

OUR PLACE - HOBART

22 November 2023

Mr Simon Scott

Committee Secretary

Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts

Parliament of Tasmania

By email: pac@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Scott,

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission to the Committee.

We congratulate the Committee on its interim report and its decision to amend the terms of reference.

Our Place – Hobart—a group of Hobart citizens concerned with the need for appropriate development of our city— has a significant interest in the outcome of the proposal to develop a stadium at Macquarie Point and associated proposal to develop an arts, entertainment and sports precinct.

The proposed arts, entertainment and sports precinct (“the precinct”) is, in effect, an amalgam of concepts designed to window dress a stadium on the site. As a precinct it is a failure, and has little in the way of redeeming features. As a stadium it is a bad idea in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Much has been written both by the Public Accounts Committee and members of the public that already address the terms of reference of the Public Accounts Committee. Rather than burden the Committee with a repeat of that information, I am going to summarise our position in opposition to the stadium and to the precinct.

- Visually, the stadium will have a catastrophic effect on the heritage values of Sullivans Cove. **Attached** to the email carrying this letter is an image prepared by Bence Mulcahy, respected architects, which is a computer model based largely on information released by the government. The architect who oversaw the model, Shamus Mulcahy, has provided a statement in relation to the process of constructing the model. It is **attached** to the email carrying this letter.
- The stadium will not fit on the site.
- The construction of the stadium on the site will be at the expense of any area for Aboriginal reconciliation and promotion of cultural understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. This is contrary to the **Pathway to Truth-Telling and Treaty Report** prepared by Professors Warner and McCormack in November 2021 and presented to then Premier, Peter Gutwein, which he committed to honour.

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- The agreement between the Tasmanian Government and the AFL casts the entirety of the risk for the project on to the Tasmanian Government. In that way, the agreement is extraordinary. It was clearly drafted by the AFL's lawyers, and the Tasmanian Government appears to have signed it without conducting an assessment of the risk that it was undertaking. All this for seven AFL games a year.
- We do not have the resources to undertake an assessment of the economic modelling of the project. We know that the State Government is planning to put in \$750 million, which will include over \$200 million from the Commonwealth, ultimately to be contributed by the State because that money will come from GST revenue. But the cost blowout for the stadium and associated buildings has not been assessed. Our advice is that it will cost in the vicinity of \$1.2 billion. And that is before we look at the costs of transport upgrade and facilitation, reconfiguring access to Macquarie Point wharf and the like.
- The stadium and precinct does not have the support of the RSL. This is utterly unsurprising. The Dawn Service will be dominated by the proximity of the wall of the stadium. It will be a blight on the landscape and a blight on the area generally. It is astonishing that this development proposal has got as far as it has, given it has so little going for it.
- The only benefit that could be said to flow from the proposal is that it will satisfy a term of the AFL funding agreement. For that benefit – if it truly be a benefit – we get a stadium that will be ugly, and is poorly sited. It has a lack of transport infrastructure to feed it. The proposals for transport infrastructure are farcical, are not funded and are not achievable. We are reliably advised that their costs will run into additional hundreds of millions.
- At every point, this development fails the most basic of tests for planning outcomes. It is not surprising that a development like this is prohibited under the relevant planning scheme.
- Macquarie Point is an ideal site for housing and other special area uses such as the mooted Aboriginal Reconciliation Park. Our Place developed and publicly promoted an alternative vision that envisaged one thousand homes for two to three thousand Tasmanians built on the site for a little over half the cost of the stadium (\$400 million). The development of a stadium on Macquarie Point will be at the expense of that area being available to the public and to cater for just such critical needs such as housing. It obliterates the prospect of the site being used for Aboriginal reconciliation.
- No adequate value has been ascribed to the site. If the AFL or anyone else wants a stadium to be constructed on that site, the value of that site needs to be identified and costed as part of the costs of such a development.

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- The Government's process has been opaque. There has been no consultation with impacted groups including local residents, the RSL or even Hobart City Council. The Government has attempted to mislead the public with the two primary images it has released, one from about 1000 feet in height, and the other from ground level near Mawson's Hut. The Aboriginal community has not been properly consulted about this proposal. There is much talk by the government of community, coupled to an evasion of ever meeting with it.
- This precinct proposal only gets as far as it has because the government has no vision for the site. Our vision of what could be achieved at Macquarie Point excited many because it was something Tasmanians could be proud of. The image is **attached** to the email carrying this letter (named 2303_A1 panel). The government's stadium proposal however threatens to seriously debauch the state's public finances, takes money away from areas that desperately need it, such as housing, health and education, has deeply divided Tasmanians, and even from the view point of an AFL team, done much damage to the good name and necessary united support of all Tasmanians such a team so clearly needs to succeed.
- Lastly, the comments made by former Victorian Premier, Jeff Kennett, must not be dismissed. I **attach** to the email carrying this letter Our Place's response to those comments.

