New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

RE: BOWMANS CREEK WIND FARM (SSD-10315)

APPLICANT MEETING

COMMISSION PANEL:	ALICE CLARK (PANEL CHAIR) ADRIAN PILTON RICHARD PEARSON
OFFICE OF THE IPC:	JANE ANDERSON OLIVER COPE
APPLICANT:	MARTIN POOLE REBECCA RIGGS

LOCATION: VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

DATE: 4.00PM ON TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2023

TRANSCRIBED AND RECORDED BY APT TRANSCRIPTION

PROF. CLARK: So welcome to this afternoon. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you from the traditional lands of the Arakwal People of the Bundjalung nations and I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the country from which we virtually meet today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

Welcome to the meeting today to discuss Bowmans Creek Wind Farm project (SSD-10315) currently before the Commission for determination. The applicant, Ark Energy Project Pty Limited proposes to develop a 347 megawatt wind farm in the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone. The proposed project involves the development of up to 56 turbines and up to 220 metres high with associated ancillary infrastructure including a new 330 kilovolt transmission line to connect to TransGrid's existing network at the Liddell Substation.

My name is Professor Alice Clark. I'm the Chair of this Commission Panel. I'm joined by my fellow Commissioners Adrian Pilton and Richard Pearson. We're also joined by Jane Anderson and Oliver Cope from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission. In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website.

This meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of this matter. This meeting will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its determination. It's important for the Commissioners to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues whenever it's considered appropriate. If you are asked a question and you are not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and provide any additional information in writing which we will then put up on our website.

I request that all members here today introduce themselves before speaking for the first time and for all members to ensure that they do not speak over the top of each other to ensure accuracy of the transcript. We will now begin. I'd like to hand over you to, I guess, introduce yourselves and commence with your presentation. Thank you.

MS RIGGS: Sure, I'll start. My name is Rebecca Riggs, I am the Project Manager for Bowmans Creek Wind Farm.

MR POOLE: And my name's Martin Poole, I am 20-year employee of Ark and Acting Head of Development in the company.

MS RIGGS: O.K. I will share my screen. Apologise, we don't normally use Zoom, this is a little bit new. O.K. Perfect. Can everyone see my screen?

PROF. CLARK: Yes.

MR PILTON: Yes.

MS RIGGS: O.K. So this is the presentation for Bowmans Creek Wind Farm for the Independent Planning Commission meeting and today's date is Tuesday, the 28th of November, 2023. Again we would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians upon the land of which we all meet and continuing their connections to the land or to the same communities and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

So just a little bit of the agenda today. We'll go through who we are from Ark, a little bit about the company. The context - original context of the - of the project, a bit of an overview, the key issues that were raised during the EIS, the residences surrounding the site, the visual assessment and noise, traffic and transport, biodiversity, other hazards and risks, socioeconomic impacts, the VPAs and decommissioning. So as we just said, this is Martin Poole who is the Head of Development/Strategic Advisor at Ark and I am Rebecca Riggs, the Project Manager for Bowmans Creek Wind Farm.

Bowmans Creek Wind Farm is owned by Ark Energy, our friendly acquisition of Yuropon was the original company name which the project started under was completed in 2022 and the Yuropon name was retired. Ark Energy is a leading Australian renewable energy company specialising in greenfield utility scale wind, solar and hydrogen. The company has over 20 years experience in this industry with 13 projects in development across the country focused on accelerating the energy transition including decarbonise the energy supply of the parent company Careezinc and other third party customers. Careezinc's first major refiner to join the RE100 and commit to powering global operations from a hundred percent renewable energy by 2050.

MR POOLE: It might be worth adding at this point that we have been operating in New South Wales since 2003. Our first project that went through New South Wales Planning legislation was commissioned at Cullerin Range west of Goulburn in 2010 and it's still there, it's still one of the highest yielding wind projects in the national electricity market. So we've got a long connection to wind in New South Wales. We're one of the earliest companies to do it and we've seen quite an evolution of the system and we're pleased to be working under the current environment and to be presenting this to you.

