

Yerranderie Management Committee

The Secretary

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Submission for Warragamba Dam Raising Project EIS

During the 1940's & 1950's the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board (MWS&DB) purchased or resumed lands within the inundation area for Warragamba Dam storage and out to two miles / three km (and at times beyond) above full supply level for water quality protection.

All these property acquisitions are on file (either with Water NSW or Sydney Water, they are historic records and cannot be destroyed) and contain, in most cases, descriptions, plans, drawings of properties showing house, buildings and other structures on the land and at times photographs as well. This includes many of the European heritage sites that can still be found along the foreshore within the proposed 14 meter raising zone.

When the raising of Warragamba Dam for flood mitigation was first mooted, in the late 1980's, by up to 23 meters above full storage level, an independent report by survey and field assessment was carried out with assistance from a knowledgeable Water Board Ranger of most of the foreshore sites but due to a lack of time it was not a complete report. This report was done by James Stephany and would be in Water NSW records / archives (and possibly some Local Heritage Societies). This report formed part of the EIS for this project that was later abandoned and the current flood protection for the dam was built (at great cost).

Although the Water Board owned and managed these lands from the late 1950's, the Government Gazetted most of the catchment lands along the foreshores to the National Parks and Wildlife Service on 13 December 1991 and the lands were to be jointly managed and were known as the Nattai Reserve System. In the mid 1990's the Government instructed Sydney Water to have Joint Plan of Management prepared and gave two years for its completion. Part of the planning process was to have an inventory of heritage sites throughout the catchment / National Park. The compilation of heritage sites throughout the catchments was divided into those in the Warragamba Special Area and those in the Metropolitan & Woronora Special Areas. The Warragamba Report comprised two volumes, one for those heritage sites and items in Burratorang Valley / Yerranderie and those in the Silverdale area (these areas had private lands acquired). Apart from the two hard

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copy volumes all sites were entered onto a GIS layer. The completion of these plans was done in 1997.

The NPWS, who are now responsible for these lands, in a Joint Management Agreement with (now) Water NSW have Management Plans that cover the same areas as previously owned and managed by the MWS&DB, Water Board, Sydney Water and Sydney Catchment Authority, all previous agencies of Water NSW.

The NPWS Nattai Reserves Plan of Management (April 2001-current).

Pages 28/29 4.2.2 Historic Heritage.

Policies: Historic places will be:

- recorded, researched, and conserved
- non-destructive research into the historic heritage of the reserves will be encouraged
- the cultural heritage of these areas will be promoted by providing information about the non-aboriginal history of the reserves.

Actions:

- A register of historic places in the Nattai reserve System will be established and maintained by the addition of new records.
- A conservation plan for the 'Joorilands' homestead will be prepared in accordance with the Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management.

The Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management 2015 (Water NSW & Office of Environment & Heritage)

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3.8 Cultural heritage

The cultural values of the Special Areas are significant for communities. Culturally important places, sites and objects of both aboriginal and non-Aboriginal origin occur throughout the Special Areas and provide a record of human activities related to the natural features of the area. Cultural sites may be deteriorating and non-renewable and may require effective management to ensure their conservation.

Under the NPWS Act and the NSW Heritage Act 1977 the agencies are required to have regard to the conservation of Aboriginal sites and historic places within the Special Areas. The agencies are guided by the provisions of the Australian ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of places of historic significance and the views of local communities who have an ongoing and active interest in the management of Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage within the Special areas.

The joint sponsors consult and where appropriate activity involves communities with cultural connections in the management of the Special area lands. The Joint Sponsors will plan and implement programs to conserve significant historic places and Aboriginal sites within the Special areas where required.

Page 20. 4 Strategic directions

4.2.4 Cultural values

The Special areas contain a wide range of Aboriginal and historic objects, sites, and cultural landscapes. These cultural values are of ongoing significance to Aboriginal and other local communities. The maintenance of the cultural values of the Special Areas will require the conservation of significant objects, sites and cultural landscapes in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders.

From the above it is obvious that Water NSW and NPWS have a great deal of information regarding previous European sites (or as listed non-Aboriginal) and objects within the proposed inundation area by raising the Warragamba Dam wall for flood mitigation but have chosen NOT to list any,

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except a mention of the “Jooriland” homestead on page 17.14. 17.3.4.6. that states the property was in use until the 1980s, but Water NSW own records would tell them that it was occupied up to 1993 when the lease was terminated. It states the homestead residence was occupied into the 1960s but fails to say a newer homestead alongside the original one was occupied up until it burnt down 1994. The original house was in use up to the 1950's. It states the property was obtained by the National Parks in 1993 but this is incorrect. The land was Gazetted to National Parks by the Government from the Water Board 13 December 1991. It states the homestead is not listed on any statutory heritage register. To determine the heritage significance of this item a heritage assessment of the Jooriland homestead should be undertaken by the asset owner. There has already been a Conservation Management Plan completed for Jooriland as was directed by the Action within the Nattai Reserves Plan of Management 2001 (as previously mentioned).

Both Water NSW and NPWS would have a copy of this Conservation Management Plan as both were involved in its development. If it cannot be located this would be a breach of what was required under their own Management Plans.

It would seem the only European or Non-aboriginal heritage sites or objects must be either World heritage, National heritage, Commonwealth heritage, State Heritage, as listed on council LEP or an agency section 170 Heritage Act listing.

Although:

Within the **Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements** (Page 1-11)

10.Heritage.

