

PORT OF AIRLIE MARINA DEVELOPMENT

15. Social Impacts

15.1 Existing Social Environment

15.1.1 Introduction

In order to understand the potential social impacts of the proposed development, a study was undertaken of the existing social environment. Consideration was then given to how the local community could be affected by the development. Impacts have been considered in terms of the whole community as any development of this nature may have a broad social impact. As well, consideration was given to the effects of the development on various key stakeholder groups.

The methodology that was used included an analysis of social statistical data and other resource documents and a stakeholder and community consultation process. The data that was considered was derived from a variety of sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing and the Office of Economic and Statistical Research.

Consultation activities are described in **Section 20**. Matters raised by stakeholders during the consultation process are addressed in this Section.

Further details about who was consulted are attached as **Appendix Q**.

The following social impact assessment report is presented in two sections, namely:

- ❑ The existing social environment
- ❑ Anticipated impacts of the development on the social environment.

15.1.2 Affected Stakeholders

Overview of local community and its character

The Airlie Beach community includes Airlie Beach, Cannonvale, Jubilee Pocket and Shute Harbour. Airlie Beach has a strong focus on tourism, particularly backpacker accommodation, sailing, diving and access to the nearby islands. In recent years, higher quality accommodation has been developed for tourists. The community has benefited recently from an artificial lagoon which enables swimming in all seasons and is very popular with tourists and local residents. Jubilee Pocket and Cannonvale are both growing residential areas with Cannonvale having a more commercial focus. Most government and community services for this area are located in Cannonvale. Shute Harbour is largely a departure point for ferries to the nearby islands.

While there are differences between these communities, there is a strong sense of inter-dependence and cohesion in economic and social terms. As each of these areas grows and expands, the physical distance between these communities is decreasing and a stronger local identity is emerging.

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There is a much stronger sense of difference between the Airlie Beach community as a whole and nearby Proserpine, some 20 minutes away and also part of the Whitsunday Shire. Proserpine has a sugar mill and is the centre of a rural community which has been much less impacted by tourism. Locals talk about the “townies” (Proserpine) and the “beachies” (the Airlie Beach area).

There are also clear and important links between Airlie Beach and the regional centre of Mackay and with the port of Bowen to the north.

There is a general recognition by those interviewed of the changes and growth that have already occurred in Airlie Beach and that the change from a small village to a thriving tourist centre is irreversible. There is a sense of wanting to control future growth and development in a positive way that retains the village atmosphere of the main street, along with a strong commitment to tourism as the main economic driver for the area. No negative feelings were expressed about the intrusion of tourists on the community as their presence appears to be a valued and an integral part of everyday life.

The interest groups that were identified as likely to be most affected by the proposed development are the business community, environmental groups, indigenous groups, education/employment and training services and health/community services. These include non profit, private and government services. Each of these interest groups will be described separately in terms of the existing social environment. Recreation and tourism will be discussed later in this report.

The Business Community

Business interests are represented through tourism groups such as Whitsunday Tourism and the Whitsunday Development Corporation as well as through the more broadly focused Local Chamber of Commerce. The business community is keen to see economic growth in the region and has taken on a strong advocacy role for the community.

There is also a range of business clubs and organisations. For example, for people involved in Tourism there is the SKAL Club. As well, there are broader business organisations serving the community such as Rotary, Lions and Zonta International. The major issues raised by the business community were the potential for economic growth, the negative impacts on business of changes in traffic flow caused by the new bypass road and the effects of the downturn in tourism in the last year. The business activities of the Airlie Beach area are considered in more detail as part of the economic report.

Environmental Groups

As the development involves the reclamation of coastal and intertidal land for the creation of a marina environmental interest groups are affected stakeholders. An environmental group based in Mackay and a several other local people with concerns about environmental impacts attended the Information Day. Particular concerns include loss of seagrass and mangrove and the potential for indirect effects on mangroves and seagrasses in other areas of Boathaven Bay.

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Indigenous Community

The Census data indicates that there are some 70 people of Aboriginal and/or Islander descent living in the area. The Aboriginal people of the Whitsunday Islands were called the Ngaro and also lived on the coastal fringe areas. It is believed that the Ngaro were nomadic and visited the area for short periods of time. A separate report on Indigenous issues was undertaken as part of the Burchill 1998 IAS and has been revisited in **Section 18**.

Education, Training and Employment Services

The Airlie Beach area has access to pre-school, private and government primary schools, a government secondary school in Proserpine and a non-government secondary school (to year10). There is also a TAFE College at Cannonvale.

The schools have a strong focus on future life opportunities, more flexible options and pathways for their students and are closely linked with the TAFE campus at Cannonvale and Bowen.

There are 5 employment services in the area with most located at Cannonvale. Centrelink also operates from Cannonvale. Data which is set out in **Section 15.1.4** indicates that unemployment is not particularly high in the Airlie Beach area and that participation rates are higher than average for the State. However, concern was expressed by various people consulted about a number of issues related to employment:

- ❑ the high level of casual employment with limited career paths. Comment was often made that a lack of training and employment opportunity for young people resulted in many of them leaving the area;
- ❑ high turnover of staff and shortages of skilled staff particularly in hospitality, commercial cooking and in the marine industries;
- ❑ the need for more traineeships to be taken up by local business;
- ❑ access to employment at Airlie Beach was limited for Proserpine residents because of the cost of public transport to Airlie Beach and to the islands in the area.

Health, Community Services and Housing

The Airlie Beach community is serviced through a wide range of services which are mostly located at Cannonvale. These include:

- ❑ a neighbourhood centre and family support service with about 6 staff which has been established for 14 years. It provides family support, emergency relief, limited hours care for children, vacation care and community development programs. The Neighbourhood Centre is funded by the Department of Families.
- ❑ a community health clinic operated by Queensland Health with 13 staff, provides a broad range of services including home and community care, child health, mental health, school health, drug use services, and speech pathology. A visiting social work service is provided through the Proserpine Hospital;
- ❑ a range of child care services, playgroups and a toy library
- ❑ public library
- ❑ a QGAP service – a one stop shop for government services and enquiries;
- ❑ numerous low cost clothing shops operated by volunteers;

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- ❑ police, ambulance and fire services;
- ❑ a mobility access and advisory service;
- ❑ medical and dental services
- ❑ the Volunteer Marine Rescue service;
- ❑ a women's refuge and services for women experiencing domestic violence;
- ❑ housing information and support services.

Some types of service need to be accessed at Proserpine or are provided from a base located in Proserpine. These include:

- ❑ the Proserpine Hospital;
- ❑ the youth and community development service provided through the Whitsunday Shire Council;
- ❑ a Youth Council of about 20 young people for the area (half from Proserpine and half from Airlie Beach) who assist with identifying the needs of young people and appropriate responses;
- ❑ respite care services and paramedical support services;
- ❑ a nursing home at Proserpine;

Mackay is the regional centre servicing this area with community services being provided by a range of government departments including the Department of Families, the Department of Housing, Queensland Health and the Department of Employment and Training. Specialist medical services are also available at Mackay.

All of the services contacted reported that they were busy and had waiting lists. However, additional funding is being provided for new services in the Airlie Beach area including:

- ❑ Support packages for older people to assist them remain in their homes;
- ❑ A grant of \$326,000 for an innovative business mentoring service for young people funded through the Neighbourhood Centre at Cannonvale;
- ❑ A new \$2.5 million dollar Police and Citizens Youth Centre and sporting complex for young people and the community which is described in more detail in **Section 15.1.6**; and
- ❑ Break Even services to prevent problem gambling and assist people affected by gambling.

These new initiatives reflect the efforts of local people to ensure that their community needs are met and also indicates a strong level of investment by the Whitsunday Shire Council in community resources.

Existing Social Issues

The major issues that were identified are:

- ❑ The high cost of living including the comparatively low supply of affordable housing which is supported by the statistical data in **Section 16.1** of this report;
- ❑ The absence of emergency accommodation services other than for women affected by domestic violence;
- ❑ Limited and costly public transport. This was seen as preventing young people from Proserpine accessing training at the Cannonvale TAFE and employment opportunities in the Whitsunday District. It is not possible to travel to and from Mackay from Airlie Beach in a one day period, which limits access to specialist services;

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- ❑ Lack of activities for young people. To some extent this will be offset by the new Police and Citizens Youth Centre and the newly approved business mentoring service. There is some suggestion of exploitation of young people – for example, pornographic photos being taken in exchange for accommodation and food. Poverty and homelessness can occur for those people arriving at Airlie Beach with no personal resources who are unable to find work or access social security benefits;
- ❑ The impact on social services of transient people coming to Airlie Beach needing support and resources;
- ❑ The isolation experienced by families coming to a new area without established social support structures; and
- ❑ Limited access to services and accommodation for people with disabilities or in wheelchairs.

