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The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee on Public Land Development
Parliament of Victoria
Spring Street
MELBOURNE Vic 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

Further Private Development of Public Land in Victoria

I write as a member of the public concerned about the current level of private development activity and development interest in public land in Victoria and our region in particular.

It appears that even where the local community is opposed to further alienation of public land, as for example the current instance of the development of the Apollo Bay Harbour, public views are discounted in favour of developers. I submit that this is a travesty of the principles behind the concept of public land which is intended for public use and enjoyment. I would argue that the views of 'the public' ought to be given serious weight by the governing bodies, particularly the State Government.

The notion of 'public' is increasingly under threat I believe. Private developers' interests often take precedence over the 'common good' or the interests of the community at large, 'the public'. This is frequently supported by government inaction. Although government rhetoric is one of consultation and public interest, the actual activity appears to be behind-the-scenes support of private interest.

Whether or not any private development has a 'flow on' positive effect in the public interest does not equate to the pursuit of policies that retain the public interest at their heart, and not only the current public but the public of the future. The alienation of public land frequently erodes the access of the public itself, as well as the features of the landscape, now and into the future.

I submit that the committee give serious consideration into recommending that the State Government mandate against further incursions into public land in Victoria. Thank you for your consideration of this brief submission.

Yours faithfully

Marina Lewis