THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

# Annual Report: Dysart

Social and economic changes in Queensland's gasfield communities in 2017

Report published:  30 June 2018

## Contact

Dr Katherine Witt
Research Fellow
The University of Queensland
Centre for Coal Seam Gas
St Lucia Qld 4072 Australia
E: k.witt@uq.edu.au
W: www.ccsg.uq.edu.au
W: www.boomtown-indicators.org

# The Dysart CSG Development Story

Changes in Dysart accompanying coal seam gas (CSG) development have been characterised here with the help of expert knowledge from members of the Dysart community. These individuals were presented with statistical data on the following indicators of social and economic impact to assess the data's accuracy from a local point of view, and to gather further insight about interconnections between the changes.

1. Population
2. Employment
3. Income and business
4. Housing
5. Crime

Dysart was established in 1973 to provide accommodation for workers at nearby mines and to service surrounding cattle and grain properties. The town has experienced a number of mining booms in its 45-year history, with CSG development arriving on the back of a significant coal boom. CSG is not perceived to have had a significant presence in Dysart, in the past or present; instead, mining is the dominant driver of social and economic dynamics locally. Consequently, the impact of CSG on the changes discussed in this report is perceived to be "very minimal".

The population of Dysart has seen a slow decline since 2008. The town's full-time equivalent (FTE) population—which includes residents and non-resident workers (NRWs)—was boosted in 2011 with the arrival of fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in/drive-out (DIDO) workers. By 2012, there was close to one NRW for every Dysart resident. In 2017, the downwards trend in Dysart's resident population has continued, reaching 2,740—the lowest since the 1990s. The number of NRWs is lower than during the peak construction period, however they still number nearly one NRW for every resident. There are concerns about the impact that "long" rosters (e.g. 7 on, 7 off) will have on the population and community; compared to "lifestyle" rosters (e.g. 3 on, 1 off), these are not condusive to workers establishing their lives and families in town.

The influx of workers to Dysart during the resources boom reduced housing availability. This effect was seen to be exacerbated by companies subsidising rent for workers—real estate agencies reportedly overinflated rents to capitalise on this. Combined with high demand, this resulted in significant increases in rent; at the peak of the boom in 2012, median rent reached $1,200 per week (compared to $500 in 2010). The companies also bought and sold houses, causing peaks and troughs in the number of sales and house prices. High rents encouraged outside investors to buy in Dysart, leading to further increases in house prices and rent. Dysart experienced a dramatic housing crash in 2013, with house values and rents decreasing by around 28% and 75%, respectively. That same year, the number of new building approvals in the area sharply increased to a historic high, exacerbating a housing oversupply. In 2017, rent appears to be stable around $170 per week, and house values are reportedly returning to a growth trend. The anticipated increase in long rosters (resulting in fewer families in Dysart) is expected to affect the demand for and occupancy of housing, which may lead to a future decrease in prices and rents.

Due to the low availability and high price of housing during the boom, it became standard for prospective employees to be offered accommodation and other benefits (e.g. vehicles and subsidised bills) along with high wages. These packages caused difficulties for local businesses outside the mining sector, which struggled to compete with what mining companies offered employees. A resulting lack of suitable staff is reported to have caused some businesses to leave Dysart, downsize, or change their core business. Despite

this, data suggests that Dysart has seen strong overall growth in business activity since 2011/12. Peculiarly in 2014/15, two significant changes occurred: Dysart's total business income tripled to reach a historic high, while the number of businesses nearly halved. This suggests that the dramatic increase in business income was attributed to a small number of enterprises having exceptionally high turnover. This is confirmed by local informants, who explained that a few new businesses providing equipment servicing and maintenance have "taken off", securing a lot of work with the mines.

Following the mining downturn, some mining companies are reported to have sold houses to the Queensland Housing Commission. A related combination of factors has seen low income and unemployed people moving (or being moved to) Dysart. A high cost of living and inadequate provision of services (e.g. healthcare, public transport) in Dysart has limited the opportunities for these new residents. Those interviewed suggest that the lack of opportunities and high stress for the new residents in Dysart's social housing areas contribute to an increase in alcohol and drug use. Some also expect to see an increase in rates of domestic violence.

The crime rate in Dysart is low, remaining well below the Queensland benchmark. However, from 1999/00, the community was challenged when the mines instituted 12-hour shifts. This change was viewed as a cause for a range of direct and flow-on issues that those interviewed stated had undermined the quality of life in the town. These issues included the promotion of DIDO arrangements for workers, which was seen to increase local speeding and other traffic issues. Workers on 12-hour shifts could be more detached from their families, which those interviewed attributed with causing increases in stress and fatigue, sometimes leading to drug and alcohol use and domestic violence. During the recent mining boom, Dysart experienced some spikes in certain offences, such as theft and traffic offences. In 2017, drugs are a prominent community concern. Appropriate resourcing for the local police is viewed as a major issue for Dysart, especially when some drug use is attributed to NRWs. Actual traffic and drug offences are considered to be higher than the reported figures suggest due to the lack of enforcement capacity of the local police. Despite these community concerns, Dysart is seen by those interviewed to be a safe and secure town. The community, police, and local companies are reported to cooperate to "keep the town safe".

Under-resourced services, facilities, and infrastructure have been linked to the mines' practice of employing non-resident workers (NRWs). They place demand on local services (e.g. health services), and they may contribute to local offences recorded by police. While these negative impacts are felt locally, the potential benefits of NRW spending are seen to elude Dysart. Additionally, NRWs are not included in official population counts; so their numbers do not contribute to the allowances for services, such as staffing of local police.

This booklet provides detail on the aspects of the 'Dysart story' based on the range of priority indicators that we tracked. We would like to thank members of the Dysart community for their cooperation and the gift of their time. We hope that we have done justice to their contributions to this study.

*The UQ 'Cumulative Impacts' Research Team, June 2018.*

# Contents

**List of figures**

**Appendices**

# Introduction

The University of Queensland commenced research into the social and economic impacts of coal seam gas (CSG) development in 2013. This research focused on the combined impacts of the multiple CSG developments in the Western Downs region of Queensland as an initial case study, and has now expanded to include other local government areas—Maranoa, Toowoomba, and Isaac. The research team uses publicly available statistical information regarding a number of key indicators that were selected in consultation with community members at the commencement of research. These statistics are combined with additional data gained through interviews with key community members, which provide insight into the factors that are influencing changes in the community. This information is gathered each year, and findings are reported for each town, sub-regions and the region as a whole. More information about the methodology is contained in Appendix D to this report. In this document we present the findings on the town of Dysart.

The following acronyms are used throughout this report:

CSG         Coal seam gas

DIDO        Drive-in/drive-out

FIFO        Fly-in/fly-out

FTE         Full-time equivalent

LGA         Local Government Area

NRW         Non-resident worker

QLD         Queensland

SA2         Statistical Area Level 2

SA3         Statistical Area Level 3

SLA         Statistical Local Area

UCL         Urban Centre & Locality

# General community insights

**2017 summary**

Coal seam gas (CSG) is not perceived to have had a significant presence in Dysart, in the past or present; instead, mining is the dominant driver of social and economic dynamics locally. Consequently, the impact of CSG is perceived to be "very minimal". Following the mining downturn in 2014 and 2015, there is now reportedly a "small glimmer of hope" that Dysart's economic situation is "moving in a positive direction".

## Community spirit:

- Following the resources sector downturn in 2014 and 2015, there is now reportedly a "small glimmer of hope" that Dysart's economic situation is "moving in a positive direction".

## Changed capability:

- No insights about changed business or community capabilities were gleaned from recent interviews.

## Lessons learned:

- Interviewees suggested that information sharing and more communication from companies about future activities would help communities prepare for and manage local impacts.
- It was recommended that government funding for services (e.g. police) and infrastructure should be based on the population including NRWs and workers in camps, not just the official resident population.
- Some interviewees felt that mining companies should be required to "use or lose" mining leases, not to hold onto them while production is stalled as the wait causes loss of employment/ income.
- Encouraging workers to live in town (rather than in work camps) is desired in order to stimulate the local economy.
- It was suggested that limiting shifts at the mines from 12 hours to 8 hours would reduce stress, potentially leading to decreased domestic violence and other offences.
- There are concerns about the impact that "long" rosters (e.g. 7 days on, 7 days off) have on the community; compared to "lifestyle" rosters (e.g. 3 days on, 1 day off), these are not condusive to workers establishing their lives and families in town. This is expected to have direct and indirect impacts on resident population, retaining skilled workers in the community, local spending and business activity, and demand for housing.

# 1. Population

## 2017 summary

The downwards trend in Dysart's resident population has continued; in 2016/17 it reached 2,740—the lowest since the 1990s. The number of NRWs is lower than during the peak construction period, however they still number one NRW for every resident. Long rosters are expected to exacerbate Dysart's declining resident population; "the longer the roster, the bigger the impact".

## Context

- Australian Government's *Relocation Assistance* program remains active, providing financial incentive to long-term unemployed job seekers to move to regional towns with low unemployment rates.

## Trends reflected in the data

**Historical trend:** Dysart was established in 1973 to provide accommodation for workers at nearby mines and to service surrounding cattle and grain properties. Dysart's population increased steadily from 2000/01 to 2004/05, at an average rate of 5.4% per annum, compared to 2.2% for the wider Isaac LGA. The population then plateaued, and has experienced a slow decline since 2007/08. Non-resident worker (NRW) population was not recorded prior to 2010/11.

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** The town's full-time equivalent (FTE) population—which includes residents and NRWs—was boosted in 2010/11 with the arrival of fly-in fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in drive-out (DIDO) workers. By 2011/12, there was close to one NRW for every Dysart resident. The resident population continued to decline over this four-year period, at a rate of 1.8% per annum.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – 2017):** The downwards trend in Dysart's resident population has continued; in 2016/17 it reached 2,740—the lowest since the 1990s. The number of NRWs is lower than during the peak construction period, however they still number one NRW for every resident.

## Community insights and perceptions

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Dysart's population is perceived to have reached 5,500 (which corresponds with total residents plus the full-time equivalent of NRWs). One interviewee reported that NRWs out-numbered locals 3 to 1 during peak mining activity, well exceeding the number of NRWs captured in the data. NRWs (many of whom are based in workers camps) use local services, but are not included in population counts.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – now):** The resident population is perceived to be stable at ~2,600 to 2,800. The coal downturn has changed some of the people migrating to Dysart. There are two noticeable new demographics perceived to be driven by depressed house prices: young people using it to enter the housing market; and retirees choosing to use the town as a base. An in-migration of unemployed people has been attributed to a combination of the Australian Government's jobseeker relocation program, and mining companies selling empty houses to the State Government for public housing. There are concerns about the impact that "long" rosters (e.g. 7 days on, 7 days off) will have on the population and community; compared to "lifestyle" rosters (e.g. 3 days on, 1 day off), these are not conducive to workers establishing their lives and families in town.

