Hilltops COUNCIL

Draft Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy

Message from Mayor

Effective and responsible waste management by Council is expected by all Hilltops residents and businesses. This includes reliable services and facilities suiting all parts of Hilltops.

For Council, waste management is a major service area, and we seek to deliver services and facilities that achieve community expectations and regulatory standards. Also, for all activities undertaken by Council, including waste management, to be safe and financially responsible.

Shifting global trends and national and state policy and legislation, as well as evolving community expectations, has changed how these services and facilities can be provided now and into the future.

In response, Hilltops Council is reviewing its approach to waste management and resource recovery to set clear objectives and priorities that will be central to future decision making. This Draft Strategy provides the community and Council with a document to discuss and develop these objectives and priorities.

It outlines our strategic objectives and priorities for waste management and resource recovery in the Hilltops Local Government Area. It also provides context to the diverse and dynamic world we need to successfully work in to deliver waste management and resource recovery services.

Hilltops Council is seeking your views on the Draft Strategy, and on waste management and resource recovery in general, prior to being finalised, so that we can begin delivering on the strategy in 2021.

I invite residents to read the document and provide their feedback.

Message from General Manager

Hilltops Council is looking to establish clear objectives and priorities for waste management and resource recovery, setting the direction for Council and its services to the community for the next decade.

Council seeks to provide all residents with fair and reasonable access to waste management and resource recovery facilities and services. Achieving this requires various approaches and levels of services, taking into account the diverse needs of Hilltops towns, villages, and rural communities. Council also aims to achieve this in a fair, safe, and environmentally and financially responsible manner.

Achieving these objectives has become more difficult over time, with changing national, state, and regional policy and regulation, as well as higher community expectations. In addition, changing global, national, and regional waste and recycling markets have forced communities and governments to find more effective regional and local approaches to waste management and resource recovery.

Council must continue to adapt and respond its approaches to waste management and resource recovery to accommodate changing behaviours, standards, and expectations.

To assist, Council is seeking your input into determining objectives and priorities for waste management and resource recovery. Also, your views on what types and levels of service are suitable to towns, villages and rural communities that can be achieved in a sustainable, responsible, and financially viable manner.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Acknowledgements

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2
2 BACKGROUND 6
3 SCOPE 8
4 PURPOSE 9
5 VISION 10
6 SETTING DIRECTION 11
7 CONSULTATION 12
8 RESOURCE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT IN HILLTOPS 13
8.1 Hilltops Council Approach to Waste Management 13
8.2 Hilltops Waste Management at a Glance 14
8.3 Village Landfill Redevelopment Program 15
8.4 Owner/Manager/Contributor/Regulator/Facilitator 15
9 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 17
9.1 Theme 1: Leading by Example 19
9.1.1 Leading by Example – Strategic Objectives 19
9.1.2 Leading by Example – Strategic Priorities 20
9.1.3 Leading by Example – Priority Actions 20
9.1.4 Challenges and Risks 21
9.1.5 Way Forward 21
9.2 Theme 2: Waste Minimisation 22
9.2.1 Waste Minimisation – Strategic Objectives 22
9.2.2 Waste Minimisation – Strategic Priorities 22
9.2.3 Waste Minimisation – Priority Actions 23
9.2.4 Challenges and Risks 23
9.2.5 Way Forward 24
9.3 Theme 3: Proactive Management 25
9.3.1 Proactive Management – Strategic Objectives 26
9.3.2 Proactive Management – Strategic Priorities 26
9.3.3 Proactive Management – Priority Actions 27
9.3.4 Current Status 27
9.3.5 Challenges and Risks 29
9.3.6 Way Forward 29
10 MOVING FROM OBJECTIVES TO STRATEGY 31
10.1 Commonwealth, State and Regional Policy, Strategy, and Legislation 31

10.2 Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Priority Program 31
10.3 Hilltops Council Implementation Program 32
11 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT 33
12 HILLTOPS COUNCIL PROJECTS, PROCEDURES, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES 34
13 RISK ASSOCIATED WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE RECOVERY 35
14 POLICY & CHANGE 36
14.1 Drivers of Policy Change at a Global, National, State, Regional and Local Level 36
14.2 Australian Government 36
14.3 NSW Government 37
14.4 Regional Response 39
14.5 Local Drivers 40
15 KEY LEGISLATION AND POLICIES 41
15.1 Protection of the Environment Operations Act (PoEO Act 1997) 41
15.2 Environmental Protection Licences 42
15.3 Allocation of Responsibility 42
15.4 Offences Under the PoEO Act 42
APPENDIX 1. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 43
APPENDIX 2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 45
APPENDIX 3. CRITICAL STATISTICS WASTE GENERATION AND MANAGEMENT IN HILLTOPS 47
APPENDIX 4. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE 49
APPENDIX 5. PRIORITY ACTIONS – LEADING BY EXAMPLE 52
APPENDIX 6. PRIORITY ACTIONS – WASTE MINIMISATION 58
APPENDIX 7. PRIORITY ACTION – PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT 61
APPENDIX 8. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH RESOURCE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 63
APPENDIX 9. INITIAL 3 PROJECTS MANAGEMENT PLAN TIMEFRAMES AND DELIVERABLES .. 66
APPENDIX 10. PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK 68
APPENDIX 11. NSW STATE KEY POLICY DRIVERS 70
APPENDIX 12. LIST OF LEGISLATION, POLICY AND KEY STRATEGIES 72
APPENDIX 13. GLOSSARY 74

Document History

Date	Status	Version	Resolution	Description
17 June 2021	Draft	0.1		Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy – created

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hilltops Council is tasked with leading waste management and resource recovery across the Local Government Area (LGA). Council is obliged to fulfil many roles as a waste and resource recovery service and facility provider, a regulator and contributor, and as a leader and educator.

During 2018/19, Hilltops Council received approximately 8,000 tonnes of material through its domestic waste services and landfill facilities. Council has responsibility for enforcing relevant legislation and for managing the resources and potential generated through all Council activities.

Hilltops Council works collaboratively with Hilltops communities, other government and regional bodies and various providers and other stakeholders to inform, educate, and enhance resource recovery, and to minimise waste and ensure it is disposed of in a safe, sustainable, financially accountable, and secure manner.

Achieving these objectives is becoming increasingly challenging as relevant legislation has changed and associated regulations have heightened, and community expectations in relation to service levels and resource recovery have increased. Revised national, State, and regional strategies, policies and standards have increased resource recovery targets significantly, and heightened the expectation on local councils to be leaders at the forefront of enhancing waste management and resource recovery.

Significant time and effort has been spent reviewing current and emerging trends in waste management and resource recovery and their impacts on policy, legislation, and community expectations and behaviours. Council has participated in discussions with the State, regional groups and peers on objectives and approaches to waste management and resource recovery, with the aim of thoroughly investigating the current and potential scope of Council's responsibilities and objectives in waste management and resource recovery. If Council does not change its approach to ensure compliance with new and emerging regulatory needs and expectations, Council will be exposed to significant environmental, community, reputational and financial risks.

This Draft Strategy is intended to provide a basis for an effective, appropriate, and responsible way forward, by providing strategic context and justification, and setting the objectives, priorities, and actions to progress them. The draft Strategy summarises the context in which Hilltops Council and local communities are required to respond and operate in, and what this means for how waste management and resource recovery objectives can be progressed, responding to local needs.

The draft Waste Strategy is intended to be a high-level document which sets Council's waste management and resource recovery direction and alignment to Council's *Community Strategic Plan 2030 and this draft will form part of the broader consultation process*.

The strategy sets the following vision:

To provide resource recovery and waste management services for current and future generations that meet community expectations and statutory obligations, provide acceptable levels of service, are fiscally responsible, safe, and environmentally sustainable.

Achieving the vision will continually evolve, as community expectations, legislative regulation and standards are diverse and continuously undergoing change. Shifting global, national, and regional waste and recycling trends has required communities and governments to find more effective regional and local approaches to waste management and resource recovery.

The draft Strategy seeks to provide a basis for addressing this by providing a risk -based, economically achievable resource recovery and waste management framework for the Hilltops Community.

Strategic Objectives

To set intentions and direction for the strategy, a series of Strategic Objectives have been developed, and grouped under the following three themes (refer Appendix 1):

- Leading by Example;
- Waste Minimisation; and
- Proactive Management;

The Strategic **Objectives** relating to each of the three themes are outlined below.

Leading By Example

A) Establishing a long-term, integrated, and aligned approach to planning, operations, monitoring, reporting, and governance for resource recovery and waste management;

B) Optimising long-term efficiency and capacity of waste management infrastructure and services;

C) Working collaboratively with local communities, industry groups, and all levels of government to progress waste management policy and programs that cater for Hilltops communities;

D) Consistent and effective collection, collation, analysis, and reporting of data to support decision making and review; and

E) Educating and informing community on progress and change to:

- Council Waste Strategy, activities, and associated targets; and
- Responsible resource use and disposal.

Waste Minimisation

A) Reduce the generation of waste by supporting and enabling waste avoidance and reuse behaviours through community and business education, engagement, and collaboration;

B) Increase the amount of material going to resource recovery, re-use, and recycling options;

C) In partnership with community, and other stakeholders enhancing community understanding and behaviours, with a focus on achieving greater resource management and waste minimisation;

D) Demonstrating a commitment and leadership through Council activities and stakeholder interaction;

E) Improving community understanding of waste stream composition; and

F) Increasing the range of options and support services available to recover, re-use, and recycle resources.

Proactive Management

A) An informed, educated, and supportive Council and community on the identification, management, and disposal of problem wastes;

B) An informed, educated, and supportive Council and community on managing, monitoring, mitigating, and reporting illegal dumping & littering;

C) Improving community knowledge and access to the regional network of facilities that accept and manage problem wastes;

D) Minimising the social, environmental, and economic impacts of illegal dumping and littering through community education, enforcement, deterrents, and clean-up activities.

E) The enhanced collection, collation, and analysis of data to support decision making;

F) Supporting and utilising state and regional initiatives and programs on illegal dumping and littering; and

G) Collaborating with local communities to deliver a more strategic and integrated approach to illegal dumping and litter prevention and their management.

Strategic Priorities

A diverse range of actions are required to progress the Strategic Objectives and deliver the Strategy as a whole. To assist, the draft Strategy outlines a series of **Strategic Priorities**, which are central to the effective progression and delivery of the Draft Strategy within the first eighteen months. The Strategic Priorities are listed below (refer Appendix 2):

Leading By Example

1. Develop, consult, and implement the ***Hilltops Resource Management and Waste Strategy*** and ***Hilltops Council Resource Management and Implementation Plan.***

2. Harmonising resource recovery and waste services and fees across Hilltops.

3. Establishing a ***Waste Management and Resource Recovery Business Unit.***

4. Establishing resource recovery and waste management fees that encourage waste minimisation and ensure cost recovery.

5. Adjusting domestic waste charges and tipping fees to:

- Be a true reflection of cost; and
- Achieve full cost recovery over time.

6. Enhancing safety, security, and supervision of facilities.

7. Upgrading Victoria Street and Red Hill sites as sub-regional transfer and resource recovery facilities.

8. The staged redevelopment of other local and village landfill sites across Hilltops.

9. Maintain licences for all relevant waste facilities.

10. Remain an active member of regional waste groups, to progress waste management policy and programs.

Waste Minimisation

11. Enhancing service provision by moving to a weight-based fee structure by progressing the installation of:

- A second weighbridge at Victoria Street; and
- Weighbridge options at Boorowa and Harden.

12. Developing Victoria Street as the main resource recovery site in Hilltops.

13. Develop and implement a comprehensive education strategy in partnership with community, the South West Regional Waste Management Group, and the Canberra Regional Joint Organisation to support waste minimisation.

Proactive Management of Problem Wastes & Illegal Dumping

14. Improving data acquisition and dissemination to facilitate better understanding, decision making, and management.

15. Collaboratively working with fellow local governments, regional groups, and the State to develop a strategy for effective waste and resource management in rural NSW including strategies to:

- Deal with legacy issues resulting from former and current facilities;
- Identify and undertake further opportunities for regional facilities and services, catering for demand well into the future.

2 BACKGROUND

The effective management of waste is a significant issue for communities and local governments across Australia.

Hilltops Council has traditionally provided a range of waste management and resource recovery services to local communities, such as domestic services and landfill and transfer station facilities. Beyond this Council has a role as waste and environmental regulators, having responsibility for the local implementation and enforcement of relevant State legislation.

Policy, standards, and expectations have changed dramatically over the last thirty years and will continue to do so. In parallel, local governments have developed a better understanding and acknowledgement of the legacy of current and former waste management practices.

Community expectations and behaviours have changed, with Councils required to provide higher standards and a greater range of waste management options. In response, local governments have been required to enhance and adapt waste management and resource recovery policies, strategies, and operations accordingly.

For smaller rural councils, this challenge is significantly harder due to relatively low economies of scale and associated resourcing and servicing costs, as well as the broad geographic distribution of demand.

Adding to this is the magnitude of responsibility placed on small rural councils with legacy issues resulting from previous waste management practices within the local area. In many cases, including Hilltops, these are likely to have a major financial impact over the next decade and possibly beyond.

Waste generation is a by-product of an economy's production and consumption processes. Therefore, recognising and responding to current and emerging trends and policy in resource use and management is critical for future resource management. This includes consideration of the capacity to export materials, and the value given to materials for recycling and re-use.

Over the last five years, global, national, state, and regional policies and strategy have experienced considerable change with a greater emphasis on managing waste and resources locally and sustainably. In NSW, this has been influenced by the emergence of the NSW Circular Economy Policy[1], the operational and processing pressures brought on by the China National Sword Policy[2], associated shifts in domestic and global markets, and changing community expectations about what happens to their waste.

The scale and composition of waste generation is relative to population size, household income, and economic activity. With Australia achieving and sustaining relatively high levels of growth in each of these sectors, the 2018 National Waste Report[3] stated that waste generated in Australia had increased significantly over the last decade: in 2006–07, 57 million tonnes (Mt) of waste was generated; in 2016–17 this had increased to 67 million tonnes, which is equivalent to 2.7 tonnes (t) per capita. Of this, 13.8 Mt (560 kg per capita) was from municipal solid waste from households and local government activities.

While a move towards less waste disposal and greater resource recovery is evident in Hilltops, the rate of change is less than the State and national averages.

Within Hilltops, over an eleven-year reporting period, waste generation increased by 6%. However, assessed on a per capita basis, waste declined by 10% over the same timeframe.

[1] https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/response-to-china-national-sword/circular-economy-policy

[2] https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/response-to-china-national-sword

[3] https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/7381c1de-31d0-429b-912c-91a6dbc83af7/files/national-waste-report-2018.pdf

Based upon the 2018-19 Annual Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Data Survey (EPA) for Hilltops Council, the total waste collected through the domestic kerbside program was approximately 4,161 tonnes. Approximately two-thirds of this was reported as 'residual' waste Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), while both the 'recycling' and 'organics' were well under 1,000 tonnes each. However, it should be noted that of the 4,161tonnes of waste, the final destination of 3,591 tonnes of waste was as 'residual' waste while 570 tonnes were 'recycled'. This represents a recycling rate of 13.7% through the domestic kerbside program. This result is less than 25% of the average across NSW as reported in the 2018 National Waste Report and far below the NSW Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2021 (WARR) target of 70%.

