

Mount Rawdon Pumped Hydro Project

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Mount Rawdon Pumped Hydro (MRPH) newsletter. We hope that this provides you with a timely update on activities, including where we are up to with our environmental baseline studies and stakeholder engagement, plus what's next for the Project.

Our website has also been updated, designed to provide easy navigation and quick access to Project information. It will be regularly updated with Project information, including opportunities for public consultation and has a link for queries and feedback regarding the Project.

The Mount Rawdon Gold Mine has produced over 2.0 million ounces of gold over the last 22 years. While Mount Rawdon is reaching the end of its mining life, operations are set to continue but for an entirely different purpose.

The vision is to convert Mount Rawdon into an 80-year renewable asset as a low-cost, large scale pumped hydro power station to support Australia's renewable energy and job plans. Mount Rawdon is set to be a 2,000 megawatt pumped hydro storage facility providing firm capacity operation.

The MRPH Project is being developed by a joint venture between Evolution Mining (via Mount Rawdon Operations Pty LTD) and ICA Partners. A feasibility study is currently underway and due for completion by early 2024. The MRPH Project is designated a coordinated project by Queensland's Coordinator General.

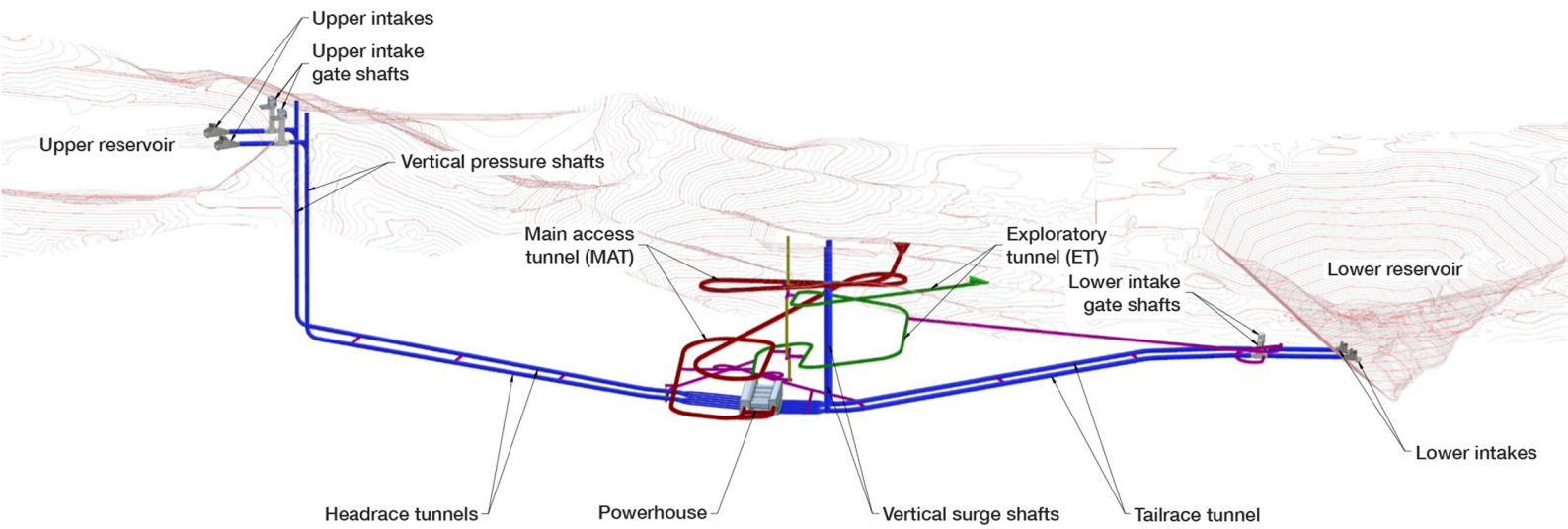
Environmental Impact Statement Progress

The Project is currently preparing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which is guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) required for the Project. You can view the ToR here: <https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/coordinator-general/assessments-and-approvals/coordinate-d-projects/current-projects/mt-rawdon-pumped-hydro-project>

The EIS is informed by the scientific, geological, engineering, environmental, economic and community studies that have been completed for the Project.

Following the submission of the draft EIS to the Queensland Government, the public will be invited to provide comment on the EIS and the Office of the Coordinator General (OCG) will consider these comments in preparing its assessment report. The EIS is anticipated to be available for public review and comment in early 2024.

Overall, the project remains on track for a Project Go decision in the second half of 2024.



Isometric layout of the underground tunnelling for the Project

A History of Tunnelling

There will be over 15 kilometres of lateral tunnelling and approximately 2.5 kilometres of vertical tunnels required for the Project, much of it through hard granite rock. The main water way tunnels will each be 8 metres in internal diameter and constructed using drill and blast techniques.

Tunnelling is not new to the region with the heritage listed Boolboonda Tunnel in Mount Perry celebrating its 140th anniversary on the 12th of November 2023. Back in those days, the drilling of the 192 metre tunnel through hard rock was advanced by mechanical means, including boilers and air compressors for drills.

