

Submission
No 53

**INQUIRY INTO GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT OF THE
POWERHOUSE MUSEUM AND OTHER MUSEUMS AND
CULTURAL PROJECTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Save the Powerhouse

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Ultimo, 09 May,2020

INQUIRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT OF THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM AND OTHER MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL PROJECTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

SUBMISSION

“Save the Powerhouse” is a community campaign opposing the destruction of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the sale of the site to private developers. The campaign also supports Parramatta residents’ efforts to acquire their own world-class museum that reflects the area’s unique culture and history.

The campaign

- was established in Ultimo after a public meeting on 20-03-2015, following former Premier Mike Baird’s announcement that the Powerhouse would be moved to Parramatta.
- the convenors are Ultimo residents who also head the “Friends of Ultimo”, a community action group that addresses local issues.
- communicates with supporters via a Facebook page (4400 followers, average 5,000 post reach per week) and bulk emailing.

We are not museum experts, but aim to keep the general public informed, and represent their views about the Powerhouse issue to other groups, politicians, local leaders and the media.

Actions to date

The Save the Powerhouse campaign has

- helped to collect 10,000+ signatures on a Parliamentary petition which opened the way for a Parliamentary debate on 28-10-2015
- Organised meetings and rallies addressed by
 - Political and Local Government representatives
 - Museum experts including Dr Lindsay Sharp (Powerhouse Museum’s founding Director), Jennifer Sanders (former Powerhouse Deputy Director and Museums Consultant Kylie Winkworth).
- Arranged meetings in Parramatta with the North Parramatta Action Group (NPRAG and have liaised with them regularly since.
- Met, and collaborated regularly with, politicians and museum experts in the Powerhouse Museum Alliance.
- Recently (pre- pandemic) collected over 2,300 signatures on a petition calling on the government to divert the \$1.5billion Powerhouse “move” budget to supporting disaster relief across NSW <http://chng.it/2cNV29SDZc>

We also made submissions and testified (05-09-2016) at the Upper House Inquiry into Museums and Galleries (<http://tiny.cc/datfoz> , submissions 21,21a, 117 and 121).

We note and support the impending 2nd inquiry’s specific focus on “the Government’s management of the Powerhouse Museum “ rather than the (broader) “Museums and Galleries in NSW”, as previously.

While the first inquiry was thorough, it still left important questions unanswered.

We hope and believe that approach of the second is more likely to uncover critical new facts about the Government's motivations in pursuing the flawed "Powerhouse project."

Before commenting we want to express our concern that such an unpopular project should be proceeding during the Covid-19 lockdown when public meetings and discussion, an essential part of democratic public consultation, are prohibited.

A further reason to suspend it completely until the current crisis is over, including the current pseudo "consultations", is that it will not be among the 24 projects to be "fast-tracked" to reinvigorate the post-pandemic economy.

Below are our comments on on the terms of reference provided for this Inquiry.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. That a select committee be established to inquiry into and report on:

(a) The proposed move of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the Powerhouse Museum, from Ultimo to Parramatta, including:

(i) the core visions behind the move,

1) The "move" is said to be the result of a "thought bubble" in 2014 by then Premier Mike Baird, based on advice from Infrastructure NSW that the Powerhouse's Ultimo site had major resale value. It was announced, without any feasibility study, cost analysis or consultation, just before the March 2015 State elections aiming, and was designed, we believe, to

- win votes in Parramatta (although neither the Parramatta community nor the Parramatta City Council were consulted at the time!) by promising them the museum and thus pitting them against the Inner City "elites"

-create an attractive real estate opportunity in Ultimo

2) Over the five past years the project has continuously evolved as the Government has progressively discovered the difficulties and costs of their initial intention to "move" the Powerhouse to Parramatta. Even **the name of the project changed regularly** over this period.

From the outset the Government has struggled to maintain the fiction that it can "move" the Powerhouse to Parramatta, despite ample expert advice that this would be impossible.

Today the project clearly has little to do with a "move" as the facilities planned for Parramatta are visibly not a "Powerhouse Museum", nor even a museum, but **a multi-purpose commercial building.**

Note: the recent problems of CarriageWorks is a timely warning of the fragility of such ventures.

