

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC



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Jordan Crugnale MP

Member for Bass

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22 June 2022

cc. Richard Wynne MP

Dear Jordan

Request for acquisition of land on Phillip Island

We are writing to you about a current opportunity to acquire and restore the natural beauty of land adjoining the Phillip Island Nature Parks managed land at the Rhyll Inlet, on Phillip Island. The land of 32.20 hectares is located at Lot 2, Cowes Rhyll Road and is currently for sale. <https://www.realestate.com.au/property-lifestyle-vic-cowes-700169810>

We believe that a unique opportunity exists for this land to be placed into government ownership and returned to its pre-farming natural wetland condition as part of the Rhyll wetlands and estuary system and not sold as simply a limited development site subject to inundation. This outcome would greatly benefit the Rhyll Inlet wetlands and estuary system, the RAMSAR wetlands and provide extensions to existing boardwalks.

We believe the acquisition would have similar net benefits to the entire community as did the acquisition of the Summerlands Peninsula by the Kerner Government in the 1980s.

Phillip Island Nature Parks have advised us that should the land be acquired by Government they would welcome taking on the management of the land.

Our views on government ownership have also been based on the complex zoning issues affecting the land and a summary of zoning issues is attached.

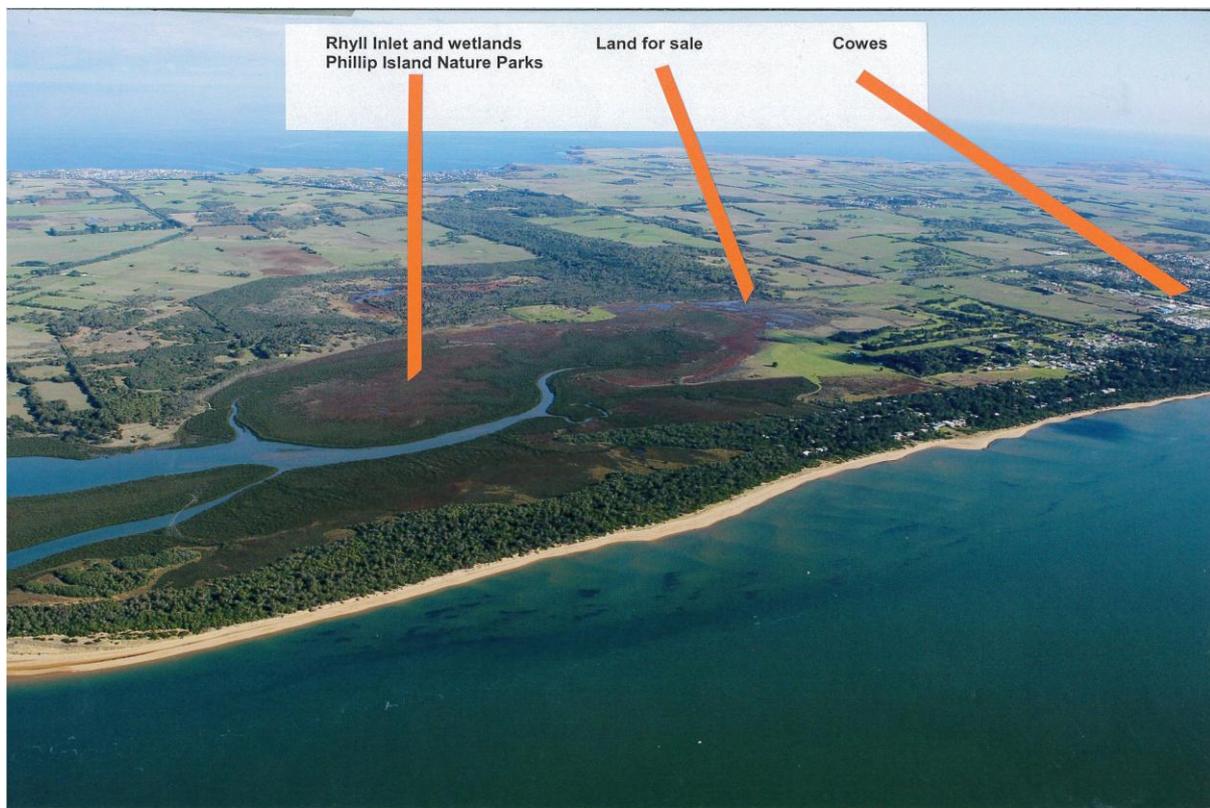
We invite you to carefully consider this opportunity and we would be pleased to lead an onsite tour.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Jeff Nottle

President



Aerial View of Rhyll Inlet, Phillip Island

Zoning Issues

The land is currently zoned Rural Conservation Zone as part of BCSC Amendment C140 in 2017. To protect this land from further degradation and to promote its rehabilitation, PICS investigated whether the land could be rezoned into a Zone that would offer better protection from inappropriate development.

The existing Rural Conservation Zone, RCZ, offers reasonable protection with permits being required for most uses other than a bed and breakfast with max 10 persons. Other domestic and agricultural uses do not require a permit but the allowable scope of these is very limited. A permit is required for a dwelling, a residential hotel, restaurant and for primary produce sales. The suitable land at the SouthWest corner is so small that these uses, apart from a dwelling, would not be viable.

The lot is too small for subdivision.

Our concern relates to the Schedule to the RCZ zone which sets out the requirements for earthworks. It appears that the requirements for a permit for earthworks is limited to earthworks that change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary or to earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater.

This means that other earthworks do not require a permit. For example, further filling around the elevated part of the land to increase the size of the land suitable to build on.

The land to the east and the south of the site is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone, PCRZ. This land forms part of the Rhyll Inlet wet lands and estuary system and is managed by the Phillip Island Nature Parks. The PCRZ zone would protect the subject land

but the PCRZ can only be applied to public land e.g. Parks Victoria or to private land that has an incorporated plan.

Thus, it would be highly unlikely that the subject land could be rezoned PCRZ whilst still being in private ownership.

Distinctive Area and Landscape legislation (DAL)

The Draft Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy contains several maps of Bass Coast Shire. These maps address separate topics and categories such as the Bunurong Cultural Heritage, Environmental Risks, Landscape Character, Landscape Significance and Environment and Diversity.

In each of these maps the Rhyll Inlet conservation area is highlighted for the importance it has within each category. Its importance for significant views within the landscape is also highlighted on these maps.



View of land for sale at Rhyll Inlet next to Phillip Island Nature Parks