

# **Attachment C**

**Planning Proposal - Powerhouse Museum  
Heritage Item Amendment**

# Planning Proposal – Powerhouse Museum Heritage Amendment



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# 1. Background

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## 1.1. History

The Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (SLEP 2012) came into effect on 14 December 2012, consolidating the Sydney, Leichhardt and South Sydney plans into one comprehensive plan in the new NSW Government's Standard Instrument format.

Continuous review is necessary to ensure the SLEP 2012 continues to deliver positive outcomes for the local economy, residents and visitors and remains consistent with the vision set out in the *City of Sydney's City Plan Local Strategic Planning Statement and Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision*.

Since the SLEP 2012 has been in force, the City of Sydney has made heritage-related amendments and additions to improve its operation, accuracy and ensure its diverse history is adequately acknowledged.

The City of Sydney has made changes to these controls to address the changing urban context, to meet strategic objectives and to support growth, primarily through site-specific and discrete planning proposals responding to landowner requests or through strategic work such as the Central Sydney Planning Strategy.

Since 2014, there has been significant community interest in the management and future of the Powerhouse Museum, triggered by a proposal to close the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo and construct a new Powerhouse facility in Sydney's western suburbs in 2014.

On 15 May 2023, a Resolution of Council (Item 11.9) included that: *(B) 'the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate the entire Powerhouse Museum site [in Ultimo] for heritage significance'*

In response to this Resolution of Council, the City of Sydney engaged Lovell Chen to prepare a heritage assessment for the entire Powerhouse Museum site in early 2024.

The Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo is already an individually listed heritage item under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the SLEP 2012: *'Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior' (I2031)*. However, the current SLEP 2012 listing does not recognise several important elements and buildings associated with the entire Powerhouse Museum site, including the Wran and Harwood Buildings.

The purpose of this planning proposal is to amend the Powerhouse Museum's existing SLEP 2012 listing (I2031) to better reflect its heritage significance and recognise the importance of the buildings and elements associated with it. To achieve this, it proposes to expand the site's current SLEP 2012 mapped heritage boundary to include the Wran Building, Harwood Building and landscape elements, update its property description to include additional Lot and DP boundaries, and amend the item name. These proposed amendments align with recent gazetted revisions made to the State Heritage Register listing for the item.

The amendments proposed in this planning proposal were recommended in the Lovell Chen heritage assessment, which was prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria (2023).

The additions in this Planning Proposal will ensure the City's planning control framework is up to date and reflects current planning strategies.

## 1.2. Introduction

This Planning Proposal – Sydney Local Environment Plan – Powerhouse Museum (planning proposal) explains the intent of, and justification for, proposed amendments to the SLEP 2012. It has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act) and relevant Department of Planning guidelines.

The purpose of this planning proposal is to amend the item name, property description and mapped boundary of an existing heritage item listed under Schedule 5 (Environmental heritage), Part 1 (Heritage items) of the SLEP 2012. The proposed amendments are for the following item:

- Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo: '*Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior*' – Item no. I2031

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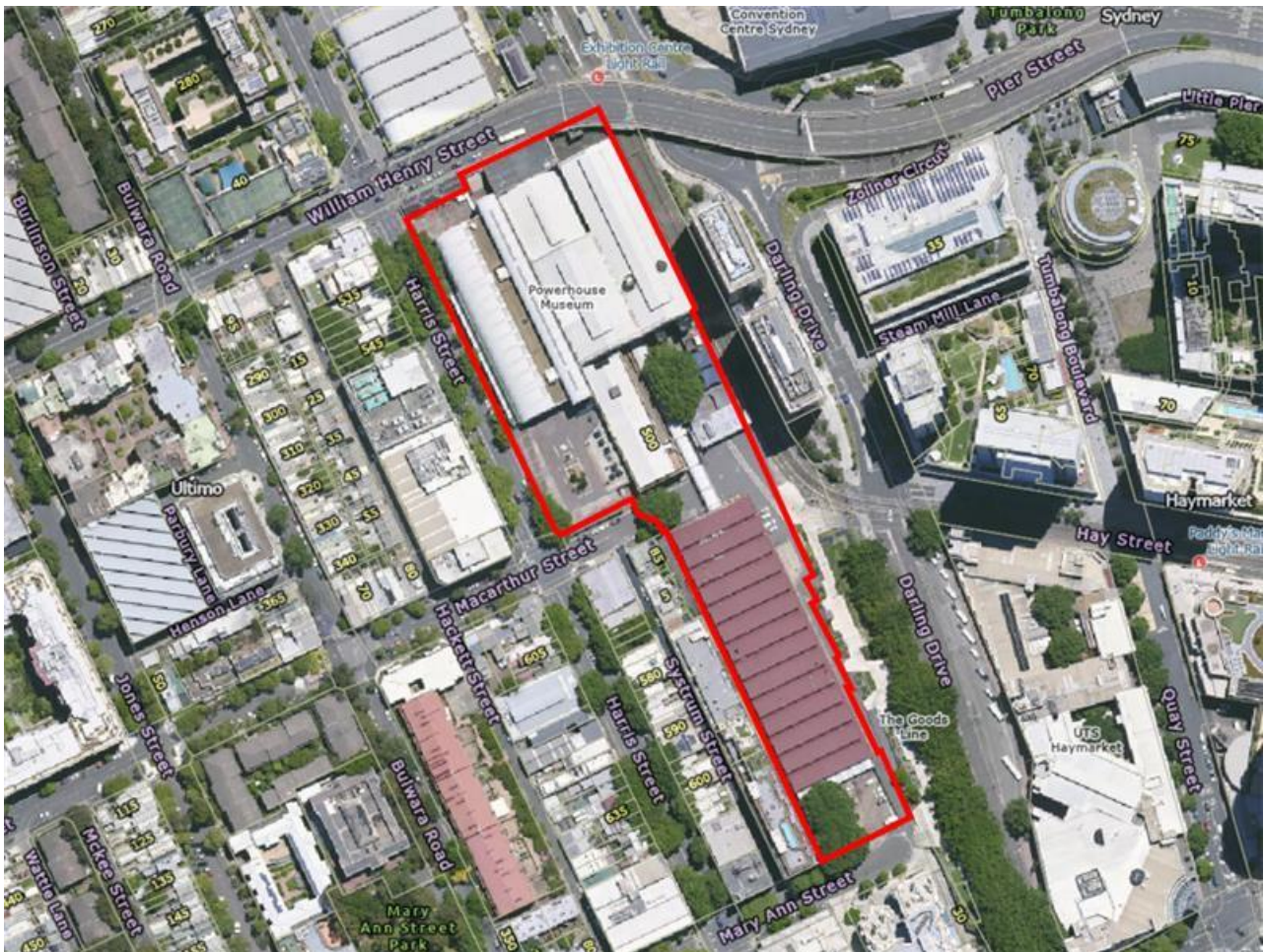
## 1.3. Background

