



Greater
Hume
Council



Waste Strategy 2019 - 2023

Adoption

Council adopted the Waste Strategy 2019 - 2023 on 17 July 2019.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Hume Waste Strategy 2019-2023 outlines the proposed management of Council's waste facilities, kerbside waste and recycling and other waste initiatives. This strategy provides recommendations that have been developed to align with the strategic focus of the waste service which are promoting affordability and accessibility, whilst minimising environmental and operational risks and remaining financially sustainability.

The strategy identifies the following recommendations:

- 1. Henty Transfer Station – The opening hours and budget remain unchanged**
- 2. Brocklesby Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged**
- 3. Burrumbuttock Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged**
- 4. Jindera Waste Management Facility - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged**
- 5. Holbrook Waste Management Facility - The opening hours will remain unchanged but the budget will revert to normal operating conditions**
- 6. Gerogery Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged**
- 7. Culcairn Waste Management Facility:**
 - a. The opening hours and budget remain unchanged; and**
 - b. Council further investigate the option of providing remote access by undertaking a design and construct tender to determine the merits of proceeding.**
- 8. Mullengandra Waste Management Facility – The opening hours and budget remain unchanged.**
- 9. Council not proceed to provide an events recycling trailer but continue to provide extra waste bins for events.**
- 10. Council develop reuse swap areas at its waste facilities with items being left and collected on free to take basis**
- 11. Council support any reasonable community initiative to undertake a hard waste collection by providing the following:**
 - a. Allocating a donation of \$2500 per club that is willing to undertake the collection;**
 - b. Allowing free access for the collected material to be disposed of at Councils waste facilities;**
 - c. Undertaking the advertising of the event and collating registration forms;**
 - d. Ensuring that a payment is received in line with Councils fees and charges for all mattresses, fridges and freezers and tyres that are booked in for collection.**

- e. Council fund the collection of any heavy materials and the cost of cleaning up waste facilities after the event.
- 12 . Council maintain its current fees and charges. Staff monitor the performance of the waste budget and retain surplus funds in reserve to permit holding further free open days at the waste facilities. With the exception of mattresses, fridges and freezers and tyres which would be charged at cost.
- 13 Council note that separate collection and processing of organic material will likely be a component of Councils next kerbside waste collection contract and the addition of this waste service will likely increase the waste charge levied through the rates.

2 INTRODUCTION

The objective of Greater Hume Council waste service is to be both affordable and accessible, whilst minimising environmental and operational risks and remaining financially sustainable.

This is the fourth waste strategy prepared by Council reflecting a commitment to review and change the waste service in response to a shifting operational context. It will be shown that Council's waste service is agile having responded to considerable change since the previous strategy.

This waste strategy covers the period 2019 – 2023 and it details the Council's waste service, issues that affect the waste service and provides recommendations where appropriate.

Matters discussed in the waste strategy are outlined below:

Current Waste Services

- Describing Council's current waste service which consists of:
 - What is currently provided to residents
 - The waste facilities including the opening hours; available equipment; services provided; changes made to the facility since the 2012-2017 waste strategy; proposals for future change; and details of Council's budget for each waste facility
 - Comparison of Fees and Charges of Council's waste facilities in comparison to nearby councils
 - Final budget position for the past five years.

Identifying Core Issues

- Identify the core issues that are influencing Council's waste service and then determining which of these issues will be the priority for Council to address in this strategy. These issues include:
 - a discussion about the developments in kerbside collection of recyclables and how these could potentially effect Councils waste operations
 - the effects of the NSW government Container Deposit Scheme and implications for event management and recycling;
 - The need for an event recycling trailer.
 - Initiatives to provide greater accessibility for residents to the waste service including options to provide savings or additional means for residents to dispose of waste/recycling.
 - Council's response to organic waste and whether change is needed.

Unlike its predecessors this waste strategy does not need to advocate for significant change.

The adoption of recommendations within past waste strategies has produced an outcome where this strategy can demonstrate that the stated objectives of the waste services which are accessibility, affordability, minimising risk and being financially sustainable are all being met.

3 WHAT IS CURRENTLY PROVIDED BY THE WASTE SERVICE?

There are many elements to Council's waste service which cater for the waste disposal needs of residents.

Residents of towns, villages and a considerable number of rural residents access a weekly kerbside garbage collection and fortnightly co-mingled recycling collection. For rural residents there is a front lift bin collection provided by several waste collection companies. Whilst this service is not available everywhere the collection footprint covers a substantial portion of Greater Hume. This service is subsidised by Council charging a reduced gate charge for disposal of the waste at Holbrook and Culcairn Landfills.

For commercial users, those without access to a collection service and for larger items there is access to Council waste management facilities. Landfills are provided at Culcairn and Holbrook. Transfer stations are provided at Henty, Gerogery, Mullengandra, Jindera, Brocklesby and Burrumbuttock. All of these are supervised for a certain number of hours and accept mixed waste, green waste, recyclables, E waste, tyres (only at Culcairn, Holbrook and Jindera) and bonded asbestos (only at Culcairn). There is the ability to accept house hold problem waste at all Council facilities which will be discussed further within this waste strategy.

It should be noted that with eight waste facilities, Greater Hume has more waste facilities than neighbouring councils - Lockhart having four facilities, five in the Federation Council area and a total of six in the Snowy Valley local government area.

4 WASTE FACILITIES

4.1 Henty Transfer Station

The transfer station at Henty has been constructed since the 2012-2017 waste strategy. The facility utilises a suitably constructed wall and drop off area which provides access for users to place their household rubbish into two large skip bins. The skip bins have the ability to be covered to prevent windblown litter. The risk of fire has been dramatically reduced since this site has become a transfer station.

Pic: Henty Transfer Station 1



At the Henty transfer station there is the ability to dispose of the following waste:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- metal waste.

All of the waste is removed from this facility to the Culcairn Waste Management Facility either for final disposal or for bulking up with other items for offsite disposal or recycling.

Currently the Henty transfer station is open the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month between 2pm and 5 pm.

