

# Meeting Minutes

<b>Meeting name</b>	Borumba pumped hydro project - stakeholder reference group extraordinary meeting
<b>Location</b>	Imbil Sports Club, 49 Yabba Creek Rd, Imbil QLD 4570; and Online [Microsoft Teams]
<b>Date and time</b>	Friday 25 August 2023, 12:30pm – 1:30pm
<b>Attendees</b>	<p><b>Environment group members:</b> David Arthur (Wide Bay-Burnett Environment Council, online), Glenda Pickersgill (Save the Mary River Coordinating Group), Narelle McCarthy (Sunshine Coast Environmental Council, online), Nigel Parratt (Sunshine Coast Environmental Council, online, observer), Steve Burgess (proxy for Ian Mackay, Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee).</p> <p><b>Business representative members:</b> Dan O'Regan (HQPlantations Pty Ltd).</p> <p><b>Community members:</b> Carolyn Harris (adjoining landholder), Don MacAulay (Mary Valley Fishing Club), Ian Stehbens (local community member).</p> <p><b>Project representatives:</b> Leah McKenzie, Travis Graham, Kylie Gomez Gane, Julie Spencer, Nirvana Searle, Michael Price, Rebecca Grady, Georgia Southern, Lynda Williams.</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	<p><b>Environment group members:</b> Dave Copeman (QCC).</p> <p><b>Business representative members:</b> Janelle Parker (Mary Valley Chamber of Commerce), Petra Van Beek (Gympie Chamber of Commerce), Graeme Elphinstone (Gympie District Beef Liaison Group), Luke Barden (Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union), Sotera Trevaskis (Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Development Australia).</p> <p><b>Community members:</b> Bruce Horsfall (Lake Borumba Fish Stocking Association), Senior Constable Bill Greer (Imbil Rural Watch), Gary Rozynski (local irrigator).</p>

## Meeting purpose

Meeting purpose was to provide further detail regarding the execution of a works regulation from the Office of Coordinator-General (assessed under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act)), as well as engaging with the group regarding upcoming approvals milestones.

## Minutes

Agenda item	Minutes and Actions
1. Welcome and introductions	- JS welcomed stakeholder reference group (SRG) members and thanked all for their time on short notice, noting that the intention of the meeting was to ensure SRG members are informed of the approvals update and to ask any questions

following the optional briefing on Tuesday (15 August) and after reviewing the works regulation Project Report.

- JS led introductions around the room and online.
- JS spoke to Acknowledgement of Country.
- JS noted that approvals were a key topic of the last SRG meeting (held 30 June 2023).
- JS noted that this is an extraordinary meeting, and so our facilitator is not here today however that the group's terms of engagement still apply. These include:
  - o Treating other members and their opinions with respect
  - o Sharing your thoughts professionally, respectfully and in a civil manner
  - o Committing to frank, honest and transparent discussion and feedback
  - o Being curious
  - o Listening to each other, with one conversation occurring at a time
  - o Being succinct
  - o Saying what you need to say, please do not leave the room with things left unsaid
  - o Advocating for the solutions that you feel strongly about
- JS handed over to NS to discuss the works regulation for the Temporary workers accommodation camps (TWACs).