### **Site identification**

This planning proposal relates to the following land and structures:

- 500 Harris Street, Ultimo - Lot 1, DP 631345

The relevant structures, Lot and DP boundaries are outlined in red in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Location of site and Lot and DP boundaries for 500 Harris Street, Ultimo.

### 500 Harris Street, Ultimo – Powerhouse Museum

The Powerhouse Museum complex is bound by William Henry Street to the north, Harris Street and Omnibus Lane to the west, Mary Ann Street to the south and the Goods Line/tramway corridor to the east. The area, identified in Figure 1 comprises Lot 1, DP 631345 (the Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street) and Lot 1, DP 770031 (Former Ultimo Post Office). Lot 1, DP 631345 is made up of the following:

- Lot 1, DP 781732: Museum and gallery space constructed in the 1980s (generally referred to as the Wran Building), and hard paved courtyard to the north
- Lot 1, DP 631345: Including the remnants of an electricity-generating power station built from 1898 to the 1930s (Engine House, Boiler House, North Annex, Pump House), hard paved areas and public open space generally to the west and east of the study area
- Lot 3, DP 631345: Harris Street forecourt (part)
- Lot 37, DP 822345: Harris Street forecourt (part)
- Lot 1, DP 216854: The 'Harwood Building', a former Tram Depot that was adapted for use as storage, offices and conservation studios in 1980-81

The Power House was established in 1898/99 for the generation of coal fired electricity to power Sydney's tramway network. A Tram Depot was constructed concurrently on site where tram cars were stabled. The Power House and Tram Depot closed in 1963 and 1953, respectively.

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The Powerhouse Museum was developed during the 1980s as premises for Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), which maintains a diverse collection estimated at 500,000 items/objects. The Museum is owned by the NSW Government and operated and maintained by the NSW Minister for the Arts and the Trustees of MAAS. It was formally gazetted on the NSW State Heritage Register in 2020. It closed in 2024.

