

Sunshine Beach showcases how to build the right way

SUNSHINE Beach is an example of how the potential for disastrous planning outcomes can be challenged and changed for the better.

By the late 1980s and into the early 1990s the character of Sunshine Beach was changing.

Developers were naturally taking advantage of a system that allowed bigger development through amalgamation of titles.

Gross floor area could double and bulky buildings were resulting on sandy soil that was not suited to that outcome.

People who had invested in the area with a plan to eventually retire there were finding their street population density increasing and with it traffic and character changes.

"We asked ourselves why these non-developers were being penalised," Mr Summers said.

"We decided to back zone and wrote provisions for duplexes which were quite large and took the disincentives for that type of development out of the plan.

"People grabbed a hold of it when they found they could fund their own unit through the sale of the oth-

er. It chewed up a lot of unit capacity and we did not get one compensation claim."

The council ran workshops for architects to explain what it was trying to achieve and they in turn became messengers who could advise land owners of the opportunities.

Noosa was fortunate to have a number of architects already living in the shire who were there because they appreciated the physical form and natural environment.

As a result Noosa has become a place of a large number of small buildings rather than a place of fewer but bigger buildings.

Most of the subsequent battles have been with out-of-town architects who lacked an understanding of the plan's philosophy and intent.

However as with any process there can be losses, particularly when the state government intervenes.

That was the case with the Noosa Sheraton, a building which Summers describes as offensive because of its height and bulk which set it at odds with construction around it.