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Liberals do not support permanent weir at Lake Bonney

In a statement released today, Shadow Water Security Minister Mitch Williams expressed the State Liberal party's opposition to the building of a permanent weir at Lake Bonney and would only support a temporary structure if river flows and salinity levels demand it.

With the state still in the grip of a severe drought, and the River Murray under stress, backwaters and lagoons along the river are being closed off from the main stream in an effort to minimise water loss through evaporation and prevent hyper-saline water in the lagoons from returning to the river.

It has been suggested that these weirs should be permanent, a possibility that has angered Lake Bonney locals in particular.

Mr Williams said the Liberal Party called on government to 'work with the local community to develop a management plan for Lake Bonney with the contribution and support of the local community.'

Mr Williams said the plan should include environmental issues, management of inflows, analysis of the community's reliance on the river and lake, and potential opportunities presented by a changing environment.

'We also call on the government and the Murray Darling Basin Commission to invest in upgrading river infrastructure including repairing locks, weirs and barrages, to minimise uncontrolled loss and back-flows into the river,' he said.

Mr Williams said the Liberals would only support a temporary weir at Lake Bonney as part of a thorough local management plan and 'if it can be scientifically shown that such a blockage would help to maintain the best possible condition of both lake and river, and when and as long as low inflows demand such a structure.'