



The Coordinator-General



Major Resource Projects Housing Policy: Core principles to guide social impact assessment

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1 Introduction

Expansion of the resources industry brings people, jobs and growth to Queensland's resource towns and regions. Economic prosperity is welcome in Queensland and the expansion of the resources industry, including development of a new coal seam gas industry and potential development in the Galilee Basin, plays a critical part in this prosperity. Alongside the substantial benefits of economic development comes the challenge of planning effectively for growth in Queensland's resource towns and regions.

The Queensland Government is leading the way with a focused approach to managing growth to help shape tomorrow's Queensland. A number of initiatives designed to make sure growth happens in the best possible way are already underway. In particular, the government's commitment to development of a Queensland Regionalisation Strategy to encourage population growth and economic development outside South East Queensland, including in Queensland's resource-rich regions, demonstrates the importance of effective management of growth in resource towns and regions.

The Queensland Government believes that resource workers should have a choice of where and how they live and work. Where a fly-in, fly-out workforce is proposed, the proponent must work with local communities, councils, unions and the state government to make sure that the liveability and sustainability of towns is protected and that workers have choice about where they live.

The Major Resource Projects Housing Policy (MRPHP) is a clear demonstration of delivering outcomes for Queenslanders in resource towns and regions. The policy supports better planning for housing in resource communities and provides the opportunity for government (state and local), industry and community to work in partnership on housing issues. This policy sets out principles to be used by government, industry and community each time a resource project is subject to Environmental and Social Impact Assessment under either the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* or the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

Major project proponents are responsible for identifying and considering worker accommodation and broader housing impacts as part of their project development and planning and for including an analysis of these issues in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) part of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For the purpose of this policy, a project workforce is defined as both direct employees and contractors. To this end, proponents are responsible for passing on obligations to major contractors associated with their project in order to meet the requirements of this policy.

Project proponents must specify mitigation strategies in the Social Impact Management Plan (including those relating to contractor activities), implement these strategies in collaboration with contractors and other key stakeholders, and mitigate



any adverse accommodation and housing impacts of their project on local communities over the life of the project. Housing and accommodation strategies developed as part of this assessment process will, given approval of the project, be subject to the Coordinator-General's compliance regime as components of the project's Social Impact Management Plan.

2 Purpose

Proponents for major resource projects are required to submit an EIS to enable Government to assess their proposed project. As part of this, proponents must undertake SIA which sets out the project's projected social impacts on resource towns and regions, including both positive and negative impacts.

In conducting the SIA, proponents are expected to assess and analyse projected accommodation and housing market impacts. The objective of this policy is to make clear government's expectations of the accommodation and housing issues that project proponents submitting an EIS will need to consider.

To achieve this objective, the MRPHP establishes:

- guiding principles on stakeholder engagement for use by proponents in undertaking Social Impact Assessment
- principles that the Coordinator-General's Social Impact Assessment Unit will use to assess accommodation and housing market impacts of resource and resource-related projects that are subject to Social Impact Assessment.

The Coordinator-General's Social Impact Assessment Unit has developed a *Social impact assessment: Guideline to preparing a social impact management plan*¹ (the SIMP Guideline), including a template for a Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP). This sets out the requirements for project proponents so that the roles and responsibilities of proponents, government, stakeholders and communities can be established throughout the life of the project, in mitigating and managing social impacts and opportunities during the pre-construction, construction, operation and decommissioning phases of major resource projects. SIMPs must identify the projected positive and negative social impacts of a project, including impacts on social infrastructure and services, and accommodation and housing market impacts, and propose strategies to maximise positive social impacts and benefits and to manage and mitigate projected adverse social impacts. This policy works alongside the SIA process and the SIMP Guideline to ensure that SIAs and SIMPs are comprehensive and take account of Queensland Government policy settings.

¹ www.deedi.qld.gov.au/cg/resources/guideline/simp-guideline.pdf



3 Context

A range of Queensland Government policies sets the context for the MRPHP.

- *Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland*² describes five ambitions for the future of Queensland including:
 - a **strong** Queensland which creates a diverse economy powered by bright ideas
 - a **green** Queensland where our lifestyle and environment are protected
 - a **fair** Queensland which supports a safe and caring community.