Construction technology has advanced significantly since the late 1800's, and the MRPB Project will be utilising advanced machinery and techniques, but methods are essentially the same as those employed over 140 years ago.

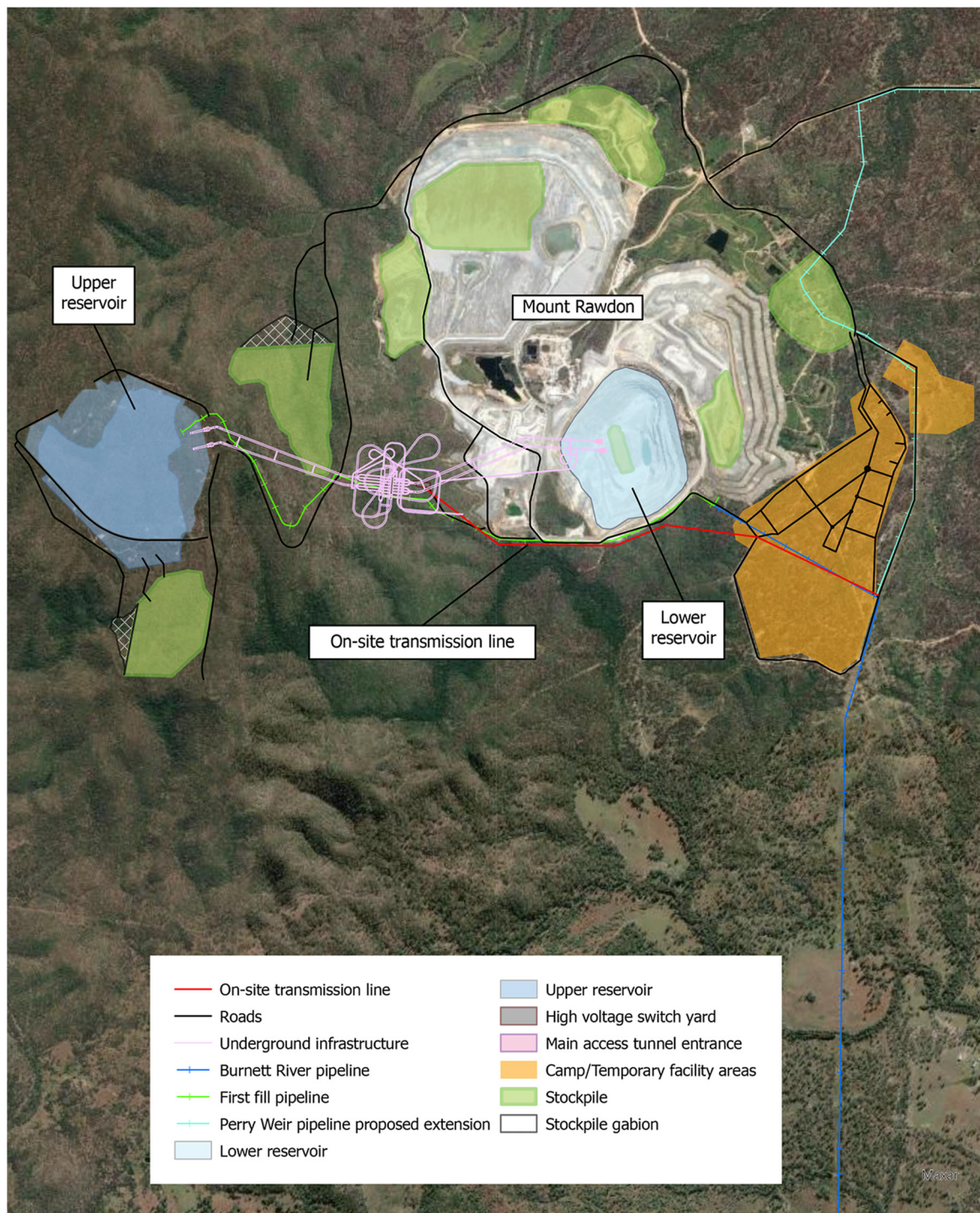


The heritage listed Boolboonda Tunnel in Mount Perry (Photo by Bundaberg Now)

Project Layout

Engineering and environmental studies have continued to gather extensive information needed to finalise the Project layout. This is an iterative process, based on the results of studies and stakeholder engagement, and one that will continue to be refined as the final studies are completed for the Project.

Since the June newsletter, further studies into the location of the access road to the upper reservoir have been undertaken. The southern access roads have been removed from the Project layout due to impacts on cycads (*Cycas megacarpa*) which are listed as Endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act), and the lowland rainforest of subtropical Australia threatened ecological community which have been identified through flora and fauna studies. The main access tunnel has also been relocated to avoid impacts on the threatened ecological community and cycads. The stockpile locations (both temporary and permanent) have also been selected, maximising the use of already cleared areas from mining activities. Further work has been undertaken to refine the location of the construction village and associated workshops.



