

The Department of Planning and Environment
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Parramatta NSW 2124

Submission uploaded to : [www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects
Bellambi Heights Battery Energy Storage System | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/Bellambi%20Heights%20Battery%20Energy%20Storage%20System%20-%20Planning%20Portal%20-%20Department%20of%20Planning%20and%20Environment%20(nsw.gov.au))

Dear Megan Ramsdale, Contact Planner

My objections to SSD-33344237 Bellambi Heights BESS

My objections to the proposed Bellambi Heights BESS includes the **Increased fire and toxic chemical laden smoke risks:**

The proposed BESS poses an unacceptable fire risk to my property and the properties of my neighbours from fire and smoke from toxic chemical fires. We are within a 5kms distance from the proposed site of the BESS. Just since July 2022 we have had four fires in that area, including two in the Beryl solar works. We could clearly see the smoke from the fires and the flames from the fire on the property adjoining the site of the proposed BESS, which is part of the proposed 13km² Tallawang solar works proposal.(see photos). The second fire at the solar farm burnt 18 hectares under the solar panels at a reported damage cost of \$7,000,000. All these fires occurred when weather conditions were relatively benign, yet they took several hours to control and involved calling in emergency services from 30kms or more radius, including three water-bombing helicopters. The second fire at the Beryl solar works burnt itself out after four hours due to a wind change. Our fire-fighting crews and HAZMAT team did not try to extinguish this fire but just protected the perimeter. They will not risk their lives and health to fight any industrial wind turbine, solar works and BESS fires.

Just this week a BESS is on fire at Bouldercombe in Queensland. The manufacturer of the battery units told fire-fighters to let it burn and just keep the nearby units cool with water. The chemical reaction lithium batteries fire is expected to burn for four days, as did the Moorabool-Geelong BESS fire in July 2021. In both cases nearby residents were told to shut all windows and doors and stay inside with their respiratory medicines nearby. Some may have evacuated.

We are now entering a drought period and while we have lived with severe grass and bushfires for decades these new sources of fire-ignition from BESS, wind, solar and transmission lines crowded within a few kilometres of our properties and of our historic town of Gulgong are a step-change in risk for our community that we should not have to face. Ash from grass and bush fires are relatively harmless. Toxic chemically-based fires are a different matter. We do not have the resources to contain fires of this type let alone extinguish them, even if that was possible. Not enough RFS volunteers, FSNSW personnel or suitable equipment exist. Apart from fires spreading uncontrollably there is the toxicity of the smoke. The toxic residue will settle and contaminate or tank water and our dams, resulting in increased ongoing human and animal health risks.

None of the above is understood by the Proponent, which makes their fire mitigation proposals useless. It is our lives, properties, town, animals (domestic & wildlife) put at very much INCREASED risk, not the Proponent's, their consultants or their construction workers.

The Bellambi Heights BESS proposal MUST BE REJECTED! Our lives are at stake!

Sincerely, Upset Gulgong resident

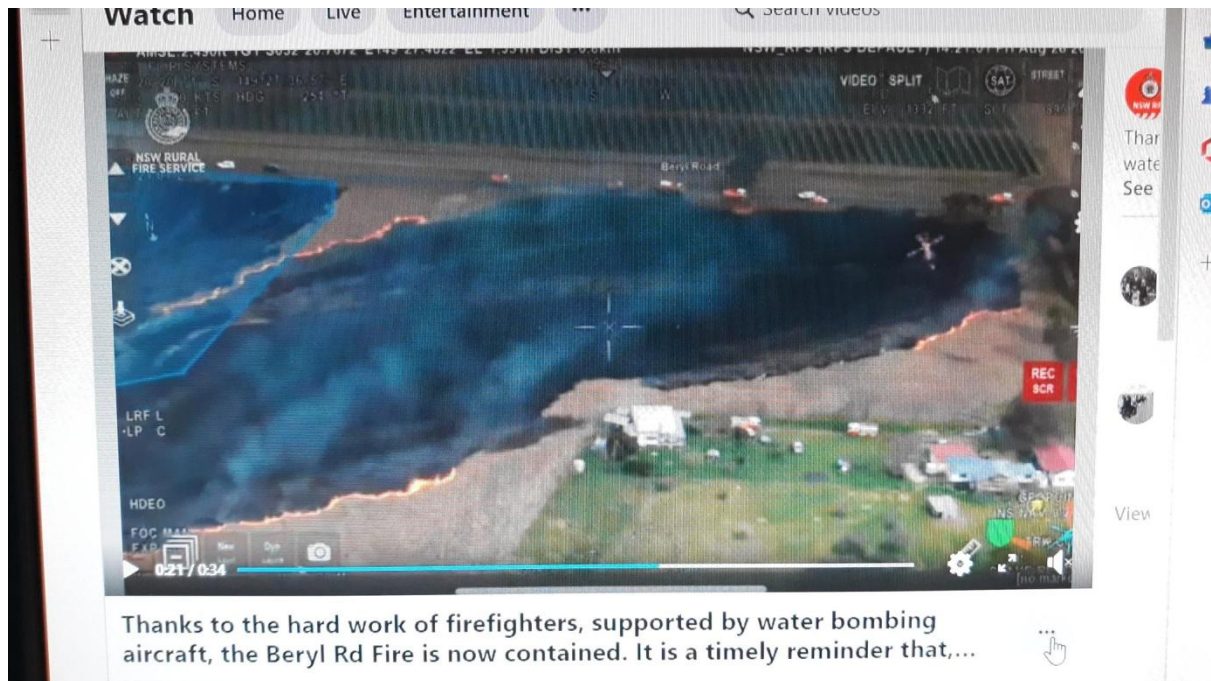
Photos of recent Beryl and Stubbo fires

26/08/22: Fire starts on property across the road from Beryl Solar works

Start of fire about midday across from Beryl Solar Works (4kms away)



Fire threatens to enter Beryl Solar Works



Fire jumped the road & burnt to the solar works fenced boundary



07/09/2022: Beryl Tallawang fire, Puggoon Rd

Weather: Temperature 16.7C, humidity 69%, wind 4.7km/h (5kms away)



24/04/2023: Beryl Solar Works burns (4kms away)



16/09/2023: Stubbo Solar Works' into days of burn-offs

Gulgong RFS & FRNSW already under resourced

