

I wish to submit my opposition to the extension of the lapse date of the proposed AGL Dalton Power Project (DPP).

My wife and I have owned a 67 hectare property at Dalton for the past 18 years; our property is within 2.5kms south of the proposed DPP site. Despite being in such close proximity to the DPP site, at no time have we ever received any direct communication from AGL regarding the proposed DPP.

Over the past 18 years we have invested considerable time and money on improvements and infrastructure to improve our property with the intent to build a house and live at Dalton. These plans were shelved in July 2012 with the granting of approval for the construction of the DPP. The announcement by AGL in October 2012 of the suspension of the project did provide some glimmer of hope, but there has always still been that degree of uncertainty. In February this year my wife and I decided that considering the pending expiration date for the DPP approval period approaching without any action by AGL, it would be reasonably safe to reignite our plans to construct our retirement home on our property. Granting AGL an extension will, at the minimum, again prolong the uncertainty we have endured for the past 5 years.

Noise Impact

A major concern for us is the noise impact from the power station. On a still night the trucks can clearly be heard travelling along the Hume Highway, some 12kms away, and also the trains passing through Gunning, which is a passive reminder of why one would choose to live in Dalton. But I dread to think of the noise impact of multiple turbines in operation only 2.5kms away.

Property Valuations

Another major concern is the negative impact on property valuations. This has been confirmed by Real Estate experts of many years standing, although has been dismissed by AGL. Like many other residents of the area we have made considerable investment in our property which is being negated by the ongoing uncertainty hanging over the district of Dalton.

Community Consultation

I attended the AGL - Community Meeting / Presentation at Dalton on 5/4/2017. I have worked in the utility project delivery industry for over 25 years; in the industry good stakeholder engagement is fundamentally critical and basic practice for a successful project. I find the AGL approach to community consultation abhorrent; they seem to constantly treat the community of Dalton -who are all stakeholders- with contempt.

AGL started their address to the meeting with an apology for their lack of community consultation and silence over the past 5 years, with promises of improved community engagement going forward. Their disregard for the community was again demonstrated toward the end of the meeting with the AGL team blatantly engaging in a one on one conversation while a Dalton community member was delivering their closing presentation to the meeting.

Throughout the presentation AGL constantly referred to the project approval being for a power station of only 750 megawatts (MW) capacity, although the approval is for - stage 1 being a nominal generating capacity not exceeding 750 MW and the total nominal generating capacity after completion of stage 2 was not to exceed 1000 MW.

Even within their Mod 1 application AGL identify stage 1 not exceeding 750 MW generating capacity and further into the document it refers to stage 1 possibly resulting in 780 MW generating capacity.

This is an example of selective, deceitful and incomplete information being fed by AGL in contrast to their commitment to open and effective consultation.

Conclusion

In justification for their Mod1 application AGL have identified a Change in Energy Market Conditions. This change has not happened over night, change has been in progress for a considerable time and I believe an organisation like AGL are constantly assessing the market and have had significant opportunity to react in the past 5 years, without prolonging uncertainty for the Dalton community.

In summary, given the demonstrated track record, I have little faith in the commitment portrayed by AGL to address the magnitude of concerns raised by the community.

Therefore I would implore the Department of Planning and Environment to reject the AGL application to extend the lapse date of the DPP for a further 2 years and thereby end the protracted uncertainty endured by the Dalton community.

At the very least, if AGL are really serious about addressing **changes** in the energy market, they should withdraw the currently approved project and re-submit a new project application under the current approval process, thereby addressing **changes** in the Dalton surrounding environment over the past 7-8 years.