# Graphinex – Esmeralda Graphite Project Environmental Impact Statement

## Appendix O – Social Impact Assessment

GRAPHINEX



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# Esmeralda Graphite Project
# Social Impact Assessment

## Social Impact Assessment

Prepared for: QLD Aus Graphite Pty Ltd

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# Executive summary

## Introduction

QLD Aus Graphite Pty Ltd (the proponent) is seeking environmental approvals to develop the Esmeralda Graphite Project (the Project), located approximately 70 kilometres (km) south of Croydon within the Croydon Shire Council (CSC) local government area (LGA).

This social impact assessment (SIA) forms part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project being prepared under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act) and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017* (SSRC Act).

## Project overview

The Project involves mining of the Esmeralda Granite Unit and on-site concentration of graphite ore within Mining Lease Application (MLA) 100431 and MLA 100430. The Project is located in the rural locality of Esmeralda within the Croydon LGA, with Croydon the nearest outback town.

The Project involves extraction of up to 3.5 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of Run-of-Mine (ROM) ore, with a total of approximately 170 Mt of graphite ore to be mined over the operational life of the Project. The proposed life-of-mine (LOM) is approximately 65 years, including construction (2 years), operation (53 years), and final rehabilitation (10 years).

### Construction

The construction phase is anticipated to commence within 12 months of approvals being obtained and would occur over a period of approximately two years.

The Project is expected to support a construction workforce of up to approximately 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers, with the main workforce categories involving civil works, MPP construction, site building and infrastructure construction, equipment assembly, and accommodation village construction and management.

The construction workforce will comprise a mix of local and non-resident workers. However, due to the remote location of the Project as well as workforce constraints within surrounding communities, it is anticipated that the majority of the construction workforce would likely be sourced from outside the Croydon LGA.

An onsite accommodation village will be established to accommodate the construction workforce.

### Operation and decommissioning

The operations phase is currently assumed to commence in 2029/2030 and would occur over approximately 53 years. At peak production, an operational workforce of up to 192 workers is expected, with approximately 128 workers engaged for mine operations and the remaining estimated 64 workers engaged for surface infrastructure operations including mineral processing and other site works.

During operations, the likely occupations required are anticipated to include machinery plant and truck operators; process plant operators; tradespeople including diesel fitters, boiler makers and electricians; engineers, surveyors, geologists; health, safety, environment, human resources, and mine management professionals; and administrative staff.

The operational workforce will comprise a mix of local and non-resident workers. It is anticipated that greater than 95% of the operational workforce will fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) to the Project and less than 5% will drive-in-drive-out (DIDO) from the surrounding areas.

The workforce will be accommodated in the on-site accommodation village.

## Methodology

The methodology for this SIA was developed to meet the requirements of the SSRC Act, the terms of reference for the Project, and the SIA Guideline. The approach was tailored with consideration of the nature, scale, and extent of the Project and the likely scope and significance of the Project's potential social impacts.

This SIA presents the identification and assessment of the Project's potential social impacts and includes measures to enhance potential positive social impacts and mitigate potential negative social impacts. In accordance with the SIA Guideline, this SIA addresses the following key matters:

- community and stakeholder engagement;
- workforce management;
- housing and accommodation;
- local business and industry procurement; and
- health and community well.

The potential positive and negative social impacts of the Project were identified and assessed with consideration of:

- the nature of Project activities and the workforce profile;
- socio-economic baseline characteristics of potentially affected communities;
- outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement activities; and
- findings from other relevant technical assessments prepared for the EIS.

Significance ratings were assigned to each potential positive and negative social impact based on their anticipated likelihood of occurrence and magnitude. Significance ratings were assigned before applying management measures and then again after applying management measures (i.e., residual significance).

Measures to enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate potential negative impacts (collectively referred to as management measures) were identified through consideration of Project impacts and SIA consultation, as well as existing SIA Project-team knowledge.

## Community and stakeholder engagement

The primary method of community and stakeholder engagement undertaken to inform the SIA was via online meetings with a broad range of stakeholders from Croydon and Normanton including local government, local businesses, health and emergency services, education and training providers, and community groups and organisations. Key outcomes from these engagements included:

- In general, the Croydon community is supportive of the Project. There is some awareness about the Project, yet a strong desire for more information about the Project.
- The existing housing constraints in the town of Croydon and the broader region including Normanton was widely noted. Despite this, the potential for the Project to draw people to the town of Croydon was highly valued.
- Local people want to see local benefits.
- Stakeholders in both Croydon and Normanton expressed keen interest in the potential for training and local employment.
- There is a limited number of businesses in Croydon (machinery operators, quarry, tyre businesses) that could supply services to the Project. There is a greater number of businesses in Normanton that may be able to supply relevant services.
- The Project will need to be largely self-sufficient for health and emergency responses.
- There are key risks associated with the road network in the region. The potential for the Project to contribute to road improvements along the Richmond-Croydon Road was seen as a key Project benefit.
- High level of interest was expressed in the potential for community investment.

## Impact assessment

Table 1 presents a summary of potential social impacts due to the Project. The table includes detail regarding each identified impact's significance prior to, and after, the application of relevant management measures.

Table 1: Summary of potential social impacts

| Potential social impact | Project phase | Impact type | Impact significance | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Workforce Management** | | | | |
| Increase in employment opportunities | Construction | Positive | Low | Medium |
| | Operation | | Low | Medium |
| Increase in training and skills development opportunities | Operation | Positive | Low | Medium |
| Increase in workforce health, safety and well-being risk factors | Construction | Negative | High | Medium |
| Impact on workforce wellbeing from redundancies due to ramp down and closure | Decommissioning | Negative | Medium | Low |
| **Housing and Accommodation** | | | | |
| Increase in demand on local short-term accommodation affecting accessibility by other users | Site establishment | Negative | Low | Negligible |
| Additional economic opportunities for short-term accommodation providers | Site establishment | Positive | Low | Low |
| Decrease in local housing availability and affordability due to demand from relocating Project workforce | Operation | Negative | Medium | Low |
| **Local Business and Industry Procurement** | | | | |
| Increase in supply and procurement opportunities | Construction | Positive | Low | Medium |
| | Operations | | Medium | Medium |
| Increase in industry diversification | Operation | Positive | Medium | Medium |
| Increase in economic activity for businesses | Construction / Operation | Positive | Low | Low |
| Increase in labour draw and competition for other businesses. | Construction / Operation | Negative | Medium | Low |
| **Health and Community Wellbeing** | | | | |

| Potential social impact | Project phase | Impact type | Impact significance | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase in demand for health and emergency services contributing to service provision disruptions to for existing residents | Construction / Operation | Negative | Medium | Low |
| Increase in road safety risks (e.g., accidents, road condition deterioration, etc) | Construction / Operation | Negative | High | High |
| Improved access and connectivity | Construction / Operation | Positive | Low | Medium |
| Changes to cultural heritage value | Construction / Operation | Negative | Medium | Low |
| Changes to ecological / environmental values | Construction / Operation / Decommissioning | Negative | Medium | Low |
| Disruptions to surrounding amenity | Operation | Negative | Low | Low |
| Support overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon | Operation | Positive | Low | High |
| Support increase in resident population | Operation | Positive | Low | Low |
| Community scepticism and apathy towards project | Site establishment | Negative | Medium | Low |

The management measures developed within this SIA seek to mitigate potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts. The management measures can be grouped under the following sub-plans:

- Workforce Management Plan
- Housing and Accommodation Plan
- Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan
- Health and Community Wellbeing Plan
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

## Conclusion

The potential positive impacts of the Project with a residual significance rating of medium or higher are:

- Workforce management
  - Increase in employment opportunities
  - Increase in training and skills development opportunities
- Local business and industry procurement
  - Increase in supply and procurement opportunities
  - Increase in industry diversification
- Health and community wellbeing
  - Improved access and connectivity

- Support overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon.

There are two potential negative impacts of the Project with a residual significance of medium or higher, which are:

- Workforce management
  - Increase in workforce health, safety and well-being risk factors
- Health and community wellbeing
  - Increase in road safety risks (e.g., accidents, road condition deterioration, etc)

A SIMP has been developed to accompany this SIA. The SIMP provides for managing and monitoring the Project's potential impacts and effectiveness of proposed management measures.

# Contents


**1. Introduction ..... 3**
1.1 Project overview ..... 3
**2. Methodology ..... 8**
2.1 Scoping ..... 8
2.2 Baseline analysis ..... 8
2.3 Community and stakeholder engagement ..... 8
2.4 Impact assessment ..... 9
2.5 Social impact management plan ..... 10
2.6 Assumptions and limitations ..... 10
**3. SIA scoping ..... 12**
3.1 Regulatory framework ..... 12
3.2 Stakeholder profile ..... 13
3.3 Preliminary identification of potential social impacts ..... 15
3.4 SIA study area ..... 17
**4. Community and stakeholder engagement ..... 21**
4.1 Key findings ..... 21
**5. Social baseline ..... 29**
5.1 Socio-economic planning context ..... 29
5.2 Traditional Owners ..... 30
5.3 Community profiles ..... 30
**6. Impact assessment ..... 34**
6.1 Workforce management ..... 34
6.2 Housing and accommodation ..... 39
6.3 Local business and industry procurement ..... 42
6.4 Health and community wellbeing ..... 46
6.5 Cumulative effects ..... 54
**7. Conclusion ..... 57**
**References ..... 59**


## Appendices


**Appendix A** Impact significance rating
**Appendix B** SIA engagement activities
**Appendix C** Detailed baseline


## Figures


Figure 1.1: Project location ..... 4
Figure 1.2: Project layout ..... 5
Figure 3.1: Local study area ..... 19

Figure 3.2: Regional service centres and regional study area ..... 20
Figure C.1: Unemployment rate, December 2021 quarter to December 2025 quarter.

## Tables

Table 1: Summary of potential social impacts ..... iv
Table 1.1: Project phases ..... 6
Table 2.1 Social impact significance matrix ..... 9
Table 3.1: Project EIS TOR, social requirements ..... 12
Table 3.2: Stakeholder identification ..... 14
Table 3.3: Preliminary identification of potential social impacts and benefits ..... 15
Table 3.4: SIA study area ..... 17
Table 4.1: Summary of SIA engagement and outcomes ..... 23
Table 5.1: Local and regional policy and planning context ..... 29
Table 6.1: Summary of workforce management impact assessment ..... 38
Table 6.2: Summary of housing and accommodation impact assessment ..... 41
Table 6.3: Summary of local business and industry procurement impact assessment ..... 45
Table 6.4: Summary of health and community wellbeing impact assessment ..... 52
Table 6.5 Projects that may contribute to potential cumulative social impacts ..... 54
Table 6.6 Cumulative impacts ..... 54
Table 7.1 Summary of potential negative social impacts ..... 57
Table 7.2 Summary of potential positive social impacts ..... 58
Table A.1: Likelihood levels
Table A.2: Magnitude levels
Table A.3: Social impact significance matrix
Table C.1: Estimated resident population, 2014 to 2024
Table C.2: Health and medical facilities across regional service centres
Table C.3: Education facilities in local area and regional service centres
Table C.4: Community services
Table C.3: Indicators of potentially vulnerable groups, 2021 Census
Table C.5: Short-term accommodation in Croydon, Normanton and Richmond
Table C.7: Business count by employee size, Croydon LGA and regional area

# Abbreviations and acronyms

| Abbreviation / acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ASGS | Australian Statistical Geography Standard |
| Attexo | Attexo Group Pty Ltd |
| CSC | Croydon Shire Council |
| CSE | Community and Stakeholder Engagement |
| DIDO | Drive-in-drive-out |
| DSDIP | Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning |
| EIS | Environmental Impact Statement |
| EP Act | Environmental Protection Act 1994 |
| FIFO | Fly-in-fly-out |
| FTE | Full-time equivalent |
| HA | Housing and Accommodation |
| HCW | Health and Community Wellbeing |
| km | Kilometres |
| ktpa | kilotonne per annum |
| LBIP | Local Business and Industry Procurement |
| LOM | Life-of-mine |
| LGA | Local Government Area |
| MLA | Mining Lease Application |
| Mtpa | Million tonnes per annum |
| QAS | Queensland Ambulance Service |
| QGSO | Queensland Government Statisticians Office |
| QPS | Queensland Police Service |
| RFB | Rural Fire Brigade |
| RFDS | Royal Flying Doctors Service |
| ROM | Run-of-Mine |
| RNTBC | Registered native title bodies corporate |
| SAL | Suburbs and Localities |
| SDPWO Act | State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 |
| SES | State Emergency Services |
| SIA | Social Impact Assessment |
| SIMP | Social Impact Management Plan |

| Abbreviation / acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| SSRC Act | Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017 |
| Supplementary Material | *Supplementary material for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects under the SIA Guideline* |
| the project | Esmeralda Graphite Project |
| the proponent | QLD Aus Graphite Pty Ltd |
| TOR | Terms of reference |
| UCL | Urban Centres and Localities |
| WM | Workforce Management |

# 1. Introduction

QLD Aus Graphite Pty Ltd (the proponent) is seeking environmental approvals to develop the Esmeralda Graphite Project (the Project), located approximately 70 kilometres (km) south of Croydon within the Croydon Shire Council (CSC) local government area (LGA).

Attexo Group Pty Ltd (Attexo) was engaged by the proponent to undertake a social impact assessment (SIA) for the Project. The purpose of an SIA is to identify and assess potential social impacts on local and/or regional communities that may be affected by a project, including how impacts identified (both positive and negative) may be mitigated or enhance, as well as monitored.

This SIA forms part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project being prepared under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act) and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017* (SSRC Act).

## 1.1 Project overview

The proposed Project involves mining of the Esmeralda Granite Unit and on-site concentration of graphite ore within Mining Lease Application (MLA) 100431 and MLA 100430. The Project is located in the rural locality of Esmeralda within the Croydon LGA, with Croydon the nearest outback town (Figure 1.1).

The Project involves extraction of up to 3.5 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of Run-of-Mine (ROM) ore, with a total of approximately 170 Mt of graphite ore to be mined over the operational life of the Project. The proposed life-of-mine (LOM) is approximately 65 years, including construction (2 years), operation (53 years), and final rehabilitation (10 years).

The main components of the Project as shown in Figure 1.2 include:

- open-cut mining of approximately 3.5 Mtpa of ROM ore, using conventional surface mining equipment (excavator, trucks, dozers, drill rig, grader) or equivalent.
- construction and use of a ROM pad for ore stockpiling and handling of ore.
- construction and operation of a Mineral Processing Plant, including an initial crushing and milling circuit, followed by a conventional flotation circuit consisting of rougher and flotation stages.
- product load-out area for stockpile and loading of graphite concentrate.
- construction of dedicated Tailings Storage Facilities for storage of process waste streams.
- construction of an on-site workers accommodation facility, ablutions, and sewage treatment plant.
- construction of an on-site airfield for transport of workers to and from the site.
- construction of a private access road connecting the mine to the public road network at Esmeralda Prospect Road, located within the southern lease application area.
- installation of water management infrastructure including a watercourse diversion, flood levee, dams, drains, and bunds.
- power supply through installation of an on-site solar array and energy storage system with back-up diesel generation and energy distribution infrastructure and grid power when available.
- potable water supply through on-site water treatment and/or importing water to site and supply of processing water from recycled sources on the mine site, including pit dewatering groundwater abstracted to enable the mining operations.

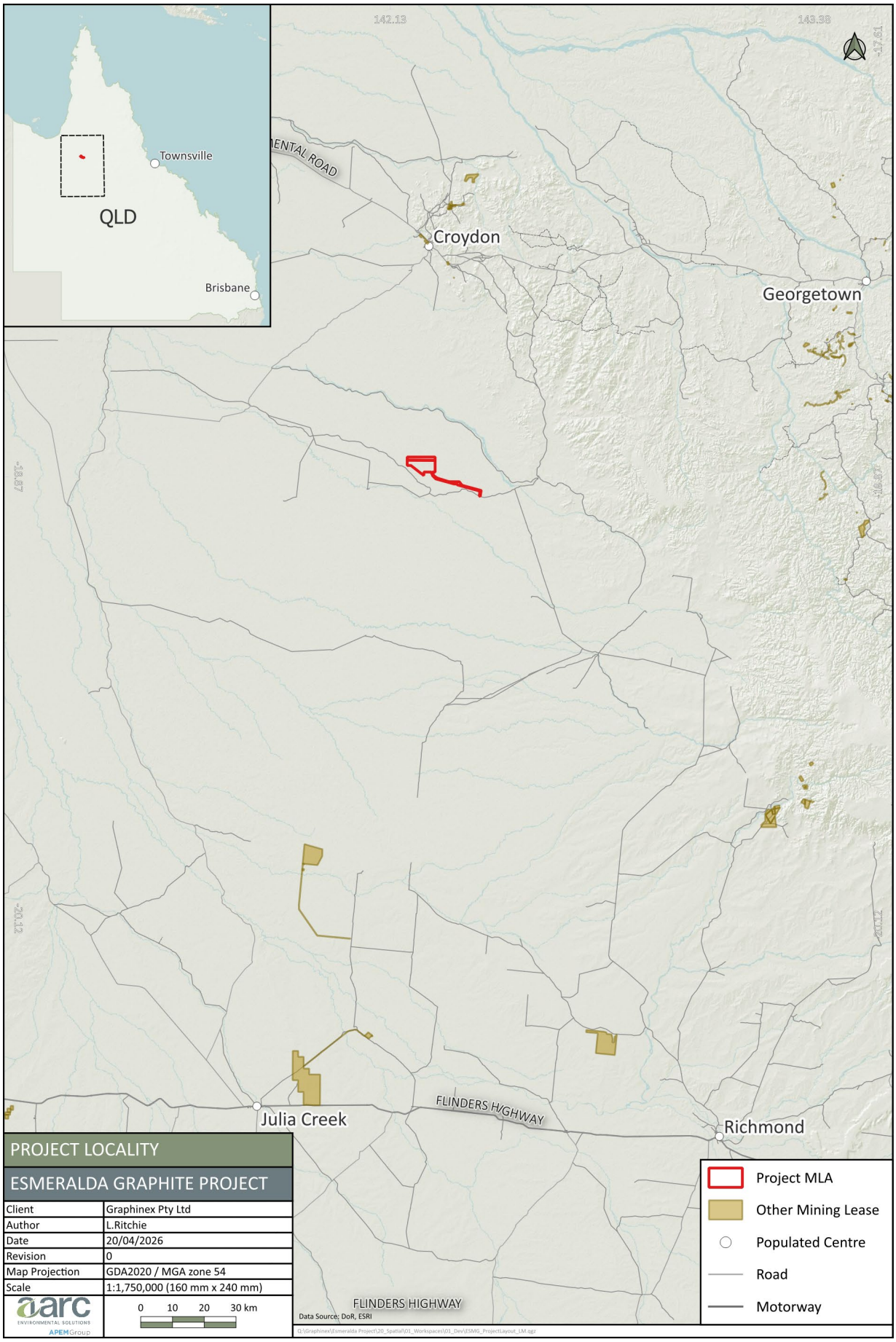



Figure 1.1: Project location

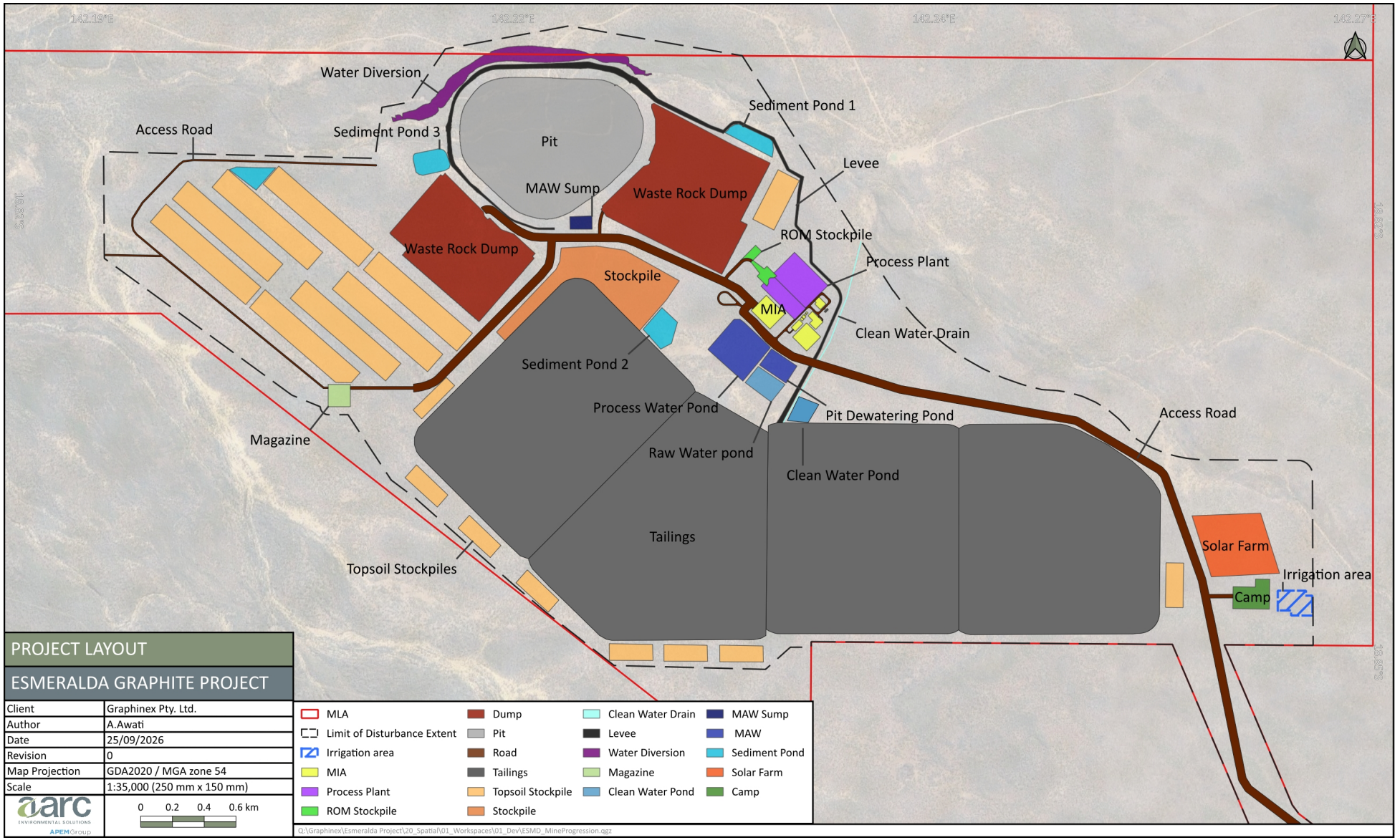



Figure 1.2: Project layout

Extracted ROM ore will be hauled to the mineral processing plant for stockpiling and processing via conventional floatation methods. On-site processing of ore will produce 100 ktpa of graphite concentrate during the first three years of operations before increasing to approximately 200 ktpa of graphite concentrate for the remainder of the Project operational life.

Low-grade ore will be stockpiled separately for processing later in the mine life, as ore reserves begin to deplete in the in the pit. Processing of low-grade stockpiles will continue post-mining, economically supporting the backfilling and rehabilitation of the mining void.