3) For promotional purposes, the Government has created an artificial link between destroying the Ultimo Powerhouse and selling the site to developers, and the construction of a so-called "New Powerhouse" at Parramatta. **THE TWO PROJECTS ARE UNRELATED.**

Further, as the Ultimo Powerhouse takes its name from the former power station in which it is housed, the Government has no justification for naming the proposed "museum" at Parramatta a "Powerhouse". **It is contemptible to reduce the "Powerhouse" name, with its 127 years of proud history in Ultimo, to a mere "brand".**

In summary. the Government has never had a stable core vision for the “move” beyond winning an election and making a fast profit on a real estate deal.

(ii) the governance of the project, including the effectiveness and adequacy of planning, business cases, design brief, project management, public reporting, consultant selection and costs project costing, and cultural and demographic justifications,

1) **Governance and planning:** the Government’s lack of an initial clear vision (see above) has negatively impacted governance of the entire project.

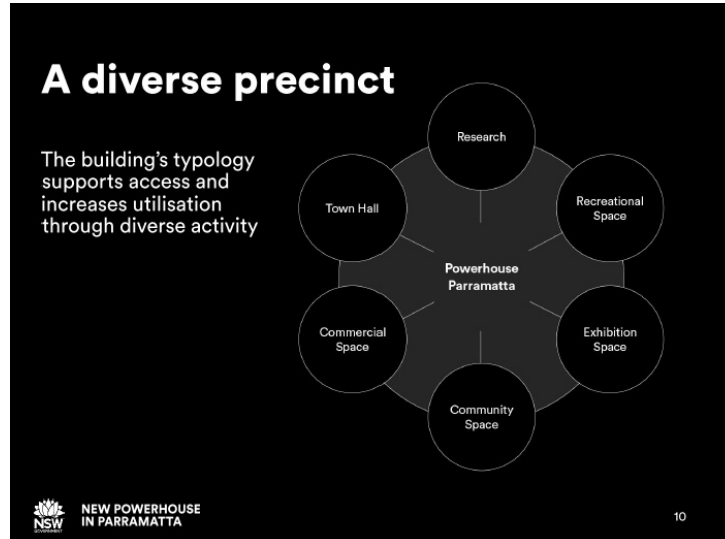
With no “road map” the project has been driven primarily by the Government’s compulsion to avoid transparency via devices such as bogus business cases, fake public consultations and evasive responses to the first Upper House Inquiry.

- MAAS Board of Trustees

a) Since former Premier Mike Baird announced the “move” in 2015, the MAAS Board of Trustees has been noticeably silent, although according to the Museum Act (1945) **“the Museum is operated and maintained by the Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.”**

Trustees have been steadily replaced by Government yes-persons.

b) The President of the Board, Pr Barney Glover failed to react to the fact that the proposed “Powerhouse Parramatta” will **be a mixed-use development with commercial space, resataurants and 40 residential apartments**, even though he told the 1st Upper House Inquiry (19 Oct, 2016) that “*..we believe a museum should standalone on the site*” and that “*...we certainly have a view...that the site should be for the museum.*”



c) In late December 2018 it was announced that Darren Steinberg, CEO of Dexus “an Australian Real Estate Investment Trust managing an Australian property portfolio valued at \$31.8 billion” - had unaccountably been appointed to the MAAS Board of Trustees “with assurances that any potential for conflict of interest with his...job with Dexus would be well managed.”

Yet after only seven months, in August 2019, he abruptly resigned “due to a possible conflict that may arise with the potential sale of the Powerhouse site”, according to “a Dexus spokesman.” (see SMH dated 08-03-2020 <http://tiny.cc/50tfoz>)

On March 3 this year, during recent Budget Estimate Hearings, the Arts Minister and MAAS CEO Lisa Havilah shrugged off MLC David Shoebridge’s (Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier And

Finance) penetrating questions over the circumstances of Steinberg's appointment and possible conflicts of interest (see Hansard transcript page 16 <http://tiny.cc/c4tfoz>)

The Minister conceded that he appointed Steinberg (WHY?). Havilah said it was felt that someone with his property experience would be an asset to the Board (WHY?) and that she had been asked to brief him on the market value of the Ultimo site (BY WHOM?) in mid' 2019, but did not do so because "he had already left the Board".

2) **Business cases:** the preliminary and final business cases both failed to follow basic rules and are inaccurate:-

- they never considered the status quo option
 - they systematically underestimated the costs and overestimated the benefits of the project
- In particular, they excluded high cost items such as collection storage facilities in Castle Hill, maintaining a "cultural presence" in Ultimo or flood mitigation measures in Parramatta.

Despite these deliberate miscalculations **the project benefit/cost ratio forecast by the final business case is only marginally above 1.00 (1.02).**

3) **Design brief:** the design brief has changed continuously as the Government has progressively recognised the flaws of the project (see above).

