



New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

**RE: KINGSWOOD BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM
(SSD-63207219)**

COUNCIL MEETING

PANEL: MICHAEL CHILCOTT (Chair)
ELIZABETH TAYLOR

OFFICE OF THE IPC: GEOFF KWOK
TAHLIA HUTCHINSON

**TAMWORTH REGIONAL
COUNCIL:** JORDAN KIRK
SAM LOBSEY
JAY MORROW
ANDREW SPICER

LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

DATE: 2:00PM – 3:00PM
THURSDAY, 29th JANUARY 2026

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

[Audio gap until 00:00:14]

5 **MR MICHAEL CHILCOTT:** Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. If you'd be good enough to turn on your camera and perhaps microphone. Thank you. I can – oh, there we are. Thank you.

MR ANDREW SPICER: G'day.

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MR CHILCOTT: And I'll just observe Mr Morrow is online already, sitting in the background, he's got his camera turned off for bandwidth purposes. And I think I can see, although it's quite distant on the frame, three people in Council's offices. Is that correct? I saw on the list of attendees from Council, a longer list than those we seem to have on the platform at present.

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MR SAM LOBSEY: Yes, that's right. You have Sam Lobsey, Andrew Spicer and Jordan Kirk in the room.

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MR CHILCOTT: And is that all we're anticipated joining us?

MR LOBSEY: In addition to Jay, I think that is all, yes.

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MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thanks. Well, in that case, good afternoon, everybody, and welcome. I have an opening statement that I will need to run through, if that's okay, and following that we'll move onto the detail of the meeting.

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So, welcome to this meeting, which is to discuss the Kingswood Battery Energy Storage System, a state significant development application with the reference SSD-63207219, which is currently before the Independent Planning Commission for determination.

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My name is Michael Chilcott. I am the Chair of the Commission Panel for this matter, and I am accompanied today by my fellow Commissioner, Elizabeth Taylor. Elizabeth and I are also joined by Commission staff from the Independent Planning Commission, Geoff Kwok and Tahlia Hutchinson.

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I'd like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you from land in the Blue Mountains, which is Dharug and Gundungurra land, and I acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands from which we all come today and meet. And pay my respects to Elders past and present.

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The Applicant in this matter, Iberdrola Australia Development Pty Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Iberdrola Australia Limited, proposes to develop a 270-megawatt and 1,080-megawatt hour battery energy storage system approximately 6 kilometres southeast of Tamworth in the Tamworth regional local government area.

In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information from today's meeting, the meeting is being recorded, and a complete

transcript of the meeting will be produced and made available on the Commission's website in due course.

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

10 As you'd anticipated, it's likely that we will have some questions for you during the course of the meeting to clarify issues when that's considered appropriate. If you're asked a question today and you're not in a position to answer it immediately, please do take it on notice. Following the meeting, the Commission through its staff will advise you in writing of any questions taken on notice that the Panel considers requires a formal response. And subsequent responses and information provided to the Commission will then be published on our website.

15 For the purposes of today's meeting, I'd ask that you, before you speak for the first time or at the point of you speaking for the first time, would be good enough to introduce yourselves, and could I ask that people attending please not speak over the top of each other, so as to ensure the accuracy of the transcript.

20 So, thank you very much for allowing me to make that introductory statement. Again, welcome, and let's begin the meeting. There was an agenda provided by the Commission to the Council – is that satisfactory for the purposes of the Council, are you happy to go along with that structure?

25 **MR JORDAN KIRK:** Yes, that's fine.

30 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you very much. It may be convenient in fact just for you to do introductions of your Council representatives and how you fit into the various processes of Council. Thank you.

35 **MR KIRK:** So, I might kick off. So, my name is Jordan Kirk and I am the Renewable Energy Project Coordinator. So, my role within Council is coordinating Council's submissions to the Department as well as being the first point of contact for the community and the developers.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

40 **MR SPICER:** My name is Andrew Spicer. I'm the Manager of Future Communities. In a context of this development, one of my teams is strategic planning and so we're looking at the land use planning aspects and particularly we've started the process of the voluntary planning agreement and work in with Jordan with the company on that front.

