

# Submission to the Department of Treasury and Finance

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## Tasmanian Short Stay Levy Bill 2025

### Executive Summary

Lisdillon Estate is a working 2,400-hectare agricultural enterprise on Tasmania's East Coast. Our short-stay farm accommodation is not speculative residential investment; it is an integrated component of a primary production business and a key element of long-term farm sustainability.

While we support the Government's objective of assisting first home buyers, the uniform application of a 5% Short Stay Levy across Tasmania will not increase housing supply in regional areas such as Little Swanport. There is no long-term rental demand for our dwellings, and they cannot realistically be converted to residential rental stock.

Applying the levy to regional farm stays risks reducing occupancy, weakening agricultural diversification, discouraging regional tourism investment, and undermining heritage preservation—without delivering housing outcomes.

We respectfully request that the legislation include either an exemption for working primary production land or a regional carve-out outside the main metropolitan areas.

### Introduction

Lisdillon Estate is a 2,400-hectare working sheep and vineyard property located at Little Swanport on Tasmania's East Coast. We currently operate five short-stay farm accommodation houses, with a sixth in development. These dwellings are not investment properties; they are an integral part of a working primary production enterprise and form a critical component of our long-term agricultural sustainability strategy.

We acknowledge and support the Tasmanian Government's objective of assisting first home buyers and maintaining a balanced housing policy. However, we respectfully submit that the uniform statewide application of the proposed 5% Short Stay Levy (SSL) will not achieve housing supply outcomes in regional Tasmania and may produce unintended economic consequences in rural communities.

## 1. No Housing Supply Impact in Regional Areas

The accommodation at Lisdillon Estate cannot realistically be converted into long-term rental housing. The dwellings are located on working agricultural land and are integrated

into farm operations. There is no demonstrable long-term rental demand in the Little Swanport region.

Accordingly, applying the SSL to regional farm stays does not release housing stock, does not improve rental affordability, and does not address urban housing pressures.

## **2. Regional Tourism and Price Sensitivity**

Regional tourism accommodation is highly price-sensitive, particularly outside peak periods. The addition of a 5% levy—on top of GST and booking platform charges—will increase the effective cost of stays and will materially affect occupancy rates in shoulder and off-peak seasons.

Reduced occupancy directly affects farm income diversification, regional employment, local suppliers, and reinvestment into agricultural production.

## **3. Regional Accommodation Supply Constraints**

The East Coast already experiences a shortage of quality visitor accommodation during peak periods. Constraining regional accommodation investment through additional taxation risks limiting tourism growth in areas that rely heavily on visitor expenditure.

The Government has consistently promoted visitor dispersal beyond Greater Hobart. A uniform statewide levy risks discouraging precisely the type of regional investment that supports that objective.

## **4. Farm Stays Are Structurally Different**

Farm stays represent agricultural diversification, rural economic development, landscape stewardship, and heritage preservation—not residential market displacement. Treating farm-based accommodation identically to metropolitan short-stay apartments fails to recognise these differences.

## **5. Heritage Preservation**

Lisdillon Estate includes historically significant cottages dating back to the 1830s. The preservation and ongoing maintenance of these heritage assets is supported by income derived from short-term accommodation.

Without this revenue stream, the economic justification for maintaining these structures would be materially reduced. This issue affects heritage properties across regional Tasmania.

## Requested Legislative Amendments

We respectfully request consideration of the following:

- An exemption for short-stay accommodation located on working primary production land.
- A regional carve-out for properties located outside the metropolitan areas.

## Conclusion

While a levy may be appropriate in metropolitan areas experiencing housing pressure, its application to regional farm stays does not contribute to housing supply outcomes and risks weakening agricultural diversification, regional employment, tourism growth, and heritage preservation.

We offer this submission in a constructive spirit and would welcome further consultation to ensure the final legislation recognises the unique characteristics and public value of regional agritourism enterprises.

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