The following table provides details of the Henty transfer stations budget, operating expenditure, revenue and level of patronage.

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$16,718.00
Expenditure year to date (ytd)	\$9,855.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$5,072.00
Patronage	1,800 visits/year (approximate)

There have been no requests for additional hours or complaints made in relation to the service provided from the Henty Transfer Station.

Recommendation 1

Henty Transfer Station – The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.2 Brocklesby Transfer Station

The Brocklesby transfer station is the smallest in the shire. The site has been converted from a landfill into a transfer station utilising a constructed wall and drop off area. The waste goes into a large skip bin that is then taken to the Culcairn Waste Management Facility.

At the Brocklesby transfer station there is the ability to dispose of the following waste:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal.

The facility is currently open 1st Sunday of the month 10am - 12pm and 3rd Sunday of the month 2pm - 4pm

Pic: Brocklesby Transfer Station 1



The following table provides details of the Brocklesby tips budget, operating expenditure, revenue and level of patronage:

Budget(2018/2019) recurrent	\$4,620.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$7,138.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$1,235.00
Patronage	710 visits/year (approximate)

Since the last waste strategy Council has received correspondence from the Brocklesby and Burrumbuttock representative committees which requested a change to the opening times for the waste management facilities that are located at Brocklesby and Burrumbuttock. The request was reported to Council at the June 2018 Ordinary Meeting and the hours have been changed.

A recent letter has been received regarding the new transfer station which requests similar facilities are provided to those delivered by Council's other transfer station. This is a reasonable request and was the intention of Council staff. The additional facilities such as household problem waste recycling and scrap metal collection will be provided as requested.

Recommendation 2
Brocklesby Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.3 Burrumbuttock Transfer Station

The Burrumbuttock facility has undergone significant and beneficial environmental projects as part of the Wirraminna Environmental Education Centres project to transform the site in 2005. The project has seen a positive impact on the landscape and the trees and bushes are well established.

The separation and classification of waste has been made possible through the use of signage for patrons to follow. Windblown rubbish is kept to a minimum through the use of skip bins and the risk of fire continues to be low.

At the Burrumbuttock facility patrons have the ability to dispose the following waste:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,
- used motor oil,
- used drums.

The facility is open 1st Sunday of the month 2pm - 4pm and 3rd Sunday of the month 10am - 12pm

The following table provides details of the Burrumbuttock transfer stations budget, operating expenditure, revenue and level of patronage:

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$10,132.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$7,583.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$3,257.00
Patronage	1,200 visits/year (approximate)

As mentioned above Council has received a letter regarding the opening hours at the Burrumbuttock which has been addressed.

Recommendation 3

Burrumbuttock Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.4 Jindera Waste Management Facility

The Jindera Waste Management Facility has undergone safety and procedure changes regarding the skip bins on site. Due to the safety risk that the bins pose, new caution and danger signage have been provided and the bright yellow and red signage provides patrons with ample warning.

The transfer facility is minimising risk and providing the council with valuable resources such as crushed concrete for road base.

The centre is processing waste and recycling waste efficiently, the site is presentable and organised which allows patrons to easily move throughout the station.

The Jindera Waste Management Facility has the ability to process:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,
- used motor oil,
- tyres,
- concrete rubble,
- household furniture.

The Jindera Waste Management facility is open 2pm-5pm Wednesday, 9am-12pm Saturday and 2pm-5pm on Sunday.

The following table provides details of the Jindera transfer stations budget, operating expenditure, revenue and level of patronage:

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$70,023.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$38,483.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$22,435.00
Patronage	2,600 visits/year (approximate)

Since the last waste strategy there has not been correspondence or complaints about the services provided at this facility. There has been a safety issue associated with a user of the facility and measures have been undertaken in response to this incident. Those measures have also been implemented at the other waste transfer stations.

Recommendation 4

Jindera Waste Management Facility - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.5 Holbrook Waste Management Facility

The Holbrook Waste Management Facility is located on Tip Road to the west of Holbrook. It is a landfill which receives kerbside waste from Holbrook and Woomargama. It also receives a considerable volume of waste from the contractor provided rural bin service and from rural residents.

The Holbrook facility has been used to receive asbestos impacted material that was generated in the demolition of over 40 buildings containing loose fill asbestos. It was anticipated that this material would significantly reduce available landfill space at the facility however this impact has not been as significant as first anticipated.

It has been difficult to manage runoff water at this facility and since the last waste strategy measures have been put in place to minimise environmental risk associated with the discharge of water from the site. The measures include a new lined evaporation pond and large waste water tank.

Pic: Waste Water Storage Tank Holbrook



The risk of fire at landfills is constant and to address this concern a firefighting trailer has been purchased. The availability of this equipment allows the waste operator or first Council responder to fight a fire before it gets a chance to spread and increase in magnitude. The increased storage of runoff water generally ensures that water is available for firefighting purposes.

The site has particularly benefited from the use of a purpose built garbage compactor which is kept at the facility. The machine has allowed greater compaction of waste to occur whilst minimising windblown litter.

All areas of the facility are clearly marked and directions are provided via the site office and signage.

Tip Road provides access to the facility, and this road has also been improved and upgraded as part of the Hume Highway bypass works.

The Holbrook Waste Management Facility has the ability to process:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,
- used motor oil,
- tyres,
- concrete rubble,
- household furniture.

The Holbrook waste management facility is open 2pm-5pm every Tuesday and Thursday, 9am-12pm Saturday and 2pm-5pm Sundays.

The following table provides details of the Holbrook Waste Management Facilities budget, operating expenditure, revenue and level of patronage:

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$181,967.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$70,781.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$1,103,825.00
Patronage	5,000 visits/year (approximate)

Note: The above figures are influenced by the Loose Fill Asbestos Demolition Programme which is nearly complete.

Since the last waste strategy the only correspondence received concerning the facility and the services provided has been in relation to runoff water, which has been adequately addressed.

