



TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: DUBBO FIRING POWER STATION (SSD-28088034)

DEPARTMENT MEETING

PANEL: KEN KANOFSKI (CHAIR)
ANDREW MILLS
MICHAEL CHILCOTT

OFFICE OF THE IPC: GEOFF KWOK
(SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER)

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LOCATION: VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

DATE: 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
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<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MR KANOFSKI: Good afternoon. Just let me get this off my screen. Good
afternoon Clay, Rose-Anne and Brittany. And welcome. I've just got a couple of
5 formalities before we get started, if that's okay? So first of all, I'd like to
acknowledge the traditional custodians of the various lands on which we're meeting.
I'm on Wangal country, and I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.
Today's meeting is to discuss the Dubbo Firming Power Station case. The State
Significant Development Number 28088034 which is currently before the
10 Commission for determination.

The applicant Dubbo Firming Nominees Proprietary Limited, proposes to construct
and operate a power station a hydrogen generation plant and ancillary infrastructure,
15 including gas and fuel storage and connections to and connections to the electricity
and gas networks. My name is Ken Kanowski. I'm the chair of the Commission
panel. I'm joined by my fellow commissioners, Andrew Mills and Michael Chilcott.
We're also joined by Geoff Kwok from the office of the Independent Planning
Commission. In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full
capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript
20 will be produced and made available on the commission's website.

This meeting is part of the Commission's consideration of the matter, and will form
one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its
determination. It is important for the commissioners to ask questions of the attendees
25 and to clarify issues whenever it is considered appropriate. If you ask a question and
you're not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and
provide additional information in writing, which will then publish on our website. I
request that all members present here today introduce themselves before speaking for
the first time and that all members to ensure that they, or attempt to, make sure that
30 we don't speak over each other to ensure the accuracy of the transcript. So thank you
for that. And welcome I think I think we're probably best way to proceed is to hand
over to you guys to I think you've sent through a presentation which you intend to
walk through. It's my understanding.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah. Look. Thanks, chair. Look, Steve O'Donoghue here.
35 I'm Director of Resource Assessments, so I'll be stepping through the presentation.
Thanks, chair.

MR KANOFSKI: And if it's okay, Steve, we might ask questions as we go. That's a
40 I think that's probably the most efficient way of dealing with it. If that's okay with
you -

MR O'DONOGHUE: That's fine. Look, just any time you want to ask a question or
clarify anything, just step in. That's great.
45

MR KANOFSKI: Okay.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, first of all, I'd just like to thank the chair and the Commissioners for the opportunity for the briefing today.

I've introduced myself, but I'm here with my colleagues, Clay Preshaw, who's the Executive Director, Energy Resources and Industry Assessments. Also, Rose-Anne
5 Hawkeswood, the Team Leader, and Brittany Golding, Environmental Assessment Officer who worked on the project and know the project pretty well as well. So if there's any specific technical questions, we may seek clarification from them as well. I'd also like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we're joining today. Today's meeting. I'm on Gadigal land and pay my respects to Elders past, past,
10 present and emerging. I'll put - I'll just share the PowerPoint presentation if I can. Share screen. Can everyone see that okay?

MR CHILCOTT: Yes. That's right.

15 **MR KANOFSKI:** Yeah. That's great. Thank you.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Right. Okay. I'll just put on the big screen. That's still fine. Okay. Hang on. Okay. Firstly, just to the - okay, just on the contents, I was going to go through some project components. Some strategic context of the project and just
20 opportunity to outline the key reasons for the evaluation and the project's approvable before moving to the matters on the agenda, if that's okay? Just on the project - I just want to touch on this. I don't want to go into too much detail, but it's essentially that what's proposed is a dual fuel, which means either gas or liquid can be used in the turbines. Peaking power plant that can generate up to 64 megawatts of electricity.

25 At this stage the configuration would be either a one or 1 or 2 turbine configuration, either one by around 30 megawatt, or a single 60 - 64 megawatt turbine. Also includes a hydrogen generation facility capable of producing about 330kg per hour of hydrogen, which would be sufficient for to operate at that 25% capacity of hydrogen,
30 as is mixing with the fuel. There's associated ancillary infrastructure, gas storage pipeline and storage tanks which for the hydrogen and biofuels proposed to be used at the site at some stage. Connections into the New South Wales electricity grid and the gas pipeline network and a life of approximately 40 years with an additional 30 months of construction.