In areas of Hilltops where domestic waste services are not provided, waste is self-hauled to a series of rural landfills, bin-banks, and transfer stations. The total waste estimated to have been delivered to these facilities during the same reporting period was 3,669 tonnes, of which 3,490 tonnes remained as landfill and 179 tonnes was reported as managed for 'recycling'. This figure represents a recycling rate of 4.9%. This demonstrates that Hilltops Council is well short of the NSW averages of 59% or the 2021-22 targets of the WARR.

Commercial properties waste totalled 155 tonnes over this period, with all of this reported as recycling.

It was reported that there was some 'Recyclables Exported for Reprocessing', with a total of 1.8 tonnes exported, of which 1.4 tonnes was from Victoria Street while 0.4 tonnes were from the Boorowa Landfill.

This draft Waste Management and Resource Strategy forms the basis of the way forward in understanding and delivering on the strategic objectives and priorities with several short-term projects identified to manage waste and resource recovery in Hilltops Council.

3 SCOPE

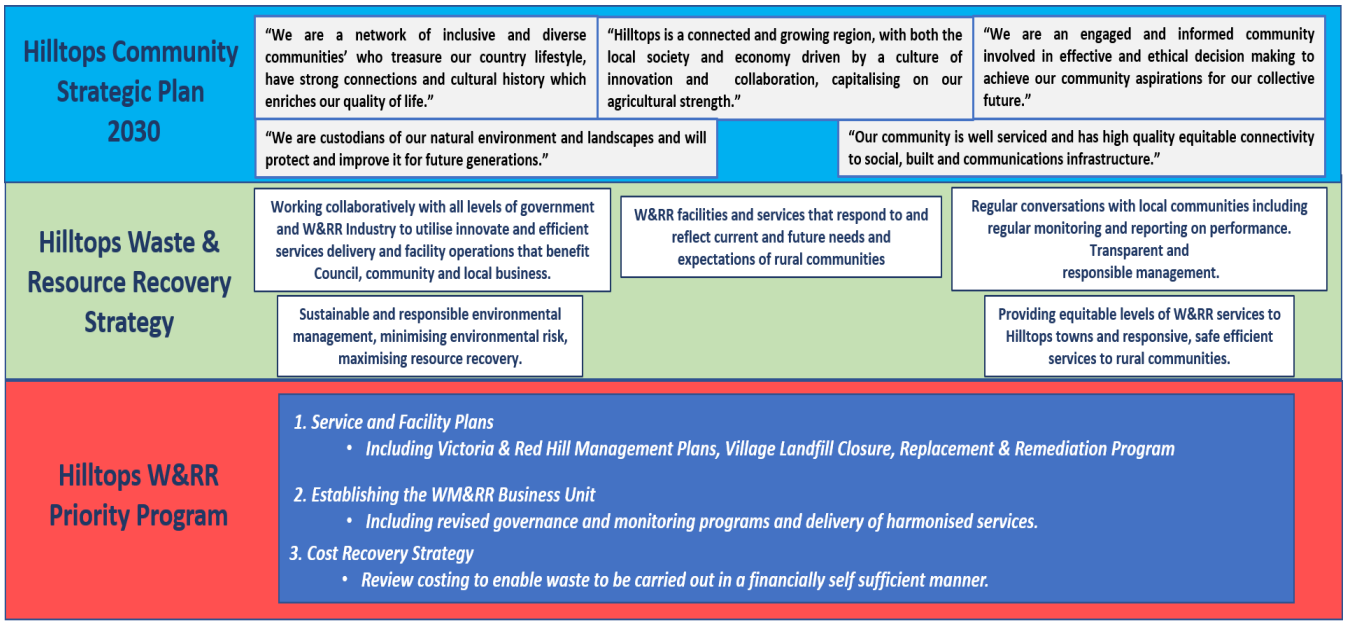
The finalised strategy will provide the long-term (20-year) vision and strategic objectives for Hilltops Council's approach to resource and waste management. It will also identify the priority actions required in the short term (first three years) to provide a solid platform towards achieving these objectives, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.

The scope of Waste and Resource Recovery and Council's involvement in this area overlaps all Five Well-Being Pillars established within the Hilltops Community Strategic Plan 2030. The Five Well-Being Pillars endorsed by Council which are central to the document are:

- Loving Where We Live;
- Nurturing our Natural Environment;
- Building a Strong and Robust Regional Economy;
- Strengthening the Regions Connectivity and Maintenance of Assets and Infrastructure; and
- Providing Ethical, Proactive and Effective Leadership and Governance.

Improving upon Waste and Resource Recovery provides an opportunity for Council to demonstrate its commitment to progressing the objectives of Hilltops Community Strategic Plan 2030 in relation to sustainability by:

- Managing the natural environment and maximising resource recovery and re-use;
- Providing equitable and compliant services and facilities that meet current and future needs of local communities and business as well as meeting all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements;
- Managing and minimising environmental, financial, and workplace risk;
- Efficient and transparent allocation of resources; and
- Working with local communities and businesses to remain aware of their needs and expectations.



4 PURPOSE

The proposed strategy provides Council with a high-level document that serves as a framework for actions to improve our waste systems and services.

The strategy document examines the key areas impacting over waste services as follows:

- **Community Services:** Fit for purpose; Set service level standards; Fair and equitable; Reasonable access; and Education of users.
- **Waste Minimisation:** Avoid; Reduce; Re-use; Recycle; and Dispose as a last resort.
- **Governance:** Legislation requirements; Reporting; and Bench marking.
- **Environmental:** Stewardship of our environment; Leading by example; and Local Environmental Planning requirements.
- **Financial:** Full cost recovery; Activity based costing; Sustain a waste business unit; and Efficient and effective practices.

The strategy adheres to the policy and legislative requirements that Hilltops Council and the community are required to comply with and progress, including:

- The principal waste and resource recovery document for NSW, the Waste and Resource Recovery (WARR) Strategy (2014-21). This document remains in force, but is being superseded by the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041;
- The current Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Regional Waste Strategy 2018-2023; and
- The Hilltops Community Strategic Plan (Hilltops CSP).

The strategy seeks to align with emerging policy and strategy.

The Strategy is intended to operate as part of an efficient and transparent governance framework, aligned and integrated within the Hilltops Council's approach to Integrated Planning and Reporting across the organisation.

5 VISION

A vision has been developed for resource recovery and waste management to reflect the community, regulatory, environmental, and economic expectations of resource recovery and waste management within the Hilltops area:

To provide resource recovery and waste management services for current and future generations that meet community expectations and statutory obligations, provide acceptable levels of service, are fiscally responsible, safe, and environmentally sustainable.

Hilltops Council is seeking to provide all residents with fair and reasonable access to facilities, with the aim to minimise waste, increase re-use and recycling, and only dispose as a last resort.

Principles

Council and the community are to uphold clear Principles on the approach to waste management and resource recovery. These Principles are based on:

A) Generate less waste;

B) Treat all materials as valuable and finite resources;

C) Recover, reuse, and reprocess materials wherever practicable;

D) Encourage and embrace innovative thinking and approaches to resource recovery;

E) Inform and educate Hilltops communities to:

- positively influence behaviours; and
- provide efficient, transparent, and accountable approach to resource recovery and waste management.

Hilltops Council will support these Principles through their planning, management, and operations. Council will shift towards a 'whole of life cycle' or 'circular economy' approach through:

A) Aligning relevant planning, management, and operations to benefit both the community and environment while also increasing financial viability;

B) A coherent, consistent, and integrated approach to waste planning and resource recovery;

C) Improved and cost-effective service delivery;

D) A committed and responsive approach to community education, compliance and enforcement in all areas including illegal waste disposal and operation of Council and private waste and resource recovery facilities; and

E) A consistent, integrated, and regular approach to waste management monitoring, reporting, and review.

These principles will be further developed to show how they relate to moving towards a 'whole of life cycle' or 'circular economy' approach. It is intended that these principles, in addition to the objectives and outcomes of this strategy, provide the baseline for the future review of any waste and resource management plans, policies, and procedures.

6 SETTING DIRECTION

Hilltops Council seeks to:

- Provide all residents with fair and reasonable access to waste facilities and services;
- Minimise Waste and increase re-use and recycling with waste disposal as a last resort;
- Adapt and respond to our communities changing behaviours, standards, and expectations;
- Comply with environmental legislative and regulatory requirements;
- Reduce our burden on the environment;
- Perform waste functions in a financially responsible manner;
- Create financial reserves to support the rehabilitation of current waste sites; and
- To harmonise waste services and fee structures across the Hilltops area.

Hilltops Council has identified priority actions that will:

- Enhance current waste management;
- Improve resource recovery practices; and
- Improve facilities in the Hilltops area.

Early implementation of these priority actions will enable Council to provide efficient and reliable services and infrastructure and will increase the capacity of Council to monitor and review its waste practices. This will inform future decisions to minimise risks, enhance environmental and economic outcomes, and enhance the sustainability of Council's operations.

The Draft Strategy will enable Council to provide information for medium- and long-term decision making and will provide the framework to handle waste management in a risk-based and economically achievable manner.

A series of Strategic Objectives have been developed to set intention and direction which are grouped under the following three themes (Please refer to Appendix 1 for a more detailed explanation):

- Leading by Example;
- Waste Minimisation; and
- Proactive Management

Achieving these objectives is a challenge as community expectations, legislative regulations and regulatory requirements are diverse. The waste industry is experiencing significant global and national change with regional waste and recycling markets being forced by communities and governments to find more effective approaches to waste management and resource recovery.

Under state law, Hilltops Council has the responsibility to 'properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance, and conserve the environment of the area'. In NSW, several Acts and Regulations are in place which aim to minimise:

- Risks to public health;
- Risks of potential environmental contamination; and
- Loss of valuable resources through ineffective waste management practices.

7 CONSULTATION

Consultation and engagement are essential to the development and implementation of a successful Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy for Hilltops. Hilltops Council is a major resource user, manager, regulator, and leader in the region. These responsibilities are shared across the community and the many businesses and industries that operate within the Hilltops area. The Strategy will recognise and respond to the multiple stakeholders involved, the scope of their activities, and their needs and aspirations.

As part of the consultation process Council will engage with the community and stakeholders regarding the dynamic legal, environmental, economic, and social contexts that Waste Management and Resource Recovery programs and projects are required to operate. This will include the scope of Council operations, its influence in Waste Management and Resource Recovery, and options in conjunction with advancing additional legal, financial, environmental, economic, and social obligations.

Consultation on the Draft Hilltops Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy provides the opportunity to discuss potential and proposed changes to services and existing facilities with consideration of the following:

- The proposed benefits to the communities;
- Legislative, regulatory, operational, and environmental requirements;
- Financial sustainability; and
- Delivering on strategic objectives.

Consultation will also play a critical role in revitalising conversations with the community, stakeholders, and peers in relation to Waste Management and Resource Recovery education. This is essential in progressing behavioural change in the use and lifecycle management of waste.

8 RESOURCE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT IN HILLTOPS

A number of avenues are available for Hilltops Council to manage its resources in line with community expectations, financial limitations, and legislative standards. This begins with establishing and committing to a waste management and resource recovery strategy that outlines intent and direction, and that relates to current and projected circumstances within Hilltops.

To achieve this, the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy establishes local objectives which reflect Hilltops Council's commitment to:

- **Minimising waste generation** - Reducing resource consumption through resource recovery and re-use;
- **Environmentally Sustainability** – Meeting EPA and Legislative requirements to lessen our environmental impact;
- **Financial Sustainability** – To provide a transparent financially sustainable waste service;
- **Risk** - Minimising risk to the community, environment, and Council;
- **Legislation and Policy** - To include current and emerging Commonwealth and State legislation and policy;
- **Status** – Status of local facilities and services as well as local and regional infrastructure, services, agreements, demand, supply, and behaviours; and
- **Planned and projected change** - Local and regional infrastructure, services, demand, supply, and behaviours.

While National, State and Regional targets are predominantly developed to reflect the scale and nature of metropolitan activity and demand, rural communities, and local government such as Hilltops, need to find more efficient, effective, and sustainable ways to progress waste management and resource recovery. They also need to demonstrate a commitment and progress towards these objectives.

Hilltops Council and similar small to medium size rural councils are required to seek ways and means to progress national, state, and regional policies through local and regional responses suited to rural towns and activities.

Critical statistics of Hilltops regarding waste management can be found in: Appendix 3 – Critical Statistics Waste Generation and Management in Hilltops.

8.1 Hilltops Council Approach to Waste Management

The management of resources and waste form some of Hilltops Council's most pressing environmental, financial, and social challenges.

Hilltops Council strives to effectively service its communities and Waste is an essential service and Council is required to sustain expected levels of service and facilities across Hilltops.

The relative remoteness and small size of many villages within Hilltops, combined with the size and geographic distribution of Hilltops larger towns, results in significant financial and logistical challenges for provision of regular 'basic' services, such as kerbside waste collection and recycling particularly, while remaining consistent with the expectations of Council and the community. Generating less waste, education on the real costs of waste management will be central to progressing effective and sustainable waste management and resource recovery within Hilltops.

This Strategy is seeking further ways to reduce the generation of waste material and the associated costs of transportation and disposal. This is to be achieved by pursuing alternate approaches and promoting efficient ways to manage the whole life cycle of resources and reduce the creation of waste.

To achieve this, Hilltops Council aims to:

A) Understand, plan for, and monitor **current and projected waste generation patterns** that will arise as a result of:
   - Changing consumer choices;
   - A changing and growing economy; and
   - Expected legislative and policy direction changes.

B) Acknowledge and respond to the **cost prohibitive impacts on resource management activities** resulting from:
   - The lack of resource volume;
   - Remoteness and limited access to markets; and
   - Costs of handling and transportation.

C) Understand, plan, and manage risks associated with the **multiple roles of Council and local communities within waste management and resource recovery**, including:
   - Environmental;
   - Economic;
   - Community health, safety, and liveability;
   - Governance and legislative responsibilities; and
   - Reputational risks to Council and community.

D) Consider and plan for the **waste streams** relevant to Hilltops communities through differing sectors and land uses.

Hilltops Council is a founding member of the South West Regional Waste Management Group (SWRWMG), sharing services and management of waste transportation and disposal to regional facilities located at Bald Hill. Council is also a member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO), allowing Council to contribute and benefit from regional collaboration, particularly in the areas of waste management policy and education. Both are active examples of where collaboration with other local government authorities can enhance economies of scale and provide opportunities to share resources and lobby State authorities for greater assistance.

It is recommended further opportunities for collaboration are sought to ensure Hilltops Council can adapt sustainably to increasing demands and requirements. Further collaboration will enhance Council's capacity to lobby State and Federal authorities to understand and assist rural communities and councils to adapt and respond to the specific challenges and legacy issues that confront them.

8.2 Hilltops Waste Management at a Glance

Hilltops Council currently has no overarching strategy in relation to its waste management and resource recovery activities. Waste strategies were completed for the former Young Shire Council in 2013 and former Boorowa Shire Council in 2015 which reflected the context of waste management at that time.

The Hilltops Community Strategic Plan 2030 (Hilltops CSP) identifies the important roles of Council in waste management reduction and recycling. Council's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program, and Operational Plan identify Council's roles, responsibilities, and allocated resourcing towards the provision of waste management and resource recovery services and facilities.

Council's current waste management and resource recovery activities deliver services that are:

- In line with community expectations;
- In compliance with Commonwealth and State regulations and standards; and
- At a cost to Council and the community.

