

# *Camden Residents' Action Group*

*Incorporated*

*Camden – Still a Country Town*

PO Box 188  
Camden NSW 2570  
Email: [admin@crag.org.au](mailto:admin@crag.org.au)  
**Website:** <http://www.crag.org.au/>  
Ph: 0415 617 368

General Manager and Council  
Camden Council  
John Street,  
Camden 2570  
4 August 2016

Dear General Manager and Council,

## **URGENT REQUEST FOR MEETING Argyle St Works and Drainage**

The Argyle Street works have been undisputedly contentious although the Council has acknowledged that for the community "the most important thing we as a Council needed to achieve over the long term is retaining the rural setting, country town and heritage feel of the area"<sup>1</sup> and that "previous studies and periods of consultation have highlighted the need to respect, protect and build on the area's unique history"<sup>2</sup>. Many who understand the aesthetic significance of the townscape would argue that the works are historically insensitive.

A main beloved feature of Argyle Street has been its old-world leafiness and the ambience that the jacarandas and other trees have bestowed. CRAG notes that it has yet to receive any response to our request of 27 July 2016 for an urgent meeting about the health of the trees in Argyle Street, which is in doubt because, as documented, the works have impinged on their root systems.

---

<sup>1</sup> Camden Council (2013) *2012/13 Introduction and End of Term Report Foreword By The Mayor* p.6  
[http://www.camden2040.com.au/assets/pdf/2012-13\\_Part\\_A.pdf](http://www.camden2040.com.au/assets/pdf/2012-13_Part_A.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Camden Council (2014) *Business Paper 08 July 2014 ORD06Trim 14/100528*  
[http://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/assets/pdf/Council/AboutCouncil/2014/BusinessPapersAndMinutes/8\\_July\\_2014\\_-\\_Business\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/assets/pdf/Council/AboutCouncil/2014/BusinessPapersAndMinutes/8_July_2014_-_Business_Paper.pdf)

One consistent reason provided by the Mayor<sup>3</sup> and promoted by Council<sup>4,5</sup> for undertaking the Argyle Street works, and one that the community<sup>6</sup> did not dispute, was that the drainage needed fixing. Council<sup>7</sup> reported that the expected completion date of the Argyle Street works was late July 2016 and that substantial drainage works have been completed.

This letter is to request that the meeting, as requested on 27 July 2016, also canvass the drainage works and public assurance that the recognised drainage problems have been solved by the works. It does appear, as documented below, that drainage problems have been neglected and remain unresolved in both stages of the works.

The common tropical storm on 30th January was at night and lasted for a very short period. Camden Airport recorded 57 mm and Camden itself 75 mm within an hour. This was enough to cause flooding of the Whiteman's building, Blooms, St George Bank and Tildsley's Butchery. It seems flooding of the latter two buildings was caused by down pipe problems associated with the new footpath paving.

The rain of June 5th and 6th caused major flooding, particularly in Picton, but Camden Airport recorded 280 mm, not heavy enough to cause general flooding in Argyle Street at an average of only 6 mm per hour.

### **Stage 1A: Argyle Street West**

However, the laneway through from the Bloom's carpark to Argyle Street was flooded due to both January 2016 and June 2016 rain events. As shown in the diagram and photos below, storm water flows through from the Bloom's carpark along the laneway between Blooms and Camden Valley Meats, enters Bloom's side door, and flows into the Argyle Street footpath where it tends to pool. Potentially the water creates a 'pedestrian safety' issue, a main issue cited by Council that was to be addressed by the Argyle Street works.

The drainage does not appear to be upgraded although the works undertaken in the vicinity of this main drain are complete.