2. What is a works regulation and what does the works regulation apply to?

- NS noted that this topic was discussed during the online optional briefing on Tuesday 15 August 2023, and the information being shared on this will be similar information. NS noted that this meeting is an opportunity to ask questions to the team, now that members have had time to review the Project Report.
- NS noted that the works regulation is made under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*, which is the same act that guides the OCG and the environmental impact statement (EIS) process and Coordinated Projects processes. The works regulation will either direct a local body or the OCG, or both, to undertake specific works. In this case, Queensland Hydro has been directed to construct the TWACs.
- NS noted that as part of liaison with the OCG, there is an ongoing information sharing process between the OCG and Queensland Hydro. The OCG assess this information and decide on the most efficient approvals process for the Project works package to be undertaken.
- NS noted that the information supplied by Queensland Hydro to the OCG has been comprehensive and has covered all exploratory works, however this is the element which the OCG has decided will be brought under the works regulation. It was noted that the OCG may still make further decisions about the suitability of works regulations for other activities based on the information provided but that the typical approvals processes are currently planned for other works.
- NS advised that during this ongoing information sharing, Queensland Hydro raised the possibility of a works regulation in relation to some of the more critical activities. The OCG considered this and made a decision following assessment of the information shared by Queensland Hydro.
- NS noted that the works regulation process is driven by the OCG and the OCG directs and manages the process. The proponent (which in this case is Queensland Hydro) is responsible for providing information requested by the OCG.
- NS noted that the works regulation for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project relates specifically to two temporary workers accommodation camps to be constructed for use during the exploratory works and directs Queensland Hydro to undertake the construction of these camps. The regulation also enlivens the OCG powers in relation to opening and closing roads specifically as they relate to those workers accommodation camps, if required. NS further noted that it is not guaranteed that that power to open and close roads will be required,

however it is there as an option as there are some road corridors in the area that are outside the surveyed alignment.

- NS noted that the works regulation enables the construction of the temporary workers accommodation camps for exploratory works to progress without requiring Queensland Hydro to go through the Somerset and Gympie Regional Council planning schemes application processes, which is likely to have been a longer assessment and approval timeframe. This is one of the primary reasons that this is the approval pathway for this work.
- NS noted that the works regulation does not apply to other work activities for the exploratory works or main works, for example it does not apply to geotechnical investigation works or the exploratory tunnel. Other exploratory works activities are still going through the typical State Government approvals processes as these are triggered (for example waterway barrier works where there is a waterway crossing, or vegetation clearing permits if there is clearing associated with the works). A lot of the exploratory works are also still undergoing assessment under the EPBC Act through the Commonwealth.
- NS noted that the compressed timeframes and need for geotechnical information to inform the design of the Project contributed to the works regulation being executed. NS noted that a local Council's resources may be limited, resulting in longer approvals timeframes.

### 3. Project Report

- NS noted that as part of the works regulation execution process, the OCG prepares a project report, which is published on their website. NS noted that the link to the project report for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project was sent via email to stakeholders on Tuesday 15 August 2023.
- NS noted that the project report speaks to who is responsible for the works, the location of the works, and information regarding construction, operation and decommissioning of the TWACs.
- NS noted that Appendix A (Figure A.1) shows the locality of the two TWACs in orange. NS noted that the TWACs are shown on land that has been previously cleared and that was relatively level. The locations were also selected on the basis of being able to access the proposed geotechnical drilling areas, as it will be workers working on these areas who will be housed in the camps.
- NS noted that Appendix 2 (Figure A2.2) depicts the area for the Borgan Camp.
- NS noted that Appendix 2 (Figure A2.3) depicts the area for the Walkers Top Camp.
- NS noted that both areas shown in these Figures had been previously cleared.

### 4. Environmental management

- NS noted that environmental management has been considered through the design process for the TWACs and that environmental management was considered by the OCG as part of the works regulation process. This included design, establishment, operational and management considerations.
- NS noted that design considerations included:
  - o Locating the TWACs in predominantly cleared areas to avoid vegetation clearing as much as possible, to minimise the impact on fauna and issues with erosion, run off and sediment impacts.
  - o Selecting locations generally not visible from either public spaces or houses. NS noted that the TWAC sites are not visible from any nearby residences. NS noted this also plays a role in minimising community impact.
  - o Fauna friendly fencing, with hoarding to minimise visual amenity impacts to the community
  - o Minimal lighting around buildings at night, and mostly at ground level to minimise community impact and allow workers to be able to sleep
  - o After decommissioning, ground will be rehabilitated back to pre-existing condition. NS noted that this is on the assumption that the main works for the Project does not go ahead. If the main works for the Project does get approved through the required approvals processes, the TWACs will be repurposed for a short time while the main works accommodation camps are constructed, and after this the TWACs will

be decommissioned. If the TWACs are in the Project footprint, they will likely be repurposed for laydown areas or other similar uses. This would be instead of these areas being placed in another area and disturbing that new area.

