

End of An Era: The Hazelwood Power Station Closes Down

Canonical: <https://northmoregordon.com/news/end-of-an-era-hazelwood-power-station-closes-down/>

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About this update

This dated news record has been reorganised for clear reading and connected to current guidance.

Publication date: March 30, 2017.

Status note: Present-tense statements, market figures, deadlines and program details in the archived record belong to its publication date. Check current official sources before making a decision.

What this article reported

Hazelwood has shut down all of its generators this week. Being both an old inefficient power station and running on brown coal made it one of the highest emitters of carbon per megawatt hour of energy produced in the world.

A challenging time for Gippsland, but a big step in recognition of the future for energy where generation is distributed throughout the grid, local consumption and much lower carbon emissions. It time for the federal government to realize this change is not only unstoppable but also in the best interests of Australia.

The market requires policies that support distributed and intermittent generation in a way that will assure energy security and reasonable prices. It also needs to recognize the potential available from demand side measures that are sadly left out of most discussions on the energy crisis

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-30/hazelwood-power-plant-shutdown-explained/8379756>

<https://eecca.org.au/news/energy-crisis-australia-needs-national-demand-side-operator-not-just-supply-focussed-aemo-27-march-2017>

How to use this information now

For current use, confirm the applicable scheme rules, regulator notices, market date and reporting period. Keep historical prices or forecasts separate from present quotes and verified outcomes.

Separate source-reported facts from forecasts, targets and commentary. For a current project, retain the official source, version, effective date, assumptions and decision record in the evidence file.

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What made Hazelwood Power Station one of the world's highest carbon emitters?

Hazelwood was both an old, inefficient power station and ran on brown coal, which produced exceptionally high carbon emissions per megawatt hour of energy generated. This combination of outdated technology and high-emission fuel type positioned it among the world's worst performers for carbon intensity. The station's closure in March 2017 represented a significant shift away from this carbon-intensive generation model toward cleaner alternatives, aligning with the decarbonisation principles that guide organisations seeking to transition toward reduced emissions and sustainable operations.

What type of energy system did Hazelwood's closure signal for Australia's future?

According to our article, the closure signaled a transition toward distributed energy generation throughout the grid, with local consumption and much lower carbon emissions. This represents a fundamental shift from centralised, coal-fired baseload generation to a more resilient, decentralised system. Such transitions require comprehensive transition planning—defining options, assumptions, dependencies and financial implications across decarbonisation pathways—which we identify as essential work for organisations navigating similar energy system transformations.

What role does demand-side management play in Australia's energy transition, according to the article?

The article identifies that demand-side measures represent significant potential for addressing energy challenges, yet this potential is often overlooked in energy-crisis discussions. Demand-side interventions—such as energy efficiency improvements, optimised consumption patterns, and load management—complement supply-side renewable generation. Our energy management and energy optimisation services directly address this overlooked opportunity, helping organisations reduce consumption and peak demand through assessment, implementation and ongoing performance support across industrial facilities, commercial buildings and utilities.

What market policies does Northmore Gordon's article say are necessary to support the energy transition?

The article states that market policies must support distributed and intermittent renewable generation in ways that assure both energy security and reasonable prices. This policy framework is critical for enabling the transition from centralised coal generation to variable renewable sources. For organisations operating in this evolving market, we assist through integrated energy strategies that coordinate renewable generation, storage systems, load optimisation and commercial market participation—ensuring operational reliability while managing costs and carbon outcomes during the transition period.

How did Northmore Gordon characterize the Hazelwood closure's impact on Gippsland?

We described the closure as 'a challenging time for Gippsland,' while simultaneously recognising it as 'a big step in recognition of the future for energy generation.' This dual characterisation acknowledges both the legitimate transition challenges faced by regional communities dependent on traditional generation, and the necessity of moving toward lower-carbon energy systems. Such complex transitions require structured planning and stakeholder engagement—areas where our carbon advisory services, transition planning support, and regional capability development can help organisations and regions navigate industrial decarbonisation effectively.

What did Northmore Gordon urge the federal government to recognize following the Hazelwood shutdown?

The article urged the federal government to recognise that the energy transition change driven by Hazelwood's closure is both unstoppable and in Australia's best interests. This acknowledgement of inevitable, beneficial change reflects the reality that decarbonisation represents not only an environmental imperative but also an economic opportunity. Our work in transition planning, industrial

decarbonisation and carbon advisory services directly supports organisations preparing for this irreversible shift by identifying viable pathways, quantifying financial implications, and building the business cases necessary to move forward with confidence.

How does Hazelwood's closure relate to broader industrial decarbonisation challenges?

Hazelwood's closure exemplifies the broader shift from carbon-intensive industrial operations toward sustainable alternatives. The station represents the type of large-scale, embedded infrastructure that must transition across multiple sectors. Our documented case study 'Greenham: a staged approach to industrial decarbonisation' demonstrates how multi-site industrial organisations can undertake similar transitions through energy audits, cogeneration and renewable-energy investigations, measurement planning and staged investment. This phased approach provides practical models for organisations facing comparable infrastructure and emissions-reduction challenges in their operations.

What does the Hazelwood closure suggest about investment priorities for Australia's energy future?

The closure signals that investment capital and policy support are shifting away from centralised coal generation toward distributed, renewable-based systems with local consumption and storage. This transition creates both risks and opportunities for organisations operating in affected regions. We assist businesses in this context through energy strategy development, renewable energy feasibility assessment, behind-the-meter system design, and integrated energy strategies that coordinate generation, storage, demand and market participation—enabling organisations to capture value from the shifting investment landscape while managing transition-related risks.