

8 October 2013



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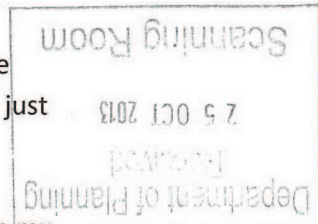
Director, Mining Projects
Development Assessment Systems & Approvals
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Sir

Re: Development Application SSD 5156 – Rocky Hill Coal Project -Forbesdale

I would like to share with you and take you on a journey of the mixed emotions that I have experienced before and after becoming aware of the real prospect of having, a Coal Mine just located one kilometre from my family home.



We moved to the beautiful, picturesque town of Gloucester on the 25 January 2001, when my husband started his new career path. This was a huge and exciting adventure with my eldest son starting kindergarten one week after relocating. We rented a house in town until we had saved enough money to consider buying a home, or if possible, buying a block of land and building a new home on it.

I first saw our block back in 2003, when with my mother, my then preschool aged second son, and myself were driving the Gloucester district looking for that perfect spot that might be available for us to purchase and build our dream family home. We saw a few properties that day, but it was instantly different when we came across 19 Grantham Rd. I parked the car in the cul-de-sac and we walked a few metres up the entrance with the "For Sale" sign. Mum and I both looked at each other and then back at the view, words were not expressed for ages until we simultaneously said, "***we/you won't ever be built out!***" That started the wheels in motion. We went and got the 'contract for sale' from the Real Estate Agent. My husband and myself, both from a rural background, were elated by the prospect of raising our two beautiful boys in such a picturesque location overlooking the Avon Valley. This, combined with the opportunity to have a 7 ½ acre elevated block situated only 6 kilometres from the Gloucester township with the bonus of power and town water amenities was exactly what we were looking for. There was not one tree, which was ok; it could be our blank canvas.

I have included photographs so you can visualise why we have undertaken this project to create our dream family home.



After much discussion, deliberation and investigation we became the very proud owners of 19 Grantham Rd, Forbesdale. ***"Still unaware that there was an exploration licence just 1 kilometre away"***.

The next step was to begin the planning of our first family home from scratch. I took on the pleasurable challenge of drawing the plans for our new home and addressing all the legal and environmental y sustainable requirements. We selected a local building company and our dream started to become a reality. Firstly, the paper trail with the builders, then tweaking all the details so we could best incorporate these spectacular views. This was the first house that my husband and I had built and we put our heart and soul into getting it as good as we could with the funds we had available. We looked to the future and incorporated a fully self contain granny flat to cater for our ageing parents, which is now occupied by my 87 year old father. During this time, we started planting trees and fencing our block as it was not fenced on all sides. After a year or so of planning, our builders notified us of the approval to commence work. What a special time!

Our beautiful children, both in primary school at this stage and in a great little community with an array of opportunities, both came to see the local excavator man move and create our pad on which our family home would sit. With the unknown of what lay underneath, a mixed bag of emotions flowed with each scoop of dirt, would we hit rock? How much will it cost if we do? Can we afford this? Our children kept us grounded and strong as this was our ***investment for the future and for them***.

We were so fortunate with our builders and where included in every decision. I remember Easter 2005, Peter was 10 and Ben was 7, great ages for an Easter egg hunt or better still camping. Our builders gave us permission to camp near our house site, even though it was still a skeleton with only a floor, roof ,and the treasured builders port-a-loo. It was a special time, the boys road their pushbikes while we planted more trees, we all played cricket and soccer and the boys helped set up the fire pit to cook our pot roast for dinner. After dinner, my husband pointed out the Milky Way, Saucepan and other veriest star constellations. I can still remember how quiet it was, and remember reminiscing about when I was a little girl growing up on a large country property out west, listening to that very sound of silence. That is about to be shattered by coalmine operations and the other activities that go along with it including extra train movements. No matter what the experts say, there will be excess noise, even with the bunding that they say they are going to put in place. We have been told that double glazed windows will help, but the joy of living where we are at present, is that we can leave the windows and sliding doors open to

13 October 2005



let the regular breeze we get blow through. This will be a thing of the past. Another problem that will occur, which will make us keep our doors and windows closed, will be excess dust. To say that it will not occur is a fallacy. We already have black dust on our roof, which appears to have come from the

Stratford Coalmine that is over 5kms from where we live.



Our first night in our beautiful new family home was on the 18 August 2005. The children yet again, were so excited; they both had their own bedrooms with a feature wall painted in their chosen favourite colour and they each had a large window in their bedrooms facing north. When the blinds are drawn, they can see for miles. Our bedroom is situated at the

other end of our home, with a large sliding door leading out to the Juliette balcony, and windows on two other sides so we can capture the cooler night air in the warmer months. That evening we did not have any blinds or curtains and we were in awe of our brilliant views to the North, East and South. This is also about to change, as the lights from the mining operations will ensure that we will have to keep our blinds closed to block them out. It did not take my husband or myself long to enjoy the sound of silence to assist with our sleep. Now in the warmer nights (as already stated above) we enjoy having the comfort of leaving the sliding door open to capture the Easterly breeze that we can experience most afternoons.

