

**REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT  
OF THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM AND OTHER MUSEUMS AND  
CULTURAL PROJECTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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

**UNCORRECTED**

**At Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney on Monday, 15 February 2021**

**The Committee met at 9:15 am**

**PRESENT**

The Hon. Robert Borsak (Chair)  
The Hon. Ben Franklin  
The Hon. Rose Jackson  
The Hon. Trevor Khan  
The Hon. Taylor Martin  
The Hon. Walt Secord  
Mr David Shoebridge (Deputy Chair)



**The CHAIR:** Welcome to the fifth hearing of the Select Committee on the Government's management of the Powerhouse Museum and other museums and cultural projects in New South Wales. The inquiry is examining issues surrounding the Government's proposal for the Powerhouse Museum and support for the State's museums and cultural sector more broadly. Before I commence, I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders past and present of the Eora nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginals present.

This morning we will hear from Government witnesses from the arts and infrastructure portfolios, including the Hon. Don Harwin, MLC, followed by the chairman of Western Sydney Powerhouse Museum Community Alliance. After lunch we will hear evidence from the CFMMEU, a flood expert and a Parramatta councillor. Before we commence I would like to make some brief comments about the procedures for today's hearing.

Today's hearing is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. A transcript of today's hearing will be placed on the Committee's website when it becomes available. In accordance with broadcasting guidelines, media representatives are reminded that they must take responsibility for what they publish about the Committee's proceedings. It is important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to what witnesses may say outside their evidence at the hearing, and so I urge witnesses to be careful about any comments they may make to the media or to others after they complete their evidence as such comments would not be protected by parliamentary privilege if another person decides to take an action for defamation. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available from the secretariat.

All witnesses have a right to procedural fairness in accordance with the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House in 2018. There may be some questions that a witness could only answer if they had more time or with certain documents to hand. In those circumstances, witnesses are advised that they can take a question on notice and provide an answer within 21 days. I remind everyone here today that committee hearings are not intended to provide a forum for people to make adverse reflections about others under the protection of parliamentary privilege. I therefore request that witnesses focus on the issues raised by the inquiry's terms of reference and avoid naming individuals unnecessarily. Witnesses are advised that any messages should be delivered to Committee members through the Committee staff. To aid in the audibility of this hearing, may I remind both Committee members and witnesses to speak into their microphone.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN**, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs and the Arts, before the Committee

**SIMON DRAPER**, Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure NSW, on former affirmation

**KATE FOY**, Deputy Secretary, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet, on former affirmation

**The CHAIR:** I now welcome our first witnesses. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament. Similarly, Ms Foy and Mr Draper have both already been sworn for this inquiry. Would you like to start by making a short opening statement?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** As I have, of course, appeared before the Committee in late July, I will try to keep my remarks brief, although that there have been one or two things that the Committee should be brought up to date with since then. Obviously it is now a matter of record that the Minister for Planning approved this State significant development [SSD] application for the Powerhouse at Parramatta. It is now moving into its delivery stage, and indeed some very preliminary work commenced on the site at 7.30 this morning. In the immediate term, the project is going to create 4,000 jobs and it is going to inject hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy that will really help the State power through the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. When it is complete, it is projected to attract two million visitors each year to Parramatta, injecting millions into western Sydney. Also—and this is important—up to 10,000 regional students will come to stay at the museum every year through the academy program, and that is very significant also for school students right across regional New South Wales, who will have that capacity for the first time in one of our cultural institutions.

With a focus on science and technology, Powerhouse Parramatta will be the museum's flagship and an incredible opportunity for the community to engage with the revered Powerhouse collection. And really our Government's commitment to cultural infrastructure is without recent precedent, and we are absolutely committed to this once-in-a-generation investment in our cultural infrastructure. I would remind the Committee that already the Powerhouse is operating on three sites, including the Powerhouse at Ultimo, the museum's Discovery Centre at Castle Hill, and also the Sydney Observatory. The total net New South Wales Government capital contribution to Powerhouse Parramatta and the expansion of the museum's Discovery Centre is \$840 million. This is proof that the New South Wales Government remains absolutely committed to establishing an iconic, vibrant, interactive world-class cultural institution in Parramatta to further grow and promote an accessible and diverse arts and cultural environment across western Sydney.

Regarding Willow Grove, I note that throughout the planning process at our previous hearings of the Committee some have raised concerns. I would like to remind the Committee that the selected design from the design excellence process did not retain the locally listed Willow Grove building. I would also like to remind the Committee that Willow Grove has over many years had many additions and alterations. It does not reflect its original State. However, in response to the concerns of the community, we have committed to relocating Willow Grove to another area within the Parramatta local government area. While it cannot be retained on site, we will retain Willow Grove and return it to the community and protect it for future generations.

This decision is about getting the best possible outcome for the western Sydney community. It is a balance between delivering western Sydney a world-class cultural institution and retaining much-loved heritage items. Relocation will allow the building to be more accessible to the local community to use it, and it will allow western Sydney to realise its long-awaited cultural institution with a high quality design, one that western Sydney deserves. The dismantling of Willow Grove is subject to details and conditions of consent. The dismantling will be supervised by a qualified heritage consultant, and the future use of Willow Grove will be subject to community consultation and planning approvals. The cost of the proposed relocation will be confirmed once further planning work is completed. We have been able to retain the original aspects of St George's Terrace in place, and are working through how to best integrate them into the operations of the new museum, if that is what the community wants. The opportunity for the Powerhouse Parramatta to harness this growth to contribute to the greater productivity and livability of western Sydney more broadly is truly transformational.

On 4 July last year I was absolutely delighted to announce with the Treasurer that the New South Wales Government is committed to keeping the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo open. It is a decision I am sure that this Committee welcomes. The decision to retain and renew Ultimo, in addition to establishing the new flagship at Parramatta, will allow us to provide two world-class museums for the communities of New South Wales and significantly increase access to an exhibition of the internationally renowned collections of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Trust. The final business case investigating a range of options for Powerhouse Ultimo

was completed at the end of 2020 and is currently under consideration by the Government, going through all of the normal processes that I have outlined to the House, and which I am sure Committee members are familiar with, that are required in any of these sorts of projects before an investment decision is made.

The New South Wales Government is committed to retaining the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo as part of a creative industries precinct. Retaining this site as a creative industries precinct is critical to cementing Sydney's reputation as Australia's cultural capital, while investing in one of the fastest growing economic sectors in this State. The New South Wales Government has developed a high-level, precinct-based master plan for the site, in collaboration with the Powerhouse, that has informed the final business case. This master plan fully engages with the precinct surrounding the site and ensures that it remains at the centre of Ultimo's future. Throughout the process, a variety of options have been investigated through consultation with the cultural and creative industries, including several curatorial and master planning workshops to inform a decision on the best use of the site.

In closing, I am proud of the decision to build the western Sydney fit-for-purpose, iconic museum. I am proud of our record cultural infrastructure spend, particularly in these challenging times when the State needs economic stimulus. Two world-class museums in Parramatta and Ultimo will provide a significant boost for the cultural and tourism sectors in New South Wales and it is a great outcome for New South Wales. I will just make one final point that, unlike previous hearings, Lisa Havilah is appearing separately. So some of the matters on which she is more able to help you than I am or Ms Foy or Mr Draper, we will suggest that you ask her as she immediately follows us.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You mentioned in your opening statement that you were proud of the Powerhouse. If you are so proud of the Powerhouse decision and announcements, why did you sneak out the announcement late Friday afternoon and refuse to do interviews all weekend about this matter?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** That is just simply nonsense. I did not sneak anything out. Minister Stokes is the person who makes decisions on State significant development applications, not me. The timing was a matter for him, not me.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It was approved, according to the website, signed by the Minister on 11 February. A project that will cost between \$840 million and \$1.5 billion, and the Government does not even issue a press release? It is only brought to the community's attention by the community groups?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With respect, Mr Secord, if you check, you will find out the press release was issued by Minister Stokes, which had comment in it from me and also from the member for Parramatta, Dr Geoff Lee.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It was brought to the community's attention by the community groups. If you are so proud of this project—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I am sorry, that is just not true. I made the point in response. The Government did make an announcement last Friday.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** At 5.45 in the afternoon—very late in the afternoon. Sneak it out on a late Friday afternoon. I thought that you would be trumpeting this announcement from the rooftops if you were so proud of it.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** As I said, if you have any further questions about that, you should refer them to Minister Stokes. It was his decision when it was announced, not mine.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Did you ask him whether you two might do a stand up together so that you had the opportunity of talking to the media? When he said, "Minister Harwin, would you like to have comment in my press release?", did you say, "Jeez, it's quite late on a Friday, Minister Stokes, perhaps we might find a more opportune time to promote this announcement of which we are so proud"?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With great respect, Ms Jackson, I have done many, many, many media conferences on this project. It was a development application [DA]. I am pleased it is over. It is going ahead. I was in Parramatta and talking to the media in Parramatta just the week before last. It is just gross exaggeration. It is more a reflection, frankly, on how Labor work—that that is your priority in the first questions you are asking.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It is about scrutiny, Minister.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With great respect, having a press conference is not about scrutiny. Scrutiny is about me fronting up and answering whatever questions you want asked today, and so far all you are asking me about is media strategy, which I just find extraordinary.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** All we get from you when we ask questions is referral to other people. We ask about this announcement—"Ask Minister Stokes". In our July hearing we said the announcement in which the Ultimo site was being kept—"Ask Minister Perrottet." When are you going to be able to answer any questions about the decisions on this project?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Rose, don't be silly. I have been at hearings of this Committee on at least four occasions answering questions on them. I answer them at estimates, I answer them in Parliament, I answer them all the time.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, you hid all weekend and when you had media inquiries yesterday, you referred them to Infrastructure NSW.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With great respect, Walt, I am a resident of country New South Wales. I was not in Sydney. I also had on Friday things that I needed to do in Newcastle, so I was not available. On Saturday I had to do the Blake Prize out at Casula Powerhouse. Over the weekend it was my mother's eighty-third birthday. She is not in good health and I wanted to spend time with her. That was my decision.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, putting aside your mother—and I extend any sympathies or any concerns about your mother—but this is a \$1.5 billion project. I would expect the Minister would be out there in the community explaining it, trumpeting it from the rooftops, not slipping it out on a Friday afternoon and then hiding from the media all weekend.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I have answered that question, Walt. I reject your characterisation of it and I might also say you are trying to slip in the \$1.5 billion figure again—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Let us go down this track. What is—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —which is wrong. I have repeatedly answered questions. The net contribution that the Government will be making to this project is, as I said in my opening statement—I have already addressed it—\$840 million.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** That figure of \$840 million, does that change with the 188 conditions attached to the project on Friday afternoon? How does that affect the funding of the project?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Eight hundred and forty million dollars is the amount that the Expenditure Review Committee [ERC] of Cabinet has said that I have to spend on this project. No doubt, of course, Infrastructure NSW will consider those conditions very carefully and if it has any comment to make in that respect, it will give me advice. Mr Draper, is there anything you would like to add at this stage?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Draper, the 188 conditions added, how does that affect the Government's claim of \$840 million for the project? Does that change the cost of the project?

**Mr DRAPER:** I think our initial assessment would be that they would have no impact on the cost of building the project, those conditions.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** One hundred and eighty-eight new conditions on the project. What is the costs of the relocation of Willow Grove, or the demolition of Willow Grove, or the dismantling of Willow Grove? What is the cost? We have heard \$10 million to \$20 million. What is the cost?

**Mr DRAPER:** You have not heard those numbers from us or from anybody else who is familiar with the project. I suspect those are numbers that have been speculated by other people. The cost of relocating Willow Grove will be known once we complete the methodology plan that we are required to complete under the conditions. Then we go to tender. We get the price for that from builders who are firstly going to dismantle and store and then secondly reconstruct at a new location. There is quite a lot of work to be done. That relocation is included in the conditions, but it was something that we offered to the department. It was not something new. It was something that we proposed in our response to submissions. That is not a change that has come out that would affect the cost of the project.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You are at Infrastructure NSW. The Government has publicly committed to dismantling, demolishing or relocating Willow Grove. Did you tick off on the processes behind that decision?

**Mr DRAPER:** I do not understand the question.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What I am trying to get to is that you must have done some calculations on the cost. What will be the cost to dismantle, relocate or demolish Willow Grove? You must know.

**Mr DRAPER:** I think what I have just said answers your question. That is we will know accurately the cost of that process when we have gone through the process of finalising a methodology plan, which the conditions

of consent require us to do before any works are done on Willow Grove. That has to be approved by the secretary of the department of planning before we can do any works at all on Willow Grove. That is a very involved process. We have to then appoint builders. We have to work through that process. And we have to know where it will be relocated to in the long term. That will take some time. I just want to put this in context. Infrastructure NSW advised the Government—and the Government has adopted this policy—that we do not make premature announcements about costs and timetables for projects before they are advanced enough to do so. That is just counterproductive. It is counterproductive for project teams; it is counterproductive for the construction industry; and—to be absolutely honest—it is counterproductive for the community, who then gets incorrect information when things are announced far too early.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** But it is also counterproductive for accountability. If you cannot give us even a rough figure as to how much this component of the project is going to cost, how can we hold the Government accountable if that rough figure doubles or triples or more? If we have no idea how much that is going to cost, how can we hold the Government accountable to ensure that it is being done efficiently and effectively?

**Mr DRAPER:** Because the Government has announced the budget for the whole project. Anything we do on the relocation works for Willow Grove needs to operate within that budget.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** So you are guaranteeing that the dismantling, the relocation, whatever happens to Willow Grove will be entirely contained within the \$840 million envelope for the Parramatta Powerhouse project.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With respect, I have already said that today in this hearing and previously.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** As you have said, there are a lot of unknowns. You have not done the scoping studies, you do not even know the site to which it is going to go. There are a lot of things that are unknown. What if the cost of that ends up being very considerable? What if the cost of that component ends up being within tens of millions of dollars, which is quite possible? How will that affect other elements of the project?

**Mr DRAPER:** We are not saying it will affect other elements of the project at all. Obviously, when we develop a project design, we operate with a contingency. We know that there are going to be things that happen in the course of implementing a project and that cannot be foreseen in the design process. So we operate with contingencies, and we expect to be able to absorb those costs within any contingencies we hold for the project.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What is the contingency?

**The CHAIR:** Can I ask a question about the budget? The Minister said, was it, \$828 million—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, \$840 million is the net Government contribution to the project that ERC decided upon.

**The CHAIR:** Can you tell us what contributions came in and how it all ends up at \$840 million?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes. The approved capital investment is \$840 million. Then we are spending an additional \$5 million which is related, which is the Ultimo business case—although that is not, strictly speaking, Parramatta. Then on top of the \$840 million, there will be a philanthropy contribution of \$75 million, which makes in total a cost of \$915 million. That is the total capital budget.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much of the \$75 million of philanthropic donations has been received to date?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** In terms of received—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** In the bank.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** None of it is in the bank yet, but they are making excellent progress.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Was the call for philanthropic donations not announced at the end of 2019? I have multiple media reports from 2019, if that is any help.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes. I am entirely comfortable with the progress that is being made. Progress is being made very quickly on this.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The call for philanthropic donations is now about a year and a half old. You want to get \$75 million, and you have not got one single cent. How can you say that is going well?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** What you seem to ignore and what you seem to be overlooking is the record that the Arts portfolio has in terms of obtaining philanthropic support for its cultural program.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, I want to finish this. Our credibility is extremely strong on this. We have completed the Walsh Bay Wharf 4/5 project with 100 per cent of the philanthropic targets met. The Wharf 2/3 project is going ahead, with the targets proceeding as planned. Over \$100 million has been pledged for Sydney Modern, and it is coming in. When we say we are going to do this, we do this. And when I say that I am comfortable with the progress that is being made, I know what I am talking about. I have every reason to be confident about how that is going.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You acknowledge that not a single dollar has been paid into an account yet, Minister?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** But that is different to pledges, surely. That does not mean that nothing has happened.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How much has been pledged?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I am going to get to that. Minister, you acknowledge that not a single dollar has been paid in?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I have absolutely no intention of making premature remarks about the philanthropic campaign until we are ready. We have a strategy. I could also talk about the enormous amount of—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Your own Government members are asking how much has been pledged, so I will ask again. How much has been pledged?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** No, that is not what I was asking.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Franklin is saying it. Tell us about the pledging.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I was explaining the difference between money in the bank and pledges, which you obviously do not understand.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Tell us about the pledging.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Stop lying, David. Stop lying about what Ben Franklin just said.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Tell us about the pledging. How much?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I am telling you. I have told you about Walsh Bay; I have told you about the art gallery. I could now tell you about the State Library.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But this is a Powerhouse inquiry.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I could then proceed to tell you about the Australian Museum. Even the National Art School is now well and truly into fundraising.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But this is a Powerhouse inquiry. How much has been pledged?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I will make an announcement on that when I am ready to make an announcement. I am very comfortable with how it is going.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** We want to be very comfortable. So could you give us any more information about any work—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** You say you have a strategy. What is the strategy?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** There is a team at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences trust that is working on this and has been working all year to identify donors. There are a number of them. And I can assure you we are making extremely good progress.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** We may have some further questions of Ms Havilah and Mr Collins in that regard. Minister, first of all I acknowledge everyone has family issues on the weekend. I am not going to take issue with you doing that. I was also late this morning because of family issues. It happens to all of us. I accept your explanation. Can I ask you about the actual building cost. Previous business cases had put the building costs of the Parramatta project at about \$1.17 billion. You are now putting to us that it can all be done in an envelope of \$915 million. How has it become cheaper?



**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I will invite Mr Draper to talk about that. The current total capital budget is as I described it. That is what I have been advised. Simon, is there anything you want to add? I might say there have been so many figures bandied around. Sometimes it is better just to go to the source of truth, which is Mr Draper.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Just to be clear, so Mr Draper knows where I am getting this from, it is from the 2018 economic analysis produced, I think, by both your department and Infrastructure NSW, and it had the cost at \$1.17 billion.

**Mr DRAPER:** We have got a scope of works that fits within the budget that we have been given, which is the budget that the Minister has outlined just earlier this morning. This is a project with a very long history and, as the Minister said, all sorts of numbers have been flagged at different times for different scopes of works. The project that has just been through a planning consent process, which has been—and as Ms Jackson was saying, this is very open; this is very transparent—through a lengthy planning process. The design and the scope that has been on exhibition and has now been approved by the Minister is designed to work within the budget that the Minister has outlined. I cannot really comment on those earlier figures or the scope that—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Perhaps the difference—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** David, I might be able to help you with one aspect of your question. You have quoted from a 2018 report.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I was going to ask whether or not it includes costs in addition to capital.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The 2018 report was before the design competition commenced and was more than 12 months before the winning design was announced. Infrastructure NSW only assumed responsibility for the project in December 2019, so whatever costings you may be referring to from 2018 was pre-design and goes back to the exact point that Mr Draper was making earlier about figures given too early. Until you have a design and until you have done some of the work that follows a design, you are really in no position to be able to make a statement about the total capital investment budget for a project. Now you might come up with an estimate, but really in this case the figure is what it is and that is how we are delivering it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** When the design went out, were they given the budget? Were they told "You have to design a project within this budget" or is it just sort of a magical symmetry between the design competition and the budget?

**Mr DRAPER:** I was not involved in the design competition, but what I understand they were given was the budget in terms of the space allocation, so how big the building needed to be. So we had a budget around the size of the building because the Government had made public commitments around that. So they were given a brief that went along those lines. But to be absolutely honest, should a group of architects come in and tell us how much a building is going to cost, we probably would want to double-check that in any case.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So are you saying that you have some kind of assessment that the design that has got planning approval will fit within this capital budget of \$915 million? Have you got that assessment somewhere?

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Where?

**Mr DRAPER:** That is how we have built up our internal budgets. What do you mean by "Where is it?"

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Show me the document, the assessment, the analysis that says that that can be built for \$915 million. Where is it?

**Mr DRAPER:** We clearly have not published that; we are in the middle of a tender process with a number of builders. We are not in the habit then of publishing our detailed costs breakdown when we are in a highly sensitive commercial process with building contractors.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The \$915 million is just the capital works. Is that right?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Capital investment.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Capital works.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** If you are asking, is that the cost of actually building the building? It is more than just building the building. It is the cost of the project including what precedes, if you like, the building

of the building and then what follows that, which is the commissioning of the museum and the work that is done inside the museum by the museum. Am I right, Simon?

**Mr DRAPER:** That is correct, yes.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I thought you said capital investment.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Sorry?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The figure you gave—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Was the Government capital investment.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** —was \$915 million in capital investment.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I assume that includes all the consultants that have been paid to date.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes.

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes, that is correct.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Sorry, I will let Mr Draper answer.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much has been paid to date to consultants?

**Mr DRAPER:** When you say "consultants" we are really talking about architects and engineers and those sorts of participants, planning advisers, people who do specialist reports for the environmental impact statement [EIS] process, et cetera. Up until the end of December, about \$20 million—or Infrastructure NSW has spent that amount. There may have been other amounts spent previously.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But Infrastructure NSW only came on in December of last year and you have already spent \$20 million on consultants.

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes, and in that time frame we have done the detailed investigation and design of a large complex building and run a very exhaustive consultation and planning approval process. So that is not surprising at all for a building of that scale.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, \$20 million has been spent on consultants since December of last year to now. How much was spent in the years before that on consultants and is that part of the capital investment figure?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Just a minute, I will just seek the advice. I have been advised by my Deputy Secretary that between mid-2017, which was the point where we effectively got the permission to proceed by ERC, and November 2020, which would also therefore include the costs that Mr Draper has just been referring to, the approximate cost is \$25.7 million in total.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Sorry, is that \$25.7 million from your department?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, that includes the Infrastructure NSW expense. That is the figure that I have been given by the Deputy Secretary.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much of the Infrastructure NSW \$20 million consultants have happened since November 2020, Mr Draper?

**Mr DRAPER:** My figure was at the end of December, so I would imagine it would be quite a small amount. I have not got that number to hand, Mr Shoebridge.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Perhaps if you could just give us on notice the updated figures to now, Mr Draper.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Perhaps, David, it might be best if we take that on notice and give you a more precise figure.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Yes, if you both could, that would be good.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** But, in terms of what you have got, you have got the broadbrush picture.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** On the relocation costs, the different estimates that have been provided by museum experts and collection experts have put the relocation costs at astronomical figures.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Of Willow Grove, you mean.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What is your assessment of the relocation costs and is that included in the \$915 million?

**Mr DRAPER:** Just to clarify, are you talking about the relocation of Willow Grove or the relocation of the collection?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I am talking about the collection. We will do Willow Grove separately.

