

Submission
No 130

INQUIRY INTO MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

The Powerhouse Museum is currently perfectly positioned to meet the needs of the State which it serves. It is within short walking distance to the numerous forms of public transport, including light rail, bus, ferry, and Central train station- the interchange for all rail lines. All roads lead to the CBD, even though some areas of Western Sydney might be closer to Parramatta as the crow flies, it is often easier for residents of these areas to hop on a train into the city, or even drive, given the nature of our transport infrastructure. This is especially true for those outside of Sydney, such as my parents who live on the Central Coast and catch the train to Central to visit the Museum (of which they are Foundation Members) often. They could not do this if it were to move as it would require changing trains etc. The Powerhouse Museum is located on a significant site. The buildings are part of the history and culture of the institution. It is an old powerhouse! A site of technological significance! If this site were to be taken from public hands into private ownership access to this history and architecture would be lost to all but a rich few.

The Powerhouse Museum is also just down the road for the University of Technology- how more perfectly placed can a science and technology museum be?! Oh and don't forget Ultimo TAFE, another educational institution which specialised in the applied arts.

Ultimo is also the start-up hub of Sydney. Fishburners and all sorts of small to medium technological businesses have grown from the tech personality of the suburb. This is directly linked to the Museum. You would gut the local economy if you ripped the Museum from these streets.

As a local living in the adjacent conservation area I am fearful for overdevelopment of the site, especially given we cannot do anything with our property to compensate (e.g. renovate or sell to a developer) due to the restrictions placed on the conservation area. If another huge residential tower, such as those rising in the Haymarket/Darling Square redevelopment, were to be built here we would lose total solar access. Can you image living in a home without sunlight?

It is truly heartbreaking to see your local community carved up for the benefits of big-time developers. I was born in this suburb and I had hoped to raise my own children here, close to the cultural facilities I paid a premium to be near. As someone passionate about arts & culture this is like a surfer paying through the nose to live close the beach and waking up one morning to find someone has decided to take it away.

By all means create a new museum in Western Sydney but don't rob Pymont to pay Parramatta. With a growing population Sydney, and indeed NSW, needs more investment in cultural facilities and institutions. It is madness to sell off prime real estate to make a quick buck when you can't even accommodate the needs to current residents (see the dire state of Ultimo Public School which is overflowing with students and more on the way).

Yours faithfully,