

MR P. DUNCAN: Good afternoon, and welcome. I have a statement I wish to make before we begin. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Pejar people. I would like to also pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders from other communities who may be present today. Welcome to the meeting. Crookwell Development Pt Limited, the applicant, is seeking approval for the construction and operation of the Crookwell III Wind Farm, including 23 wind turbines and associated infrastructure in the Upper Lachlan Council area.

10 My name is Peter Duncan. I'm the chair of the IPC panel today. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Zada Lipman, at the end, and Adrian Pilton, as well as David Way from the Commission Secretariat. In the interests of openness and transparency, and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded, and a full transcript will be produced and made available on the
15 Commission's website. This meeting is one part of the Commission's decision-making process. It is taking place at a preliminary stage of the process and will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its decision.

20 We have met with the Department of Planning. We've had the public meeting this morning. We have this meeting; a site inspection this afternoon; and we meet the applicant later in the month. It's important for the Commission to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues wherever we consider it appropriate. If you're asked a question and you're not in a position to provide an answer, please feel free to take it
25 on notice and provide some additional information in writing, which we will then subsequently put on the website. So my request is that if you do speak today, if you could introduce yourself the first time, so that we know for the recording who's speaking, and also if we could ensure we all speak one at a time, so that we are clear for the transcript. But that's all I have to say. Thank you for being here.

30 MS T. DODSON: Thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Okay. So I think I will hand it to you, Andrew, and you can present as you see fit, in line with the agenda that David has put together.

35 MR A. CROKE: Okay. It's Andrew Croke, acting general manager of the Upper Lachlan Shire Council. So obviously the introduction here – Tina Dodson is our director of environment and planning, and Mursaleen Shah is our director of infrastructure. So thank you for this opportunity to, obviously, present council's
40 views and response to Crookwell III Wind Farm proposal. And we've actually got some notes and dot-points here, which I suppose deals with each of the items that were on the agenda in relation to visual impacts.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

45 MR CROKE: And so we might commence with - - -

MR DUNCAN: Yes. And also, if you wish to – if you haven't already done so – provide notes to David, we're happy to receive that as well. And that can be today or soon after.

5 MR CROKE: Sure. Yes. Okay.

MR DUNCAN: Okay. Thanks, Andrew.

10 MS DODSON: Tina Dodson, director, environment, planning with Upper Lachlan Shire Council. Based upon the agenda that was provided – I will just read through some notes in response to those dot-points on the agenda. So council's comments on the project – council is not opposed to renewable energy projects subject to the proposed – the proposals meeting council's DCP requirements, which have been through substantial community consultation, in 2005 and 2010, and has been
15 consistently applied and communicated since the original adoption on 27 September 2005.

20 So council has numerous wind farms within our local government authority. And we have consistently applied or communicated those controls. It's in our DCP. Even though it's not a statutory document – but as council has been through the community consultation process, the community, we feel, was happy with the adoption of those controls. And I think it's our duty that we continually request that those controls be met in any applications or consideration be given to those.

25 Council still strongly objects to the proposed turbines located within the Pejar South-western group, as this grouping will, if constructed, be located in a direct line of the Mount Gray and Wades Hill television transmission line, servicing almost all the residences in Crookwell and the surrounds. Council is also opposed to turbines being located within two kilometres of non-associated existing residences and roads,
30 as per our DCP controls. Do you guys have any questions on that?

MR DUNCAN: Only – and we have to work through this - - -

35 MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: - - - but the applicant this morning mentioned that they were going to withdraw the southern cluster from their application. We have to sort through exactly what that means for the application as it now stands. But I just thought I would clarify that issue. I don't think – were you here at the meeting?
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MR CROKE: No, we weren't.

MS DODSON: No. No.

45 MR CROKE: So thank you for that

MR DUNCAN: I just thought I would let you know that.

MS DODSON: No. That's good to know, actually.

MR DUNCAN: I'm not saying that has to make any difference to your comments, but I just wanted to clarify that - - -

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MS DODSON: Well, I think council's comments are based on the application and the assessment - - -

MR DUNCAN: Yes. That's right.

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MS DODSON: - - - currently undertaken and I - - -

MR DUNCAN: And that's our task.

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MS DODSON: - - - would assume that we would reserve the right to provide further comments if the project changes at any point in time.

MR DUNCAN: Yes. And we will undertake to do that.

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MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: That's our task to look at the report as we have from the Department of Planning.

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MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: And then we will come back to you if there's any further discussion.