45 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thank you.

MR LOBSEY: And I'm Sam Lobsey. I'm the Manager of the Development Team. We are responsible for the development applications that come through that Council does the assessment of. But in terms of state significant developments, through Jordan, we

coordinate the submissions and reach out to all the internal agencies at Council for advice on all sorts of different state significant developments. And yes, so that's me.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. And Mr Morrow?

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MR JAY MORROW: Yes, so I'm Jay Morrow. I'm the Development Engineering Manager here at Council. I've recently just transferred into this role, so prior to that, I was the Senior Operations Engineer, so basically looking after the roads and drainage assets for Council. So, it give me quite a unique perspective coming over to development engineering, particularly from a renewable energy perspective where there are cumulative impacts to roads and the like. So, yes, just relatively new to the engineering manager role though, so.

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MR CHILCOTT: Grateful for your experience anyway, Mr Morrow. Look, thank you. I don't know whether you have a nominated lead on the Council's side for coordination of inputs or coordinating responses. Is there somebody who's taking the lead in the meeting, or are you a relatively flat structure for the purposes of today?

15

MR KIRK: Yes, it's my job, Jordan Kirk, as I'm the Coordinator for Renewable Energy Projects, so I am the one who put together all the resources from the different directorates within Council and putting them into the submission. So, I'm happy to talk to that.

20

MR CHILCOTT: Great. Thanks very much, that's helpful to know. So, we obviously have within the IPC your submissions and noted the progression of matters from first to final. The purpose of today is to enable you to provide input to us and for us potentially to put a few questions back to you just to clarify matters from our side. Can I ask, do you have any prepared remarks at this point, or is there any general statements you want to get on the record first before we move to specific matters?

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MR KIRK: Other than – there are a few things that haven't been captured in our submissions to the Department that have been just in passing comments in meetings with them that haven't been formal submissions. As well as there's a couple of other items that have been brought to our attention post submission stage that, if we are able to bring those up now, that'd be great.

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MR CHILCOTT: And I think that'd be helpful if perhaps you'd go through them, and as you go through them, if you'd pause at the end of each sort of logical step from one to the other, just to see if we've got any questions, that'll be helpful. Thank you.

40

MR KIRK: Yes, no problem. So, the first point we wanted to bring up was in relation to blast walls to protect against explosions and fires. We have a –

MR CHILCOTT: Sorry, can you say that again – I didn't quite get that first – something bores, I heard?

45

MR KIRK: Blast walls.

MR CHILCOTT: Oh, blast walls. My apologies. Thank you.

5 **MR KIRK:** Yes. So, we have another project in region and during a meeting with them they were discussing the need for blast walls in their project. And that's something that hasn't come up in our discussions on this project or within any of the Proponent's submissions in EIS. So, we just wanted to know if there's a mechanism in place or if it's needed to have these blast walls, considering the proximity and location to residents.

10 The other project I'm talking about is a rural project and its only neighbours are farming properties. Where this one is right in the middle of town, as you would know. So, the –

15 **MR CHILCOTT:** When you say, "in the middle of town," I thought it was out on the Calala Road [cross-talk 00:11:28]. It doesn't strike me as like Peel Street but –

MR KIRK: No, that's correct. It's a part of the Calala subdivision, really. So, it's quite a populous area, it's one of the more populated areas of Tamworth.

20 **MR LOBSEY:** Yes, it's Sam Lobsey here, and I'll just add to that. It has sort of – it came to our attention recently, as Jordan's just mentioned, in another meeting with another developer. Now, that site was a lot further away from receptors whereas this particular site is closer to a number of receptors in the Calala suburb. And it is an interesting, well, it's something that we hadn't really thought of in terms of a way of mitigating certain events, like if there was an explosion.

