

Sun 22/12/2024

Save the Powerhouse Museum <savethepowerhouse@gmail.com>

NEW TRUST PRESIDENT BORGER ADMITS PARRAMATTA MAY SERVE AS EVENT CENTRE

Hi everyone,

David Borger, recently appointed President of the MAAS Board of Trustees

<https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-and-design/who-s-in-who-s-out-as-labor-figures-head-cultural-leadership-shake-up-20241127-p5ku3e.html> will take office on 1 January 2025.

THIS IS NOT GOOD NEWS FOR THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM IN ULTIMO. Borger, an enthusiastic supporter from the start of Mike Baird's electoral promise (*NSW elections of 25 March 2015*) to sell "the Powerhouse Museum in Pyrmont (sic) to raise about \$200 million..." simply declared "It's terrific news for Parramatta."

Read "Powerhouse Museum site in Ultimo to be sold to developers" in SMH of 26 February 2015

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/powerhouse-museum-site-in-ultimo-to-be-sold-to-developers-20150226-13pn5o.html>

The sale of the Ultimo site which "would be developed into apartments" would "reap between \$150 and \$200 million", enough to pay for the move, including the construction of new facilities in Parramatta.

"Mr Baird said the plan was for the new Powerhouse Museum to open before the end of the state government's next term" (March 2019).

10 years and \$1.5 billion down the track, the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo has been closed for nearly a year and will remain closed indefinitely, and the Parramatta white elephant will not open before the end of 2026 (**8 years later than announced by Baird!**)

How was this allowed to happen despite a change of Government in March 2023?

Speaking to Linda Morris (Read SMH of 21 December 2025 <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-and-design/we-don-t-want-to-be-too-stuffy-new-powerhouse-boss-on-what-we-can-expect-20241216-p5kymp.html>), Borger **did not have a single word about the Ultimo Museum's future** but candidly confirmed critical information on Parramatta that was strongly denied before.

The Parramatta "milk crate" –

- Will not be a museum but an event centre and venue for hire: Borger "is 'unapologetic' about **finding new ways to present the collection**. Nor should the public mind, he says, if **weddings share presentation floor space**. The hope is that there's ...some **revenue generating opportunities** that can go to help with the operational costs."

- It exceeds its budget (in particular nothing has been allowed for fitout and programs): "Borger concedes **budgets can move**" ...IT'S JUST TAXPAYERS' MONEY!

- Did not secure the expected \$75 million private donations: "\$53 million (only) has been raised for capital works over three years, \$27 million short of its target" and "**the museum is without a campaign director**." But "should he (Borger) fall short, THE BILL WILL BE PICKED UP BY TAXPAYERS." *Note that former Board of Trustees President Peter Collins claimed in his foreword to the 2023-24 annual report that \$60.7m had been raised. Where has the missing \$6.3 million gone?*

It is still not too late to save our Museum. Sign our joint petition “Keep the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo open” <https://chng.it/x6r5ZRtCQK> if you have not done so yet and share it with your family and friends.

The petition is reaching 9,000 signatures with a goal of 10,000 in the near future.

Save the Powerhouse

