

I have read the Consultation paper in relation to the future of population growth in Tasmania.

I write from a personal perspective and live on Flinders Island.

I note that the Tasmanian Government's desired outcome from a refreshed strategy is to 'improve well being outcomes for Tasmanians'.

I would submit that the Planning Commission is a massive hindrance to this objective. The reason I state this is as follows:

Flinders Island has seen an influx of new residents yet there are few places that they may purchase to set up homes and raise families. For example: The region is now one of the most sought after areas to live on Flinders Island because of its beauty and access to the beach and boat ramp. Yet there is no land for people to purchase). We went through the long winded process of making a submission to the Planning Commission (who I note are an organisation that is all care and no responsibility with no further correspondence being entered into) to change the zone to rural living B allowing for a subdivision of five lifestyle blocks of just under five acres to be zoned. An agronomist report was submitted and the land found not suitable for agriculture due to poor soil content and land size. We were represented by consultant planners. At the Planning Hearing the officers were ill prepared, had not read the submissions and barely listened to the proposal. The outcome however was that 'whilst the proposal had merit' it could not be granted at this time due to there not being a Strategic population growth plan for the region of Palana! Why not?? Why hold a planning commission hearing if the government is not prepared to have its facts and figures appropriately to hand.?

Ours is a small satellite coastal village and our block is located well behind the sensitive coastal environment area and it made perfect sense as noted vaguely in the report to allow for more lifestyle development. This area desperately requires services that could be provided by more families living in the area to cater for aged care services, cleaning, hospitality, building and maintenance. Housing is desperately needed yet the Planning commission does not appear to allow for simple sensitive lifestyle blocks to be released that could provide places for people to live in a more sustainable fashion. More land needs to be released so that this can occur.

Flinders Island can well support a larger population, in fact it is at the detriment of the island resources to allow the population numbers to fall to such a critically low number. You only have to ask the local Real Estate Agent Michelle Hirschfield to find out that there is little or nothing to buy on the island and that people are being prevented from taking up employment opportunities because of this. Any further falls in population numbers will result in diminished services and less maintenance yet more bureaucracy!!

Not everyone wants to live in town and whilst the Council maintained road (gravel - and not well maintained) is an annoyance people are prepared to put up with this to be able to live in this unique part of Flinders Island.

Therefore, and in conclusion if you are serious about improving the wellbeing for Tasmanians may I respectfully suggest that you review the whole Planning Commissions activities and decisions and start by encouraging people to open up parcels of land that are suitable for lifestyle blocks that I have mentioned. I in no way advocate non sensical and scattered development but surely there is room for well thought out and designed environmentally conscious blocks being made available. The Planning Commission are not interested in further communication, their decisions cannot be appealed, and I would say the right of natural justice has not been met.

I look forward to hearing back from you at an appropriate time.

regards

Linda Nicol