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Supplementary complaint concerning two further issues arising after my complaint of 23 March 2026

1. Introduction

This is a supplementary submission to the complaint of possible maladministration that I made on 23 March 2026 concerning Premier Rockliff, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC), and related conduct in connection with the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025*, UTAS' STEM proposal, and Right to Information (**RTI**) matters.[1]

This supplementary submission is framed around **two new issues** that arose, or materially emerged, after I lodged my complaint of 23 March 2026. It is intended to avoid unnecessary duplication of my original complaint and, where relevant, this submission generally cross-refers to my 23 March 2026 complaint, rather than repeating points.

The two new issues are:

- The Government's deliberate removal of approximately 56 hectares of Sandy Bay campus land from the protection of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025*, and the misleading way in which that matter was presented, or not presented, to Parliament and the public. This matter only became publicly clear late in the Legislative Council debate after being raised by Meg Webb MLC.
- Defective briefing, advice and quality control, and failure to observe a legislative requirement, by the Government and DPAC during the period 25 March to 2 June 2026.

A particular focus of this supplementary submission is the role of Education Minister Jo Palmer and DPAC Deputy Secretary Matthew Healey. Mr Healey sat beside Minister Palmer and advised her throughout the Legislative Council second reading debate and committee stage on 15 April 2026, when a number of statements were made about matters pertaining to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* that were false, misleading, internally contradictory, materially incomplete, and in some cases knowingly false or reckless as to truth. These matters included:

- Refusal to correct false and misleading statements about the 56 hectares issue.
- False and misleading statements about the origin of rezoning provisions (clause 7 and schedule 2).

[1] The term *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025* is used to describe the 2024 iteration of the Bill, as amended on 28 November 2024, and the 2025 iteration collectively. Where reference is made to the 2024 Bill before it was amended this is specified.

- False description of the Hobart City Council's position on rezoning.
- Misleading claims about planning advice and expert support.
- False claim that UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) provided a business case for rezoning.
- Misleading portrayal of the rigour and funding prospects of UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025).
- Failure to execute or progress the promised deed poll hypothecating sale proceeds.
- Deficient reasoning for rejection of more stringent enforceable information requirements.
- Failure to address the crude schedule 2 mapping and neglect of legal risk.

I appreciate that one possible explanation for the problematic statements made by Minister Palmer is that she did not properly understand the effect of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025*, and issues surrounding the Bill, and was overly reliant on the advice being given to her by Mr Healey. However, that possibility does not lessen the maladministration concern. On the contrary, if the Minister was being used as a medium for false or reckless administrative advice from DPAC, that would make the conduct of DPAC and Mr Healey more serious rather than less.

I also note that Mr Healey made false and misleading claims in briefing Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) on the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* on 25 March 2026.

As foreshadowed in my March complaint, I made a further submission to the RTI section in your office on 15 May 2026 in relation to the external review of my RTI applications to DPAC (R2504-004) and former Minister Ogilvie (R2504-020) under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (**RTI Act**). These applications are being accorded priority consideration (Attachment A).

- There is considerable overlap between this complaint and my requests for external review of my RTI applications. However, I note that the focus of each is quite different – one raises issues of maladministration while the other deals with specific agency/Ministerial compliance with the RTI Act and, among other things, seeks early provision of missing information.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak to you about this submission and to provide additional explanation and detail. As a matter of public interest, I will be circulating this complaint widely, including to members of the Tasmanian Parliament.

2. Background

2(a) My March 2026 complaint and its continuing relevance

My complaint of 23 March 2026 raised four principal maladministration concerns:

- Supplanting of portfolio Ministers by Premier Rockliff (and his office) without transparent accountability in relation to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*.
- Delays, obstruction, inadequate record-keeping and/or deliberate non-disclosure of records by DPAC in relation to Right to Information applications.

- Misuse, or incompetent handling, of DPAC's coordination role that undermined the transparency objects of the *Right to Information Act 2009* and obscured the true chain of responsibility for the rezoning/sale amendments to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*.

- Gross administrative failures, negligence, lack of quality control and lack of coordination by Premier Rockliff and DPAC relating to UTAS' STEM proposal, which in its final form - as UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) - was submitted to the Commonwealth with "the full support of the Tasmanian Government".

Nothing in this supplementary submission departs from those concerns. Rather, the further matters set out below strengthen them. In particular, they suggest that the lack of transparency, candour and administrative integrity and competence identified in my March complaint was not confined to the development of the amendments considered in that submission, UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) and the handling of RTI, but continued in the following period.

2(b) Developments since 23 March 2026

I note the following major developments since I lodged my complaint on 23 March 2026:

- 25 March 2026 - Briefing sessions conducted for MLCs on the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* by, in order: Save UTAS; Jeff Malpas and I; UTAS; and DPAC and the Department for Education, Children and Young People (**DECYP**).

- 25 March 2026 – Minister Palmer's second reading speech in the Legislative Council on the Bill.

- 26 March 2026 – Second reading debate on the Bill.

- 12 April 2026 – The revelation by Ms Webb that, at the same time, the Government made rezoning/sale amendments (clause 7 and schedule 2) to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* on 28 November 2024, it removed some 56 hectares (57 percent) of UTAS' Sandy Bay campus from the coverage and protection of the Bill.[2]

- 15 April 2026 – Conclusion of second reading debate, committee stage and passage of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025*.

- 28 April 2026 - The *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Act 2026* received Royal Assent - the Government failed to meet the requirement under section 7(2) of the Act to register the plan:

  "On the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent, the Planning Minister is to cause a plan to be prepared **and registered** in the Central Plan Register." (my bolding)

  As of 2 June 2026, this requirement had still not been met.

- 12 May 2026 - Commonwealth Budget – this did **not** include any infrastructure funding for UTAS for the four years 2026-27 to 2029-2030.

- 21 May 2026 - Tasmanian State Budget - this did **not** include any infrastructure funding for UTAS for the four years 2026-27 to 2029-2030.

[2] See: https://megwebb.com.au/media-release-utas-bill-will-protect-only-14-of-sandy-bay-campus/ See also my blog post on this issue at: https://theutaspapers.com/how-the-state-government-misled-parliament-over-the-utas-bill-promised-protection-covers-only-14-of-the-sandy-bay-campus/

3. Complaint of Possible Maladministration

3(a) The Government's deliberate removal of approximately 56 hectares of Sandy Bay campus land from the protection of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025*, and the misleading way in which that matter was presented, or not presented, to Parliament and the public

On 27 February 2024, during the Tasmanian election campaign, the State Liberal Government made an election commitment that it would:

> "amend the University of Tasmania Act 1992 to require that the land at Sandy Bay currently held by the University of Tasmania cannot be sold except with the explicit support of both Houses of the Parliament."

In fulfilment of this commitment, the Government introduced the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* in the House of Assembly on 20 June 2024, which covered, or within the terms of the Bill protected, the entirety of UTAS' Sandy Bay campus – approximately 98 hectares.

