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7 February 2024

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Penny Simmonds – Minister for the Environment
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Wellington 6160

Email: penny.simmonds@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Minister

Request For Call In of Resource Consent Application Under Section 142(2) of the RMA - Global Contracting Solutions Ltd - Waste Incineration Plant

I write to you on behalf of Waipā District Council (Waipā) to request you make a direction under Section 142(2) of the RMA, to call in the resource consent applications lodged by Global Contracting Solutions Ltd (GCS) for a waste incineration plant proposed in Te Awamutu.

This request supports the same request made of you by Waikato Regional Council (WRC) in December 2023.

In summary, the applicant's proposal will involve the site accepting approximately 480 tonnes of feedstock daily via trucks. The feedstock will include Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), plastic, tyres and car flock. The proposal suggests approximately 15MW of electricity will be generated from the combustion of 400 tonnes of refuse per day, much of that trucked in from outside the district.

Waipā received this resource consent application in December 2021 to construct and operate the plant. GCS has also applied for resource consents from the Waikato Regional Council for discharge of contaminants to air and water. The applications were jointly publicly notified, and the submission period closed on the 13 October 2023 with almost 900 submissions received by each consenting authority. The vast majority of submissions to each consenting authority opposed the plant, and a joint hearing is now being organised.

In December 2023, Waikato Regional Council wrote to you requesting you call in their resource consent application due to concerns the proposal reaches the threshold to be considered of national significance in accordance with various factors listed in Section 142(3) of the RMA. WRC's concerns relate to the potential for emission of greenhouse gas and effects on climate change and their inability to have regard to these effects due to the application being lodged prior to amendments to the RMA allowing such. In addition, WRC believes the proposal is of national significance, in that the development involves technology, processes, or methods new to New Zealand and that may affect its environment.

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Waikato Regional Council liaised directly with Waipā on this issue prior to making their request. Waipā was unable to make the same request at the time due to the different levels of delegation within each organisation. We have now met with the appropriate Council committee which has formally directed staff to make the same request of you.

Given that, and noting Waikato Regional Council's request of December 2023, Waipā also requests you make a direction under Section 142(2) of the RMA, to call in the resource consent application lodged by Global Contracting Solutions (GCS).

Waipā has been working to ensure the local community is well-informed and provided with the most appropriate and accessible path to be involved in this process. The number of submissions, as well as the public protests and discussions held to date, indicate very high levels of interest.

It is our view that any decision-making around this issue must be clear and consistent and that, if possible, there should be only one hearing process undertaken. If not, this has the potential to become both expensive and cumbersome for both councils, for the applicant and for the wider community.

If the Minister agrees to accept the requests from both councils and make a direction to call in this application, Waipā would like to advocate for the Board of Inquiry process. A Board of Inquiry process is less confronting than the Environment Court for our lay-community submitters, is less likely to require lawyers (and their additional cost) for our submitters and it has the potential to be held locally (Te Awamutu being our preference, given 575 submitters advise they wish to be heard).

When Waipā last met with the applicant in December, they did not agree to a request to call in.

The application documents are available using the following link: [Global Contracting Solutions Limited – Waste Incineration Plant | Waipā District Council](#).

If you require any further information or wish to discuss the matters raised, please contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

Wayne Allan

GROUP MANAGER DISTRICT GROWTH & REGULATORY SERVICES