



## **TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING**

RE: BULLAWAH WIND FARM (SSD-50505215)

### **HAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING**

|                    |                                                              |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| PANEL:             | NEAL MENZIES (Chair)<br>SUELLEN FITZGERALD<br>MICHAEL WRIGHT |
| OFFICE OF THE IPC: | JANE ANDERSON<br>GEOFF KWOK                                  |
| HAY SHIRE COUNCIL: | CAROL OATAWAY<br>DAVID WEBB<br>ALISON MCLEAN                 |
| LOCATION:          | ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE                                         |
| DATE & TIME:       | 9:00AM – 9:45PM<br>TUESDAY, 25 <sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2026     |

**<THE MEETING COMMENCED**

**MR NEAL MENZIES:** Hello, David.

5 **MR DAVID WEBB:** G'day, how are you going. Can you hear us?

**MR MENZIES:** We can hear you very well indeed.

10 **MR WEBB:** Thank you.

**MR MENZIES:** Who have we got in the room, David?

**MR WEBB:** I've got the Mayor Carol Oataway.

15 **CR CAROL OATAWAY:** Hi, hello.

**MR MENZIES:** Welcome. We weren't sure whether you were joining us, so this is at one level an unexpected pleasure. Thanks for committing the time.

20 **CR OATAWAY:** Oh well, thank you.

**MR WEBB:** Now, we've got the Mayor and I've got – I'm expecting one of your Executive Managers, Alison McLean, will join in a second, and Jack Terblance is unfortunately now an apology. And then we did have a couple of other councillors that  
25 said they would join but time will tell whether they join.

**MR MENZIES:** Alison's joined us. Hello, Alison.

30 **MS ALISON MCLEAN:** Hello Neal, how are you?

**MR MENZIES:** Yes, I'm really well, thanks. We might just give the other councillors a minute or two to join us.

35 **MR WEBB:** Sure. Yes.

**MR MENZIES:** And I can ask you, when I come to Hay in a week's time, am I going to need my cold weather gear, as a Queenslander?

40 **CR OATAWAY:** Oh, no, I think the weather won't be too bad. Well, as a Queenslander, yes. But I think we're heading towards our spring weather.

**MR MENZIES:** Beautiful.

45 **MR WEBB:** Bring your wet weather gear, just in case.

**CR OATAWAY:** Yes.

**MR MENZIES:** Yes, I've turned up to a few things where my Queensland brain says, you know, "Take a long-sleeved shirt and you'll be right, Neal." And I get there and

the New South Wales team have got heavy woollen clothes and big heavy raincoats, and I go, whoops, [cross-talk 00:01:50] to bring cold and damp. Anyway.

**CR OATAWAY:** Yes. We've had a bit of rain lately, which has been good.

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**MR MENZIES:** We might kick off. So, the formal process – there is a formal process here which is I'm going to start by reading out a formal statement that the Commission guys have prepared for me. And then we move to whatever presentation you want to make, and a much less formal approach of questions backwards and forwards and teasing out what you want to tell us. So, I'll start by reading that formal statement and then we'll flick back to our informal mode.

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So, good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I'd like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you from the land of the Jagera and Turrbal peoples here in the Brisbane River Valley. I acknowledge the traditional owners of all of the lands from which we're virtually meeting today, and I pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

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Welcome to the meeting today to discuss the Bullawah Wind Farm state significant development application currently before the Commission for determination. The Applicant, BayWa r.e. Projects Australia Pty Ltd, proposes to develop a wind farm with an electricity generation capacity of 804 megawatts in the South West Renewable Energy Zone.

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The project site is approximately 28 kilometres southeast of Hay and extends across three local government areas – Hay Shire, Edward River, and Murrumbidgee. The project involves construction of up to 141 turbines with a maximum tip height of 300 metres, a 359-megawatt/718-megawatt-hour battery energy storage system, transmission connection, and ancillary infrastructure.

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My name is Neal Menzies. I'm the Chair of this Commission Panel and I'm joined by my fellow commissioners, Suellen Fitzgerald and Michael Wright. And we're also joined by Jane Anderson and Geoff Kwok from the office of the Independent Planning Commission.

