

**West's Road RDF & Waste Management
Community Reference Group
AOC
15th Meeting
Final Notes
9 December 2015
Conference Rooms C & D**

Present:

Jacqui Scott - representing the residents in the precinct
Karen Hucker – community representative
Harry Van Moorst – WREC representative
Julian Menegazzo – adjoining landowner representative
Michelle Lee – Planner, Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group (MWRRG)
John Faranda – Werribee South Ratepayers Association representative
David Suder – Director Infrastructure, City of Wyndham
Simon Clay – Manager Refuse Disposal Facility
Bruce Turner – Independent Chair

Visitors:

Hayley Jarvis – Team Leader Waste Strategy, City of Wyndham
Sarah McDonald - Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group (MWRRG)

Apologies/ absent:

Cr Peter Maynard – Mayor, Councillor, City of Wyndham
Cr Bob Fairclough – Councillor, City of Wyndham
Peter Haddow – Community representative
Kimi Pellosis – Community representative
Lindsay Swinden – Community representative
Elio Comello – Coordinator Strategic Planning City of Wyndham

The meeting commenced at 4:00 pm. No conflicts of interest were declared

1. Welcome and Introductions

Bruce welcomed Simon Clay the new manager for the RDF.

2. Notes and actions from the previous meeting

Harry requested a correction to item 3(c) Update on Waste to Energy Discussion, namely that Waste to Energy is a replacement to landfill rather than a complement to landfill.

Bruce ran through actions from the previous meeting:

Action M14-2.1 Council to seek EPA guidance on what material the maximum approved height of the RDF includes and report at the next meeting.

Clarification was circulated by Simon Clay prior to the meeting which confirmed that the 44 m AHD was inclusive of capping material.

Action M14-2.2 Finalised notes of the previous meeting, including the notes of the CRG workshop conducted by Michelle, to be published on Council's website.

A new action was identified in relation to the Community reference Group page on the Wyndham City Council website which is now out of date.

Action M15-2.1 Update the CRG page on the WCC web site

3. Membership renewal

David summarised the changes to the Terms of Reference which includes a three year membership on the CRG. This means a third of members need to be replaced each year. There is a currently 1 vacant community position. In addition Karen agreed to step down and renominate.

John Faranda has agreed to step down as one of the community/business group representatives.

Clarification was provided that resigning members can renominate for a further term on the CRG.

Action M15-3.1 WCC to send a letter to each member of the CRG confirming their term and expiry date.

There was a discussion about the timing for having new members in place and whether it would be possible to have the new members appointed by the first meeting of each year. David reminded the CRG that the appointment of members to the CRG requires a councillor resolution. It was therefore agreed that the process of recruiting new members should start in late January, with a view to council endorsement in March for appointment in April 2016.

Action M15-3.2 Simon to check with WCC Communications Team about getting a call for expressions of interest for new nominations in the January newsletter.

4. Waste management and resource recovery in general

4a. Update on Council's waste strategy

Hayley provided an update on the development of the waste strategy including that a draft consultation paper was going to the next council meeting for approval with the expectation it would be available for public review and comment from mid-January 2016. The consultation paper currently contains approximately 30 questions on which WCC is seeking public feedback.

There was a general discussion about the height of the RDF and whether that was addressed in the draft strategy. John mentioned that the RDF was starting to look unsightly from the highway.

4b. Waste to Energy

There was no discussion on this item at the meeting.

5. Strategic planning context

5a. MWRRG Implementation Plan and Local Buffer Support Project

Michelle Lee provided an update on the Draft MWRRG Implementation Plan and talked to the papers that were circulated at the meeting.

The key points were:

- The key opportunities are in food waste, plastic, paper and cardboard
- The recent market assessment exercise has indicated both a strong interest in resource recovery and an intent to try and reduce reliance on landfill
- The plan will define hubs more including what is the role of a hub
- Food waste solutions can involve both centralised approaches (e.g. kerbside collection and processing) and decentralised approaches (e.g. the Melbourne City Council food project)

Karen asked how many of the local government customers of the RDF have a green bin service. Of the eleven local government customers of the RDF (including Wyndham City Council) one council has a compulsory green bin service, six have an optional green bin service, and four do not have a green bin service (although three of them do have a free collection service available).

