

Proposed Rezoning
**Save the Large Erecting Shed
South Eveleigh**



Keep Rail Live and Connected



Proposed Re-Zoning

The RTBU Retired Members Association (RMA), in collaboration with REDWatch, rail heritage and community organisations, has raised a number of major concerns to the proposal by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to rezone the Large Erecting Shop (LES) at the Eveleigh Locomotive Workshops for commercial and retail uses. The rezoning proposal will adopt an exclusive business park zoning that would see the ground and proposed additional two storeys of the workshop converted into commercial office and retail premises.

A major change is in the floor space that will be allowed within the building. The proposal takes a high open production building and in effect puts three floors of offices into the building. The internal floor footprint of the LES is approximately 6000m² and the rezoning proposes 15,000m². The quantity of floor space sought will have the effect of removing much of the scale of the original interior of the building.

The Rezoning Proposal is primarily a real estate/commercial vehicle for both the Government and Mirvac. Profit, yield and Gross Floor Area (GFA) maximisation are the drivers behind this proposal. No alternative or hybrid proposal has been put forward

which takes into account its location, function, heritage significance, connection to the Sydney rail network and the implications for heritage interpretation and cultural heritage tourism for the local and NSW community. These issues are woefully downplayed or ignored in the various State Led Rezoning Reports.

The Association is opposed to the State Led Rezoning Proposal for the LES. The Association calls for it to be sent back to the drawing board in order to include a hybrid option that allows for a functioning rail line into the LES to be retained for cultural heritage tourism together with accommodation for an archive, research centre or a mini museum.

The short sighted decision to rip up the rail link and deny historic rolling stock to be displayed in the large Erecting shop (The Large as it affectionately known by past generations of rail workers, the local community and rail heritage enthusiasts) comes from a deal between the NSW government agency and South Eveleigh owner Mirvac.

The Large Erecting Shed

The Eveleigh Locomotive Workshops constructed, repaired and assembled steam locomotives for a hundred years. It was a beacon for leading edge technology and the highest standards of craftsmanship. It was an era when locomotives and rolling stock were proudly Australian made.

The Large was built in 1899 to accommodate the expanding NSW railways industry.

The Large is one of Australia's finest remaining railway heritage buildings. It consists of brick walls with sandstone windowsills and is divided into two enormous parallel galleries, each separated by a row of iron pillars separating it into 20 bays. **The Large** is unique in Australia as a complete example of this type of facility.

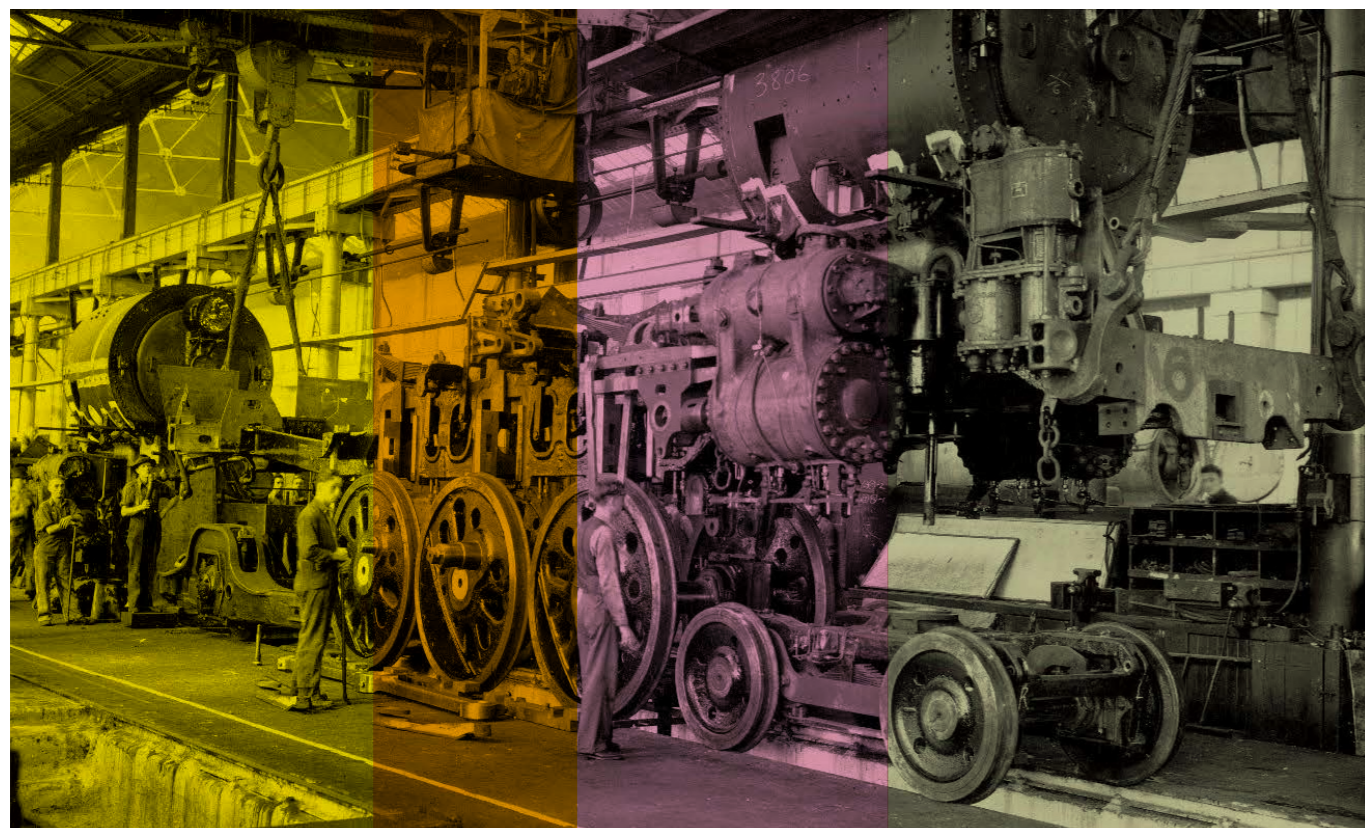
The main Eveleigh Locomotive Workshop facility closed in 1985, whereas **The Large** continued from 1988 until 2017 as an operational rail facility which housed rail heritage operator 3801.

