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O/N H-1027513

**INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**RE: CROOKWELL III WIND FARM**

**PANEL:**

**PETER DUNCAN  
PROF ZADA LIPMAN  
ADRIAN PILTON**

**ASSISTING PANEL:**

**DAVID WAY**

**LOCATION:**

**CROOKWELL RSL SERVICES CLUB  
160 GOULBURN STREET  
CROOKWELL, NEW SOUTH WALES**

**DATE:**

**9.41 AM, THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2019**

MR P. DUNCAN: Good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Pejar people. I would also like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be present today. Welcome to this public meeting on the development application from Crookwell Development Pty Limited, the applicant, who is seeking to develop and operate Crookwell III Wind Farm, including up to 23 turbines and associated infrastructure. My name is Peter Duncan. I am the chair of this Independent Planning Commission Panel and this has been appointed to help determine the proposal.

Joining me are my fellow commissioners Zada Lipman and Adrian Pilton and David Way, from the Commission's Secretariat. Before I continue, I should state the appointed Commissioners must make an annual declaration of any interest, identifying potential conflicts with their appointed role. For the record, we're unaware of any conflicts of interest in relation to our determination of this development application. You can find additional information on the way we manage potential conflicts on our Commission website

Also, I need to make an apology, too, on the meeting schedule. I think we've misspelt Crookwell RSL, so I'm sorry about that. It's apologies. And I think John McGrath – we've misspelt John's name, as well, so my apologies there. I just wanted to correct that, for the record.

In the interests of openness and transparencies, today's meeting is being recorded and a full transcript will be produced and made available on our website. The public meeting gives us the opportunity to hear your views on the assessment report prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment before we determine the development application.

The Independent Planning Commission of New South Wales was established by the New South Wales Government on 1 March 2018 as an independent statutory body operating separately to the Department of Planning and Environment. The Commission plays an important role in strengthening transparency and independence in the decision-making process for State Significant Development and land use planning in New South Wales. The key functions of the Commission include to determine State Significant Development applications, conduct public hearings for development applications and other matters, provide independent expert advice on any other planning and development matter when requested by the Minister for Planning or Planning Secretary.

The Commission is an independent consent authority for State Significant Development applications and provides an additional level of scrutiny where there are more than 25 public objections, reportable political donations or objections by the relevant local council. The Commission is not involved in the Department's assessment of this project, the preparation of the assessment report or the findings within it.

5 The public meeting is one part of the Commission's process. We have already met  
with the Department on 23 May 2019 and will meet the Upper Lachlan Shire Council  
later today, 6 June, and the applicant on 13 June. The panel is also conducting a site  
inspection and local tour today. Transcripts of these meetings and notes will also be  
put on the Commission's website. After today's meeting, we may convene with  
relevant stakeholders if clarification or additional information is required on matters  
raised. Again, any of these meetings will be transcribed and all meetings will be  
published on our website. Following today's meeting, we will endeavour to  
determine the development application as soon as possible, however there may be  
10 delays if we find the need for additional information.

15 Before we hear from our first registered speakers, I would like to set out some  
ground rules that we expect everybody taking part in today's meeting to follow. I  
would also refer you to the Public Meeting Guidelines and there are copies of that at  
the back desk. First, today's meeting is not a debate. Our panel will not take  
questions from the floor and no interjections are allowed. Our aim is to provide  
maximum opportunity for people to speak and be heard by the Panel.

20 Public speaking is an ordeal many people. Though you may not agree with  
everything you hear today, each speaker has the right to be treated with respect and  
heard without interjection. Today's focus is public consultation. Our panel is here to  
listen, not to comment. We may ask questions for clarification but this is usually  
unnecessary. It will be most beneficial if your presentation is focused on the issues  
that most concern you. It is important that everyone registered to speak receives a  
25 fair share of time, which they have nominated themselves. I will be enforcing  
timekeeping rules. As chair, I reserve the right to allow additional time for provision  
of further technical matters. A bell will sound one minute before the speaker's  
allotted time and again when the time runs out, so please respect these time limits if  
you can.

30 Though we will strive to stick to our schedule today, speakers sometimes do not  
show or decide not to speak. If you know anybody who has registered who has  
decided not to speak please let David Way know and we can deal with that during  
the meeting. If you would like to project something on the screen, again, please let  
35 David know before your presentation. And if you have a copy of your presentation,  
it would also be appreciated if you could provide a copy to David after you speak.  
Please discuss it with David if you wish. Please note, any information given to us  
may be made public, so you can also discuss that matter if you wish.

40 The Commission's privacy statement governs our approach to your information. If  
you would like a copy of the privacy statement, you can also obtain this from the  
Secretariat or our website. Finally, I ask that everybody present please turn off your  
mobile phones and thank you again for being here. And it's now my pleasure to call  
the first speaker. The first speaker today is Mr Guillermo Alonso, the proponent.  
45 Thank you.

MR G. ALONSO: Thank you. Right. Well, good morning, everyone and thanks for coming. My name is Guillermo Alonso, engineering manager for Global Power Generation Australia, the proponent ..... wind farm. So thanks – first of all, thank you very much to the IPC and also to the members of the Panel. Thanks, of course,  
5 to all members of the community who have been gathered here this morning for this meeting to share their views about this project. Also, thanks to those directly related to the project. Also, thanks to those that have travelled maybe a few hundred kilometres to be here. So I guess today I just wanted to - - -

10 MS .....: ..... microphone .....

MR ALONSO: Can you hear me properly?

15 MS .....: ..... hold it up to your mouth.

MR ALONSO: Much better? Yes. Thank you. So, first of all, I would like to start my speech with a few corporate details about who we are, who is Global Power Generation Australia and in particular Crookwell Development Pty Ltd. So Crookwell Development Pty Ltd, the proponent of this project, is basically the  
20 special-purpose vehicle for this project under our current structure here in Australia for Global Power Generation Australia. Global Power Generation Australia in turn is the Australian subsidiary of Global Power Generation, which is, basically, the international-generation arm for development of power-generation facilities within the Naturgy Energy group, which is a large gas-electricity integrated utility which  
25 originated back in Spain about 175 years ago. And – yes. Well, Global Power Generation, our parent, is participating 75 per cent by the Naturgy group and 25 per cent by the Kuwait investment authority.

30 So our view, our position in the world, developing power-generation assets – it's, I guess, a long-term view with the intention to stay, to own and operate the assets in the long term, and, well, that's the intention we have with the already-operated Crookwell 2 windfarm that you already know in the area and some other projects that we are also developing in Victoria. Crookwell 3 wouldn't be an exception to this. Our – I guess the – Global Power Generation's current focus is – in terms of growth  
35 markets is mainly Australia and Chile, and again our DNA is long-term operator of the assets. And we've been present in Australia from 2008, developing several projects in Victoria and New South Wales.

40 So moving on to Crookwell 3, we've been dealing with this project – sorry. We've been dealing with this project since 2009 roughly. We put an original-development application back in 2010 for a total of 30 wind turbines ..... generation turbines, basically, with two – roughly two megawatts size. And – yes. Well, at the time the rotor diameters were smaller, in the order of hundred meters et cetera, and, well, due to some – during the – I guess, during the planning process we've had several steps  
45 there. This was referred to the – originally to the PAC, the planning-assessment commission. They went back to the department with some comments, and that,

basically, triggered a review and reconsideration of a number of factors in the project, mainly, reducing the overall number of turbines, which at the time were 29.

5 So during 2015, 2016 we redesigned this project. We went down to 23 turbines in total to make use the – of the – well, the newest or the available wind-turbine technology at the time with slightly larger rotors, slightly larger unit-rating capacity per turbine, and – with the aim, mainly, of reducing the visual impacts of the project due to a reduced number of turbines in the overall layout. So that led us to, well, propose a redesigned project back in 2016, consisting of 23 turbines in those two  
10 clusters that you can see there. So – southern cluster here, six turbines, and the eastern cluster with 17 turbines. And that’s pretty much the situation that we have right now. As everyone knows, department of planning and environment in New South Wales has recommended not to approve, and now the matter is with the IPC for final determination.

15 So moving on, I would like to, definitely, make a few statements and a few commitments from our end to try to address some of the concerns that have been raised by the community, by council, by other organisations, to try to make these impacts – to mitigate these impacts as much as possible. First of all we would be at  
20 this point in time prepared to reduce the number of turbines and remove the southern cluster without – continuing, basically, to honour our commitment to the host landowner in that area in terms of future contributions and future payments and also without reducing our commitments to the Upper Lachlan shire in terms of a – sorry – in the form of a voluntary planning agreement that we’ve signed. So in the event that  
25 the – we reduce the number of turbines by six, still our contribution to the council would be as if the project had a total of 23 wind turbines as originally planned, same again – I insist, same for the host landowner in the southern area of the windfarm.

30 I would like to continue just outlining a number of project benefits for the region in terms of positive stimuli and positive impact to the local and regional businesses during construction. We estimate that – well, the overall balance of planned costs, basically, the construction of a civil and electrical infrastructure, will be in the order of 20 to 23 million dollars for Crookwell 3. Based on our previous experience with Crookwell 2, we’ve calculated some ratios to, basically, give you an idea of the  
35 impact or the business that this will represent for local companies within the Goulburn, Crookwell and Marulan area, mainly, in the – well, in the environment of civil-construction works, earthmoving, haulage, fencing, quarrying. May be concrete-supply as well. And we estimate that this could capture around \$8 million based on these previous ratios that we’ve seen for Crookwell 2, which is successfully  
40 operating at the time, at this point in time.

