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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENT

RE: WHITE ROCK WIND FARM MOD 6

PANEL: **PETER COCHRANE (CHAIR)**
WENDY LEWIN
ADRIAN PILTON

ASSISTING PANEL: **KANE WINWOOD**
CALLUM FIRTH

COUNCIL: **CAROL SPARKS**
COLIN PRICE
STEVE TOMS
KEITH APPLEBY
CRAIG BENNETT

LOCATION: **GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL,**
71 GREY STREET,
GLEN INNES, NSW 2370

DATE: **5.06 PM, THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019**

MR P. COCHRANE: So good afternoon and welcome. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are meeting and pay respects to their Elders past and present and to the Elders from any other communities who may be here today. Welcome to the meeting on the proposal
5 seeking approval for the modification of the White Rock Wind Farm which includes changing the dimensions of the wind turbines, changing the layout of the approved turbines and ancillary infrastructure, reducing the number of turbines from 49 to 48, increasing the overall project area and increasing the vegetation limits – clearing limits. My name is Peter Cochrane, I'm the Chair of this, ah, Independent Planning
10 Commission Panel. And joining me are my fellow Commissioners Wendy Lewin and Adrian Pilton, Kim Stratham, Callum Firth and Kane Winwood are here assisting us, from the Secretariat.

In the interest of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of
15 information, today's meeting is being recorded and full transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. This meeting is one part of the Commission's decision-making process and this meeting will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its decision. It's important for Commissioners to be able to ask questions of attendees and to clarify
20 issues wherever we consider it appropriate. If you're 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 up on our website. I request that you all introduce yourselves before speaking for the first time. And for all members to ensure they do not speak over the top of each other, to ensure accuracy
25 of the transcript.

We received the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Referral and Assessment of the White Rock Rim Wind Farm application on the 23rd of August, this year. Since the application was lodged and assessed by the then Department of
30 Planning and Environment, more detailed vegetation surveys have been conducted of the site and have identified, ah, impacts on an additional 7.22 hectares of native vegetation. Due to the precautionary assumptions made in the previous assessment, there will be a reduction of impact on New South Wales Threatened Ecological Communities of less than a hectare. The proponent's letter dated the 24th of
35 September this year, advising of the need to increase vegetation impacts and seeking an increased clearing limit and offset requirements was posted on the Commission's website on that same day, the 24th of September.

The results of the most recent vegetation surveys are contained in the letter from the
40 proponent's consultants dated the 8th of October, which was posted on the Commission's website on the 9th of October. So there has been some additional information made available to us which is on the website, on some additional clearing requirements, which arose as a result of the cabling that will be required for stage 2 and MOD 6. So we might start. This is the opportunity to us to hear from
45 you – for us to hear from you on your views, positive and negative on the proposal. We're in your hands now. So who would like to say something to us?

MS C. SPARKS: I'll say something.

MR COCHRANE: Yep.

5 MS SPARKS: Ah, has – has there been - - -

MR COCHRANE: Could you – could you identify yourself, first? Sorry, yeah.

10 MS SPARKS: I'm – my name's Carol Sparks. I'm the Mayor of Glenn Innes
Severn Council.

MR COCHRANE: Yep.

15 MR TOMS: Has there been any investigations into the lights that might be required
on the wind turbines?

MR COCHRANE: We've received a number of submissions, including from Glen
Innes Shire Council on the lighting requirements. I am assuming you - - -

20 MR A. PILTON: Inverell.

MR COCHRANE: Sorry?

25 MR PILTON: Inverell Shire Council.

MR COCHRANE: Inverell, as well. And, um, and, um, you would have seen the
Draft Conditions that the Commission is – is, has been provided by the Department
on lighting. Ah, okay, so - - -

30 MS SPARKS: I have had some communications with the Sapphire Wind Farm - - -

MR COCHRANE: All right.

35 MS SPARKS: - - - Committee - - -

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

MS SPARKS: - - - ah, about CASAs requirements, yes.

40 MR COCHRANE: Okay. So on the Commission's website, along with the
Assessment Report, um, this document, that the Modification Assessment Report.

MS SPARKS: Mmm.

