



Bowen Shire LGA Profile

December 2007

Known colloquially as the "Gem of the Coral Coast", Bowen Shire is located at the top of the Whitsunday Islands, offering pleasant and constant temperatures all year round. Major attractions in the region include the shire's seven unique and beautiful beaches, many of which are lined with palm trees and provide access to activities such as swimming, snorkelling, and fishing.

The Shire is comprised of two major town centres, Bowen and Collinsville, which form integral hubs which support the horticultural, coal mining and export activities of the area.

The Shire is well known for horticultural products, particularly mangoes, tomatoes, capsicum and sweet corn. The Queensland Department of Primary Industries' Centre for Dry Tropics Research is located in Bowen and is the driving force for the development of innovations in the local horticulture industry. Coal mining, tourism, cattle farming, and power generation are also significant industries.

Bowen is located on the main Queensland north south rail line, and is serviced by the Bruce Highway. The region boasts a high quality deep-water port capable of docking vessels up to 40,000 tonnes, while the Abbot Point bulk coal terminal services mining operations in Bowen and Nebo Shires.

Bowen Shire amalgamated with Whitsunday Shire on 17 March 2008 following the local government election to form the Whitsunday Regional Council.



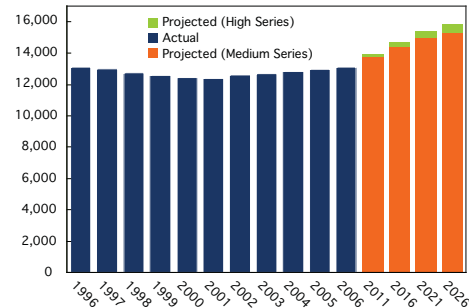
Population

There were an estimated 13,142 persons living in Bowen in 2006, 1.3% more than in 2005. Bowen accounted for 8.2% of the Mackay Whitsunday population in 2006.

Between 2006 and 2026, the population of Bowen is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 0.8% to 15,361 persons by 2026. This translates to an extra 111 persons in Bowen each year between 2006 and 2026.

If current high growth experienced by the Mackay Whitsunday Region continues over the next 20 years, Bowen may be expected to experience a higher growth rate of 1.0% per annum to 15,889 persons by 2026. However, significant port expansion plans and other industrial projects are expected to stimulate substantial population growth in the future. Bowen Shire Council estimates the population of the Shire could be as high as 24,000 by 2026.

Estimated Resident Population
Bowen Shire



Source: ABS 3218.0, QDLGP Population Projections 2006, AECgroup

Employment

In the September Quarter 2007, Bowen Shire recorded a trend labour force of 7,116 persons, 1.5% more than in the September Quarter 2006. In annual terms, the trend number of employed persons increased by 4.0% to 6,860 persons, while the number of unemployed persons declined by 35.0% to 274 persons.

Bowen Shire recorded the highest trend unemployment rate in the Mackay Whitsunday Region of 3.9% in the September Quarter 2007, although this represented an annual decline of 2.1 percentage points.

Trend Employment Indicators, Bowen Shire

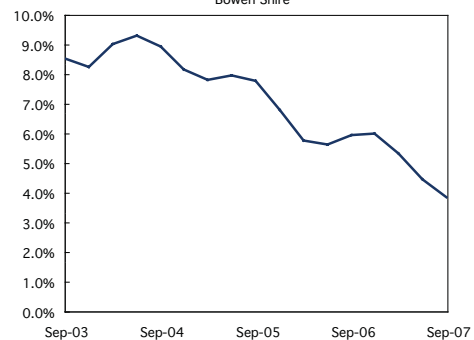
	Sep Qtr 2007	% Change on Sep Qtr 2006
Labour Force (no.)	7,116	1.5%
Employed (no.)	6,860	4.0%
Unemployed (no.)	274	-35.0%
Unemployment Rate (%) ^(a)	3.9%	-2.1%

Note: This data is derived through trending the unsmoothed series from DEWR, thus the trend labour force does not necessarily equal trend employed persons plus trend unemployed persons. (a) The change in the unemployment rate is in percentage point terms.

Source: DEWR Small Area Labour Market Surveys, AECgroup

The trend unemployment rate in Bowen Shire has steadily declined since the September Quarter 2004.

Trend Unemployment Rate
Bowen Shire



Source: DEWR Small Area Labour Market Surveys, AECgroup

Housing

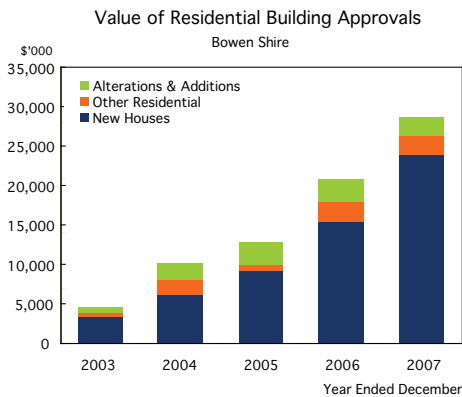
Bowen Shire had 108 residential building approvals in the 2007 calendar year, 10.2% more than in 2006. This growth was attributable to an increase in new house approvals of 21.5%, while other dwelling approvals declined by 36.8%.