35 I'll bring up a figure in a second, but it's located in a heavy industrial area north of Dubbo, within the Dubbo regional local government area. About 4.5km from the Dubbo Airport, which was an issue that we looked at carefully in the assessment. It's within the Central West Arana renewable energy zone. And it's on the traditional
40 lands of the (indistinct) people. Here's the layout of the site. This is from the project assessment report. But essentially one thing to note here is the close proximity to the gas and electricity infrastructure. So it negated the need for long linear infrastructure to support the development being in the industrial zone, also close to water infrastructure as well. So here's the essential energy site across the road from on
45 Yarrendale Road. Here's the APA connection point for the connection into the or the Jemena into the for the power station and the site itself.

The red series of here is the gas storage pipeline, which would hold natural gas. There's the power station site itself, there's the hydrogen plant, and then a various storages. From a strategic context point of view, there's a couple of things to point here. New South Wales has set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and 70% by 2035, and net zero by 2050. To meet these targets, the electricity supply sector is transitioning away from fossil fuel fired power stations to renewable energy such as wind and solar. But to support this transition from electricity supplies need to be incorporated into the grid.

That's this is met by batteries, pumped hydro or peaking power plants or a combination to manage maintain the reliability and stability in the grid. The project would be capable of being switched on and off rapidly, as being a peaking power station for providing firming electricity for short periods of time on an as needed basis. And particularly during times when the renewable energy sources are lower and during peak periods.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Although the project would generate greenhouse gas emissions when operating on natural gas, it would support the government's goal of reaching net zero by supporting the transition to renewable energy. But however, the project's also set up to facilitate the adoption and rollout of technologies to use hydrogen and biofuels to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the project, in line with New South Wales and Commonwealth emission targets. Just another point here from a strategic context, just to show the suitability of the site for such a development. It's located within an industrial precinct, zoned heavy industrial. There's other lighter industrial around as well.

There's buffers to the residential receivers due to the zoning. And as I mentioned earlier, there's short connections to gas power and water supply for the project. So these figures are just showing the location within the industrial zone plus also the proximity to the Dubbo airport and in this zoomed up here map here showing the surrounding land uses, which is abattoir, livestock sale yards for export. Also lighter industrial precinct down the south. There's also the Dubbo sewage plant to the north and other facilities to the east of the site. It's zoned industrial. But one point here is that the landowner who led the development of this site still owns property to the east of the site, which is which includes one residential receiver, but it's on industrial zoned land. Just to make a point of that.

MR KANOFSKI: Is that R2, Steve?

MR O'DONOGHUE: I think it might be. Rose-Anne or Brittany, can you clarify the - who the - the R2 receiver out to the east? I've got a map coming up to -

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's correct. It's R2. Yes.

MR O'DONOGHUE: R2, yep. That's R2. That'll come up on a map later too. I can point that out.

MR CHILCOTT: And Steve, those the lots for the connections to the gas and electricity -

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yep.

5

MR CHILCOTT: Off the site. Who owns those and what's their zoning? Are they the same zoning?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, they are. The whole area is industrial zoned. The - for the gas infrastructure, that's actually that is still on land owned by Fletcher, the company. So they own the land there in terms of landowner consent for the project, for the essential energy site that is owned by Central Energy. But the project just in terms of information from Essential Energy, the project goes to the boundary of their site. They'll - while the proponent will build the construction and connection point in there for the infrastructure on their site. They'll do that as part of a part five assessment that they'll take on themselves. So the in terms of land ownership, it just goes to the boundary of the site for the purposes of this project.

MR CHILCOTT: Is that then the road that - they'll take it across the road?

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MR O'DONOGHUE: The road and the road reserve. Now council's given - from a road ownership point of view, council's given their landowner approval for the project as well.

MR CHILCOTT: Okay. Great. Thank you.

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MR O'DONOGHUE: And probably the main things to point out here. I just want to touch on this before we get into the specific sort of agenda items. But as an overview, I just wanted to say that the assessment considered the EIS, the matters raised in agency advice and submissions very carefully, and the applicant's response to these matters. There was also quite a number of additional information requests from the department that were provided through the assessment process, and that was in relation to, in particular to some additional information that the EPA required in relation to air impact assessment. Locating the project in a heavy industrial area limits the impacts to residential receivers, as demonstrated in the impact assessment of air noise and visual impacts in particular, which showed there would be a low impact or would be acceptable impact against government policy.

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The project would contribute to energy security and supporting the transition to renewable energy by providing firm electricity. The project would not be inconsistent with New South Wales and Commonwealth greenhouse gas emissions targets. With the ratcheting down of emissions over time and with the adoption of hydrogen and or biofuel technologies over time. So I just want to make a few key points there. Just I'll just touch on submissions. This is fairly important for the I guess in our assessment as well. We received 12 submissions objecting to the project one from an interest group and 11 from the public. There was no local submissions from local residents, for example.

