

Hodgman hot on Fragrance's Hobart interest but ...

Cold on city skyscraper

BLAIR RICHARDS

PREMIER Will Hodgman says he personally has "serious reservations" about the Fragrance Group's proposal for a 120m skyscraper in Hobart.

Mr Hodgman has become the latest high-profile Tasmanian to express concerns about the Singaporean developer's plan to build the skyscraper in Davey St, one of two proposed for the CBD. The other is an 83m tower in Collins St.

Speaking on ABC local radio, Mr Hodgman said he

welcomed the company's interest in the state but he did not think the 120m tower proposed for the Hobart CBD was the right fit.

"Personally I have serious reservations. I think we live in one of the most picturesque, idyllic, capital cities in the country ... I think we need to do everything we can to protect the quality of not only the aesthetic [of] our capital city but also the amenity," Mr Hodgman said.

"I think it's a superb looking building but more suited to

other cites where those things are a dime a dozen. It would be one of a kind in Tasmania, it would dominate a landscape ... across to Sullivans Cove to beautiful kunanyi/Mt Wellington in a way that would have a serious impact."

However, Mr Hodgman said the skyscraper proposals were a welcome sign of the state's economic revival and booming tourism.

"I think it's a remarkable sign of the times that concepts such as these are being seriously canvassed," he said.

"You wouldn't have thought it possible only a few years ago."

Mr Hodgman said despite his personal views it was up to the Hobart City Council to assess the Fragrance proposals via the proper process.

Fragrance has lodged development applications with the council for the hotels in Davey St and Collins St. The two projects are worth a combined \$230 million.

The group's first Hobart hotel, a \$35 million building in Macquarie St, opened about

three weeks ago and is operated by the Ibis Hotels group.

Mr Hodgman called the Ibis hotel "a fantastic addition" to Hobart.

Last month, the company also lodged an application for mixed-use hotel development in Elizabeth St between North Hobart and the CBD.

Opposition to the two skyscrapers has been fierce, with senior Tasmanian tourism figures, revered author Richard Flanagan and actor Essie Davis among those expressing concerns.



CONCERN: Davey Street plan