

Fiona Lee
109 Albert Street, Islington NSW 2296
fiona.michele.lee@gmail.com

**Submission on the proposed Hunter Power Project (Kurri Kurri Power Station).
Application number SSI-12590060**

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a mother and bushfire survivor I strongly oppose the Hunter Power Project. I urge the Minister to reject this proposal because we know that burning gas drives climate change. Gas is a polluting fossil fuel and the carbon emissions generated from the extraction and transport of it will only fuel more fires like the one that took my home and thousands of others in the catastrophic bushfires of 2019/20.

Australia doesn't need new destructive unconventional gas. Economists, energy industry experts, power companies and the Australian Energy Market Operator have all stated that it is uneconomic and unnecessary.

Australians like myself, have lived through numerous extreme weather events in just the last two years- from enduring crippling drought then losing our home to bushfires and recently suffering through the devastating flash floods this year.

We must urgently phase out all fossil fuels, including gas, if we are to avoid more dangerous climate change. Every time we expand or build new fossil fuel infrastructure, including gas power stations, we are putting more Australian lives, like my 4 year old child's, in danger.¹ If we continue along our current trajectory of relying on fossil fuels to meet our power needs, I will remain fearful of what Australian summers will look like when my daughter is my age.

The recent court case *Sharma v Minister for Environment* (May 29, 2021) established a new duty of care to protect young people from foreseeable future climate change harms and establishes a clear link between fossil fuel projects and those harms. The risks to young people are real and being felt in my community already.

"If we want to reach net zero by 2050 we do not need any more investments in new oil, gas and coal projects." International Energy Agency, May 2021

The NSW Government has committed to a strategy to transition rapidly to renewable energy generation and storage, effectively reducing Greenhouse gas emissions and creating secure and sustainable jobs. This commitment is clearly articulated in the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap enacted into law on 2 December 2020.²

¹ <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/net-zero-emissions-plummet-decade/>

² <https://energy.nsw.gov.au/government-and-regulation/electricity-infrastructure-roadmap>

Contrary to the claim made in the EIS (on page 58), the proposed Power Station is inconsistent with this NSW Government policy.

The Roadmap aims to help NSW deliver on its ambitions to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and to reduce NSW electricity emissions by 90 million tonnes by 2030.

The NSW Government's commitment to a transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is also clearly articulated in the Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030 Plan, which aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 by creating new jobs, cutting household costs and attracting investment.³

The proposed Hunter Power Project is incompatible with the commitment made by NSW Energy and Environment Minister Matt Kean for NSW to become a “renewable energy superpower”. The Roadmap clearly differentiates the NSW Government's approach to energy from the Commonwealth's reliance on a “gas-led recovery”. It could see renewable energy increase from 16% of energy generated in NSW to more than 60%. “Using gas to create electricity is a really expensive way to do it. If you're interested in driving down electricity prices, then you'd be mad to use gas.” Matt Kean, NSW Energy & Environment Minister

We have clean and affordable alternatives to gas. Batteries and pumped hydro can provide clean and affordable power. These are dispatchable technologies and batteries are being embraced by the private sector, with a number of projects planned in NSW. Snowy hydro should invest in these technologies to help reduce New South Wales' emissions, improve grid security and put downward pressure on electricity prices.⁴

We can meet energy demand through a combination of renewable energy and battery storage. The EIS acknowledges that a combination of grid-scale batteries and fast-start-turbines could provide dispatchable capacity and meet demands when the needs of electricity consumers are highest (p.x). Further, the EIS states that “the cost of batteries is falling, making storage an increasingly commercially viable option” (p.52).

I urge the Minister to consider his duty of care to protect young people from foreseeable future climate change harms and reject the Hunter Power Project.

Sincerely,

Fiona Lee

³ NSW Government Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030 Plan
the objective is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 by creating new jobs, cutting household costs and attracting investment.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Climate-change/net-zero-plan-2020-2030-200057.pdf>

⁴ <https://reneweconomy.com.au/big-battery-storage-map-of-australia/>