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## Case Study: Grafton Shopping World 2010

### Grafton Shopping World

Grafton Shopping World is the newest shopping centre in the Clarence Valley and North Coast region. It is managed by McConaghy Shopping Centres Pty Ltd. Grafton Shoppingworld had a \$50 million dollar major redevelopment in 2008, expanding from 40 retailers to over double its size. The new development offers a wide variety of stores and services, including the 4 major retailers – Woolworths & Dan Murphy's, Coles, Big W & Target, a Lincraft superstore, and in excess of 85 specialty retailers. In addition a 400 seat food court, including McDonalds, KFC and Subway.



Over 8m<sup>3</sup> of cardboard was found in waste skips.

On a daily basis the shopping world generates 7 x 3m<sup>3</sup> waste skips per day, increasing to 9 skips over Christmas. A 9m<sup>3</sup> cardboard compacter is removed once a fortnight. Cooking oil is also collected and recycled.

### The Challenge

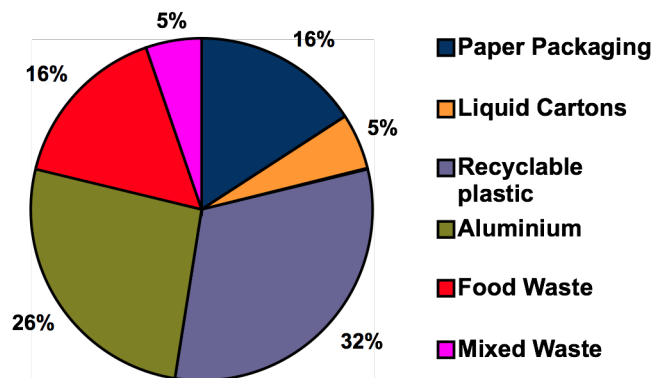
The greatest challenge for the shopping world was getting co-operation from the 80 tenants to use the bins correctly. Tenants were not keen to walk further distances to separate recycling and cardboard. Getting waste on the managements agenda to keep the project moving ahead was also challenging. However, increases in waste charges has motivated management to make some changes to reduce waste and increase recvclina.

### Waste Characterisation

Grafton Shopping World produces 18 000L (24 000L at Christmas) of waste and 650L of compacted cardboard per day. To gain a better understanding on types and quantities of waste produced in the different areas of the centre the audit involved separating the waste streams from the 6 food court waste bins, 4 food court recycling bins (which were ending up in the waste), 21 bins located through the centre for customers and the tenants waste.

The tenant's waste does not include the four major tenants Coles, Big W, Woolworths and Target who manage their own waste.

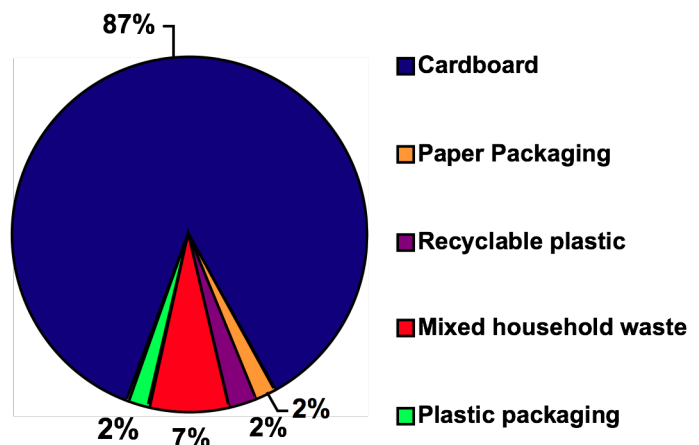
#### Recycling Bins in Food Court



The major finding was the unnecessary dumping of cardboard in the waste skips, particularly in the three waste skips in the lower carpark level. This alone has great implications for saving on waste charges.

The contamination in the recycling bins in the food court justified the dumping of the recycling at present.

#### Lincraft Skip Bin



## The Results and Opportunities

The following recommendations were made in the Waste Reduction Action Plan.

**1. Maximise collection of cardboard recycling.** Separate facilities for collecting cardboard on the lower level carpark is required. This would not only reduce the number of skips required for waste collection by at least two per day but also equate to a large saving in waste collection costs.

**1. Improve collection of recycling in the food court.** The audit indicated that customers were attempting to recycle drink containers in the food court. However, due to the high contamination with food and cardboard packaging, the recycling is sent to landfill. A few strategies were suggested to reduce the contamination. These include:

- improving signage on recycling bins in the food court to include pictures of the items you are targeting in the recycling bins;
- Install restriction flaps on the recycling bin lids to reduce cardboard food boxes entering the bins to reduce contamination;

**2. Encouraging tenants to recycle.** Tenants do not currently have access to recycling bins for plastic, aluminium, glass and paper. Whilst 27% of tenant's waste in the skips was comprised of co-mingled recycling which could be recycled. Diverting these materials from the waste skips would save up to 25% of space but also reduce waste charges.

**4. Consolidate and secure waste skips.** To avoid the dumping of household waste in these skips, management could encourage tenants to keep the roll down security screens down and locked.

## Savings and the Future

The audit identified a number of ways that Grafton Shopping World could make savings on their waste charges be:

- Diverting the 8m3 of cardboard from the waste skips which is costing management up to four times the cost of recycling the cardboard through the compacter;
- Encouraging tenants to use the co-mingled recycling skips to divert up to 25% of the waste from the skips;
- Make improvements to the food court recycling bins to recover drink containers for recycling without the contamination.

Management has implemented the cardboard separation to date and is working towards the other changes in 2010.

### Environmental Policy

A final suggestion for the future of the centre is to develop and implement an **Environmental Policy** for the organisation. The policy would target sustainable practices in waste, water and energy use. The McConaghy Group who own and manage the centre are property developers specialising in the investment, management and leasing of shopping centres in regional areas of New South Wales and Queensland. By trialling sustainable practices at one centre, the McConaghy Group could benefit from the lessons at Grafton Shopping World and roll out sustainable practices across their other centres. Many sustainable business practices not only reduce resource use but also save businesses money.

A precedent has already been set with developers and shopping centre owners, **Lend Lease** implementing recycling across 11 shopping centres across Queensland and NSW. McConaghy could well meet up to this challenge, starting with Grafton Shopping World.

## Contacts

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## Background

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a collective of local councils in the Northern Rivers region of NSW who take a regional approach to waste management. An initiative of the NEWF, the Business Waste Reduction Project (BWRP) works with local businesses to assist them in developing waste management strategies that promote waste reduction and resource recovery. The project began in April 2005 and has collaborated with a wide variety of businesses and institutions. An integral part of the project is to transfer information from participating businesses to other similar operations within the region. The project also works with industry organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce, to further disseminate information on commercial waste reduction.