

18 May, 2023

Climate Change: Comments from colleagues

1.0

I just wanted to raise something that may be of interest to the PHM Alliance. I am really baffled at the Museum's claims around climate: See website. <https://www.maas.museum/climate-action/>

And at 'First Museum to Pledge Zero':

<https://www.climatecontrolnews.com.au/building-services/first-museum-to-pledge-net-zero>

How this can be achieved with people and objects travelling regularly back and forth from Castle Hill and Parramatta is a mystery to me. I would be really good if someone could actually explain how this is going to work.

2.0

Dear Mr Graham, I bring your attention to a Powerhouse Museum quote on sustainability:

'Taking an international leadership position on sustainability and positive climate action is central to the Powerhouse's renewal and expansion.'

It is naive to think the Parramatta PHM is the first to consider the environment.

In 1957 the Opera House installed, among other things, a system of pipes for heating and cooling the building from harbour water, with huge power savings.

It is hard to fathom the empty words in this recent Powerhouse sustainability pronouncement.

A few sustainability issues come to my mind to contradict this myth:

1. The total destruction of the Ultimo heritage building and all its materials - marble, wood, metal etc that just needs repair, not destruction.

Rebuild for \$500 million. Zero waste???

2. The elimination of historic Willow Grove, never to be seen again.

Zero waste???

3. Fuel and time for staff who have to travel to Castle Hill to view the collection- thousands of journeys to and fro. (Photos do not replace the viewing of real objects for serious exhibition development.) Pollution???

4. Travel and time for patrons, especially tourists, to visit the Parramatta gallery.

5. Destruction of curatorial research and exhibition files documenting Australian history whose contributors are often long gone.

6. To date the elimination of education programs and exhibitions which build awareness of important environmental and sustainability issues for future citizens.

7. The lack of knowledge and thought for objects in the collection - in particular, the misconception that the unique Boulton Watt engine can be moved.

8. Precious objects unprotected on display in ways that deny universally accepted conservation guidelines, leading to many cases of damage.

With all due respect this is not the 'sustainability leadership' with which you should associate yourself, Mr Graham.

3.0

Lots of gall, guile and window-dressing!

First, kill off *Ecologic* and replace it with a bunch of energy-guzzling screens with low visitor appeal.

Next, remove carpet and grind the concrete floor of the Boiler Hall, spreading grit on precious objects like the Blieriot, so that a good deal of time and energy will be required to properly clean them. Destroy the Wrان building and bury the energy embodied in its fabric, which is nowhere near the end of its design life. Replace it with a brick monstrosity with higher embodied energy and no solar panels.

Build a new structure at Parramatta with a fake 'exoskeleton' made largely of imported steel, a facade that will require a lot of energy and water to keep clean. Totally ignore the opportunity to install conventional solar panels or building-integrated photovoltaics.

That's on top of demoting the Harwood Building from being an efficient centre for exhibition development and operations to a home for so-called 'creatives', as has been pointed out. Grrreen-washing writ large!