New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: LIVERPOOL RANGE QUARRY (SSD-68063715)

APPLICANT MEETING

PANEL:	TERRY BAILEY (CHAIR) SARAH DINNING
OFFICE OF THE IPC:	KENDALL CLYDSDALE ISAAC CLAYTON
APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES:	JUSTIN MELEO (Australian Resource Development Group Pty Ltd) DAMON BIRD (Australian Resource Development Group Pty Ltd) DAVID HOLMES (Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd) PENNY WILLIAMS (Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd)
LOCATION:	ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE
DATE:	10:00AM – 11.00AM TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2025

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MR BAILEY: That's okay, let's get going. Can I just check, David, have you got audio now? Okay, all right. I'll actually formally commence from here, just for the recording purposes, from here, Kendall.

So, good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I'd like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you all from Yuin country. And I acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands from which we virtually meet today and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Welcome to the meeting today to discuss the Liverpool Range Quarry (SSD-68063715) state significant development application currently before the Commission for determination. The Applicant, Australian Resources and Development Group Pty Ltd proposes to develop a hard-rock quarry and clay pit in the Upper Hunter Shire local government area, approximately 10 kilometres northwest of Cassilis.

The project seeks approval to extract, process and transport up to 700,000 tonnes per annum of hard rock and clay material over five years, for the sole purpose of supplying construction materials to the approved Liverpool Range Wind Farm Project (SSD-6696).

My name is Terry Bailey and I'm the Chair of this Commission Panel, and I'm joined by my fellow commissioner, Sarah Dinning. We're also joined by Kendall Clydsdale and Isaac Clayton 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 will be produced and made available on the Commission's website.

This meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of this matter and will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its determination.

It's important for the commissioners to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues whenever it's considered appropriate. If you're asked a question and not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and provide any additional information in writing, which we'll then put on our website.

I request that all members here today introduce themselves before speaking for the first time, and for all members to ensure they don't speak over the top of each other, to ensure accuracy of the transcript.

We'll now begin, and with that, happy to hand over to the Applicant to commence a presentation on the project. If we could try and keep – we've set about 45 minutes for the meeting, if we could try and keep the presentation to about 20 minutes, during

which we might ask questions, but that will allow some question time at the end as well. Thank you.

MR BIRD: Sure. Justin, did you want to kick off the presentation?

MR BAILEY: Yes, maybe just introduce yourself first, Damon, and then I will …

MR BIRD: Yes, sure, so Damon Bird, Director of Resources and Operations. I've previously met Kendall and Terry on other projects, and nice to meet you, Sarah and Isaac. Yes, so I mainly focus on the resource and development side of our quarry projects, and with a strong focus on ensuring that, you know, when we put a proposal forward, we have a very solid resource assessment that's been undertaken. I'm also heavily involved in the targeting of sites to make sure that we pick the optimum site from a range of different perspectives. Justin?

MR MELEO: Thanks, Damon. Yes, Justin Meleo, Director of Planning and Development for RDG. My role, as indicated, is to focus on the planning side and the development side of our projects. I've met Terry and Kendall before, and good to see you again, and Sarah and Isaac, nice to meet you guys.

So, I'll just share a screen and just run through a presentation, it shouldn't be too long, and we can go from there. If you've got any questions as we're going through, by all means just jump in, Terry or Sarah, happy to answer as we go if you like. Okay, I'll just – hopefully this works okay. I'm just sharing my screen. And here we go. Just let me know if that's all right.

MR BAILEY: Yes, that's come through now.

MR MELEO: I'm just going to try and maximise it to see if that works. How's that?

MR BAILEY: Yes, that's come into slideshow now, so all good. Thanks, Justin.

MR MELEO: All right, we'll just run through them. So, just to clarify something, and it's a matter that came up last week with the Department. I was contacted by the Department of Planning who seemed to be confused about Australian Resource Development Group and ARDG Deans Quarry Pty Ltd, who is the Applicant. As it turn out, through some back and forth emails with the Department, they have made an error in naming the Applicant in their report to the IPC, and also in their draft conditions of consent.

The Applicant is ARDG Deans Quarry Pty Ltd, which is a related entity of Australian Resource Development Group, which you may remember, Terry and Kendall, was the applicant for the Stone Ridge Project.

