

My name is Hazel Maryann Brooke and I object to the Woodlawn Advanced Energy Recovery Centre Project Application No SSD-21184378 for the following reasons:

1. The proposed incinerator will emit toxic air pollution over a wide region, including where I live at Boro NSW 2622. This has the potential to affect the air I breathe, the quality of the water I drink and thus every aspect of my life and the lives of future generations through the accumulation of chemicals in the surrounding environment. The pollution in the air will be there every day that the facility is operating. Not only will it be injurious to the health of local people and animals, but it will impact on the value of our land and assets.
2. The NSW Government Chief Scientist and Engineer in his 2022 report to the NSW Minister for Environment concluded that “there is insufficient evidence to conclude that any incinerator is safe” and in particular “contamination of food and ingestion of pollutants is a significant risk pathway for both nearby and distant residents”. The proposed incinerator will exceed NSW government safety standards for air emissions during start-up, shutdown, and many other ‘non-standard’ operating conditions. As a local resident am aware Veolia has already had difficulties complying with license conditions at their existing Woodlawn facility.
3. Incineration is incompatible with the concept of the circular economy. It creates a disincentive to recycling by locking local councils into long-term contracts to supply consistent volumes of waste for incineration over decades. By burning waste, incinerators simply replace municipal/commercial/industrial waste with contaminated ash. The incinerator proposal is estimated to create 2.2million tonnes of toxic waste ash, including 380,000 tonnes of air pollution control residue (fly ash) which is classified as hazardous waste by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). This waste will be dumped on site, greatly increasing the risk of further contamination of soil and groundwater in the area as well as in the Sydney water catchment.
4. I strongly object to characterizing waste incineration as renewable energy generation. The source of the energy generated is not from renewable resources but from the incineration of waste products largely derived from fossil fuels. Burning these products is the same as burning fossil fuels and produces similar emissions. This incinerator will contribute to climate change by emitting 140,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub>) each year. To approve the project is inconsistent with the NSW government commitment to net zero emissions by 2030.
5. The project is unnecessary. Tarago already hosts the Woodlawn landfill and bioreactor, which has a remaining useful life of 25 years. The NSW Government is introducing policies that will reduce waste, extending that life even longer. There is no need to divert one-third of waste received by Veolia in Tarago to an incinerator which will pollute the region when there is sufficient capacity in their existing landfill. Veolia’s claim that incineration is better than landfill due to methane emissions ignores the fact that the methane produced from landfill operation is captured, preventing it from entering the atmosphere. The methane is used to generate power which is pumped into the grid – a much better result for the environment.

I have not made any reportable political declarations in the past two years.

I accept the Department’s disclaimer and declaration.