



TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: NORTHERN COAL LOGISTICS MODIFICATION 5 (SSD-5145-Mod-5)

APPLICANT MEETING

PANEL: MICHAEL CHILCOTT (CHAIR)
SIMON SMITH

OFFICE OF THE IPC: BRAD JAMES
TAHLIA HUTCHINSON

APPLICANT
REPRESENTATIVES: RON BUSH
CLINTON BROCKWELL
JEFFREY DUNWOODIE
ROXANNE HOFFMAN

LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

DATE: 11:00AM – 12:00PM
THURSDAY, 5th JUNE 2025

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MR MICHAEL CHILCOTT: Good morning, everybody. I've got an opening statement just to commence proceedings, so if you just bear with me, I'll run through that.

Welcome to this meeting to discuss the Northern Coal Logistics Modification 5 Application, reference SSD-5145-Mod-5, which is currently before the Independent Planning Commission for determination.

My name is Michael Chilcott, and I am the Chair of this Commission Panel for this matter. I am joined today by colleague, Simon Smith, who is the other Commissioner sitting with me. We're supported and joined today by Brad Jones and Tahlia Hutchinson from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission.

I'd like to commence by acknowledging the traditional owners of the lands from which we all join this meeting. I and Tahlia are sitting together on Gadigal land in the CBD. And I pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

Centennial Northern Coal Services Pty Ltd, you, the Applicant, own and operate the Northern Coal Services Project. The project as approved, comprises surface handling of coal, preparation facilities at the Newstan Colliery Surface Site, the Cooranbong Entry Site as well as private road haul facilities connecting the Newstan Colliery, Awaba Colliery, Cooranbong Entry Site and Eraring Power Station.

Centennial's applied to modify the existing Development Consent applicable to those operations, and through that to facilitate a number of activities, including: transport and beneficial use of coal washery rejects from the Newstan Colliery Surface Site; flexibility in the transportation of coal products between its operations on the existing private haul road, use of a mobile crushing and screening plant at the Newstan Colliery Surface Site on a campaign basis, it's referred to; and the timing of the Conservation Bond payment to align with the vegetation clearing as part of the activity.

In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure full capture of all information, today's meeting is being recorded, and the Commission will ensure that a full transcript of today's meeting will be produced and made available on the Commission's website.

The meeting is one of several of the Commission's considerations of this matter and will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its determination. From time to time, it's likely, you should expect Simon and I will have questions in relation to the matter. If you're able to provide answers on the day, that's great, if not, we're happy for you to take the question on notice and provide a response to us subsequently.

For the transcript, could I invite, as each of you speak for the first time, just to introduce your voice onto the tape, so that we know who's who for the record, and also please ensure that we minimise the extent to which we talk over the top of one another, so that it's clean for the purposes of making the transcript later.

That's my opening statement, and thank you very much, and we'll get on with the meeting proper. There's been an agenda circulated to you. Can I just ask whether you are content to run through the agenda as is? And I think Mr Bush, there may be a presentation you are seeking to make. Is that correct?

MR RON BUSH: Yes, Ron Bush. Yes, we've got a presentation that just follows the agenda as circulated. So, if you're happy, I can share and we can work through that and prompt any of your discussion or it might prompt any questions that you may have.

MR CHILCOTT: No, that's fine, I'm happy to take that as the process, and we'll stop at each of the points in relation to particular subject areas and check in for questions as you go. Just by way of background, we've had the benefit of reading through the material provided by the Department. So, you know, you can take it we have familiarity with what is proposed, and we've also had the benefit this morning of some time with the Department of Planning who also were good enough to take us through a presentation as well.

So, to the extent that it can guide our discussion, that's helpful. If there's new material that you're aware we're not quite up to speed with and should be, please bring us aware of those, or otherwise I encourage you to move through it and let's focus on the questions in relation to each of these matters as much as possible. But thank you.

I'll just note for the record that Ms Hoffman has now joined us. Ms Hoffman, I'll just check, can you hear us? Ms Hoffman, you're on mute, if you can hear us? And Ms Hoffman is still on mute. Mr Bush, I'll just note as we've – I can see a link to Ms Hoffman, oh, here we are. Ms Hoffman, are you online now?

