



MEDIA RELEASE - 19 October 2018

COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF COUNCIL ELECTION CANDIDATES REVEALS STRONG SUPPORT FOR LOCAL PLANNING CONTROLS

In what is likely to be the biggest survey of candidates in the upcoming local government elections, the Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania (PMAT) has revealed strong candidate sentiment for local government planning controls that protect local character, sunlight and privacy for our homes and facilitate public involvement in planning decisions in national parks and reserves.

PMAT sought to survey all 481 candidates in the upcoming council elections, reaching 407 candidates, 107 of whom completed and returned their responses to questions. It asked the following three questions and the individual responses to these questions are now available on PMAT's website [here](#).

1. Do you believe that Councils should have greater capacity to protect local character and amenity and places important to local communities?
2. Do you believe that planning rules should protect a neighbour's right to sunshine and privacy in their own home and garden?
3. Do you believe that major tourist developments proposed for national parks (and other reserves) should be discretionary i.e. the development proposal is released for public comment and the council can either approve or refuse it?

“PMAT is concerned about a raft of issues pertaining to weakened planning rules and Tasmania’s future and supports an overarching strategic vision for Tasmania which would include social, economic and environmental goals that are supported by State Policies on a wide range of issues,” said Sophie Underwood, State Coordinator of PMAT.

“This survey demonstrated a majority of respondents take the planning responsibilities of local government very seriously and believe councils should have greater capacity to protect local character, amenity and places important to their local communities.

“Most respondents support council having a role in assessing new tourism developments in national parks and ensuring this creates a forum for community consultation and input into planning decisions.

PMAT State President Anne Harrison, representing the Tasmanian Planning Information Network (TasPIN) and the Blackmans Bay Residents Action Group, stressed the importance of councils and said “local government is a very important tier of government in our system, offering the closest contact with the public and the capacity to best represent their communities.

“Government at this level should allow us all a voice about the place we live, offering representation to all, the capacity to protect what we see as special and a genuine plan for a future in livable, connected and sustainable communities.

“PMAT thanks candidates who responded and looks forward to working with all those who are ultimately elected to ensure that the state’s planning system allows Councillors and Aldermen a meaningful say on planning decisions in their municipality.

Local government elections are currently underway via a voluntary postal vote that must be returned by 30 October to be valid. PMAT encourages all enrolled voters to exercise their democratic right and empower themselves and their councilors by participating in this process.

The Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania is a growing network of over 60 community groups from across Tasmania which is campaigning for a strategic, sustainable and integrated planning system which will serve to protect the values that make Tasmania such a special place to live and visit.

For Comment

Anne Harrison **State President, PMAT** **0419 585 291**

Sophie Underwood **State Coordinator, PMAT** **0407 501 999**

Press Conference Details

- **Where:** On the steps of the Hobart Town Hall, 50 Macquarie Street, Hobart
- **When:** Friday 19 October at 11 am
- **Who:** Anne Harrison, PMAT State President and Sophie Underwood, PMAT State Coordinator