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There were five submissions really raised concerns about renewable projects. But it wasn't about the project itself. It was more concern about you know, support for renewable projects and you know, more impacts associated with solar projects and wind projects in other locations. But this project was seen to be supporting that by providing firming electricity. And also because Squadron Energy's the proponent. Concerns raised about some hazards with risk of fire, loss of agricultural land and use of hydrogen for power generation to provide reliable, affordable and reliable power. And the special interest group, which is the Sydney Knitting Nannas you know, objected to the use of gas on the grounds of greenhouse gas emissions and, and the need to use the hydrogen to try and transition to lower greenhouse gas emissions from the project. And relevant agents were invited to provide advice to the project through the assessment on that one.

MR KANOFSKI: Just on the fire hazard, also the in terms of the submission, a number of the submissions, as I read them, actually objected on the basis of batteries catching on fire.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah, that's right. I think there was concern. Well more what was drawn into the into the submissions were broader concerns about impacts associated with batteries or solar and wind. So it was more of a concern about that this project was would be is seen to be supporting that which it is in providing that, you know, that mix of energy need to firm up the renewable sources with Squadron Energy also looking at you know, a number of other renewable energy projects, you know, across the state. So I'm just going into the agenda items here, which is really the key issues. And I'm not sure where you want to specifically focus on these ones, but I thought I'd just sort of go through our assessment on hazards and risks, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. And if you've got any sort of specific questions around them just jump in. You know, as I'm going through, was there is there anything specific you wanted to sort of look at now or just step through the presentation?

MR CHILCOTT: I've got a question on his hazards and risks, but step through your presentation, I think, Steve.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Okay. So just on the hazards and risks side, I guess the key is that in terms of potential for hazards associated with, you know, hydrogen and power generation and storage of, you know, fuels, etc. The project was classified as a potentially hazardous facility under the Resilience and Hazards State environmental planning policy. And our preliminary hazards analysis was undertaken in accordance with the relevant sort of guidelines, which includes the HiPAP advisory paper number six. The hazard analysis considered plausible explosion, fire and toxicity risks. And the conclusion was that the project would comply with the land use safety criteria set out in HiPAP number four.

Now we have a hazards unit which is very experienced in the department that's within our branch. So we did seek advice from them on the hazard assessments. And they were satisfied that a competent job had been undertaken in the hazards analysis.

Just on the figure here, I guess the key things to note is that if I step sort of from the green line to the black inner line. The green line is associated with risks to hospitals and very sensitive (indistinct) aged care homes where there may be issues with evacuation, for example. The red line is related to the buffers needed in for residential land. Purple is associated with commercial operations. The brownish line is with industry and - or the black lines with industry in that one, sorry. So just got that one mixed up. So the - this can be seen here, the contours are confined to the site for the land uses the around the site, which are predominantly industrial. So there's no off site risk. You know, as a result of the project, based on the acceptable risk criteria for under the hazards analysis.

MR MILLS: So if can I jump in there, in doing the risk assessment for fire and explosion, I guess -

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah.

MR MILLS: Presumably there's so presumably it's a question as much as anything else. Do we know what the - or has the assessment been on the basis of a certain of the hydrogen being held under a certain level of pressure? Is there a range of pressures? Does it make a difference depending on the pressure and could over time, change the way in which that is held, that pressure which is held in tanks? And does that impact on the fire and explosion?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, it can certainly pressure is one of the aspects that I looked at. It is something that we did interrogate with the company particularly in relation to the storage pipeline, which is the sort of the, the red piping through here. That-

MR MILLS: Concerned about hydrogen thing.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah, which is why we conditioned not to include hydrogen within that storage pipeline, because that change that does change the risk profile. Now, that's gas under a higher pressure because you can store more gas in there. The hazard assessment only undertook an assessment of storing natural gas in that in the storage pipeline. The company was sort of indicating that they would, that they could seek to put hydrogen in there with where they would need to design the pipeline to a higher standard that could that which is associated with well, how you do the weldings and the sort of steel you use for construction to reduce the risk.

But given that they hadn't, haven't hadn't done that assessment, we did put a specific condition in that they could only use the storage pipeline for natural gas. If they did choose to use hydrogen, then there would need to be, you know, a re-evaluation that a reassessment and potentially a modification to allow that to occur. Now, the assessment did include hydrogen storage at a specified pressure on site. So that was a storage bottles for hydrogen only. Now that was part of the assessment. That's why the contours predominantly around explosion risk around the hydrogen storage facility rather than is the is sort of the biggest pushes the contours out.