So, the Department indicated to me that they were going to fix up that error through the process, and so whether they issue with an amended report – I mean, it only mentions the name twice or three times and then it's thereafter referred to as 'the

Applicant', so I think it's a small fix for them. But I think it was just a clerical-type error.

MR CLYDSDALE: Yes, I can confirm, Justin, that the Department's provided some correspondence to clarify it, so thank you for that.

MR MELEO: Okay, great. Thanks, Kendall. So, yes, so just briefly for your benefit, I guess, Sarah and Isaac, our business is basically we locate and develop – in one part of our business – and operate short-term project-specific quarries that support construction of renewable energy projects in New South Wales. And we've also had another major quarry project going for the last nine years which was recently approved, which is a large-scale quarry north of Newcastle. So, there's two arms to the business – one focusing on site-specific project quarries for renewable projects, and one on more larger-scale quarries.

Since 2017, we've obtained planning approvals for 12 on-site quarries, project-specific quarries to support the construction of a number of wind farms in New South Wales. There's a number of benefits of on-site quarries to these projects, in that they provide a local source for quarry materials which enables the project to reduce the distance travelled by their haul fleet on the local and regional road networks surrounding the projects.

So, just for some context, many of the wind farms that are proposed and that have been built in New South Wales are located in relatively remote locations with respects to quarry material providers and sources of quarry materials. So, often there's a large haulage distance required. There are millions of tonnes of material required to build these projects, and so that translates to a significant number of haul trucks added to the road network.

So, the opportunity is to try and reduce that part of the impact of those projects by having a local source of materials, to effectively reduce their footprint by bringing the haulage closer to their project. And there's a number of flow-on benefits from that. Improved road safety on that road network. It reduces the road maintenance requirements. And it can also assist in reducing the carbon development footprint of the project through less burning of diesel for haulage.

The quarry materials transport itself for these projects is undertaken by the wind farm haulage fleet itself that operates in accordance with their particular consent, and generally utilises a much smaller part of their approved haulage route.

This project in particular, as Terry indicated at the beginning, we're seeking consent for a temporary project-specific quarry to supply materials to the Liverpool Range Wind Farm which was approved, or the modification of which was approved earlier this year, I think it was, January, maybe, Dave, or February, or late last year.

Importantly, there's no change required to the approved haul route for the wind farm in order to access this quarry location. As indicated, it would avoid the need to haul quarry materials from commercial quarries. The most viable commercial quarries to

supply this project are located in the Dubbo area, which is a round trip of around 300 kilometres to the project. So, when you add that up through, you know, tens of thousands of truck movements, it's a significant number of kilometres on the road.

It addresses a challenge in this region for supplying materials to the many renewable projects that are in the Central-West Orana REZ by having an on-site solution for the project. There's a combined basalt and clay resource which you'll see next week at this site, which is well-suited to the production of most of the quarry materials required by the project.

So, just to recap, there'll be approximately, there was 2 million tonnes of material which is at the moment based on the estimates provided by the wind farm proponent, is around about maybe 2 million tonnes demand. That would equate to taking about 17 million kilometres of road travel off the network. It would reduce the potential for interaction between road users and that truck haul fleet. It would reduce the public road maintenance requirements, and would also reduce greenhouse gas emissions of the project.

So, just to go to the project –

MR BIRD: Sorry, Justin, could you just jump back to that previous slide, I just wanted to reiterate something. Under point 2, just something that you didn't mention there, Justin, but it's really important to understand. That the haulage is undertaken by the fleet, the wind farm haulage fleet. Our project doesn't introduce any vehicles to the road network other than a very low number of light vehicles required to access the site, and a few heavy vehicle movements to deliver equipment to the site.

So, we don't run our own haul fleet. Haulage is undertaken by the wind farm fleet. Essentially, the quarry is just a location much closer to the project area from which they can pick up construction materials. So, it's just an important point to make. We're not introducing any new trucks – those trucks would be on the road network anyway.

Sorry, Justin.

MR MELEO: No, thanks, Damon, for clarifying that.

MR BAILEY: Damon and Justin, just as you step through that. So, recognising that and understanding that from the reading, can you be very specific in where those movements will be. Because there is some, from my reading, there is some confusion around that relationship. Just so it's to be very clear as we go through the presentation of where those movements will and won't occur, so there's absolutely clarity. Thank you.

MR MELEO: Yes, we've got some –

MR BIRD: We've got a map that shows that nice and clearly.

MR BAILEY: Thank you.

