

Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium – Enabling Legislation Consultation

Submission by Kevin and Pam House

As a born-and-bred fifth generation and proud Tasmanian, businessman and currently a Councillor with the Meander Valley Council, I would like to add my personal thoughts and perspectives on the proposed Macquarie Point Stadium, and it's imperative link with the Tasmanian Devils Football Team.

This is a moment in our history that will define where we're headed in the next 10, 20, or more years. Without vision and progress, we risk becoming a state with a rapidly aging population, with shrinking industries and our youngest and brightest again leaving the State for other opportunities. Tasmania must back itself if it is to move forward.

Much is being made of the cost, however the terminology should really be changed to investment. This isn't a question of whether we can afford it. It is our view that we can't afford not to, and it is a moment in time for Tasmania that is really "now or never".

Tasmania having its own AFL team (a 19th licence in the AFL and AFLW) is an opportunity that simply cannot be missed. We deserve it, we need it and it will forever change Tasmania in an extraordinarily positive way.

The business case agreed to by all 18 existing AFL clubs requires both a high-performance training facility and a state-of-the-art stadium in Hobart. Without the stadium, the team doesn't exist. It's that simple. To argue otherwise is folly. The position has been made clear.

Events, sport, and tourism mean so much for our economy. When people come to Tasmania for these occasions, they stay longer, often spend thousands of dollars, and support countless local businesses. What is not so quantifiable are the people who often don't come to Tasmania unless they have reason to, but so many times I have seen visitors come to the State for an event only for them to discover how much Tasmania has to offer. Then they will return with other friends and family members, and sing its praises to others. This is real repeat and referral business, the foundation of success. Great examples of this have been MONA, the quickly growing statewide golf industry, and wine, whisky and gin distilleries gaining world recognition in each case. Having our own AFL teams will be an extraordinary addition to what we already do so well, bringing people to Tasmania on a regular basis.

This stadium won't just benefit the big players. It will support micro, small, and medium-sized businesses right across the state. It will help sustain Tasmania's major project building industry for many years to come. It will help grow the economy, increase revenue, and allow the government to invest more in essential services such as education, health, roads, and infrastructure.

We must encourage the next generations to be proud of where they're from, to build careers here, to stay in Tasmania and contribute. That reduces crime, lifts communities, and builds pride and resilience. It inspires them to dream big, stay fit, and live healthier lives. That's not just good for them, it's good for Tasmania's long-term health system, workforce, and social wellbeing.

What's been missed in much of the debate is that this stadium will be multi-purpose, not just football, and that is critically important. A stadium with a roof changes everything. It gives certainty to event organisers, concert promoters, and sporting bodies. We can host national and international events in Hobart – rain, hail, or shine. This will become a true business and entertainment hub, not just for Tasmania but across Australia. And with the proposed translucent roof, this could become the world's first oval stadium with that design. A true architectural icon. We wouldn't just be catching up – we'd be leading the way.

All different sports, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, and corporate conferences will flow through our capital, injecting millions into our economy and showcasing Tasmania to the world. But it won't just be Hobart that benefits, there also will be so many spin-offs for tourism business throughout the State.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to rebrand Tasmania as forward-thinking, proud, and worth investing in. If we let it slip through our fingers, we'll be seen as the state that that didn't have the faith or courage, the state that talked itself out of greatness.

Our family all live here, three married children, with children of their own. They too love our State, and are proud Tasmanians. For their sakes, and all future generations, we cannot, must not, be afraid to embrace change and progress. To be brave. The future is never assured, and opportunities like this must not be lost.

We commend those that have continued to press hard for this objective, not always easy with the unrelenting negativity from a few. If we are not moving forwards, inevitably we will be moving backwards. Please count us in those that want to move forward!

Kevin and Pam House

Proud Tasmanians.