Growth in the resource industry contributes substantially to the ambition for a strong Queensland. SIA supports the ambition for a fairer Queensland by considering the impacts of economic development across all community members and supports the ambition for a greener Queensland through promoting a greener approach to housing design and location.

- The Queensland Government's response on Queensland's population growth, *Shaping Tomorrow's Queensland*³, outlines a range of initiatives for responding to growth including establishment of *Growth Management Queensland*, a community engagement strategy for growth management and investigation of new ways to deliver affordable housing.
- As part of its growth management agenda, the Queensland Government has released the Queensland *Regionalisation Strategy*⁴ for consultation to encourage population growth and economic development outside South East Queensland, including in Queensland's resource rich regions. Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce issues (Sub-action 2.1) commit the government to address issues associated with fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforces in regional areas.
- The Queensland Government's *Future Directions Statement*⁵ supporting regional development in the Surat Basin, commits the Government to building and maintaining liveable Surat Basin communities and includes the *Resource Town Housing Affordability Strategy* to improve availability of quality affordable land and housing.
- The *Sustainable Resource Communities Policy* commits to strengthening SIA as well as to development of this policy.
- The *Sustainable Resource Communities Partnership Agreement*⁶ oversees work between government, community and industry and commits to exploring affordable housing options in resource communities.

² www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/library/pdf/tomorrow/Towards_Q2_Tomorrows_Queensland.pdf

³ <http://growthsummit.premiers.qld.gov.au/assets/gov-response-summary.pdf>

⁴ <http://services.dlqp.qld.gov.au/resources/docs/qrs/qld-regionalisation-strategy.pdf>

⁵ <http://203.210.126.185/dsdweb/v4/apps/web/secure/docs/4187.pdf>

⁶ http://www.qrc.org.au/_dbase_upl/Partnership%20Agreement%20FINAL.pdf



- The *State Planning Policy 1/07 on Housing and Residential Development*⁷ requires some local governments (based on triggers such as number of development applications, population, etc.) to identify the housing needs of their community and to analyse, and modify if necessary, their planning scheme to remove barriers to, and provide opportunities for, a range of housing options that respond to these needs.
- The Queensland Government's *LNG Industry Snapshot*⁸ commits to maximising community benefits and managing regional growth as a result of the rapid growth of the resources sector and focuses on ensuring resource communities are provided with infrastructure and services that meet their future needs.
- In the broader context, international practice and industry standards and policy set the scene for this policy. The paper on *Leading Practice Strategies for Addressing the Social Impacts of Resource Developments*⁹ sponsored by the Queensland Government cites a range of international standards which guide responsible SIA. Examples include OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, International Principles of SIA Practice from the International Association for Impact Assessment and a range of resource industry standards and codes of practice.

4 Which resource projects does the Major Resource Projects Housing Policy apply to?

The MRPHP covers major resource projects that are assessed under either the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*¹⁰ or the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.¹¹ For projects assessed under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act*, the MRPHP will apply to significant projects which are resource or resource-related projects (e.g. port, water and rail infrastructure) including those located in state development Areas. For projects assessed under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, the MRPHP will apply to all projects for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is undertaken.

5 Policy principles

The MRPHP is set out below as a set of core principles to guide the identification and assessment of accommodation and housing impacts and development of mitigation and management strategies. These principles are supported by definitions in Section 6 on page 9.

⁷ <http://www.dip.qld.gov.au/docs/ipa/Forms/Policies/StatePlanPolicyDocV5.pdf>

⁸ www.industry.qld.gov.au/documents/LNG/LNGBlueprint_Summary.pdf

⁹ Franks D, Fidler C, Brereton D, Vanclay F and P, Clark P. *Leading Practice Strategies for Addressing the Social Impacts of Resource Developments*. Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining. University of Queensland. November 2009.

¹⁰ www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/S/StateDevA71.pdf

¹¹ www.legislation.qld.gov.au/legisltn/current/e/envprota94.pdf



Major Resource Projects Housing Policy: Core Principles

1. Growth management and liveable resource communities

- 1.1 The Queensland Government is actively leading the way on effective and coordinated planning for growth in Queensland. Effective planning for resource communities is an important part of this agenda.
- 1.2 The Queensland Government is committed to the liveability¹² of resource communities.
- 1.3 The Queensland Government is committed to better linkages between land use, infrastructure delivery, economic development, environmental protection and affordable housing, as reflected in the establishment of Growth Management Queensland.
- 1.4 The Queensland Government is committed to SIA and community engagement on growth management.
- 1.5 Partnership between the Queensland Government, local government, industry and community will underpin consideration of accommodation and housing impacts of resource projects.

2. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

- 2.1 Project proponents are responsible for identifying projected positive and negative accommodation and housing market impacts through the SIA and in the associated draft SIMP.
- 2.2 Project proponents are responsible for identifying requirements for project workforce accommodation, considering housing market impacts and specifying mitigation and management strategies.
- 2.3 Strategies to mitigate or manage negative impacts of project workforce accommodation and housing market impacts must be based on a strong understanding of:
 - projected positive and negative impacts
 - local and regional settings
 - initiatives such as regional plans and other housing market initiatives
 - the nature and lifecycle of the resource project under consideration
 - respective roles and responsibilities of state and local governments, community and industry.
- 2.4 The development of mitigation and management strategies will be completed in close consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders including state government agencies and local governments.
- 2.5 Responsibility for a particular mitigation or management strategy may be shared or may identify, after discussion with that stakeholder, that other stakeholders have direct responsibility.
- 2.6 A summary of projected requirements for project workforce accommodation and impacts on housing markets and a risk rating of impacts and of mitigation and management strategies must be included in the draft SIMP submitted as part of the EIS.
- 2.7 The draft SIMP submitted as part of the EIS must include:

¹² In this paper, liveability is defined as the characteristics that make a place where people want to live (e.g. access to services, quality of life, comfortable living standards, transport, air quality and social participation) as described at www.highdensityliveability.org.au



2. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

- projected requirements for project workforce accommodation
 - projected impacts on housing markets
 - a risk rating of impacts
 - mitigation and management strategies.
- 2.8 The Coordinator-General's Social Impact Assessment Team will use this policy to:
- assess the accommodation and housing market impacts of a proposed resource project
 - assess the mitigation and management strategies proposed in the EIS
 - negotiate with the proponent on impact assessment, mitigation and management strategies and the draft SIMP as required
 - develop conditions needed to ensure mitigation and management strategies are appropriate.
- 2.9 Where a project changes through the course of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and this changes project workforce accommodation and housing market impacts to a degree that is considered substantive by the Coordinator-General's Social Impact Assessment Team, a project proponent will be required to reassess impacts and associated mitigation and management strategies.
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3. Stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 Project proponents should engage early with community stakeholders, local government and unions in assessing the need for workforce accommodation, the nature of workforce accommodation required and the impacts on housing markets in preparing their EIS and associated draft SIMP.
- 3.2 Consultation should occur as part of consultation on broader social impacts and as outlined in the Coordinator-General's *Guideline to preparing a social impact management plan*.
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4. Housing, planning, infrastructure and environmental sustainability

- 4.1 Development of resource projects must take into account the location and capacity of existing and planned infrastructure¹³ and how best to optimise its use, as well as requirements for new infrastructure to support project workforce accommodation.
- 4.2 Project proponents must take into account planning mechanisms established by the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* and the *Local Government Act 2009* including Regulations, State Planning Policies, regional plans, priority infrastructure plans, community plans and planning schemes when considering project workforce accommodation and housing market impacts and in development of strategies to manage and mitigate projected negative impacts.
- 4.3 Project proponents must consider the approach taken in the *State Planning Policy 1/07 on Housing and Residential Development*¹⁴ to promote diverse housing types in plans for provision of housing.
- 4.4 Project proponents must take into account all building requirements established by the *Building Act 1975*¹⁵, *Building Code of Australia*, *Queensland Development Code*¹⁶ and any other associated building provisions. Buildings and their inclusions should consist of sustainable housing components that promote water and energy efficiency and are resilient and adaptable to the ongoing and changing needs of the community.

Where Urban Development Areas (UDAs) administered by the Urban Land Development Authority (ULDA) exist in resource communities and regions, proponents must take into account the *Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007*¹⁷ which provides planning authority for declared UDAs as well as other relevant policies and guidelines issued by the ULDA.¹⁸ Proponents are also encouraged to take the opportunity presented by UDAs to facilitate efficient and affordable housing outcomes if they are providing housing.

