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Secretary,

Legislative Council Sessional Committee Government Administration B

Heritage Tourism Sub-Committee

Ms Natasha Exel

tht@parliament.tas.gov.au

“To inquire into and report upon the management, preservation, tourist marketing and promotion of built heritage assets in Tasmania, with particular reference to:”

1. The current and future potential contribution that built heritage makes to tourism in Tasmania;
2. The role of Government;
3. The role of tourism organisations;
4. The role of heritage organisations;
5. Any relevant considerations in other jurisdictions;
6. Any other matters incidental thereto.

Dear Secretary,

The Built Heritage that concerns me most is the **Eddystone Light Precinct** at Eddystone Point (Larapuna) consisting of a 125 year old, 100ft Granite Light station, three stone cottages and the historic grave site of the lighthouse keeper's son *Walter McFarlane Kirkwood*.

The Eddystone Light is part of my heritage as a fisherman. This light and all those around Tasmania have provided a beacon of safety and security for all the fishermen of Tasmania both past and present. This is part of their history and heritage.

About a decade ago, the then Minister David Llewellyn, put forward a proposal to open the site to 'expressions of interest' as a tourism enterprise. I was one of about 30+ people to attend the open day. Unfortunately this line of thought was not pursued and the potential for this property has effectively remained idle since then.

There were many I spoke to on that day, who had some very exciting ideas for the future of the area all based on the principle of sharing the area with a visiting public.

The idea of a tourism venture including guided tours of the light station is an obvious one as per the example of the Cape Leeuwin light in the south-western corner of Western Australia. I had the pleasure of a tour of this light last November and was delighted to find the mechanics of the light were identical to that of Eddystone where the enormous brass frame and multiple glass prisms that project the light, float effortlessly in a bath of mercury. While the mechanics of Eddystone are in perfectly good working order, the 'light' has been replaced with a bolt-on model on the upper rail.

I quizzed the tour guide on how their system worked and he explained the proceeds for the tours pay the wages and the surplus is reinvested into the maintenance and restoration of the site.

This but one example of a simple business approach, to this infrastructure, that would add to the growing tourism trade to the North East of our state.

In 2007 the Lonely Planet listed the Bay of Fires as one of the top ten destinations in the world. Two years earlier Conde Nast quoted the beaches of the Bay of Fires the second best in the world and yet we have failed to truly capitalise on this opportunity of free international publicity. Eddystone Point represents the northern extremity of the Bay of Fires with the gateway in the south being Binalong Bay.

The role for the government of the day is to not only protect this heritage property but there is a responsibility to maintain this infrastructure in fair and reasonable condition. I can understand this can be difficult when there are constraints on the state budget and therefore allowing a business model through a lease arrangement, creating employment, and providing a new tourism product could only result in a win-win outcome

Currently there is a tour operation in the wings, similar to the Rob Pentecott excursions around Bruny Is and having a working lighthouse as part of the tour would create a compatible partner for a world class coastal experience.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Paulsen