

## Media Release

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### **No Confidence in Fair Hearing by Hobart City Council**

Mount Wellington Cableway Company says the Hobart City Council's Parks Committee ignored procedural fairness and has demonstrated undeniable bias against the cable car proposal.

MWCC Chair Jude Franks said today the company was disappointed at the decision of the Parks Committee last night given the enormous ground swell of public support this week, but not surprised given the prior public position of several aldermen on the Committee.

"These 5 aldermen clearly have a fixed, set in stone view and a closed mind about the project. Their decision last night means that they now in no way could ever objectively consider this project," Ms Franks said.

"We are taking legal advice. However we have no confidence of a different outcome at the full Council meeting." Ms Franks said.

Ms Franks said all that was before the Council was a request for permission to do a flora and fauna study.

"Our clear advice from Council was that this was the correct procedure to follow and, in fact, was the approach alderman Jeff Briscoe previously publicly advocated.

"Instead the Parks Committee moved a motion to oppose the whole cable car project before it even knows what ecological values are on the proposed road route and before even seeing the development application.

"Despite the demand by several of the aldermen for transparency, we were not shown this motion in advance – and, as it was typed and distributed around the table – it was clearly a pre-arranged position.

Ms Franks said it appeared the outcome had been pre-determined even before the Committee met.

She said MWCC was taking legal advice on whether the aldermen should have absented themselves from the Committee meeting and whether it would be ethical for them to now vote at the full Council meeting.

Ms Franks said that in taking the action the Committee had ignored the professional advice of Council staff.

“I think the people of Hobart will see this for what it was – a kangaroo court designed to crush the cable car project before we are given the opportunity to submit a development application,” Ms Franks said.

North Barker Ecosystem Services partner Andrew North told the committee that the survey was routine and if any threatened or endangered species were found it would trigger the Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 and possibly the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

“Without the survey it is impossible to know with a level of confidence what may or may not be there,” Ms Franks said.

“We have no plans to deviate broadly from the route for the proposed access road to the base station, but the knowledge from the survey is necessary to inform the exact route the proposed road we need to take,” she said.

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