

# **ECONOMIC NEED ASSESSMENT**

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## **EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT**

**153-157 DALRYMPLE ROAD, GARBUTT**

**PREPARED FOR:  
THE BUSY SCHOOL LTD**

**25010  
MARCH 2025**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BUSY School Ltd (the applicant) proposes to develop an Educational Establishment at 153-157 Dalrymple Road, Garbutt. The proposal differs from traditional secondary schools or trade schools because it caters only to disengaged youth (by law), is 'closed enrolment', and no fees are charged to attendees.

The subject site is 2,430sqm and is zoned Low Impact Industry under the current Townsville City Plan. The site is located within an industrial precinct and was formerly used as a place of worship.

This report addresses the economic and community need for the proposal by:

- Defining a Study Area.
- Assessing supply and demand.
- Forecasting demand and assessing potential community benefits.

## Need Assessment

The key findings of this assessment which indicate a need for the proposed development include the following:

- The population of residents aged 15-19 in the Study Area is expected to grow by around 17% (2,547 persons) between 2021 and 2046.
- The Study Area exhibits lower levels of secondary school attendance and lower levels of engagement with study (residents aged 15-19).
- Strong increases are forecast in the number of jobs in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors. Therefore, additional trade-based education pathways are needed to develop the requisite skillsets.
- The number of school-attending VET participants (aged 15-19) in the Study Area has increased between 2021 and 2023.
- The number of enrolments in trade-related VET programs by Study Area school students (aged 15-19) grew significantly from 1,465 enrolments in 2021 to 1,800 enrolments in 2023 (23% increase). With population growth, enrolment demand is anticipated to increase further.
- There is a need for additional educational establishments providing VET courses to address demand growth.
- The proposal will provide a point of difference from existing educational facilities and only cater to a specific vulnerable community segment (disengaged youth).
- Alternative education pathways are important to maintain the relatively high year 12 completion rates observed in the region. This is particularly relevant as the proposal will only accept students who are disengaged with traditional education channels (under legislation).

## Community Benefits

Community benefits of the proposed development include:

- The proposed Educational Establishment at the subject site would encourage skill development and linkages with local businesses, facilitating potential employment pathways.
- Proximity of the subject development to industrial businesses would result in synergistic benefits as students have access to businesses and skill development opportunities, and local businesses have increased access to a stream of skilled labour.
- Helping to address skills and employment shortages in trade industries.
- Increasing the workforce participation rate, particularly for a vulnerable community segment.
- Re-engaging youth with education and improving employment outlooks, benefiting both the individual and the economy as a whole.

It is concluded that there is a strong economic and community need for the proposed development, which would improve the potential education and employment outcomes of the youth in Townsville.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Subject Site

The BUSY School Ltd (the applicant) proposes to develop an Educational Establishment at 153-157 Dalrymple Road, Garbutt.

The subject site is 2,430sqm and is zoned Low Impact Industry under the current Townsville City Plan. The site is located within an industrial precinct and was formerly used as a place of worship. The immediate area is generally characterised by low and medium impact industrial uses.

Figure 1.1 shows an aerial view of the subject site and its surroundings.

## 1.2 Proposed Development

BUSY (Backing Unemployed Southport Youth) Schools is an independent Queensland organisation providing education at Special Assistance Schools to support social, educational and employment outcomes of at-risk and disengaged youths. There are currently nine BUSY School campuses which are located in Strathpine, Southport, Ipswich, Cleveland, Brisbane City, Cairns, Shailer Park, Coolangatta, and Salisbury.

The applicant advises that BUSY Schools are considered a 'Special Assistance School' under legislation and differ from trade schools in that they are 'closed enrolment' (i.e. only available to students demonstrate that they are disengaged from mainstream education) and fully supported special assistance school (i.e. no fees paid). Generally, trade schools such as TEC-NQ, are paid and open enrolment schools.

BUSY Schools aim to provide a range of employment opportunities and training services to young Australians. As such, the schools specifically cater to those aged between 16 and 19 years (typically year 11-12). Although trade-related courses and education form a large part of the total curriculum, BUSY Schools are not considered trade-specific.

The curriculum offered by BUSY Schools differs from traditional schools in that it comprises a mix of classroom-based learning and on-site industry-based learning. The subject site therefore represents an ideal location for the proposed school, as its proximity to industry-oriented businesses will afford students the opportunity to participate in training experiences and foster industry connections.

The proposed school at the subject site is expected to accommodate 256 students in total (across year 11 and 12), however only 128 students would be on campus at any one time.

## 1.3 Purpose of Report and Methodology

Foresight Partners Pty Ltd was engaged to prepare this economic and community need assessment to accompany a Development Application.

