



TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: BALDON WIND FARM (SSD-40138508)

EDWARD RIVER COUNCIL MEETING

PANEL:	MS JANETT MILLIGAN (Chair) DR SHERIDAN COAKES DR TURLOUGH GUERIN
OFFICE OF THE IPC:	KENDALL CLYDSDALE
EDWARD RIVER COUNCIL:	MARK DALZELL HARVEY MCKINNON ELLIE DANCKERT
LOCATION:	ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE
DATE & TIME:	1:00PM – 1:50PM TUESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2026

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MR MARK DALZELL: Good afternoon.

5 **MS JANETT MILLIGAN:** Well, good afternoon and welcome. Before we begin, I'd just like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you from Cammeraygal land, and I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the lands from which we're virtually meeting today, and I pay the respects to Elders past and present.

10 So, welcome to the meeting today to discuss the Baldon Wind Farm state significant development application, which is SSD-40138508, which is currently before the Commission for determination. The Applicant, Baldon Wind Farm Pty Ltd on behalf of Goldwind Capital Australia Pty Ltd, proposes to develop a wind farm with a capacity of up to around 1,400 megawatts located in the South West Renewable
15 Energy Zone.

The site's approximately 13 kilometres north of Moulamein. The majority of the project is within the Murray River local government area with the northern section of the project being in the Hay Shire local government area. Edward River Council local
20 government area is adjacent to the east of the project.

The project involves the development of up to 175 turbines across two stages; 46 turbines in Stage 1 and 129 turbines in Stage 2, with a maximum tip height of 300 metres, a 200-megawatt battery energy storage system with a two-hour storage
25 capacity of 400 megawatts, and other ancillary infrastructure for the project.

So, hello, my name's Janett Milligan, I'm the Chair of the Commission Panel, and I am joined by my fellow commissioners, Dr Sheridan Coakes and Dr Turlough Guerin.

30 **DR TURLOUGH GUERIN:** Greetings.

MS MILLIGAN: We're also joined by Kendall Clydsdale from the office of the Independent Planning Commission.

35 So, in the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of all the information, today's meeting is being recorded, and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. So, this meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of this matter and it will form one of several sources of information upon which we will base our determination.

40 It's important for the commissioners to ask questions of attendees to clarify things whenever it's considered appropriate. But if you're asked a question and you're not in a position to answer, you may take the question on notice. And then after the meeting, we'll advise you in writing of any of those questions taken on notice that we actually
45 consider requires a formal response. Then any information that you, or response you send to us after that, we'll publish on our website.

So, I request that all participants here today introduce themselves before they speak for the first time, and for all of us to make sure that we don't speak over the top of each other, just to make sure we get an accurate transcript.

5 So, with those comments, let's begin. Again, welcome, welcome to Edward River Council. Can I maybe at this point refer to Mr Dalzell and ask you to introduce yourself and your team, and then we'll get underway.

10 **MR DALZELL:** So, yes, good afternoon, commissioners, and thank you for the introduction and this opportunity to speak to the Panel about it. My name is Mark Dalzell, I'm the Director of Infrastructure here at Edward River Council. My portfolio oversees Council's planning and development services activities.

15 And I'm joined today by Harvey McKinnon, our Manager of Development Services. I also oversee Council's infrastructure, so road network, coordinates of utilities and that as well. So, a lot of interaction with REZ projects through my team. Also, today we have Ellie Danckert, who is our Renewable Energy Project Coordinator, very much our first point of contact and does a lot of work whether talking with councils and with the proponents of these developments and that.

20 So, yes, again very appreciative. Noting there with the agenda, we're more than happy just to, yes, work through those items and any others that the Panel may have for Council.

25 **MS MILLIGAN:** Thank you very much for that introduction. So, we have as you say provided an agenda for the meeting; could we just consider that as a loose guide to the conversation. We note your interaction with the Department and the submission you made to the Department in September '24. And there are other issues raised in that letter that aren't on the agenda, so please don't feel constrained. The purpose of the meeting of course is to hear what you want to say to us. But let's just start with the agenda and we'll work our way through it.

