

10 July, 2020

Dear Independent Planning Commissioners,

Re Vickery Extension Project

I write in support of approval of the Project.

The record will show that the Vickery Extension Project has been the subject of a thorough and comprehensive assessment and has cleared every hurdle for approval.

The SEAR's issued by the Department of Planning have been addressed by Whitehaven by undertaking studies by independent consultants supported by respected peer reviewers.

I can assure you that from my personal involvement that the Department of Planning and Environment conducted a rigorous and robust analysis of the Vickery Extension Project including doubling up on peer reviews of peer reviews.

It is clear that every issue raised has been comprehensively closed out. Any impacts can be effectively addressed and the benefits are clear.

The economic analysis of the project conclusively indicates that the project will contribute significantly to the economic well being of the state of NSW and to the local region. It is an economic fact that with changes in the agriculture sector, employment is reducing due to mechanisation and automation and that if the rural economy is to be sustained and country towns not to die there must be other sources of employment for people living in country towns, particularly young people.

The Vickery Extension Project will provide significant employment opportunities for local people including indigenous people.

I particularly want to draw your attention to the business people of Boggabri. I have been very impressed by the initiative and positivity that the small business owners of Boggabri have displayed in forming the Boggabri Business Chamber to promote the businesses within the town.

Unfortunately some anti mining people from outside Boggabri had sought to overlay their views on Boggabri and portray it as an anti mining town.

The real business people of Boggabri became increasingly frustrated that their views were being misrepresented. They were facing the challenges that all small businesses face, then the effects of the drought and more recently COVID - 19.

Commissioners, you will have heard from many of the small business owners of Boggabri and their overwhelming support for the Vickery Extension Project. Please take their views into account in your deliberations.

Also bear in mind that the proposed VPA for the Vickery Extension project includes a significant payment that will be allocated to projects within the Boggabri town including the Boggabri Business Chamber Streetscape project.

Yours Faithfully,



Brian Cole