Now they would need to as part of the conditions, they need to do final hazard analysis to confirm that what the assessment they did in the EIS is consistent, and they would need to rerun that to see for a final hazard analysis to demonstrate that they would still be achieving this. So we sort of dealt with the potential risks associated with different pressures or where they may put hydrogen in as part of the requirements of the final hazard analysis in particular.

MR MILLS: Well technology changes. Sorry. Does the conditions don't reflect the conditions don't refer to the pressure as such. They just simply refer to as ease kind of stuff that is presented. Does it matter? It's not an evaluation question, I guess. And whether you're qualified to answer this or not, I don't know. But does it matter if they were to change that pressure under which it's stored because technology allowed them to it?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, it would matter because it would change, because the pressure would be one of the drivers of the explosion risk and propagation. So certainly and certainly for hydrogen, it's important because that the this is where the pressure for whether it's a low pressure pipeline or a high pressure pipeline does lead to issues around you know the propagation explosion risk, but also leads to potential failure mechanisms for those sort of pipelines and infrastructure as well. So because the answer is yes, it does matter. And that they would, you know, they would need to do like an updated risk assessment around that.

MR MILLS: Because the what's being approved is on the basis of the pressures that they've set in the -

MR O'DONOGHUE: That's right. Yeah.

MR MILLS: Okay. Thank you.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah.

MR CHILCOTT: And Steve, just for me, the language you're using in terms of the hazards and risk assessment would suggest the department's assessment is comfortable that there's any risks to do with hazards and risks are mitigated. There's some language in the assessment report that is a little bit more equivocal. Talking about it, the final design is capable of or could appropriately mitigate risks, but you're satisfied that in terms of what we're dealing with at the moment the level of information we have should satisfy us that indeed, those risks are adequately managed and mitigated.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, that's right, that's correct. I mean, there's and this is the advice from our risk team as well that they were they were satisfied that the design of the project, you know, was appropriate to managing the risks. And it just needed to be confirmed in the final hazard analysis. I guess the one of the key things here is that the you don't have any of those really high sensitive, you know, residential receivers around the site. It's industrial.

So the risk profiles are different in the criteria. So that's another thing being cited. An industrial zone well away from residential receivers in particular is also you know, part of that consideration.

5 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you.

10 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Just on hazards and risks, the two other areas that were looked at as well was bushfire risks. Even though it's an industrial site, it is surrounded by grassland. So there are risks associated with not high risk, but there's still risks associated with the grassland around the site. There was assessments done in accordance with you know, planning for bushfire protection. The RFS and the department were satisfied with that. But the Rural Fire Service didn't recommend conditions that we did include in the recommended conditions of consent for bushfire emergency plan and also about construction of buildings relevant to the standards and the guidelines that they needed to comply with. But overall, we're satisfied that they could they could do that and meet the guidelines comfortably.

20 The other area is really aviation risks. You've got the Dubbo airport there. In these sort of cases, we consult closely with, with CASA in terms of risk of plumes from power station sites that was done. CASA there was some additional information provided from the proponent about the emissions from the plumes. But the CASA at the end was satisfied that there was an acceptable risk you know, from the plume in relation to the aerodrome and but did recommend made a couple of recommendations about putting on red obstacle lights in terms of the stack location and also recommendations about updating information to inform pilots of the location of the stack as well from a risk point of view. Look, if there's any if there's no other questions on sort of the hazards side of it, I was just going to move on to air quality which was the next sort of agenda item.

30 So I guess the key thing here is that the emissions from the project do depend on the fuel source used. The height of the stacks and the exhaust and the exhaust parameters sort of drive the assessment. Now the PM10, the particular matter emissions are a higher under a bio fuel use scenario. So there was a worst case scenario of use of biofuels. And they were assumed to be the other. It was a conservative assumption in that it was assumed that would be operating for 100% of the time, when in reality, and being a peaking power station, it's more likely to be running in that, you know, 10 to 12% of the time at periods of that high demand. So certainly from an assessment point of view, it was conservative on that basis.

40 It looked at 24 hour concentrations of particulates and other emissions, including nitrogen dioxide or NOx emissions. And it looked at average annual concentrations compared to the approved the EPA's approved methods document for assessment of air pollutants in New South Wales, which is based on the National Environment protection measures as well. It was conservative also too, in that they one of the issues for the assessment is sort of in our assessment report, is that one of the scenarios they did run was assuming that emissions would be higher than the Clean Air regulations allowed, which was an issue for the assessment and the EPA and in

sort of assessing that component that worst case scenario, even on that worst case scenario, assuming a higher emissions would meet all the assessment criteria for air quality for, for NOx and PM10. We've also, as a result of concerns by the EPA on whether they meet the clean air reg emissions. More information was provided by the company to demonstrate that they could they could meet it.

