

Submission to Tasmanian Planning Commission – Central Highlands Municipality

To the Tasmanian Planning Scheme commissioners, I wish to raise my concerns over a number of key areas that the Commission is imposing on our municipal area through the Local Provisions Schedule:

1. Significant changes to the proposed Agriculture & Rural Zones
2. Refusal to allow Council to modify the Meadowbank Specific Area Plan
3. Forcing Council to have split zone titles
4. Refusing to allow Council to remove the redundant Attenuation Zone around the decommissioned & rehabilitated sewage ponds at the Great Lake Hotel.

(1) - The significant extension of the Agriculture Zone into the, at present Rural Resource Zone, around Ellendale and Westerway substantially reduces the particular ratepayer's ability develop their properties. This area has a multitude of small, vacant agriculturally unviable titles, that have been predominantly purchased for retirement purposes ... it's difficult to prove an agricultural use to build a dwelling on a 2 Ha title.

The extension of the Agriculture Zone to the high-altitude seasonal grazing country has the same effect, making it difficult to develop non-agricultural uses, which the area needs if it is to further contribute to both the municipality's & Tasmania's growth.

In the North West of Tas (Burnie City Council), Class 4, 5 & 6 agricultural land is zoned Rural, apparently transitioning directly from their previous Rural Resource Zone, whilst their best agricultural land, Class 1,2 & 3 appears to transition from Significant Agriculture to the newly created Agriculture Zone. The Central Highlands Council area however has only a limited area of about 3 Ha of Class 3. Our best agricultural land is Class 4 in small pockets around our main towns Bothwell, Hamilton, Ouse, Gretna & Ellendale. This land is to transition into the new Agriculture Zone. What is concerning however, is the significant extension of this zone to include Class 5 & 6 land that is used for extensive grazing & is presently in our Rural Resource Zone.

This is not the hallmark of a scheme that is promoted on the basis of the same rules state-wide, and places an unfair burden on the municipality's farmers

(2) - The Lake Meadowbank Specific Area Plan was developed some 10 yrs ago at the insistence of the State Govt to help develop some specific planning guidance around the State's premier recreational lake, which is also a significant source of irrigation water & hydro power. The cost of developing this plan was borne equally by Central Highlands Council, Hydro & State Govt.

It is time now to make the plan more contemporary around the protection of Aboriginal Heritage, protection of water quality as well as further recognising the lake's economic importance. This requires some minor modification of the plan ... not just transitioning it straight across to the new scheme.

(3) - The Planning Commission's advice, when developing our local provisions, was to avoid split-zones titles but won't let council remove these. This will cause significant confusion to land owners.

(4) - New technology has allowed for the removal & rehabilitation of the sewage ponds at Great Lake Hotel and it seems an opportune time to remove the Attenuation Zone that still surrounds the area. Given that this new Planning Scheme has been promoted as reducing red-tape it is difficult to see that this is the case if council has to implement a planning scheme amendment costing all parties time and money.

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All these four points appear to be imposed on the Central Highlands Council seemingly without justification and uniformity. They will add costs to our ratepayers to manage & rectify, and is inconsistent with the concept of a new planning scheme that promises the same rules, state-wide and a reduction of red-tape.

Your Sincerely

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