

**Will Hodgman, MP**

Leader of the State Opposition

**Brett Whiteley, MP**

Shadow Minister for Health and Human Services

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**Government not connected with Hobart Port concerns**

The State Opposition has accused the government of failing to address concerns that a new hospital on Hobart's waterfront could jeopardise Hobart's working port.

Concerns are mounting that a new hospital on the waterfront will not be able to co-exist with a working port, which is a key driver of the Southern Tasmanian economy.

The State Government has failed utterly to allay these concerns but has arrogantly maintained it will be building a new hospital on the waterfront anyway – before a master plan for redevelopment of the precinct has been developed, before it even has a business case for the hospital, and while it continues, as it should, to investigate the suitability of redeveloping the Royal at its existing site.

The State Opposition is not convinced that building a new hospital on the Hobart waterfront is the best outcome for Tasmanian taxpayers, and is continuing to consult widely on the issue.

Leader of the State Opposition, Will Hodgman said he was worried about the threat to the port that key port stakeholders were identifying. It is a recurring issue that has been raised with the Opposition as part of its consultation process.

“Hobart needs its port infrastructure to be in top condition. The port needs certainty to realise its potential and to remain one of the key drivers of the Hobart economy. The Government needs to understand that in 2006-07, the value of Hobart-based Antarctic operations alone was \$147.7 million,” Mr Hodgman said.

“It does not make any sense to put this vibrant economic engine in jeopardy, particularly when we are at such a preliminary planning phase for this major development and

should therefore be able to look comprehensively at all the options rather than making rushed decisions.

“It’s a worrying sign that so many of the key players in the Tasmanian economy are saying that limiting the size of the working port is a bad idea.”

Mr Whiteley said concerns about the port were just one of many that he held regarding the government’s plans to put a new \$1 billion hospital on the Hobart waterfront.

“It was the government, after all, that said in 2006 that building a new Royal Hobart Hospital would be a ‘massive waste of money’ – and that’s when the government said it would cost \$500 million, not in the order of \$1 billion,” Mr Whiteley said.

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