

Our Place - Hobart

David O'Byrne MP
Member for Franklin

by email: david.obyrne@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr O'Byrne

Here at *Our Place* we read with some concern of your support for a new stadium at Macquarie Point. We were somewhat reassured, however, when you qualified that support by saying that it did not constitute "a blank cheque". We now ask that you fully reconsider your position in light of the financial data that were released shortly before the election.

We sincerely hope that you will continue to place the people of Tasmania, ALL the people, uppermost in your dealings with the incoming government, where the majority of successful candidates expressed concern over the redistribution of funds from the State's primary responsibilities of health, housing and education to a vanity project that will only plunge us further into debt.

Throughout the campaign we interrogated every aspect of the stadium proposal and concluded that:

- it's not needed and any funding to the AFL should be spent building a local team from the grass-roots level, while games are played at two existing, perfectly adequate facilities that could be upgraded at a fraction of the cost;
- it's too expensive and will place an unaffordable burden on future generations of Tasmanians – the funding agreement places all the risks on the State when all the rewards benefit the AFL, media and gambling corporations;
- it lacks social licence – we were never asked if we wanted a third AFL ground and the lack of transparency, with secret deals signed behind closed doors and without reference to Cabinet or even Treasury, alienated many Tasmanians from their neighbours and caused a loss of faith in the previous government to steer us through the precarious economic times ahead (as evidenced by the 12% swing against them); and
- it's in the wrong location – a structure that meets the stated specifications simply won't fit on-site, and the geo-engineering needed to support such a heavy building on unstable land was not costed prior to signing the contract.

We believe that you will be in a very strong position to hold the Liberal minority government to account, and it is incumbent upon you act in a way that lives up to your promise to ensure maturity and stability in parliament in order to avoid the chaos that has plagued the past few years and worked against the interests of Tasmania.

Much of that chaos derived from the Premier's proposal for a stadium at Macquarie Point, and was only confirmed as the campaign unfolded and more was revealed about the lack of transparency surrounding the contract, the lack of planning in selecting the wrong site, and the previous Government's unfunded commitments in an economic environment of increasing annual deficits and ballooning State debt.

We look forward to you reconsidering your position over the coming months to see this ridiculous proposal finally expunged from the new parliament's agenda so that it can get on with the job for which it was elected.

Yours faithfully



Roland Browne
10 April 2024