

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning
Sent by email to sonya.kilkenny@parliament.vic.gov.au
Level 20, 1 Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

06 February 2025

Doc No: D25-49280
Our Ref:
Your Ref:

Dear Minister Kilkenny

Re: Waste to Energy planning responsibility

Council has listened carefully to concerns about the facility from the community. We understand that Lara residents and the broader region are troubled by the potential environmental and health impacts of this waste to energy incinerator and as such, I am writing to advise you that after considerable community feedback regarding the Lara waste to energy incinerator, the Greater Geelong City Council (The City) at its meeting on Tuesday 28 January 2025 considered and carried a Notice of Motion (NoM) stating:

(3) Writes to the Minister for Planning seeking changes to the Planning Scheme to enable the Council to be the decision-making authority for any future waste to energy proposals within the boundaries of the City of Greater Geelong given the significant community impact associated with such proposals;

With the adoption of this NoM and also through previous correspondence to yourself, Council has reiterated its opposition to the Lara waste to energy incinerator and is requesting for the project to not proceed and is also seeking to become a decision making authority for similar proposals in the future.

EPA Victoria approved the development licence for the private facility on McManus Road in 2023, which will see 400,000 tonnes of waste each year incinerated and converted into 35 megawatts of electricity – enough to power up to 50,000 homes.

Residents, community groups such as Geelong Sustainability, Say NO to the Lara Big Incinerator and Committee for Geelong, and Council continue to object to the planned incinerator.

There are significant concerns about potential community health and environmental impacts, and questions regarding the plant's safety and viability, including:

- proximity to homes as close as 350 metres and schools and preschools within five kilometres;
- adverse health effects, including significant associations with some cancers, birth defects, infant deaths and miscarriage;
- potential odours;
- air pollution, including residual particles landing on produce grown in the region; and

- the production of 4.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) over its lifetime.

As a referral authority, Council's role in this process to date has been limited to providing advice and feedback regarding the application's consistency with the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. As the level of government closest to the community, Council believes the City is best placed to be the planning authority for matters such as these.

I respectfully request you review and change Clause 72.01-1 *Minister is responsible authority* of the State standard provisions, and associated provisions, to enable the City to be the responsible authority for any future waste to energy proposal.

Council planning staff are available to work with the Department of Transport and Planning as required.

I would welcome a discussion with yourself regarding this topic and technical officers from the City can be made available should they be required.

I look forward to your consideration of this request and my office can be contacted on 03 5272 5272

Yours sincerely,



CR DR STRETCH KONTELJ OAM
MAYOR

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG