

## PHMU- A SAD 9-YEAR SAGA OF BROKEN PROMISES AND DECEIT

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Hi everyone,

Kyle Winkworth, former PHM trustee and senior museums expert, gives her own astute comments on Arts Minister John Graham's "broken promises. <http://tiny.cc/vjehvz>

"It is bizarre that the Harwood building is proposed for inclusion in the City of Sydney's heritage floor space scheme when it isn't even on Council's LEP, let alone the state heritage register which used to be the eligibility criteria for selling air space rights for heritage floor space Will it be the MAAS Trustees selling out the Wran legacy and the endowment of previous generations of NSW taxpayers, the legacy that John Graham promised to preserve? Or will it be UTS or some other developer that cleans up after the people charged with protecting the assets of the Powerhouse Museum sell out the public interest?"

She adds "All these machinations fit perfectly with Minister John Graham's fake 'heritage overhaul' announced on Monday. Less than nine months ago he stood in front of the PHM and said "**only Labor will save the Powerhouse Museum**" <http://tiny.cc/wiehvz> **..NO THEY HAVEN'T. THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM IS NOT SAVED.** The Minister has mistaken preserving the 'Wran legacy' for keeping the Wran building, when it is the museum itself that is at risk"

"One of many misleading statements in the Minister's media release <http://tiny.cc/qiehvz> is the absurd promise that when the museum reopens it will support increased access to the collection. After the PHM closes in February anyone wanting to see the museum's transport, engineering and technology collections will have to trek to Castle Hill (no parking and no public transport), a shocking act of cultural vandalism to disperse these collections and disconnect them from their meaning and place at the heart of the Powerhouse Museum, and their context in Ultimo."

**"This is the only collection relocation project anywhere in the world where taxpayers have been slugged to move the museum's collection into inferior, less secure and less accessible facilities** to what the PHM already owns at Ultimo. At a **cost of more than \$100 million** this is an **outrageous exercise in asset destruction**. More damage is inevitable when they start moving the large fragile objects in Transport Flight and Space, Steam Revolution and Loco No.1 and carriages. This will cost millions of dollars and require parts of the boiler house and the Wran building to be demolished."

Winkworth says "It has always been the CEO's plan to empty the PHM of its defining collections to create what the President of the MAAS Trust called a *tabula rasa*. The mystery is why Minister Graham, having promised a heritage revitalisation, continued the SSD concept scheme when its obvious intent was to erase all trace of the Powerhouse Museum's iconic installations, design and heritage adaptation.

After blowing \$250 million only three large objects will be returned to the former Powerhouse Museum which was purpose designed to display the state's iconic transport, power and engineering collections in the grand and conceptually resonant spaces of the former Ultimo power station. The exhibition of these priceless collections was the centre of the whole investment case for the PHM and is the heart of **Neville Wran and Jack Ferguson's vision for the Powerhouse Museum.**"

"After only 35 years and more than 22 million visitors, the Labor Government that promised to save the Wran legacy, is now delivering the coup de grace to the Powerhouse Museum. **People should visit the PHM before it closes on February 5** to ask themselves why the government is closing the museum to empty it of its defining collections, when **only three months ago Minister Graham promised they were keeping the Powerhouse open.**

Winkworth concludes “The scheme that John Graham announced in front of the Harwood building is stage 2 of the LNP’s museum demolition and collection eviction plan, otherwise known as the Ultimo Renewal Creative Industries Precinct. There is no heritage revitalisation. At best what will emerge from the former PHM is a **commercially focussed part time exhibition centre**. All this is being done behind a shroud of secrecy inconsistent with the obligations of a public museum. **There’s no master plan, no museum plan, no design brief, no exhibition plan and no business case.**”

“Inevitably ‘Powerhouse’ as it is now known will offer **more consultation in an information vacuum**. And once again they will ignore what people say, just as they did in the last eight rounds of consultations. **No one believes the PHM will reopen in three years’ time, or that it will even be a museum.**”

If you don’t want the Powerhouse Museum to close unnecessarily on February 5 write to the John Graham, Minister for the Arts at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/ministers/minister-for-roads-arts-music-and-night-time-economy-jobs-tourism> and CC the Premier, Chris Minns at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/premier-of-nsw/contact-premier>

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