



Western Australian State Office

Unit 1 Abridge House
5 Turner Ave
BENTLEY WA 6102
Tel: **08 9472 3200**
Fax: **08 9472 3155**
Mobile: **0428 949 924**
tca@westnet.com.au
<http://www.tca.org.au>
ABN 33 008 665 736

Shire of Manjimup
PO Box 1
MANJIMUP WA 6258

SUBMISSION BIOMASS PLANT

Dear Sir

Timber Communities Australia LTD (TCA) is a national grassroots organisation boasting some 81 branches and 14,000 members nationally and this year celebrating 21 years of protecting our forests and rural communities through a balanced healthy environment and strong economy.

We exist to encourage the *sensible, balanced multiple use of our forests for the benefit of all Australians* and provide a structure through which the interests of all Australians concerned with maintaining a healthy forest environment and forest-based economy can be coordinated and represented to government, industry and the public.

It is with this in mind and through thorough examination of the biomass proposal, that TCA as an organisation and its members support the biomass proposal, on the condition that it meets all the environmental requirements, and urge the Manjimup Shire to endorse this huge opportunity for the community.

WHY TCA SUPPORTS THE BIOMASS PROPOSAL

Employment opportunities

- With an exodus of some 500 residents from the Manjimup Shire since the inception of the state governments 'Protecting our Old-Growth Forest' policy in 2001, this biomass proposal offers a great opportunity to the Shire for the expansion of its forest based industry by way of real value adding to what is otherwise a useless by-product of an important part of the timber industry. This in turn will increase the opportunities for permanent full time employment, traineeships for the shires' youth, and an increase in work for trades' people through maintenance etc, an increase in turnover for the main street businesses therefore resulting in an overall economic boost to the entire shire.

Economic Benefits

- The Manjimup Shire is in a position to achieve what it set out to do during the original timber industry restructure – attract new industry to Manjimup that would value-add and enhance the timber industry. Although, the biomass proposal is a long way off the original plan of a furniture precinct, what better way to value-add an otherwise useless resource, while giving back to the community through the generation of clean green energy.

- It is now more obvious than ever with the recent withdrawal of the previously promised funding for the formerly proposed “Tourist icon” that the state government is in no way committed to the growth and economic wellbeing of the Manjimup Shire. Therefore it is up to the Shire to ensure its own vitality by attracting industry and opportunities to the shire that will secure its economic future. TCA believes that such an opportunity exists with the proposed biomass plant.
- A vibrant community brings new opportunities. Attractive housing opportunities, increased property values, increased infrastructure, increased services and increased interest from alternative business proponents along with greater political strength.

Environmental Benefits

- With climate change being on everyone’s agenda, the Manjimup shire has the opportunity to show itself as being clean and green while contributing to the ever increasing problem of power supply. Manjimup has the opportunity to lead the way by becoming the centre for renewable energy.
- With the plantation industry expanding throughout the south west and no current use for the residue left after harvesting operations, the biomass plant is the perfect opportunity to reduce emissions from the imminent burning of the waste products. Currently uncontrolled burning is a necessary part of the plantation timber industry, and the Diamond Chip Mill, so to put those processes to a productive use can only be beneficial, both financially and environmentally.
- The full utilization of any renewable resource is a positive outcome for all concerned and we should all endeavour to accomplish this at every opportunity particularly including the useful disposal of what would otherwise be waste products, such as with recycling household goods which is a practice that most Australians have now embraced.

Transport

- The opportunity to use truck movements more efficiently by back loading is certainly a move in a positive direction. The truck movements, in most cases need to be made anyway, so to actually have a constructive use rather than returning empty to a destination will have a positive effect both practically and financially.
- With financial restraints playing a large role in the resistance to the reopening the rail line to Diamond Mill due to lack of prospective freight making the cost too great, locating the proposed biomass plant out at the Diamond site is not only practical for such a large scale industrial proposal but it also raises the opportunity to freight the fuel by rail, hence giving opportunity for a financially viable rail line to reopen, therefore reducing the amount of trucks on South West Highway.

An existing form of power generation

- With similar biomass plants scattered throughout the world, and around Australia, (with very successful outcomes and minimal complaints) it seems an obvious step forward that given this fantastic opportunity, the Manjimup Shire should follow suite.
- The Shire of Wanneroo in metropolitan Perth has just approved the development of a very similar biomass plant that will also utilize plantation residue. This plant is to be built in close proximity to a highly populated residential area therefore giving reason to believe that all the misinformation regarding air pollution is nothing more than propaganda!

CONCLUSION

On behalf of TCA I would like to reiterate our support for this important project on condition of the recommendations put forward by the EPA.

It is our belief that the enormous social, economic and environmental benefits of this project need to be given serious consideration when deliberating over the proposal.

With TCA's many years of experience dealing with emotive issues surrounding the timber industry, it has become apparent, that most people that support projects and ideas sit back and say nothing presuming that the right outcome will be achieved, while those that oppose almost any development are the *vocal minority* and I trust that the shire will take that into consideration when making a decision for the betterment of the whole shire.

Yours truly

Letisha (Tish) Campbell
WA State Manager TCA