

Meatworks Australia works approval decision



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria

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Summary report

Meatworks Australia Pty Ltd (Meatworks) has proposed construction of an abattoir and meat processing facility with a:

- processing rate of 3000 head of sheep per day
- onsite sewage and wastewater treatment plants, and
- recycled water irrigation at 630 Lancaster-Mooroopna Road, Gillieston, Victoria.

The proposed facility requires a works approval from Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) under the *Environment Protection Act 1970* (the Act).

A works approval is required for industrial activities with the potential for significant environmental impact. The approval permits construction of a facility, the installation of equipment or the modification of processes.

On 24 April 2019, EPA received a formal application for a works approval from Meatworks. On 18 October 2019, EPA approved the works proposal, subject to conditions.



Figure 1. Aerial map showing the boundary of the activity area

This publication summarises the key aspects of EPA's assessment and the decision-making process for the works approval application. The full works approval application assessment report is available via the [Engage Victoria](#) website.

EPA decision on the works approval application

On 18 October 2019, EPA approved the works approval application, subject to conditions.

What was proposed in the works approval application?

Meatworks has proposed construction of an abattoir and meat processing facility at 630 Lancaster-Mooroopna Road, Gillieston, Victoria.

The proposed facility has a processing rate of 3000 head of sheep per day, with onsite sewage and wastewater treatment plants and treated recycled water irrigation at the premises.

Activities to follow works approval

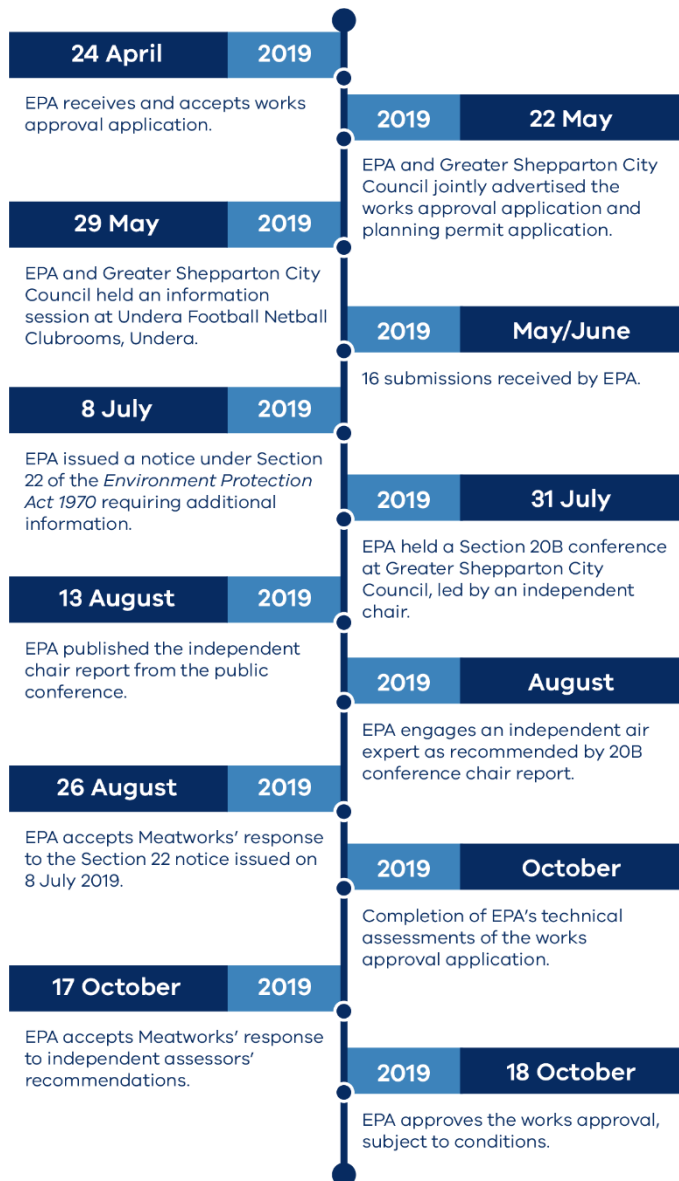
Meatworks will need to undertake these activities following works approval:

- obtaining other permits (e.g. a planning permit)
- completing final detailed designs and obtaining EPA's approvals under the appropriate works approval conditions
- a construction phase
- a commissioning phase
- obtaining an EPA operating licence.

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Works approval application process

Some of the key steps in the works approval application and assessment process are as follows:



EPA assessment process

Relevant legislation and policies

A works approval application is required to comply with the Act and subordinate legislation. Other legislation also needs to be considered, such as the *Climate Change Act 2017*.

The Act, regulations, and state environment protection policies (SEPPs) establish a framework to ensure waste treatment infrastructure is appropriately located, designed, constructed, operated and managed to minimise risks to the environment and public health. EPA considers the following SEPPs for environmental management are particularly relevant for this proposal:

- [SEPP \(Waters\)](#)
- [SEPP \(Prevention and Management of Contamination of Land\)](#)
- [SEPP \(Air Quality Management\)](#)

Departmental and agency consultation

In assessing the application, EPA consulted with Greater Shepparton City Council, Goulburn-Murray Water, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and Agriculture Victoria.