The perception of Airlie Beach as 'paradise' tends to mask underlying social problems that were identified through the consultative process. However, these problems are similar to those experienced in other tourist destinations distant from major regional centres. These issues need to be managed as it is unlikely that they can be eliminated. The Airlie Beach community has a wide range of resources. It has demonstrated its capacity to develop innovative solutions to social problems as evidenced in the new sources of funding acquired.

15.1.3 Demographic Profile

Population

The following statistical data covers the Airlie Beach community, which includes Airlie Beach, Jubilee Pocket, Cannonvale and Shute Harbour. This area equates to the Airlie Beach postal area 4802 unless otherwise specified.

Wherever possible 2001 Census of Population and Housing information has been used. However, only limited information has been released at the local area level at present. 1996 Census data or alternative information for the Whitsunday region has been included when 2001 Census data for Airlie Beach has not been available.

The population of the Airlie Beach community was recorded as 11,477 persons in the 2001 Census of Population and Housing (see **Table 15-1**).

On census night, the Airlie Beach population consisted of 6,554 residents, 2,692 local, intrastate and interstate visitors, and 2,231 overseas visitors.

Australian and overseas visitors comprised a large proportion of the population at 43%. The proportion of overseas visitors at Airlie Beach (19.44%) was ten times the equivalent figure for Queensland and had increased from 13% in 1996.

■ **Table 15-1 Population of Airlie Beach and Queensland – 2001 Census**

	Airlie Beach Number	% of total	Queensland Number	% of total
Counted at home	6,554	57.1	3,359,989	91.9
Local and Qld visitors	1,032	8.9	131,392	3.6
Interstate visitors	1,660	14.5	94,256	2.6
Overseas visitors	2,231	19.4	69,500	1.9
Total Persons	11,477	100	3,655,139	100

Source Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 2001

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Past and Future Trends

Census data indicates that the population of Whitsunday Shire increased from 3,617 persons in 1947 to 18,282 persons in 1996, representing an average annual increase of 3.4 per cent over this period. The greatest increases in population have occurred mainly since 1971. Between 1947 and 1971 (24 years) the population increased by 2,803 persons, while between 1971 and 1996 (25 years) the population increased by 11,862 persons.

Figure 15-1 shows a comparison of the increase in development of Airlie Beach and Jubilee Pocket from June 1970 to November 1996.

Population projections published by the Department of Local Government and Planning in 2001 indicate that the population of the Whitsunday region is projected to increase from 9,676 persons in 1986 to 18,067 persons in 2006, an increase of 86.7%.

Currently the annual average growth rate between 2001 and 2021 is projected to be 2.1%. This may be revised following finalisation of Census data. Preliminary 2001 Census data shows an annual average growth of 2.7% for the Whitsunday region as a whole in the five years to 2001, compared with 1.7% for Queensland.

Age Distribution

While the average age of persons in Airlie Beach is equivalent to the Queensland average age, **Table 15-2** shows the age distribution of the population of Airlie Beach is quite different from the age distribution for Queensland as a whole.

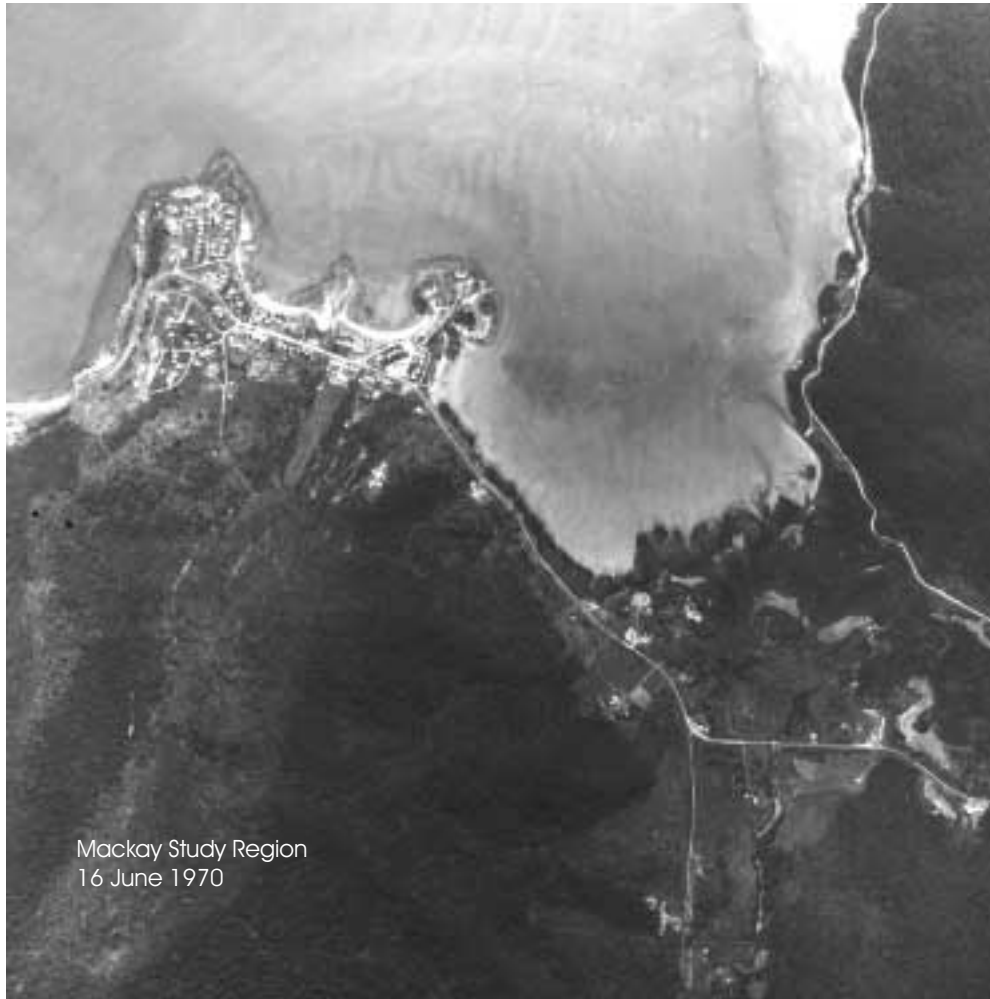
Airlie Beach has proportionally fewer persons under 15 years and 65 years and over.

Table 15-2 and **Figure 15-2** shows the Airlie Beach and Queensland populations, and the comparatively lower dependant population of the Airlie Beach area. Similarly the age distribution of overseas visitors shows a comparatively low proportion of persons under 15 years and over 65 years.

■ **Table 15-2 Airlie Beach and Queensland Population and Overseas Visitors to Airlie Beach**

Age Group	Airlie Beach %	Queensland %	Airlie Beach Overseas Visitors %
0-14 years	12.45	21.1	5.2
15 - 64 years	79.65	66.6	90.3
65 years and over	7.9	12.3	4.3
Total	100	100	100

Source Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 2001.

