



Proposal to extend operations at Redvale Landfill & Energy Park

Findings from Public Consultation - Phase 3

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Redvale Landfill & Energy Park



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Executive summary



This report summarises what was heard during WM New Zealand's (WM) Phase 3 consultation on its proposal to extend landfilling operations at Redvale Landfill & Energy Park until 2036.

The consultation sought feedback from neighbours, the wider community, Auckland Council, and other interested parties before WM finalised its referral application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. It builds on two earlier consultation phases that explored Auckland's options for safely managing residual waste between 2029 and the mid-2030s, once Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL) is expected to be operational.

Community and stakeholder feedback have been instrumental in shaping the final proposal. Input from earlier consultation phases led to strengthened odour controls and improved communication channels with local communities.

Feedback during Phase 3 reinforced the importance of certainty around the duration of landfilling operations, resulting in WM setting 31 December 2036 as a firm end date for landfilling operations at Redvale. **WM has committed to ceasing landfilling earlier if ARL is operational sooner**, meaning the transition period could be as short as four years.

WM intends to begin gradually implementing the strengthened odour controls outlined in the proposal (including reducing the size of the working face, increasing daily and intermediate cover, separating odorous and non-odorous waste streams, and maintaining a 500-metre buffer) ahead of the current consent end date to help address ongoing community concerns.



Participation and engagement

Between 14 October and 7 November 2025, WM invited feedback through written submissions and email, and hosted an in-person community hui at Dairy Flat Community Hall where the community and other stakeholders had the chance to hear about the proposal, ask questions, and speak directly with the team. WM also offered the community the option to have a one-on-one conversation with one of our team members.

- Total responses: **332** (174 physical forms and 158 emails).
- Additional engagement: follow-up conversations with Auckland Council waste team, elected members, Dairy Flat School Board, and other stakeholders.

What we heard

Feedback was strongly focused on environmental, health, and amenity impacts.

Most respondents expressed opposition to the extension, citing odour, proximity to homes and Dairy Flat School, pests, and the length of the proposed extension period.

Some submissions acknowledged the need for an interim solution but questioned whether Redvale is the right location.



Across submissions, several recurring themes emerged:

- Odour and air-quality effects.
- Duration of effects and future closure expectations.
- Impacts on health, schoolchildren, and water.
- Pest management and litter.
- Traffic and property values.
- Trust, communication, and compliance history.
- Environmental concerns.
- Fairness and the Fast-track pathway.

This feedback, along with technical assessments and iwi engagement, has informed WM's Fast-track application.

Next steps

WM has now lodged its Fast-track referral application. Before making a decision, the WM Board considered the feedback shared by local residents, Dairy Flat School, community organisations, and other stakeholders across all three consultations.

The concerns and priorities raised through consultation played an important role in shaping the final proposal and the commitments WM has made – particularly around setting a clear timeframe for the landfilling extension and strengthening odour-management practices. WM will continue to keep the community updated as the Fast-track process progresses.





What we heard

This Phase 3 consultation followed two earlier rounds that examined how Auckland should manage its residual waste until the Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL) is operational.

- Phase 1 identified that neither new landfill sites nor alternative waste-processing technologies could be delivered in time to fill the gap between 2029 and ARL's expected opening in the mid-2030s. Using existing landfills, along with ongoing waste minimisation and recovery, were identified as the most workable solution for the interim period.
- Phase 2 explored how to rebalance Auckland's existing landfills. Feedback at that stage showed strongest community concern around odour and end to landfilling closure expectations at Redvale, and traffic effects at Whitford. On balance, extending landfilling at Redvale was the preferred choice.
- Phase 3 focused on the proposed extension of landfilling operations at Redvale Landfill & Energy Park until 2036 as the most feasible short-to-medium-term option.



Phase 3 consultation's purpose was to:

- Gather feedback on the proposal before WM finalised its Fast-track Approvals Act referral application;
- Provide an opportunity for local communities and stakeholders to have their say; and
- Seek feedback on the specific changes made since earlier consultation, including the strengthened odour controls and the clearer timeframe for how long the proposed Redvale extension will be.



Engagement Phase 3 focused on reaching:

- Local residents and community organisations in Redvale and Dairy Flat.
- Dairy Flat Primary School.
- Auckland Council and relevant departments.
- Iwi authorities and hapū.
- MPs and government representatives.

How we engaged

Information was shared through multiple channels to make participation straightforward and accessible:

- Information pack: a plain-English summary document outlining the proposal, changes, and how to provide feedback.
- WM consultation webpage and email address (submissions@wm.nz).
- Direct emails and letters to stakeholders.
- Community hui: 20 October 2025 at Dairy Flat Community Hall.
- Meetings with key stakeholders.

