
18 November 2022

Licence approval for meat works

Thomas Foods International has been granted an Environment Protection Authority (EPA) licence to operate its new abattoir at Pallamana, north-west of Murray Bridge.

The company has said the first stage of the processing facility will create about 350 jobs, with around 2000 jobs created once subsequent stages are completed.

The EPA has applied a range of conditions to the licence that seek to minimise and prevent environmental harm from the meat processing operations.

The conditions require an Odour Management Plan to ensure any elements of the facility that generate odour have management measures and triggers in place to minimise impacts to the community. This is due to be provided by 16 December.

An EPA-approved commissioning plan is also required before processing starts to ensure that the wastewater system is operating effectively.

Additionally, the facility's wastewater treatment system and the way in which the wastewater is irrigated will be managed through licence conditions and relevant plans.

EPA Director Operations Andrew Pruszinski said the EPA would conduct frequent compliance inspections to ensure the facility was operating in a sustainable manner.

"The site will be regulated by the EPA for compliance against strict protocols with respect to odour and wastewater management," he said.

"TFI is also required to have a community engagement plan to ensure local residents are kept informed as to the progress of the new facility's operations."

The initial licence covers beef processing, with an initial capacity of up to 600 head per day, and fuel burning for the boiler systems.

Subsequent stages of the development will include expansion of the beef facilities and additional small stock (sheep and lamb) processing capacity. At a future stage a new rendering plant and composting facility will be constructed.

TFI will apply to add these activities to its licence, and the EPA will notify the community and provide an opportunity to comment when these applications are made.

As part of the development application, odour modelling was commissioned and reviewed in accordance with the EPA's Ambient Air Quality Assessment and the *Environment Protection (Air Quality) Policy 2016*.

TFI received development approval to construct the new facility in June 2020 after the previous one was destroyed by fire in January 2018.

The facility, excluding lagoons, is about 1.5km from the nearest private dwelling and about 10km from the centre of Murray Bridge.

Both TFI and the EPA have undertaken community engagement.