30 So, the first one we've listed, and it may not be in order of priority for Council, but we've listed workforce accommodation. So, at the moment the application has two options still in play; an on-site accommodation camp, which is at the north of the site as you would know. We met with the Applicant recently, they feel reasonably confident they will use the other option, which is to use the accommodation facilities in Balranald, the workers accommodation in Balranald. However, formally, they're both still on the table. So, can we just open up that topic of workforce accommodation for you to tell us what you'd like to about that one.

35 **MR DALZELL:** Yes. Thank you, Chair. I'll pass onto Ellie Danckert as our Project Coordinator, she's had a lot to do with workforce accommodation generally with them, and then, yes, with any further information, following Ellie.

40 **MS ELLIE DANCKERT:** Okay. Thank you, Mark. Thank you very much for the time and the opportunity to speak today. In terms of Edward River Council's position around impacts with workforce accommodation for this particular project, we feel sort of given the geographic location of the project that it doesn't directly impact on our

LGA in any form. And I suppose more broadly speaking, in terms of discussions amongst various councils within the South West REZ, there is certainly the position that councils do prefer to have the opportunity to have workers accommodation located in townships such as Balranald because of the economic benefits that that then brings into that community. Yes, so that would sort of be my answer to that, around that topic of workforce accommodation.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay, yes. Look, I think we understand what you're saying. Because even if we assume either option, they're at the top of the site or they're in Balranald, which doesn't look as though it puts them directly within your local government area using facilities and requiring services. So, okay, so we've started with a pretty straight forward one.

Anything to say on the topic of opportunities for your residents to be part of that workforce?

MS DANCKERT: I guess there would be possibly some opportunity for workers. Given, again, it would be very much, they would need to have that workforce accommodation because geographically the distance would be too far for them to drive from home, being living here in Deniliquin, over to the site. But yes, certainly there would be the opportunity, I would imagine, for our community to potentially be engaged as employees for the project.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay. All right. Let's just move down our list. We've listed visual impacts, and that also is on your list when you originally made a submission to the Department, and we understand why, because you're on the boundary, you sort of share a boundary there. So, would you like to talk to us about the visual and perhaps the landscape impact.

MR DALZELL: Yes, thanks, Ms Chair. Yes, these are sparsely dense or sparsely populated areas, apologies with that, and that does mitigate the impact. Also noting that very flat country that generally these wind farms, the turbine and that will be seen from a distance away. Whilst it's in that space, lights will have an impact on the landscape and that, that's something that the Proponent has addressed with the work to date, and will continue through development and project and operation and that, of them noting that whilst this one here in for Edward River Council we have as part of the South West Renewable Energy Zone four developments, parts and that EnergyCo made project, and, yes, generally the issue has been impactful but the work that's been done on it, the Council has been happy with the work done to date on the visual impact.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay. So, while we're sort of on the topic of landscape, can we sort of spread into talking about flora and fauna, because I know you did have some comments about that. And also, while we're at it, can we then sort of talk about bushfire.

MR DALZELL: Yes. I'll pass to Harvey, our Manager of Development Services, to talk about flora and fauna.

MR HARVEY MCKINNON: Yes, thanks very much. I think, as Mark alluded to, we have had a couple of responses back and forward throughout the project, and the most recent one was that Council was satisfied with the response provided by the Proponent. And as long as there were suitable conditions imposed on the consent, if it were to
5 proceed to that point, to ensure that there was no or any measurable impact on the native flora and fauna that exists within the area. So, that's been our consistent approach across these projects as they've come up.