Participation snapshot

- Total feedback received: 332 submissions (174 forms + 158 emails).
- Physical forms were distributed by the Redvale Environmental Protection Society Inc. (REPSI) and included pre-set checkboxes listing common concerns. Because nearly all respondents selected most or all options, these have been summarised collectively rather than analysed individually.



Mana whenua engagement

During Phase 3, we continued direct engagement with iwi and hapū who hold interests in Te Raki Paewhenua (Redvale).

This phase centred on going deeper into the details of current and proposed operations at Redvale and providing space for iwi and hapū to share their views and aspirations regarding future activities at the site. Engagement has remained positive and forward-focused.

Throughout this phase, our commitment has remained on strengthening relationships, working alongside our iwi partners, and ensuring tangata whenua perspectives continue to inform our planning and decision-making as we move ahead.



Odour and air quality

Most submissions focused on odour, describing it as the single biggest and most persistent concern for those living near the Redvale Landfill. Many said the smell affects their ability to enjoy outdoor areas, sleep with windows open, or host visitors. Several linked odour complaints to particular weather conditions or wind directions and questioned the effectiveness of WM's current controls.

Some said the smell had worsened in recent years and expressed frustration that promised improvements had not been delivered. Others shared that the landfill smell extends to Dairy Flat School and neighbouring streets, with a parent describing it as a daily reality our kids shouldn't have to breathe.

A smaller number recognised that some odour is unavoidable in landfill operations but called for tighter oversight, real-time monitoring, and faster response times when issues are reported.



WM's view on feedback

Odour has been the most common concern raised across all three consultation phases, and it is the issue that has most directly shaped the proposal. In response to this feedback, strengthened odour-management measures have been developed, including a smaller working face, thicker daily and intermediate cover, shorter winter operating hours for putrescible waste disposal, and a 500-metre buffer between existing homes and higher-odour waste.

WM and its technical experts consider these measures to be significant improvements that will reduce odour risk. We have already implemented several of these points and will continue to do so. This means improvements can be realised as early as possible.

WM has also introduced a new automated complaints system from October 2025 to improve response times, ensure consistent investigations, and strengthen accountability.



Duration of effects and closure expectations

Many respondents said they had expected Redvale Landfill to cease landfilling in 2028 and felt let down or misled by the proposal to extend landfilling operations until 2036. For long-term residents, the sense of frustration was linked to fatigue with ongoing effects and a perception that closure had already been promised.

Several said the eight-year extension was too long and urged WM to find shorter-term or alternative solutions, even if that required transporting waste further afield. Some submissions called for a defined, legally binding closure date, while a few acknowledged that extending Redvale may be necessary to avoid reopening or expanding other landfills elsewhere.

WM's view on feedback

Closure timeframes have been a consistent theme across all three phases of consultation. In response to this feedback, WM has confirmed 31 December 2036 as a firm end date for landfilling at Redvale. WM has also committed to ending landfilling at Redvale earlier if ARL becomes operational sooner, meaning the landfilling extension could be as short as four years if consenting and construction progress without further delay.

Redvale would only continue landfilling for the short period needed until ARL is up and running, and the two sites would not operate in parallel for any significant length of time. Community feedback on the importance of certainty has been a key consideration in finalising the extension timeframe.

Pests, vermin and visual amenity

Many respondents mentioned rats, myna birds, seagulls, and litter, describing them as everyday nuisances linked to landfill operations. Several said pest numbers have increased in surrounding properties and farms, affecting gardens and livestock feed. Others commented on the visual effect of birds and litter, saying it reinforces a sense that the area has a landfill.

A few acknowledged existing pest-control efforts but asked that they be expanded or more visibly maintained.

WM's view on feedback

WM recognises that pests and birds can be a nuisance for nearby residents and acknowledges the concerns raised through this consultation. WM undertakes ongoing pest and litter control measures, including daily cover practices, litter fencing, and prompt roadside collection of any escaped waste. There are also bait and trapping stations for possums, rats and stoats.

To strengthen bird management, WM is working with its internal ecologists and carries out fortnightly bird counts, alongside ongoing trials of bird-control measures to understand what is most effective at the site. Keeping the working area small and maintaining increased daily cover remain the most effective measures for reducing bird and pest attraction. The proposed smaller working face and thicker cover are expected to improve pest control further.

Proximity to Dairy Flat School and health risks

Many submissions, including several from parents, raised concern that the landfill's proximity to Dairy Flat School poses unacceptable health and wellbeing risks to children. Odour, dust, and potential air-quality effects were the main issues cited, alongside worry about long-term exposure and reputation impacts on the school.

A few asked whether independent air-quality testing had been done and requested further monitoring around the school site. Some also mentioned anxiety among children when odour events occur, describing it as disruptive to learning.

