

We need to protect our heritage

I HAVE just spent a week in Hobart, where I was born and grew up many years ago. Having lived overseas for most of my life, and visited many cities in the world, I believe that what Hobart has is quite extraordinary. Its stunningly beautiful setting on the water, its low-rise landscape, and its fascinating history still reflected in its astonishing array of intact Georgian and Victorian architecture, make it one of the unique cities of the world. My immediate thought is that surely Hobart could apply for UNESCO World Heritage listing of the city itself? If George Town in Penang can do it, so too can Hobart. This would not only protect Hobart's unique heritage and landscape, but also bring droves of tourists from around the world, instantly and in perpetuity, thus solving Tasmania's employment and economic woes in a single stroke forever. No skyscraper, placed smack bang in the middle of Hobart's stunning low-rise centre, could hope to achieve that; indeed, the exact opposite, as the minute such an inappropriate structure is allowed, more will follow, and Hobart will quickly become just another modern urban city, but chilly and small at that, and many tourists will lose interest in visiting.

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Mercury 31 May 2017



PENANG-STYLE: Would heritage listing protect Hobart's unique values?