

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

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# Modification 1 of Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation

State Significant Development Assessment Report (SSD-67588459 MOD 1)

November 2025





# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Assessment Report

Published: November 2025

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# Executive Summary

This report provides the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (the Department's) assessment of the proposal to modify the State significant development (SSD) consent for the redevelopment of the Powerhouse Ultimo museum (SSD 67588459 MOD 1), located at 500 Harris Street in the City of Sydney local government area (LGA).

On 24 March 2025, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister) approved the Powerhouse Ultimo museum SSD application (SSD 67588459). The approval allows for the demolition, alteration, addition, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, as well as the provision of vehicle access, open space, and landscaping. The site and its buildings are listed as State and local listed heritage items.

Infrastructure NSW (INSW) (the Applicant) proposes to amend the development consent to include additional demolition of the Wran Building, the removal of the loading dock, the mezzanine levels, and the rooftop bar, and to make other internal and external changes and amendments to conditions.

The Department is satisfied that the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and does not constitute a new development application.

The Department exhibited the modification from 17 July 2025 until 30 July 2025. During the exhibition period, the Department received 30 submissions from the public (28 objections, one providing comments and one in support), a submission from the City of Sydney Council (Council) objecting to the modification and advice from five government agencies.

The key concerns raised during the exhibition period related to the demolition of the Wran Building, heritage impacts, design/appearance, museum function, cost, consultation, and public interest.

The Applicant submitted a response to submissions (RtS) report on 30 September 2025 and additional information on 22 and 23 October 2025 to address the issues raised in submissions and agency advice. In addition, the Applicant amended the proposal, including revisions to the Switch House rooftop staircase/lift overrun, window designs, and other internal and external.

The Department has assessed the modification in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act and carefully considered the issues raised in submissions and the Applicant's response. The Department considers the proposed modification is acceptable for the following key reasons:

- the demolition works and rebuild of the Wran Building / Galleria:
  - is unavoidable due to structural issues
  - would have acceptable heritage impacts as the Wran Building will be rebuilt, its internal steel

structure will be replaced with like-for-like materials and the building's double-arch form will be retained

- would be subject to new conditions requiring heritage interpretation and photographic archival recording
- the replacement of the Galleria glazing with solid cladding would not result in adverse heritage impacts, as it does not alter the spatial qualities of the building and would not be readily visible from the public domain
- the removal of the Switch House roof extension/bar allows for a greater appreciation of the Switch House roof form and has a positive heritage impact
- the removal of the Switch House loading dock and alterations to windows and doors would have neutral to positive heritage impacts, as the changes either retain original features or result in only minor and sympathetic alterations
- the revised operational waste management strategy, including the use of the Harwood Building for deliveries, is appropriate to meet the servicing needs of the development
- it is substantially the same development as the approved development.

As such, the Department considers the modified project to be in the public interest and concludes that the consent may be modified subject to conditions.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The proposal

This report provides the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (the Department) assessment of an application to modify the State significant development (SSD) consent for the redevelopment and revitalisation of the Powerhouse Ultimo (SSD-67588459 MOD 1).

The application was lodged by Infrastructure NSW (the Applicant) on 4 July 2025, pursuant to section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (the Act).

The Applicant seeks to modify the development to include additional demolition of the Wran Building, the removal of the loading dock, the mezzanine levels, and the rooftop bar, and to make other internal and external changes and amendments to conditions.

Details of the modification (including amendments since its lodgement) are provided at **Appendix A**. An overview of the proposed is provided in **Section 2**.

## 1.2 The site

The subject site is located at 500 Harris Street, Ultimo in the City of Sydney local government area (LGA). The site covers an area of 24,370 m<sup>2</sup>, is irregular in shape and is bound by William Henry Street to the north, Macarthur Street to the south, Darling Drive to the east and Harris Street to the west.

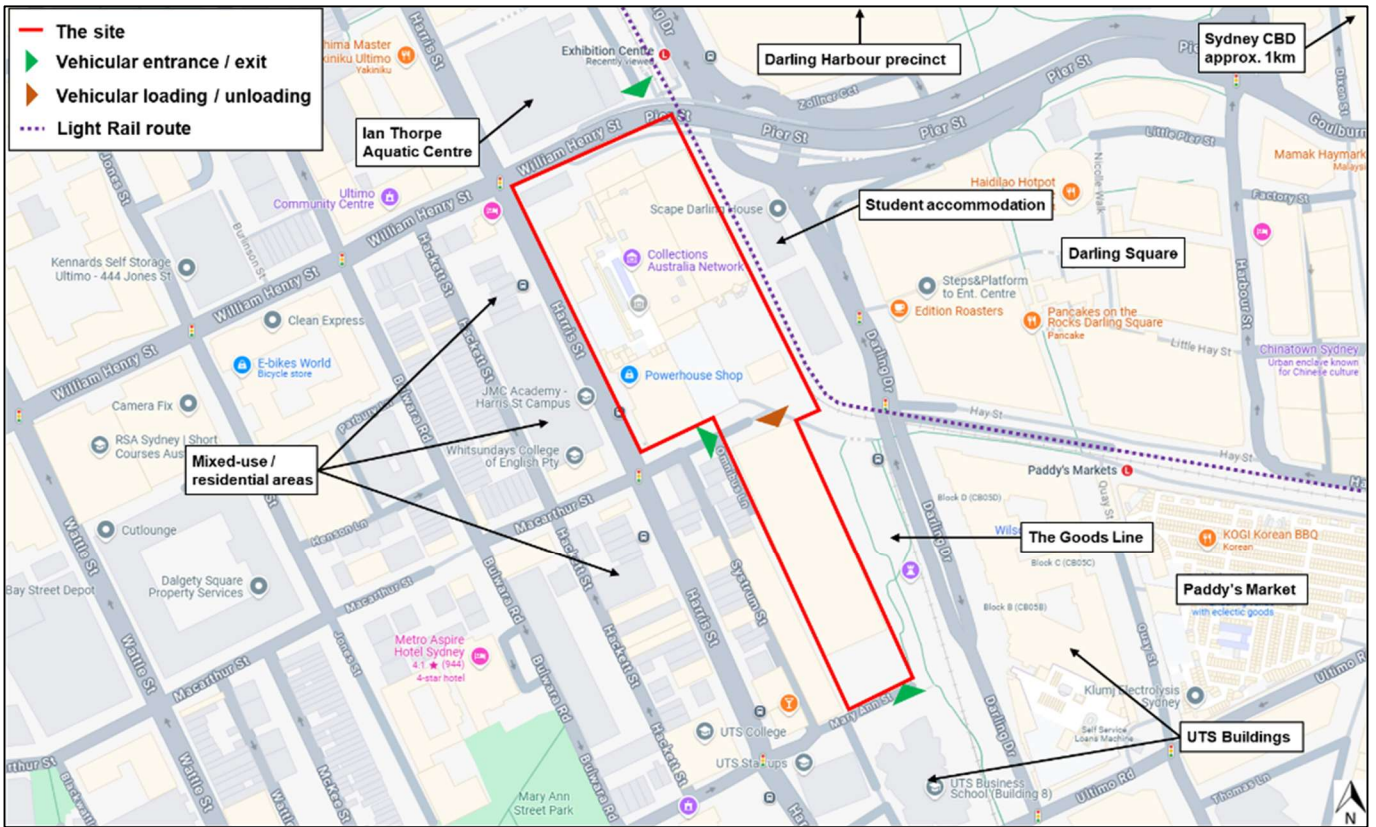
The site contains several existing buildings (total GFA of 23,002 m<sup>2</sup>) and spaces, which comprise the Powerhouse Ultimo Museum, key buildings include the:

