

Carl Dumbleton
Department of Infrastructure and Planning, NSW
by email carl.dumbleton@planning.nsw.gov.au

4 February 2013

RE: Coalpac Consolidation Project

Dear Mr Dumbleton

I am writing to express my support of the Project Assessment Commission report key recommendations regarding this project.

Overall, I highly commend the PAC's statement that *"...when the merits of the project are considered as a whole, the benefits of the project are substantially outweighed by the breadth and potential magnitude of the impacts. The Commission therefore recommends that the project should not be approved."*

In particular, as a keen bushwalker and a person who spent a lot of time in the affected area, I wish to register my full support to the following recommendations:

Recommendations 45-48 (Section 6.2 – Pagodas and Associated Environments)

Everyone I have ever taken to that area is smitten by its beauty and, in particular, by the beauty of the pagoda formations. Many overseas visitors who have travelled extensively in other parts of the world commented that they had not seen anything like that anywhere else. They shake their heads in disbelief when they find out this area can be destroyed. I believe these pagoda formations are unique and must be protected for the future generations.

This area can create a multi-million dollar, sustainable, long term tourism industry for Lithgow.

Recommendations 49-55 (Section 6.3 – Terrestrial Ecology)

The project area has amazing biodiversity which is obvious during even a short visit. The range of flora is astonishing, as is the variety of birdlife. The pagodas require about 1 million years to form 8m of height, and 40m+ pagodas are common. The Coalpac's talk of rehabilitation of this area is therefore nonsensical in these terms. I also believe it is a total nonsense to talk about rehabilitation of the rich and diverse flora that took hundreds if not thousands of years to evolve. A visit to one of the existing 'rehabilitation sites' would show how poor and inadequate this is compared to the naturally evolved environment. The rehabilitation story is designed for city people who may have never been out in the bush to see and compare for themselves. It is impossible to re-constitute this unique land. The same must be said for the so called Biodiversity Offset Package – it is like ripping pages out of a precious book and substituting them with pages from another book – the story will never be the same.

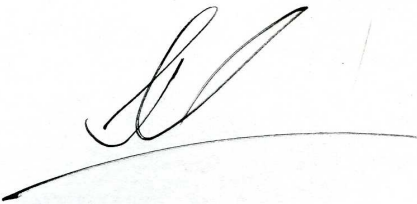
Recommendations 76-80 (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage)

This area is extremely rich in Aboriginal shelters. During the last 6 months, whilst walking there, we found 2 shelters not identified by Coalpac, one of them has great art

and is in the project area, so if the open mine goes ahead, it will be destroyed. I have met and spoken with the local Aboriginal people and I know that this would cause them a lot of distress. We have notified OEH about both finds, and this is mentioned in PAC report. How can we be thinking about destroying precious art created by the Aboriginal people? How can we be thinking about destroying something that may be thousands of years old and is a very important part of our cultural heritage?

In summary, I believe that the Coalpac Project must not be allowed to go ahead and the PAC recommendations must be upheld.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'YB', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Yuri Bolotin
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