- NS noted that the TWACs are being designed to minimise run off from the camp sites and to divert storm water around the sites.
- NS noted that establishment considerations included:
  - Subcontractors to clearly delineate work area boundaries before works begin for clarity on the approved disturbance areas
  - Pre-clearance surveys by qualified fauna spotter-catcher, if required. Although the approved TWACs works areas are largely cleared there is the odd tree, which may require trimming or removal. In this case, a fauna spotter-catcher will be engaged and on-site for this activity.
  - Access tracks will be in accordance with best practice, including erosion control on property roads and tracks and managing runoff
  - Treatment of existing weeds and biosecurity management, and requirements for vehicle washdown and weed hygiene declarations
  - DA asked could the TWACs be repurposed for the camps for main construction? NS noted that these TWACs will not be a suitable size for the main works camps, but may be able to be scaled up while the larger main works camps are constructed in more suitable locations. TG noted that the team did investigate if the TWACs and main works camps could be the same, however due to lay of the land, location and other factors that meant they could not be the same camps for both exploratory and main works. DA asked if the 'scale up' is factored into environmental management considerations? NS confirmed that the scaled up camps were built into the environmental management considerations. TG further noted that the TWACs will be constructed without main works approvals in place, so there is a requirement to keep these temporary in nature. The parcel of land in the upper area (Walkers Top Camp) is in the footprint for the upper reservoir inundation area, so a main works camp cannot be located here. TG noted that the Borgan Camp is located on a parcel of land that is not large enough to accommodate the size of a main works camp. TG noted that the TWACs will 'pioneering camps' used while the main works camps are built, and once the main works camps are built the TWACs will be decommissioned. LMc noted that for the main works camps, Queensland Hydro are establishing an Accommodation Strategy to assess the balance of onsite and offsite accommodation (offsite areas being Imbil, Kilcoy and the other areas around the Project). The Strategy will assess the dynamic of housing workers within the local communities and the number of workers to be housed onsite. NS clarified that the TWACs are approved on the basis of the 'scaled up' design but not for a larger camp. NS noted that the TWACs are expected to house around 84 workers, with the scale up option being for approximately 168 workers.
  - SB asked if there are proposed locations for the main works camps? TG noted that there are options being investigated for this.
  - GP enquired as to what 'fauna friendly fencing' refers to? NS noted that this is styles of fencing that are designed to deter animals from climbing over the fence into the exclusion zone. Typically, these have a sheet metal section and/or an angled top of the fence to prevent animals from being able to cross over the fence. GP asked for size of fauna exclusion zone. NS noted that the fenced will only be around the TWAC footprint, which are quite small.
- NS noted that operational considerations included:
  - Worker access to the camps will be by bus, to minimise the traffic on local roads and minimise disturbance from vehicle movements

