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Subject: scenic protections submission
Attachments: scenic protections final.pdf

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To: Circular Head Council

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Submission for the Circular Head Planning Scheme Review of Scenic protections

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

Scenic values of the coastal estuaries and Islands between Cape Grim and Smithton will be the area of the Circular Head planning scheme review that I will focus on for this submission.

What comprises the visual scenery within the coastal islands and estuaries from Cape through to Smithton?

The natural and scenic values present in the coastal estuaries and Islands are interlinked. The twenty six Islands and Islets that make up the area proposed for scenic protections (see Australian Hydrographics Mariners chart referenced page 10) between Cape Grim and Smithton all retain unique geographical coastline and topography and the majority of the island zoning is collectively categorised as **environmental management**. The marine estuary (Boullanger Bay and Robbins Passage) contains a globally recognised (listed by the **International Union for the Conservation of Nature**) critical shorebird habitat for around 25, 000 birds. The Islands and estuaries are unpolluted, full of wild creatures and free of any industrial scale developments that would threaten the current integrity of this large and biodiverse island and marine complex. In terms of scenery; the experience of nature as a central visual component of the Islands and marine area at the site is presently outstanding. In a time when only 15% of the entire world's coastlines are still ecologically intact it is an amazing experience to witness flocks of birds in the thousands, visit a place where there are more animals than people and be at close proximity to iconic creatures like dolphins, whales, shy albatross and shearwater rookeries. There are many marine species important to recreational tourism and a variety of marine flora such as seagrass beds which also act to filter the water quality of the estuaries (and if this is disrupted by development of coastline the water will not remain so clean). The scenic values of the coastal estuaries and islands between Cape Grim and Smithton provide experience of a living natural world, largely preserved due to the present sustainable uses, such as small scale commercial fisheries, oyster farming, recreational fisheries, low impact agricultural activities and eco-tourism. Infrastructure required to develop (proposed wind farms) or change the area radically on a visual scale could/would create obstructions through new roads, causeways, bridges, berthing wharves and also affiliated quarrying, drilling, heavy machinery operation, use of explosives would not to harmonise with the sites existing natural values. Because of the presence of nature in abundance in and around the islands and estuaries, the scenic experience of the location is interlinked with living ecosystems and to assert scenic protections for this area would be synonymous with valuing life.

Why we need scenic protections for the coastal estuaries and Islands between Woolnorth and Smithton?

Healthy living environments are beneficial to the wellbeing of the human race. Scenic protections I believe could be a way to ensure that the integrity of valued natural settings are retained along with all the benefits that go with a clean environment and sustainable investment that respects local community valued places. Without scenic protections for Circular Heads Islands and marine estuaries, I fear the area will be left vulnerable and seen as an easy target by corporations who are looking only through the lens of economic gains, which is an entirely flawed foundational

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2

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

basis for planning because it is one dimensional and also an ideological perspective that all things must be monetised before they can be valued (In my experience, Circular Head residents are more principled in their thinking). In the past, archaic political rhetoric pushed the notion that to protect is to “lock up,” however this is easily debunked as scenic protection will not limit or stop progress, instead scenic protections will guide investment to be correctly profiled for particular regional areas. Scenic protection will help streamline development proposals by ensuring more visually sustainable developments occur and prevent corporations wasting time and money with long drawn out approval periods which are costly and also stressful to local people who have to raise finance for legal fees and campaign for their local scenic assets. Scenic protections for the marine estuaries and islands will support visually sustainable development by assisting the prevention of contentious development projects and provide a clearer framework for large scale infrastructure and locals who simply want to invest and live as permanent residents in Circular Head. Circular Head needs good future planning so that the region can retain diversity of investment and scenic protections would be a way of future proofing the areas coastal identity. When driving into the Circular Head region we are met with signs saying, “Welcome to the Tarkine coast, *a diverse region*.” Circular Head leaders need to plan for the future, as the alternative will be that the regions profile will likely be determined by investments that clash with location.

