Name - Maree Bolfield - I speak on behalf of myself and my 3 grandsons.

Planning and Assessment Commission.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak and voice my concerns about the Proposed Coalpac Consolidation Project.

I would like to begin by stating that I am not anti-mining. We all live in a rich coal mining district - and Cullen Bullen's history and probably its very existence is due to coal mining. For over 150 years the Residents of Cullen Bullen and District have lived in relative harmony with the coal mines. 75% of the Residents of Cullen Bullen have worked in the mining industry or have family members associated with it at some point in time. We live in an Industrial and Coal Mining District - this is a fact. I am against the methods proposed by Coalpac to extract this coal because it will result in the complete destruction and annihilation of the Cullen Bullen surrounds and the Ben Bullen State Forest, and the unique and irreplaceable escarpments, landforms, and habitats.
Sadly Cullen Bullen and District has never been perceived as the "Shining Star" of the Greater Lithgow City Council - people ask questions like "Why would you live in Cullen Bullen? There's nothing out there." And that may be one of the main reasons people choose to live in Cullen Bullen - for the peace and quiet - for the unhurried lifestyle and the beautiful natural environment.

In the past we were able to say we enjoyed the clean air and the clean water - but that was in the past.

I would like to draw peoples attention to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Article 2 talks about children's rights to develop in a healthy way -

Article 4 relates to children's rights to good housing -

Article 7 relates to the right to go to school for free and the right to play -

I suggest that these rights will be breached if the proposal goes ahead - children's healthy housing and the right to play and go to school will suffer.

I also came across the Children's Bill of Rights which was compiled by 650 children from 7 countries across three continents in 1996.
Article 2 of this Bill of Rights states:

2. Right to Inherit a Better World

Children have the right to inherit a world that is at least as good as the one their parents inherited.

Travelling from Portland to Cullen Bullen
and from Lithgow to Cullen Bullen - the
"new" restored landscape which replaces the
mountains and escarpments where open cut
mining has taken place - is not "a better world"
If this proposal goes ahead - the approach from
Mudgee will also be an environmental graveyard.

The Children's Bill of Rights also refers to children's
rights to influence the future. Article 3 -
so they can create the kind of world they want to
grow up in, by being involved in discussions about
economic, social and political issues and policies.
Article 12 refers to leisure and play -
Section 2 of this Bill Relates to
Social and National Policies

Article 20 talks about the right to a clean environment -
(water, air, ground and sea -
Our children and our grandchildren will inherit
the world we create - Will this proposal create
the kind of world we want for our children?)
International Human Rights Standards

In 2008 the United Nations Human Rights Council welcomed the "Protect, respect, remedy" Framework for Business and Human Rights, developed by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Business and Human Rights, led by Harvard Professor John Ruggie.

The Framework has 3 Pillars:

- The State Duty to Protect Human Rights
- The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights
- The need for greater access to remedy for victims of business-related abuse.

The Australian Mining and Resource Sector and Human Rights Fact Sheet 3

Talks about "ensuring the appropriate use of water, land and air.

It also refers to the impact on housing and standards of living. Businesses need to respect the right to housing and an adequate standard of assessing their impact on housing.
land, water, farming and employment needs of the local community in which they operate.

Many facts and figures have been presented regarding the adverse impacts on health, social fabric and infrastructure as well as the complete destruction of the natural environment if this project is approved.

From my perspective - not one aspect of the lives of the residents of Cullen Bullen and District and the surrounding Ben Bullen State Forest will be enhanced in any way if this project is approved.

The Hunter Valley and The Mudgee District have areas where small towns and villages once existed - today there is nothing there. I don't know why these people's homes and villages couldn't be saved.

I have Rights, my grandchildren have Rights and the people of Cullen Bullen have Rights.

I would like to thank the 920 individuals and organisations who believe people have rights and who believe our precious environment needs preserving and protecting.

Thank you for your time.
Websites


Maren Botfield