The detailed assessment report was informed by extensive community consultation and advice from the Narrabri Shire Council, government agencies and independent experts, including a Water Expert Panel established specifically for this investigation.

The report concluded that the Narrabri Gas Project:

+ Is critical for energy security and reliability in NSW
+ Delivers significant economic benefits to NSW and the Narrabri region and would stimulate economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19
+ Has been designed to minimise any impacts on the region’s significant water resources, including the Great Artesian Basin, the biodiversity and heritage values of the Pilliga State Forest, and the health and safety of the local community
+ Would not result in any significant impacts on people or the environment.

The report found that the economic benefits of the Narrabri Gas Project included:

+ Creation of 1300 construction jobs
+ 200 local, ongoing jobs
+ A $14.5 million Voluntary Planning Agreement with Narrabri Shire Council.
The 196-page report also confirmed the Project would comply with relevant government legislation and noted at least 10 reasons why it was unlikely to adversely affect the region’s groundwater resources. These included that:

+ The target coal seams are very deep, at least 350-650 metres deeper than 97 per cent of productive groundwater bores
+ There is no evidence of any geological structure that could create a pathway between the shallower aquifers and the coal seams.

Based on this assessment, the NSW Government has recommended approval subject to strict conditions. Santos would accept, implement and comply with all the conditions proposed by the Government if the Project is approved.

**What is the IPC’s process?**


The IPC Panel, chaired by Steve O’Connor, will now:

+ Review the assessment report
+ Review comments and submissions received on the report
+ Conduct a site visit
+ Conduct stakeholder meetings
+ Hold public hearings and hear from stakeholders who register to speak at the hearings
+ Consider any proposed draft conditions recommended by the Department
+ Make a final determination on the Project.

**Find out more**

The Narrabri Gas Project website (www.narrabrigasproject.com.au) includes Project information, news and activity updates. Since December 2014, the Narrabri Gas Project Community Consultative Committee (CCC), consisting of representatives from government, key industry and community organisations, and Santos, has met regularly to provide the community with updates on the Project and to listen to their feedback. Meeting documents are published on the website.

**Have your say**

The IPC’s website allows you to leave a comment, upload a written submission or register your interest (by 10 July 2020) to speak during the public hearings. You can express your support for, or opposition to the Project, and give your reasons why. Electronic hearings will be held by the Panel from Monday, 20 July 2020 to Friday, 24 July 2020 and written comments on the Narrabri Gas Project will be accepted up to one week after the hearing via email, post or through the online portal: www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say.

For further information, please visit www.narrabrigasproject.com.au or email energy.nsw@santos.com

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**Santos’ track record**

Santos has been supplying natural gas to New South Wales customers from South Australia’s Cooper Basin for nearly 45 years. Today, NSW still imports around 95 per cent of its natural gas needs from other states. Santos’ proposed Narrabri Gas Project would allow NSW to develop and use its own gas resources, improving energy security and reducing gas transport costs.

The large natural gas resource in the Narrabri area was first discovered in the Pilliga scrub in the 1960s and the Narrabri Gas Project was announced in July 2013.

Gas from appraisal wells is already supplying Santos’ Wilga Park Power Station which generates enough electricity for the equivalent of 23,000 households in northwest NSW. This number will increase to 32,000 households when two new generators at the power station are fully commissioned in the middle of this year.

Santos is already an important part of the Narrabri community, spending $2 million on local goods and services last year and employing 16 people who live locally with their families.

Santos has committed 100 per cent of gas from the Narrabri Gas Project to the domestic market and it would provide cleaner and cheaper energy to support the more than one million homes, 33,000 businesses and 300,000 jobs in NSW that rely on natural gas.

Santos has relied on the best science to confirm that the Project can be delivered safely and sustainably, without harm to water resources or the environment.