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Groups support new plan

Written by Administrator

CALOUNDRA City Council appears to have got it right with their new Structure Plan for the Maleny Community Precinct.

This was the opinion of independent town planner Paul Summers who spoke at a Green Hills community meeting on Saturday. His backing of the proposal appears to have the support of Maleny Golf Club, Maleny Green Hills and other community groups central to the process. Mr Summers said Caloundra City Council had identified a "clear and proper process" for the analysis and identification of the future role of the Maleny Community Precinct through its Structure Plan.

Mr Summers has extensive knowledge of Maleny and the Maleny Community Precinct. The former Noosa Council town planner has prepared a submission to Caloundra on behalf of several local groups.

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His submission seeks to:

a) Congratulate Caloundra City Council on the process defined for preparing the proposed structure plan for the Maleny Community Precinct.

b) Strongly support that process and request that CCC ensure that no amendment is made to the open wording currently used in the draft to make reference to particular land uses. Mr Summers said it was time for Maleny to move on and Council had provided an effective vehicle to do so.

“This process starts with the community, essentially, before any policy position on what the precinct should contain is determined,” he said. “This is very important for Maleny. It means that you are starting with a blank canvas. Previous processes have been marred by improper processes or perhaps pre-determined outcomes, which have been the undoing of much of the good work put in by community members.”

Golf Club president Max Whitten agreed the Structure Plan was an effective way forward. “Mr Summers’ submission effectively puts a damper on pressures from any group, including golf club members, to be pushing barrows at this stage,” Dr Whitten said. Dr Whitten said, while he supported Mr Summers’ positive outlook, he challenged his interpretation of past “improper processes”.

The Structure Plan process provides a brief overview of what will be a two-year preparation phase. “The structure appears correct,” said Mr Summers. “The only qualification that I have suggested is that prior to the consultation period commencing a properly prepared land constraints and opportunity analysis be carried out. This analysis will identify what land constraints exist.

For example no-go areas, areas with some constraint, areas without constraint. And what opportunities exist. For example areas with views, areas with easy access to the town centre, areas with visibility from the major roads, areas with good foundation suitability, etc.” Mr Summers said with the process defined, the next question was whether the Maleny community could rise to the challenge.

“The one thing that will spell failure for the process is for Maleny to continue the factional brawling that has dominated previous processes and is still happening today. This is not about winners and losers, it is about identifying what the land can sustain and what Maleny will need into the long-term future and whether that can be achieved on the Maleny Community Precinct site. “So the various different groups must stop pushing individual barrows and start thinking about the land itself and overall community needs.

If they continue to squabble and push particular land use outcomes, they are handing Caloundra City Council a blank canvas to do whatever it thinks is right in the precinct, rather than what the Maleny community thinks and what is actually needed.

“It must also be realised that there is no pot of gold at Caloundra City Council waiting to be spent at Maleny.



Paul Summers ... “It is likely that the community goodies that could go in the precinct will have to be paid for from income derived from the same land”.

It is likely that the community goodies that could go in the precinct will have to be paid for from income derived from the same land.”

To see the notes from the presentation and find out more visit www.paulsummersplanning.com.au and click the Maleny link in the left menu.

Precinct Structure Plan is on display today

THERE will be a display staffed by Council officers at the Maleny Library today from 10am-2pm regarding the Draft Caloundra City Local Growth Management Strategy and the Maleny Community Precinct Structure Plan. People will be able to provide input into the future use of the Maleny Precinct site.

The LGMS is a plan to guide the future development and growth in Caloundra City to 2026 and beyond. A structure plan is an integrated land use and infrastructure plan that establishes the broad layout on how an area will develop and will guide detailed site planning for the Maleny Community Precinct Major Development Area.

Copies of the Information Sheet regarding the Maleny Precinct and the LGMS questionnaire are available at Maleny Menswear and at the Library.

It is also available on the web at www.caloundra.qld.gov.au/lgms.

Golfers support submission on Structure Plan

THE Golf Club Committee discussed the final submission prepared by Paul Summers on behalf of a number of Maleny groups on Tuesday night.

“I’m happy to advise that the Club endorses the position and recommendations made by Paul about the way forward in determining how best to use the Precinct land,” said Golf Club President Max Whitten. He said his club would be making a submission to Council along similar lines.

“In particular, The Golf Club strongly supports the process defined by Council in its LGMS for preparing the proposed Structure Plan. We support the view that Council make no reference to particular land uses on the Maleny Precinct in its LGMS. And we support the suggestion that ‘Consultation with the local community and stakeholders be informed by a properly prepared constraints and opportunities analysis of the land’.

But Dr Whitten said the Golf Club did not agree with Mr Summers that the earlier Task Force process was “flawed”. “There is no evidence to support such a claim; indeed the opposite.

We are happy to acknowledge that it was the Golf Club’s submission to Council in 2001 to use Armstrong’s farm for a community golf course which kick-started the process which ultimately led Council to purchase Stephen Porter’s farm; and we remain as enthusiastic as ever that a community golf course will ultimately be one of the facilities provided on that site.

“However, we do not accept that the Task Force’s deliberations were distorted to achieve this or any other particular outcome. We accept that no outcome is inevitable but we are determined to present a strong case for a community golf course at the appropriate stage when the Structure Plan is prepared.”

Dr Whitten said the Golf Club would be urging Council to take note of the findings of the Maleny Precinct Task

Force during preparation of the Structure Plan.

THE Range News spoke to independent town planner Paul Summers about his views, from a planner's perspective, on the Maleny Community Precinct.

Q. Is the work that was done by the Maleny Community Precinct Taskforce dead? Or will its spirit live on in the plans for the Maleny Community Precinct?

Paul Summers: Inevitably, some of the information prepared for or by the Task Force will inform the next process; however because of the flaws in that process and the openness of the process now proposed by the Council, it is best to focus on the future, not the past.

Q. You suggested at the meeting that Maleny needs to stop factionalising. It's one thing for those with nothing to lose to agree to work together, but aren't the 400 or so members of the Maleny Golf Club and those who worked in good faith on the Taskforce entitled to feel incredibly frustrated that the goal posts have been shifted?

Paul Summers: Using your analogy, if the goal posts were put up in the wrong place in the first instance, then perhaps whatever goals were kicked into the posts invalidate the game. In my view, there was a clear taint of some pre-determined outcomes in the previous process, the overall consultation process used was radically flawed and the overall process was not informed by a full assessment of the constraints and opportunities present on the land. Now in this light, this does not make the goals that were kicked the wrong goals. But it gives me, as a qualified practitioner in these areas, little confidence that the goals were legitimate.

Q. Can you paint us a picture of what possibilities you can see for the site, from a planner's perspective?

Paul Summers: No, sorry I am a purist in these matters. My preference is to see the analysis of the land constraints and opportunities, have the community educated about what the analysis means, examine the likely needs for the community in the longer term, satisfy parties that those needs can be accommodated on the land. And then, and only then, examine the wish lists of others. Notice I am distinguishing between needs and wants. Needs being things the community cannot live without.

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