

# Somerset Dam Improvement Project

## Community Engagement Summary



### Project Status

Seqwater is upgrading Somerset Dam as part of its Dam Improvement Program to ensure the dam continues to function safely during extreme weather events and complies with modern engineering standards and safety requirements, while providing long-term water security benefits for the region.

The Somerset Dam Improvement Project is currently in Detailed Business Case (DBC) stage, which upon completion will inform the design for the main dam upgrade. While this detailed planning is underway, Seqwater has identified an opportunity to undertake Early and Enabling Works which will commence in 2025.

### Community Engagement

Through July and August, Seqwater distributed a newsletter and held five community information sessions to update the community about the project. The information sessions were formatted as drop-in sessions, allowing the community to stop by any time during each event to speak to the project team and have their questions answered.

The community information sessions attracted a total of 122 attendees. Key themes discussed during the sessions have been summarised overleaf with focus areas broadly relating to the project scope and potential construction impacts.

Feedback provided during the sessions is being carefully considered by the project team during planning phase activities. The Early and Enabling Works and future main dam upgrade head contractors will be responsible for developing the project management plans, which will outline how the contractor plans to mitigate construction impacts. The head contractor will also receive a list of local contractors who have registered their interest in the project for potential work opportunities. To register your interest, visit the project website.

### Next Steps

Seqwater would like to thank everyone who participated and provided feedback on the project. More information about the project and potential impacts and proposed mitigations will be provided as the project progresses.

Seqwater looks forward to continuing to engage with the recently reformed Community Reference Group and Somerset Regional Council in 2025.

To stay up to date about future engagement opportunities, sign up for project updates on the Seqwater website by scanning the QR code.

### CONTACT US

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The information sessions facilitated constructive discussion and the feedback provided will be carefully considered during the project planning phase. Key themes from the sessions are outlined below.

### Construction impacts



Comments were received around noise, dust and vehicle movements in the area, especially along Esk-Kilcoy Road. Stakeholders also requested additional information about how Seqwater plans to ensure any impacts on the local environment are minimised.

Upon appointment, the head contractor will consider feedback provided and ensure mitigation strategies are outlined in project management plans.

More information on potential impacts and mitigations will be shared as the project progresses and Seqwater looks forward to keeping the community informed.

### Project timing



Considerations around project timings were raised including potential impacts on water security, tourism and the livelihoods of locals during construction.

Through late 2022 and early 2023 Seqwater determined that Early and Enabling Works were required to progress immediately to support the project and represent the first major step of the dam improvement work. These works are planned to begin in 2025.

The timing of the main dam upgrade is subject to the completion of the Detailed Business Case. Seqwater will keep the community informed as this progresses.

### Work opportunities



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

The head and Early and Enabling Works contractors are 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 will be provided to the head contractor, once appointed. The project is expected to support up to 150 jobs throughout construction.

### Flood mitigation



Across all the information sessions, flood impacts and mitigation was front of mind for many attendees. Given the varied locations of the sessions, comments were raised by both upstream and downstream residents.

The main opportunity identified for upstream communities was that raising the wall could increase water or flood storage.

In comparison, downstream communities were interested in if raising the dam wall could heighten the risk of flooding during weather events when water is released from Somerset Dam into Wivenhoe Dam.

Most stakeholders recognised the connection between the Somerset and Wivenhoe Dams.

### Community Reference Group



The community information sessions attracted several former CRG members as well as new community members interested in joining a reformed CRG. This has now been completed.

The reformed CRG held its first meeting in November 2024 and is designed to provide the community with an opportunity to better voice their concerns, disseminate project information and contribute to aspects of the project planning, particularly in relation to legacy projects.

### Project scope



Community members were interested to understand what the Early and Enabling Works involved and how this would support the main dam upgrade planned for this site.

Overall, attendees were supportive of the Early and Enabling Works and understand these works need to be delivered regardless of the outcomes of the DBC currently underway for the main dam upgrade.