

655 Bundook Rd
Gloucester NSW 2422

28th October, 2013

Director, Mining Projects
Development Assessment Systems & Approvals
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir,

RE: ROCKY HILL COAL PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION SSD-5156

I am writing to oppose the Gloucester Resources Ltd's development application for an open cut coal mine near the Gloucester township.

The Rocky Hill Coal Project is far too close to Gloucester, the Forbesdale Estate and surrounding areas of farms and properties. There are numerous residents within a short distance of the main extraction boundary area, some as close as 900m. We are talking about real people here and their homes. This is where they live, work and play.

The health impacts of mining, transporting and burning coal are well known and pose one of the most significant health issues of our time. Very fine coal dust is a critical issue that GRL has not attended to and which appears to be outside the interest of the NSW government. I am asking you to pay serious attention to this matter.

No one seems to be dealing with the sub 2.5 to 1 micron particles, yet these are the ones that travel furthest in the air and are able to enter the bloodstream through the lungs. This dust causes strokes, heart attacks and reduces the birth weight of babies. Add to this damage to genes, leading to cancers and mutations. Toxic gases such as sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxides and carbon monoxide are also produced. The dust will be deposited on rooftops and into the tanks and waterways used for drinking water. Just because we can't see the dangerous dust particles doesn't mean that they aren't there, insidiously working their way into the bodies of human beings and livestock, eventually entering the foodchain.

Gloucester township, schools and hospitals are all in the direct path of coal dust borne on southerly winds. The nature of the Gloucester valley, being steep sided, means that dust particles are trapped in the area. Imagine breathing in this filthy, contaminated air and knowing that your children are doing the same, all the while being powerless to stop it. Who will pay for the health costs in the future once the mine has done its damage and gone?

Gloucester's economy has quite happily existed mainly on agriculture and tourism. It is not fair to say that mining will make a significant positive contribution to the local economy. It has become evident from the Stratford mine experience, that any new mining jobs take workers away from other industries, mainly agriculture and manufacturing, rather than creating new employment. A mine is a short-term project. What happens to Gloucester's economy after the mine has closed and forced the collapse of other sustainable industries?

With the ever increasing pressure put on the world's food supply due to population growth, the protection of the agricultural industry is going to be absolutely essential if we are to feed ourselves. What is more important than food and water from safe, healthy and clean sources? We will not have this basic human need met if the Rocky Hill Coal Project is allowed to go ahead. Gloucester has a critical part to play in providing for the world's future food supplies. It is imperative that we do not let mining take precedence over agriculture and all it can provide for everyone.

I do not accept that it is reasonable to inflict harm and suffering on people and communities simply for the short-term gains of a mining company. In this day and age, with all that we know, it is absolutely irresponsible to allow a project such as the Rocky Hill coal project to go ahead. We are not living in the times of the Industrial Revolution anymore. The NSW State Government needs to realise that they have a duty of care to protect their citizens from known harm. I urge you to act responsibly and refuse GRL's application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robyn Hooke". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Robyn" and the last name "Hooke" clearly distinguishable.

Robyn Hooke.