

# The Northern Daily LEADER

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## Purchase of councillor's property unlikely

ARMIDALE Dumaresq Council looks unlikely to go ahead with a proposal to buy part of a councillor's property for its new rubbish tip for a price many times its market value.

The land, in Silverton Rd about 18km east of Armidale, is owned by councillor Ken Waters and is one of two parcels of land offered to the council to develop a new landfill.

The initial (September 18, 2001) asking price for Cr Waters' land was \$825,000.

The second parcel of land, adjoining Cr Waters' property and owned by Derry Crisp (principal of LJ Hooker, Armidale), was offered to the council at \$660,000 - also many times its market value.

The issue is expected to come to the public arena on Monday night with three notices of motion from councillor Herman Beyersdorf, including one that council negotiations for a new landfill site be based on the Just Terms Compensation legislation.

There has been no inference from anyone that either Cr Waters or Mr Crisp have attempted to use their positions to secure the sale of their properties to the council.

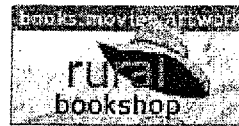
Documents obtained by The Leader detailing council workshop discussions on the issue show that Cr Waters and Mr Crisp had agreed on the price of the land with the then general manager of council, Peter Straw, last year.

A second (lower priced) offer was made by Cr Waters and Mr Crisp to sell the blocks to council - \$415,000 for Cr Waters' 29ha and \$385,000 for Mr Crisp's 32ha.

The two parcels were then valued by Selena McMullen, a senior valuer with the State Valuation Office.

Ms McMullen gave the market values of the properties as \$44,000 for Cr Waters' land and \$53,000 for Mr Crisp's property but, in line with Just Terms Compensation, put a fair market value on the properties of \$107,000 and \$96,000 respectively.

When new council general manager Shane Burns commenced in early September 2001, he, according to the minutes of a council workshop on the landfill, "expressed considerable concern of council purchasing land for a landfill at four times the valuation of the State Valuation Officer, particularly when it became known that an existing councillor was a vendor and when it was considered that obtaining



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