

## SUBMISSION OPPOSING AGL PROPOSED EXTENSION TO THE LAPSE DATE - PROPOSED GAS FIRED POWER PLANT PROJECT AT DALTON

I write this submission opposing AGL's proposed extension to the lapse date for the commencement of work on the proposed gas fired power plant project at Dalton (DPP), NSW.

I'm opposed to the application by AGL for an extension of time for the following reasons:

1: The Planning Assessment Commission granted AGL Energy Ltd project approval for the construction and operation of the DPP under Part 3A of the *Environmental Assessment and Planning Act 1979*. The approval was granted on 19 July 2012.

AGL seeks to modify the project approval to extend the lapse date for a further two years to enable "AGL to review the DPP in line with current technology and energy market circumstances". I note the application mentions "new technology" and refers to 'fast start' aero derivative gas turbines and battery storage.

In an Email to Dalton resident Mr Alister Waine on 28 March 2017, Ms Diane Knott (AGL) expanded that list to include solar and diesel.

Extract of email from Ms Diane Knott (AGL) to Mr Alister Waine:

*As we've discussed, AGL Energy's current application provides time to consider the gas-fired peaking power station in light of new technology, proposals including the Snowy Hydro pumped storage, and energy market conditions. Technology that AGL may consider to make the project more efficient and complement New South Wales' energy needs may include additions of solar, batteries, diesel, and higher-efficiency gas turbine options.*

*We are not considering modifying the approved project to a baseload power station.*

In the application AGL goes on to foreshadow lodging a more substantial project approval modification (MOD 2) after the assessment of current/new technology. Noting that AGL has had 5 years to continually assess and consider the commercial viability of the technology it was given permission to use, I suspect AGL does not intend to build the DPP in the approved design. That leads me to conclude that AGL has reached a position that a DPP would only be viable using different technology.

Surely the use of technology different to that which was originally assessed and approved would substantially change the impact to the community and the environment. I am perplexed as to how an extension to the lapse date could even be considered for AGL's stated purpose. Surely the consideration, approval and development of a substantially different power plant should only be done via a new development application and assessment process under the legislation with which new proposals are now considered - Not the legislation (now repealed) under which the original approval was given.

2. In the AGL request to extend the lapse date it is stated that “In October 2012 AGL announced the suspension of construction of the DPP due to difficult market conditions - including lower demand for electricity”.

AGL has had five years to make a decision to start building the power plant and it has chosen not to in this time. I acknowledge that AGL noted the “project remained valid for five years and in that time that market conditions or demand could change”. That time is over. They have had 5 years to continually assess and consider changing energy market conditions.

I contend that market conditions and demand has not changed to an extent where AGL could justify to its shareholders moving forward with the DPP as it stands. I contend AGL is seeking an extension on the basis that things “could” change from this point on. Further, when you take the AGL statement about current and new technology into account, the question arises : is AGL attempting to change what they want to build on the site while keeping the future development under Part 3A of the *Environmental Assessment and Planning Act 1979* (repealed)? This only serves to keep a darker cloud hanging over our community.

3. AGL seeks to modify the project approval to extend the lapse date for a further two years to enable consultation with the local community, landholders and other stakeholders. In its application to extend the lapse date AGL claims it wants to be a “trusted and respected member of the communities in which it operates”. AGL claims it wants to engage beyond baseline regulatory requirements.

AGL has shown no commitment to the community in the last five years. AGL is a landowner, effectively a member of our community, yet it has contributed nothing. If AGL was a contributing community member and engaged with the Dalton community it would’ve been aware of the new residents that have moved to Dalton since October 2012.

It is important to note that since the AGL announcement to suspend the DPP project the village of Dalton has grown. New families have chosen to move to our quiet village after the AGL announcement. I am one of them. Many moved here with no knowledge of the proposed plans by AGL because everyone thought AGL had gone away to leave Dalton in peace. There was no engagement or communication with the community by AGL after it announced the project suspension.

