

August 15, 2026

The Saturday Telegraph

August 15, 2026 | The Saturday Telegraph

NEWS 19

Powerhouse sets date to welcome visitors

Museum opening to spark west into life



David Borger takes a look at the emerging shopping mall exhibit at the new Powerhouse Museum. Picture: Richard Dobson

EXCLUSIVE
Linda Silmalis

Western Sydney's first cultural institution will house more than 3000 exhibits, with the government promising that most will be free, as will entry.

One of the first five exhibitions at the museum will include a homage to the shopping mall, featuring exhibits from Sydney's first Westfield at Blacktown, the old "Parramall" and relics of other famous retail centres.

The homage — dubbed "The Mall" — will also include rare archives from Australian brands such as Le Specs, Hot Tuna and Mambo and the signature Levi's 501 jeans worn by

Apple co-founder Steve Jobs. Shop window displays such as those by David Jones, Sportsgirl and R.M. Williams will also be showcased along with the "rain-drop foundation" from Roselands centre.

The opening follows protests over the relocation from the city and criticism at the cost.

However, the government and museum advocates are confident Western Sydney's first major cultural institution will recoup a large portion of the investment within the first year.

The government is at pains to point out that \$75 million of the total bill came from philanthropic contributions.

Arts Minister John Graham said the Powerhouse was set to challenge visitor views on a typical museum experience.

"It will bring audiences from across Sydney, NSW, Australia and the world to explore its bold exhibitions and reshape what audiences think of a museum experience," he said.

Business Western Sydney executive director David Borger, who had been one of the leading advocates for the museum relocation, said it represented a new national landmark that completed

Parramatta's transformation from industrial heartland to a modern city.

"I don't think I can remember a time when Sydney has had a cultural investment this big. Not since the Opera House. It will be the biggest museum in NSW," he said.

"It is going to shape Western Sydney from a scrappy manufacturing heartland. We are giving birth to the biggest museum investment in the world.

"The Powerhouse is the first building in Parramatta leaning back into its river-side setting."

EDITORIAL, PAGE 66

On line

August 15, 2026 - 5:00AM

The Saturday Telegraph

'New national landmark': First look inside Powerhouse as opening date revealed

The \$915 million Parramatta Powerhouse, dubbed the most significant cultural project since the Sydney Opera House, has secured a November 7 opening date.



Linda Silmalis, Chief reporter, @LindaSilmalis

EXCLUSIVE:

One of the world's most significant new museums – the Parramatta Powerhouse – will open on November 7.

More than a decade since it was first mooted, The Saturday Telegraph can reveal the Minns government has agreed on an opening date for the \$915 million project.

Dubbed the most significant cultural infrastructure project since the Sydney Opera House, the museum marks a “coming of age” for Parramatta, complementing its transformation to a modern metropolis.

Western Sydney's first cultural institution, the museum will house more than 3000 separate exhibits, with the government promising that most will be free, as will entry.

One of the first five exhibitions at the museum will include a homage to the shopping mall, featuring exhibits from Sydney's first Westfield at Blacktown, the old “Parra mall” and relics of other famous retail centres.



Business Western Sydney executive director David Borger takes a look at the emerging shopping mall exhibit at the Parramatta Powerhouse. Picture: Richard Dobson

The homage – dubbed “The Mall” – will also include rare archives from Australian brands such as Hot Tuna and Mambo, the signature Levi's 501 jeans worn by Apple co-founder Steve Jobs and the Predator Boot, conceived by former Liverpool player, Australian Craig Johnston, and worn by David Beckham.

Shop window displays such as those by David Jones, Sportsgirl and R.M Williams will also be showcased along with the “raindrop foundation” from Roselands centre.



Interior view of Victoria Arcade, printed by the NSW Government Printer, Sydney, about 1983, will be part of the exhibit. Picture: Annika Kafcaloudis



An electronic payment terminal from 2002 on display. Picture: Annika Kafcaloudis

The opening follows protests over the relocation from the city and criticism at the cost. However, the government and museum advocates are confident Western Sydney's first major cultural institution will recoup a large portion of the investment within the first year. The government is at pains to point out that \$75 million of the total bill came from philanthropic contributions.

Arts Minister John Graham said the Powerhouse was set to challenge visitor views on a typical museum experience.

"It will bring audiences from across Sydney, NSW, Australia and the world to explore its bold exhibitions and reshape what audiences think of a museum experience," he said.

Business Western Sydney executive director David Borger, who had been one of the leading advocates for the museum relocation, said it represented a new national landmark that completed Parramatta's transformation from industrial heartland to a modern city.

"I don't think I can remember a time when Sydney has had a cultural investment this big. Not since the Opera House. It will be the biggest museum in NSW," he said.

"It is going to shape Western Sydney from a scrappy manufacturing heartland. We are giving birth to the biggest museum investment in the world.

"The Powerhouse is the first building in Parramatta leaning back into its riverside setting."