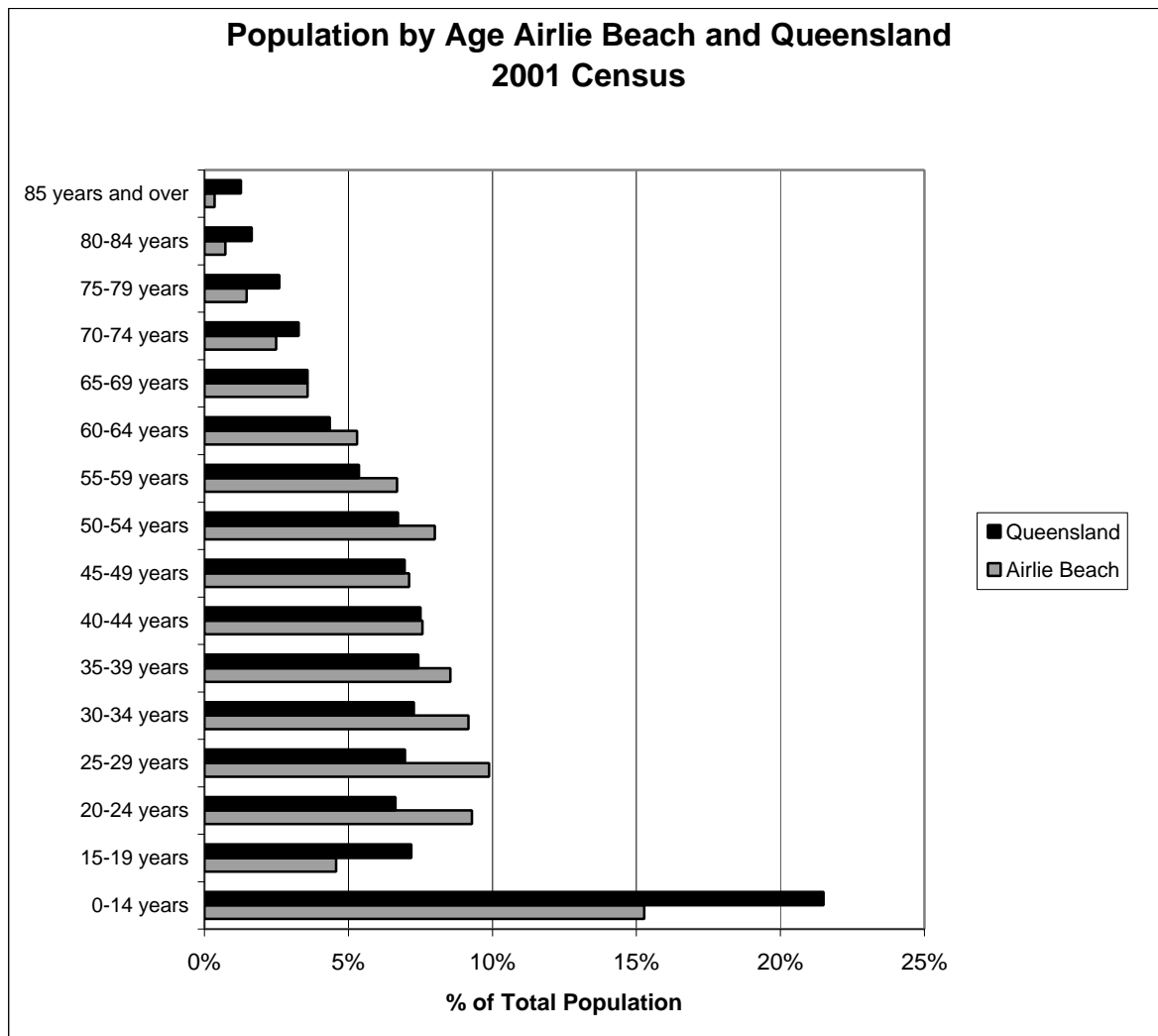


Mackay Study Region
16 June 1970



Prosperine Whitsunday
25th November 1996

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■ Figure 15-2 Age Group as a Proportion of Total Population, 2001 Census

The age profile for the Airlie Beach area shows that there is a higher proportion of persons in the age groups between 20 years and 65 years and a lower proportion in the younger and older age groups. This is quite unlike the trend in most communities throughout Australia and is contrary to anecdotal comments that suggest that the population of the Airlie Beach community is ageing rapidly due to an influx of retired people. This age profile combined with the high level of mobility of residents suggests that this situation, which appears to be influenced by the active lifestyle of residents, will continue into the future.

Gender

In Airlie Beach males outnumber females in every age group from age 25 years to age 75 years. This is again contrary to the trend across Queensland where females outnumber males in almost every age group from 25 years onwards. While construction activity would account for some of this in the younger age groups, the magnitude and attraction of water based employment and leisure activity is clearly a contributing factor.

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Indigenous Persons

At the 2001 Census the total number of Indigenous persons in the Airlie Beach area was 70 or 0.6% of the total population. Some 87% of Indigenous persons were identified as Aboriginal, 9% as Torres Strait Islander and 4% as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Some 64% of the Indigenous persons in Airlie Beach (45 people) were aged 18 years and over compared with the Queensland figure of 54%.

There were 112,772 Indigenous persons in Queensland in 2001, comprising 3.1% of the total population, a higher proportion than for Airlie Beach.

Overseas Born

Airlie Beach has a relatively high number of residents born overseas. Some 77% of Airlie Beach residents were born in Australia compared with 82% of Queensland residents.

Of the 1806 Australian residents who indicated they were born overseas, 714 were born in the United Kingdom, 362 in New Zealand and 104 in Germany. Other countries represented included Netherlands (49), Ireland (46), United States of America (42) and Italy (42). This indicates that the area is somewhat different from the surrounding areas which show higher concentrations of persons of European origin.

15.1.4 Socio-Economic Characteristics

Housing

At the 2001 Census 8,540 persons or 74% of the total population of Airlie Beach were living in private dwellings. This is significantly lower than the Queensland figure of 96% and would reflect the high number of visitors staying in hotel style accommodation.

Overall the occupancy of private dwellings was 2.1 persons per dwelling for Airlie Beach, lower than the Queensland figure of 2.6. Separate houses have a higher occupancy rate of 2.7 persons per dwelling than flats and units, with 1.9.

Separate houses, 1,400, comprise only 38% of the total private dwellings compared to the Queensland figure of 77%. Some 49% of the people in private dwellings were living in separate houses.

Flats, town houses and units comprise 1182 or 32% of the housing stock. Almost 28% of these dwellings were 3 storeys or over. This is an increase on the 1996 Census figure when 15% of dwellings were recorded as 3 storeys or over.

Almost 25% of occupied private dwellings were classified as caravans, cabins, or houseboats occupied by 18% of the population. Not surprisingly the Queensland figure was significantly lower at 3%.

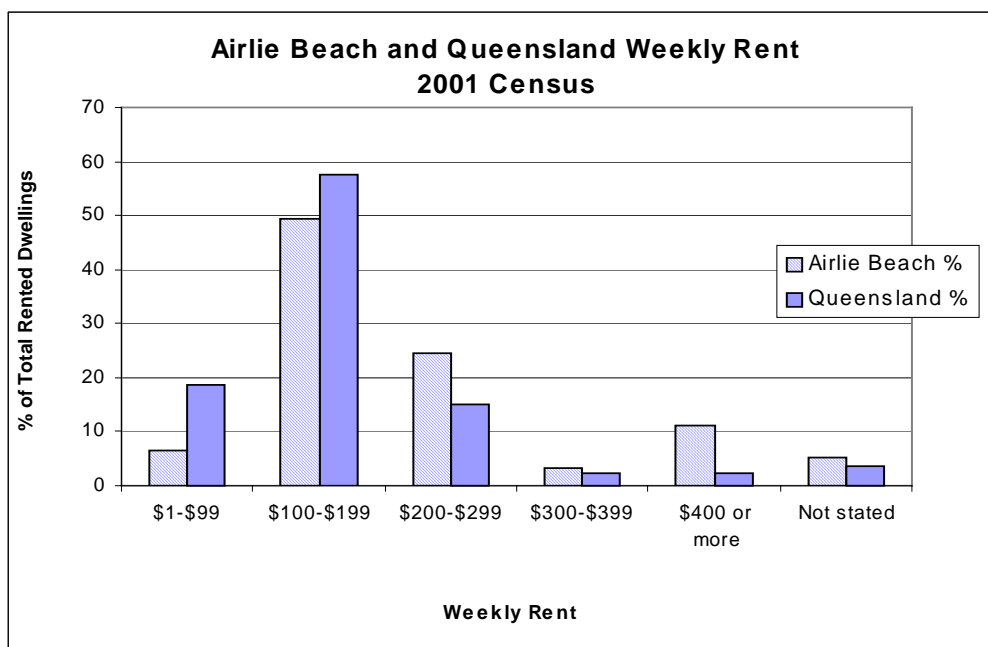
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Rental properties show significantly higher rents paid in Airlie Beach than for Queensland as a whole. While the rent for 18.8% of rented private dwellings in Queensland was less than \$100 per week, the corresponding figure for Airlie Beach was 6.4%.

Weekly rent for almost 77% of Queensland rented properties was less than \$200 per week while the corresponding figure for Airlie Beach was 56%.

The small number of public housing properties (22) reported in the Census is in keeping with the population of the area.

Figure 15-3 shows the proportion of occupied private dwellings being rented in each rent category as a proportion of total rented dwellings.