The shorebird habitat around Robbins Island was agreed upon for protection by a local “Land and Coastcare group” initiated by the local council and Labour government in 2001. . . The land and Coastcare group has dissolved and consecutive governments have forfeited on their assurance to protect the Ramsar qualified habitat. Instead could scenic protections offer some measure of upholding the regional and state governments promise to care for the islands and marine estuaries between Cape Grim and Smithton?

The reality is that the area around Robbins Island, in particular Boullanger Bay and Robbins Passage through to Perkins Island (covering 28, 000 hectares) does meet Ramsar criteria. It was sought for Ramsar listing in 2001 by Birdlife Tasmania with the support of groups like the Tasmanian Conservation Trust. A small local opposition group called Citizens Against Ramsar was formed including a Proponent of the Wind Farm for Robbins Island (please see my reference article below for some key group members and the anti-Ramsar groups ideas). Below: car strong impacts to CH through Ramsar, Circular Head Chronicle, 25/7/2001

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



In place of a Ramsar listing it was agreed upon by the local Council and Tasmanian State Labour government of the time to create a "Land and Coast Care Group" to serve the function of a Ramsar with the argument put forward that the extra layer of protection offered by a Ramsar listing was unnecessary because the locals could manage and protect the area sufficiently themselves. Unfortunately the "Land and Coast Care Group" does not at all exist today. Despite assurances that the areas environmental significance is recognised and would be managed, no consecutive local or state governments have shown leadership by promoting or following up on ensuring the continuation of the "Land and Coast Care group." For a reference to the agreement of a "Land and Coast Care group" please see my picture reference below to the Circular Head Chronicle article for August the 22nd 2001 titled, "Wetlands Safe from Ramsar."

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Left: the lead in front page photograph and caption for “Wetland Safe From Ramsar,” (right) article from the Circular Head Chronicle, August 22, 2001

With regards to the wetlands being globally significant the Robbins Passage and Boullanger Bay wetlands complex is listed by the **International Union for the Conservation of Nature**. In Tasmania the wetlands surrounding Robbins Island are recognised by scientists from Birdlife Tasmania as the most important wetlands in our state. In a media release titled *Death by 1000 Blades* (25/6/2019) by Birdlife Tasmania, Ornithologist Dr Eric Woehler states:

These wetlands are the summer home to more than 10,000 migratory shorebirds. The Robbins Passage - Boullanger Bay wetland complex is the most important site for shorebirds in Tasmania, supporting more shorebirds than the rest of the State combined. It is a critical site in a global flyaway that stretches from Australia through eastern Asia to north of the Arctic Circle in Siberia.

Eric Woehler labels the wetlands a “critical” site in reference to its importance for globally migratory and endangered shorebird species. It can be asserted that the importance of the wetlands site for global shorebird migration for numbers for more than 10, 000 in fact does make it internationally significant despite the lack of formal “Ramsar” title. Scientific authorities recognise the Boullanger-Bay and Robbins Passage as a wetlands important to the preservation of global shorebird species. The presence of these birds gives the area it’s identity and promotes the visual nature experience of the Islands and estuaries.

In reference to the wetlands importance as a critical habitat there are other scientific studies that would support that the wetlands habitat around Robbins Island not be obstructed or impacted by development. Presently there are **no heavy industries or industrial developments** within the Hunter Islands and this is part of the reason that the area has retained its high standards of biodiversity. There are small oyster leases and commercial local fishing operations nearby however, there are also protection measures such as no netting permitted in the Boullanger Bay Robbins passage areas.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

A) **A study reveals only 15% of the worlds coastlines are ecologically intact** (Cox, The Guardian, 2022). In a scientific report by the University of Queensland Authored by Brooke Williams and co- author James Watson (Cox, The Guardian, 7/2/2022). Brooke Williams and co- author findings show that globally only 15% of the worlds coastlines are ecologically intact. Their report recommends that measures be taken to preserve the remaining coastal areas of ecological merit. Robbins Passage and Boullanger bay are sites that have great ecological merit as they meet Ramsar Criteria and this is supported by the scientific community.

