

## Friendly Beaches and Surrounds Strategic Direction

### Background:

Through the approval process of the Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme the delegated panel of the Tasmanian Planning Commission requested Council provide advice on its strategic vision for the coastal area north of Coles Bay.

### Purpose & Overview:

The following outlines a strategic direction for the area primarily to identify and justify appropriate land use planning controls to be implemented via Council's planning scheme.

The following outlines the physical resources of the area, including scenic landscapes, environmental values and potential rural resources for agriculture. Social and economic resources are also discussed in terms of population and businesses as well as physical services. Current and previous planning regulated is also described as is key land uses.

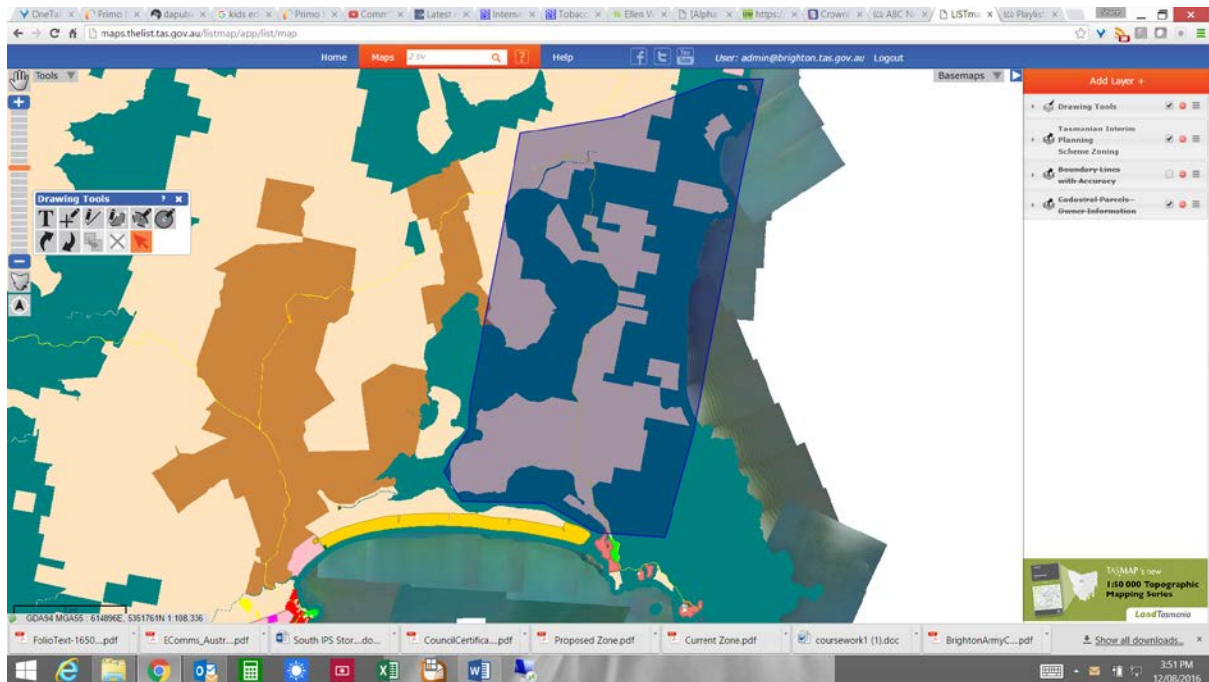
From this background, a strategic direction is established setting out preferred uses and development controls, desired values to protect and maintain and preferred development opportunities.

### Study Area:

The following concerns land generally found between Moulting Lagoon and Friendly Beaches running north from the intersection of Coles Bay Road / Tasman Highway intersection to the Coles Bay settlement.

Much of the land in this area is part the Freycinet National Park of Coles Bay Conservation Area. Moulting Lagoon is a Ramsar Wetland and State Game Reserve. All these areas are regulated primarily by the Parks and Wildlife Service and are zoned Environmental Management. The focus of this report is rather on the private rural holdings found to either side of Coles Bay Road.

This is described by the following image.