Recommendation 5

Holbrook Waste Management Facility - The opening hours will remain unchanged but the budget will revert to normal operating conditions

4.6 Gerogery Transfer Station

The Gerogery facility transfers waste via covered skip bins to Culcairn for landfilling, which significantly reduces environmental risks associated with fire and windblown litter.

The signage around the centre is well displayed and people know where to put their waste. Services provided are listed below:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,
- used motor oil

The facility is open on the second and fourth Sunday of the month from 2pm-5pm.

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$14,396.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$7,822.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$3,290.00
Patronage	650 visits/year (approximate)

There has been an incident at this site which involved a fire lit by a Council staff member that spread outside the facility. The fire was controlled without causing any damage or injury.

Since that incident improved standard operating procedures have been developed around the use of fire for burning of green waste at Council's waste facilities and additional equipment has been purchased.

Recommendation 6

Gerogery Transfer Station - The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.7 Culcairn Waste Management Facility

The Culcairn Waste Management Facility is a landfill located to the west of Culcairn with access from Schnaars Road. The facility is centrally located in Greater Hume, has fewer environmental issues, than the Holbrook Facility and has considerable available space for landfilling waste. Consequently, it is the primary site for receiving waste from all kerbside collections other than Holbrook and Woomargama, all of the transfer station waste, rural bin waste, demolition waste and general usage.

Since the last waste strategy the following changes have occurred at the Culcairn Waste Facility:

- A Community Recycling Centre (CRC) has been constructed at the facility. It comprises a large Colorbond shed with an adjacent covered area. Users of the facility pass the CRC on entry to the facility and have the opportunity to deposit problem household waste which includes:
 - Batteries
 - Fluorescent Tubes
 - Household chemical
 - Paints
 - Batteries
 - Oils
 - Smoke detectors
 - Gas bottles and smoke detectors

Items left at the CRC are collected for further recycling. Problem household waste is collected at all of Councils waste facilities and then transported to Culcairn in a specially designed and constructed CRC trailer where they are sorted with other materials left at the CRC.

Pics: Problem household waste recycling trailer





- Considerable efforts have been made to minimise the risk of fire with the purchase of firefighting equipment and the installation of tanks for firefighting water.
- Cages have been purchased to enable to storage of mattresses for recycling



Pic: Mattress recycling cage

The Culcairn Waste Management Facility has the ability to process:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,
- used motor oil,
- tyres,
- concrete rubble,
- household furniture,
- car batteries,
- car wreckages.

The facility is open Tuesday 2pm – 5pm, Thursday 9am – 12noon, Saturday and Sunday 2pm – 5pm, (Closed Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$95,742.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$65,716.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$66,072.00
Patronage	6,500 visits/year (approximate)

The Culcairn waste facility has been used for receiving bonded asbestos and asbestos impacted dirt from the loose fill demolition programme. Receiving this material has utilised a considerable portion of available land.

The 2018-2019 budget contains an allocation for implementing remote access, some investigations have been done and the cost of providing weighbridges, cctv cameras, software and electricity to the site is preliminary quoted at \$200 000. The current budget has approximately \$120, 000 available for undertaking this work.

Whilst remote access to this landfill would support some small businesses in the shire it needs to be determined whether the costs out way the benefit of providing the enhanced service. It is considered that Council could call for tenderers to award this job which would determine a fixed price for undertaking this project and then the merits of proceeding can be considered.

Recommendation 7
<p>Culcairn Waste Management Facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opening hours and budget remain unchanged; and • Council further investigate the option of providing remote access by undertaking a design and construct tender to determine the merits of proceeding.

4.8 Mullengandra Transfer Station

The Mullengandra waste management facility is a transfer station located adjacent the Hume Highway off Bowna Rd. The facility is a three bay transfer station at which two large commercial skip bins are kept.

The facility is well managed and there has been no complaints concerning this site.

The following services are available at the facility:

- general solid waste;
- green waste;
- household problem waste (smoke detectors, paint, gas bottles, batteries, etc.);
- household electronics and;
- scrap metal,

The facility is open 1st Sunday of the month 2pm - 5pm and 3rd Sunday of the month 2pm - 5pm

Budget (2018/2019) recurrent	\$14,766.00
Expenditure (ytd)	\$7,921.00
Revenue (ytd)	\$3,948.00
Patronage	450 visits/year (approximate)

Recommendation 8

The opening hours and budget remain unchanged

4.9 Collection of Payment at Waste Facilities

The collection of payments from users of waste facilities is an issue that warrants consideration by this waste strategy. Currently staff collects cash payments which present a number of issues that are discussed below:

- Increasingly people are not carrying cash and arrive at a facility and then are unable to make a payment due to Council not accepting EFTPOS payments.
- Alternatively people are paying with large notes which can cause issues due to the modest cash float that is provided to the waste attendants.
- The high cost to Council of paying both waste attendants and Council customer service staff to reconcile small amounts of collected cash.

It is advised that Councils finance staff are assisting in obtaining EFTPOS facilities that can be used via mobile internet and it is hoped that the availability of the payment method will address the abovementioned issues. For a time EFTPOS facilities should be utilised in conjunction with cash payments however there would be an advantage in reducing the amount of cash collected at the waste facilities.

4.10 Halve Waste and Community Garage Sale

Council is a member of the Halve Waste Initiative along with Albury City Council, City of Wodonga, Federation Council and the Shires of Towong, and Indigo. The goal of Halve Waste is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by 50% by 2020.

Halve Waste provides information to resident as to how to best utilise the waste and recycling service in order to achieve the stated aim of reducing by 50% the amount of waste that is going to landfill.

As a result of participating in Halve Waste Council is also taking part with Garage Sale Trail for 3 years which commenced in 2018. Garage Sale Trail is described on their website as follows:

“Powered by 150+ local councils, Garage Sale Trail is an award winning community engagement program that promotes and encourages reuse and waste reduction in communities across Australia. Including a ten-week waste education campaign that runs from August - October, the highlight of the program is one big community building weekend of garage sales which takes place on **Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 October 2019**. The event gets over 350,000 Australians choosing to reuse.”

