

ISSUE 1906

“In Support of Progress”

Newsletter

Hobart City Deal
Renewable Energy
Parliament

Date: 28 February 2019

Hobart City Deal

There is a postscript to the Hobart City Deal matter.

The \$450m of Commonwealth money for the Antarctic will go towards upgrading facilities in the Antarctic. Nothing to do with Hobart really. This advice was proffered by the head of the Antarctic Division in a note that was circulated to staff, by way of “explanation”. In reality it has little if anything to do with Hobart’s infrastructure, which is what the City Deal was meant to be all about.

And yes, the \$5m for Macquarie Point is additional money to the \$45m already granted, and will be used to enable the place to become an “arts and cultural hub”. Really!

Wilderness

I have made comment previously about what our attitude should be to natural events such as fire that occur in wilderness areas. Tricky policy indeed.

But it also opens up a debate as to what access should be granted to people wishing to traverse it. If people walking in the wilderness get into trouble should they be rescued? Well, yes, of course they should, but to do so means access to those places by plane and helicopter, which destroys wilderness values. A paradox.

And this paradox has been firmly on display this week. People wishing to develop a wilderness experience site at Lake Malbena, in the north of the state, have been condemned for wishing to access the site by helicopter – the only access. Environmental approvals had been sought and been granted. What sacrilege, say the opponents. Helicopters flying overhead would destroy the wilderness experience apparently. Its OK to walk, but not OK to fly.

But in the same breath, another group wish to restore the original Lake Pedder to its former charm, which would, it is argued, enable light planes to land on the beach so that people can enjoy the wilderness experience. So light planes flying overhead are OK, it seems.

Parliament

The Premier has decided to prorogue Parliament while a recount is underway, to replace Rene Hidding, who resigned. Posturing by the Premier – he didn’t need to do it.

He could have first asked Labor for a pair, but didn’t. Labor could have offered a pair, thus showing leadership on the issue, but didn’t. And the Greens, posturing by berating both, could also have offered a pair, thereby taking the political high ground. But didn’t.

Pairs are an important part of the parliamentary process, and it would have to be a matter of grave concern for a pair not to be granted. This wasn’t.

The political manouvering has been so unnecessary, and highly disruptive. Committee work has been closed down, and the notice paper is now a blank. What is also of concern is that the government is now being painted as running away from its responsibilities to parliament and thus the people, and that is not a good look. Once again, optics at play.



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