

**Submission  
No 210**

## **INQUIRY INTO SYDNEY STADIUMS STRATEGY**

**Name:** Ms Claire Bettington

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Stadium Inquiry submission, sent 24-5-2018

Thank you very much for the opportunity to make a submission to the Sydney stadiums strategy. 24-5-2018

**Statement: I AM TOTALLY AGAINST the Sydney Football Stadium Redevelopment, especially if it is paid for with public money.**

If Alan Jones, the Board, the Trust, etc, want to replace a perfectly good functioning Stadium with another one the same size in the same place, they should stump up the money themselves!

There can be no possible justification for spending \$billions of Public Money on such a project, especially when there is a crying need in NSW to upgrade public schools, provide more money to the hospital system and hundreds of other very worthy causes and projects.

If the present Stadium has shortcomings such as the lack of a fire sprinkler system, then INSTALL ONE!!

If the present Stadium has a lack of toilets, build a few more!

If the present Stadium has long queues for food and drink, let people bring their own!

All of the above is NOT rocket science.

And these upgrades would be considerably cheaper than a total rebuild, and would probably be the preferred option if Alan Jones *et al* were actually forking out their own money, don't you think?

I viewed the proposals at one of the drop-in sessions, and noted that there is no provision for a car park, despite the fact that many people would prefer to attend sports events by car. If the Stadium is ever to be filled to capacity, a car park would be an absolute necessity, as there is no way that the Light Rail will ever be able to deliver 45,000 people to a sporting event on time without delays and a lot of queueing and crowding. I realise that many people travel by train to Central and walk the rest of the way to the Sports Stadium and the SCG at the moment. This probably puts some potential sports fans off attending, the result of which is that currently, the Stadium is only ever half full even for major sporting events. So the solution would seem to be construction of a large multi-storey car park.

Yet, as I stated, there is no *stated* plan to construct a car park. This is despite the fact that the Tibby Cotter Bridge was built to link Moore Park East and West in the vicinity of the Stadium and the SCG at great public cost - \$38million – yet seems to have no purpose, even though it is a substantial structure which would allow two lanes of traffic to use it simultaneously. No one believes that it is a “footbridge” – it is wide enough to take cars two abreast, it has no steps so that people can short-cut the large curved ramp ends, and it takes about 20 minutes to walk over it – 20 minutes just to cross the road! The only current use is the occasional cyclist, although it does not link to any cycleways, and a few Mums with strollers. People have long regarded it as a White Elephant.

The only conclusion I can come to is that there is indeed a plan to use Moore Park West as a car park, either for overflow car parking on public space, or a secret plan to take a great deal of Moore Park West and build a multi-storey car park there. If so, I violently object! This is public space which has been slowly whittled away for various purposes over the last century, and it MUST STOP! With the burgeoning population density of Sydney, particularly in this part of Sydney which is in close proximity to recent massive apartment development at Green Square and surrounds, public space is needed more than ever. If anything, we should be creating *more* public space to service the needs of a larger population, not taking public space to build on!

The community's suspicions have been further confirmed by the plan to upgrade the road network so that the WestConnex at Alexandria has an extension to Moore Park, named the "A2MP" (Alexandria to Moore Park) road. Why upgrade a road if the intention is not to have an easy route to the Stadium, the SCG and EQ (the old Show Ground, now the "Entertainment Quarter") for which there are ambitious plans to revitalize it by Gerry Harvey's Company who have the lease? And of course if one is planning a new Stadium and a revamped EQ, one needs a new multi-storey car park to bring in the punters in large numbers. If you are a businessman like Gerry Harvey, it would be wonderful to have this provided for you at public expense.

Notwithstanding the public outcry and backlash caused by the terrible lack of regard shown to our mature Heritage Fig Trees (which form the Anzac Parade "Avenue of Remembrance") during the construction of the Ugly Light Rail, when a great number of Figs were destroyed, the government is determined to forge ahead with the A2MP which will cause the destruction of hundreds more mature figs on Dacey Avenue, South Dowling Street and other locations, to allow for road widening all along the route. People love their mature trees, and for the Government to order yet another "chainsaw massacre" is surely electoral suicide?

What makes you think that this is a good idea? As a taxpayer, I strenuously object to paying for this. I would rather the trees remain to shade our city and keep it beautiful. Have you seen the ugly soullessness of Alison Road where a lovely avenue of mature shade trees were destroyed in 48 hours flat, to be replaced with concrete and a forest of ugly steel poles and numerous overhead wires (why, oh, why aren't those wires underground as they are in the city?). Have you seen Anzac Parade in Kensington and Kingsford which now resembles Parramatta Road, lined with bankrupt businesses? Have you seen Anzac Parade where there are Light Rail works almost all the way from the City to Kingsford? Have you tried to travel along it on public transport – it takes 1½ hours to travel from Maroubra into the City! There has been NO consideration of the "heat island effect" which mature shade trees mitigate; there has been no consideration of Climate Change and emissions – a mature large Fig Tree when alive is a massive carbon storage and carbon sink; it supplies much needed oxygen and absorbs a lot of pollution; when it is wood-chipped and used as mulch this process is reversed as the wood rots and releases a hundred and fifty years of CO<sub>2</sub>.

On the same theme, concrete production is a major source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. There has been no consideration of this either. Imagine how much energy is needed to knock down an entire perfectly functional stadium. Then there is the energy it takes to transport the debris away; more energy will be required to recycle the concrete, or alternatively, a massive amount of landfill space will be required in which to bury it. Then the new concrete will be poured, releasing a huge amount of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere as it sets. All this is TOTALLY UNECESSARY. As a taxpayer, I really object to paying for it too, on emissions alone. Climate Change is real, and we should be avoiding adding to it, not deliberately and unnecessarily adding to it.

I believe the NSW government has also authorized \$billions of taxpayers' money to be spent on a new large stadium to be built in Parramatta. Surely this is where the focus should be? Parramatta is the population centre of Greater Sydney, and has good train connections. Surely this is a "no-brainer"?

If the government is keen to attract large international sporting events to Sydney, this is where they should be – most of the fans live there too. We also have a wonderful sporting complex at Olympic Park, purpose-built for International Sporting events at great Public Expense, only 18 years ago. (Thank goodness sanity has prevailed and the Stadium there is to be retained.) There's no point having it there if it isn't used. Given this context of many suitable alternatives, I fail to see why the Moore Park Stadium should be upgraded at all. It would be better if the Stadium were demolished if it is truly unsafe and unfit for purpose, and the land returned to the people, restored to Public Park in perpetuity, as was intended in 1900. I fear that the disproportionate influence of Alan Jones *et al* has had too much influence on these Stadium decisions.

I have a few other points I wish to make. Any one of these points should be enough on their own to prove that this project is: Not wanted; not needed; not suitable; very wasteful; and will be seen as using taxpayers' money as a favour to the government's "mates" (ie corrupt):

- The process is being fast-tracked to facilitate the stadium's demolition ahead of the next state election;
- The cost benefit analysis indicates a ratio less than 1:1. This should have seen the project declined.

- Unbelievably, there has been no detailed business case released!
- The “A2MP” road upgrades to bring traffic from Westconnex to Moore Park will only serve to induce more traffic thereby causing further traffic chaos.
- The research shows that the new light rail won’t have sufficient capacity to absorb the plans for a mega entertainment precinct.
- The environmental impact of a ‘knockdown’ option vs the stadium’s refurbishment is substantial.

Yours sincerely,  
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