

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY - OVERVIEW

Planning, development and museums are the current focus and contested ground for debate in Parramatta - whether this is developing heritage sites, moving a museum or providing more housing. Community and government agencies are currently searching for solutions. Although there are several development opportunities in Parramatta, the most contested is the North Parramatta Precinct which has significant Colonial heritage sites dating from the earliest days of colonisation as well as Burramattagal connections.



The *Museum of Australian Identity - a living museum for the people* provides the solution to the North Parramatta Heritage, community and economic imperatives. It has the potential to be a world class museum precinct network providing national and state significant experiences of heritage and culture. At this point in time there is no NSW Migration Museum, NSW Social History museum or National /state Archaeology museum. The site specific histories of North Parramatta have not been interpreted, although one, the Parramatta Female Factory is of World Heritage significance.



The *Museum of Australian Identity* would function as a national resource, education, tourism and related cultural and business hive. It would respond to the indigenous, Colonial and later migration (free and forced) as well as 20th and 21st century social histories that have contributed to the Australian identity.

NEW APPROACH

The museum would embody a contemporary approach. It is a museum model not confined by physical structures or borders but allows multiple themes to operate over the Parramatta North Heritage Precinct. Its function is as an umbrella organisation consisting of a number of museums in a local network (similar to PAHSMA - Tasmanian Trust for Port Arthur, Cascades Female Factory and National Parks and Wildlife, Tasmania). This will involve multiple themes to operate physically over the precinct meaning fluidity and crossings of storylines through different onsite museums. This national and world significant museum which will feed into the Fusion network of major state and the regional museum networks.



Economic Capital through Heritage

This model would provide social and economic capital in a location and at a time in NSW planning where this is critical as well as retaining the integrity of the heritage sites in this location. Heritage would lead the development rather than development lead the heritage. Significant Australian histories would be accessible for all Australians as well as overseas visitors. The profitability of other significant heritage sites are indication of the potential for this site to be an economic hum as well as heritage and cultural.

Custodianship Management Model

Although the centre has the potential for international significance, the custodianship decision would determine this, i.e. whether it is state or federally funded and managed or a joint management.

The proposed management model with greatest efficacy for custodianship in line with the Burra Charter is a unified model for the whole North Parramatta precinct. A Museum of

Australian Identity Trust with national and state responsibilities is the preferred model as it provides:

- a unified management base for the whole precinct functionality
- An opportunity for the State of NSW to develop a museum of NSW covering Indigenous history, 19th, 20th and 21st century histories including forced and free migration, settlement, expansion, WWI, depression, WW II and contemporary life as well as covering a number of themes not previously dealt with in NSW such as migration history, custody and care, social history encompassing regions and cities, industrial history, nursing and medical, archaeology and architectural history.
- National research centre for Australian identity
- Regional Museums Service with the objectives of servicing the regional and state museums providing nodal connections and outreach which would also have operational connections with the Discovery Centre at Castle Hill for Collection advice and research
- A custodianship model with responsibility at a Federal and State level acceptable for Australian National Listing and World Heritage nomination for the Parramatta Female Factory.
- An umbrella for the following museum service theme areas:
 - a. **National Research Centre for Australian Identity Resource Centre** providing research on national identity ranging from the 5 museum themes to local and family history
 - b. **Themed history 5 museum network:**
 1. **Indigenous History Museum**
 2. **World Heritage Site - Parramatta Female Factory**
 3. **NSW Social History Museum**
 4. **Archaeology Museum of New South Wales**
 5. **Custody and Care Museum** - Roman Catholic Orphanage/Girls Industrial School, Mental Health node and Parramatta Gaol site.

The administrative and management structure is shaped by the theme and function of the museum service areas.

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY CONCEPT FUNCTIONALITY

On a state and national level these histories and associated experiences are missing and the absence reflects an unhealthy society in terms of understanding its origins of identity, evolution and reflections of its present nature and uniqueness. The *Museum of Australian Identity* has connections through time to our identity from Dreaming, through migration, growth and evolution to the present using unique site specific elements such as the original Parramatta Female Factory footprint. The museum services represent current gaps in the national and NSW history narrative and contain site specific and broader opportunities.

