



**Gundaroo Community
Association Inc.**

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Name: Gundaroo Community Association

Address: 56 Morning St, Gundaroo NSW 2620

Project: Woodlawn ARC: SSD-21184278

Position on the Project: OBJECT (*see the case for this position in the attached page*).

Declaration: Gundaroo Community Association has made NO reportable political donations in the past two years.

Acknowledgement: Gundaroo Community Association acknowledges and accepts the NSW Planning Department's disclaimer and declaration.

Case for Objection:

Gundaroo is a village in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, with a population of 1200 (including surrounds, ABS Population Census 2016), and is in the Yass Valley Council area. It is 17 kilometres west of the Woodlawn Veolia site at Lake George/Tarago and about 35 kilometres north of Canberra. It is a unique village with most public spaces managed by the community, including the village Common, a 68-hectare grassland containing threatened species of flora and fauna. The village is also the home of McLeod's Creek Nature Reserve, a 204-hectare area of rare remnant box gum woodland. Surrounding the village are many small farms and businesses which provide 'clean & green' food, wine and horticultural goods for Canberra including fruit, eggs, meat, and flowers. The village is a popular short-stay tourist destination for Sydney with several cool climate wineries nearby, as well as popular eateries such as Grazing and the Cork St Cafe, and there are at least three wedding venue businesses.

The Gundaroo Community Association (GCA) was established as an informal community organisation in the 1970s. It became formally incorporated in July 1999 under the NSW Associations Act 1984. For almost 40 years, the GCA has provided an open forum in which the greater Gundaroo village community could come to discuss issues of interest to the community. The GCA is viewed as a point of contact with the Gundaroo community. Groups and bodies such as the Yass Valley Council will often refer matters which are of interest to the community, or which are subject to consultation with the GCA. In turn, and guided by its objective, the GCA has viewed an important part of its role as the dissemination of information to the community and provision of a vehicle through which matters of community concern could be heard.

It is because of the nature of Gundaroo, its businesses, its precious natural surrounding resources, and more, that the GCA strongly rejects Veolia's proposal to extend its operations at Woodlawn to burning many hundreds of thousands of tonnes of Sydney's waste.

Woodlawn Eco Precinct is already disposing of large amounts of Sydney waste and is already recovering energy from this waste. Gundaroo does not want more Sydney waste coming to the area, and it certainly does not want the risk of toxic ash polluting its air and surrounding landscape. Gundaroo already tolerates odours from the waste site during spring and summer when coastal easterly winds rise in the village and surrounds in the evening. The company

states that it has dealt with these odours by installing additional aerators in its waste ponds, however, the odours are still evident, as recently as this week. Because of the continuing issues with odour across the village, the GCA does not trust Veolia to undertake an even more potentially threatening process of incinerating Sydney's waste.

The potential for toxic ash from the incinerator to reach Gundaroo and surrounds, because of the summer easterlies, is very real. There is no mains water supply in this area, we rely on rainwater capture which is stored in our own tanks. If there is even one event of this toxic ash accidentally escaping and blowing over Gundaroo everyone's water supplies will be affected.

The expected continued expansion of ACT into NSW, specifically north of Gungahlin to places like Gundaroo means that in the longer term even more people will be exposed to this toxic ash. As the population grows in the area so will tourism, but Sydney siders are not going to want to come to this part of the Southern Tableland if they know this is where their city's waste is dumped and incinerated - they will go elsewhere.

It does not make sense to allow Veolia to invest in infrastructure to deal with waste in Tarago when the NSW government and the ACT government both rejected similar proposals (ACT Waste to energy policy, 2020-25; NSW Energy from Waste Infrastructure Plan 2021) because of threats to health and the environment.

The GCA does not buy the idea that waste incineration is 'recycling' and believes that there is a lot of green 'washing' of a system that is in fact polluting and that will have long term affects for the region in which we live. There is plenty of evidence that supports this in peer reviewed papers such as:

- . The health impacts of waste incineration: a systematic review, Tait et al. Australian & NZ Journal of Public Health, 2020.

- . Waste: Energy from Waste. London Assembly Environment Committee, February 2018.

We are concerned that a lot of what will be incinerated could, in fact, be recycled and remain in the 'circular' economy, not turned to concentrated toxic waste. Sydney should be recycling everything it can IN Sydney.

Waste to energy technology such as in this proposal in some ways encourages waste because the company, having invested in incinerator technologies & infrastructure will require a certain volume of waste to make it viable into the long-term future. This is a disincentive and a contradiction to NSW government longer term goals to reduce recyclable waste in the materials industry. It sends a message to the Sydney community that their waste is "ok", being "dealt with", and out of sight and out of mind. They are being sold an outdated mindset to deal with their waste by simply 'exporting' their problem elsewhere. Now that exporting our waste overseas is being halted it seems the NSW government is looking closer to home to 'export' Sydney's waste. Gundaroo says a firm 'no' to this.

Lastly, what does Gundaroo and surrounds get from this incinerator? We don't need jobs, so that economic 'pro' does not apply to us. We do, however, have a thriving tourism, agricultural & niche food production economy that relies on clean air and soil. Gundaroo will not receive any benefits from this proposal, and so rejects the proposal strongly.

Veolia's incinerator project is not ok at Lake George and Tarago.

Yours sincerely

Moraig McKenna (President)

Gundaroo Community Association Inc.