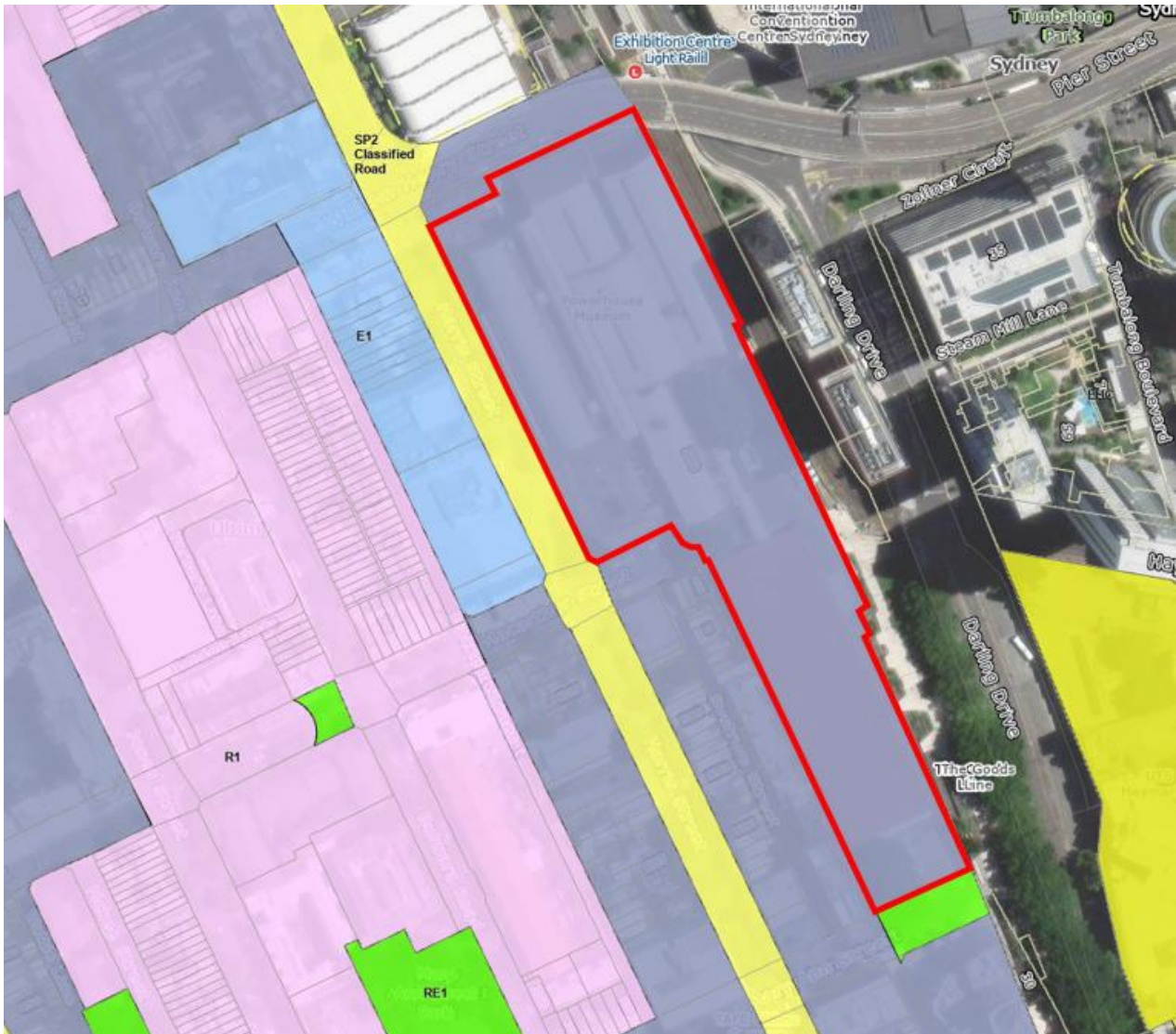


**Figure 2.** The Powerhouse Museum at 500 Harris Street, Ultimo

## 1.4. Planning context

### Land Zoning

The Powerhouse Museum Lot and DP boundary and proposed SLEP 2012 mapped heritage boundary is located within the MU1, Mixed Use Zone. It is abutted by a Classified Road (SP2) to the west and Public Recreation (RE1) area to the south.



**Figure 3.** Extract from Zoning map in the SLEP 2012 showing zoning controls.

### Heritage Context

The Powerhouse Museum site includes the existing SLEP 2012 heritage item boundary for the ‘*Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior*’ (I2031). The nearest existing heritage item is the ‘*Former Ultimo Post Office including interior*’ at 494 Harris Street (I2030) which abuts the site to its north. In close proximity are the following items:

- *Glasgow Arms Hotel including interior* at 527-529 Harris Street (I2032)
- *Terrace Group including interior* at 578-606 Harris Street (I2033)
- *Former “Millinery House” including interior* at 608-614 Harris Street (I2035)

The site is also in close proximity to the Harris Street Heritage Conservation Area (C57).





**Figure 4.** Extract from the SLEP 2012 Heritage Map (HER\_008) showing heritage items adjacent to, and within, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo (outlined in red).

## 1.5. Heritage assessment

In 2014, City of Sydney engaged Lovell Chen to prepare a heritage assessment for the Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo. The heritage assessment was commissioned in response to a Resolution (Item 11.9 (b)) of the City of Sydney Council on 15 May 2023, which required that:

- ‘the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate the entire Powerhouse Museum site [in Ultimo] for heritage significance’

The amendments proposed in this planning proposal were recommended in the Lovell Chen heritage assessment, which was prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria (2023).

The Lovell Chen heritage assessment for the Powerhouse Museum site is included in **Appendix C1**. A draft inventory sheet for the site, also prepared by Lovell Chen, is included in **Appendix C2**.

## Heritage assessment findings

The heritage assessment concluded that the Powerhouse Museum, including the Wran Building, Harwood Building, and landscapes associated with the complex, meet the threshold for local significance in terms of:

- Criterion (a) Historic significance: The Powerhouse Museum complex is important in the course of the history of NSW, Sydney and the Pyrmont Peninsula. The Power House was established in 1898/99 for the generation of electricity to power Sydney's tramway network and the Ultimo Power House was the first facility for the generation of electrical power in NSW, and from 1899 until the 1920s it was the largest and most technologically advanced. Both buildings were closed by the 1960s and in the late-1970s, the NSW Public Works Department resolved to adapt the Ultimo Power Station and Tram Depot as premises for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS). The vision was for the conversion and adaptive reuse of the derelict industrial buildings with the MAAS and NSW Government Architect committed to delivering a new type of visitor attraction, a place of engagement, activation and broad popular appeal. The decision to retain and adapt the historic buildings perpetuated their physical presence in the urban landscape, as well as their relationship and Ultimo's historic associations with industry and transport. The nature of the MAAS collection, including some of its signature items (i.e. the Boulton and Watt 'Whitbread Engine' and 'Locomotive No. 1') aligned with these thematic associations, as well as the huge scale of the buildings.
- Criterion (b) Historic association: The Powerhouse Museum is notable for having been conceptualised, championed and delivered by a large and diverse group of organisations (including the NSW Labor Party, the office of the NSW Government Architect and MAAS) and individuals within them (including Neville Wran, Dr Lindsay Sharp, Norman Harwood, Lionel Glendenning), as well as others (including Richard Johnson). These individuals and institutions reflect diverse fields of endeavour, including politics, architecture, engineering, exhibition design and collections management. Some individuals are remembered in building names (the Wran and Harwood buildings). The breadth of expertise embodied in the project is consistent with the scale, complexity and prestige of the undertaking.
- Criterion (c) Aesthetic / creative / technical achievement: Conception of the Powerhouse Museum was contemporary with the *Heritage Act, 1977* (NSW), as well as the first edition of the *Burra Charter* (1979). The adaptation of the former Tram Depot (1979-81) was a very early example in NSW (and Australia) of adaptive renewal of a transport/industrial building and set the tone for the adaption of the Power House buildings. The new works to the Tram Depot were significant with a few side walls remaining. Interventions were, however, respectful of the scale, massing, materiality and roof profile of the original structure. The outcome is a building that retains legibility as an historic industrial structure, as well as its relationship with the Power House buildings to the north.
- Criterion (d) Social, cultural and spiritual: Since its opening in 1988 the museum has been valued by people across Sydney, NSW and beyond who have shared experiences and memories of the place. The strength of public attachment to the place is demonstrated by the extent of public support and donations for its establishment, and subsequently, its consistently high visitor numbers and the strong community reaction to the NSW Government's proposal for significant change at the place.

The heritage study concluded that the Powerhouse Museum, including the Wran and Harwood Buildings at 500 Harris Street, Ultimo meet the threshold for local heritage significance for its historic, associative, aesthetic and social warrants potential listing as a heritage item on the SLEP 2012.

Based on these conclusions, progressing amendments to the existing heritage item '*Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior*' (I2031) will ensure the local heritage significance of the site is appropriately considered and maintained in the context of any future plans or redevelopment at each site.

