4. Consultation

Table of contents

4. Consultation i
4.1 Overview 4-1
4.2 Public consultation 4-1
4.2.1 Consultation approach 4-1
4.2.2 Aim and objectives 4-1
4.2.3 Integration of consultation program into Project EIS 4-2
4.3 Stakeholder identification and involvement 4-4
4.3.1 Project stakeholders 4-4
4.3.2 Consultation activities and communication tools 4-5
4.3.2.1 Overview 4-5
4.3.2.2 Landholder communications 4-5
4.3.2.3 Project newsletters and updates 4-6
4.3.2.4 Government agency briefing and meetings 4-6
4.3.2.5 Community information sessions 4-6
4.3.2.6 Project contacts 4-6
4.3.2.7 Project website 4-6
4.3.2.8 Advertising 4-6
4.3.2.9 Feedback form 4-9
4.3.2.10 Stakeholder database 4-9
4.4 Consultation outcomes 4-9
4.5 Future consultation with stakeholders 4-11
4.5.1 Consultation on the EIS 4-11
4.5.2 Consultation following completion of EIS 4-11
4.5.2.1 Stakeholder engagement plan 4-11

Table index

Table 4-1 EIS consultation stages and timeframes 4-3
Table 4-2 Project stakeholders 4-5
Table 4-3 Summary of newsletters and updates 4-7
Table 4-4 Summary of paid advertisements and public notices 4-9
Table 4-5 Summary of key issues raised by stakeholders 4-10

Figure index

Figure 4-1 EIS consultation activities and communication tools 4-2
Figure 4-2 Integration of EIS and SIA consultation processes 4-4

4.1 Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the public consultation process undertaken for the Lower Fitzroy River Infrastructure Project (Project). The consultation approach and objectives are outlined and stakeholder identification, consultation activities and communication tools are discussed. Consultation outcomes and proposed future consultation activities following the completion of the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) are also described. This chapter addresses the consultation requirements of Part C of the terms of reference (ToR) for the EIS, supported by Appendix F.

4.2 Public consultation

4.2.1 Consultation approach

A public consultation program was undertaken as part of the Project environmental impact assessment. The overall approach to public consultation was guided by the core values and principles of the International Association of Public Participation. A Consultation Plan was developed to guide effective and timely delivery of the consultation programme. The Consultation Plan identified:

- A framework for the implementation of consultation and communication activities
- Key stakeholders including government, industry and communities
- Roles and responsibilities for communication and consultation
- Communication protocols
- Reporting and feedback arrangements.

The consultation program has been ongoing since 2008 and will continue through the EIS and beyond (as necessary and applicable). To assist in undertaking these consultation activities, a variety of communication tools were developed to facilitate two-way flow of information between the Project team and stakeholders and assisted in capturing stakeholder feedback throughout the environmental impact assessment process, as depicted in Figure 4-1.

Appendix F provides further detail on the consultation program undertaken for the Project.

4.2.2 Aim and objectives

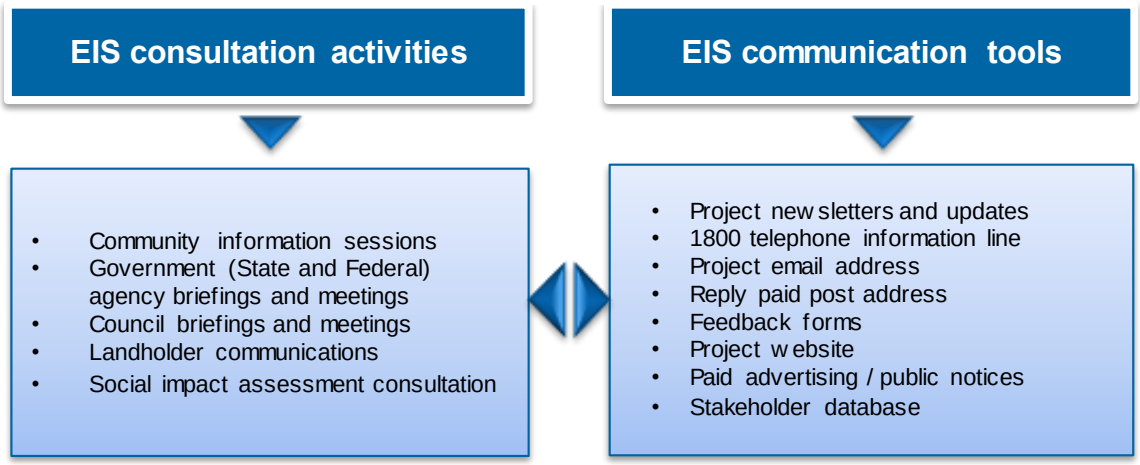
The aim of the public consultation program was to enable a structured process to facilitate open, meaningful and accountable public consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders during the preparation of the EIS for the Project.

