

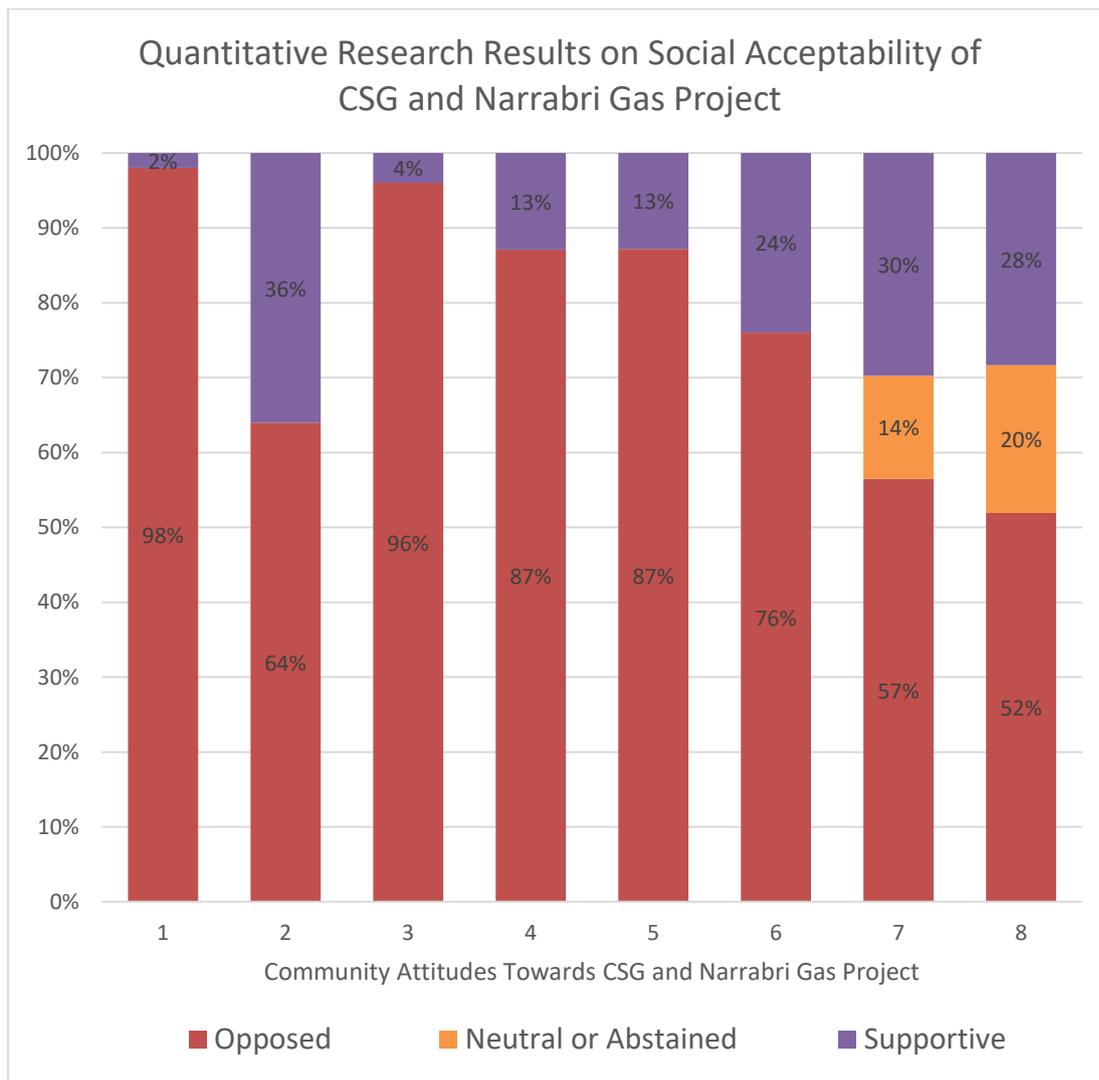
Part One – Quantitative Data Proving No Social Acceptance of The Proposed Narrabri Gas Project

Numerous surveys have been undertaken over the past five years to assess whether the Narrabri Gas Project has "community acceptance". The results of all surveys show that the project is roundly opposed by the residents of Narrabri Shire and the surrounding region.

