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Ralf Kenyon CEO  
Port of Hastings Corporation  
Unit 2/184 Salmon Street  
Hastings  
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5<sup>th</sup> December 2006

Re: Submission for consideration by the Port of Hastings Corporation on future developments of the port and associated infrastructure.

Dear Mr Kenyon.

I can see the benefits of expanding and developing the Port of Hastings to improve trade and business in our state, and our Nation. There are benefits to many for employment, trade and prosperity for all. But I am concerned as to what cost this development may incur, not just financial either. I live in Lynbrook, a new suburb that used to be part of Lyndhurst. The plans for the further development of the Port of Hastings will directly affect my family due to the need to increase road and rail traffic through this area. This concerns me greatly as the point of living on the outskirts of Melbourne is to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city and the proximity of the countryside to our home. Below are issues I will discuss in my submission.

1. Increases of road and rail traffic pitfalls.
2. Pollution and the outcomes.
3. Destruction of a coastal treasure
4. Wildlife risks and hazards.
5. Needs and wishes of Victorian Communities.
6. A widely suspected preparation for a nuclear power plant.
7. The effect of the concepts and publications.
8. Possible alternatives or trash the idea and start again with long term future in mind.

#### **1. Increases of road and rail traffic pitfalls.**

There seems to be a huge increase in traffic generated by the proposed further development of the Port of Hastings. More vehicles on our roads means more deaths and road accidents, increased costs on registrations and rates to maintain these roads and railways, and the increases of the stress experienced by those sharing roadways with heavy vehicles. It

makes living unpleasant in the area. The level of heavy vehicles trafficking through the affected regions is heavy enough already. For example, many trucks can not stop in time for normal traffic light sequences, especially now we have B-Double trucks on our roads carrying very heavy loads. Increases to our insurances too would be expected. With rail traffic increases, we will find more delays at level crossings for normal daily family and business activities. More noise and pollution are to be expected. Levels of brake dust and diesel engine emissions for trains and trucks would be substantially increased to dangerous levels. I do not know how long it takes to stop a kilometre long train, but I have heard the screeching of train brakes continue for over half an hour whilst talking to a gentleman on the phone, that happened to have a railway behind his home. He told me it was a freight train and the noise continues for quite some time. The traffic we have to put up with at this time is enough, we do not want any more traffic from this development. Further to this, I suspect that if the proposal for a freight terminal in Lyndhurst is to go ahead, the current rail line to Lyndhurst will be used. It too may need to be up-graded. I have concerns here as this will directly affect my family home and the local schools and parks. We have wonderful new parks and schools in this area and the further development of the rail line will be detrimental to the area. I suspect that parklands will be consumed for the improved infrastructure, and that the rail line will run right near schools, where passing trains will spew out brake dust and diesel exhaust all over the place. Not to mention the noise associated with trains, horns, brakes revving engines and the clunking and clicketty clack of the carriages. No thanks!

## **2. Pollution and the Outcomes.**

With all the additional pollution, we really need to think, if these plans go ahead, how would this issue be addressed? Pollution in the form of fumes, dust, superfine particles and noise will be on the increase significantly. EPA may offer guidelines about pollution and laws may be about to protect the public from pollution, but are all factors truly considered even in our own state legislations. I recently saw a television show about pollution and the issue of superfine particles (generally created by diesel engines) are of a major concern. The particles are so fine that they can pass through human tissue and lodge in the body. The type of substance may not be acceptable by the human body, and given enough doses of superfine particles, we may find increases in the numbers of cancer victims in and around the Port of Hastings developments. I do believe that not enough research has been done in this area and suggest that the Port of Hastings make recommendations to Government to have proper research into superfine particles associated with vehicular operations and emissions. I do not want the noise and pollution in my neck of the woods anyway.

## **3. Destruction of a Coastal Treasure.**

Hastings is a place to go on weekends for city-folk and visitors. It does have a charm for not being invaded by residential development too much, or, industrialized to the point of ugliness. In the bay too, there are mangroves and other marine life that depend on the protection from development to continue in existence. The mangroves too are of significant interest worldwide as to their most southern existence. What sea life will be affected by this development? Who knows, but I do not want to see any further development of Westernport Bay. It is precious and wonderful and should be preserved for the entire world to enjoy. Far too often we see coastal areas being gobbled up by residences and tourism. Let's just leave things as they are for the benefit of the whole world to enjoy and love. Let's focus on making sure we do not destroy a wonderful bay. Use it wisely and we have developed it enough already. Do we really need to increase business and port activity here? Are there not other ports in our nation that could do the job better anyway without so much need for development and infrastructure?

