

MR J. HANN: So, look, good morning and – and welcome and before we begin I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Worimi People, and I would like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be here today. So welcome to the
5 meeting today. Lindfield Property Nominee Proprietary Limited and NGP Investments Proprietary Limited, the applicant, has lodged a request to review the gateway determination for a planning proposal seeking to amend the Great Lakes Local Environment Plan 2014 to facilitate the development of a Highway Service Centre at 9844 Pacific Highway, Bulahdelah, New South Wales.

10 My name's John Hann. I'm the chair of the IPC Panel and joining me is my fellow Commissioner Peter Williams and the other attendees are Helen Mulcahy and Brad James from our secretariat that assist us, ah, in these matters. So in the interest of openness and transparency, as I mentioned earlier, to ensure the full capture of
15 information today's meeting is being recorded and we put a transcript up on our website. The meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of the matter at hand and will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its advice. So, look, it's important for us that we can ask questions of – of you but, look, that's primarily to clarify issues.

20 If there are questions we put to you that you don't have the information that's fine. If you can take that on notice and then provide us with a written submission on that that would be much appreciated and if you could do that within seven days that would be – or – or sooner, preferably, in the interests of our timeframes and – and
25 yours. Ah, and, look, in terms of the recordings, if – if you – if you could just introduce yourself when you speak the first time and just avoid talking over the top otherwise it gets a bit confusing in terms of the accuracy of the transcript. So, without further ado, let's commence the meeting proper. Look, from our point of view it would be best if you just take us through your application and, in particular,
30 highlight the key aspects of it that you would particularly like us to – to pay attention to, ah, given that this is a review of the determination and – and – and obviously in light of the department's position on it. So over to you.

MR P. KAMPFNER: John, my name's Peter Kampfner. I am Lindfield Properties.
35 My partner, Nick Politis, is my partner in the venture. Gavin Maberly-Smith is our town planner. Domenic Belmonte is Nick's property man. I think, if I can, I would like to discuss with you the principles of why we believe the site is an ideal site for a service centre and why I'm optimistic that common sense will prevail. Firstly, let me discuss why is the site suitable for a service centre. The roundabout has a direct
40 ramp on to our site. It wasn't necessarily needed but that's the way it was built. The golf course is directly adjoining and surrounded by the land that Nick and I have bought.

45 For those that remember Bulahdelah, and I'm not sure whether you all do, everybody in the State knew it. It was the pinpoint on the highway going north to Queensland. People would stop for coffee, tea, meals and to be on the river. I believe the proposal will restore Bulahdelah to the thriving community it once was. The rezoning

proposal for a service centre will make Bulahdelah a destination point. It will get people to stop there once again. Bulahdelah has suffered dramatically since the bypass. Local businesses have closed, families have moved away and the town's largest employer, Newells Creek Sawmill, is desperately concerned they will lose young families and good employees.

Let me read a message I received from Anthony Dorney, co-owner of Newells Creek Timber:

10 *Hi Peter, it's imperative Mr Murray understands the history of our small town. We, as a community, struggle to get recognition within our own local council which means we fight heart and soul for the smallest of privileges that are everyday occurrences for other towns. We don't have the means or opportunities to offer our children employment after their schooling. As a result they leave town for work which leaves an aging population. This has a flow on effect on our schools, sports, choices and facilities. Since the bypass we have lost three service stations and a huge cost in employment and our schools have dropped around 150 students. This development would offer employment and have a huge impact on our town. We need something to kickstart our economy and give Bulahdelah a future.*

That's what's at stake here today. Bulahdelah's future. Business in Bulahdelah is languishing. Shops are closed. The local golf club adjoining our site is on its last legs. If I can pause for a moment and tell you it's a beautiful golf course. The people love it. It makes so little money that virtually all the staff there are voluntary staff. They come in and do the work, running that entire club, for nothing but they don't want to see it closed. There used to be two thriving houseboat businesses. If you go down to the river you will see there is now just one. It's called The Modern Houseboat Company. If you have a look at the boats you will see that the word "Modern" is poorly placed. It has a few boats, it just survives, and it is the link to the Myall Lakes.