In terms of the bushfire element, that's something that we have consistently raised,
10 mostly given if there are going to be accommodation camps on site, because of the remoteness of these sites, and I'm sure you can understand that we rely a lot on the New South Wales RFS and volunteer firefighters. So, I think our main thing has been that acknowledging that fact that they're, in terms of when the Emergency Management Plan is being prepared, that there is some liaising with those services to
15 ensure that we're not putting additional burden on those services that are already short.

We also have, I don't think this one is covered by our zone, but Mark, you can probably maybe provide a bit more detail on the local emergency management group that potentially exists up that way, because that's something that we have the ...
20 Projects that have been within our Edward River Council area, that's something that we sort of picked up recently to make sure that they are liaising with those local emergency management response groups as well.

DR GUERIN: And Harvey, are you – that's good, I mean, that makes a lot of sense. Are you satisfied that, I think it's coordination you're talking about and ...
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MR MCKINNON: Yes.

DR GUERIN: Are you satisfied that that will actually happen when it needs to happen. Like, are you sure, I mean, we can talk about that, but is it going to happen when there is a bushfire, I guess, you need to be satisfied and are you satisfied that that coordination will happen and you'll get the services and the protection will occur.
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MR MCKINNON: Yes, I think that's a good question. I think, I guess our position has been that with these projects, our council has been, although this one's not in our council area, our council has been supportive of the projects more generally. And our position has been to, I suppose, support the projects as long as some of these issues, something like bushfire management, are mitigated by suitable conditions of consent, and as long as there's some, I guess, interaction and liaising with Council and those
35 groups before we actually have construction commencing. That's been our, I guess, main, I suppose, I guess, strategy in terms of mitigating some of these issues. Yes.
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But look, yes, I think we're pretty confident that that would occur. We've also had some meetings with the State Significant Development Compliance Team and we're pretty, I think, comfortable in that space in terms of working with them and then
45 working with the proponents during the construction phase as well.

DR GUERIN: Thank you.

5 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. So, thank you for that. So, I think you've implied in that last conversation that the draft conditions of consent, should the project be approved, address your issues around fire. Can I just step back and ask you about the flora and fauna, the draft conditions of consent, and if there's anything else you wanted to say about that. Are you generally saying that those draft conditions, should they be adopted, would address your concerns?

10 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes, that's typically been our approach in that space as well. Acknowledging that the, I mean, in terms of this project, given that it does sit outside of our council area, we haven't had as much engagement with the Proponents. But with a lot of the other projects, they have done significant studies with some of the native flora and fauna that are there and are looking at expanding on some of the projects – for example, for the Plains-Wanderer, which is a critically endangered species – some of those projects that already exist within the area. A lot of the studies
15 as well have shown that the areas of the wind turbines are avoiding identified habitat or are providing mechanisms to actually better maintain that habitat for those species.

20 So, I think from, yes, more broadly, our approach has been that what has been proposed is satisfying our concerns. But as long as those issues are carried over into conditions of consent and not just left on the side.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay.

25 **DR SHERIDAN COAKES:** And Janett, if I could just pop in there. So, Harvey, obviously there are some conditions there around a sort of more a regional approach, particularly to the Plains-Wanderer which I think you did, you noted that specifically in your submission, original submission.

30 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes.

DR COAKES: So, yes, I guess you're, from what you're saying then is you're quite comfortable with those sort of ...

35 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes, that's right.

DR COAKES: ... conditions being in place, and management, you know, there's quite extensive management proposed as well.

40 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes, and I think it's for some of those species, because in particular there's a lot of ground-dwelling species there, and a lot of native flowers as well. Typically, these projects we're seeing that there actually is, because of the financial, I guess, gain for some of the landholders in particular who are already engaged with these projects, there actually is significant opportunity there for them to better improve some of these sites that, you know, typically run really large stock
45 numbers and intensive stock numbers in really big areas, to actually be able to move stock around and provide a better habitat for some of these ground-dwelling flora and fauna that are there.

So, yes, I think there's a, from what we've seen there's a positive outcome, even though these are quite big developments. Typically, the flora and fauna that exists are very low ground-dwelling and there's a significant opportunity there to actually improve the environment in the long run.