The clean air emissions in relation to NOx in particular and that they would need to if they were running the plant on biofuels, they would need to put on some additional mitigation measures, selective catalytic reduction technology or SCR to ensure that the NOx emissions would meet the emissions from the stack. I guess the key point there is that is that there was no from a ground level concentration point of view, there was no was no receiver. Would that at all receiver locations the impacts were acceptable. Based on the EPA's advice, we did include some recommendations around undertaking a revised air quality impact assessment based on the final design and configuration and the and manufacturers performance guarantees for the final plant design. The important thing here is that there's a strict statutory requirement to meet the clean air reg limits. So they would need to demonstrate that they can do that.

MR CHILCOTT: And that's the point of that revised equality impact assessment.

MR O'DONOGHUE: It is. Yeah on that one. From a greenhouse gas emissions point of view, the project would generate up to around 37.6 thousand tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year from scope one, two and three emissions. And that's based on running on natural gas, 100%. Certainly if with the introduction of hydrogen up to 25% or higher, potentially in biofuels that would come down-

MR MILLS: They have been able to measure? Sorry to jump in. They've been able to measure Scope 3?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Been able to measure what sorry?

MR MILLS: Scope 3 emissions.

MR O'DONOGHUE: They did. They updated. They did. It was it was the request from EPA CASA team in as part of their response. So they did provide an estimate of Scope 3 emissions.

MR MILLS: Most people struggle with that, that's all.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah.

MR MILLS: Just realise that for the first time it's (indistinct)

MR O'DONOGHUE: I think the other thing, like being a power station to I guess it's generating power. I guess what would usually be considered scope three emissions for other projects is the scope one for this power station site as well, or

scope two emission, I mean. So I guess the key point here is that the project has been designed to facilitate the use of hydrogen and biofuels. And we've included a condition requiring a like a three yearly review power station fuel report to be prepared. Including demonstrating how the reasonable measures they're taken to reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions. And another point here is that the EPA has introduced this climate change policy and action plan.

Last year, as part of that for any scheduled premises under the Protection of Environment Operations Act, they will be requiring licensees to prepare a climate change mitigation plan, which would be an additional in conjunction with, you know, our requirements that we've put in there for measures to try and reduce those scope one and two emissions in line with you know, the trajectory where of the targets for New South Wales by, you know, 50% by 2030, 70% by 2035 and net zero by 2050. So there's opportunity here, significant opportunity here to bring in the biofuels and hydrogen. Well, early in the life of the project.

MR MILLS: Steve again. It's not perhaps relevant to our decision making, but more out of curiosity than anything else. Has there been any consideration or comparison, I guess, between this kind of firming and other forms of firming?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah. Not that I'm aware of in terms of pumped hydro or battery -

MR MILLS: And each obviously has an infrastructure cost of, you know -

MR O'DONOGHUE: That's right. You know, there's all in terms of the construction and that but look, I haven't seen a strict comparison of that. We did one thing to point out here we did compare it to this climate modelling that New South Wales does. And looking at if abatement measures are adopted across sectors there's a model estimate of how much emissions New South Wales would have in 2030, 2035. So just as a comparison there, the emissions from the power station would be about 0.03% of the estimated gross emissions in 2030. So that's without any offsetting, for example and 0.077% by 2035.

So this is a fair like this is a what it's probably call a like a boutique power station to some degree. It's 60 megawatts. It's Squadron Energy, I guess, has put this up to really look at that adding that firming, but also really looking at opportunities to use hydrogen and biofuels in this mix. You know, for this size plant. But yeah, look, I haven't seen a, like a comparison between different firming options that the AMO's sort of advice on this is really that there's all forms of beneficial. They're identifying any particular one. But firming is needed quite a significant amount. And the gas has a role to play in that.

MR KANOFSKI: Is that Steve that kind of goes to the heart of the Knitting Nannas kind of submission, really, is it?

MR O'DONOGHUE: It does. Yeah.

MR KANOFSKI: Is it their submission is essentially this is not the right sort of firm?

5 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yeah that's right. But I think it's recognised that it's still an important one because it can generate power very quickly into the grid and -

MR KANOFSKI: In fact and even they say, yes, it should be conditioned to move to hydrogen more quickly.

10 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yeah. And I think the EPA's role in this that they'll be the lead regulator in relation to greenhouse gas emissions in the state under the the Power Act. So I think they'll have a key role in a sector role in setting sector targets and also requirements for individual premises about reducing emissions. So certainly
15 the power station here and I think the way they've assessed, you know, they've already done an assessment of hydrogen and biofuel use for the site. So the opportunity is there to introduce that under the terms of the consent that's being given. So, look, I don't know how much you want to go through these other.