Decisions made by Council at a strategic level (in relation to planning and management), and at an operational level (in relation to how Council performs its functions), have the potential to significantly influence the Hilltops environment. This was recognised within the current Hilltops CSP, which outlines the community's expectations around lifestyle and living standards.

Waste is managed in Hilltops Council through a range of approaches depending on geographic location and service availability. Each community has differing expectations, consumption, and waste generation patterns and behaviours. Currently Hilltops service levels, available services, and fees vary across the area. The Strategy aims to harmonise these services across Hilltops.

Services in the towns of Young and Boorowa area are currently managed under collection contracts which include:

- The collection of kerbside waste and recycling in the towns of Young and Boorowa;
- Garden organics in Young
- Commercial waste and recycling in Boorowa
- Collection of waste and recycling from public bin-banks and transfer stations within the Hilltops Council area.

Residents within the Young township receive weekly recycling collection.

Garden organic collection is undertaken in the towns of Young and Harden-Murrumburrah. However, there is no garden organic collection service in Boorowa. Residents in Boorowa receive a free self-haul service for green waste at the receival site.

Services in Harden are managed by Council staff and equipment.

8.3 Village Landfill Redevelopment Program

Over the past decade the three former shires of Boorowa, Young, and Harden had all actively sought to reduce the risks and financial costs associated with the operation of village landfills. With the assistance of the State, this resulted in the redevelopment of approximately fifty percent of village landfills across Hilltops, which were replaced with transfer stations and upgrades to waste facilities.

In June 2019, funding provided by the State, in conjunction with funding provided by Council, has enabled Council to begin assessing the status, lifespans, and capacity of the Bendick Murrell, Bribbaree, Koorawatha, Milvale, Reids Flat, Rye Park and Tubbul landfill facilities. It has also been used to commence three development applications (Bendick Murrell, Koorawatha, and Reids Flat), seeking approval for the change of use of the sites from landfills to transfer stations.

The work undertaken so far has further informed Council in relation to the full cost of remediation and replacement, which is significantly underfunded. The scale and cost of this program is extensive and will require a long-term commitment by Council and the State to see it being fulfilled over the next 7-10 years, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.

8.4 Owner/Manager/Contributor/Regulator/Facilitator

Like all local governments, Hilltops Council has a number of responsibilities in resource recovery and waste management:

A) **Owner**: Hilltops Council is an independent statutory body, thereby owning the responsibility of providing infrastructure to the community;

B) **Manager**: Hilltops Council manages the collection services on behalf of the community;

C) **Consumer and Contributor**: Hilltops Council has a significant role in influencing the amount of waste that is generated in the Local Government Area and is best placed to take action to reduce or manage it more efficiently;

D) **Regulator**: Hilltops Council has the regulatory responsibility to manage waste, whereby individuals, organisations, and Council must comply with the rules and regulations pertaining to resource recovery and waste management; and

E) **Facilitator**: Hilltops Council facilitates activities and approaches to improve resource recovery and waste management within the council area.

The scope of each of these roles is constantly changing, which makes setting and sustaining strategic direction and undertaking operations very challenging and requires a clear and coherent approach.

9 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

A series of Strategic Objectives have been developed under the following three Themes:

- **Leading by Example;**
- **Waste Minimisation;** and
- **Proactive Management.**

These themes address the full scope of waste management and resource recovery, and are consistent with current Commonwealth, State and regional strategies, policies, and legislation.

The strategic Objectives and Strategic Priorities relating to these themes can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

The planned delivery timeframes relating to these objectives can be found in Appendix 4.

The intent and scope of the Strategic Objectives is summarised below:

Leading by Example

Hilltops Council will enact this through all aspects of waste and resource management and planning, including effective and efficient governance, service provision and legislative compliance, and regular monitoring, reporting and community consultation.

Continually demonstrating a commitment to provide adaptive waste management and resource recovery activities that are a benchmark for the community, industry, and peers.

This includes actively minimising risks, compliance with legislative and policy requirements, and aiming to achieve high levels of environmental and financial performance within a safe and healthy workplace. Council will measure this performance through setting benchmarks for waste avoidance, resource recovery and re-use within the region.

Hilltops Council aim to provide a consistent and efficient services, while effectively managing risk and the potential for complaints, breaches, legal action, and associated costs. This will occur through working collaboratively with local communities, all levels of government, providers, and other stakeholders to increase awareness, responsibilities, and options.

Leadership will be reflected in all aspects of waste management and resource recovery including:

- Effective Governance;
- Service Provision;
- Legislative Compliance;
- Monitoring and Reporting; and
- Community Consultation.

Waste Minimisation

Recognising and treating waste as a resource by collaboratively identifying and capitalising on opportunities for the re-use, recycling, and repurposing of waste, as well as more efficient, effective, and sustainable alternative waste disposal options.

Waste management costs continue to rise as government standards and community expectations elevate. A key factor in sustainable waste management is reducing the quantities of material that is disposed of, generally by landfill, and identifying and implementing alternative options including greater opportunities for re-use, recycling, and repurposing. Where waste disposal is necessary, using more efficient, sustainable, and effective waste disposal options can further increase financial viability.

Re-use, re-purpose, and recycling can occur through a range of processes dependent on the resource materials involved, the intended outcomes, and the scale of operations. Hilltops Council is already actively working towards this by working collaboratively communities, service providers and businesses to separate certain materials for recycling. Council will investigate further opportunities to reduce disposal volumes, and to find financially and environmentally sustainable means of re-use, repurpose, and recycling that can be successfully achieved within the Hilltops region.

In addition to re-use and recycling activities, alternative treatment technologies can provide further opportunities to divert waste from landfill and recover resources. However, it is important that such technologies are considered with a full appreciation of the levels of reuse and recycling that can be achieved before residual waste is processed through alternative treatment methods. The feasibility of alternative treatment technologies, such as waste to energy, will need to be considered after waste avoidance initiatives and after the enhancement of re-use and recycling services.

Waste Minimisation will be progressed through:

- Waste Avoidance:
  - Increased Resource Recovery;
  - Re-Use; and
  - Recycling;
- Enhanced:
  - Monitoring and reporting;
  - Education;
  - Communication; and
  - Collaboration.

Proactive Management

Actively seeking to minimise the scale, frequency and level of risk resulting from waste and resource management, including the inappropriate and illegal disposal and management of waste and resources.

The effective and efficient management, education, and regulation of waste minimisation and resource management will be central to Hilltops Council's success in being an effective, resilient, and adaptable waste and resource recovery manager and provider. This is particularly important in relation to areas of waste management and resource recovery where Council do not have direct control and rely heavily on the behaviour and attitudes of others.

This includes Council's approach to influencing the methods of disposal of problem wastes, illegal dumping, and the unauthorised disposal of waste materials on private lands. Proactive management will be shown by Council through increased community education, and the installation of deterrents and enforcement, with the aim to reduce incidents, and minimise risk and potential impacts on environmental and human health.

Proactive Management of Problem Wastes and Illegal Dumping will be progressed by focusing on:

- Problem Wastes (e.g. Chemicals, asbestos);
- Illegal Dumping;
- Litter; and
- Communication and education.

9.1 Theme 1: Leading by Example

Continually demonstrating a commitment to provide adaptive waste management and resource recovery activities that are a benchmark for the community, industry, and peers.

Hilltops Council will enact this through all aspects of waste and resource management and planning, including effective and efficient governance, service provision, legislative compliance, regular monitoring, reporting and community consultation.

Council will demonstrate its leadership in waste management and resource recovery in its day-to-day operations by:

- Delivering a service that responds to community expectations and regulatory requirements;
- A continued commitment to collaboration with all levels of government to enhance waste management services for rural communities; and
- Its pro-active response to minimising risk, effectively utilising resources, consulting on change, and reporting regularly on progress.

Council will be a leader in Waste Management by utilising internal and external resource recovery and waste management approaches, and through integration of sustainable resource management principles into future procurement and purchasing decisions.

Hilltops Council will lead by example through its collaboration with community and industry groups, regional organisations, and the State to educate and inform consumers and resource owners on waste and resource management and will undertake regular consultation with Hilltops communities and other stakeholders on the status and review of waste strategy, projects, and programs.

Council will continue to actively participate in State, regional and local organisations, and undertake activities to implement waste avoidance and recycling schemes across all operations. Council will work with all levels of government towards achieving agreed waste avoidance, recycling, and re-use targets.

Hilltops Council will continue to acknowledge and operate within all legislative frameworks, continually seeking to improve the health and safety of waste management and resource recovery operations, services, and facilities. This includes an ongoing commitment to regular monitoring and reporting to the Hilltops community and the State on waste management activities, incidents, and targets.

9.1.1 Leading by Example – Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives identified are the following:

A) Establishing a long-term, integrated, and aligned approach to planning, operations, monitoring, reporting and governance for resource recovery and waste management;

B) Optimising long-term efficiency and capacity of waste management infrastructure and services across Hilltops Council;

C) Working collaboratively with local communities, industry groups, and all levels of government to progress waste management policy and programs that cater for Hilltops communities;

D) Consistent and effective collection, collation, analysis, and reporting of data to support decision making and review; and

E) Educating and informing community on progress and change to:

   - Council Waste Strategy, activities, and associated targets; and
   - Responsible resource use and disposal.

9.1.2 Leading by Example – Strategic Priorities

Strategic priorities to support the Strategic Objectives are:

1. Develop, consult, and implement the Hilltops Resource Management and Waste Strategy and Implementation Plan;
2. Harmonise resource recovery and waste services and fees for Boorowa, Young and Harden-Murrumburrah;
3. Establish a Waste Management and Resource Recovery Business Unit;
4. Establish resource recovery and waste management fees that encourage waste minimisation and ensure cost recovery;
5. Adjusting domestic waste charges and tipping fees to:
    - be a true reflection of cost; and
    - achieve full cost recovery.
6. Enhance safety, security, and supervision of facilities;
7. Upgrade Victoria Street and Red Hill sites as sub-regional transfer and resource recovery facilities;
8. Staged redevelopment of local and village landfill sites across Hilltops;
9. Sustain licences for all relevant waste facilities; and
10. Remain an active member of regional waste groups, to progress waste management policy and programs.

9.1.3 Leading by Example – Priority Actions

The priority actions for this theme are:

- Enhancing service provision through:
    - Harmonising of resource recovery, waste services, and service providers across Hilltops to provide more equitable services to the community as a whole;
    - The development of a village landfill maintenance schedule;
    - The redevelopment of rural landfills and replacement with improved and safer services;
    - Undertaking regular bin audits;
    - Future service provider contracts providing additional collections and harmonised contract periods; and
    - The revision and development of standard operating procedures, operational systems, guidance and communications material for waste management and resource recovery across Hilltops.
- Developing an annual monitoring and reporting program including:
    - Key Performance Indicators / Benchmarks in line with local, regional, and State objectives;
    - Enhanced data acquisition and reporting;
    - Seeking regular community feedback on service levels and provision;
    - Developing and implementing a comprehensive resource management education

strategy in partnership with community, the State government, CRJO, and neighbouring Councils, with a focus on resource management and waste minimisation;

- Undertaking a strategic assessment of regional facilities including Bald Hill to confirm capacity of regional facilities to accommodate projected and changing demands in the long term; and
- Developing, adopting, and enforcing 'Waste Not' components within the proposed Hilltops Development Control Plan.

9.1.4 Challenges and Risks

The main challenge in Leading by Example, is sustaining expected levels of service while enacting improvements and minimising risk to the community, environment, staff, and the organisation. To successfully achieve this Council and the community need to clearly identify roles and responsibilities and identify which Waste and Resource Recovery services Council should provide, and what the costs involved are to Council and the community, relating to levels of service and financial liabilities.

Leading by Example requires a high standard of risk management that Council will openly communicate with all stakeholders to ensure effective sharing of information.

From a governance perspective, this involves Council establishing and committing to a clear strategy, and in parallel committing to an effective and responsive management framework capable of achieving strategic objectives.

Leading discussions with the community, industry groups and peers will assist in establishing realistic expectations and aspirational objectives, with achievable priorities and commitments which take into account available resources, equity, safety, and regulation. This includes investigating and utilising various means of service provision to overcome financial and geographic constraints with the aim of achieving the same levels of service at a reasonable cost to all Hilltops community members.

Achieving these objectives will be difficult and take significant time, resources, and support. Waste as a function will be examined for ways to become independent of general fund subsidy and become financially self-sufficient.

Being a leader also includes dealing with unresolved issues such as the varying levels of service found across Hilltops and the significant variations in capacity and costs to achieve greater parity. Standardising services and costs to achieve greater cost equity will change current levels of service for some ratepayers, resulting in either an improvement or a decrease in service levels (and associated cost). Discussing with Hilltops communities why this approach is proposed and the broader impacts of not taking action (as much as undertaking change) will be pivotal to successfully setting the direction for waste management in Hilltops well into the future.

9.1.5 Way Forward

Leading By Example will be achieved by:

- **Establishing, sustaining, negotiating, and communicating clear objectives and principles** for waste and resource management;
- **Working proactively** to have Waste and Resource Management Strategies delivered through aligned actions and commitments by the community, industry groups, peers, and State agencies as well as through Council's own operations;
- **Developing and sustaining clear governance procedures and policies**; and
- **Building and sustaining strong relationships** with community groups, private service providers, landowners, and other local governments.

9.2 Theme 2: Waste Minimisation

Recognising and treating waste materials as a resource by collaboratively identifying and capitalising on opportunities for their re-use, recycling, and repurposing, as well as more efficient, effective, and sustainable alternative waste disposal options.

Hilltops Council will enact this through increased resource recovery, re-use and recycling and working with the community, industry, and peers to reduce demand. This will also be achieved through identifying alternative waste disposal options.

With waste facilities providing a finite capacity for waste disposal and an increasing awareness of associated environmental, social, and economic risks and costs in relation to waste management, reducing waste generation is essential. This includes the direct costs and risk to Council as well as those on the broader Hilltops community and the viability of local business.

Waste minimisation processes and practices range from avoiding waste generation at the start of a product lifecycle (through product stewardship), to communication and education, consumer choice, right through to landfill diversion behaviours and alternate treatment technologies.

Responsibility for waste minimisation rests with all participants and relies heavily on behavioural change and collaboration. Hilltops Council has the potential to influence and enact waste avoidance at a local level through its procurement process, and the use and disposal of materials across the organisation.

9.2.1 Waste Minimisation – Strategic Objectives

The strategic priorities identified for waste minimisation are:

A) Reducing generation of waste by supporting and enabling waste avoidance and reuse behaviours through community and business education, engagement, and collaboration;

B) Increasing the amount of materials going to resource recovery, re-use, and recycling options;

C) In partnership with community, all levels of government and providers, enhancing community understanding and behaviours, with a focus on achieving greater resource management and waste minimisation;

D) Demonstrating a commitment and leadership through Council activities and stakeholder interaction;

E) Improving community understanding of waste stream composition; and

F) Increasing the range of options and support services available to community and businesses to recover, re-use and recycle resources.

