

**Submission
No 87**

INQUIRY INTO GREATER SYDNEY PARKLANDS TRUST BILL 2021

Organisation: Sydney Football Club Pty Ltd (Sydney FC)

Date Received: 14 January 2022



13 January 2022

Select Committee on the
Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Select Committee Members,

Re: Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021

Sydney Football Club Pty Limited (Sydney FC) are the most successful football club in Australian history and have been a proud tenant of the Moore Park precinct for seventeen (17) years (since the Club's inception). The Sydney faithful refer to the Sydney Football Stadium (SFS) as our fortress and are elated to be returning home to a world class stadium in late 2022 after four (4) years displaced.

The Moore Park precinct has always been an anchor point for our Members and fans who enjoy its centrality, and quality event experience. Through our tenancy at the Sydney Cricket Ground, as part of our displacement period stadia circuit, Sydney FC have experienced firsthand the efficiencies created through previous amalgamations of government entities namely the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust and the former Venues NSW to the Venues NSW of today and understand the requirement for new governance legislation to be formulated in response to such changes.

In the case of the amalgamation of the parklands across Greater Sydney and subsequent *Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021*, Sydney FC request the Select Committee ensure that the *Bill* has no unintended consequences for the Members and fans of Sydney FC and football more generally who represent individuals from across our great city and its surrounding areas.

As you are aware, the *Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021* in its current iteration makes parking on grass at Upper Kippax Lake (EP2) in Moore Park illegal, while also prohibiting parking on grass throughout Moore Park East from 31 December 2023.

Sydney FC are supportive of the phased removal of car parking from greenspace, as per the Moore Park Masterplan 2040, beginning with Upper Kippax but emphasise it is crucially important to our many thousands of fans who reside from Palm Beach to Kiama or may take a day trip from regional NSW, that there is no net loss of parking capacity in the broader Moore Park precinct. The prohibition of on grass parking on the lower Kippax area (EP3) from 31 December 2023 results in a 43% reduction of available car parks immediately adjacent to the stadium with no feasible public transport and equivalent car parking solution formulated to rectify the inaccessibility issue this action causes.

Research conducted has shown that 61% of Sydney FC fans rank having a car park/s close to the stadium as an important factor when determining whether to attend a Sydney FC match. Further research conducted and published in the SFS Redevelopment Transport Assessment reiterates that Sydney FC fans utilise driver/passenger as their mode of choice vastly outweighing the uptake of all other transport options offered. Sydney FC acknowledges that the private vehicle usage rate may decrease slightly with the light rail system operating in a non-COVID impacted environment however our experience during displacement has shown despite relocating to a stadium which is closer to direct public transport options, most Sydney FC fans still prefer to drive to our matches.

The high use of private vehicle transport correlates with the composition of our fans and public transport versus private vehicle travel time to the SFS from their homes. Our Sydney FC supporter base is largely made up of young families who among others preference private transport. The weighty preference to private vehicle usage for young families is linked to it being quicker, easier and perceived to be safer for their family than catching multiple modes of public transport, particularly when our matches have late evening kick offs. The current



event day parking in the Moore Park precinct, EP2 and EP3 is within close proximity to both the Sydney Cricket Ground and the SFS creating convenient access options for families with small children including those with prams. The implementation of family friendly spaces in and around the precinct should encourage even more families to attend Sydney FC and sporting matches more generally at the SFS therefore making car parking for this high use group a high priority and must-have inclusion in the redeveloped SFS plans.

The narrative exemplifying the importance of car parking is also evident when talking to fans that live a considerable distance from the SFS such as a Sydney FC member/s residing in Dee Why. For many of our northern beaches members it can take over 1 hour 25 minutes and a minimum of two buses to attend a 5.35pm Sydney FC match at the SFS on a Saturday afternoon. The same trip undertaken by the same member residing in Dee Why takes on average 40 minutes by private vehicle. A reduction of car parking in the Moore Park precinct and within close proximity to the SFS is a major deterrent when the alternative public transport travel time is double to what a fan would usually endure.

Greater Sydney Parklands may point to the Venues NSW underground car park and shared community and outdoor recreation project as the solution for car parking in the Moore Park precinct however this infrastructure merely reinstates the off-grass car parking originally on Venues NSW land, commonly referred to MP1, which was disrupted by the SFS development, and provides a like for like capacity solution for the on grass car parking situated adjacent to the SFS site – upper Kippax or EP2 which Sydney FC through the vehicle of Alliance of Moore Park Sports (AMPS) have already agreed to no longer use as event day parking once this project is delivered. It does not account for the 43% loss of available car parks the Moore Park precinct would endure if car parking on EP3 is to also be removed without a mutually beneficial and practical solution being formulated and delivered in totality beforehand.

Sydney FC request the Select Committee move to remove from the *Bill* any reference to parking on Moore Park East greenspace being an offence or prohibited activity to ensure no unintended consequence/s and/or detrimental impact to the operation of the Moore Park stadia and event day experience occurs.

Sydney FC is committed to actively working with Government, Transport for NSW, parkland authorities, the Entertainment Quarter and the local community to ensure that any future vision for Greater Sydney Parklands is complimentary to the effective utilisation and accessibility of the NSW Government's two world-class stadiums and aids the development of a world class precinct which delivers mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders. Sydney FC believe a mutually beneficial solution can be obtained through considered, consultative discussions between all entities and should not be constrained and/or spearheaded through parameters dictated by a *Bill* that is intended to provide governance direction for a newly formed entity.

Sydney FC thank the Select Committee for your consideration of our request and look forward to working with the Greater Sydney Parklands to build a world class precinct in Moore Park that services all parts of our great city.

Kind regards,

Danny Townsend
Chief Executive Officer
Sydney FC