



Strategic Projects
Department of State Growth
Tasmanian Government
GPO Box 536
Hobart TAS 7001

4 December 2024

Dear Strategic Projects team,

Strategic Review of kunanyi/Mount Wellington and Wellington Park

The Australia Institute Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the strategic review of kunanyi/Mount Wellington and to respond to the discussion paper, *A shared vision for our mountain's future*. We note that according to the review's terms of reference it will primarily focus on three themes: values management, user experience and administration.

We understand that for many Tasmanian Aboriginal people, kunanyi is a special place that features in creation stories passed down through generations and that it is a sacred place where ancestors' spirits are laid to rest.¹ Tasmania's *Pathway to Truth-Telling and Treaty Report* recommended that the Government seriously explore the possibility of using the statutory framework for Aboriginal Protected Areas to create a kunanyi /Mt Wellington Aboriginal Protected Area, recognising the need to first consult with Aboriginal people.

Tasmania's first State of the Environment Report in 15 years, recommends that the Tasmanian Government continue to invest in Tasmania's terrestrial reserve system in order to maintain the integrity of the current reserve estate, including kunanyi/Mt Wellington and Wellington Park. The Park's governing legislation says that it is set aside as a reserve to allow for recreational and tourism uses that are consistent with protecting and preserving its natural and cultural values.

Stage one of the ongoing, separate management plan review has found a clear majority of participants continue to appreciate these values.² That process is comprehensively addressing values management and user experience. The Australia Institute does not consider there has been adequate justification by the Department of State Growth of the need for this separate strategic review or why the existing management plan review now appears to be sidelined.

Governance arrangements will be crucial to the future wellbeing of the mountain, yet there is no commitment to further consultation on this issue. Ample evidence is readily available of the obvious and longstanding problems of inadequate facilities and access to the mountain, as well as solutions. Progress towards addressing even the most obvious problems has been frustrated by lack of funding.³ Adequate state government funding is required so that current managers can simply get on with the job.

¹ Warner and McCormack (2021), [Pathway to Truth-Telling and Treaty](#) p.77

² Wellington Park Management Trust (2023), Management Plan Review [Park Values Consultation Report, p.1.](#)

³ The Mercury (2024) [Hobart City Council says it's time for the state government to chip in more on the mountain](#)

However, it is very clear that the access solution is not a cable car. Of the 16,500 public submissions made to the council on the cable car, almost 72% opposed it. The Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT) found that the cable car proposal failed to meet standards over noise, visual impact and effects on geoheritage and biodiversity when it upheld the Hobart City Council's decision to reject it in 2022.⁴ Australia Institute research found the economic case did not stack up.⁵

If the strategic review determines alternative governance arrangement are required for kunanyi/Mt Wellington and Wellington Park, we recommend creating a kunanyi /Mt Wellington Aboriginal Protected Area, recognising the need to first consult with Aboriginal people, as recommended in the *Pathway to Truth-Telling and Treaty Report*.

The protection of the mountain's natural and cultural values are essential for meeting Tasmania's biodiversity commitments and ensuring their long-term resilience.

Yours sincerely,



Eloise Carr
Director
The Australia Institute Tasmania

⁴ ABC News (2022), [Hobart's kunanyi/Mount Wellington cable car proposal fails as company declines to lodge appeal](#)

⁵ The Australia Institute (2021) [Submission on Kunanyi-Mt Wellington cable car proposal](#)