5. Project workforce accommodation

- 5.1 The Queensland Government believes that resource workers should have a choice of where and how they live and work. Where a FIFO workforce is proposed, the proponent must work with local communities, councils, unions and the state government to make sure that the liveability and sustainability of towns is protected and that workers have a choice about where they live.
- 5.2 Resource project proponents must therefore, where practicable and sustainable, locate a proportion of their operational workforce in resource towns to support growth and liveability of these towns and should provide evidence they have considered this option in consultation with the relevant state and local government and the community.

¹³ See definition of infrastructure in Section 6. It should also be noted that infrastructure requirements may include essential services such as water, power and sewerage and other services such as education, health, police services and emergency services as well as other community facilities.

¹⁴ The State Planning Policy 1/07 on Housing and Residential Development requires larger local governments to identify the housing needs of their community and analyse, and modify if necessary, their planning scheme to remove barriers to, and provide opportunities for, a range of housing options that respond to the housing needs of the community.

¹⁵ www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/consol_act/ba197591/

¹⁶ www.dlqp.qld.gov.au/our-services/building-codes-queensland.html

¹⁷ www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2007/07AC041.pdf

¹⁸ For example, the ULDA has currently issued a public consultation draft of a guideline for locating and designing non-resident worker accommodation which can be found at www.ulda.qld.gov.au/_dbase_upl/Proposed_Non-resident_workers_accommodationFINAL_Feb_2011.pdf and has also finalised a range of policies and guidelines including Residential 30 Guideline to deliver diversity in new neighbourhood development which can be found at www.ulda.qld.gov.au/_dbase_upl/ResGuideline.pdf



5. Project workforce accommodation

- 5.3 Project proponents are responsible for accommodating employees¹⁹ working on a resource project where there is insufficient capacity in the local housing market to provide adequate accommodation and housing stock.
- 5.4 Project proponents must put forward a clear and detailed strategy for accommodating project workforces in their EIS.
- 5.5 The strategy for accommodating resource project workforces must describe:
- projected size, nature and location of the workforce for the resource project (for pre-construction, construction and operational phases) including the projected proportion of workers who will fly, drive or ferry in and out
 - towns and cities in which fly-in, fly-out or drive-in, drive-out employees are likely to be permanently residing
 - plans for accommodating the proportion of the workforce who will not readily access local accommodation during pre-construction, construction and operational phases.
- 5.6 Project proponents must take into account the projected accommodation and locational preferences of workers.
- 5.7 Regional as well as local impacts must be considered including taking account of any regional workforce development/management plans incorporating training, skill development and attraction and retention strategies that have been developed during the Social Impact Assessment or have been developed by local authorities or state government departments/agencies.
- 5.8 When outlining plans for worker accommodation villages, project proponents must include:
- details of the projected size, design and location of villages
 - a strategy for provision of recreation, infrastructure and social services
 - a management plan for the village including strategies for managing 'neighbour' interactions through options such as Codes of Conduct etc. or, where the village is to be managed by an independent organisation, evidence of a contractual arrangement for such a plan to be developed. Management plans should consider gender and cultural issues in the village as well as alcohol and drug use
 - evidence of adequate engagement with local government and community on planning considerations for location of worker accommodation villages
 - duration for which villages will be required
 - the relativity of the projected size of the village to the size of the nearest resource town and issues emerging from this
 - consideration of whether integration of the village, infrastructure (e.g. power, water or sewerage) or communal facilities into adjacent resource town is a desirable option
 - proximity of villages to mining sites and assessment of likely safety issues for workers travelling to and from the site
 - details on how the proposed development satisfies relevant planning standards (e.g. council planning schemes)
 - consideration of the ULDA Guideline No.3 'Non-resident worker accommodation'
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¹⁹ This responsibility is intended to apply to both direct employees of the resource proponent and contractors working on the resource project.



5. Project workforce accommodation

February 2011', where the accommodation is proposed to be located in an urban development area

- evidence of intention to comply with Queensland's Development Code on Temporary Accommodation Buildings and Structures where this code applies
- consideration of whether villages and infrastructure provided to support them may be suitable for ongoing use after they are no longer used to accommodate resource project workers
- decommissioning plans for the proposed village
- projected impact of planned village on liveability of the community in which it is located.