9.2.2 Waste Minimisation – Strategic Priorities

The Priorities in the first three years for progressing Council's commitment to Waste Minimisation are (subject to the availability of funding and resources):

11. Enhancing service provision through a weight-based fee structure so that all loads/categories are charged by weight, except for small loads, such as carloads, which are to be charged in accordance with EPA standards and recommendations for volume conversion to weight;

12. Developing Victoria Street as the main resource recovery site in Hilltops, with all material (including Commercial & Domestic / Commercial & Industrial) destined for disposal in Young to pass through this site; and

13. Develop and implement a comprehensive education strategy in partnership with community, theSWRWMG and CRJO to support waste minimisation.

9.2.3 Waste Minimisation – Priority Actions

Priority Actions are provided in Appendix 6.

- Enhancing service provision through:
    - Providing Community Reuse, Repair & Recycling Centres at Victoria Street, with satellite facilities at Boorowa and Harden-Murrumburrah;
    - Providing a Commercial & Domestic / Commercial & Industrial transfer station at Victoria Street and restricting public access to Red Hill;
    - Investigating the potential to establish Commercial & Domestic / Commercial & Industrial materials recovery, processing, and sale within the Victoria Street site;
    - Working with providers to enhance the Victoria Street Material Recycling Facility;
    - Purchasing a landfill compactor for Red Hill (achieved);
    - Establishing a transfer station at Bribbaree;
    - Installing and upgrading village landfill transfer stations to enhance service and safety; and
    - Investigating the potential to expand kerbside collection to include:
        - Waste and recycling at Murringo, Bendick Murrell and Koorawatha;
        - Recycling collection at Galong.
- Working with local and regional communities to develop a viable resource recovery industry;
- Shifting to a weight-based approach for waste charges;
- Standardising waste disposal and recycling options in parks and other public spaces such as street bins; and
- Developing and implementing a comprehensive education strategy in partnership with the community, the SWSRMG and CRJO to support waste minimisation. This includes increasing the capacity for greater waste avoidance through purchasing, minimising single use, and re-use/recovery/recycling options for end of life.

9.2.4 Challenges and Risks

The challenges and risks for Council can largely be mitigated by:

- Raising community awareness and understanding of the problems associated with increasing waste generation levels;
- Providing further advice on how to avoid waste generation;
- Developing and communicating better information on waste generation and levels of re-use, recycling, and repurposing within Hilltops and associated costs;
- Working with other local governments, regional and state organisations to extend product stewardship, manufacturing standards, and other measures; and
- Providing opportunities for the re-use of items and materials which cannot be avoided.

Achieving any substantial and sustained improvement in waste minimisation requires all parties to understand the issue, the impact of their behaviours, the options available, and the true value and costs before committing to change.

Local information, approaches, and outcomes that do not rely on high levels of intervention or additional resource commitments of Council are also beneficial, while remaining consistent with State policy and regulation.

Council will aim to revise services and facilities for residents and businesses to provide and promote the recovery of materials rather than disposal as a first option. However, behavioural change and community acceptance will be reliant on providing greater information on real costs and risks associated with current levels of service, and identification of opportunities for community benefit.

Council needs to manage facilities to ensure that remaining landfill life is maximised, and risks are minimised. One approach to enable achieving this is through revising pricing for resource management services to reflect the full cost to Council of disposal or reallocation. Utilising a cost-recovery approach that includes covering current and projected construction and operational expenditure is likely to reduce demand by encouraging and rewarding re-use and resource recovery and reducing the financial burden of waste management services and facilities to Council.

9.2.5 Way Forward

Waste Minimisation will be achieved by taking an integrated and multi-dimensional approach oriented towards:

- Enhancing monitoring and reporting of waste management and reuse;
- Raising community awareness and understanding of the problems associated with increasing waste generation levels;
- Providing advice, support and leadership to the community and local business on how to avoid waste generation;
- Collaborating with other local governments, regional organisations, and the State to extend product stewardship, manufacturing standards and other measures;
- Orientating costs, frequency, and types of Council services and facilities towards waste minimisation including:
    - Waste disposal fees recovering full costs of service.
    - Increasing frequency of recycling and green waste services.
    - Incentivising use of recyclables bins.
- Supporting greater recycling and re-use, working with communities and business to identify and provide opportunities for the re-use of items and materials which cannot be avoided.

Council will also move towards a cost recovery approach to reduce waste demand and to assist all parties in gaining a better understanding of (and responsibility for) their associated financial costs. To achieve this, the cost recovery approach will need to cover all costs involved in the management and storage of materials in the short to long term, including:

- The costs involved in transitioning from waste disposal to minimisation;
- Likely increases in management costs due to increasing environmental standards and increasing community expectations; and
- The remediation and management of former landfill sites and current facilities proposed for redevelopment.

It is critical that the waste charges include a provision for building financial reserves for capital assets now and into the future. The organisation and the community need to be aware of and understand the need for this provision to ensure waste generated now leaves a healthier legacy for the future.

An effective monitoring and reporting program will be central to Hilltops Council's approach to waste management and minimisation. This program will inform Council, the community, industry groups, and the State of the:

- Current status and projected demand and capacity of services and facilities;
- Quantity and composition of materials received and their distribution;
- Progression towards local, regional, and State targets;
- Current and projected costs and risks to Council and the community; and
- Options and priorities for improvement.

9.3 Theme 3: Proactive Management

Actively seeking to minimise the scale, frequency and level of risk resulting from waste and resource management, including the inappropriate and illegal disposal and management of waste and resources.

Hilltops Council will enact this through a proactive and responsible risk aware approach to all aspects of waste management and resource recovery. Council will work collaboratively to influence behaviours and understanding of risks and harm resulting from inappropriate management of problem wastes, and the unauthorised and illegal disposal and management of waste and resources.

This includes Council's proactive approach through:

- Community education;
- Deterrents and enforcement;
- Organisational behaviour and practices including WHS to reduce incidents;
- Financial prudence;
- Minimising risk; and
- Environmental and human health.

While the Proactive Management Objective relates to all elements of waste and resource management and recovery, a particular focus is placed on aspects of waste and resource management where parties other than Council have high levels of responsibility. This includes economic, legal, and environmental responsibilities for the management of the full lifecycle of a resource while within their custodianship, including its ultimate disposal.

Council has obligations to enforce regulatory requirements relating to illegal disposal of materials on public and private lands, and the inappropriate handling and disposal of problem wastes including chemicals and asbestos.

Hilltops Council will prioritise increasing education and awareness of impacts and responsibilities in relation to illegal dumping and unauthorised disposal. Council will work collaboratively with the community, industry, landowners, and neighbouring local governments to change behaviours and effectively enforce regulatory controls.

As the name implies, problem wastes have greater capacity to cause harm to human health and the environment if they are managed inappropriately. Due to their nature they can be difficult to recycle and recover, and the cost of doing so can be uneconomic. Such wastes may include (but are not limited to), paint, batteries, smoke detectors, fluorescent lamps, gas bottles, motor oils and fluids, and other toxic and hazardous products, including asbestos.

Problem wastes in the broader context also include littering and illegal dumping due to the additional issues involved in their storage and management and the impacts of toxic or dangerous wastes likely to be present. They often include materials that incur an additional cost burden in their disposal (e.g. mattresses, cars, and whitegoods).

Littering has a detrimental effect on the environment and can have a negative impact on community well-being. Hilltops Council will continue to work with the community to identify and respond to these incidents and aim to change associated behaviours within the community.

9.3.1 Proactive Management – Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives can be found in Appendix 1.

A. An Informed, educated, and supportive Council and community on:
B. Identification, management, and disposal of problem wastes; and
C. Managing, monitoring, mitigating, and reporting including –
    - Illegal dumping; and
    - Littering
D. Minimising the social, environmental, and economic impacts of illegal dumping and littering through:
    - Community education;
    - Enforcement;
    - Installation of deterrents and appropriate infrastructure including CCTV coverage of waste facilities; and
    - Clean-up activities.
E. Improving community knowledge and access to the regional network of facilities that accept and manage problem wastes;
F. The enhanced collection, collation, and analysis of data to support decision making and incident investigation;
G. Supporting and utilising state and regional initiatives and programs on illegal dumping and littering; and
H. Collaborating with local communities to deliver a more strategic and integrated approach to illegal dumping and litter prevention and their management.

9.3.2 Proactive Management – Strategic Priorities

Strategic priorities can be found in Appendix 2.

The Priorities in the first two years for progressing Council's commitment to Proactive Management are:

14. Improving data acquisition and dissemination to facilitate better understanding, decision making and management; and
15. Collaboratively working with fellow local governments, regional groups, and the State to develop a strategy for effective waste and resource management in rural NSW including strategies to:
    - Deal with legacy issues resulting from former and current facilities; and
    - Identify and undertake further opportunities for regional facilities and services, catering for future demand.

9.3.3 Proactive Management – Priority Actions

Priority Actions are provided in Appendix 7.

- Investigating the capacity to provide a local green waste facility capable of turning this resource into a reusable product;
- Enhancing permanent drop-off facilities for problem wastes;
- Community and commercial education and support;
- Waste avoidance through purchasing;
- Minimising single-use products;
- Re-use/recovery/recycling options for end-of-life;
- Establishing event-based collections for low-volume, high- toxicity materials;
- Trialling alternative collection methods, such as mobile collection facilities; and
- Working with CRJO to establish a Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) squad.

9.3.4 Current Status

Hilltops Council undertakes a range of activities and programs in collaboration with State Agencies, the CRJO and SWRWMG. These include:

- Chemical Clean Up program.

  Coordinated by the CRJO with Council's participation.

  This includes an annual chemical clean-up campaign at Young, Harden and Boorowa which removes small quantities of harmful chemicals from households at no cost to the general public.

- Drum Muster.

  Council works with Drum Muster to recycle chemical drums in a safe way, while removing potential pollutants from the environment and dangerous chemicals from farms.

- Transport & disposal of waste.

  The SWRWMG arranges the transport and disposal of waste from most Council Transfer Stations.

  A contractor takes waste from static compactors on Transfer Station sites via specialised trailers and transports the waste to a privately owned landfill at Jugiong.

- Conversion of Landfills.

  The EPA has financially assisted Council to convert some landfills to transfer stations.

- Illegal dumping.

  The CRJO is laying the groundwork for a Regional Illegal Dumping Squad, which would be available to Hilltops.

- Educational Programs
- Education Programs are currently undertaken by Council in conjunction with State Agencies or the CRJO;
- Educational materials from CRJO, the EPA, Planet Ark, and industry help educate the public;
- Council has the option to include waste communications with rates information mailouts or by press release to traditional media or social media.

Waste Management and Resource Recovery Services

Hilltops Council oversees a range of waste management and resource recovery services as provided below:

- Kerbside waste collection;
- Kerbside recycling collection; and
- Kerbside green waste collection.

The services vary in delivery standards for different areas, with these variations causing some confusion to residents.

Council contracts out kerbside waste collection in Young and Boorowa and uses day labour to perform collections in Harden and Galong.

The main waste related contracts are set for a common expiry date of November 2022. This will allow Council to consider establishing a new common contract across all collection streams. A larger and consistent contract may provide Council with better financial and operational outcomes.

Council currently engages contractors to service Transfer Station skips and bins, including construction and demolition skips at Victoria Street Young, which are then transported to Redhill Road Landfill. In two cases, Council uses neighbouring councils to service Transfer Station waste (Cowra Council at Wyangala, and Yass Valley at Jugiong and Galong).

Hilltops Council operates and manages a range of waste management and resource recovery facilities:

Major Local Landfills at:

- Victoria Street Landfill, Young.
- Redhill Road Landfill, Young.

Urban Transfer Stations at:

- Boorowa
- Murrumburrah

Rural Village Landfills at:

- Bendick Murrell
- Bribbaree
- Koorawatha
- Tubbul
- Milvale
- Reid's Flat
- Rye Park

Rural Village Transfer Stations at:

- Frogmore
- Galong
- Jugiong
- Monteagle
- Murringo
- Wyangala
- Rugby

Problem wastes are managed on a regular basis within Hilltops, with procedures in place to ensure their safe and effective management in accordance with relevant regulation. There are a number of facilities established to manage 'problem wastes' including:

- Victoria Street:
    - Green Waste – accepted at Victoria Street. However, it does not currently have the capacity to convert this material into a viable reusable product.

- Victoria Street, Murrumburrah, and Boorowa:
    - Scrap Metal – for limited storage before removal to a regional facility.
- Various landfill sites, including rural village landfills:
    - Tyres.
    - Mattresses.
    - E-waste.

In the EPA WARR reporting, in 2018-19 there were 26 reported incidents of illegal dumping, accounting for 2.1 tonnes collected by Council for disposal. Of these, materials illegally dumped included (but were not limited to), asbestos, Commercial & Domestic / Commercial & Industrial, household general waste and organics.

9.3.5 Challenges and Risks

The challenges and risks associated with waste management and resource recovery are diverse as are the opportunities. As a waste and resource recovery manager, Hilltops Council has the responsibility to manage these risks and challenges effectively. However, this responsibility is shared with all resource users within Hilltops.

Successfully increasing awareness, identifying options, and managing challenges and risks will be subject to implementing an integrated approach that focuses on:

- Community education and awareness;
- Access to appropriate infrastructure;
- Regulation and enforcement; and
- Evaluation and monitoring.

For problem wastes, education, information and access to alternate facilities and services are essential. While regulation has a critical role, education and social responsibility will be key to reducing dumping and littering.

Education, understanding and awareness of these issues and their impacts on the environment and public safety are critical to gaining community support and achieving these objectives, as well as providing incentives and other means of support to drive social acceptance, change behaviours and manage community expectations.

9.3.6 Way Forward

Proactive Management will be achieved by:

- Highlighting and integrating risk management into conversations and management practices within Council and with local communities and businesses in relation to resource management and waste minimisation;
- Consistent use of a monitoring and reporting program to inform strategy, operations and regular discussions with the community and industry on waste demand, needs and priorities, including management and disposal of problem wastes and littering;
    - Collaborating with the community, industry, and other government authorities to educate and inform communities and local business on the full costs and risks; and
    - costs and opportunities resulting from waste disposal and minimisation and the practical ways they can assist and benefit.

- A regular and sustained regulatory enforcement program to minimise the impact and frequency of incidents; and
- Collaboratively working with fellow local governments, regional groups, and the State to develop a strategy for effective waste and resource management in rural NSW.

Taking a proactive approach is proposed to ensure Council and the community are aware of the challenges and risks at hand and to work together to reduce them. Actively collaborating with other levels of government to develop and implement waste management and resource recovery practices and behaviours so that Council achieves objectives, meets community expectations, and regional, state, and national policy and targets.

This includes collaborating with all parties to progress the 'Waste Hierarchy' as agreed to by all State governments and the Commonwealth to prioritise 'waste avoidance', followed by 'resource recovery' and when no other viable options are available, 'disposal'.

Hilltops Council will also seek to collaborate with local governments, regional organisations and State and National bodies to provide consistent information and priorities to communities and business in relation to waste and resource management, including education on options and reporting on incidents, risks, and legal responsibilities in relation to the management of problem wastes.

The Priority Actions for Proactive Management relate to all three Strategic Themes for Waste Management and Resource Recovery and more detail can be found in Appendix 8.

10 MOVING FROM OBJECTIVES TO STRATEGY

Hilltops Council is seeking all its programs and projects to align with and further the established objectives and obligations of Council. This includes those set by the Hilltops Community Strategic Plan 2030, as well as the legal, financial, and moral obligations of Council in its management of resources, assets, and people.

To achieve this alignment Council will remain consistent and compliant with all relevant Commonwealth, State, and Regional Policy legislation while, being aware of changes in expectations and practices that may influence demand and service provision.