18 months ago at the School of Arts, the hall here, there was a meeting to discuss the rezoning with locals overflowing on to the street. It was packed. We had the stage up the front. People were all over the footpath. 95 per cent of the Bulahdelah community there that night voted in support of the rezoning proposal. Council's manager of strategic planning and his assistance, who both attended the meeting, observed it and no doubt it has contributed to council's change of approach. I have been very gratified by council's support for this proposal but more gratified, of course, by the support of the Bulahdelah community. We all want Bulahdelah to succeed.

I now want to speak for a brief period on section 117 direction. We would not be here today if it weren't for section 117 direction which controls the provision of service centres along the freeway to the border. We all know that s117, which has been in effect since 2007, was genuinely designed to protect small communities like Bulahdelah from suffering from the bypass and highway. It was proposed, in fact, by

the then council and the road's department and local communities like Bulahdelah totally supported it. Who was to know that when the bypass was completed in 2013 that same s117, meant to save to Bulahdelah, would instead condemn it to a slow, steady decline.

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What the people of Bulahdelah want is to be put back on the map. They want people to stop at Bulahdelah. Our service centre will do just that. Every local business will be signposted at the centre to funnel visitors down into the town and the riverside. We are proposing to contribute a million dollars towards the beautification of the town's streetscape and riverside. To that end we have commissioned one of Australia's leading landscaping architects, Michael Bates, to bring it to life. Let me summarise, we all know s117 was meant to protect towns from the freeway and the bypass. At the time it was seen as the right thing to do but, clearly, it has failed the town of Bulahdelah which is now a skeleton of the town it used to be.

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Surely, each case should be treated on its merits. There is no doubt this rezoning would revitalise the town, boost employment, encourage tourism and do the one thing it desperately needs; to get people to stop in Bulahdelah. I make a short pause here to say that in the course of dealing with council and the application we did road studies, traffic counts and everything else that's required. The number of people that now drive in and out of Bulahdelah is breathtakingly low. Clearly, during holidays that picks up dramatically but, overall, you're talking just 250 people including residence driving in and out of Bulahdelah on a daily basis. Now, that's simply appalling. In the days that I mentioned of pre-bypass Bulahdelah, Bulahdelah was packed. Everybody drove through it. I've spoken to a lot of people since I acquired the land. They all knew Bulahdelah. They all spoke of stopping there for their coffees. Now, I talk to people that don't even remember Bulahdelah. It's now a thing of the past.

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There is no doubt that this rezoning would revitalise the town, boost employment, encourage tourism, do the one thing that's desperately needed to get people to stop in Bulahdelah. It's that simple. Bulahdelah would be back on the map. It will be an ideal rest stop with walking trails, riverside parks, golf to play, a mountain to climb and visits to the town all contributing to the rezoning benefits. Again, I take a pause to say that in my own studies of the site I spoke to a psychologist in terms of rest stops and he agreed with me that the many rest stops provided on the lengthy trip between Sydney and Queensland, and Brisbane, there are abundant rest stops. Often, they are simply a little circle of bush cut away where a few cars can park and people can sit in their car and catch their breath. Other times they stop at service stations and sit in their car or get their McDonald's and take a bit of a break.

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It's my proposal to make this service centre an absolute landmark. The psychologist agreed with me that if people can have mild recreational facilities to take their mind off driving and the road it would be of enormous benefit. Now, I know that you all had a look at the site. It has a sacred Aboriginal mountain; Mount Alum. For reasons that I cannot explain, it's a very important climbing mountain. We have multiple clubs that sought our permission to continue climbing Mount Alum. It has

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got stunning walking tracks through the land around the service centre. It has got a row of five ponds that flow into each other. It's a beautiful piece of land.

5 The golf course, you may have noticed, it's only nine holes. Not a bad stop to go and play a few holes of golf and if you go through to the township of Bulahdelah, by the time we have beautified the riverfront, it will be an ideal place to go and stop, have a picnic and a rest. It is an ideal stop and revive location. I propose, amongst other things, to build a huge bird aviary and it will be in our service centre so that children and people taking a rest can look at things, rest their eyes and be surrounded by
10 leisurely activity to give the kind of break that will revitalise. I simply ask all of you to use common sense of why should the rezoning be approved. I have given my reasons. I can go a step further and say that the site that we have is huge. Some 360 acres. Part of that is zoned for residential. Part of it for hotel and a brewery.

