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28 September 2007

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

Dear Sir,

**Planned Private Development on Public Land at Apollo Bay**

I am a member of the Apollo Bay and Kennett River Public Reserves Committee and I am also a member of the Western Coastal Board. These comments do not necessarily reflect the views of those bodies but there is widespread concern in the Apollo Bay community about this issue.

DSE and the Colac Otway Shire are planning a development of the Apollo Bay Harbour that includes the building of a 5 star hotel on publicly-owned Crown land foreshore and also the building of Council offices in the same location, as well as other tourism-related commercial development.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy requires that public foreshore be only used for coastal-dependent uses. This is an important principle to uphold because of the limited amount of foreshore land still available as public open space in Apollo Bay. The coast is visited by large numbers of people and their experience depends on equitable access to the public land beside the ocean.

It is disappointing that state and local government planning authorities are attempting to alienate to (a) private developers and (b) local government administrative facilities, even more of this rare public commodity that is currently open to all, both rich and poor. It appears that the open space is seen as "easy game" for public planners because the land is undeveloped, does not need to be purchased at the prices that currently apply to freehold land in Apollo Bay and the planning for the development to some extent is occurring behind a veil of secrecy at a department level beyond the scrutiny of the Planning and Environment Act that applies to private land.

The rationale for encouraging private development on public land is presumably that the costs of upgrading public facilities are partially defrayed by handing over some of the land to private interests. This is essentially a "selling off" process that certainly does not have community support in Apollo Bay.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to expand on this brief submission at a public hearing.

Yours faithfully,  
Neil Longmore