It may be that one of your colleagues, Mr Bush, as you move forward, could just make contact with Ms Hoffman and confirm whether she's comfortable with the link that she's got and whether at some point she might be able to confirm that by coming on visually and turning on the microphone, just to ensure she's fully part of the meeting. But thank you. Mr Bush, over to you.

MR BUSH: Okay. I might just share the presentation, so just confirming the Commissioners can see the screen.

MR CHILCOTT: No, we can see that, thank you.

MR BUSH: Okay, so I'll just introduce the participants from Centennial. So, there's Ron Bush, I'm the General Manager of Development Approvals. Clinton Brockwell who's the Northern Coal Services Manager. Jeff Dunwoodie who's the

Mandalong Environment and Community Superintendent. And Roxanne Hoffman who's the Newstan Environment and Community Officer.

5 So, the agenda is taken from what was circulated, so we'll go through the application, transport and traffic, development contributions, noise, air quality, and Conservation Bond.

10 So, just by way of an introduction, Northern Coal Services is part of our Northern Region Complex. So, we've actually got three coal mines, underground coal mines in the region. One is the Mandalong Coal Mine, which is an operating longwall mine. One is the Myuna Mine, which is at Wangi Wangi. And then also we've got the Newstan Colliery, which is currently on care and maintenance. And also we're in the process of seeking an extension of that – that's an application before the Department of Planning at the moment.

15 The Northern Coal Services Site is a processing site that sort of overlies those three coal mines and processes the coal that is mined. It's made up of several components, one being the coal preparation plant that's at the Northern Coal Services Site, which is at the Newstan Colliery Surface Site. There's also a site
20 called Cooranbong Entry Site, which is where the Mandalong coal comes to the surface, and that coal is either taken by conveyor to the Eraring Power Station or it's transported to the Northern Coal Services Site for processing via private haul road by truck.

25 So, the Northern Coal Services Site sits within the SSD-5145, which was granted development consent on the 29th of September 2015, and continues operation to the 31st of December 2045.

30 The next slide is a summary of the Modification Application, so I won't go through that in detail, as the Commissioner sort of detailed that. But essentially, the key points are looking to beneficial reuse of coal washery reject partly for Eraring Power Station once they move into closure for engineering works, for capping and so forth. But also for beneficial reuse to external customers under the EPA's Coal Washery Rejects Order and Exemption.

35 There's a component of the mod that looks to establish on a campaign basis a mobile crushing and screening plant for some oversize material that we generate. And also some modifications to the existing coal and reject transport under the approved truck movements. And some modification to the wording of the
40 Conservation Bond.

45 So, if we get into traffic and transport. So, under the current consent, there's a range of truck tonnages that is generated from the mines and that allows it to be transported to certain places for processing or use. So, what Mod 5 seeks to modify is to allow transport of coal from the NCSS to the Cooranbong Entry Site in addition to the Eraring Power Station within the existing approved transport limits of 4.5 million tonnes per annum. And to allow an increase in transport of some product coal which we call "middlings" from the Northern Coal Services

Site to the Cooranbong Entry Site from the existing 500,000 tonnes a year that's currently approved to a million tonnes a year. And then also allow coal washery rejects to be transported from the Northern Coal Services Site to Eraring Power Station for beneficial reuse under the Coal Washeries Reject Order and Exemption.

So, the transport activities will be undertaken within the existing approved truck movements along the existing private haul road, with the additional product coal middlings and coal washery rejects prominently transported via back haulage. So that means within the range of approved truck movements that we've got, trucks generally go one way and then go back the other way, so what we want to do is to more efficiently use those vehicle movements by having those trucks full either direction. So that's essentially what the back haulage means. So, with the proposed additional tonnages, there'll be no additional truck movements because we'll predominantly using back haulage traffic.

So that's sort of the transport principally on the private haul road. Then ...

MR SIMON SMITH: Can we just ask a question before we move on please, Ron?

MR CHILCOTT: Yes, thanks, Simon.

MR SMITH: Yes. So, just can you explain why does the coal currently and more in the future go from the Newstan processing area back to the Cooranbong Entry Site? Where does, what is, why do you want material going to the Cooranbong – is it because it goes from there to the power station?

