



## Media Release

6 July 2017

### Community groups launch election-focused appeal on planning laws

Forty-six community groups encompassing a wide cross section of interests will formally launch an alliance that will take a positive agenda for planning scheme reform to the next state election, and seek to reverse the weakened and undemocratic regulations being introduced by the Hodgman Government.

The groups, including ratepayer associations, social services and environment groups and local community constituencies are banding together as the Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania (PMAT). As part of launching, PMAT will release its Platform Statement, a vision for how planning should be conducted Tasmania

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c7031893fc0cdd94ee04c/1499230260575/PMAT+Platform\\_Final.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c7031893fc0cdd94ee04c/1499230260575/PMAT+Platform_Final.pdf).

The groups share a concern for the protection of Tasmania's unique historic built heritage, natural and Aboriginal cultural values, urban amenity and the rights of the community to participate in all levels of planning and development assessments. PMAT is united in opposing the Hodgman Government's new planning regulations, in particular its removal of many long-standing protections for the things Tasmanians value and the fact public participation in development decisions has been weakened or cut out altogether.

'Today is the formal launch of PMAT and our campaign to restore strong planning laws in Tasmania,' said Sophie Underwood, coordinator of PMAT. 'While we have already overflowed the Hobart Town Hall on this issue, today signals a unified push to protect the things that make Tasmania great and ensure the public has the right to have a say in how decisions are made.'

'PMAT will work with all political parties as Tasmania heads towards a state election, seeking commitments to restore a credible planning system in Tasmania and remove the red carpet currently being rolled out for developers looking to make a quick buck from a state that is being discovered by the world.'

Anne Harrison from the Tasmanian Planning Information Network (with links to many professionals and ratepayer groups) says there are huge concerns around the increased densities now allowed for

residential areas, along with the loss of privacy and overshadowing caused by bigger buildings on smaller blocks.

“So many issues were raised concerning residential areas, during the public consultation process into the statewide scheme, that the Tasmanian Planning Commission recommended that the new planning rules be reviewed as a priority. We are now told that such a review could be 2-3 years away but in that time there could be lots of unsympathetic or problematic developments which do not respect existing local character and amenity.”

TCT Director Peter McGlone said that ‘Peter Gutwein’s state wide planning scheme must never be allowed to come into force.

‘It provides no safeguard for endangered species and other biodiversity outside of reserved land. Inside reserved land, over half of Tasmania, the public will be cut out of having any say over tourism developments.’

‘We call on the opposition parties, who may be in government after the next state election, to commit to progressive planning policies consistent with the PMAT platform.’

‘We ask that they commit to rolling back the Gutwein development-first planning scheme.’

PMAT will officially launch tonight at 5.30 pm, Brooke St Larder, for a party and networking event. Invitees include the media, political representatives and staffers, Local Council and PMAT member groups and their constituencies. PMAT will officially be launched by Tasmanian actress Essie Davis and business, communications and brand expert, Gerard Castles and Meg Webb of Anglicare Tasmania, an organisation providing services and support to the Tasmanian community.

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#### **Further Information:**

View PMAT’s planning platform document here:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c7031893fc0cdd94ee04c/1499230260575/PMAT+Platform\\_Final.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c7031893fc0cdd94ee04c/1499230260575/PMAT+Platform_Final.pdf)

View PMAT’s brochure outlining why planning matters and key issues here:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c691accf2107d76be1e65/1499228445524/Planning+Matters+DL+WEB.pdf>

More detailed information of background and the key issues of the scheme can be viewed here:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590bec1386e6c071a646994b/t/595c51e13e00be98e384209f/1499227775858/Brief+-+Statewide+Planning+Scheme+%28updated+March+2017%29.pdf>