Yours faithfully,



Roland Browne
Spokesperson



MACQUARIE POINT STADIUM PROPOSAL.

Shamus Mulcahy, Bence Mulcahy

Our methodology

We used computer software to create a model the size and shape of the stadium. Inputs for this are based upon the information made publicly available in Tasmanian government documents.

A standard photograph was taken from Victoria Dock near Mures. However, the visual impact from many other parts of Hobart will be significantly worse with the stadium more dominant in viewlines.

Using the computer we took a screenshot of the computer model of the stadium from the same location (matching the distance and angle) as the standard photograph.

We then used computer software to combine the two images.

Why it is accurate.

The proposed stadium is 40 metres high, 240 metres long and 210 metres wide. There is limited information available but what is available is very clear and therefore the model is accurate as there is little opportunity for error.

Why we added a steel structure

A roof is not self-supporting and requires a structure. None of the information available regarding the proposed Hobart stadium dimensions takes into account the additional height and visual bulk that this will add to the building. The government commissioned Aurecon Report made clear that a lighter structure for a fixed roof would be insufficiently strong to hold the weight of the lighting and sound rigs used for the large-scale concerts the government says the stadium will host. For the image we have used professional experience to conservatively approximate a typical structure for a stadium of this size that would support a fixed roof and concert infrastructure.

Colouring

As there is no design yet for the stadium, nor is there any colour specified for the external walls. The render shows the stadium in a neutral concrete colour. The final finish may be a variety of colours and surfaces. The government in its documents uses the Melbourne Marvel (Docklands) Stadium as its key reference. If the final stadium were to resemble Marvel Stadium in its finishes and styling the visual impact on Sullivans Cove would be considerably worse than this render.

Stadium Too Large For Site

The dimensions of the stadium appear to make minimal allowance for seating and public amenities and facilities (food/drink vendors toilets etc.) outside the playing surface. In addition, the government report states no allowance has been made for a concourse in the current dimensions. The report dimensions 240m x 210m only just fit on the current site with the north end close against the cenotaph escarpment and the south end right on Evans Street.

On this basis it is clear that the site is not an appropriate sized location to accommodate a typical and workable stadium and that the current stadium proposal is being compromised and manipulated to fit the site.

The danger in this is that as the project develops and compromises becomes more difficult to practically accommodate, the site may need redefining and parts of Evans Street, the wharf or Cenotaph hill may need to be taken and subsumed over in order to properly accommodate the stadium.

Secondly, the proposed stadium stretches all across the site and therefore divides the site in two parts. (East and West) There is little opportunity for movement through and around the site and future opportunities such as transport routes are not feasible. The space on either side of the stadium become disconnected, particularly the east side.

Third, these constraints of site and budget will make it extremely difficult to realise a stadium of the quality and with the amenity that people would expect of a 21st century stadium.

Fourth, there is no meaningful space left for any of the precinct projects the Tasmanian government has said will be built on the site and the Federal government says it is funding, such as an Indigenous Reconciliation Park.



Macquarie Point Vision

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|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| ① Indigenous Cultural and Heritage Centre | ⑦ Sustainable Urban Transport Link | ⑬ Plaza Square | ⑲ Public Art |
| ② Truth and Reconciliation Park | ⑧ Wild Swimming Basin | ⑭ The Long House | ⑳ Escarpment and Cenotaph Hill |
| ③ Shoreline Revealed | ⑨ Cenotaph | ⑮ Transit Hub | ㉑ Solar Power Generation |
| ④ Housing | ⑩ Red Shed | ⑯ Welcome Forecourt | ㉒ Post Industrial Infrastructure |
| ⑤ Australian Antarctic Program Headquarters | ⑪ Safety and Security | ⑰ Surging Rivulet Exposed | ㉓ Pedestrian and Cycling Super Connector |
| ⑥ State Library | ⑫ Vehicle and Pedestrian Streets | ⑱ kunanyi | ㉔ Green Rooftops |

Our Place: a Tasmanian Vision for Macquarie Point

The Macquarie Point Vision is an iconic housing development of 1,000 new homes for 2,000-3,000 people that has as its centrepiece an enhanced, nationally significant Truth and Reconciliation Park.

