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2 March 2021

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Energy
Department of Premier and Cabinet
PO Box 123
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Sir

Circular Head Council - Renewable Energy Coordination Framework submission

Circular Head Council thanks the Department of State Growth and the Minister for Energy, Hon Guy Barnett MP, for the opportunity to comment on the Renewables Tasmania Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework.

The proposed changes contained with the discussion document are significant for the far North West of Tasmania. The Far North west area with world class wind resources with average wind speeds recording 10m/second is clearly identified as an area for serious investment and change under the draft framework policy alongside the new role Tasmania will play on the national energy stage as the leading renewable state.

As referenced in the framework document on page 5 under section 2.2 the transition from 100% to 200% renewable generating capacity will involve some unique opportunities and serious challenges. The Circular Head Council area and its residents have much to gain from a frank and genuine discussion of these community tension points and challenges ahead.

The Renewables Tasmania Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework speaks to community consultation on an inclusive and collaborative basis. Notwithstanding this the Circular Head Council and the broader community hold concerns around the introduction of the policy position aspects into the wider community. A high-level consultation process that does not address the fundamental aspects of a local community understanding and or connection to place, will not be embraced or understood, resulting in negative outcomes later in the delivery timeline.

Consultation without some additional effort in local presentation of the information will result in underrepresented participation from key community stake holders. The present circumstances in the Circular Head Community around employment and housing if not acknowledged will impact the participation effort.

The following issues are of specific concern to Circular Head Council out of the consultation draft.

Consultation

The present design of the consultation method and emerging interest points across the community in the Circular Head area warrant some additional effort in the draft exposure to community.

For example, it is not widely known or understood by the majority of persons across the Circular Head community the significant proposed expansion in Renewables Tasmania Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework for the Far North west local area.

To consider the implementation of a policy framework that introduces the concept of a clear 100% increase in renewable capacity with limited awareness in the region where serious scale new developments may occur warrants far better communication and presentation to locals.

The clearly identified new potential large-scale wind and solar projects for the North west represents more than 50% of the policy position being presented and far greater than a 100% increase in the local area.

Circular Head Council is presently very actively engaged in considering the largest renewable wind energy project in the North West of over 1000MW.

As part of the early community responses to date, a number of alternative locations have been suggested for this project to move concerns to locations away for residents or valued community sites. The presented Renewables Tasmania Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework suggests (on page 7) a further 5150MW for the North West. If 50% of this capacity was to be located in the Circular Head Council area this would be 2.5 time the current projects, being able to successfully take up all the alternative suggested locations plus more. This scale of change is presently not widely appreciated or known to the community and is a far greater change than the notional 100% of the broader strategy narrative. This level of change when comprehended will stimulate a response of considerable momentum.

Whilst it may be considered reasonable for the Circular Head Council area to play a significant role in new energy generation given the highly sought after and reliable counter cyclical world class wind resources, the suggestion of this scale without some clarification and specific introduction will most likely result in significant community concern.

The projects currently being prepared for development assessment have for several decades been under various forms of consideration & preparation and have a well-known place in the local community knowledge. The presented policy change has no such community background.

The forecasting of very large scale projects with no such community introduction is respectfully considered, not a sound strategic move towards empowering positive community advocacy and will most likely result in a counterproductive response in the important debate of decarbonising the energy economy and shifting the new opportunities of renewable energy to the local Tasmanian benefit.

The lack of genuine community consultation that empowers local conversations by sharing information in locally relatable format is not occurring. To successfully implement the policy change proposed far more work is required.

The consultation method design has not acknowledged the literacy or social capacity divides across the Circular Head Community. As an example, the use of the written format predisposes 50% of the community to poor understanding due to an inability to comprehend the messaging of complex themes and information in this format. Further the capacity to respond to the consultation requires

a level of literacy skills within the grasp of this author but not the majority of the wider community and the absence of a response cannot be taken as acceptance.

Much greater effort is required with face to face communication at a grass roots on the ground level to determine the aspirations of the community and draw forward the real individual and community concerns.

A new level of reflection on the communication methodology and outcome design with some thoughts towards the insights of community engagement from Bridges out of Poverty knowledge platform would serve the development of a holistic engaging policy to a much higher level.

The information presented in the consultation paper clearly requires a level of knowledge and competency to understand the issues and local community members who are currently occupies by more pressing local issues of housing and work security will not be engaged until the consultation strategy is more focused using improved design knowledge.

As an example, seeking to engage the head of the family household across the community requires 3 different strategies and some fundamental knowledge to be successful. On the aspects of family structure & leadership, the three different societal cohorts have different leaders and styles and hence need different mechanism to connect.

In the following we see the differences described.

Bridges Out of Poverty "Hidden Rules"

	Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
FAMILY STRUCTURE	Tends to be matriarchal.	Tends to be patriarchal.	Depends on who has money.

If one reflects on this knowledge, they are 3 different persons who may engage in completely different ways and have vastly different expectations. This is further elaborated upon by the following concept of time.

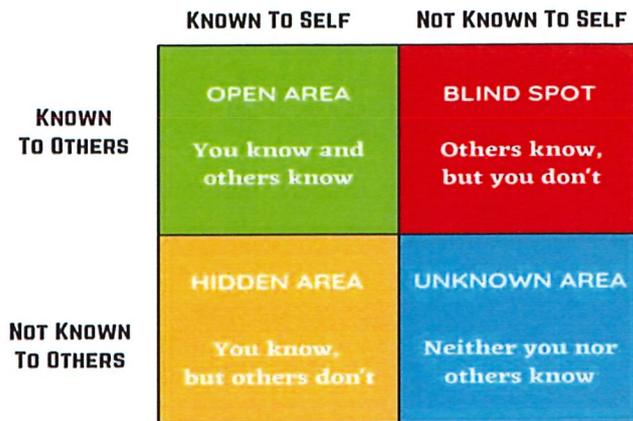
	Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
TIME ***	Present most important. Decisions made for moment based on feelings or survival.	Future most important. Decisions made against future ramifications.	Traditions and history, most important. Decisions made partially on basis of tradition and decorum.

The individual understanding of any information presented for community discussion, if not described with the reflective insight and knowledge will be rapidly dismissed as not relevant to the individual.

To further explain the position of community understanding of information if one is to reflect on the Johari window model below, the need to engage with community to genuinely share information at a relatable level and move understanding to the open area window which is essential to build working relationships and understanding.

Having vital information in any perspective other than the open area is not genuine consultation and will not support positive community or individual understanding of the draft policy.

JOHARI WINDOW



To proceed on the basis that any important information or knowledge resides in the unknow areas is very detrimental to any success and successful partnering with the local community. Much more focused on ground consultation is needed with the local community to ensure the concepts of the policy are widely understood and the narrative is directly relatable to individuals.

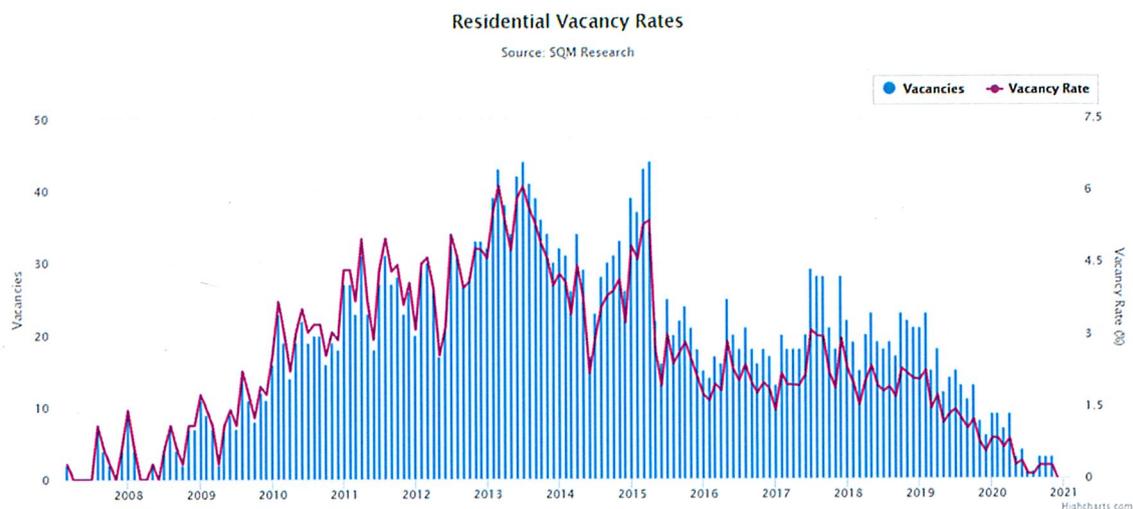
The known disadvantages in the local Circular Head community are predisposing a high level of non-response to some very important community opportunities and changes. To ignore this is a perilous decision of serious consequences for everyone's future. The consultation method must acknowledge and respond to the disadvantages to be seen of any genuine value to individuals or the community. The goals established under the plan objectives in particular objective 3 being, 3.1 to 3.3 will not be realised in the local Circular head Community without additional local consultation engagement effort.

Housing

Currently the Circular Head community is experiencing a serious decline in housing availability and affordability. The decline in housing availability is shown below with the dramatic change in rental availability since 2019.

Residential vacancy rate December 2020 – 7330.

RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATES POSTCODE 7330



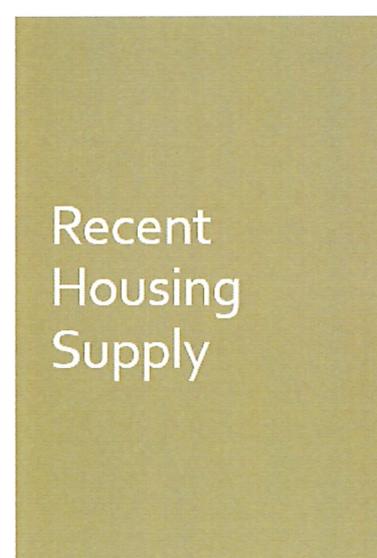
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This dramatic change has been sparked by a number of factors which have caused the decline in availability in the local market.

The corporate restructuring of industry over many recent years, globalisation of work and product supply chains and the moves to online or remote work following the ongoing global pandemic have changed permanently the nature of work and residency in the area, making the Circular Head Council area a safe place and ideal choice as a place to choose to live. This change combined with several decades of slow and almost unnoticeable population demographic change and decline has seen the supply of new housing not necessary in a declining and largely self-sufficient market. The new unexpected demand and a contracting market trend have produced a serious pinch point in supply. This is further compounded by a building sector capacity constraint.

From 2016 to 2019 new housing approvals were less than 5 approvals per year with 2020 showing an approval volume of 22. This represents at the local industry scale more than 4 years supply in one 12-month period. Hence delivery of the new housing by traditional methods is clearly insufficient in scale and why there is serious delays to customers exposing the higher market rental costs during the construction timeline.



One might argue strongly why doesn't the industry scale up and the response is clearly with over 30 years of population decline and a long term trend in demographic ageing, a growing long term trend of new housing construction is foreign and beyond the scope of the industry skills and capacity.

In addition to the above the stagnant to declining historical demand for housing has suppressed prices and rental returns making new construction of housing seriously more expensive than existing product in the market and the local construction industry has adapted to these conditions to remain viable.

The above economic factors have manifest in no capital growth in the housing market for almost a generation and the new demand occurring is causing considerable household disruption as the new market conditions play out through cost rises.

A perfect storm has emerged for the Circular Head Community, high housing demand and low capacity to respond due to demographics and industry capacity alongside the change in housing now being an economic decision, not a shelter consideration where the economic principles do not support additional supply investment.

