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Flood proves Powerhouse museum is safe

Robert Moran

Powerhouse Parramatta bosses have defended the museum's site following weekend flooding, saying water levels "would not have come within four metres" of the future building's entrance.

A flood warning was issued on Saturday for the ground floor of the four-level car park to be demolished to make way for the museum, sparking renewed criticism around the contentious development.

But Peter Collins, president of the Powerhouse Trust, said the weekend's flooding proved that the new museum was "positioned well above even the rarest of flood events".

"Powerhouse Parramatta will be a very safe building for people to visit and for the collection to be exhibited," he said.

The museum cited an analysis by "international engineering and flood specialists ARUP" that found Saturday's "flood water would have only just entered the riverfront undercroft", an area built into the design of the new museum to allow the passage of flood water. ARUP's David Harding said its analysis showed "it would take a river flood event worse than any ever recorded for river flood water to get into the ground floor of the new museum".

Powerhouse chief executive Lisa Havilah said the museum's design and engineering teams had ensured "every element of Powerhouse Parramatta puts safety first".