



Managing Auckland's Residual Waste

Findings from Public Consultation

Findings released: Monday, 2 June 2025

Redvale Landfill & Energy Park



Table of Contents

Overview of public consultation	4
Engagement and participation	6
Quantitative feedback	8
Qualitative feedback	9
Option 1: Rebalancing Existing Landfills	9
Option 2: Identify a New Landfill	10
Option 3: Alternative Technologies	11
Option 4: Increasing Recovery (“Auckland Recovers More”)	11
Our conclusions and next steps	15
Appendix: common concerns	16



Introduction

Auckland is running out of time and space for its residual waste. With Redvale Landfill due to stop landfilling by the end of 2028, and its replacement, the Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL), delayed due to appeals to the interim granted consent, the city is facing a significant disposal issue for hundreds of thousands of tonnes of waste per year.

Between 17 March and 11 May 2025, WM New Zealand (WM) undertook a public consultation to better understand community perspectives on the future of Auckland's residual waste management, specifically covering the 7-8 year period from 2029 to mid-2030s.

The consultation's purpose was to gather feedback on interim waste management options between the scheduled ending to landfilling at the Redvale Landfill and Energy Park in 2028 and the projected opening of the Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL) in the middle of the 2030s. There is currently no consented, alternative disposal covering this period.

Consultation was to ensure we considered all available options and got feedback from iwi, customers, waste operators, Auckland Council, experts and the public as we evaluated viable solutions.

This report provides a summary of the consultation process and feedback we received. It also outlines how this data is used to inform our broader planning process.

The report includes:

- A recap of what we consulted on;
- An overview of how the consultation was conducted;
- A summary of engagement methods and participation;
- Key themes and preferences raised during the consultation;
- A note on how feedback will be considered in the next phase of evaluation and further consultation;
- Clarifications on common concerns or areas of misinformation.

All submissions will be considered alongside environmental, cultural, operational, regulatory and financial factors.



The consultation

The consultation presented four independent technically assessed options and invited public and stakeholder feedback on both the evaluation criteria and the possible solutions.

The four options, developed with independent analysis were:



1. Rebalancing Existing Landfills



2. Identify a New Landfill



3. Alternative Technologies



4. Increasing Recovery (“Auckland Recovers More”)

Each option was evaluated against seven criteria: timing, consenting feasibility, economic impact, resiliency, environmental effects, social/community impacts, and emissions.

The recommendation put forward from WM was that some combination of option 1 and 4 was the appropriate path forward.

The initial consultation sought feedback on the evaluation criteria, the options and the recommendation. Perspectives or additional ideas not covered by the presented scenarios were welcomed.





Engagement

The engagement reached over half a million Aucklanders through online promotion, a NZ Herald article from the NZME editor at large and delivering 4,000 physical flyers in the Dairy Flat area. 111 written submissions and 9 oral submissions were received (all of whom provided written submissions). While the local response was notably strong, region-wide engagement remained low, underscoring the challenge of waste literacy, expertise and an apathy around waste disposal. It's the privilege that comes with being an essential service, as long as the bin is picked up, it appears from our consultation the vast majority of Aucklanders are content with their waste services.

The consultation was promoted and conducted through multiple channels to ensure broad access and involvement. These included:

- A series of community consultation events across Auckland;
- Targeted outreach to affected communities and stakeholders;
- Tailored engagement with iwi and tangata whenua partners;
- An online submission form via the WM website;
- Submissions accepted by email and post; and
- An opportunity for members of the public to present their feedback at a dedicated hearing.

Community meetings were held at locations across the Auckland region, including East Tāmaki, Glenfield, Dairy Flat, Henderson, and online. An oral submission session was also held on 16 May 2025.

Participation in numbers

- [NZ Herald article](#);
- Advertisement of the consultation reached approximately 575,000 people, generating 1,659 click-throughs;
- 4,000 flyers were distributed to the local community;
- 4,901 people accessed the consultation page on the WM website;
- 111 written submissions were received during the consultation period, noting some people were located at the same dwelling;
- 30 people recorded as attending in person or online events (note some did not sign the register);
- 9 oral submissions were heard by the WM team, including Chairman Murdo Beattie;
- 2 Community Liaison Committee meetings at both Whitford and Redvale.