15 Now, the whole township are busting for us to do the residential. We have done preliminary research and at this stage there is permission for 200 residences but that, indeed, could be increased. We propose to commence doing that subdivision but we've spoken to major subdivision developers and the site was negated. They did their survey and the answers they came back with, universally, nobody wants to go
20 and live in Bulahdelah. So we still propose to begin, present some subdivision opportunities and see how this is absorbed by the market. I believe, once we get the service centre there, it will bring the town back to life. It will be back on the map. It will supply employment and I believe, over time, that subdivision will be fully taken. The hotel is a similar story that people want more people to recognise Bulahdelah
25 again. That's all I want to say. I hope it made sense. I'm fully open to any questions you would like to ask and all of the technical aspects I leave to Gavin Maberly-Smith but you can ask questions at a later period or now as you wish.

30 MR HANN: Thanks very much, Peter. Before we ask any questions, is there anything, Domenic, you wanted to add to Peter's material - - -

MR D. BELMONTE: Oh.

35 MR HANN: - - - that he presented?

MR BELMONTE: The – the only thing I would like to add is that Gavin tabled a – the RTA Road Stop - - -

40 MR G. MABERLY-SMITH: The table was attached to it. Yeah.

MR BELMONTE: - - - Plan that may or - - -

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Yeah.

45 MR HANN: - - - may not have been tabled previously – I'm not sure – and - - -

MR MABERLY-SMITH: It's from the RMS Policy.

DR P. WILLIAMS: Oh, yes.

MR HANN: Oh, yep, yep.

5 MR BELMONTE: Yes. Based on that plan, it clearly indicates that there is a need for another rest stop or suitable recreational facility, or fuel stop for that matter, in that precinct.

MR HANN: Right.

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MR BELMONTE: I think that's the vital comment to make. Ah - - -

MR HANN: Okay. All right. Now – now, thanks - - -

15 MR KAMPFNER: Oh, may I make one – one other comment?

MR HANN: Of course.

MR KAMPFNER: Um, the people of the township are overwhelmingly behind the rezoning. The council, where we had two voting meetings on the rezoning, gave 100 per cent support in both votings and I believe that they are strongly behind a revisit to s117. Now, that same council was instrumental in the – ah – implementation of s117. I think that they have now sufficiently reviewed it that I have 100 per cent support from the council as well. I hand you over to Gavin if you will - - -

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MR MABERLY-SMITH: Um, my name's Gavin Maberly-Smith. I'm the town planning consultant working for the applicants. We have reviewed the Department of Planning's justification report and, essentially, the four reasons that they've put forward in relation to the declining of the gateway determination. I would like to address those four points if I may. Ah, the first point deals with the RMS policy that looks at Bulahdelah as a highway service town. In relation to that I think it's worth going back to see how that policy was developed. So the current RMS policy was highly influenced by the policy of the – the Great Lakes Council who is now MidCoast Council, formulated in 2004 prior to the bypass that occurred and the bypass was a little more than route options report at that time and the purpose was there was – a Highway Service Centre proposal at Karuah which ended up in court, dealt with permissibility issues and it was permissible and council wanted to avoid the potential of Highway Service Centres on the highway which would compete with Bulahdelah in its provision of highway services, so, it brought out that policy.

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Now, following the opening of the bypass the RMS, which had adopted that policy as well and they were actually – they funded part of that study, sent a letter off to council in 2014, so less than a year after the bypass had actually occurred, seeking their advice and I've actually pulled out the council report in relation to that and what it shows is that council didn't actually consult with the community at that time. They simply reiterated their 2004 policy position but even then they recognised that if a HSC was proposed to occur outside of town that it would be subject to a planning

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proposal and full consideration of consistency with section 117 direction. So council, while responded to say, “Yes. We don’t change our policy”, in their – in their deliberation of that, they certainly considered that there may be some – some action occurring and – and hadn’t really taken into account the full effect of the –
5 um, of the bypass upon Bulahdelah because, you know, if there was an immediate impact they wanted to see if there was recovery over time.