10.1 Commonwealth, State and Regional Policy, Strategy, and Legislation

Hilltops Council aims to advance community and Council objectives while ensuring all policies, strategies, programs, and actions are consistent with all relevant Commonwealth, State and Regional policy, strategy, and legislation. The strategic and legislative environment is dynamic and changing which has a significant impact on the strategy and operations of Council.

The Strategy seeks to achieve this by considering the latest positions of Commonwealth, State and Regional authorities and organisations, and integrating these into the development of proposed priorities, programs, and governance. This is intended to influence the scope of any projects and programs that result.

10.2 Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Priority Program

The Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery program identifies a range of Strategic Priorities and Actions reflecting the broad scope of roles and responsibilities of Hilltops Council. The initial priorities focus on the delivery of the Strategy in the areas of greatest need and risk. The three initial programs that will demonstrate Council's full commitment to responsible, effective, efficient, and sustainable management and leadership in Waste Management and Resource Recovery.

Each of the priority programs proposed also encompass multiple strategic objectives and priorities, ensuring no major elements of the Strategy are overlooked in the short to medium term.

The three programs currently underway are:

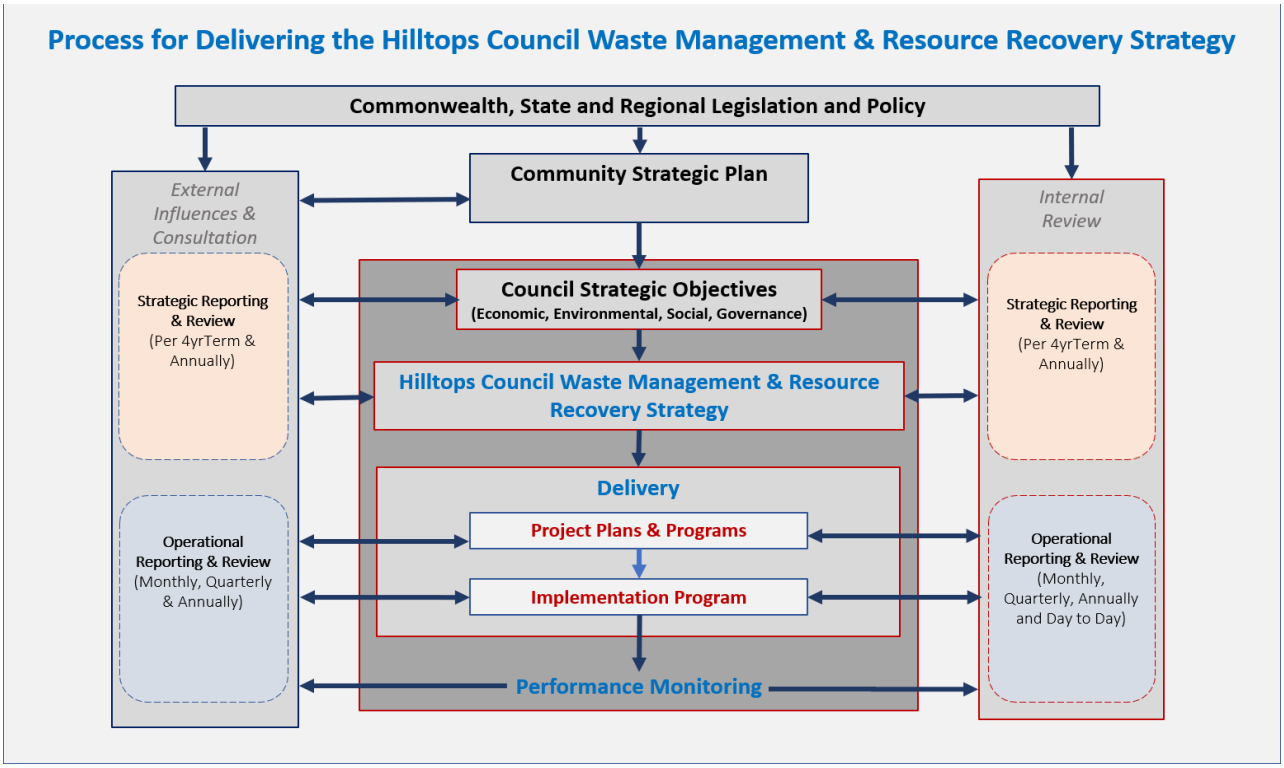
- Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Services and Facilities Management Plans which includes the following projects:
  - Victoria Street and Redhill Road;
  - Village Landfill redevelopment to transfer stations;
  - Contract renewal for kerbside and transfer stations; and
  - LEMP – Landfill Environmental Management Plan.
- Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Business Unit which includes the following:
  - Establishment of waste business unit; and
  - Ensure clear strategic direction.
- Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Cost Recovery Program which includes the following projects:
  - Redevelopment of landfill sites by transitioning to transfer stations;
  - Financially self-sufficient waste functions; and
  - Harmonisation for services and fee structure.

Please refer to Appendix 9 for the management plan and timeframes associated with these 3 projects.

10.3 Hilltops Council Implementation Program

The Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery Implementation Program will be established to provide a source document for Council's committed projects and programs to progress the Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery over the following three years.

The Implementation Program will be developed for consideration by Council and upon endorsement be integrated into Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. A report will be provided annually to Council on its progress and to raise any variations that may have arisen over the previous twelve months. This report will also inform Council's Annual Report, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.



11 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Regular monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and improvement will be essential to ensuring Strategic objectives are met and operations remain relevant and effective. This will also play a major role in educating and communicating to Council staff, local communities, and local business the real costs, scale and risks associated with waste management and resource recovery and the effectiveness of their efforts.

Monitoring and reporting on waste management and resource recovery are also a necessary component of Council's governance and reporting frameworks and an expectation of the State.

The regular provision of data that will inform operations and allow Council to recognise and respond to changing demands and effectively project future needs.

Ongoing reporting and consultation will also be pivotal to building greater confidence and knowledge of Council services and objectives to local communities and how they can participate in them. In addition, they will be critical in keeping communities aware of the ever-changing policy directions, regulation and initiatives from the Commonwealth and the State.

Internal reporting and monitoring will enhance Council's performance, including the management of customer queries and complaints in relation to Council managed waste and resource recovery facilities and services.

Enhanced monitoring of services and facilities will also further inform future reviews of Council assets and services, including the review or replacement of collection and processing infrastructure and the negotiation and delivery of service contracts.

Council will also continue to work closely and report to regional groups and State authorities such as the EPA on their actions and any conditions placed on Council via environmental licences. This is in addition to regular reporting to State authorities on resource recovery rates.

A summary of the proposed framework for progressing Waste and Resource Management and Recovery can be found on Appendix 10.

12 Hilltops Council Projects, Procedures, Standards & Guidelines

All materials used to inform Waste Management & Resource Recovery operations, including all relevant Plans, Projects, Procedures, Standards & Guidelines will be reviewed and revised to ensure they are consistent with and clearly progress Council's Waste Management & Resource Recovery Implementation Program. Council will prioritise the review of all relevant material to identify strategic gaps, inconsistencies and other anomalies that may impact on progressing the strategy. This review will also identify any other priority items to minimise environmental risk, ensure the safety of the community and Council staff and the effective and efficient allocation of resources.

Supporting Hilltops Council Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy with the right tools for its delivery

13 RISK ASSOCIATED WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE RECOVERY

Local governments take on diverse and significant responsibilities and risks in relation to waste management and resource recovery. These include shared risks with:

- Local communities and industries in relation to environment and community health and safety; and
- Organisational and individual economic, environmental, community, legal and reputational risks relating to responsibilities and operations.

Within NSW, local governments are responsible for the ongoing management and associated risks relating to former facilities such as old landfill sites. For councils such as Hilltops, this can be a major financial risk due to the unknown nature and location of materials deposited in current and former Council landfills over the last century.

Councils across NSW have been required to take on the expanding roles and increasing liabilities of a waste and environment regulator, with responsibility for enforcing and monitoring regulatory requirements relating to unlicensed waste activities on private lands and non-compliant depositing of waste (e.g. illegal dumping).

For Hilltops Council, the types of risk relating to waste management and resource recovery vary depending on the 'function that is being undertaken. However, in all cases understanding, acknowledging, planning, responding, and avoiding risk is essential. Without due consideration and mitigation all risks have intergenerational equity implications leaving significant legacy issues for the organisation and future generations.

In responding and identifying risks, Council is obliged to consider the costs of implementing control measures compared to the derived benefits, in addition to legal requirements and regulatory standards.

Hilltops Council recognises and places a strong emphasis on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of local communities and the environments in which they live, work, and play. This includes the management of materials and their disposal and is reflected the priority actions identified.

The scope of activities and associated risks to Council in relation to waste management and resource recovery have changed over time and will continue to do so in the future. Council will aim to respond promptly and effectively to new and emerging risks, while remaining committed to providing waste management and resource recovery services through the delivery of the proposed waste strategy, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.

For the purposes of this strategy, specific types of risk are detailed on Appendix 8.

14 POLICY & CHANGE

14.1 Drivers of Policy Change at a Global, National, State, Regional and Local Level

Strong efforts have been made at all levels of government to reduce waste from business, industry, the public sector, households, and local communities. This includes changes in policy, regulation and standards, and the increased use of levies and incentives to reduce waste to landfill, and achieve full recovery and recognition of financial, social, and environmental costs.

There have been major changes in national and state legislation, policies, and strategy to address all waste streams (municipal, commercial & industrial, and construction & demolition), setting the framework for local and regional waste management and resource recovery.

All levels of government are involved in managing waste and recycling to protect the environment, secure public health, and safety outcomes, and to avoid the loss of public amenity. In summary, responsibilities for the various levels of government can be categorised as follows:

- Local governments are most directly involved in the management of waste and recycling through arrangements for its collection, processing, and disposal;
- Regional organisations (such as the CRJO) can be considered as an extension to local government, representing Councils in developing and negotiating policy and standards with the State and Commonwealth, and providing a platform for greater co-ordination, collaboration, and consistency;
- State and territory governments have primary responsibility for regulating domestic waste management through various aspects of legislation and policy. Matters that the states and territories regulate include conditions for operating a landfill facility and the imposition of landfill levies as well as broader environmental and planning legislation covering the regulatory roles of local governments in relation to safety, environmental health, and protection; and
- The Australian Government has a role in providing national leadership and coordination and ensuring that Australia's international obligations regarding waste are met.

14.2 Australian Government

The Australian Government's formal regulatory role in waste and recycling largely relates to Australia's international obligations. Recently, it has extended to provide a policy response to global change and trends in relation to waste management, including the reduction in acceptance of waste by nations within the Asia/Pacific rim including China.

In terms of domestic waste and recycling, the Commonwealth has limited constitutional responsibilities, with policy and regulation primarily within the realm of the states. However, successive Australian governments have taken an active role in these matters through various national councils. The Australian Government has taken a national leadership and coordination role in certain regulatory matters such as product stewardship where there are risks posed by hazardous substances to human health and the environment.

Australia's National Waste Policy: **Less waste, more resources** was agreed to by all Australian environment ministers in November 2009 and was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The policy targets six key areas for action, including:

A) Improving data for waste and resource recovery;

B) Reducing the risk of hazards in waste;

C) Sustainability of resources;

D) Improving market conditions for waste and recovered resources;

E) Taking responsibility for reducing waste; and

F) Material consumption across the supply chain

The framework underpinning this policy is the Waste Hierarchy, which ranks the methods of dealing with waste in order of preference from avoiding the creation of waste as the most desired outcome, and disposal as the least desired outcome (refer Figure 1).

In summary, the Waste Hierarchy defines:

- **Avoidance** – including the action to reduce the amount of waste generated by households, industry, and all levels of government. This is intended to maximise efficiency and avoid unnecessary use of virgin materials through changes in consumer behaviour;
- **Resource recovery** – including re-use, recycling, reprocessing, and energy recovery, consistent with the most efficient use of the recovered resources. Re-use activities avoid the costs of energy and other resources required for recycling, while recycling of materials to make the same or different products keeps materials in the productive economy. It also aims to provide beneficial environmental outcomes through reducing the need for virgin materials and waste disposal such as landfill; and
- **Disposal** – material which is unable to be re-used, recycled, reprocessed, or recovered for energy should instead be treated to minimise environmental and health and safety impacts.

This approach stresses the importance of preventing waste being created in the first instance, with waste avoidance as the main priority and disposal as the lowest. Producing recyclable material of a sufficient quality is also important so that the amount that must be further treated or disposed of is minimised.

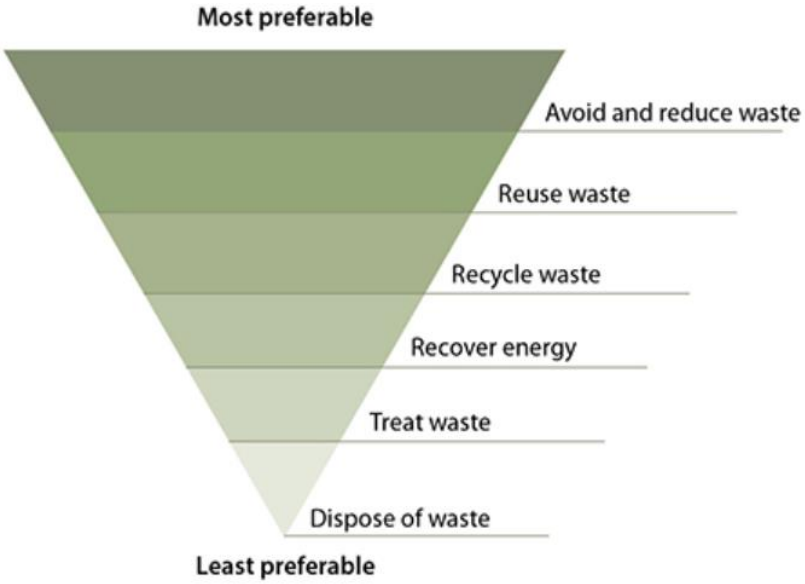


Figure 14.1 The Waste Hierarchy (NSW WARR Strategy 2014-21)

14.3 NSW Government

Waste management policy and regulation primarily falls within the realm of the states, with local governments, residents, and businesses required to comply with these requirements. The State legislative frameworks, standards and guidance governing waste and recycling have evolved significantly in the last decade with further revisions proposed and underway.

State policy and regulations are complex, the NSW Government regulates waste and recycling by:

- Imposing licencing conditions for waste and recycling facilities and the transportation of waste;
- Imposing landfill levies;

- Providing incentives for recycling; and
- Undertaking environmental protection measures, such as enforcement activity in relation to large scale illegal dumping and dumping of hazardous waste.

The principal waste and resource recovery document for the New South Wales State Government is the NSW Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (WARR 2014-21), which sits under the state priority document, NSW 2021: A plan to make NSW number one. This strategy contains goals to 'protect the natural environment' and 'to increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments'. It also establishes a series of targets through until 2021–22, including:

A) Avoiding and reducing the amount of waste generated per person in NSW;

B) Increasing recycling rates to:

   - 70% for municipal solid waste
   - 70% for commercial and industrial waste
   - 80% for construction and demolition waste

C) Increasing waste diverted from landfill to 75%;

D) Managing problem wastes better, establishing 86 drop-off facilities and services across NSW;

E) Reducing litter, with 40% fewer items (compared to 2012); and

F) Combatting illegal dumping, with 30% fewer incidents (compared to 2011).