WM's view on feedback

The health and safety of our WM team and the Dairy Flat community, particularly local children, is our top priority. In response to concerns raised by the school community, WM commissioned additional testing of the school's drinking water in October 2025. According to the laboratory results, all water samples demonstrated excellent overall quality and are safe for drinking and general use. All measured chemical and metal concentrations were well below the limits set by New Zealand, WHO, and US EPA standards, indicating that the water is free from harmful substances.

Redvale operates under strict environmental controls, with air, water and soil testing carried out regularly. Every result to date has confirmed full compliance with health and environmental standards.

WM continues to meet with the Dairy Flat School Board of Trustees to discuss concerns, share monitoring information, and identify where further improvements may be needed.





Traffic, noise and property values

Some respondents raised concerns about traffic volumes, particularly heavy trucks using Dairy Flat Highway. Many said the roads already feel unsafe, especially during school drop-off times, and worried about further impacts from other developments in the area.

Noise from truck movements, reversing alarms, and machinery was also mentioned, though less frequently than odour. A number of respondents linked these effects to declining property values, arguing that the landfill deters potential buyers and limits future growth opportunities for Dairy Flat and the wider Rodney area.

A few submissions asked for compensation or rates relief for nearby residents if the extension proceeds.

WM's view on feedback

The proposal does not change current traffic routes or increase truck numbers beyond existing consents. WM currently meets, and will continue to meet, Auckland Unitary Plan noise limits and maintain existing mitigation measures such as speed limits, wheel washing, and dust suppression.

Wider transport pressures in the area are influenced by multiple activities and developments, not just the landfill. While some expressed concern about future growth around Dairy Flat, Auckland Council's Future Development Strategy identifies this area as one that is not planned for urban development until after the proposed extension of Redvale. This means no major changes in local land use or traffic demand related to urbanisation are expected during the lifetime of the extension.

WM will continue to work with Auckland Transport and the Community Liaison Committee to monitor any traffic-related issues.

Environmental risks: water, leachate, and hazardous waste

Many submissions raised concern about potential contamination groundwater, and the Rangitopuni Stream, with some claiming the landfill's non-compliance history for leachate levels. Several called for independent water-quality testing and public access to results.

A number of respondents mentioned fears about asbestos dust or other hazardous materials being deposited at Redvale, questioning how these are monitored and contained.

WM's view on feedback

Stormwater, leachate and asbestos management systems meet modern engineering and regulatory standards. The proposed extension to landfilling would use the same design principles, including Class 1 liner specification for new Class 2 areas and ongoing surface-water and groundwater monitoring.



Compliance, trust and communication

Many submitters said they do not trust WM to comply with consent conditions or manage community impacts effectively. Several referenced previous odour incidents, historic breaches, or perceived inaction following complaints. Some said WM communicates only when it has to, and asked for more transparent, two-way engagement.

A smaller number acknowledged improvements in recent years, while others questioned whether community input has any real influence, particularly given the Fast-track process.

WM's view on feedback

WM acknowledges the community's concerns around trust and understands that past experiences shape how people feel about the landfill today. Redvale operates under strict consent conditions and is subject to regular air, water, and soil testing. These tests have consistently shown full compliance with environmental standards, with Auckland Council confirming there is currently no groundwater, surface-water, or air-quality contamination.

Redvale will stop accepting waste for landfilling as soon as ARL becomes operational and able to accept waste, and no later than 2036. WM has committed to clearer, more frequent updates through the Community Liaison Committee, the Dairy Flat Newsletter, and an upgraded complaints system to improve responsiveness.

Feedback from all consultation phases has influenced design and mitigation measures, and further updates will be shared as the process continues.

Fairness, process and the Fast-track Pathway

Some respondents said the use of the Fast-track Approvals Act consenting pathway felt unfair or undemocratic, arguing it limits public input. Others felt the decision appeared predetermined, noting that this was the third consultation on the issue.

A smaller number said they understood the need for a streamlined process but wanted assurance that feedback would still be considered by an independent body.

WM's view on feedback

The Fast-track Pathway is designed for projects of regional significance while still allowing councils, iwi, and affected communities to provide input through the Expert Panel process. Due to the limited time available, Fast-track remains the only feasible pathway to manage Auckland's waste between 2029 and ARL becoming operational.





Conclusion and next steps



This consultation was the third and final phase in WM's engagement on Auckland's interim landfill solution before lodging a referral application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.

Across 332 submissions and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, the community provided clear, consistent feedback. Most respondents during phase 3 were Redvale residents who opposed extending landfilling at Redvale Landfill beyond its current consent period, citing concerns about odour, health effects, and the duration of operations. Other feedback covered traffic, pests, compliance history, and communication.

