

Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium – Enabling Legislation Consultation

To: The TPC Panel Members considering submissions for the report on the Draft Enabling Legislation.

Submission to consider the impact of:-

Damage to the Tasmania Community Brand by not proceeding with the Stadium and associated positive spin-off for the community

Tasmania Community Brand (the Brand):- the distinctive and unique characteristics, image and identity presented by the collective of Tasmanian people. The Tasmanian community, Tasmanians.

Not to be confused with Brand Tasmania which relates to produce.

Based on facts presented in:-

**Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium - Enabling Legislation Report May 2025 |
CONSULTATION DRAFT**

Careful consideration is needed to ensure that intangible measures are not ignored when considering the measurables.

This submission should be considered in the context as presented by:

- TPC Draft Integrated Assessment Report Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium Project of State Significance (the Draft Report);
- and specifically, Section 2.0 Social and community issues (p39 to 44);
- and the Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium Summary of Observations.

As authored by the independent 5 member TPC panel.

Introduction

The recent dysfunctional performance of the Tasmanian Parliament if it leads to abandoning the construction of a Stadium and therefore rejection of AFL/W teams will cause serious damage to the Tasmania Community Brand (the Brand).

It is not just the team and the stadium which are pulled into focus but our Brand and all it stands for. As we air our dirty laundry for the world to see the consequences of such an outcome will set the Brand back decades. Our people will once again suffer tags such as No-bart and No-mania and abandon the State as we slide into decline.

I strongly encourage TPC Panel Members to consider the understated benefit to civic pride, community cohesion and subjective wellbeing as it relates to a deficient and diminishing Tasmania Community Brand (the Brand). A diminishing brand has detrimental flow-on effects on other issues such as community brand reputation through to economic investment as the State continues to reject projects generating considerable and often unmeasurable community benefit.

Direct economic measures and resulting arguments are not considered in this submission as that is well and truly debated elsewhere.

The premise

It is accepted from the outset that a Stadium or any piece of infrastructure considered in isolation does little to enhance the Brand (notwithstanding community collective achievement). However, an AFL/W team is contingent on a stadium at Mac Point and that point should be the focus. To call a bluff and sever the link between the two is fraught with danger, and risks not adding sport as a strong ally to build and bolster our Tasmania Community Brand.

Brendan Gale (CEO of Tasmania Football Club) said, *“Projects like this lift communities they bring people in, support local business, and inspire the next generation. Kids being able to dream about running out on a national stage, in front of a home crowd that’s powerful.”*

Conversely, rejecting a once in a lifetime opportunity that benefits all Tasmanians will kill the aspirations and positive mental demeanor (civic pride, community cohesion and subjective wellbeing) off for so many young people already engaged with the groundswell. This positive demeanour permeates out through their families and circle of friends to a degree demonstrated by existing 210,000 Devils members.

The Tasmania Community Brand

Let's further expand the Tasmania Community Brand concept and how it can be built by moving beyond decisions based purely on financial measures. Let's consider the intangibles by looking at our current Tasmania Community Brand considered to consists of:

- Community and people values which are considered the envy of most places and are unique.
- Our cultural brand has been invigorated by developments such as Mona which showcases our cultural identity to the world and shines a light on our other cultural strengths.
- Natural beauty has for a long time showcased on the national and international stage our ecotourism opportunities through our natural environment.
- Artisans with elite skills in hospitality, food and beverage are at least the equal of anything in the world and are recognised as such.
- The quality of business and scientific achievement now hold their own on any stage.

These are the current pillars of our Tasmania Community Brand (the Brand).

It is evident that if we don't bolster and maintain our brand with such a powerful opportunity (Tasmania Community Team inclusive of Stadium) we will slip backwards toward where we were during the 80s and 90s and suffer tags such a No-bart and No-mania. The damage to brand reputation will become significant and is not a mindset that any of us should wish on our kids.

The pillars dot-pointed above are all key to the Tasmania Community Brand, but despite some renown individual sporting achievements, and the ground broken by the Jack Jumpers, the one thing our Tasmania Community Brand is missing is unified team-based sporting achievement competing at the highest sporting level typified by that provided by the AFL industry. This of course include Team Tasmania (our State and its people) which has fought so hard together over many decades to create something special.

The stadium formatted as the planned urban renewal development has the potential the develop a sporting Brand pillar with similar strength as developed for culture by MONA.

Socio-economic studies continue to extol the benefits of participation in sport. The once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to tap into elevated levels of participation right down to grass roots across the whole State is a commitment from all stakeholders in the Team including the AFL. Love or hate football and love or hate the AFL, the socio-economic benefit the two-billion-dollar industry brings to our nation is difficult to measure but is widely known to be huge.

The Team, the AFL, the Stadium and the Brand

Money already provided and committed by the AFL in Tasmania (reportedly \$370M) is already providing support at a level where junior participation is growing at around 40% in some age groups over last year, and anecdotally at no detriment to other sports. This contribution by the AFL is provided for developing young talent to set up the future success of more senior teams. No Stadium and therefore no Team and the level of support will crash as the AFL looks elsewhere such as the Northern Territory who are pushing for a team.

