

Submission  
No 366

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 6 September 2019

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear Committee,

Please accept this submission to the Legislative Council's Select Committee Inquiry into the Proposal to Raise the Warragamba Dam Wall. I consent to this submission and my name being published in full.

There are several options available including lowering the full storage level of Warragamba Dam by 12 metres would free 795 billion litres of airspace for flood control [and] would have no upstream environmental impacts and can be implemented immediately.

A September 2018 report, from the Australian National University under Assoc Prof Jamie Pittock, discusses these options including the strategy of lowering the full storage level.

Why are property developers and \$\$\$s being put forward as the priority to environment.

Rainfall is already at desperate levels. Trees are essential to the development process of rainfall and yet this NSW Govt believes destroying trees and habitat will improve what? Nothing.

Rampant approval by this Govt to strip environment is fast becoming the basis of governance, and continually threatening habitat, indigenous peoples heritage and the Blue Mountains Heritage Listed National Park.

The NSW Govt will be dealing with climate change droughts over the next 10 years, and stripping environment will add to this, not save us from it.

Start working on decentralisation of Sydney's population using railway infrastructure could disperse Sydney into regional areas as they do overseas. Instead of attacking environment for the sake of developers profits.

The Govt is overlooking flood-management practices used across the world, because it doesn't fit in with their agenda to take more land for development profits.

The NSW Government's plan to raise the Warragamba Dam wall by at least 14 metres is unnecessary, destructive and an expensive gift to property developers. It would be cheaper and less destructive to invest in international best practice flood management for Western Sydney. Forty eight threatened species that inhabit the area will be put at risk, including the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater (one of Australia's rarest birds) and the Camden White Gums. In July 2019, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee found that raising the dam wall would significantly impact the 'Outstanding Universal Values' of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Each time species are destroyed, there are whole ecosystems that go with each species that are also destroyed. The impact is profound. The NSW Govt is not called the Sydney Govt. Their focus for urban development has to be greater than the Sydney region. Stop attacking our tourist-dollar making Blue Mountains region, and first nation people's land; and consider the well researched reports that are available to make competent decisions instead of the private money-making avenues that have no regard for our nature's future that we so desperately need. Given the Global Warming that is emerging each year in it's impact.

Three hundred sacred Aboriginal sites in the Burratorang Valley, including the last remaining waterholes of the Gundungurra peoples dreaming stories and grave sites will be lost. This is serious and 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. This is fraud, to produce an assessment that deliberately negates the truth of cultural significance. What price was paid for such an inadequate report or was this done on purpose to ensure the truth was not truly represented?

The real driver behind the proposal is clearly a push to increase housing development across the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley floodplain. 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.

We should not be putting the interests of property developers ahead of the environment and communities.

Alternative options for flood mitigation 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; and
- 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.

Due diligence would reveal that the proposal of raising the wall instead of the other well documented options, would be blatant negligence and manipulation to afford property developers privileges above the needs of the community and environment.

Let commonsense prevail over profits for private developers.

Kind regards,