MR BUSH: Yes, so it depends on what ... The coal has different ash content, so sometimes it's suitable to be transported straight directly over to Eraring Power Station, sometimes it needs to be processed. But also sometimes we do blend processed coal with unprocessed coal to meet the various specifications that the power station may have.

MR SMITH: Right. So, some of the increase in the transportation of coal from the processing facility back down to Cooranbong is to enable blending with the run-of-mine coal that is – and then both go to the power station.

MR BUSH: That's correct, yes.

MR SMITH: Okay, I understand. So then, so what you do is you'll be taking more processed coal down to use in the power station and also taking some of the processed coal washery waste also down to Eraring. Is that correct?

MR BUSH: That is correct, yes, yes.

MR SMITH: Great. Thank you.

MR BUSH: So, the other component of the traffic and transport is the coal washery rejects to external customers. So what we're seeking approval for is transport of up to 250,000 tonnes a year of coal washery rejects from the Northern Coal Services Site partly along the private haul road but then up to Rhondda Road and along the public road system to the M1 Motorway principally for distribution to external customers.

So that'll be a maximum of 2,000 tonnes a day. And that's essentially about 26 two-way movements during normal times, but within peak traffic periods, that will be reduced to 16 two-way movements during the a.m. peak and 6 two-way movements during the afternoon peak.

So we've looked at various transport options for this external use of the material and we've selected option one as it minimised impacts to the main urban and residential areas through the region. And then also we've, as part of the mod, we proposed a Traffic Management Plan that would govern the post-approval traffic management for that system.

So, with the coal washery rejects to external customers, we've been approached by numerous major civil contractors within the region. There's a shortage of fill within the Lower Hunter area from virgin quarry sources, and our material is suitable for a general fill for engineering purposes, and it complies with the EPA's General Coal Washery Rejects Order and Exemption. So, we see it's a good thing where it can assist with providing a beneficial material to be used. Also, it enables access to that circular economy where it avoids virgin material, and it also enables us to extend the life of our rejects emplacement area, so that's where the benefits of that aspect come from.

MR CHILCOTT: Mr Bush, just to confirm, this is a thing which isn't currently done – it's an extension of your activities there. Is that correct?

MR BUSH: That's correct, yes. So, it's not done at this facility, so that's why we are seeking modification to introduce it. It is done at other coal mine sites throughout New South Wales. And as I said, we've been approached by civil contractors due to the deficit of virgin fill material in that Lower Hunter region.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

MR SMITH: Just two questions from me. So, one is what – can you just give us some samples of the kinds of uses that the material would be put?

MR BUSH: Yes. So, when some of the road construction projects – as you would imagine, there's large embankments that are required. So, generally what they need it for us core material for those large embankment areas and then typically they'll put a virgin material over it. And then also for some of the road construction aspects, it's used as a subgrade type material, and they'll use the virgin DGB road base over the top of that. So that's where it'll be sought. So, it's generally bulk fill for engineering embankments.

Also, in other applications it can be used for bulk fill for filling industrial developments and things like that, where they need large sources of fill, and then they generally put the high quality road-base type materials as the wearing course.

MR SMITH: All right. And then I noticed in the submissions from members of the public, there was a view put that an alternate route was possible. Could you just highlight – is there a way to describe where that route is when I’m looking at the map, that you’ve got on the screen?

MR BUSH: Yes, not ... Yes, it’s off the page, but it’s to the south of the site. Oh sorry, actually ... Yes, it’s not on the page here. It’s to the south of the site and where it – actually, sorry, it is here ...

So, yes, so through here, along the private haul road, there’s a possibility that trucks could come through here and then enter onto the public system here. But it’s not a road that’s used at the moment. There’s a bit of a track that enables access to the private haul road, but it does go through the Awaba – it’s quite close, sorry, to the Awaba and Blackwoods Park residential areas.

But also, it has some traffic impacts for the private haul road. We use a private haul road and also others, so it does have some traffic implications having trucks exiting and entering at that point. So, that was why it wasn’t preferred as part of our assessment.