The future health benefits (and saved costs) of not have kids sitting in front of screens and improved mental benefits is unmeasurable and therefore not counted.

Kick the AFL at your will and promote them as unconscionable in their dealings with the State and accept if you like that they have put unreasonable demands on Tasmania. But let there be no misrepresentation here, the AFL wish to set up a Tasmanian Team to succeed and their requirements for a team are presented in the agreement with the State. The AFL cannot afford to issue a license that creates a failure, hence the very best club establishment practice (including facilities such as a stadium) through extensive experience has been employed to protect the AFL (and consequently the State) brand. These are learnings from the lessons in establishing other expansion clubs such as Gold Coast and Greater Western Sydney.

The AFL will not accept a failure, and hence the best team development practice and minimum infrastructure (stadium and high-performance centre) are a non-negotiable requirement. The Club Funding and Development Agreement (2023) requires that the stadium must be a multi-use sporting and entertainment venue, used for a range of sporting events including AFL, Soccer, Cricket, Rugby Union/League, concerts, and cultural, convention and business events. This is a requirement of the AFL for a successful club. Furthermore, the AFL is reported to be investing \$126 million in local grass roots and community football across the State, \$209 million in direct funding for the Devils and \$35 million in club infrastructure. This is setting up a pathway to establishment for young folk as sustenance at more senior team levels, and the spin-off is to the Tasmania Community Brand.

The stadium presents an opportunity through the Tasmania Football Club to showcase the Tasmania Community Brand distinction to a global audience, and as stated in the Draft Report this will have positive and enduring impacts to Tasmania's liveability, its businesses, and the reputation of Hobart as Australia's dynamic small capital city and vibrant host for major events.

A Tasmania Community Brand advantage.

Some supplementary points

Points which should be carefully considered and not lost in distractions centred on issues such as political incompetence, mismanagement and parochialism.

- There has already been too much National and Global damage to our reputation (brand) from the ferry fiasco which has been an embarrassment. To cringe back into our hole is not the way out to redeeming our brand, the way out is bold considered decision making based on the pillars of our Tasmania Community Brand.
- Consider the cost of the stadium to be the price of the team, a team that over 210,000 people want and the State deserves. Consider the unmeasurable benefits.
- Consider the cost of the stadium to be the price of a strengthened brand for generations to come.
- Parochialism. There is no room for parochialism which has been evidenced recently in the media. It is blatantly obvious that some don't want the stadium purely because it is in Hobart.
- AFL stipulate the bare minimum design requirement to protect Tasmania and AFL community and financial interests, hence the roof and hence Bellerive and York Park as unsuitable with upgrades physically and financially unviable to maintain the Tasmania and AFL brand.
- Retribution drop the stance that the AFL has ridden rough-shot over Tasmania. The AFL know what they are doing, and don't want to set the Tasmania Football Club up for failure.
Retribution political retribution due flawed process and mismanagement which can be left for the ballot box if needed.
- Today's juniors - tomorrows defectors. NO!
- Aspirational juniors. YES!
- Conservatism generally will overstate the negatives and understate the positives as we strive to maintain the status quo, even if the status quo is damaging to a brand needing support.
- If we lose the opportunity for a Tasmanian team and all the positives it brings, the Northern Territory will take our place. There is already a proposition from the NT to enter the AFL competition shortly after Tasmania.
- It is reported that there are already several AFL Club Presidents wavering on the initial financial support due to the negative publicity the Stadium debate is generating. This in itself is damaging our brand.

Finally

It is too easy to base our decision-making on financial measures in isolation without considering some of the intangible and immeasurable benefits of a Team and the necessary stadium at Mac Point. Without a stadium at Mac Point there will be no Tasmania Football Team, and we forgo forever an opportunity to add sport as the sixth key pillar of the Tasmania Community Brand, and this will be profoundly detrimental as our brand once again begins to lose power.

Make no mistake, there is no other sport with the broad support of a community that is capable of providing the glue to build the sixth pillar of our Tasmania Community Brand, so please consider the extensive unmeasurable economic and social opportunity costs of rejecting the Stadium project.

For your positive consideration please.

Colin Allen
(0408 442 750)

About the author

I have no particular political affiliation but do have a predisposition toward progressive rather than conservative decision making. Finding ways around problems is the key rather than bagging them. Too often decisions are stalled by attempting to get a 100% correct solution to problems rather than having the courage and self-confidence to take the first steps, and an ability to adjust and to solve residual problems.

My motivations are to move the Team and Stadium urban renewal project forward for enhanced civic pride, community cohesion and subjective wellbeing especially for our young people.

My business interested have seen inclusion on National committees and boards stretching back to the 80s and 90s where the State was seen as a conservative focused backwater and a poor relation which created tags such as No-bart and No-mania, and where the stigma grew as community benefit opportunities were rejected. The situation gradually improved as community pride grew, but now we must do all in our power bolster and build the brand.

I am also the grandparent of three juniors benefiting from AFL development programs and see first-hand all the flow-on positives.