**Future expectations:** Long rosters are expected to exacerbate Dysart's declining resident population; "the longer the roster, the bigger the impact".

# 1. Population

## 1a. Dysart population and projection
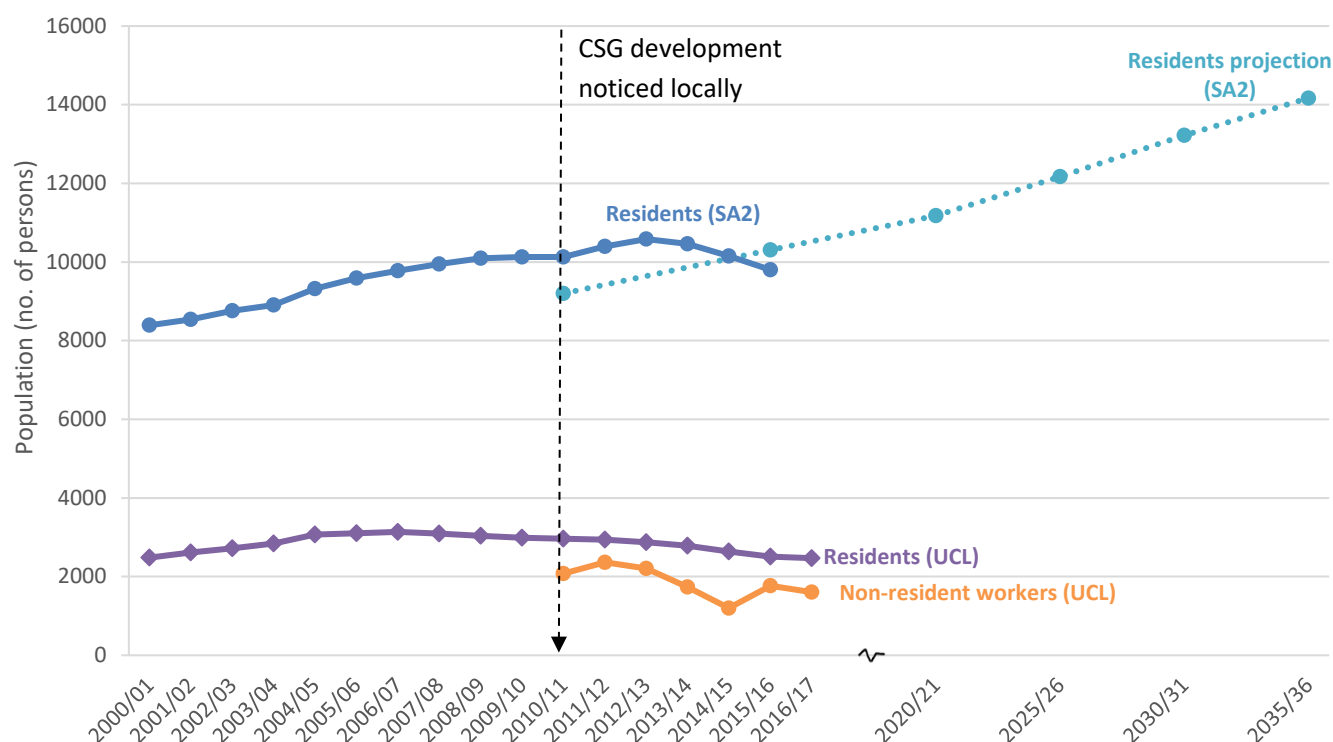


Data notes

- UCL non-resident workers population estimate from QGSO 'Bowen Basin Population Report' (ASGC 2016); 2017 version available here: http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/bowen-basin-pop-report/bowen-basin-pop-report-2017.pdf
- UCL resident population estimate from the QGSO table 'Estimated resident population (a) by urban centre and locality (b), Queensland, 2006 to 2016pr' (ASGS 2016), http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/erp-ucl-qld/index.php
- SA2 (Broadsound-Nebo) population estimate from the QGSO table 'Estimated resident population by statistical area level 2 (SA2), Queensland, 2006 to 2016pr' (ASGS 2016), http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-estimates/tables/erp-sa2-qld/index.php
- Population projection (2015 edition) from QGSO table 'Projected population (medium series), by statistical area level 2 (SA2), SA3 and SA4, Queensland, 2011 to 2036' (ASGC 2001), http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/proj-pop-medium-series-sa2-sa3-sa4-qld/index.php
- NRW estimates do not include the many NRWs in camps outside town

# 1. Population

## 1b. Resident vs. non-resident population - Dysart
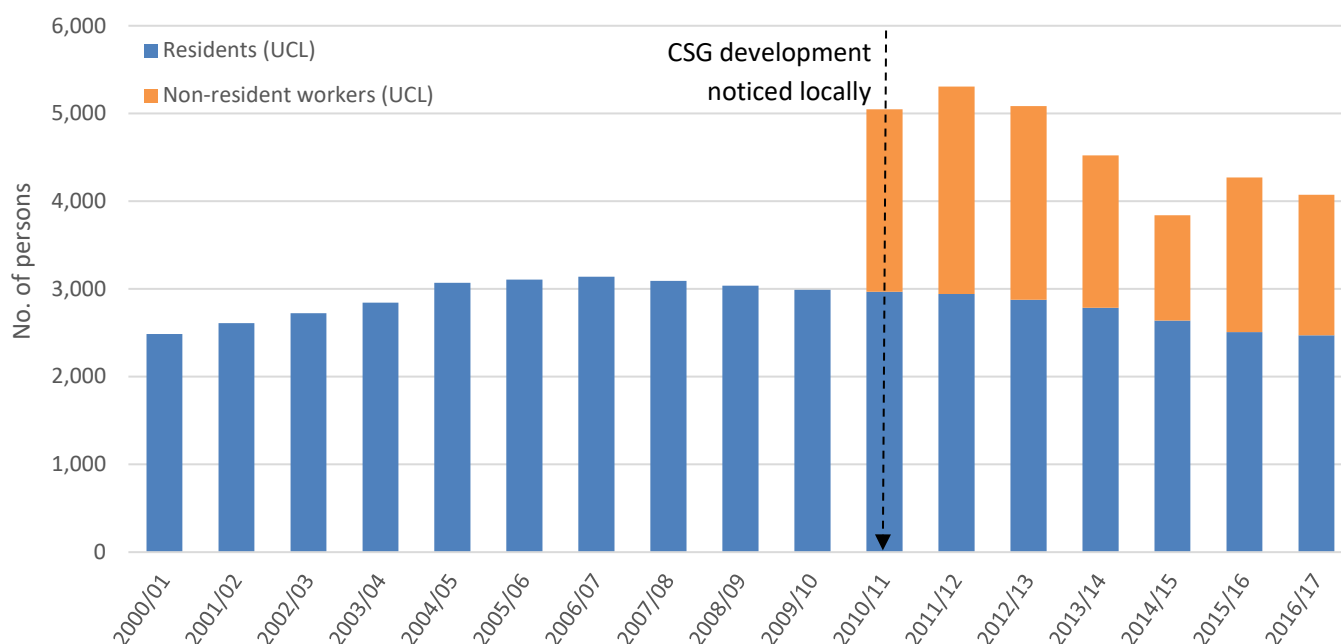


## 1c. Resident vs. non-resident population - Isaac LGA
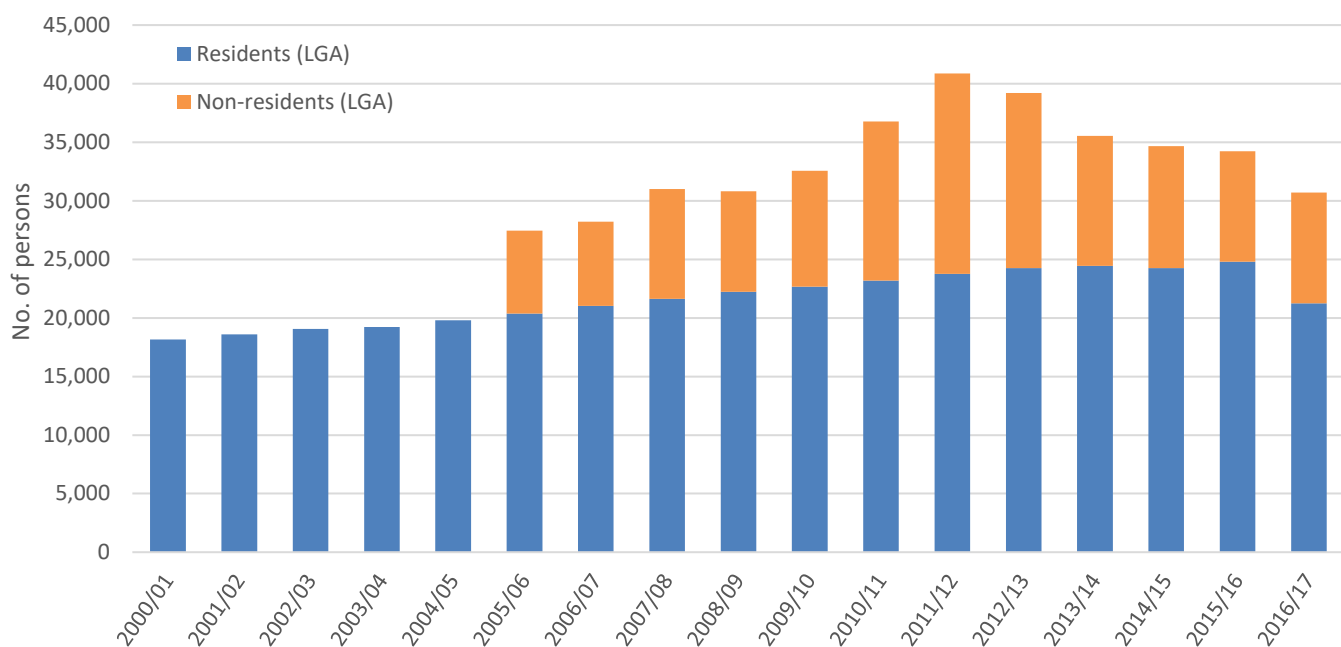


Data notes

- Source: Population and non-resident worker population estimates for UCL and Isaac LGA from the QGSO 'Bowen Basin Population Report' (ASGC 2016); 2017 version available here: http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/bowen-basin-pop-report/bowen-basin-pop-report-2017.pdf

## 2. Employment

**2017 summary**

In 2017, the unemployment rate in Broadsound-Nebo is 1.7%, continuing a two-year downwards trend since the historic high during the mining downturn. Some interviewees expect that unemployment will continue to decline to the historic baseline of ~1%. Unless people are incentivised through their work with the mines to establish their life and families in community, skilled workers are expected to be transient.

