Public sector drives projects

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Those big residential projects will be developed as demand requires,” Ms Lines said.

“It is tough times, certain sectors are doing it very tough but Townsville’s future is still strong.”

According to the report, the biggest project under way is the $200 million Townsville Ring Road stage 4, an 8km section of roadway crossing the Bohle Plains from Kolyne Chase to Deogragin.

Another $200 million is being spent on the Defence Logistic Transformation Project at Lavarack Barracks, providing new storage and maintenance facilities, and the Chinook Replacement Facilities at RAAF Base Townsville, supporting the new Chinook Medium Lift helicopter.

At James Cook University, $110 million is being invested in two projects, facilities for the just completed Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine and The Science Place, a four level research and teaching centre.

Lendlease Queensland general manager Tony Cragg said Science Place was proceeding well, with extremely high local participation rates.

“At the 384 workers indicate out on the site, 371 had a local Townsville postcode which equates to 97.3% local participation,” Mr Cragg said.

“In 386 work packages currently put out to the market, 33 were awarded to local subcontractors and six to Queensland subcontractors,”

Heron Todd White’s latest Townsville in Focus report shows residential building approvals have halved to about 34 a month since 2013; however, non-residential approvals kicked to a value of $36 million in 2015, well up on the $186 million in 2014.

Stockland North Shore project director Andrew Astorquia acknowledged the home building activity had declined across the city.

Mr Astorquia said $185 million worth of residential and commercial development would be undertaken at the masterplanned community this year to meet current population demand.

The number of people living in communities between the Bohle and Black Rivers had almost doubled to 23,000 in the past eight years since North Shore commenced, Mr Astorquia said.

At North Shore, a new Townsville Grammar School is in construction, a $23 million tavern and residential complex would soon under way, the State Government was expected to soon call tenders for a new $30 million primary school and private group Arcoore planted a $15 million aged-care facility.

“About $65 million worth of commercial work is set to go ahead and all these services are needed to cater for the population we have,” Mr Astorquia said.

“It’s a good time to have these things happening.”

Mr Astorquia said the projects, including $45 million in residential housing, were expected to provide 665 construction jobs, as well as ongoing jobs in operation, providing momentum for further growth.