## 2. Objectives and intended outcomes

The objectives of this planning proposal are to recognise the significance of the SLEP 2012 heritage listed ‘*Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior*’ (I2031) by amending its item name, property description, and SLEP 2012 mapped boundary under Schedule 5, Part 1, of SLEP 2012. By making these amendments, the heritage significance of the site can be appropriately considered and maintained in the context of any future plans or redevelopment at each site.

The proposed amendments will also support and align with the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy. The Strategy recommended that the Wran Building be included in the existing Powerhouse Museum’s SLEP 2012 listing. Further, this proposed amendment will ensure the current SLEP 2012 listing aligns with the State Heritage Register boundary for the site.

## 3. Explanation of provisions

### 3.1. Amendment 3 SLEP 2012 Heritage Schedule Amendment

The planning proposal seeks to amend the SLEP 2012, Schedule 5, Part 1 by amending the item name, property description and mapped boundary of the ‘*Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior*’ as shown below in **Table 3**. Text to insert is shown as **bold underline**. Text to omit is shown as **~~bold strikethrough~~**.

**Table 3:** Proposed amendments to Schedule 5, Environmental heritage, Part 1, heritage items.

Locality	Item Name	Address	Property Description	Significance	Item no.
Ultimo	Powerhouse Museum, <del>former</del> <b><u>warehouse buildings,</u></b> including interiors	500 Harris Street	<del>Lot 37 DP 822345, Lot 3 DP 631345, Lot 3 DP 216854, Lot 1 DP 781732, Lot 1 DP 631345</del> <b><u>Lot 37 DP 822345, Lot 3 DP 631345, Lot 3 DP 216854, Lot 1 DP 781732, Lot 1 DP 631345</u></b> Lot 1, DP 631345	Local	I2031

The name of this heritage item has been amended in accordance with the directions contained in the *Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006*, which require that an item name briefly describe those things that are part of its heritage significance.

This heritage item amendment is described further in the supporting information contained in the heritage assessment included at **Appendix C1** and heritage inventory sheet included at **Appendix C2**. The non-statutory heritage inventory sheet can continue to be updated as new information becomes available.

# 4. Justification

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## Section A – Need for the planning proposal

### Q.1 Is the planning proposal a result of any strategic study or report?

This planning proposal is the result of a heritage assessment prepared by Lovell Chen in 2024. The heritage assessment was commissioned by the City of Sydney in response to a Resolution (Item 11.9 (b)) of the City of Sydney Council on 15 May 2023, that:

*‘the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate the entire Powerhouse Museum site [in Ultimo] for heritage significance’*

The amendments proposed in this planning proposal were recommended in the Lovell Chen heritage assessment, prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria (2023).

The Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo is already an individually listed heritage item under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the SLEP 2012: ‘Powerhouse Museum former warehouse buildings, including interior’ (I2031). However, the current SLEP 2012 listing does not recognise several important elements and buildings associated with the entire Powerhouse Museum site, including the Wran and Harwood Buildings.

The purpose of this planning proposal is to amend the Powerhouse Museum's existing SLEP 2012 listing (I2031) to better reflect its heritage significance and recognise the importance of the buildings and elements associated with it.

As noted above, the proposed amendments will also support and align with the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy which recommended that the Wran Building be included in the existing Powerhouse Museum's SLEP 2012 listing. Further, they will align with recently gazetted (gazette no. 268) revisions to the Powerhouse Museum's SHR listing.

A summary of Lovell Chen's revised assessment of significance for the Powerhouse Museum is presented below:

**Criteria (a)** – An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area:

*The Powerhouse Museum complex, including the Wran Building, former Ultimo Tram Depot (Harwood Building) and the former Ultimo Power House buildings, is important in the course of the history of NSW, Sydney and the Pyrmont Peninsula. (Note: Ultimo Post Office, which is included in the SHR in its own right, is not considered to derive additional significance for its association with the Powerhouse Museum.)*

*The former Power House and the Tram Depot demonstrate and retain associations with historic events of significance. The Power House was established in 1898/99 for the generation of electricity to power Sydney's tramway network. The tram cars were stabled in the Tram Depot, constructed concurrently on a site to the south of the Power House. The two buildings continue to share a symbiotic functional relationship.*

*Ultimo was selected for these major initiatives for a number of reasons, including access to a rail corridor (for delivery of coal), the relatively low cost of land, the potential for expansion (which quickly became a reality), the existing industrial character of the area and because of its proximity to Darling Harbour, which provided a reliable source of water essential for the water cooling system.*

*The Ultimo Power House was the first facility for the generation of electrical power in NSW, and from 1899 until the 1920s it was the largest and most technologically advanced. The Power House evolved considerably between the late-1890s and 1930s, reflecting growing demand and technical advances. The Power House finally closed in 1963. Over the following decade it was stripped of plant and machinery, and its three tall chimney stacks were truncated. By the 1970s the evolved Power House complex was in a state of dereliction.*

*The Ultimo Tram Depot was the first stabling facility for Sydney's electric tram network. The building, which was also enlarged over time to meet demand, closed in 1953, following which it was adapted for storage, a process that included the removal of almost all tram tracks and service pits. The building, which was contemplated for adaptation as a Museum of Transport in the mid-1960s, was derelict by the 1970s.*

*In the late-1970s, the NSW Public Works Department resolved to adapt the Ultimo Power Station and Tram Depot as premises for the Museum of Applied Arts and Science (MAAS), a collection of considerable significance in its own right. The origins of MAAS date to the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879. MAAS also has strong connections with Ultimo, having been headquartered at the Technological Museum on Harris Street from 1893 to the 1980s.*

*The vision was for the conservation and adaptive re-use of the derelict industrial buildings, and the introduction of new works to the west of the site (Harris Street) creating a new public address. The initiative was developed by the NSW Government Architect and MAAS and drew upon expertise from a broad range of contributors (see Criterion 'b'). In terms of its programme, the ambitious undertaking was inspired by overseas precedents (including the Pompidou Centre, Paris). It was also a major expression of an emerging interest internationally in adaptive renewal (see criterion 'c'). Political impetus for the project was provided by the bicentenary of 1988 (Premier Wran stipulated completion by 1988). The project also a flagship of the regeneration of the Darling Harbour precinct.*