- The Government did not provide any quantification of land protected by the Bill; the first quantification was provided in Ms Webb's media release of 12 April 2026.[3]

On 18 November 2024, at the same time Cabinet agreed to the rezoning/sale amendments (clause 7 and schedule 2) to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*, under which some 28 hectares (28 percent) of the Sandy Bay campus was to be automatically rezoned, it appears that it also agreed to the amendment to schedule 1 which removed some 56 hectares (57 percent) of the Sandy Bay campus from the protection of the Bill altogether.

- Taken together, the amendments struck at the heart of what the Bill was represented as doing. The Government's election commitment, the title of the Bill and the form of the Bill as it was originally introduced conveyed that the entire Sandy Bay campus would be protected from disposal without parliamentary approval. The amendments reduced protection to only 14 hectares (14 percent) of the Sandy Bay campus.

The Government presented these two sets of amendments in fundamentally different ways to the Parliament and public. It was forthright about the rezoning/sale amendments (as it had to be to give effect to rezoning), but between 21 November 2024 and 12 April 2026, it repeatedly acted to obscure the removal of the 56 hectares from the protection of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025* from the Parliament and public.

I have been advised by a confidential source, who was close to the Government's decision making at the time, that the Government decided to be as quiet as possible on the 56 hectares issue. Certainly, reviewing statements, fact sheets, second reading speeches and plans presented by the Government across the period 21 November 2024 to 25 March 2026 - as I will now do - it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the Government sought to actively obscure the removal of the 56 hectares from the protection of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/25* from the Parliament and the public or, at least, minimise attention on the matter. In this, it must have been supported, and even advised to act in this manner, by DPAC. [4]

[3] See: https://megwebb.com.au/media-release-utas-bill-will-protect-only-14-of-sandy-bay-campus/

[4] The amendment to schedule 1 obviously involved a change in wording, however the significance of this was obscured by the fact that there were two areas of land referred to in the schedule, the absence of any announcement by the Government and the possibility that the change was a correction. In hindsight, it is clear that some members of the House of Assembly understood the purpose of the amendment, but the fact remains that the Government avoided mentioning

3(a)(i) *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* as amended on 28 November 2024

Question in Parliament to Premier Rockliff on 21 November 2024 after the Cabinet decision of 18 November 2024 to amend the Bill:

> **"Mr WINTER** - Premier, at the election you said:
>
> We will amend the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* to require that land at Sandy Bay currently held by the University of Tasmania cannot be sold except with the explicit support of both Houses of parliament. Does that remain your policy?
>
> **….**
>
> **Mr ROCKLIFF** - The government's position is clear, Mr Winter. We support UTAS. Both Houses of parliament need to approve **any** land sell off. We support the UTAS plan to build a state-of-the-art STEM facility at Sandy Bay…."[5] (my bolding)

Fact sheet and clause notes[6]

The fact sheet and clause notes were not updated from those presented with the original Bill on 20 June 2024 to reflect the amendments made in the House of Assembly on 28 November 2024.

Former Minister Ogilvie's second reading speech in the House of Assembly – 28 November 2024

Former Minister Ogilvie's second reading speech included the following:

> "This legislation allows for scrutiny through the parliament of **any** proposed disposal of land at the Sandy Bay campus."[7] (my bolding)

and

> "**This bill will require that the land at Sandy Bay, currently held by the University of Tasmania and gifted to the university in 1951, cannot be disposed of except with approval from both Houses of parliament**. That is, if the university wishes to sell the land or indeed lease the land for a term of 99 years or longer, both Houses of parliament **would have the opportunity to scrutinise this** and ensure the right decision is made for all Tasmanians, not just those residing in immediate proximity."[8] (my bolding)

and

> "In other words, UTAS has remained and will remain at Sandy Bay, full stop. The amendment circulated last week proposed the repurposing of some defined university lands. Specifically, the university has proposed, whether explicitly or by virtue of rezoning, selling off two parcels of land above Churchill

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the amendment in key documents to the point of deceit, leaving the Parliament and public largely in the dark. Certainly no quantification - and therefore no sense of the profound change made to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025* - was provided in the public domain until Ms Webb's media release.

[5] See Hansard, p11 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 21 November 2024 See also Hansard, p4

[6] Fact sheet at: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/83046/31_of_2024-Fact-Sheet.pdf
Clause notes at: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/83044/31_of_2024-Clause-Notes.pdf

[7] Hansard, p74 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 28 November 2024 (Note: I have referenced Hansard rather than the published form of second reading speeches in case the final wording used in Parliament is different).

[8] Hansard, p75 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 28 November 2024

Avenue to fund their STEM vision. In other words, **there is a proposal and this parliament will consider that proposal**."[9] (my bolding)

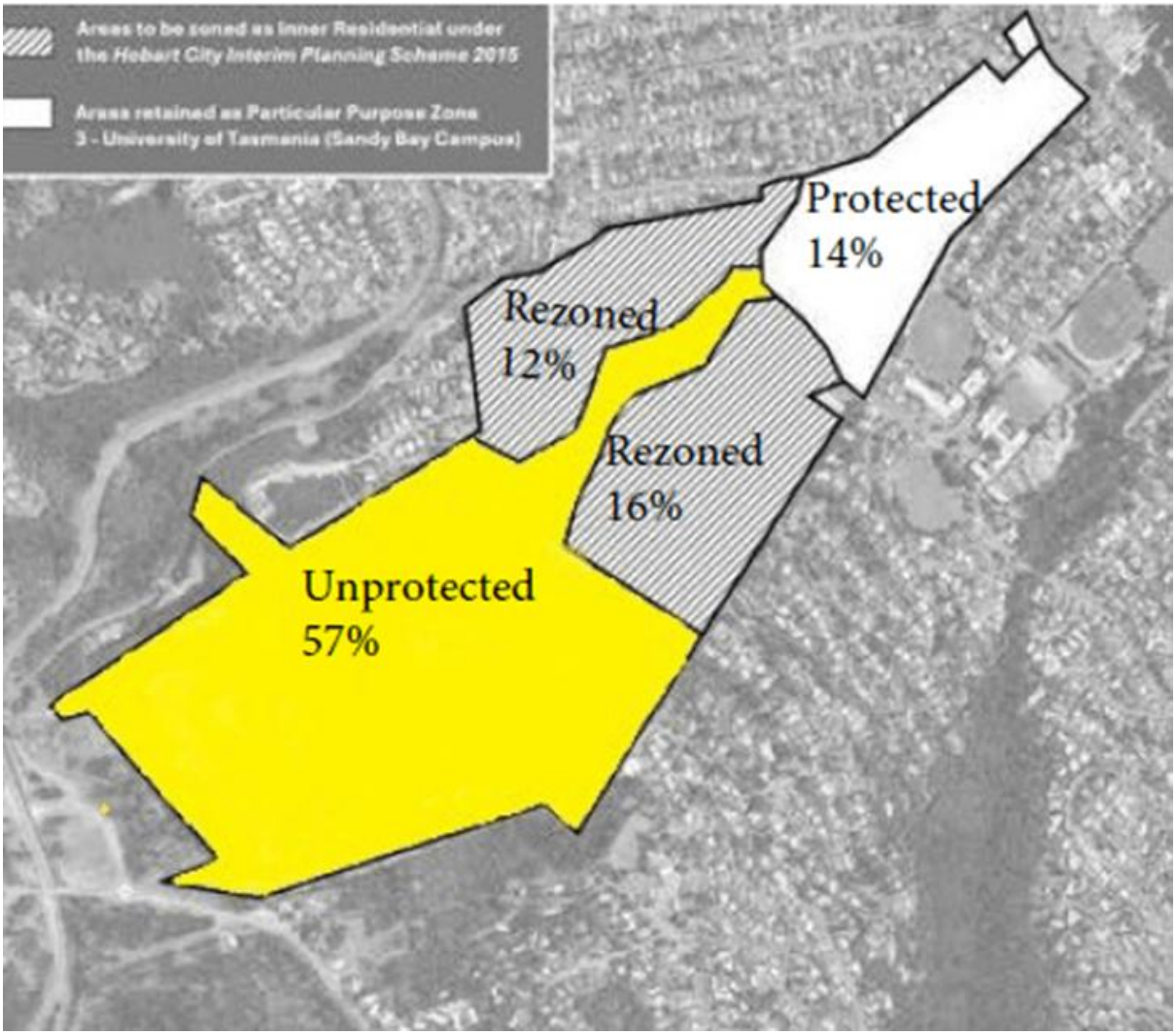
The plan in schedule 2 in the Bill amendments – 28 November 2024[10]

