



Wagga Wagga  
City Council

# Flood Futures

## MINUTES: Gumly Gumly Community Information Session

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

**Date:** 11 March 2015

**Location:** East Wagga Football Club

**Start:** 6:07pm **Finish:** 8:12pm

### *In attendance*

**Councillors:** Deputy Mayor Councillor Dallas Tout, Councillor Yvonne Braid, Councillor Alan Brown, Councillor Greg Conkey, Councillor Gary Hiscock, Councillor Julian McLaren, Councillor Andrew Negline, Councillor Kerry Pascoe

**Council Staff:** General Manager Phil Pinyon (Facilitator), Director Infrastructure Heinz Kausche, Director Planning and Regulatory Services Andrew Crakanthorp, Director Corporate Services Craig Richardson, Manager Engineering Alex Fenwick, Manager Corporate Strategy Governance & Communications Christine Priest, Acting Manager Corporate Strategy Governance & Communications Nicole Johnson, Strategic Partner Corporate Strategy & Communications Brett Koschel, Executive Assistance Infrastructure Services Maree Ingram, Community Engagement Officer Lauren Fitzgerald, Corporate Strategy and Communications Officer Sarah Jones

**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** Mayor Rod Kendall, Councillor Kevin Poynter, Councillor Paul Funnell

The community members would like the following apologies noted: Mrs Masters, Mr and Mrs Russell Argus

## Comments, Statements, Questions and Answers

### Questions relating to detailed design and floodplain modelling

**Q. Why are we talking about increasing the North Wagga Levee? North Wagga sits at the same level as Gumly. Why are they being treated differently?**

**RESPONSE:** Part of a Council resolution - The eight options that are available to Councillors regarding the levee will be discussed further through the presentation. This information should answer this Question. No decision has been made, as yet in regard to North Wagga.

**Q. Clarification regarding the impact on Gumly Gumly map. The map shows impact on Gumly Gumly in a 1 in 100 year flood event if the North Wagga levee is raised to a 1 in 20 year flood event and the Main City levee is raised to a 1 in 100 year flood event.**

**RESPONSE:** The map shows a 1 in 100 year flood event.

**Q. There will be a 2.5cm impact on Gumly Gumly should a 1 in 20 year levee be constructed in North Wagga, can you confirm this?**

**RESPONSE:** There would be a 2.5cm impact on Gumly Gumly should the Main City Levee be increased to a 1 in 100 year flood event. There is no impact on Gumly Gumly should the North Wagga levee be increased to a 1 in 20 year height.

**RESIDENT COMMENT:** there is a problem with language being used, Community need to be able to understand that what is being proposed is not like the March 2012 flood event. We need to make sure the community has the correct information.

**RESPONSE:** Yes we agree.

**Q. What does the map tell us?**

**RESPONSE:** It is showing the upgrade of the North Wagga Levee to a 1 in 20 year flood event which will have no impact on Gumly Gumly.

**Q. Why show that slide as it is telling the Gumly Gumly community that there will be no impact which is a confusing message.**

**RESPONSE:** Will clarify when coming back to the community.

**UPDATE:** The impact of increasing the height of the main city levee for a 1 in 100 year flood event is approximately an extra 2cm in Gumly Gumly.

**Q. What is NSW Public Works role in the process? Will they be involved throughout the construction process?**

**RESPONSE:** NSW Public Works involvement has included the initial provision of the concept designs for the levee upgrades and more recently the detailed designs. PWD's involvement will cease at the end of June 2015, any further relationship with Council would depend on what funding Council may secure in regard to the levee upgrade project.

### Questions relating to Option 1: Maintain North Wagga Levees at their current level and take no further action

#### **Q. Why do we have a freeboard of only 0.4m difference?**

RESPONSE: Analysis looked at what it should be and takes into account flood modelling inaccuracies, wave actions and erosion. Based on these factors, 0.6m is proposed as an acceptable level.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Take it on board that all hydrological work is good and has been validated, no independent assessment done.**

#### **Q. Can it be assumed that the Average Annual Damages (AAD) figure do not take into account recurring costs and impact outside of North Wagga Wagga, they are only calculated for properties inside the North Wagga Wagga levee, is that correct?**

RESPONSE: That is correct as per AAD calculations. This information will be available on Council's website. Council has engaged an external consultant to undertake the modelling. Council has no persuasion for a particular option. Verifications were done by Office of Environment and Heritage.

#### **Q. As Council have outsourced this information, taking into account that this information is correct then in the next 1 in 100 year flood, who does the responsibility lie with?**

RESPONSE: Liability/Flood Plain Risk Management sits with Council. The data collated from the modelling has also been provided to the SES for planning purposes. The process has taken over 12-24 months and has involved a lot of work to ensure that the information presented to the community is correct.