*MAAS and the NSW Government Architect were committed to delivering a new type of visitor attraction, a place of engagement, activation and broad popular appeal. Aspirations for the architectural character, conservation and internal experience (exhibition design) of the place were correspondingly ambitious. The Powerhouse Museum complex is a place that is embedded within and responsive to its setting. The decision to retain and adapt the historic buildings perpetuated their physical presence in the urban landscape, as well as their relationship and Ultimo's historic associations with industry and transport. The nature of the MAAS collection, including some of its signature items (i.e. the Boulton and Watt 'Whitbread Engine' and 'Locomotive No. 1') aligned with these thematic associations, as well as the huge scale of the buildings.*

*The new additions were also historically referential – the linear vaulted forms of the Wran Building, for instance, drew upon the Garden Palace, venue for the 1879 International Exhibition, the event that was foundational to MAAS.*

*The Powerhouse Museum has been a notable popular success and has inspired broad community support and sentiment.*

**The site meets this threshold at a local level and at a State level.**

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area):

*The Powerhouse Museum complex derives significance for its associations with individuals and institutions of importance in Sydney and NSW's history.*

*The Powerhouse Museum is notable for having been conceptualised, championed and delivered by a large and diverse group of organisations (including the NSW Labor Party, the office of the NSW Government Architect and MAAS) and individuals within them (including Neville Wran, Dr Lindsay Sharp, Norman Harwood, Lionel Glendenning), as well as others (including Richard Johnson). These individuals and institutions reflect diverse fields of endeavour, including politics, architecture, engineering, exhibition design and collections management. Some individuals are remembered in building names (the Wran and Harwood buildings). The breadth of expertise embodied in the project is consistent with the scale, complexity and prestige of the undertaking.*

*A test for criterion 'b' is first to demonstrate that the person or group is of importance in the history of NSW (or at the local level), and second that they have a special association with the place under assessment.*

*Of the notable individuals and organisations associated with the Powerhouse Museum complex, two stand out for the strength of their association with the place, and for their role in shaping its identity and evolution: MAAS and the office of the NSW Government Architect. MAAS (notably through the work of Lindsay Sharp and Norm Harwood) and the office of the NSW Government Architect (led by Lionel Glendenning). The Powerhouse Museum is perhaps the seminal work of Glendenning's career.*

*As related to the other individuals of note associated with the Powerhouse, Neville Wran was associated with multiple places and initiatives, including the Powerhouse Museum, during his ten-year tenure as State premier (1976-86). Evidence to indicate that the Powerhouse derives cultural significance for this association, or that the Museum is a preeminent landmark of his legacy, did not come to light during research for this report.*

*Similarly, evidence to suggest that the place is of cultural heritage significance for its association with Henry Deane or Walter Liberty Vernon did not come to light. Deane was associated with multiple works of major infrastructure – including the Ultimo Power House and Tram Depot – during his career as Engineer in Chief for the NSW Railways from 1891-1906 and Engineer in Chief of the Commonwealth Railways Construction Branch, 1912-14. Walter Liberty Vernon oversaw the design of a significant numbers of public buildings (including over 20 post offices) as the NSW Government Architect from 1890 to 1911.*

**The site meets this threshold at a local level and at a State level.**

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area):

*The Powerhouse Museum complex is significant for demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and a high degree of creative achievement.*

*Aesthetic value is a broad concept. As applied to heritage significance, aesthetic characteristics and qualities may relate to how we respond to sounds, smells and other factors having an impact on human thoughts, feelings and attitudes. These qualities may be associated with good design; they may also relate to concepts of beauty. Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place or object. They can also be the outcome of the way in which a place or object has evolved and been used over time. Many places and objects combine both. Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time and cultural context. As related to the Powerhouse Museum, this criterion relates primarily to its standing as a landmark of adaptive renewal, and its architectural and experiential qualities.*

*Conception of the Powerhouse Museum was contemporary with the Heritage Act, 1977 (NSW), as well as the first edition of the Burra Charter (1979). The adaptation of the former*

*Tram Depot (1979-81) was a very early example in NSW (and Australia) of adaptive renewal of a transport/industrial building and set the tone for the adaption of the Power House buildings. The works to the Tram Depot were significant. Interventions were, however, respectful of the scale, massing, materiality and roof profile of the original structure. The outcome is a building that retains legibility as an historic industrial structure, as well as its relationship with the Power House buildings to the north.*

*This approach, bold, assertive while simultaneously responsive to the valued attributes and characteristics of the place continued in the Power House itself. The buildings were retained as three-dimensional forms; the spatial qualities of the buildings were celebrated; original fabric was revealed where possible; applied details and new interventions embraced colour as well as architectural diversity of the evolved building complex; and thematic synergies between the collection and the place were optimised. Opportunities for innovation presented by the existing building were also seized. A notable example was the use of historic conduits connecting the Turbine Hall to Darling Harbour (for use in the water cooling system) in support of the Museum's air conditioning system.*

*Works for the adaptation of the Ultimo Power House and Tram Depot were contemporary with early examples of adaptive reuse of industrial/transport buildings as arts facilities at the national as well as international levels.*

*The use of the adapted buildings as premises for MAAS, while not explicitly a heritage issue, is also relevant. The coalition of the collection and the historic buildings was mutually strengthening in terms of their significance, social resonance and cultural influence. For the first time, the buildings were accessible to the public, and the collection had space to breathe and reach a broader audience.*

*The architectural and experiential qualities of the Powerhouse Museum were the outcome of an intensely collaborative approach, with Lionel Glendenning and Richard Johnson being lead protagonists. Glendenning, architect of record for the Powerhouse and Principal Architect within the Office of the NSW Government Architect, brought a notably plural sensibility to the project. His interest in drawing upon a diverse set of historical and symbolic references was responsive to the origins and associations of the collections and the existing buildings. It was also contemporary with the expansion of Postmodernist principles in architectural design.*