The WARR seeks to support investment in infrastructure and encourages innovation and recycling behaviours. It also seeks to facilitate the development of new markets for recycled materials and reduce litter and illegal dumping. Currently the primary lever for developing recycling markets under the WARR is the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (PoEO Act) Sec.88 levy "Waste Levy". However, this only applies to parts of NSW and may be a driver for the relocation of waste materials from Sydney and surrounds to rural areas such as Hilltops where the levy does not apply.

The WARR Strategy is supported by the $465.7 million Waste Less Recycle More (WLRM) Initiative announced in 2013. This initiative funds programs in the waste and resource recovery sector including waste and recycling infrastructure, problem wastes, local community programs, illegal dumping, and littering. The WLRM 2017-21 extension provides an additional $337 million grants and funding package across nine distinct funding streams.

The draft NSW 20-Year Waste Strategy Issues Paper was released for public consultation in early 2020. Hilltops Council provided a detailed submission to ensure due consideration is given to the impacts on Council as a result of proposed changes. Some of the changes proposed which may impact on Hilltops are:

- The potential revision of the waste levy boundaries and the significant financial impacts that would be borne on council's affected, as opposed to the net benefit to Council; and
- Greater recognition of the importance of:
   - Waste avoidance to prevent waste being created in the first instance; and
   - The production life cycle for sufficient quality recyclable material so that the amount that must be further treated or disposed is minimised.

The NSW 20-Year Waste Strategy became the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, which was released in June 2021. Hilltops Council will continue to liaise with the State government on the Strategy as it develops to ensure the Hilltops Strategy is consistent with State policy.

The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 is a development of the WARR Strategy. It places an emphasis on:

- Collaborative approaches to Waste management by Local Government, especially regarding procurement of services;
- The need to address diverting organics from landfill;
- The need to address removing plastics from the waste stream;
- The need to build infrastructure;
- Innovation in resource recovery;
- The Waste Levy that applies in parts of NSW (not currently in the Hilltops area);
- The need to address gases from landfill; and
- The need to improve hazardous waste management.

The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 is out to public consultation at the time of preparation of this document.

14.4 Regional Response

The New South Wales Government, through the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), requires all regional organisations to prepare a waste strategy. Hilltops Council participated as a member of the Canberra Regional Joint Organisation (CRJO) in the development of the CRJO Regional Waste Strategy 2018-2023, covering south eastern NSW with Hilltops making up the western portion of the region.

The CRJO Strategy advocates a rapid change towards greater recycling and waste diversion from landfill. The strategy is aligned with the current WARR targets and seeks to maximise the potential to leverage grant funding opportunities as part of its strategic approach. It also seeks to drive further collaboration between local authorities and explore more efficient waste and resource recovery practices.

With Canberra and the remainder of the ACT geographically surrounded by the CRJO region, and the proximity of western and southern Sydney, the scale and anticipated growth within these areas has been a major contributor to determining future needs and policy direction. This includes areas such as Sydney and Canberra looking towards areas of the CRJO region to provide alternate regional level services and facilities.

This has seen the CRJO Regional Waste Strategy focus on the predominant sources of current and projected demand, rather than on the issues and economies of scale most relevant to rural areas such as Hilltops. Therefore, while the CRJO Strategy is applicable to Hilltops, it does not fully reflect, respond to or compliment local needs and objectives.

Hilltops Council is also a member of the South West Regional Waste Management Group (SWRWMG). This was established by participating councils in 2002 to set up and manage a licenced regional landfill at Jugiong (Bald Hill). The intent was to maximise efficiencies and support the rationalisation of small rural landfills. At the time of its inception, the SWRWMG consisted of eight councils. However, post amalgamation processes in 2016, it consists of the following councils:

A) Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council;

B) Hilltops Council;

C) Snowy Valleys Council; and

D) Yass Valley Council.

The SWRWMG has no waste strategy as member councils are part of other regional waste groups with respective waste and resource recovery strategic planning frameworks. However, this group and future potential collaboration with peers by Hilltops Council are likely to greatly assist in enhancing the environmental and financial viability of waste and resource recovery management. Hilltops Council is the current administrator of the SWRWMG.

Collaborations such as these can also play a major part in advocating for funding and policy that responds to rural areas and effective education and information distribution across Hilltops and the region. In addition, they may generate further opportunities to develop regional level responses that can achieve economies of scale to make waste management and resource recovery financially sustainable and possibly competitive with regional, state, and national markets.

A further collaborative opportunity is available by the development of procurement for Waste functions through a NSW State body: Local Government Procurement. This body allows Councils to piggyback onto common tenders that comply with Council's tendering obligations, negating the need for Councils to individually tender for Waste services.

14.5 Local Drivers

Local governments such as Hilltops Council have a long history in municipal waste management. The services provided vary between councils and depend on regulatory frameworks, community expectations and demands as well as population distribution and density.

Local governments can:

- Provide a range of services directly, including waste collection, waste disposal, kerbside recycling, management of landfills, and gas capture and co-generation of power;
- Provide waste management services as part of a cooperative body with other local governments;
- Contract waste management contractors to undertake waste services;
- Undertake other programs to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, such as the collection of green waste to produce compost; and
- Support other initiatives, such as product stewardship, the introduction of container deposit schemes, and community education programs.

State governments also require local governments to enforce State government policy and legislation in relation to waste management as well as associated regulations relating to safety and environmental health and protection. The State also require local governments to provide data on waste and recycling and the operation of licensed facilities.

15 KEY LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Refer to Appendix 11 and Appendix 12 for detail information.

There is a plethora of legislation, policies, and strategies relevant to managing waste and resource recovery in Australia. For Hilltops, the primary legislation, policy, and standards are set by the State government and supported by regional strategies. In addition, Commonwealth legislation can also apply.

At the Commonwealth level, the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*[4] (EPBC Act) and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000[5] are the key pieces of legislation that consider waste management. The EPBC Act enables the Australian Government to join with the states and territories in providing a national approach to environment and heritage protection and biodiversity conservation. A statutory independent review of the Act is currently underway, and the outcomes may impact on future state, regional and local policy.

Decisions made by Council have the potential to significantly influence the Hilltops environment. Breaches in legislation or work practices which impact on the environment may attract penalties under legislation such as the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*[6] (PoEO Act) and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*[7] (EPA Act).

15.1 Protection of the Environment Operations Act (PoEO Act 1997)

At the state government level, the *PoEO* Act is the principal legislation which seeks to achieve the protection, restoration, and enhancement of the NSW environment. This legislation is supported by the *Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014*[8] (PoEO (Waste) Regs) which seeks to protect human health and the environment, while providing a platform for a modern and fair waste industry. Additionally, it includes strict thresholds for environment protection licences and outlines the waste levy system. The Act and the Regulations are major drivers of local waste management and resource recovery policy and operations across NSW including within Hilltops.

For the purposes of waste management, the PoEO Act:

A) Defines 'waste' for regulatory purposes;

B) Establishes management and licensing requirements for waste;

C) Defines offences relating to waste and sets penalties;

D) Establishes the ability to set various waste management requirements via the PoEO (Waste) Regs (Waste Regulation); and

E) The PoEO Act empowers EPA authorised officers to perform functions that ensure the environment is protected which includes the capacity for EPA:

- Officers to enter Hilltops Council premises, undertake inspections and require reports or information; and
- Vary any condition of previously approved licences in consultation with Hilltops Council.

[4] https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00485
[5] https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2000B00190
[6] https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1997/156
[7] https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1979/203

15.2 Environmental Protection Licences

The activities listed in Schedule 1 of the Act (activities with potentially significant environmental impacts such as development and management of landfills) require a licence. Currently Hilltops Council operates two waste facilities which require environmental protection licences and have these licences in place:

- Victoria Street Landfill (Licence number 5916); and
- Redhill Road Landfill (Licence number 5915).

Licenses are issued in respect of:

- Scheduled development work (i.e., development of a site that would require a licence);
- Premises-based activities and non-premises-based activities; and
- Regulating water pollution from activities (such licences can provide protection against prosecution for water pollution if licence conditions are complied with).

The EPA issue all licences including any associated conditions. Licences can control the air, noise, water, and waste impacts of an activity. They are ongoing but subject to review at least once every five years and can be varied, suspended, or revoked at any time. A licence can, in some circumstances, require an environmental audit to be undertaken. The information in the audit can be considered by the authority and used for the purposes of the Act. The Act also protects documents produced for the sole purpose of a voluntary audit.

15.3 Allocation of Responsibility

There is a broad allocation of responsibilities under the PoEO Act between the EPA, local governments, and other public authorities. The EPA is made the regulatory authority for:

A) Activities listed in Schedule 1 of the POEO Act and the premises where they are carried out;

B) Activities carried out by a State or public authority;

C) Other activities in relation to which a licence regulating water pollution is issued.

In nearly all other cases, the regulatory authority is delegated to the relevant local government, including Hilltops Council.

15.4 Offences Under the PoEO Act

The PoEO Act has a three-tier regime of offences. The EPA may institute proceedings for any offence under the Act or Regulations. Certain other authorities such as local authorities, Water Supply Authorities, the Maritime Authority of NSW, or police officers may also institute proceedings for certain offences. Any person may institute proceedings for an offence against the Act or the Regulations in the Land and Environment Court if the Court grants the person leave to do so. Any person may bring proceedings in that Court for an order to remedy or restrain a breach of the Act or Regulations.

APPENDIX 1. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objectives

Leading By Example

A) Establish a long-term, integrated, and aligned approach to planning, operations, monitoring, reporting, and governance for resource recovery and waste management.

B) Optimising long-term efficiency and capacity of waste management infrastructure and services.

C) Work collaboratively with local communities, industry groups, and all levels of government to progress waste management policies and programs that cater for the Hilltops community.

D) Consistent and effective collection, collation, analysis, and reporting of data for decision making and review

E) Educate and inform the community on progress and change to:

- Council's Waste Strategy, activities, and associated targets;
- Responsible resource use and disposal.

Waste Minimisation

A) Support and enable waste minimisation and re-use behaviours through improved community and business education, engagement, and collaboration.

B) Increase the quantity of materials going to resource recovery, re-use, and recycling.

C) In partnership with the community and stakeholders, enhance community understanding and behaviours with a focus on achieving greater resource management and minimisation of waste.

D) Demonstrate a commitment and leadership through Council activities and stakeholder interaction.

E) Improve community understanding of waste stream composition.

F) Increase the range of options and services available to recover, re-use, and recycle resources.

Proactive Management

A) Facilitate an informed, educated, and supportive Council and community on:

- The identification, management, and disposal of problem wastes;
- Management, monitoring, mitigating, and reporting on Illegal dumping and littering.

B) Improve community knowledge and access to the regional network of facilities that accept and manage problem wastes.

C) Minimise the social, environmental, and economic impacts of illegal dumping and littering through improved community education, enforcement, deterrents, and clean-up activities.

D) Enhance collection, collation, and analysis of data to support decision making.

E) Support and utilise, state and regional initiatives and programs, on illegal dumping and littering.

F) Collaborate with local communities to deliver a more strategic and integrated approach to the management of illegal dumping and litter prevention.

APPENDIX 2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The **Fifteen Strategic Priorities** for progressing the Strategy are listed below.

Strategic Priorities

Leading By Example

1. Develop, consult, and implement the Hilltops Resource Management and Waste Strategy and Implementation Plan.
2. Harmonising resource recovery and waste services and fees for Boorowa, Young and Harden-Murrumburrah.
3. Establishing a Waste Management and Resource Recovery Business Unit.
4. Establishing resource recovery and waste management fees that encourage waste minimisation and ensure cost recovery.
5. Adjusting domestic waste charges and tipping fees to:
   - Be a true reflection of cost; and
   - Achieve full cost recovery.
6. Enhancing safety, security, and supervision of facilities.
7. Upgrading Victoria Street and Red Hill sites as sub-regional transfer and resource recovery facilities.
8. The staged redevelopment of other local and village landfill sites across Hilltops.
9. Sustain licences for all relevant waste facilities.
10. Remain an active member of regional waste groups, to progress waste management policy and programs.

Waste Minimisation

11. Enhancing service provision through moving to a weight-based fee structure by progressing the installation of:
    - A second weighbridge at Victoria Street; and
    - Weighbridge options at Boorowa and Murrumburrah.
12. Developing Victoria Street as the main resource recovery site in Hilltops.
13. Develop and implement a comprehensive education strategy in partnership with community, the SWRWMG and CRJO to support waste minimisation.

Proactive Management of Problem Wastes & Illegal Dumping

14. Improving data acquisition and dissemination to facilitate better understanding, decision making and management.
15. Collaboratively working with fellow local governments, regional groups, and the State to develop a strategy for effective waste and resource management in rural NSW including strategies to:
    - Deal with legacy issues resulting from former and current facilities;
    - Identify and further opportunities for regional facilities and services, catering for demand well into the future.

APPENDIX 3. CRITICAL STATISTICS WASTE GENERATION AND MANAGEMENT IN HILLTOPS

3,487 tonnes

Total waste disposed to landfill in 2018/19

2,635 tonnes

Total waste collected at kerbside by Council in 2018/19

873 tonnes

Total recycling collected at kerbside by Council in 2018/19

303 tonnes

Kerbside recycling that could not be recycled in 2018/19

653 tonnes

Organics collected in kerbside service in 2018/19

29.39%

Recycling rate from kerbside collection (WARR goal is 70%) in 2018/19

26

Number of incidents of illegal dumping in 2018/19

$1,785,045

Total Domestic Waste Management Collection costs in 2018/19

10 million tonnes

Increase in waste generated nationally between 2006/7 and 2016/17

6%

Increase in waste generated within Hilltops over the last decade

4.9%

Recycling rate in rural areas of Hilltops in 2016/17

1.5 Mega Tonne or 31%

Increase in solid waste recycling within Hilltops over the last decade (11% per capita)

4191 tonnes

Total waste collected through domestic kerbside services in Hilltops in 2018/19

1000 tonnes (>14%)

Materials recycled, received through domestic kerbside services in Hilltops in 2018/19

APPENDIX 4. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

*This program is indicative only, and subject to Council considerations and resources being allocated.