**Mr DRAPER:** Okay.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It would be appropriate that we take that on notice at the moment.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is not included in the capital investment, though, is it?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes, it is.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So if the relocation costs are \$20 million, \$50 million, \$100 million, the museum just keeps getting smaller and smaller and smaller.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, David. All of the—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** As Willow Grove costs increase, the museum gets smaller and smaller and smaller. You cannot keep taking from the same pie, Minister.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** We are not taking from the same pie. It was all included from day one and that is why I stick to what I say—

**The CHAIR:** It is the magic pudding.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —which is that the net cost to government of building the Powerhouse Museum, including things such as the collection move and the money that has been spent on the Ultimo business case, will not exceed \$840 million.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** With respect, Minister, it was not all included from day one because the relocation of Willow Grove, for example, which is potentially going to cost tens of millions of dollars—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I accept that, Rose.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** —is within the \$840 million envelope and was a very recent inclusion in the project.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Thank you. I accept that, Rose. I have already [audio malfunction] in relation to St George's Terrace but that matter has been covered earlier by Mr Draper.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, are you confident that all concerns about flooding have been taken into consideration at the Parramatta site?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What do you base that on?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Based on the fact that the State significant development approval has been given.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I will take you to that approval. It seems that the planning department does not share your views.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I do not think that characterisation is fair, Mr Secord.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I will read to you recommendation E32 which states:

Prior occupation and commencement of the use of the development, a suitably qualified consultant is to undertake a detailed flood damages assessment to assess the likely intangible and tangible damages for the museum / museum collection across the full range of flood events.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Could you give us the number of the condition again?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** E32—it was one of the 188 recommendations.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Just so that Mr Draper is clear about which one you are talking about.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It continues:

The assessment will review the acceptable probability of loss or damage to categories of Museum contents by the curators, taking into account their various values.

How much?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I have been given a high level briefing on the conditions of consent by Infrastructure NSW and the museum director.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Was flooding included in that brief?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It is obviously a large project. There are detailed conditions of consent, but the feeling of both Infrastructure NSW and the museum is that many, or most, of the conditions are exactly the sort of conditions that you would expect for a project of this nature and they are comfortable with them. But I will invite Mr Draper to respond specifically to the matter you have raised.

**Mr DRAPER:** Thank you, Minister. Thanks, Mr Secord. That condition is really quite standard, so what they are saying there is, when you go through a planning process, first you get a planning consent then you get a construction certificate which allows you to commence construction and then before you occupy the building, further requirements. All along the way there are requirements of producing more information for the planning department before you can get an approval to occupy the building. That condition goes to the occupancy certificate and deals with the question of how the building will be operated, how the exhibits will be protected and exhibited at the time. That is something we cannot know right now as we are building the building. This is something that the occupiers of the building and the operators of the building will have to produce at that time.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Draper, I put it to you that it is not standard. It is very specific. It talks about the museum contents. It talks about employing a consultant to assess that.

**Mr DRAPER:** It is very standard for a—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What? A museum built on a flood plain?

**Mr DRAPER:** —building to be approved without really there being any concerns about the inherent nature of the building. It is very standard for the planning conditions to include steps to be taken during the course of the construction process and prior to occupancy. That is very standard.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Is it true there will be levels of the museum that will be unoccupied because of flood possibilities?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** If I may, Chair, I will just contribute first to that and then if Mr Draper wants to add, he is of course most welcome to. There have been reports along the lines that you have suggested; they are untrue. The only part of the building which is referred to in that way is the undercroft. The undercroft was designed specifically as a measure to assist in the management of floods.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What is "undercroft"?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The undercroft.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What does "undercroft" mean?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I will let Mr Draper remark upon that in supplementary answers, if you like. But let me be clear, those comments did not relate to any of the exhibition spaces—none of them. It was to the undercroft and the undercroft is something that is—Mr Draper will do better at this than I will, but undercrofts are generally part of a design literally to help with the management of inundation of waters.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So flooding.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It is very common in buildings. In fact, there was a house for sale recently in my village that had an undercroft specifically for that purpose. Anyway, Mr Draper?

**Mr DRAPER:** That is correct, Minister. To answer your question directly, there is no part of the museum that has been found to be unsuitable for occupation for those reasons. The undercroft is a structure that we have designed in the development because the formation of the landscaping along the riverbank, if you like, cannot result in waters backing up in the course of a river flood event.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It is to protect the whole valley.

**Mr DRAPER:** That would affect the neighbours—people further upstream—from the river. So that is designed to allow the water to flow through that part of the riverbank, as it does today. We did think, "Well, we are building a structure there to allow that to happen. Wouldn't it be nice to make that available for other uses in the community?" Now, others have said that is not really something they would advise; we accept that. But that

was a secondary idea; a primary idea was to ensure that it was a flood mitigation measure to prevent flooding upstream from the riverbank.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** How much of the \$915 million that you are putting forward as the figure will go towards flood mitigation and flood-related activity?

**Mr DRAPER:** I do not have a breakdown; I do not think we could even get a breakdown from the way we construct our costings. It is just a standard part of the construction process in any site—that you have to manage flows of water whether it is river flooding, in this case, or potentially overland flows of flooding. Any construction site includes allowances for that.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Does a figure exist on the impact in flood mitigation measures in your budget?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Sorry, I think you will have to re-ask that, Walt.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I guess what I am trying to do is that if you do not have a figure at your fingertips involving the costs of flood mitigation, flood prevention or flood response, can you take it on notice and provide it to the Committee?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I think what Mr Draper said—correct me if I am wrong—is that literally the whole building has been designed to ensure there are no flood impacts. To actually identify any particular dollars is probably a bit—

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes, it is just inherent to the design of the site.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** That is the way the building is designed to make sure there is no problem.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** If you do not mind, can you take it on notice to see if in fact there are figures or data that relate to flood mitigation at the site?

**Mr DRAPER:** I am happy to take it on notice.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is not in a neutral context, Mr Draper. You would be aware that the detailed report by Steven Molino, the most pre-eminent flood expert for the Parramatta catchment and particularly the CBD, pointed out the initial proposed plans were deeply hazardous; that the undercroft was a gathering area for the community; it was going to flood; there was no way out; there was a risk to life and limb as a result of the original design. There were concerns about the scale of the building blocking floodwaters moving down into the river making escape routes impassable. These were very real concerns. I assume it has cost something to redesign to fix those, or have they not been fixed?

**Mr DRAPER:** I think the primary change that has happened for the design for the undercroft is that it will not be made available to the public. Originally, we had intended it to be an open area so that people could enter and egress at will, as they can on the rest of the riverbank, but the concerns of Mr Molino and people in the planning department and others has resulted in the idea that that will now be enclosed with a screen so that people cannot go into the undercroft. That is the only change that has happened since then.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So it will be an empty, neutral space confronting the riverfront.

**Mr DRAPER:** I am not sure what you mean by "empty, neutral space", but it will be a structure that is built—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It will be an undercroft.

**Mr DRAPER:** —and it will have a screen around it. I am sure it will look much better than the council car park that is there today. It will be done as part of the landscaping plan that has been set up for the riverfront.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What about the narrow egress on the western side of the site which Mr Molino said was prone to potential major flooding, particularly if the two drainage pipes that are proposed as the major flood solution get blocked? As you know, you should assume they will get blocked in a major flooding event. What have you done to address that dangerous escape route?

**Mr DRAPER:** You are referring now to overland flow flood events.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Correct.

**Mr DRAPER:** At the moment the floodwaters go either side, east and west of the site, and that is what would happen in the event of the Powerhouse being completed as well, so there will be no real change there. Dirrbarri Lane, I think you are referring to, is already a place where overland flows pass through that site. There

will be no worsening of that effect as a result of the construction of the Powerhouse. Mr Molino did advocate, and the council also advocates, assuming that all the underground drainage systems are blocked. So that is something that is quite unusual. It is a very conservative assumption to make; it is not applied generally in other parts of Sydney or other parts of New South Wales. The report that the department did—its own assessment of the flooding reports—suggested that was a good sensitivity analysis to do but should not be your core assumption.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You have rejected Mr Molino's considered expert opinion that those major drainage pipes can be blocked in a flood event and you have decided to carry on regardless.

**Mr DRAPER:** No. There are a number of experts in this field. Mr Molino—I do not doubt his expertise whatsoever. But we have got a very good group of engineers working on our project as well; the departments commission their own engineers. His comments have been reviewed, dealt with and considered in the planning consent process and it has been found that the design that we have come up with is acceptable and does not increase the flood risk in Parramatta. In fact, the conditions will be very much the same as they are today. It is worth noting that the conditions you are describing, should they eventuate, are not only an issue for our site; they would be affecting all of Parramatta and probably all of Sydney because a rainfall event of that nature would be—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Yes, but Mr Draper you are proposing to build a new attraction which, if it goes well, will have thousands of people in it which you will need to rapidly evacuate in a flood, and your final design is contrary to the recommendations of Mr Molino. That is the point, is it not?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I am not trying to shut off Mr Draper, and he can also respond. Let us make it quite clear: The ground floor of the new museum, which is at the level that has been approved above the one in 1,000-year flood level, is one of the highest ground floors, arguably, of any building in Parramatta. Some of the material that has gone out suggesting that people are in danger or that the collection is in danger is just simply wrong, David. I will allow Mr Draper to make further comments.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, I am asking about people being able to safely evacuate the building in the case of a flood and, as I understand it, the design now has rejected the advice and the opinion of the pre-eminent flood expert for Parramatta. That is the case, is it not?

**Mr DRAPER:** I think you are talking about two things, Mr Shoebridge. On one hand you are talking about the overland flows passing down the western side of the building to Dirrabarri Lane.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Correct.

**Mr DRAPER:** The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences will have to develop an emergency plan for those sorts of circumstances, but that would not necessarily necessitate any evacuation. In those circumstances that Mr Molino is concerned about, you would have a passage of water passing down a particular stretch of the laneway, and that does not mean there is a generalised flood across all of the lands in Parramatta including the Powerhouse site.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** We will see what Mr Molino says about that this afternoon.

**Mr DRAPER:** Sure.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** On the relocation of Willow Grove, under the conditions of consent that have been granted, specifically D1 that relates to this, the specific program of the relocation—the relocation site, the relocation cost—is not required to be provided until 12 months after the deconstruction of Willow Grove. Is that right?

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes, there is a two-step process that the department has set out.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Yes.

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That is right. I am seeking an assurance, Minister, that you guarantee that between step one and step two of that process, if the costs of the relocation and selecting the new site become higher than you had anticipated and start to exceed the \$840 million envelope, that you will not abandon the relocation altogether and suddenly just say it is too expensive.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, it is very clear that the relocation is part of the consent, so we will be doing it and that is the expectation that is clearly there in Minister Stoke's approval and we will be delivering.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I appreciate it is your expectation—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** No, he said "and we will be delivering".

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With respect, Rose, you asked me this question back in July last year—sorry, it might have been in the House after I made the announcement and it might not have been you, so I apologise for that. But I have made it very clear that we are going to do this.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I appreciate that—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** We are going to do this.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I appreciate—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I have also given a public commitment that people will be in it and using it before the museum is finished.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Can you understand why there is some community scepticism? We have a situation where prior to the last election you and the Premier indicated that it was your hope and expectation that these buildings would be retained as part of the design, and then lo and behold, after the election, after everything is approved—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** With great respect, Rose—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** —that becomes impossible. People are concerned that between stage one and stage two—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Are you giving a speech or asking a question, Rose?

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I am premising my question requesting a guarantee with the reasons why people might not take "It is my hope and expectation that this occurs" particularly seriously.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** No, he has already given that guarantee. "It will be done", he said.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** The Minister can answer his own questions, Mr Franklin.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Well he has answered it three times already, so let us go for number four.

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Can you understand why there might be some scepticism?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, I cannot actually because I made it very clear I am going to do it, and I am very happy to do it as a matter of fact. In fact, I was the one who offered to do it to deal with community concern.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, regarding Willow Grove, have you met with the Construction Forestry Maritime Mining and Energy Union [CFMMEU] in relation to its green ban on that site?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, personally I have not. In fact, I had a meeting scheduled with Mr Greenberg which he cancelled. But I know that Infrastructure NSW has been discussing that matter with him, so perhaps you might—

**The CHAIR:** Mr Draper, what are the outcomes of those discussions?

**Mr DRAPER:** We met with the CFMMEU—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** By the way, it is Greenfield.

**The CHAIR:** Greenfield, not Greenberg.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I am sorry about that; I do not know how I mixed it up. I must have been thinking about Todd Greenberg or something; I do not know. Anyway—Greenfield.

**The CHAIR:** I am sure later today he will get your name right, too.

**Mr DRAPER:** We met with the senior officials of the CFMMEU, including Mr Greenfield; I think that was back in August. They had announced a green ban, I think, in June last year. We met with them then as we were going through the EIS process—the consultation process—and really that was for us to explain why it was that we were approaching Willow Grove the way we were, and St George's Terrace. To be fair, they explained the discussions they had had with the community—their commitment to preserving heritage. It was a perfectly amicable conversation and I think we understood that position.

We just tried to explain the practicalities of dealing with two heritage buildings on the site which, in one case, it has been possible to leave in situ because it is on the edge of the site, and I think the whole project team who works with us is very happy with that outcome. The Willow Grove building is in the middle of the site and,

as we explained to the CFMMEU at that time, it was simply not possible to keep it where it is currently located. So we have come up with another solution which we think is a good outcome, particularly when you consider—you have all been to Willow Grove and it is not the best environment for a heritage building. It is sort of squeezed between car parks and 1970s office buildings. It is in a state of—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** We will have to agree to differ on that, Mr Draper.

**Mr DRAPER:** It has been somewhat unloved for quite a long time. We think the outcome that we are coming to will be a lot better.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Draper, with all respect, that was not the question. The question is, has the CFMMEU come back to you and agreed that it will remove its green ban and allow you to either move or demolish that building as a premise for your budgetary processes?

**Mr DRAPER:** We do not usually go and ask the CFMMEU how to manage our budget processes and I do not think they would expect that.

**The CHAIR:** Again, with respect, you gave evidence earlier saying that the project would cost an amount of money working on the assumption that it will go ahead, and so was the Minister, but obviously the CFMMEU has a green ban on the site. What have you done, or Minister what have you done, to get that removed?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I am happy to go first. Let me make it quite clear that obviously the Government with its record \$100 billion-plus infrastructure budget, relations between construction trade unions and the Government and the contractors is very important. I think it would be inappropriate, frankly, for one Minister to go in there.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You would want to bring a friend, do you think, Minister?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I think it is best handled by Infrastructure NSW which deals with all of the projects to take, if you like, a helicopter view; that is the appropriate way. I do not think it would be responsible at all, frankly, for just one Minister and just one project to try to intervene, and so therefore, I have left it completely to Infrastructure NSW. Mr Draper might want to make some more comments about that.

**The CHAIR:** I fail to understand the answer to that question actually.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr DRAPER:** Chair, can you just remind me what the question was?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I think the question was: What had the Minister done to try to lift the green ban? The way I understand it, you are open to a meeting with the CFMMEU and you will bring along whatever other appropriate Ministers to try to talk that through.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** As was I but they cancelled it. My preference is that these issues should be handled on a whole-of-government basis by Infrastructure NSW.

**Mr DRAPER:** Maybe to attempt to understand the question, we met with CFMMEU—

**The CHAIR:** You are working on the basis—

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** He is answering the question.

**The CHAIR:** —that the demolition or removal of the building will go ahead.

**Mr DRAPER:** I just want to answer your question because you have asked it several times and so has Mr Shoebridge. We met with them in August. At the time we met with them in August, our proposal was to demolish Willow Grove and to also demolish St George's Terrace. We heard the concerns of the community; a very large number of people made submissions, most of them related to heritage. We listened to those submissions, including the CFMMEU, and, as I say, I heard the officials that day speak; I thought they spoke from the heart about their concerns and their members' concerns of heritage and we took that on board. So we changed the proposal.

We propose now to not only keep St George's Terrace—and if you have been there you will know it is in a great state of disrepair and, I would say, disrespect for a heritage item—we are going to be investing in those buildings and keeping them on site, which was not the proposal before, and we are also proposing, as you have pointed out, to invest a significant amount of money in carefully dismantling and relocating the Willow Grove building to a site that is suitable for ongoing use of a heritage item in the Parramatta area, because the concern of people in Parramatta is that there are a relatively few number of heritage items of that nature still left in Parramatta. If you go to other areas there are some parts, but in Parramatta there are relatively few left.



So we are investing a lot of time and money into ensuring that we meet the concerns that people expressed during the EIS process, including the union. As I say, I do not think they would expect us to come to them and ask them what it is going to cost—we do not do that in any other project—but we have had a very, I think, amicable and respectful dialogue. We have not met with them again to ask them what they think about the new proposals but I am sure they will tell us.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The people of Parramatta have told you that they were appalled by the way the Royal Oak Hotel, one of their key heritage sites, was knocked down at midnight by your Government, Minister—knocked down at midnight by your Government for one of your projects, and now you are going to destroy another one of these key Parramatta heritage sites, Willow Grove, and destroy it for another one of your projects. The people of Parramatta are sick of their heritage constantly being destroyed because it is the cheapest way of delivering your projects. What do you say to that?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I will say this: I am not familiar with the Royal Oak project because it is not one of my projects—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Well, I am. I walked past it for three years on the way to work.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —but I am certainly aware of it. But in relation to Willow Grove, we have listened; we are keeping Willow Grove. The building will be faithfully reassembled and it will be in better condition than it is now and will be available for the people of Parramatta to use. We will consult them on where they want it and how they want to use it, and we will do that, and that will be a darn sight better than the way it was given to us by Parramatta council, who did not seem to care much at the time.

Can I say that since we made the decision we made to move Willow Grove and keep St George's Terrace, the level of angst has dropped dramatically. There is enormous support for this project in Parramatta, and I completely reject your characterisation of the views of Parramatta. I think when you hear from the Parramatta Powerhouse Community Alliance later in the morning you will get some sense of just how much support there is for this project.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Draper, you used the term "dismantling". Minister, I think you used the term "reassembling" Willow Grove. It is nothing of the sort. It is being destroyed and then a faux heritage item is going to be built at an indeterminate place at some point in the future. That is what is happening, is it not? You are destroying it.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I will tell you what was happening. Under Parramatta council you had dilapidation by neglect. Under this proposal you have the building being reassembled, saved and made available for use by generations of local people to use in the future.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You may have me on this point to the extent that a majority on Parramatta council sold you Willow Grove at top dollar without any kind of limitation on it.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** It was the administrator.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But Parramatta council sold it to you at top dollar without any kind of limitation and now, retrospectively trying to sort out some heritage, you may have me on that argument, but on the idea that you are dismantling and reassembling—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** And further, David—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** —how much of the original heritage fabric will be left?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** And further, David, if I may respond to the preamble in your question, at no stage has Parramatta council asked for the site or Willow Grove back.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** As I said, you may have me on some of those arguments, Minister.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I have to say I did focus on that aspect of your question. If there was another one would you mind asking it again?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much of the original heritage fabric of Willow Grove will there be in the sort of Las Vegas Willow Grove that you recreate on the other side of the river?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** David, I know you are running for preselection, but phrases like "Las Vegas version" is really nonsense.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Las Vegas does not work well amongst The Greens you will be pleased to know.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I cannot help reflecting on the fact that we are sitting here at Parliament House and immediately behind us is a building which is, frankly, one of the best examples of Brutalist architecture in the State.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Yes, but some cunning bureaucrat wanted to destroy this bit too.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Stop interrupting me, David. I am trying not to interrupt you and I would ask you not to interrupt me either. That building was built after Richmond Villa went through exactly the same process as Willow Grove is now to go through. Richmond Villa was dismantled and reassembled and, frankly, now looks fantastic, down at Millers Point, and the same thing will happen with Willow Grove at Parramatta. To characterise it the way you have is just ludicrous and more of just a stunt for your own preselection.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much of the original—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Mr Chair, can I ask a question at some point?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, you can.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** That would be lovely. Thank you.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The question was: How much of the original heritage fabric will be left? We have not got an answer yet.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Right.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, what does Heritage NSW have to say about this?

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I want the answer. What percentage? 10, 20, 30? What percentage of the original building will be there?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The building has been modified over the years to meet its change in use. Alterations, including bathrooms, doors, extensions, lights and flooring are not expected to be retained. Modifications to meet modern and equitable access requirements will ensure that it can be used by all members of the community. The aim will be to rebuild the building with some minor modifications to meet those requirements. Detailed surveys, assessments and archival recordings of the building condition are, in fact, almost complete. We have experienced heritage consultants and builders to determine the exact way it will be dismantled and rebuilt.

**The CHAIR:** What are you going to do in relation to its connection to country there on that site? Are you going to take the top layer of soil and move that as well, or something silly like that? That building has a connection to the Aboriginal community. How are you going to address that?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes, I am aware of that. Ms Foy or Mr Draper, do you want to speak to that or will we take that on notice?

**Mr DRAPER:** I think we will take that on notice.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** We will take that on notice and get you a proper response because, in fact, that is something that is also being worked on by Ms Havilah and, as I said earlier, Ms Havilah is not here at this hearing and I would rather get a proper response because it is an important issue, I agree with you.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Just one quick question. Minister, I noted in your opening statement you talked about an excellent focus of mine, which is getting regional school students to utilise the new facility. You mentioned that in one sentence. Can you just unpack that a little bit more about what is actually happening?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I would encourage you to ask Ms Havilah that question when she comes because that has been one of her initiatives and I think it is a tremendous one. Sorry, Walt?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Sorry, I apologise.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Apologies.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** That is all right. It was just distracting me a little. I am not upset about it. I will just refocus now. It was one of Ms Havilah's great ideas and I really support it. I think there has been, frankly, some silly commentary in the media in the past seven to 10 days, describing them as apartments. They are not. It is all about the capacity for kids from regional New South Wales to have a better experience when they come down and use its facilities. The academy is tremendous. It is also not just for visiting schoolchildren, although that will be its primary purpose. It is also there to support research collaborations between the museum

curators and subject experts. Ms Havilah can expand on that in more detail, but I think it is exactly what you would expect in a twenty-first century museum and where musicological practice should be.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** And, also, all about the fundamental basis of where Create is going, which is about access.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Absolutely.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** Minister, I just want to pick up on a point that was made at the end of Mr Shoebridge's questioning around the heritage value of Willow Grove. There was a tour of Willow Grove that this Committee went on and what was really striking to me was so many inclusions of modern additions throughout Willow Grove—just off the top of my head, vinyl flooring and fibreglass used throughout the bathrooms and whatnot. So to be clear, this will be restored back to somewhat original—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I think to be fair about the local heritage significance that council has placed on Willow Grove, the significance is more about the story rather than the building fabric. The building would, frankly, never reach State heritage significance assessment because the building is just not significant. I was driving to Parramatta just recently—I think it was Church Street, Harris Park, that I drove along on that occasion as I was going up to Elizabeth Farm, I think—no, I think I had just been to Elizabeth Farm—and we drove past two Victorian Italianate houses, both of which were virtually identical to Willow Grove, both of which were in better condition.

The building itself, let us be clear, is not particularly significant. But I do accept that lots of local people consider it important because of its story, and that is mainly due to its role briefly as a maternity hospital. I have to say I do find being preached at by Labor Party people about destroying heritage a bit rich when the maternity hospital that I was born in, which was a world-leading research hospital, was sold off by a previous Labor Government to a property development for apartments. I have always found that a bit curious, but that is perhaps a lateral move.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I was in high school then.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** I do not think he is blaming you personally, Rose.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** You are talking as if he is Minister for Heritage.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I accept it is for those people in Parramatta important, just as Crown Street has a little bit of sentimentality for me too, but that is the reality in terms of that building.

**The CHAIR:** I agree. Crown Street Women's Hospital should have been listed as well because I was born there too.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I was born there too.

