Ms Sera Taschner  
NSW Planning Assessment Commission  
GPO Box 3415 Sydney NSW  
pac@pac.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Taschner,

I am writing as a very concerned member of the Australian public, in relation to the proposed ‘Coalpac Pty Ltd Consolidation Project’ Castlereagh Highway Cullen Bullen, NSW. I strongly urge you to reject this proposal as the consolidation involves extending open-cut and highwall mining into a large area of the publicly-owned Ben Bullen State Forest (BBSF) and will impact the adjoining lands of the Gardens of Stone.

Having personally visited this beautiful area and seen the natural beauty, diverse flora and fauna, pagodas, and Historical Aboriginal sites, I feel that this proposal will be so destructive to an incredible area of natural beauty and cultural heritage that should be protected and preserved.

I have also been witness to standing coal mines in the area that have been left in a disgusting mess with absolutely no regeneration. These mines have left a polluted disgrace into a natural environment that should be looked after. It makes me feel so sad that a proposal to extend mining in this beautiful place is even being considered, as it shows such little care and respect for our home and the environment that we live in.

In addition, I am opposed to the proposed development of the Coalpac opencut mine because:

- It will degrade all biodiversity from 1088 hectares of mainly old growth forest and habitat in the BBSF and turn its geodiversity into piles of waste rock.
- I support the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service wish to add BBSF to the conservation reserve system as a matter of priority; it is an area with outstanding natural values.
- Permitting this proposal would see the NSW Coalition Government privatising and liquidating a large part of public land, whereas I expect state forests to be protected from destruction in perpetuity.
- The Gardens of Stone’s iconic and unique sandstone pagodas provide a safe haven for a variety of native flora and fauna; it is a biodiversity hot-spot. If approved, their features and stability may be threatened by partial or total collapse, compromising the region’s tourism.
- Our Iconic Lyrebirds use the sides of pagodas in this area to nest and raise their young. Mining will completely remove their food habitats.
- Habitats for the Regent Honeyeater, Tiger Quoll and Powerful Owl and at least 32 threatened native animals, 5 of which are listed under the EPBC Act, will be completely removed.
- The large open-cut will create significant dust and air quality issues which will directly affect local residents.
- The open-cut poses risks to the quality and quantity of westward-flowing surface water, and the quality of eastward-flowing groundwater.

This area deserves to be protected and I strongly urge you to reject this destructive and irreversible mining proposal and act to protect the region within a State Conservation Areas.

Yours Sincerely,

Larisa Asimus