



Wagga Wagga
City Council

Flood Futures

Gumly Gumly & East Wagga Community Meeting

22 November 2012

Start Time: 6:10pm

Finish Time: 8:15 pm

Location: East Wagga Football Club

Main City and North Wagga Levee Upgrade – Gumly Gumly & East Wagga Community Information Session

Councillors present:

Mayor Rod Kendall, Deputy Mayor Andrew Negline, Councillor Garry Hiscock, Councillor Yvonne Braid

Present:

James McTavish – State Emergency Service

Reuben Robinson – GHD Pty Ltd

Council Officers:

Heinz Kausche, Andrew Crakanthorp, Luke Grealy, Geoff Veneris, Brett Koschel, Vanessa Keenan, Belinda Maclure, Kate Amos, Brad Jeffrey

Opening Vanessa Keenan

Welcome Mayor Rod Kendall

Outline of Presentation Vanessa Keenan

Presentation Project Manager - Brad Jeffrey

- Outline of presentation
- What is the proposed upgrade of the levees project?
- Historical flood heights
- History of the levees
- What has happened so far with the proposed upgrade of the levees project
- What is planned for the proposed upgrade of the levees project
- Review of Environmental Factors
- Social, environmental and economic impacts assessed including specialist studies for indigenous and non-indigenous heritage, noise and vibration and ecology

What is Flood Modelling?

- We are planning for a bigger flood than 1974
- The 1 in 100 yr flood has been modelled as an 11.3m river at the Hampden Bridge
- The model improves flood studies that were previous done and includes over 200 flood levels taken from the 1974 flood to improve its accuracy
- The model is based upon survey data accurate to within +/-0.15 metre which was taken in 2008

-The modelling is 2010 data

-The model itself is accurate to within +/- 0.25 metre

Gumly Levee

-Formalised in the 1992 by Kyeamba Shire Council to what was then thought to be a 1 in 10 year level

-Provides protection for Gumly Gumly residents until flood water moves around the flood plain and approaches from both the north west and south east.

What impact will the upgrade of the levee have on Gumly Gumly and East Wagga?

-There will be an increased depth of water as a result of the levee upgrade.

-The depth varies depending upon where you are located in the floodplain as well as the distance from the point of restriction in the floodplain near the Gobbagombalin Bridge.

-For North Wagga, there will be an approximate increase of 0.15 metre

-For East Wagga, there will be an approximate increase of 0.12 metre

-For Gumly Gumly, there will be an approximate increase of 0.02 metre

How do I get further information?

-One on one appointments can be made with a Council officer at your home or at Council by calling 1300 292 442 or emailing leveeupgrade@wagga.nsw.gov.au

-All information is available on Council's website www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/floodfutures

How do I interpret the concept designs?

-There is a fact sheet available on our website which shows you how to interpret the designs. www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/floodfutures

-If people need assistance please call 1300 292 442 or email leveeupgrade@wagga.nsw.gov.au and ask for assistance

How can I share my views?

-Submissions will be received up until 18 March 2012

-Submission can be in the form of letters or emails

-Please post to

PO Box 20, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

-Or email us at

leveeupgrade@wagga.nsw.gov.au

Project Funding

-Since 2007 Council has been successful in obtaining funding for this project from the NSW State Government and the Commonwealth Government.

-Based upon the concept designs the estimate for the project is

www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/floodfutures

1300 292 442

\$18.8 Million. This includes \$11.5 Million to be spent on the Central Wagga levee and \$7.5 Million to be spent on the North Wagga levee. These figures are expected to increase upon finalising detailed designs.

Open Discussion - Comments, Statements, Questions and Answers

Comment

A resident commented that they found that the 1974 flood was 8-9 inches lower than in March 2012.

Response

Every flood is different. In March 2012 the flood water arrived a lot quicker than it did in 1974.

There are similar stories about higher flood heights experienced in March 2012 than in 1974.

The likely reasons for the increased flood height may be due to changes in the floodplain such as development, changes in agricultural practices (grazing vs. cropping), sedimentation, erosion, vegetation and the building of roads and other infrastructure (Brad Jeffrey).

Question

Masters and other developments have an effect on the topography - how will that impact on the floodplain. Is the development at East Wagga included in the modelling?

Response

Any changes, including development have an effect on flood water depth, flood water velocity and the direction of flow.

The development that occurred up until 2008 is included in the modelling.

Good practice is to revisit the flood modelling every 5 to 10 years depending upon what is occurring in the floodplain as well as what flood events have occurred (Brad Jeffrey).