#### **Q. What about lifting homes in Gumly Gumly if homes in North Wagga are raised?**

RESPONSE: The next option is about raising the North Wagga levee to a 1 in 20 year flood as well as other scenarios all of which will be separately discussed.

### Questions relating to Option 2: Raising the North Wagga Levees to a 1 in 20 year flood event

#### **Q. Have there been any studies on the impacts of flooding up the river, not just at North Wagga? Floods don't go where they use to, the property of Tahara has a levee that affects the floodplain.**

RESPONSE: Management of the floodplain is an ongoing separate project. Council has been successful in applying for funding to review the Flood Plain Risk Management Plan and will continue to look at how better to manage the floodplain.

#### **Q. The \$4.8 million does not include compensation for residents upstream of the 2.5cm impact and should be built into the funding now, not later; it should be a part of the estimates upfront. Council**

**has a responsibility to either mitigate or compensate. Compensation has not been accounted for in cost estimates.**

RESPONSE: There are no compensation costs included in these estimates. We will take that comment on board.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Great example coming up – compensate those inside the levees, dealing with floodplain issues – has legal advice, can't mitigate, have to compensate.**

Response: Unsure of whether there is OEH legislation re impact on properties due to floodplain management options, will need to investigate this.

#### **Q. There is currently a Chicken and Egg situation. Council are undertaking modelling/analysis work without considering the future risk management aspects of the floodplain including development on the floodplain. There is still development being approved on the floodplain. Does this mean that Council will continue to approve developments that impact current flood modelling?**

RESPONSE: Council will be applying for further funding in regard to the management of the floodplain and will look at these issues when updating and reviewing the Floodplain Risk Management Plan.

### Questions relating to Option 3: Raise North Wagga Levees to more than 1 in 20 year flood event

#### **Q. AAD figure – 10-15% of what AAD if no action is taken. There will still be a lot of damage to properties upstream, where is the equity in that? People/properties outside of the levees haven't been considered or assessed, the information provided is misleading. While AAD is lower, there would be higher AAD upstream.**

RESPONSE: Council can take this comment onboard and provide further information on impacts outside of the levees.

UPDATE: AAD figures quoted include both properties inside and outside of the levee system. For clarity, these will be separated in the final version of the report North Wagga Levee Options and Third Party Impacts.

### Questions relating to Option 4: The removal of the North Wagga Levees

#### **Q. If the current levee was to be retained, should a 1 in 20 or a 1 in 100 year flood event occur, North Wagga Wagga would still be inundated.**

RESPONSE: Correct.

### Questions relating to Option 5: Relocation of the Village

**Q. I don't support the option but it is not as silly as it sounds. Multiplying 100 years by the \$102m AAD is more than the \$93m quoted. Should look to plan for the future, other cities have been moved. AAD x 100 years is more than this option, you discount it as out of hand but it is not so silly in regard to the long term view, it is more relevant than other options.**

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RESPONSE: Yes, if you take a long term approach, the option is paid for.

**Q. There is no building/development cost with this option?**

RESPONSE: Correct, there are things like building costs not included in this option that could be added.

#### Questions relating to Option 6: Raising Homes in North Wagga

**Q. With reference to the previous option, has there been any experience around Australia of where this has occurred and a breakdown of costs of relocating and raising homes?**

RESPONSE: There are no specific examples. The option is not unheard of and is feasible. The cost for a new suburb is around \$107sq/m. The breakdown of raising a house as referred to in this presentation is approximately \$40,000 per property.

**Q. Are Gumly Gumly residents entitled to have their homes raised?**

RESPONSE: These consultations are about equity. Raising homes in other areas is a valid point that Council will take on board.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: This whole process is all about North Wagga!**

RESPONSE: This current investigation is about North Wagga. Raising homes in Oura and Gumly Gumly would considerably increase the cost of this option.

**Q. How much information does Council have in the modelling in regard to compensation for home owners affected by minimum height flooding?**

RESPONSE: The flood modelling undertaken utilises the best technology and expertise to make informed decisions. We always check flood levels against modelling and data; we can validate and adjust the modelling if required.

**Q. Has any consideration been given to water harvesting and the pumping out of water within the levee when levels start to drop? Amount of damage is increased when water stays around for weeks, this can be relieved with the installation of pumps. Do we have any information/data on how long a flood takes to go down? Water harvesting would be a far cheaper option. The current 8in pump is not suitable.**

RESPONSE: I'm not familiar with or aware of any option that has looked at this method. Council will take this suggestion on board.

