

Submission  
No 143

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

**Organisation:** The International Committee for the Conservation of the  
Industrial Heritage

**Date Received:** 17 June 2020

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# The International Committee on the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage



The Hon. Robert Borsak, MLC  
Chair, Select Committee on the Government's Management of the Powerhouse Museum  
Parliament House, Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000, AUSTRALIA

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17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Chair,

**Powerhouse Museum, Sydney**

I write today as the President of *The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage* (TICCIH), the primary international organisation concerned with industrial heritage. Among our many activities, we support UNESCO's advisors, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and its work for the World Heritage Committee.

Our expertise, advice and extensive global network has for many years embraced the world's most significant industrial museums, and in this respect, we are aware of the importance and international reputation of the Powerhouse Museum, including the iconic Boulton & Watt engine and the associated steam exhibition. With this in mind, we were both astonished and alarmed to hear of the proposals to relocate the Museum, moving it from the current highly accessible and symbolic Ultimo site in centre of the city to a comparatively isolated, flood-prone location at Parramatta 25km away. The fact that this would also result in the destruction of two listed heritage properties is also hugely disappointing, and casts doubt on the sustainability of the project at a time when Climate Change is a growing national and international issue.

The TICCIH Board recognises the value and importance of our industrial history and its associated technologies as a central component of our cultural heritage, and acknowledges the value it brings both to communities and to technical education, especially in the context of the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and the survival of traditional skills. Our experience demonstrates the value of maintaining our industrial heritage at the heart of our communities and at the core of our museums' portfolios, and we are convinced the Powerhouse Museum has the potential to continue and enhance this role at its current location close to the centre of Sydney.

On behalf of my fellow Board Members, I therefore urge you to do everything in your power to facilitate a review of and then reverse the proposed move to Parramatta, which we believe will devalue, diminish and marginalise a hugely important cultural and educational asset.

If you wish to discuss the issue directly, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**PRESIDENT: Dr Miles Oglethorpe, Historic Environment Scotland, Edinburgh EH9 1SH, Scotland, UK**

**SECRETARY GENERAL: Dr Marion Steiner, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, [secretary@ticcih.org](mailto:secretary@ticcih.org)**

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