45 MR COCHRANE: On that same part of the website are draft conditions that the
Department has put forward.

MS SPARKS: Right.

MR COCHRANE: As suggestions. And there is a Draft Condition on lighting there, which we've had some comment on, as well, already.

5

MS SPARKS: Mmm.

MR COCHRANE: So could I ask if you could look at those Draft Conditions and then provide us with any comments on those - - -

10

MS SPARKS: Yeah.

MR COCHRANE: - - - that would be very helpful.

15

MS SPARKS: Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: We are taking comments for 7 days after today.

MS SPARKS: Righto.

20

MR COCHRANE: After which, ah, public comments and any other comments will be closed. So the role of the Commission is actually not to – to debate - - -

MS SPARKS: Mmm.

25

MR COCHRANE: - - - these matters, it's to hear - - -

MS SPARKS: Yeah.

30

MR COCHRANE: - - - and then we will - - -

MS SPARKS: Concerns.

MR COCHRANE: - - - make our decision based on the information we've received - - -

35

MS SPARKS: Okay.

MR COCHRANE: - - - and has been made available to us.

40

MS SPARKS: So the other question I had was the increasing the clearing limits - - -

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

45

MS SPARKS: - - - does that mean simply taking out more - - -

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

MS SPARKS: - - - native vegetation?

MR COCHRANE: There is, yes. So already, if I recall correctly, it's about 169 hectares of – of woodland that needs to be cleared. That's detailed in the assessment report and the Environmental Impact Assessment Statement. Since that was
5 produced, as I, um, said in my opening comments, the, um, company has come back, ah, with more detailed, um, analysis and assessment of what needs to be done to – for the revised layout.

10 MS SPARKS: Mmm.

MR COCHRANE: Ah, and rather than deal with this issue later, they have asked to include the cabling requirements, 'cause each of the wind farms, turbines needs to be connected by cabling.

15

MS SPARKS: Mmm.

MR COCHRANE: Ah, and they've done some very detailed surveys, now - - -

20 MS SPARKS: Okay.

MR COCHRANE: - - - of the, where those cables would go. And that has resulted in an additional 7 hectares of native vegetation that would need to be cleared.

25 MS SPARKS: Okay. Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: But as I said, there is a smaller area impacted of Threatened Ecological Communities. It's mostly Ribbon Gum Woodland.

30 MS SPARKS: Yeah.

MR COCHRANE: That's up there.

MS SPARKS: Which is Koala feed tree.
35

MR COCHRANE: So are there views from the Council on that? Again, you don't have to say it now but if you could, if you wish to provide written comments to us on your view – views on that.

40 MS SPARKS: Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: Yeah.

MS SPARKS: We'll need to look at that.
45

MR COCHRANE: So that – the letter from the company and, um, and the Survey that has been recently concluded from their consultants is on the website, as well.

MS SPARKS: Okay. Thank you.

MR C. PRICE: Colin Price. I'm a Councillor.

5 MR COCHRANE: Yep.

MR PRICE: And, ah, I'm one of the alternative, um, delegates for – for the Planning Panel.

10 MR COCHRANE: Mmm.

MR PRICE: Um, the – the mentions of the – of the suggestion - - -

MR COCHRANE: Mmm.

15

MR PRICE: - - - are about the same as the existing size of Sapphire?

MR COCHRANE: Correct.

20 MR PRICE: Yeah.

MR COCHRANE: Yeah.

MR PRICE: Yeah.

25

MR COCHRANE: Maximum of 200 metres to the top tip.

MR PRICE: Mmm.

30 MR COCHRANE: Yep.

MR PRICE: So there are towers in existence - - -

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

35

MR PRICE: - - - that – that have those dimensions, yeah.

MR COCHRANE: Yep. The Sapphire Wind Farm is 200 metres to the tip.

40 MR PRICE: Mmm.

MR COCHRANE: The current stage one of the – of White Rock is 150.

MR PRICE: Mmm.

45

MR COCHRANE: So that's a big – a major part of the modification is the increase in height for the stage two.

MS SPARKS: Is that because of the side of the blades? Carol, again.

MR COCHRANE: Again, modification six, their proposal is to seek approval for up
5 to 85-metre blades. They haven't decided yet. They don't have a precise blade
length yet. So they've – they're going for a maximum blade size.

