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To: Anna Burns <Anna.Burns@minister.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: JOHN GRAHAM - THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM ULTIMO TO SHOW SYDNEY A NEW SIDE IN HERITAGE OVERHAUL - MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 2023

OFFICIAL

John Graham

Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-Time Economy, Minister for Jobs and Tourism

MEDIA RELEASE

The Powerhouse Museum Ultimo to show Sydney a new side in heritage overhaul

Vision pack available to download: [here](#)

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The Powerhouse Museum Ultimo will be reorientated to connect with the CBD, provide a new outdoor public square, more indoor exhibition space and show off the heritage facades of the original power station built in 1899.

The main entrance to the Powerhouse Museum Ultimo, will face the Goods Line, the walkway connecting Central Station and Haymarket, under the heritage renewal that will revitalise the iconic 1988 Wran Building on Harris Street.

The Minns Labor Government today released concept designs for the \$250 million project that is going to elevate the much-loved museum with world-class exhibition space focused on applied arts and sciences.

The Powerhouse Museum Ultimo will close its doors on February 5 2024 for building and conservation works that are expected to take up to three years.

The temporary closure will enable the protection of the collection and the most efficient delivery of the project, having the least impact on the Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo communities and audiences. The temporary closure will ensure the best use of funds, focusing investment into the revitalisation. A staggered closure would amplify the cost of the project, extend the disruption period and lead to a compromised visitor experience over a prolonged period.

When it reopens, the design will provide improved flow of visitors and exhibition spaces that will support increased access to the Powerhouse collection.

The new entrance will reveal the beautiful heritage facades of the original power station built in 1899 and the 1902 Turbine Hall. The 1901 Post Office building located on Harris Street will be preserved and further integrated into the Museum precinct.

The new public domain adjacent to the entrance will become a major new green space for Sydney.

This design will enable the Powerhouse Museum Ultimo to present international exclusive exhibitions and showcase the museum's existing collection, as well as expanded learning programs that support the applied arts, applied sciences and creative industries.

The Powerhouse Museum Ultimo confirmed the revitalisation concept design will include purpose built space to support the Powerhouse Academy program. This program offers accommodation for regional NSW school children to visit the Museum to engage with applied arts and applied sciences through immersive learning programs enriched by access to the Powerhouse Museum Ultimo collection and a major new partnership with UTS.

The revitalisation will be led by Infrastructure NSW in line with the museum's Conservation Management Plan and current heritage and planning legislation. The project will require a State Significant Development Application and, as part of this, consultation with the community.

The Powerhouse Museum Ultimo heritage revitalisation design scheme has been developed by Durbach Block Jagers Architects, proven design innovators and authors of some of Australia's most remarkable buildings, partnering with Architectus and landscape architects Tyrell Studio.

Timing for construction commencement and completion is subject to the outcomes of the planning and procurement processes. Following the conclusion of the revitalisation, Powerhouse Ultimo will continue to exhibit its iconic objects from the collection, including the Boulton & Watt Steam Engine, the Catalina flying boat Frigate Bird II and Locomotive Number 1.

Minister for Arts John Graham said:

"In September, the NSW Government announced it would deliver on its election commitment to save the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and preserve the Wran legacy.

"This is the next step in the process of reimagining the future of the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo. After 9 years of divided opinions of this site, we are hopeful these new designs and a renewed focus on applied arts and sciences are more in line with the community's expectations of this much-loved institution.

"The area around the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo has changed significantly in the last 30 years. The design plans will reorient the Museum, and open onto to the Goods Line. This will connect the Museum to the city, including major public transport options."

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo, Trust President Peter Collins said:

"The renewal of Powerhouse Ultimo will deliver a dynamic applied arts and applied sciences program, presenting exhibitions that showcase the Powerhouse Collection, attract international exhibitions and programs that support the visitor economy and create an activated cultural precinct.

"Embedding these collections, exhibitions and programs within a broader creative industries precinct will significantly contribute to the renewal of the institution while creating national and international development and employment pathways for NSW creative practitioners."

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo CEO, Lisa Havilah:

"The heritage revitalisation of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo will ensure that there will be even more opportunities for our audiences to connect with and experience our collection and programs across the applied arts and applied sciences. This new concept plan will expand our ability to present international exhibitions and expand our learning and industry programs. We thank the NSW Government for this transformative investment into the future of our much-loved museum and look forward to delivering an exceptional outcome for the communities of NSW.

“The concept design includes the Powerhouse Academy, which will offer increased levels of access for secondary and tertiary students from regional NSW and beyond, providing immersive learning experiences that enable pathways into industry and tertiary learning.”

“The government has committed \$250 million for the heritage revitalisation, with the Powerhouse Museum Ultimo adopting a \$50 million philanthropy target. We have already secured \$10 million towards this through a partnership with UTS.”

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