It speaks to what Hobartians need, which is housing, and what they want, reconciliation with the Palawa people. It is about Tasmania's needs and values.

It is about creating an iconic, internationally significant urban renewal project which answers our needs and addresses our problems. It is about hope and pride, truth and the future. It's about our place.

The Macquarie Point Vision is an initiative of Our Place, a group of Tasmanians who wish to see development that benefits Tasmanians, not vested corporate interests. The creative work has been done in partnership with Bence Mulcahy, bencemulcahy.com.au. For further information go to, macquariepointvision.net.au

Macquarie Point Vision

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Cost

This vision for Macquarie Point would be developed and built in stages deriving funding from a mix of various state, federal and private sources. At 2023 costs the 1,000 homes, have been costed at a total \$300 million, while the Truth and Reconciliation Park and the Indigenous Cultural Centre \$100 million, a total of \$400 million.



1 Indigenous Cultural and Heritage Centre

The Indigenous Cultural Centre is an essential place for gathering together Tasmania's indigenous culture.

It accommodates performance, workshop, retail and gallery spaces, as well as offices, meeting, education and archive facilities.

The Centres location, at the heart of the Macquarie Point Vision, and the only new building on the pre colonial shoreline, is recognition of its significance, of the importance of indigenous people and culture in contemporary Tasmania and recognition of our shared history.



2 Truth and Reconciliation Park

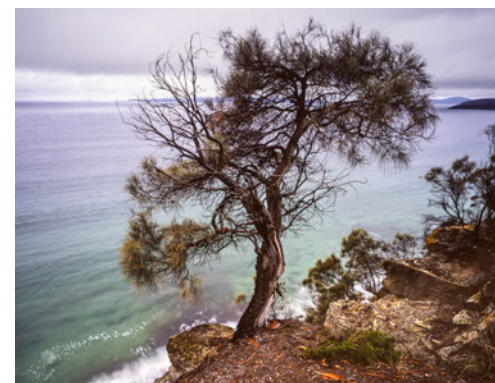
The primary landscape element of the Macquarie Point Vision is the Truth and Reconciliation Park. This involves rehabilitation of contaminated industrial ground into a natural landscape reminiscent of the pre colonial shoreline.

Native vegetation such as She-Oaks, Kangaroo Paw and Correa will provide shade, native grasslands become spaces for recreation while sandstone outcrops create meeting spots and gathering points.

The Truth and Reconciliation Park will be activated by the Indigenous Cultural and Heritage Centre, and landscaped spaces around the Centre will accommodate community educational and cultural activities.

The park connects the city and waterfront to the Queens Domain and creates an opportunity for level access to the cenotaph.

The allocation of meaningful space for the Truth and Reconciliation Park is a step toward the acknowledgement of our states history and recognition of the importance of indigenous people and culture as part of a future Tasmania.



3 Shoreline Revealed

A key feature of this vision is the acknowledgement of the pre colonial shoreline. This line organises the site into the Truth and Reconciliation Park (on the shoreline side) and new buildings and urban spaces (on the reclaimed land side).

200 years ago escarpments laced with thickets of She-Oaks and sheltered coves dripping with oysters would have characterised the shoreline. In revealing this shoreline we propose a series of landscape interventions along the route of the old shoreline. Wooded groves, rock outcrops and water features provide places to rest and reflect.

As the principle axis of the Macquarie Point Vision, the shoreline also marks the route of the light rail and main pedestrian/bicycle route through the site. This line also connects the sites main public buildings including the new State Library and the Indigenous Cultural and Heritage Centre and the extension of this axis beyond the site ties together cultural institutions including the TMAG, City Hall, and the Federation Concert Hall.



4 Housing

Housing is the major problem confronting Tasmanians in 2023. The Vision proposes more than 1000 dwellings for the site accommodating 2000-3000 residents. Dwellings vary in type and style with mixed tenure blocks, accommodating, private market apartments, key worker housing, community/government housing as well as crisis accommodation.

All housing on site will be world leading sustainable design. Housing will be designed, constructed and will operate carbon neutrally. Solar arrays will generate energy while green rooftops will improve energy efficiency, increase urban biodiversity and limit water run off.

Housing will be constructed of engineered timber, manufactured locally from sustainably managed local plantations, providing the utmost levels of energy efficiency, health and comfort to residents.

