

Dungowan Dam&Pipeline Project SSI-10046

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I OBJECT to the proposal to construct the new Dungowan Dam but support a new pipeline from Dungowan Dam to the Dungowan Showground as ours is 70 years old and loses at least 10% of the water that passes through it due to leakage.

The proposed New Dungowan Dam is \$1.3 billion and is on a catchment that yields on average 7-10GL per year. At 22.5GL it will take more than 3 years to fill using no water from it and applying the flow rules of only retaining flow-ins greater than 13ML.

The EIS looks at NO ALTERNATIVES and is NOT the most cost efficient option to secure Tamworth Water Supply. The Namoi Regional Draft Water Strategy published in March 2021 discussed many options.

The three abattoirs in town use 43% of the town water. If industrial water recycling was implemented it would save more water than a new dam could store with no evaporation or expensive infrastructure required. Most of the population would have no objection to recycling water for industrial use.

The new dam will cause major environmental damage to the river and biodiversity.

River health will be affected due to loss of major flows into the catchment downstream from the old Dungowan Dam and less river transfer of water from Chaffey Dam to Calala due to use of Dungowan Dam and pipeline preferentially. This will reduce groundwater recharge especially in the Peel river which has fractured rock aquifer heavily dependent on river flow. The town relies on bores to water sporting fields and other grounds and the drift wells in Scott Road to supplement the town water particularly in drought.

The dam will cause cold water pollution when discharging which travels up to 5km downstream. There is no fish passage so 34.2km of fish habitat of which 26.4km is highly sensitive will be lost. This is where the dam is and the tributaries that run into it. Fish passage offsets is a lazy way of dealing with the issue and will not benefit this environment. The current Dungowan Dam contains no carp unlike Chaffey dam and the Peel river. When we had access before the Council closed the road to the general public there was also a healthy platypus population which I assume is still there.

Building a dam requires significant clearing and 315 hectares are impacted including 57 hectares of Boxgum woodland a critically endangered ecosystem that contains koalas, Spotted-tailed Quoll and other threatened birds and mammals. Half of this will be replanted hopefully with endemic species but you cannot replace 100 year old trees with hollows etc and it will be many years before a mature structure of grasses, groundcovers, shrubs and trees returns so it is beneficial to all wildlife currently there. Biodiversity offsets-paying into a Biodiversity Conservation Fund and purchasing credits- will not improve the situation for Dungowan.

The dam will have many negative impacts for our aboriginal community including loss of material culture, access to cultural sites, declining fish population and native flora and fauna with clearing and changed water flows.

Clearing and dam construction also increases the bushfire risk including the problem with smokers and also the likelihood of more weeds and invasive species. The pipeline is in a trench 1.35m by 2.2 m which is too shallow to crop over

The dam will not increase employment for the local population as at least 90% will be brought in and live in a camp which has 140 places. There are very few rentals available (only 16.5% of places are currently rented) the rest are occupied by people who either own or are paying off their property .The vacancy rate is less than 1% .Once construction is complete only 1-2 FTE will be needed to keep it operational. There are also no services at Dungowan- no water, transport, laundry, health services and the internet is patchy. The camp will have a major impact on the community.

Surveys done in 2020/2022 had very small numbers the 2022 survey was stopped after only 9 days. However they did show that the more people learnt about the dam the less they wanted it. Poor awareness dropped from 28.7% to 7.6% but supportive dropped from 57.5% to 34.5% and opposition rose from 26.4% to 56.1%. The majority opposed it on account of cost, water management, and the business case and to look at alternatives.

NSW taxpayers do not want to pay for a project with no cost benefit and significant environmental damage. The Federal productivity Commission was not supportive. It was estimated to add \$50- \$53 added to our rate bill but did not include the actual cost per kl of water to us as this is decided by IPART on a user pays basis which changes every year. Currently our water is not that expensive as the Council owns the Dungowan dam and the water is of good quality. The new Dungowan dam will be owned by Water NSW so Council will lose a valuable source of revenue.

For the above reasons I do not think the new Dungowan Dam should go ahead.

I have made no political donations in the last two years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynette D Allen'.

27/11/22