

**Submission  
No 211**

## **INQUIRY INTO SYDNEY STADIUMS STRATEGY**

**Name:** Ms Robyn Evans

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Dear Public Works Committee Members

As a resident of North Parramatta, the loss of our War Memorial Pool without any consultation still fills me with anger, great sadness and loss. It's demolition was such a waste of public funds and facilities. I feel it was an arrogant abuse of power because the NSW government could get away with it by conveniently first putting their Parramatta Council administrator in place. They then rubber stamped and railroaded through their plans for the stadium and demolition of our pool without consultation.

Parramatta Park belongs to the people of western Sydney yet the NSW Government decided they could just have the residents of Parramatta rebuild and fund the majority of the cost to the replace the pool and in the process take another large section of open space that was not theirs but Parramatta Park Trust land, our land. They would never have tried a similar project by taking over acres of Centennial Park in the eastern suburbs of Sydney yet they did it without conscience and consultation to Parramatta.

The NSW government demolished our pool that had a rare diving pool and have offered less than half the cost of replacing it. Most of the money they have offered will be spent on retaining walls etc because it is on the side of a hill, not flat land. The diving pool will not be replaced. The residents of Parramatta need to fund the other \$40 million to replace the wonderful facilities we had already paid for. I suspect rates will need to increase and other sporting facilities throughout the city will not be funded or suffer reduced funding.

The pool will not be complete for another 3 or so years all being well. It is half a generation of time from when the pool was demolished until it can be replaced. The children of our city who were toddlers and ready to learn to swim when the pool was demolished will be close to high school before the pool is replaced. All those years of lost swimming opportunities and somewhere to relax as a family. The temporary pool at Macarthur Girls High has not yet eventuated.

Personally I used the pool twice a week all year. Sunday afternoons, I often shared the pool with migrant adults learning to swim. Again we will have years of lost swimming opportunities for our Parramatta migrant populations. I have not swum since the night our pool was closed, I miss it. My two pre-school grandchildren have to drive to the Hills Shire for swimming lessons. We no longer have summer evenings as a family cooling down at our local pool. Like most residents of Parramatta we live in townhouses and units and do not have a pool at home.

I attended large public meetings at Burnside Public school and in the Square at Parramatta asking for the government to pause and look at the possibility of moving the stadium north west a short distance in order to permit the stadium and pool to coexist. Architects prepared plans demonstrating this option. Our requests to look at this option were ignored.

Personally I have not been into a stadium since the Sydney 2000 Olympics, I do not attend football so feel very ripped off that a facility that many citizens and workers enjoyed was deemed less important than the interests of the stadium. I run in Parramatta Park and feel doubly ripped off that extra open space is going to be annexed for the new pool to be built.

I still find the arrogance and processes of the Parramatta stadium decisions amazing.

Why did they think it was OK to take a City's pool?

Why did they think it OK to put the major burden of rebuilding the pool facility they took on the city of Parramatta?

Why did they think it was OK to take the public land owned by the residents of western Sydney from the Parramatta Park Trust?

Why did they think it was OK to not consult or only select to consult with those that would agree with them?

Why did they think it was Ok to take a recreational facility and important learning to swim facility away from the high migrant and dense living population of Parramatta?

Why did they think it was OK to demolish the pool in haste and replace it sometime in 5 or so years?

Yes I am sad, disillusioned and dreading the return of stadium parking invading our street and parking up on our footpaths seeing it is so much bigger and better than the stadium that was usually not full that they demolished!

thank-you for your work, please ensure this does not happen to another community.

Robyn Evans