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14. Social Environment

14.1 Methodology

The Department of Communities submission on the EIS identified the importance of the EIS providing a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the communities affected by the HHI Development. The submission also requested that the associated positive and adverse impacts should be identified along with strategies to mitigate or enhance potential impacts of the HHI Development.

Section 16 of the EIS presents an assessment of the potential associated social impacts and benefits for local and regional communities. A separate economic impact assessment is provided in Section 17 of the EIS.

The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) presented in Section 16 of the EIS provides an overview of the existing social conditions of local and regional communities potentially affected by the HHI Development, including consideration of matters identified in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EIS such as community infrastructure and services, population and demographics, community values and property and housing. Demographic information presented in the EIS was based on the ABS Census 2006 and supplemented with more recent information where available (i.e. population growth, employment and income, housing rental costs).

The SIA also provides an assessment of potential social impacts and benefits of the HHI Development on local and regional communities in accordance with the ToR. This assessment includes consideration of potential construction and operation impacts on property and local businesses, community values and lifestyles, local and regional populations and demographics, employment, housing and accommodation, and social infrastructure. Mitigation measures are also identified to manage potential adverse impacts and enhance or maximise associated benefits for local and regional communities.

14.1.1 Stakeholder Consultation

Several submissions were received on the consultation process undertaken following the release of the EIS in November 2007. These issues have been addressed in **Section 1** of the Supplementary Report and in the detailed consultation report in **Appendix B1**.

14.2 Construction Workforce Housing and Accommodation

Issues were raised in the Department of Housing's (now the Department of Communities) submission on the EIS about accommodation requirements for workers and impacts of the HHI Development on the local housing market. Potential impacts on housing and accommodation during construction and operation of the HHI Development are discussed in Section 16.2.6 of the EIS.

Construction will be staged over a 17 year period with the progressive build up of the workforce over a period of time, in line with the construction period of the HHI Development.

It is estimated that the HHI Development will provide an average of 190 jobs per year over a 20 year construction period, with a peak of about 350 jobs.



It is expected that the majority of the workforce will be drawn from the local region and preference will be given to local contractors. However, additional workers may be sourced from outside the local region, with construction contractors who may be awarded specific components of the development phase. These workers will require both short-term and long-term accommodation. However the numbers of workers constructing the initial development infrastructure (i.e. access road, bridge, power supply) will be small and can readily be accommodated in the local community. When this basic infrastructure is completed the contractors will be able to establish a construction camp on Hummock Hill Island that will be provided with a full range of facilities to the workforce.

As outlined in Section 16.2.6 of the EIS, an accommodation management strategy will be prepared for the construction and operation phases of the HHI Development to ensure that adequate housing is available for workforces and that potential impacts on the broader community are appropriately managed. The accommodation management strategy will be prepared as part of the detailed design phase and in consultation with the Department of Communities.

The strategy will consider the expected housing and accommodation needs of the construction workforce, including the timing of peak construction periods, and the availability of existing accommodation in the region, including short-term tourist accommodation and rental housing. Appropriate accommodation management strategies will be identified. These could include the use of short-term and tourist accommodation, coordination of rental housing and the establishment of a workers camp on Hummock Hill Island. Processes for monitoring the performance of the accommodation management strategy will also be identified.

14.3 Workforce Availability

Issues were raised about the capacity to “up-skill” the local workforce due to demands from other projects and the lead time for involving education and training institutions in the training of the local workforce.

Effects on workforce and employment, including mitigation measures to address existing local skill shortages, are outlined in Sections 16.2.5 and 17.2.4 of the EIS.

The staging of the development phase over a 17 year period and the subsequent progressive build up of the workforce, will provide opportunities for early consultation and communication with local businesses, employment and training facilities about business and employment opportunities and will help facilitate skills development for local residents.

14.3.1 Engagement of traditionally disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups

One submission raised the issues about the need to ensure that traditionally disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups in adjacent communities (i.e. youth, people with disabilities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People) are provided the opportunity to be engaged in construction, maintenance and operation.

As outlined in Section 16.2.5, the preparation of an Employment and Training Strategy will be prepared for the construction phase of the HHI Development. This will include strategies to maximise employment and training opportunities for traditionally disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups (refer Section 16.2.3.1).