MS SPARKS: Mmm. Yeah. That's big.

MR S. TOMS: Councillor Steve Toms. I'm a - - -
10

MR PILTON: Councillor Toms.

MR TOMS: - - - former Mayor and, also, for a period was the Chair of the White
15 Rock Consultative Committee.

MR COCHRANE: All right.

MR TOMS: So just by way of background. I – I guess I just would like to make
20 some background comments.

MR COCHRANE: Mmm.

MR TOMS: And that is that we've had three wind farm proposals in this area: Glen
25 Innes, White Rock and Sapphire. And of those, obviously White Rock and Sapphire
have been built. White Rock is stage 1 and Sapphire, the last I've heard was that
they weren't planning to have any further extensions as such. And we had the Glen
Innes wind farm proposal, which was the first to be talked about. The developers
came in and it was the closest of all three on the western side of Glen Innes.

30 MR COCHRANE: Mmm.

MR TOMS: The Glen Innes wind farm was in the Furracabad Valley and it's more
densely populated than going further west, and the developers at the time did not and
35 would not negotiate with locals in terms of the number of towers, where they would
be sited and so forth, and created a fair bit of angst within that neighbourhood, and so
much so that it's created a fair bit of ill feeling to start off with, but the White Rock
and Sapphire developers, by contrast, I think have shown much more responsibility
in terms of the way they've looked at tower locations and talking to people and so
40 forth, and another development to come out of all of that is providing some equity
for neighbours that might be in proximity to a wind tower, but not necessarily getting
the direct benefits of it, and that, I believe, has made quite a difference as well.
Overall, I think our community has been quite open to the concept of having wind
farm developments. We're not a highly populated area and there's bene, I guess, the
45 economic development aspects that have come with it, in terms of jobs and so forth.

Expenditure of money through the construction phase has been very positive and it
has resulted in some permanent jobs within our local area as well. And I should

hasten to say that Sapphire is primarily located within Inverell local government area and White Rock is partly between Glen Innes and Inverell, although it's a quirk of our local government boundaries that the boundary is quite close to Glen Innes for historical reasons, and probably closer than the actual community of interest as such.

5 I know with the White Rock, once White Rock was built there's been some angst by a small number of people, from what I can see, in terms of talking about some noise issues, and it seemed almost like a bit of an afterthoughts that there are, sort of, wind – tiny razor sort of wing things that can reduce some noise, which I think has been added to some of those blades and I believe that the Sapphire wind farm was more

10 focused on having those.

So I think in any future proposal, anything that reduces the noise, any technology that is available, absolutely should be used to minimise any of those noise risks. The area where these extensions are going into, I think they probably tend to be a little

15 more remote than where they're currently built. So the individual landowners and immediate neighbours, I guess, I think have got, you know, a fair of – their voices are quite important in this overall process, but I will say that coming out of the Glen Innes wind farm proposal, it created – the angst that it created within people living in that area has also had a bit of a spill-on effect in terms of relationships within that

20 area, and I suspect it may also be having some spill-over effects into this proposal, this current proposal that you're considering, that may be more personal related rather than anything else, but that's not to say that I want to discount people's opinions and views, perceptions, et cetera, in terms of this modification.

25 The White Rock towers are quite significant and they were quite a significant scale as it is. It's interesting to observe the difference in scale with the Sapphire towers and it's – both are big. The Sapphire ones I think appear bigger when you start to compare the size of the hills in relation to the towers. I guess one question is, is that excessive? I don't know, but I suspect – I guess part of my response would be that

30 precedent is already built in with the Sapphire Towers now. So people have got a real perception about what it is that they're seeing as such, but speaking as an individual, I don't have any views against the development and I think, from what I have seen of White Rock, they've been a responsible developer and have been, sort of, keen to be involved with this community as well. So I guess that's, sort of, my

35 comments.

MR COCHRANE: Thank you. My understanding is that the stage 1 consultancy committee has sort of finished its work for the moment.

40 MR TOMS: Yes.

MR COCHRANE: It's not really functioning?