Another positive aspect for the community and, well, specifically, for the Upper Lachlan shire – it’s this voluntary planning agreement that we’ve signed with them. This voluntary planning agreement would see one contribution of us of \$2500 per  
45 turbine and per year multiplied by again 23, irrespective of final number of turbines that ..... approved. And this contribution would be used towards local improvement

projects, community projects, improvement of infrastructure, roads et cetera et cetera.

5 Additionally we as part of our agreements with the host landowners and neighbours – we're committing, well, roughly to \$9 million in current terms, in current dollars over the life-time of the project, mainly due to lease payments and neighbour agreements. It's kind of a benefit-sharing agreement with neighbouring properties located within the two-kilometre radius of any of the turbines proposed. So, basically, if we look at this map – these external circles or this external line around  
10 both sides represents the dwellings or the locations of the properties that we have identified within a two-kilometres radius, and all these owners, landowners have been offered neighbour agreements in the past, with a number of them, which I can estimate at the moment being very, very close to 80 per cent of them, accepting the neighbour agreements. So, basically, within associated residents plus host  
15 landowners we're targeting a figure of 80 per cent of people that actually have accepted this kind of agreements with us.

20 Additionally I would like to mention two key important things in terms of benefits of the project for the region, in particular, road upgrades – we're also committing to rehabilitate ..... road as the main access to the windfarm as a favoured option by Upper Lachlan Shire Council. And this will mean an extra investment of \$800,000. Finally we are also committing another \$800,000 to improve radio, TV and mobile communication-infrastructure upgrades, which will mean a significant benefit for the area and for those people living around the windfarm.

25 Moving on to the operation and maintenance phase of the project, also we envisage significant use and business for local contractors, specifically, in the areas of civil and electrical maintenance or the infrastructure associated to the windfarm, mainly about maintaining the internal access roads, electrical medium-, low-voltage  
30 infrastructure et cetera et cetera. And, yes, well, this is pretty much what we wanted to say. Just to recap: we are here – our intention is to be here to stay, to operate the windfarm in the long term, as we've already been – have started doing with Crookwell 2, and, hopefully, we can bring some positive outcomes for the community, as, we believe, we're already doing with Crookwell 2. So thank you  
35 very much, everyone, for giving me the opportunity to talk today, and we're happy to take any questions at any stage or later during the day. Thank you very much.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you. Could I now call on Laura Beasley to speak, please.

40 MS L. BESLEY: Hi, everybody. I'm Laura Besley. A lot of you might not know me, but my kind of claim to being here today is I'm third generation of the local area, of farmers in the local area. Just want to say – can you hear me okay in the back there now? I just shifted my microphone. Sorry. A bit about me and my role that I  
45 do on a day-to-day basis in work.

So I'm a national-sustainability manager. And I deal with energy-management day in day out as part of that role for a global property company that deals with

industrial, commercial and retail spaces. I'm a lover of nature, agriculture and massively drawn to natural landscapes. I'm here representing my generation as a concerned party and important member of this community.

5 So I'm for Crookwell 3, and to demonstrate why I'm going to talk about three things that are extremely relevant here today. The first is ..... and draw comparisons with what we're here talking about today – and the community as the second and then tourism as a third. And I will end on some hard facts that tie in really nicely with what Crookwell Development was just talking about. Firstly I want to draw you  
10 back to the 1800s in Crookwell. There was a gold rush here. About 12 miles out from this area there was a goldmine that was developed. That was the sole purpose of astonishing richness for the community.

15 But, subsequently, only one of the proprietors or the main proprietors benefitted from that, and that was around \$20,000 for his two years of labour. At the time that was a considerable amount of money but only one person that significant benefit from that. And today in terms of the tourism it's a claim here on three major websites that this is something that you can come to Crookwell to see, the gold trails.

20 Think of the benefit that you will be able to get out of this particular promise of having Crookwell 3 added to the additional windfarms that are already on sites here. At the moment you're in the midst of wind rush. So – harvesting gold from the wind. And it's not something that, I think, you would want to walk away from, if you have a benefit of walking out your door and picking up gold. This is, essentially,  
25 what you're able to do. In terms of the community – it lands back to the benefits that the community will get as part of this benefit. So just alone with what Crookwell Development was talking about – that was just under \$20 million of direct investment in your community, which is a huge considerable amount of money that would not want to walk away from. This is in terms of creating a lower impact. So a  
30 spatial footprint of turbines versus the mine – you're not having a permanent structure. These can be removed and decommissioned. They're only there for a 30-year life-time, but they can then be upgraded as part of that.

35 There's a direct investment around local jobs to this community and, essentially, a tourism impact. So on five of the major websites – Visit New South Wales is one of those. Trip Advisor and traveller.com.au all list as the top five reasons to come to Crookwell – as the wind turbines. Nobody owns a view. A view is there to be enjoyed and shared by all. The number of submissions that were made as part of this that are against the visual impact of these wind turbines was only a small  
40 considerable number, about 10 per cent. 80 per cent of submissions were in favour of the windfarms.

45 So why are we standing here, having this conversation? I would want to know and ask the independent planning commission to have some considerable question around that in terms of 12 who opposed and 74 submissions who in total of – majority of who were in favour. It's clear, that there's so much more to be gained

when compared to the visual impact the department of planning is citing as a main reason for declining this project. Thanks very much.

5 MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Laura. Could I now ask David Brooks to come forward.

10 MR D. BROOKS: Good morning, Commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to speak at this meeting. I should make a couple of declarations. First, I am a neighbour of the Gullen Range Wind Farm, not far from here. My house is about 1.6 kilometres from the nearest turbines. From my house, I can see about 20 of the 72 turbines. From my hill, I can see about 55. They cannot be masked by trees as they are situated on a ridge. They do not improve the landscape. They detract from it.

15 The turbines also are noisy. Whether they are noisy or not depends on wind strength, wind direction and temperature and, more specifically, on whether there is plenty of wind on the ridge, where the turbines are, while at the house there is little or no wind. In these circumstances, which are quite common, they can be very noisy indeed, both in the morning and in the evening and at night. These conditions apply to every wind farm, and they will apply to Crookwell III if it is built and is operated.

20 Second – excuse me – I must declare that I have been chairman of Parkesbourne-Mummel Landscape Guardians for several years. I am so no longer. But I have always opposed the construction of wind farms, on the southern tablelands and, indeed, anywhere else. Since 2008, I have read tens of thousands of words on wind farms and their impacts and have written tens of thousands of words, in the form of submissions to government departments, the NSW Land and Environment Court, planning panels and parliamentary inquiries. I say this only to emphasise that while I am not an expert, my opposition to wind farms is at least informed.

30 I do not intend to speak about visual impact, since you have the Department of Planning's views on that. I will speak on the noise research of a Sydney-based noise consultant, Dr Steven Cooper, and its bearing on the wisdom of wind farm development. This topic is as relevant to Crookwell III as to any other wind farm. Excuse me. So as I said, Dr Steven Cooper is a Sydney-based noise consultant of more than 30 years experience. He has worked for both the Australian Government and the American Government. His recent research into the impact of low-frequency noise from wind turbines is a game-changer. I wish to emphasise this very clearly.

40 Until Dr Cooper conducted his research, it was impossible to establish a causal link between wind turbine noise and the symptoms of ill health, such as headache, pressure in the head, ears and chest, ringing in the ears, heart racing or a sensation of heaviness. The best that could be established was a correlation. And as everyone knows, correlation does not prove causality. This has now changed. As a result of his research, Dr Cooper now claims that a causal link does exist between wind turbine noise, more specifically inaudible amplitude-modulated low-frequency noise, and the symptoms that I have just mentioned. He is quite explicit about this.

And in my speech here, I give you in footnotes references to his work that you can consult. His field work research was conducted at the Cape Bridgewater wind farm in Victoria, with the permission of the operator, Pacific Hydro. This was in 2014. The findings of that study were then put to the test in experiments conducted in his acoustic laboratory in Sydney. He has presented his findings in reports, in submissions to public enquiries and tribunals and in papers delivered to international acoustics conferences.

As the turbines of the Cape Bridgewater wind farm were turned off from time to time, Dr Cooper's study already had the character of an experimental study but he tested the results of that study in a double-blind investigation in his laboratory using both wind farm neighbours who had complained of these unpleasant sensations and a control group – people without experience of wind turbine noise. This investigation used WAV files from the Cape Bridgewater study. Inaudible, amplitude modulated, low frequency noise was then played to the participants. I emphasise “inaudible”. Dr Cooper has described the results, quote:

*...after a period of between 45 seconds to three minutes, all the nine people in the test group –*

that is the wind farm neighbours –

*could sense the presence of the wind turbine signal on 100 per cent of the occasions in which the signal was presented, even though they were unable to hear the signal. At no point in time did any of these test subjects detect any audible signal –*

and he goes on:

*...one test subject –*

one of the wind farm neighbours –

*identified a disorientation in the room where there was a perception of a tilt in the floor of about 20 degrees –*

in other words, this person felt that the floor was tilting under them. Dr Cooper also says:

*...the control group –*

people with no experience of wind turbine noise:

*...the control group were exposed to the same test set-up ... after a period of some two minutes, two people, including one a very distinguished Australian acoustician, could identify a sensation whilst the remainder of the control group never detected any sensation –*



MR .....: .....