The Architect competition brief Architect competition "urged each designer to consider (the removal (of Parramatta's heritage-listed buildings Willow Gove and St George's Terraces)" at the same time the Premier and the Minister for the Arts announced their "intention ... to preserve them." (see below)

4) **Project management:** owing to frequent resignations, the composition of the MAAS project management team also changed continuously.

With the exception of the financial manager, all members of the 2015 MAAS executive team have left and **Lisa Havilah is the 3rd Powerhouse Museum CEO since 2015. NSW has also had 3 different Ministers for the Arts since 2015.**

The project has been managed by a succession of government agencies, currently Infrastructure NSW, the Government's construction arm, which recently completed the demolition of the Allianz stadium, but has no capability/experience in the Arts/Culture sector.



5) **Public reporting:** so-called public consultation has been minimal, with pseudo consultations organised in Ultimo and Parramatta in 2018.

The latest trend of biased “have your say” online surveys and “webinars” when the current pandemic prevents conventional public consultation is even more dubious.

MLAs for Sydney and Balmain, and Sydney and Parramatta Councils were not kept informed (with the notable exception of the Parramatta City Council while it was under Government administration, following forced amalgamation rules!)

6) **Consultants:** Museums expert Kylie Winkworth estimates that a total \$38.7 million has been spent to date on consultants fees. “This would build three new regional museums in drought-stricken regional NSW” she said.

MAAS New Museum Western Sydney summary of consultant & related costs		
Source	Amount	Purpose
2015-16		first year of funding (\$10,000,000 over 2 years) relating to the museum’s proposed relocation
MAAS annual report	\$3,380,000	
2016-17		business case for the New Museum project
MAAS annual report	\$2,859,000	
2016-17		ancillary costs in relation to the business case
MAAS annual report	\$2,790,000	
2016-17		diverted to the Department of Planning and Environment to address the extension of the business case
MAAS annual report	\$3,261,000	
2017-18		collection relocation and Parramatta expenses
MAAS annual report	\$2,790,000	
2017-18		expenses for the New Museum Parramatta
Dept of Planning annual report	\$5,770,000	
2018-19		employee related costs for the collections relocation
MAAS annual report	\$2,986,000	
2018-19		equipment related to the collection relocation
MAAS annual report	\$1,207,000	
2018-19		“New Powerhouse Museum” for Parramatta design competition
Dept of Planning annual report	\$11,322,000	
2018-19		Creative industries precinct at Ultimo
Dept of Planning annual report	\$2,353,000	
Total	\$38,718,000	

Kylie Winkworth, 02 De, 2019

7) **Project costing:** official project cost estimates increased from an initial \$150-200 million (Mike Baird, 2015) (estimated to be entirely covered by the sale of the Ultimo site) to \$645 million (Don Harwin, 2019) after deduction of \$400 million for the expected proceeds of the Ultimo site sale.

- all experts predict the final cost will reach at least \$1.5 billion.

- how did the Ultimo site value increase from \$150-200 million (estimated) in 2015 to \$400 million in 2019? What is the site's true value in 2020 in the prevailing economic circumstances?

- the Government has a consistent history of project cost overruns

Save the Powerhouse		NSW GOVERNMENT'S PROJECTS COST OVERRUNS				14-Oct-19
	Original Budget (M\$)	Latest Figure (M\$)	Cost Blow-out (M\$)	Cost Blow-out (%)	Status	Ref/Remarks
Light Rail	1,600	2,700	1,100	69%	Under construction	https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/sydney-light-rail-cost-blows-out-to-at-least-2-7b-after-settlement-20190603-p51tvc.html
Sydney Modern	344	344	0	0%	Planning	https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/sydney-modern-project-under-budget-but-late-20190901-p52muw.html <i>Remark: Currently still shown as being on original budget but re-tendering as selected contractor Lendlease pulled out</i> <i>Believed "to (head) to \$600 million" according to Shadow Art Minister Walt Secord</i>
Moore Park Stadium	729	729	0	0%	Demolition underway	https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6295959/nsw-govt-looking-for-new-stadium-builder/?cs=14231 <i>Remark: Currently still shown as being on original budget but re-tendering as selected contractor Lendlease pulled out</i>
Walsh Bay	129	245	116	90%	Planning	https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2019/jul/09/price-tag-for-sydneys-walsh-bay-revamp-blows-out-as-artists-concerns-grow
Fish Markets	250	750	500	200%	Planning	https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/sydney-fish-market-redevelopment-costs-blow-out-by-500-million-20190919-p52su4.html
Powerhouse Museum	150	645	495	330%	Planning	<i>Remark: Most experts agree that current budget is grossly underestimated with number of cost items not priced. Estimated final cost expected to reach \$1.5 Billion +</i>
TOTAL	3,202	5,413	2,211	69%		

