

Dr John Whittington  
Director of National Parks and Wildlife  
GPO Box 1751  
Hobart TAS 7001



7 November 2016

Dear Dr Whittington,

**REPRESENTATION**  
**TASMAN NATIONAL PARK**  
**DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016**

(ALTERING THE TASMAN NATIONAL PARK AND RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011)

The Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) is a not-for-profit organisation which provides a community voice on issues relating to Tasmania's national parks and reserves. As such, what is presented below represents the concerns not just of the TNPA but also of members of the Tasmanian public who count on the organisation to speak on their behalf.

The stated reason for the proposed changes to the 2011 Management Plan is to facilitate an Expression of Interest proposal for a tourism venture centred on Tasman Island. The information available to the public regarding this proposal by Rotor-Lift Aviation consists of barely five words: "& Tasman Island by helicopter"! This is insufficient for the TNPA or the public to evaluate the merits or otherwise of the proposal itself.

The TNPA opposes all the proposed plan changes. Our reasons for rejecting those that relate to facilitating commercial tourism access to Tasman Island are explained below and the other proposed changes which reflect the completion of the Threes Capes Track can and should wait for the next full review of the management plan.

**COMMERCIAL TOURISM ACCESS TO TASMAN ISLAND - GENERAL**

The absence of any other practical access to Tasman Island means that the proposed plan changes amount to a proposal for the provision by government of expensive infrastructure for the exclusive use of a single commercial operator. In addition to being an unjustifiable use of public money, such commercial tourism access can only reduce the natural and cultural heritage values of Tasman Island and the rest of Tasman National Park.

Alteration 5 proposes removing from Section 2.8 Management Zones Table 1 (Management Zones & Sites) the following Objective: "protect, maintain and monitor environmental and heritage features and values". No justification is provided and this fundamental objective must be reinstated.

**Government subsidy**

It is generally acknowledged that access to Tasman Island is frequently disrupted by weather conditions (wind or fog) so it is unlikely that a commercial tourism operation will ever be viable, yet an under-resourced PWS will be required to construct boardwalk and lookouts for the exclusive use of a single commercial operator. This will detract from the ability of PWS to undertake far more important work elsewhere. Alternatively, if the commercial operator is required to provide these facilities the proposal is even less likely to be viable. i.e. the proposal is totally dependent on the government's provision of facilities for the exclusive use of a single commercial operator.

**Heritage Values**

The proposal to allow use of the historic buildings for accommodation is alarming. Their heritage status is potentially compatible with their use as emergency shelter for short-term visitors who are stranded by a change in the weather, but the plan change does nothing to preclude their conversion to luxury overnight tourist accommodation which would seriously compromise their heritage qualities. This should be explicitly ruled out.

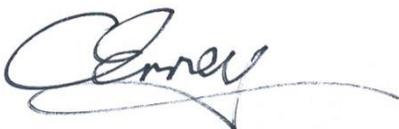
**Wilderness**

Commercial helicopter flights will inevitably impact on the wilderness experience of users of the Three Capes Track and the rest of Tasman National Park. The direct flight path is likely to be very close to sections of the Three Capes Track and tourists visiting Tasman Island will expect a view of the most spectacular sea cliffs as part of their experience. The statements in Alterations 2 & 3 that "flight paths will be identified which do not impact on park visitors" are unachievable and even flight paths which minimise the impact on park visitors are unlikely to be acceptable to the operator.

**Natural Values – Quarantine**

Tasman Island provides important seabird nesting sites and is now largely free of introduced animals, weeds and pathogens. Maintenance of this status requires strict enforcement of quarantine procedures. Regular tourist visits will increase the probability of a breakdown in quarantine procedures – not only because of the increase in visitor numbers but also because tourists and the helicopter operator are less likely than current visitors (the vast majority of whom are either government employees or PWS volunteers) to have a good awareness of the need for strict quarantine.

Yours sincerely,



Catharine Errey  
President  
Tasmanian National Parks Association