Alan Emerson

Annandale NSW

**Submission of Objection to the Narrabri Gas Project**

To: The Office of the Independent Planning Commission NSW

Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street,

Sydney NSW 2000

To the IPC:

Please accept this as my objection to the approval of the Narrabri Gas Project.

I have sat back and lazily watched this project unfold over the last several years. I haven’t been involved in any protesting, nor have I submitted any objections prior to this. I have merely shared relevant articles and stories on social media. I am embarrassed to say this is all I have done. I live in Annandale, Sydney. I have, for the most part sat on my hands on this issue.

From a point of disclosure of interest, I have close friends who have been, and continue to be directly impacted by the proposed project. I also have close friends whose lives and livelihoods revolve around and are dependent on mining. I have thought long and hard on where I stand on this issue. After spending a night in Narrabri in July 2018 I can see the town is economically struggling. Why have I started this objection with the above information? It’s to demonstrate to you that this isn’t an objection that has been done in haste without appropriate thought and consideration of all the benefits and dis-benefits a project like this can bring.

The Narrabri Gas Project represents the single biggest risk to the livelihood of locals and the essential natural assets in the area they have ever faced. What is clear in the research and literature produced on this project is that the facts don’t stack up, they certainly lead to an obvious conclusion that this project should **not** go ahead. These include:

* Estimated production costs for this project will be in excess of twice that in the rest of the country
* The global gas market remains over supplied – there is a perceived domestic gas shortage yet we are the biggest exporter of gas in the world
* The focus of industry should be on sustainable, renewable energy options

Whilst such a project would probably give the area an adrenaline shot in the arm for a short term economic gain, it will not be sustainable and this has been proven the case in many instances across Australia.

Example towns are Miles and Chinchilla. Despite projections of long-term, economic prosperity, and an initial boom period, these towns had a deeper and everlasting bust that has provided no long term benefit to those locals who needed it most and were promised it. I am big one for learning off past experience and here it is. Let’s not make the same mistake again.

I grew up in Inverell, NSW and often travelled to Narrabri for sporting events etc. I know the area reasonably well. I also have an understanding of the magnitude of importance a resource such as the Liverpool Plains and Great Artesian Basin are to this country having completed my bachelors degree in Natural Resource Management at the University of New England and had many field excursions to and around the great GAB. The removal of 37500 Megalitres of ground water – this will not be replaced by natural processes and possess a significant and likely risk to permanently depressurize many hundreds of existing bores landholders are reliant on for water supply. This is what has happened in Queensland where coal seam gas mining has taken place.

The recent announcements from major insurance companies to no longer include liability protection insurance for those landholders who has CSG infrastructure on their land points to 2 significant issues:

1. It puts landholders in the impossible position of not being able to appropriately insure their businesses
2. For insurance companies to make this call, it is clear they see they have very strong concerns and see the inherent risk CSG infrastructure introduces. They didn’t make the call to increase premiums, they just refused to provide cover in these circumstances.

Agriculture has always been and will continue to be the backbone of our rural prosperity and contributes nationally to 3% ($50 billion) to GDP. The Great Artesian Basin contributes more than $12 billion to the Australian economy each year. If we continue to manage this essential natural asset in a sustainable manner, it will continue to do this indefinitely into the future.

The people who are best placed to manage this are those that have chosen to live in this area and to make their quality of life intrinsically linked to the health of the GAB. In many cases, landholders been there for many generations and hope to continue to do so. These are the people best place to manage this land, as they have been doing for many decades. To place the long-term health and viability of the GAB in the hands of profit driven, faceless large entities is a mistake. They have no long-term vested interest in the GAB. They are there to make money, and to make money quickly. What happens 5, 10 50 years after they leave is not their concern, but it is the landholders impacted, it is mine as a responsible human being and it should be yours as the final line of the defense for the GAB and everyone and everything it benefits.

I implore you to reject this project and stop it from proceeding. We have far too much to lose for it to go ahead and far too much at stake.

Yours Sincerely

Alan Emerson

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