

Both the Development Application and Heritage Impact Assessment should be rejected in their entirety including for (a) not complying with the 2023 NSW Department of Planning and the Environment 'Guidelines for Preparing A Statement of Heritage Impact'. There is no physical analysis including a physical inspection of extant exterior and interior fabric, including interior fabric to be demolished in the State Heritage listed Ultimo Power Station or across the buildings impacted. The documents ignore the Powerhouse Museum and the integrated nature of the Powerhouse Museum Complex and Powerhouse Museum Collection across several buildings. There is no detailed assessment of whether the works in the Development Application – fabric and spatial arrangements, setting view and vistas comply with Article 22 of the Burra Charter especially practice note Article 22 pertaining to new work, alterations and additions as required by the Department of Planning and the Environment. ***The information available about the heritage item, i.e. the Powerhouse Museum Complex and the Powerhouse Museum Collection, across several buildings and spaces, interiors and exteriors, and significant fabric, is not sufficient to undertake a robust heritage impact assessment.*** Refer Appendix One for the works scheduled. (b) The assessment of significance ignores the Powerhouse Museum and the integrated nature of the Powerhouse Museum Complex across several buildings for the display of the Powerhouse Museum Collection. ***It omits key evidence including the Sulman Award citation that includes both interiors and exteriors, internal ramps and mezzanines, movable heritage, the colonnade and the public forecourt proposed for demolition; the citation for the RAIA ACROD Award for barrier free circulation that yields information on the significance of the public forecourt, Harris Street entrance, internal ramps and mezzanines to be demolished; the citation for the RAIA National Awards 1988 for a Recycled Building with all but the facades to be demolished and citation for the RAIA Belle Award for Interiors where notable interior colour schemes and carpets by esteemed designer George Freedman are not researched, investigated or even acknowledged; the commissioned history of the Powerhouse Museum, Graeme Davison and Kimberley Webber (eds) *Yesterday's Tomorrows; The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005* (Powerhouse Publishing and University of NSW Press 2005) is not researched to inform the assessment of aesthetic and historic significance; the many community submissions over 9 years are not reviewed to inform social significance. The architect Lionel Glendenning has not been approached to contribute primary source material or knowledge despite exercising Moral Rights over his designs. There is an 'Updated submission on the State Heritage Significance of the Powerhouse Museum Complex, including the Powerhouse Museum Collection, (being an extension to Ultimo Power House, State Heritage Register item 020045) by John Petersen - 24 May 2024 that is attached to research heritage significance*** (c) The assessment of significance is cursory for the Powerhouse Museum Complex's component buildings but there is no assessment in any of the buildings of the heritage values of the actual Museum. It ignores the Powerhouse Museum and the integrated nature of the Powerhouse Museum Complex across several buildings (d) the omissions and incompleteness of the Development Application and Heritage Impact Statement and assessment based on an incomplete and Draft Conservation Management Plan and Concept Environmental Impact Statement does not comply with Kerr's *The Conservation Plan* or the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter*. In terms of the 2023 NSW Department of Planning and the Environment 'Guidelines for Preparing A Statement of Heritage Impact' (e) There are no detailed plans or service diagrams with clear or specific information about the actual works and the impact on existing fabric. The Development Application fails to include drawings and plans adequate for making an informed assessment on the impact on significant fabric including for the State Heritage listed Ultimo Power Station. There is no Engineers Report evidencing that works including

demolishing ramps and mezzanines, the colonnade and public forecourt can be completed without damaging fragile and significant heritage fabric. **Therefore the Heritage Impact Statement is also ill-informed. The information available about the heritage item in the Development Application, i.e. the Powerhouse Museum Complex, across several buildings and spaces, interiors and exteriors, and significant fabric, is not sufficient to undertake a robust heritage impact assessment in its current form. (2023 NSW Department of Planning and the Environment 'Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact).**

Further information is as followings:

- A. The Powerhouse Museum Complex's State heritage significance is one integrated museum complex of old and new places, and interiors and exteriors – and key power and transport movable heritage items and fixtures for which the Complex was purpose designed to hold and display, a Sulman Award winning Complex of historic, social and aesthetic significance and a public museum of historic, social and aesthetic significance since its 1980s construction and adaptive reuse as a museum. Refer to the information in the supporting ***Updated submission on the State Heritage Significance of the Powerhouse Museum Complex, including the Powerhouse Museum Collection, (being an extension to Ultimo Power House, State Heritage Register item 020045)*** - John Petersen - 24 May 2024

