

Name Withheld

Object

KINGSGROVE , New South Wales

Message

Submission: Objection to Modifications to PUR SSD

I object to this modification to the approved Revitalisation SSD. In so doing, I also restate my objection to the Heritage Revitalisation SSD-67588459 which dismantles the Sulman award winning Powerhouse Museum, rendering the remaining building envelopes and spaces unsuitable for the viable continuance of the Powerhouse Museum. The proposed outcomes of this SSD and the proposed modification are contrary to the government's promise to save the Powerhouse Museum as the Museum's proven museum standard functionality, as evidenced by its popular success since opening in 1988, is being disastrously eroded. The Revitalisation SSD reduces the Powerhouse Museum's exhibition space from 21,800 sqm to just 5,100sqm. This is negating to the government's purported intent to deliver a 'Heritage Revitalisation' of the Powerhouse Museum.

This modification signals the government's disregard of both its publicly stated goals to save the Powerhouse Museum. It is demolition, not saving.

This modification illustrates the dishonesty of INSW in developing and promoting, against popular and expert objections and considered advice, an expensive and wasteful project which will not result in the Heritage Revitalisation of the Powerhouse Museum.

The Powerhouse Museum has delivered a professional, museum standard exhibition program using its best practice Harwood Building museum facilities. While it may be that the proponents are actually trying to save money on an already wasteful and unnecessary SSD, this particular modification also suggests that the government will dispose of the Harwood Building, which in practice is an essential component of the effective running of the Museum. Harwood now needs to remain as part of the Powerhouse Museum campus, in the absence of any other dock.

The modification will result in the demolition of the Wran Building and Galleria - the signature elements of the popular success of the Powerhouse Museum: the grand entry and massive and adaptable exhibition space and volume of the Wran building; and the soaring Galleria - the inspired structure uniting the contemporary with the heritage structures of the Ultimo Power House - both major circulation paths to experience the Powerhouse Museum. Claims made by the proponents of the SSD that the Wran Building was not used for exhibitions are false. From the Museum's opening in 1988, the Wran building functioned as a flexible exhibition space, able to accommodate major touring exhibitions, such as Greek Antiquities held to mark the Sydney 2000 Olympics, as well as Museum-generated exhibitions on a wide range of subjects drawing on the Museum's Collection. Similarly, the Galleria was always a key exhibition space, highlighting internationally and nationally significant objects from the Collection so as to lead visitors to explore key themes throughout the Museum's galleries. The major theme is the beginning of the Industrial Revolution which underpins the purpose and potential of the Powerhouse Museum - a museum of the Applied Arts and the Applied Sciences.

The destruction of the Museum's established and continuing purpose under its Act - an applied arts and sciences museum - is further illustrated by the specific INSW proposed exemption to the false and ineffectual State Heritage Listing, the exemption that allows the removal of the historic floor and other built structures of the 1899 Engine House set within the Turbine Hall. This popular, educational and rare exhibition of historically significant

Australian and international steam engines is the 'beating heart' of the Museum, operating in synergy with the world treasure, the 1793 Boulton & Watt beam engine.

The fact that these significant museum objects have been removed to storage, the fact that the INSW Exemptions allow for the removal of the heritage significant original Engine House and the fact that this modification proposes, at great expense to the NSW taxpayer, to demolish two heritage and architecturally significant structures, the Wran Building and the Galleria shows how ill thought out and wasteful, and contrary to what the people of NSW actually want, the SSD is.

I further note and object to the fact that the proposals to demolish the Wran and Galleria are against the ICOMOS Venice Charter 1964 which states that "The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification which would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed." Article 6.

I object to the fact that this modification will destroy the essence of the Powerhouse Museum's conception and purpose by stripping out these two key built elements, needlessly replacing them with what appear to be brick culverts with vertiginous stairways - a poor excuse for public circulation in what are now inspiring, sky-framing, glorious and proven functional museum spaces to show off our Australian and international treasures.

I would ask that the NSW restore the Ultimo Museum, and make all repairs required to reopen the Museum as soon as possible. Establish a new senior management team with proven Museum (not art gallery) experience.

Thank you