



Wagga Wagga  
City Council

# Flood Futures

## MINUTES: North Wagga Community Information Session

Main City and North Wagga Levee Upgrade Project- detailed design and options for North Wagga

**Date:** 12 March 2015

**Location:** North Wagga Community Hall

**Start:** 6pm

### ***In attendance***

95 community members

**Councillors:** Mayor Rod Kendall, Deputy Mayor Dallas Tout, Councillor Alan Brown Councillor Yvonne Braid, Councillor Paul Funnell, Councillor Gary Hiscock, Councillor Kevin Poynter, Councillor Julian McLaren

**Council Staff:** Director Corporate Services Craig Richardson (Facilitator), Director Infrastructure Heinz Kausche, Director Planning and Regulatory Services Andrew Crakanthorp, Manager Engineering Alex Fenwick, Project Coordinator Kym Holbrook, Acting Manager Corporate Strategy Governance & Communications Nicole Johnson, Community Engagement Officer Lauren Fitzgerald, Communications Officer Josh Lang, Business Support Infrastructure Jessica Crawford

**State Emergency Service (SES):** Deputy Regional Controller Jon Gregory, Community Engagement Coordinator Ian Leckie,

**NSW Public Works:** Manager Clients and Project Delivery Fred Spain

**Apologies** General Manager Phil Pinyon, Councillor Andrew Negline, Councillor Kerry Pascoe

## Comments, Statements, Questions and Answers

**Q: Concerns over the vegetation in the Floodplain and that nothing is being done about it.**

RESPONSE: Council has just received funding to update the Floodplain Risk Management Plan, which will include vegetation. The plan will be revised to help control the vegetation so it doesn't worsen.

**Q: The predictions you are showing for the levee heights don't take into account the levees at the Harness Racing track and Turf Farm?**

RESPONSE: Council recognises that this is a key project into the future, and that the effects of development on the floodplain are included in the planning for the levee project.

**RESIDENT COMMENT - Representatives from the Harness Racing / Trotting Track advised North Wagga residents that the development will put an extra**

**100mm of water into North Wagga. Residents believe Harness Racing should have a duty of care to the people who live here.**

RESPONSE: The impact is 10mm, not 100mm immediately adjacent the track.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: That's different to what the developers have told us.**

RESPONSE: The modelling provided by Harness Racing NSW indicates an impact of 10mm in a one in one hundred year event.

**Q. I'm just wondering why Council spent a few million dollars only a few years ago to put in levee banks between the 2 bridges. This holds the water back, and that's when all the damage is done. Council won't get rid of it.**

RESPONSE: No plans at this time to remove that levee.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Council had plans after the 2012 floods to put in 3 outlets that will let the water out quicker. Nothing has been done.**

RESPONSE: Noted.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Not worth only building a levee, you need to put floodgates in as well**

RESPONSE: Noted

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Masters allowed to do whatever they want, build whatever they want**

**Q. Did Tarcoola lodge a DA for their works and levee?**

RESPONSE: Yes, approval has been given by Planning for their development. They are permitted to have 2 temporary levees at any time when extracting from their pits.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Kerry Pascoe and Donna Argus assured people a few years ago that the trotting track would never go ahead.**

**Q. Why is Council spending money on levee banks, you could open the "Gap" / Malebo Hill and that would solve all the answers.**

RESPONSE: Noted

UPDATE: Advice received from the consultants that undertook the flood modelling is that there is a backwater effect associated with constricted flow at Malebo Gap. However, this effect does not extend as far upstream as

[www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/floodfutures](http://www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/floodfutures)

1300 292 442

the Gobbagombalin Bridge.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The Council pit is holding water and bottle necking it. This puts pressure on the North Wagga side**

**Q. The flood in 2012 was over a 1 in 20 event. Where does it come up to in a 1 in 60 event?**

RESPONSE: The 2012 flood height was 10.6m on the Hampden Bridge gauge. A 1 in 60 year event is approximately 0.3m higher at 10.9m on the gauge.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Council used to remove regrowth from the North Wagga flats. We've been told that vegetation had no impact. Then the last study presentation said that vegetation / roughage caused issues. I understand there is a pygmy glider living in there. Don't you think homes are worth more than a glider.**

RESPONSE: Noted

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Alleviate the Malebo Hills, get rid of it and stop the bottleneck**

RESPONSE: Council recognises there are many projects in the process. This could include options like Malebo Hill, development in the floodplain and vegetation.