- 1988 Wran Building (including Galleria) fronting Harris Street
- Ultimo Powerhouse main buildings at Pier Street, including Boiler, Switch and Pump Houses, Turbine and Engine Halls and North Annex (Core Buildings)
- Harwood Building within the southern portion of the site
- former Ultimo Post Office.

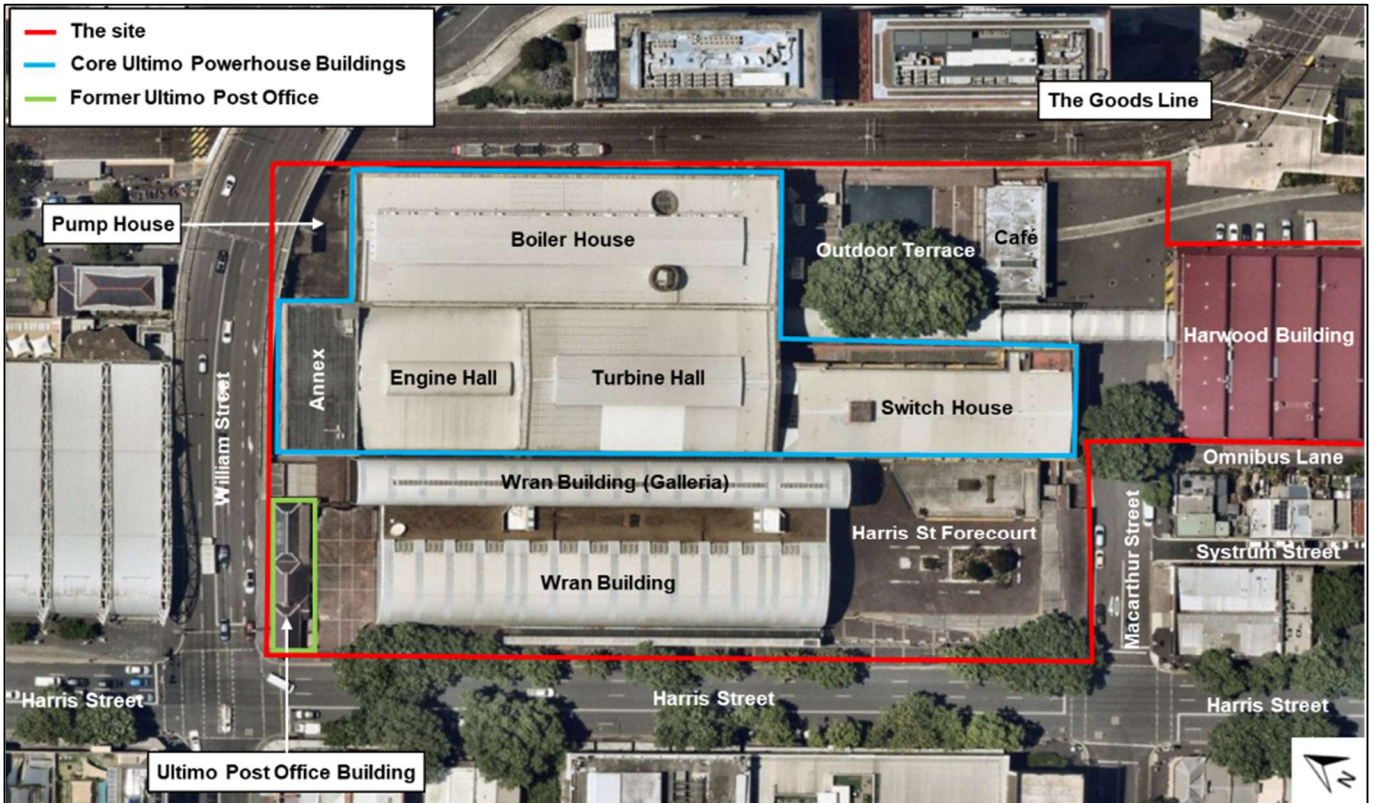
The site is listed as a State heritage item on the State Heritage Register (SHR) under the *Heritage Act 1977* and Schedule 5 of the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (SLEP) identifies the Core Buildings and former Ultimo Post Office as local heritage items.

Vehicle access is primarily obtained from Macarthur and Mary Ann Streets. Loading and unloading occurs within the Harwood Buildings predominantly via the Macarthur Street access and occasionally from the Core Buildings.

The surrounding area is generally characterised by a mixture of high to medium density commercial, residential, educational and recreational use.



**Figure 1** The site location and surrounding context (Base source: Nearmap)



**Figure 2** | Aerial view of the site, its buildings, adjoining roads and urban form (Base source: Nearmap)

## 1.3 Modification background

The Applicant has lodged the application following further design development of the proposal, including structural investigations that identified additional challenges associated with retaining the steel structure of the Wran Building and Galleria, as well as a review of its ability to meet the requirements of the National Construction Code and relevant Australian Standards.

The Applicant also identified that the existing Harwood Building loading arrangements are sufficient to meet demands, and the new loading dock is no longer required. In addition, further design development results in other internal and external changes and associated amendments to conditions.

## 1.4 Related projects and works

### 1.4.1 Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation

On 24 March 2025, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister) approved an SSD for the redevelopment and revitalisation of Powerhouse Ultimo, comprising:

- demolition of existing buildings and structures
- alterations, additions, adaptive reuse, maintenance and repair of existing buildings
- construction of alterations and additions to the Wran Building
- use of new built form for the purpose of a museum
- service vehicle access, bicycle facilities, public open space, courtyards and landscaping.

### 1.4.2 Powerhouse Ultimo Concept Approval

On 21 February 2023, the then Minister for Planning approved an SSD concept proposal (SSD-32927319) for the renewal of the Powerhouse Ultimo (the Concept Approval). However, the Applicant decided not to pursue the Concept Approval and surrendered the consent on 6 March 2025.