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MS MILLIGAN: Okay. Next on our agenda we listed social and economic impacts. And we do note that you're on the edge of this project, and you may not have a lot to say to us about that. But can we just ask you about social and economic impacts. We will then move onto to talk about cumulative impacts, which might be sort of, you know, of more interest to you, but social and economic impacts of this project.

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MS DANCKERT: Do you want me to take that one, Mark, or ...

MR DALZELL: Yes, please.

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MS DANCKERT: Yes. Okay. Thank you. I know from communities within our LGA that have other projects, wind projects, there is certainly some concern around impacts around telecommunication, mobile phone coverage particularly. That a lot of the sort of, the smaller, these remote, smaller village communities are quite concerned around their telecommunications being used up by these developments as they're coming in and during their construction phase, and sort of initial establishment phases.

20

And, I guess, generally speaking, our LGA there's a lot of local businesses that are very excited about the business opportunities around these projects and are looking for ways that they can participate with their businesses in the projects. So, certainly our council is working sort of very closely with the proponents in our LGA around how we can get that real hyper local business engagement for our local businesses in Edward River.

25

MS MILLIGAN: And how do you think that will happen – it is just through, you know, that hard work of engagement and discussions, or is there some way that your planning, or would like to see a systematised approach?

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MS DANCKERT: Okay. Yes, so we are at the moment, we are working with EnergyCo around in this space, and we ... So, the councils, particularly the Hay Shire Council, Edward River Council and Murrumbidgee and Murray Council to a degree, as well, we work quite closely together as a group to try and pull our talent and knowledge and resources in the REZ space.

35

So, we have jointly approached EnergyCo to look to employing someone in the South West REZ who can be what we are calling like a "business concierge" type of role that can come in and work with the developers and then also sort of work with each of our local councils and businesses as well. So, that's one opportunity that we're working on at the moment.

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And then individually each council, we're working with each individual developer ourselves with their balance of planning head contractors and things like that. And hoping that they will pull together a procurement package, I guess, which will outline to our local businesses what the real opportunities are for them, what insurances,

accreditations, those type of things that they need to put in place should they want to look to tendering for these types of projects. Because for a lot of our local businesses, this is a big step up for them, as you could imagine, working for a state significant development. So, I guess we are trying to very much give them those tools to understand what, how they need to gear up, not only in terms of equipment wise, but also in terms of insurance and ticketing and workforce. So, yes.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay.

DR GUERIN: Chair, back to the telecommunications comment. Are you talking about, Ellie, just the demand on the local mobile towers, if there's a couple around, three or four, or maybe there's three, I haven't counted them, but that's presumably what you're talking about, just excess demand ...

MS DANCKERT: Correct.

DR GUERIN: ... unmanaged ...

MS DANCKERT: Yes.

DR GUERIN: And you won't know when there'll be a blackout or a triple zero call won't be able to get through.

MS DANCKERT: Correct, yes, yes.

DR GUERIN: Yes. Thanks.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay. So, just coming back to your last comments there. I mean, it's really interesting to hear the innovative and cooperative work that councils are doing, it's very impressive. Can I just ask you, is there anything that can happen at the individual project level that, particularly around conditions that may be imposed on an individual project if it's approved, that could help that? Or in fact is it something that is already happening and will happen outside the individual project approval process?

MS DANCKERT: I believe, well, yes, the individual project, so for example, the Spark Renewable Dinawan Project, I have been speaking with the proponents and they are very much looking to engage someone who will work specifically in this space around dealing with local businesses and trying to assist them with accreditations or insurances or ticketing, training, that type of thing. So, that's one particular project.

And I do know as well EnergyCo are obviously, we're about to have – actually, I think she started yesterday – a training skills coordinator who's been brought into the South West REZ and their role will be specifically around training. So, helping to train up the workforce to make themselves available to work for the proponents, yes, on the projects.