MS RIGGS: So just a little bit about the regional context of the project. So the project area sits within the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone which is highlighted here in red and the project area is outlined in dark - in the darker red. It's located approximately 10 kilometres east of Muswellbrook township and 25 kilometres north-east of Singleton. The site's north-west - sorry, the site sits within three local government areas, Singleton Shire Council, Upper Hunter Shire and Muswellbrook Shire Council.

The project is near the areas of the following localities. So Bowmans Creek, Goorangoola, Davis Creek, Hebden, McCullys Gap, Muscle Creek and Rouchel Brook. The area predominantly includes large rural properties with a population of approximately a thousand within the broader localities. There are some lifestyle blocks in the area as well. Within a 10-kilometre radius of the site there are three

operational coalmines and three quarries. Additionally, there's Bayswater Power Station and the recently-closed Liddell Power Station 10 kilometres to the south-west of the project site.

So just a bit of a project overview. We have proposed 56 turbines to a maximum height of 220 metres and with a maximum hub height of 150, two onset - onsite substations from three proposed locations connecting to the existing TransGrid substation at Liddell. 17 kilometres of overhead reticulation and 40 kilometres of underground reticulation at 33kv. 14 kilometres of overhead and seven kilometres of underground 330kv powerline to reach the Liddell Substation from the onsite substation. Two construction compounds with up to three batching plants. Oversize and over-mass access route from the Port of Newcastle via the Hunter Expressway and New England Highway and onto the local roads at Hebden and there is a site access off Scrumlo Road which can be seen here. Upgrades to infrastructure along Hebden Road South, Scrumlo Road, Albano Road and Bowmans Creek Road which I will detail in - further into the presentation.

So these are the key issues that were raised during the EIS process based on the response to submissions. This figure comes from the Department's report, the two that's posted on the website. So visual is clearly the most of concern to the public followed quite closely by noise. Social and economic did come up but it also came up in a positive light as well and, I guess, just to highlight a bit further, the ones surrounded here in green are what we will talk about today. For the hazards and bushfire I will just highlight that, we plan to talk about it in response to lighting for aviation more so than bushfire or anything else.

So just surrounding the site in relation to residences, there are 47 non-associated residences within 4.4 kilometres of a proposed turbine location. So that area can be shown by the blue line there and there are 20 associated residences that is both neighbour - neighbouring associated residents and infrastructure host within 4.4 kilometres of the proposed turbine locations and they are shown in red - sorry, their dwelling are shown in red rather than the black ones.

So there are six neighbour agreements that we have for the project and I think it might be easier on a larger map obviously but they are - the majority are sitting over here on this side with three here, two here and two more up here - sorry, there we go, at the moment. So that's where they all are, and for two of those there are two dwellings on each of them even though it's one block of land.

So for the visual assessments, so prior to the EIS being submitted Ark, who was then Yuropon, removed 12 turbines from the layout from the initial consultation with the community and early biodiversity studies so the initial number within the - of the proposed turbines within the LVIA was 60. So the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the EIS. The LVIA was then updated in accordance with the amendment report that was submitted to the Department of Planning. The LVIA was updated and it had removed a further four turbines and the number dropped to 56 is where we are sitting today.

As a result of the above changes it was determined that 15 non-associated dwellings at the time - I will note that some of those dwellings are now associated - would experience changes to their sensitivity level, so decreasing it or a reduction in their visual impact. During the assessment there were 20 private photo montages that were provided within the EIS document and an additional six locations were completed. Sorry, was that a question?

MALE SPEAKER: No.

MS RIGGS: No. O.K. That's O.K. It was just background noise, I think.

PROF. CLARK: Yes, I think you're getting a bit of feedback, it might be a good idea to put us on mute here.