In addition to the above recent consultation with a number of significant local employers has revealed the housing issue is already impacting their businesses as evidenced below.

This recent consultation paints a picture of a challenging time for long established industries who make a considerable contribution to the regional and state economy being forced to think and act on workforce housing supply.

The impact of a declining operating and supply environment for housing is one to take serious notice of.

Item No	Business Name	Contact Person	Survey Response	Affecting Business	Attending Discussion
1	Emmertown Park Aged Care Facility	Ian Adams	No	N/A	No
2	Britton Timers	Stuart Gale	Yes	Yes - in future	No
3	Clark Window Tasmanian Pty Ltd	Craig Clark	No	No	No
4	Grange Resources Ltd	Ben Maynard	Yes	Yes	No
5	Greenham	Robert Cox	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	McCain Foods Aust Pty Ltd	Gordon Gillies	No	Yes	Yes
7	Moon Lake Investment (Van Dairy)	Tristan Huang	Yes	No	Yes
8	Saputo Dairy Australia Smithton	Dale Poke	Yes	Yes	No
9	Tasmanian Seafoods	Zubair Ali	No	Yes	Yes
10	Bridge Hotel	Kim Revell	No	N/A	No
11	Tall Timbers Tasmania	John Dabner	Yes	Yes	Yes
12	Hursey Seafoods	David Hudson	No	No	No
13	Stanley Hotel	Julian Jacobs	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Blue Hill Honey	Nicola Charles	Yes	Yes	No
15	Blue Hill Honey – The Colony Cafe	Mark Angius	N/A	Yes	Yes
16	Tarkine Fresh Oyster	Cassie Poke	No	No	No
17	TOP Fish Pty Ltd	Martine Hardy	No	No	No
18	Vestas	Grant Gleeson	No	No	No
19	Armour Hardware	Theresa Young	Yes	Yes	No
20	Allan Lord Holdings Pty Ltd	Allan Lord	No	No	Yes
21	Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation	Tony Smart	No	No	No
22	Collins Contracting(Tas) Pty Ltd	Rodney Collins	No	No	No
23	Dutch Mill Tasmanian Dairies	Paul Arnold	No	No	Yes
24	Ta Ann Tasmania	Jamie Hite	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total			10 Responses	12 Business have been or will be affected	10 Attendees

Industry Feedback to Date

- 12 out of 24 (50%) Jan 2021- Business have indicated housing is impacting operations = 1/2 of those contacted.
- Respondents expressed interest in different housing types to meet new market and customer needs.
- Quality housing is required to recruit & hold better quality staff and skilled employees in the area.
- A diversity of solutions is required.

The type of housing also is poorly diversified in the area and is not providing enough market choices for existing or new arrivals to the community. This is shown in the census information below.

Dwelling structure	Circular Head (M)	%	Tasmania	%	Australia	%
Separate house	2,828	97.1	172,998	87.6	6,041,788	72.9
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	3	0.1	11,376	5.8	1,055,016	12.7
Flat or apartment	52	1.8	11,267	5.7	1,087,434	13.1
Other dwelling	8	0.3	1,202	0.6	64,425	0.8

The following are the key issues in the housing market in the Circular Head area.

- Housing is no longer a conversation around shelter and is now directly linked to economic circumstances and the decisions customer make is clearly linked to investment / economics of lenders in each market.
- Limited capital growth in housing market locally since 2008. This significantly impacts owner exit costs from the market as no growth often materialises an economic loss due to the taxes and transaction costs not being off set at the time of sale. Up until recent times the high number days on market has also exacerbated costs as value cannot be redeployed causing additional rental expenses upon moving locations.
- Market demand below market supply until late 2020.
- Construction capacity not available due to historical declining demand for new construction services. Recent trends of 3 to 5 new homes per year is out of step with demand which now in 2020 was 22 new approvals in a single year. A quantum of 4 times the historical trend over recent years.
- Construction cost rate (\$) linked to past historical methodology.
- Lack of Construction innovation (modularisation) to reduce weather risks & costs being passed back to customer. Currently weather costs are outsourced to the customer by the construction industry as a risk management strategy.
- Low historical rental returns due to weak housing demand from past industry restructuring and community demographic change.
- Housing stock available in the market is substantially below replacement cost. This has supported in the last decade a well-developed renovation market in lieu of the new construction market.
- Local Market Capacity to afford, based upon core primary industry employment which significantly influences sale price sensitive thresholds. At the higher value ends of the market out of region/ interstate purchasers are more prevalent.
- Industry globalisation and restructuring is also a significant issue as this has dramatic impacts in the small local housing market as evidenced in the vacancy rates graph.

Without early targeted intervention in increasing housing supply to the community the impacts of further infrastructure and project proposals and development will clearly influence the local community perception of any positive local benefit when promoted.

If households are experiencing serious negative cost and supply impacts, no extraneous future positive benefit will make up for the personal loss of housing shelter in the hierarchy of family or personal needs.

This has wide ranging political implications for inattentive governments.

Circular Head Council encourages the state government on the implementation of solutions as there is serious considerations to be given to any intervention methodology in a local housing market to avoid adverse community perceptions of help offered.

A lesson in reference is the attached paper from the Queensland Planner – Spring 2011 – Vol 51 No 3 which examines the process of replacing democracy with overarching governance and forcing paternalistic solutions onto a local community. This can cause very suboptimal outcomes and result in poor local support for projects in a local community and further afield.

To date the presentation of the discussion paper and draft framework does not acknowledge or suggest an effective way to engage the necessary local community in effective democratic decision making let alone providing suggested solutions to the challenges to housing already in the local community.

Employment

The draft renewable energy Coordination framework remains rather silent on the full context of jobs and the potential to be captured.

It is positive to have the clear Growing the economy and providing jobs as a target in the sister publication of the Tasmanian Renewable Energy Action Plan (TREAP) however in the local community context the availability of access to the jobs of the future remains constrained by the local context of education standards, training capacity and local participant inspiration or motivation.

The suggestion of growing the economy and jobs without local tangible direct links is an area to be addressed and is not referenced in the documents.

As an example, the following “Are you interested in working in Renewable Energy” diagram represent the jobs and relevant skills to participate in the Renewable Energy Industry. This is a significant challenge for any person wishing to participate as a very limited number of the skills or training components are offered locally and even regionally and would at minimum require individuals to travel out of our area to attend basic training and competency development.

On reflection of the jobs bullseye it is conceivable that over 80% of the available employment may not be realised due to an existing strong local employment market and current existing vacancies combined with housing shortages.

Further the education attainment levels in the local area pose significant barriers to taking the steps towards embracing further training and career development based on the area census data with a significant skew towards Labourers, Managers and Technicians and Trade based workers in the below census information.

Occupation <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>	Circular Head (M)		Tasmania		Australia	
		%		%		%
Labourers	875	24.3	25,183	11.6	1,011,520	9.5
Managers	759	21.0	26,467	12.2	1,390,047	13.0
Technicians and Trades Workers	409	11.3	30,243	14.0	1,447,414	13.5
Machinery Operators and Drivers	342	9.5	13,800	6.4	670,106	6.3
Community and Personal Service Workers	311	8.6	26,754	12.4	1,157,003	10.8
Clerical and Administrative Workers	308	8.5	28,194	13.0	1,449,681	13.6
Professionals	280	7.8	40,772	18.8	2,370,966	22.2
Sales Workers	250	6.9	21,402	9.9	1,000,955	9.4

The local data is significantly different to the state context and this will influence perceptions of draft renewable energy coordination framework and resultant project acceptance of the employment opportunities.

The context of employment for the Circular Head community will be one of keen interest as this will be an example of true local benefit. However, will be closely watched and observed as there will need to be early successes and clear local benefits for the community particularly the development of career paths for youth to succeed and grow their careers locally.

The early initialisation of training in all the base competencies of the skill / job matrix is essential to support local maximisation of employment from prior to project start.

At present the knowledge of how the local employment market will be impacted by the policy framework is unclear and will depend upon how the local community takes up the opportunity if at all.

Industry of employment, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>	Circular Head (M)		Tasmania		Australia	
		%		%		%
Dairy Cattle Farming	524	14.8	1,568	0.7	20,326	0.2
Meat Processing	190	5.4	755	0.3	28,852	0.3
Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised)	119	3.4	1,168	0.5	44,309	0.4
Cheese and Other Dairy Product Manufacturing	100	2.8	757	0.3	9,256	0.1
Primary Education	100	2.8	5,653	2.6	231,198	2.2

On reflection, the development of competency requires training opportunities and time, with the knowledge that an apprenticeship takes 3-4 years to complete, there is considerable urgency to commence implementation of training and the delivery of base competency skills as this is the opportunity to the local community.

This would be a tangible example to promote in support of the Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework. A commitment to this vital industry labour development strategy would also provide a tangible evidence to community of the new renewable energy opportunities emerging. Until this occurs the employment opportunities of the Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework remains abstract and not realistic for the local community who will experience significant community change as part of the policy implementation.

In a further consideration Circular Head Council would encourage all to consider how support can be implemented early to provide opportunities for local entrepreneurial participation in the project delivery supply chain. Positive policy encouragement and local supply chain engagement will support improved local community benefit across the whole community. See attached entrepreneurship research paper.

In addition to the above the community sensitivity and scepticism of false promises is also to be considered in terms of the long-term employment benefit of the proposed changes and development of the renewable resources. In the recent past the local community has witnessed the decoupling of work and residency from the traditional models. For example, the more technically based a particular job skill is the greater probability the work will be undertaken remotely especially after COVID 19, in addition to the pressure of automation of many labour inputs of the regions manufacturing jobs.

This therefore predisposes the long-term renewable industry development to less and less locally based employment as the work can be completed remotely, especially those at levels 3 and 4 of the earlier diagrams, which are more typically the remaining long-term jobs post initial construction activities.

On a social cohesion context this also results in a serious loss and decline of social capacity as community members with organisational and administrative skills are no longer present to sustain sporting, service or other volunteer organisations that sustain, and self-actualise the social fabric of a vibrant regional community.

A win for the industry development can mean significant economic leakage via jobs being undertaken remotely in more regional locations.

These phenomena do not support local communities and accelerates the regional decline. Local communities seek a more tangible community return for the changes in their local area and what it makes to the wider state and national benefit. Especially if a local area is powering the future of others. Circular Head Council seeks to embrace the opportunities of a local community fund to add self-determined democratic intergenerational development and resilience to local community as the philosophy of trickle-down economics does not support long term community economic resilience and are subject independent corporate changes over time, which is beyond the communities influence. No longer on the future horizon can a regional or rural community be guaranteed prosperity by the simple notion of jobs and employment as the modern world has decoupled residency from work, and without residency the regional economy lacks community vibrancy & vitality and fails to prosper.

The recent research project and preliminary findings of the NW Community Marine Futures community engagement undertaken by Maree Fudge, Karen Alexander and Emily Ogier from the Institute of Marine & Antarctic studies (IMAS) & University of Tasmania, have clearly indicated the very strong community connection with the natural environments and landscapes of the Circular Head area. Reflecting on this valuable research insight will provide a clear picture of community responses to local perspective on value and change.

Circular Head Council encourages this submission reviewer to invest the time in reflection on this recent community engagement.

Conclusion

In conclusion the type of engagement strategy and methodology will significantly impact the levels of submissions received for the Circular Head Community on the Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework as present the lack of diversified design in the consultation method will not produce a clear reflection of the community perspective or feeling towards the draft policy.

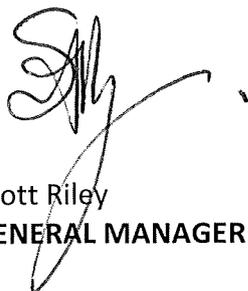
The messaging of the Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework is not sufficiently promoting the coexistence of the growing renewables developments and the current high value of local experiences.