45 MR TOMS: Yes. It's partially morphed into – it's not necessarily the same body – to they now operate with their community fund does have an annual process. So which – and is on the committee. So that's an ongoing process, but that doesn't

aim to be the committee, consultancy committee, as such. It's a separate fund committee to review the distribution of those community funds.

5 MS LEWIN: Can I ask what sort of projects the funds are used for?

MS SPARKS: It's used for community groups - - -

MS LEWIN: Right.

10 MS SPARKS: - - - community – for example, the library has just had a White Rock fund to fund their annexe for the kids outside. Pottery groups, you know, all sorts of charities and - - -

15 MS: Yes. My name's Hannah. So I think in the first round it was \$175,000 that was distributed, and that went across everything from arts and cultural groups to sports group to schools to the P&Cs for projects that they were doing. There was a festival that was put on in town last month or the month before as well. So lots of events, arts, cultural, sports, as well as community groups helping with storage
20 containers for new facilities or equipment that they needed to buy. So the application process is quite wide. It's available to everybody without our GA - - -

MS SPARKS: Yes.

25 MS: - - - as well as our as well as Inverell as well, and then we compile all the information and there's a committee that meets.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

30 MS LEWIN: Interesting.

MS SPARKS: And that's figured out by the – we have one turbine in our electorate from Sapphire, and for that we get a \$5,000 grant. So depending on how many turbines are impacting on our community as to how much funding we get. Yes.

35 MS LEWIN: Does council or the community have any considerations related to traffic impacts that we should have further knowledge of?

MS SPARKS: Roads, I think. Yes.

40 MR APPLEBY: So Keith Appleby, Director of Infrastructure for Glen Innes Council. Obviously, these projects do have a significant impact on our local roads in particular, which often, you know, haven't been constructed to a standard that's
45 been problematic at times, more so with the Sapphire wind farm that with the stage 1 of the White Rock, but if Spring Mountain Road was going to be used from Inverell Shire – it's not in our shire, but I can foresee similar issues that we experienced with

the Sapphire project. So safety, I think, is a key factor. You've covered the dilapidation impacts. We've had a very good experience with both wind farms in that area, in stage 1 of both projects, more than comfortable with the condition as it is there.

5

The upgrades required I think is potentially an area that's not as strongly covered or as well covered, and obviously the projects are wanting to minimise costs and to do as little as possible, and it doesn't seem to be addressed until the approvals are through and the project's ready to start, and at that point in time, there's a time imperative and it's difficult to really, you know, assess design and get quality outcomes because of the timeframe and the fact that it's left so late in the process to finalise haulage routes and - - -

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MS SPARKS: Yes.

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MR APPLEBY: - - - to do those assessments. So we would really prefer, you know, to have seen that level of work done before the approval got to this stage.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

20

MR APPLEBY: So if the condition's the same, but even now, a plan has to be developed. To our mind, it's too late in the process. You know, when we get a development application for a small development, we expect all of those things to have been done at the approval process so that we can give it due consideration.

25

MS LEWIN: Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: Does this relate mostly to the construction phase?

30

MR APPLEBY: All to the construction phase. Yes.

MS SPARKS: Does that include moving the blades around narrow corners and roads? Yes. That's a problem.

35

MR APPLEBY: So certainly we've had issues. So with Sapphire wind farm, we had a bridge that was upgraded for the project, but it wasn't upgraded long term. It was only upgraded for the duration of construction, and downgraded again at the end of the construction phrase, but then after the construction phase that was finished, they've had a failure of components and they've had to bring the same traffic through again, but the bridge isn't now rated appropriately. So I think appropriately that any infrastructure that's required to be upgraded for the construction phase is upgraded to at least the life of the entire project, so that's it's standard, at the end of the project, ready for decommissioning as well.

40

45

MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR COCHRANE: So in the assessment report, it states that Goldwind is proposing to use one of the project's approved haulage routes to transport the larger turbine blades to sites. So there is an approved haulage route.

5 MR APPLEBY: I'm assuming they're referring to the Mobile route, so coming in through Mobile Road, Kellys Road.

MR COCHRANE: That's correct.

10 MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR APPLEBY: And that's fine. It's not so much the blades. It's more the cranes that are required to erect them and at any bridge access, in particular, can be problematic.

