

Appendix (i) List of Contributors & Their Field of Expertise

Penny Drake-Brockman	Ornithology
Philip Greenwood	Environmental Science
Graeme Healy	Strategic Planning
Jeff Kite	Hydrology
David Marston	Agricultural and Natural Resource Management
Gerald McCalden	Social Science
Patricia McCalden	Health
Steve Robinson	Health
Garry Smith	Natural and Cultural Heritage

Appendix (ii) Residents' Statements

Anthony and Diana Berecny
130 Bullen Bullen Road
Waukivory, 2422

We are affected by mine noise.

We hear mine noise almost every day of the week after 7 am.

The Stratford extension Project EIS clearly states that I won't be affected by mine noise day or night, however I am already affected by mine noise. Our house, residential receiver, is just outside the zone of influence and any noise heard is assumed to be acceptable by Yancoal. I don't want to hear any mine noise. I do not want to hear mine noise 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Interestingly, neighbours in Phillips Road and along Waukivory Road as far south as the Glen Road have all mentioned hearing mine noise. It would appear that the Noise Modelling done by SLR Consulting is incorrect or designed to suit the Yancoal's application.

The noise is a low rumbling which sounds mostly like haul trucks and the occasional dozer noise. We regularly hear an additional sound like a vehicle coming up our driveway to the house. It is very disconcerting as we go out to see who it is, only to realise there is no one there. Then we realise it is noise coming from the mine. Some nights we have our sleep disturbed with what sounds like a train that never goes past. It has been suggested to us that those symptoms occur with infrasound/low frequency noise.

Why don't we complain? We know that a complaint to Stratford Coal requires a mining employee comes onto our property to verify the noise, which potentially brings biosecurity risk from mine vehicles. I find it offensive that the company does not accept my noise complaint as valid. I understand that mining staff often are not able to identify the source of the noise. Then on reflection back at the mine, they claim that no noise of that type has been made by the mine. The usual answer is that the noise is 'under the EPA limit'.

Another issue is blasting. My property and two neighbouring properties have suffered landslips, some quite serious. I have brought this up at the Stratford Coal/YanCoal Community Consultative Committee on several occasions. According to the mine personnel it might be rainfall, or it might be differing soil types or it might be over clearing, and it is definitely NOT blasting. However the blasting is the only common action occurring to all three neighbouring properties that have experienced land slips. Dust is another worrying issue as we recently had our water tanks cleaned professionally and was told we have coal dust in the tank. I haven't complained about this yet, but I retained samples for testing. Coal dust is something that seems to be appearing in Gloucester residents' swimming pool filters as far north as Jacks Road.

Anthony Berecny

Name: Lindy Blanch

Address: 24 High St, Stratford NSW 2422

Stratford Mine disturbs and distresses me in several ways...

The most obvious is the noise, which is often heard at all times of the day and night. It sometimes disturbs my sleep late at night, anywhere from 11pm to 2,3 or 4am. Sometimes I phone the complaints line, (usually when I am at the end of my tether)! Other times I don't bother because I feel it is futile, and that Stratford Coals Community Liaison, Rachel Windrum's job is to placate complainers, with no tangible outcome possible.

The type of noise varies, from the beep beep of reversing machinery, to the roaring engines of the bulldozers or trucks, or the rattle of the washery, or screeching train wheels. However, it is the constant roaring noise of the engines (either bulldozers or trucks???), that disturbs and distresses me the most, as it is most days and nights that this can be heard. The noise disturbs my peaceful enjoyment of the quiet rural country life I chose to live here for.

I am a fourth generation local, and I bought my property, a bare ½ acre block, in the village, next door to my mother's home in 1981. My two sisters and their families lived in the village also. It has been my life's work building and creating a home, and haven for myself and my daughter, with all the usual blood, sweat and tears over many years of ups and downs, and it's still a work in progress, as homes often are. It is depressing and disheartening after investing over 30yrs of my life, to feel powerless, vulnerable and insecure, when I have worked so long and hard to create a secure and long-term future in Stratford for myself and my daughter.

I also have a chronic health condition, (for over 30yrs) which is exacerbated by the impacts of the mine, and I am often too ill to complain!

The lights of the mine also detract from the natural beauty of the skyline and diffuse the view of the stars, particularly in the southern sky.

The dust from the mine is so bad, that I took my filter out of my water tank because it kept clogging up, and I couldn't physically lift it out to clean it every couple of months, so I am drinking water contaminated by dust from mining, because tank water is the only option for Stratford residents, even though the miners have their drinking water brought it from outside the area!