MR DUNCAN: Looks like he's an apology. So we will move to the next speaker.  
If Malcom arrives, we will add him to the list at the end. The next person on the list  
5 is John Benjamin. Is John here? Yes.

MR J. BENJAMIN: Yes.

MR DUNCAN: Yes.  
10

MR BENJAMIN: Can I speak through this?

MR .....: .....

MR BENJAMIN: Okay.  
15

MR .....: ..... speak .....

MR BENJAMIN: ..... so just push the button?  
20

MR .....: .....

MR BENJAMIN: This development contradicts zoning aspirations. If Crookwell  
III is approved in any form, this will allow for the construction of turbines on land  
25 located within or adjoining the E3 Environmental Management Zone, the Upper  
Lachlan Shire Environmental Plan of 2010. The intent and purpose of the plan is  
clearly stated:

30 *...to protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural  
or aesthetic values ... to prevent development that would destroy, damage or  
otherwise have an adverse effect on those values.*

The New South Wales Planning Department has itself stated that the proposal is  
inconsistent with local planning controls which classify more than two-thirds of the  
35 proposed site as an environmental management zone:

*...overall, our assessment concluded the site is fundamentally not suitable for  
large scale wind farms.*

40 Mike Young, Executive Director of Resource Assessments, makes it clear that the  
proposal does not comply with the New South Wales Government's Wind Energy  
Framework which was introduced in 2016. Furthermore, the Department has sought  
the advice of an independent visual expert and states that "the department's  
45 recommendation to refuse draws on extensive community consultation" and the  
advice from that independent expert.

Now, like many others in the community, think that the landscape has already been brutalised beyond what one would consider reasonable. Anyone would think that New South Wales is the size of a postage stamp. People are dumbfounded as to how the landscape of such a beautiful area can become the victim of such planning decisions. The sheer dominance of the now built Crookwell II Wind Farm overpowers the natural landscape. The district is being turned into a plantation of wind farms.

Renewable energy has not only become a religion, it has become a feasting-ground for companies involved. Currently the large-scale generators market pays \$40 for each renewable energy certificate. That's \$40 per megawatt. The companies then double up and sell the power on the open market. The \$40 subsidy goes onto the bills of electricity payers of New South Wales. Wind farm operators bathe in the warmth of the grants. Some might call them bribes that they make to the local communities. But make no mistake, community grants are paid for by the electricity users of New South Wales.

Renewable energy is big business. It's about money. It's about profits. I have personally experienced their underhanded behaviour. Goldwind, the owner of the Gullen Range Wind Farm, offered me thousands of dollars – and I have that in writing – for a noise easement over my property, even though their application clearly stated I would not be noise-affected. They moved turbines closer to my property and then omitted this from a report and finally, after they had put me in a precarious situation, used a stooge to buy my farm. They then knocked down hundreds of trees and went about installing 42,000 solar panels.

There is an extremely important issue of indemnity which the Department of Planning and the IPC need to address, and that is who is ultimately finally responsible for the removal of these turbines, the thousands and thousands of turbines that are being spread everywhere? New South Wales taxpayers should not be held liable for this. Landowners take on the profit. They get the profit. They should take on the risk. Last year – I will have to skip that. I won't have time.

When it comes to the inadequacies of wind and solar, slowly but surely voices like Michael Shellenberger, co-founder of the Breakthrough Institute and now Head of Environmental Progress voted by Time Magazine as Hero of the Environment, are being heard. He is not only bringing an awareness as to why renewables are so inadequate on a global basis – they achieve so little – but also the role oil and gas companies play in backing them to protect their own interests.

People should listen to what Bill Gates has to say about the possibilities of renewable energies running a city like Tokyo. It's disappointing that it's even considered, he says. During a discussion at Cambridge University, Professor Jordan – just a bit more – who for two years worked on a UN committee for sustainable and ecologically development, said that when talking about the possibility of a renewable energy running a modern economy – “Good luck with that.”

Wind and solar are – compared to coal, gas and nuclear are low-density energy sources. A US Nimitz-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier weighing 100,000 tonnes can reach speeds of 56 kilometres an hour and can remain at sea for 20 years without refuelling. That’s why modern navies don’t use sailing ships other than for ceremony, training or to remember the past. Like navies, modern developing economies – modern and developing economies can’t be sustained on low-density wind and solar energy. Because of their limitations, wind and solar are a lifeline for the coal and gas companies. Just look at the increase in gas production globally. Apparently we are facing the world’s greatest challenge, and our response is wind turbines and solar panels. In the words of Professor Jordan Peterson, good luck with that.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, John. I would now like to ask Nick Winberg to speak. Thank you, Nick.

MR N. WINBERG: Morning. Morning, all. I’m speaking here today on behalf of myself and several affected residents of what the department labels the Roslyn North and Eastern group to request that the panel upholds the recommendations of the Department of Planning and Environment. The department’s own assessment report enunciates enough supporting argument as to why this particular project should be refused. I don’t see a need to re-hash the same detail, but perhaps for a little perspective I will share a few token points.

On weekends I often ride my pushbike around a 50 kilometre loop from Rolsyn, along Roslyn Road to Crookwell Road, then south along Woodhouselee Road and back to Woodhouselee – back through Woodhouselee to Roslyn. Basically, a loop around Crookwell II and the proposed Crookwell III. On every ride, while focusing intently on the crisp air on oncoming vehicles whose drivers are often distracted looking up through their windscreens at the multitude of turbines, I come to the crest of a rise to a spot which illustrates exactly the fact that this region has reached saturation; a saturation with wind turbines. A fact highlighted by the department’s own assessment.

If you drive 15.3 kilometres from this very point back along Crookwell Road, just before the right turn on to Pejar Road there is about a 200 metre break in the left – on the left side of a road of evergreen trees. If you can pull over safely, please do, get out of the car and look around in every direction. There are wind power stations within every vista on every horizon. Every single horizon. Irrespective of whether you’re for or against wind power stations, the fact is that they’re well and truly here and in great numbers. Within that view, you will see the accumulative impact of several wind power stations that, in total, now contain 210 turbines.

Further, a small gap on the distant southern horizon will soon be filled with another 54 turbines from the approved Collector wind power station that commenced construction last week on 27 May. When the also approve Biala Wind Farm – wind power station commenced construction, another 31 turbines will bring the total in this immediate region to 296 turbines, not including Crookwell IIIs proposed 23 or

17. The point is there are already way too many. It's manifestly unfair to expect one region to accommodate this much impact, let alone more still, especially in an area that has an environmental zoning. Adrian, as a fellow architect, one whose firm and work I have enormous work for, where is the contextual relationship for this region?

5

296 40 plus storey towers, planning every otherwise undeveloped horizon, all already approved, under construction or operational. Is it because this local population is small, that the local community's right to a well-managed planning environment is not relevant or respected? Your firm's offices are a lower level of Seidler's Australia Square, right over Ryan's Bar, a fantastic place. It's a beautiful, elegant and iconic building. It's also 170 metres tall, only three or four floors taller than each of the 23 turbines proposed for this power station. If you worked on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of one of those turbines, the bottom of the blades would swing past your windows and extend to the top of the building.

10

15

Can you imagine, as I have to, fronting a local or even state planning panel with a plan to build a 48-storey, 157-metre high residential building in a local suburban conservation zone with only two-storey dwellings? Not 23, not 296, just one. We both know that wouldn't get passed by the paper. And more so, imagine a developer client writing a letter to the authorised panel two days prior to the public meeting, promising to hand over more money, noting that they would really appreciate the panel disregards the department's assessment and advice because they've already signed up buyers for most of the apartments, because that's exactly what the proponent did the their letter to the IPC on 4 June. Please give that letter the consideration it would get in any other comparable development project.

20

25

I'm not here to argue about the need or otherwise for renewable energy, nor the need to reduce emissions. I fervently agree they both need to happen. How much or how fast is now irrelevant around here. This district has done its bit for New South Wales Australia and the world. Coupled with the cluster of approved wind power stations about 80 kilometres due west in Boorowa, Harden and Yass containing another 300 turbines, the wider region will have over 610 turbines. That doesn't include the cluster around Lake George. More importantly, is the number of homes that will be powered by these turbines. This immediate region of 296 will total 330,000 homes.

30

35

If you include Boorowa, that's 500,000 more. If you include Lake George, another 140,000. That's over 970,000 homes powered only by the approved wind farms in this area. The 2016 census notes there were 2.6 million homes in New South Wales. Make it 2.7, because we've gone a few years. Over one-third of all New South Wales homes, according to the wind power lobby, are able to be powered by wind power without approving more turbines anywhere in New South Wales. That's not even considering solar power, domestic rooftop solar, Snowy Hydro. Adding another 23 or even 17 is not only plainly unfair, it's completely unwarranted.

40

45

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Nick. Could I now ask Grant Winberg to present.