The 1980s Complex as a whole is of aesthetic significance recognised by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Architectural Awards in NSW in 1988 with the **(a) Sir John Sulman Award for Public Buildings** (Government Architect's Office, Lionel Glendenning, principal architect) **(b). RAIA ACROD Award for Barrier Free Circulation** including for an accessible public forecourt, Harris Street entrance, ramps and mezzanines to be demolished **(c) RAIA National Awards 1988 for a Recycled Building** with all but the facades to be demolished and **(d) the RAIA Belle Award for Interiors** including ramps and mezzanines to be demolished and notable interior colour schemes and carpets by esteemed designer George Freedman. The Sulman Award citation stressed the 'collision' of old and new and of inside and outside. The circulation patterns, including the Forecourt as the first point of arrival ahead of the Harris Street entry, Galleria, exhibition halls, internal ramps and mezzanines won also the RAIA ACROD Award for barrier free circulation. The ramps and mezzanines were part of Lionel Glendenning's integrated design scheme for the Powerhouse Museum Complex with a particular interest in allowing access and viewing opportunities and sightlines for key and major collection holdings, in particular large power and transport objects. The Complex was purpose designed to conserve and display major power and transport objects. These could often be viewed from under and upwards, or to the sides or downwards, or tall objects along ramps¹

¹ Peter Spearitt 'Positioning On Site and In Situ' in *Yesterday's Tomorrows: The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005*, Powerhouse Publishing 2005 and John Petersen *Submission on The Powerhouse Museum Complex (being an extension to Ultimo Power House, State Heritage Register item 020045)*

The Heritage Impact Statement's assessment of the Powerhouse Museum Complex under the criterion at 5.2.1. Criterion (a) Historical Significance fails to research or reference any of the above or engage with the assessment of external and internal heritage fabric. It ignores the Powerhouse Museum and the integrated nature of the Powerhouse Museum Complex across several buildings and writes an assessment of historic and aesthetic significance without reference to. Graeme Davison and Kimberley Webber (eds) *Yesterday's Tomorrows; The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005* (Powerhouse Publishing and University of NSW Press 2005). The Heritage Impact Statement reads: *The 1988 museum adaption of the formerly defunct Power House Site, including the former Powerhouse buildings, has historical significance to the Ultimo/Pymont area as the current location of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (formerly the Powerhouse Museum) and represents an early example of adaptive re-use of a major heritage site in NSW. The adaptive reuse of the Former Powerhouse site for the Museum is associated with the NSW Government's 1988 Bicentenary building program. The creation of the precinct between c.1984-1988 was a historic milestone in the gentrification of Darling Harbour and its final conversion from industry to tourism, entertainment, shopping and dining. It was 'created as a gift to the people of NSW in celebration of the 1988 Bicentenary' by the NSW Government. In contrast, however, the 1988 Bicentenary is historically significant for raising the issue of Aboriginal rights on the International Stage, with more than 40,000 Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal supporters staged the largest protest march ever held in Sydney (for its time), during the Bicentenary celebrations. Busloads of Aboriginal people from other states and rural and remote communities arrived in Sydney to join the protest ...construction of the landing of the first fleet and what it represented. The protest march was both an affirmation of indigenous Australians' survival and a stark reminder of the falsity on which the celebration was premised. Aboriginal people called on the Australian public to join the protest in solidarity and to make the point to the rest of Australia that the whole idea of the Bicentenary celebration was based on hypocrisy and lies. The message was and still is to this day 'White Australia has a Black History. Several of the former Bicentenary built buildings, built as part of this fast-tracked program, have since been demolished, including the former International Convention Centre, the Harbourside Shopping Centre and have been, or are in the process of, being replaced with precincts that have a more considered focus on expressing shared histories and Aboriginal Co-Design. The 1988 museum adaption of the site in Ultimo, including the historic buildings, has historical significance as, the most recent, yet one of the many sites of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, in its various forms and locations, has been in operation more than 140 years.*

