

**Submission
No 34**

**INQUIRY INTO GREATER SYDNEY PARKLANDS TRUST
BILL 2021**

Organisation: Hawkesbury Environment Network

Date Received: 12 January 2022



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12th January 2022

Submission to Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021

The mission of the Hawkesbury Environment Network (HEN) is to conserve the natural environment of the Hawkesbury region. We work to promote sustainable natural resource management practices which reduce human impacts on our ecosystems and the native species they support.

We are very concerned with the loss of so much our natural Cumberland Plain Woodlands. Much of the undeveloped land that was formerly purchased to create a green belt has been dramatically altered for the worst by piecemeal development since the 1970's. The creation of the Western Sydney Parklands has resulted in the accelerated loss of bushland. Already 4.9 square kilometres of public land has been commercialised and is in private hands. Thus, we **strongly oppose the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021.**

The Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021 will further weaken protections for open greenspaces in Western Sydney. **The Bill in its present form fails to:**

1. Require community consultation.

Thus, preventing stakeholders from having a say in their local environment. Local councils in consultation with ratepayers and residents must be involved in deciding the future of the Parklands. Too much power is now concentrated in the hands of the minister and the unelected Trust members.

2. Prevent the further loss of public land.

So much parkland has been commercialised to create high-density suburbs, industrial estates, high rise hotels, shooting ranges, transport infrastructure, corporate adventure parks and zoos. This Bill does nothing to prevent the further privatisation of public land. Leasing of parkland should be for short terms of no more than 10 years.

3. Require Guaranteed Government funding.

The value of the open green spaces of the parklands to the well-being of the people of Western Sydney should be acknowledged through an adequate funding mechanism. It should not require the parklands to be self-funded. This only accelerates the destruction of the last remnants of the Cumberland Plain Woodlands.

The parklands should be managed as natural green places which do not need to be covered in kilometres of concrete paths.

Yours sincerely,