

Experts join fight

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Greater Dandenong Council says it will mount "significant" opposition to a proposed waste-to-energy plant in Dandenong South.

In a public statement, the council stated it engaged experts, lawyers and a specialist barrister to oppose the EPA's works approval in an appeal hearing at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal in February.

A specialist firm was providing technical advice on air quality, noise, vibration, human health and environmental risk, waste classification and handling fly ash, the council stated.

"This is one of the most significant VCAT planning appeals Greater Dandenong has pursued and demonstrates Council's commitment to ensuring the proposal is opposed."

Greater Dandenong had initially sought an extension on VCAT's deadline for submissions. It argued for more time "given the detailed and complex nature of this work".

On 24 September, VCAT ruled against proponent Great Southern Waste Technologies' bid for the appeal to be struck out without a hearing.

The council was granted a time extension until 5 October.

"These are great outcomes and Council's team of experts continues to build as strong a case as it can in arguing for the Works Approval to be set aside by VCAT," the council stated.

The works approval appeal follows VCAT approving a planning permit for the 70 Ordish Road facility on 15 September.

The decision drew sharp criticism from the



Greater Dandenong Council has defended its campaign against a waste-to-energy plant in Ordish Road.

Keysborough-based South East Environmental Group (SEEG).

SEEG president and council election candidate Ramy El-Sukkari claimed the council's case was hindered by tardiness and unprofessionalism.

He said the council's "token gesture" had not to that stage included "scientific and factual evidence".

In its statement after the hearing, the council noted VCAT's comment that the council had only a week to review the EPA works approval before the planning permit matter.

VCAT's reasons focused on the site being appropriately located in an industrial 2 zone and at a safe distance from "sensitive uses".

The tribunal noted that the EPA had no concerns with odour, noise and emissions.

Since November, the project has attracted public outrage, with homes as close as 800 metres from the site.

The site is on the western edge of the "suitable" Industrial 2 zone - a zone that is typically more than 1500 metres from residences.

A coalition of schools, residents and community centres in Keysborough within five kilometres have objected.

The gasification facility with two 55-metre chimneys will process 100,000 tonnes a year of household solid waste, commercial and industrial waste, producing 7.9MW of electricity.

Nearby are a clinical waste incinerator, a resource recovery facility and a transfer station.

The VCAT appeal is expected to start in February.