**The CHAIR:** See, there you go.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It certainly was of local heritage significance.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Let us list Hornsby hospital.

**The CHAIR:** So was Hornsby hospital.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** You have made a valid point. The building had been compromised over the years, even more so, frankly, with St George's Terrace, but the story of the two mattered to the people of Parramatta so we have made the changes we have, and I think we have done the right thing. That is why I think there is now a vastly reduced level of concern about what is happening there. In fact, what has been evidenced through the community access space that has been established in Parramatta Square is that 95 per cent of people who have been into the community access space have indicated they are excited and are in favour of the project.

I believe now that we have development approval, now that a lot of the mistruths have been addressed through that State Significant Development Application [SSDA] process, now that preliminary work has started, people are going to get very excited about this museum and it is going to be a tremendous facility for western Sydney and, indeed, all of the State.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, did you not see the hundreds of messages that were put on Willow Grove just this last weekend—pictures of people's baby photos where they were born there, messages from Dharug Elders on Willow Grove's gate and fence, hundreds and hundreds of them? Did you not see any of those?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I did see references to them in the media, yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Did the preliminary works at 7.30 this morning involve removing those? Was that what you were referring to when you said "preliminary works" this morning? Was it the removal of those community messages?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, Rose.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What has happened to the messages, because they all been taken down. It looks like an act of censorship. They have all been taken down. Why were they taken down and what has happened to them?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Because work is beginning and hoardings are about to go up.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What has happened to the messages, the baby photos of people, the messages from Dharug Elders

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I would be very happy to make inquiries for you, David.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, in your opening statement you said that work had begun this morning at 7.30.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So at daybreak what work began at the site?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Fencing started.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** So it was the removal of the community messages.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No. The photos I saw in fact were on the Wilde Avenue side of the building.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, this is the first time I have actually heard you utter this. Do you stand by the words you spoke that you believe Willow Grove is not significant? Those are your words.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It is not State significant.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Under the definition of "State significance". Do not be unreasonable here.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It is not State significant. You do this all the time, with respect, Walt. Honestly, you undermine your own credibility by just lying about what people said—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, these are your words. I am just recanting the evidence that you presented earlier. You said it is not significant.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No. You are leaving out a word to completely change the meaning. It is a bit like when you say, "Oh, Mike Baird said he would build the Powerhouse for \$10 million." Honestly, do you think that makes you more credible?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** October 2016 he said he would do that.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** What he actually said was that he was going to allocate \$10 million for planning money to fund some business cases. And you go around saying it was going to cost that. It just makes you silly, Walt, with great respect.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** We have gone from \$10 million to \$1.7 billion.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** You want to be shadow Treasurer and you just do things like that. How do you expect anyone to take you seriously, Walt?

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How do you expect anyone to take your government seriously when the announcement was made in February 2015 and the only figure attached to it was \$10 million? That was the only figure presented in February 2015, prior to the election, by Minister Baird. It is now 2021, nothing has happened and it costs over a billion dollars. How do you expect us to take you seriously?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** No, it does not cost over a billion dollars.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Shouting does not make you right, Rose, with respect.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Maybe it will get me an answer.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** You would get an answer even if you asked it without shouting, Rose.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, answer the question.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Which of the 12?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The question that Rose asked me was to do with the \$10 million. The \$10 million, it was always made very clear it was for planning money.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, the Ultimo site, you made much about a theatre being on the site. What has happened with your dream in relation to a musical theatre?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The situation with Ultimo is that a final business case is being prepared. Certainly back in April 2017, I think it was, when an announcement was made to retain the Ultimo Powerhouse—as in the historic building—as cultural space, I made a statement then that it would be investigated in the context of the Ultimo business case—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Four years ago.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —and it is still being investigated.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Four years later?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It has been investigated, I should say.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** And what is the verdict of that investigation?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** The final business case is going to the appropriate committee of Cabinet shortly and after that there will be a statement that I am able to make and I will address that at that time.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, what is the future of the Harwood building?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** It has been considered as part of the Ultimo final business case. It is a matter that is going to go before a Cabinet committee and after there has been a discussion with my Cabinet colleagues about it then I will make an announcement at the appropriate time.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Will that time be 5.45 p.m. on a Friday?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, could I ask you about the conditions of consent regarding Willow Grove to the extent that I assume you will be responsible for them? What is the status of the relocation framework methodology claim?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Let us be clear, Infrastructure NSW is responsible for delivery of the project. Technically, of course, they report to the Premier, but the Arts portfolio is certainly the client in terms of the project. So it is probably appropriate if you have detailed questions that they be directed to Mr Draper.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Draper?

**Mr DRAPER:** Thanks, Mr Shoebridge. We only got the conditions of consent last week, so we are still working on those, but there is a number of requirements in the conditions. One of them is that no works on any heritage item can be done until the completion of archival photographic recording. That part of the work is largely complete—so we have already done that recording in anticipation that that was going to be required—but there is a number of other elements to it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is B2 and D1 that I really want to focus on.

**Mr DRAPER:** That was B1 that I just referred to.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** B2, as in the second banana.

**Mr DRAPER:** B2, yes. The second one says no works until there is a detailed relocation framework methodology plan. That is all getting underway at the moment. Probably one of the most important first things we have to do is appoint a heritage specialist that meets the requirements of the department, and we have got a few people in mind for that; we have not finalised that process yet. That will be really the commencement of most of those detailed works on the engineering and heritage assessments, and there is a number of other elements that will have to be worked up with the assistance of that heritage specialist. I think that is the threshold step for us to take.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Will you make the relocation framework methodology plan public at the time it is submitted to the planning secretary? Is there going to be any transparency here?

**Mr DRAPER:** That is probably a question really for the Department of Planning. We certainly would have no problem with it being public, but that is really—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is your document; you can make it public.

**Mr DRAPER:** Yes, but I think it would be respectful to the secretary of planning to ask them whether they think that it should be made public.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Why?

**Mr DRAPER:** The planning process is a pretty transparent process. I will take it on notice and ask the secretary of planning if that is the intention, but we would normally, when we give something to the Department of Planning for planning purposes, show them the respect for them to make the decision about when it should be exhibited. They may say, "That is not yet ready. We want you to do more work. We will exhibit the one that is ready."

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** There is no requirement in the planning approval to rebuild Willow Grove, is there, Mr Draper?

**Mr DRAPER:** No, I think there is clearly a requirement in the planning consent to rebuild Willow Grove.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Show me the condition.

**Mr DRAPER:** Condition C1 is relevant. C1 is prior to the commencement of construction of the built form of the museum. The applicant must submit for the planning secretary approval amended drawings—no, sorry, that is the wrong one.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** D1 I could help you with. Does that help?

**Mr DRAPER:** That is right. So within 12 months we have to update the methodology plan in consultation with the council, the Heritage Council, community, key stakeholders, local landowners, managers, and submit it to the planning secretary, and that must include updated details of the relocation site, the program for the relocation process including any additional approvals, opportunities for future use and details of a consultation undertaken as part of that process.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Draper, that is as close it gets, is it not?

**Mr DRAPER:** When you consider that the submission that we have made to the plan, which they have approved, included the relocation and reassembling of Willow Grove, I think it is pretty clear that the approval requires the rebuilding of Willow Grove.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** David, that is the approval that I have got. It is going to be done.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Draper, I have asked you to identify anywhere in the conditions a requirement to rebuild Willow Grove and you have been unable to do so.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I do not think that is right, David.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is no blame on you, Mr Draper, but it is because there is no requirement in the planning consent to rebuild Willow Grove, is there? There is none.

**Mr DRAPER:** I do not know that we could occupy the building if we had not satisfied all these conditions.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** None of which require the rebuilding of Willow Grove. We are not talking about the vibe here; we are talking about actual conditions, and there is nothing to require Willow Grove to be rebuilt.

**Mr DRAPER:** No, but our proposal to the Department of Planning was for the rebuilding of Willow Grove.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But in their conditions of approval allowing you to destroy Willow Grove there is nothing there requiring you to rebuild it, Mr Draper. That is the point.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** But, David, we put up a proposal to dismantle and then reassemble Willow Grove and that has been approved.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** No, Minister—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** The two documents need to be read in conjunction, surely.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Of course they do.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** No, Minister, let us be clear—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** David, it is just a semantic trick that you are trying to play here.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It is not.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Yes, it is. It is just a stunt, another stunt on the way to your Senate preselection.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, you can say what you like about these substantive issues, but it does you no credit at all. There is no requirement to rebuild Willow Grove. You have permission to destroy it but no requirement to rebuild it, and you could not have planning approval to rebuild it because you do not even know whether you bloody well want to do it in the first place. That is the situation, is it not, Mr Draper?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** We have put a proposal to them to dismantle and reassemble—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Where?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** They have said to us the steps they would like us to go through in terms of where it will go, and those steps include things like consulting the community, consulting the Heritage Council, then we are to go back to them and then they will tick it off, and that is part of the approval. Frankly, it beggars belief that you are trying to suggest this—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You are talking out your hat, Minister.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —when you put together the proposal we put it in and the approval we received.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, you are talking out your hat, with all due respect.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** No, I would submit that it is you who are talking out of your hat, David.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Show me the condition now, on notice, at any point—show me the condition anywhere that requires Willow Grove to be rebuilt? Mr Draper cannot because it is not there.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** I think it is quite clear that in terms of reading the application that we put in and the consent documents, including the one that we have had under discussion, D1, that there is an approval to—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Destroy.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** —dismantle and reassemble Willow Grove at a location within Parramatta local government area, and that is what we are going to do. I could not be clearer.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Minister, you can call black white if you like, but there is nothing in this planning approval to require the rebuild.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** David, with respect, it is you who are calling black white. I think we have canvassed this about as far as we can take it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Assuming there is an approval to rebuild Willow Grove, which I have got to say I fundamentally dispute, where are you rebuilding it?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** As you would be aware, because you appear to have read some, if not all, of the conditions of consent, there is a process that has been recommended by the Department of Planning and that is what will follow, and that includes consulting the community.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How many suitable sites are there in the Parramatta local government area for this sort of rebuild?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** There would be a number of suitable sites, and we will talk to the council about sites they may have, sites they suggest. We will talk to other people in the community about what their aspirations are, but the State Government also has holdings of land in the community and no doubt several of them are suitable as well. The local Aboriginal land council has holdings in the area. There are lots of possible sites.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, I am mindful there are several minutes left in the inquiry in your session. I ask you one last time: How much will it cost to demolish or relocate Willow Grove? You cannot tell me that you have not undertaken work in this regard. How much will it cost?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Those questions have been asked by you already to the head of Infrastructure NSW and he has responded to you.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Can you say, hand on heart, that no financial work—

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** He has given you a full answer, Walt.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** —no financial work has been undertaken in this area?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** He has given you a full answer. There is nothing further to add.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Minister, please tell us how much it will cost.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** Walt, you have asked that question already to the head of Infrastructure NSW; he has taken you through all of the material and he has given you an answer. There is nothing further that I need to add.

**The CHAIR:** Any further questions? Thank you very much for coming, Minister, Ms Foy and Mr Draper.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**(Short adjournment)**



**The CHAIR:** The Minister wishes to make a clarification.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN:** In my evidence I believe I was asked some questions about the green bans and a discussion with Darren Greenfield from the CFMMEU. My evidence was that the meeting that was planned was cancelled by him. After consultations with my staff during the morning tea break, we cannot be so sure now that that was actually correct; there is a possibility it might not have been, so it is better that I withdraw that answer. We have tried to look at the relevant file and see if that sheds some light so we can be clear, but we cannot. I withdraw the statement I made that the meeting was cancelled at Mr Greenfield's instigation. There is a possibility that I might have had to cancel it myself for other reasons relating to my ministerial duties. I thank the Chair for his consideration in giving me that brief opportunity to correct the record.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister.

**PETER COLLINS**, President, Board of Trustees, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, sworn and examined  
**LISA HAVILAH**, Chief Executive, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, on former oath

**The CHAIR:** Would either of you like to make an opening statement?

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes. I will let Ms Havilah go first, if that is all right.

**The CHAIR:** Yes. Could you just restrict to a few minutes?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes. Thank you, Mr Chair. Thank you, Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to address you again today. I would like to start by acknowledging the traditional owners, the Gadigal people, and thank Elders past and present for allowing us to be here. I would like to acknowledge the Powerhouse Trust president, Peter Collins, and thank him for his collaboration and leadership.

I, the trust and the museum are incredibly excited that Powerhouse Parramatta has received planning approval from the New South Wales Government to proceed into construction and delivery. This is a major milestone for this internationally important project and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the New South Wales Government for their visionary investment into establishing greater western Sydney's first New South Wales cultural institution. I would also like to thank Infrastructure NSW for their significant ongoing leadership in the delivery of this project.

Powerhouse Parramatta is being delivered through an extraordinary collaboration between the museum, Infrastructure NSW, Create Infrastructure and the exceptional design team Moreau Kusunoki and Genton. This team has been unrelenting in their focus to develop Powerhouse Parramatta through what has been a challenging year of restricted movement. Powerhouse Parramatta will be culturally transformative for the communities of Sydney and New South Wales, with over 18,000 square metres of exhibition and public spaces, 1.5 hectares of high-amenity public domain and open space, creating a precinct that will attract over two million visitors to Parramatta each year.

In October last year the Western Sydney Powerhouse Community Alliance was established by leaders from across Sydney. Chaired by Chris Brown, the alliance is comprised of representatives across industry associations, local businesses, universities, research institutes, arts and cultural organisations, major sporting codes, schools and churches, who represent hundreds of thousands of community members from across the region. On behalf of the trust and the museum, I would like to thank the alliance for amplifying the overwhelming strength of support and excitement for Powerhouse Parramatta.

In December last year we launched the Powerhouse Parramatta Community Information Centre in Parramatta Square. I would like to thank the Lord Mayor, Councillor Bob Dwyer, and Parramatta City Council for their support in establishing the centre. This centre provides the community with the opportunity to hear firsthand the many cultural, educational, economic and employment benefits that the museum will provide to local and western Sydney communities. I am happy to advise the Committee that we have had over 600 community members visit the space and there has been overwhelming positivity, excitement and anticipation for the museum. Some of the repeated comments that we hear from local residents have included: "There are so many young people in Parramatta"; "We really need something like this"; "It's so great, we won't have to go all the way into the city"; "I grew up here and there was only sport. We never had anything like this"; "This is going to put Parramatta on the map"; and "we can't wait till it opens".

This year the museum will continue to expand its programming across western Sydney. Last week the museum celebrated International Women and Girls in Science Day at Macarthur Girls High School. We convened a panel that included the newly appointed Physicist and Chief Scientist of Australia, Dr Cathy Foley; Associate Professor Alice Motion, Chemist and 2020 Eureka Prize winner for Science Communications; and Dr Sarah Reeves, our own Astronomer and Powerhouse Curator. The panel was attended by 300 students from Macarthur Girls High School, Doonside Technology High School, Greystanes High School and Penrith High School, developing important new educational and employment pathways for young people across western Sydney. It will be programs like this that are delivered every day at Powerhouse Parramatta that will have a generational and transformative impact for western Sydney and New South Wales.

As we await the Government's consideration of the business case for the renewal of the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo, I am excited to advise that Create Infrastructure and the museum have been undertaking ongoing consultation with key stakeholders. We are working with award-winning architect, Lionel Glendenning, to embed his 1988 design principles into the conservation management plan at Ultimo. Alongside this, we have established a master planning dialogue that includes Lionel Glendenning, Richard Johnson, Peter Poulet, Andrew

Andersons and Abbie Galvin. This eminent group of design leaders are advising on the development of the master plan that will inform the museum's renewal.

I recognise that for our museum to renew and remain relevant, it needs to engage and reckon with its histories. For its success it is also critical that it continues to change to reflect the contemporary landscape and communities of Sydney and New South Wales. I would like to thank the many stakeholders and community members that have invested their time and advice as part of our ongoing consultation. This includes previous museum staff members Jennifer Sanders, Kylie Winkworth, Margaret Betteridge, Andrew Grant, Dr Ann Stephens, Debbie Rudder and Grace Cochrane.

Last week we announced the Powerhouse Museum Ultimo Exhibition Program for 2021. This annual program, led by our extraordinary curatorial team, includes exhibitions that are focused on presenting and engaging audiences with the Powerhouse collection. We will begin the year with *Iranzamin*, an exhibition that presents highlights from our extensive Persian collection of over 1,700 objects. One of the key exhibition highlights for this year is *Eucalyptusdom*, which tells the story of the museum's long relationship with eucalyptus, from the early days of economic botany and technical education, through to collecting and recording where the eucalyptus sits in our national identity, including decorative arts, fashion and design.

This year we make a strong commitment to documenting and amplifying the work of Australian innovators that are actively responding to the climate challenge. *100 Conversations* is an exhibition and digital archive that will present their stories and become an incredible record of how Australia responded to climate change at the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century. This incredible work and achievements of our institution have all happened since I last had the opportunity to present to you a short three months ago, in October last year. This is a great testament to our staff. As you know, I have incredibly high expectations of them, and they have my ongoing respect and thanks. Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Mr Collins?

**Mr COLLINS:** Thank you, Chair. I, too, acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we meet, and acknowledge their Elders past, present and emerging. Chair and Committee members, I thank you for your deep interest in the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences—the Powerhouse—and your navigation of the various issues that are under examination today. I served as arts Minister from 1988 to 1995. It is a position which I shamelessly hogged and held onto despite the other vagaries of politics, with which you are all intimately familiar.

In my day as a Minister, I was successful in moving the Children's Hospital from Camperdown to Westmead, which is a lead into where I am now. I have watched the development of Powerhouse Parramatta from the sidelines until my appointment in November last year and if I look back on my regrets in politics, it was my regret that we were not able to do something like this 30 years ago. There were two simple reasons: one, the then size of Sydney, and while Parramatta was, even then, the demographic heart of Sydney, it is a much bigger, greater Sydney now; and the second reason is the money simply was not there and that was the last recession. So opportunities like this were not available then.

I am so excited by what we face now. I think that the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences over the next few years will develop into Australia's Smithsonian. We will go from the Powerhouse site in Ultimo, whose opening I attended back in the day, in the bicentennial year, and we will have a network of museums and, for future reference and future governments, that can be a building block for an even greater network of museums. So I think Parramatta is the place to go. I think that the site that has been chosen is a beautiful, evocative site which will complement everything else that is happening in Parramatta at the moment. We all know Parramatta is a massive construction zone at the moment—everything seems to be happening in Parramatta at the moment—and this will be added to it. But I think it is tremendously exciting and I hope over the next hour there is a chance to explore some of those things with you. Thank you, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Questions?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Ms Havilah, in your opening statement you made reference to, I think, community submissions to the information centre.

**Ms HAVILAH:** No, I was referring to conversations that our staff and our team have with the community regarding Powerhouse Parramatta. The community information centre was established at the end of last year. The purpose of the centre was to inform the community about the incredible positive impacts that the Powerhouse will have.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So what were you quoting from?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I was quoting from the statistics that were given from people that come in the door, and I said over 600 people have come through the door since we opened.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So 600 then, and those testimonials that you referred to were given by those 600?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What were some of the examples of the less favourable or adverse or troublesome responses?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I know that people have raised Willow Grove, and some of the feedback that I have got—and I have also done shifts in the community information centre as well so I have heard these things firsthand—is that people do come in and raise issues about Willow Grove, but once we explain how we have responded to that, by relocating Willow Grove and making it available to the community, in my experience and what I have seen in the reports that I get is that everyone is satisfied with that.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So you think that you will be able to overcome the community concerns about Willow Grove?

**Ms HAVILAH:** The response that I have had to date, yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Collins, you are just starting newly into this venture. Do you accept that if your institution is a museum and it is meant to be celebrating the history of this country, that it takes a reputational hit when it starts with the destruction of a site like Willow Grove? Do you accept that is a problem that you have to overcome?

**Mr COLLINS:** Let me go directly to Willow Grove, if you wish me to. Willow Grove is an 1880s Victorian Italianate building. It is an attractive building. It is on the local heritage plan, it is not on the State Heritage Register. If the proposal had been to demolish Willow Grove to put in an office block or shops or whatever, I would be opposed to that. This is to put in an iconic cultural building which, in terms of cultural spending you know is the second largest cultural spend in this State's history since the Opera House. This is one of those decisions which has to be taken by a government and I think that the quality of the replacement and the significance and iconic status of the replacement far outweighs what is there at the moment.

Willow Grove will be relocated. If you will bear with me just for a moment, Mr Shoebridge. It is interesting that Willow Grove will be relocated. It is not the only building to be relocated in Parramatta. One of my interests in the heritage of Parramatta has been Lancer Barracks; I have always had an interest in things military, which I suspect you and other Committee members know. Lancer Barracks has on it Linden House, which was relocated stone block by stone block and is the regimental museum at Lancer Barracks. So I support the relocation of Willow Grove and I think that is a significant concession by the Government to the local community.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But, Mr Collins, there is no identifiable heritage report that shows how it can be relocated. It is going to be destroyed and then some kind of replica of Willow Grove will be created. Do you accept that that is a poor heritage outcome?

**Mr COLLINS:** I am sorry. The acoustics in here—and, pardon, I do not want to duck anyone's question, but—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I will put it to you again. Willow Grove is not being relocated; it is being destroyed and then a replica of Willow Grove is being built at an indeterminate place with some of the original fabric.

**Mr COLLINS:** Look, I disagree with that. Willow Grove is being relocated—that is the commitment of the Government—and it will be relocated in consultation with the community to determine where the best context is for it to be reassembled.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I want to be clear though, the heritage significance of that site, Willow Grove, is not just the bricks and mortar—and we can agree or disagree about whether it is possible to relocate that; it is the history of it being a maternity hospital, it is the history of the Dharug land that is in the soil that has that continuity going back through thousands of years and the Dharug people have said do not do this. Do you accept though that starting with the destruction is a bad start for a museum?

**Mr COLLINS:** In terms of the significance of the site at Parramatta to the Indigenous population, to First Nations, I acknowledge the interests of the original Australians in relation to the entire continent. As to singling out a particular building, I do not single out a particular building; I do not attach particular significance

to Willow Grove in that regard. As a maternity hospital, okay, I was born in an Italianate maternity hospital on the banks of the Richmond River in Lismore, which was demolished and replaced by the Lismore RSL Club. I imagine that my birthplace is now marked by a poker machine. There is an opportunity with the relocation of Willow Grove to acknowledge some of what the local community brought up over the weekend in relation to its history as a maternity hospital. Mind you, it is a history we have heard nothing about until the Powerhouse was earmarked for Parramatta. Nobody talked about Willow Grove, nobody mentioned Willow Grove outside a relatively small group of local citizens in Parramatta to whom it did mean something and to whom it continues to mean something. They have a legitimate, emotional and local attachment to that.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Ms Havilah, during the last session there was some discussion, and I would like to follow it up from Mr Shoebridge's questions, about the 188 recommendations or conditions on the application. Mr Shoebridge put forward—and maybe he should make sure this is accurate—that there is not a legal requirement as part of the conditions to rebuild, reassemble Willow Grove. Is that correct or incorrect? I would like clarification.