*Glendenning explored a series of design themes including: the layering of space through screens and structural rhythm; levels of transparency to evoke spatial depth; the insertion of buildings within buildings to rescale experience; memory and contextual reference to create dialogues between old and new, and between past and present; and grids and their rotation as compositional tactics to encourage diverse movement and experiences within a building or site.*

*The cumulative significance of these elements was their reference to memory, time and travel, evocative not just of the industrial nature of the collection and its new location in a series of structures originally devoted to transport but also an analogy to a museum visitor's experience of memory, time and travel as they would make their way around the diverse volumes and spaces of the whole museum complex.*

*The design of the exhibitions and visitor experience, overseen by Johnson, was similarly innovative. Much as Glendenning had conceived the exterior form and the diverse scale of spaces within as an extension of the broader urban context, Johnson was interested in the internal experience of the museum being like that of a city. Major exhibits – including the Boulton and Watt Engine, the Cataline and Loco No. 1 – were used as anchors, to assist visitors in navigating the large spaces.*



*The Powerhouse Museum has been modified since 1988, notably during the works of 2011-13. However, the core principles that underpinned the design response, and many of the sources and references that informed it, remain evident.*

*The design qualities of the Powerhouse Museum were highly awarded. It was the first project ever to have been nominated for three categories in the RAI National Architecture Awards: the President's Award for Recycled Buildings; the Belle Interiors Award for Interior Design; and the Sir Zelman Cowen Award. It won all of them. At the State level, it was the co-recipient of the RAI NSW Chapter's top award, the Sulman Award for 1988.*

**The site meets this threshold at a local level and at a State level.**

**Criterion (d)** An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area):

*The Powerhouse Museum is a place of social value to communities and groups for a range of reasons variously related to conceptions of identity, practice and interest (as discussed at Section 2.6.1). Based on the limited review of evidence undertaken for this assessment, communal attachment as it relates to the Powerhouses Museum resonates at the local (Sydney) level and possibly the State level.*

*Since its opening in 1988 the museum has been valued by people across Sydney, NSW and beyond who have shared experiences and memories of the place. The strength of public attachment to the place is demonstrated by the extent of public support and donations for its establishment, and subsequently, its consistently high visitor numbers and the strong community reaction to the NSW Government's proposal for significant change at the place.*

*The Museum is used and appreciated by the Pyrmont, Sydney and NSW communities. It is also valued by communities who identify with and derive a sense of pride from an appreciation that the Powerhouse is a museum with few equivalents in Australia or elsewhere that is recognised worldwide and has contributed positively to perceptions of Sydney and NSW. Communities of identity associated with the Powerhouse also include those that have been supported (or represented) by the Museum, including migrant and LGBTQI communities.*

*Communities of interest associated with the Powerhouse Museum include groups that formed (or mobilised) following the NSW Government's 2014/5 announcement of plans to replace the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo with a new facility in Sydney's western suburbs. Communities of interest also include those with an interest in the site's associations with industry, transport and with MAAS.*

*Communities of practice associated with the Powerhouse Museum may include but are unlikely to be limited to present and former MAAS staff, Powerhouse Museum staff and volunteers.*

**The site meets this threshold at a local level.**

**Q2. Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?**

Yes.

Appropriate heritage protection under Amendment 3 is best achieved through amendments to the existing item name, property description and mapped SLEP 2012 boundary identification of the Powerhouse Museum in an environmental planning instrument. The current listing does not include or acknowledge several buildings, spaces and elements that contribute to its heritage significance.

It is also inconsistent with the listing description and boundary in the gazetted NSW State Heritage Register listing for the site.

Progressing the proposed amendment to the current Powerhouse Museum SLEP 2012 listing will ensure that its local heritage significance is appropriately recognised, considered and conserved. It will also ensure formal consultation with landowners and the broader community prior to any future change or development to the items. These outcomes are only achieved in the longer term through protection under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the SLEP 2012.

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## Section B – Relationship to strategic planning framework

### **Q3. Is the planning proposal consistent with the objectives and actions contained within the applicable regional or sub-regional strategy?**

Yes. See comments below

#### **Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities**

The Greater Sydney Region Plan, completed in March 2018, is the Greater Sydney Commission's vision for a Greater Sydney of three cities where most residents live within 30 minutes of their jobs and services. City of Sydney is situated within the Eastern Harbour City.

This plan sets a 40-year vision (to 2056) and establishes a 20-year plan to manage growth and change for Greater Sydney in the context of social, economic and environmental matters. This sets out how the State Government's 10 directions for a Greater Sydney are to be implemented through integrated planning. These 10 directions, with 40 supporting objectives, address infrastructure, liveability, productivity and sustainability. This planning proposal is consistent with these high level directions and objectives. In particular it addresses the liveability great places direction objective:

*Objective 13: Environmental heritage is identified conserved and enhanced*

By listing each building on the SLEP 2012, this planning proposal will fulfill this objective.

#### **Eastern City District Plan**

The Eastern City District Plan completed by the Greater Sydney Commission in March 2018 is a 20-year plan to manage growth in the context of economic, social and environmental matters. The district plan identifies 22 planning priorities and associated actions that support a liveable, productive and sustainable future for the district. This planning proposal gives effect to the following key planning priority and actions:

*Liveability Planning Priority E6 – Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage Action 26 - Identify, conserve and enhance environmental heritage by:*

- (a) engaging with the community early in the planning process to understand heritage values and how they contribute to the significance of the place*
- (b) applying adaptive re-use and interpreting heritage to foster distinctive local places*
- (c) managing and monitoring the cumulative impact of development on the heritage values and character of places.*

This priority seeks to enhance the district's liveability by identifying, conserving and enhancing the heritage of local centres and neighbourhoods. It notes that built heritage contributes to an area's sense of place, its distinctive character and diversity of built form and uses and brings people together.