Current and Upcoming Activities

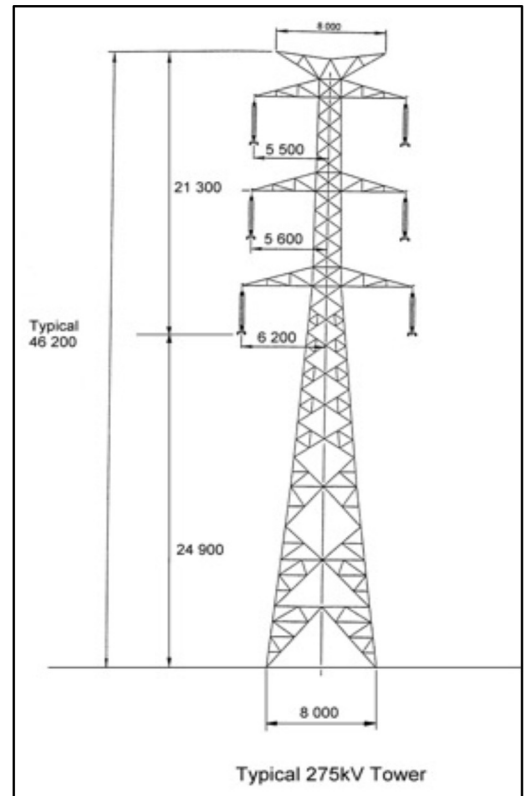
Since the 5th newsletter issued in June 2023, the Project has made significant progress towards the completion of technical studies.

These studies are important to help ensure the Project has a detailed understanding of all possible impacts so these can be managed well. The Project is confident that there is no risk to the flora and fauna and the studies support this. Specific studies have included:

Visual Studies

Two site visit field trips were undertaken during September and October to visit public spaces, as well as properties along the transmission line corridor. The aim of the visits was to investigate the likely visual impact of the transmission line. Outputs from the study will be used to inform the final transmission line alignment.

A visual impact assessment report has been prepared to address how these impacts will be avoided, managed, or mitigated. Mitigation measures to reduce visual impacts include consideration of the transmission line design, such as circuit design, tower design and treatment (i.e., pre-dulling of hot-dip galvanised steel sections or painting), and landscape screening (i.e., landscape plantings designed to screen or filter views). The EIS and future newsletters will include photomontages of what the view of the tower and transmission line could look like, from the view of a number of neighbouring properties.



Typical transmission line tower design

Terrestrial Ecology

Ecological surveys have been regularly conducted between November 2021 and October 2023 at the pumped hydro energy storage site, as well as along the transmission line. This work has helped to shape the project layout design demonstrated on page 3. For example, the southern access road has been removed from the project layout due to its impact on the lowland rainforest of subtropical Australia threatened ecological community as well as the impact on cycads (*Cycas megacarpa*). The various options that were looked at for a southern approach to the upper reservoir could not avoid the threatened ecological community or the significant number of cycads, therefore it was removed as an option. The main access tunnel was also relocated to avoid impacts on the threatened ecological community and cycads.



Australian lungfish eggs observed by the field team

Aquatic Ecology

Surveys and sampling of the aquatic sites along the transmission line corridors have been completed for the late dry season. The aquatic sampling sites include small waterways, many of which are currently dry, and large permanent pools along the Perry River. The survey recorded twenty species of fish (including the Australian lungfish (*Neoceratodus forsteri*)), three species of turtle (including the white-throated snapping turtle (*Elseya albagula*)) and one species of mammal – a platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*).

The Australian lungfish is recognised as a species that predates dinosaurs with fossils dating back to the Devonian period approximately 380 million years ago. At one site large adults, juveniles and eggs were collected during the sampling event which demonstrates a self-supporting population.

Five white-throated snapping turtles were recorded from three sites along the Perry River. High quality nesting habitat was also identified. Feral pigs were also found which are considered to be the greatest threat to this species. All individuals recorded were large (possibly as old as 100 years) suggesting the destruction of nests by feral pigs has severely impaired the population.

Additional Studies

Assessments of a range of studies have been completed, often including physical surveys and/or modelling, and are in the final stages of reporting. This includes groundwater assessment, traffic assessment, air quality, economic, greenhouse gas, noise, landform design, flooding, and reservoir water quality and water balance.

The Project is progressing well with studies being close to completion and the draft EIS expected for submission to the Queensland Government before the end of the year. The Project will continue to support stakeholders and the community through the generation of jobs, regional economic development and reliable and lower cost electricity for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Community Information Evenings

Evolution Mining hosted a community information evening in Mount Perry on the 9th June, 2023. Representatives from Evolution Mining and the MRPH Project gave presentations and updates on the Project, followed by a Q&As session. This provided the opportunity for interested community members to ask questions about the Project and raise any concerns which will be considered in the EIS.

The Project will be hosting a community information evening in Gin Gin on the 31st October, 2023 to present Project information and to provide an opportunity for the community to give feedback on the Project. The Project is also planning to hold another community information evening in Mount Perry before the end of the year.

Project Website

The Project website has been updated, designed to provide easy navigation and quick access to Project information. The website will be regularly updated with Project information, including opportunities for public consultation and has a link for queries and feedback regarding the Project.

Head to our website below for more information about the Project:

<https://mtrawdonhydro.com.au/>

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