

Midfield protein recovery plant works approval decision



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria

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Summary report

Midfield Meat Processing Pty Ltd (Midfield) has proposed construction of a modern protein recovery plant (PRP) adjacent to the existing abattoir located at 24 Scott Street, Warrnambool, Victoria. Following full commissioning of the PRP, Midfield intends to cease the operation of an existing old co-product facility (rendering) located in Swinton Street, 2.4 km from the abattoir (Figure 1).

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 and waste management activities with the potential for significant environmental impact. The approval permits the construction of a plant, the installation of equipment or the modification of processes.

On 9 August 2018, EPA received a formal application for a works approval from Midfield. On 23 January 2019, EPA approved the works proposal, subject to conditions.

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 23 January 2019, EPA approved the works approval application, subject to conditions.

What was proposed in the works approval application?

Midfield Meat Processing Pty Ltd (Midfield) has proposed construction of a modern protein recovery plant (PRP) adjacent to the existing abattoir located at 24 Scott Street, Warrnambool, Victoria. The proposed facility consists of a PRP with a bovine line with a design capacity of 12 tonnes/hour and an ovine line with a design capacity of 7.5 tonnes/hour to process raw materials generated on the same premises (300 tonnes/day) and externally-generated raw materials (up to 100 tonnes/day).

Activities to follow works approval

Activities Midfield will need to undertake following works approval include:

- obtaining other permits (for example, 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
- shut down and decommissioning the rendering plant at Swinton Street, Warrnambool.

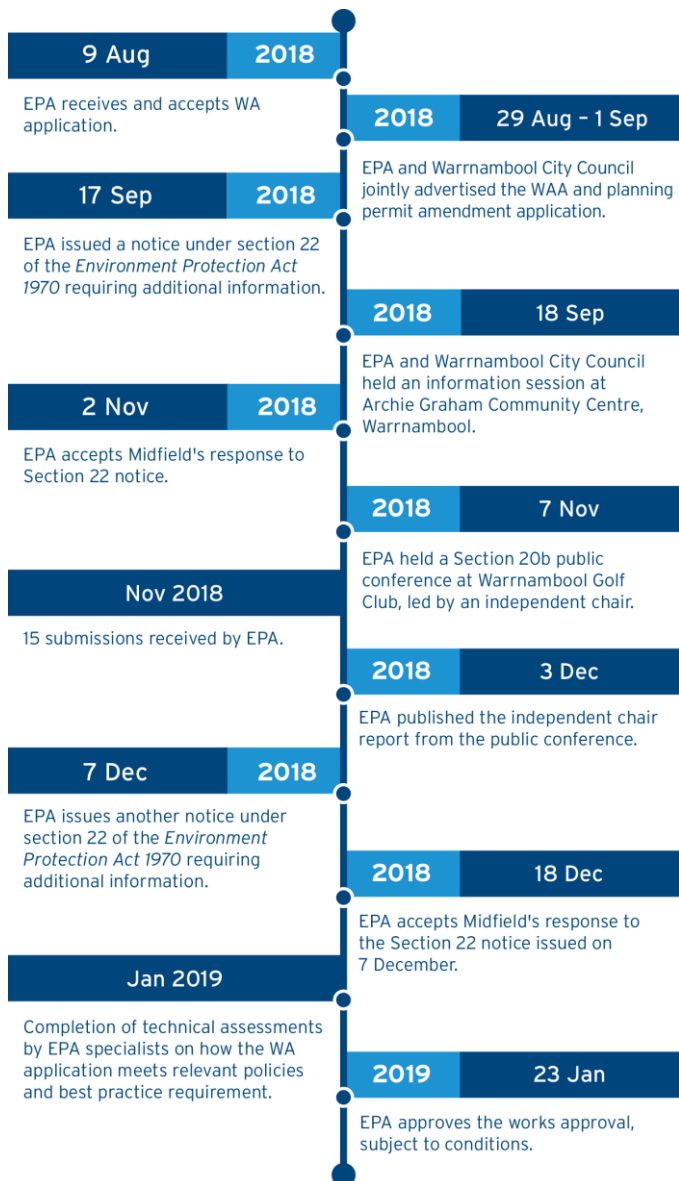


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the PRP facility (Source: Midfield works approval application).