MR MELEO: Okay. So, in terms of the location, you can see here on the right there's a map that shows the project boundary of the wind farm. The red area here is where the quarry footprint is. The quarry would be accessed via Rotherwood Road, which is this road here, which is part of the haul route for the wind farm. It's a relatively small footprint and it's relatively isolated, the quarry site that is, it's about 3.1 kilometres to this nearest residence down here, and there's a map that I'll show later on that gives a bit more context to that. And the site itself is predominantly long-term cleared grazing land.

Damon, did you just want to have a bit of a talk about the site selection process that we went through?

MR BIRD: Yes. Just in terms of targeting the site, a couple of the key things that we need to look at. We need to make sure that if we're looking for – we've obviously got to have a decent quality resource, so that's one of the key things we look at.

We try and locate sites that avoid impacting high-value vegetation. We want to try and have a site that's pretty close to where the project development is starting, so that, for example, you don't – you have your quarry at the very distant-er end of the project so that you've got to build a lot of roads to get there. You really want to have the quarry located in a good spot so that you can start building the roads out from where they intend to start. And obviously, the terrain needs to be suitable as well. We've got to have a site that's safe to operate, it can't be on terrain that's too steep.

So, look, a lot of work's happened, and really, to identify the site, and really, these images, they're not – there's a lot of detail in those, but this shows some of the sorts of stuff that we do in advance of selecting a site. One of the things we did on this project area in consultation with the proponent was look at all their geotechnical information which they had that related to the turbine locations. So, these coloured dots on both maps relate to sites that have been geotechnically drilled and had a lot of detail done on them.

And essentially, through looking at all that information, we soon realised that from all that information that had been collected, there was a cluster of areas, and really just highlighting these very green sort of boxes up in the north, and down around where the quarry's actually located, and that includes some of our recent drilling data as well sucked into these maps.

But essentially, we identified two areas where there was sufficient thickness of high-quality rock coupled with appropriate quality clay material, which is sort of defined by the bottom-right image, but I won't go into the technical side of that. But essentially, there's two areas where you could potentially have a quarry on this site that would supply the sort of materials that you needed.

Obviously, the site that we selected down in the south was preferable to the only known alternatives, which were way up in the north, up towards Coolah Tops. Justin, just highlight – yes, maybe on the left image – that the very green areas up there and a

bit to the right, yes, that's it, those areas would only be accessed at the very end of the development of the road network for the wind farm. So, you really need to have something located much closer to where everything's starter, which is down in the south, and also very close to the existing haulage route network.

Look, that's just one aspect of why we selected the site. Making sure the geology was appropriate, but we did look at a broad area. And Justin, if you just want to go onto the next one … Yes, did you just want to run through this with the site layout? Because we'll get to the benefits – we'll actually be able to see some of the other aspects of the site in the next couple of images afterwards. Yes.

MR MELEO: You right, Damon, do you want to keep going or …?

MR BIRD: Oh, you can go, if you like, yes.

MR MELEO: Okay. So, with the site layout itself, there's two involved landowners and the nearest non-involved residence is 3 kilometres to the southwest. And I sent through a map yesterday which showed some of the cadastre around for the site meeting, for this area.

The disturbance footprint itself is about 19-and-a-half hectares, which includes the access road. The operations area, which is the main area here, is around 14 hectares. And the access road is a bit over or a bit under five-and-a-half hectares. The road itself, access road is about 2.7 kilometres long.

The operations area has a main pit which is a hard-rock resource up here, and there's a clay pit or a borrow pit down here which would be used for blending with the hard rock for certain products. And in fact, the main product required by the wind farm is a road and hardstand capping material, which is a combination of around about 20–25% clay and 75–80% hard competent rock material.

There are processing and stockpiling areas in amongst here, and there's temporary site infrastructure as well which is temporary office, utilities, water tanks etc., as well as site service water management infrastructure, so there's a sediment basin down here, there's bunding around the site, there's bunds that direct water down here, which is all detailed in the Surface Water Management Plan.

The access road itself, we've chosen a corridor that's about 15 to 20 metres wide, which will allow us to actually microsite the running surface of the access road which will be a hard-packed compacted, spray-sealed road to reduce dust. But we needed to have that width as an assessment area to allow for detailed design as we go through.

