

Jim Henley

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Resource Planning and Development Commission
144-148 Macquarie Street
Hobart TAS 7000

Dear Commissioners

I wish to put forward my comments in relation to the proposed pulp mill and associated activities by Gunns Ltd.

This representation not being one of a technical nature I expect may not be given much consideration, however I know that I would always regret it if I did not air my views.

This proposed pulp mill was initially attempted to be sold to the general public as one of worlds best practice and technology, it has since demonstrated clearly that it is not.

Any discharge of pollutants such as dioxin I believe should be enough alone to disqualify or reject this proposed pulp mill. And we now know that not only will there be pollutants discharged directly into the sea, there will be discharges into the atmosphere. And as I understand planning law this constitutes an irrefutable violation of the precautionary aspects of schedule one of the LUPA Act.

I believe that if the discharges from this mill were as pure and clean as the proponent would have us believe then they would not have to be pumped three kilometres to sea and one hundred and sixty metres into the air.

Like many people that live on this small island of Tasmania I enjoy the health benefits of god clean rain water collected off our roof and held in water tanks. Any atmospheric pollution that will be generated form the pulp mill must result in some degree of contamination of rain water.

The insidious rationale of all proponents of the pulp mill is one that prioritises economics over and above environmental and public health.

Tasmania's land and resource management system has involved an enormous amount of public input in its formation and it has been specifically designed to provide priority protection to our natural resources and hence a safeguard for the welfare of the public.

This invaluable safeguard system must neve be for sale. Our land and resource management system must be held high above governments and wealthy industrialists that believe that they can buy our safeguard system with great fists full of dollars and promises of prosperity.

The best news for a long time came recently in the land mark action of the King Island Council and RPDC to provide protection for agricultural farming land against plantation forestry practices. I along with many others are very grateful to the King Island people and RPDC for the excellent move.

If only the good old b.o.d Council had the substance to follow suite! Even if they could find it within themselves it is a bit late at least for some very large pastoral properties in the South Esk River basin.

This brings em to a little story that I wish to share with you of my experience in this area. It concerns Environmental Impacts that have been occurring now for some time in preparation for the pulp mill. I am sure you will not read of this in the forty three volumes etc, etc by Gunns.

After Gunns had purchased and then ripped the beautiful pastoral property of evercreach to shreds with a bulldozer armed with large ripping claws. Then they demolished one of, if not the largest dairy in the country. Following this the chemical spray units appeared on the landscape to proceed poisoning the land. Then 1080 signs were nailed to fence posts everywhere, poisoning of the wildlife had commenced.

Where once we drove along the road toward Mathinna enjoying the vast expanses of lush green pasture land, now suddenly it resembled a war zone of sad hopeless destruction.

Then Gunns proceeded further to buy out the adjoining property extending from Mathinna through and up into the beautiful Tyne Valley. A very spectacular valley on the eastern side of Ben Lomond where one of few remaining groups of wedge tailed eagles have peacefully existed along with the existence of the mountain.

At this time the state elections were on and Gunns were making statements about pulling out on the pulp mill. It looked very much like an electoral stunt and I imagine that they really did fear the ultimate spanner in the works, that being the potential of the Greens having the balance of power.

So the giant bulldozer lay still during this time near the old cattle yard in the Tyne Valley. Then I believe on the night of the election results when Lennon emerged victorious, the giant bulldozer sprang back to life and proceeded to rip the Tyne Valley pastoral property to shreds. Then came more chemical spray and 1080 signs everywhere.

And where we once drove in stops and starts along the Tyne Road at night at 25kph to avoid running over the countless numbers of quoll running zig zag sometimes for 50 metres up the centre of the road and pademelon that would all be playing and feeding along the road side. We recently drove along the old gravel Tyne Road and there was not one to be seen.

The wedge tailed eagles and white goshawks of the Tyne Valley can't tell if the animal that they are about to eat is full of poison.

Chemicals and toxins always find their way into the waterways and it is a constant disturbance to me to be aware of what the people of Launceston and other areas are drinking in their water supply.

Politics government and big business are all rife with treachery and corruption, bearing testimony to this I believe, is the recent attempt by the Solicitor General to interfere with the King Island action in relation to the protection of their agricultural land. I sincerely hope that in this case, perhaps the greatest test case ever for the RPDC that it can continue to stay above all corruptive influences.

The RPDC is the only hope that ordinary people have in the safeguarding of clean air, land and water which we all depend on for a good clean healthy life.

The safeguarding of environmental and hence public health should be the paramount consideration above any amount of economic factors and it must be applied in the most stringent precautionary manner.

I believe that too often national health and safety standards are used to justify a practice thereby appeasing any public concern.

Where there is any question or doubt about the adequacy of such standards. The standards themselves should not be used to overrule the safeguard of precaution.

Particularly where public health is an issue, avoiding the "remedying or mitigating" of adverse effects should be paramount.

Yours sincerely
Jim Henley

**Handwritten submission. Typed by RPDC.*