SUMMARY

1 Waste Management NZ Ltd ("WMNZ") welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the discussion document released by the Ministry for the Environment regarding the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development ("NPS-UD").

2. Regional waste management services operate as a network of collections, resource recovery, recycling, transfer and disposal facilities, with landfill disposal sites sitting at the top of the hierarchy. These networks are regionally significant infrastructure that are critical to the efficient functioning of cities and regions across New Zealand. They are also critical to enabling New Zealand's expected future growth.

3. Regional waste management networks, like those operated by WMNZ, must be provided for by our resource management system, including within regional planning for future urban development. A key part of this will be through the NPS-CJD, which needs to direct local authorities to enable the necessary waste infrastructure to service their growing communities.

4 WMNZ supports national direction on urban development. However, despite nation-wide waste minimisation initiatives, an inevitable result of urban development and growth is increased waste volumes and related increased demand for waste management services. WMNZ is committed to utilising waste efficiently and sorts, recovers, redirects and neutralises waste where possible and ensures the safe disposal of residual waste at environmentally secure disposal sites. Even with this approach, the fact remains that waste must be managed to provide liveable, comfortable cities. Another consequence of increased urban development is for incompatible activities to locate close to waste infrastructure, compromising waste operations.

5 It is absolutely critical waste management infrastructure is recognised as essential infrastructure, despite it frequently being funded and controlled by private operators rather than local authorities. It is equally critical that existing waste infrastructure and regional waste management networks are protected from the adverse reverse sensitivity effects that result when new urban development locates in close proximity to waste infrastructure.

6 In addition, the demands that urban development will place on regional waste networks in terms of collection and disposal services (including the ability for collection vehicles to efficiently access urban environments) must remain a focus in land use planning. It must be a priority for national planning documents like the NPS-UD to enable these networks to continue to efficiently service future urban growth.

7 WMNZs specific submissions on the discussion document are set out below.

WHO WE ARE
8. WMNZ is New Zealand's largest waste and environmental services company, with recycling, resource recovery, transfer and landfill disposal facilities and other waste management operations located across New Zealand. These operations include.

(a) Waste and recycling collection services — these include regular household (kerbside) and commercial collection services, and on demand services where collections are ordered by customers on an "as needed" basis.

(b) Recycling facilities — these facilities receive source-separated recyclables for further processing and subsequent shipment to a downstream processing facility.

(c) Downstream processing facilities — these facilities receive and process particular kinds of recyclables such as greenwaste, end-of-life tyres etc.

(d) Resource recovery facilities — these facilities receive construction and demolition materials from the construction industry. Various materials such as ferrous and nonferrous metals, soil, brick, concrete and timber etc are recovered and recycled and residual waste is disposed of at a suitable cleanfill, managed fill or landfill facility.

Refuse transfer stations — these facilities are multi-purpose and serve a wide range of different customers and waste management functions. They are used for the receipt, recovery, recycling and then subsequent transfer to an appropriate downstream facility of a range of organic, recyclable and non-recyclable materials.

Landfill, cleanfill and managed fill disposal sites — these facilities provide for the secure disposal of residual waste materials received through the waste management system, which cannot otherwise be recycled or re-used.

DEFINITION OF "OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE"

9 The NPS-UD discussion document proposes to define "other infrastructure" as: ¹)

(a) public open space;

(b) community infrastructure as defined in the Local Government Act 2002

(c) land transport as defined in the Land Transport Management Act 2003, that is not controlled by local authorities;

(d) social infrastructure and healthcare;

    telecommunications as defined in the Telecommunications Act 2001 ²)

energy; and

(g) other infrastructure not controlled by local authorities.
1. Local authorities must provide for waste infrastructure in their regional plans. The current proposed definition for "other infrastructure" will not achieve this.

11. Waste infrastructure is as essential to high-quality urban growth as the other listed categories. Put simply, the high-quality urban growth desired by the NPS-UD cannot be achieved without adequate waste infrastructure to service it.

12. The catch all "other infrastructure not controlled by local authorities" does not appropriately provide for waste infrastructure. Waste infrastructure is owned and operated by both local authorities and private sector operators like WMNZ. The distinction between public and private waste assets can also often be unclear, such as where infrastructure is operated on a jointventure basis between a council and a private operator. Local authorities also "control" significant parts of the regional waste management network such as contracts for household (kerbside) collection services.

13. Reliance on the existing definition of "other infrastructure" is therefore insufficient. This definition must be amended to specifically include waste infrastructure within the listed infrastructure categories. This will ensure that local authorities are required to provide for waste infrastructure when they give effect to the NPS-UD in their regional and local plans.

