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## TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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TRANSCRIPT IN CONFIDENCE

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O/N H-949904

### INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION

### MEETING WITH THE PROPONENT

### RE: O'CONNELL ROAD, O'CONNELL - GATEWAY REVIEW

**PANEL:**

**CHRIS WILSON  
SNOW BARLOW**

**ASSISTING PANEL:**

**MATTHEW TODD-JONES  
DAN KEARY  
REBECCA GROTH**

**PROPONENT:**

**DAVID WALKER**

**LOCATION:**

**IPC OFFICE  
LEVEL 3, 201 ELIZABETH STREET  
SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES**

**DATE:**

**11.28 AM, TUESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2018**

MR C. WILSON: Good morning and welcome. Before we begin I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, and pay my respects to the elders, past and present. Welcome to the meeting today on the review of the Gateway determination for the planned proposal to rezone land at 2519  
5 O'Connell Road, O'Connell from RU1 Primary Production to R5 Large Lot Residential. The proposal also aims to reduce the minimum lot size from 110 hectares to facilitate rural residential development. My name is Chris Wilson. I am the chair of the IPC panel. Joining me on the panel is Snow Barlow. The other attendees at the meeting are Dan Keary and Rebecca Groth of Keylan Consulting,  
10 who are assisting the Commission in this project, and Matthew Todd-Jones from the IPC Secretariat. David Walker is attending from Geolyse – Geolyse?

MR D. WALKER: Geolyse, yes.

15 MR WILSON: In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a full transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. This meeting is one part of the decision's decision-making process. It is taking place at the preliminary stage of the process and will form one of several sources of information upon which the  
20 Commission will base its decision. It is important for the Commissioners to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues whenever we consider it appropriate. If you are asked a question and are not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and provide any additional information in writing, which we will then put on our website. We will now begin.

25 We've asked a similar question to both the department and council in relation to the history of this land, through their LUS 2012 and the LEP 2013. I guess we're asking, you know, this was originally included then excluded. It was excluded.

30 MR WALKER: Yes.

MR WILSON: Excluded. And now it's proposed to include it. And I guess we're just trying to understand some of the reasons why it was excluded and whether or not this PP addresses those issues.

35 MR WALKER: Yes. Certainly. Yes, certainly, the applicant's family were very strong advocates for including it. Right around the time that the LUS was being finalised, the applicant's parents were involved in quite a serious car accident and all of a sudden their attention was diverted otherwise, and the way the applicants explain  
40 it to me, rightly or wrongly, is they sort of came out of that period of time when they were going through that hard time to find that the LUS had been finalised and their submission had essentially been discounted and the land had been excluded. So they were always very much of the view that it was a logical parcel of land to include. As you would have seen from the mapping, it essentially - - -

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MR WILSON: Yes.

- MR WALKER: - - - provides a bit of a ring around the village. Obviously, from the history, there was a lot of contention amongst the residents of that village, and there still is, to say, "We love it the way it is and we don't want it to change." And, equally, from other residents saying, "There's a real demand. People want to live
- 5 here. Why aren't we supplying more land? Why aren't we supplying more services?" And those, I think, are very valid questions. In terms of the land's capability, it's very similarly constrained – or unconstrained, depending on your perspective – from a land use perspective. You know, the bush fire, the biophysical agricultural land, etcetera.
- 10 All of those things are very similar to the land that was rezoned in 2013. So I guess the short answer to your question is, we don't explicitly know why it was excluded. There hasn't been any analysis that I've seen that suggests that there was some land availability level that was identified. Certainly, the council has indicated that they
- 15 believe that a 10-year supply into the future is what the area needs and what should generally be provided for these rural residential communities. What has been seen in the period since the LUS was adopted is that growth in O'Connell has far-outstripped growth across the rest of the local government area.
- 20 It's a hugely popular area. It's really well-located to both access Oberon and Bathurst. So it's very well-located, and our perspective, I guess, is that demographically the situation has moved on from where it was in – when the land use strategy was adopted. And if there was a reason at the time to say, "There's a particular amount of land that needs to be released now and we're going to release
- 25 that land," our position would be to say that, actually, the demographics have moved on, the land use strategy is now a little bit out of date in that regard, and there is justification for including this additional portion of land. Does that answer the question?
- 30 MR WILSON: Yes. That's a good start. Just in relation to, I guess, those – while we're on the issue of the land either side of the land which the proposal applies, some of that land, I understand, to the east is now being developed.
- MR WALKER: Correct.
- 35 MR WILSON: The land to the west is yet to be taken up; is that correct?
- MR WALKER: Correct, yes.
- 40 MR WILSON: What about your lots to the north? Have they been taken up?
- MR WALKER: That hasn't been subdivided as yet. An application has been lodged.
- 45 MR WILSON: Okay.

