

# Landfill site selection spot on

AS A member of the ADLCCC and as a landowner adjacent to one of the sites considered for the proposed new Armidale landfill, I would like to correct misleading and incorrect assertions made in articles and letter in The Armidale Express on June 23 and 28.

Council has been looking for a new site for over 10 years and has examined approximately 90 sites during this period.

Time has now run out and a decision had to be made as the existing site could be closed by the EPA, as it has done in other areas, and the material transported at great expense to other locations.

It takes two and a half to three years after choice of a site for a landfill to become operational.

I believe this is one decision that council has got 100 per cent correct. The consultants used as a final independent advisor are recognised Australia-wide and have designed major landfills which are close to top residential suburbs in Brisbane (Rochedale and Pine Rivers), Ipswich and Sydney.

The site selected meets every EPA and Department of Infrastructure and Planning requirement but will be subject to an EIS statement which can set conditions to address residents' concerns.

Environmental concerns were carefully considered in the selection of the site and members of the community through the ADLCCC had input into the factors considered by the consultants and into the scores and weightings used by the consultants.

In site 8, discussions were held with concerned local landowners on many occasions and particularly on the consultants' scoring and weightings and their interim report.

We also visited the Tilbuster site after a call from concerned residents in that area and permission

of the owner.

There was clear community involvement from some areas. Armidale is unique in that over 80 per cent of urban run-off (a major pollutant) goes down Commissioner's Waters and ultimately into the Blue Hole and then the National Park System.

Run-off from residential development in the Gara Valley and from south east of Armidale as well as any potential leachate from the existing landfill also finds its way to this system.

The proposed landfill is below the Gara Dam and close to this system. The site is at the top of a water catchment to minimise flood risk and does not change significantly any existing environmental risks.

There are a minimal number of residents subject to environmental risks with the major exposure born by the vendors.

Modern landfills must have an impervious liner and a leachate trap/recovery system and an associated disposal mechanism.

In addition, residents east of the site have a permanent buffer separation by the Grafton Rd and the RLPB stock route and reserve.

This buffer area could be improved by council contracting the Armidale Tree Group for advice to improve it as a wildlife corridor and improve visual protection of the site. Funds could be sought from Landcare and the National Heritage Trust.

If Mr Quiafe is really concerned on the effect on the gateway and tourists, he could open negotiations with council to purchase a 15 metre section for a buffer where the road is close to his boundary.

The Quiafe property is upstream from the proposed site (1 km off the Grafton Rd and in a depression) and separated by a ridge.

Concerns regarding predatory birds, wild animals, insects weeds and disease apply not only to orchardists but equally to every rural landowner including those running sheep and cattle.

The comments in the article about odor, litter and noise display

a complete lack of knowledge of modern landfill operation and transport regulations.

There are transfer stations (equivalent to council's at East Armidale) in Brisbane at Chandler and Ashgrove and in Sydney at Artarmon, North Sydney, Ryde and Blacktown, with material being transported from them in sealed trucks preventing any loss of litter or liquids.

In Brisbane there are two landfills adjoining the Gateway motorway and in Sydney in addition to Menai, they exist off Forestway at Belrose and Monavale Road at Terry Hills.

Material must be covered daily and there are legal limits set for dust and noise.

Regional truck movements were considered in the decision with Guyra material already received in Armidale following closure of their landfill by the EPA.

Uralla was also represented at meetings of the ADLCCC. Armidale contributes over 90 per cent of the material going to landfill and will

continue as the major contributor even if Uralla contributes in future years.

The transfer station is already on the eastern sides so it does not make sense to have a site west of town which will increase truck movements through town with an increasing distance from the major source of landfill.

Increase in distance from Armidale will increase transport and operating costs. Removal of a site away from state highways will increase the road maintenance costs on council maintained roads.

The ADLCCC, Waste Management Committee and council have put a considerable effort into considering all factors relating to this decision and put particular emphasis not only on the technical issues but also into the environmental, economic and social issues involved.

Wherever the landfill goes, someone is going to be disadvantaged, but this decision overwhelmingly favours all residents with a reduced impact on future

rates and charges.

The ADLCCC and the Waste Management committee recommended that the design of the new landfill include provisions that the site ultimately become a Class 2 landfill ie only inert material go to landfill.

Concerned residents should be lobbying for this as soon as possible as it addresses most of these issues raised and would reduce the amount of material going to landfill. It will ultimately be a regulatory government requirement.

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**Have your say**

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