

SUBMISSION TO PLANNING ASSESSMENT COMMISSION

14 - 15 NOVEMBER 2017

ROCKY HILL COAL PROJECT – SSD 5156

Sue-Ellen Kingston

Good afternoon Commissioners

The Department of Planning and Environment has recommended that that the Rocky Hill Coal Project ^{and Stratford modification} should not be approved.

I speak in support of the Department's recommendation.

It is the right decision for the health and wellbeing of the people of this town and the wellbeing of the Gloucester valley

My name is Sue Kingston. I have lived and worked in Gloucester for 17 years. My children have grown up and attended school here, I care about this valley and its future and I speak to protect this place.

The project site is too close to the town of Gloucester and family homes; open cut coal mining causes health problems; an open cut coal mine would damage the scenic amenity of the town and valley, and have detrimental impact on the environment.

1. The site is too close.

The Rocky Hill coal mine site is located only 1km from residential areas. I agree with the Department's report when it says this site is incompatible due to the close proximity to homes where people live.

And with Council's then Administrator, Mr John Turner: "The disruption to established residential areas would be more than substantial. They would be constantly affected by the operations of any mine located where this mine is planned".

2. A coal mine close to homes, schools, hospitals, workplaces will harm people's health.

The risks and dangers of open cut coal mining are well known:

blasting, ^{coal} dust, impaired air quality, and noise.

Coal mining causes physical and psychological health conditions.

"The Department considers that the amended project's proximity to existing residential areas exacerbates its predicted visual amenity, noise, and air quality impacts".

The Department is concerned as to how noise levels will be monitored and managed and that the mitigation measures "contain no room for error".

3. An open cut coal mine will damage the scenic amenity and have detrimental impacts on the environment.

The Department's report says that the "project site is not a suitable site for an open cut coal mine due to its incompatibility with protecting the scenic amenity of Gloucester township and the broader Gloucester Valley."

I acknowledge that we are meeting on Biripi and Worimi country. The Gloucester valley, a place of unique scenic beauty with the river valley running between the magnificent Bucketts and Mograni ranges, is a sacred place for Biripi and Worimi people. I acknowledge the wisdom of the Aboriginal culture that deeply respects land and water and understands that all things are connected.

^{This} Understanding that land ^{and} is ~~shared~~, rivers are ~~sacred~~, to be protected, not trashed, means this mine ^{application} must be rejected.

An open cut coal mine certainly causes plenty of environmental destruction to the site, and there is great concern for environmental impacts that are not contained to the site.

The Department's report states there are "unresolved issues". These include water resources: water quality, water treatment and impact on rivers.

The Department is concerned about the "consequences of unplanned blast fume and/or spontaneous combustion events".

All have potential to cause environmental disaster and harm to people living in Gloucester, and to the broader valley, and to the Manning River and Valley.

In conclusion, the project site is unsuitable for an open cut coalmine.

I recommend that the Commission not approve the development.