sch. 2

PART 2 – PLAN

This plan made absolutely no distinction between the protected and unprotected areas of the Sandy Bay campus. It can be compared to the following version of the plan that I prepared for a blog post:[11]

[9] Hansard, p75 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 28 November 2024
[10] See: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0031/88249/31_of_2024-R1.pdf
[11] See: https://theutaspapers.com/how-the-state-government-misled-parliament-over-the-utas-bill-promised-protection-covers-only-14-of-the-sandy-bay-campus/



The Government needed only to shade the area I have coloured yellow differently from the protected area to provide a measure of transparency.

Comment on the presentation of the amended University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024

Premier Rockliff and former Minister Ogilvie's statements allow only one possible interpretation – that the only areas at the Sandy Bay campus not covered by the protection of the Bill were those designated for rezoning (and therefore according to the Government's logic, subject to Parliamentary consideration). The statements were not merely ambiguous but affirmatively misleading.

The misleading nature of the statements was supported by a schedule 2 plan that made no diagrammatic distinction between the 14 percent of the Sandy Bay campus that remained protected by the Bill and the 56 percent to be carved out from the Bill's protection.

The schedule 2 plan was also small scale, with thick lines and no specificity regarding the areas marked for rezoning. As noted by Vica Bayley MHA:

> "We do not even have a very detailed plan. The only plan we have is a very thick line on a map that is about a quarter of an A4 page. The level of specificity here is pretty low."[12]

This added a further level of obscurity.

3(a)(ii) *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025*

When Parliament was prorogued for the State election in 2025, the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* lapsed. The Bill was reintroduced to the Tasmanian Parliament as *the University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* on 25 September 2025.

Fact sheet and clause notes[13]

The fact sheet included the following text:

> "The purpose of this Bill is to amend the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* (the Act) to require **that the land at Sandy Bay currently held** by the University of Tasmania (the University), and gifted to the University in 1951 for education**, cannot be disposed of except with the explicit support of both Houses**, preventing the University from unilaterally disposing it (sic). Certain land is excluded from this requirement **and** rezoned by the Bill to give the University flexibility in relation to the development of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) precinct on the Sandy Bay campus."(my bolding)

The clause notes provided minimal description of clauses and were largely uninformative – a systemic issue with clause notes (and, indeed, fact sheets), provided to the Tasmanian Parliament.

Former Minister Ogilvie's second reading speech in the House of Assembly – 3 December 2025

Former Minister Ogilvie's second reading speech included the following:

> "This Bill delivers on the Government's commitment to prevent the University of Tasmania from disposing of land at its Sandy Bay campus **without the explicit approval of both Houses of Parliament**."[14] (my bolding)

and

> "On 28 November 2024, this House debated and passed the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* (sic) with amendments. Those amendments supported the STEM precinct by **excluding** land above Churchill Avenue from the protections in the Bill **and** rezoning **that** land from Particular Purpose Zone 3 to Inner Residential."[15] (my bolding)

[12]Hansard, p134 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 28 November 2024
[13] Fact sheet at: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0031/97465/FACT-SHEET-University-of-Tasmania-Protection-of-Land-Bill-2025.PDF
Clause Notes at: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0030/97464/CLAUSE-NOTES-University-of-Tasmania-Protection-of-Land-Bill-2025.PDF
[14] Hansard, p132 at: House of Assembly Proceedings 3 December 2025
[15] Hansard, p132

The plan included in schedule 2[16]

SCHEDULE 2 – AREA TO BE REZONED

Section 7

Minister Palmer's second reading speech – 25 March 2026

Minister Palmer's second reading speech on 25 March 2026 included the following:

> "The future of the Sandy Bay campus has been the subject of extensive community discussion and engagement. This bill was the result, preventing the university from disposing of campus land at Sandy Bay **without the approval of both houses of parliament**. **There are only two parcels of land exempt, which we are looking to rezone**."[17] (my bolding)

Comment on the presentation of the University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025

The statements in the fact sheet and former Minister Ogilvie and Minister Palmer's second reading speeches again allow only one possible interpretation – that the only areas at the Sandy Bay campus not covered by the protection of the Bill were those designated for rezoning. The statements were affirmatively misleading.

[16] See: https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/100036/Bill-58-of-2025-2nd-Print.pdf

[17] Hansard, p37 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 25 March 2026

The misleading nature of the statements was again supported by a plan that made no diagrammatic distinction between the 14 percent of the Sandy Bay campus still to be covered by the Bill and the 56 percent to be carved out from the Bill's protection.

It is not clear why the plan was changed between the November 2024 and 2025 iterations of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill*. It certainly was not for the sake of transparency and accuracy. The change may warrant scrutiny.

I also note that Minister Palmer referred to only two parcels of land being exempt when this diagram showed three – a basic factual inaccuracy. The reason the two rezoning parcels were split into three was also not given although it may be to do with the fact that French Street was shown as being rezoned in the 2024, which says something about the quality of the 2024 plan.

DPAC, the 56 hectares issue and Right to Information

In my original submission of 23 March 2026, I noted that in 1710 pages of RTI documents received from Ministers, agencies and UTAS relating to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* and UTAS' STEM proposal, I had received very few documents relating to the origin and development of the rezoning/sale amendments. The few documents I had received I provided in chronological order as part of Attachment 1 to my March submission.

Based on clear gaps in documentation and documents that I had obtained from other sources, but failed to obtain through RTI, I raised a particular concern that DPAC had conducted an insufficient search or withheld documents and failed in its claimed coordination role. This view has been reinforced by the fact that I have been unable to identify any documents from the 1710 pages that clearly relate to the amendment to remove the 56 hectares from the coverage of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* – not from DPAC, not from former Minister Ogilvie and not from UTAS.

This strengthens my concern that DPAC conducted an insufficient search or withheld documents and failed in its claimed coordination role.