Because of the topography of the area, which you'll see next week, some areas will require a little bit of cut-and-fill, there will be batters required on the side of the road, and it also allows us to avoid as many trees as possible in that access road area. And so, it just gives us some flexibility. Notwithstanding the assessment assumes total disturbance of that area, so in effect it's a conservative approach in that we're assuming more disturbance than there probably actually will be in the end.

The other thing you'll find that's maybe a little bit strange is this hook in the access road here. So, originally, we had designed the access road to essentially come straight across and down here. Quite a fair while after we had designed that road, EnergyCo arrived on the scene, got in contact with us and said, "No, you're going to have move your road because we're bringing our line through here." They have certain requirements in terms of staying away from their infrastructure.

So, we had quite a bit of a detailed back and forth with EnergyCo to re-design our road to go around their poles and wires, and cross in a place that they were going to be happy with us crossing their corridor. And that's why the access road looks the way it does. But that'll happen prior to submitting the EIS, but it was a process that we had to go through with them, which meant re-surveying areas and doing other bits and pieces to make that happen.

This is just a bit of a –

MR BIRD: I'll just run through this, if you like.

MR MELEO: Yes.

MR BIRD: Yes. So, just with the design of the two extraction areas. They're both located in areas largely devoid of trees; there are a couple of trees there present on the site, but pretty well – and you'll see on site – most of this area is cleared. And down where the clay borrow pit is, there's a couple of small trees that'll be impacted there. But generally, it's pasture.

The idea with the pit is to, the main pit, is to actually drop the pit into the ground on the flat crest of the hill and retain all the peripheral sides of the hill, thereby screening anything from a distance. So, essentially, it's a bit like a bathtub that's been, with a flat top surrounding it, it's completely hidden from view from surrounding residences.

With the clay borrow pit, it's a much shallower feature. I mean, the main pit's got two 12-and-a-half-metre benches notionally, with an access ramp that will direct traffic or manage traffic movements into the pit. The borrow pit is a much shallower excavation and will be developed in a series of cells to keep the clay material dry, rather than opening up just one large area.

Justin, if you just flick to the next ones, the oblique ones. These sort of give an idea from different perspectives. The image on the left shows the sort of idea of the bathtub or the sunk pit within the crest of the hill, and with the clay pit in the distance. And the other one's a view of the clay pit. The clay pit itself will be – you'd be struggling to see that from anywhere, given the topography of that area as well.

Yes, and this gives you a better feel for the nature of the hill. Interestingly, Justin, if you just highlight for the guys' benefit where the rock is outcropping around the side. So, that's the flat-lying basalt lava flows that we're targeting, daylighting around the perimeter of the hill. But the pit itself will be located well within the crest of the hill,

and you won't see anything from distant vantage points. Yes, in terms of the wind farm, you can see the wind farm off in the distance there. So, it is located reasonably close.

Just one thing to mention while you're looking at this view. There have been questions and discussions, well, assessments of the potential impact of the quarry on groundwater. It's important to note that, given where we're located, and we have extensively drilled the site with diamond core and percussion drilling, and much deeper than the level of pit. No groundwater was encountered whatsoever on the site. Other than a bit of surface moisture right at the top where, you know, you've got ponding on top of rock.

There's no water table within the hill, and the reason is that it's – you can see it fairly clearly here, but it will also be obvious on site, is that the flanks of the hill are all – the whole site or the level of pit development is completely surrounded by air. Okay. So, there's no ability to have a groundwater table, a meaningful groundwater table at shallow depth, and certainly within the depth that we're operating.

Yes, there is significant groundwater or the potential for significant groundwater exists much deeper, but certainly not in this sort of isolated or the crest of the hill where we're operating.

Justin, the next one.

MR MELEO: Yes, this one here shows a bit of a perspective for the nearest non-involved residence, which is R2 down here. And I've just shown a profile viewing from where that residence is, up to the quarry. You can see the quarry here is sitting, as Damon indicated, below the crest of the hill. And so, there's not a direct line of sight, and being 3.1-odd kilometres away, it's a significant distance from the site, which is important from the perspective of noise impacts, dust impacts, blasting and vibration impacts assessment.

So, I'll just quickly run through some of the key issues, and Terry we'll just touch on the comments you made regarding the traffic. So, as we indicated previously, there's no change required to the approved haul route of the Liverpool Range Wind Farm. It reduces the overall distance travelled on the local and regional road network for the wind farm haul traffic truck fleet.

