

**Submission  
No 682**

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

**Name:** Mr Brett Hartin  
**Date Received:** 31 October 2025

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To all concerned,

Re: Parkes “Energy from Waste (EFW)” proposal.

My wife & I have been residents and ratepayers in Parkes for the past 36+ years and remain staunchly in support of ALL levels of Government actively acting in the best interest of its constituents, however I now feel the need to formally express my current level of concern with both the fundamentals of the proposal and the apparent reluctance of government to proactively oppose the EFW proposal on behalf of its constituents past, present & future.

For ease of explanation, I have summarised my assertions and concerns below:

a) Resident Safety concerns.

This is the obvious and appropriately the most prevalent concern being expressed by residents and this is also my primary concern with the proposed development. The current & future safety of all Parkes Shire residents (& the wider region) MUST remain paramount for all and it remains unclear to me how this can ever be satisfied.

Regardless of the level of “spin” that has been present to date and no doubt would increase going forward, the simple question remains IF this new technology is so safe, then WHY is it not simply processed at source - in the immediate vicinity of where the waste is actually created? I suspect that one of the real reasons the waste is not processed in Sydney Metro areas, relates to the fact to do so would risk opposition from likely millions of residents, ratepayers and particularly voters. Parkes appears to have been a location chosen on a sacrificial basis, despite the obvious transport links being in place.

To transport the extreme volume of waste proposed (on an indefinite basis) would no doubt place additional significant infrastructure costs on road and/or rail in conjunction with the increased safety issues associated with the transport volumes, routes and regularity.

I am personally aware of a significant number of families that have already made the decision that should this development be approved; they will immediately seek to relocate from Parkes (their long-time home town) to a more environmentally friendly location well clear of any proposed “incinerators” of a similar nature. These families represent varied demographics including retirees, current long-term employees and other family units also with school age children – placing additional pressure on our local schools in maintaining numbers.

Should the proposal proceed, sadly, my family would also be joining the exodus from the Parkes region after spending 36+ years in a town we considered home.

Further, a recent survey has highlighted the loss of medical professionals/staff in the exodus when it is already hard enough to get an appointment or hours waiting in ED. Survey showed 42 health and aged care workers plan on leaving.

I would also refer to the NSW Government's Independent Planning Commission's report & determination dated 19th July 2018 (SSD 6236) where the EFW proposal for Eastern Creek was rejected. This determination (point 150) included a statement that "The Department noted in its Assessment Report that the project has received opposition from NSW Health and the EPA. NSW Health has advised the Department that it is unable to support the project as it is unable to determine the proposed facility's actual or potential impact on human health". I would expect that when the State Government's own Health Department has safety concerns and did not support such an EFW proposal at Eastern Creek – that the proposal should be rejected.

Again, IF the proposed technology is so "safe" then why transport it away from processing at the source of creation at all?

#### b) Economic & Logistical feasibility

While I understand that land resources are available at reduced cost in regional areas when compared to Sydney (or nearby) in acquiring the necessary land area to construct/manage the incinerator plant, I can't understand the economic business case when this increased cost would be a single "one-off" cost, rather than embed an indefinite cost of transporting the waste from the Sydney Metro region to Parkes at a reported cost of circa \$60 million annually.

I have previously mentioned, however would again stress the aspect also related to the significantly increased safety issues associated with transporting such a large volume of heavy waste freight across a significant distance and on a very regular basis. This would impact not only be for our direct region, but also every other location the freight passes through.

It has been stated that the proposal would likely see around 50 permanent employment positions created after construction and I assume that a significant portion of these would be sourced locally, however I personally know of more than 50 current employees that would be leaving the region, resulting in an immediate negative employment position?

#### c) Parkes' reputational impact

Parkes has always enjoyed a strong regional reputation as a friendly, sporting and community-based town due to community support and PSC's development of facilities and greenspaces. Such initiatives as the Elvis Festival, our well known "Dish", the recently highlighted pristine nature of Goobang National Park and more recently even, success as a "Tidy Town" award recipient. We all know that regardless of any positive "spin" that will no doubt be provided by the Waste to Energy project proponents, "perceptions" remain key to people's decisions and with this in mind I fear that all of the good work over years to date will definitely be negated by the proposed development.

The new Newell Highway "Parkes Bypass" facility would be well used, as attracting visitors to stop in Parkes will become increasingly difficult as Parkes becomes labelled as "Sydney's Incinerator Town" (or something similar), ensuring that visitors do in fact "bypass Parkes" at every opportunity on their travels. The previously successful events such as the Elvis Festival and numerous statewide sporting events will be negatively impacted and the recently promoted

Goobang National Park avoided due to a reputation of potential environmental risk associated with the proposed “incinerator”.

From a business perspective, I know from direct experience as a Senior Executive in the finance industry for 30+ years, that many regional employers already experience significant issues when seeking to recruit for specialised roles within their business. Unfortunately, developments such as the EFW proposal would further inhibit business’ ability to recruit where relocation to “Parkes” is required.

#### d) Property Value Impacts

It is anticipated that both residential, rural/farming and commercial property values will reduce during the project consideration process and IF the project proceeds – fall even further. I am personally aware of a number of “Investors” currently in the Parkes market, that have indicated they will change their investment strategies now to seek alternate regional locations to invest in a more stable and environmentally attractive market, thus avoiding the investment risk presented by the proposed EFW project. In addition, these investors have also indicated they will see to divest in the Parkes market, those investment assets already held here.

I would ask that the committee to consider the proposal and my comments carefully and remind Government that their primary charter is to speak on behalf of their community as elected representatives and to reflect their constituents wishes.

It should be noted that this letter articulates my personal views and has been written after lengthy consideration of the wider implications for the Parkes region.

Regards

Brett Hartin

“A very concerned long-term resident & ratepayer”.