



Narrabri Gas Project for and against

Narrabri Gas approval a 'disaster' for community, climate and power prices

The decision to approve the controversial Narrabri Gas Project, handed down by the NSW Independent Planning Commission, has been labelled a 'disaster' by locals and energy experts.

Last weeks decision grants gas company Santos permission to drill 850 gas wells in the Pilliga State Forest, which North West NSW locals say puts some of Australia's most valuable farmland and water resources, including the Great Artesian Basin, at risk of contamination. Santos has already come under fire for polluting an aquifer with uranium.

Energy and climate experts have also warned that the Narrabri Gas Project, which Prime Minister Scott Morrison has earmarked as a key project in his 'gas-fired recovery' plans, will lock Australia in to higher power prices and emissions. Energy analysts say that Narrabri gas, which is expensive to produce, will send electricity bills soaring.

They warn that the crashing gas and oil export market and China's decision to shift rapidly away from fossil fuels could leave the Narrabri Gas Project as a stranded asset, with taxpayers and the Narrabri community saddled with a polluting 'white

elephant.'

Climate experts say that the Narrabri Gas Project is a climate disaster, with greenhouse gas emissions from the project set to fuel more fires, droughts and extreme heat.

Community vows to fight on

The Narrabri Gas Project has met with fierce opposition from the North West community for almost a decade. Over 11,000 people made submissions to the Independent Planning Commission hearing, the largest in the state's history, with the majority opposing the project.

The local community has vowed to fight on, challenging two major pipelines connected to the project which will encroach on farmland and are subject to separate approvals.

- The Western Slopes Pipeline, which will connect in to the Moomba-Sydney gas pipeline

- The Hunter gas pipeline, which will run from Wallumbilla in QLD to Newcastle in NSW, passing through Narrabri.

Huge benefits of Narrabri Gas Project a step closer

An important new major gas project offering jobs, a huge economic boost and increased energy supply to New South Wales is a step closer following the state's Independent Planning Commission approving the Narrabri Gas Project.

The Santos project will directly benefit the Narrabri community and surrounding region with the creation of up to 1,300 jobs during construction and 200 highly-skilled, well-paying and secure local jobs during operations.

It will also deliver around \$1.2 billion in state royalties and unlock new natural gas reserves delivering cheaper and more reliable energy into NSW households and businesses.

"The Narrabri Gas Project will bring important jobs and much-needed economic benefits at a critical time during the COVID-19 recovery phase," Steve Knott, Chief Executive of Australian Resources and Energy Group AMMA, said.

"Santos has undertaken a comprehensive approval process to ensure the project can be developed safely and sustainably, while working closely with Indigenous communities to ensure protection of cultural heritage and sharing of the project's benefits.

"Not only does Santos have a strong track record in safe, sustainable and successful natural gas development, it also has a well-earned reputation for ensuring the communities in which they operate thrive as a result of jobs and community investment.

"Narrabri is also a 100 per cent domestic gas project, delivering energy security and affordability at a time when it is most needed."

The AMMA congratulates Santos on its tireless work to gain support for the project and becoming an integral part of the region's community, including the establishment of a Community Benefit Fund of up to \$120 million to benefit local community groups.

While this approval is a major step, AMMA looks forward to the final tick of approval on the project from the Federal Minister for the Environment under the EPBC Act as well as other subsequent approvals.