

Planning and Assessment Commission Meeting

Firstly, I would like to thank the commission for the opportunity to be able to present mine and my families case to as why the Rocky Hill coalmine should not go ahead.

Many people possibly do not know me but I moved to Gloucester at the beginning of 2001 with my wife and our two young children and instantly fell in love with the area. Both our children started and completed their schooling in Gloucester and they consider it as home to them as it is basically all they have known while growing up. I will state now that I feel like we are stuck between a rock and a hard place, in that I am definitely not anti-mining, but like all industries, they have their time and place, and right on the edge of the Gloucester township and within a stones throw of the Forbesdale subdivision is definitely not the place. The other part of the problem is not knowing what is the correct thing to do for our family, in the way, that if we say something against the mine, they will possibly treat us with contempt and we might miss out altogether if it goes ahead, but if we don't say anything, we appear to be hypocrites.

We live in Grantham road at Forbesdale and purchased the then bare block back in 2003 to build our family home due to the outstanding and picturesque views that it offered.



Even by the time in 2005 when we moved into our new home, there was no mention from any angle that one day we would be living roughly 900metres - 1km from a coalmine, and would be able to stare into it from our living room and bedrooms. Currently the view of the valley in the direction of the proposed mine is spectacular in our eyes and one that we savour every day. This is possibly going to be destroyed in the future, when, and if this proposed mine gets the go ahead. If you do not believe this, I encourage you to come for a drive out to our home and I will show you what I mean.

The classic example is the extension of the Duralie Coal mine on to what was once the beautiful "Wards River Station" just south of the small township of Wards River. An unsightly, man-made fabricated wall was built along a section of the main road that runs past the property to block out the view of the coal mine extension. Firstly, why was this needed at all if mines do not cause any visual impact, and secondly, it is only a *claytons wall*, as it only blocks out a section of the complete devastation that has been created. When you approach the old Wards River Station, driving south towards Newcastle, all you can see is this massive ugly hole and large unsightly mounds caused from Coal mining on what was once, pristine and spectacular farming country.



I feel sure, though nothing in life is certain, that any of the people that sit on this commission would be truly perturbed if it was their beautiful home with the outstanding views that we currently have, was soon to be located less than 1km from and overlooking a coal mine. If this is not the case, we would be extremely happy to sell it to you at a figure that would be reasonable compensation.

Apart from this, we will also have to put up with excess noise from mining operations, extra train movements, and now, also the massive trucks that will be continually hauling coal along the proposed new road between the Rocky Hill mine to the washery at Stratford.

Only recently when AGL were finalising gas exploration in Gloucester, there was machinery activity going on in the general direction of the proposed mine which I have videoed from our bedroom veranda to show the effect of their operations as far as noise pollution goes. The gas company were still in the process of capping off the gas wells that had recently been drilled, and even though this was only a small operation, it was extremely noisy. Thankfully, it was only there for a short period of time. The talk going around is that the mining company will maybe supply double glazed windows to keep the noise out, which we find is totally unacceptable as we do not want to be locked in our house when the weather, the conditions and the views currently sitting out on our veranda's are spectacular.

The excess dust that we will experience (our roof already has black dust and soot, possibly from the Stratford coalmine which is over 5kms away) and the bright lights at night from mining operations, are just a number of other issues that we will have to endure. I know that the EIS says this won't happen but some of it already has. We do not want to, or should have to lock up our house like a safe to keep the above mentioned from changing the way we currently live. We should not even have to be worrying ourselves about it at all.

We sunk all the money that we had and took out a large mortgage so we could build and develop what we wanted for us and our children. This was a beautiful home and a lovely garden and accessories. This whole mine proposal process, that has now been going on for over ten years, which is a long time in anyone's world, has certainly tested the nerves and patience of everybody involved and the stress and tension that it has caused is totally unacceptable.

We still have projects that we would like to undertake to complete our dream home, but with the total uncertainty of what has been occurring and what is still to come, we have found that our life has been put completely on hold. I wish that the people who are going to allow this to happen were currently in our shoes, wondering what was going to happen to them, both health wise and financially.

Currently we would be lucky to even sell our home at present without giving it away. We are living our life in limbo, not knowing what is to come, and feel that there is only two reasonable outcomes, both which need to be sorted out ASAP to allow us to get on with our lives. (1) The mine application needs to be revoked, never to be allowed back on the table, or (2) That it be approved, and a condition written in the approval process that the mining company should have to buy us and our neighbours that will be directly affected, at a figure that would allow us to move on, have what we presently have, and not suffer financially in any way.

I would like the people that have the ability to approve or decline this mining application, before they make a decision, come and sit in our home and then walk around our gardens, to see what I am talking about.

Yours Sincerely



Mr Chris Reynolds



Mrs Patrice Reynolds