**Media Release 16 April, 2025**

**NSW Parliament inquiry recommends reform to open up**

**former mining land in Wollondilly to new opportunities**

A NSW parliamentary inquiry has recommended sweeping reforms to laws governing former mining land, potentially opening up tourism, manufacturing and renewable energy development opportunities for the Wollondilly Shire.

[The final report of the Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use Inquiry](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=3046#tab-reportsandgovernmentresponses) was tabled in NSW Parliament this week and it includes a key recommendation to remove bureaucratic obstacles to enable former mining land to be repurposed for the next generation of industry, including renewable energy projects.

One of the main recommendations is directly relevant to the Wollondilly Shire and its history of coal mining: “*That the government conduct a comprehensive program of reform of current land uses and opportunities for future uses across regions experiencing mining and energy transition.”*

The Inquiry committee, made up of MPs from the government, opposition and minor parties, urged the NSW Government to consider former mining land ideal “*for housing, environmental, educational tourism, sport, infrastructure, advanced manufacturing and renewable energy purposes.”*

ZEN Energy and the SADA Dunbier Group, partners in the proposed Western Sydney Pumped Hydro project at the former Wollondilly Coal Washery site at Nattai, gave evidence at an Inquiry hearing in late 2024 and presented the project as case study of the second life benefits of former mining land.

Wollondilly Council made a submission to the Inquiry and expressed its excitement about the project's potential to bring 'significant benefits' and investment into the local Wollondilly community, including 1,500 construction jobs, and 80 ongoing jobs. The Council further noted the benefits of such initiatives in seeking to achieve a more sustainable energy future:

“*Projects like the [Western Sydney Pumped Hydro Project] demonstrate the potential for government and private partnerships and investment into projects that deliver community benefit and seek to achieve a more sustainable future for communities via renewable technologies.”*

All Inquiry members also agreed to a key recommendation that the NSW Government pursue “*opportunities to encourage innovative post-mining land uses including: (i) the planning and implementation of essential supporting infrastructure for future site use and; (ii) the development of solar farms, pumped hydro, and other clean energy industries.*”

The Inquiry report and its 13 recommendations will now be reviewed by the NSW Government, and it will announce its commitments to act within six months.

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