The aim was supported by the following objectives:

- To build awareness and understanding of:
  - The need for the Project
  - The investigations required for the business case
  - The potential impacts and benefits for industry, government and the community.
- To provide opportunities for stakeholders to contribute in a meaningful way to the Project's investigations and assessments and to understand how this input was considered
- To manage stakeholder issues and expectations including what was and was not negotiable

- To enhance existing stakeholder relationships established by the Proponent and contribute to the overall objectives of the Project.

Figure 4-1 EIS consultation activities and communication tools



4.2.3 Integration of consultation program into Project EIS

The public consultation program commenced in late 2008 and was phased in line with key EIS milestones, namely:

- Phase 1: Scoping and planning
- Phase 2: Draft EIS development
- Phase 3: Public exhibition and release of the draft EIS
- Phase 4: Evaluation and EIS finalisation.

The sequencing of consultation activities is shown in Table 4-1.

This program will continue in 2014 and 2015. Of particular significance is the integration of the consultation program with the social impact assessment (SIA) in order to:

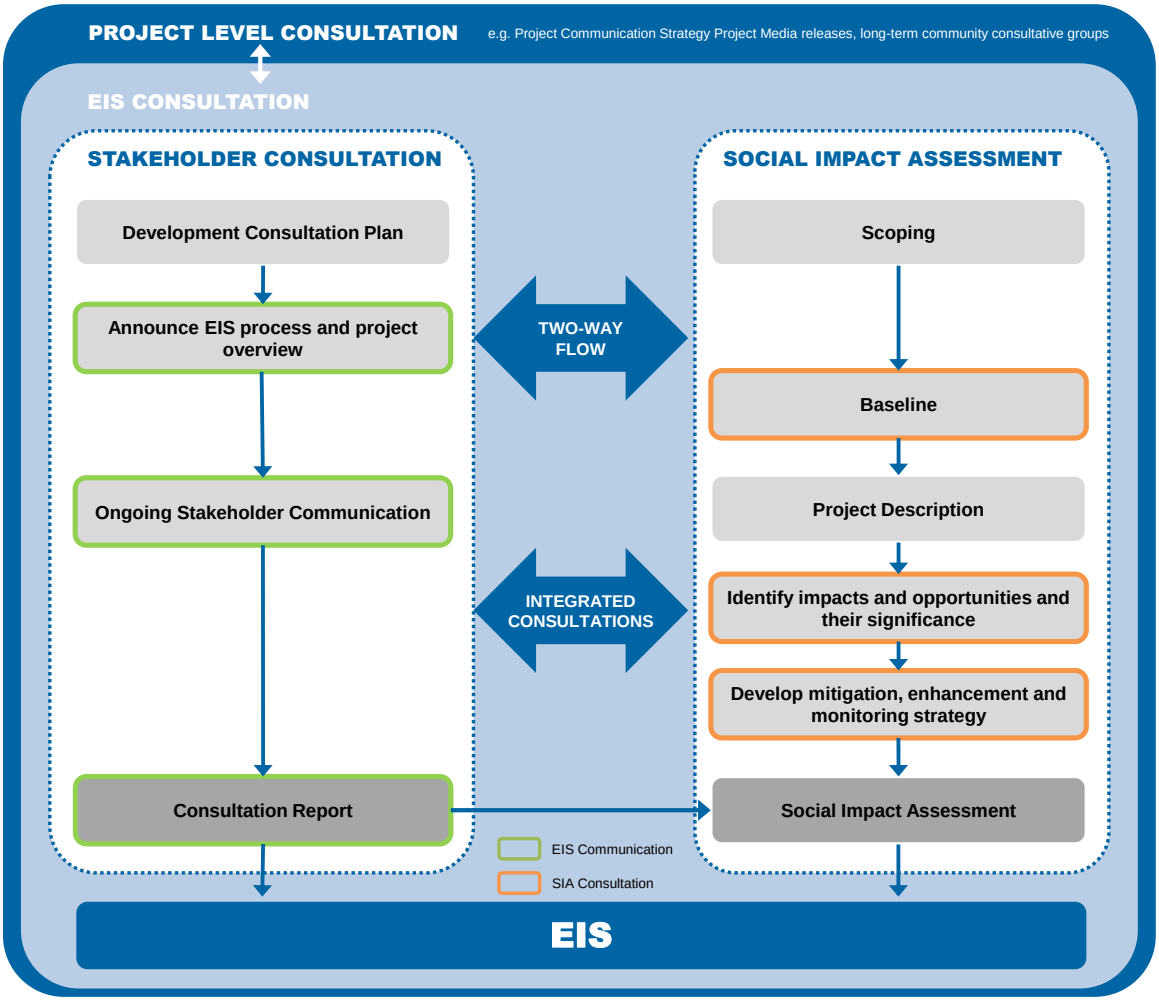
- Avoid potential duplication and consultation fatigue among stakeholders involved in both the broader EIS consultation and social research for the SIA
- Enable cross-pollination of the EIS consultation and SIA processes based on stakeholders information and feedback.