MR WALKER: The client's perspective is ideally it would be good to do it all at the same time. So there's a small portion, obviously, of the subject lot on the northern side of Box Flat Road that has been rezoned. There has been a subdivision approved by council for six lots. But the idea from the client's perspective is it  
5 would be better to do it all at the same time rather than do it in a piecemeal fashion.

MR WILSON: You're probably not the right person to answer this, but what do you think the reasons are for the land to the west not being developed – not being - - -

10 MR WALKER: Anecdotally, I understand from our client that the person who has that land has no interest in developing it. They're a farmer, they've been a farmer forever, and they have no interest in seeing it go to rural residential. So in that regard it strikes me as a little bit unusual that council took the position that, "Let's rezone that land," when the person who owned it at the time and still owns it now, had no  
15 interest in rezoning it, and didn't rezone our client's land, which was essentially very similar in terms of its land use constraints, as I said earlier, and the owners were very strongly of the view that they did want to see it rezoned and developed. So anecdotally is really the only way I can answer that question, based on that - - -

20 MR WILSON: No. That's fair. I understand that.

MR WALKER: Yes.

MR WILSON: I guess council and the department in their reports both raised the  
25 issue of disproportionate delivery of services or demand on services, and basically that there's an existing infrastructure, or lack of infrastructure, provision in O'Connell.

MR WALKER: Yes.

30 MR WILSON: And you also raise the issue in your submissions that you believe that, notwithstanding what might this lack of infrastructure be, that your proposal stands alone and it's not going to impost on the structure provision.

35 MR WALKER: Yes. I think – it's absolutely true to say that there's an issue around infrastructure provision in town. I mean, it's a growing town, and the land use strategy identified the need to identify other services that needed to be provided  
- - -

40 MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - the open space and various other services. To date there has been no action from council to do anything about that.

45 MR WILSON: Okay.

MR WALKER: Obviously, to a degree, the market needs to lead it, but all that land has stayed zoned as RU1. You know, the range of land uses that are permissible in that zone that could conceivably provide some of those services - - -

5 MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - just don't exist. And the council hasn't led any sort of move towards rezoning to provide some of those services. So absolutely agree that there is a shortfall in servicing and that it's an area that needs to grow, and the discussions  
10 with Council's planning staff reflect the same.

MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: And our position is to say, "Well, you've already rezoned quite a  
15 large portion of land. That demand or that drive or that need for services exists now. The additional population that would be realised from the rezoning of this land would grow the potential population of the town by about six per cent." So, as a proportion of that demand, it's a very, very small proportion. So I guess our position is, "Yes, there's a demand and a need for services and, council, what are you doing  
20 about it?" It's a difficult question to answer, because at one point I did discuss with the applicant would there be any conceivable position that you would look to rezone some of - propose a rezoning of some of your land to provide some sort of commercial use, a shop or something similar. And it's not really suited to that. It's slightly - slightly disassociated from the bottom of the village, so to provide a  
25 service of that nature it would be logical to put it next to the pub, next to the café that's there, or near the school. Coming down on the intersection of Box Flat and the O'Connell Road, it's a slightly less logical position, in my mind. So that makes it a difficult - a difficult scenario. We certainly agree that there's a need for services there. And I guess the short answer to that question is, well, why hasn't something  
30 been done about it? Why isn't council leading on it? Their own strategy says that that's what's needed. Yes, it's an issue, but it's a difficult one for the client to resolve.

MR WILSON: So the 6 per cent growth, you're saying that your contribution to that  
35 6 per cent would be so insignificant that - - -

MR WALKER: No, no - sorry. What I was saying - and I think it's articulated in the request for review - is that in terms of the available zoned land, the potential population based on the average household size - - -  
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MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - based on the Census data, I think it takes the population to something like 750 people.  
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MR WILSON: From 600.

