



Committee Secretary  
Senate Economics References Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

March 29, 2018

Dear Chairperson

**RE: SITE SELECTION PROCESS FOR A NATIONAL RADIOACTIVE  
WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

At its Ordinary Meeting of Council on March 14, 2018 the District Council of Kimba resolved to make a submission to the inquiry investigating the process the Australian Government is undertaking to select a site for its proposed National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (NRWMF) in South Australia.

Council's submission pertains to two of the six focus areas identified in the inquiry's terms of reference, being:

- (e) Whether wider (Eyre Peninsula or state-wide) community views should be taken into consideration and, if so, how this is occurring or should be occurring; and
- (f) Any other related matters.

Council acknowledges that the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (the Department) has engaged AECOM to complete site characterisation testing at the two nominated sites within the Kimba Local Government Area which will assess the existing flora and fauna, geology and seismic activity, in addition to the potential effect the NRWMF will have on the surrounding environment, road network and associated infrastructure. Further, Council recognises that part of AECOM's role will be to deliver specific designs and costings for the facility once the site characterisation testing has been completed.

**(e) Whether wider (Eyre Peninsula or state-wide) community views should be taken into consideration and, if so, how this is occurring or should be occurring**

Council's support of progressing the site selection process to the second phase has always been predicated on allowing the residents and ratepayers it represents with transparent access to the most accurate information about what hosting the NRWMF would mean for their community now and over the life of the facility.

Council is extremely supportive of the fact both land nominations were voluntary, and that the respective landowners have made their own determinations on nominating 100 hectares of their freehold land for the NRWMF.



The need for community support has been clear throughout the process, and while Council was disappointed with the initial telephone surveys undertaken and argued strongly for a more independent and robust methodology, it is evident that the first ballot facilitated by Council in 2017 on behalf of the Australian Electoral Commission provided an opportunity for the community to have its say in a confidential manner.

Early in the process, Council was asked to provide feedback on its definition of community. The consensus of Elected Members was that those residing within the District Council of Kimba boundary was an applicable interpretation of community. This was the definition utilised for the initial ballot, and the one Council believes should be used for any final vote, as it allows the organisation to facilitate a ballot in alignment with Local Government election guidelines.

Council recognises that there are wide-ranging opinions on the construction of the NRWMF from across South Australia and further afield, and that a boundary will never be all-inclusive, irrespective of where it is drawn. However, Council remains of the view that its Local Government Area represents the best reflection of the wishes of its community, as it is those who live, work and play within this boundary who will ultimately be most directly affected if the project proceeds at one of the two nominated Kimba sites.

**(f) Any other related matters**

Throughout the site selection process, Kimba has been visited by a multitude of experts in fields including nuclear medicine, radiation safety and radioactive waste management who provided the technical information required to allow members of the community to develop their own opinions on whether or not the NRWMF should be constructed in the proximity of their town. In fact, Associate Professor Geoff Currie – a Charles Sturt University expert in medical nuclear radiation – commented during his last public presentation in Kimba that he had seen the community and conversation mature as the consultation process progressed, adding that he believed Kimba was now one of the most educated communities in the country on radioactive waste. Kimba has also had activists and advocates against the project present to the community, so there have certainly been repeated opportunities to hear both sides of the argument in forming individual judgements about the potential community benefits and risks of the NRWMF.

Part of reaching an informed, balanced opinion about the project involves having all of the short- and long-term social and economic benefits it would deliver for the community. These benefits include improvements to critical social infrastructure like roads, healthcare services and telecommunications.

To that end, Council would expect that the Australian Government will provide specificity on what financial and service benefits it will provide, and how these will be administered through the *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012* (the Act) before a final ballot occurs.



Without this information available, Council does not believe the community would be in a position to make an informed decision that addresses the questions and concerns identified during phase two of the site selection process.

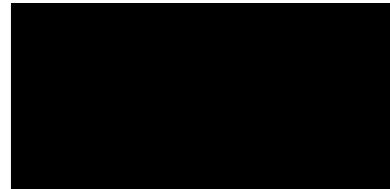
Council acknowledges the Australian Government is committed to undertaking community engagement as it selects a site for the NRWMF, and believes that by continuing to provide detailed information about the process, it will allow those participating in the final ballot the opportunity to make a considered decision which factors in both the impacts and benefits of constructing the facility in their region.

Yours sincerely



Dean Johnson  
Mayor

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Debra Larwood  
Chief Executive Officer