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From: Peter Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 7 January 2024 5:16 PM
To: TPC Enquiry
Subject: Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium - Tasmanian Planning Commission - Draft Guidelines

Categories: [REDACTED]

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Dear Commissioners ,

Thank you for affording the public the opportunity to offer input to the above . I have read the Draft Guidelines , which for a layperson , I would have to say was not easy !

However , as best I could understand it , I would say you have done a very good job .

I am one of the so called ' nay sayers ' , totally supportive of Tasmania having it's own team in the AFL competition , but totally opposed to the Government prioritising the spending of so much money on an un-necessary new stadium in Hobart , and an unjustified expansion in seating at UTAS stadium in Launceston , when there are clearly so many far more essential things that the Government should be focusing on . However I will try to be objective .

Item 1 . The proposal that you are assessing is , I believe , the original plan that the AFL put forward early in 2022 for a 23, 000 seat stadium at Macquarie Point . That was after they rejected the plan by former Premier Peter Gutwein , for a 27,000 seat stadium to be built off the Regatta Grounds . The estimated cost of the AFL submission , \$715M , was , as I recall , provided by the AFL's expert on stadiums who flew in for a couple of days with a senior AFL executive to deliver that news . That was it - there was no input from the Government , and no consultation with interested or affected parties .

As mentioned , I am a lay person . I know nothing about planning or construction . But I find it extraordinary that the Government is relying on that estimate , which would have been given [no doubt in good faith] , but without any detail or specifications on what was going to be delivered . And of course it is now almost 2 years old .

So , the first thing that should happen is that the Final Guidelines should quantify in some way that that cost of \$715M is reliable . Because -

2 . The government's funding of the project , obviously relies on that . I believe they are already in trouble on that score by virtue of the fact that a Grant of \$240M from the Commonwealth which they thought was for the stadium , turns out to be for the ' renewal ' of the whole site , not specifically for the stadium . The State Government has not said how it will make up that shortfall . And , unlike the public , has shown no concern .

3 . One of the things that I was particularly pleased about in your Draft Guidelines is the attention you have given to protection of the Cenotaph, which has been a major concern of the RSL. I wonder whether it should be specified in the Guidelines , that because of the close proximity of the stadium to the Cenotaph , there should be no activity at the stadium on Anzac Day ? .

4 . Likewise , I was pleased to note under 1.1.2 you have called for the objectives of the project to be stated .

5 . Cost Benefit Analysis [CBA - Part 3.1] . Should this say who actually manages the stadium , controls / benefits financially from it's use , and is responsible for any deficit ? That is , is it the Government , the AFL , or the new GBE ' Stadiums Authority ' ? Part 3.5 makes reference to this , but does not say who is actually responsible ?

6 . Part 8.3 refers to Light . The AFL has specified that ' their ' stadium has to have a fixed roof . Which I understand will be translucent , and is based on what was done with a soccer / rugby stadium in Dunedin , which apparently is noted for it's extreme cold and wet climate . The people at AFL House probably think that our climate is on a par with that , but of course it's not .One of the benefits that our Government were spruiking for our new stadium was that ' people would come from all over the world to watch their teams in Test and One Day cricket ' . But in spite of being asked on several occasions whether the ICC would permit International cricket to be played under a fixed roof , the Government have not clarified that uncertainty .

So the Guidelines should somehow make reference to that . And , as an aside , I have noted that apparently Dunedin had great difficulty in finding a grass that would grow under a fixed roof . And it is not used for cricket . In my opinion , a fixed roof is short sighted . It should either be retractable , or cantilevered without necessarily being closed .

7 . Appendix A - Ministerial Direction . I realise you cannot change that wording , but as a ' nay sayer ' , I was interested that the Premier under 2 . . . used the words ' could generate ' , rather than ' will generate ' , or ' expected to generate ' . At this stage ' could ' , or ' might ' , are probably appropriate , because the only certainty we have is that the stadium will be used for 7 games of AFL football . And that will not ' cut the mustard ' . Nor will 4 games at the proposed 27,000 seat UTAS in Launceston .

8 . Appendix B - Flowchart . Should there be ' Timelines' for each process ?.

Thank you for reading , and good luck with the assessment ,

Peter Williams