25 And we wanted to raise it today really just to ask the question, if it is something that these battery operators do need to think about, and whether there is a requirement for them considering the distance to the nearby suburb. We have not only this project; we already have another battery storage present that has already gone through and is currently under construction. But there are two other battery storage projects within the same location.

30 So, it's certainly something that we're interested in, just to see whether that is something that does need to be thought about or considered. And just wanted to note it and flag it for the IPC's attention.

35 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thank you. I'm aware of the Tamworth and Calala BESS proposals. I'm not aware of the details of them, I have to say. And I suspect you have had greater visibility prior to this point in relation to those projects. Perhaps you can inform me, for either of those, has there been a consideration to your knowledge of a requirement for blast walls?

MR LOBSEY: No, no.

45 **MR CHILCOTT:** What I can tell you is that I don't think it's been part of our discussions today. Elizabeth may have a comment on this. The principal concerns have been certainly focused around fire, fire risk and so forth, rather than blast risk per se. So, it's not a question we've put, we'll take it on board and perhaps following this what I'd invite you to do, and I'm just looking at my colleagues, Tahlia and Geoff, that

there may be benefit in Council formulating a further submission to us that just confirms that particular interest and others ones that you may touch on now, so that we have a sort of trigger to put questions and address them. But it's helpful to have the background on the other two from your perspective.

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And as I've said, I've given you what background or what little background, I should add, that we have in relation to this, which is that at no point currently has that been raised either by the Department or the Applicant or generally in submissions. Although recognising fire certainly has been raised in submissions and hazardous risk generally, I think. Elizabeth, did you want to add anything to that, correct anything I may have misspoke on?

10

PROF ELIZABETH TAYLOR: No, I certainly agree with you. I don't think that explosions per se have been part of the analysis. But it's certainly worth raising that, because it is considered a risk for these lithium-ion batteries scenarios. This other project, is it a similar sort of technology or are you talking about something totally different?

15

MR LOBSEY: The one that has raised our attention, it was a solar project with an ancillary battery component to it.

20

PROF TAYLOR: Okay, okay.

MR CHILCOTT: All right, thank you.

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PROF TAYLOR: Okay. That's helpful.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. That's noted. Sorry, Elizabeth, you had a further comment?

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PROF TAYLOR: Oh, I was just going to say, so it's not as though explosions are something that is not considered for these battery situations. So, I certainly agree with Michael putting it on notice and finding out a bit more is prudent.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

35

MR KIRK: The second point we wanted to raise was just in relation to electromagnetic fields. While we note that this isn't Council's area of expertise, we've had members of the public express concern around this, particularly as mentioned, the density of the four BESS's in the area. So, if there was a mechanism where we could have this monitored to safeguard the residents from any exposure that's beyond the safe levels, that would be a recommendation from Council.

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MR CHILCOTT: And this in relation to the batteries per se. We have obviously the transmission lines that pass close by and which are already there and presumably the subject to separate approvals. I don't know the extent to which electromagnetic radiation monitoring is required for those, although inevitably where you have electricity you have magnetism, these things obviously go together, I seem to recall my basic physics.

45

But the extent of them, the impact at distance and so forth, thank you for noting it. We'll look at it and please note it in your note to us.

5 **MR KIRK:** Thank you.

MR CHILCOTT: Elizabeth, on the engineering side, I'll just check with Elizabeth, my engineering colleague to see whether she has any advice to add.

10 **PROF TAYLOR:** I'll just note on the wrong sort, but I can read into the area. It was covered in the report that was done, so I'm just teasing out whether you are or your constituents are more worried about the cumulative effect of having so many. So, if each is okay in itself, but together there might be an increased possibility of that, and that's where the monitoring might be useful. Is that where you're coming from?

15 **MR KIRK:** Yes.

PROF TAYLOR: Okay. Thank you. Because it's certainly, the analysis did suggest that it was not going to be an issue in and of itself for this one. And explosion was covered, I just noticed, in their report also, I've just gone back and checked. They have suggested an explosion would not be a credible event and was not further assessed. So, perhaps your input can sort of leverage off that statement if you have continuing concerns.