When you look at the RMS map attached to their policy, which I see you have in front of you, you can see the travel times between various Highway Service Centres and you will note that the largest gap exists between Taree and Tomago and
10 Bulahdelah sits right in the middle of the gap. So it’s certainly an excellent location for highway services to be provided and to promote the safety of the highway by providing suitable rest stops and – and – ah – fuelling and food areas. So I move on to 2017, 2018, 2019 and following deliberation, a great deal of community
15 consultation, investigation, council basically responded that there was a need for highway services on the highway at Bulahdelah and that this Highway Service Centre should be supported and whilst it’s a variation of the 2004 policy position the council’s point was it’s actually consistent with those policy objectives in that it still maintained highway services at Bulahdelah where the town could benefit from the
20 economic advantage of servicing highway traffic.

So after the bypass occurred RMS, in their EIS for the bypass, said they would support – a – Bulahdelah as a highway service town and the contained a – a number of things that should be contained in that such as vision to the town such as signage
25 that would direct them, you know, this encouragement of – of vehicles to come into – to Bulahdelah as a highway service town. Unfortunately, the execution and – I don’t know why but the bypass construction and delivery missed a lot of those points. Um, if you drive up and down the highway, um, along the bypass and see – you – you don’t get any vision of Bulahdelah except at one point and at that point it’s too late to
30 even, um, come back other than taking a big long route and turning back upon yourself.

Ah, psychologically, motorists are hesitant to make diversions from the highway of an unknown point of view. I’m – I was just thinking about that myself as Peter was
35 talking and I travel the F3 a lot down to Sydney. Um, there’s a place called Peat’s Ridge, because I’ve seen the sign. I’ve never been there. I would have no idea what’s in Peats Ridge. It even says there’s highway services at Peat’s Ridge, fuel, etcetera, but I’ve never, ever turned in there. I’ve been to the service centres but I’ve never been to Peat’s Ridge and there would be a myriad of other towns along the
40 highways that would have exactly that same point. Then, when you go to the directional signposting, if you actually follow the blue directional signs to the town centre you will actually see that it takes you to the town centre but it takes you around the service stations.

45 So someone who says, “Well, I’m going to take the – take the gamble and see what these signs lead me to”, are – are – are going to have great difficulty finding where they can get fuel there which is not going to lead to the success of a highway service

town and, lastly, I think it's relevant RMS purchased a service station to the north of Bulahdelah which is on the highway as part of the, um, construction and shut that service station down which was a – a fairly popular service station with trucks and had a small, um, café associated with it. But since that time, and I think it's around
5 2016/2017, the RTA have leased that property to a – a – a – a fuel operator and it has opened again providing discount fuel that competes directly with the Bulahdelah township. So another point of the execution now, ah, failing to encourage Bulahdelah as a highway service town.

10 So if we look at the current function of the town since the bypass, there hasn't been a lot of traffic returning to the, ah, town centre. When we look at the highway bypass EIS, their predictions for the return of traffic were that by 2018 there would be around 1000 vehicles, um, coming into Bulahdelah. Our traffic counts show that it's far, far below that. Um, so there hasn't been a return of traffic into Bulahdelah. Um,
15 there's no truck parking in town, so, there's no provision really for heavy service vehicle – vehicle servicing other than, ah, fuelling. Um, a lot of – there's food businesses in the main street, small cafes, etcetera, mum and dad, um, operations, um, generally closing 3 to 4 pm, so, serving a possibly breakfast, possibly lunchtime crowd but certainly nothing to deal with those 24-hour operations.

20 Um, of those motorists who are stopping in town, we undertook surveys to determine what was their basis for stopping, would an out-of-town Highway Service Centre have an effect upon them, and what our survey showed us is that the people were stopping because they had a familiarity with Bulahdelah, that it was there, and they
25 had a desire for a more relaxed stop other than just fuel and food. So they felt that a Highway Service Centre out of town wouldn't have impacted upon their visit to Bulahdelah because that – they knew exactly what they were after and it wasn't a Highway Service Centre. That's the majority. Obviously, there were some people who were affected.

30 So the town has taken its own approach and is adapting to emerging markets. It's promoted as an RV-friendly town and provides free off – overnight parking for RVs in a number of areas. Um, there's a new caravan park that has been developed that was approved 30 years ago but now it's – stage 1 has been developed. Ah, the town
35 has been using some of its discretionary funds to promote events, um, it has a Bass fishing tournament annually. Um, these markets are improving town visitation but they still have the absence of a highway presence, um, they still have the problem that passers-by are largely unaware of Bulahdelah being there unless they knew Bulahdelah before, um, and are unaware that these opportunities exist. Ah, so our
40 proposal also includes a planning agreement that will be developed – I mean, Peter's offered a significant proportion of money to put into that. That will then be consulted with council and the local community to see where to best spend to support those – those new markets and, of course, the proposal provides the presence in town.

