

**Submission  
No 676**

## **INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES**

**Name:** Mr Shane Trudgett

**Date Received:** 31 October 2025

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SUBMISSION  
INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

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Email:

I oppose the proposed waste-to-energy incinerator. In my submission, I have addressed Term of Reference (j), discussing both the ecological significance of Goobang National Park and the associated biosecurity risks. These are critical issues, and I urge the Committee to consider them in depth. I hope the outcome reflects the best interests of both the community and the environment.

## **(j) any other related matter**

### **Overview - Ecological Significance of Goobang National Park**

Goobang National Park lies directly next to Parkes, NSW, even though the mapped park entrance is 30 km from town, I recommend the committee come and experience just how close it actually is.

Goobang National Park protects one of the largest remaining areas of continuous woodland and forest in Central Western New South Wales. Established as a national park in 1995, it includes a mix of woodlands, ironbark ridgelines, cypress pine stands, and small patches of heath.

These different habitats meet in a transition zone where inland semi-arid species overlap with more eastern, moisture-loving species. This mix supports a high diversity of plants and animals, including many species at the edges of their normal ranges.

The park is especially important as a refuge because much of the surrounding land has been cleared for agriculture, reducing connections between habitats.

Goobang National Park should be clearly considered in any environmental assessments for major industrial or transport projects, such as large combustion facilities or freight corridors. This is because the park contains species and plant communities that are rare or under-represented in New South Wales protected areas and the train tracks run through parts of it. It also supports threatened species and populations at the edge of their range, including some recently rediscovered species. Its rivers, catchments, and overall landscape make it sensitive to changes in water quality and air quality.

Any assessment that could result in emissions, contamination, or increased biosecurity risks should evaluate how these impacts might affect Goobang's vegetation and protected species. Nearby industrial activities, airborne pollutants, or proposed developments (including waste-to-energy facilities or heavy freight routes) could have measurable effects on air quality and ensure it poses no risks to species higher up the food chain.

### **Key ecological values**

1. **Vegetation diversity and representation.** The park contains over 500 recorded plant species across 11 native vegetation communities. Several of these communities are under-represented in NSW's protected area network, making the park regionally significant for conservation of box-gum woodlands, ironbark forests and remnant cypress stands.
2. **Faunal importance and threatened plants and animals recognised as threatened under state or federal law.** Surveys and records document 200+ vertebrate taxa within the park. At the time of the NPWS plan, multiple threatened species were recorded or known to use park habitats (for foraging, breeding or as range-edge refuge). The 2025 rediscovery of

the Pookila (New Holland mouse) within Goobang substantially further inland than earlier records highlights the park's continued importance for species that occur at the boundary of their known habitats and mammals inhabiting the transition zone between inland and coastal ecosystems.

3. **Range-edge and relic populations.** Because Goobang lies at a climatic and floristic transition, it supports species that occur at the western or inland limits of their distributions. These populations are important for genetic diversity and long-term species resilience.
4. **Landscape connectivity & catchment protection.** The park protects headwaters and catchments of the Lachlan/Macquarie/Bogan systems. In a largely cleared agricultural landscape, these protected catchments provide hydrological stability, refuge habitat and stepping stones for species movement.
5. **Cultural heritage & community value.** Goobang contains Aboriginal cultural heritage (Wiradjuri country) and a history of historic forest uses, it is also used extensively for recreation and community science monitoring (e.g. birdwatching, ALA records), strengthening local stewardship.