MR G. WINBERG: Mr Cameron, Professor Lipman and Mr Pitman – Pilton – I can't compete with that last presentation or the one before. But thank you for the opportunity to speak at this public meeting, to support the Department of Planning and Environment's recommendation to the Independent Planning Commission to not  
5 allow the Crookwell III proposal to proceed. It is noted that the agenda has the director of the developer as the first speaker and the representatives of the Australian Wind Alliance as the final two speakers. I imagine, however, that the majority, bar one, if not all, of the remaining speakers will be presenting their arguments to you to adopt the Department's recommendation. We're assured that each of the IPC Panel  
10 Members has read and absorbed all of the written submissions to the Department regarding this development application and not merely those currently visible on the Department's website. We are assured there is no reason to repeat here any of the contents of those submissions. Please correct me if I'm wrong.

15 To restate the Department's recommendation, which I unreservedly endorse, to ensure I get the message across to the IPC Panel present today, quote – and I must read this because it is recorded and it's not going to be recorded otherwise:

20 *...ultimately, the Department considers that the environmental impacts of the project outweigh its benefits and the site is unsuitable for a large scale wind farm on the following grounds: the project would result in unacceptable impacts on the landscape, character and significant landscape features; the project would result in unacceptable direct and cumulative visual impacts on residences, public viewpoints and the surrounding landscape, the majority of  
25 submissions from residences in the local area –*

not Lane Cove or Epping or any other place:

30 *...in the local area object to the project and Upper Lachlan Shire Council maintains residual concerns about the impact of the project and the project is not consistent with the current land use zoning provisions. Consequently, the Department considers that, on balance, the Crookwell III Wind Farm is not in the public interest and should not be approved.*

35 Unquote. For background, my family acquired our property 22 years ago unlike many who have acquired theirs many years before or inherited the land, some of whom have decimated that inheritance with these obscene constructions. The Crookwell III application was lodged in 2010, in the final throes of perhaps the most controversial planning instrument in New South Wales history, which was repealed  
40 very soon after submission.

We have had the prospective imposition of Crookwell III hanging over our heads for nine years, not unlike all of those before it. We have seen the particular injustice of the Gullen Range development, a sensible Planning Assessment Commission  
45 committee decision was overturned by a subsequent PAC committee and we, consequently, quite understand that other residents would then accept don't complain

money for entering into confidential don't complain agreements when they realise there is no way that the developer won't get its way, anyway.

5 In brief summary of my involvement in this and other such proposals, I first heard about the precursor to this proposal, the Crookwell II proposal, in 2004, became a member of the Friends of Crookwell which transitioned to the Crookwell District Landscape Guardians, held the offices of public officer, secretary and treasurer of the CDLG for various periods, spoke at various public meetings and researched and lodged submissions with regard to the Crookwell proposals, the Gullen Range fiasco and other such proposals.

10 To conclude, a short story. A little while ago, I was advised by someone who was engaged to advise the ACT Government in finalising the selection of preferred renewable energy supplier between Collector and Crookwell III. If Collector had won, that development would have proceeded and not Crookwell II with respect to the ACT Government's reverse auction. He noted that Crookwell II won because Collector was claimed to have more resident objections than Crookwell II statistics. He was a consulting engineer and that was ultimately the deciding basis. That is why I'm standing here. I'm a statistic.

15 But please understand, there are many more of us statistics who, for various reasons, cannot stand here today. Malcolm, for instance, a very knowledgeable ex-Councillor, still involved with the community, is probably not here. He has a wife who is – requires his attention and I'm sure that's why he couldn't make it today. It has happened before in recent times. They have written object submissions over the last nine years. They have fears of subtle and direct community retribution. I urge each of you to carefully consider the impact on this area of any more wind turbines and heed the advice of the Department – reject this development, please.

20  
30 MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Grant. Thank you. Could I now ask John Carter to present, please.

35 MR J. CARTER: Well, Commissioners, thank you for the opportunity to address you. I am totally opposed to Crookwell III for all the reasons that the Department of Planning has listed and those that were listed should have prevented the desecration of the lovely Wollondilly Valley by Crookwell II. In retrospect, there are people in the Department who basically are apologising for that mistake. They've also listed the cumulative effects of many wind farms in a small area. This is concerning the Wind Farm Commissioner, Andrew Dyer, and, belatedly, the Yass and Upper Lachlan Councils and was very well presented by Nick Winberg. And I hope that we will not see a repetition of the disgraceful Gullen Range ruling reversal by the second PAC hearing here. I chaired the Meat Authority for 10 years in the past and in all my years in the public service, I have never seen such a disgraceful performance.

45 Now, I've actually lived within three kilometres of the first wind farm in New South Wales for 21 years. Others may conjecture. I have experienced. Most of my comments are based on factual experience. David Brooks has spoken of the

infrasound health effects and the research by Steven Brooks. I may add that that research has also occurred in Germany and is basically being accepted in Europe. Now, my wife – she is one of those – perhaps five – we have no idea – 10 per cent of people who are affected by infrasound. She’s currently in Crookwell Hospital with a broken hip caused by vertigo which has occurred on and off for nearly 20 years. I’ve gone into the kitchen and her face has been all twisted and it’s when the wind is in a certain area. And Crookwell I is only a small eight turbine, low-powered wind turbine – wind farm.

10 We were told that Crookwell I in 1997 was a trial. There would be no more wind farms in our area. That was in 1997. I have followed Crookwell I. It is uneconomic. The Government sold it for less money than it cost to erect it to a New Zealand lot. And if we were to believe anything that was said at the time, it would be due for demolition. It won’t be demolished. It will be like the scars across the west of the United States of America where there are wind turbines fading away and in Hawaii, no longer of any use. Now, if we had to do this for the good of the world, we had to suffer this, I would have to go along with it but when it is not efficient, as has been pointed out this morning by John Benjamin, it does make you sick.

15

20 Now, like David Brooks, I’ve read a fearful amount on wind turbine results around the world. But well before Professor Michael Dureau, former CEO of the Warren Centre at Sydney University told me, that no Australian wind farm with any land mass between it and the South Pole, will ever be profitable without government subsidy. Premier Bob Carr, who was responsible in some ways for Crookwell I:

25

*We could cover all New South Wales with wind farms, kill all the kookaburras and still not generate 10 per cent of our power needs.*

30 We’ve seen – it was 21 years – we’ve seen all these different companies. Some of the shelf companies, Crookwell I, Crookwell II – they kept changing – and some of them had – well, we invested – had one lot at capital of \$1100. When the time comes for them to be no longer of any use, they won’t be taken down because it costs too much money. And now we’ve got a good example of this. Crookwell I was sold last year; the farm was sold. The owner of the farm, before she died, said that if she had her life again she never would have agreed to the turbines going up. The property value falls dramatically. This was the first major test and we had an extraordinary situation where the property brought \$2900 an acre.

35

40 Now, by coincidence, another farm, the same distance from Crookwell, similar basalt soil, sold for \$4000 an acre within a few months. It – the prospect of having these turbines – I’m sorry. The prospect of having these turbines – disobeying the rules – on a farm is quite frightening on the way it will – it will devalue the property. The cost of the demolition is the problem. And right around Australia we will haven’t had a government come forward with the obvious solution to put in bonds as they do with mining. There should be a bond. An ..... big bond before any wind farm is erected. And without that, they will all scar our landscape for the rest of our lives.

45

Now, we refer to what has happened with Crookwell II as a – well, they’re basically steel weeds.

5 We’ve got a sea of steel where once there was a really Scottish Highland’s sort of environment, and both Dennis Williamson and Terry O’Hanlan, landscape experts, advised against it on those grounds. Now, Lake Pejar, the idea of turbines going beside Lake Pejar was absurd all along, but I understand there’s delay. That has been withdrawn. We’ve got the 22 red lights on Crookwell II ruining our formally pristine night sky. There seems to be wild inconsistency in the rulings of the New South  
10 Wales planning and CASA on turbine lighting with the Gullen Range Wind Farm having no lights, despite being on a higher altitude than Crookwell II.

Bushfire risk is a shocker. I was a bushfire captain for 20 years. We’ve had two really bad fire days; 2003 and 1965. And without aerial support, we would have  
15 fires go right through from Boorowa – if it starts there, we won’t be able to use aerial support and we get a day like we had in 2003, it will go to the coast. Sir, we’ve got trouble with TV reception. I had to watch the second-half of the State of Origin through the Alice Springs channel because our television went when the Crookwell one went up and they put a disc up, but we’ve got to get it through Alice Springs.  
20 We’ve got a trouble with our radio every evening. We’ve got to keep moving the radio every few minutes because reception goes.

I’ve spoken on the health effects of infrasound, but the “woosh, woosh, woosh” that’s coming, we – I personally don’t hear it where we do – where we live, but the  
25 Dooley family have had a shocking time. They’re surrounded by wind turbines. And people to the west of Crookwell II are losing sleep because of the “woosh woosh”. Like a washing machine going all night. And we’re – the only thing – I would to just throw in something I read in my research is that in Texas where there has been a very dense concentration of wind farms, they have now established that  
30 the soil is drying and there is an increase – a decrease in rainfall in that – those particular areas. Sir, I oppose Crookwell III on all the above grounds and trust that the commission will reject the application. Thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, John. Could I now ask our speaker, John McGrath, to  
35 present.

MR J. McGRATH: Thanks very much. Yes, no, I will get the microphone. Where is the microphone?

40 MR .....: Sorry .....

MR DUNCAN: Thank you.

MR McGRATH: We just push this up?