Question

If the survey data is from 2008 and the modelling is from 2010, why are you talking to us now? Shouldn't you be talking to us when you have up to date data?

Response

Council appreciates that the survey data is from 2008 and that the modelling data is dated 2010. This is the most up to date data we currently have. Council will be reviewing its flood modelling data when the NSW Office of Water release their revised flood rating tables for the March 2012 flood event. Hopefully they will be released in February 2013 which will allow revised flood modelling to inform the detailed designs (Brad Jeffrey).

Question

Why does North Wagga get a higher levee and that causes more inundation at Gumly Gumly? What is so special about North Wagga?

Response

Council resolved in 2009 to look at the feasibility of upgrading the North Wagga levee to a 1 in 20 year level of protection and the levee protecting central Wagga to a 1 in 100 year level of protection. The purpose of these information sessions is to inform the community about the project as well as listen to what the community has to say (Brad Jeffrey).

Question

Why not just worry about the southern side of the river and forget about North Wagga?

Response

This may be one of the issues that come out of the community engagement, for Council to not do anything to the North Wagga levee (Mayor Rod Kendall)

Question

Why are you proposing to spend millions of dollars at North Wagga?

Response

This is the sort of feedback we need to hear (Mayor Rod Kendall)

Question

How strategically are Council going to spend the funding that it receives?

Response

Once the community engagement phase is complete the information gained will be provided to Council to make a decision about how the money should be spent, Council will be deciding on what works will be done or if the project goes ahead at all (Brad Jeffrey)

Question

How much control do we have over discharges from Burrinjuck and Blowering Dams?

Response

At the moment our control over how the upstream water storages are managed is minimal. However, discussions are being had with both State Water and Snowy Hydro about management strategies to better assist downstream communities during flood events.

Most of the water during large flood events comes from Burrinjuck Dam. However in March 2012 there was a large inflow to the Murrumbidgee River from the Goobragandra River upstream of Tumut and separate to the water storages altogether. (James McTavish – SES)

Question

How much effort is put into getting real knowledge about this area?

Response

Our modelling includes eye witness accounts, photographs, survey levels taken after the 1974 flood to calibrate the model. Following the March 2012 event the SES sent out a firm of investigators to gather data from residents and from in the floodplain. This firm of investigators are the same people who have done Council's modelling in the past.

Council intends to use that information collected to calibrate the flood model and improve its accuracy. (Brad Jeffrey)

Question

Why is North Wagga only going to a 1 in 20?

Response

Anything bigger will cause an island on the floodplain and the Department of Environment and Heritage would not allow it. It would have a bigger effect upstream. (Mayor Rod Kendall)

Question

When will the decision be made by Council?

Response

Consultation will end in March 2013. The decision or recommendation may not be made until mid 2013. Mayor Rod Kendall.

Comment

Stop development on the floodplain as flood water keeps changing

Comment

Mayor's opening remarks should set off alarm bells – he said "what you are hearing tonight is not to assist you, but to inform you of the impact". Also, in the 1974 flood, I was sandbagging a pump – heard a roar and then saw a black line of water surging across flood plain – it hit with such force that it knocked a brick retaining wall over. Look up on internet "1974 Burrinjuck emergency" – flood damage to the retaining wall affected flood. I have spoken to Council engineers many times to look at not using the 1974 flood level as the benchmark due to the difference in the water speed/flow from 2012 and the reason behind the flood which was the 1974 Burrinjuck emergency.

Response

My opening remarks were made so that you understood exactly what this is about and we are not considering protection for Gumly, this is the basis of a Council resolution and any flood works have an impact elsewhere. Mayor Rod Kendall.

Comment

There were no river height readings taken at Gumly during the 2012 event, if readings had been taken in Gumly, authorities would have found out the water was actually dropping at a time they said it was rising

Comment

Protecting North Wagga will affect all the industrial area out this way as well as homes.

Comment

Previous Councillor and flood plain management committee – the problem with being a decision maker is every decision affects someone. What I'm asking Council – our forefathers didn't have technology but got it right – it is foolish not to listen to local knowledge – not engineers but those who've lived and breathed floods. Decisions have been made about development etc – this community is tired of being the brunt of bad planning/development decisions – don't make decisions without speaking to locals. – and we need to know what - we're sick to death of talking, we want action - the flood data in the model inaccurate because Council never sent a surveyor out to measure the Gumly levee, residents requested the levee be surveyed in 2010 and it wasn't. Now after the 2012 event the levee is damaged and the survey data won't be accurate now as there is nothing to compare it against – there are so many different methods and techniques apart from levees – bureaucrats here better not be making a token effort talking to us.