20 **MR KANOFSKI:** Yeah.

MR O'DONOGHUE: All these other matters or -

MR KANOFSKI: No I'm conscious of time and I know we've had the presentation. I might pause you on presenting on the other matters.

25 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yep.

MR KANOFSKI: Just to make sure that the (indistinct)

30 **MR CHILCOTT:** Ken you're breaking up, just so you know.

MR KANOFSKI: Sorry. My apologies. Yeah. So I might just pause there.

35 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Okay.

MR KANOFSKI: Just to go to the my fellow commissioners in terms of questions, they might have more on what we've seen so far or more generally. And then and then if we've got time, we'll go to the other matters just on. I'm just conscious of finishing up on time.

40 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yep. That's fine. Yeah.

MR KANOFSKI: Michael? Andrew?

45 **MR CHILCOTT:** Ken, I'm fine. In terms of what's we've dealt with so far, I have a couple of questions on the next point on statutory context to deal with, but I can wait till we get to that slide.

MR KANOFSKI: Okay. Andrew?

MR MILLS: Yeah, I think I had one other question. Sorry, two other questions. There's a life of the facility of 40 years plus 13 years of construction.

5 I didn't see anything in relation to dismantling, remediation or any of that kind of thing that you might expect to see on a project and given its total life is that not required in this circumstance to address that?

MR O'DONOGHUE: In terms of decommissioning?

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MR MILLS: Yeah.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Look, there is a requirement for decommissioning of the plant. One of our conditions does address sort of decommissioning against - in there. But we don't have a specific condition there about like final rehabilitation of the site in the recommended conditions.

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MR MILLS: So, sorry, so, I couldn't find that. Would you mind pointing me to the decommissioning? And I must have -

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MR O'DONOGHUE: I'll just have a -

MR MILLS: Look over it.

25 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I think it's - we've handled, if I may, sorry. We've included decommissioning as part of the definition of construction. And so the impacts from definition, from decommissioning are addressed through the same conditions that would manage construction impacts.

30 **MR KANOFSKI:** Okay. So decommissioning is part of the definition of construction. So -

MR MILLS: Yes I see that.

35 **MR KANOFSKI:** Yeah that applies to construction also applies to decommissioning.

40 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yeah. And the only other - rather than decommissioning I think I was also referring to the demolition question, the condition which is in relation to the Australian standard. So which would be you know, at the end of the project there would be requirement for demolition as part of that decommissioning as well.

45 **MR MILLS:** Thank you. The other thing that I recall seeing and just trying to lay my hands on it again. It may well have been in the original proposal. The use of hydrogen that has been produced on this site for other purposes apart from the power generation.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah. Look, we've only there's sort of certainly no condition there that allows the export of hydrogen off site. It's really only for the use the generation and use within the site itself. So certainly the condition or assessment doesn't allow sort of input of hydrogen, you know, back into the gas system, for
5 example, or you know, or as a feed to hydrogen buses because that would also change the risk profile in doing that.

You know, at the site, if you start incorporating that. Yeah. So, certainly the conditions and the framing, the conditions and the assessment really are only allows
10 them to use hydrogen as a feed into, into the gas turbines and the 25 - the 20 - we do have a 25% limit on there because that's the assessment was based on that as well. And in speaking with our hazards team, they were concerned that an increase above that should be you know, reassessment of that if you move to higher levels of hydrogen, particularly if there was more storage on site or burning higher levels in
15 the power plant.

MR MILLS: So if the application and please help me if the application suggests that the hydrogen produced on the site could be used for other things, would the conditions need to specifically then say it can only be used for power generation on
20 the site? And if it doesn't say anything, does that inferentially allow it to be used for other purposes, like taken off site?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah. Look, I don't think there's enough. My answer would be we can come back to you on that one, but my answer would be no, because there's
25 really no. There's been no assessment of that in terms of how that would be done and the risks associated with that. So if you're setting up a system where trucks or fuels were coming into to take hydrogen, there's been no assessment of that at all. So-

MR KANOFSKI: Does that mean, in your view, it's covered by the fact that the
30 development has to be consistent with the EIS?

MR O'DONOGHUE: So sorry. Just you just broke up a little bit-

MR KANOFSKI: I'm sorry. So that is that covered in your view by the fact that the
35 development has to be consistent with the EIS and the EIS only considered the use of it on site?

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah, that's largely it. Certainly I think that, yeah, there's
40 been no assessment on those aspects. So it there would to my, in my view anyway they need to come for a like a modification if they wanted to start looking at export or refuelling options that wouldn't be consistent with the consent.

MR MILLS: Okay, well. Thank you.