The proposed Narrabri Gas Project is the most contentious State Significant development in the history of NSW as evidenced by the almost 23,000 written submissions in response to an open call for public responses to Santos' Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project.

Much controversy has surrounded and continues to surround the project.

People for the Plains is a locally based group of Narrabri Shire residents who have sought to gain a comprehensive understanding of the processes surrounding coal and coal seam gas (CSG) developments, and the impacts of those processes. As part of the wider community, the group has long realised that the project does not have strong community support. This paper analyses all the quantifiable data (survey results) that we have been able to access, to see what the numbers actually say. These results have been graphed, as follows.



The graph shows the eight sets of survey results (note some data sets are different aspects of the same survey) undertaken over the last five years. The following table shows when and where each of the sets of survey results was taken from, and the size of the sample.

No.	Survey Name	Date of Results	Sample Geographical Area	Sample Size
1	EIS Public Submissions (Total)	May 2018	Open to all areas	22,949
2	EIS Public Submissions (Narrabri Shire postcodes Only)	May 2018	Only those in local postcodes (determined by Dept of Planning)	499
3	Lock the Gate Community Surveys	Over the last 5 years	North West NSW Communities	7,024 over 106 communities
4	Reachtel Q4 (Barwon)	17/03/2015	Barwon Electorate Residents	681
5	Reachtel Q2 (Tamworth)	12/03/2015	Tamworth Electorate Residents	686
6	Fairfax Online Survey (7/2/17)	7/02/2017	The Land on-line readers	2,224
7	GISERA Survey	29/05/2018	Narrabri Shire Residents	400
8	North West Alliance Narrabri Town Survey	November 2018	Narrabri Town Residents	839

Each set of survey results are based on different questions and provided different options for answers. However, our analysis has grouped the answers to provide a direct comparison between those answers that either indicate support for, or objection to, the proposed Narrabri Gas Project, or no opinion (where this option was provided). The table below sets out what questions were used for each of the survey results and how the answers were grouped for the use in the graph above.

No.	Question Asked	Negative	Neutral of Abstained	Positive
1	When providing written submission, tick box for support or object to the project proposal	Object (98%)	NA	Support (2%)
2	When providing written submission, tick box for support or object to the project proposal	Object (64%)	NA	Support (36%)
3	Do you want your road/street to remain gasfield free?	Yes (96%)	NA	No (4%)
4	How concerned are you about the risks posed to water supplies and food-growing areas from coal seam gas mining in NSW?	Very concerned and Somewhat concerned (87%)	NA	Not At All concerned (13%)
5	How concerned are you about the risks posed to water supplies and food-growing areas from coal seam gas mining in NSW?	Very concerned and Somewhat concerned (87%)	NA	Not At All concerned (13%)
6	Do you want CSG production at Narrabri?	No (76%)	NA	Yes (24%)
7	Q44 Overall, which best describes your attitude towards this CSG development in the Narrabri Shire. I would:	Reject it, Tolerate it (57%)	Be ok with it (14%)	Embrace it, Approve of It (30%)
8	Do you support the Narrabri Gas Project?	No (52%)	Abstain, don't know (20%)	Yes (28%)

Views have been expressed in the local media, largely from vested interests, that the project carries “strong community support”. However, the eight sets of survey results from the area, and graphed in the figure above, clearly show that the opposite is true.

Support for the project ranged from 2% to 36%. On the other hand, opposition to the project and CSG ranged from 52% to 98%, depending on the set of survey results.

In summary, this is a highly controversial project with vested interests intent on swaying opinion on how “the community” feels about it. This quantitative data shows that, no matter how the data is analysed, the proposed Narrabri Gas Project has only limited support and a high level of opposition.