The role of DPAC in advising on the 56 hectares issue

The consistently misleading statements by the Premier, former Minister Ogilvie and Minister Palmer, and in the 2025 fact sheet, as well as the misleading plans provided in both 2024 and 2025, raise serious questions as to authorship and responsibility. Both the 2024 and 2025 fact sheets stated that administration of the Act was assigned to the Minister for Education and to DECYP.

However, my March complaint set out evidence that by late 2024 DPAC had effectively taken control of the rezoning/sale amendments and of dealings with UTAS and it is likely that DPAC was also at the centre of the amendment to remove the 56 hectares from the protection of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*, as the two sets of amendments were almost certainly formulated, made and approved by Cabinet at the same time. Attachment 1 to my original submission suggests that Mr Healey was a central figure in this process for DPAC.

It is a matter for investigation where responsibility for the numerous false and misleading statements and plans on the 56 hectares issue lies between DPAC and DECYP, and if DECYP was involved, the extent to which DPAC kept it uninformed on the true state of matters.

3(b) Defective briefing, advice and quality control, and failure to observe a legislative requirement, by the Government and DPAC during the period 25 March to 2 June 2026

3(b)(i) Briefing of MLCs on 23 March 2026 on the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* by Mr Healey

In their respective briefing sessions with MLCs on the Bill on 23 March 2026, both Jane Beaumont (UTAS) and Mr Healey were asked whether they knew the origin of the rezoning amendments (clause 7 and schedule 2), and **said they did not**. While the information provided to me by the parties to whom I submitted RTI applications in December 2024 was scant on this matter, Attachment 1 to my original submission makes it clear that both Ms Beaumont and, as I have indicated, Mr Healey were centrally involved in the development of the amendment.[18] This being the case, it is hard to see how Mr Healey's response could be held to be anything other than deceitful.

Mr Healey also stated that Infrastructure Australia had said UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) was "not a bad project", and that there were a number of funding pathways that could be pursued for the project.

In my March complaint, I commented on the unlikelihood of UTAS ever receiving material funding from the Commonwealth Government for construction works outside of an election commitment. My view was based on extensive professional experience in infrastructure funding in Canberra, including in election periods, and on reading recent Commonwealth policy and program documents that signaled that the Commonwealth funding environment had changed radically in recent years.

It was open to DPAC and Mr Healey to undertake a similar analysis and to provide MLCs with an evidence-based assessment on the likelihood of UTAS receiving material funding from the Commonwealth. Instead, be it through incompetence or design, I believe, Mr Healey provided a fundamentally misleading impression of the STEM project's chances of receiving Commonwealth funding, which may have carried weight in voting on proposed amendments in the committee stage and the passage of the Bill.

I will comment further on this matter in section 3(b)(ii)(5) below, where - in contrast to briefings to MLCs on Bills - there is a record to quote from.[19]

3(b)(ii) Statements made by Minister Palmer on 15 April 2026 in the conclusion of the second reading debate and committee stage of the Bill

During her response to comments in the second reading debate and in the committee stage, Minister Palmer made numerous statements about matters pertaining to the Bill that were false, misleading, internally contradictory, materially incomplete, and in some cases knowingly false or reckless as to truth. Many of these statements appear to have been made on advice from Mr Healey, as can be confirmed by reference to Hansard and/or the video of proceedings.

3(b)(ii)(1) Refusal to correct false and misleading statements about the 56 hectares issue

When the 56 hectares issue was raised in the Legislative Council on 15 April 2026, Minister Palmer was given a clear opportunity to correct her earlier false statement in her second reading speech. Instead, she declined to

[18] Unfortunately, briefing sessions for Tasmanian MPs are not conducted under oath and are not recorded (either in Hansard or electronically) creating a low-accountability environment in which truth can be treated as optional. A number of contemporaneous or near contemporaneous records of Mr Healey's (and Ms Beaumont's) comments exist, which I can provide on request.

[19] See Footnote 17.

do so and, after seeking advice from Mr Healey, doubled down by saying she was not correcting the record and did not believe her statement was incorrect.[20]

That response is highly significant. It suggests not merely an initial mistake, but a conscious refusal to correct a false statement once the contradiction had been exposed. By the time of the 15 April 2026 committee debate, the Minister had been explicitly confronted with the fact that approximately 56 hectares of Sandy Bay land lay outside both the protected and rezoned categories in the Bill. In those circumstances, her continued reliance on a "two parcels only" description was not simply erroneous, but knowingly false or, at minimum, reckless as to its truth. Her seeming reliance on Mr Healey to determine whether she should correct the record reflects poorly on the Minister.[21]

Questions for the Ombudsman to determine are whether DPAC and its adviser, Mr Healey, failed in their administrative duty (1) to ensure that Parliament was not provided with a materially false understanding of the Bill's effect and (2) to correct a falsehood when this was exposed.

The 56 hectares and the late Aboriginal land handback explanation

After the 56 hectares issue emerged on 12 April 2026, the Government's response was not to accept that this substantial excluded area had not been properly explained earlier. Instead, Minister Palmer advanced the proposition that land above Churchill Avenue had been left outside the rezoning/protection framework because it was associated with possible Aboriginal land return and Commonwealth environmental protections.[22]

The difficulty is that this explanation was not part of the Government's earlier public explanation of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/25* in fact sheets, second reading speeches and schedule 2 plans. The explanation was advanced only after Ms Webb identified and criticised the removal of the 56 hectares from the protection of the Bill.

The explanation constitutes an ex post facto justification rather than a clearly explained amendment to the Bill. If that is so, it raises the further question whether DPAC and Mr Healey were involved in constructing or endorsing a late explanation to defend a position that had not been transparently stated from the outset.

I further note that, from a legislative perspective, land handback could have occurred/occur at any time under any of the legislative models contemplated and that Commonwealth environmental protections are generic protections applying across almost the whole of Australia. They are not equivalent to the specific statutory protection that the 56 hectares would have enjoyed under the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* as originally tabled on 20 June 2024, and they would have applied to the 56 hectares in any event, whether or not that land was removed from the protection of the Bill.

3(b)(ii)(2) False and misleading statements about the origin of rezoning provisions (clause 7 and schedule 2)

In response to comments by Ms Webb on 26 March 2026 that the origin of the rezoning amendments was "murky", Minister Palmer stated:

[20] Hansard, p9 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026 See also pp66ff

[21] Indeed it was suggested in the committee stage that Minister Palmer had "lied" to the chamber about this matter. I believe that it is clear the Minister either made misleading statements deliberately or accepted poor advice from Mr Healey far too readily. See Hansard, p67 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026

[22] Hansard, p9 and 66ff

> "I do object to references that the circumstances surrounding section 7 of this bill are in some way murky. The university proposed clause 7. It was developed as a compromise solution that would meet the needs of both the state and the university***."***[23]

This statement missed the point of Ms Webb's comments. Since former Minister Ogilvie's second reading speech in 2024 it has been clear that UTAS had proposed, or at least been involved in proposing, the rezoning amendments. What has not been clear is the how, when and why that proposition came about and why the Government accepted it. As indicated in my March complaint this matter has been left "murky" by deficient RTI responses. The documents obtained under RTI do not present a clear and candid documentary trail showing a simple university-originated proposal. Rather, the material suggests close and opaque involvement by UTAS and DPAC together, while the documentary trail remains notably thin and fragmented. In my March complaint I pointed out that the Premier's office and DPAC appear to have taken over development of the amendments, and that DPAC's RTI disclosures were fragmentary and omitted critical classes of document such as drafting instructions and briefing material.