MR SMITH: So, would that – you mentioned there’s a track. Is it not constructed to the standard required for the ...?

MR BUSH: No, no, it’s just a rough access track.

MR SMITH: I see. But are you – I think the materials we read said that your view was that that alternate, even if those other issues were addressed, would cause a higher level of impact than the proposal. And is that based on that more people would be exposed or people would be exposed to that aren’t already next to a busy road or how was that determined?

MR BUSH: Yes, so it would require that the trucks, if they did exit and enter at that point, would have to pass through the residential areas, the Awaba village, so it’d pass through a greater number of urban area than the route that’s been proposed.

MR SMITH: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR CHILCOTT: Mr Bush, just from me. So, the proposition is that this material will be taken directly to the site of the projects that are going to use the material – you’re not proposing, or are you proposing to sell it sort of wholesale to a place which would then stockpile it and then sell it on as a retail proposition in any form?

5 **MR BUSH:** Yes, no, the proposition is that we'd have an arrangement with the user of the material and it's principally these large infrastructure projects or large construction projects. We're not proposing that we'd be retailing the material, it's not our core business.

10 And logistically, we'd limit it to just to these large infrastructure and construction projects so that it doesn't divert our attention from our core business. But also there's – it's not something that we're looking to go into retail selling coal washery rejects to small projects; it's only large infrastructure projects or construction users that we'd be looking to. And principally, it'd be delivered directly to the job.

15 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thank you.

20 **MR BUSH:** So, the next one is development contributions. So, as part of the consultation, Lake Macquarie Council requested that a condition be imposed requiring that any heavy vehicles entering the local road system be subject to a heavy vehicle haulage levy in accordance with their adopted Development Contributions Plan. They've got one for the Toronto catchment area.

25 So, the development contributions would be used for the maintenance of roads, for haulage of mine products in accordance with their Infrastructure Contribution Plan for the life of the project. And essentially, the way that their contribution plan, it ends up being a contribution rate per tonne, and then there's formulas within the contribution plan that that is calculated, and then they'll be a payment either quarterly or half-yearly or annually.

30 The other thing I should say is, with the coal washery rejects export to external customers, it generally would be done on a campaign-type basis, subject to the job. So, if there's a major project, there may be a period of time where material is transported but there may be other times where no material is transported, as is mentioned it'd only be the major infrastructure or construction projects that this material would be, an agreement to place this material would go to. For the contributions, it would only be for those periods of time when the material is being transported off site.

40 So, the next one is noise. So, the coal washery reject plant configuration doesn't enable oversize coal or reject material to be processed. So what we're seeking is on a campaign basis for up to 20 weeks a year to have a mobile crushing and screening plant sited at various locations on the site to crush any oversize material that is generated during the coal processing. And that's normally crushed to a 50-mil size, so it can be either sent off to customers, either coal or coal washery reject, or better be able to be compacted when it goes into the reject emplacement area.

45 So, we've identified four locations within the site that the coal washery – ah sorry, the coal crushing and screening plant could be located. So, with the noise

assessment that was done, there were project noise trigger levels that were developed under the current noise policy for industry, and the approved conditions were developed under the old noise industry policy. So, there were minor exceedances in the noise levels from under both the current consent conditions and the noise trigger levels under the noise policy for industry.

So, with that, what we're proposing is, to mitigate any noise from the mobile crushing and screening, that a 2.1-metre-high temporary acoustic barrier be installed around the plant, to mitigate any noise impacts. Additionally, the crushing and screening plant would be limited to Monday to Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays and public holidays. It will be restricted to a maximum operation of 20 weeks per annum.

And also, there's the existing Noise Management Plan that has noise monitoring requirements and management measures, so that would be updated to incorporate the mobile crushing and screening plant. And that monitoring process also includes a real-time noise monitoring system. So, that's the mitigation measures proposed.

MR CHILCOTT: Just pause there. I'll just turn to my colleague, Simon Smith. Simon, do you have questions in relation to noise matters?

MR SMITH: Ah, yes, I did. It's partly about Sundays. I just wanted, could you explain if you're only running 20 weeks a year, why it's essential to have operations on a Sunday or public holiday?

