

**Independent Planning Commission
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
BY EMAIL: ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au**

21 August 2020

RE: NARRABRI GAS PROJECT – NEW MATERIALS

Dear Commissioners

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the additional materials provided by Santos and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Unlike Santos, a huge multi-national corporation with significant staff and resources at its disposal, many of the people objecting to the project are individuals juggling work, family and other commitments. I am a working mother of a toddler, as well as the founder of a local community group. Yet my belief that the Project should not be approved is so strong that I feel compelled to take time out of my very busy schedule to write to you. However, time limitations prevent me from responding comprehensively.

I will therefore will frame my comments as dot-point responses to specific statements made by Santos in its 'Submission to IPC following public hearing' document dated 10 August 2020.

1. “The Project is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on the local community or the environment.” (p. 2).

I refer to my previous submission to the Commission dated 10 August 2020, in which I provided references for the facts that:

- We must almost halve CO2 emissions by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050 to avoid climate catastrophe and secure a safe planet for our children’s future; and
- Australia is an enormous contributor to CO2 emissions.

This means that even the 1% of total national greenhouse gas emissions the Project is predicted to contribute is inarguably “a significant impact on the environment.”

The record-breaking number of opposing submissions received by the Commission clearly demonstrates that approval of the Project will also result in a significant impact on the community.

2. “[Gas and renewables] must coexist to deliver the energy security and reliability that our society demands.” (p.2)

Santos references the Australian Energy Market Operator’s (AEMO) 2020 Integrated System Plan to make this assertion. However, the AEMO report makes clear the following:

- Although gas may have the potential to balance out variable renewable energy supply and complement renewables storage, under none of the potential scenarios considered by the Plan does the amount of gas burned for electricity in our country’s main grid increase over the coming decade. In fact, it is likely to fall significantly.

- As renewable energy and storage rapidly improve, gas, which is expensive to extract, will not be able to compete with wind and solar on an economic basis.

Not only is gas damaging to the environment at a time when we cannot afford even the slightest increase in carbon emissions. It is also – like coal – a quickly outdated energy source, whose redundancy economists are forecasting for the near future.

Santos fails to acknowledge that gas is no longer competing only with coal, but also with cheaper, safer renewable alternatives.

3. “Santos has set an aspiration of net zero emissions by 2050.” (p. 3)

We are in a climate crisis. An aspiration is not sufficient; Santos must set a clear target and hold itself accountable to it. Further, the document fails to specify how the proposed project is in line with this supposed aspiration.

4. “Consistent with Santos’ core value of “Building a better future”, Santos will continue to work in partnership with local communities and invest in social infrastructure and economic development opportunities that address impacts created by the Project and/or to leave a positive legacy for future generations. These benefits will be applied across the local community in the areas of health, education, environment, economic development, heritage, sport, arts and culture.” (p. 39)

Santos is doing the exact opposite of “building a better future”. Despite whatever efforts, the Project will ultimately not leave a positive legacy for future generations. A safe planet to live on, with adequate access to food and water, must be prioritised over sporting scholarships and art exhibitions.

The document as a whole fails to address most of the (numerous and valid) concerns of the objectors to the Project. There are multiple other aspects of the document which require scrutiny and response, however as noted above I am time restricted. I do however trust that the Commission will thoroughly examine and question the contents of the document and other additional material, in the context of the large body of scientific evidence and community sentiment against the Project.

I look forward to your decision.

Yours sincerely

**T Rainbird
Tamworth NSW**