

MINUTES

DETERMINATION OF EASTERN CREEK ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITY

IPCN PUBLIC MEETING

ROOTY HILL RSL, 55 SHERBROOKE STREET, ROOTY HILL

14 MAY 2018 AT 11.00AM

ATTENDANCE

The Commission

Commission Members: Robyn Kruk AM (Chair), Peter Duncan AM, Tony Pearson

Commission Secretariat: Matthew Todd-Jones (Senior Planning Officer), David Koppers (Team Leader)

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING IS FOR THE COMMISSION TO HEAR VIEWS ON THE PROPOSED PROJECT.

THE COMMISSION RECEIVED LATE APPLICATIONS TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC MEETING. THE CHAIR OF THE PANEL PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THESE PEOPLE TO SPEAK BUT THEY WERE NOT IN ATTENDANCE. THE CHAIR OF THE PANEL ALSO EXERCISED HER DISCRETION TO:

- PERMIT THE SUBSTITUTION OF SPEAKERS;
- GRANT ADDITIONAL TIME FOR A SPEAKER AT THE PUBLIC MEETING; AND
- GRANT A LATE APPLICATION TO SPEAK.

THE FOLLOWING MATTERS WERE RAISED THROUGH VERBAL SUBMISSIONS AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS (WHICH CAN BE VIEWED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE). THE APPLICANT PROVIDED A PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC MEETING AND INFORMED THE COMMISSION OF THEIR INTENTION TO PROVIDE A FORMAL RESPONSE ADDRESSING THEIR KEY MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION.

THE COMMISSION NOTES THAT MANY OF THE ISSUES RAISED THROUGH VERBAL COMMENTS ARE CONTESTED BY VARIOUS PARTIES, AND THEREFORE SOME COMMENTS MAY READ AS BEING INCONSISTENT WITH OTHER COMMENTS RECORDED IN THE MINUTES.

A FULL TRANSCRIPT OF THE PUBLIC MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE.

Project Operation

Speakers said broadly in relation to this issue:

- HZI will be responsible for the facility's operation, maintenance and management.
- The proposal will have no visual plume from the stack.
- The scale of the proposal is commercially viable and there is enough waste in NSW bring to the site.
- Any exceedance in emission limits would initiate the automatic shutdown of the proposed facility over four hours.

- There is not enough suitable waste in Sydney to fuel the proposed incinerator.
- Applicant asserted that waste sorting processes at the proposed facility are designed to prevent recyclable materials being incinerated.
- There is potential for hazardous material to be incinerated by the proposed facility.
- Machinery performance guarantees have not been provided by the applicant.
- Extreme heat days in Sydney in the next 10 to 15 years will almost double. The proposed facility would have to reduce operations or shut down on these days.
- The proposal is inconsistent with the Environment Protection Authority's Energy from Waste Policy Statement.
- Cannibalisation from the waste recovery hierarchy.
- The applicant asserted that varying waste streams can be treated by the proposed facility and any emissions adequately dealt with by its proposed air purifiers.

Air Quality

Speakers said broadly in relation to this issue:

- The facility's emissions plume would travel up to 40 kilometres from the proposed site.
- There is currently limited air pollution monitoring in Western Sydney and there are questions over how the impact of the proposed project on air quality levels could be accurately assessed without a relevant baseline.
- Fine particle concentrations in Western Sydney have exceeded the national standard for a 24-hour average concentration. Concentrations in Richmond are 4 times the national average standard.
- There are currently no world class air quality standards in NSW. The current standards need to be rewritten and regulations should be introduced before any proposals of this nature are considered.
- Sydney has only experienced 63 good air quality days this year.
- Western Sydney suffers from temperature inversions that prevent pollutants escaping the area.
- The incinerator fails to meet the basic principles of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Human Health

Speakers said broadly in relation to this issue:

- The project has the potential to impact on human health through its emissions, which could lead to, among others, chronic cardiac and respiratory diseases.
- Small particulates can be inhaled and eventually get into the bloodstream. These small-sized particles kill more people each year than car accidents.
- Admissions for respiratory conditions in 2010-11 were 3-4 times higher at Mt Druitt hospital than at Royal North Shore and Royal Prince Alfred hospitals.
- There is no certainty of pollutant emissions from the facility.
- The proposal would create dioxins and furans as a by-product, which are highly toxic and cancer-causing chemicals, and would be released into the air. These chemicals cannot be destroyed and at best can only be captured by filters. There is no safe level of exposure to these chemicals.
- Ash and filters would become toxic by-products of the proposed process.
- There have been changes to the applicant's emissions data over time without any explanation.
- There are houses and a school located 800 metres from the proposed facility.
- The nearby Prospect reservoir could be contaminated by toxic waste from emissions.
- The applicant's application states that emissions can harm human health.
- Public organisations are not confident that public safety can be ensured. This cannot be ensured until there is an effective regulatory and enforcement environment in place.
- The true impacts of the proposed facility wouldn't be known until after it has been built.

- Applicant's human health risk assessment is predicated on, what it regards as, conservative assumptions.

Community consultation

Speakers said broadly in relation to this issue:

- There has been poor community consultation from the applicant, and not enough notification.
- The applicant stated that it has undertaken extensive community consultation.
- In a survey undertaken by the community group No Incinerator for Western Sydney, 72.5% of respondents did not know about the project until February/March 2017.
- There is no trust in the applicant, who has not obtained any social license to operate.
- There was a 12,000-signature petition against the proposal, which led to a parliamentary enquiry that recommended refusal for the proposed project.
- The local communities are distressed and fearful of the proposal.
- Local community groups have not been approached by the applicant.

Other matters

Speakers raised other matters broadly in relation to:

- The reuse and recycling of waste should be considered before incineration. There should also be the reuse of housing stock rather than its demolition.
- The applicant stated that the Department of Planning and Environment has misinterpreted and misapplied the NSW Energy from Waste Policy, and will provide the Commission with further information on their position with regards to this matter.
- There would be a cumulative impact from the proposed facility when taken together with existing pollution levels in Western Sydney.
- Waste infrastructure should be given the same foresight in strategic plans as other types of infrastructure.
- There is no strategic planning document that outlines the waste infrastructure needs of Sydney.
- The applicant has not provided information of what would happen in the event of a catastrophic failure of the filtration system.
- What would be the impact of the proposed facility on nearby food distribution centres?
- Property prices would be severely affected by the proposal.
- The proposal's stacks would be visible from the Parramatta CBD.
- The applicant does not demonstrate competence and relevant experience. Consideration of whether the applicant is "a fit and proper person" is required under Section 83 of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act in NSW.

MEETING CLOSED AT 3.15PM