Construction methods will benefit our local industry and economy in developing manufacturing capacity, innovative construction technologies and employing Tasmanians.

Housing blocks are 3 to 5 stories high so not to overshadow adjacent public spaces and sit comfortably in scale with the existing neighbouring buildings and the natural landforms of the precinct.

Houses will be generous in size, light, warm and healthy and will feature the highest levels of amenities ever experienced in Tasmania including, bike parking and end of trip facilities, secure resident storage, free solar electricity, gyms pools and health facilities. The design will encourage social connections between residents and accommodate opportunities for local retail and conveniences.

This development will provide significant relief for Tasmania's current housing crisis and importantly set a new benchmark for future developments.



5 Australian Antarctic Program Headquarters

The Australian Antarctic Program Headquarters is proposed for location adjacent Macquarie Wharf. This facility co-ordinates Australia's scientific, environmental logistical and transport activities in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

The building accommodates offices meeting spaces, educational facilities as well as workshops laboratories, storage and other specialist facilities. The location provides direct access to the RSV Nuyina when docked as well as allied wharf facilities and quick access to the Antarctic air link via Hobart Airport. Main access is via Evans Street but it utilises the wharf side edge for vehicle and specialised access.

The Australian Antarctic Program Headquarters will be sustainably constructed utilising engineered mass timber. It will be light, bright and generous in amenity and its new city location will facilitate cross disciplinary collaboration with local institutions as well as a pleasant and convenient work environment.

The scale of the facility proposed provides opportunity for space over and above that currently accommodated in Kingston. The Vision proposes a sustainable, attractive and enviable workplace, the worlds pre-eminent Antarctic Headquarters, with direct access to Macquarie Wharf, the gateway to the Southern Ocean.



6 State Library

Anchoring the Vision is the new State Library. A modern sustainable, building befitting of Tasmania's most loved and trusted institution.

Envisaged as a "public living room". It is a place to grab a novel or flick through magazines, to conduct research or view an exhibition, to stream audio files and download movies, to meet a friend over tea and cake and to steal a quick nap in a quiet sunny nook. A building for all Tasmanians.



7 Sustainable Urban Transport Link

The development of the site is catalyst for the implementation of an urban transport network of hubs laced throughout our city from Sandy Bay to Bridgewater. This high speed battery powered light rail service will connect communities and support social development, urban regeneration, employment, housing, health, leisure, tourism and sustainability throughout the city and its fringes.

The light rail network will thread its way through the site, extending along the shoreline to the north and Davey Street to the south, increasing the connectivity of city life by attracting and moving significant numbers of people to and through the site and most importantly, remarkably improving city traffic congestion.



8 Wild Swimming Basin

Clean waterways are a key signaller of a healthy and sustainable city. The Macquarie Point Vision proposes the rehabilitation of the outdated dirty sewage works into a pristine cool climate wild swimming basin and the ultimate signal of Hobart's new healthy green future.

Swimming is fun, healthy, keeps you fit ,can be competitive or social, young or old can participate, it serves is a life skill, is low impact and not expensive.

In summer residents and tourists can see and be seen sunning on the basins shady edge, while in depths of winter hardy souls will gather like a fraid of shivering ghosts in the frosty jerry before slipping into its inky wetness for that icy life affirming dip.

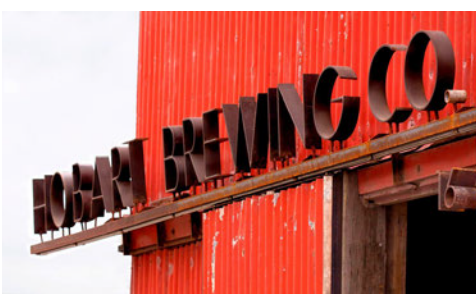
The wild swimming basin would be created by removing the sewage works and diverting the Hobart Rivulet into the new natural basin.

By embracing the waters pilgrimage from kunanyi to the Derwent we celebrating the tangible connection of the site with the wider landscape.



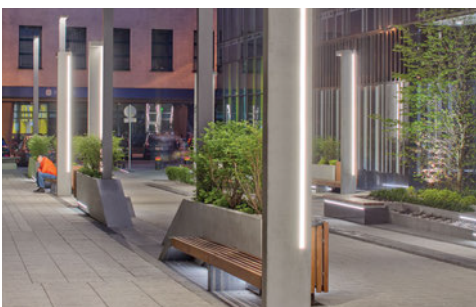
9 Cenotaph

The Cenotaph is a key driver in the site planning. Public spaces are designed to provide views to the Cenotaph orienting us within the city and providing connection to the greater landscape. The Truth and Reconciliation Park provides a buffer between the Cenotaph, its landscape, and new developments. The Vision recognises the Cenotaphs cultural importance as a place of reflection, and with dignity and respect it grants it due space.



