

14.05.2024

Dear NSW Government,

Subject: Opposition to the Seaham Quarry Project - SSD-59254474

I am writing from the Sydney Basin Koala Network to express our strong opposition to the proposed expansion of Borals Seaham Quarry. The expansion plans, as they stand, pose a significant threat to the environment, biodiversity, and the well-being of the local community. Here are several key points that highlight the detrimental effects of this expansion:

1. Destruction of Koala Habitat and Fragmentation of a Koala Corridor:

The proposed expansion would result in the loss of nearly 30 hectares of crucial Koala habitat and would narrow connected habitat running North to South in between the Williams River and Grahamsham Lake (Figure 1). Connected habitat is crucial for the movement and genetic diversity of the Koala populations. Fragmentation of habitat corridors leads to increased vulnerability to extinction.

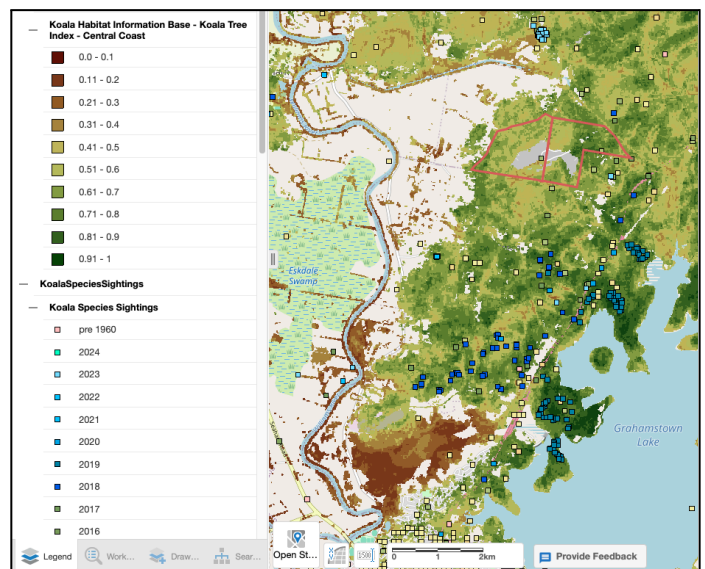


Figure 1: Koala Sightings and Habitat. Development outlined in red.
Map from SEED

2. Threats to other Species: In addition to Koalas, the proposed expansion poses a threat to various other wildlife species that inhabit the area. **The Southern Myotis and Eastern Cave Bat, both threatened species, are particularly vulnerable to habitat loss and disturbance.** The expansion would intensify disturbances such as noise pollution, vibrations, and habitat destruction, further endangering these already vulnerable populations.

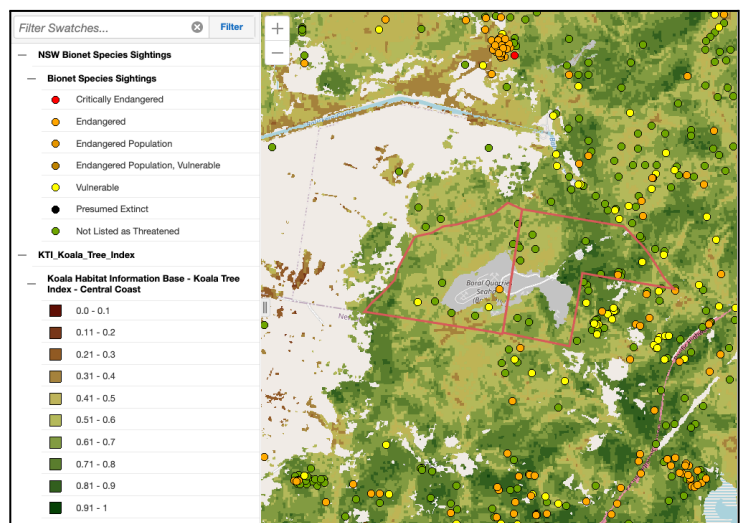


Figure 2: Threatened Species. Development Outlines in red.
Map from SEED

3. **Loss of Biodiversity:** This area is of immense biodiversity value in the Lower Hunter region and serves as a vital ecosystem for numerous species (Figure 2). Biodiversity in NSW is already in crisis, **almost all measures of Biodiversity in [NSW Biodiversity Outlook Report 2024](#) are trending down while Native Forest Clearing continues at an alarmingly high rate.** 89% of Ecosystem resilience to climate change has already been lost, and a mere **29% of capable habitat remains, underlining the urgent need to protect all remaining habitat and fast track restoration efforts.** This expansion would exacerbate the ongoing loss of biodiversity, further endangering already threatened species like the Southern Myotis and Eastern Cave Bat and Koala.

4. **Lack of Social License:** This project lacks the necessary social licence to operate due to unresolved social and environmental issues. **[Recent polling](#) shows record high support for Nature Protection.** There has been insufficient public consultation and examination of alternatives, which unfairly burdens the community and local council. The concerns of residents and environmental advocates have not been adequately addressed, undermining trust in the project's legitimacy.

5. **Water Resource Concerns:** The Seaham Quarry Project raises significant concerns regarding groundwater and surface water pollution. **The potential contamination of watercourses in the Grahamstown catchment could have far-reaching consequences for both wildlife and local communities** reliant on these water sources. It is imperative to ensure the protection of water resources and aquatic ecosystems from the adverse impacts of quarrying activities.

6. **Lack of Responsible Planning:** Approving the Seaham Quarry Project would place an unfair burden on both current and future generations. **There has been a failure to conduct thorough strategic planning to assess the cumulative and combined effects of quarrying activities in the Port Stephens area.** This lack of responsible planning disregards the long-term well-being of the community and the environment. No extension of quarrying approvals should be given to Boral, until appropriate and thorough strategic planning considering the cumulative and combined effects of quarries is undertaken.

In conclusion, **I urge you to reject the proposed expansion of Seaham Quarry,** we cannot continue to approve projects that result in biodiversity loss. **Instead, I call for a comprehensive assessment of alternative solutions and a commitment to protecting the environment, wildlife, and the interests of the local community.** It is essential to prioritise sustainable development practices that preserve our natural heritage for future generations.

Thank you for considering my concerns regarding this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Jade Peace

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[Sydney Basin Koala Network](#)

