

Media Release

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FORBESDALE RESIDENTS TELL OF THEIR ROCKY HILL PAIN

Several distressed Forbesdale residents today told representatives from the NSW Planning and Environment Department of their distress and anguish which has been caused by the Rocky Hill coal mine proposal.

One resident talked about how he and his family had endured 10 years of uncertainty and now faced the prospect of a coal mine less than 1 kilometre from their house. He told how they had come to Gloucester for a better life but now lived a nightmare. He said that in the 10 years that Gloucester Resources (GRL) had held mining exploration licences no-one from the company had ever spoken to him until 2 weeks ago. He explained that this meeting was also the first time any government official had listened to his concerns. He described what he, his wife and children had endured as “cruel”.

Another resident told the Department that if this mine was built she would have to endure dust and noise from a mine which would be just over 1 kilometre from her bedroom window. She and her husband, who has recently died, had bought their house in good faith before there was any talk of a mine, and now her house was unsaleable except for much less than it was bought for many years ago. She said that neither GRL nor the Planning Department had ever spoken to her.

Groundswell Member John Watts, who also attended the meeting, says:

“This was the first time the Department representatives had heard of the terrible human impact caused by this flawed proposal. They could not fail but to have been deeply moved by the tragic stories shared by the Forbesdale residents telling of their distress and upset at how they have been, and are being, treated.

It is stories such as these which has made other members of the Gloucester community determined to stop this mine. The psychological impact of this proposed mine has been enormous

GRL has no social licence to proceed with its dirty open cut 220m deep coal mine. It is time that the government did the right thing by the Gloucester community and bought back GRL’s licences which were handed out by the corrupt and convicted former minister Ian Macdonald.”

Another resident, who has farmed in the area for many years, talked about the adverse impact the mine would have on his farming operations and his family’s health and welfare.