

## Project approvals fact sheet

# Borumba Pumped Hydro Project

## About the project

The Borumba Pumped Hydro Project is the proposed development of a pumped hydro energy storage system at Lake Borumba, located southwest of Gympie near Imbil. It forms part of the Queensland Government's commitment to transitioning to 80% renewable energy by 2035.

## Exploratory works and main works

The project is intended to be delivered in two stages: exploratory works, followed by main works.

Exploratory works will comprise detailed geological investigations including geotechnical drilling and excavation of an exploratory tunnel to the proposed underground powerhouse cavern. Associated works will include minor road improvements, construction of access tracks, and construction of temporary exploratory workers' camps and supporting infrastructure.

Main works for the project will include construction of a new lower Borumba dam, the upper reservoir dam, tunnels and underground powerhouse, and associated construction facilities such as access roads, quarries, and construction camps.

## What have we done so far?

In March 2023, Queensland Hydro submitted the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project's Detailed Analytical Report (DAR) to the Queensland Government for its consideration and investment decision. The DAR assessed the feasibility of the proposed project by undertaking preliminary engineering, environmental, social and economic studies.

We have started geotechnical drilling in locations that do not trigger approvals.

## What is the approvals process for this project?

The Borumba Pumped Hydro Project will require assessment under State and Commonwealth legislation for both the exploratory works and main works.

### Exploratory works

The exploratory works have been referred to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), and require assessment via preliminary documentation under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). A range of permits and approvals will also be required at a State level, and Queensland Hydro is currently working with the Office of the Coordinator-General to progress the necessary State approval pathways.

### Main works

The main works will also be referred to DCCEEW, and it is assumed that the project will require EPBC Act assessment. It is assumed that the EPBC Act assessment would be via an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

The project will also submit an application for coordinated project status under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act) to the Office of the Coordinator-General. Should this application be approved, the project would also require a State EIS under the SDPWO Act.

Both the Commonwealth and State assessment for the main works would be progressed under a bilateral agreement which provides for a single, integrated EIS process that encompasses both Commonwealth and State assessment requirements.

Following completion of the EIS process, the project would also need to obtain a range of additional permits and approvals before construction can commence.

These two processes are outlined on the following page.