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In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure 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.

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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 are not in a position to answer, you may take the question on notice. Following the meeting, the Commission will advise you in writing of any questions taken on notice that the Panel considers require a formal response. Any subsequent response or information provided to the Commission will then be published on our website.

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I request that all participants 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.

5 So, we may now begin. And let's formally go around the room and introduce ourselves as a way to kick this off. And given that I can see all the pictures, I'm going to call the order of things. Suellen, do you want to start?

10 **MS SUELLEN FITZGERALD:** Let me just get off mute. Good morning everybody, pleased to meet you.

**MR MENZIES:** And Michael?

15 **MR MICHAEL WRIGHT:** Likewise. Good morning.

**MR MENZIES:** Jane?

**MS JANE ANDERSON:** Good morning, everyone. Jane Anderson, office of the IPC.

20 **MR MENZIES:** And Geoff?

**MR GEOFF KWOK:** Morning, everyone.

25 **MR MENZIES:** Councillor Ottaway, I'm going to hand over – Oataway – I'm going to hand over to you to take control of the Council team and the presentation.

30 **CR OATAWAY.** Okay. I'm Carol Oataway. I'm the Mayor of Hay Shire Council and I've got David Webb, the General Manager in the room with me, and Alison McLean who is the Executive Manager – Tourism and Economic Development. Okay, now my turn to go?

**MR MENZIES:** Yes, you're in control.

35 **CR OATAWAY:** Okay. Thank you. Chair and commissioners, thank you for the opportunity to address the Independent Planning Commission on behalf of Hay Shire Council regarding the Bullawah Wind Farm proposal. I am Carol Oataway, Mayor of Hay Shire Council.

40 Council's position is straight forward. Hay Shire Council supports the Bullawah Wind Farm and supports the transition to renewable energy within the South West Renewable Energy Zone. We recognise the significant economic and employment opportunities that renewable energy development can provide to regional communities, and we want to see these projects proceed. However, support for the project does not mean that Council should accept unreasonable or unmanaged impacts on local  
45 infrastructure, services and the community.

Council's submission is therefore focused on ensuring that the conditions of consent provide appropriate safeguards and that the costs and risks associated with the development are not transferred to Hay Shire Council and its ratepayers. I will focus

on the key matters identified by the Commission, with particular emphasis on transport and cumulative impacts.

Commissioners, our principal concern remains the impact of the construction traffic on the local road network, and particularly Jerilderie Road. Council acknowledges the additional information provided by the Proponent and amended traffic impact assessment. We also acknowledge the Proponent's willingness to prepare a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan in consultation with Council – that is a positive development. However, Council does not agree with the conclusion that the existing road network can accommodate the proposal's construction traffic without significant upgrades.

Our concern is not primarily about the movement of an oversize wind turbine component; our concern is the much greater volume of conventional heavy vehicles required to construct the project. These are the trucks carrying gravel, aggregates, concrete materials, reinforcing steel, structural steel, plant, equipment, and other construction materials. It is these repeated heavy vehicle movements that for an extended period that will generate the majority of the cumulative axle loading on our roads. And this is particularly important when Bullawah is considered alongside the other renewable energy projects proposed across the South West REZ.

Council's engineering assessment is that Jerilderie Road does not have sufficient structural capacity to sustainably accommodate the anticipated construction traffic in its current condition. This is not simply a matter of whether a B-double can physically travel along the road; the question is whether the existing pavement can withstand the volume, frequency and loading of those vehicles over a construction period of approximately three years without premature structural deterioration.

Council has undertaken significant work through its South West REZ Roads Management Plan to understand the condition and capacity of the local road network. That work identified low strength subgrades and relatively thin pavement structures on Jerilderie Road. The geotechnical information indicates granular pavement thicknesses ranging from approximately 110 millimetres to 330 millimetres, with an average of approximately 236 millimetres. This is materially less than the approximately 300 millimetres assumed in the Aurecon assessment.

