

TASMANIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION inc.

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Media Release

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The Tasmanian National Parks Association Inc (TNPA) calls on the Huon Valley Council to reject an application by Stage Design Pty Ltd for an extension of two years to the Planning Approval granted for the Cockle Creek East Development Proposal in the vicinity of Planters Beach within the South West National Park and adjacent to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The original two year Planning Approval which was granted is due to lapse on 4 July 2003.

The Cockle Creek East development proposal consists of an accommodation facility for up to 80 cabin/units, together with a central complex which will provide for lounge, dining, kitchen and bar facilities. The TNPA rejects as totally inappropriate within a National Park the construction of such large overnight accommodation facility as it will destroy the acknowledged natural values of the site for which it has been reserved within the National Park. The primary management objective of all National Parks is the conservation of the natural and cultural values contained within.

The TNPA strongly supports appropriate tourism based projects in Tasmania and supports the regional benefits that will flow from such projects. However, we argue strongly that sustainable benefits can only be achieved by placement of projects, such as that proposed for Planters Beach, outside the boundaries of Tasmania's National Parks and World Heritage Areas. The development of very successful tourist nodes outside National Parks at Strahan, Cradle Valley and Coles Bay validates this argument.

As such, the TNPA also calls on the Premier, who has said unequivocally and on many occasions that he does not support commercial tourism developments in our national parks, to reject the above development proposal within the South West National Park. The Premier must also release all details on negotiations with the developer in regards to the Catamaran Bridge and guarantee Tasmanians that no public funds will be provided for this private development to go a head.

Spokesperson for the TNPA Greg Wood said " Tasmanians have made it abundantly clear we don't want to see these types of developments in our national parks and any secret negotiations or commitments of public funds are totally unacceptable."

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