



Powerlink – Meeting Minutes - Form

Purpose and Outcome

The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update to the stakeholder reference group for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project (the project). The reference group helps to capture stakeholder feedback on the project to enable development of a well-informed business case.

The expected outcome is to meet the following objectives:

- provide a forum for discussions of project specific issues (e.g., social and business issues, environmental assessment, or water modelling) to better inform the project's detailed analytical studies;
- enable Powerlink to be aware of local issues related to the project and ensure the interests of a broad range of stakeholders are considered during the detailed analytical studies;
- provide opportunities for the exchange of local information and knowledge to better inform the project;
- build on stakeholder understanding of the project and identify and leverage community knowledge to provide local benefits; and
- provide a formal communication channel between Powerlink and stakeholders to disseminate and gather information.

Attendees:

Project representatives: Gerard Reilly (chair, Powerlink), Chris Gwynne (Powerlink), Catherine Cussen (Powerlink), Tara Gardiner (Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW)), Rebecca Powlett (SMEC), Colin Langton (Powerlink)

Environment group members: Steve Burgess (Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee), David Arthur (Wide Bay-Burnett Environment Council), Nigel Parrett (Queensland Conservation Council), Glenda Pickersgill (Save the Mary River Coordinating Group)

Business representative members: Graeme Elphinstone (Gympie District Beef Liaison Group), Petra Van Beek (Gympie Chamber of Commerce), Sotera Trevaskis (Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Development Australia), Malcom Oakly (Mary Valley Chamber of Commerce), Bob Lewis (HQPlantations Pty Ltd)

Community representative members: Bruce Horsfall (Lake Borumba Fish Stocking Association), Ian Stehbens (local community member), Carolyn Harris (adjoining landholder)

Apologies: Narelle McCarthy (Sunshine Coast Environmental Council), Luke Barden (Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union), Gary Rozynski (local irrigator), Don MacAulay (Lake Borumba Fishing Club), Senior Constable Bill Greer (Imbil Rural Watch) Kabi Kabi representatives

Date & Time: 13 July 2022, 10:00 am – 12:45 pm

Location: Kandanga Country Club, 4 Bowling Club Road, Kandanga

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Next revision due:	HARDCOPY IS UNCONTROLLED	© Powerlink Queensland



Minutes

Agenda Item	Minutes and Actions	Action/ Assigned to	Due Date
1.0	Introduction and housekeeping		
1.1	Round table introduction of all stakeholder reference group (SRG) members and project representatives.	No action	N/A
1.2	<p>Recap of previous meeting</p> <p>Member request for update on geology information and flood hydrology. In relation to the hydrology, some members are meeting with the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) after the SRG and want to understand the interplay between the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project (the project) and the review of the Water Plan (Mary Basin) 2006 (Water Plan) review.</p> <p>Borumba project team explained that geology and hydrology studies are still underway and at this time there are no results to report back to the SRG. There is an action from the first SRG meeting for Powerlink to provide outcomes of the geotechnical report to SRG, when available.</p> <p>The hydrology study team does have the new DRDMW model and the study team is running model scenarios for the pumped hydro scheme operation under the parameters of the new catchment model. The modelling for the project is specific to determining the reliability of the project. The scope of the hydrological study does not include any consideration of the wider catchment/Water Plan issues.</p>	Powerlink to provide outcomes of the geotechnical and yield hydrology reports to SRG, when available	<p>Reports currently scheduled for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geotechnical report available in December 2022 • Yield hydrology available in October 2022
2.0	Budget announcement		
2.1	<p>Powerlink provided an update on the budget announcement to SRG members.</p> <p>Three reasons given for new budget allocation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase the scope of environmental studies to be consistent with an environmental impact statement (EIS) process. 2. To start heritage and Traditional Owner (Kabi Kabi) conversations early. This will enable the project team to deal with issues and challenges earlier. 3. To bring forward delivery of information that will support the State Government's investment decision within the Government's budget process. This will assist the State Government and the project team to understand funding horizons. 	No action	N/A
2.2	SRG members then asked questions regarding the budget announcement.	No action	N/A



