

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

30/06/2020

Dear Mr Jennejohn,

I object to the Powerhouse Parramatta Project.

I have not made any political donations and I would like my name withheld from being published with my submission.

Willow Grove has played an important part in the social and historical character of Parramatta and by destroying it, as well as St George's Terraces, you are destroying a part of Parramatta.

This beautiful villa has graced Philip Street for 150 years. It is one of very few remaining residential structures remaining in the CBD.

Australia in terms of European history, is quite a young nation and not many of the early colonial structures over this land have been retained or cared for. Parramatta however is an anomaly where our heritage buildings have remained a constant around our city. It should be no surprise that Parramatta has old buildings, it is here that the colony first flourished.

We have Old Government House preserved within our town, the George Street Gate house standing at the start of the old 'High Street' now Macquarie Street, Experiment Farm, Elizabeth Farm and Hambledon Cottage all belonging to important figures in Parramatta's history and indeed, Australia's colonial past.

Had we not fought for these properties they would have lost a tangible part of our past.

These structures are a part of Parramatta's history and by being surrounded by them, we are immersed in the old character of Parramatta. The loss of Willow Grove and St George's Terraces would be detrimental to our city, to our citizens and to our thousands of visitors.

Willow Grove was originally a private homestead but it was eventually altered to be a maternity hospital. Over the following three decades, many babies were born within its walls. These children have now grown up and reside around their place of birth. The sense of place and belonging to these

older residents is immense but also to their children and grandchildren as they feel as if they belong to the town through their parents and grandparents. Retaining a sense of belonging in a rapidly changing world is vital.

In regards to personal significance to the site, this villa does not hold any personal significance to me. I am the first generation of my family born in Australia, I have no Aboriginal or colonial ancestors. I do however have a sense of belonging to this city as, growing up here, I have walked these streets, visited restaurants and historic museums and I have gotten attached to this city as a whole. I have appreciated Willow Grove and St George's Terraces as examples of Parramatta in the 1880's, retaining the unique charm of the city.

That being said, I see that many residents **do** have a personal connection to the building. They have ancestors who worked, were born or died within those walls. The Victorian Italianate villa also plays an important role in modern Parramatta history. During the Parramatta Lanes Festival thousands of people walk through the beautiful grounds, admire the architecture, sample some of the great food around the city and have a great time. Nonna Maria's Restaurant inside the terrace was a cozy Italian restaurant that offered free lemonade to the customers in addition to a large selection of traditional Italian food.

Willow Grove and St George's Terraces are not forgotten.

This house is one of the few ties living Parramatta residents have to retain their sense of belonging. Europe has retained their old buildings and masterfully altered them into bars, houses and incorporated them within modern society. The modern people there feel a connection to the past, sitting in a 400 year old pub like their ancestors would have enjoyed.

Australia is an ancient country, with over 60,000 years of Aboriginal history and a mere 250 years of European history. In Parramatta, we still have finds of Aboriginal stone tools, scar trees and middens. We should retain both our Aboriginal and European history and rightfully be "Australia's Next Best City" not some Sydney copy and paste.

Parramatta should get a museum, there is no doubt about that, however it should not come to the detriment to our heritage nor to the heritage of the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo. That museum was established and in fact, the name Powerhouse, comes from the fact that it is currently housed in the old electric tram power station. The history of the building has been used remarkably well and it compliments the site. I understand the museum has moved several times in its history however destroying another city's heritage over the heritage over another is typical Eastern suburbs.

Parramatta has its own industrial, social, Aboriginal and colonial history but an uprooting of a well



loved city museum that makes complete sense in it's place to another location to satisfy a political promise is not logical. Not to mention the mindboggling amount of money that it will cost to build (and has cost) to close down, catalogue, organise, pack, transport and store the objects.

Geoff Lee mentioned in an interview that the move is creating jobs. It is creating short term jobs.

Jobs for engineers, builders and short term conservators/packers but long term, it will not.

Museum jobs are not easy to come by and by keeping the same number of museums, we are not getting more jobs in the long term.

Leave the Powerhouse in Ultimo, and in Parramatta, take into consideration the want and needs of the community there and create a museum using the objects from the Powerhouse. This museum could focus on the agricultural innovations of Parramatta, perhaps even the steamers that once floated down the river into the city or even Howell's Mill along the banks of the river.

The same way the Powerhouse in Ultimo was perfect for the site, we can make the Parramatta Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences perfect for us.

The Powerhouse in Parramatta will not be a museum; it will be a milk crate that sits on a flood plain housing international visitors.

Parramatta already has hotels around the CBD and creating one on the site of a museum is foolish.

Many museum visitors use public transport, furthermore, Parramatta already has parking stations.

Creating a place where people can sleep and park is not a museum. Destroying heritage buildings to create this monstrosity is not building a good museum.

Museums have hundreds of thousands of items in storage. I mentioned the point above, Parramatta should have a museum but use the objects currently sitting in storage and create a museum on a site that will not flood, will not destroy valuable heritage structures and that will benefit the entire community.

Do not destroy our heritage to pander to a politician. People in Parramatta, in Ultimo and all over Australia are opposing the move and the destruction.

Please, regard the importance of the site in Parramatta, the value of the museum in Ultimo and the vast amounts of tax payer money going to be spent to make something neither area wants.

Regards,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.