45 So our proposal will do what the EIS proposed to do which was ensure the retention of highway services at Bulahdelah, provide much needed employment in the town

and provide a presence for Bulahdelah on the highway improving that access for those existing – for those emerging markets. In terms of the Hunter Regional Plan, the Department of Planning Justification Reports talks of issues of, ah, safety of the highway because of new highway access, there's proliferation of signage, etcetera.

5 As you would have seen today, there's a very efficient access existing at the site. There's no reason that it would impact upon traffic safety. The large onramps, offramps and space within the site means that there would be no queueing of traffic back to the highway and it's obviously a key location for Stop Revive.

10 The Hunter Regional Plan – the other component of the Hunter Regional Plan they brought – bring out is revitalising communities. Well, the bypass had a significant blow to Bulahdelah when it occurred, ah, and the loss of employment has not been returned to the town. The environmental impact assessment that is prepared by Hill PDA noted that the Highway Service Centre would create 60 direct jobs, 48 flow-on
15 jobs, ah, which would be significant for a town like Bulahdelah especially after its loss from the bypass. Ah, the shopping centre showed that a majority of business in town would still be visiting town and not influenced by a Highway Service Centre on the highway and I think it's important to understand that the loss of jobs isn't just directly to people who work in the Highway Service Centre but also to other
20 industries.

So you've heard from Mr Dorney who owns the – ah, the local timber mill and, my discussions with Mr Dorney, they're having issues of retaining workers because their spouses can't get any employment in town and also school-leavers are obviously
25 unable to get any employment directly from school so the only way is to leave town to – ah, to go on to that. Ah, he EIS actually acknowledge this as an issue and sought to say we will keep this as a highway service town so it can deliver these employment factors. It just – unfortunately, it just hasn't happened.

30 MR HANN: Sorry, just a question of clarification, when you say the EIS, are you talking about the RMS?

MR MABERLY-SMITH: I'm talking about the RMS - - -

35 MR HANN: EIS for - - -

DR WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MR HANN: - - - the highway.

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MR MABERLY-SMITH: - - - EIS for the bypass.

MR HANN: Okay. Thank you.

45 MR MABERLY-SMITH: Yeah. So it recognised the issues of the flow-on effects of losing - - -

MR HANN: Right.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: - - - jobs to other – to other industries in town - - -

5 MR HANN: Okay.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: - - - and put an import upon those things but, unfortunately, it just hasn't delivered. Um, so we would say that the proposed Highway Service Centre will actually revitalise the community providing
10 employment, providing opportunity for promotion and providing people – or providing Bulahdelah a presence that it doesn't actually have. Um, maybe Peat's Ridge will do the same one day but I don't think the F3 is going to get too many stops on it. Ah, and, finally, the – the Department of Planning talks about the Ministerial direction and whether there's a justified need. Obviously, that's a key
15 issue here. Um, council, in their planning proposal that they sent away and that – that we submitted and – and was adapted by council, ah, noted that the 117 direction doesn't actually limit where you can have it. It gives you criteria for out-of-town and in-town service centres and it says you may do them here. It doesn't say that you shall not do them anywhere else.

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The planning proposal shows that the proposal is consistent with the 117 direction in terms of centres both in town or out of town. We don't agree with the Department of Planning assertion that the HSC has an impact in terms of reinforcing the town centre and there's a few things to note there and that is the town centre is actually not that
25 well defined within town. The cafes and pub are located in one area. The, um, service stations are located in another area and there's other shops and cafes up near the hospital. So there's actually a widespread of it throughout the town. There's a recognised need for Bulahdelah to provide these highway services and have a – and to do that need to have a presence on the highway.

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So, you know, it may be – it may be separate from the town centre but it's servicing a different market and not taking away from the town centre and the adaptation of Bulahdelah to other markets still requires that presence. Ah, the landowner's town centre improvements will obviously have an effect in helping the main street to – to
35 better, ah, capitalise on those markets that are emerging and we would say that the proposal actually offers the town an opportunity to recover from that impact from the bypass. I guess, in closing, we would note the comments at the end of the justification report that talk about council and RMS developing a policy and if that site's then identified we can come back to deal with that.

