

Submission to Narrabri IPC

By Leanne Brummell

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Mr Steve O'Connor
Mr John Hann
Professor Snow Barlow
Office of the Independent Planning Commission, NSW
ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au.

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached my submission on the final two docs for the Santos Gas Project.

I have read these documents and still believe the project should not be approved.

Sincerely

Leanne Brummell

The Narrabri Gas Project is in the public interest, critical for energy security and reliability in New South Wales and would deliver significant economic benefits to NSW and the Narrabri region, including jobs, investment and regional development. At the same time, the Project is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on the local community or the environment. These are the findings of the Department of Planning, based on a rigorous, multi-year assessment process that relied on science and evidence, and independent expert opinion. Thank you for the opportunity to present to the Panel during the public hearing and to now provide a further submission on behalf of Santos.

This project is not CRITICAL for energy security and reliability. There are alternative renewable ways to provide energy that are cheaper, and there are alternative ways to stabilise the grid (e.g. Virtual Power Plants using rooftop solar and batteries).

The number of jobs will be small.

The approval of this project will have a significant impact on the vast majority of residents in the local area who are obviously opposed to having a gasfield enforced on them. This is especially true for traditional owners.

water resources or the environment. As the Department of Planning found, it is “difficult to reconcile the significant community concerns about the Narrabri Gas Project with the technical advice from experts that the risk of any significant impacts occurring is generally low and can be controlled using standard engineering practice and imposing strict conditions on Santos”.

I do not think it is difficult to reconcile community concerns at all. The commission has been told of the confidentiality agreements used in the Queensland gasfields to silence those who experienced atrocious impacts to the extent they had to leave their homes.

The Santos submission is typical of those in Qld. Just tick all the boxes to say it’s low risk.

The technical advise from Santos and DPI experts did not include advice from experts who have listened to the stories of those impacted in Qld.

What standard engineering practice and conditions will monitor abandoned wells literally for ever and make repairs as necessary?

While I outlined Santos' capability in my presentation to the Panel, one thing I would like to reiterate in this further submission is our strong track record of coexistence with farmers. We have worked in partnership for more than 65 years across the country and most recently as we have developed a coal seam gas industry in Queensland that is welcomed by farmers and rural and regional communities. Landholders have welcomed payments that help drought-proof their farms by providing a second source of income from hosting gas field infrastructure, allowing them to expand their business in other directions, purchase additional land and add value to their properties. Some have also gained a new, clean source of water supply, available only because of gas production.

There is coexistence with farmers in Qld because THEY HAVE NO CHOICE. Santos have obviously only talked to the people making a monetary benefit from their Qld projects.. As someone who lives relatively close to the area, this industry is hated by most of the locals. The handful of farmers who have benefitted as they say from money in drought and from water are small in number to the one's who've received no money and no water. This industry makes a select few well off and makes life a misery for everyone else.

I see Santos say they are supplying water in Qld, not mentioning that groundwater is being depleted and it's not known if it will replenish. Impacts are long term and I ask you to keep this in mind.

Many presenters and submitters were generally opposed to any new fossil fuel projects, including gas, pitting them against a renewable energy future.

Pg 2

However, the two must coexist to deliver the energy security and reliability that our society demands. The International Energy Agency says that natural gas will grow to supply a quarter of all global energy demand in 2040 in all its scenarios. On Australia's east coast, the Australian Energy Market Operator's Integrated System Plan has found that more gas supply needs to be developed each year from 2023-2024 to meet residential, commercial, industrial and power generation demand in southern Australia.

Yes many submitters are opposed to fossil fuel projects... because fossil fuels are leading to global warming incompatible with life on the planet. Interesting that in between what we thought was the final submission and this give Santos another chance, Santos has started putting posts on social media about how it cares about the climate. I don't believe them. I do hope that you Sirs do care about the climate and the life that children will have in 20, 50, 200 years time.

Santos has more than 2000 land access agreements in place throughout the Bowen and Surat regions in Queensland and we have safely drilled and operated more than 2300 coal seam gas wells since 2006, without harm to water resources or the environment.

Pg 2

I'd be more inclined to believe Santos if they'd said they have over 2000 land access agreements, have had strained negotiations with x of them, have drilled and operated 2300 gas wells with x minor spills, x breakdowns, x number of drill ends lost etc. The guys that work on these sites are loath to report incidents as it's a race to get more wells drilled. I've had several approach me with these types of stories.

New gas supply on the East Coast is not necessary if demand for gas is reduced. There are mechanisms for this including mandating no new gas connections on new and existing dwellings, freeing up energy for manufacturing by encouraging more roof top solar. Creating policy for electric as opposed to gas fuelled vehicles. Indeed the aluminium smelter that NEEDS this gas can actually run as a big battery for renewable energy. There is one in Germany already doing this and it will be the cheapest most reliable way to transition to renewables (Simon Holmes A Court knows details of this technology).

I won't take up more of your time. I could keep going to the end of both of the two new documents. Suffice to say that nothing I have read in either of them has made me change my mind. I do not think this project should be approved. I do not think it can be conditioned to remove all risks. The long term legacy is forever..

Thank you for the hours, days, weeks and months you have spent. I pray you come to the same conclusion as me and #JustSayNo

Thankyou

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