MR BUSH: Just to enable operational efficiencies. The current operations run 24 hours a day and the oversize material is generally stockpiled and the site, we don't have huge amounts of hardstand areas available at the site, so there might be times where there's a lot of material being generated, so there is a need to process that material so that the site has availability of those areas. Yes, so the site does operate 24 hours, so it's to fit in with that operational characteristic of the site.

MR SMITH: Right. So, you mentioned that you'll be delivering to infrastructure projects and so therefore your deliveries will need to match when they need the material. So, what happens, are you producing the washery reject product 24 by 7, and then, without this project, it would be transported to an emplacement area.

MR BUSH: That's correct.

MR SMITH: But the way it will work in the future is that it will come out of the coal washery reject processing, the washery, and then it will be placed somewhere ready for the campaign to begin for when a customer wants the material to be delivered. And there could be, if there's no customers for a gap, you might end up with a big pile waiting. In that case, would it then revert back to the emplacement area, waiting for a customer to come?

MR BUSH: That's correct. So, the two are not totally linked. So, just back to the coal washery rejects export, so the rejects at the moment are stored principally on site but it's mainly in the reject emplacement area, in this location here. And then they're stored there – ah, sorry, they're either taken directly from emplacement or they're stored there waiting to be put into the emplacement area. So, the rejects export will principally be loaded from this location and then taken to the customer through the transport route identified.

With the generation of the material from the plant, there's various processes that happen within the site. So, any oversize is generally stockpiled in these areas here. Or if these areas are filled, it's taken over to the reject emplacement area. So, the material could be crushed at these locations here, and it could be either reject or coal, it's not exclusively just reject material.

So, if the material is stockpiled here and crushed, it could be then transported over to this area here for emplacement or it could be stockpiled to go to an external user of the coal washery reject. Or potentially, if it's coal, it could go here and then be transported over to this location here to be loaded out onto a train.

So, the two aren't linked exclusively. Yes, so the reject material does get stockpiled for either emplacement or if we have approval to export it, to an external customer, it could be loaded out and sent off to them.

MR SMITH: Right. Yes, so I'm not familiar with this site but we are coming to do an inspection next week.

MR BUSH: Yes.

MR SMITH: So, I look forward to that. But what would be the harm or the imposition for your operation if it was only six days a week?

MR BUSH: It'd have some operational inefficiencies for us. So, as I said, we do operate 24 hours a day and as you can see, in these areas here which are where a lot of the material is stockpiled, it does from time to time will have issues depending on what's been processed and where's it been taken to, and how full those other areas are.

MR SMITH: Okay. Thank you for that.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

MR BUSH: So, air quality was the next one. So, there was an air quality impact assessment completed. The key emission sources were the operation of the mobile crushing and screening, and loading out of any coal washery rejects, and transport of the coal washery rejects to either external customers or to Eraring Power Station.

So, the air quality impact assessment indicated that incremental and cumulative emissions would comply with the applicable New South Wales EPA Particulate Matter Impact Assessment Guidelines, with the exception of receptor NC2. So, the modelling indicated that on a cumulative 24-hour PM10 criteria, there were two days where the criteria was exceeded. So, that was a minor exceedance, and there's proposed mitigation measures to operate – we currently have a real-time air quality monitoring system on the site.

We also would look to minimise any operations on our northern reject emplacement area which is a completed area that's currently undergoing rehabilitation, when there's winds blowing from the southeast. And then also update our existing Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan to incorporate those specific dust mitigation measures.

In terms of greenhouse gas, the air quality assessment also reviewed that. It was determined that there was about an additional 823 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent that would be generated by the proposed project, principally from the transport and operation of the mobile crushing and screening plant.

And as you're probably aware, there's an EPA new guideline relating to greenhouse gas emissions, and it's below that – additional greenhouse gas emissions is below the threshold for the management. Sorry, the Department has indicated that a condition would be put there to modernise the consent in relation to those new guidelines.

MR CHILCOTT: Just stop there for a moment. Simon, do you have questions in relation to air quality matters?

MR SMITH: No, no, I'm satisfied with this, thank you.