B) **“We need to build biodiversity considerations into trade and infrastructure decisions”** (Sandra M Diaz, ecologist from the National University of Cordoba, 2019)

Ecologist Diaz makes the above statement in reference to her other point that it is not enough just to focus on environmental policy with regards to addressing loss of species, in an article from the New York Times titled “Humans Are Speeding Extinction and Altering the Natural World at an “Unprecedented” Pace” (Plumer, new York Times, May 6, 2019). The article covers the issues brought up by a **United Nations** assessment that as many as one million species are now at risk of extinction. Another interesting point made by ecologist Richard Pearson form the University College of London in the same article states:

“If climate change were the only problem we were facing, a lot of species could probably move and adapt. But when populations are already small and losing genetic diversity, when natural landscapes are already fragmented, when plants and animals can’t move to find newly suitable habitats, then we have a real threat on our hands”

The United Nations study emphasises how internationally significant critical habitats are in terms of preservation of species and emphasises infrastructure policy be sited with sensitivity to support habitats so that these habitats do not become fragmented. The Robbins Island wind farm proposal is a poor choice of location for a large scale infrastructure development with regards to critical habitats.

C) **A global study by 59 scientists finds that 60% of animal populations have been wiped out since 1970.** The study of animal populations finding 60% of animals reduced, was part of a report produced by the WWF with scientists contributing form across the world (Carrington, The Guardian 2018). With these extinction rates in mind, the importance of “critical” habitats (as the Boullanger Bay Robbins passage wetlands are referred by qualified ornithologists), become more important when we think globally.

D) **“Destruction of nature is as dangerous as climate change,” Professor Bob Watson** (Carrington, The Guardian, 2018). Whilst a shift from fossil fuels to less harming renewables energy is supported in principle by most people, preference for renewables doesn’t automate that renewables projects can negate being sited sustainably to respect important wilderness areas or habitats. We need preservation of natural habitats to sustain a living planet.

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6

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

From various current scientific reports outlining the threat of global ecological collapse, it would seem urgent that large scale renewables developments need to work in conjunction with efforts to sustain biodiversity. To suggest locations near/amidst critical habitat are suitable for massive windfarm developments infers the purpose of renewables is only to uphold sterile living standards absent of valuing nature preservation. The need for more renewables doesn't force necessity for one wind farm on Robbins Island. With the reality of global ecological collapse, the scientific findings that 60% of animal populations have been wiped out since 1970 and only 15% of coastlines remaining ecologically intact, it can be argued that the value of the Robbins passage and Boullanger Bay wetlands complex for thousands of migratory shorebirds *should* and *does* matter on an International level. Recognition of internationally significant wetlands near Robbins Island *only* with Ramsar listing is a flawed evaluation of worth. Despite criterion for the title being met, the formal title "Ramsar" (its granting) is ultimately predisposed to secondary influence from political, business and local interest groups whose motivations may conflict with the natural environment.

The shorebird habitat all around Robbins Island is already a valuable asset without the need to be repurposed by an industry or corporation. It is much more than a "wind resource" and a rich place of value to the North-West Tasmanian identity. In support of science informing a progressive stance, it can be said that the best "bird strike mitigation strategy" for wind companies is to site wind farm developments (associated bridges, substations, cables, berthing wharfs etc) away from critical habitats and bird flight paths, feeding and breeding grounds.



