

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

In the matter of an application by **Dunedin City Council** for resource consents for the operation, closure and aftercare of the Green Island Landfill, Dunedin.

Statement of evidence of Sandra Graham

4 March 2025

Applicant's solicitors:

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Qualifications and experience

- 1 My name is Sandra Dawn Graham.
- 2 I am currently employed as the Chief Executive Officer of Dunedin City Council (DCC or Council).

Scope of evidence

- 3 I have been asked to prepare evidence in relation to the Dunedin City Council's waste management functions and commitment to the continued operation and closure of the Green Island landfill.
- 4 This includes:
 - (a) Council's role in waste management, and in particular Council's commitment to working towards preventing waste and building a circular economy;
 - (b) A summary of Council's Waste Futures program;
 - (c) Council's financial planning for the extension and closure of the Green Island Landfill; and
 - (d) Council's engagement with key stakeholders.

Executive summary

- 5 The proposal to continue to operate and close Green Island landfill sits within the context of the wider Waste Futures programme.
- 6 This programme aims to ensure effective reduction and management of solid waste; and to enable Dunedin city to move towards a circular economy.
- 7 The continued operation of the Green Island landfill is necessary to ensure that Dunedin City's waste disposal needs can be met until the Smooth Hill landfill is ready to receive waste.
- 8 Once the Smooth Hill landfill is operating, Council's focus at the Green Island site will turn to the closure of the Green Island landfill, and aftercare of the landfill site. This will include ongoing management of any effects associated with the operation of the landfill, and collaboration with the community to plan for future uses of the site that capitalise on the recreational and open space amenity opportunities offered.

- 9 Council has consulted extensively with key stakeholders and the wider community regarding the Waste Futures programme generally and the ongoing operation, closure and aftercare of the Green Island landfill.
- 10 Council acknowledges that the community, particularly those who live near to the site, have a significant interest in the plans for the Green Island landfill. Council is working closely with the community to ensure local people are informed, and that the proposal best meets community needs.

Council's role in waste management

- 11 Council's Waste and Environmental Solutions Group manages activities and services related to waste and environmental solutions across Dunedin city.
- 12 Services provided by Council include kerbside collection of waste and recycling for most city residents and small businesses, resource recovery, and residual disposal services for domestic residents and commercial entities.
- 13 A new enhanced kerbside collection service was rolled out in July 2024. This service includes weekly collection of food scraps and garden waste, fortnightly collection of mixed recycling, fortnightly collection of glass recycling, and fortnightly collection of residual waste
- 14 In recent years Council has invested significantly in waste diversion and recycling facilities. The existing recycling facilities at the Green Island landfill site, will be significantly upgraded with the construction of the new resource recovery park (RRP). Council also now provides recycling hubs for those who live in the central city, in the tertiary education precinct, and in rural locations who do not have access to a weekly recycling service.
- 15 Council manages a portfolio of waste disposal facilities. This portfolio spans from major infrastructure such as the Green Island landfill to smaller community waste transfer facilities such as the Middlemarch and Waikouaiti waste transfer stations. Waste collected at these community transfer stations is transferred to Green Island Landfill for disposal.
- 16 The public recycling and litter bins throughout the city are also provided by Council. Council monitors the usage, capacity, and condition of public place waste and recycling infrastructure, and enforces the city's Litter Compliance Policy to prevent littering and illegal dumping of waste.
- 17 The provision of these services and facilities is complemented by Council's education on waste minimisation and sustainability practices and support

of community initiatives. Examples of this work are: Council workshops on topics such as composting, and waste free living, waste minimisation grants offered to community groups and to commercial entities looking to innovate in the waste minimisation area, and guidance on waste minimisation for event organisers.

The Waste Futures program

18 The Waste Futures Programme was established in 2018.

19 The overall objective for the programme is:

To ensure effective reduction and management of solid waste to achieve the goals set out in its Waste Management and Minimisation Plan. Specifically, to identify and procure the best solid waste solution for Dunedin City to enable us to move towards a zero waste future and a more circular economy.

20 The Waste Futures Programme comprises three overlapping and complementary waste management projects. The three components are:

- (a) The waste management and minimisation plan (WMMP) 2020, which covers collection, reuse, recycling, resource recovery, treatment and disposal, services and facilities in Dunedin, including waste minimisation promotion and education. This plan was consulted on as part of the 2020/21 Annual Plan consultation process and was subsequently adopted by Council on 25 May 2020 Options for enhanced waste and diverted materials collection, including reducing organics (food and/or green waste) going to Green Island Landfill; and
- (b) Preparation for closure of Green Island landfill, including planning for a new landfill at Smooth Hill.

21 Council currently has significant work progressing on each of these three work streams.

22 A new draft waste management and minimisation plan is currently out for consultation and this is likely to be considered by Council later in 2025 in light of the public feedback. The new draft plan identifies the following priority areas:

- (a) management of construction and demolition waste;
- (b) development of community partnerships for waste diversion; and
- (c) regional collaboration on waste and recycling infrastructure.