The existing pavement is also substantially different from a modern engineered pavement constructed with high-quality dense graded base material. Council therefore does not consider that theoretical ESA calculations based on assumptions about the existing pavement are sufficient to demonstrate that the road is suitable to the proposed loading.

There is also a fundamental issue with the interpretation of pavement life. Council does not accept the repeated reference to a 20-year pavement design life as the basis for assessing the impact of this development. The 20-year period relates to the wearing surface or seal. It is not the structural life of the pavement. The issue before us is whether the structural pavement can accommodate the additional axle loading without premature failure.

Council welcomes the Proponent's commitment to proactive maintenance, dilapidation surveys and wet weather controls, but maintenance is not a substitute for adequate pavement capacity. Maintenance can repair a defect; it cannot restore structural capacity that was never sufficient for the imposed loading. Once repeated heavy axel loads cause fatigue, cracking, rutting, sheer failure, or edge deterioration, simply patching or re-sealing the surface does not restore the underlying pavement structure.

This is why Council considers that the current proposed approach places too much reliance on identifying and repairing damage after it occurs. Our preferred approach is preventative. If the road is not structurally capable of carrying the anticipated construction traffic, it should be upgraded before that traffic commences.

Council therefore requests that the conditions of consent require the necessary assessment, design and upgrade of Jerilderie Road before major development related construction traffic begins. The scope of the upgrade should be determined through appropriate engineering assessment and in consultation with Council. The Council's Road Management Plan identifies a minimum seal width of 7.2 metres as an appropriate standard.

The second transport issue I want to highlight is the proposed restriction on heavy vehicles turning right from the Cobb Highway into Jerilderie Road. Council considers the current proposal to require heavy vehicles to continue through Hay and use the Sturt Highway – Cobb Highway roundabout to access Jerilderie Road to be unnecessarily inefficient. If significant construction traffic is travelling from the south requiring those vehicles to travel through Hay urban area, creates additional heavy vehicle movements, congestion, and interaction with local traffic and vulnerable road users. There is a potentially more direct route available, that is, a right turn from the Cobb Highway directly into Jerilderie Road. Council is not suggesting that this should occur without proper engineering and safety assessment. We are asking that it should be properly assessed. It should also be considered in the context of other renewable energy projects, including Pottinger, rather than each project being considered in isolation. A coordinated solution may provide a safer and more efficient outcome for the community by reducing unnecessary travel and project costs.

Council supports the requirement for a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan. We also request that Council and the relevant local road authorities be expressly included in the consultation on the TMP. Council is the authority responsible for a significant proportion of the roads what will ultimately carry this traffic. Our involvement therefore needs to be more than notification after decisions have been made.

Council also seeks stronger and more objective arrangements for road maintenance. We are concerned about terms such as "normal wear and tear", which can be subjective and difficult to apply where an existing pavement is already experiencing deterioration.

Council supports pre-construction and post-construction dilapidation surveys. However, we also request intermediate condition surveys, preferably every six months, and more frequently during peak construction or wet weather periods. The objective should be early intervention.

Council also requests that the maintenance obligations be supported by a formal agreement with the relevant road authority and appropriate financial security. Council should not be placed in a position where it has to fund repairs and then attempt to recover those costs after the event. The principle is simple; the development should pay for the infrastructure impacts that it creates.

Commissioners, the use of cumulative impacts is particularly important to Hay Shire. Bullawah is not occurring in isolation. There are multiple renewable energy projects proposed across the region, together with other major infrastructure projects. The local road network is therefore likely to experience overlapping construction programs and significantly increased heavy vehicle movements over a number of years. Council's concern is that if each project is assessed independently, each proponent may conclude that its individual contribution is manageable. But the road pavement does not operate on a project-by-project basis. The same section of road can be used by multiple projects. The impacts therefore accumulate.

Council's South West REZ Road Management Plan was developed specifically to address this issue. We strongly encourage the Commission to recognise the plan as an important reference point for managing the cumulative impact of renewable energy development on the local road network. We also encourage coordination between the proponents, Council, Transport for NSW, EnergyCo and the Department regarding construction scheduling, traffic routes, road upgrades and maintenance.

