

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

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**From:** Jane Stevenson <janestevenson6@bigpond.com>  
**To:** <information@planning.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 9/27/2013 7:47 PM  
**Subject:** Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

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NOTE These are Dept of Planning MANDATORY fields.

My NAME is: Jane Stevenson

My Full ADDRESS is: 235 Curricabark Rd Gloucester NSW 2422

Dear Sir, I OPPOSE the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project. For all the reasons stated below I believe that if the government approves the development of the Rocky Hill coal mine it will be a betrayal of everything that I thought our government stood for, and a betrayal of all the people of this town who have worked hard to make a home for themselves in this beautiful valley. I came here from Sydney eight years ago, seeking a quiet and lovely place in which to live after the stress of living in the big city. I have supported all the businesses in this small town, I have renovated my home and spent a considerable amount of money settling into my new surroundings. I came here with no prior knowledge of the coal mines that have caused such distress to Gloucester residents. As a pharmacist working part-time in the local pharmacy I came to realise the stress and emotional upheaval that has been caused to town residents by the operation of the mines. The mines that are already here, the Stratford and Duralie open cut mines, were originally 'sold' to the residents under the farcical claim of being 'boutique mines that will close after a few years' operation'. They are now two monstrous open coal mines that are a blight on the valley. Ownership of the mines has been constantly flogged to the highest bidder, and currently the Chinese-owned Yancoal company owns and operates both mines under the name of Gloucester Coal with both Stratford and Duralie operations. The jobs for local people that were promised as an inducement to the residents of the town to allow the mines to operate have not eventuated. Mining is a specialist operation, experienced miners are brought in from elsewhere, mainly the Hunter Valley, and the 'locals' have been given the crumbs of a few unskilled jobs such as labouring and truck driving, and perhaps office work for a few local accounts people. Yancoal has just given the sack to 120 workers because of the downturn in the demand for coal, and the effect on Gloucester is even greater distress and grief ... even the local jobs that were provided have now been lost. THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE ROCKY HILL MINE, AND THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION WHATSOEVER FOR THE GOVERNMENT APPROVING IT. China is getting out of coal as fast as it can, and it may be the case that the price of coal may never get back to where it was a year or eighteen months ago. If that is the case it is quite likely that the operations of the Rocky Hill mine will be only just viable, and any profit to the owners (who are not local) and/or the state government will not justify the damage to the well-being of the town of Gloucester. Gloucester sits at the gateway to the Barrington Tops World Heritage Scenic Area and it has a wonderful future in eco-tourism because of its beautiful landscape and clean rivers. To risk all of that for the sake of some polluting and basically short-term coal mine would just be a disgrace, and I beg the people who make the decisions to think about what yet another coal mine will do to this valley. Once the valley floor is mined it can NEVER be re-habilitated, it is ludicrous and deceitful to claim that it could be. I object to the mine, and I ask you to disallow it. Jane Stevenson, Retired Pharmacist, Gloucester.

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, Jane Stevenson, Gloucester New South Wales 2422, Australia