

MEDIA RELEASE

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Willow Grove green ban stands

The NSW Government's plan to 'relocate' Willow Grove is really a demolition job which does nothing to preserve the heritage site and runs roughshod over the people of Parramatta, says the NSW CFMEU.

"The CFMEU's green ban on the destruction of Willow Grove stands," said Darren Greenfield, CFMEU NSW Construction Secretary.

"It is long past time for the government to listen to the people of Parramatta, to heritage experts, and to the whole NSW community and finally commit to preserving the heritage building in its current location."

"The 'plan' to move Willow Grove is nonsensical and will result in the loss of the building's heritage value."

"Willow Grove is over 150 years old, made of 150-year-old bricks and 150-year-old timbers. The dismantling of the building will inevitably result in the destruction of much if not all of the original materials."

"What will be rebuilt on a completely different location will not be Willow Grove - it will be a copy. And given the low-ball figures we've heard bandied about on the cost of the project, it will be a poor copy at that."

"The government has alternatives before it. It has already responded to the green ban and community pressure by committing to preserve St George's Terrace and incorporating the building into the design of the new museum."

"There is no sensible reason why Willow Grove cannot also be preserved in its current location and incorporated into the new Powerhouse Museum, which would add to the museum's cultural significance and connection to the local area. There are many spectacular examples from the world where modern museums retain and celebrate cultural heritage."

"The people of Parramatta and Western Sydney deserve a museum that celebrates their heritage, rather than destroy an irreplaceable historic building to make way for the museum gift shop."

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