**Mr COLLINS:** I heard what was said in the last session. I am not in a position to provide a more specific answer, but I think, to the point, a commitment has been given to relocate and reconstruct Willow Grove to move it to an area with appropriate curtilage which is relevant and which provides the right sort of historic context along with perhaps other historic buildings. I did hear in the last session that there are several sites available; some of them are owned by the traditional owners, some owned by Parramatta council and some owned by the State Government. So there are a lot of options. I would have thought the best thing to do is to consult with the community and determine the best of those and also to consult with the community to determine what goes in Willow Grove when it is reconstructed.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Collins are you conceding or accepting that there is not a legal requirement to reassemble or rebuild Willow Grove but it will be based on good faith of the Government carrying out its promise?

**Mr COLLINS:** Mr Secord, I cannot point you in the direction of a specific document. I cannot hand up a document to this Committee saying "There it is." Suffice it to say that were Willow Grove not rebuilt, and I think this was the point that both you and Mr Shoebridge were pursuing in the earlier session, I think it would be extremely difficult and embarrassing for the Government were Willow Grove not to be relocated and rebuilt, as has been promised. That concession was made after consultation with unions, consultation with Indigenous landowners, consultation with the local community. The concession was made as it was made in relation to the St George's Terrace. So it is something that has to be delivered, and it is our expectation and our intention to deliver it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But, Ms Havilah—

**The CHAIR:** Further to that, Mr Collins, there has been a lot of talk about demolition, reconstruction, it goes off somewhere else, something appropriate to the community, but no-one has talked in any detail whatsoever about the concerns of the Dharug people on that site. There has been nothing. I asked the question or a couple of questions on it earlier on and all we got was, "We will take that on notice."

**Mr COLLINS:** I can say, Chair, that it is something I have discussed with the Chief Executive, Lisa Havilah, and it is our intention, once we have full access to the site and what is beneath it, to conduct an archaeological dig to see whether there are artefacts other than those that have already been pointed out.

**The CHAIR:** This might not just be a physical thing, Mr Collins.

**Mr COLLINS:** No, that is right. I concur, but I think if you look at it from an Indigenous point of view, the approach of the First Nations is that the entire country is—

**The CHAIR:** Yes, but let us just confine it to the banks of the Parramatta River. That is one of the very few sites that is left, potentially, that those people can maintain an ongoing, unbroken linkage. Ms Havilah, have you actually spoken to the Dharug people directly?

**Mr COLLINS:** Chair, just before Ms Havilah answers, at the moment though that very riverbank is scarred by, I have got to say, a pretty miserable-looking car park and a whole lot of annexes that have been tacked on out the back of Willow Grove. They bring no credit to the site whatsoever and no-one has mentioned a word about this until now.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But they were desecration when they were built and what the Dharug people are saying is, "Stop. Don't do this again", and they talk about the curtilage of Willow Grove and the deep, undisturbed soil that surrounds that beautiful curtilage of Willow Grove, and they say it is a healing place, it is a

women's place, it has been respected by the maternity hospital—it is special to them, and those demands and cries have been ignored. What do you say to the Dharug people?

**Mr COLLINS:** I have been working my way through a long list of critics of what is proposed and I have yet to meet with the Dharug people, but I certainly will. Tomorrow we will be meeting with the North Parramatta action group and after that we will be meeting with the Deerubbin land council in Parramatta. We are keen to explore their feelings on these things and to work out what progress we can take.

**The CHAIR:** You have sort of pre-empted a bit of it, but I was going to ask Ms Havilah whether she actually met with the Dharug people directly concerned with that piece of land and also, of course, the North Parramatta Residents Action Group.

**Ms HAVILAH:** I have ongoing meetings with stakeholders across Parramatta all the time.

**The CHAIR:** But have you met with the North Parramatta action group?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I have not.

**The CHAIR:** You have not, okay.

**Ms HAVILAH:** I have met with Dharug's Strategic Management Group on multiple occasions, and they are also representative of our community reference group, and I met with them onsite a couple of weeks ago as part of that ongoing process of the management of archaeology on the site, which is being led by Infrastructure NSW. There are a number of First Nations stakeholders as part of that that have been consulted and are leading that process.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The Dharug Elders that I have spoken to say that that consultation has been, I think a polite description would be, a sham. They feel like their input has not been valued and that their very strong views that Willow Grove should not be destroyed have been dismissed. Is that the kind of feedback you get, Ms Havilah?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Well, no. I have open conversations with Dharug's Strategic Management Group, which I did just two weeks ago. We want to have ongoing relationships with multiple stakeholders across First Nations, across all communities, across both Parramatta and western Sydney.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But one of the biggest residents groups who is regularly heard on this issue is the North Parramatta Residents Action Group. You are aware of them?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I am, yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You have been aware of them since you commenced your position, I assume?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Which is how long now?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Two years.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** And you have not met with them. Is it because you do not like what they say?

**Ms HAVILAH:** They have never requested a meeting. We are meeting with them this week.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So you have never reached out at all to meet with them? You say that you are involved in stakeholder engagements, you have gone and spent time at the Powerhouse site at Parramatta, but you have not picked up the phone—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** They have.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You have not picked up the phone—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** They are meeting with them this week.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You have not picked up the phone in the two years prior to today's hearing and said, "Let's have a meeting to hear your concerns directly"?

**Ms HAVILAH:** May I just make a correction? As part of the environmental impact statement we did extensive consultation and North Parramatta Residents Action Group were part of that; the members, including Suzette Meade, were involved in multiple consultations as part of that. So I have met with them—over Zoom, unfortunately, because of COVID. This will be the first time that we have an opportunity to meet in person.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I am not criticising you for having Zoom meetings during COVID, Ms Havilah, I want to be clear.

**Mr COLLINS:** Mr Shoebridge, can I add just on this point the Pymont-Ultimo Save the Powerhouse Group I met with about three or four weeks ago now and they suggested to me that I meet with the North Parramatta action group. So I have set that in train; I have had a couple of goes with Suzette Meade to fix a date and that will be at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning in Parramatta.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Collins, I am not critiquing your alacrity. It seems to me, soon after your appointment you have made those appropriate meetings, so I am not criticising yours.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Collins, from your opening statement you said that you were appointed in November 2020.

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Has the board met since then?

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes, we have had one trust meeting.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Have you, as the president of the Board of Trustees, set a new direction or given an indication to board members on how you want to move forward?

**Mr COLLINS:** I have given an outline about my actions in meeting with those who have raised issues about either Ultimo or Parramatta or Castle Hill and I will meet with as many key representatives as possible. So I certainly outlined that to the trust. I have also spoken to the trust about a number of issues. One, if I recall my remarks at that trust meeting, was we need to look at—and the museum is looking at this—what goes where in each of the museums that we will have and just how the collection is distributed. Secondly, how much of the collection is on display. It is rather interesting that only a small percentage of the collection is currently on display, it is about 3 per cent, and I would like to see a massive increase in what is on display because I think what we have in our collection is fascinating. You can argue we might need even more space over time.

But I think we have got a fabulous collection that needs to get out there. So they are the sorts of issues I have talked about with the trust and we have had a good response. Following that trust meeting, I think nearly all members of the trust visited the Castle Hill site to go through the backblocks and see what is in the collection.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Collins, in your answer you referred to exhibiting and putting objects out there. Ms Havilah, there has been quite a bit—it was on the front page of the *Goulburn Post* and lots of coverage down in Goulburn—about moving the steam engine to Goulburn, returning it to Goulburn, so to speak. I have got a copy of the Goulburn Mulwaree Council business paper for tomorrow evening and it says that you no longer support moving the steam engine to Goulburn. What has happened there?

**Ms HAVILAH:** The consideration of the loan of the Maudslay engine is an ongoing consideration.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Not according to the business paper.

**Ms HAVILAH:** I am not sure where that advice has come from. I believe that it is there.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I will quote directly from it. It is the business paper for tomorrow's meeting, "This proposal is no longer supported by the management at Powerhouse Museum and is unlikely to proceed in the short term", and that is the recommendation to the council involving this long-running debate about whether it is going to be returned to Goulburn.

**Ms HAVILAH:** I am not sure where they received that advice but I would like to take that on notice.

**Mr COLLINS:** Can I add to this? Kylie Winkworth, who I am sure is well known to members of the Committee, raised the potential loan of the engine to Goulburn with me, saying that in her view, and in the view of a number of people with significant collections knowledge, this was not something that, in her view, we should do. I said that I would raise that with the chief executive, which I have about a week ago. So whereas we are open to and, indeed, keen to support regional museums, because once upon a time the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has consisted of a lot of regional museums, including one in Bathurst that I recall that particularly inspired me, while we are keen to assist regional museums and to look at loans from time to time, this is something that we are going to consider carefully because we need to look at what goes in the Powerhouse at Ultimo when we know what our budget is—to refresh it and really get it up to speed again. I think the chief executive and I are of one view that there should be a single standard of presentation which should be world's best practice in both Parramatta and Ultimo and, for that matter, to a lesser extent, Castle Hill.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I just want to close the loop on this here. So it is actually a recommendation from the general manager. Will you be communicating with Goulburn council and getting clarification on what your position is on the steam engine?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I will take that on notice and I will look into that. Thank you for raising that.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That is okay. In a way perhaps it might lead on to my question, which is, does it concern you, either Ms Havilah or Mr Collins, that once again there seems to have been a miscommunication between your side and, in this instance, Goulburn council? I think there are plenty of examples where they have listed on their business paper a clear direction from you, a clear understanding that you are not proceeding and you do not seem to know where that has come from or why that has occurred. Does that concern you that there has been that sort of miscommunication?

**Mr COLLINS:** Let me start and then Ms Havilah might add. I was asked whether I had set any sort of direction at my first trust meeting. The trust has been refreshed. I have taken the chair of it from Barney Glover, for whom I have deep admiration, and we need to look very carefully at what we have got in our collection and where it goes appropriately. With this particular engine it is not a small item, it is not something that you can just shove around in some sort of travelling exhibition; it is one that looks for a fairly permanent home. I think that while we have been open to the idea of a loan and viewed it sympathetically earlier on, I think it is something we need to reassess and we need to look at what goes back into the Powerhouse. One thing I have said to the trust is we need to look at getting much more of our collection on display because it is fantastic, it is limitless and it is exciting, and this is what we want to expose to the people of western Sydney with Parramatta.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** There is no disagreement that, in fact, loaning it or moving it would be challenging. In fact, this Committee has received evidence on that point, some months ago in fact, mid-last year. So perhaps, Mr Collins, it might just be a reflection in terms of your new role. How much time are you having to spend putting out these spot fires, for want of a better word, on this project? Because whether it is the loan to Goulburn, whether it is the North Parramatta Residents Action Group, the Ultimo action group, there are a lot of concerns. We have a long list of things we can ask questions about. You have taken to your new role with vigour, but how much time are you spending putting out these spot fires on behalf of the Government?

**Mr COLLINS:** I will not say I am spending all my time putting out spot fires, although that is part of it, but I am spending more time on the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences than any of the dozen or so public authorities which I have chaired since leaving Parliament. This is remarkably time-consuming, and not surprisingly because it is a very high-profile, exciting and in excess of a billion-dollar budget already for this museum—you have got to look at this in Opera House terms. So the answer is I am spending about three or four days a week at the moment doing things for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and of course you know what my pay rate is.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** We thank you for your voluntary service on behalf of the people of New South Wales. One issue that has been raised previously, again on communication was—this is my characterisation; of course, Ms Havilah and your predecessor were more diplomatic—the limited communication that was received, for example, on the decision to keep the Ultimo site. There was evidence that we received that the team at the Powerhouse received I think it was a day's notice of the Government's announcement to massively change course and keep the Ultimo site. Is that something that you have raised with the Minister in your new role, wanting to improve that communication?

**Mr COLLINS:** I think, to put it as diplomatically as I can, the Powerhouse has been through a turbulent period with a lot of controversy.

**The CHAIR:** That is an understatement, Mr Collins.

**Mr COLLINS:** I see my job as trying to get everybody on the same page and to move this forward. My job is not to make the political decisions or the budget decisions anymore; that is of another era. My job is to implement this, and to ensure that we have good governance at the museum and that we have a highly motivated workforce. We do have that and I think they need to understand that there is a way forward now. There is a very clear direction. Things are not going to change. They are not going to read about it in the newspaper. We have a firm direction with a set of goals and we are proceeding along those lines.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Are you confident, in terms of your capacity to do that implementation, that you are getting the communication and support from the Government to achieve that?

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes, I am. The missing part of the jigsaw at the moment is that we do not know what the amount is for Ultimo. All I can say is that the signs have been encouraging and we expect to know that answer by the end of April.



**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I would now like to ask something about the money, if that is okay? When you say—and you were being quite frank with us—you do not know what the envelope is for Ultimo, does that mean you do not know how much money will be available to renovate the Ultimo site?

**Mr COLLINS:** We do not know our budget yet, Mr Shoebridge. We have made a detailed submission and provided the Government with various options. We are waiting to see which of those it is.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** And that is still going through the Expenditure Review Committee black box process and you will get an answer at some point?

**Mr COLLINS:** I would think we will get an answer within a couple of months, on the current schedule.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Ms Havilah, I asked the Minister how much of the \$75 million that is required from donations has been received to actually build the Powerhouse at Parramatta. His answer was "none". Is that right? None of the \$75 million has been received?

**Ms HAVILAH:** We have appointed a campaign committee and we have a strategy that we are working through. We are working very closely with the trust in the delivery of that strategy. I feel confident, as does the Minister and the trust, that we will be successful in raising that \$75 million.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But my question was really kind of simple. It was whether or not you can confirm that not a dollar has yet been put into a bank account.

**Ms HAVILAH:** I can confirm that.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Alright. When in 2019 was the \$75 million plan announced? Can you remember?

**Ms HAVILAH:** November. Sorry, can you ask that question again?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** When was it announced that you wanted \$75 million in donations? I have got reporting that goes back to November of 2019 but I cannot see an announcement.

**Ms HAVILAH:** That would be right, but I have to take that on notice for the exact date.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So let us assume at least November 2019. That is now the better part of a year and a half and you have not received a dollar. How is that on track?

**Ms HAVILAH:** We have made very significant progress and that progress is confidential until the Government and the trust are ready to make an announcement about it.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** May I ask a question about the campaign committee?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Campaign team, sorry, to correct you. It is staff of the Powerhouse.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Are there parameters set for those on the team about how they will actually get the \$75 million? For example, will they be able to do so in exchange for naming rights to certain wings and things like that? Is that part of their campaign strategy?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Of course, yes. It is part of any capital campaign strategy and we have a policy for that as well.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The Atlassian Hall?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Yes, I was going to ask that. So you will have parts of the Powerhouse Museum in Parramatta named after individuals who will give donations as part of the \$75 million?

**Ms HAVILAH:** That will be a consideration of Government and a consideration of the trust. It is naturally something that will be considered as part of the campaign plan and the strategy for implementation.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** The \$75 million—is it purely philanthropy or does it also involve commercialisation and renting out facilities? How is the phrase "philanthropy" interpreted by your team?

**Ms HAVILAH:** It is philanthropy as a gift.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** As a gift?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So part of it can be named after you in exchange for funding.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Could I ask about how you are going to afford to run the Parramatta Powerhouse? What is MAAS's current operating budget?

**Ms HAVILAH:** The investment from Government is \$28 million.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** And with that, you are currently running the Powerhouse site at Ultimo, the Sydney Observatory and the Castle Hill site. Is that right?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Correct.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** How much is it going to cost to run the Parramatta site?

**Ms HAVILAH:** That is part of the business case for Parramatta and Ultimo. The operational costs are integrated into that business case and are currently being considered by Government.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So you cannot tell us how much it is going to cost to run the Parramatta site, or even an estimate of how much it is going to cost?

**Ms HAVILAH:** It is part of the business case that is being considered by Government.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Unless you get a substantial increase in ongoing Government funding, you will not be able to get the lights on, will you, Ms Havilah? Has that been promised to you?

**Ms HAVILAH:** The business case is being considered and I think it is a very robust business case. Of course, we require Government investment, but the way that Parramatta is run and how we would like to move forward with Ultimo is also to take responsibility in terms of earning income and creating active, dynamic precincts, which is what the community expects. Institutions like ours raise money through commercial programs, events and retail. We very much have responsibility to integrate those things. Yes, we will require Government investment, but we are taking very seriously our responsibility to offset that Government investment and to create vibrant, engaged precincts. As part of that, we are truly rethinking what a museum should and could be for its community. That includes expanded opening hours, contributing to the night-time economy and contributing to the visitor economy. That is critically important in the structure of our operations.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Collins, you mentioned earlier in your evidence that the board and you had put forward a number of scenarios for the improvement of the Ultimo site. I am sure everyone here is in furious agreement with you that there is a huge part of the collection that never sees the light of day; as you say, 3 per cent is on exhibition. Given all of that, in those submissions what is the future of the Harwood building at that site? There is a large project of cataloguing and digitising going on there at the moment. We were told when we visited the site that a number of those, if not most of it, would be going to Castle Hill.

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** What is the future of the Harwood building?

**Mr COLLINS:** The short answer is: It is to be determined by the Government. But if I may make these observations—this is where we conduct most of our meetings at the moment and where most of the staff are located at the moment. The Harwood building, which is an adaptive reuse of what were tram sheds, was not built for purpose. It has done its job but for the past 30 years we have been decanting to Castle Hill. Castle Hill was built as the storage facility. We have been upgrading and will continue to upgrade storage facilities at Castle Hill because it makes more sense to store objects—especially large objects of the half a million objects in our collection—at Castle Hill. It is running out of time, in terms of being a proper place for occupational health and safety.

It is not a terrific office environment for the many staff who are working in there. What happens to the site? It is for the Government to determine, but our observation and our recommendation to Government would be that it certainly remain part of the Powerhouse Ultimo precinct and that it be earmarked for museum or arts purposes. When I say "arts purposes", I think it is known that the Minister has mentioned he would like to explore whether or not you could have some theatre capacity in there. Those are the sorts of things that can be examined, but the Government will ultimately make the determination. Our recommendation would be, and our understanding is, that Harwood remains part of our precinct and will be used well into the future.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I have a couple of questions, predominantly about regional access. There has been some discussion here today about regional museums having loans from the Powerhouse. Can you give us some understanding of your vision of what you see in that space? We have heard some evidence previously from Ms Havilah about what currently is being done. That is something that I am keen to see increase and I am interested in your perspective there.

**Mr COLLINS:** My perspective for this whole appearance and the job that I am doing as president of the Powerhouse Museum is entirely framed by regional museums. If I had to name one in particular, it is the now closed museum in William Street, Bathurst. As a kid living with my grandparents on the outskirts at a housing commission house when I was 11 years old, that was where I would entertain myself on weekends. It was free. I can still tell you what some of the exhibits were. What it has absolutely etched into me is the educational significance of museums, whether they be in western Sydney or regional New South Wales. We need to get through to the imaginations and ambitions and thoughts of children across the State. Those regional museums have a vital role to play. One of the people who has been, I guess, a constant observer and critic of processes so far, Kylie Winkworth, I know is very passionate about regional museums, and not without good reason. They are a wonderful educator. They are a wonderful starting point.

One of the things that I would like to see us do, and the Committee might bear this in mind for the future, is when we do have our museums up and running, when all of this is done and dusted and Ultimo is working again and Parramatta is built, when you see an exhibit in the museum, if there are regional museums or even private museums out there—collections around the State that people should be going to—then maybe you swipe your phone over a device in our museums to say, "Look, go and see the Flying Doctor museum at Broken Hill," to which, by the way, we lent our de Havilland Drover aircraft, or "Go and see Gulgong. Get out there." There are fabulous collections right around the State. I would like to see us as a reference point, not just a kind of solitary standalone—"We've got ours and the rest of you can worry about yourselves." We would like to feed audiences to those museums as well because of the educational role they play.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Can I respectfully suggest that, if you have not already—I suspect you probably have not—you meet with Brett Adlington, the new CEO of Museums & Galleries of NSW, because of the extraordinary role he had at the Lismore Regional Gallery and that redevelopment project. He is passionate about regional areas too. I make that comment, for what it is worth.

**Mr COLLINS:** Yes.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** My second question—and I am happy for this to come back on notice as well—is what is the vision, in terms of what the Minister was talking about, for regional school students being able to come to visit the new Parramatta facility and how they can maximise that experience? Can you give us a quick outline of how that will work, with the detail on notice if you wish?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes. We are really excited. One of the key parts of cultural infrastructure that is embedded into Powerhouse Parramatta is the Academy, which is a 60-bed dormitory that will provide the opportunity for up to 10,000 regional schoolkids a year to come and stay at the museum for up to a week to completely embed themselves into science, technology, engineering and maths museum experiences, but also broader education experiences. We have started working with the New South Wales Department of Education and we are undertaking a whole range of consultation to make sure that those programs are completely embedded within the syllabus and that we can create very distinctive and special museum experiences for young regional people.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Do you know if there is any equivalent program like that in the State or the country at the moment?

**Ms HAVILAH:** No, I believe that this is a national precedent. I think what it will demonstrate over the years through its implementation is that by giving young people direct access to seeing people who are in science, technology, engineering and maths [STEM] jobs and STEM employment and engaging them directly with STEM education in different and unique ways, we can actually create pathways for young people into different types of industries and into science and technology.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I want to ask about some of the financial figures. In 2018-19, the Department of Premier and Cabinet was required to contribute over \$5 million as a funding adjustment. Can you talk us through how that shortfall occurred?

**Ms HAVILAH:** As a natural part of the financial operations of the museum, that reimbursement—sorry. Give me one second.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It was \$5.23 million, to be exact.

**Ms HAVILAH:** Yes. It was a normal cash buffer process that is run by Treasury and it happens across—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I think the Audit Office described it as very uncommon, in fact. The Audit Office described it as not common at all that a public body like the Powerhouse would require that sort of overdraft.

**Ms HAVILAH:** My understanding is that it is a normal process, but I am happy to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I understand it would be a normal process that, if the Powerhouse Museum is about to run out of money, the Government would come in and provide it some support. That would be normal. I suppose my understanding is the budgeted shortfall was \$3 million, and that then blew out to close to \$6 million and the Government was required to come in, in what the Audit Office described as quite an unusual situation.

**Ms HAVILAH:** Just to be clear about the \$3 million, that was reimbursement—timing around a reimbursement. It was not a deficit against a budget. The way that the project is financially managed is that we spend against the budget and we invoice each month, and that was a delay in that reimbursement of the \$3 million. So it was not a deficit against a budget.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** But it was not, in fact, \$3 million in the end. It was significantly more than \$3 million.

**Ms HAVILAH:** No, they are two separate things: the \$5 million cash buffer and the \$3 million reimbursement.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Just on the \$5 million cash buffer, then, is there no additional explanation for why that budgetary buffer was required?