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	<p>Q. First announcement said that final decision late 2023, what does the Minister's announcement mean?</p> <p>A. It means that Powerlink will provide information that will support the State Government's investment decision earlier than originally scheduled but will also bring delivery of this information in line with the State Government's budget process.</p> <p>Q. Has an initial advice statement or Coordinator-General (COG) process started? Is there a terms of reference (TOR) and if not, will there be an opportunity for the public to develop the TOR for the EIS?</p> <p>A. There has been no formal submission of an initial advice statement or commencement of a COG process. However, the project team is has started to introduce the project to the Office of the Coordinator-General (OCG). Based on our current schedule we expect to commence formal discussion and process towards the end of 2022. The announcement to increase the scope of environmental studies to be consistent with an EIS means that the project will be in the best possible position if the project progresses.</p> <p>Under the current project delivery schedule, an EIS approval is targeting 2024/2025. The EIS process includes several opportunities for public participation, including an opportunity to provide input and comment during the development of the TOR.</p> <p>Q. When will we know if the project is going ahead?</p> <p>A. There are likely to be multiple investment gates for the project over time. What this announcement means is that State Government has decided it is worth the risk to maintain the best pace that they can through the approvals process. In an ideal world 2024/2025 would be the timeline for a final investment decision with the best approval pathway.</p> <p>Q. Does that 2024/2025 timeline include Commonwealth approvals?</p> <p>A. Yes. It is anticipated that the assessment pathway with the Commonwealth will be via the bilateral agreement.</p> <p>Q. Is there Commonwealth funding?</p> <p>A. DEPW identified that it is too early in the process to confirm if Commonwealth would or would not be funding any part of the project. However, the Queensland Government would be open to any discussions with the Commonwealth in relation to funding.</p>		

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	<p>Q. Is the 10-year Queensland Energy Plan energy plan driving this project?</p> <p>A. Borumba is an enabling project. To transition to renewable energy you need large scale long duration storage. Borumba is both a part of the plan, but it also affects the plan.</p> <p>Q. What is plan B if the economics and environmental does not stack up for the project and what would this mean for the Queensland Energy Plan?</p> <p>A. The other part of the announcement on 10 June was funding to look into other sites in Queensland that may be suitable for a pumped hydro energy scheme – which means the State Government is looking into alternatives and providing potential plan B and C.</p> <p>Q. When talking about other sites, where are you talking? Are they a secret?</p> <p>A. Looking at whole of the State to identify other sites. Work needs to be done to understand what is possible and where before engagement can begin. Government will follow processes before making an announcement for any other sites.</p>		
3.0	<i>Recap of Wivenhoe pumped hydro site visit</i>		
3.1	<p>The SRG were asked about their insights from the Wivenhoe pumped hydro site visit. Comments from members included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felt the visit was essential to get a mental image of scale of underground operations and the upper reservoir in the landscape. The visit really bought the project to life. Gave an understanding of the longevity of this project by understanding the life/age of Wivenhoe. 	No action	N/A
3.2	<p>SRG members and project team then discussed member questions regarding the site visit and how the project this relates to the project.</p> <p>Q. There has been a media report that Wivenhoe was not generating and was just being run to let water weed through?</p> <p>A. Project team was not aware of the media report, but Wivenhoe is here to feed into the peak. When Wivenhoe generates depends on the demand. Wivenhoe would have played a big role in June when demand was high.</p>		



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	<p>Q. Borumba won't have any capacity to generate during the pumping?</p> <p>A. No, the transmission lines will supply electricity from the grid to pump, generation occurs when water is released from the upper reservoir to the lower reservoir.</p> <p>Q. Wivenhoe hydrology is different due to the size of the reservoirs compared to Borumba. The upper reservoir at Wivenhoe is about 3% of the lower storage. For Borumba it is about 30%. The tidal fluctuations will be greater as a result.</p> <p>A. Need to understand the scheme to start to understand what the fluctuations will be. The fluctuations will be based on demand and there will be a process to determine how to manage the operation of the scheme during 'fringe' periods where fluctuations will be much greater. Water cycling is one of the key things the project needs to manage. Generally, the project will be shaving off/topping up, so not filling/empty all the time. The project is a kind of insurance policy for times of high demand, like February. Stakeholders will be involved in how the scheme will operate.</p> <p>Q. Doesn't Wivenhoe have hydro generation from the lower reservoir/dam wall? There may be a time where Wivenhoe is releasing from the lower reservoir and generating while pumping water from the lower reservoir to the upper reservoir is occurring?</p> <p>A. This is possible, but the generation from the hydro in the dam wall is small.</p> <p>Q. There is a level of fish mortality with Wivenhoe. Is there anything that Borumba is doing to manage/minimise fish mortality?</p> <p>A. Potential fish mortality impacts will be considered as part of an EIS process. It is likely there will always be a residual level of fish mortality, but measures to minimise fish mortality is part of the design process from the very beginning of the process.</p> <p>Q. Will there be compensation to the fish stocking association for fish mortality?</p> <p>A. There will be a variety of mechanisms to reduce fish mortality, including through design and management of the scheme. Potential fish mortality impacts and management and mitigation measures will be considered as part of an EIS process. Need to understand what aquatic fauna species are in Lake Borumba to understand what management and mitigation measures may be effective.</p>		