Garage Sale Trail provided a report on the outcome of the 2018 garage sale and the report indicates that 40 Greater Hume households participated in the Garage Sale Trail and it is estimated that 802 kg of material was sold at this event which saved a proportion of these items being sent to landfill.

4.11 Community Satisfaction Survey – Waste Service

The recent 2019 community satisfaction survey provided some feedback as to the performance of the waste service. It was pleasing to note that respondents rated waste collection as having the 2nd highest average satisfaction rating for Councils infrastructure and basic services. Unfortunately the level of satisfaction has reduced 0.2 pts to be 3.8 pts and the data indicates that rural residents and those aged between 35-49 and 50-64 are least happy with waste collection.

Overall satisfaction with the waste service was 10 pts beneath those of comparable councils.

In response to the survey it should be noted that the dispersion in the location of Greater Hume residents compared to other Council likely adversely affects the waste services satisfaction score. For example comparable Councils are likely operating less than 8 waste facilities and more likely operating larger facilities located close to a larger population centre and consequently they would be able to offer more opening hours.

5 COMPARISON OF GREATER HUME FEES AND CHARGES WITH OTHER COUNCILS

An analysis of Greater Hume fees and charges in comparison with neighbouring Councils has been undertaken and is included in **ANNEXURE A** and it can be observed that it is considerably cheaper to dispose of waste at Greater Hume.

5.1 The Waste Service Final Budget Position

The following graph shows the final budget position for the waste service for the past five financial years:

Budget Year	Income	Expense	Profit/(Loss)
2013-2014	\$ 913,688	\$ 883,976	\$ 29, 712
2014-2015	\$ 1,139,775 #	\$ 896,797	\$ 242,978
2015-2016	\$ 997,310	\$ 972,005	\$ 25,304
2016-2017	\$ 1,054,280	\$ 992,144	\$ 62,135
2017-2018	\$ 2,713,503 *	\$ 1,139,000	\$ 1,544,503

Notes: # Grant Income and a solitary cash payment affected this result when these payments are removed profit is \$ 87 978.

* Affected by Loose Fill Asbestos Demolition Programme

The details on fees and charges and the final budget position will be pertinent information when this waste strategy discusses additional means to provide access to the waste facilities and options for providing savings to ratepayers.

6 THE WASTE SERVICE AND RECYCLING

This section will discuss the recycling and waste material diversion component of Councils waste service. Since the previous waste strategy Councils efforts to divert materials from landfilling has increased primarily through changes at the waste facilities and Council has been affected by issues affecting kerbside recycling caused by the China Sword policy.

6.1 Waste Facility Recycling

At Council's landfill there has been a considerable effort to divert material from landfill and to be more environmentally conscious in dealing with materials at the landfill before they are recycled.

The recyclable materials collected at the waste facilities are the same as those collected by the kerbside recycling collection but other materials are recycled through the Community Recycling Centre and by other means.

The waste facilities are serviced each week by the same collection truck that undertakes the kerbside recycling collection. This is the most economical means to collect comingled household recycling as the truck is in the location of the waste facility and Council is charged on a per lift basis for a 240 litre wheelie bin.

Undertaking recycling at the waste facilities in this manner requires a large number of 240 litre recycling bins to be at the sites to ensure there is sufficient capacity for those who wish to separate the recycling from their waste.

Paper and cardboard is a high value recycled commodity and Council is paid a rebate for it and to collect paper and cardboard there are larger 3 metre bins at each site. There are 40 businesses in the shire which Council provides assistance to collect paper and cardboard and this collection occurs by the same truck collecting paper and cardboard from the waste sites.

There have been complaints about the inconvenience of people having to manually unload their recycling into the 240 litre bins and people would like the convenience of emptying directly into a skip bin. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is some inconvenience associated with the current practice, it was implemented because it is the most economical means to provide recycling into the waste facilities. Collecting 5 cubic metres of recyclable material using the current method, costs approximately \$120, whilst recycling the same amount using a skip bin could range from \$500-\$600.

The implementation of the Container Deposit Scheme in December 2017 had a significant effect on the volume of drink containers received at the waste facilities. It was common to receive a large volume of containers however that situation has now completely reversed as the containers are worth \$0.10 by redemption. Sporting clubs, event organisers and the general public are now unlikely to bring containers. As a consequence of the Container Deposit Scheme it is possible for Council to reduce the number of bins that are provided at the waste sites.

Whilst the current practise is inconvenient for users the cost differential between the current practice and the alternative is so significant that the current practice should be retained.

A discussion concerning recycling of problem household waste has been undertaken in the section of the strategy concerning the Culcairn Waste facility and as mentioned these material are collected via a purpose built trailer from all other waste facilities and taken to the Culcairn community recycling centre.

Council participates in the Drummuster programme at a number of its waste facilities. It is planned to request users of the programme to voluntarily provide their email contact so that details of the Drummuster collection can be sent directly to them.

Other initiatives to recycle material at the waste facilities include crushing and reuse of concrete and masonry and the rate charged is the same cost per metre that Council is charged to crush the material. Once the concrete and masonry is crushed it is a suitable road base and hard stand material and large quantities were used at the Holbrook works depot.

Pic: Crushed concrete waste



Council is recycling mattresses and lounge suites that brought to the waste facilities. These materials are difficult to landfill and often causing damage to the waste compactor. Recycling the material recovers the resources within them. To comply with Federal Government requirements Council recovers the refrigerate gases used in fridges, freezers and air-conditioners these items are then subsequently recycled for scrap metal.

6.2 Kerbside Recycling

Through a contract arrangement Council provides kerbside recycling to residential and some rural properties. Those properties are provided with a yellow lid bin and up to 17 different categories of materials are able to be recycled. Up until recently the recycling component of Council waste service has been quite static with Council and the contractor collaborating to provide education on the types of material that can be recycled.

The operational context for kerbside recycling has changed since February 2017 when China introduced the “National Sword” policy which restricted the importation of waste from other countries, reduced the permitted contamination rates of incoming material and limited the number of import licenses.