Left: Red-Necked Stints in the Boullanger Bay area looking towards Treefoil

Island (photo credit Ian May)

High Visibility of Turbine Developments in the North West Islands (Robbins island) is a factor impacting scenic amenity

Renewables developments in the Fleurieu Island Group will be visible from Smithton, The Hunter Islands, Stanley, historic Highfield House, West Inlet, Montagu, Boullanger Bay, Robbins Passage and a collective of the Circular Head municipalities coastal beaches and rural areas. In a radio interview on the Mornings show with Leon Compton (22/7/19) UPC CEO Anton Rohner states that "residents have lived with the turbines at Woolnorth for a long period of time." It is inferred locals are used to living with turbines because we are familiar with the Woolnorth Wind Farm, however the Woolnorth wind farm is not offering a close example to the Robbins Island wind

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7

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

proposal which in recent TASCAT amendments sit at a maximum of 212 metres in height. Turbines at Woolnorth are 124 metres at blade tip point (Studland bay) and 92 metres tall at blade tip point, making the larger Woolnorth turbine 88 metres smaller. The difference to Woolnorth turbines is significant, especially when the turbines will be raised on topography up to around 60 metres above sea level boosting some of the turbines to a height of 272 metres (Along/near to White Rock Ridge).

Using Pythagoras theorem and assuming the earth is a perfect ball, it is possible to calculate height to distance on the horizon visibility of turbines proposed for Robbins Island. A 212 metre high turbine (conservatively) mounted on a site elevation of 60 metres above sea level are calculated to be visible 58.9 kilometres away. Whilst weather and cloud cover will affect visibility on days of good clear weather turbines will be visible into the distance. The visibility will be exacerbated by the low topography of surrounding lands which I will discuss in the next paragraph.

Circular Head coastal islands between cape Grim and Smithton have low topography that cannot compete with tall built structures such as turbines proposed for Robbins Island

The highest topography near Robbins Island is 237 metres on Three Hummock Island and this is only 25 metres taller than the proposed turbine height proposed for Robbins Island. When sited on a 60 metre elevation on Robbins Island the turbines would sit taller than Three Hummock Island by 35 metres. This is significant because Three Hummock Island offers the highest land form nearby.. Turbines proposed for Robbins Island would be taller than any Circular Head landmark and therefore compete with and obstruct the landscape. Here is a list of nearby sites and height elevations in order of scale:

Three Hummock Island (tallest peak) 237 metres

Mount Cameron West 168 metres

The Stanley Nut 143 metres

Hunter Island 72 metres

Tier Hill 72 metres (many Smithton residences are built up along the north/western slopes of this large hill)

Robbins Island 67 metres

Ben Hill Road 61 metres

Highfield House (historic site) 49/50 metres

Islands and estuaries between Cape Grim and Smithton are numerous and interconnected.

One island cannot be treated differently to the surrounding and interconnected area.

Robbins Island and the 25 other Islands and Islets around are not each separately isolated but part of an interconnected biodiverse web of life including significant wetlands for shorebirds through Boullanger Bay and Robbins Passage. Islands nearby include:

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8

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

Penguin Islet
Walker Island
Wallaby Islands
Petrel Island
Trefoil Island
Perkins Island
Bird Island
Short Island
Kangaroo Island
Clump Island
Murkay Islets
Delius Islet
Henderson Islets