The SIA involved targeted stakeholder consultation to inform the social baseline study, identification of impacts and development of appropriate management strategies. Figure 4-2 depicts the integration of EIS and SIA consultation process.

Table 4-1 EIS consultation stages and timeframes

Period	October 2008 – August 2009	August 2009 – June 2015	Q3 2015	Q3 – Q4 2015
Phase	Phase 1 Scoping and planning	Phase 2 Draft EIS development	Phase 3 Public exhibition	Phase 4 Evaluation and EIS finalisation
Summary of Activities	• Identification of stakeholders and establishment of stakeholder database • Issue/risk assessment • Preparation of information materials (including website, 1800 number and reply paid post facilities) • Consultation plan preparation and approval (internal) • Preparation of land access protocols, media protocols etc.	• Production and distribution of Project newsletters and updates • Maintain website, 1800 number and reply paid post facilities and stakeholder database • Stakeholder briefings • Landholder meetings • Community information sessions • Management of enquiries and media relations	• Production and distribution of Project newsletters and updates • Maintain website, 1800 number and reply paid post facilities and stakeholder database • Community and agency information sessions • Management of enquiries and media relations	• Close out activities • Production and distribution of Project newsletters and updates • Maintain website, 1800 number and reply paid post facilities and stakeholder database • Consultation evaluation • Public notification of EIS assessment outcomes
Regulatory consultation requirements	Consultation plan	Prepare consultation report for the draft EIS	Public display of draft EIS Community information sessions and regulatory agency briefings	Prepare response to draft EIS submissions as directed by Coordinator-General requirements

Figure 4-2 Integration of EIS and SIA consultation processes



4.3 Stakeholder identification and involvement

4.3.1 Project stakeholders

A stakeholder list was initially developed based on desk-based research using the internet, documentation and previous consultations held by the proponents and State agencies with regard to the Project. This stakeholder list was expanded through ongoing stakeholder identification as part of the implementation of the consultation program. Table 4-2 provides a summary list of the Project stakeholders. Detailed stakeholder lists are provided in Appendix F.

