

Submission on the new landfill extension (SLEPO) Business case to Council 2nd February

Kia Ora Councillors and Deputy Mayor. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you.

I am Ali Forrest, here on behalf of OBRA, the Owhiro Bay Residents' Association to say something about the first agenda item, 2.1 Residual Waste - Southern Landfill Extension (Piggyback Option) Business Case.

Firstly we recognise and appreciate that the council is going in the right direction with its emphasis on zero waste and real efforts to manage the transition to a circular economy in Wellington.

OBRA has been part of working groups around the Southern Landfill options and waste minimisation – including the ongoing residual waste working group up at the landfill, and we've had constructive discussions with council officers who I'd like to thank for being transparent and responsive.

We feel it's very important for democracy that community groups are involved in council decision-making in this way. There may only be a few of us from our communities with the time to engage with council, but we feed back to a large part of our communities so that all residents are up to date and have the opportunity to give their input.

On the subject of this Piggyback option business case:

We don't have a quarrel with the business case that you're being asked to approve, but I do want to state, or re-state, a few points that are important to the Owhiro Bay Community as the group probably the most immediately affected by the Southern Landfill.

1. No more extensions

We agreed to the piggyback option going ahead on condition that this would be the last ever extension, giving the Southern Landfill another 20-30 years, and councillors have explicitly endorsed this in LTP and here. We are very happy with that.

However, councils change and it's a risk that this resolution will during the next 30 years be out the window. So we want a guarantee that Carey's Gully won't be filled any further. We made a submission to the District Plan for a redesignation of the Carey's Gully area so that the remainder of it changes from a Sanitary Waste designated area to reserve, as this seems the best way to guarantee that the landfilling does not continue for another century up the entire gully.

The District Plan is going to be considered separately early this year but I just wanted to remind you of our view.

2. Related to this is the Date for closure of the Landfill

We have a slightly different perspective from the council. The council sees the drastic reduction of waste that we are all working towards allowing an attenuated life for the landfill to beyond 2047.

OBRA is actually keen to see an end date for the landfill rather than an indefinite life. It is only when it is closed that the valley can be finally made good and become part of the regenerating environment between Zealandia and the sea.

3. No out-of-town rubbish

There is a risk that when the Piggyback option gives the Southern Landfill a new lease of life and other landfills around Wellington come up to capacity in the next few years – such as Spicers - there may be a temptation to **divert** all or some of that to the Southern Landfill. This has been mentioned in past papers and implied in the Q &As for this session and it's not acceptable to OBRA. The Southern Landfill should not accept waste from out of town whether or not there are financial penalties/incentives.

At least the commercial waste can be prohibited - as trucking waste from the motorway through the top of Te Aro and through Brooklyn – crowded inner city suburbs – is unacceptable. It should not be happening now, and it should not be an expedient official decision in a few years' time.

4. **The 2 private landfills next to the Southern Landfill**

There should be better control over the 2 private landfills T&T and C&D. They are a large part of the problem with traffic, litter and pollution of the stream and marine reserve, but are not adequately monitored - nor are the conditions of their consents enforced. We want to see this improve from both regional and city councils.

5. **the Financial model**

This business case is based on the current financial model whereby landfill gate fees supply a large part of costs for collection services. As waste is reduced this won't work any longer. So we are keen to see the new financial model (whereby other income can be generated from hopefully **not rates**, but recycling, repurposing and compost etc.) - I think it's going to be presented with the next LTP in 2024.

6. And my last point is **the ecological mitigation and off-setting**. A relatively small area is going to be excavated for the Piggyback option which we're satisfied is going to be made good.

However, we think the council needs to look further at the whole site and ensure that the effects on it from all previous incursions on the regenerating bush and the native fauna are mitigated. Since the last resource consent a lot has changed: the halo effect from Zealandia has improved the birdlife, and a corridor from Zealandia to sea is opening up, residents have been avidly trapping on their sections, the surrounding bush has been regenerating and kiwis are being introduced a couple of valleys away - so the problem of rats, possums and mustelids encouraged by the waste is if anything more urgent. We'd like to see the plan for enhanced trapping or bait stations, and monitoring in Carey's Gulley, replanting and the continuous cleanup of plastics flying around or in the streams.

A general point related to this – we ask Councillors to bear in mind that the Owhiro Bay community has been accepting the waste from the whole city for decades. We have been mitigating the effects by planting, trapping pests eliminating weeds and clearing the beach and stream of rubbish washed down from the tips. In return it seems reasonable that resources are put into protecting us and our environment from its effects.

That's the end of my presentation. Even if some points are not directly relevant to this business case, I think they need to be kept in mind by the council when making any decisions on the Southern Landfill. Thank you for your time.