MS MILLIGAN: Thank you, thank you. We've strayed into this territory of beyond one project and cumulative benefits and cumulative impacts. Can we just talk about that for a bit. Everyone we've spoken to and usually most of the submissions talk

about cumulative impacts. Can you just talk to us from Council's point of view, and we note again that you're outside the footprint, but we also note that on that eastern boundary there is a proposal for another development. So, can you just talk to us about cumulative impacts.

5 **MR DALZELL:** Yes, as noted with the State Government having this South West REZ, quite a number of projects, some approved, some not. The issue of cumulative impacts are very much the forefront of how the projects are managed. Council generally feels a one-off project, in terms of roads, services that may be provided
10 through water, sewer, waste and that, that we're of a size, especially with Edward River, based out of Deniliquin, we're of a size to handle one but once we get two, three or four, especially wanting to build all at one stage, that that may impact on Council.

15 So, that is something we want to see and mainly through EnergyCo with their role, their regulatory role in that space, ensuring that they are working with all the developers in addressing that. And I know they've done a number of studies around cumulative effect, and that's coming through to the councils, and that's very great to see those. So, they've done some in housing, some in water use, which is a big issue for us out in this area, we're in an irrigated area and a low rainfall area and that. So, we
20 are to a point, you know, we need to sort of see them and work with EnergyCo around those studies.

We also talk to adjacent councils. As Ellie noted before, we've gotten really good information on that. We feel the cumulative effects can be managed as long as
25 everyone is transparent about them, and really putting that forward and, you know, as councils, as providers of services and supporters of the community, we're getting that information, because then we can work with them and, for an example, I'm not sure of the specific on Baldon Wind Farm, but for the others, we provide a lot of potable water, drinking water to these camps and that, we've got a large water supply system
30 here in Deniliquin and the ability that it can be trucked out to places.

So, you know, with one of them, we've had other state significant development, we've had has really worked out. But if they've got three or four at one time, that might limit what we can do, so we needed to know that, yes, construction are going to have these
35 big construction camps on at the same time, we would offer those services as we have to the other developments, to the developers of Baldon Wind Farm. Very keen to support it where we can and we just need to then, with that timing, work out what those impacts are for us, but generally feel that those impacts – the developments as a whole just still need to get on top of the cumulative impacts and making sure that
40 information is sort of accurate as much as they can.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay. But you seem to be saying to us that with transparency at individual project level, and with the work that EnergyCo and the individual councils are doing, you're reasonably confident that from your Council's perspective there's a
45 way through that cumulative impact issue.

MR DALZELL: Yes, yes, we do, we do think so. It is a question of support. An example of that, and going back to the water supply example, you know, EnergyCo, we're working with EnergyCo about improvements and augmentation of our system as

a legacy project. It helps the community, addresses this issue of cumulative effect. So, the discussions around it are leading to some good options and that around how it does impact communities, and how they can be addressed.

5 Where if there weren't any discussions about cumulative effect, the individual projects, including Baldon, aren't enough that would trigger major investment into improvements into our systems. But when you add them up and you may have four or five, and there may be others that are working within the same timeframe, that then, you know, everyone's got to sit back and say, yes, small towns like Deniliquin and the
10 villages and areas like Balranald, Moulamein and that, they are going to need that investment into the towns for their services, for their housing, to be able to support this.

15 **DR COAKES:** And Mark, just a quick question there, if that's okay, Janett. Just in terms of that, do you feel that the timing of that is, you know, that there's enough preparatory time, I guess, for that to be put in place as these developments come online?

20 **MR DALZELL:** We're on the edge of that. We still feel there is, and talking from an infrastructure point of view, I know Ellie and Harvey are talking about sort of those other areas, but from an infrastructure point of view, we are on the edge, noting that the works they're talking about do have long-lead times, we still have approval mechanism to go through to get those projects up, and that's why it's important to be doing it now. No use talking, you know, there right in front of the graders or right in
25 front of the trucks and then saying, "Oh, now we've got to do this work."

