
My Submission to: draft Macquarie Point Stadium Planning Permit Bill 2025 and the draft Enabling Legislation Report

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Maria IE Riedl B.S.Ed., M.Env.L., M.Env.Gov

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Summary

-a stadium at Macquarie Point is overwhelmingly opposed by Tasmanians

-2025 entire population of Tasmania is 581,000 and Hobart is 58,206: compared to Melbourne 5,392,000 and Adelaide 1,392,940: what other state had to build a nearly \$2 billion stadium to get an AFL team? We cannot afford it, nor want it.

-we already have stadiums where AFL has been played (one in the middle of a \$130 million upgrade)

-the Tasmanian Planning Commission's independent expert panel assessing the stadium proposal at the direction of Parliament published a damning report, with a long list of critical issues, with its cost blowout over \$2 billion and we await their final report

-the Tasmanian Government is now questioning the integrity of the Panel, and makes it clear that cost of stadium is no longer capped, overruns would be borrowings or selling our public assets

-the Tasmanian budget has seriously deteriorated, facing funding cuts, job freezes, and fire sale of assets with the threat of debt catastrophe

-Premier Rockliff has lost the confidence of Tasmania's House of Assembly with a 'no confidence' motion against him last week

-the stadium breaks *all* heritage planning rules and disregards the Cenotaph and TSO



Introduction

Rockliff government is thwarting the entire democratic process:

1. Dr Nicholas Gruen's report reviewing the existing analysis and assess overall cost and benefit of the MacPoint precinct released 3 January 2025
2. The independent report of the state's finances by Saul Eslake
3. Thus contravening the process, by rushing through 'corrupted, enabling' legislation: basically jumping over the process, to appease the AFL and the gambling industry. We Tasmanians, deserve a team but not an unaffordable, unwanted stadium at our special Mac Point, blocking the cenotaph views to and from, blocking views entering from the Derwent River, massively towering over historic Hobart, affecting the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the Sullivans Cove area. We were never ever asked if we were prepared to wear ANY cost for an AFL team. No other State has had a stadium or a position or roof, dictated to it.

The proposed stadium at Mac Point was declared a Project of State Significance (PoSS) in October 2023. The Premier then directed the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) to do an integrated assessment. We, the community, were invited to submit representations by 8 May, 2025 and I have done so. Have you read it and all the others? Most are against the Stadium at MacPoint for solid logical reasons, but we still want our team!



The above views are views from various images we have been given of the proposed stadium. It is an overbearing structure, completely overpowering the site and in fact, it is squeezed onto a small site with absolutely NO room for expansion or mistakes.

Whilst I agree with an AFL team, I do not agree with the MacPoint stadium. I have absolutely no concern with the current planning process. The fact is, there was no oversight, the stadium proposal was never released to us, and in fact it is clear that the proposal does not include all aspects of the development, (only 50% is planned even at

this stage) hoodwinking us and the Tasmanian Planning Commission by shooting the messengers, the independent reports and other relevant and vital information.

