

Credit due

Your reporter's suggestion that town planner Paul Summers "is credited with much of the Noosa population cap strategy" (Noosa News, October 16, p3) is incorrect.

The population cap originated in the 1982 to 1985 Noosa Council and it was expressed in Noosa's 1984 Draft Strategic Plan which specified that "the (Noosa) Coastal Urban Objective is to contain the overall level of urban residential growth in the coastal portion of the shire to a level of approximately 40,000".

The decision was based on careful calculations of the carrying capacity of the Noosa environment.

The 1982 to 1985 council had some 13 elected members who were advised by the then Noosa town planner Alan Simes (who undertook the calculations) and several visionary consultants, including David Chesterman of the Town Planning consultancy company, Jackson, Teece, Chesterman Willis and Partners.

Paul Summers subsequently produced two reports (one in 1997 and one in 2004) – both of which confirmed the accuracy of Alan Simes' original calculation.

Paul Summers made a contribution. He re-calculated the carrying capacity and expanded the concept to include the Noosa hinterland.

His work formed the basis of Noosa's 1997 Strategic Plan, which confirmed and continued the initiatives taken in the early 1980s.

However, credit for Noosa's population cap belongs in the

early 1980s and is shared by a range of people – councillors, then town planner Alan Simes and several paid consultants.

The preservation and continuation of this important work has been made possible by subsequent Noosa councils under mayors Noel Playford and Bob Abbot and by a dedicated team of "unsung" council planning staff.

PETER BYCROFT

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Reporter's Note: Thanks for the insights, Peter. Having dealt with Paul at the time all the planning strategies designed to effect what became known as the population cap were put in place, it was evident that he and his planning team had the primary role of implementing council's direction. He had a pivotal role in this as did the councillors steering the council ship.

Peter Gardiner