30 Part of that is also when these projects are going to get up and running. That's where that transparency, so if it's a project that honestly is going to get up in 12 months, as opposed to one that's going to start construction in two years, that is meaningful for councils in terms of developing these projects and that, and that's part of that transparency. We don't want people to give away state secrets, we're fully aware of the economic landscape that they work in, but yes, for us as councils and that, it's just always better, let us know how you're going and we can work in with them.

35 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. Thank you for that. Can I just ask you about heritage. Your original submission talked about finds on the project, and I'm just wondering if you can tell us where your thinking is at the moment on that issue of cultural heritage.

40 **MR DALZELL:** So, it's, regarding cultural heritage, we feel the proponents have been very respectful. They've been working with Indigenous groups and that around it, and sort of talked with some of the Indigenous groups here in town and they're personnel of rangers have been very busy as, again, it's a bit of a cumulative effect, you have one development, they can support them. You have half a dozen
45 developments and they're all coming back to the same group to provide that really detailed local knowledge around it. So, it's sort of one of those areas where it comes up.

But yes, our interaction has been that, yes, they're very mindful of it, they're doing some great studies and that. I'm not sure with the details on the Baldon, but I know

other developments have changed layouts and that, you know, in light of studies that have come, and have been happy to do it. And I would think that this is the same at Baldon.

5 **MS MILLIGAN:** Yes.

10 **MR DALZELL:** I think this is an area that just has to be at the forefront through the whole thing. It's not just do it at the start, get a plan in, all that, throughout their whole project, it's construction, operation, looking after cultural heritage, looking after any heritage like flora and fauna as Harvey was talking about earlier, it has to be forefront in all their operational and management plans. To date, we feel that's happening and would encourage them to continue.

15 **MR MCKINNON:** Sorry, I'll, if you don't mind, just me jumping in. Thanks for that, Mark. The only thing I would, maybe looking at the conditions, I do think, and I know, I understand that we could provide further feedback. But just looking, it doesn't look like there's any reference to the NSW Cultural Heritage Centred Framework, which I understand is legislative and should be considered anyway, but potentially whether that could be included descriptively in the conditions as well, would be my only comment there.

20 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. So, not specific conditions but make sure that it's referenced in the conditions that do deal with this issue. Is that what you're saying?

25 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes, correct.

MS MILLIGAN: All right. Thank you for that comment. Okay. Anything else on that cultural heritage issue before we leave it?

30 **DR COAKES:** I guess the only thing would be that obviously the RAPs (the representative Aboriginal parties) have raised the, obviously the importance of having somewhere maybe to store or to keep those artefacts that are collected off site, given the number of sites and the number of additional sites, I suppose, that have been identified, and I think some of those extend into your Council area. So, yes, I guess Council's supportive of some sort of storage or keeping place or whatever that might be, that might be appropriate from the community in that regard.

35 **MS DANCKERT:** Yes, so I'll – oh, sorry.

40 **MR DALZELL:** No, Ellie, sorry.

MS DANCKERT: I was just going to comment to say that in Deniliquin we have the Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, who do have a number of – or they have a small museum, and they do have the ability to store and archive artefacts. So, I would imagine that that would be one of the First Nations organisations involved around, yes, storage of artefacts.

45 **DR COAKES:** Thanks, Ellie, that's good to know.

MR DALZELL: And yes, just another example of that, there's another state significant development that we have in the Edward River Council area, it's regarding putting regulator weirs on creeks, on Billabong Creek. And part of the work near Conargo. There was a scar tree that unfortunately had to be removed from the site. The
5 proponent of that project worked with the Conargo Council and worked with the Yarkuwa, so they've now brought that into, or they're going to bring it into Conargo as part of a sort of a beautification project at the local hall there, that they're looking at doing some gardening works, putting a cenotaph in as well, but they're also going to make the Scar Tree there one of the displays as part of that.

