

Submission Opposing the Proposed Hobart Stadium Legislation

I write to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislation enabling construction of a stadium at Macquarie Point.

A Flawed and Undemocratic Process

My primary concern is the process. The government is **bypassing established planning frameworks and public oversight** by proposing legislation that removes assessment by the Tasmanian Planning Commission and overrides appeal rights under key Acts.

The bill would grant the Minister sweeping powers to issue and amend planning permits and direct changes to planning schemes. These **powers are excessive and set a dangerous precedent** for decision-making on major public projects.

There has been no genuine public consultation and no opportunity for Tasmanians to assess or challenge the business case or location choice. Projects of that will burden future generations with major debt should be beholden to an extremely thorough, water-tight process.

Lack of Independent Scrutiny

The business case has been widely criticised as overly optimistic by independent experts. Yet there has been no updated business case or revised cost-benefit analysis reflecting this major change. This is critical to the project's economic merits.

Escalating Costs and Questionable Priorities

The stadium's estimated cost has already jumped by \$170 million to \$945 million, and that still excludes associated infrastructure. This is a huge commitment of public funds at a time when Tasmania faces more pressing needs—housing, healthcare, education, and climate adaptation among them.

Conclusion

If the government is confident in this project, it should welcome proper planning scrutiny and open consultation. Instead, it has chosen a rushed and heavy-handed approach that undermines public trust.

I urge the Legislative Council to reject this legislation in its current form, or at the very least, delay its passage until (1) a revised business case is published, (2) alternative sites are assessed and one is chosen based on its objective merits, and (3) Tasmanians are given a real say (it is not fair to say that an election provides a mandate on a single issue).

Sincerely,

Dr. Calum Cunningham