I wish to object to the proposal on the following grounds:

Increased combustion of fossil fuels is incompatible with emissions reduction commitments

Achieving net zero by 2050 is a target which has been agreed by the NSW government. Although it is not as ambitious as we need to slow the rate of global warming for the protection of humans and other living things, it nevertheless points clearly in the direction we need to go, particularly on the burning of fossil fuels. Building new power plants that will emit carbon, such as this proposed gas/diesel one, is a retrograde step.

This has been reinforced recently by the International Energy Agency's statement on critical milestones for achieving the net zero by 2050 goal. As well as including no investment in new fossil fuel supply projects, its Roadmap says that "by 2040, the global electricity sector has already reached net-zero emissions". Decarbonising electricity production is key.

if we are to have a chance of reaching responsible climate goals, the NSW government should not be approving new projects that either extract fossil fuels or burn them for electricity generation.

Proponent does not validly justify need for this power station

Although touted as a back-up facility ("peaking plant'), no comparison is made between delivering firming of the electricity grid by this proposed plant and by other means. In particular, this should not be regarded as state significant development if equivalent options in storage from batteries and pumped hydro are not taken into account. The statement that "storage alone will not be able to meet the shortfall in generation that will accompany the planned closure of the Liddell Power Station …" is not supported by any evidence.

Two big batteries are already under construction in NSW, with another 12 proposed or announced. Pumped hydro stations like Oven Mountain will likely add more firming capacity as we shift further towards renewable power generation in this state.

Based on a technology that is becoming outdated now, the estimated 30 year life of this project, not yet approved, means it will become a stranded asset well before 2050.

Proposed project does not deal adequately with pollution and contaminants

The site proposed is polluted from its use as an aluminium smelter, a situation not explored in any detail in the EIS. Decontamination if performed adequately will take some time, and delay in beginning this project must be factored against the coming on line of alternative resources described above.

The proposed project will likely add further contamination.

Air pollution is both global and local. Globally, greenhouse gas production will contribute an estimated 14.8 million tonnes over a 30-year life for the gas plant.

Locally particulate pollution will exacerbate the health concerns of the local residents. Fine particle and nitrogen oxides will be emitted through the burning of diesel, in an area where air pollution already exceeds national standards, especially for PM2.5.

Angela Michaelis, 9 June 2021