

**Submission  
No 107**

## **INQUIRY INTO MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES**

**Name:** Mr Duncan Bourne

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I live in Ultimo, am a MAAS supporter and am one of many local people who look on the Powerhouse Museum(MAAS) as an integral part of our community. It has a long history here from its original location in the current TAFE building just down the road to it's current iconic purpose designed building that is intended to last for several decades more housing many donated artifacts from the local area representing its history. The MAAS stretches from the spectacular new Frank Gehry designed UTS Wing building to the iconic Ian Thorpe Swimming Pool. After several years of being cut off by construction(damaging attendance) it has recently been reconnected to Central Station, and Darling Harbour by the renewed 'Goods Line' park and walkway. It is part of a ribbon of public and private, arts and science innovation through Ultimo that feed off and complement one another.

I was shocked to hear the Premier announce the move a few weeks before the last election without any prior discussion or review of its impact on, and cost to, our community. The government has reduced funding and staff for the museum for several years affecting its ability to mount major exhibitions. Accusations have been made of developer pressure and political opportunism.

I became a member of local group Save the Powerhouse and have spent some time talking to MAAS visitors before and after they visited the museum. I asked their opinion on the relocation and asking them to sign the petition to Save the Powerhouse in Ultimo provided by Alex Greenwich MLA, in consultation with local groups and Jamie Parker MLA. The vast majority of visitors (most stopped to listen) supported keeping the Powerhouse in Ultimo and signed. They came from all over the city, state, country and overseas. Many had special memories of their families coming to the Museum over the decades since its completion. Many remembered many of its special exhibits. Those out of towners who were asked mostly said they would not make the extra journey to Parramatta if it moved there.

I have been to the MAAS satellite facility in Castle Hill that provides Western Sydney one worthwhile option. Concerned residents of Parramatta have pointed out the need for the government to fund the preservation and interpretation of the many historical areas there that are under threat of development, they could be the basis for a Museum of NSW. I invite you all to come to Ultimo and take a walk around the neighbourhood and the MAAS and then the historical areas of Parramatta before you make your recommendations.

Thankyou.