

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1955

AFFILIATED TO THE NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF NSW

Mining and Industry Projects
NSW Dept Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2011



18 May 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Coalpac Consolidation Project: Application No: 10_0178

This organisation (with over 290 members) is well-informed on the area under consideration.

- In September 2009 members were briefed on the Gardens of Stone Stage II Reserve proposal.
- In October 2011 more than 30 members spent a week-end visiting the Ben Bullen and Newnes State Forests to inspect sites proposed for the Gardens of Stone Stage Two Reserve and threatened by the Coalpac Consolidation Project. We were impressed by the wonderful diversity of wildflowers in bloom - many rare and confined to the area - and particularly by the flora in the upland swamps.

We are deeply concerned by the Coalpac Consolidation Project; open cut mining on a scale that removes over 400 million m³ will have a disastrous and permanent impact on the rich biodiversity and geological structures of the Ben Bullen area. Rehabilitation of open-cut mines CANNOT restore the original landscape and current diversity of fauna and flora.

We totally reject the biodiversity offset package proposed by Coalpac. A unique area of biodiversity cannot be replaced by any other parcel of land. Equivalent areas do not exist.

The long-term legacy of pollution from coal mines was recently highlighted in the World Heritage-listed Grose Valley, where zinc and nickel at 100 times safe levels were detected downstream of the Canyon Colliery Mine that closed 15 years ago in. The pollution was initially detected through absence of typical aquatic life in the waterways. That mine was run by Coalpac for 10 years.

The haste to excavate coal reserves in NSW for short-term gain is disastrous for the long-term viability of the country. Leaving coal in the ground in environmentally sensitive areas protects biodiversity, water quality and environmental features, and conserves resources that future generations will need.

If the Coalpac Consolidation Proposal is approved by the NSW Government, it will alienate public land and destroy the heritage that belongs to all the citizens, not to a private company for short-term profit.

We strongly support the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service's wish to add the Ben Bullen State Forest to the conservation reserve system as a matter of urgency.

This organisation has not made any donations of \$1,000 or more to any political party over the past two years.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Cameron
Honorary Secretary



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