- The origin of the rezoning amendments was left "murky" again on 23 March 2026 by the misleading responses of Ms Beaumont and Mr Healey when MLCs sought to get to the bottom of the matter.

Minister Palmer referred to a "compromise solution". It is not clear what UTAS gave the Government for fundamentally subverting the intent of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* as originally introduced to Parliament by its inclusion of the rezoning amendments. If the suggestion is that it was UTAS' agreement to remain at Sandy Bay, I note that UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) provided a far higher benefit-cost ratio for STEM remaining at Sandy Bay than moving to the CBD. UTAS' decision to remain at Sandy Bay can therefore be seen as a reasoned economic decision rather than a compromise with the Government.[24] Or was UTAS' part of the compromise about something else – such as ending UTAS criticism of the Government, and/or persuading UTAS to refrain from briefing the State Opposition against the Government, on the Bill?[25]

Minister Palmer's statement was at best seriously incomplete and at worst misleading. I make no comment on the high-handed and disrespectful tone in which it was delivered.

3(b)(ii)(3) False description of the Hobart City Council's position on rezoning

Minister Palmer made repeated claims that the Hobart City Council (HCC) had no concerns about the rezoning amendments made to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*. These claims included these statements and these exchanges with members:

> "Hobart City Council has advised that it provided planning and technical support to the University of Tasmania and that it had no concerns with the proposed zoning of this land as inner residential."[26]

and

[23] Hansard, p5 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[24] See for example UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), p5 at: https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1900557/University-of-Tasmania-STEM-Business-Case.pdf
[25] See my blog post at: https://theutaspapers.com/rti-reveals-utas-and-labor-opposition-collusion-preceded-government-backflip-on-utas-bill/
[26] Hansard, p5 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026

> "Council officials advised that they had provided technical and planning advice to the university and had no concerns with the proposed zoning of this land as inner residential."[27]

and

> "**Ms Webb** - Point of clarification. When the minister says the Hobart City Council has no concern, does she mean the paid staff in the planning division, or does she mean the elected members of the Hobart City Council? You have to be careful about terminology here. I think we're not misrepresenting.
>
> **Ms PALMER** - The advice I have is that we've received advice from the Hobart City Council."[28]

and

> "We satisfied ourselves that the university has been working with the Hobart City Council plannings (sic) and that they had no concerns with the proposed zoning. After all, they are the experts here."[29]

and

> **Mr HISCUTT** - I'm just wondering if I could seek advice with regard to the rezoning, whether the government received any written advice from council, whether they had an expectation that they would or would not support a rezoning to occur through the normal course of action?
>
> Ms PALMER - **I am seeking advice, Madam Chair**. No, the government has not sought written advice. There were a number of discussions with officials at senior levels of the council with the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) and the university. The advice that was given was they provided planning and technical advice to the university and their planners, I'm advised, had no concerns with the proposed zoning.[30] (my bolding)

Ms Webb then read from a letter from the CEO of the HCC (Michael Stretton), which contradicted the assertions of Minister Palmer that the HCC had "no concerns" with rezoning, after which point the Minister changed her story entirely stating:

> "The Council's preference is for the normal planning process, and that is not inconsistent with the government's advice provided on this bill."[31]

This looks like deliberate peddling of a falsehood until caught out, with video evidence suggesting Mr Healey played a major role in the peddling.

I attach a copy of Mr Stretton's letter (Attachment B) and draw your attention to his response to Question 3, which Ms Webb did not read into Hansard. I also attach a copy of an email from the HCC to UTAS of 1 October 2024 (Attachment C). This shows that even in technical consultation over maps, HCC planners expressed their misgivings over rezoning:

> "Further to our discuss (sic) yesterday, I wish to reiterate that it is our strong preference that any zoning changes go through a normal scheme amendment process allowing wider public and Elector Member engagement and comment."

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[27] Hansard, p8 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[28] Hansard, p8
[29] Hansard, p44
[30] Hansard, p47
[31] Hansard, p54

Mr Healey's name may well be one of the ones redacted in the email.

The pattern here is deeply concerning. Minister Palmer did not merely overstate HCC's position; she repeatedly converted a clearly expressed preference for the ordinary planning process into a claimed absence of concern about rezoning, and only retreated when Ms Webb produced contradictory evidence. On the material presently available, Mr Healey appears to have played a significant role in the formulation and persistence of that misrepresentation.

I note that I obtained the document at Attachment C indirectly from the HCC. It does not appear to have been provided to me under RTI. Taken together with other documents in Attachment 1, it highlights the major gaps in RTI responses.

3(b)(ii)(4) Misleading claims about planning advice and expert support

Apart from consistently verballing the HCC on rezoning, Minister Palmer also made the larger claim that:

> "the government is satisfied that the work has been done and that the proposal to rezone this land as inner residential is both responsible and creates a path to a positive future for the university and the state. To satisfy ourselves, we have considered the All Urban Planning report into the University of Tasmania's proposal as it relates to this land. We've considered the masterplan as it relates to this land. We've also considered the Hobart City Council discussion paper on the Mount Nelson and Sandy Bay Neighbourhood Plan from 2023, and the engagement report in 2024. We satisfied ourselves that the university has been working with the Hobart City Council planners and that they had no concerns with the proposed zoning. We've made sure that our state planning office also has no concerns. All of this work told us that the rezoning of this land to inner residential is appropriate for the broader needs of Hobart and Tasmania, and not just the university."[32]

The masterplan to which Minister Palmer referred was UTAS' 2021 Sandy Bay masterplan, which UTAS withdrew after it was asked over 150 questions on the masterplan by the HCC to which - as far as I know - it never responded.[33] The HCC discussion paper was subject to strong criticism and has been overtaken by subsequent developments.[34] Given the way the HCC was verballed, in the absence of written advice, there must also be a question whether the State Planning Office was also verballed.

I also note that in debate Mike Gaffney MLC quoted former State Planning Office director Brian Risby, who described the statutory rezoning as "a flagrant abuse of process without any apparent strategic planning rationale" and said it would undermine the Hobart City Council's strategic work in the surrounding area.[35]

The Minister did not address that contrary expert opinion in any substantive way. Instead, she returned to general assertions about opportunity, housing supply, the benefits of UTAS' STEM proposal, and the work undertaken by ERA Planning and Environment and All Urban Planning.[36]

Minister Palmer presented the planning evidence base to Parliament as if it was coherent, settled and reassuring, while omitting or downplaying the absence of formal written support and the existence of highly relevant contrary expert criticism. This was at least materially misleading.

