

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

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**From:** Rod Besier <r.besier@bigpond.com>  
**To:** <information@planning.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 10/13/2013 10:02 AM  
**Subject:** Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

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Rod Besier

7 Forbesdale Close Forbesdale NSW 2422

Dear Sir, I oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project.

**Proximity:** The mine boundary will be situated 900metres from Forbesdale Residential Estate of 35 families. As retirees, my wife Robin and I live in the Estate, will experience unacceptable levels of noise, dust, and traffic. We do not want to live in a house that has to rely on air conditioning and double-glazed closed windows. That is response we made to senior executives of the proposed mine when they visited our home in 2010. We have already lost the peaceful, rural lifestyle with this threat. We have decided not to do improvements to our home or the block of land. The value of our family home has dropped 30%. We do not want to live next door to an open-cut coal mine. Should you approve this project, part of the Conditions of Consent should be the mining company buy us out for a good price, pre-mining, at today's market. Also, the Department of Planning & Infrastructure should now define the distance for considering compulsory acquisition, which should be at least, 3kms from the mine pits. To make matters worse, in a couple of years' time, we will be surrounded by up to 110 coal seam gas (CSG) wells, over the two beautiful dairy farms, which is part of our wonderful visual amenity; all this will be lost. We do not wish to stay in Gloucester should the mine be approved. We are distressed that we cannot choose to leave – who will buy a home 1km from the Rocky Hill coal mine? One of the CSG wells is 400 metres from our home.

**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 i.e. blasting, truck movements and large plant movements. There is the noise of the coal being dropped from loading bins into empty coal trains in the middle of the night. 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 unacceptable high levels of noise for us on the Forbesdale Estate. No amount of monitoring or measuring will stop the noise impact for us at Forbesdale.

**Health** – Negative health impacts, which can result in serious illnesses, from the dust from open cut coal mines are well known. We at Forbesdale are well and truly within the acknowledged 5km health impact zone of the Rocky Hill mine – thus placing us at a greater risk than the population of Gloucester. Those most affected by the health impacts are our children, the old and the sick. We are in our late sixties and feel the residents of Forbesdale are just collateral damage. Any medical problems we have now will put our health more at risk.

**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. We are privileged to enjoy views of the iconic Bucketts and Mograni Ranges. We have spoken to tourists and like us the question is asked: In reality how can any claims be made that the area mined can be returned to even its near natural state?

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. I doubt if a truly comprehensive historical assessment has been done by the proponents in regards to flooding.

Cumulative Impacts – If approved, the Rocky Hill coal mine won't be operating in isolation in the Gloucester Valley. Yancoal has requested modification expansion of it's 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. if ignored I feel future governments will face serious class actions for damages e.g. health, arising out of any approvals in respect of the Rocky Hill Open Cut Coal Mine Project, Yancoal's Stratford Open Cut Coal Mine expansion and AGL's CSG Gloucester Project of 330+ gas wells and a pipeline to Hexham.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours sincerely, Rod Besier New South Wales 2422, Australia