FAQs Rye Landfill Extension of Use

Mornington Peninsula Shire

What issue is Council trying to address?

The current landfill cell at Rye is nearing capacity and is expected to close early next year. Available landfill in the southeastern region of Melbourne is also nearing capacity, and Council needs a reliable way to manage household waste generated across the Mornington Peninsula in the years ahead. The priority is keeping costs as low as possible for ratepayers.

Having additional landfill space made available within the Shire will provide certainty and decrease costs for ratepayers.

What is Council's preferred long-term waste solution?

Council's preferred long-term option is to send the Shire's residual waste to a waste-to-energy facility once that technology becomes available within reasonable proximity of the Mornington Peninsula.

What is waste-to-energy?

Waste-to-energy is a technology that converts non-recyclable waste into energy, such as electricity and heat. It is viewed by Council and the State Government as a future alternative to landfill for residual waste that cannot be reused or recycled.

Why can't Council move to waste-to-energy immediately?

While waste-to-energy is Council's preferred long-term solution, regulatory delays and increasing construction costs appear to have impacted the viability of some of the proposed facilities. It is not yet clear where and when waste to energy facilities will be available to accept the Shire's residual waste.

What is Council's proposed interim solution?

Council is considering utilising existing space at Rye Landfill. This would extend the site's operational life and provide a transition period while future waste management technologies continue to develop.

How much additional landfill capacity would this provide?

The proposed development would provide approximately 16 years of local landfill capacity.

Why is continuing to use Rye Landfill the preferred option?

A feasibility study found that continuing to use Rye landfill is the most cost-effective option assessed. It would provide medium-term waste disposal capacity while retaining flexibility to move to waste-to-energy technology in the future.

Does this mean Rye landfill will expand?

No. There is unused space within the current site boundaries in between the existing landfill cells.

What other options were investigated?

Council's feasibility study assessed three options:

1. Full development of all available space at Rye Landfill.

2. Using the available space between the current landfill cells.
3. Trucking waste to landfills in Melbourne's western suburbs.

The study identified using the available space between the current landfill cells as the preferred option.

What happens when the current cell at Rye Landfill closes early next year?

Council has a contract until mid 2029 to transport and dispose of the Shire's waste at other landfills. From early next year, Mornington Peninsula's waste will be taken to a transfer facility in Dandenong before being trucked to a landfill at Ravenhall in Melbourne's western suburbs.

Why has the annual waste charge increased?

The increased cost of transporting and disposing of waste outside the Peninsula has been a key contributor to higher waste charges. Trucking waste to Melbourne's western suburbs is significantly more expensive than local disposal.

What are the benefits of continuing to use Rye Landfill?

According to an independent feasibility study, using the available space between the current landfill cells would:

- Have the lowest estimated impact on waste charges compared with the other options assessed.
- Provide approximately 16 years of local waste disposal capacity.
- Reduce reliance on external landfill markets.
- Minimise longer transport distances and associated vehicle emissions.
- Allow flexibility to transition to waste-to-energy or other emerging technologies in the future.

Would this mean Council is committed to landfill for decades?

No. The proposed development is intended as an interim measure that maintains future flexibility. It would provide 16 years of landfill capacity. Council would continue to explore waste-to-energy and other waste treatment technologies before making a longer-term decision.

How could the proposal affect ratepayers?

The feasibility study found that using the available space between the current landfill cells would have the lowest estimated impact on waste charges compared with the other options considered.

What environmental factors are being considered?

Council is assessing both economic and environmental impacts. For example, local disposal could reduce truck movements and emissions associated with transporting waste to Melbourne's western suburbs. Further environmental assessments are also being carried out on the impacts of continuing to landfill waste.

Has a final decision been made?

No. Council has resolved to consult with the community to understand their views about a continuation of Rye landfill and to do additional work to explore the project further in terms of timelines, costs and risks.

No final decision has been made.

Can residents have their say?

Residents and ratepayers are encouraged to participate in Council's consultation process and provide feedback during the community engagement period.

Why is community feedback important?

Waste management decisions affect nearly every household and property that receives a kerbside bin collection service. Community input will help Council understand local views and inform future decision-making.

What will happen after community consultation closes?

Council will consider community feedback alongside further details about the costs, timelines and risks associated with continuing Rye landfill before deciding whether to proceed with the project.

How long would it take to develop the unused space ready to receive waste?

The approvals, planning and design process would take approximately two years.