

We're not keeping up

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THESE Gold Coast newborns may have their own cribs now, but come 2027 babies could struggle to find a home to grow up in, according to a report released yesterday.

The Australia on the Move report, which projects the country's population growth up to 2027, has put the Gold Coast at number 4 on its list of the top 20 biggest growth areas.

The report, by The Residential Development Council in conjunction with Matusik Property Insights, also says our population is expected to increase by 54 per cent over the next 18 years.

This means the Gold Coast will need to build 8372 new houses each year for the next five years to cater for the swelling population.

In addition to population growth, the Gold Coast and Tweed regions also scored a spot in the top 10 Australian cities needing new homes, because supply does not match demand.

According to the report launched by the Federal Minister for Housing Tanya Plibersek, the Coast must build 4372 houses and 4001 attached dwellings each year before 2014 or face the consequences -- newcomers coming to the city and having nowhere to live.

The Gold Coast's population sits at 568,330 -- but it is projected to reach 873,198 -- an increase of 304,868 by 2027.

Queensland dominated the report's growth list, holding 11 of the 20 spots.

While the latest figures are relatively on par with previous population projection reports, the experts never seem to agree on an exact figure.

In February, the State Government predicted our population would reach just 737,986 by 2026 even though property analysts were saying it would actually hit 850,000.

Just last month demographer Bernard Salt warned the city would grow to one million residents by 2030.

While the actual population projection figure has been debated, the imbalance between supply and demand has been a topic analysts do agree on, with several reports outlining the need for more housing on the Gold Coast.

Upper Coomera couple Suzi and Brett Burke said they were worried about the struggles their children, five-week-old Lucas and 14-month-old Kayla, would have when they were looking for somewhere to live.

"Future residents are bound to that area north of the Gold Coast because that's really the only affordable area left," said Mrs Burke.

"By the time our kids are 18, 19, 20 and looking for a place to live, that area will be full so people will be forced to move interstate."

The Residential Development Council's executive director Caryn Kakas said the Australian population experienced its biggest increase last year.

"Within 20 years, the population will increase by just under six million people, bringing the total number of permanent residents to 28 million people," she said.