## 2 Proposed modification

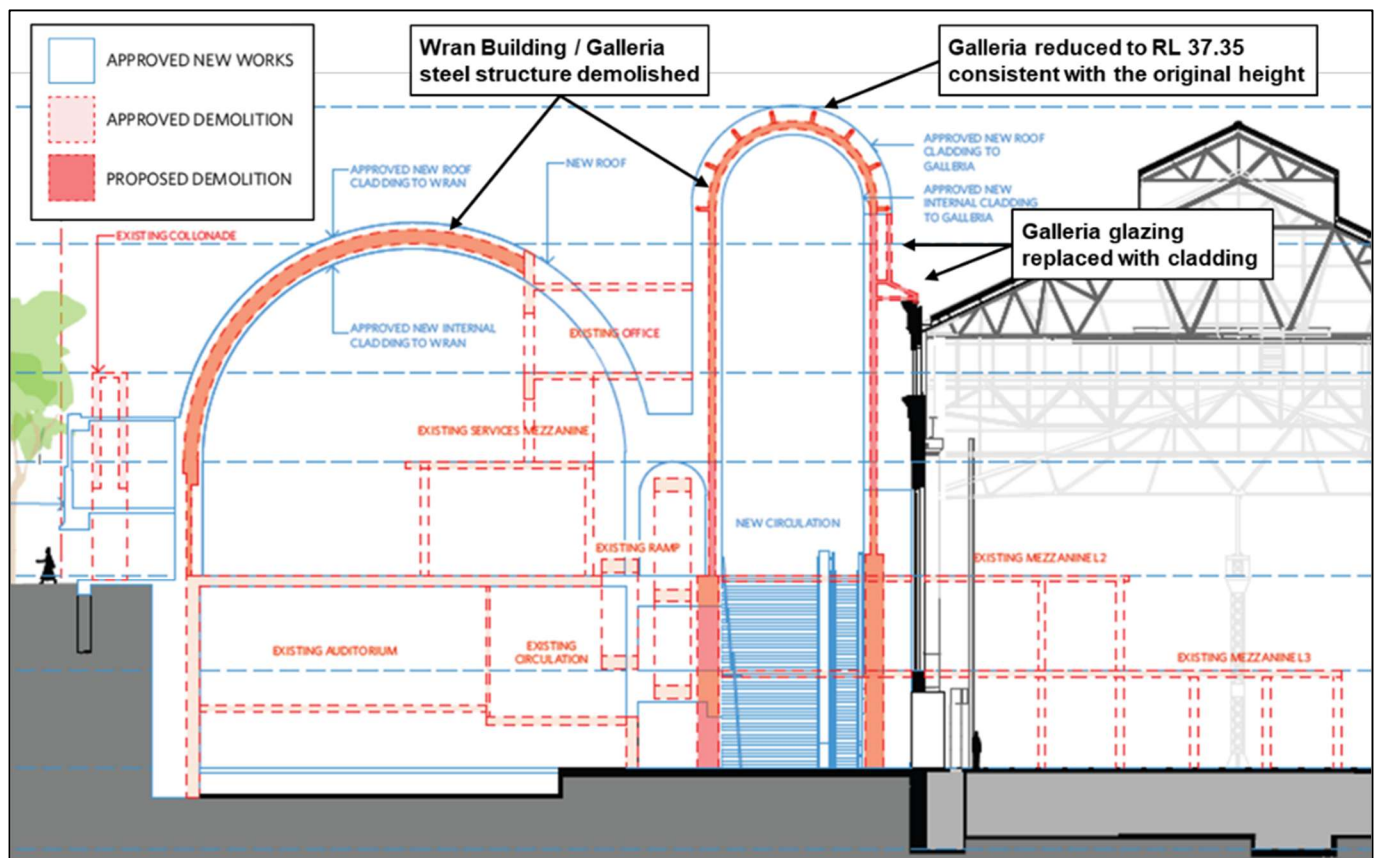
The modification seeks to demolish and rebuild the Wran Building, remove the loading dock, mezzanine levels, rooftop bar and make other internal and external changes and amendments to conditions.

The key aspects of the modification (as updated by additional information) are provided in the Modification Report (**Appendix A**), outlined in **Table 1** and illustrated in **Figure 3** to **Figure 5**.

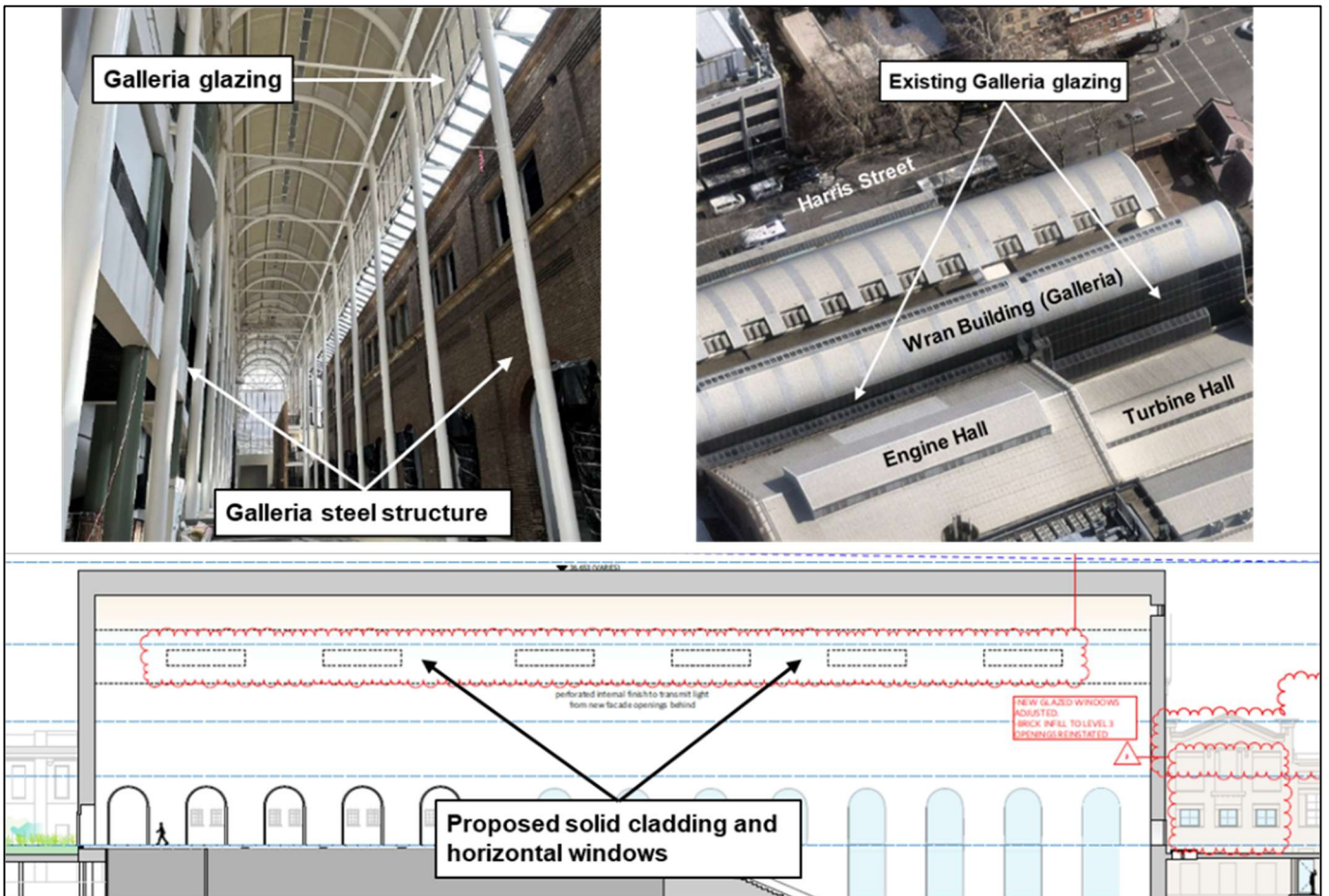
**Table 1** | Key aspects of the modification