\$2.2 Billion overrun on just 6 projects of which only one reached construction stage

NB: it is likely that future revenues have also been grossly inflated We understand they are based on a projected visitation figure of 1 million persons annually. According to regular comments from campaign followers, most regional NSW, interstate and overseas visitors to Sydney as well as residents from other Sydney population centres (Northshore, etc...) are not willing to travel to Parramatta Hence visitation will probably be only a fraction of Ultimo's current total (500,000+ annually). perhaps 100,000-200,000 p.a. at best.

8) Cultural and demographic justifications: the project relies heavily on pitting Western Sydney residents against Inner Sydney "elites" for electoral benefits.

- According to the 2011 Census, the Ultimo median individual income was \$487 per week compared with \$623 in Parramatta (-22%)...and \$1069 in Manly, the Premier's electorate.

- Parramatta is only one Western Sydney centre:, others include Blacktown, Camden, Canterbury-Bankstown, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly.

- Large city centres are generally not located at their geographical centres, especially when they are located by the sea.

City centres are defined by criteria including:

- historical location where the city was established
- where the political powers sit
- where the transport systems (train lines, etc...) converge

- where most cultural facilities (theatres, museums and galleries, etc...) are located
For all these reasons **the City of Sydney is the true centre of....Sydney.**

It is also the destination of choice for regional NSW, interstate and overseas visitors.
Finally if major cultural institutions were to be located at the geographical centre of their cities, the Guggenheim museum would be in a New Jersey suburb rather than Manhattan.

-The Powerhouse Museum and its predecessor, the Technological Museum, have been part of Ultimo since 1893 (127 years).

Many of the objects in the Powerhouse's unique collections are linked to and reflect Ultimo's proud industrial history as a driver of NSW's early economy. Positioned close to Darling Harbour, Ultimo's converted woolsheds and warehouses, as well as the power station that was brilliantly adapted to house the Powerhouse Museum, are daily reminders of the suburb's rich past.

Ultimo residents have a high regard for the museum they visit regularly, often since childhood: we hear frequently from local people who recall happy times there, as children, then as parents, then as grand-parents. They are also deeply attached to the building itself which has been an integral part of the local landscape for decades.

Ultimo and Pymont are among the most densely populated suburbs in Australia and acutely lack open public space (parks, etc...). Residents often live in apartments or small terrace houses with little room for children to play. In this context, regular family visits to the Powerhouse have become part of Ultimo's way of life.

-The Powerhouse has proved an outstanding tourism/visitor attraction, with 500,000+ visitors a year from all parts of Sydney, NSW, interstate and overseas. It makes an important contribution to the local economy, especially restaurants, cafes and pubs.

and remains a valuable resource for students and academics from Tafe, UTS and Sydney University, as well the numerous and high-tech and creative start-ups operating in Ultimo.

- The Government threatens to replace the Powerhouse with "super towers" in an area where there are already too many (increasingly unoccupied) high rise apartment buildings.

(iii) the risks in the move, including damage to collections, cost overruns and the future costs of operations in Parramatta,

1) **Damage to collections:** the Powerhouse collections include half a million objects collected since the end of the 19th century.

- Some items would inevitably be lost, misplaced and/or damaged during the "move". A few very large, rare objects, like the Boulton and Watt steam engine, are both brittle and priceless. In any case **the Boulton and Watt, predicted to be moved to the ground floor of the Parramatta East building, would no longer be steam powered.**

- The Parramatta institution will not have any storage/safekeeping/maintenance facilities and most of the collections will be moved for permanent storage to **a warehouse yet to be designed, budgeted and built, in Castle Hill.** We understand the Government is currently encountering difficulties securing the land for this building.

- Other large objects will be dispersed to small regional museums with often inadequate conservation conditions.

- Since Parramatta will not have any storage capacity, objects will have to be moved, with the same risks as above, between Castle Hill and Parramatta for each new exhibition.

2) **Cost overruns:** With work not yet started, official costs of the “move” have escalated from zero (the sale of the Ultimo site was to pay for the new institution in Parramatta) to a grossly under-estimated \$645 million.

