

**Waste 2024 Conference Abstract Submission**  
(for face-to-face Conference which includes live broadcast)

**Waste Management Precincts**

*My presentation is relevant to the following topic area(s).*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Aboriginal community waste management</b> (projects, results, planning, what else to be done)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>National waste policies &amp; programs</b> (new schemes, opportunities & recent results)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CDS</b> (new schemes, new containers, innovations)  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organics</b> (food only vs FOGO, implementation strategies, new services)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Circular economy</b> (case studies, right to repair, trials, new materials targeted)  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Plastics</b> (plastics recycling, plastics recovery schemes, small and large scale plastics projects)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Climate change</b> (new innovations, strategies & policies)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Problem &amp; hazardous waste</b> (asbestos, clinical & medical, illegally dumped hazardous waste, systems for managing hazardous materials)                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Collections</b> (innovations, new systems, vehicles, challenges)  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Procurement</b> (recent process developments, case studies, planning)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Disaster waste management</b> (bushfires, floods, pandemic)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Project Planning</b> (projects currently planned, challenges and barriers, planning controls and conditions, project management)                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Economics</b> (business cases, data gathering, planning for financial impacts, reviews & analyses)  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Product stewardship &amp; extended producer responsibility</b> (current & planned schemes, new materials to be captured by schemes, local schemes for recovery)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Education</b> (behaviour change, community engagement, social media, planning FOGO education)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Recycling &amp; resource recovery</b> (post China Sword, and export bans, market insights & updates)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Energy from Waste</b> (projects, case studies)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Regional issues</b> (regional responses to waste settings, collaboration, joint projects)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grants</b> (major waste grants, outcomes & processes)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social enterprise</b> (new entrants, recent endeavours, case studies)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Infrastructure &amp; planning</b> (FOGO capacity, new material recovery planning)  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>State based issues</b> (policies, strategies, responses & challenges, border transitions)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovative projects</b> (sustainability innovations, artificial intelligence, case studies)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategic waste planning &amp; policy</b> (stakeholder engagement, strategy development, waste policy impacts and opportunities)                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Landfill &amp; facility management</b> (facility operations management, strategic planning, facility budgeting)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Technology</b> (innovations, must haves, how technology will improve or assist with waste responsibilities, AI)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Legislation, regulations &amp; levies</b> (major updates, monitoring & enforcement, response to changes in regulations)   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tenders &amp; contracts</b> (planning, implementation, contract management, innovations, systems & approaches)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Litter &amp; illegal dumping</b> (prevention, new management systems & innovative & smart initiatives, surveillance)  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Waste projects</b> (planned waste infrastructure, how to plan & scope, budgeting, understanding what is required, governance & process planning, case studies) |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Proposed Panel Discussion</b> - Proposed topic & participants suitable for key issues that may be addressed by a Panel of presenters. For this category suggest your topic & who you will arrange to attend and present (maximum of 5 panel members). |   |

### **Presenter information**

**Presenter name:** Esther Hughes  
**Presenter position:** Principal Environmental Consultant  
**Presenter organisation:** MRA Consulting Group  
**Presenter email address:** esther@mraconsulting.com.au  
**Presenter phone number:** 0427139702  
**Presenter mobile number:** 0427139702

### **Biography**

Esther is an Environmental Consultant and Planner with a keen interest in policy frameworks, facilitating recycling infrastructure development, and Energy from Waste.

Esther has worked in infrastructure development for over 15 years and with the waste and resource recovery industry for more than 7. She has been part of multiple diverse projects with the team at MRA Consulting Group. Her main job is to obtain development consents and licensing approvals for waste and resource recovery infrastructure, and to provide regulatory advice.

*Insert biography here (max 150 words)*

### **Abstract Summary**

It is abundantly clear that investment is needed in waste and recycling infrastructure, however, problems lie in the extended timeframes to get approvals, scarcity of industrial land, and community opposition. This presentation will highlight how three states, Victoria, NSW and Queensland, have approached the establishment of precincts, including the Victorian 'hub' model, the NSW regional precincts and the proposed Queensland model.

We will explore the Parkes Precinct in NSW, including the intention of the precinct and the planning process.

A case study of a facility in Parkes will be presented as an example of the Parkes precinct planning approval pathway.

### **Abstract**

In February 2021, a proposed Gunnedah waste facility made headlines: "Packed Gunnedah council chamber sees locals voice their opposition over proposed Gunnedah Waste Facility". Located in the industrial area of Gunnedah, it is over 1km from 'village' zoning and more than 3.5 km from the residential town of Gunnedah. The area is zoned General Industrial.

The facility is slated to process up to 250,000 tpa of construction and demolition waste, which would divert 60 - 80% of materials from landfill while simultaneously creating 30 jobs.

In an article in The Conversation, the general manager is quoted as saying that descriptions such as "toxic waste dump" were far from accurate.

"It's not a dump [...] Its prime focus is to reclaim, reuse and recycle."

This is a very disappointing story when it comes to waste management. In the resource recovery industry, recyclers are taking garbage that is generated by the community, are expected to meet unrealistic targets of recovering everything, and then faced with opposition about where such activities are undertaken.

It is also becoming abundantly clear that investment is needed in waste and recycling infrastructure.

Problems lie in the extended timeframes to get approvals, scarcity and expense of industrial land, and community opposition.

One of the answers lies in planning precincts.

A precinct is a designated area that has a preferred purpose, such as commercial, residential or industrial use. Once the use is established, the area can have allowances and limitations set to accommodate the preferred use.

This presentation will introduce the issues mentioned above, and will highlight how each of three states, Victoria, NSW and Queensland, have approached the establishment of precincts, including the Victorian 'hub' model, the NSW regional precincts and the proposed Queensland model.

We will then go into depth regarding the Parkes Precinct in NSW, including the intention of the precinct and the planning process. The Parkes precinct discussion will be developed in collaboration with the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation.

A case study of Sircel's e-waste processing plant in Parkes will be presented (in collaboration with Sircel) as an example of the Parkes precinct planning approval pathway. It will outline the project, give actual timeframes, and demonstrate outcomes.

In 2022, it was reported in The Northern Daily Leader that the Gunnedah Waste Facility would be scaled back as a result of community opposition. The first part of the application (SEARS Request) was submitted in July 2020. The project has not yet reached determination after being in the planning process for about 4 years (including time to secure a site and write the first report). The urgency to develop resource recovery is at odds with the current approvals timeline. Establishing precincts is one way to assist in setting community expectations, defining suitable areas and enabling waste and recycling projects.

Note: I think we will spark some interesting conversations from his presentation. Additionally, the NSW EPA may be releasing consultation on the concept of precincts early 2024, which would be incorporated.