

28<sup>th</sup> February 2007

Letter to the Editor

If and when a new Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) is to be built, the business interests of the Hobart Central Business District (CBD) should not be the major driver for site selection. In light of the direction the clinical services plan is taking to provide state-wide services, many of which may well be provided from a RHH base, any new site must ensure ready access from all parts of Tasmania.

If the major State hospital is to be built in the CBD, with increasing population growth and traffic congestion on roads, from the North of the State as well as from the high growth areas South of Hobart, this will compound the issues of access and does not demonstrate forward and future planning of the health services or infrastructure needs into the future. A new hospital, costing an estimated \$500-800 million, must be able to meet the health service requirements of all Tasmanians for many years ahead.

Access to this major tertiary facility, must be via major roadways, not inner city streets, especially to enable timely access for residents of Tasmania who already have 4-5 hours travelling time to arrive in the Hobart area and may be unaccustomed to driving in inner city traffic, further adding to the stress surrounding health issues they or a family member or friend is experiencing.

Business owners will have considerable time to seek new markets or consider other options for business at a future location in close proximity to a new hospital if they wish too. Future development of the current RHH site in the CBD has the potential to bring many new and varied investments, business opportunities and customers to the Hobart CBD.

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