

**Submission  
No 367**

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

**Name:** Ms Gisela Kaplan

**Date Received:** 7 September 2019

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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.

I am writing in response to the foolhardy proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall by at least 14 metres. There are better and less destructive ways to deal with the problems at hand. Raising water levels in dams is furthermore old-hat, outmoded. As we speak, many dams are filled in and abolished in the USA for reasons of the obvious and apparent damage they do.

I urge the committee to recommend the NSW Government abandon this short-sighted proposal. Moreover, flooding 4,700 hectares of World Heritage listed National Parks in the Blue Mountains is destroying a major income earner for NSW by tourism, possibly forfeiting world heritage status too. Perhaps the government does not care at all about Aboriginal rights, threatened species of flora and fauna and it would be a waste of paper to even suggest they consider this, having their minds buried in a bizarre 19th century colonial bubble. But 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 and that also translates into money/income for NSW, never mind the intrinsic beauty of the area that we ought to maintain for future generations..

The real driver behind the proposal is clearly greed and a collusion with developers, perhaps a push to increase housing development across the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley floodplain. If this is so, then this is a very corrupt plan because it is an area which has a known flood risk.

We should not be putting the interests of property developers ahead of communities and the environment and should start adding up the actual costs to the state, to its reputation, its tourist dollars and the scandalous running rough-shod over the few Aboriginal sacred sites. Dams are the most inefficient way of harnessing water and one would expect better and more up-to-date engineering know-how from a 21st century government!!

Alternative options for flood mitigation are already known. These include:

- 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.

There is no single good or logical reason for raising the dam walls at all except greed and corruption, neither of which I hope the government would want to be seen to be involved in.

Kind regards,

Gisela Kaplan , (2450}