



DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE NATIONAL PARKS MATTER TOO

or: Why we urgently need Landscape Conservation Zones within the Local Provisions Schedules of our new planning scheme

TNPA's main concern is what happens within our national parks and other reserves and we have long advocated that tourism development should occur on private land, outside national parks. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that developments immediately outside national parks can, depending on the circumstances, affect the parks themselves.

Support in principle for tourism development occurring on private land outside national parks must not be interpreted as 'anything goes so long as it's outside the park boundary'. Such developments require scrutiny to ensure that they do not unduly impact park values or the experience of other park visitors.

The opportunity to appreciate unspoiled nature is very important to many locals, and is the competitive advantage of the Tasmanian tourism industry. It is a quality that needs to be protected everywhere, not just within or adjacent to our national parks.

Some examples:

Picnic Island (Freycinet)

This tiny, privately-owned but previously undeveloped island is about 1 km due west of Coles Bay town and 2 km from the closest point in Freycinet National Park. A 'resort' comprising several small cabins and a larger communal facility has recently opened (see [here](#)). The TNPA hopes that the natural values of the island, including a penguin colony, have been adequately protected but the naturalness of the views of other visitors to the area has not. Picnic Island lies in the foreground of the classic view of the Hazards as seen from anywhere between the northern end of Muirs Beach and Hepburn Point, which includes the upmarket Saffire Resort. The structures on Picnic Island are visible during the day but particularly at night when their lights are apparent in a formerly dark seascape.

The Fisheries

This is the small enclave of private land adjacent to the start of the main walking tracks into Freycinet Peninsula. It is about 3 km inside the park boundary. The TNPA

is not aware of any current development proposals apart from a proposed subdivision but The Fisheries appears an attractive location for future private tourism development, which would inevitably impact on the surrounding national park.

Cradle Mountain

For several decades the tourist accommodation along the road into Cradle (outside the park boundary) has mostly been discretely located out of sight from the road, thereby preserving some sense of entering a wild, natural landscape when approaching Cradle Valley itself. The TNPA is concerned that this will be soon be a thing of the past – private land adjacent to the road and northern end of the airstrip has recently been sold and the state government is encouraging the provision of additional accommodation in this area.



Photos: There is already a lot of commercial tourist accommodation on the approach to Cradle Mountain but only the signage and entrances of most are visible from the road. The notable exception is the long-established Cradle Mountain Lodge.

Adjacent to the start of the Cape Raoul Track (Tasman Peninsula)

A development comprising 34 bedrooms in 17 cabins and a 60 seat restaurant with parking for 58 cars has recently been approved by Tasman Council for private land on Stormlea Road, Tasman Peninsula, immediately adjacent to the start of the recently upgraded tracks to Cape Raoul and Tunnel Bay. The original Three Capes proposal included a now-abandoned proposal for a new track linking Cape Raoul (the third cape) to Port Arthur, so the Cape Raoul and Tunnel Bay tracks have been popularised by the promotion of the Three Capes Track to Capes Pillar and Hauy.

The development site is on land formerly cleared for agriculture but this does not mean TNPA doesn't have concerns about the proposal; the start of the Cape Raoul Track is currently at the end of a quiet rural road and this proposal will drastically change the character of the area and the walks by introducing a sizeable commercial development and additional visitors. In particular, it seems far too large for the location – a development of this size would be more appropriate adjacent to one of the nearby small towns. The TNPA's representation to Tasman Council suggested that, if approved, it should be substantially scaled down.



Photo: Development site (on the left) viewed from the carpark at the start of the Cape Raoul Track

How do we prevent further incremental degradation of Tasmania's natural landscapes?

The overly long and rather boring subtitle of this document hints at a solution. Developments outside national parks and reserves require planning permission from the local council. The soon-to-be-introduced Tasmanian [Statewide] Planning Scheme includes the possibility of applying an *Environmental Management Zone* and/or *Landscape Conservation Zones* and/or *Scenic Protection Code*. These can apply across a range of tenures and would provide a mechanism to ensure that impacts on landscape values are considered when a council assesses a development application, but they do need to be written into the Local Provisions Schedules of our new planning scheme, which are currently being developed. Some councils have proposed such zones/codes, many have not. Members of the public may propose additional or more extensive zones/codes but rigorous criteria must be satisfied. The TNPA encourages all members to check their Local Provisions Schedules (see link to PMAT website below) and lobby their local council if protections appear inadequate.

Much more information is available from the Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania (PMAT). PMAT's *Guide to Influencing the Development of your Local Planning Rules (Local Provisions Schedule)* can be downloaded from [here](#).