10 So, I feel, you know, it's a good example and that, and it takes a bit from the applicants that know they'd need to have that as part of any management plans they've got. But yes, the councils would be receptive of storage, working with groups around that storage and display of any items.

15 **DR COAKES:** Yes, great, thanks, Mark.

20 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. So, just the last couple of things there. Am I right in saying that looking back at your submission to the Department and the interaction you've had in the responses you've had from them, there aren't any significant residual issues from that submission. Is that a correct reading?

25 **MR DALZELL:** Yes. Our reading through the draft conditions there, I think they've been picked up in those conditions, a bit like Harvey noted there before, and sort of noted there around the roads and that, I think there's just that work in implementing those conditions.

30 **MS MILLIGAN:** Right, okay. We have it – oh, sorry, go ahead.

35 **MR DALZELL:** No, you're right, sorry, Chair.

40 **MS MILLIGAN:** We have heard you talk about a couple of issues that we hadn't had on our horizon, particularly the telecom impact, and just some issues around fire preparedness and management. So, my last question before I invite you to make any
35 other comments you'd like to, was really, from the Assessment Report that the Department's produced, and their recommended conditions to be applied should the project be approved, is there anything you wanted to say to us about those? About the Assessment Report, or about the conditions.

40 You've already made a couple of points, for example, you know, referencing the cultural heritage framework. You've talked about a couple of other things that could strengthen. But anything else to say about those conditions?

45 **MR DALZELL:** One of the items I have and noting with transport and roads, and very much noting that the development proposal is utilising the state highway network, Sturt Highway as the main access. But like Murray River Council, Edward River has some local roads in the area that are alternate accesses. They are areas, the roads in that area, given that we've had a previous state significant development, being the Project

EnergyConnect line that went through there. We have had a lot of impact in that area, in the council area, a lot of impact from that development.

5 And our sort of concerns in that space is, whilst noting the conditions there, and one of the conditions would limit the amount of vehicles that could use these secondary accesses, and the number of vehicles they're talking about is sort of consistent with our expectations of those roads. These are low-volume agricultural roads supporting nearby farms, they're not sort of supporting these major ones.

10 Our concern in this space isn't so much the condition, it's how they're implemented and that the implementing and verification of them doesn't come back onto Council. That has been our experience, that these go ahead and unless Council is sort of out there all the time inspecting roads, raising concerns, they just keep working and need to deal with an issue.

15 So, in terms of conditions and that and whether it sits like inside the access condition or the Traffic Management Plan, details of how the Applicants are going to independently verify and provide information around meeting consent conditions. It's fine to have a condition saying you can only use 10 vehicles a day. Council does not have an issue with that. But how is that, is that independently verified with traffic
20 counters and things like that or is that just information from the developer and their contractors saying, "No, we haven't used it," and then that becomes an issue when we notice and we, through inspections and that, see impact on the roads much greater than that amount of vehicles.

25 Because we know coming up via Maude Road, that's sort of the major sort of road in the area coming from all the eastern area, through Deniliquin and that, anywhere south of Hay, you're probably going to come across Guidemore Road or come across Booroorban-Tchelery Road. They're a pretty, you know, obviously straight forward
30 accesses, where they would use those alternate access, just as there are in the south from the Murray River Council area, some of those access roads, that will not put up with any significant amount of vehicles on them.

35 So, in terms of roads, I appreciate that they've thought about and using that Sturt Highway, that's very good, that's the right way and that, but yes, just really making sure that the conditions around there, that there's enough there to make conditions enforceable and put the onus of that back onto hopefully the Applicant/developer or back onto the Planning Department, and not onto councils.

40 **MS MILLIGAN:** Yes. It's such an important point about compliance, isn't it? Because I imagine, I don't know your area, but I imagine if people feel that the imposed limit is being exceeded, they'll probably complain to Council. So, I understand what you're saying, yes.

