

22 June 2016

Mr Tim Smith  
Executive Director  
Heritage Victoria  
GPO Box 2392  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Tasma Terrace  
4 Parliament Place  
East Melbourne  
Victoria 3002

Email: [info@nattrust.com.au](mailto:info@nattrust.com.au)  
Web: [www.nationaltrust.org.au](http://www.nationaltrust.org.au)

T 03 9656 9800  
F 03 9656 5397

Our Ref: B6052

**Re: Permit Application No. P24867 Continental Hotel, Sorrento**

Dear Mr Smith,

I refer to the above application, for the refurbishment of the interior of the Continental Hotel, conservation works, and construction of multi-storey additions to the south and west of the building. The National Trust objects to the proposed development in its current form due to significant concerns regarding the proposed new work and conservation works to the existing hotel. Further, we do not believe that adequate documentation has been provided to justify the proposal.

The Continental Hotel was classified by the National Trust at Regional level in 1993:

*The Continental Hotel is of historical significance to the State of Victoria for its associations with George Coppin businessman, politician and entrepreneur whose enterprise was largely responsible for the development of Sorrento from the 1870s to the 1890s as a seaside resort. Coppin established a number of business ventures associated with the Continental Hotel such as the steamer service from Melbourne and the Sorrento tramway to encourage tourism to Sorrento. The Continental Hotel is of architectural significance to the State of Victoria as a relatively intact example of the type of hotel development popular in the later years of the nineteenth century providing accommodation, entertainment and associated hotel services for wealthy city tourists. The Continental Hotel, constructed of local limestone, is important as a landmark building for the seaside town of Sorrento as it is situated on a prominent site at the entry to the town.*

**New Work**

As no renders or photo-montages have been provided with the application, it is difficult to fully assess the potential impact of the proposed development within the existing streetscape. However due to the massing of the proposed buildings, the materials specified, and the proximity to the heritage-listed hotel, it appears that they are poorly integrated within the surrounding context and significantly impact surrounding views to the hotel.

Of particular concern is the proposed new hotel building directly adjacent to the existing hotel, which would be highly visible from Point Nepean Road. In addition, the height of the proposed residential building reaches the parapet of the mansard tower—above the existing roofline of the hotel—and would overwhelm the hotel's landmark qualities.

While it is difficult to assess without detailed renders, we also believe the dark materials in the schedule including concrete, zinc cladding, grey vision glass, and bluestone, are unsympathetic, and will contribute to the visual dominance of the new buildings over the distinctive local limestone of the existing hotel and other surrounding buildings.

### **Conservation Works**

The National Trust has serious concerns about the lack of detail provided by the applicant regarding works to “to remove, in coordination with a heritage consultant, modern alterations which have adversely affected the exterior and interior aspects.” While conservation work could potentially mitigate the impact of new development, the applicant has not demonstrated that this will be the case, nor is this established in the Heritage Impact Statement provided by the applicant.

Further information about proposed demolition and conservation works should be sought prior to the approval of any permit, to ensure that a viable and appropriate program of conservation works can be tied to development milestones.

### **Conclusion**

While the National Trust accepts that development at heritage places is sometimes necessary to enable the conservation of historic fabric and a viable use for the site into the future, it is important for a balance to be achieved between development and conservation. This balance is not demonstrated in the current proposal for the Continental Hotel.

While the subject site demonstrates tolerance for development, the National Trust believes the current proposal constitutes an overdevelopment of the site, and that the permit application should be refused in its current form.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Watson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Felicity Watson  
Senior Community Advocate