By consulting with the community to consider amending and listing these items as having local heritage significance, this planning proposal will address the district plan by respecting the City of Sydney's diverse heritage and fostering great places to bring people together.

The retention, conservation and revised acknowledgement of the items in Amendments 1-3 has potential to enhance the character and distinct sense of place in Ultimo.

**Q4. Is the planning proposal consistent with council's local strategy or other local strategic plan?**

Yes.

**Sustainable Sydney 2030 – 2050 Community Strategic Plan**

The City of Sydney's Sustainable Sydney 2030 Strategic Plan is the vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2050 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This planning proposal is consistent with the key directions of Sustainable Sydney 2030 – 2050, particularly Direction 4 'Design excellence and sustainable development.'

**Local strategic planning statement**

The City Plan 2036 Local Strategic Planning Statement was completed in March 2020. This statement is the 20-year vision for land use planning in the city. It aims to link the NSW State Government's strategic plans and the community strategic plans with the city's planning controls. This plan highlights that the unique heritage character of Sydney is a strong focus for local communities.

The planning proposal identifies amendments to the Powerhouse Museum's SLEP 2012 listing that will facilitate its conservation and allow future generations to recognise the site's significance. The amended heritage listing will ensure future development considers and maintains the entire Powerhouse Museum site's heritage significance, including the Wran Building and Harwood Building.

**Q5. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)?**

This planning proposal is consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) as summarised in Table 4 and detailed in the following section. In this table, consistent means that the planning proposal does not contradict or hinder the application of the relevant state environmental planning policy.

**Table 4:** Consistency with State Environmental Planning Policies.

State Environmental Planning Policy	Comment
SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Consistent - amendments in this planning proposal will continue to support the biodiversity and conservation in the local government area
SEPP (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.

State Environmental Planning Policy	Comment
SEPP (Housing) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Industry and Employment) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Precincts–Central River City) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Precincts–Eastern Harbour City) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Precincts–Regional) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Precincts–Western Parkland City) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Primary Production) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Resources and Energy) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP No 65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.
SEPP (Housing) Amendment (Transport Oriented Development) 2024	Consistent - no amendments in this proposal will hinder the application of this SEPP.

**Q6. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable ministerial directions?**

This planning proposal is consistent with all Ministerial Directions issued under section 9.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, as summarised in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Consistency of the planning proposal with ministerial directions.

Ministerial Direction	Comment
<b>Focus area 1: Planning Systems</b>	
1.1 Implementation of Regional Plans	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of Regional Plans

Ministerial Direction	Comment
1.2 Development of Aboriginal Land Council land	Not applicable
1.3 Approval and Referral Requirements	Consistent. No amendment includes concurrence, consultation or referral provisions or identify any designated development.
1.4 Site Specific Provisions	Consistent – see discussion below.
1.4A Exclusion of Development Standards from Variation	Consistent. This planning proposal does not propose to exclude a development standard from variation under clause 4.6
<b>Focus area 1: Planning Systems – Place-based</b>	
1.6 Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy	Not applicable
1.7 Implementation of North West Priority Growth Area Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	Not applicable
1.8 Implementation of Greater Parramatta Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	Not applicable
1.9 Implementation of Wilton Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	Not applicable
1.10 Implementation of Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor	Not applicable
1.11 Implementation of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis Plan	Not applicable
1.12 Implementation of Bayside West Precincts 2036 Plan	Not applicable
1.13 Implementation of Planning Principles for the Cooks Cove Precinct	Not applicable
1.14 Implementation of St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan	Not applicable
1.15 Implementation of Greater Macarthur 2040	Not applicable
1.16 Implementation of the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy	Consistent. This planning proposal supports and aligns with the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy by including the Wran Building in the existing Powerhouse Museum’s SLEP 2012 listing and amending the LEP boundary to align with the State Heritage Register boundary for the site
1.17 North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 2: Design and Place</b>	
<b>Focus area 3: Biodiversity and Conservation</b>	
3.1 Conservation Zones	Consistent. Amendments in this planning proposal will continue to support the protection and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas in the local government area

Ministerial Direction	Comment
3.2 Heritage Conservation	Consistent. Amendments in this planning proposal will support the conservation of items, areas, objects and places of environmental heritage significance in the local government area
3.3 Sydney Drinking Water Catchments	Not applicable
3.4 Application of C2 and C3 Zones and Environmental Overlays in Far North Coast LEPs	Not applicable
3.5 Recreation Vehicle Areas	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 4: Resilience and Hazards</b>	
4.1 Flooding	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
4.2 Coastal Management	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
4.3 Planning for Bushfire Protection	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
4.4 Remediation of Contaminated Land	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
4.5 Acid Sulfate Soils	Consistent. Amendments in this planning proposal are proposed for land classified as Class 5 and will not hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
4.6 Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 5: Transport and Infrastructure</b>	
5.1 Integrating Land Use and Transport	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
5.2 Reserving Land for Public Purposes	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
5.3 Development Near Regulated Airports and Defence Airfields	Not applicable
5.4 Shooting Ranges	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 6: Housing</b>	
6.1 Residential Zones	Consistent. This planning proposal supports and aligns with this local planning direction, particularly objectives (a) and (b).
6.2 Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 7: Industry and Employment</b>	

Ministerial Direction	Comment
7.1 Business and Industrial Zones	Consistent. No amendments in this proposal will hinder the implementation of this local planning direction
7.2 Reduction in non-hosted short-term rental accommodation period	Not applicable
7.3 Commercial and Retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 8: Resources and Energy</b>	
8.1 Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries	Not applicable
<b>Focus area 9: Primary Production</b>	
9.1 Rural Zones	Not applicable
9.2 Rural Lands	Not applicable
9.3 Oyster Aquaculture	Not applicable
9.4 Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast	Not applicable

## Section C – Environmental, social and economic impact

**Q7. Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?**

No. The planning proposal will not adversely affect any critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitats.