MR WALKER: From its current population, yes. So the resulting population, if you assume that average 2.8 persons, takes you to a population of – including our land – to 751. And so the 17 lots, which is 48 persons, at 6 per cent - - -

5 MR WILSON: Okay.

MR WALKER: 6 per cent of that, 750 people. So it's quite a small proportion of the potential population that could be developed there. And if there is an issue with services – which we agree there is – that issue exists regardless of whether that 6 per cent – 48 people – gets added to it or not.

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MR WILSON: Okay. Dan, you - - -

MR D. KEARY: Sorry - - -

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MR S. BARLOW: No. You go first.

MR KEARY: In any of the discussions with council on the infrastructure issue, did they give any indication of how the infrastructure might be dealt with for contributions otherwise voluntary planning agreements?

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MR WALKER: No, nothing that I can - - -

MR KEARY: Is there any precedent that you're aware of that – those sorts of things out there?

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MR WALKER: I mean, I think the infrastructure is more of a services issue. It's not around providing reticulated water or sewer or waste services and the like, it's around the need for a - - -

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MR KEARY: Yes, so not a physical infrastructure.

MR WALKER: No, it's around the need for amenity - - -

35 MR KEARY: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - for want of a better description, that it needs a corner shop or it needs something that people can go to so they don't have to drive 15 minutes either way.

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MR KEARY: Yes, yes.

MR WALKER: I mean that doesn't seem to be inhibiting the 600 people that live there now. There is a small café that's open three or four days a week that sells various ancillary goods and tea and coffee and, you know, light foods. To a certain extent I look at it and think, well, if there's such a demand there why isn't that café running seven days a week. So, I think the people that live there accept what they're

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moving into and they know that they can't pick up a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk. That's what they do in Bathurst or Oberon before they come home. So it's an unusual situation - - -

5 MR KEARY: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - because the town is certainly growing, and I could see that people who live there – if I was in that position, would – I would – it would be nice to have a corner shop, but those things are very difficult, economically, to make  
10 viable, so even if the capacity existed, would the market support a small corner store. I don't know. I mean corner stores are dying at a ridiculous rate across Australia because proportionally they just don't have the upkeep – the market to support themselves.

15 MR KEARY: Yes, critical mass.

MR WALKER: And they have to charge high prices so people go, well, I just won't bother, I'll pick up my milk and get bread elsewhere. So it's a really nuanced issue, and to a certain extent I think the people that live there accept that issue, and they  
20 know that what they're buying is a little slice of peace and quiet, and maybe those services aren't as critical as they're made out to be. The school there is hugely popular.

MR WILSON: Primary school, yes.

25 MR WALKER: Yes.

MR WILSON: But it's at capacity we're told.

30 MR WALKER: Well, yes, we are told that, and to what extent is the Department of Land – Department of Education planning for the future of that school. Again, there is a conceivable population of 700 people in that town. You know, I don't know the policy planning behind how schools grow, and how they plan for population growth, but it's really a Department of Education issue, and I would have thought the  
35 stimulus or the catalyst of a rezoning would be a driver for them to say, well, we need to allocate more resources to that school. It's, to a certain degree, I believe that, kind of, sits outside the planning process even if it shouldn't. It probably should be wrapped in, politically, but I don't think it currently is integrated in the right way.

40 MR BARLOW: How about garbage disposal?

MR WALKER: No, there's none of that out there.

45 MR BARLOW: No.

MR WALKER: And, again, you know, the people who are buying out there – there's no council provided service anyway. I know from my own perspective in

looking at houses out of town there's often commercial services that are offered and people pay for them separately outside of their rates. I don't know if that exists in O'Connell. But certainly there's no council provided system. And, again, the people who live out there now are buying properties at fairly high prices and accepting that status quo, so - - -

MR BARLOW: From the point of view of demand - - -

MR WALKER: Yes.

MR BARLOW: - - - we've heard, sort of, anecdotally, that O'Connell's hot, if you wish, but what does this mean, you know, this - are they going to run out of available land in the near future?

MR WALKER: Well, all we can really comment on is past statistics. We've got two - the last two years of Census data is showing really strong growth in O'Connell. Very high 2006 to 2011. I think it was something like 15 per cent and then it dropped to - for the 10 years it's around six or eight per cent, so - I think it's six per cent. So, I mean - and that growth is happening because there is land available. The development people are buying land and putting houses on them. The population is growing for that reason. So, it's a matter of, I guess, looking at the trend.