6. Housing market impacts

- 6.1 For the EIS and associated draft SIMP, project proponents must consider the housing markets in which their projects will operate when they are identifying and assessing social impacts relating to the pre-construction, construction or operational phases.
- 6.2 Regional as well as local impacts must be identified and considered.
- 6.3 Project proponents should include strategies to mitigate and manage projected adverse impacts on housing markets during pre-construction, construction or operational phases that:
 - are based on local and regional conditions
 - optimise operation of the planned resource project
 - take into account the impact of the accommodation strategy for workers on other local residents and on the private rental market.
- 6.4 Issues to be considered in developing mitigation strategies (refer 6.3 above) are likely to include:
 - projected population increases attributable to the resource project
 - analysis of the impact of projected demand for housing from resource project workers and their households on housing affordability
 - type and location of proposed accommodation for resource project workers and projected impacts of this accommodation during pre-construction, construction or operational phases
 - analysis of projected employment mix (e.g. fly-in, fly-out, new and locally based operational workforce and workers who are sourced locally)
 - current and projected rental and purchase costs
 - current and projected rental vacancy rates
 - impact of current and projected rental costs on low and moderate income workers in industries other than the resources industry.



7. Cumulative impacts

- 7.1 Consistent with the Terms of Reference for EIS in Queensland, project proponents must consider readily identified cumulative impacts of resource projects on local and regional housing markets when identifying accommodation and housing market impacts and developing mitigation and management strategies.
 - 7.2 Where appropriate, project proponents must collaborate with other resource proponents, local governments and state government agencies to design and develop partnerships that support short, medium, and long-term solutions to worker accommodation and housing impact issues.
 - 7.3 This collaboration should be undertaken early in the Social Impact Assessment process as an identified action in the stakeholder engagement strategy, as part of consultation on broader social impacts, and consistent with the Coordinator-General's *Guideline to preparing a social impact management plan*.
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6 Definitions

- *Resource-related projects:* For the purposes of this policy, resource projects include resource-related projects such as port, water or rail infrastructure that are intended to support the resource industry.
- *Infrastructure:* For the purposes of this policy, infrastructure includes economic, social and environmental infrastructure that supports sustainable regional growth.²⁰
- *Housing:* This term is generally used in this policy to refer to broader housing issues, other than the accommodation needs of employees working on resource projects.
- *Project workforce accommodation:* This refers to accommodation that is required by employees of resource projects over the lifecycle of the project to which this policy applies. For the purposes of this policy, employees are considered to include both direct employees of the resource company and other staff working on the resource project (e.g. contractors) who are not directly employed by the resource company.
- *Worker accommodation villages:* In this paper, the term 'worker accommodation villages' is used to describe non-resident workforce accommodation. Non-resident workforce accommodation is defined as premises used to provide accommodation for non-resident workers which may include provision of recreational and entertainment facilities for the exclusive use of residents and their visitors. They may also be known as contractors' camps, construction camps, single person's quarters, temporary workers accommodation, relocatable home parks, short-term accommodation or tourist parks. This definition is drawn from the *Queensland Planning Provisions (QPP)*.²¹
- *Affordable housing:* This term is used in this policy to refer to housing which is affordable for rental or purchase by low or moderate income households who do not work in the resource industry and so do not earn higher resource industry incomes. Common examples include workers from the service or retail industries as well as workers offering community services. These households may or may not be eligible for social housing.
- *Social housing:* This term is generally used to refer to government-subsidised housing which is targeted to low income earners in high need and which may be managed directly by the Department of Communities or by registered social housing providers (e.g. community organisations or local governments).

²⁰ This definition is drawn from the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 at www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/SEQ/regional-plan-2009-seq-regional-plan-2009-part-d-dro-10.pdf

²¹ www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/qpp



7 Table of abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation/acronym	Full text
MRPHP	Major Resource Projects Housing Policy
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management
The SIMP Guideline	Social impact assessment: Guideline to preparing a social impact management plan
SIMP	Social Impact Management Plan
UDAs	Urban Development Areas
ULDA	Urban Land Development Authority
QPP	Queensland Planning Provisions