Final costs are estimated to be in excess of \$1.5 billion. This would have been better spent on:

- leaving the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo, clearing the maintenance backlog (estimated cost \$50 million).
- Constructing a world-class museum in Parramatta reflecting its unique heritage and culture, in accordance with Parramattans’ wishes.
- Funding and improving regional museums which are in dire need of adequate Government support.
- **Supporting Arts industry workers currently unemployed and unsupported (close to 200,000 jobs)**

Even with the items above deducted from a \$1.5 billion project cost, there would still be \$ several hundred millions available to support the NSW regional population stricken by drought and bushfires and the NSW economy severely damaged by the current pandemic. **The project that was merely perceived as an enormous error until a year ago has now become a case of criminal mismanagement, giving a deplorable image of a Government totally indifferent to its constituents.**

In addition, we believe that the new pretext presented to us at a recent webinar, that the move should proceed to support NSW post-pandemic economic recovery is fallacious. Diverting the “move” funds as described would create (or help to maintain) at least as many jobs as building “inverted milk crates” on a flood plain. Further a lot of the money would finance small regional businesses rather than a large multi-national construction company.

3) Future cost of operations in Parramatta:

- It is difficult for non-specialists to estimate the running costs of the future institution. This is compounded by the fact that the proposed building is not a museum but a multi-purpose facility (“Carriage Works 2”) that will rely heavily on private ventures.
- Costs of constantly transporting collections items between Parramatta and Castle Hill (see above) will add significantly to the running costs.

[\(iv\) the consequences of flood at the site at Parramatta in light of the flood event in February 2020,](#)

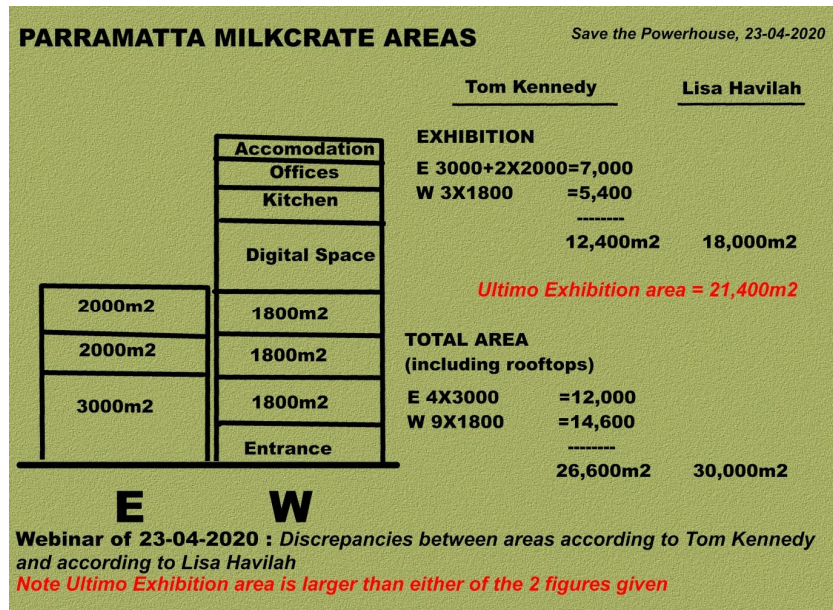
The Riverbank site in Parramatta is:

(a) much smaller than the current Powerhouse Museum site in Ultimo
Ms Havilah’s repeated statements that the Parramatta institution will have more exhibition space than Ultimo are false.

Museums expert Kylie Winkworth has estimated that there will be only 11,500m² of exhibition space in Parramatta (of which only a fraction will meet professional exhibition standards) as opposed to 21,800m² in Ultimo (**ie twice as much**).

	Ultimo	Parramatta
Total Combined Floor Area	42,600m ²	21,500m ²
Exhibition Space	21,800m ²	11,500m ² (*)