Council generally supports the proposed emergency management mitigation measures. Our principal request is that Council and the Local Emergency Management Committee are properly involved where development-related emergency arrangements interact with local emergency management responsibilities. This is particularly important for flood and bushfire planning.

The site emergency management arrangements should be developed and reviewed in consultation with the Local Emergency Management Committee and where appropriate, the NSW Rural Fire Service and other emergency service agencies. The objective is not to create unnecessary additional processes; it is to ensure that the project's emergency arrangements are compatible with local arrangements and that there is clarity about responsibilities, communications, access, and available resources.

Council has no fundamental objection to the proposed waste management arrangements. However, if Council's waste facilities are to be used by the project, Council requires a formal waste management agreement with the Proponent. Council has already prepared a draft agreement. We would also welcome discussions with the Proponent regarding opportunities to use local waste management and resource recovery services, where appropriate. This provides opportunity for the project to generate additional local economic benefits while ensuring waste is managed in accordance with Council's requirements.

Council recognises the significant potential economic benefits of the Bullawah Project. Renewable energy development provides opportunities for local contractors, accommodation providers, businesses and workers. However, the scale of development

also has the potential to place a pressure on accommodation, local services, roads, emergency services, and community infrastructure. Council therefore considers that the economic benefits and infrastructure impacts need to be considered together. We want the local community to capture as much of the economic development as possible – benefit as possible – while ensuring that the infrastructure and services required to support the development are not disproportionately funded by the local ratepayer or impact business-as-usual, that is, tourism.

Council recognises the importance of the biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage matters associated with the project. Council’s position is that the relevant mitigation measures and statutory requirements should be appropriately implemented and monitored. We particularly recognise the importance of protecting Plains-wanderer habitat and ensuring that Aboriginal cultural heritage is managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and in consultation with the appropriate traditional custodians and stakeholders.

Council has not sought to duplicate the specialist assessment undertaken by the Proponent, and development in these areas. Our focus has been on ensuring that the conditions provide an appropriate framework for implementation and compliance.

There is one broader issue that Council would like the Commission to consider. Council is often the government authority most accessible to residents and businesses in the Hay community. When something goes wrong on a major development, residents frequently contact Council first. Council therefore considers it important that there is clear compliance and complaints framework identifying who is responsible for compliance, who receives and investigates complaints, how complaints are escalated, how incidents are communicated to Council, and when Council and other relevant authorities are required to be notified.

Similarly, where management plans, construction schedules, emergency arrangements or other strategies change in a way that affects Council or the community, Council should be consulted or notified as appropriate.

Council has provided the Commission with detailed proposed amendments to the recommended conditions. I will not take the Commission through every amendment today, however, there are several matters we consider particularly important:

- First, Jerilderie Road should be expressly addressed in the conditions, including a requirement for the necessary upgrade to be completed before development-related construction traffic commences.
- Second, the Traffic Management Plan should be prepared in consultation with Council and should address all significant heavy vehicle movements rather than focusing primarily on over-size/over-mass traffic.
- Third, road maintenance and monitoring obligations should be strengthened, including regular dilapidation surveys and clear performance criteria.
- Fourth, the Commission should provide sufficient flexibility to address additional roads or infrastructure identified during construction, rather than limiting the Proponent to a pre-determined list.



- Fifth, the proposed restriction on the right turn from Cobb Highway into Jerilderie Road should be reconsidered following an appropriate traffic engineering assessment.
- And finally, Emergency Management Plans should be developed in consultation with Council, the LEMC, and relevant emergency services.

Commissioners, Hay Shire Council supports the Bullawah Wind Farm. We support the renewable energy transition. We support the economic opportunities that the project can provide to our community and the region. Our concerns are not about whether the project should proceed, they are about how it proceeds. Council's responsibility is to protect the community's infrastructure and ensure that development does not leave a legacy cost to local ratepayers.

