



WEST COAST REVIVAL

Labor's vision for Tasmania's West Coast

Tasmanian
Labor 

Since the announcement of the closure of the Mt Lyell and Henty mines, Labor has been consulting with the private sector and community organisations to identify job-creation opportunities in and around Queenstown.

The following proposals are part of Labor's vision for Tasmania's West Coast.

Labor is committed to putting politics aside and working in a bipartisan way to revitalise the West Coast.

There is no shortage of ideas or determination in the Queenstown community to bounce back from the current hardships.

This document is by no means an exhaustive list, but it does contain proposals that could get underway within a relatively short timeframe to create jobs and economic activity.

What is needed is leadership and a modest level of government funding to kickstart these proposals.

NBN The Federal Government must make Queenstown the next site for the NBN rollout.

An immediate start will see more workers in the town installing the infrastructure, spending money at local businesses from the local service station to the hotels.

In the long-term, it will set up Queenstown to be at the cutting edge

of technology, helping local businesses tap into the enormous benefits the NBN offers.

It will also help the school, health providers and indeed all residents in Queenstown.

It is a show of faith that the town will not be abandoned and can grow.

WHISKY Tasmania's whisky industry continues to go from strength to strength with international recognition and growing sales.

Adding a West Coast stop to the Tasmanian Whisky Trail would provide a link between the popular Hellyers Road distillery in Burnie and businesses in southern Tasmania.

Start-up costs for a distillery would be between \$100,000-\$300,000.

Queenstown's rich history would provide excellent marketing opportunities for a West Coast made product. Tasmania's whisky community prides itself on working together and generous assistance is provided to any new operators.

Whisky tourism has significant growth potential as Tasmania's reputation grows. In the US, Kentucky's 'Bourbon Trail' attracted nearly 600,000 visitors in 2013.

CULTURAL TOURISM

With its unique blend of history, stunning scenery and character Queenstown is well placed to capitalise on cultural tourism.

The biennial Queenstown Heritage and Arts Festival is already tapping into the success of Ten Days on the Island and Dark Mofo.

Links with established events and organisations like TMAG could be

formalised to bring attractions to the West Coast in the gap years of the Heritage and Arts Festival.

Labor also supports investigations into the establishment of a Geopark in the Queenstown region.

A geopark would highlight the region's geological significance and mining heritage without fettering future mineral exploration.

GOLF

A proposal exists to develop an 18-hole links-style championship golf course on the West Coast, supported by an experienced golf course developer.

Golf tourism is a growing part of the Tasmanian economy with the two courses at Barnbougle attracting thousands of visitors each year.

The West Coast proposal is world class and would complement developments

underway on King Island and the course planned for Seven Mile Beach.

Like Barnbougle, the West Coast development could attract visitors from around the world, injecting tens of thousands of dollars into the region.

AIR ACCESS

Chartered sea planes already land in Macquarie Harbour, delivering tourists, residents and business travellers to the West Coast.

A joint private/public investment in a larger amphibious aircraft would increase capacity and reliability, without the infrastructure-intensive commitment required to enhance regular fixed-wing aircraft access.

Unlike Tasmania's current fleet of seaplanes, a larger aircraft would be able to operate under IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) allowing for a more dependable service to the West Coast and other regions.

WIND FARMING

The \$200 million wind farm proposed for Granville Harbour is effectively ready to roll out. The 33-tower wind farm has been approved by the Environmental Protection Authority.

The project would create 200 jobs during construction, with several permanent jobs once operational.

This clean energy could also help to "drought-proof" the Tasmanian energy market.

The future of this operation could be made more certain if the Federal Government committed to a renewable energy target. Labor is ready to work cooperatively with the State Government to lobby Canberra to achieve this.

Labor notes that Abbott Government moves to scrap a price on carbon could jeopardise the viability of this proposal.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURISM

The West Coast has enormous potential for mountain bike tourism.

Outside of elite races like Wildside there is very little promotion of the West Coast's extensive network of disused forestry and mining tracks and 4WD trails.

A modest and immediate outlay on marketing, maps and signage would help boost visitation from mountain bike riders, who typically stay multiple nights to explore a region.

Government could also fund a scoping

study to identify additional trails in and around Queenstown catering for a variety of abilities and disciplines, including downhill and cross country.

An independent economic assessment of the North East Mountain Bike Project, which includes tracks at Hollybank, Derby and the Blue Tier, indicated the project could support up to 100 jobs, generate over \$15 million of additional expenditure annually and attract over 16,000 visitors each year.

LAKE MARGARET

Funding should be provided to investigate the feasibility of a major walking track linking Lake Margaret with the end of the Overland Track at Lake St Clair.

The track could follow a route first carved out in the 1850s to give miners

access to the West Coast fields.

In addition to taking pressure off the Overland track, and opening up stunning wildness areas, the new trail would funnel visitors to Queenstown.

MINERAL RESOURCES TASMANIA

The Liberal Government has pledged to move Mineral Resources of Tasmania from its Hobart headquarters to Burnie. If the Government insists on proceeding with a costly relocation exercise, it should at least revise the policy to base the agency in Queenstown in recognition of the combined blow to the West Coast economy of the closure of the Henty and Mt Lyell mines.

Having experts on the ground would help support industry and economic activity and capitalise on future mining growth.

The fast-tracked roll-out of the NBN in Queenstown would give MRT access to the latest in cutting edge teleconferencing facilities.

TANGENT STRUCTURES

Tangent is a Tasmanian company which manufactures purpose-built viewing platforms that can be installed in remote locations with a very small environmental footprint.

The concept has already proven to be successful in the Gorge in Launceston.

Possible Tangent locations on the West Coast have already been scoped including at Strahan and Donaghys lookout on the Lyell Highway.

A cantilevered lookout on the mountainous approach to Queenstown would also provide a unique visitor attraction.