As Damon indicated earlier, the quarry provides an alternative pickup point for quarry materials. And the modelling that was undertaken confirmed that the overall truck movements from the quarry would not change, and in fact they've been already approved under the Liverpool Range Wind Farm Mod 1 consent.

So, just to go to that in a bit more detail. This first image here shows the public haul route for quarry materials to the wind farm without the quarry. And so, that's shown by the red lines. We've got a number of cluster of quarries here in Dubbo that could supply the project. There's some to the south, out to the east, and these ones out here to the northeast. And there's no scale on this map, I apologise, but the distance from

Dubbo by road to this point here is about 147 or 150 – something about 150 kilometres, roughly. So, it's about a 300-kilometre round trip to Dubbo. And so, what this shows is the public road network.

MR BIRD: Just highlight, Justin, from the northeastern cluster as well, there's a road that's a bit hard to see.

MR MELEO: This road, just when we made the image for some reason, it came out as a skinnier line, but that would be the haul route from the Willow Tree – Ardglen area to the site.

So, the haulage required on the public road network to haul quarry materials, just for some context, for 2 million tonnes of materials, it's around about 62,500 one-way truck movements, or 62,500 truck trips, which equates to something like 125,000 truck movements or 17-odd million kilometres travelled to get, given that each truck would carry around 32 tonnes of material.

So, this next image –

MR BAILEY: Just before we jump off, I just want to follow up on the haulage side, in particular.

MR MELEO: Yes.

MR BAILEY: So, we know there's an existing approval linked to Mod 1, the haulage piece, but could you be very explicit in what would vary in terms of haulage upgrades for this site?

MR MELEO: Yes. Next image. So, the green line shows that the haulage route from the Liverpool Range Quarry to the project. So, I if I just flick between them, you can see that we're using a much-reduced part of the existing approved network.

MR BAILEY: Yes. Okay.

MR BIRD: No additional roads. It's all on that same network.

MR BAILEY: But the upgrade, if I'm seeing this correctly, is that next to the words 'Liverpool Range Quarry,' that short section of green, is an additional upgrade to haulage roads associated with –

MR MELEO: No, no. It's utilising the existing approved road network. So, whether we're there or not, that road network – that's the road network used to get materials to the wind farm without the quarry. The green is the road network used to get to the wind farm with the quarry.

MR BAILEY: Yes, but what I'm talking about is that short distance of – if you go back a slide.

MR BIRD: Additional traffic.

MR BAILEY: That additional piece is that green section, that short green section.

MR MELEO: No, sorry, that's the quarry footprint. That's our access road.

MR BAILEY: Right, okay.

MR MELEO: Sorry, yes, it's not very clear, but that's the scale of it.

MR BIRD: No, I think what Terry's asking, Justin, is the section between the intersection of our access road and Vinegaroy. Yes.

MR DAVID HOLMES: Yes, sorry, David Holmes here. I'm the REAP on the project. I think, Terry, that all of that green route except for that little section of the access road into the quarry from Rotherwood, all of that green section of road has to be upgraded or is part of the haul route for the wind farm. And the project, the quarry project doesn't require any additional upgrading of that road to what's already required by the wind farm.

It may put more trucks on one section of the road which would require additional maintenance works, which are also covered by that wind farm condition, but it just means that they're not – you know, it kind of moves the commitment from one area to another, I guess. Because that section from the Golden Highway into the Rotherwood Road intersection won't have as much vehicles on it.

So, basically, the only quarry products that will go on that road, some maintenance works upgraded for that associated with the turbines and stuff coming in, but it's only a roadwork maintenance kind of section along there. Otherwise, all the haul route that the quarry products will be on that green.

MR MELEO: So, just to reiterate, sorry, you can see the little bit of green here is our development footprint, including our access road. So, that's excluded from any assessment of traffic impacts because it's part of the quarry, it's the quarry development footprint.

MR BAILEY: Yes.

MR MELEO: So, the part of the haulage route, of the existing approved haulage route that would be used, is shown in green. And importantly, under the Liverpool Range Wind Farm consent, when they are putting their engineering designs to Upper Hunter Shire Council and Warrumbungle Shire Council for the upgrade of the public road network, right, the councils both have to sign off on the road upgrade designs.

And the road upgrade designs include the worst-case scenario traffic movements under the wind farm consent, which we do not exceed. So, we are – our traffic movements from the quarry are within the consideration that they have made for number of truck movements along this road network that feed into their designs for these roads to be

upgraded. And in actual fact, it's proposed that the material that's used to upgrade these roads come from the quarry itself.