14.4 HHI Development Population

The Department of Communities expressed a view that the HHI Development is designed to attract a residential population that in terms of age profile and socio-economic backgrounds that is unlike the communities in the adjoining locality of Miriam Vale. As identified in Section 16.2.3 of the EIS, the implementation of community development strategies will be important to encourage participation by new residents and where appropriate, visitors, in the development of social networks and to build an 'island' sense of community. This could include actively supporting the establishment of sporting clubs and community groups (i.e. arts and culture, environment, etc) and community events (i.e. annual festivals, markets, etc) through promotion, in-kind support, sponsorships or establishment of a community fund. This could also include working with Gladstone Regional Council's Community Development Officer to identify opportunities to conduct existing Gladstone Regional Council programs on Hummock Hill Island, such as at the community centre.

It will also be important to integrate residents of Hummock Hill Island with residents in surrounding communities, including encouraging participation by other local and regional residents in Hummock Hill Island events and activities, to build a wider sense of community and inclusion. This may include participation in existing regional events and activities (i.e. Gladstone Harbour Festival, Gladstone Seafood Festival, Gladstone Annual Show, SUNfest, etc) through sponsorship, displays at community events, or organisation of complementary events (e.g. as part of Gladstone Regional Council's Clean Up Australia Day activities).

14.5 Tourism and Housing Affordability

14.5.1 Affordable Tourism Accommodation

A concern was raised by the Department of Communities about the location of affordable tourism accommodation and proximity to the beach.

Hummock Hill Island has been designed to provide safe and easy access, including for pedestrians and cyclists within the HHI Development and to key facilities. This includes access to the beach from residential and tourist accommodation areas.

14.5.2 Housing Affordability

Some submissions suggested that many people who live in the Miriam Vale Shire have low socio-economic means and that they live in the Shire because housing and accommodation costs are cheaper than in Gladstone and Boyne Island/Tannum Sands. It is also suggested in these submissions that houses within the HHI Development will realise higher prices given their location and that existing cleared land in the Miriam Vale Shire could be used for housing, which is closer to current amenities.

As outlined in Section 16.2.6.1 of the EIS, the greater Gladstone Region is currently experiencing significant housing shortages resulting from increases in population and economic growth in the region. As a result, housing affordability has suffered, particularly for rental housing, leading to the displacement of some existing rental households and increasing levels of housing stress, particularly for people on low incomes.



HHI Development is proposed to provide approximately 2,000 dwellings by 2023, of which approximately 60% would comprise short-term holiday accommodation while 40% would comprise permanent dwellings. The HHI Development will provide a number of dwelling options ranging from affordable units through to high value homes.

Housing on Hummock Hill Island is primarily for use by tourists and to provide accommodation for people who work in the tourism industry. However, the HHI Development would also provide some additional housing that could also be accessed by other residents in the Region.

14.6 Community Facilities

Issues were raised by the EPA (now DERM) about the need for the Proponent to clearly state the likely demands for community services (i.e. human services and emergency services) and infrastructure so that the potential full cost to local and State Governments resulting from the HHI Development is clear.

It is expected that the HHI Development will have a permanent residential population of about 260 people in 2011 increasing to approximately 880 people in 2016 and a maximum of approximately 1,600 people in 2021. Consultation with local community organisations and government agencies (i.e. Department of Communities, Gladstone Regional Council and Department of Community Safety) will be undertaken by the Proponent to identify the likely demand emanating from Hummock Hill Island's population and co-operative methods of addressing local needs.

HHI Development is expected to deliver a range of community facilities which will be accessible to residents of Hummock Hill Island and adjoining communities, who currently lack easy access to these facilities. The community facilities will include a medical centre, emergency services, a public bus service, and a range of recreational facilities. The establishment of these facilities will be developed by the Proponent and then maintained and operated or subsidised by the Proponent until the costs of operation are matched by income from either local government rates and levies or from commercial operation of the facility.

14.6.1 Police Facilities

The Proponent has discussed the provision of policing services to the Hummock Hill Island community with the Queensland Police Service. Presently, Police are stationed at Tannum Sands and have presence at Agnes Water and Rosedale. The Queensland Police Service does negotiate with developers on the issue of providing support to the Service to establish a Police presence within a new development which may include land for a Police Station or for the construction of residences for Police Officers to be based on Hummock Hill Island. Discussions will continue with the Queensland Police Service on this matter, to reach agreement on the provision of Police within the community on Hummock Hill Island.

14.6.2 Educational Facilities

Issues were raised by the Department of Education and Training (previously Department of Education) that the HHI Development would not generate the number of students required to justify a primary or secondary school on Hummock Hill Island and that it was not possible for the State to negotiate over cost-sharing for the opening of a school service in the area.