Graphite concentrate from the processing plant will be transported via B-double trucks on a dedicated haul road within MLA 100431 connected to the Esmeralda Prospect Road, located south-east of the mine. Road trains from the Project will travel south to Richmond then connect onto the Flinders Highway heading east to the Port of Townsville.

Table 1.1 provides a summary of key Project phases including approximate timing.

Table 1.1: Project phases

| Approximate timeframe | Project phase |
|---|---|
| Year -2 to Year -1 | **Construction** – Project site works commence and is expected to occur over a period of approximately 2 years. This includes pre-strip, topsoil stockpiling, development of on-site accommodation, mine infrastructure area and mine-access road, and waste/overburden removal in Year -1. |
| Year 1 | **Operation** – mining production commences, processing up to 100 ktpa concentrate. |
| Year 3 | Ramping up to full production of 200 ktpa graphite concentrate. |
| Year 28 | Fourth and final tailings storage facility constructed. |
| Year 35 | In-pit waste backfill commences on small scale.<br>Ex-pit tailings will be progressively reclaimed to fill the large pit void. |
| Year 46 | In-pit waste backfill ramped up |
| Year 48 | **Mining operations progressively cease**. Plant and vehicle movements continue, associated with use of any remaining stockpile through to year 53. |
| Year 54 - 63 | **Decommissioning and rehabilitation** – decommissioning and removal of infrastructure, final rehabilitation and ongoing environmental monitoring and maintenance works. |

Rehabilitation will occur progressively, with areas of waste rock dumps and tailings cells becoming available for rehabilitation late in the Project life. Following the cessation of operations, a period of 10-years is anticipated for the removal and rehabilitation of non-retained infrastructure and rehabilitated landforms.

Refer to EIS Chapter 4: Project Description, for additional Project description details.

### 1.1.1 Construction

The construction phase is anticipated to commence within 12 month of approvals being obtained and would occur over a period of approximately two years.

The Project is expected to support a construction workforce of up to approximately 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers, with the main workforce categories involving civil works, MPP construction, site building and infrastructure construction, equipment assembly, and accommodation village construction and management.

During construction, the likely occupations required is anticipated to include:

- earthmoving plant operators

- structural steel and welding trade workers
- electrical trade workers
- professionals including geologists, managers, safety officers, engineers and environmental scientists
- concreters, and
- construction and mining labourers.

The construction workforce will comprise a mix of local and non-resident workers. However, due to the remote location of the Project as well as workforce constraints within surrounding communities (i.e., availability of skilled workforce, low population density, and predominantly an agriculture-based region), it is anticipated that the majority of the construction workforce would likely be sourced externally from outside the Croydon LGA.

The construction hours are anticipated to be 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a planned workforce roster comprising 12-hour day/night shifts.

An onsite accommodation village will be established to accommodate the construction workforce due to the remote location of the Project and absence of alternative accommodation options available within a safe daily driving distance. Prior to the commencement of main construction works, the small workforce involved in site establishment and preparation activities would be accommodated in temporary mobile accommodation based onsite.

### 1.1.2 Operations

The operations phase is currently assumed to commence in 2029/2030 (subject to timing of receiving all required approvals) and would occur over approximately 53 years.

At peak production, an operational workforce of up to 192 workers is anticipated, with approximately 128 workers engaged for mine operations and the remaining estimated 64 workers engaged for surface infrastructure operations including mineral processing and other site works.

During operations, the likely occupations required are anticipated to include

- machinery plant and truck operators
- process plant operators
- tradespeople including diesel fitters, boiler makers and electricians
- engineers, surveyors, geologists
- health, safety, environment, human resources, and mine management professionals
- administrative staff.

The operational workforce will comprise a mix of local and non-resident workers. It is anticipated that greater than 95% of the operational workforce will fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) to the Project and less than 5% will drive-in-drive-out (DIDO) from the surrounding areas.

Operational hours are anticipated to be 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a planned workforce roster comprising 12-hour day / night shifts. Various operational roster options are currently being examined including equal time rotation 8 days on and 6 days off and 7 days on 7 days off. Local operational workers may be on a 5 days on and 2 days off roster with 12-hour day shifts.

The majority of both the construction and operational workforce is anticipated to commute via air travel from Brisbane and/or North Queensland to a purpose-built airfield of the Project site. It is likely that some of the workforce may travel via light vehicle (with or without carpooling) from within the Croydon, Carpentaria or Richmond LGAs to the Project.

During operation, the workforce will be accommodated in the on-site accommodation village located in the southern section of the Project area. The accommodation village will have a capacity to accommodate up to 200 workers, but under normal conditions will be occupied by approximately 113 persons. The village will include sleeping quarters and associated facilities, including an adjacent sewage treatment plant. Bus transport will be provided between the accommodation village and mine site.

# 2. Methodology

This section describes the methodology used to undertake the SIA. The approach adopted was tailored to meet the requirements of the SIA Guideline (DSDIP 2025). Key steps in the SIA process include scoping, baseline analysis, community and stakeholder engagement, assessment of impacts (both positive and negative), identification of impact mitigation and benefit enhancement measures (collectively referred to as management measures).

The SIA also informs the preparation of the Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP), which include details on proposed management measures identified through the SIA and provides a practical basis for their implementation and monitoring. The key steps in the SIA process are described below.

## 2.1 Scoping

A range of activities were completed as part of the SIA scoping phase to enable proportionate depth and scope consideration of potential social impacts and benefits of the Project. These activities included:

- Determining the regulatory context applicable to the SIA.
- Understanding key Project aspects including workforce, accommodation and infrastructure requirements.
- Profiling of potentially affected and/or interested stakeholders.
- Preliminary identification of potential social impacts and benefits from the Project.
- Defining the SIA study area.

Outcomes of the scoping phase informed the subsequent phases in the SIA, including community and stakeholder engagement activities, baseline analysis, and the impact assessment.

## 2.2 Baseline analysis

Social baselines describe the existing social conditions and trends within a defined study area. The aim of the baseline is to concisely document current socio-economic characteristics within the study area and provide a benchmark against which potential social impacts (positive and negative) can be identified, assessed, and monitored.

A range of primary and secondary sources was used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to inform the baseline, including (but not limited to):

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for Census, population, and economic data.
- Queensland Government Statisticians Office (QGSO) for population projections and regional profiles.
- Australian Government sources for quarterly labour force and unemployment estimates (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) as well as insights on skills and occupation shortages and projections (Jobs and Skills Australia).
- SQM Research and real estate platforms (e.g., realestate.com.au) for housing market insights and dwelling availability and affordability trends.
- Literature from local and state government sources (e.g., Julia Creek/Richmond Critical Minerals Zone Baseline Study, Queensland Housing Strategy Local Housing Action Plans) as well as industry and academic research.
- Desktop mapping tools for locational data on available social infrastructure.
- Outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement (SIA specific engagement and Project engagement undertaken by the proponent) for insights on community values, aspirations, challenges, and concerns associated with the Project. Qualitative data obtained from engagement was also used to verify desktop research.

## 2.3 Community and stakeholder engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement plays an integral role in the SIA process. Inputs from the community and stakeholders facilitate a better appreciation of the local social context and play a key role in informing the assessment of potential social impacts and development of management measures.

Key principles guiding this SIA's community and stakeholder engagement process included being participatory, inclusive, respectful, meaningful and tailored (DSDIP 2025). The engagement process commenced during the scoping phase with the identification and profiling of stakeholders and their interests in relation to key matters stipulated in the SIA Guideline (DSDIP 2025).

The primary method of engagement was through semi-structured individual discussions (remotely via phone and Microsoft Teams) with targeted stakeholders primarily in Croydon and Normanton. Individual discussions were generally structured with the aim of:

- providing stakeholders with an understanding of the Project, including current environmental approval processes being undertaken
- understanding stakeholder perceptions and attitudes about the Project
- enabling stakeholders to share local insights and knowledge of their community
- collecting stakeholder input on potential social impacts and benefits relating to the Project, including how impacts could be managed and benefits enhanced.

Engagement activities undertaken to inform the SIA were conducted in accordance with good ethical practice and informed consent was obtained from participants to confirm they understood that participation was voluntary and confidential.

Outcomes of SIA engagement are presented in Section 4, with stakeholder input incorporated throughout the report where relevant and referenced.

## 2.4 Impact assessment

The purpose of the impact assessment is to identify and assess the potential social impacts (both negative and positive) associated with a project. The SIA Guideline defines social impacts as the "*issues that affect people and the potentially impacted communities in which they live as a result of the project*" (DSDIP 2025).

Identification of impacts involves both subjective and objective judgment to determine what is likely to occur due to the Project and its associated activities. Potential social impacts were identified through an analysis of:

- the nature of Project activities
- socio-economic baseline characteristics of potentially affected communities
- outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement activities
- findings from other relevant technical assessments prepared for the EIS.

Identified impacts in this SIA were determined and assessed based on the latest Project information available and socio-economic context at the time of SIA drafting. It is recognised that identified and assessed impacts may change over time as Project details are further refined (post environmental assessment process) or with changes to socio-economic conditions or stakeholder perceptions.

As stipulated in the SIA Guideline, the assessment of impact must consider impact significance, which is an analysis of the extent to which potentially impacted stakeholders and communities may be affected positively or negatively. The significance of identified social impacts was first assessed based on their anticipated likelihood and magnitude levels (Appendix A) prior to the implementation of any management measures. Once the likelihood and magnitude level of a potential impact is established, the significance rating of a social impact is determined through the impact significance matrix in Table 2.1, developed with reference to the impact significance matrix presented in the *New South Wales Technical Supplement Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects* (DPHI 2025).

Table 2.1 Social impact significance matrix

| Likelihood level | Magnitude | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal | Minor | Moderate | Major | Transformational |
| Almost certain | Low | Medium | High | Very High | Very High |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Likely | Low | Medium | High | High | Very High |
| Possible | Low | Low | Medium | High | High |
| Unlikely | Negligible | Low | Low | Medium | High |
| Very unlikely | Negligible | Negligible | Low | Medium | Medium |

In line with the SIA Guideline, management measures were developed with consideration of stakeholder feedback for all potentially significant social impacts identified. Relevant management measures from other EIS technical studies were also leveraged to manage specific impacts (e.g., traffic, economic, noise) with a strong social impact component or interest. Where necessary, supplementary social management measures were further proposed.

Cumulative impacts may be experienced by a community when multiple projects are being developed within a similar timeframe. Potential drivers for cumulative social impacts in relation to the Project are likely to include labour force capacity and sourcing as well as traffic and transport movements. Projects considered in the cumulative impact analysis included proposed resource projects located within the LGAs of Croydon, Carpentaria, and Richmond, with likely scheduled overlaps with Project construction (assumed from 2027) and operations (assumed from 2029/2030). It should be noted that there was limited publicly available information about the proposed projects considered in the analysis. It should be noted that the cumulative analysis was based on limited public information available at the time of SIA drafting.

## 2.5 Social impact management plan

Directly informed by the SIA, a SIMP was developed to document the identified social impacts and corresponding management measures proposed. The SIMP provides a practical basis for the implementation of management measures and includes a monitoring framework to support adaptive management of social impacts throughout the Project's lifecycle.

The SIMP includes five sub-plans in line with the key SIA matters:

- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Workforce Management Plan
- Housing and Accommodation Plan
- Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan
- Health and Community Wellbeing Plan.

Each sub-plan details how the proponent will manage social impacts including timeframes for implementation, roles and responsibilities, and potential stakeholder partnerships for implementation of management measures. A monitoring program is also provided with key component including impacts addressed, desired outcomes, performance indicators, mechanism for monitoring, and the timing and frequency of monitoring.

A separate SIMP document was prepared and consistent with this SIA forms part of the EIS for the Project.

## 2.6 Assumptions and limitations

The following limitations and assumptions apply to this SIA:

- A key data source for the social baseline is the latest ABS Census of Population and Housing. While the census is a comprehensive record of the Australian population, the responses are self-enumerated (subject to a degree of inaccuracy) and represents a snapshot of the population at a particular point in time (latest census was completed in 2021 and now relatively dated, with the next census scheduled for the latter half of 2026). Additionally, the 2021 Census occurred during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when varying restrictions were enforced which may have impacted upon the socio-economic characteristics and trends recorded.
- Social infrastructure identified in the social baseline predominantly comprises government-provided facilities or services. It is recognised that local communities are likely to access some services through private providers, for which data is not always publicly available.

- Primary data collection through stakeholder engagement is based on the knowledge, perception, and experience of the participant and while providing a valuable perspective, they may not be fully representable of the views of the broader stakeholder group or all community members.
- During SIA engagement, notes were recorded by the Project team in attendance with engagement discussions and outcomes summarised as accurately as possible (not verbatim).
- Latest socio-economic datasets are not always available for smaller statistical geographies, such as the regional service centres (may be limited to only 2021 Census data). Any interpretation and inferences from data of smaller statistical geographies should generally be undertaken with caution (greater data uncertainty risks) and should not be generalised (small sample size constraints).
- SIA engagement was completed virtually through Microsoft Teams and phone calls with stakeholders in Croydon and Normanton.

# 3. SIA scoping

The scoping phase supports the early identification of potential social impacts and frames the scope and scale of the SIA. This section outlines outcomes of the range of activities completed during the scoping phase for this SIA.

## 3.1 Regulatory framework

The State statutory and policy framework relevant to informing the scope of the SIA are outlined below.

### 3.1.1 State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971

The SDPWO Act provides a framework for rigorous impact assessment involving whole-of-government coordination for projects of economic, social and/or environmental significance to Queensland. The Coordinator-General administers the SDPWO Act and has wide-ranging powers to plan, deliver and coordinate large-scale projects in Queensland, while ensuring their environmental impacts are properly managed (Queensland Government 2020).

Under Part 4 of the SDPWO Act, the Coordinator-General may declare a project a 'coordinated project' for which an EIS is required. An EIS for a coordinated project must address the terms of reference (TOR) issued by the Coordinator-General.

The Project was declared a coordinated project on 11 July 2025 and is required to complete an EIS process under the SDPWO Act. The final TOR for the Project was issued in September 2025, setting out the matters to be addressed in the Project's EIS. Table 3.1 outlines the specific 'social' matters stipulated in the final TOR for the Project including relevant SIA sections where the matter is addressed.

Table 3.1: Project EIS TOR, social requirements

| TOR reference | Requirement | Relevant SIA section |
|---|---|---|
| **20. Social** | | |
| 20.1 | Describe the project within the legislative context of the Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017, including provisions for large resource projects | Section 3.1 |
| 20.2 | Prepare a social impact assessment for the project consistent with the relevant requirements in the SIA Guideline and SIA Supplementary Material. | All sections of this SIA as well as the separate SIMP prepared for the Project |
| 20.3 | The SIA is to be developed in consultation with the Office of the Coordinator-General. The SIA is to describe the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) of the project and must identify relevant and effective impact mitigation and benefit enhancement measures. | |

The SIA has been prepared in accordance with the final TOR issued for the Project.

### 3.1.2 Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017

The SSRC Act sets out consistent mandatory requirements for an SIA under the SDPWO Act and *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act).

The object of the SSRC Act is to ensure that residents of communities near large resource projects benefit from the construction and operation of the projects. The key provisions under the Act are:

- Prohibition of 100 per cent fly in, fly out (FIFO) workforce arrangements on operational large resource projects.
- Prevention of discrimination against locals in the future recruitment of workers.
- Requirement for an SIA during the assessment process.

A large resource project undergoing an EIS process under either the SDPWO Act or *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act) are required to complete an SIA in accordance with the SIA Guideline (DSDIP 2025).

As defined in Schedule 1 of the SSRC Act, a 'large resource project' is a resource project for which an EIS is required or that holds a site-specific environmental authority under the EP Act and has a workforce of 100 or more workers[1]. The Project meets the definition of a large resource project under the SSRC Act.

The 100 per cent FIFO prohibition and anti-discrimination provisions of the SSRC Act applies to a large resource project that has a 'nearby regional community'.

As defined in Schedule 1 of the SSRC Act, a 'nearby regional community' means a town[2] that:

- is located within a 125km radius of the main access to the Project or a greater or lesser radius decided by the Coordinator-General; and
- has a population of more than 200 people or a smaller population decided by the Coordinator-General.

As defined in Schedule 1 of the SSRC Act, a 'town' in relation to a large resource project, means an area listed as a locality or urban centre by the ABS and published on its website. Croydon is not listed as a locality or urban centre by the ABS.

Based on initial desktop mapping, the Project does not appear to have a 'nearby regional community' as per the definitions under the SSRC Act. While the outback town of Croydon is within a 125 km radius of the Project and had a population of 215 people recorded at the 2021 Census, Croydon is listed as a suburbs and localities (SAL) by the ABS, not a locality or urban centre.

### 3.1.3 SIA Guideline and Supplementary material

The SIA Guideline (DSDIP 2025) outlines the details that must be addressed in an SIA and is structured according to five key matters:

- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Workforce management
- Housing and accommodation
- Local business and industry procurement
- Health and community well-being.

As stipulated in the SIA Guideline, management measures identified through the SIA process must be documented in a SIMP. The SIMP comprises sub-plans attributed to each key matter and provides a practical basis for the implementation and monitoring of management measures.

Supporting the implementation of the SIA Guideline is the *Supplementary material for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects under the SIA Guideline* (Supplementary Material) (DSDIP 2025). The non-statutory Supplementary Material provides additional guidance on general requirements as well as considerations relating to each key matter in the context of the phases in the SIA process. Informing all components of the SIA is the community and stakeholder engagement process and the consideration of First Nations people.

## 3.2 Stakeholder profile

Stakeholder profiling and analysis was undertaken to identify relevant groups and stakeholders who may potentially be affected by Project activities, or may have an interest in or influence over, matters addressed in the SIA. Table 3.2 provides an overview of the stakeholder analysis based on potential interest and influence considerations for each stakeholder group, in relation to each key SIA matter. These stakeholders were regarded as in scope for potential SIA engagement.

[1] Or has a smaller workforce decided by the Coordinator-General and notified in writing by the Coordinator-General to the owner of the project.
[2] Town in relation to a large resource project means an area listed as a locality or urban centre by the Australia Bureau of Statistics and published on its website.

Table 3.2: Stakeholder identification

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | CSE | WM | HA | LBIP | HCW |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local government | • Croydon Shire Council<br>• Carpentaria Shire Council<br>• Richmond Shire Council | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Landholders | • Host (Esmeralda Station)<br>• Neighbouring | ● | ● | | | ● |
| Traditional owners | • Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| State government agencies | • Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP) – OCG<br>• Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism – Cairns Far North Queensland region<br>• Queensland Police Service (QPS)<br>• Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS)<br>• Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) and State Emergence Services (SES)<br>• Queensland Health Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (HHS)<br>• Queensland Government Agent Program (QGAP) | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Local business and industry groups | • Croydon Gulf Gate BP Roadhouse<br>• Croydon Centre Supermarket<br>• Croydon Club Hotel<br>• She Boss Connections<br>• TWT Rural Services<br>• Pickering Earthmoving<br>• Kickin' Kitchen (food truck)<br>• Gulf Savannah Development Inc.<br>• Regional Development Australia (RDA) Townsville and North West / Tropical North<br>• Gulf Regional Economic Aboriginal Trust | ● | ● | | ● | |
| Health and emergency services | • Croydon police station<br>• Croydon Rural Fire Brigade<br>• Croydon Primary Health Centre<br>• Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) – Cairns<br>• Normanton Primary Health Care Centre | ● | ● | | | ● |
| Education and training providers | • Croydon State School<br>• Croydon Day Care Centre<br>• Normanton State School<br>• Gulf Christian College (Normanton) | ● | ● | | | ● |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | CSE | WM | HA | LBIP | HCW |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social services and community groups | • VisitCroydonQLD<br>• True Blue Visitor Information Centre<br>• Croydon Men's Shed<br>• Croydon Heritage Preservation Association<br>• Croydon Library<br>• Croydon Swimming Pool<br>• Gulf Savannah NRM / Southern Gulf NRM<br>• QCWA Normanton | ● | | | | ● |
| Housing and accommodation providers | • Croydon Club Hotel<br>• Croydon Caravan Park<br>• Racecourse Rest (formerly Freedom Camping) | ● | | ● | ● | |
| Other project proponents | • Jubilee Metals | | ● | ● | ● | |

Note: CSE – Community and Stakeholder Engagement; WM – Workforce Management; HA – Housing and Accommodation; LBIP – Local Business and Industry Procurement; HCW – Health and Community Wellbeing.

## 3.3 Preliminary identification of potential social impacts

Preliminary identification of potential social impacts and benefits associated with the Project during construction and operation was completed with consideration of anticipated project activities and preliminary understanding of potentially impacted communities. Outcomes from the preliminary identification completed is summarised in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Preliminary identification of potential social impacts and benefits

| Project phase | Project activity | Potential project impact / benefit | Potentially interested stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Workforce management** | | | |
| Construction/ Operation | Employment generation | Employment opportunities | Local and regional communities<br>Local government<br>Local business and industry groups<br>Education and training providers |
| | Provision of skills development and training opportunities | Training and skills development opportunities | |
| | Remote working environment and accommodation | Workforce health, safety and well-being risk factors (e.g., fatigue, mental health, stress) | Health and emergency services |
| **Housing and accommodation** | | | |
| Pre-construction | Influx of non-resident workers to establish on-site camp | Temporary demand for short-term accommodation<br>Reduced availability of short-term accommodation for tourists and visitors | Housing and accommodation providers<br>Local community |

| Project phase | Project activity | Potential project impact / benefit | Potentially interested stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operation | Workforce demand for residential accommodation | Changes to availability and affordability of residential accommodation – if there would be operational workers living in town (e.g., managerial roles) | Local and regional communities<br>Local government |
| **Local business and industry procurement** | | | |
| Construction/ Operation | Generation of supply and procurement opportunities | Supply and procurement opportunities | Local and regional businesses<br>Local businesses and industry groups<br>Local government |
| | | Increase in local business patronage | |
| | Employment generation and labour demand | Reduced availability of labour and skills for other businesses | |
| **Health and community wellbeing** | | | |
| Construction | Transporting workers, material and equipment | Increased road safety risks and disruptions | Neighbouring landholders<br>Local government<br>Health and emergency services |
| | Construction activities | Noise and dust emissions | Host and neighbouring landholders |
| Construction and operations | Project construction and operations | Changes to ecological / environmental value | Local and regional communities<br>Social services and community groups |
| | | Changes to cultural heritage value (e.g., disruptions to sites and landscapes of cultural heritage significance) | Traditional Owners |
| | | Changes to land use and existing agriculture activities | Host and neighbouring landholders |
| | | Increase in community investment opportunities – sponsorship, grants, funding, etc | Local community<br>Local government<br>Social services and community groups |
| Construction and operations | Influx of non-resident workers to the local area | Increase in demand and pressure on social and physical infrastructure | Local community<br>Local government<br>Social services and community groups<br>Health and emergency services |
| | | Changes to community cohesion | |
| | | Community anxiety and stress due to change and uncertainty in their surroundings | |
| Operations | New resident workers | Potential for increase in resident population | Local community<br>Local government<br>Social services and community groups |

| Project phase | Project activity | Potential project impact / benefit | Potentially interested stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project end of life | Decommissioning and closure | Closure impacts (e.g., loss of employment, population outflow) | Local government<br>State government |

## 3.4 SIA study area

The SIA study area is identified based on the geographic areas and communities likely to experience changes to social conditions as a result of the Project. Matters that have been considered in determining the SIA study area include:

- the nature and scale of the project, including associated infrastructure
- the scope of potential social impacts throughout the project lifecycle
- the location and characteristics of potentially impacted communities, including existing population centres as well as labour and service centres
- local and regional transport and connectivity networks, including workforce fatigue management requirements.