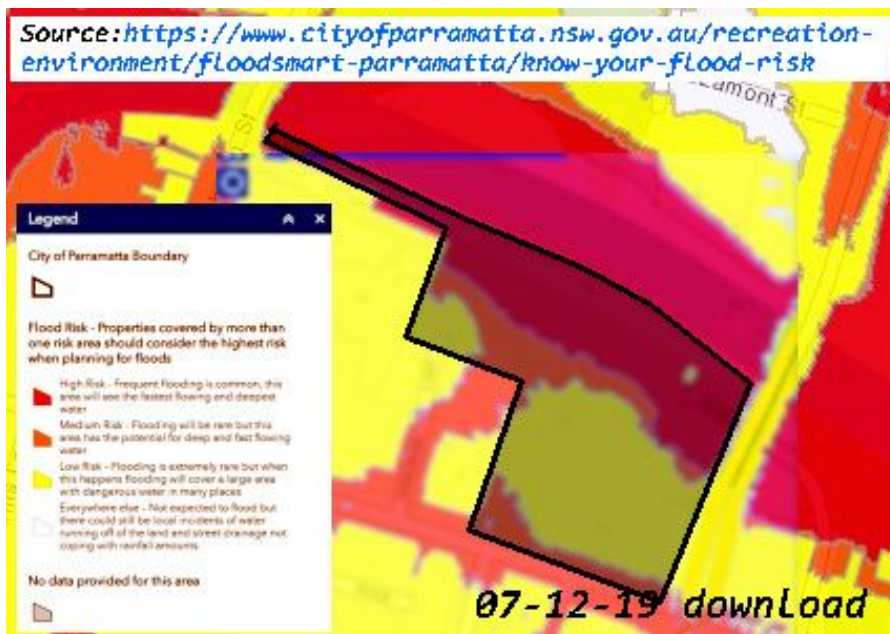
(*) "Parramatta Powerhouse" Project Manager Tom Kennedy estimated the total exhibition area was only 12,400m² during a recent "webinar".



The statement that "the Parramatta museum would be the largest in NSW" would only be true if the Ultimo Powerhouse Museum were demolished.

- (b) contains heritage buildings (see below)
- (c) is located in the flood plain of the Parramatta River

Flooding risks are the most compelling reasons why the Powerhouse Museum should not be relocated to the riverbank site in Parramatta.



Dr John C. Macintosh of Water Solutions Pty Ltd writes in his submission to the 1st Upper House Inquiry <http://tiny.cc/stwfoz> "Potential for LOSS OF LIFE: In considering the above I conclude that locating the PHM at the proposed site would result in visitors to the PHM being exposed to unacceptable flood hazard."

Dr Macintosh is a civil engineer with expertise in flooding, its management and hazard mitigation. He has a PhD in river hydraulics, and decades of experience in water engineering.

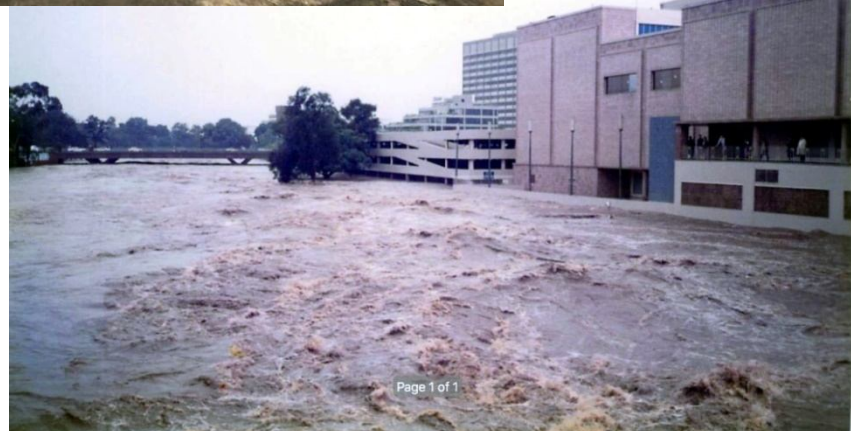


Old David Jones Carpark, Parramatta - June 05, 2016



Parramatta
(date unknown)

Parramatta, 1988



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(v) the impact on the heritage status of the site in Ultimo and heritage items at Willow Grove and the Fleet Street precinct in Parramatta,

1) The impact on the heritage status of the site in Ultimo

We recently objected to the Heritage Council of NSW's "notice of intention to consider listing *Ultimo Tramways Power House* on the State Heritage Register" because

- There is no building under the name "Ultimo Tramways Power House" on the Ultimo Powerhouse Museum site. We therefore question the legal and constitutional validity of the proposed heritage listing for a *fictitious* building, apparently invented to camouflage an underlying intention **TO LIST ONLY THE EXTERIOR SHELL** (without interiors) of the original Power Station building, not the "Powerhouse Museum" as we know and understand it.

- The Powerhouse Museum (ie the former Power Station) is already locally heritage-listed by the City of Sydney (Sydney LEP2012 – item I2031), so this proposal would remove that current protection from the interiors and contents of the museum, effectively "**UNLISTING**" them

- The nomination does NOT include

- the Wran building and galleria, nor the Harwood building (the former tram depot) which have all been part of the Powerhouse Museum complex from 1899 to the present day.