#### **4. Wildlife, Risks and Hazards.**

I have seen bandicoots in the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne, and have heard that they exist in many parts around Westernport Bay and Gippsland. I do believe they are not so common nowadays and may be a threatened species. Guaranteed, there will be other creatures and plants of significant interest that will be under threat to development of new infrastructure need to feed the needs of a port expansion development such as that proposed by the Port of Hastings Corporation. Rail and highway development will destroy wildlife corridors and may isolate small breeding colonies and create great dangers for these creatures. Pollution increases to may pose a threat to native orchards and other plants in the region. What of the marine life too. Increased traffic of vessels on Westernport will surely increase the risk of spills of oil or other things. Maritime pollution could be just as damaging to the critters of Westernport Bay. The wake created by such vessels too, may cause erosion to the point of coastal destruction and killing off of mangroves. Collisions to on the highway and on the bay between animals and cars, trucks, boats and trains will definitely be on the increase. This will definitely put stresses on the existence of these creatures and are a perfect reason to consider dropping the proposed development of the Port of Hastings.

#### **5. Needs and Wishes of Victorian Communities.**

The state has a good unemployment level, we are productive and prosperous. We are enjoying the good life in this state. We really need to think about how much more a city like ours can develop. We could if we like push development to extremes like have been done in Japan and other countries in the world. We could occupy every square centimetre of this nation through development, but where would that lead us? Clearly it would lead us to the demise of our own species and the demise of all other species on earth. Suburban Melbourne has been creeping out

further and further every year and gobbles up precious agricultural and natural habitats. The Port of Hastings needs to do more about getting the message out to all Victorians about its plans. I'm sure that many Victorians will oppose the development as it will take away something valuable from our state forever. Westernport is popular with people that like to go fishing, boating and enjoy the scenery. Developing this region will bring with it affordable medium to high density housing, industrial estates and business districts. These sound all very progressive, but at what cost to our nation. Progress is not always about building and business, it is too about understanding what we have and working to preserve some of the special things we already have, and promote ways that we can all benefit from it. We truly do not need this development in this state and I am sure there are alternatives or, we can just learn to live with our current ports and improve on interstate rail transport instead.

#### **6. A widely suspected preparation for a nuclear power plant.**

A report is floating around about the benefits of Westernport for being a location for a nuclear power plant. The infrastructure developed for the Port of Hastings Corporations plans would suit the implementation of nuclear power plans in this state to a tee! Unfortunately, I do believe that nuclear power in the current method being utilized for its generation is totally unacceptable today. Recent findings at the site in Chernobyl in Russia make it clear that nuclear power generation is a dangerous activity. The reactor in Chernobyl is damaged and the concrete covering it has cracked. Radioactive goo is oozing out and creating a real environmental problem, and is spreading radioactive runoff. A disaster like this in Westernport would destroy all the benefits of the bay in an instant and create a hole in our nation. It is not until research has been done to create devices to soak up radioactivity as quickly as it can be formed that we should even consider nuclear power in this country. A port disaster with nuclear waste or uranium would be equally catastrophic. Development of the Port of Hastings would encourage nuclear power plans, and most Victorians do not want that!

#### **7. The effect of the POHC concepts and publications.**

The documents and ideas about developing the Port of Hastings to cater for more shipping have already had a significant negative impact on all the residents in the region. Property prices have been destabilized and there is hesitation in the real estate market. People are not sure what developments may come and how they will effect them in the future. Offers on properties are already being made by large companies, and the offerings a significantly down on previous market prices. People who planned to live out their retirements in the region will not be able to sell up and move due property devaluations since the POHC has made its plans public. Property developers may be rubbing their hands together thinking of the mass migration of workers to the region to buy up near their potential workplaces etc. I can see heartache and pain associated

with these proposals already. The proposed plans are clearly not a good thing for Victorians. I too am questioning the viability of continuing residence in Lynbrook, if trains are going to growl, hoot and screech their ways through my area, we will have no peace from noise or pollution ever. It is bad enough suffering nearly two years of dog barking and another two years of drumming noise from my neighbours' house. Do not make my home a living hell. Who will buy my home in the shadow of the POHC infrastructure needs?

**8. Possible alternatives or trash the idea and start again with long term future in mind.**

What are the alternatives if we truly need more docks and freight facilities in this state? Can we rely on our goods being unloaded in another state? Do we have to keep growing at the rate we are now, in population and in productivity? Is our growth sustainable? Can we create new infrastructure that does not rely on fossil fuels and other forms of diesel fuel? Do we have to use conventional rail systems, or can we apply some new technology to the transportation of goods. Can we send the goods via underground networks and truly plan not just for Melbourne 2030, but for 3000?

I would like to see the Port of Hastings withdraw its plans for now. I am not satisfied that enough thought or consultation has been had. I am not satisfied that the environmental impacts have been considered sufficiently. And I love Hastings and Westernport as it is. I totally oppose the idea of further developing the Port of Hastings for more shipping and freight to pass through and fear the outcomes will be detrimental to our state. I do however wish to thank you for the information sessions and the opportunity to voice my opinion on the subject. I hope I can convince whoever needs to be convinced to put the idea to bed once and for all and abandon all plans for further development of the Port of Hastings and affiliated infrastructure plans.

Yours Sincerely.



Matthew J. Ridgeway