This policy has had a substantial effect on the Australian recycling industry as China currently processes approximately 50% of the world’s recycling materials and consequently can greatly affect prices paid for recyclable material. In particular the large scale importation by China of plastic material has meant that there has been little local investment to process plastics. Councils and others became used to paying very little for the disposal of plastic recycling materials as processors received reasonably high prices for mixed plastics. The effect of the “National Sword” policy has reversed this scenario and the price paid for mixed plastic has dramatically fallen.

The effects of China’s ‘National Sword’ policy has had a significant adverse effect on the recycling business of Councils kerbside contractor Cleanaway and at the November 2018 Ordinary meeting Council agreed to a contract variation to compensate Cleanaway for the effects of China’s ‘National Sword’ policy which was back dated to April 2018.

The issues with the recycling industry have not been resolved with many Victorian Councils being forced to landfill recycling. This situation has occurred due to a large recycling processor being ordered to cease taking more material due to the fire risk of having excessive stockpiles of recycling.

Currently Council is relatively unaffected by issues in the recycling industry with increased costs being negated by Council receiving short term funding from the NSW Governments Recycling Relief Fund and funds being paid to Council from a refund agreement with Cleanaway under the provision of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulation 2017*.

6.3 Events Recycling Trailer

There have been requests for Council to investigate providing an events recycling trailer for use at major sporting events and shows etc. Currently Council has extra waste bins available for events however there is no dedicated recycling infrastructure available.

It is considered that drink containers are the main recyclable material generated by events. The Container Deposit Scheme will significantly reduce the quantity of these materials left after events. The ability to collect \$0.10 per container will mean that people will collect the containers. Also the event organisers may want to collect the containers to claim the refund.

Recommendation 9

Council not proceed to provide an events recycling trailer but continue to provide extra waste bins for events.

6.4 Holbrook Landcare Silage Wrap Program

Since 2017 Council has contributed to the Holbrook Landcare silage wrap and twine recycling program. The initiative has involved Holbrook Landcare placing skip bins at Holbrook, Mullengandra, Culcairn and Burrumbuttock waste facilities for landholders to utilise to place their silage wrap and twine for recycling.

After collection at the waste facilities the silage wrap and twine is delivered to the recycler Plastic Forests in Albury where the material is dry cleaned and then recycled into products or into resin. To date the project has collected 34 tonnes of material. Holbrook Landcare's press release on their Silage wrap and twine recycling program is attached in **APPENDIX A**

Council has been supportive of this initiative as the project aligns with the objective that the waste facilities will increasingly be utilised as a place where items can be brought to aggregate to levels where they can be sent away for recycling. This means that valuable landfill space is preserved for future use and potential resources are not wasted. Another benefit is that silage wrap is a difficult material to landfill as the long lengths of strong material can result in damage to waste equipment.

6.5 Reuse Swap Collection Areas at waste facilities

Council frequently receives requests from residents to salvage items from its waste facilities. Currently Council does not accommodate these requests and to prevent the potential for injury or illness waste attendants are required to stop users of the waste facilities from scavenging items.

Increasingly items that could be reused such as bicycles and timber are being taken to Council waste facilities. If the issue around prevention of injury and illness can be resolved then it is beneficial for the environment that useable items are collected for potential reuse.

It is proposed that an area at each facility will be delineated for placement of items that could be reused. The waste attendants will ask people on entry if they think they may have items which could be reused and where that is the case they will be encouraged to place these items in the delineated area. No improvements to the delineated area are proposed other than ensuring safe pedestrian access and providing signage. The policy of no scavenging will still apply to the remainder of the waste facilities. The reuse area will operate on free to take basis with no payment for items being imposed.

Staff will need to develop some operational rules for the reuse swap collection area. Likely stipulations could be as follows:

- the waste operator will determine whether an item can be left for reuse;
- items that would attract a disposal/recycling fee for the depositor will not be accepted ie: No soft furnishing such as lounges, etc
- No electrical goods, power tools or anything potentially hazardous for reuse.

Recommendation 10

Council develop reuse swap areas at its waste facilities with items being left and collected on free to take basis

7 INITIATIVES TO PROVIDE IMPROVED ACCESS TO THE WASTE SERVICES AND SAVINGS FOR RESIDENTS

Frequently there are requests to provide additional ways to improve access to the waste service and find savings for residents to dispose of their waste. This section of the strategy discusses the merits in changing the waste service to accommodate these requests.

Previous waste strategies focused on finding savings as Council's waste service for many years ran at a substantial loss that was funded through general revenue. Through necessity the emphasis was to find strategies to provide a satisfactory service whilst addressing the loss. It is evident in the table of the waste services final budget position that Council has been successful and during a normal year a small profit has been generated to fund other Council activities.

7.1 Hard Waste Collection and Free Access Days

A recent hard waste collection held on March 3 was combined with a free access day to the landfills at Holbrook and Culcairn and the transfer stations at Henty and Jindera. The day would qualify as the largest waste initiative that has been held since the inception of Greater Hume Council. Consequently it is necessary to review the cost and effectiveness of this waste initiative in order to determine future measures to improve access to the waste facilities and find savings for residents.

The catalyst for the day was a request made by the Murray Jones from Holbrook Rotary Club. He indicated that the football clubs in Walla Walla, Henty, Holbrook, Culcairn and Jindera would undertake a hard waste collection with support from the Rotary club and the day could be held in conjunction with a free waste open day. Council considered the request at the December 2018 Ordinary meeting and determined to support the initiative.

After the December 2018 Ordinary Meeting the football clubs at Culcairn and Holbrook indicated to Council staff that they would not support the hard waste collection and so hard waste collections were held in Walla Walla, Henty and Jindera.

Council's support for the hard waste collection included promoting the event through various forms of media including town newsletters, commercial papers and radio opportunities. Council also undertook to collect registrations forms and organised for heavier items to be picked up by a contractor.

As the free day approached, Council staffs were advised that many people also intended to take full advantage of the free access day at the landfill. On the day there were people queuing in cars to enter the facilities and the number of entries was recorded at 579.