**Context**

- Unemployment data is based on Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) boundaries. Dysart is captured in the Broadsound-Nebo SA2, accounting for approximately 26% of the area's total population; this means unemployment data may not be fully representative of real trends in the township.

### Trends reflected in the data

**Historical trend:** Dysart has few secondary industries outside the mining sector, so unemployment is typically very low. The unemployment rate in Broadsound-Nebo SA2 has stayed below 3% (with 5% considered "full employment"). It has consistently been well under half of the Queensland average; however, it has historically followed a similar trend.

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Unemployment decreased from 2010, reaching a historic low of less than 1% by 2012. By 2014, this had increased to 1.5%; still well below the Queensland average of 6%.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – 2017):** In 2015, unemployment continued a three-year upwards trend, to rise to a relative high of 2.8%. This has since decreased; in 2017, the unemployment rate in Broadsound-Nebo is 1.7%.

### Community insights and perceptions

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Despite reported skills shortages, secondary and service industries were able to employ partners of mine workers. Some interviewees state that claims about local skill shortages were overstated by mining and CSG companies to justify more use of FIFO/DIDO arrangements.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – now):** The 2015 spike in unemployment was largely attributed to the mining downturn. Additionally, the availability of public housing and the Australia Government's jobseeker relocation program is perceived to have attracted new unemployed residents to Dysart. However, an increase in employment has been observed in 2016 and 2017. Many of those who lost permanent jobs at the mines are still working there as casuals and contractors (likely on lower wages than before). Employment is still overwhelmingly about the coal mines; it was suggested that around 85% of people in town are mine employees. There is a tendency for skilled unemployed people to leave Dysart for work elsewhere.

**Future expectations:** Unemployment is expected to continue to decline to the historic baseline of ~1%. Unless people are incentivised through their work with the mines to establish their life and families in community, skilled workers will be transient.

## 2. Employment

### 2a. Unemployment rate
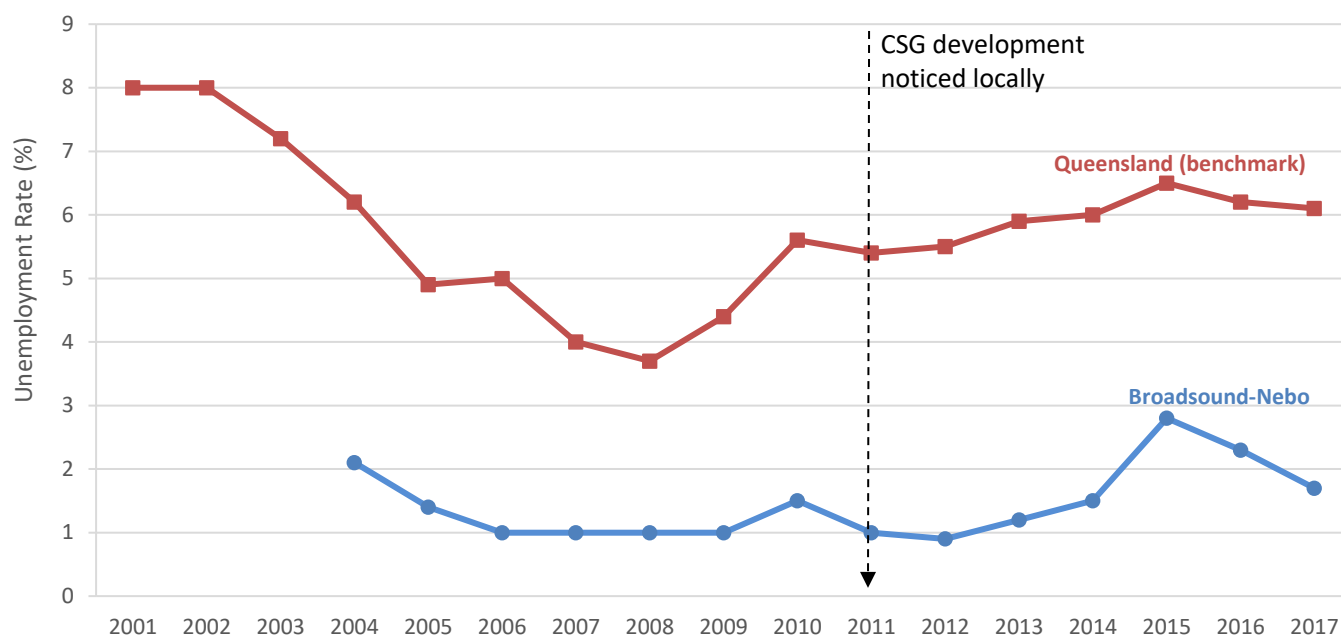


**Data notes**

- 2001-2008 based on SLA statistical boundary; Source: QGSO Regional Database Archived dataset 'Labour Force - Small Area (Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2002 to Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2008) [DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets Australia] (ASGC 2001)', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php
- 2009-2010 data from DEEWR file 'Unemployment salm_data_files_2008-2013'
- 2010-2017 based on SA2 (Broadsound-Nebo) statistical boundary; Source: QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Labour Force - Small Area (Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2010 to Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2017) [Department of Jobs and Small Business] (ASGS 2016)', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php
- Prior to 2017, unemployment data is reported for financial years; e.g. FY2016 corresponds to July 2015 to June 2016

# 3. Income & business

## 2017 summary

In 2015/16, total business income was stable, while average individual income decreased by 4.7%. The anticipated increase in long rosters (resulting in fewer families in Dysart) is expected to have negative consequences for local businesses and incomes.

## Context

- High average income can be attributed to the large proportion of the population working in mining.
- Business and income data lags a year behind other data due to ATO data reporting cycles.

## Trends reflected in the data

**Historical trend:** Dysart is historically a high income town; average individual income has exceeded the QLD benchmark since at least 2000/01. In 2000/01, Dysart had 38 non-primary production businesses, and total business income of $145,000. The number of businesses grew to 70 by 2007/08. A slump in business numbers and income between 2008/09 and 2010/11 is likely due to the global financial crisis.

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Individual income continued to rise, with no apparent departure from the historic trend. The number of wage earners peaked in 2010/11, coinciding with peak construction activity in local mining projects. By 2013/14, this had dropped to a historic low, along with total individual earnings. Dysart saw strong growth in business activity until 2012/13; in two years, businesses doubled in number, and total business income nearly tripled. By the end of the boom period, business income had dropped back in line with the historic trend.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – 2017):** In 2014/15, two significant changes occurred—Dysart's total business income tripled to reach a historic high, while the number of businesses nearly halved. This suggests that the dramatic increase in business income was attributed to a small number of enterprises having exceptionally high turnover that year. In 2015/16, average individual income decreased by 4.7%.
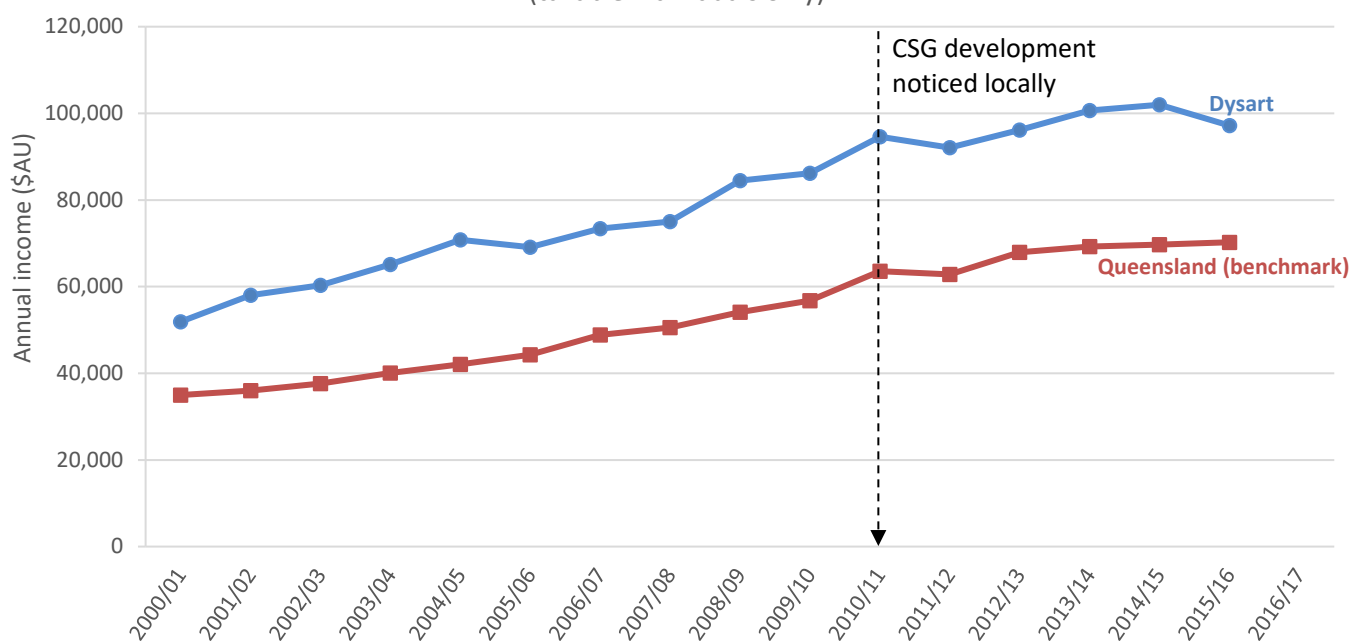
## Community insights and perceptions

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Local businesses had difficulty employing skilled workers during the boom as workers wanted the income and benefits provided by the mines. Those NRWs not based in town were not seen to contribute income to the town.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – now):** Deunionisation in local mining workforces has reportedly had an impact on pay rates; lower wages and the casualisation of the workforce have resulted in high labour turnover. The number of earners is perceived to have dropped (linked to population decrease), and lucrative permanent job opportunities are also fewer; both factors pull down the total earnings. Mining companies' "buy local" programs are a good idea, but are reportedly not very effective. Majority of small businesses are perceived to be "struggling"; some of those reliant on the mining industry have been gradually moving out of town. Exemplifying this, Dysart's shopping centre reportedly has a ~30% occupancy rate (compared to ~100% during the mining boom). However, a few new businesses providing equipment servicing and maintenance have "taken off", securing a lot of work with the mines.