25 **MR KIRK:** Thank you. The third point we just wanted to make is in regard to the access route into the project. So, we've had another project, Calala BESS, which you mentioned, we've had a bottleneck in the access on that project in relation to one of the routes they selected, which was Whitehouse Lane, in regards to their OSOM transport movements.

30 So, two of their movements when it was submitted to NHVR for the heavy vehicle approvals, it was assessed by Council and it was deemed that two of the movements were excess of the bridge capacity loads, which has caused a sense with that project to have to find a different route with that component.

35 This proponent, Iberdrola for Kingswood BESS, has already selected Whitehouse Lane. So, we just wanted to raise that with yourselves as potentially we could run into the same bottlenecks with this project. And if possible, there was some flexibility we could have within the consent conditions that allows us to be able to have flexibility of the route if there's another route that's more suitable, without having the Proponent have to submit a mod for their project. And Jay might be able to talk to this one more.

40 **MR MORROW:** Yes. Thanks, Jordan, I'm happy to talk to that a little bit further. So, basically, Council receives applications through the NHVR portal for OSOM loads. And effectively, because the proponent had a DA condition that basically dictated their travel path to and from site for their OSOM movements, it left the proponent with little option but to seek a modification to the DA after Council reviewed it. Because the structures couldn't take the loading, particularly of the transformers over the bridges.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you.

MR KIRK: And our final point was just on the voluntary –

5 **MR LOBSEY:** Sorry. I'll just add – Sam Lobsey just adding to that a little bit. Recognising with a flexible-type condition that that can have – generally be a little bit complicated if it hasn't been advertised or exhibited, in terms of the haulage route, to other properties.

10 So, if there's an exhibition of a development and that changes post consent, we do recognise that potentially has complications if you're then changing the haulage route in another way. But what we're flagging is only a couple of those really heavy movements only, So, the example that we're currently managing is, I think it's only two of the really heavy actual routes – that's right, isn't it, Jay?

15 **MR MORROW:** Yes, that's correct, Sam. It's really the transformer loads. So, apart from the transformers, generally our bridge structures can cater for the loading. But those transformers are very, very heavy duty.

20 **MR CHILCOTT:** Do you have a number that you're working to that says if it's over this many tonne, then it needs to go via an alternate route. Is there that level of clarity at the moment?

25 **MR MORROW:** It's difficult to actually do that, because it depends on the vehicle configuration and the axle loadings, which Council don't actually receive until it comes through the NHVR portal.

30 **MR CHILCOTT:** Right. But there's not a predictive set of weight dynamics or length dynamics that you can identify that would help already to guide decision making and potential conditions?

MR MORROW: Yes, absolutely, and it also relates to bridge structures and design errors. So, whether it's a T44 or an SM1600 bridge structure as well.

35 **MR CHILCOTT:** Are you able to provide some of that information to the Commission through Council's next correspondence?

MR MORROW: Yes. Just to clarify exactly what the Commission would like to see?

40 **MR CHILCOTT:** What I'm asking is that what you seem to be anticipating is that there are several loads with transformers for this project, which are going to be similar to the Calala BESS project, and which will confront exactly the same circumstances of needing an alternate route. That is a predictable thing, and if one can predict it and one can specify the circumstances in which that needs to happen, we can then have a series
45 of discussions with the potential outcome we can in some form incorporate that requirement proactively rather than leaving it post approval, it's something that may need to be dealt with, with the risk that it may get overlooked.

MR MORROW: Yes, we can definitely do that.

PROF TAYLOR: Could I just seek as clarification. You're talking about high-risk heavy vehicles requiring escort?

5 **MR MORROW:** Yes, effectively, yes. Over-size/over-mass vehicles that would be done under escort. That is correct.

PROF TAYLOR: So, as you say, under B4 you have no capacity as you do for other heavy vehicles to develop an alternate route. So, if you could tie it in with the proposed
10 recommendation and what you might see as a way forward around that, that might be useful.

MR MORROW: Yes.

