



COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	13.03.06
Report Title:	Disposal of Contaminated Concrete Waste Stockpiles from Council's Waste Transfer Stations
Author and Recommending Officer:	Rodney Jessup, Director Infrastructure and Operations
Meeting Date:	20/08/2024
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding the ongoing management of disposing of the contaminated concrete waste at the Humpty Doo and Howard Springs Waste Transfer Stations and seeks approval of budget from the Waste Asset Reserve to dispose of the contaminated stockpiles.

Recommendation

THAT Council resolve to commit a Budget of \$3,000,000.00 to disposing of the contaminated concrete waste piles from Howard Springs and Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Stations. The budget is to come from the Waste Asset Reserve.

Background

On Tuesday 25 June 2024, NT Environmental Protection Agency (NTEPA) Inspectors attended Howard Springs and Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Stations to inspect the construction waste stockpiles. Whilst on site the inspectors observed material with potential to contain asbestos, and as such collected four samples of the suspected asbestos material for laboratory identification at both Humpty Doo and Howard Springs Waste Transfer Stations.

On Tuesday 2 July 2024, the analysed samples resulted in three of the four samples collected at both sites identified as containing chrysolite asbestos.

Under our licences Asbestos is not permitted to be stored in either location. As such on Thursday 11 July 2024, NTEPA issued a direction to cease all activities associated with crushing and distribution of construction waste from the stockpile, effective immediately.

To comply with the direction Litchfield Council staff have arranged for the stockpiles to be temporarily fenced and a separate 'clean concrete' stockpile will be set up for residents to unload.

Council staff through consultation with relevant qualified contamination specialists, have obtained an estimate for disposal of the contaminated piles.

Site	Estimated Cost for Disposal and Remediation
Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station	\$1,604,559.00 inc GST
Howard Springs Waste Transfer Station	\$1,172,864.00 inc GST
Total	\$2,777,423.00 inc GST

The current balance of the Waste Asset reserve is \$5,482,478 as at the end of 2023/2024 Financial Year. With the proposed works expected to cost in the vicinity of \$3.0mil when considering contingency, this is expected to make a considerable dent in the reserve that can or should be used for upgrading, increased recycling capabilities and more efficient operations of the facilities.

As presented in recent Council reports and the proposal to discontinue the acceptance of commercial concrete waste, the implementation of the recommendations from that report, should significantly reduce the likelihood of further contaminations or at a minimum reduce the size of stockpiles that could be contaminated.

Further to the above NTEPA advice, a Show Cause letter was received on 13 August 2024 in relation to offences and contravention of licenses under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998.

Based on this further correspondence it is imperative that Council deal with the current contaminations as soon as practicable. On approval of the Budget allocation, Council staff are looking to put the works to Tender with the aim for award by the end of October 2024. It is important that as much processing and disposal work can occur prior to the wet season setting in, to ensure water runoff and paying increased mass of waterlogged waste can be reduced where possible.

Links with Strategic Plan

Progress - Continuity of Services and Facilities

Legislative and Policy Implications

FIN04 Financial Reserves
Waste Strategy 2018-2023
WHS01 Work, Health and Safety
Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998
Environment Protection Act 2019

Risks

Financial

The disposal and processing of these contaminations will make a significant dent and reduction in the Waste Asset Reserve. Considerations on this impact need to be managed in allocating any further budgets from this Reserve, noting the reserve is set aside for future expansion and/or the likely requirement at some point for Council to rehabilitate both the Howard Springs Land fill area and the old Humpty Doo Land fill site.

Governance

The current Waste Strategy expired in 2023 with work to commence on a new strategy in early 2025.

Likewise, Council does not currently have an Environment or Waste Management Policy, only what exists in our Work, Health and Safety Policy and the guidelines provided in our Environmental Protection Licences.

Continuing to accept supposed 'clean' concrete waste still presents a risk to Council with the potential that contaminated concrete may still be mixed within the contents. Implementing the proposed changes to acceptance of commercial concrete waste and fees for residential, may mitigate the unplanned costs of dealing with contaminated concrete in the future.

Community Engagement

Not applicable.