

6 February, 2019

Mr John Hann

Chair, Vickery IPC

Level 3, 201 Elizabeth St

Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

Vickery Extension Project

I recently attended the Vickery Project Public Hearing held in Gunnedah on the 5 February, 2019. I listened to the presentations and based on your comments inviting written submissions I have decided to submit my views on the project in writing for the IPC's consideration.

I fully support the Vickery Extension Project for the reasons set out below:-

I am an indigenous man who has lived in Gunnedah all my life. I am married with a family of a number of children.

Over my working life I have spent considerable time working in the agricultural industry performing a range of tasks from chipping weeds in the cotton industry to fencing. What I have found is that in recent years opportunities for employment in the agricultural industry for me have effectively dried up due to changes in technology, mechanisation and specialised contracting. My experience is consistent with some of the changes in agriculture across the board that I heard referred to at the hearing in Gunnedah. And of course the current drought has not helped things.

I am an indigenous man very committed to my cultural heritage and have spent considerable time educating myself in aboriginal culture. To this end I have been able to gain employment in mining related cultural impact assessments in the region.

For instance I was involved in the cultural surveys on the Vickery site and was provided with the opportunity to input into the Vickery Expansion Cultural Heritage Assessment prepared on behalf of Whitehaven. I fully support the contents of the Assessment Report and look forward to participating in salvage activities on site when the project proceeds.

Over a number of years I have found that Whitehaven has taken a very responsible approach to cultural heritage and spend considerable time and effort consulting with indigenous stakeholders.

Whitehaven has a very positive indigenous employment program in place which has produced significant benefits for the local indigenous community.

My wife who has brought up a number of children and now looks to return to the workforce has been successful in gaining employment at Maules Creek Mine.

These are real stories that indicate the benefits that mining has brought to my family and we are just one example of many.

The Vickery Extension Project will bring many benefits to the local region including indigenous people in terms of job opportunities that they would not otherwise get and potentially fundamental change their futures.

It is for this reason that I support the Vickery Extension Project and request a speedy approval.

Yours Faithfully


Michael Long