- Power from portable muffled or silenced generators. This is to minimise the disturbance of fauna and also to allow workers to sleep.
- All work will be limited to the camp compound, the only exception being erosion and sediment control measures.
- Waste to be sorted onsite and transported for disposal offsite, at the closest waste transfer station
- Wastewater will be trucked offsite to an appropriate facility
- Dust generating areas to be wetted regularly or covered to reduce dust
- Low speed limits with signage
- Appropriate storage of materials, for example any fuel that is stored onsite will be kept within Australian Standards and regulations, personnel onsite will be spill management trained with onsite kits available.
- NS noted that management plan considerations included:
  - Preliminary management plans are in the process of being drafted, including a Bushfire Management Plan for the TWACs, which was delivered by an independent company, and a preliminary erosion and Sediment Control Plan for the exploratory works generally, with a detailed plan to be developed for the TWACs. These plans were appended to the EPBC referral for the exploratory works. Erosion and sediment controls will be in place before any earthworks commence.
  - NS noted that these preliminary plans were submitted to the OCG. The OCG have been provided with all aspects of the EPBC Referral. NS noted that four rounds of detailed information were provided to the OCG in response to Requests for Information (RFI).
- GP asked if management plans are publicly available? NS noted that the plans are publicly available through the EPBC referral documentation (these included a draft Construction and Environmental Management Plan and the preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, as well as others submitted as an appendix to the referral). TWACs were excluded from the works included in the EPBC Referral because of the minimal impact, but the appendices of the EPBC Referral included a self-assessment that evaluates the potential impacts of the TWACs on flora and fauna to justify their exclusion from the Referral. NS clarified that the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan is publicly available as an Appendix to the Construction and Environmental Management Plan that was included in the EPBC Referral documents, and that while the TWACs are excluded from the works included in the EPBC Referral all exploratory works including the TWACs are included in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan.
- GP noted that the SRG members were not shown the Preliminary Documentation RFI. NS noted that approval was needed from the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to share this information, which has now been granted. NS noted that the SRG members will be sent this information to review ahead of the public notification/consultation period for the Preliminary Documentation. NS noted that the timing for submission of the Preliminary Documentation response is targeted to be mid-September 2023. NS noted that Queensland Hydro will make a submission to the Commonwealth agency (DCCEEW), who will review it for at least three or four weeks where they consider if more work to the submission is required to be done by Queensland Hydro. The Commonwealth agency will then decide if the Preliminary Documentation is adequate to be displayed for public consultation. At this point it will be published online and will be publicly accessible. NS noted this public notification is likely to be around mid-October 2023.
- DA noted that solar panels and batteries could feasibly be installed to power the TWACs.
- SB noted increased traffic on Bella Creek Road associated with the TWACs will require road works on Bella Creek Road. SB asked when these road works would take place and to what extent, noting that particular attention is needed

at the three crossings of Kingaham Creek. TG noted that a hydrological study of Bella Creek Road has been undertaken, in the aim of providing flood response measures to the TWACs and allowing the TWACs to be self-sufficient in times when access to the camp flooding. TG noted the works required may include installing culverts across and raise the crossings above bed-level. SB asked if best practice culvert installation for bio-passage would be followed. TG noted options are still being assessed, with one being a low-level bridge. SB noted that this would be even better. TG noted another option would be for the access to bypass Kingaham Creek entirely by moving the road corridor away from the creek, giving the work areas full flood immunity. SB asked if this work will occur ahead of the TWACs construction. TG noted that it would be occurring concurrently. IS noted that this road work is essential work. TG noted that increasing Bella Creek Road to a two-way carriageway and sealing the road may take place during the exploratory works timeframe, however this is as yet unconfirmed.

LMc noted that Queensland Hydro are working with Gympie Regional Council to plan these road upgrades. SB noted that much of Bella Creek Road runs through wetland. TG noted that Queensland Hydro are investigating moving sections of the road out of wetland. LMc noted that the road currently facilitates an average of 30 vehicle movements per day, and that this will change. As such Queensland Hydro and Gympie Regional Council will work together to make the road fit-for-purpose. NS noted multi-disciplinary discussions are held to assess the appropriateness of road solutions. TG noted operational and exploratory works will require subcontractors to bus workers into site, to reduce the traffic volume on the road to mitigate the impact on community as well as for safety reasons (including that the road is not lit during dark periods). DMc asked if this would be a part of the contract for contractors. TG confirmed that it would be.

- GP asked what shifts would be worked, to indicate when and how often workers will be bussed in and out of site? TG noted that while underground works will be 24/7, other aspects of the exploratory works will not be. The shift swings (times workers will be onsite for work and living in the TWACs) will be determined by the contractors conducting the works. The workers will be bussed in at the beginning of their shift swing and bussed out a number of days later at the end of their rostered shift swing. LMc noted that different specialist contractors will be conducting different aspects of the exploratory works, and it will be up to those contractors to decide on the roster for their workers. GP noted that accurate traffic numbers depend on this information. LMc noted that studies have been done based on most impactful option.