The assessment of heritage significance is factually incorrect at both 5.2.1. Criterion (a) Historical Significance and 5.2.2. Criterion (b) Associative Significance in the Heritage Impact Statement. The Powerhouse Museum Complex was not conceived or delivered as a Bicentenary Project and nor did the Complex attract initial or ongoing First Nations protest of any documented sort. The planning and announcement for the Powerhouse Museum in 1978 at Ultimo predates the Darling Harbour Authority by six years in 1984

and was about celebrating the Museum's own 1888-1978 centenary². The Bicentenary was merely a useful catalyst for construction and scheduling of opening. The Powerhouse Museum Complex does not have an evidenced 'contested history as a bicentennial building' project as Curio states in 5.2 of its Heritage Impact Statement. The Museum initiated First Nations curation and was directly involved in supporting First Nations access to the Museum collection and on country assistance for communities and museum practice in the area evolved through having a First Nations curator. The public forecourt has a long history of smoking ceremonies and the Museum has a public space for these scheduled and spontaneous community gatherings at its front entrance that will be lost in the proposed demolition of the public forecourt.

The Heritage Impact Statement's assessment of the Powerhouse Museum Complex under the criterion for Aesthetic Significance at 5.2.3. fails to research or reference any of the above or make detailed physical assessment of external and internal heritage fabric. It only states that *the adaptive reuse of the former Power House buildings and site for museum purposes is an example of postmodernist adaptive reuse project undertaken during the 1988 Bicentenary work program. As one of the first major sites in NSW to successfully adaptively reuse a former industrial site, it was the recipient of a Sulman Award. Since this time, however, the original musicological intent, as expressed through the architecture of the 1988 works, has been subject to major modifications and change in order to accommodate the ongoing core requirements for museum exhibitions, user expectations, changes in technology and visitation needs over the last three decades.*

These statements are unsubstantiated and made without an assessment of the physical fabric or its heritage significance and the drawing and plans submitted with the Development Application do little to evidence remaining physical fabric and what remaining physical fabric is to be demolished. The key features of the Wran Building (and its original windows to be infilled), Galleria, colonnade, public forecourt, ramps and mezzanines, Harris Street entrance are still extant and unaltered. Earmarked for demolition in the Development Application, it is a bit rich to state the original musicological intent, as expressed through the architecture of the 1988 works, has been subject to major modifications and change. The Heritage Impact Statement later again confuses the Complex as a Bicentennial building project (when it was actually for the Museum's own centenary) and it states that it is not rare as a post-modern building without any evidenced comparative analysis of similar public buildings in NSW. It would be the only one with a Sulman Award and only Museum or Gallery. The Australian National Maritime Museum is modernist not post-modern.

The Development Application and Heritage Impact Assessment are based on an incomplete and inadequate assessment of heritage significance and an inadequate and incomplete draft Conservation Management Plan by Curio that omits key evidence of heritage significance for the Powerhouse Museum Complex. It does not assess interior features despite supporting their removal. It also does not adequately assess social

² Peter Spearitt 'Positioning On Site and In Situ' in *Yesterday's Tomorrows: The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005*, Powerhouse Publishing 2005

significance when the body of submissions by the Save the Powerhouse Museum and its followers and the extended Powerhouse Museum communities over 9 years are omitted as evidence. Insights into the historic and aesthetic significance of the Powerhouse Museum Complex are omitted as evidence, including its known Sulman award winning interiors, exteriors, movable heritage, ramps, mezzanines and access as cited above. This includes by reason that the key commissioned history by the Powerhouse Museum is not cited or in the bibliography for the Development Application, Heritage Impact Assessment or draft Conservation Management Plan by Curio. This is the key evidence for the Powerhouse Museum Complex that was researched by eminent historians and curators – Graeme Davison and Kimberly Webber (eds) *Yesterday's Tomorrows; The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005* (Powerhouse Publishing and University of NSW Press 2005). Furthermore, the architect Lionel Glendenning has not been approached for primary source materials or consulted. He is quoted selectively and historically in the Heritage Impact Statement to justify changes and demolition of components in his own Sulman award winning building. He has stated previously that he has exercised moral rights in his designs.

This omission of key sources of knowledge is contrary to Article 4 of the Burra Charter *Knowledge, Skills and Techniques. Conservation should make use of **all the knowledge, skills and disciplines** which can contribute to the study and care of the place.*

The Heritage Impact Statement rates the Wran Building as being of Moderate significance when it is more likely on the balance of available evidence provided to the Heritage Council of NSW of Exceptional significance and a signature building in the Sulman award winning Powerhouse Museum Complex.

