

# Take a stand for our lovely city

THANK you, Richard Flanagan, for eloquently putting the case for the preservation of Hobart, our unique culture and heritage. Thank you, Robert Morris-Nunn, for standing up for quality architecture. But for the inner precincts of parts of Europe, cheap highrise is everywhere else. Let us count the long term value of what we already have rather than the short term profit for which we will all eventually pay. The *Mercury* editorial suggestion to instead permit highrise along the northern rail corridor is a good one. This is a matter for the state government at least. Not for a single council riven with dissent and self-interest.

**Dain Bolwell  
Bellerive**

## Mixed bag

WE totally agree with Richard Flanagan (*Mercury*, May 6), regarding the skyscrapers proposed for the City of Hobart, but we nearly choked on our cornflakes when we read the comments by Robert Morris-Nunn that “the proposals were inappropriate for the City”, and “they would change the face of our City.” These words are from the mouth of the same person who is responsible for designing the monstrosity which is proposed for Kangaroo Bay — which if built, will change the face of our beautiful Bellerive Village forever. At the moment there is a stunning view across Kangaroo Bay to the City of Hobart with the backdrop of Mt Wellington. This view will be replaced by a building 83 metres long and more than two power poles high. How does Mr Morris-Nunn dare to say one thing and yet do another.

**Arnold and Tibby Sierink  
Bellerive**

## People power

HOBART Lord Mayor Sue Hickey is quoted saying “some change in thinking is necessary” (*Mercury*, May 6). “Although I will always champion the protection of genuine heritage, I still believe every generation has its right to leave its own architecture.”

Is she asking that we change to her way of thinking? What is “genuine” heritage? And, surely, “every generation” must refer to Hobartians, not developers from a glass-city like Singapore.

On July 26 last year, in an article regarding a development in the New Town heritage precinct, the *Mercury* stated: “Hobart Lord Mayor Sue Hickey rubbished the suggestion that New Town Rd is a heritage precinct.”

When I asked her about this at the AGM of electors, she repeated this in much stronger language. I fear for the future of Hobart’s heritage.

**Brian Corr  
New Town**

## Bigger picture

RICHARD Flanagan’s prescient article warning about Hobart skyscrapers points to the broader issue of how developments in Tasmania need to be assessed — by carefully balancing the desires of corporate citizens with the democratic right of affected people to defend their interest and the rights of community to defend values that Tasmanians hold dear.

We may have a skyscraper issue now, but there’s an eternal tension between these opposites.

The need for careful balance, and separation from political interference, was

recognised when the state implemented the very sophisticated Resource Management and Planning System some 30 years ago now.

Introduction of the new statewide planning system — it’s happening right now — threatens to weaken this robust system in a number of ways.

It diminishes what developments are allowed to happen without scrutiny; it diminishes the rights of affected people to have a say in a range of circumstances; and it grants the minister virtual control over certain planning processes.

Nobody is objecting to the overall principle of co-ordinated statewide planning where such changes are an improvement, but the statewide planning reforms — as are being implemented in the coming year — essentially weaken local controls, depriving councils of the right to take into account values that are of particular value in their precinct.

This is a very volatile issue. Being an election year we are sure to hear a lot about appropriate planning controls in coming months.

**Chris Harries  
Dynnryne**

## Make a good mark

WHILE I support in principle Lord Mayor Sue Hickey’s assertion that “every generation has its right to leave its own architecture”, I totally reject the idea that massive skyscrapers which will change Hobart forever fit into this category.

Not only are tall buildings completely out of harmony with our beautiful city, they will have an irreversible impact.

**Richard Upton  
Battery Point**