

Purpose of this document

This document summarises the Works Approval application submitted for the proposed Prospect Hill Energy from Waste (EfW) facility. Works Approval from the Victorian Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is required for the project to proceed.

The Energy from Waste (EfW) facility.

Prospect Hill International Pty Ltd is proposing to develop an EfW Plant in Lara near Geelong, Victoria. Every year, this project would divert approximately 400,000 tonnes of waste from landfill. It would also generate approximately 35 megawatts of electricity which would be fed into the grid, enough energy to power up to 50,000 homes.

The project aligns with Victorian Government waste policy. This policy supports energy from waste as a transition solution to reducing the use of landfill and allowing energy to be generated from materials that cannot be recycled. It would also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with a net reduction of approximately 300,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent emissions each year.

Importantly, for the Lara community, the facility would create hundreds of jobs during construction and approximately 30 ongoing roles for the life of the facility.

Meeting the highest global standard

The facility is designed to meet European standards for EfW, the highest in the world. It would also meet all relevant EPA State Environment Protection Policies.

For the design this means:

- Integration of technologies to control odour emissions
- Facility monitoring that meet National Association of Testing Authorities and Monitoring Certification Scheme requirements
- Technologies to control gas recirculation and an enhanced gas treatment system
- Increased energy efficiency
- Measurement and pursuit of further landfill diversion opportunities

Community engagement

Community engagement is and continues to be a critical part of the project. Engagement undertaken to date raised awareness of the project in the local community and gave people an opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback and raise concerns.

An introductory fact sheet and cover letter were distributed via Australia Post to all local residential and commercial properties in July 2020. The cover letter introduced the project and included an invitation to an information session. The fact sheet provided a high-level project summary, indicative project timelines, information about project rationale and benefits, introductory information about EfW, and project contact details.

The information session was held online due to COVID-19 requirements; however, it proved a valuable forum for feedback. Questions and feedback received in the session fell into the following themes:

- Technology proposed for the plant

- The site selection process
- Air emissions, including modelling, prevailing winds, emissions and pollutants
- Information about Prospect Hill International
- Logistics required for the running of the plant
- How waste can be turned into energy

Results of the technical investigations

Waste feedstock

The facility plans to divert 400,000 tonnes of household and commercial waste from landfills. The waste feedstock would be sourced from a number of Victorian councils, with a preference for that from the Geelong, Surf Coast and Bellarine areas. The waste feedstock would exclude all material used within existing recycling programs.

A range of measures would be used to monitor the quality and type of waste delivered to site, including:

- Number plate recognition software to track incoming and outgoing vehicles
- Random waste delivery audits for quality control
- Inspection for waste contamination. Where suspected hazardous waste is found it will be removed from the feedstock and stored correctly

Operational wastes

The facility would generate bottom ash, boiler ash and air pollution control residues. These would be disposed of at suitably licenced landfill. However, the facility will seek opportunities to safely reuse these materials to further reduce its environmental footprint.

Greenhouse gas

The greenhouse gas emissions for the project were assessed in accordance with the Protocol for Environmental Management. The construction of the project is expected to produce 25,538 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. However, when operational, the project is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 8 million tonnes over 25 years.

Air quality

The EPA require EfW facilities to meet European Commission standards for emissions. An air quality assessment was undertaken to confirm whether the EfW facility would meet these standards. The air quality assessment found that the proposed EfW facility would meet these standards.

Noise

An acoustic impact assessment impact assessment was also undertaken. It found that the proposed EfW facility would comply with the existing requirements through the use of several on site mitigation measures.

Health

A Human Health Risk Assessment was conducted in accordance with national guidelines available from the 2017 Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation. The assessment found that the project would have a

negligible impact on community health, with one exception. The assessment identified a positive health impact associated with the employment opportunities with the facility.

Conclusion

The proposed EfW facility will create local skilled jobs while providing a better outcome for the environment by diverting waste from landfill. It will also provide improved energy security for all Victorian's by generating approximately 35 megawatts of baseload electricity, enough energy to power up to 50,000 homes.

The facility is designed to meet the highest global standards and all relevant EPA requirements. Importantly, it is also designed with proven air and noise emissions control technology as well as advanced odour control systems to avoid amenity impacts on the Lara community.

The assessments undertaken demonstrate that the facility would be appropriately located in the Lara industrial precinct and can effectively operate with minimal environmental and social impacts.