You know, I don't have a crystal ball. I don't know if things will fall in a hole when there's no more land there, but the market will, to an extent, dictate whether or not it will continue to grow, and it might be - and looking at the trend you would suggest it was in demand and people want to be there. You know these lots are quite unique. There's no other 10 hectare lots being provided across Oberon, like all the other rural R5 land in Oberon is either two or five hectares, and those parcels of land, they're not in demand. People aren't subdividing them. People aren't buying in those areas, but they are buying in O'Connell, so, yes, I mean I can only comment on the history of it.

MR BARLOW: Yes, but do you think that that's solely related to the lot size or is it the landscape at O'Connell as well.

MR WALKER: I think it's the combination of the two, to be honest.

MR BARLOW: Yes.

MR WALKER: I think people from Bathurst and Oberon who are - you know, the Census data shows that people living in O'Connell have a higher than the State average median income, higher - very low rates of unemployment, so the people who are moving into those areas tend to be more affluent, and I think it's the landscape. It's a beautiful - it is a beautiful landscape. It's a very nice area to be around. The river's not too far away, the Fish River. There is a heritage element to it that attracts people.



I got – bailed up’s, probably the wrong word, but after the last council meeting I came out and a lot of the residents walked up to me and said, “Who are you?” and, you know, “What’s your angle here?” And I explained what I was doing and why we were doing it, and they said, “We love this area; we don’t want it to change.”

5 And I said, well, the reality is the reason you love this area is the reason other people want to be here, it’s a beautiful locality, and people like the level of amenity that they receive in this area. So I can’t speak to the trend; I can’t speak to the future, but I can only speak to the trends that exist. If no more land is released then at some point  
- - -

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MR WILSON: No. And we had that discussion this morning. I think once the growth – the growth is basically on the back of subdivisions, or the release of land in and around O’Connell.

15 MR WALKER: Well, it is, but there is land rezoned near, I think, Burruga and Black Springs, and that’s not – there’s no demand for that. People aren’t moving into those areas.

MR WILSON: Where is – where is that?

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MR WALKER: So those are, sort of, village communities similar to O’Connell, but  
- - -

MR BARLOW: But are they closer to - - -

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MR WALKER: - - - in Oberon. Closer to Oberon.

MR BARLOW: Closer to Oberon.

30 MR WALKER: Smaller lot sizes, two to five hectares. You know, it’s very difficult to compare difficult – the different, sort of, areas because the features of those areas are slightly different, but those R5 areas are zoned and capable of subdivision, and, yet, it’s happening in O’Connell and it’s not happening in those areas. Again, I can only speak to those as being facts rather than how to interpret  
35 them necessarily, but to my way of thinking it seems logical that there is a demand going on here in O’Connell that people are responding to.

MR WILSON: There’s a net community benefit test somewhere, I can’t remember – what requires that? Is there a - - -

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MR WALKER: This is the planning proposal?

MR WILSON: Yes. So, can you just quickly run through that in terms of what is the overall net community benefit for the proposal?

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MR WALKER: Yes. I mean - - -

MR WILSON: Just from – you don't have to go through the items, but just holistically, I mean.

MR WALKER: Yes, I'm just going to refresh my own memory.

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MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: It's been a while since I looked at that particular document.

10 MR WILSON: You can take it on notice, if you want, I don't mind.

MR WALKER: Look, I think in a general sense - - -

MR WILSON: Just in a general sense.

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MR WALKER: Yes, in a general sense, there's no detrimental impact.

MR WILSON: Right.

20 MR WALKER: You know, there's no cost to the community as such. There's no an expectation of potable water or sewer to be supplied. There's not an expectation of garbage services to be provided. There's not a cost to the council in doing this necessarily. The roads that are there are capable of accommodating the demand. The costs are all at the applicant's side. It responds to a demand for land in that area.  
25 So I think it's, you know, in that sense - - -

MR WILSON: So reverse sense because there's no impacts that it's got to benefit, because it's delivering housing?

30 MR WALKER: Well – yes, I mean I think my fundamental perspective with planning has always been starting from the premise of where's the harm, and I think that's because I started out in compliance planning - - -

MR WILSON: Yes.

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MR WALKER: - - - and you always look at things and say, "Well, how is it affecting people?" And if it's not affecting people then it's actually probably okay to proceed, and I've always started up from that perspective which is possibly a negative way to look at things, but if it's responding to a demand and it's supplying something that the community wants, and it doesn't have a negative impact then, I  
40 guess, to my way of thinking, well, why shouldn't it proceed.

MR WILSON: Okay. Snow, Dan?

