



# Waimate District Council

## *Office of the Mayor*

12 November 2024

Minister of Infrastructure and the RMA Reform Hon Chris Bishop,

[Chris.Bishop@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Chris.Bishop@parliament.govt.nz)

Minister of Regional Development Minister Hon Shane Jones [Shane.Jones@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Shane.Jones@parliament.govt.nz)

Minister Energy, Transport and Local Government Hon Simeon Brown

[Simeon.Brown@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Simeon.Brown@parliament.govt.nz)

Waitaki MP Miles Anderson [waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz)

Rangitata MP James Meager [James.MeagerMP@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:James.MeagerMP@parliament.govt.nz)

Dear Sirs

### **REMOVAL OF 'PROJECT KEA' FROM THE FAST TRACK BILL'S "LISTED PROJECTS"**

Waimate District Council (WDC) writes to express our collective opposition, on behalf of our community, to the approval and construction of the South Island Resource Recovery Limited, Project Kea waste-to-energy (WTE) plant within our district.

WDC seeks that Government remove the WTE plant from the Fast Track Approvals Bill's 'listed projects' which are to be referred directly to an expert panel.

WDC and the wider community holds significant concerns regarding the environmental, health, and economic implications of this proposal.

As you will have been informed, Waimate District Council and Environment Canterbury made a successful request to the Minister for the Environment to 'call-in' Project Kea. The current proposal is with the EPA prior to being referred to the Environment Court.

WDC is concerned that the assessment of environmental effects is inadequate given the scale and significance of the effects on the environment. As the original application pointed out, the proposed energy from waste plant would be the first of its kind in New Zealand.

Accordingly, the WTE therefore involves many technologies which have never been tested in this country, or assessed in the context of our environment, particularly the discharges to air.

The Council and community considers sufficient information essential to understanding the effects of the project.

Originally the applicant committed to fully engage and consult with the community, which has not transpired.

Without confidence that the Fast Track Approvals Process will address the significant information gaps present in the original application, we cannot support the proposal.

**Our specific concerns are:**

**Environmental:**

**Air Pollution:** WTE plants release various pollutants, including particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and potentially harmful dioxins and furans, which can harm the environment and public health.

**Water Pollution:** Leachate, stormwater, and wastewater generated by the plant could pose risks of contaminating groundwater and surrounding waterways.

**Health:**

**Exposure to Pollutants:** Residents living near the plant (milk factory, Glenavy community and school) may be exposed to air pollutants that can exacerbate respiratory conditions and increase the risk of various health problems.

**Long-term Health Impacts:** The potential long-term health consequences of exposure to pollutants released by WTE plants are not fully understood in New Zealand.

**Economic:**

**Limited Economic Benefit:** WTE plants do not create significant local employment opportunities and may have negative impacts on existing waste management businesses.

**Heavy vehicle movements:** With an anticipated increase in truck movements of 10% they will exert significant stress on road infrastructure that is already subject to accelerated wear and tear.

**Unclear project economics:** WTE will have to compete with landfill disposal. In the event that the project is unsuccessful, site cleanup and decommissioning will impose a significant burden (likely on rate payer funds). Alternatively, our community will be left with the consequences of a large scale unmanaged industrial site.

**Insufficient assessment of alternatives: Waste Reduction Focus:** We believe that the focus should be on reducing waste generation through recycling, composting, and waste minimisation strategies. WTE facilities can discourage these efforts.

**Circular Economy Alternatives:** We advocate for investments in sustainable waste management solutions that create more jobs and contribute to a circular economy.

We look forward to your prompt response.

I am, of course, available to discuss the contents of this letter with you, and if you require any further information your office can contact Council Chief Executive Stuart Duncan at [stuart.duncan@waimatedc.govt.nz](mailto:stuart.duncan@waimatedc.govt.nz).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rowley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a small flourish at the end.

Craig Rowley

**Mayor**

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