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MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

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MS DODSON: Now, with regards to council's view on key points: the first point was visual impacts. I would just like to draw the commission's attention to obviously council's DCP, clause 9.5, which stipulates the controls that council has been consistently applying. Again, just re-iterating, that's a minimum setback of two kilometres using a precautionary principle in addressing perceived visual impacts. Council supports this control and unless the proponent can obtain neighbour agreements which they've discussed in – throughout the documentation provided for the affected properties, then council stand behind this control measure being implemented.

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45 The zoning considerations. That one was an interesting one. So the shire has up to 11 approved wind farms within our LGA. A number of wind farm projects have been assessed and approved by delegation of the Minister for Planning. Council understands that the application was submitted whilst the current LEP was a draft

and on public exhibition. The assessment as to the merit and weighting of the assessment officer's position on the draft LEP can only be justified by that officer.

5 As the staff sitting before you now were not involved in the LEP process back in 2010, we're unable to provide the reasoning for the E3 zoning being provided, which is the environmental zone, other than the Pejar Dam, which you will see on your site inspection, is zoned and maintained by Goulburn Mulwaree Council. So a little bit of history. The dam was established a long time ago and I think at that point Goulburn City Council were looking to utilise that as a supplementary drinking water supply.

10 MR DUNCAN: Okay.

MS DODSON: Subsequent to that, they've now installed a pipeline from Moss Vale as - - -

MR DUNCAN: Highlands.

MS DODSON: - - - the Highlands area, as their supplementary water supply. Confirmation on that you would have to speak with Goulburn Mulwaree Council - - -

MR DUNCAN: Thank you for that. Yes.

MS DODSON: - - - as to the utilisation of any water from the Pejar Dam catchment.

MR DUNCAN: So just to confirm, your feeling was that because of that management by Goulburn Mulwaree, that they would have – if it was going to be drinking water, would have put some protections around it.

30 MS DODSON: That's correct. Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Okay.

35 MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Right. Thank you.

MS DODSON: Now, as to community concerns. So council is aware of community concerns regarding the accumulative visual impact of the proposal. Again, I can't verify that as in writing from the residents other than the general conversations that council staff have with members of the public that ask questions regarding the proposal. Council is also mindful of the social and economic benefits that the scale of projects bring to the area, considering we have already 11 approved in our LGA. Council again would be supportive of such projects if they were more aligned with the controls outlined in our DCP. So that's our consistency in providing that two-

kilometre setback from non-associated dwellings. And I'm sure we're happy to answer any questions or clarification that you require.

MR DUNCAN: Okay. Zada or Adrian, anything from your point of view?

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PROF Z. LIPMAN: I was just wondering if you entered into a VPA or you can discuss the VPA with the panel.

MS DODSON: Yes, we have. So we have – council has provided and has a council resolution to an in-principle VPA. We have been provided with the draft documents, but they haven't been endorsed as yet. I think, obviously, they're awaiting to see if approval is granted.

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PROF LIPMAN: And does that take care of all concerns you had in relation to the roads as well construction?

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MS DODSON: No.

MR: No.

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MS DODSON: No. It only – the draft VPA only relates to a contribution to community enhancement. So projects that the local community can apply as part of that funding caution of the VPA.

MR DUNCAN: So any discussion on roadworks and impacts on local roads would be a separate discussion to the VPA?

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MS DODSON: That's correct. Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Has anything happened? Has there been any discussions on that?

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MS M. SHAH: My name is Mursaleen Shah. I'm the director of infrastructure. No. At this point in time we haven't had a detailed discussion in regards to the roads. I guess, council's position is that the impacts arising during construction, as well as during the operation of the wind farm, that those impacts would be adequately mitigated through appropriate conditions and concern to – including the roads that had been identified are likely to be impacted.

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MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

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MR A. PILTON: Sorry. It's Adrian Pilton here. There were some comments this morning from the proponent, which I understood – I understood them to mean that they were proposing to spend \$800,000 or something on improving TV reception. Have they talked to you about that or do you know anything about it?

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MR CROKE: We've had an initial discussion with, but there certainly has been no firm commitments, no signed commitments in relation. We're understanding that the

television transmission issues and things like that were going to be looked at and addressed. So that's probably what you're discussing there. Yes.

5 MR DUNCAN: That's right. And the proponent also mentioned \$800,000 towards a road upgrade for access.

MR PILTON: Okay. That's – yes.

10 MR DUNCAN: They've mentioned two lots of 800,000 in the discussion this morning.

PROF LIPMAN: Yes. Actually - - -

15 MR CROKE: And which road was that, sorry?

MR DUNCAN: It was the major entrance road. I will have to confirm that, but - - -

MS DODSON: Was it the Grainwood Siding Road?

20 MR DUNCAN: I think that's it. Yes.

MS DODSON: Was that discussed? Yes.

25 MR DUNCAN: I think that's it.

MR PILTON: That's this one.