15 **PROF TAYLOR:** I think it's B4.

MR CHILCOTT: Yes. I'd rather it not be left vague if it's actually a predictable thing.

20 **PROF TAYLOR:** Yes. Yes.

MR CHILCOTT: Let's try and deal with it, and if there are implications as you've identified for people being away of the circumstance, that's also a matter we'd need to consider.

25 **PROF TAYLOR:** Mm-hm.

MR MORROW: Yes, noted.

30 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thank you.

MR KIRK: And our final point was just in relation to the VPA arrangements. As you would have seen in the Department's report, they've included the letter that Council has received, a letter of offer. In that letter of offer, the Proponent's proposed that
35 Council will receive 85% of the benefit sharing value and the remaining 15% will go into a community benefit fund.

In the current – just for your reference, the Council's currently updating its VPA policy for renewable energy projects. And as a part of that, we are looking at other councils, especially in the Central West Orana region and how they've managed their VPAs. And what they tend to do is they've been receiving 100% of the benefit sharing value and foregoing the community benefit fund. Just to avoid the administration strain of the number of projects that are going on in those regions, those councils would have
40 multiple community benefit funds to manage.

45 So, it kind of saves the time for council as well as councils view themselves as being best placed as the place manager of the region to be able to know where the funds would be best utilised. And if we could pull the 100% of the funds into one fund rather than having 15% and 85%, Council sees that as would be beneficial to the community.

So, part of Council's recommendations would be to allow some flexibility within the consent to be able to still have those negotiations with the Proponent around that 15%.

5 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you for that. Can I just ask in relation to that, Council's not seeking to impose section 711 type condition in relation to this. I noted that there was a – in I think your first submission, some wording to do with, you know, if it doesn't live up to this level, then the balance might be imposed with a 711 condition.

10 Within our consent powers, our jurisdiction, we are unable to impose a condition requiring a VPA. We do have power to impose 711 conditions. We can acknowledge the existence of VPAs and their status within our statement of reasons, but that's largely the extent to which we're able to deal with the matter.

15 **MR KIRK:** Yes. So, we would be looking to enter into a VPA agreement with the Proponent and the negotiations as to how that is structured is still ongoing. But we have no concerns that that won't be able to be confirmed with the Proponent.

20 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. I think we note what you say and whilst an enquiry may be possible, it's not something within how we have any basis to enforce.

MR KIRK: Yes. Thank you.

25 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you. Elizabeth, can I seek any comments from you in relation to that?

PROF TAYLOR: No.

30 **MR CHILCOTT:** No. And Tahlia/Geoff, do you want to make any observations, just from an administrative point of view on that?

MS TAHLIA HUTCHINSON: There are none from me. Thanks, Michael.

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

MR MORROW: Sorry, Commissioner. I was just going to ask one other question, if that's okay?

40 **MR CHILCOTT:** Sorry, is that –

MR MORROW: It's Jay.

45 **MR CHILCOTT:** Yes, sorry, Mr Morrow, yes.

MR MORROW: Yes. I was just going to ask, with respect to defects and maintenance bonds, just the Commission's history and experience with how other councils actually deal with that. Because Orana is a perfect example where there's multiple projects

going at once, and it's very difficult to pinpoint which truck or which vehicle actually damaged the road pavement during the course of each development.

5 I'm just wondering whether the Commission's got any comments about maintenance bonds and defects liability with respect to council assets such as roads.

MR CHILCOTT: Look, it's not one I'm in a position to offer an immediate response on. I suspect my colleagues may be in a similar position, I'll give them the opportunity, but it's one on which I'd take advice from the broader Commission secretariat, and maybe in a position to provide some response. But I'm not able to provide that at this point.

10 I'll just check in with Geoff first, Geoff Kwok, whether you have any comment on that?

15 **MR GEOFF KWOK:** Nothing further to add at the moment. It's something that the Department has provided advice on in the past, because this is something that has been raised for other projects. But that's – yes, we can do some work in the background and touch base with you separately and let you know what we've received in terms of a response on that matter, for other projects.