Element	Approval	Modification
<b>Wran Building and Galleria</b>	<p>Wran Building / Galleria works included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial retention of internal steel building structure</li> <li>• retention of vertical glazing to eastern elevation / roof of the Galleria</li> <li>• mezzanine levels within creative commercial units</li> <li>• Galleria building height RL 37.565</li> </ul>	<p>Amend the Wran Building works, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demolish and rebuild all Wran Building / Galleria building structure</li> <li>• replacement of glazing with solid cladding and insertion of horizontal windows</li> <li>• remove mezzanine levels within creative commercial units.</li> <li>• reduce Galleria height to RL 37.35 (-0.215 m)</li> </ul>
<b>Switch House</b>	<p>Switch House works included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a domed roof extension and bar (however, consent not granted for this component under condition B2)</li> <li>• new loading dock, vehicle entrance, ramp and associated earthworks</li> <li>• new windows and doorways provided to south, east and west elevations</li> <li>• internal stairs, amenities, hoist, back of house BoH facilities and plant</li> <li>• 16 bicycle parking spaces and end-of-trip facilities (EoT).</li> </ul>	<p>Amend the Switch House works, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remove domed roof extension, bar, provide new low-pitch roof and delete condition B2</li> <li>• remove the loading dock and associated, vehicle entrance, ramp, earthworks and reconfiguration of internal spaces and the southern elevation.</li> <li>• alterations, additions and removal of windows and door openings</li> <li>• alterations, additions, removal of stairs, hoist, amenities, BoH facilities and plant</li> <li>• remove 16 spaces and EoT and provide 20 spaces and EoT in the Harwood Building.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste and servicing strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational waste storage / managed within Switch House loading dock</li> <li>• All deliveries (excluding large exhibitions) to the new loading dock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational waste storage / managed within new Switch House storage areas.</li> <li>• All deliveries (excluding large exhibitions) to the existing Harwood Building loading dock.</li> </ul>

Element	Approval	Modification
<b>Gross floor area (GFA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15,226.50 m<sup>2</sup> GFA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14,859.03 m<sup>2</sup> GFA (-367.47 m<sup>2</sup>).</li> </ul>
<b>Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A2 includes plan references</li> <li>B2 and B9(b) require reinstatement of windows and removal of the Switch House roof extension / bar</li> <li>B13 and B14 require retention of Wran Building internal structure and provision of technical information</li> <li>B23, E6, E33(a)(d) and F9 relate to the new loading dock operation</li> <li>B30 relates to heritage interpretation</li> <li>E42 relates to waste management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update A2 to include revised plans.</li> <li>Delete B2, B9(b) as the changes to the Switch House have been incorporated.</li> <li>Delete B13, B14, as Wran Building structure is no longer proposed to be retained.</li> <li>Delete B23, E6, E33(a)(d), F9, as the loading dock is no longer proposed.</li> <li>Update B30 to include interpretation of Wran Building.</li> <li>Update E42 to revise waste management due to removal of loading dock.</li> </ul>



**Figure 3 |** Wran Building / Galleria additional steel structure demolition works and glazing (Base source: Applicant’s modification)



**Figure 4** | Wran Building / Galleria steel structure and roof glazing (top) and proposed solid cladding and horizontal windows (bottom) (Base source: Applicant's RtS and additional information)



**Figure 5** | Approved (left) and proposed (right) Switch House southern and eastern elevations (Base source: Applicant's additional information)

# 3 Statutory context

## 3.1 Scope of modification and assessment pathway

Details of the legal pathway under which the modification is sought are provided in **Table 2**.

**Table 2** | Permissibility and assessment pathway

Consideration	Description
<b>Scope of modification</b>	<p>The Department has reviewed the scope of the modification and considers that it can be characterised as modification pursuant to section 4.55(2) of the EP&amp;A Act, as it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• it is substantially the same development as originally approved</li><li>• it would not involve any further disturbance outside the already approved disturbance areas for the development</li><li>• the proposed modifications are such that they cannot be considered administrative or minor in nature and therefore warrant the use of section 4.55(2) of the EP&amp;A Act.</li></ul> <p>The Department has considered the changes to the Wran Building, loading dock and internal and external changes and is satisfied the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(2) of the EP&amp;A Act and does not constitute a new development application. Accordingly, the Department considers that the application should be assessed and determined under section 4.55(2) of the EP&amp;A Act rather than requiring a new development application to be lodged.</p>
<b>Consent Authority</b>	<p>The Minister is the consent authority under section 4.5(a) of the EP&amp;A Act and has the capacity to modify the consent</p>
<b>Decision-maker</b>	<p>The Executive Director, Housing and Key Sites Assessments is the decision maker under the Minister’s instrument of delegation as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the modification application has not been made by a person who has disclosed a reportable political donation</li><li>• less than 50 public submissions by way of objection were received</li><li>• Council objects to the modification application.</li></ul>

## 3.2 Mandatory matters for consideration

In determining the modification, the consent authority must take into consideration the matters referred to in section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act which are of relevance to the development the subject of the application. The consent authority must also take into consideration the reasons given by the consent authority for the grant of the consent that is sought to be modified.

The Department’s consideration of these matters is shown in **Table 3** and **Appendix C**.

