

# Council has long-term zero landfill program

ARMIDALE Dumaresq Council plans to reduce the volume of waste to its new landfill site by 80 per cent over the next decade.

Mayor Brian Chetwynd said the council's ultimate aim was zero landfill.

"The way things are going that will be achievable," he said.

"Household recycling has increased by 50 per cent in the last four years and industrial waste is being recycled at similar rates.

"We have achieved the best recycling record of any council in the State in our division and the momentum is increasing."

Cr Chetwynd said tenders had been called for hydrological and geological testing of the proposed landfill site 12km east of Armidale on Waterfall Way as the first stage of an extensive environmental

impact study.

If the site meets the required criteria, further environmental studies would be conducted.

"No final decision will be made until all assessments have been concluded," he said.

"The State guidelines are very strict and there is no way Council would sign off on any site that allowed leakage into the surrounding environment, including rivers and national parks."

Cr Chetwynd said the search for a new landfill site had continued for more than 10 years with the clock ticking towards the closure of the current site on Long Swamp Road within two years.

A community consultative committee including representation from several environmental groups had selected the proposed new site on the basis of 32 envi-

ronmental and social criteria addressed in the Maunsell Report commissioned by Council.

"The process has been exhaustive and transparent and is ongoing," Cr Chetwynd said. "There are still many opportunities for people in local community to make submissions and raise concerns in the lengthy environment assessment process."

Cr Chetwynd said the push to reduce landfill would have a big impact on any new site.

There would be much less traffic to the site as all domestic, industrial and other waste would be delivered to the current Waste Transfer Station for recycling.

Producing landscaping and management plans for the site were all included in the current tender process, he said.

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