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MEDIA RELEASE

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Coogee Bay Hotel proposal excessive: NSW Government Architect

An expert review by the NSW Government Architect has found that proposals lodged with the Department of Planning earlier this year for redevelopment of the Coogee Bay Hotel are excessive in terms of height, bulk and scale and should not be supported in their current form.

The review, commissioned by the NSW Department of Planning, suggested that any future development of the site should be 3-4 storeys along Coogee Bay Rd and Arden St and up to 5 storeys in the south-western part of the site.

The existing heritage-listed hotel and beer garden should also be retained, the review found.

The Department of Planning has advised the proponent, Oakstand Property Group, that its concept plan will need to be redesigned to be broadly consistent with the Government Architect's report.

Planning Minister Tony Kelly said that in order to be assessed by the Government as a major project, any revised scheme will need to demonstrate that it meets the relevant \$100 million threshold.

"This is a good example of the State's major projects assessment system working well and doing the job it was intended to do," Mr Kelly.

"The local member, Paul Pearce along with community representatives had the opportunity to meet with the Government architect and put forward their views on the project.

"The State's leading authority on matters of appropriate design has advised that the proposal needs to be sent back to the drawing board – and that's exactly what has now happened."

In February this year, the Department of Planning advised Oakstand of its concerns regarding the scale of the original proposal, which included a 15-storey tower. Oakstand subsequently submitted two alternative designs including different height options up to nine storeys.

The Government Architect's review considered these two alternatives and found that both represented an overdevelopment of the site.

In addition to concerns over the size and scale of the development, the review found that the location of the site within the Coogee Bay valley floor and its interface with the Coogee Beach foreshore should be key factors for consideration in any future redevelopment.

"One of the advantages of the Part 3A major projects assessment system is that it can weed out inappropriate proposals early in the assessment process," Mr Kelly said.

The Government Architect's review can be found on the Department of Planning's website at <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Development/Independentplanningassessmentandreviewpanels/tabid/70/language/en-US/Default.aspx>