

From: [Lindsay Sharp](#)
To: [Marcus Jennejohn](#); [Lindsay Sharp](#)
Subject: Late submission/objection after studying Melino Stewart report II and latest designs Powerhouse Project
Date: Wednesday, 2 December 2020 5:16:01 PM

Mr Jennejohn:

If permissible I would like to add the following to my original objection submission of 12 07 2020 in regards to the Powerhouse Project, after additional data has become available, most especially the subsequent Steve Melino flood risk assessment report, number II, responding to the very significant design changes wrought after his first report earlier this year and MAAS evidence to the Upper House Inquiry.

Thank you,

Dr Lindsay Sharp

'I further object to the Powerhouse Parramatta project:

EIS Parramatta Project Design III comments objecting to this project:

These comments are made in support of the comprehensive analysis by Ms Kylie Winkworth based on the second Melino Stewart adjunct Flood Risk Report and Ms Winkworth's decades of museological planning experience. My comments were written independently of Ms Winkworth's yet they strongly interdigitate and overlap.

[\[https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=EXH-10413236%2120201201T024953.339%20GMT\]](https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=EXH-10413236%2120201201T024953.339%20GMT)

1. The second Melino Stewart Flood Risk Report, which analyses design changes made since the original EIS was posted, indicates a range of critical risks still remaining notwithstanding the alterations made to the original high risk designs. Without the detailed, amended Design Brief III it is obviously difficult to establish precise parameters and factors. In summary Melino's issues are as follows:
 - a) The major drainage pipe for overland, trans-site, maximal flooding amelioration is assumed in the redesign to remain functional in the event of such high volume/velocity flooding even if that takes two hours to eventuate. Melino: there is no certainty it will continue to be functional and not suffer blockage especially if flooding carries substantial debris and is even more rapid in onset
 - b) The implications of this are severe in respect of water penetration of the lowest, singular presentation space and additional facility spaces most particularly that containing the back up generators
 - c. If these spaces are penetrated then power will most likely be lost to the vertical

movement equipment, the HVAC which keeps humidity under control in respect of the extant/ present collections throughout the building and also any fire services which are incorporated to meet museum and public safety code requirements

d) In the event of ground floor water penetration the objects on that floor will be inundated at the same time as visitors and staff are being kept or made safe from flooding. Objects will almost certainly be damaged as a result. Large objects will not be removed; others may also suffer severe damage. The outcome for people remains challenging and uncertain.

e) Humans within the building could find that lifts and escalators which are needed to give them vertical safety could cease operating as back up power goes down. This is especially critical for groups of children, families, the elderly and the disabled.

f) If there should be a concatenation or sequence of causally linked events: water penetration/power outage/slow person movement/ power short- outage/fire/ personnel mal-distributed on vertical, non-functioning access systems/panic/chaos/ spreading fire and humidity unchecked/ and other related events there is no way to be certain fatality or at least injury within and without the buildings would not take place at least in 12% [minimum, one in one hundred years] of the time. This might be repeated year after year given the laws of statistics. Damage to the collections is almost 100% certain over a hundred year period.

g) Other flood impacts owing to these changes may also occur as unintended consequences: flood vectoring and displacement onto/into neighbouring properties [eg. The 1980s GEC Building, soon to be replaced by a tower of apartments in excess of 250 metres, currently owned by Australian Unity. The Meriton structure, as another example, may be affected in extreme circumstances. The St George's Terrace Buildings may also be further threatened].

h) The broader, surrounding, public, pedestrianised spaces including the Civic Link may have had their risk level unfortunately and negatively affected in the event of a massive and rapid overland flood event. On a peak holiday day in summer- according to the reported 2 million average annual visitation to the Powerhouse Parramatta- the number of pedestrians of all types milling around the Parramatta Riverbank could easily be over 60-80,000 persons within 750 metres of this completed project in the space of an hour or two. A massive inundation and flash flood could eventuate and cause extremely high risk to crowds of such magnitudes. Access for emergency services may prove challenging.

2. 'Fit-for-purpose' and site location/choice:

It is self evident that this site inevitably creates avoidable risks from flooding which are inherent to its location. A location chosen by Government prior to any serious consideration of flooding and related potential dangers. A site inherently, therefore, not 'fit-for-purpose'. A site which has already seen major design changes due to thorough study by Melino-Stewart commissioned by non-governmental sources. A site which leads to unintended consequential potential impacts every time such design changes eventuate. A site-choice process fundamentally at odds with the underlying principles of an EIS and rigorous planning. A site for which future

liability will be legally difficult to disavow on the part of Government, MAAS, the Parramatta City Council and consultants. Perhaps the ultimate 'hospital pass' of this kind? Good luck Councillors.