45

MR DUNCAN: It should be on.

MR .....: It's on - - -

MR McGRATH: It was – the green light. Can you hear me?

5 MR DUNCAN: Yes.

MR McGRATH: That's good. Thank you. Look, I would like to initially thank the IPC for having me here, the other people having me here. Some people know of me, some people have heard of me and my stand on wind farms hasn't changed since  
10 2004 when we found out the implications of the Conroy's Gap Wind Farm at home. I would like the IPC to uphold the DPEs stance on the Crookwell III Wind Farm, because of saturation, as other speakers have mentioned. Basically, the reasons that DPE have now rejected Crookwell III is exactly the same reasons that we've been putting up against wind farms for the last 15 years of my life, anyway.

15

Unacceptable impacts – and I'm going to read through these. I'm sorry. Unacceptable impacts on landscape character and significant landscape features, and I'm sorry I don't agree with the lady here earlier that said they don't interfere with the landscape. They're unacceptable to direct and community – sorry, on visual  
20 impacts on the residents, public viewpoint and the surrounding landscape. The majority of the submissions – the majority of the submissions from residents in the local area objected and the Upper Lachlan Council – Upper Lachlan Shire Council maintains residual concern about the impact of the project, and they've already – Upper Lachlan have already been impacted. The project is not constant with local  
25 land provision use. This is – this is rural land. T

his is not to be used as an industrial – or it already is become an industrial generation site. Okay. At the moment, Crookwell III is owned by the Crookwell Development Proprietary Limited. A subsidiary of global power generation. And I might put in  
30 here, I've been to CCCs with global power generation and they are the honest proponent that I've met, mostly the others will lie to you or not answer or go away and come back with some silly answer in three months. I'm a member of the CCC for Coppabella. I was a past member on the Yass Valley Wind CCC. I'm secretary of Yass Landscape Guardians. What this little company becomes is a \$2 shelf  
35 company, and it will vaporise as much as the proponents say they will stay here for the duration.

This project will change hands with regularity to another \$2 company down the road. And at the end of it, those people expecting decommissioning; it's a pipe dream.  
40 It's a pipe dream. You're going to wear these things. You, as the host, are going to be pulling them down at a quote of \$340,000 in 2015 from Epuron if they pull the lot down at once. That's per tower. Okay. So, basically, here, what I'm saying – yes – okay. Now, with Charlie Prell's reasoning for Crookwell III to be an extension of the existing wind farm, that's a pretty poor reason, Charlie, I'm sorry, because – I'm  
45 getting on to this directly – but there's so many towers across the Southern High Tablelands now – have reduced their – your – Global Power Generation reduced their infrastructure by three towers and they've talked the neighbours and once the

neighbours understand the benefits – ie, they're going to get bribery payments, which is all they are – to shut up on documents that I can't discuss with anyone, it's pretty poor show.

5 Now, I've heard today that they've removed the southern cluster near the Pejar Dam and I was going to talk about that. But I will talk about the first – the lady's mentioning of the eighty – I think it was the 80 per cent – no, sorry, it was proponent – 80 per cent of the neighbours are agreeing with these towers because they're being paid and there's 20 per cent that still have integrity, like some of those people in the  
10 room, to object to this. It has also been pointed out that Pitt Street farmers are the objectors. Absentee farmers – absentee landholders are the majority of the people putting these towers up. And the reference to this being a gold rush that we should take money from these people is not relevant to me, I'm sorry. It just doesn't stand up.

15 I'm sorry to the IPC. I've had to change my notes as we had through here. Local jobs; another farce. Another farce. They bring people from Tasmania or New Zealand to do this sort of work. And I've already mentioned the water birds, but I'm going to say the proponents will always tell you these things are moving slowly. 14  
20 RPM with a 70-metre tip blade accounts to 300 kilometres per hour. There's nothing – none of us in the room that could dodge something moving at 300 kilometres per hour. Okay? I've got the facts there and I will talk about – a little bit about mental health. I got up at 3 o'clock in the morning to get that – because I couldn't sleep, I got up to find that calculation online and I've got a copy of it there for anyone that  
25 wants to see it.

Now, I concur a little bit with John Carter on rural fire, because at the moment there's 13 or 14 – 13 constructed or approved wind farms totalling probably more than 800 towers right across the Southern Tablelands from Coppabella, west of  
30 Bucca to here. We get a fire – this not going to be – we are not going to be able to use aerial bombardment within the fires because the rural fire service – and I spoke to George Shepherd at Southern Tablelands Rural Fire Service up at Crookwell yesterday by phone – will not fly through a wind farm that they can't see the towers for smoke. And we've done the right thing by getting these things painted grey.

35 But I was at the Taralga Wind Farm fire, which started in the Taralga footprint, and the Capital Wind Farm fire, so-called started by the Currandooley crow. Then there's a court action against ..... there. So you people that are putting these things up want to be very careful that you're not going to end up with an – a whole court  
40 case against you for starting a fire that's going to sweep from west of here to the coast in one hit because it can't be contained because of wind towers. I – unlike, John, I'm not a captain, but I'm a deputy captain of Bowning Brigade and have been involved in firefighting since 1972. A lot of the – all the – majority of the rural fire service people are volunteers, like myself, and there are brigades in our area that  
45 have already decreed they will not control a fire started by – or within the footprint of a wind farm.

So you will want to consider that, too. The volunteers like myself – and I would not have gone to Taralga to that fire had I known it was started within the footprint of the wind farm. I would have refused – I would have stayed at home. It’s interesting – I just refer to David Brookes here and Steven Cooper. Interesting how many  
5 proponents don’t know who Steven Cooper. And I was at the Rye Park CCC last Thursday night as an observer and Tilt, basically the New Zealand government, which was Trustpower. Trustpower were the people responsible for assaulting Jim Fields at 79 years of age, at Rye Park in 1979, as well as Mark Glover, the same day. I was at that meeting and I saw what happened. So, yes, I concur with John on the  
10 fire. And I will leave it at that. But I would like to implore the IPC to actually reject – and stay with the DP and reject Crookwell III being constructed, please. Thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, John. Now, I understand Malcolm Barlow has arrived;  
15 is that correct? Malcolm – if everybody is happy, Malcolm, would you like to speak now?

MR M. BARLOW: I would love .....

20 MR DUNCAN: Thanks. Malcolm, you’ve been allocated five minutes. We will ring a bell about a minute before the end and then two bells when it’s time to wrap up. Thank you.

MR BARLOW: I used to be a school teacher. I might not listen to the bell.  
25

MR DUNCAN: Okay. Okay. Thank you. Do what you can.

MR BARLOW: I would just like to make a little complaint first. I’m sorry I’m late, but things happen. I won’t go into that.  
30

MR .....: .....

MR BARLOW: I would like to apologise for being late, but things do happen. I won’t go into that. I would like to make a complaint. I did not hear about this  
35 meeting until Thursday of last week when I heard about it second-hand in the street from another person who also heard about it second-hand. The Department of Planning assures me that my name and address was given to the IPC as a submitter and someone who should be contacted, and this didn’t happen, and as of yesterday afternoon’s mail I still not had heard officially. Nevertheless, I do wish to speak.  
40

My first objection – and that is mainly to do with Crookwell III South – is that good planning never juxtaposes antipathetic land uses. In good planning you don’t put garbage dumps near hospitals; you don’t put brothels near churches; you shouldn’t put pubs near schools; and you shouldn’t put giant bird-killing machines next to a  
45 bird breeding ground and habit, and that is exactly what Lake Pejar is and that is exactly what Crookwell III South would do. Any person involved in planning who breaches that basis tenet shouldn’t be in the field.

My second objection, panellists, is that I've got no doubt that you are aware that a wind farm developer was, and I hope still is, required by the Department of Planning to consider whether or not their proposal would constitute an excessive cumulative impact upon the landscape, especially if there are other pre-existing wind farms  
5 already in the area, as there are, with Crookwell I and Crookwell II and its giant turbines already operating on adjacent properties. There are some – my figure is 36 turbines in the immediate vicinity of this proposed project.

Now, whilst modification number 2 for Crookwell II reduced the number of turbines,  
10 it increased their height, and the increase in the height in the view of many people did not, in fact, increase the visual impact. The number may have reduced it a bit, but the increase in height to those giant machines increased the visual impact. If Crookwell III were allowed to go ahead, there would end up being about 70 turbines crowded into a triangular-shaped piece of land about 55 square kilometres in area,  
15 a density of over one and a quarter turbines in every square kilometre.

Now, even the huge and ugly Gullen Range Wind Farm with much smaller turbines has 73 turbines in a long stretch of ridge land of about 200 plus square kilometres or a density of less than a third of a turbine per square kilometre. The developer's own  
20 application on page 100 admits that Crookwell III would create – and this is a quote from page 100:

*A moderate to high visual impact on 29 residential sites.*

25 And then strangely states – and this is a quote on the same page:

*There is unlikely to be a significant increase in visual impact arising from the cumulative impact.*

30 This is nothing more than unsubstantiated assertion by this greedy developer. I have in the – what I will give to you – a little map that shows this conglomeration, this forest of turbines in this smallish area. My third objection is that Crookwell III is inconsistent with council's state-approved local environmental plan in relation to developments that may be allowed with consent in areas zoned as E3 which is  
35 environmental protection.

