

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

Name: Mr Neville Wilkinson

Date Received: 10 September 2019

Mr. Justin Field (MLC),
Chair,
Select Committee on the Proposal to Raise the Level of the Warragamba Dam Wall,
Legislative Council,
NSW Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000.

Dear Mr. Field,

I respectfully request, that you and your Select Committee, accept the following Submission, to the Inquiry into the Proposal to raise the level of the Warragamba Dam Wall. I also provide my consent, for this Submission and my name to be published, in full.

The decision by the NSW Government, to raise the Warragamba Dam wall, by at least 14 metres, is a very short-sighted proposal. It will flood 4,700 hectares of World Heritage listed National Parks in the Blue Mountains. There will be irreversible damage caused to Sydney's only remaining wild river and wilderness streams (eg. the Nattai, Kowmung, Kedumba and Wollondilly rivers). It will be totally and permanently destructive AND UNECESSARY. Rich, versatile lands, not available elsewhere will be permanently damaged by the flooding. Similar-functioning- Ecosystems elsewhere, have been wiped out and they should be "OFF LIMITS".

This project will also cause dire problems in the areas of our Native Flora and Fauna, for at least forty eight (48) species, already endangered (classified as THREATENED), that call this area home, including The Camden White Gum and the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater (a very Rare Australian bird), will be seriously put at risk. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee, in July 2019, found that raising the Dam Wall would significantly impact the "Outstanding Universal Values" of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The World Heritage Listing could well be in danger.

The project will also result in the loss of over 300 sacred Aboriginal sites, in the Burratorang Valley, including the last remaining waterholes of the Gundungurra Peoples Dreaming Stories and Grave Sites. It will destroy the remaining link that Traditional Owners have to Country. It will cause a massive loss of Sacred Archaeological sites. I also believe that it is unacceptable, that the Draft Cultural Assessment, undertaken by SMEC Engineering, only covered 26% of the entire area that will be submerged by the raised dam wall.

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It would appear that the real reason behind this plan is an attempt to increase housing development, across the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley floodplain. The interests of Property Developers should not be put ahead of the Environment OR Communities. The Government should abandon plans to double housing on the floodplain, adding at least another 134,000 homes to an area, which has a known flood risk. Comments have been made, by a Minister that it aims to lessen flood risk in the area. Alternative options, for flood mitigation for the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley, have been identified, which are cheaper, less destructive and should be adopted, instead of raising the Dam Wall. These include: -

- Investing in evacuation infrastructure in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley.

- Adopting international best practice floodplain development controls.
- Using flood levees and diversion structures.
- Managing the existing capacity of Warragamba Dam by lowering its current full storage level to provide additional airspace for floods and investing in water recycling and desalination infrastructure.

Sir, this issue has raised serious concerns in the Public at large and there is a growing opposition to this Proposal. I am looking to you and your Committee, to make the decisions that will ensure the safety and integrity of the Environment in the area under threat by this proposal and guarantee the interests of the Traditional Owners, will be preserved.

Yours Faithfully.

Neville P. Wilkinson
(2153)
9th. September 2019.

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