



MLC Meg Webb's motion to renegotiate the Mac Point stadium deal failed to pass the upper house.

## Stadium motion falls flat

**David Killick**

A motion calling on the state government to renegotiate its stadium deal with the AFL has been voted down in the Legislative Council.

Member for Nelson Meg Webb moved the motion, calling on the government to reopen talks with the football league on the location and construction time frame for the stadium.

Debate on the motion continued late into Tuesday night.

Ms Webb condemned the way the government had progressed Tasmania's bid for a team.

"This Premier has demonstrated throughout this whole saga a propensity to act in autocratic, secretive and unethical ways, in my view," she said during debate.

"This is the Premier who promised ... back in 2022 that the team would not be contingent on a stadium, that they would be

separate matters altogether.

"The misleading, unaccountable behaviour has only progressed from that point."

Leader of Government Business Leone Hiscutt described those opposing the stadium as "extremists and anti-development voices", comments she later withdrew. "Let me be very clear: no Macquarie Point stadium equals no AFL team. It goes together," she said.

Labor MLC Luke Edmunds spoke against the motion.

"If Tasmania does not deliver the stadium now, our reputation will be in tatters and we will be left without the AFL club we deserve and all the benefits it will bring," he said.

"The cost of not building the stadium and losing the Devils – I do not think our reputation will ever recover."

Ms Webb said she was disappointed her motion had failed. "After a marathon debate,

it is disappointing that the Legislative Council failed to seize the opportunity this week to pursue renegotiations with the AFL in order to ensure Tasmania's AFL team does not become collateral damage should the state be unable to comply with the current agreement time frames and deadlines," she said.

"Contrary to some arguments, this call to reopen negotiations is not mutually exclusive to the ongoing PoSS (Project of State Significance) process by the Tasmanian Planning Commission."

The motion was lost 4-10. Those for were independents Ms Webb, Rosemary Armitage, Mike Gaffney and Green Cassy O'Connor. Against were Liberals Ms Hiscutt, Nick Duigan, Jo Palmer, Kerry Vincent; Labor's Sarah Lovell and Mr Edmunds and independents Ruth Forrest, Tania Rattray, Dean Harriss and Bec Thomas.