

8.3**Belrose Waste and Recycling Centre – Draft Future Use Concept Plan**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The report discusses future use at the Belrose Landfill site following the cessation of landfill operations as outlined in the WSN report 'draft Future Use Concept Plan for Belrose Landfill, February 2010'.

Summary

At its Ordinary Meeting of 8 December 2009 Council considered a background report outlining the history associated with the development of concepts for recreational re-use of the Belrose Landfill site upon cessation of land fill operations. At that time it was recommended that a future report be presented to Council following the exhibition by WSN Environmental Solutions (WSN) of its proposed future concepts for the site. This report summarises the WSN Concepts and provides a recommended position for Council.

Financial Impact

The preferred option – Combined Passive Use (informal recreation) is the most financial viable option presented and provides for a community asset for 50 years.

Policy Impact

There are no direct policy impacts associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION OF DIRECTOR STRATEGY AND POLICY

- A. That Council provide in principle support to Option 1 – Combined Passive Use (informal recreation), Belrose Landfill site
 - B. That further investigation of options, available funding and opportunities for third party involvement in future recreational uses at the Belrose Waste and Recycling Centre be referred to the NSW Government for consideration.
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REPORT

Background

WSN Environmental Solutions (WSN) owns and operates the Belrose Waste and Recycling Centre located at Crozier Road, Belrose. Landfill operations are due to close in November 2014 and the final landform is subject to a positive covenant. A report considered by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 8 December 2009 provides additional historical information related to proposals for recreational use at the site.

The landfill site when closed will be approximately 35 hectares in size and is characterised by two large plateaus surrounded by extremely steep slopes with terraced benches.

WSN Draft Concepts

The current draft concept plan prepared by WSN was recently placed on exhibition by WSN with submissions being received till 15 April 2010. The plan includes three proposals for future use with funding and maintenance scenarios provided from the estimated \$3.49M Enhancement Fund held by WSN. These options are summarised below. Indicative capital cost estimates have been provided with a residual component shown for operational and maintenance costs. It is important to note that Option 1 provides for ongoing maintenance and operational costs which terminates after 50 years. Options 2 and 3 have maintenance and operational allocations that are exhausted after 11 years. It would then be the responsibility of a 'third party' to provide for these ongoing costs and not WSN.

1. Option 1 - Combined Passive Use (Informal recreation)

This concept includes developing typical park facilities such as walking trails, grassed areas with picnic tables with the potential for an unleashed dog exercise area. As with all options, site access is constrained and access limited to daylight hours and no amenities are provided for. It should be noted that building amenities or similar structures are problematic on a former land fill site of the nature of the one at Belrose. Some form of portable structure may be possible, however this would reduce the maintenance and operational funding if added to the concept.

Option 1 is the most financially sustainable option and does not rely on a third party to manage the site. Site risks are lowest and there is minimal conflict with land fill infrastructure (e.g gas wells). This option is also least likely to be affected by land fill stability.

2. Option 2 – Dedicated horse riding and training facility

This option includes a horse arena area with associated car park on the plateau area. This greatly increases the initial capital outlay from the Enhancement Fund resulting in funding for operations and maintenance being exhausted in 11 years. A passive open space area is also provided in this option.

Council currently provides a riding arena at JJ Melbourne Hills Memorial Reserve in Terrey Hills which is currently used mostly by Forest Hills Pony Club. Council also has responsibility for the arena at Anembo Reserve in Duffys Forest. More widely there are also facilities at Frenchs Forest Show Ground and in Ku-ring-gai LGA at St Ives Show Ground.

WSN state that this option would have higher maintenance costs and would represent a 'high risk' activity. This option can only proceed if a third party agrees to manage the site with associated insurances. WSN have stated that the third party must be able to demonstrate sufficient organisational capacity to manage the site.

3. Option 3 – Dedicated Mountain Bike Riding tracks

This option could potentially meet some of the demand for mountain biking in the region. Track options able to be supported at the site include 'cross country' and 'downhill'. This would enable

around 800m in track supporting a 2.5 minute ride and would be mostly dedicated to mountain biking with limited open space remaining.

WSN have identified this option as being of a medium to high capital costs with operational and maintenance funds lasting 11 years. Again, a third party would need to manage the site with necessary insurance and organisational capacity. WSN state that this option is high risk with particular attention being drawn to conflict with site infrastructure (gas wells and environmental monitoring equipment).