MS RIGGS: O.K. So there are an additional six locations and updates to a number of the originals provided during the EIS stage and they were provided during the amendment report and at various points during the RFI stages. Additional to that there were seven public photo montages from around the site and an additional two wire frame locations. So this map shows the photo montage locations. The green triangle showed the private locations and the yellow stars show the public locations. What's not marked on here are the wire frame locations as they were a little bit further away past Lake Sinclair which is a little bit further towards the east. I guess it is important to note that these were the official photo montages that were provided. There were several others that were done for consultation purposes but they were not provided during the EIS for various reasons.

We also did line of sight diagrams for certain properties to look into the ability of screening certain turbines. This one is from a property called G17-1 which runs along the western side of the project who has a view of these four turbines here. There are additional turbines screened behind these trees. This particular line of sight diagram here is looking at screening turbine 66 which is this one right here on the end and this is completed by using a digital elevation model to gain the information on topography and then to determine the distance and the height that the trees would need to be to be able to screen these turbines.

So based on this cross-sectional diagram here it was determined that an eight-metre tree about 30 metres from the residence or a six-metre tree 15 metres from the residence would be able to screen the turbine here. There were other various diagrams for additional turbines here and also for additional residences. They were all available within one of our RFIs for the project.

Night lighting. So night lighting was raised as a concern for residences within proximity to the site and we discussed it in detail with many residences, in particular residences along this western side of the project. An obstacle night-lighting plan was developed for the project by aviation projects. The proponent is of the position that based on the assessment to date that night lighting for the project was not required, though if it is determined that it is required then lighting and shielding specifications should be in accordance with CASA. CASA permits shielding of downward

component of obstacle lighting and we believe this should be utilised if night lighting is going to be proposed to be able to mitigate the effects on nearby residences.

On this map here the green turbines as shown as lit and the yellow are shown as unlit based on our plan that was developed for us by our aviation projects consultant. During this process we also spoke with the Department of Defence as they use the area quite frequently as it is quite close to Williamtown Airport and their requirements for lighting would be that they prefer the lighting to occur during the day as that's when they do most of their flying. So they would be switched on at 8.00am Monday to Friday and switched off at 6.00pm and also that in times when it is bright enough with greater than 5,000 lux these lights would automatically switch off as they don't require them when it's brighter than that.

Moving onto noise. So this diagram shows our noise contours with the last line on the outside of all these, the darker blue being the 35 decibel line. So a detailed noise assessment was carried out by Sonos during the EIS phase of the project in line with the noise assessment bulletin. Background noise monitoring occurred from October 2019 to January 2020 at four locations surrounding the site.

Construction noise levels are predicted to comply with the recommended criterion at all non-associated receivers and roadwork noise levels are predicted to be high at six non-associated receivers and I can point those out to you being in here and in here and two residences just here. In particular to S17-2 which occurs just here due to the proximity of the dwelling to the road. The increased noise levels at these residences would be short term and intermittent for the period of the road upgrades and once that had been passed it would return to lower levels.

Operational noise levels were assessed in accordance with the noise bulletin and noise modelling predicts that the project complies with the relevant environmental noise criteria at all receivers at all wind speeds and we also did assess low frequency noise. We acknowledge that this is often a concern of local communities and we came to that - the levels are about 50dBc which is significantly under the 60dBc level which is the level the bulletin would require further assessment to be done.

Traffic and transport. So this figure we looked at for the REZ zone. So our traffic and transport route from the Port of Newcastle is shown here in green. This is just an overview to show the main roads that are used. I'll move on to a detailed one for the local area but the oversize and over-mass components will be delivered from the Port of Newcastle. From there they would travel to the New England Highway via John Renshaw Drive and the Hunter Expressway back onto the New England Highway before turning onto local roads at Hebden. There will be 560 heavy vehicles requiring escort to deliver the turbine components to the site. Approximately about 10 vehicles per turbine is what's required.

There are 10 locations where minor roadworks between the Port and Hebden Road would be required to accommodate the heavy vehicle requiring escort. These works include relocating fencing, traffic lights and various median barriers along points of the route. So this is more looking at local roads. So this is the turnoff point here from

the highway and moving onto what is called Hebden Road South. I will just point out there is two sections of Hebden Road, this is called Hebden Road South and this section up here is called Hebden Road North. It is somewhat a little bit confusing and then when they meet here it becomes Scrumlo Road.

