

20 May 2017

Attn: Executive Director, Resource Assessments

Dept of Planning & Environment

GPO BOX 39

SYDNEY NSW 2001

**RE: Narrabri Gas Project**

I object to the Narrabri Gas Project for all the reasons listed below.

**Social and Health impacts**

Anyone who has watched Erin Brockovich the movie, based on a true story, understands the lengths gas companies go to, to cover up and deny the damage that gas mining has on the land, water & air, and therefore on all those great and small – animals and people, who are in that area. The social impact assessment conducted by Santos is 3 years old and utterly inadequate.

**Air quality – air pollution**

The air quality assessment fails to include health damaging fine particulate pollution, with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less (known as PM2.5). With diesel generators at each well pad and at the water treatment and gas compression plants, there will be significant PM2.5 emissions. The air quality assessment and greenhouse section also fail to model the likely substantial escape of fugitive methane emissions.

**Methane emissions**

The impact of methane emissions from unconventional gas, including coal seam gas, is discussed in the research by the Melbourne Energy Institute, which shows that Australia is dramatically under-estimating the negative impact of this gas, particularly with its involvement with climate change. It is not needed or useful as a source of energy. We have the technology we need to replace gas with renewable energy sources.

**Social and Environmental impact - Jobs**

The project will provide some jobs for a short term. We need sustainable jobs, not those that provide short term profit for long term devastation on the animals, nature and environment.

**Cost of living**

As the negative impacts increase, the cost of living for importing water, paying for medical bills, and not being able to eat the produce in the area, due to contamination, this means greater expense to all those in the area. The effect of the project on cost of living in the Shire needs to be modelled, assessed and considered, as do the labour dynamics of the project.

**Great Artesian Basin & groundwater**

The project is expected to remove over 37GL of groundwater. This will result in a loss of water from the Great Artesian Basin recharge aquifer over time. We can't afford to risk this crucial resource.

### **Salt – transportation and impact**

The water removed from the ground will be treated with salt. The transportation of this salt, at an expected 115 tonnes per day. This traffic will impact the environment – both the fauna and flora around. Then this salt, 41,900 tonnes, in the peak year, will all go to landfill.

### **Cultural heritage and the Pilliga**

The Pilliga is a spiritual, cultural and social icon for the Gomeroi / Gamilararray people. Industrialisation cuts people off from their heritage and connection to the country.

### **Real Estate prices**

Real Estate prices will plummet as the traffic, environmental destruction of land, water and air occurs. Current residents will want to move out, and no one will want to move in, this will then mean the price of real estate will drop, and possibly cause financial hardship on those existing residents.

### **Biodiversity and the Pilliga**

The Pilliga is the largest temperate woodland in NSW. Clearing so much of the Pilliga (nearly 1,000ha) including habitat for critically endangered Regent honeyeater and koalas, which are already in decline in that area. Clearing of the forest and creating roads will fragment much larger areas of habitat. The gas field will clear breeding habitat for the Pilliga Mouse, which doesn't live anywhere else and breeding habitat for other wildlife.

### **Forest**

The gas fields will fragment and degrade the forest. The Pilliga is a cherished natural and cultural icon and must be protected.

### **Light pollution**

Light pollution from flares (burning off the gas), and the lights from passing trucks, and the lights at the gas wells, will be on all night. This light will ruin the dark sky needed by the internationally renowned Siding Spring Observatory. Also, this light will impact all the nocturnal animals.

### **Noise pollution**

The noise pollution from passing trucks day and night, on the people and animals in the area.

### **Water contamination**

The Government must insist that Santos conduct a proper health impact assessment including modelling exposure pathways, reviewing literature and engagement with the Narrabri community.

Yours sincerely,

Brent