

NEWSFRONT

Gutwein denies fast-track hotel bid

SIMEON THOMAS-WILSON

TREASURER Peter Gutwein has played down concerns that Major Projects Legislation soon to be introduced to State Parliament will be used to force through the Fragrance Group's Davey St hotel.

Last year, Mr Gutwein confirmed that the State Government was developing legislation that would allow a state planning minister to

assess developments that meet certain criteria and over-ride local council approval processes.

Yesterday, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust called on Mr Gutwein to rule out using the new legislation to fast track a 457-room, high-rise hotel proposed by the Singaporean developers Fragrance Group for Davey St.

In revised plans released last month, the hotel is now

179-metres high with a 25-metre spire. The trust has released images showing how it will impact the Hobart skyline.

Trust director Peter McGlone said while building heights were severely restricted by the current planning scheme, the planned new hotel could be a prime target for the Major Project Legislation.

"The only way that the Fragrance tower can ever be built in Hobart is if it is

approved under Major Projects Legislation that Planning Minister Peter Gutwein will introduce to the State Parliament soon," he said.

However, Mr Gutwein told the *Mercury* yesterday that the new legislation "would not be about fast-tracking these sorts of skyscrapers".

The Hobart City Council is set to advertise the Davey St hotel and the 84-metre hotel slated for Collins St shortly.