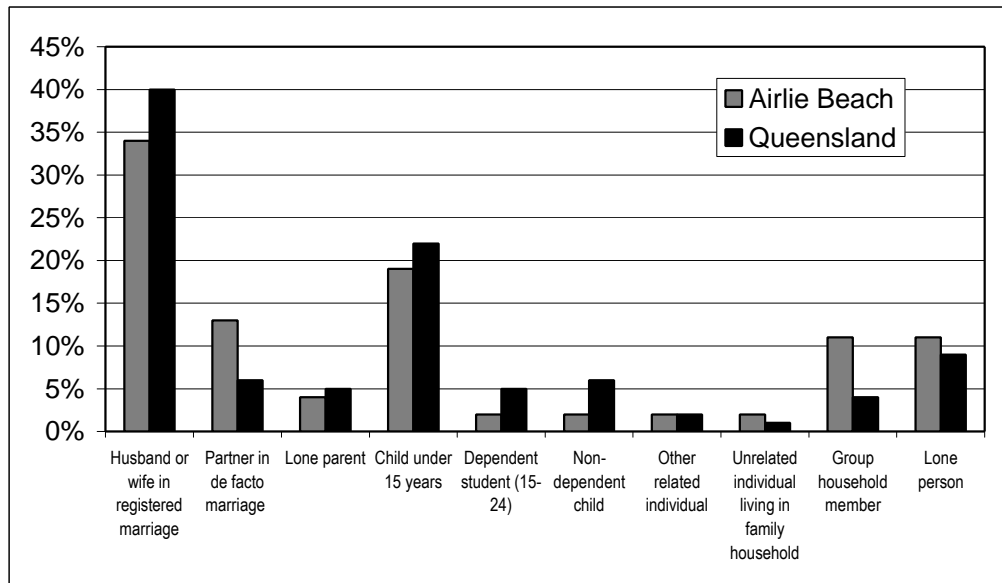


■ Figure 15-3 Airlie Beach and Queensland Weekly Rent 2001 Census

Living Arrangements

At the 2001 Census 47% of the population were living in a registered marriage or de facto partnership. An additional 21% of the population were children under 15 years or dependent students. The remaining 32% of the population included lone parents at 4%; persons living in group households at 11%; and living alone at 11% (see Figure 15-4).

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■ Figure 15-4 Living Arrangements, Airlie Beach and Queensland

Income

The median weekly individual income for Airlie Beach was \$300-\$399 in 1996 with the corresponding figure for Queensland \$200-299. However the median weekly household income for Airlie Beach is the same as for Queensland as a whole, \$500-\$699.

Statistics from the Australian Taxation Office show that the mean taxable income of taxpayers in the Whitsunday region for the 1998-99 financial year was \$28,134. This figure was \$4,224 less than the equivalent Queensland figure of \$32,358.

Labour Force

In the quarter ended March 2002, the unemployment rate for Whitsunday was 6.1% compared to 8.2% for Queensland.

The overall unemployment rate in the Airlie Beach area at the time of the 1996 Census was 8.6% compared with 9.7% for Queensland (see **Table 15-3**). The labour force participation rate for Airlie Beach was 73.9%, higher than the Queensland rate of 63.2%. The Airlie Beach area had 0.4% of the State’s employed persons and 0.3% of unemployed persons. Centrelink figures, for September 1998, show 860 persons on unemployment benefits, 0.4% of the Queensland total of 208,016 people.

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■ **Table 15-3 Employment Status Airlie Beach and Queensland , Census 1996**

	Airlie Beach	Queensland	Airlie Beach as % of Queensland
Employed full time	3,633	955,394	0.4
Employed part time	1,459	418,423	0.3
Total employed ^a	5,165 ⁽¹⁾	1,404,062	0.4
Unemployed	485	150,570	0.3
Labour Force	5,650	1,554,632	0.4
Not in labour force	2,001	906,421	0.2
Unemployment rate	8.6	9.7	..
Participation rate	73.9	63.2	..

(1) Includes not stated.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1996 Census of Population and Housing. Unpublished data, 2001 Geographical Boundaries.

Table 15-4 shows the major occupational categories for Airlie Beach and Queensland at the 1996 Census (2001 data was not available). The largest occupation group reflects the major industry of the area with sales and service workers comprising almost 20% of employed persons. Other large occupation groups included technicians and associate professionals at 15.8%, professionals at 14.4% and tradespersons at 14.0%. There were significantly fewer production workers and labourers than in the State overall.

In the 1996 Census the majority of workers were employed by the private sector (90%).

■ **Table 15-4 Employed Persons by Occupation, Airlie Beach and Queensland Census 1996**

Occupation	Airlie Beach %	Qld %
Managers and administrators	8.3	8.7
Professionals	14.4	15.0
Technicians and associate professionals	15.8	11.5
Tradespersons and related workers	14.0	13.7
Advanced clerical, sales and service workers	3.8	4.0
Intermediate clerical, sales and services workers	19.6	16.3
Intermediate production and transport workers	5.5	9.1
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	8.8	9.5
Labourers and related workers	8.1	9.8
Not stated and inadequately described	1.8	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1996 Census of Population and Housing. Unpublished data, 2001 Geographical Boundaries

Education

The 2001 Census data shows that 1,235 persons in Airlie Beach were attending pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary or other education institutions at the time of the census.

Queensland Department of Education, 2001 Schools Census Data shows that there were 2,413 school students in the Whitsunday region. Some 90.5% of school students attended government schools and 9.5% attended non-government schools. The corresponding percentages for Queensland were 72.5% school students attending government schools and 27.5% attending non-government schools.

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Law and Order

Table 15-5 relates to offences recorded by the Queensland Police Service. Offence rates for 3 years are shown as the number of offences for the Whitsunday area are relatively small which can account for fluctuations in the data.

Rates for *offences against the person* and *offences against property* are comparable with rates for Queensland when considering the relatively small number of offences. The rate for *other offences* was significantly higher than for Queensland as a whole because of the significantly high rate of *drug offences* and to a lesser extent *good order offences*.

■ **Table 15-5 Crime Trends, Whitsunday and Queensland 2000-2001**

	Whitsunday Number	Rate ⁽¹⁾	Queensland Rate ^a
Offences against the person			
1998-1999	131	859	855
1999-2000	152	981	830
2000-2001	150	935	866
Offences against property			
1998-1999	1,078	7,088	8,019
1999-2000	1,218	7,873	8,523
2000-2001	1,348	8,412	8,626
Other offences			
1998-1999	793	5,215	2,834
1999-2000	871	5,635	2,940
2000-2001	778	4,858	2,981

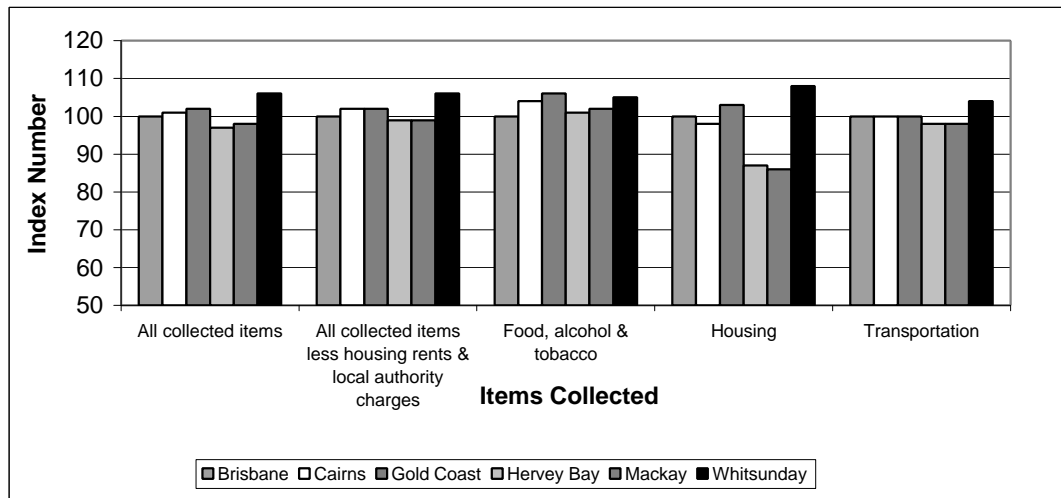
(1) Rates expressed per 100,000 persons Source: Queensland Police and OESR.

Retail Prices

The index of retail prices contains information derived from a survey of regional prices in selected Queensland cities and towns conducted in October 2001 (see **Table 15-6**). The data is expressed in the form of index numbers, which allow comparison on relative retail prices between selected centres and Brisbane at the time of the survey. The price of each item was weighted according to its relative importance to total household expenditure. The index is presented on the basis of Brisbane as a benchmark (Brisbane = 100). The index number for each centre indicates the relative level of prices in that centre compared with Brisbane.

Of the 45 centres surveyed outside Brisbane, 15 recorded prices higher than Brisbane. Thursday Island was the most expensive centre (26% more expensive than Brisbane), followed by Whitsunday (6% more expensive than Brisbane).

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■ Figure 15-5 Index of Retail Prices, October 2001

Figure 15-5 shows that Whitsunday was higher than the other centres listed in almost all categories, with prices 4-8 per cent higher than Brisbane in all categories. This was the case even when housing rents were excluded.

■ Table 15-6 Index of Retail Prices in Selected Regional Centres, October 2001

Centre	All collected items	All collected items less housing rents and local authority charges	Food, alcohol and tobacco	Housing	Transportation
- index number -					
Brisbane	100	100	100	100	100
Cairns	101	102	104	98	100
Gold Coast	102	102	106	103	100
Hervey Bay	97	99	101	87	98
Mackay	98	99	102	86	98
Whitsunday	106	106	105	108	104

Source: Index of Retail Prices in Regional Centre, October 2001 OESR

Building Investment

In the year ended June 2002, there were 232 dwelling units in new residential buildings approved in the Whitsunday Shire. These approvals were valued at \$44.6 million and represented 0.9 per cent of the overall total for the State. The corresponding value for 2001 was \$29.5 million, and \$36.6 million in the previous year.

In the period 1997 to 2001, the value of new residential building approvals increased at an annual average rate of 7.3 %. The value of residential building approvals for Queensland increased at an annual average rate of 3.3 % over the same period.

The value of non-residential building approvals in the Whitsunday Shire in the year ended June 2002 was \$32.0 million. This represented 1.5 % of the value of these approvals in Queensland. The corresponding value for 2001 was \$29.6 million, and \$25.0 million in the previous year.

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In the period 1997 to 2001 the value of non-residential building approvals increased at an average annual rate of 25.0 %. The value of non-residential building approvals for Queensland declined at an average annual rate of 3.4 % over the same period.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Building Approvals, Queensland, (8731.3), 2001 Geographical Boundaries

15.1.5 Social Well Being

What is well being?

The difficulty of measuring well being has been addressed by many agencies including the OECD, the United Nations and the Australian Bureau of Statistics over many years. While there can be no single measure of well being that meets all requirements, the ABS has given primacy to objective measures of well being. Subjective measures can provide an important supplement to objective measures, and for this reason are provided throughout this report.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics, using data sourced from the 1996 Census of Population and Housing, has developed a series of Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). The Indexes use a comprehensive range of variables which have been subjected to a high level of scrutiny to ensure that they reflect what they purport to measure (see **Appendix M**).

Values for these variables from the 1996 Census have been combined to produce an index that allocates a score indicating the relative level of socio-economic advantage or disadvantage in a region. For each index quintiles represent a division of scores such that one-fifth of Queensland's population falls into each category. Thus, an average LGA would have one-fifth of its population in each quintile. The base score is 1,000. That is, the average Australian area will have a score of 1,000, with more disadvantaged areas scoring lower and less disadvantaged areas higher.

Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSED) provides a composite index of the relative socio-economic disadvantage of areas based on variables relating to employment status, income, educational qualifications, housing tenure, Indigenous population and various other related variables. This type of index has been produced since the 1971 Census.

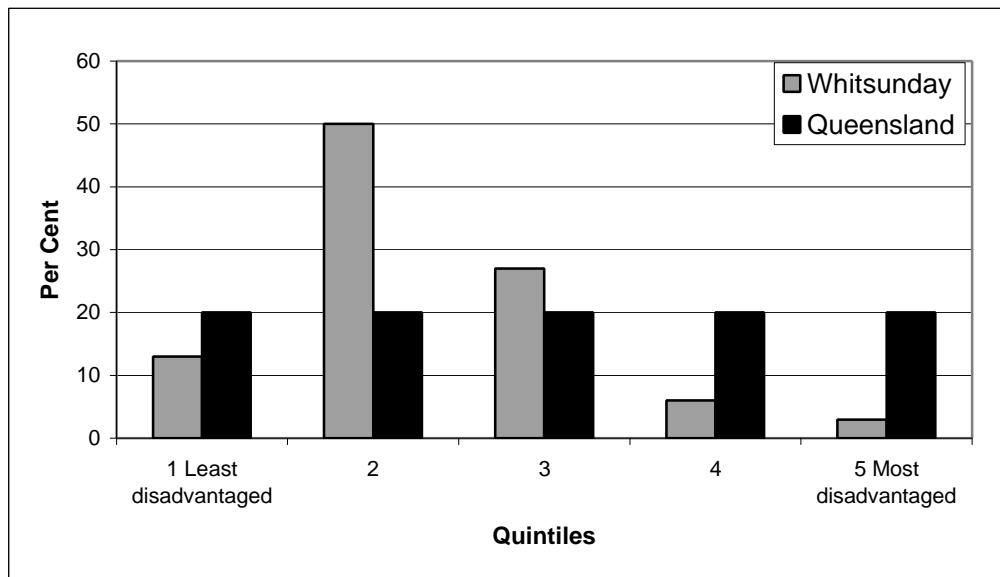
The average IRSED score for Queensland is 989. The IRSED score for Whitsunday is 1014 putting it in the top 20% of Queensland local government areas.

Figure 15-6 shows over 90% of the Whitsunday population were in the 1-3 quintiles population groups – or least disadvantaged groups.

The index reflects the socio-economic well being of an area, rather than that of individuals.

The IRSED is derived from attributes such as income, educational attainment, unemployment and occupations (see also **Appendix M**). For the purpose of this exercise the index gives a useful overall indication of the well being of the area.

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■ **Figure 15-6 Population Distribution by Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage Quintiles, 1996 Census**

Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage

There are two Indexes of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage, one for urban areas and one for rural areas. The variables underlying both indexes are indicators of relative socio-economic well being such as high income, tertiary education, and skilled occupations. A higher score on one of the indexes indicates that an area has attributes such as a relatively large proportion of households with high incomes or a trained workforce.

The score for Relative Socio-Economic Advantage for Whitsunday is 1016 for the rural index and 929 for the urban index. The comparable Queensland scores are 1016 and 980. This can be interpreted as a high level of socio-economic well being for the area. The lower score on the urban index is expected considering the nature of the area in relation to other more highly urbanised centres in Australia.

Index of Economic Resources

The Index of Economic Resources reflects the profile of the economic resources of families within the area. The Census variables, which are summarised by this index, reflect the income and expenditure of families, such as income and rent and home ownership. Additionally, variables that reflect non-income assets, such as dwelling size and number of cars, are also included. The income variables are specified by family structure, since this affects disposable income.

The Whitsunday score on this index 957 reflects the lower proportion of households on high incomes, the relatively high number of households renting and the high rents that they pay. The Queensland score for this index is 998.

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Index of Education and Occupation

The Index of Education and Occupation is designed to reflect the educational and occupational structure of communities. The education variables in this index show either the level of qualification achieved or whether further education is being undertaken. The Whitsunday score is the same as the Queensland average of 974. The score reflects the high concentration of persons with higher education and the lower number of persons employed as labourers or unemployed.

Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA)

The Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) is a comprehensive geographical approach to defining remoteness.

ARIA calculates remoteness as accessibility to some 201 service centres based on road distances. Remoteness values for 11,320 populated localities are derived from the road distance to service centres in four categories (a weighting factor is applied for islands).

ARIA values are grouped into five categories which relate to accessibility to a wide range of goods and services and opportunities for social interaction:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Accessible | ARIA score 0 – 1.84 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible | ARIA score >1.84 – 3.51 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Accessible | ARIA score > 3.51 – 5.80 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remote | ARIA score > 5.80 – 9.08 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Remote | ARIA score > 9.08 - 12 |

The 1999 ARIA classification for Whitsunday is at the high end of the Moderately Accessible range at 5.6. This reflects a reasonable access to services given the size and location of the area.

Summary

The above indexes give a good overview of the relatively high level of well being of the Whitsunday area and the low level of disadvantage. While the indexes contain only limited aspects of wealth, family structure and access to infrastructure, combined with the other information in this report they provide a valuable insight into the well being of the community.

