

9 February 2022

Ref: D22/9218

Mr Michael Waterhouse
President
SAVING MOORE PARK
Via Email:

Dear Mr Waterhouse

Thank you for your open letter of 30 January 2022 regarding the removal of on-grass parking at Moore Park East and providing Venues NSW with an opportunity to clarify some misconceptions.

Venues NSW (and the former SCG Trust) has long been supportive of the 2040 Moore Park Master Plan's objective of progressively removing on-grass parking at Moore Park East. The Master Plan's section on key strategies for the future of parking states: *"Progressively removing parking on green space, noting that such measures will not be implemented until supplementary parking in dispersed locations (such as the Entertainment Quarter, E.S. Marks Athletics Field, Moore Park Golf and the SCG) has been created. This will ensure there is no net loss of event related parking in the precinct."*

Venues NSW has not only championed initiatives to deliver on that objective but has also provided capital to enable these changes.

The SCG Trust funded the construction of the Sydney Swans and Sydney Roosters training fields at Moore Park East, which facilitated the removal of thousands of parking spots. The training field developed for the Sydney Roosters was previously a gravel pit.

Venues NSW has worked collaboratively and constructively with Government to consider alternatives to accelerate further removal of on-grass parking. Venues NSW is funding a multi-level underground carpark on the SFS site which will allow for the removal of 1,000 parking spaces from the northern end of Moore Park East. The precinct village and car park project which will include a public plaza, sporting and exercise equipment, an art project and green space with children's playground and shaded picnic facilities, involved a detailed process and consultations with community groups and the SFS Community Consultative Committee (CCC). All associated planning materials were provided to the CCC. Based on extensive assessments and reviews of alternatives, the precinct village and car park represents the singular viable option available to Government to facilitate meaningful removal of on-grass parking within a short timeframe.

Venues NSW has also advocated strongly for improved and affordable public transport connections for the precinct to reduce the need for private vehicle usage. We have actively promoted public and active transport and we encourage the use of integrated event ticketing when available.

While Venues NSW continue joint efforts with sports partners to promote the use of public transport, private vehicle usage remains popular for a number of key groups, including the elderly, those with accessibility needs, and families who are not able to use public transport for reasons of disability or practicality. Also, the EP3 area at the southern end of Moore Park east is used by those travelling from the south and west of Sydney.

The reference in your letter to the survey of 11 games in 2019 is not an appropriate comparison. During the SFS redevelopment, starting in January 2019, a significant number of games and events were relocated from the SFS including all A-league games and the majority of the Super Rugby games and these events have the highest car transport modal share.

In relation to your **first question**, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was correct and was predicated on no net reduction or no net increase in precinct parking consistent with the Moore Park Master Plan 2040. Venues NSW has not sought additional parking to what is already currently available and SSDA approved.

The EIS states:

“the Moore Park Master Plan 2040 provides for the removal of on-grass car parking at EP2 and EP3, the Master Plan makes clear that this removal will be progressive, occur over the medium and long-term and will only occur where increased access via other transport modes and/or additional car parking is provided in alternative locations”.

The Moore Park Master Plan 2040's key strategy to allow for the progressive removal of on-grass parking is through the provision of dispersed parking alternatives elsewhere in Moore Park to ensure no net loss of event related parking in the precinct.

This occurred for EP2. A whole-of-government approach, championed by Venues NSW has resulted in the village precinct and multi-level carpark concept. This is a transformative initiative for the precinct and for the broader community. It will keep parking in the wider precinct as per the Moore Park Master Plan objective and ensure equality of access for all. For EP3, while Venues NSW and other stakeholders support the progressive removal of parking, time is required to develop a comprehensive solution prior to the removal of this last remaining area of parking. Venues NSW and its sports and hiring partners are very concerned by the proposed legislated removal date that is setting the precinct up for failure. The SCG and SFS are available for the people of NSW, and it simply isn't acceptable that they are not easily accessible for all.

The EIS referred to medium and long-term removal of parking but now the legislation imposes a short-term deadline for removal, and some people are calling for the immediate removal. The goal posts have been moved and Venues NSW and its sports and hiring partners simply ask that they be moved back to their original location to allow for options to be properly worked through.

In relation to the draft Green Travel Plan in your **second question**, a five per cent target has been recommended along the same line of reasoning put forward in the inquiry. Public transport is simply not a viable option for many in the west and south-west of Sydney and regional NSW, where the majority of customers come from. Young families, the elderly, the disabled and those in regions poorly served by public transport will always be reliant on private vehicles and the ability to park in accessible locations regardless of additional transport initiatives.

The status of the Green Travel Plan is that it is in draft, it reflects the input and comments of the CCC, and it is currently before Transport for NSW for input.

The Hon Mark Latham, MLC described a potential scenario during the recent parliamentary enquiry hearing which the sports and Venues NSW both agree would be completely unacceptable:

"So (a family) get the light rail, wait for a train at Central after midnight, change trains probably at Glenfield to get to places like Oran Park and Leppington and Harrington Park, get to Leppington station and then do another 25-minute drive to where they live."

Only last month, the Sydney Sixers versus Sydney Thunder BBL derby drew a crowd of only 18,000 but EP2 and EP3 were full and EQ's multi-storey car park was near capacity. This highlights that it will be young families who will suffer if parking options are reduced without viable alternatives.

With regard to satellite parking options in your **third question**, the draft Event Car Parking Management Plan does propose Randwick Racecourse to manage overflow. As you noted, Randwick Racecourse has been trialled twice and it was also in operation for the recent Ashes Cricket Test when parking at Moore Park reached capacity. It was not taken up on those occasions despite being promoted and it should be noted that this site also has availability limitations.

On your **fourth question**, Venues NSW's commitment to progressively remove all on-grass parking has not changed.

The progressive removal of parking on EP3 by Greater Sydney Parklands is to be in consultation with the major precinct stakeholders subject to the successful development and implementation of precinct-wide transport initiatives. There was no commitment to a date. However, there is now a legislated date that will force the removal of cars before an accessible alternative to EP3 is in place, compromising the precinct. It should be noted that the 31 December 2023 date was only made known when the Bill was tabled in Parliament.

Events at the SCG and SFS are important for NSW. They support an estimated 4000 jobs, and in normal years host over 100 events. The precinct welcomes more than 1.5 million people annually and contributes approximately \$700m in direct and flow-on benefits to the NSW economy.

We acknowledge your concerns and we are actively working to address them.

Yours sincerely

KERRIE MATHER
Chief Executive Officer