**Table 3 | Matters for consideration**

<b>Matter for consideration</b>	<b>Department's assessment</b>
<b>Environmental planning instruments (EPIs), proposed instruments, development control plans and planning agreements</b>	The Department conducted a comprehensive assessment of the project against the mandatory matters for consideration as part of the original assessment.  The Department considers the current modification application remains consistent with the relevant EPIs, as outlined in <b>Appendix C – Statutory Considerations</b> .
<b>EP&amp;A Regulation</b>	The modification satisfactorily meets the relevant requirements of the EP&A Regulation, including the procedures relating to applications and public participation, as outlined in <b>Appendix C – Statutory Considerations</b> .
<b>Likely impacts</b>	<b>Section 5 – Assessment.</b>
<b>Suitability of the site</b>	<b>Section 2 – Proposal and Section 5 – Assessment.</b>
<b>Public submissions</b>	<b>Section 4 – Engagement and Section 5 – Assessment.</b>
<b>Public interest</b>	<b>Section 5 – Assessment and Section 6 – Evaluation.</b>

### 3.2.1 Objects of the EP&A Act

In determining whether or not to modify the approval, the consent authority should consider whether the modified project is consistent with the relevant objects of the EP&A Act (section 1.3) including the principles of ecologically sustainable development. Consideration of these factors is described in **Appendix C**.

The Department is satisfied that the modified development remains consistent with the objectives of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD).

### 3.2.2 Biodiversity development assessment report

Section 7.17(2) of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) requires all SSD modifications to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) unless the authority or person determining the application is satisfied that the modification will not increase the impact on biodiversity values (as identified in the BC Act and in the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017).

The Department is satisfied the modification will not increase the impact on biodiversity values and consequently a BDAR is not required to accompany the modification application, in accordance with section 7.12(2) of the BC Act.

# 4 Engagement

## 4.1 Public exhibition and notification of the modification

After accepting the modification application, the Department made the documents publicly available on the NSW Planning Portal and:

- publicly exhibited the project from 17 July 2025 until 30 July 2025 on the NSW Planning Portal
- notified occupiers and landowners in the vicinity of the site and each person who made a submission in relation to the original development application about the public exhibition
- notified and invited comment from relevant government agencies and City of Sydney Council (Council).

The Department received 30 public submissions (28 objections, one comment and one in support), advice from five government agencies and an objection from Council. The Department also received feedback from a member of the public outside the exhibition period in the form of an objection, which has also been considered as part of this assessment.

The Department requested the Applicant to respond to the issues raised in submissions, the comments received from government agencies and Council's objection. The Applicant provided the Response to Submissions (RtS) to the Department on 30 September 2025 and submitted additional information on 22 and 23 October 2025 (**Appendix A**).

The Department made the RtS and additional information publicly available on the NSW Planning Portal and notified the relevant government agencies and Council.

A summary of the key issues raised in submissions and agency advice is provided in the following sections.

## 4.2 Summary of advice received from government agencies

The Department received responses from five government agencies on the modification.

Three of the five agencies (including NSW State Emergency Service, Heritage Council of NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water – Water Group) confirmed that either their initial advice has been adequately addressed by clarification(s) or that the agency had no comments on the modification.

A summary of the advice from the two remaining agencies is provided in **Table 4**. A link to the full copy of the advice is provided in **Appendix A**.

**Table 4** | Summary of the final position and any outstanding comments raised in agency advice

Agency	Summary of final advice and outstanding comments
<b>Heritage Council of NSW (HNSW)</b>	HNSW provided the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consider retaining the Wran Building Galleria steel structure</li><li>• amend the lift / stair design so it does not project above the Switch House roof</li><li>• retain the Galleria high-level glazing</li><li>• amend Switch House window / door designs to retain the existing proportions of windows at Level 1 and the existing blind openings at Level 2</li><li>• salvage any original brickwork removed for reuse on-site.</li></ul>
<b>Transport for NSW (TfNSW)</b>	TfNSW recommended the Applicant prepare a delivery and servicing management plan.

### 4.3 Summary of Council submission

Council objected to the modification.

Council provided further comments in response to the Applicant's RtS and additional information, which confirmed that changes had addressed some previous concerns. However outstanding matters remained. A link to its submission is provided in **Appendix A**.

A summary of the issues raised by Council is provided below:

- Council does not support the demolition of the Wran Building and Galleria structure
- retention or reconstruction of the Galleria glazing should be considered to provide a clearer visual break between heritage and new structures
- provide details of how the creative spaces could be adapted to include mezzanine(s)
- clarify the location / design of bicycle parking, EoT facilities and locate visitor parking close to the building entrance.

### 4.4 Summary of public submissions

#### 4.4.1 Summary of public submissions

The Department received a total of 30 submissions during the public exhibition of the modification from the public and special interest groups, comprising 28 objections, one comment and one in support.

A summary of the key issues raised in submissions is provided in **Table 5** and a link to all submissions in full is provided at **Appendix A**.

**Table 5** | Key issues raised in public submissions on the modification

Issue raised	Number and percentage of Submissions
<b>Adverse heritage impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• loss of heritage fabric</li><li>• inconsistent with heritage principles and the SHR listing</li><li>• lack of a Conservation Management Plan</li></ul>	24 (80%)
<b>Museum function</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• inappropriate reduction in exhibition floor space</li><li>• insufficient space to display the museum collection</li><li>• no commitment to permanent exhibitions</li><li>• lack of detail on internal and functional changes</li></ul>	10 (33%)
<b>Project cost</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• excessive cost of demolition and reconstruction</li><li>• poor value for money</li></ul>	10 (33%)
<b>Inappropriate architecture / urban design and loss of iconic architecture</b>	9 (30%)
<b>Consultation and public interest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lack of transparency</li><li>• not in the public interest</li></ul>	8 (27%)

Other issues raised in less than 10% of submissions included structural integrity, extent of modifications to the approval, Harwood Building impacts and the loading dock should be retained.

Feedback was also received from an individual outside the public exhibition period. The concerns raised related to matters summarised in **Table 5** (adverse heritage impact, architecture / urban design and loss of iconic architecture and museum function) and new comment relating to change in nature of museum into an entertainment facility.

## 4.5 Applicant's response to submission and additional information

Following the exhibition of the modification, the Department placed copies of all submissions and advice received on its website and requested the Applicant to respond to the issues raised in submissions, advice from government agencies and Council's objection. The Department also wrote to the Applicant on 28 August and 17 October 2025 requesting additional information, clarification and justification of the application.

In response, the Applicant submitted a RtS to the Department on 30 September 2025 and additional information on 22 and 23 October (**Appendix A**), which provide a response to submissions, advice

and additional information. The RtS and additional information also include the following key amendments to the proposal:

- additional demolition, relocation of stairs and columns and other internal and external works
- reduction in the extent of excavation works along the western boundary
- removal of the Switch House staircore / lift overrun and provision of a low-pitched roof
- alteration of Switch House western elevation window design
- details of potential future creative commercial unit mezzanine levels
- details of bicycle parking and EoT within the Harwood Building
- additional wording to conditions B30 and E42 relating to heritage interpretation and waste management.