The museum concept is one of a network node, rather than one museum in a certain physical space not shared by other museums. This node would be physically placed on what is currently known as Cumberland Hospital Eastern Campus extending to land identified as the Parramatta North Urban Transformation (2016). The node would be the central pulse of the *Museum of Australian Identity* including: National Research Centre for Australian Identity and Museums with theme cores and site specific interpretations.



Each museum locality would contain a creative and business hub. This would include residency opportunities for historians, curators, writers and 'creatives' such as visual artists and multimedia artists.



The PNUT core, the significance value core currently being assessed by the Federal Government for national heritage listing and addition Parramatta Gaol would form the *Museum of Australian Identity*. The research centre would be open access. The underlying approach for the museums on site would be a living museum approach and museums not defined by physical borders within the site. They would work within the nodal model of core spaces but not defined only to those spaces. For instance the Indigenous story could be presented in the Derrubin owned site but use the river and open space areas for story interpretation and education/tourism activities. The living museum approach would mean, in this context, experiential based interface with the visitor. This does not mean recreation of a point in time (such as Sovereign Hill) but one where the visitor is led on multiple possible narrative journeys of their own choosing and interactivity (digital and non-digital). Self-directed interpretation is the key. The visitor curates their own experience within the framework.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Social Viability

Looking at the social viability the questions of significance and visitation are essential considerations.

There is evidence of historical significance. It is currently included in the Federal Heritage working party portfolio for national listing. Its significance includes but is not limited to:

- It is the first purpose built Female Factory in the world and therefore the Colony of NSW and a model for the twelve other sites.
- It is a Macquarie commissioned and Francis Greenway designed site (1818) with elements from subsequent NSW state architects.
- Earliest convict women's site surviving in Australia
- It is the site of the work social history and the site of the first identified workers action
- Estimated 9,000 Female Factory women went through the factory system (approximately 1 in 7 Australians related to these women). Parramatta Female Factory shaped these experiences for subsequent sites
- Site of some of the earliest industrial history in Australia. The reason it is called a factory is because there was spinning and weaving on an industrial scale as well as other products produced.
- Site of the earliest women's health service in Australia and early nursing and medical history
- Subsequent mental health history (1848-present)

Economic Viability

This site would exceed comparative thematic sites such as Port Arthur and Cascades Female Factory because of the following:

- Its specific significance
- Its location in the centre of Sydney

- It would be the only museum and national research centre that presents Australian identity specific interpretations and research opportunities linking identity, social history and cultural expression on one site
- Its Colonial history context. Other early surviving sites in the precinct and locality. These include but are not limited to: Old Government House(1790), Elizabeth Farm (1793), Experiment Farm(1791), Female Orphan School (1813), Macquarie Barracks (1818), Brislington House (1821), Macquarie Hospital Archaeology (1818), Hambeldon Cottage (1824) and St John's Cemetery (1790).
- Early Colonial Heritage tourism is a growing industry as a part of heritage tourism
- Parramatta is Sydney's second largest metropolitan CBD which continues to develop significantly ensuring increasing regional visitation to add to state, national and international tourism
- The main visitation of the majority of federal, state, regional and local museum visitation is school and tertiary based education. The site would provide this with directly relevant curriculum outcomes for primary, year 7, year 11 and year 12 (particularly for history but also Design and Technology, English, Visual Arts). In tertiary education the relevance would be particularly for social science, architecture curricula.
- The potential for a creative and heritage and businesses hub would also provide social and business outcomes.
- Within the context of the evolution of Australia and its identity Parramatta is a centre for cultural diversity and would provide an opportunity for life-long learning within these communities



The 11 convict world heritage sites demonstrate the economic and social viability. This would be evident at the site through promotion and activation of:

- **World heritage value** – social and economic opportunities
- **International communities**
- **Relevance to all Australians**
- **High education value**
- **Self-determined immersive visitation experiences**
- **Economic Viability through onsite service and business opportunities:**
 - Tourism
 - Education
 - Heritage/arts/ business hubs
 - Associated local and regional generated business and employment opportunities

LOCATION

The museum location is in Fleet Street, Parramatta. Sites included in this are: the Parramatta Female Factory and later Psychiatric Hospital buildings; the Roman Catholic Orphanage and Girls Industrial School and the Parramatta Gaol. These sites have significant Australian Stories to tell but are also touchstones for larger Australian stories of identity.

