

# East Coast Alliance 2023 AGM

## President's Report - Anne Held



Welcome to the fifth East Coast Alliance (ECA) Annual General meeting.

I would like to express my absolute appreciation to all of you. First, for your attendance, and also for your ongoing support and trust in the East Coast Alliance. This has not erred, and for that I, and we the committee, are extremely thankful and completely humbled – thank you.

### What has happened since we met last year with the Cambria Green application?

- ECA felt the extremely strong arguments put forward by our planners and expert witnesses in the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) hearings, along with local agribusiness Stahmann Websters P/L, successfully exposed real weaknesses in the Cambria Draft Amendment. As a result, the applicant responded with a substantially modified version of the SAP on 22 July 2022, which was accepted as evidence for consideration by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. This further prolonged and confused an already complex application.
- In December 2022, after reviewing all the submissions in response to the alternative draft amendment submitted by the applicant on 22 July 2022, the Commission gave a direction that:
  1. A hearing was to be reconvened on 1 February 2023 only to hear evidence in relation to the applicant's proposed zoning for Precinct 4
  2. Closing Submissions were to be held at the end of March 2023.

You can find all submissions presented on the TPC website.

- The TPC are currently considering all the evidence presented and at some stage the decision will be announced - we are hoping that will be imminent.

There are several possible outcomes following the TPC decision, which we will discuss in more detail in the Q & A session with Caroline Lindus from ERA Planning and Environment following the AGM.

### Fundraising

Secretary Jennie Churchill, on behalf of Ellen France our Treasurer, currently overseas, will provide an update on the current financials shortly.

Since the ECA was incorporated in May 2018 we have been overwhelmed by the generosity of so many people. We could not have run this campaign without this ongoing support - people gave so generously whenever we needed to ask for contributions to meet our campaign budgets - and often gave without us asking.

In the past year, we have continued to have substantial costs of our planners and expert witness representation at the Tasmanian Planning Commission, primarily this year for the closing hearings in March 2023.

We have only been able to represent you and remain active in this campaign because of all your support and donations. Despite the frustrating and costly delays, we assure you we are on this journey until we reach our destination.

Considering how drawn out this campaign has been, it is incredible to note that our membership has increased this year from last year, from 71 paid members to 85. A huge thank you to all of you - members and donors - for your ongoing support and incredible generosity. Thank you all so very much.

## Acknowledgements

I would also like to take this opportunity to say an immense thank you to the following people:

- The **ECA Committee**, Ellen France (Treasurer), Maureen Stevenson, Mitty Williams, Steve Barrett (Committee members), and Secretary Jennie Churchill for their hard work throughout the year.
- Thank you especially to **Di Bricknell** for more than 5 years of excellent graphic design and website support, Di drops everything immediately to produce whatever it is we may need, doing it graciously and without payment.
- All those community members who travelled to the hearings, some of whom delivered excellent personal presentations to the TPC Panel that strengthened the campaign's evidence.
- And especially to Emma Riley of ERA Planning and Environment, who has gone above and beyond our expectations, putting a tremendous amount of time into the hearings, being on the end of an email or the phone almost 24/7, and giving us support, advice, and a lot of laughs.

## History and timelines

In April 2018 our lives were completely disrupted, we were presented with an application to Glamorgan Spring Bay Council that would potentially impact all of us, our environment, our peace, and tranquillity of the place we call home. And this is when our journey began.

We quickly gathered and made a commitment to working together toward a common purpose – to STOP the SAP (Specific Area Plan).

The next step was the immense effort by all of you to write and submit over 600 representations to the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council *not* supporting the Cambria Green application. Emma has said that this was possibly the largest number of representations ever submitted to a 'planning scheme amendment application'.

In **September 2019** a hearing was held at the TPC into jurisdictional issues of landowner consent, with the consequent decision in **November 2019** by the TPC panel that it had no jurisdiction in this matter. This was a win along the way.

This was only possible due to the dogged determination of four members of the community, their relentless research, and persistence in endeavouring to stop what they believed was not right. Thank you to Alain Coultier, Ross Irving, Andrew Wyming and Dr Peggy James.

In **November 2020**, after a very lengthy appeal process, the Supreme Court of Tasmania, quashed the original TPC decision, meaning that once again we were back on the journey to STOP the SAP.

This resulted in the application going back to the TPC to be assessed by a different panel. This process started in **March 2021** with a Directions hearing, then another Directions hearing in **December 2021**.

Finally, the actual hearings took place in **June and July 2022**. This meant the application would be assessed on the basis of planning merits. Here we are in **2023**, five years after the original application was lodged with the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council.

The closing submissions were held at the end of **March 2023**, and today we are still waiting for the TPC decision.

### **Conclusion**

We are patient, we are committed and we have the tenacity to stay on this STOP the SAP journey until we have reached our ultimate destination.

Barack Obama once said *“A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things.”*

Together we have all been extraordinary in staying on this journey and not giving up. Thank you for your generosity, support, encouragement and mostly, for your trust in our taking you on this journey.

So, let's remain patient and positive, and committed to reaching our goal. I am confident we will soon be rewarded.

As Nelson Mandela said *“It always seems impossible until it's done.”*

**Anne Held**  
**President**