Harry stated that he agrees with the majority of the objectives in the implementation plan but has some concerns about the way hubs have been determined. Harry mentioned that there possible needs to be two more landfills outside the urban growth boundary and that landfill may well be appropriate for rehabilitation of quarries, however he expressed particular concern about:

- The contingency around having only three large putrescible landfills
- The concentration of market power and creation of monopolies

Julian asked whether WCC was undercutting other landfills. David replied that we didn't know as we didn't have any information on competitors cost and pricing structures. This led onto a general discussion of landfill supply, demand and cost structures and the impact on landfill gate fees.

Sarah McDonald then provided an update on the local buffer support project. This project is still in its early stages and is being run on behalf of the Environment Portfolio to manage separation around waste and resource recovery facilities and sensitive land uses.

The Land Use Planning System has policy statements about protecting buffers but planning schemes haven't always been able to adequately address this. The Brooklyn Greens redevelopment adjacent to a former landfill in Cranbourne and the subsequent Auditor General's report was a major catalyst for this project.

EPA has current buffer distances for landfills but they haven't made it into planning schemes or land use zoning. EPA has also increased the buffer from 200m to 500m over time. In addition local planning schemes don't adequately define buffer and separation distances. Planning Scheme

Overlays can be used to control development but not to control use which can create some confusion and difficulties.

Harry made the comment that engagement with the community seemed to be a missing piece and that there was a lack of trust in EPA.

5b. RDF Buffer Study

Elio Comello was not available for the meeting but provided an update on the Wyndham Vale Buffer Study for the meeting. Key points are:

- The Wyndham Vale Buffer Study which was commissioned by Wyndham City Council to inform the future planning of land recently included in the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) along the municipality's western growth front, has been completed and submitted to the Environment Protection Authority. The study, which was conducted as an environmental audit under Section 53V of the Environment Protection Act 1970, will help to determine appropriate buffer / separation distances around existing and proposed quarries, landfill and organic treatment sites located along the municipality's western UGB.
- A copy of the report is available at http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/building_planning/strategic/policy/current_policy_strategy_development/wyndham_vale_buffer_study
- The general conclusions drawn from the study are as follows:
 - That the Wyndham Refuse Disposal Facility requires a larger separation distance to future urban encroachment than the 500m minimum default buffer currently prescribed by Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Policy Guidelines.
 - That the findings of the audit report justify the recommendation of the Logical Inclusion Advisory Committee that future zoning of land around the Wyndham RDF should be employment-industrial up to the alignment of the future Ison Road/Westbrook Drive road reservation; and to the edge of the current employment-industrial zone proposed on the northern side of the Geelong-Melbourne rail line as shown in the West Growth Corridor Plan.
 - That the current 500m minimum default buffers around existing and future quarries along the UGB (i.e. Sites B to G) are adequate for quarrying activities. However, none of the sites immediately abutting the Western UGB would be suitable for future putrescible landfill sites given the urban encroachment to come from the development of future adjacent PSP areas or environmental considerations associated with the Federally protected Western Grassland Reserve
- Notification about completion of the study has been provided by letter to affected land owners with an invitation to meet with council officers to discuss the findings of the audit report.
- A report for council is currently being prepared on the most appropriate planning instruments available to support the buffer separation distances recommend in the report. This report is expected to be presented to council early in 2016.

A general discussion on the outcomes of the buffer study noted that the buffer is on privately owned land. Julian raised that as an owner of part of the buffer he was very interested in what the buffer could be used for and noted that industrial usage may well be appropriate. However Julian also highlighted his concern that planning tools were potentially being used to devalue land by zoning to

industrial rather than residential. This was particularly in relation to the land from Browns Rd to Ison Rd road reservation. Julian also mentioned that he hadn't received direct notification from Council about the study finalisation.

Action M15-5.1 Ensure Julian Menegazzo receives a letter from Planning about the Buffer Study

6. RDF Update

a. Landfill gas management update

Works to address landfill gas emissions was summarised briefly as installation of additional gas extraction bores, placement of additional intermediate capping material on parts of the old cells and placing clay material on the batters of Cell 4A.

b. Clarification of approved maximum height

The maximum height of 44 m AHD was confirmed as including rehabilitation and capping material. Julian asked a question about whether the 44 m height limit was inclusive of the vegetation silhouette. The EPA requirements are clear that this height refers to the soil or surface height of the cell.

c. Landfill Signage

The sign on Manor Rd still refers to the tip and is yet to be changed (M14-6.1).

d. Phytocaps

The following was provided in response to Harry's questions from the previous meeting.

