

I object to these proposed modifications to the Invincible and Cullen Valley coalmines because it will adversely impact on the internationally significant pagoda landform complex contained on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range in Ben Bullen State Forest. This public forest should be fully protected from open- cut mining in a State conservation area for nature conservation, recreation, and tourism.

The coal in this proposal is of poor quality and there are better quality substitute resources that can provide for at least 25 years electricity generation by the two power plants in the Lithgow region. The claim of increased costs to electricity consumers if the Coalpac proposal does not proceed is a wild exaggeration. Nearby underground mines have provided for local electricity power plants for over 20 years.

The proposal will destroy by open – cut mining the unique biodiversity, scenery and geological values associated with the pagoda landform complex. Its outstanding values include a Grassy Box Woodland-a nationality endangered ecological community, many nationally endangered Clandulla geebung shrubs and 2,300 threatened Capertee Stringybark trees. Given the importance of the natural environment, the Planning Assessment Commission recommendation for independent vegetation study should not have been ignored by Coalpac in its current environmental assessment.

The proposal fails to provide the 300 metre minimum buffer recommended by the Planning Assessment Commission from the base of the pagoda rock formations and the open – cut area. The buffer provides protection for wildlife including many Lyrebirds and the threatened Broad Headed Snake. if such a buffer was provided, there would be no mine.

The proposal is less than 2 km 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 but fails to address the ongoing fires underground and in waste heaps.

Despite Coalpac's rehabilitation claims ecosystems cannot be replanted on farmland or after open-cut mining native forests. No mature woodland has ever been established through mine rehabilitation. The biodiversity offsets are inadequate and cannot replace a Gardens of Stones Stage 2 reserve over Ben Bullen State Forest.

Please refuse consent to both proposed modifications and stop open- cut mining in the Gardens of Stone region.

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

Yours Sincerely

Edward A Hartley