Pic: Jindera Transfer Station during the free access day held March 2019

The extent of the material collected and the forgone revenue is approximated in the following table

Table: Cost of Free Access Days held March 2019

Item		Town Pickups		Dropped off by Residents						Cost	Total
				cm3	Jindera	Culcairn	Holbrook	Henty	Totals		
Mattresses	143		55	35	22	26	276	\$28.00	\$7728.00		
lounges /couches	42		30	19	18	20	129	\$28.00	\$3,612.00		
lounge chairs	64			15	18	24	121	\$28.00	\$3,388.00		
Tyres = Approx average cost	10		50	50	82		192	\$15.00	\$2,880.00		
Fridges (un gassed)	64		37	3	16	8	128	\$25.00	\$3,200.00		
Washing Machines (plastic)	55		17	1	10		83	\$10.00	\$830.00		
General Rubbish - average Trailer cost	150			202	143	84	579	\$15.00	\$8,685.00		
			102				102	\$15.00	\$1,530.00		
Chargeable Items - Average item cost	100			211	23	22	356	\$10.00	\$3,560.00		
								Total Cost \$35, 413			

The listed items include mattresses, tyres, fridges etc. as these are expensive items for Council to collect. The gate fee for these items shown in the cost column is the same amount that Council pays to either recycle the item or to undertake a process such as degassing fridges.

It is apparent that significant quantities of high cost items were received and large volumes of general waste.

The total cost of forgone revenue far outweighed early estimates and was commensurate with the popularity of the hard waste collection and free day.

In addition to forgone revenue Council has incurred other costs to undertake clean-up activities after the hard waste collection and free access day at the landfills. These costs are shown in the following table:

Activity Undertaken	Cost
Hard Waste Contractor	\$4,000
Transfer Station Bin hire and Bin removal	\$6,640
Additional Waste Site Push up	\$600
Additional Labour	\$990
Total	\$12,230

Pic: Hard Waste Left for Collection



So the total cost for the first hard waste collection and free day is \$47,643.

It has been shown that the waste initiative was extremely popular. From inspecting the items taken to the waste facilities and those left for the hard waste collection it is apparent that many residents took advantage of the opportunity to discard unwanted or unserviceable items. It is hoped that some community satisfaction would be generated for Holbrook Rotary Club, the football clubs of Walla Walla, Jindera and Henty and Council.

The numbers of registrations for the hard waste collection illustrate that there is a demand from the community to access this service. It is apparent that even with volunteer labour the cost of the hard waste collection is substantial. The high costs were due to the volume of the material that was disposed of and the nature of the material which included large numbers of expensive items such as fridges, mattresses, lounge suites and tyres.

An advantage of the football clubs undertaking the hard waste collection was that they undertook the collection quickly meaning that waste material was not sitting on the kerb sides for long periods of time.

On the day after the hard waste collection a contractor utilised a skid steer loader and a truck to remove heavy items that were left behind. The time taken to perform that function meant that it is now possible to gauge the cost of undertaking a kerbside hard waste collection without community help. It is considered that the collection would take a lot longer and cost considerably more.

The items to be collected by the clean-up needs to be considered as some households placed numerous items out for collection that have a high disposal cost with some individual clean-ups costing well in excess of \$100.

If Council was to consider undertaking either an annual or biannual collection of all residential properties then to cover the cost of the collection the domestic waste access charge levied through the rates would need to be increased. Increasing the domestic waste charge by \$16.33 per annum would raise \$50 000 which could be utilised for a biannual collection.

Alternatively Council could support future community driven hard waste collections by adopting the following recommendation:

Recommendation 11
<p>Council support any reasonable community initiative to undertake a hard waste collection by providing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allocating a donation of \$2500 per club that is willing to undertake the collection;• Allowing free access for the collected material to be disposed of at Councils waste facilities;• Undertaking the advertising of the event and collating registration forms;• Ensuring that a payment is received in line with Councils fees and charges for all mattresses, fridges and freezers and tyres that are booked in for collection.• Council fund the collection of any heavy materials and the cost of cleaning up waste facilities after the event.

The hard waste collection has allowed an additional waste service to be investigated, whilst the free access day was a means of saving residents money to utilise a waste facility. The abovementioned table showed that there were at least 579 visitations to the waste facilities and so the initiative was popular with residents. The material that was disposed of was substantial and includes a high rate of expensive waste.

Perusal of Councils end of year financial positions for past years would indicate that regularly holding a free access day would not be sustainable and place the waste budget at risk of slipping into deficit.

The high cost of the free access day was due to Council accepting all materials free of charge. However considerable costs were also incurred due to the free access being available at the Jindera and Henty transfer stations. The bins at these transfer stations needed to be cleared before the day so that sufficient capacity could be provided and additional bins were hired. Even with these measures being implemented there was not sufficient capacity and users were directed to Culcairn or Holbrook Landfills.

There were also staffing issues associated with having the waste facilities open for the free day. Staff were overwhelmed by the number of users and in future if open days were to be held then a minimum of 2 staff per site would be needed resulting in even more costs. Considerable staff hours were utilised after the event to clean up the waste facilities to pre-open day standard.

Now that the shortcomings of free open days have been determined it is worth considering if there are other alternatives to providing savings to residents. To commence this exercise it is necessary to consider the comparison of Greater Hume's fees and charges in **APPENDIX B** compared to nearby Councils fees and charges.

It should be noted that for access to waste facilities Greater Hume is the 2nd cheapest with only Lockhart being cheaper and the difference between Albury, Snowy Mountain and Federation being quite significant.

(**Note:** to minimise environmental risks Greater Hume utilises transfer stations which are more expensive to operate than the landfills operated by Lockhart).

Both Albury and Snowy Valley Councils provide free access to their waste facilities. Albury City provides four free passes with their rate notices and Snowy Valley has frequent free access days but both have higher gate charges than Greater Hume.

If you are infrequent visitor to a waste facility there would be benefit from the Albury and Snowy Valley pricing however the low gate fee provides better value for frequent users of waste facilities such as rural residents of Greater Hume.