15

MR COCHRANE: Okay. Because the assessment report does identify that some works and upgrades would be required at various points.

MR APPLEBY: Mmm.

20

MR COCHRANE: RMS didn't object to the proposed route for potential works, but there does need to be a works authorisation deed. Glen Innes Council did not have any further concerns about the matter. So you're saying that you still have some concerns about - - -

25

MR APPLEBY: I think just the general process is that we'd really like to see the detail. It's very difficult to comment if you don't know what the works involve, and if the company hasn't even got to the point of determining what the particular works are going to involve, and that will depend whether they go to the 85 metre blades or not as to what's required. So - - -

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MS SPARKS: Mmm.

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

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MR APPLEBY: That's our only comment is that it's just a bit hard to really, you know, know what the impacts are going to be. Generally, look, yes, we're reasonable comfortable, ultimately, with the outcome of the project, but it is all done, you know, on a shoestring and in a very minimalist fashion. So it does leave us, you know, very attentive to managing safety risk and so on through the project.

40

MS LEWIN: Yes. Understandably. And just to be clear, you are speaking about consideration to ensure that any upgrades for the project during the construction are maintained for the life of the project, so that the experience with Sapphire, the bridge and so on - - -

45

MR APPLEBY: Yes.

MS LEWIN: - - - is not - - -

MR APPLEBY: Not repeated.

5 MS LEWIN: - - - a common experience again.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR APPLEBY: Yes.

10

MS LEWIN: So for the life of the project, you're desiring to have the upgrades maintained and fit for the purpose.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

15

MR APPLEBY: Yes.

MS LEWIN: Thanks.

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MR PRICE: Yes. Sapphire bitumen sealed past a couple of houses and they were going to just leave it there during construction, and then they were going to rip it up, but the residents fought them and they'll said that they'll leave it, but they won't maintain it.

25

MS LEWIN: Okay. Okay. Thank you. Any - - -

MR COCHRANE: Any other comments?

30

MR APPLEBY: So just moving onto water requirements, one of the major issues that's been an issue in both projects has been the lack of forward planning around water supplies and proponents chasing water during the project, not having extraction licenses, and not really understanding what was going to be required in terms of both water and gravel resources. And so, again, because planning wasn't done and was left in that, "Yes. We'll do it when we get there" scenario, we ended up with a couple of situations where, for various reasons, they got stuck and opted to do things that were less than ideal, which, you know, really should have been thought about earlier on and planned for. So gravel resourcing would be one thing that we would, you know, think should really be thought through and, you know, advised before approval was given.

35
40

MR: Sand.

MS SPARKS: And water resourcing.

45

MR APPLEBY: And water and sand. Yes.

MR COCHRANE: So this is with stage 1 of White Rock or Sapphire?

MR APPLEBY: Both. Both.

MR COCHRANE: Both.

5 MR APPLEBY: Now, I'm sure they've learned some lessons through that, but even so, we're still being presented with a – you know, “We'll come up with a plan before we start” approach, which really is just leaving it too late in the process.

MR COCHRANE: Okay. Thank you.

10

MR SHOOT: I'm Kane Shoot. I'm the manager of planning and regulatory services. I was just interested in getting some clarification on the waste that might be created from this development, or from this modification. Are they planning to actually replace the blades on the existing towers and raise the towers, or is the 200-

15

MR COCHRANE: My understanding is that it's just the new towers - - -

MR SHOOT: Yes. Okay.

20

MR COCHRANE: - - - that they're proposing to be 200 metres.

MR SHOOT: Yes. That's what I thought. Yes.

25

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

MR SHOOT: So they're not proposing any additional waste or disposal of any of the existing towers.

30

MS LEWIN: Not that we're aware of.

MR SHOOT: Yes.

35

MR COCHRANE: No. And they have made some commitments on that in their response to submissions. I think Glen Innes raised that issue specifically from your past experience - - -

MR SHOOT: Yes.

40

MR COCHRANE: - - - and so they have committed, in their response to submissions, to pay more attention to the packaging that comes with the turbines, et cetera.

MR SHOOT: Yes.