Response

The reason the CBD was evacuated in March 2012 was because there was a forecast of a 10.9m river which exceeds the certified design height of 10.7m Heinz Kausche.

Comment

We were told by former Mayor, Kerry Pascoe that no more landfill was going in beyond the battery factory about 4 years ago. We were given information on flood mitigation regarding the proposed battery factory – we were told no more fill along Hammond Avenue – but the new Masters development is like a levee bank.

Response

Not aware of any documentation regarding the proposed battery factory. All development in the floodplain is expected to have either a 1 in 20 year or a 1 in 100 year level of protection depending upon exactly where it is located. This is based upon NSW State Planning legislation which is updated in Development Control Plans accordingly. Brad Jeffrey.

Comment

Thought Council would be more worried about the city – forget Nth Wagga they knew where they were buying – it is just a waste of money.

Question

Question regarding the accuracy of the 0.02m proposed increase from the modelling data.

Response

You can ask for data relating your specific property. Mayor Rod Kendall

Question

What data do you have for me on the Corner of Argus and Graham Avenue. If the data is out of date why not wait until new up to date data is available?

Response

The model is dated 2010 and the survey data that forms the basis of the model is dated 2008. Our last model update took around 18 months to produce. Brad Jeffrey

Comment

18 months isn't long to wait for accurate data and peace of mind for a new model to be created

Comment

4 years ago there was a meeting here - Council had a computer on the bar – they showed me a photo of the next flood and it would go through my windows – and this flood (2012) didn't go through. One thing we know is that levees fail.

We've all heard stories about Malebo Hill – build levee inside township of Wagga – sacrifice few house so water can get away My father used to say blow the Malebo hill away

US Army engineers in WW2 wanted to blow a gap through Malebo hill – all we're hearing about is levee banks which will make it worse for North Wagga

Gumly levee doesn't affect us – doesn't stop water coming into our place – 5 families on our corner – usually with a high river, the bottom end of our place flooded – in 2010 it came a different way – all my paddocks and hay sheds went under – huge volume, but it came a different way

I live there as well – I was watching the water flow away – water just suddenly dropped a metre – that was when Gumly levee breached

Response

All this info is what we need – you need to come in and sit with Brad so he can calibrate the modelling - remember every flood is different – we adjust the model for one flood but the next one could be different (Heinz Kausche)

Comment

Council had info in 2010 and you didn't act on it

Response

We had forums in 2010 when we placed the modelling report on public exhibition but after 10+ years of drought it was hard to get people to engage – people weren't as interested in flooding (Heinz Kausche)

Comment

Council have to repair that levee to 9.6m - community believe it was significantly higher – specific request to survey that levee and was never done.

We tried to tell Council to look at the Gumly levee – you tried every excuse - you lied – it was never done.

Response

We have to rebuild that levee but we need to know – before we rebuild the levee we'll come back to you to explain what we plan to do. (Heinz Kausche)

Comment

Regardless when measurements were taken - North Wagga is lower than us – why is that area getting so much time and money – my guess is Nth Wagga is more of a priority because of lobbying – Nth Wagga were told it was not feasible.

We live just across road from the levee – we were getting water in higher areas than ever before – flood way was bone dry and I was getting higher water levels - once the levee broke the water levels dropped quickly, once levee broke water level dropped 1m immediately. High areas were getting wet and lower areas were still dry - one road has been built up and caused water to back up – the road to quarry was also built up and was also stopping water flowing to lower areas – so two built up roads and levee.

Response

Properties to Nth of Gumly – water level dropped as soon as levee breached (Mayor Rod Kendall)

Comment

In 1974 the Gumly levee saved many of our homes

Another resident disagreed.

The Shire didn't build levee, the levee bank was put there by Brunskill's boys – to grow lucerne

Levee was moved in 1974 flood – Council put a big bank about 10-12 metres back from original bank

Response

Important thing – this is a passionate topic – we're not here to hide anything – this is one community to gain nothing, expect to be impacted on by proposed work. Every chance Nth Wagga will feel differently – all needs to be considered- outcomes will be what we don't know today. Copies of our notes will be sent directly to Progress Associations (Mayor Rod Kendall)

Comment

Letting people build in flood plains causes water to push back this way – and force through little bottleneck in Wagga

Response

Opportunity to raise these issues as part of a submission. Recap of ways to provide feedback to Council (Vanessa Keenan)