MR KANOFSKI: Thank you. Okay, look, I think we might. So we will move
45 quickly on.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Okay, look, I'll just touch on these. From a noise point of view, this is showing the receptors. I think you mentioned R2 earlier. They're commissioners.

5 So yeah, that's the it's R2 is on the land owned, but he's owned by the land owner who's given the approval for the development to occur so that's the Fletchers. So that's the receptor, the East R6 is the closest sort of residential receiver. The complying overall, they're complying with the P&TLs. And they meet the relevant operational noise criteria, construction criteria and road noise criteria in relation to site. So and vibration impacts were considered and seen to be acceptable.

10 We've included recommended conditions around to meet the predicted operational noise at the site. And that based on advice from the EPA in terms of what the limits should be and also just requiring standard construction hours to be applied or they could make a request for an out for working out of that, but subject to sort of strict
15 sort of consideration by the department and the EPA. Just I think there was a gas supply was on there. So we've just given a little bit of context around here. So we weren't sure what the specific issue was. But this is just showing how gas would be supplied to the power station site. So it's coming from the Moomba to Sydney pipeline. And then we get into the Central West pipeline, which, which goes to
20 Tamworth via Dubbo is how the gas would be supplied to the site.

It's a uni - just I guess on that question of where gas could go. It's a unidirectional pipeline. So you wouldn't be able to put gas back into the network, for example, and put it into the network. Now there are constraints under the Pipelines Act anyway
25 about the it's the gas pipelines can only be used for using natural gas. There's only very small amounts of trace elements of hydrogen can go in the pipeline. And that's largely because the pipelines haven't been developed to certainly the high pressure ones cannot take any high level of hydrogen or even small levels of hydrogen. So it's a constraint in terms of that.

30 There was just some questions, I think, with around the statutory context, which you may want to ask around, but I think there was about which LEP was applicable. The DA was lodged on the 20th of July, 2023. The Dubbo LEP was updated and gazetted in March 22. So the applicable LEP for the project, which we considered against was
35 the 2022 local environment plan. And we touched on earlier about the, the landowner consent issues that it's been covered by consent from council and Fletcher international exports who own the land. Did you have any like further questions on that aspect?

40 **MR CHILCOTT:** Steve? This came from me. Just a couple of clarifications. When I read the SSD guidelines, it says that in order to trigger the SEARs, you've got to put an application in to get the SEARs. And the SEARs were issued in 2022 which would be prior to what's recorded here as the development application. Is that correct?

45 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Look, the date of the SEARs it's the date of lodgement. It's not the SEARs so much.

It's when the DA is lodged. So for SSD projects that while the SEARs is issued at a certain date prior to the actual application is lodged at that date at a later date. Yeah. When the OS is lodged. Yeah. It's different to state significant infrastructure where for SSI the application is actually lodged the date when they request the SES.

5

MR CHILCOTT: Right? No, just reading from the SSD guidelines. Right. It sort of said, you know, in order to get your SEARs, you lodge an application. And this obviously hasn't worked quite in that order in this particular case.

10 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** Yeah. Look. Yeah, certainly for certainly look certainly for SSI that's the case. So if it says-

MR CHILCOTT: No (crosstalk) this is SSD, it said. But anyway that's fine. I just want to clarify.

15

MR O'DONOGHUE: Let's look at the wording in that because yeah the application is not lodged actually like with changes to the regs the application is not formally lodged until the proponent pays, pays their fee. Yeah.

20 **MR CHILCOTT:** No, that's fine thank you.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah.

25 **MR CHILCOTT:** And secondly with the landowner consent you've got consent from council. When you on your draft conditions you've got two lots nominated as the site to which the consent relates. I'm assuming it's the main site and the one to the south for the gas connection, but you've got owners consent from council, which is in relation to the road, which isn't listed as a site to for which consent is being granted. I just want to clarify for consistency, is this seeking consent for the road works or is that a separate consent under the Roads Act?

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MR O'DONOGHUE: No, this would cover. There wouldn't be a separate consent under the Roads Act. This would cover the construction of the pipe. So they gave landowner consent in relation to the road reserve.

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MR CHILCOTT: Right. Okay. And does that need to be noted on the consent document is land to which this consent relates.

40 **MR O'DONOGHUE:** We could come back to you on that one, but certainly it's probably wouldn't have a lot of DP per se. But it could be identified as part of the project is the construction and the road reserve. Yeah.

MR CHILCOTT: Yeah. Okay. Thanks. Thanks again.

45 **MR KANOFSKI:** All right. Thank you. Thanks, Michael.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Transport. Just I'll just touch on a few things here.