MR CHILCOTT: Just for my benefit, could you just talk through a little bit more about the mitigation measures for NC2 and what practically would be done in circumstances where your monitoring indicates potential exceedance.

MR BUSH: Yes, so at NC2, it's quite close to what we call our northern region emplacement area, which is a completed reject emplacement area that's currently undergoing rehabilitation. And that's essentially where the two minor exceedances have come from in that modelling.

So, there's areas that are still exposed and they're currently being going through revegetation. So, in those circumstances where there's winds blowing from the southeast, we'd probably restrict operations to ensure that we were maintained within the approval criteria.

MR CHILCOTT: What does "restrict operations" mean practically? What does it look like if that does happen?

MR BUSH: Yes, so in those circumstances, we'd limit any movement of materials or grading materials. We'd potentially also ensure the water cart would look at keeping those areas wetted down to ensure the minimisation of any dust generation activities in that area.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you.

MR BUSH: If there's no further questions on that. The last one was the Conservation Bond. So, under the original approval there were areas that were proposed for vegetation disturbance and there was a biodiversity offset strategy developed and a Conservation Bond was conditioned.

So, the biodiversity offset strategy and Conservation Bond were to compensate for clearing native vegetation related to the Northern Coal Services expansion. So, there was an area to the north that was proposed when the plant got to a certain capacity, the plant could be expanded. So, that's where some vegetation clearing was required.

And also, there's a secondary reject emplacement area at a place called Hawkmount Quarry which is just off the private haul road to the south of the NCS Site. So, that clearing associated with those areas has not yet occurred. So, on the 23rd – ah sorry, the 11th of August 2023, the Department of Planning granted approval for the extension of time for the lodgement of the Conservation Bond to the 31st of July 2025.

At the time of that approval, the Department acknowledged that Centennial intended to lodge a modification application seeking amendment to Condition 20 to link the timing of the biodiversity offset strategy to prior to the clearing of any native vegetation, rather than the current time base requirements of that condition.

So, Modification 5 seeks to modify the consent to allow the Conservation Bond to be linked – to be lodged prior to the clearing of any native vegetation associated with the NCS expansion or vegetation removal at the Hawkmount Quarry reject emplacement area that's approved.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. Can you just give us some sense of – I understand you're seeking a change to the timing. The bond is sort of a guarantee rather than an extraction of funds per se, as I understand it. Is that correct?

MR BUSH: Well, the bond is for the operation of any maintenance of those areas, essentially, so as part of –

MR CHILCOTT: It's a guarantee that's ...

MR BUSH: Yes.

MR CHILCOTT: ... lodged per se, it's not a drawdown on resources per se.

MR BUSH: That's correct.

MR CHILCOTT: And do you have a sense of the timing for when vegetation clearing might happen? I'm trying to understand why the difficulty in reaching the current bond arrangements that's driving the need to alter the timing to this new proposal?

MR BUSH: Well, so the original application and consent allowed the processing plant to be expanded in stages. So, these areas were to accommodate the second stage of that processing plant expansion. So, at this point in time, there's no certainty about when that expansion may occur.

At the moment, Eraring Power Station takes a large percentage of our production. If that facility does close, a lot more of the production will go to our processing plant for export markets, so the expansion of that facility may occur then. But at this point in time, there's no certainty about when that may occur for that second stage of the expansion of the processing plant.

So, with the way that we're proposing the bond to be modified, it's to allow it to be lodged prior to the clearing of that native vegetation, just due to the uncertainty of when that may occur.

MR CHILCOTT: So, it's more about the timing. Do you envisage it will occur at some point or you just don't know whether you'll ever use it or not, is that ...?

MR BUSH: No, we do envisage it will occur at some point in time. Just at this point in time, there's no certainty about when that may happen.

MR CHILCOTT: Right. Which will be at some point you'll need to do it ...

MR BUSH: That's correct.

MR CHILCOTT: ... in your expectation.

MR BUSH: Yes.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you.

MR BUSH: So, that's the end of the presentation that followed the agenda set. So, I suppose it's open to questions.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. I'll just check with my colleague, Simon, to see whether he has any residual questions that we haven't addressed along the way.

MR SMITH: Yes, I do, just a couple, yes.