45 MR KEARY: I just want to understand the strategic merit argument.

MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: So my understanding of your position in requesting the rezoning review is that condition 1 is not necessary because you've been through a process, you've argued strategic merit has been demonstrated.

5 MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: Condition 1 implies that there's – not everyone is convinced about the strategic merits.

10 MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: I just want to fully understand, just based on your submission, what the strategic merit of the proposal is, from your perspective.

15 MR WALKER: Well, again, it's very similar to the response I just gave. I mean this is something that is responding to a – to something the community wants, that that growth is - - -

MR KEARY: Based on the Census data?

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MR WALKER: Yes, based on that – well, yes, based on that – based on the census data, essentially. It's showing consistent growth in that area and high growth and much higher growth than anywhere else in the council area. The councillors, when they endorse this – the councillor that spoke – his name, I can't recall – articulated it to say, well, if they don't move there, then they probably won't come to Oberon, and I think from Oberon Council councillor's perspective, they view this as a good way to respond to that – the need for the council to continue to grow. It's a difficult one for a lot of these small regional councils, because a lot of them are predicted to decline over the next 30 years. It's – I don't think they want to be pro-development at any cost, but they do want to see areas of growth supported.

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So, strategically, I think there's a lot of information in this document that sort of – in these various documents that we've supplied that talks to the strategic merit, but, again, it's coming back to that perspective of it's responding to the demand or the needs of the community in a positive fashion, and it's not having any detrimental impacts. So to me, that's a strategic justification for proceeding – it's responding – I think it says in the "Preparing a Local Environmental Plan" document, you know, strategic merit can be demonstrated in a number of ways, and one of those is change in demographic trends, which I think is what O'Connell is exhibiting. It's very different trends to what were exhibited in the last strategy which didn't have the benefit of that most recent ABS data to rely on.

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And, certainly, both council staff and western region planning staff have both agreed in various reports that there is a strategic justification for including this land in the land rezone ground. O'Connell, it seems to be from council's perspective, it's more around – the issue is more around, "Well, what about services and when are they going to be provided and how are they going to be provided", and from the

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department's perspective, it seems to be, "It's not in the strategy. So you should fix the strategy to put it in there", and I have a real problem with that particular approach. Firstly, because it's not necessary to change the strategy. If the development is justified, it's justified. And, secondly, we've been through a similar exercise with the western region office and another local council area where they've required that an addendum be prepared to a local strategy and we've been through three iterations of the addendum, and at every submission, they said, "Actually, we don't think this should proceed. We recommend that you pull back and not proceed with this process." And - - -

MR WILSON: And so is – that could be an outcome of this condition - - -

MR WALKER: Absolutely. Absolutely, it could be an outcome, and I think it's a very strong outcome because if the council have articulated this – if this is to proceed, someone needs to prepare an addendum. In the normal circumstance, they would say to the applicant, "You can see condition 1. Go away and write that addendum", but we would never be viewed as an impartial body presenting an addendum fully present an addendum to the local community, and we may say, "Actually, Burruga and Black Springs, hey should be back zoned to RU1."

MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: Because the demand is over here and it's not over there, and we want to keep the net supply roughly the same, and the people in Burruga and Black Springs and, no doubt, the councillors in those areas will say, "Hang on. You're diminishing our land owners' right to build", which is not a thing. It doesn't exist, but people have this perception, "Well, this is my entitlement. This land has been zoned, and I shouldn't lose that."

And I have a real problem with how that will play out going forward because I feel, based on the experiences that we've had in other council areas, that the department will keep pushing back and saying, "Yes. No, it needs that community support. It needs that community" – or even the transparency of a local councillor and impartial third party preparing this. And I did suggest to our client, you know, it may well be the case that rather than us preparing this, there is a third party that comes in and prepares it, and that, you know, they have to foot the bill for it, but it's – there's so many – there's much broader issue, I think, at question in terms of what that strategy change would do because it's a whole council area change.

MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: Whereas the scale of what we're proposing here, you know, 45 people. It seems like a process that's unnecessary to support what's happening when, in fact, there's a justification for a – just allowing it to proceed as it is. And the other, really, I guess, important thing from my perspective is, when we prepared this document, the regional plan for Orana and Central West was in a draft format. It didn't have, in it, the key direction which – at the back end of the current plan, it says

any rezoning that proceeds must be in accordance with the local strategy, and the department have very much relied on that premise in their reporting - - -

MR WILSON: Yes.