- the rare and historically significant Case gantry cranes in the engine house, or the Goninans of Newcastle gantry crane in the turbine hall

- the Powerhouse's transport and steam power collections which are fundamental both to the concept, adaptation and design of the Powerhouse Museum and its contemporary identity.

- The Powerhouse Museum has won many distinguished design awards for Lionel Glendenning's (principal architect) inspired adaptation of the original power station, including the Sir John Sulman Award for Public Buildings, which was for the whole museum, not just the 1988 Wran building and galleria.

- The nomination has ignored many aspects of the state significance of the Powerhouse Museum, particularly its social values for the people of NSW.

For these reasons, we have strenuously opposed listing *Ultimo Tramways Power House* (?) on the State Heritage Register and instead have urged the Heritage Council of NSW to grant state heritage protection for the entire Powerhouse Museum and its contents and collections.

2) The impact on heritage items at Willow Grove

The new riverbank site at Parramatta includes heritage-listed buildings Willow Grove and St George's Terraces.

Beyond its heritage value, Willow Grove is particularly respected by the local community as a former Parramatta maternity hospital.

Asked in February 2019 whether this building would have to go to make room for the proposed "Powerhouse Parramatta", Premier Gladys Berejiklian replied "We've never said it will go as part of the Powerhouse Museum... We've always said of course **our intention is to save it**" (<http://tiny.cc/q4wfoz>).

This was also confirmed by then Minister for the Arts Don Harwin Interviewed on ABC Breakfast in April 2019: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ro1bdvd186Q&t=10s> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtwJcWjRy5M&t=3s>)

Wendy Harmer "All right then they will be demolished"

Don Harwin "No we haven't said that at all" then

Robbie Buck "...the Australian Historical Society...(is) suggesting these buildings...will be demolished"

Don Harwin “Well I regret to say that **they haven’t done their homework**”

However, when the winning design for the project (Moreau Kusunoki and Genton) was announced the Government revoked repeated promises to preserve Willow Grove and St George’s Terraces.) ABC’s Robbie Buck,(19 Feb, 2020) also revealed that that “*The stage 2 design brief prepared by Create NSW...did not push for the retention of the villa (Willow Grove) but instead urged each designer to consider its removal*” making plain **The Premier and the then Minister for the Arts cynically misled the public.**

It’s ironic that construction of a new so-called cultural institution would start with bulldozing existing culture and heritage buildings, especially given the Premier’s and the former Minister for the Arts’ repeated promises to preserve Willow Gove and Saint George’s Terraces.

3) The impact on the Fleet Street precinct in Parramatta

- The proposed institution does not reflect the fact that **Parramatta is the cradle of modern Australia**. There is no link with the Old Governor House, the Fleet St Precinct (Female Factory, etc...), the Parramatta Gaol, St John’s Cemetery, Elizabeth Farm or the Experiment Farm Cottage.

- At the same time the 30ha Fleet St Precinct, an ideal location for a world class museum genuinely reflecting Parramatta’s culture and heritage is being disfigured by the Light Rail line, jeopardising the precinct’s application for UNESCO Heritage listing.

(vi) the use of the proceeds from the proposed sale of the site in Ultimo,

The \$400 million proceeds (Government estimate) from the proposed sale of the Ultimo site has already been used to reduce the nett cost of the move from \$1,045 million to \$645 million (Government estimates.)

(vii) the Government’s response to the previous recommendations of the Portfolio Committee No. 4 in report 40 entitled “Museums and Galleries in NSW”,

The Government (Don Harwin, 12-07-2019) rejected all findings and recommendations of the 1st Upper House Inquiry, in particular “That the NSW Government NOT proceed with the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum from Ultimo to Parramatta.

Ironically the Government’s project DOES now comply with this recommendation: the Powerhouse Museum will not relocate to Parramatta, as a multi-purpose space is planned instead, but will be destroyed in Ultimo.

(b) the Government’s management of all museums and cultural projects in New South Wales including:

(i) current Government policy, funding and support for museums and galleries across regional New South Wales,

According to Museum expert Kylie Winkworth, the share of arts grants directly funding museums in regional NSW and western Sydney is just 0.67%.