Community engagement by EPA

As required by the Act, the works approval application was advertised in newspapers, and communicated on the EPA and Engage Victoria websites.

EPA received 16 submissions between May and June 2019. One of the submissions supported the application.

Following a review of these responses, EPA organised a community conference, held on 31 July 2019 in Shepparton. The conference, hosted by an independent chair, provided an additional opportunity for the community to raise concerns. Where possible, an attempt was made to reach a just resolution of them, consistent with section 20B of the Act.

The chair subsequently published recommendations. These have been considered as part of EPA's determination.

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EPA assessment

What did EPA assess?

This section summarises the findings relating to the most important issues as part of EPA's assessment. For more information on how EPA assessed all the key issues of concern, see Section 6 of the full report.

Regulatory compliance

EPA has determined that subject to conditions:

- the proposal is protective of human health and the environment
- the proposal is consistent with the relevant SEPPs
- the proposal has considered potential climate change impacts in accordance with EPA's obligations
- Meatworks meets the 'fit and proper person' requirement of the Act.

Key issues

Odour emissions

What is the concern?

Potential odour emissions from the process activities.

What are the proposed key design odour controls?

The proposed key design controls include:

- emissions from higher odour process activities will be diverted through ventilation to a stack to improve dilution
- the overflow livestock yard will be covered to maintain dry conditions to prevent odour generation from wet litter and livestock
- daily removal of by-products offsite for appropriate disposal
- development of an Environment Improvement Plan incorporating an odour management and monitoring plan, including a risk assessment and mitigation measures.

Human health

What is the concern?

Potential risks to human health from zoonoses transmission. Zoonoses is a disease which can be transferred to humans from animals.

What are the proposed key zoonoses risk controls?

The proposed key design controls include:

- implementation of a risk assessment and Infection Control Management Plan including containment and disposal of manure and by-products, daily cleansing, and disinfection of all risk areas
- indoor processing of sheep in covered elevated pens
- wastewater treatment ponds and flood irrigation designed to minimise aerosols
- planting of screening trees around the site to act as a wind break and minimise dust and aerosol transmission.

Determination of best practice

Integrated within the SEPPs is the requirement to meet best practice. EPA has assessed that Meatworks' overall odour and human health risk control and management on a conceptual level is acceptable. This is subject to conditions for final design details for the building ventilation system and overflow livestock yard.

Conclusion of the assessment

Meatworks has adopted a best practice risk control and management concept. The operational performance will be monitored during the commissioning phase. Separation distance variation is justified considering the high standard of the proposed management systems, procedures and contingency plans.

Other issues assessed

Climate change and greenhouse gases

EPA has considered the potential impacts of climate change in its decision and determined the proposal has appropriately addressed these impacts and the proposal is considered to be consistent with the *Climate Change Act 2017*.

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Air emissions – dust

Meatworks are required to develop a dust management plan including on-going dust and particles monitoring including compliance review and triggers for further control measures.

Wastewater management

Wastewater management onsite should not pose an environmental risk, subject to conditions for final design of the wastewater treatment systems.

Irrigation management

Irrigation management should not cause environmental hazard, subject to conditions for final design and an environment improvement plan for reuse.

Land and groundwater contamination

The proposed works are unlikely to cause land or groundwater contamination.

Noise emissions

Prior to construction, Meatworks is required to provide noise calculations based on the final design in order to confirm that noise emissions from the proposed facility can meet the requirements set out in the [Noise from Industry in Regional Victoria](#) guideline. Noise measurements will be performed during the commissioning of the facility to confirm the actual noise of the operations reflects the predictions provided in the works approval application.

Solid waste

The proposed waste management should not cause environmental hazard.

Conditions of approval

The works approval is subject to conditions. Some conditions must be met prior to commencement of construction, and others relate to the commissioning of the facility. In addition, operation of the facility will be regulated through an EPA-issued licence. The works approval conditions include the following requirements:

- the final detailed design for managing and controlling odour and noise emissions must be provided to EPA for approval
- Meatworks must develop a comprehensive commissioning program to verify noise and odour performance specifications, and provision of the final Risk Assessment and Infection Control Management Plan for approval

- Meatworks must develop an environment improvement plan which includes ongoing noise and odour monitoring, as well as the establishment of a community liaison committee to facilitate community meetings.

Appeal process

If you object to the issuing of the works approval or its conditions, you may have the decision reviewed by applying in writing within 21 days of the date of issue to:

**Registrar, Planning and Environment Division
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
(VCAT) 7th Floor, 55 King Street
Melbourne, 3000**

An application fee may be applicable when lodging an appeal with VCAT. Contact VCAT on (03) 9628 9777 for further details on fees associated with an appeal. A copy of the appeal should also be forwarded, within seven days of lodgement, to:

**Director, Development Assessments Unit
Environment Protection Authority Victoria
GPO Box 4395
Melbourne, 3001**

If you would like further information, please contact us by emailing contact@epa.vic.au or calling 1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC).

More information

Read EPA's full assessment report on the Engage Victoria website: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/epa-works-approvals/gillieston-meat-processing-facility-works-approval-application>

Please contact EPA on 1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC) or via email on contact@epa.vic.au