

# First look at Australia's newest gas-fired power plant at Kurri Kurri

By [Matthew Kelly](#)

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The Hunter Power Project is due to be operating later this year. Picture Snowy Hydro.  
Australia's newest gas peaker will be operating at Kurri by the end of the year as part of the federal government's Future Gas Strategy.

The \$950 million [Hunter Power Project](#), is likely to run on a diesel backup fuel supply until a [21 kilometre gas lateral from Killingworth](#) is completed.

The 660 megawatt peaker, initially [announced by the former Coalition government in 2020](#), was originally due to be open in time to compensate for the loss of [Liddell Power Station](#) last year.

However a series of cost blow-outs and delays caused by poor weather combined to push the plant's commissioning back to the last quarter of this year.

The gas-fired power station will have a capacity of up to 750 megawatts, with 660 megawatts supplied to the grid initially.

The government committed a further \$700 million during the election campaign to allow the plant to eventually run on a blend of green hydrogen and gas.

A workforce of about 750 is presently employed at the Kurri site. Several key milestones have been met in recent months including the mechanical completion of the two exhaust stacks for the gas turbines.

The generator and turbines were successfully assembled for the two units and preliminary alignment of the turbine / generator was completed in April 2024.

The project construction team is gradually turning over sections of the site to the commissioning team for testing, ahead of the expected project delivery in December.

The fire water tanks have also been completed and are ready to be filled with water for the commissioning of the fire system.

A spokeswoman for Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen said construction was *on track to deliver power by the end of this year*.

"The Albanese Government is working closely with Snowy Hydro to see this project realised," she said.

"Snowy Hydro Limited is responsible for managing fuel supply for the Hunter Power Project and is actively doing exactly that."

Work on the combustor installations was completed at the end of February with 20 dual fuel combustors installed into each turbines.

Generator and turbine assembly was completed in March, while a preliminary alignment of the turbine and generator was completed in April.

Environment groups, which have opposed the project from day one, renewed their attacks following the release of the Future Gas Strategy on Wednesday.

The strategy is designed to provide a plan for how gas will support the economy's transition to net zero.

But Lock the Gate National Coordinator Carmel Flint said it represented a [reckless plan to open up new industrial gas basins](#) that would damage land, water and communities.

"It is Scott Morrison's failed and terribly ill-considered 'gas-fired recovery' all over again, and it is as wrong now as it was then," she said.



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"This strategy is a capitulation to the gas lobby at the expense of manufacturers, workers and households struggling with the cost of living, who will all pay more for energy because of it."

"The gas industry has mercilessly price-gouged Australians, with gas prices more than tripling in the last 10 years, driving up energy prices more broadly and destroying manufacturing. [Climate Energy Finance](#) think tank director Tim Buckley described the strategy as "ridiculous and beyond disappointing."

"The strategy is a massive misstep in the context of the strides the Albanese government has been making in pivoting to our economic future as renewables powered zero-emissions trade and investment leader," he said.

"Gas as a transition fuel might have made sense a decade ago, but the climate science and renewables and storage technology landscape has changed fundamentally in the decade since. Power supply firming, where gas plays a small and diminishing role, is now transitioning to batteries and other storage technologies."

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/8622957/hunter-power-project-at-kurri-will-boost-to-national-gas-strategy/>