

**Submission  
No 344**

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

**Name:** Mr Thomas Colley

**Date Received:** 10 September 2019

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Dear Members of Parliament and the NSW Government,

I strongly object to the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall.

The project would have high and unwarranted impacts on biodiversity and cultural heritage. The project would damage threatened species habitat for at least 48 species, at a time when biodiversity is under more pressure than ever. It also impacts hugely on Indigenous cultural heritage sites that have not been properly assessed due to an unbelievably poor cultural heritage assessment which only assessed a fraction of the total area (<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6302092/warragamba-report-insulting-to-elders/?cs=14231>). Much cultural heritage in this area has already been destroyed by previous flooding from the existing dam wall. To increase the destruction at this time is macabre. These impacts also deplete the "Outstanding Universal Values" for which the Greater Blue Mountains has been granted World Heritage Status, thereby threatening this status.

The motives behind the raising of the wall are dubious. Claims that the raised wall will protect people from floods are cannot be substantiated, and alternative strategies would better serve the people of Sydney in terms of both flood protection and water security - see Associate Professor Jamie Pittock's report from 2018, "Managing flood risk in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley" ([https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/wildrivers/pages/310/attachments/original/1554349542/Professor\\_Jamie\\_Pittock\\_-\\_A\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_alternative\\_flood\\_management\\_measure.pdf?1554349542](https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/wildrivers/pages/310/attachments/original/1554349542/Professor_Jamie_Pittock_-_A_report_on_the_alternative_flood_management_measure.pdf?1554349542)).

The likely scenario arising from raising the dam wall is that unscrupulous developers will make huge gains by buying and selling flood-prone land, while those who purchase and build there will still be prone to the larger and more devastating floods, and carry the cost of such disastrous planning. Such unscrupulous activity is already apparent (see <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2019/02/06/raising-nsw-dam-wall-good-floodplain-developers>). If the project went ahead, the government would be handing over huge profits to developers while setting up the Sydney community for devastating flood impacts and related economic losses.

The points raised above show the proposed project to be a miscarriage of social, environmental and economic justice. It is appalling that the project is even under consideration.

Sincerely,  
Thomas Colley