**Q8. Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?**

No. It is unlikely that the proposed amendment to Part 1, Schedule 5 of SLEP 2012 will result in development creating any environmental effects that cannot be readily controlled.

**Q9. How has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?**

Identification and recognition of each heritage item and its significance will facilitate retention of physical, social, cultural and historic values that may have significance to the community. No changes to current zoning controls are proposed. The merit-based heritage provisions provide capacity for Council and any proponent to take into account these matters when development is proposed.

## Section D – State and Commonwealth interests

**Q10. Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?**

Yes. The SLEP 2012 amendment will not generate any additional demand for infrastructure.

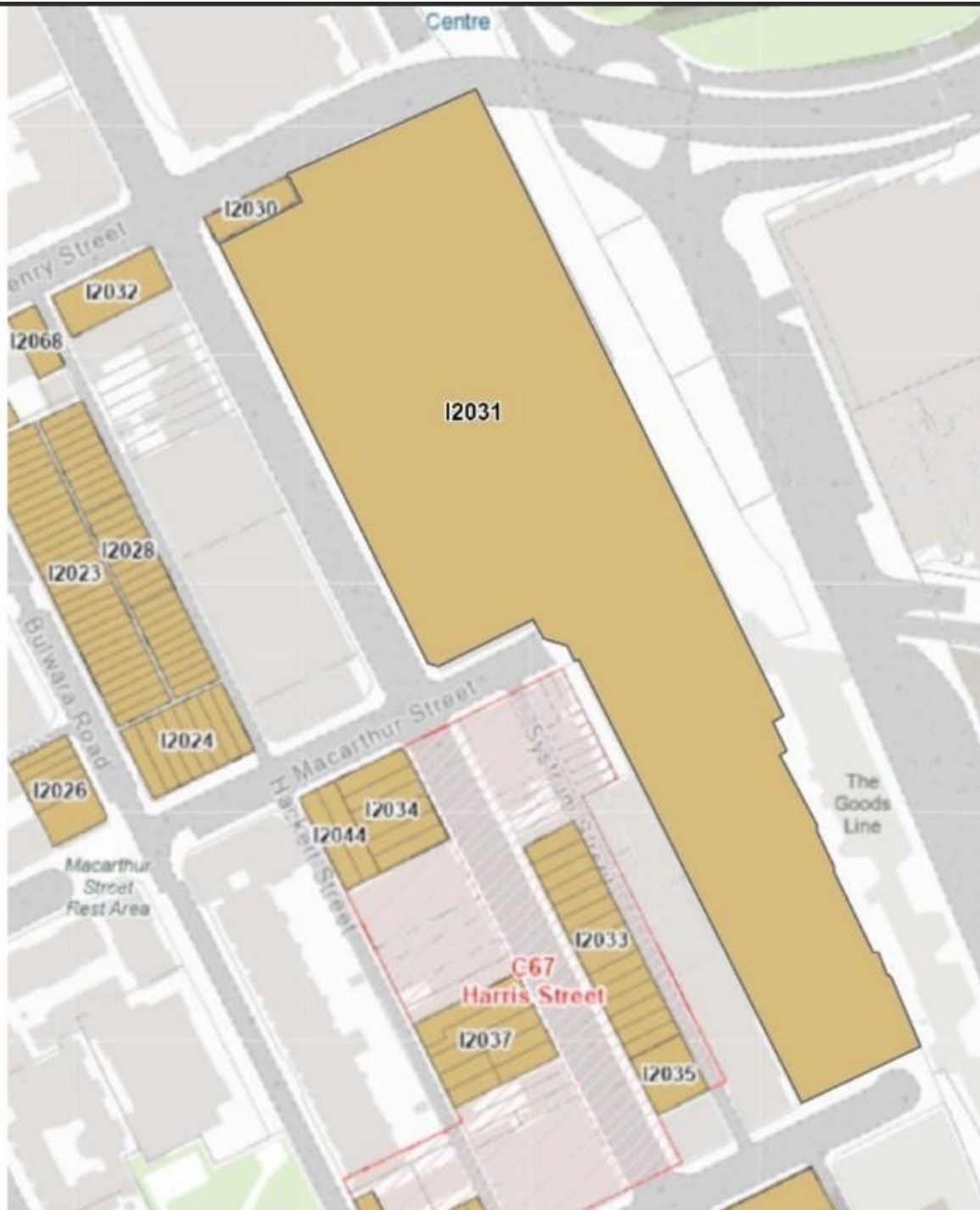
**Q11. What are the views of State and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in the gateway determination?**

If required by the Gateway Determination, the Heritage Council of NSW will be consulted during the public exhibition period. The identification of this heritage item, based on a comprehensive heritage assessment, is consistent with Heritage Council of NSW standards.



# 5. Mapping

The Heritage Map tile HER\_008 will be updated to shade in brown the amended item boundary. The heritage map extract at **Figure 5** shows the proposed boundary.



**Figure 5.** Proposed heritage boundary amendment for the Powerhouse Museum, Heritage Map tile HER\_0008.

# 6. Community consultation

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## 5.1 Public Exhibition

This planning proposal shall be exhibited in accordance with the requirements of gateway determination once issued by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

It is anticipated that public exhibition will be for a period of at least 20 working days, which is consistent with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline prepared by the Department dated August 2023.

The public exhibition of the documents will be on the City of Sydney website and carried out in accordance with the City's Community Participation Plan.

Consultation with the necessary NSW agencies, authorities and other relevant organisations will be undertaken as required by the conditions contained within the gateway determination.

# 7. Project timeline

The anticipated timeline for the completion of the planning proposal is as follows:

Stage	Timeframe
Gateway request	December 2024
Public exhibition & government agency consultation	April 2025
Consideration of submissions	June 2025
Post exhibition consideration of proposal	August 2025
Draft and finalise LEP	October 2025

# Appendices

Appendix C1 – Powerhouse Museum Heritage Assessment Report (Lovell Chen)

Appendix C2 – Draft Inventory Sheet - Powerhouse Museum and interiors