10 Red Shed

The Red Shed currently occupied by the Hobart Brewing Company is maintained and enhanced with the addition of a public square. Its grit and texture is retained as place where residents can sip a cheeky beer while walking the dog, visitors can sample a local, or a sub antarctic scientist can smash some frothies after returning from a winter season. A place for all to say "cheers to Hobart".



11 Safety and Security

The Macquarie Point Vision proposes spaces that are safe, secure, robust and people friendly. Self generating solar lighting will be abundant and public spaces will be designed so that security is inherent with passive surveillance and residential oversight.



12 Vehicle and Pedestrian Streets

Primary street access into the Macquarie Point site is via Evans Street. Streets are located adjacent the existing site buildings (Long House/Goods Shed/Red Shed), and while convenient this also extends the existing opportunities for sneaky ambling pedestrian connections through the existing Henry Jones/UTAS precinct from the waterfront.

Streets are 2 way with a dedicated cycle lanes and ensure access to all buildings. Streets layouts do not allow vehicle access all the way through the site. Streets widths accommodate parking where required but, preference pedestrians with generous footpaths, quality street furniture and vegetation.

The streets are sustainable and friendly. The Vision proposes electric fast charging points in parking locations, impervious paving, bio-swales and rain gardens to limit, catch and treat surface water and self generating street lighting for safety and amenity. Streets will be activated by "lived in" features to generate community connectedness such as mini street libraries and street side stalls where residents can pass on that thumbled copy of Fifty Shades of Grey or offload an excess of the summers jam.



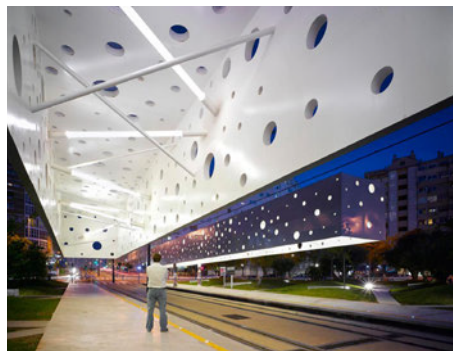
13 Plaza Square

The central square is a north facing public space orientated to the sun and the Cenotaph. Commercial activity serving local residents activates the edges of the square at ground level. At the northern periphery, the square terraces up forming a natural amphitheatre and the perfect space for large public gatherings.



14 The Long House

The current Long House is maintained as a mixed use commercial hub (accommodating creative agencies, a fitness gym and an indigenous social enterprise) with minor modification to its north end to allow it to open out onto the newly developed sunny public space.



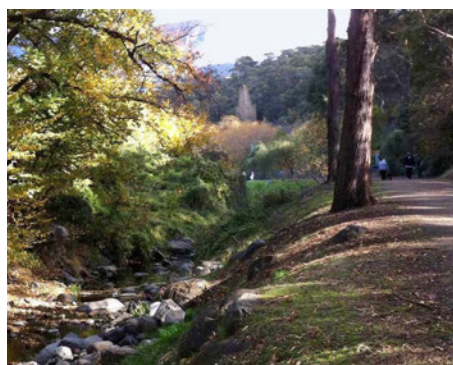
15 Transit Hub

At the gateway to the Macquarie Point Vision is the Transit Hub. This is the primary light railway interchange and a place to rack securely and recharge your bike or scooter for the day and grab a coffee before heading into the city or further afield. The building respects the Davey Street alignment and is set back to maintain views into and out of the site.



16 Welcome Forecourt

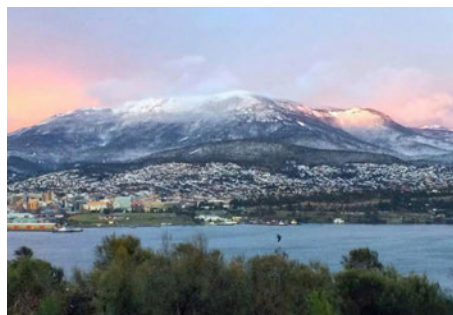
The welcome forecourt is the entry to the Macquarie Point Vision and its direct connection to the city. Edged by the newly exposed rivulet and with views to kunanyi, the forecourt space sets the precedent for the overarching site agenda, the natural connection between summit and sea. The forecourt is activated by the flanking buildings, the new State Library and the Transit Hub.