With housing pressures are now a real and tangible personal / family impact across the community, Combined with the new large projects being promoted and little emerging training opportunities locally, the focus of the community is not on new regional or state aspirations but more akin to the local needs of the individual & or family household. Without much greater targeted support, the local area will not be focused on the aspirations of self-actualising policy engagement until the fundamental safety and psychological needs are met. These are fundamental lessons from Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and should not be overlooked as they relate directly to local personal experiences.

Put simply, Local community is very unlikely to be engaged in the consultation phase of the policy simply because the existing challenges of work and housing security dominate the personal and household thinking and not the needs of community policy participation.

Promoting additional change at a time of considerable once in a generation unchosen change in the community requires a far more dedicated personalised face to face engagement strategy to understand what the local community values the most. Any short cutting of the genuine process to consult and listen may well see the important initiative derailed by uninformed negative community responses. This presents a unique localised challenge in securing meaningful community engagement and support for the framework components and the opportunities identified.

Circular Head Council would seek to discuss personally face to face with the Minister for Energy, this submission components and the local area experiences with this engagement process at the earliest opportunity available. Should you require any further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.



Scott Riley
GENERAL MANAGER

Cc Premier + All Braddon MP's

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Article in *Journal of Rural Studies* · February 2019

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Entrepreneurship under siege in regional communities: Evidence from Moranbah in Queensland, Australia

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ABSTRACT

The notion that entrepreneurial activity is an important driving force for facilitating development is not new. To date, influential empirical research that is focused on the small community context of the entrepreneurship debate is still emerging. Moranbah in Queensland, Australia, is a case example of a small mining town that is characterised by a two-stream economy: the prosperous mining-employed stream and the much less prosperous non-mining employed stream. In as much as the local entrepreneurship stream in Moranbah offers a potential driving force to rebalance these two extremes in the current economy, the distinct prevalent conditions in the region pose threats that undermine the capacity of local entrepreneurs. This paper presents empirical evidence of how the socio-spatial, economic, political and cultural environments in Moranbah has put its entrepreneurship stream under a siege. The study found three key threats to entrepreneurship in Moranbah: (i) the *nature of the ties with all levels of government*, (ii) *lack of status for local entrepreneurs*, and (iii) *the current business model direction taken by the coal mining industry*. The results of the study have potential implications for current discussions around regional development policies.

1. Background

The notion that entrepreneurial activity is an important driving force for facilitating local and regional development is not new (Guerrero and Peña-Legazkue, 2013; Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017). More particularly, the relationship between the creation of new ventures, and appearance of new entrepreneurs, and economic progress has received considerable attention in the field of entrepreneurship, urban and regional development, and geography (Korent et al., 2015; Matejovsky et al., 2014). Traditionally, studies are dominated by economic concerns such as how entrepreneurship is linked to growth, income and employment in metropolitan regions (Müller, 2016). Elsewhere, others have offered conceptual discussions on how the urban socio-spatial context and its structure affect possibilities, opportunities and challenges for entrepreneurship (Kibler et al., 2014; Welter, 2011). Influential empirical research that is solely focused on the small community context of the entrepreneurship debate is only emerging (Lorentzen and van Heur, 2012). Mkubukeli and Tengeh (2016) share that the lack of research is more pronounced in small mining communities where mining operations have rendered these regions as a single-based economy.

Over the last five decades, the global mining industry has undergone

significant changes, and has made regional development an increasingly important issue. The growing interest in regional development has resulted in more recent government interventions to ensure that a significant part of the economic benefits is retained in the region in which the revenue is generated (Erdiaw-Kwasie and Agyeampong, 2018; Söderholm and Svahn, 2015). The increasing acknowledgement of this concern has popularised the concept of benefit sharing in the mining industry – specifically focused on the distribution of the monetary and non-monetary benefits that are generated through the implementation of a mining project. Bocoum et al. (2012) explain that whereas the monetary benefits (e.g. development and investment funds, equity sharing and tax sharing with governments) are relevant, the non-monetary benefits, which include education facilities, medical facilities, employment goals, local procurement, training of staff and improved service access, are equally important.

Refocusing the benefit sharing debates within the framework of entrepreneurship, there is significant agreement amongst scholars on non-monetary factors being critical. Empirical evidence suggests that mining will typically have positive employment and entrepreneurial impacts, but the magnitude of these impacts can differ from modest to sometimes substantial, depending on the geographical scope of the assessment of impact as well as on other context-specific factors

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(Söderholm and Svahn, 2015; Moritz et al., 2017). For instance, with regard to entrepreneurial activities, although there is an increasing understanding that spatial contexts are heterogeneous and their characteristics and features provide different breeding grounds to create and nurture different entrepreneurial activity (Müller, 2016), the majority of such evidences are recorded in urban settings, focused more on the urban context of the debate (Bosma and Sternberg, 2014; Glaeser et al., 2015). In addition, the larger the region is, the more likely it is that it will have the capacity and the labour skills to capture the mining sector expenditures. The extent to which the inputs for the mining activities will be procured in the region will also be determined by the existing industrial structure, where more diversified regional economies will be better equipped to meet the new demands for goods and services (Corden, 2012; Ejdemo and Söderholm, 2015; Erdiaw-Kwasie et al., 2017).

More recently, relationships with the local community have become an increasingly important component of the mining industry's business strategy, arising from corporate social responsibility trends and pressures across the globe (Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2016; Erdiaw-Kwasie and Alam, 2017; Hilson et al., 2018; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013). To Söderholm and Svahn (2015), if mining cannot be a vehicle for regional development and job creation, community relations may become tense and lead to costly conflicts, as well as to other types of business risks for the companies. For this reason, there exists several international examples of how new mining projects have focused on contributing to the development of regional communities (Ejdemo and Söderholm, 2011; Erdiaw-Kwasie and Alam, 2017; Parra and Franks, 2011). Over the past decade, many regional areas globally have experienced unprecedented growth through the resources boom and the resultant increases in investment, employment and income opportunities. In Chile, for example, in the last two decades, regional mining areas like Tarapacá and Antofagasta have grown in terms of production, foreign investment, and world-class projects, and have experienced very important economic and social transformations (Lagos and Blanco, 2010). Similarly, in Australia, along with direct employment and investment in public infrastructure such as transport, water and power, there is an opportunity for downstream and lateral economic activity, particularly for small businesses, generating employment and income for non-miners (Ivanova, 2014; Weber-Fahr et al., 2001). However, recent concerns about the efficacy of support structures for, and success factors relevant to, local business opportunities in host communities have placed entrepreneurship issues on the development radar. Regrettably, although significant research studies have addressed diverse aspects of the entrepreneurial issue in the mining domain, attention has been focused on mining entrepreneurs (Hilson et al., 2018; Mkubukeli and Tengeh, 2016; Mutemeri et al., 2010).

Generally, the term local entrepreneurs refers to people who provide the base for the provision of non-mining and non-agricultural related services and goods to people resident in a town. In many mining communities, numerous entrepreneurs have little or no prior knowledge of the mining sector, but are usually involved in investing time, effort and money in various aspects of this sector, or its related services, for a share of the eventual profits (Mkubukeli and Tengeh, 2016; Opoku, 2018). For example, Afful-Koomson and Owusu Asubonteng (2015) in their study shared how, across mining regions, local entrepreneurs such as artisans produce locally made tools for replacement of worn-out equipment, trade in goods, as well as supply services essential for the upkeep of entire mining operations.

There is a growing awareness among practitioners that procurement from local SMEs can bring significant social and economic benefits to communities (Esteves and Barclay, 2011; Warner, 2011). Given the complexities associated with the operations of the mining industry, in terms of policies and procurement requirements, there is an increasing interest by several companies to adopt policies and standards aimed explicitly at increasing 'local procurement' or 'community content' (Warner, 2011). This practice recognises that supply chain participation

has benefits for companies and communities alike - giving communities a stake in the project, as well as ensuring reliability of supply by having a supplier located nearby. Nevertheless, some scholars suggest that local entrepreneurs in mining regions lack the capacity to take advantage of the opportunities that are available to them and this is reflected in the sluggish growth of entrepreneurship activities in such regions (Lyons, 2015; Romani et al., 2018; Sawyer et al., 2014). In particular, local procurement strategies by resource companies elicit a range of enablers and barriers for sourcing from small- and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, some authors identify attracting and retaining labour for local non-mining businesses in regional communities as a key challenge that undermines entrepreneurship initiatives in many resource regions. Fleming and Measham (2015) explain that during resource booms, a regional resource curse scenario can emerge in regions surrounding extractive industries, particularly from the labour demand shock that mining expansion produces in resource-rich regions as well as in neighbouring regions. To them, this labour demand shock initiated by the mining activity can be a huge source of a resource curse. For these reasons, government policies aimed at strengthening regional development are now more focused on delivering better services for communities, investing in infrastructure, and creating an enabling environment for local businesses to grow, adapt and prosper (Laukkanen and Tornikoski, 2018; Lee, 2018).

An Australian study on the social outcomes of the government-governance nexus in a regional mining community (Basson, 2016) revealed an unexpected sub-set of results on the relationship between local entrepreneurship and the government-governance nexus. This paper reports on these findings pertaining to local entrepreneurship. Basson (2016) describes Moranbah in Queensland, Australia, as an example of a small mining town that is characterised by a two-stream economy: the prosperous mining-employed stream, and the much less prosperous non-mining employed stream. Basson's (2016) study findings reveal that the non-mining employed stream in Moranbah is largely comprised of locals who are operating their own businesses and offering services to residents of the region. It is evident from the businesses established in town that the latter is largely dominated by entrepreneurs, especially in the form of small business owners rather than chain stores. In as much as the entrepreneurship stream in Moranbah offers a driving force to rebalance these two extremes of the current economy, the distinct prevalent conditions in the region pose threats that undermine the capacity of local entrepreneurs. In line with this reasoning, this paper presents empirical evidence of how the socio-spatial, economic, political and cultural environments in Moranbah has put its entrepreneurship stream under a siege.

The structure of the paper is as follows. The paper begins with an introductory section that provides a logical explanation of the research goal. The second section discusses the methodology of the study, with details of the sample and data sources, participants, interview questions and data analysis techniques described. The third section of the paper focuses on the presentation of study results. The fourth section captures the discussion and implication. The final part of the paper presents the conclusions of the study.

