

Tarraleah Redevelopment Project Update

December 2023



In this issue, we share an update on our community consultation, the progress of upgrade works and the environmental approvals process for the proposed redevelopment.

Hydro Tasmania's *Battery of the Nation* vision is to upgrade the existing hydropower system and add new pumped hydro in the future. The Tarraleah hydropower scheme is a key part of that vision and we are progressing an assessment of the commercial viability of redeveloping the scheme. An important part of this is better understanding what the potential impacts, concerns and opportunities are for local communities around the district. We sought the views and perspectives of the local community through a survey and a series of drop-in sessions to provide an opportunity for community members to talk with our team.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their views on Tarraleah's future as we progress our detailed studies. A summary of what we've heard from the community so far is on pages 2 and 3.

Upgrade works are progressing

We're progressing a staged program of upgrade works in and around Lake King William. The upgrade works include construction of a new water intake at Lake King William and dam safety improvements at Mossy Marsh Dam. We're pleased to advise that the work at Mossy Marsh Dam is now complete, and the area reopened for recreational use.

To ensure public safety, we have closed Butlers Gorge Road weekdays between 7am and 5pm and this will remain in place until at least August 2024. The lookout and boat ramp are accessible outside of these hours and on public holidays and weekends. The Lake King William campground will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

The upgrade works provide flexibility for a range of future scenarios for the scheme. They maintain our ability to progress redevelopment in future, subject to a positive final investment decision. They also contribute to managing risks on ageing assets to ensure the scheme can continue to operate safely and reliably into the future.



Above: An aerial view of the downstream tunnel portal of the Lake King William tunnel that will commence construction in early 2024. The 1km tunnel will link the new intake at Lake King William to a future new water conveyance. Site rehabilitation is now underway.

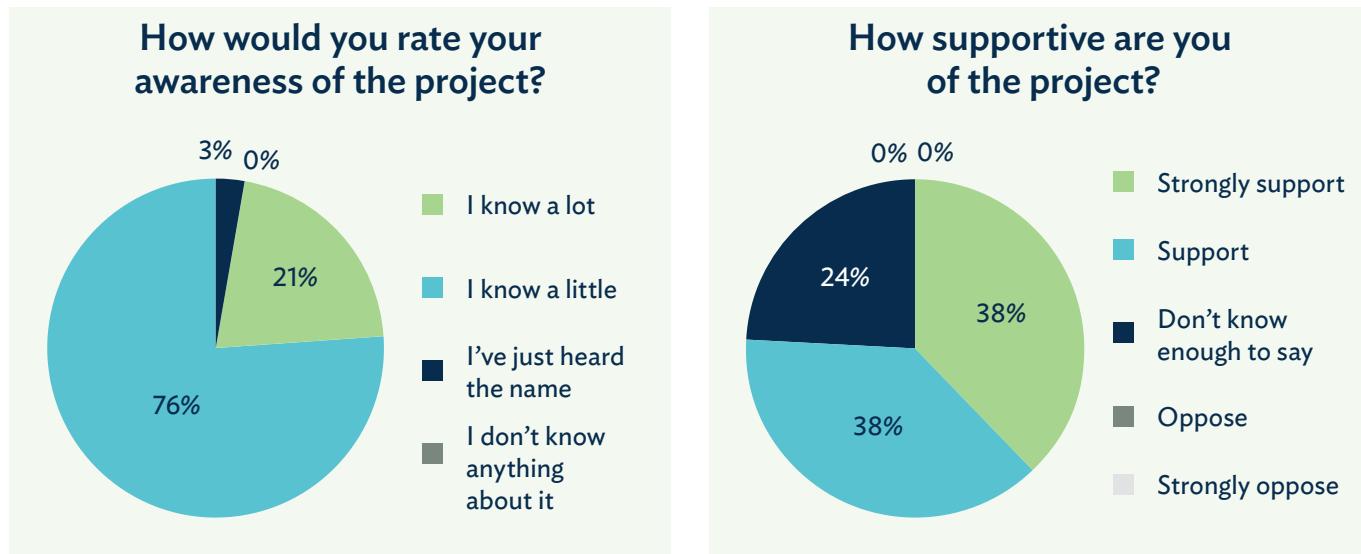
Community input on Tarraaleah redevelopment welcomed

Major projects can have positive and negative effects on people and communities. We want to better understand community perceptions about the proposed redevelopment and what any concerns might be. This allows us to better manage impacts and realise the many opportunities that major projects can bring.

Our team has been out in the community hosting information sessions and meeting service providers and local interested groups. We also sought your views through our community survey, which focused on what was valued about the local area and future benefits and opportunities.

Here is what we found from over 30 respondents to the survey.