# 5 Assessment

In assessing the merits of the proposal, the Department has considered:

- the modification applications and associated documents
- the assessment and conditions of approval for the original application
- relevant environmental planning instruments, policies, and guidelines
- the requirements of the EP&A Act and Regulation, and
- the advice of Council and agencies, and public feedback.

The Department considers the key assessment issue associated with the modification is the potential heritage impacts associated with the modification of the Wran Building.

The Department has discussed the Wran Building at **Section 5.1** and has considered the other relevant issues taken into consideration during the assessment of the modification at **Table 6** and within the appendices of this report.

## 5.1 Heritage impacts – Wran Building

The original approval allowed for the partial demolition of the Wran Building / Galleria. However, the demolition work excluded most of the building's internal steel structure (including the Wran Building's distinctive double arch form), which was to be retained and incorporated into the redevelopment (see **Figure 3** and **Figure 4**). The approval also included a slight increase of 0.215 metres in the Galleria's height, from RL 37.35 to RL 37.565.

Conditions B13 and B14 require the Applicant to submit details confirming the retention of the internal steel structure, along with relevant technical information.

The modification seeks to amend the proposal to allow for the complete demolition and subsequent reconstruction of the Wran Building / Galleria and to delete conditions B13 and B14 relating to the retention of the Wran Building Structure. Additionally, it involves a minor reduction of the height of the Galleria's arch (by 0.215 m<sup>2</sup>) to match its original arch height and continuing the arc of the western arch to the Galleria compared to the existing structure.

Public submissions raised concerns about the loss of the Wran Building heritage fabric, and HNSW recommended retaining the existing steel structure. While Council objected to the demolition of the steel structure, it confirmed that the modification adequately explains why the structure cannot be retained in the current design.

To support the proposed modification, the Applicant submitted an Engineer's Structural Statement (ESS) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). The ESS concluded that the steel structure was compromised and recommended demolition due to safety concerns, inability to meet modern standards, and the impact of intrusive modifications, if retained. The HIA concludes that demolition

will not harm heritage values, as key architectural features of the Wran Building will be preserved and replicated to meet current standards.

The Department has carefully considered comments from Heritage NSW, Council’s objections, and the Applicant’s responses. It concludes that demolition of the steel structure is unavoidable due to:

- structural limitations and uncertainties
- inability to meet modern loading and construction standards
- complex safety and construction challenges
- the need for intrusive modifications, such as cross-bracing, if retained.

The Department is also satisfied that the proposed changes would not result in any significant heritage impacts beyond those already assessed and approved. This is because:

- the reconstruction will allow the Wran Building’s distinctive double-arch form, appearance, and spatial qualities to be retained, with new fabric matching the original
- alternatively retaining the existing steel structure would require extensive interventions that would compromise spatial qualities and cause adverse visual and heritage impacts
- the minor reduction in the Galleria’s height aligns with the original building’s proportions.

To further mitigate heritage impacts, the Department recommends:

- a like-for-like replacement of the steel structure in the Galleria to preserve the building's spatial qualities
- updating the Heritage Interpretation Plan (Condition B30) to include the Wran Building
- updating the Photographic Archival Recording (Condition B31) to specifically document the existing steel structure

Based on these findings, the Department considers Conditions B13 and B14 relating to retention of the Wran Building are redundant and recommends their removal from the consent. Overall, the Department is satisfied that the proposed modification will not result in any significant heritage impacts, subject to the recommended conditions.

## 5.2 Other issues

The Department’s consideration of other issues is provided at **Table 6**

**Table 6** | Department’s consideration of other issues associated with the modification application

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommendation
<b>Galleria glazing</b>	The original approval includes the retention of vertical and sloped glazing located along the eastern roof of the Wran Building / Galleria.  The modification seeks to replace the glazing with solid cladding	The Department has recommended condition A2 include updated

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommendation
	<p>including horizontal windows (<b>Figure 4</b>).</p> <p>HNSW and Council does not support the replacement of the glazing with solid cladding, noting the glazing forms a key part of the original design of the Wran Building and provides built form separation between the Galleria and the Core Buildings.</p> <p>In response, the Applicant stated that replacing the glazing with solid cladding is necessary to address water ingress issues that have damaged the heritage fabric and require significant ongoing maintenance, and that retaining the glazing would also result in adverse heat gain within the proposed Galleria space.</p> <p>The Department has carefully considered HNSW’s comments and the Applicant’s response. The Department considers that the replacement of glazing with solid cladding is on balance, acceptable as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the existing glazing is not readily visible from any public area or vantage point</li> <li>• the original approval includes the construction of an internal skin within the Galleria, which would largely obscure the internal view of the glazing (and the built form separation of buildings) from within the Galleria space</li> <li>• the proposal includes horizontal windows, which would provide natural light to the Galleria space.</li> </ul>	<p>plan references.</p>
<p><b>Switch House alterations</b></p>	<p>Condition B2 requires the removal of the Switch House roof extension/bar and B9(b) requires the window and door design amendments.</p> <p>The proposal includes the removal of the Switch House roof extension/bar and the required amendments to windows and doors to address B2 and B9(b). In addition, the proposal includes additional alterations to windows on the eastern, western and southern elevations (<b>Figure 5</b>) and internal alterations to the layout of the building.</p> <p>HNSW recommended additional amendments to the design of windows and door openings and to salvage any brickwork for use on the site. In response, the Applicant amended the design to adopt HNSW’s recommended Switch House window/door designs.</p> <p>The HIA supports retaining the original blind and open windows and timber doors, with other changes to the southern, eastern, and western elevations having neutral or positive heritage impacts. Removing the roof extension enhances the appreciation of the Switch</p>	<p>The Department has recommended condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A2 include updated plan references</li> <li>• B2 and B9(b) be deleted.</li> <li>• B9 be amended and new condition D9A be added to require the salvage and reuse of bricks.</li> </ul>

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommendation
	<p>House's architectural character.</p> <p>The Department supports the removal of the roof extension/bar and considers that the internal layout changes would not have any adverse heritage impacts. Following the Applicant's amendments, the Department is satisfied that the proposed alterations to windows and doors are acceptable and are in line with HNSW recommendations. The Department also considers that the requirements of B2 and B9(b) have been addressed, and these conditions can be deleted. The Department recommends conditions requiring the salvage and reuse of bricks.</p>	
<p><b>Loading dock and waste management</b></p>	<p>Conditions B23, E6, E33(a)(d) and F9 require details of the operation of the Switch House loading dock. Condition E42 requires the implementation of an operational waste management plan (OWMP), and E45 requires the implementation of a loading and servicing management plan (LSMP).</p> <p>The proposal includes a revised service vehicle/waste management strategy for the development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>removal of the Switch House loading dock, vehicle entrance and all associated earthworks</li> <li>provision of Switch House operational waste storage areas</li> <li>deliveries (excluding large exhibitions, which are provided in the Boiler House, as approved) to occur within the Harwood Building's existing loading dock.</li> </ul> <p>Public submissions raised concerns that the Switch House loading dock should be retained to support the museum's operations and that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the Harwood Building. Council advised that the revised waste strategy for the operation of the Harwood Building should be managed appropriately. TfNSW suggested that the LSMP should cover essential operational requirements.</p> <p>The Applicant stated that the Harwood Building loading dock has sufficient capacity for the development, making the Switch House dock unnecessary. Amendments to E42 were proposed to ensure the OWMP addresses any waste removal conflicts, and it accepted TfNSW's LSMP requirements.</p> <p>The Department considers the removal of the Switch House loading dock, use of the Harwood Building loading dock and revised waste management strategy is acceptable as:</p>	<p>The Department has recommended condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A2 include updated plan references</li> <li>B23, E6, E33(a) E33(d) and F9 be deleted</li> <li>E42 be amended to require the LSMP consider and address waste removal conflicts</li> <li>E45 be amended to incorporate TfNSW's requirements.</li> </ul>

