



FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK

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JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE GREATER SYDNEY PARKLANDS TRUST

Email: GreaterSydneyParklandsTrust@parliament.nsw.gov.au

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE: FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to supplementary questions from the committee. The Friends of Callan Park monthly meeting on Monday evening, 7 April discussed these questions and the following submissions are based on that discussion.

1. In respect of improving the operation of CTBs, the Friends of Callan Park would suggest:

- Expansion of the numbers of members on CTBs, so that at least one member can be added who has experience or expertise in health. This is particularly important in the case of Callan Park where the community has long been supportive of the return of modern and much-needed mental health services to Callan Park. However, the health or 'wellness' function of parks is widely acknowledged and the presence of a CTB member with competence in health issues would be an advantage to the CTBs in all of the GSP parks.
- The chair of each CTB be selected by the members of the CTB.
- Members of the CTB be empowered to determine the agenda of their meetings and to initiate additional meetings or the extension of the time of their meetings.
- To improve access by members of the community to their relevant CTB, the venue and times of the CTB meetings be publicised at least 14 days prior to their meetings and submissions from the public be invited. Notice boards at the main pedestrian entrances could be used for this purpose.
- The general public should be encouraged to attend CTB meetings. The Act is silent on this matter (S.38).
- First Nations representation be the result of the direct engagement of First Nations organisations in the process of selection of the First Nations CTB representatives and of the general management of the GSP parks.
- One seat on the board of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust should be occupied by one of the CTB Chairs, with the position being rotated among the CTB chairs every 12 months.

FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK 1998 – 2025

26+ YEARS OF COMMUNITY ACTIVISM • ADVOCACY • ACHIEVEMENT

CALLAN PARK & BROUGHTON HALL :: IDENTIFIED AS LANDSCAPE @ RISK – AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

2. **In response to the question about empowering the GSPT Board to allocate monies raised in one park to another**, the Friends' position is that, while understanding that acquiring this flexibility would have certain advantages, this question is only raised because of the failure of governments to fully fund our parklands.

The Friends strongly reiterate their view that parks should be considered by governments to be a core responsibility and their proper funding be accepted as essential as that for schools, courts and hospitals.

"Legacy-defining initiative" / "iconic world class" parklands – the GSP will not succeed without proper funding. It seems the Western Sydney Parklands has abundant funding. The Friends would support the sharing of funds from this income-producing site to be allocated to all the historic parklands in the GSP portfolio which may not be able to produce income to this degree and should not be commercialised to do so.

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

1. Leases – Section 21: Leases, licences and easements

- FOCP does not support this section of the Act: The Friends prefer that licences and leases should be for a term no longer than 10 years - applicable under the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002. The tenancy of WHOS (We Help Ourselves – providing therapeutic programs to reduce dependence on drug and alcohol) on Broughton Hall within Callan Park has run from May 2008, with renewal after a decade, thus proving the strength of the ten year term of a lease.
- The term of ten years allows the lease to be reviewed and terminated should there be any difficulties with a tenant or its functions.
- This section does not provide sufficient protection for public open space.
- The Friends have no understanding of what the "net existing natural environment" means.
- Standardising leasing arrangements across the GSP parklands does not work for Callan Park. There is already a term of 10 years term and for the reasons cited above this works best for Callan Park.

2. Greater Sydney Parklands should be responsible for maintenance and operations of the portfolio of parklands and these functions should not be divested to local councils.

3. **Models of successful parklands** – include Abbotsford Convent in Melbourne, the Royal Parks in the UK, the HighLine in New York. Whilst these vary in size and scale ... these are all special places with high social values (in addition to other values).

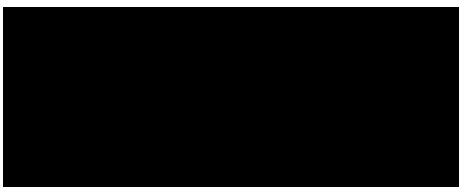
4. Callan Park's proper name is not Callan.

- The Friends would ask that the GSP respects the proper name of the estate, Callan Park, which gave its name to this extraordinary landscape and the changes that followed, and remains the name of the remarkable landscape which is part of the GSP portfolio.
- Never before the GSP did anyone refer to Callan Park in this manner – and since the formation of the GSP the Friends have repeatedly requested that the full name of Callan Park is respected and used both in-house and publicly by the GSP.

- In spite of requests to use the full name of this Greater Sydney Parkland heritage property, consultants as recently as 2024 have continued to refer to this heritage landscape as “Callan”; and during the Review in March 2025, one witness who was engaged by the GSP as a consultant some years ago, referred to Callan Park as merely “Callan” twice in their address to the Committee.
 - Nowhere in the GSP Act – or the Callan Park Act – is there any reference to abbreviation of any of the names of any of these iconic parklands.
5. **Social enterprises:** to avoid any confusion and disappointment, social enterprises should be included in the definition of not-for-profits in the legislation.
- Examples of successful social enterprises are *Abbotsford Convent* <https://abbotsfordconvent.com.au/> and *Streat* <https://streat.com.au/>
Like-minded organisations would be a good fit for Callan Park.
6. **Blue-Green grid committee to advocate for a long-term vision for and outcomes of quality parklands** – Callan Park is located on Sydney Harbour at Iron Cove. Recognition of the importance of blue-green elements of planning and their recognition in public open space, the Friends would like to understand why the GSP has not established the Blue-Green grid committee. And we ask when will this committee be established? (S 12 Committees)
7. **Callan Park is not merely a place of local interest:** it was listed on the National Register, and is listed on the State Heritage Register. Many people visit Callan Park for passive recreation and active uses. It requires no further “activation” – the public is very concerned about the way this term is used without thought and seemingly without understanding of the community’s recognition of the benefits of Callan Park’s green, open spaces and its heritage values.

The Friends hope these responses will help the committee in deciding on their recommendations for improving the operation of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Act (2022).

Yours for Callan Park



Hall Greenland
On behalf of the Executive