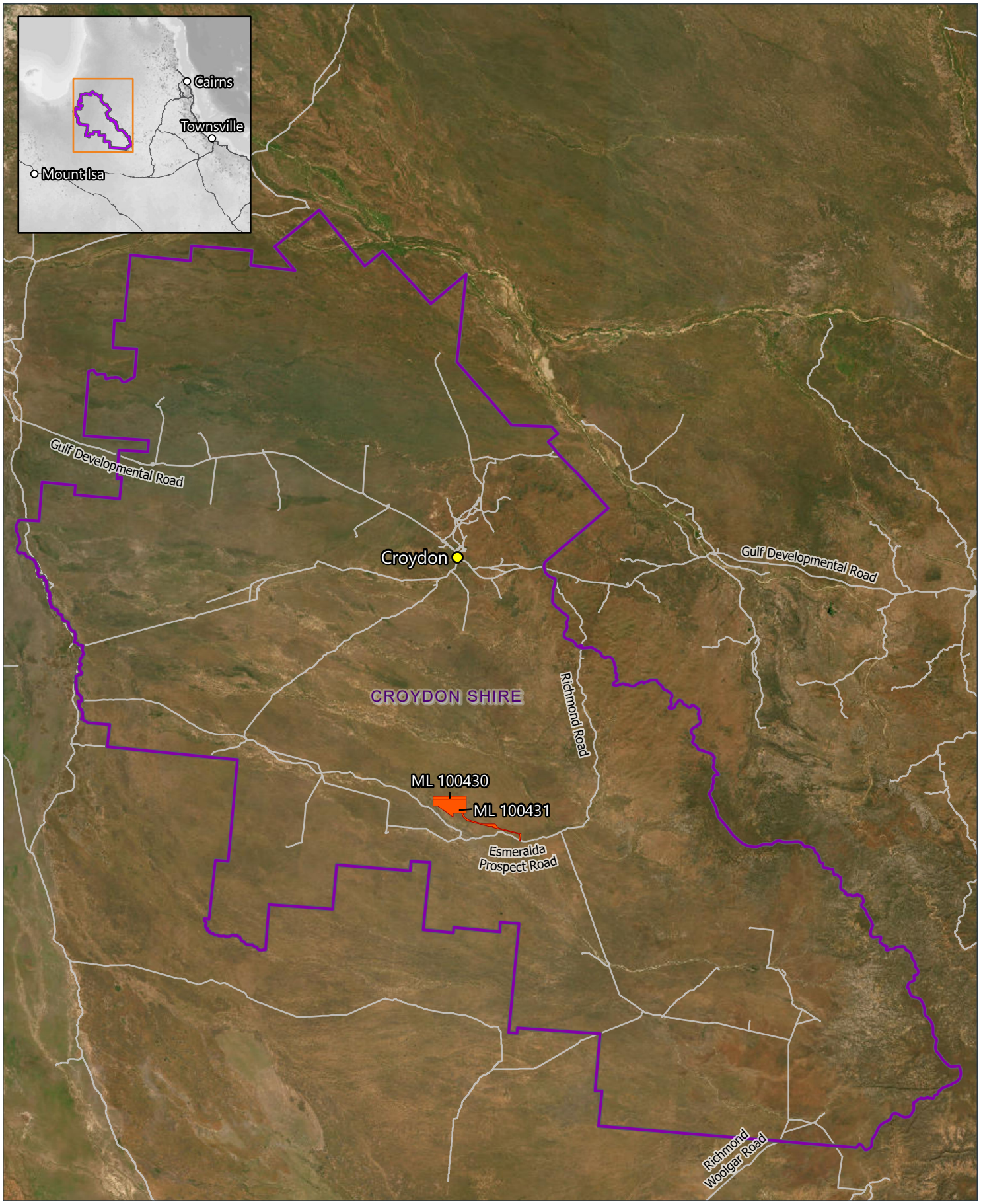
The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) provides a framework of statistical areas used by the ABS and other organisations to capture demographic and socio-economic data. The statistical geographies adopted for the SIA study area include urban centres and localities (UCL) and LGA.

The study area determined for this SIA are outlined in Table 3.3. and illustrated in Figure 3.1and Figure 3.2.

Table 3.4: SIA study area

| Study area | Statistical geography | Relevance to Project |
|---|---|---|
| Local | Croydon LGA | The local study area encompasses the entirety of the Project site, Esmeralda Station, and Croydon township which are all located within the Croydon LGA. The outback town of Croydon is the closest community to the Project and the main population and administrative centre in Croydon LGA.<br>Croydon LGA is most likely to experience any direct impacts and benefits from the Project. |
| Regional service centres | Normanton UCL<br>Richmond UCL<br>Townsville UCL<br>Cairns UCL | The four communities are considered regional service centres for the Project and Croydon residents.<br>Normanton and Richmond are the nearest regional service centres.<br>• Normanton is a larger centre than Croydon, a key centre for the gulf region, and a potential source of workers and services for the Project.<br>• Richmond is a key centre along the Project transport route from Townsville. Richmond Woolgar Road is a key connector route between Richmond and Croydon.<br>Townsville and Cairns are large population and service centres for the North and Far North Queensland regions.<br>• Townsville provides port access and is anticipated to host additional supporting infrastructure for the Project.<br>• Cairns is an established service centre for the Croydon community where residents access good and services including healthcare.<br>The regional service centres are potential sources for labour, goods and services for the Project. |

| Study area | Statistical geography | Relevance to Project |
|---|---|---|
| Regional | LGAs of Croydon, Richmond, Carpentaria | The regional study area includes the host LGA as well as the adjacent LGAs encompassing the nearest regional service centres of Normanton and Richmond. |




# Local study area

## Figure 3.1

Project MLA
Croydon township
Local Study Area
Roads

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**DATE:** 24/04/2026
**DRAWN:** KB
**REVIEWED** JL
**SCALE (A4):** 1:1,400,000

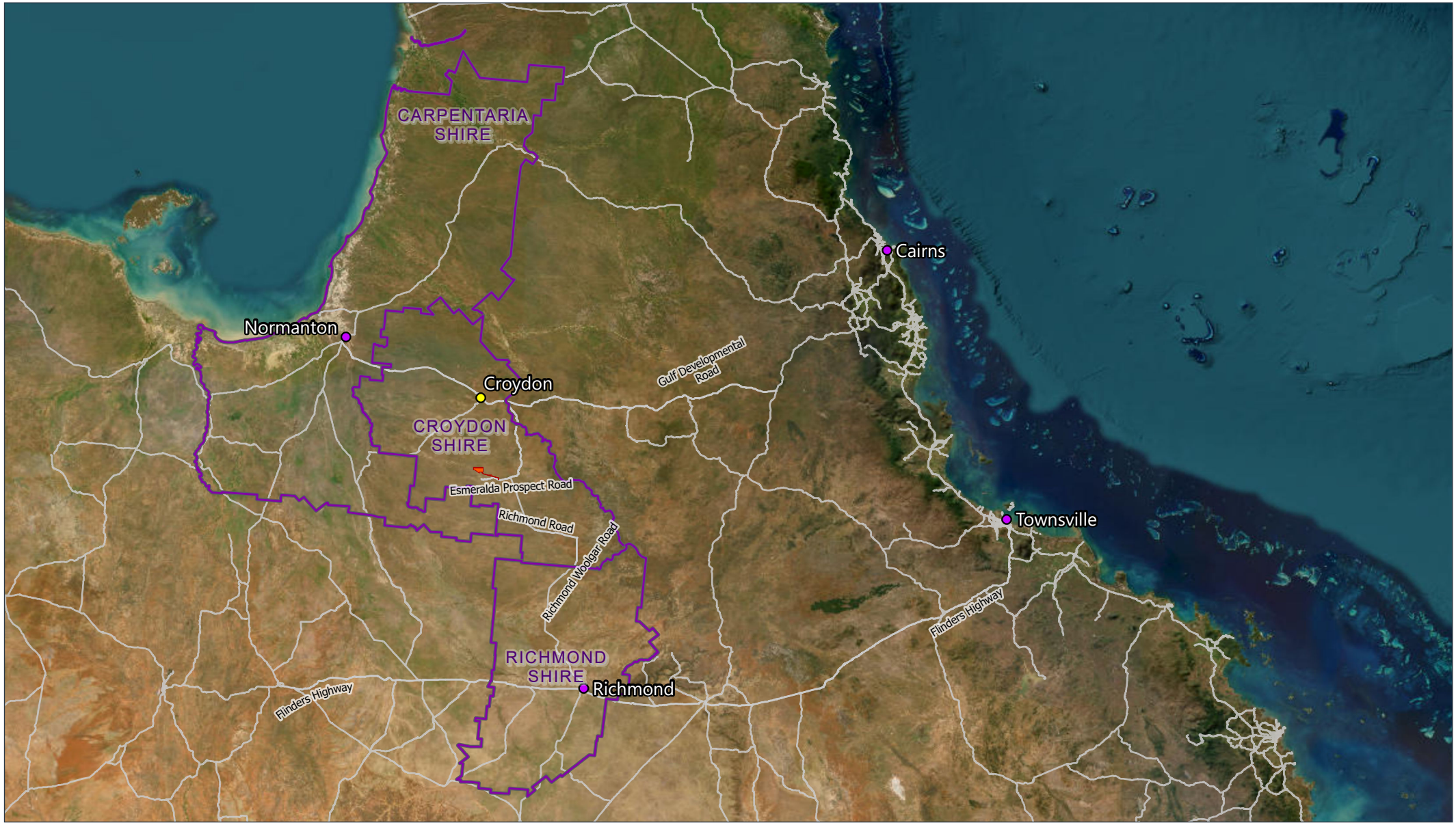
N

0 km 30

GDA2020

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# Regional service centres and regional study area

## Figure 3.2

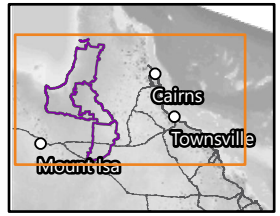
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**DATE:** 21/04/2026
**DRAWN:** KB
**REVIEWED** JL
**SCALE (A4):** 1:5,000,000

N

0 km 100

GDA2020

Project MLA
Regional Study Area
Regional service centres
Croydon township
Roads




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# 4. Community and stakeholder engagement

Targeted SIA engagement was undertaken between late March and early April 2026. A total of 22 stakeholders were engaged across 13 individual and group meetings conducted in-person and online via Microsoft Teams. The aim of this engagement was to garner an understanding about community perceptions relating to the Project including potential social impacts and benefits, and community benefit sharing opportunities.

Stakeholders engaged during this period included:

- Croydon Shire Council
- Croydon Rural Fire Brigade
- Croydon Gulf Gate BP Roadhouse
- Croydon Men's Shed
- Croydon Club Hotel
- Croydon State School
- Croydon Primary Health Centre
- State Emergency Service
- Normanton Airport Accommodation & Vehicle Hire
- Gulf Regional Services
- Rural Flying Doctor Service
- Bynoe Community Advisory Advancement Cooperative Society
- Gulf Regional Services.

This engagement was in addition to Project-wide engagement that was undertaken by Graphinex (see EIS Chapter 7 Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement).

## 4.1 Key findings

A summary of some of the key findings from the engagement with stakeholders as part of the SIA includes the following:

- There is some awareness about the Project within the Croydon community, yet a strong desire for more information and for knowledge about the Project to become more widespread amongst the community, through more Project engagement.
- In general, the Croydon community is supportive of the Project and is pleased to see that the Project is progressing at Esmeralda Station.
- The town of Croydon and the broader region is extremely seasonal, with rains and flooding limiting access and economic activity over the wet season.
- The existing housing constraints in the town of Croydon and the broader region including Normanton was a widely raised theme in SIA engagement. Stakeholders noted the difficulty in attaining rental accommodation and the implications this has for attracting and maintaining workers in the region. Despite this, the potential for the Project to draw people to the town of Croydon was highly valued.
- Local people want to see local benefits. Stakeholders engaged for the SIA acknowledged that the Project is distant from Croydon yet still expect to see benefits for the town.
- There is a desire for the proponent to be proactive in facilitating opportunities for interaction of the Project with the town of Croydon. This may include local employment or business opportunities, or interaction of the workforce with the town (e.g. through bussing of the workforce into town for events or other occasions).
- Stakeholders in both Croydon and Normanton expressed keen interest in the potential for training and local employment. This was seen as of particular interest for young people, First Nations populations, and those seeking career or employment changes. The distance of the Project to town was not viewed as an impediment

to potential employment opportunities for Croydon residents. Within the regional study area, there are training, employment support services and labour hire in Normanton that can assist with linking local people to the Project's employment opportunities. It was stressed that the proponent will need to be genuine in their approach to local and regional employment.

- There is a limited number of businesses in Croydon (machinery operators, quarry, tyre businesses) that could supply services to the Project. There is a greater number of businesses in Normanton that may be able to supply relevant services. Local or regional businesses could also develop over time to meet the needs of the Project.
- The Project will need to be largely self-sufficient for health and emergency responses. Drawing on local services would result in loss of access for locals due to resource constraints and long travel distance considerations.
- There are key risks associated with the road network in the region, principally relating to limited access due to flooding, and dangers of wildlife and unsealed roads. The potential for the Project to contribute to road improvements along the Richmond-Croydon Road was seen as a key Project benefit.
- High level of interest was expressed in the potential for community investment. There are many community organisations in town that could benefit.
- Suggested engagement mechanisms for the Project included having an open forum or BBQ. Anything that allows Project personnel to talk to local people in a relaxed setting.

Table 4.1 presents an overview of SIA engagement undertaken, including details about matters discussed and key issues raised by stakeholders.

Table 4.1: Summary of SIA engagement and outcomes

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Local government | Croydon Shire Council | Video meeting | • Limited knowledge about the Project – have been provided limited information.<br>• Acknowledged that impacts to community are likely limited to road traffic on Richmond Road.<br>• Project will need to be self-sufficient for health and emergency response – drawing on local services would result in loss of access for locals due to resource constraints and long travel distance considerations.<br>• Fuel reserves will be required on site in the event a rescue helicopter is dispatched for incident response at the Project.<br>• Consideration of an annual community benefit fund to support Croydon (e.g., sponsorship for local groups, community infrastructure investment, support local events etc). Important for projects to be involved in the community and supporting community groups.<br>• Potential for workers and their families to relocate to Croydon – contributes to flow on benefits. Contributing more housing stock would be very well received by the town.<br>• Project to consider establishing a register to enable local residents to register their interest / capacity to supply the project (e.g., local housing, earthworks, fencing, landscaping, etc). |
| Education and training providers | Croydon State School | Video meeting | • Community perception that the town is missing out from the Project – not much impact or benefit. Some community scepticism with historical gold project proposed 30 years ago that did not eventuate – some sceptical about Jubilee Metal's proposed gold mine north of town.<br>• Community would like to see Croydon grow with workers moving into town with partners and families (more people and money helps with population growth and supporting the school).<br>• No incentive for kids to do well locally unless they leave for bigger cities or coast region. Most young people that leave the region do not return.<br>• Community quite conscious about air and water quality – environmental impacts from the Project will need to be appropriately managed.<br>• Potential workforce competition – concerns that better pay attributed to mining would result in reduced workforce for other industries or employers. Cumulative consideration with Jubilee Metal project also commencing.<br>• Opportunities for local employment and people to live in Croydon will be beneficial. However available labour in Croydon is quite small. |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | • Other ways the Project could benefit the community include workforce spending in town, sponsorships, infrastructure investment, collaboration with school, and helping community better access goods and services. |
| | Bynoe Community Advisory Advancement Cooperative Society | Video meeting | • Bynoe delivers many community, youth, social support, housing and training services in Normanton and the broader gulf region.<br>• There are severe housing constraints in Normanton, a lot of overcrowding.<br>• Employment is seasonal in the region. Wet season (December to March) effectively closes access to town by car and any road works. This also affects employment.<br>• Recommended to hold community and business briefings in Normanton, Croydon, Karumba. |
| Business and industry groups | Croydon Gulf Gate BP Roadhouse | Phone conversation | • General perception that the town is pro-mining however sceptical about potential Project benefits with it located so far away from town.<br>• Generally high tourist traffic at the business up till Easter, along with patronage from some locals, outside contractors as well as seasonal cattle station feeder trucks.<br>• Big wet seasons over the past five years, with exceptional rainfall during the most recent wet season. Croydon cannot be accessed during the wet season (part of life in the region) and can be very isolated for many months while flood water slowly recedes out the gulf.<br>• Housing shortage in town with supply to be further constrained when Jubilee Metal's gold mine starts up.<br>• Anything the Project can do to interact with town would be beneficial such as opportunities for local employment, local businesses, Indigenous training.<br>• Support for local groups through sponsorships or donations (a little can go a long way in the region). |
| | Normanton Vehicle Hire | Phone conversation | • Normanton is as a regional transit hub, particularly for government and corporate travellers to Croydon and surrounding areas.<br>• Accommodation issues are widespread across the Gulf and are a major constraint on local business viability and workforce retention**.** Chronic workforce shortages, particularly skilled trades (e.g. mechanics).<br>• Small local operators cannot compete with large national companies on pricing due to higher costs (insurance, maintenance and repair), remoteness, economies of scale, contracting model favouring large contractors (bulk service supply). |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | • Past projects promised local jobs but delivered minimal long-term local employment. Job advertisements at other mines were perceived as disingenuous, with unrealistic criteria that effectively enabled FIFO employment.<br>• Project-related housing acquisition risks worsening existing housing shortages in Normanton and Croydon. Loss of housing affects local services (health, hospitality, small business).<br>• Potential opportunity for local people with previous mining experience (e.g. from New Century Mine) if Project recruitment is genuine.<br>• Existing Indigenous training pathways through Bynoe Indigenous Corporation, including civil works tickets, forklift licences, and machinery operation. |
| | Gulf Regional Service | Video meeting | • GRS has grown rapidly in recent years and provides labour hire, wet hire, machinery and operators, with clients across the Gulf region.<br>• About 70-75% of their workforce is Tagalaka people. About 95% of the workforce are localpeople. About 80% are Indigenous.<br>• Main work is civil construction – most of their employees (about 70%) are ex-Century Mine workers.<br>• Very seasonal nature of economic activity in the region.<br>• Housing issues in the region are a key impediment to economic development for the business and the region. |
| | Gulf Savannah Development | Video meeting | • Roads are a key impediment to economic growth in the region (e.g. the Gilbert River Bridge going under in the wet season), limits access to the coast. This impacts on liveability, attracting regional workforce etc.<br>• Electricity is another key impediment to growth with frequent brownouts.<br>• Housing is the other key limitation.<br>• Use of the region's infrastructure would support socio-economic growth for Croydon and the region. If the project used the Croydon airstrip that would be a huge benefit for the town.<br>• 100% FIFO adds nothing to the town/region.<br>• Questioned the potential for the Project to use the Karumba port, even down the track when/if there are improvements to the port. |
| Housing and accommodation provider | Croydon Club Hotel | Video meeting | • Long history of deposits being discovered and projects being proposed in the region, however nothing has eventuated. General positivity that there appears to be something happening in the region. |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | • The Croydon community does not really know much about the Project (limited knowledge and awareness). General perception that there would be limited Project impacts on Croydon with proposed Project transport going south towards Richmond.<br>• No surplus housing in Croydon and rental accommodation is very hard to obtain. Difficult for prospective residents / workers to find local housing.<br>• Not much employment opportunities in Croydon – Council, some contractors, and tourism businesses are the main employers.<br>• Some people in Croydon and surrounds may benefit from employment and flow on effects. Harsh working conditions in the region but some locals could be interested in gaining employment.<br>• Concerned about lack of workforce interaction with Croydon community – participation in local events or community groups and spending in town is highly valued. |
| Health and emergency services | Croydon Primary Health Centre | Video meeting | • During the wet season, road access to the mine is often cut, increasing reliance on RFDS or helicopter retrievals from Cairns. Stations in the region generally call RFDS if they need assistance – stations usually have a RFDS medical kit.<br>• The mine is expected to increase presentations for acute conditions and injuries, rather than routine healthcare, as mine workers are expected to access primary care (e.g., prescriptions, health checks, etc) through their home GPs.<br>• Expects the Project would need (as a minimum) a qualified medic / paramedic on site to manage workforce health and wellbeing – potentially also an onsite nurse with peak operational workforce over 150 workers.<br>• Bushfires, flooding, animals on roads, long travel distances, dirt roads, and fatigue are key risks for both mine workers and responders.<br>• Emergency planning, preparedness, drills, and coordination with SES and RFDS highlighted as critical.<br>• Potential risk that council and essential service staffing could be affected if residents shift to mining employment.<br>• Project a potential opportunity to support community health, wellbeing, and social activities, particularly given the region's poorer-than-average health outcomes (e.g. lower life expectancy, higher rates of smoking and alcohol use). Sponsorship of events and health-promoting initiatives would be strongly welcomed. |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Croydon Rural Fire Brigade | Video meeting | • Community generally positive about mining occurring in the region but do not want to see companies only take and leave a mess behind for the community to manage.<br>• Croydon community does not really know much about the Project (limited knowledge and awareness).<br>• Project contact with the town is extremely important to boost the local economy – major cash flow potential for the town as long as there are opportunities for the Project and Croydon to interact.<br>• 65 year mine life is ample of time to plan and establish initiatives, programs, etc for the community.<br>• Esmeralda prone to bushfires (major fires every couple of years). Good wet season this year resulting in high fuel load and upcoming fire risk.<br>• Critical for the Project to have comprehensive onsite emergency protocols / plan. High expectation for Project to have good incident response capacity and capability onsite with existing town services providing backup support.<br>• Ways the Project could benefit the community include local employment, apprenticeships/traineeships, support for community groups, and new residents. |
| | SES Far North Region | Video meeting | • Truck fires can be an issue particularly through the summer. National trucking organisations will have standards / expectations around fatigue management on roads.<br>• Croydon Shire Council can add weight limits to dirt roads during wet season that may prevent truck movements for the project. Some roads are closed during wet season to help maintain condition.<br>• Project workers with lots of money in town could create friction with the community.<br>• Project airfield should be designed to be capable of supporting emergency helicopter services. Helicopters that fly in from Cairns to attend to site incidents will need to refuel for the return journey.<br>• Local businesses would need significant lead time to prepare for any increase in order to cater to the Project.<br>• An increase in population in Croydon presents an opportunity to increase SES volunteer group, which in turn increases capacity of the road safety rescue group. Incentives to encourage workers to live locally. |

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Engagement approach | Key issues raised / matters discussed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural Flying Doctors Service | Phone conversation | • RFDS delivers a weekly clinic to service the community. Fortnightly, there are GP, antenatal, child health service provided.<br>• Further engagement with RFDS is required to clarify details around the potential for RFDS to service to mine site, in the event of emergencies. |
| Social services and community groups | Croydon Men's Shed | Phone conversation | • Local people would be attracted to the job potential with this project. People have worked for the same company/org all their life, so it is good to have another option.<br>• People work away on shifts now (i.e. with the road camps) and would be attracted to the potential to camp on site and have good internet.<br>• The Project should use local businesses from town – two tyres centres, quarry, and three major earth moving contractors.<br>• Croydon-Richmond road very dangerous – soft road shoulders and mainly single lane. Improvements on the road would be very appreciated by Croydon people, as they get stuck in wet season.<br>• Project will need to have on-site facilities and capabilities. Long travel distance and time for the ambulance from town.<br>• Concern that benefits such as community sponsorships, while appreciated do not compensate for lack of genuine employment or housing solutions. |

# 5. Social baseline

This section provides an overview of the existing socio-economic context across the study areas. A detailed analysis of key characteristics and trends across the study area as well as data referenced is provided in Appendix C**.**

## 5.1 Socio-economic planning context

The local and regional planning context provides important insights into community values, priorities and aspirations. Table 5.1 provides an overview of socio-economic strategies and plans relevant to the study areas based on the latest publicly available documents at the time of SIA development.

Table 5.1: Local and regional policy and planning context

| Plan / strategy | Description |
|---|---|
| Queensland Critical Minerals Prospectus 2026 (DNRMMRRD 2026) | The prospectus highlights high potential investment ready critical minerals projects in Queensland across various development stages. Critical mineral opportunities in Queensland include (but not limited to) copper, vanadium, silica, rare earth elements, high-purity alumina and graphite.<br>The Project is identified as a prospective investment opportunity in the prospectus, seeking offtake, debt, equity and/or strategic partnership. |
| Croydon Economic Development Strategy (Croydon Shire Council 2023) | The strategy provides the foundation for sustainable growth, fostering innovation, job creation and enhanced community wellbeing that is to be achieved through strategic partnerships and targeted investment with the Croydon region.<br>Existing regional strengths highlighted in the strategy include strong agricultural industry, liveability, and strong community, while growth opportunities identified include tourism, construction, and mineral mining opportunities. The Project has the potential to contribute to growth opportunities in the region (mineral mining) as well as local employment and procurement opportunities. |
| Croydon Shire Council Priority Economic Projects (Croydon Shire Council 2023) | Key economic projects identified in the strategy include Gilbert River Bridge raising; realignment of Samwell and Sircom street intersection; installation of doppler weather radar station; mountain bike trail network development; water park; creation of local housing; and support to maintain level of education services.<br>There is the potential for the Project to support CSC with key economic projects identified for the region further delivering benefits for the Croydon community. |
| Queensland Housing Strategy 2021-2025 Local Housing Action Plan – Croydon Shire Council (Croydon Shire Council 2023) | Developed to respond to housing challenges in the Croydon LGA, the plan provides an overview of key community and housing characteristics, emerging challenges, and an initial set of targeted actions for priority housing needs.<br>Informed from stakeholder input, key focus areas identified include housing availability (land options and housing needs); private rental markets (availability and affordability); social housing supply (increasing demand); employee housing (Council and State Government staff housing needs); and cohort specific housing (youth, homelessness, crisis housing). Development of the Project will need to appropriately consider and manage any potential impacts on local housing. |

## 5.2 Traditional Owners

The Project is within the traditional country of the Tagalaka People, which covers various lands in the Gulf Savannah region around the townships of Croydon, Normanton and East Hayden. The Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation registered native title bodies corporate (RNTBC) administers land on behalf of the Tagalaka People (Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation 2026). Native title was determined to exist on 10 December 2012 (Federal Court file no QUD6020/2001) with native title existing in parts of the determination area, including the MLA for the Project.

Additionally, native title exists across Croydon LGA as per the claims and determinations outlined below:

- Tagalaka People #2 (Federal Court file no QUD6109/1998) – determined 10 December 2012, native title exists in parts of the determination area (area around Croydon township).
- Gkuthaarn and Kukatj People (Federal Court file no QUD29/2019) – determined 29 September 2020, native title exists in parts of the determination area spanning the Carpentaria and Croydon LGAs.
- Kurtjar People (Federal Court file no QUD483/2015) – determined 26 July 2022, native title exists in the entire determination area spanning the Carpentaria, Croydon, and Mareeba LGAs.

During SIA engagement, it was highlighted that Croydon comprises a high First Nations population, with cultural and social ties to Normanton.

## 5.3 Community profiles

### 5.3.1 Local study area

The local study area is comprised of the Croydon Shire LGA and includes the outback township of Croydon. The Croydon Shire is located just south of the base of the Gulf of Carpentaria in Far North Queensland and encompasses an area of 29,538 square kilometres. The shire is landlocked, surrounded by the Carpentaria, McKinlay, Richmond, Etheridge and Tablelands LGAs, and the landscape is predominantly savannah grassland country, with low rolling hills.

Croydon town has its roots in both the pastoral and mining industries. Gold was discovered in the 1880s and the town quickly grew around this goldrush. Now the town serves as a small centre for its resident and surrounding populations.

In 2024, the Croydon LGA was home to 270 people (ABS, 2025). Most of this population lives in Croydon town, with the remainder living on pastoral properties (Croydon Shire Council, 2022). The median age of the shire's population is 41 years (ABS, 2021). Other key features of the population include the presence of a significant Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population (28.6%), a high proportion of males (52.5%) to females (47.5%), and a high proportion of one-parent families (28.3%) and lone persons households (37.5%) relative to the State (16.8% and 24.7% respectively) (ABS, 2021). The population of the shire has been contracting over the past decade (ABS, 2025).

At the 2021 Census, the Croydon LGA had a small housing stock of 213 dwellings, with lower levels of dwelling occupancy and homeownership relative to Queensland. There was a high level of rented dwellings exhibited in 2021 (ABS, 2021), and more recently (February 2026), there was a very low vacancy rate (0.3%), indicating an extremely tight rental market (SQM Research, 2026).

At the 2021 Census, Croydon LGA had a small labour force of 137 persons, with a comparable labour force participation rate (62.6%) and a higher rate of unemployment (8.0%) relative to Queensland (61.6% and 5.4% respectively). The First Nations labour force in Croydon was 24 persons in 2021, with a participation rate of 57.1% and unemployment rate of 20.8%. Local government administration was the main industry of employment for residents across Croydon (34.9% of the population). Other key industries of employment included beef cattle farming, road bridge construction and primary education (ABS, 2021).

The Croydon LGA economy is predominantly driven by agriculture (specifically cattle grazing) and supported by other key contributing industry sectors including tourism and public administration. In 2024, the Croydon LGA economy generated an estimated $43.35 million in output, with public administration and safety the largest contributor accounting for 31.7% of total output (REMPLAN, 2026).

In June 2025, a limited number of businesses were actively trading in Croydon LGA (35 businesses) (ABS, 2025). The industry with the largest number of registered businesses in June 2025 was agriculture, forestry and fishing, accounting for 42.1% of businesses in Croydon LGA, followed by the construction industry with 23.7% (QGSO, 2026).

Services and amenities hosted within Croydon are limited, but include a health service, police station (open limited hours), ambulance vehicle, and a rural fire brigade and State Emergency Service (SES) unit staffed by volunteers. There is also a hotel, roadhouse, caravan park, café and small supermarket, and heritage precinct. Lake Belmore is also a key natural and recreation asset for the town.

### 5.3.2 Regional service centres study area

#### Normanton

Normanton is an outback town and the administrative centre of the Carpentaria Shire LGA. Established on the Norman River, Normanton was historically the port for the Croydon Gold Rush and a terminus of the Normanton to Croydon Railway line built in the 1890s (OQTA 2026).

In 2024, Normanton was home to a small estimated resident population of 1,414 persons, with two fifths of the population comprising residents aged 24 years or younger (children and youth) and a median age of 31 years (QGSO 2026). Relative to Queensland, the Normanton population is characterised by a high proportion of one parent families (one-third of all families), family households, and a notably high proportion of residents (almost 60%) who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (ABS 2021).

The large majority of Normanton residents lived in separate houses (86.5%) in 2021, with around two-thirds of occupied dwellings rented (ABS 2021). Homeownership in Normanton is low with Carpentaria Shire Council, Bynoe (community housing provider), Gidgee Healing and the State Government representing the major property owners (Carpentaria Shire Council 2022). Latest vacancy data indicates an extremely tight rental market in Normanton with a vacancy rate near/at 0.0% in February 2026 (SQM Research 2026).

Normanton comprised a small labour force of 529 persons in 2021, with a lower labour force participation rate (54.9%) and a notably higher rate of unemployment (10.2%) relative to Queensland (61.6% and 5.4% respectively) (ABS 2021). The top three industries of employment for Normanton residents were local government administration (13.4%), combined primary and secondary education (8.1%) and primary education (6.2%). Century Mine located in the neighbouring Burke Shire LGA was a major employer, with Normanton the largest source of First Nations employees for the mine (Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining 2004). The most prevalent occupations of Normanton residents in 2021 included professionals, community and personal service workers, clerical and administrative workers, and technicians and trades workers (ABS 2021).

Services and amenities hosted in Normanton include a hospital and medical centre, pharmacy, primary and secondary schools, an airport, emergency services (police, ambulance, fire and rescue), aged care service, early childhood facility, grocery store and supermarket, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, short-term and workforce accommodation options, and a small range of community facilities and services.

#### Richmond

Richmond is a rural town and the administrative centre of the Richmond Shire LGA. The town was surveyed in 1882 and was historically an important transit point on the Cobb and Co coach route transporting miners to the gold field at Woolgar (Centre for the Government of Queensland 2018).

In 2024, Richmond was home to a small estimated resident population of 467 persons, with almost one third of the population comprising residents aged 24 years or younger (children and youth) and a median age of 38 years (QGSO 2026). Relative to Queensland, the Richmond population is characterised by a comparable proportion of families with children, a marginally higher proportion of families without children, and a higher proportion (almost 10%) of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (ABS 2021).

The majority of Richmond residents lived in separate houses (88.4%) in 2021, with almost two-thirds of occupied dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage (ABS 2021). Latest vacancy data indicates an extremely tight rental market in Richmond and surrounds with a vacancy rate near/at 0.0% in February 2026 (SQM Research 2026).

Richmond comprised a small but economically active population in 2021 with a higher labour force participation rate (65.3%) and notably lower rate of unemployment (1.7%) relative to Queensland (61.6% and 5.4% respectively) (ABS 2021). The top three industries of employment for Richmond residents were local government administration (27.0%), beef cattle farming (7.1%) and combined primary and secondary education (6.2%). The most prevalent occupations included machinery operators and drivers, labourers, managers, and technicians and trades workers (ABS 2021).

Services and amenities hosted in Richmond include a multipurpose health service and pharmacy, an airport, railway station, emergency services (police and fire and rescue), a state school (primary/secondary), petrol stations, early childhood facility, short-term accommodation options, small supermarket, and a small range of community facilities and services.

### Townsville

Townsville is a city located within the City of Townsville LGA and a key regional population and service centre for North Queensland. The city was founded in 1864 as a port for the emerging pastoral industry in North Queensland and progressed into a key place for commerce and commodities following the discovery of gold in Ravenswood and Charters Towers (Centre for the Government of Queensland 2018).

In 2024, Townsville was home to an estimated resident population of 183,126 persons, with over one-third of the population comprising residents aged 24 years or younger (children and youth) and a median age of 36 years (QGSO 2026). Relative to Queensland, the Townsville population is characterised by a high proportion of families with children and one parent families, residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, and lone person households (ABS 2021).

The majority of the Townsville residents lived in separate houses or flats/apartments at the 2021 Census, with around 58.0% of occupied dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage (ABS 2021). Latest vacancy data indicate a tight rental market in Townsville city with a vacancy rate of 1.8% in February 2026 (SQM Research 2026).

Townville comprises an economically active population with higher labour force participation (63.9%) and a marginally lower rate of unemployment (5.2%) compared to Queensland as a whole (61.6% and 5.4% respectively) in 2021 (ABS 2021). Key industries in Townsville include agriculture (sugar cane, fruits and vegetables), mining and resources (major metals refining base and export hub for the North West Minerals Province), health and education services, government administration and defence, construction, retail trade, and property and business services (Townsville City Council 2026).

As the major administrative and service hub for North Queensland, Townsville city hosts a wide range of essential services including public and private hospitals and medical facilities, public and private primary and secondary schools, tertiary education facilities, emergency services (police, ambulance, fire and rescue), early childhood facilities and aged care services. Amenities available include retail and entertainment precincts, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, short-term accommodation options, and several community facilities and services. Key infrastructure in Townsville include a major regional airport (domestic flights only) and the largest port in Northern Australia.

### Cairns

Cairns is a city located within the Cairns Regional Council LGA and a key regional population and service centre for the Tropical North Queensland and Cape York regions. The Cairns region comprises good quality agricultural land and areas of high ecological significance, with Cairns city providing an important gateway to the Great Barrier Reef (Cairns Regional Council 2026). The region also provides an important gateway to the nearby Atherton Tablelands, Daintree and Wet Tropics rainforest, and the outback Savannah region beyond the Great Dividing Range.

In 2024, Cairns was home to an estimated resident population of 162,960 persons, with the population primarily comprising residents between the ages of 25 to 64 years (working age adults) and a median age of 39 years. Relative to Queensland, the Cairns population is characterised by a high proportion of one parent families, residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, and lone person and group households (ABS 2021).

The majority of Cairns residents lived in separate houses or flats/apartments at the 2021 Census, with around 60.0% of occupied dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage (ABS 2021). Latest vacancy data indicate a tight rental

market in Cairns city (and surrounding inner-suburbs) with a vacancy rate of 0.8% in February 2026 (SQM Research 2026).

Cairns comprises an economically active population with slightly higher labour force participation (62.6%) and a marginally higher rate of unemployment (5.8%) compared to Queensland as a whole (61.6% and 5.4% respectively) in 2021 (ABS 2021). The region's economy has historically been dependent on sugar growing and farming around the Atherton Tableland although tourism is now the dominant industry. Other key industries in Cairns include aviation, construction, education and training, health care and social assistance, manufacturing, arts and culture, and marine and defence.

As a key regional service centre, Cairns city hosts a large range of services including public and private hospitals and medical services, major regional airport (both domestic and international flights), multi-purpose regional port, public and private primary and secondary schools, tertiary education facilities, emergency services (police, ambulance, fire and rescue), aged care services, early childhood facilities, retail precincts, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, short-term accommodation options, and several community facilities and services (including those servicing the broader Far North Queensland region).

### 5.3.3 Regional study area

The regional study area comprises the three LGAs of Croydon, Carpentaria and Richmond. Covering a total land area of approximately 120,199.7 $km^2$, the regional study area is located on the traditional lands of the:

- Tagalaka People (Croydon LGA).
- Gkuthaarn, Kukatji and Kurtijar Peoples (Carpentaria LGA).
- Wunumara, Mbara and Yirandhali Peoples (Richmond LGA).

Land use within the regional study area predominantly comprises pastoral farming (cattle grazing), nature conservation (e.g., Tagalaka National Park, Staaten River National Park) and rural residential (.idcommunity 2025).

In 2024, the regional study area was sparsely populated with a small estimated resident population of 3,287 persons. Limited population growth is projected for the study area, with an estimated population of 3,545 residents by 2046 reflecting an average annual growth rate of 0.4% which is significantly lower than the 1.4% anticipated for Queensland as a whole (QGSO 2026).

A younger population profile is exhibited by the regional study area population with a median age of 35 years and a higher proportion of residents (over one-third) aged 24 years of younger (children and youth) compared to Queensland. Overall, the regional study area is characterised by a higher proportion of families without children (41.0%) and one-parent families (22.0%), a higher proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (32.1%), and a higher proportion of multiple family (3.3%) and lone person (30.1%) households relative to Queensland (QGSO 2026).

The top three industries of employment for the regional study area are agriculture, forestry and fishing (accounting for 27.0% of employed persons), public administration and safety (14.7% of employed persons), and education and training (8.5% of employed persons). Latest quarterly labour market estimates indicate a relatively small labour force (1,481 persons) and a high rate of unemployment (9.7% compared to Queensland's 4.0%) in the regional study area during September 2025 quarter (QGSO 2026).

# 6. Impact assessment

This section discusses the potential social impacts and benefits which may occur as a result of the Project and assesses the significance of identified impacts based on potential changes to current baseline social conditions with the Project proceeding.

The identification of potential impacts was informed by current socio-economic baseline conditions, findings from community and stakeholder engagement activities, findings from other technical assessments, comparative studies, and Project information provided by the proponent. The anticipated significance of each potential impact was determined by assessing likelihood and magnitude levels based on the impact significance matrix detailed in Section 2.4. It is important to note that the identification and assessment of potential positive and negative social impacts involves both objective (technical) and subjective (experiential) judgment.

Proposed mitigation and benefit enhancement measures (collectively referred as management measures) are presented alongside the corresponding impact. The development of management measures was informed by insights from stakeholders during SIA engagement, measures identified in other technical studies undertaken for the Project, industry practice, as well as lessons learned from comparable projects.

Identified impacts as well as responding management measures are presented under the relevant key SIA matters, with potential impacts associated with community and stakeholder engagement incorporated under the health and community wellbeing matter.

## 6.1 Workforce management

Workforce management matters include impacts relating to the recruitment, as well as the health and well-being of the workforce. The potential workforce management impacts of the Project include:

- Increase in employment opportunities.
- Increase in training and skills development opportunities.
- Changes to workforce physical and wellbeing risk.
- Workforce wellbeing impacts from redundancies due to ramp down and closure.

### 6.1.1 Employment opportunities

The Project would generate direct employment opportunities during both the construction and operation phases. Project construction is anticipated to generate a peak workforce of up to 100 workers over a two-year period while at peak production, an operational workforce of 192 workers will be required.

Construction of the Project will be delivered by a construction contractor(s) and will likely require specialist activities. However, it is likely that there will also be some opportunities for more general civil construction activities. This may provide some opportunities for local or regional employment through procurement of local/regional businesses (see Section 6.3.1).

For operations, the proponent will endeavour to maximise employment opportunities for residents in Croydon, Normanton and the broader region where feasible. However, it is acknowledged that is it likely that a large proportion of the workforce would comprise of non-resident workers from outside the region (DIDO/FIFO arrangements) due to existing labour and skills constraints.

As detailed in the social baseline, the Croydon LGA labour force is very small with a low rate of unemployment (2.5% during December 2025 quarter) based on latest figures. The top industries of employment of local residents are local government administration, beef cattle farming, road bridge construction and primary education.

SIA engagement with stakeholders in Croydon revealed much interest in the potential for local employment with the Project. Stakeholders noted that the Project will bring another employment option for local people, and this was noted as being of particular benefit for young people, First Nations people and other local people who may be looking for a career or employment change. It was also noted that the local people will likely have to stay at the on-site accommodation camp for the duration of their shifts and this was not seen as a barrier, as many local people

work away on extended shifts for current employment (e.g. when working on road crews). Stakeholders engaged for the SIA in Normanton also viewed the Project's employment potential positively. There are employment support services in Normanton that can assist with linking local people with Project opportunities. It was noted during consultation that there are many people in Normanton (and the broader region) who have experience working at Century Mine.

Engagement also revealed that it is important for the proponent to be genuine in their approach to local employment, and the importance that this can have on building the Project's social license. Experience with other mines in the broader North-West region suggests that some past projects have promised local jobs but have delivered minimal long-term local employment, and this impacts on the local and regional community's perceptions about the projects.

It should also be noted that over the life of the Project, the proponent may roll out the use of alternative technologies within the mine site that would reduce the number of workers required for operations. For example, the proponent may consider the use of a fully electric conveyor to move extracted material across the site, thereby reducing the reliance on truck movements (and associated workers) for this task.

The potential benefit of an increase in employment opportunities for both the construction and operational phases is assessed as **low** significance (possible and minor) without consideration of management measures.

To proactively deliver positive training outcomes, the proponent will further develop and implement management measures in the Workforce Management Plan including:

- Recruitment hierarchy prioritising employment in the following order: Croydon LGA residents; Carpentaria and Richmond LGA residents; broader North and North West Queensland residents; rest of Queensland.
- Staggered recruitment and use of various channels to promote Project opportunities (e.g., Jobs North West, project website, local noticeboards/newsletters, etc).
- Collaborate with construction and principal operations contractor to deliver apprenticeships and/or traineeships (contracting expectation).
- Collaborate with employment and training providers to facilitate access to Project opportunities (e.g., school and industry-based partnerships, strategies to reduce First Nations employment barriers, etc).

With effective implementation of measures, the residual significance for the construction phase is assessed as **medium** (likely and minor) and for the operations phase is also assessed as **medium** (possible and moderate).

### 6.1.2 Training and skills development

The Project represents a potential source of training and skills development opportunities during its long operational life. These opportunities could particularly benefit young people, people seeking to transition into the resources industry, and people from underrepresented groups.

SIA engagement revealed that there are limited education (no secondary school) and employment (mainly agriculture and local government) opportunities for young people in Croydon. Engagement with Croydon State School identified that there are limited incentives for young people to do well locally, with many leaving the region to access opportunities, and not returning.

Workforce and First Nations training opportunities were identified during SIA engagement as ways that the Project could benefit the local community. Some stakeholders noted that when the previous gold mine was operating, training opportunities from this mine really benefited the community (e.g., with local labourers gaining skills that enabled them to move into managerial positions).

Stakeholders also noted an opportunity to tap into existing First Nations and other local and regional training opportunities including those provided through Bynoe CACS and Gulf Regional Services (e.g., civil works tickets, forklift licences, and machinery operation).

Some training opportunities may be available during the construction phase however this will be dependent on the main construction contractor and likely to be limited due to the shorter timeframe relative to the operations phase.

The potential benefit of an increase in training and skills development opportunities during operations is assessed as **low** significance (possible and minor) without consideration of management measures.

To proactively deliver positive training outcomes, the proponent will:

- work with the principal contractor(s) to deliver annual apprenticeship and/or traineeship opportunities.
- collaborate with employment and training providers to facilitate access to Project opportunities (e.g., school and industry-based partnerships, work-experience, graduate program).

With effective implementation of measures, the residual significance is assessed as **medium** (likely and minor).

### 6.1.3 Workforce wellbeing

There is the potential for risk factors that affect workforce wellbeing, such as changes in fatigue, anxiety, isolation and stress levels, to increase as a result of Project accommodation arrangements (quality and service provisions) and physical working conditions (remoteness and isolation).

As noted in the social baseline (Appendix C), there is considerable research on the unique workforce wellbeing risks and impacts from DIDO/FIFO arrangements in the mining industry. Most findings generally indicate higher incidences of psychological distress (i.e., fatigue, burnout, anxiety, depression) amongst workers on FIFO arrangements compared to the general population. Families of workers may also be vulnerable to stresses and challenges from disruptions to family life and routine as well as additional responsibilities from operating as a single parent while partners are away on shift. While it is acknowledged that FIFO work arrangements may be common practice in the mining industry, potential workforce wellbeing implications remain relevant and a subject for consideration, particularly with the remote context of this Project.

The Project site is set within a remote landscape surrounded by grazing land, with Croydon being the closest town located approximately 70 km north (straight line distance) and at least 90-minutes by road. As highlighted by local stakeholders during SIA engagement, working conditions in the Croydon region can be difficult with harsh climatic conditions year-round which include intense heat, significant humidity, major flooding and prolonged isolation during the wet season. The most recent wet season was consistently highlighted as a major event with exceptional rainfall and extended periods of isolation for the Croydon and Normanton communities due to road closures from flooding. Stakeholders also noted the presence of existing hazards along the Croydon-Richmond and Esmeralda Prospect roads including rough road conditions (exacerbated during wet conditions) and wildlife encounters.

Given these factors, potential risks to the physical and mental wellbeing of the workforce during both the construction and operations phases is assessed as **high** significance (**possible** and of **moderate** magnitude).

To minimise potential workforce health and wellbeing risks, the proponent will establish a Health and Safety Management System for the Project with provisions including:

- relevant Project policies and protocols (i.e., fatigue management, site inductions and training, pre-starts/toolbox meetings, safety and operational protocols, remote work risk assessment, etc)
- Workforce Code of Conduct
- onsite mental health support service (e.g., digital mental health service, employee assistance program, etc)
- onsite first aid facility with dedicated advanced first aid qualified personnel
- exploring carpooling arrangements and journey management protocols for the DIDO workforce
- accommodate Project workforce in a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village, including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.

The proponent will also collaborate with local and regional health and emergency service providers (i.e., RFDS, SES, QPS, RFB) to develop a detailed emergency response plan for the Project. The plan would include details around onsite resources and response capacity as well as agreed protocols and training consideration.

With effective implementation of health and safety provisions, the residual significance of the potential risk is assessed as **medium** (possible and moderate) during both Project phases.

### Decommissioning

The Project is estimated to be in operation for approximately 53 years. Mining operations will progressively cease when nearing end of operational life and will involve staged ramp down and associated workforce contraction over several years.

Wind-down and cessation of Project operations will result in the loss of up to 192 operational jobs, which may have the potential to impact the wellbeing of workers and their families affected by the redundancies. Socio-economic conditions, including the labour and employment market, are likely to be substantially different when ramp down activities occur. As such, it will be important for the assessment of closure impacts on workforce wellbeing be reviewed and undertaken within the relevant socio-economic as well as political context at that point in time. Without consideration of management measures, the potential impact on workforce wellbeing from closure is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate).

To manage this potential impact, the proponent will regularly engage with the workforce throughout the operational life of the Project and provide advance notice on the anticipated ramp down schedule including workforce transition strategies. The proponent will also collaborate with relevant stakeholders (including state and local government) around potential mine closure implications closer to that time.

With effective implementation of management measures, the residual impact significance is assessed as **low** (possible and minor).

## 6.1.4 Impact assessment summary

Table 6.1 summarises the potential impacts and benefits identified relating to workforce management. This includes management measures and the evaluated impact significance prior to (preliminary significance) and following the application of management measures (residual significance).

Note in Table 6.1 and all successive impact summary tables, 'SE' denotes site establishment / pre-construction activities, 'C' denotes construction phase, 'O' denotes operation phase, and 'D' denotes decommissioning and rehabilitation.

Table 6.1: Summary of workforce management impact assessment

| Project phase | Social impact | Impact type | Stakeholders | Preliminary significance | Management measures | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | Increase in employment opportunities | Positive | • Croydon, Normanton and Richmond community (including First Nations residents)<br>• Regional service centres – Cairns and Townsville<br>• Croydon and Richmond Shire Councils | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | • Further develop and implement management measures in the Workforce Management Plan including:<br>– Recruitment hierarchy prioritising employment in the following order: Croydon LGA residents; Carpentaria and Richmond LGA residents; broader North and North West Queensland residents; rest of Queensland.<br>– Staggered recruitment advertising and use of various channels to promote Project opportunities (e.g., Jobs North West, project website, local noticeboards/newsletters, etc).<br>– Collaborate with construction and principal operations contractor to deliver apprenticeships and/or traineeships (contracting expectation).<br>• Collaborate with employment and training providers to facilitate access to Project opportunities (e.g., school and industry-based partnerships, strategies to reduce First Nations employment barriers, etc). | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minor |
| O | | | | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate |
| O | Increase in training and skills development opportunities | Positive | • Croydon, Normanton and Richmond community (including First Nations residents)<br>• Training and education providers (regional service centres) | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minor |
| C<br>O | Increase in workforce health, safety and well-being risk factors | Negative | • Project workforce<br>• Health and emergency service providers in Croydon and regional service centres | **High**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Moderate | • Establish Health and Safety Management System for the Project with workforce health and safety provisions including:<br>– Relevant Project policies and protocols (i.e., fatigue management, site inductions and training, pre-starts/toolbox meetings, safety and operational protocols, remote work, DIDO risks and protocols, extreme heat and heat stress, etc).<br>– Workforce Code of Conduct – project site, on road, in community.<br>– Provision of mental health support service on-site (e.g., digital mental health service, employee assistance program, etc)<br>– On-site first aid facility with dedicated advanced first aid qualified personnel.<br>– Explore carpooling arrangements and journey management protocols for DIDO workforce.<br>• Develop a detailed emergency response plan for the Project in collaboration with local and regional health and emergency service providers (i.e., RFDS, SES, QPS, RFB) including onsite response capacity/resource, training, and protocols).<br>• Provide workforce with a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.<br>• Ongoing engagement with health and emergency service providers on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate |
| D | Impact on workforce wellbeing from redundancies due to ramp down and closure | Negative | • Project workforce<br>• Local government<br>• State government | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | • Regular engagement with key stakeholders throughout Project lifecycle including advance notice of Project closure schedule and planned transition activities.<br>• Collaboration with state and local governments regarding workforce impacts due to mine closure. | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor |

## 6.2 Housing and accommodation

Housing and accommodation matters include changes to existing housing availability and affordability within communities from Project workforce accommodation arrangements. The potential housing and accommodation impacts of the Project include:

- Increase in demand on local short-term accommodation affecting accessibility by other users.
- Additional economic opportunities for short-term accommodation providers.
- Decrease in local housing availability and affordability due to demand from relocating Project workforce.

### 6.2.1 Short-term accommodation

During Project construction and operations, the associated workforce will be accommodated in an accommodation village established onsite. Accessing short-term accommodation in Croydon is not expected.

Prior to the commencement of Project construction, a small workforce would be required for site preparation activities including establishing the onsite accommodation village. While the proponent is committed to maximising local employment opportunities, given the small labour force and constrained skilled workforce availability in Corydon, this work is expected to be delivered by specialist contractors from outside the LGA and comprise mainly of non-resident workers. It is expected that most of this workforce will be accommodated onsite in temporary facilities.

As noted in the social baseline, short-term accommodation options in Croydon are limited to mainly the Croydon Club Hotel and two caravan/camping grounds. SIA engagement revealed short-term accommodation in Croydon is mainly used by tourists/visitors as well as visiting tradespersons and contractors during the dry season (typically from April to late September) which coincides with the tourist season and the undertaking of road works in the region. It was also identified anecdotally that at least half of the available short-term accommodation in Croydon is currently being used by the Croydon Gold Mine workforce. Given these factors, any short-term accommodation demand by the Project's site establishment workforce is anticipated to be ad-hoc and very limited given the travel distance between Croydon and the Project site. The potential for Project short-term accommodation demand to negatively affect the accessibility of other users is assessed as **low** significance (possible and minor), prior to application of management measures.

To minimise potential negative Project associated impacts on short-term accommodation in Croydon, particularly during the dry season, the proponent will further develop and implement management measures in the Housing and Accommodation Plan including:

- provision of temporary mobile accommodations onsite during site establishment works.
- provision of a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village for the Project workforce, including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.
- engagement with short-term accommodation providers in Croydon on any potential Project accommodation requirements (if required).

With effective implementation of management measures in the Housing and Accommodation Plan, the residual impact significance of this potential negative impact is assessed as **negligible** (unlikely and minimal).

Project demand for short-term accommodation conversely also has the potential to benefit local short-term accommodation providers through additional economic activity and opportunities. The proponent will actively engage with short-term accommodation providers in Croydon on any potential Project accommodation requirements and keep community and stakeholders informed about Project development. The potential benefit for short-term accommodation providers is assessed as **low** (possible and minor) prior to, as well as, following application of management measures.

### 6.2.2 Housing availability and affordability

The Project is expected to operate over a period of approximately 53 years and at peak production, an operational workforce of up to 192 workers would be required. Over the substantial operational duration, there is the potential that some workers and their families may choose to relocate to Croydon (albeit likely limited).

While the Project has the potential to positively contribute (albeit to a limited extent) an increase in the resident population of Croydon during its long operational life (see Section 6.4.7), local housing demand associated with this relocating population has the potential to negatively impact on local housing availability and affordability.

As detailed in the social baseline, Croydon has a small and aging housing stock comprising of private dwellings, social housing and employer-owned housing (Council and State Government agencies). Limited to no housing sales or building activity has been observed in town over the past few years and the rental market remains extremely tight (near or at 0.0%) based on latest figures. This was corroborated during SIA engagement with almost all stakeholders highlighting the constrained local rental market and limited housing availability in town. Most stakeholders that noted benefits from additional families moving to town were also quick to acknowledge that access to housing would be a major constraint.

At this stage, potential local housing demand associated with the Project's operational workforce is unknown and unable to be predicted. This is due to the diversity of contributing factors such as the remote location, personal preference, choice and unique circumstance for each prospective worker and their family.

Given these factors, the potential decrease in local housing availability and affordability due to demand from relocating Project workforce is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) during the operation phase. In addition to management measures in the Housing and Accommodation Plan (refer to preceding section), the proponent will regularly engage with CSC to monitor Project workforce demand on local housing and proactively address any emerging issues in collaboration with them. The proponent will also continue to engage with the Croydon community and stakeholders on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. With effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance is assessed as **low** (unlikely and minor).

### 6.2.3 Impact assessment summary

Table 6.2 summarises the potential impacts and benefits identified relating to housing and accommodation including management measures and evaluated impact significance prior to (preliminary significance) and following application of management measures (residual significance).

Table 6.2: Summary of housing and accommodation impact assessment

| Project phase | Social impact | Impact type | Stakeholders | Preliminary significance | Management measures | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SE | Increase in demand on local short-term accommodation affecting accessibility by other users | Negative | • Accommodation providers in Croydon<br>• Tourists / visitors | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | • Further develop and implement management measures in the Housing and Accommodation Plan including:<br>– Provision of temporary mobile accommodation on-site during site establishment.<br>– Provision of a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.<br>– Engagement with short-term accommodation providers in Croydon on any potential Project accommodation requirements.<br>• Regular engagement with Croydon Shire Council to monitor Project workforce demand on local housing and proactively address any emerging issues.<br>• Ongoing engagement with community and stakeholders on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. | **Negligible**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minimal |
| SE | Additional economic opportunities for short-term accommodation providers | Positive | • Accommodation providers in Croydon | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor |
| O | Decrease in local housing availability and affordability due to demand from relocating Project workforce | Negative | • Croydon community<br>• Croydon Shire Council | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minor |

## 6.3 Local business and industry procurement

Local business and industry procurement matters include procurement opportunities as well as local and regional supplier capability and capacity. The potential local business and industry procurement impacts of the Project include:

- Increase in supply and procurement opportunities.
- Increase in industry diversification.
- Increase in economic activity for businesses.
- Increase in labour draw and competition for other businesses.

### 6.3.1 Supply and procurement opportunities

The Project will directly and indirectly (through its supply chains) create demand for goods and services such as civil works, traffic control, freight, and construction, operations and maintenance services. There is the potential that businesses across Croydon, the regional service centres, and the broader region, will be able to supply some of these services.

During SIA engagement, it was acknowledged that while there are limited businesses in Croydon, there are some with relevant services that may benefit from Project supply opportunities such as the local quarry and earthworks contractors. There are also civil works, labour hire services and other businesses in Normanton. It was also noted that given the long operation life of the mine, there is the potential that local or regional businesses will develop or emerge during that time to meet the needs of the Project.

Supporting and enabling the realisation of procurement opportunities for local businesses in Croydon and the broader region was widely identified by stakeholders as a potential benefit from the Project. Early and clear communication on potential Project needs during all phases was recommended by businesses and employment service providers during SIA engagement. It was noted that relatively longer lead times would be needed for local businesses to prepare and increase their capacity where required to better tender for potential Project opportunities.

The potential benefit associated with an increase in supply and procurement opportunities without consideration of management measures is assessed as **low** significance (possible and minor) during the construction phase and **medium** significance (possible and moderate) during the operations phase.

To maximise supply and procurement opportunities (potential benefit) for businesses across Croydon and the broader region, the proponent will further develop a Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan with targeted measures including:

- a local and regional business register.
- supplier briefing and tender information sessions in Croydon and nearby regional service centres.
- embedding proponent expectations and strategies around local and First Nations content into the Project's contracting model.
- collaboration with relevant state government agencies and business and industry groups to support delivery of tender readiness and business capacity building programs, including targeted programs to support First Nations business participation.
- advance notice of Project supply requirements and tendering opportunities through various channels (e.g., project website, local noticeboards/networks).
- consideration of higher preference weighting to local businesses and First Nations businesses in competitive bidding processes.
- exploring opportunities to break down large work packages and provide small-to-medium business friendly payment terms (where appropriate) to support local business participation.

With effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance of the potential benefit is re-assessed as medium (likely and minor) during the construction phase and remains **medium** (possible and moderate) during the operations phase.

### 6.3.2 Industry diversification

When operational, the Project has the potential to contribute to industry diversification within the Croydon LGA (albeit relatively limited from a stand-alone perspective) and support the emerging critical minerals industry across the broader North and North West Queensland regions.

Agriculture, specifically cattle grazing, is the principal industry of the Croydon LGA, with tourism and public administration also key contributing industries. During SIA engagement, tourism was highlighted as the major driver for most local businesses in town particularly during the peak tourist season from April until the end of September. Croydon's strong historical ties to gold mining were evident during engagement, with stakeholders noting the local injection of wealth and workforce opportunities from the industry. At the regional level, there is an increasing focus around the potential of the critical minerals industry in Queensland to support the renewable energy transition. Croydon Shire Council's Economic Development Strategy (2023) identifies the LGA as being well positioned to support the development of the critical minerals industry needed to help meet renewable energy targets (Croydon Shire Council 2023).

The potential benefit associated with the increase in industry diversification during Project operations is assessed as **medium** significance (likely and minor). The range of measures in the Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan (refer to preceding section) will be further developed and implemented to maximise Project supply and procurement opportunities for local and regional businesses. The residual significance of this benefit remains as **medium** (likely and minor) with the implementation of management measures.

### 6.3.3 Workforce spending

The Project has some potential to generate additional economic activity for local businesses through discretionary spending by the workforce during both the construction and operation phases.

Croydon town hosts a limited number of retail businesses including a pub, petrol station, post office and a small grocery store. The Project is anticipated to require a construction workforce of up to 100 workers and a peak operations workforce of up to 192 workers. If the Project workforce were to access local goods and services (such as food, fuel, and groceries), this could contribute to additional patronage and revenue for select businesses in town.

This workforce spending potential was identified during SIA engagement, however stakeholders in Croydon emphasised that any potential economic boost for businesses in town will be contingent on the workforces' ability to access and interact with the town. Stakeholders highlighted that with the Project located far away from town and being largely self-sufficient with onsite airfield and accommodation, there would be limited opportunities realistically for workforce interaction and spending in town. Given these factors, the potential benefit from workforce spending in Croydon without consideration of management measures is assessed as **low** significance (unlikely and minor).

To enable workforce spending in Croydon, the proponent will explore opportunities to facilitate workforce interaction in town, such as through monthly bus transport to town and workforce attendance at local events, as well as regularly engaging with the community and stakeholders on Project development.

While enhancement measures are proposed, the residual significance of the potential benefit would be greater although still assessed as **low** (possible and minor) during both Project phases.

### 6.3.4 Labour draw and competition

Opportunities for employment with the Project, particularly during the operations phase, could contribute to an increase in labour draw and competition with businesses in Croydon and the broader region for skilled and unskilled labour.

Attracting, building and retaining a skilled labour force is an important yet complex issue for rural and remote communities. As detailed in the social baseline, the Croydon LGA labour force is very small with a low rate of unemployment (2.5% during December 2025 quarter) based on the latest data. The top industries of employment of local residents are local government administration, beef cattle farming, road bridge construction and primary education. SIA engagement confirmed the limited number of businesses in Croydon (i.e., pub, roadhouse, earthworks contractors) with Croydon Shire Council identified as the main employer in town.

Local businesses and service providers engaged highlighted the seasonal nature of work in the region. The dry season is very busy for road crews and tourism related businesses, while employment fluctuations are observed during the wet season with access disruptions and isolation of the town due to flooding. Some concern was raised regarding the potential risk to staffing levels at local businesses and organisations. It was noted that essential services in town (including Council) may be affected, if existing local workers are drawn to the relatively high renumeration typically offered by the resources industry. Cumulative workforce considerations were also noted with the re-commencement of the Croydon Gold Mine (located just on the edge of town) (see Section 6.5).

The potential impact of labour and skills competition is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) during both construction and operation phases. To manage this impact, the proponent will:

- further develop and implement training and skills development measures in the Workforce Management Plan.
- monitor to understand the ongoing changes in local workforce availability and staffing levels in collaboration with Council, local businesses, and essential service providers.
- regularly engage with community and stakeholders on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes.

With effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance is assessed as **low** (unlikely and moderate).

### 6.3.5 Impact assessment summary

Table 6.3 summarises the potential impacts and benefits identified relating to local business and industry procurement including management measures and evaluated impact significance prior to (preliminary significance) and following application of management measures (residual significance).

Table 6.3: Summary of local business and industry procurement impact assessment

| Project phase | Social impact | Impact type | Stakeholders | Preliminary significance | Management measures | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | Increase in supply and procurement opportunities | Positive | • Croydon businesses and industry<br>• Croydon Shire Council<br>• Businesses and industry groups – regional service centres<br>• First Nations businesses | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | • Further develop and implement management measures in the Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan including:<br>– Establish and maintain a local and regional business register.<br>– Host supplier briefing and tender information sessions in Croydon and nearby regional service centres.<br>– Embed proponent expectations and strategies around local and First Nations content into the Project's contracting model.<br>– Collaborate with relevant state government agencies and business and industry groups to support delivery of tender readiness and business capacity building programs, including targeted programs to support First Nations business participation.<br>– Advance notice of Project supply requirements and tendering opportunities through various channels (e.g., project website, local noticeboards/networks).<br>– Assign higher preference weighting to local businesses and First Nations businesses in competitive bidding processes.<br>• Explore opportunities to break down large work packages and provide small-to-medium friendly payment terms (where appropriate) to support local business participation. | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Moderate |
| O | | | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate |
| O | Increase in industry diversification. | Positive | • Croydon Shire Council<br>• Croydon community<br>• State government | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minor | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minor |
| C<br>O | Increase in economic activity for businesses. | Positive | • Croydon businesses<br>• Richmond and Normanton businesses | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minor | • Provide opportunities for workforce interaction with Croydon town (e.g., monthly bus into town, attendance at local events, etc).<br>• Regular engagement with community and stakeholders on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor |
| C<br>O | Increase in labour draw and competition for other businesses. | Negative | • Croydon businesses and service providers<br>• Croydon Shire Council<br>• Businesses and industry – regional service centres | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | • Further develop and implement training and skills development measures from the Workforce Management Plan.<br>• Monitor and understand changes in local workforce availability and staffing level in collaboration with council, local businesses, and essential service providers.<br>• Regular engagement with community and stakeholders on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Moderate |

## 6.4 Health and community wellbeing

Health and community wellbeing matters include changes to capacity of existing services and infrastructure as well as the social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing of potentially impacted communities. The potential health and community wellbeing impacts of the Project include:

- Increase in demand for health and emergency services contributing to service provision disruptions to for existing residents.
- Increase in road safety risks.
- Improved access and connectivity.
- Changes to existing land use activities and operations.
- Changes to cultural heritage value.
- Changes to ecological / environmental values.
- Disruptions to surrounding amenity.
- Support overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon.
- Support increase in resident population.
- Community scepticism and apathy towards project.

### 6.4.1 Health and emergency services

Population influxes generated during construction and operations of the Project have the potential to contribute to additional demand on local infrastructure including health and emergency services.

As detailed in the social baseline, Croydon is serviced by basic health and emergency services including a primary health centre with an ambulance vehicle, police station, rural fire brigade and SES unit. Engagement with health and emergency services providers consistently revealed that good communication and appropriate onsite response capabilities at the Project site will be the key management measures needed for reducing potential pressures on existing services. Service providers reiterated that due to the Project's location, they would expect that the Project will need to be highly self-sufficient with adequate onsite first response resources and capabilities (i.e., advanced first aid, firefighting, emergency response team etc) while waiting for health or emergency service support from Croydon or elsewhere.

Other considerations raised by stakeholders included the need for suitable landing areas for emergency response aircraft (e.g., RFDS planes or QGAir helicopters) and onsite fuel reserves, noting that any response helicopter called to site will require refuelling to enable the return journey to Cairns. Concerns relating to service demand or disruptions to services for local people were not raised during SIA engagement, with the local health service provider noting expectation that the Project's non-resident workers would access primary care (e.g., prescriptions, health checks, etc) prior to travelling to the region.

The potential increase in demand for heath and emergency services during Project construction and operations is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) without consideration of management measures. To minimise potential service provision disruptions or impacts for existing residents, the proponent will:

- establish the Project Health and Safety Management System with workforce health and safety provisions including onsite first aid facility with dedicated advanced first aid qualified personnel.
- collaborate with local and regional health and emergency service providers to develop a detailed emergency response plan for the Project, including details for onsite resources and response capacity as well as agreed protocols and training.
- provide a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village for the Project workforce, including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.
- continue engaging with emergency service providers on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes.
- establish and promote the Project complaints and feedback process.

With effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance of the potential impact is re-assessed as **low** (possible and minor).

### 6.4.2 Road safety and use

Traffic associated with Project construction and operations has the potential to increase road safety risks (such as traffic incidents, road deterioration, driving fatigue) and disruptions (inconveniences, or increased travel time) for other road users along the Project's transport route.

During SIA engagement, existing road conditions around the Project area were frequently raised by stakeholders. Many noted that the roads (unsealed dirt roads) are susceptible to flooding, which contributes to poor road conditions. The potential for wildlife encounters on the local roads and the dangers that this presents was also an issue raised by local stakeholders. Croydon Shire Council identified that additional road traffic on Richmond-Croydon Road would be the Project's main impact on the Croydon community given its remote location relative to the town.

Findings from the EIS Transport Assessment (Burchills Engineering Solutions 2026) indicate:

- Richmond-Croydon Road and Esmeralda Prospect Road are considered unfit for use for the Project in their current configuration – neither adequately meet suitable road condition and adequate road safety criteria. Potential mitigations recommended include:
  - localised widening of roads and in some locations to double width
  - installation of advanced warning signs, give way signage, and guideposts
  - repair of road surfaces with significant damage
  - undertaking regular road maintenance.
- Infrastructure agreements with Croydon Shire Council, Richmond Shire Council and DTMR are expected to address the ongoing use of road infrastructure and any future upgrades required for the Project.
- The Project is not anticipated to generate a significant impact on the external road network (in terms of additional traffic volumes) during construction or operations. Potential Project impact on time-sensitive agriculture freights on the rural road network surrounding the Project is anticipated to be minimal during all Project phases.
- Road safety risks identified in the Road Safety Assessment include increases in turning movements and through movements at existing intersections, traffic volumes along the route, OSOM vehicles on road links, and risk of incidents due to driver fatigue. The route currently accommodates heavy vehicles including haulage vehicles and the increase in traffic volumes associated with Project haulage is not anticipated to increase the safety risk rating along the existing route.
- Recommended mitigations in addition to road upgrades include monitoring workforce hours and driver behaviours (including strict adherence to existing speed limits and road rules), and implementation of Traffic Management Plan and Road Use Management Plan.

The potential for an increase in road safety risks is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) during both construction and operation phases. To manage potential road risk impacts from the Project, the proponent will:

- implement management measures identified in the Transport Assessment and subsequent management plans to be developed (e.g., Traffic Management Plan, Road Use Management Plan).
- enter into infrastructure agreements with relevant local and state governments prior to commencement of construction.
- exploring carpooling arrangements and journey management protocols for the DIDO workforce.
- advance notice of key Project transport movements and anticipated disruptions (e.g., text message alert, notice on council and project website, etc).
- establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process.

With effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance is re-assessed as **low** (possible and minor).

Potential road improvements for the Project have the potential to contribute to improved access and connectivity in the Croydon region. During SIA engagement, local stakeholders noted that any road upgrades around the Project area, particularly if all weather use is being considered, would greatly benefit and be appreciated by the community as this helps provide an alternative route to and from Croydon during the wet season when other roads are closed due to flooding.

Based on existing conditions, the potential significance of improved access and connectivity is assessed as **low** (unlikely and minor) without consideration of proposed traffic management measures from the Project. With effective implementation of proposed management measures outlined previously, the residual significance of the potential benefit is re-assessed as **medium** (possible and moderate).

### 6.4.3 Cultural heritage

Project construction and operation activities could disrupt sites and landscapes of cultural heritage significance, potentially resulting in a loss of or decline in cultural heritage value for First Nations People.

The Project is within the traditional country of the Tagalaka People with the Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC administering land on behalf of the Tagalaka People. Native title exists over areas subject to the Project MLAs. During SIA engagement, it was highlighted that Croydon comprises a high First Nations population and there are cultural and social ties to Normanton.

Cultural surveys have been completed at the proposed Project site in collaboration with the Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation, with no objects or sites of cultural significance currently identified.

Potential changes to cultural heritage value and associated impacts throughout all Project phases are assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) prior to consideration of management measures. It should be noted that the significance may be subject to change over time, particularly in the event of a significant find at the site. To manage this potential impact, the proponent will:

- implement the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) agreed for the Project.
- continue engaging with the Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation throughout Project lifecycle including advance notice of key Project activities.
- explore opportunities for Tagalaka Ranger involvement in cultural heritage / environmental management activities for the Project where feasible.

With effective implementation of management measures, the significance of the impact re-assessed as **low** (unlikely and moderate).

### 6.4.4 Environmental value

Environmental impacts can arise from Project construction and operations activities including vegetation removal, bulk earthworks and open-pit resource extraction that could cause erosion and sedimentation of waterways.

It is estimated that a total of 2,416 ha of remnant vegetation will be cleared within the Project area to facilitate Project development. However, riparian corridors, such as the Warrigal Creek, the Clara River and the Yappar River will not be impacted by the Project. Access to the resource will require diverting a section of an unnamed tributary of the Warrigal Creek (approximately 1.5 km in length). The permanent diversion will be designed and managed in accordance with relevant environmental guidelines, and rehabilitation of the diversion area will be conducted to achieve conditions similar to those of the existing unnamed tributary. Clearing of vegetation for creek crossings will be limited to small tributaries traversed by the transport corridor.

SIA engagement did not reveal specific concerns around potential Project impacts on ecological and environmental values. However, it was noted that the Croydon community is conscious about air and water quality in the region and will expect any potential environmental impacts from the Project to be appropriately managed. Community expectation around decommissioning and rehabilitation was also indicated during SIA engagement with some stakeholders anecdotally noting poor closure outcomes from the historical gold mine near town, including unwanted remnant infrastructure left for the community to manage and the poorly secured hazardous open pit. Stakeholders

acknowledged that present decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements are likely to be more comprehensive compared to the past.

Concerns around potential changes to ecological and environmental values is assessed as **medium** significance (possible and moderate) prior to consideration of management measures. To manage environmental impacts of the Project, the proponent will:

- implement management measures identified in relevant environmental assessments and subsequent management plans to be developed for construction, operations and decommissioning (including the Progressive Rehabilitation and Closure Plan).
- continue engaging with relevant stakeholders (e.g., local government, Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation, landholders, etc) throughout the progressive rehabilitation and closure planning process.

With effective implementation of management measures, the significance of the impact re-assessed as **low** (unlikely and minor).

### 6.4.5 Surrounding amenity

The Project is located in a remote area, with cattle grazing the dominant land use of the surrounding landscape. Any changes to noise, dust or vibration levels due to Project activities have the potential to disrupt the amenity of nearby receptors.

The Project's Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (AARC 2026) identified three isolated residences in the surrounding vicinity of the Project with Prospect Homestead the nearest receptor to the Project footprint:

- Prospect Homestead, approximately 7 km south and 5 km south-west from the Project access road.
- Esmeralda Homestead, approximately 33 km east and 18 km east from the Project access road.
- Homestead, approximately 16 km south-west and 20 km west from the Project access road.

The location of on-site Project activities and amount of equipment required (contingent on estimated material handling quantities) were identified as the major determinants for potential noise impacts over the operational life of the mine. Findings from the assessment indicate that noise levels from Project operations are predicted to be compliant with proposed daytime and nighttime noise limits under all scenarios modelled prior to the consideration of mitigation measures being applied (AARC 2026). Vibration and airblast overpressure levels from blasting are also predicted to be compliant with the proposed criteria, with vibration levels considered compatible with land uses around the Project. In relation to the construction phase, noise emissions from construction activities are expected to be less than those anticipated during operations based on the lower intensity and relatively short nature of activities and equipment required.

Based on these findings, potential disruptions to the surrounding amenity of nearby receptors during Project operations is assessed as **low** significance (possible and minor). While Project noise and vibration impacts are predicted to be compliant with relevant regulations and have no significant impact on surrounding sensitive receptors, the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment recommended that noise and vibration management plans are prepared prior to the commencement of construction, including potential management and mitigation measures (refer to EIS Chapter 24 Noise and Vibration). Additional management measures that the proponent will implement include establishing and promoting the Project's complaints and feedback process as well as regularly engaging with stakeholders on Project development and providing advance notice of key activities. The residual significance of this impact remains as **low** (unlikely and minor) with the implementation of the identified management measures.

### 6.4.6 Community

#### Resident population

Project operation is estimated to span over 53 years and at peak production, an operational workforce of up to 192 workers would be required. Over the substantial operational duration, there is the potential that some workers and their families choose to relocate to Croydon (albeit likely limited).

As noted in the social baseline, Croydon's resident population has progressively decreased (at a rate of -1.1%) over the past decade, with limited population growth projected over the next two decades (ABS 2025; QGSO 2026). Local stakeholders engaged for the SIA indicated that additional residents in Croydon would be a welcome contribution. This was seen as particularly pertinent if these workers have families, given the positive flow-on effects (though small) towards sustaining social infrastructure, such as the school, as well as community groups. While it was acknowledged that relocation would be a personal choice and involve housing considerations due to the constrained housing market in Croydon (refer to section 6.2), stakeholders generally perceived this as a benefit from the Project.

The potential benefit from an increase in resident population during the operations phase is assessed as **low** (unlikely and minor). To support this benefit, the proponent will look to develop and implement a live local policy for the Project with incentives (e.g., relocation allowance, wage incentives, flexible rostering, etc) to encourage workers and their families to consider relocation to Croydon. The residual significance of this benefit remains as **low** (possible and minor) with the implementation of management measures.

### Community investment

The Project presents an opportunity for increased investment in local community initiatives through community benefit sharing.

Feedback from stakeholders garnered through this SIA indicates that the community is keen to see a mixture of legacy benefits as well as more generalised community supports, and that there should be some consideration of the targeting of benefits towards the very localised area surrounding the Project. Key themes raised by stakeholders as potential areas for community investment through the Project included:

- Local community groups and events.
- Community amenity, services, and physical infrastructure.
- Opportunities to support kids and young people.
- Housing and accommodation.
- Education and training.
- Health and emergency services.

The potential benefit from the Project supporting the overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon during operations is assessed as **low** (possible and minor) prior to the consideration of management measures.

To enhance the potential benefit, the proponent will:

- establish a Community Support Program (annual budget of up to $25,000) to support community initiatives and/or programs and local community groups.
- provide opportunities for workforce interaction with Croydon community (e.g., monthly bus into town, attendance at local events, etc).
- explore partnerships with community groups and service providers to support community initiatives and/or programs, including in-kind support opportunities.
- establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process.

With the effective implementation of enhancement measures, the residual significance of the potential benefit is re-assessed as **high** (likely and moderate).

### Community uncertainty

Major projects can create a degree of uncertainty amongst local communities, relating to whether projects will eventuate, lack of understanding about projects, and unknowns about potential impacts and benefits.

SIA engagement revealed limited levels of awareness and knowledge about the Project within the community, with the general perception that there would be limited impacts or benefits for the town due to distance. There is interest amongst those engaged to understand how the Project will benefit Croydon given that the site is positioned away from town and will be largely self-sufficient with onsite facilities to support workforce movements and accommodation. A level of development uncertainty was also indicated during engagement. A few stakeholders

noted the long history of deposit discovery and exploration activity within the region that has not eventuated with mining projects being developed to date. Overall, most stakeholders engaged as part of the SIA generally perceived the proposed Project as positive but identified the importance of ongoing Project engagement and interaction with the Corydon community.

Based on these factors, the potential impact of community uncertainty and apathy towards the Project is assessed as **medium** significance (likely and minor). To manage this potential impact, the proponent will:

- further develop and implement engagement activities in line with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Project construction and operations.
- regularly engage with the community and stakeholders on Project development including upcoming activities and key milestones.
- establish and promote the Project complaints and feedback process.
- establish a Community Support Program (annual budget of up to $25,000) to support community initiatives and/or programs and local community groups.

With the effective implementation of management measures, the residual significance is assessed as **low** (likely and minimal).

### 6.4.7 Impact assessment summary

Table 6.4 summarises the potential impacts and benefits identified relating to health and community wellbeing including management measures and evaluated impact significance prior to (preliminary significance) and following application of management measures (residual significance).

Table 6.4: Summary of health and community wellbeing impact assessment

| Project phase | Social impact | Impact type | Stakeholders | Preliminary significance | Management measures | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C<br>O | Increase in demand for health and emergency services contributing to service provision disruptions to for existing residents | Negative | • Health and emergency services – Croydon and regional service centres<br>• Croydon community | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | • Establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process.<br>• Establish Health and Safety Management System for the Project with workforce health and safety provisions including:<br>– Policies/protocol relevant to Project (i.e., fatigue management, site inductions and training, pre-starts/toolbox meetings, safety and operational protocols, remote work DIDO risks and protocols, extreme heat and heat stress, etc).<br>– Workforce Code of Conduct – project site, on road, in community.<br>– Provision of mental health support service on-site (e.g., tele-mental health, employee assistance program, etc)<br>– On-site first aid/medical facility with dedicated paramedic or nurse.<br>• Develop detailed incident/emergency response plan for the Project in collaboration with local and regional emergency service providers (including onsite response capacity/resource, training, protocols)<br>• Provide workforce with a self-sufficient and well-equipped onsite accommodation village including recreational facilities, health and safety provisions, catering and communications.<br>• Ongoing engagement with emergency service providers on Project development including advance notice of workforce mobilisation or changes. | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor |
| C<br>O | Increase in road safety risks (e.g., accidents, road condition deterioration, etc) | Negative | • Residents along transport route – Croydon and Richmond LGA<br>• Health and emergency service providers<br>• Croydon Shire Council<br>• Richmond Shire Council | **High**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Major | • Implement management measures identified in the Traffic Impact Assessment and subsequent management plans to be developed (e.g., Traffic Management Plan, Road Use Management Plan<br>• Enter into infrastructure agreements with both local governments prior to commencement of construction.<br>• Explore carpooling options for DIDO workforce.<br>• Advance notice of key Project transport movements and anticipated disruptions (e.g., text message alert, notice on council and project website).<br>• Establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process. | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate |
| C<br>O | Improved access and connectivity | Positive | • Croydon and Richmond community | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minor | | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate |
| C<br>O | Changes to cultural heritage value | Negative | • Traditional Owners<br>• Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | • Implement CHMP agreed for the Project.<br>• Ongoing engagement with Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation throughout Project lifecycle including advance notice of key Project activities.<br>• explore opportunities for Tagalaka Ranger involvement in cultural heritage / environmental management activities for the Project where feasible. | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Moderate |
| C<br>O<br>D | Changes to ecological / environmental values | Negative | • Croydon community<br>• Croydon Shire Council<br>• State government agencies<br>• Traditional Owners<br>• Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation | **Medium**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Moderate | • Implement management measures identified in relevant environmental assessments and subsequent management plans to be developed for construction, operations and decommissioning (including the Progressive Rehabilitation and Closure Plan).<br>• Continue engaging with relevant stakeholders (e.g., local government, Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation, landholders, etc) throughout the progressive rehabilitation and closure planning process. | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minor |
| O | Disruptions to surrounding amenity | Negative | • Landholders – Esmeralda station and neighbours | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible | • Establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process. | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely |

| Project phase | Social impact | Impact type | Stakeholders | Preliminary significance | Management measures | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | M: Minor | • Implement management measures identified in relevant environmental assessment and subsequent management plans to be developed for construction and operations.<br>• Regular engagement with stakeholders on Project development and advance notice of key Project activities including workforce mobilisation and key transport movement and anticipated disruptions. | M: Minor |
| O | Support overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon | Positive | • Croydon community<br>• Croydon Shire Council | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor | • Establish a Community Support Program (annual budget of up to $25,000) to support community initiatives and/or programs and local community groups.<br>• Provide opportunities for workforce interaction with Croydon community (e.g., monthly bus into town, attendance at local event, etc).<br>• Explore partnerships with community groups and service providers to support community initiatives and/or programs, including in-kind support opportunities.<br>• Establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process. | **High**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Moderate |
| O | Support increase in resident population | Positive | • Croydon community<br>• Croydon Shire Council | **Low**<br><br>L: Unlikely<br>M: Minor | • Develop and implement a live local policy for the Project with incentives (e.g., relocation allowance, wage incentives, flexible rostering, etc) | **Low**<br><br>L: Possible<br>M: Minor |
| SE | Community scepticism and apathy towards project | Negative | • Croydon community | **Medium**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minor | • Further develop and implement engagement activities in line with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Project construction and operations.<br>• Regular engagement with community and stakeholders on Project development including upcoming activities and key milestones.<br>• Establish and promote Project complaints and feedback process.<br>• Establish a Community Benefit Fund/Program of up to $tbc per annum to support local community groups and initiatives. | **Low**<br><br>L: Likely<br>M: Minimal |

## 6.5 Cumulative effects

The cumulative assessment considers the potential key effects of the Project together with other resource projects in the Croydon, Carpentaria and Richmond LGAs. The Croydon Gold Mine is about 70 km north of the Project site and immediately west of Croydon town, The Big Vein South Gold Project is about 130 km southeast of the Project site and Richmond is the nearest centre to the project. The Richmond-Julia Creek Vanadium Project is about 130 km south of the Project site and Julia Creek and Richmond are the nearest centres to the project. These projects are listed in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Projects that may contribute to potential cumulative social impacts

| Project | Proponent | Project status | Workforce requirement |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Croydon LGA** | | | |
| Croydon Gold Mine | Jubilee Metals | Construction<br>Operations | Construction: 50<br>Operations: 77 |
| **Carpentaria LGA** | | | |
| None identified | - | - | - |
| **Richmond LGA** | | | |
| Big Vein South Gold Project | Strategic Minerals Corporation Pty Ltd | Progressing approvals<br>Construction start date: Q2 2027 | Construction: 980<br>Operations: 380 |
| Richmond-Julia Creek Vanadium Project | Richmond Vanadium Technology Limited | EIS process<br>Construction start date: 2027 | Construction: 300<br>Operations: 200 |

The key cumulative effects are summarised in Table 6.3.

Table 6.6 Cumulative effects

| Impact category | Cumulative impact | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Workforce management** | | |
| Employment | Increase in employment opportunities | Within the Croydon LGA, there is the potential for significant changes to the employment landscape, for local people and new residents. This will particularly be due to the presence of the Croydon Gold Mine, located just on the edge of town. Within the broader region, there is also potential for increased employment opportunity, diversity and choice. |
| Training | Increase in training and skills development opportunities | These projects will bring about increased training opportunities, particularly during the operations phases. This may include potential for increased apprenticeships and other training pathways. |
| **Housing and accommodation** | | |
| Temporary accommodation | Increase in demand on local short-term accommodation | Within Croydon and the broader region, it is likely that there will be increased demand for local short-term accommodation with the construction and operational phases of the proposed projects. This may impact on the |

| Impact category | Cumulative impact | Description |
|---|---|---|
| | | accessibility of short-term accommodation for tourists / visitors. |
| Housing | Increase in demand for local housing | Within Croydon and the broader region, it is possible that there will be increased demand for housing with the construction and operational phases of the proposed projects. |
| **Local business and industry procurement** | | |
| Procurement and business activity | Increase in procurement and industry diversification opportunities | Construction and operation of the proposed projects will engender increases in procurement opportunities for local, regional and First Nations businesses. This will likely support economic development in the region and provides potential opportunity for diversification for existing or emerging businesses. |
| | Increase in economic activity | Within Croydon, with the increase in transient population within the town, there is potential for increased economic activity for local businesses, during the construction and operations phases. More broadly, the projects will bring about increased economic activity for businesses within the region. |
| Competition for labour | Increase in labour draw and competition for other businesses | Within Croydon and the broader region, given the increased employment opportunities, it is likely that this may engender increased competition for labour. For Croydon, this is likely to be due to the employment opportunities generated by the Croydon Gold Mine (given the opportunity to work at that mine without the need to be accommodated at on site camp). |
| **Health and community wellbeing** | | |
| Social infrastructure | Increase in demand for health and emergency services | Within Croydon and the broader region, there may be potential for increased demand on health and emergency services during the construction and operations phases of the proposed projects. |
| Roads | Increase in road safety risks (e.g., accidents, road condition deterioration, etc) | There may be potential for increased road safety risks with the increased vehicle movements associated with the proposed projects. This may be experienced along both the Richmond-Croydon Road and the Flinders Highway. |
| | Improved access and connectivity | There is potential for cumulative improvements to the road network, particularly along the Richmond-Croydon Road. |
| Environment | Changes to environmental values | There may be potential for increased concern about or changes to environmental values in the region. |
| Population | Increase in resident population | Within Croydon and the broader region, there is potential for resident population increases with the increases in employment opportunities. |
| Community benefit | Increase in community support / benefit opportunities | Within Croydon and the Richmond LGA, there is potential for cumulative benefits due to the proposed projects. |

Considering these cumulative impacts, where possible, the Proponent will engage with CSC, DTMR, and other developers in the region to further identify and confirm potential cumulative effects. From this, proponents can develop and implement strategies to avoid and/or manage the potential cumulative effects.

In addition, it offers developers the opportunity to enhance project benefits by potentially collaborating on community benefit initiatives.

# 7. Conclusion

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the SIA Guideline. It was developed in consultation with the CSC, and local stakeholders from Croydon and Normanton.

This SIA has identified and assessed the potential positive and negative social impacts of the Project with consideration of:

- The Project's construction and operational activities and associated workforces.
- Existing socio-economic characteristics of the Project site and surrounding region.
- Outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement undertaken for the SIA.
- Findings from other technical assessments prepared for the Project (where available).

With the effective application of proposed management measures, the residual significance of nine potential negative impacts identified were assessed as low or negligible, while two potential negative impacts were assessed as having medium residual significance (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Summary of potential negative social impacts

| Potential negative social impact | Project phase | Impact significance | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Workforce management** | | | |
| Increase in workforce health, safety and well-being risk factors | C, O | High | Medium |
| Impact on workforce wellbeing from redundancies due to ramp down and closure | D | Medium | Low |
| **Housing and accommodation** | | | |
| Increase in demand on local short-term accommodation affecting accessibility by other users | SE | Low | Negligible |
| Decrease in local housing availability and affordability due to demand from relocating Project workforce | O | Medium | Low |
| **Local business and industry procurement** | | | |
| Increase in labour draw and competition for other businesses | C, O | Medium | Low |
| **Community health and wellbeing** | | | |
| Increase in demand for health and emergency services contributing to service provision disruptions to for existing residents | C, O | Medium | Low |
| Increase in road safety risks (e.g., accidents, road condition deterioration, etc) | C, O | High | Medium |
| Changes to cultural heritage value | C, O | Medium | Low |
| Changes to ecological / environmental values | C, O, D | Medium | Low |
| Disruptions to surrounding amenity | O | Low | Low |
| Community scepticism and apathy towards project | SE | Medium | Low |

With the effective application of proposed enhancement measures, the residual significance of three potential positive impacts were assessed as high, while five potential positive impacts were now assessed as medium, and three were assessed as low. The residual significance rating of the remaining positive impacts identified remained low (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Summary of potential positive social impacts

| Potential positive social impact | Project phase | Impact significance | Residual significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Workforce management** | | | |
| Increase in employment opportunities | C | Low | Medium |
| | O | Medium | High |
| Increase in training and skills development opportunities | O | Low | Medium |
| **Housing and accommodation** | | | |
| Additional economic opportunities for short-term accommodation providers | SE | Low | Low |
| **Local business and industry procurement** | | | |
| Increase in supply and procurement opportunities | C | Medium | High |
| | O | Medium | Medium |
| Increase in industry diversification | O | Medium | Medium |
| Increase in economic activity for businesses | C, O | Low | Low |
| **Community health and wellbeing** | | | |
| Improved access and connectivity | C, O | Low | Medium |
| Support overall socio-economic wellbeing of Croydon | O | Low | High |
| Support increase in resident population | O | Low | Low |

Management measures described in this SIA seek to mitigate potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts. Measures also include ongoing engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders to address potential and community needs and cumulative impacts.

A SIMP has been developed to accompany this SIA. The SIMP provides for managing and monitoring the Project's potential impacts and effectiveness of proposed management measures. The SIMP consists of the following components:

- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Workforce Management Plan
- Workforce Accommodation Plan
- Local Business and Industry Procurement Plan
- Health and Community Wellbeing Plan.

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# Appendix A

## Impact significance rating

# A-1 Impact significance rating

Table A.1: Likelihood levels

| Likelihood level | Description |
|---|---|
| Almost certain | Definite or expected, e.g. has happened on other projects |
| Likely | High probability |
| Possible | Medium probability |
| Unlikely | Low probability |
| Very unlikely | Improbable or rare occurrence, i.e., only likely to occur in exceptional circumstances. |

Table A.2: Magnitude levels

| Level | Impact description | |
|---|---|---|
| | Positive | Negative |
| Transformational | Radical improvements that specifically address a community need and/or aspiration with long-term legacy affecting most or all in the broader community. | Widespread, irreversible, significant change from baseline conditions, affecting most or all in the communities. |
| Major | Long-term opportunities providing substantial improvement for many people or highly vulnerable/sensitive groups in the broader community. | Long-term difficult to reverse change affecting many people or highly vulnerable/sensitive groups. Substantial change from baseline conditions. |
| Moderate | Medium-term opportunities providing material improvement for the broader community. | Medium-term change that are reversible with mitigation, affecting some people or moderately vulnerable/sensitive groups. Material change from the baseline conditions. |
| Minor | Short-term opportunities providing noticeable improvement for a small number of people in the community. | Short-term reversible change affecting a small number of people or groups with low vulnerability/sensitivity (resilient groups). Small change from baseline conditions. |
| Minimal | Local, small-scale opportunities that benefit very few people in the community, or people unrelated to the project area. | Local, small-scale, easily reversible change affecting very few people. Marginal or no change from the baseline conditions. |

Table A.3: Social impact significance matrix

| Likelihood level | Magnitude | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal | Minor | Moderate | Major | Transformational |
| Almost certain | Low | Medium | High | Very High | Very High |
| Likely | Low | Medium | High | High | Very High |
| Possible | Low | Low | Medium | High | High |
| Unlikely | Negligible | Low | Low | Medium | High |
| Very unlikely | Negligible | Negligible | Low | Medium | Medium |

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# Appendix B

## SIA engagement activities

# A-1 Stakeholders consulted for the SIA

| Stakeholder group | Stakeholder | Contacted for SIA participation | Participated in SIA engagement | Number of engagements | Number of participants[3] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local government | Croydon Shire Council | Yes | Yes | 1 | 6 |
| Health and emergency services | Croydon Primary Health Centre | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Croydon Rural Fire Brigade | Yes | Yes | 1 | 2 |
| | SES Far North Region | Yes | Yes | 1 | 2 |
| | Royal Flying Doctors Service | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Queensland Health Cairns and Hinterland HHS - Cairns office | Yes | No | - | - |
| | Gidgee Healing – Normanton | Yes | No | - | - |
| Social services and community groups<br>Education and training providers | Croydon Men's Shed | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Croydon State School | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Bynoe Community Advancement Cooperative Society (CACS) | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | QCWA Croydon and Georgetown | Yes | No | - | - |
| Accommodation providers<br>Local business and industry | Croydon Club Hotel | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Croydon Gulf Gate BP Roadhouse | Yes | Yes | 1 | 2 |
| Local business and industry | Gulf Savannah Development Inc | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| | Normanton Vehicle Hire | Yes | Yes | 1 | 1 |
| Local business and industry<br>Traditional Owners | Gulf Regional Services | Yes | Yes | 1 | 2 |

[3] Excluding Attexo and Graphinex staff

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# Appendix C

## Detailed baseline

This section details the existing social baseline conditions across the study areas and is broadly structured according to the key SIA matters, with the inclusion of population and demography upfront to provide overarching context. All data presented here are from the 2021 Census unless otherwise stated.

As outlined in Section 3.4, the study areas adopted for this SIA comprises the following:

- Local area: Croydon local government area (LGA)
- Regional service centres: urban centres and localities (UCL) of Normanton, Richmond, Townsville, and Carins
- Regional area: LGAs of Croydon, Richmond and Carpentaria.

A summary profile for the study areas is presented in Section 5.

## C-1 Population and demography

The estimated residential population of Croydon LGA has been slowly contracting at an average annual rate of -1.1% over the past decade, with latest figures indicating a small estimated resident population of 270 persons in June 2024 (Table C.1). Across the nearest regional services centres, the Richmond population also slowly contracted, albeit at a lower average annual rate (-0.6%), while Normanton experienced steady population growth over the ten-year period, with a 10.6% increase (gain of 136 residents).

Table C.1: Estimated resident population, 2014 to 2024

| Locality | 2014 | 2016 | 2018 | 2020 | 2022 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Croydon LGA | 303 | 296 | 280 | 269 | 268 | 270 |
| Normanton UCL | 1,278 | 1,267 | 1,280 | 1,336 | 1,376 | 1,414 |
| Richmond UCL | 538 | 529 | 497 | 471 | 460 | 467 |
| Townsville UCL | 170,904 | 173,297 | 174,810 | 175,940 | 178,026 | 183,126 |
| Carins UCL | 146,287 | 149,130 | 152,697 | 155,109 | 157,654 | 162,960 |
| Regional | 3,253 | 3,153 | 3,115 | 3,156 | 3,215 | 3,287 |

Source: (ABS, 2025).

Population projections are available for larger geographies including LGA. Looking ahead, population projections indicate a continued decline in the Croydon LGA population with a projected population of 234 persons in 2046, reflecting a decrease of 0.6% per year of a 25-year period (QGSO 2026). For reference, the average annual growth rate projected for Queensland as a whole over the same 25-year period is 1.4%. The regional study area population is projected to be 3,545 persons in 2046 (0.4% average annual growth), with Carpentaria LGA projected to have the largest and fastest growing population within this study area (QGSO 2026).

Based on the 2021 Census, socio-cultural characteristics of the Croydon LGA population include:

- high proportion of males (52.5%) compared to females (47.5%).
- median age of 41 years with a high proportion of residents aged 14 year or younger (20.7%) and working age population (31.9%) relative to Queensland (median age of 38 years and18.0% and 24.0% respectively).
- low levels of population movement with approximately 51.8% of residents residing at the same address as five years prior and approximately 72.7% residing at the same address as the year prior.
- low levels of cultural diversity with over two thirds of residents born in Australia and use only English at home.
- high proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with 28.6% of the population relative to the Queensland figure of 4.6%.
- high proportion of one-parent family (28.3%) and lone persons household (37.5%) relative to the State (16.8% and 24.7% respectively).

For the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population in Croydon LGA, some key socio-economic characteristics include a high proportion of females (53.9%), around one quarter of residents are aged 14 years or younger (children), presence of multiple family households, and low levels of population movement (ABS 2021).

# A-2 Health and community wellbeing

## C-1-1 Social infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to community facilities, services, and networks that help individuals, families, groups and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development and enhance community wellbeing. The availability of social infrastructure can have a direct influence on the socio-economic wellbeing of communities, therefore additional demand on existing services (i.e., demand associated with the workforce of major projects) can have implications on accessibility and service provision for communities.

### Health and medical services

Health services in Croydon LGA are limited to Croydon Primary Health Centre, a small health care facility providing acute and primary health care services to the Croydon community including immunisations, complex care coordination, wound care, telehealth, limited emergency care and x-ray services (Queensland Health 2026). Visiting services at the facility include the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) of Australia (weekly), a women's health nurse (twice a year) and Queensland Health's outreach allied health services (four times a year).

Residents in Croydon requiring higher level of health and medical care are generally referred to Cairns Hospital (main referral hospital) or Atherton and Mareeba Hospitals (closest referring hospitals). Health and medical facilities available in the regional service centres are detailed in Table C.2.

Table C.2: Health and medical facilities across regional service centres

| Service centre | Facility | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Normanton | Normanton Hospital | • Facility in Normanton offering 24-hour emergency care and inpatient care as well as outpatient, community health and visiting services. Capacity of 18 hospital beds and bed alternatives.<br>• At the end of December 2025, the facility was staffed by one doctor and nine nurses and midwives. |
| | Normanton Primary Health Care Services | • Operated by Gidgee Healing, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service provider. Services provided include primary health care, allied health, recovery and family wellbeing. |
| Richmond | Richmond Multipurpose Health Service | • Facility in Richmond with 10 beds providing 24-hour accident and emergency care, general medical services, long-stay elder care, outpatient and visiting specialist services.<br>• Role of facility is to assess patients while the Emergency Medical Technician team in Townsville treat the patients. |
| | GP in Richmond | • Richmond GP is through a private surgery that leases the building from Queensland Health.<br>• Richmond had a permanent GP for the past 8 years. The GP resides in Charters Towers and travels to Richmond on 21 days and 10 days off basis. |
| Townsville | Townsville University Hospital | • Only tertiary referral hospital and major trauma centre in North Queensland, with a service catchment population of |

| Service centre | Facility | Description |
|---|---|---|
| | | approximately 250,000 residents (including Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait Islands).<br>• The hospital provides services in all major health specialties and a major teaching hospital for James Cook University and TAFE Queensland North (hub for health research in the region).<br>• At the end of December 2025, the facility was staffed by 914 doctors, 2,854 nurses and midwives, and 734 allied health practitioners. |
| | GPs in Townsville | • Over 20 GP service providers (approximate) in Townsville city based on desktop mapping search. |
| Cairns | Cairns Hospital | • Only tertiary referral hospital and major trauma centre in North Queensland, with a service catchment population of approximately 250,000 residents (including Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait Islands).<br>• The hospital provides services in all major health specialties and a major teaching hospital for James Cook University and TAFE Queensland North (hub for health research in the region).<br>• At the end of December 2025, the facility was staffed by 914 doctors, 2,854 nurses and midwives, and 734 allied health practitioners. |
| | GPs in Cairns | • Over 15 GP service providers (approximate) in Cairns city based on desktop mapping search. |

Source: (Queensland Health, 2025; Queensland Health, 2026).

Public health and hospital services (HHS) across the SIA study area is provided by Cairns and Hinterland HHS (Croydon and Cairns), Townsville HHS (Richmond and Townsville), and North West HHS (Normanton).

Key challenges identified within the three HHS catchments include:

- increasing demand for services and access challenges due to rural and remote geography.
- health equity of First Nations peoples including diverse needs (i.e., continuity of care for transient populations and culturally appropriate healthcare).
- growing need for supporting services (i.e., mental healthcare, disability services, and residential aged care) and additional investment required to increase resource and capacity.
- difficulties in attracting and retaining a sustainable health workforce due to remote location, employment competition and high workforce turnover which affects service delivery capacity (CHHHS 2025; NWHHS 2025; THHS 2025).

### Emergency services

Croydon LGA is serviced by basic emergency services based in Croydon township including a police station (open Monday from 8:30am to 12pm), an ambulance vehicle based at Croydon Primary Health Centre which is supported by community volunteer drivers, and a rural fire brigade and State Emergency Service (SES) unit staffed by volunteers.

SIA engagement with the primary health centre revealed that the facility is well resourced for its size with capacity to manage acute and primary care. Nurses at the centre DIDO from Cairns with a single nurse posted on a week on week off roster. It was indicated that the centre has capacity to support additional population attributed to resource projects proposed in the region (currently not a busy centre).

Across the regional service centres, emergency services available include police stations in all four communities (multiple in Townsville and Cairns); ambulance officers in Normanton, Townsville and Cairns (no officer stationed in

Richmond however an ambulance vehicle is available and operated by a nurse with a driver when attending incidents); as well as permanent fire stations in Townsville and Cairns, auxiliary fire station in Richmond (supported by volunteers) and a rural fire brigade in Normanton.

## Education and training facilities

Schools function as a focal point for community activity and are important social infrastructure for many rural and remote townships. In April 2025, the regional area hosted five schools and seven early childhood education and care services, with the largest concentration of facilities available in Carpentaria LGA. A state primary school is available in Croydon while the nearest secondary schools are based in Normanton and Richmond (Table C.3).

Table C.3: Education facilities in local area and regional service centres

| Locality | Facility | Description (as of August 2025) |
|---|---|---|
| **Local** | | |
| Croydon (township) | Croydon State School | • Primary school (Prep-Year 6) with 29 students and 3 teaching staff. |
| **Regional service centres (nearest)** | | |
| Normanton | Normanton State School | • Combined primary/secondary school (Prep-Year 10) with 149 students and 22 teaching staff. |
| | Gulf Christian College | • Combined primary/secondary school (Prep-Year 12) with 111 students and 11 teaching staff. |
| Richmond | Richmond State School | • Combined primary/secondary school (Prep-Year 10) with 111 students and 13 teaching staff. |

Source: (ACARA 2026); (Department of Education 2026).

Student enrolment numbers at Croydon State School have generally remained over 20 students during the five-year period to 2025, with anecdotal information identified by stakeholders during SIA engagement revealing that there are presently over 30 students (including kindergarten students). There are no high schools in Croydon with students typically completing secondary schooling via boarding schools in Carins, Townsville, Mount Isa or Charters Towers as identified by stakeholders during SIA engagement. Engagement feedback from Croydon State School further noted that the lack of local secondary schooling contributes to a transient town population with some families relocating once their children complete primary education. Across the regional service centres, there are approximately 11 schools in Townsville and 8 schools in Carins, including primary and secondary schools (state and private) as well as special assistance schools (ACARA 2026).

There are no training and higher education services in Croydon with the nearest facilities in Normanton, including TAFE Queensland Normanton campus and Gulf Christian College (registered training organisation). Access to facilities and support services are more readily available in Cairns and Townsville, as well as through online/remote learning platforms.

## Community facilities and groups

A small number of community facilities and groups can be found in Croydon, with more availability in Normanton and Richmond. Table C.4 reflects findings from desktop research and is not an exhaustive list of available services, groups, and facilities in the townships. A considerably greater range of facilities and services are available in the large regional service centres of Cairns and Townsville.

Table C.4: Community services

| Facility / service type | Croydon | Normanton | Richmond |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community and family support | • Croydon Men's Shed<br>• Croydon Shire Council office | • QCWA Normanton and Georgetown<br>• Centacare NQ – Normanton<br>• Ada Disability Services<br>• Normanton Recovery and Community Wellbeing Service<br>• Normanton Neighbourhood Centre<br>• Lamberr Wungarch<br>• Kurtijar Aboriginal Corporation | • Richmond Civic Centre<br>• Services Australia Access Point |
| Sports and recreation | • Lake Belmore<br>• True Blue Visitor Information Centre<br>• Croydon Swimming Pool<br>• Croydon Heritage Trails<br>• Federation Park,<br>• Centenary Park<br>• Savannah Golf<br>• Diehm's Lookout<br>• Croydon Rodeo Grounds | • Normanton Sports Centre<br>• Normanton Golf Course<br>• Normanton Rodeo Grounds and Racecourse<br>• Normanton Gun Club<br>• Normanton Bowls Club<br>• Normanton & Karumba Athletics Club<br>• Normanton Cricket Club<br>• Normanton Swimming Club<br>• Normanton Stingers Rugby League | • Charlie Wehlow Oval<br>• Richmond Tennis Court<br>• Richmond Skatepark<br>• Lake Fred Tritton<br>• Parks (Jack Brown Lions Park, Bobby Murray Memorial Park, Bush Tucker Gardens)<br>• Richmond Racecourse<br>• Kronosaurus water park<br>• Richmond Bowls Club |
| Arts, culture and amenity | • Heritage Precinct<br>• Croydon Library<br>• Croydon Heritage Preservation Association<br>• Savannah Art Trail<br>• Mining Museum | • Normanton Library and Visitor Information Centre<br>• Normanton Land and Sea Rangers<br>• John Henry Memorial Park | • Cambridge Downs Heritage Display Centre<br>• Kronosaurus Korner<br>• Richmond Library |
| Religious | • St Margaret's Anglican Church | • Normanton Christian Fellowship<br>• St Peter's Anglican Church | • St Brigids Catholic Church<br>• St John the Baptist Anglican Church |

Source: (Carpentaria Shire Council, 2026; Richmond Shire Council, 2026; Croydon Shire Council, 2026; Google, n.d.).

Social capital and community connectedness are important parts of rural and remote living, with residents typically reporting increased community connectedness, social cohesion and participation (Ziersch, et al. 2009). Participation in volunteering is a commonly used indicator to gain insights on community strength and cohesion. At the 2021 Census, a high proportion of residents in Croydon engaged in voluntary work (approximately 18.3%) while the proportion across Normanton and Richmond were approximately 14.2% and 16.9% respectively. For reference, the figure for Queensland in 2021 was 14.1% (ABS 2021). Some of the key community events in Croydon include the

Poddy Dodgers Festival (campdraft and rodeo), Heritage Festival, and annual Barra Fishing Competition at Lake Belmore.

## C-1-2 Physical infrastructure

Physical infrastructure essential for communities to function includes water, waste, energy and telecommunication systems, and road networks. Increased demand for infrastructure due to population change (even temporary) can have implications on the capacity and reliability of service delivery, particularly aging or under-invested infrastructure.

### Waste, water supply and sewage

CSC operates one landfill for the entire Croydon LGA, located south of Croydon town centre. The majority of waste at the landfill comprises residential waste from kerbside collection services, with limited capacity to store other waste including tyres, scrap metal, septic waste and hazardous materials (Croydon Shire Council 2014). There is greater availability and capacity of waste management facilities in Cairns and Townsville

Reticulated water supply in Croydon township is sourced from Belmore Dam while pastoral properties access water from bores. Septic systems are employed within the LGA as there is no reticulated sewerage system available (Croydon Shire Council 2025).

### Energy and telecommunications

Power supply in Croydon LGA is provided from the electricity grid via the Kidston-Karumba line managed by Ergon Energy. The hospital is equipped with an emergency generator while Council has several small portable generators (Croydon Shire Council 2025).

Telecommunication is available in Croydon township via landline and mobile systems. Mobile phone coverage is generally limited across the LGA and residents living outside of town are known to use satellite internet services (Starlink) for Wi-Fi calling capabilities (Epic Environmental 2025). Council maintains a UHF radio system and the whole Shire area is covered by broadcast radio (Croydon Shire Council 2025).

### Transport and access

The major roads servicing Croydon LGA are the Gulf Developmental Road and Croydon-Richmond Road. The Gulf Developmental Road is a sealed state-controlled road linking Cairns to Normanton, passing through the townships of Mount Surprise, Georgetown and Croydon. The road forms part of the Savannah Way, a popular self-drive and State Strategic Touring Route connecting Cairns to Broome in Western Australia. The Gulf Developmental Road runs east to west through Croydon township and provides an important transport corridor for cattle transport and the supply of goods for the community. In 2024, the average annual daily traffic (AADT) count along the Gulf Developmental Road (Normanton to Croydon section) was 197 vehicles (bi-directional), of which approximately 23.7% comprised of heavy vehicles (Queensland Government 2025).

The Richmond-Croydon Road commences in the south at the intersection with the Flinders Highways in Richmond and traverses north-west through the rural localities of Burleigh, Saxby, Bellfield, Victoria Vale and Esmeralda until it finishes at a T-junction with the Gulf Developmental Road approximately 27 km east of Croydon township. The road forms part of the inland freight network linking cattle properties in the Croydon, Etheridge, and Richmond region to major freight routes on the Landsborough and Flinders Highways. There are sections of the Richmond-Croydon Road that are unsealed.

During the wet season, both roads are susceptible to flooding and regular road closures. During SIA engagement, local stakeholders highlighted that Croydon and surrounding communities can often be isolated for long periods (anecdotally over several months during the most recent wet season) due to road condition constraints.

In relation to air transport, Croydon Shire Council owns and operates an aerodrome located southeast of Croydon township which is primarily used by the Royal Flying Doctors Services as well as light aircraft. The aerodrome has the capacity to accommodate heavier aircraft as required and the potential for the aerodrome to support the Project's workforce transport was raised as an opportunity by a stakeholder during SIA engagement

There is a tourist rail service providing weekly services from Normanton to Croydon (the Gulflander) and the Trans North Bus and Coach runs three weekly services from Cairns to Karumba stopping at all towns in between, including Croydon. No public transport service is available in Croydon.

### C-1-3 Community safety

QPS data for recorded offences is categorised into three broad categories: offences against the person, offences against property, and other offences[4]. In 2024-25, there were 37 recorded offences in Croydon LGA (rate of 13,704 per 100,000 persons), with almost half comprising of other offences (QGSO 2026). Within the regional area, the rate of total recorded offences in 2024-25 was notably higher compared to Queensland (34,481 compared to 10,879 per 100,000 persons), with a total of 1,142 recorded offenses during this period (QGSO 2026).

In relation to road safety, there were 40 crashes recorded within Croydon LGA between 2004 and 2024, with over two thirds of crashes resulting in hospitalisation or medical treatment (Queensland Government 2025). Of these recorded crashes, six occurred along road networks leading to the proposed Project site, including Richmond Road, Esmeralda Prospect Road and Richmond-Croydon Road. Over half of the crashes resulted in hospitalisation or medical treatment while the remaining resulted in property damage only (Queensland Government 2025).

### C-1-4 Potentially vulnerable groups

Vulnerability relates to the susceptibility of an individual or group to be adversely affected, which is influenced by various factors including existing sensitivities and the ability to respond to, adapt to and cope with changes in the surrounding environment (Australian Climate Service 2026). Some demographic and social characteristics, particularly under certain circumstances, may indicate greater vulnerability amongst a population group compared to others.

Socio-economic indicators that may influence vulnerability include:

- Age, such as children, youth, and the elderly who are more likely to depend on others for care and wellbeing.
- Socio-economic status, such as households on low-income, residing in social housing, unemployed, or of lower educational attainment.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people, such as those who do not speak English well or as a primary language.
- People with a disability or long-term health condition, such as those who require assistance with core daily activities including self-care, mobility and/or communication
- Disadvantage, such as people experiencing homelessness or without access to transport.

Potentially vulnerable groups are identified by comparing select indicators across the study areas with Queensland (Table C.3).

Table C.5: Indicators of potentially vulnerable groups, 2021 Census

| Indicator | Croydon LGA | Normanton UCL | Richmond UCL | Regional area | QLD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Children (ages 14 years or under) (%) | 20.7 | 27.5 | 22.0 | 22.6 | 18.2 |
| Youth (ages 15 to 25 years) (%) | 10.7 | 20.8 | 15.6 | 12.1 | 11.9 |
| Older population (65 years or older) (%) | 13.7 | 9.3 | 19.4 | 13.4 | 17.2 |
| People requiring assistance with core activity[5] (%) | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.7 | 2.7 | 6.0 |

[4] Includes drug offences, prostitution offences; liquor (excluding drunkenness); gaming, racing and betting offences; breach of domestic violence protection orders; trespassing and vagrancy; weapons act offences; good order offences; stock related offences; traffic and related offences; and miscellaneous offences.
[5] Core activity refers to self-care, mobility and communication.

| Indicator | Croydon LGA | Normanton UCL | Richmond UCL | Regional area | QLD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| People who reside in social housing (%) | 12.9 | 34.0 | 18.6 | - | 9.9 |
| Homelessness (rate per 10,000 persons) | 0.0 | - | - | 153.7 | 43.2 |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 8.0 | 10.2 | 1.7 | 5.3 | 5.4 |
| Households earning less than $650 a week (%) | 24.3 | 15.6 | 14.8 | - | 16.4 |
| People who do not speak English well or at all (%) | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 1.7 |
| Households without a vehicle (%) | 11.3 | 12.6 | 4.5 | 8.5 | 5.7 |

Source: (ABS, 2021; PHIDU, 2025).