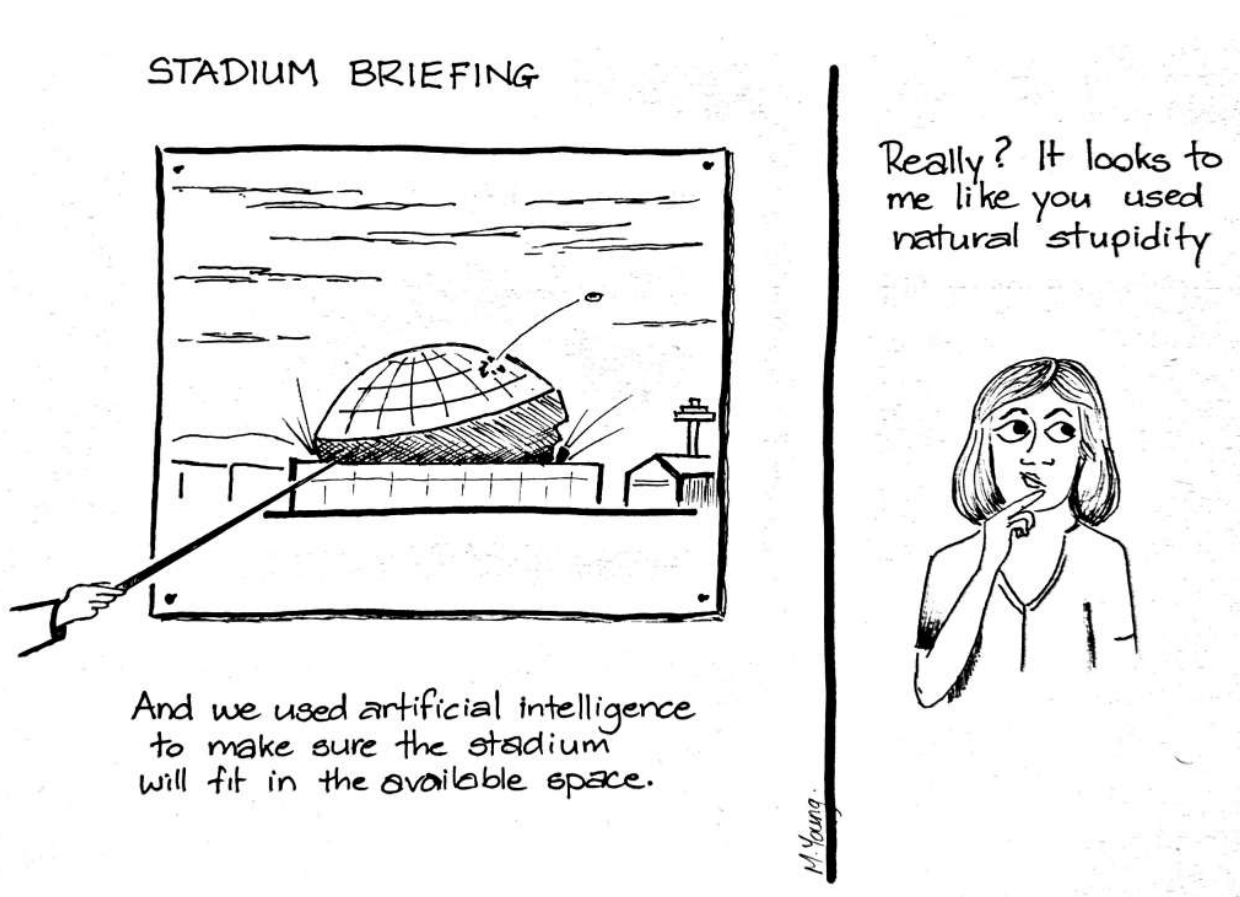
The location at Mac Point is wrong;

- its too tall (immense size), its too wide (won't fit)
- if there is an emergency there is no way that 23,000+ people can exit the area safely (eg bomb scare or shooting or fire, or flood or.....) Just look around the world what is happening for goodness sake
- excavating under that area of contaminated reclaimed land is a threat to the Derwent and the surrounding area and to what is left of marine life
- there has been no facts given on flood mapping due to climate change nor seepage and leakage....Just look closely at other buildings that are on reclaimed land like RTS, TMAG, Maritime Museum for example and see what is happening right at this moment and supposedly you plan to excavate contaminated soil to shove a huge carpark underneath the Stadium
- Indigenous recognition has been minimised and even eliminated yet again
- totally overshadows our heritage buildings at Hunter street and the heritage listed Goods shed, and obliterates our views of the Cenotaph from all angles
- the avoidable noise, the traffic mess, the lights which destroy the night sky, the water usage for the grass, heating and cooling, the lack of egress and ingress areas, the overshadowing
- this proposed Mac Point stadium does not fit with the Sullivan Cove Planning Scheme and belittles our efforts to ensure the right developments at the right areas in this precious area forever
- how on earth will there be enough room for green spaces which we require to calm areas especially in this unique once in a lifetime area
- the cricket group has stated that the roof will cast shadows so they can't use it
- the skyline would be utterly ruined and you KWOW this
- it is too high, it cannot be hidden
- the basement carpark will leak and ingress and egress will be a total nightmare adding to traffic chaos
- what happens if there is an accident on the bridge
- the cost has been purposefully misquoted and it will cost more than a billion dollars, probably 2 billion if you add in everything you are meant to (which you purposefully failed to!!!
- there is no light rail, buses don't run on time, 85 buses would drop people off where, where would cars park in the city with carparks already full due to market and other events and people living in the area have to be able to park too!
- where do existing vehicles from underground carpark go
- the visual impacts of the stadium on the historic Mac Point precinct would definitely be significant and unacceptable and ruin historic Hobart forever and ever... for what I ask when there are other more sensible cost effective options you are refusing bluntly to come to terms with...utter bias and stupidity at its best