Submissions were received from a range of stakeholder groups, including:

- Local residents, particularly from communities around Redvale;
- Auckland Council officials;
- Industry and waste sector partners;
- Community organisations;
- Individual citizens.



Iwi and Māori engagement

We engaged with iwi and hapū groups who hold registered interests across our landfill operating areas in Auckland. This initial outreach included the full consultation document and an invitation to participate in the feedback process. This broad communication ensured that iwi partners with an interest in both current and future landfill sites had access to the relevant information and the opportunity to engage in the consultation process.

Direct engagement during the consultation period took place with Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki. Hui were held to discuss the options, and Ngāi Tai expressed support for the consultation being undertaken by WM.

Engagement with other iwi partners who hold a direct interest in Redvale and the future Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL) is progressing positively.

These iwi have been involved in ongoing discussions relating to the ARL project as well as the transition phase. These relationships continue to strengthen as we collectively seek outcomes that respect cultural values and environmental responsibilities.

We remain committed to continuing this kaupapa by embedding Māori values into decision-making and maintaining open, respectful and enduring relationships with tangata whenua as we move forward.



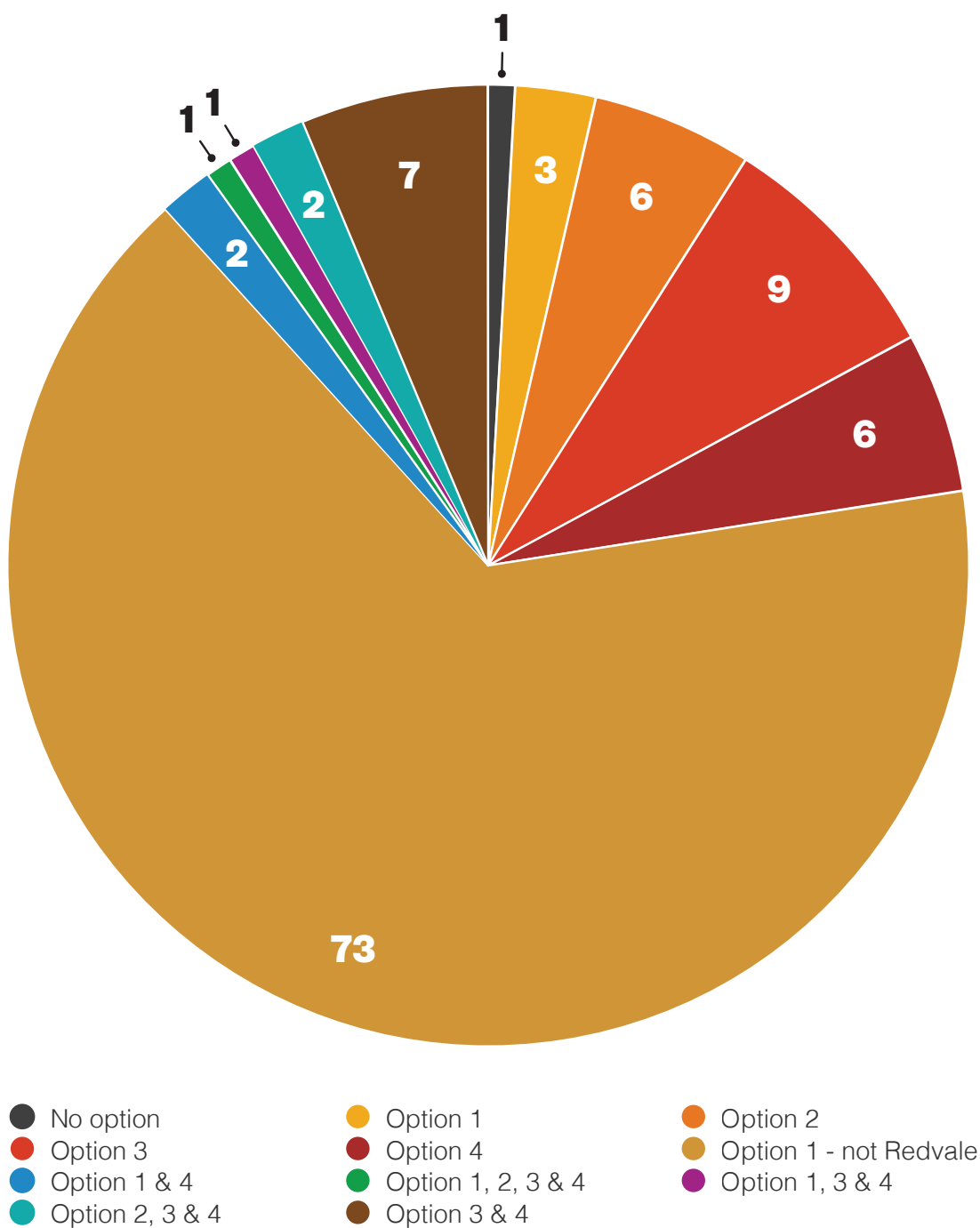


Submissions varied in focus, some expressed support for one or more of the presented options, while others used the consultation to raise broader concerns or suggest alternative ideas.

Quantitative summary of option preferences

Across the 111 written submissions received, preferences for the four presented options varied. We did not explicitly seek feedback if any options were opposed.

Results of ARLTP consultation





Option 1: Rebalancing Existing Landfills



Although there were concerns about Option 1, particularly Redvale, few submissions presented alternatives that could be delivered in time. This highlights the challenge of identifying both acceptable and feasible interim solutions.

In support of Option 1 were submissions which focused on existing WM landfills being the cheapest and easiest option and having excellent environmental controls in place.

Some of those opposed to Option 2 and the specific Wayby Valley site for ARL, supported Option 1. They argued that increasing capacity at existing landfills would create additional political pressure on Auckland Council to meet its 2040 zero waste targets.