Name: Ned and Betty Collins

Address: Shakespeare Street Stratford

Notes from Interview:

No-one wanted the original mine and we were promised that it would be here for 8 years only and then be closed down.

Noise from the mining of the original pit was very bad but we don't really notice it anymore. We can hear the washery just over the hill but we have got used to it.

We don't want to see 24-hour mining again. That will make the noise noticeable again.

The mine is coming too close to Stratford. We were given so many promises about keeping the mine away from Stratford.

Mainly concerned about coal dust, which is getting worse. Black film on every surface. Damage to curtains and washing.

Drinking water is disgusting. Would like the company to pay for an exterior filter and regular tank cleaning. Perhaps they could put a diverter on the gutter?

Management "doesn't give a stuff anymore."

Never really complained – what's the put. "We can't stop the mine." "just have to put up with it."

No benefits at all for Stratford. "The little bit of money paid by the mine goes to Gloucester."

"It's heartbreaking to see a rural area ruined."

Name: Graeme Healy

Address: 314 Glen Road Craven

I have been impacted by intrusive noise from the Stratford Mining Complex since 1999.

Between 1998 and 2004 I was only here on weekends and occasional holidays, so I missed the full impact of the night-time noise horror. But my first exposure to noise was on a Saturday night in 1999 when the dozers were hard at work on the mullock heaps. The noise was incredible. It was like I imagine a warzone to be like and I couldn't quite believe that the noise was coming from the mine. It was so loud and seemed to be so close.

This has been my home since 2004. The pattern of noise disturbance has been fairly constant over the past 8 years. Typically it begins at about 7:00 am and continues until about 9:00 am. The day itself is mostly peaceful, although there can be noise and it can go all day and it can be very intrusive. The noise usually becomes noticeable again at about 4:00pm and continues through the night.

The noise can be variable. Variable in occurrence and intrusiveness.

The morning noise can most typically be described as a constant low roar accompanied by the sound of heavy machinery revving, changing gears and working under load. The evening noise is more typically of lower volume and of a constant character, like a train passing but it never passes! It is not possible to sleep with the windows open. The noise is often apparent as I lie in bed before falling asleep. I have occasionally been woken from sleep.

The noise can be loud. But the volume is not necessarily the most disturbing element. The fact that it can go on and on and on and on, even at a relatively low volume, is the thing that drives you mad.

I experience morning noise at least 90% of the time. If the noise nuisance I experience in the morning was to continue through the day, I would find it intolerable and I would not be able to live here.

Sometimes the noise actually seems to be louder inside the house than outside.

I complain periodically but the process is as frustrating as the noise. The staff cannot conclusively identify the source of the noise let alone explain why it is so variable. If they cannot identify the source how can they implement any mitigation measures.

The favourite excuse to explain the reason for the intrusive noise is "temperature inversion". More recently they seem to have given up trying to identify the source or pretend that something might be done. They simply respond "we are operating according to the consent conditions."

The proposal to return to 24-hour mining operations is outrageous.

To: BGSPA
From: SUE and JOHN HUGHES
Date: 19 January 2013
Re: COAL MINING HAS A NEGATIVE IMPACT

We have been landholders in Glen Road Craven since 1992 and have enjoyed the beautiful valley since that time. In particular what attracted us to this place was the natural beauty and the peace and serenity of the bush and the native birds and animals. We knew there was a potential for a coal mine but understood that the life of the mine was around 12 years or so. The documents we have, from when we bought the farm, show us that this belief was based on a "fact". It turns out that was a fact for that time only and not of lasting integrity.

We now wish to record our grave concern that the mine is expanding again.

We are not in a position of being affected by noise or by dust as the mine operates at present. This undoubtedly will change with the proposed extensions down to Glen Road.

What does affect us is the impact on the commercial and aesthetic value of our property.

The commercial value has been stalled with all the plans by Gloucester Coal and leaves us in a state of limbo, not knowing whether to develop the property or not. There is minimal to zero interest of buyers if we need to realise our investment. This can be confirmed through real estate agents.

Gloucester Coal now owns the property immediately over the fence and we do not know what the company will do with this land, or how they intend to maintain it against feral pests and vegetation. This is apparently a "buffer" for their future expansions. We do know that the visual impact of the mine expansion/s when travelling along Glen Road to our property will be an ugly one and hardly the quiet rural environment we have sought in our retirement.

