

**Submission
No 161**

INQUIRY INTO MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

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Cities around the world continue to convert iconic industrial buildings in their city centre for cultural purposes. The current PowerHouse Museum is a classic and early example of this.

1 Accessibility & Location.

The location of the PowerHouse Museum in Ultimo is accessible to all in the Sydney region being only a short walk from Central Railway along the new Goodslane walkway which ends at the doors of the PowerHouse itself. The alternative light rail stop is also close to the Museum.

The radial nature of Sydney's rail network means that venues close to Central Station give all a relatively easy access, regardless of where they live.

2. Net value of the Building.

Over many years successive governments, public instrumentalities have invested money in the restoration, enlargement and decontamination of the building. In current dollars that must be close to \$500 million. As an example, the original \$10 million spent by Pacific Power in asbestos removal would, given the over inflation rates, now be worth about \$30 million. Thus selling the site for \$200 million would effectively destroy \$300 million of public funds.

3. Heritage.

Currently Sydney Water is restoring the heritage pumping station adjacent the PowerHouse Building. The electricity for this station was supplied by the generators within the PowerHouse building. One government instrumentality appreciates heritage and protects it while another proposes destruction.

4. Tourism/schools

The Powerhouse sits in a tourist/museum precinct, with a number of attractions within walking distance. Darling Harbour, the Chinese Gardens, The National Maritime Museum, the Sydney Aquarium, the Star Casino, The Capitol and Lyric Theatres as well as the new Convention and Exhibition Centres.

The PowerHouse adds to this precinct as a tourist mecca with easy walking accessibility from city and Darling Harbour hotel. I understand that some 40% of visitors to the PowerHouse are also visitors to Sydney (both rural and overseas). These would unlikely to travel to the suggested Parramatta location.

Everyday, school groups arrive by train, walk along the Goodslane walkway to visit the PowerHouse in the morning and then move on to the Maritime Museum or the Aquarium or vice versa.

In conclusion the current site offers technical displays in an iconic industrial building, in a tourist/museum area with easy transport accessibility. The loss of public funding in the building's demolition is unjustified.

This museum is one for all of Sydney due to its central location.

Regards
Peter Wotton