

I object to the proposal for construction of the Sydney Modern Gallery for the following reasons:

1. Inappropriate design and placement of a new structure adjacent to the existing gallery. I have been fortunate to have spent time in galleries in the UK, Europe and the United States; galleries with walls for paintings not for taking in the view. No gallery had glass walls as the Sydney Modern design proposes. The walls of a gallery are for display of paintings, not for providing views of the external environment. Clearly this design demonstrates the decision of The Trust to provide an attractive space for hire for private functions raising revenue for the Gallery which is no longer adequately financed by the Government.
2. Building on land which is publicly owned and administered by the Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust is unacceptable. Loss of open space and removal of 140 trees is a shameful proposal. The offer of financial compensation could never repay for the loss of open space and removal of trees. Is this really an offer from the Department of Environment?
3. Mrs Macquarie's Road and the Woolloomooloo Gate should not be impacted by a transfer to the Art Gallery.
4. There is no point in pursuing construction of a new building when an increase in recurrent funding for The Gallery is not on offer from the Government. This really underlines the need for the Director of The Gallery to focus on advocacy for sustainable finance to support the curatorial and acquisitions functions of The Gallery.
5. The administration of the existing gallery should concentrate on providing exhibitions of existing and overseas collections and the government should have regard for the need of a gallery in the Western Suburbs.

Please do not proceed with this ill-conceived proposal.

The Honourable Ann Symonds AM

Friend of the Botanic Gardens and Member of The Art Gallery