-this is not the Sydney Opera House we are talking about for goodness sake
-views have been manipulated to suit AFL and gambling lobby
-the additional costs would be up to \$400 million more than stated
-my suggestion is to consider a stadium if one is needed at Dowsing Point where other sporting facilities are co-located and in fact can be expanded (the old army barracks is 1960s, needs upgrading and can be moved to Cambridge) : removes an underground carpark, easy ferry access, easy vehicular access, bicycles (as a path already exists) easy for buses and a light rail which can all be used for other purposes as well, not just AFL and gambling!!

In his article, *The Island of White Elephants*, published today Sunday 7 June 2025 in The Saturday Paper, eminent Australian author and anti-stadium activist, Richard Flanagan says “The Tasmanian Liberal government is in crisis and a snap election likely to be called as the premier clings to plans for a stadium that will bankrupt the state.”

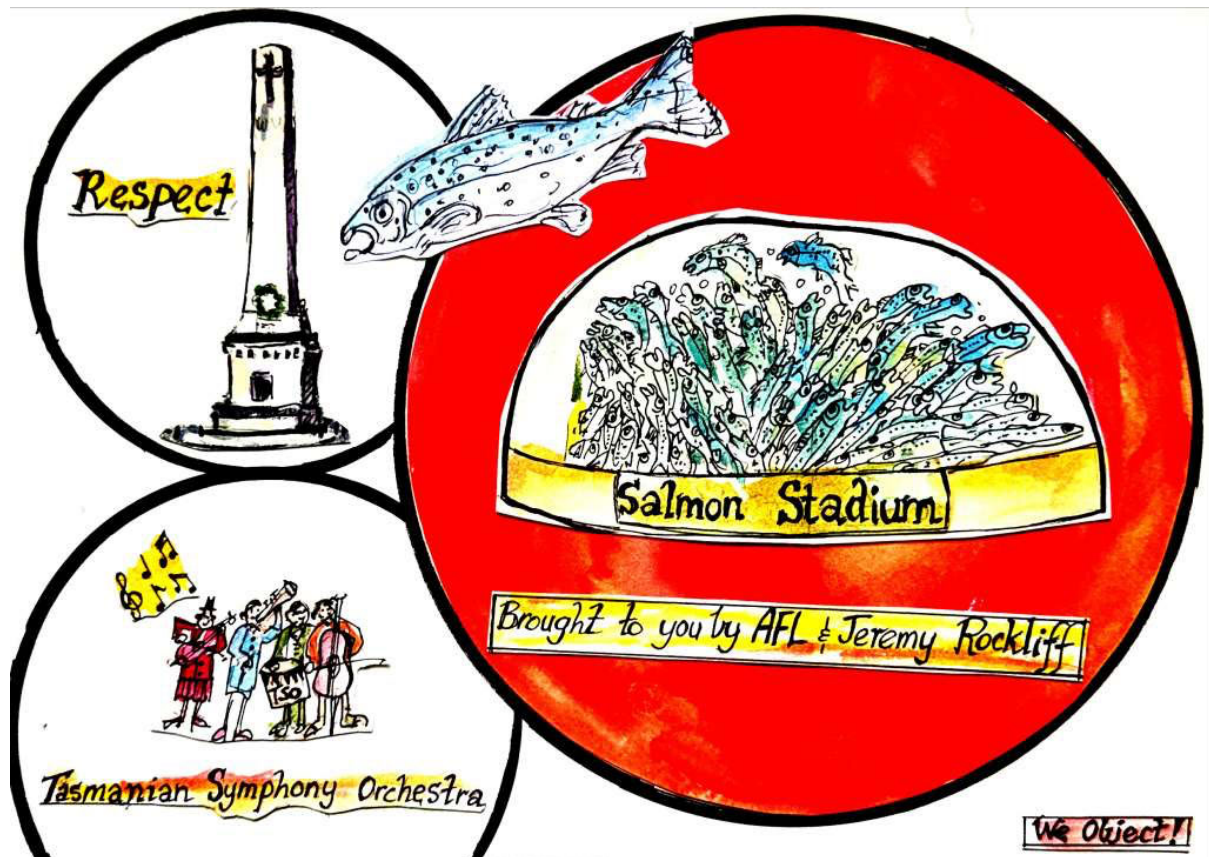
Below are just few of the entries into Tasmanian Times cartoon for the month of May 2025



Judges said: Another stadium cartoon and one that speaks to the GRIPE (Giant Ridiculous Infrastructure Protect Exhaustion) plaguing many Tasmanians. We also like the

counterpoint to Artificial Intelligence of natural stupidity ... cleverr! Bonus point for the footy going through the roof of the [REDACTED] whoops stadium and heading for 'tartica.

