

The Mercury

Opposition groups say Major Projects Bill should be postponed; but consultation has been extensive, says the government

Community groups opposed to the new major projects laws want the tabling of the Bill this week to be postponed, while the government argues consultation on the legislation has been extensive.

[Jessica Howard](#), Mercury
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Brian Corr from Hobart Not Highrise, Anne Held of the East Coast Alliance, Peter McGlone from the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and Sophie Underwood from Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania want the state government to postpone the tabling of the Major Projects Bill. Picture: LUKE BOWDEN

THE tabling of the government's new major projects legislation should be postponed until the public has had more time to consider the details, say lobby groups opposing the Bill.

Parliament will see the finer details of the Liberals' overhaul of the state's major projects approval process when legislation is tabled today.

The new laws will replace old projects of regional significance rules, which were never used, and applied to high-value or complex major projects, as declared by the Planning Minister or their developers.

Representatives from several community groups including the Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania, East Coast Alliance, Tasmanian Conservation Trust and Hobart Not Highrise spoke out on Monday on their opposition to the new Bill.

PMAT co-ordinator Sophie Underwood said the group still held concerns about appeal rights and the broad scope of the legislation and wanted the tabling of the Bill delayed.

TALKING POINT: IF LABOR CARES, IT SHOULD STAND AGAINST MAJOR PROJECTS LAW

“We think it could be a 200 page document and we’re concerned it will be tabled Tuesday and debated on Thursday and given the significant and far reaching consequences for this Bill for the entire Tasmanian community, we’d like it postponed,” she said.



Sophie Underwood from Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania want the state government to release the Major Projects Bill for analysis. Picture: LUKE BOWDEN

“The government has never actually explained to us the need for this Bill.

“This is a whole new planning process which will essentially displace the existing and trusted processes and it will make it easier for developers at the cost of local communities.”

Tasmanian Conservation Trust director Peter McGlone said there was nothing wrong with the process of the Tasmanian Planning Commission dealing with major projects.

He wrote to Premier Peter Gutwein on Monday asking if the proponent of the contentious Cambria Green development had asked for government assistance to get the project, which is before the Supreme Court, over the line.

Planning Minister Roger Jaensch said the final version of the Bill would be tabled and debated in Parliament “just as is standard practice for any other piece of legislation.”

“It is disappointing that despite receiving a comprehensive briefing on the Major Projects Bill process, that included a discussion of how the draft Bill would be revised following consultation, PMAT continue to deliberately misrepresent the Bill and the assessment process it prescribes,” he said.

“The draft Bill has been through three stages of direct consultation over three years, for a total 20 weeks.

“Major projects is simply an evolution of, and improvement on, the current Projects of Regional Significance assessment process ... it does not take anything away, does not erode anything or create any new powers.”

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