As outlined in Section 3.3.2.8 of the EIS, a site has been made available for educational purposes. The infant/ primary school site may be established as the population grows and the demand is established. In the interim, the Proponent will establish a bus service to link with existing school bus services to existing schools in the Region. The education site is also intended to include an educational centre that will support research in environmental management and provide facilities for residents and tourists to undertake study programs linked to a major Queensland university. A site has also been identified for a school recreation camp (Section 3.3.3.20 of the EIS) which provides camping and associated facilities and caters for recreational needs with a sporting field and associated ancillary buildings. The site has the potential to maximise the educational opportunities of the natural resources and environment of Hummock Hill Island.

As identified in Section 16.2.7, the potential need for a primary school will need to be determined when the balance between permanent and temporary residents is ascertained. The Department of Education and Training's comments in relation to the establishment of a primary or secondary school are noted.

The submission from the Department of Education and Training also suggested that the planning and location of schools must increasingly be affected by considerations of environmental sustainability and that the approval of residential development in locations remote from areas of existing infrastructure becomes an issue. The Department of Education and Training suggests that while tourism developments generally seek remote areas, permanent populations are ideally accommodated as close to work and existing enabling infrastructure as possible. As such, consolidation, rather than dispersal of development, should be the driver for the location of residential development. In addition, the Department suggests that the locality of Hummock Hill Island is not capable of further expansion (in order to form a new node for further future consolidation), given its location in an ecologically sensitive area.

HHI Development is proposed to be relatively self-contained with a range of employment and services provided for tourists and local residents. The residential component is not proposed as a dormitory suburb for Gladstone, but is primarily to support the tourist facilities and services on Hummock Hill Island.

14.6.3 Health Facilities

Issues were raised in submissions about existing constraints on local and regional health care facilities (i.e. home care services, GP facilities, and hospital services) and the potential for the HHI Development to increase pressure on these health care facilities, particularly if there is a higher than average proportion of people aged over 65 years.

As outlined in Section 16.2.7 of the EIS, when completed, the HHI Development is expected to deliver a range of community facilities, including an access point for family health, income support and home care services. Local social infrastructure is usually planned in partnership between developers, community organisations and local governments and funded through a combination of funds and in-kind support from stakeholders.



As population forecasts for the HHI Development are clarified, consultation will be undertaken with local community organisations and government agencies to identify the likely demand emanating from Hummock Hill Island's population and co-operative methods for addressing local needs. This would include planning for specific services and facilities for older people.

A medical clinic will be developed as part of the broader HHI Development and the Proponent will work with private health care professionals to provide incentives for the establishment of facilities for a general practitioner. In addition, the Resort will provide a level of primary health care support for its visitors.

14.6.4 Recreation Facilities

Some submissions questioned the need for the development of additional recreation facilities (i.e. golf course) in the Region given that a wide range of existing recreation facilities are provided locally and in the broader Gladstone region and that many of these facilities are currently underused or have closed because they were not profitable. Some submitters suggested that residents and visitors could access existing golf courses in the Region including at Gladstone, Boyne Island and Miriam Vale.

A submitter raised the matter of access to the waters around Hummock Hill Island. It was stated in the submission that the waters around Hummock Hill Island are already accessible and that the improvement of boat ramps to the area are not contingent on developing Hummock Hill Island as proposed. The EIS does not suggest that improvements of boat ramps are contingent on developing Hummock Hill Island and the HHI Development will include the construction of boat ramps at Boyne Creek and Colosseum Inlet.

The HHI Development will include a range of recreation facilities including a golf course, sporting fields, public parks, tennis courts, lawn bowls, cycle paths and boating facilities which will primarily support tourist and residential users. These facilities would also be available for use by local and regional residents should they desire to use them.

The recreational facilities would be established, operated and managed by the Proponent for an agreed period as discussed in Section 6.1 of the Supplementary Report. As such, there would be no cost to Gladstone Regional Council associated with the maintenance of the facilities until a rate base is established.

14.6.5 Retail facilities

Some submissions suggested that residents of Turkey Beach would have to travel out of their way to access retail and hospitality outlets on Hummock Hill Island and that there would be no benefit for the Turkey Beach community in using these facilities as the distance would not be much different to Gladstone with less retail outlets offered.

The view of some Turkey Beach residents in relation to the retail and hospitality facilities is noted.

Hummock Hill Island is 45 km closer to Turkey beach than Gladstone and will not require travelling on the main highway. Hummock Hill Island will include a range of retail and hospitality facilities to



support the tourist and residential users. These facilities could also be accessed by residents and visitors to the broader Region should they desire.