20 **MR CHILCOTT:** Thanks. And Tahlia, I don't know if you want to add anything to what Geoff said?

25 **MS HUTCHINSON:** Geoff covered it, all good. Thanks, Michael.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you. And Elizabeth, any observation from you?

30 **PROF TAYLOR:** None from me.

MR CHILCOTT: No, all right, thank you. So, those are your matters. I think your most recent submission dealt largely with transport related matters and you've dealt significantly with transport related matters. Is there anything outstanding beyond the matters you've raised today?

35 **MR KIRK:** No, nothing additional, nothing additional to what we've raised in the submission and brought up today.

40 **MR CHILCOTT:** Anything in the submission that remains unresolved that you'd like to draw our attention to? Particularly given the draft conditions or the recommended conditions that have come through by Planning which you may not have previously addressed.

45 **MR KIRK:** My only other point would be just in relation to workers accommodation. A dedicated accommodation camp wasn't part of the Proponent's submission. However, it's something that Council has concern on due to the cumulative impact of all the projects that are happening in our region. We're conscious that all these projects, if they nominate to use our accommodation assets such as motels and hotels,

it could adversely impact our tourism and event economy which Tamworth heavily relies on and it's part of our regional brand.

5 So, just to have a mechanism in place for Council to be able to have to sign off the Proponent's accommodation and strategies, so we can maintain that it won't negatively impact our tourism economy. That would be my only point.

10 **MR CHILCOTT:** Noting that Tamworth is an extraordinarily popular place obviously, and notwithstanding it does have some significant peaks as well. I think there are people passing through all year, but there's certain peaks. Is your concern at the peaks, or is your concern at the base?

15 **MR KIRK:** It's probably – we have 16 to 18 other projects currently in the pipeline, and our concern is if they were to all come online as a similar project and their construction timeline, which a lot of the construction timelines for these projects is relatively unclear. If they were to all come at once, it would be adversely negative impact to our tourism economy.

20 So, for larger projects such as solar farms and wind farms, we now have been taking the position that there should be a dedicated workers accommodation facility as a part of their application. For BESS's such as this, it's not as much as a concern, but if there was an overlap with particularly high periods of tourism events, such as the Country Music Festival, we would like a mechanism in place that allows us to – if they're using accommodation assets, have tools down during that week or two-week period, so
25 they're not using our accommodation assets which would minimise the tourism population coming through.

MR CHILCOTT: And notwithstanding – oh sorry, yes, please say further comments.

30 **MR LOBSEY:** Yes, I might just add to that, it's Sam again. When we've had recent conversations with what we want to see in the accommodation strategies, we've requested that they look into where other projects are up to in terms of their timelines, so we can get a good idea on the timeline of that particular project versus the timelines of others.

35 And that helps us then match that up with our events schedule for the year. Now, we do have peaks, certainly we've just had one, and a very big one. But we do have a lot of other events and conferences and things throughout the year, and we're often looking for big events that occur throughout the year as well. And if we have an issue
40 where we have a long, sustained accommodation sort of problem in terms of construction workers sort of booking out accommodation for long stretches of time, we might be falling into some problems of, say, trying to get a large event.

45 So, say for example, last year, we had the Indigenous rugby event, the Kouri Knockout, which we happened to have it organised on a particular weekend where we knew that that accommodation would be available. And so, when we apply for grant funding for those sorts of events, we want to be certain that we don't have a problem in the future if we do have a bunch of these projects up and running where we just won't be able to supply a sufficient amount of accommodation.

5 So, that's just an example of the thought process we have around the cumulative impacts of these projects on Tamworth and, I guess, its tourism industry, which is very important. So, when we requested in the conditions of consent to include reference to other projects' timelines, which are often available on those websites, that they all have individual websites, that those particular accommodation strategies consider what that is. If that makes sense.

10 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you. Just in relation to other projects that you're currently dealing with and maybe in advance of this, do you have forms of words agreed and taken up in relation to the implementation of those projects within their workforce accommodation strategies that has helped to resolve this? Or are we in virgin territory still?

