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Proposed 47 Storey Tower at 50 and 52 Phillip Street, City of Sydney

Detailed Response to the Proposal

As a former Chair of the Heritage Council of NSW and a former Councillor of the Australian Heritage Council I note that this proposal is completely contrary to the intent of the National Heritage Listing of the Governor's Domain and Civic Precinct which this project is within.

While obviously a large payment to the NSW Government is the sweetener of the proposed leasing deal, the Government document states:

Non-financial benefits

Working together

- Rejuvenation and adaptive reuse of a NSW Government-owned heritage building
Comment: I have no objection to the rejuvenation and adaption of 50 Phillip Street, perhaps as a boutique hotel. It is the tower introduction and addition which is completely inappropriate
- Regeneration and enhancement of public domain, particularly the upgrade to Phillip Lane
Comment: Phillip Lane is a narrow service laneway quite unsuited to substantially increased traffic volumes. The introduction of, say, granite paving will not, in my view, transform it into a splendid public precinct
- Creation of a heritage tourism precinct. Non-financial benefits
Comment: The heritage tourism precinct already exists in the defined heritage precinct, and the existing major hotels immediately to the north. The suggestion is spurious
- Job creation and tourism industry benefits from the construction and operation of a new 5/6 star hotel
Comment: Similar employment will be found on other sites
- Reinvestment of proceeds into government services and infrastructure
Comment: The State Government has numerous other sites that it can capitalise, should it wish

Fjmtstudio: Vision for the site

- Perpetuate the active use of the State Significant Heritage listed building
Comment: this can be done in much more acceptable ways
- Contribute to the revitalisation of the precinct; street activation
Comment: existing major hotels, office blocks, clubs and the Opera House ensure very adequate existing public activity in this precinct
- Much needed hotel accommodation [in this area]; associated economic benefits

Comment: there are two major hotels immediately to the north, a large hotel development is underway along Bridge Street and the Wentworth Hotel is close by. This argument is spurious

- **Phillip Lane network**

Comment: in my opinion, unlikely to become a popular place of public visitation

- **Phillip Lane hotel entry portico**

Comment: cramped and a potential traffic hazard, given the increased car and truck movements required in Phillip Lane by the proposal

- **Complementary use of the historic building**

Comment: yes, a boutique hotel in the historic building is accepted; however, the introduction of intrusive construction within and over the historic building is inappropriate and unacceptable

- **Overshadowing controls of the Domain and the Royal Botanic garden**

Comment: The shadow diagrams are difficult to read, but imply 2 pm winter overshadowing of the State Library's north façade

In conclusion:

The proposed 47 storey tower is an affront to the very important Chief Secretary's Building, and compromises its southern wing (50 Phillip Street). Both have been appropriately used for court and other government roles for many years.

The giant supporting mega column compromises better future outcomes for 50 Phillip Street, and the curved cantilever over 50 Phillip Street is visually clumsy and will not enhance this important heritage precinct of National Significance.

This proposal will deface important heritage buildings, and compromise the setting of the public square formed by First Government House Place. In my opinion, any works to major heritage buildings must be suitably sympathetic and make a secondary statement, or be fully and readily reversible. There is no evidence of this in this proposal.

The proposal is exactly what the National Heritage Listing aims to control and deny.

Howard Tanner AM LFRAIA
Consultant Architect

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Howard Tanner's appointments have included:

- Chair, Heritage Council of NSW
- Councillor, Australian Heritage Council
- National President, Australian Institute of Architects
- Chair, Australian Architecture Awards