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Your Submission to the TPC Review: The Tasmanian Land Planning Commission (TLPC) has several important functions, some of which have been sidelined, and even omitted over several years. For example, successive governments have reduced the TLPC's role in planning, leaving decisions on planning and approvals with the Minister who may be seen, by an increasingly mistrustful public, not to do this in a fair and just way.

It is important that the TLPC has its independence maintained, broadened and strengthened so that it reduces the risk of political influence in its decisions, and to ensure decisions are made by qualified and independent planning experts. The integrity and centrality of evidence-based decision making must be restored to the resource management and planning system in both environmental and other decision making. In addition, given its expert status, the TLPC should be given the power to make and amend the Tasmanian Planning Scheme where circumstances make this necessary. To keep the TLPC independent acts as a safeguard both for the public and the government of the day.

There are some functions of the TLPC that I feel must be retained in order to maintain confidence in the planning system.

These are as follows:

The TLPC must maintain its function in policy development in particular with regard to draft State Policies and draft Tasmanian Planning Policies, and have a greater role in other public decision making roles which would benefit from its expertise. This would include reviews of reserve management plans, water management plans and the State of the Environment Report. It must retain its existing role to review and hold hearings on representations and to amend any planning scheme to be consistent with draft Tasmanian Planning Policies. Its role as decision maker for State Planning Provisions must be restored.

Legislation should be changed to give the TLPC the responsibility to develop, amend and approve Regional Land Use Strategies with public notice and hearings.

The role of the TLPC in assessing projects of State significance must be retained, along with the necessity to provide advice and recommendations to the Minister who should act in terms of that advice.

Reviewing National Park and Reserve management plans must be retained by the TLPC as it is a key function of this authority. The recent practice of developing Master Plans without oversight by the TLPC has misfired as it leads to contentious community discontent and disillusion with the government. Master plans are not subject to the legal requirements for openness, transparency and consultation which apply to formal management plans.

State of the Environment reporting should remain with the TLPC as it is fundamental to assuring a basis for good planning, and a source of excellent information about current land health and integrity. I note that reports have not been produced since 2009 which is

very concerning as problems with the reporting had been identified in 2013, and again in 2018 without being rectified.

In conclusion the TLPC has served Tasmania well in the past by keeping governments up to date with information and expert advice.

It would be disastrous if short term thinking discouraged excellence in planning and this review should take advantage of the opportunity to make positive changes to ensure continued public support and government credibility.

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