

21 August 2020

Independent Planning Commission
Level 3/201 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2100

Narrabri Gas Project (SSD6456) Submission to IPC Following Public Hearing

Dear Panel,

Thank you for considering this further submission which is in response to the submission by the proponent of the project, Santos, on 10 August 2020.

THIS PROPOSAL MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO PROCEED.

THERE ARE TOO MANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSAL TO DRILL UP TO 850 WELLS TO EXTRACT GAS FROM ENVIRONMENTALLY AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE COUNTRY.

This submission to the enquiry argues that the risks to the environment, to society and the economy are too great for the project to proceed.

The biggest risk, the elephant in the room so to speak, is the one arising from climate change as this impacts on almost every aspect of life. The consequences of accelerating climate change are already starkly evident in the world around us and adding more 'fuel to the fire' by drilling for gas as proposed in the Pilliga is simply untenable if we are to sustain a liveable planet.

Environmental Risks

- The risk of the addition of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere when the science is recommending that all fossil fuels be left in the ground
- The risk of contamination of water in the Great Artesian Basin
- The risk from there being no plan for management of waste salt and 'produced water'
- The risk from there being no plan for rehabilitation of ruined landscapes when the gas reserves are depleted or mining companies are bankrupted due to collapsing prices
- The risk from the realisation that gas is not the transition fuel it is held to be with potentially high methane emissions

Social Risks

- The risk to household water supplies from water contaminated by gas drilling activities
- The risk that job number claims are unfounded and do not materialise, thereby negating any benefit to job creation from the project
- The risk of the alienation of culturally important country to indigenous residents by the industrialisation of the countryside
- The risk that property values will be driven down due to wrecked country and boom-bust cycles of gas pricing and market fluctuations

Economic Risks

- The risk that the project will become a stranded asset in the face of industry predictions of disappearing demand for gas while renewables continue to expand at lower cost
- On a global scale, the economic risk is so great that massive companies like BHP are exiting the fossil fuel industry and insurance companies exit insuring energy companies that rely on fossil fuels as they consider the move to a zero carbon economy

Even if the risk arising from the above issues could be managed, burning the gas that Santos proposes to mine at Narrabri is the issue as it flies in the face of incontrovertible evidence relating to the climate change impacts from burning fossil fuels.

The Commission has a responsibility to draw a line in the sand for future generations who will be subjected to runaway climate change and will bear the brunt of those impacts.

This gas must be left in the ground and the Narrabri Gas Project must not be approved.

Yours Faithfully

Tony Edye
Architect