The key objectives of this report are to:

- Identify and discuss the existing and future supply of secondary schools in the Townsville LGA, particularly those offering vocational training; and
- Assess demand for the subject development; and
- Assess the overall economic and community need for the proposal.

Several investigations were undertaken in preparation of this report, including:

- Definition of a Study Area for the proposed Educational Establishment;
- Forecast population in the defined Study Area;
- Extraction and examination of the demographic profile;
- Assessment of vocational educational and training (VET) participation;
- Analysis and discussion of apprenticeship/traineeship participation;
- Forecast employment by industry sector; and
- An assessment of need for the proposal.

These investigations provided the basis for this economic and community need assessment.

## 1.4 Definitions

This report contains a number of industry terms that are explained below.

**Vocational Education and Training (VET)** is learning which is related directly to a particular line of work. Secondary school students may enrol in VET programs while at school to gain the knowledge and skills needed for a particular job. Students can undertake VET while at school in one of three ways:

- as part of their school studies (i.e. delivered and resourced by the school);
- by enrolling in an external training organisation (e.g. TAFE); or
- as a school-based apprentice or trainee (SBAT). School based apprenticeships allow secondary school students (typically those in year 11 and 12) to work with an employer as a paid employee, while studying for a senior certificate. Employment / training arrangements must impact on school timetables to be considered school-based.

VET qualifications include Certificate I, II, III, IV, as well as diplomas, advanced diplomas, and vocational graduate certificates.

VET can also be undertaken by persons of any age at other institutions. For context, persons aged 15-19 comprised around 16.4% of total VET program enrolments in 2021 in Queensland<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> NCVER via Databuilder.



Figure 1.1: Subject Site and Local Context





## 2. SUPPLY ASSESSMENT

This section analyses the existing and potential future supply of secondary schools in the relevant Study Area.

### 2.1 Existing Supply

For the purposes of this assessment, a Study Area was defined as the relevant catchment to assess demand and supply of secondary schools offering VET programs. It generally encompasses the urban areas of Townsville and comprises 23 SA2s (Statistical Area 2).

Table 2.1 sets out the existing secondary schools in the Study Area, and Figure 2.1 shows their locations.

In total, there are 22 secondary schools offering places for students in grade 10-12 in the Study Area. All of the identified secondary schools offer VET programs.

Townsville Flexible School aims to provide educational opportunities to young people outside the mainstream schooling system. It is part of a larger network of more than 20 flexible schools operated by Edmund Rice Education Australia and facilitates VET qualifications. While Townsville Flexible School is similar to the subject proposal in that it caters to disengaged youth, its religious affiliation is a key difference.

Tec-NQ is a vocational secondary school which integrates academic studies and practical training. It functions as a trade school providing pathways for students to complete the traditional school program (QCE), obtain VET qualifications, and transition to full-time work through placements typically in health or trade sectors. It differs from the subject proposal in that it offers open enrolments and there are fees to attend the school.

The remaining supply of secondary schools are considered traditional/mainstream schools (public and private) and are distinct from the subject proposal. As discussed, the purpose of the proposal is to cater to students disengaged from mainstream schools.

### 2.2 Future Developments

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is expected to open in 2025 at the corner of Dalrymple Road and Bishop Putney Avenue, Shaw. It will offer enrolments for grade 7 initially, progressing to its first year 12 cohort by 2030<sup>2</sup>. Based on the school's website, it is expected to offer VET programs. This is considered a mainstream school and not directly comparable to the proposal.

Searches of Council's database of Development Applications revealed no other relevant approved applications for a facility comparable to the subject proposal.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mhoc.catholic.edu.au/about-us/our-story/>

