

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 7 - PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

**RATIONALE FOR, AND IMPACTS OF, NEW DAMS AND OTHER WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN NSW**

**Friday 27 November 2020**

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM CR BILL WEST, MAYOR OF COWRA COUNCIL:**

I provide the following comments to the question from the Chair of the Committee in regards to the 2014 and 2018 Water Infrastructure Studies and the choosing of Wyangala as the preferred option for Water Security in the region.

I note that the 2018 20-Year Infrastructure Options Study Rural Valleys, which I assume was being referred to by the Chair, indicates that “raising Wyangala Dam by about 10m” as the preferred option for consideration along with other measures. Ref 3.7, page 37

Phase1 Water Security for Regions: Belabula and Lachlan Rivers Dam Investigations, a 2014 WaterNSW document [www.waternsw.com.au/projects/infrastructure-studies/belabula](http://www.waternsw.com.au/projects/infrastructure-studies/belabula) gives an understanding of the issues.

I quote from the Executive Summary, “This report documents the methodology, results and recommendations of the investigation of the potential storage in the Lachlan Valley to provide improved water security for the central west region of NSW. The study identified and assessed the potential for additional storage for water security purposes considering economic, social and environmental outcomes and prudent management risk. The investigation concludes that there are four dam sites of potential, which, in order of preference are; Cranky Rock, Abercrombie, The Needles and the raising of the existing Wyangala Dam.”

Cranky Rock and Wyangala (as referred to in Table 17) were the focus of the investigation that was undertaken as part of the Phase 2 Water Security for Regions study. While the final report from Stage 2 has not been provided to Central West JO, we are very much aware of the issues surrounding the Cranky Rock proposal. Both documents I have referred to indicate two things: firstly, water security is a major concern in the Lachlan Valley and secondly, Wyangala wall raising was always part of considerations.