A specific submission from a large customer of Redvale and a collections competitor to WM pointed out that diverting traffic to Hampton Downs was not feasible due to the capacity constraints of that landfill to accept loads on a timely basis. They themselves did not have the extra trucking capacity, nor the ability to fund this. Delivery to southern landfills would negatively impact traffic density on the Southern Motorway and create increased risk to Auckland with only one remaining landfill in the region. Although some construction and demolition waste may be diverted to a Class 2 landfill, the economic and practical difficulties of not being able to dispose of a significant portion of Auckland's residential and commercial waste at Redvale, until ARL was open, would be an obvious health risk for Auckland.

A major customer supported the recommendation for Options 1 and 4, emphasising the importance of combining Option 1 with Option 4 to work collaboratively on waste minimisation and resource recovery. They noted this approach aligns with Council's Waste Minimisation Plan. The submitter highlighted that alternative approaches would create suboptimal outcomes for ratepayers, including significant costs from transporting waste over much longer distances to alternative landfills. They also raised concerns about broader impacts on roading infrastructure, transport emissions, and traffic congestion. Additionally, they identified risks associated with relying on a single regional landfill, noting this creates vulnerability in the event of disasters that could disrupt access to waste disposal facilities serving the region.

Several submitters opposed any extension of landfilling at Redvale being included in Option 1. Key themes from submitters included a sense that the local Dairy Flat community had already done their part in managing Auckland's waste, and frustration the 2028 end to landfilling would now be extended. There were many comments about the effects of odour, noise, dust, traffic and pests on their daily life. Some submitters expressed disappointment that the community could miss out on the various benefits planned for the aftercare period, such as parks, walking tracks, and wildlife sanctuaries. Submitters raised several environmental and health concerns, including potential airborne contaminants and impacts on water supplies and soil quality. Many expressed worry about the landfill's proximity to Dairy Flat School and the planned Surf Park development. Property-related concerns included fears of reduced property values and restrictions on future development opportunities.