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Well, MidCoast Council are currently preparing strategies. Because they're the three amalgamated councils they're preparing consolidated LEP and the Department of Planning are demanding that all councils now prepare Local Strategic Planning Statements. So their strategic planning, ah, workload is quite full. Even if it was
45 empty a strategy like this would take two years, minimum, once it was started. Um, I think, with the workload, we're talking more likely in the realms of five to 10 years

for a strategy like that to be developed and completed. The ongoing impact to Bulahdelah over this time is substantially detrimental.

5 Um, the proposal has support from the council. The local community, ah, have shown overwhelming support in relation to it, including the, ah, Chamber of Commerce, and the landowner wants to develop and work with the community to – to make sure that this thing doesn't just deal with the Highway Service Centre but does its best to provide that presence to Bulahdelah on the – ah, on – on the highway for the township and, you know, as a landowner who wants to develop 200 lots, ah, 10 he certainly has a vested interest in the future and the – and the prosperity of Bulahdelah and we would say that, ah, this proposal needs to proceed without further delays of preparing new strategies, etcetera. Thank you.

15 MR HANN: Okay.

DR WILLIAMS: Sorry.

MR HANN: Thanks, Gavin.

20 DR WILLIAMS: Gavin - - -

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Yeah.

25 DR WILLIAMS: - - - could I just ask one question of clarification before we move on.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Yeah. Sure.

30 DR WILLIAMS: That, um, service station just to the north that the RMS purchased, did you have a name for that, ah, service station?

MR MABERLY-SMITH: It used to be called O'Sullivan's Retreat - - -

35 DR WILLIAMS: Right.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: - - - back in its day. Now, it's just called United Petroleum Bulahdelah.

40 MR HANN: Okay.

DR WILLIAMS: Thank you. Thank you.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Yeah.

45 DR WILLIAMS: Sorry.

MR HANN: That's all right. So, look, we've – we've just got – we – we – we've got, as you might imagine, some questions. The – the - - -

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Sure.

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MR HANN: The first one would be, ah, whether a Highway Service Centre located here, ah, as proposed, what – what evidence have you got as to the proportion of those that stop at that centre would then be directed into and actually visit the township because that's a – from – from our point of view, is crucial to
10 understanding the – the flow-on benefit apart from direct employment, obviously.

MR KAMPFNER: John, if I may - - -

MR HANN: Please.

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MR KAMPFNER: - - - answer that, um, I fully understand the question. It's a very relevant question. Ah, we don't propose to just build a service centre for a hit, run and go position. That service centre, in its design, has a vast trucking facility. Those truck drivers need substantial rest time and I have undertaken with the commercial
20 people from the town of Bulahdelah that we will signpost every business in Bulahdelah. We will pay for pamphlet and information that will be available on every one of those businesses. There will be arrow and signposting to get to the township of Bulahdelah. Now, I know that you all went and did a visit to the site with the golf course and Mount Alum and my property but I don't know whether
25 you've taken a drive around Bulahdelah. It's a very shallow town. It used to have the streets of full of fairy lights. It used to be busy. It used to be thriving. It used to be landscaped.

30 Take a short trip down to the river edge now. It's – it's all dilapidated, non-maintained. Go down the main street. Have a look at the lighting. Um, in the talks that I've had for the things that we, ah, can – can do, we are proposing antique lighting right down the main street, fairy lights put back up to give a bit of sparkle to the main road, streetscaping with plants. Um, so a million dollars will get you a lot of improvement in the beautification of Bulahdelah. The riverfront will be re-
35 landscaped, made really beautiful and attractive with park area, with picnic area, flora, fauna. So we want to make Bulahdelah a beautiful place to go and visit.

We want to highlight directional guidance for anyone that stops at the service centre and, the other thing that you may find of interest because it's familiarity, the time
40 that it takes you to get from the service centre into the heart of Bulahdelah is a couple of minutes. That's it. It's not as though you've got a long drive to go anywhere and if we promote the town of Bulahdelah, which is what we will be doing, I would guarantee you there will be a multi-fold increase of people that will stop, get their rest and break and pop into the town. Part of what we're doing is to try and make the
45 service centre the nicest we possibly can and funnel people down into the town.