Date	Actions
Draft Waste Strategy	
June 2021	• Council considers placing the draft Waste Strategy out to consultation
July 2021	• Draft Waste Strategy out to public consultation 28 days subject to Council resolution
October 2021	• Report to Council on Draft Waste Strategy consultation results
Waste Contract	
July 2021	• New waste contract report to Council for inclusions / exclusions
August 2021	• New waste contract prepared to go for legal advice
September 2021	• New waste contract report to Council
October 2021	• New waste contract to market
December 2021	• New waste contract procurement closes
February 2022	• New waste contract to Council for determination
August 2022	• Supporting actions put in place for new waste contract
October 2022	• Publicity / education campaign regarding new waste contract
November 2022	• New waste contract starts
Waste Business Unit	
September 2021	• Waste Business Unit report to Council (prepared in-house)
October 2021	• Waste Business Unit consultation with staff
January 2022	• Waste Business Unit in operation
Finances	
August 2021	• Investigations / consultation with CFO / Prepare Brief for consultant
September 2021	• Engage consultant to assist the process / provide advice
February 2022	• Waste Finances report to Council
June 2022	• Commence implementation of new Finance arrangements
Urban Landfills Management Plans	
September 2021	• Landfill Environmental Management Plans due for Victoria Street and Redhill Road landfills from consultants (includes Filling Plan for Redhill Road)
October 2021	• Landfill Environmental Management Plans for Victoria Street and Redhill Road landfills adopted by Council
May 2022	• Full Management Plans for Victoria Street and Redhill Road Landfills to Council for initial consideration
June 2022	• Full Management Plans for Victoria Street and Redhill Road Landfills to public consultation

Date	Actions
August 2022	• Full Management Plans for Victoria Street and Redhill Road Landfills to Council
Village Landfills Redevelopment Plans	
August 2021	• Developing a Kerbside and Transfer Station Waste and Resource Recovery Plan to inform on kerbside services and regular pick-ups from transfer station sites.
January 2022	• Complete background information and Staging Plan
June 2022	• Complete preliminary work for closures and remediation (subject to funding and design constraints)
2023-2028	• Full redevelopment of all facilities proposed (subject to funding)

APPENDIX 5. PRIORITY ACTIONS – LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Priority 1. Develop, consult, adopt and implement the Hilltops Resource Management and Waste Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Adoption of this strategy will ensure that Council has a coherent, compliant, and effective plan to address waste management issues that reflects the needs and aspirations of Hilltops as well as State policy, legislation, and standards.

The Strategy will demonstrate to Hilltops communities and the NSW Government that Hilltops Council is committed to managing waste in a way that: -

- Is compliant with legislation;
- Addresses waste minimisation targets;
- Is practical and cost efficient;
- Is environmentally responsible; and
- Serves the needs of our residents.

It will also provide a solid benchmark for seeking further assistance and funding from the State and Commonwealth to upgrade regional and local facilities and services.

The Strategy will be put out to public consultation. All submissions received will be considered and reported back to Council for their review and consideration

Priority 2. Harmonising resource recovery and waste services and fees for Boorowa, Young and Harden-Murrumburrah.

Greater consistency in relation to scope, scale and frequency of service will result in improved efficiencies, greater transparency, and clearer expectations in relation to levels of service within Hilltops communities.

Consistency in fees, that reflect all costs involved will assist communities and Council to recognise and respond to the true cost of waste management and resource recovery and in time, manage accordingly.

Some standardisation cannot be achieved – for example, a village transfer station cannot provide full urban landfill disposal options. However, where possible equitable arrangements should be put in place and consistency will be aimed for across similar scales of demand. For example, consistent levels of:

- Town services for Young, Harden-Murrumburrah and Boorowa (kerb side service and access to landfill stations);
- Rural Village services (access to rural village transfer stations and limited kerb side services);
- Rural services (access to rural village and town transfer stations).

Consistency will also be achieved in relation to fees (for example, tipping fees to be the same, regardless of which transfer station or landfill is being attended).

To assist, the main waste collection and recycling service contracts will be harmonized as part of the review and renewal of current contracts set to expire at a common time in 2022. Other options will also be investigated such as combining services together and putting the total work out to contract (or day labour). Further investigations are required to consider these options and the potential impacts market conditions and contractor delivery models on benefiting from each approach.

To ensure consistency in levels of service and manage risk, tender evaluation processes will also ensure any contractor has established capacity and redundancy. This also provides an opportunity for considering whether the services need to be changed to meet community expectations / Council direction.

Priority 3. Establishing a Waste Management and Resource Recovery Business Unit to consolidate and align management and operations.

Consolidating waste management and resource recovery operations within a separate business unit will provide benefits in relation to service costs, and risk management.

Waste management is becoming more and more complex and, in parallel, levels of risk and costs to Council and the community increase. It is a critical function of Council requiring specialised training and skills and appropriately allocated staff and infrastructure. High standards of ongoing performance and monitoring need to be sustained to limit exposure to risk and sustain waste management and resource recovery operations which remain consistent with current and future State legislation, policy, and standards.

Creating a dedicated Waste Management and Resource Recovery Business Unit with the appropriate resources and clear and effective strategic direction will play a major part in delivering the strategy, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.

Priority 4. Establishing resource recovery and waste management fees that encourage waste minimisation and ensure cost recovery.

It is financial best practice to have Council's Waste function cover costs. The need to balance the books will also include the need for creating and building Waste reserves to fund major expenses such as landfill redes and the building of new infrastructure such as Transfer Stations and organic processing facilities.

Improving the financial model must be done in an equitable way. Council will look to benchmark against similar Council areas and seek innovative solutions to deliver the best result for Council's residents.

Priority 5. Adjusting domestic waste charges and tipping fees to be a true reflection of cost and achieve full cost recovery

As discussed and proposed within Priority 2, adjusting domestic waste charges and tipping fees to be a true reflection of cost will assist communities and Council to recognise and respond to the true cost of waste management and resource recovery and in time, manage accordingly.

Currently, waste management functions in Council do not recover all costs associated with the service.

To achieve full recovery will require all operating expenses and building capital reserves to address future actions required to achieve compliance with current and future regulation and determined levels of service. This includes the likely costs of future landfill redevelopments, capital works and expanded service provision.

Further investigations are required to fully examine and report to Council and the community on the financial implications and options in relation waste management and resource recovery needs now and into the future.

Therefore, it is recommended that a report be produced for Council review and consideration to amend fees and charges.

Priority 6. Enhancing safety, security, and supervision of facilities

Unauthorised waste has been dumped at Council facilities regularly resulting in the transfer of risk and associated remediation costs to Council and Hilltops communities. Unauthorised waste found at Hilltops facilities can be significant in volume, hazardous, and may originate from outside the Hilltops LGA. Council property within landfill facilities has been frequently vandalised and destroyed. Remote facilities are seeing gate locks cut, or waste dumped at the gate.

It is proposed that access be restricted for the use of these facilities to allocated times when staffed by Council, authorised volunteers and contractors. This change will involve some additional expenditure in wages.

For more remote facilities, such as village landfills, the use of remote reporting CCTV systems will be considered subject to cost and reliability. The intent being to provide remote reporting CCTV systems that transmit footage as it happens, and with sufficient information to take further action.

Priority 7. Upgrading Victoria Street and Red Hill sites as sub-regional transfer and resource recovery facilities with remaining landfill capacity at both sites to be kept in reserve for emergency use

Council's two main landfills are both located in Young and provide specialised services not found at other facilities across Hilltops.

Redhill Road Landfill is for inert waste only. It serves an important and convenient role in inert waste disposal for Council. Council is considering methods for extending the life of Redhill Road by use of a landfill compactor to manage more waste into a given area, and the possibility of greater recycling or reuse of materials going to Redhill Road. However, further investigations into the viability and effectiveness of extending the life of Redhill Road are required.

Victoria Street takes the greatest volume of waste of any facility in the Council area. It is the location of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and has significant stockpiling capability for other recyclable materials such as green waste, tyres, and scrap metal. It is also the most suitable location for a potential Community Reuse Recycling and Repair Centre, should Council decide to create one. Consequently, with the space and facilities available, Victoria Street is the best option for developing waste minimisation measures for the Council. However, further investigations into the viability and effectiveness of potential Community Reuse Recycling and Repair Centre, and the long-term use and management of Victoria Street are required.

Priority 8. The staged redevelopment of village landfill sites across Hilltops

The EPA has foreshadowed that existing landfills will be required to be progressively upgraded in the future. Even within current operating standards, village landfills across Hilltops operate at the limit of regulatory compliance, and therefore continuing to use village landfills in the longer term is not a viable option. Therefore, it is recommended that they be progressively converted to Transfer Stations or replaced with domestic kerbside collection services.

Beyond EPA requirements, village landfills pose a range of risk management issues exacerbated by the difficulties involved in providing effective security and supervision for all sites. There have been numerous examples of dumping of unauthorised waste, unauthorised people / businesses using facilities, and facilities being left in an unsafe condition. Some landfills have repeatedly had fires lit in them.

The levels of incidents and the cost to clean up these sites and repair damage is rising at an unsustainable rate and diverts staff away from other operational matters, often at short notice to address safety issues.

The problem is not unique to Hilltops Council.

The conversion process will need to be over an extended time in order to accumulate funding for the transfer stations creation and perform mandatory landfill closure works.

Council has been successful with obtaining some grant assistance from the State Government in the past to assist the process of moving from village landfills to transfer stations. However, the full cost of redevelopment and associated remediation and replacement with Transfer Stations is well beyond current budget allocations.

Therefore, the project will be staged over five to ten years and further grant opportunities will pursued.

Priority 9. Sustain licences for all relevant waste facilities and ensure compliance in accordance with relevant legislation

Council currently operates two facilities that are of sufficient scale to require licences to operate. They are the Victoria Street and Redhill Road facilities in Young.

Victoria Street Landfill has little capacity left for further landfilling. However, it is recommended that the existing licence be retained for disposal of sewage grits and for emergency purposes. Sewage grits are difficult to dispose of elsewhere. Emergency landfilling capability is helpful in dealing with major compactor failure as well as responding to major incidents which require large scale and expedient removal of waste for health and safety reasons such as a flood or bushfire.

Redhill Landfill is used for inert waste only. As inert waste does not putrefy, odour issues for nearby residents as a direct result of wastes are minimal. The site achieves current expectations and requirements and has several years of working life available.

Priority 10. Remain an active member of the CRJO and SWMRWG, working collaboratively to progress waste management policy and programs that cater for Hilltops communities

Council is a full member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) which seeks to drive further collaboration between councils and explore more efficient waste and resource recovery practices. Membership of the organisation brings benefits regarding waste management such as:

- Sharing of knowledge of legislative and policy changes from the NSW Government;
- Sharing of knowledge of the operations, issues, and solutions from other Councils in the Region;
- Access to some grant funding for Regional projects, such as the Household Chemical Collection;
- Co-ordination and potentially funding for illegal dumping programs;
- Funding for some waste education programs; and
- Demonstrates Council's interest in keeping up to date with waste initiatives and changes in the industry.

Hilltops Council is a party to the CRJO's *Regional Waste Strategy 2018-2023* which advocates a rapid change towards greater recycling and waste diversion from landfill. The strategy is aligned with the NSW government's current WARR targets and seeks to maximise the potential to leverage grant funding opportunities as part of its strategic approach.

Hilltops Council is also a member of the South West Regional Waste Management Group (SWRWMG). This was established by participating councils in 2002 to set up and manage a licenced regional landfill at Jugiong (Bald Hill). Sustaining membership of this organisation is considered to be essential, as it arranges contracts for waste disposal at the privately owned Bald Hill landfill. However, a review of its governance and allocation of responsibilities is recommended to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of responsibilities and costs, and all decisions continue to be made in a fair, compliant and transparent manner.

In addition, it is recommended further investigations be undertaken in collaboration with SWRWMG members in to the long term needs and capacity of regional level waste management and resource recovery facilities, including the long term capacity and best use of the Bald Hill site.

Current agreements in relation to Bald Hill are relatively short term. In addition, while Bald Hill has considerable capacity remaining and further capacity to potentially expand, there are competing interests (both public and private) for its use by consumers located both within and outside the area covered by the SWRWMG member councils

Hilltops Council also has the responsibility for the administrative function of SWRWMG.

APPENDIX 6. PRIORITY ACTIONS – WASTE MINIMISATION

Priority 11. Moving to a weight-based fee structure so that all loads/categories are charged by weight, except for small loads such as carloads which are to be charged in accordance with EPA standards and recommendations.

Charging by weight is industry standard, fair to users, and allows accurate statistics to be kept. Accurate statistics allow proper assessment of waste service needs and progress towards waste minimisation targets, and proper risk assessment for facilities.

Currently Council charges waste disposal fees by volume everywhere except Victoria Street, and then convert volume estimates to tonnages for reporting purposes. This is an inaccurate way to charge and record waste tonnage amounts.

With domestic loads such as cars and station wagons, an EPA approved conversion factor is available that is regularly used in NSW including facilities with weighbridges. This conversion factor is already in use at Victoria Street landfill and is proposed to continue. The EPA also has conversion factors for larger vehicles, with limited accuracy, which can be used during times of weighbridge outages in the facilities at Victoria Street, Boorowa, and Murrumburrah.

11a. Installing a 2nd weighbridge at Victoria Street and weighbridges at Boorowa and Harden-Murrumburrah.

Weighbridges are essential to achieving accurate statistics to inform usage and accurately allocate fees.

Therefore, they are a necessary requirement if Council is to effectively plan, manage, monitor, and report on waste management services in an effective and transparent manner.

Introducing weight-based charging is proposed for Victoria Street Landfill, Boorowa Transfer Station, and Murrumburrah Transfer Station. Village transfer stations and landfills will continue to be limited to accepting small domestic waste loads, and therefore weighbridges will not be required.

While a second weighbridge at Victoria Street landfill with a weigh in / weigh out arrangement may be required, a less expensive option will also be investigated - using the existing weighbridge for weigh in / weigh out assessment using a traffic light system. Traffic volumes are relatively low, so the system should not result in significant hold ups to users.

Weighbridges will be required at Boorowa and Murrumburrah under these arrangements. Methods for reducing the cost of works are to be examined, such as installing less expensive and smaller weighbridges that weigh one axle group at a time. It is feasible to use these sorts of more time-consuming arrangements at Boorowa and Harden due to the low traffic usage. These systems could also weigh in / weigh out with stop signs and manual traffic control. This also needs to be fully examined.

Once options have been assessed, funding requirements can be considered.

Priority 12. Developing Victoria Street as the main resource recovery site in Hilltops, with all material (including Commercial & Domestic / Commercial & Industrial) destined for disposal in Young to pass through this site.

The Victoria Street Landfill is the best equipped waste facility in the Council area. It has an 80-tonne weighbridge and is the site for the Elouera Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) that processes most of Council's recyclables. Infrastructure is already in place for waste processing.

Development of this facility may include such initiatives as:

- Installation of an inert waste transfer station, allowing inert waste to be weighed, and then put into bins and transferred to Redhill Landfill. This process would:
  - keep the general public out of Redhill (benefits from reduce risk and improved disposal practices),
  - allow accurate weighing of inert waste coming in; and
  - allow possible inert waste recycling at Victoria Street.
- Green waste pasteurisation and recycling.
- Installation of a traffic light system to allow trucks to weigh in / weigh out more safely.
- A Community Reuse, Recycling, and Repair Centre (CRRRC) Centre.

MRF improvements / possible increased kerbside recycling volumes and material types

Priority 13. Develop and implement a comprehensive education strategy in partnership with community, the SWRWMG and CRJO to support waste minimisation. This includes the capacity for greater waste avoidance through purchasing, minimising single use, and re-use/recovery/recycling options for end of life.

There are practical benefits that can be achieved from educating the public about waste minimisation and resource recovery. Greater knowledge about these matters can increase minimisation & recycling and reduce contamination of the recycling stream.

Additional risk management benefits can arise from these activities including, a better explanation and education of the general public can be expected to result in better waste minimisation and recycling outcomes and therefore assist Council in meeting Regional Waste Management Strategy targets.

Council has limited funds to devote to education. However, the CRJO could assist by providing up to date information, literature, advertising, promotions, events and identifying and assisting in seeking additional grant funding.

The CRJO has obtained funds to enable all Councils in the Region (including Hilltops) to have four educational events with a waste / recycling theme annually, presented by professional educators.