For example: If a rural resident accesses the waste facility with a trailer of waste per month then their annual cost at Greater Hume is $12 * \$15.00 = \180

Under the Albury City cost structure 4 visits would be free but then the remaining $8 * \$28.00 = \224 .

If Council wanted to provide saving to residents then one alternative is to lower the gate price. Administratively this would be the easiest option and it could be advertised that Council had lowered the access charge. Finally it should be noted that Council has been holding the gate charges for mixed waste at the same level for quite a few years.

Another alternative to save residents money would be the distribution of free access vouchers. To investigate this option it is assumed that the voucher would have a value of \$15.00 which is the cost to bring in a load of waste in either a utility or trailer. At a minimum Council would need to give each ratepayer with a dwelling two vouchers so the cost per ratepayer is \$30.00. Councils rates Department has calculated that there would be 4495 properties that would be eligible to receive the vouchers. So the face value of these vouchers will be \$134,850. The value of the vouchers is concerning because even if 60% of the vouchers are redeemed then the cost would be \$80,910 per annum and on a normal year this would mean that the waste service budget would be in deficit.

Increasing the gate charges would be the only way the waste budget could fund the waste vouchers and as shown in the abovementioned example on waste charges and usage this would benefit the infrequent user whilst penalising the frequent user. Also vouchers can be reproduced by people and specialised printing with a bar code and specific numbering would be needed to prevent misuse of the vouchers. Finally once waste vouchers are introduced it would be very difficult for Council to cease to offering the waste vouchers.

7.2 Free Access Day 6 April 2019

Due to staffing constraints it was necessary to provide a second free access day that was undertaken on the 7 April 2019 at the Gerogery, Burrumbuttock, Brocklesby and Mullengandra transfer stations.

Council undertook an extensive advertising campaign for the free access day and consequently a lot of residents took up the opportunity to utilise these waste facilities.

Transfer Station	Number of Visitation
Gerogery	65 visits most with large trailers and horse floats
Mullengandra	24
Burrumbuttock	33
Brockelsby	33

The standard open hours were changed on this day to operate from 9.00 am until 3.00 pm and these hours were selected so that people could be directed to the landfills at Holbrook and Culcairn if the transfer stations reached capacity. It was fortunate that this arrangement was made because the transfer stations did reach capacity despite additional bins being provided and cages being constructed so that waste could be placed on the ground.

The amount of expensive waste (tyres, white goods and mattresses) received was proportional to the volumes that were received on the first free access day. Also considerable expense was incurred in cleaning up the transfer stations through removing the waste that was placed upon the ground and removing the additional bins.

A number of issues were identified through the provision of the second free access day and these are discussed below:

- It is considered that having a second access day gave people another opportunity to access the waste service for free and this likely occurred at Gerogery.
- The transfer stations have difficulty in coping with free access days and quickly reach capacity. Despite there not being a charge people were unhappy when asked to take their waste onto Culcairn or Holbrook landfill.
- The changed hours at Mullengandra caused confusion as the day coincided with a normal opening time which is 2pm-5pm. Quite a number of people arrived to utilise the facility and found that it was closed. These people advised that they were simply unaware of the free access day and the changed opening time. Management apologised to these people and they have been provided with a voucher that will allow a free visit to the facility.

As a result of the abovementioned issues it is considered that any future free access day must be held across the shire on one day. This would result in less usage of the transfer stations and minimise the need for people to travel on to a landfill. Also the cost in cleaning up the transfer stations after the day would be reduced. Having the access day on one day should result in greater awareness of the day minimising the chance of people being unaware of changed opening times and then being inconvenienced.

Recommendation 12

- **Council maintain its current fees and charges.**
- **Staff monitor the performance of the waste budget and retain surplus funds in reserve to permit holding further free open days at the waste facilities (with the exception of mattresses, fridges and freezers and tyres which would be charged at cost).**
- **Any future free access days are provided for the entire shire on one day.**

7.3 Disposal of Organic Material

This is the first instance that a Greater Hume waste strategy will discuss organic material in the waste stream. Council receives organic material in its waste stream from the red lidded kerbside bins and from people bring green waste to the waste facilities. Organic material that is comingled with other waste is landfilled and green waste is either burnt or chipped and then disposed of by spreading over the landfill site.

The NSW EPA indicates that the organics component of mixed waste can be as high as 60% and when landfilled a valuable resource is lost and the harmful climate change gas methane is produced under anaerobic conditions. Another factor for reducing organic material from the waste stream is the high cost of landfilling which is due to EPA requirements for lined waste cells incorporating gas capture.

Councils are responding to environmental and economic factors to remove organic waste from their waste streams. It is typical now for a larger Council to utilise a three bin model with a Food and Organics bin collected weekly and refuse and recycling bins collected fortnightly on alternate weeks. The collected food and organics are normally taken for composting by large scale commercial operations that can utilise a range of technologies.

Smaller rural Council are also undertaking composting of kerbside food and organic waste and material received at their waste facilities. Coolamon Council has been at the forefront in this area and they undertake a kerbside collection of organics and carry out composting themselves at their waste facilities using open windrows. Recently Lockhart Council was successful in receiving a grant from the NSW EPA to undertake organic collections and they are investigating options and grant opportunities to process the collected organics.

The tender process to award Councils current kerbside waste concluded in 2011 and that collection contract commenced in June 2012. For the tender process Council collaborated with neighbouring Councils and consideration was given to adopting a three bin model with most of the Councils electing to take that option. At that time Council did not proceed with the weekly food and garden service as the cost increase of \$96.00 for Greater Hume was considerably higher than the other Councils. Instead of proceeding with the weekly food and garden waste service Council elected to undertake an education campaign of residents encouraging home based disposal of organic material. Since that decision Council has held two comprehensive efforts to promote home composting.

Given the cost of the food and organic collection in 2012 the decision to not take that service at that point in time had some merit. However when the contract expires in June 2023 there would be very few Councils that will not separately collecting food and organic material. At that time it is foreseeable that Councils cost to landfill could have increased considerably as Council may have constructed lined waste cells that incorporate gas capture.