Several submitters expressed frustration that they perceived Auckland Council had allowed this situation to develop. Wellbeing impacts were also raised, with concerns about mental health effects and, in one case, impacts on pets.

While most submitters offered no alternatives, some suggested diverting waste to other existing landfills in other communities, pursuing Option 2 (building a new landfill), or exploring Option 3 (a waste-to-energy facility).

One submitter recommended that WM New Zealand engage an independent contractor to work with residents on how the community might benefit from any extension.

WM's view on feedback

WM appreciates the thoughtful feedback from all submitters and has carefully considered this initial feedback.

- The feedback presented outlined a clear dichotomy between the views of facility users and neighbouring residents.
- Feedback from users of the facility supported the evaluation as outlined by Tonkin + Taylor and reinforced that the assessment was appropriate.
- Neighbours to the Redvale facility felt that social and community impacts had been understated in the evaluation. WM has heard this concern and further consultation will be undertaken.
- WM acknowledges that any odour does have an effect on the local community and needs to be managed appropriately and minimised through best practice controls and consent conditions.
- WM has included an appendix with some specific responses to the concerns raised by the submitters that may be neighbours to our Redvale facility.

Option 2: Identify a New Landfill



The thematics of those which mentioned Option 2 in their submissions were:

- Many of the submitters who opted for Option 2 live near current landfill sites and wish for WM to seek an alternative site.
- One submitter felt the technology available at a new landfill would be far superior to that at existing landfills.
- One mentioned a class 2 facility could be constructed in time.
- Some comments were made on WM's perceived lack of competence to consent and develop the new Auckland Regional Landfill site in a timely fashion.
- Some objected to a new landfill site, particularly located at Wayby Valley due to perceptions regarding the volume of rainfall and natural ecosystems in the area and proximity to a busy road (noting SH1 will soon be relocated).
- One submitter opposed this option, as given more time at existing landfills, further pressure would occur to minimise waste and no new landfills would be required.

WM's view on feedback

- WM has conducted extensive site assessments in the selection of the Wayby Valley site for ARL. WM even suspended the Environment Court proceedings to reassess sites with appellants - this process did not identify any better available sites. WM maintains that the ARL site is the best location for north Auckland's future landfill.
- None of the other feedback provided a viable alternative landfill site.

Option 3: Alternative Technologies



- Many submitters talked about how New Zealand should follow Scandinavia, Singapore or Japan's approach to waste-to-energy incineration.
- Where benefits were outlined, these included power to the grid, heat, reductions to the volume of waste sent to landfill and emissions reduction.
- There were varied views on climate change impacts, with some noting that burning plastics could increase climate change, while others argued that emissions would be lower than produced by landfills, particularly with ultra-modern plants.
- A couple of submitters suggested that advanced thermal gasification technologies, such as plasma gasification or waste-to-hydrogen should be considered for residual waste.
- One submitter suggested that waste-to-energy plants should be located at all landfills, with employees sorting through the waste before it is chipped and fed into the plants.
- Some submitters were opposed to waste-to-energy plants, with one noting that disposing of mixed municipal waste through incineration is not desirable from a minimisation viewpoint.

WM's view on feedback

- WM keeps itself well abreast of waste-to-energy incineration plants, with its executive team visiting several plants through Asia, Europe and Australia, as recently as this month. Beyond Tonkin + Taylor's independent assessment of new technologies, WM has previously commissioned an independent Australian-based consulting firm for a review of the technical and commercial feasibility of waste-to-energy incineration being consented in New Zealand. WM has held discussions with the United States' largest waste-to-energy incinerator provider and technical suppliers of waste-to-energy incineration technology. WM's previous studies into plasma gasification and waste to hydrogen suggest the technology does not have the technical or commercial viability to solve the problem under consultation.
- No feedback received presented compelling evidence that the independent technical evaluation of Option 3 was inappropriate or required adjustment for reconsideration of the solution.