Table 4-2 Project stakeholders

Stakeholder category	Stakeholders (non-exhaustive)
Internal stakeholders	
Project partners	SunWater Limited and Gladstone Area Water Board Boards, Executive Management Teams, Project Control Group and Project Technical Committee
GHD and sub-consultants	Project Manager, assessment teams, consultation team, sub-consultants
External stakeholders	
Federal Government	Departmental ministers, elected representatives, Government departments and authorities
Queensland Government	Departmental ministers, elected representatives, State departments and authorities
Local Government	Rockhampton Regional Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council, Gladstone Regional Council, Livingstone Shire Council
Community and business	Directly affected landholders, local residential areas, environmental groups, local business, industry/peak bodies, community/interest groups, cultural heritage representatives, health and educational institutions, recreational groups, media, utility service providers, Gladstone Fitzroy Pipeline Project

4.3.2 Consultation activities and communication tools

4.3.2.1 Overview

A number of communication techniques have been used to engage stakeholders in the consultation program. To date, approximately 8,800 newsletters have been distributed, workshops and briefings have been held, including 250 telephone discussions and 52 face-to-face meetings, and three community information sessions hosted where people could 'drop in' and talk to the Project team. Feedback forms have also been used and all stakeholder feedback, both positive and negative, was recorded in the Project stakeholder database. This database facilitated effective tracking of stakeholders engaged and ensured timely responses to enquiries.

4.3.2.2 Landholder communications

Land liaison officers were engaged to liaise with landholders in regard to voluntary access for field investigations and commencement of discussions to inform potential land acquisition processes. One-on-one meetings were conducted to discuss perceived and likely actual impacts, and specific issues and mitigation measures with landholders that may be directly affected by the Project, including flooding or inundation.

In addition to consultation with the land liaison officers, landholders were also engaged as part of the overall public consultation program to facilitate opportunities to provide input to the EIS and SIA investigations. A landholder survey was distributed to all landholders who may be directly affected by the Project. The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding of how the proposed Project may impact on the people living in the area. Eighteen landholders provided responses to the survey.

4.3.2.3 Project newsletters and updates

Project newsletters and updates were produced at key stages to provide the community and other stakeholders with information about the Project and EIS process and how they could participate in consultation activities. Table 4-3 provides a summary of newsletters and updates.

4.3.2.4 Government agency briefing and meetings

Briefings to State and Commonwealth government agencies have been ongoing since Project inception. In addition, a number of meetings were held with specific State government departments as well as a number of key interest groups. The proponent continues to liaise directly with relevant local governments. Further, the Project team meets monthly with the Office of the Coordinator-General with Department of the Environment representatives and invited State agency representatives attending as necessary.

4.3.2.5 Community information sessions

Three community information sessions were held during Phase 2 (Draft EIS development) of the consultation program. Invitations to the information sessions were advertised in newspapers, through Project updates and via the Project website. Letters of invitation were sent to directly impacted landholders.

Community information sessions were based on a 'walk through' format, allowing people to 'drop in' over a four-hour period, to talk to members of the Project team and review information and maps relating to the Project and the EIS. Community information session dates and times were aimed at providing participants with flexibility around work and family schedules. The Project team took notes of discussions with attendees where possible and informed attendees were able to provide feedback in writing via feedback forms available in hard copy or via the website or email address.

4.3.2.6 Project contacts

At Project inception, a Project-specific email address, freecall telephone line, reply paid postal address and website were established. Communication and contact channels provide platforms for stakeholders to obtain Project information and provide valuable feedback. These contact channels will be maintained throughout the EIS process.

4.3.2.7 Project website

A Project website was established to provide stakeholders with an accessible portal to obtain information about the Project, including a Project description and maps showing the study area, the EIS process, relevant legislation, planned consultation activities and Project contact details. The website is updated periodically to reflect Project progress and key milestones and to provide Project updates.

4.3.2.8 Advertising

Paid local newspaper advertising was undertaken by the proponents to inform stakeholders of the community information sessions held in 2009. Separately, advertising of re-issued draft ToR in 2014 has been undertaken by the State and further advertisements will inform the community and stakeholders of the release of the draft EIS for public comment and community information sessions associated with the public exhibition period. Details of the advertisements are provided in Table 4-4.

