



**Jane Anderson**

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**EPA Victoria**

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**RE: EPA Victoria Development License Application from AGL Loy Yang**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing regarding the application received by Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria for a development license which permits prescribed development activity from AGL Loy Yang Pty Ltd for a development at Loy Yang Power Station, Bartons Lane, Traralgon VIC 3844. It is encouraging to see that the EPA are seeking feedback from the Latrobe communities in relation to the licence approval and how that development may impact their health and wellbeing.

The Latrobe Health Advocate was appointed by the Victorian Minister for Health in May 2018, to offer independent advice on behalf of Latrobe communities to improve health and wellbeing service systems in Latrobe City. The role provides community-wide leadership for the Latrobe Health innovation Zone while maintaining a focus on strategic outcomes and systemic change.

In my role I promote the position that Health is Everyone's Business. I have been encouraged by the willingness of businesses in Latrobe to consider and prioritise the health and wellbeing of communities as they develop new enterprises and reflect on how their practices can support good mental and physical health both within their workforce and the communities in which they are located.

Since the establishment of the Latrobe Health Advocate's office, I have engaged regularly with businesses within Latrobe, including ENGIE, Opal, Chunxing, Osmi, AGL Loy Yang and the EPA on matters that have the potential to impact on the health and wellbeing of Latrobe communities. In 2019 I was appointed as the independent Chair of the Latrobe Valley Asbestos Taskforce. The taskforce brings together government agencies, local council, unions, and community groups to work together to deliver the best outcomes for the Latrobe Valley. I welcome further discussions with EPA and will continue to share what I am hearing from local communities into the future.

My aim is to influence development projects in terms of how they:

- Create a healthy community
- Impact on climate change and the determinants of health and
- Do not adversely affect community health

I have been made aware of development projects that have been introduced to communities where community members have indicated that the planning processes are unclear and that they feel a sense of helplessness and disempowerment that has impacted on their mental and physical health and wellbeing. In submissions made to governments about these projects I highlighted the need to consider the psychological impacts of the planning process on the communities effected by development proposals.

I recently held a forum to achieve a shared understanding of the contexts in which development proposals are processed with consideration of how this impacts community health and wellbeing; and to provide a platform from which a response to any identified gaps could be developed and trialled in Latrobe. The

forum was attended by State Government representatives including the Chief Environmental Scientist, Deputy Chief Health Officer, CEO VicGrid, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Regional Development Victoria, Latrobe Valley Authority and representatives from local agencies including Latrobe City Council, Latrobe Health Assembly, and the Public Health Unit.

Participants at the forum identified several opportunities to consider:

- o University research and data collection using an instrument / survey to assess psychological impact
- o Utilise Hazelwood Health Study and Mine Fire as a scenario to work back through exposure impacts
- o Provide information clarity about the public value and the good of developments
- o Use a wellbeing frame to emphasise the health benefits of developments
- o Better use of science, rather than used by various lobbyists for particular point of view
- o Development of a set of principles
- o Engagement that provides a regional narrative, is informing, builds trust and relationship, includes health background and skills, provides a sense of fairness
- o A third-party mediator that provides a trusted voice in the process and is legislated, provides independent review. Such as a Local Public Health Unit
- o Vision setting for the future

I will be meeting with the partners in the near future to discuss the options and next steps. The opportunities are of great importance given the establishment of Gippsland as a renewable energy zone and the commitment of the Victorian Government to enable genuine engagement.

In line with the priorities of my role, I am pleased to provide this submission to the Environment Protection Authority as it considers the proposal by Ash Landfill under EPA Licence no OL000011149.

I read that the applicant proposes an extension to its Ash Landfill and Leachate Storage Pond to meet future demand. The proposed landfill extension is located within the same area as its current Ash Landfill. The application proposes six new landfill cells as part of the extension. This will provide a total of 9,730,000 cubic meters of landfill space. This is enough landfill space for a 19.4 year period.

In considering the proposed development licence application by AGL Loy Yang, I recommend:

- The EPA satisfies itself that the proponent has provided sufficient opportunity for communities to be consulted about the proposal.
- That the EPA consider the cumulative impact of the release of stated emissions on the existing environment in Latrobe.
- That the EPA consider the psychological impacts of the approval process on those people who have raised concerns around the proposal and work to mitigate those impacts by maintaining a transparent process and evidence informed communication strategies to prevent unintended harm.
- That a wellbeing frame is utilised to emphasise the health benefits of the development.
- That there is a use of science that builds trust and knowledge.
- That there is engagement that provides a regional narrative, vision setting for the future, is informing, builds trust and relationship, includes health background and skills, and provides a sense of fairness.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical yellow line.

**Jane Anderson**

Latrobe Health Advocate