45 **MR DALZELL:** Yes, yes. So, we've had the Planning Department, they've come out, they've, you know, to their credit, and they noted the issues from the previous project, so they're coming out, their compliance teams, around how they are looking at addressing this, which we appreciate. Because yes, you want them to work, and how

they impact in having such major state significant developments into these areas, it's been a learning process for many people.

5 But yes, we just want to make sure that the conditions, or what the conditions say they've got to do, the developer needs to do some sort of management plan. So, in my example, they need to do a Traffic Management Plan. We need to make sure that, yes, we have interaction with them in the Traffic Management Plan, which I think is written in there, but we can get those conditions and some way of managing it that doesn't fall back onto Council around it.

10 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. I understand that point, so thank you. It feels as though we're getting to the end of the conversation, so I'm going to ask Sheri or Turlough if they have any other points they'd like to discuss.

15 **DR COAKES:** No, all good for me, thanks Janett.

MS MILLIGAN: Okay. And back to Council. Are there any last comments from Council?

20 **MR DALZELL:** Harvey, do you have any comments?

MR MCKINNON: Thanks, Mark. Probably the only thing, and I only thought of it just earlier with the previous comments around the compliance mechanisms. Probably something that we have been a little bit concerned with from a cumulative impact if all the projects are happening at one time, is the complaints handling element of it.

25 Because these projects sit under the state significant development compliance arm, that's the appropriate regulatory authority to be dealing with complaints. Whether it be, you know, over-sized vehicles on roads, whether it's damage to roads, whether it's biodiversity, cultural heritage, anything like that, or even just the fact that we have a lot of development happening at one time within this broader area across the councils, I guess just how that can be managed better. Because I'm sure you can imagine that people, in terms of the general public, their first response is to ring Council. But given that we're not going to be the actual authority for these developments, we're going to have to pass that message onto the appropriate people.

30 So, I guess whether – and I don't know what that looks like, and we have raised it with other projects – whether there is some sort of central place where these developments, if there are complaints, people can go to raise those. How that looks? I'm not sure. But that's probably just something that came to mind in terms of some of the discussions that we've had.

35 **MS MILLIGAN:** Yes. So, interesting point, thank you. So, you're kind of saying it would be good if there was a system where the triaging wasn't being done by Council.

40 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes, that's correct.

MS MILLIGAN: With triaging, you'll get some of them, you'll legitimately get some of them referred to you, but you'd like someone else to be doing the triaging. Okay.

5 **MR MCKINNON:** Yes. And I think Ellie can probably even provide a little bit of commentary around, some of the team did a trip up to one of the other REZ zones earlier this year and I believe some of the projects set up a community hub in one of the central towns. Not that that was necessarily a requirement, I don't think, Ellie, you know, but whether – that would be great if that happened. But what can be done to sort of maybe push that along a little bit more.

10 **MS DANCKERT:** Yes, yes, no, that's correct. That was a Squadron Energy project, Uungula, out of Wellington. Squadron has taken it upon themselves to have, as Harvey said, a shopfront but they also have a dedicated community liaison/complaints officer that works for the project, and that's specifically her role is to be that sort of front-faced person to deal with complaints or queries relating to the project.

15 And that's something certainly that all of the councils and my counterparts in the other councils within the REZ are pushing with EnergyCo, is to have funding to support a "compliance officer", for want of a better role, that can operate across the REZ, across all projects just to take that level of workload off council. Because we are, as you say, we will be the first port of call from our ratepayers.

20 **MS MILLIGAN:** Okay. Listen, thank you for that. It sounds as though we have explored all the issues that are important to Council. So, at that point, I'm going to say thank you very much to the three of you for giving us the time this afternoon, and for what's been a really useful conversation. So, thank you very much, and good
25 afternoon.

MR DALZELL: Excellent. No, thank you.

[Multiple people say thank you]

30 **DR GUERIN:** See you all.

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED