

## 15. Social Impacts

### 15.1 Currency of Data

The Social Impact Assessment was based on census data available at the time that the study was completed. Not all data from the 2001 Census was available at the time. Given that social impacts identified are mostly either positive or neutral, it was not considered necessary to re-examine data used in the Social Impact Assessment in the light of more recent data. In any case, most of the demographic analysis information presented was based on the 2001 census data.

### 15.2 Housing Issues

#### 15.2.1 Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is identified as an issue in the Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement. Rental property costs in the Airlie Beach area are higher than the average for Queensland. The proposed additional residential units to be provided by Port of Airlie will be at the high end of the market and will not in themselves contribute to an increased stock of low rental housing. However, a cascade down effect is likely as this and other high-end residential developments become available and older properties become more affordable.

#### 15.2.2 Maritime Training Academy

The number of students likely to attend the Maritime Training Academy has not been determined as the type, number and duration of courses to be offered have not been finalised. A particular benefit of the academy is to provide training opportunities for local youth and it is anticipated that a high proportion of students will already be resident in the area. Transportation from Proserpine may be necessary to ensure that potential attendees in this area have access.

In future years, as the profile of the academy increases, the number of students attracted from outside the region may also increase. The housing market is likely to respond to a gradual increase in demand for lower budget accommodation in the area, and additional housing developments in locations such as the Cannon Valley may provide this. Students may elect to live in shared household arrangements to reduce rental and other living costs. Another option may be for students to board with families in the area; this has the added advantage of increasing income to some families. Throughout Australia, educational institutions which attract large numbers of students from other regions operate placement services for students wishing to board with a family.

#### 15.2.3 Management of Construction Employees Accommodation

Accommodation will be needed for up to 35 construction employees during the initial 18 months of earthworks and land reclamation. In the following five years, the various buildings and other structures will be constructed. The workforce for this has been estimated at 800 employee years spread over 5 years, an average of 160 workers at any one time. It is not possible to provide any indication of peaks and troughs in this number as the sequence and construction effort required for each component of the proposal is not known, and will not be known until designs for these components

are finalised. The spread of employment opportunities across this 5 year period is expected to be reasonably even.

Accommodation for these workers will be the responsibility of the various construction contractors and it is inappropriate to place undue constraint on the accommodation options available to the contractors at this stage.

Standard practice in the construction industry is for contractors to pay imported workers an allowance to assist with accommodation. This allowance would need to be concomitant with local rents if the contractor is to attract high quality workers, which is to the contractor's advantage. It will also be to the contractor's advantage to utilise local labour wherever suitable labour exists (and for lower skilled jobs) to minimise the need to pay an accommodation allowance.

However, it is acknowledged that the contractor should be restrained from utilising a high proportion of cheaper rental properties in the region, to the extent that low income earners are disadvantaged. This criterion will be included in the construction contracts. If it is a condition of contract that adequate accommodation and or transport to worksites must be provided for workers, contractors will include this in the tender price.

Strategies for accommodating the workforce suggested in Section 15.2.3 of the Supplementary EIS are provided to demonstrate that there exists a range of feasible options for resolving accommodation issues. It is likely that each contractor will use a combination of these options to provide accommodation to the construction workforce. Use of residential accommodation in Proserpine would require the contractor to provide transportation for construction workers.

### 15.3 Shute Harbour

The proposed ferry terminal facilities at Port of Airlie are not intended to render the facilities at Shute Harbour obsolete. Commercial vessel operators may choose to operate from Shute Harbour due to its closer proximity to some destinations as well as possibly cheaper berthing rates (related to the lack of facilities provided at Shute Harbour compared to Port of Airlie). The major ferry and cruise operators in the region are predicting a continuing and significant increase in passengers and customers over the next 10 years and are continuing to make significant investments in vessels and marine infrastructure. The proposed Port of Airlie development will provide these businesses with alternative and improved port facilities and land based infrastructure.