It is this uncertainty that is the impact on us of the various proposals of the company, including the current extension plan.

Are we not entitled to some quiet enjoyment of our land?

We would like this note to be included in any submission being made by BGSPA.

Sue and John Hughes

W K and K E Hunter
2013
417 Upper Avon Rd
Stratford

18th January

Impact of Stratford mine.

Noise.

We live 5 km in a westerly direction from the mine. We do hear machinery noise from the mine on most nights and sometimes during the day. The noise is in the form of a constant rumble in the mid range.

On still nights it can be intrusive and irritating. We have not complained to date, as the noise is just bearable and it does eventually cease late at night. It would certainly be unbearable if mining activity did extend into the early morning.

Our exposure to the noise will also certainly increase if the mine extends south of the current area.

We do hear low frequency "thuds" on occasions, both day and night associated with a rattle of our windows. Presumably these coincide with explosions at the Stratford mine. They have woken us on a few occasions but not recently. Presumably this is because the newest pit is to the north of the original and further from us.

Again, if the mine extends towards Craven, we will be affected by explosions to a much greater degree and the threat of this is of great concern.

Dust.

We do have to clean the clothes line of black grime before hanging out clothes to dry. This is a constant activity and must reflect what is in the air that we breath.

We ensure our drinking water is filtered for particular matter, and for heavy metals..

Lighting.

We are not affected by lights from the mine at this time, but we will be if the mine extends towards Craven.

Summary.

We are moderately affected by noise and presumably dust from the Stratford Mine.

An increase in mining activity to 24 hours will adversely affect us, and extension of the mine to the south will expose us to much greater increases in noise, dust and lighting pollution. This is of great concern to us.

We have not complained to the company before, but we are anxious that if the extensions to activity and area go ahead, it will be too late to complain

W K and K E Hunter

Name: Kevin and Robyn Lowrey

Address: 59 Crowthers Road Stratford

We are currently impacted by noise and blasting from the Stratford mine. We have taken noise readings at our home which typically register 45dBA. The noise nuisance can occur at any time of day and night, but is probably of most concern during the morning.

Our previous experience of 24-hour mining was horrendous – disruptive, debilitating and disturbing. We were frequently woken from sleep and once woken, unable to return to sleep.

The noise is mostly a low frequency drone.

Blasting is also a problem. We have been exposed to many over pressure events which can be very alarming and stressful. We had several extreme blasting events in February 2012., which we believe caused serious cracking in our house. We obtained a builders report and discussed it with Stratford mine management. They said, “if we fix your house, we’ll have to fix everyones”.

We have no confidence in the noise modelling for the expansion project and we don’t believe that the quiet trucks will solve the problem. Life will become unbearable.

We didn’t complain at first, believing that the mine would only be here for a short time. Now we complain from time to time but noting is ever done to resolve the complaint.

Our property is also subject t intrusive lighting impacts from the mine. The introduction of 24-hour mining would make this worse.

- Name; Gerald and Patricia McCalden

- Address; 594 Glen Road Craven

- Approximate distance from CHPP; 5.5 kms

- Nature of noise nuisance: frequently heard, but intensity depends on weather conditions - usually in the mornings up to 10:00 am Most often train loading and CHPP but occasionally hear the fleet (haul trucks). Can produce a headache especially out doors, some sleep disturbance from (?) bulldozers at CHPP.

- Complaints: Used to complain up to 1 x week until appointment of Rachael to receive complaints. I trusted the environmental officers to identify and register complaints, though nothing was ever done to stop the noise. I did not wish to allow Rachael access to come to the house (as the e. officers used to do) to monitor noise when she is also the employee who negotiates mine access to private property.

Are there times when you don't complain: Yes, even prior to the change in handling complaints it was too time consuming when the results are zilch.

Name: Vicki Moseley

Address: Crowthers Road Stratford

Notes from Interview:

Intrusive noise is experienced on most days, typically at night from about 10:30 pm.

Low level hum or roar. Not necessarily loud but constant. Low impact drone that doesn't go away.

Experience regular sleep disturbance. Increased stress and need for medication. No other obvious reason than the impact of the mine.

Children have commented when they visit, that the mine noise is much more noticeable than when they moved here 5 years ago.

Have complained but have tended to give up complaining. "You can't complain all the time, especially when it just falls on deaf ears."

Husband is hearing impaired. "When he hears the noise, I know it must be bad."