Land use details for this zone are such. Permitted without consent, environmental protection works, extensive agriculture and human occupations. Permitted with consent, dwelling houses and roads. Prohibited, industries, multi-dwelling houses,  
40 residential flat building, retail premises, seniors' housing, service stations, warehouses or distribution centres and any other development not specified in 2 or 3 above, and wind farms are not specified in 2 or 3 above.

We had the quite ludicrous situation where a state-approved planning law with which  
45 council and other developers must comply be overridden today by this panel in order to facilitate an overseas developer's attempt to gain more subsidised profits. Of course, the developer will argue that they lodged an initial application in March 2010

when the zone – area was zoned differently. The new LEP came in in July 2010, a few months later, and the developer did not lodge their final real application for this development until July 2012, two years later. I have one page to go if you will bear with me.

5

MR DUNCAN: Okay.

MR BARLOW: Lest we just – finally, there are many other reasons why you should knock back this wind farm development. Wind farm ..... are a potential source of fire. Wind turbines reduce aerial firefighting capacity. Wind farms reduce aerial agricultural practices. Wind farms destroy social cohesion in rural communities. Wind farms produce audible and inaudible noise or soundwave emanations that impact the health, mainly through sleep deprivation, of many near neighbours.

10  
15  
20  
25  
Wind farms, as many studies have shown, lower the value of nearby properties. Wind farms kill untold numbers of birds, 12 and a half per turbine per year in Macarthur Wind Farm by admission of the developer. Currently there are no enforceable measures in place to pull down outdated turbines 14,000 of which litter Southern California. Wind farms subsidised by consumers through the REC market are a major cause of our damagingly high electricity costs. Panellists, for all of those reasons and the three that I emphasised at the beginning, I ask you to please support the Department of Planning's recommendation that Crookwell III not go ahead. Thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Malcolm. And, Malcolm, can I just say, too, an apology that you apparently weren't notified. We will follow that up.

MR BARLOW: Good.

30  
MR DUNCAN: Please be assured we do everything possible to contact as wide a range of the community as possible, so thank you for making the effort of coming in and we will follow that up.

MR BARLOW: .....

35

MR DUNCAN: Give – a copy for David. Won't be a moment. Thank you, Malcolm. The next speakers registered are Steve and Kylie Ward. Steve has nominated five minutes but has asked for an additional two to three minutes. That's okay, Steve. If you could do what you can to keep it tight? Thank you.

40

MR S. WARD: ..... will do. G'day, everyone. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Steve Ward. My wife, Kylie, and I own the property Narangi on Pejar Road, which is a direct neighbour to Crookwell III South. I'm a member of the Crookwell II and III Community Consultative Committee and have been since it was established in early 2013. I'm opposed to the Crookwell III development for many reasons, the main reason being the cumulative impact of these huge turbines destroying our once beautiful rural landscape and now dominating the ridge line.

45

5 The purpose of today's meeting is to talk about the Department of Planning's  
assessment report, so here goes. The first application for Crookwell III was lodged  
in February 2010 for 30 turbines. In February 2015, the Department of Planning  
recommended the PAC to approve the development with the provision that eight  
residences in close proximity to the turbines be granted voluntary acquisition from  
the developer. My property, Narangi, was one of these properties. The PAC had  
concerns with the application back then and these were the proximity of turbines to  
non-associated private residences, visual and noise impacts, problems with  
neighbourhood agreements, road maintenance, access to site and decommissioning of  
10 the turbines at completion of their useful life.

As a result, an amended DA was submitted in September 2016, with 23 turbines, 157  
metres tall, 17 turbines in the east sector and six turbines in the south sector. The  
Upper Lachlan Shire Council were concerned about the following items. They  
15 opposed turbines within two kilometres of a residence, damage to roads, TV  
interference. The Office of Environment and Heritage had concerns for bird life and  
bats. WaterNSW were concerned about the water quality entering the Sydney  
catchment. Terry O'Hanlon, from O'Hanlon Design, who attended my property with  
Mike Young and David Kitto from the Department of Planning wrote:

20 *...these turbines will have an unacceptable impact on the landscape –*

Terry O'Hanlon is the visual expert working for the Department of Planning. I will  
repeat his words again:

25 *...these turbines will have an unacceptable impact on the landscape –*

I and the majority of people I talk to in Crookwell share his views. The Department  
of Planning now considers that the potential benefits of the projects are outweighed  
30 by its predicted impacts. Here are some of the statements made by the Department  
of Planning in their 64 page summary. Page 6:

35 *Overall, the Department considers the local landscape already has limited  
capacity to absorb further change from wind farm projects, and the particular  
location and layout of the project would result in material impacts on local  
landscape values and features.*

#### Visual Impacts on Residences

40 *The NSW Wind Energy Framework recommends that turbines of 157 metres in  
height should not be located within 2.1 kilometres of private residences unless  
there is clear justification to do so. This is similar to the Upper Lachlan  
Development Control Plan 2010, which specifies that turbines should be  
located more than 2 kilometres from non-associated residences. The proposed  
45 Crookwell 3 turbines are located in close proximity to residential dwellings  
with 17 of the 23 proposed turbines (representing 74%) located within 2.1 km  
of non-associated residences ... given the close proximity of the majority of*



• *the majority of submissions from residences in the local area object to the project and Upper Lachlan Shire Council maintains residual concerns about the impacts of the project; and*

5 • *the project is not consistent with the current land use zoning provisions.*

Consequently, the department considers that on balance the Crookwell III Wind Farm is not in the public interest, and should not be approved. Okay. Page 19:

10 *Local Populations*

*There are approximately 90 residences within five kilometres of the site ... the project has three host or “associated” landowners (representing four residences) who own land on the project site.*

15

I can't imagine why this development should be approved when so many people and properties will be adversely affected to the financial benefit of such a minority. Back to the summary, again, page 21:

20 *Non-Associated Landholders*

*There are 76 non-associated residences within five kilometres of the site, including...28 residences within three kilometres ... many of these residences have the potential to experience significant direct and cumulative visual impacts given they are located between, or with extensive views of, the Crookwell 3 turbine clusters and the Crookwell 2 Wind Farm –*

25

so page 40:

30 *Pejar: South-western group*

*This cluster has eight residences and is predominantly located along Pejar Road and Dawsons Creek Road around the southern turbine cluster –*

35 and:

*...most viewpoints at elevated locations. Almost all residences (seven) have a moderate high to high impact ... the residences have the nearest turbines between 1.1 kilometres and 3.2 kilometres. In particular, R8 –*

40

Narangi, which is my property –

*and R19 –*

45 which is Wombat Hollow –

to the north of the southern cluster would have a high visual impact with the closest turbines located 1.7 kilometres and 1.1 kilometres from these residences respectively, and all six turbines in the southern cluster ... located within 3.1 km. In addition, these residences would have impacts from Crookwell 3,  
5 Crookwell 2 and Gullen Range wind farms, resulting in wind turbines being visible within the horizontal view in more than four –

sections:

10 (ie, over 240 degree views of turbines) –

the photomontage, as supplied by Union Fenosa Global Power Generation, have managed to hide a 157 metre tall tower behind a shrub from my property, R8, Narangi. This is pointed out by O’Hanlon Design in figure 10. This tower is 1.7  
15 kilometres from my house, yet is barely visible in the photo. These are words from the Department:

*...turbine A29 appears missing or hidden by foreground foliage.*

20 Another one of my neighbour’s properties is Wombat Hollow, which is a non-host property. It has a 157-metre tall tower hidden from view being a 12-metre tall timber power pole. Amazing, considering this turbine is 1.1 kilometres from their house and otherwise unobstructed. These photo montages supplied to the Department of Planning are disgraceful and have deliberately tried to mislead the department on  
25 what the actual view would indeed be. So not long to go. Back to the summary. Community submissions, page 48:

*The majority of submissions in support of the project came from residents beyond 15 kilometres of the project site. In this regard, approximately 80 per cent of submissions within 15 kilometres objected to the projected, while 90 per cent objected within five kilometres, and all submission within three kilometres objected with the exception of the two submission in support from host  
30 landholders.*

35 Key issues raised in submissions:

*Approximately, 80 per cent of objections raised visual impacts as a key issue. In particular, concerns were raised in regard to the visual impact on surrounding residences, accumulative visual impacts from the presence of  
40 several wind farms in the area, loss of scenic value, impacts of industrial structures in a rural landscape, proximity of turbines to dwellings, the height and number of turbines, impacts associated with night lighting and shadow flicker, misleading photo montages and the validity of the methodology used to determine visual impacts.*

45

Final, the Department of Planning recommendation, page 54:

*It is recommended that the Independent Planning Commission of New South Wales, as delegates of the Minister for Planning consider the findings and recommendations of this report, noting that the department considers that the application should be refused.*

5

I could have read the entire summary to you all, as the whole 54 pages all have the same point of view and lead to the same conclusion, and that is, the Department of Planning considers that the application should be refused. The people of Crookwell think that the application should be refused. Commonsense and decency say that the application should be refused. Thank you.

10

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Steve. Could I now ask Renae Keith to present. Renae, the microphone is just on the stage there.

