

I oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Project together with the Stratford Mine Modification. The people of Gloucester have made it clear that we do not want any coal mines – not only through individual people but through our council prior to amalgamation. Please reject this proposal.

No.1 Dust – GRL plans to generate 944 tonnes (over 1600 cubic metres) of dust every year. Children, the elderly, and people with respiratory disease will be at risk. I am particularly disturbed because measures have shown Gloucester to already exceed the limits for particulate pollution. Since the prevailing winds will blow the dust produced from the mine in the direction of Gloucester township at all seasons, and since our weather pattern includes atmospheric inversion, the risk of dangerous levels of pollution are too high. My concern includes not only dust from blasting and general mining activities, but also small particulates (PM2.5) produced by the high volume of trucking by diesel vehicles in order to transport the coal from Rocky Hill to Stratford. This kind of pollution not only causes respiratory problems but the particles are small enough to be absorbed through the lungs into the bloodstream and have been declared carcinogenic.

No.2 Scenic beauty – GRL claims that overburden from the mine will be used for ‘visibility barriers’. The largest is over 50m high and over 2km long. They will be visible to travellers along the Bucketts Way and residents on the eastern side of the valley. They will be as ugly as the mine, as can be evidenced for the similar view of overburden at the Durallie mine in Wards River. A large proportion of Gloucester's economy is dependent on tourism. Although GRL claims tourists will come to look at the mine, this is not borne out by the facts. Almost no tourist has ever requested to see the existing Stratford mine, so why would the Rocky Hill mine suddenly generate tourism?

No.3 Rehabilitation – There is not enough overburden to fill the voids or produce the claimed landform. 20 million tonnes of coal removed. Topsoil 40cm deep over rubble 190 metres deep will not hold water in dry spells.

GRL claim that they will fill in any voids and completely rehabilitate the area to look even better than nature has created. What if GRL go into liquidation and the mine ceases to operate? If we use the examples of mines in the Hunter then we cannot believe them. The bond put aside for rehabilitation is never enough. The mining company moves on and leaves the clean up to the taxpayers.

No.4 Night Lights – Gloucester sits in a quiet, rural valley with dark, starry night skies. This will disappear with the lights from a mine in the Avon valley. Even though the mine will not be operating at night for three years, the workers will have shifts until 10.30pm. They will be travelling along the haul road and to and from the mine. Their lights will be visible to residents in the Avon valley and will glow into the sky.

No.5 Extensions to the mine. – GRL have already earmarked the area north of the proposed Rocky Hill mine for ‘Stage Two’. As with all coalmines, when the first mine is approved then they follow on with extension after extension, after extension. If the coal is there then GRL will mine it. The exploration licence extends north up the Avon Valley to the town. There is no minimum distance from residences, as with the 2km for CSG.

No.6 Housing values – during the time when AGL proposed coal seam gas extraction, the value of our properties decreased significantly and it became almost impossible to sell. When the CSG wells finally went away, suddenly houses started selling again. Most of the people I know have stated they will try to leave Gloucester if the mine goes ahead. A mass exodus will cause a big decrease in property values. It will also depress the retail market in the town and surrounding areas.

No.7 Benefit to the NSW Government and the people of NSW – GRL will pay \$63M in revenue and \$60M in taxes. The life of the mine is 16 to 20 years. That means the company is paying just over \$3M a year for revenue and taxes.

The question is, why would the Government approve a mine that is paying so little to the coffers of NSW?

Gloucester does not need this mine. NSW does not need this mine. Australia does not need this mine. And the world does not need any more coal mines. Ever. Do not approve the Rocky Hill Coal Project.