

Submission on Oven Mountain pumped storage hydro project EIS

I submit the following points in regard to this project to express my concerns about the EIS and my opposition to it.

- The Government needs to consider possible options for brownfield projects such as at old open cut mine sites and quarries, and those about to close, before approving this project. These would have much less environmental impact.
- The business case is suspect. The economic analysis has been done by the same consultants as for Snowy2, which is showing at least 500% cost overruns. The Kidston Project appears to have a 100% cost overrun. These cost blowouts are a feature of these types of projects.
- The taxpayers are likely to have put in a large amount in subsidies for a foreign owned project.
- The \$9.5M gifted by the Government for this project seems to have been used to garner local support by spending it sponsoring shows and sporting events rather than for project work. This is mis-use of public money.
- The project is to be fully foreign owned and will be run for maximum profit rather than to serve the community. Power will only be available when prices are the highest. The EIS is disingenuous when it emphasises community value. There is Sovereign risk when the project is owned and run by China, which is a likely hostile power.
- The projected reduction in electricity prices is very dubious
- The community consultation and information available in Armidale was inadequate. I went to a meeting in Armidale and learnt almost nothing about the project, and the proponents were unable or unwilling to answer some questions.
- The long term local employment appears to be vastly overstated. The operations will be handled from afar (Sydney?)
- In the 5 years proposed for construction the project may be rendered redundant due to the rapid advances in battery technology.
- The local Councils are required to contribute millions of dollars for roadworks that are really only needed for this project. The usage of this road west of Bellbrook is quite low, and there will be minimal benefit to Armidale residents as the Big Hill section will still be a restricting feature. Armidale Council appears to be expected to widen 24 sections of the road (appendix R) - thousands of square metres- and this may involve large volumes of cut and fill due to the steep slopes. There has been recent approval for a 58% increase in rates in the Armidale Council area and this project will make Council's financial position even worse
- There appears to have been inadequate geotechnical investigation in terms of drilling carried out for a project of this size

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