The phytocap trial area has now been modified and will involve an area of approximately 1400 m² involving:

- One plot with a lysimeter and a capillary break
- A control plot with capillary break but no lysimeter, and
- A control plot without a capillary break

The trial will commence in mid-2016 and will run for a period of 2-3 years in order to validate the water balance model and be confident that the proposed capping meets EPA requirements.

What contingency plans are in place?

Contingency events that have been considered are the proposed responses are summarised below:

Event	Contingency
Poor establishment of vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation will be planted as tube stock • Provide supplementary water as required • Re-establish vegetation combined with intensive management • Select other species
Vegetation not accessing deep moisture	Excavate the cap adjacent to the trial area to investigate potential physical or chemical causes of limited root growth
Phytocap fails to meet BPEM by 1 order of magnitude	Alter vegetation mix to ones with a higher water use
Phytocap fails to meet BPEM by 1-3 orders of magnitude	Plant additional small trees and shrubs
Phytocap fails to meet BPEM by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase cap thickness by 0.3-0.5 metres

more than 3 orders of magnitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate other cap designs
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What plans are in place to protect the landfill between now and when the permanent phytocap is installed (including while the vegetation grows)?

The cap performs 2 main purposes:

1. To reduce the infiltration of rainfall into the landfill area which results in leachate at the bottom of the landfill cell
2. To reduce emissions of landfill gas through the surface of the landfill to below EPA limits (200 parts per million for intermediate capping and 100 ppm for final capping)

The landfill will be protected by:

- Continuing to monitor surface gas emissions on a bi-annual basis and addressing any high gas readings by a combination of: installing additional gas extraction wells; placing additional intermediate capping material; or placing additional mulch material over the intermediate capping to reduce drying and cracking. All of these methods have been used in combination to reduce surface emissions from Cells 1B, 2A, 2B and 3.
- Continuing to pump leachate into 1 of 2 leachate evaporation dams and monitor leachate levels in the base of all cells on a monthly basis.
- Construct an additional leachate dam in 2016 to provide additional storage and evaporation capacity

What impact does the phytocap have on the ability to capture methane?

The intermediate capping of 500 mm (minimum) of compacted clay remains in place and the phytocap is built on top of this. The phytocap system means the landfill gas system is easier to manage as gas wells and related infrastructure do not have to be integrated with a synthetic liner (which requires welding, joining, leak testing and ongoing maintenance). The landfill gas system then needs to be balanced so that it does not over extract and then draw air back into the landfill.

What progress has been made on the establishment of the 5 acre trial plot?

The proposed trial plot has been reduced in size to enable construction to be undertaken in a reasonable time and to match to trial area with the availability of required resources (suitable soil/fill material).

A concept design has been prepared and approved in principle by EPA. EPA has requested that the plans be approved by an auditor prior to construction commencing. Construction is currently planned for March 2016 with planting in April and May.

e. Future Works Approval

Simon briefly covered that Council was currently in the initial stages of preparing a Works Approval application to submit to EPA to allow landfilling beyond the currently constructed cell (Cell 4C). Consultation with the community would be a major component of the works approval.

It was recommended that the district advisory committees and portfolio groups could be one mechanism to engage segments of the community.

7. Members report back

Julian reported that odours had been detected at his residence on a number of occasions and the dates had been passed onto Simon for investigation. Julian also mentioned the German VDI scale for measurement of odour intensity.

Action M15-7.1 Simon to investigate the VDI scale for measuring odour intensity.

Harry raised the Annual Performance Statement submitted by Council to EPA and noted that page 14 said "relatively minor impact ... confined within the boundary" in reference to impacts on groundwater. Harry asked what does this mean and asked if the CRG could be provided with the monitoring data upstream and downstream of Cherry Creek.

Action M15-7.2 Item to be included in agenda for the next meeting

8. Communications

No additional items discussed.

9. Other business

The CRG would like to consider the RDF targets that are proposed in the draft Waste Strategy.

Action M15-9.1 Item to be included in the agenda for the next meeting

10. Next meeting

The next meeting is at 4:00 to 7:00 pm on Wednesday 10 February 2016.

The Meeting closed at 7:00 pm