Building Approvals, Bowen Shire

	Year Ended Dec 07	% change on Year Ended Dec 06
<i>Number</i>		
New Houses	96	21.5%
Other Dwellings	12	-36.8%
Total Residential	108	10.2%
<i>Value (\$'000)</i>		
New Houses	23,989	55.6%
Other Dwellings	2,386	-8.9%
Alterations & Additions	2,326	-17.4%
Total Residential	28,701	37.6%
Non-Residential	18,307	-17.0%
Total Building	47,009	9.5%

Note: Other dwellings includes flats, units and apartments.
Source: ABS 8731.0

In line with the number of residential building approvals, the value of residential building approvals increased by 37.6% to \$28.7 million in 2007. This was largely attributable to growth in the value of new house approvals (up 55.6% to \$24.0 million) over this period.



Source: ABS 8731.0

The value of non-residential building approvals declined by 17.0% to \$18.3 million in 2007.

Industry

Agriculture - Main agricultural production is in mangoes, tomatoes, capsicum and sweet corn. Around 2,600 tonnes of mangoes, 43,000 tonnes of tomatoes, 22,000 tonnes of capsicum and 6,650 tonnes of sweet corn were produced in 2001. Beef also plays an integral part in the Bowen economy, with around 315,000 head of cattle in 2001.

Mining - Coal mining is an important industry in Bowen, and is home to the Bowen Central and Collinsville coal mines. Additionally, the Sonoma Coal Project was recently completed in Bowen Shire, increasing the region's coking and thermal coal production capacity.

Bowen Shire has significant deposits of gold, silver and copper, which are currently the subject of exploration activity. There is future potential for mining and processing of minerals other than coal in the Shire.

Tourism - Tourism is a vibrant industry in Bowen Shire. Data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for hotels, motels, and serviced apartments with five or more rooms indicate there were a total of 41,939 guest arrivals in the year ended September 2007 with a total of 89,873 guest nights occupied over the year. This resulted in a total turnover \$4.6 million for the Shire, 30.7% more than the year ended September 2006.

Major Projects

Sonoma Balloon Loop - The \$11 million Queensland Rail construction of a balloon loop will service the Sonoma Mine near Collinsville. This rail loop will serve as an extension to the Newlands line, and will provide a key link between production and export hubs. This development is currently under construction and due for completion in late 2008.

Bowen Marina - This \$600 million committed development will transform the existing boat harbour into a facility that will include a residential village, a tavern, a retail precinct, offices, floating berths and a specialised marine industrial precinct.

The Queensland Rail Northern Missing Link - A 69km track from North Goonyella to Newlands will increase the service the mines of the North Bowen Basin. It is estimated this project will cost approximately \$965 million.

Whitsunday Shores - The Aspen Group has committed to develop this \$32 million residential estate, comprised of 669 lots, a country club, a retail precinct, a retirement village and an 18 hole golf course.

Transmission line from Strathmore to Bowen - The \$50 - \$70 million Powerlink 132 kV transmission line project will increase the capability of the Queensland Rail network servicing coal mines in the region.

Abbot Point Coal Terminal, Stage 2 - This recently completed stage of development cost \$116 million and included increasing capacity of the terminal from 15Mt to 21 Mt per annum.

Abbot Point Coal Terminal, Stage 3 - The Ports Corporation of Queensland has committed to an additional \$770 million expansion which will include the construction of additional onshore handling facilities and an additional offshore berth and ship loader to increase coal throughput to 50Mt per annum.

Abbot Point Coal Terminal, Stage 4 - Stage 4 of the Abbot Point Coal Terminal upgrade will expand capacity at the terminal to 100 Mt per annum.

Sonoma Coal Project - This recently completed new mine was constructed to produce 1.8Mt of coking coal and 0.2Mt of thermal coal per annum. The project was developed by QCoal for an estimated \$160 million.

Bowen Foreshore Development - The Bowen Shire Council will spend an estimated \$20 million to develop the foreshore, recently used for the filming of the movie Australia, into a modern, multifunctional participation space.

Water for Bowen - An EIS is currently being undertaken for a proposal to develop a new 150km water channel and pipeline system for urban, industrial and agricultural uses, extending from the Burdekin River south to Bowen and the surrounding areas. The Water for Bowen project would provide an estimated 60,000ML per annum from existing water allocations in the Burdekin Falls Dam.

For More Information

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