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Subject: Form Submission - TPC Review
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Your Submission to the TPC Review: I write to make a submission to the review of the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC).

The TPC was established as an independent authority which can provide oversight on development in Tasmania and can ensure that all land use is subject to the Land Use and Planning Act. (LUPA). In the years since its establishment the effectiveness of the TPC has been considerably weakened.

This diminution of influence can be seen in:

an increased number of cases in which the Minister has intervened and ignored TPC decisions or advice,

changes in laws (The Major Projects Act, the Housing Land Supply Bill) which remove or bypass the TPC assessment process,

'Master Plans' and Strategies for regional and municipal land use which have been produced by local governments, private developers and consultants with no involvement of TPC

disappearance of the role of the TPC when inquiries into Public Land Use and Marine Protected Areas are carried out,

increasing numbers of permitted uses and land use exemptions which make it impossible for the TPC to ensure that land use planning is coherent and sustainable,

the removal of the need for public hearings in some cases,

the appointment of the former head of the Property Council (Mary Massina) as head of the Planning Reform Task force.

These changes have been made in the interests of 'removal of red tape' and 'planning reform', which in effect, reduce the influence of local government and of the community and favour the vested interests of property developers.

Corruption is an ongoing problem in Tasmania, and the rezoning of land for development provides an opportunities for corrupt behaviour. Transparency and proper consultation are essential.

My recommendations:

There is a need for an independent, properly funded TPC so that the Community, Local Government and Development proponents can have an affordable and accessible forum in which to make their cases.

The powers, roles and functions of the TPC must be restored and expanded so that it can properly carry out its work as the central institution for assessing strategic land use planning in Tasmania.

This role must not be handed over to vested interests.

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