

Good afternoon Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my perspective on the implications of approval of Mt Pleasant Coal Mine continuing to operate for another 22 years with double the current annual output of coal.

I have lived in the Hunter Region, north of Singleton, for over 30 years.

In the many submissions on proposed developments that I have made over that time I have argued that the due consideration of the public interest must include the broad complex social and environmental costs. I have tried to argue against decision-making confined by a mindset that the wheels of industry must be kept turning. The determining aspect of the public interest is **not** a viable economy at any cost.

I ask you to take a step back to consider that in these unprecedented times of a being confronted with a chaotic climate your decision making must consider what acting in the public interest actually is. The public interest must be reevaluated.

It becomes increasingly obvious everyday that the bottom line for decision-making in the public interest must be with respect to climate change and the more frequent extreme weather events that global heating precipitates.

I contend that we need to approach the decision-making from the point of view that it is not about weighing up perceived competing interests, but rather, **what is the limiting case?**. Clearly, a stable economy relies upon a stable environment which all turns on a safe climate.

It seems clear to me, but I am concerned that the IPC struggles with perceived public interest. I understand that there is no rulebook on the public interest, and there has been a perversion over time of the application of the principles of ecologically sustainable development but the need for Intergenerational Equity is unequivocal. The public interest cannot just be confined to the considerations of the current community of the Hunter Valley or NSW. Reasonable decision-making by the IPC must take in to account the scientific consensus on climate change and the trajectory we are on with global heating.

I submit to you, the Independent Planning Commission that you most properly need to use the global Carbon Budget as your primary reference point for decisionmaking in the public interest. Perhaps the IPC considers that this reference point is beyond its jurisdiction, for instance, I imagine you might say that Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions are not accounted for in Australia's target, so you do not consider them. However, when it is also a matter of the public record that the International Energy Agency issued the clear directive late in 2021 that the world cannot afford to approve any more extraction of fossil fuels if we want a chance of holding warming to

1.5 degrees, then I consider that the NSW Independent Planning Commission cannot reasonably approve the Mt Pleasant Mine Expansion Project.

It is clearly not in the public interest to approve the further emission of 876 million more tonnes of CO₂e when the **imperative is to cut emissions**.

The Australian share of the global Carbon Budget was calculated by the government's own Climate Change Authority in 2014. This figure is 0.97%. And to even meet our Paris commitments, Australia needs to cut emissions by at least 50 per cent of 2005 levels by 2030, and reach net zero by 2045.

The Climate Targets Panel report in October last year estimates that Australia's has 3521 million tonnes of greenhouse gases left to burn of our share of the Global Budget. We have been creating around 500 million tonnes per year. Given current and pending fossil fuel project approvals, we have **already effectively spent our share**.

I submit that the IPC cannot reasonably approve the proposed expansion as it is not in the public interest. I ask the IPC to reject the application. I will submit my written submission with my bibliography and further clarification and details of how this Mt Pleasant Mine proposal is not in the public interest.

Thank you for your time.

Marg Mclean

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July 7th 2022

<https://www.globalcarbonproject.org/carbonbudget/>

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-climate-clock-what-s-the-world-s-carbon-budget-and-what-s-australia-s-share-20211021-p5924q.html>

<https://theconversation.com/five-key-points-in-the-ipcc-report-on-climate-change-impacts-and-adaptation-178195>