UPDATE: Advice received from the consultants that undertook the flood modelling is that there is a backwater effect associated with constricted flow at Malebo Gap. However, this effect does not extend as far upstream as the Gobbagombalin Bridge.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: This has been going on since 2007. You've already looked at options. North Wagga people need action. You have the Floodplain money, this should have been implemented already.**

**Q. Would a 1 in 20 levee in North Wagga cause any danger to the Wagga City? I have concerns over the city.**

RESPONSE: The design of the upgrade for the Main City Levee factors in an increase of the North Wagga Levee to a 1 in 20 year level of protection.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Flood Insurance Protection was \$800 - \$900 prior to the flood, and is now \$16k to \$20k per year. Council hasn't even considered the residents. Insurance companies use Council information, and because Council keeps dilly-dallying with decisions, it's costing residents.**

**Q. Does the AAD figures include Gumly properties?**

RESPONSE: No, North Wagga only.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: After the 1974 flood we were told that increasing the levee bank heights would put too much stress on the levee bank.**

RESPONSE: Noted

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Regarding evacuations. We had a meeting in the hall at 6pm. We had to be out by the next morning. Once people went into town, they weren't allowed back into North Wagga. All those people could have spent the following day**

**emptying their houses, that's why so many people lost property.**

RESPONSE: The SES is responsible for evacuations

**Q. Would you be increasing the levee between the 2 bridges? You are not giving people full options, only levees.**

RESPONSE: No

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Options are good so far. But you should have outlets. The damage to the houses would be 50% left and not stick in the levee for 10 days.**

**Q. Why do we need to raise the CBD Levee? Is it because the levee bank in Mason Street failed and frightened everyone?**

RESPONSE: The upgrade is to protect the CBD to a 1 in 100 level. Nothing to do with levee damages.

**Q. Wagga has been here for hundreds of years, why are you raising it now? Is it because of the state people?**

RESPONSE: it's a result of feedback that we've received from the community.

**Q. Who has the final decision?**

RESPONSE: Councillors

**Q. What were the 2010 flood levels?**

RESPONSE: 6.9m on the Hampden Bridge gauge in September 2010, 8.7m in October 2010, 9.7m in December 2010.

**Q. AAD relates to the properties in North Wagga? It hasn't taken into account the equitable impact of those outside the levee. There is no compensation included in any of the figures. This has to be taken into account. Whilst Council is applying for funding they must apply for compensation.**

RESPONSE: Yes

**Q. Why is the village relocation even being considered?**

RESPONSE: Council resolved for it be an option, so it has to be included.

**Q. Option to remove the levee – only taking the dirt 2 – 3 kms? That will keep it in the floodplain.**

RESPONSE: Noted

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The residents who have already been forced to raise or build new houses should be entitled to a refund from Council if you go with the house raising option.**

**Q. After the 1974 floods, the option of moving was discussed. The option was somewhere out near Mangoplah. Where do you plan to move us to?**

RESPONSE: No decision has been made on this.

**Q. In the cost of raising houses, has the cost of lifts in homes been included. North Wagga has a lot of elderly people.**

RESPONSE: No lifts are not included in the price.

**Q. In a 1 in 100 flood event would the town would still be flooded?**

RESPONSE: Yes, the town would still be flooded. Homes would be out of the water if raised, but people would have no access or infrastructure like sewer, water and electricity, so evacuations would still take place.

**Q. Is the aim of voluntary purchase to demolish the houses?**

RESPONSE: Yes, they would be

**Q. Are the Grants for the levee system available for other options?**

RESPONSE: Sometimes the Government will pay, but not very often.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Call for a show of a show of hands on what option people would prefer**

Maintain the levee at the current level: 0  
Upgrade the levee to a 1 in 20 year level of protection: 25  
Upgrade the levee to a 1 in 20 year level of protection: 34, then when explained to residents it was for 1:100 level, more raised their hands.  
Remove the levee: 0  
Relocation of the village: 1  
Voluntary purchase: 5  
Both levee and house raising: 1  
RESPONSE: Noted

**RESIDENT COMMENT: looking at the options, levee raising is the only viable option. Only \$2M extra for 1:20 to 1:100**

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The problem starts with the Dams upstream. It's a disgrace that State Water did not know how much water was coming from the Canberra area. I think Council should lead a class action law suit against State Water to show them we mean business.**

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Compensation should be provided to those residents who have recently built (2006) and have never flooded, but will now be affected by a higher levee.**

**Q. Has Council ever considered a Class Action Law Suit against State Water?**

RESPONSE: A class action suit is for those people who have been affected. It's not something Council would normally get involved in. Rate Payers would need to know that the money that would be spent on something like this, has some kind of return.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The dams just need 15% guarantee, there is now none.**