15 **MR LOBSEY:** I'm wondering, I'd have to go back and have a look, but I'm wondering whether the Middlebrook, the recent Middlebrook Solar Farm approval had specific words to that effect. But I can't remember, to be honest, but, yes, it has been raised previously, I think it might have been the Middlebrook development.

20 **MR CHILCOTT:** Okay, no, I was just wanting to get your input, and that's useful. You've identified a place that, from your perspective, we can go and examine and draw some potential lessons.

25 **MR LOBSEY:** We'll go back too and when we provide our further submission, we might add to that.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you.

30 **MR MORROW:** Just on that – sorry.

PROF TAYLOR: Sorry. After you.

35 **MR MORROW:** I was just going to add that that's with respect to tourism, but I'd also point out that resources within the region such as concrete, quarried materials and things like that would become quite scarce as well, if all these projects were to align at the same time. So, I think that's a wider spectrum response that – I don't think it's just related to tourism, so.

40 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. Thank you. It's helpful. Sorry, Elizabeth, you've got a comment.

45 **PROF TAYLOR:** Yes, I was just going to note, B45, that requirement for the accommodation and the employment strategy to be in consultation with you and that considering strategies to minimise the use of short-term accommodation during major events. So, are you seeing – are you suggesting it needs even further words because that doesn't capture the cumulative impact or ...

MR LOBSEY: Yes, it could be expanded upon to consider events and other significant projects within the region. So, it might not be just renewables, it could be

another large-scale commercial project that has a thousand workers going on at the same time. So, it's around, yes, maybe just expanding on that a little bit to not just the tourism events, it could be other major projects within the region.

5 **PROF TAYLOR:** Okay. Thank you.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

10 **MR KIRK:** And if I could add to that. If there was a mechanism that we would have to sign off the accommodation and employment strategy before construction begins, that would help us mitigate those risks as well and protect our assets.

15 **MR CHILCOTT:** So, that goes further than, I think, the condition that Elizabeth was referring to, which referred to consultation, which I agree would be a minimum and is currently proposed. You're seeking further than that at this point?

20 **MR KIRK:** Yes. If Council could have the mechanism that we would have to sign off their strategy beforehand, before construction begins, that would further protect our concerns.

25 **MR CHILCOTT:** All right. And if – so, I mean, thank you for putting that into both this conversation and into the written material that'll come forward. I think if one were to consider that in a substantive way, what would assist is the sorts of things that ought to be, that would satisfy you, that is, you know, it's a pretty broad power that you're seeking to have written in, that you have basically veto over that strategy. If there were in the case that you had, how that might be framed, so there was a target that might be identified, what would satisfy Council, that could be useful?

30 **MR KIRK:** Probably [cross-talk 00:40:44] ...

35 **MR CHILCOTT:** I'm not seeking necessarily to get that detail now. I'm just inviting you to apply your mind to it. If that's the sort of thing you're seeking to proposed. I just observe that it is a significant power over a key piece of documentation and thinking that the Applicant is required to prepare but making it subject to a Council sign off without indications as to what might satisfy Council, I think could be quite a challenge.

40 **MR LOBSEY:** Yes, look, I can understand that. I think it's just ensuring that the condition is worded so that the consultation, there is a response to that consultation from Council provided. It's not just, "we've sent it to Council and that's it." There needs to be a "send to Council and allow time for Council to provide its comments and maybe have a little bit of a conversation with the developer around that strategy." Just to ensure that the consultation is not just, "Here you go, this is what we're doing," and then the next day it's all ticked off and done. Does that make sense? So –

45 **MR CHILCOTT:** Yes, I think we understand what you're looking at there. And again, I just invite you to think about forms of words that you'd like us to consider explicitly, and options for that, would be, I think, useful beyond simply a broad request that we be the sign-off authority.

MR LOBSEY: Yes, no, that's understandable.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. Are those all the points from Council's side?