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[32] Hansard p5 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[33] See: University of Tasmania plan for Sandy Bay campus 3,000 car spaces short, Hobart Council documents show - ABC News and Building our Hobart University presence since 2007 | Our campuses | University of Tasmania
[34] See: Mount Nelson and Sandy Bay Neighbourhood Plan | Your Say Hobart
[35] Hansard, pp 42-43 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[36] Hansard, pp44ff

3(b)(ii)(5) False claim that UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) provided a business case for rezoning[37]

After it had become known that the Government was contemplating amendments to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*, in a media interview on 7 November 2024, former Minister Ogilvie stated:

> "…what I have said is I want to see the full business case of what the proposal is. And my view is that business case ought to come through Parliament. **So that's our position.**"[38] (my bolding)

Notwithstanding former Minister Ogilvie's emphatic statement, no business case was, or ever has been, presented in relation to rezoning, or – for that matter - in relation to the removal of 56 hectares from the protection of the Bill.

In response to concerns raised by Ms Webb on 26 March 2026 about the absence of a business case for rezoning, Minister Palmer stated:

> "Then there was the contribution from the honourable member for Nelson that this proposal should have a business case. This proposal is supported not only by a full business case, all 157 pages of it, but through the UTAS master plan and concept plan developed with input from staff, students, the Hobart City Council, other stakeholders and the community."[39]

This was false. The business case to which Minister Palmer referred was UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025). This did not purport to be a business case for the rezoning proposal, rather it was a business case that considered two options for the future of STEM in southern Tasmania – consolidation below Churchill Avenue and relocation to the CBD (to the extent it was possible).[40] It did not touch upon the cost and benefits of the rezoning proposal, let alone provide a comprehensive analysis of what that proposal entailed. It even failed to address implications of rezoning for UTAS' STEM plans in a meaningful way, such as traffic impacts.

To reinforce these points, I quote some answers that UTAS provided to questions by Ms Webb on 26 May 2025.[41]

> "**Question 7: Has UTAS developed a separate business case for the rezoning and sale of this land?**
>
> **No**." (my bolding and underlining)
>
> and
>
> "**Question 11**: **Please list the STEM facilities currently above Churchill Avenue (including down to the level of individual glass houses) and detail what the plans are for these.**

[37] https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1900557/University-of-Tasmania-STEM-Business-Case.pdf
[38] See Attachment A, p3
[39] Hansard, p5 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[40] In a major flaw in UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), a third option – maintenance of the current Sandy Bay campus - was presented, but only as a mathematical base case, largely preserving the status quo, rather than as a thoroughly worked through upgrade option to be seriously considered against the other options. See references throughout the Business Case at: https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1900557/University-of-Tasmania-STEM-Business-Case.pdf
[41] The questions referred to are in Attachment B of the document, at: https://megwebb.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/UTAS-Responses-to-Questions-from-Meg-Webb-MLC-May2025-Contacts-Redacted.pdf

It is too early to provide details as there is a general budget allocation for replacement facilities with the detail to be determined in consultation with staff through the detailed design phase for each development."

and

"**Question 13: To the extent that UTAS plans to relocate STEM facilities from above Churchill Avenue to below Churchill Avenue, what is the total estimated cost?**

The total estimated costs in the business case are not split between above Churchill Ave and below Churchill Ave in this way."

and

"**Question 14: How much do you expect to receive for the approximately 5 hectares of land (up to and including the old Medical Sciences building) on which STEM facilities are currently located above Churchill Avenue?**

We have not calculated it out in this way."

3(b)(ii)(6) Misleading portrayal of the rigour and funding prospects of the *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case (2025)* , including the false claim that the Business Case remained on Infrastructure Australia's website under evaluation

More generally, Minister Palmer's use in Parliament of formulations such as a "full business case, all 157 pages of it" conveyed an impression of a robust and decision-ready justification not warranted by the underlying material. Not only did Minister Palmer falsely suggest that UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) applied to rezoning, but she failed to candidly convey the Business Case's limitations (including that the project was at design stage only) and assumption-dependence to Parliament.

I wrote at length on weaknesses in the *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) in my March complaint, but note that UTAS' answers to Ms Webb materially add to the picture, including by confirming that many important design matters remained unresolved, for example:

"Question 1: Was the $500 million figure a nominal or outturn figure?

The $500M figure is nominal and quantified by independent QS [Quantity Surveyor, namely Slattery] advice based **on the high level concept STEM masterplan**." (my bolding)

and

"Question 22: Are floor plans available for each level of each building in the consolidated STEM?

Not yet. **Initial work** will be undertaken through the design phase for each building."[42] (my bolding)

This adds force to Slattery's comment on its cost estimate in Attachment B of the *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), which I quoted in my March complaint, that:

[42] See also Question 20 in Attachment B of the document, at: https://megwebb.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/UTAS-Responses-to-Questions-from-Meg-Webb-MLC-May2025-Contacts-Redacted.pdf

> "This cost plan is based on preliminary information and therefore should be regarded as indicative only of the possible order of cost. All components of the cost plan will require confirmation once further documentation is available."[43]

UTAS' responses to Ms Webb confirm UTAS' $500 million cost estimate, which was imposed top down rather than being formulated bottom up, was a preliminary estimate only and would likely be a very significant underestimate of final project costs. Even assuming that funding of $500 million became available to UTAS, this would mean reducing the scope of works as they are currently proposed and envisaged – that is, leaving bits out and/or reducing quality.

Minister Palmer also made numerous dubious claims about what UTAS' STEM proposal would offer. For the sake of space, I will cite one example only – Minister Palmer's repeated stressing of the superiority of new building over upgrading current facilities. What Minister Palmer did not say – assuming that she knew - was that UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) involves **only one** new building, with other buildings to be upgraded.[44]

Subsequent developments on funding and cost

Neither the Commonwealth nor the State Government allocated funding to UTAS for construction works in their respective May 2026 budgets.

UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) assumed that construction works would commence in 2025-2026.[45] Even assuming that UTAS received a funding commitment in 2026-27 and was able to commence construction works in 2027-28, on UTAS' own escalation assumption (3 percent a year) the cash cost of the project would increase from $500 million to $532 million. There is no allowance in UTAS' funding model for such inflation effects, so this is another factor that would reduce the scope of proposed works.

I also note that the escalation rate assumption in the *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) appears to make no allowance for inevitable increases in construction costs, in the event of UTAS competing with the Macquarie Point Stadium for scarce construction resources.[46]

The false claim that UTAS' STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case (2025) remained on Infrastructure Australia's (IA's) website under evaluation

Minister Palmer stated that:

> "IA has advised the project remains on its website as (sic) the project under evaluation list and the state will work with them on alignment to their updated approach. Our government is also looking into other federal funding avenues, and this will continue to be explored with UTAS."[47]

This statement is both false and, like Mr Healey's claims on 23 March 2026, gives a misleading impression of the likelihood of Commonwealth funding. I also note that IA has no program funds of its own.

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[43] *UTAS' STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), Attachment B (pdf p117) at: https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1900557/University-of-Tasmania-STEM-Business-Case.pdf

[44] For example, Hansard, pp3-5 and 43 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026

[45] *UTAS' STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), pdf p119 at: https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1900557/University-of-Tasmania-STEM-Business-Case.pdf

[46] *UTAS' STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) states (p75) that an annual inflation rate of 3 percent has been applied to cost estimates, indicating that no regard was paid to Macquarie Point, which it does not mention.

