2 July, 2023
To Evan Hughes, adviser to Arts Minister John Graham
Subject: Powerhouse Museum

Dear Mr Hughes

This is an 11th hour appeal to you as advisor to the Arts Minister to try to prevent behind the scenes powerful lobby groups from –
Achieving their aim to spend $500mil + to convert the current Museum into an Educational/Entertainment /Commercial Hub that will house a Design & Fashion Museum. This will involve closing down the Ultimo site for several years, demolishing the Wran Building and handing the Harwood building over to developers.

Just to give one example of the collateral damage the current plan will cause.
The Boulton & Watt steam engine (B&W) is 250 years old and is the oldest engine of its type still working under steam. It is housed in the Wran Building hence it must be moved.

The move involves packing up, placing into "temporary" storage, eventually to be returned to an unspecified location where it will become a static object in a design & fashion museum.
As far as we know – no world recognised expert is being consulted. This irresponsible plan is being championed by the current CEO. It also appears to be fully backed by the current Trustees, some of whom were blatant fit for purpose appointees of the previous government. Outside experts believe that moving B&W even under world recognized expert care is a highly risky endeavour and should not be undertaken. It is a dangerous myth that just because B&W was moved successfully 35 years ago by the then living experts, moving it today will be a piece of cake. There seems to be a "she be right " attitude to all this, not to mention at what dollar cost.

You only need to look at what happened with Willow Grove & St George's Terrace to have serious doubts about their motives and competence.
 The current government has three options.
a) To stay with the completely unacceptable status quo.
b) Come up with an alternative, that will satisfy nobody.
c) Save the museum by giving it some serious TLC.

Yours sincerely
 Garry Horvai, Pennant Hills