MR CHILCOTT: Thanks, Simon.

MR SMITH: Thanks, Ron, for your very helpful presentation – that cleared up a lot of things in my mind. Can I just ask you a couple of things? So, one is the material, the coal washery reject material to be delivered to Eraring, can you just give us an idea of what it's for?

MR BUSH: Yes, so Eraring's made an approach that they've got their ash emplacement and various areas of their site, so when they move towards closure of the facility, they'll need a lot of bulk fill and engineering material as part of their rehabilitation process. So, they've made that approach.

Obviously, there's been announcements of the potential closure of Eraring. As they've made that approach and they're interested in potential use of that coal washery material for their rehabilitation processes, we have moved to apply for that just to be in expectation of that may happen in the future.

I think the announced time is around that 2027, possibly a little bit longer than that. So, from what I understand, when they get to their closure period, they'll have earthworks required for the capping of their ash dam and then also various other areas as they decommission the plant, I would imagine they'd have areas where they need to use it for engineering materials or bulk fill. So, that's where it would be applied.

MR SMITH: And so you're satisfied that they will be using it for a lawful process?

MR BUSH: Well, it's subject to their own approvals, but under the Coal Washery Reject Order and Exemption, from our end, provided it applies with the order, we can supply it. And then provided that it meets the conditions of the exemption, they can apply it to land. So, if their approval is to be able to use that material for their rehabilitation processes, that's a matter for them. As far as we're obligated, we basically need to comply with the order, and they've got to comply with the exemption.

MR SMITH: Sure. So, I don't need to know the amount, but would they be paying you to obtain the material?

MR BUSH: Yes. We'd be doing it on a commercial basis, so there'd be – at the moment, as you'd imagine, our normal mode of operation is to emplace the material and so there would have to be a financial benefit for us to change our current sort of mode of operation. There'll be some modification required to our standard procedures, so that would be to compensate for that.

MR SMITH: I see. Thank you. And then, we observed that your original approval referenced the number of transport modes for the materials that you use, so there were conveyors, rail and your on-site haul road. But it never sought or was granted approval for using the public road network for transport of bulk materials. So, this is a change to what was originally approved. Did you consider the option of just going with the Eraring option for this? Would that be a feasible approach?

MR BUSH: So, as I said, we've been approached by Eraring interested in the material. And as I mentioned, we've also been approached by other large civil contractors. So, that's why we structured the modification to accommodate both.
5 We've obviously got a finite quantity of reject material. We've also got our own internal rehabilitation requirements for our reject emplacement area as well.

10 So, the approach from the civil contractors is an immediate need. As I mentioned, there's a deficit of virgin fill materials in the Lower Hunter at the moment, so we see that this could fulfil their requirements for that period. But also post Eraring's rehabilitation which, and as I mentioned, our consent goes to 2045, Eraring post their closure, they may need material for a period of time, depending on how much they need for their rehabilitation processes.

15 So, there might be a short-term period where we supply some of these civil contractors. If we do gain approval for exporting to external customers, when Eraring comes online, they may exclusively source the material, and we may not service external customers for a period while Eraring is operating. And then when Eraring demand ceases, we may seek to supply that material to external customers,
20 subject to their demands and requirements in the future.

MR SMITH: Okay. And is the half-a-million tonnes for which you seek approval, is that the limit of the back-haul capacity or is that just ...

25 **MR BUSH:** That was what Eraring indicated they'd be interested in on an annual basis, yes.

MR SMITH: Okay, oh no, that's good, thank you for that. That's all my questions, Chair.
30

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you very much. I'll just check with Brad or Tahlia whether they have – want some clarification of the required or any information they wish to put forward to you as a result of the discussions today.

35 **MR BRAD JAMES:** Nothing from me, Michael.

MR CHILCOTT: Tahlia?

MS TAHLIA HUTCHINSON: Nothing from me, thanks.
40

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. I have no further questions. But I thank you very much for your attendance today. We look forward to seeing you on site, I think it's next Friday.

45 **MR BUSH:** Yes, that's correct.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you.

MR SMITH: Thanks very much.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. Good morning.

5 [All say thank you]

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED