

Dump site rage

The controversy that has dogged Armidale's search for a new landfill site has been re-ignited by a powerful visual protest on the proposed site for the dump.

A large sign erected on adjoining land to the designated Waterfall Way site asks Armidale - Dumaresq Council why a rubbish dump should be located on a world heritage gateway.

Opposition to the site was also expressed by Mr John Hammel who spoke on ABC radio about the negative impact of building a dump on an ecologically sensitive location.

Speaking on behalf of Gara Valley Environmental Preservation Association, Mr Hammel said that he was greatly concerned about the likelihood of effluent running into the Gara Dam.

"You can get a downfall out here of 3.5 inches in 20 minutes so I don't know how they propose to prevent run-off.

"The Gara runs into the MacLeay which then goes through the middle of Kempsey, so we are concerned about the possible degradation of water quality.

"There are platypus in the Gara river and we don't want them endangered.

"The site is also too close



The landfill site protest on Waterfall Way has re-ignited the dump site controversy

to the Wild Rivers National Park.

"I don't think you really want 20 trucks a day rolling along Waterfall Way.

"I don't think that will do much for tourism.

"Sure, rubbish has to go somewhere but it shouldn't go near a river or National Park.

Mr Christian Quaife, who owns land adjacent to the proposed site, pointed out

that a National Parks and Wildlife draft plan of management for the region had expressed concerns about the issue of catchment protection.

Because Waterfall Way crosses the headwaters of most of the major streams the National Parks plan of management was concerned that "a vehicle accident involving a chemical spill would pose a major threat to water quality."

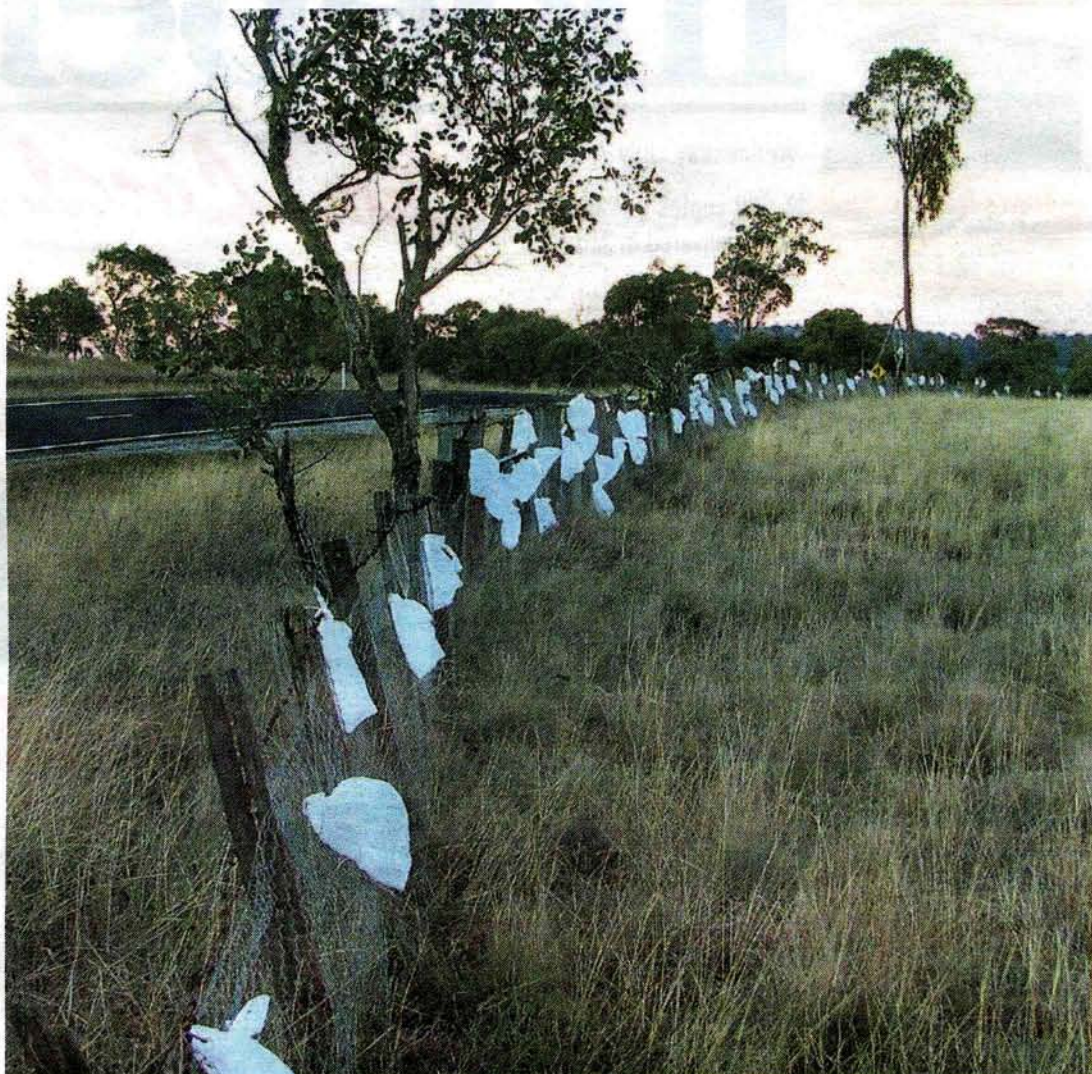
Mr Quaife believes that the building of a dump would be potentially catastrophic to the environmental integrity of the area.

"A lot of people have been disgusted with the shabbiness of the process," said Mr Quaife.

The environmental concerns add further complexity to the Council's ten-year search for an appropriate landfill site.

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Landfill site back on the agenda



A Waterfall Way landowners' impression of the future if the landfill site goes ahead

from page 1

In 2002 serious questions were raised as to the openness and transparency of the process and deep reservations were held about the fact that the favoured site was in part, owned by Councillor Ken Waters.

Controversy raged when it was claimed that there was a huge discrepancy between the proposed sale price of the land and its perceived market value.

Speaking on behalf of Armidale-Dumaresq Council, General

Manager, Shane Burns said

“There were concerns expressed about the openness of the process and council have responded by undertaking an open and transparent process involving broad community consultation.

“The Armidale-Dumaresq Landfill Community Consultation Committee has been appointed and they have adjusted weightings to give more emphasis on social factors.

“They approved this site and I am quite happy with the trans-

parency of the process and the involvement of community members.

The next stage of the fraught process will be to engage a company to undertake an environmental impact study.

The impact statement will require the selected company to involve State government departments and to take their findings into consideration.

Mr Burns believed that the cost of the E.I.S. would be around \$500,000.