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Mining and Industry Projects  
NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

**RE: Part 3A Modification 4 – Invincible Mine Extension (07\_0127 MOD 4) and  
Part 3A Modification 2 – Cullen Valley Mine Extension (DA 200-5-2003 MOD 2)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The proposed modifications to the Invincible and Cullen Valley coal mines should not be allowed because of the effect they will have on the remarkable pagoda landform complex located in *Ben Bullen State Forest*. The landscape of this public forest is continuous with and part of the World Heritage-listed landscape of the *Gardens of Stone NP* and should be fully protected from open-cut mining in a state conservation area for nature conservation, recreation and tourism in a *Gardens of Stone Stage 2* as recommended by the *Office of Environment & Heritage*.

The overall plan to mine in *Ben Bullen SF* was found to be inappropriate only last year. Mining of this remarkable area in progressive stages should not be permitted, as it is a common ploy of mining companies, “death by a thousand (open-)cuts”.

**ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS** Further open-cut mining will destroy the unique biodiversity, scenery and geological values associated with the pagoda landform complex. Its outstanding values including a *Grassy Box Woodland* – a nationally endangered ecological community, many nationally endangered *Clandulla geebung* shrubs and 2,300 threatened *Capertee Stringybark* trees. The *Planning Assessment Commission* recommendation for independent vegetation study should not have been ignored.

**REPORT RELIABILITY** The reliability of Coalpac’s vegetation and other environmental mapping has been questioned recently in an *ABC RN* report. The very fact that this area overlaps and lies within the area rejected plan makes a mockery of Coalpac’s claim that this mine will not have a significant impact on threatened species and communities listed under the Federal *Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

Similarly, their Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment lacks credibility because it did not find a cave art site in the proposed disturbance area for the Cullen Valley Mine. Previous studies had missed other important Aboriginal cave art sites in the area.

**OFFSETS** This new plan will exterminate all plants and wildlife within the open-cut area, a home to lyrebirds, spotted-tail quolls, squirrel gliders, the

critically endangered leek orchid and the grey-headed flying fox. Ecosystems cannot be replanted on farmland and especially after open-cut mining. No mature woodland has ever been established in mine rehabilitation. The biodiversity offsets are inadequate, and cannot replace a *Gardens of Stone Stage 2* reserve.

**BUFFER ZONE** The proposal fails to provide the 300 metre minimum buffer recommended by the *PAC* from the base of the pagoda rock formations and the open-cut area. The buffer provides protection for wildlife including many Lyre Birds and the threatened broad headed snake. If such a buffer were provided, there would be no mine. Apart from this, what is the point of preserving features of scenic beauty if there is an open-cut mine immediately on one side of them?

**ECONOMICS** The poor quality coal in the area proposed can easily be substituted by alternative better quality resources to provide at least 25 years electricity generation by the two power plants in the Lithgow Region without significant extra cost. Nearby underground mines have provided for local electricity power plants for over 20 years with far less environmental impact to significant areas.

**HUMAN & LOCAL IMPACTS** I have taught in Cullen Bullen PS and noted the noise and dust from the existing mine and the complaints of the children and local residents. The proposal is less than two kilometres from Cullen Bullen and dust from this project will lead to increased morbidity and mortality in the community from respiratory and cardiovascular disease. Noise, truck movements and blasting will also adversely impact on residents. The proposal intends to vastly increase water extraction from underground workings from 26Ml/year to 750Ml/year, but fails to address the ongoing fires underground and in waste heaps. Where 2Ml/day of water pumped from old workings is to be released is not explained.

**COALPAC'S RECORD** Coalpac's argument that the mine is needed to pay for environmental rehabilitation of new and historical damage reveals that Coalpac has not rehabilitated land as required by previous mine approvals. How then can this company be trusted to fulfill further promises?

I declare that I have not made any significant donations to political parties in the last year.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Humble