MR HOLMES: Justin, just for clarity as well. That section, the green probably should include the road for Vinegaroy Road as well, because to the extent that that needs –

MR MELEO: There may be some material used from the quarry to upgrade sections of Vinegaroy Road, however, it's also possible that the upgrade of this road may occur before we commence, because they've already started upgrading the intersection here. So, in the context of the 2 million tonnes of material required, the amount of material required coming up here is a teaspoon. But yes, there may be some movements of trucks coming from the quarry up here, which in the absence of the quarry, would be coming from outside and down here anyway to upgrade that road.

MR BAILEY: Thanks.

MR MELEO: Is that clear, Terry?

MR BAILEY: Yes, that's certainly clearer and we'll keep doing some reading. One other quick question that I did have, I just wanted to check in, was what's in place to understand the weight on the vehicles that will be moving from the quarry onto the sites?

MR MELEO: Sorry …

MR BAILEY: The weight of vehicles to ensure compliance during haulage.

MR MELEO: Well, they have to be road compliant. Generally speaking, on wind farms they use truck and dogs, which is a 32-tonne load. And sometimes they use what's called side tippers, which are 25-tonne loads.

MR BAILEY: Yes, so the –

MR MELEO: Anything that's going on, they all have to be road worthy and meet their –

MR BAILEY: I understand that, Justin. How will you ensure compliance, so what's the intention to ensure compliance with the weight load?

MR MELEO: Oh okay, sorry, so they don't exceed the load?

MR BAILEY: Yes.

MR MELEO: Yes. So, the materials are loaded using loader scales. And so, as each load goes out, each truck driver needs to sign off with the load operator that the legal amount of material has been loaded onto the truck, and that's kept on a docket system.

MR BAILEY: Yes, thank you. We'll need to keep moving a bit, sorry.

MR MELEO: Okay, sorry, yes, we'll just run through it, we're almost at the end anyway. In terms of water, there's no water courses on the project area.

MR BAILEY: Sorry, I think we missed biodiversity.

MR MELEO: Oh, sorry, I beg your pardon, we did too. So, we're located on predominantly cleared, long-term grazing land. The assessment from the BDAR showed that there were 3.2 hectares of low condition Grey Box-White Box open grassy woodland and 15.8 hectares of poor condition of that woodland DNG (derived native grassland).

The project has been designed to avoid and minimise tree clearing. And there will be further detailed design, for example, for the micro-siting of the access road, which will further reduce tree clearing. And that means that the offset requirements that we've agreed to exceed the tree clearing that will actually occur. So, it's actually quite conservative.

Dave, is there anything more you need to say about that? I mean, we'll see it all on site next week.

MR HOLMES: I'll just add one little correction to the Department's report as well. I think they've got – there's a discussion about whether or not that 15.8 hectares meets the CESC listing criteria. In the Department's report or Secretary's report, it has a comment that one of the plots has none of the characteristic species; that's not correct. I think they've misinterpreted what we've said.

There's 11 of the 115 characteristic species across four plots. Three of the plots have 4 or less of those characteristic species, so of the 115, and one has 6. But I think the Department has misinterpreted the way we'd worded the order of the three of the four plots having less than 4 as being the other one having none, where it's not none, it's actually 6, but it's still a very low number.

But other than that, it's, you know –

MR BAILEY: Can I just ask, David, I might just ask if you could just put that back to us in writing in terms of that correction to the Department's Assessment Report as you've just worked through there.

MR HOLMES: Yes.

MR BAILEY: And we'll follow that up with a question on notice, just to get that clarity, so that is very clear. Thank you.

MR HOLMES: Yes. But what I will point out is with the biodiversity is the CPHR, like, one of the requirements for SAII entities, which the CESC is, is to reduce or avoid additional outcomes and to note that the additional avoidance of individual trees that is

proposed despite being assumed in the offsetting, so that is an additional commitment to reduce that level of impact.

MR BAILEY: Thanks, David, and that'll be good to look at next week, as you said.

MR MELEO: So, quickly just to finish off –

MR BAILEY: Just to check – sorry, I just want to check in to see if Sarah's got any questions as we're going?

MR MELEO: Sorry.

MS SARAH DINNING: I'm fine, thanks Terry, thank you.

