

Groups join in anger over cable car works

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PREMIER Will Hodgman has labelled concern over approvals being given to the Mount Wellington Cableway Company on the eve of calling the state election a "storm in a teacup".

On Tuesday it was revealed that State Growth Minister Peter Gutwein signed an authority for the MWCC to enter the pinnacle site to conduct drilling, surveying and other works on the final working day before the election was called.

The Wilderness Society, Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation, Planning Matters Alliance and Residents Opposed to the Cable Car joined forces yesterday, holding a joint press conference to air concerns about the authority being granted.

The TAC's Andry Sculthorpe said kunanyi/Mt Wellington was a significant icon for Aboriginal people, but the Government had not consulted the Aboriginal community before signing off on the authority.

"It's a real shock to see the beginning of the defacing of kunanyi," Mr Sculthorpe said.

"If it was a storm in a teacup I don't think the level of secrecy and sidelining of community process and existing structure and assessment would be necessary.

"We're continually reminded that Aboriginal voice and Aboriginal heritage and history does not matter to this Liberal government."

Residents Opposed to the Cable Car's Ted Cutlan said questions remained about the route the cable car would take.

"They've kept us in the dark completely for four years, and this is more of the same, the Government and the MWCC working together to keep everybody in the dark," he said.

Shadow Treasurer Scott Bacon questioned why the Liberals did not announce that the decision had been made, considering the Government had been strong supporters of the project.

"Why did they try to keep this secret until after the election?" Mr Bacon said.

When asked what Labor would have said if the party had been consulted on the decision, Mr Bacon said Labor wanted to see "an open and transparent process".

Mr Hodgman said the signoff was part of an administrative process, and any environmental disruption would be remediated by the proponents.

"I don't think the average Tasmanian will be surprised to hear that I don't see each and every administrative decision that is signed off by a minister," he said.

MWCC was contacted for comment.