Now, if I can make that service centre a highlight service centre on the east coast of Australia, and that's the direction I'm aiming in, I'm confident, if we get five per cent, 10 per cent of the people that stop there seeing the signs, seeing the pamphlets, seeing that it's only a few minutes away, families, saying, "let's go and sit on the
5 riverside, picnickers, people simply wanting to see the town, I don't think it needs rocket science to say that Bulahdelah will once again be recognised and be utilised.

MR HANN: Peter, do you have any comparable examples of where that has been successful? What – in other words, similar circumstances that, ah – ah, you're aware
10 of?

MR KAMPFNER: John, ah, the answer to that has to be a straight no other than the first sentence that I used in this talk. I hope common sense prevails. If you've got a situation that has a lot of natural beauty, and you help to make that stunning, the
15 purpose of that is to attract people and a million dollars gets you a lot of beauty. As I say, if you have the time, spend five minutes driving around, 10 minutes. Look at the river edge.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: It's you. Not me.
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MR KAMPFNER: Oh.

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Mine's off.

MR KAMPFNER: They should have like in the cinema; "Turn off before entering"
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MR HANN: I should have said that. You're right, Peter. I, ah - - -

MR KAMPFNER: So - - -
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MR HANN: Okay.

MR KAMPFNER: - - - our intention is not just the service centre. We're very
35 focused on then town of Bulahdelah.

MR HANN: So a broader offering which his leveraged from the – the service centre is, essentially, what – what you're saying, drawing on the existing physical - - -

MR KAMPFNER: We're going to - - -
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MR HANN: - - - attractions. Yeah.

MR KAMPFNER: We – we are going to – I have to be careful with what I say with
45 Helen here but we're going to promote the – next words - - -

MR MABERLY-SMITH: Out of it.

MR KAMPFNER: - - - out – out of the township of Bulahdelah. It will be highlighted everywhere. We’re going to spend the money so that people can walk into it and say, “Wow, have you been to the new town of Bulahdelah? It looks sensational”. Get people to say, “We went down to the river. It was so beautiful”.
5 We’re investing money in it and we’re investing promotion in it and you say can I name another town where this has been done. Look, I’m a perfectionist. I’m really going to drive this so that Bulahdelah becomes spectacular to go to and are we going to get 100 per cent of the people that stop going down into Bulahdelah? No. At the moment, if you look at our traffic studies, there’s – there’s a few – few 100 – 250,
10 300 a day. That’s all it is and, as I said, I think that includes the locals. That’s a dribble.

MR HANN: Yeah. Yeah.

15 MR KAMPFNER: If – if we get this service centre are you aware that it’s not a small service centre? It’s going to be a landmark on the east coast of Australia. Just building the bird aviary will be a very expensive task but we want people to – to – to landmark it, to stop, and that Stop and Revive, where better to revive than on a river’s edge? How do you get to the river’s edge? You stop at the service centre and
20 two, three minutes later you can be at the edge of this beautiful river, landscaped by Michael Bates and he is the name. People will go just to look at Michael Bates’ landscaping, you know. So there has been lengthy discussion with the local community. 95 per cent of them are satisfied that we’re going to boost the town.

25 MR HANN: Okay. Okay. No. Thanks, Peter.

DR WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MR HANN: Peter, any particular questions?
30

DR WILLIAMS: Yeah. Thanks, John.

MR HANN: Yeah.

35 DR WILLIAMS: Ah, just – just trying to summarise or encapsulate your arguments, or part of them anyway - - -

MR KAMPFNER: Please.

40 DR WILLIAMS: - - - as best I can, ah, so just to run it past you, basically, you’re arguing that the town has suffered from the bypass. Normally, a – putting in a Highway Service Centre would cause the town to – to – to be adversely affected but in this case the adverse affect has already occurred through the bypass. You’re seeking to revitalise the town by the – by the, um, Highway Service Centre. The
45 argument that there would be no net further loss of economic vitality to the centre is the fact, in part, that the services offered by the service centre will compliment what’s in the – in the town. There would be no direct competition in terms of what’s

currently left in the town and so it will compliment, one, and, two, will encourage some of the people back into the town.

MR KAMPFNER: Peter, may I answer that?

5

DR WILLIAMS: Yes, please.

