



DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR RESTART OF REDBANK POWER STATION REFUSED

15 September 2025

The NSW Independent Planning Commission has today refused the development application from Verdant Earth Technologies Ltd to restart the Redbank Power Station at Warkworth using biomass instead of coal tailings as fuel.

The application proposed to restart the power station by using up to 700,000 dry tonnes per year of biomass as fuel, with an intended five-year transition from using biomass sourced primarily from 'invasive native species' (INS) and other 'eligible waste fuels' (EWF), towards using purpose grown biomass fuel (plantation crops) for 70% of its fuel source.

The Commission became the consent authority for the State significant development application (SSD-56284960) after more than 50 unique objections to the proposal were received.

Commissioners Professor Neal Menzies AM (Chair), Ms Alexandra O'Mara and Professor Elizabeth Taylor AO were appointed by the Commission Chair to determine the application.

The Commission met with key stakeholders including the Applicant and Singleton Council, conducted a site inspection and held a public meeting in Singleton where it heard from 37 speakers.

The Commission also received 591 unique submissions, of which 28 (4.7%) supported and 559 (94.6%) objected to the Project.

Details of the key matters raised through submissions and consultation, and how the Commission considered these, are outlined in the Commission's [Statement of Reasons for Decision](#).

In determining the application, the Commission recognised the potential benefits of the Project, including:

- the reuse of existing, purpose-built infrastructure;
- its contribution to energy security and reliability in NSW; and
- the creation of employment opportunities.

However, the Commission refused the Application, finding that "the Application has not, as it should have, addressed potential adverse impacts of the Project relating to its fuel strategy" and that it will "establish a new commercial incentive to increase land clearing", the adverse impacts of which "have not been assessed by the Application in its current form".

"[A]lthough sustainable clearing of INS serves an important role in supporting agriculture, the Commission cannot accept, without thorough assessment, that the large-scale additional actual clearing of INS required by the Project will have no flow-on environmental impacts."

The Commission finds that “the likely environmental impacts of the Application’s proposed fuel strategy are undefined and potentially dispersed and decentralised and not able to be adequately addressed through conditions of consent”.

The Commission also found that “the Application has not adequately addressed the potential risks of the intended transition to plantation crops”, and that “[i]f the proposed transition from INS to plantation crops is frustrated or delayed, the Project would be required to secure other sources of biomass fuel and likely continue its reliance upon INS as a feedstock. This would require further land clearing over the proposed 30-year duration of the Project, with the associated environmental impacts”.

All the documents relating to the assessment and determination of this proposal can be found on the Commission’s website: <https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/cases/restart-redbank-power-station>