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## EXHIBITION OF CONCEPT STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Application No.	SSD 7693
Location	InterContinental Hotel and Transport House, 115-119 Macquarie Street, Sydney (Lot 40 DP 41315) and 99-113 Macquarie Street, Sydney (Lots 3 and 4 DP 785393)
Applicant	Mulpha Australia Ltd
Council Area	City of Sydney
Consent Authority	Minister for Planning

It is sad that, at a time when the increased regret at the unfortunate developments in the city over the past 30 or 40 years, there is another application to vary an exiting approval. The skyline and horizon is at further risk.

First, this is a very significant development application, not a small change. The alteration will alter the appearance of the building in a number of ways. The use of the term “envelope” is especially misleading and seeks to diminish the change. Also, I note that the building already has an “envelope” in terms of the rooms jutting out from the walls - this alteration will exacerbate this.

Second, the alteration violates the original approvals that had significant concerns about size and siting. There was considerable controversy about those original approvals and, after only 30 or so years, to have them revisited seems to call into question the sanctity of that process.

Also, the airspace addition will set a precedent for other expansions to nearby buildings. These additions - if approved - will further encroach on the NSW Treasury Building, Transport House, and overpowers even more the Colonial Secretary’s Building. It will dwarf these historically significant buildings.

The Treasury building was built in 1849. It is a beautiful example of late Victorian architecture. Transport House was built in 1938 and is Art Deco. Both buildings are regarded correctly as historically significant.

Sir Robert McAlpine was responsible for building the 32 storey InterContinental Hotel which opened in 1985 at a cost of \$72 million. In 1988, he also purchased Transport House for \$66 million. Both of these buildings have now been sold to Mulpha Australia Ltd, a large Malaysian property development company. The InterContinental Hotel was built on two-thirds of Crown land, leased in perpetuity to the Urban Transport authority. It smacks of a large conglomerate treating the city as its space.

There was considerable criticism in 1981 of the new building with the Director of the National Trust, Mr John Morris, being allegedly removed from the NSW Heritage Commission for attacking what he descried as Premier Wran's pet project (SMH, 22/7/81, p 9). In 1982 the matter went before the Land and Environment Court. Questions were raised about the old Treasury building being dwarfed by the new structure. The National Trust wanted the new building scaled down to the size of the existing buildings, described as the most substantial group of historic buildings remaining in Sydney. John Hassel, architectural writer for the SMH referred to the area as an architectural microcosm.

The airspace addition to the InterContinental Hotel will be very noticeable from The Astor and also from the Botanic Gardens. It will restrict the natural light into the windows on the south side of Transport House at a time when all in Sydney are seeing the damage from overcrowding - both at ground level and in the airspace.

The views from The Astor will be affected by this development. Built in 1923, The Astor is one of just a handful of old apartment buildings which survive on Macquarie Street. Since it was built it has gradually become hemmed in by modern buildings. The views which the building originally had to the Blue Mountains, to the south of Sydney and to Circular Quay, have gradually been taken away. By 1966 there were only slivers of Circular Quay to be seen. This addition will further reduce the vista.

It is my view that the redevelopment of the InterContinental Hotel should remain within their present space and not be spread further into the historically significant Macquarie Street precinct.

Thank you for reading this objection.

John A. Fraser