

22 September 2016

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To The Director – Resource Assessments  
Planning Services  
Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001



**Rocky Hill Coal Project – Application No SSD-5156**  
**Stratford Coal Extension Project – Application No SSD - 4966 MOD1**

Dear Sir/Madam

I strongly oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Project and Stratford Mine modification on the following grounds:

**1. Impact of this proposed mine on my Family and Me**

My husband and I bought a house in the township in the early 80's and then built a new home on our property on Bucketts Rd. in 1993 at which time there was no mining in the Gloucester Valley. My parents have lived nearby since 1982 and we have all enjoyed the peaceful lifestyle, clean air and water. My sister has also lived here permanently for several years. As an asthma sufferer, she dreads breathing coal dust. We all object to having our tank water supply contaminated by coal dust particles. I am told this is highly likely as this happens at Stratford and surrounds.

I also believe that this mine will have an adverse impact on property values in the entire Valley and make them almost unsaleable, thus prohibiting owners moving to a clean area. This aspect of the proposed mine is causing considerable stress to me and many other people in the area.

**2. Perceived Bias at Council level for Submission**

Following the recent Council amalgamations, I was most disturbed to learn that an administrator had been appointed by the State government. This person has strong mining connections and I believe he will not represent the concerns of the majority of the local constituents in any submission made by the newly appointed Council. I can only think that this appointment smacks of being in the interests of the State rather than of the people of this community.

**3. Predicted Royalties and Future of Coal**

Rocky Hill Project website has predicted royalties to the State Government of \$200m, \$150m to the Commonwealth Government and another \$5.6m for Council rates over the life of the mine, i.e. 21 years. This seems to me a paltry amount in exchange for the desecration of our beautiful valley and a way of life lost for many of us. As is happening with the coal mines in the Hunter Valley, I doubt very much whether the mine will ever be rehabilitated. It appears to me that Gloucester is being sacrificed for the greedy gain of a largely foreign owned resources Company who, I believe, will not care about what happens when they eventually finish mining. How can a huge hole in the ground be rehabilitated? I believe that coal is on the decline in most developed countries around the world with sustainable energy production on the rise in many places. It seems horrific to me that this Company is keen to start this mine for a product which I believe is outdated as an energy resource.

**4. Proximity to residential areas**

The mine is proposed only 900metres from the residential area of Forbesdale. These residents will carry an unacceptable burden and will be impacted by dust, noise and loss of amenity, resulting in risks to their health and loss of property value. This proposed mine will be far too close to town and other rural residential areas. As there is no minimum safety zone for mines, it is possible that they can keep bringing the mine right up to housing, which is totally unacceptable.

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### **5. Impacts on Health**

Health impacts from open-cut coalmines are well documented. With most of Gloucester township, including the hospital and schools, falling within the 5km health impact zone of the Rocky Hill mine, this places a large percentage of the population at risk. Those most affected by the health impacts are the very young, the elderly and the sick.

### **6. Impact on Tourism, worth \$51M per annum to the Gloucester economy**

An open-cut coalmine within 5km of Gloucester and within sight of the Bucketts Way will have an impact on the visual amenity of the area. The mine will risk the jobs of hundreds employed in the tourism industry. I have looked at the Rocky Hill Project website and was appalled to see the damage which will occur over the life of this mine. I cannot see why tourists will want to come to Gloucester to see the overburden and mess made.

I travelled recently through part of the coal producing area of the Hunter Valley. As it was almost night time I was amazed and appalled at the myriad of lights and the huge devastation that these ventures have impacted on this lovely farming area.

### **7. Environment**

The proposed mine is on the Avon River floodplain and in the 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 2013. There is definite potential for contamination of the water in the catchment. Gloucester Valley is also often subject to heavy fog and it has been suggested that this will hold the coal dust in the air over Gloucester township and its environs. I can only imagine the effect this will have on the accumulation of grime on buildings and also on washing hung out to dry.

**This mine should not be approved**

Yours faithfully



Brenda Pennicuik,  
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I have not made a reportable political donation.