



## Tasmanian Conservation organisations urge candidates to oppose Government’s proposed developer-friendly assessment process for national parks and reserves

19 February 2024

Tasmanian nature conservation organisations with decades of experience working to create and protect world heritage areas, national parks and other reserves have united to urge election candidates to ‘Scrap the DAPs’ for reserved land.

The state government is proposing a developer friendly development assessment and approval process for the world heritage area, national parks and other reserves. The proposed new ‘Statutory Environmental Impact Assessment Process’ for reserves will enable developers to ask the Minister for Parks to take developments out of the normal planning and environmental assessment process and be given to a Development Assessment Panel (DAP).

The DAP has all the power to assess and approve a development and can even change the Reserve Management Plan rules. Local councils will be removed from the approval process and the community will lose the right to appeal the DAP decision.

The government is responding to the concerns of the development lobby who want a system that will guarantee their developments are approved even in world heritage areas, national parks and other reserves.

The developments that will bypass Local Councils and community appeal rights will include large tourism developments, transmission lines, government proposals such as the Tyndall Range huts, and even mining operations.

**A public meeting on the proposed changes has been called for 1 pm, Hobart Town Hall on Wednesday 6 March 2024 – [see details.](#)**

**Submissions on the proposed reserved land DAPs proposal are due Friday 8th March 2024. The quoted Conservation Organisations will be encouraging their supporters to make submissions.**

### **Wilderness Society**

"The integrity of reserve land like the iconic Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area needs to be protected. Proposals for the use of such precious land must be scrutinised thoroughly, and the public must have the ability to appeal bad development decisions as this is a basic community right. It is critical that there are mechanisms in place that allow developers and the government to be accountable for project proposals in reserve land."

Alice Hardinge, Acting Tasmanian Campaign Manager, Wilderness Society  
Tasmania

### **North-east Bioregional Network**

"The Governments proposed RAA process will diminish the communities and local Councils rights to respectively appeal against or refuse developments in protected areas. This is bad for biodiversity and democracy."

Todd Dudley, President, North East Bioregional Network

### **Tasmanian Conservation Trust**

"Tourism developments that have been refused (Cataract Gorge gondolas in Launceston) or have had trouble getting approval and have been delayed (Lake Malbena and Rosny Hill tourism developments) could be resurrected under the proposed new DAP system and be guaranteed approval.

"The Government has not specially flagged the kunanyi Mt Wellington cable car but nor has it ruled it out being resurrected under this new fast-track DAP process."

Peter McGlone, CEO, Tasmanian Conservation Trust

### **Bob Brown Foundation**

"For years this Government has been attempting to give away our public reserves like gifts to its developer mates, and the courts and tribunals have been upholding the public interest. This shift is the Government removing any ability for the public to have its interests considered. They don't just want to pick the umpire, they want to ensure only one team is on the field."

Scott Jordon, Takayna campaign coordinator, Bob Brown Foundation

## **Tasmanian National Parks Association**

"This so-called "reform" of the Reserve Activity Assessment is actually the addition of an entirely new process to fast-track large and/or controversial proposals for development on reserved land without any opportunity for the public to challenge the outcome. This provides even less accountability than the current process which usually provides an opportunity to challenge a decision through the council's assessment of the development application."

Nicholas Sawyer, President, Tasmanian National Parks Association

## **Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania**

"The Government wants to gag the community and tick off developments. It's completely undemocratic and opens the door to deals between governments and developers, who could make secret political donations, curry favour and get into Tasmania's protected places. Appeal rights are the only checks and balances we have.

"These undemocratic proposed changes are part of a bigger push by the Government to remove the community's voice from across Tasmania as they want to remove appeal rights from both reserved and private land."

Sophie Underwood, State Director, Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania, Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania

## **Residents Opposed to the Cable Car**

"The State Government have repeatedly said they will find a way to make a cable car on kunanyi happen. In recent weeks Tony Mayell (the new CEO of MWCC, but formerly Principal Advisor at Office of Premier and Cabinet) has claimed that the cable car project is not dead despite TASCAT ruling that it failed on multiple grounds. Clearly both the government and MWCC anticipate a massive changing of the rules.

"kunanyi / Wellington Park is now facing new threats in the proposed "reform" of the Reserve Activity Assessment (RAA) process and the amendments to LUPAA proposed by this government."

Phil Stigant, Residents Opposed to the Cable Car

## **Grassroots Action Network Tasmania (GRANT)**

"As a group of predominantly young people striving to create positive change in our communities, GRANT supports greater community rights in planning processes. The proposed developer-friendly assessment panels are therefore in absolute opposition to our values and principles. They are clearly the result of backroom deals with the developers lobby, and are undemocratic in nature.

"Young people are already excluded from the conversations about how the spaces we will inevitably inherit are planned and developed. These changes to planning laws entrench this even further and give greater say to millionaires and mainland investors, over the local communities who have to live with the outcomes of these decisions. GRANT opposes the proposed changes in full."

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