

9 July, 2020

**Save the Powerhouse  
(email and Facebook)**

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Hi Everyone,

After the Berejiklian Cabinet's shock decision to keep the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo, while still pursuing its long term goal to build the "Milk Crates museum" (aka Powerhouse 2) on a flood-prone Parramatta site, here's our take on what could, and more importantly what CAN'T happen.

To recap, the Government's original project to move the Powerhouse to Parramatta was supported by a (highly dubious) business case. It was withdrawn on 4 July 2020 (see Media release <http://tiny.cc/yoourz> )

So whatever new project the Government (and the MAAS team) want to pursue in Parramatta, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for "Powerhouse Parramatta", currently on exhibition, is now clearly invalid and inapplicable and should be cancelled immediately, since it describes a project (ie moving the PHM to Parramatta) which the Government has dropped.

To be legitimate, they must now start the process all over again, with a new business case that must follow, and be based on, extensive and transparent community consultation.

Equally, any future project in Ultimo, including the creation of Harwin's rumoured dream - a "fashion centre" (see SMH <http://tiny.cc/hl0wrz> ) - that would involve altering the Turbine and Boiler halls and/or remove large objects from these halls and/or alter the Harwood building's collection storage and curation facilities CANNOT be pursued without a valid business case including genuine, documented community consultation.

Clearly, it is time for the Government to wipe the slate clean, and re-think the whole operation.

**IN PARRAMATTA** they must -

- respect residents' demands for a world-standard museum reflecting their history and culture, ideally built in the Fleet Street Heritage Precinct

- revive the Council's Parramatta River foreshore plan on the riverbank site.

(These moves would create as many construction and permanent jobs as the farcical Milk Crate project, at only a fraction of the cost to the taxpayer)

**IN ULTIMO** they must focus on restoring the museum to its former internationally acclaimed status by -

- implementing the necessary repairs/maintenance works ASAP

- re-hiring qualified staff with genuine museum experience (as opposed to events and/or art gallery professionals)

We do not believe that any of these steps can be carried out under the current management team and Trustee Board.

The Government still seems blithely unaware of any problems ahead. Treasurer Perrottet continues to refer to the Parramatta EIS as still in place, even though the project it applies to is cancelled!

Meanwhile, Premier Berejiklian, whose back-flipping skills are legendary, has produced yet another version of her vision for the Parramatta Powerhouse. Talking to ABC Drive's Richard Glover on 7 July <http://tiny.cc/3ri4rz> , she chirped excitedly that the new museum would be the leading science institution in NSW, the "signature" Powerhouse, future-focused, featuring cutting edge technology..."

Glover pointed out that this was not the “relocated” Powerhouse museum she had been promising Parramatta for the past five years: “so why did you change your mind?” She retorted that she had hesitated initially to leave the original Powerhouse in Ultimo, while creating a second in Parramatta, only because the operational costs (in Ultimo) were “significant”. But fortunately, she said, the Treasurer had “found” the extra dollars needed to keep both sites operational.

When Glover, referring to the Green ban now protecting Parramatta heritage buildings on the museum site, asked “Will you be able to build it?” she replied confidently “Of course we’ll be able to build it! If there had been any specific legal heritage issues regarding the site, they would already have been dealt with.”

But with the Green ban firmly in place, a new Parliamentary Inquiry ( <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/listofcommittees/Pages/committee-details.aspx?pk=264> ) starting this month (29-07-2020), project costs rising by the day and thousands of NSW community members united in their desire to see Parramatta have its own, unique, cultural institution, Gladys may be in for the rude awakening she surely deserves.

When you submit your opposition to the “Parramatta Powerhouse” project (to <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/26576> - closing date Tuesday 21-07-2020) as well as stating initially “I object to...” you could also add that this EIS is no longer valid.

NB: if you encounter difficulties uploading your submission to above portal you may snail-mail it to -

Planning & Assessment Department of Planning, Industry & Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
Parramatta NSW 2124

*Save the Powerhouse*