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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 *Environment Protection Act 1970* (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 and protocols for environmental management are particularly relevant for this proposal:

- [SEPP \(Waters\)](#)
- [SEPP \(Prevention and Management of Contamination of Land\)](#)
- [SEPP \(Air Quality Management\)](#)
- [Protocol for Environmental Management: Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Efficiency in Industry \(EPA publication 824\)](#)

Departmental and agency consultation

In assessing the application, EPA consulted with Warrnambool City Council and Wannon Water.

Community engagement by EPA

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

EPA received 15 submissions between September and November 2018, of which one supported the application.

Following a review of these responses, EPA organised a community conference, held on 7 November 2018 in Warrnambool. The conference, hosted by an independent chair, provided an additional opportunity for the community to raise concerns and, where possible, to attempt to reach a just resolution of them, consistent with section 20B of the Act.

The chair subsequently published recommendations which 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
- Midfield 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 and biofilter.

What are the proposed key design odour controls?

The proposed key design controls include:

- High odour emissions from process activities will be captured at the source and transported for treatment.
- All areas where odour activities occur, such as process and receival buildings, will be maintained under appropriate negative pressure.
- All odorous emissions will be combined and transported to a biofilter for treatment.
- Key areas, such as transportation of odorous air from process and buildings, are monitored for performance measures with resultant trigger actions, and by supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) control.

Determination of best practice

Integrated within the SEPPs is the requirement to meet best practice. In determining best practice, EPA has considered the application against the European practice and guidelines, *Sector Guidance Note IPPC SG8 Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC)*, *Secretary of State's Guidance for the A2 Rendering Sector* and rendering industry practice in Australia.

EPA has assessed that Midfield's overall odour control and management on a conceptual level is acceptable, subject to conditions for final design details for pre-treatment (wet scrubber) and treatment system (biofilter), building ventilation under negative pressure, as well as operational control (SCADA system).

Conclusions of the assessment

Midfield has adopted a best practice odour control management concept. The detailed design of odour control equipment is subject to conditions of the works approval. The operational performance will be closely and continuously monitored by a sophisticated SCADA system with alarms and interlocks for critical responses. Separation distance variation is justified considering the high standard of the proposed odour control management system 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.

The waste heat generated in the existing rendering plant is not utilised. The waste heat generated at PRP will be recovered and used to heat water for the abattoir. The project would result in a net reduction of GHG emissions of 102,899 tonnes CO₂ equivalent per annum through energy saving (electricity, gas and fuel).

Wastewater management

Midfield has a current Trade Waste Agreement with Wannon Water. EPA has confirmed with the water authority that they have no issue with the additional trade waste proposal.

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Air emission – dust

Dust emissions from the PRP will be negligible.

Noise emission

Midfield is required to undertake a detailed noise assessment prior to construction, in order to confirm that noise emissions from the proposed PRP can meet the requirements set out in the Noise from Industry in Regional Victoria (NIRV) guideline during the day, evening and night periods. 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 WAA.

Stormwater management

The proposed PRP will use the same stormwater management system as the existing abattoir. The proposed stormwater management should not pose environmental risk.

Land contamination

The proposed works are unlikely to cause land contamination.

Solid waste

The proposed waste management should not cause environmental hazard.

Human health

EPA has considered the potential effects on human health posed by this proposal. EPA has assessed that potential for exposures to emissions for nearest sensitive receptors and the potential for health impacts are negligible.

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.
- Midfield must develop a comprehensive commissioning program to verify noise and odour performance specifications.

- Midfield must develop an environmental 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.gov.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/midfield-meat-wa>

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