**Ms FOY:** If I may take that on notice, because with the Department of Premier and Cabinet [DPC]—I do not want to be completely determinate but I do want to check whether that was part of the machinery-of-government changes between the Department of Planning and DPC. There may have been some cash adjustments required as part of that. I would like to go back and check if that is the case, so we can provide you with an exact answer. In doing so, I am very happy to review that comment that you are providing from the Audit Office, if that can be tabled, so we can provide that information.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That is fine.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Ms Havilah, in your opening statement you mentioned the 2021 exhibition program. How did the uncertainty in the chopping and changing last year affect your programming for this year? Did you have to scramble to put exhibitions together and curate them for this year? How did that impact on your exhibition program this year?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Following the July announcement of the retention of Ultimo, which we were incredibly excited about, the curatorial team worked to develop our 2021 program. It gave us an extraordinary opportunity to develop projects that were completely focused on our collection. That is with the exception of a great partnership that we have established with the National Museum of Korea with a project called 500 Arhats, which is an exhibition that celebrates the sixtieth anniversary of friendship between Australia and Korea. We have a fantastic curatorial team. They have done a great job working on not only our '21 program, but also our '22 program, which is well into development.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Have we revised or established the completion date for the Powerhouse Parramatta?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Not to my understanding.

**The CHAIR:** They have not even got a start date yet.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** But I would like to know.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** They have not got a business case yet.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So there is no business case, no start date and no completion date?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** A business case is being developed. They are currently in the process of that. We are doing things in their obvious order.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** We have had five prior business cases.

**The CHAIR:** We have never actually seen a business case, have we?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Ms Havilah, do you have a target opening date?

**Ms HAVILAH:** Infrastructure NSW, who is our delivery partner, are leading the delivery of the project, and as you heard from the Minister, it moved into delivery today after the planning approval. Infrastructure NSW,

as you would have heard directly from Simon Draper, they do not like to give a date because it is, of course, dependent on the process of the delivery of the project.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It was first kicked around February 2015 and we still do not have a completion date, is that correct?

**Ms HAVILAH:** We have a delivery time frame and we have started delivery today.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** When does the delivery time frame end?

**Ms HAVILAH:** I would refer you to my delivery partner, INSW, if you would like—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** But you do not know, Ms Havilah.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You are the client, Ms Havilah, you must know when you are going to open the door.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I think if I ordered a museum I would want to know the delivery date.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Collins, can you help us here?

**Mr COLLINS:** Chair, may I make this offering? I know the Committee does not like the term, "take it on notice", but we would like to try to get back to you with some indication as to time lines.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Collins, you and I have known each other for a long time, you are a thorough professional. I am pretty sure—and I have even described you as one of the State's best arts Ministers, which I am probably going to regret, but yes, I did that—you must have said when you took on the role, "What's the delivery date? What's the completion date we are talking towards, Don?"

**Mr COLLINS:** I have a pretty good idea.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Can you share it with us?

**Mr COLLINS:** And what I am saying and offering, Chair, is if we can take that away with us and see if we cannot come back to the Committee with some indication as to approximate time lines. There are contracts yet to be signed and so on. I think that we should be able to give you ballpark dates.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Do you get the frustration, though? This is now five, six years since it started. We do not have a business case, we do not have an opening target date, we do not know where Willow Grove is going. Six years into the process these should be pretty easy questions to answer, should they not, Mr Collins? I am not blaming you for the past six years, but you should be able to have these answers?

**Mr COLLINS:** I am trying to assist the Committee, Mr Shoebridge, in whatever I can do. I am not stonewalling you on this. I hear what you are saying, and if we can get some at least indicative dates, then I will do so. But I would just like to get that clarified elsewhere and come back to the Committee, if that is all right.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** On that happy note, Mr Chair, I note that we are three minutes over the allotted time.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** And I just want to remind the Committee—

**The CHAIR:** I note also that I am the Chairman.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** That was why I was very respectfully drawing your attention to it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You see how useful it is to have a deadline to work to. Do you see that?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Chair, with your indulgence, I want to say that the original commitment was that the museum would be opened before the 2019 State election.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I do not know that that was the case.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It was.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Yes, it was. That was the original commitment.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** That was a few Premiers ago.

**The CHAIR:** That was a few Premiers ago.

**Mr COLLINS:** Chair, an amusing note on which to end about opening dates, I had looked forward to the opening of the Museum of Sydney immediately before the 1995 election, which for those who note electoral statistics was a pretty close election, and unfortunately due to rubber membranes on the roof it could not be opened

prior to the election by myself, then as arts Minister, and was opened as the first project delivered by the incoming Government about three weeks after the election. So we will try to get you some indication as to dates.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**CHRISTOPHER BROWN**, Chair, Western Sydney Powerhouse Museum Community Alliance, before the Committee via videoconference, sworn and examined

**The CHAIR:** Would you like to make a short opening statement?

**Mr BROWN:** I would first list an apology. I am broadcasting from home because I have got a little burst of bronchitis. Despite massive public health issues I managed to catch bronchitis during the lockdown. My apologies if there is a slight mute for a second while I cough and spare you the glory of it all. I am delighted to be able to be part of this inquiry, delighted to have this role as a proud son of Parramatta, delighted that the Government has decided to finally invest in the cultural facilities to spend some of the literally billions of dollars of taxes that the people of western Sydney pay on cultural facilities in the greater west. I think we are dealing with a portfolio, the only one in all of government where 90-plus per cent of the entire scheming of the Arts portfolio is spent in one local government area in the inner city of Sydney.

While I am very proud of the cultural institutions I have grown up with in my broad city, I am even prouder that some of them might now finally, finally be drifting west to where the great mass of those taxpayers in the community live and not hived away just for the benefit of the inner city and the eastern suburbs. I am delighted that the inquiry, the parliamentary Committee, has shown an interest in this. I would be more delighted if its interests were centred largely on how we can start this as a process to get more cultural institutions, more equitable spending of arts funding and more support for the people of greater Sydney in this process and not necessarily focused on the process issues about which the kids of western Sydney care little. The families simply want the chance to see the great institutional benefits that museum has to offer and hopefully the museums and galleries and theatres that will follow in its wake as this part of the city grows to more than 50 per cent of the entire population of Greater Sydney.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Questions?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Brown, do you have a formal relationship with the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences? What is your relationship with them?

**Mr BROWN:** My relationship is chairing the alliance that brings together a range of community groups right across greater western Sydney who support that. I am also, my role largely has been as an avid consumer of the MAAS through some years through servantry, particularly. I know I have said I am a bit of a stargazer, so not nearly enough, like most of Sydney, never enough to Piermont because it is too hard to get to. Thirdly, I am also the chairman of the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue and the MAAS has only in recent times also organised something with which we were involved. My previous role was at tourism and transport for many years. I think from memory back in the day the Powerhouse also served as a part of it, recognising its importance in the tourism framework in the city.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Without revealing your location, what part of western Sydney are you giving evidence from now?

**Mr BROWN:** I am not. I am home sick. I am on a farm recuperating well and self-isolating so as to not be accused of being a public health hazard.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You are in the Western Sydney Powerhouse Museum Community Alliance. Are you based in western Sydney?

**Mr BROWN:** The alliance is based in western Sydney, yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Are you based in western Sydney?

**Mr BROWN:** In which way? I can tell that is a somewhat tricky question, Walt, but what specifically are you after?

**The CHAIR:** Where do you live?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Where do you live?

**Mr BROWN:** I live in the Southern Highlands at the far extreme of the west, just by Wollondilly.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Because I have seen public comments from you as a champion for western Sydney and I just wanted to establish that you lived in western Sydney.

**Mr BROWN:** So we are going to open up my western Sydney credentials. You think that is an appropriate use of taxpayers' time, Walt. I am happy to go there, my friend. I expected a little more of you, to be honest. But let's go.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Whoa, Mr Brown.

**Mr BROWN:** Let us go to no illusion. This meeting was set up to try to deny the majority of people in western Sydney this museum.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** That is untrue, Mr Brown. And I would prefer that you refer to people by their titles.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Brown, we prefer that you respond to questions rather than make speeches. Your view in relation to what this Committee's duty is or is not is not directly relevant. We would like you to please just answer the questions if you can.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** We have done you the courtesy of giving you this chance to speak.

**Mr BROWN:** Thank you very much for giving me the chance to speak.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Did your committee support the destruction of the oldest licensed hotel in Australia, one of the key parts of Parramatta's heritage fabric—being the destruction of the Royal Oak Hotel? Did your committee support that?

**Mr BROWN:** I must admit that the committee did not have a view on trying to help save the Royal Oak Hotel. The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue raised with Government the need to [audio malfunction] need to be in place. For me it has even greater significance. It is also the place where the great Parramatta Eels convened for their Mad Mondays normally.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But your committee did not have a position on that. Your leadership team did not have a position on that.

**Mr BROWN:** Yes, the leadership team had a position on that. But we believed, we sought advice from Transport as to why that needed to happen and we were convinced there was no chance otherwise despite my personal misgivings and I believe it was part of the light rail routing.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Your leadership team supported the destruction of the Royal Oak Hotel, did it not? It supported the destruction of one of the oldest buildings in Parramatta and the longest standing continually licensed pub in the country. Your leadership team supported the destruction of that.

**Mr BROWN:** I grew up amid the history of Parramatta—growing up everyday. Cadmans Cottage, Elizabeth Farm, Experiment Farm Cottage, Parramatta goal—I spent eight years on the board of the magnificent university house and the Female Orphan School. I do not think I need to be lectured by inner-city Greens about the heritage of Parramatta, with the greatest of respect.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** If you could just answer the question, Mr Brown, it might be helpful. Your leadership team supported the destruction of that critical Parramatta heritage site and now you support the destruction of Willow Grove.

**Mr BROWN:** Are we going from bad to worse?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Let me finish the question, Mr Brown. It will work better this way. I will let you finish your answer. You let me finish the question.

**Mr BROWN:** I will state for the third time that we raised this concern with the Government about the need for that to go down as part of the light rail [audio malfunction]

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Yes, your western Sydney leadership team supported the destruction of the Royal Oak Hotel. You now support the destruction of Willow Grove. Is any part of Parramatta's heritage valuable enough for you to put your hand up and try to save?

**Mr BROWN:** I just do not believe that. As I have said, living amongst it all the time and not discovering it five minutes ago, forgive my political banter, from an inner-city perspective but actually being part of that history of Parramatta. My family has a history in Parramatta.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Look, mate, I worked in Parramatta for three years myself. I care about it. I would not let it be destroyed.



**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Point of order: The witness actually allowed the question to be asked in silence on that occasion—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Because his internet broke.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** —and the witness is now trying to answer. The member is trying to cut in over the top of him. I think there is a challenge here because of the format in which we are doing questions and answers. I ask the Chair if there could be a bit more restraint on both sides and that there can be a question and an answer without interruption.

**The CHAIR:** Could each side please be a little bit more considerate in terms of the timing of the questioning and answering?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I ask you again, Mr Brown, is there any part of Parramatta's heritage that you are willing to put a stake in the ground and say should not be destroyed?

**Mr BROWN:** There is every—as I have made a life and a career out of doing, including up to and most recently reaching out to Bruce Beresford over the weekend to join him in the fight for the Roxy Theatre, where I watched Star Wars in 1977. I came out on the steps and will fight to the nth degree to save it. I have been involved in the campaign for Lancer Barracks. I have been involved previously in years past in the campaign for Elizabeth Farm and for the Female Orphan School—currently the work will come out. But do not for five minutes try to equate Willow Grove—a very modestly important heritage site—with the truly great convict and Indigenous heritage of western Sydney. That would be one of the great acts of political hypocrisy.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Have you spoken to the Dharug people about the Indigenous heritage there? Or is that just your self-assessment from Wollondilly?

**Mr BROWN:** I have actually engaged with my Indigenous advisers—sorry, my trusted Indigenous advisers. The Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council are the owners, proudly under New South Wales legislation, and currently the guardians of Indigenous people in western Sydney. They are active members of this alliance. I am also working with them to try to get the spirit of the Powerhouse to continue and establish the world's greatest Indigenous gallery and cultural centre in that Parramatta jail that is on Deerubbin land. We have been actively engaged in our Indigenous consultation right from the beginning.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Obviously you were pleased and excited personally. Obviously the community alliance did not exist then. But as an individual involved in it when the Government made this announcement way back in 2015, you were supportive and excited at that time. We have just heard evidence from the Minister and the new chair of the museum Board of Trustees, Peter Collins, that there is no time frame at all at this point. They could not give us a sod-turning day or an opening day. It has been six years since that exciting time for you when this project was announced and we have no time frame at all for when this fantastic facility will be opening in western Sydney. Does that frustrate or concern you?

**Mr BROWN:** You bet. It also frustrates me that we got a vote from the Government three times that ANZ Stadium would be upgraded. It frustrates me that we want a commitment from the Government to build Parramatta Light Rail through to Olympic Park. A lot of things frustrate me when advocating for western Sydney. How long this project will take is frustrating. But I think we all have had some frustrations. There has been an activist campaign by people in the city particularly. Those who even said early on—people for whom I have great respect—what was the quote? "Just give them an immigration museum." In other words, that is all the west is. They are all migrants. Give them that. Do not let them have any of the high culture. Do not let them close to any of the real things we care about. Toss them an immigration museum. I am frustrated that we are still having to have this argument with people who are denying western Sydney the right to get this museum. I am frustrated about the process on the Government side. I am frustrated about the politics on either side. Let us all get going and give people from western Sydney that promise they deserve.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I understand your concerns, although surely you would accept that people like the North Parramatta Residents Action Group, which has been a key leader in raising some of those concerns that you have articulated—it is really unfair to that group of people, who do live in and around Parramatta, to dismissively describe them as inner-city activists. They are local people who have those genuine concerns.

**Mr BROWN:** Sorry, I did not describe them as that; I described them as "western Sydney activists". But when compared to the list of organisations that are part of this alliance it is one small group backed by some friends of the CFMMEU. I can remember a time when unions cared about getting people a job; I know that is long past in some cases the CFMMEU's days. But the array of organisations in western Sydney that are clamouring for this, that have stood up despite the opposition and the threats against them by the residents and the implied threats from the union—they have turned up, fronted up. They are groups across vibrant communities, professional

communities, educational groups and Indigenous groups. Please do not have us believe that one noisy group, the North Parramatta Residents Action Group, equates to the incredible array of community groups speaking out in favour of our right to have this museum to tell our stories to our kids.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** On the content of the museum, obviously the initial announcement was the relocation of the facility now in Ultimo. The Government has reversed course on that and a number—all, in fact—of the very large objects that are incredibly significant, incredibly interesting and incredibly historic at the Ultimo site will be staying there. None of them are coming to Parramatta now. When asked about what is going to be in the Parramatta facility there is a lot of language around—

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** That was three items, Rose. There are half a million items, so 499,997 items—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Thank you. I am asking questions of Mr Brown.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I am just helping with your information.

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** My favourite description of the Parramatta Powerhouse is the "galactical spaces" that will be out there. Are you concerned that the vision for a world-class facility in Parramatta with some of these very large, significant objects has all gone down the drain and that, in fact, you are now getting a second-rate museum and the Government does not have a particularly strong vision of what is actually going to be in the Powerhouse facility beyond words that do not really mean anything?

**Mr BROWN:** We look forward to the curation of a museum that is not only academically and technically proficient with great creativity; we also look forward to a magnificent new public building. It goes to the very essence of why we are supporting this project. We are trying to reshape the central city of Sydney, the great [inaudible] from Olympic Park to Blacktown. We are trying to create a western parkland in the city of Sydney. Great cities deserve great buildings. They should not all exist at Macquarie Street—such as the magnificent building in which members of the Committee sit today. They should not all exist there. They should be spread out. If great cities want to take on greatness they need that public building. What houses it is magnificently important. What is inside it—I hope we get every possible bit of greatness in content we can have when the building is finished and then I hope we go and get a lot more, particularly some that reflects the western Sydney hosts of the new museum.

If there is a chance to start over we will be punching and fighting as hard as possible to get recurrent funding. I heard the questioning earlier of Lisa Haviilah about recurrent funding. That is a challenge our alliance will take up to ensure there is enough money to get this project—a fight we will take up to ensure we get a completion date confirmed and to ensure that this museum will be as magnificent as it can be, and that it is the first of a number of cultural institutions. We are coming for the rest of it as well. Long may he rest in peace, the great Ed Capon, but his legendary resistance to set up an annex in Parramatta was emblematic of way too much a view of the inner city that the people of western Sydney do not deserve to be trusted with the great cultural institutions that their hard work and taxes pay for. We will never allow that argument to roll and be unchallenged again.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** One of the parts of the original articulation back in 2015 for moving, as it was then, the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta was that it would be part of a "cultural ribbon", I think was the phrase then used, linking to the Riverside Theatre and others. Are you concerned that there has been no real movement on any other part of that cultural ribbon at all? In fact, the Riverside Theatre redevelopment project is seemingly at a complete standstill. The Government has allocated no additional investment in that project. Does that concern you? Is that something that you have been advocating for with Government?

**Mr BROWN:** Yes, and yes. I am very concerned by it. I have mentioned before the personal connection to the Roxy. I can look at it with great pride that when my father was Federal member for Parramatta and Federal arts Minister he paid for the Riverside Theatre as a bicentennial project in Parramatta. I am greatly concerned that while a commitment has been given by Government to fund the extension of Riverside we have not actually seen anything happen yet. That is something that we have raised. We raised it publicly with Minister Harwin and Minister Lee last week in the presence of Chairman Collins, calling not only for the funding for the Roxy and the Riverside to be made real but also for the Government to consider the funding of the Aboriginal First Nations cultural centre and gallery in the Parramatta Gaol that we publicly announced last December.

Yes, we are frustrated by that, but also that it is not only Parramatta. Where is the funding for the permanent Penrith opera arts company? Where is the movement by Government to take the Campbelltown Arts Centre back under State control to fund it properly? I was proudly part of the Moorebank Intermodal board around

Save the Casula Powerhouse, which was slated for destruction. The cultural debate in western Sydney does not begin and end in Parramatta, but it is the most important first step to allow that ribbon to thread not only through the streets of Parramatta but flow right across Greater Western Sydney.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Would you be prepared to let the Committee know of Minister Harwin or Minister Lee's response in your meeting to your advocacy on this point? Were any commitments given? Were you given any confidence by them that that element of this project—which, as I said, was at the very core of it from the very beginning but has really dropped off—was going to be reinstated?

**Mr BROWN:** I have to confirm that the statement was read out by one of my team because this same bronchitis affliction had me not attend the meeting of the alliance I was hosting. But I am reliably informed Minister Harwin was quite excited about the concept of the Indigenous gallery in the jail. I did not have any specific feedback about the others. The Government is well aware of our concerns about Riverside and we will continue to raise them. I have not had a satisfactory response yet other than a commitment to fund it, but I am awaiting more detail. Only this weekend, with Bruce Beresford's support, the campaign for the Roxy will kick off again to try to save that. Hopefully as part of the development of the Parramatta metro station Government should be imposed upon to ensure that it is saved, redeveloped and protected for the people of Parramatta and beyond.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Brown, the Western Sydney Powerhouse Museum Community Alliance that you chair, who is actually in that alliance? Can you outline those organisations?

**Mr BROWN:** Sure. The Campbelltown Arts Centre; the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre; the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta; Coleman & Greig Lawyers; the Committee for Sydney; the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council; FORM Dance Projects Gandhi Creations; Greater Western Sydney Giants; Leo Tanoi; L-FRESH the LION—one of the great cultural exports of Campbelltown; Museums & Galleries of NSW; Night Time Industries Association; NSW Council for Pacific Communities; Overton Creative Consulting; Pacific Business, Sport & Entrepreneurs; the Parramatta Eels; St John's Anglican Cathedral, Parramatta; the Sydney Festival; the Westmead Institute for Medical Research and the Westmead Institute for Medical Research Foundation; the University of Sydney; the Western Sydney Business Chamber; the Western Sydney Business Connection; the Western Sydney Community Forum; the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue; Western Sydney University; the Western Sydney Wanderers; and western Sydney Women in Business.

**The CHAIR:** That is certainly a comprehensive list of people—of organisations, anyway. What is your view in relation to the Willow Grove building and its curtilage? How should it be treated from a western Sydney and Parramatta point of view?

**Mr BROWN:** I think if it can be saved and moved then that would be good. It would be hypocritical of me if I were to say this is a thing of the most heritage significance in Parramatta; it quite simply is not. I think Peter Collins called it an attractive building, the terraces—and they are. I would hope all heritage in Parramatta can be saved and where it has been levelled for a car park—the McDonald's I used to work in at Parramatta was shifted for a car park. That had heritage—not quite as much as this. I grew up next to the King's School. I did not like it much. I was at Burnside Primary School on one side of it and Cumberland High School on the other.

The King's School sat next to me. That was another building that was moved brick by brick from the old King's School site to North Parramatta some years ago, à la Linden House within the Lancer Barracks. I trust in the science; I am reliably informed relocation can happen well. It would make an ideal part of the heritage precinct at North Parramatta, amongst the other heritage gems of the region, and I support that being moved if possible. But, if push comes to shove, the cultural imperative of the museum, in my personal opinion, overrules the cultural imperative of Willow Grove. It was never one of the buildings I used to visit as a kid. It has never been raised by anybody I have ever known of. I did not know it was there until this came up. Its relative importance is important here.

**The CHAIR:** We heard similar evidence from Mr Collins earlier. The fact that it was not raised until this came up does not necessarily detract from its heritage value. Usually that is when these things do come up for discussion. How do you deal with the Dharug people, who have got a direct connection to that land upon which that building stands?

**Mr BROWN:** I am informed that the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council are fully supportive of this move. I do not claim to be an Aboriginal anthropological expert. I struggle sometimes to understand who in Dharug is Dharug. I do know who is in Deerubbin, who we have a close relationship with and enormous respect for, as they are the currently the guardians of the Indigenous people of western Sydney, under the very proud New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act. I am dutifully informed by them that they are comfortable with the process and that the benefits that will flow from having a museum there potentially allows for remarkable

articulation of the First Nations heritage of the region in the new Powerhouse. It gives me comfort that this is an appropriate move.

**The CHAIR:** Are you suggesting that one group of Dharug people, who have done a deal to get a museum that is not yet funded, should offset the rights, privileges and opinions of other Dharug people, who believe that they do have a linkage to that land? Is that what you are saying? In other words, the Government should be quite happy to buy them off?

**Mr BROWN:** No. What I said was, in my view, understanding the benefit that could come from an articulation of First Nations heritage in Parramatta with this new museum would outweigh Indigenous heritage claims on the site, and that my dealings with Deerubbin, whom I entrust as my advisers in local Indigenous [audio malfunction] in the region, were comforted in that. I do not believe in disputing what is put to me by Aboriginal Elders such as the Deerubbin land council, who I know well that I should doubt that.

**The CHAIR:** How far advanced is the proposal for a Dharug museum at the old jail site?

**Mr BROWN:** We have held discussions with Deerubbin about that. We have put it to the Minister. We launched a campaign in November or December last year. I have had very early discussions with the arts Minister and we are going to brief the Federal departments on Thursday this week in Canberra, to raise our discussions about whether there can be Federal funding in what will no doubt be an election year. Considered as an act of reconciliation and a cultural investment in western Sydney—to consider that site or other sites in western Sydney for the development of what Australia has long lacked: a globally standard Indigenous art gallery and cultural centre.

**The CHAIR:** So there is yet no commitment from Government, either State or Federal, to fund such an institution?

**Mr BROWN:** No. I back myself as an advocate but I only raised the issue in December. There is a bit of time to go yet; we are considering investments of hundreds of millions of dollars of public money.

