Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy

2022 to 2025

HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

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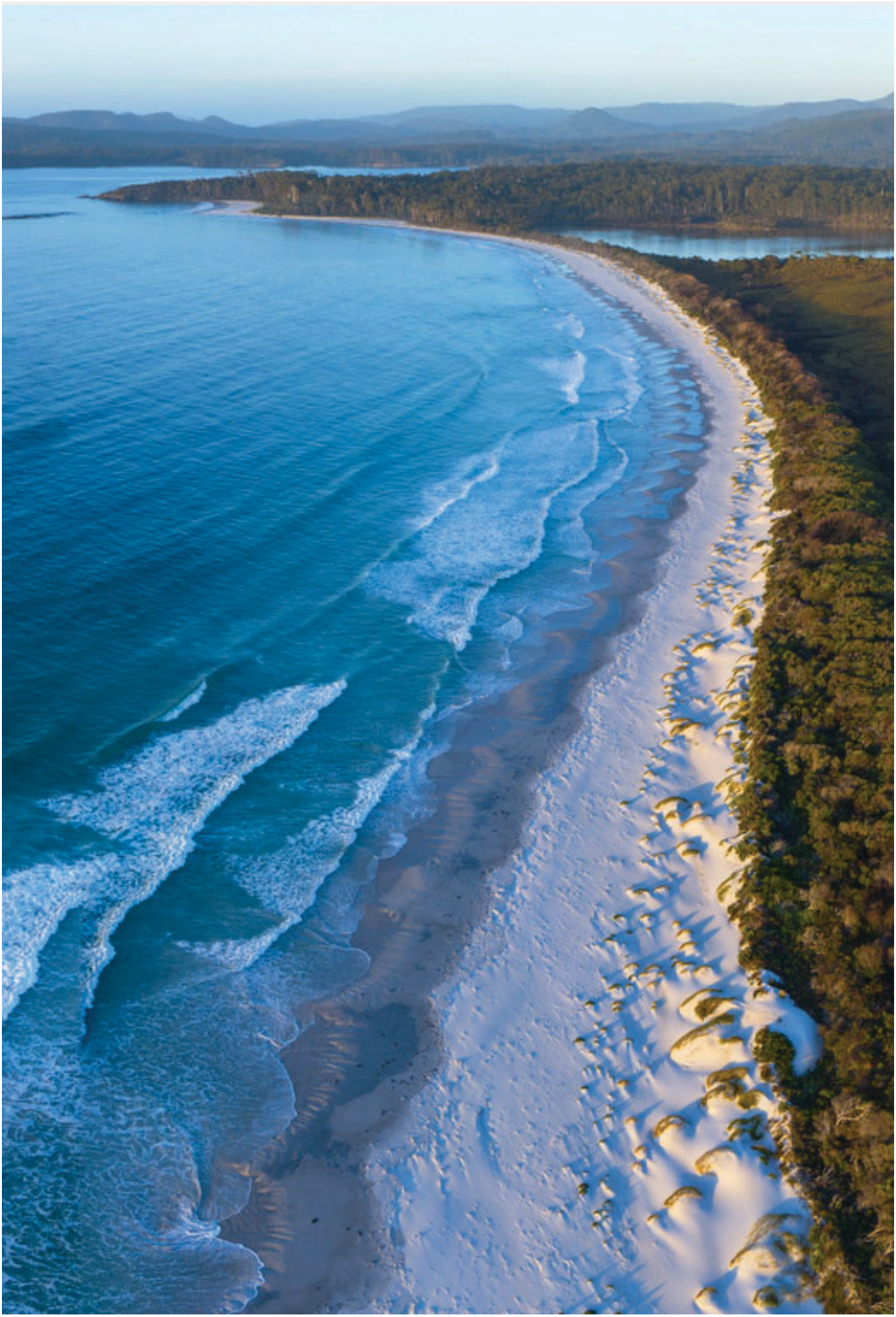


Executive Summary

The world of waste has changed dramatically since our last waste management strategy was endorsed in 2002. Landfills that existed in the Huon Valley have been closed, a 20-year contract has been negotiated with Southern Waste Solutions for sending waste to landfill (due to expire in October 2023), kerbside collection areas have been expanded, and we now operate a successful Reuse Shop.

The landscape outside of Council has shifted too. Environmental standards have continued to rise, and community expectations have rightfully matched them. In 2017, China announced that it would cease to accept importation of a range of recyclable materials and not accept contamination in waste loads over 0.5 per cent (known as the 'National Sword' policy). This exposed illegal activity and forced the Australian waste industry to rethink the processing and end life of recyclables, with the Australian Government subsequently introducing a ban on exports.

Through all this, waste management, one of what's known as 'the three Rs – rates, roads and rubbish', has remained an essential service that we provide.

The generation of large volumes of waste, that unfortunately became a product of our post-World War II lifestyle, is still a challenge we face. As well as looking to improve resource recovery rates (goal 2), our strategy has a strong focus on supporting the community to reduce the amount of waste created (goal 1). It also addresses the environmental impacts of our waste management practices and sites (goal 4).

Providing waste management infrastructure and services to the community is core to our strategic objective to achieve 'Capable and Productive People and Assets', outlined in the Huon Valley Council Strategic Plan 2015 – 2025. Doing it well is essential in achieving the other three strategic objectives: 'A Great Environment', 'A Prosperous and Resilient Economy' and 'Community Wellbeing and Liveability'. The need for a waste strategy was identified through our annual planning process with our strategic objectives in mind, amid increasing interest and concern from the community.

This strategy focuses on ensuring that we are set up to manage waste in the best way possible, and account for the cost of waste appropriately (goal 3). This strategy is designed to have a duration of three years and focuses on addressing gaps and setting the scene for more ambitious and informed action in four years' time. It guides the first necessary steps to better understand the waste we manage, and immediate actions that we can take to improve our practices.