MR MELEO: Okay. Right-io. Water. There are no water courses in the project area. There's no discharge of water required during operations, it'll be re-used on site. The groundwater level, as Damon indicated, is well below the maximum excavation depth. And water supply to the project will come from an existing commercial bore that the landowner has, and there's to be an agreement in place for supply of water there.

Noise and dust. As indicated, with significant distance to the non-involved sensitive receptor, we're 2 kilometres from the closed involved sensitive receptor, which is the landowner, which you'll see next week. The modelling confirmed emissions of well below EPA criteria limits. And the impact of traffic movements from the quarry were within the EPA criteria limits at a couple of residences on that haul route between Vinegaroy Road and the quarry itself.

In terms of blasting and vibration, again, significant distances from the non-involved sensitive receptor, the landholder and also the future infrastructure of the wind farm. We need to consider that as well; so, how far the nearest turbines were. Modelling confirmed that ground vibration and air pressure – aero-blast over pressure, sorry, was well below applicable limits.

The blasting is going to be designed for a low powder factor and smaller blasts to minimise the potential for fly-rock and to ensure that material is heaved away or in the opposite direction to the nearby property boundary. And we've done some detailed work with our blast contractor to get that figured out. And the fly-rock risk is negligible at the nearest residence, which is 2 kilometres away, and the future infrastructure, given those distances.

And just finally, the last –

MR BAILEY: Sorry, just on those other residences.

MR MELEO: Yes.

MR BAILEY: Could you just follow up. So, I see the one at 3.1 to the southwest.

MR MELEO: Yes.

MR BAILEY: In what direction – they're associated, so they're not the involved residences, in what direction are they 2 kilometres?

MR MELEO: So, it's the landowner's house which is to the northeast or –

MR BIRD: Just flick to the – have you got the image there, Justin?

MR MELEO: Yes, I'll just flick to an image, sorry, quickly, here it is. So, this is the landowner's house, so that's about 2 kilometres away there.

MR BAILEY: Yes.

MR MELEO: And just for context, normally when we're blasting we have a standoff safe distance of around four to five-hundred metres.

MR BAILEY: Yes.

MR MELEO: So, with the rehab, Damon, do you quickly want to have a word on that?

MR BIRD: Oh, yes. So, we'll end up having fairly steep walls when we're operating, about 80 degrees from the horizontal. But they'll be battered off to probably around one-in-one, we'll probably do a perimeter shot just to drop the flanks of the walls and create a rubble slope.

Topsoil that's spread around in bunds will be relocated into the pit. There'll be scarification of the hardstand areas, re-seeding the whole area with pasture grass. We'll be retaining a ramp into the pit, an access ramp, so that any stock that get into the pit, well, they'll probably only get in by that means, but they can get out. That's a requirement that the landowner is after.

And at the end of the day, it'll be just a safe and stable landform that will be re-utilised for grazing, which is its current use. Now, obviously a hard-rock pit, it's going to have some limitations in terms of what the stock can do in there. But the landowner is fully aware of that.

MR MELEO: Yes. I think to be clear, Damon, it's more relevant to the operations area around the pit than in the pit itself.

MR BIRD: Yes, which will all be scarified. Any hard, compacted material will be lifted up and re-used for rehab there. Yes.

MR MELEO: Just in terms of waste, the quarry itself actually generates minimal quantities of general waste. Any residual processed material would be used in the rehab. So, if there's any fines left over or what we call 'crusher dust'. General waste

will be disposed of by an appropriate licensed waste contractor. So, essentially the sites use skip bins that get picked up periodically, as well as port-a-loo type operations.

We just thought it was worthwhile mentioning that – I'm not sure whether you've read through any of the public submissions on the project – but there was quite a number of submissions that were focused on the wind farm itself and also indicating that this site would be used to store waste turbines and other components, which is just absolutely not the intention whatsoever.

In terms of consultation, there was detailed consultation with the proximal landholders, the community in the surrounding Coolah and Cassilis areas, the registered LALCs and both councils. And I'll just leave it there. Sorry if I went over time a bit.

MR BAILEY: No, no, that's all right, we did some questions as we were going. I just wanted to open up to check with Sarah first if there were clarifications you …

MS DINNING: Thanks, Terry, no, I don't have any clarifications. I think being on site will be very helpful next week to just understand, I think, in particular the roads and the layout. So, thank you.