**Table 2.1: Existing Supply of Secondary Schools, Study Area**

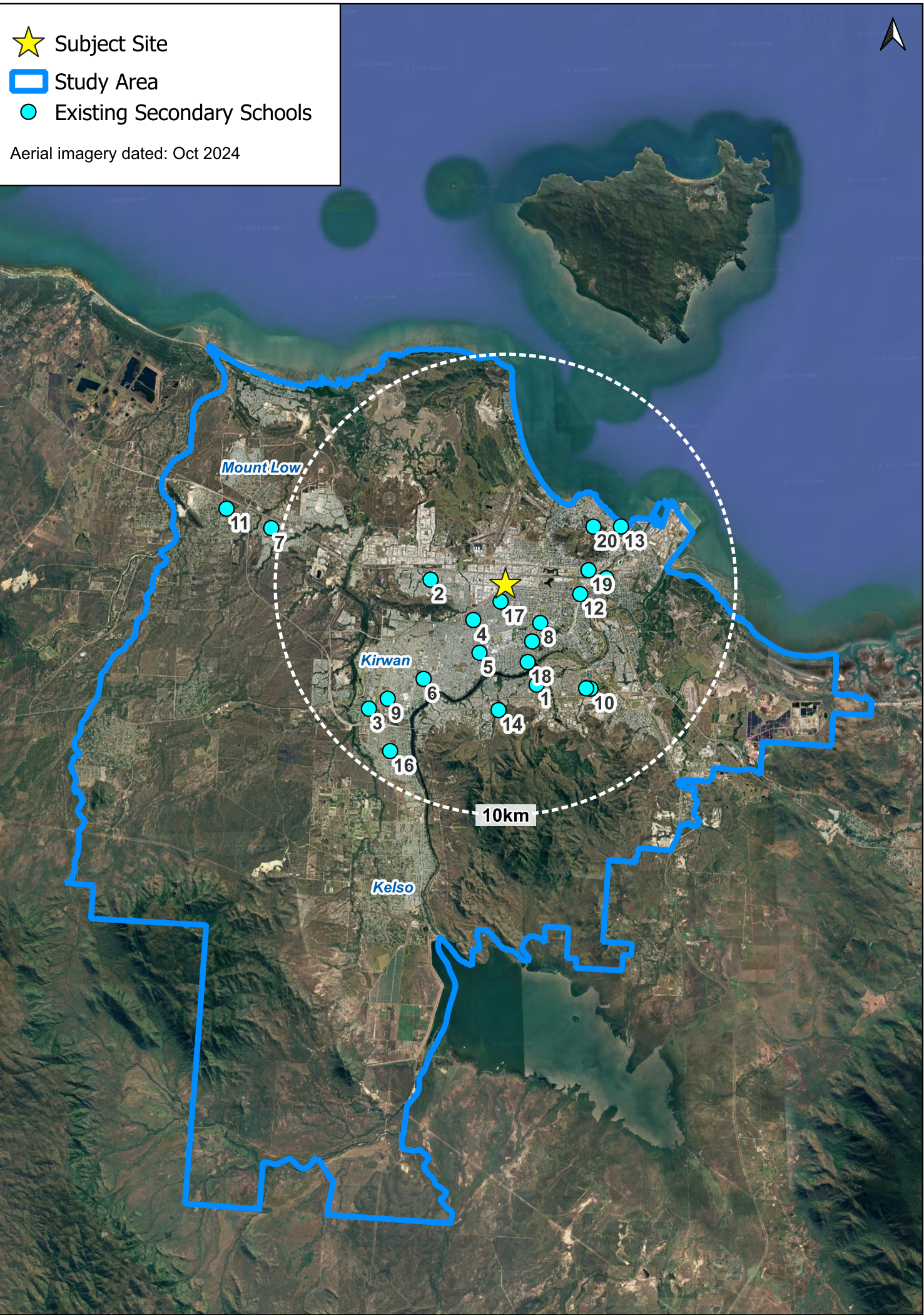
Map ID	Name	Type	Year Levels	Address	Offers VET Programs?	VET Qualifications Completed*	Enrolments^
1	Annandale Christian College	Non-State	P-12	104-156 Yolanda Drive, Annandale	Yes	31	667
2	Calvary Christian College	Non-State	P-12	569 Bayswater Road, Mount Louisa	Yes	35	1098
3	Carinity Education - Shalom	Non-State	P-12	190 Hervey Range Road, Condon	Yes	2	205
4	Heatley Secondary College	State	7-12	Cnr Hanlon Street & Fulham Road, Heatley	Yes	164	753
5	Ignatius Park College	Non-State	7-12	368-384 Ross River Road, Cranbrook	Yes	238	937
6	Kirwan State High School	State	7-12	Hudson Street, Kirwan	Yes	861	1877
7	Northern Beaches State High School	State	7-12	Meranti Street, Deeragun	Yes	243	894
8	Pimlico State High School	State	7-12	Fulham Road, Gulliver	Yes	243	1502
9	Ryan Catholic College	Non-State	P-12	59 Canterbury Road, Kirwan	Yes	180	2011
10	Southern Cross Catholic College	Non-State	P-12	Gartrell Drive, Annandale	Yes	258	1491
11	St Anthony's Catholic College	Non-State	7-12	Cnr Veales Road and Joanne Street, Deeragun	Yes	110	1525
12	St Margaret Mary's College	Non-State	7-12	1-9 Crowle Street, Hyde Park	Yes	162	688