The Huon Valley's waste

To better understand and manage waste, it is grouped by the industry according to source into municipal solid waste, commercial and industrial waste, and construction and demolition waste. In the Huon Valley, our responsibilities centre largely on the management of municipal solid waste. Municipal solid waste is the waste produced by residents and is divided into several streams in the Huon Valley: general waste, recyclables, garden waste, timber waste, and concrete. The recyclables stream is further divided into co-mingled, cardboard, aluminium cans, steel, fluorescent tubes, household batteries, car batteries, chemical drums, motor oil, tyres and x-rays.

The Huon Valley is a regional municipal area where most dwellings are privately owned and separate, and incomes are lower than average compared to major cities in Tasmania. While household sizes are similar to the greater Hobart area, the population of 17,966 residents[1] has a much lower density and is spread over a larger area.

In 2020–21, we received 6,283 tonnes of general waste from the community. This waste was compacted at Southbridge waste transfer station and then sent to the Southern Waste Solutions landfill at Copping, near Sorell. A total of 1,067m^3 of timber waste was shredded and sent to the same landfill. 1,509m^3 of green waste was also shredded.

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020

Shredded green waste was made available to residents at no cost for use as mulch but only a small amount was taken for this. Currently, there are limited viable options for shredded green waste besides sending it to landfill. It cannot remain at waste transfer stations indefinitely due to issues associated with space, leachate and fire risk.

Also in 2020–21, over 1,000 tonnes of recyclables were sent to the materials recovery facility in Derwent Park (currently owned by Cleanaway) for sorting.

Waste Transfer Stations and Landfills

Council currently operates four waste transfer stations at Cygnet, Dover, Geeveston and Southbridge (Huonville). The Southbridge waste transfer station is the central facility, with general waste from Cygnet, Dover and Geeveston transported there to be compacted before going to the landfill at Copping.

Along with the Southport waste transfer station that was closed in 2005, all were previously landfill sites. Southbridge ceased functioning as a landfill in 1994, with Dover closing as a landfill a couple of years prior to that.

While our last waste strategy recommended that we close the Geeveston site altogether, it remained open to make the most of the last available landfill space in the Huon Valley. Along with the Cygnet landfill, the Geeveston landfill reached capacity in the 2000s. Leading up to the landfill closures, there was concern about the proximity to waterways, and residential and agricultural properties, and the potential for impacts associated with leachate.

Environment Protection Notices (EPNs) were put in place to regulate the process for rehabilitation of these sites and prevent public and environmental harm from the previous landfill operations. The EPNs for Geeveston and Cygnet waste transfer stations are still in place.

Our landfill sites were typical for the era but rudimentary and problematic by today's standards, resulting in the decision to send general waste to the new landfill built at Copping. Council considered establishing a new landfill within the Huon Valley but was unable to identify a suitable site. In addition, to establish a landfill that satisfied the modern regulations would have required a significant financial investment.

Kerbside Collection

As well as waste transfer stations, we provide a kerbside service for general waste and comingled recyclables. General waste is collected weekly from a 120 litre or 240 litre wheelie bin, and comingled recyclables are collected fortnightly from 240 litre wheelie bins. The current estimated service levels are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Current estimated service levels for kerbside collection in the Huon Valley

	Number of properties rated as non-vacant residential	Number of properties with a kerbside service	%
Geeveston	556	366	66%
Geeveston surrounds (Brooks Bay, Cairns Bay, Glendevie, Port Huon, Surges Bay, Waterloo)	377	220	58%
Total Geeveston & Surrounds	**933**	**586**	**63%**
Dover	509	408	80%
Dover surrounds (Southport, Lune River, Hastings, Ida Bay, Police Point, Raminea, Strathblane, Surveyors Bay)	449	0	0%
Total Dover & Surrounds	**958**	**408**	**43%**
Cygnet	690	552	80%
Cygnet surrounds (Abels Bay, Charlotte Cove, Deep Bay, Eggs and Bacon Bay, Garden Island Creek, Gardners Bay, Glaziers Bay, Gordon, Huon Island, Lower Wattle Grove, Lymington, Middleton, Nicholls Rivulet, Petcheys Bay, Randalls Bay, Verona Sands, Wattle Grove)	1264	374	30%
Total Cygnet & Surrounds	**1954**	**926**	**47%**
Huonville	1165	1124	96%
Huonville surrounds (Castle Forbes Bay, Crabtree, Cradoc, Franklin, Glen Huon, Grove, Judbury, Kaoota, Lonnavale, Lower Longley, Lucaston, Mountain River, Pelverata, Ranelagh, Upper Woodstock, Woodstock)	2458	1431	58%
Total Huonville & Surrounds	**3623**	**2555**	**71%**

Prior to the introduction of a third wheelie bin to the kerbside service for food and garden organics (FOGO) in the City of Hobart, the average composition of the general waste bin was 61 per cent food and garden organics, 12 per cent recyclables and 27 per cent non-organic general waste (often referred to as 'residual waste'). This proportion of waste types is typical for both urban and regional Australia where there is no FOGO collection. It is likely that the Huon Valley kerbside general waste has a similar composition.

Community Interest

There is considerable interest and weight given to the importance of good waste management in the Huon Valley community. As part of the stage 1 community engagement to inform this strategy, residents were asked to rank eight factors relating to waste management.

The demographics of the residents that completed the survey was broad. There was representation from every location and age group (from 16+). The collated results of this community survey ranked the factors from most important (1) to least important (8) in the following order:

1. The environmental impacts of waste and litter
2. The visual amenity/social impacts of waste and litter
3. Reducing the amount of waste your household generates
4. Resource recovery rates
5. Access to kerbside service
6. Affordability (kerbside charge, waste transfer station fees)
7. Opening hours of waste transfer stations, and
8. Proximity of a waste transfer station to your home.

