

**Submission
No 145**

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

Name: Ms Marijke Leermakers

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My mother worked at Callan Park in the 1950s. She was incredibly young and naive at the time and it was an incredibly traumatic experience for her and led to future mental health issues. She introduced me to Callan Park and told me her stories. With respect to those who were admitted to, or incarcerated in Callan Park, and to those who worked there (and their families) I request that the Park remain a place of peace and relaxation for the local communities and visitors to enjoy and respect. It should remain in public hands and its history and beautiful natural grounds protected for generations to come.

It is disgraceful that this government is seeking to devise ways to draw a profit from public parks by opening the gates to corporate profit seekers rather than investing in expanding and improving the parks for people and fauna.

I am not aware of any key stakeholders, apart from the Greater Sydney Parklands agency, who have been pressing to increase commercialisation of public parks.

I note and support the strong concerns and opposition to this bill voiced by the Inner West Council, the Friends of Callan Park, the Alliance for Public Parklands and other community and stakeholder groups.

We need legislation that aims to protect and safeguard these parklands from all sides of politics for future generations. Any reserve power in the Minister should be subject to the principles and objects of the Bill and subject to a veto power by a local park authority with a super-majority.

I recognise that the amendments made by the Member for Balmain in the Legislative Assembly have removed some of the worst impacts in regards to Callan Park, I am still concerned that this Bill will permit unnecessary commercial activity on Sydney's parklands and effectively privatise large parts to the potential exclusion of some community members. Commercialisation will also lead to the potential harm and/or destruction of our flora and fauna caused by habitat destruction to make way for profit seeking activities.