DISCOURAGING INAPPROPRIATE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

14. One issue that WMNZ frequently encounters is developers purchasing (comparatively) lowpriced industrial zoned land, and then seeking a plan change and / or resource consent to develop non-industrial residential activities on the relevant land.

15. This approach to urban development must be discouraged in the NPS-I-JD.

16. There is currently only limited industrial-zoned land within urban areas nationwide, particularly when compared to the abundance of land currently zoned residential. This is particularly the case in Auckland, where the Auckland Unitary Plan has reduced the total amount of industrialzoned land when compared with the legacy planning frameworks. Existing industrial land needs to be protected for legitimate industrial operators, and residential activities actively directed elsewhere to more suitable locations.

17. The establishment of sensitive residential activities on industrial-zoned land also compromises the activities of already established industrial operators on neighbouring land. This is because residential occupants expect a higher level of amenity (eg in terms of noise, odour, dust, light spill etc) than should reasonably be anticipated in industrial zones.

18. WMNZ considers that the NPS-UD must assist to address this issue. The NPS-UD discussion document already directs that residential intensification should be provided in areas where a good standard of amenity for occupants can be achieved. WMNZ supports this focus on amenity values for current and future communities, to ensure that urban development is directed to the areas where it is most appropriate.
However, based on its experience with residential activities seeking to locate inappropriately in industrial areas, WMNZ considers the NPS-UD needs to be explicit that urban development should be discouraged in areas where there is an inherent reduced level of amenity, such as in industrial zones.

PROVISION FOR ANTICIPATED TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

The NPS-UD discussion document proposes requirements for zone descriptions to describe the expected types and nature of development that is intended within the zone (consistent with
The objectives, policies, rules and assessment criteria of local authority plans will be required to enable the development anticipated by the relevant zone description.

The NPS-UD must include a suite of zones and associated descriptions that provide for all elements of the waste management network. For example, existing facilities such as transfer stations located within existing urban areas, require an industrial zone that protects these activities from sensitive land uses establishing on surrounding land (ie protection against reverse sensitivity effects).

For new landfills, the situation is different. By their nature, landfills require large areas of land with extensive buffer zones. As such, these need to be located in valleys in greenfields rural areas away from existing development. Flexibility is required within the zone description for rural zones, to ensure that future waste management facilities be provided for in these locations.

COORDINATED INTENSIFICATION

WMNZ supports objectives and policies to allow for increased density in areas where the benefits of such development are best realised.

In particular, WMNZ supports proposed Policy 6A which requires that higher density development should occur in areas where best use can be made of existing or planned infrastructure. This policy will ensure that when local authorities are considering locations for higher density living, the ability of the regional waste management network to service that proposed growth is fully considered. One prevalent issue for WMNZ is difficulty in collecting refuse and recycling due to narrow access ways, traffic congestion and poor parking availability. In an increasingly high density urban environment, these difficulties will be exacerbated if careful planning is not undertaken by local authorities to ensure high density areas are located where they can be adequately supported by infrastructure networks, including the waste network.

WMNZ also supports the proposal for local authorities to work with infrastructure providers within and across local authority boundaries, when planning to ensure there is sufficient development capacity for intensification. The reality is that intensification in the area of one local authority will often be serviced by existing and future planned waste infrastructure located in another local authority area (for example, not every local authority will have its own landfill as landfills often serve much bigger catchments). Local authorities need to be directed by the NPS-UD to consider the reality of the "on the ground" situation, including the needs of waste infrastructure located across local authority boundaries, when undertaking their individual planning exercises.
ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER NATIONAL DIRECTION AND RMA REFORM

The Ministry is currently consulting on, or about to commence consultation on, a wide range of proposals to reform New Zealand's resource management system. This includes subordinate Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) documents relating to freshwater, indigenous biodiversity and air quality, as well as amendments to the RMA itself. 6

WMNZ has a significant interest in all these reforms, which will each impact on its existing and future operations. From WMNZ's perspective, it is crucial that these reforms are not developed in isolation from each other. Although the focus of these processes is necessarily different in each case, it is crucial that they are ultimately aligned in terms of how they provide for critical matters such as waste infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

WMNZ is generally supportive of providing additional national direction to local authorities under the RMA via the use of the NPS tool. However, as currently proposed, the NPS-UD does not make appropriate provision for waste infrastructure and regional waste management networks. The NPS-UD needs to specifically provide for this regionally significant infrastructure, to enable and ensure high-quality urban growth is achieved in line with the NPSCJD’s overall aims.

WMNZ would like to engage further with MfE on the concerns set out in this submission in finalising the NPS-UD.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Signature:

Date.

Address for Service.

Telephone: Email:


10 October 2019

Planning for successful A discussion document on a proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development
Consultation Questions