Judges said: This one scared us because we thought the Tasmanian Government might actually think a salmon-themed stadium was a good idea. You can almost picture the huge Tassal logo over the stadium entrance, Rum'un slurping down plates salm'un for the cameras, seals being shot as they try to sneak in, and much more/worse. *Nervous laughter*



Below comments in the Age newspaper yesterday (6th June 2025) show that everyone knows Tasmania's budget is a disgrace and overblown already!!!



The state cannot bear the \$1b stadium cost

Forgetting the antipathy from the other AFL clubs ("Why some AFL club presidents hope political convulsions sink the Tassie Devils", 4/6) put simply, Tasmania cannot bear the cost of a new \$1 billion-plus stadium. Its total population is around 580,000 of whom 250,000 live in Hobart, so the economy is correspondingly small, essentially service-based. The Age article also refers to a push from the Adelaide Crows chairman comparing the initiative with the favourable impact of the Adelaide Oval. What's missing in that argument is that the Adelaide Oval was already in existence and South Australia has a population of 1.8 million, of whom 1.4 million live in Adelaide. What's wrong with spending a far smaller sum developing Bellerive Oval, where AFL games and Test cricket matches are already played?

If the AFL genuinely wants to have a Tasmanian team, while purporting to be a good corporate citizen, then it should remove the condition that will saddle the people of Tasmania with a financial impost that will have a significant impact on future Tasmanian governments being able to provide far more essential services than a football team.

Noel Bullen, Macleod

Just upgrade grounds in Hobart and Launceston

The AFL and Tasmania are missing out on a golden opportunity. Forget the closed roof stadium that few want. Upgrade Hobart and Launceston football ground. Swap Devils AFL home matches between both cities and maybe even stage an annual Tassie gather round using both stadiums. Set up a range of AFL hotels and resorts in both cities. These could operate all year. Offer sea/air travel and accommodation fan packages. The whole of Tasmania benefits.

Alan Williams, Port Melbourne

First, get the game up and running

Subiaco was used by the Eagles/Dockers from 1987 to 2017; Football Park was used by the Crows/Power from 1992 to 2013. I can understand the AFL desire for larger attendances and a roof over the stadium to keep out the cold, but surely they should get the Tasmanian club up and running, put an inflatable roof over Bellerive Oval or North Hobart Oval and put in a few more stands. Have the game plan to build the game and then build the bigger stadium over time. Pay for the stadium with profits, not debt.

David Blom, Nunawading

AFL, why put this impost on the state?

It's sad to learn the future of the Tassie Devils is at risk because of government turmoil which threatens the future of the proposed roofed stadium, without which the AFL has said no Devils. This raises the question why has the AFL required a very costly roofed stadium from the smallest and poorest state? Neither the MCG nor Geelong football ground have roofs.

Thomas Hogg, East Melbourne

The AFL is NOT government, it was not elected by Tasmanians to work for Tasmanians, a new stadium in Hobart is not required for an AFL team to be sustainable as we already have 2 stadiums: 1 at Bellerive and 1 at Devonport for goodness sake. swap games between the two major cities. You are forgetting we are a population of 581,00 and won't get to 616,000 until 2046 of whom 250,000 live in Hobart. Adelaide Oval already exists and South Australia has a population of 1.8 million of whom 1.4 million live in Adelaide so any comparison is biased. Bellerive Oval upgrade would cost less to Tasmania who simply CANNOT and I mean CANNOT afford a 1.5-2 billion \$ stadium.

Surely the first step is to get the game up and running, before a stadium, which we simply cannot support or afford.

Why is the AFL obstinate: no stadium, no team from the poorest, smallest state? Neither MCG, nor Geelong Football grounds have roofs!!

