

Hi, my name is Sarah.

It's a tough gig being last on the list and so late, I really did draw the short straw! So, if I can ask you to keep the toothpicks in your eyelids for just a few more minutes. I am only here, last on the list, to speak specifically to you, the Planning and Assessment Committee, to tell you how this mine impacts my family.

I am a teacher at one of our local public schools. As I stood at the photocopier the other day I counted the number of students on health care plans specifically for asthma. To have a health care plan means that the child has been hospitalised with asthma. There were 23 students. On enquiry, I found there is roughly the same number again who suffer from asthma and are medicated but are not on a plan. With a school population of 350 students, this means that roughly 1 in 7 students at our local primary school suffer from asthma. Both of our school aged children are amongst this number, so the statistic very personal for me.

These are the statistics at the moment. An open cut mine is only going to have a negative impact on the air quality of our town. It will have a broader impact on our town, but a deeper impact on these students who are already suffering.

I want to read to you part of a letter written from concerned Gloucester mothers and grandmothers, to politicians and GRL.

"We, a group of mothers and grandmothers from Gloucester, write to you with our concerns for our children's and our grandchildren's health, lifestyle and future should the Rocky Hill open cut coal mine be approved. If this mine is built it will impact greatly on the lives of our children and grandchildren. It will create noise, dust and blasting fumes. It will pollute our air and has the potential to pollute our waterways.

We choose to live in Gloucester so that our children can have a clean environment, where they can breathe fresh air and drink clean water, where they can sleep and play peacefully without industrial noise and blasting."

This letter was signed by over 60 concerned mothers and grandmothers.

I wish to applaud the Department of Planning and Environment for recommending that the Rocky Hill coal mine be disapproved.

One of the hard things about living in a small town is the feeling of being overlooked and insignificant. I want to thank you for being here because it reminds me that you are listening. So, can I ask you to listen to me when I say that as a mum this really matters to me. And as a community it really matters to us that you reject the Rocky Hill coal mine.

Thank you.