

Re: Representation objecting to: 43.2021.1.1 MCGinness Rd Carlton River -
Rezone land from rural resource to rural living and rural living B & 12 Lot
Subdivision - QC Newitt.

To: The General Manager Sorell Council, 47 Cole St, Sorell.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my objection to the above proposed subdivision that among other impacts, will have a significant adverse effect on a pair of endangered Tasmanian Wedge Tailed Eagles (*Aquila audax fleayi*).

The proposed subdivision encompasses an area that contains two mature giant cypress pines (*Macrocarpa* sp). The eagles have been utilising these trees for resting, hunting, feeding and training juveniles for many years. Their actual nesting site is nearby on an adjacent block, but they spend most of their time perched atop these trees from where they hunt locally abundant wild geese, hares, rabbits and occasionally scavenge on sheep placenta during lambing season.

As a land owner in an adjacent subdivision I have observed the birds for many years myself. However, my neighbours' property is within clear line of sight of the trees and has a 500+ date stamped photographic record and detailed written description of the eagles' behaviour going back to 2019. These images clearly show fledged offspring being fed atop the *Macrocarps*.

Juveniles are taught to hunt in the immediate area and always return to these trees to consume kills. For most of the year, they spend almost all day perched in these trees. It is clear that they comprise a significant component of their habitat.

The current proposal seeks approval to create 9x1Ha lots, one of which (lot 5) will be directly adjacent to the stand of *Macrocarps*. A second larger lot (lot 3) will also be created that will **directly encompass** the critical trees. It is overwhelmingly likely that the impact of urban encroachment in such close proximity to the trees will result in the eagles abandoning them. It could be argued the birds may be able to find other suitable resting grounds adjacent to their nesting site, but this is unknown. Whatever the case, the impact will clearly not be positive for the birds since they are obviously secure and settled in this location. Successful local breeding attests to this.

It is appropriate to note that the Tasmanian Wedge Tailed Eagle is listed as endangered for several reasons. Firstly, the entire population is estimated at <440 mature birds. In addition, the number of breeding pairs and breeding success rate is very low and death from unnatural causes (shot or poisoned) remains high. Perhaps most concerning is that each pair only lays one egg per year, and less than half of those pairs produce a chick. Such a low rate of natural increase does not bode well for the future of the species.

The Natural Values Assessment for the proposal states there are only anecdotal observation records of Wedge Tailed Eagles foraging and no significant habitat for threatened fauna is present. This is clearly not the case.

I would like to suggest that some significant modification to the proposed configuration of this subdivision, including the deletion of lot 5 and lot 3 and the creation of a buffer zone and protected area, is required to mitigate impacts on this high value threatened species, if approval is being considered.

In addition, I am not convinced that the allocated \$6-700,000 to construct 420m of new road will be sufficient to create a decent sealed surface. In an unsealed or semi-sealed state, the new road will likely create a significant source of dust impacts on the immediate neighbours (myself included) both during construction and afterwards, given the powerful and ever-present N and NW winds.

Finally, I would like to suggest that this proposal appears contrary to the intent of both state and local government legislation regarding land use and I do not believe the applicant has made a strong case for approval. For decades, planning schemes and the Land Use Act in Tasmania have recognised the importance of rural and agricultural land and legislated to protect it from fragmentation by incremental subdivision.

Rezoning from Rural resource to Rural Living should only be considered for compelling reasons in appropriate locations and where possible not to the detriment of natural and environmental values. This precinct does not have any significant connection to an existing rural community or urban area and could not be described as a logical 'infill' area either. It does not have any reticulated water or sewer services and is already an anomaly when compared to existing ribbon development along Carlton River.

Indeed, I believe that the Sorell Land Supply Strategy Stage 2 Assessment of Expansion Options (1997) was entirely justified and accurate when it did **not** include this land for potential rezoning. It clearly does not concur with the historical spatial layout of development in the area and the southern beaches generally.

As a local stakeholder it is my preference that if Council agrees to rezone the subject land, that a change from Rural Resource to Rural Living B with larger 10Ha blocks should only be considered.

Thank you for your consideration,

Yours Sincerely,

7th September 2021