

Legislative Council Hansard – 13 September 2017 – Proof

**PARRAMATTA PARK TRUST AMENDMENT (WESTERN SYDNEY STADIUM) BILL
2017***First Reading*

Bill introduced, and read a first time and ordered to be printed on motion by the Hon. Don Harwin.

Second Reading

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities, and Minister for the Arts) (11:53): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Parramatta Park Trust Amendment (Western Sydney Stadium) Bill 2017. This bill proposes three simple amendments to the Parramatta Park Trust Act 2001 to facilitate the construction of the new Western Sydney Stadium and to secure a new aquatic leisure centre for the Parramatta community as soon as possible. As the Premier announced on 9 August, work has begun on the \$360 million Western Sydney Stadium. This is a world-class sports and entertainment facility that will boost the local economy. More than 2,000 jobs will be created. As part of the construction plan the Parramatta pool had to be demolished. The Government has made a public announcement to build a new aquatic leisure centre as soon as possible and it is committed to keeping this promise. We have also committed \$30 million towards building the new centre. I will now briefly outline the three amendments to the Parramatta Park Trust Act which will enable both the stadium and the new aquatic leisure centre to proceed unencumbered.

First, new section 13 (1) (b) set out in schedule 1 [2] to the bill will allow the Parramatta Park Trust to enter a lease for a maximum of 50 years specifically for a new aquatic leisure centre in the Mays Hill precinct of the parklands. The former swimming pool was built on land that was leased to Parramatta council in 1957. The Act that was passed in 2001 only allows the Parramatta Park Trust to grant a 50-year lease for the purposes of a pool at a specific site within the parklands—that is, at the site of the former swimming pool. When the lease expired in 2007 the former swimming pool lease continued as a periodic month-by-month lease. Therefore the Government is proposing an amendment to the Act to allow the Parramatta Park Trust to enter into a 50-year lease for a new aquatic leisure centre in the Mays Hill precinct. This legislation is consistent with the lease term under the existing legislation and will enable Parramatta council to deliver this important project.

Secondly, new section 9A set out in schedule 1 [1] to the bill will allow certain land to be swapped between the trust and Venues NSW for purposes associated with the Western Sydney Stadium. Venues NSW requires approximately 1.6 hectares of the trust's land around the new Western Sydney Stadium. This will give both the public and venue operators 360-degree access to the new stadium. This will also ensure that the stadium meets all current international safety standards for major venues. In return, Venues NSW will transfer approximately 1.9 hectares of land to the trust, which will improve access to Parramatta Park.

The bill enables this land swap by providing that land may only be transferred by the trust to Venues NSW if at least an equivalent amount of land is transferred from Venues NSW to the trust. There will be no reduction in open green space across the parklands. As a result of the transfer, Parramatta Park will gain around 0.3 hectares of extra open green space for Parramatta and will also improve access to the parklands. In particular, the land that is being transferred to the trust will improve public access to the Old Kings Oval Cricket Ground and to the river's edge. The bill includes a map which gives an indication of the land that will transfer to Parramatta Park and the land that will transfer to Venues NSW for the stadium.

In order to effect the land swap, Parramatta Park Trust and Venues NSW will prepare an order for the approval of the Minister for the Environment which will identify in more precise terms the land to be transferred between Venues NSW and the trust. Once the order is made the land identified in the order will vest in the trust and Venues NSW. It is anticipated that the order will be made prior to completion of construction of the stadium. Finally, the bill will bring the Parramatta Park Trust legislation into line with other more modern legislation governing Sydney parklands by removing at schedule 1 [4] the requirement to consult with the Treasurer on 50-year leases. The current requirement creates red tape and its removal is supported by NSW Treasury. The plans for the new aquatic leisure centre will go through the ordinary planning process, including approval by the Heritage Council and the relevant planning panel.

In addition, the lease is subject to the Minister's approval and the proposed provisions dictate that the lease can only be granted for the express purpose of an aquatic leisure centre at Mays Hill.

Parramatta Park will continue to be an important recreational area and public open space as Parramatta grows and changes. The Government has a long-term commitment to the parklands. That is why we have invested \$22 million into Parramatta Park since 2015—the largest investment in the park's history. This has allowed the trust to attract international events such as Tropfest, which was held in Parramatta Park on 11 February 2017—an event I remember well—and it will be held there again in 2018. There is also a large open air space called the Crescent, which hosts popular music events such as the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's "Symphony Under the Stars. That is a free event presented by the trust and the Sydney Festival every year.

We have also invested \$3.2 million on conserving important heritage items in the park, including restoration of the Mays Hills Gatehouse and The Dairy, which is one of Australia's oldest buildings. Western Sydney Parklands and Parramatta Park are also set to receive more than \$139 million in the next four years. That will create even more employment and recreational opportunities. The relocation of the new aquatic leisure centre to the Mays Hill Precinct, the construction of the Western Sydney Stadium and the land swap between the trust and Venues NSW will activate space that was previously underutilised and will secure vital recreational facilities for the community in the long term. The Government will work with Parramatta council and the community to bring this vision to fruition. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.