

The Examiner

Greens planning spokeswoman Rosalie Woodruff calls for the Major Projects bill to be withdrawn



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Greens planning spokeswoman Rosalie Woodruff. Picture: file

The government's draft Major Projects bill should be withdrawn says the Greens.

Comment on the [Draft Land Use Planning and Approvals Amendment \(Major Projects\) Bill 2020](#), which will provide for the independent assessment of major projects in Tasmania, will close on Friday, May 15.

In her submission on the proposed legislation, Greens planning spokeswoman Rosalie Woodruff said the bill needed to be re-done because it failed to articulate the need for a major projects process.

"There has been no attempt to outline why the current planning process fails to satisfactorily assess proposals of impact, planning significance or complexity," Dr Woodruff said.

She the consultation process for this bill had locked out most Tasmanians.

"Planning legislation is some of the most lengthy and complex of all legislation," Dr Woodruff said.

"This 206 page bill was released for public consultation without accompanying clause notes or fact sheets. This is an unbelievable gap, given the complexity of planning law and the substantial changes this bill seeks to achieve.

"The consultation has been substantially undermined by being held during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has reduced the effective time available to prepare a submission."

She said the allegation some matters were too complex for councils to consider was condescending and irrational.

"Councils, like the Tasmanian Planning Commission, employ professional planners," Dr Woodruff said.

"Removing councils from planning decisions is a political decision that undermines principles of good planning and community participation."

Dr Woodruff also cited concerns the proposed TPC Development Assessment Panel would hold too much power.

But Premier Peter Gutwein said the draft bill set out a sensible framework, one he hoped the vast majority of Tasmanians would support.

"With legislation like this you will always have those at one end of the spectrum who will argue against it and those at the other end of the spectrum who will argue for it - I believe this sits firmly in the middle," Mr Gutwein said.

"We need a framework that provides an independent panel to assess major projects that may be out of the scope or the capacity for local governments to deal with or, for their complexity, require special skills in terms of the assessment."