

**Submission from Angela Bennet relating to the Rocky Hill Coal Project (Application No SSD-5156) and
Stratford Coal Extension Project (Application No SSD-4966 MOD1).**

I am opposed to the Rocky Hill Coal Project (Application No SSD-5156) and also the Stratford Coal Extension Project (Application No SSD-4966 MOD1).

My opposition is based on many factors, including but not limited to:

1. Dust and Air Pollution – I am very concerned at the dust that will be caused from many sources – the blasting, the open cut mine itself, proposed transport of unwashed coal to Duralie for treatment, etc. etc. I am not connected to the town water supply, and never likely to be given the location of my home, and our water source is rain water tanks; which I fear will be contaminated by coal dust. The coal dust also causes concerns for those people suffering from asthma and other respiratory issues. I have several friends who have indicated that they would have to seriously consider whether they would be able to continue to visit us if the mine goes ahead. The allied health cost posed by coal dust far outweighs any economic benefit from the mine.

2. Water Issues - The River Avon forms part of the water catchment for the Great Taree area, providing drinking water for over 80,000 people,. The proposed location of the mine is on the flood plain, and places the catchment at risk when there are major rain events. I understand that the Rocky Hill mine have indicated that they wish to discharge run-off from disturbed areas into local waterways. They have also indicated that they will discharge water to areas outside the mine site, and in some circumstances into the Avon River itself. Without doubt waste from the overburden will leach into the catchment. BTEX chemicals were released by AGL's CSG activities, and a similar risk will apply from this mining. Any water from the mine will contain salts and heavy metals.

It is well known that the geology of the area is very complex and fractured, and any mining risks affecting the aquifers and the water table.

Water is our most precious commodity, and as such should be protected at all costs - any potential risk is too great.

3. Salt – Rocky Hill/GRL have acknowledged that around 7 tonnes of solidified salt, mixed with heavy metals and other chemicals, will have to be disposed of daily from their water treatment plant. When their representatives were recently asked how they planned to dispose of this, they responded one method would be to send it to the local tip. This is not an acceptable solution..

4. Health Issues – The health issues associated with mining are well documented, and most at risk are the elderly and the very young, who form a large proportion of the local population. Workers from open cut mines in Queensland have recently been found to be suffering from “Black Lung” or pneumoconiosis. In addition to the problems caused by coal dust, there are noise related problems from blasting, and from low level noise pollution, and issues with light pollution, plus the pollution from diesel emissions from the trucks hauling the coal to Statford for washing. Etc.

5. Proximity – At approximately 900 metres from a rural residential estate, and less than 5 kms from the hospital, schools and pre-schools, this proposed mine is demonstrably too close to the town. Approximately 300 people live within 3 kms, 2,000 people within 5 kms and 3,500 within 7 kms of the proposed site.

6 Tourism – Tourism is currently worth over \$51 million dollars to the town. It is unlikely that tourists will continue to come to Gloucester and stay in the town if it is that close to an open cut mine. GRL have completely failed to address tourism concerns in their EIS, and at no time have they consulted the local tourism groups, despite having said they did. The cost benefits from the mine will not compensate for the loss of capital to the town generated by tourism, and many jobs will be lost.

7. Local Jobs - The local jobs lost to tourism will not be offset by those created by the mine. When I asked GRL for their definition of “local” recently they were unable to tell me what it was. We do know that anyone who moves to reside in the “area” to take up a job with the mine will be classified as local, but that is not a job for someone already living here.

In surveys conducted in the area, including one conducted by our former Gloucester Shire Council, 80% of residents have indicated the opposition to this mine. I ask that the take the wishes of the local people into consideration – GRL/Rocky Hill Mine do not have a social licence in Gloucester.

Please note that I would like to claim Submitter's Rights in the event that I wish to add more to my submission.

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