Therefore, it is recommended that Hilltops Council work with the CRJO and other partnering Councils regarding waste avoidance strategies. This includes education programs and other opportunities to partner in communicating the benefits of waste avoidance.

APPENDIX 7. PRIORITY ACTION – PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT

Priority Actions for Proactive Management of Problem Wastes & Illegal Dumping

Priority 14. - Improving data acquisition and dissemination to facilitate better understanding, decision making and management

Assessing the state of waste management, reporting, and planning for the future in Hilltops has been difficult, due to data deficiencies including inconsistent monitoring and reporting. Enhancing current monitoring and reporting processes will be critical to assessing future performance, usage and progression toward strategic objectives and regional targets. It will also assist Council in reporting to the State government on regulatory compliance.

Data acquisition is to be improved by the installation of weighbridges, and greater supervision of village landfills and transfer stations, providing more accurate records of usage and materials.

Priority 15. Collaboratively working with fellow local governments, regional groups, and the State to develop a strategy for effective waste and resource management in rural NSW.

Council may be able to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of provision of waste services by collaboration on such things as resource sharing, knowledge sharing, joint submissions to Government, and joint contracts. The CRJO is becoming increasingly important in this regard. There is also significant scope to improve the certainty of disposal capability through SWRWMG.

It is noted that the NSW Government released in June 2021 the document *NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041*, which emphasises the importance of collaboration.

APPENDIX 8. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH RESOURCE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. Strategic

A dynamic approach partnered with clear objectives is central to successful Resource and Waste Management. Therefore, strategic risks are greatest when an organisation fails to:

- Establish objectives and the means to achieve them;
- Monitor and review plans and operations regularly;
- Monitor broader change in Resource and Waste Management practices and policy;
- Integrate strategy into governance frameworks, including day to day decision making;
- Sustain alignment between operational tools and strategic objectives.

Without establishing and maintaining an effective strategy and taking appropriate actions, monitoring, and review, Council will be unlikely to meet any regional, state, or national waste minimisation or resource recovery targets, and may potentially place people and property at risk.

The development of this Strategy and a commitment to its implementation, monitoring, and regular review will be critical steps in reducing Strategic Risk.

2. Work Health and Safety (WHS)

Waste management and resource recovery practices involve a range of activities that have the potential to cause short and long-term negative health implications and pose a clear risk to staff and the public.

To minimise risk Council has standards and education processes in place for of the activities undertaken by staff, and for the operation of machinery and facilities. In addition, Council manages and, where possible, limits public access to waste management facilities.

Hilltops Council complies with and enacts legislative standards and regulations to ensure risks to individuals and the broader community are minimised.

3. Environment

Resource and waste management practices have the potential to result in damage to local and wider environments such as soils, water, and air. These impacts can result in direct pollution or other environmental degradation that leads to impacts on productivity, the environment, and personal health.

Legislative standards and regulations, policies, and targets are in place to minimise environmental risk. If these are not met, individuals or organisations responsible for the management of the affected lands or materials (including Council, businesses, or individuals) are responsible for mitigating impacts, bringing management up to standard and any legal responsibilities and associated fines that may apply.

4. Community Health, Safety, and Liveability

The management of Resource and waste services and facilities, as well as the regulation of waste and environmental legislation can impact on community health and safety. Standard and frequency of services has the potential to impact on environmental health issues relating to waste disposal as well as a town's amenity. The location of waste services, including some in close proximity to residential areas, also introduces potential risks relating to noise and odour.

Council has a range of planning and management practices in place to protect and sustain community health, safety, and liveability. Continual monitoring and review of these practices is required to ensure they address these matters in a dynamic environment.

5. Governance and Legislative

Resource and Waste Management governance and legislative requirements are set both within and external to Hilltops Council. Potential risks apply in relation to sustaining these requirements and ensuring they remain up to date and aligned, particularly with State legislation.

Potential risks relate to internal governance include sustaining reporting and transparent decision making, consistent with established procedures, commitments, and standards. Risks also apply to how these are communicated within the organisation as well as with the community and the State.

6. Economic/Financial

There are significant economic costs associated with waste management practices. Should incidents arise through community or staff safety, environmental damage, or neglect, significant economic and human resources can be absorbed.

Risks also apply in relation to sustaining effective, efficient, and transparent resource allocations towards waste and resource management.

The costs to Council of not having and committing to a coherent, integrated, and effective strategy and program can be a significant resource burden on the organisation and leave it open to unplanned and unidentified financial risk.

7. Reputational

Resource and waste management are considered a central component of local government services, with high expectations from the community in relation to service levels, and the capacity for significant environmental, community, and economic risk both to council and community. As a result of this, the associated reputational risks are high.

APPENDIX 9. INITIAL 3 PROJECTS MANAGEMENT PLAN TIMEFRAMES AND DELIVERABLES

Hilltops Council Waste Services and Facility Management Plans

The development and review of services and facilities management plans will allow Council to ensure its assets and their management align with the Strategy and the latest Commonwealth and State policies and regulation. They will ensure risk assessment and management procedures are up to date and responsive to the specific requirements for each asset and site.

The project will also set the framework for the continued transition from the use of landfills to the use of transfer stations across Hilltops, and provide greater detail to Council and the community on the status and capacity of existing village landfills and their proposed transition.

The commissioning of Landfill Environmental Management Plans (LEMP), for Councils largest Waste and Resource Recovery facilities, Victoria Street and Red Hill, Young, will outline how they will be updated to achieve Strategy objectives and ensure ongoing compliance with State government licensing requirements.

Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Business Unit

The establishment of a Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Business Unit will consolidate waste management and resource recovery operations improving resource use, costs of service provision, workplace safety, and risk management.

Waste management is a critical function of Council requiring specialised training and skills and appropriately allocated staff and infrastructure. High standards of ongoing performance and monitoring need to be sustained to limit exposure to risk, and to sustain waste management and resource recovery operations which remain consistent with current and future legislation, policy, and standards.

The establishment of a Waste and Resource Recovery Business Unit is, subject to funding availability and adequate resources.

Hilltops Council Waste and Resource Recovery Cost Recovery Program

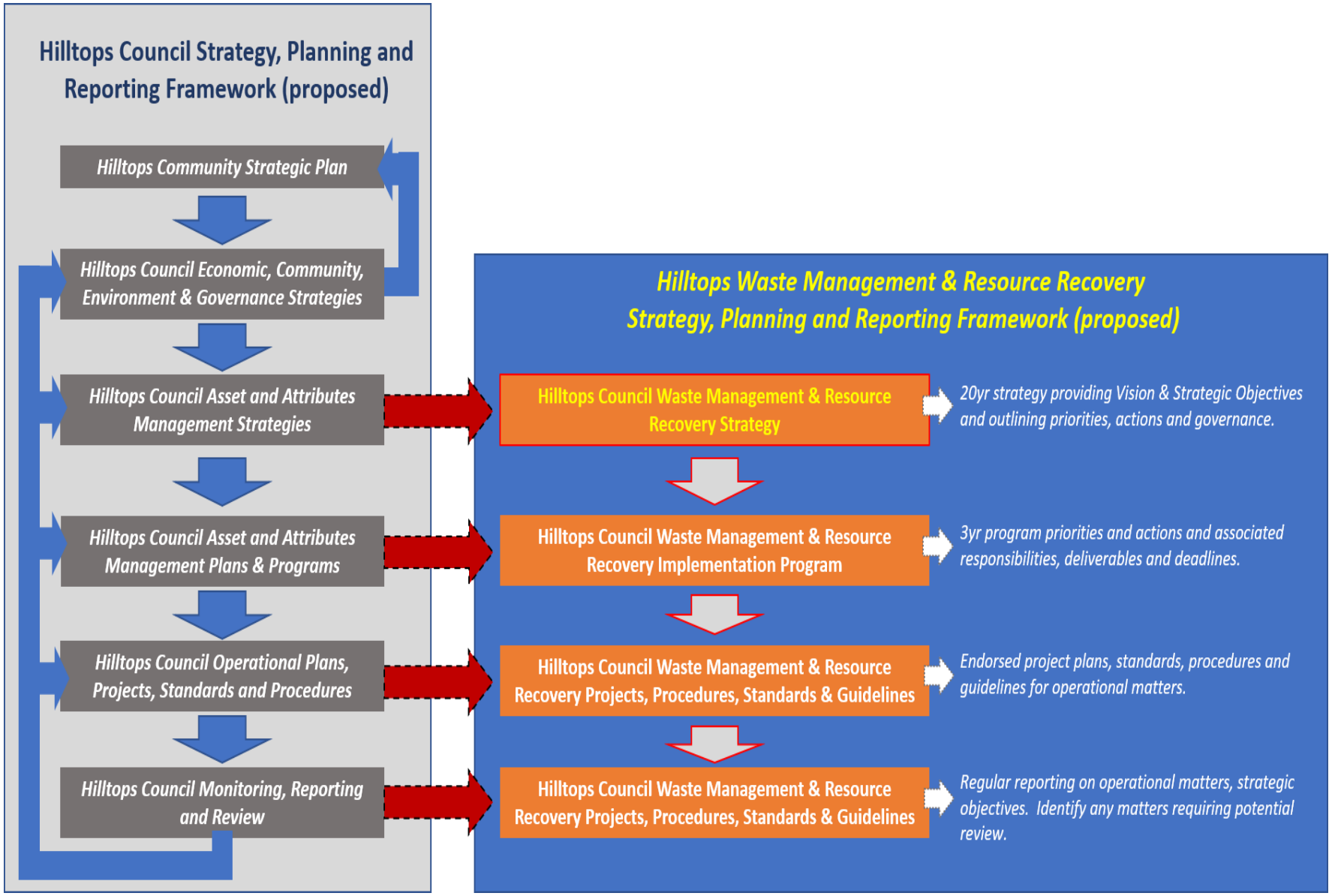
This program will establish an integrated approach to reviewing services, associated costs, and allocation. The program will review levels, types, and costs of projected services in line with the strategic objectives, regulatory requirements, community expectations, and actual costs.

It will identify the real costs of waste management and resource recovery activities, associated costs relating to future upgrades to facilities and services, and the cost of any works required to remediate previous activities including the full redevelopment of legacy landfill sites.

Reviewing and understanding the full and projected costs of resource recovery and waste management over the medium-long term is essential to effectively plan for the future, and to manage and recover associated costs.

This information is vital to setting fees that cover actual costs and building a service model that promotes waste minimisation and the efficient use of resources, whilst increasing transparency and the capacity to make informed decision making.

APPENDIX 10. PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK


Hilltops Council Strategy, Planning and Reporting Framework (proposed)
Hilltops Community Strategic Plan
Hilltops Council Economic, Community, Environment & Governance Strategies
Hilltops Council Asset and Attributes Management Strategies
Hilltops Council Asset and Attributes Management Plans & Programs
Hilltops Council Operational Plans, Projects, Standards and Procedures
Hilltops Council Monitoring, Reporting and Review
Hilltops Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy, Planning and Reporting Framework (proposed)
Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy
20yr strategy providing Vision & Strategic Objectives and outlining priorities, actions and governance.
Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery Implementation Program
3yr program priorities and actions and associated responsibilities, deliverables and deadlines.
Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery Projects, Procedures, Standards & Guidelines
Endorsed project plans, standards, procedures and guidelines for operational matters.
Hilltops Council Waste Management & Resource Recovery Projects, Procedures, Standards & Guidelines
Regular reporting on operational matters, strategic objectives. Identify any matters requiring potential review.

APPENDIX 11. NSW STATE KEY POLICY DRIVERS

Key policy/ plan	Summary	Key targets/action/notes for councils
Premier's Priorities in Action	The NSW Government has committed to 12 priorities to make NSW a better place to live and work. Under keeping our environment clean – reducing litter is a key issue.	Reduce litter by 40%
NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014–2021 (WARR Strategy)	The WARR Strategy includes long-term targets for the following five key result areas: • avoid and reduce waste generation • increase recycling and divert more waste from landfill • manage problem wastes better • reduce litter • reduce illegal dumping.	Councils need to contribute to meeting WARR strategy targets by 2021–22. Key targets are: • reduce the rate of waste generation per capita in NSW • increase recycling rates for: – MSW 70% – C&I 70% – – C&D 80% • establish or upgrade 86 drop-off facilities or services for managing household problem wastes • increase waste diverted from landfill to 75%
Waste Less, Recycle More	The NSW Government's $465.7 million waste and recycling initiative has been extended with a further $337 million over 4 years from 2017-21. This will help to continue the work already underway to modernise the waste sector in NSW, deliver waste and recycling services to the community and ensure a clean environment.	Waste Less, Recycle More provides funding for business recycling, organics collections, market development, managing problem wastes, new waste infrastructure, local councils, and programs to tackle illegal dumping and litter. Funding is available for: $4.5 Million for regional coordination and strategy for the greater Sydney region $8million for Voluntary Regional Waste Groups $48 waste and recycling infrastructure fund The 2017–21 Waste Less, Recycle More extension brochure provides more details on the programs, priorities, and grants under the extended program.

APPENDIX 12. LIST OF LEGISLATION, POLICY AND KEY STRATEGIES

Relevant Australian Government Legislation:

A) *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

B) *National Environment Protection Act 1994 – principles of ESD*

C) *Product Stewardship Act 2011*

Relevant Australian Government Policy:

A) Australian Packaging Covenant

B) The National Waste Policy, 2009

Relevant NSW Government legislation:

The NSW legislation relevant to this Strategy includes:

A) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

B) Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000

C) *Protection of the Environment Operations Act (POEO) 1997*

D) POEO (Waste) Regulation 2014

E) Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Amendment (Fees and Penalty Notices) Regulation 2014

F) *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001*

G) *Water Management Act 2000*

H) State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (SEPP Infrastructure 2007)

I) *Corporations Act 2001*

J) *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

K) Worker Health and Safety Regulation 2017

Other relevant NSW Government drivers, strategy, and legislation:

A) NSW Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014–21 (WARR Strategy 2014-21 - supported by the NSW Government's Waste Less Recycle More initiative, funding an additional $337m of projects from 2017-2021, of which Hilltops Council has received grant funding for landfill remediation works

B) NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 – will supersede the above document.

C) NSW EPA Environmental Guidelines: Solid Waste Landfills (2016).

D) New South Wales Plastics Action Plan 2021

E) NSW Energy from Waste Action Plan 2021

The WARR strategy sets the following targets for 2021–22:

A) Avoiding and reducing the amount of waste generated per person in NSW

B) Increasing recycling rates to:

- 70% for municipal solid waste
- 70% for commercial and industrial waste
- 80% for construction and demolition waste increasing waste diverted from landfill

APPENDIX 13. GLOSSARY

Acronyms

CRJO:	Canberra Regional Joint Organisation
CCTV:	Closed Circuit Television
COAG:	Council of Australia Governments
EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
EPBC Act:	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conversation Act 1999
Hilltops CSP:	Hilltops Community Strategic Plan 2030
LEMP:	Landfill Environmental Management Plan
LEP:	Local Environmental Plan
LGA:	Local Government Area
MRF:	Materials Recovery Facility
MSW:	Municipal Solid Waste
PoEO Act 1997:	Protection of the Environment Operations Act
RID Squad:	Regional Illegal Dumping Squad
SWRWG:	South West Regional Waste Management Group
WARR:	Waste and Resource Recovery
WLRM:	Waste Less Recycle More Initiative
WM&RR:	Waste Management and Resource Recovery
WHS:	Work Health and Safety