**Future expectations:** The expected increase in long rosters (resulting in fewer families in Dysart) will have negative consequences for local businesses and incomes. If FIFO/DIDO continues, the number of earners will decrease.

## 3a. Average taxable income
### (taxable individuals only)



CSG development noticed locally

Dysart

Queensland (benchmark)

## 3b. Total individual earnings



CSG development noticed locally

Number of earners — Total wage & salary earnings
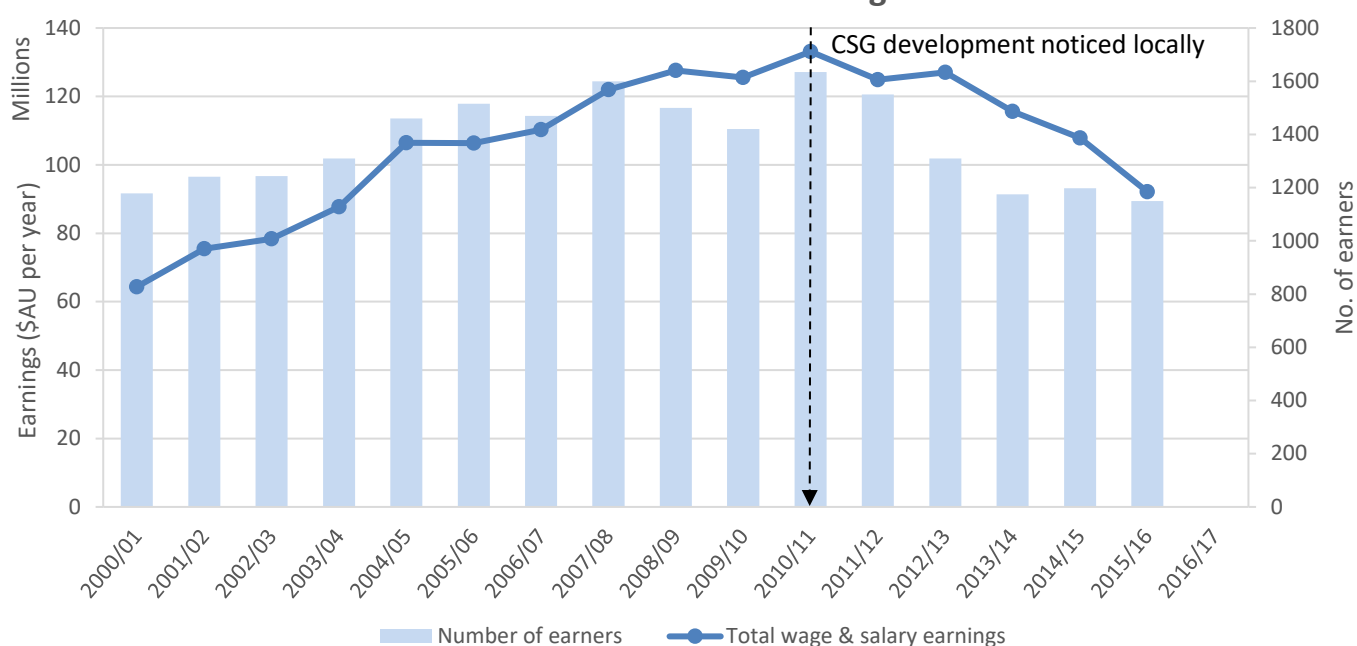
Data notes
- Source: Australian Taxation Office (ATO), Research and Statistics, https://www.ato.gov.au/
- Average taxable incomes reported by ATO until 2009 excluded losses. Averages from 2010 include all taxable incomes including incomes of zero and losses.
- Data relates to Dysart postcode 4745
- Original data – no discounting applied
- Due to ATO data publishing cycles, 2016/17 data will be included in the 2018 Dysart booklet

# 3. Income & business

## 3c. Total business income
### (non-primary production)



CSG development noticed locally

Legend: Number of businesses
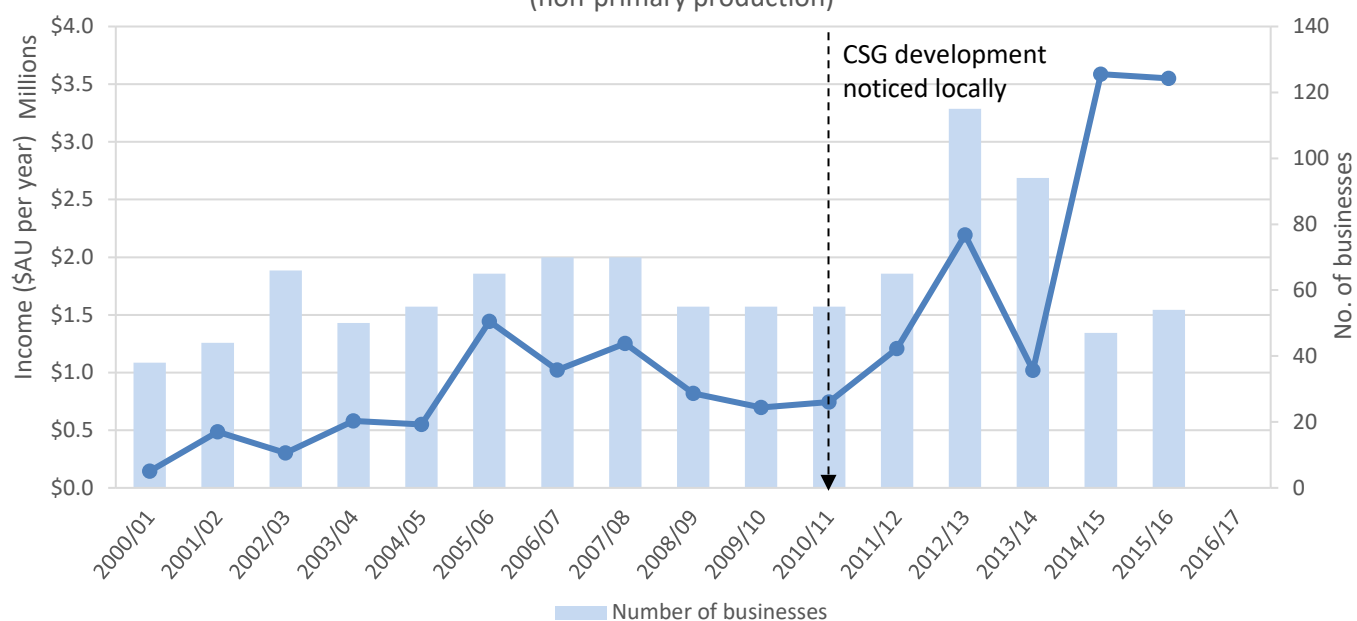
Data notes
- Source: Australian Taxation Office, Research and Statistics, https://www.ato.gov.au/
- Data relates to Dysart postcode 4745
- Original data – no discounting applied
- Due to ATO data publishing cycles, 2016/17 data will be included in the 2018 Dysart booklet

# 4. Housing

## 2017 summary

In 2017, the Broadsound-Nebo area saw strong growth (32%) in house values—the first increase since 2012. Rent has stabilised at ~$170, at less than half the Queensland average. The anticipated increase in long rosters (resulting in fewer families in Dysart) is expected to affect the demand for and occupancy of housing, which may lead to a decrease in prices and rents.

## Context

- Housing data is based on Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) boundaries. Dysart is captured in the Broadsound-Nebo SA2, accounting for approximately 26% of the area's total population; this means housing data may not be fully representative of real trends in the township.

## Trends reflected in the data

**Historical trend:** Historically, house values in the Broadsound-Nebo SA2 have been significantly lower than Brisbane; in 2000/01, the median sale price was one tenth of the benchmark. However, from 2003/04 to 2008/09, house values increased by a factor of 4.5, to $380,000. New building approvals have historically remained below 100 per year. From 2005, median rent surpassed the QLD benchmark; by 2009 it had reached $650 per week—more than double the state average.

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Median rent and house values peaked at the height of mining construction in 2012; sale price reached $489,000 and rent reached $1,200. At that time, rent was more than triple the QLD average. This unprecedented growth was short-lived; the following year (2013) rent value dropped by 75%, number of sales by 72%, and median sale price by 28%. That same year, the number of new building approvals sharply increased to a historic high of 218.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – 2017):** House values continued a dramatic decline until 2015/16, when the median sale price levelled out at $75,000. Sale numbers remain low (<65), but have been increasing since 2013/14. 2017 saw strong growth (32%) in house values—the first increase since 2012. Rent has stabilised at ~$170, at less than half the QLD average.

## Community insights and perceptions

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** High rents were attributed to an increase in NRWs and mining accommodation arrangements; mining companies would subsidise workers' rents—"picking up the tab without question"—and real estate agencies reportedly exploited this (since then, companies have reportedly implemented a $1,000 rent subsidy limit). High rents led to investors buying houses, further increasing house prices and rents. "A lot of people got burned" when the housing market crashed in 2013. Typical Dysart rents in 2014 were reportedly much lower (~$120) than that shown in Figure 4b ($200). Peaks and troughs in house sales were attributed to mining companies buying and selling.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – now):** Contrary to the Broadshound-Nebo trend shown in Figure 4b, rents in Dysart are perceived to have increased since 2014. Similarly, the typical house price in 2017 is reportedly ~$120,000, compared to $99,000 shown in Figure 4a. Low rents and an increase in public housing are seen to be attracting unemployed people to Dysart.

**Future expectations:** The anticipated increase in long rosters (resulting in fewer families in Dysart) is expected to affect the demand for and occupancy of housing, which may lead to a decrease in prices and rents.