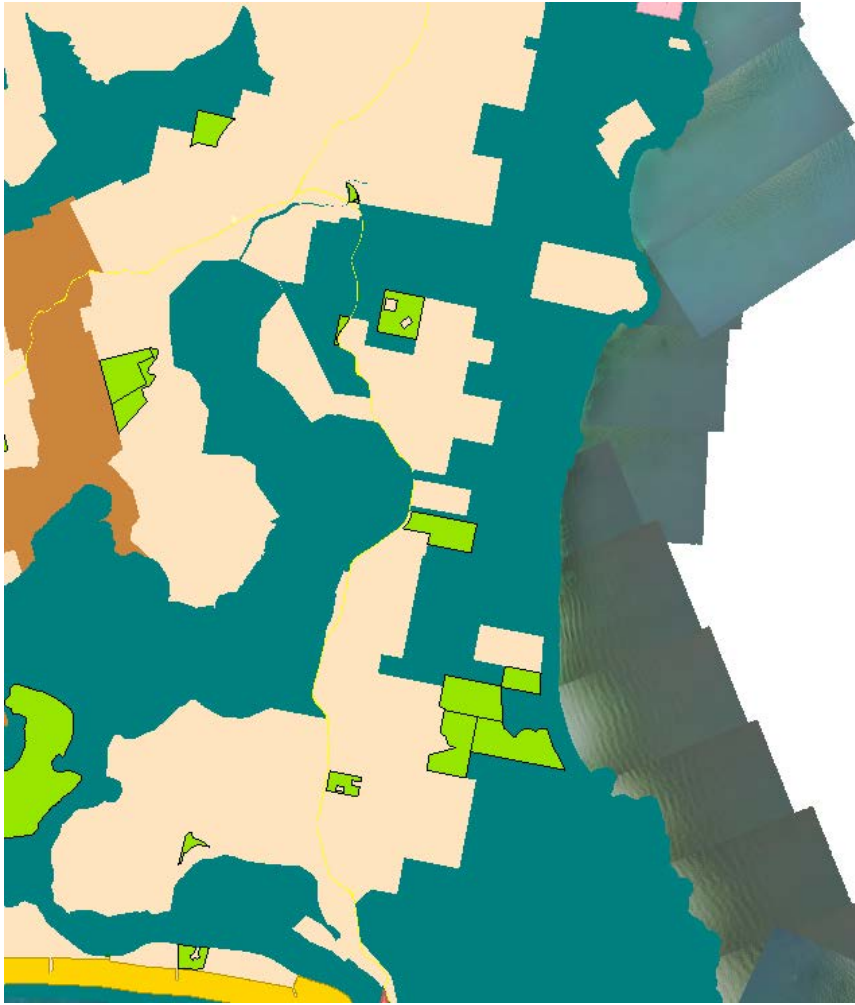
## Physical Resources

The landscape of the area is varied: There are relatively flat and cleared areas along sections of Coles Bay Road. Agricultural use of these areas is limited however some use does occur including a vineyard. There are extensive areas of bushland throughout including on flatter areas and numerous hillsides and mountains.