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	<p>Q. There will be water quality issues – it is critical that the community/stakeholders are involved in setting the TOR.</p> <p>A. Water quality is a key consideration for the lower reservoir and is being considered as part of the design process and environmental studies.</p> <p>The EIS process includes several opportunities for public participation, including during the development of the TOR.</p>		
4.0	<i>Progress update for detailed studies</i>		
4.1	<p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>At the first SRG, the project team explained that the engineers are considering ranges of megawatts and dam heights to determine the best scheme for Borumba. The proposed megawatts and dam heights is going to the Project Hydro Board for approval next week [<i>week commencing 18 July</i>]. This will form the reference design for the project.</p> <p>SRG members and project team then discussed member questions regarding engineering progress.</p> <p>Q. Will the approved reference design be made public?</p> <p>A. Yes, but the project team does not know exactly when or how at this stage.</p> <p>Q. Who is on the pumped hydro board? What level are the government representatives?</p> <p>A. The Project Hydro Board includes membership across government from DEPW, DRDMW, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Treasury, Seqwater, and the technical review panel. Government representatives are at the Executive Director level.</p> <p>Q. Are there any other non-government members advising the Project Hydro Board?</p> <p>A. No. Seqwater is on the board as an advisor and as owner of dam.</p> <p>Technical review panel has just set up. Chair of the technical review panel is Roger Gill, who is international hydro power consultant and is an International Hydropower Association board member.</p>	Powerlink to share approved reference design with SRG	TBC



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4.2	<p>Q. Are there any environmental representatives or local knowledge represented on the technical review panel?</p> <p>A. The technical review panel does include technical representation for environmental issues. The role of the technical review panel is to look at the whole suite of project activities, identify gaps, provide advice. The technical review panel must be independent.</p> <p>The purpose of the technical review panel is not for capturing local knowledge it is to receive input from independent experts. They provide input to government independently from the project team. The technical review panel provides a higher level of assurance to the board. The SRG is the forum for capturing local knowledge and feedback.</p> <p>If there are SRG members that want to raise things about the project, they can raise things with DEPW representatives.</p> <p>Exploratory works</p> <p>Powerlink is progressing with early exploratory works that are expected to commence early 2023. These exploratory works will provide greater understanding of the geotechnical environment and are not unusual for projects of this type and scale. The works will include works to improve site access and to drill an exploratory tunnel.</p> <p>Exploratory works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road works to safely get equipment up to the upper reservoir site. These are relatively minor works to allow for safe road use and access to site. These are not the works required for the whole project. • Exploratory tunnel, which will include drilling and blasting a tunnel. This tunnel is along the alignment of the proposed power station access tunnel but is smaller than what will be required for the whole project. • Associated infrastructure including a small workers accommodation (estimated to be about 40 workers), spoil stockpile and laydown areas. 	<p>Powerlink to arrange a meeting with traffic and transport stakeholders</p> <p>Powerlink to present early findings for traffic and transport at the next SRG meeting.</p>	<p>08/2022</p> <p>TBC – currently scheduled for late September</p>



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	<p>SRG members and project team then discussed member questions regarding proposed exploratory works.</p> <p>Q. One safety issue when working with serpentinite you will be dealing with asbestos. There is a section along Bella Creek Road, past the second crossing, that goes through serpentinite.</p> <p>A. Noted.</p> <p>Q. What happens if the project does not go ahead?</p> <p>A. As part of the necessary approvals, the project team will be identifying the remediation that would be carried out if the project does not go ahead. This will be developed as the project team develops the approval documents.</p> <p>Q. What will happen to spoil from the exploratory tunnel?</p> <p>A. The plan is to keep that material on site and potentially use the spoil for the project. Stockpiling the spoil on site is also a way to minimise vehicle movements along Bella Creek and Borgon roads.</p> <p>Q. How big will the tunnel be?</p> <p>A. The tunnel will be about 8 m in diameter. If the project proceeds, the tunnel will be developed to meet the project's operational requirements during the construction phase.</p> <p>Q. When will this start?</p> <p>A. Approvals are expected to start being prepared in August 2022. Early road works are scheduled for Q2 2023, the exploratory tunnel is expected to commence around Q3 2023.</p> <p>Q. What approvals are required for this scope of work? Will there be community engagement on this?</p> <p>A. The approvals process is being worked through, but based on the scale of work, are expected to trigger approvals from Gympie Regional Council and the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA). The project team also wants to start discussions with the Commonwealth Government to clarify triggers under Commonwealth legislation.</p> <p>The project team also understands the concern of local residents and businesses in relation to traffic and transport. We envisage that we will start engaging with stakeholders around the same time as we start talking to Gympie Regional Council, in August. This would be similar to the meeting that the project team held with environmental groups at the start of the ecological studies.</p>		



