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contact.us@architecture.com.auarchitecture.com.au**17 August 2026****Professor Alex Zelinsky AO
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Newcastle
University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308****RE: Proposed Demolition of The Romberg Building**

Dear Professor Zelinsky

The NSW Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects is seriously concerned by reports that the University of Newcastle proposes to demolish the 1970 Romberg Building.

The building, listed on both the Institute's Register of Significant Architecture (Register No. 4703117), and the University's own Heritage and Conservation Register, was designed by the University's Foundation Professor of Architecture and first Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Professor Frederick Romberg, and opened in 1970 by prominent Australian architect Dr Robin Boyd. The building is an important work of Australian architecture by an émigré architect who was one of the key proponents of modernism to Australia; his Newburn Flats in Melbourne predated the Rose Seidler House by some 10 years.

The Romberg Building is the central building in the SABE (School of Architecture and Built Environment) Precinct, acting as the pivot of the other three buildings that complete the precinct. In the 60th anniversary year of the University's School of Architecture, proposing the demolition of such a building is short-sighted; whilst it is understandable that a 55 year old building has some maintenance issues, the value of the building's cultural, social, aesthetic and historic significance, not to mention the environmental and cost advantages of retaining and adapting the existing building fabric far outweighs any possible advantages of its removal.

The Romberg Building is an exemplary building designed by an important figure in Australian architectural history. It has been an integral part of the education of thousands of architecture graduates, many of whom have in turn made important contributions to our built environment.

We recognise that the University must undertake due diligence on its estate. Demolition would nonetheless sit extremely poorly against the standing of the forward-thinking institution we know the University of Newcastle to be.

The NSW Chapter offers its assistance in securing an outcome that retains this important building, and we would welcome a conversation with you.

Yours Faithfully



Elizabeth Carpenter

NSW Chapter President

Australian Institute of Architects



Tammy Dickson

Executive Leader

Australian Institute of Architects