

**ITEM 3.1 MOORE PARK COMMUNITY ACTION****FILE NO: S051491****MINUTE BY THE LORD MAYOR**To Council:

In September 2017, Council endorsed my Lord Mayoral Minute highlighting new threats to Moore Park. Since that time, the NSW Government has announced that more than \$2 billion will be spent on stadium upgrades – including the knockdown and rebuild of Allianz Stadium.

The upgrade also coincides with plans to redevelop the Entertainment Quarter and expand car parks and a proposal to build a direct highway from WestConnex to Moore Park. The Alexandria to Moore Park Connector includes a “continuous flow intersection” at Anzac Parade which will have 12 lanes of traffic and carves off parkland and threatens more mature trees. Pedestrians will have to wait at five sets of lights to cross it.

It also comes at a time when leases for the Hordern Pavilion and the Royal Hall of Industries are up for tender.

There is no doubt that this is fast becoming the most direct assault on Moore Park that we have seen in decades.

The Government’s announcement was delivered without a business case and without any public consultation. Reports suggest the benefit-cost ratio of knocking down these stadia and rebuilding is well below one – meaning it will cost far more than it will ever deliver in benefits.

Their blatant disregard for the most basic principles of proper planning and financial management is negligent and shocking.

Claims that Allianz can’t be refurbished are questionable, given just 18 months ago the Government announced that it could be refurbished to meet safety standards at less than a quarter of the current price tag.

And while other development is required to comply with planning legislation and environmental assessment, Sydney Cricket Ground Trust legislation ‘switches off’ the application of the NSW Planning Act to Trust land, exempting the Trust from any transparent or independent process. Instead, the Sports Minister can ‘self-approve’ development and only needs to ‘consult’ with the Planning Minister and Public Works Minister.

Given the community’s serious concerns about the lack of transparency and the Sports Minister’s advocacy for this project, it is not appropriate that he self-approves the project. If the project goes ahead, it must be independently and impartially assessed.

Unsurprisingly, the Government is facing a massive backlash.

Not only has it failed to outline the impacts of their decision, the Government has failed to answer why they want to spend close to a billion dollars on a stadium that is rarely full when what NSW desperately needs is more community sporting grounds, public transport and schools.

Limited public funds for sports facilities should not be focussed on show-case stadia that underwrite private business interests, but should support grass-roots sporting clubs that build the health and well-being of children, youth and local communities.

The NSW Office of Sport's website indicates community sports make a \$10 billion contribution to our Gross State Product each year, have 500,000 volunteers and employ 30,000 people. Almost 5 million people are involved in community sport and active recreation in NSW.

The cost to meet 522 urgently required community sport projects across greater Sydney and the State is \$2.6 billion – a remarkably similar amount of money to the amount they want to waste upgrading two stadiums.

In just a few days, over 140,000 people signed former Wallaby and SMH Columnist Peter Fitzsimons's petition to the Premier to reconsider the wasteful spending on the stadiums and instead fund community sports.

And Councillors at Randwick and Waverley Councils have contacted me to say that they want to work with us, State and Federal representatives and the communities in all our areas to encourage the Government to reverse their decision.

Each Council will soon consider Motions that call for a moratorium on the rebuilding of Allianz Stadium and the cancerous Alexandria to Moore Park road widening project, unless they are based on a proper planning and consultation process. Councillors at Woollahra Council are also looking at a similar Motion.

I believe we should all work together to protect Moore Park. Twenty million people visit the Centennial and Moore Parklands annually, while just two million attend Allianz stadium and the SCG. The needs of the majority must be prioritised.

We should be improving and expanding open space not further eroding it – three out of every four people in the City of Sydney live in an apartment and Moore Park is our city's backyard.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the State Government's failure to engage in meaningful community consultation and its unwillingness to commission and/or release the relevant strategic business cases;
- (B) agree to collaborate with neighbouring councils, as well as State and Federal representatives, to work together in order to effect an immediate moratorium on the progression of the following proposals:
  - (i) the demolition and construction of a new stadium at Moore Park and encroachment and expansion into Moore Park open and green space at an anticipated cost to taxpayers of \$705 million; and

- (ii) the Alexandria to Moore Park road widening - the Roads and Maritime Services' (RMS) 'preliminary concept design' for the Alexandria to Moore Park Connectivity Upgrade includes the redesign of the Anzac Parade, Dacey Avenue and Alison Road intersection. Estimated to cost \$500 million, the continuous flow intersection will be the largest non-motorway intersection in NSW, bringing thousands of more cars into the area and likely resulting in more compulsory parkland acquisitions and the loss of a further 100 trees and greater traffic congestion into our local government areas;
- (C) call for a moratorium on the proposals to remain in place until, in consultation with the affected councils and the community, each of the above proposals are fully and adequately assessed for their impact on:
  - (i) open public green space, trees and heritage;
  - (ii) the implications on Driver Avenue and Kippax Lake and the implications on our ANZAC memorial;
  - (iii) local traffic congestion and carparking facilities and flow on impact into the City of Sydney and on our local communities;
  - (iv) public transport capacity;
  - (v) community amenities, especially those located in the surrounding parklands of Moore Park and Centennial Park parklands;
  - (vi) the long-term effect of further commercialisation of public land; and
  - (vii) any other issues that may impact on the area's character, amenity and sustainability;
- (D) call on the NSW Upper House to hold an Inquiry into the proposals, specifically focusing on the appropriateness of the NSW Department of Planning decision-making processes with regard to long-held community standards of transparency and accountability of the use of public monies; and
- (E) call on the newly elected Local Government NSW leadership team to campaign for the funds set aside for the stadium rebuild to instead be used for public community infrastructure, including hospitals, education, community sport and other public assets, and to do this in partnership with councils, community groups and local sporting clubs across NSW.

**COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE**

Lord Mayor