**The CHAIR:** I am sure they, and we, would appreciate that advocacy. But the reality is that nothing has actually happened yet—other than advocacy, which is good.

**Mr BROWN:** No. We are still trying to get our first museum. I am still advocating to get my first museum at Parramatta before I can go for a second one. With your help, I am sure I will be able to bring that issue forward.

**The CHAIR:** We have been trying to help for ages but the Government does not want to listen. One of our key recommendations from the last Committee was that a Powerhouse Museum should be built in Parramatta.

**Mr BROWN:** I appreciate that support.

**The CHAIR:** That was one of the key recommendations that was there, so we are very much in furious agreement with you.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I just want to ask a few questions about your background first, if I may, Mr Brown. Were you pro-chancellor of Western Sydney University?

**Mr BROWN:** I very briefly had that honour, but I was an eight-year trustee of the organisation and director. I was pro-chancellor towards the end of my role and I had the great honour of being given an honorary doctorate from the university. When you are a kid from western Sydney with no degree, it meant a lot to get an honorary doctorate from Western Sydney University.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Understood. Did you chair the Western Sydney Rail Alliance?

**Mr BROWN:** I did, indeed.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Were you the founding convenor of the Parramatta Partnership Forum and the Committee for Liverpool?

**Mr BROWN:** I was, and also the convenor of Advance Blacktown.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Do you now manage the Canterbury-Bankstown Forum and Advance Blacktown civic leadership forums?

**Mr BROWN:** Advance Blacktown, yes. Canterbury, no longer. It wound up at the end of last year, but I did have that role. You are right.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Do you chair the South West Sydney Local Health District Advisory Board?

**Mr BROWN:** I do.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Were you an adviser to the Western Sydney Parklands?

**Mr BROWN:** I was. I am also independent chair of the Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct collaboration group.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** And you were raised and educated in Parramatta itself?

**Mr BROWN:** Burnside Primary and Cumberland High, the home and the school of the great Ray Price.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Mr Brown, I cannot think of a more appropriate person to speak on behalf of the people of western Sydney and the people of Parramatta than your good self. In fact, to me, you could almost be uniquely placed in terms of your experience. That goes to the heart of my question: Why do you believe that the people of western Sydney more generally, and the people of Parramatta specifically, want the Powerhouse Museum development that the Government is proposing in Parramatta?

**Mr BROWN:** Because they have been denied their fair share of cultural funding for over 200 years. They are a proud community that is officially designated the second CBD of Greater Sydney. They have young kids who look to the stars and dream of a better life. They dream of the wonder of technology and great culture. They should not be denied access or constantly suffer the tyranny of distance to schlep into the inner city to go to the art gallery, the great museums or the State Library. It is about time Sydney shared its cultural benefits and its largesse.

It is not good enough for the branch office to simply pay their fees when the Sheriff of Nottingham comes around to collect the taxes, and for all of the good stuff to stay there—for the cultural facilities to be hoarded within one local government area. It is about time the people of western Sydney got their fair share. The Powerhouse is not the be all and end all, but it is a damn good start. It followed the start that came with the Riverside Theatre. I have got a family connection to that and the original Parramatta Stadium, way back in the eighties. It has been a long time between drinks for western Sydney.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Your words are convincing and compelling, but how do you know that the people of western Sydney share those views? How do you know that you are speaking for the people of western Sydney? How can we be assured that this is not just you going off on your own quixotic venture—that, rather, you actually speak for the people?

**Mr BROWN:** I would not be so arrogant as to assume that I speak for every person in western Sydney. I can tell you that I speak for the collection of organisations that I mentioned before. I speak for the partners of the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue. I can tell you I speak for all those who have positively given comments at the Powerhouse information booth. I know that Suzette Meade does not believe I speak for her; I am not that arrogant. I can certainly speak for the many of those who have asked me to speak on their behalf. They are unambiguous: We want our Powerhouse. We wanted it ages ago. We want it as soon as possible. We want it to be brilliant. We want a great public building. We want it to have an operating budget and we want the rest of Sydney and the world to come and enjoy it when we host it proudly at Parramatta.

**The CHAIR:** The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue was founded by Mr Christopher Brown. Thank you very much for doing that. But it was launched by Mike Baird, the very man who launched this Powerhouse concept, so obviously they were on the same page at that time. I think the patrons Mr Greiner, Mr Clyne, Craig Knowles, Dr Kerry Schott and Peter Shergold are all on the same page. We all want to see great things for western Sydney. What we do not want to see is these things being rammed through in a way that not everybody in western Sydney can agree on. Western Sydney does deserve more; we agree with that. That is why we made the recommendations we did.

**Mr BROWN:** Chair, just on a point of accuracy, in recent times both Mr Greiner and Mr Knowles have taken up posts as consul generals in other parts of the world. They have been replaced by Lucy Turnbull and Mike Mrdak, the former secretary of the Federal department of infrastructure and the arts. Thank you for the support of the Committee. Thank you for keeping Government honest, as always. Thank you for your service.

**The CHAIR:** It is a thankless task, Mr Brown, but we are working on it.

**(The witness withdrew.)**

**(Luncheon adjournment)**



**DARREN GREENFIELD**, Secretary, Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union NSW, on former affirmation

**The CHAIR:** Welcome, Mr Greenfield. Would you like to start with an opening address?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** As I did yesterday out at Willow Grove, I will start by reminding everybody that the green ban that was placed 12 months ago on Willow Grove and St George's Terrace by the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union [CFMMEU] and our members is still in place. We would like the Government, as we have requested on a number of occasions now over the past 12 to 14 months, to come and sit at the table with us and the community at western Sydney and come to a resolution that everyone is happy with and that people can live with and that is a win-win for everybody.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** After last night's coverage of the protest it has been put to me this morning, from whistleblowers inside the Government, that the Government has three tiny contractors lined up—non-unionised workforce, with fewer than 10 employees—that will find a way to get around your green ban. Are you aware of this, and is it possible?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** I am not aware of that. It is the first I have heard. I do know of the builders the Government has gone out to for the project. I think, off the top of my head, there were around six or seven and it is down to three.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I was told three.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, it is down to three now. They are builders that have enterprise bargaining agreements [EBAs] with us. Our members work for them. So, yes, that is the first I have heard of that.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So the three that the Government has shortlisted are unionised?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, they are.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Are you confident that they will adhere to the green ban?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Our members will adhere to the green ban, as they have always done.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Is there scope for the Government to use—I will use North American phrasing—scabs?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** There is, but I think this has been highlighted for the past five years—from our part, probably the past 14 months—in such a way that so many people know of the issues out there, I think they would find it very hard to go down that road and engage someone. We have not just been talking to contractors that have an agreement with us, and members; we have also been talking to other contractors as well about the importance of Willow Grove and St George's Terrace. So I think they will find it hard.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** For the benefit of members and anyone watching on the webcast or reading this in *Hansard*, can you define what the green ban is and if there are any previous examples? From my memory, there was a surf club or something.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, the last one we put on was out at Bondi Pavilion with the surf club, and we got behind that community out there. They approached us. We have had numerous over the years: obviously, The Rocks, Centennial Park. There are a number of examples out there where, looking back now, people are very happy that they were achieved. The community at Bondi were very happy that they achieved that out there to keep it for the benefit of everyone. Obviously, we are a construction union so the green ban was placed for the protection of Willow Grove and St George's Terrace, not for the museum not to go ahead. Western Sydney deserves a great museum.

We say through the green ban that Willow Grove should be retained like the Government has said it is going to retain St George's Terrace, and factor it into the building and design it into the building. We say they can do the same and still have open spaces where Willow Grove sits around it and retain Willow Grove in that position and still have a fantastic museum out there for the locals and for western Sydney. To us, it is reprehensible to pull down a building like Willow Grove just to get a walkway, and that is all we are looking at here: to get a direct walkway through the middle of Parramatta down to the water. That is why it is going. From everything we have looked at, there is no reason why Willow Grove cannot remain and still have open spaces. There are open spaces at the back behind the planned museum—behind Willow Grove. There are open spaces to both sides. There is no reason that we can see that it should remain.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** What has been the feedback to the union so far and ongoing about the green ban, both from interactions with the community and from your members? What has been the response?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** In regards to the green ban, I have been involved with the union in some form for probably 40 years—maybe 42 years. I have not seen a response to when a green ban was placed in probably 20 years like the response we got of support for the green ban on Willow Grove and St George's Terrace. That has been ongoing. Every time we are out in the media talking—every time it comes up—we just get emails, calls; it does not stop. People have taken it to heart, I think. They do not see the point, from all of the discussions I have had—and, again, yesterday out there—of building a museum and bulldozing a building with heritage value that can be used as part of that development. They just do not see—they cannot understand that.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I think the last time you were here, the proposal to relocate Willow Grove was very new. If I recall my timing correctly, it was possibly even the morning of the Committee inquiry or something that the Government had proposed that.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** With some time to reflect on that, what is your response to both the logistics, in a way, and the practicalities, with your construction background, of actually physically relocating that building? Also, is that consistent with the green ban? Would that be something that, if it were possible to do, you would contemplate?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Not in regards to the feedback we have had from the community out there and the public contacting us. You cannot really pull that building down and relocate it. It will not be the same building. It is a brick rendered building. You pull it apart—out of the announcement on Friday, all we can see there is there is a commitment to give 12 months to assess whether it is suitable. So, what—are they going to pull it down, stack it somewhere and rebuild it in 12 months? You cannot rebuild a heritage building such as that. It will be a new building. So we say it should remain there as it stands.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** What kind of tools would you use to demolish in order to rebuild? My vision of how you demolish a building is getting the wrecking ball through; this is obviously not what you would do if you want to retain and rebuild. How do you do that?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** With a heritage building such as this, to pull it apart—you have to pull it apart piece by piece. You would have workers in there by hand, pulling it apart piece by piece and stacking it. As I said, you cannot do that. You cannot remove render. What—do you tape it to the walls when you get to the other end? Do you sticky tape it? Glue it? You cannot do it. It will be a new building. It is a big job and from what we have looked at, it will be financially better off for the Government and the community out there to redesign the museum to keep the building than to pull it down and move it, because it is a big expense.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I want to ask about the time of that, because I appreciate what you are saying: You would have to do essentially do it by hand, using handheld tools.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** You have obviously been to Willow Grove. How long would that element alone take? How long would it take to dismantle something like that?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** As a rough estimate, I would say eight to 12 months to do it properly, if not longer.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** To do it properly, because they want to preserve and keep these materials.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, and rebuild.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I am looking for a rough cost. This morning we asked Mr Simon Draper from Infrastructure NSW about the rough cost, and he refused to provide any. We have seen figures in the newspaper but—again, relying on your expertise—how much would something like that cost?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** From people we have spoken to who do that sort of work, it could be anywhere up to \$25 million. It is a large cost. As I said, we just do not see the point when the museum can be redesigned to incorporate the building.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Greenfield, are there examples that you can point to where you can redesign around? Are there examples of that?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes. It happened with other buildings, and can be done all over the country, all over the world it has been done. From what we have looked at, and looked at with the community out there, it is a minimal redesign. From where Willow Grove sits on the property, a portion of Willow Grove—as you look at



it the back right hand corner—I think is fifties, sixties. Even if that had to come down, but the heritage building was to remain there, it is not a big ask to redesign the building to do that. The excuse I was given six or seven, eight months ago from Infrastructure NSW in a meeting it would take too long and set it back a year to do that. We are nearly a year down the track now. It could have been done.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** And potentially it would take eight to 12 months to do—

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Any work.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Deconstruction—I am trying not to use the word demolition—but to do the deconstruction with the level of detail that would be required to then potentially rebuild, that could take 12 months in itself?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** That is right.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Greenfield, have you ever heard of a two-storeyed, rendered or stuccoed, clay brick building being moved brick by brick, as opposed to the examples we had trotted out to us this morning where they were all actually stone buildings?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** No, I have not.

**The CHAIR:** You have not?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Sandstone blocks, yes, but not rendered, no. As I said earlier, I do not know if it is going to be the same building. As I said earlier, do you tape it to the building, do you glue it to the building? It is gone. Once you pull it down, all the render has gone, everything has gone. So, no, I have not.

**The CHAIR:** Those buildings are not built the way we build them these days, they are all tie brick buildings.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, they are.

**The CHAIR:** It cannot be the same.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** There was some slight confusion this morning about your meeting with the Minister.

**Mr GREENFIELD:** I heard, yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** He initially claimed that you had cancelled that meeting, but then to his credit he came back and said that perhaps that is not entirely accurate. Firstly, do you have a recollection about what occurred?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes, I do. I was approached on behalf of Mr Harwin by KPMG to meet and was happy to meet, I had been asking to meet. It kept getting put back on me that he would not meet without an agreed position. And that happened twice, and they cancelled the meeting, not me. I was happy to have the meeting and attend. I do not enter any meeting with a preconceived idea. We all go in supposedly for a discussion around all these issues, and they pulled the pin on it when I would not come to an agreed position. And that was at the time to agree for it to be moved to North Parramatta.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** The intermediary was KPMG?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** It still remains that you are open to a meeting with the Minister with all options on the table?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Most definitely. As we have been from day one, we are open to sit at the table and talk, and hopefully with the community as well, and western Sydney, as I said, can achieve something great here and have a fantastic museum and a heritage House that has remained there for many years.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Greenfield, what representational discussions have you had from the Dharug people on that site?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** We have had a few discussions. They have a lot of value in the trees there, in the land itself out there. As they say, to remove that house, you remove everything. It is the house, the property, the trees, it is the lot to them, to that community out there. They are dead set against anything being removed from there.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Greenfield, what happens in circumstances like this? Are we just simply at a stalemate?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** At the moment it looks that way. We would like to think Mr Harwin and the Government will come at some point to the table to try to resolve this. We do not put, as I have said many times now, green bans lightly, we do not throw them around like hot cakes. It is very in depth before we look at it before we put one on, which we did here. We were approached two or three times before we actually put the green ban on. We would like to think that they will come to the table, but it is a stalemate at the moment and the only process from here is our members will come out to defend the property out there and to back the green ban up, because they do take it very seriously when we put a green ban on. Just like the community take it very seriously out there. They have stated they will defend the building, as we will do the same.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Just to be clear, because obviously there are some people in the construction industry who unfortunately are not members of the union and so if the Government were to try to get some of those people to come, say in the middle of the night at times when maybe they think people are not paying attention, and they commenced the deconstruction of the building, what response would you have? Because, again, we are not talking a wrecking ball coming through and knocking it over very quickly, in fact we are talking about quite a detailed taking apart. Were that to commence, what would be your response to that?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** Our members would come out.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** And picket the site?

**Mr GREENFIELD:** And picket around the site with the community. As I said, they have made it quite clear that is what they will do. We will support them and come out and support the green ban we put on to convince our members and anyone that attempts to pull that building down not to pull it down, listen to the community out there. Unlike the Government they have not listened to submissions, by far from what we have seen against it, they are not listening to the community out there. Once again, I just call on them to come and sit at the table with us and the community, have a discussion and try to resolve this for the better of western Sydney, and for the Government, for everybody.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much, Mr Greenfield.

**(The witness withdrew.)**

**(Short adjournment)**

**STEVEN MOLINO**, Principal, Molino Stewart Environmental and Natural Hazards Consultants, on former affirmation

**The CHAIR:** Would you like to make a short opening statement?

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes, thank you. Mr Chairman and honourable members, thank you for inviting me again to appear before the Committee. I can see that significant progress has been made in the design of the proposed museum at Parramatta since I last appeared, but I think there are some aspects which still remain of concern to me and do not appear to have been adequately addressed in the impact assessment and approval process. When I previously appeared I said there were three risks that were of concern; risk to people, risk to neighbouring properties, and risk to the museum collections.

With regard to risk to people, I think that the design as amended and the conditions imposed will satisfactorily manage that risk. I think there has been good progress made there. In terms of risk to neighbouring properties, I do not want to get bogged down in the technical engineering side of things, but basically the way that Arup, the engineers, have modelled the flooding I think is correct and appropriate, except that Parramatta Council applies a different methodology and this is actually going to impose a financial disadvantage to neighbouring properties when they go to redevelop, the fact that the State Government has assessed it in one way, and the local government will assess it in a different way in terms of what the flood impacts at the museum are. That does not seem to have been resolved, from what I can see.

Finally, the risk to the museum collections has been recognised as a potential risk, but quite bizarrely it has been addressed as a consent condition or a condition of approval. That seems to be completely the wrong way around. I have project-managed and authored multiple EIS's, including environmental impact statements for dams and other projects that have involved significant flood risks. Normally you would assess the most significant risks during the impact assessment process, not condition it as something to be assessed after the project has been approved, because the idea is to see what the likely impacts are and to be able to demonstrate through that EIS process that those impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated to a level that is acceptable and practical. That has not been done, to my thinking, with the museum.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Molino, you have read the Friday afternoon recommendations of the—

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes, I read those on the train on the way in and I focused on the ones in relation to flooding.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You mentioned there was still a concern about a risk to the collection.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What are those risks?

**Mr MOLINO:** Nowhere is anyone suggesting that floodwaters will not get into the museum building. The EIS and the additional work done as part of the submissions report response identified that a one in 800 chance per year flood could enter the museum. To put that into context, if the museum is going to be there for 100 years, that is a 12 per cent chance that floodwaters will enter that museum. Nowhere in the EIS or in the subsequent documents has anyone asked what the consequences of water getting into the museum are, how those consequences are going to be mitigated and whether a 12 per cent chance of that happening in the design life is an acceptable chance of that happening. That is just not being addressed. Now there is a condition—I think it might be E32 from memory—that says "Oh, you better do that assessment" as a condition of approval, but the thing has been approved. Now, before you actually occupy, you do that assessment. What if you do that assessment and you go "Oh. That is going to damage—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The practical issue about this is that, if you do the assessment pursuant to that condition and you get the wrong answer, what happens?

**Mr MOLINO:** Exactly right. You go, "Oh. That is going to damage the collections and that is going to happen far more often than we are willing to accept", but now you are already way down the track with a commitment to constructing this museum. You are probably in the detailed design phases.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I want to go back to that. Simply doing an assessment under E32—if the assessment says that water is going to get in and damage the Powerhouse Museum Parramatta, the fact that you have done the assessment fulfils the recommendation.

**Mr MOLINO:** That is right.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** It actually could be this ludicrous thing: "Yes, there are problems. Yes, these things could happen, but we have done the assessment. Therefore, we have ticked the box."

**Mr MOLINO:** That is right. We are going to have a better than 10 per cent chance of losing unique and irreplaceable collection items.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** And now we know. Now let us get on and build it—

**Mr MOLINO:** That is right.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** —which would be a terrible outcome.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** A 10 to 12 per cent chance—I wrote it down. The Minister this morning said one in 2,000.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** One in 1,000.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Okay. From your expertise, would you warn someone about taking a 12 per cent chance?

**Mr MOLINO:** We need to understand some of these probability issues and I will try and keep it simple. I do not want to get into complex mathematics here.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Sorry, Mr Molino, I should just make it clear. The Minister was saying one in 1,000 years, not a one in 1,000 chance. That was my understanding anyway.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I think it was one in 1,000 in any given year.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Yes, correct.

**Mr MOLINO:** Okay. I am not going to dispute whether it is one in 1,000 or one in 100. The last report I saw from ARUP said one in 800. That is a one in 800 chance per year. But that is the chance each and every year. So the longer it is there, the more that probability accumulates. If it is there for 100 years, a one in 800 chance means that there is a 12 per cent chance in that 100-year period that floodwater is going to get in there. Similarly if you have a one in 100 chance per year of something happening, that is about a 50-50 chance that a one in 100 flood is going to be experienced in our lifetimes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Molino, can I take you to the flood condition? You said you were looking at it on the way in. I assume it is C18.

**Mr MOLINO:** No, I think it is C32.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** C18 is flood management.

**Mr MOLINO:** No, sorry, I think it is E32. I am happy to stand corrected.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** C18 is the first condition about flood management.

**Mr MOLINO:** E32 is the condition to which I am referring.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** E32 is the one I have been referring to as well.

**Mr MOLINO:** It says "prior to occupation and commencement of use". So you can build the whole thing, have it all fitted out and ready to move in, and then you do the risk assessment and say, "Oh. That is not a good outcome."

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** That is focused upon the intangible and tangible damages to the museum collection that happens after you have built it but before you get an occupation certificate.

**Mr MOLINO:** That is correct.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Then I will take you to the one I was referencing earlier. It seems to be the sort of—as much as there is—front-end design thing. It is C18, flood management. It says:

Prior to the construction of the built form of the museum the Applicant must submit evidence to the Certifier demonstrating the design of the development has:

Incorporated the management and mitigation measures contained with the document titled '*Flood Risk and Stormwater Management Report Rev 2*' ...

Do you see that?

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes. I can see that.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** The second part is about ensuring that an array of critical systems in the building are above the one in 100 year flood level.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes, and I think all of those measures in C18 are appropriate, but none of those measures in C18 really go to the nub of protecting the collections, other than the one there with regard to the climate control, part (b) (vi). At least there is some recognition that the climate control standards need to be maintained.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But we do not know in what circumstances they need to be maintained in part (b) (vi), whether it is a one in 100 year flood or a one in 1,000 year flood that they withstand.

**Mr MOLINO:** That is correct. And if there are collections on the ground floor, then they may come in direct contact with the floodwaters and so maintaining climate control does not help them much.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** When I read that condition C18, I read it as saying that most of the prescriptive requirements are to protect things from a one in 100 year flood level.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes. That is the way it reads.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** That means that over the course of the next 40 years there is a 40 per cent chance that the water would hit or exceed that level.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes. Actually in 80 years there is a 50 per cent chance of a one in 100 flood. So over 100 years it is going to be something greater than a 50 per cent chance. But they do talk about the emergency electricity generators have been designed—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It does not say.

**Mr MOLINO:** You are right. It does not say what probability event they are to work under. It just says that electrical connections are to be guarded against the one in 100.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** It does not even say one in 100. It seems to be a fairly meaningless condition.

**Mr MOLINO:** Sorry, part (b) (i) says all electrical connections and flood sensitive equipment will be located above the one in 100.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But then B6 just says something about an emergency without any standards, without any prescriptive elements.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes, you are quite correct there.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** If you have a flooding event that exceeds the one in 100 years and takes out the electrical equipment there is nothing in these conditions, as I read them, that protects the collection from moisture and mildew—

**Mr MOLINO:** No, because that emergency generator may be at a level that is affected by the one in 100 year event.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You said in your opening that you were concerned about the fact that the flood issues in this application are tested against a different standard to that which is going to be applied by City of Parramatta Council. Can you explain that in more detail?

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes, I will try to do that as simply as I can. This is in relation to the water running down the hill towards the river rather than the water in the river itself. When that water is running down the hill it arrives in Phillip Street and ponds there, and then it goes into the underground drainage system. When it exceeds the capacity of the underground drainage system it rises up above the kerb and it goes down the laneway and currently it goes down through the grounds of Willow Grove—there are two flow paths that go through there.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I remember your prior evidence on that and your particular concern that if the pipes blocked up, which is a reasonable assumption in some flooding events, the overflow needs to be safe and has sufficient capacity.