WM acknowledges the strength of community feeling and the continuity of themes raised since the first consultation. While opinions differed on whether extending landfilling at Redvale is acceptable, there was a shared desire for higher standards of performance, greater transparency, and clearer accountability for managing effects on the local environment and community wellbeing.

How findings will be used

WM has now submitted its Fast-track referral application. Before lodging the application, the WM Board reviewed the feedback received through this consultation alongside technical assessments, environmental and cultural reports, and statutory input. This feedback helped inform the commitments WM has made in the proposal, including strengthened odour controls and a clear, finite operating timeframe.

Although the referral application has been submitted, WM is committed to continuous improvement. We have heard the feedback and will continue working with the community to ensure we are being a good neighbour and responsible landfill operator.

WM will also continue sharing information with the community through existing channels and will remain available to meet with residents, Dairy Flat School, and other stakeholders as the Fast-track process progresses.

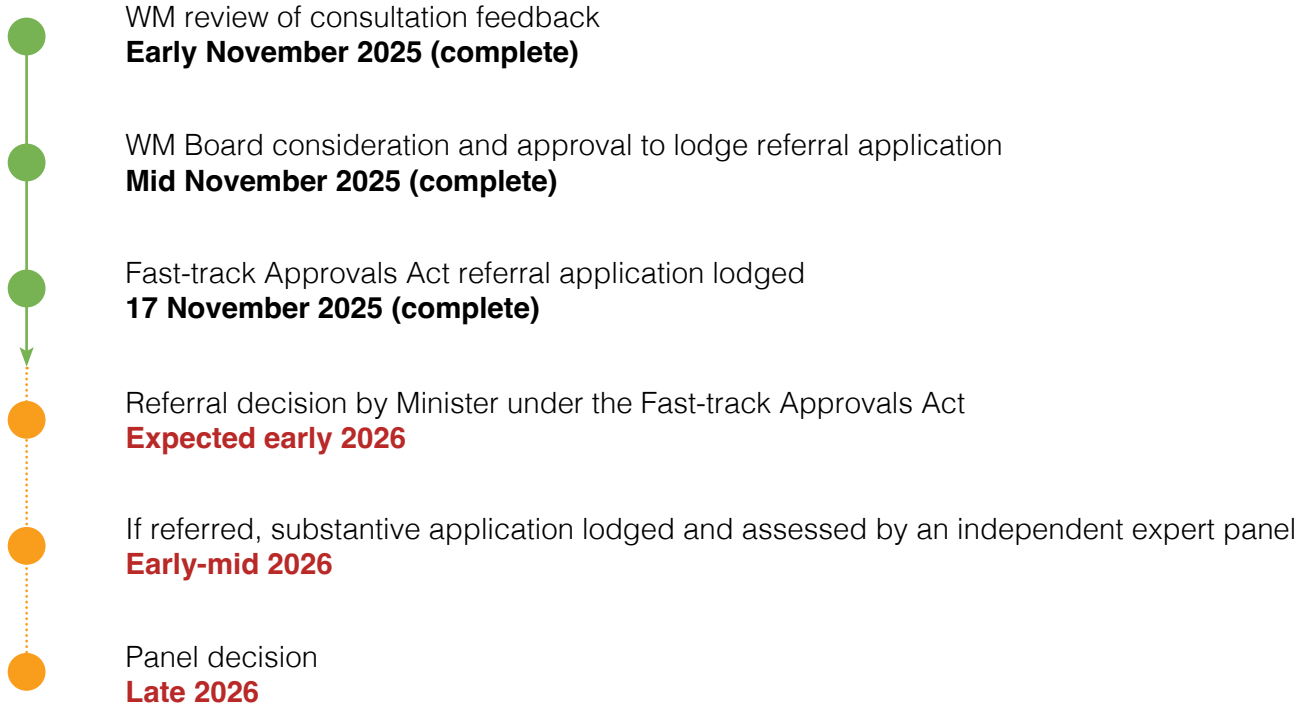
Mana whenua engagement

Mana whenua engagement remains ongoing as part of the Fast-track referral process, the outcomes of that engagement will be presented independently from this consultation, with a separate report being prepared by iwi representatives.





Proposal decision and Fast-track referral application process



WM will continue to share updates with the community through the Redvale Community Liaison Committee, newsletters, and its consultation webpage. Feedback received in this and earlier phases will remain an important reference as the project moves into the statutory process.

Through this consultation we have heard clearly where we need to do better, and we are committed to continuing that improvement while we remain part of this community.

If at any time you would like to speak with someone directly, you can contact the WM team at submissions@wm.nz



Finally, WM would like to sincerely thank everyone who took the time to share their views throughout all three consultations this year.

Your feedback – whether supportive, cautious, or opposed – has been important in shaping the decisions made to date and will continue to guide how we operate going forward.



Let's take care of it

wm.nz

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Redvale Landfill & Energy Park