

To the Independent Planning Commission,

My name is Maddy and I am a local resident of Wollongong. I studied biology at university because I care deeply about the environment, and now work in community and environmental organisations. Last year I travelled to Mudgee to visit the town of Wollar and hear from local residents who have been devastated by coal mining development and expansion.

Growing up in a coal mining town, I know the significant contributions that industries like coal mining have brought to our workers and communities. I also know that coal mining is destroying our environment, our ecosystems and water that we depend on, and Aboriginal heritage. As a young person, I see these impacts and am terrified by the catastrophic effects that mining and burning coal have on the climate.

I am therefore writing to object to the proposed expansion of Yancoal's Moolarben OC3 coal mine expansion near Mudgee on Wiradjuri Country.

On my visit to Mudgee last year, I visited the beautiful Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, which is only 100 m away from the proposed mine expansion. We walked through the reserve, and learnt about the ecosystems and species that the reserve provides habitats for. I am highly concerned that 480 hectares of native vegetation, including 113 hectares of koala habitat where breeding koalas have been sighted, is proposed to be cleared for the expansion. I was also horrified to learn that the proposed expansion is predicted to have serious and irreversible impacts on several threatened species and ecological communities, including Regent Honey-eater, Broad-headed Snake, Microbats (eastern cave and large-eared pied bats), and White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Box Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.

I am particularly concerned about the damage that the proposed mining would have on Wiradjuri cultural landscapes, including 55 Aboriginal heritage sites directly impacted. I note that the Cultural Heritage Management Plan recommended protection of these sites, which has been ignored by the proponent.

Additionally I am highly concerned about the climate pollution that would be emitted due to this proposed expansion. I understand that an additional 64 million tonnes of greenhouse gases emissions would be produced over the life of the OC3 mine extension if this expansion is to go ahead. This is an unjustifiable cost to the climate, and inconsistent with the NSW Government's Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 and the Paris Agreement, especially since NSW [is not on track to meet its greenhouse gas emission targets for both 2030 and 2035](#).

As a young person, I have experienced a lifetime of extreme weather from severe drought in the early 2000s, to the black summer bushfires in 2019-2020 and the preceding floods. I have witnessed climate fueled disasters like these across the state, the country and the world, and more frequently over the past few years. I am terrified of what the world will look like if we continue to mine and burn coal. I want to see good meaningful jobs that benefit the local

communities of Mudgee and surrounding areas, not those that will take their future away from them.

The NSW Government cannot afford to allow the approval of new or expanded coal projects during a climate and biodiversity crisis. For the reasons outlined above I therefore urge the Independent Planning Commission to recommend that the Moolarben OC3 Coal Mining Extension Project be refused.

I thank you for considering my submission.

Sincerely,  
Maddison Yerbury  
Wollongong NSW 2502