3. VLOs and other access issues:

Very Large Objects are key to the vision of the incoming MAAS President yet any close study into appropriate object access onto site immediately demonstrates profound object movement challenges into and intra site/buildings. With a lack of a detailed Design Brief III and a detailed operational plan this objector can only utilise first principles but any analysis inevitably throws up this as a possibly insuperable challenge. Even access of smaller objects on a repeated basis in spaces where functional materials and collection movement may well intermix raises profound questions. In addition, at peak visitation, exacerbated perhaps by post-CVD social distancing, vertical movement of clients through the building will prove exceptionally challenging. A 'multi-entrance/porous' building offers even more exacerbation. The potential for wanton theft and damage is magnified. Operational considerations suggest higher maintenance and cost factors. Visitor control will suffer both in terms of safety and in terms of broader crowd management principles even outside of maximal flooding events. Heavy rain will lead to mass internal invasion which will cause a major spike in humidity and slippery surfaces. Toilet facilities may well be overrun and end up blocking. Climate control to museum standards will be challenged owing to this so-called 'porosity'.

4. Post CVD spacing, safety and business planning:

The post CVD 19 and post vaccination worlds are especially difficult to predict as are the future likelihood of other, far more infectious and dangerous pandemics. According to WHO epidemiologists planning for public facilities of all kinds must take risks, caused by such events, into account. If that is the case how can a Business Plan or Benefit Cost Analysis which relies on conjured-up figures from mid-2019 possibly stand up to close scrutiny? Even on Government's completely understated project capital cost figures, in \$ 2020, of approximately \$850 million [far from a Total Project Cost which should also include all exhibition, collection, Ultimo and Castle Hill construction costs etc.] how can a Business Case possibly justify such fiscal investment? This explains why Government thus far has refused to supply all latest Business Cases for the three interlinked projects. It has nothing to do with 'commercial-in-confidence' and everything to do with typical '*autogolpe*' secrecy. Look it up.

5. No parking for visitors, little for staff and colleagues:

Any commercial entertainment facility, even in a world where optimum visitor transport fulfilment and behaviour [eg Copenhagen] exists requires some provision for temporary, paid parking and, especially, for small group vehicles and those for the disabled. Ideally hundreds of places are on-site, or immediately adjacent to the facility. The argument that new public transport system[s] are available to this project is misleading: the transport patterns for the wider regional area especially in respect of families, must be taken into account. A forensic, credible and wide-spread survey should be provided as a fundamental basis for planning and the EIS in regards to the Parramatta Powerhouse Project. Even the original Powerhouse Museum had parking stations available in Darling Harbour [one of

which was owned by Merlin International Properties] which did a roaring trade on weekends and holidays. Unwise subsequent Government and commercial greed led to the sale of these facilities and highly profitable apartment towers [one off profits: long term negative results] were developed instead. There will be chaos once the Parramatta project is opened, with mass public rejection and criticism and a major impact on the hallucinatory figure of 2 million visitors.

6. Willowgrove, the Green Ban and future community strife:

The depth of opposition to the asinine proposal that Willowgrove may be 'moved' will simply grow. Any attempt by Government to 'move' this graceful building over Christmas 2020 and New Year 2021- or thereafter- will merely cause civil and community protests at a scale hitherto unimagined. In and of itself this heritage destruction, misogyny and community outrage is the worst kind of public relations imaginable for a new cultural institution. The profound opposition of the Dharug First Nation and the apparent, insidious cupidity of the Deerubin Land Council may well suggest that any 'planning'/community sensitivity so far for the Parramatta Powerhouse is profoundly sub-optimal and seems based, in part, on denial, mendacity, cultural ignorance and heritage destruction.

MAAS needs to think very deeply right now if this is a course of action it intends to follow. Communities have long memories. This key factor alone calls for a complete redesign of the project. Allied to the unfit-for-purpose site it would suggest that the Female Factory/Cumberland Hospital site be rescued from the clutches of that Land Council and Sydney University [et al] and an entirely different and far larger in total scope [but lower in cost] alternative cultural-museum project be developed.

On these and other grounds I continue to object to the parramatta Powerhouse project.

Thank you,

Dr Lindsay Sharp

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