

Submission
No 130

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 17 May 2020

Partially
Confidential

Dear Select Committee,

I wish to voice my grave concerns regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Power House Museum into the new location and building in Parramatta.

The key areas of my concern are:

- The loss of outstanding heritage assets in the proposed location is completely unacceptable. These are heritage assets owned by the people and not to be destroyed on the whim of a particular government. The elegant 1870's Willow Grove Italianate House and St George's Terrace must be retained as symbols of our journey to the country we have become. This government appears to be developing a very concerning 'disposable' attitude towards built and environmental heritage in this city and state. It is unacceptable - we must not destroy these outstanding buildings to erect the new Power House Museum. It is not progress if we destroy these valuable heritage assets in the process of making the proposed shiny new thing. An alternate site is required if the government proposes to continue with the project of a museum for Parramatta.
- What will happen to the existing site of the Power House Museum - this is currently unclear and needs to be made transparent by the government.
- Given there is a huge collection at the current Ultimo location what will happen with these exhibits and may they be in fact damaged in this process - or even not displayed in the new proposed location?
- What is the primary purpose of the new museum - is it to serve the people or create a shiny new emblem for the current government with the use of exorbitant tax payer funds. Is it more a tourist attraction rather than a valuable long term asset of the people.

Whilst the need to provide museums of world standard in Western Sydney or Parramatta precinct for the benefit of future generations is not to be dismissed, I am deeply concerned by the current government's approach to our museums and heritage buildings and landscape. The current state government appears to not want to own any state heritage buildings having sold off the Lands Building in Macquarie Street rather than using this as a museum. (Let alone the sale of the Land Titles Office which was a travesty for the people of NSW).

We need a rigorous assessment of the proposal for a new museum in Parramatta and also if the current proposal is at all viable based on:

- Cost of the project / versus retaining the existing museum
- Feasibility - flood plain issues
- Loss of heritage involved in this particular site should mean the site is unacceptable
- Loss of existing Ultimo site - if this is simply to be sold to a developer rather than retained and used in an appropriate manner as a state owned asset.

Thank you for pursuing this matter on behalf of the people of NSW.

Kind regards,