So there are 75 points along four local roads within Singleton and Muswellbrook Shire Council that will require upgrades being Hebden Road South, Scrumlo Road up to the site entrance here, Albano Road which is over here and Bowmans Creek Road which changes here along the route here. The types of roadworks required are the construction of a new site entrance at Scrumlo Road which is on here, road widening at four locations and replacement of six cattle grids along Albano Road and the associated fencing with the cattle grids. Also three areas where the gradient reduction - gradient reduction would need to happen along Albano Road. The temporary relocation of some roads furniture along Hebden Road down here, mainly barriers around corners and so forth and general branch and tree trimming and/or embankment modifications at Hebden Road South and on Albano Road here as well.

So traffic management. A detailed traffic management plan will be prepared in conjunction with the relevant road authorities, so in this case it would be the Council and they would consider some of the following points but they are not limited to. So the oversize and over-mass vehicles would be scheduled to avoid morning and evening southbound peaks of the New England Highway/Hebden Road intersection. It does get quite busy at that intersection at those times of the day with the changeovers of the mines. Ensuring that the school bus routes are avoided for oversize and over-mass vehicles and where they can't be ensure movements happen outside of the school bus route times. Ensure there's adequate passing bays on local road and discuss with local mines to ensure the least amount of overlap between the shift changeover times. '

That issue was raised with us specifically by Singleton Council as they do get quite a lot of people coming in and out of Hebden Road. There are quite a few access to mines along that point there so they were concerned about that. And as noted in the recommended conditions of consent this will require the proponent to undertake all construction works prior to the use of the road for construction and that the dilapidation surveys and repair would need to be undertaken and repair any damage to the road from the project.

Moving to biodiversity. So the development footprint of the project including the road upgrade land is approximately 411 hectares, 280 hectares is classified as native vegetation. Of that 98.4 hectares is dry rainforest, 178.6 hectares is derives native grassland or DNG land and 3.3 hectares is poor condition or plant and vegetation. Currently approximately 232 hectares of vegetation comprising of four threatened ecological communities would be impacted, that is 215.5 hectares of Box Gum woodland which is considered endangered, of that 178.6 hectares is derived native grassland and 37 hectares is woodland. 11.7 hectares is Central Coast Ironbark Spotted Grey Box forest - apologies if I get any of these wrong - in the New South Wales North Coast and Sydney basin bioregions which is also considered endangered. 3.5 hectares of the Central-Hunter Grey Box Ironbark woodland in the New South

Wales North Coast and Sydney basin bioregions which is endangered and 1.4 hectares of Lower Hunter Valley dry rainforest which is considered vulnerable.

Ark has committed to avoid and minimise impacts on Box Gum woodland and other threatened ecological communities were feasible via micro-siting during the detailed design phase. Staying on biodiversity. Ark has also committed to avoiding impact s on three serious and irreversible impact entities or SIIE which have been assumed present on the site. So they - again apologies if I mix up these names - Acacia Pendula, Scrub Turpentine and Native Guava. If these species are confirmed present on the site by targeted surveys during the detailed design phase the region in which they would occur would be avoided and the total clearing of native vegetation would be reduced by six hectares.

Addition to that, Ark has offered to implement additional measures beyond biodiversity offsets to further minimise the impacts on Box Gum woodland whereby 37 hectares of Box Gum woodland, derived native grassland land would be brought to the condition of Box Gum woodland. So the picture here on the left is what's considered DNG land or derived native grassland land and the picture on the right is considered Box Gum woodland, status land. So we would take 37 hectares of land within the site boundary acknowledging that we haven't defined exactly where that land is to date but within the site boundary as there is quite a fair bit of it and bring it up to the Box Gum woodland status.

MR PEARSON: Can I just ask a quick question on that while you've got that slide up?

