

## **“WATTLE VALE” PURCHASE FAQ’S**

Q. Why are ratepayers purchasing a commercial farm?

A. Glen Innes Aggregates has effectively purchased “Wattle Vale”, not ratepayers. This profitable business enterprise supplements rate income enabling Council to purchase the farm without using ratepayers’ monies. The existing quarry site will be consumed within eight (8) years unless additional resources are obtained. The current site has particularly high quality material that will be reserved for high end use into the future.

Q. Is Council destroying grazing land with this project?

A. The quarry will consume a maximum of 15 hectares of the less productive portions of the property. The remainder will continue to be leased to third parties for grazing purposes.

Q. How can Council approve its own project?

A. Council will not be approving the project. It will go to the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) for approval. White Rock Wind Farm is well under way and the remaining two approved projects are rapidly progressing toward construction. These projects will potentially create a demand for gravel material that far exceeds the extraction limit of all approved quarries combined (including those under assessment) in the Glen Innes Local Government Area. It is essential for the wind farm projects that Wattle Vale is developed quickly to provide certainty of supply.

Council will therefore be lodging an interim development application internally for a smaller scale operation of maximum 6 months duration. This will ensure that there is a supply of material available to the Wind Farm projects after other sources within the Local Government Area reach their extraction limits. The assessment of that application will not be performed by Council staff, however once assessed Council will become the approval authority.

Council staff have also stepped aside from the preparation of the Statement of Environmental Effects, which has been prepared by GHD Australia (see <http://www.ghd.com/australia/> for company information). That document is comprehensive and includes independent and expert analysis of expected mine planning, noise, dust, biodiversity, European and Indigenous heritage, traffic, water and land use issues. Council has gone as far as it is possible to prepare a thorough investigation of the relevant issues and remove itself from the approval process to ensure that there can be no question of the approval process being short circuited.

Meanwhile, the full application will continue to be pursued through the Joint Regional Planning Panel. All Council representatives on the JRPP will stand aside from the decision making process and there will be a public exhibition and commentary period for the approval.

Q. Why is Council in the quarry business?

A. The quarry business initially became a Council managed enterprise with the purchase of the quarry pits which have provided water security for Glen Innes. In addition, the business provides security of resource for Council’s road infrastructure and underpins local business operators who require aggregate supplies that would otherwise be freighted in from out of town.

Q. What is "Own Source Revenue" and why is it important?

A. Own source revenue is income Council receives such as rates, fees and charges, and income from business units. Glen Innes Aggregates contributes significantly (\$500,996 for the current financial year) to this important Fit For the Future benchmark.