Temporary workers accommodation camps (TWACs)

- TG noted that the tenders to construct and operate the TWACs are likely to be released in the next weeks. These tenders have been discussed with the Minister for the Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW) and trade unions.
- TG noted that the standard required for the construction of the TWACs is high, and Queensland Hydro are looking to award the tender this year (2023).
- TG noted that the TWACs will be fabricated offsite and will likely be installed in March or April 2024. TG noted that workers will begin to use the TWACs when 30 beds are ready for use.
- TG noted that the selected TWAC will perform all required work necessary to fully design, fabricate, construct, certify and then operate the camp facility. The TWACs may be awarded to one contractor for both camps, or two contractors (one for each TWAC) depending on the tenders received.
- TG noted that approximately 50-60 workers will likely be onsite at each TWAC at a time, with the allowance for visitors to stay at the camps during this time.
- DA asked if onsite construction could start in Q1 or Q2 2024, when would workers be likely be housed there? TG noted this would be May or June 2024.
- TG noted that the intention is for the facilitates to be temporary and self-sufficient. Potable water supply and sewerage treatment will be trucked in and out of site, instead of being treated and discharged onsite.

- TG noted that a bio-security weed and seed facility and guardhouse will be constructed nearby to the TWACs.
- SB asked if heliport would be built? TG advised that there wont be a heliport as this is usually only implemented when regular helicopter flights are expected. Instead, the sites will have a helicopter landing zone for emergency evacuation. This will likely be a clear field of appropriate size next to each TWAC as well as near work areas.
- GP asked if there is Giant Rats Tail weed in the site areas? NS noted that there is Giant Rats Tail onsite. GP asked if there is a large amount? MP noted that there is not a large amount nearby to the TWAC locations, however there is a patch near Yabba Creek on Queensland Hydro land. GP asked what controls would be put onsite to manage this? NS and MP noted that treatment processes will be in place, the BioSecurity Management Plan is currently in draft. This is in consultation with Seqwater regarding the treatment chemicals that can be used, considering the proximity and sensitivities of Lake Borumba.
- TG noted that fire control is a key consideration being discussed with Gympie Regional Council. Water is likely to be stored onsite for the purposes of fire control, with a fire ring-main and hydrants.
- TG noted that communication is not currently possible on phone networks onsite. For this reason satellite communications infrastructure will be installed, as well as CCTV infrastructure.
- TG noted that the facilities will include concrete walkways, fuel storage compliant with legislation and power generators.
- TG noted that as TWAC tenders will be judged on sustainability innovations, it is expected that solar power infrastructure will be utilised, with power generators as backup.

#### 5. Approvals for main works

- NS noted that Queensland Hydro are looking to submit a Coordinated Project application to the OCG for the main works of the Project this month.
- NS noted that an EPBC Referral for the main works of the Project will also be submitted to the Commonwealth agency (same process as the exploratory works). It is likely this submission will be in late August/September 2023.
- NS noted that SRG members will be notified of this submission by the Project stakeholder engagement team. SRG members will also be notified of public notification periods.
- NS noted that the Coordinated Project application and the EPBC Referral may reference the locations of the proposed main works camps in nominal locations (subject to change). This is based on best locations with an assessment made from currently known information. SB asked if nominal locations for the quarry and sand locations will also be included? NS noted that there are options being considered for the quarry. TG noted that sand will likely be manufactured from quarry rock, instead of from onsite riverbeds.
- GP requested clarification on the public comment timelines. NS noted that the Coordinated Project application made with the Initial Advice Statement will likely be made public on the OCG website approximately three to four weeks after it is submitted by Queensland Hydro. NS noted that the EPBC referral is likely to be a similar timeframe.
- GP referenced the note on Slide 23 that “public comment on the Environmental Impact Statement Terms of Reference is expected Q4, 2023”. NS noted that this refers to the draft Terms of Reference for the main works Environmental Impact Statement, which is likely to follow after the review of the (1) coordinated project application to (including an Initial Advice Statement (IAS)) to the Office of the Coordinator-General, and (2) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) Referral for the Project to DCCEEW. GP asked if there is an opportunity to comment on the EIS Terms of Reference as well as the draft EIS? NS confirmed this is the case.
- GP asked for clarification of the processes for exploratory works approvals and main works approvals.
- NS advised that the exploratory works have been referred to DCCEEW and require assessment via Preliminary Documentation under the EPBC Act.