---

<sup>3</sup>Peter Way (8 July 2015) *Camden Council announces work due to start on the revitalisation of the town centre* Macarthur Chronicle Camden <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/macarthur/camden-council-announces-work-due-to-start-on-the-revitalisation-of-the-town-centre/news-story/d6cb543b6b2f2ab0f46744ff98170119>

<sup>4</sup>Camden Council (2015) *an update from your council on major projects* <http://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/assets/pdf/Major-Projects/2015/Where-Are-My-Rates-Spent-Brochure-June-2015-option-with-MALC-web.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Camden Council (8 July 2015) *Media Release CAMDEN TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENTS TO BEGIN* <http://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/assets/pdf/Major-Projects/2015/Camden-Town-Centre/080715Camden-Town-Centre-Enhancements-to-begin-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>Camden Community Alliance Inc (July 2015) *Press Release Council figures show traffic lights not needed in Camden CBD* <http://connectweb.com.au/news/media-centre/jul-2015/council-figures-show-traffic-lights-not-needed-in-camden-cbd.aspx>

<sup>7</sup>Camden Council *ARGYLE STREET STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS - STAGE 1* **Stage 1B** <http://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/home/major-council-projects/argyle-street-streetscape-improvements-stage-1/>



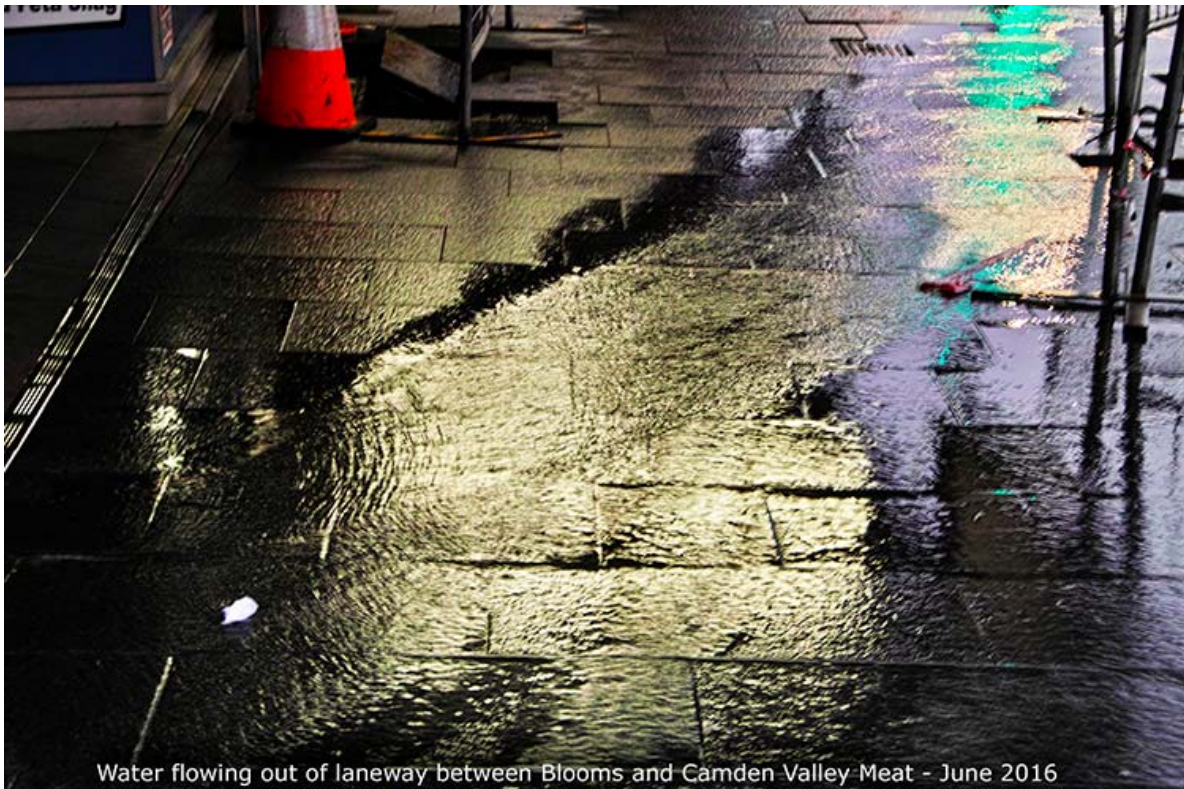
Blooms Car Park







Blooms laneway storm water not upgraded - Flood 31st Jan 2016

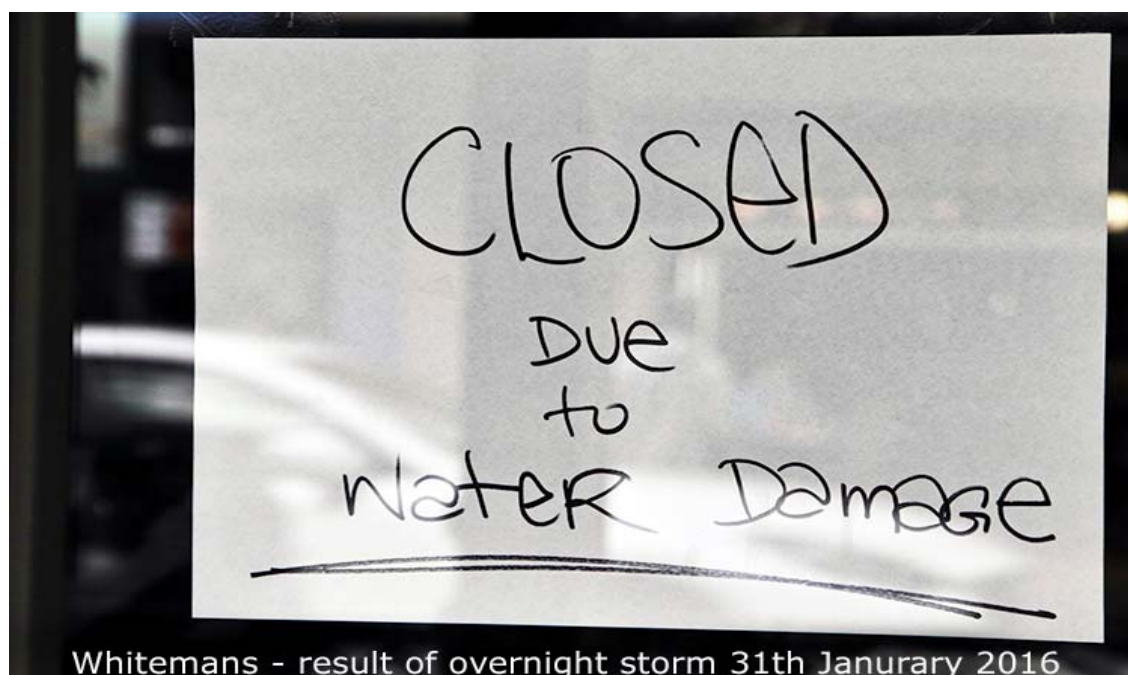


Water flowing out of laneway between Blooms and Camden Valley Meat - June 2016



## Stage 1B: John Street to Hill Street

Hill Street has storm water pipes on both sides of street, but John Street has no storm water pipes past the first 30 to 40 metres up the hill from Argyle Street. In heavy rain, water flows down the gutters either side of John Street, and across the roundabout in large volumes.