**Mr MOLINO:** That is correct. There is a risk that those underground pipes—well, not so much the pipes but the inlets into those underground pipes—will block with debris and litter and leaves.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Have you seen—there are photographs circulating of the debris collected. I am giving you an example of just what you have actually expressed concern about.

**Mr MOLINO:** There are many photos. I have not seen any specifically in that location but you do not need to convince me. However, the City of Parramatta Council, as far as I am aware, is the only council in

Australia that says when you are modelling those flows you have to assume that those inlets are 100 per cent blocked. It is more normal to assume somewhere between 20 per cent and 50 per cent blockage. That is what Arup has done: It has assumed a 50 per cent blockage. There were some ambiguities in some of its reporting and some errors in its reporting that made me think it was saying it was modelling it with no blockage, but it was actually modelling it with 50 per cent blockage. I have had a meeting with them and got that clarified.

The way that Arup has modelled it is appropriate and the way that the Department of Planning has considered those modelling results is appropriate in terms of the way everyone else does it. However, if another developer—and there is a number of properties surrounding there, and I have done some work for the people at 32 Phillip Street, which is next door to the museum—goes to put in a development application council will say, "The model has got to have 100 per cent blockage." Suddenly your level that Arup has modelled has gone from down here up to here when you model it with the council requirements. Therefore, the presence of the museum has created that increase.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Because it is blocking some of the flows down either side to the river.

**Mr MOLINO:** That is correct. It has blocked off one of those pathways. Now if someone goes to put in a development application to redevelop their property council will say, "Oh well, here is our model, we have run it and the one in 100 year level is no longer down here; because the museum is there it is now up here. You are going to have to raise your floor levels", which is a cost to those property owners.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Or increase their setback to allow more space for the floodwaters to egress.

**Mr MOLINO:** No, it will not really work like that in Phillip Street. Basically the podium of the museum acts as a dam and you are not going to gain much by volume. You are only—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** You are lifted above the—

**Mr MOLINO:** You either have to lower that podium level or you have to increase the size of the pipes, and council is saying, "No, we don't consider increasing the size of the pipes because we are assuming that the inlet is 100 per cent blocked." It would not matter how big you made those pipes; you would never be able to change the numbers as far as council is concerned.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Can I just ask quickly about that 100 per cent assumption? Mr Draper gave some evidence on that this morning. I am obviously not an expert on this, but my recollection of his evidence was that Molino Stewart had used that 100 per cent blockage assumption and he suggested in his evidence that that was not common or was unreasonable. I am not exactly sure what word he used but the suggestion in his evidence was, "We appreciate Molino Stewart has done different work and that it as assumed this 100 per cent blockage but we think that is quite out of the ordinary." However, your evidence is that in fact it is also City of Parramatta Council that is working on that assumption?

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes. I do a lot of work in City of Parramatta Council and am often at loggerheads with council about this 100 per cent blockage. I am in no way defending what the council is doing. However, in the process of preparing my report I said if you assume the 100 per cent blockage that council has used then the museum would flood in a one in 20 year event. However, if you use what Arup has used—and at the time I prepared my report Arup was saying "no blockage", but I have subsequently learnt it is 50 per cent blockage. I was concerned that it was saying no blockage because that also would not be appropriate; that is at the other end of the scale. But I understand that it has used 50 per cent blockage. I had a meeting with it before Christmas and had that clarified for me.

I am not in any way saying you have to assume 100 per cent blockage. What I am saying is that if you assume 100 per cent blockage there are two consequences. One is that the museum would flood more frequently than is said in the Arup report. But even if you accept that is not an appropriate assumption to make, that we make the 50 per cent blockage assumption, City of Parramatta Council is still going to impose the 100 per cent blockage assumption on the neighbours and the neighbours will be financially disadvantaged because of that.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But there is a reason why Parramatta council has taken a very conservative approach to flood risks. It is seeing a very large increase particularly in the population of the CBD with increased hard ground cover and reduced areas for floodwaters to escape from across the CBD. Because it is on a riverside location surrounded by increasing development around the rest of the Sydney region, it is worried that the flood risks are just going to get bigger and bigger going forward and it is taking a conservative approach. Is that right?

**Mr MOLINO:** No, I would not characterise it in that way. There are a number of things that you have said there that I would not agree with 100 per cent but there are other aspects I would agree with. The Parramatta CBD is pretty well all concrete anyway. Apart from the grounds around Willow Grove there are not too many places that you could pour concrete that have not already had concrete poured on them. You are not actually going to increase the run-off significantly in the Parramatta CBD with the increase in development there. You are certainly going to be putting more people in there, and it is appropriate to give serious consideration as to how to keep those people safe should a flood occur.

The 100 per cent blockage is really nothing to do with life safety. It is just really what City of Parramatta Council thinks is an appropriate standard to apply in terms of risk to waters getting into buildings and causing damage to the contents of buildings. With most engineering modelling—even the one in 100 years is in some ways a number plucked out of the air. It has been adopted around the world and around Australia but some countries adopt a higher standard than one in 100. But it is pretty much written into common practice here in Australia and in New South Wales so that is what everyone uses. What City of Parramatta Council has chosen to do is put another assumption in there that puts another factor of safety, if you like, into that whole modelling process.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Your expert opinion is that if the museum proceeds on its current path, having been assessed under a lower standard, that is going to put a financial burden on either of its neighbours in the event they redevelop—

**Mr MOLINO:** Unless council changes its policy.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Just a question about the undercroft, which we heard much about this morning—and there was much touting of that being an important and helpful part of the solution, particularly in terms of addressing the potential loss of life issue. I was just wondering if you had thoughts on that and if you felt that was the case?

**Mr MOLINO:** Sure. I understand the need for the undercroft from a flooding point of view, to create that space for the floodwaters to pass through there, as they currently do through the existing car park. Whether you put people in there or not—as soon as you give people the opportunity to go in there, you create a safety issue.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Obviously, there is the fencing now.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes. The question then is: How do you exclude people, how often do you exclude people and how easy do you make it for them not to be there when it is going to flood? I thought what was originally proposed was quite inadequate because you had to walk down towards the floodwaters and then walk up where floodwaters were running down from the street to the river.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I think we were all alarmed by your initial evidence.

**Mr MOLINO:** Right. They have certainly made improvements to the design around that. I thought the retractable screens were a good compromise in terms of keeping people out of there most of the time and only using it when you wanted to use the area, and then ensuring that those screens were opened if it was going to flood. I had some questions about how you would do that and ensure that you did not have the operators going down there and manually opening the doors when floodwaters came. I thought all of those things were easily solved from a design point of view. I see now—again, when reading the conditions of approval on the way here—that it is now proposed to have the undercroft permanently sealed off, but with a grilled area, so that the water can flow through but people cannot get in. That is the best of both worlds from a flooding point of view and from a life safety point of view. My expertise is not in aesthetics. All of these design things are a compromise.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** My last question was about the collection itself. The current condition, and you have pointed it out—E whatever it is—says, "Give us a report after you have built it, to tell us what the flooding impacts will be on the collection." Assume that I am persuaded by your argument that that is a pretty poor way of protecting priceless artefacts.

**Mr MOLINO:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What should be insisted upon to actually protect them? How do we remedy that?

**Mr MOLINO:** As someone that has prepared many environmental impact statements for flooding and the like, this should have been addressed in the secretary's environmental assessment requirements [SEARs] when they were listed. I felt that they were implicit in the SEARs, in that they had to assess the impacts on the cultural heritage. The museum collections are cultural heritage items. That is when that should have been assessed. The sooner it is assessed, the better. If it comes up with an answer that is unacceptable, or you cannot find a solution

that is both affordable and acceptable in terms of the collections—the sooner you can do that, from a financial point of view, the better.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Should not have been part of C18, the condition I took you to, which is all about—prior to the construction of the built form?

**Mr MOLINO:** Sure. You could do it then. I do not even understand why you would even have it conditioned. It is like putting one of the requirements of the SEARs right at the end of the process, rather than right at the beginning of the process. It has just been overlooked. The sooner you move it into the process, the better. If you move it into that group of C conditions, that would be better, because at least you are at, "Are we going to build this thing and how are we going to build it?" and not—

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** "Having built it, what do we do?"

**Mr MOLINO:** "We are about to open the doors and put everything inside. Oh! We can't put them there."

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Molino, thank you for your assistance today. I think Mr Franklin acknowledged it earlier; I am very thankful for your assistance to the people of New South Wales in the course of this inquiry to address some extraordinarily grave flood risks in your earlier report. I think I express the views of the Committee in our gratitude for your engagement in this process.

**Mr MOLINO:** Thank you. My pleasure.

**(The witness withdrew.)**

**(Short adjournment)**



**TOM LOCKLEY**, private citizen, affirmed and examined

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Lockley, for coming in this afternoon.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** My name is Tom Lockley. In a former life, for 40-odd years I was a teacher. My present life is centred around museums and history. I have volunteered in numerous museums over the past years, including the equivalent of two years full time at Ultimo. In 2016 we established an email group and, while I am speaking in my own name, the things that I say are well backed up by data and represent a considerable body of opinion. Thank you.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** That was your opening statement?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I would really love to say something that has been on my mind for the last two hours, so let us make this my opening statement.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Okay. As long as you do not direct it at me, Mr Lockley.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** No, I am directing it at Mr Brown.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Lockley, I warn you that adverse mention applies and if you do adversely mention anyone, I will have to stop you.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I will not adversely mention Mr Brown.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Let us not be hasty. Let us hear what he has to say first.

**The CHAIR:** I am quite happy to hear what he says. I am just issuing a warning.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I just want to say that when we heard about the western Sydney Powerhouse alliance late last year, our first reaction was "Oh, not again," because over the years we have seen off several such mass opinions from the west. The *Telegraph* for months portrayed the furphy that we are all inner-city snobs picking on the dear west. We have done some analysis: 25 per cent of the supporters of the Powerhouse Museum come from the west or the Blue Mountains. We heard, I think, from Mr Grant that 500,000 people are clamouring for the museum out west. We looked at it, and what he meant was that they had distributed 377,000 letterbox drops. Ms Chadwick had a questionnaire. We looked at that and we feel that it owed a lot to the Schumacher school of administration. We heard about the new MAAS website, which was going to tell us all these wonderful things. The number of posts to that over the years since May 2017 is less than what goes onto the Powerhouse Museum website every week. So here we have another group that is purporting to prove that we are wrong when we say that the overwhelming majority of people support the Powerhouse.

I would like to ask Mr Brown if he would not mind sending us the contact details of all the people he has spoken to in the Catholic education department, Committee for Sydney, Greater Western Sydney Giants, Parramatta Eels, Sydney Festival, Westmead Institute for Medical Research, Westmead Institute for Medical Research Foundation, University of Sydney, Western Sydney University and Western Sydney Wanderers. I would like to know who he has talked to. I would like copies of the resolutions passed by the boards of all these people. Then I can promise you that we will be visiting them and we will be showing them our fact sheets, which have not been contradicted for the past four years. We are just fed up of dealing with what we believe are incorrect statements.

I would now like to move on to where I should have started. Our major problem—and I wonder if you could help with this—concerns the determination of the Government that the traditional procedure of having a base case leading to a group of alternatives has been superseded by the decision that the base case for this project should be the determination of the Government to move the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta. This is something that really concerns us. That is my opening statement. My main interest is to try to help you understand how important the cultures of Parramatta and of Ultimo are and how much they depend on the buildings that are under threat. Thank you for listening to me. Now I would love to have your questions.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Mr Lockley, we have heard from the Minister that they put up some fencing this morning at 7.30, which now indicates they are beginning work on the Parramatta site. But we were told today that there was no opening date and no completion date. What is your response to that?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I have been told by Ms Havilah that the project has not yet been determined—the legal phrase is "determined"—and, because of that, nothing was definite. I am hoping that that is the case, because we are terribly concerned about what might happen.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** I understand that you oppose the closure and sale of Ultimo. The Government has said that will not occur. There is a question mark over what it is going to do with the site and what it is going to protect. What now is the basis of the community campaign? What is your direction now?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and particularly the Powerhouse campus, is the only museum in Australia devoted to the very important interface between applied arts and sciences. That is terribly important to the development of Australia. If we are going to be the clever country, we need to take the things that we have and make new things with them. As such, it should be in the best place for its accessibility to Sydney, to the State, to the country and to the world. I can tell you we get a surprising number of overseas visitors. Many people come into Sydney for a day on a cruise ship, and even though it is not promoted they will duck down to the Powerhouse Museum and spend the day there because they have heard of things like Boulton and Watt engine and so on. This is the spot for this museum and it must be set up with full facilities.

The history and culture of Parramatta has been very much underestimated by a lot of people. Parramatta is the place for the museum of New South Wales—the place which has the enormous vitality of Parramatta. It is not second best. We are not saying to just have an immigration museum. Look at the richness of Parramatta culture. I have counted up 37 institutions—that, incidentally, were not consulted when the museum proposal came up—that are really wonderful. The one that stands out is Elizabeth Farm—terribly relevant today because of Elizabeth Macarthur's work. The staff there are absolutely superb. The Female Factory staff are devoted to what they are doing and they deserve support. They deserve to have a museum that reflects what Parramatta is, not something transplanted from its proper habitat and plopped in place where Parramatta people do not want it.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Lockley, can I ask what your position is in response to the Government's manoeuvres on the Harwood building?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** If we are going to have a proper museum in Sydney, it needs to have backup facilities on site. We have some wonderful exhibitions coming through, and I am so impressed that we have Australian curators producing Australian subjects. There is a huge scope for Australia not to buy in turnkey exhibitions, as we have done in the past, but to go out through the world and say, "Here is Australian stuff," and take it to all the museums of the world. The Harwood building is essential to that. "Gee, Bill, we need some three-inch screws"; "Oh, I have to go over to Castle Hill and back again." Not to have a proper facility at the Harwood building is ridiculous. Having said that, in all fairness I must say that over the 12-plus years that I have been in the museum, there have been times when I have looked at the Harwood building and thought it was under-utilised. There is room for other activities, but there must be a workshop and there must be a secretariat.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What about storage of the collection? A number of people have contacted my office to say that if the storage is going to be out at Castle Hill, there is a very long and quite difficult trip to get the collection over to Parramatta or to the Ultimo site. In fact, the Castle Hill collection site carries significant risk.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** Castle Hill, as you well know, was originally purchased by the museum as a eucalyptus plot so that the museum could develop studies in the growth of eucalyptus trees for the production of eucalyptus oil, which was a big export for Australia and is still a unique product. I understand—this is not one of my guaranteed facts—that the proposed new building is going to take virtually the last stand of that eucalyptus, which has historic interest. I do not think that the new store is necessary if the Harwood building is retained as it is. But, Mr Shoebridge, I think the idea of having a store there that you move stuff into—a store at Harwood—and then put on display is the way to go.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** From a museum management point of view, having your collection as close as possible to your exhibition space seems to me to be both efficient and also good practice in terms of ensuring that the collection does not get damaged in transport.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I am not a museum manager, but it makes sense and I would like to see somebody persuade me otherwise.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I do not have any questions. Very compelling.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I have a couple of questions, if that is what this pause is waiting to be filled with.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** You defend Chris Brown again?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I did not attack Chris Brown. All he has to do is say, "Okay, these are the people we've talked to." Then we will talk to them and we will say, "Hey, have you thought of this? Have you thought of that?" Because we usually find then when people say, "Oh, you are not talking any sense at all. It is obvious that we've

got to move the museum to Parramatta." If we sit down and say, "Look, this was never researched. There was no consultation and on top of that it is a bad idea. If you wanted to choose an institution to move to Parramatta, the most costly and inefficient one would be to move the Powerhouse."

In the Ultimo Powerhouse you have got strengthened floors to carry heavy things. You have got strengthened ceilings to hang things from. You have got a steam reticulation system that is already installed. You have big objects and according to Peter Ruark, the best logistician in Australia for museums according to many people, according to the museum's own contracted person, when we were going to move the whole museum, the big objects had to be the last out of Ultimo, the first into Parramatta with consequent enormous delays in the building. Getting back to your original question—I have lost it. Can you repeat it?

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** That is okay. I am going to hand you over to the Hon. Benjamin Franklin.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I am sorry. I know I have not answered your question but I think I have spoken relevantly. Mr Franklin, I am so sorry. Could you repeat your question?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I do not think I actually got to the question. I want to pick up on the contention that you just made, which is the previous witness spoke on behalf of people of western Sydney and at Parramatta saying that he felt that they wanted it. You have made it quite clear in your evidence, Mr Lockley, I think you might have said Parramatta people do not want it. My question is, just to flip it, how can you say that and what evidence do you have—and I am not being aggressive in this?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** Not at all, and I am delighted to answer. I am sorry, this is going to be long and boring, because I am a detailed person. The organisations that have supported the move began at the Western Sydney Arts and Cultural Lobby. Miss Macgregor said that she had conducted examination into all alternatives and this was the one standout, it was a perfect fit. Well, I have put up some opposing arguments to that. The Western Sydney Arts and Cultural Lobby were the main people with whom Miss Macgregor spoke. They disappeared about 18 months after she spoke with them. They have never had a website. We have tried to contact them ever since. There have been other organisations that purport to speak on—I am sorry—that support the Powerhouse. The people who do last are North Parramatta Residents' Action Group. They are an incorporated body, they have a website, they have a history going back for many years.

There is another group the Western Sydney—I am sorry, I have lost their name, but there is another cultural group that have also persisted from 2014 right through to now and they have a website and they function. Western Sydney Arts and Cultural Lobby started, stopped. And incidentally, they did not recommend the establishment to the museum. They approved it. They did not recommend it. They did recommend the installation in western Sydney of a film and television school and a film museum, rather like the one they have in Federation Square in Melbourne. My point is, the opposition to the museum in Parramatta has been consistent, it has been principled, it has been based on fact. The supporters of the museum rely on polemic, "The inner city are trying to rob western Sydney." and all this sort of thing.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I appreciate your comments about the North Parramatta group and the other unnamed group, I get that. My question is about the broad populous. How can we be assured that when you say the Parramatta people do not want it, how can you back that up?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** We cannot, but why do we not say to the Parramatta people—by the way before I become with that—there was a seminar of all arts groups held by North Parramatta Residents' Action Group where this was discussed and the recommendation was not for the Powerhouse Museum but for the development of Fleet Street, which many of us believe has the potential to be one of the great cultural areas of the world. Getting back to your question—I have done it again. Yes, why can we not say to the Parramatta people, "Here are the options. You can have the museum where it is on its site." Bear in mind that the elected City of Parramatta Council before dissolution passed many resolutions saying that they wanted that site kept as open area. When the City of Parramatta Council was run by the administrator, just before she finished her term the deal was signed to have the museum on the Parramatta River site. When the elected City of Parramatta Council came back there was considerable discussion about it. Talk to the next witness, Ms Davis, about this, but here is my perception—again, this is one of the things I do not guarantee, okay.

When the new council was elected there were three groups of people. There were the people who said, "We don't want that museum on the site, we want our open space and we want the museum somewhere else." There were the people who said, "Oh, this is a wonderful project. We support it." And there is a group in the middle. My perception is that when it came to a vote, the people in the middle said, "It looks like we either get the museum on the site that is at Parramatta, or we get nothing." So, they voted for it. If I remember rightly, it only just passed. It passed on the casting vote of the mayor. It was not a lay down misère for either side. But, I

still say that the councillors who voted for the present project were often swayed by the fact that they felt that if they did not vote for it, they would get nothing. I do not guarantee that as fact, okay?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** We understand that is just your opinion.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** Yes, it is just a guess.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** My final question is, in your opening statement you talked about the importance of having a world-class applied arts and sciences museum in Australia and in a part of Australia which is the easiest and best place, I think you said, for accessibility and so on, and therefore—

**Mr LOCKLEY:** And a wonderful heritage building.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Understood, and therefore that the Sydney CBD basically was the best place to do it.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** Yes.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I agree with you that that sort of access is critical, which is why I am so thrilled that the Ultimo site is being kept and maintained. My question is, why not have more than one site?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** Oh, very much.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** Like the Smithsonian Institution does, and therefore what would you say to the contention that the Powerhouse or the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences could have a number of different sites, which is obviously the plan? Why is that not ideal as far as you are concerned, as it is in other parts of the world?

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I say here that I am going to say something that is not supported by an overwhelming majority of people who email me and things like that. I think that the Ultimo museum should concentrate on the history of the area and the interface between arts and sciences and that things like fashion and maybe IT, it might be fairer if they were placed at Parramatta. I stress that this is my own opinion. One thing I do think should be retained at Ultimo is—and it has one of the best education programs I have seen in my professional career—the exhibition of HSC works, which is held every year. It is absolutely wonderful. They bring in the best HSC techniques—I am sorry, I retired 20 years ago—of science and needlework; I have forgotten the proper terms for them.

They bring in the best exhibits and they display the exhibits with the students' diaries of how they were produced. They have young designers and young industrialists come in, and the schools come in and talk to them and so on. Then they have a session where the heavies from the curriculum branch talk to them about how the project will be marked. I have been in awe of the atmosphere that is intended in that. I would like to see it retained in Sydney because it is better for—I would like to see it retained in Ultimo, where we are at, out of the whole State. But that is my excuse. I do not want to lose it from Ultimo. I am not travelling to Parramatta.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Mr Lockley, I have to duck off this minute, but I thank you for your long-term commitment as a volunteer and for bringing your expertise to the Powerhouse Museum. I know that not everyone around this Committee table will always agree with your position. But I also think that the passion and consistency with which I have seen you advocate for the Powerhouse is a public service and I wanted to acknowledge that.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I need to say something very clearly: I have been there for 12 years, equivalent two full-time years, and I am the newcomer. I am learning. We have some awesome people, particularly at Castle Hill at the moment. I am going to embarrass Meg. She is well in her nineties. I am going to embarrass her because we have all been at her for years to slow down a bit so that we can catch up. I needed some information for—just in case you asked some curly questions, the other night I rang her up and I got the answers far quicker than I would get from the website. There are some awesome people there. About six years ago we had an amazing group on Thursdays. There was an ex-regional director of education. There was an 80-year-old engineer. He immigrated from England at the age of 80 and volunteered at the Powerhouse Museum. He had first come to Australia in the 1970s to build the basic oxygen furnaces. Thank you for what you said. I want to emphasise that I am a newcomer. I am still learning. The scope of knowledge out there is huge.

**The CHAIR:** On that basis we will call it a day. Thank you very much, Mr Lockley, for coming and giving us your knowledge and answering our questions. I echo what Mr Shoebridge has said. Thank you indeed for your contribution.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** I might say that was extraordinarily easy. I was prepared for some difficult questions. May I have another 40 seconds?

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Mr LOCKLEY:** This is purely me. The Powerhouse Museum and the dwelling at Parramatta are part of our very being. It is sort of like Mabo for the First Nations people but not as pronounced. The government of the day has the unmitigated privilege and honour of looking after them. It has the responsibility to take care of them and develop them using the best available expertise. They are not things to be arbitrarily decided and signed off at the whim of some personal opinion. I would like to finish by quoting somebody 60-plus years younger than me on a far more important matter: "How dare they?" Thank you very much.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**(The witness withdrew.)**

**DONNA DAVIS**, Councillor, City of Parramatta Council, sworn and examined

**The CHAIR:** I welcome Ms Donna Davis.

**Ms DAVIS:** I am a councillor at the City of Parramatta. I represent the people of Parramatta, but here today I understand that I am giving evidence as myself. I am still a councillor but I am not representing the council.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Many of us are familiar with the code of conduct. We know your position.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Would you like to make a short opening statement?