Access to infrastructure, which is generally related to locational disadvantage rather than socio-economic disadvantage, is also at a reasonable level.

15.1.6 Recreation

The major recreational focus for residents and tourists in Airlie Beach and the Whitsundays generally are water based sports and activities. There are numerous bareboat charters and sailing options. Sailing and visiting the Great Barrier Reef and islands is clearly the most sought after experience for tourists, followed by snorkelling, diving and the nightlife..

Recreational fishing from boats is also popular. The major areas where boats are launched are Abel Point, Shingley Beach, Cannonvale, Airlie Beach and Shute Harbour.

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There is also an abundance of other sporting activities that are not marine based and indicative of the strong commitment of the local community to recreation, with some 80 sporting clubs and centres being identified.

There is a major sports park immediately south of the proposed development which is used by about 30 or 40 clubs for various outdoor sports including netball and different types of football.

Next to this is a major new sporting complex, the Police and Citizens Youth Centre (PCYC) which overlooks the sporting oval and has just been completed. The local Whitsunday Shire Council provided \$1.3 million towards this \$2.5 million facility with other funding from government sources namely Regional Communities and Sport and Recreation with the local Rotary Club also providing a significant contribution. The PCYC includes a full sports hall with a sprung wooden floor and spectator viewing. The courts can be used for sports such as netball, volleyball and basketball. A youth café, and space for games and art are also available. The PCYC has also negotiated a highly reduced fare for young people wishing to travel to the facility from Proserpine or Cannonvale. The facilities can be used as a function hall with two areas each capable of accommodating 400 – 500 people. There are also smaller meeting rooms which will provide important space for community groups and meetings. As a result of a survey of young people, a third skate park will also be built at the PCYC. The local bowls club is also located in this area. This is becoming the major sport and recreation area in the area.

Between Airlie Beach and Shute Harbour there is also a Bird Park and the Conway National Park which provides extensive outdoor recreation for tourists and local residents.

Other recreational options in arts and cultural activities are also well catered for through a wide variety of clubs and outlets. The area is also serviced by a library at Cannonvale. There is also a wide variety of clubs associated with the arts, wine appreciation, music and dance.

15.1.7 Tourist Accommodation

The Whitsundays Tourism Region consists entirely of Whitsunday Shire. **Table 15-7** shows that in December quarter 1999, the Whitsundays tourism region had 19 (2.0 per cent) of Queensland's tourism establishments and 2,368 (4.6 per cent) of Queensland's hotel, motel, resort, guest house and serviced apartment rooms.

Takings from tourist accommodation for the Whitsundays tourism region in 1999 were \$77.0 million, accounting for 7.2 per cent of Queensland's takings from accommodation in 1999.

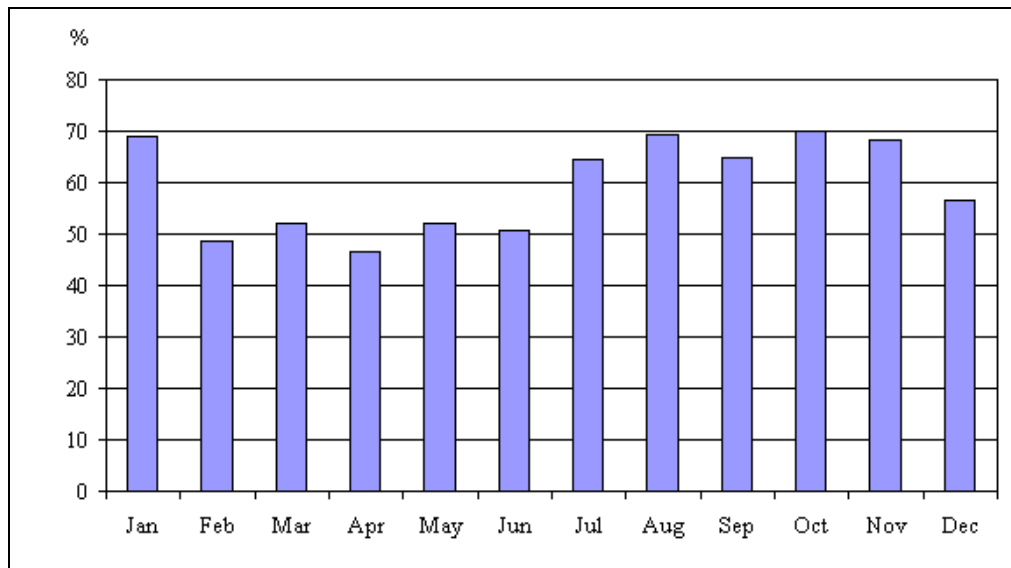
Figure 15-7 presents the average room occupancy rates in the Whitsundays tourism region. The average occupancy rate of guest rooms in the Whitsundays tourism region was 56.7 per cent for December quarter 1999, 4.0 percentage points below the rate for Queensland (60.7 per cent).

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■ Table 15-7 Tourist Accommodation, December Quarter 1999

		Whitsunday	Queensland	Whitsunday as % of Qld
Establishments	no.	19	940	2.0
Guest rooms	no.	2,368	51,895	4.6
Average room occupancy rate	%	56.7	60.7	
Accommodation takings 1999	\$'000	77,027	1,068,907	7.2

Source: [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#), *Tourist Accommodation, Queensland* (Cat. no. 8635.3).



Source: [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#), *Tourist Accommodation, Queensland* (Cat. no. 8635.3).

■ Figure 15-7 Average Room Occupancy rates, Whitsundays Tourism Region, 1999

15.2 Potential Impacts on Social Environment

15.2.1 Demographic Profile

The Port of Airlie Marina Development will involve approximately 224 dwelling units and a 170 bed hotel accommodation. The proposed timeframe for the residential development is a period of 5 years from completion of the reclamation of the site. The transportation interchange and public carpark, the ferry terminal and the adjacent harbourfront mixed retail/commercial/residential complex will be constructed immediately the reclamation works have been completed. The remaining retail and residential buildings and the hotel will be constructed to meet market demands.

Using the most recent occupancy rates for dwellings and hotel accommodation the potential overall population increase could be of the order of 520 persons (including 210 residents). This amounts to 4.5% of the current population, less than 4% of the projected population and an average annual growth rate of less than one per cent.

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The potential impact on the population of the 224 dwelling units and 170 bed landmark hotel should be considered in relation to the projected population rather than the current population.

The Port of Airlie Marina Development will increase the housing stock of flats, townhouses and units by almost 20%, with the overall increase in the dwelling stock less than 6% over 5 years. When this is compared with the high population growth rate already being experienced by the area, it is reasonable to suggest that this increase will alleviate some existing and developing housing problems.

An increase in the number of properties available for rental may have the effect of moving rental property costs closer to the Queensland figures at the lower end of the market. However, it is expected that generally rental costs will remain higher than average in keeping with the nature of the area.

There were comments made during the consultation process regarding the need for tourist accommodation and housing at the higher end of the market to ensure that Airlie Beach maximised the opportunity to increase its share of the higher end of the tourist market. Currently backpackers form a large proportion of the substantial tourist population. The average amount spent by this group is significantly less than the amount spent by visitors to the island resorts in the Whitsundays.

There is no evidence to suggest that the population growth will result in any major change to the age and gender distribution of the population. In fact, current data suggests that the overall dependent population will continue to be much lower than the Queensland average. The high mobility rate of residents is seen as one of the factors contributing to this population profile. This high level of mobility is reflected in the Census data shows that only 28% of the population was counted at the same address as 5 years ago. This combined with the attraction of the area to younger members of the population suggests that the impact of growth on community services is less than in other parts of the State. However, there will continue to be demand for services to support young people with limited personal resources.

The Port of Airlie development will also create significant employment opportunities during construction and operation. Anticipated numbers of local and imported workers are:

- ❑ A peak of approximately 35 employees during initial excavation/land reclamation
- ❑ Up to 800 employee years over a 5 year period during construction of the buildings and other facilities
- ❑ At least 300 full time equivalent positions during operation.

At this stage, it is not possible to predict the proportion of employees that will be drawn from the local community, however every effort will be made to maximise local recruitment and training opportunities for local youth.

In addition, the proposal is likely to stimulate indirect employment in the local, regional and state context. These opportunities are not expected to lead to large influxes of employees into the Airlie Beach area but rather, lead to small influxes in a large number of organisations providing various goods and services to the development.

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The potential impacts of an influx of workers on accommodation is discussed in **Section 15.2.3**.

