



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Thursday, 11 February 2010

MOTION: SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND REGIONAL PLAN

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (8.47 pm): The LNP supports the South East Queensland Regional Plan concept, as it is necessary to have a good planning process in South-East Queensland, which is experiencing continued growth, as it has for the last 30 years. Growth is not new, it is ongoing but it has to be managed in the right way. We do, however, have reservations about the way this government is handling growth. Gordon Gekko famously claimed that greed was good in *Wall Street*, while in George Street the Bligh Labor government claims that density is good. Both of these extreme values are abhorrent to most Queenslanders, who do not want greedy, inept governments with visions of sardine cities. They want growth to be balanced with cost-effective and timely infrastructure and they want choices.

The answer to future growth is not just about high-rise and higher density, as the government would have us believe. There has to be a balance which gives people choices which the infill and density targets of this government fail to achieve. Where high-rise and higher density are justified in a number of urban centres, this has to be accompanied by a plan for infrastructure that underpins that and makes it sustainable. That is also true in other communities with reasonably lower density targets—suburbs, cities, regional communities. But there is no connection between the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program and the growth targets with the South East Queensland Regional Plan. There is no connection between SEQIPP, the infrastructure plan, and the South East Queensland Regional Plan.

When projects are resequenced under SEQIPP, there are no announcements, no consultation and no consideration about what this means for the communities which are expected to expand without infrastructure such as hospitals, roads and public transport and other services. The only thing visionary about the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program is the fact that it is out there in the ether. It has no foundation, and it is nothing more than air and spin when you consider the huge gap between the infrastructure that is required and the growth targets of this government. It is a whim, it is a whiff, it is a nice idea. Like the South East Queensland Regional Plan, this infrastructure document is aspirational. It has lost connection to the growth targets.

In recent years we have seen an escalating estimated cost of what SEQIPP should be but no plan to deliver those projects in a timely way. SEQIPP has blown out in cost by 280 per cent since it was launched in 2005, from \$32 billion to \$124 billion, and the time lines are floating away onto the never-never. As I have said, there has been resequencing of SEQIPP, but there has been no explanation publicly about the resequencing and we have had to trawl through the documents. I will table one document that provides an analysis of the blow-outs, in cost and in time, of a number of these projects, but there is no connection with the resequencing and the growth targets of this government.

A significant proportion of the projects which have been rolled back and which have blown out in price are in the Transport and Main Roads portfolios. These projects have grown from \$25 billion to \$95 billion on paper, and delivery times have been pushed further and further out. As my colleague the member for Gympie has outlined, the South East Queensland Regional Plan is predicated on the population growing from 2.8 million to 4.4 million people in this region, requiring an additional 754,000 new dwellings between 2006 and 2031. The increase in dwellings varies. In Ipswich it is 226 per cent; in the western councils it is 100 per cent; in Logan it is 78 per cent; on the Sunshine Coast it is 75 per cent; on

the Gold Coast it is 71 per cent; in Toowoomba it is 68 per cent; in Moreton Bay it is 68 per cent; in Redland it is 42 per cent; and in Brisbane it is 39 per cent.

Then there are the infill targets—targets which a lot of local governments have had foisted upon them and are having to cop the flak for. On the Sunshine Coast the redevelopment and infill targets are for 37,000 dwellings, or 38 per cent growth. With broadacre the targets are 61,000 dwellings, or 62 per cent growth. All together this is 98,000 additional dwellings.

What about the infrastructure required to meet this extraordinary amount of growth? What infrastructure? The Sunshine Coast regional hospital has been delayed yet again—delayed in a region of 300,000 people currently and a population that is due to explode. In fact, the government has rolled back the necessary infrastructure in a region where it is encouraging a fast-tracking of that explosion. The same is true with the CAMCOS corridor, which is fundamental to the future of the public transport needs of the Sunshine Coast. This, too, has been rolled back. This, too, has been pushed further and further into the future while growth along that corridor is being fast-tracked.

Premier Anna Bligh announced that residential development at Maroochydore, Meridan Plains, Palmview and Caloundra South would be fast-tracked in what she described as a bid to tackle spiralling housing affordability in South-East Queensland, but it is a case of a lot of talk and not a lot of action from the Premier in ensuring that growth is sustainable when it comes to infrastructure delivery.

What about the economic plan? This is fascinating. There is no economic plan that sits alongside and underpins the South East Queensland Regional Plan.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Ms SIMPSON: I hear the minister laugh. Well, table it. There is no economic plan that sits alongside and underpins the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The principal activity sectors in the SEQ Regional Plan are like dots on a map with no economic plans or alignment to infrastructure and services. They are principally pimples on a map rather than principal activity centres with meaning, because there is no focus of coordinated government activity. It is a bit like a scratchie: it promises a lot but does not deliver much once you get below the surface. Unfortunately, that is so true in regard to the fundamentals required to have a regional infrastructure plan that understands the economic fundamentals, because there is no plan to drive jobs growth sustainably in this region.

SEQIPP has become an aspirational rather than an operational document. I will table this because planning without infrastructure delivery is like steering a boat without a rudder. You will have a lovely journey drifting along, but the destination will not be the one that you intended. I believe and the LNP believes that South-East Queensland, where this growth is occurring, deserves better. It deserves more than just talk from this government. It deserves timely and cost-effective infrastructure delivery which meets the realistic needs of this area. I table this document.

Tabled paper: Document relating to the South East Queensland Plan indicating cost and timeframe blowout [[1734](#)].