Option 4: Increasing Recovery ("Auckland Recovers More")



- The key thematics outlined are from strong advocates for a more robust and holistic approach to waste management in Auckland, moving beyond current recycling efforts towards a genuine circular economy. In essence, the feedback calls for a paradigm shift from managing waste at the end of its life to preventing its creation in the first place, with shared responsibility across producers, consumers, and Council, backed by strong policy and infrastructure.
- Submitters considered greater responsibility should sit with manufacturers, supermarkets, and retailers for the waste they create. The feedback included calls for mandatory product stewardship schemes, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and regulations on packaging (e.g., banning certain plastics, mandating refill/reuse systems, and a switch to compostable or truly recyclable materials. Japan's EPR was highlighted as a good model.



- Some submitters felt WM and Auckland's waste practices more broadly should prioritise waste reduction and reuse (higher up the waste hierarchy). The theme of moving beyond recycling to actively reduce waste at its source came through with some suggestions including mandatory refill and reuse systems in supermarkets (e.g., BYO containers), bans on problematic single-use plastics (e.g., plastic bottles, meat trays) and promotion of composting (both residential and commercial, potentially using advanced technologies).
- While better recycling facilities are mentioned, some submitters outlined cynicism about the effectiveness of current recycling ("recycling myth," items ending up in landfill).
- Some submitters called for investment in dedicated facilities for various materials, clearer waste sorting guidelines for residents, a focus on materials that are genuinely recyclable or compostable, and consideration of product return schemes (e.g., like Japan's).
- Some feedback spoke about material innovation and alternatives to plastic including minimising plastic use drastically, transition to natural, compostable (e.g., seaweed-based), or infinitely recyclable materials (e.g., PDK plastics) and mandate compostable packaging by a specific date.
- Some submitters agreed that enhanced infrastructure and investment was required including commercial composting facilities, dedicated recycling and drop-off points and potentially waste-to-energy technologies (as a way to reduce landfill, though this is mentioned less emphatically than reduction/reuse).
- A few outlined public education and behaviour change was required to raise awareness, encourage responsible disposal, and shift consumer behaviour.
- Some submitters outlined stronger regulation, consistent enforcement, and bold local policies were seen as essential to drive these changes to minimise waste and recover more.
- Some submitters, who are neighbours to a current facility, felt Option 4 should be explored.
- One submitter outlined that Redvale should have a large resource recovery park located on the site.
- Lastly there was an underlying sentiment that incremental changes are insufficient. The feedback calls for "bold," "monumental changes" and a systemic overhaul to achieve ambitious goals like Zero Waste to Landfill by 2040, with a desire to "do it once and do it right."

WM's view on the feedback

- WM is enthused by the passion around progressing waste minimisation and recovery from the consultation. WM is making investments in key recovery categories such as plastics, organics, cardboard, tyre processing, building and construction recovery, solvent and oil recovery.
- WM agrees that increased repair, reuse and recovery are important parts of Auckland's future system and will continue to invest and work with stakeholders, joint venture partners, businesses and residents to move towards this. However, the timing, infrastructure, and policy hurdles make them unlikely to address the immediate gap in 2029.

Qualitative feedback on the evaluation criteria and process

- Across the 111 written submissions received, few provided feedback that the evaluation criteria were insufficient to inform a recommendation. The Dairy Flat community expressed concerns that the social and community impact criteria may have been undervalued at a moderate rating, noting that impacts on immediate neighbours and property values appeared to have been overlooked in the assessment.
- Some submitters and stakeholders expressed frustration at the timing of the NZ Herald article, relative to community, iwi and community liaison committee briefings.
- Some felt it was none of Auckland's business and WM should only consult with neighbours, in contrast to some submitters who appreciated the consultation happening and that WM sought feedback.
- The value of landfilling and who financially benefits from the proposal were raised. These comments broadly reflected concerns about either the economic viability of the options or the motivations of a private company.
- Some criticised the level of detail provided and requested the underlying technical document be released.
- Another outlined it was impossible to complete a science-based approach as few, if any, in the community have the expertise to critique. In parallel, some felt that within Option 1 more detail should be provided about what was being proposed in order to provide substantive feedback.
- Some submitters close to the Redvale facility felt that WM had been disingenuous about not declaring the issue earlier.
- A few questioned Tonkin + Taylor's independence.
- One submission expressed frustration that 'consultation' and 'submission' language was being used, arguing that these should be part of an RMA process rather than a private company seeking feedback. This left some concerned that this consultation would be used to satisfy requirements in a Fast Track process.





