

Chipmill accused of “high handed arrogance” on Pellet Plant

Conservationists have accused the Eden chipmill of high handed arrogance by importing a wood pellet making plant* before gaining Bega Valley Shire Council development consent for the facility.

The Eden chipmill intends to build a pilot pellet making facility to test the market for a new and potentially profitable way to use native forest wood.

Convenor of the Chipstop campaign, Ms Harriett Swift said that the chipmill Development Application is still under consideration by the Bega Valley Shire Council but the equipment has already arrived. Public submissions on the wood pellet facility closed on 24th February 2011.

“When the project was placed on public exhibition, no information whatsoever about direct or indirect emissions and their human health impacts was provided,” Ms Swift said.

“Since then, State Government Environment Authorities should have required more information on pollution emissions.

“In the interests of public health and transparency, the Bega Valley Shire Council should provide a further exhibition period for better informed public scrutiny and comment before a decision is made.”

“In these circumstances it is very cheeky of the chipmill to go ahead with importing this expensive equipment,” she said.

Ms Swift said that it is not the first time that the chipmill has taken the Bega Valley Shire Council for granted and get a free ride off other rate payers.

In June 2002 chipmill managers demonstrated a similar cavalier attitude to the Council when they built their electric security fence around the mill without any Council approval. They then avoided the full Council fee by waiting for 3 years before adding a substantial concrete footing under the fence, which was not part of the original design,” Ms Swift said.

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