Map ID	Name	Type	Year Levels	Address	Offers VET Programs?	VET Qualifications Completed*	Enrolments^
13	St Patrick's College	Non-State	7-12	45 The Strand, Townsville	Yes	76	662
14	Tec-NQ	Non-State	10-12	54 Discovery Drive, Douglas	Yes	340	349
15	The Cathedral School of St Anne and St James	Non-State	P-12	154 Ross River Road, Mundingburra	Yes	87	1168
16	Thuringowa State High School	State	7-12	26 - 54 Vickers Road South, Condon	Yes	283	653
17	Townsville Christian College	Non-State	P-12	210 Palmerston Street, Vincent	Yes	6	414
18	Townsville Community Learning Centre & Special School	Special	P-12	78 Thompson Street, Mundingburra	Yes	12	206
19	Townsville Flexible School	Non-State	7-12	26 Ingham Road, West End, Townsville	Yes	13	185
20	Townsville Grammar School	Non-State	7-12	45 Paxton Street, North Ward	Yes	30	1291
21	Townsville State High School	State	7-12	36 Boundary Street, Railway Estate	Yes	168	850
22	William Ross State High School	State	7-12	Mervyn Crossman Drive, Annandale	Yes	323	926
<b>Reported Total</b>						<b>3,865</b>	<b>20,352</b>

Source: Foresight Partners, various School Annual Reports (2021). \*2023 figures (latest available). ^2024 data.



Figure 2.1: Defined Study Area and Existing Secondary Schools





## 3. MARKET FUNDAMENTALS

This section assesses the market fundamentals in the relevant age group. It sets out population projections, socio-economic indicators, employment, and secondary school completion rates.

### 3.1 Population Projections

Population growth, specifically in the secondary school age cohort, will drive demand growth for the proposed development.

Table 3.1 sets out the projected population of the Study Area, including for the relevant age group.

The Study Area population is expected to grow from 181,609 persons in 2021 to around 234,503 persons in 2046, representing an increase of around 52,894 persons. The resident population aged 15-19 (the relevant age group) is expected to grow by around 2,547 residents over the same period.

**Table 3.1: Projected Population by Relevant Age Group, Study Area, 2021 to 2046**

	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	Incr. 2021-46
Aged 15-19 (persons)	12,521	14,473	14,657	14,156	14,640	15,068	2,547
All Other Ages (persons)	169,088	178,607	190,062	201,883	211,025	219,435	50,347
<b>Total (persons)</b>	<b>181,609</b>	<b>193,080</b>	<b>204,718</b>	<b>216,039</b>	<b>225,665</b>	<b>234,503</b>	<b>52,894</b>

Source: QGSO Population Projections by SA2 Medium Series (2023) by age by sex rebased with ABS Estimated Population at June 2023.

### 3.2 Socio-economic Characteristics

#### 3.2.1 Education and Employment

Table 3.2 sets out a summary of selected education and employment characteristics of Study Area residents, benchmarked against Queensland. Key insights include:

- A lower proportion of Study Area residents aged 15-19 are attending secondary school (50.3%) compared to the Queensland level (54.8%).
- The Study Area had a higher proportion of residents whose highest level of educational attainment is a Certificate III or IV (16.7%) than Queensland (15.4%).
- Participation in vocational tertiary studies for 15–19-year-olds is around the Queensland level.
- The Study Area had a slightly lower proportion of residents who have completed year 12 or equivalent (42.7%) compared to Queensland (44.7%).

- The Study Area had a lower proportion of residents aged 15-19 who were fully engaged with study (63.9%) compared to Queensland (67.7%).
- The Study Area had a higher proportion of residents aged 15-19 employed in the Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services sectors (32%) than Queensland (29.1%).