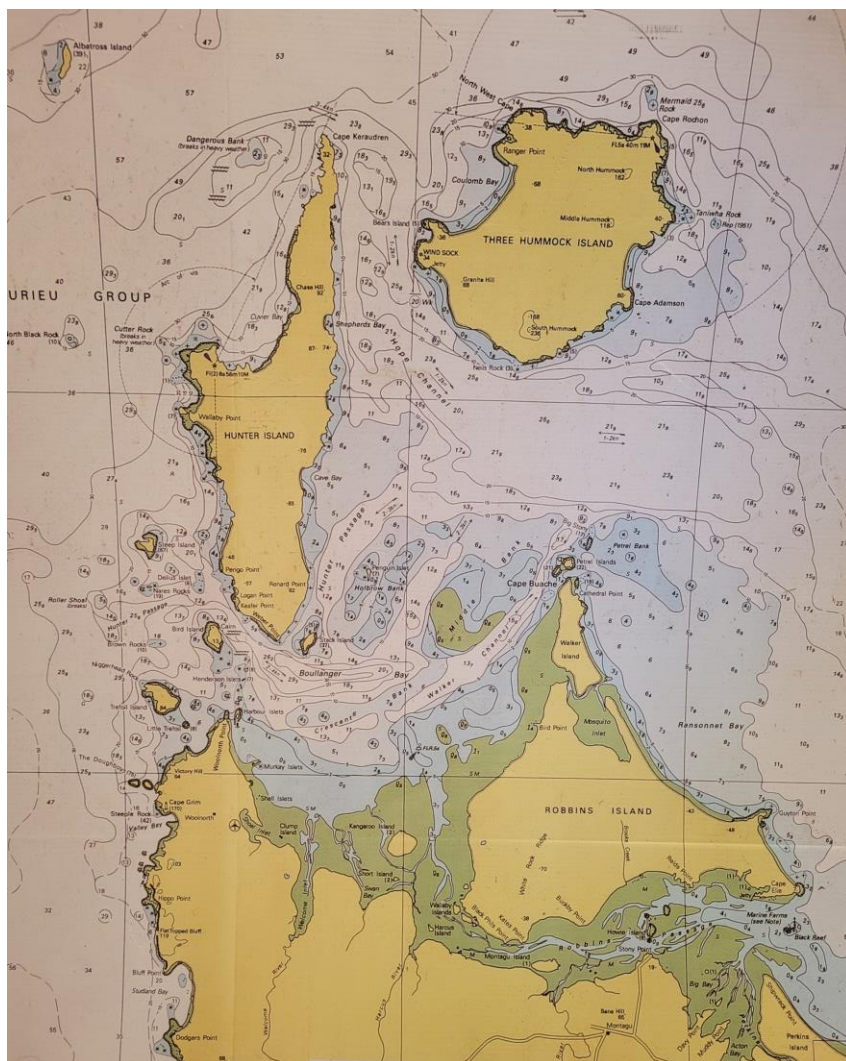
Hunter Island
Stack Island
Montagu Island
Steep Island
Little Trefoil
Three Hummock Island
Harcus Island
Howie Island
Albatross Island
Bears Island
Harbour Islets
Shell Islets
Robbins Island

The above list of Islands amounts to more than 26 Islands (some smaller Islets being collectively named). The most isolated island being Albatross where 40 % of the world's Shy Albatross breed. Many of the Islands are zoned **Environmental Management including hunter Island, Perkins Island and three Hummock Island**. Robbins Island is not Isolated but instead can be viewed as part of a network of Islands and Intertidal habitats. Below is an Image taken from a Nautical navigation map. This seafarers map shows the many Islands and intertidal areas above listed.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Reference: Australian

Hydrographics Mariners Chart, Fleurieu Group

Recreational users increase number of receptors and this influences the scenic value

Recreational users increase the number of receptors to be visually impacted by developments within the Fleurieu Group. In points A, B, C and D I have put some figures together regarding recreational access within the Hunter Islands/Fleurieu Group.

A) **Fishers** – there are 100, 000 recreational fishing licenses in Tasmania and 30, 000 registered boat owners. Recreational fisheries and boating contribute to local economies. Boating makes up an important part of access to the Hunter Islands. Over the summer months the boat trailer parking area at the Montagu boat ramp access is often full. UPC has not included a survey showing numbers of Boat users in the Montagu area around the Islands to make their assumptive conclusion that there are “limited receptors” of the views around Robbins Island.

B) **Campers** - The Montagu Campgroup and has 46 campsites for hire. Each site carries a number guideline limit of 2 adults and three children. At capacity during seasonal use the camp ground is

[Type here]

10

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

full and numbers can amount to 230 people. During Christmas and new year's eve more locals visit the grounds, joining the campers for festivities. The camp ground is open from November through to Easter.

