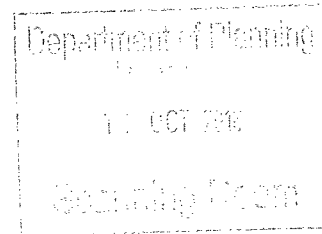


PCU067487

Margaret Boxall
P.O. Box 275
Gloucester. 2422 NSW

9 October 2016

The Director
Resource Assessments Planning Services,
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Sir,

Rocky Hill Coal Project - Application No. SSD 5156

I believe the Department is co-ordinating submissions opposing the above application and the Minister will make a final decision based on the material available from your Department. I would be grateful if you would submit this letter of objection based on the following grounds:

1. The location is too close to town and to an area of private residences.
2. Fine coal dust creates particulate matter suspended in the atmosphere.
3. Frequent coal truck movements from Rocky Hill Mine to Stratford will create an unpleasant and constant ambient noise for many years to come.
4. Judging from responses at public meetings I have attended, the majority of Gloucester residents oppose the mine on the basis that it will irredeemably ruin a beautiful natural valley.

There is an opinion that for a mining application to be approved in the face of strong resident objections, any approval should assert that the mine can be located nowhere else. I submit that should the Minister approve the mine in this location he is obliged to address this dictum in his findings.

The prevailing view in Australian politics is that the government, of whichever persuasion, will act clearly on behalf of the people it represents. Any divergence from this view can be explained by saying that for Australia to grow and prosper the interests of big business should be given priority. This is the risk that the people of Gloucester face at this time. But by going to the ballot box the people have entered into a pact with the government whereby their interests shall be protected.

Let me remind you of the arrangement made between the people and the government in the social contract spelled out by Thomas Hobbs (1588-1679) and which even today underlies our Westminster system of government.

The concept of a social contract, as seen by Thomas Hobbs, ensures a stable and peaceful society. Here the people cede their Right of Nature to a Sovereign (government) in return for protection and social stability. On its part the government is obliged to honour this pact.

This government which gets both its right to govern and its power to do so from the consent of the governed has, as its primary duty, the people's safety.

(The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, Robt.Audi [gen.ed.] p.335)

If this application is approved the people's physical health will be at risk due to particulate matter in the air. Mental health will be at risk due to worry and concern about loss of enjoyment of the home due to noise and ugliness of an open cut mine.

I would urge the Minister to give serious consideration to the objections made in dot points 1-4 and for the reasons outlined. The government must support the people because due to the implicit social contract at the base of our system of governance the rights of the people have been ceded in return for safety and stability in our society.

The government ignores the voice of the people at its peril. Big businesses come and go but for the people of Gloucester this is where we live. The government has a moral imperative to honour its contract with the people.

I do not wish my name to be published. I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours faithfully,

Margaret Boxall