# 4. Housing

## 4a. Median house sale price



CSG development noticed locally

Brisbane (benchmark)

Broadsound-Nebo

No. of house sales
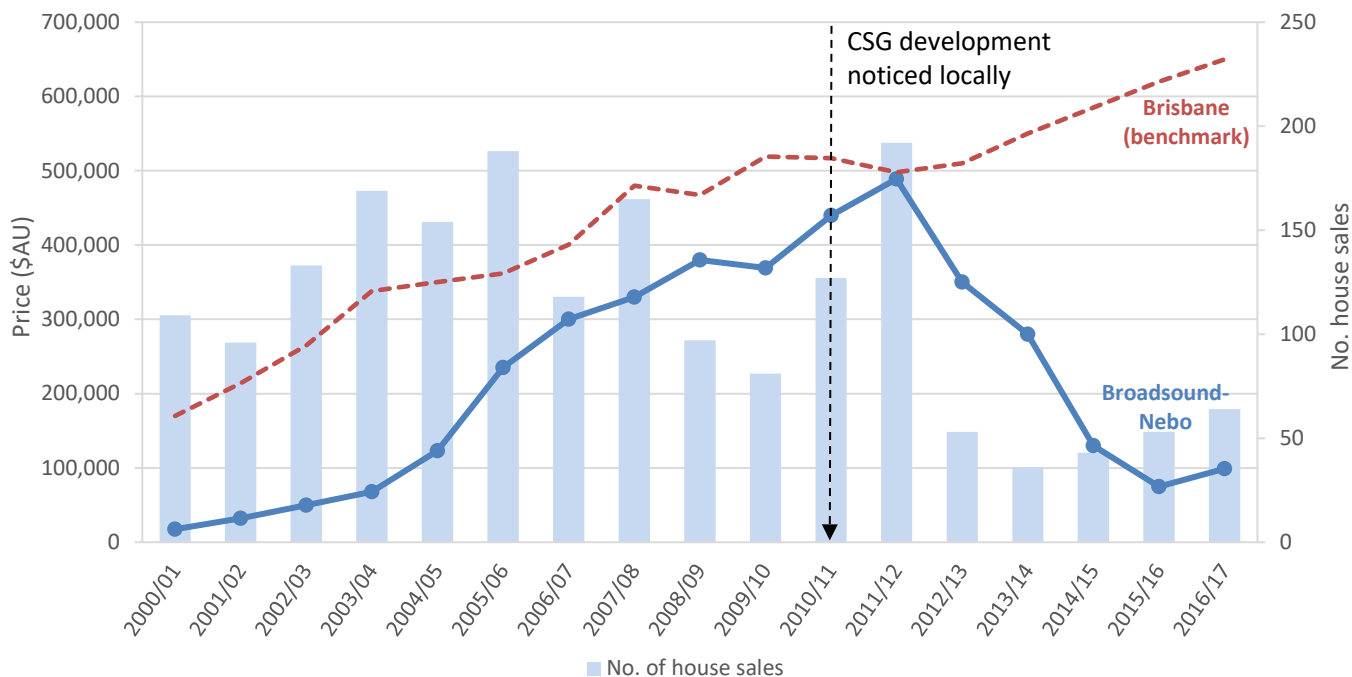
## 4b. Median weekly rent
### (3-bedroom house)



CSG development noticed locally

Queensland (benchmark)

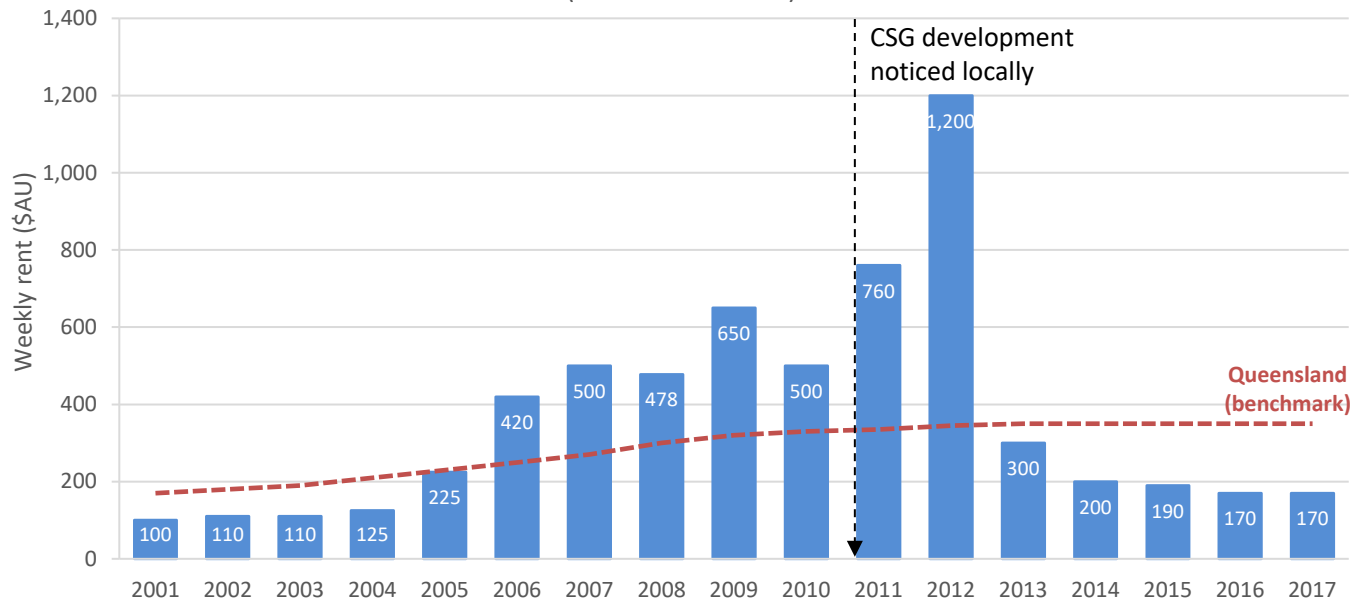| Year | Value |
|------|-------|
| 2001 | 100 |
| 2002 | 110 |
| 2003 | 110 |
| 2004 | 125 |
| 2005 | 225 |
| 2006 | 420 |
| 2007 | 500 |
| 2008 | 478 |
| 2009 | 650 |
| 2010 | 500 |
| 2011 | 760 |
| 2012 | 1,200 |
| 2013 | 300 |
| 2014 | 200 |
| 2015 | 190 |
| 2016 | 170 |
| 2017 | 170 |

Data notes
- 4a source: QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Residential land and dwelling sales (Year Ended 30 Sep 2000 to Year Ended 30 Sept 2017) [DNRM] (ASGS 2016)', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php
- 4b source: QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Median rent (Year Ended 30 Sep 1990 to Year Ended 31 Dec 2017) [RTA] (ASGS 2016)', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php
- Data based on SA2 (Broadsound-Nebo) statistical boundary
- Prior to 2017, rent data is reported for financial years; e.g. FY2016 corresponds to July 2015 to June 2016

# 4. Housing

## 4c. New building approvals



No. of approvals (y-axis)

CSG development noticed locally

■ Residential building approvals     ■ Non-residential building approvals
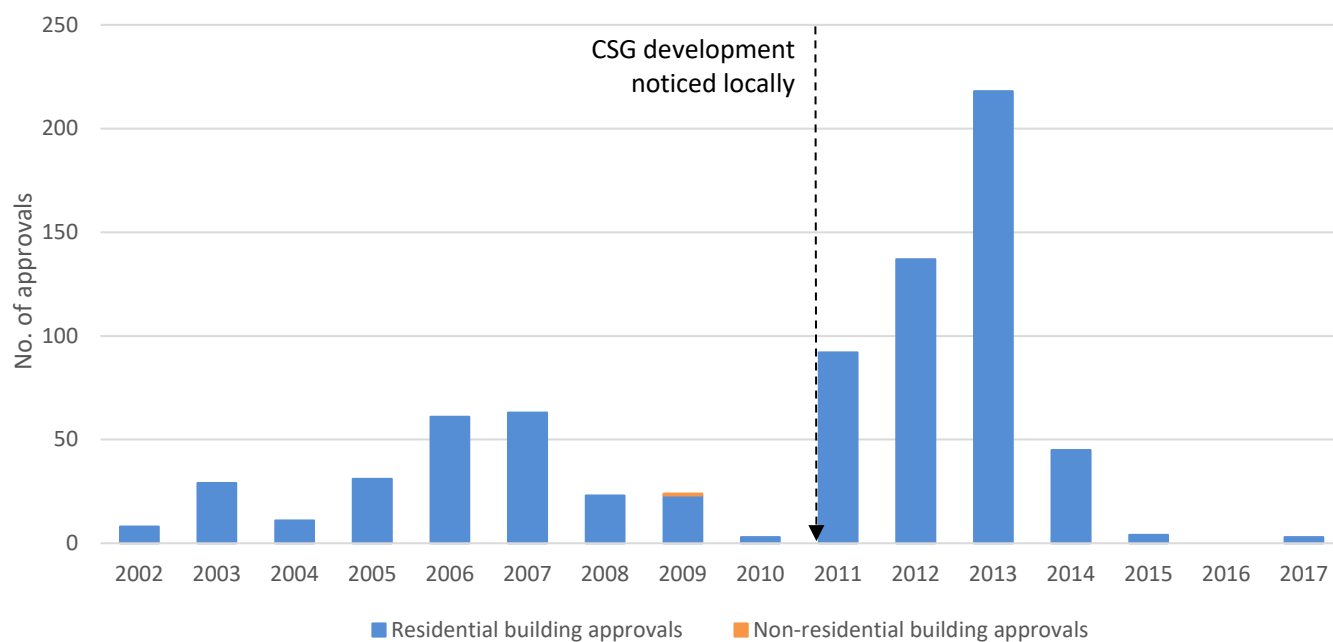
Data notes
- Source: QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Building Approvals (Jul 2001 to Dec 2017) [ABS 8731.0] (ASGS 2016)', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php
- Data based on SA2 (Broadsound-Nebo) statistical boundary
- Approvals shown for private buildings only; public developments are excluded
- Prior to 2017, building approvals are reported for financial years; e.g. FY2016 corresponds to July 2015 to June 2016

# 5. Safety & wellbeing

## 2017 summary

Dysart's overall crime rate remains consistent with the historic baseline and low relative postion to the QLD benchmark. Theft, traffic and drug offences are prevalent in reported offences. Drugs are a community concern, and local police are perceived to be under-resourced.

## Context

- Drug offences are perceived to be on the rise in all rural Queensland towns.
- Crime statistics can be subject to significant variation based on factors such as police resourcing, enforcement and prevention strategies, and community awareness and reporting.