C) **Mutton bird licences** – Latest data from Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania which is responsible for issuing licences show that there were **701 mutton bird Licences** in 2021. In 2018 (their most recent information) a total of 38 percent of licences were used in the Hunter Island group. It may also be added that Indigenous Tasmanians do not require a formal licence therefore more numbers of people accessing the birds above licence numbers can be assumed.

D) **Informal local and visitor recreational use does occur** – bird-watching, wildlife photography, walking, swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, fishing, abalone diving, diving, horse – riding, rock pool exploration/beach fossicking and sailing are all activities that occur in the Robbins Passage and nearby coastal areas. Whilst I do not have specific numbers for these recreational activities, it can be asserted that both locals and visitors to the region would make up these participants.

I would like to highlight that there has not been a proper audit of recreational users for the coastal areas between Cape Grim and Smithton, however I have come across many generalist statements inferring isolation means limited users.

Smithton is close to Robbins Island and relies on views to the coast and the Fleurieu Group/Hunter Islands often referred to as the “Tarkine Coast” for visual amenity.

It needs to be identified that much of the built and rural landscape of Circular Head relies on views to outlying coastline for amenity. Within and adjacent to the Smithton town boundary are many utilitarian structures with no aesthetic value, including an abattoir, chip factory, sheds, light industrial commercial premises and abandoned dilapidated buildings such as the old Duck River butter factory, so the visual compensation for these utilitarian built structures is the natural outlook towards the locally dubbed “Tarkine Coast”. The “Tarkine Coast” which takes in views of the Hunter Islands and Bass Straight between Cape Grim and Smithton. The beautiful natural scenic coastline offered by the Hunter Islands is a visual compensation for the community beyond the utilitarian and adds value to the built and rural areas that are close by, including Smithton, Montagu, areas. Smithton is *only* 15 minutes drive from the edge of Robbins Passage (13 minutes to Montagu) and 17 kilometres away. A large portion of the urban built area of Smithton has views towards the Hunter Islands. All streets east of Nelson Street move up Tier Hill. This can be seen in a town map as referenced below (next page).

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Map Reference: Map Data Sciences Pty Ltd, 2009

Locals who know the area celebrate the value of their Islands and this has been built into the local brand campaign referring to the area as the “Tarkine Coast.” Real estate agents often use the views to outlying islands to promote the sale of real estate in Smithton. In promotional material for Spinks Property Services the company states:

Here at Spinks Property Services we believe the North West Coast of Tasmania to be a hidden treasure, from the rugged west coast, to pristine rainforests, crystal clear waters of our beaches and remote offshore Islands. The team at Spinks Property Services know the area inside out. .

reference: <https://www.realestateview.com.au/real-estate-agency/spinks-property-services-smithon-17825/>

In many other advertisements for property in Smithton a major selling point asserts views to outlying islands. A quick internet search and scan of local real estate advertising for Smithton residences on Tier Hill brings up similar celebratory language applauding the views of Islands as “commanding” and “Majestic”.

The township of Smithton has a population of 3, 881 (according to the 2016 census) and as mentioned earlier much of the town is elevated and looks towards the Hunter Islands. The Robbins Island wind proposal will undermine standards of liveability contingent on natural and uninterrupted scenic beauty for Smithton residents.

Developments need to blend/integrate or harmonise with the topography, vegetation other land features. The outstanding features of the view from Tier Hill are rural, Island and water views. In contrast built structures such as turbines are a man - made kinetic (moving) metal structures and

[Type here]

12

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

their visual appearance is not sympathetic to the natural and rural backdrop. A large residential component of the Smithton town is constructed on North – West facing hillside. These residents are arguably receptors for the Robbins Island wind farm, being that many of the homes are specifically constructed to take in coastal views. Many of these homes comprise the more expensive end of the urban real estate market in Circular Head. Smithton will lose valuable visual Amenity if the views to outlying islands are not respected with sensitive developments that visually complement/harmonise with the high value natural scenic amenity that is presently offered.