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MS R. KEITH: Sorry. You will have to excuse me. If I was judging at a cattle show and looking at cows I would be fine, but my nerves are with me today. Firstly, I would like to thank the Independent Planning Commission for the opportunity to speak today. My husband and I own Atholvale, which is located at 1156 Woodhouselee Road. My family has lived on Atholvale for over 40 years. We have taken over the family property and continue to run a Poll Hereford and Angus stud. We have a development application approved to update the existing dwelling, which I have noted in my notes the DA number, which is currently known as R69 for this project. Atholvale is located next door to the proposed Crookwell III Wind Farm and adjacent to the Crookwell II Wind Farm. We can now see five different wind farms from our property.

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We estimate, based on figure ES2, visual impacts on residences, page 7 of the report, using the scale provided, we currently have 24 turbines within five kilometres of the residence on Atholvale. With the proposed Crookwell III Wind Farm we would be significantly impacted by what is known as the eastern cluster of 17 turbines which would increase this number to approximately 41 turbines within five kilometres of our residence. Based on table 3 of the report, there are 296 turbines operational or approved within 30 kilometres. We believe we could see up to 245 of these turbines from our property. The process for Crookwell II and Crookwell III Wind Farms have been extremely stressful for myself and my family members over the last 15 years.

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Since Crookwell II Wind Farm has become operational, we now have a much better idea of the true impacts of these developments. Due to our high elevation at Atholvale, we have been significantly impacted by the Crookwell II Wind Farm from both a visual and noise standpoint. The nearest turbine from Crookwell II to our residence is 2.1 kilometres. We have a number of aging pine trees that act as a partial visual screen to the residence from the Crookwell II turbines. However, these trees do not provide any relief from the noise which can be heard when the turbines are operational. The only I can think of describe the constant sound is the constant sound of a vehicle, on some days a semi-trailer, coming up our driveway. It doesn't seem to matter what direction the wind is coming from, the noise can still be heard.

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Visually, we can still see the movement of the blades through the existing vegetation of the residence and are also affected by the white lights seen some nights which can – which we believe are at the TransGrid station and we have brought this up with the representative of Global Power Generation. Another impact that we have  
5 experienced since Crookwell II has become operational, is reduced mobile phone service coverage. Areas of our property and surrounding area the phone previously worked now have no coverage. For us this is a significant safety concern. During the construction phase of Crookwell II, we also had numerous experiences with erratic and dangerous driving of vehicles associated with the construction of the wind  
10 farm whilst travelling on Woodhouselee Road. I can recall at least six instances where we had to pull up our vehicles to a stop to avoid collision, especially in the area of the Pejar Creek bridge. Sorry. Not too much longer.

MR DUNCAN: Yes.  
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MS KEITH: With the impacts that we have experienced from Crookwell II Wind Farm, we are extremely concerned with the proposed Crookwell III Wind Farm development as these turbines are a lot closer. We are concerned with the potential noise impact as the nearest turbine will be 1.3 kilometres from our current house site,  
20 and also concern with accumulative noise aspect from the additional proposed turbines. Based on figure 16 of the report, all 17 turbines of the eastern cluster would be visible from our dwelling in addition to the Crookwell II turbines. Due to the elevation and close proximity to our property, the height of the proposed Crookwell III turbines, we agree with the Department of Planning that visual  
25 screening would not provide a practical or effective option to mitigating the visual impacts of the project.

In addition, as per the DA for our dwelling, we are in a bushfire prone area and vegetation screening would not comply with our conditions of consent for our  
30 updated dwelling. The proposed northern access referred to as Boltons Lane has been one of our major concerns in relation to this project. Whilst there is a Crown road marked at this point, the current formed road is on our property. It is not currently fenced and poses biosecurity and safety concerns for our livestock.

35 The proponent has advised us in our most recent meeting, last week, that they would not be using this as a preferred access to the development, however cannot guarantee that it would not be used, as they are unsure they can get all the required components to the site using the Grainwood Siding Road access point. Sorry.

40 We have come to the conclusion that there would be a greater impact on our property than we previously thought. We are very concerned with the cumulative visual and noise impacts if Crookwell III was to proceed. We can only just tolerate the impacts of Crookwell II and believe that the addition of Crookwell III turbines would be unbearable.

45 We are also concerned for the safety of the local community and biosecurity risks that may result from this development. We would like to thank the New South

Wales Department of Planning for taking the time to meet with us onsite as part of the assessment process and taking our concerns into consideration. We agree with the overall conclusion of the report, that the negative impacts of the Crookwell III Wind Farm outweigh any benefits from the project.

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MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Renae. Thank you. Thank you. I would now like to ask Andrew Bray from the Australian Wind Alliance to come forward. Is Andrew here?

10 MR A. BRAY: I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My presentation is longer than the five minutes I have. So I will try to read an abbreviated version and send the full one on later on.

MR DUNCAN: We would appreciate that. Thank you.

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MR BRAY: Yes. So the Australian Wind Alliance is an advocacy group for wind power supporting local wind supporters and seeking the best results from wind farms for local communities. Our members are farmers, some hosts, some neighbours, people who work in the industry, small businesses and environmental supporters, including many from this area. We do carefully assess new wind projects, to satisfy ourselves that they've been developed properly, with community stakeholders in mind, and have objected to one proposal in the past. I note that we appeared before the last hearing for this project under the Planning Assessment Commission in March 2015. As we did that day, we appear today representing those people who don't want to run the gauntlet of a public meeting or may be too busy or shy or nervous to present in person.

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So I would like to challenge the Department of Planning and Environment's recommendation to refuse the development application for Crookwell III on the following grounds. The department has overstated the visual impacts of the project, particularly in regard to landscape character, and gone beyond the standards that it laid out in its 2016 wind energy guidelines. It cited local government zoning that's not appropriate for this decision and understated the need for new renewable energy projects like Crookwell III.

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The department's discussion of visual impact goes to two separate issues, landscape character and visual impacts on residences. Any discussion of these issues needs to remember that many people – and it's hard to quantify, but perhaps the majority – quite like the sight of wind turbines. Obviously this is not going to be, you know, a particularly accurate sample group. But you know. But that's worth bearing in mind when – and it should temper consideration of what the guideline bluntly refers to as visual impact.

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In its report, the department states that building Crookwell III would result in turbines covering an arc extending more than 10 kilometres along the main ridgeline on the approaches to Crookwell. It should be noted that a 10-kilometre long wind farm – that wind farms of that length are routinely approved in New South Wales as

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well as in other states. The Sapphire Wind Farm, the White Rock Wind Farm were both approved in recent years. They're both 10 kilometres along their own ridgelines.

5 And together, in fact, they cover a distance of over 20 kilometres across the Gwydir Highway, which is a road certainly as picturesque and well used as the approach to Crookwell. Closer to home, of course, Gullen Range is much longer than 10 kilometres; Capital Woodlawn, next to where I live, over 10 kilometres as well. So that's, you know – in windfarms that's not a particularly prominent windfarm. It's  
10 not intrusion on the visual character, and it should be not a contributing factor in rejecting a windfarm.

The report goes on to state there are also a number of other windfarms visible from the site and surrounds, including Crookwell 1, Gullen Range and Gunning  
15 windfarms. While the Gullen Range windfarm is indeed visible to the west, we shouldn't overstate its presence. As the New South Wales windfarm guide-line acknowledges in the visual bulletin, at eight kilometres turbines and objects recede into the background in terms of visibility, and that's a quote from the bulletin.

20 Most of the receptors listed in the report appear to be more like 10 to 14 kilometres away from Gullen Range, and I would – I did try to check the numbers, the distances in table 3 of the DPE's report. And they routinely seem to be less than what's actually on the map. Perhaps they go from site boundary to site boundary. It's hard, to tell. But I just question what those distances were. So we would argue that the  
25 department's report effectively exaggerates the impact of Crookwell 2 and 3 projects on the landscape character as a contributing reason for the refusal of the project.

So I note that the developer's comments from early on were that 80 per cent of the residences within two kilometres of the project had accepted agreements. I haven't  
30 updated any of this for the removal of the southern cluster yet. There are approximately 90 residences within 50 – five kilometres of the – of a turbine that are not associated with either Crookwell 2 or 3 windfarms. Of these 78 residences, only 15 submissions were received – opposing the project – which does suggest that there's quite a large number of other neighbours who weren't concerned enough to  
35 bother submitting. In regard to the agreements and whether there are residences associated or not – it's reasonable, that a developer offer near neighbours a fair process and a fair offer for that agreement.

40 But a neighbour, of course, is completely within their rights to refuse that agreement. But it may not be because the approach was not generous or done in good faith. But we don't believe that that refusal should accept – sorry – that refusal should preclude a project from going ahead. We would prefer to see the project proceed but with voluntary-acquisition rights for those neighbours where appropriate.

45 Regarding the zoning we would argue that emphasising the E3 zoning for Crookwell 3 is contradictory and not appropriate. So more than half of the Crookwell windfarm sits on the exact same E3 zone land, which was also approved by the department

long after the 2010 LEP was adopted. So it would seem contradictory, that in the case of Crookwell 2 it wasn't an issue, in the case of Crookwell 3 it suddenly is an issue.

5 Finally I would also like to challenge the department's claim that New South Wales doesn't need this project. Crookwell 3 – and here again I haven't adjusted the numbers for the 17 turbines, but on the basis of 23 turbines it would produce a significant amount of electricity, 275 gigawatt-hours per annum. Compared to Capital, that's – Capital windfarm – that's 20 per cent more energy but with a third  
10 of the number of turbines. Engaging the need for new renewable energy, the department relies on federal and state renewable-energy targets that are very unambitious and do not reflect the urgency of tackling climate change, and I think we should assume that these targets will increase dramatically in coming years.

