



Greens Leader
Member for Denison

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Tasmanian Greens Submission to the Freycinet Peninsula Draft Master Plan

By email: freycinetmasterplan@parks.tas.gov.au

A Flawed and Inadequate Draft Plan for Freycinet Peninsula

The Freycinet Peninsula Draft Master Plan is one of the most poorly conceived and prepared consultation documents yet presented on behalf of the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

Replete with internal contradictions, subjective assumptions and typographical errors, it fails to instil any confidence that the high natural and cultural values of the Freycinet National Park and the amenity of Coles Bay residents will be protected in to the future.

This is highly regrettable given the pressing need to better manage and constrain mass visitor impacts on the ecologically fragile Freycinet Peninsula, rather than accommodate continual growth in visitation to the detriment of natural, cultural and social values.

The Greens note the domination of tourism industry representatives and lack of community or conservation groups on the Steering Committee behind this flawed Draft Plan. This lack of balance has helped to deliver a heavily pro-industry plan for the Freycinet Peninsula and it further diminishes public faith in the current government's management of Tasmania's reserve estate.

At its foundation the Draft Plan represents a failure of government to prioritise the protection of the values of the Freycinet National Park over the demands of the tourism industry and its continual growth drive.

Nowhere is this conflict more evident in the Draft than in the projected annual visitor growth rate of 5.5% per annum.

If the rate of 112 000 walkers counted entering the Wineglass Bay track in December 2016 grows at 5.5% per annum, the track would be expected to carry in excess of 200,000 walkers in December 2027, averaged at about 6,400 per day. During peak hours, this would mean more than 1500 walkers each hour entering the track, with busier days certain to be even higher. Accommodating this is nothing short of government sanctioned insanity. At this rate of growth, the Park will suffer profoundly.

Such high projected and facilitated growth in perpetuity is manifestly unsustainable given the current, evident negative impacts of mass visitation on the Freycinet Peninsula and National Park.

Rather than being directed by government to facilitate this ongoing degradation of natural, cultural and social values, the Parks and Wildlife Service must be enabled to return to its core charter of protecting and managing the Freycinet National Park to maintain its ecological and cultural integrity. In so doing, the PWS will be working towards a higher quality visitor experience and mitigating negative impacts on the amenity of Coles bay residents.

The failure of government to prevent cruise ships from mooring in Wineglass Bay continues to degrade the wilderness values of the Freycinet National Park. There remains no justification for allowing such large vessels and high numbers of cruise ship passengers to enter the Park's boundaries in such a high impact manner.

Enabled increased helicopter flights to cater to tourists is also counter to the original objectives of the Freycinet National Park Management Plan prior to the current government's pro-developer Expressions of Interest Process for developments inside protected areas and public Crown Lands.

Any sustainable, long term plan for the Freycinet Peninsula must include annual and daily caps on visitor numbers to the National Park. To better protect its values and contiguity with the National Park, the Coles Bay Conservation Area should be incorporated in to the Park under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* and private development within its boundaries, prohibited.

It is clear from the number and content of public representations on the Draft to date, that there has been no genuine consultation on the future of the Freycinet Peninsula. The local community, in particular, has every right to feel aggrieved at this failure to implement good consultation process. This Draft Master Plan contains proposed actions that have no social license.

To restore public faith in the process and to deliver a long term, sustainable vision for the Freycinet Peninsula, the Tasmanian Greens support calls for a second, more comprehensive, intrinsic values and evidence based Draft Master Plan to be put out for genuine public consultation.

Yours sincerely,

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