

One-page summary of questions for Monday 31 July meetings:

KEY QUESTION: is the 'move' plan backed by appropriate research and consideration? If so, we submit that this material must be publicly released now to persuade people that the scheme is rational. **If not, can we begin an appropriate investigation now, putting the plans on hold till this is done?**

Subsidiary questions:

1. **Why has there been little considered response to particular questions asked about the move?** All we typically receive is a standard reply extolling the benefits of the move, typically from Arts Australia on behalf of the Arts Minister.
 2. **Why are the Business Plans 'cabinet in confidence'?** They were paid for by public money, do not discuss cabinet deliberations, have no national security implications, and their publication would indicate a democratic openness of government. If the Preliminary Business Plan is not to be publicly released now, why is this so?
 3. **If the Business Plans are withheld, what is the objection to releasing the facts presented to the government by the specialist consultants that have been employed to prepare the business plans?**
 4. We are assured that the Business Plans have been carried out strictly in accordance with the rules set down in with Office of Financial Management Policy and Guidance Paper tpp 08-5. **Could we have an outline of how these requirements are met, at least in regard to the Preliminary Business Case?** This would cover such things as the range of options that must be, and have been, considered.
 5. **Why is there no evidence of wide consultation and research about the basic move idea?** The enormous list of people and entities that appear not to have been consulted include even the MAAS trustees, the Director of MAAS, the consultants that have been hired, Parramatta Council, the National Trust and Museums and Galleries NSW, the government entity charged with overseeing museum matters. **Why is this so?**
 6. There is clear evidence that even the destruction of the Powerhouse museum and consequent resale of the land would not provide any significant amount of surplus funds that can be put towards the erection of a suitable museum at Parramatta. The removal and appropriate storage of the exhibits alone will cost the amount received from the site sale. **Can a realistic budget be released to allay these fears? If not, why not?**
 7. PHM and its buildings are extraordinarily valuable items of national heritage. **What value is being placed on this aspect of the 'move' idea?**
 8. **Why is there so much secrecy about the move? Why have employees and volunteers been asked to present a positive image of the 'move'? Is the issue of edicts on this matter a legitimate use of employer power?**
 9. The fact that employees and volunteers have been requested to present a positive image of the 'move' process may have given the impression that they support the 'move'. Informal surveys indicate that this is far from the case. **Could the PR machine supporting the 'move' ensure that the silence of the volunteers and employees is not seen as an implication of support?**
 10. **Can we be assured that suitable investigations has been regarding the logistics of the 'move'?** Matters that immediately come to mind include major items such as the Boulton and Watt, the Catalina, the air ambulance, the Apollo rocket engine. The cast iron of the Boulton and Watt engine, for example, is extremely fragile. The care of smaller items is also a matter for grave concern. The publication of the protocols involved, plus an assurance that there is a sufficient quantity of appropriately trained and skilled workers, would be very reassuring, especially considering the drastic staff cuts that have happened in relevant areas, such as the removal of specialist curators.
 11. There is overwhelming evidence that Parramatta citizens and organisations would prefer other alternatives, eg development of the Fleet Street precinct, to the erection of a new museum building on the suggested site, with skyscraper development of Fleet Street. **Could a process of genuine public consultation be initiated to ensure that Parramatta people get what they would prefer?**
 12. Concern remains about flooding of the Parramatta site. This is a potential major flaw in the move plan. **Is there really no better alternative? Can the scientific studies made on this matter be released? If not, why not?**
 13. **What attention is being given to the mass of submissions, and the records of evidence, that emerged from the Upper House Inquiry?** These overwhelmingly were critical of the 'move' proposal and come from highly experienced people and from organisations such as the National Trust.
 14. The majority of these questions can be answered with data that must be available electronically. **Can the answers be publicised as soon as possible?** We suggest the use of the new MAAS website created for this purpose.
- SEND OTHER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO tomlockley@gmail.com before Monday midday.