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the removal of the loading dock significantly reduces physical interventions into the fabric of the Switch House, which has a positive heritage impact</li> <li>no changes are proposed for the Harwood Building's loading dock and the existing facility can adequately handle loading and unloading requirements.</li> <li>adequate space is provided within the Switch House for waste storage and management.</li> </ul> <p>Noting the removal of the Switch House loading dock, conditions B23, E6, E33(a)(d), and F9 are no longer necessary and can be deleted. The Department also recommends amendments to E42 and E45 to incorporate the OWMP and LSMP changes.</p>	
<b>Bicycle facilities</b>	<p>Condition B24 requires the provision of 16 staff and 20 visitor bicycle parking spaces and EoT facilities.</p> <p>The proposal includes the removal of staff bicycle facilities from the Switch House and provision within the Harwood Building.</p> <p>Council requested the Applicant clarify the location and design of the proposed bicycle parking and EoT.</p> <p>The Applicant stated that the development is capable of providing the necessary bicycle facilities, and details will be finalised in accordance with the requirements of B24.</p> <p>The Department notes that B24 remains applicable to the development and considers that the Applicant can satisfy the requirements of B24 in accordance with the usual post-approval process.</p>	<p>No conditions or amendments are recommended.</p>
<b>Creative commercial units</b>	<p>The modification proposes to remove the mezzanine levels from the creative commercial units fronting Harris Street, as they are no longer considered necessary.</p> <p>Council requested the Applicant confirm the units could be adapted to include mezzanine levels in the future. In response, the Applicant provided drawings demonstrating that mezzanines could be installed within the units and that sufficient head-height clearance can be provided.</p> <p>The Department is satisfied that mezzanine levels could be installed in the future, should the Applicant wish to do so.</p>	<p>No conditions or amendments are recommended.</p>

## 6 Evaluation

The Department's assessment has considered the relevant matters and objects of the EP&A Act, including the principles of ecologically sustainable development, advice from government agencies, Council and public feedback, and strategic government policies and plans.

The Department's assessment concludes that the proposed modification is acceptable as:

- the demolition works and rebuild of the Wran Building / Galleria:
  - is unavoidable due to structural issues
  - would have acceptable heritage impacts as the Wran Building will be rebuilt, its internal steel structure will be replaced with like-for-like materials and the building's double-arch form will be retained
  - would be subject to new conditions requiring heritage interpretation and photographic archival recording
- the replacement of the Galleria glazing with solid cladding would not result in adverse heritage impacts, as it does not alter the spatial qualities of the building and would not be readily visible from the public domain
- the removal of the Switch House roof extension/bar allows for a greater appreciation of the Switch House roof form and has a positive heritage impact
- the removal of the Switch House loading dock and alterations to windows and doors would have neutral to positive heritage impacts, as the changes either retain original features or result in only minor and sympathetic alterations
- the revised operational waste management strategy, including the use of the Harwood Building for deliveries, is appropriate to meet the servicing needs of the development
- it is substantially the same development as the approved development.

The Department considers the modification is in the public interest and should be approved, subject to the recommended conditions of consent (**Appendix D**).

## 7 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Director, Housing and Key Sites Assessments, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report
- **accepts and adopts** the findings and recommendations in this report as the reasons for making the decision to approve the modification
- **modifies the consent** for the Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation (SSD 67588459 MOD 1), subject to the conditions in the attached instrument of modification
- **signs** the attached instrument of modification (**Appendix D**).

Recommended by:



**Anthony Witherdin**

Director

Key Sites and TOD Assessments

## 8 Determination

The recommendation is **adopted** by:



14/11/2025

**Ben Lusher**

Executive Director

Housing and Key Site Assessments

# Appendices

## Appendix A – List of referenced documents, submissions and advice

The following key documents were relied on by the Department in its assessment and can be found at the application webpage:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/powerhouse-ultimo-modification-1-additional-demolition-and-rebuild-wran-building-removal-loading-dock-and-other-internal-and-external-changes>

- Modification Report
- Response to Submission Report and Applicant’s additional information
- public submissions, Council’s submission and Government agency advice.

## Appendix B – Department’s consideration of submissions

**Table 7 |** Key issues and how they have been considered

Issue	Consideration
<b>Adverse heritage impact:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• destruction of heritage fabric / Wran Building</li><li>• inconsistent with heritage principles and SHR listing</li><li>• lack of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP)</li></ul>	<p>The Application includes an engineer’s Structural Statement (ESS) and a Heritage Impact Statement (HIA), which demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the retention of the Wran Building / Galleria internal steel structure is not possible due to limitations to its structural integrity, durability and lifespan and associated complications.</li><li>• the demolition and rebuild of the Wran Building / Galleria would not have an adverse heritage impact as the proposal retains the Wran Building distinctive double-arch, internal spatial qualities and the steel structure would be replaced on a like-for-like basis.</li></ul> <p>Based on the above findings, the Department considers the demolition of the steel structure is unavoidable and, on-balance, has acceptable heritage impacts.</p> <p>The application does not need to provide an updated CMP as the existing CMP (2022) remains relevant and the heritage principles and SHR listing was considered by the HIA submitted with the original and current modification applications.</p> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delete conditions B13 and B14 relating to the retention of the Wran Building and provision of technical information.</li><li>• Updated conditions B30 and B31 to require heritage interpretation and photographic archival recording of the Wran Building.</li></ul>