**Table 3.2: Selected Education and Employment Characteristics, Study Area and QLD, 2021**

	Study Area		QLD	
	Age 15-19	Total	Age 15-19	Total
<b>Current Education</b>				
<i>Private Secondary</i>	25.7%	3.6%	22.7%	2.8%
<i>Public (Government) Secondary</i>	24.6%	3.4%	32.1%	4.1%
<i>Vocational Tertiary</i>	4.5%	2.0%	4.7%	2.1%
<i>University Tertiary</i>	12.4%	5.0%	12.1%	4.3%
<i>Other</i>	1.3%	11.0%	1.0%	10.8%
<i>Not Attending an Educational Institution</i>	24.1%	67.1%	21.5%	69.5%
<i>Not Stated</i>	7.3%	8.0%	5.8%	6.4%
<b>Highest Level of Educational Attainment</b>				
<i>Years 9 and Below</i>	18.5%	5.3%	19.1%	5.5%
<i>Certificate I &amp; II</i>	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
<i>Years 10 and above</i>	65.8%	27.4%	63.3%	25.5%
<i>Certificate III &amp; IV</i>	6.2%	16.7%	7.6%	15.4%
<i>Diploma / Advanced Diploma</i>	0.5%	6.7%	1.7%	7.7%
<i>Bachelor Degree</i>	-	10.5%	0.1%	12.2%
<i>Graduate Diploma</i>	-	1.6%	0.0%	1.8%
<i>Postgraduate Degree</i>	-	2.9%	0.0%	3.8%
<i>Not Stated / Inadequately Described</i>	9.0%	9.7%	8.1%	9.4%
<i>Not Applicable (aged 0-14)</i>	-	19.2%	-	18.7%
<b>Highest Year of School Completed</b>				
<i>Year 12 or equivalent</i>	34.5%	42.7%	32.1%	55.0%
<i>Year 11 or equivalent</i>	18.1%	6.5%	19.3%	7.4%
<i>Year 10 or equivalent</i>	21.4%	17.7%	23.0%	21.2%
<i>Year 9 or equivalent</i>	16.2%	3.9%	16.6%	4.8%
<i>Year 8 or below</i>	2.5%	2.9%	3.0%	3.9%
<i>Did not go to school</i>	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.6%
<i>Not stated</i>	7.1%	6.7%	5.8%	7.1%
<i>Not Applicable (aged 0-14)</i>	-	19.2%	-	18.7%
<b>Engaged in Employment or Education</b>				
<i>Fully Engaged - Study</i>	63.9%	6.9%	67.7%	6.7%
<i>Fully Engaged - Employment</i>	9.6%	30.3%	8.0%	27.5%
<i>Fully Engaged - Other/Mix</i>	2.6%	1.6%	2.6%	1.7%
<i>Partly Engaged - Study</i>	1.2%	0.6%	1.2%	0.7%

	Study Area		QLD	
	Age 15-19	Total	Age 15-19	Total
<i>Partly Engaged - Employment</i>	7.1%	10.9%	6.1%	11.6%
<i>Partly Engaged - Other/Mix</i>	1.0%	2.6%	1.7%	3.4%
<i>Not Engaged</i>	7.6%	20.8%	7.3%	24.1%
<i>Not Stated / Inadequately Described</i>	7.0%	7.0%	5.3%	5.6%
<i>Not applicable (aged 0-14)</i>	-	19.2%	-	18.7%
<b>Employment by Industry</b>				
<i>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</i>	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%	1.5%
<i>Mining</i>	0.1%	1.3%	0.2%	1.3%
<i>Manufacturing</i>	1.7%	2.1%	2.0%	3.3%
<i>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</i>	0.1%	0.7%	0.1%	0.7%
<i>Construction</i>	2.8%	4.1%	3.1%	5.3%
<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%	1.4%
<i>Retail Trade</i>	12.2%	4.6%	11.5%	5.4%
<i>Accommodation and Food Services</i>	19.8%	3.7%	17.6%	4.2%
<i>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</i>	0.5%	2.1%	0.6%	2.8%
<i>Information Media and Telecommunications</i>	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%
<i>Financial and Insurance Services</i>	0.0%	0.7%	0.2%	1.5%
<i>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</i>	0.2%	0.7%	0.3%	1.0%
<i>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</i>	0.7%	2.2%	0.7%	3.9%
<i>Administrative and Support Services</i>	0.6%	1.3%	0.8%	2.0%
<i>Public Administration and Safety</i>	1.6%	6.3%	0.5%	3.6%
<i>Education and Training</i>	1.8%	4.6%	1.6%	5.2%
<i>Health Care and Social Assistance</i>	2.3%	8.7%	2.2%	9.0%
<i>Arts and Recreation Services</i>	1.8%	0.7%	1.3%	0.9%
<i>Other Services</i>	2.1%	1.9%	1.7%	2.3%
<i>Inadequately described</i>	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	1.8%
<i>Not stated</i>	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%	0.8%
<i>Not applicable (not employed)</i>	49.4%	51.1%	52.1%	41.7%

Source: ABS Census 2021 via Tablebuilder.

Based on the above, it is estimated that demand for vocational study opportunities and traineeships is likely to be slightly higher in the Study Area compared to Queensland. There is also an opportunity to reduce the higher proportion of disengaged residents aged 15-19 through the provision of alternative education pathways.