Residents were also invited to comment on waste management, which raised several common themes. There was strong alignment between issues and concerns known to us and the responses received from the community.

Half of the comments provided mentioned organic waste, with most of these comments calling for a food organics and garden organics (FOGO) kerbside collection. Some residents called for waste to be composted within the Huon Valley with compost made available

for domestic purchase. A small number said they could compost themselves and did not need a service.

Half of the comments (not necessarily the same half) also mentioned waste services, including:

- Expansion of kerbside services,
- Disparity (cost/convenience) of kerbside versus visiting a waste transfer station,
- Improvements to waste transfer stations to improve resource recovery rates,
- Calling for better recovery of metals and timber for sale at the Reuse Shop,
- Calling for a broader range of difficult waste acceptance at waste transfer stations,
- Calling for hard waste collections,
- Kerbside bin placement issues such as noise and safety, and
- The need for better waste data for the Huon Valley.

Many residents were concerned about illegal dumping in bushland areas and offered suggestions for how Council could influence that. Several residents felt there was a need for increased community understanding on waste avoidance including:

- Educating children/young people
- User-pays systems and the true cost of managing waste
- How to recycle, and
- Environmental impacts of waste.

There was a clear message that waste management matters, and that many people in the community want us to improve.

Following this first stage of consultation with the community, a draft version of this document was endorsed by Council for release for public comment.

Many community members reinforced the same concerns that were raised in the first stage of consultation. However, there were some new issues raised, including:

- Concern regarding services in Southport and issues with public bins in townships
- The need to explicitly commit to introducing tangible, medium-term waste volume targets once better baseline data has been obtained

- The suggestion to introduce a waste committee to allow community members to formally communicate with Council on waste issues
- A desire for the community to be more involved in repair and salvage initiatives
- A high level of frustration with the lack of control over plastic products and packaging, and
- The suggestion to invest in improving the end-product of the garden waste.

Following some concern from individuals regarding the potential closure of Geeveston Waste Transfer Station, the stage two of public consultation also sought to specifically gain feedback from affected residents on this. The results indicated that there is not strong concern in the community about this. However, there was feedback that the short opening hours of Southbridge Waste Transfer Station limit the convenience of the site for some Geeveston residents.

The Global Setting

In 2018, municipal solid waste production globally reached 2.01 billion metric tonnes, with a projection of 3.40 billion tonnes by 2050.

Economic growth in the modern world has relied heavily on the exploitation of natural resources to produce and sell products. Raw materials are extracted, made into products, and then they become waste (often referred to as a 'throw-away society'). From the second half of the 20th Century in particular, this approach has been the dominant culture in the Huon Valley, Tasmania and throughout much of Australia.

This economic model currently results in negative impacts on the environment and human health from air, water, and land pollution as well as the loss of precious and finite resources. In 2016, solid waste was responsible for 3.2 per cent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with 1.6 billion tonnes of CO_2-e emitted.

Particularly difficult waste types include electronic waste (e-waste), polystyrene, batteries, single use packaging, and household hazardous waste that, if not handled well, can also cause significant impacts on human and environmental health.

In recent years, improved management of waste has become a focus in countries including China, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. These countries have recently changed laws to prohibit or restrict importing of waste and contaminated recyclable materials. These changes are forcing countries, such as Australia, that previously exported problematic waste, to focus on managing it appropriately at home.

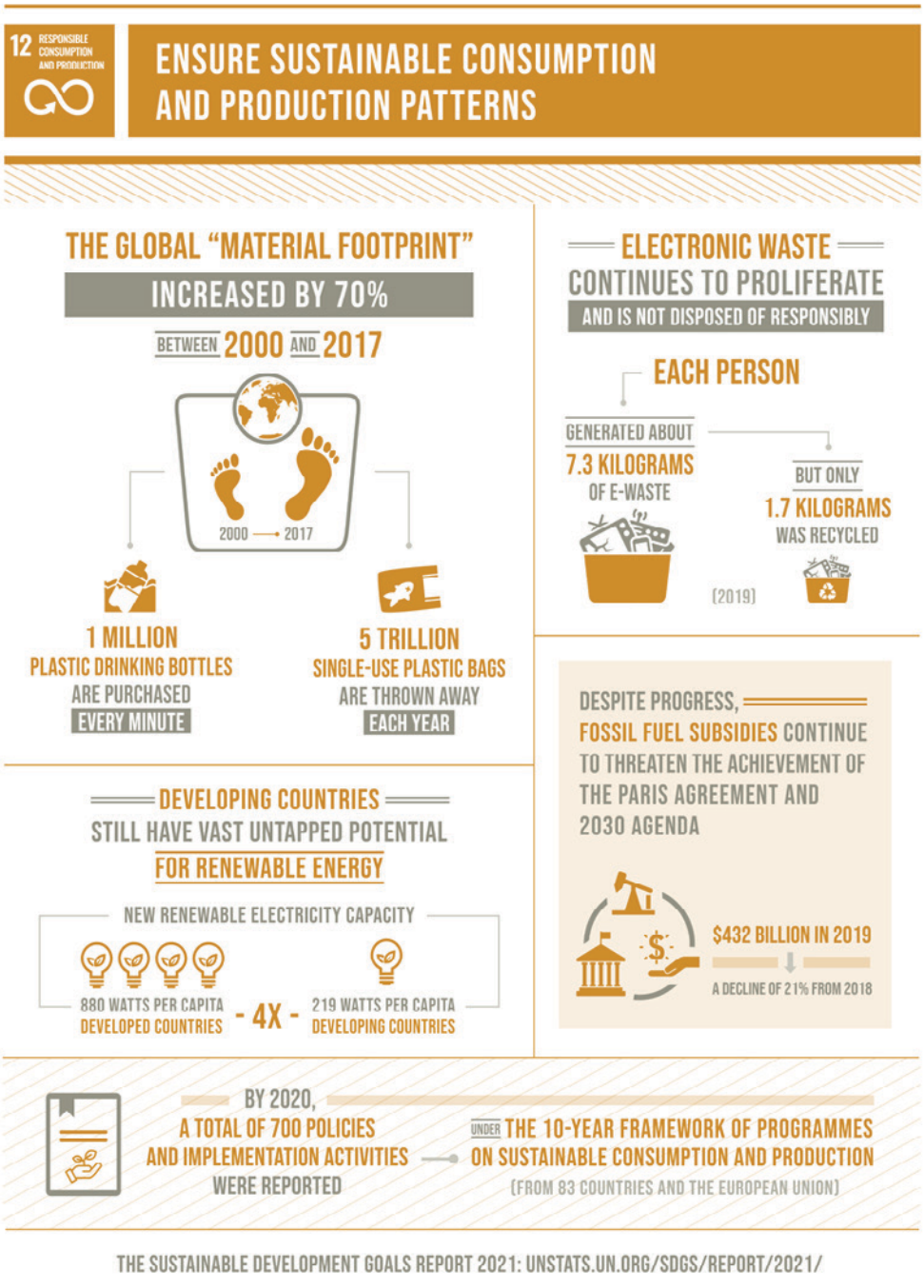
In 2015, the United Nations States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, containing the UN Sustainable Development Goals[2]. The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals are a useful reference as context for waste and resource recovery improvements.

Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production (infographic below[3]) has several 2030 targets, including halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, and substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse. Goal 13 – Climate Action, Goal 14 – Life Below Water, and Goal 15 – Life on Land, also directly relate to the management of waste. When looking at any individual goal, it is important to consider how addressing it might relate to the rest of the goals.

The goals need to be addressed concurrently and in a holistic manner to ensure that none are adversely impacted by any other.

[2] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org
[3] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021


SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS


12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS
THE GLOBAL "MATERIAL FOOTPRINT"
INCREASED BY 70%
BETWEEN 2000 AND 2017
2000 2017
1 MILLION
PLASTIC DRINKING BOTTLES ARE PURCHASED EVERY MINUTE
5 TRILLION
SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS ARE THROWN AWAY EACH YEAR
ELECTRONIC WASTE
CONTINUES TO PROLIFERATE
AND IS NOT DISPOSED OF RESPONSIBLY
EACH PERSON
GENERATED ABOUT
7.3 KILOGRAMS
OF E-WASTE
BUT ONLY
1.7 KILOGRAMS
WAS RECYCLED
(2019)
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
STILL HAVE VAST UNTAPPED POTENTIAL
FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEW RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY CAPACITY
880 WATTS PER CAPITA
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
- 4X -
219 WATTS PER CAPITA
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
DESPITE PROGRESS,
FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES CONTINUE TO THREATEN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND 2030 AGENDA
$432 BILLION IN 2019
A DECLINE OF 21% FROM 2018
BY 2020,
A TOTAL OF 700 POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES WERE REPORTED
UNDER THE 10-YEAR FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMMES ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
(FROM 83 COUNTRIES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION)
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2021: UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/REPORT/2021/

State and Federal Waste Policy

As outlined above, the bans on the importation of waste and contaminated recyclables into countries such as China have forced Australia to rethink the recycling industry. The announcements had widespread effects, with stockpiles of recyclables reaching ever more dangerous levels in terms of fire risk, and disruption to local government recycling contracts across Australia.

Councils in Southern Tasmania were directly affected when the recyclables processor for the region, was placed into receivership in August 2019. This caused widespread uncertainty and exposed the vulnerabilities of the recycling system.

In response to these policy changes overseas, the National Waste Policy Action Plan is phasing in bans on the export of waste plastic, paper, glass, and tyres. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity to better manage waste here in Australia.

The challenge is in moving to rapidly build the infrastructure and businesses to support this change, while opportunities lie in doing so in ways that are innovative, better than before, and that support local businesses. The Recycling Modernisation Fund allocates $190 million from the Federal Government to leverage funds from state and territory governments and industry to achieve a claimed $600 million investment in recycling infrastructure, create 10,000 new jobs and divert 10 million tonnes of waste from landfill[4].

In Tasmania, the introduction of a landfill levy is a key element of the Tasmanian Draft Waste Action Plan that has a broad aim to keep materials in circulation, rather than send them to landfill.

A landfill levy is an amount paid to the State Government for each tonne of waste that is landfilled. It increases the cost of sending waste to landfill to make avoiding, reducing, reusing, and recycling more financially viable options. It also raises money to support better waste management outcomes.

[4]https://www.awe.gov.au/environment/protection/waste/how-we-manage-waste/recycling-modernisation-fund

The Tasmanian landfill levy is scheduled to come into effect at $20 per tonne from 1 July 2022 and will increase to $40 per tonne two years later, and $60 per tonne two years after that.

The draft legislation to enact the waste levy, the Waste and Resource Recovery Act 2022, also sets out the establishment of the Waste and Resource Recovery Board. This board will provide strategic oversight, including how levy funds will be invested back into the sector.

The Tasmanian Draft Waste Action Plan also brings in a container refund scheme (CRS), designed to reduce the impact of littered beverage containers.

