

5 July 2020

Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Attention – Marcus Jennejohn
PO Box 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

By email: [REDACTED]

POWERHOUSE PARRAMATTA SSD SSD-10416

Dear Mr Jennejohn,

I object to the Powerhouse Parramatta project because it will cause the Unnecessary loss of further significant historical heritage from Parramatta CBD and diminish the unique sense of place for the proposed new museum. This proposed development should not include demolishing two irreplaceable remnants of Parramatta's history Parramatta River: Willow Grove and the St Georges Terraces in Philip Street. These building should be retained and incorporated in the plan for the museum. Now that the NSW government has finally decided that the original Powerhouse Museum will remain at Ultimo, the plan for Parramatta can be revisited to allow this very important change.

I have lived in North Parramatta for over ten years and worked in Parramatta for a similar time, so I am very familiar with the Parramatta CBD and surroundings. In the 1990s I was involved professionally in the commissioning of reports for a Conservation Management Plan of the North Parramatta Government Sites and in the management of Parramatta Park.

The Parramatta CBD and surrounds are beautifully set along and around the Parramatta River. It has an exceptional wealth of historic buildings and sites despite years of redevelopments, and at times, demolition. Its European heritage importance goes back to the very early days of European settlement. (eg 1790 first vice-regal country residence and town laid out: 1793 Elizabeth farm built; 1803 St Johns Church, Parramatta opened). This importance is still present in the various institutions as well as civic, commercial (hotels/inns) and residential buildings in Parramatta. Unfortunately, governments have been blind to the history and character of Parramatta in various bids to make Parramatta a modern city. It has at times allowed the unsympathetic redevelopment of residential and commercial areas, particularly to an extent which would not happen in the Sydney CBD This is despite successive governments promoting Parramatta as Sydney's second CBD.

Willow Grove – This is an 1870s two-storey villa of Victorian Italianate style. The EIS recognises Willow Grove has significance for historical, aesthetic and representative reasons. "It is a good example of a Victorian Italianate two-storey villa, readily identifiable as part of historic building stock and strongly contributing to the streetscape." It has also retained mature trees associated with the building. Willow

grove should be preserved as, according to the EIS, few similar building still remain in Parramatta.

Miraculously, Willow Grove has retained significant curtilage and so its place in the landscape is also still evident. It would originally have been prominent on the river bank but has been hidden behind the appalling concrete car parks for many years. This villa could be a positive contribution to a revised Powerhouse redevelopment Now that the NSW Government has finally decided to retain the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo and build a second museum at the Parramatta, the plans for Parramatta should be amended to include Willow Grove as part of its entrance from Phillip Street.

St George's Terrace is a two-storey terrace of seven houses fronting Phillip Street constructed in the 1880s. They are recognised as significant at a local level for historical and aesthetic reasons and are the only remaining two-storey terrace group in Parramatta". Like Willow Grove, losing this set of terrace houses is further wilful destruction of Parramatta's history, and it should be preserved as a rare example of terraces of this style.

Too much built heritage has been destroyed already in and around Parramatta. Each decision to destroy is dealt with individually on a project by project basis so there is no consideration of the cumulative impact of this disregard for Parramatta's history as if it is just another modern suburban centre. Social history, character and sense of place are important to people's attachment and pride in their area. You would think that an institution like a museum would understand this and want to recognise it. As well, the Secretary of the Planning Department's requirements (SEARS) say it must "...investigate the cumulative impact of the loss of heritage within the Parramatta area from the point of view of the local communities. Unfortunately, the EIS has barely touched on this important 'social ' issue. "Social considerations" and the requirement to "promote the social...welfare of the community" are certainly not given equal weight with economic and environmental considerations as the principles of ESD included in the objectives of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* require. Unnecessary destruction of heritage reduces that sense of place communities value and enjoy.

Additionally, the plan to remove 54 mature trees (6.1.5) from the site must be revisited. The development should endeavour to retain mature trees as shade is very important in Western Sydney, particularly now the impacts of rapid global warming are now obvious and will continue to increase. If you live in Western Sydney, you will know how important trees are becoming. Once removed, trees can take years to regrow adequate new shade.

I have not made any reportable political donations .

Yours sincerely

Madi Maclean

[Redacted signature]