MR DUNCAN: Yes. I think that's the one.

30 MS DODSON: So council had raised that road in our submissions as to – that's the option council preferred.

MR DUNCAN: Right.

35 MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Okay.

40 PROF LIPMAN: Can I just ask – you know, you're concerned about the television and radio impacts. And as I understood it, I think, from your submissions, the main turbines that are causing the problem are in the southern cluster. So if those six are removed, it should take care of the television - - -

45 MS DODSON: We would hope that that would alleviate that concern.

MR CROKE: Yes.

PROF LIPMAN: So that would probably be part of the reason why the proponent was proposing to remove those.

MR CROKE: Yes.

5 PROF LIPMAN: Yes.

MS DODSON: You would make that assumption, yes.

10 PROF LIPMAN: Yes.

MR PILTON: One of the speakers this morning referred to problems with mobile telephones. Have you heard any general complaints? Because it was just one person who mentioned it.

15 MR CROKE: There are issues.

PROF LIPMAN: Yes.

20 MR CROKE: There's black - - -

MS DODSON: Black spots.

MR CROKE: Black spots all along that – different components of the road between Crookwell and Goulburn.

25 MR DUNCAN: Existing black spots? Or ones that are caused by - - -

MS DODSON: Existing.

30 MR CROKE: There's existing black spots.

MR DUNCAN: Okay.

35 MR CROKE: And – yes. So that may be some of the issues that they may want to address as well as part of their development.

MR PILTON: Yes. This speaker – he said that they weren't there before, these black spots.

40 MR M. SHAH: There's a possibility that the blades might be cutting the signal. But we're not technical experts in the area to comment on that.

MR DUNCAN: Right.

45 MR PILTON: That's why I asked the question, because I know nothing about it.

MR CROKE: yes. That's right. Yes.

MS DODSON: Yes.

5 MR SHAH: But we definitely have been made aware that it cuts the TV signals.

MR PILTON: Okay.

MR SHAH: So we do not know whether it does the same to the mobile - - -

10 MR PILTON: It cuts the TV signals physically, because things - - -

MR SHAH: Yes.

15 MR PILTON: It's not sort of an electromagnetic thing.

MR SHAH: We do not know the mechanism through which it affects.

MR PILTON: Yes.

20 MR SHAH: But it does affect the electromagnetic signal, that frequency range, for some reason.

MR PILTON: Okay.

25 MR SHAH: So we do not know whether that communicates with the other - - -

MR PILTON: Okay. Thank you.

30 MR DUNCAN: One of the speakers also objected to the southern cluster on the basis of birdlife and locality, close to the dam.

PROF LIPMAN: Yes. That was right.

35 MR DUNCAN: That was a strong position of one speaker.

MR CROKE: Sure. Okay.

MR PILTON: Yes. He said this area around here was a bird breeding ground.

40 MS DODSON: It is a large water body.

MR PILTON: Yes.

45 MS DODSON: So you would make the assumption that birdlife would be attracted to that area.

MR DUNCAN: Yes.

MR PILTON: Yes.

5 MR DUNCAN: Yes.

MS DODSON: Yes.

10 MR DUNCAN: Any other questions?

MR PILTON: I don't have any.

PROF LIPMAN: Not from me, no.

15 MR DUNCAN: We don't have any more questions. Are there any final comments, anything that council would like to summarise?

20 MR SHAH: I guess one important thing is, is that some further discussion need to be had in regards to the mitigation measures arising from the construction, as well as the operation of the wind farm: what the infrastructure impacts are. The specific details needs to be agreed in due course, of course. But there is a fair bit of work in negotiation that's still to be had, and it's worthwhile

25 MR DUNCAN: So you would be assuming there would be more discussion, and possibly conditions, to ensure that discussion takes place and we get a satisfactory outcome

MR PILTON: Yes.

30 MS DODSON: Yes. As previously stated, depending on which way the Commission goes – obviously council would like the opportunity to address any future changes or proposed changes.

35 MR DUNCAN: We understand that.

MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Yes.

40 MR SHAH: Thank you.

45 MR DUNCAN: Okay. And, look, from our point of view, we've met with the department; we're meeting you now; and we had the public meeting this morning. We're looking at the site this afternoon. We're meeting the applicant in the next couple of weeks. So we're still on the journey.

MS DODSON: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Okay.

MR SHAH: I guess from council's perspective, council's submission that was made in 2016 largely stands as is, without any major changes. Is that - - -

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MS DODSON: That's correct.

MR CROKE: That's correct.

10 MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

MS DODSON: And that's what we've alluded to. Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

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MR CROKE: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Okay. Well, I think we will formally close it at that point.

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[12.36 pm]