Macquarie Point is too small, no room for all the bits planned, what about the poor Heritage listed goods shed.



Have a close look at Kudelka's cartoon above. Do you understand what we are all trying to tell you. We want a team, not a massive debt.

Conclusion:

I object to the stadium proposal as it is now proposed at MacPoint, and this flawed, rushed, biased proposed legislation. Issues have failed to be addressed.

I object to any rush to bypass this PoSS process by legislation that is rushed through, denying us, and my fellow Tasmanians, our democratic right to have a say and to point out that the current proposal is a grab by the AFL and gambling industry to dump us with a stadium we cannot and will not afford. We can't even afford a hospital to be proud of and high quality education and..... In fact the government is so broke it is proposing to sell our public assets!







Sorry to be so harsh but this legislation is totally an undemocratic politically motivated rush to pander to AFL and ??? they don't give a damn: its about

gambling and \$\$\$\$

There is no respect for Indigenous heritage, sense of place, our heritage and history and Tasmanians love of places and vistas....) who actually care about our History, our special unique places, our places that impact our heart, soul and where we give reverence and acknowledgement where it is proper and respectful to do so, because we value our uniqueness, our Tasmania, and Indigenous Heritage: our Indigenous Heritage, the commanding Cenotaph (important at all times to think of those who gave their lives and still gave their lives and respect them and their service), our unique and world renowned Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Kunanyi, our unique still as yet unspoiled, not overshadowed and drowned out Historic Hobart city, our vital Port, importantly, our Antarctic ship's views when they get home from the Antarctic and our entire port area.

Hobart is a unique natural deep Port city, NOT a huge dome AFL (paying a measly \$15 million!) stadium city overpowering everything and utterly defacing everything it can... for what.... and AFL who are not elected to represent us.

The additional cost the Government now quotes close to a billion is still missing 50% of the plan and what it must include. It is clear to all of us Tasmanians that this Government is rushing through this legislation, jumping over the Tasmanian Planning Commission's Inquiry, ignoring Independent reviewers that they employed, calling them all sorts of nasty names because they don't agree and in fact disregarding the fact that this is NOT their money they are adding to the blow-out budget released last week, and the no-confidence disaster because of the huge budget deficit that has been building and building and building and they are still promising to spend spend spend. Then they were going to sell our public assets and until yesterday planned to, but withdrew this proposal but who can trust them? They keep flipping back and forth.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-05-29/2025-tasmanian-budget-explainer/105337842>

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2025/03/27/kpmg-exposed-dodgy-hobart-afl-stadium-report/>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-06-07/tasmanian-liberals-rule-out-asset-sales/105388070>

[https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2025/06/07/tasmania-crisis-over-billion-dollar-afl-stadium?utm_source=Clipboard&utm_medium=social&utm_term=read shared article&utm_campaign=social share icons&utm_content=mobile share](https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2025/06/07/tasmania-crisis-over-billion-dollar-afl-stadium?utm_source=Clipboard&utm_medium=social&utm_term=read%20shared%20article&utm_campaign=social%20share%20icons&utm_content=mobile%20share)

[https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2025/06/07/tasmania-crisis-over-billion-dollar-afl-stadium?utm_source=Clipboard&utm_medium=social&utm_term=read shared article&utm_campaign=social share icons&utm_content=mobile share](https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2025/06/07/tasmania-crisis-over-billion-dollar-afl-stadium?utm_source=Clipboard&utm_medium=social&utm_term=read%20shared%20article&utm_campaign=social%20share%20icons&utm_content=mobile%20share)

'Unfortunately, no corrective measures were taken, leading us to the disastrous position we are in today. The 2025/26 budget predicts interest on debt at \$700 million in 2028/29, nearly three times the worst-case scenario in the 2021 FSR.'

<https://megwebb.com.au/media-release-government-consultation-sham-on-contentious-macquarie-point-stadium-bill/>

<https://megwebb.com.au/article-stadium-bill-sparks-fury/>

Please, this proposed legislation is wrong on all fronts, reject it as I reject it.

Thank you for the opportunity, much appreciated. Any issues or questions please contact me.

Also can you please acknowledge that you received my submission and that you are able to read it. Many thanks again. Happy to have a chat anytime.

Regards

Maria IE Riedl B.S.Ed., M.Env.L., M.Env.Gov

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