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City of Cockburn

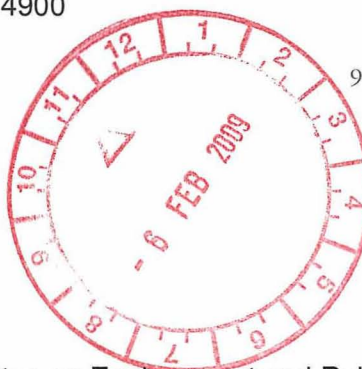
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Committee Clerk
Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: Submission to the State Inquiry into Municipal Waste Management

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the Inquiry into Municipal Waste Management.

The City of Cockburn is an active participant in the world of waste management. It is a Member Council of the SMRC (own and operate Alternative Waste Treatment facilities - AWT) and it owns and operates the Henderson Waste Recovery Park (HWRP). Both of these facilities cater for in excess of 350,000t of municipal and commercial waste. The City has invested much capital and time in endeavoring to evolve our waste management businesses; however, what is essential is a government that is prepared to show leadership and to give very clear direction on the future of waste management in this state. The government must decide how waste management will be addressed in the future, the timeframes for the development and where waste management facilities will be located. A State Waste Management & infrastructure Strategy will facilitate this.

A strategic direction which details locations and types of alternative waste treatment processes (AWT's) needs to be developed which considers the ongoing sustainability and viability of these types of facilities. The cost to establish AWT's are significant and well beyond the capacity of local governments to fund their development and implementation. Local governments have joined forces to form larger Regional Councils in an effort to address the issue of waste minimisation however they struggle to look beyond their municipal boundary. A State Waste Management & Infrastructure Strategy is necessary to guide the development and implementation of the necessary infrastructure required to meet the demands of waste management in the future and considers alternative disposal mechanisms. Until we have alternative disposal options provided at a reasonable cost it will be difficult to reduce our reliance on landfill.

The City would contend that the state requires more capacity to deal with waste disposal going forward. Recent analysis will confirm that waste generation is directly proportionate to the economic prosperity of the state. Whilst WA is coming out of a 'once in a generation' boom, throughout that boom waste generation in WA peaked at 2.4t/person, the highest across Australia. Whilst the government strategy of 'towards zero waste' is an important goal, it must be clear in how it can strive to achieve this goal. Does the government understand what the capacity will be for waste disposal in the future and how that demand will be met? AWT does not remove the need for

landfill and the technology is still being proved. AWT is expensive to establish and operate. The fact remains that landfill will provide an essential role in the waste disposal hierarchy in the future. Our challenge is to ensure that we are minimising the quantity being landfilled. Whilst the demand for waste disposal is currently being met by others, how would the government react if the demand outweighed the capacity to dispose?

The City is keen to be involved in the solution. It has a strategic plan to expand the operation at the HWRP to accommodate and process commercial waste streams so as to divert waste away from landfill. The project and vision is a holistic approach to waste management which seeks to address collection as well as disposal. Unfortunately the project has been stymied for almost 2 years due to a number of uncertainties surrounding the future planning of the area and an apparent lack of understanding across the various departments of government on the waste management needs into the future. HWRP is located in the Hope Valley Wattleup Redevelopment Area (currently known as latitude 32) that is controlled by the WAPC and Landcorp.

Of significance is the lack of clear land planning direction over the site and the contention that waste management cannot coexist in this landform. The City would contend that a properly managed and integrated waste management facility could be the benchmark development for this industrial precinct. A waste management facility that caters for all waste streams including C&I, C&D and which incorporates a range of technologies to separate, process and minimise waste is consistent with the government's current stated direction. Landcorp however have developed a Planning Strategy with zones that significantly restrict the expansion of the HWRP. Landcorp have also proposed to establish an intermodal facility in close proximity to HWRP. Some of the options that are currently open for public comment completely cover the HWRP; however, the preferred model quarantines a significant portion of land on the east of the Site. Until this Intermodal Facility is finalised the City cannot proceed with any confidence to invest in technology.

The HWRP lined cells are ideally located in disused limestone quarries. The practical expansion of our facility is to the north toward another completed limestone quarry; however, current zoning will not permit the Cockburn Cement land (General Industry) to be used as Resource Recovery. It is the City's vision to develop RDF on our site that will comply with the DEC standards to power industry and wind/solar (thermal or PV) farms on the capped landfill cells to further enhance the renewable energy generated from the HWRP. We believe that our current and planned uses for this site blend well with the existing and future zoning of the area should our or additional adjacent land be rezoned to Resource Recovery.

Waste management is an essential service and one which the community of Western Australia takes for granted. It is time for a review and it is time to take definitive steps towards a real solution for waste management into the future. We look forward to the outcomes of this inquiry and are happy to continue to be part of the solution.

Yours sincerely,



MICHAEL LITTLETON
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING & WORKS