MS RIGGS: Yep.

MR PEARSON: So I'm presuming you would have to negotiate with the landowner to accept that revegetation because they probably use this for grazing, would that be correct?

MS RIGGS: Yes, that would be correct.

MR PEARSON: Yes. So have you had any - I notice issue came up quite late in the assessment process but have you had any negotiations with landowners who might be interested in - for example, what happens if nobody wants it?

MS RIGGS: Yeah, that is a fair question. I mean, what we have considered to date is that we have gone back to our ecologists who completed the assessment and asked them to sort of like determine areas for us where this would - where it would be feasible to be able to allow us to go back to have a more informed discussion with our landowners rather than just coming to them with sort of like a no information request. So right now what we've done is we have a loose area that we have drawn sort of a circle around, that would potentially allow us to do this. Some of those areas sit outside of what was surveyed during - during the assessment phase. So we may be required to go back and do some further surveying to confirm that it is, in fact, DNG land before we progress that conversation any further with our landowners. Ideally we

would use it from within the project footprint where possible and that would be able to be determined once we had a detailed design.

MR POOLE: I think it's fair to say that over the last four years working with these landowners we've got a good feeling that they are open and amenable to doing this kind of activity.

PROF. CLARK: And further to Richard's question there and noting that it is additional measures beyond the biodiversity offsets to further minimise the impacts, given that they're on different landholder's land and should they agree to this what would be the likelihood that it would be, you know, contiguous of any substantial amount across that 37 hectare (not transcribable) (4.28.58).

MS RIGGS: Yeah. I mean, BCS has stated to us that they would prefer it to be continuous so, I guess, we acknowledge that and we will work in our best endeavours to make it - that the case but with that being said I don't think I can guarantee that that would happen.

PROF. CLARK: Thanks, Rebecca.

MS RIGGS: Yep. So just moving on to the socioeconomic impacts of the project. So over the life of the project there would be direct and indirect benefits to the community. So during the 18-month construction phase there will be benefit to the local community through the creation of employment opportunities and supply arrangements through local businesses. It is anticipated based on the nature of the area that a large majority of the workforce and supply of material could be sourced form within local areas.

There would also be upgrading and maintenance - sorry, continued maintenance or local roads, procurement of goods and services by the proponent and their associated contractors and expenditure on accommodation and businesses within the local community. DP has recommended that the project - sorry, that the proponent prepare and implement an accommodation and employment strategy in consultation with the local Councils and Ark welcomed this idea and believes that with constructive discussions with the local Councils there is a great opportunity for these towns. Bowmans Creek Wind Farm is one of the many proposed infrastructure projects in the region so it's something that really needs to be considered by all these towns and communities.

There is expected to be a small amount of impact to agricultural over the life of the project, mainly during the construction period and would be mainly affecting those landowners who are involved in the project. It's estimated that this impact will be less than .01 percent of the total agricultural activity within this region. The economic impact will not impact the capability of the land in perpetuity. Sorry, the agricultural impact is more what I was trying to say, and once the wind farm is decommissioned the land would be returned to its former rate of agricultural productivity.

So there is a VPA has been discussed with the three local Councils. So this map here just shows the breakdown of Council areas with the yellow turbines being Muswellbrook Shire Council, the green being Singleton and the orange/red colour up here being the Upper Hunter Shire. So there are three turbines proposed within the Upper Hunter Shire, 41 within Muswellbrook and 12 within Singleton. All three Councils were consulted regarding the terms of the VPA. Ark initially proposed a 3,000 per turbine per year rate consistent with other projects in New South Wales. Following further consultation the offer was increased to 3,400 per turbine per year which was in November of 2022.

In March of '23 Singleton Council wrote to the proponent and expressed the preference for the VPA to be expressed as a per megawatt figure. They made the request of $686 per megawatt installed. This figure was accepted by the proponent and the figure was extended to the additional two Councils and that offer was accepted by both Muswellbrook and Singleton - sorry, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter in April of 2023.