2. Study location and methodology

2.1. Study location

The case study town, Moranbah, is a small regional town located in the Isaac Regional Council (IRC) area of jurisdiction of the Bowen Basin, Central Queensland (Morrison et al., 2012), illustrated in Fig. 1. Moranbah, is located 150 km south-west of Mackay in a belt of coal mining towns and is the main service centre for the IRC area. The town was purpose-built by the Utah Development Company in 1970 to service the Goonyella and Peak Downs Mines (Ivanova et al., 2007). The IRC area of jurisdiction is extensive, roughly the size of Tasmania, and stretches inland from the coastal strip at St. Lawrence for approximately

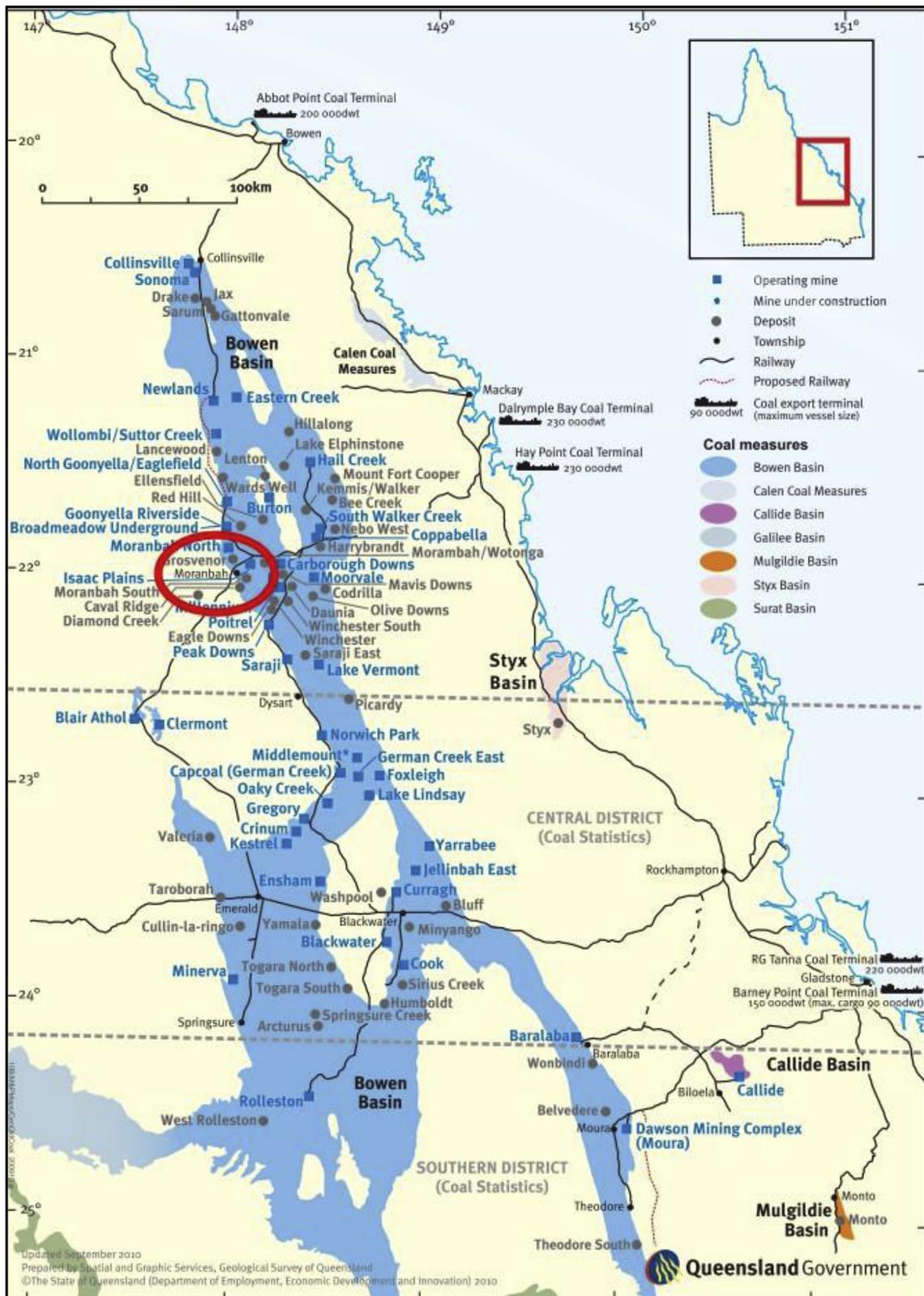


Fig. 1. Case study map. Adapted from *The Bowen Basin* by Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources and Mines (2014). Retrieved from https://mines.industry.qld.gov.au/assets/coal-pdf/cen_qld_coal_map_10.pdf. Copyright (2014) by Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

350 km.

The IRC is classified as an Urban Regional Town/City Small (urban/rural populations up to 30,000 people) under the Australian Classification of Local Government. In 2011, the IRC had 24,275

permanent residents plus 11,085 long-distance commuters who stayed in temporary accommodation. The full-time equivalent IRC population was estimated to be 35,845, of whom 8333 residents resided in Moranbah (ABS, 2011). The population of Queensland was 4.51 million

(ABS, 2011). The 2016 population figures were 20,940 permanent residents and 9445 temporary residents (FIFO and Drive-in-drive-out (DIDO)) (IRC, 2017). The median age of residents is 29, compared to 37 in Queensland (ABS, 2016), and linked to the mining dominant nature of economic activities in the IRC area of jurisdiction and the employment practices.

In 2012, the Bowen Basin produced all of Queensland's high-grade coal and 48% of the export-traded thermal coal (Fleming and Measham, 2015). By 2016, there were up to 24 mines in operation in the area surrounding Moranbah, producing 56% of Queensland saleable coal (IRC, 2017). As a result, the mining sector is the largest industry employer in the IRC region (Fleming and Measham, 2015). Compared to only 1.2% of full time workers being employed in coal mining in the rest of Queensland, 39.1% of the Moranbah population was employed in the coal mining sector. Full-time employment numbers were higher in Moranbah (66.9% of the population) than Queensland (57.7%) (IRC, 2017), leading to a lower part-time employment (20.7% of the population), compared to Queensland (29.9%) in 2016 (ABS, 2016).

The selection of Moranbah as a case study for the research on the social outcomes of the government-governance nexus in a resource community flowed from the severe housing stress experienced in Moranbah in 2010/2011.

Mining leases extend up to the boundaries of the town just outside the dust contours, land locking the town and contributing to a shortage of land for residential development (Basson and Basson, 2012). This shortage of developable land in Moranbah is argued to have contributed to some of the “fly-over effect” reported by other researchers such as Rolfe and O’Dea (2007). Although the 2010/2011 housing crises gave rise to the approval of two 100 % Fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) mines near Moranbah, this practice has recently been banned by the Queensland State Government under the *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act (2017)* (Queensland Government, 2018). Due to the extent of the mining activities in the region, Moranbah should not be assumed to be an economy dominated by FIFO and hence can be deemed to also represent some generic characteristics of a regional or rural mining town.

Housing in Moranbah was regarded as “the canary in the coal mine” (Morrison et al., 2012, p. 480) and the town became the focus of State Government intervention in 2010 due to this housing stress (Gurran and Whitehead, 2011; Riley and Basson, 2011). The Urban Land Development Authority (ULDA), created under the auspices of the Queensland State Government, was tasked with expedited development of affordable housing in Moranbah. The ULDA took over the role of assessment authority from the local government until the developed area was to be handed back to the local government (Riley and Basson, 2011). Moranbah was the most expensive place in Queensland to live during the last mining boom with the town holding the Queensland record for high mean mortgage repayments in 2011 (Queensland Government's Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2011). Rented dwellings make up 76.9% of tenure compared to 34.2% in the rest of Queensland (ABS, 2016).

A two-stream local economy was predominant at the time of the 2010 intervention (Basson and Basson, 2012), as well as before then (Rolfe and O’Dea, 2007) and since (Witt et al., 2018). The mining industry paid the highest wages in the country in 2012, with average take home earnings of \$2388.20, compared to sales workers (\$607), community and personal service workers (\$707), and labourers (\$779) (Heber, 2013). More recently in 2016, the median family income in Moranbah was \$2435 per week compared to \$1402 in Queensland and \$1438 in Australia (ABS, 2016). Resident mobility was high compared to the rest of Queensland (Queensland Government Statistician's Office, 2015), but in many cases those not employed in the mining industry were caught in a poverty trap (Basson and Basson, 2012) also evidenced in other mining communities in Australia (Lockie et al., 2009).

2.2. Study methods

The paper shares the fundamental understanding of entrepreneurship – exploring the how and why some individuals (or teams) identify opportunities, evaluate them as viable, and then decide to exploit them in product, firm, industry and wealth creation. Entrepreneurial opportunities exist because different agents have differing ideas on the relative value of resources. In line with the theory of the entrepreneur, which focuses on the heterogeneity of beliefs about the value of resources, the entrepreneurial function can be conceptualised as the discovery of opportunities and the subsequent creation of new economic activity in a region. We adopt this shared conceptual entrepreneurial function in defining the conceptual scope and the research design of the paper. In terms of the conceptual scope, we mainly focused on non-mining entrepreneurs (both individuals or teams) who provide some level and type of services to the locals and firms within the Moranbah community or those who own businesses (not a mining one) or provide services (both to local people and mining firms) within Moranbah as our unit of analysis. This explains why the research is primarily focused on non-mining entrepreneurs – individuals or teams who provide some level and type of services to the locals and firms within the Moranbah community. This was helpful in defining the contextual scope and the research design of the study.

2.2.1. Research design and sampling

This paper details a longitudinal case study carried out over a six-year period (2011–2017), consisting of two related studies. A qualitative research design was adopted. This research design underpins the humanistic focus of the paper and contributes to achieving a greater depth of understanding of the research issues. The collective and individual nature of humans was a key factor in the combined data collection methods used, namely questionnaires, mini-focus groups, individual interviews and a community workshop. The sampling strategy exercised was non-probability or purposive sampling, which is common in small-scale research, such as case studies (Somekh and Lewin, 2011). The aim of the sampling strategy was to get access to participants who were involved in entrepreneurial activities in Moranbah, and not only forward linkages of mining activities such as increases in motel patronage. The depth or richness of the data collected was more important than the breadth, and the focus was on the possible contributions individuals could make in terms of the issues embedded in the research topic (Bickman and Rog, 2008). The Isaac Regional Council (IRC) CEO facilitated the execution of the sampling strategy by appointing an IRC community liaison officer to assist with approaching the pilot project participants, as well as approaching possible participants on a list compiled by IRC officials, based on the selection criteria provided by the researcher. The community liaison officer was assisted by the Moranbah Traders’ Association (MTA) in the dissemination of details pertaining to possible participation in this study. The key stakeholder groups and the number of participants per data collection type are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2.

The sampling strategy enabled an iterative process of data collection, analysis, review and refinement, involving the key informants. During each phase, participants were given the opportunity to indicate their willingness to participate in the next phase, and to suggest other information-rich participants. Participants from the focus groups were purposively selected for the individual interviews based on their expertise and willingness to continue participation. Ethical issues were addressed throughout the research process, including permission to access the research site, and the use of the IRC Community Officer as the point of contact for potential participants.

2.2.2. Data collection and analysis

Primary data was collected on site by the researcher, ensuring extensive interaction with the participants. Data collection events took place in meeting rooms at the Moranbah Library and the Community

Table 1
Key stakeholder groups and the number of participants per data collection type – Study 1.

Key stakeholder groups	Number of participants in mini-focus groups	Number of participants in individual interviews
Isaac Regional Council officials	6	6
Elected representatives	3	3
Business owners and non-governmental organisations	11	11
Totals	20	20

Centre in town, as it provided a neutral and familiar context for the participants. After a pilot phase, the primary data in the first study was collected in two phases, namely questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Given that the questionnaire was custom-designed, a pre-test trial was necessary to confirm the estimated time it would take to complete the questionnaire, as well as to ascertain if there were any unnoticed ambiguities in the questions. The pre-test of the questionnaire took place during a pilot interview with a person who was representative of other stakeholders. The questionnaire contained a variety of question types such as multiple-choice questions, and dichotomous and open-ended questions. The data collected through the completion of the questionnaires was augmented through individual interviews that followed immediately after the completion of each questionnaire. In the second study, primary data was collected in four phases: during a preliminary mini-focus group, a set of mini-focus groups, individual interviews and a community workshop, as illustrated in Table 3.

