



## Project Overview

Seqwater is upgrading Noosa's Lake Macdonald (Six Mile Creek) Dam as part of its Dam Improvement Program to ensure the dam continues to function safely during extreme weather events while providing long-term water security benefits for the local area.

The Lake Macdonald Dam Improvement Project will involve building a new spillway and reconstructing the existing earth embankments to meet modern engineering and dam safety standards.

The new dam will reduce risks associated with extreme weather events, achieve regulatory compliance, and ensure the continued reliability of this water source for the Sunshine Coast region for years to come.

## Community Engagement Overview

Seqwater released the project concept design and undertook targeted engagement with adjacent residents and stakeholders in January 2024. In February and March 2024, Seqwater held four drop-in community information sessions:

- Tuesday 13 February - Cooroy
- Monday 19 February - Cooroy
- Saturday 2 March - Pomona
- Tuesday 19 March - Cooroy

The community information sessions were promoted in a newsletter that was distributed to around 5,000 properties, emailed to around 580 recipients on the project database and promoted on social and local media, attracting the following interactions:

- 84 attended the information sessions
- 5 phone calls received
- 36 emails received
- 12 directly adjacent properties doorknocked
- 238 Facebook post engagements
- 34 Instagram post engagements
- 1,153 average reached on LinkedIn

Throughout this community engagement, eight key themes were raised.





A common theme raised was **traffic** impacts, particularly along Lake Macdonald Drive.

Residents shared with the project team concerns around the speed and route of both heavy and trades vehicles, as well as dust impacts. Feedback noted that many pedestrians use the local roads, due to footpath limitations, and safety is an understandable priority for those who live locally.

Seqwater and the construction contractor, John Holland, take safety seriously and traffic management and short-term speed reductions will be in place where required. All drivers will need to adhere to the speed limits and traffic laws, and this will be monitored regularly.

The construction contractor will also undertake necessary road surface treatments throughout the project.

In accordance with the Queensland Coordinator-General project conditions, the project heavy vehicle haul route will be along Lake Macdonald Drive. Access to the project site via utility vehicles from the east along Collwood Road will be necessary at times, regardless of the preferred transport route. Dust mitigation measures will also be in place.



A number of local contractors attended the sessions to enquire about **work opportunities** on the project.

The contractor is required to adhere to the *Queensland Procurement Policy 2023* and implement a local buying program. They will source suppliers and materials locally, where possible, to help support businesses in the region. Details of interested parties who have already enquired have been provided to the contractor. The project is expected to support up to 150 jobs throughout construction.



Residents raised feedback around potential **noise** impacts from works, including traffic and truck braking, concrete batching, excavation and rock piling.

Every effort will be made to minimise impacts on the local community and environment while work is undertaken.

The project team will be in contact with those residents who are directly affected throughout the project to advise of noise impacts in advance.

Construction activities will include, but are not limited to, demolition works, heavy vehicle movement, concrete batching and pouring, rock breaking, drilling, piling, excavation and stockpiling of raw materials. There will be times of weekend and nightworks for time critical construction activities, which we will be sure to notify the nearby residents of beforehand.

More information about mitigation measures will be provided once construction staging and schedules are completed and Seqwater will keep the community updated as the project progresses.



**Project timing** and the length of the project was raised, as there has been an extension to the original timeframe proposed.

Seqwater acknowledges the five-year construction timeframe is longer than advised in 2019. The change to the construction timeframe is mainly due to the change in construction methodology with a larger coffer dam being built to allow the worksite to be pumped out and creating a dry working environment so that the dam wall construction work can be carried out with less disruption from heavy rain. The temporary coffer dam will also allow more water to be maintained in Lake Macdonald during construction than originally proposed, ensuring water security for the region. More water in the lake will also minimise environmental impacts and maintain recreation access to the lake during construction.



Stakeholders were interested to know where **construction materials** will be sourced and concerned around traffic impacts in relation to this.

The construction contract has been awarded to John Holland, who is responsible for engaging quarries for the delivery of the project. Procurement of suitable quarry materials will occur in 2024, with suitable quarry locations from the region approached to tender. John Holland is required to adhere to the Queensland Procurement Policy 2023 and implement a local buying program. They will source suppliers and materials locally, where possible, to help support businesses in the region. Any supplier selected will have project management plans and construction impact mitigations in place.



The management of **aquatic flora and fauna** was raised, particularly around the relocation of fish and preservation of significant vegetation in and around the lake.

As part of the planning and delivery, Seqwater has undertaken extensive environmental investigations focusing on protected plants, important habitats, waterway environments, and significant local species. This has helped to inform reduced water levels, locations to avoid around Lake Macdonald, where possible, and any mitigations needed during construction. Seqwater is committed to minimising and mitigating any impacts. An environmental management plan will be in place during construction, which outlines the measures required. Some fish species will need to be relocated due to the reduction in lake level. All relocation will be delivered by expert fish biologists, via a purpose-built fish transport vehicle to Cooloolabin Dam.



**Lake lowering** was a common theme raised during discussions with attendees discussing the previous proposal to drain the lake during construction. People raised concerns about impacts to flora and fauna if the lake was to be drained, and the closure of recreation sites.

Seqwater has worked to minimise environmental impacts from this project, with a revised construction methodology that will see more water retained in the lake than the previous proposal. To ensure water supply security and to minimise environmental impacts, Seqwater will only undertake minor lake lowering of the lake, approximately 2 metres lower than full supply height. This will be achieved via the construction of a cofferdam, which will act as a temporary dam wall. Recreation, including fishing and use of non-powered watercraft, will still be permitted on the lake. However, due to its location near the cofferdam, the fishing platform at the Botanic Gardens will be closed during works. The water treatment plant will still operate and environmental flows will be maintained to help mitigate impacts to downstream flora and fauna.



Residents who live close to the dam were interested to know **construction mitigation** would be in place to help mitigate project impacts such as noise.

Seqwater recognises that the construction of this project will have an impact on the community and we are committed to ensuring we minimise impacts where possible and meet any legislative and regulatory requirements. Seqwater is working with John Holland on the construction methodology and the likely effects of the works and will have mitigation measures in place.

More information about mitigation measures will be provided and Seqwater will keep the community updated as the project progresses.

## Next Steps




Seqwater would like to thank everyone who participated in the community information sessions for the Lake Macdonald Dam Improvement Project. Seqwater has considered the feedback and is committed to ensuring this is incorporated into project development wherever possible and will continue to liaise and engage with Noosa Shire Council and the State Member for Noosa on project updates.

Seqwater is continuing to work with the construction contractor, John Holland, to finalise the construction methodology and schedule and obtain final project approvals ahead of major works commencing. Seqwater and its contractor are committed to ongoing community engagement as the project progresses.



To stay up to date on the project and find out about future engagement opportunities, sign up for project updates on the project web page by scanning the QR code.

## CONTACT US

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