**Ms DAVIS:** I would. You will probably have to shut me down because there is too much to tell you. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the country on which we meet today, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I have been working with the Parramatta community for over four years to save Willow Grove and St George's Terrace because they are such an important part of the fabric of Parramatta and they must remain central to any reimagining of our city to ensure we incorporate our past for the benefit of future generations. I am here to represent my views as an elected representative of the community, not as a spokesperson for the City of Parramatta. I have so much I would like to share with you today that I cannot do it justice in an opening statement. What I am hoping to achieve is to shine a light on process, the shortcomings around the delivery of the arts and cultural precinct to date, the weaknesses within the environmental impact statement [EIS] process as they relate to Willow Grove and the disrespect to Parramatta's proud heritage.

While the City of Parramatta Council has supported the relocation of Willow Grove, this support was only on the casting vote of the Mayor. The fourteen elected members of the council split evenly on this important decision. I understand the legalities of that, but that is the reality with this particular issue. My view is that there are significant reasons why Willow Grove should be retained in its current location. First, the council has maintained the heritage importance of items in the Parramatta CBD through its local environment plan [LEP] and development control plan [DCP] objectives. The removal of Willow Grove from its original location will make a mockery of these objectives by trying to relocate the building to an undisclosed location

The removal and the supposed re-establishment of Willow Grove elsewhere removes the significance of Willow Grove, as its significance is as much about the physical form of the building as it is about place: its setting, its relationship to St George's Terrace, its relationship to Phillip Street and the social history of its location. The assessment of the heritage significance of Willow Grove and St George's Terrace in the statement of heritage impact is glowing in terms of the individual heritage significance of Willow Grove and for the Parramatta area. Given this, it is impossible to understand how it is then possible to conclude that this building should be demolished. There is no reasoning for this conclusion in the EIS or statement of heritage impact beyond the bland statement:

Demolition would be required at this time to fulfil the vision and functional requirements of the proposal.

The EIS clearly pre-empts the decision by the Government to demolish Willow Grove. The token attempt to retrieve something through the proposed mitigation measures, such as some building material, is insulting and totally inconsistent with the acknowledged heritage significance of the buildings and only confirms the support for a predetermined outcome. The report should have concluded after making the findings on the important heritage significance of the buildings and the benefits to Parramatta in their retention. The obvious conclusion, from their findings on significance, was that the buildings should be retained.

Similarly, the adaptive re-use is given no consideration in either the EIS or the statement of heritage impact. There is nothing in either document that suggests that the buildings are not suitable for adaptive re-use beyond the need to demolish them to achieve a predetermined outcome. Given the amount of cafe and retail activities proposed for this Powerhouse development, Willow Grove and St George's Terrace would be ideally placed to accommodate some of these uses. There is also no discussion on "adaptive re-use and measures to minimise impacts on the building" or "attempts to avoid and/or mitigate the impact on the heritage significance or cultural heritage values of the site" as required by the SEARS. The feeble attempt at mitigation works by retaining parts of the demolished buildings is only tokenism because of the acknowledged significance of the buildings. I know that I have probably gone on, but I did have some information about Riverside that I also wanted to share.

**The CHAIR:** Please do.

**Ms DAVIS:** Parramatta council spent years developing a City River Strategy to revitalise the Parramatta River with the potential to deliver a unique arts or cultural facility. To complete the strategy, a pedestrian civic link was designed from Parramatta Square to the river and the purchase of Willow Grove, St George's Terrace

and two adjoining shopfronts was required. The retention of Willow Grove was intended to be a central feature of the central river strategy.

In 2016 the elected council raised its concerns about the State Government's choice of the Riverbank site for a relocated Powerhouse Museum. There was no doubt there needed to be a significant pendulum shift to deliver more arts funding to the west. This was overdue based on current growth, let alone the significant housing targets set out in the Greater Sydney Commission's district plans. The State Government was right to respond. However, the process for identifying the most appropriate institution and location fell short. One could argue there was no transparent process and the State Government committed to building a new Powerhouse Museum on a site with significant constraints. Where was the body of work that supported the relocation of the Powerhouse as the best approach for addressing the inequity of arts funding and State-funded arts institutions in western Sydney? I would argue it was a manufactured solution rather than an organic, well-considered plan.

The Parramatta arts and cultural precinct was billed as a double-header: a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a significant interconnected cultural precinct with critical mass of two critical cultural assets that included construction of a new museum and the Riverside Theatre. The State Government knew the sweetener was its commitment to redeveloping Riverside Theatre, a project that had been on the council's agenda for many years but had never been realised. Unfortunately, the rhetoric never matched the reality, and the perfect opportunity to achieve the best outcome from two significantly constrained sites was missed.

A closer look at the heads of agreement shows there was no capital commitment from the State Government. The Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office indicated that the joint venture entity would have some responsibility for fundraising—I know that was a topic for discussion at the hearing this morning—should there be a difference between the cost of the preferred option and the funding available. Given the only money on the table was the \$100 million from the sale of the Riverbank site and there were no visible signs of fundraising, there was a shortfall right from the outset.

I was a member of the project steering committee. It was reprehensible that after just shy of two years we had been presented with a total of 10 options and were supposedly heading to the finish line yet the designs failed to meet fundamental planning requirements. The Government repeatedly moved the milestones, failed to provide a business case to the steering committee and make an election to proceed with the project before the revised deadlines. Therefore, the payment to council of the \$100 million MAAS purchase price site was triggered. On a previous occasion, Minister Harwin gave the impression that it was the council that walked away from the Riverside project. From where I sit, it was the State Government that failed to deliver an on-time, plausible business case that met the brief of the project and the requirements of the economic review committee.

I have the privilege of sitting on the Riverside Theatres Advisory Board. My personal view is that there is as much commitment to finding a new way forward with the State Government on this project as there has ever been. The disappointment lies in the New South Wales Government's failure to deliver the Arts and Cultural precinct that was promised in that heads of agreement. Parramatta has been treated like a jilted lover since the centre of power was moved from Old Government House to Macquarie Street. This is one example of many that things have not changed.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** That is a longstanding grievance, councillor.

**The CHAIR:** That is grievance politics at its best!

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Councillor Davis, I have heard Minister Harwin actually say what you have just said. He has accused the council of walking away from Riverside. What is the current state of play and what is the current status of the \$100 million he claims is with the council. Can you clarify that?

**Ms DAVIS:** He is correct. The \$100 million is with council because the State Government failed to meet its milestones. It actually delayed the process several times. The business case was originally to be presented to the economic review committee on 6 December 2018 and the call option deed could be exercised any time up until 31 December 2018. But the development of the business case was not progressing well. They were not actually able to achieve a viable business case other than the bottom rung on the ladder, which was not what anybody wanted. Nobody wanted just a refurbished Riverside Theatre. It was agreed that date would be pushed back out and that was for the presentation of the business case.

As for the call option deed, the State Government came to the council at the end of 2018 and asked if that date could be pushed further back to the next year—the business case to be presented by the end of September 2019 and the call option deed held off until after the election. The council was in the room and involved in all of this. The joint venture was not actually effectively in play at this stage, as you probably already know, but the council was responsible for making a decision about the future of its asset. It made sense for it to agree to

allow that extension of time. In 2019 the process continued. There were another five options presented. Towards the end of that year it was fairly evident to most of us that this was going nowhere.

**The CHAIR:** As it is to us.

**Ms DAVIS:** That is right.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** What has happened to the business case?

**Ms DAVIS:** When the Government failed to meet its milestones it agreed to give the business case to the council. The council has then been assessing that business case and working with the Government to find a way forward, so to speak.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Meanwhile, the \$100 million is sitting in a Parramatta council account?

**Ms DAVIS:** It has been given to the council, and that was one of the conditions that the council made at the end of this process.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I just want to be clear: The business case development was meant to conclude at the end of 2018?

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes, originally.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** And I assume the people of Parramatta and greater western Sydney, if all things had been going right, would have had a redeveloped Riverside Theatre by now?

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** Should have had it by now.

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** But instead we have not even got a completed business case.

**Ms DAVIS:** That is right.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** So, the money is just sitting in the account?

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes. It was supposed to stay in escrow but the councillors were quite firm that—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** What does the Berejiklian Government, Create NSW or the Minister say to you when you say, "Okay, get on with this. We want a theatre. We want it redeveloped?"

**Ms DAVIS:** As far as they are concerned, the ball is in our court. That is my understanding. My understanding is that they have given us the business case and are suggesting to us—and this is a business case that was not suitable to present to the Expenditure Review Committee. We know that it had work to be done on it. Also, there was no funding for that project. All there was was the \$100 million, because at no point in time that the State Government ever commit to any funding for the Riverside Theatres project.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** This is a project that, from the outside, started with an arbitrary budget, and they have tried to work their way back from that point. It starts with \$100 million and then tried to work back from that point. Is that what has happened?

**Ms DAVIS:** From the moment that I was involved in this, my understanding was that money was—there were very few conversations about money. When we attended the project steering committee meetings, the impression that we were given was that we would not know how much money the Government would commit until the business case was presented. We were flying blind, really. It was a matter of, "Once you have actually produced that business case and you have got it to one, then we will go to Treasury, cap in hand, and see if they are going to contribute."

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** So, the business case that has been developed—the one that has been handed to council. Would it be impolite to describe that as a bit of a turkey? That business case has never flown?

**Ms DAVIS:** It has the potential, but the funding is going to be the issue.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** Was that within a \$100 million budget?

**Ms DAVIS:** No.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How much over that? This is the key issue, is it not—that the council had ambitious vision for its city, understandably, and the State Government kept presenting options that were much less significant? Funding was critical in that difference, was it not?



**Ms DAVIS:** I would say that the Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office were presenting options that covered the whole range of the spectrum. There was the basic refurb option, right up to the option that included—one of them included a hotel, I think, in the original 2018 options. The challenge with all but the bottom was that the site was so constrained. To be able to achieve what needed to be achieved was a real challenge. The biggest problem that came out at the end was that in 2019, when we were up to the second round of options, the independent members of the steering committee were very upset that they felt that the Government was not committing to the best outcome for these theatres. The vision was not being realised for a world-class institution that was going to meet the growing needs of Parramatta. They actually called a special meeting to voice their concerns.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Previously, as my colleague Mr Secord has noted, when we have asked Minister Harwin about it he has presented evidence that intimated the Government has given City of Parramatta Council \$100 million towards this project. But that is not necessarily a fair characterisation of that money, is it? That money is a just terms payment for the site of the Parramatta Powerhouse, is it not?

**Ms DAVIS:** That is right.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That is what that money is. So, they have invested off their own back in the idea of making the Riverside Theatres successful—they have invested no money and committed no money, other than a just terms payment for a substantial piece of land elsewhere.

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes. They have simply paid us the money that they owed us for that site and they set the stipulations on how the money needed to be spent.

**The CHAIR:** Councillor Davis, it was my understanding that the money was paid for the riverside land, where the new museum would be located. Was it a condition that that money had to be spent by the council on the redevelopment of the Riverside Theatres?

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes. The \$100 million was to be spent on the Riverside Theatres. The \$40 million was to be spent over 20 years on Parramatta city's cultural plan. If there was not a cultural plan, then it had to be spent on cultural and arts investment programming in the local government area and approved by the Minister.

**The CHAIR:** And that \$40 million was coming as an add-on to the \$100 million from the Government over time?

**Ms DAVIS:** I believe we have that \$40 million. I would have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** May ask another question? Thank you for clarifying his claim about the riverside, because he has been perpetuating that claim for almost two years. I want to take you to Willow Grove. He also claims that the council sold the Willow Grove site to the Government and now wants it protected. What do you say to that claim? He has been perpetuating that in many locations.

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes. When the City of Parramatta purchased Willow Grove they did a conservation management plan. The intention was that Willow Grove would be incorporated into the City River Strategy. This was prior to my time on the council. That building was to become a centrepiece as the council chambers for the city. When the Government announced that they wanted to buy this land—this was at the time, as I have said, of administration. This is only just come to light recently, through a lot of hard work. They actually required that all easements be removed from that land prior to the sale of that land. There was an easement that none of the councillors were aware of, to my knowledge; I certainly was not aware of it. I am only speaking from my own experience. That restriction had been placed on Willow Grove when—do you know the high-rise building beside Willow Grove?

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Ms DAVIS:** When that was built, the land was sold off from Willow Grove for that site. The floor space ratio [FSR] from Willow Grove was transferred and protection was placed on Willow Grove and the gardens so that there could be nothing built on that land in front of Willow Grove. So, there was a restriction put in place. Going back to your question, which was—

**The Hon. WALT SECORD:** The Minister claimed that the council sold Willow Grove to the State Government and is now demanding protections on it.

**Ms DAVIS:** There is one thing that I have noticed when others have been at the inquiry and in the public, and that is this impression that local heritage is not of significance. Even though there was this issue with the easements and the Government requested that those easements be removed, which does make one think that at all times they intended to demolish Willow Grove—otherwise, why would they want that easement removed—they

talk about how it is only local heritage. The thing is, local heritage is as significant as the area that it surrounds. For Parramatta, because of the age of our buildings and because of being one of the first European settlements in Australia, that local heritage is of great significance. The Minister has said in this room that because that land was zoned for higher density, that meant that the council did not support the heritage on that site.

The reality is that as part of planning in New South Wales now, FSR is placed on heritage items that are located beside other land so that that FSR can be used to benefit other developments within that area. We have seen it here in Macquarie Street. We have seen it with either the Hyde Park Barracks or the Mint—one of those buildings. To say that the council did not value the local heritage, I believe is false because it is in the local environmental plan [LEP]. It is recognised in the LEP and there has never been any intention of taking the heritage listing off that land.

**The CHAIR:** While you are talking about that, Ms Davis, are you aware that many members of Geoff Lee's own Liberal Party branch are not necessarily supportive of what is going on?

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** You would not be, surely, as a member of the Labor Party—unless you have deep links in the Liberal Party. But you are a paid-up Labor member.

**Ms DAVIS:** All I can tell you is that the protection of Willow Grove and the recognition of the significance of Willow Grove goes beyond politics. In Parramatta there are former lord mayors of all persuasions. There are Liberal Party members—at least six or seven of them—who actually attended the Valentine's Day event yesterday. I spoke with them and they have actually said to me that they have taken steps within their branch to bring this matter and the protection of Willow Grove to the attention of the relevant ministers, or whatever the process is. I am not sure what the process is in their branch. They had also asked the convener or spokesperson for the North Parramatta Residents Action Group, Suzette Meade, to attend their branch meeting and to speak to them about Willow Grove and what was being done, because they were so concerned about the loss of more heritage in Parramatta and particularly Willow Grove. They had also—this is yesterday—said to me that they were wanting to be continually updated on that information. There was even a former Federal Liberal candidate there, supporting.

I was watching this morning from the comfort of my home and it concerns me that others come to this place and say that there are mistruths being bandied around. You would all be aware of how many submissions this project attracted. This was on a scale way beyond the number of submissions that were received for WestConnex, for Sydney Modern, for Sydney Metro, for Metro West. This level of submission and interest does not happen easily. It happens because people are upset and because there is genuine concern. The other thing we also know is that the planning system has been altered to ensure that there is not an opportunity for people to do mass submissions. We all know in the past that it was a lot easier: You could put a petition in and there is 100 signatures—you have walked down the street. It is not like that anymore.

This is about people actually committing and taking the time. There were more responses to submissions for this project than there were actual submissions made for the majority of major projects that this Government has embarked on since it has come to government. I think that has to be recognised. What is so disappointing is that the decision on Friday night was handed down at 5.45 while this inquiry is still happening and there are still so many questions unanswered. While I did not support the decision of the council for the final submission that they made, that was purely because of the wording around Willow Grove. But there were so many issues that were significant that were raised in the submission and that I feel still have not been addressed. I think it is very poor form that we are still waiting on those responses, and yet it has been given the green light.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** Are there any prominent Labor Party members who are in support of the Powerhouse move that you know of?

**The CHAIR:** "Prominent" might be a problem.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** David Borger—he was quite prominent as the mayor and former member.

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes, as I said to you before, of course there are people from both sides of politics. David Borger, through his business interests at the Western Sydney Business Chamber, has been extremely active representing the interests of those people who pay him handsomely to do so.

**The CHAIR:** That is an own goal.

**Ms DAVIS:** I would suggest that having the Powerhouse brought to Parramatta would put a smile on the face of many of those people who pay for the Western Sydney Business Chamber. I do not think you need to

go much further than to do a little bit of cross-referencing between the Parramatta Powerhouse alliance group and their membership to see that.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** One of the things we have had throughout the course of today's hearing is the sense—you have referenced it a couple of times—that there are different claims about where the community falls on this issue. Some people say the local community is set against it; other people say, "No, no, the local community out there is for it." I particularly wanted to draw your attention to the evidence of Ms Havilah, who acknowledged that in their community drop-in centre—I do not know if that is the best description for it—where she had been at times, people had come in and raised concerns about Willow Grove in particular.

She acknowledged that and she claimed that—I believe the words she used were "every one" or "all" of those people, when the plans around the relocation of Willow Grove were explained to them, were comfortable with that. She made a claim along those lines. I wanted to put that to you. Is it your sense that, yes, there are people in the community who are concerned about Willow Grove, but when the government representatives of Parramatta Powerhouse explained the plans, the relocation and what the Government is intending to do—I recall that she said "all", but even if we go with "almost all"—those people were comfortable. Is that your sense of how that is received in the community?

**Ms DAVIS:** It is not my experience that that is what is happening. I cannot speak for how many people have visited the centre. I have walked past on numerous occasions and there are occasionally people there. I have stood outside Willow Grove on numerous occasions, whether or not it be just walking past getting my coffee or whether I have been there for a purpose, and it has been amazing how many people come by and say, "Gee, I love this building." When I tell them what is going to happen, they go, "Is this where the Powerhouse is going?" It is not that they have any objection to the investment in the arts and culture; none of us do.

If I could genuinely, with my hand on my heart, say that I knew that this was going to be the Powerhouse, with all the whizbang exhibitions that I used to take my sons to as an annual member, then I would probably be a lot more confident in the process. But they do not know. They do not even understand that this is the site that the museum is on. When Ms Havilah suggests that when people are explained that it is going to be relocated, they feel comfortable, I would like her to try to make us feel comfortable because I have no idea where it is going, how it is going or how much of it is going. I have experience with this. It is almost a week to the day that a year ago the Royal Oak Hotel was pulled down to make way for the Parramatta light rail.

I pushed hard to try to get some sense out of somebody as to what elements of that building were actually going to be saved and I can honestly say that I think that if I had not have pushed the way that I did, I do not think there would have been any elements of that building saved. And even now I have concerns that we should have tried harder. But that is what worries me in this particular instance as well, what are they telling and how much of that is what the reality is going to be?

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** My last question, and I put this to Minister Harwin, who assured me in his response that there were lots of sites, but obviously the commitment is to relocate Willow Grove within the Parramatta local government area—notwithstanding the fact that you do not support the relocation at all. Do you have a sense of how many suitable sites there would be for that within that local government area? Are there lots of places that you could rebuild Willow Grove?

**Ms DAVIS:** It depends if they are proposing to put it in their new jail at Camellia, I suppose. That is always a possibility. What concerns me is that the Government has limited respect for the land of the Parramatta Park and the significance of that land and its relationship to the heritage and its Indigenous heritage. It is a highly significant site. The pool is already now taking up part of Mays Hill. The stadium has encroached on more space. We still do not know what else is going to be constructed between the Venues NSW land there, between the stadium and the Parramatta Leagues Club. I do have concerns that there may be an attempt to relocate it to somewhere as significant as the park. And equally as significant is the Cumberland heritage precinct. The thing that is so important about the heritage precinct there, as you would know, those of you who have visited, is that it is a place that is about the history of institutionalisation, whether or not that was the institutionalisation of the women in the female factory, those in the asylum, those in the men's jail, those that were taken, stolen generations that were taken to be housed at the Cumberland precinct, whether or not it was the women's jail, it is all about institutionalisation.

Willow Grove was built by and for a woman who owned a haberdashery store on the high street, on Church Street. This was a woman of economic success of her time. That House—I heard someone this morning talk about how there are examples of these buildings in Summer Hill and in the inner west and on the lower North Shore and in other parts of Sydney, but there are not many in Parramatta, and there is a reason for that. That is why it is so important, it has a relationship where it is and it has a relationship with the river. It has a relationship

with Phillip Street, and it has a relationship with Church Street. I would say that there is one opportunity with the Cumberland precinct and that is to embrace it and consider it as part of the arts and cultural offering that we can provide in Parramatta. That, along with the Riverside, along with the river bank site, along with the Roxy Theatre, the four of those have incredibly rich options for the delivery of arts and culture in Parramatta, whether or not it be rehearsal space, development of projects, whether or not it be theatre space, exhibition space, performance space, or galleries.

There are so many opportunities and I think that is what is so frustrating with this proposal to move Willow Grove is that, like the Cumberland precinct, it just shows a complete lack of respect for what those buildings are and what potential they have, and there is this false belief that this is about what older people value, and it is not. There are a significant number of young people who I have had conversations who really want to see their history that is here today, their heritage here today for their families in the future. It is up to us, and I see my role as the custodian as a councillor of the City of Parramatta, and that is why I am fighting so hard for this, because it is important and sometimes things go beyond what is about us, it is about what is right for the future.

**The CHAIR:** We have had evidence today and earlier that, and let us use the word "excuse", one of the excuses for moving or demolishing the building is that it is in poor physical historical condition. Do you have any comments to make in relation to that?

**Ms DAVIS:** Yes, I do actually. I have only just read the Conservation Management Plan again yesterday and when you excise the additions to that building, which would be removed with any development on that site, the original structure has actually been rated as of high significance, the actual interior. Obviously there are floating floorboards, but the original floorboards are there, the original staircase is there, most of the elements of that original Willow Grove building. It is a very comprehensive report, it actually highlights in three different colours which are the original parts, which are the additions, et cetera. I also heard, I am not sure who it was, whether it was the Minister or someone else this morning, that was suggesting that the building had been let go.

In response to that, the council bought that building in 2015. It had been occupied right up until that time. The council at the time that they were sacked were in the process, and they had done the Conservation Management Plan, of actually working on moving their council chambers into that building, and then that all stopped. So, there has not been any way forward because the Government had signed a heads of agreement and had a call option deed on Willow Grove. Who would invest money in upgrading that building knowing that the State Government had removed—I did not know this but others knew that the easements had been removed, that their intentions were to build a new museum on that site. I think it is very harsh to actually suggest that, and I think that when I have been through the building, I have seen a hell of a lot of buildings in a lot worse condition than that. The Parramatta Female Factory has been left to the devices of consecutive State Governments, regardless of your politics, and now we are in a situation where we must do what we can to preserve the Parramatta Female Factory, but I do not see the Minister making those comments.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much Councillor Davis for coming today and informing us.

**(The witness withdrew.)**

**The Committee adjourned at 16:30.**