Currently Queensland Hydro is preparing a Preliminary Documentation RFI response. 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.

- NS advised that the main works will also be referred to DCCEEW, and it is assumed that the project will require EPBC Act assessment 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 an EIS for the State under the SDPWO Act. It is anticipated that 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.
- LMc advised SRG members that an infographic will be sent to them simplifying this process and adding clarity on dates for public notification.
- KGG noted that there are two streams of works (exploratory and main works). KGG noted that, for the exploratory works:
  - o TWACs were approved under a works regulation (executed by the OCG)
  - o EPBC referral has been made and a response to a Preliminary Documentation RFI is being prepared. The Referral itself is available on the DCCEEW website. Once the Preliminary Documentation satisfies DCCEEW, it will be available for public comment.
  - o Concurrently, other State level approvals and development approvals will be required and progressed.
- KGG noted that, for the main works Queensland Hydro will submit:
  - o coordinated project application to (including an IAS) to the Office of the Coordinator-General, and
  - o EPBC Act Referral for the Project to DCCEEW
  - o From this, it is anticipated that the existing bilateral agreement will be used and both State and Commonwealth approvals bodies will make assessments based on an EIS. The EIS process includes opportunity for public comment.
- IS spoke to issue of fire and fire report. IS requested report to be sent to SRG members. NS noted this would be investigated. LMc asked IS to speak to KGG around environmental initiatives. SB noted that with climate change the gullies that were historically used as firebreaks are now ineffective.
- NMc asked if TWACs required cuts in sloping ground? TG noted the footprint area (110 m by 75 m for each TWAC) may require approximately 1 m cut and 1 m of fill to create the flat pad needed for the TWAC construction.
- GP noted one TWAC is in inundation area and asked which inundation area this will be. IS noted this would be the upper reservoir.
- GP noted request for site visit for SRG. LMc noted that safety works are being undertaken in order to facilitate, hopefully this calendar year however this is dependent on works.

#### 6. Next steps

- JS noted that the next SRG meeting is scheduled for 7 September in Gympie. SRG members have been sent an invitation to this.
- JS noted that Queensland Hydro have progressed in finding a Project office in Imbil, and have signed a lease on the old medical centre in Imbil. JS noted that Queensland Hydro are looking into works to make this fit-for-purpose and will have an update at the next SRG meeting. LMc noted that Queensland Hydro are in discussions with a not-for-profit medical care provider regarding partnership.

#### 7. Questions

- NMc thanked team for scheduling meeting, noting that the works regulation approvals pathway does not fit with the 'no surprises' commitment to SRG members by Queensland Hydro. NMc noted that they understand the rationale behind the works regulation process to expedite the TWAC process, however



that the SRG would appreciate the opportunity to comment on the planning of the approval. NS noted that this will be taken on board, and this particular process is driven by the OCG (discussed in detail in the SRG meeting in June 2023). Queensland Hydro will endeavour to keep SRG members abreast of upcoming submissions and the contents of this as feasible.

- GP noted that this process has bypassed the community to have an opportunity to comment on the detail of the TWAC planning.
- CH noted that community benefits have not been announced. JS noted this would be discussed in detail at the next SRG. DMc noted that medical centre is possible community benefit. CH noted that all volunteer services require investment.
- DA asked what the FID is? JS noted that FID is an acronym for final investment decision. LMc noted that the State Government announced funding to the amount of \$6 billion for the Project in June 2023, Queensland Hydro will be responsible for a further \$8.2 billion.
- JS thanked all SRG members for their attendance and input.

Meeting closed 1:50pm