

Corangamite Shire Council  
181 Manifold Street  
Camperdown. 3260

3 December 2016

**RE: Montarosa Pty Ltd. 79 Old Coach Rd Princetown, Vic. 3269**

**Planning Application number: PP 2016/ 126**

for the Use and Development of an Integrated Eco-Tourism Facility being a Residential Hotel, Group Accommodation, Restaurant and Pleasure Boat Facility, Removal of Native Vegetation and Alterations of Access to a Road Zone Category 1 and Application for Liquor Licence

AND

**Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria - Works Approval Application number 1002429**, for the construction and operation of a wastewater treatment plant at the proposed Eco-Tourism Facility

I write in objection to this proposal.

The development of tourism accommodation, including eco-friendly facilities is clearly supported by Council's Tourism and Economic Development policies.

However Council's Planning and Environmental policies do not support a development of this scale on the proposed site, on a floodplain adjacent to an environmentally fragile estuary and wetland.

Specifically, the proposal does not meet the purposes nor decision guidelines of the Planning Overlays that Council has applied to protect this site: Environmental Significance, Significant Landscape and Wildfire Management.

The proposal is not consistent with the Purposes of the Rural Conservation Zone:

- Protect & enhance the natural environment and natural processes ...
- Protect & enhance natural resources & biodiversity
- Encourage development which is consistent with sustainable land management & land capability practices, and **which takes into account the conservation values and environmental sensitivity of the locality** (my emphasis)
- Conserve ... open rural and scenic non urban landscapes.

This proposed development, far from being "Eco" (which I presume implies Ecologically sound/ sustainable) is at odds with the principles of the Victorian Coastal Strategy in many details, particularly in the risk it proposes to the important "natural coastal process" of estuary closure and opening. The estuary's management is already balancing marine environment protection with protection of man-made 'assets' from flooding. Adding a private 'asset' of this

scale will unnecessarily increase the pressure to artificially open the river mouth, with potentially disastrous environmental outcomes.

The strategies the proponent offers to minimise flooding risk to the Montarosa property (raising the road level) will impact on the natural dissipation of any flood waters, resulting in higher flooding risk to neighbouring properties, such as the existing Rec Reserve camping area.

Further, Council has in recent years invested considerable resources to developing two important Amendments to the Corangamite Planning Scheme –

- Amendment C30 resulted from an extensive study to determine sites suitable for tourism infrastructure in order to provide increased certainty and direction for private sector investment. This site at 79 Old Coach Rd was NOT identified as a suitable site. In fact a nearby site located on higher ground (Site 17 Princetown East) was rejected by the Planning Panel, and abandoned by Council as a potential rezoning site, for multiple reasons including its location partly within a floodplain, having a boundary with a National Park creating interface issues, and challenging site access issues. These ‘reasons’ all apply to the Montarosa Site.
- Amendment C29 resulting in SL04 which aims to minimize the visual impact of buildings and structures on the (Gellibrand River) valley floor, for the two reasons that it is a floodplain, and a visually important landscape. It is not possible to blend the proposed two-storey Montarosa buildings into the natural landscape; the indigenous vegetation would not even adequately screen a single-storey structure on this site. And there is nothing in this Significant Landscape that has any relationship to the proposed ‘Lookout’ tower.

I am extremely concerned about access to this property for the number of guests being proposed. The access is currently a gravel road exiting on a sharp bend of the Great Ocean road, and a single lane bridge, both of which are currently shared with walkers and cars. The strategies for dealing with the heavy construction vehicles and potential buses for guests is very unclear, and consequently appears very unsafe. If large buses are unable to access the bridge, and the suggested shuttle bus system for transporting guests to the restaurant is implemented, where will the buses park? At the moment the majority of users of this road turn off for a specific purpose – most ‘tourists’ will simply drive past. If the road is upgraded to bitumen to accommodate the increased traffic, it will invite all manner of vehicles to explore where it leads, adding to the traffic pressure.

Regarding the proposed sewerage treatment system, having been a member of the Community Panel established to consider the sewerage problems at the 12 Apostles car park, I am acutely aware of what can go wrong with even the best planned, environmentally sustainable system. The risks associated with locating such a system within a floodplain, beside a waterway are not warranted. One side of the risk equation is likelihood of failure – which the proponent argues is small, while others suggest higher likelihood. But the other aspect of risk is

consequences of failure, and this has not been adequately addressed. The consequence of a failure in this system has the potential to impact on the health of the estuary, the health of the Marine National Park, and the health of the water supply. This is too great a risk to ignore.

I would be affected by this proposal being approved in two ways.

At a personal level, while I live in Port Campbell, our family regularly visits Princetown to walk along the coast from the Apostles, walk across the boardwalk, have a coffee or lunch, or go fishing along the river. The amenity of the estuary and environs that we enjoy will be destroyed by the building of the Montarosa development and the traffic it will generate.

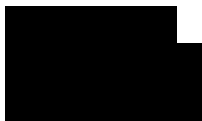
As a business person reliant on tourism, I am very conscious of the asset we have along this coast, that attracts visitors. Particularly important is the diversity of environs that the different towns offer – that cater for different needs. This is recognised in the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan. Council has also recognised (in the C30 Amendment) the importance of protecting the quality of our coastal resources by ensuring further tourism development is appropriate.

The development proposed for this site will damage both the asset we are aiming to protect, and the planning controls that Council has developed to effect that protection.

There are suitable sites within the Shire for the type of development Montarosa is proposing. But this site at 79 Old Coach Rd Princetown is not.

Thank you for considering my objection

Sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.