15.2.2 Social Well Being

In considering the impact of the Port of Airlie Marine Development, it is important to consider objective measures of well being. The potentially positive impacts of the development on the social well being of the Airlie Beach community are evident when considering the variables used to develop the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage and the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage. For instance:

- ❑ Employment opportunities will increase leading to an even higher participation rate than is current;
- ❑ Unemployment is likely to decrease;
- ❑ Increased turnover as a result of spending by marina residents and visitors will lead to higher levels of disposable income for residents;
- ❑ The development of the marine academy and working harbour will provide tertiary and skilled training and employment opportunities for local residents
- ❑ A variety of high quality dwellings will be available for purchase or rental
- ❑ The proportion of higher income residents attracted to the area will increase.

The development will provide a much needed balance between the budget accommodation currently provided to backpackers and the 3 to 4 star accommodation being proposed. While this in itself need not increase the overall well being of residents, it was mentioned a number of times during the consultation process that Airlie Beach was in danger of being classed as a second rate destination because of the predominance of budget accommodation. Community perceptions such as this are important to an overall sense of well being.

Currently the Airlie Beach area is rated at the high end of the moderately accessible category of the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia. As this index relates to location of services it is expected that simply because of the location of this area in relation to larger centres, it will not rate highly. However with increased population and services targeting the high end of the market, it is reasonable to suggest that the availability of services in the local area will increase.

As a result of the positive impacts on a number of the variables that are used to develop the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, it is expected that the scores on a number of the indexes will increase – a strong and objective indicator of well being. In particular, because of the positive impacts on the variables such as income, employment, unemployment, occupation and housing, it is expected that the scores for the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage and Relative Socio-Economic Advantage will change to reflect increased social well being resulting from the development.

15.2.3 Impact on the Community and Affected Stakeholders

This section discusses broad community impacts and then the potential impacts on the affected stakeholders previously identified.

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Local Community Impacts

The proposed development is accessible from the main street of Airlie Beach. The increased amenity of having a large working harbour and commercial precinct adjacent to the main street is likely to benefit residents and visitors. The increase in facilities for a population with a major focus on boating and water activities is a significant benefit to the community. The broad impacts on the Airlie Beach community are expected to include:

- ❑ an increase in a variety of residential accommodation types available for purchase or rental. In particular, there was an enthusiastic response from consultation participants to the seven prime residential blocks proposed for development on the breakwater;
- ❑ increased public facilities such as the beach area, parks, boardwalks and the town square. The town square was seen as fostering the tourist 'village atmosphere' which is seen as a positive feature of Airlie Beach. The other public facilities were seen as adding significant amenity;
- ❑ an integrated transport system with the proposed transport interchange, bus terminals and 1200 carparks in close proximity to the ferry terminals. This was seen as a major social benefit.

Most people consulted were very positive about the development and were keen for it to commence. They were generally positive about the reduced scale of the development although some disappointment was expressed about this. The staging of the development over a five year period was seen as a significant factor in enabling the community to adjust to the changes that would result from the development.

Concerns were rarely focused on the development as a whole but rather on particular aspects of the development. These concerns included:

- ❑ how the community would be affected during the construction phase and any disruption that might occur to traffic or community access to the area during this period, especially for residents along Shute Harbour Road and Hermitage Drive ;
- ❑ the need for sufficient lighting to ensure public safety in community spaces such as the boardwalk areas;
- ❑ ensuring that there was adequate access and parking facilities for bicycles;
- ❑ ensuring that there was safe pedestrian and wheelchair access to the development with a safe crossing of Shute Harbour Road available to all people including people with a vision impairment;
- ❑ recent publicity about proposals for an alternative bus terminus in the main street of Airlie. The integrated transport system in the proposed development was strongly favoured. However, concerns were raised about transiting backpackers to their accommodation at more distant locations in Airlie Beach;
- ❑ how traffic would be managed when the development was constructed and operational;
- ❑ building heights. Some of those consulted expressed concern about the 10 story proposed tower which they considered out of keeping with the character of Airlie Beach. Concern was also raised about the height for the hotel and other buildings of 5- 6 stories by land owners whose views would be impacted. Viewing corridors to the water are also of significance;
- ❑ how sewerage would be dealt with and its potential impacts on Cannonvale or Jubilee Pocket sewage treatment plants and receiving waters of Boathaven Bay

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and Pioneer Bay. It is understood existing sewerage infrastructure is under some strain and that the Whitsunday Shire Council has plans to address this issue in the near future (this is discussed in more detail in **Section 12** and **14**);

- ❑ adequate provisions to manage storm surge;
- ❑ the need for public signs and information about the dangers of stingers;
- ❑ 15 boats drawn up on the mud flats of Boathaven Bay, mostly occupied by ‘squatters’ and
- ❑ social impacts of the development on nearby islands.

The following discussion briefly describes the particular impacts of the proposed development on key stakeholder groups identified in the description of the existing social environment.

Impacts on the Business Community

The impacts on the business community that were raised are as follows:

- ❑ the increase in retail space provided at Airlie Beach. It was suggested that there was a need to ensure that the expansion in retail space did not duplicate existing business services but provided new and innovative products and services that met gaps in the existing market. The linkage between the retail area of the proposed development and the main street of Airlie Beach was seen an advantage for the total business community. It was suggested that the new retail outlets would create competition but also the marina development and tourist accommodation would bring new customers to the broader shopping area. There would be more tourists, more permanent residents and more employees. None of those consulted raised competition as a negative factor and in fact, saw this as a price control on the cost of retail letting.
- ❑ an increase in accommodation for visitors principally through the hotel, serviced apartments, and rental accommodation options. This was seen as providing a balance to the relatively high proportion of backpacker facilities. It was suggested that this type of quality development would attract more international visitors and thereby contribute to the economic viability of Airlie Beach and its commercial standards
- ❑ an increase in restaurants. It was suggested that there remained unmet needs for high quality and waterfront restaurants which could be met through this new harbourside location.

Overall, the proposed development was viewed positively by the business community.

Impacts on Environmental Groups

The development will have impacts on the coastal environment as a result of reclamation of land. The major issues raised concerned seagrass, mangroves, acid sulphate soils and marine life. The quality and source of the sand and rocks to be imported was also raised with a preference for beach sand and existing quarries to be used. These issues are discussed in detail in **Section 2** and **3**.

Impacts on Indigenous Groups

This issue is discussed in **Section 18**.

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Impacts on Education, Training and Employment services

The construction and operation of the marina, hotel and other commercial facilities will provide significant opportunities for traineeships and permanent employment as well as casual employment. In addition, the Marine Training Academy should considerably extend the level and types of training opportunity in all areas of the marine industry including opportunities for school leavers. This was considered as being a very important local benefit by those consulted including the local Director of the TAFE and youth services workers.

The Proponent is aware of the Queensland Government's 10% training policy for construction projects, and while this does not apply to a private sector project, the proponent will seek to maximise training opportunities during construction through liaison with local training providers and advertisement of traineeships in the local and regional community.

Similarly, the Proponent will seek to maximise employment opportunities for local businesses and individuals during construction by maintaining a register of local services and contractors and advertising positions and contracts locally.

Impacts on Health, Community Services and Housing

Increased pressure on the health and community services was linked to the increased visiting and permanent populations. However, it was felt that the staged development over a five year period would assist the necessary adjustments in service levels.

The major social concern related to the development that was raised was the possibility of increased housing stress associated with the influx of external workers requiring accommodation during construction and operation. The total numbers cannot be estimated as the proportion of local recruitment is not known. However, it must be noted that the construction program is staged and introduction of operations positions are also staged over a 5 year period. Allowing for 25% local employment and assuming that construction activities for buildings and facilities are spread evenly over a five year period, the number of external workers in the area will probably not exceed 120.

In terms of construction workers, it will be the responsibility of the construction contractors to provide suitable accommodation for construction workers. This can be enforced through conditions of the contract and contractors can be required to address worker accommodation issues in the bid documents.

It is envisaged that accommodation may be the Airlie Beach area or Proserpine and possibly further afield as appropriate. Where workers are housed at a distance from the site, the contractor would need to provide transportation. Some strategies available to construction contractors to provide housing might include:

- ❑ Use of vacant tourist accommodation. This might be especially appropriate for short term work contracts. There is a range of accommodation available in the area and it is unlikely that the ability of visitors to find suitable accommodation will be affected.
- ❑ Placement of additional mobile home or caravan units at camp grounds in the area. It is likely that an arrangement can be made with camp ground owners such that these units may remain in situ following completion of construction works.