MR KAMPFNER: Because, again - - -

10 DR WILLIAMS: That – that’s how I understand the argument.

MR KAMPFNER: Again, I hope common sense prevails and the question is a completely correct question. That, obviously, competition exists. Every time a new shop opens in a city, that’s competition. Every time Westfield build a shopping
15 centre, that’s competition. It’s – it’s all competition. With, ah, this – whether they are compatible or not compatible, common sense – people bring commerce. People. You’re not going to get commerce without them. If you’ve got virtually no people coming into a town the chance of seeing growth of any form of retailing and commerce is very low. If you’ve got hundreds, if not thousands, of people popping
20 in I will guarantee you money will be spent in the town, guarantee it, and the more money that gets spent in the town the better off everybody will be. Those people, in turn, will spend money.

We will boost interest and people coming into the town of Bulahdelah. Not
25 everybody, including particularly myself, will stop to buy a hamburger. You know, the idea of potentially going into a gorgeous little town and going to a café, very appealing. The idea potentially with a family of having a picnic at a river’s edge, very appealing. If you looked at – at – ah – a number plane, we will bring multi-fold additional people into the town of Bulahdelah. Those people will spend money and I
30 can see a strong improvement in the commercial heart of Bulahdelah. Can I say that there will be no competition? No. Do I want to say there will be no competition? No. Can I say that there will be substantially more retail spending? I guarantee it. Absolutely guarantee it and the – the – the people of Bulahdelah will have to do what they need to do to – to – to take the extra money that comes in but you can’t take
35 extra money from no people. So do I think that it will create some competition? Yes. Do I think the overall benefit commercially to Bulahdelah will be enormous to the township? Yes. Do the people of Bulahdelah think it will be of enormous benefit commercially to the township? Yes.

40 So that’s – it – the – the question is correct. The answer is if you’ve got nobody coming in you’re not getting anywhere. If you’ve got a lot of people coming in and things to offer – so if we had no signboards and no promotion and no pamphlets at the service centre I would say there – there – there – there is a chance that that would be of some detriment. We intend to have masses of all of them and if you’ve stopped
45 and you’ve got time to relax why not go into the town. But it needs somebody to direct you and it will be a landmark. I can tell you, um, using somebody like

Michael Bates, Bulahdelah is a name plate. Michael Bates is a name plate. It – it will attract people. People have money and that money will get spent.

5 So, overall, I think it will be of strong commercial interest to the town. Some people will be nervous that they will buy a hamburger up there and won't buy a toasted sandwich down here. If you open any new shop somebody down the road will say – somebody might spend money there and not there but it's commerce. Things go on. We are putting proactive money and effort and advertising into lifting the township of Bulahdelah and we will do all three. I hope that gives some answer.

10 DR WILLIAMS: Yeah. That's fine.

MR HANN: Any other questions?

15 DR WILLIAMS: Yeah. That's fine.

MR HANN: Yeah.

20 DR WILLIAMS: No. Thank you. Thank you, Peter. Thank you.

MR HANN: I don't have any – you – look, you've covered the ground really - - -

DR WILLIAMS: Yeah.

25 MR HANN: - - - thoroughly, thanks, Peter, Gavin and Domenic. Um, Helen, have we missed anything that you thought we should have - - -

MS H. MULCAHY: I don't believe so. No.

30 MR HANN: - - - covered? Yeah.

MS MULCAHY: We've captured - - -

35 MR HANN: Brad?

MR B. JAMES: Ah, no questions from me.

MR HANN: Okay.

40 DR WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MR HANN: Well, gentlemen, thank you very much.

45 MR MABERLY-SMITH: Thank you.

MR HANN: Now, I really appreciate - - -

DR WILLIAMS: Thank you for your time.

MR HANN: - - - the effort to – to meet us here but we - - -

5 MR KAMPFNER: Thank you.

MS MULCAHY: Thank you.

10 MR HANN: - - - we do need to see the site. That was important. There's no point in deliberating on this unless we've got a full understanding and also particularly to be able to hear from your point of view the key aspects. So we very much appreciate it. Thank you.

MR BELMONTE: Thank you.

15

MR KAMPFNER: I think you've been a delightful committee.

DR WILLIAMS: Thanks for showing us around the site. Thank you.

20 MR KAMPFNER: Thank you.

MS MULCAHY: Thank you.

25 **MATTER ADJOURNED at 12.29 pm INDEFINITELY**