

Questions from the Organics Processing Plant webinar – 13 September 2023

Question 1: The getting of the material to the North Island processing plant sounds extremely expensive and energy intensive. Also puts you at the mercy of shipping. Have you adequately factored in potential fuel price increases/RUC increases? Also exactly where in the North Island are these processing plants?

Answer: Costs have been estimated at this stage and are included as part of the metrics to assess each of the shortlisted option as part of the consultation.

Road, rail and sea are all being considered and the risks, including price fluctuations, associated with each of those transport methods.

Three processors in the North Island have been identified who could immediately accept part of the city's mixed organics;

1. Eco Gas in Reparoa
2. Envirofert in Tuakau
3. MyNoke in Taupo, Tokorao and Ohakune

Eco Gas and Envirofert use Anaerobic Digestion (AD) technology. AD uses microorganisms to break down organic material in the absence of oxygen. This process produces two outputs; a nutrient rich digestate which can be used as a fertiliser and biogas which is a renewable energy. Biogas is primarily methane and carbon dioxide and can be used directly as a fuel in combined heat and power gas engines. Therefore, the renewable energy produced reduces the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions including from transport to the North Island. We have engaged external environmental experts WSP to assist with the calculation of the GHG emissions figures presented in the consultation.

MyNoke use worm farming which is a similar process to the current Organics Processing Plant (OPP) and does not produce renewable energy.

Question 2: Are there potential sites for offsite outdoor processing (re option 5) lined up?

Answer: Yes, at this stage two sites have been identified for option 5 but due to commercial sensitivity we cannot disclose their locations.



Question 3: Ignoring pending legislation, what if you only accepted green waste not FOGO what effect on odour etc?

Answer: Advice from our external environmental experts Pattle Delamore Partners (PDP) is household green waste has a high component of grass clippings which forms a dense material which increases the odour of green waste. Therefore, processing only green waste would not remove the risk of odour at the Organics Processing Plant.

Question 4: Meat and fat should not be put into the bins. Why is this not put in the red bin?

Answer: When organic material like food is sent to a landfill and breaks down it creates methane. If a landfill is not equipped to capture that methane, it will escape into the atmosphere and become a GHG that is over 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

Council and central government policies, and the Council's levels of service in the Long Term Plan, illustrate that there should be disposal to landfill only if there is no reasonable alternative. Reasonable alternatives are likely to be available.

Question 5: Exactly how far does the objectionable odour plume extend into residential areas?

Answer: We engaged PDP to estimate the area affected by offensive or objectionable odour from the OPP. They took into account when an offensive or objectionable odour had been established through their own odour scouting and Environment Canterbury's Notices of Non-Compliance, and the furthest distance was 1,350m from the OPP. To this distance a 190m buffer was added on the basis of this was the downwind distance to the closest location where the odour was confirmed not to be offensive or objectionable.

The derived zones were cross referenced with community complaints submitted through Environment Canterbury's Smelt It and include the areas with the highest report counts.

Offensive or objectionable odour may have occurred further downwind than identified in these zones but there is currently no evidential basis in the data to support this.

Question 6: Why has the consultation pamphlet not been delivered to businesses for them to comment? Will this be happening? Perhaps personal consultation?

Answer: We emailed the closest businesses, school and preschool directly and put-up posters in local food outlets. Booklets are also available at the community centre and local doctors surgeries.

Question 7: How much revenue does CCC get each year from compost sales?

Answer: CCC does not share the revenue generated by Living Earth from compost sales.

Question 8: The commercial food waste removed couple of years back made a big difference?

Answer: Commercial food waste has not been accepted at the site for a number of years. Only kerbside collection material is accepted at the site.



Question 9: Have you analysed if a particular plant material is causing the problem? For instance, grass in the green bin smells terrible within a few days. Normally our home compost only smells if grass is put on it.

Answer: After reviewing the operation and the effectiveness of the odour controls, PDP have advised that the most significant source of odour is the compost material and the associated outdoor screening and storage of this, rather than a particular input material.

Question 10: Option 5, why hasn't this been trialled before now??? We have been quite patient. These options seem just silly. Option 1 how do you think you could transport the waste to the north island when you can't get a car across on the Ferry when you need to ?....the only options for it to go to Kate Valley so you can clear the mess up now!!!

Answer: Environment Canterbury issued an Abatement Notice in January 2021 with an enforcement date of January 2022. Council created a Transitional Plan which include significant operational changes including ceasing outdoor maturation in windrows. The peak season for the OPP is spring summer with larger volumes of kerbside organics and a higher content of grass clippings. Last peak season, spring/summer 2022, was the first peak season operating under the Transitional Plan. Incidents of offensive and objectionable odour beyond the plant's boundary have led us to consult on interim options to manage the city's mixed kerbside organics until the long term organics processing solution is operational.

As mentioned in response to the first question, for Option 1 a number of transport methods are being considered.

Question 11: Why is the Council not asking the community to reduce organics going into the green bins - e.g promoting home composting?

Council has several initiatives underway to support home, community and commercial composting. These include educational school programmes, composting food packaging at events, and our Food Resilience Policy. We also have an Edible Christchurch initiative where we provide resources and information about growing food at home, foraging and edible parks, school gardens, farmers markets and food resilience.

We are also working with other councils around New Zealand to understand what kind of composting schemes or subsidies they provide.