Earlier Community Campaign Saves the LES

The LES was to be pulled down previously and replaced with a 12 storey building, but opposition from residents and heritage rail groups saw the building saved.

The RMA argues that maintaining the LES in a reduced form as a heritage rail facility would bookend South Eveleigh with living heritage at the Eastern end of the precinct with the Blacksmiths Shop at the Western end the operational rail heritage facility, will have a limited impact on the commercial and retail spaces.

The RMA is calling for a moratorium on the removal of movable heritage from the LES until a comprehensive inventory has been completed, and detailed consultations with all heritage stakeholders have occurred.





Cultural Heritage Tourism

The redevelopment of the ATP/Eveleigh railway workshops has included the development of a heritage tourism plan which is a key component of Mirvac's Heritage Implementation Plan. Taking an integrated approach to heritage interpretation makes not only good economic sense in driving potential customers to the company's retail offering but has demonstrable opportunities to deepen both local and international tourist understanding of, and engagement, with cultural heritage tourism.

The importance of Cultural Heritage Tourism to the re-purposed South Eveleigh site is highlighted by figures from Destination NSW which show for the year ended December 2018 the share of Cultural and Heritage visitors for: buildings sites or monuments is 68% for international visitors; domestic overnight visitors 37% and domestic day trip visitors 36%. South Eveleigh and its surrounds has a multitude of cultural and heritage attractions.

Carriageworks across the rail line is the former railway workshop which was transformed into a contemporary arts centre by the NSW Government in 2005. It is the largest multi-arts organisation in Australia attracting over 400,000 visitors per year.

Community Concerns

Major concerns have been raised by local community organisation REDWatch, and the RMA, and other community organisations in relation to the processes for these rezoning proposals, the lack of adequate consultation with stakeholders, and the limited approach to rail heritage and its connection to its lived past and the present.

Sydney City Council has also raised major concerns in its Submission on the Rezoning Proposal, and has recently passed a resolution, which includes:

- The rezoning proposal will prevent the entry of heritage locomotives and rolling stock into the Workshop and thus into the South Eveleigh Precinct. This will end a 123 year association of the Eveleigh Locomotive Workshops with the Sydney rail network.
- The continuance of an operating road into the Workshop to enable heritage locomotives and rolling stock to be accessible as part of the cultural heritage tourism offering of South Eveleigh.
- The City submission includes heritage interpretation with a focus on the Workshops' rich social, union and political history.
- The design for the proposed reuse of the Workshop and the Public Art Strategy should be the subject of a competitive process.

For more details and access to the Rezoning Proposal documents, go to redwatch.org.au