### 3.3 Forecast Employment

Table 3.3 sets out forecast working population (employment) in the Townsville LGA by industry from 2021 to 2041. Employment projections are not available at the SA2 level to reflect the Study Area, however LGA data is considered a useful proxy. Key insights include:

- The largest industries (by employment) in the Townsville LGA in 2021 were Health Care and Social Assistance (19.1% of total jobs), Public Administration and Safety (13.8%), Education and Training (10.4%), and Retail Trade (10.1%).
- The Manufacturing and Construction sectors combined represent around 12.4% of total jobs in the Townsville LGA.
- A large increase is forecast in the number of Health Care and Social Assistance jobs and Public Administration and Safety jobs between 2021 and 2041 (8,492 and 4,055 respectively); and
- Moderate increases are projected in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors (2,388 and 1,773 jobs respectively).

Provision of education and training opportunities facilitated by the proposed BUSY School will contribute to achieving employment growth in the region.

**Table 3.3: Forecast Working Population by Industry, Townsville LGA, 2021 to 2041**

	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Incr. 2021-41
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	530	545	566	587	609	79
Mining	665	727	828	950	1,086	422
Manufacturing	3,947	4,275	4,824	5,524	6,335	2,388
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1,330	1,515	1,808	2,082	2,302	972
Construction	6,792	7,512	7,949	8,285	8,565	1,773
Wholesale Trade	1,750	1,806	1,869	1,933	2,001	251
Retail Trade	8,745	8,668	8,600	8,538	8,441	-305
Accommodation and Food Services	7,020	7,408	7,792	8,184	8,547	1,527
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	3,917	4,099	4,294	4,466	4,635	718
Information Media and Telecommunications	754	803	857	904	950	196
Financial and Insurance Services	1,286	1,213	1,188	1,245	1,336	50
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1,296	1,518	1,752	1,983	2,240	944
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4,200	4,832	5,502	6,186	6,991	2,791
Administrative and Support Services	2,102	2,405	2,734	3,072	3,450	1,348
Public Administration and Safety	11,942	12,891	13,890	14,948	15,997	4,055
Education and Training	9,043	9,960	10,962	11,981	12,946	3,903
Health Care and Social Assistance	16,545	18,533	20,678	22,899	25,037	8,492
Arts and Recreation Services	1,251	1,308	1,373	1,447	1,523	271
Other Services	3,672	3,815	3,973	4,134	4,284	612
<b>Working Population (Employees)</b>	<b>86,787</b>	<b>93,832</b>	<b>101,439</b>	<b>109,348</b>	<b>117,275</b>	<b>30,488</b>

Source: Foresight Partners' estimates based on QGSO Employment Projections rebased with 2021 ABS Census data. Not stated/inadequately described responses were redistributed based on known proportions by sector.

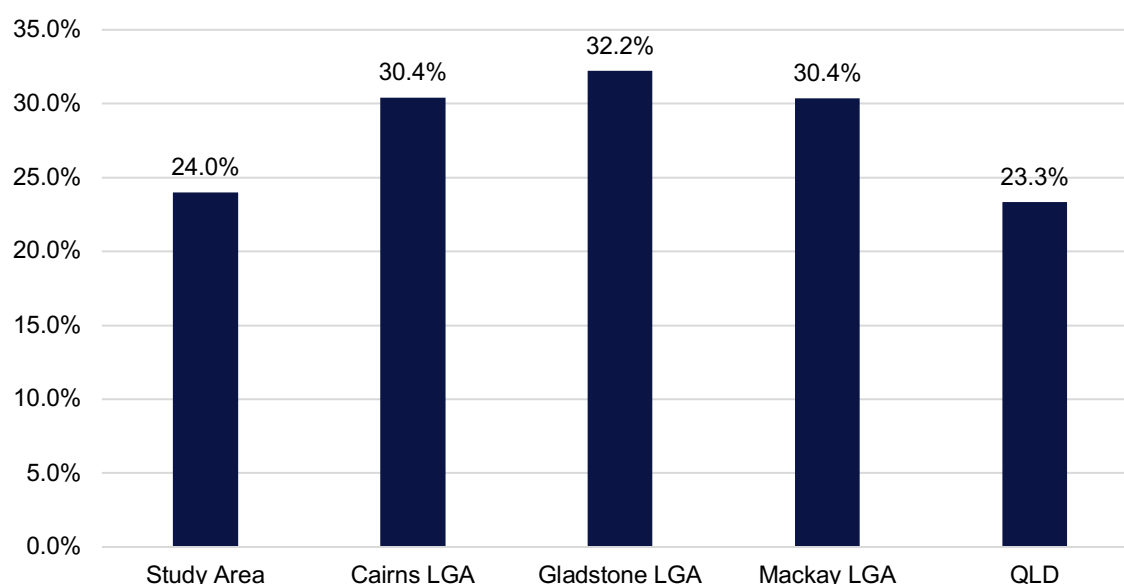
### 3.4 School Completion Rate

Figure 3.1 sets out the proportion of residents aged 18-20 who have not completed year 12 as at June 2021.

