

Submission  
No 633

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

## **Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Energy from Waste (EfW)**

**From:** , Retired Farmer – Parkes, NSW

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns regarding Energy from Waste incineration.

My name is and I am a retired farmer from Parkes. My daughter, son-in-law, and their children now manage our family property, which has been farmed by our family for over 105 years. Our connection to the land runs deep, it's not just where we live, it's part of who we are.

Generational farmers develop a bond and understanding of the land that can't be easily explained, only felt through a lifetime of working with the soil, the seasons, and the cycles of nature.

I am deeply concerned about the proposal to build an Energy from Waste incinerator near Parkes. There is a growing disconnect between the city and the country, and this project highlights it perfectly.

It is simply unjust that Sydney's waste should be freighted more than 500 kilometres by train to be burned in one of regional Australia's richest food-producing areas. The inequity of that decision is staggering and shows a lack of respect for regional communities and the industries that sustain them.

Adding to the irony, the proposal relies on a diesel-powered freight train to transport waste such a long distance. The emissions from that transport alone will be substantial, and completely at odds with the government's zero-emissions and climate targets.

Even more ironic is that the proponent, the Tribe Infrastructure Group consortium, is promoting this project under the banner of "clean energy" while depending entirely on fossil fuels to make it work. In fact, Tribe's broader business interests are heavily tied to fossil fuel infrastructure and investment, making this proposal less about genuine sustainability and more about prolonging dependence on polluting energy systems. Burning waste hundreds of kilometres from its source, after hauling it there using diesel, cannot seriously be described as sustainable or environmentally responsible.

My greatest fear is for the health and wellbeing of my family, my grandchildren, and the wider Parkes community should this proposal go ahead.

Our region already faces a severe shortage of doctors, nurses, and psychologists, leaving us ill-equipped to manage any additional health impacts that could arise from a facility of this nature. Beyond the immediate health risks, there is the very real threat of contamination, or even the perception of it, which would be devastating for our agricultural industry.

Once the integrity of our produce and the reputation of our farming region are damaged, they cannot be recovered.

The mental health toll from that alone on farmers would be immense, as the fear of losing market access, land value, and generational livelihoods weighs heavily on those who have worked the land for decades.

The lack of transparency and communication around this proposal is deeply troubling.

The Parkes community only became aware of the project in March 2025, yet it appears discussions and approvals may date back as far as 2018. Why were we, the people most affected, not consulted or asked for our input on such a major development?

A decision of this magnitude should never be made without meaningful engagement with the community it impacts most.

I acknowledge that Sydney has a waste problem. However, that problem should be managed at its source, not exported to regional communities like Parkes.

If this technology was deemed **unsafe for Sydney, then it is unsafe anywhere**, and certainly not appropriate in an agricultural region that feeds the state and the nation. As highlighted in the May 2020 report by the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer, Energy from Waste facilities should **avoid proximity to food production**. The report also states that any **Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) should consider food as an exposure pathway**, reinforcing the unsuitability of siting such a facility near agricultural areas like Parkes.

There are safer and more sustainable alternatives to incineration, including improved recycling and resource recovery systems, composting and organic waste diversion, waste reduction programs and anaerobic digestion.

Pursue circular economy initiatives that keep materials in use rather than turning them into pollution. These are the directions that should be supported, solutions that align with environmental responsibility and community wellbeing.

It is disappointing to see the inconsistency in leadership on this issue. Both Penny Sharpe and Chris Bowen spoke passionately against Energy from Waste when it was proposed for their electorates. Yet that same concern does not seem to extend to their country cousins.

It feels like a case of classic NIMBYism, “not in my backyard.” Well, this backyard grows much of the food that city people, and indeed the world, rely on.

I urge the Committee to think carefully before allowing this proposal to proceed. When you sit down to your next meal, please ask yourself:

**What will you be putting on your fork if we destroy the regions that feed us?**

Thank you for considering my submission.

Retired Farmer, Parkes NSW