

Submission  
No 188

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

**Name:** Mrs Bethany Schofield Tomanbil

**Date Received:** 19 October 2025

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Partially  
Confidential

## **Submission Opposing the Proposed Parkes Waste Facility**

*From Bethany Schofield – Local Farmer, Health Professional & Anaiwan Woman*

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Bethany Schofield. I am a mother of four young children (aged 7, 6, and 2-year-old twins), a physiotherapist with over a decade of experience working in rural health, and a proud Anaiwan woman. Together with my partner, I run a beef cattle and cropping farm and work as an agricultural contractor. We are a proud, hard-working family committed to our land, our community, and the future of our children.

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed waste facility and incinerator project in Parkes.

### **Impact on Agriculture, Food Quality & Livelihoods**

As primary producers, we rely on clean water, healthy soils, and uncontaminated air to raise cattle and grow crops. This facility puts that at serious risk. The potential release of toxic chemicals and particulates into our air and waterways may compromise the safety and quality of the food we produce—food that we also eat ourselves and sell to others.

Farms in the region are already under pressure from environmental and economic challenges. Introducing a high-risk industrial facility into a food-producing region is short-sighted and dangerous. It threatens not only our health, but our reputation, our markets, and the viability of our business.

### **Impact on Our Children's Future and Education**

Our children currently attend preschool in \_\_\_\_\_ and we have been planning for them to attend \_\_\_\_\_. However, that school sits alarmingly close to the proposed incinerator site. It now feels unsafe to send our children there.

This project is making us rethink the entire future we've been building for our family—where they go to school, where we live, how we farm, and how we protect their health.

### **Cultural Concerns and Lack of Informed Consent**

As an Anaiwan woman, raising my children on Country is deeply important to me. I want them to grow up in a place where their wellbeing is valued and protected—not sacrificed for short-term industrial gain.

I am also concerned by the lack of meaningful consultation with local Wiradjuri Elders and community members. Any major development on or near Aboriginal land must seek **informed** consent, not tokenistic consultation. We know too well the long history of projects being pushed through without proper cultural respect or accountability.

### **Health Impacts and Rural Inequity**

In my clinical work as a physiotherapist, I have seen firsthand how rural Australians face higher disease burdens and less access to health care than those in cities. Our people are already doing it tough.

If this facility worsens air quality, increases respiratory disease, or leads to contaminated water, it will hit our community hard—especially children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions. And our already-stretched rural health services will be expected to carry the burden.

These are **long-term risks** that can't be undone once damage is done.

### **Environmental and Economic Harm**

Native flora and fauna will also be affected—once lost, they don't come back. And property values across the region, especially those close to the facility, are expected to drop significantly. For farming families like ours, that is not just a home—it's our equity, our livelihood, and our retirement plan.

Short-term jobs and cash injections are **not** worth the long-term damage to our community's health, economy, or environment.

### **Lack of Transparency, Oversight & Public Trust**

I am deeply concerned about:

- Greenwashing of the project to appear “safe” or “sustainable”
- Lack of transparency from government and developers
- Inadequate oversight from the EPA
- Previous community opposition being ignored

### **We demand the following as a minimum:**

1. **Independent baseline testing** of soil, air, and water—funded by the EPA or project backers—not the community.
2. **24-hour environmental monitoring**, with real-time public access to the results.
3. A guaranteed supply of **safe, clean drinking water** for every home and farm in the affected area.
4. A **genuine, independent health impact assessment** before any approvals are granted.
5. Full disclosure of why this location was chosen, and transparency about any similar projects that were rejected elsewhere.
6. This community deserves better. Our families, farms, and futures should not be the price of industrial convenience. I strongly urge you to halt this project and truly listen

to the people who will live with its consequences—long after the construction crews are gone.

Sincerely,

**Bethany Schofield**

Physiotherapist, Farmer, Mother, Anaiwan Woman