

## **SUBMISSION**

Owhiro Bay Residents' Association (OBRA) has the following comments on the Annual Plan Issue 2: The Future of the Southern Landfill:

### **Summary**

OBRA expects the Southern Landfill to be phased out. We realise that the Piggyback option will go ahead but see it as an interim solution; we want the next 20 years of its life to see such a drastic reduction in residual waste that it can be closed. We will absolutely not accept any further extensions.

### **1. Waste to Energy (Incinerator)**

This should never have made it onto the short list as it did not satisfy the MCA criteria:

You would never get this consented and built in time (2026).  
It is not scalable; it will encourage more waste to make it viable  
It is not a proven technology in NZ.

If there is an incinerator it is absolutely unacceptable for it to be built on the Southern Landfill, which is the site proposed. Such a large facility is in no way suitable for a populated area.

It is a very expensive option. It is obviously a regional solution as it is only marginally economically viable with the amount of waste the city has currently, and not at all when the sewage sludge is removed (as WCC officers have stated). Would regional waste then have to be trucked in to the Southern Landfill to feed it?

Incinerators have been common in Europe for a long time but are now being phased out. Not a good time for us to start one. It seems that incinerator engineering firms are running out of markets in the developed world and are looking for new ones; they are pitching in NZ pretty hard.

An incinerator still outputs residual waste, and although the statement says it could be shipped elsewhere, it probably won't be, because it is already at the SL, so this will inevitably require a landfill extension anyway.

Although modern incinerators apparently emit only a very small amount of noxious gas, what there is would be polluting Owhiro Bay, Brooklyn and Zealandia air.

### **2. No Residual Waste Facility in Wellington City**

There are very good reasons for closing the landfill and many of our residents are strongly in favour of this option.

- Heavy and increasing traffic causes filth and noise and endangers cyclists
- Increasing population around the area makes it a real city suburb, unlike the sparse out-of-town settlement it was when the landfill was first created
- Landfills are no longer seen as the solution to waste and are unacceptable as part of a city.
- Encourages pests - Zealandia and the corridor, Capital Kiwi
- Affects the stream. Rubbish blows into Carey's stream and Hape Stream. Rubbish and pollutants get into Owhiro Stream and thence into the Marine reserve.
- Many residents are too often affected by unpleasant smells.
- Greenhouse gas emissions are only partly captured.

This closure is something that OBRA strongly supports and urges the council to work towards when Wellington has substantially reduced its waste. Currently it would just be transferring city waste to other areas – Spicers and Silverstream - and increasing transport costs while shifting our problem on to other parts of Wellington.

### **3. The preferred option, the Piggyback extension of the Landfill**

We realise that the Piggyback extension is going to go ahead and OBRA only accepts this with the proviso that it is a temporary solution to residual waste. The Owhiro Bay community does not accept that the landfill will be there for ever or that there will be any more extensions. There must be a plan to close it before it reaches capacity in 20 years. Landfills do not belong in a city, and we need to be doing much more to head for zero waste and a circular economy. Wellington, far from being the leader that council aspires to, is way behind and needs to run to catch up with other NZ cities, let alone Europe.

We want waste minimisation to be drastic, and look forward to waste minimisation (WMMP) initiatives being announced later this year. The sewage sludge will be stopped in 2026 and no longer require large amounts of rubbish to bury it. We expect to see by 2026 the diversion of food waste for composting along with green waste, which will greatly reduce volumes being landfilled. The piggyback extension will give us 20 years more, and we do not want this time wasted. It must be used to reduce residual waste to such a small volume that it can be sent to other, regional sites. Another extension in 20 years' time is in no way acceptable to the community.

It has been mooted in previous council plans that as other landfills around Wellington close in the next decade their waste might be diverted to the Southern Landfill. We want the council to guarantee this will not happen.

Additionally, the problem of trucks thundering down Happy Valley must be addressed before the landfill is closed. Several things can improve this, prior to closing the 3 landfills is not the AP could discourage litter by for instance refusing to accept uncovered loads at the Landfill.

#### **Plan for the other 2 landfills**

The 3 Landfills up Happy Valley are less and less acceptable as time goes by. We would like to see a solution removing all three landfills. WCC should take control of all this land and possibly use it as a site for composting and recycling. Construction and Demolition waste should be recycled, and we expect more to be done to incentivise builders and construction companies to re-use materials. All council roading and building projects must do a lot more to reuse concrete rubble etc. Timber should not be going into landfill, where it emits greenhouse gases, but into timber recycling depots.

#### **Need for New Funding Model**

Page 25: “A landfill extension will maintain the current financially self-sustaining model, maintaining all existing waste management and minimisation services and is the least likely option to require alternative funding for future waste minimisation services to be implemented.”

This is not a good reason to maintain the landfill, and it is a conflict of interests for WCC. There should be a completely new funding model that does not depend on landfill income but revenue from other waste-related activities as well as the increasing levy. How are we going to cope when the amount of waste is very little – as WCC says it is aiming for?