The Study Area performs better than the selected LGAs in terms of year 12 completion rates, but slightly worse than Queensland overall.

Alternative education pathways are important to maintain, and potentially boost, year 12 completion rates observed in the Study Area. This is particularly relevant as the proposal will only accept students who are disengaged with traditional education channels (under legislation).

**Figure 3.1: Proportion of Residents Aged 18-20 who have not Completed Year 12, 2021**



Source: ABS Census 2021 via Tablebuilder.

## 4. DEMAND

This section analyses the indicators of demand for alternative education pathways, including participation rates of VET programs and apprenticeships and traineeships in the Study Area. Demand for VET enrolments by school students is also forecast to 2041.

### 4.1 Students

Data from the National Centre for Vocational and Educational Research (NCVER) was extracted to analyse the VET participation levels of school students by age and location.

The number of school students participating in VET programs from 2021 to 2023 for selected LGAs is shown in Table 4.1. This data excludes persons aged 15-19 participating in VET programs who are not attending secondary school.

Within the Study Area, there were a total of 3,835 school students aged 15-19 participating in VET programs in 2023. This comprised 290 apprentices / trainees and 3,545 other VET participants. This is the equivalent of around 29.4% of the total Study Area population in this age group. This is only slightly lower than the Queensland level (30.5%).

It is relevant to note that the Study Area has a slightly lower proportion of resident employment within fields typically requiring VET qualifications (e.g. construction) than Queensland (Table 3.2). This implies that there may be an opportunity for additional trade-specific educational facilities in the Study Area to meet regional employment growth in these sectors.

**Table 4.1: School Students Aged 15-19 in VET Programs, Study Area and Selected SA3s, 2021 to 2023**

LGA	2021		2022		2023	
	Apprentice / Traineeship	Other VET	Apprentice/ Traineeship	Other VET	Apprentice / Traineeship	Other VET
Study Area	250	3,560	250	3,080	290	3,545
Mackay SA3	140	2,270	150	2,030	200	2,100
Cairns South SA3	225	1,685	235	1,820	240	1,935
<b>QLD</b>	<b>12,570</b>	<b>90,210</b>	<b>12,840</b>	<b>86,275</b>	<b>13,520</b>	<b>92,525</b>

Source: NCVER via Databuilder. Figures are rounded. Excludes persons aged 15-19 participating in VET programs who are not attending secondary school.

### 4.2 Enrolments

Table 4.2 sets out the total enrolments in VET programs by secondary school students aged 15-19 in selected areas from 2021 to 2023. It is relevant to note that one student could account for more than one enrolment. This data excludes persons aged 15-19 participating in VET programs who are not attending secondary school.

The number of enrolments (by school students aged 15-19) in apprenticeships / traineeships in the Study Area has grown since 2021, but the total number of enrolments in

other VET programs dipped significantly in 2022, before recovering in 2023. This trend was also present at the Queensland level.

**Table 4.2: Enrolments in VET Programs by School Students Aged 15-19, Selected Areas, 2021 to 2023**

	2021		2022		2023	
	Apprentice / Traineeships	Other VET	Apprentice / Traineeships	Other VET	Apprentice / Traineeships	Other VET
Study Area	370	7,310	395	6,145	390	7,165
Mackay SA3	180	4,215	225	3,535	260	3,675
Cairns South SA3	280	3,585	355	3,415	330	3,695
QLD	15,120	171,600	16,425	153,440	16,735	167,950

Source: NCVER via Databuilder. Figures are rounded. Excludes persons aged 15-19 participating in VET programs who are not attending secondary school.

### 4.3 Apprenticeships and Traineeships by Industry Sector

Commencements of apprenticeships/traineeships in the Study Area were investigated to evaluate growth over time and the proportion by industry sector (Table 4.3). This data illustrates participation in trade-specific industry training relative to other sectors. It includes all persons, regardless of school enrolment or age group.

The industry sectors which accounted for the most commencements of apprenticeships and traineeships in YE March 2024 were Construction (330, or ~21%) and Health Care and Social Assistance (270, or ~17%).

BUSY Schools typically facilitate VET qualifications a range of sectors which would support pathways to apprenticeships/traineeships and eventual employment.