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	<p>Q. What would the timing be for the approvals for the exploratory works?</p> <p>A. The current schedule targets towards the end of March 2023. Even a small development application can take a long time, so the project team will be starting the approvals process in August 2022 to meet this schedule.</p> <p>Q. What happens to the spoil if it rains?</p> <p>A. Management of the spoil is important, and a spoil management plan will be developed as part of the approval documents. This plan will outline the proposed management measures, including erosion and sediment control.</p> <p>Q. Do you have a map showing where all the project materials are coming from?</p> <p>A. This is one of the issues with early engagement, the project team does not have all the answers yet. This includes where the project materials will be sourced. The project team does want to have conversations about where the material is coming from and what the issues are and work to resolve these issues, but this cannot happen until we identify where the material is coming from.</p> <p>Q. Where is the sand and aggregate coming from?</p> <p>A. This is still to be determined.</p> <p>Q. When will the traffic and transport proposal be delivered?</p> <p>A. Current schedule has the project traffic and transport study to be delivered in November. This study will not have all the answers. This is the first step in the process. Further studies will continue to develop and refine the traffic and transport issues and management and mitigation measures. The project team is hoping to be able to bring back information on the early findings regarding traffic and transport at the next SRG meeting.</p> <p>What is the sequencing for project construction? Will construction be concurrent or sequential?</p> <p>A. Construction is staggered, particularly with the dams. Sequencing will be understood once the designs are complete.</p> <p>Q. What is the sequencing for other approvals?</p> <p>A. All approvals will be running in parallel with the exploratory works. The project team will not be waiting for the exploratory works to be complete to commence the project approvals.</p>		

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	<p>Q. Will there be rehabilitation plans?</p> <p>A. Yes. It is important to note that the commencement of the exploratory works will not prejudice Government's decision process. There will be a remediation plan in place for exploratory works if the project does not proceed.</p> <p>Q. Key defining thing for this project is whether there is sufficient water. When will the yield hydrology study be available?</p> <p>A. Based on the current schedule the yield hydrology study is due for completion in October. Our modelling will be submitted to DRDMW. The study will consider water available in the project catchment. The study uses the new DRDMW water model.</p> <p>Q. Based on the hydrologic modelling done so far, can you reliably run the scheme.</p> <p>A. Based on modelling completed to date, yes.</p> <p>Q. When will there be an official announcement that there is enough water in the <i>[Mary River]</i> catchment?</p> <p>A. Will need to take this question on notice. When this information will be released is a question for the State Government and it is not known when this information will be released.</p>		
4.3	<p>Social</p> <p>Social impact studies have commenced. These include the social impact evaluation, social impact assessment, and the recreation study. These studies include stakeholder engagement that includes one-to-one stakeholder interviews and an online survey which are due to commence in August.</p> <p>The project team asked the SRG at a community level, what are the opportunities to maximise social and recreational outcomes from the project.</p> <p>Members identified the project could support the following social and recreational benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Borumba Dam outflows and downstream impacts including bank erosion and specifically Yabba Creek • Manage downstream of the Borumba Dam as a recreation river • Manage releases from the Borumba Dam so that the releases are from different levels, not just from the base of the dam 		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and reduce algae blooms within Lake Borumba • Ramp up identification of workforce requirements and skills, don't just poach skilled workers from current employers • Need for skills and training program • Provide opportunities for as much/maximise local procurement as possible • Assist with easing housing issue. Project timeline may mean that the bypass is finishing as Borumba ramps up and there may be rooms available. Other opportunities might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value add for existing landholders by offering up housing/extra housing or tiny homes on rural properties • Free up restrictions for additional tiny homes on properties. Currently \$10,000 to put in Council approvals for a tiny home • Support business and community in Imbil to become a green energy town • Provide opportunities for business to value add, including farmers • Consider Indigenous procurement, workforce planning – there are several government programs that this project can lean on <p>SRG members and project team then discussed member questions regarding progress with the social studies.</p> <p>Q. can there be recreational use on the upper reservoir? A. No</p> <p>Q. Community and stakeholder need input into the process for developing offsets. A. The project team is working through a process for offsetting. Offsetting will be an important mitigation tool. The intent is to first minimise impacts. The project team is aware of the requirements to include offset costs into the project.</p> <p>Q. What about safety issues on the lower reservoir during operation? A. This issue is being investigated as part of our detailed analytical studies. Operation trade-offs will be investigated and managed as best as possible. Operation schemes and associated compensation will be required to be understood.</p>		



