

**The draft legislation should be abandoned entirely.**

**Major concerns that we would suggest you discuss in your letter to the inquiry committee:**

- The Bill contains next to no imperative to maintain green open space, habitat and biodiversity. Western Sydney is under enormous pressure with Parramatta and Blacktown expected to increase their housing by over 40,000 dwellings by 2038. Carving up of Western Sydney Parklands must stop – these are our green lungs for humans and wildlife.

**SAY NO TO:**

- This Bill that allows up to 25-year leases to commercial developments, without ministerial oversight, including high-rise hotels and business hubs. What cafe/restaurant for public use needs a lease beyond 5+5 years in our parkland estates?

**SAY NO TO:**

- This Bill that gives the GSP Board the power to acquire public and private land compulsorily. This means any existing council parks, reserves, playgrounds, or your own land.

**SAY NO TO:**

- This Bill that will concentrate too much power in the hands of any Minister, leaving our parks vulnerable to politics, lobby groups and associated developers. There have been some atrocious politicians in major political parties and there will always be more – not every planning minister is going to have the good of public land, green open space or the community at heart of planning foremost in their minds.

**SAY NO TO:**

- Making communities powerless to object to over-commercialisation. It is already a struggle to stop our top 5 iconic parks (Centennial, Callan, Parramatta, Western Sydney Parklands and Fernhill) from commercialisation. This new legislation promises it “may” set up community consultation committees within a year, but its decisions may be ridden over roughshod by the GSP Board and the Minister, making it a toothless tiger. The GSP Board can also fire the community panel on a whim.

**SAY NO TO:**

- The Disposal and surrender of Parklands to other government departments (to allow sale and development). This means that the GSP Board won't develop on the parklands, but

the Minister of the day can surrender any of the parklands estates to another government department to develop ( e.g. for Transport, Education, or Health).

**Alliance for Public Parklands alternative solution – the Federation Model.**

The **Alliance for Public Parklands represents the community's voice** – being a strong and active coalition of representatives from all five major parklands currently under full or partial management of the (existing) Greater Sydney Parklands agency. We want to ensure that these parks are enjoyed by all stakeholders and handed down to future generations.

The Alliance is proposing a **federated, community model rather than the centralised, topdown model** that is being advanced in the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill.

Under this model, each of the iconic parks would have its own Trust Act, allowing them to manage and advocate for their own unique and discrete priorities and values under a full Board of Trustees.

The membership of these individual Trusts would combine community members with local knowledge of each park, First Nations representation, experts in heritage, biodiversity and park management, and a representative from the local Council. The Greater Sydney Parklands agency would only liaise with the Trustees to ensure these parks obtain the funding they require from the relevant ministers.

**The Alliance hopes the inquiry into the Bill will shine the light on many unanswered questions about the governance of public parks and how and why the Greater Sydney Parklands agency has already been given extensive powers over them.**

**KEEP POLITICS OUT OF OUR PARKS** – write your letter and share this email with all your friends NOW, encouraging them to share their thoughts!