

Residents concerned about landfill site

REPORT: Lisa Tisdell

CONCERNED residents will keep a close eye on developments surrounding the establishment of a new regional landfill site.

The owner of the Ballantrae Rd site, Les Davis, attended Monday night's council meeting along with other residents who are worried about the location of a new waste management site.

Mr Davis said he hopes the process proceeds properly and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is quite rigorous, particularly in respect to the environmental concerns of runoff.

He will seek a meeting with the mayor, Brian Chetwynd, and general manager, Shane Burns, as soon as possible.

Council adopted a nine-part recommendation at Monday night's

meeting, in what mayor Brian Chetwynd said enabled the general manager to pursue one of several courses of action to move towards a conclusion.

Council has been searching for seven years to find a replacement for the Long Swamp Rd waste management site that is due to close in two years.

Council's consultants from the Department of Public Works and Services assessed a shortlist of possible locations. During a workshop on October 18, councillors discussed the issues and recognised the urgency to find a new site given the limited life of the existing landfill.

Speaking at the council meeting, Cr Chetwynd acknowledged the need to move forward with the process.

"There's a number of members of

the community who are interested in this. Council is recognising there is a necessity for a very detailed and accurate process."

Cr Chetwynd stressed the importance of community consultation in the whole process.

"It will start an open and transparent process," he said.

Selective tenders will be invited for preliminary costing and designs, and an EIS study for the Ballantrae Rd site, 16km east of Armidale.

Mr Burns will provide regular reports back to council before any further action is taken.

Other sites will be considered if the Ballantrae Rd site is not viable.

A community consultation and education program will inform the public of council's decision and invite community participation in the development process.