

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What sort of waste is going into the landfill?

Waste from residential wheelie bins, stores, restaurants and workshops will be accepted at the landfill.

Asbestos that is wrapped up will be safely buried deep in the landfill.

Nothing hazardous or toxic will be taken to the site. No radioactive or liquid waste will be accepted.

How long is the landfill going to be there?

At this stage, the lifetime of the landfill is estimated at 40 years. It really depends on how much waste we receive e.g. if less waste is received per year the life of the landfill increases.

How do you protect the surrounding environment?

The landfill is lined with a layer of plastic and clay on the bottom, and then covered with a cap on top as it fills. All of the water from the waste is captured and treated so that it doesn't harm the surrounding environment. In the area of the landfill, groundwater lies beneath a thick (6.5 to 9.5m) natural layer of low permeability clay.

How do you make sure it doesn't leak?

Installing the liner involves a thorough leak testing program, verified by an independent third party observer.

How do you know the liner is working?

A set of monitoring bores installed around the site allow us to test the groundwater regularly and make sure its quality hasn't changed. The bores are tested at regular intervals, with the results made available to the public by SITA.

What impact will the landfill have on the surrounding nature reserves?

The landfill is going to be built on existing cleared cropland. No native bushland will be cleared to build the landfill. There is a buffer distance of 1 km between the landfill and the nearest nature reserve.

Is the landfill going to pollute the Avon river catchment?

Any water that comes into contact with waste is known as leachate. All leachate is captured and evaporated. The landfill is kept dry by pumping water out from the bottom of the waste and into evaporation ponds. The landfill is located near the catchment boundary and does not interrupt the flow of Thirteen Mile Brook. These factors, coupled with effective management and monitoring mean that the landfill will not affect the surface waters that feed into the Avon River.

How do you make sure the evaporation ponds are safe?

The ponds are fenced to prevent wildlife like kangaroos falling in or drinking the leachate. The fencing also helps to prevent accidental damage to the liner.

The dual layer design of the liner (plastic and clay) provides backup protection if the plastic surface is damaged. The ponds will be regularly inspected and any damage found will be repaired and tested.

Why are you building the landfill at St. Ronans near York?

SITA looked at 19 potential sites for a new landfill across many Shires around Perth. Allawuna Farm has the most suitable conditions of the sites investigated. The geology of the area and very slowly moving groundwater makes protection of the groundwater much easier. The site is very large (1,500 ha) meaning we can have large buffer distances to neighbours, waterways and nature reserves and the site is far away from major watercourses.

Why are you bringing all the waste from Perth and dumping it in the Shire of York?

The Department of Environment and Conservation will not approve any new landfills on the Swan Coastal Plain. Not because they want to force landfilling out into the country, but because the geology of the plain is too sandy for building safe landfills.

Building a brand new landfill has a number of environmental benefits, it makes use of the latest technology and builds on many years of industry and SITA experience.

What are you doing at the site?

A modern landfill is highly engineered and uses the latest technology available.

Waste is compacted with specialised plant and covered with soil.

The landfill is progressively capped and rehabilitated as it fills. Capping contains gas, litter and water.

Gas is extracted and may be used to power turbines for electricity generation.

Will you employ local people at the landfill?

Our policy has always been to find the best person for the job, without discriminating based on where someone lives, who they are or what they look like. With that given, the travel distance from Perth means potential job applicants are more likely to come from the local area.

What sort of facilities will you have on site?

In addition to the landfill and the evaporation ponds, various other structures are necessary to properly operate a landfill. A weighbridge with an office, a storage shed for landfill plant and equipment, a gas flaring and power generation facility and water tanks for fire fighting will all be built on site.

Why did you only tell people about this in October 2012?

There is a lot involved with making sure a site is appropriate for a landfill. If we did all our environmental investigations into the surface water, ground water, geology, plants, animals, odour,

noise and road access and found there was a big 'red light' we would not waste your time or ours by talking about the project.

Now that we have the answers to the questions we think you are likely to ask, we are inviting everyone in the community to ask away.

Will you be burning any waste at the site?

There will be no burning of waste at the site.

What is the fire risk associated with the landfill?

SITA is very careful to limit the risk of fire in the design of the landfill, the operations procedures followed by our staff and our emergency response plans.

A comprehensive fire management plan will be developed for the landfill in consultation with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and the York Fire and Rescue Brigade. The plan will cover fire prevention, emergency response and performance review.

What is landfill gas flaring and how safe is it?

Landfills generate methane as the waste in them decomposes. The flaring of gas has a variety of functions: It reduces the greenhouse impact of the gas, converting methane into carbon dioxide, it removes the gas from the landfill, reducing the risk of fire and flaring also enables power generation by a gas turbine if the flow is sufficient.

All of the gas combustion happens inside a closed in gas power generation plant or in a shielded flare burner. There are no naked flames to start a fire. Burning of landfill gas does not give off sparks as there are no solids in the fuel.

Will Shire of York waste go into the landfill?

SITA are willing to negotiate the placement of York waste in the Allawuna Landfill.

Why did you put the landfill in that particular spot on the site?

The position of the landfill was chosen to avoid the course of Thirteen Mile Brook, to be in impermeable clay and also to maximise the buffer distances between the landfill footprint and the surrounding properties.

Will the landfill be visible from the road?

The landfill will not be visible from Great Southern Highway. The landfill is designed to have a final height lower than the surrounding ridgelines. This means that as it is capped and vegetated it will blend into the surrounding landscape, and won't change the line of the horizon.

What are you going to do at the road entrance?

SITA will upgrade the turn off into Allawuna to meet the requirements of Main Roads WA. We are currently in consultation with Main Roads to determine the exact form of the intersection. At this stage

it looks like an east bound overtaking lane for trucks turning right into the site, and a west bound entry slip lane and exit speed up lane will be required.

Who are you seeking approval from for the development?

Before construction of the landfill can begin, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), the Department of Water (DoW), the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Main Roads WA and the Shire of York must all be satisfied that the project is safe and well designed.