Kylie Winkworth figures, 04 Dec, 2019		Total Funding	Museum Share \$	%
1	Program Funding Grants			
	Museums funded under Program Funding grant category			
	Hawkesbury Regional Museum and Gallery		\$105,000	
	Orange Regional Museum		\$80,000	
	Museum of the Riverina		\$75,000	
	Albury Library Museum		\$45,000	
	Total Program Funding grants	\$18,074,450	\$305,000	1.69%
2	Project Grants category			
	Museums funded under the Project Grants category			
	1 regional partnerships grant to Albury City Council for Aftermath WWI impact on our community		\$74,000	
	Total Project Grants	\$5,896,154	\$74,000	1.26%
3	Professional Development Support grants			
	Museum curators/creators funded		\$0	
	Total Professional Development Support grants	\$1,318,541	\$0	0.00%
4	Strategic Funding grants			
	Museums funded		\$0	
	Total Strategic Funding grants	\$4,128,746	\$0	0.00%
5	Others	\$26,784,008	\$0	0.00%
	Total 2018/19	\$56,201,899	\$379,000	0.67%

(ii) whether there is equitable access to collections across New South Wales, including at the Powerhouse Museum and the Australian Museum,

- Powerhouse Museum

The Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo is centrally located and is easily accessible to regional NSW, interstate and overseas visitors to Sydney.

It is extremely well served by Public Transport with

- The Paddy's Market Light Rail Station close by
- Central Station only a 10mn walk away via the Goodline
- the 501 bus along Harris St

More touring exhibitions should be organised in order to give regional NSW greater access to the collections.

- Australian Museum

The prolonged closure of the Australian Museum and permanent storage of the "Pacific Collections" to enable the Museum to host the 6-month Tutankhamun "blockbuster" exhibition at a cost of \$60 million to the tax payer, is unacceptable.

This exhibition could have been hosted by

- either the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo (but the suitable exhibition space has been rented out to UTS!).
- or by the grossly underused Darling Harbour Exhibition Centre.

Note: the Tutankhamun exhibition was hosted in exhibition spaces (not museums!) in Los Angeles and Paris and no alterations or additions were necessary.



(iii) whether comprehensive consultations with communities and experts has informed cultural policy and projects across New South Wales, such as that applying to heritage arms and armour collections,

We are not qualified to comment

(iv) the continuing impact of the efficiency dividend on the budget of museums and galleries over the last 10 years,

The continuous shrinking of the Powerhouse Museum funding by the Government has resulted in large and damaging specialised staff cuts

(v) funding levels for museums and galleries in New South Wales compared with other states,

We are not qualified to comment

(vi) whether there are other more cost effective strategies than the sale of the Powerhouse Museum site at Ultimo to support museum development across New South Wales, including consideration of the new Parramatta site and the proposed standalone Western Sydney Museum at the Cumberland Hospital site,

Refer to our comments above

(c) any other related matter.

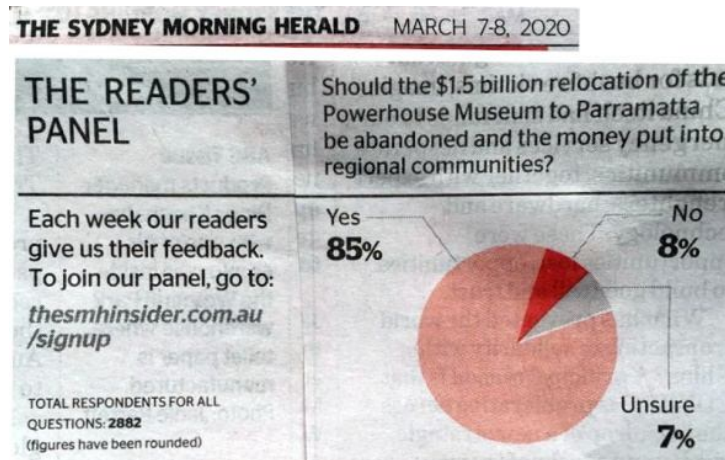
N/A

CONCLUSION

- The “move” of the Powerhouse Museum from Ultimo to Parramatta is not a “move”, the proposed Parramatta facilities appear unrelated to the Powerhouse and do not constitute a museum.

- The “move” will result in the permanent destruction of a time-honoured institution and storage of its priceless collections.

- the “move” is extremely unpopular in Inner Sydney and Parramatta, across NSW, interstate and overseas.



- the project has been grossly mismanaged, continuously veiled in secrecy and five years after its announcement is still without a vision.

- the extravagant \$1.5 billion cost of the move could be put to much better use, in supporting the Arts sector devastated by the current lockdown (Re: recent CarriageWorks debacle).

Save the Powerhouse

 **Savethepowerhouse**