

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PAC](#)
Subject: Inquiry into the Tax Govt's process into the proposed arts, entertainment and sports precinct in Hobart
Date: Monday, 23 October 2023 1:01:59 PM

Dear Mr Scott

Please find below my submission:

1. Matters related to the Club Funding and Development Agreement signed between the Crown in the Right of Tasmania and Australian Football League

Since the first announcement, this agreement has been shrouded in secrecy. It appears to have been signed by the Premier alone without either consultation with his parliamentary colleagues or a detailed business case. Surely a commitment of this magnitude and such far-reaching consequences for the state should have been debated in parliament? Macquarie Point is not the the Premier's personal fiefdom and it is most alarming that he should have simply handed it over to an enormously rich Victorian business entity in this manner. Leaving aside any considerations of proper democratic process, the Agreement seems like a complete turkey, placing all the burden for development onto Tasmania which seems inequitable in the extreme.

2. The suitability of Macquarie Point as the site for the proposed Arts, Entertainment and Sports Precinct.

This site offers a unique opportunity to create some much needed breathing space for the people of Hobart. The stadium will be a large and dominant edifice, and going by other stadia around the world, it will not be an aesthetic asset. It will deny access to the waterfront for the Regatta, and loom over the Cenotaph. Offering as the site does wonderful water views, it seems absurd to plonk a building there that turns its back on the water. The site is not large enough to accommodate transport and parking on game days, whereas there are other sites around Hobart that are already set up with parking and transport networks.

3. The financial risks of the Agreement
And

4. Matters relating to the financing and delivery of the entire proposed Arts, Entertainment and Sports Precinct

All risks accrue to the Tasmanian purse, and since there is no detailed and independent business case we do not yet even know what they are. Since every other development in Hobart is beset by rapidly rising costs and long delays it seems unlikely the stadium will be an exception, so that the \$751 million originally bandied about cannot be seen as anything like the total cost. The sinking of piles into the riverbed will make a significant dent in that 'estimate', let alone the penalties for delays in completion which seem inevitable.

'Estimates' of the likely income earned from the stadium seem more like wishful thinking than any serious attempt to calculate future likely profits or losses. Concerns have been raised about the viability of the big imported shows and the likelihood that we could attract such tours, the suitability (or not) of the stadium for other sports and about the problem of a fixed roof for

cricket matches, but I have not seen these addressed in any serious way. Surely assessing these concerns should be the matter of a business case, rather than the subjects of a blithe dismissal by interested parties.

As to the financing of the entire precinct, since there is as yet no agreement on what that will actually contain there is no way to know how much that will be. While the Federal Government has committed an amount for something, it seems unlikely that will cover the other facilities on the site, so again Tasmania will pick up the tab.

5. The future of Blundstone Arena and UTAS Stadium

These are looking increasingly like stranded assets. According to the AFL they are not suitable for the training facilities required, let alone games with the new team; can someone clarify why not? Has any independent body assessed their suitability against publicly available criteria? Will the public purse continue to pay for their upkeep and operation as well as everything else?

6. Any other matter incidental thereto

While schools, transport networks and the health system struggle to serve the taxpayers of Tasmania to anything like an acceptable standard it seems ludicrous that the premier has committed us to an open-ended, enormous and continuing expenditure on one code of football, which is not even followed by all Tasmanians. We are not children to be fobbed off with naïve and empty reassurances that 'it will all be alright on the night'. We have seen proper process and governance subverted which in itself is extremely concerning, but the Agreement is a whole other fiasco.

Yours Sincerely

Dr. Julia Clark

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