

Director Les Willmott
Chair of the Board
Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group
P.O. Box 1326, South Melbourne
VIC 3205

Submission from Cesar Melhem MLC

Dear Mr Willmott,

RE: Submission regarding the Draft Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan (MWRRIP)

I write to express my concern with the Draft Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan and urge you reconsider it in its current form.

The Draft Plan raises issues of critical importance to my constituents in the Western Metropolitan Region. Specifically, it fails to identify any long-term solutions for managing Melbourne's waste beyond sending it to landfill in the western and northern suburbs.

Of utmost concern, the Draft MWRRIP assumes that the Deer Park landfill will be expanded to encompass the entire Boral quarry site. Current State planning policy includes nothing to suggest that the landfill would expand further from its current footprint, nor that it would occupy the entire Boral quarry site in future.

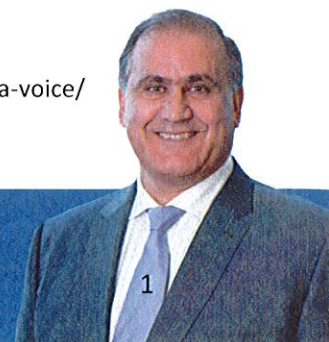
Aside from ignoring Boral's rejected application to expand its landfill operation and the overwhelming public opposition it faced, this assumption undermines a commitment the Premier gave the people of the western suburbs to "call-in" any proposed landfill expansion to an independent panel, to "provide local residents and landowners with the opportunity to have their say about the future of their community"¹. This commitment should be recognised in the MWRRIP, but is conspicuously absent from the draft.

Further, I highlight the following specific concerns that the document:

- Makes several incorrect references to the Deer Park landfill as the Boral quarry. The quarry site is not an approved landfill. The recent proposal to expand the landfill ignored relevant Environment Protection Authority (EPA) policy for design and siting² of landfill and was not supported by the EPA or the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA).
- Assumes that in future, buffers to landfill will be provided outside of the landfill site, shifting the burden of providing adequate buffers to adjoining properties and limiting their potential future use.
- Appears to rely heavily on consultation with landfill and waste providers with scant examination of the waste industry.
- Does not set any performance benchmarks for its 10 major priorities.
- Recognises that there is enough landfill capacity in the current system for the next decade, but simply presumes that in future, land around existing tips will cater for increased demand (the combined capacity of existing landfills in Deer Park, Werribee and Hansen Wollert, is approximately 110 million cubic metres. This represents over 30 years of Melbourne's needs in the current and approved landfills).

¹ <https://www.viclabor.com.au/media-releases/labor-to-review-boral-expansion-and-give-locals-a-voice/>

² <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/publications/publication/2015/august/788-3>



- Fails to provide strategic and innovative solutions to reduce the amount of waste being diverted to landfill.

Issues of odour, escaped litter and dumped rubbish from the Deer Park landfill are of constant concern for many of my constituents and I note that the EPA has recently found the operators in breach of the conditions of their permit on numerous occasions. This problem will continue as more residents move into the area surrounding the current facility.

Simply put, we cannot have a waste dump in the middle of suburbia.

Other options should be considered, such as placing landfill as far away as possible from residential areas, along with a buffer zone for at least 5 km as per the most recent EPA Boral Deer Park Odour Complaints, Proximity and Planning Zones Map (see attached document). This map clearly indicates the extent of the current problem with odour emitted from that site.

It is my strong view that the Ravenhall Deer Park site should not be considered as part of any future plans and when the current licence expires, the site should be closed down with no further extension to the current permit allowed.

Therefore, other options should be considered, including a new site being established far away from the residential area.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Cesar Melhem MLC
Member for Western Metropolitan Region
Legislative Council, Parliament of Victoria