

Submission  
No 148

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 16 January 2022

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank the Select Committee on the Inquiry into the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021 for the opportunity to comment on this Bill. You have my permission to publish this submission in full on the website but with my name removed.

Beyond doubt and like its forerunners (*50-year Vision Plan*, *White Paper*, its *Report – What we heard*, and the various management plans; e.g. Fernhill), the legislation is cleverly written in an open-ended manner that appears attractive when read casually. Upon critical review, however, its meanings, even without considering intent, is duplicitous, obscure, and deceiving. The GSPT Bill 2021 (second print) is not sound legislation. I urge this Inquiry Committee not to recommend the Bill for legislation.

Some key points regarding this Bill:

- its Objects misconstrue the inherent purpose of public parklands – free, easily accessible, and restful green open space – and has the potential to cater for specific interests, which could be accommodated by private facilities, and exclude access by the public
- it provides no long-term vision, other than flexibility to meet any future activation or accommodate influences by specific interest parties
- the specified structure of the GSPT removes its direction and management of parklands from public input and scrutiny
- it promulgates a cookie cutter approach to development of each unique parkland under the guise of efficiency (for which there is no provision of review)
- it provides alienation of parklands, particularly under the purpose of non-government funding, while growing parklands by acquisition of crown lands and private lands
- it is wanting in certain appropriate checks and balances (example below)

By way of example, the Bill states “the Trust may acquire land by agreement”. This could occur between government agencies (NPWS, local Councils, reserves, etc.). Yet the Bill as it reads could also permit consolidation of existing Associated Trusts within the into the GSPT into a single, GSP Trust, negating the need for all but a single Community Trustee Board.

Since enactment of the Western Sydney Parklands Act 2006 No. 92, and its associated Plans of Management, that govern the “lungs of Sydney,” the stated 2% limit activation of land for business purposes has been exceeded significantly, and perhaps by as much as 10%.<sup>[1]</sup> Yet this ‘model’ is touted as a highly successful example of funding a public parkland. Deficient in its Annual Reports, the WSP Trust has not been held accountable.

This Bill does not adequately provide what the public has expressed it wants and has major flaws in its construct.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Ridgeway, P.A. 2021. *A Wide & Open Land*. p. 57. Also, figure stated by Member for Blacktown in a public forum and from publicly available figures calculated manually.