Issue	Consideration
<p><b>Harwood Building and vehicle servicing</b></p>	<p>There are no proposed changes to the Harwood Building, other than the inclusion of bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities.</p> <p>The Harwood Building loading dock currently services the entire site. The removal of the Switch House loading dock and reliance on the Harwood Building loading dock therefore reflects the existing situation / operation. In addition, the removal of the loading dock would have positive heritage impacts including reduced interventions and alterations of the Switch House.</p> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delete conditions B23, E6, E33(a), E33(d) and F9 relating to the Switch House loading dock</li> <li>• Update conditions E42 and E45 relating to operational management.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Architectural design</b></p>	<p>The architectural design and appearance of the development was considered in detail as part of the original application.</p> <p>The modification does not propose significant changes to the overall design and appearance of the development.</p>
<p><b>Museum function:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inappropriate reduction in exhibition floor space</li> <li>• insufficient space to display the museum collection</li> <li>• no commitment to permanent exhibitions</li> <li>• lack of detail on internal and functional changes</li> <li>• use of the museum as an ‘entertainment facility’</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed reduction of 367.47 m<sup>2</sup> GFA arises from the removal of the originally proposed Switch House loading dock and the creative commercial unit mezzanine levels.</p> <p>Removal of internal spaces, exhibition structures and other fit-out components was approved as part of the original application. The modification does not result in additional reduction of GFA related to exhibition floor space.</p> <p>The proposed development would improve on the existing facility and contribute to NSW’s cultural and visitor economy.</p> <p>The SHR listing includes an exemption relating to the exhibits within the museum. The Applicant is required under the MAAS Act to control, manage and protect the museum collection and for the select programming and delivery of exhibitions.</p>
<p><b>Public consultation</b></p>	<p>The Department exhibited the modification and made all application documents available on the NSW Planning Portal in accordance with the requirements of the EP&amp;A Act.</p>
<p><b>Development cost and the public interest</b></p>	<p>The project scope was concluded as the most effective way to meet the objectives of the Powerhouse Ultimo revitalisation. The proposal will provide for a positive investment in arts and culture for NSW.</p> <p>The museum will provide for a range of exhibition spaces, typologies and</p>

Issue	Consideration
	capacities within a contemporary facility designed to meet international standards. The modifications to the proposal will enhance the proposal and the development is therefore considered to be in the public interest.
<b>Extent of modification to the approval</b>	The Department has considered the changes to the Wran Building, loading dock and internal and external changes and is satisfied the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(2) of the EP&A Act and does not constitute a new development application. Accordingly, the Department considers that the application should be assessed and determined under section 4.55(2) of the EP&A Act rather than requiring a new development application to be lodged.

## Appendix C – Statutory considerations

### Section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act

Under section 4.55(3) of the EP&A Act, the consent authority must consider the matters referred to in section 4.15(1) of relevance to the development.

**Table 8** | Consideration of the matters listed under section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act

Section 4.15(1) Matters for consideration	Department’s assessment
<b>(a) the provision of:</b> <b>(i) any environmental planning instrument</b>	The modification would not alter the consistency of the proposal with the relevant EPIs.
<b>(ii) any proposed instrument that is or has been the subject of public consultation under this Act and that has been notified to the consent authority (unless the Planning Secretary has notified the consent authority that the making of the proposed instrument has been deferred indefinitely or has not been approved)</b>	Not applicable.
<b>(iii) any development control plan</b>	Under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021, Development Controls Plans do not apply to SSD.
<b>(iiia) any planning agreement that has been entered into under section 7.4, or any draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 7.4</b>	Not applicable.
<b>(iv) the regulations (to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purpose of this paragraph)</b>	The application satisfactorily meets the relevant requirements of the EP&A Regulation, including the procedures relating to application, the requirements for notification and fees.

Section 4.15(1) Matters for consideration	Department's assessment
<b>(b) the likely impacts of that development including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality</b>	The Department considers the likely impacts of the proposed modification acceptable and have been appropriately addressed ( <b>Section 5</b> ).
<b>(c) the suitability of the site for the development</b>	The suitability of the site was considered in the Department's original assessment and the modification does not alter the site suitability.
<b>(d) any submissions made in accordance with this Act or the regulations</b>	The application was publicly exhibited ( <b>Section 4</b> ) and consideration has been given to the submissions received during the exhibition of the proposal as summarised at <b>Section 5</b> .
<b>(e) the public interest</b> <b>Reasons given by the consent authority for the grant of the consent that is sought to be modified</b>	The modification would be in the public interest. The Department considers the reasons given by the consent authority for the grant of the consent and the modification does not affect these reasons.

## Objects of the EP&A Act

A summary of the Department's consideration of the relevant objects (found at section 1.3 of the EP&A Act) are provided in **Table 9**.

**Table 9** | Objects of the EP&A Act and how they have been considered

Object	Consideration
<b>(a) to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources,</b>	The modification would not result in adverse impacts to social and economic welfare of the community and does not have any impacts on the State's natural or other resources.
<b>(b) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment,</b>	The modification does not seek to amend the approved ESD measures.
<b>(c) to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land,</b>	The modified proposal continues to represent an efficient and economic use of land consistent with the EPIs and policies under the EP&A Act.
<b>(d) to promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing,</b>	The proposal being for a cultural facility, does not include any affordable housing and is not required to do so under clause 7.13 of the SLEP.
<b>(e) to protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities and their habitats,</b>	The modification will not adversely affect the protection of the environment.

Object	Consideration
<b>(f) to promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage),</b>	The proposal has been appropriately designed to respect the heritage significance of the site. The Department concludes the development heritage impact is acceptable, subject to conditions, as discussed at <b>Section 5</b> .
<b>(g) to promote good design and amenity of the built environment,</b>	The modified development demonstrates a good design approach and amenity of the built environment.
<b>(h) to promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants,</b>	Existing and proposed modified conditions would ensure the proposed works are undertaken in compliance with all relevant building codes and health and safety regulations.
<b>(i) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning and assessment between the different levels of government in the State,</b>	The Department publicly exhibited the proposed development as outlined in <b>Section 4</b> , which included consultation with Council and other public authorities and consideration of their responses.
<b>(j) to provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment.</b>	<p>The Department publicly exhibited the proposal as outlined in <b>Section 4</b>, which included notifying adjoining landowners and displaying the proposal on the Department’s website. The Department has considered all issues raised in submissions as part of its assessment.</p> <p>The Department also placed the Applicant’s RtS and additional information on its website and referred it to Council and relevant agencies.</p>

## Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs)

The Department is satisfied the proposed modification would not alter the compliance of the original application with the relevant EPIs listed below:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022
- Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (SLEP)

The Department undertook a comprehensive assessment of the application against the relevant EPIs in the original assessment. The Department is satisfied that the modification does not result in any inconsistency with the EPIs.

## Appendix D – Recommended instrument of modification

The modification instrument can be found at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/powerhouse-ultimo-modification-1-additional-demolition-and-rebuild-wran-building-removal-loading-dock-and-other-internal-and-external-changes>

## Appendix E – Consolidated development consent

The consolidated development consent can be found at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/powerhouse-ultimo-modification-1-additional-demolition-and-rebuild-wran-building-removal-loading-dock-and-other-internal-and-external-changes>