



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Joint Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Act

Questions – review of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Act

Randwick City Council

1. How do you view the role of council representatives on community trustee boards in fulfilling the objectives of community engagement and consultation?

- It is noted that Community Trustee Boards are designed to provide a voice for community members and to support decision making by the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust through provision of local community input. In this regard the GSP have suggested community representation rather councillor and council employee representation on the community trustee boards. In line with GSP advice, Randwick Council's initial nomination was a community representative. However, it is noted that in some instances elected Councillors have been appointed to the Trustee boards. Councillors are elected to represent and be the voice of the community and have a deep understanding of key issues to their constituents. It is therefore considered that the legislation should be explicit to allow both community representatives as well as councils to nominate an elected member or council employee to Trustee boards to ensure membership is balanced and boards remain effective in decision making.
- Council representatives could facilitate and improve coordination and communication by sharing initiatives and seeking feedback in a variety of ways from a broad range of stakeholders including:
 - other Councillors
 - local sporting groups
 - volunteer bush care groups
 - major landowners such as Randwick Racecourse, UNSW
 - local community precinct committees (e.g The Randwick Precinct)
 - Randwick Advisory Committees on a needs and issues basis (e.g Aboriginal Consultative Committee, Access and Older Persons Advisory and Cycleway and Bike Facilities Committee)
 - any other recreational groups as identified from time to time
- It is noted that agenda papers and minutes of committee meetings are provided on the GSP website. However, it is not clear how the broader community can provide advice, share ideas, local knowledge and experience. It would be beneficial if greater support could be provided to community representatives and councillors to enhance their interactions with the community. This would strengthen the exchange of ideas and initiatives between the local community and GSP Committee to plan and improve open space and recreation planning outcomes.

2. Are changes needed to the Act to strengthen the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust's advocacy on expanding green spaces in Greater Sydney?

- The Objects of the Act should specifically allow for the expansion and enhancement of parklands estate across Greater Sydney. It references maintenance, management, protection and improvement of parklands not expansion/acquisition and rehabilitation. Suggested amendment to the Objects:
(d) to advocate for a long-term vision to achieve:
i) the outcome of quality parklands across Greater Sydney, particularly connectivity of green corridors and public access to open space and
ii) expansion of Greater Sydney's open space network.
- The functions of the GSP could also recognise and address the importance of collaborating with the State Government to identify surplus or underutilised Crown land suitable for open space and recreation. Further to this, the Act could also be strengthened to mandate early collaboration between the Department of Planning and other State agencies and the GSP to ensure integration of open space planning with housing policy reforms that identify growth precincts e.g Low and Mid Rise reforms, TODs
- The Act could make reference to funding opportunities aimed at creating and upgrading new open space such as the Housing and Productivity Contributions, State Grants and Federal Funding. Council recognises the need for significant on-going investment by government to develop existing underutilised public recreation-zoned land within the LGA into suitable open spaces that enhance community use and accessibility. Cost challenges include site rehabilitation, essential site infrastructure such as paving, lighting, landscaping, environmental management and coastal protection works.
- Reference could be made in the Act or Regulation for the GSP to maintain, analyse and report on relevant data for effective planning on open space and recreation. Data such as % of open space (for a specific region), public open space per capita and walking distance to open space would enable transparent monitoring, evaluation and forecasting future needs.
- Other relevant metrics that can support the GSPs future open space and recreation planning include walking distance to open space, connections to existing open space and satisfaction surveys. By way of example, Randwick Council's Open Space Strategy has the following objectives under *Outcome 1 – Open space grows and changes with the community: every home in Randwick will have an open space of 1000m² within 800m by 2031.*

