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Population Growth

- Is it inevitable?
- Do we all just have to lie back and think of England?
- Or are planners and councils letting their communities down?
- What might real planning based around "sustainable carrying capacity" mean for the liveability of our communities?



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Is it inevitable?

- The politicians would like you have you believe that it is ...

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Former Premier Peter Beattie

- Queensland Premier Peter Beattie has dismissed suggestions the state's population should be capped to ensure future water supplies...
- "I wish the growth wasn't as high as it is, in terms of numbers, but the fact is we have an additional 1,500 people every week," he said.
- "But it's simply not possible to [cap numbers]..." (ABC News 21/05/2006)

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Current Premier Anna Bligh

- ...Deputy Premier Anna Bligh said a population cap was a simplistic solution that would place pressure on the economy. "The only way we could really do that is to put a fence up at the (Queensland) border, or to cancel or freeze all new home building approvals," she said. (22/04/2007 - The Age)
- ...It is my view that we need to actively embrace growth. I note comments early this week from one of our regional mayors that we should have a population cap. Well I don't support that, even if I did I don't think that I can constitutionally erect a barbed wire fence at the border... (16/10/2007 - Speech to Committee for Economic Development of Australia)

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Is it inevitable?


- The technicians would like you have you believe that it is ...

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1976 (projecting to 2000)

- The Moreton Region's population is expected to grow to 1,389,000 (1985) and to 1,802,000 by the year 2000 - a total addition of 670,000. (1976 - Moreton Region Growth Strategy)



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1994 (projecting to 2011)


- By 2011 it is forecast that there will be another one million people living in the region (1994 - Regional Framework for Growth Management)



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2005 (projecting to 2026)

- If we are going to accommodate one million extra residents in this region in the next two decades, we need to be smarter in how we use the land available to us (2005 - South East Queensland Regional Plan)
- The review of the SEQ Regional Plan is about to commence (to be completed by 2010). What next? Is SEQ going to grow by another 250,000 to 2031? Can we? More importantly, should we?



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Do we all just have to lie back and think of England?



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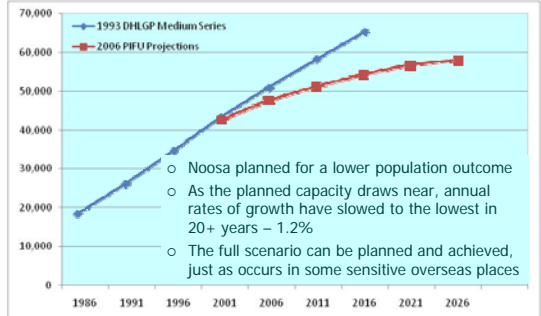
Noosa's 1997 Strategic Plan

- Noosa's 1997 Strategic Plan:
 - Recognised the character and value of its discrete localities
 - Recognised the environmental limits for the Shire and each locality
 - Recognised the limits on infrastructure provision and its cost or potential cost to the community
 - Defined limits to growth for the Shire and each places in the Shire
- It was hailed as a good model and approved by the State Government.



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State Reaction



- Noosa planned for a lower population outcome
- As the planned capacity draws near, annual rates of growth have slowed to the lowest in 20+ years - 1.2%
- The full scenario can be planned and achieved, just as occurs in some sensitive overseas places

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Conclusions

- Is population growth inevitable? No, you can plan for a different future, but this requires not a simplistic notion of a population cap, but measures of sustainability across all areas of infrastructure, services and environment AND consideration of spatial distribution of population across Australia and each of the States. Using language like population caps belittles the processes involved in good sustainability planning and allows the politicians to get off the hook by using fence analogies.
- Or are planners and councils letting their communities down? Despite some good models, the answer is unfortunately yes. Planners and councils are generally afraid of these issues.
- Do we all just have to lie back and think of England? Well there are some good examples there ...
- What might real planning based around "sustainable carrying capacity" mean for the liveability of our communities? Noosa?
- Now one last thought. There is one State politician that understands ...

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2004 – Former Minister for Local Government & Planning Desley Boyle

- ENVIRONMENT Minister Desley Boyle wants interstate migrants arriving in southeast Queensland to keep on driving. She said her message to migrants arriving at the border was: "Welcome to Queensland, but keep on driving."
- "You might like to live at Toowoomba or Crows Nest, or maybe you'd like to go north to Hervey Bay, or maybe continue right up the coast," she said.
- Addressing a group of Gold Coast developers yesterday, Ms Boyle said the state's southeast was becoming overcrowded, placing extreme pressure on infrastructure and the environment.
- She said it was "dumb" that everyone clustered in the southeast corner when Queensland was so large. (2004 - Courier Mail)

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