

**Submission  
No 80**

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

**Organisation:** Paddington Darlinghurst Community Group

**Date Received:** 16 January 2022

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**Paddington-Darlinghurst Community Group** (covering parking permit area 15)

Convenor Will Mrongovius,

Sunday 16 January 2022

To Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021

Chair- Robert Borsak

Dear Robert and other members of the Select Committee,

**Re Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021.**

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed Bill.

Our members agree with the stated ambitions of;

- ensuring the protection of the parklands
- encouraging the enjoyment of the parklands by the community
- increased and improved community consultation to ensure parklands respond to community needs.

Unfortunately we do not believe that the current Bill does anywhere near enough to ensure that these ambitions can be realised.

Attached is our original submission to Minister Rob Stokes dated 21 October 2021.

We would welcome your support in having further amendments included that would align with the stated ambitions of the proposed Bill.

In particular we ask that you consider the following suggestions from our Community members.

**1. Protection for Centennial and Moore Parklands**

The Bill makes carparking on the grass at Upper Kippax Lake in Moore Park illegal. This is in line with the Moore Park Masterplan 2040 and will be the first stage in the Greater Sydney Parklands strategy to remove parking for events on the grass all together over the long term

Amendments passed in the Legislative Assembly have provided some improved protections for Moore Park. These should have been a basic minimum in any draft Act and must be retained. Moore Park has the potential to be much more than a grassed temporary car park and any new Parks law must make this a reality.

We ask that amendments to be included to ensure;

- (a) On grass carparking illegal in Lower Kippax lake area effective when the first stage of the new Stadium carpark is completed – we understand this to be in August 2022.
- (b) On grass carparking illegal in the remainder of Moore Park East when the second and larger stage of the new underground carpark at the new stadium is completed- we believe this to be at the end of 2023.

The inclusion of specific timeframes is the only guarantee the Community will have that event parking on the grass will be removed.

This is crucial . The proposed 1,500-space car park at the New Stadium must not be allowed to actually increase the supply of car parking available to events in this area.

## **2. Amendments already accepted**

We understand that the Legislative Assembly has already accepted the following Amendments;

- No unsolicited proposals on GSP land. Achieved through a requirement for every lease, and every licence that is over 10 years, to be subject to an open tender process;
- A limit of 50 years for all leases on Centennial Park and Moore Park land (this overturned the change in 2012 that increased leases to 99 years);  
We believe this is still too long- see point 3 below
- A mandatory community trustee board for each GSP estate (eg one for Centennial Parklands, one for Callan Park etc) – the bill originally allowed for just one across the whole GSP estate;
- The bill originally had new wording for the granting of leases on GSP land which said it had to “directly or indirectly” help the trust achieve its objectives. Removal of the words “indirectly or directly” so there is now just a requirement to achieve the trust’s objectives; and
- Allowing the MP or their delegate to attend community trustee board meetings.

Our Community Group fully supports all these Amendments but considers that the following Amendments should also be included in the Bill.

### **3. 50 year leases to be replaced by 10 year leases**

The lease provisions in the Bill allow for effective privatisation of lands and buildings within the five foundation parklands. There should be a general cap on any lease of no more than 10 years.

We have all seen how public lands allegedly managed by “Trusts” are lost forever when long leases are given. Examples are Fox Studios and the Entertainment Quarter.

**This should never be repeated.**

### **4. Amendments to provide real Community involvement and consultation.**

#### **(a) Mandatory Community Trustee Boards**

The community trustee boards in the Act are essentially advisory bodies at the mercy of the GSPT board who appoint the members and can dismiss members or dissolve boards without grounds.

Local control and local engagement have proven crucial for the protection of public open space for the last century. Breaking this link with local communities is part of a broader attack on the ability of local communities to have a say in their neighbourhood and local environment.

The proper alternative is to restore or create Trusts for each of the parklands with accountable local representatives on the Trust boards.

#### **(b) Ensure local Councils are involved in planning & park management**

Councils provide the relevant controls to exclude activities that would or could have negative effects on the parkland, or are incompatible with Council Plans - LEPs, DCPs - which have been developed in consultation with ratepayers and residents.

Ensuring consent via the local council is necessary because it provides some assurance the voice of the local community will be heard.

#### **(c) The Bill specifies no deadline for the implementation of a Community consultation and engagement framework.**

As we stated in our submission dated 21 October 2021

“It is absurd that a consultation and engagement framework is to be completed within 2 years of commencement of the Trust.

What happens during those two years and how does the Community know what will finally be approved by the Minister?

The Bill must provide guarantees that any form of Community consultation is real and does empower the community.

Our experience with the current Centennial Parklands Community Consultative Committee (CCC) is one of complete disappointment

This CCC does;

- **Not** consult, nor engage or seek community involvement
- Does **not** provide details of meeting Agendas and Minutes-
- **not** provide a mailing list to keep interested members of the Community involved in the actions of the CCC”

The development of this framework is urgent.

### **Summary**

Our members ask that the Select Committee is forceful in ensuring that the Bill, as amended , does truly ensure that the stated ambitions are realised.

We thank you for your efforts

Yours Faithfully

Will Mrongovius