Ahead of these initiatives, the State Government allocated the following funds in the 2021–2022 budget:[5]

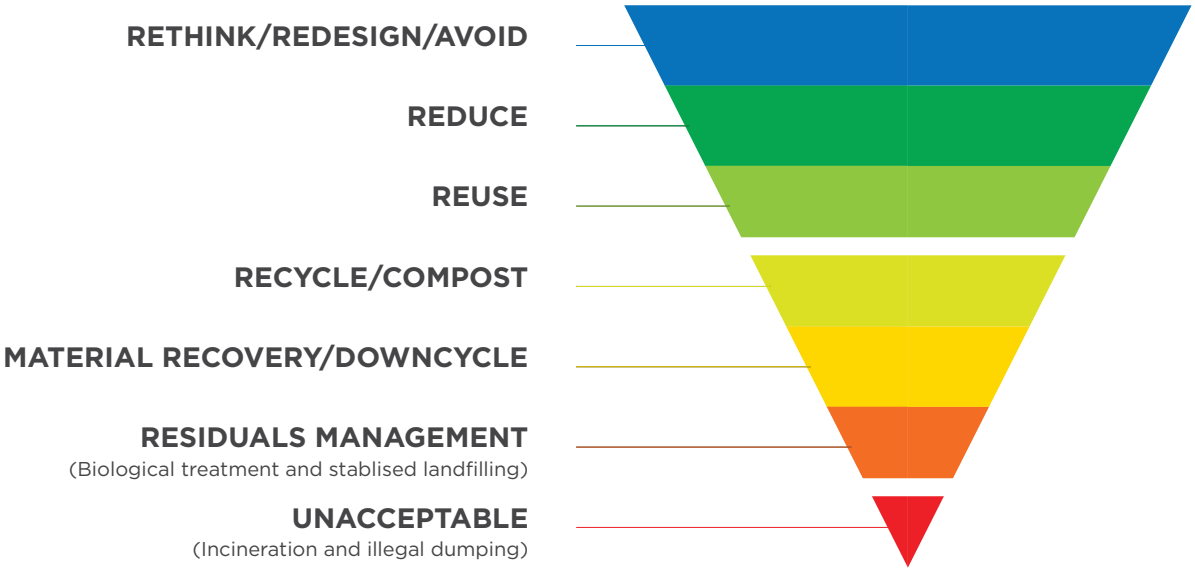
- $3 million to invest with industry in the construction of a rubber crumbing plant
- $1 million to phase out single use plastics by 2025
- $10 million for the COVID-19 Response – Circular Economy Fund (including $4.5 million to improve organics recycling capacity)
- $1 million towards improving waste and resource recovery data and waste data infrastructure in Tasmania

[5] Waste Initiatives Progress Report 2021

Managing the Huon Valley's waste

There are several ways that we can work towards managing municipal solid waste better. The waste hierarchy (Figure 1) is an important tool to support decision making. Using the hierarchy helps to ensure we put materials to their best use with least impact.[6]

Figure 1: The Zero Waste Hierarchy[7]



Traditionally, Australians have viewed recycling as a really important action to help the environment. However, moving our focus further up the waste hierarchy can make a much more significant difference to the waste problem.

[6] National Waste Policy Less Waste More Resources 2018
[7] Adapted from the Zero Waste Hierarchy 7.0, Zero Waste Alliance zwia.org/zwh

While recycling is part of the transition to a circular economy, avoiding and reducing waste are preferable. Our strategy has been informed by the waste hierarchy, with a strong focus on diverting material from landfill and reducing the generation of waste in the first place.

Risks of inaction

The risks of us taking a business-as-usual approach to waste are significant. They include inability to meet legislative requirements and the consequences of that, high financial impact to our residents, and worsening environmental performance as waste volumes increase.

The State Government's renewed interest in waste management is welcome, but it does bring with it an expectation that we will have the ability to report waste tonnages accurately and regularly according to a classification system and be accountable for how that waste is managed. These expectations will be spelt out in the Waste and Resource Recovery Regulations and will be a legal requirement.

Currently, we rely on contractors to report back waste tonnages. Small errors or inconsistencies over time can equate to significant financial impacts. In some cases, that financial quantum is, conversely, a benefit to the contractor.

The dependence on contractors means there is a conflict of interest in being responsible for the data. In addition, it is estimated that there are material loses at the gate associated with having a fee structure that relies on staff estimating volumes of waste, rather than weighing the waste. Staff are also regularly put under pressure by customers questioning these estimates, with some customers becoming aggressive.

Failing to close out the historical Environment Protection Notices (EPNs) for the Geeveston and Cygnet closed landfills holds significant risks in terms of potential further action by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). The conditions of these EPNs were drafted quite some time ago and the decision could be made to replace them with more onerous and costly conditions.

Managing waste and sending waste to landfill is increasingly expensive. Not supporting the community to reduce the amount of waste they are generating and divert more waste from landfill will mean that the community will face higher costs than what might have been possible.

Inaction or insufficient action to improve waste management in the Huon Valley is likely to lead to loss of social license. The community has made it clear that waste and environmental impacts are priority issues, through responses to public consultation processes, as well as through avenues such as forums and informal approaches to Council outside of that. To meet the expectations of the community in the provision of this essential service, changes are required.

Challenges

We do face challenges in improving the waste management services in the Huon Valley. The geographical spread of communities across diverse landscapes brings difficulties in providing consistent services. Kerbside collection can be unsafe or impractical where driveways abut highways and other roads without safe places for wheelie bins and for trucks to stop. Problems can also be caused by insufficient truck turning areas, long driveways, and issues keeping the collection runs cost-effective due to low density populations and driving distances.

Providing efficient waste management services to shack communities can also be difficult due to their more remote locations and the services not being required consistently across the year by everyone. Understandably some members of these communities would prefer not to pay an annual kerbside fee if they don't feel they use it.

Completing rehabilitation of all closed landfills and bringing all waste transfer station sites up to modern standards in a cost-effective manner will be challenging. While much of the waste involved was accepted many years ago, the cost of rehabilitation was not factored into the gate fee for that waste. To achieve the rehabilitation work required (even just for the current EPN conditions) it is likely a considerable amount of funds will need to be committed.