Decommissioning. So our decommissioning agreement sit within our involved landowner agreement. So we have developed a decommissioning fund in conjunction with our involved landowners and it is to sit with the decommissioning agent. Currently the fund is proposed to reach 100 percent of the cost required for decommissioning by year 10 of the life of the project and the fund is to be - is proposed to be paid into from the start of construction rather than the start of operation and I believe that was all.

MR PILTON: Can I just ask a question about that last point you were talking about, the decommissioning?

MS RIGGS: Yes.

MR PILTON: You talk about independent decommissioning agent, what sort of body is that? Is it a private company or what or subsidiary of your company?

MR POOLE: No, no, no, it's an independent private company which is - which is bound by the - by an agency agreement to carry out the functions set up in the decommissioning fund.

MR PILTON: Thank you. What happens after year 10? Stop paying into it or what?

MR POOLE: The fund - fund builds up, it accumulates interest or whatever but it's then fully funded.

MR PILTON: Thank you.

PROF. CLARK: I've got some other questions and we may as well stick on decommissioning while we've got it up there. How have you, I guess - well, I'll start with my first question which is - I'm getting a bit of feedback there from somewhere,

I'm not sure, but my first question is what's actually involved with decommissioning these - these - these windmills? What's the process just out of interest?

MR POOLE: The process at the moment is a bit theoretical in New South Wales because it hasn't happened on any material scale but typically what - what the proponent or the owner at the time will have to consider is whether it's to be decommissioned or to undergo a life extension. So the greatest experience in old wind turbines is really in Northern Europe and rather than decommissioning it and returning it to its original state what's happening to wind power over there is it's being repowered, as they call it, which generally involves the generators and blades being taken off the top of the towers and replaced with something which is almost inevitably more powerful, more efficient and as a result reusing all of the other infrastructure such as the roads and the towers and the wires and the connection point and the transformers and giving the whole thing another 20 to 25 years life.

So that would be an attractive option because a lot of the capital cost is already sunk and the cost of electricity would step down in that case from this project. If that does not happen then the decommissioning process involves removal essentially of all the aboveground infrastructure and the remediation of the land so - - -

PROF. CLARK: And - - -

MR POOLE: Sorry, go on.

PROF. CLARK: No, go ahead please.

MR POOLE: I was going to say the remediation of the land is the covering of the turbine footings either to the - to the - where the tower used to be or even over that if it's practical to do so. That's our normal approach. So - - -

MR PILTON: Can you give us some idea of the size of these pads underneath the towers, the width and the depth?

MR POOLE: Yeah. The typical - typical width would be a diameter, a circle or a many-sided geometric shape of 25 to 30 metres in diameter and the depth might be three to five metres with a vaguely sort of conical shape, yeah, depending on - mainly on geology.

MR PILTON: Thank you.

PROF. CLARK: O.K. I guess the other question I had with relation to decommissioning, and I was just thinking through of the some things that you said there, how have you estimated these costs that go into this fund?

MS RIGGS: So there is a report that was written by WSP that broke down the best sort of, I guess, guess - estimate is probably a better way, yeah, the decommissioning costs and you can look at decommissioning as, I guess, net or gross, net being the resale of any of the materials, the steel and so forth and gross obviously being the

gross cost. So in this case we looked at it as 100 percent of the gross costs rather than the net value and they consider everything as - I mean, including the cost of steel, the cost to move any materials to landfill, the distance to landfill and all those sorts of things. There are many, many components obviously that are considered in that report, yeah.

PROF. CLARK: Thank you, Rebecca. Is that part of any of the documents that we've already got?

MS RIGGS: No, it wouldn't be but we can send it to you.

PROF. CLARK: Thank you. And I have all of the involved landholders - well, I'll ask the question differently. You have all landholders who have one of these on their land agreed to this?

MS RIGGS: For the decommissioning?

PROF. CLARK: Yes.

MS RIGGS: Yes, I believe that would be true, yeah. All the lands they have all agreed to it, yeah.