WM New Zealand's response to some of the feedback on the process

- Once the option is identified and confirmed and an appropriate consenting strategy is determined, further consultation will be undertaken.
- Comments on financial benefits were heard and in general represented a misunderstanding of the economics of landfilling.
- Tonkin + Taylor is a highly respected environmental and engineering consultancy that consistently maintains professional standards and a prestigious reputation. The assessment was carried out by technical experts using established criteria and methodology, and their analysis is available for public review in the consultation document. Their report is one of several expert inputs into a broader, multi-stage consultation and assessment process. We've also engaged other independent advisors and will continue to do so as we move forward.





Our conclusions based on the consultation

The recommendation to pursue Options 1 and 4 appears most workable at this stage

WM believes that without the adoption of an appropriate solution, Auckland faces a real risk of running out of landfill space before the replacement facility (ARL) is available, placing higher costs on the community, potentially disrupting services and increasing illegal dumping.

Community input has provided valuable insight into how different parts of Auckland view the options and what matters most to different groups. While not every view can be acted upon directly, the submissions (although few in numbers relative to those who ultimately send waste to Redvale) help us understand expectations, concerns and opportunities.

The consultation surfaced a wide range of views and preferences. We've reflected on the diverse views shared through consultation and weighed them alongside time constraints, environmental goals, and practical delivery considerations.

Option 1, rebalancing use of existing landfills, currently stands out as the most workable option at this stage because it:

- Can be delivered within the required timeframe.
- Uses existing infrastructure.
- Provides operational certainty while longer-term solutions are developed.
- Has been independently assessed as lower-risk than untested alternatives.

Feedback supporting Options 2 and 3 did not provide sufficient evidence that suggested that the independent evaluation of the solution for solving the residual waste problem was incorrect.

WM will also continue to drive waste minimisation and increased recovery as part of Option 4. We thank the range of ideas provided and will work with stakeholders to pursue those technically and commercially viable at scale.

Next steps

We want to thank everyone who shared their views. Your feedback has helped shape our thinking. We will develop a more specific proposal which can be consulted on.

We acknowledge the strength of feeling among some community members and understand their desire for a greater voice in the process. As suggested by one of the submitters, WM New Zealand is engaging an independent consultant to meet directly with affected community members. These conversations are designed to listen, understand concerns in more detail, and explore ways forward that address community expectations while recognising Auckland's urgent waste needs.



Appendix: common concerns



Some topics were raised often and may benefit from further explanation. Most of these topics were raised solely by the Dairy Flat community near Redvale Landfill. The clarity below could support a shared understanding.

Redvale has a council approved comprehensive management plan which manages all aspects of the site. This covers how the site is constructed and operates. It outlines how we manage the safety of people, work with the environment, how we respond to emergencies. It overviews our daily practices around our waste acceptance criteria and how we manage things like odour, dust, stormwater, groundwater, leachate, birds and vermin, soil and erosion, landfill gas, traffic and litter. It also outlines how we work with our community.

Health concerns

We continuously monitor air and water quality around Redvale Landfill, including ongoing checks of groundwater, surface water, air discharges, and the Rangitopuni Stream.

Our comprehensive monitoring approach is based on the detailed environmental assessment completed during our resource consent application, which established clear limits for air emissions, soil, and water quality. These limits guide how we manage and monitor the site today.

