



Glamorgan Spring Bay Mayor Michael Kent a supporter of the Cambria Green proposal on Tasmania's east coast. Photographed near his home at Orford PICTURE: Peter Mathew

## East Coast communities unite for fight against Cambria Green complex

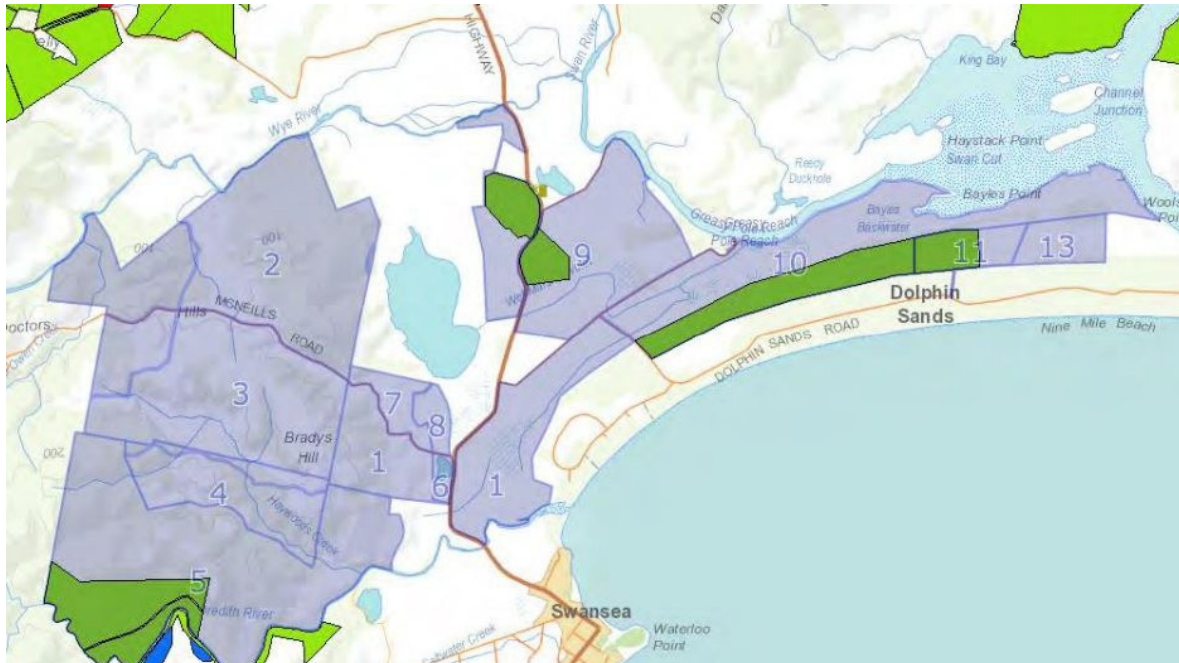
NICK CLARK, Mercury  
August 20, 2018 12:00am  
Subscriber only

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A MASSIVE development proposed for Tasmania's East Coast should be considered as a Project of State Significance, Glamorgan Spring Bay mayor Michael Kent says.

A zoning change, from rural to a special area plan, is to be considered by the council to enable the controversial development, which will be assessed by the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

“Consideration of a development of this size requires planning expertise and understanding and with a lot of money at stake some members of rural and regional councils will not have the necessary experience of larger issues,” Mr Kent said.



Cambria Green resort project at Dolphin Sands: map showing the 3185ha site. Picture from the development application

A Project of State Significance process would ensure it was overseen by planning experts.

Chinese-backed Cambria Green Agriculture and Tourism Management Pty Ltd is proposing the \$100 million development, which could include a 120-room luxury hotel, a golf course, 70 villas, 240 units, an 80-unit health retreat, 80 apartments, a village, function and conference facilities, an airstrip and upgrade of the circa 1820s Cambria homestead.

The development is proposed on 3185ha of land bought in 2016 close to Swansea and Dolphin Sands.

An alliance of 16 East Coast community groups concerned that the development constitutes a Chinese town in the middle of Tasmania will hold a public meeting tomorrow.

A spokesman for Planning Minister Roger Jaensch said the Government had trust in the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission process.

“The Tasmanian Government has not received an application for Project of State Significance for this development and is not considering it at this time.

“The government is aware of the proposal for a new tourism development at Dolphin Sands, which the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council has voted in favour of rezoning.

“This is matter will come before the Tasmanian Planning Commission for their assessment and decision.

### **GLAMORGAN SPRING BAY MAYOR AVOIDS NO CONFIDENCE VOTE**

“The Government and the Minister for Planning has no involvement in the matter, and the Tasmanian Planning Commission is the responsible body to assess and decide upon this development.”

Cambria Green chief executive Ronald Hu represents an international consortium of investors in the project.

He says the development would attract high-end visitors to stay in the area and in doing so would bring more business to existing Swansea operators.

In 2007, Mr Hu was an investor in a proposed \$150 million development at Musselroe Bay in North-East Tasmania.

Spencer Morgan Pty Ltd and Melbourne firm Connell Wagner and Launceston firm CB & M Design Solutions proposed a 100-room, five-star hotel, golf course, 300 strata-title units and a 1.7km airstrip on a \$5.2 million, 1473 ha grazing property named Icena.

At the time it was proposed that residences would not be primary residences and would be occupied for just a few months a year.



Cambria Green resort project at Dolphin Sands: The Heritage Listed 'Cambria' Homestead. Picture from the development application

“People who buy them have to have a permanent address somewhere else,” a spokesman said at the time.

He said China would be the primary market and finance was expected to come from the US and China.

Spencer Morgan Pty Ltd went into liquidation in 2010 with debts of \$3.7 million.

The Tasmanian Planning Commission comprises a full time executive commissioner Greg Alomes and seven part-time commissioners Michael Stretton, Ann Cunningham, John Ramsay, Claire Gregg, Roger Howlett, Kim Evans and Michael Brewster.

Mr Kent said the owners of Tasmanian land assets needed to decide whether they were merely investors or developers.

The Triabunna woodchip mill site was an example of where there had been little movement since former Wotif owner Graeme Wood bought the site from Gunns Ltd in 2009, he said.

“A lot of these people including foreign investors come out with great ideas but then nothing much happens,” he said.

“When do they start to put a spade in the ground? “They need to be careful about raising expectations in local communities if they are just investing over a period of time in an asset.”

Mr Hu said the plan would enable visitors to stay on the East Coast rather than head back to Launceston or Hobart after golf or a wedding.

“These high-end people are normally wealthier than the normal tourists, so based on that logic that is how we have framed our business model,” he said.

“We won’t decentralise the community and we are not going into competition with the local business and operators.”