Our principal concern is Jerilderie Road. Based on Council's engineering assessment, the existing pavement should not simply be assumed to be capable of carrying sustained heavy construction traffic for several years. We therefore ask the Commission to strengthen the conditions so that:

1. The necessary assessment and upgrade of Jerilderie Road is completed before major construction traffic commences;
2. The Traffic Management Plan comprehensively addresses all heavy vehicle movements on all affected roads;
3. A potential for a direct right turn from the Cobb Highway into Jerilderie Road is properly assessed;
4. Road condition is monitored throughout construction, and deterioration attributable to the project is promptly rectified;
5. The Proponent bears the reasonable cost of infrastructure impacts attributable to the development;
6. Cumulative impacts from other renewable energy and major infrastructure projects are actively coordinated; and
7. Council and local emergency management authorities are appropriately involved in transport, emergency management, waste, and other matters that directly affect the Hay community.

Council is committed to working constructively with the Proponent, the Department, EnergyCo, Transport for NSW, and the Commission. We believe the Bullawah Wind Farm can proceed while also protecting the Hay community, its road network and its infrastructure. Council respectfully requests that the Commission incorporate the amendments proposed in Council's submission, into the final conditions of consent.

Thank you, Chair and commissioners. I am happy to respond to any questions.

**MR MENZIES:** Thank you. Thank you very much. That was beautifully clear. Thanks for the structured presentation. And look, thanks for the Council's submission as well which was equally clear in the way that it expressed your concerns. We had – Michael had raised the Jerilderie Road question. We, you know, from the documentation that we have, it wasn't clear that that was satisfactorily resolved with

the Council. And your explanation just now has answered that question for us but also given the depth of understanding that we need, you know, the thickness of pavement is not something I've spent a lot of time thinking about, but obviously a council does, and the numbers tell the whole story there.

Look, one of the things I'm a little bit intrigued by, and it's not strictly about approval of this wind farm, although obviously related. Mayor, your investment in waste recycling is interesting, and the nature of agreement that you want to reach with the Applicant. What sort of things do you have to resolve with them? Is this about the types of waste that you'll accept and the types of waste that you won't accept – is that the sort of nature of discussion you need to have?

**CR OATAWAY:** I might hand that over to the General Manager who is all across waste. I'm a little bit across it but not to the extent that you require. So, he'll be able to give a clearer explanation.

**MR MENZIES:** Thank you.

**MR WEBB:** Thanks Mayor, thanks Mr Commissioner. So, we've just built a resource recovery park and we can separate [K-nickel? 00:26:50] waste, we can take different waste streams, and we're happy to take in all their waste streams and working with them. The agreement is about what's that charge that we would charge them for them, how we're going to manage that, so that's what the agreement talks about.

We are open for business. We've got the capacity. We've got the know-how. We've got the will to do it. It's more about how we can just work together so they're not trying to truck waste away to some other place. So, reducing their disposal costs as well and try and make some efficiencies, but also then do the circular economy principles where we can then re-process that waste at our facility to then be re-used in other construction activities locally. So, that's what it's all about. We're open to talk to them, and the agreement's about how we can best manage that, that's all.

**MR MENZIES:** Yes, okay, David, thank you very much, that's brilliant. Look, I think it's a really excellent way that the Council's able to increase the amount of local economic benefit that's happening. It's absolutely a win in every direction, so more power to the Council for doing it.

**MR WEBB:** Thank you.

**MR MENZIES:** Let's quickly go around the room. Michael, do you want to jump in?

**MR WRIGHT:** Yes, thanks Neal. And thank you, Mayor and David for that presentation. As Neal said, it was really excellent, excellent information for us as we go forward with this assessment process.

With the Cobb Highway right-hand turn, I would need to go back and have a look at some of the Transport for NSW material. My recollection is that Transport for NSW weren't supportive of that right-hand turn; is that correct? I can certainly understand why Hay Shire Council would want that right-hand turn in place to prevent those

OSOM vehicles transiting through Hay and then making a left turn into Jerilderie. But Mayor or David, do you have any other information you can – yes.

