



**Hon. George Souris MP**  
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing  
Minister for the Arts

**COPY**

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[REDACTED]  
2/103 Victoria Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter concerning the State Library of NSW.

The State Library of NSW is governed by the Library Council of NSW. Its charter is to collect, preserve and provide access to the history and heritage of our State and nation, while at the same time changing to the needs of its readers and visitors.

Plans announced last week by the Library will progressively realise the vision of returning the Mitchell building to the people of NSW as an accessible, vibrant public space. I can confirm that it will continue to function as a public reading room, with additional seating for informal study and WiFi throughout the building.

These plans will be realised in three stages:

Stage 1 includes enhancing the Mitchell Library Reading Room as a public space with free WiFi and increased seating for informal study.

Stage 2 will see the restoration and opening up of heritage rooms to the public, and establishing dedicated spaces for research and scholarship and for Library volunteers

Stage 3 includes the establishment of a children's learning centre and new galleries on the first floor of the Mitchell building.

Additional information regarding the plans for renewal can be found online at:

<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about/support/mitchellcampaign/plans.html>

This follows the major transformation of the Library's Macquarie Street building, including the State Reference Library, which concluded last year. In April this year the Library also successfully launched the Amaze Gallery, the first new gallery to open at the Library since 1929.

The Mitchell building will be enlivened by opening up more of the historic Sydney icon to give visitors the opportunity to see items from the Library's unrivalled collections. At the same time readers will gain better access to the books and other materials of interest through delivery to one location.

In early December the Library's reference and printed materials will all be available in the State Reference Library in the Macquarie building. Readers will no longer have to work across two reading rooms. This is in response to feedback from clients.

Special collections - manuscripts and rare books - will continue to be accessible in the Mitchell Library Reading Room as the Library re-establishes the Scholars' Room, a dedicated place for research and scholarship. Interestingly, the Scholars' Room will be located within the space of the original Mitchell Reading Room, room 1910.

Access to the Library's collections has always been through a process of change. For example, when the Library first opened it was only for 'serious scholars', and not the general public. The Library's capacity to evolve and respond appropriately to changing client needs and preferences is one of the principal reasons that it is so trusted and valued.

With substantial financial support from the NSW Government of \$32.6 million over four years, the Library last year embarked on a major digital renewal through the Digital Excellence Program to make its unique collections accessible online, providing untold benefits to researchers, students and historians in particular.

The Library is reviewing and realigning its processes and people following an organisational assessment, commissioned last year, to render the State Library a relevant, sustainable, 21st century library.

Yours sincerely



George Souris MP

Cc Mr Alex Greenwich, Member for Sydney