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Subject: Form Submission - TPC Review
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Your Submission to the TPC Review: As a citizen of Tasmania who cares about my local urban, suburban and regional environments, I am really concerned about the plans to review the functions of the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

The TPC appears to work well as it is, and it seems to me, from what I have witnessed over the years, that it does a good and fair job of reviewing and assessing proposed major projects by taking all views into account – not just developers. This is what a democracy should be doing. We are all members of the community, and our views need to be taken into account – not just the views of developers who work for private profit for a few.

The TPC needs to maintain its functions of assessing major projects independent of government influence, under the legislation which already exists for that purpose; and of reviewing reserve and national park management plans. As well as its other planning functions. And be properly funded to do the tasks which it is required by law to do.

The proposed Major Projects Bill is not necessary, considering adequate legislation already exists for this purpose, and a fair and representative independent body already exists to do the work required. The thought that the power would be taken away from the TPC and given to a non-elected body, rather than the TPC, would review ‘major projects’, and that the public would have no say or right of appeal, is just plain wrong.

I regard the TPC as a fair and just independent body which will takes into account the views of the community as well as developers. I cannot see that the Major Projects Bill and the processes under which it will operate (eg assessment by a new and unelected body, the Developments Assessment Panel, and unchecked Ministerial power over decisions)) will take community views into account in the same way, instead leaning towards increasing private profit for a few wealthy developers.

I am fearful that the proposed review of the TPC is an attempt by the Government, under cover of the COVID-19 crisis which is occupying so much of peoples’ minds at present, to take away the independent function of the TPC and hence a fair hearing on major developments which takes community views into account as well as those of developers.

It makes me angry that developers and private profit should be put before the interests of the public when the use of public land is being considered. If there is public outcry about a development, then by definition, there is something about it that needs an independent examination, taking all concerns into account. Categorising members of the public who want further scrutiny of large projects as ‘greenie minority anti-development troublemakers’, is too often used as a smokescreen for something NOT being in the public interest.

Controversial development proposals need to have independent scrutiny and decisions made on the basis of whether they are for the public good. Surely this is should be a mainstay of our democratic society.

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