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<https://cityhubsydney.com.au/2022/08/powerhouse-museum-upgrades-public-overwhelmingly-disapproves-plans/?fbclid=IwAR3SnJwO5XLLd-v34eNmjdHYbtYRjBvb0WluWzyazioKuT6ikhg7q9u8SWc>

Powerhouse Museum upgrades: public overwhelmingly disapproves plans

Posted on **11 August 2022** by **Tileah Dobson** in **City Hub** **City News** **Featured City Hub**



The saga continues after the community rejected the 'renewal' of Ultimo's Powerhouse Museum. Photo: Tileah Dobson

By SASHA FOOT

Community members and groups have overwhelmingly opposed the NSW Government's Powerhouse Museum redevelopment plans in submissions made to the Department of Planning in July. Public feedback shows that objections – mostly centered on shifting the museum's focus from science to fashion – strongly overrule statements approving the Ultimo site renewal.

87% of the submissions stated their disapproval, while those who supported the concept plans were mostly government organisations like the Sydney Living Museums and the Australian Museum. The State Government will invest \$500 million to upgrade the existing museum, which includes a new six-storey building, outdoor programs, and a public square.

Save the Powerhouse, a community group opposing the site’s renewal, called the concept plan “destructive”.

While the community group expressed support for a site refurbishment (such as updating the exhibition spaces), they believe a planned renewal will “completely change and degrade” the existing museum. State member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich, opposed the draft plans as he said it would “intensify overdevelopment.”

The City of Sydney’s submission neither supported nor opposed the plans; instead, they requested more clarity on the proposal.

Save the Powerhouse, 08 August, 2022



POWERHOUSE ULTIMO RENEWAL Submissions to EIS Summary

*** Changes to Built Forms:**

- Demolition of What & Gallery
- Facelift of Herwood
- New Highways along Herwood
- Museum turning its back to Ultimeo

		Support	Comment	Oppose	Reasons to object				
					Transformation of Science Museum into Fashion Facility	Changes to Built Forms*	Waste of Public Money	Lack of due Process	Inadequate Heritage Listing
INDIVIDUALS	86	2	4	80	80	38	27	13	10
		2.33%	4.65%	93.02%	100.00%	47.50%	33.75%	16.25%	12.50%
COMMUNITY GROUPS	7	0	1	6	0	4	4	1	1
		0.00%	14.29%	85.71%	100.00%	66.67%	66.67%	16.67%	16.67%
PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS	3	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1
		0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	100.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%
BUSINESSES	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
GOVERNMENT	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
		80.00%	20.00%	20.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
TOTAL	102	6	7	89	89	44	31	14	12
		5.88%	6.86%	87.26%	100.00%	49.48%	34.82%	16.22%	13.40%

Having received a total of 102 submissions, the community has clearly outlined their feelings on the matter. Photo: Save the Powerhouse/Facebook

The council worried that a heritage building height increase would “obscure the distinctive profiles” of the existing site.

They also indicated that the site analysis was insufficient and recommended the inclusion of surrounding streets for a more comprehensive assessment.

Their submission did, however, welcome considered site upgrades.

The Sydney Living Museum, a State Government organisation that manages conservation efforts at 12 historic sites in NSW, said the plans will not compromise the site’s heritage.

“In our experience, adaptive reuse of built heritage and open forms can be done very successfully, and with care, creativity and consultation,” Adam Lindsay, the CEO of the Sydney Living Museum, expressed in their submitted feedback letter.

Michael Rodrigues, the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner of Investment NSW, backed the plans in the Department of Industry’s submission.

Rodrigues said the plans would help deliver on the state government’s 24-hour economy strategy – which aims to improve Sydney’s night sector. The museum’s renewal, he explained, will activate a night-time presence in Ultimo by providing increased evening events.

The Planning Department has begun calling for potential architectural firms that would like to compete in designing the final plan.
According to Save the Powerhouse, the panel has yet to include a museum expert.