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MR WALKER: - - - to say, “No, no, no, this shouldn’t proceed because it’s not in accordance with the strategy.” Well, in fact, they – and they rely on that particular premise; whereas, that’s in odds with the local planning direction that says, yes, a rezoning may proceed that’s inconsistent with a strategy, as long as the local studies in – behind it takes account of the objectives of the direction which is what – the approach we took here. I think the policy decision of the department has changed in the intervening period, and to an extent, we’re ..... caught up in that, and I still keep coming back to this perspective. There’s enough information here to justify what we’re proposing to do - - -

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MR WILSON: Yes. Right.

MR WALKER: - - - without needing to change the strategy to support them.

20 MR WILSON: Well, that’s – I guess that’s a matter we will need to consider, but I would have thought that the strategy has to be reviewed or it just goes through. I mean, I would have thought that’s the situation, but, Snow, do you have any more questions?

25 MR BARLOW: Just a bit of context. There has been this – we know that to the east, there’s presumably borders on the Bathurst - - -

MR WALKER: It does, yes.

30 MR BARLOW: So what’s the growth over there? You know, is it a - - -

MR WALKER: Very strong.

MR BARLOW: Yes.

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MR WALKER: Not in this particular locality, but in Bathurst itself, they have quite strong growth, and I did – at the time that this all came up, I discussed with the strategic planner from Bathurst Council because there was a potential to merge over on Bathurst that was proposed, and I went back to the strategic planner at Bathurst and said, “You know, if you guys merge and this development – this proposal proceeds, what would your position on it be?” And they said, “Well, we can see the logic of O’Connell growing, but we think you would go straight to residential. You put potable services in. You put – reticulate it in, and you go straight to that small scale.” Their perspective was it doesn’t – you know, it is a bit of a centre now. It’s growing, and it doesn’t make sense to keep providing the large lot around it which – I mean, I disagree with that position because I think that’s what people want in that area. That’s what the demand is for. People like those larger lots.

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MR WILSON: Does that then undermine its ability to become a tier 2 type community in terms of the hierarchy of - - -

MR WALKER: If it stays as larger lot around the - - -

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MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: Potentially, it does, yes, but I think, again, it's a matter for responding to the market. The market seems to be desiring those larger lots. So there needs to be some account taken of that. It's – yes, long-term planning is logical.

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MR BARLOW: Is that true in Bathurst as well or it just happens to be in - - -

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MR WALKER: What was that, sorry?

MR BARLOW: The large lots are very attractive.

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MR WALKER: No. Well, Bathurst is going the other direction with their – urban is very small. They're going down to quite small lot sizes in town.

MR BARLOW: Yes.

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MR WALKER: And then the - - -

MR BARLOW: There must be rural subdivisions.

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MR WALKER: There are some rural subdivisions going on out there. I can't remember off the top of my head what the lot sizes are of some of those, but I don't think it's in that 10 hectare range. It's more the two floors and even some smaller – in a four to 8000 square metre lots that are – certainly in Orange, which is where I'm based, we're seeing a very strong demand for R5 fully serviced for 4000 square metre lots - - -

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MR BARLOW: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - on the periphery of town.

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MR BARLOW: Yes.

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MR WALKER: You've got a certain cohort of people that don't want to drive 15 minutes to get a loaf a bread. They want to be – they want to have their space. They want to put a 600 square metre house up because that's what they can afford, and they want to drive 10 minutes or five minutes to the local Woolworths to get a loaf of bread, and that – there's a strong demand for that, but that's a very different part of the market, I think, to what you're seeing developing out of O'Connell. Those people who want that close to town with a bit of space, they're buying near Bathurst,

they're buying near Orange and, to a certain extent, near Oberon. The people who – this is the next stage, if you like, of people who want a bit of space, want to grow some fruit trees, have a few sheep and cattle and, if you like, their farming, but still be close enough that it's not a long commute to a – so I think it's a very different part  
5 of the market, and to compare the two is probably a little bit unfair to both sides of the market. And, again, I'm only speaking anecdotally.

MR BARLOW: Yes. Yes.

10 MR KEARY: The DA – you said you had a DA in for the land to the north?

MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: The subdivision.  
15

MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: So that's six lots, is it? Is that the entire - - -

20 MR WILSON: There were four – it's six - - -

MR WALKER: It's in that market.