New members of the community have since moved to Dalton and the surrounding area. Some very close to AGL land. The new members of the community made a lifestyle choice to move away from industrialisation and the stresses that comes with it. People, including myself have made financial decisions about buying property and building in our community since the AGL announcement in October 2012. An extension of time for AGL would only serve to leave a cloud of concern and fear hanging over the new community members for the next two years.

Some have invested in developing land. Subdivisions have been developed and are on the market for sale. The future of these developments is now in jeopardy.

In summary, the decision by AGL to return will have significant detrimental financial, economic and environmental impacts that people could not foresee or were not warned about.

If an extension of time is granted real estate prices would drop because real estate agents are legally obliged to inform potential buyers of any circumstance that might impact negatively on them. This would potentially leave those individuals that have borrowed money to invest in or move to Dalton losing financially. New residents potentially may end up owing more money than what the property will be worth if an extension is granted. They would not be able to sell it for the price they bought it for, assuming it can be sold. Let's be honest no one wants to live near a power plant.

Further, if AGL had engaged with the community, it would have known that the area has recently been identified as an environmental hotspot with the recent finding of the southern pigmy perch and the yellow spotted bell frog in our water ways. Our frog was thought gone for thirty years, never to be seen again; and if AGL is given its extension of time it may only be a few years before that really does happen.

Noise and vibration generated by the plant is a huge issue. The Uranquinty and Alice Springs debacles leave me doubtful of AGL's research data and claims of a quiet office environment at my home.

AGL is not a respected land owner and member of our community. It has displayed complete disregard for its obligation to care for the land it owns at Dalton. I have been informed that AGL has failed to control noxious weeds. The invasion of native plant communities by exotic weeds is not only a threat to our native plants and animals it threatens the livelihoods of our farmers (AGL's neighbours).

4. AGL contend that extending the lapse date would not change the positive socio-economic benefits of the DPP. It talks of 5-10 long term jobs.

I again refer you to the points made above regarding the socio-economic impacts on those that have moved and or invested in property developments since October 2012. There will be no positive socio-economic benefit for Dalton.

Dalton is a farming community and a tourist community. We are not technically qualified to work in a gas fired power plant. Let's be honest no one will end up with a job at the power plant if it was built and very few will have an opportunity to work on the construction of it.

People come here for the lifestyle and to experience a peaceful quiet country village lifestyle where people can live in harmony. They will not come here, or stay if the village is overshadowed by a power plant spewing toxins into our air, our waterways and our country side. If we lose our reputation as a place of tranquillity, we will lose the people who want to live here and the people who want to visit. If we lose our people and our tourists then we lose our businesses and our jobs, our schools. We will lose our community. We will lose far more than the 5 to 10 long term jobs mentioned in the AGL application for an extension of

time to the lapse date. Even this claim of 5 – 10 jobs is being challenged. I understand that the plant will be operated remotely.

Further the construction of the plant if it proceeds will be undertaken by a major construction company. Construction companies such as these bring construction crews in from outside the area, and set up self-sufficient camps. Local business hardly ever benefits in these situations and if it does the gain is only ever short-term. I doubt the veracity of the AGL claim that construction will provide local jobs.

In summary, I again wish to state that this submission is for the purpose of opposing AGLs proposed extension to the lapse date regarding the proposed DPP. AGL has had five years grace, but it chose not to proceed with the project in that time. In that time, they have not engaged with the community at all. The AGL application is nothing more than a mechanism under which it can continue to keep the project alive under repealed legislation that was flawed and sullied by claims of corruption.

AGL has a terrible reputation with this community. Why would any community wish to engage with an organisation that was found guilty of and fined for not disclosing political donations, coincidentally during the same period it was pushing for a proposed gas fired power plant in a sleepy little village on the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales.

Please tell AGL to walk away. Refuse the request for an extension to the lapse date.