MR MELEO: Okay.

MR BAILEY: And the only last perhaps clarification for now is just the status of agreements with Council.

MR MELEO: Yes. So, there is a VPA that has been agreed with Upper Hunter Shire Council, so, we had some discussions with them. And the VPA was predicated on $50,000 being paid to Upper Hunter Shire Council to be spent in the town of Cassilis, the nearby town of Cassilis to the southeast of the project.

And yes, that sort of came – we wanted to ensure, and this came from having been in this area and working on this project since around 2019, we've got to know quite a few of the people, the characters in Cassilis itself. And, you know, they repeatedly indicate to us that they get left out of any consideration because they're at the far end of the Upper Hunter Shire Council area, and could you please make sure that we get something out of this project.

So, we indicated to Council that we really wanted to not have the money sucked into consolidated revenue and spent in Scone; that we wanted it to benefit the local community. So, Council agreed to that, that was put to their council meeting and that's on the record. So, that's the VPA we have with Upper Hunter Shire Council.

MR BAILEY: Thanks for that. I know it's a different context, but conversations with Warrumbungle?

MR MELEO: Yes, we had quite a number of discussions with Warrumbungle Shire Council. There was quite – there was a period where we … I guess, because of the slightly complex nature of the traffic, which seems to confuse everyone, it took us a

while for them to understand that we weren't adding trucks to the road network. That the requirements on the wind farm consent would apply to any truck movements from the quarry. That the wind farm was responsible for road maintenance, upgrade and make good at the end of the project. And that the quarry was actually going to be reducing trucks on the overall road network, including that intersection of Vinegaroy Road that's maintained by Warrumbungle Shire Council.

They indicated to us numerous times that their default position was to object to everything in the area, which was fair enough. They insisted that they wanted a VPA from us and they were, they should get a VPA out of it, however, we indicated that there was no nexus for a VPA agreement with Warrumbungle Shire Council, given that we weren't located in their area for starters, and any contribution to them either through a road maintenance contribution or a VPA would effectively be them double-dipping on the VPA and road maintenance contributions that they well be getting from the wind farm.

And in fact, several of their officers reluctantly agreed that that would be the case. However, bizarrely, they continued to push that line in correspondence with us and to the Department of Planning. We made our case to Planning, and Planning can see what the sense in what we were saying.

MR BAILEY: Thanks, Justin, for that response. I'm just checking –

MR MELEO: I'm sorry, I'll just say one other thing. They indicated to us that we weren't welcome to use their tip in Coolah. So, we said, "Yes, no problems, we're happy to not use your tip in Coolah, we'll …" Not that we probably would have used it anyway, but we'll just have a licensed waste contractor who we'll pay for them dispose of it wherever they need to dispose of it legally and appropriately. Albeit that we only have very small quantities of waste anyway.

MR BAILEY: Thanks, thanks, Justin. Just checking very quickly to see if there are any last questions or queries from Sarah?

MS DINNING: No thank you, Terry, thank you.

MR BAILEY: And just to check, Kendall, Isaac, if there's anything you felt we needed to follow up with?

MR CLYDSALE: Nothing from the Office, Chair, and David, just to follow up from Terry's discussion, yes, we'll touch base in writing on that clarification on the Assessment Report issue, so that will be great, thank you.

MR BAILEY: Yes, there'll be a few bits. Thanks – the Panel wants to thank everyone for your time and your presentation; it's been very helpful. As we've said throughout, we'll be undertaking the site visit next week, which I think will be very helpful as well for our understanding.

Any questions that did arise today, we will put through correspondence from the Office in the coming couple of days to give you the opportunity to respond back in writing. So, we'll do the follow up there.

But thank you, again, thanks everyone for your time.

MR MELEO: Just a note. It'll be very hot next Tuesday, so I forgot to add water on the list of PP things, but make sure you bring water. It's going to be pretty warm out there, so.

MR BAILEY: Will do, thanks Justin. Thanks everyone for your time and we'll see you next week.

MR HOLMES: Sorry, can I just – I just have one more thing for the site visit. If any of you get hay fever from rye grass and stuff, make sure you bring your antihistamines as well, so.

MR BIRD: Thanks, Dave.

MS DINNING: Sounding better and better, thanks.

MR MELEO: Thanks, bye-bye.

MR BAILEY: Thanks all, see you next week.

[All say goodbye]

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED