

SOCIO-ECONOMICS

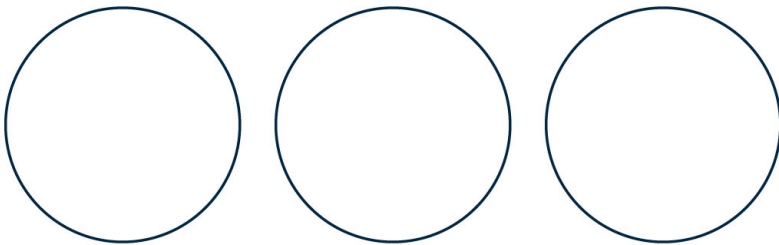


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19 SOCIO-ECONOMICS

This section describes the existing social and economic environment relevant to the Ensham Central Project and provides a summary of the possible social and economic impacts of the project. A detailed Social Assessment is presented in Appendix J.

19.1 INTRODUCTION

The project is located in the Bowen Basin area of Central Queensland and straddles the Emerald, Peak Downs and Broadsound Shires. The project's closest economic centre, and the main source of local employees at the Ensham Mine, is the town of Emerald located approximately 40 km west of the project by road. After Emerald, the largest nearby town is Blackwater located approximately 50 km east of the project site by road, in the nearby Duaringa Shire. The closest major regional centre is the city of Rockhampton located approximately 200 km east of the project.

This section examines the existing social and economic environment relevant to the project and discusses the likely impacts of the project on the community and economy in the area. Many of the anticipated social impacts relate to the additional workforce required for the project and the additional accommodation and service facilities which may be required to support this workforce.

The social assessment reviews the impact of the project on the social profile, labour force, housing demand and community services of the Emerald area and specifically considers the implications of the proposed workforce accommodation strategy.

The economic impact assessment broadly summarises the economic implications of the various stages of project construction, operation and decommissioning.

19.2 PROJECT WORKFORCE

19.2.1 Introduction

Construction of the underground mine will commence in Project Year 2 and be completed in Project Year 3. Construction of the washplant and associated coal handling infrastructure will be commenced and completed in Project Year 3. Operation of the underground mine and washplant will commence in Project Year 4. No additional construction works are proposed for the open cut mining operations, although approval of the project will extend open cut mining operations by a further six years.

19.2.2 Workforce Numbers

Workforce numbers for project construction and operation have been estimated for project planning purposes based on the most accurate, currently available information. However, workforce numbers are dependent on several variables, including project timeframes. Consequently, the workforce numbers presented in this report may be subject to minor change during construction and operation.

For the purposes of this report the terms "workforce" and "employee(s)" have been used to describe any employee or contractor employed, either directly or indirectly, by the proponent, to

undertake work at the Ensham Mine. The project workforce is likely to consist of a combination of permanent employees and contractors.

The estimated workforce required for the project is summarised in Table 19-1. As indicated in this table, the workforce for the currently approved Ensham mining operations will reach 700 prior to commencement of the project. As the open cut mining production rate, and associated workforce, will remain constant during construction and operation of the project, this workforce of 700 will remain in place for the duration of the project.

Any increases in workforce will be due solely to construction and operation of the underground mine and washplant. As indicated in Table 19-1, construction will require a workforce of approximately 200 employees who will be employed on site for a two year period during Project Years 2 and 3 of the project. Following this, the project will require an operational workforce of approximately 140 people for operation of the underground mine and washplant.

There will be a single year (Project Year 3) in which the construction and operations workforce will partially overlap and during this period there will be a project workforce of approximately 240 people (Table 19-1). This is the highest project workforce which will occur at any time during the life of the project. This project workforce, combined with the open cut workforce of 700, would result in a total Ensham Mine workforce of approximately 940.

Following closure of the underground mine in Project Year 14, the total workforce will revert to 700 employees.

**Table 19-1
Project Workforce**

	Pre-Project (Project Years 0 and 1)	Project Construction (Project Year 2)	Project Construction/ Operations Overlap (Project Year 3)	Project Operations (Project Year 4 to Project Year 14)
Project Workforce	0	201	238	138
Open Cut Workforce	700	700	700	700
Total	700	901	938	838

19.2.3 Workforce Accommodation

Workforce Accommodation Strategy

The majority of the current Ensham workforce is employed on a roster system in which employees work 12 hour shifts for seven days and then have seven days off. These employees are accommodated in on site camp accommodation during their seven day shift period and then disperse to their residential base for their seven day roster break. This strategy of providing on site accommodation has worked successfully at Ensham Mine since the commencement of mining operations in 1993 and the proponent proposes to continue with this strategy for the project.

Only a small percentage of the workforce (engaged in administration, management and some specialist areas) lives locally and travels to the site on a daily basis.

Accordingly, as indicated in Table 19-2, the entire construction workforce, and all but 26 of the operations workforce, will be housed in on site camp accommodation. The workforce not housed in on site camp accommodation will travel daily to the site and is likely to be based in Emerald or small towns nearby.

**Table 19-2
Project Workforce Accommodation**

Place of Residence	Project Construction (Project Year 2)	Project Construction/ Operations Overlap (Project Year 3)	Project Operations (Project Year 4 to Project Year 14)
Emerald area (Travelling daily to work)	0	26	26
On site camp	201	212	112
Total	201	238	138

The on site camp accommodation strategy enables employees to select from a wide choice of residential bases, depending on individual preferences. These range from towns such as Cairns in far north Queensland, Brisbane in south-east Queensland and Roma in western Queensland. Based on trends amongst the current Ensham workforce, the majority of the on site camp workforce is likely to base their families in regional centres such as Rockhampton. These centres are favoured because they provide access to a larger variety of social infrastructure than that available in the towns surrounding the project site. Table 19-3 provides an estimate of the residential base of the on site camp workforce (and their families), based on the residential base of the current Ensham on site camp workforce.

Table 19-3 indicates that the majority of the construction and operations shift workforce accommodated in on site camps are likely to have their residential base in Rockhampton. Other key residential base locations include Mackay, south and south-east Queensland, Emerald and a range of other central Queensland towns.

Only 14% of the on site camp workforce is estimated to select the town of Emerald as its residential base. This figure is a conservative estimate. The actual proportion of the workforce based in the town of Emerald is likely to be lower due to the current high prices and limited availability of accommodation which detracts from Emerald's appeal, relative to other regional centres, such as Rockhampton.

**Table 19-3
Estimated Residential Base for On Site Camp Workforce**

Residential Base	Construction (Project Year 2)	Construction/ Operations Overlap (Project Year 3)	Operations (Project Year 4 to Project Year 14)
Rockhampton	62	67	36
Central Queensland (excluding the town of Emerald)	39	40	21
Mackay	35	37	20
South & South-East Queensland	30	32	16
Town of Emerald	28	29	16
North Queensland	4	4	2
West Queensland	3	3	1
Total	201	212	112

In summary, based on the above discussion, it is estimated that the following project workforce will choose to live in the town of Emerald:

- construction workforce of up to 28 employees based in Emerald during roster breaks; and
- operations workforce of up to 42 people, comprising 26 people who travel daily to the site and 16 employees based in Emerald during their roster breaks.

Consideration of Alternatives

The proponent proposes to accommodate the project workforce in on site camps because of the past success of this strategy at Ensham Mine. The only feasible alternative to on site camp accommodation for the additional project workforce would be to house the entire workforce in the town of Emerald. However, this option is not favoured because of the current high price and the limited availability of accommodation in Emerald.

On Site Camp Facilities

The existing on site camp provides a high level of services for use by employees. These include:

- single rooms with amenities (television, ensuite);
- inground swimming pool;
- recreation room;
- tennis courts;
- tavern;
- gymnasiums;
- vending machines;
- kitchen and dining area serving breakfasts and dinners;
- ambulance;
- car park and car washing facilities; and
- bus service for commuters traveling between the project site and Yeppoon.

A new camp will be constructed on site to accommodate the additional project workforce. The new camp will provide a similar style of accommodation and facilities comparable to those of the existing accommodation camp. It will be located within the project site boundary and be developed in accordance with relevant building and design industry standards.

19.2.4 Workforce Catchment

As discussed in Section 19.2.3, the majority of the workforce is expected to have residential bases in locations including Rockhampton, Mackay and other regions throughout Queensland. The estimated distribution of the project workforce to these centres will not result in any significant proportional population increases in these major cities. Consequently, there will not be any significant related social impacts on these locations. Therefore the social assessment has focussed on the town of Emerald, with reference to the community facilities and services in Rockhampton in instances where they supplement those in Emerald.

Blackwater is also within proximity to the project site. However, it is most likely that the project workforce will look to Emerald for local goods and services in preference to Blackwater due to Emerald's higher level of community infrastructure and services. Therefore it is not anticipated that Blackwater will experience any significant social impacts as a consequence of the project.

19.2.5 Workforce Skilling and Resourcing

The proponent will seek a suitable workforce for the project at a local, state and national level. Table 19-4 shows the expected skill requirements for the project.

**Table 19-4
 Project Workforce by Occupation**

Occupation	Construction	Operations
Tradespersons	78	66
Miners	107	55
Professionals	13	15
Clerical	3	2
Total	201	138

The project will recruit a mix of people with varying skill profiles, including the following:

- technically qualified trades;
- professionals including engineers and geologists;
- specialist mining employees;
- transport operators;
- experienced machine and equipment operators; and
- people with no previous experience.

19.3 SOCIAL PROFILE

19.3.1 Introduction

A detailed assessment of the existing social environment and infrastructure in the region is provided in the *Social Assessment (Appendix J)*. This was prepared with reference to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 census data and following consultation with the local community.

It specifically considers the following areas:

- the population and demographics of the community;
- the labour force;
- housing and accommodation; and
- community infrastructure and services.

The majority of the workforce have residential bases in other areas of Queensland, including Rockhampton and Mackay. These large centres are not expected to be impacted by the project. Therefore this social impact assessment has focussed on the town of Emerald which is the area likely to be most affected by the project.

19.3.2 Demographics

At the time of the ABS' most recent 2001 census, the population of the town of Emerald was 10,093 people, which represented 71% of Emerald Shire's total population of 14,249 people. This represented a population increase of 8.0% for the town of Emerald and 7.0% for the Shire of Emerald since the previous 1996 census.

Emerald experienced dramatic growth in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as a consequence of expansion within the mining sector combined with changed agricultural practices in the area. The annual population growth of the Emerald Shire for the period from 2001 to 2021, has been predicted by the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation to be in the order of 1.0 percent.

19.3.3 Employment

At the time of the 2001 census, the total labour force of the Emerald Shire was 7,170 people. The unemployment rate for the Shire was 5.3% compared with the average unemployment rate for Queensland of 8.2%.

Employment in Emerald Shire was distributed by industry sector as follows: retail 15%, agriculture, forestry and fishing 13.6%, mining 10.8%, education 7.4%, property and business services 7.0%, construction 6.8%, manufacturing 5.6%, and transport and storage 5.0%.

It can be seen from the above statistics that, although the mining industry is a significant employer in the area, the local and regional community has a stable and diverse economic base with the majority of the available labour force employed in other non-mining industries.

19.3.4 Accommodation

Stakeholders have raised concerns in relation to the price and availability of accommodation in the town of Emerald.

The type of property available for rent or purchase in the town of Emerald, recent trends in the town's property market and residential development activity are examined in *Appendix J*. Based on this assessment, there is sufficient capacity for the limited additional accommodation demand created by the project.

This investigation found that the number of units and detached houses available for rent in Emerald in 2004 were 523 and 528 respectively, corresponding to a 36% increase in rental units since 1999 and a 15% decrease in rental houses since 1999. The majority of rental properties available in June 2005 were three bedroom houses and two bedroom units, comprising 36% and 28% of the rental property market respectively.

Although the review generally found the rental prices to be higher than those in the surrounding Bauhinia, Jericho and Peak Downs Shires and the city of Rockhampton, the average weekly rental values for one, two and three bedroom houses were the same or less than the averages for Queensland on the whole.

In the year ending March 2005, 111 residential lots were approved for construction by the Emerald Shire Council and construction of 68 residential lots was completed. In the same period, the Emerald Shire Council recorded 114 new residential dwelling approvals, 96.5% of which were for separate houses.

In the six month period to 31 August 2005, a total of 122 detached houses were sold in Emerald of which 43% were three bedroom and 41% were four bedroom houses. In mid-September 2005 there were 161 houses listed for sale at prices ranging from \$180,000 to \$695,000. No share accommodation or apartments were listed for sale at that time.

19.3.5 Community Services and Facilities

Emerald is the major population and administrative centre for the Central Highlands Region and as such there is a wide variety of infrastructure and services available to the local community. Where necessary, these facilities and services are supplemented by more extensive services in Rockhampton.

Medical facilities include the 36 bed Emerald Hospital, and health services include a schedule of regular specialist visits to the town. Education facilities include six primary schools, two secondary schools and regional campuses of the Central Queensland University and Central Queensland TAFE.

Emerald's emergency services include a police station, ambulance centre, state emergency service and a Magistrate's Court. Where necessary these services are supplemented by district level services based in Rockhampton.

Other community facilities include welfare and community support services, sporting and recreation organisations, cultural and leisure facilities and retail shopping outlets.

19.3.6 Local Community Values and Lifestyles

Feedback from the stakeholder consultation program indicate that the Emerald community values a range of aspects of its social environment. Emerald and the surrounding region is characterised by a relaxed country lifestyle and Emerald has attracted more long term settlement than some other centres in the region. Evidence is that Emerald is a desirable place to live, with a strong sense of community. It is well serviced by sporting clubs, entertainment facilities and natural recreation facilities. The role of mining as an important aspect of the Emerald community has been acknowledged by stakeholders.

19.4 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

19.4.1 Introduction

This social impact assessment considers the project's direct, beneficial and adverse impacts on the town of Emerald. Potential impacts have been considered at a local and regional level and include an evaluation of the short and long term impacts.

The following impacts on the social environment are considered in this assessment:

- impacts on the social profile (including demographic and cultural profiles, and residents' aspirations and values);
- impacts on labour force and skilling;
- impacts on housing demand and supply;
- impacts on community infrastructure and services; and
- social implications of the accommodation strategy.

Mitigation strategies are included in the discussion of the impacts, where relevant. A summary of mitigation measures is provided in Section 19.5.

19.4.2 Impacts on the Social Profile

As indicated in Section 19.2.3, the majority of the workforce will be housed in on site camp accommodation and will disperse to regional centres, such as Rockhampton and Mackay, during

their roster breaks. Consequently, only a small proportion of the construction and operations workforce will be based in the town of Emerald. The contribution of the project to the total population of Emerald is likely to be no more than 42 employees and their families, which is only 1-2% of the current population of Emerald. Given that the potential of the project to impact the population of the town of Emerald is minor, the project is not expected to have a significant impact on the demographic or cultural profile of Emerald or on the aspirations, values and lifestyles of existing Emerald residents. The relatively small additional population influx due to the project could have a minor additional effect on property values and rental prices. Potential impacts on housing demand and supply are discussed in Section 19.4.4.

As detailed in Section 19.2.3, the estimated distribution of the project workforce to home bases in other locations, including Rockhampton, Mackay and other areas of Queensland, will not result in any significant proportional population increases in any other towns or cities. Consequently there will not be any significant related social impacts on these locations.

19.4.3 Impacts on Labour Force and Skilling

As discussed in Section 19.3.3, Emerald is characterised by high employment and Emerald specifically, and the region generally, have a high level of labour force containment.

The skill levels of the required project workforce is summarised in Section 19.2.5. There is a limited pool of both skilled and unskilled people available in the local labour market. However, the lower employment levels in the Fitzroy Statistical Division indicates that there may be an opportunity for project resourcing from the wider regional area.

The proponent will have a focussed recruitment program and will seek a suitable workforce in the local Central Queensland Region, and also at a state and national level.

The proponent currently participates in two programs coordinated by the Central Highlands Development Corporation (CHDC) which address labour skills issues. These are the CHDC Mining Forum, which is a joint working party on accommodation and skills, and the CHDC Skills Development Study Program. Both of these programs consider skills development in the Central Highlands Region and include representatives from the following areas of the community:

- CHDC;
- local councils (Emerald, Peak Downs, Bauhinia, Jericho) – mayors, councillors and town planners;
- a number of employment/training/skills agencies;
- a number of mining companies in the Emerald district;
- government departments;
- private land developers;
- real estate agents;
- support organisations (Anglicare, Centacare, Salvation Army, Lifeline); and
- CHRRUP (Central Highlands Regional Resource Users Planning Cooperative).

In addition, the proponent is on the board of CHRRUP and represents the mining sector to this organisation.

The proponent will continue to participate in these forums to ensure that it provides timely workforce data to assist these organisations in future planning and skills development.

19.4.4 Impacts on Housing Demand and Supply

Based upon the distribution of existing Ensham workforce residential bases, only a small proportion of the workforce is likely to select the town of Emerald as a residential base. On this basis, the project alone is not expected to have a noticeable impact on housing demand and supply in the town of Emerald. However, the cumulative impact of the project, in conjunction with other mines expanding or being developed in the region, may contribute to existing pressure on the cost and availability of accommodation in Emerald.

The proponent is unable to directly address this cumulative issue because housing demand and supply is dependent on a number of factors beyond its control. These factors include the development of other, unrelated projects in the region which may impact on housing demand and supply (e.g. sub-divisions). However, the proponent will assist with long term planning by providing accurate and timely planning updates to the existing forums engaged in accommodation planning. Government and social infrastructure providers have requested that project information in relation to the workforce is provided sufficiently in advance of the development of the project. In particular, the proponent will continue to participate in the CHDC Mining Forum, which is a joint working party on accommodation (Section 19.4.3). The proponent will also continue proactive communication with the Emerald Shire Council and Peak Downs Shire Council to address housing supply issues relevant to the project.

19.4.5 Impacts on Community Infrastructure and Services

The impact of the project on community infrastructure and services will be limited by the fact that the majority of the workforce will be accommodated in on site camps in which full amenities are provided. Currently, employees are free to leave the site between shifts however, the majority of the workforce usually remains on site because of the high level of employee amenities provided. This pattern is expected to continue for the project.

Details of the community infrastructure and services available in Emerald, and where relevant, in Rockhampton, are provided in Section 19.3.5 and in *Appendix J*. Most services are provided in Emerald. The community infrastructure is well supported at a regional level by services in Rockhampton.

Any potential impact of the project on the capacity of community infrastructure and services will be dependent on a range of influences on population and the relevant timing of these in relation to the timing of the project. In order to assist with forward social infrastructure planning, the proponent will consult with the Emerald Shire Council, Peak Downs Shire Council and other relevant social infrastructure providers to ensure that any impacts of the project are understood and considered in planning for social infrastructure.

19.4.6 Social Implications of Accommodation Arrangements

Experience to date is that the shift arrangements at Ensham Mine are popular amongst employees with families as it enables them to spend time at home with their families during roster breaks. However, the physical separation of families during the roster work periods may contribute to stress on family relationships.

The proponent currently makes available the services of an independent counselling consultant to all employees in the event that they require professional guidance on personal matters. This service will be extended to the project workforce.

19.4.7 Impacts on Landowners

The project is located on land currently owned by the proponent. Generally, the land in the area adjacent to the project is used for agricultural and grazing purposes. There is no requirement for additional property acquisition as part of the project. No existing land uses outside of the mining lease and Mining Lease Application Areas will be significantly adversely affected.

Detailed studies of the environmental impact of dust, noise, blasting, flooding and other potential impacts of the project on neighbouring landowners have been undertaken as part of this EIS. The details of these studies are included in the relevant sections of this report.

19.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

The majority of potential social impacts on the local community relate to the additional workforce required for the project and the housing of this workforce. The proponent's decision to provide on site accommodation for the majority of the workforce, similar to the current Ensham workforce arrangements, significantly reduces the potential for social impacts on the local community.

Specific mitigation measures that will be adopted to address social impact issues include:

- Provision of timely workforce data and planning updates to forums and agencies involved in planning related to accommodation provision, social infrastructure and skills development. These include Emerald Shire Council, Peak Downs Shire Council, CHDC Mining Forum, CHDC Skills Development Study, and any relevant social infrastructure providers.
- Continued participation in CHDC Mining Forum, which addresses issues related to accommodation and skills.
- Continued participation in the CHDC Skills Development Study Program, which considers skills development in the Central Highlands region.
- Providing an independent counselling service to the project workforce to provide professional guidance on personal matters.

19.6 ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

19.6.1 Introduction

The local and regional economies were historically founded on agriculture. In more recent times the development of the Bowen Basin coalfields has had an increasing influence, although the agricultural basis of economic activity in the area is still strong.

The Emerald economy is very strong due to its solid agricultural base, coupled with the strength of the Queensland coal industry and the extent of coal mine development in the Emerald area.

The project has the potential to impact the economy on a local, state and national level during both construction and operation. On a local level there will be a direct increase in the demand for employees, local services and supplies. On a regional level there will be an increase in opportunities for small to medium sized businesses supplying the mining industry and also a skilled worker demand.

On a state level there will be substantial increases in mining royalties, rail freight and port handling charges. On a national level the increased mine output will directly increase Australia's coal exports thereby having a positive impact on the national trade balance whilst also indirectly increasing national revenue through the generation of additional goods and services taxes and income taxes.

Potential adverse economic impacts of the project include a minor contribution to the current imbalance between mining industry salaries and salaries in other industries. This potential minor adverse impact is outweighed by the substantial positive economic impacts of the project.

19.6.2 Construction Phase

The total capital cost of the underground mine and its associated surface facilities is estimated to be \$260 million. Construction resources and equipment required as part of this work include construction labour, development and longwall mining equipment, underground conveyors, surface handling equipment, underground services, vehicles and ventilation, power and surface facilities. Of the total estimated capital expenditure for construction, approximately 65% to 70% will be expended within Australia.

Construction of the washplant will commence and be completed in Project Year 3. It will require direct employment of approximately 70 employees. The total capital expenditure of the washplant and associated coal handling facilities is estimated to be \$32 million and, with the exception of approximately \$5 million of mechanical equipment and electrical instruments, this will be expended within Australia.

During construction there will be an economic benefit for the local and regional economy. The construction workforce will be predominantly employed from the Central Queensland Region and the local Emerald area, and materials and supplies will be sourced from the Central Queensland Region. The local economy of Emerald and surrounding towns will be positively impacted by the demand for local services associated with provision of camp accommodation (eg. food, supplies and laundry) and construction materials and supplies (eg. fuel, concrete, etc.).

The reduction in economic activity following completion of project construction in Project Year 3 will be mitigated by new demand for labour, products and services as part of the ongoing operation and maintenance of the project from Project Year 3 onward.

19.6.3 Operations Phase

Approval of the project will extend the open cut mining operations for a further six years beyond the current approval. This will result in direct employment of the 700 employee open cut workforce for a further six years, and continuation of the annual open cut mine operating cost of \$500 million for a further six years.

Operation of the underground mine will commence in Project Year 4 and quickly reach its maximum forecast output of 8 Mtpa, which will continue until the closure of the underground mine in Project Year 14. Operation of the washplant will commence in Project Year 3 and continue through until decommissioning of the underground mine.

At full operation the annual underground mine and washplant operating cost will be approximately \$270 million and the workforce will be approximately 140 employees. Approximately 110 employees will be accommodated in the on site camp and 30 employees will travel to the project daily.

In addition to the direct annual operating costs of the project, the project will have broader economic impacts for the Central Queensland Region and the state and national economies. Locally the economic impacts most directly affect employment and community spending, as additional materials and services will be sourced from local suppliers and contractors. It is estimated that indirect employment due to extended operation of the mine, will positively impact at least 4,000 people.

Regionally, the project will expand the coal mining industry in the area creating new opportunities for small and medium businesses. The state government will benefit from up to \$70 million in

taxes annually due to the extension of mining. The potential additional revenue for Queensland Rail and Central Queensland Ports Authority will be in the order of \$200 million annually.

The provision of an additional on site accommodation camp will increase the demand for goods and services (including food, supplies, laundry, etc.) from the local community.

19.6.4 Decommissioning

The expanded mining operations, including the project, will operate for a period of 16 years following which the mine will be decommissioned. A detailed decommissioning plan will be developed well in advance of this time.

Cessation of mining activities will affect the Central Queensland economy generally and more specifically the town of Emerald. However, Emerald Shire, although actively involved with the mining industry, has a stable and diverse economic base with the majority of its available labour force employed in other industries including agriculture, horticulture, retail and construction (Section 19.3.3 and *Appendix J*). This diversity means that the local Emerald community is more resilient to downturns in any one particular industry category than many other Central Queensland towns which rely on only one sector for the majority of employment. Consequently it is anticipated that Emerald will have sufficient alternative industries for employment following decommissioning of the project.

The impact of the project's closure on the Central Queensland Region will be partially mitigated by the continued expansion and development of other mining projects within the Central Queensland Area during the life of this project.