

Dear Commissioners,

My name is James Hooke and I am a farmer 10 minutes out of Gloucester downstream of the proposed mine. I strongly oppose this mine, mainly because of its proximity to the town where my 3 children go to school, my wife works, and my father is in the nursing home. I do not believe that the mitigation measures proposed, will stop coal dust pollution , noise problems ,or plain ugliness. However, these issues have been dealt with in depth by other speakers and submissions

What I would encourage you to consider, is the social division that has had such a strong influence on our town for the last 10 to 15 years. People.....I , have been spat at, for opposing resource mining, and worse. Shop keepers who support mine development, have had abuse yelled through their shops. Normal, lay people, who just want to get on with their lives, have had to become experts, lobbyists, protesters, in order to keep what they have. Friends have turned on each other. Think about the explanation you need to give a 10 year old boy as to why his father only just avoided getting his head knocked off in his own front yard. It has been very ugly and very nasty.

The problem is, we are a small town that needs to be cohesive to operate. I still need to deal, in my business, with people who hold completely opposite views to mine (and frequently bring that up!) and they me (though I try to lessen the confrontation - sometimes successfully....) We cannot afford infighting, on such a scale, and with such savagery, for so long.

Yet outside corporations, and government, have managed to keep us unsure of our future, uncertain of our homes, unsure whether to invest or not, unsure of whether our town is going to be as we want it or not, for 10-15 years. That's a bastard of a thing to do to a small town like Gloucester.

When making this decision, please consider how you would justify it to my 10 year old. Will he think the dust pollution, the noise, the ugliness, were worth it. If Gloucester becomes a mining town, with all the associated booms and busts, transient workers and transient incomes, will he want to return here to bring up his family as I did.

You have evidence of how the majority of residents feel about this proposal. Please decline this mine and let our community determine it's own direction.

Thank you.