[47] Hansard, p8 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026

IA's only website material regarding UTAS relates to an earlier and materially different Hobart CBD STEM relocation project, which was evaluated in 2017 as part of a Priority List that has been superseded.[48] IA published a **new** Infrastructure Priority List in 2026, aligning:

> "with one of five investment priorities, identified in Infrastructure Australia's 2025 Annual Budget Statement, that represent areas where Australian Government investment would deliver national benefit."[49]

None of the investment priorities relate to university infrastructure. There is also no separate 'evaluation' entry for UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025).[50]

Given Mr Healey's advisory role at the table, there is a serious question whether he knew, or ought reasonably to have known, that Minister Palmer's statement conflated an old CBD project and superseded IA listing with the present Sandy Bay proposal.

3(b)(ii)(7) Failure to execute the promised deed poll hypothecating sale proceeds

The promised deed poll was expressly foreshadowed in Vice-Chancellor Black's letter of 25 November 2024 to former Minister Ogilvie, and others, as a mechanism by which UTAS would hypothecate proceeds from sale of land above Churchill Avenue to works on the Sandy Bay campus below Churchill Avenue. My March complaint noted that no such deed poll had been provided in the public domain or obtained through RTI.[51] That failure was already significant because the proposed hypothecation of proceeds was plainly relied on as an assurance supporting the rezoning/sale pathway, yet without an executed and publicly available instrument the assurance remained non-binding and incapable of meaningful scrutiny.

The significance of the failure was compounded by Minister Palmer's handling of the matter in Parliament on 15 April 2026. When asked directly by Ms Webb where the deed was and why it had not been completed, Minister Palmer first said only that UTAS had "publicly committed" to executing a deed poll and that the Government had "no reason to believe that won't occur". Later in the same exchange, she acknowledged that the deed existed only as a draft and "has not progressed" because the focus had been on passage of the legislation.[52] That answer is open to strong criticism. It effectively confirmed that, despite the deed having been raised as early as November 2024 and despite its obvious importance as a supposed safeguard, the Government proceeded with and defended the legislation without ensuring that the safeguard had been finalised, executed or made public, or – indeed - progressed.

This was not a minor loose end. It was a central assurance used to justify a controversial rezoning and sale mechanism. Minister Palmer's response tended to minimise the problem and substitute confidence and repetition of UTAS's stated intention for evidence of completion, legal effect and accountability. In administrative terms, that points to defective follow-through, poor quality control and a troubling willingness by the Government and DPAC to rely on an unfinalised promise as though it were an operative safeguard.

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[48] See: https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/evaluations/university-tasmania-hobart-science-and-technology-precinct

[49] See: https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/2026-infrastructure-priority-list

[50] IA's website is at: https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/

[51] Attachment A, pp3-4

[52] Hansard, pp48-49 and 53-55 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026

3(b)(ii)(8) Deficient reasoning for rejection of more stringent enforceable information requirements

The discussion of the enforceable information requirements within the Bill for future disposal motions also raises issues. When an amendment was proposed to clause 4 to make some relatively modest additions to the minimal requirements in the Bill, Minister Palmer described such requirements as "unnecessary regulation" and said members did not need a head of power to ask questions of the Government or the University.[53]

Yet it was also clear from the debate that the Bill itself required only limited information, and that additional information depended on what UTAS considered relevant. Members could ask questions, but would have no enforceable mechanism by which to require complete answers or disclosure of all relevant material by UTAS.[54]

The Minister twice said it was in the University's best interests to put its "best foot forward" and provide what was needed to secure support.[55] That reasoning was misleading and/or naive. It treated UTAS' strategic interests as if they were aligned with full transparency, when in fact a proponent may well have incentives to limit, shape or sequence the information it provides to decision-makers.

3(b)(ii)(9) Failure to address the crude schedule 2 mapping and neglect of legal risk

I have provided copies of the two schedule 2 plans above.

As put by Ms Webb the plan presented at schedule 2 to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill* 2025 was "a fuzzy aerial picture with some sharpie pen lines."[56] Minister Palmer's response on this issue, which was risible given the quality of the plan, was:

> "… we believe there is enough detail in Schedule 2 to agree to the extent of land to be rezoned. The detailed plan [for clause 7(2)] is provided to make sure that there can be no disputes in the future regarding the detailed area of the land that is rezoned and, again, I draw your reference to clause 7(2)."[57]

Clause 7(2) states:

> "On the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent, the Planning Minister is to cause a plan to be prepared and registered in the Central Plan Register."

The Government had had 11 months from tabling of the original schedule 2 in 2024 to tabling of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2025* on 25 September 2025 to provide a high quality plan for the Parliament as part of the Bill, and the Government had had a further seven months up to 15 April 2026, on which it could have moved an amendment with a high quality plan.

That it did not do so was disrespectful to the Parliament but it was also consistent with a Government agenda to be as silent as possible on the 56 hectares issue.

Beyond this, there must be concern that any material discrepancy between the land shown in schedule 2 to *the University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Act 2026* and the plan later prepared and registered under section 7(2) would create obvious legal uncertainty and risk – a concern heightened by the crudeness of the plan in schedule 2. Schedule 2 forms part of the Act itself, whereas the section 7(2) plan is an administrative

[53] Hansard, p37 at: Legislative Council Proceedings 15 April 2026
[54] The whole debate on this matter is in Hansard, pp27-40
[55] Hansard, pp33 and 39
[56] Hansard, p39
[57] Hansard, p41

instrument intended to give official effect to that legislative description through registration in the Central Plan Register. A plan becomes official only once registered in that Register, but registration cannot lawfully enlarge, reduce or otherwise alter the land that Parliament identified in the Act.

If the registered plan were materially different from the crude schedule 2 depiction, that would raise a serious question as to whether the statutory duty had been properly performed at all, and whether the registered plan, or decisions later relying upon it, would be vulnerable to legal challenge on the basis that an administrative act cannot override or depart from the Act under which it is made.

The plan provided in schedule 2 remains a disgrace. It is a blot on the Government and a damning indictment of parliamentary standards in Tasmania that it was acceptable to majorities in both the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council.

3(b)(iii) Failure to comply with section 7(2) by timely preparation and registration of the required plan

A further matter concerning section 7(2) of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Act 2026* is that while the Act received Royal Assent on 28 April 2026, as at 2 June 2026 the plan had still not been registered in the Central Plan Register, notwithstanding that a plan becomes official only once registered in the Central Plan Register.

This is not a merely technical omission. The requirement serves an obvious legal and administrative purpose, namely to ensure that the land affected by the statutory rezoning is identified with clarity and certainty in a formal registered plan, rather than being left to rough maps. In the context of this legislation, where the quality and precision of the maps and delineation of land parcels were already matters of serious concern, failure to comply with section 7(2) materially compounds those concerns.

The omission is particularly troubling because Parliament was asked to approve an unusual and controversial statutory rezoning outside the normal planning process, with Ministers and Government repeatedly asserting that the relevant land and planning consequences were sufficiently clear and well understood. If, however, the Government has failed even after Royal Assent to ensure timely preparation and registration of the very plan the Act itself required on that day, that tends to suggest poor administrative follow-through, inadequate legal and implementation planning, or a troubling lack of seriousness about statutory compliance.

