

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [PAC Enquiries Mailbox](#)  
**Subject:** Rocky Hill Mine  
**Date:** Sunday, 19 November 2017 8:31:15 PM

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Planning Assessment Commission Members,  
Please accept my apologies for not addressing you during your visit to Gloucester on November 14 and 15 as work commitments precluded such an opportunity. I am in full support of the development of the Rocky Hill Mine within the development consent rules set out by the NSW Government. The Planning Department has set out some reasons for their recommendation not to approve which appear to countenance the mendacious arguments posed by the organised resistance to any carbon based developments in New South Wales. The Planning Departments reasons for refusal fall under five areas which I wish to address.

### **1. Proposed land use conflicts with existing established land uses, in particular rural-residential and tourism land uses**

- The existing Forbesdale Rural Residential subdivision was approved by Gloucester Shire Council, developed by local investors and willingly purchased by people to build houses with the knowledge that it was within an approved mining exploration area. Failure to understand such approved mining exploration areas is a failure by the purchasers or their legal representatives not the mine proponents. A view that "it would not go ahead" is not an excuse to oppose the proposed development. I am aware of people who purchased some of the blocks being told of the proposed mine development who chose to ignore the advice then after purchase becoming significant critics of the proposed mine development. Such people in my view are nothing but self serving hypocrites.
- The tourism potential of the proposed mine area is nothing but a Furphy. Many who oppose developments such as Rocky Hill use very twisted logic to champion Tourism as the saviour of Gloucester. There has only been one small tourist cabin built in Gloucester in recent times, if the potential was so fantastic why such minor progress. On the figures used by opponents of Rocky Hill to justify the tourism claims again are mendacious.
  - The Shires of Singleton and Muswellbrook have higher tourism figures than Gloucester, taken from the same Destination's NSW website, and obviously have a far greater mining footprint. Such figures lead me to one of two conclusions either mining does not affect tourism or potentially attracts tourism perhaps of a different kind than that championed by the negativists.
  - Many people who have visited Gloucester were unaware of the existing mines and as the Rocky Hill mine has been planned with visual screens I am certain it will fall within the same parameters

### **It is incompatible with the underlying aims and objectives of the strategic land use zonings of the Gloucester Local Environmental Plan to protect the scenic amenity of Gloucester township and the broader Gloucester Valley by retaining scenic and rural surroundings for the town**

- When the previous Local Environmental Plan was gazetted it was under the understanding that the area was subject to mining exploration leases and could ultimately become a mining area. To destroy an economic development opportunity using such a premise is at best disingenuous and also significantly tenuous.

**The project is too close to the town of Gloucester and would result in unacceptable**

### **risks of noise, blasting and air quality impacts for residents**

- The proposed development is no closer to residential areas than other mine developments within the State of NSW and the risks used by Planning such as noise, blasting and air quality are manageable by conditioning the approval. For example there are blasting techniques used in other States which negate the concerns of reasonable neighbouring landholders. Noise again is abatable by earth mounds and screens.
- Air quality is a negative used by opponents to suggest health issues. The air quality testing in place in the Hunter Valley shows that the pm 2.5 and pm 1 factors that appear are explainable by western dust storms and burning for agricultural purposes. Mining equipment is fitted with particulate matter controls that prevent the release of these particulate sizes into the surrounding environment.

### **The project would have unacceptable visual impacts**

- The designs I have seen do not support this claim and should be treated as mischievous at best and mendacious at worst.

### **The project is not in the public interest**

- This is an extremely tenuous claim for a number of reasons
  - The proposed Rocky Hill is a metallurgical coal mine with 95% of the production being coking coal for the production of iron and steel and only 5% will be thermal coal. I am certain much of the angst and argument expressed by those who oppose the Rocky Hill development will centre on concerns surrounding the thermal coal industry. Such arguments fail to acknowledge the part thermal coal has to play in providing Australia with cheaper electricity production.
  - The Rocky Hill Mine will provide opportunities for local people to secure sound, long term well paying employment, such opportunities are currently not available.
  - Well paying local employment opportunities have a significant positive impact on the economy of the community.
  - The development of Rocky Hill will provide significant economic stimulus for local business's in the supply, maintenance and contracting of services for and to the mine.

As stated earlier I am fully supportive of the approval of the Rocky Hill Mine and ask that you provide opportunity and stimulus for my community.

To support the no case is to cause the derogation of opportunity for our youth.

Yours faithfully

Ian

**Ian Shaw**  
**PO Box [REDACTED] Gloucester NSW 2422**

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