## Trends reflected in the data

**Historical trend:** The overall crime rate in Dysart has stayed well below the QLD benchmark, at between 30–54 offences per 1,000 people compared to the historic state rate of >90. Because of Dysart's small population, crime trends are easily distorted by small spikes in offence numbers (e.g. for traffic and other theft).

**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Overall crime remained below 54 offences per 1,000 people, with no apparent departure from the historic trend. However, significant spikes in certain offences occurred during this period. For example, in 2011, reported thefts more than tripled; despite a significant drop the following year, thefts remain higher than the historic baseline. In 2013, traffic offences spiked above the QLD average, to 16.2 offences per 1,000 people (compared to Dysart's 10-year average of 7). Good order offences and offences against the person remained low.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – 2017):** Dysart's overall crime rate remains consistent with the historic baseline and relative postion to QLD. Theft, traffic and drug offences are prevalent in reported offences. In 2017, drug offences reached a historic high. Traffic offences have decreased since the 2013 peak, but remain higher than the historic baseline.

## Community insights and perceptions

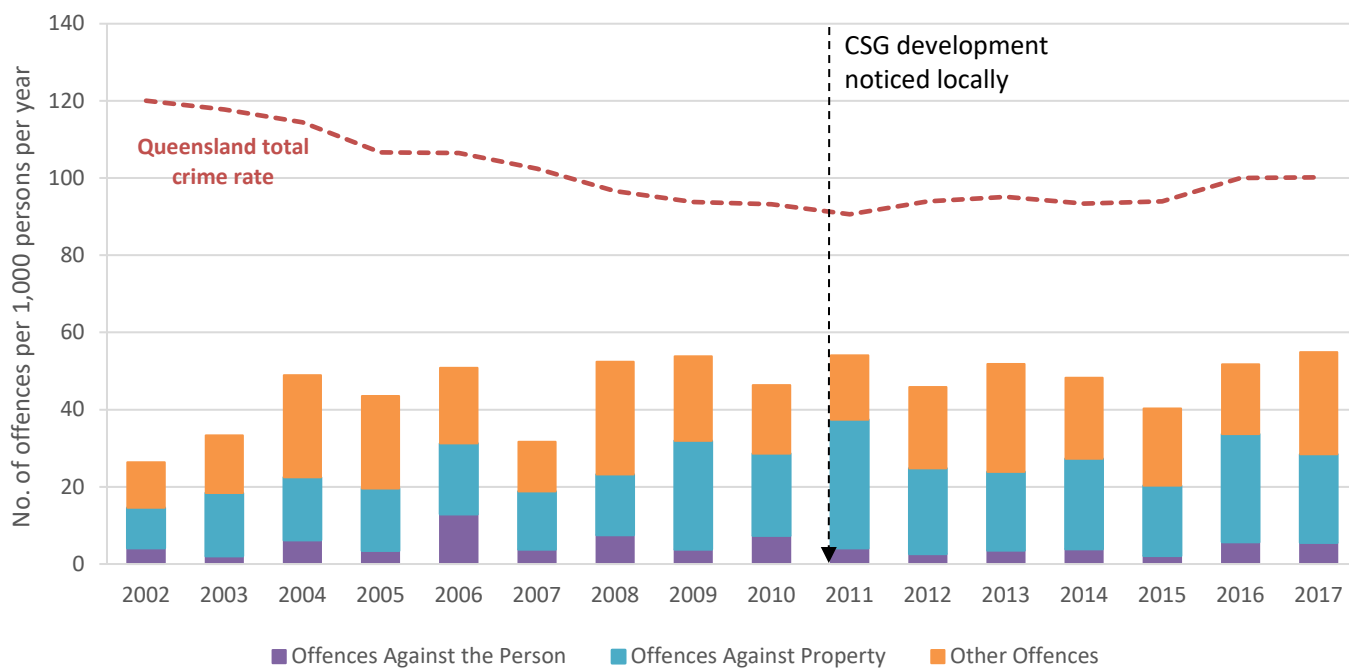**During CSG construction period (2011 – 2014):** Enforcement was managed between police, mining companies, and the unions. Too few police (compared to other towns) made enforcement difficult, stated interviewees. Some percevied traffic offences to be higher than reported by QPS data, e.g. speeding by DIDO workers. They also suggested that actual offences were higher than the recorded figures due to a lack of enforcement capacity.

**Since CSG construction period (2015 – now):** The community perceives enforcement demands to be unrealistic for Dysart's two police officers, who reportedly work "unbelievable" hours. The in-migration of low income residents is seen to increase crime. Drugs are a concern, with some young families "destroyed by ice"; grandparents are stepping in to raise grandchildren. Mine workers are seen as prominent among users. Anecdotal stories suggest that mine workers are able to circumvent workplace drug tests, for example by using at work after being tested (ice pipes found in truck cabs). Some older workers have retired early because they did not feel safe with others driving heavy machinery under the influence. Domestic violence is perceived to have increased, with many incidents going unreported.
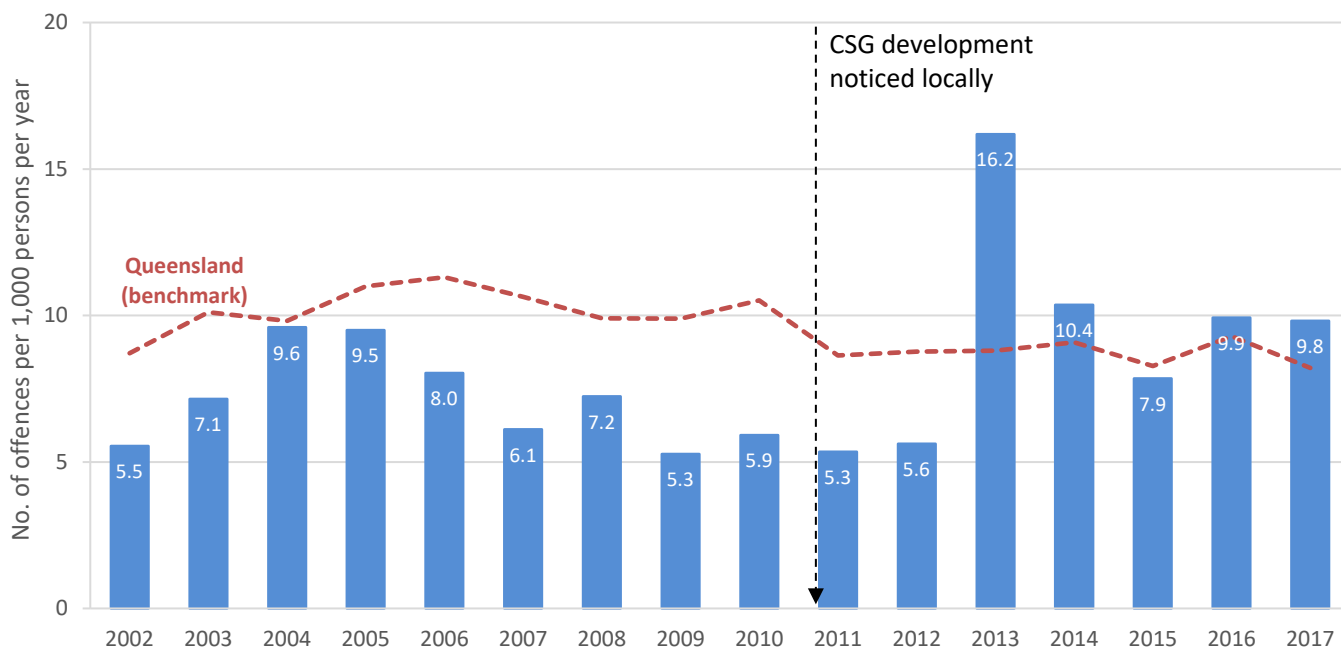
**Future expectations:** In-migration of low-income people seeking affordable housing is expected to bring exacerbate problems related to drugs, alcohol and domestic violence.
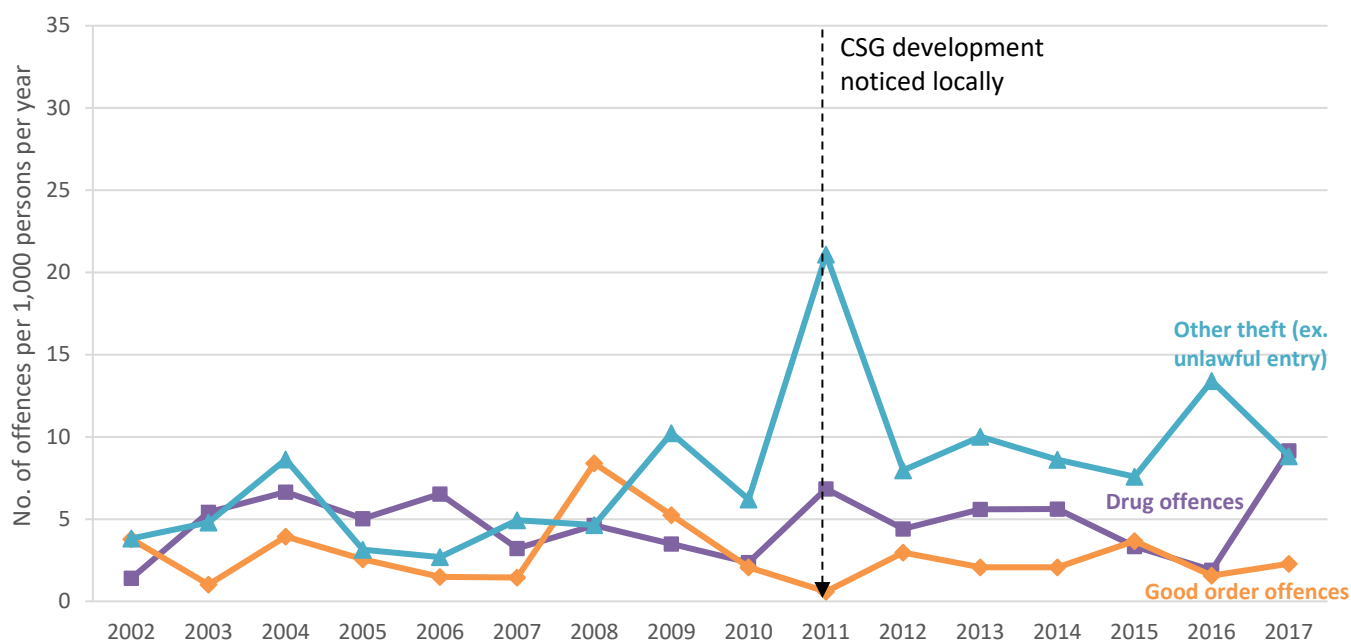
## 5. Safety & Wellbeing

