

CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

Robin Duncan
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8th August 2019

The General Manager
Central Coast Council
PO Box 220
Ulverstone TAS 7315

Division

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File No

Doc. Id

Dear Sir/Madam,

Representation Re: Scenic Protection Area Overlay under new state-wide Tasmanian Planning Scheme

This representation seeks that the Scenic Protection Area Overlay (Code C8.0) be applied to parts of the southern half of the Central Coast Council area. The Central Coast Council area is blessed with truly remarkable and distinct landscapes and scenery. I live in this part of the shire and know the area intimately, which is why I feel strongly about making this representation.

The purpose of the representation is to advocate that a **scenic protection area overlay** should be applied to the area highlighted in Attachment 1 as the land identified is important for the protection of scenic values at the regional level.

The area highlighted in Attachment 1 identifies four distinct landscape segments. All four segments deserve scenic protection because they provide a powerful combination of scenic experiences, which are cherished by locals and which delight tourists from around the world. If one was to be scenically degraded, it would diminish the character of the entire area.

- Area **A** contains the Leven Canyon Regional Reserve and approaches, including Loyetee Peak. This land is of outstanding scenic value at a global scale. The land is majority gazetted 'regional reserve' and 'potential future production forest' and some small adjoining pockets of privately-owned land. The Leven Canyon Regional Reserve is home to the mighty Leven Canyon, which is a geological feature and tourist attraction of global significance. The Leven River cuts the deepest limestone ravine in all of Tasmania. Importantly, the canyon is easily viewable from the Cruikshanks Lookout. The native forest skyline provided by the approaches to the Reserve is absolutely integral to providing the visitor with an unspoilt wilderness view and feel. Less than an hours' drive from the coastal cities of Ulverstone, Burnie or Devonport, Leven Canyon feels like a world away. Being in close proximity to the port of Burnie, a significant proportion of cruise-ship passenger disembarking there take a scenic coach trip to the Canyon and surrounds.
As shown in Attachment 1, our property is right adjacent to the Leven Canyon Regional Reserve, sharing a high-ridge skyline, and we advocate for it to be included in the scenic protection overlay.

- **Area B** covers the valley of Gunns Plains, to the north of Leven Canyon. As the Leven River leaves the canyon, it creates the fertile plains, which are dotted with dairy farms, potato growing, poppy growing and beef cattle. This area is scenically special because the valley is tightly contained within an escarpment which sharply raises approximately 300m from the plains and, to the south, offers a mountain backdrop. The valley is only accessible by windy roads, which afford breathtaking views of the valley and the landscape beyond. This is a rural view unparalleled elsewhere and most tourists stop at George Woodhouse lookout to take in the scene. The scenery combines with Wings Wildlife park and the Gunns Plains limestone caves to provide an important day destination for tourists and locals alike. The valley forms an integral part of the scenic coach tours offered to cruise ship tourists. Area B also includes Preston Road and South Preston Road, which take tourists south to Leven Canyon and afford sweeping views of Black Bluff and glimpses into Gunns Plains. The scenic integrity of this road corridor supports the visual experience.
- **Area C** contains Black Bluff and northerly approaches including Mount Tor and Loongana, which is the upper part of Leven River valley. Black Bluff provides an impressive visual beacon, which guides visitors from the coast south to Leven Canyon. The 1,339-metre mountain is snow-capped in winter and long into spring, providing an iconic image. There are significant native vegetation or bushland areas with important scenic values. Black Bluff and its surrounds form the quintessential skyline for the southern part of the Central Coast Council Area. The skyline and scenery provide an integral part to views enjoyed by visitors to Leven Canyon. In Loongana, the Leven River is a spectacular wild river. The steep slopes of Black Bluff are covered in native forests of myrtle, blackwood and man ferns at the base, and Alpine vegetation above the tree line. While arguably not as spectacular as Cradle Mountain or Mount Roland, this area is still unspoilt and has much potential for new nature-based hikes and wildness retreats—all within an hour's drive from the coast.
- **Area D** contains the undulating rural areas of Nietta and surrounds, in the south-east corner of the shire. Here, a patch work of beef cattle grazing, private forests and Nietta sward fields provides the drive tourist with constantly changing glimpses of Black Bluff to the south-west and Mount Roland to the south-east, while old farm dwelling and buildings are a reminder of yester years.

The four areas are distinct but visual and landscape connectivity is provided through the Leven River and the Black Bluff reference.

As identified in the 2018 Leven Canyon / Leven River Master Plan, each of these landscapes is magnificent and, in combination, provide a very strong tourist product moving forward. The region is blessed to have such landscape diversity in proximity of Burnie, Ulverstone and Devonport. The existing scenery and vegetation provide a key opportunity for the growth of nature-based tourism in the region. This opportunity is being harnessed by an increasing number of tourist businesses offering tourist accommodation and experiences. Livelihoods of niche tourist businesses underpins much of the region's investment and jobs growth.

While not as famous as Cradle Mountain, the area nevertheless features heavily in tourist promotion for the region and forms a vital part of "Product Tasmania". And it is easily accessible.

The scenery is unique and unspoilt, and the area retains much of its natural vegetation. Inappropriate development would irrevocably diminish the scenic values. The scenic values require

protection. Applying Scenic Protection Area Overlay (Code C8.0) is crucial for safeguarding the scenic values.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a large 'D' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robin Duncan

Attachment 1: Location map of southern part of the Central Coast Council Area

