Future Development on the Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast 2014-2054

In 2014 the Sunshine Coast had a population of approximately 275,000 people (not including Noosa).

At the current rate of growth the Sunshine Coast will have a population of 370,000 people by 2031. The majority of new residents will live in new communities at:

- Palmwoods (pop. 18,000)
- Caloundra South (pop. 50,000)

Identified Growth Area (IGA)

The South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan includes a number of ‘Identified Growth Areas’ (IGAs). These areas are not part of the urban footprint (i.e. not available for urban development) but have been identified as areas for possible future urban development subject to further investigation.

The current SEQ Regional Plan contains two major Identified Growth Areas on the southern end of the Sunshine Coast: the Halls Creek IGA and the Beerwah Caloundra South Corridor (or Beerwah East) IGA. The SEQ Regional Plan requires only one of these IGAs to be seriously considered for long term residential and employment growth.

There are no defined boundaries for either of the IGAs just broad descriptions of their indicative location. The boundaries used for the IGAs on the map (left) are indicative only based on conversations with Sunshine Coast Council and the State Government. Approximately 1,000 ha of land will be required to meet projected population growth until 2050.

Halls Creek

The Halls Creek IGA is about 3,300 hectares located immediately adjacent to the Pumicestone Passage on the eastern side and the Bruce Highway on the western side.

Stockland owns a 1,400 ha parcel of land in the centre of the area which has commonly been taken to be the target land for this IGA.

The possibility of urban development at Halls Creek area has been considered by Council since the early 2000s and Council has conducted many detailed investigations of the area. Council has consistently rejected Halls Creek as an area for future urban expansion.

Beerwah East

The Beerwah East IGA is about 5,200 hectares located between the Bruce Highway, Steve Irwin Way and Roys Road.

The majority of the area is currently subject to a 99 year forestry lease. The possibility of future urban development at Beerwah East was first considered by Council around 2009. Council considered this area because of its strategic location in relation to existing road and rail infrastructure and its potential for strengthening the case for rail duplication and the construction of the CAMCOS rail link to the coast.

How we manage growth beyond 2031 is the subject of the debate about the Halls Creek area.

Do we continue urban sprawl heading South towards Moreton Bay? Or do we look elsewhere and continue to develop our region as a ‘community of communities’?

Do we plan for urban growth in areas that will strengthen the case for investment in rail infrastructure? Or do we choose an option that is easy but adds little to our existing community?

Do we believe that urban sprawl is inevitable and our green spaces can’t possibly be retained? Or do we insist that the inter urban break between Moreton Bay and the Sunshine Coast is retained and protected?

Do we allow urban settlement and commercial activity to be monopolised by (yet to be built) coastal communities? Or do we plan future growth in a way that enhances the vitality and economic viability of our railway towns going forward?