### Species list – illustrating the park's environmental and biodiversity significance.

#### Vegetation / Plants (representative)

| Common name                     | Scientific name  | Community / Note   |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Yellow Box                      | <i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i>                                 | White-box grassy woodland component; locally significant remnant |
| Blakely's Red Gum               | <i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i>                                   | Woodland species; regionally important                           |
| Red Ironbark                    | <i>Eucalyptus fibrosa</i> (or <i>E. sideroxylon</i> complex) | Ironbark woodland on ridges                                      |
| Mugga Ironbark                  | <i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i> sensu lato                     | Inland ironbark community  |
| Black Cypress Pine              | <i>Callitris endlicheri</i>                                  | Scattered stands; conservation value                             |
| Red Stringybark                 | <i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i>                               | Occurs in upland slopes  |
| Native Heaths & Shrubs          | ( <i>Grevillea</i> spp., <i>Leptospermum</i> spp., etc.)     | Heathland and shrubland communities at range limits              |
| Mat-rush / <i>Lomandra</i> spp. | <i>Lomandra</i> spp.   | Understorey in grassy woodland                                   |
| Wattles                         | <i>Acacia</i> spp.   | Multiple species across communities                              |

|         |                                       |                              |
|---------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sheoaks | <i>Allocasuarina / Casuarina</i> spp. | Locally important components |
|---------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|

### Selected terrestrial fauna (mammals, reptiles, amphibians)

| Common name  | Scientific name                             | Conservation status / Note   |
|--|---|--|
| Pookila / New Holland mouse (recent inland record) | <i>Pseudomys novaehollandiae</i>            | Rediscovered in Goobang (2025) — species of conservation interest; formerly considered range-limited to coastal/southern areas |
| Red-necked wallaby / Bennetts wallaby              | <i>Notamacropus rufogriseus</i>             | Common macropod in woodlands   |
| Eastern Grey Kangaroo                              | <i>Macropus giganteus</i>                   | Common in park and surrounding grazing country   |
| Common brushtail possum                            | <i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>                | Widespread nocturnal arboreal marsupial  |
| Common ringtail possum                             | <i>Pseudocheirus peregrinus</i>             | Woodland specialist where canopy intact  |
| Echidna  | <i>Tachyglossus aculeatus</i>               | Ground forager; widespread   |
| Southern Myotis / bat species (multiple)           | <i>Various</i>                              | Microchiropteran records in roosting habitat (cave/gully habitat)  |
| Various skinks and dragons                         | <i>Ctenotus, Tiliqua, Amphibolurus</i> spp. | Reptile diversity recorded in surveys  |
| Eastern long-necked turtle (near watercourses)     | <i>Chelodina longicollis</i>                | Present in park drainage lines (where permanent water occurs)  |

### Selected birds (notable species & threatened birds)

| Common name           | Scientific name                | Conservation status / Note   |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Glossy Black-Cockatoo | <i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i> | Threatened species recorded in the region; dependent on key she-oak / casuarina food resources |

|                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Superb Parrot                         | <i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>                   | Listed as vulnerable (NSW & EPBC) in parts of range; uses riverine and adjacent box-gum woodland for foraging and nesting |
| Wedge-tailed Eagle                    | <i>Aquila audax</i>                           | Large raptor present over open country and escarpments  |
| Little Lorikeet                       | <i>Parvipsitta pusilla</i>                    | Woodland nectarivore observed in flowering seasons  |
| Red-rumped Parrot                     | <i>Psephotus haematonotus</i>                 | Common inland woodland parrot   |
| Australian Magpie & allied passerines | <i>Cracticus</i> spp.,<br><i>Meliphagidae</i> | Common woodland birds recorded across habitats  |

### Selected invertebrates (examples)

- Native bees and nectar-feeding insects associated with eucalypt and heath communities.
- Butterflies: multiple *Papilionidae/Nymphalidae* records in sunny grassy clearings.

### Selected references

- New South Wales National Parks & Wildlife Service — *Goobang National Park: Plan of Management* (2001);
- Fauna survey: *Fauna survey of Goobang and Nangar National Parks*, (field survey reports, 1997).
- Atlas of Living Australia (ALA). Occurrence records for Goobang National Park (downloaded/consulted to 2024).
- ABC News (2025). Report on rediscovery of Pookila (New Holland mouse) in Goobang National Park.
- ALA home page (data & downloads): <https://www.ala.org.au/> Atlas of Living Australia+2csiro.au+2
- ALA help page for downloading data: <https://support.ala.org.au/support/solutions/articles/6000261718-downloading-ala-data> ALA Support
- NPWS Plan of Management for Goobang National Park (PDF): <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/goobang-national-park-plan-of-management-010132.pdf> environment.nsw.gov.au
- <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-07-12/pookila-new-holland-mouse-rediscovered-goobang-national-park/105517896>

## 2. Biosecurity Risks

The bulk of the waste originates from Sydney, transporting it to a site near Goobang National Park creates biosecurity risks because the materials themselves carry invasive species, pathogens, and contaminants. The combination of transported waste, local handling, and proximity to sensitive ecological areas increases the park's vulnerability.