7.3 of the Heritage Impact Statement notes that *Major external modifications and **internal changes to the fabric** of the Wran Building to meet future spatial, functional and upgrade needs of the Powerhouse are proposed.*

Page 191 of the Heritage Impact Statement comes to the conclusion that *it is considered that the impacts to the fabric Wran Building, as part of the overall planned revitalisation of the whole of the Powerhouse site are acceptable from a heritage perspective in order to allow for the ongoing overall success of the museum. The ingenuity, design and intent of the museum in 1988 can be captured by thoughtful and thorough interpretation, displays and media, as designed by the Powerhouse museum within its revitalised site, as an offset for the removal of fabric.*

It is a complete misreading of the intent and articles of the Burra Charter to suggest that works to the Wran Building, including demolition and obscuring of its landmark qualities and vistas by brick facings and a new brick building, will have neutral heritage impact and that the heritage aspects of the Sulman award winning Complex can be 'interpreted' at the expense of 'conservation'. The Powerhouse Museum Complex is one integrated Sulman award winning heritage place (that includes the Ultimo Power Station) rather than separate buildings requiring individual schemes.

This is contrary to Article 15 of the Burra Charter that notes on Change: *Change may be necessary to retain cultural significance, but it is undesirable where it reduces cultural significance. The amount of change to a place should be guided by the cultural significance of the place and its appropriate interpretation. For many places, significance is retained by minimising change. In others, change is necessary to maintain a significant use ... **When change is being considered, a range of options should be explored to find one that minimises the reduction of cultural significance and conserves the place in a sustainable way.** Where meeting building code requirements involves irreversible removal of fabric, consider all feasible options.* A range of options has not been explored.

15.4 *The contributions of all aspects of cultural significance of a place should be respected. If a place includes fabric, uses, associations of different period, or different aspects of cultural significance, emphasising one period or aspect at the expense of another can only be justified when what is left out, removed or diminished is of slight cultural significance and that which is emphasised or interpreted is of much greater cultural significance.*

Even rated as 'Moderate' significance, the Wran Building's fabric cannot be considered as being of slight cultural significance. The Heritage Impact Statement has a strong focus on the Ultimo Power Station to be stripped to its shell at the expense of the 1988 Powerhouse Museum Complex across several buildings and its evolution as a Museum to the present day.

B. Heritage Impact Statement

The Heritage Impact Statement does not comply with the NSW Government Guidelines for Preparing A Statement of Heritage Impact. ***The information available about the heritage item, i.e. the Powerhouse Museum Complex, across several buildings and spaces, interiors and exteriors, and significant fabric, is not sufficient to undertake a robust heritage impact assessment in its current form.***

Refer to detailed information in Appendix 2

- C. There is no Engineers' Report accompanying the Development Application and Heritage Impact Assessment evidencing that the Powerhouse Museum Complex including Ultimo Power Station's heritage fabric can cope with demolition and interventions into historic fabric. This includes punching holes into the brickwork of the Ultimo Power Station, and judging from the drawings provided, brick or brick infilling of the arched windows of the Wran Building and demolishing its colonnade for a new brick faced building along Harris Street. The structural impact of removing ramps and mezzanines within the Ultimo Power House and Powerhouse Museum Complex also require an Engineer's Report including for Occupational Health and Safety and Risk Assessment for the proposed works.
- D. The Powerhouse Museum Complex has historic and social significance as a public and State museum that has the renowned and nationally significant Powerhouse Museum

Collection on public exhibition. This includes fixtures and movable heritage that are an integral component of the heritage significance of the complex and an integrated component of Lionel Glendenning's Sulman award winning Museum design including for ramps and mezzanines allowing observations of objects from different vantage points. Both the assessments of heritage significance and the Heritage Impact Statement omit this.

This is contrary to Article 10 of the Burra Charter that states *Contents, fixtures and objects which contribute to the cultural significance of a place should remain at that place. Their removal is unacceptable unless it is: the sole means of ensuring their security and preservation ... Such contents, fixtures and objects should be returned when circumstances permit and it is culturally appropriate...*

Article 14 of the Burra Charter states *Conservation also includes retaining the contribution that related places and objects make to the significance of the place.*

There is no Movable Heritage Plan for in situ and non-fixed movable heritage that has already been removed and is to be reinstated in their original locations, nor also for the Powerhouse Museum Collection, to justify any of the actions in the Development Application or Heritage Impact Assessment. This seeks demolition and gutting internally and partially externally of an already functional and already existing Powerhouse Museum Complex that only requires scheduled maintenance that has been long deferred. Three large transport objects are stated as returning which is a poor cultural heritage return for a museum 'heritage revitalisation' costing \$250 million.

