

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO RAISE THE
WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I have been horrified to read of the NSW government's proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall by 14 metres. While 14 metres may not sound very much, it is almost 46 feet under the old measurement, or higher than the average two-storey house.

This proposal has nothing to do with increasing Sydney's water supply. It is just so that the government can allow developers to build another 130,000 houses on the Nepean-Hawkesbury River floodplain, including around Richmond and Windsor.

The raising of the dam wall will flood 4,700 hectares of the world-heritage-listed Blue Mountains National Park. The lower reaches of the Kowmung River, the Park's only declared wild river, will be flooded. As will the lower reaches of the Coxs River in the Megalong Valley.

However, the greatest devastation will be in the Kedumba Valley. The State government has said that any flooding will only be temporary, with minimal impact. But the government knows that is a lie! Any damage will be permanent!

Even a few weeks of inundation will kill the eucalypt forest, leaving an ugly scar of wasteland and weeds after the waters subside. If that is doubted, look at every dam in NSW. Most of those dams are presently carrying very low storages due to the drought. BUT THE BED OF EVERY ONE OF THOSE DAMS SHOWS A WASTELAND RIGHT UP TO THE ORIGINAL 100 PERCENT STORAGE LEVEL. There has not been any regrowth on the upper levels of those dams, even though most of those dams have not seen 100 percent storage for years.

The devastation scar, if raising of the dam wall proceeds, will be clearly visible from lookouts all the way around from Wentworth Falls to Katoomba, and it will be massive – nearly twice the size of Mt Solitary. A picture of the proposed devastation can be seen on page 12 of the digital print edition of the Blue Mountains Gazette for February 27, 2019, at www.bluemountainsgazette.com.au.

On page 5 of the Blue Mountains Gazette for August 21, 2019, it was reported that Blue Mountains National Park had received more 8.43 million visitors last year. Most of those visitors come to enjoy views of the world-heritage-listed Blue Mountains National Park. How do you compare jeopardising more than eight million visitors a year to the Blue Mountains with around 130,000 houses on the Nepean-Hawkesbury River floodplain?

The government has said that raising the dam wall is the most “cost effective” option. But their plan is deeply flawed, and is only “cost effective” because they value damage to the Blue Mountains at \$ZERO.

This proposal needs to be terminated NOW!

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.