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To The Public Work Committee,

The current plan for the new Tasmanian Youth Justice facility is poorly conceived, showing a complete lack of consideration for its placement and its effect on the surrounding area of Pontville. Placing troubled and vulnerable youths into an industrial compound neighbouring a marijuana plantation, two gun clubs and a distillery is an abjectly careless decision, showing a lack of regard for the facility's core purpose of rehabilitation.

Pontville is a precious encapsulation of Tasmanian heritage. All buildings within its zone must adhere to a strict code that ensures they assimilate with pre-existing structures in the area, some as old as 200 years or more, my residence included. The level of industrialisation brought by the proposed facility would completely decimate Pontville's atmosphere and cultural value. The prospective site is already a constant source of anxiety for those living in close proximity to the facility, which cannot be said to be irrational given the previous detention centre's reputation and regular walk-outs. Living so close to the facility, I will be worried for my mother who is out feeding her horses late each night. Our hillside is one of the few places I can feel safe running alone as a teenage girl; that will no longer be the case should the detention centre be built. The FAQs subsection of the Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility's page has led me to believe that there will be a focus on meeting the mental health needs of youth housed in the facility, however the current plan shows no regard for its impacts on the mental health of young people and adults in the immediate area.

It is hard to trust that detainee's mental health will be treated with adequate sensitivity given the placement of the facility alone. Youth will be regularly exposed to distressing stimuli, such as gunfire and the scent of marijuana. The impact of cannabis odour has been addressed by the facility's FAQ page, with an alternative disposal technique being the current remedy, however it has not been mentioned when this technique will be implemented. There is no promise the issue will be resolved by the time the facility is in operation, and so no guarantee that youth will not be exposed. Also not mentioned in the FAQ page is the management of staff and the vetting process to ensure they will be safe to work with vulnerable children. [According to a 2022 report cited by Kelso Lawyers](#), 55 staff members working at Ashley Youth Detention Centre were alleged sex offenders. Acts of physical abuse and sexual violence were perpetrated by staff members against detainees, whose concerns were dismissed at the time. With no clear statement of how

it will be assured that the detainees of the new facility will be safe around the staff tasked with caring for them, there is no certainty that it will be a fit environment for rehabilitation at all irrespective of its new design.

Another personal concern for myself and my family is the influx of traffic the new facility will bring to Pontville. Not only is this a major disturbance, but the reworking of Brighton Road leading up to the facility's entry point will encroach on our property. It will see the line of trees on our property's edge cut down, our only privacy from the road and the facility by extension. These trees are also home to native birds living in the area, and I have personally observed green rosellas, eastern rosellas, black cockatoos and wood ducks living in them. This destruction as well as the aforementioned stress induced by the facility's presence has made me and my family seriously consider leaving our home, a house that has been in my family for generations. However, this may not be possible for us due to a potential loss in property value that has not been adequately addressed by the facility's FAQ page. At least one deal agreed upon for a property in the surrounding area has fallen through now that development for the new facility may be underway; concerns raised by residents regarding compensation have been dismissed, even though there is no research in Tasmania to suggest that the development will not decrease property value, and there are already indicators to suggest it will. This has left me and my family feeling trapped by the difficulty in leaving and the fear in staying.

The plan for the Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility does not leave me hopeful for the rehabilitation of vulnerable youths. Instead, I am left dreading being neighbour to the next Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

It is my sincere hope that the concerns expressed in this letter will lend needed reconsideration to the facility's plan.

Kind Regards,  
Elena Nye

