



Save the Powerhouse Campaign  
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To  
NSW DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENT

*Ultimo, 27 January, 2022*

## **SUBMISSION PYRMONT PENINSULA SUB-PRECINCT MASTER PLANS**

In early 2015, then NSW Premier Mike Baird announced that the Powerhouse Museum would be moved to Parramatta and its Ultimo site sold to private developers. Since then, the community action group "Save the Powerhouse" has consistently argued that **the Powerhouse Museum must be retained in Ultimo with all its original function(s) (a Science and Techniques Museum Science and Techniques Museum featuring world-class collections) and renewed funding to restore it to its former status as one of the great international museums, following long term government neglect.**

Our five-year advocacy, and that of many other groups and strong community support, led the Berejiklian government to decide in mid-2020, that the Powerhouse Museum would remain in Ultimo.

Theoretically, we therefore welcome judicious "improvement" to the Museum, such as a **new main entrance from the Goods line** and/or the extension of the Goods line to the north (as suggested) but **OPPOSE**

- The Powerhouse Museum site being listed as "**capable of change**" and
- Any proposal to alter the Powerhouse Museum's original function(s) (see above) so as to turn it into a **commercial venture**.

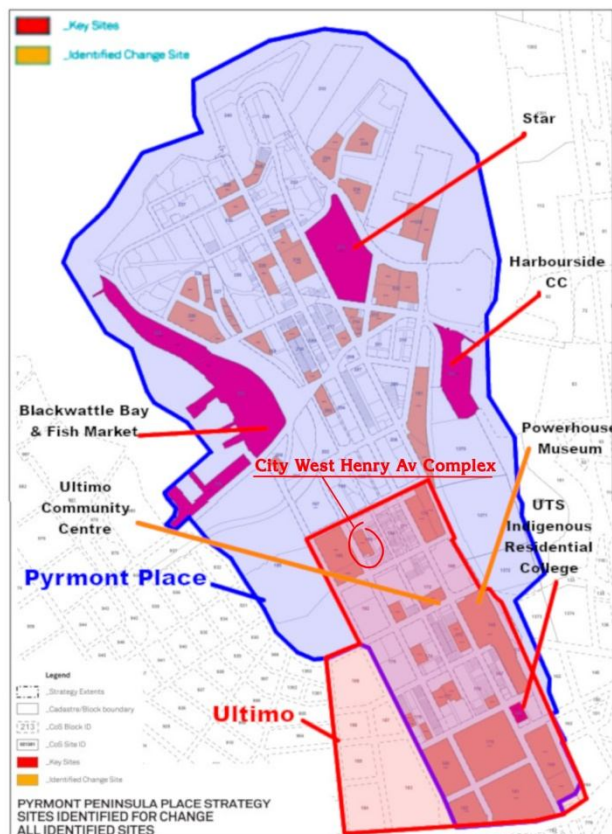
### **-1- POWERHOUSE" CAPABLE OF CHANGE"**

**We strongly object to the concept of "sites capable of change".**

According to the Master Plans these sites have "the potential to be developed or redeveloped to meet the residential and commercial floor space forecasts as set out in the PPPS for the next 20 years", such that they could be **intensively densified or their use varied** via "adjustments" of the LEP2012 controls (Height of Buildings and Floor Space Ratio but also Land Zoning or Heritage)

**More than half of (administrative) Ultimo (East of Wattle St) is categorized as "capable of change.**

**We are extremely concerned by the City of Sydney Council's pivotal role in this process**, and specifically by the statements that the list of "sites identified for change under the PPPS was informed by work done by DPIE **in consultation with Council...**" and that **"the City of Sydney Council will use the output from the review to establish planning controls..."** (ie to modify the LEP2012 controls as necessary?).



Classifying **the Powerhouse Museum** site as “capable of change” renews concerns that the non-heritage listed Harwood building (and other parts of the Museum) could be commercially re-developed.

We believe that an essential element of “restoring the museum to its former status, is **retaining the Harwood Building as the museum collections storage facility and back-office** (exhibition preparation, collection maintenance and curation, etc...). although the construction of new facilities at Castle Hill casts doubt on this.

## **-2- POWERHOUSE ENVISAGED TRANSFORMATION**

We are further concerned by statements (Pyrmont Peninsula Infrastructure Delivery Plan p12&13) such as “the renewal of Powerhouse Ultimo will deliver dynamic retail, hospitality and outdoor activation opportunities ensuring a dynamic precinct throughout the day and night” and “the introduction of The Academy will accommodate up to 60 remote and regional NSW students to stay at the museum and immerse themselves in exhibitions and learning programs while having direct access to the creative industries within the precinct” or “a significant investment in the development of a creative industries precinct will deliver subsidised creative industry studio and workspaces resulting in a vibrant precinct that is an active contributor to the growing night-time economy..”. These indicate that the Government plans to **transform Ultimo’s internationally- respected Museum into a commercial venue. (“Carriageworks style”)**

Consequently and owing to lack of details, we cannot (yet) support options C4 (new production space for creative art) or C6 (improve community access to MAAS auditorium and theatre) which could pave the way for commercial ventures in the Harwood building and other parts of the Museum (see above).

### **-3- COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

#### Powerhouse Museum

Since It began in 2015, the entire “Powerhouse” (Ultimo, Parramatta and Castle Hill) “Project” has been marred by the absence of meaningful public consultation.

**We are particularly troubled that, since the announcement eighteen months ago that the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo would be retained and that \$480-\$500 million would be allocated for its “renewal”, there has been no indication of HOW the Museum is to be “renewed”.**

#### Pyrmont Peninsula place Strategy (PPPS)

Since the beginning of the “Pyrmont Peninsula Place” process, .community consultation has been woefully inadequate.

Above all, the State Design Review Panels (SDRP) sessions (Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy Implementation – p14) made a mockery of community consultation since community representatives present, whose main objective is to consult with, and inform, their respective communities, were **subjected to a confidentiality agreement**.

**Many of the Strategy shortcomings result directly from the inadequate and biased community consultation process.**

### **-4- GOODSLINE EXTENSION TO THE NORTH**

More positively, we **strongly support** the extension of the popular Goods line to the north, parallel to the Powerhouse Museum, under Pier St and along Pyrmont St.

We recognise that it will be necessary to construct a **deck above the LR1 light rail tracks beside the Powerhouse** since there is no space between the Museum itself and the tracks.



Yours faithfully,

Patricia Johnson & Jean-Pierre Alexandre

*Save the Powerhouse*

 **Savethepowerhouse**