### 5a. Total offences



Queensland total crime rate

CSG development noticed locally

No. of offences per 1,000 persons per year

■ Offences Against the Person   ■ Offences Against Property   ■ Other Offences

### 5b. Traffic and related offences



Queensland (benchmark)

CSG development noticed locally

No. of offences per 1,000 persons per year

| 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 5.5  | 7.1  | 9.6  | 9.5  | 8.0  | 6.1  | 7.2  | 5.3  | 5.9  | 5.3  | 5.6  | 16.2 | 10.4 | 7.9  | 9.9  | 9.8  |

**Data notes**

- Source: Queensland Police Service (QPS), https://www.police.qld.gov.au/online/data/
- Crime rate data (per 100,000 people) obtained by QPS Division and Queensland State; data was adjusted to be presented as number of offences per 1,000 people per year

## 5c. Other relevant offences - Dysart

CSG development noticed locally

Other theft (ex. unlawful entry)

Drug offences

Good order offences

No. of offences per 1,000 persons per year

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

## 5d.  Other relevant offences - Queensland
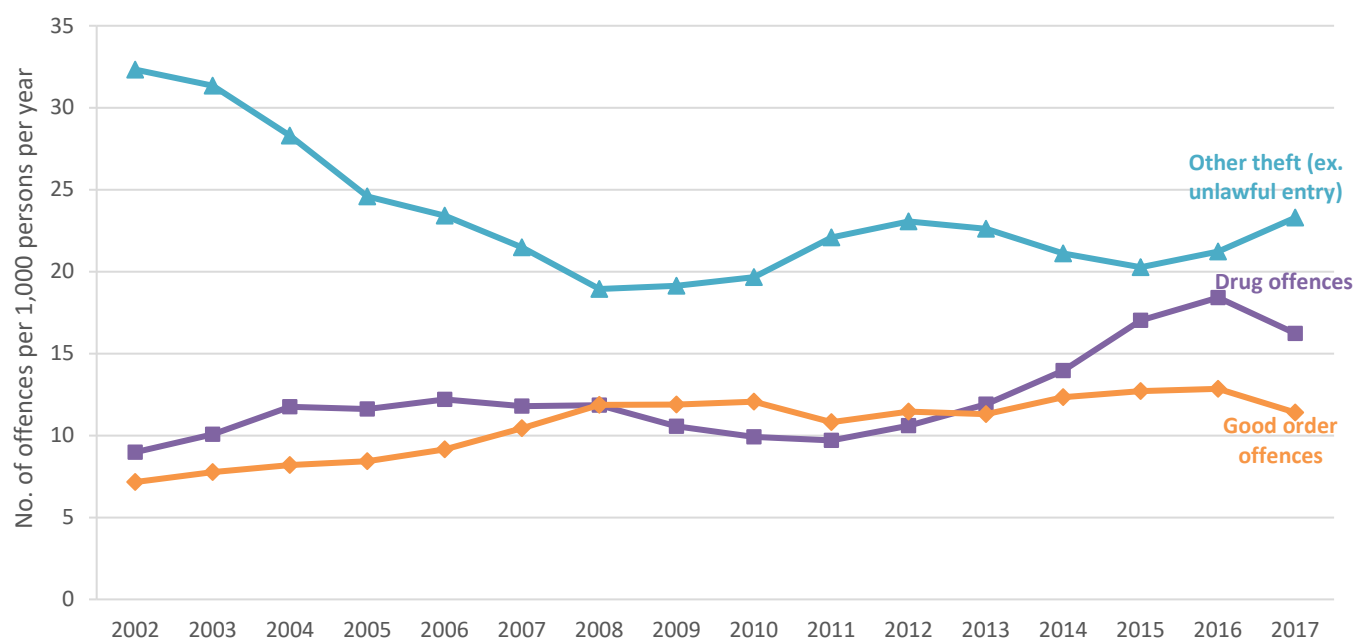
Other theft (ex. unlawful entry)

Drug offences

Good order offences

No. of offences per 1,000 persons per year

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Data notes
- Source: Queensland Police Service (QPS), https://www.police.qld.gov.au/online/data/
- Crime rate data (per 100,000 people) obtained by QPS Division and Queensland State; data was adjusted to be presented as number of offences per 1,000 people per year
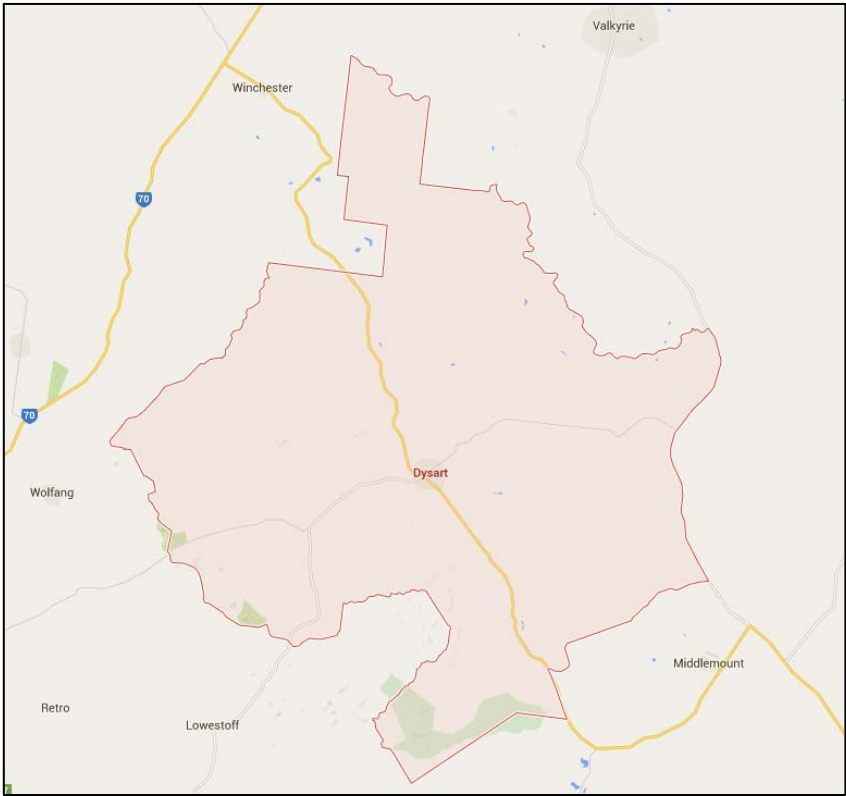
# Appendix A:  Spatial boundary maps (SA2, UCL and postcode)
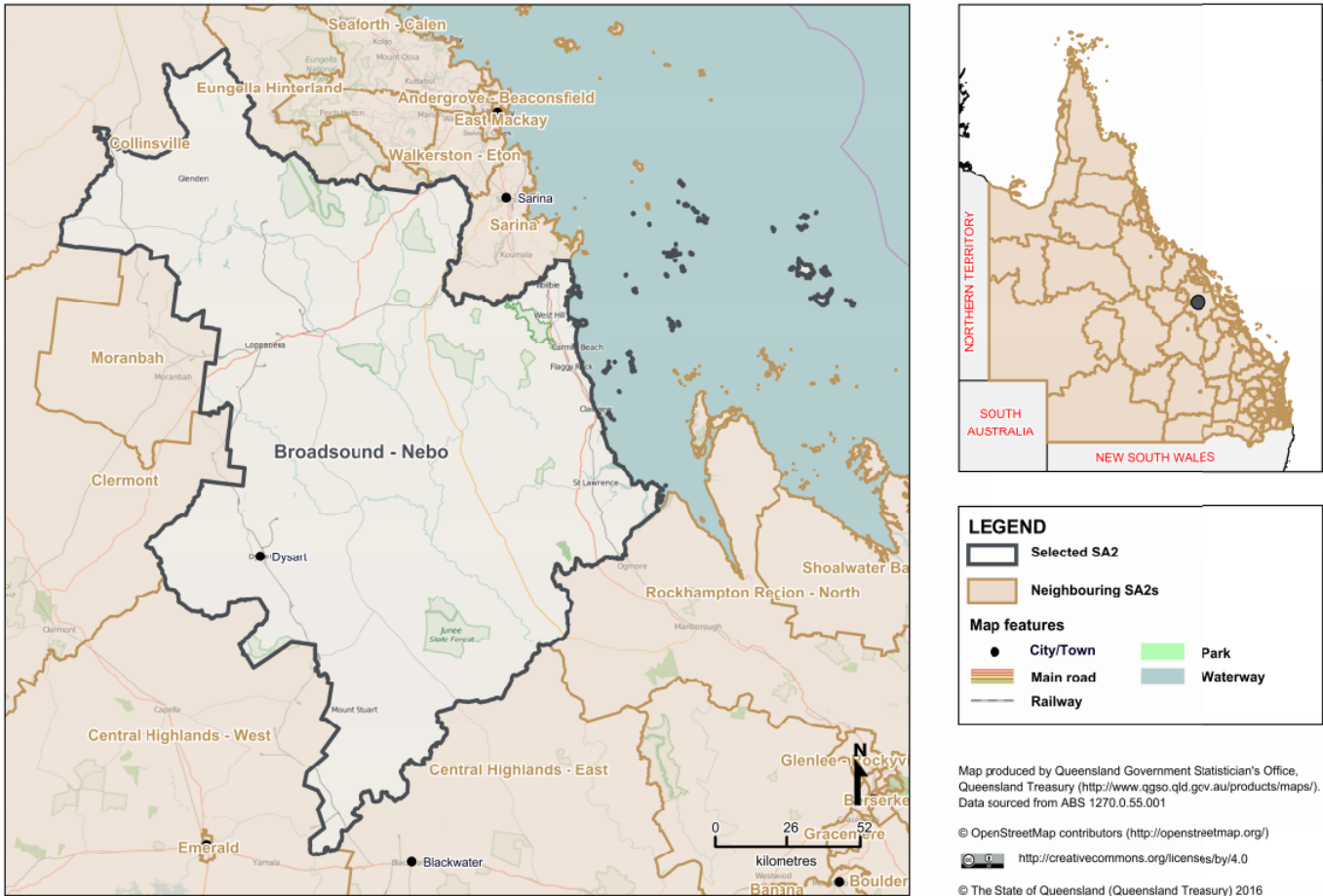