While we have had strong feedback from the community that improving waste management is a priority, shifting the culture away from the idea that waste just "goes away" will take time. In the public

consultation, some residents requested that Council introduce a hard waste collection. Getting bulky items disposed of can be difficult for people without the means to do so. However, the expectation that we can do this for free or at a low cost is not accurate and is not consistent with a user pay system that drives down waste generation.

Similarly, some residents suggested that lowering gate fees would reduce the incidence of illegal dumping. This approach means that the people doing the right thing end up paying for the ones that aren't, through subsidisation from other sources such as the general rate. Research has shown that illegal dumping behaviour is complex and not purely related to gate fees.

This strategy has been designed to prompt the actions required over the next three years, in the order that makes the most sense. For example, gathering accurate data early on (e.g. kerbside waste composition), will mean that we are better informed when making decisions on new services slightly later (e.g. FOGO). In other words, there are actions in the strategy that rely on earlier actions to be completed well. This presents a risk to the strategy implementation if early actions do not occur. Reasons for actions not occurring might include a lack of resources such as budget or staff, insufficient availability of appropriate consultants or an absence of waste treatment options, or some sort of catastrophic disruption outside of our control.

Opportunities

The resource recovery rate for the Huon Valley is currently estimated to be no more than 20 per cent. This is low and presents an opportunity to tackle "low hanging fruit" to make quick gains. Organic waste is the most apparent. As well as being a large portion of the general waste, there are other reasons organic waste is problematic in landfill. Organic waste produces leachate and methane (a potent greenhouse gas) when it breaks down in landfill, and valuable nutrients and finite elements such as phosphorus, are locked up rather than remaining in circulation to produce food.

Changing the kerbside service configuration is a key way to lead landfill diversion. Currently, we have a mix of bin sizes that don't represent the industry best practice configuration. There is an opportunity to influence change by reviewing and adjusting this.

Improving our understanding of the volumes and composition of the waste collected in the Huon Valley will make it easier for us to concentrate our efforts where we can have the most impact towards our goals. The installation of a weighbridge would also allow us to move even closer to a true user-pay system. Dense and heavy waste would be charged more accurately at a rate that better represents the true cost of disposal. Conversely, bulky but lighter waste could be charged according to weight.

The unusually high number of waste transfer stations for the area represents an opportunity. Waste transfer stations are costly to run. Closing Geeveston waste transfer station, would allow staff to be reallocated to Southbridge waste transfer station, avoid contractor bin costs, and make rehabilitation of the site easier. Analysis of the impact of this option on travel distances showed that overall, the maximum travel distance to a waste transfer station across the Huon Valley remained unchanged at 22 minutes. Closing the Geeveston site would also result in a financial saving if it avoided the upgrades currently required to the building and facilities for staff.

The current political interest in waste at the regional, state and national level presents potential opportunities for Huon Valley to gain support for projects. The waste levy will bring in funds at the state level. The State Government has committed to a high re-investment rate for the waste levy, meaning that the funds will be used primarily in the area of improving waste management. Councils may also be able to access funds to assist in levy-readiness.

The funding already committed by State and Australian Governments will help to improve the options available to us. In late 2021, the State Government called for expressions of interest for a regional organics facility for Southern Tasmania. Such a facility would provide a state-of-the-art alternative to landfilling for organic waste.

The container refund scheme presents an opportunity for Huon Valley community groups and social enterprise to participate in the collection of beverage containers and benefit financially.

With the support of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT), the 12 councils in Southern Tasmania have collaborated closely on waste over the past few years. Prompted by the uncertainty caused by the recycling processor, SKM, going into administration following China's waste policy changes.

Working together on a regional tender and the establishment of a joint authority has built good will between the councils. Maintaining this network will present opportunities in the future for improved contractor management and negotiation, further collaboration and the sharing of knowledge, resources and learnings.

Feedback from the community in stage two of the public consultation highlighted additional opportunities. Some residents wrote about the quality of the green waste end-product, and how it could be improved with a more thorough composting process that included screening and soil testing. These are important points for when considering the future of Southbridge Waste Transfer Station, as space and substrate currently limit green waste treatment options.

The establishment of a waste committee to provide a platform for communication with Council could be a valuable step in building trust and cooperation with community members undertaking waste initiatives. Even when projects are outside of the scope of Council's work, we may be able to provide support in some way. An example of this from other jurisdictions is repair cafes. Conversely, community members can provide alternative viewpoints and insights for Council staff working on waste actions.

Strategy Objectives

There are four goals that underpin the actions in this strategy.

Goal 1 – Reduce waste generation

Goal 2 – Improve resource recovery rates

Goal 3 – Provide an equitable and efficient waste service

Goal 4 – Reduce environmental impacts resulting from waste

These goals are designed to relate directly to meaningful outcomes for waste management, the environment and the Huon Valley community.

Goal 1 and 2 are focussed on moving practices further up the waste hierarchy. Achieving them will bring benefits such as reduced cost of waste management to the community, less extraction of raw materials for products and support a transition to a circular economy model. These goals are consistent with the stage one survey result, where waste generation reduction and resource recovery rate were ranked third and fourth for importance.

Whilst a measurable difference in waste generation and recycling rate may not be possible in a short three-year strategy, it is still important to keep these goals front and centre. Addressing data gaps early will pave the way for the setting of targets on waste generation and resource recovery rates in future years. Moving closer to industry best practice for kerbside collection and waste transfer station site management will also place us in a good position to progress these goals further.

Ideally, the person or business generating waste is the person or business that pays for the management of that waste in an equitable system. This is also known as a user-pays system. Goal 3 focuses on achieving this, whilst also trying to limit the financial impact to the community where possible and take into account any social equity concerns.

Unfortunately, the Industrial Revolution has seen the design and manufacture of a huge range of materials and products without due regard for their end-of-life management. In many cases, issues have emerged once products have been in circulation (e.g. asbestos, single-use plastic).

