

24 February 2009

Executive Commissioner
Resource Planning and Development Commission
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To whom it may concern

PROPOSED WALKER CORPORATION DEVELOPMENT IN RALPHS BAY

We welcome efforts to facilitate appropriate development in Tasmanian areas that will not be adversely impacted by it.

We understand the Resource Planning and Development Commission considers development applications on merit against short and long term environmental, social and economic criteria. In reaching a decision to support or oppose the Walker Corporation's proposal (or any similar proposals in coastal areas) please be rigorous and balanced in your assessment, and publicly disclose the full rationale for your decision.

Please note our opposition to this Development and consider the issues that follow.

Tasmania's environment is unique and this attracts people to visit and live here. Walker Corporation's development substitutes little more than a common imported pattern of suburban living in place of an attractive vista, public recreation opportunities (water sports) and a nature conservation area.

The proposed pattern of development is contrary to desirable and sustainable urban development principles. Development of this type is opposed elsewhere. The Proposal is low density and expands urban sprawl, despite decades of evidence to discourage this. Government and community expenditure (collected from rates and taxes) to maintain this infrastructure over its lifespan will be high - arguable higher than the economic stimulation it will provide during construction.

Expensive residential properties by themselves in an area discourage social diversity (they become like gated communities) – diversity is a prerequisite for healthy communities.

The scale of this Development (too large) compared to the likely market demand at the likely property prices is arguably mismatched. What security is

being offered by Walker Corporation if they leave a partially complete mess or fail to deliver the spruiked benefits?

Arguments for a development in the middle of Ralphs Bay (or any bay) based upon over population, scarce land or resources are unjustifiable in Tasmania. There are many other more appropriate, but perhaps less profitable sites to develop in Tasmania.

Government's foresight to protect large areas of Tasmania in parks and reserves is significant and appropriate. Ample publicly available evidence demonstrates that destruction of natural habitat leads to flora and fauna extinction, long term community poverty, and costly problematic consequences like pollution. The scale and type of development proposed for Ralphs Bay is inappropriate and incompatible with this nature conservation area. It may be argued that nature adapts (animals and plants find other places to live); however this Development if approved is likely to set a precedent. It will be the sum of many developments like this that will permanently damage Tasmania's environment. Undeveloped and unspoilt coast in Australia is becoming rarer, which is perhaps why Walker Corporation is now in Tasmania.

We encourage the RPDC to value and protect what makes Tasmania unique, facilitate development that provides sustained employment based upon our international competitive advantages, and encourages more environmentally sustainable towns and cities. Walker Corporation's proposal for Ralphs Bay contributes little to these goals.

Yours sincerely

Andrew and Susan Wagg