The study researchers anticipated that mini-focus groups in Study 2 would provide the breadth of data to answer the research questions. The preliminary mini-focus group was used to confirm the focus and the suitability of the data collection plan. Phase Two consisted of five mini-focus groups. Seventeen information-rich participants were then selected purposively from the different participant categories in Phases One and Two to participate in individual interviews during Phase Three, which was based on the depth of knowledge on the research issues they revealed during the mini-focus groups. The interviews were intended to reveal the depth of data to understand the issues studied and questions were focused around the roles of the different stakeholder groups in Moranbah and the perceived contribution to the sustainability of the community. Phases One to Three provided the data needed to compile a set of initial findings that formed an important element during Phase Four. Phase Four consisted of a community workshop with participants from the focus groups and the individual interviews, but it also allowed for the inclusion of new participants. This workshop provided the opportunity for the participants to verify, dispute or expand the initial findings of the second study.

The data analyses for both studies were primarily done using Nvivo. The analysis framework preferred was a hermeneutic thematic analysis. Data collection and data analysis were done simultaneously to ensure flexibility of the data collection plan. Firstly, this provided the researcher with the opportunity to determine the saturation point of themes, and to focus on less illuminated themes in subsequent phases. Preliminary data analysis allowed the researcher to progressively

identify emerging themes (Yin, 2013). This analysis revealed the tendency amongst the participants to use a chronology for relating significant events, opinions, attitudes and beliefs. The data was prepared and organised, reviewed for coding, and categorised. Coding was both concept-driven and data-driven, and enabled examination of data from data excerpts, as well as an analysis of relationships between codes based on detecting hierarchies of codes; and case-by-case comparisons (Gibbs, 2007). The final stage, selective coding, was analytic and theoretical, and involved identifying the central coded phenomena whilst systematically relating the central code to other codes. The first cycle was thus grammatical, affective, and exploratory, whilst the second cycle was about classifying, integrating and conceptualising (Miles et al., 2013). The second cycle fed into the hermeneutic thematic analysis framework.

In summary, data was analysed using a hermeneutic thematic analysis approach. Data was perused for main concepts, constructs and themes that were then used as nodes in Nvivo to enable coding of all the data collected, as well as notes from the researcher's data collection journal. Tabulation, mind mapping, spread sheeting and descriptive statistics were used to verify the findings from the Nvivo analysis. For the analysis captured in this paper, respondents in each study were coded to facilitate the analysis process. In study 1, respondents in the interview session were coded M1R1, M1R2, M1R3,...M1R20. Alternatively, the participants in the mini-focus group discussion were coded M1FGP1, M1FGP2, M1FGP3...M1FGP20. Similarly, all the participants in study two's mini-focus groups were coded M2FGP1, M2FGP2, M2FGP3... M2FGP19, interview respondents were coded M2R1, M2R2, M2R3...M2R17 respectively. After the interviews, follow-up community workshops participants who helped to validate the findings from the previous sessions were coded as CWP1, CWP2, CWP3, CWP4...CWP15.

3. Study findings

The findings from the Moranbah case for this study is presented and discussed under two broad themes: (i) *the nature of the mining industry and local development*, and (ii) *perceptions on the status of entrepreneurship in the region*.

3.1. Mining situation and local development

As a result of the relative strength of the mining sector compared to other sectors, there is a two-stream economy in the community with

Table 2
Key stakeholder groups and the number of participants per data collection type (2014) – Study 2.

Key stakeholder groups	Number of participants in mini-focus groups	Number of participants in individual interviews	Number of participants in community workshop
Isaac Regional Council officials	5	3	3
Elected representatives	0	3	0
Residents	7	5	5
Business owners and non-governmental organisations	5	3	2
Mining company employees	1	1	1
Mining company liaison officers	1	2	4
Totals	19	17	15

Table 3
Key phases in data collection – Study 3.

Phase	Type	Duration	Number of events	Month (2014)
Phase 1	Preliminary mini-focus group	2 h	1	August
Phase 2	Mini-focus groups	2 h	5	September/October
Phase 3	Semi-structured individual interviews	1 h	17	November
Phase 4	Community workshop	2 h	1	December

mining employees being in the affluent stream and others in a less affluent stream (Basson and Basson, 2012). It is impossible for the entrepreneurs to compete with the mining sector in terms of salary and benefits provided to employees (Heber, 2013). This makes employment by local entrepreneurs a less attractive option, with many local businesses reporting that they were only open after school hours as their employees mainly consisted of school age children. For those employing adults, the two-stream economy posed constraints in terms of non-mining employees being unable to afford housing due to the inflation of housing costs because of the affluence of the mining employees. The ABS (2017) report that the number of businesses employing between 1 and 4 employees has decreased from 128 in 2012 to 98 in 2015, while the number of businesses employing between 5 and 19 and more than 20 employees has increased slightly.

Mining employees are more mobile than the rest of the population due to both internal and external factors. In this case, and at the time of these studies, external factors included the broader economic climate and the growth in the mining industry (Atkinson and Hargreaves, 2014). If spouses or partners of mining workers were employed in the business sector, this resulted in a high staff turnover due to this mobility. This employment situation, due to the lack of employees available and to the high turnover of staff who were willing to work in the non-mining industry, but whose spouses or partners were mining employees, resulted in many entrepreneurs doing most of the tasks in their businesses themselves at a great personal cost to their own work-life balances, both where many invest extra hours in doing tasks that could be more economically beneficial to outsource. The boom and bust cycles in the mining industry exacerbate this situation, but boom periods also enticed business owners with a strong profit motive into the community. Study participants confirmed the introduction of a local initiative by a mining company aimed at offering support to traders. The empowering effects of this initiative was largely emphasised during the study by the traders and some government officials. Study respondents indicated that:

“We gave the Moranbah Traders Association some money to employ a part time growth and resilience officer to help build this thing called an e-business directory, which is increasing local business exposure to mining companies” [M2R1].

“This initiative was a great thing. It actually helped to draw the dots together” [M2R2].

Study findings showed that the current business model of the mining companies affected the entrepreneurs and their businesses in a more insidious way. Although some of the mining companies had buy-local initiatives, there were many instances where goods and services were sourced from outside the community and even outside the Central Queensland region. Several of the study respondents showed their discontent about such a business model and shared the need to retain a stable core of entrepreneurs in the community.

“Mining companies enter our communities through their local buy project which makes many to see it as an good example of mining companies working together to build a more sustainable Moranbah...but usually do not live up to expectation” [M2R9].

“Existing mining firms hardly contract local suppliers like us for their needs. They have big companies in the big cities they directly deal

with...”[M2R11]

Adding to this, some local government participants stated that this was particularly true for the accommodation model employed by the mining companies. In the past, mining companies provided highly affordable company housing, but during the 1980s with changes in tax legislation, mining towns “became normalised” - meaning that property were sold to private owners and local governments assumed jurisdiction (Marais et al., 2018). In the recent past, outside service-providers have been providing accommodation villages or mining accommodation. Most of these accommodation providers have contracts with service and goods providers from outside the community and the region. In addition, the mines have strict rules about workers staying in these villages and bussing them straight to the airport to fly out at the end of their shifts. This fly-in-fly-out workforce arrangement impacts greatly on money spent in the local community. Many of the study participants shared their frustrations and argued that community resources are siphoned by mineworkers and rather spent in large cities outside the host community.

“Mines prefer off-site accommodation. They don't want to invest that level in town. Camp is the safest option. They get a contractor that carries the risk. That is wrong. They should provide the means to employees so that they can purchase a house and live in town for forty years” [M1FGP1].

“But they've got a house somewhere else. So on their days off, they leave.” [M2R7].

“If we could keep our local traders, but that's the thing, you've got to buy local. If you live here you must buy local but then the traders need to be providing an appropriate service too and then the industry in the town also needs to support those local businesses.” [M2R8].

“Where's home?” They don't say Moranbah, they say oh, Mackay, or Mt Morgan or Rocky or Brisbane...” [M1R7].

To many respondents, this consumption pattern has remained a key challenge to the economic base of the region, particularly when considering internally generated revenue from local consumption. It became evident that although surrounding towns and cities get the chance to benefit the resources of the region, such spending trends undermine local initiatives. This consequently leads to many local entrepreneurs being more hesitant to expand their businesses in the region.

However, participants reported that when upward mining commodity cycles started declining, many of these traders disappeared from the community, either to pursue opportunities that were more lucrative elsewhere or because of the demise of their businesses. This was perceived to be linked to the “gold fever” mentality during boom periods. A significant number of the study participants emphasised their fear of their town losing all well-known businesses in the community. Some respondents also stressed how local businesses had remained the backbone of the Moranbah region, as it provided lifeblood to the entire mining industry as well as providing for the basic needs of the local residents. This aspect of the argument was reiterated during the focus group discussions. To the focus group participants, the mining boom times brought improvements into the Moranbah town in terms of a greater threshold population for businesses as well as emergence of new businesses. However, the business models adopted by the mining

industry posed huge threats to many local initiatives, and this forced many local entrepreneurs to look beyond their community for external customers.

“They come, they do their time, they get established, they make good money and then they bugger off” [M1R3].

“...local businesses were too focused on the here and now...” [CW1].

“...Many of the locals who owned businesses and enjoyed over good 5 years of business have moved on... I think a lot of them have just had enough of the mining pressure” [M2FGP2].

3.2. Perceptions on the status of entrepreneurship in the region

The second set of themes relates to the lack of status or standing of entrepreneurship in the community. The disregard for local business or entrepreneurship includes the State Government, Local Government officials and Local Government elected representatives. A significant number of the study participants perceived collaboration by the State Government as a box-ticking exercise rather than true collaboration. The traders reported some contact with elected representatives and very little contact with Local Government officials. The focus of the mayor was on the primary sector, mining, rather than on the businesses in the secondary sector. In addition, despite efforts to convey to the Local Government the obstacles the traders faced, there was almost no willingness by the Local Government to make any concessions in terms of taxation and land use decisions to support the traders.

“... all what the local government values is the primary industry...any other business is secondary” [M2FGP1]

“I think they're [local government is] too ready to accept the mining company's interpretation of what they need rather than what the community needs” [M1R7].

“Local government make no concessions to local businesses in terms of rates or planning regulations” [M2R3]

“We approached the council, they were to partner us in that [training facility]. They were quite reluctant... I sort of cajoled them a bit they said, they would make available a block of land to us that we could buy, and they would give us a slightly discounted rate ...” [M1R3].

The collaboration between the traders and the mining industry was a fledgling attempt and many locals who operated a business in the region did not feel as if they had true advantage to influence either the mining industry or the State Government. During the study, many participants shared the opinion that any partnership between a local organisation and the mining companies is best described as ‘no partnership’. To them, mining officials dominate this kind of partnership, and final decisions always reflect the greater interests of the mine and its shareholders than local people. At the focus group discussion, some participants used an example of the local entrepreneurship group – MTA, and explained how the mining officials showcase support for local initiatives through meetings with the MTA, but always end up doing what favours them. This attitude from the mining companies had resulted in many local entrepreneurs losing interest in any collaboration with the mining companies on ways to strengthen local initiatives.

“I think the people that work in the businesses here are pretty friendly. Um... there is a little bit of a ‘them’ and ‘us’ with [mining company].” [M1R3].

“I think they are... I think they [mining companies] ... turn a blind eye to it because they... don't know the solution either [to the issues facing the other entrepreneurs]” [M1R1].

It doesn't matter if it's the corner shop down here. They're [mining companies] all the same. You just need to treat people with a little bit more respect and I'm afraid in today's society respect is not there

anymore. It's just a bull nose, let's [mining companies] keep going [M2R4].

In addition, it became evident that pressure exerted by community-based organisations such as the Moranbah Action Group, to some extent did influence the decisions taken by Council. However, many participants acknowledged that few of their concerns resulted in Council actions, especially when dealing with issues that concerned the mining companies. To some study participants, the council perceived the actions and operations of the local community group as much more vocal and “militant” than that of the MTA. This resulted in a disconnect between the traders and the community group, despite the perception expressed in the focus groups that the traders needed the community to succeed in this mining-dominated environment, where decision-makers such as Local Government and State Government were perceived to often prioritise anything mining-related over local community needs.