In the absence of broad product stewardship and/or strict environmental controls for waste management in the past, we now have several actions required to improve our environmental performance of our waste operations. Goal 4 deals with these actions. This goal also reflects the stage one survey result, where residents ranked environmental impacts and social amenity as the two most important considerations for waste management, noting that moving further up the waste hierarchy to reduce the waste in the first place is also a crucial part of this.

The tables below outline how the strategy actions contribute to these goals.

Goal 1: Reduce waste generation

Objective 1.1: Reduce household waste generation

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Data	1.1.1 Conduct an audit and analysis of waste from the general and recycling kerbside services	Audit conducted by June 2023	YEAR 1
Data	1.1.2 Map Council waste data flows and centralise waste data storage and ensure reports are available at appropriate frequencies	Data mapped and centralised by June 2023, reports available monthly	YEAR 1
Kerbside Service	1.1.3 Investigate ways to incentivise lower waste generation for households through Council policy such as kerbside bin size or collection frequency, and corresponding fee schedule	Investigation conducted, and formal recommendations made by June 2024	
	YEAR 1, 2		
Behaviour Change	1.1.4 Deliver community workshops on waste avoidance, reduction and reuse	Workshop delivered annually	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Behaviour Change	1.1.5 Engage with children via a school-based waste education program	One school engaged annually	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Regional Initiatives	1.1.6 Advocate for, and support State-wide/regional initiatives designed to drive the phasing out of single-use plastic	Initiatives supported	As the opportunity arises

Goal 2: Improve resource recovery rates

Objective 2.1: Increase the recycling and recovery rates of municipal solid waste

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Kerbside service	2.1.1 Review waste disposal services including kerbside collection volumes per week	Review conducted and formal recommendations made by June 2023	YEAR 1
Data	2.1.2 Identify key contamination issues with our recycling processing contractor and tailor community education accordingly	Regular communication with contractor, community education conducted according to issues	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Regional initiatives	2.1.3 Investigate the feasibility of implementing the CSIRO ASPIRE platform (or similar) at a municipal or regional level, and if feasible, implement this either in the Huon Valley, or across the Southern region through cooperation with the Southern Tasmanian Waste Management Group (STWMG)	Topic put on a STWMG agenda by June 2024	YEAR 2
Waste transfer stations	2.1.4 Improve the site layouts, signage and ease of use of waste transfer stations to maximise recovery of recyclable waste	New signage installed	YEAR 3
Waste transfer stations	2.1.5 Expand the number of materials accepted for recycling at Southbridge Waste Transfer Station, particularly difficult waste types	Increased number of waste types recycled	YEAR 3
Waste transfer stations	2.1.6 Investigate ways to salvage more timber and metal waste at waste transfer stations	Investigation conducted	YEAR 3
Regional initiatives	2.1.7 Support local charities and/or social enterprise to participate and benefit from the Container Refund Scheme	Entities supported	As opportunities arise

Objective 2.2: Divert organic waste from landfill

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Organics Infrastructure	2.2.1 Investigate the feasibility of a kerbside FOGO service (action endorsed in Council's Climate Change Strategy – Part A) and, if feasible, implement the service	Consultant report completed by June 2023	YEAR 1
Behaviour Change	2.2.2 Provide advice to the community on ways to reduce food waste	Website updated and food waste campaign delivered by June 2023	YEAR 1
Organics Infrastructure	2.2.3 Investigate options for the treatment of organic waste, including the feasibility of a local composting facility (adapted from action endorsed in Council's Climate Change Strategy – Part A)	Investigation conducted	YEAR 2
Behaviour Change	2.2.4 Deliver community education/engagement on household composting	Initiative delivered annually	YEAR 1, 2, 3

Goal 3: Provide an equitable and efficient waste service

Objective 3.1: Balance the cost of operating waste transfer stations with the need to provide reasonable access to waste services across the municipal area

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Kerbside service	3.1.1 Investigate the feasibility of extending kerbside collection services beyond the current geographical areas and implement, where beneficial	Implemented as part of next kerbside contract	YEAR 1
Waste transfer stations	3.1.2 Consolidate the acceptance of certain waste types with high cartage and/or plant float costs, to Southbridge Waste Transfer Station, for example: Scrap metal at dover WTS Timber at cygnet WTS	Reduced cartage and plant float costs across the municipal area in 2023/24	YEAR 1
Waste transfer stations	3.1.3 Close Geeveston Waste Transfer Station and to offset this service impact by extension of kerbside collection service and/or alternative household waste disposal options within Geeveston and expanding opening hours of Southbridge Waste Transfer Station.	Geeveston Waste Transfer Station closed by June 2023	YEAR 1
Regional initiatives	3.1.4 Move to assess feasibility and plan relevant waste projects to maximise the likelihood of gaining funding for key waste initiatives	Known projects are grant-ready	As opportunity arises

Objective 3.2: Maintain a user-pay fee structure across services as far as is equitable and possible

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Data	3.2.1 Install a weighbridge at Southbridge Waste Transfer Station	Weighbridge installed by June 2024	Commence in YEAR 1 Complete in year 2
Kerbside service	3.2.2 Encourage contractors to consider the costs and benefits of truck technology that allows for innovations such as weight-based kerbside charges and/ or microchip tags	Kerbside tender criteria includes innovation and waste reduction initiatives	YEAR 1

Objective 3.3: Regular community engagement on waste initiatives

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Behaviour Change	3.3.1 Form a Waste Committee of community members to collaborate with Council on waste initiatives.	Waste Committee formed by June 2023	YEAR 1, 2, 3

Goal 4: Reduce environmental impacts resulting from waste

Objective 4.1: Reduce the contribution of waste to greenhouse gas emissions

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Data	4.1.1 Investigate and add emissions from municipal waste to Council's greenhouse gas inventory	Emissions are added to Council's inventory by June 2023	YEAR 1
Kerbside service	4.1.2 Encourage contractors to consider the costs and benefits of transitioning to an electric fleet	Kerbside tender criteria includes innovation	YEAR 1

