

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Petition Number: 716
Petition Sponsored by: David Ettershank
Directed to: Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP
Tabled on: 2/12/2025
Petition Grievance:

The Petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council that the proposed construction of a waste incinerator in Sunbury is causing great concern among local residents. Sunbury has repeatedly been treated as a dumping ground for metropolitan waste projects.

There are unaddressed concerns about increased air pollution, an incinerator's impact on local ecosystems, and the introduction of more than 700 additional heavy trucks per day on roads that are already congested, exacerbating safety and quality of life issues. The proposed site will also be adjoining housing and a future town centre according to the Hume Integrated Growth Area Plans.

HiQ, has previously been fined by the EPA for 13 offences or contraventions, calling into question HiQ's ability to ensure the incinerator is operated in a safe or compliant way. The risks to public health, and the environment, posed by the proposed waste-to-energy incinerator have alarmed residents.

Petition Action:

The Petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council of Victoria: Calls on the Minister for Planning to immediately halt any approval or progress towards building a waste incinerator in Sunbury, until the Economy and Infrastructure Committee inquiry into Waste to Energy is complete.

Reply:

I understand the community holds concerns about the proposed waste-to-energy facility in Sunbury. I am advised by the Department of Transport and Planning that an application has not yet been submitted for the proposed facility. If an application for this project is submitted, I encourage all potentially affected community members to engage in the planning process and make their views on the proposal known.

If a planning permit application is submitted to me as the responsible authority, I will be required to consider the application in line with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. This assessment process would include referral to relevant government authorities, consultation with Hume City Council, public notice and opportunity for public submissions. Key elements of the assessment would consider relevant state and local policies contained in the Hume Planning Scheme together with environmental, economic, social and relevant technical considerations.

In addition to requirements under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the proposal would also require approval of a development licence under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* from the Environment Protection Authority. Development licence applications primarily include scientific assessment of potential risks to human health and the environment from matters such as pollution, waste, air quality and odour.

The submission period for the Economy and Infrastructure Committee's Inquiry into waste-to-energy infrastructure closed on 27 March 2026, with its report due in August 2026. Pending the Inquiry's outcomes and the Government's response, projects must continue to be assessed under the existing legislative framework.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SK', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning

20/4/2026