

**Submission
No 316**

INQUIRY INTO SYDNEY STADIUMS STRATEGY

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Parliamentary Committee into Government spending on Stadiums

To whom it may concern

I am writing to let the NSW Parliament know that I strongly oppose the proposal to knockdown and rebuild two (2) perfectly good stadiums, if the same criteria were applied to all public infrastructure that is being applied for the reasoning behind these knockdowns we would be knocking down the Opera House and the NSW parliamentary buildings, the community and the general electorate is appalled by the misplaced priorities, the shocking waste of public funds my hard earned taxes and my buildings that I have paid for with hard work, and to add to it the whole secrecy surrounding the process.

Some of my main concerns about the Moore Park Site in particular are:

The choice of location: why is the Government creating a major sports and entertainment facility on the edge of a congested city & eastern suburbs with inadequate public transport, when the larger population and demand for such facilities is in Western and South Western Sydney? The amount of traffic already in this area is beyond breaking point. The green lungs of Sydney are being destroyed by over development and overcrowding.

A Misleading proposal: this rebuild is not only about sports – it's about creating a multi-complex entertainment precinct. Again, why is this not located in the centre of population in Western Sydney, where there is a much greater demand and significantly fewer facilities? Who is the lobby group behind pushing for this Stadium to be rebuilt here?

Rushed planning process: Infrastructure NSW has given a timeframe of six months to assess the project. This is an unusually fast determination for a project of this size and complexity. The Government appears to be fast tracking an approval so demolition of the current stadium can occur before the next election. The government is heading for a defeat at the next election so lining the pockets of those supporters before they go seems like a good idea.

The Government's failure to engage in any meaningful community consultation, it seems way too late when we get to a parliamentary enquiry.

The Government's unwillingness to release the strategic business case to justify the proposal, there is no valid reason to knockdown and rebuild a perfectly good stadium, the money can be better spent on education, health and the homeless.

With a benefit-cost ratio of less than one – meaning the project will cost far more than it benefits, there are many other projects the government can be investing in including better public transport, new train routes and facilities, as well as our health care system and support for TAFE and apprentices.

The disruption to the surrounding residential (conservation) areas these areas surrounding the stadium are all worth preserving and being kept on the national heritage register and then there are the parklands which are continually being encroached upon by unrelenting development, demolition, construction and operations, which will not only include sporting events but large music concerts.

Ongoing loss of trees to facilitate an expanded footprint of the new stadium. This area has already lost a lot of the beautiful well established tree canopy which makes the area what it is and draws so many people to the area for the cafes, restaurants and public amenity.

The increased traffic congestion – the combination of the sporting stadia and the widened road to accommodate the Alexandria to Moore Park Connector from St Peters Interchange to Anzac Parade is a recipe for further gridlock. This area on the weekend is already an absolute nightmare when it comes to moving only a few kilometres from home, with a knockdown and rebuild we will be subjected to heavy vehicles coming and going at all hours of the night and day, destroying and polluting our already fragile atmosphere, no more heavy traffic through this area, enough is enough.

The failure of the Sydney Cricket & Sports Ground Trust to maintain the stadium which has led to the current safety and security problems, this is reprehensible and the trust should all be sacked for not taking into consideration a maintenance plan to keep the property in tip top condition, what would happen if the Opera House were left to deteriorate there would be a public outcry like we have never heard before.

The ongoing use of the Moore Parklands for spectator parking is criminal – all parking should be taken off the grass and be restricted already built-on areas, the new light rail which will act as a new mode of transport for people coming to the stadium should be embraced.

The former Sydney Showground needs to be preserved at all costs for much-needed community/amateur sports use (both indoor and outdoor). It is now under threat of privatisation for use as corporate headquarters for the major sporting codes. This is not a private facility, it is public infrastructure for the use of us all.

Please I hope you will consider all these point and see that this stadium knockdown and rebuild is a complete waste of my tax dollar, I want to see my tax used in an efficient and effective way within the community that will benefit the majority and not just a small minority of people who attend a few sporting events throughout the year, there are much higher priorities for the government of the day to be focused upon.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Regards

Glenn Meadley