The Powerhouse Museum was purpose designed around the power, transport and engineering collections. The public expects retention and revitalisation of the museum's major exhibitions of transport, power and steam, in the galleries that were purpose designed to display these collections. The theme of power, transport and technological innovation from the industrial revolution to the present must remain as the central narrative of the Powerhouse Museum. The dedicated Transport, Flight and Space exhibition in the Boiler Hall must be renewed and the collections remain in situ, along with the Steam Revolution exhibition in the Engine House, with Australia's finest collection of steam engines working under live steam. Live steaming of the steam engines and the 1785 Boulton and Watt must be preserved and continued as a unique part of the Museum's visitor appeal, its heritage values, and the conservation and management of the steam engines. The Boulton and Watt, and No.1 Loco with its tender and carriages, must remain in the Galleria which was purpose designed for their exhibition. Without these internationally significant objects the Galleria will lose much of its significance, meaning and design integrity³.

³ Jennifer Sanders in conversation with architect Lionel Glendenning 'Memories, Reminiscences and Thoughts' in *Yesterday's Tomorrows: The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005*, Powerhouse Publishing 2005

- E. The Powerhouse Museum Complex does not require further adaptive reuse. It was functional and safely open to the public as a Museum until the day of its closure even though scheduled maintenance had been deferred for some time by the Board by way of neglect despite an oft publicly mentioned roof leak to justify the proposed development. Reroofing the Museum is not noted in the Development Application. The Powerhouse Museum Complex was overhauled including upgrading electrical and fire services, a new lift and escalators as recently as 2011-13 and the Wran Building was converted into a temporary exhibition gallery. There were new education spaces, toilets, a café and shop.
- F. The result of the works in the Development Application would be fewer exhibition spaces and a significant reduction in the square metres of display space. The result would be that there would be less of the Powerhouse Museum Collection on display in the Museum than its current capacity. The need for open galleries with higher ceilings is not demonstrated and removal of display cases, mezzanines and access ramps requires demolition of significant fabric that is an integral part of Lionel Glendenning's Sulman award winning heritage scheme that allowed viewing of large objects for different vantage points and was an integral part of the access that was also noted in the Sulman award citation and the access that won the RAIA ACROD Award for barrier free circulation.
- G. The Heritage Council of NSW is yet to deliberate on the extension to the listing of the Powerhouse Museum Complex (being an extension to the Ultimo Power House, State Heritage Register item 020045) and is considering the expanded Proposed Curtilage, Powerhouse Museum Complex, Ultimo. This extension to the Ultimo Power House, State Heritage Register item 020045 ensures that the Harwood Building, Forecourt, Wran Building and Galleria and exhibition halls, and key power and transport movable heritage and fixtures, exteriors and interiors are included in the State Heritage Register listing for the Powerhouse Museum Complex. Importantly it upholds the public interest in the Powerhouse Museum Complex and is an independent assessment of heritage values.
- H. The Development Application and Heritage Impact Assessment is not for the stated Heritage Revitalisation but for a Heritage Demolition requiring demolition of significant heritage fabric including the interiors, ramps and mezzanines of the Powerhouse Museum Complex not yet adequately assessed for heritage significance, demolition of the forecourt, partial demolition of the Wran building and interventions into the identified heritage fabric of the Ultimo Power Station. The Development Application and Heritage Impact Statement furthermore do not adequately research the impact on the landmark qualities of the Powerhouse Museum Complex including the Ultimo Power Station with both the Wran Buildings and Ultimo Power Station to be largely obscured from Harris Street and Macarthur Street by the bulk and walled compound that is the fabric of the new development. The brick facing of the new buildings and development in the Development Application are severe visual intrusions in the streetscape that spoil an appreciation

of the Wran Buildings and destroy the Wran Buildings through unnecessary removal or cladding of windows with a brick facing that destroys both the significant fabric and visual appreciation of Lionel Glendenning's original design and the Sulman Award winning architecture. The colonnade is similarly destroyed as is the public forecourt.

