

Cleanaway's Proposed Processing & Co-generation Plant should NOT be allowed

SUMMARY

1. Cleanaway Operations Ltd and Macquarie Capital are proposing to build a processing facility and waste incinerator at Eastern Creek, burning solid materials collected from a range of disposed domestic and industrial materials, to produce electricity.
2. The major driving factor for this project is undoubtedly the Australian Government's legislation banning the export of our recycled plastics and while it may reduce the need to export recycled plastics, the emissions from the incineration of these plastics and other solid waste will cause severe, long-term impacts to the environment and to the health of residents living in the Greater Sydney area. This is not an acceptable trade-off.

MY REASONS FOR OBJECTION

1. The incineration of waste creates highly toxic ash, contaminated filter carbon and range of pollutants which accumulate in the environment, food chain and people, can't be treated or recycled and must be contained in a hazardous waste landfill forever. Any PPE or other consumables used during maintenance activities would also have to be treated as hazardous waste. In short what is proposed is "dumb engineering".
2. What is proposed has major adverse health implications. Incineration of waste creates dust particles which are less than 2.5 microns in size that can't be filtered out of the stack gases. These PM2.5 particles can carry toxic pollutants which, when inhaled, can lodge in the lungs and then migrate into the blood stream causing cancer and a range of other serious health effects.
3. Today Blacktown is not just a commercial and manufacturing hub, but a highly urbanised area with large numbers of residents living within 5km of Cleanaway's proposed waste processing plant and as such this represents a serious long-term health risk to all residents living in Blacktown City and the Greater Sydney area generally.
4. This proposal will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Every tonne of mixed waste burnt produces approximately 1.5 tonnes of greenhouse gases. The bulk of greenhouse gas emissions are created from rotting organic material which will not be recovered by Cleanaway's process.
5. There is a viable, sustainable alternative which provides a win-win solution for the environment, jobs, the health of Sydney residents and solves the waste issue. The NSW government needs to adopt a Zero Waste policy. This will promote a robust recovery and recycling industry creating a circular economy and a range of manufacturing and service industries able to provide thousands of skilled, permanent employment opportunities across all sectors of the NSW economy. Promoting a circular economy is a viable alternative to the use of incineration to manage waste throughout Greater Sydney and NSW.
6. The incineration of waste represents the greatest threat to the creation of a sustainable, circular economy in NSW and a move back to the past where air pollution in the Sydney basin will inevitably become much worse, causing the adverse environmental and human health impacts that successive NSW governments have worked so hard, for so many years, to reverse.

On a personal level, I do not want my family now or in the future to have to live a world with so many pollutants and health risks. Sydney is expanding and areas that were once industrial are now residential and communities should not have to suffer because of industry costs controls.

Spencer Harrop