MR KEARY: Some of it.  
25

MR WALKER: Some of it. There - - -

MR KEARY: Yes. Is that – so is that the entire area or is it – okay. And what sort of demand is – do you have any sort of evidence or any information about the  
30 demand for those lots?

MR WALKER: Well, because they haven't been – because that subdivision hasn't proceeded, those lots haven't been put to the market, but there's - - -

35 MR KEARY: No.

MR WALKER: - - - a subdivision further to the north which - - -

MR KEARY: Yes.  
40

MR WALKER: - - - I think, is about eight to 10 lots, and to my knowledge, all of those were sold since they've been released.

MR KEARY: That's part of the – when you say to the north, that's - - -  
45

MR WALKER: No, it's - - -

MR WILSON: Different - - -

MR WALKER: - - - different parcel of land again. Just further up, there's a little  
cul de sac - - -

5 MR KEARY: Right. Right.

MR WALKER: - - - that runs up on a, sort of, an upward - - -

10 MR KEARY: And then what size are they? They - - -

MR WALKER: They're 10 hectares - - -

MR KEARY: 10 hectares.

15 MR WALKER: Yes.

MR KEARY: And this – they're on the market or - - -

20 MR WALKER: No, they have all been sold since.

MR KEARY: They've all been - - -

MR WALKER: Yes. The subdivision has gone through and been registered, and all  
25 the lots have been sold. I'm not sure if I've got it, to show you that. I should be able  
to, actually. That's this parcel of land up here, that's marked as number 1 on that.

MR WILSON: Okay.

30 MR KEARY: Yes.

MR WALKER: That was the additional information request we sent back to - - -

MR KEARY: Yes.

35 MR WALKER: - - - council, and we did the analysis of lots that were available. So  
it's this little parcel of land up here.

MR WILSON: Right.

40 MR WALKER: And all those lots, to our knowledge, have been advertised and  
sold.

MR WILSON: Okay.

45



MR WALKER: And all this land through here is developed. All this land through here is developed. This is the chap over here – sorry, this is the chap over here that farms - - -

5 MR KEARY: So he's still farming it.

MR WALKER: - - - it, and he has no interest, anecdotally, as far as I know, in bringing it to the market. So that's another part of the supply/demand equation; is yes, council has rezoned that land, and it has – it's part of the supply equation, but if  
10 the developer – if the owner doesn't want to develop it, then - - -

MR WILSON: Yes.

MR WALKER: - - - it's a false supply, to a certain extent.  
15

MR WILSON: You submit that you will stage your release. Any idea how long that's going to take, or - - -

MR WALKER: It would probably be only two stages. It's not really economic to do - - -  
20

MR KEARY: Yes. It's only 17 lots.

MR WALKER: Yes. Exactly. I mean, in terms of the design, it's really just the  
25 road that needs to be designed, and the electricity provision, so it wouldn't be economic to go less than sort of 10 to a lot, I would have thought, so it would probably be, you know, maybe a nine and an eight release, and the land to the north probably will all come out at the same time, maybe as a third stage or maybe in conjunction with it. But, as – you know, I'm also mindful of not saturating the  
30 market. You don't want to throw 25 lots onto the market, or 22 lots onto the market, at one time.

MR WILSON: Well, that's right. You undermine your own viability.

35 MR WALKER: Yes. Yes. Exactly. But realistically it's probably only two or three years to release it all, maybe four.

MR WILSON: Okay. I don't think I have any more questions. Do you?

40 MR BARLOW: I haven't got any more questions.

MR WILSON: You don't?

MR BARLOW: No.  
45

MR WILSON: Dan?

MR KEARY: No.

MR WILSON: So I think we're done. Thank you very much.

5 MR WALKER: That's all right. .... ready to start.

MR WILSON: Yes. Appreciate you coming in.

10 MR WALKER: No, that's all right. Like I said, appreciative of the opportunity to  
speak to you, and appreciative that council and the Department of Planning have  
both supported this to move forward. It's really around the practicalities of  
delivering it that this review is focused. It's around, well, do we need to change the  
strategy to reflect what is in fact a demographic change in the environment, or can it  
15 just proceed? And we would submit that it can and should just proceed as it  
currently stands, but - - -

MR WILSON: Okay. Well, I appreciate that. All right.

20 MR BARLOW: Thanks.

MR WILSON: Thanks for coming in.

MR WALKER: No worries. Thank you for your time.

25 MR BARLOW: Thank you, Steve.

**RECORDING CONCLUDED**

**[12.00 pm]**