

Matthew DiMaggio - Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

From: Alison Bencke <Alisonbencke@hotmail.com>
To: <information@planning.nsw.gov.au>
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Subject: Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

NOTE These are Dept of Planning MANDATORY fields.

My NAME is: Alison Bencke

My Full ADDRESS is: 1114 Gloucester tops Road, Gloucester

Dear Sir, I oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project. My family have been in the area for 40 years. Our sons and their families are hoping to farm on our property in the future, we do not think they will want to live in this area if the mine goes ahead. Gloucester is seen as an attractive place to live with the potential to become a food bowl for the state.

Proximity – The mine boundary will be situated 900metres from Forbesdale Residential Estate of 35 families. Those families will experience unacceptable levels of noise, dust, and traffic. They have already lost their peaceful, rural lifestyle with this threat. Many have chosen not to improve their homes because they no longer have any value.

No one wants to live next door to an open-cut coal mine. The only way they can sell their homes is to the mining company, GRL and they don't want them.

Noise – It is a known fact that noise is the number one complaint from residents who live near coal mines. There is the noise of the mine workings. There is the noise of the loading trains. But the most destructive noise for humans is 'infrasound'. Infrasound causes sleep disturbances and can lead to major health complaints. The Rocky Hill mine will cause high levels of noise for residents close to the mine but also unacceptable levels of noise for residents in Gloucester town.

No amount of monitoring or measuring will stop the noise impact for the residents of Gloucester.

Health – negative health impacts, which can result in serious illnesses, from the dust from open cut coal mines are well known. Most of Gloucester township (including the hospital and schools) falls within the acknowledged 5km health impact zone of the Rocky Hill mine – thus placing a large proportion of the population at risk. Those most affected by the health impacts are our children, the old and the sick. Are the people of Gloucester just collateral damage?

Impact on Tourism – Visitors come to Gloucester to experience the peaceful, country lifestyle. An open cut coal mine within 5km of Gloucester and within sight of the Bucketts Way will have a major adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area. Tourism is currently worth over \$30M to the Gloucester economy. It will be impacted with a resultant loss of jobs and income generated in the township.

Employment – Companies in town are already experiencing the negative impacts of having a mine nearby. One company lost 11 apprentices to the Stratford mine, down the valley. Mining is good for employment if you want to work in a mine. It is not good for people who want to work in other industries in a mining town.

Water – The location of the proposed Rocky Hill mine is on the Avon River floodplain, and in the water catchment area of the Manning River which supplies drinking water to over 80,000 people. The Avon River has flooded 5 times in 4 years, with 2 floods occurring in February this year. There is real potential for contamination of the water in the catchment.

Cumulative Impacts – If approved, the Rocky Hill coal mine won't be operating in isolation in the Gloucester Valley. Yancoal has requested expansion of its mine at Stratford and AGL is planning on 330 CSG wells in the Valley – many of AGL's wells are to be placed within the Rocky Hill mine and the Stratford mine area. No other area in NSW has coal and CSG companies fighting over the same piece of land. To not consider the cumulative impacts of this mining is reckless and irresponsible.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours sincerely, Alison Bencke New South Wales 2422, Australia