MR POOLE: This group of landowners are operated cooperative throughout so with Ekker, in particular, sat through numerous meetings with them all and they generally - we have reached unanimous agreement on vast majority of points and where there are property-specific matters they're dealt with in a small addendum to the agreement but the great majority of the agreement is the same for everybody.

PROF. CLARK: O.K. So for the avoidance of doubt there's no landholder with a windmill on their - their land that hasn't agreed with - with the decommissioning - things on the site. Great. Thank you. That helps me a lot there. Any other questions on decommissioning, Richard or Adrian? Richard, you're on mute.

MR PEARSON: Sorry. Are there any other Councils across this proposal?

MS RIGGS: No, just those - - -

MR PEARSON: Because I know it has been an issue that they've raised with us. Are they - are they across this decommissioning agent fund issue?

MS RIGGS: Probably they would not be. The reason being is that these - up until, I guess, this presentation the decommissioning fund and how it is structured and organised is part of our involved landowner agreements which obviously are confidential. This part of it is fine to discuss but, yes, we will be happy to explain it to them obviously noting confidentiality.

PROF. CLARK: So, Rebecca, in the situation where decommissioning is an issue that we need to get across we can handle it off - offline and via a communications - written

communications where we need more information on this and we'll direct all of that through the Secretariate there with Jane and Oliver with us now. There will be a lot of questions around this issue. Anything else there, Adrian?

MR PILTON: Not on decommissioning, no.

PRINCIPAL MEMBER: O.K.

MR PILTON: I'd like to ask a question about the construction process. Just firstly about water. Where will you get the water and so on to make the concrete on the roads and such like?

MS RIGGS: Yeah. So we have proposed that the water will be brought in. Most of the landowners have asked that obviously the water on site is not used. Obviously there are some exceptions but in general the water will be trucked in from various locations.

MR PILTON: Thank you. And I read somewhere in your batching plans talking about noise from crushers and so on, I'm just wondering is it necessary to crush the stone, the aggregate on site or can not bring it in as aggregate to stop the noise?

MS RIGGS: Yeah. I mean, that is possible and I think it depends, I guess, where the aggregate is sourced from. If it's sourced somewhere quite close and they don't have crushing facilities there then they would be crushed on site but, yeah, that is definitely an option.

PROF. CLARK: Richard, I've got some other questions. Have you got anything you want to raise now or later?

MR PEARSON: Well, just a broader question about whether - have you reviewed the Department's recommended conditions? I take it you're aware they're recommending deletion of two turbines. Are there any comments, not necessarily on that issue but across the conditions generally or are you accepting of the conditions?

MS RIGGS: I think I would just want to point out quickly which is not - more just a comment. There is a slight mistake in the conditions between the dates that a letter was sent from the relevant Councils. I think, yeah, you're in there so, yeah, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter Shire the dates just got switched around, the letter - - -

MR PEARSON: I think they mentioned that today, yes.

MS RIGGS: Yeah. Perfect.

MR PEARSON: Yes.

MS RIGGS: Yep. So, yeah, that will be a comment just on that but, yes, we acknowledge that the Department has recommended 54 turbines and we are of the

opinion, I would say, that the 56 are approvable and they meet the visual guidelines but, yes, I guess that is - I guess that is our comment on that, yeah.

MR PEARSON: Yes. Thank you.

PROF. CLARK: I guess my next questions relate back to item 9, traffic and transport and again just for the avoidance of doubt you refer to relevant authorities, can we assume that Councils are included in that - that list of relevant authorities?

MS RIGGS: Yes, we can, yes.

PROF. CLARK: This has featured quite a lot in their conversations with us today and also in their submissions. And also around this transport and the roadworks, I'm interested to know about the dilapidation surveys. I see that there's dilapidation surveys done at the beginning and some requests for dilapidation surveys at different times but will there be one at the end?

MS RIGGS: I acknowledge that that's what Council have requested and I also believe that that is what is normally done before the road is handed back to the Council or to the relevant authority, which in this case is the Council, before, yeah, before the proponent hands the road back to ensure that it's of a condition that the Council is happy with.