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5.0	Transmission lines		
5.1	<p>Powerlink is in the early stages of the transmission process. Powerlink knows that the connections from the Borumba power station will be to Woolooga and Tarong. Depending on the transmission outcomes there may be a need for substation expansion at Woolooga and Tarong.</p> <p>Powerlink has not identified an alignment. Today is about understanding what stakeholder consider are the constraints for a transmission alignment.</p> <p>The project team asked the SRG what the team should be aware of when thinking about transmission corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For grazing land, the biggest issue relates to biosecurity and the seed banks in the soil. Need weed survey of corridors before development commences. • Understanding landholder land management practices. Example given of Powerlink spraying vegetation under transmission lines. This leaves dead trees and may be incompatible with land management practices of landholder (in case of organic farms) • Stay away from townships and small blocks of land if possible. <p>SRG members and project team then discussed member questions regarding transmission lines.</p> <p>Q how wide are the operations easements for transmission lines?</p> <p>A. Depends on the tower size and the voltage of the lines, but between 60 m to 70 m for operations. The transmission study easement is likely to be about 4 km</p> <p>Q How many transmission lines and towers are going to be sitting side-by side?</p> <p>A. Depends on how they leave Borumba – could have two lines side by side for a distance until they separate for Tarong and Woolooga.</p> <p>Q. Will power from Forest Wind be used by Borumba?</p> <p>A. Borumba will be connected to the network so will draw power from the network during pumping and will supply the network during generation.</p> <p>Pumped hydro, and the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project enables renewables. Generally, a pumped hydro project will enable double the amount of renewables for the scheme. For example, a project of 2,000 MW has the potential to result in about 4,000 MW of renewables in the networks.</p>	SRG members to notify Powerlink project team if they wish to be part of a transmission line sub-group	31/08/2022



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	<p>Q. What voltage will lines be?</p> <p>A. To be determined. Different voltages have different advantages. Transmission has long lead times and Powerlink needs to consider the future loads for the network when identifying the voltage of lines.</p> <p>Q. Can different sides of towers be strung at different times?</p> <p>A. It is technically possible but does have disadvantages.</p> <p>Q Who is likely to own the asset?</p> <p>A. Transmission lines will be Powerlink. It is a matter for the State Government as to who operates the project.</p> <p>Q. If you need 500 kV, it would be preferable to have one 500 kV rather than two 275 kV</p> <p>A. Transmission is not quite that simple, as the distance plays a significant role. It is usually a 2:1 to 4:1 (for common transmission distances) – so it would not be simply two 275 kV to make up 500 kV transmission, it would require more.</p> <p>Q. If you string different 500 kV, does this need a wider easement?</p> <p>A. The operational easement is based on the tower size and voltage of the line, but a 500 kV transmission line is likely to require an increase from 60 m to 70 m easement.</p> <p>Q. Want in writing from the State Government that there will be no off-stream downstream storage to augment this project – want it from the whole government.</p> <p>A. The Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen has made the commitment that this project cannot have off-stream storage as part of the project.</p> <p>Q. With Seqwater owning Borumba Dam, they currently manage entitlements. With new ownership of the site, the new infrastructure means allocation holders will have to develop new expertise.</p> <p>A. Dam infrastructure and water ownership are two different things. It is a matter for the State Government as to who operates the project and what the dam infrastructure ownership may be.</p> <p>Q. There has been two long-term consultation programs of the MRCCC – 1. how the community would like to see catchment managed 2. a multi-species recovery plan that the Commonwealth Government asked MRCCC to put together. The multi-species recovery plan has not yet adopted by Government, but MRCCC want to see threatened species managed in accordance with this plan. Both documents are publicly available.</p>		



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	<p>A. Noted. The ecology study teams have been liaising with the MRCC during the study and will pass this request to the ecology study teams</p> <p>Q There are two government agencies/entities that manage the Mary River – would be good if this project will take on a coordinated approach to the Mary River.</p> <p>A. Noted.</p>		
	Meeting Closed		