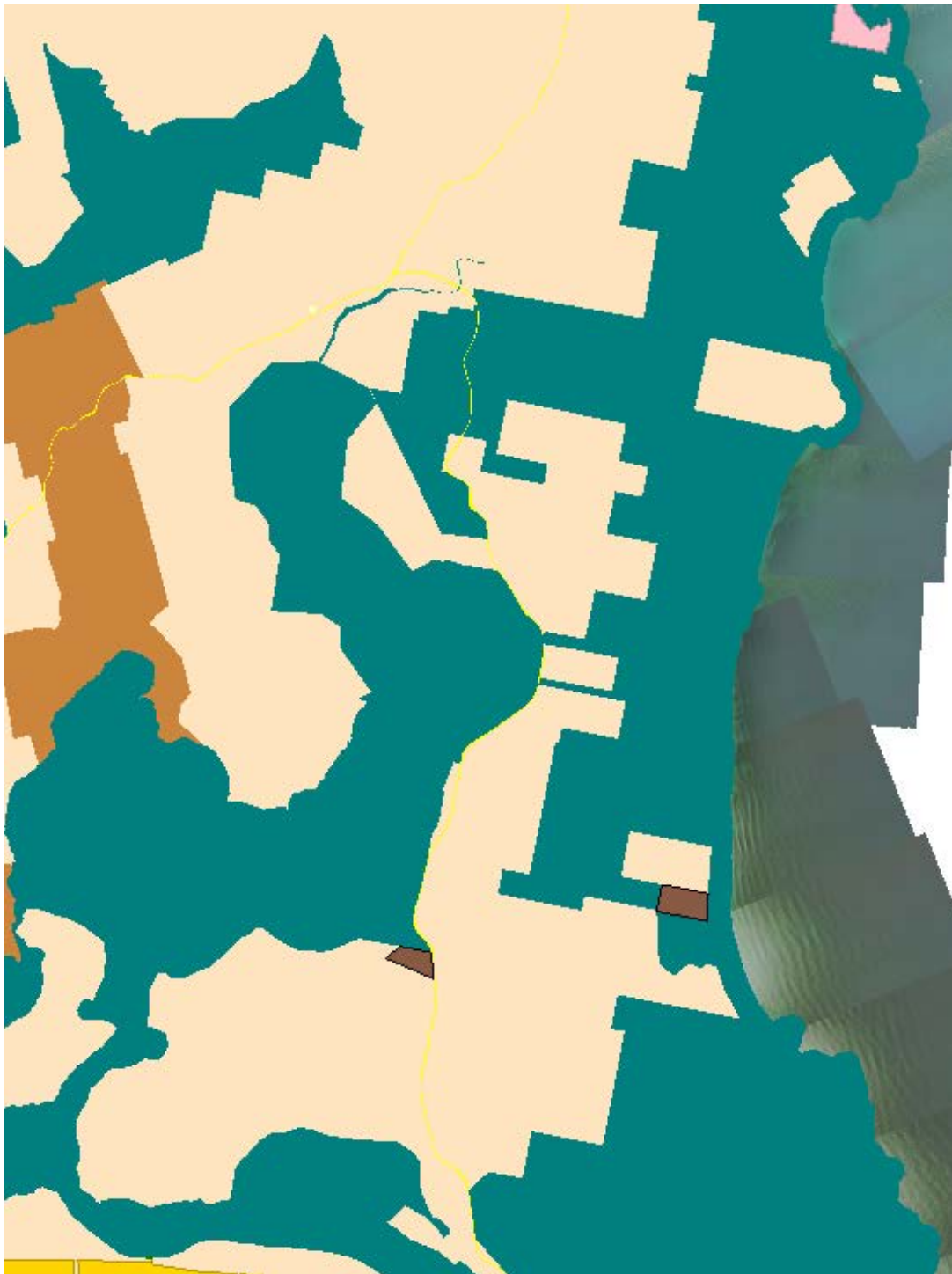
The dominant land use for private land identified by DPIPWE 2009-2010 land use mapping ([www.thelist.tas.gov.au](http://www.thelist.tas.gov.au)) is residual native cover (ie bushland) with other land uses being grazing of native vegetation and grazing of modified pasture.

The following describes key features:

- Approximately 470ha of conservation covenants on land zoned Rural Resource at three main sites.



- There are also two private sanctuary reserves recorded under the Nature Conservation Act 2002.



- Approximately 850ha is under Private Timber Reserves at five different sites.



- There is one mining lease over a 5ha area.





- Land capability for agricultural use is limited; being either class 5 (khaki) or class 6 (blue).



### Social and Economic Resources

In addition to Private Timber Reserves and Mining Lease, key employment generators principally relate to tourism. Operations include

- Freycinet Experience Walk, with lodge facilities based at the southern end of Friendly Beaches Road
- Freycinet Eco Retreat located at 1799 – 1819 Coles Bay Road, and
- Freycinet Air located at the local airstrip at 109 Friendly Beaches Road
- Aplite House, B&B located at 845 Coles Bay Road
- Glamorgan Gun Club, located north of 1297 Coles Bay Road (CT [155805/2](#))

Many more operations are located at Coles Bay and Swanwick.

