

**The Hon Rose Jackson MLC**  
Minister for Water, Minister for Housing,  
Minister for Homelessness  
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth  
Minister for the North Coast



MF24/1788

## **An open letter from the Minister for Water, Rose Jackson, to the community of Wilcannia**

Thank you for taking the time to come and yarn with me in the park and for welcoming me into your beautiful town last month.

I want you to know that I heard your concerns, I heard your disappointment, and I heard the questions you raised. I appreciated hearing first-hand about your deep connection and long held knowledge of the river. I recognise that the river is essential to the health and wellbeing of both the Barkandji people and the wider community.

While it is important that we have a plan to provide greater water security for the town, it is equally important that we do this in a way that ensures you are part of any planning and decision-making conversations. For this reason, I am pausing any further work on the design and environmental planning assessment of the new weir.

As promised when I spoke with you, I have requested an independent review into the environmental impacts, safety and operational concerns that led to the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) proposing a new design for the weir.

I told you I would be upfront about what I would like to do and I am committed to building trust by delivering on this commitment.

This will all take several months to complete. Members of the Wilcannia community will be involved in the review, and I will provide more details about who will lead this review and how you can be involved as soon as I can.

While the weir design work will be paused and the review completed, work will continue on the Wilcannia water treatment plant upgrade, Community River Place co-design, and investigating a potential new groundwater bore. DCCEEW is looking at a location, in an old branch of the river, which appears to be less saline.

I want to be open with the community. I want to communicate better. I said I would independently review why DCCEEW decided it needed a new design and I will do that and release it to the community to consider.

Once we have that, we can consider our next steps together.

Yours sincerely

**Rose Jackson MLC**  
Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness,  
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, Minister for the North Coast  
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