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

14th October 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Rocky Hill Coal Project – Application No SSD-5156, and Stratford Coal Extension Project – Application No SSD - 4966 MOD 1

I oppose the Rocky Hill Coal Project and the modification to the Stratford Coal Extension Project for a number of reasons.

The Rocky Hill Coal Project is a perfect example of the “wrong mine in the wrong place”. The proposed mine is only 900metres from the residential area of Forbesdale. There is no social licence for the mine, with approximately 80% of the Gloucester community having already expressed their opposition to the mine (Gloucester Council Meeting Minutes 14th February 2012)

The mine will severely impact on the amenity of rural and residential properties that surround the mine.

The extensive hours of operation will cause unacceptable noise impacts and light pollution. Gloucester sits in a quiet, rural valley with dark, starry night skies which will disappear in the glare of mine lights.

The EIS proposes to exceed acceptable standards for air blast criteria. GRL is planning to generate 944 tonnes (over 1600 cubic metres) of dust every year. There is an inevitable risk of health damage, particularly to children, the elderly and people with respiratory disease.

There will be an unacceptable visual impact on the picturesque landscape of the Gloucester valley. The EIS claims that overburden from the mine will be used for ‘visibility barriers’ - with the largest being over 50m high and over 2km long. These ugly mounds will be visible to travelers along the Bucketts Way and also to residents on the eastern side of the valley. The impacts on the floodplains from these proposed “visibility barriers” are not addressed.

There will be significant impacts on surface water quality, The EIS suggests the likelihood of discharge and pollution of the Avon Valley tributaries to the Manning River as “possible” with

“medium consequences”. What are the ramifications for the tens of thousands of Manning and Great Lakes residents when this occurs? Risks regarding pollution of the Manning River are unacceptable.

The Gloucester Tourism Board opposes the mine. Gloucester attracts thousands of tourists every year, who bring over \$50M into the community. Those tourists would not want to visit a town with a coal mine on its doorstep.

Ground water and related issues not adequately addressed in the EIS.

The impacts on the threatened ecological community and fauna species are inadequately addressed. There is no mention in the EIS of the Purvis' Turtle (*Myuchelys purvisii*), recently recommended for listing by the NSW Scientific Committee as an Endangered species.

The impacts from the mine on Aboriginal heritage are significant.

Regarding the proposed mine rehabilitation, with 20 million tonnes of coal removed there will not be enough overburden to fill the voids or to produce the claimed landform. Topsoil 40cm deep over rubble 190 metres deep will not hold water in dry spells.

The economic viability of the mine not demonstrated. Should GRL go into bankruptcy or liquidation and the mine ceases to operate the bond paid to cover rehabilitation will not be enough. The mining company will leave and the taxpayers will have to clean up.

If this mine is approved GRL will seek further extensions to the mine. GRL have already earmarked the area north of the proposed Rocky Hill mine for 'Stage Two'. GRL have said they will mine as close to the town as they are allowed.

There is a worldwide trend away from fossil fuels, particularly coal. This is not the time to be opening new coal mines. Modern steel making technology is becoming less reliant on coking coal.

The people of the Gloucester Valley and the Manning Valley have suffered the anxiety and other debilitating and socially disruptive impacts from the threats of fossil fuel mining proposals – including coal and coal seam gas – to their picturesque and agriculturally productive environment, for over a decade. It is time this stopped.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'CS' or 'Chris Sheed', written on a light blue background.

Chris Sheed