Table 4-3 Summary of newsletters and updates

Timing	EIS milestone	Newsletter focus	Distribution
Newsletter Spring 2009	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	Introduction to project in the form of a six-page colour newsletter to inform the community and other stakeholders about the Project and EIS participation opportunities	Mail-out to wider community, stakeholders, affected land owners and available via the Project website
Update 1 Summer 2009	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• Feedback on EIS from community and other stakeholders • Notification of activities going forward	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders registered on Project database and available via the Project website
Update 2 Autumn 2010	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• Project referral to Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities • Notification of endorsement of Aboriginal parties to develop Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) • Establishment of a Fishway Design Team	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders registered on Project database and available via the Project website
Update 3 Summer 2010	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• Feedback Project activities and progress • Submission of CHMPs to Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs for approval • Update on State and Commonwealth's EIS approval pathways and submission of Initial Advice Statement	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders registered on Project database and available via the Project website
Update 4 Summer 2011	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• Update on State EIS approval process, specifically the declaration of the Project as a 'coordinated project' under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (Qld) • Notification of release of draft ToR	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders registered on Project database and available via the Project website
Update 5 Autumn 2013	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• General update on Project activities and legislative framework • Notification of activities going forward and participation opportunities	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders registered on Project database and available via the Project website

Timing	EIS milestone	Newsletter focus	Distribution
Update 6 Summer 2013	Phase 2 – draft EIS development	• General update on Project activities and the legislative framework • Notification of activities going forward and opportunities for participation	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders as registered on the Project database, including agencies (approximately 300 distributed) and available via the Project website
Update 7 Winter 2013	Phase 2 –draft EIS development	• Update on legislative framework. • Notification of the re-issue of the draft ToR	Mail-out to affected landholders and stakeholders as registered on the Project database, including agencies (approximately 300 distributed) and available via the Project website
Update 8 *To be confirmed*	*Phase 3 – Public exhibition*	• *Notification of the release of the draft EIS for public comment* • *Promote community feedback opportunities including the process for making a submission on the draft EIS and details of Community Information Sessions*	*Direct mail-out to affected landholders and key stakeholders (approximately 330)* *Available via the Project website*

Table 4-4 Summary of paid advertisements and public notices

Publication	Dates	Details of advertisement
Rockhampton Morning Bulletin	Saturday 4 October 2009	Introduction to the Project Contact details for the Project Community information session dates, times and venues
	Wednesday 27 October 2009	Public notice of the intent to develop CHMPs for the Project pursuant to Part 7 the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (Qld) (ACH Act)
	Saturday 12 November 2011	Issue of the draft ToR for the EIS
	Saturday 19 July 2014	Administrative process: re-issue of the draft ToR for the EIS
Rockhampton and Fitzroy News	Wednesday 7 October 2009	Introduction to the Project Contact details for the Project Community information session dates, times and venues
	Wednesday 28 October 2009	Public notice of the intent to develop CHMPs for the Project pursuant to Part 7 the ACH Act
The Courier-Mail	Saturday 12 November 2011	Issue of the draft ToR for the EIS
The Australia	Saturday 12 November 2011	Issue of the draft ToR for the EIS
	Saturday 19 July 2014	Administrative process: re-issue of the draft ToR for the EIS

4.3.2.9 Feedback form

A feedback form was developed and included in Newsletter Spring 2009, and made available at community information sessions and via the Project website. Hard copy feedback forms could be (and can still be) returned using the reply paid address. To date the Project has received 49 completed and returned feedback forms.

4.3.2.10 Stakeholder database

A stakeholder database (using web-based software known as Consultation Manager) has been maintained for the Project to record all consultations and contacts undertaken with the community, key stakeholders and landholders. As the central Project database, the program has been, and will continue to be progressively updated and used to monitor and report enquiries, issues and team responses across all Project interfaces. The database was used to identify issues and potential social impacts which have informed the development of the EIS and compilation of the SIA.

