

**Car Parking on Moore Park: A Way Forward  
(Briefing Note by Saving Moore Park Inc.)**

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in their submissions Venues NSW (VNSW) and the Alliance of Moore Park Sports (AMPS) have made a range of unsubstantiated claims about the risks and costs of removing car parking from Moore Park. This brief note seeks to

- correct the main flaws in the VNSW submission,
- highlight the need for a more equitable solution, and
- suggest how the needs of both the sporting codes and the local community might be addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

**The flaws**

We agree with the existing car parking numbers in the VNSW table of car parking spaces. The debate is around the future numbers and specifically the reduction from 5,490 to 4,350. The following factors are relevant:

- VNSW argues that, if the Bill is passed in its present form, there will be a 20.8% decline in car spaces at the end of 2023. (This differs from the AMPS figure of 43% which it doesn't seek to explain or justify. They should be asked to do so.)
- It suggests that this is likely to cause material damage to the NSW economy. It makes several unsubstantiated claims to support this contention, including that up to 35% of event attendees are from interstate or overseas. (Of course, very few of these attendees ever require car parking.)
- It argues that car parking is required for 43.7% of attendees. This overstates demand. Arup's Transport Assessment in May 2019 suggest 35% of attendees come by car.
- Neither VNSW nor AMPS refer to the Green Travel Plan which VNSW is required to develop, whose over-arching aim is to "*Positively influence the travel behaviour of users of the venue by promoting alternative travel modes to car.*"
- Despite committing to a Green Travel Plan, VNSW is instead demanding that removal of all on-grass parking be conditional on the provision of a "like-for-like car parking alternative".
- This is inconsistent with the commitment given to the SFS Community Consultative Committee on 13 October by Julie Shires (Group General Manager Infrastructure Development, VNSW) that EP3 would be completely removed – not relocated - once the new 1500 space Village Precinct carpark was operational and that a holistic solution was required, involving behavioural change. (Minutes available on NSW Department of Planning website.)
- The 2019 EIS for the SFS Redevelopment stated that no additional car parking was required as part of the redevelopment and confirmed that there was '*sufficient capacity in the transport network should parking not be available on the existing sites of EP2 and EP3*'. Further, that '*light rail and public transport would have additional capacity to transport people to the SFS to offset the loss of parking in the event EP2 and EP3 are no longer available.*' Does VNSW now believe these statements to be incorrect?

## **The need for a more equitable solution**

VNSW attaches significance to the fact that “On-grass carparking at Moore Park has been taking place since Sir Donald Bradman was playing at the Sydney Cricket Ground....” It conveniently ignores that almost everything at the SCG has changed since that time – but apparently car parking in Moore Park must never change. And this is despite dramatic changes in community needs for and attitudes towards green space.

The population density of the suburbs surrounding Moore Park is set to exceed Hong Kong’s within the next few years. 95% of the residents of the City of Sydney live in medium and high density housing. For them, Moore Park is their backyard. It is not, and never should be, a parking lot.

Moore Park has been neglected for decades – in part because it’s been viewed by many as just a car park. The removal of car parking will enable Greater Sydney Parklands finally to start turning Moore Park into one of the city’s great parks, one that meets the community’s many diverse needs.

Where once there were cars, new playing fields will provide a place where kids can play and pursue their sporting dreams and ambitions. Or a place for people to enjoy picnics and barbecues. Or simply a place for them to escape for some solitude and peace. The importance of parklands to the community has never been more apparent than during the 2021 Covid-19 related lockdowns, with park usage up by 20%. We need to build on this.

Our Association’s vision for Moore Park can be seen in the attached plan. A year ago we surveyed the public and asked what would encourage them to make greater use of Moore Park if car parking ceased. The results said much about the community’s needs:

- 83% wanted picnic and barbecue facilities,
- 76% wanted spring flowers,
- 61% wanted Aboriginal heritage and landscape interpretation,
- 32% wanted a new children’s playground,
- 24% wanted quality junior and community playing fields, and
- 16% wanted cricket nets for junior and community use.

But so long as Moore Park is viewed by VNSW and AMPs as a convenient parking lot, one where cars periodically churn up the surface, nothing will change. As we move through the third decade of the 21st century, let’s finally put people first and remove cars forever from Moore Park, just as this Bill proposes.

## **How fairness and equity can be achieved**

Consent Condition D50 for the Sydney Football Stadium requires VNSW to consider alternative strategies for meeting the needs of stadium patrons on event days – to promote more sustainable modes of travel, reduce overall parking demand and redistribute existing parking in satellite parking areas such as Randwick Racecourse.

To the extent that demand can't be accommodated by off-grass parking facilities – and this is unlikely to happen on more than about 10% of the 65 event days annually – the built car park at Randwick Racecourse offers an effective alternative.

Venue NSW's 'trial' earlier this month in connection with the SCG Test is no indicator of whether parking at Randwick Racecourse is a viable distributed parking option:

- Attendances at the Test were well down on normal, so there was ample car parking close to the SCG, including on the grass, so there was no need for people to use the Randwick option.
- There was no marketing campaign to inform potential users of the option.
- Members were informed of it daily during the Test but not in advance of it.
- To the best of our knowledge, the public weren't advised of the option at all.
- The cost of parking at Randwick was the same as parking on Moore Park. But as users would have incurred light rail fares each way, the cost would have been greater than parking on EP3. (This option is only likely to be viable if the Government permits free travel between the Racecourse and Moore Park on event days.)

A consultant advising VNSW told the SFS CCC in October that the Racecourse would most likely be used by people from south-eastern Sydney and would relieve road congestion. Making the Racecourse car park available would add a further 580 spaces. The reduction in spaces when EP3 closes would then be just over 10%.

If a Green Travel Plan can't deliver a reduction in car parking of this magnitude, and thereby contribute to an outcome that's fair and equitable for both SCG/SFS patrons and the local community, what's the point of having it?

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