



**Healthy Rivers Dubbo**

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NSW Department of Planning

## **Submission**

### **Objection to Warragamba Dam Raising SSI-8441**

Healthy Rivers Dubbo (HRD) is a grass roots community network dedicated to providing a strong voice for our local rivers, aquifers and wetlands in the Murray-Darling Basin for the benefit of wildlife, plants and people. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge that this land was never ceded.

#### **HRD objects to the raising of Warragamba dam wall.**

The Preferred Infrastructure Report ignores the concerns raised by the community and government agencies to the initial Environmental Impact Statement from 2021. Some expert submission were not addressed.

Sydney Water and Health NSW have serious concerns about the effects the dam project would have on Sydney's drinking water.

The Australian branch of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which advises the UNESCO World Heritage Committee strongly objected to the dam proposal:

*"The Dam Proposal is inconsistent with Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention with respect to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area... and neither the Dam Proposal itself, nor the EIS comply with specific Decisions of the World Heritage Committee,"*

A submission by consultancy firm Coast History and Heritage was highly critical of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report:

*"Our strong view is that the ACHAR for the Warragamba Dam Raising does not meet the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements [SEARs] and is manifestly inadequate to allow the Minister to make an informed decision about the project in relation to Aboriginal heritage,"*

There have been over 1,500 cultural heritage sites identified in the area that would be destroyed by the project. Many submissions to the original EIS pointed out the consultation with the Gundungurra Community was not done appropriately.

Noting that 45% on average of the floodwater that impact downstream of Warragamba originate outside of the Warragamba dam catchment, there are plenty of alternative options that would protect existing floodplain communities from flooding. A combination of multiple options has been recommended:

- buy-back program for houses below the 1-in-100 flood line
- Reduce the full supply of the dam level by 12m, that would create 800 gigalitres of space for flood mitigation (40% of the total dam capacity).
- Expand of Sydney's seawater desalination plant by 90 to 180 GL per year to cover the reduction of water availability from a reduced Warragamba dam full supply.
- This would significantly increase drought resilience by having rebalanced our water sources towards more rainfall-independent supply.

None of these options were considered in the EIS.

For more information about this submission, contact the Healthy Rivers Dubbo Committee

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