4.4 Consultation outcomes

The Project has maintained a consistent approach to responding to enquiries through an approved set of key messages related to the Project scope and the EIS process. This section presents public consultation findings for the Project. The feedback received has informed:

- Project design decisions
- The SIA and development of mitigation and management measures

- EIS technical studies and the environmental management plan.

Key themes raised throughout the consultation program are highlighted in Table 4-5. Where applicable, the issues have been addressed in the EIS, or referred as relevant to third parties.

Table 4-5 Summary of key issues raised by stakeholders

Consultation results	
Themes	**Key issues**
Access	• Loss of and/or disruption to access at a local and regional scale, that is private property accesses and crossings, and loss of access within the Rockhampton Regional Council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads road network • New and/or alternative access arrangements • Land access protocols during field surveys and site investigations and concerns with regard to weed management, opening and closing of gates, conflicts with property activities such as mustering, and so on
Consultation/ engagement	• Time, location and format of community information sessions
Environment	Impacts to flora and fauna as a result of the Project including: • Impacts of the project and potential cumulative impacts on aquatic faunal communities (including fish, fish habitats and fish movement) at the site and up and downstream of the site (nursery habitats, estuarine and near coastal aquatic communities, water quality, flow regimes and diversities) • Impacts on significant natural vegetation communities and proposed mitigation/management measures e.g. offset strategy • Impacts on the Fitzroy River turtle including impacts to flow regime, habitat and nesting sites • Invasive weed risks due to large area of still water and increased potential for algae blooms
Landholders	• Compensation and/or acquisition related to Project impacts • Loss of viability of property and/or operation • Loss of stock water • Cattle bogging • Diminished access to property and/or facilities • Opportunities, such as ability to log forestry material
Project design	• Development options and alternatives • Associated infrastructure and/or impacts to other infrastructure, such as existing water storages, roads and causeways
Water related matters	• Impacts on downstream floodplain wetlands on the Fitzroy River • Impacts on hydrology including changes in flow patterns at the site and downstream of the site and changes in flood regimes including frequency and during of floodplain and wetland inundation • Effect of proposal on water quality during construction and operation • Effects of the proposal on sediment transport and deposition and potential resulting erosion • Increased flood risk • Recreational use of the river and ponded areas • Impacts on water allocations (now and into the future)

4.5 Future consultation with stakeholders

4.5.1 Consultation on the EIS

Once approved for release by the Coordinator-General the draft EIS will be released for public comment with the following being undertaken:

- Public notices in local newspapers, information on the Project website, distribution of a Project Update and notification of key stakeholders (how) providing details about:
  - Timing of the public comment period
  - Locations where the draft EIS can be viewed
  - How to make public submissions.
- Agency briefings and community information sessions.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, feedback will be considered by the Coordinator-General and, if a supplementary report to the draft EIS is required, response to this feedback will also be presented.

4.5.2 Consultation following completion of EIS

Engagement with stakeholders is an important component to managing and monitoring the potential impacts and opportunities of the Project. Stakeholder consultations will continue throughout the Project and following the completion of the EIS.

The Project is likely to be staged, with sequencing and timing dependent on a number of demand triggers including existing and new consumers, drought conditions and security of supply requirements. The Project will be implemented by way of a flexible strategy to allow the rapid delivery of water to meet anticipated future demands, when triggered.

Investigations and preparations, including the EIS, are currently being carried out for the Project to facilitate construction of the Project within three years of a trigger. Whilst it is not yet known when the trigger for this Project will occur, the proponent will continue to consult with landholders and key stakeholders to ensure that they remain informed of the progress of the Project and are adequately prepared for the development proceeding when triggered.

Outlined below is a framework for maintaining an open dialogue with landholders and key stakeholders throughout this 'holding period' until the Project development is triggered.

4.5.2.1 Stakeholder engagement plan

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be prepared which focuses on building the relationships established during the EIS consultation and maintaining the lines of communication during the 'holding period' and until such time as a Project trigger is realised.

The proponent will work with affected landowners and other stakeholders to develop suitable communication approaches. It is intended that contact with landholders in particular, as well as other stakeholders, will be coordinated and a single point of contact provided.