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From: Tim Slade [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 8 January 2024 3:58 PM
To: TPC Enquiry
Subject: Submission - Integrated Assessment for proposed Stadium at Macquarie Point

Categories: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tasmanian Planning Commission
GPO Box 1691
Hobart 7001

Dear TPC,

Integrated Assessment for proposed Stadium at Macquarie Point

Based upon the facts so far, the following are the primary reasons why I stand opposed to a new AFL stadium at Macquarie Point, Hobart.

The Bellerive Oval is suitable to host AFL games.

Australia's foremost football journalist, here is Tasmania's Martin Flanagan in The Age:
<https://www.theage.com.au/.../the-afl-had-one-job-protect...>

A new stadium, if built, will host only seven AFL games each year. Bellerive Oval is approximately 3km away from the proposed Macquarie Point location.

The formal statement from government and the AFL on May 4, is that it is yet to be worked out who pays for any budget overruns. The contract has been signed, but no planning for this inevitable outcome. Many experts predict that the cost will blow out to beyond \$1.5 billion, three times the net worth of the British Royal Family.

This failure to plan for this blow-out is economic vandalism by Jeremy Rockliff and his government. A legacy of profound debt for our children and future generations.

The question, roof or no roof, was decided last minute, last week. Zero planning. The state government were in favour of a stadium whether or not it has a roof. Therefore the claim that said government has been diligently interested in multi-use, for example for concerts, is not borne out by the evidence.

Jeremy Rockliff misled his colleagues and all Tasmanians, when he said, from the beginning of the process, that a new stadium was not a prerequisite by the AFL for a Tassie team. We now know, from documents and public servants involved in the process, that yes, a new stadium was a prerequisite, from the very beginning. Should Tasmanians show respect to a Premier who misleads us? Should we thank Jeremy Rockliff for his failure to tell the truth? The knowing omission of facts is a form of corruption.

Aboriginal community groups are opposed to the use of this land for a new stadium. Many Tasmanians believe that this project is culturally insensitive. As part of this, the adverse visual amenity upon this environment is of serious concern to many Tasmanians.

In the Shepparton News, March 1, RSL Tasmania CEO, John Hardy, described the location as a 'sacred place of reflection'. In a letter to Premier Rockliff, he wrote: "We are opposed to the stadium at Macquarie Point due to the environmental and cultural impact on our world-class cenotaph. We believe that the Tasmanians who erected this obelisk as an outpouring of immeasurable grief after their loved ones, made the ultimate sacrifice, would stand beside us shoulder to shoulder."

Hardy says RSL Tasmania supports the state's quest for an AFL team, as well as a new stadium – but not at Macquarie Point. "The AFL has always supported veterans, it is a working person's game, and I believe the AFL will understand our issue," Hardy wrote.

ABC's Tim Lane says that a footy team for Tasmania should occur in such a way that it unites all Tasmanians. There is serious division among Tasmanians about the team. Jeremy Rockliff and the state government had an obligation to negotiate a deal that did not create foreseeable division among Tasmanians, when it is a fact that the great majority of Tasmanians support a Tassie team in the AFL.

The attached accommodation plan proposed for Macquarie Point was an afterthought by the state government, presented only in the recent weeks. Again, there is zero planning. The alternative plan by Richard Flanagan and Kate Warner has housing as a priority, not as a minor afterthought. The Hobart City Council attempted to introduce new rules to limit Airbnb, to help the crisis in long-term home rentals, but the Tasmanian state government stopped the changes by Hobart City Council.

Light rail and better traffic flow to Hobart are issues that have been steadfastly hampered by the state governments of Will Hodgman, Peter Gutwein and Jeremy Rockliff over the past decade. So if these are required for a stadium at Macquarie Point, then this will be a complete about-turn from the state government. According to experts, such infrastructure will blow-out the budget for the stadium by hundreds of millions of dollars. The necessary relocation of Hobart's sewerage works will cost a similar amount, possibly hundreds of millions of dollars.

This stadium will likely rely totally on Peter Gutwein's new 'Major Projects' legislation. This means that the state government can ignore all planning authorities and the opinion of Tasmanians who are against the stadium. So far the state government has ignored the Hobart City Council, only meeting with them on one occasion during the process so far.

The AFL is acting for its own interests, which are private financial interests. This is not a genuine offer to Tasmanians. The Tasmanians who are opposed to this deal should not be blamed for realising this. All blame should be directed to the AFL and the state government, and to the other 18 AFL teams who are aware, silent and complicit.

I grew up as a supporter of the Glenorchy Magpies, a club which came close to not having enough players to field a team in 2023. Over generations, many Tasmanians have hoped for a Tassie footy team. We deserve a team. But this shared history does not mean that this game plan should be accepted. It does not mean that this deal is for the good of Tasmanians.

No matter how much we dream to barrack for our own team, the best and fairest from our island. No matter how much we might wish it to be true – that this team will represent us, now and into the future – that this is our team.

I have read and fully endorse the submission made by Our Place - Hobart.

Tim Slade's The Walnut Tree was longlisted for the 2022 Tim Thorne Prize for Poetry, as part of the Tasmanian Literary Awards. [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,

Tim Slade