- Waste handling, transport and processing often increases movement of vehicles, goods, soils and plant/animal materials — which can harbour seeds, pests, pathogens or soil-borne diseases.
- The Biosecurity Act 2015 underlines the need to manage risks of pests, diseases and invasive species to plants, animals and the environment.
- A large facility may become a hub for such movement (e.g., trucks bringing waste in, by-products being transported out) and thereby increase risk of pests/ pathogens entering adjacent ecological areas or facilitated by auxiliary infrastructure.

### 1. Hydrological/catchment impacts & indirect biosecurity stress

- The facility will be near water catchments so there is a risk of contaminated runoff entering waterways, which then feeds into broader catchment systems and ties into a bio-ecological risk chain.
- Altered water quality or increased nutrient loads or contaminants may stress native species, reduce ecosystem resilience, and make the system more vulnerable to pests, diseases or invasive species.

### 2. Reduced ecological resilience leading to higher vulnerability

- When ecosystems are stressed from pollutants, habitat fragmentation, invasive species etc, their resilience to biosecurity threats, pest outbreaks, disease incursions, invasive plants/animals is reduced and its impacts will propagate via air, water, transport networks and may diminish the resilience of the park's species and make biosecurity risks more likely or more harmful.

Goobang supports range-edge populations and species of conservation concern. Those populations are inherently more vulnerable because they are already at ecological limits. Any added stress e.g., contaminant load, invasive species intrusion reduces their margin for survival.

Its catchment, woodland and heath communities are sensitive and somewhat isolated within an agricultural landscape. Disturbance or lowered resilience from external sources raises the stakes.

A facility pose risk if transport vectors (road/freight), airborne emissions or water/groundwater flows link the region. Distance alone does not guarantee isolation.

The transport of waste and ash/residues could pass through or near the National Park, which may act as a stepping-stone into natural areas; agricultural lands often are monitoring frontiers for biosecurity threats. The introduction of pests or pathogens via such pathways could eventually reach or impact the park.

## References

- [https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2015A00061/2016-06-16/2016-06-16/text/original/epub/OEBPS/document 1/document 1.html](https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2015A00061/2016-06-16/2016-06-16/text/original/epub/OEBPS/document%201/document%201.html)  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Australia) *Approved Arrangements: 10.6—Biosecurity waste transport (2025)*. This sets out rules for the transport of biosecurity waste and identifies risk pathways such as soil, plant and animal material associated with waste. <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/before/prepare/aspects-procedures>
- Inspector-General of Biosecurity *Hitchhiker pest and contaminant biosecurity risk management in Australia*. This discusses how contaminants like soil and seeds on transported materials (vehicles, machinery, etc.) pose risk of pest-introduction and establishment. [igb.gov.au](http://igb.gov.au)
- Invasive Insects: Risks and Pathways Project (Australia) This research maps pathways by which invasive insects enter and spread, including via transport of goods/materials. Useful for illustrating risk of pests via transported waste. [invasives.org.au](http://invasives.org.au)
- NSW Department of Primary Industries *Biosecurity Risks* resource page. Describes how pests, diseases and invasive species are major risks to environment/communities, supporting the broader argument of transported-material risks. <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/dpi/climate/climate-vulnerability-assessment/biosecurity-risks2>
- Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry- *Cargo containers: biosecurity aspects and procedures*. While focused on imports, it details how soil, plant and animal matter on transported goods pose risk of exotic pest/disease entry, analogous to movement of waste materials. <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/before/prepare/aspects-procedures>