# Borumba Pumped Hydro Project

## Environmental and planning approvals process

### Exploratory works approvals



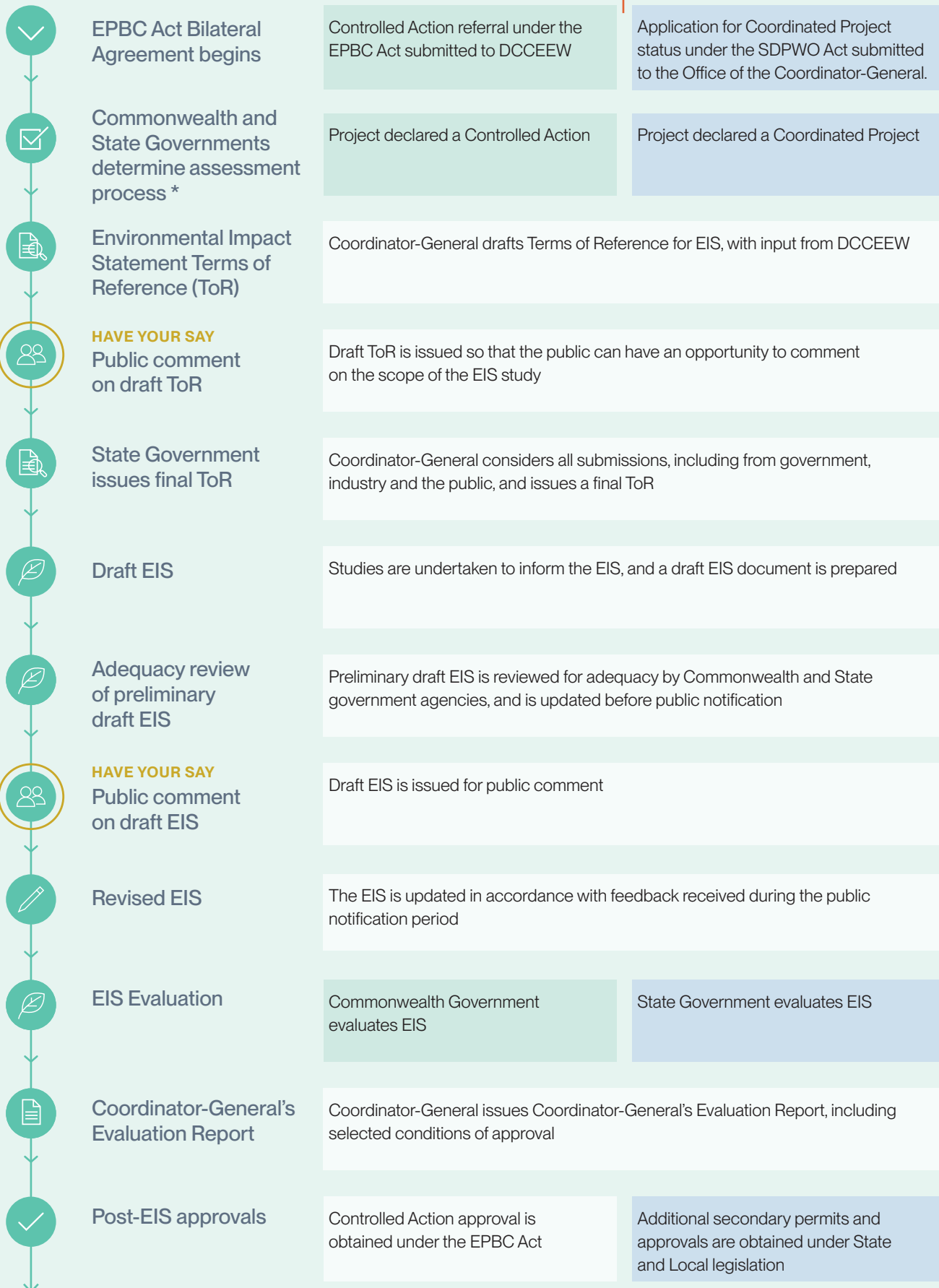
### Exploratory works may begin

- Commonwealth Government approval step
- State Government approval step
- Bilateral (Commonwealth and State Government agreement)
- ⊙ Opportunities for input

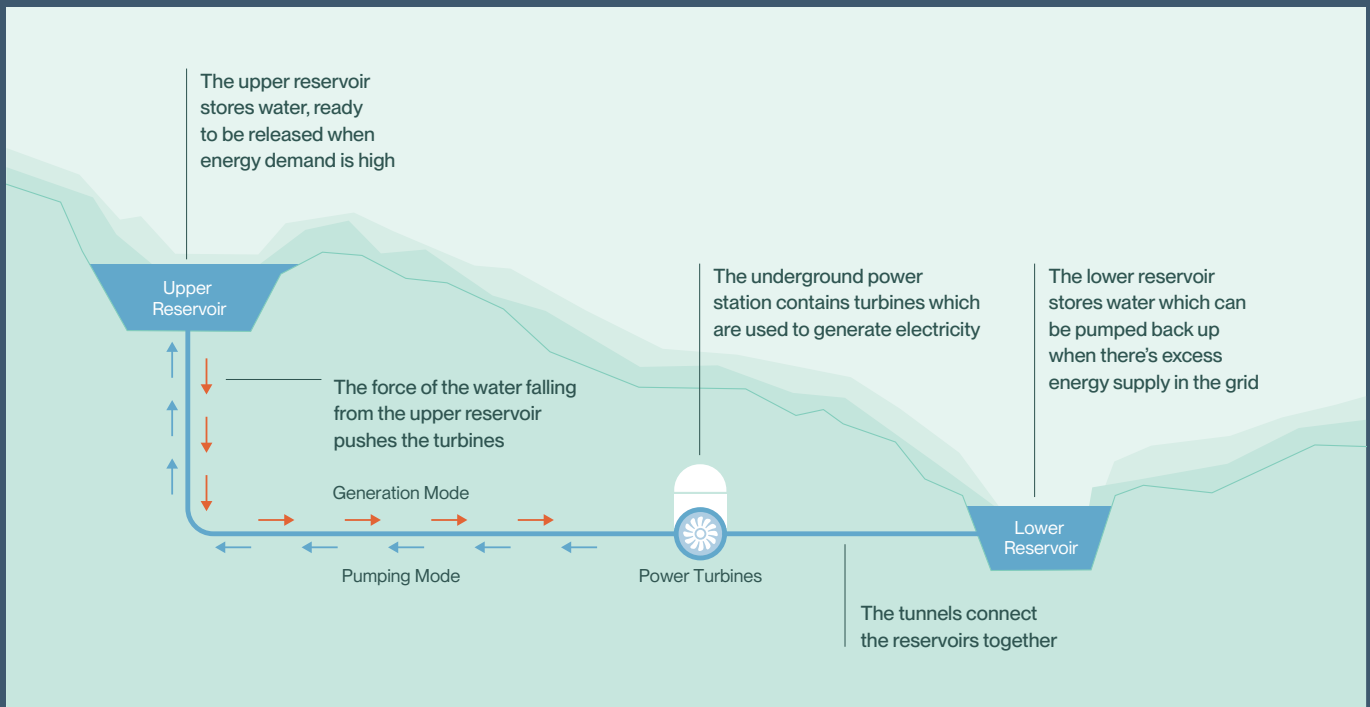
\* These are the assumed processes. Actual processes will be determined by Commonwealth and State Government.

## Main works approvals

**WE ARE HERE**



Main works may begin



## What is pumped hydro?

Pumped hydro energy storage is a closed water system that moves water between two large reservoirs constructed at different heights to generate and store potential energy.

The Borumba Pumped Hydro Project requires expansion of the existing Lake Borumba reservoir (the lower reservoir), as well as construction of new dams in the hills south of Lake Borumba to create an upper reservoir. When energy is needed, water will pass from the upper reservoir to the lower reservoir via turbines in an underground power station. When there is excess energy available in the network, the water will be pumped back up from the lower reservoir to the upper reservoir where it will be stored until energy is needed again.

When constructed, the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project would be capable of producing up to 2,000 MW of continuous power for a period of up to 24 hours.



### Opportunities to have your say

There will be various opportunities for public input over the course of the approvals process for both the exploratory works and the main project works. Queensland Hydro will keep stakeholders informed of these opportunities as the processes progress.

## To find out more

Queensland Hydro will continue to engage and work with the community and our stakeholders throughout the approvals process.

If you have any questions or would like to receive project email updates, please speak with our communications and stakeholder team via [borumba@qldhydro.com.au](mailto:borumba@qldhydro.com.au).

### Get in touch

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