Regrets moving here and would happily sell if given the opportunity.

Names: Anne Ryan and Darcy Tordoff.
Address: 382 Woods Rd, Craven 2422 NSW

We experience noise from the mine everyday, the only time we've had any respite has been over the Xmas/New Year period this year - 2012-2013, when Yancoal closed down for the Xmas break. This was the first time we've ever had real peace and quiet and imagined what it must be like for other people who live in the country and enjoy this every day.

We experience noise 24/7. When we wake in the morning, on a typical weekday, there is a loud roar of machinery and vehicles, and even though we live approx 5 kms from the colliery, it sounds like we are living next to a 6-lane freeway. The level of noise can range from a low background hum, up to a deafening roar, depending on the prevailing weather conditions. Cool, foggy, still, mornings during winter, or days when the wind is coming from the east, exacerbates the problem, and unfortunately these are common conditions. The noise persists to a lesser degree during the day, unless we have easterly winds, and then picks up again in the afternoon and persists all night until at least 1-2 am, sometimes longer. Night-times, like the mornings, are bad, because there is less background noise to muffle it, particularly at night, and it can be so bad that we have to shut the windows because we cannot hear the T.V, even when it's turned up loudly.

The noise is usually a generalised roar, a continuous hum in the background that drives us crazy at times because you cannot escape it. Not all the noise can be attributed just to the colliery, we have had a huge increase in traffic noise in the last few years and that contributes enormously to that constant hum. That traffic can be directly attributed to the mine however, because the traffic is generated by the huge increase in mine workers on the road, not just coming and going to work in the morning and evenings, but the constant flow of mine staff moving about from various parts of the extended mine complex, in their vehicles.

As said before, the noise consists of a roar or hum, but individual machines such as bulldozers, can be heard frequently and loud noises that cannot be identified but obviously come from the washery, are particularly loud and frequent at night.

Then there is the blasting. This doesn't happen every day, but it does happen often enough to be a very unpleasant and worrying occurrence. We have had the building shake and windows rattle each time a blast occurs. This makes us extremely concerned about what kind of structural damage is being inflicted upon our home. Recently (I don't recall the date) in 2012, there was an extremely loud blast, louder than we've ever heard before, that shook the house very hard. It was so extreme, you could feel the shockwave and I thought we must have had an earthquake. I rang the mine to complain. I spoke to Rachel, (don't know her surname- possibly Urselmann?) and she seemed surprised and unaware that any blasting had taken place. She said she would investigate and get back to me, but we never heard from her again. I made it very clear about how upset we were and how it had given us a terrible fright and I made it clear that we would not want this to keep occurring. Her response to that, was to ask if we would like to be notified in the future, in advance, each time they were going to do blasting, and that way it wouldn't cause so much distress if we knew what was coming! I told her to forget it, because that would just normalise it into something that just occurs and that we accept and put up with. I was really incensed.

We have only complained a couple of times about the noise because it seems a pointless exercise, it takes up a lot of time and it doesn't seem to make any difference, they only fob you off, as Rachel tried to. Perhaps we should persist, but I suppose we feel a sense of futility, they don't care less, they're only concerned with profits.

Lights at night are a big problem for us, they shine on our bedroom wall, and we see the

orange glow in the sky and the orange and white lights twinkling away in the distance, spoiling the dark night sky which we want to see and enjoy. The place looks like Dante's Inferno, quite sinister and oppressive. We are living in the country, miles from anywhere and yet there is this huge industrial complex, sitting across the paddocks, completely destroying our peace and security.

Last year Rachel contacted us about having some photographs taken and noise monitoring, and we were happy to comply, anything that might draw attention to the difficulties we were having to live with. Gloucester Coal contracted a company to install noise monitoring equipment in our paddock in the areas where we received the most noise and also a company to come and take photos of the views that we have of the mine - we have a direct view straight across to the washery, we can see a major part of the mine infrastructure from here. Everything was installed for the noise monitoring and the equipment was left here for 2 weeks. This may sound like we are cynical, but I can say quite truthfully that there was an extraordinary decline in any noise from the mine for the duration of the monitoring. Even given the fact that noise does fluctuate normally, some days are very bad and some days are good, for the entire 2 weeks, there wasn't so much as whisper, particularly at night. We could only surmise that they had very deliberately shut down a lot of their operations in order to influence the results of the monitoring. There can be no other explanation, it can't just be a coincidence, this was 2 weeks, day and night, and miraculously, when the monitoring was removed, back came the noise again. As for the photography, they came on a very overcast and particularly hazy day, and therefore you couldn't see the mine at all from here. Whether that was a deliberate ploy or just the way it turned out, we will never know, but either way, the outcome again, was that the visual impact of the mine would have been completely negated.