The population is not known but is limited. There are fewer than 100 private lots within the area and perhaps half of these are vacant.

All land is reliant upon onsite services for wastewater, water and stormwater. Reticulated power is provided and the area will be serviced mainly via Satellite NBN with some areas via fixed wireless. Public road access is limited to Coles Bay Road, Flacks Road, River and Rocks Road and Friendly Beaches Road. Many lots are reliant on rights of way for access. Despite limited services there are no significant issues for private development as servicing levels suit the needs of ecotourism operations.

### **Land Use Planning Regulation**

The Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015 zones public land as Environmental Management Zone and private land as Rural Resource Zone. The previous Glamorgan Spring Bay Planning Scheme 1994 zoned public land Open Space and private land as Rural. Boundaries did differ from today due to establishment of public reserves since the former scheme was prepared.

The former Rural Zone protected the resource potential of the land, premature use of rural land for other uses and scenic and environmental values. The minimum lot size was 80ha but with a discretion to 20ha subject to compliance with the State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land or less than 20ha for an approved aquaculture operation. The zone provided for a number of discretionary uses including visitor accommodation albeit limited to two units per lot. The sole development standards was a 50m setback. The former scheme provided the following intent for the subject area

*The remainder of the surrounding area exhibits a rural character, with a number of prominent landmarks (Mt Paul and Mt Peter) as well as coastal areas that range from rocky shorelines to beaches and lagoons. These features, along with a lack of residential use or development outside the established town boundary and along the Coles Bay Road, all combine to establish the general character of the area.*

The current Rural Resource Zone does not provide for subdivision. It does provide for a number of discretionary uses including visitor accommodation but without any absolute limitation. The Rural Resource Zone provides a greater number of standards, including standards to located new buildings in existing clearings. The current zone would therefore better serve the landscape values of the area whilst also enabling a broader range of potential uses. The Rural Resource Zone however works in a general sense with specific, particular or important values, such as landscape, biodiversity, or waterways, to be managed via Codes.

### **Preferred Direction**

Land use planning should seek to maintain the rural character of the area which, in the main, is developed by the combination of bushland and landscape features such as Mt Paul and Mt Peter, lagoons, beaches and rocky shores. This can be achieved via:

- Along either side of Coles Bay Road, and the land along Flacks Road through to Moulting Lagoon, rural resource use should be provided for. Where environmental values are significant the extent of rural resource use should be mitigated by overlays
- Other areas should be protected principally for their landscape values. The provision of suitably located, scaled and designed visitor accommodation use or residential use is appropriate. Rural resource use should be limited but with flexibility for higher value such as extractive industry to be considered on merit.



A 20ha lot size is likely to be sufficient to protect and provide for the preferred outcomes across both areas. The prevalent lot size is in the order of 20ha, particularly along Coles Bay Road. Thus, 20ha would be consistent with the existing pattern whilst provide flexibility for further subdivision to create new opportunities for tourism ventures whilst not necessarily supplanting the resource base or landscape values.

The above can be furthered by zoning and/or overlay mechanisms. As the draft State Planning Provisions are yet to be finalised it is difficult to determine which approach is more likely to achieve the desired outcome. This is because it is necessary to have regard to what range of uses is provided for in the final rural and landscape conservation zones, as well as the type and nature of development standards within each zone.

Alternatives to the rural zone or the landscape conservation zone are not expected to be available to Council. However, any mechanism to specifically identify existing tourism related uses and provide more tailored planning regulation would be desirable. To that end, any modification to the major tourism zone that allowed for a broader use of the zone could be considered in conjunction with the operators. Equally, any mechanism for local planning provisions to provide a clear permitted path for modifications or extensions to existing uses, subject to meeting all applicable development standards, would likely be utilised by Council.

In summary, the area is one of high value scenic landscape with existing uses comprised of a mixture related principle to tourism and rural resources. Council's planning scheme should continue to provide for these range of uses and focus on protecting key scenic and environmental values; on more elevated land values take on a greater significance and likely require a more focused zone/overlay approach than the current Rural Resource Zone would permit.