

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

From: Julie Sheppard <jashep50@gmail.com>
To: <information@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 10/28/2013 3:57 PM
Subject: Submission Opposing the Rocky Hill Coal Project - SSD5156

NOTE These are Dept of Planning MANDATORY fields.

My NAME is: Julie Sheppard

My Full ADDRESS is: 55 Eagles Rd, Razorback 2571

Dear Sir,

I oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project.

I have known and loved the Gloucester area since 1971 when I took up my first teaching appointment at Gloucester High School. I have retained strong links with the area ever since through strong friendships forged back then.

I have recently been alarmed by the proposal to expand mining close to the township. I feel that this will destroy the Gloucester that I know and love. It will spoil an idyllic area for all time – all for the short-term gain of the profits from mining a fossil fuel that should stay in the ground anyway if we are serious about tackling climate change.

I have seen the impacts of mining on towns and villages in the Hunter Valley and cannot bear to think that Gloucester is to be subjected to a similar fate.

I also oppose the mine for the following specific reasons:

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, Julie Sheppard New South Wales 2571, Australia