5 **MR WEBB:** I can answer that, Commissioner Wright. So, the Transport – well, no, they weren't particularly supportive of it, but the issue that Council had was that we don't believe it was assessed, and we raised that several times with the Department, and saying that we believe it should be assessed.

10 Because we think it's unreasonable for traffic to have to travel past that intersection, go another 5 kilometres into town, go through our big roundabout in an urban area to come back out again to turn left. There's plenty of room there that could build an intersection, in my engineering experience, that you could make that work. So, it's not so much they were against it, it wasn't chiefly assessed, in my view, properly.

15 **MR WRIGHT:** Yes. So, that would require a channelised right-hand turn there?

20 **MR WEBB:** Absolutely, yes. So, they'd have to upgrade the intersection, channelise the right-hand turn, so that ... They're going to put a channelised left-hand turn in, well, you do the same for right, and there's plenty of room there that you would be able to create at an intersection, it's flat, it's open, the sight distances are adequate, in my view, so I believe it can be done. It just hasn't been assessed fully to what we would expect or would have hoped.

25 **MR WRIGHT:** Okay. Thank you, David.

**MR MENZIES:** Suellen?

30 **MS FITZGERALD:** Yes, again, I agree with my fellow Commissioners, that you've made your issues very clear. And I was pleased to see that some of the issues that you raised in your earlier submissions to the Proponent have now come off the table, it appears. Being the concerns about engagement with the users of the Hay Aerodrome, is something I'm assuming Council is happy about now. Plus also, the question of IT and telecommunications as well. Mayor, are you able to confirm for us that those early issues have been successfully addressed by the Proponent?

35 **MR WEBB:** Would you like me to answer that, Madam Mayor?

**CR OATAWAY:** Yes, please.

40 **MR WEBB:** Thanks, Commissioner Fitzgerald also. The aerodrome has definitely been addressed. They got additional advice – went back to their consultant, and my understanding is they had discussions with CASA and Air Services Australia. It was more about the notification period, which has been addressed in the updated documents, and also we were concerned about not lighting of the turbines, which  
45 they've admitted to putting some lighting in, even though they're deemed light, which is fine. So, I believe the aerodrome issues have been addressed.

In terms of the telecommunications, that's a very difficult one for them to address. We acknowledge that it's really hard for the Proponent to be able to do anything there, so

we sort of – we'll just keep working with them. It's a problem across our region and our community anyway regardless of their development. So, we see that as something we'll just keep working our way through with the Proponent and the Federal Government and everyone else that's involved in that sort of connectivity space.

**MS FITZGERALD:** Mm-hm. Yes, thanks for that, David. I also, I mean, having just come back from the Flinders Ranges myself, I'm very conscious of the implications for flooding as well in this area. Is that part of your concerns around road pavements and road conditions as well? Is it a major issue, I suppose I'm wondering, for the Hay Shire?

**MR WEBB:** Would you like me to answer that, Madam Mayor?

**CR OATAWAY:** Yes, please.

**MR WEBB:** Yes, so, no, flooding is a major concern for us. Jerilderie Road does flood in some – it doesn't have to be, it can be a moderate event, it doesn't have to be a major event. So, there is concerns there around flooding of roads. But it's also not just flooding; a prolonged wet period will cause problems for the road network in terms of the edges get soft, and once you get your edges soft and these big trucks run off the side of the road, that's where water ingresses in under the pavement. As you'll see in our full submission, there's more detail around that. And that's of more concern than the flooding itself.

If the flood – yes, flooding's a problem, the Cobb can get closed, the Sturt can get closed in major floods, and as I said, Jerilderie Road can flood in a few places as well. But we can't control the weather, so in terms of – there's not much we can do with that, but in terms of the impact of wet weather, there is concern there as the Mayor highlighted in her address.