The Museum of Australian Identity extends beyond the Urban Growth Heritage Core and includes:

1. Female Factory site – full original footprint
2. Core mental health node (north east Cumberland Hospital campus)
3. Roman Catholic Orphanage/Girls Industrial School
4. Parramatta Gaol

Note: The locality inclusions encompass but extend beyond the Urban Growth identified Heritage Core, the Federal Government identified Significance Assessment Areas.



Museum of Australian Identity core heritage localities, including the original entrance (site of first Australian workers action) and complete third class yard.

Map by DizonbyDesign



Heritage Core as identified by Urban Growth area

*Note: missing vital Fleet Street Heritage - Female Factory entrance and entire third class yard, mental health campus core and Parramatta Gaol. Map by Urban Growth



Heritage value as identified by the Federal Government. Map by Department of Environment and Energy

MUSEUM OF IDENTITY - PARTICIPANT MODEL PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY SITE

As one of five museums in the Museum of Australian Identity network this museum would:

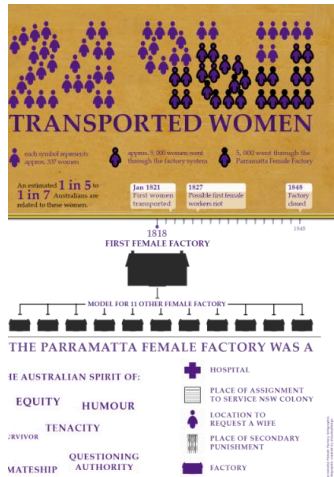
1. Interpret the nationally significant histories associated with the site:

- Female Factory site and building history - Governor Macquarie commissioned, Greenway designed with input from early Colonial Government Architects and convict building trades
- Site social history: individual experiences relating to the 5000+ women who passed through the factory; children in custody histories, social justice and prison reform
- Forced migration - female convict history
- Workers industrial history - first workers action in Australia
- Very early manufacturing history – spinning, weaving and other products
- Medical History - earliest women’s health service in Australia, early nursing and medical history and subsequent mental health history
- Colonial aspect of the National Archaeology Museum - most of the material culture relating to the female factory is embedded in the archaeology of the site

2. National Research Centre focussing on the access for core themes of the precinct

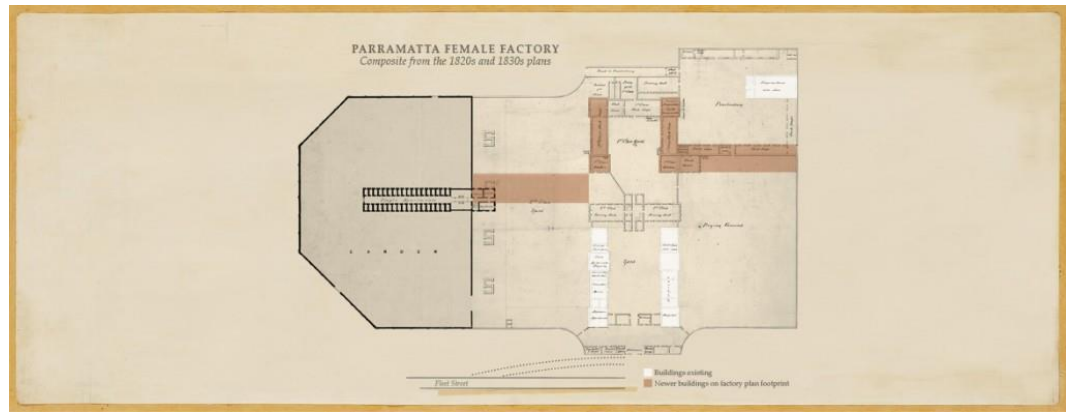
3. Provide preservation and access for all Australians:

- Present the earliest surviving intact convict women’s site in Australia and world first convict female factory in a world class museum context
- Respond to the site World heritage value and Burra Charter by:-
 - recognising the site integrity with no new buildings on the female factory footprint
 - Legislate the state/federal custodianship as an ongoing entity
 - sensitive adaptive reuse within the buildings, externally and throughout the factory footprint open spaces
 - Ensure access for all Australians for education, tourism, leisure and personal quality immersive experiences



