

**Restart of Redbank Power Station**  
**Application Number - SSD-56284960**

**Submission objecting to Verdant Energy's biomass power station proposal.**

Verdant Energy's proposal to burns 850,000 tonnes of wood per year (modifying a coal tailings furnace to burn wood products) is not green, clean or renewable.

The proponent suggests:

- that the wood supply for the Redbank Power Station will be sourced from invasive native species cleared from farmlands west of Singleton, within 400km of the Redbank site, claiming energy generated from burning this wood will be a carbon neutral source of energy.

Such claims stretch the truth to realms of incompetence.

Burning wood for electricity is a highly polluting process and emits more carbon dioxide per kilowatt hour of energy produced than burning coal.

Burning wood biomass emits 50% more CO<sub>2</sub> per MWh of energy produced than coal, as well as emissions of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) which are many times more destructive to climate and air quality, and to the health of communities living in close proximity to the emissions stack.

The energy required to clear the land, process the bulldozed trees into woodchips, dry and haul the material by road to Cessnock and then burn it to generate heat for electricity is enormous.

Burning 850,000 tonnes of wood will result in the release of some 1.3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year (just at the stack). There will be additional emissions from debris and soils at the clearing sites, and from processing and transporting woodchips.

It is clear that a comprehensive assessment of the potential emissions generated by this proposal have not been fully accounted.

One fact that can be relied upon is that trees growing in the ground sequester CO<sub>2</sub> and that land clearing releases this carbon into the atmosphere. Processing and burning the land clearing residues cannot be considered 'avoided' emissions as this proposal will generate extra emissions in processing and haulage - then combust the end product on the power station site.

In effect, this proposal generates a demand for farmers to clear land, instead of paying them credits to sequester living carbon in regenerating trees and shrubs.

**NSW Biodiversity Crisis**

The proponent has done no assessment of the environmental harm or emissions generated from what the proponent characterises as "much needed" land clearing, or consideration of harm to threatened species habitats, soils and water catchments

impacted when creating a market demand that incentivises land clearing.

There will be additional negative impacts of heavy haulage on local roads, traffic congestion and truck exhaust on surrounding local areas.

### **Risky Investment Project**

Financial investment in polluting biomass undermines investment in genuine renewables such as solar and wind.

Internationally, the biomass energy industry has come under increasing scrutiny, with claims of carbon neutrality and sustainable wood sources being discredited as local communities object to the health impacts of poor air quality, loss of forest habitats and destruction of nature in order to sustain financial viability of wood pellet manufacture and biomass energy projects.

Burning trees to generate electricity is socially and environmentally unacceptable. This project will generate air pollutants including particulates, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), methane, nitrous oxide, sulphur dioxide, lead and mercury.

The biomass needs to be trucked hundreds of kilometres in B-double trucks. At least 56 arriving (and leaving) every day.

The Restart of Redbank Power Station using biomass is neither viable, clean, green or renewable! NSW needs to encourage investment in genuine renewable energy projects that are of benefit to the whole community, protect the environment and public health.

Trees are worth more standing to draw down excess atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>.

I urge the NSW Planning Department to reject this proposal.

sincerely,

Meredith Stanton