45

MR APPLEBY: Certainly, separating recyclables has been an issue for us, and I think the proposed condition there is fairly vague, which I don't – just there, but I

think it basically said, you know, they need to minimise waste and maximise recycling, which really has no substance, because there's no measure and nothing to assess that against.

5 MR COCHRANE: Again, if you've got some more precise wording that you would like to see in those conditions, if you could give - - -

MS SPARKS: Yes. Okay.

10 MR COCHRANE: - - - some thought to that and provide that to us, that would be very helpful.

MS SPARKS: Mmm.

15 MR PRICE: Yes. The blades don't come gift-wrapped.

MR SHOOT: In regards to the clearing proposed, have we got access to the ecological reports or - - -

20 MR COCHRANE: It's on our website.

MR SHOOT: Okay. So that's available as well.

MR COCHRANE: Yes. Yes.

25

MR SHOOT: And the noise assessment as well is on there?

MR COCHRANE: The step that is yet to happen is for that to go to the department and for them to provide us with their advice on the adequacy of that – well, not so
30 much the adequacy, but a revised biodiversity assessment report, which is required to formalise the offset requirements. But the company has indicated that their existing offset requirements – or the property that they have allocated for offsets is more than adequate to deal with any additional clearing and offsets required. We're waiting for the department's advice back on that. But, again, any information we receive will be
35 immediately posted on the website.

MS LEWIN: Okay. Thank you.

MR PRICE: I think I'm the only person that is really underneath the towers. I
40 don't – I have had all my horizons spoilt, but I do admire the way that White Rock engineered their first development. I mean, it was almost impossible to achieve, you would think, knowing how steep the country is, and particularly it didn't stop raining all the way through, but they just went ahead and moved an enormous amount of earth and achieved it, so I've got to admit I admire them for that. And I think the
45 ribbon gum – I think there's a lot of blackthorn and I'm a former owner of a block up there where the – where the new – the first development went, and it's largely clamatis and blackthorn.

MR COCHRANE: Well, I didn't say at the beginning, but we just come from a site visit and we went to the site of the most southerly proposed turbine in stage 2, and then to the existing stage 1. So we've had an opportunity to see it on the ground.

5

MS SPARKS: Good.

MR COCHRANE: Steve.

10 MR TOMS: One of the issues – I'm Councillor Toms. One of the issues that hadn't been thought through in the whole context of the whole development process was – and I think it sort of faulted the whole planning system, is that – and that is in terms of being able to tap into the grid, and there was - - -

15 MS SPARKS: Good point.

MR TOMS: - - - almost after the event, discussion around creating a renewable energy hand-up brief, which effectively was going to be potentially a state-sponsored or government-sponsored grid connection point, which would then enable any
20 number of wind farms and whatevers to feed in and, obviously, we've also got solar and there's talk of batteries down the track with Sapphire, but – so when – with the planning for White Rock and also for what was the Glen Innes wind farm, they were looking at tapping into the – I think it's the 132 kV line between Glen Innes and Inverell, which only has a certain capacity. Sapphire have gone and linked to the
25 330kV north-south line, or the Eastlink line, it was called when it was first built, and the interconnector into Queensland, and I guess just stepping back one bit, that line was very contentious when it was originally built, and coincidentally now, it's actually enable these wind farm developments.

30 So the line between Glen Innes and Inverell is pretty much at its limits and it just seemed extraordinary to me that you could have the planning for these three wind farms going on without any oversight, either through Department of Planning or the electricity regulators and providers that managed the line network, that you could have these developments potentially being approved without the infrastructure in
35 place to actually deal with it, and I believe that White Rock are looking at setting – if they go ahead with this stage, that they will potentially tap into the 330kV line, which potentially may then free up the 132kV line for if Glen Innes wind farm is every recreated again, but it's just that – it just seems to me that an important part of planning is thinking about the infrastructure requirements that support it and how
40 that gets sorted.

And there just doesn't seem to have been a mechanism to have done that, short of the individual companies playing a bit of a game, stepping around each other and trying to second guess each other and potentially producing infrastructure that gets
45 duplicated for the sake of not having some good systems in place.

