

Submission
No 853

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 25 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Proposed Energy from Waste Facilities in Regional NSW

Personal Details

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Date: 22 October 2025

Confidentiality: I request that my personal details remain confidential, but the submission may be published.

Hearing: I am not willing to give evidence at a hearing.

This submission addresses the Inquiry's Terms of Reference:

- Health impacts (c and d)
- Agricultural impacts (e)
- Emissions (b)
- Alternative waste solutions (i)
- Other related matters (j)

Introduction

As a Parkes resident who's worked and lived here for decades I'm furious about the proposed Energy from Waste incinerator threatening our town. This reckless plan risks poisoning our soil, ruining our farms and disrespecting rural communities by making Parkes Sydney's rubbish dump. Burning unsorted waste is an outdated and dangerous idea and our council's weak response prioritises money over our future. I demand better for our land and people.

Concerns and Evidence

Our farmland is Parkes' lifeblood. We produce wheat, canola and livestock that feed NSW. Incinerators release toxic ash, gases, mercury, cadmium and organic pollutants that contaminate soil and groundwater. I am concerned that this will slash crop yields and livestock health. Our town bore water which is critical for irrigation faces similar risks. Contamination or even its perception could bankrupt our farmers as buyers reject Parkes produce.

Why isn't this incinerator in Sydney? The state's urban areas don't have these facilities due to health and environmental concerns yet Parkes is targeted to process 1 million tonnes of Sydney's unsorted waste annually. This insults country people who sustain cities with food and resources. The environmental toll of rail transport from diesel emissions and potential issues further harms our region. It's a disgrace that rural towns are forced to bear Sydney's burden.

Burning unsorted rubbish including plastics, is a dangerous step backward. We've known since the 1990s that incinerating modern packaging releases toxic compounds and microplastics into the air. Australia's own Matraville incinerator in Sydney was shut down in 1997 after dioxin leaks so why revive this failed approach in Parkes when it was withdrawn from reopening in Matraville in 2022? (1)

I'm appalled by our council's ineffectiveness. Some councillors seem lured by short term financial gains to fix budget woes while ignoring long term devastation. We have had no public vote on the incinerator and land sale discussions hidden from residents. This secrecy fuels distrust and weakens our community's voice.

This proposal is irresponsibly risky. Without guaranteed safety measures, it threatens our environment, water table and food production. Globally incineration is declining. Europe is closing or no longer funding incinerators as countries like Sweden shift to zero waste systems. Australia's Kwinana facility, plagued by

\$200 million in cost overruns, shows these projects fail economically and environmentally (2). No other country is building new incinerators as a “solution” so why us?

There are better ways to manage waste such as advanced recycling and corporations producing plastic packaging (responsible for 40% of Australia’s waste) must be held accountable through extended producer responsibility schemes, not rural towns like ours. **Parkes shouldn’t pay for their mess.**

Recommendations

I urge the Committee to halt the Parkes EfW incinerator to safeguard our land, farms and dignity.

Instead:

- Prioritise land preserving waste solutions like advanced sorting to recover materials safely.
- Mandate schemes to force packaging companies to fund and innovate waste reduction.
- Reform council governance to ensure public votes on major projects and transparent land dealings.
- Conduct independent soil and water testing before any EfW approval with results shared publicly.
- Reject rural exemptions for waste facilities, ensuring no town becomes a dumping ground.

Closing Statement

Parkes’ clean soil and proud farming heritage are not Sydney’s landfill. This dangerous and outdated incinerator insults our community and risks our future. Stop this reckless plan and invest in modern and safe waste solutions that respect country people.

Signed,

Parkes, NSW

References

1. The Maroubra News (2022)
<https://maroubranews.com.au/controversial-matraville-incinerator-proposal-officially-withdrawn/>
2. The West Australian: Kwinana EfW Cost Overruns
<https://www.watoday.com.au/business/companies/court-rejects-covid-excuse-for-delay-on-700-million-kwinana-waste-plant-20221114-p5by7z.html>