

Meeting Minutes

Meeting name	Borumba pumped hydro project - stakeholder reference group briefing
Location	Online [Microsoft Teams]
Date and time	Tuesday, 15 August 2023, 4pm – 5pm
Attendees	<p>Environment group members: David Arthur (Wide Bay-Burnett Environment Council), Glenda Pickersgill (Save the Mary River Coordinating Group).</p> <p>Business representative members: Janelle Parker (Mary Valley Chamber of Commerce).</p> <p>Community members: Carolyn Harris (adjoining landholder), Don MacAulay (Mary Valley Fishing Club), Ian Stehbens (local community member).</p> <p>Project representatives: Catherine Cussen, Julie Spencer, Nirvana Searle, Michael Price, Rebecca Grady, Georgia Southern, Lynda Williams, Cat Spalding.</p>
Apologies	<p>Environment group members: Narelle McCarthy (Sunshine Coast Environmental Council), Ian Mackay (Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee and Conondale Range Conservation Association), Dave Copeman (QCC).</p> <p>Business representative members: Petra Van Beek (Gympie Chamber of Commerce), Dan O'Regan (HQPlantations Pty Ltd), 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>Community members: Bruce Horsfall (Lake Borumba Fish Stocking Association), Senior Constable Bill Greer (Imbil Rural Watch), Gary Rozynski (local irrigator).</p>

Meeting purpose

Meeting purpose is 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)).

Minutes

Agenda item	Minutes and Actions
1. Welcome and introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JS welcomed stakeholder reference group (SRG) members and thanked all for their time on short notice, noting that the intention of the briefing was to ensure SRG members are informed of the approvals update. JS noted that approvals were a key topic of the last SRG meeting (held 30 June 2023). - JS spoke to agenda - JS spoke to Acknowledgement of Country

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JS made introductions, including Julie Spencer (Head of Stakeholder Engagement and Communications), Catherine Cussen (Head of Government Relations, Policy and Media), Michael Price (Environmental and approvals manager for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project) and Nirvana Searle (Environmental and approvals advisor).
<p>2. Overview of Project approvals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NS spoke to State and Federal approvals for both exploratory works and main works, noting that these are separate approvals processes being undertaken concurrently. - NS noted that the exploratory works are subject to Commonwealth assessment under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act) as a controlled action that will be assessed under preliminary documentation. NS noted that Queensland Hydro are in the process of preparing documentation with an aim to submit in the next few weeks. - NS noted that the exploratory works are also subject to state and local approvals. Queensland Hydro has been communicating with the State Government regarding the most appropriate process for the different exploratory works activities. - NS advised that the Project's main works are proposed to be assessed under a coordinated project process, with Queensland Hydro submitting an application to the Office of the Coordinator General at the State Government level. Meanwhile an Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) referral will be submitted to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). It is expected the Project's main works will be assessed as a controlled action on the Commonwealth level. NS noted that that it is anticipated that these two processes will result in an EIS being required and that the EIS will be done under the bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and the state. - NS noted that the reason for this SRG meeting is to discuss a works regulation that has been executed by the Office of the Coordinator-General (OCG), who is responsible for this process, and what it means for the Project.
<p>3. What does the works regulation apply to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NS noted that the works regulation is made under the <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>, which is the same act that guides the OCG and the environmental impact statement (EIS) process. The works regulation will either direct a local body or the OCG, or both, to undertake specific works. - NS noted that the 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 when this is requested by the OCG. - NS noted that members of the SRG have received an email (sent Tuesday 15 August 2023) with a link to the website of the OCG to view the Project Report prepared by the OCG for the works regulation. - 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 directs the OCG to exercise their 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 which are outside the surveyed alignment. - IS noted that a lot of the roads in the area are outside of the gazetted areas. - 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. - NS noted that the works regulation does not apply to other work activities for the exploratory works, for example it does not apply to geotechnical investigation works or the exploratory tunnel.

4. Project report for the works regulation
- 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 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 option and made a decision based on a report generated by the OCG following assessment of the information shared by Queensland Hydro.
 - NS noted the contents of the report, referencing the contents page of the Project Report.
 - 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.
 - NS spoke to the locations of the camps in detail, per Appendix 2 of the Project Report, noting that the locations of the camps are located on previously cleared areas. NS noted that one camp is located on land owned by the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water and one camp is located on land owned by Queensland Hydro.
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5. Next steps
- NS noted that tenders for the camps construction and operation will be awarded by the end of 2023, and onsite works are scheduled to commence early next year. The camps are then scheduled to be in place for the duration of the exploratory works and should the main works for the Project be approved to go ahead, the camps are likely to continue to be used while other accommodation camps are constructed for the main works.
 - NS noted that the workers undertaking exploratory works (for example, geotechnical drilling and exploratory tunnelling) will occupy the camps (approximately 84 per camp).
 - CC noted that an extraordinary SRG meeting will be held next week, likely on Thursday 24 August or Friday 25 August. An invitation will be sent to SRG members for this meeting as soon as possible.
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6. Question and answer session
- JP noted that what had been explained seems straight forward, and that the tender process is open for suppliers to register their interest.
 - DA asked if the camps would be occupied by the lower reservoir dam workers? NS noted that the lower camp would be occupied by workers working on the exploratory tunnel and geotechnical investigations around the dam wall. DA noted that he had no further questions at this stage and would appreciate time to look over the document ahead of the next SRG.
 - GP noted that they have not had sufficient time to review the documents and CH noted they would also like to review the documents. CC noted that the extraordinary SRG will be offered as an opportunity for further questions.
 - GP clarified that the meeting will occur on Thursday or Friday next week? JS and CC confirmed this timing. JP noted Thursday does not work for her. Noted that she does not have any further questions.
 - JS thanked stakeholders for their time, and advised the presentation and minutes from this meeting will be sent to all members of the SRG as well as an invitation to the extraordinary SRG next week.

Meeting closed 4:30pm