“(Action Group) are blaming Council ... Council actually fostered the Action Group... but it started to wind up and hit [Council], blaming [them] for things beyond [their] control.” [M1R4].

“[Community participation is] reflective of the structure of the community – if you don't touch their pockets they don't care what happens” [M1FGP1].

“...you don't just come to Moranbah and buy a business that is not mining related without realising that you need the community... and traders really – it's a risk that they are taking to be running a business that is not mining connected” [M1R5].

One key issue that emerged from the focus group sessions was a traditional mindset carried by Local Government and the mining companies that local entrepreneurs were more cognisant of economic security given their substantial investments than actual community wellbeing. This stands in direct contrast with the opinions of the traders and other participants groups that the traders were actually the group most concerned with the overall sustainability of the community. A significant number of the study participants shared their fear about the economic sustainability of the community. Some of them also had a well-expressed fear and a sense of hopelessness about the future, particularly considering their huge financial and time investment in their businesses, and the many operational struggles of running their businesses, such as attracting and retaining staff. Many study participants who owned businesses within the community shared their struggle of attracting and retaining employees due to the prevailing situation, including the superior attractiveness of mining related employment, the housing issues that resulted from the two-stream economy and the mobility of staff with partners employed in the mining industry.

“A lot of fear around at the moment... Fear because there are not any options anymore, if you want to work for mining you basically have to dissociate yourself from your family” [M1R9].

“I feel that... if the left hand doesn't speak to the right hand or the council doesn't communicate with the community and every... every person who's standing up on their soapbox at the moment, including the Action Group and the Moranbah Traders and taking all of those things into consideration, we could very well end up like some of the other industrial towns in ...” [M1R5].

“Yeah, I mean I'm, I'm also worried about the long-term future. I've invested, I've invested all the money I have, plus a big bank loan in this town basically, um. And I don't own a house here, I rent, if it keeps going up then, what am I going to do?” [M1R6].

“...I think the big barrier [to entrepreneurship] is just attracting non-mine workers to the town and... without that it's hard to really get the ball rolling” [M1R6].

The study data showed how local entrepreneurs had concerns about retaining Moranbah businesses into the future and pondered how to

enable and entice businesses to remain in town. There were, however, some concerns about new business owners not being cognisant of the demands of operating in a mining-dominated community. Many of study participants stressed the importance of leadership in efforts towards strengthening local entrepreneurship within the Moranbah area. To some participants, as long as there were leaders in the community who were willing to take up responsibility for fostering collaboration, communication and education around entrepreneurship, there would be improvement in the future.

“So great, fresh blood, but they are not knowledgeable around the highs and lows and they come in and - but this includes businesses that have started up during the boom time as well” [M2R7].

“Um... I, I've been involved in, in the Traders Association which helps and gets a look at, at, at most of the development plans and um we get fairly good access to council and councillors. Um... you know I do a lot of reading of what is going on and different things and, and, and attend meetings with other residents [M1R1].

“So a good opportunity for them to take a lot of money and leave. It might not be a bad thing. It might allow for smaller business, who may be more nimble and agile, to come and fill those gaps” [M2R5].

4. Discussion and implications

Given the MTA's extensive network of relationships, including State Government, Local Government, traders' organisations in adjoining regional council areas, and mining companies, it is commonly acknowledged as the central mouthpiece of the entrepreneurship system in the Moranbah region. In fact, the MTA emerged as a potential catalyst to recreate the space to advocate for local entrepreneurship within the region. However, study evidence indicates that the current status of the association undermines its capacity to promote entrepreneurial activities within the region. This study found that although MTA involvement in community issues, including social wellbeing and local business resilience, had increased, the organisation has limited abilities to effect changes in government decisions, particularly ones that relate to local entrepreneurship empowerment. For instance, in Moranbah, entrepreneurship is popularly presented as an individually focused economic undertaking and such a culture and notion undermine the socio-political value of entrepreneurial activities. The current situation hinders most local business operators from keeping a watchful eye on, and contributing to, any political developments such as new legislation or regulatory shifts in the region, which could have a substantial impact on the fate of locally-owned businesses. MTA representatives further explained that the narrow perception of entrepreneurship by government officials pose challenges, which render the role of local entrepreneurship system in the decision-making process of the Local Government almost totally absent.

Although some aspects of the MTA actions were reported to have had a significant impact on the Council and its attitude towards the State Government and the mining companies' response to community needs, the entrepreneurship stream of the local economy was impacted less. The role played by the local entrepreneurship system in the decision-making process of the Local Government appeared to be almost totally absent. This research is different from some previous studies on regional entrepreneurship in that it has appraised the extent of pressure on the entrepreneurship system in a small mining town in regional Australia, but it also supports earlier argument that challenges of local entrepreneurs remains a major hurdle for regional development efforts across the globe (Barca et al., 2012; Fritsch, 2008; KritiKoS, 2014).

Given the impact of the interventionist approach of the State and the demise of demos in the Moranbah region, study evidence showed how the current multi-level governance system hugely undermine entrepreneurial activities. The credibility of the Local Government's commitment to quality civil service, the degree of its independence

from political pressures, as well as the quality of small-scale business policy formulation and implementation, constitute a building block for a region's entrepreneurial activities. The elements of the entrepreneurial system within the Moranbah region were, however, not part of the larger local governance system. Perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies varied. As a result, there was little evidence of ongoing collaboration between local entrepreneurs and other powerful actors within the region. For example, business owners in Moranbah operate within legal constraints, and do not have the political motives to affect attempts towards changing the use of power by higher levels of government. A lack of an effective synchronisation approach to link entrepreneurial priorities into the overall governance system poses challenges of different magnitudes to the local entrepreneurship groups, particularly in performing their assumed roles in the entire development process of their community. Findings support the conventional wisdom that good governance (trust in government effectiveness, political stability, and voice in government affairs) fosters willingness among locals to take risks associated with investing, starting and managing new businesses (Friedman, 2011; Méndez-Picazo et al., 2012). Although study findings showed that the role played by local entrepreneurship groups is much more based on economic sustainability for their significant investment, they showed an equal understanding of the need for building a more inclusive governance system where they can obtain support and recognition for their efforts in the community. Study findings contribute to enhancing knowledge on resolving the conundrum of the governance-entrepreneurship nexus, which remains an important area of policy research and discussion in recent years (Carroll, 2017; Ha et al., 2016; Méndez-Picazo et al., 2012).

Despite the general acknowledgement of the impact of the mining sector on the local economy, the current business model of the mining industry within the Moranbah region poses considerable threats to the entrepreneurship base within the region. Local entrepreneurs are virtually absent from the benefit sharing initiated by the mining companies. Although local entrepreneurs have shown significant willingness to collaborate with other internal stakeholders such as mining companies and the Council, prevailing conditions have rendered such collaborative efforts less fruitful. This research acknowledges that mining companies have moral responsibilities for designing, promoting, innovating and implementing community development initiatives – as documented in previous studies that mining companies mainly supported community clubs, organisations and local government endeavours (Erdiaw-Kwasie and Alam, 2017; Lodhia, 2018). However, the direction taken by the mining industry in terms of its accommodation and workforce model has continuously undermined local entrepreneurial initiatives, thus worsening the socio-economic plights of resource regions. Attracting skilled staff for local businesses with Australian remote conditions has not been made easier with the presence of mining companies operating in such regions. Generally, mining industries provide relatively high wages and a range of rental and home purchase assistance to their commuting workers. However, the real concern should be the impact the housing shortage had on the people providing essential goods and services and not earning mining wages. Policy attention on the attraction and retention of staff to the entrepreneurship stream of local economy is therefore deemed critical if it is to remain vibrant and self-sufficient, and hence able to sustain itself into the future. This finding resonates with the perception in regions with a high proportion of long-distance commuters that metropolitan Australia (where company headquarters are typically based) regards the region as a resource bank rather than supporting local initiatives to developing its economic base (De Silva et al., 2011; Rolfe and Kinnear, 2013).

5. Conclusion

Scholars commonly acknowledge that entrepreneurial activity is an important driving force for facilitating economic development, but most of studies have focused on the role of entrepreneurship in urban contexts. Empirical research focused on entrepreneurship in the small regional or rural community context is only emerging.

In this paper, we detailed a longitudinal case study consisting of two sub-studies. The case selected was Moranbah in Queensland, Australia. It is a small mining town characterised by a two-stream economy: a prosperous mining-employed stream and a less prosperous non-mining employed stream. A combination of data collection methods was used to reflect both the individual and the collective nature of humanity. The methods included questionnaires, mini-focus groups, individual interviews and a community workshop. The sampling strategy exercised was non-probability or purposive sampling, which is common in small-scale research, such as case studies. The primary data management tool used was Nvivo and the analysis framework for both studies was hermeneutic thematic analysis.

Findings from the study were presented and discussed under two broad themes: (i) *the nature of the mining industry and local development, and (ii) perceptions on the status of entrepreneurship in the region*. The nature of the mining industry was evident from the dominant role it plays in the economy and governance in the community and the region. The economic prosperity of the mining sector employees contributed to the two-stream economy observed in the community. The dominance of the mining sector and the mining companies was also evident in the impact it had on State Government and Local Government decision-making processes. The business practices of the mining sector were evident in its procurement practices and the provision of accommodation for its workers by independent accommodation companies. These practices reflected the mining sector's risk aversion and its perceived lack of concern for the local economy and the local residents not employed in the mining sector. This perception existed despite some community projects initiated by the mining companies. These were perceived by most of the participants to be tokenistic and more aligned with global corporate social responsibility practices.

The obstacles that the local non-mining entrepreneurs faced, apart from those evident in the preceding paragraph, included the boom and bust cycles in the mining industry, a lack of collaboration and the nature of entrepreneurs themselves. The cycles in the mining sector result in the waxing and waning of the population and the spending power in the community. It also contributes to the shortage of affordable housing during boom times because of the prosperity of the mining employees. Entrepreneurs experience staff shortages due to the attractiveness of mining employment and the mobility of staff with spouses employed by the mining sector. In terms of the nature of entrepreneurs themselves, there is a lack of understanding of the nature of entrepreneurship in a mining-dominated community and a strong profit-seeking motive in some of the incoming or emerging entrepreneurs. The lack of status experienced by entrepreneurs impact on their power to exert influence on both Local Government and the State Government and their ability to foster collaboration with other stakeholders in the community. These obstacles resulted in fear about the future and a sense of hopelessness, although the entrepreneurs were perceived to be the group with the most significant economic investment in the community and the greatest desire for a sustainable community. The three key threats to entrepreneurship in Moranbah were thus the nature of the relationship with Government, the lack of status of local entrepreneurs, and the current business model of the mining industry.

In conclusion, this paper presents empirical evidence of how the socio-spatial, economic, political and cultural environments in Moranbah put entrepreneurship under siege. Despite evidence that entrepreneurship in Moranbah offers a potential force to rebalance the two-stream economy, the conditions in the region undermine the capacity of local entrepreneurs to contribute significantly to the

sustainability of the community. These results have potential implications for current and future discussions around regional development policies within the framework of entrepreneurship and specifically so in a regional or rural mining context and as such makes an original contribution to the international rural science social science literature.

