

1/3/2009

Benjamin Arthur

Dear Executive Commissioner

Re Proposed Ralphs Bay Canal Development

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed canal estate development at Ralphs Bay. Whilst I have every faith in the Resource Planning and Development Commission's ability to independently assess this proposal, I feel obliged to urge you to consider the voice of the Tasmanian community.

If the RPDC allows this project to proceed, it will set a worrying precedent for future coastal developments in Tasmania. Why should a publicly owned Conservation Area be sold to an investor merely for their gain? Ralphs Bay was declared a Conservation Area with good reason. A considerable amount of time and money was spent in the process of establishing this protected area. Why then should it simply be ignored?

Secondly, the Draft Integrated Impact Statement released by Walker Corporation clearly shows this development will have a significant impact on the shorebird community of Ralphs Bay, an internationally significant wetland for a vast array of migratory shorebird species. These species are already under enormous pressures elsewhere along their migration routes. The Tasmanian and Australian governments both have a responsibility to ensure the protection of vital foraging sites for these species. Shorebird use of Ralphs Bay is concentrated around the northern edge of the bay, the area where the development is proposed. Walker Corporation's assumption that they can simply move the birds elsewhere displays a clear lack of understanding of ecological processes. I trust the RPDC will consider the ecology of the area more thoroughly.

And lastly, canal developments are old fashioned and outdated. Having been recently banned in Victoria, the huge detrimental effects of such developments have been proven many times over. Tasmania should be a smart state when it comes to managing its valuable coastal areas and not make the same mistake as other Australian states. Please, leave Tasmania's beautiful coastline canal free by not approving this hugely inappropriate and unpopular development, and in doing so, set a precedent for future coastal developments in this state.

Signed,



Benjamin Arthur