

From: Muir via Colong Foundation <info@colongwilderness.org.au>
Sent: Thursday, 23 January 2020 12:42 PM
To: Sally Munk
Subject: Submission opposing Mount Piper Energy Recovery Project

Ms Sally Munk
Principal Environmental Planner
Industry Assessments
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Munk,

I object to the proposed “energy recovery project” (recyclable materials burning) at Mt Piper Power Plant, State Significant Development (SSD-8294). This proposal will have negative impacts upon people’s health, local communities and be a major emitter of greenhouse gases. Toxic ash and gasses produced from this incinerator are likely to poison the air and water ways, impacting both the Blue Mountains and Sydney. It is not a green energy project, as waste burning facilities produce far more carbon dioxide per unit of energy generated than coal, oil or gas fired power stations, in addition to destroying resources that should be reused, such as plastics and paper.

Incineration produces ash that contains toxins and dangerous gas emissions that have health risks. Ash from burning waste is toxic and must be disposed of as intractable waste, in this case in a lined cell. The location of the proposed plant next to Mt Piper Power Plant poses a risk to the Cocks River catchment and its use as a source of raw source of drinking water for Sydney.

The most energy-rich waste products, such as plastic and paper, should be recycled, not burnt. The establishment of waste incineration technologies will result in a reduction in Sydney’s recycling as plastic bags are burnt instead of not being produced at all or recycled. The proposal entrenches a wasteful society and is a step in the wrong direction if Australia is to adapt and thrive in the 21st century.

The proposal will be in contravention of the Stockholm Convention (which Australia is a signatory to) as it will generate air emissions that include highly toxic and carcinogenic persistent organic pollutants. The Stockholm Convention specifies those Persistent Organic Pollutants whose production should be avoided or terminated which includes the highly toxic compounds such as dioxins, furans and toxic metals that are by-products of the incineration process. They are carcinogenic in humans (Stockholm Convention, 2008). Persistent organic pollutants from this proposed facility will contaminate the airshed, which will drift over the Blue Mountains and, in some circumstances, reside in the Sydney Basin. These contaminants will also pollute Sydney’s water supply catchment and build up over an extended period.

A large fleet of rubbish trucks will be used to transport waste to this plant, which will cause great disruption and negatively impact the Blue Mountains community. Deliveries of smelly loads of rubbish, by large and noisy trucks, will likely occur during the early morning and afternoon (end of school day), causing maximum traffic disturbance. It will alter the atmosphere of the towns within the mountains and will impact negatively on the Great Western Highway and the Bells Line of Road.

The proponents have tried to reframe their arguments for its waste burning technology to present themselves as ‘green energy’ generators that combat climate change. In fact this is a costly proposal to operate that seeks to pick up financial subsidies for green energy and appear benign. The language used does not change the facts of the proposal. It is a recyclable material burning project, not a ‘green’ project.'

This proposal must be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Muir
61 Egan Street
Newtown New South Wales 2042
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