At the 2021 Census, potentially vulnerable groups in Croydon LGA with higher representation relative to Queensland include children, people residing in social housing, unemployed people, households earning less than $650 a week, and households without a vehicle (ABS 2021). Of the regional service centres, Normanton exhibited the greatest vulnerability with high representation across most indicators, in particularly children and youth, people residing in social housing, unemployed residents, and households without a vehicle (ABS, 2021). These potentially vulnerable groups within the study areas are likely to have greater sensitivity to external socio-economic changes (both positive and negative) such as an increase in economic opportunities or an increase in demand of local services (health and emergency services) and subsequent access challenges as health and emergency services.

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is one of four socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) generated by ABS Census data and only includes measures of relative disadvantage[6] (ABS 2023). A high index score indicates a relative lack of disadvantage while a low score indicates relatively greater disadvantage of a geographic area. In 2021, Croydon LGA had an IRSD quintile value of one indicating relatively greater disadvantage of the LGA compared to others in Queensland. Carpentaria LGA also recorded a low IRSD quintile value of one (relatively greater disadvantaged experienced) while Richmond LGA had a high quintile score of four indicating a relative lack of disadvantage in comparison (ABS 2023). Within Croydon LGA, 100% of the population were in the most disadvantaged quintile (quintile one). For the Regional area as a whole, around 90.4% of the population were in the lowest two quintiles (quintile one and two) and around 9.6% were in the least disadvantaged quintile (QGSO 2026).

## C-2 Workforce management

This section provides an overview of workforce indicators relevant to income and education, labour force characteristics, unemployment trends, key industries, and occupations of employment.

### C-2-1 Income and education

In 2021, the median individual income in Croydon ($819) was slightly higher than the State median ($787) while the inverse was observed for median household income which was lower than the State median ($1,375 compared to $1,675). A similar trend was present in Richmond, higher individual and lower household median incomes, while median incomes in Normanton were comparable with that of the State (ABS 2021). Reflective of these medians, almost a quarter of households (24.3%) in Croydon were considered low-income households (total household income less than $650 per week), indicating likely limited or constrained income generation capacity locally. For Normanton, the proportion of lower-income households (15.6%) and households in higher income brackets (21.2%) was relatively comparable to that of the State (16.4% and 21.9% respectively) (ABS 2021).

[6] Indicators of disadvantage considered include (but not limited to) households with low income, unemployment, highest education attainment (year 11 or lower), and lack of access to a motor vehicle.

The Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) is an ABS derived socio-economic index that provides insight into the educational and occupational status of communities. The IEO focuses on relative education and occupation advantage and disadvantage[7]. A low IEO score indicates relatively lower education and occupation levels of the people in the area, while a high score indicates relatively higher education and occupation status of people in general within an area (ABS 2023). In 2021, both Croydon and Carpentaria LGAs recorded an IEO quintile score of one (most disadvantaged) while Richmond LGA recorded a score of two. This indicates a higher concentration of residents without higher education qualifications or in less skilled occupations (i.e., labourers and machinery operation roles) within these LGAs relative to those with higher levels of qualifications or in highly skilled occupations.

In 2021, the highest level of schooling completed by residents in Croydon LGA was Year 11 or 12 (or equivalent) with 36.6% of the population, followed closely by Year 9 or 10 with 35.7% of residents, which likely reflects the absence of secondary schooling being available locally. Across the nearest regional service centres, the majority of Richmond residents (43.3%) completed Year 11 or 12 as the highest level of schooling while for Normanton, the proportion of residents completing Year 9 or 10 and Year 11 or 12 as the highest level of schooling was similar (around 39.0% for each respectively).

For non-school qualifications, certificate was the most common qualification completed by Croydon LGA residents with 21.9%, followed by an advanced diploma or diploma with 7.3% of residents (QGSO 2026). The top three most common non-school qualification fields of study in Croydon LGA were engineering and related technologies (15.0%), management and commerce (13.3%) and society and culture (11.7%). The regional area as a whole broadly exhibited similar trends in fields of study with the addition of education.

## C-2-2 Labour force characteristics

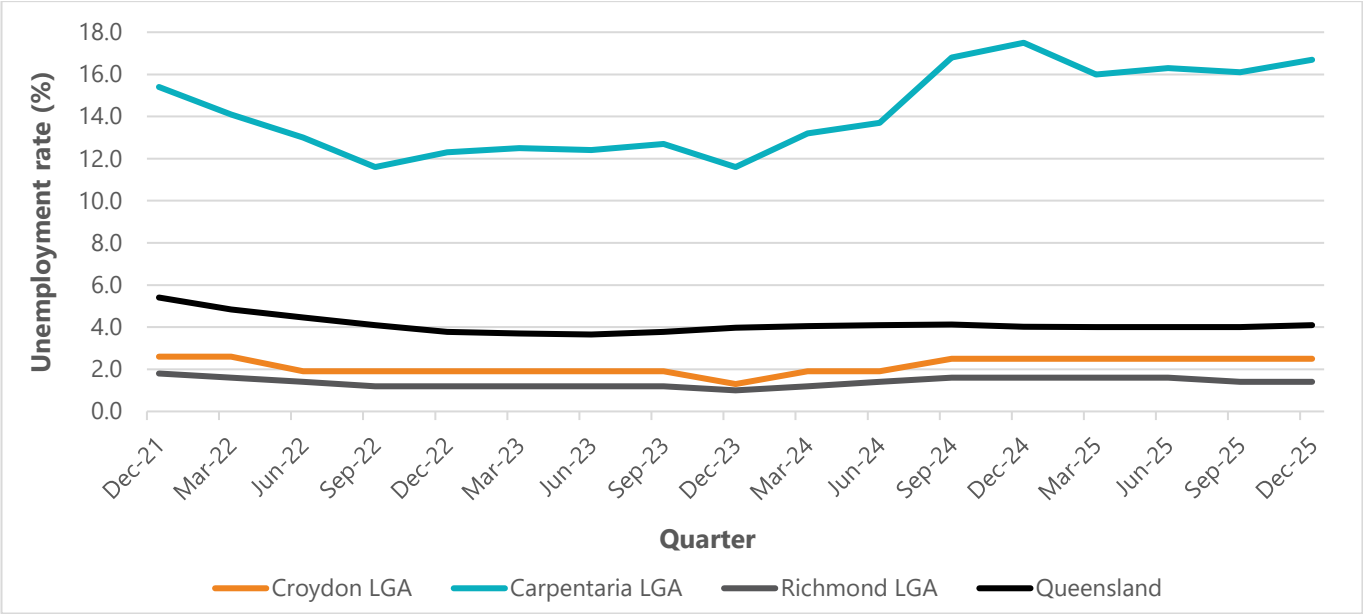
At the 2021 Census, Croydon LGA had a small labour force of 137 persons, with a comparable labour force participation rate (62.6%) and a higher rate of unemployment (8.0%) relative to Queensland as a whole (61.6% and 5.4% respectively). The First Nations labour force in Croydon was 24 persons in 2021, with a participation rate of 57.1% and unemployment rate of 20.8 compared to 64.3% and 11.0% respectively for the First Nations labour force for Queensland as a whole. Across the nearest regional service centres, Normanton had the largest labour force (529 persons) while Richmond featured greater labour force participation (65.3%) and notably lower unemployment (1.7%) relative to Queensland.

Local government administration was the main industry of employment for residents across Croydon, Normanton and Richmond in 2021, with Corydon exhibiting the highest proportion with 34.9% of the population. Other key industries of employment across these study areas include beef cattle farming (Croydon and Richmond), combined primary and secondary education (Normanton and Richmond), road bridge construction (Croydon) and primary education (Croydon and Normanton) (ABS 2021). Public administration and safety was the largest industry of work for First Nations persons in Croydon (39.1%) followed by accommodation and food services (21.7%) and education and training (17.4%) (QGSO 2026).

Data published by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations provides quarterly estimates of unemployment for select statistical geographies including LGA (DEWR 2026). While quarterly unemployment estimates are not available for Normanton and Richmond, the data is available for the respective LGAs that they are key population centres for.

Over the five-year period to December quarter 2025, the unemployment rate across Croydon and Richmond LGAs exhibited similar trends, generally remaining around 2% with some minor fluctuations above and below this rate across some quarters, but consistently well below the rate for Queensland as a whole (Figure C.1). The Croydon labour force remains small with 158 persons and an unemployment rate of 2.5% during the December 2025 quarter.

[7] Indicators considered by the IEO include educational attainment, occupation, skills levels, and employment status.




Source: (ABS, 2025)

Figure C.1: Unemployment rate, December 2021 quarter to December 2025 quarter.

The unemployment rate for Carpentaria LGA in contrast has experienced greater fluctuations over the five-year period and has consistently remained well above the Queensland figure with a peak unemployment rate of 17.5% recorded during the December 2024 quarter.

## C-2-3 Workforce wellbeing

A wealth of literature is available around the negative effects of FIFO and long-distance commuting work practices including higher incidences of anxiety, depression and burn out amongst FIFO workers compared to the general population as well as higher risk factors associated with alcohol, other drug use, and suicide (EMM 2025).

Research conducted by the Centre for Transformative Work Design at Curtin University found that of the 3,000 FIFO workers surveyed, around one third experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress, including feelings of depression, restlessness, fatigue, worthlessness and anxiety (EMM 2025). For comparison, the figure for the general population was lower at around 10%. Contributing factors raised by survey respondents included social isolation, stigma, perceived lack of autonomy, bullying, disruptions to normal family life and routines, physically demanding work, long non-standard working hours and associated fatigue (Centre for Transformative Work Design 2018).

From the perspective of families, research found that partners of FIFO workers with children felt like a single parent, with some expressing some resentment on having to manage all household chores and decisions while their partner was away (Dittman & Rathbone, 2022). Similarly, families supporting FIFO workers (particularly partners) are also vulnerable to the psychological stresses and mental health challenges that workers face, suggesting that a partners' mental health was significantly worse when the FIFO worker experienced loneliness, conflict between work and family, and difficulty in balancing competing demands (EMM 2025).

A consistently perceived key factor to reducing work-family conflict is greater roster choice. However available research also highlights a need for greater understanding of the nuanced inter-relationships between work and family, particularly when considering the complexities associated with the work-family interface and influencing factors such as different family structures and unique family needs (Brook and Ditchburn 2023).

In contrast, while a lesser focus in available research, the most commonly noted positive impacts of FIFO work practice includes improved financial circumstances from higher wages, reduced living costs while on shift, opportunity for lifestyle choices, and extended breaks between rosters (LGAQ 2015).

# C-3 Housing and accommodation

This section presents an overview of housing and accommodation trends, including dwelling occupancy and tenure, housing availability and affordability, and the availability of short-term and workforce accommodation.

## C-3-1 Dwelling occupancy and tenure

At the 2021 Census, the Croydon LGA had a small housing stock of 213 dwellings, with lower levels of dwelling occupancy (64.5%) and homeownership (37.6%) relative to Queensland (90.7% and 63.5% respectively). High levels of rented dwellings was exhibited in Croydon with 41.2% of total private dwellings occupied (ABS 2021). Similar to Croydon, Richmond comprised a small housing stock of 289 dwellings in 2021 while Normanton had the largest with 613 dwellings. Both centres exhibited notably higher rates of occupancy (over 70%) than Croydon, although lower than that for the State. Homeownership was high in Richmond and comparable with that for Queensland, while almost two-thirds of dwellings in Normanton were rented (ABS 2021).

The dwelling tenure characteristics in the larger regional service centres of Cairns and Townsville closely aligned with that of the State.

## C-3-2 Housing availability and affordability

Vacancy rates provide an indicator of rental housing supply and demand within an area. A vacancy rate of around 3% (i.e., between 2.6% to 3.5%) typically indicates a healthy rental market where housing supply and demand are balanced. In contrast, vacancy rates below 2.5% indicate a tight rental market where there is stronger demand than supply, while vacancy rates above 3.6% indicate a weak rental market where there is more housing supply than demand (REIQ 2023).

Based on housing market data published by SQM Research, residential vacancy rates in Croydon (postcode 4871) have consistently remained below 2% over the five-year period to January 2026, with a temporary peak vacancy rate (around 1.75%) recorded in October 2023 and lows of around 0.1% recorded over multiple non-consecutive months in 2025 (SQM Research 2026). The latest vacancy rate for Croydon was 0.3% in February 2026 indicating an ongoing extremely tight rental market, with rents ranging from around $300 to upwards of $700 per week depending on the housing type (SQM Research 2026).

The very constrained rental market was reiterated by multiple stakeholders during SIA engagement, with limited rental stock available in Croydon. Findings from the CSC Local Housing Action Plan indicate (anecdotally) that rental properties are tightly held and rarely available for the market with available properties typically passed on privately and often through word of mouth (Croydon Shire Council 2023). A search through online property platforms in April 2025 identified no properties for rent in Croydon and three properties for sale including a livestock property (REA Group 2026).

There are no real estate agents in Croydon, with real estate needs generally serviced by agents from outside the region (when necessary) and there is little or no data available for historic activity or price trends in the township. Major barriers to local housing activity include a lack of new private housing stock constructed over the past few years and prohibitive bank requirements (up to 60% housing deposit) which prevents potential buyers including former residents looking to relocate back to live permanently in Croydon (Croydon Shire Council 2023).

Across the nearest regional service centres, the latest rental vacancy rates in Normanton (postcode 4890) and Richmond (postcode 4822) were near/at 0.0% in February 2026 indicating an extremely tight rental market (SQM Research 2026). Findings from the Local Housing Action Plan for Carpentaria Shire identify a strong rental market in Normanton with properties tightly held and quickly rented out with private rents ranging from around $350 to $450 per week (Carpentaria Shire Council 2022). For the broader regional area as a whole, there were 55 residential dwellings sold, of which over two-thirds were in Carpentaria LGA which had the highest median sale price with $325,000 (QGSO 2026). Residential building activity within the regional area was limited to ten approvals, which primarily comprised of the nine new houses approved in Croydon LGA and one new house approved in Richmond LGA. Similar to Croydon, a major impediment for Normanton residents (and residents of remote areas in general) seeking to purchase or develop housing is the inability to obtain bank financing on reasonable terms including prohibitive deposit requirements and low valuation issues (Carpentaria Shire Council 2022).

Regarding social housing, there were 9 social housing dwellings in Croydon (three of which were not tenanted due to poor condition) and 103 social housing dwellings in Normanton. Demand for social housing is high in Normanton, with long-term waiting lists, and limited availability has contributed to overcrowding issues in both townships. It has been noted that overcrowding conditions aggravate social issues that contribute to other unintended consequences such as family and domestic violence or the outmigration of residents due to the lack of affordable housing options locally (Carpentaria Shire Council 2022; Croydon Shire Council 2023).

## C-3-3 Workforce and short-term accommodation

Workforce accommodation villages (WAVs) are generally the most prevalent form of accommodation used to house non-resident workers while on shift in rural or remote areas. There are no WAVs in Croydon, with the closest facility located in Normanton. Jubilee Metals is proposing to develop a temporary non-resident workforce accommodation facility in Croydon township to support their Croydon gold mine project workforce. The development application is currently being assessed by CSC.

A limited range of short-term accommodation is available in Croydon township, with a larger number of facilities available in the regional service centres of Normanton and Richmond (Table C.5).

Table C.6: Short-term accommodation in Croydon, Normanton and Richmond

| Locality | Accommodation | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Croydon | Croydon Club Hotel | • Accommodation (approx. 18 rooms) and outdoor pool located behind the hotel. |
| | Croydon Caravan Park | • Council managed caravan park with camping sites and self-contained cabin accommodation as well as on-site laundry, pool, camp kitchen, and amenity blocks. |
| | Racecourse Rest Camping | • Donation-based campground on the outskirt of town with small amenities block. |
| | Croydon BP Road House | • Limited donga style accommodation available. |
| Normanton | Purple Pub Brolga Palms Motel | • Self-contained motel units (approx. 17 rooms) located behind the hotel. |
| | Normanton Airport Accommodation | • Small worker accommodation at the airport with on-site shared kitchen, dining facility and vehicle hire. |
| | Gulfland Motel And Caravan Park | • Accommodation options include motel rooms as well as powered and unpowered caravan and camper sites. |
| | Normanton Tourist Park | • Self-contained cabins as well as campground with on-site pool, dump point, camp kitchen and BBQ area. |
| | Albion Hotel Normanton | • Approx. 7 motel rooms located behind the hotel. |
| | Central Hotel Normanton | • Motel units and backpacker rooms. |
| Richmond | Richmond RV Stop | • Council managed RV parking area with water and dump points onsite. |
| | Mud Hut Hotel | • 36 en-suite rooms with on-site bottle shop, bar and bistro, and gaming area. |
| | Entriken's Pioneer Motel | • In town donga-style facility with on-site pool, laundry facilities, and BBQ area. |
| | Ammonite Inn | • 25 rooms with on-site pool, laundry facility, outdoor dining, and BBQ facilities. |

| Locality | Accommodation | Description |
|---|---|---|
| | Big Wheel Budget Accommodation | • 15 self-contained quarters, with outdoor cooking, dining area and laundry facilities on-site. |
| | Lakeview Caravan Park | • Accommodation options include powered and unpowered sites, bunkhouse, ensuite rooms, self-contained cabins, and family villas. |
| | Midway Motel & Roadhouse | • Serviced apartment (approx. 33 rooms) with on-site restaurant, laundry, and outdoor area. |

Source: (ABS, 2025)

During SIA engagement, accommodation providers engaged noted that tourism is a major driver of most businesses in Croydon, with peak tourism season from April until the end of September before is starts getting too warm from October.

In Normanton, accommodation for visitors is typically at a premium for large parts of the year and is particularly limited during the high tourist season from May to September (Carpentaria Shire Council 2022). Limited availability if further compounded by demand for accommodation by visiting tradespersons and contractors during the year as Normanton functions as a major service centre for the western gulf.

A larger availability of short-term and workforce accommodation options is available across the larger regional service centres of Cairns and Townsville.

## C-4 Local business and industry procurement

This section provides an overview of economic trends in Croydon LGA and the regional study area, including types of businesses available across the regional service centres.

### C-4-1 Local and regional study area economy

The Croydon LGA economy is predominantly driven by agriculture (specifically cattle grazing) and supported by other key contributing industry sectors including tourism and public administration. In 2024, the Croydon LGA economy generated an estimated $43.35 million in output, with public administration and safety the largest contributor accounting for 31.7% of total output (REMPLAN 2026). Other key contributors to the LGAs economic output include agriculture, forestry and fishing (30.3%), accommodation and food service (11.8%), and construction (11.3%). Public administration and safety was also the largest industry sector for employment with 39 jobs, which represented 37.5% of total employment within the Croydon LGA.

For the regional study area, key industries in the Carpentaria LGA include agriculture, fishing, mining, tourism and government administration. Much of the Carpentaria LGA's commercial activity comes through Karumba, which has an active port based around export of zinc and lead as well as a fishing industry. Established industries in Richmond LGA include agriculture, mining and tourism as well as an emerging critical minerals industry.

### C-4-2 Businesses and industry types

There are a small number of businesses based in Croydon township including the pub, roadhouse and petrol station, small grocer, quarry, tyre centre, and three main earthmoving contractors.

The ABS business register provides an annual snapshot of actively trading businesses for select statistical geographies including LGA. In June 2025, a limited number of businesses were actively trading in Croydon LGA (35 businesses in total) of which over half were non employing businesses, such as sole traders (ABS 2025). Overall, the total number of businesses in Croydon LGA increased marginally between June 2023 and 2025, with the largest growth recorded for small businesses employing less than 20 people (Table C.7).

Table C.7: Business count by employee size, Croydon LGA and regional area

| Employment size | Croydon LGA | | | Regional area | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | June 2025 | June 2023 | Change (%) | June 2025 | June 2023 | Change (%) |
| Non-employing | 22 | 21 | 4.8 | 286 | 271 | 5.5 |
| 1-19 employees | 16 | 14 | 14.3 | 153 | 149 | 2.7 |
| 20-199 employees | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 12 | 25.0 |
| 200+ employees | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 38 | 35 | 8.6 | 454 | 432 | 5.1 |

Source: (ABS, 2025)

The industry with the largest number of registered businesses in June 2025 was agriculture, forestry and fishing, accounting for 42.1% of businesses in Croydon LGA, followed by the construction industry with 23.7% (QGSO 2026). The agriculture, forestry and fishing industry also had the highest specialisation ratio[8] of 5.31 indicating the importance of the industry to Croydon with a significantly higher concentration of businesses for that industry relative to Queensland. The availability of construction businesses in Croydon LGA, albeit very limited, suggests some potential for relevant services that could support construction activities associated with the Project.

Relative to Croydon, the regional study area comprises greater business availability and capacity (i.e., businesses with a larger workforce) with 454 businesses registered in June 2025 (over half based in Richmond LGA) including medium sized businesses employing between 20 to 199 workers. The agriculture, forestry and fishing industry comprised the highest number of registered businesses in the regional area (44.7%) followed by construction (11.2%) and transport, postal and warehousing industry (9.0%) (QGSO 2026).

## C-4-3 First Nations businesses

Desktop search of Supply Nation and Black Business Finder in April 2026 did not identify any First Nations businesses based in Croydon LGA. The Tagalaka Aboriginal Corporation manages the Tagalaka Rangers based in Croydon which cares for Tagalaka Country through a range of environmental and cultural protection and management projects.

Across the regional service centres, the closet First Nations businesses to Croydon are based in Normanton and Richmond (both with two registered businesses) while there are over 20 businesses registered in Townsville and Cairns (Supply Nation 2026; Gateway by ICN 2026). Services provided by busineses in Normanton and Richmond include civil contracting, indigneous labour hire, traffic management, biosecurity and environmental services.

SIA engagement with Gulf Regional Services (labour hire and civil construction provider in Normanton) revealed that the large majority of their workforce consists of locals (Croydon/Normanton area) and First Nations people (Tagalaka). The business also supports training and upskilling opportunities (licenses and machinery tickets) but identified location as the biggest barrier to access as travel and associated logistic costs can be prohibitive (e.g., travelling to Cairns for traffic control training or flying in a machinery trainer/assessor from the coast to Croydon/Normanton area).

Research relating to First Nations participation in emerging industries, including critical minerals, identifies significant opportunities through the supply chain process to strengthen First Nations economic development and partnerships between industry and communities. However, consistently raised challenges constraining First Nations business participation in opportunities include complex procurement processes (particularly large work packages), workforce readiness constraints, limited capability and capacity (including lack of assets or access to capital), and remoteness challenges such as high travel costs and seasonal disruptions (Clean Energy Council and KPMG 2024; Northern Australia Indigenous Reference Group 2026).

[8] The relative concentration of industries within specific regions compared to Queensland. A specialisation ratio above 1.00 indicates Croydon LGA has a larger share of that industry than Queensland. Similarly, a specialisation ratio below 1.00 indicates Croydon LGA has a smaller share of that industry than Queensland (QGSO 2026).

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