17 Surging Rivulet Exposed

Cascading from the scree slewn slopes above the city, the Hobart Rivulets crystal clear waters were the lifeblood of the new settlement. Since foundation times the city has grown and has suppressed the natural expression of the Rivulet, ultimately burying it and piping it to the sea.

This vision rewinds 200 years of history celebrating this natural feature. The Vision proposes revealing the Rivulet at the historical confluence of the Park Street and Hobart Rivulets where they joined as one to flee the confines of the foothills and flow into the Derwent, near Hunter Island. To pass through the site means traversing the mouth of this city making watercourse, in the footsteps of all those who trod these shores past.



18 kunanyi

The presence of the mountain is inherent in the site planning. Key public spaces are designed to provide summit views, orienting citizens in the city and making connections to the greater landscape. The revealing of the Rivulet and the redevelopment of the pre colonial shoreline emphasises the river and the mountains as connected natural entities.



19 Public Art

The vision proposes a significant network of site specific public art commissions throughout the site. Public art will vary in scale and medium, some interactive and playful and thought provoking. A focus of the public art will be nature based pieces and indigenous artists.



20 Escarpment and Cenotaph Hill

The Cenotaph hill and escapement are recognised as key landscape features of the wider precinct. The Vision proposes an exclusion zone from the escarpment to the old shoreline free of development. This allows a clear reading or understanding of the natural landscape and due reverence to the Cenotaph hill. Landscaping in this zone will create the opportunity for level access from Macquarie Point to the Cenotaph hill.



21 Solar Power Generation

Building roofs will accommodate Australia's densest and most interconnected urban network of solar arrays. Each building will feature battery storage facilities and provide opportunities for building users to access generated energy or if excess then for redirection back into the grid. Each building will also accommodate electric charging stations within carparks.



22 Post Industrial Infrastructure

As testament to this precincts industrial history, selective retention of the non operational sewage treatment infrastructure is proposed. The giant tanks, spiralling staircases, gantries and pipes will form an interesting and beautiful sculptural backdrop to the wild swimming basin.



23 Pedestrian and Cycling Super Connector

The Pedestrian and Cycling Super Connector traces a route along the old shoreline. Safe, sustainable, efficient and interesting this dedicated pedestrian and cycle path brings the popular northern suburbs cycle path into the heart of the city.



24 Green Rooftops

Residential buildings will feature green rooftops. Green rooftops reduce stormwater runoff improve building thermal performance and energy efficiency and create wonderful opportunities for increased urban biodiversity.



25 The Goods Shed

The current Goods Shed is retained and reimagined as a lose fit, all weather, multi function commercial space. At any time one might wander in and find pop up retail, regular markets, a temporary seasonal restaurant or a gig space. The sunny north end of the shed opens up to the Plaza Square encouraging indoor outdoor events.



26 Cost Efficient and Debt Free Staging

The Macquarie Point Vision does not rely on being undertaken as a single construction project. It is designed to be constructed as a series of smaller scale project stages. The advantage of this is that it does not rely on a single large Government financial commitment, It can be funded by the state over a number of budget cycles and matched with contributions from private investors, where they benefit.

The Vision is "loose fit" so can evolve should circumstances change. It is designed to be of maximum financial benefit to the state. Because construction stages are of manageable scale it is designed to be built entirely by local contractors with the capacity of our local construction industry, rather than relying on a single large multi national building company.

The Macquarie Point Vision is a financially intelligent, and economically responsive approach to developing the site that does not saddle future generation of Tasmanians with an ongoing debt.



27 The Round House Ring

The circular configuration and location of the existing round house is acknowledged in this public space. Buildings surrounding the Ring peel back to ensure views from the space to kunanyi and the Cenotaph are maintained. The Round House Ring is an open landscaped space, activated by the neighbouring buildings. The new State Library cafe and entry open into the Ring while the Indigenous Cultural and Heritage Centre utilises the Ring for formal ceremonies and large gatherings. The pedestrian, cycling and light rail routes transverse this space.



28 Parking and Charging Stations

Electric charging stations will be located in parking clusters. These will be serviced from solar energy generated on site and available to visitors and residents.

THEIR STADIUM



OUR HOBART