#### Questions relating to Option 7: Raising homes in East and Mill Street Only.

There were no comments or questions in relation to this option.

#### Questions relating to Option 8: Voluntary Purchase for Properties in North Wagga

**Q. \$1.2 million into \$32 million. It would be less AAD. The payoff would occur within 25 years. This is a reasonable timeframe and not expensive, it is a very realistic option.**

RESPONSE: It is feasible that a combination of options be explored. From a longer term view it could be cost effective. However, if you go for the non construction costs option how do you force people to sell? Council cannot force people from their homes.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: North Wagga's slogan is "We will not be moved". People should build knowing it is a flood plain. People should build their homes higher than is recommended. People outside of North Wagga levee need to have the same options. Leave the levee as it is. They build there they should "suck it up" and it should not impact on us!**

RESPONSE: Comment taken on board.

**Q. There is a levee being built near the Eunony Bridge Road bypass, what sort of impact will this have on the floodplain? This is not the only place that changes to the structure of the floodplain are happening.**

RESPONSE: A review into flood impacts was undertaken before construction began which indicated that the impact will only be minor and will not extend very far upstream of the works.

**Q. How many minor developments will there be before there is a major impact on the floodplain? All the little things build up and will make an impact.**

RESPONSE: Development on the floodplain is one factor that will be considered as part of the review of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan. Council has received funding to from the State Government to undertake a review of the current plan.

**Q. Are Council allowing small levee banks that have been constructed eg behind Masters, to stay?**

RESPONSE: The material is not a permanent fixture and will be removed.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: the community needs to be advised of this type of activity, it should be made known to the public.**

**Q. What information will Councillors be given to make a decision at the July meeting? What will be put to Councillors to assist them to make a decision?**

RESPONSE: The report going to Council in July will include the information collated from the community engagement and how to proceed regarding the Main City and North Wagga levee upgrade options based on community input from these meetings.

**Q. What will be the recommendation presented to Councillors in June?**

RESPONSE: We don't know what the recommendation will be at this point in time.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: Councillors will be making a decision with only half the information, Councillors**

**need the updated Floodplain Risk Management Plan information to make a complete decision.**

RESPONSE: We will be asking Councillors to make a decision in respect to the levee upgrade project. The ongoing management of the floodplain will continue and the upcoming review of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan will include development and vegetation impacts. This review of the plan will be a 12 month process. The plan will identify the priorities for the future management of the floodplain.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: A decision still needs to be made based on these priorities.**

**Q. Two projects are going to Council. Will there be funding left over from the State Government to assess other areas eg low lying areas, will there be any funding for communities upstream of North Wagga?**

RESPONSE: The funding of \$110,000 for the Flood Risk Management Plan is more about doing a risk assessment and looking at where to put our focus through high level analysis and community consultation. The funding for the Main City and North Wagga Levee Upgrade project, from the State Government, is driven by the project status. Further application could not be submitted until the detailed design was done. The Main City and North Wagga Levee Upgrade project is being undertaken in partnership with the Office of Environment and Heritage, Council need to be well into the design stage before any further application for funding can be made. Council, however will be making application for the construction phase.

**Q. Where is the main levee going, how far out will it be? Will it be into Copland Street?**

RESPONSE: The upgrade relates to the existing levee.

**Q. Is the levee going out past Masters? We have been told that an application has been lodged by Riverina Water and passed through Council for a levee at the back of Masters.**

RESPONSE: Levee does not go up as far as Masters. The levee upgrade by Riverina Water is not part of the MCNWLW project. Riverina Water currently have a levee that goes two thirds around the treatment site and the administration building, they are proposing to complete the other third and to raise the existing levee.

**Q. Is there a levee at Tarcoola?**

RESPONSE: We will take this on notice and provide feedback.

UPDATE: There is currently one and the recently approved DA included further Levees, these are yet to be constructed

**Q. A determination for a development at the Quarry site included the permission of a 2.5m levee, as the development evolves, will the flood modelling be changed and adjusted?**

RESPONSE: This will form part of Council's review of the existing Floodplain Risk Management Plan. The impact of the Harness Racing development will also be a part

of the review as well as any future levees, raised beds and developments such as Masters. The original consent for the quarry (some twenty years earlier) approved the construction of levees within the quarry. The recently approved DA provides for the erection of temporary levees as pits are created and then backfilled. As part of the recent approval, Council staff will inspect the site as required and ensure that the conditions of consent are complied with.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The community should have been notified about these developments and any effects on Gumly Gumly.**

RESPONSE: Various means for contacting those who maybe affected are utilised by Council. Council advertises development applications through public notices.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: You are here telling us about North Wagga, but did not tell us about something that affects Gumly Gumly.**

## Open Discussion and Questions

**Q. Will the project see the need to build new levees or will the current levee banks be raised higher?**

RESPONSE: We will reuse current levees as much as possible. They will be made to the proper width and design height as economically as possible by utilising as much of the existing material where possible.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: The old levees will burst at some point!**

RESPONSE: The designer has designed levees that are waterproof. This may require digging below ground level on inside of the levee to remove any material that may impact on the stability of the levee and therefore maintain the levee structure.

