

**Submission  
No 302**

## **INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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The Committee Secretary  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 6  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie St Sydney  
NSW 2000

## Inquiry into Crown land

### Submission

#### Focus of this submission

This submission is intended to highlight the serious and continuing erosion of Sydney's parks, most or all of them Crown land. A useful way to appreciate the extent of this loss is to look at aerial photography provided on NSW Land and Property Information's website. The Spatial Information Exchange ("SIX") page permits comparison of recent photography with similar (but black-and-white) photography from 1943.

A series of decisions made by state or local government (rarely Commonwealth) and/or boards of park trustees have taken parkland from Sydney while the population grew from perhaps two million to the present five million. Larger populations need more parkland, not less, especially when they continue to grow as is the case with Sydney. There have been a very few new or expanded parks around Sydney, including some cases of councils buying and demolishing houses and in some cases larger sites such as Sydney Park, St Peters. But on balance the supply of parkland is not keeping up with the growth of population in most of Sydney.

Much of the land lost has been taken by sporting organisations which claim to be performing a desirable community function. A high fence around a sporting ground, however, is no different from a similar fence around private land. Other land has been lost to roads and sometimes railways.

#### Particular parks

##### 1. Moore Park, Surry Hills

- o A substantial slice of Moore Park West was taken for the Eastern Distributor (a road).
- o A notch on each side of Anzac Pde was taken for the rarely-used Tibby Cotter bridge, apparently because the SCG hoped to build a new stadium on Kippax Lake. Fortunately the stadium plan was dropped when nearby residents, concerned at shrinkage of parks, revolted.
- o Parkland is being taken for light rail track.

##### 2. Parramatta Park

- o The four-track railway runs on former parkland, as does busy Park Parade. The golf course land used to be park.
- o The eastern corner of the park was long ago handed to the Parramatta Leagues Club. Fans celebrating the club's premiership win in 1981 started a fire which destroyed the old Cumberland Oval grandstand. The club then wanted to replace the oval by a 40000-seat stadium. Both the local council and the park trustees approved however the project was limited by the Land and Environment Court. Twin grandstands were erected and are now known as Pirtek Stadium. At the time of writing the club is expanding Pirtek to surround what was once a parkland oval. The adjacent Parramatta Swimming Centre (opened 1959) and associated car parks also stand on former parkland. At the south corner, so does Parramatta RSL Club. The swimming centre site will be absorbed by the Pirtek expansion.

##### 3. Harold Park, Glebe - now covered with high-rise residential towers.

##### 4. Barangaroo - a harbourside park is to have a high-rise casino/hotel in it. It is not clear how the patrons will get there. Roads will presumably be needed to carry patrons and supplies to the venue; these roads will require additional land.

##### 5. Wentworth Park, Ultimo - the former oval is surrounded by a 3-metre high wall topped with barbed wire. A grandstand was built inside the wall. It is not clear what will happen if and when greyhound racing is shut down next year.

##### 6. Centennial Park is losing a strip for light rail track.

##### 7. Wimbo Park, Surry Hills - lost to light rail.

##### 8. Ward Park, Surry Hills - losing a notch for a light rail station.

##### 9. Tay Park, Kensington - losing a strip for light rail.

##### 10. King George Park, Rozelle - lost a strip when Victoria Road was widened onto a second Iron Cove bridge.

##### 11. Kirby Park, Gordon - almost swallowed in the widening of Mona Vale Road.

##### 12. Drivers Triangle, Surry Hills was wrecked by a road tunnel portal for the Eastern Distributor.

##### 13. Wiley Park, Wiley Park - lost a swathe between Canterbury Road and Edge Street in the widening of King Georges Road

#### Conclusion

Crown lands need determined protection in the city and suburbs no less than in rural areas.

#### Recommendation

The inquiry should look for strategies to stop or minimise parkland loss.