

**Submission
No 48**

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

Name: Ms Bronwen Geering

Date Received: 13 January 2022

I am a NSW citizen concerned with the provision of green open space for the inhabitants of the Greater Sydney area. I have a particular interest in Callan Park which is my local park and has provided me with physical and emotional well being for more than forty years.

My basic concern is that there is no specific guarantee for funding beyond "facilitating business activities and facilities within the GSP/T estate". I believe that public parks should be funded from Treasury as an essential common good like schools and hospitals. The pandemic has emphasised the public health benefits of open public green space. The allowance of long leases leaves the parks open to commercial exploitation, the effective commercialisation of public assets.

There is a lack of reference to the primacy of the Heritage Act. All the parks have important and complex heritage issues which need to be given priority in their management.

The suggested governance of the GSP causes concern to local communities. Callan Park, for instance, only still exists because of concerted community action over many years. Each park serves a different community and has a different character and range of problems to be addressed. The local communities should have more input than a hand picked "community consultation committee" that has no real power and can be overridden or dismissed by the board or the minister. There is too much power in the hands of the minister who is, after all, one individual. I agree with proposals by community groups and MPs, including the Member for Balmain, that there should be separate trusts set up to manage each of these iconic parks.