

Re-writing history

Normally I would not respond to a letter like that of Peter Bycroft's, under the heading "Credit due" in your Tuesday edition, but there are too many errors of fact and erroneous claims made.

The fine-grained work carried out by the council and my small team from 1994-1997 was simply not possible to do in the period 1982-1985. It required huge amounts of calculation using computers, spreadsheets and geographic information systems (GIS). Computers were slow and very elementary in the early 80s. GIS did not even exist.

The 1994-1997 work was sophisticated, rigorous and bold and it had a powerful mapping footing. It required a brave council and dedicated staff throughout the organisation to put together the plan (and its 34 supporting studies), work it through the community and the state government and evolve it to a final operational and adopted plan.

Many laughed at Noosa and its approach in the 1990s, but these processes are now the norm for government.

Unlike the 1982-85 council, the Playford-led councils finished their planning works. Peter says it all when he refers to "Noosa's 1984 DRAFT Strategic Plan".

When I commenced work with the council in 1987, I examined this work, found it to be not capable of implementation, not consistent with the legislation and unintelligible for implementing council policy and regulation.

By mid-1987, and without reference to the 1984 draft, the ultimate 1988 Strategic Plan was produced. This work was the only thing that held the line when the Planning and Environment Court refused the major Leisuremark application on the Noosa North Shore – none of the 1982-85 council's documents were of any use.

Peter also suggests that I re-calculated. There was no re-calculation. The population work carried out between 1982-85 was coarse and would not have held up in a court of law. The population capacity calculations in 1995 (not 1997), 2001 and 2004 were done from a clean sheet and with a completely different methodology using lot-by-lot analytical

techniques.

There is no doubt that the 1982-85 council made a contribution to Noosa as we know it today. Many councils before and after have done so.

But when Peter attempts to give total credit for the planning framework that we have in place today to the period when he was in council, he is simply re-writing history and misinforming the community.

PAUL SUMMERS
Coaroy