**Table 4.3: Commencements of Apprenticeships/Traineeships by Industry, Study Area, 2020 to 2024**

	YE March 2020	YE Mar 2021	YE Mar 2022	YE Mar 2023	YE Mar 2024
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	5	15	15	15	15
Mining	40	70	35	30	30
Manufacturing	105	110	165	230	140
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	30	30	35	30	35
Construction	305	345	485	375	330
Wholesale Trade	0	10	45	65	25
Retail Trade	50	65	115	65	30
Accommodation	195	215	315	165	110
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	15	70	50	110	65
Information Media and Telecommunication	0	0	0	0	0
Financial and Insurance Services	0	0	5	0	0
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	0	5	45	20	5



	YE March 2020	YE Mar 2021	YE Mar 2022	YE Mar 2023	YE Mar 2024
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	35	40	95	65	45
Administrative and Support Services	120	95	180	140	160
Public Administration and Safety	90	55	60	90	90
Education and Training	10	10	20	10	15
Health Care and Social Assistance	150	205	275	255	270
Arts and Recreation Services	20	25	50	10	0
Other Services	145	180	220	185	210
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>2,210</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>1,575</b>

Source: NCVER via Databuilder. Note: NCVER data is rounded to nearest 5. Data is not directly comparable with Table 4.2 (due to age and school enrolment considerations).

## 4.4 Forecast Demand

Table 4.4 sets out the forecast number of enrolments in VET programs (including apprenticeships/traineeships) by school students aged 15-19 in the Study Area.

Demand forecasts are Foresight Partners' estimates based on the following:

- Forecast population of residents aged 15-19 in the Study Area;
- Estimates of the proportion of Study Area residents aged 15-19 likely to enrol in VET programs, based on trends in participation rates; and
- The proportion of Study Area VET enrolments in a trade-related sector (see note beneath Table 4.4).

The number of VET enrolments in trade-related industries grew from 1,465 enrolments in 2021 to 1,800 enrolments in 2023. With short-term population growth, this is expected to increase to around 2,025 enrolments by 2026, and 2,415 enrolments by 2041.

Accounting for growth in other industries, it is estimated that the total number of enrolments will grow from around 7,685 in 2021 to:

- 8,685 enrolments in 2026; and
- 9,370 enrolments in 2041.

This represents an increase of around 1,685 enrolments (2021 to 2041), which illustrates the growing demand for VET programs by school students in the 15-19 age group in the Study Area.

**Table 4.4: Forecast VET Enrolments, School Students Aged 15-19, Study Area, 2021 to 2041**

	Historic			Projected			
	2021	2022	2023	2026	2031	2036	2041
Enrolments in Trade Related Industries*	1,465	1,505	1,800	2,025	2,125	2,195	2,415
Other VET Enrolments	6,220	5,015	5,760	6,660	6,960	6,725	6,955
<b>Total VET Enrolments by School Students Aged 15-19</b>	<b>7,685</b>	<b>6,520</b>	<b>7,560</b>	<b>8,685</b>	<b>9,085</b>	<b>8,920</b>	<b>9,370</b>

Source: NCVER via Databuilder. \*Trade related industries include *Engineering and related technologies* and *Architecture and building*. Figures may not add due to rounding.

## 5. NEED ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Need

Need for the proposed development is demonstrated by the following:

- The population of residents aged 15-19 in the Study Area is expected to grow by around 2,547 persons between 2021 and 2046.
- The Study Area exhibits lower levels of secondary school attendance and lower levels of engagement with study (residents aged 15-19).
- To meet substantial increases in employment in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors, additional trade-based education pathways are required.
- The number of school-attending VET participants (aged 15-19) in the Study Area has increased between 2021 and 2023.
- The number of enrolments in trade-related VET programs by Study Area school students (aged 15-19) grew significantly from 1,465 enrolments in 2021 to 1,800 enrolments in 2023. With population growth, demand is anticipated to increase.
- There is a need for additional educational establishments providing VET courses to address demand growth.
- The proposal will provide a point of difference from existing educational facilities and only cater to a specific vulnerable community segment (disengaged youth).
- Alternative education pathways are important to maintain the relatively high year 12 completion rates observed in the region. This is particularly relevant as the proposal will only accept students who are disengaged with traditional education channels (under legislation).

### 5.2 Community Benefits

Community benefits of the proposed development include:

- The proposed Educational Establishment at the subject site would encourage skill development and linkages with local businesses, facilitating potential employment pathways.
- Proximity of the subject development to industrial businesses would result in synergistic benefits as students have access to businesses and skill development opportunities, and local businesses have increased access to a stream of skilled labour.
- Helping to address skills and employment shortages in trade industries.
- Increasing the workforce participation rate.
- Re-engaging youth with education and improving employment outlooks, benefiting both the individual and the economy as a whole.

- Addressing the socio-economic barrier to education by providing alternative education pathways catered specifically to at-risk and disengaged youths.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The proposed development represents a substantial net benefit to the Townsville region. It is concluded that there is a strong economic and community need for the proposed development, which would improve the potential education and employment outcomes of the youth in Townsville.