At a minimum, the failure to register the plan appears inconsistent with the plain terms of section 7(2). More broadly, it is capable of being seen as part of the same broad pattern identified elsewhere in this complaint: legislative and parliamentary assurances being given in confident terms in contradiction of the facts.

4. Further issues for investigation

This supplementary complaint does not repeat the issues for investigation set out in section 5 of my complaint of 23 March 2026. Rather, it identifies additional later-emerging matters that I ask the Ombudsman to investigate alongside those earlier issues.

4.1 The 56-hectares exclusion and misdescription of the Bill's effect

I ask the Ombudsman to investigate:

- Whether DPAC, including Deputy Secretary Matthew Healey, advised Ministers in terms that inaccurately or incompletely described the effect of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024/2025* on approximately 56 hectares of UTAS' Sandy Bay land that was left outside protection or rezoning.

- Whether DPAC and DECYP were jointly or separately responsible for the fact sheets, second reading speeches and plans that portrayed the Bill as protecting UTAS' Sandy Bay land except for limited rezoning parcels, and whether those materials were false or materially misleading when the 56-hectares exclusion is taken into account.
- Whether, once the 56-hectares issue was raised on 12 April 2026, DPAC and Mr Healey fulfilled any duty they had to correct or qualify earlier statements, or instead participated in or endorsed a decision not to correct the record and to advance a belated explanation that had not previously formed part of the Government's account of the Bill.

4.2 Briefing and advice to the Legislative Council

I ask the Ombudsman to investigate:

- Whether Mr Healey's statements in the 25 March 2026 briefing to MLCs, including his denial of knowledge about the origin of clause 7 and his description of Infrastructure Australia's assessment and the project's funding prospects, were accurate and candid given the documentary record, his involvement in the development of the rezoning/sale amendments and readily available Commonwealth Government policy and program documents.
- Whether DPAC's advice to Minister Palmer for the 15 April 2026 second reading reply and committee stage was false, misleading, materially incomplete or reckless as to truth in relation to:
    - the 56-hectares exclusion and the Minister's "two parcels only" description;
    - the asserted role of UTAS as the originator of clause 7 and the description of that clause as a simple "compromise";
    - the claims that the Hobart City Council and its planners had "no concerns" about the rezoning; and
    - the portrayal of planning advice and expert support as settled and supportive of the rezoning.
- Whether, by refusing to correct the record when the 56-hectares issue was put squarely to her in committee, Minister Palmer, on advice from Mr Healey, knowingly maintained a materially false account of the Bill's effect, or at least acted with reckless disregard for whether her earlier statement was wrong.

4.3 Presentation of the Business Case and funding narrative

I ask the Ombudsman to investigate:

- Whether it was accurate and fair for Minister Palmer, on advice from DPAC, to present UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025) as a "full" business case supporting the rezoning proposal, when that document did not purport to analyse the costs and benefits, or wider dimensions, of rezoning UTAS' land above Churchill Avenue and UTAS itself acknowledged that there was no separate business case for rezoning.
- Whether statements to Parliament and in briefings suggesting that Infrastructure Australia regarded the project favourably, that the Business Case remained on Infrastructure Australia's website, and that there were plausible Commonwealth funding pathways fairly represented the project's status and prospects, or instead conveyed an unduly optimistic or misleading impression to Members.

- Whether DPAC exercised adequate care, internal review and quality control before endorsing the way the Business Case and funding prospects were described to Parliament, having regard to the Business Case's preliminary nature and the changed Commonwealth funding environment referred to in my complaint of 23 March 2026.

4.4 Failure to execute safeguards and comply with section 7(2)

I ask the Ombudsman to investigate:

- Why the promised deed poll hypothecating sale proceeds to works below Churchill Avenue was not finalised, executed or made public before the legislation was passed, and whether DPAC nonetheless encouraged Ministers to present that unfinalised instrument as if it were a concrete safeguard.
- Whether the Government's refusal to strengthen clause 4 information requirements, coupled with assurances that Parliament could simply ask whatever questions it wished, reflects a failure by DPAC to design and advise on enforceable disclosure mechanisms appropriate to a controversial disposal-authorising framework.
- Whether the failure, as at 2 June 2026, to cause a plan to be prepared and registered in the Central Plan Register on the day the Act received Royal Assent, as required by section 7(2) of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Act 2026*, indicates breach of a plain statutory duty and inadequate implementation planning and supervision by DPAC and the responsible Minister.

4.5 RTI, record-keeping and coordination

I ask the Ombudsman to investigate:

- Whether DPAC's record-keeping and RTI performance in relation to the 56-hectares exclusion shows the same pattern of opacity, insufficiency in searching and poor coordination identified in my complaint of 23 March 2026.
- Whether the cumulative picture, from the development of the rezoning/sale amendments, and the removal of 56 hectares from the protection of the Bill, through to the 2026 Legislative Council processes and the non-compliance with section 7(2), reveals a broader systemic problem in DPAC's approach to transparency, record-keeping, RTI and central coordination amounting to maladministration.

5. Additional relief sought

In addition to the relief sought in section 6 of my complaint of 23 March 2026, I ask the Ombudsman to:

5.1 Treat this submission as supplementary to my March complaint

Treat this supplementary submission as part of a single investigation into the matters raised in my complaint of 23 March 2026, so that the later-emerging issues identified here are considered alongside the earlier concerns about the origin of the rezoning/sale amendments, RTI performance and the handling of UTAS' STEM proposal.

5.2 Make findings on the 56-hectares exclusion and misdescription

Make findings on whether the treatment of the 56 hectares of Sandy Bay campus land left outside both protection and rezoning, and the way that exclusion was disclosed or not disclosed in fact sheets, plans, second

reading speeches and other ministerial statements, amounted to maladministration, including by giving Parliament and the public a materially false impression of the Bill's effect.

5.3 Make findings on DPAC's advice and Mr Healey's role

Make findings on whether DPAC and Mr Healey provided advice or briefings that were false, misleading, materially incomplete or reckless as to truth in relation to the matters addressed in sections 4.2 and 4.3, and whether that conduct contributed to Parliament being materially misinformed about key aspects of the Bill and UTAS' STEM proposal.

5.4 Examine the section 7(2) non-compliance

Examine whether the failure to comply with section 7(2) of the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Act 2026* constitutes maladministration and, if so, make recommendations aimed at improving systems and oversight within DPAC and the responsible Minister's department.

5.5 Require further searches and production of records

Require DPAC and any other relevant agencies to undertake thorough, documented searches for records specifically relating to:

- the 56-hectares exclusion and the drafting of schedule 1; and
- the origin, drafting and negotiation of clause 7 and schedule 2.

5.6 Consider systemic recommendations

Consider whether recommendations should be made concerning the way DPAC exercises its central coordination role, including in RTI matters, legislation and policy development, and briefing of ministers and Parliament, so as to reduce the risk of future errors.

5.7 Consider whether a report to Parliament is warranted

Consider whether, having regard to the seriousness and systemic nature of the matters raised across both complaints, it would be appropriate to report to Parliament.

Thank you for your attention to the matters raised.

Yours sincerely

Robert Hogan
Canberra

By email: harveyr35@aol.com