MR PILTON: Issues with the road. So it's mainly during the construction phase, I assume, that there's the potential for damage to the road surface?

MS RIGGS: Yeah.

MR PILTON: And after that it's only the odd truck and so on?

MS RIGGS: Yeah, exactly. I mean, the oversize, over-mass vehicles are generally what are causing the issues to the road and when the project is operational you're looking at the odd Ute and potentially, yeah, a truck bringing in material or something like that.

PROF. CLARK: Yes. So just maybe to reframe my questions to clarify what I'm asking. So the dilapidation surveys are mentioned for the beginning which makes sense and at other times which makes sense and if there is a dilapidation survey normally done at the end of the project should it be mentioned as well, I guess is my question?

MS RIGGS: I thought I did mention it. Maybe I didn't.

MR POOLE: Are you referring to after decommissioning there?

MS RIGGS: Yeah, I see, sorry.

MR POOLE: Yeah. Because obviously that's the only time the - - -

MS RIGGS: Sorry. Yeah, yeah. sorry. Yes, I guess in theory, yes, that should also occur because the oversize, over-mass vehicles would be requires again to remove any of the components, yep.

PROF. CLARK: That's - that's - yeah. So that's the premise of the question and so thank you for clarifying that, it's not in there yet is what your answer is?

MS RIGGS: Yes. Yes, that is - yep.

PROF. CLARK: Thank you.

MS RIGGS: No worries.

MR PILTON: If the turbines are refitted, as it were, replaced at the end of the 25 years or whenever, does that mean you'll have to have the oversize vehicles and so on coming back in or do the turbines not require such big trucks?

MS RIGGS: No, you would need the oversize vehicles coming back in, yeah.

MR PILTON: Yes. Thank you.

PROF. CLARK: My next question is on 11 on the socioeconomic impacts there. We talk about - just let me find the right thing. Yes, expenditure and accommodation, dot point 3 under, "The project would generate direct and indirect" et cetera, what level and type of expenditure on accommodation are you thinking about with relation to that dot point?

MS RIGGS: It's still something that we're considering. We've had, I guess, how should I say, off-the-record conversations with Council with ideas about how this could be managed but no formal discussions have been had to date.

PROF. CLARK: Thank you. And my second question around this issue as well is you talk about a survey that you're going to undertake which makes perfect sense, when would that survey be conducted?

MS RIGGS: Sorry, a survey in relation to?

PROF. CLARK: I'll just find the exact - O.K. Sorry. Yes. I apologise, give a moment and I'll - - -

MS RIGGS: That's O.K.

PROF. CLARK: I'll come back to that. I need to find the exact words for you.

MS RIGGS: No worries. All good.

PROF. CLARK: O.K. Yes, if we could go up to number 10.

MS RIGGS: Yes.

PROF. CLARK: I still haven't found the survey reference but I will.

MS RIGGS: O.K.

PROF. CLARK: We talk there in dot point 3 of the first slide, I think, "committed to" - "Ark is committed to avoid and minimise the impact on Box Gum woodland other than TSEs were feasible via micro-siting". When it's not feasible what does - what happens then and who determines where it's feasible?

MS RIGGS: Feasibility, I think, in this case would refer to engineering feasibility as in, yeah, whether it's physically possible to go around it. If it is not feasible then the land would need to be offset.

PROF. CLARK: O.K. Thank you. That was - that was the reason for that question. O.K. I didn't have anything else and I'm not sure - I'll need to go back and - we'll address it off - separately in writing when I find my survey reference.

MS RIGGS: It's all good.

PROF. CLARK: Anybody have any other questions?

MR PEARSON: I'm good, thank you.

MR PILTON: Not from me.

PROF. CLARK: O.K. Well, thank you very much and thank you for sending through the presentation by email, that made it much easier to go back to hone in on things. I wish you all a very good afternoon and thank you for your time. Thank you very much.

MEETING CONCLUDED