When we test and monitor the water, soil and air we are monitoring for elements like arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, DDT, dieldrin, lead, mercury, nickel, PAH (BAP) equivalents and asbestos. Monitoring results consistently demonstrate that all measured parameters are below the safety levels set by applicable standards, including national environmental standards and international guidelines. We share these results with Auckland Council, ensuring accountability and transparency through this oversight. We also have third-party review through engagement of independent experts, reporting to the Council, and ongoing verification with the Peer Review Panel (PRP).

Our BeneVap system treats and evaporates leachate, releasing primarily water vapour and standard combustion products consistent with well-managed facilities. Any other compounds are present only in trace amounts, and all monitoring results remain within New Zealand's environmental standards and our strict consent conditions. This proven technology operates successfully at landfills throughout the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

School proximity and safety

Redvale Landfill has been a neighbour to the school since 1993 and we work with drivers to make sure they understand they are travelling through a community.

The traffic around the site is carefully managed and all trucks slow down as they approach the landfill entrance. Some trucks approach from the north using different routes, which means fewer heavy vehicles passing the school.





Noise

We understand that noise can be a concern for those living nearby. Redvale Landfill follows clear environmental rules with regular oversight, and we consistently meet these compliance requirements.

We continuously monitor operations to ensure noise levels stay within approved limits and provide sound walls around the generators. It's also worth noting that there are several other activities in the area that contribute to background noise.

Prior closure commitments

Auckland Regional Landfill (ARL) is the proposed replacement for Redvale, and we secured a consent in 2021 but have been subject to multiple appeals. Had the ARL consenting progressed as anticipated, it would have been ready to receive waste in 2028.

We thank the local community for outlining back to us our previous communications about the site and the aftercare use. In terms of community use, we've long said that once waste acceptance ends and the site is safely capped, parts of Redvale can transition to community use. This will happen gradually over the aftercare period, a process that unfolds over decades to ensure the land remains safe and suitable.

We're already making some areas available for public benefit. For example, the land for the local sports club was purchased and then sold back to the community for \$1.

We remain committed to future community and iwi use of the site, and this is being built into our long-term business and operational planning. WM will consult on these betterment options.

Property values

Redvale Landfill has been part of the local community for more than 30 years and follows clear environmental rules, with strong controls in place to manage odour, noise, and environmental effects. Independent monitoring consistently shows we're meeting those standards.

We know that perceptions can influence buyer interest and that property values are shaped by many different factors like the overall housing market, interest rates and local infrastructure, and other changes that would be expected to occur over a period of more than three decades.

Ongoing housing and infrastructure development in Dairy Flat reflects continued area confidence. Although property values softened recently, they are now strengthening after solid decade-long gains.

Pests

We carry out regular pest control measures to limit rodents and birds, including covering over the tip face (where fresh waste is deposited) with soil every evening.





Appendix: common concerns

Odour

We acknowledge that odour from Redvale Landfill may have an impact on those living nearby and it's one of the most frequently raised concerns.

We use the same complaint process for all properties. Any odour complaints are investigated, and we apply a continuous improvement approach to identify what's working, what needs adjustment, and where further investment is required.

We will continue to manage and improve systems to help reduce odour and its impact on the community.

Some submitters suggested should we go back to areas of prior waste placement, they would be particularly odorous. A landfill is continuously going back to previous sites.

Consultation

We've heard the concerns raised about communication and community involvement and we want to do better.

We've recently launched a new Dairy Flat Community Trust website to make information more accessible, and the Redvale Community Liaison Group continues to meet to provide a local forum for updates and feedback.

Surf park

We're aware of the surf park development nearby and welcome positive investment in the area. Our focus remains on managing the landfill to a high standard and ensuring operations remain within the limits set by our resource consents, and we'll continue to work constructively with surrounding developments. Just as we collaborate with local horticultural operations, there could be an opportunity to use local renewable power to fuel the surf park, making it an even more sustainable facility.





Let's take care of it

wm.nz

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