PAC Presentation

-keep it brief as we have made our position clear in our original submission and more recent submission, and my presentation to the earlier PAC hearing our concerns as to the VPA process and the perceived Independence of the PAC in the Planning Assessment process.

- however, I would like to emphasise the importance of this decision in terms of potential economic, social and demographics for our community.

* Gunnedah has seen a significant increase to our population according to the last two census with an increase from 11,976 in 2001 to 11,525 in 2006 ( a 3.8 percent reduction) to 12,066 in 2011 ( a 4.7 percent increase) replacing those numbers lost post the Abattoir closure and closure of the two historic coal mines in our area-Preston and Blackjack.
* This growth Rate places us second only to Tamworth in our region with a projected increase of 6.1per cent over the next 15 yrs. this equates to an annual projected increase of 0.3 per cent As follows:
* 2016: 12,750; 2021: 13,000; 2026: 13,150 ; 2031: 13,300
* This increase is across the LGA but more so in the town of Gunnedah as demonstrated by the following figures:
* LGA: 2001:11,976; 2006: 11,525 ( LGA -3.8); 2011 : 12,066 (4.7pc)
* Town: 2001: 7,855; 2006: 8,044 (2.4 pc); 2011: 8,732( 8.6pc)
* together with this increase in population we are now evidencing some 23 per cent of our work force being directly or indirectly mining related and this percentage is growing
* Consequently, Gunnedah's future growth will be very much dependent upon what happens in the extractive industries in the immediate future while developing other, diverse industries, in the longer term.
* Gunnedah township has approximately 1400 residential and rural residential blocks which have either be approved for sub-division or could be approved relatively quickly( in excess of 80per cent having received approval already) and has the present infrastructure which could cope with a significant part of this development, Some supplementation would be possible of our water supply in the south-west and Curlewis areas should we receive the VPA funding negotiated with the proponent.
* We would continue to also seek access to Royalty for Regions funding should this program continue as we were ranked 11 (the top 10 were successful) in the last round In 2014.

-our relationship with Shenhua over the last five yrs has shown them, from our perception, as Being an example of good corporate citizens intent on playing a strong, pro-active role in our community. This has been demonstrated by:

1) their building a purpose built main office in Gunnedah where over 20 staff are based

2) their commitment of the $5 million Community Fund to many worthwhile projects in both Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains Shires. This Fund was distributed in a very transparent way utilizing a community committee which sought applications for funding which were assessed against criteria and made recommendations as to which of the many applicants should be supported by the Fund.No recommendation of the committee was overturned by management.

3) their encouraging their staff members to be participants in many community activities eg. Meals on Wheels, supplying Chinese interpreter for introduction and guides at AgQuip Field Days

4) negotiations in good faith on the VPA’s with Tamworth, Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah Shires. The resultant outcome will see some $18 million flow to GSC over the life of the mine in order to ameliorate some of the social impacts anticipated as a result of their operation in our LGA.

5)their actively assisting in the funding of studies relating to the Koala population and their long-term sustainability

6) their assistance in our desire to create a Sister/City relationship with a Chinese community with similar agricultural/mining activities being Linhe District in Inner Mongolia.

Consequently, GSC is destined to be significantly impacted in a number of regards and we have had many contacts by people/businesses interested in developing in our area but who are awaiting the surety of a decision in regard to approval or otherwise. Given the time this has taken, understandably given the process involved, the number of Departments involved, and the potential damage that could occur to our valuable farming lands and water aquifers, we believe our community would be happy to see a resolution in the near future in order to give us some surety going forward.