



MEDIA RELEASE

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Trust Welcomes Court Decision on Development at Gwandalan

“Today the Land & Environment Court has reminded us that it is the Government’s role to make plans for communities not developers. The outstanding heritage of the Wallarah Peninsula including Gwandalan, Catherine Hill Bay and Nords Wharf has now been protected for all Australians,” said Trust Executive Director, John Neish today.

The National Trust has been campaigning to save Catherine Hill Bay from destruction by rampant overdevelopment. This idyllic mining village established in the 1870s on the Central Coast (30 kms south of Newcastle) comprises about 100 homes. The area is highly significant environmentally and for its rich built and cultural heritage.

Today’s court decision declares void the approval by former Planning Minister, Frank Sartor, for a 600 home Development Application in the area.

“There is some concern that the State Government may now introduce retrospective legislation to facilitate the developments proceeding. However, there can be little doubt that this precious part of the Australian coastline is not suited to the development proposed and should be kept for future generations for its natural and historical significance.”

“The Trust had never opposed reasonable and modest expansions of the existing villages to meet local needs, but the proposed development was out of all scale with the present town and inconsistent with the region’s character. The Draft Hunter Regional Strategy originally identified this site as a low priority for development,” said Mr Neish.

“We await the Planning Minister’s response to the Court’s decision which allows Minister Keneally to make a final decision in keeping with the community’s aspirations for the protection of the NSW coast and one of the Hunter Region’s naturally unspoilt places,” said Mr Neish.

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