LOCALITY USES

The site localities would be interconnected with other North Parramatta Interpretations. In practical terms there would be interpretation opportunities for other themes such as use by the Indigenous museum of riverside aspects or custody and care in relation to the children of convict women sent to the Roman Catholic Orphanage in the last years of the factory system or the comparative conditions of incarcerated women to the Girls Industrial School or architectural comparisons between the Female Factory and the Parramatta Prison. There are also possibilities for digital connections between this site and other members of the nodal network (i.e. other convict museums or museums holding collections). This could be as simple as a museum access kiosk linking sites (including related themes across NSW) at the entrance of the museum and its constituents – Parramatta Female Factory, Roman Catholic Orphanage, Parramatta Prison etc.



The building and open space primary uses would be:

Greenway Design Footprint

Entrance

This would be located in the Liberty Vernon building 1. on the Female Factory main gates entrance This would be an orientation point for the Museum of Australian Identity network on the precinct and would include a 'Fusion Hub' digital information kiosk connecting to the museums and collections of NSW and beyond).

Avenue and river frontage would be designated open space for pedestrian use only with occasional seating for vista and reflection. The open space locations would have interpretations relating to original functions and histories such as muster locations, first workers action locations, rock breaking and oakum picking yard uses.

Matrons Quarters/ Meeting Rooms/ Storage Building

This building, a Greenway design, would include early Colonial history overview focussing on forced Migration history (transportation) and specific social and building history relating to the female factory including female factory context, the factory management, the matrons, marriage process (find a wife scheme) and Colonial assignment.

Female Factory Hospital

This aspect would include the nursing and medical history of the site with specific reference to the Factory period, the staff and patients (convict and free)

The Airing Yard

Open area maintained as an outdoor experience. It would connect the stories between buildings and the meaning of the spaces. Could hold food outlet, provide opportunities for groups (tourism and school) to congregate.

Paired Solitary Cells Space

An interpretation here concerning incarceration – the experience of incarceration, the social reformers of the factory period whose influence affected the shape and management of the factory, as well as the advocates. This would include: John Howard; Jeremy Bentham; Elizabeth Fry and her disciples (such as Thomas Reid and Charlotte Anley) and the Sisters of Charity.

This area which was also second class yard would also be open space for gathering education and tourism groups.

Second Liberty Vernon area adjacent and connected to the hospital

This area originally first class work rooms would cover themes of the British social and industrial history context, convict women's journey, the over view of the factory

experience throughout the colonies, the building of the factories, the worker' history context.

The open space would have ground shadow interpretation of the barracks and would include children's histories at the factory.

Third Class Dining Room

Set up as the dining room interpretation and accompanied by interpretation of the women's individual stories and the subcultures of the factory.

Clock Tower Building

This building would be the National Research Centre for Australian Identity and related library/archives. It would also include the Institute of Psychiatry tenancy and a lecture theatre for education and public programming.

Open space between the clock tower building and the river designated for outdoor eating for groups self-catering such as picnics.

Governor Brisbane Additions

Second Class Work Room Area

This room would have interpretation of the factory work and early industry in Australia, include wool and early trades associated with the factory.

Third Class Sleeping Quarters

The building interpretation for this would be third class dormitory experience, crimes and punishments at the factory, factory class system, riots, with a focus on the 1827 workers action. The yard would include oakum picking and rock breaking

Single cells in Third Class

This was originally a workroom but as the component extant is the asylum period and later the connection between factory as a place of refuge for mental health and the period of transfer from factory period to asylum period interpreted here.

Third Class Work Range - footprint and connected buildings

This would be used for forced and free migration in Australia and later social histories. The section of the buildings directly north of the third class sleeping quarters would be museums support areas for offices and meetings concerning daily business and management of the site.

Governor Gipps Additions

Gipps Solitary Cell Yard

Interpretations relating to original uses – farm, mill race, vegetable garden (possible opportunity for a community garden). A section of this area would be for later solitary cells. This interpretation doesn't need a new building but rather a ground tracing of the building footprint, a garden of reflection.

Although it may be determined by the State Government of NSW to put new buildings in the vicinity of the Parramatta Female Factory Footprint. This is unnecessary within.

FUSION CONCEPT

The 'Fusion' concept is one of museums connected directly with each other throughout NSW in a non-hierarchical or geocentric way through NSW Government driven communication initiatives for sharing histories, information, resources, exhibitions and collections.