- I. The Development Application and Heritage Impact Statement are in direct contravention of both the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter* and Kerr's *The Conservation Management Plan* the accepted heritage principles in Australia. The assessment of heritage significance is inadequate, incomplete, omits key evidence and the Heritage Council of NSW is still considering the curtilage when the Development Application and Heritage Impact Statement is on public exhibition, the draft and not endorsed Conservation Management Plan by Curio is based on a flawed and incomplete assessment of heritage significance for the Powerhouse Museum Complex including its interiors and therefore is inadequate and not sufficiently robust for its recommendations on the conservation and demolition of significant heritage fabric. It is not a basis for the Heritage Council of NSW to review its curtilage or make exemptions (which would follow an endorsed Conservation Management Plan rather than one being developed concurrently. The absence of a heritage management process that follows the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter* and *Kerr's The Conservation Management Plan* is unprecedented for any public and State Government owned building in NSW, let alone Australia and for a public building of State Significance. The Powerhouse Museum has also demonstrated wilful neglect in removing fixed and in situ movable heritage and removing Sulman award winning interior features, including carpets by esteemed designer George Freedman, without reference to an agreed and endorsed Conservation Management Plan for the Powerhouse Museum Complex (that includes the Ultimo Power Station) that assesses the Sulman award winning interior and exteriors.
- J. The incoherent and vague reports and parallel processes are likely to result in cost blowouts by Infrastructure NSW above the \$250 million budget with redesigns likely required when the heritage assessment of significance and curtilage are completed by the Heritage Council of NSW, a final Conservation Management Plan is endorsed and Heritage Council of NSW exemptions are endorsed for the Powerhouse Museum Complex based on an endorsed Conservation Management Plan.
- K. There is no need to demolish the colonnade for Creative Industries. It is not within the charter of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences 'to grow' or 'subsidise' Creative Industries shopfronts or function to provide industry assistance, research and development of contemporary industries of music, screen, literature, fashion, design, architecture, food, digital games, and tech. The Museum's primary and legislated core function is culture and learning and exhibiting the Powerhouse Museum Collection. Even the NSW Government's *Creative Communities* policy provides for supporting museums and 'the traditional arts sector and cultural organisations' without diminishing their important role including for NSW Tourism.

In Prague, on 24 August 2022, the Extraordinary General Assembly of ICOM has approved the proposal for the new museum definition with 92,41% (For: 487, Against: 23, Abstention: 17). Following the adoption, the new ICOM museum definition is:

“A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.

The Development Application and Heritage Impact Statement and schedule of works are not needed and demolish the fabric that is essential for the Powerhouse Museum to operate as a museum, in accordance with the ICOM definition. They are for Creative Industries and events and functions and diminish and demolish a functional museum complex and should be rejected.

- L. As well as the above, the new building and scheme for the Powerhouse Museum Complex and the Powerhouse Museum Collection is not as coherent, integrated or sophisticated as the Post Modern one it replaces and large open galleries for display of decontextualised objects is extremely old-fashioned and a significant backward step in museology. It hardly positions the museum for a functional or innovative future. Lionel Glendenning flatly rejected this ‘black box’⁴ approach to galleries in his Sulman award winning design during the mid-1980s and the changes proposed are inconsistent with the intellectual framework of the Powerhouse Museum concept which included a design reference group working with curators to determine new and better ways to exhibit the Powerhouse Museum Collection⁵. Peter Spearitt notes that:

Almost all the writing about the Powerhouse in the year of opening regarded the primary historic structures as ‘derelict’ or a ‘shell’ and stressed the achievement of the Government Architects Office and Lionel Glendenning in blending old and new⁶.

The erasure of the Sulman award scheme is not about heritage conservation or heritage revitalisation but gutting a working museum into a shell. The new buildings and scheme lack magic and museum functionality. They are vastly inferior to the current Powerhouse Museum, less sophisticated intellectually and architecturally and have none of Lionel Glendenning’s cultural references or sense of play.

⁴ Jennifer Sanders in conversation with architect Lionel Glendenning ‘Memories, Reminiscences and Thoughts’ in *Yesterday’s Tomorrows: The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005*, Powerhouse Publishing 2005

⁵ Peter Spearitt ‘Positioning On Site and In Situ’ in *Yesterday’s Tomorrows: The Powerhouse Museum and Its Precursors 1880-2005*, Powerhouse Publishing 2005

⁶ *ibid*

John Petersen

MPHA, MICOMOS