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Stakeholder perceptions of the impact of Urban Development Area in Moranbah

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Abstract

Moranbah is a rural mining town experiencing severe housing stress. In an effort to expedite the delivery of affordable housing, the Queensland State Government declared 1218 hectares of Moranbah, Queensland as an Urban Development Area in July 2010. Urban Development Areas declared elsewhere have not been met with enthusiasm by all, with accusations of a creep towards state dominance in planning. The nature of power and politics in modern day society needs to be considered to understand these accusations. Governance has replaced government and dictates community participation, but community consultation does not always produce sustainable planning outcomes. Concrete outcomes need to be identified to evaluate the success of community participation programs. This paper addresses the apparent gap in town planning literature as to whether or not State intervention in rural resource towns, such as Moranbah, would lead to sustainable planning outcomes. It provides not only evidence from the literature, but also stakeholder data to argue the case against indiscriminate State intervention.

Introduction

'... it's a funny place, it really is a bit of an oasis in the middle of nowhere and you don't realise it till you come here and have a look at the place. I mean, everybody says before they come here they think it's just going to be this little tiny mining town with nothing...' (Andy).

Moranbah is a modern rural mining town, one of the three Utah Development Company coal towns established in northern Queensland alongside Blackwater and Dysart in 1973 (Freestone, 2010). It has been experiencing housing problems such as high costs, limited supplies, variable standards and a mismatch between housing types and needs (Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2009). Isaac Regional Council (IRC) approached the State Government for assistance (Urban Land Development Authority, 2010a) and as a result 1218 hectares of land in Moranbah was declared an Urban Development Area (UDA) in July 2010 (Urban Land Development Authority, 2010b). There are no legislative criteria for the nomination of a site to be declared a UDA, although sites are typically in high growth areas experiencing housing pressures (Urban Land Development Authority, 2008).

The problems in Moranbah are typical of those in several other rural resource towns in Queensland where Local Governments are battling to provide an adequate supply of affordable housing (Urban

Land Development Authority, 2010c), and dealing with the resultant employment and social problems. The establishment of the *Urban Land Development Authority (ULDA)*, under the *Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007* was a Queensland State Government effort to address these problems. The ULDA serves as vehicle for the expedited delivery of affordable housing through the process of declaration of Urban Development Areas (UDAs) in identified problem areas. The ULDA effectively takes over the role of assessment authority from the local government, as well as the role of developer until such time as the developed UDA is handed back to the local government.

There has been a mixed reaction to the ULDA since its inception. Regional councils of resource communities have, in general, welcomed the ULDA, whereas in urban areas it has generally been viewed as interventionist (Local Government Association of Queensland LTD., 2010). Some view it as a transgression of the rights of government: the ULDA is less constrained in executing its powers than the State, or any State Agencies, since it is not bound by the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (HopgoodGamin Lawyers, 2010). Attention has also been drawn to the way the ULDA came into existence: the *Urban Land Authority Act of 2007* was 'quietly' put through Queensland Parliament (Wilson, 2008). A group of Queensland mayors has accused the Queensland Government of grabbing control of planning through the ULDA; a 'powerful, unaccountable and unelected authority' (Tully, 2010, p. 1). Previous Brisbane Lord Mayor Campbell Newman claimed that the ULDA is a 'power grab' by the State Government (Wilson, 2008, p. 1). It has been described as being a 'backward step for sustainability' due to the influence big developers can exert over the State Government, while the community has no say in the declaration of the UDA and no appeal rights (Tully, 2010, p. 1). Based on certain changes in recent legislation, including the establishment of the ULDA, the Queensland Government has been accused of a gradual creep towards state domination in planning (HopgoodGamin Lawyers, 2010).

Background

The first issue that comes to mind when considering the background against which the establishment and activities of the ULDA took place, is the nature of power and politics in modern day society. Power and politics have transcended formal democracy to other forms, thereby promoting the concepts of liveability and environmental sustainability (Gualini, 2010). 'Governance' has replaced 'government' in

Impact of the declaration of an Small town – how sustainable will the outcomes be?

society through a less hierarchical structure where command has been replaced by co-operation (Gualini, 2010; Healy, 2010), and where people tend to only accept or abide by Government action or policy when they have sound reasons to do so (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003). Good governance is reflected in clear outcomes, which brings about trust and common goals (Sanoff, 2000; Verma, 2010), but it also requires the transformation of government structures and processes since bureaucracy hampers participatory development (McGrath, Armstrong, & Marinova, 2004). This current viewpoint has led to the burgeoning of stakeholder groups and a focus on planning of citizen participation (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003) where the emergent policy structures are open to much higher levels of scrutiny by stakeholders and citizens (McGrath, Armstrong & Marinova, 2004). In spite of these changes in societal views, the authors argue that there are still remnants of bureaucratic paternalism evident in planning policy and systems in Queensland, paternalism being defined as an action that is taken with the intention of benefitting the individual or group, but without their informed consent (Karlsson & Nilholm, 2006).

It is clear that planning systems and outcomes reflect the dynamics between planning, power and politics (Healy, 2010). In the 1970s it was argued that planning systems and practices are a tool of the state, and decision-making power was thus in the hands of the economic elite (Healy, 2010). Currently, a new and transformational role for planning has emerged in response to calls made by the United Nations, the World Bank, scholars and the World Planners Congress (Young, 2008). This new rights-based approach (Murray, Tshabangu, & Erlank, 2010) to participation in the planning process holds that citizens are entitled to be active participants in the quest for finding solutions to problems that affect them. It is acknowledged that the specific culture of a community should serve as the basis for planning, and that the utilisation of local knowledge is a pre-requisite for sound 'planning outcomes' (Young, 2008). In Australia, this more participatory approach has been hampered by the existence of bureaucratic silos (Head, 2007), impacting on the sustainability of planning outcomes.

The philosophical question underlying the concept 'sustainable' is how social and equity goals can be balanced with economic and environmental goals (Grant, 2007; Pears, 2007). The concept of 'sustainability' cannot be defined exactly due to the complex and unpredictable ways in which social, ecological and economic objectives interact (Grant, 2007). In addition, humans have the ability to both

increase and decrease sustainability, and the same methods that in the past have produced unsustainable outcomes, cannot be used today. A second problem pertaining to 'sustainability' is that there is no clear-cut way to achieve it. Constant technological advances and changes occur, necessitating the ongoing identification and consideration of new alternatives (Pears, 2007). This makes it difficult to determine when the goal of sustainable development has actually been achieved. The implication is that planning policies will need to be flexible and allow for innovation if they are to be effective tools in the quest to achieve sustainability, and that current planning methods need to be inclusive and capable of dealing with ambiguities (Pears, 2007). The ULDA (2008) acknowledges the fact that 'sustainability' includes the aim of 'social sustainability' which is to enhance social interaction, protect vulnerable sections of the community, respect diversity in the community and build social capital. Since 'sustainability' is time and place specific, local social, economic and environmental context is a critical factor (Beder, 1996; Pini & McKenzie, 2006)

The local context in small towns differs substantially from those in big cities and unique challenges and opportunities are presented to the authorities involved in planning in small towns (Sanoff, 2000). In situations where external policies and regulations (as is the case here) determine the management of resources in rural towns, it is important that these areas not be undermined, as there are clear links between the quality of food, water, the environment and rural sustainability (Rogers & Jones, 2006). Especially in the case of external intervention, the role of Local Governments in rural towns should be acknowledged, since generalised bodies of authority (such as the ULDA) with no stake in the partnership presents a significant barrier to success (Griffin & Curtin, 2007).

The question can then be asked what do legitimate town planning outcomes mean at the Local Government level, where all these policies, programs and initiatives 'come together and get enacted' (Verma, 2010, p. 399). Local Governments play an important role in the sustainability of small towns due to their geographical and relation proximity to the community (Martin, 2006) and they are crucial members of any development partnerships (Griffin & Curtin, 2007). In addition, they are more likely to effectively and efficiently involve communities in sustainable practices and approaches (Whelan, 2007). The term 'community' is 'synonymous with the very essence of planning' (Campbell, 2005, p. 517). Reorienting society towards sustainability requires new skills that Local Governments need to transfer to communities

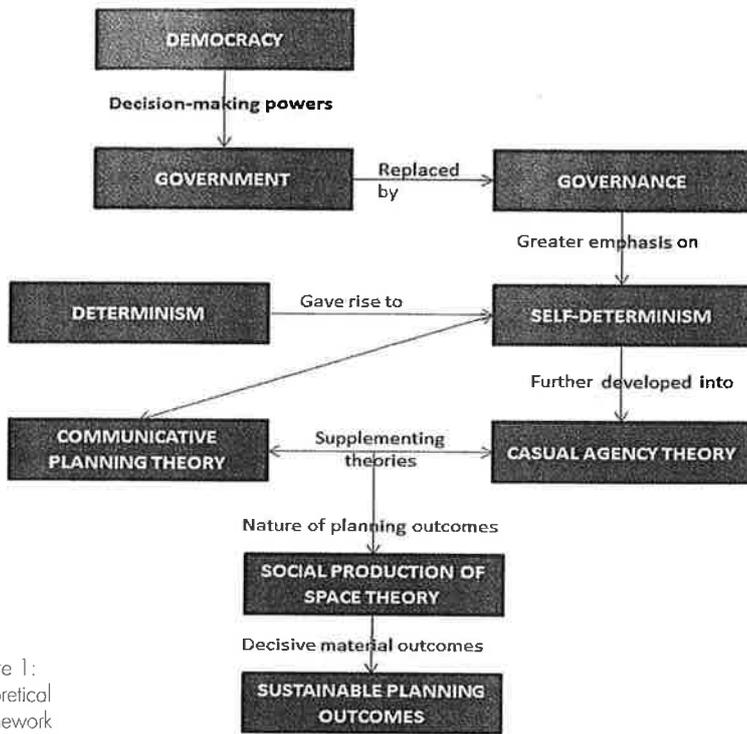


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

(Tilbury & Wortman, 2008). Sustainability education, resource management and community action are activities that Local Governments should embrace (Potts, Merson, & Kachka, 2007) to achieve a sustainable community where people are empowered with shared responsibility (Rogers & Jones, 2006).

An advantage of community participation and involvement is that it relays to any participant that the relevant authority has concerns for his/her wellbeing (Sanoff, 2000). Social capital is built due to an improved public spirit, financial improvement and a better maintained physical environment (Sanoff, 2000) but demands early inclusion since it encourages consensus to emerge amongst the stakeholders, and ensures active participation and sustained involvement (Brownhill, 2009). At the same time, participation should be a culture and not an ad hoc approach to individual projects (Murray, et al., 2010). Collaborative processes should not be regarded as a magic solution. Thus far white, educated middle class groups have tended to be over-represented in participative processes (Gualini, 2010) and representation on behalf of residents has not always delivered desired outcomes (Gualini, 2010). The measures of community participation success (or 'sustainable planning outcomes') are reaching agreements that are in the interest of the public, the utilisation of a superior planning process and enhanced social capital construction (Cullen, Gordon, Gunton, & Day, 2010).

Research question

This research project aimed to provide an answer to the question of whether the declaration of the Moranbah UDA would lead to sustainable planning outcomes. It also endeavoured to establish if there was proof in current literature of a link between certain levels, and the timing of stakeholder participation, and sustainable planning outcomes.

Theoretical frameworks

Theoretical concepts that were relevant to this research included 'Self-determination theory', 'Causal agency Theory', and more briefly 'Social Production of Space Theory' and 'Communicative Planning Theory'. Figure 1 depicts the theoretical framework.

Democracy is underpinned by the assumption that typical citizens have a right, and are qualified, to govern themselves and their communities (Karlsson & Nilholm, 2006). Main stream sociology has strong influences on planning theory, also in the area of stakeholder participation (Watson, 2008). The right to determine group and personal outcomes is described by 'Self-determination Theory' which emerged from the philosophical doctrine of determinism. Determinism posits 'that events, in this context human behaviour and actions, are effects of preceding causes' (Wehmeyer, 2004, p.260). Clements (2004, p. 60) defines the term self-determination as 'The ability of people's to name, create and control their own history... (here) the 'self' of self-determination refers to groups of people'.

