

Submission
No 564

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 26 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

To the Parliamentary Enquiry Committee,

Subject: Opposition to the Proposed Energy from Waste Facility in Parkes

My name is _____, and I am a long-term resident of the Parkes Shire. I have lived in this region my entire life and have proudly called Parkes home for the past 20 years. This is where I began my career, purchased our first home, started our family business, and, most importantly, chose to raise our three beautiful children. We were drawn to Parkes for its wide-open spaces, fresh country air, and the warmth and support of its community.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) facility in Parkes. While I understand the growing challenge of landfill capacity, I believe there is much more that can and should be done before resorting to waste incineration. Recently, I spoke with a resident from the Hills District in Sydney who mentioned that their council only introduced green waste bins within the past six months. I was genuinely shocked. That organic waste, for years, went directly to landfill—waste that could have been processed into mulch or compost for Sydney's parks and gardens. This highlights a major issue: metropolitan areas have not been proactive enough in reducing, reusing, and recycling their waste. Now, they appear to be shifting their burden onto regional communities like ours—communities that have fewer voices and are easier to overlook.

While reducing landfill is an important goal, the location, scale, and long-term implications of this project pose serious risks that must be carefully examined before any approval is granted.

Health Impacts

There is substantial evidence that EfW facilities, even those adhering to “best practice” standards, can emit fine particulates and toxic compounds such as dioxins, furans, and heavy metals. These substances present long-term health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and individuals with respiratory conditions. As a parent of a child with asthma, I am deeply worried about how exposure to emissions from the proposed incinerator could exacerbate his condition. The cumulative health effects over decades cannot simply be dismissed.

Environmental Impacts

The proposed facility threatens to degrade local air quality, water sources, and soil health. Parkes is an area renowned for its agricultural productivity, and any contamination—no matter how minimal—could jeopardise surrounding farmland, native vegetation, and biodiversity. Furthermore, transporting waste more than 500 kilometres from Sydney to Parkes undermines any claim of environmental benefit. The carbon emissions generated through such transport directly contradict state and national goals of achieving net-zero emissions. It is difficult to see how this proposal contributes meaningfully to a sustainable future.

Economic and Property Impacts

A large-scale industrial EfW plant will inevitably impact property values and deter both residential and business investment. Parkes has worked hard to grow its reputation as a clean, welcoming,

and forward-looking regional centre. The presence of an incineration facility risks undoing that progress. I am concerned that local businesses—particularly those in retail, hospitality, and tourism—will struggle even more, as residents leave and visitors are discouraged. Over the past decade, our retail sector has already faced significant challenges; this project could be the final blow for many small operators. Additionally, residents fear that their homes will become unsellable, as few would choose to live near such a facility.

Mental Health and Community Wellbeing

The uncertainty surrounding the proposed EfW project has already caused widespread stress and division within the community. Residents are anxious about potential health risks, environmental damage, and the long-term safety of their families. Living near a facility of this nature can lead to ongoing anxiety, loss of trust, and diminished sense of security. The erosion of community cohesion and confidence in decision-making processes is deeply concerning. These social and psychological impacts are just as significant as the physical and environmental consequences and must be properly acknowledged.

Consultation and Transparency

Community consultation so far has been insufficient, with much of the information presented shaped by the proponent's interests rather than the wellbeing of residents. The people of Parkes deserve a transparent, independent environmental, health, and social impact assessment—free from commercial influence—before any decisions are made.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge the Parliamentary Enquiry to reject the proposed Energy from Waste facility in Parkes. There are safer, cleaner, and more sustainable waste management alternatives available that do not compromise the health, environment, or economic future of regional communities. Let us focus first on practical measures: reducing plastic packaging, ensuring all councils—particularly in Sydney—implement green organics programs, and expanding public education on reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Ultimately, if the process is truly safe, it should be located closer to the source of the waste. If it is not suitable for Sydney's residents, it is certainly not suitable for ours.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Sincerely,

Parkes Shire Resident