

Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Project

Name: Mark Hammond

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Position: I strongly oppose the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Project.

A Life Built Around Lake Lyell

I have lived in this area for over 23 years, and like many others, I have deep roots here. My family has been connected to this region for generations.

Lake Lyell has always been part of my life. I grew up around it—fishing, camping, and spending time there with family. Later, my own kids grew up doing exactly the same. It's more than just a dam. It's part of who we are as a community.

When I bought my property in the early 2000s, it was for a simple reason—peace and quiet. It was the perfect balance: close enough to town, but far enough away to feel like you had space, nature, and a future.

The Moment Everything Changed

I didn't plan to stay there forever. Like many people, I had a longer-term plan.

After raising my family, I wanted to renovate, sell, and move closer to the coast—closer to where my children are now living. That was the next chapter.

But the moment this project was announced, that future disappeared.

Living Next Door to an Industrial Project

The proposed pumped hydro development is not somewhere in the distance—it is right next door.

It will sit on my boundary. What was once a quiet rural outlook will become an industrial site. The very reason I bought the property no longer exists.

I now face the reality of living beside a project that will fundamentally change the landscape, the noise, and the entire character of the area.

A Dam That Will No Longer Belong to the Community

Lake Lyell has always been used by locals and visitors alike—for fishing, swimming, skiing, and camping.

We are told that access will remain, but realistically, that cannot happen. You cannot safely have people using the dam recreationally while water levels are being actively pumped in and out to meet energy demands.

What is being proposed will take something that belongs to the community and turn it into something that serves a completely different purpose.

Financially Trapped

Before this project, I had a clear plan. Renovate, sell, and move on.

Now I cannot sell.

Local real estate advice is clear—the value of my property has dropped significantly, and even worse, it is effectively unsaleable. Any potential buyer would be made aware of the project, and that alone is enough to walk away or demand a heavily reduced price.

I am left in a position where I either accept a major financial loss or stay in a place that no longer represents what I bought.

Years Of Uncertainty And Broken Promises

Over the past few years, I have had very limited engagement with the proponent.

There were meetings early on, and I was told that within months there would be clarity—either the project would not proceed, or there would be an offer to purchase my property.

Years later, nothing has happened.

I was encouraged to get a solicitor. I did. Since then, there have been repeated attempts to get responses—most of which have been ignored.

The result is ongoing uncertainty. No answers. No timeline. No resolution.

Feeling Invisible

At one point, I saw project images and visualisations being displayed publicly.

My house wasn't there.

It had been replaced with trees, as if it didn't exist. As if I didn't exist.

That moment summed up how this whole process has felt—like the people most affected are simply removed from the picture.

A Breakdown In Communication

The frustration built over time. Conversations went nowhere. Promises were made and not kept.

Eventually, I expressed that frustration in a phone call.

What followed was completely unexpected—police were sent to my home for a welfare check.

There had been no threats. It was a phone conversation. Yet suddenly I had police at my door, in front of my family.

It was distressing, embarrassing, and entirely disproportionate.

After that, communication effectively stopped.

The Personal Toll

This is not just about a project on paper.

It has affected my life in a very real way:

- I cannot move forward with my plans
- I cannot sell my home
- I am living with ongoing uncertainty
- It has caused stress, frustration, and sleepless nights

At a stage in life where I should be planning the next chapter, I feel completely stuck.

Wider Concerns For The Community

What is happening to me is not just an individual issue.

This project will:

- Remove or severely limit access to a major recreational asset
- Impact the natural environment, including wildlife
- Deliver uncertain local benefits
- Be driven by external commercial interests rather than local needs

I struggle to see any real positives for the community.

Final Reflection

Lake Lyell has always been part of this community—part of people's lives, memories, and identity.

What is being proposed will change that permanently.

For me, it has already changed everything.

MY FINAL POSITION

I strongly oppose the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Project.