

Department of Justice
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12th May 2020

I wish to make a submission to the review of the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

The TPC is an independent umpire with members with suitable qualifications and experience to adequately assess proposed developments across Tasmania. Our planning schemes and other assessment processes have been drawn up by experts in their fields over a long period of time. It is imperative that we maintain both our rigorous independent assessment body and our robust planning schemes. It would be tragic if this independence was lost to politically motivated individuals, with little knowledge or experience in planning matters.

Tasmania must come before the political aspirations of short term politicians, motivated by the need for foreign investment or political power. We risk our democracy when we hand power to politicians with no recourse for the public.

Development projects can affect the State either positively or detrimentally for a long time, some irreversibly. It is therefore crucial that we have a totally independent, qualified and experienced team to evaluate any development, be it large or small, to guarantee the future for Tasmania and Tasmanians. This team needs to be free of any political or economic influence. It is crucial that we maintain total transparency in our planning decisions.

Further it is imperative that the TPC, and not politicians, make all decisions relating to Planning Scheme controls and amendments. Political interference in planning decisions can only be detrimental to Tasmania's future.

It is crucial that we have an independent umpire to assess all major projects to protect Tasmania from inappropriate development driven by the need for profit. The proposed Major Projects Bill will destroy the independence and transparency so vital to that process and pose a direct threat to our democracy and the future of Tasmania.

In the interests of all Tasmanians and for the viable future of Tasmania, the role of the Tasmanian Planning Commission should be maintained and strengthened and the proposed draft Major Projects Bill rejected.

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