

Christine Scott



Senate Standing Committees on Economics
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Subject: Senate enquiry into site selection process for a national radioactive waste storage facility

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter as a concerned member of the Kimba community. I reside in the township of Kimba and have a son, his wife and three young children living and working on the farm which has been in our family for over 100 years, and which is situated approx 17kms from our town centre.

In the 50 years I have resided in the Kimba district (coming here as a teacher in 1968) I have never before witnessed such a divided and hurting community. Before the selection process began I would have described our community as united and supportive of each other and the local businesses. Now many farmers are looking to buy their merchandise only from businesses that support their viewpoint on whether or not there should be a nuclear waste dump in Kimba, even preferring to shop out of town for farm goods, food and groceries than give their financial support to people who they feel have betrayed them and the whole agricultural export industry on which the existence of this town depends.

Resentment runs high towards those farmers who “volunteered” their land for the dump, when that “volunteering” comes with an incentive of 3 times the value of their land plus the original value. From my understanding a volunteer is someone who gives of their time, services or possessions for free, but these farmers are seen to be benefiting at the disadvantage of others. I strongly reject the presumption implied by the Government that one, or in Kimba’s case two individuals have the right to decide that: -

- (a) A nuclear dump can be placed in a grain growing area relying on export markets for its existence.
- (b) Can ignore their own State Law prohibiting such a dump.

The present government, would no doubt argue that it is not just two individuals offering their land. They would say that 56.7% of the community are in favour as a result of a local council vote and that this shows “broad” community support for the nuclear dump to be placed in agricultural land. That 56.7% is considered to be broad community support is puzzling when 65% support was required at Hawker.

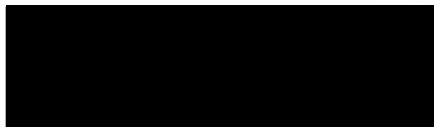
What is the figure representing broad community support? Surely when you are considering intermediate waste with a life of up to 1000 years, meaning that it could affect many, many, many generations to come, and that once the waste is “dumped” it will most likely not be shifted – so the decision is actually irreversible, surely broad community support should be at an absolute minimum 66%. This is the figure I understand is required for a constitutional change.

I have attended many “information” sessions over the time our town has been enduring this destructive process and my confidence in the process has decreased considerably: -

1. At my first meeting I was told that the storage facility would provide 12 – 15 long term jobs. My son and daughter in law at an earlier meeting on the same day were told 6.
2. I was shown models of waste sites constructed overseas – looking very impressive, but no one knew what type we would have built here. How can I vote on an unknown
3. The low waste was pushed – just hospital gowns, gloves etc. Nothing to worry about..... the Intermediate waste was pushed aside. Many people are still ignorant concerning the reality of the nature of the waste. I do not like minimising of important information.
4. We are told that the intermediate waste will be stored temporarily above ground while a permanent solution regarding how to store it is found. Nothing to worry about. Worlds best practices apply. Really? Then how come waste temporarily stored at Woomera (a much better site than grain growing agricultural land) is leaking already and it is proposed that that waste will also be stored in Kimba if Kimba is chosen.
5. I am puzzled by the need to shift the intermediate waste from Lucas Heights where it is stored under strict security, is at all necessary until a permanent, not a temporary solution has been reached. Surely it is best to shift it only once if at all.
6. We are told that Lucas Heights is running out of room and yet my son on a visit there observed a big empty shed built for this purpose.
7. We are told that having a nuclear dump in the middle of our agricultural land is absolutely safe and famers from Champagne in France have been brought out just to convince us, and yet NO ONE has been able, from the government through to the grain industries concerned. to give us any guarantees and of course they can't. They have no control over our overseas customers who at a whim, could refuse any grain grown near a Nuclear dump because of perceived contamination.
8. We are told that we will receive \$10,000,000.00 if we get the dump. All for Kimba or is it? There is some confusion in reality as to how much of this money Kimba will be able to manage itself or if it will end up in the hands of the state government to spend as they see fit for Kimba and there is a big difference in these two scenarios.

In closing I beg the Government to think again about this process. As it stands at the moment it is destructive to the little communities involved and will result in a dump being built where it has potential to bring about permanent harm to our farming industry. Surely blind Freddie can see there is so much non productive land in Australia much more suitable -

Please accept this as my submission,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Christine Scott.

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