

**Submission
No 138**

INQUIRY INTO MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Name: Mr David Payne

Date received: 14 August 2016

It is requested that the inquiry into museums and galleries should address the misuse of public lands at North Parramatta by the Government through the upcoming selloff of public lands to private developers for the construction of residential towers. This land is a public asset and has been so for over 200 years. An once only opportunity exists to re-integrate public lands that were once part of the Government Domain and so to extend the current World Heritage area of Parramatta Park to include the precincts of the Female Factory, the Catholic Orphanage, the Asylum, the Wisteria Gardens, the old Kings School and the Parramatta Gaol. The heritage values of these precincts is all under threat from the Government's upcoming selloff of most of the open spaces between the sites. The integration of these precincts and the linking through to connect with Prince Alfred Square and with the Parramatta River within the CBD would create a collection of significant historical sites without any parallel within Australia and would be a major tourist drawcard for tourism. It would revitalise the moribund centre of Parramatta and encourage development on private lands in North Parramatta. Instead the Government is pursuing the sell off and development of much of these heritage precincts. The Government has argued that this is necessary to fund restoration of the heritage buildings within these sites, however, the proposed scale of development would utterly compromise the heritage values of these precincts. The Government has proven that it can finance other heritage and cultural projects without such sell offs. Examples include c\$400m for the Sydney Modern, c\$400m for Parramatta Stadium, c\$400m to c\$800m for relocation of MAAS. We in Western Sydney do not want imported "culture" such as the proposed MAAS relocation, what we want is the recognition, protection and conservation of our unique heritage precincts of old colonial Parramatta and their linking and integration to provide a comprehensive experience of our colonial past. Should the Government continue on its present course this opportunity will be irretrievably lost. The people of Western Sydney wish to be consulted by the Government and to be included in the decision making process, this has not been the case to date.