Whitford Landfill is owned and operated by Waste Disposal Services, a joint venture between Transpacific Industries Group (NZ) Ltd and Manukau City Council. The landfill is developed in cells, which are typically constructed annually or biannually. The site sought to conserve its natural materials (clays) and to shorten construction times by the use of HDPE and ELCOSEAL Geosynthetic Clay Liner in the lining system.

As with all new landfills the impact on the environment is paramount and an overriding factor in the design and construction of new landfill cells. The designers chose a combination of a HDPE membrane liner manufactured by GSE and ELCOSEAL GCL as the main barrier to reduce the risk of waste leachate permeating into the underlying ground water table and potentially contaminating fresh water streams. This tried and true combination of HDPE and ELCOSEAL GCL liners was employed to line the bottom and sides of the new cell. Heavy duty geotextile protection layers incorporating both Polyfelt TS70 & TS011 were placed directly over the HDPE liner followed by a layer of gravel to protect it from puncturing during the placement and compaction of the waste material.

Quality Assurance plays a huge roll in a project of this nature requiring the materials, supplied by Geofabrics, to have manufacturing certification and traceability and the selection of an experienced installer such as GR Environmental who has the skill to satisfy the on-site stringent QA/QC requirements put in place by the landfill designers.

The cells were completed in 2 stages with the GR Environmental team of 8 men able to install up to 2000m² of liner a day. Correct sub grade preparation is crucial before the liner can be installed as this can influence production levels. This was highlighted early on in the project when an unsuitable clay sub grade material was imported and combined with Auckland’s inclement weather slowed down the initial laying of the liner system.