References for each of the Survey Results

No.	Reference
1	All submissions in response to the EIS can be found on the NSW Department of Planning and Environment’s NSW Planning Portal at https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10716
2	Attachment One – letter from Department of Planning and Environment outlining correct numbers of submissions
3	Results for Australia-wide surveys held by Lock the Gate – north west results
4	Attachment Two – Reachtel Barwon Survey results
5	https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lockthegate/pages/1853/attachments/original/1426560819/Lock_the_gate_-_11_March_2015_-_Tamworth_COAL_CSG.pdf?1426560819
6	https://www.theland.com.au/story/4450300/peeling-back-the-layers-narrabri-csg-poll/
7	Community wellbeing and social attitudes to coal seam gas development, Social baseline assessment: Narrabri project – Phase 3 survey report https://gisera.csiro.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Social-7-Phase-3-Report-1.pdf Page 80 – raw data results
8	https://www.theland.com.au/story/6302272/definition-of-independent-not-up-for-debate/

Part Two – Those Who Say There is Social Acceptance of the Narrabri Gas Project

Over many years the Narrabri community has been subjected to a well-resourced, orchestrated and deliberate process by a range of vested interests to create social acceptance of the proposed Narrabri Gas Project.

According to the CSIRO, an operation is said to have a social licence when it achieves ongoing acceptance or approval from the local community and other stakeholders who can affect its profitability. Even the Minerals Council of Australia describes a social licence to operate as an unwritten social contract. It goes on to say *“unless a company earns that licence, and maintains it on the basis of good performance on the ground, and community trust, there will undoubtedly be negative implications”*.

We have seen evidence of the importance of social licence when in 2014 NSW State Government Minister Anthony Roberts announced that Metgasco’s gas production licence at Bentley on the NSW north coast would be suspended due to “insufficient community consultation”. The fact was that Metgasco did not have a social licence to operate in the area, with massive local protest. Eventually, Metgasco was paid \$25 million as compensation for its cancelled gas licence.

A social licence is a critical component to be considered by consent authorities when evaluating a project.

There are numerous examples of where false and misleading information has been provided about the social acceptability of the proposed Narrabri Gas Project (our underlining added):

- Peter Mitchley, (then) Santos Energy NSW General Manager: “we ... have a social licence to proceed“(with the proposed NGP, Northern Daily Leader 28/2/2014). **Attachment Three.**
- Russell Stewart, Chair of Narrabri Chamber of Commerce in a letter read out to the Upper House of the federal Parliament by then National Party Senator John Williams: “... the vast majority in the Narrabri Shire is pro Santos”. (You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=Fbt2NGqUziQ>, Published 22/2/2016)
- Louise Tout, Chair of Yes 2 Gas “A quick chat amongst a few people became an overwhelming vote of support” (full page ad in the Narrabri local newspaper The Courier, Annual Review, December 2016). **Attachment Four.**
- Kevin Humphries, State Member for Barwon at the time: “... that the vast majority of people want this project to proceed” (The Courier, Letter to the Editor, 28/2/2017). **Attachment Five.**
- Kevin Gallagher, Managing Director and CEO of Santos, in Santos Environmental Impact Statement Foreword:” Santos has gained a strong level of support within the broader Narrabri community” and “The majority of the Narrabri community recognise that the expansion of this relatively new industry can improve the prosperity of the local area.” This is a subjective opinion by the company which is unsubstantiated. (<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10716> submitted March 2017)
- Yes 2 Gas advertisement: “300 local submissions received in support of the project” (Advertisement in The Courier, Annual Review December 2017) There were 499 local submissions, of which only 180 were in support of the project and 319 against. **Attachment Six.**

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- Hon Don Harwin, then NSW Minister for Energy and Utilities and Minister for Resources told Parliament: “There is *extremely strong* support for the Santos-Narrabri Gas Project in the town of Narrabri.” (<https://youtu.be/lmO0vqOFsE4> 16/5/2018)
- Despite two letters sent to Hon Don Harwin on 16/5/18 and 18/11/18 pointing out the quantitative data available at the time, the record has still not been set straight.