

'Queensland waterways for waterway barrier works' mapping

Changes to western Queensland waterways

Background

Waterways provide critical habitats for fish and ensure they can move freely throughout Queensland waterways. This is essential to maintain healthy fish populations, biodiversity and the ecological integrity of wetlands. Waterways provide many benefits to our community and are part of what makes Queensland a desirable place to live.

Development within Queensland waterways that may limit fish movement is known as 'waterway barrier works' and may require a development approval to proceed.

The *Queensland waterways for waterway barrier works* mapping reflected in the Development Assessment Mapping System (DAMS), helps development applicants and landowners to identify the location and features of waterways so they can determine if they need a development approval or can use accepted development requirements.

Amendments to version 3 of the Queensland waterways mapping have removed or reclassified approximately 150,000 km of mapped waterways to significantly reduce fish passage requirements – including the removal of approximately 47,000 km of overland flow paths.

Version 3.1 of the mapping includes the following changes:

- The Condamine-Balonne, Moonie and Border rivers drainage basins currently mapped as eastern waterways will be reclassified as western waterways.
- Only major channels of braided waterways will be classified as purple (major risk) in all western Queensland drainage basins. Other channels will be classified as red, amber or green or not mapped at all, and works in these channels will not require a development approval.

NOTE: There are no changes to waterway mapping in the remaining eastern drainage basins.

For more information about how these changes may affect your development, refer to the frequently asked questions below.

Frequently asked questions

Pre-lodgement advice received

- 1. I have already received advice about my development and how it relates to waterways and waterway barrier works? Do I need to seek further advice?**

Despite the mapping changes, any previous advice provided relating to the requirements for fish passage in a development application remains the same. These changes do not affect existing ground truthing and advice discussions.

- 2. I have questions about advice provided before the mapping update was released. Who do I contact?**

If your question relates to an accepted development requirement notification or advice provided by Fisheries Queensland about waterways, email planningassessment@dpi.qld.gov.au. If your question is about a development proposal and/or pre-lodgement advice provided by SARA, contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#).

Development application or notification submitted

- 3. I submitted a development application based on the version 3 mapping as it showed my development as assessable, but the waterway is not displayed in version 3.1. Do I still need a development approval?**

The removal of the waterway in the updated mapping means it is no longer classified as a waterway for waterway barrier works. If your works now meet the [accepted development requirements](#), you can undertake them as accepted development. If you wish to withdraw your application, contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#) to discuss the process and any refund that may be applicable.

- 4. I submitted a development application based on the version 3 mapping as it showed my development as assessable, but the version 3.1 mapping reduces the category from purple to red. Can I proceed under accepted development requirements instead?**

If your works now meet the [accepted development requirements](#), you can undertake them as accepted development. If you wish to withdraw your application, contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#) to discuss the process and any refund that may be applicable.

- 5. I submitted a development application based on an amber waterway classification and paid the relevant fee, but the updated mapping now classifies the waterway as green. Do I get a refund for the difference?**

Contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#) to discuss.

- 6. I submitted a notification to undertake accepted development works based on the version 3 mapping, but the waterway classification has changed in the version 3.1 mapping. Do I need to resubmit my notification?**

If you have already submitted a notification of accepted development works in accordance with the previous version 3 mapping, these works are authorised and you do not need to resubmit your notification.

Works underway or about to commence

7. If I have a development application under assessment by the State Assessment and Referral Agency, but the waterway has been removed in the version 3.1 mapping. What can I do?

If a waterway is no longer mapped in version 3.1, it is no longer considered a waterway for waterway barrier works. Contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#) to discuss your options.

If the waterway has been reclassified to a colour with fewer requirements, the works may be able to be undertaken under [accepted development requirements](#) (ADRs). Email Fisheries Queensland at planningassessment@dpi.qld.gov.au to confirm if the works meet the ADRs.

If the works do meet the ADRs, you can withdraw your development application and undertake the works in accordance with the ADRs.

If the works are still considered assessable development, your application is still valid and will continue to be assessed.

8. Is there a transitional period for the use of this updated mapping?

Transitional arrangements are not needed as this mapping update provides greater clarity about fish passage requirements for the development of waterway barrier works in the western drainage basin areas.

Works completed

9. I have completed works based on the version 3 mapping, but the waterway classification has changed in the version 3.1 mapping. Do I need to re-do my works?

If you have already undertaken accepted or assessable development works in accordance with the previous version 3 mapping, these works are authorised and you do not need to re-do them.

Mapping anomalies

10. I don't agree with what is mapped in the updated version. How can I get advice on waterways and waterway barrier works for my project?

The mapping is for guidance purposes and should be used in conjunction with the [user guide](#), which contains information about common mapping anomalies and what to do if you find one.

If you still need help, seek advice early in the planning process prior to undertaking detailed onsite investigations. Advice based on a desktop assessment of the best available GIS resources may negate the need to undertake onsite investigations or narrow down the areas of interest.

For advice about the mapping or accepted development requirements, email Fisheries Queensland at planningassessment@dpi.qld.gov.au.

For advice regarding assessable development, contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#).

11. The updated mapping shows a waterway under existing built housing, which could discourage homebuyers from purchase or affect works on the home site. What can I do?

Some waterways are still in the mapping despite no longer being present on ground or having been diverted away from the mapped location as a result of development. This is due to the point-in-time capture of the input data.

Deliberate filling to remove on-ground features of a waterway without relevant approvals is not considered a mapping anomaly. A review of historic aerial imagery can be undertaken to identify when filling of a waterway occurred.

If the filling was undertaken after 18 December 2009, approval for waterway barrier works should have been obtained – if not, there may be a compliance issue.

Email Fisheries Queensland at planningassessment@dpi.qld.gov.au for mapping advice.

12. Will it take longer to ground truth waterways on potential development sites?

No. The mapping update hasn't changed the ground truthing process. The version 3.1 mapping is more accurate and makes it easier to identify waterways. The [user guide](#) provides information on how to interpret the mapping and common anomalies. Generally, desktop analysis is sufficient to determine the presence or absence of a waterway.

There is also up-to-date aerial imagery that can be viewed in conjunction with mapping products, which show the course through which water flows and elevations in the landscape. Advice based on a desktop assessment of the best available GIS resources may negate the need to undertake onsite investigations or narrow down the areas of interest.

Contact your [regional State Assessment and Referral Agency office](#) to obtain pre-lodgement advice early in the planning process for development proposed in locations where waterways might be present.