**MS FITZGERALD:** Mm. Thanks, David. Thanks, Neal.

**MR MENZIES:** The other couple of things that I particularly noted, and eminently sensible things, the impact of the very large number of, I'm going to call them 'normal' semi-trailer movements that – we tend to concentrate on what are the difficulties of moving an 80-metre turbine blade rather than a hundred or a thousand truck movements just to move all the aggregate that's necessary to construct this. And linking that thought to it's far better to prevent damage, so Mayor I think you made the point really well that dilapidation surveys need to be regular and maybe even more regular than is proposed, in order to prevent damage. So, that was a point well made. And I understand, and I'm using that as a preface to my next comment, which I sort of understand but not fully.

The comment around the Council being the place where people bring their complaints. That completely makes sense to me. I'm not quite sure what you're asking for. So, people are going to bring their complaint to you. Are you wanting clarity in process for where that complaints should be directed to, you know, who you take things to? Because your people are going to come and complain to you.

**CR OATAWAY:** That's right. And I will hand over to the General Manager again. He's got a process in mind.

5 **MR WEBB:** Yes, so thanks Madam Mayor, so thanks Mr Chair. So, there's two issues with that. One issue is, yes, the process. So, if we do receive a complaint, who do we forward that onto, how do we manage that – we just need a clear understanding – and then who deals with it and how long does that take to get dealt with, because we will have to get back to the person to say, "We've passed it on, you can expect to be contacted in five days," or whatever the case may be. So, that was one aspect of what  
10 the comment we made.

The other aspect of the common we made is around the fact that under the current draft conditions of consent is the modifications, the change to working hours, and anything else around, or instances of notification all go to the Department and we're out of the  
15 loop. But we will no doubt find out about those, or people will come and complain to us, but we have no ears or eyes on anything that might be happening, we'll have to go and chase that information and then respond back to the person to us.

20 So, there's two aspects. So, one about us being involved, and managing the process with the Department or whoever, or EnergyCo, or whoever it might be. And the second bit is about being kept in the loop – if there is going to be a change in work aspects. Because we're the compliance authority for noise, but under the current conditions, as an example [unintelligible 00:36:37] go to the Department, the Planning Secretary can alter the working hours. But then we're not involved, it says there we don't get notified  
25 or anything, and so that's unfair of us who's the compliance authority or might receive a complaint about because they're not working on Sunday and they weren't supposed to, or something, as an example.

30 So, there's sort of two parts to that comment.

**MR MENZIES:** Yes, thank you, that's a really useful expansion of the idea. That's helped me a lot. The other area that I'm surprised hasn't come up, and this is probably a question for Alison. Well, Mayor, you did mention the importance of tourism for your business-as-usual, but you haven't really talked about whether there are particular  
35 concerns around this project and impact on tourism. Alison, were there things that the Council is worried about, that I'm missing?

**MS MCLEAN:** It's particularly around accommodation. So, we have, as we're on the Sydney–Adelaide route, we have very high occupancy rates; our motels run at about  
40 85%. Tourism accounts for about 56% of all of our economic activity, so it's a very vital economic – it has a very vital economic impact on the community, and provides a lot of multiplier effect through hospitality, fuel, accommodation.

45 What we don't want to see is, I know that Bullawah have an on-site accommodation camp, which is what we've always encouraged. What we are concerned around is the workforce that comes in before and after. So, to build the workers accommodation camp, you have to have workers come in to build that camp. What we don't want to see is tourism or the visitor economy pushed out of that accommodation, out of what you would call traditional tourism accommodation, to see high-vis move in, such that

when people do come to stay, the visitors come to stay in the area, they're unable to get accommodation and they move onto the next town. Once they do that, it's very hard to get them back again.

5 So, while there is some redundancy in our accommodation providers, yes, absolutely we want to see that go towards that workforce because it does provide a good level of income. But we don't want to see it at the expense of tourism.

10 The other issue for us is that we don't want to see – we have a very, very tight rental market in Hay. Last month there was only one rental that was available in the community.

**MR MENZIES:** Whoa.

15 **MS MCLEAN:** Yes, so what we don't want to see is what you would – yes, a normal sort of long-term rental being pushed into that short-term rental to meet this market. Because that again puts pressure on our availability of housing stock, and that has a longer-term impact than just that immediate construction timeframe. Because what we don't want to see is workers coming into the area to support primary production or  
20 tourism or actually the development of our business who will expand as a result of this, not being able to attract workers long term to be able to live in the area. And that's a concern already – we already have that problem in Hay; we don't want to see that exacerbated by that accommodation workforce.

