



The packed Hobart Town Hall during the meeting. Picture: MATHEW FARRELL

The Mercury

Senator Jonathon Duniam attacks 'anti-everything group' after Cambria Green protest meeting

JACK PAYNTER, Mercury
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TASMANIAN Liberal Senator Jonathon Duniam has labelled an environmental alliance the “anti-everything group” following a protest against an East Coast development.

The East Coast Alliance, along with 14 other community groups, packed Hobart Town Hall about noon on Tuesday to voice concerns over Cambria Green’s Dolphin Sands proposal.

Senator Duniam said developments such as Cambria Green would bring much-needed economic benefits to the East Coast, help support long-term jobs and renew townships and communities.

“It’s important to allow regional Tasmania to thrive and that’s just what the anti-everything group wants to stand in the way of,” he said.

“The East Coast is one of the most visited spots in Tasmania. These developments will help enhance accessibility and accommodation options for tourists.”

But Sophie Underwood, convener of the Freycinet Action Network, which co-hosted the meeting, hit back at Senator Duniam’s comments and said the Liberals should listen to what the community wants.

“We fully want regional Tasmania to thrive, but it’s got to be in the right way,” Ms Underwood told the *Mercury*.

It was standing room only at the event, with busloads of East Coast residents making the trip — with more than 400 people attending, some had to sit on the stairs outside and watch the seven speakers live on Facebook.



It was standing room only at Hobart Town Hall for the protest meeting. Picture: MATHEW FARRELL

“The main objective was to raise awareness there’s a lot of community concern about the future direction of the East Coast,” Ms Underwood said.

“It was a way the community could express how they were feeling ... it sends a strong message to our decision makers that planning matters.”

The motivator for the protest was the Melbourne-based group Cambria Green Agriculture and Tourism Management's Chinese-backed \$100 million resort development for a 3185ha parcel of land near Swansea.

The proposal includes a 120-room luxury hotel, golf courses, 70 villas and 240 units, an 80-unit health retreat, 80 apartments, a village, and function and conference facilities.



Freycinet Action Network convener Sophie Underwood. Picture: SAM ROSEWARNE

State opposition planning spokesman David O'Byrne told the meeting Labor was "very concerned" by the potential impact of the plan, while Greens Leader Cassy O'Connor described the proposal as "grotesquely inappropriate" and "insensitive".

Planning Minister Roger Jaensch was invited to speak but had a prior engagement with the Save the Children book launch.

Third-generation East Coast farmer Tim Chesterman, who also spoke at the meeting, said if people want to enjoy high-rise apartments they "can go to the mainland and find that".

Glamorgan Spring Bay Mayor Michael Kent hopes the council will vote on a planning scheme change next month to allow the Cambria Green development to proceed before the Tasmanian Planning Commission makes the final decision.

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