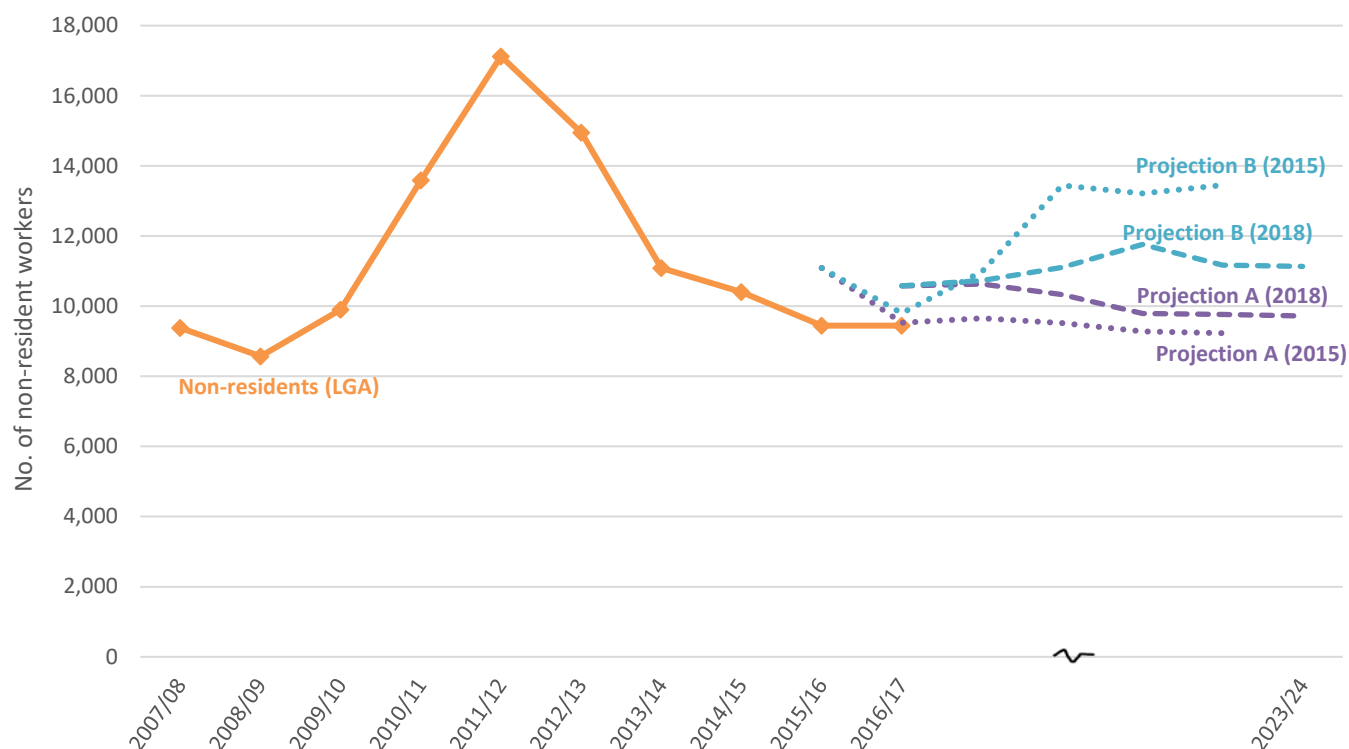**Broadsound-Nebo statistical area 2 (SA2) boundary (2016, ASGS Code 312011338)**



**Dysart urban centre and locality (UCL) boundary**



**Dysart postcode boundary 4745**

# Appendix B: Non-resident population projections - Isaac Region



Chart: No. of non-resident workers (y-axis, 0 to 18,000) by year (x-axis, 2007/08 to 2023/24). Series shown: Non-residents (LGA), Projection B (2015), Projection B (2018), Projection A (2018), Projection A (2015).

Data notes

- Non-resident worker estimates by LGA from the QGSO 'Bowen Basin Population Report, 2017' (ASGC 2016), http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/bowen-basin-pop-report/bowen-basin-pop-report-2017.pdf
- Non-resident worker projections (2018) by LGA from QGSO table 'Bowen Basin: Non-resident population projections, by local government area (LGA), 2018 to 2024' (ASGS 2016), http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/bowen-basin-non-resident-pop-proj-lga/index.php
- Non-resident workers projections (2014) by LGA from QGSO report 'Bowen Basin non–resident population projections: 2014 to 2020', http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/bowen-basin-pop-report/bowen-basin-pop-report-2016.pdf
- Series A projection is based on the number of non–resident workers on-shift who were engaged in existing resource operations and associated infrastructure activities in the area at June 2014. The projection takes into account future changes to those operational workforces as advised by resource company sources, as well as the estimated construction and operational workforces of Category A projects (i.e. those that are approved and have reached a financial close).
- Series B projection includes the Series A projection plus projected growth in the non-resident population arising from Category B projects (those that are approved but have yet to reach a financial close).

# Appendix C:  Dysart rainfall (2002 – 2017)
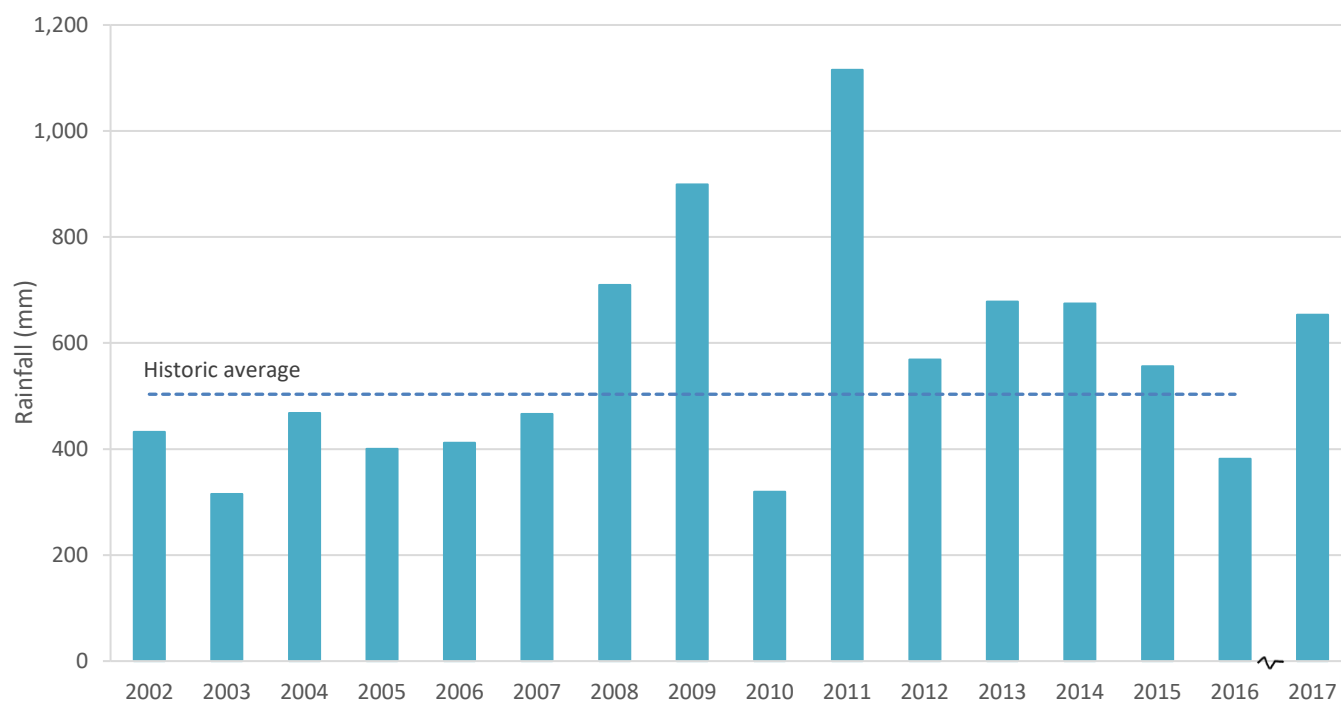


Data notes

- Source: Bureau of Meteorology Climate Data online, http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/
- Data for 2017 onwards taken from Booroondarra Rainfall Station; prior to 2017, rainfall observations are reported for Seloh Nolem Weather Station (now closed)

# Appendix D:  Project Information

The University of Queensland is conducting research into the social and economic impacts of coal seam gas (CSG) development. The project has focused on the combined impacts of the multiple CSG developments in the Western Downs region of Queensland as an initial case study. That focus has now expanded to include other local government areas – Maranoa, Toowoomba, and Isaac.

**Research project history**

- *Engagement:* People from the community, government and industry worked with researchers to identify the most important 'indicators' to monitor. This consultation process helped to develop a shared understanding of social and economic development in the community and created a framework for reporting and discussion.
- *Indicator monitoring:* The team identified ways to calculate and report the impact of multiple CSG projects against the agreed set of indicators.


**The research team**

Dr Kathy Witt, Centre for Coal Seam Gas, The University of Queensland has led this research since May 2017 and joined the original project team in 2014.

A large team of researchers has contributed to this project since 2013, including:

- Assoc. Prof. Will Rifkin, University of Newcastle (previously led this project while working at The University of Queensland from April 2012 – April 2017)
- Dr Jo-Anne Everingham, Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, The University of Queensland (CSRM).
- Ms Sarah Choudhury, Research Assistant, CSRM (2017) and Bec Colvin, (2016).
- Ms Sheryllee Johnson, Research Technician, CCSG (2013-2016).
- Professor David Brereton, Associate Director, Sustainable Minerals Institute (2012-2016).
- Dr Vikki Uhlmann, Research Manager, CSRM (2013 -2014).
- Ms Kylie May, Research Analyst, CSRM (2013 – 2014).

*Reporting timeframes*:  The data collection for the project has been occurring annually since 2013. Project outcomes, recommendations, and reports have been released periodically. The timeframe for some datasets, such as those from the Australian Taxation Office, lags behind the main data used in this report—this is due to unique data collection and reporting requirements of this agency.

*Ethics approvals*:  This study has been cleared by the human research ethics committee of The University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines (Research Ethics clearance approval no. 2013000587).

*Questions*:        Contact the lead researcher, **Dr Katherine Witt**
Centre for Coal Seam Gas, Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology,
The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD, 4072
M: 0418 619 341 | E: k.witt@uq.edu.au
W: www.boomtown-indicators.org|W: www.ccsg.uq.edu.au

If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer on 07 3365 3924.