

Lobby minister on unwanted project advocates Garad

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Public pressure should bear on the State Government to halt the proposed waste-to-energy plant in Dandenong South, says a council candidate.

Keysborough South Ward candidate Rhonda Garad called on the resident-based South East Environmental Group to lobby Planning Minister Richard Wynne to step in and revoke the EPA's works approval.

Ms Garad said SEEG led by ALP member and rival council candidate Ramy El-Sukkari should also call on the Government to ad-

dress its policy to allow for up to 85 per cent of household waste in "these incinerators".

"It's pointless to target the (Greater Dandenong) council when it's now come to the state government level."

The council has resisted calls from SEEG to appeal a VCAT planning permit approval to the Supreme Court. It stated there was no legal basis - that is, no mistake in law - to base an appeal.

Ms Garad said SEEG's lobbying for court action was therefore "futile" and "grandstanding".

"SEEG should get tremendous local sup-

port to petition Richard Wynne on the grounds that (the plant) doesn't have a social license to operate."

However, Mr El-Sukkari said the group had lobbied Mr Wynne as well as local state MPs on the issue.

"We've tried to reach out to everyone."

He said SEEG wanted to know if Greater Dandenong had engaged with the "appropriate experts" in deciding not to launch a Supreme Court appeal.

Candidate Stephen Fanous vowed to visit every resident's home to petition against the plant.

"With over 9000 people, it's going to have a lot of weight. We will exhaust all avenues."

Since late last year, there has been great community uproar from residents in Keysborough and Dandenong South against the Great Southern Waste Technologies project in Ordish Road.

The plant would process up to 100,000 tonnes a year of municipal household solid waste, commercial and industrial waste.

Greater Dandenong Council has launched an appeal to VCAT against the EPA's works approval of the project. The hearing is scheduled for February 2021.

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