



Tasmanian Parliamentary Greens

Thursday, 14 June 2018

David Metcalf
General Manager, Glamorgan Spring Bay Council
9 MELBOURNE STREET
PO BOX 6
TRIABUNNA TAS 7190

Dear Mr Metcalf,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Cambria Estate draft planning scheme amendment.

This development proposal is like nothing this island has ever seen before and it should not be approved.

We contend the project represents a significant threat to local businesses, the environment, and the wellbeing of local residents.

It represents a precedent for future large scale developments across the state. The Greens welcome good developments in the right places, and we welcome the visitors who come to experience Tasmania's wildness and beauty. We believe the access of visitors has to be carefully managed, however, to protect our island's environment and treasured way of life.

The details of our concerns with this proposal are as follows.

The Project

The Cambria Green Specific Area Plan (SAP) is requesting zoning and planning amendments to 3,185 hectares of land around Swansea, Cambria and Dolphin Sands.

The Cambria Green Masterplan Concept (pages 48 to 51) includes the 'potential to facilitate the following development':

- 139 villas and units, wedding and function facilities within the Cambria Homestead Precinct;
- 161 villas and units along the Meredith River;
- an 80 unit health retreat and 150 room resort in the Hills Resort Precinct;
- 70 villas and 240 units of tourist accommodation below the Cambria Sky Hotel;
- a major conference centre; and
- an 18 + 9 hole golf course with 20 accommodation units.

If approved, Cambria Green would have no requirement to stick to their outlined project in any way, and Council would have little control or right to refusal for the project.

The SAP would allow significant changes to building heights, set-backs and open the way for subdivision. The SAP also does not prescribe building materials and colours to be used.

Local Economic Impacts

In Beijing, China, on April 21, 2018, Cambria Green Tourism and Agriculture Pty Ltd signed an agreement with Beijing Lidaohengtong Culture and Art Co to jointly develop the 'Cambrian Culture and Art Town'. The stated purpose is to make the Cambria Green precinct in Swansea/Dolphin Sands into a purpose-built town specifically for Chinese cultural tourism, leisure and old age/palliative care.

The Cambria (Homestead) Village proposes to create an alternate shopping and cultural centre outside Swansea with shops, cafes, restaurants, pharmacy, galleries, medical facilities and aged care.

Rather than bringing visitors into the area, the project appears set to create a self-contained enclave, which may in fact discourage the residents and visitors within it to use local businesses.

The project is designed to cater to a specific demographic of Chinese citizen who wants to leave home without actually leaving home. There is the very real possibility the workforce will principally be sourced via 457 visas.

Foreign Influence

Any sizeable Chinese development, particularly overseas, has to be supported by at least one level of government in China.

All levels of government in China are intensely interested in acquiring overseas land and infrastructure. Tasmania is an ideal target. It is a large, unspoilt jurisdiction, which has geographic importance as an essential stop on the air route from mainland China to the Antarctic continent. There is strong evidence of rapidly building Chinese business activity in Tasmania over the last several years.

The Chinese Communist Party government has a long-term strategic objective that clearly involves the land of Tasmania. The fact the Cambria Green project has proceeded this far, without any query from any level of government in Tasmania or Australia about the impact of these strategic objectives on the sovereign security of our country, indicates the approach used by the Chinese Communist government is a successful model of land acquisition.

If this development is approved, it may prove to be the foundation for further acquisition of large parcels of land by companies that have both the backing of the Chinese Communist Party and are financed by Chinese state-owned banks.

Environment, Social and Resource Impacts

Prime agricultural land is valuable. Significant portions of the development area are zoned agricultural, including much of the land proposed to accommodate many hundreds of tourists within a Cambria Green estate.

The East Coast around Swansea has a relatively low rainfall. The development would require a significant, readily accessible water supply to maintain the 140 hectare, 27-hole golf course. This course would be located immediately adjacent to the Dolphin Sands aquifer – a vital and precious fresh water supply for residents.

We are extremely concerned that Council did not consider water requirements before progressing the rezoning process. The Council has failed to conduct the due diligence in this regard, potentially at significant future cost to local residents.

This major development has the potential to severely and negatively impact upon threatened vegetation, highly vulnerable migrating shorebirds and other declining species. Moulting Lagoon is an internationally-recognised RAMSAR wetland potentially affected by pesticide and chemical run-off from the proposed adjacent golf course. The Meredith River mouth is critical habitat for nesting shore birds – yet this sensitive environment is proposed to be given over for multiple accommodation units.

The existing small landing strip is located on land zoned Significant Agriculture. The Masterplan describes an ‘improved airstrip to service fly-in guests, provide scenic flights ...’, and the developer has stated publicly up to 20 flights per day would be possible.

As part of a development of this scale and intensity, traffic would increase dramatically, heightening risk for both people and wildlife.

Local governments are required to provide for the fair, orderly and sustainable use of air, land and water. Were the Cambria Green development to be approved, we believe it would set a highly concerning precedent. It effectively provides a planning loophole, where a Specific Area Plan can be used to wholly avoid a range of resource management and planning processes that would normally be required.

We add the voice of the Greens to the many east coast residents who are speaking out loudly about this development application. They understand its approval would ensure the effective daylight robbery of their arable land and planning rights, and degradation of their community’s culture, their water resource, their amenity, their property values, their local biodiversity, their road safety, and the beauty and tranquility of the Dolphin Sands region.

Yours sincerely,



Cassy O’Connor MP
Leader of the Tasmanian Greens



Rosalie Woodruff MP
Greens’ Planning Spokesperson