2. where impacts to State or locally significant heritage items are identified, the assessment must:

(a) include a statement of heritage impact for all heritage items (including significant assessment);

There is a bit of ambiguity here. Is this an oversight or deliberate to exclude local heritage items that were known as once recorded in the area above the Warragamba Dam within the catchment / National Park area?

The importance of the remaining heritage sites and objects within the area are of the utmost importance to the ex Burragorang families, many of which are still with us to this day.

It is them that gave up their homes, properties, and way of life for Sydney's water supply and the water quality protection of it.

It is of great concern that there is, apparently, an abundance of non-Aboriginal sites and objects at the dam site and the entire area below it that get recognition.

The area that is now designated as World Heritage Area was, prior to Warragamba Dam, mostly cleared and utilized for farming and along the foreshore of both the Wollondilly and Nattai arms of the dam have many of the European heritage sites such as 3 school sites, 2 with remains, 1 part of building and objects and the grave of the schoolteacher nearby dating from 1870, s. site and remains of the Wollondilly Hotel, many house sites, old tobacco kiln remains (is this the only one know in NSW?), parts of old Wollondilly Shire Council Road and bridge and other remains. The World Heritage Area only forms a small section of the foreshore area and the rest of the foreshore area also has or had a great deal of sites including the only remaining sandstone building still mostly standing, a T model Ford car, A Buick car with a gas burner still attached, the grave of a boy with headstone dated 1870, a Chevrolet car, a homemade Buick car/tractor, many house and farm remains, fences, stockyards, a boiler of a steam powered saw mill and nearby house remains with chimney made from river cobblestones and many more items.

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All these items were recorded and now should be listed on Section 170 registers, but it is unknown if they have.

The EIS process should have all information to make a valid assessment instead of a bias method to enhance the downstream importance and make out that there are no issues at all in the upstream inundation area that this project is all about.

How can an old sunken ship (heritage listed) that has had many floods over it, and will continue to do so if this project goes ahead or not, downstream of Warragamba Dam, have more relevance or importance to a family grave that has been well above a flood line for over 150 years (and placed there for that very reason), upstream of Warragamba Dam on the stored water foreshore?

Existing environment and field survey

17.2.4

Site inspection of listed heritage items within upstream and construction areas were undertaken on 17-11-2017, 8-5-2018 and 7-6-2018

What list, who was consulted?

17.3.2 Historical Overview

17.3.2.1 Early Colonial History

17.3.3.1 Phase 1: early Land Grants and Rural Development

Prior to the construction of Warragamba Dam there is nil to low potential that Archaeological Evidence of land clearance, and modification for agriculture or pasturing purposes would be located within the study area.

This statement is simply incorrect. At the bottom of the first surveyed road in 1827 (R360 old roll) into Burragorang Valley via Mt Burragorang, along both Little and Nattai Rivers, at the very end of the stored waters of Lake Burragorang there are (or were prior to the last bushfires?) the remains of dwellings and fences etc. that date back to the early to mid-1800's. Most of these areas were still in a cleared condition at least into the 1990's, this includes those areas now listed as "World Heritage" (check early aerial photographs).

This road itself is of great historical importance, as are several other roads leading into and within Burragorang Valley, above full storage level (but for some reason have not been listed or acknowledged).

The Warragamba Dam Raising Project Team have been informed of the many heritage items along the foreshores of Lake Burragorang by the YMC and submissions were also presented to the Parliamentary Hearings.

The YMC did host representatives from Water NSW Project Team, at one of our Official Regular Meetings, who gave a talk on the project, but unfortunately could not answer any questions about heritage sites, damage to river crossings, roads etc. We were told that there would be follow-up but unfortunately there has been no response or follow-up or consultation from the Warragamba Dam Raising Project Team at all.

Water NSW still have several knowledgeable and experienced staff that are aware of the heritage items on the foreshores and within the catchment / now National Park. Some have been involved with Conservation Management Plans and heritage restoration projects throughout the catchments. Historic and heritage information of the catchments is well known within the organization so why were they not consulted unless of course that information was not desired by the proponents to bias the project outcome.

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It is noted that with the **Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management 2015 (SASPoM)** Four Year Land Management Priorities **annual review completed June 2021**

8. Cultural heritage

8.1 Identify sites and manage Aboriginal and historic heritage sites in consultation with identified stakeholder and communities with cultural connections.

8.3 Develop Conservation Management Plans for all state listed heritage sites under each agency's stewardship.

8.4 Progressively implement actions from approved Conservation Management Plans.

Apart from ex-Burraborang residents and their families, there are similar families with cultural connections in all the areas that are jointly managed and there is an abundance of non-Aboriginal / European heritage sites within these areas, but it seems those families and communities have been ignored by both Water NSW and NPWS. Some of these sites would only have family or previous community connections, some would have local significance and others may have state importance but if there is no consultation or recognition of their existence, how can this be demonstrated?

The SASPoM above states "historic heritage sites in consultation with identified stakeholder and communities with cultural connections". The ex-Burraborang families and community have a very strong connection to their old homes, properties, and way of life, yet seem to be excluded.

Who are the identified stakeholders and communities?

The YMC has representation by the Burraborang Heritage Society on its committee and this society is made up of ex-Burraborang people and their families who should have been consulted about their heritage remains that will be affected should this project proceed.

Perhaps a Formal Inquiry is required or an ICAC investigation to determine if a bias has occurred on this matter.

Yours faithfully

Trish Hill *Secretary*

Dennis Ashton *Chair*

On behalf of The Yerranderie Management Committee

07/10/2021