- 23 Resource consents for a new resource recovery park (RRP) were issued in January 2025. The existing RRP at the Green Island site will undergo a significant upgrade to allow for more efficient processing of greater volumes of recycling, as well as food and green waste. The new RRP will include new organics processing, construction and demolition, material recovery, and bulk waste transfer facilities.
- 24 Council is preparing to provide new waste transfer facilities to service the proposed class 1 landfill at Smooth Hill, south of Dunedin. The resource consents for the proposed Smooth Hill landfill were granted in May 2023. However, prior to the commencement of operations at Smooth Hill Council is required to:
- complete 36 months of baseline monitoring;
 - complete detailed landfill design,
 - prepare finalised management plans, and
 - complete the initial landfill works and associated roading upgrades outside the site.
- 25 Due to these requirements it is unlikely that Smooth Hill will be ready to accept waste until 2029 at the earliest.
- 26 This means that Council must plan to continue to operate the Green Island landfill until the transition to the Smooth Hill landfill is able to be carried out following commissioning and once Smooth Hill becomes operational to accept waste.

Council's financial planning for the Green Island landfill

- 27 The draft 2025-2034 nine year plan has been approved by Council for public consultation. It allocates \$18.468 million of capital expenditure for the Green Island landfill, including various plant renewals and upgrades, closure and aftercare. This includes the following allocations for specific capital projects at the landfill:
- (a) \$8.4 million for capping, landscaping, grassing and completion of landfill stages from now until final closure;
 - (b) \$3.3 million for new landfill gas engine and additional gas works;
 - (c) \$1.5 million for the new southern valley leachate drain;

- (d) \$950, 000 for raising of the perimeter road as a defense against the risk of flooding from the Kaikarae estuary;
 - (e) \$750, 000 for construction of an additional leachate rising main around the perimeter of the landfill;
 - (f) \$750, 000 for a new in-landfill leachate drainage system; and
 - (g) \$450,000 for community walking tracks after landfill closure.
- 28 The allocations within the draft nine year plan demonstrate Council's commitment to invest in the Green Island landfill from now, through to closure of the landfill and into the aftercare phase.
- 29 In terms of DCC's financial planning it is also relevant to note that the draft nine year plan allocates new capital spending on the Smooth Hill landfill of \$92.420 million. This is to bring this landfill into operation in accordance with the consents now held for it.

Council's engagement with key stakeholders

- 30 Engagement regarding the future of the Green Island landfill site commenced in 2022.
- 31 Engagement has involved informing the community about the Waste Futures Programme, including plans for the ongoing operation and closure of the landfill and the proposed facilities required at the new RRP to support the new kerbside collection.
- 32 Key stakeholders that DCC have engaged with include:
- (a) Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou (via Aukaha);
 - (b) Local community organisations, and interest groups;
 - (c) Residential neighbours; and
 - (d) The wider Green Island community and residents.
- 33 A site visit was undertaken with Aukaha and representatives of Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou in April 2022. The purpose of this visit was to create an opportunity to discuss the possible future plans for the landfill site.
- 34 Aukaha provided a cultural impact assessment of the Green Island landfill operation, closure and aftercare in March 2023. This assessment emphasized that the Kaikarae Estuary and its associated waterways hold great significance for mana whenua who have longstanding concerns

regarding the degradation of the estuary due to past and current industrial and landfilling activities. Aukaha made a number of recommendations to ensure that the ongoing operation, closure and aftercare of the landfill is managed to mitigate potential adverse effects on wai Maori, taoka species, and indigenous biodiversity. These recommendations and Council's response to them are discussed in the remaining evidence and reflected in the volunteered consent conditions proposed by DCC.

- 35 Engagement with Aukaha and the Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou is ongoing.
- 36 DCC began local community engagement on the future operation and closure of the Green Island landfill in February 2023. This engagement involved dropping flyers and hosting information sessions that focussed on providing information about:
 - (a) the wider Waste Futures programme;
 - (b) the roll-out of an enhanced kerbside recycling and waste collection service for the city in July 2024;
 - (c) the staged closure of the Green Island landfill; and
 - (d) plans for the new RRP facilities and opportunities for future public access to the site and surrounding environment, including Kaikarae Estuary and Stream post closure.

Conclusion

- 37 The Waste Futures programme aims to enable Dunedin City to move towards a more circular economy.
- 38 The ongoing operation, closure and aftercare of the Green Island landfill is a key component of the overall Waste Futures programme for Dunedin City and an important project the DCC seeks consent to implement.
- 39 Council has identified funding for the extension, closure and aftercare of the Green Island landfill in its draft 2025 - 2034 nine year plan.
- 40 Council has engaged with key stakeholders regarding the ongoing operation, closure and aftercare of the Green Island landfill. This engagement is ongoing and will inform the exercise of the resource consents and management plans.

Sandra Dawn Graham
4 March 2025