



CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE COUNCIL

2 July 2024

Wilcannia Weir Project – community standing firm on redesign objections

The Central Darling Shire Council Administrator, Bob Stewart, has written to the NSW Water Minister Rose Jackson about the Wilcannia Weir project. The redesign of the weir has united the community which is standing together to completely reject the redesigned proposal.

It comes after the Minister visited Wilcannia on Wednesday 26 June. Mr Stewart thanked the Minister for meeting with the community and representative groups, to hear concerns about the recent redesign for the Wilcannia Weir. The letter stated the case for the community's concerns and objections to the redesign, recapping feedback received during the visit.

The community opinion is adamant, that the original designed weir height, fishway passageway and gates, will secure water security for the township in times of little or no flows and prolong drought. Furthermore, the original design with its water security will provide environmental and social benefits. This is something that has never been identified in the Environmental Impact Statement or discussed by the government.

The Minister attended a meeting in the Wilcannia Council Chambers and among the outcomes was agreement by all local representatives that the original Environmental Impact Statement advice received by government agencies, needs to be addressed. It was also highlighted that the advice by DPI Fisheries, does not reject the original design, but merely seeks further clarification on the design and operations of the weir. It is prudent that these issues are addressed and not dismissed until answered.

It has been agreed that the Wilcannia Weir project is to be placed on a temporary hold position, not stopped (only paused) for a short period of time, until the above issues have been addressed. During this period, other investigations can be ongoing for the proposed bore water location, yield and resilience. Further community consultation and investigations can be done on the proposed Keeping Place, road access to the weir, and worker accommodation.

The Wilcannia weir replacement project has been discussed for the past 40 years, with funding commitments by Federal and State Governments in 2019. Community expectation is that a new weir will be constructed. However, there is some anxiety that there is not the funding available to construct the weir. Community groups and Council are willing to work with the State Government to lobby the Federal Government for the additional funds necessary to construct a weir which is agreed upon by everyone.

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