

Press release: North East man fined for permit breach

A Teesside man has been fined hundreds of pounds and ordered to pay thousands of pounds in costs after breaching an environmental permit and then failing to comply with an enforcement notice in Middlesbrough.

Fazel Hussain, 52, of Yarm Road in Stockton-on-Tees, appeared at Teesside Magistrates' Court on Monday 11 February where he pleaded guilty to both offences.

He was charged with breaching his permit for M&M Autos at Snowdon Road in Middlesbrough, and failing to comply with an enforcement notice to make improvements to the site.

He was fined £800, ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £80 and costs of £5,000.

Matthew Treece, prosecuting on behalf of the Environment Agency, told the court that Environment Agency officers visited the site – which was a mechanic business which also dealt with scrap vehicles and oil contaminated vehicles parts – on 9 March 2017.

Number of issues at the site

They noticed a number of issues at the site, including: a damaged concrete surface and no containment bund, meaning any fluids from end of life vehicles would run from the site on to the road outside, there was no drainage system, and batteries and waste oil were being stored inappropriately.

There was evidence of recent and long term oil spills which hadn't been cleaned up.

The Environment Agency sent a report of their visit to Hussain, telling him what action needed to be carried out to bring the site back into compliance. There were seven actions to complete by April 2017.

On 5 May, 2017, the Environment Agency returned to the site, meeting with Hussain and another man who was managing the site on his behalf. The various improvements had not been completed.

A month later an Enforcement Notice was served with three requirements – namely to appoint a Technically Competent Manager by 1 July, repair the impermeable concrete surface and create a bund, and install a sealed drainage system, both by 30 November, 2017.

On 4 December 2017 the Environment Agency visited the site again to find the issues had still not been rectified. There was again evidence of oil spillages that has not been cleaned up.

Important that sites abide by permit conditions

Paul Whitehill, Enforcement Team Leader for the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

Environmental permits are in place to protect the environment and our communities, and Hussain showed repeated offending over an extended period of time.

It's important those processing scrap vehicles abide by the permit conditions to ensure oil and other harmful substances don't enter into the ground, impacting on the environment, and includes the need for specific storage and disposal of fluids.

We hope this sends out the message to others that we take permit breaches seriously and will take the appropriate action.