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Dear Sir/Madam,

I have emigrated from the UK in 1981. I liked the idea of coming to Australia as I thought it was so big that foolish people could not mess it up. I was totally wrong. From London the nearest equivalent to the Blue Mountains National Park is the Balkans wilderness, half a continent away, with its wolves etc. In Sydney we are lucky enough to have that on our door step. World Heritage listed no less. I have lived in Western Sydney for most of the time since and have often visited the National Park, doing things like walking, canyoning, motorcycling, mountain bike riding. It is appalling that our unrepresentative representatives (ie the current LNP State and Fed Govts) are arguing for a trashing of this area's values by raising the Warragamba Dam Wall. This is on several counts;

- If this lowers the flood heights along the Hawkesbury Nepean Rivers and development occurs you will have placed people in harm's way. They will be flooded, maybe not in a new lower 1 in 100 flood level but a 1 in a 500 or 1000 flood event, that will occur and people will die as a result of them living where they should not, on the flood plain. Despite assertions this will not happen if the wall is raised, I do not believe this, once insurance cos will cover it, it will happen. This is really what raising the dam wall is about.
- Naturalness cannot be maintained if the wall is raised. This was a precedent established in law to prevent sand mining along NSW beaches for rutile ie stopped as the mining cos could not retain the value of naturalness. There is no way this can be maintained in the World Heritage Area after even the first flood upstream. The 2<sup>nd</sup> EIS for raising the Dam Wall put out by the Carr Govt had measures for mitigating this. These were found to be inadequate, such as creating seed banks, these were just a sop by the prior LNP NSW Greiner and Faye Govts to do what this LNP govt is, again attempting after having it quashed in the mid 90's.
- This failure to maintain naturalness applies upstream and downstream from the wall. Downstream it is the remnant Cumberland Plain that will be degraded. The 1990's EIS's proposed seed banks etc with the criticisms aa applying, ie they will not work as the flood regimes will be altered and ecosystem irrevocably altered permanently, eg Agnus Banks and Scheyville Nat parks. The river will be altered. It will become shallower and hotter, with less oxygen, flushed less often and ultimately much less viable. That is dying. The commercial oyster farms will be adversely affected and the oyster farmers were thus opposed (not sure about their position now). The sea bass and other fish species will have their breeding cycles and ground adversely altered; they need to come upstream to do this.
- If development of the flood plain occurs there will be increased pollution, flooding and changed flooding regimes as well, adding to the above adverse effects. All the science is that further hard surfaces should be avoided in order to protect the waterways and avoid flash floods.

- The flood plain is good farming land and a nice green break between the encroaching suburbs and Richmond, Windsor, North Richmond, Pitt Town. This is great psychologically for the people of Sydney and especially Western Sydney. It helps cool a very hot area on hot days. It is a conduit for wild life eg at night you can see the fruit bats using the route of the river foraging for food. It is a source of vital, increasingly rare and therefore valuable biodiversity.

As you can see from above, I object very very strongly to the raising of the dam wall. I consider this gross vandalism, leaves nothing for our grandchildren, detracts from the quality of our lives, destroys World Heritage values, compromises land and water ecosystems, places people in the path of danger (floods), destroys livelihoods (oyster farmers, farmers and workers). To get this though there are huge powerful vested interests that are not interested in any of this or the people. For example; Witness the corruption as per the ABC and Channel 9 reports re the Hong Kong investor/developer who bought land on the flood plain just north of Penrith for \$30 million, donated \$100,000 to the Liberal Party just before it passed the bill in the NSW State Parliament, allowing the vandalism of the World Heritage Area by flooding (it would have been illegal otherwise), at night, gave a further \$100,000, after the vote, to the Liberal Party. Then a few weeks later sold the land for \$130 million as the buyer would be under the impression it could be rezoned as the insurance cos would finally agree to insuring any subsequent development. I drove past the trucks day after day, for about 5 years now, truck after truck arrive with aggregate etc to fill the holes left by the sand mines on this land, to raise it above the 1 in 100 flood level. He nor the new owner did not care that the people living here will be in harms way, some WILL DIE (who's child, father, mother, brother, sister, grandparent?) WHEN a big flood arrives and with global warming this event is more likely and closer in time. This is a government subsidy of about \$1.7 billion, depending on how you do the sums, to developers. I think this is, sorry to use strong language but I think it fits, disgusting.

In the scheme of things as per the need for Sydney to grow, any development on the flood plain is inconsequential. There maybe 100,000 or so extra people able to live on the plain. This is a drop in the ocean, pun intended. The mitigation has already been done in the mid 1990's at the cost of \$90 million (in mid 1990's dollars, so that would be about say \$500 million in todays dollars). If laws have been flouted by developers, councils and individuals since then and their action thus places their property and lives at risk, other solutions should be undertaken to ensure safety eg pay compensation to relocate them, this will be no-where near the cost of raising the dam wall and further mitigation. If knowingly illegal, it is my opinion no compensation should be paid and maybe some minor costs only. An example should be set to scurrilous individuals that this is what happens when you flout the building in flood prone area rules. They knew the risks why should I feel sorry for them when the risk comes in and they are rightly made to pay?

This wall should not be raised. If it is? It will be a gross injustice and indictment on our government and our generation and we will rightly be judged very harshly. Not me as I am objecting strongly.

The following is from a form letter and adds further huge evidence that if this goes ahead it will be against all the overwhelming evidence that this should not go ahead. So overwhelming that it easily tips into a moral crime of gigantic proportions, if allowed;

## Systematic failures of the EIS

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

## World Heritage and cultural sites under attack

The Blue Mountains World Heritage area is not just a world class National Park, in 2000 it was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in recognition of its 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. This includes:

- The **Kowmung River** - declared a 'Wild River', protected for its pristine condition under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;

- Unique **eucalyptus species** diversity recognised as having Outstanding Universal Value under the area's World Heritage listing such as the Camden White Gum;
- A number of **Threatened Ecological Communities**, notably Grassy Box Woodland;
- Habitat for endangered and critically endangered species including the **Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeater and Sydney's last Emu population.**

**Gundungurra Traditional Owners have not given Free, Prior and Informed Consent for the Dam proposal to proceed.**

- Over **1541 identified cultural heritage sites** would be inundated by the Dam proposal.
- The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report has been severely and repeatedly criticised by both the Australian Department of Environment and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) for not appropriately assessing cultural heritage in meaningful consultation with Gundungurra community members.

### **Alternatives to raising Warragamba Dam wall**

- **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.**
- Alternative options were not comprehensively assessed in the EIS. Any assessment of alternatives does not take into account the economic benefits that would offset the initial cost of implementation.
- On average, 45% of floodwaters are derived from areas outside of the upstream Warragamba Dam catchment. This means that no matter how high the dam wall is constructed, it will not be able to prevent flooding in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley downstream.

Yours sincerely

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Cert Gifted Ed.