



MEDIA STATEMENT

Helen Burnet
Greens Alderman & Deputy Lord Mayor
Hobart City Council

Saturday January 23 2010

FORESTRY - COMING TO A SUBURB NEAR YOU!

A bid by a local developer to have a private timber reserve on the foothills of Mt Wellington has raised concerns for the Greens on Hobart City Council.

Greens Alderman and Deputy Lord Mayor Helen Burnet said she was incredibly surprised when she heard of the application. “The Forest Practices Board will be considering whether or not 60.6 hectares of land is suitable for logging, clearing then becoming a plantation. This is on the doorstep of Mt Wellington Park, and in the backyard of Lenah Valley residents.”

According to the report (Development & Environmental Services Agenda, 18/01/10) for the Council meeting on Monday*, the land is visible from the pinnacle of Mt Wellington, which receives over 300, 000 visitors per year. Ald Burnet said, “Potentially this could have a serious impact on tourism, but it is the implications for local residents that should be considered, and not least of all the local environment and water catchment.

“The land up for logging is habitat for endangered species such as the Mangana beetle and Fairy lantern, and has high biodiversity value. It is also subject to various forms of erosion, is steep in areas, and does not have the infrastructure to support the machinery required for logging operations.

“One major area of concern for me is any possible disturbance to the Brushy Creek Rivulet, which flows into the New Town Rivulet catchment.”

Under the current Planning Scheme “forestry” is an undefined use and therefore discretionary, whilst the new Draft City of Hobart Planning Scheme 2009 prohibits forestry within that zone of Hobart.

“There is a discrepancy between the old and the new giving this developer the window of opportunity to put in such a proposal.” I am not hearing that this is what people want in their suburbs, and I am certainly not expecting that they will want to see this industrial practice marring the beautiful vistas from Mt Wellington”, Ald Burnet said.

Lenah Valley resident and fellow Greens candidate for Denison, Kartika Franks was shocked at the prospect of logging operations in her suburb. “I can’t believe that this would even be considered in Hobart and I do not believe forestry is an appropriate activity for Lenah Valley. What does this represent on the boundary of Wellington Park, so close to our beautiful Mt Wellington?” Ms Franks said.

*On Monday evening the Full Council will consider endorsing a letter already sent by the General Manager opposing the application.

Further information Helen Burnet 0417 284 267