Risk Considerations

a) Settlement

The land fill area will continue to differentially settle over time. WSN have a responsibility to essentially make safe any areas that are affected by this settlement, however are not responsible for repairing or replacing any site improvements affected by settlement. The site can be expected to settle and makes provision of ancillary infrastructure difficult and costly.

b) Odour

Minor odour issues will continue on the site for an extended period. Whilst WSN have addressed any health issues associated with the off-gasing from the site, the odour present may detract from the enjoyment of the site and would potentially reduce visitation to the site.

c) Liability

WSN have indicated that they are to manage the site if Option 1 is selected. Options 2 and 3 however require a third party to assume operational liability for the site.

Consultation

WSN have conducted consultation with their Community Advisory Committee, Council staff, Manly Warringah Mountain Bike Club and North Shore Horse and Pony.

Land Use Planning

The future zoning of the WSN site will need to be addressed once the desired uses are established. The site may need to be subdivided and rezoned to reflect the different uses that may be in existence on the site. The proposed zoning of SP2 under Draft WLEP 2009 may not be appropriate for the entire site once the tip use ceases and an alternative use such as private open space is proposed. It is noted that if land is to be zoned Public Open Space then this could place an acquisition liability on Council that is presently not funded.

Timing

The land fill operations are due to complete in November 2014.

Policy Impact

There are no direct policy impacts associated with this report.

Financial Impact

The cost estimates are shown in Attachment 1 of the Plan and listed over.

The 'third party' operator of the site required by WSN for Options 2 and 3, it would require annual funding of a minimum of \$170 000 per annum. This would require allocation of significant additional resources once the 11 year allocation from the Enhancement Fund is exhausted. It should also be noted that this estimate is a base amount and relies on typical estimates for asset renewal. It is not unrealistic to expect the actual costs to be higher given the uncertain nature of the landfill.

For the purposes of the concept planning the annual maintenance and operating costs have been estimated as a percentage from the capital outlay and as such can not be said to represent what may be the actual running costs. Whilst indicative for supporting maintenance of assets, they do not detail how actual operations would occur. For example, the cost of supervisory staff or insurance to operate options 2 and 3 has not been taken into consideration.

Preferred Option

It is clear that there is a significant ongoing financial liability associated with options 2 and 3 that would limit the use of the site beyond 11 years should there not be a sufficiently capable third party operator able to cover the ongoing costs. Council would be required to divert significant resources to the site and assume liability for activities were it to consider becoming the third party site manager.

Option 1 is the most financially viable option that would provide a community asset for at least 50 years with no cost to the local community. Additionally, option 1 does not preclude future uses being considered at some point in the future given the low level of capital investment and site changes proposed.

Director Strategy and Policy



Estimated Costs



Appendix I: Estimated Costs

Cost	Option 1 Combined passive use	Option 2 Dedicated horse riding and training area	Option 3 Dedicated mountain bike riding tracks
Preliminary Concept design Detailed design Planning approval Project management	\$216,000	\$240,000	\$240,000
Construction (refer to items under each option)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access (via Bundaleer St) \$16.3K - Site preparation \$5.6K - Fencing of site infrastructure \$216K - Additional landscaping \$10K - Picnic tables \$6K - Signage \$7.5K - Off leash dog area \$2K - Walking trails \$90K - Artwork/ Sculpture \$2K 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site preparation \$90K - Fencing of site infrastructure \$216K - Internal road (access) \$350K - Removal of old weighbridge \$50K - Additional landscaping \$10K - Arena construction & fencing \$286K - Picnic tables \$8K - Signage \$7.5K - Parking \$170.5K - Horse/pedestrian paths from car park to arena \$3K 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site preparation \$18K - Fencing of site infrastructure \$216K - Internal road (access) \$350K - Removal of old weighbridge \$50K - Additional landscaping \$10K - Construction of mtn bike tracks \$279.4K - Picnic tables \$6K - Signage \$10K - Parking \$130K - Path from car park to start/end \$22.5K
	\$426,698	\$1,429,786	\$1,419,677
Operating Annual maintenance (7%) Overheads (management costs) (3%)	\$51,204	\$171,574	\$170,361
TOTAL	\$693,902	\$1,841,360	\$1,830,038
Years of available funding	50	11	11

Note: Costs have been rounded