

Strategy for management of former landfills within an urban area

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Waste management is a core activity for government. Landfills remain a key component of those activities. Expectations on best practice in managing landfills has changed significantly with an increased focus from regulators and the public on the appropriate management of landfills. This also applies to former landfills where operations ceased decades previously and urbanisation has since encroached on the site.

Council has been given a range of directives and encouragement by the State Government through the Environment Protection Authority and the Victorian State Government Auditor General's Office to identify and manage former landfills.

Since 2011 the City of Whitehorse has been allocating recurrent, capital and reserve funds to investigate, treat and as appropriate monitor, environmental land management matters on former landfill sites.

Council approved the Environmental Management Strategy for Former Council Landfill Sites in February 2012. The implementation of this Strategy has been a major undertaking for Council.

A 2013 risk assessment of Council land identified six former landfill sites potentially requiring implementation of environmental land management actions. The allocation of funds from the Waste Management Reserve enabled the planning and preparation of Landfill Aftercare Management Plans and for necessary capital environmental projects at these sites. These works are expected to be completed by 2020 with ongoing recurrent funding required for the monitoring of environmental land matters at these sites.

Council has extensively invested in training to improve individual and organisational capacity to manage these issues. Through this investment, Council officers have developed considerable knowledge to manage former landfill sites with the assistance of suitably qualified consultants.

The paper and presentation will inform Conference delegates of the activities undertaken and planned to meet the requirements of regulators and manage the significant environmental land management risks of former landfill sites in the City of Whitehorse.