Awareness of, and support for, the project



Most respondents either knew 'a little' or 'a lot' about the proposed redevelopment. This translated to the majority supporting or strongly supporting the project. Nearly a quarter of respondents didn't feel they yet knew enough to indicate their level of support. Our team will continue to provide community updates to help raise awareness of what is proposed. There were no responses opposing the project.

What is valued about Tarraaleah and the region?



We asked survey respondents to rate the importance of different characteristics of the place and the region to their way of life. Respondents valued a safe road network as the most important attribute to their way of life, followed by the natural environment (lakes, rivers, forest) and access to lakes for recreation (equally).

Generally, respondents who lived locally placed higher value on attributes such as access to employment and business opportunities, and a sense of community. Those from outside the Tarraaleah area placed higher value on historic association with hydropower schemes, access to lakes for recreation, the natural environment, and peace and tranquility.



Benefits and opportunities

The survey asked about potential benefits and opportunities of the project. Respondents commonly recognised opportunities for job creation and economic growth in communities around Tarraleah and in Tasmania. An increase in hydro energy generation in Tasmania was identified as a benefit. Opportunities for developing tourism, heritage and recreational experiences were identified, including the potential for improved access for fishing.

Respondents also identified opportunities for improved public access to current recreational and historic and cultural heritage areas around the site.

Concerns about the project

Respondents were most frequently concerned about potential access restrictions for recreational purposes such as fishing. Concerns around environmental impacts such as biodiversity, visual and cultural heritage impacts were raised. Traffic and road safety, opportunities for locals, and economic impact also emerged as concerns.

Expectations of Hydro Tasmania

The survey asked people to comment on expectations they may have of us in developing the project. The most commonly expressed expectation is that we will protect (and potentially improve) the natural environment, preserve visual amenity and heritage values, and deliver economic value.

Other commonly expressed expectations included traffic and road management, maintenance of access and recreational opportunity, and adequate consultation.



What now?



Thank you to those who completed the survey!

We still want to hear from you. If you missed the survey, or want to chat further, please get in touch.

In early 2024, we will host a series of community drop-in sessions and discussion groups. This will provide an opportunity for further input into how we identify and manage social, economic and environmental values across the region.

What's ahead?

Our Social Impact Assessment (SIA) will support the next phase of our engagement activities. Through the SIA, we identify the project's social and economic impacts and opportunities using:

- existing published data
- studies we have commissioned (such as traffic)
- information gathered from the community about what is valued in the region, their way of life, any concerns and the opportunities ahead.

The SIA supports our approvals processes with State and Local Government authorities and identifies any potential negative social, economic, and environmental impacts and concerns alongside potential benefits and opportunities.

The SIA is a key input into our Social Impacts Mitigation Plan (SIMP), which details how we will manage negative impacts and build on opportunities. The SIMP provides another chance for the community to have a say on the project.

One of the opportunities we are progressing is a local benefit sharing action plan, and we will involve the community in identifying ways that we can leave a legacy from this project well into the future.





Update on environmental approvals

In March 2023, the project was referred to the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for review under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This referral was open for public comment during April.

In May, the project passed through the first step in the process, which is determining if it is a 'controlled action' under the Act. This was confirmed, which means the project will require assessment and approval under the EPBC Act before it can proceed. Three controlling provisions were determined:

- World Heritage properties
- National heritage places
- Listed threatened species and communities.

Further information on these provisions is currently being prepared. It will be assessed alongside the original referral information before the final decision is made. Many of the social, environmental and economic studies we are currently completing can now be aligned to the information requested by DCCEEW.

While the public comment period has closed, you can still view the referral on DCCEEW's EPBC Act public portal ([Project Decision · EPBC Act Public Portal \(awe.gov.au\)](https://www.epbc.gov.au/project/decision)). You can continue to provide comments and have input into the project as we progress the SIA and SIMP processes, as outlined on the previous page.

Upgrade works – Environmental Effects Report

The upgrade works at Lake King William are to prepare for construction of a new water intake and connecting tunnel, to meet up with a future new water conveyance.

Preparatory works underway didn't require further assessment by the EPA under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1993* (EMPC Act).

The next package of work required preparation of an Environmental Effects Report (EER) which provides information about the environmental impacts of the proposed works and how these will be addressed. This includes:

- construction of a new intake structure
- completion of the approach channel within Lake King William
- excavation of a new tunnel to link the intake and the downstream tunnel portal
- crushing and screening of up to 40,000 m³ of excavated material.

Erosion and sediment run-off have been identified as potential environmental impacts from this next stage. Other possible impacts relate to noise and air quality, stockpile management, wildlife impacts and managing hazardous substances.

We take our environmental stewardship seriously. We expect that with the implementation of mitigation measures, there will be minimal environmental impacts from the works.

Get in touch with us!

t 1300 360 441 | **f** +61 3 6230 5363 | **e** contactus@hydro.com.au | **w** www.hydro.com.au

