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MEDIA STATEMENT

Green Policy Would Cripple Stradbroke

Unimin – Mineral Sands is willing to work with the State Government to find a sustainable solution to ending sand mining on North Stradbroke Island.

Unimin Sustainability Manager – Mineral Sands, Community Relations Manager and long-term island resident, Paul Smith, said there needs to be a rational and sustainable transition to National Park on the island.

“We agree with the State Government to transition mining lease on Straddie to National Park, but this needs to be done sustainably – transitioning away from sand mining too soon will result in significant adverse impacts on the island’s economy,” Paul said.

“The continuation of Enterprise Mine to 2027 would allow other industries to step up and replace some of the economic activity generated by Unimin. Half of the area Unimin proposes to mine has already been disturbed by previous mining, and the remaining area is of low ecological value.

“The Green Party’s call for immediate cessation of mining would cripple the Stradbroke Island community.

“Our activities currently support 650 jobs on and off the island and 44% of total economic activity on the island; it is simply not realistic to expect this level of economic activity to be replaced by tourism in the short to medium term.

“Sand mining was allowed to continue on North Stradbroke Island after Fraser and Moreton were protected in 1976 due to recognised need for the minerals we extract,” he said.

“It’s important to remember these mineral sands are essential to the production of titanium metal, solar panels and lead-free paint.”

Unimin – Mineral Sands invests heavily in maintaining and improving on its world’s best practice and award winning rehabilitation techniques.

“We totally reject any assertion that Unimin has not fully complied with all conditions under its mining leases or is guilty of any unlawful action,” he said.

“Our mining processes are carefully designed to avoid any impact on the island’s aquifer — which continues to supply water to Redlands with no evidence of any contamination.

“Unimin has been supporting detailed research into the unique population of koalas on the island through our partnership with the University of Queensland. We have documented evidence which shows the Koalas are moving back into rehabilitated areas in strong numbers.

“We hope that all stakeholders can work together to achieve an outcome that is in the best interest of the environment, community and economy of North Stradbroke Island.

“At the end of the day, we are seeking the same outcome – a sustainable future for North Stradbroke Island.”

-Ends-

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Unimin Australia Limited (UAL) is an Australian resources company playing a key role on the international and domestic industrial minerals stage. With 10 sites in Queensland and over 40 sites within Australia and New Zealand, UAL is a major contributor to domestic GDP. UAL's operations on North Stradbroke Island include both Silica sands and CRL Minerals Sands (Rutile, Ilmenite and Zircon). CRL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Unimin Australia. Unimin Australia is part of US based Unimin Corporation, a 134 year old family owned business.

Unimin has a proud record of environmental achievement and is committed to a Sustainable Stradbroke. As evidence of its environmental record, the Queensland Government in 2008 awarded Unimin the prestigious Resource Industries Sustainability Award for outstanding performance in Environmental Best Practice.