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**Submission to the Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's process into the feasibility planning for a new sporting and event stadium in Hobart**

Master Builders Tasmania and the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania strongly support the proposed stadium development at Macquarie Point.

In 2012, the Australian Government provided \$50 million to rehabilitate the Macquarie Point site. The funding was provided on the expectation that the funding would catalyse an exceptional development on the site that would provide significant benefits to Tasmania.

A decade later, the potential for the site is still unrealised.

In our view, the Tasmanian Government's proposal to develop a multi-purpose major events venue on the Macquarie Point site presents as the most credible opportunity to finally activate the site for the long-term growth and prosperity of Tasmania and to provide the essential urban renewal that the site deserves.

To be clear: we do not believe that there is a credible alternative for the site and a failure to capitalise on the opportunity presented by the stadium proposal will, in our view, result in the site failing to achieve its potential as an urban renewal driver for Hobart and Tasmania.

Master Builders Tasmania and the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania represent two of the biggest industries in Tasmania, accounting for a significant proportion of all private sector employment and economic output in the State.

We believe that for the continued growth in our respective industries the Macquarie Point development is essential.

We have closely followed the success of inner-city stadia developments in Adelaide, Perth, and Townsville in transforming those cities' visitor economies, while stimulating private investment in their accommodation and hospitality sectors.

We are told, for example, visitor activity directly generated by events held at the Perth Stadium now constitutes the fourth largest source visitor market to Western Australia. In South Australia, the Adelaide Oval redevelopment is the catalyst for the State being able to attract unprecedented major events, such as the AFL's 'Gather Round', which is all about generating seasonal visitor activity.

We see absolutely no reason why an all-weather, boutique stadium on the literal doorstep of the Hobart CBD and our iconic waterfront precinct could not achieve similar outcomes for Tasmania.

It is essential that in coming years we continue to grow sustainable year-round visitation to Tasmania from high-yielding visitor markets. Major events attract high spending visitors to Tasmania at times of the year when our leisure market is soft. AFL football in Launceston and Hobart, along with our iconic mid-winter cultural events, Dark Mofo and the Festival of Voices, underpin our visitor economy throughout the cooler months.

Economic modelling commissioned by the Tasmanian Government on the likely tourism return of the stadium makes a compelling case for our industry to support the proposal. The PriceWaterhouse Coopers report found that the Stadium could generate 100,000 additional interstate and international visitors to Tasmania, generating 350,000 more bed nights.

To put these numbers in perspective, this would represent a similar level of demand uptake across Tasmania's visitor economy as generated by MONA, or the equivalent to one-third the total interstate visitation generated each year by the Spirit of Tasmania ships. This would be a transformative intervention into our visitor economy that will stimulate a further generation of private investment in accommodation and hospitality infrastructure, and further diversify our visitor

market profile for the inevitable downturns in domestic holiday visitation.

Importantly, the investment would also stimulate growth in our events and cultural industries.

Tasmania's events sector has grown rapidly over recent years through the success of our own homegrown arts and cultural events. The opportunity for these events to go to another level, and for the whole sector to grow around world class, all-weather infrastructure will create new Tasmanian businesses and job opportunities in event logistics and support, along with the arts and creative sectors.

As far as the building sector is concerned, the Macquarie Point project is more than just a football field, it's a game-changing urban renewal project that will deliver massive benefits to the whole State.

We have an opportunity to create something that is world-class that hundreds of young Tasmanians would be able to build and contribute to and would create lasting benefits for generations to come.

Right now there are over 3,000 apprentice tradies in the building and construction sector. Not only would a major project at Macquarie Point create opportunities for many of these young tradespeople, it would also open the door for hundreds more to start working in the industry.

It is estimated that the project itself would support (directly and indirectly) 4,200 jobs, with a fifth of those being apprenticeships. This project will be a skills incubator for Tasmania's construction industry and setup the workforce for the next decade. Additionally, it would give employers (in both the building industry and the tourism sector) the confidence to plan for the long-term regarding employment and capital investment.

The flow on benefits would be huge. A project like this would help us grow our building and construction workforce, provide a hugely valuable opportunity for tradies to develop their skill sets and demonstrate that Tasmania has come of age and has the capacity to deliver big projects.

Vocal opponents to this proposal seem fixated on this project being all about AFL football and simply replicating existing infrastructure at Bellerive Oval. We consider that a very short-sighted and naïve perspective.

An AFL team is just the catalyst in transforming the way we attract and leverage major events in Tasmania. AFL would be just one of many sporting and cultural events able to be hosted at this new inner-city and all-weather venue. Bellerive Oval is a small and beautiful, but highly weather-exposed cricket ground, in a dense suburban setting with no capacity for expansion or surrounding development. The existing stadia infrastructure in Southern Tasmania is never going to attract the types of events and outcomes for our sector and the economy as this proposed new facility at Macquarie Point.

Similarly, we hear the arguments this Stadium project should not be a priority for Tasmania when there is so much social need in our community. As Tasmanians, we are conscious of the terrible situation with homelessness and housing affordability across the State, and the perennial challenges with Tasmania's health system.

The Committee would appreciate the critical role Governments play in building economic enabling infrastructure, such as ports, highways, runways, and other 'state building' infrastructure, that stimulate private investment and economic growth, to create new jobs and generate additional taxation revenue. There are examples within Tasmania and across the country of State and Federal Government's investing in Major Events infrastructure to generate significant economic returns.

It is also worth noting that the development of Macquarie Point was always going to require significant investment from the Tasmanian and Australian Governments.

The Macquarie Point Stadium presents a rare opportunity for the Tasmanian and Australian Governments to invest in economic enabling infrastructure that will stimulate long-term investment and growth in our economy.

We would welcome an opportunity to appear before the Committee.

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