MR COCHRANE: I think the company seems to be very aware of that, because parts of the proposal are to upgrade the sub-station and provide potential additional capacity. It seems with the potential for more renewable energy projects in the region. That does form part of the modification as well, that change to the sub-station requirements.

MR TOMS: Yes. I understand it does. I guess my point is more looking at the whole picture from the beginning, from a planning perspective, a lot could have been anticipated. It might have resulted in a better outcome.

MR COCHRANE: Good. I'll note that. Do you have any more questions? Mandy? No?

MR PILTON: Just quickly, I'd like to go back – you mentioned, Carol, at the start about the night lighting and so on.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR PILTON: Does the community or the council have a position? Are you happy with the way that the Sapphire lights have been modified to be lower level and on permanently, as it were?

MS SPARKS: I think that – yes. First of all, they started flashing and everybody – the community in Inverell, and in particular the farms around the wind farms, they were totally shocked by it. So they wanted to stop that. So they stopped the flashing, the blinking, and then the capacity of the lighting has been reduced by 10 per cent, I think.

MR COCHRANE: Down to 10 per cent.

MR PILTON: Ninety per cent.

MS SPARKS: Down to 10 per cent. So it's still quite – you know, it's still there and the farms around that area – Nana would know probably more than me – are still red, and still quite – you know, when you're driving along you see them. The community preferred, and this was just in the committee, not to have the lights. Why should we have the lights. No plane is going to go that low. Whatever. That was some of the reasons. So yes. We don't have to repeat that problem and have to go through all that. We would rather just hook into where they're at now and hopefully CASA might look at it in the future.

MR PRICE: It's just a bit ironic that White Rock, which was probably three or 400 metres higher, sitting up on top of the range, didn't have any requirement for lights, but Sapphire did, because the towers were taller.

MS LEWIN: Yes.

MS SPARKS: So that has been a problem.

MR COCHRANE: Yes. I think that's the – CASA has provided the major input on that.

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MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR COCHRANE: Yes. Okay. Any other comments that we need to take on board, bearing in mind also that you've got seven days if there are specific issues that you want to - - -

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MS SPARKS: Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: - - - put to us, or suggested wording for the conditions that – that would be very helpful for us.

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MR TOMS: We'll take that opportunity.

MS SPARKS: We'll have to look at it. Yes. Thank you.

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MR COCHRANE: All right. Thank you for staying back late and putting up with our late arrival. Much appreciated.

MR TOMS: That's okay. Thanks for coming.

25

MS SPARKS: Yes. Thank you.

MR COCHRANE: All right. We've got a public meeting tomorrow.

MS SPARKS: Yes.

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MR TOMS: 9.30.

MR COCHRANE: With, am I correct, one registered speaker.

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MR PRICE: There's not a lot of objection, by the sound of it, then.

MR COCHRANE: Not lately.

MR BENNETT: I think it's probably worth nothing that we're all sort of focusing on, you know, the things that could be improved - - -

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MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR PRICE: - - - but I think generally the community really supports, you know, the projects, and certainly the economic activity that's generated.

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MR BENNETT: Well, the community saw how destructive it was with the Glen Innes wind farm. You know, there was just - - -

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

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MR BENNETT: There was bitter fighting - - -

MS SPARKS: Yes.

10 MR BENNETT: - - - and I think the community was tired of it when the other projects came around, and I think they just rationalised that it was better to go along with it.

15 MS SPARKS: Yes. We lost a doctor and there was, you know, families feuding. And it's ongoing, as Steve said. It's ongoing.

MR COCHRANE: Okay.

MS SPARKS: So – yes. It wasn't nice.

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MR: Hopefully people have moved past that.

MR COCHRANE: Yes.

25 MS SPARKS: Yes. But it's exciting, especially when the blades come through the town and they can't get round the corners and Keith has to work it out.

MR COCHRANE: And there's a lot of them associated with this next phase.

30 MS SPARKS: Yes.

MR COCHRANE: All right. We might close the meeting.

MS LEWIN: Thank you very much.

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MR COCHRANE: All right.

MS SPARKS: Thank you for coming.

40 MR PRICE: See you in the morning.

MR COCHRANE: Thank you for your time.

45 **MATTER ADJOURNED at 5.46 pm ACCORDINGLY**