Most of the traffic is expected to come from the southern end, from the Golden Highway in terms of you know, infrastructure coming from port during the during the construction period in particular. And also, you know during operations there's it was predicted that I'd be limited sort of numbers of traffic coming down Newell Highway and down through Purvis Lane peak constructions. About 120 heavy vehicles per day, 260 light vehicle movements during construction, with an average of 50 heavy vehicles and 90 over the construction period and up to about 16 oversized over mass vehicles deliveries expected for as part of the development of the project.

All the roads are proposed are approved for B-double know some routes, so there's no sort of constraints there in getting their part of the assessment was did also look at the trucks getting at the request of transport for New South Wales. Any problems they may have at intersections and getting around intersections at key points near the site. They looked at modelling of the Golden Highway Yarrandale intersection, which is the key one would still be able to operate a high level of service with that number of vehicles. Construction traffic for the Newell highway. It's a very low numbers compared to the existing traffic.

For say - I guess one of the things that came out of the assessment is transport new South Wales recommended heavy vehicles coming from the Newell Highway should use Purvis Lane rather than a road further to the north. So we included did include that as a recommended condition in relation to heavy vehicles. So this is Purvis Lane here. Boothby Road is this one here. There's more constraints for heavy vehicles in particular coming through there, but also for, from safety aspects and site siting etc.. Council requested financial contributions for road maintenance for damage. We did include a condition for dilapidation surveys to be undertaken prior to construction, and that the proponent would need to pay for any damage that was caused as a result of the on road pavement as a result of their project.

We also included a condition for the preparation of a traffic management plan to be undertaken in consultation with Council and Transport for New South Wales, who did request a dedicated transport traffic management plan on that. Just on the VPA, I think what you just requesting an update. Just some background here, council requested a planning agreement for the project so that it sort of documented our assessment report. And then in the appendices that there was an in-principle agreement on a VPA reached with council. Certainly the quantum was agreed in terms of what that should be. But there were still discussions between the applicant and council about when that should be, should be paid, whether it's an upfront payment or, or annual payments, for example.

And that just in our discussions with the proponent in the last day that they're still ongoing those discussions. So it hasn't been executed yet. I guess the thing to note here is that the onus is on the proponent can't start construction of the project until that VPA is executed. So it's in their interest to facilitate that. As early as they can. You probably, you can probably get more of an update, I guess, on that

understanding meeting with the council and proponents, they can probably give you a update from their points of view of where that's at as well.

MR KANOFSKI: We certainly will explore that with them.

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MR O'DONOGHUE: Yeah. Just on visual. It wasn't a significant issue for the project given its location within the in the industrial precinct. You know, given that it's a mix of heavy industry, industry and agriculture. Even the agriculture, as sort of stated before, even the agricultural sort of activities are largely on land that's zoned industrial. Anyway, until those areas do get developed at some point in the future. Project structures, I guess the higher the highest one would be the turbine for the plumes emissions. The stacks for the plume emissions. There was digital elevation modelling was undertaken to look at, you know, potential for impacts which demonstrated there'd be negligible to minor impacts.

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At residences, given the distance to them. The only residence with higher impacts was the R2, the landowner. So I guess that he's given permission for the project. He's there's a lot of development around there which is impacting that receiver anyway. And I guess it's a different situation for that receiver. The applicant proposed screening at some points along the, around the site. So we included that as a recommended condition. Also in terms of any impacts on Siding Spring Observatory. There's limited night lighting you know, for the operation of the plant. And that's not really a there's really negligible impact on Siding Springs. And we've got sort of standard recommended conditions to minimise sort of external lighting to comply with relevant standards on that one. So that's the key points. So like if there's any sort of residual questions or you want to go through the in particular.

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MR KANOFSKI: Yeah. So just any final questions because we are out of time. But Michael, Andrew?

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MR CHILCOTT: No. Good. Thanks.

MR MILLS: No thank you.

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MR KANOFSKI: Yeah, no look thank you. Steve and team. That's very good. Obviously, if we've got anything else that pops up during the assessment, will, you know, will come back via the commission staff to ask any further questions. So but thank you. That's been really very helpful.

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MR O'DONOGHUE: Look that's fine. Yeah. Look. And. Yeah. Any further questions there chair? That'd be great. Just direct them to us, and we're happy to provide a response.

MR KANOFSKI: Okay. Thank you.

45

MR O'DONOGHUE: Okay.

MR KANOFSKI: All right. Thanks, everyone.

MR O'DONOGHUE: Thanks, chair. Thanks, Commissioners.

5 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thank you.

MR MILLS: Thank you.

MR CHILCOTT: Good afternoon.

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks. Bye bye.

<THE MEETING CONCLUDED