

**Submission
No 123**

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

Name: Mr Jonathan Scott

Date Received: 15 January 2022

To the committee,

I have been a resident of Rozelle for 25 years. My children were born here, grew up here & still live here. We all consider ourselves members of the local community & treasure what public facilities we can access in the local area. And probably the most important part of this community is Callan Park.

Living in an area where there is such a shortage of open public space, Callan Park is an oasis where the community can visit & share this wonderful open space with everybody without any fear of encroaching on individual areas within the park that private business have exclusive rights.

The many different public uses of the park has shows how important it is not to allow areas to be craved off for private uses. Having my family grow up locally & participate in many wonderful community organizations in Callan Park proves this point. While my children grow up, they participated in the local football club, the local cricket club & little athletics to name a few. Callan Park is crucial to these activities.

As well as the community sporting organisations, we as a family have used the park for picnics, birthday parties, play dates, learning how to drive, fishing, exercising, book clubs and the list goes on.

As long as I can remember, governments of all parties have been trying to find a way to restrict the public's access to this amazing community amenity. One of the main roles of state government is to provide universal access to public amenity & unfortunately these spaces are slowly becoming smaller & disappearing under the pressure of private enterprise. Governments also see that giving over exclusive access to public lands to business will reduce their exposure to the financial responsibilities for looking area these areas.

The local community has battled hard many times in recent history for stop the short sided view of politicians & the influence of lobbyists to get their hands on the public asset. And I fear that the local community will have to battle hard again to convince politicians & bureaucrats how important this amazing space is.

The importance of leaving Callan Park to the public has never been more obvious than what has been happening for the past two years. The ability to safely go outside & enjoy the open space during the Covid-19 pandemic has been irreplaceable. Knowing that you can de-stress in a safe socially distanced environment has been a god send & giving away exclusive rights to private businesses in this space would put that at risk. Remember the park is a public amenity that once areas are craved off to private stakeholders, they can be gone for 50 years. Madness!!!

The local community has put up with a lot over the last decade. Promised public transport facilities that were canceled, the ongoing saga with White Bay power station, the international passenger terminal with all its noise & pollution and of course WestConnex. The long term disruption to the community has been profound & will continue for many years to come.

There are also other important things concerning Callan Park such as Mental Health facilities & not to forget the amazing historical values that government should be considering. Both colonial & indigenous.

Let's hope that this short sighted Bill is treated with the lack of respect it deserves & governments present and future consider want public assets like this can provide for the community not private enterprise.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jonathan Scott
Proud local resident