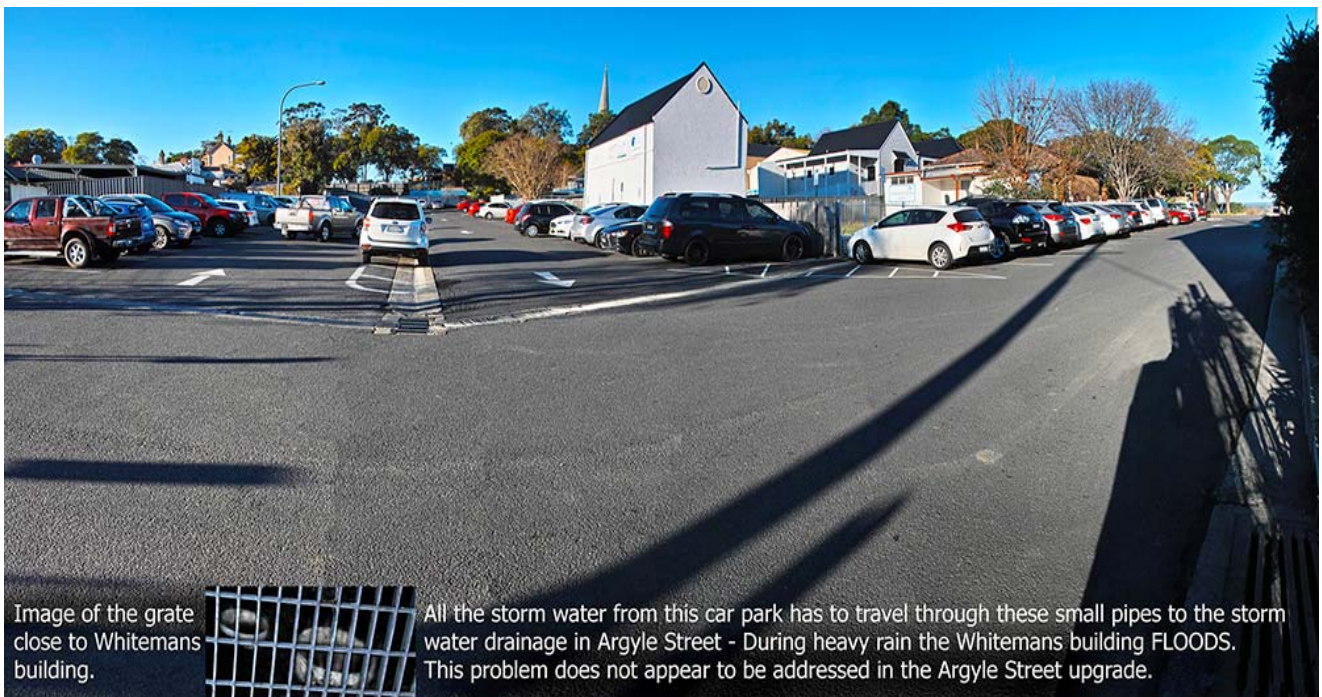
It does not appear that the Argyle Street works have addressed this flooding problem as the stormwater pipes would seem to have been left in their original state at the rear of Whiteman's and in Argyle Street as documented in the photos below.

#### Stormwater drainage to the rear of Whiteman's Building

It is understood that Council is fully responsible for Whiteman's car park between Hill and John Streets, and any problem associated with inadequate drainage. The problem is exacerbated by the large area of tarred parking space, with all the land from Hill and John Street sloping into a valley meeting at the point of the storm water pit.



#### **Pit in storm water drainage pipe to Hill Street**



The stormwater drainage from the rear of the Whiteman's building including the carpark through to Argyle Street is inadequate. During heavy rain the runoff does not fully escape through the stormwater drainage system. Unacceptably it backs up and floods the Whiteman's building.





**Stormwater grate and drains at rear of Whiteman's.**





Stormwater drainage at the front of Whiteman's building in Argyle Street





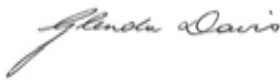
As shown in the photos above the original storm water pipe in front of Whiteman's is small but seems to be left in its original state by the Argyle Street works.

.....

The areas of problem drainage, especially near Blooms Chemist and Whiteman's Building do not seem to be addressed.

Could Council please meet with CRAG to discuss solutions for the development of an action plan to resolve these important residual drainage matters and/or provide public explanation of the drainage works that have been undertaken for Argyle Street.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenda Davis".

Glenda Davis

President  
Camden Residents' Action Group