

## Collation of Points for Additional Information to the Inquiry

**Question 1:** Dr Barkley, public (should this not read “public”?) roads, apart from tollways, are not required to pay for themselves. Why do we have this position from the Government that parks have to pay for themselves? Dr Barkley

Answer:

A world-wide trend of government neoliberalism is extending to parks, dictating they become self-financing. Current practice of transferring economic control from the public sector to the private sector obfuscates the intent of austerity with commodification and obsessive transformation of “unused” open space. With roads, if they are destroyed or repurposed, they are readily replaced. With parks, once they are gone, they are irreplaceable.

**Question 2:** Can you speak to the funding model? The funding model in this is 2 per-cent of western Sydney parklands can be set aside for economic exploitation to provide funds to the parks. Can you speak to that as a model?

Answer:

The funding model of the Bill is based on activating for business purposes 2 per-cent of land in the Western Sydney Parklands (WSP) 5,280 Ha; 2% = 105 Ha). The basis for calculating this percentage is rubbery due to a lack of clarity on what lands are included in WSP (e.g. Fernhill Estate {423 Ha} was vested in WSP in December 2020, and the status of land presumably included, but not gazetted, in WSP). The actual amount of WSP land activated for business purposes could be as high as 10 per-cent.<sup>1</sup> The funding model is also clouded by what the GSP considers business, commercialisation and tourism and hubs, facilities and activities.

There are many other funding models for parks,<sup>2,3,4</sup> in addition to the eight models referred to in Select Committee on GSPT Bill 2021 submission #77, pp 6-10, by Friends of Fernhill and Mulgoa Valley Inc (FFMV).

The NSW DPIE’s 50-Year Vision stated, “How we will incorporate these elements into planning policy, programs, **funding streams** and implementation processes will be decided in consultation<sup>5</sup> with communities, councils, State agencies and others.”<sup>6</sup> The Vision was to identify *“innovative ways to create sustainable funding streams for parks, both local and regional.”*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ridgeway, P.A., 2021. A Wide & Open Land.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/paying-for-parks.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Tate, Alan with Eaton, Marcella. 2015. Great City Parks. 344 p.

<sup>4</sup> Spenceley, Anna. 2021. Handbook for Sustainable Tourism Practitioners The Essential Toolbox. pp. 70-95.

<sup>5</sup> defined in the Oxford dictionary as “have deliberations with a person, seek information or advice, take into consideration” and consultation is “the act of consulting, deliberation, conference”.

<sup>6</sup> NSW DPIE. A 50-year Vision for Greater Sydney’s Open Space and Parklands. 2021. p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

Subsequently, GSP proffered it will “enable new and innovative ways to fund parks, including investigation of off-park business hubs, but not to replace government funding for parklands.”<sup>8</sup>

It reaffirmed the 50-Year Vision of “funding streams” and that “implementation processes would be decided in consultation with communities, councils, State agencies and others.” Also, the report stated the public thought other funding models should be embraced. **Were funding models other than that in the Bill considered?**

Alternatives to the funding model in the Bill were neither discussed or presented to the public (communities, councils, etc.), nor the public consulted, even though FFMV and local councils made submissions on the abovementioned papers. Thus, there is a lack of good faith, TRUST, in DPIE, in GSP and in the Bill.<sup>9</sup>

The funding model in the Bill appears to be based on the WSP funding model that “has successfully created a sustainable revenue base” augmented by off-park business hubs on Crown lands to “create the revenue stream to continue to deliver these facilities and to manage the parklands long term”.<sup>10</sup> However, this model does not embrace what DPIE heard<sup>11</sup>:

- “Parks should be adequately funded by government and not solely reliant on creating their own revenues.
- Over-reliance on self-funding models may result in over-commercialisation of parks and the trust’s resources being directed towards commercial outcomes rather than the custodianship of the parks themselves.”

These two points are confirmed by Smith<sup>12</sup> who concluded a one-size-fits-all approach towards funding will not work, no matter what approach or model is taken.

The White Paper states “ensure all parks funds, including savings, are reserved for park purposes and not used for other government purposes,”<sup>13</sup> however, as I’m sure the Select Committee is aware, instances exist of where revenue generated by a government agency (e.g. the former

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<sup>8</sup> White Paper – Parklands for People what we heard report. Greater Sydney Parklands. September, 2021. p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> “Community engagement Engaging the community as active participants in decision-making processes when planning, designing, managing and activating public space will help ensure that it reflects their values, needs and aspirations. Participatory processes, collaboration and co-design in public space projects help build trust, which then increases people’s use of and attachment to the space. Ensuring that vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities are engaged in these processes leads to more welcoming and inclusive public space”. in NSW Public Spaces Charter Community engagement NSW Public Spaces Charter | NSW Dept of Planning, Industry and Environment.

<sup>10</sup> White Paper – Parklands for People. p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> White Paper – Parklands for People what we heard report, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, A. 2018. Paying for Parks. Ticketed events and the commercialisation of public space in <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/westminsterresearch>

<sup>13</sup> White Paper – Parklands for People. p. 25.

Sydney Water Board) were re-directed for other government expenditure purposes. The Bill has no provision to prevent such action.

I submit the funding model has not been appropriately considered as proposed by both NSW DPIE and GSP, and through their own community engagement processes the Bill does not reflect what the public wants