Recently Council staff has been investigating composting options for the green waste that is left at Council waste facilities as Council practice of burning the material is not sustainable for

the long term. Unfortunately the option of composting the green waste appears to be limited because Councils research indicates that typically effective composting requires incorporating a proportion of nitrogen rich material commonly found in food materials.

Before the expiry of the current kerbside collection contract Council needs to be actively investigating what will be the best option for Council. It could choose to make the collection and processing of organics part of the next kerbside collection contract. Alternatively it may undertake composting of material itself or partner with a local business to undertake composting and then the next contract would only be for collection of organic material. The decision as to which option to select will be made on cost and operational factors.

Recommendation 13

Council note that separate collection and processing of organic material will likely be a component of Councils next kerbside waste collection contract and the addition of this waste service will likely increase the waste charge levied through the rates.

8 CONCLUSION

The Greater Hume Waste strategy 2019-2023 differs from previous waste strategies as the focus of this strategy has been to advise Council of the current state of the waste service, identifying macro issues impacting upon the waste service and investigating opportunities for enhanced access for residents to use the waste service and providing savings for residents.

The recommendations provided in this waste strategy have been developed to align with the overarching strategy of Greater Hume waste service which are promoting affordability and accessibility, whilst minimising environmental and operational risks and remaining financially sustainable.

Media Release – Silage wrap and twine

Managing the ethical disposal of silage wrap and twine is an issue for most livestock producers and the problem has certainly been exacerbated by the ongoing drought. This otherwise unusable bioproduct of feeding animals during dry times has significant environmental impacts to the soil, through contamination and leaching, as well as impacting wildlife and livestock via ingestion and entanglement. Previous options for this waste product have included stockpiling, burning and burying, however a recycling alternative has been a patchy at best throughout Australia.

Holbrook Landcare Network first implemented a pilot program specifically for recycling silage wrap and twine in 2017, providing farmers with an opportunity to address the waste plastic issue. The pilot received a hugely positive response from farmers, providing a free and easy to use opportunity to recycle on farm plastics. Landholders can take their silage wrap and twine to participating landfill sites within the Greater Hume Shire, and place in the skip bins provided specifically for this project. The skips are then delivered to recycling company Plastic Forests in Albury.

Plastic Forest is the first company globally to commercialise a dry cleaning process to recycle contaminated plastic film without using water. The plastic film is recycled into resin which is then sold back into the plastics industry or manufactured by Plastic Forests into a range of sustainable products including underground cable cover, garden edging and root barrier. Managing Director of Plastic Forest, David Hodge, has been hugely supporting of our silage wrap and twine recycling project, providing us with a local opportunity to sustainably dispose of this plastic waste and significantly reducing transport costs.

To date around 34 tonnes of silage wrap and twine has been dispatched to Plastic Forests in Albury for recycling over the last 18 months, and the uptake of participation continues to increase. There has been significant interest from surrounding landcare groups, councils, REROCK members and waste management businesses who want to set up a similar process in their region. Holbrook Landcare is keen to share its knowledge and methods with these groups.

However the question that need to be answered by regional bodies is how can we continue this process after our project funding ends in 2020? Holbrook Landcare is looking for key personnel who are interested in supporting a farm plastics recycling opportunity into the future, long after our project funding ends.

To take part in this project, participants can collect recycling bags from the Holbrook Landcare office, Culcairn Shire Council Office or Wiramina Environmental Education Centre at Burrumbuttock. Participating landfill sites include Holbrook, Culcairn, Burrumbuttock and Mullengandra.

We would like to thank Greater Hume Shire Council for their ongoing support, and the National Landcare Program for funding this project.

For further details please contact the Holbrook Landcare Office, T 02 6036 3181 or email phoebe.gulliver@holbrooklandcare.org.au.

APPENDIX B

Councils Comparison Table	AlburyCity	SnowyValleys	Federation	Greater Hume	Lockhart
Single Axle Single axle trailer	\$28	\$25	\$40	\$15	\$10
Tandem Trailer	not available	not available	\$40/m ³	\$15/m ³	\$15
Trucks	not available	not available	not available	\$15/m ³	\$60
Commercial Waste	\$152/tonne	\$52/m ³	\$60/m ³	\$20/m ³	\$110
Washing Machines	not available	not available	not available	\$10	not available
Asbestos	\$360/tonne	not available	not available	\$150/tonne	\$250 initial fee + \$50/m ³
Batteries	free	no charge	not available	no charge	free
Concrete	\$57/tonne	not available	not available	\$48/m ³	not available
EWASTE (gaming consoles etc.)	free	no charge	not available	\$4 each	not available
EWASTE (computers, monitors etc.)	free	no charge	not available	no charge	\$5
Fill – Clean Fill	not available	not available	not available	no charge	not available
Fill - Contaminated	not available	not available	not available	\$20/m ³	not available
Fridges (Gassed)	\$18 each	POA	not available	\$25 each	not available
Fridges (UnGassed)	not available	not available	not available	no charge	not available
Green Waste	\$57/tonne	\$10/m ³	\$20/m ³	\$7/m ³	free
Mattresses, Couches, Lounge Chairs	\$33 each	\$27 each	\$30 each	\$28 each	charged (no fee provided)
Bed & Base	\$53 both	\$32 bed & base	not available	not available	not available
Oil	free	no charge	not available	no charge	free
Scrap Metal	free	no charge	not available	no charge	free
Tyres – car or motorcycle	\$7 each	\$8 each	\$15 each	\$8 each	charged (no fee provided)
Tyres – Light truck and 4WD	\$15 each	\$20 each	\$40 each	\$10 each	charged (no fee provided)
Tyres - Truck	not available	not available	\$80 each	\$26 each	charged (no fee provided)
Tyres – Super single & Small Tractor	\$85 each	not available	\$110 each	\$40 each	charged (no fee provided)
Tyres Tractor	\$160 each	\$120 each	\$110 each	\$100 each	charged (no fee provided)



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