

SUBMISSION ON PROPOSED HUNTER POWER PROJECT (KURRI KURRI POWER STATION)

I OPPOSE the proposed development.

The Federal Government, in line with its mantra of a 'Gas Led Recovery', asked private enterprise to build and operate a gas fired power station to help support the East Coast electricity network with the imminent closure of the Liddell power station. It seems the private sector already knew this proposed power station would not make economic sense and would quickly become a stranded asset. As a result, the private sector did not take up the Government's offer.

So now the Federal Government is proposing a gas fired power station at Kurri Kurri New South Wales. Snowy Hydro has been appointed as developer of the proposal. The Executive Summary of Snowy Hydro's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project states 'For gas operation, the Proposal would also require a new gas lateral pipeline and gas receiving station which would be subject to a separate environmental assessment and planning approval. Gas would be supplied . . . via the existing NSW gas transmission system'.

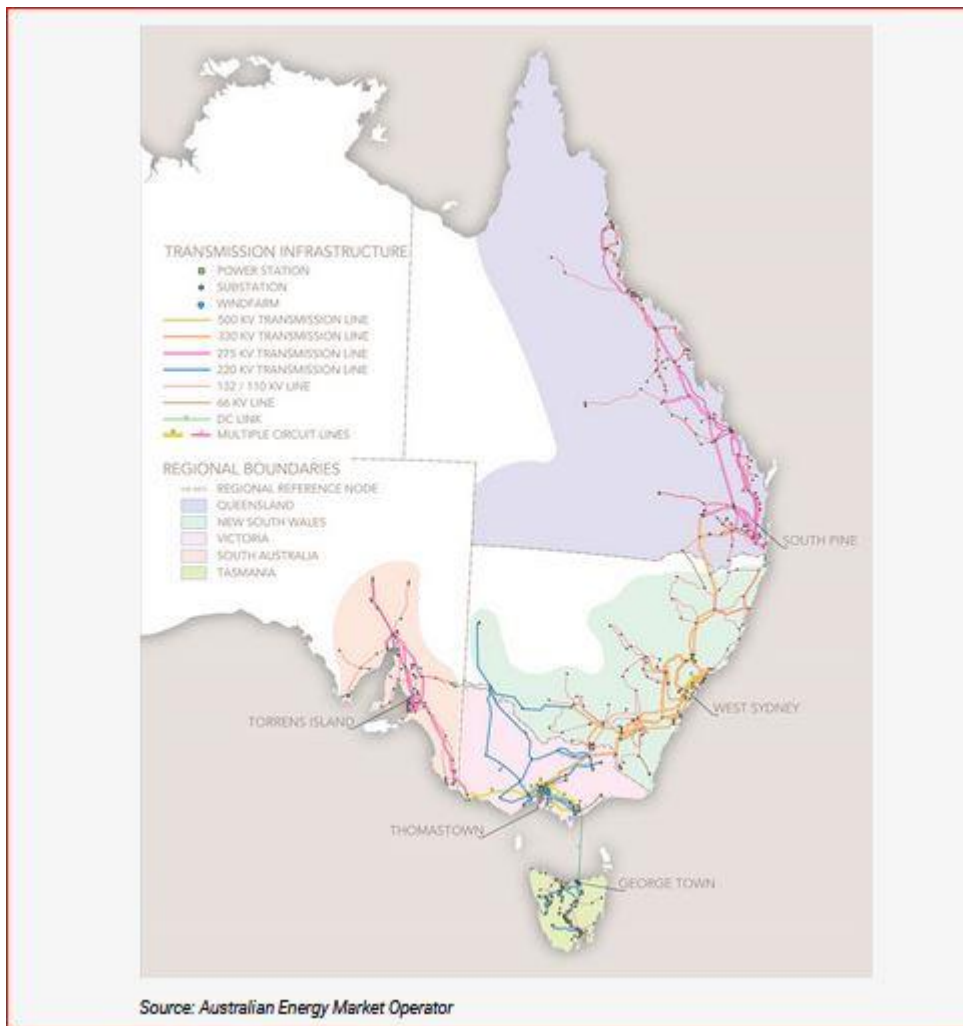
The EIS is therefore acknowledging there is no gas supply available to the site. The EIS also acknowledges the proposed plant would be powered by diesel until gas became available. It further acknowledges the plant would operate effectively just 2% of the time.

The proponents of this development appear to not understand the science behind climate change nor the economics of the proposal nor the demonstrated lack of justification for the project. The International Energy Agency has stated there should be **no** new coal or gas fired power plants built. This in itself is justification to refuse approval of the proposal. If that is not a sufficiently compelling statement, Kerry Schott, chair of the government's own Energy Security Board, has said the proposal "doesn't stack up" because gas is "expensive power, it's hard to see it makes commercial sense".

Any perceived shortfall after the Liddell power station closes is expected to be filled by dispatchable power via the NSW Government funded Emerging Energy Program. The batteries already operational, under construction and planned in NSW will have more than sufficient capacity to cover any shortfall in capacity.

Australia, rather than becoming a global social outcast, should instead be a world leader in 'the race' toward carbon neutrality; a race because planetary carbon neutrality by the year 2050 is seen by many as being far too late to prevent climate disaster. Australia has a moral responsibility to do much more than just 'our share' of the heavy lifting. We will reap the rewards if there is the will to step up. Australia is blessed with an abundance of wind and sun. It is only right for us and the planet that Australia harvests these free power sources for our own benefit as well as the planet.

As the East Coast high voltage electricity grid runs from Port Lincoln in South Australia in the West to Tasmania in the South and Port Douglas in Queensland in the North there is almost no possibility that the winds are becalmed and the sunshine excluded, at least during daylight hours, throughout the entire grid system.



The East Coast High Voltage Distributor Network

The Government's argument that this proposed Kurri Kurri plant is needed when 'the wind don't blow and the sun don't shine' can't be supported. With regard to sunshine, the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) records the solar exposure for most if not all its weather stations. During mid to late March 2021, when record flooding rains battered much of Eastern Australia, BoM records show that there were just two days, 21st and 22nd March, when the area served by the grid had less than 50% of the long term March monthly average solar exposure. This certainly was not a case of the sun not shining on the grid. Even if wind generation suffered the same drop-off, it is days like these where storage, not gas, comes to the rescue to make up the shortfall.

The Federal Government's Snowy Hydro generation, Tasmania's hydro generation plus existing and planned 'big batteries' are just the start of a network filling in the gaps in renewables. The Government's 'Gas Led Recovery' doesn't stand serious scrutiny and neither does the Kurri Kurri gas power station.

On the grounds that this project 'doesn't stack up' because it is an environmental insult, an economic nightmare and is not needed, the proposal should be rejected and I ask that this be done.