Since then we have made many investments to our property, including more trees, irrigation systems, more fencing, retaining walls , stairs, and more recently, a second hand in ground pool. There is still a number of projects that we would undertake if we did not have a mine coming to our doorstep, but to do so, seems like throwing good money after bad. What now would be over investing, would have originally added value to our home. Many of the investments we have made would not have been undertaken if we had been aware of what could be in the process of happening. I am sure

View from main bedroom October 2005



you can imagine the devastation that we all felt when we heard the news of the possibility of a coalmine so close. From that time to present, ***our life has been put on hold***. We could not sell our home for a decent price, as who wants to live near the wall of a mine, and we cannot afford to give it away as we have a mortgage. We have put our blood, sweat and tears into this now worthless patch of dirt, bricks and mortar. We do not want to put any more money in to it, but we have an

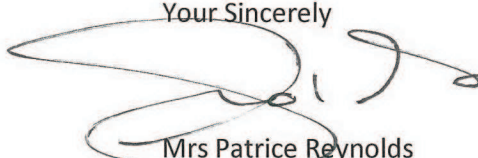
incomplete pool area, that by law, has to be completed by the end of this month. With the UNKNOWN in front of us, we do not know how to complete this project.

I used to think that if something ever happened to my husband and I, that our children would be financially secure, as our home and land, when the market was at its high, would have been worth around \$1,000,000.00, and possibly a lot more in the future. As discussed earlier, we would be lucky to sell our home at present without giving it away. We are living our life in limbo, not knowing what is to come and feel that there is only two outcomes, both which need to be sorted out ASAP to allow us to get our lives back. (1)The mine application needs to be revoked, never to be allowed back on the table, or (2) That it be approved, and the mining company should have to buy us out at a figure that would allow us to move on, have what we presently have, and not suffer financially in any way.

I have told my husband, that if the mine does go ahead, I will not be living where we are. He said, he can understand, but that we cannot move elsewhere as we could not sell our house for a reasonable price and afford to move without borrowing to the hilt again. The strain that this is putting on our relationship is completely unfair and something that we should not have to face after being happily married for over 18 years.

I thank you for your time to read my story. I would also like to say that I am not anti mining, although I do think that there is a place for it, and Gloucester Township District not being the one. We only have a few pockets of pristine areas and where do we go when they are all gone. There must be other ways that governments can collect revenue, that somehow do not affect the health be it mental or physical and the lifestyle that individuals choose. Please feel free to walk in my garden oasis and enjoy what we have at present, so you can understand what it will be like to lose it, or should I say have it taken away.

Your Sincerely



Mrs Patrice Reynolds
19 Grantham Road
Gloucester, NSW 2422

I have made no reportable political donations.

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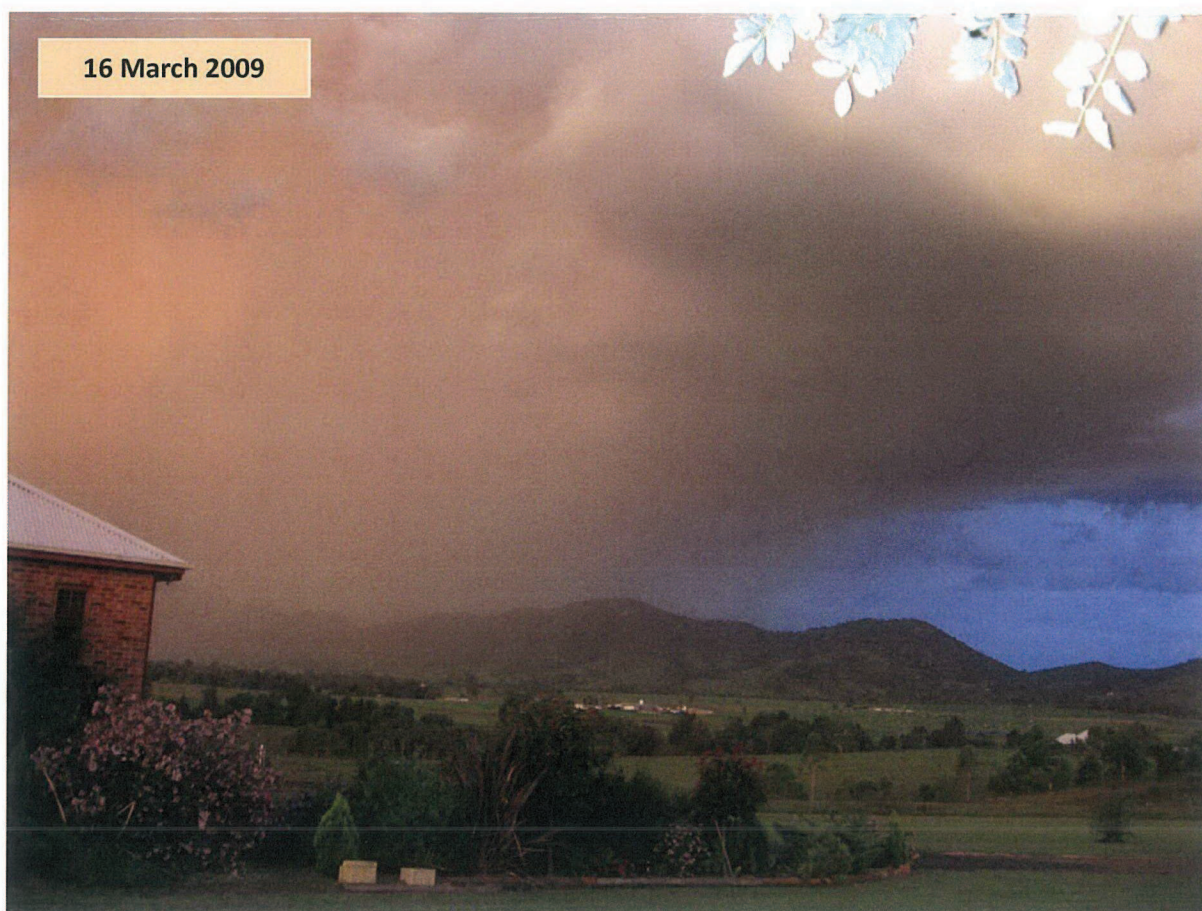
29 December 2008



16 February 2009



16 February 2009



16 March 2009