It's very hard not to be cynical of their motives under the circumstances!

Name: Mick and Paula Standen
Address: Woods Road Craven

We have put up with mine noise, coal rail noise, both empty trains and full trains right from the start of operations including blasting, constant machine noise as well as power being disrupted without being notified.

When the mine first went ahead some 18 years ago, my wife and i complained on a regular basis. We had sound monitoring as well as seismic monitoring on our property on a number of occasions. When ever these tests were carried out, the mine ALWAYS shut down for maintenance. That is the truth. Over the years we have had constant noise issues with the empty train that come from Newcastle to collect washed coal from the Stratford mine.

I have times and dates of these trains that came up from newcastle in the early mornings. 1am, 2am, 3am, 4am, the times were never consistent. On ringing the EPA on several occasions at these times, i never had any response. I was lucky to be home one day during business hours and i recieved a phone call from the Department of Planning. This gentleman basically told me "yes, the proposal for the extended rail activity looks like going ahead". My issues fell on deaf ears.

I was emailing a Mr Mark Jacobs from "Yancoal", he always answered my e-mails, but, his answers were, "yes i have sent your complaints to the manager of Stratford mine'.

I recieved one e-mail from a Rachelle Windrum, but all it done was confirm the times and dates i had noted in my complaints. I found this e-mail very condescending.

Stratford Coal Mine closed down over the Christmas/New Year period for 3 weeks. The trains still worked bringing up dirty coal from Duralie and the Newcastle trains were working as well. What i did discover, someone had organised a noise monitor to be placed in the property opposite to our home, which is owned by "YANCOAL". The monitor wasn't hidden as such, but strategically positioned so it wasn't noticable from the road.

Last night my wife and i were woken by a train that came up the cutting and made the biggest crash of coal trucks we have ever heard. When i got up, i went outside and the noise from the actual mine site was phenomenal. that was from 1.00am to 4.00am. When i got up for work at 5.00am, the mine was quiet. I feel we are all being taken for a ride, i am losing faith in our council, our government and especially the EPA, i was told by the EPA that they have no jurisdiction over coal mines, and i should forward all complaints to the Dept' of Planning.

April of 2012, we read in the Gloucester advocate of a proposal to extend rail traffic between Duralie and Stratford mines. We of course opposed this as our sleep was being interrupted already. A week later we had a phone call from a Mr Andrew Aylwood, a property valuer/estate agent from Orange. He was commissioned by (at the time) Stratford Coal to attempt to purchase (bribe) land holders. We met with Mr Aylwood and he presented us with a "COMPENSATION AGREEMENT" OF \$15000.00 per annum to basically "shut up" for want of a better terminology.

We of course laughed at this and sent him on his way. In the mean time, i complained dilligently to the EPA.

A week later, Mr Aylwood rang, we met with him once again, he presented us with another "COMPENSATION AGREEMENT", this one for \$20000.00 per annum. BUT, this one had a clause added that gave us a 3 year window were we could opt for selling our property to now "YANCOAL" at market value at the time of sale. OR. "YANCOAL" were able to tell us they are going to buy our property at market value at such time. We of course laughed at this one as well and sent Mr Aylwood on his way. What we did though was put the idea out there that we may be on the market.

Mr Aylwood rang a week later with an offer that would allow us to purchase a house in Stratford. Of course we didn't accept that offer. 24 hours later, he offered another \$100000.00 on top of the original offer which would still allow us to purchase a property in Stratford. What we made known was we would have to be able to replace what we have here.

As up to this date we have not been able to come to an applicable agreement.

I appologise if i have rambled on, it's just as you know, very frustrating. This home, our home is my wifes family home, my wife Paula is the 3rd generation to live here.

I attended the extra-ordinary meeting at council last week and not once was the village of Craven mentioned. Not once. Stratford residence were their only concern, in saying that, we are the only "FAMILY" left in Craven that are being effected by any of the noise issues.

In closing, i'll let you know what Mr Aylwood told us as he sat in our kitchen QUOTE, "you do realise that you live on the poor side of Gloucester" UNQUOTE.

Your sincerely

Mick & Paula Standen