

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 363

asked on Wednesday, 27 March 2019

MR D LAST ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the preliminary business case on raising the Burdekin Falls dam—

Will the Minister advise (a) the progress of the preliminary business case, (b) whether there are any barriers to raising the dam above the 2m to 6m or 14.6m assessed in the study, (c) whether Building Queensland has been engaged to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and (d) the date the preliminary business case will be completed?

ANSWER:

The Burdekin Falls Dam wall raising preliminary business case was approved by Sunwater in October 2018.

Sunwater has determined that further investigations are required to validate some of the assumptions in the preliminary business case, such as further environmental field studies, and an expression of interest process to determine the service need for dam wall raising options.

Raising the dam wall by two metres was considered when the dam was originally constructed; raising the dam wall by six metres would be more complex.

The preliminary business case determined that raising the dam wall by 14.6 metres is unlikely to be viable due to significant environmental and social impacts, and substantial costs. This option would likely cost over \$1.5 billion and, while it would generate a significant yield of 1500 gigalitres, the additional supply would exceed any foreseeable demand in the near to medium term.

If Sunwater progresses the project to the detailed business case stage, it will be referred to Building Queensland, and Sunwater will undertake the environmental impact statement work.

An updated and more detailed business case addendum report to the preliminary business case is currently being prepared and a decision to proceed to the detailed business case is expected by mid-2019.