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- ❑ Placement of workers in rental accommodation throughout the community. Discussions with real estate agents in the area indicate that there is a reasonable stock of rental accommodation. However, care will need to be taken to ensure that low income residents in the area are not forced out.

The presence of additional workers in the area will have flow on benefits for local businesses who may provide food, accommodation, transportation and entertainment for workers. By spreading workers throughout the Whitsunday Shire region, these benefits are also spread.

In terms of operation workers, the 300 FTE positions would be introduced over a five year period. Again, it is not known how many of these workers might be recruited locally, nor is it known how many might be short term, casual positions, attracting transient workers to the region. However, it is expected that the gradual introduction of these positions will allow the housing market in Airlie Beach and Proserpine to adjust to the changing demands.

Students at the Marine Training Academy will be drawn from the local community through connections with local high schools and the Cannonvale TAFE as well as from further afield. This is typical of most post-secondary education institutions. The numbers of external students is not likely to be such that affordable accommodation demand will exceed supply and again, the length of time over which the Academy will be developed will allow the local housing market to adapt to this demand. If housing difficulties are experienced by students, the Academy may need to provide assistance in the form of an accommodation officer or similar.

Workforce planning through Centrelink and local training providers will enhance the broader growth and building activity that is already apparent in the area with the potential to create a local permanent workforce to respond to increasing building demands.

15.2.4 Impact on Recreation and Tourism

The proposed development would:

- ❑ provide a significant expansion in the number of marina berths available to residents and visitors to Airlie Beach. There is a very high level of unmet demand for these facilities indicated by more than 800 enquiries for the proposed 240 berths (see also **Section 3** and **20**). The proximity of the harbour and the marina to other tourist operators and shopping facilities was viewed as an asset for tourism at Airlie Beach. The availability of amenities for people living on boats in the harbour was also seen positively;
- ❑ enhance tourism potential through the operation of the ferry terminal out of the harbour. It is anticipated that some of the major ferry operators at Shute Harbour would be relocated to the ferry terminal at the new marina. The large numbers of people being transited through Airlie Beach on ferries was seen as adding significantly to tourism and making it more convenient for tourists to access these services;
- ❑ enhance maintenance facilities for boats. This would assist commercial operators improve their efficiency and also improve facilities needed for recreational boating;
- ❑ provide an efficient public boat ramp which would create more opportunities for sailing, boating and recreational fishing.

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The development would significantly add to the water based recreational opportunities available through the marina, its associated facilities and public boat ramp. These would include sailing, boating, fishing, cruises and a departure point for diving. The development would not impede access to the adjoining sporting facilities and the new PCYC. In fact, the close proximity of this development to these sporting facilities would mean that the opportunity for boating recreation would be added to the existing broad range of choices in recreational activity. These facilities are particularly relevant to young people. The development offers new places where young people can meet such as the parks, boardwalk and beach areas.

Existing recreational facilities combined with the new facilities associated with the proposed marina development should be sufficient to respond to increased recreational demands that are stimulated by the development.

No doubts were expressed about the capacity of Airlie Beach to absorb the level of tourism that would be generated by this development. However, it was expected that there would be a need to increase the standard of tourist operations and service to cater for this new market. Specific impacts on tourism as an industry are documented in the economic analysis which is set out in **Section 16.1.3**.

Concern was expressed by a small number of people about:

- ❑ the impact of any noise or pollution caused by boat maintenance;
- ❑ the siting of berths in the marina and boat protection in storms;
- ❑ the need for more trained and capable staff in tourism and related service industries. The resulting increased opportunities for training and employment have been referred to previously in this report.

15.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

The proposed development is well located in proximity to the tourist centre of Airlie Beach. The centrality of a harbour to this mixed tourist, retail and residential development is well suited to the culture of Airlie Beach with its emphasis on sailing and tourism. While concern was expressed about specific issues as identified in this report, there was very strong and consistent in-principle support for this development by most local people consulted. This was expressed by people involved in business, tourism, recreation, employment and training and health and community services. The exception to this was people with a primary concern about the environment who did not support changes to existing natural systems and a small number of local residents whose properties look out over Boathaven Bay.

While Airlie Beach like any other community is not without social problems which have been set out in this report, this community has a relatively high index of social well being which is likely to be further enhanced by this development. The community evidences a relatively high level of social cohesion. It has demonstrated a capacity to respond creatively to social issues as they emerge and to seek resources for appropriate responses.

In summary, the particular benefits for this community that were attributed to this development are as follows:

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- ❑ economic benefits deriving from more tourism
- ❑ increased employment opportunities and employment participation rate
- ❑ increased spending which will in turn lead to higher levels of disposable income
- ❑ increased accommodation options, retail and restaurant facilities
- ❑ a much needed response to unmet demand for marina facilities
- ❑ increased training opportunities through the Marine Training Academy
- ❑ increased public facilities such as the boardwalks, parks, beach areas and the town square
- ❑ integrated transport and carparking
- ❑ increased recreational boating opportunities
- ❑ a unique marina development within Airlie Beach that would nevertheless be linked directly to the main shopping street of Airlie Beach with its village character.

The scaled down size of this development staged over a five year period was also seen positively. This was seen as giving the community time to plan for necessary adjustments to changes that the development would bring.

On the other hand, the concerns that were raised about elements of this development are as follows:

- ❑ building heights. In particular, concern was expressed about the proposed 10 story residential tower which was considered out of character for Airlie Beach. Owners of property on Shute Harbour Road raised concerns about the height and density of buildings that would affect their current water views and did not feel that the proposed viewing corridors were a sufficient remedy;
- ❑ negative impacts on the environment and loss of natural features;
- ❑ disruptive impacts on the community during construction;
- ❑ negative impacts on the availability of affordable accommodation. Concern was expressed that there would be less accommodation available because it would be taken up by temporary building workers forcing people on low incomes to relocate. This was of particular concern in the absence of accommodation for homeless people other than for women escaping domestic violence;
- ❑ the availability and adequacy of accommodation for construction workers and their families;
- ❑ the future for people “squatting” in the boats in the waters of Boathaven Bay;
- ❑ noise and pollution from the proposed boat maintenance area and its impacts on the surrounding community;
- ❑ increased pressure on all health and community services as a result of an increased temporary work force, additional visitors and permanent residents;
- ❑ whether there will be a sufficiently trained and competent workforce to be engaged within the new development;
- ❑ whether there would be safe access for pedestrians and wheelchair access for people crossing Shute Harbour Road;
- ❑ ensuring that all backpackers could reach their accommodation if the transport interchange was located in the development
- ❑ management of traffic during construction and once the development was operational;
- ❑ management of sewerage;
- ❑ that people using these facilities would not have sufficient understanding of the dangers of swimming in these waters during summer because of stingers;

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- ❑ management of storm surge and the safety of boats in the harbour during storms;
- ❑ how this development would impact on the nearby islands
- ❑ whether the area would be safely lit;and
- ❑ whether there would be sufficient provisions made for bicycle transport.

Recommendations regarding these concerns are summarised as follows:

- ❑ That members of the community are advised that there will be further opportunities to discuss the issues which were raised during the consultation process. The information that was provided at the time of consultation satisfied the inquiry in most cases but indicates the need for more information to be made available. Future editions of the Information Bulletin could be used to provide such information and enable feedback;
- ❑ That the managers of nearby island resorts are advised of the development proposal so that they can make plans to respond to any flow on effects resulting from the proposed development at Port of Airlie Marina;
- ❑ That retail providers are encouraged to fill gaps in the market rather than duplicate existing business products and services;
- ❑ That strong links are forged with TAFE and the local high schools to ensure an integrated approach to accredited training and employment opportunities for local residents in the construction and operational phases of the development. Well trained and skilled staff will be needed to provide the high quality of services that will be required as a result of this development. It is important for the Marine Training Academy which is to be located in this development to be part of this process;
- ❑ That local participation during construction phase is maximised;
- ❑ That contracted builders are advised that they will be required to include workforce management plans, ensure adequate housing is available for their staff and that a policy is adopted of employing local people where possible; and
- ❑ That information is made available about environmental management of the development and that consideration is given to the creation of further boardwalks through the mangrove areas. This would enable public access and information to be provided about these natural environmental systems.

The developers have agreed to use the Information Bulletin as the vehicle to provide further information to the community about the issues raised during the social impact assessment as it becomes available, to advise on progress with the development and to provide opportunities for further feedback from the community.