This would be achieved through:

- **Digital and functional connection** between all NSW museums – state, regional, local, public, volunteer run and private with shared online and onsite presence - a project funded and promoted by NSW State Government.
- **Regional Services interconnectivity between museums** with a nodal model of connectivity where each participant is equal in access and opportunity with each other. Services have existed previously but were individual institution dependant. This would function as a practical response service to museum management, collection, exhibition, interpretation and education needs. The difference to previous Government initiatives is that this would be self-determined by each museum in conjunction with the Regional Services node.
- **Functionality of Major NSW museums, galleries, libraries archives and heritage organisation as a cohesive unit (similar to the Smithsonian)**. Shared resources, communication, promotional and museum project opportunities are cost effective and mutually beneficial.

The Museum of Australian Identity would be a Fusion concept participant with equal standing to other Federal and State Trusts and Institutions with the museum purpose and management legislated in the same way as MAAS, the Australian Museum, Sydney Living Museums (HHT) is also legislated as a state museum.

Fusion with satellite museums that already exist brings networks and reduces 'border mentality'. Historically New South Wales cultural institutions have been subject to fluctuations in relationships along the historic lines of what constitutes a museum or gallery and a perceived hierarchy that places small, regional, volunteer and private museums at the base of the triangle of knowledge, understanding and importance. At some points in time there has been a removal of this approach. However these initiatives have always been an addendum or an option subject to funding opportunities or foresight of institution management and staff at the 'site' where these services exist, rather than an inalienable part of NSW Museum functionality. The networks have been dependant on the drive and good will within small and large museums rather than a modus operandi. Therefore satellites not governed by a centre but connected by shared synergies e.g. social history museum with museum of Australian Identity and Rocks and Minerals museum or Age of Fishes with the Australian Museum. Some of these synergies already exist. Placing them in a business model lifts them from dependencies on personal insights and connections by museum professionals to a viable ongoing connection regardless of staff changes.

Important in this model is removal of regional perceptual systemic identity for a museum and its location with a basic axiom originating from a centre bias and replacing with regional self-select identity. For example Western Sydney and North Shore imply a geographical centre limited by the Sydney Basin and measured from the Sydney CBD. It would be just as possible to place the geographic centre in Parramatta or Central NSW.

Fusion redefines the museum geo-political geography. It is a nodal system in which the physical location does not determine the dominance of importance.



IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the *Fusion* network and the *Museum of Australian Identity* would be staged and resource driven. It would begin with a review of what is already in place for the state and national elements of the plan and work with already committed NSW Government and Federal Government Initiatives and networks. From this the new possibilities would have a solid base upon which to develop successful international standard museums and networks with direct connections to the regions.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The NSW Government commits to a legislated model of museum functionality that requires an establishment and ongoing regional service network providing links to staff, collections and services between state and regional museums (local government, volunteer and private museums)
2. The Fusion model is adopted with establishment and ongoing funding for nodal opportunities whereby museum heritage custodian's information, collections, exhibitions and education opportunities are shared within participating museums (self-identified participation). The model includes new museums such as the Museum of Australian Identity and established large museums of NSW with similar functionality to the Smithsonian
3. That the constituent museum services identified as a part of the Museum of Australian Identity are developed and supported. These are:
 - a) National Research Centre for Australian Identity providing research on national identity ranging from the 5 museum themes to local and family history
 - b) Indigenous History Museum
 - c) World Heritage Site - Parramatta Female Factory
 - d) NSW Social History Museum Archaeology Museum of New South Wales
 - e) Custody and Care Museum - Roman Catholic Orphanage/Girls Industrial School, Mental Health node and Parramatta Gaol site.
4. That the national heritage listing is achieved and that each of the historic sites within the North Parramatta Precinct are interpreted with specific reference to site histories
5. That the Parramatta Female Factory is developed as a museum with interpretation, collection material and national resource centre and that this museum is managed in the form of a Trust and the World Heritage Status is achieved by the Federal Government and enacted by the Trust.

The Museum of Australian Identity is a vision shared by the Parramatta Female Factory and the Convict Women's Research Association.

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For more information on the Parramatta Female Factory:

www.parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au

www.parramattafemalefactories.wordpress.com

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