

Proposed Leasing of Hastings Caves and Thermal Springs Precinct

Mr WINTER question to MINISTER for PARKS and HERITAGE

My constituent, Helen Wittey, has distilled concerns over the planned leasing of the Hastings Caves and Thermal Springs precinct into a series of questions. I'm particularly concerned that the site has no management plan and Parks is sidelining its code of practice for state reserves relating to community involvement and transparency of decision-making. Residents of the far south can trace five generations enjoying the precinct's thermal pool and picnic area and they're not alone. Currently, visitation is booming with 60,000 visitations per year. Opening a spring-fed pool in a forest karst system was inspired by the 1930s, and remains charming now. This site is cultural, historic, has social significance to our remote community and extends these benefits to all visitors.

Her questions are: how will Parks ensure the pool and picnic area remain affordable and accessible? Will Parks include community members on the panel selecting proponent? Does Parks intend to develop a management plan prior to any planned development? Will the chalet continue to be used for cultural interpretations on the site?