**Q. Has Council considered flood barriers like those used in Queensland?**

RESPONSE: Yes, they will be used in areas including various road crossings and on roads where it is too dear to increase levee height.

**RESIDENT COMMENT: It is really hard to trust what has been said tonight. I live in North Wagga and managed to get a copy of the paperwork about the levee bank that is going around the quarry. I do not understand why Gumly Gumly and Oura residents were not notified about the development. There was only one person to receive notification that the construction of a levee was going ahead. Council can't be trusted. We have been told that the new roundabout at North Wagga will not have an impact, there is an issue about trust and statistics.**

**Q. I live across the river and see the levee at the Quarry as one of the many developments that will have cumulative impacts on the floodplain. Even though the height of the wall was reduced following objections being made, there will still be unmitigated flood impacts due to the installation of the levee. On all of the flood models maps, there are current quarry walls that sit above a 1 in 100 year flood level. These**

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walls shouldn't be there, Council has allowed this wall to be developed. Why was this not addressed?

RESPONSE: Comments noted.

**RESIDENT COMMENT:** Council is here tonight talking to the community about an issue that is driven by State Government Legislation, where is the local member, where does he sit in regards to these matters? The levee around Riverina Water County Council was a State Government decision; it just went ahead and was constructed as it is State Government Infrastructure. It is not just Councillors and Local Government putting their necks out here, but it is left to Councillors to make a decision.

**Q. Can you tell us about the impacts the levee at the Quarry has made on the current flood modelling?**

RESPONSE: Council has not undertaken any modelling. The Developer was required to undertake modelling and provide Council with the information prior to a determination on the development being approved. The Joint Regional Planning Panel made the decision regarding the Quarry development, not Council.

**Q. Who is on the panel?**

RESPONSE: The panel has a State Government chair, three members are from State Government, two from Council's elected body.

**RESIDENT COMMENT:** Parts of the development of the quarry were not transparent. There should be transparency in regard to development in the flood zone and any impact taken in to consideration, Council need to be responsible as people will always be affected. Something needs to be in place in regards to assessing the impact of development on the floodplain.

RESPONSE: An independent assessment was done by for the Quarry levee by a qualified/certified party.

**Q. Will Council still go ahead with project should there be a change in State Government?**

RESPONSE: The funding has been committed by the current government. While Council sees no change in the arrangement, no guarantees can be made.

**Q. How does Council intend to disseminate information to the community following tonight's Community Consultation session and other sessions held, especially given there are no mail boxes in Gumly Gumly?**

RESPONSE: The report regarding the Quarry is a public document and can be accessed via Council's website. The minutes from this meeting will be available on Council's FloodFutures website as well as emailed to those attendees who provided their emails upon signing in as they arrived.

**Q. Were photos taken documenting any levee changes, appropriate documentation made?**

RESPONSE: Yes, already in place.

**Q. Did Council do below Wagga, behind the levee?**

If you let water get away quicker by opening up the necks of the river below Wagga this should let flood waters pass quicker down the river. Last time we were here for community consultation this is what they were going to look at.

RESPONSE: Will take on notice, squeeze points on the floodplain that are more constrained by the necks of the river.

**RESIDENT COMMENT:** Council need to look at spending money on taking out the narrow necks downstream too.

**Q. Does Wagga Wagga City Council have a Facebook page? Council should explore this option.**

RESPONSE: Advised that Flood Futures website will be updated. A survey will be available for people to provide comment.

**Q. When will the trotting track be discussed?**

RESPONSE: The Development Application for the trotting track went to the Joint Regional Planning Panel on 9 April. A decision was referred until the applicants could return with more information about the impacts on the floodplain and alternatives designs for the facility.

**RESIDENT COMMENT:** Another State Government run process where State Government gets three votes and Local Government get only two votes.

RESPONSE: A number of reports and compliance requirements are posted on the Tarcoola Turf Farm website along with other details. The Tarcoola decision was a State Government one.

**Q. Do Councillors get the minutes of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee?**

Councillor Tout: Councillor's do receive the Minutes. They are also available on Council's website. The community can access information via Council's Website, drop into Council's Customer Service Centre or call 1300 2 WAGGA should they request any information.