25 **MR MENZIES:** Thanks, Alison. Once again, that's a really useful expansion of the idea. I had no idea that tourism was such an important driver of your economy; it's really considerable and needs to be protected.

30 Okay, that's all of my questions. Let me just go back around the room and make sure. Michael?

**MR WRIGHT:** Yes, Neal, just following up on your question to Alison there, and we talked about accommodation. But I'm just wondering, Alison, if Council has any concerns about demand for other services from not just the workforce building the  
35 accommodation camp but for the workers at the accommodation camp? It could be health services or other social services. Are there any issues about capacity to meet that additional demand?

40 **MS MCLEAN:** We had an experience. We had Project EnergyConnect had a 440-bed camp just to the south of town for 18 months, and we did not experience that. So, we didn't see that demand on health services. We did see economic activity, which was very beneficial for the community. But we didn't see that pressure on services.

45 **MR WRIGHT:** Okay.

**MS MCLEAN:** Having said that, that was one camp of 440, and we're looking at that cumulative impact where we have Pottinger, we'll have up to 700, and BayWA will have up to 250 for stage 1 – that's a significant amount of additional workers in the area who may then need to access those services, as opposed to what we experienced

with that first. What we do know is that they are looking at bringing in their own medical services, so a paramedic on call, a nurse practitioner on call, and we welcome that because it takes pressure off our already very stretched health services in Hay.

5 And in terms of other services, the social services, we didn't experience that with Project EnergyConnect. And I am aware that there are now programs that are implemented at the workers camps to address those sorts of issues.

**MR WRIGHT:** Okay, okay. Thank you, Alison.

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**MR MENZIES:** Suellen? No more from Suellen. All right. Jane, anything from you?

**MS ANDERSON:** Yes. Just a quick clarification, if you don't mind, Neal. Mayor Oataway and David, you referred to comments on the Department's recommended conditions, and you also referred to a submission. I just wanted to confirm that the Commission Panel can expect a submission from Council? And I just wanted to let you know that our submission period is open until the 8th of September.

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**CR OATAWAY:** Yes, we are [cross-talk 00:43:28].

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**MR WEBB:** Yes, so we're drafting a submission, Jane, and it's ready to go. We'll just wait till after the public hearing and then that'll be put in after the public hearing next week. So, yes, it's ready, you can expect one.

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**MS ANDERSON:** Thank you.

**MR MENZIES:** Brilliant. That's – it's always very useful. We've listened to what you've had to say, but when it comes to putting it down, the detail that you put in a written response can really be useful to us. Geoff, any last thing from you?

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**MR KWOK:** Nothing else from me, thanks Neal.

**MR MENZIES:** Okay. Well, it just remains for me to thank you for spending the time with us. It's certainly been useful to us as a Panel to get clarity of the Council's thinking on various of these issues. I particularly like our sessions with the councils because you really do provide that 'this is what we're feeling at the ground level, and this is the impact that it's going to have on the people that are surrounding us.' And that sort of, you know, and Mayor, you did it wonderfully, that balanced approach of, 'we can see these benefits, we can see those problems, and here's how we as a council are weighing it up'. That really is useful for us as we've got to think through this problem. So, thank you very much for the time you spent with us.

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**CR OATAWAY:** Thank you very much.

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**MR WEBB:** Thanks for the opportunity and the time. Thank you.

**MS MCLEAN:** Thank you.

**MR WRIGHT:** Thank you.

**MR MENZIES:** And we'll see you – well, we will be in Hay, we'll see your beautiful landscape in a week's time.

5      **MR WEBB:** You will. Thank you.

**CR OATAWAY:** You will.

10      **MR WEBB:** Bye, everyone, take care. Thanks, Ali.

**MS MCLEAN:** Thank you.

**>THE MEETING CONCLUDED**