15 Further, it ignores the significant commercial pressures on existing black-coal generators which could see them close much earlier and with only three years' notice than what's currently suggested. So, in summary, we would argue that there has been an exaggeration of the main impacts of the project, the inappropriate use of E3 zoning, while underestimating the project's value to the state's renewable-energy  
20 needs. So we would argue that the project should be given permission to proceed on the commission – on the conditions mentioned above.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Andrew.

25 MR BRAY: Thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Andrew, you're welcome to give your notes to David or update them and get them to us – the next few days, please. Okay. Thank you. Could I  
30 now call our final speaker, Charlie Prell?

30 Mr C. PRELL: Okay. Thank you very much. I want to give you a little bit of an introduction to who I am, and then I will speak about my experience living under the turbines of Crookwell 2 windfarm. I'm 62. I've been – I'm a farmer. I've lived in this area all of my life. And I'm now living underneath the Crookwell 2 windfarm  
35 with two other farming families. I've always been a very active member of this community. I served as a councillor on the inaugural Upper Lachlan Shire council. That was 2004 to 2008. And I'm a founding member of the – of a – and the secretary of a local trust fund which has raised a significant amount of money to invest on behalf of this community. I've participating in all manner of local  
40 activities and initiatives.

45 During my time in the local council, 2004, predominantly, I've become a very strong and very public advocate for the benefit that wind turbines can bring to this area. I was never and never will be an apologist or an advocate for the development model that was used in 2004, in those early days. That has changed for the better. It has still got a lot of improvement to happen. My advocacy was despite very strong in those days and sometimes quite toxic campaigns against the turbines. And I've

continued that advocacy to this day, because I've seen and now experienced the benefits that turbines can bring to agricultural land, which is – all of that environmental E3 zone is all agricultural land. It bemuses me, that houses are permitted out there but not wind turbines, when the footprint of a house is just as large, if not larger, than a wind turbine.

My farm is one of three, as I said, of those – under the turbines at Crookwell 2 windfarm. I live closer to turbines than, probably, anybody else in this district. I've got two turbines within, roughly, 500 metres of my house. They were spoken about earlier. I would encourage you, if you want to – I'm holding a site inspection this afternoon. You're more than welcome to come to my house and experience the reality of those turbines. They're the same turbines that are proposed for the Crookwell 2 windfarm. I also live about 800 metres from the Goulburn-Crookwell road. I constantly hear the noise from the turbines, at night, during the day, sometimes inside the house. But I also hear every car and every truck and every bloody motorbike – the sooner they put mufflers on motorbikes, the better – on the Goulburn-Crookwell road. I also – and quite often from within my house as well. And that's more – that's further away than the wind turbines. Nobody seems to worry about that.

I also hear the sound of the sheep and the cattle on my farm. I hear the birds in my – in the garden around my house that were all supposed to be killed by the turbines that are now there, and I also hear something else. There's a much quieter sound out there that not many people are hearing but more and more are waking up to, potentially, the most damaging amongst all of this cacophony, and that's the silent creep of climate change. If we don't do something to address climate change globally and within this country, then we're putting our lives in peril, and if you don't believe me, just go and have a look at the big business companies that have been factoring climate-change risk into their business models for about 25 years now. If we want to farm this land into the future in a much more volatile climate, then we're going to need non-weather-dependent ..... farm income of some sort to underpin our farming operations. And wind turbines are an excellent option for this future-proofing, because they are totally compatible with agriculture.

There has been comments about the bushfire risk. We now have roads on our farm. If you needed to – in a fire-truck you could travel up to a hundred kilometres an hour, if you needed to get to a fire in a hurry. So that – those roads didn't exist in the past. They do now. The wind turbines are an excellent option, I think, because I ran an operating farm during the construction of the turbines, the Crookwell 2 windfarm, and am now running an operating farm post construction that is totally compatible with the turbines as they stand. And my wife and I have chosen to live under those turbines on our family farm. My father used to live there until recently, when he was, unfortunately, hospitalised. But – now, about 16 years ago my family and I – sorry.

My family and I lived through the millennium drought, and what I'm about to say is relevant, because in the department's summary – this is only executive summary. In

department's report there's, virtually, no discussion of the benefits of wind turbines. For every line of discussion of the benefits, there's, probably, 10 pages of the impacts. And I don't see that as being a fair cost-benefit analysis in a social or economic or any other context for this discussion. So my family and I went through  
5 the millennium drought about 15 years ago.

This area was particularly hard – hit particularly hard by that drought, which depending where you were lasted from anywhere from six to eight years. At that time we didn't have any turbines. We had the prospect of some turbines at some  
10 time in the future, but we had to sell land. We had to pay down debt, which was really, really hard. That's why we sold the land. And we had to pay for the cost of the drought, for the feed and the lack of production. Commodity prices back then were not anything like they are now.

15 My wife and I both suffered serious mental-health problems, including depression, anxiety and worse, from the constant unrelenting stress of a drought. Droughts are just pervasive. They get into your bones, and then nobody knows quite when they're going to finish. The current drought is two or three years old, and the long-term weather fore-cast for the coming spring and summer are pretty ordinary. So no one  
20 is quite sure when this drought is going to finish either. But the difference is that, as we go into this drought, my land is in very good condition, because I've had the opportunity to reduce our stocking numbers, because I'm getting the passive income stream from the wind turbines. I'm employing two local people fulltime, and they are ex-shearers who wanted to change their lives. I've told them – and it's real, and  
25 it's true. I've guaranteed them their jobs are secure through this drought, no matter how bad it gets, no matter how long it takes, for it to break.

There's no discussion of a drought. There's no discussion of mental health. There's no discussion of those society – social benefits of these turbines. If we need and  
30 want the benefits of the turbines in this area – and there's contention in this room, obviously, about that – then we need to accept the visual amenity of the turbines, and to be honest – people don't speak to me about the detrimental effects of the turbines. They probably wouldn't. But the vast majority of people that I speak to that pull up on our front gate, which I'm happy to show you this afternoon, if you want, look at  
35 them, and the two words they use are “majestic” and “awesome”, and those turbines are turning and generating electricity, virtually, every day – and I can guarantee every night, because I hear them – while the smaller turbines at Crookwell 1 are inoperative because of their lack of size and their 21-year-old technology, as we heard earlier. So I've been called all sorts of names through this whole process  
40 because of my advocacy for some change.

This landscape has been changing for 200 years. Ask the Aboriginals. This landscape changed dramatically when Europeans arrived here. It has continued to change over the last 200 years. My family have been here for 120 years, the Carter  
45 family we live next-door to – you heard from John earlier today – way longer than that and the Dooley family longer than that as well. So this is a very, very long-held family-farm-operation-based region. The way – I think the way for those family-

farm operations, not agribusiness operations, family-farm operations to remain viable, contribute to this community and the social cohesion and the viability of this whole community is to put in wind turbines. But we need to make sure as a community – and this is what I was advocating when I was in the council 20 years ago, nearly 20 years ago – scary – we need to as a community accept that there’s a better way to do it. I proposed that way back then. It was rejected out of hand, because people wanted to stop the inevitable output of turbines in this area.

The reason the turbines are here is because it’s windy here and there’s a really good grid network through this area. It’s not because somebody said “Upper Lachlan Shire are weak, and they’re going to roll over, and we will go there”. There’s a really good resource here. We need to tap into that, the same as we’re tapping into the agricultural resource under our feet, and we can create sustainable farms that employ people and keep people local – so they keep people working locally and their families, which keeps the schools open and more viable et cetera et cetera et cetera, all those flow-on effects.

If we want to do that, we should be having discussions about how we can best share the wealth and the benefits from these turbines within our community instead of whether we want turbines or not or whether we’re going to like looking at turbines or not or whether people are going to run off the Goulburn-Crookwell road because they’re getting distracted by the turbines, which hasn’t happened yet – but it was alleged, it was going to happen every day – and integrate turbines within the community in a much better economic way. That’s possible. It’s happening all over the place in Victoria now.

But that is not the determination that’s here. This determination is about visual impact, mainly, and then the cumulative impact of these wind turbines. In my opinion, there’s only one windfarm that has any cumulative impact on the proposed Crookwell 3, and that’s the one that’s on my property now, which is the same size as the – possibly, Crookwell 1, but those turbines are like this big, and the ones at home are 57 metres, the same ones – if we want to talk about that issue, then I’m really happy to sit down, have a serious conversation with anybody in this community or elsewhere, which I’ve done in the past and I’m happy to do anytime, to work out how we can maximise the benefits these turbines can bring not just to the people like me that live under the turbines but to the whole community. So thank you.

MR DUNCAN: Thank you, Charlie. Thank you, everybody, for coming along today, and particular “thank you” to all our presenters. I also appreciate the respect you provided everybody to speak, which is fantastic, and this public meeting has provided us with a good opportunity to hear your views. As I said at the start, we’ve got a Department of Planning assessment report to consider now. We will continue our report over the next few weeks and try to wrap this up as soon as possible, but again thank you very much for your time today, and I appreciate your presentations. Thank you.

**RECORDING CONCLUDED**

**[11.41 am]**