

Dear Planners,

I and my family have for four generations been closely connected to the Blue Mountains, and to the unique bush-life and opportunities the area provides to Sydneysiders. The area is also a World Heritage site.

We strongly oppose this proposal. Below are facts the Minister should consider when making his decision on whether or not to raise the dam wall.

First, the Blue Mountains benefits all Australians, not just Sydney residents. It also brings in a great deal of tourist income.

Second, the Blue Mountains World Heritage area is not just a world class National Park, since in 2000 it was inscribed on UNESCO's prestigious World Heritage list in recognition of the Blue Mountains Outstanding Universal value for the whole of mankind. Raising the Warragamba dam wall and consequent damage to natural and cultural values would be a clear breach of these undertakings and Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention. An estimated **65 kilometres of wilderness rivers, and 5,700 hectares of National Parks**, 1,300 hectares of which is within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, would be inundated by the Dam project.

Third, the actual proposal is deeply flawed in the following ways:

1. The engineering firm (SMEC Engineering) who undertook the environmental and cultural assessments for the project has an established history abusing Indigenous rights, recently being **barred from the world bank**.
2. Severe fires during the summer of 2019/20 devastated 81% of Blue Mountains Heritage Area. **No post-bushfire field surveys have been undertaken.**
3. Only **27%** of the impact area was assessed for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.
4. Threatened species surveys are **substantially less than guideline requirements**. Where field surveys were not adequately completed, expert reports were not obtained.
5. **No modelling** of the stated flood and economic benefits of the dam wall raising are outlined in the EIS.

6. The **integrity of the environmental assessment is fundamentally flawed**, and cannot be accepted as a basis for further decision-making by the Minister for Planning.

Finally, we note that there are many alternative options to raising the Warragamba Dam wall that would protect existing floodplain communities. A combined approach of multiple options has been recommended as the most cost-effective means of flood risk mitigation.

Yours faithfully,

(Prof) A L Booth