

# Fears for future of the 'one size fits all' Coast

By Nathan Evans

STAKEHOLDERS fear Council will have no choice but to water down Noosa's defining town planning provisions in its quest to roll the Coast's three town plans into one coast-wide scheme.

That, on top of new state-driven planning guidelines, will make it difficult to safeguard Noosa's unique character, they say.

Veteran town planner and Noosa population cap pioneer Paul Summers said locality-specific provisions that helped protect and nurture towns such as Cooroy, Tewantin and Pomona would disappear under the model for sweeping changes.

"One suggestion has been that we will have only 12 localities across the Coast - that's pretty consistent with the number of divisions," Mr Summers said.

"So the notion of a plan for Kin Kin, another for Cooroy or one for the eastern beaches will fall by the wayside. Noosa is a series of little places and we've celebrated those little places for their own uniqueness in the past.

"This new scheme is not a consolidation of the three planning schemes. It's a totally new animal built around whatever final pro-



**UNDER THREAT:** Fears are growing for the unique nature of Noosa and its outlying hinterland towns.

visions emerge from the new Sustainable Planning Act and the new Queensland Planning Provisions."

Head of environmental lobby group and development watchdog Noosa Parks Association, Ian Seels, said he feared key elements of the Noosa Plan would have to be "dumbed down".

"How do you draw up a plan that looks after Noosa and Caloundra

south? That is not possible, only if you dumb-down the Noosa Plan," he said.

"You get one chance to get this right."

He said council must fight state pressure.

"When push comes to shove and the State Government says we want more development to take place on the Sunshine Coast, we need Bob Abbot to go in to bat with

the State Government on behalf of this region," he said.

Friends of Noosa spokesman Bob Ansett said he was most concerned with the State Government's plans.

"We know how the state functions," he said. "If they are not comfortable with what council puts up then they will ensure they get their way on what changes they think are appropriate to suit their plan, which is over-riding."

"The state's series of objectives may not be in keeping with what has made Noosa the special place it is."

Tourism Noosa CEO Steve Cooper said there was much riding on Noosa's ability to preserve its current landscape.

"Changes, if enacted on a regional basis, mean we have to look to ensure nothing is marginalised," he said.

Noosa MP Glen Elmes said a "one-size-fits-all" approach would ultimately put townships' unique qualities and character at risk. But until Noosa got its own council back, and greater control, it would be hard to fight the state which wanted to impose its will.