The following images offer views towards the estuaries and Islands between cape Grim and Smithton.

Image taken from Ben Hill Road



Image 1 – View looking north from Ben Hill road across Robbins Passage to Robbins Island and Three Hummock Island.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Image 2: This image shows the area where the bridge/causeway hybrid for Robbins Passage has been proposed. The marine and coastal areas will arguably be greatly imposed on by any structure that impacts on the dynamic changeable aquatic landscape of Robbins Passage.



Image 3: This is a view of Montagu area coastline bordering on Robbins Passage looking through to the Western end of Robbins Island where turbine infrastructure is proposed.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Image 4: Montagu looking west towards Robbins Island during fine weather



Image 5: Robbins Passage in fine conditions showing reflective water and pied oyster catchers looking through to endemic vegetation on Robbins Island.

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Rebecca Tyers



Image 6: Medium tide revealing large areas of abundant seagrass on a fine day looking North to Robbins Island from Robbins Passage. The air here smells clean and a little like a fresh oyster.



Image 7: Looking North-West towards Robbins Island from within the Robbins Passage during overcast weather and choppy water conditions. The scene includes a Sea Eagle hunting in the Passage. Although the day is grey the opportunity to see an iconic bird of prey catching a fish is a visual treat to anyone experiencing the scenic amenity of nature.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

Outstanding scenic values connected with nature experiences underpin scenic appeal of Islands and estuaries

The area surrounding Robbins Island has outstanding scenic values. When a person visits the Robbins Passage, Hunter Islands and their affiliated intertidal shores, they are witnessing and experiencing a place like no other on earth with a beautiful fragile ecology . The coastal habitat around Robbins Island is so valuable that the area is listed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. In Tasmania Boullanger Bay and Robbins Passage offer a bigger shorebird habitat than all of the other Tasmanian shorebird sites put together, such is its vast scale (28,000 hectares of land and sea). The close proximity experience of being in the Hunter Islands truly fills the visitor with awe and wonder. The area within the Hunter Islands offers a highly sensory experience of nature including native shorebirds birds in the thousands, endemic flora a fauna, abundant marine life and the sounds of the elements and nature uninterrupted by human activity. It is a truly beautiful escape and all the more relevant today in 2022 when only 15% of the world's coastlines are ecologically intact, according to a study by the University of Queensland, scientists Brooke Williams and co- author James Watson (Cox, The Guardian, 7/2/2022). The Hunter Islands or Fleurieu Group (as also called), offer a unique nature experience that is not disrupted by any industrial developments such as a large wind farm and its affiliated infrastructure (as proposed by Renewables companies) will permanently alter the natural values of this globally significant coastal landmark.

To illustrate some of the aesthetic/visual encounters affiliated with the Robbins Passage and nearby coastline I have provided some photographs featured below:

Birds



Left: Terns (photo credit Ian May). Above: Red-knots

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



Ducks in Robbins passage, looking towards Robins Island



Swans in Robbins Passage looking towards crown land on the Montagu side of the passage: There are over 40 swans in this image yet often there are numbers closer to 100 swans using this area as a permanent residence.



