

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

From: Megan Benson <megabens@gmail.com>
To: <information@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 9/11/2013 12:22 PM
Subject: Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

NOTE These are Dept of Planning MANDATORY fields.

My NAME is: Megan Benson

My Full ADDRESS is: 2455 The Lakes Way, Bungwahl 2423

Dear Sir,

I agree with the following reasons in opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Mine:

- Proximity to residential areas of Gloucester

The mine is proposed only 900 metres from the residential area of Forbesdale. These residents will carry an unacceptable burden and will be impacted by dust, noise and loss of visual amenity, resulting in risks to their health and also loss of property value. There is no assurance that if approved Rocky Hill mine would not advance closer to residential areas – with greater impacts.

- Impacts on Health

Health impacts 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.

- Impact on other industries in the Gloucester Valley

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.

Additionally, the Rocky Hill project is already adversely impacting on Gloucester's agriculture having led to the loss of food-producing land, loss of employment and incomes and loss of business for those companies supporting agriculture.

- Environment

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.

FURTHER – The economic justification for the proposal MUST be comprehensively and independently assessed to ensure the hidden costs to community (in terms of health and environmental impacts, social amenity, economic security and long term employment opportunity for the region) are negated. It is no longer acceptable for the Government to accept at face value the economic assessment presented by the vested interest proponents. The Rocky Hill mine proposal, if approved, will transform Gloucester into just another mining town and it would be irresponsible for the Government and it's responsibility to all constituents, not to transparently and openly disclose details of independent economic justification for the project.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours sincerely, Megan Benson New South Wales 2423, Australia