breaking them down into their component parts. The careful control of heat and the levels of oxygen and moisture help to maintain the optimum conditions for the introduced bacteria to thrive and speed up the process.

Bioremediation reduces the hazardous content of the material making it potentially suitable for recycling and reuse. Up to 100 per cent of contaminants can be removed from soils. This can divert material which would otherwise be landfilled or, if landfilling is still needed, the material is less harmful in nature than it was. This is complementary to the soil washing facility at ENRMF, which can treat a broad range of contaminants and allows for the recovery and reuse of up to 80 per cent of sand and gravel from contaminated soils.

The Waste Hierarchy

The central role of the waste management industry is to protect the environment and human health through the safe and responsible management of wastes that we collectively produce as a society. As a company we take pride in our excellent compliance practices to ensure the appropriate recycling, reuse, treatment, resource recovery and ultimately disposal of hazardous waste streams in a safe and efficient manner.

Where hazardous wastes arise, the producers are required by legislation and best practice guidance to manage that waste by exploring options for treatment or disposal in an appropriate manner in accordance with the waste hierarchy. This means that they must explore ways to avoid creating waste in the first place. Then, in order of most desirable outcomes, producers must seek to minimise, reuse, recycle or treat the waste. Even after the application of the hierarchy principles there will still be significant volumes of residual waste which have to be disposed of through the last option of landfill.

The Augean Community Fund

Many communities frequently have a clear vision for projects or facilities that would benefit their own and the wider community. However, realising these visions is often dependent upon raising or obtaining enough funding to make them a reality. For many years, the Augean Community Fund has been helping to do this within a 10 mile radius of ENRMF in Northamptonshire and Thornhaugh Landfill near Peterborough.

This is a selection of projects, large and small, that have recently benefitted from a grant:

Reading Room, Bainton

The Reading Room in Bainton provides a focal point for the village and is used for a variety of activities. Built in 1910, the centenarian roof of the Reading Room required refurbishment which was achieved through a grant of over £23,000.

Molly's Field, Empingham

Opened in 2008, the recreation ground in Empingham known as Molly's Field has been further enhanced with a grant of just over £13,000 for additional play equipment.

Village Hall, Glapthorn

The kitchen of the Village Hall in Glapthorn benefitted from £12,500 for complete refurbishment. Work has been completed and it looks very smart now!

Bellringers, Barrowden

£1,000 helped ring the changes for the Barrowden Bellringers, allowing them to replace worn bell ropes and sallies with new complete ropes.

St Peter & St Paul, Exton

A grant of £15,000 allowed a disused outbuilding at St Peter & St Paul in Exton to be refurbished to provide a toilet and kitchenette facilities.

St John the Baptist, Harringworth

The Grade I listed church of St John the Baptist in Harringworth received £5,750 towards work on the roof.

Ferry Meadows Country Park

£10,000 was awarded to the Nene Park Trust to help with the purchase of a new Polaris off-road vehicle, to help keep the Ferry Meadows Country Park litter free.

Cricket Club, Benefield

In addition to a previous award to extend and refurbish the Cricket Club building, a further grant of £7,800 was made to improve other facilities available.

GrantScape

Augean PLC
COMMUNITY FUND

The Augean Community Fund is managed by Grantscape, with the aid of volunteers from the local community who decide which grants are made. If you have an idea for a community project, or an existing project that needs help bringing it to completion, please contact Grantscape for an informal chat and see if it may qualify.

Please contact: Karen Roberts,
Grantscape, Office E, Whitsundoles, Broughton Road, Salford, Milton Keynes MK17 8BU
Email: karen.roberts@grantscape.org.uk Tel: 01908 247638

Creating Special Places for Wildlife

In 2013 a mitigation area with new ponds was specially constructed at the Thornhaugh Landfill site to create an alternative habitat that would allow the translocation of a population of Great Crested Newts, as their existing breeding ponds needed to be infilled to allow the continuation of work on the site.

In total, over 1,600 Great Crested Newts and other amphibians were trapped in and around their original breeding ponds and then rehomed in the new mitigating ponds. While the initial relocation was a great success, it was important that monitoring surveys were made in subsequent years to ensure that the Great Crested Newts continued to be present and thriving on the site.

We are very pleased to say that these ponds currently support amphibian populations that are of importance at a Northamptonshire County level, and not just of Great Crested Newts, but also Palmate and Smooth Newts.

The new ponds were purposely located next to the publicly accessible Bedford Purlieus National Nature Reserve, an area of ancient woodland which is a haven for a variety of plants, animals and insects, in order to compliment and add to the existing biodiversity and its enjoyment.

Annual Rhyne Clean Out

Since the time of the Romans the marshy margins of the Severn Estuary have been drained and useful dry land reclaimed. In the South West this was often achieved by encircling wetland with deep ditches into which the water from the enclosed area would drain, leaving it relatively dry. Our Avonmouth site is located on just this kind of land reclaimed from the estuary and with just such a ditch on the site boundary.

Locally these ditches are called a Rhyne, although in nearby Gloucestershire and South Wales they are also called a Rhine and Reen respectively. Despite the variation in spelling they are all pronounced 'rin'.

Keeping the Rhyne clear and free flowing used to be essential in order to keep the reclaimed land dry. These days the Rhyne at Avonmouth is primarily used for emergency storm water and fire water storage, so it is still preferable to keep it as clear as possible, a task that we undertake on an annual basis.

Where Does the Name Augean Come From?

Since Augean started in 2004, we have often been asked about the meaning or origins of the company name. Frequently, it has been assumed that we are French. Our headquarters have always been in Wetherby, Yorkshire, and we have sites located throughout the UK, from the Shetland Isles in the north to Kent in the south. We don't have any sites in France and we are not French!

To get to the origins of our name, you need to look further than across the English Channel and go to Greece. More specifically Ancient Greece and the time of myths, gods and heroes. Indeed, it involves the story of one hero in particular: Herakles, or Hercules as he was called by the Romans and how he is more commonly known today.

According to the legend, Hercules was given twelve tasks to complete; the famous Twelve Labours of Hercules. The fifth of these tasks was to clean in a single day the stables of King Augeas' numerous livestock - the Augean Stables – which had not been cleared in over thirty years. The task was not just meant to be unpleasant but also demeaning to the great hero. However, combining his strength and his intelligence, Hercules dug channels that diverted two rivers, the Alpheus and Peneus, through the Augean Stables, which washed all the filth away within the allotted time.

The cleaning of the Augean Stables was a large task that couldn't be ignored but, by inaction, was a situation that would only get worse and therefore deemed too difficult. Hence it became a Herculean task. Inspired by Hercules, in the face of a seemingly impossible and unpleasant task, Augean strives to deal with the society's more difficult to manage wastes that our modern society produces with the same Herculean diligence, intelligence and innovation.

If you have any comments or concerns regarding one of our sites or if you would like to arrange a site visit, please get in touch with the relevant site contact from the list below.

Aberdeen
Simon Gibb Tel: 01224 719200

Avonmouth
Tim Young Tel: 0117 9820303

East Kent
Andy Scorer Tel: 01304 450010

ENRMF / Thornhaugh
Simon Moyle Tel: 01780 444900

Paisley
Gary Richards Tel: 0141 8875689

Port Clarence Landfill
Terry Blachard Tel: 01642 546836

Port Clarence Waste Recovery Park
Steven Craggs Tel: 01642 546836