Red-Knots



Above: Terns in the Robbins Passage looking towards Robbin Island. Above: A pair of cape Barren Geese and chicks in Robbins passage on low tide

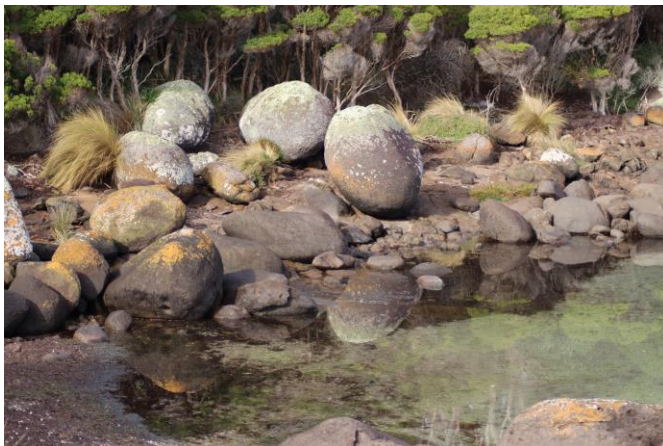
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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Vegetation hugging the coastline on crown land and nearby Islands/Islets includes high quality diverse array of endemic plant species which contribute to the tangible experience of being in and around the Hunter Islands.



Above: A view looking down from Montagu over the seagrass flats on Robbins Passage. This view includes both native marine flora and coastal flora. This view is not disrupted by man made structures and land around the passage retains native vegetation.



Robbins Passage High tide



Robbins passage native coastal plants

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Rebecca Tyers

On this page is just a small cross section of native orchids found in heathland on the crown lands around Robbins Passage.



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Robbins Passage



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Rebecca Tyers

Robbins Passage

Rural – Much of the rural environment in proximity has aesthetic value hinged on coastal scenic views, therefore the impacts on the rural landscape need to be considered for new infrastructure.

The rural environment between Smithton and through to Woolnorth has a low topography. Most of the farmland is converted to Dairy pasture with some pockets of native bush. The native vegetation generally increases on approach to the shoreline of the Circular Head coast and there are larger forests looking inland. Due to the low topography of rural areas there are not landmarks to obstruct views towards Islands and Estuaries between cape Grim and Smithton.

Below I will add some rural photographic references to rural views looking out to the Islands.



A - The above image looks across farmland towards what may be described as a lifestyle property overlooking the Robbins Passage.



B - The above image shows an area of farmland cleared towards Robbins Passage. A number of Cape Barren Geese gather on the pastureland both in the foreground and in the distance.

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers



C - Above is a rural view looking out towards Robbins Island from Montagu.

The above photograph comprises coastal and rural views with farmland, marine habitat and coastal heathlands. This is quite a beautiful view and most land clearing is only for pasture.

Summary

The aesthetic merits of Circular Head's unspoilt coastal scenery provides a visual backdrop to life in and around the region and sets it apart from anywhere else in Tasmania. Islands and estuaries between Cape Grim and Smithton provide a unique coastal environment with more than 25 Islands and islets where abundant natural habitats have been thus far retained. The visual experience of witnessing nature is a key component of the scenic amenity within the islands and estuaries, therefore the natural and scenic values need to be treated as synonymous. The visual merits of Circular Head's coastline and islands is only increased by the region's low topography as there are scarcely any landmarks/structures obstructing views to the Islands and this promotes the need for sensitive developments that integrate with the existing natural landscape. A large scale industrial wind farm with its heavy construction, bridges, quarries, transmission and berthing wharves will not seamlessly integrate with critical shorebird habitats, sensitive marine nurseries and natural coastline. The area in, around and adjacent to the project already stands as a natural asset and iconic local landmark, and to repurpose the location for industrial scale development is not within acceptable levels of change. It is important that renewables or any other developments are sited with sensitivity to promote biodiversity, sustainability and respect of community well-being attached to the visual amenity of significant natural sites. Scenic protections of the Islands and estuaries between Cape Grim and Smithton offers the Circular Head community a safeguard for the community's autonomy over high value scenic locations.

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23

Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers

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Map Reference: Australian Hydrographics Mariners Chart, Fleurieu Group

Map Reference: Map Data Sciences Pty Ltd, 2009

Photographs throughout: Rebecca Tyers and Ian May

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Submission Circular Head planning scheme review of scenic protections

Rebecca Tyers