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MR KIRK: Yes.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you. Elizabeth, just so you know, from my side, we've addressed the points I would have had to ask questions on the way through that discussion. Do you have residual questions you'd like to pose at this point?

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PROF TAYLOR: Yes, I do. A couple of areas that you mentioned in your second last letter regarding waste and decommissioning. I just wanted to seek your input on whether you are now comfortable that the conditions meet the, or sort of address the concerns you had about waste.

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The commissioning, I have raised an issue that seems to be reflected in yours, regarding the fact that the decommissioning and site sort of removal only goes to a depth of 500 millimetres. And I just have queried that, so I'm not quite sure whether you had any other issues around the decommissioning. But they were – and water was another one which you had raised. So, are they all now to your satisfaction addressed by the conditions?

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MR LOBSEY: I haven't looked at that decommissioning condition yet. I would say from a decommissioning point of view, it's around some sort of – having some sort of validation clearance at the end of the project at the end of the decommissioning, that there isn't any remaining contaminants on the site.

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So, if a 500 mils scrape of the site would satisfy that and there's a clearance certificate that validates that the site is no longer contaminated in some way, then that might be fine. But how can we be certain if there's no testing or that sort of thing happening?

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So, if you want to expand on that further from that point of view, it might be around having post-decommissioning testing done of the site, regardless of what level of scraping or clearing they need to do.

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PROF TAYLOR: Oh, well, this was that they didn't need to remove anything underground that was buried at depths greater than 500 millimetres. So, I'll just take that on – I mean, this is more a conversation, you may already be comfortable.

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The other issue perhaps is water, because water of course is something that is of – that's of interest to rural communities. And the whole water licence use of the bore, use of your resources, are you comfortable that there is a mechanism now in place for that conversation to occur with the Applicant?

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MR KIRK: Yes, so they're going to be using the bore, our concern would be that it would impact the neighbouring properties' access to water as well, using that bore. But if they were proposing to gain licences directly from Tamworth Regional Council, if

that would to adversely impact our water supply, we would not be issuing any licences and they would have to port water in.

PROF TAYLOR: Thank you.

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MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. Anything further, Elizabeth?

PROF TAYLOR: No, no, not at this point.

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MR CHILCOTT: All right. Thank you. And from Council, that completes your input?

MR KIRK: Yes, that's correct.

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MR CHILCOTT: Great, thanks. I'll just check in with Geoff Kwok and Tahlia Hutchinson whether either of them has matters that we need to raise, noting that we will be out in Tamworth on, is it Wednesday next week, to do a site view and do some inspections of both the area and some receiver properties. But, Geoff/Tahlia?

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MR KWOK: Nothing from me, Michael, thank you.

MS HUTCHINSON: And nothing from me, thanks Michael, just that the information you've given us today in writing would be really helpful, if you could put that in a submission so we can make sure that we've addressed all your concerns.

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MR CHILCOTT: Thank you. Is there a timeframe, Tahlia, that we should be agreeing with Council for provision of that, that fits in with – noting we've got certain KPIs and timelines to work to.

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MS HUTCHINSON: So, public submissions close on the 10th of February, which is after our visit next week. But the sooner you have it prepared, I would appreciate that.

MR KIRK: No problem.

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MR CHILCOTT: So, ASAP, but no later than the 10th is what I'm hearing, Tahlia.

MS HUTCHINSON: Correct.

MR CHILCOTT: All right. Nothing further, Tahlia?

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MS HUTCHINSON: No, that's all. Thanks, Michael.

MR CHILCOTT: All right, well, look, gentlemen, thank you all for attending this afternoon and providing the insights you have, I very much appreciate that, it's an important part of the process for us. So, as I say, we'll be out in Tamworth next Wednesday roaming through your territory, so thank you very much for your assistance.

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MR KIRK: Thank you very much.

MR SPICER: Thanks, everyone.

5 **MR MORROW:** Thank you.

MR CHILCOTT: Thank you.

PROF TAYLOR: Thank you.

10 **>THE MEETING CONCLUDED**