

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny
Minister for Planning
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26 April 2024

Doc No: D24-282919

Dear Minister Kilkenny,

Re: Proposed waste-to-energy facility, Lara (APP1004200)

I am again writing regarding the Prospect Hill International Pty Ltd application for a waste-to-energy facility at 164-200 McManus Road, Lara.

I appreciate the reply to my previous correspondence in September 2023 by yourself in November 2023, noting the community concerns and registering our letter as an objection to the permit application. As a referral authority, Council's role in the formal process has been limited to providing advice and feedback regarding the application's consistency with the Planning Scheme.

I note that the application by Prospect Hill International Pty Ltd was approved by the EPA in December 2023 and on behalf of the Geelong community, communicate their desire for planning permit PA2001035 and development licence APP1004200 be rejected and cancelled.

Prior to and post the approval of the application, a number of community members and groups, including the Geelong Sustainability Group, Say NO to Lara Big Incinerator and Committee for Geelong have voiced concerns regarding the potential impacts of this facility.

The community have made their position clear to Council via a number of forums and we have agreed to again pass community concerns directly to you as the Responsible Authority for this planning application.

As previously communicated, the concerns predominantly relate to health and environmental impacts, particularly in relation to schools and preschools located within 5km of this proposed facility, as well as residential homes located as close as 350m away.

We have also heard questions regarding the safety and viability of the facility, with no defined contractual, management or emergency arrangements in place.

The detailed community feedback that we submitted in our correspondence of September 2023 still stands.

The Committee for Geelong have also publicly stated that this project does not align to their vision and aspirations for Geelong.

In particular, they have listed concerns around:

1. the volume of waste required to operate, which coupled with the lack of demand within the Geelong region, could see Geelong become the destination for waste from across Victoria (and beyond);
2. the proximity of the proposed site to residential housing and the negative impact this could have on both established and growth suburbs in the north at a time where there are pressures on housing supply;
3. the size, design and positioning of the site creating a dominant, yet visually disagreeable landmark in contrast to our UNESCO City of Design status.
4. potential health impacts for the community in terms of air quality and residual particles landing on produce grown in the region; and
5. the overall environmental benefits of the proposal.

As such, the Committee for Geelong has called for action by the Victorian Government to prevent this proposal proceeding and asks for a broader discussion around whether waste to energy has a place in the state's energy transition.

The City also notes the community petition (#499) presented to the Legislative Council on 18 April 2024 with 1,107 signatures that outlines a number of concerns regarding the proposal and calls on the Legislative Council call on the Government to not impose an oversized, unsafe and unnecessary waste incinerator in the region and reject planning permit PA2001035 and development licence APP1004200.

It is also important to place on the record that the City has its own circular economy and waste management strategies and under these strategies the Council is not pursuing waste incineration methods for its waste.

On behalf of the Geelong community, we ask that you consider their concerns and requests and determine what action could be taken by the Victorian Government and you as the relevant Minister to address these valid concerns.

Kind regards,



CR TRENT SULLIVAN
MAYOR

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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