Objective 4.2: Reduce the impact of litter and illegal dumping

Theme	Action	KPI	Timeframe
Litter & illegal dumping	4.2.1 Investigate options for waste services in remote townships such as Southport and in the Channel area	Investigation conducted by June 2023	YEAR 1
Litter & illegal dumping	4.2.2 Investigate the feasibility of gross pollutant traps on storm water outlets	Investigation conducted by June 2024	YEAR 2
Litter & illegal dumping	4.2.3 Provide public waste bins in high pedestrian traffic areas close to food outlets	Public place bins are provided	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Behaviour change	4.2.4 Facilitate and support clean up events in natural areas	Community groups supported, one beach clean up held annually	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Litter & illegal dumping	4.2.5 Investigate and enforce breaches of the Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994, including burn offs and illegal landfills	All reports investigated and breaches enforced	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Litter & illegal dumping	4.2.6 Collaborate with other stakeholders and land managers affected by illegal dumping e.g. Sustainable Timbers Tasmania	Engage with stakeholders	As opportunities arise

Objective 4.3: Improve environmental management at waste transfer stations

Theme	Action	KPI	Time Frame
Waste transfer stations	4.3.1 Expand the hard stand area for recycling at Southbridge Waste Transfer Station, to more easily manage waste that is a contamination or windblown-litter risk	Hard stand area is expanded by June 2023	YEAR 1
Waste transfer stations	4.3.2 Progress remaining works required at old landfill sites, Geeveston and Cygnet, as outlined by the Environmental Protection Authority	An increase in the number of conditions met in Environmental Protection Notices	YEAR 1, 2, 3
Waste transfer stations	4.3.3 Complete Environmental Management Plans for each waste transfer station	Environmental Management Plans are completed for each site	YEAR 2
Waste transfer stations	4.3.4 Install a drain for the run-off from the compactor loading area, to filter oil and other pollutants	Drain installed	YEAR 2
Waste transfer stations	4.3.5 Conduct an assessment of the long-term appropriateness of Southbridge as the primary waste transfer station	Assessment conducted	YEAR 2
Waste transfer stations	4.3.6 Continue works to protect the remnant vegetation and waterways at waste transfer stations such as treatment of weeds and revegetation works	Boundaries are defined and reserve areas are rehabilitated	YEAR 3

Strategy Implementation

The strategy actions are divided up into seven distinct themes:

1. Data
2. Kerbside Service
3. Organics Infrastructure
4. Waste Transfer Stations
5. Litter and Illegal Dumping
6. Behaviour Change
7. Regional Initiatives

Throughout the three years, behaviour change, litter and illegal dumping, and regional initiatives are important themes that support the objectives of the strategy.

Year 1 – Data Collection and Kerbside Service

The primary focus of the first year is data collection and the kerbside service. Having a good understanding of the volumes and composition of waste that we are dealing with is crucial to making good decisions and limiting risk.

Due to the timing of the kerbside contract end date, the kerbside service is a key focus for the first year. Making adjustments to the kerbside service is also a key way to drive behaviour change and the way that residents interact with our service.

Year 2 – Organics Infrastructure and Waste Transfer Stations

Once the data actions are addressed in the first year and the kerbside contract is in place, the focus of the strategy can turn further to organics infrastructure and improving waste transfer stations. The better understanding of the waste will help to inform the decisions we make. This will also allow time to see initiatives such as the State

Government's support for a regional organics facility, start to come to fruition.

Year 3 – Waste Transfer Stations

More advanced work on the rehabilitation and management of waste transfer stations can commence in the third year once the environmental management plans are completed in the second year of the strategy.

Post Strategy Phase

This short, three-year strategy is designed to place us in a good position to prepare a longer-term waste strategy to achieve our goals. Measurable and more ambitious targets for the reduction of waste and diversion from landfill will be able to be set with a solid and well understood baseline. The works required at waste transfer stations will be known and be able to be scheduled.

The four core goals will likely remain unchanged in the next strategy, but the data that will come from the actions early in this strategy will provide a baseline to measure success against these goals. For example, a measurable target under goal 1 (reduce waste generation), objective 1.1 (reduce household waste generation) might be to reduce the annual tonnage of kerbside general waste per household by 40 per cent over 10 years. Further detail could be provided, projecting what trajectory the tonnage might take if it is unlikely to be a straight line.

Another target might be to increase the resource recovery rate of municipal solid waste over time. For example, by 20 per cent over five years.

More specific targets might refer to certain waste types. For example, reducing the amount of food in the kerbside general waste bin to less than 5 per cent within two years of introducing a FOGO kerbside service.

Work on developing these targets can commence during the life of this current strategy, as the data allows.

Community Engagement

STAGE 1

Stage 1 consisted of Councillor workshops and a public consultation that included an information paper, public survey and opportunity to provide comments.

The information paper let residents know Council is considering factors such the number of waste transfer stations, travel distances, how we compare to best practice for kerbside service, the waste hierarchy, and the increasing cost of managing waste properly.

STAGE 2

Stage 2 consisted of study tours, Councillor workshops and the preparation of the draft waste strategy.

The preparation of the draft waste strategy incorporated known gaps and issues, Councillor feedback, the results of the public survey, learnings from study tours, public comments, and the dynamic State and regional policy context.

STAGE 3

Stage 3 invited residents to comment on the draft waste strategy, via a formal public consultation process.

Council then considered the feedback and comments received as part of the public consultation, before finalising the draft waste strategy.

STAGE 4

Stage 4 is where the draft waste strategy is presented to Council for endorsement at a Council meeting.

Following endorsement, the implementation of the waste strategy commences.

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