

Submission
No 263

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO RAISE THE WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL

Organisation: Yerranderie Management Committee

Date Received: 7 September 2019

07-09-2019

Mr Justin Field MLC
Chair
Select Committee on the Proposal to Raise the Warragamba dam Wall
Legislative Council
NSW Parliament House
Macquarie St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Inquiry into the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall

I Dennis Ashton, Chairperson for the Yerranderie Management Committee (YMC), would like to make a submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee on the proposal to raise the Warragamba dam wall.

The YMC is a small committee of Wollondilly Shire Council and has been operating for over 20 years. It is made up representatives from NSW NPWS, Water NSW, Wollondilly Shire Councillors, local Police, local RFS, Guntawang (bush walking group), Burragorang Heritage Society, local land owners within and around the Yerranderie area and area generally west of the Wollondilly River (within Wollondilly Shire Council / Blue Mountains National Park).

It was formed to better co-ordinate information and ideas or concerns between the various agencies and land owners in the area.

I must declare that I have previously put in a personal submission (re European Heritage, lack of being considered). At a YMC meeting today the proposed raising of Warragamba Dam wall was again discussed and it was decided to put in this submission.

At a YMC meeting on 3 March 2018, held at Wooglamai, Sheehys Creek Road Oakdale, we had representatives from Water NSW give us a presentation on the Warragamba Dam Wall raising. They gave us an over view of the project and provided some (very) basic maps and asked if we had any particular questions. The staff did not appear to have any knowledge of the area or understand our concerns.

Such questions would relate to item (i) in your Terms of reference.

(1) What affect will this have on private lands along the Wollondilly River, starting about 3 kilometres above Full Storage Level, within Wingecarribee Shire Council. have these private property owners been notified?

What would the impact be along the river system leading into stored waters of Lake Burragorang? They did not know.

(2) With local knowledge, such a level, should this proposal go ahead, will greatly affect the main access route from the east to the west (including Yerranderie). Whist it is within the restricted section of the catchment area, it is usable for certain organised trips to Yerranderie several times a year (residents and ex residents mainly). It is the main travelling route for NPWS and Water NSW staff that are required to have access to that section of National Park or Catchment area and is the main access route for emergency services (e.g. Rural fire Services). If flooding and storage of such waters were to occur the Sheehys Creek Bridge (over the Nattai river/stored water) would be compromised. The W4 fire road would be severely impacted by debris and sediments. What plans would in place for clean up and repairs? Who would carry out such extensive works? The staff did not seem to know if or how this, or other roads would be impacted.

(3) As stated the maps that were shown to us did not have detail of how much this road or private lands would be affected. We did ask for more detailed maps and were told that these would be provided but, as to date, nothing has been sent through or given to us, in fact no feed back.

Perhaps the Select Committee should view first hand and have some one with suitable local knowledge to show them the concerns.

Item (a) Terms of Reference. Our Committee Members have been told of several proposed heights including 14, 17 and the old 23 metre levels. Which one is it?

Item (f) Terms of Reference. Our Committee (and we would assume the Select Committee) is aware of the NSW SES Hawkesbury - Nepean Flood Plan that, as far as we know, was last updated 2015 (?). It is interesting in this Plan also refers to other river systems that contribute major flooding of the Nepean Valley and these river systems are below the influence of the Warragamba. Will these also be included to meet the flood risk assessment and if they meet international best practice standards. We cannot imagine that having more development on the flood plain would be in any "best practice standard".

Item (g) Terms of Reference. Cost and funding sources. Considering the cost to date should include what has been spent previously and whether this money will be considered wasted now. The raising of Warragamba Dam wall (late 1980's) by 5 metres, adding an additional by wash area, upgrading the drum and radial gates, finished not so long ago, all for increased safety and integrity of the dam itself, in the event of a major flood. All worth while. Also the cost of the previous EIS (3 volumes?) for the proposed raising of the wall by 23 metres (early 1990's) How many millions of dollars of tax payers dollars for these previous works will be wasted if this project goes ahead, as well as, of course the project itself. Will the public pay or the downstream developers?

Yours Sincerely
Dennis Ashton
Chairperson
Yerranderie Management Committee