The authors argue here that this theoretical framework can be applied to stakeholder participation and involvement in town planning but the question should be asked whether it holds true if there are still strong paternalistic overtones in the approaches of state, local government and other governmental bodies. Research on self-determination has highlighted the significance of environments and situations that provide decision-makers the opportunity to support community autonomy, which leads to high levels of self-determination and more adaptive cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes (Vallerand & Pelletier, 2008). The prevailing culture and characteristics of the context in which individuals or communities find themselves play an important part in motivation (Vallerand & Pelletier, 2008) and can be seen in the image that the group ascribes to themselves. This image can be an obstacle to community development, especially if the community or parts thereof deem themselves to be victimised or oppressed (Clements, 2004). Added to that is the fact that group motivation can change over time, which has an important impact on how people achieve more adaptive outcomes and a more meaningful life situation during different stages of a process (Vallerand & Pelletier, 2008). Decisions need to be made by the people most affected by the outcome, and communities need to retain and maintain the maximum possible control over what happens in their communities (Clements, 2004).

'Causal Agency Theory' expands on self-determination theory by explaining how people and groups can become more self-determined (Wehmeyer, 2004, p. 351). 'Causal' refers to the interaction of cause and effect; 'causal action/behaviour' to 'action or behaviour that is purposeful, planned and intentional' (Wehmeyer, 2004, p. 353). 'Capability' refers to the capacity of the different stakeholder groups and 'challenge' refers to

the specific event or conditions that require a group to address a problem or threat (Wehmeyer, 2004, p. 353). To this a third dimension is added, that of *Causal Affect* which refers to the emotions that regulate human behaviour (Wehmeyer, 2004).

An additional theoretical dimension relevant in this research project pertains to sustainable planning outcomes can be determined or measured. Lefebvre's (2009) theory of the *Social Production of Space* emphasises that decisive, concrete or material outcomes are necessary to measure the effectiveness of stakeholder consultation processes. Outcomes need to be defined in terms of the following: place specificity, face-to-face relationship between planners and stakeholders, period of time, mutual responsibility and social learning, relationship between knowledge and action, and prevalence in all stages of planning, from pre-project to post-project (Carp, 2004).

Communicative Planning Theory is an emerging post-modern paradigm aimed at social justice and environmental sustainability (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). It is argued that the problems arising from democracy can be solved through argument (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002), resulting in a case for transformative argument rather than the dominance based on numbers found in democracy. It is relevant in this situation where planning decisions are made by democratically elected members of government at two levels, namely the state and local government level. Communicative planning theory 'aims to replace scientific and technical information as the source of planners' decisions with public deliberation, democratic debate and local knowledge' in effect resisting dominance and creep by the formal economy and government (Watson, 2008, p. 227).

Methodology

This paper is the synthesis of a largely qualitative research project that included a comprehensive review of current literature on stakeholder consultation, sustainable planning outcomes and governance; and the data collected during twenty face-to-face interviews supplemented by data collected through the use of questionnaires completed by the twenty interviewees.

The population or the target group about whom we wanted to develop knowledge (Punch, 2006) was Councillors, Council Officials, business owners and representatives from community organisations. Purposive sampling was used to sample deliberately (Punch, 2006) according to the logic of the research. Primary data was collected on site through elite interviews and self-administered questionnaires from key stakeholders representing several major stakeholder groups.

The aim with the data collection was to achieve depth or richness of the data. Validity and reliability were addressed during the design and execution of the research: the richness of the data, different question types in the questionnaires, quasi-statistics, investigation

Best interests of Moranbah residents at heart

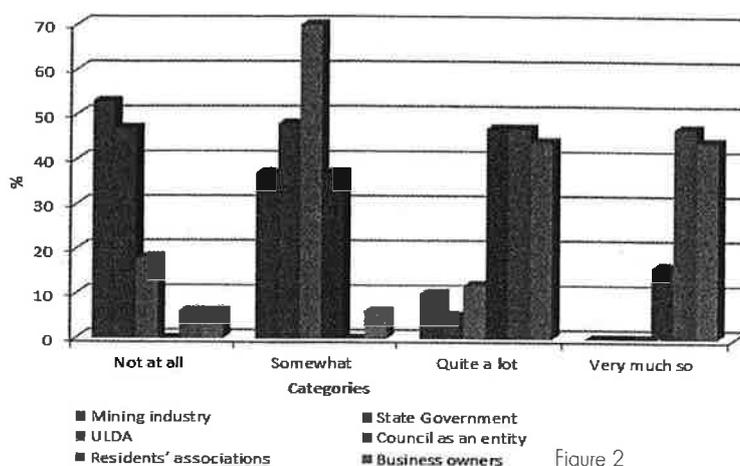


Figure 2

of discrepant evidence and the use of Nvivo9 to confirm the initial themes or categories observed.

Major findings

There is clear evidence in the literature of a link between successful stakeholder consultation processes and sustainable planning outcomes. The major findings of this research project are based on weighing the results of the data analysis against the criteria for effective stakeholder consultation and sustainable planning outcomes revealed in current literature. These criteria include place specificity of planning strategies, the relationship between the major stakeholders, the duration of the government intervention, the timing of stakeholder participation and the decision-making power.

The major finding is that the State intervention through the declaration of a UDA will not lead to sustainable planning outcomes in Moranbah. The lack of frontloading of stakeholder participation during the stage leading up to the declaration of the UDA, coupled with the shortened time frames for submissions will negatively impact on stakeholder participation. This conclusion was strengthened by the observation of a significant lack of trust in the motives and competency of all levels of government, to which is added significant distrust in the motives of the mining companies, making the stakeholders less likely to accept or abide by this State intervention. The remnants of paternalism in the Local Government compound this problem, leading to distorted stakeholder participation patterns and poor decision-making by decision-makers, which in turn lead to non-sustainable planning outcomes. Other interpretations were ruled out through the involvement of a variety of stakeholder groups and the collection of rich data to ensure that valid conclusions could be drawn.

State Government and politicians elicit low levels of trust from all participant groups, ranging from total distrust in politicians in general, to doubt as to whether the State Government actually cared about the well-being of the non-mining sectors in Moranbah (Figure 3). Much of the distrust in the State

Comparison of Councillors and Officials' perceived attitude and competency

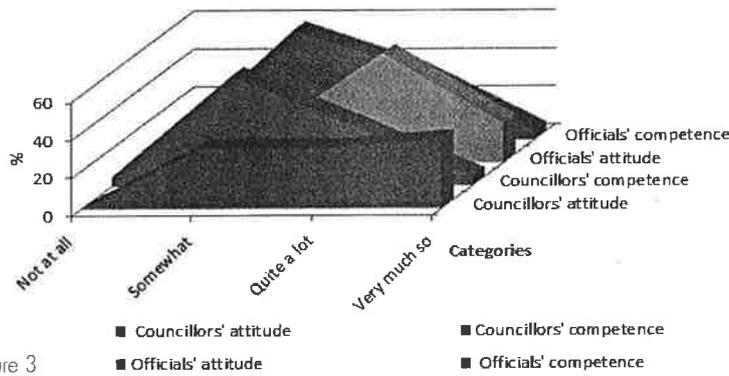


Figure 3

Importance of stakeholder consultation

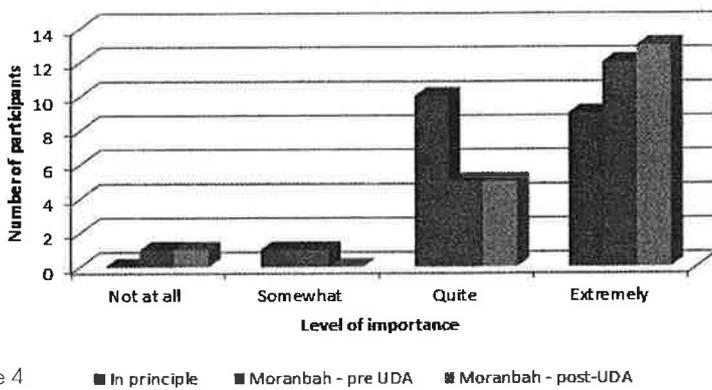


Figure 4

Government stemmed from the perceived corruptness of the relationship between the Government and the mining industry, and the view that the mining industry dictates to Government. The FIFO-issue was of particular concern, with predictions that it will impact greatly on the composition of the Moranbah population. The perception was that the more the mines implement FIFO, the less they will be committed to the local communities. This contrasts with the perception of the residents that the town is starting to 'mature', with people wanting to retire there and a desire for improved facilities, such as a tertiary education institution. This long-term vision for the town is currently marred by an atmosphere of fear brought about by issues such as the application by one of the mines to have a 100 percent Fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) workforce and the mining operations moving closer to town. Moranbah is perceived by participants as the dominant town in the IRC area due the quality of services provided, and the relatively long history of the town which has resulted in several three-generation families living in town.

Only 16 percent of the participants were of the opinion that the State Government (through the ULDA) would do a better job than IRC steering development in Moranbah and only 10 percent of the participants was of the opinion that the State Government/ULDA would heed their wishes in future development decisions.

Lack of confidence in Council was reported with

86 percent of participants only rating Council in the 'Some competence' category (Figure 3). Lack of communication between the different stakeholder groups was reported to exacerbate the problem and people feared the outcome of the direction that the development of the town is taking.

Stakeholder consultation is deemed to be 'Quite important' or 'extremely important' in principle but 90 percent of the participants rated the current necessity 'Extremely high' (Figure 4). Participants identified obstacles preventing effective and efficient stakeholder consultation in general and in Moranbah specifically. The passivity of the community was ascribed to lack of confidence, self-interest, ineffective processes and the need for leadership.

Recommendations

Future research could include a longitudinal study of community involvement in planning in Moranbah and the determination of concrete planning outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of such community involvement. It could also be expanded to include similar towns such as Roma and Blackwater, that were subject to UDA declarations at the same time as Moranbah, to lend greater validity to findings.

The following brief recommendations may be considered:

- Training in current governance models for senior staff and councillors in order to move beyond paternalistic, bureaucratic approaches in planning. It is important that the limitations of democracy be realised and managed. This could be augmented by greater exposure to current planning practice for all parties involved in planning and decision-making.
- Following on from the previous point, the establishment of permanent stakeholder consultation strategies and processes in Moranbah, preferably including all sectors of stakeholders, including the mines, unions and State Government. The nature of the stakeholder consultation program should be considered, with the possibility of a layered system that would enable people to participate at a level, to an extent and in a format that they feel comfortable with.
- The disconcerting fact that worldwide very few mining towns remain sustainable after the closure of mines (Tuck, et al., 2005) should be addressed at a strategic level, taking the whole of IRC into consideration.

Conclusion

The answer to the question whether the declaration of the UDA was thus 'a rare occasion' where paternalistic decision-making was acceptable is 'No'. The ULDA may well be the 'top-down, decide-announce-defend government arrangement' (Whelan, 2007) it was labelled by other communities where UDAs had been declared prior to the declaration of the Moranbah UDA. It seems to provide one more example of plans and policies 'done for rural Australia but not

by it' (Rogers & Jones, 2006, p. 12). Secondly, the answer to the question if decision-making in the UDA process was based on a self-determination model (Karlsson & Nilholm, 2006) that would lead to sustainable planning outcomes, is also 'No'. Indications are that indiscriminate application of State intervention procedures does not produce sustainable planning outcomes, especially in unique rural areas such as Moranbah. These early warning signs should be heeded in the application of similar interventions in other rural towns.



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