

# NEWS FROM THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS AUTHORITY

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No 17

**The views expressed here are the views of Gunta Groves and not the Adelaide Park Lands Authority Board**

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The meeting at 5.30pm on 26 May was a 'Special' Board meeting because it was an extra one convened to consider agenda items that could not be managed in the normal schedule. The only apology was Lord Mayor Stephen Yarwood who is overseas. The Deputy Presiding Officer, Mary Marsland, took charge.

Kathleen Patitsas, a teacher, artist and city resident, had requested to be heard on matters to do with Victoria Park. However, because it was a 'Special' meeting and because Councillors on the Board were concerned that she might raise issues that were sub judice (a criminal action has been brought against the ACC by an individual over the remnant vegetation in Victoria Park), her request was denied by a majority vote of Board members.

## CURRENT MAIN ISSUES

### Adelaide Oval redevelopment

Item 4: 'Executive Officer Verbal Report' was brought forward so that the Acting ACC CEO Michael Sedgman could give the Board an update on the Adelaide Oval issue and go on to another meeting. This update followed the report by Martin Cook that the Stadium Management Authority (SMA) thought it could fit in a briefing of the Board members on 21 June. Mr Sedgman described all the meetings that the Council has had and its resolutions, and the contacts it has had with government over the issues of the redevelopment of the Adelaide Oval and, in particular, the Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Bill 2011.

The latest resolutions of the Council, arrived at on 19 May, in relation to the Adelaide Oval Redevelopment [2010/01825] [C] were that:

1. *The Acting Lord Mayor write to Minister Conlon outlining Council's policy position having regard to its initial assessment of the Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Bill 2011.*
2. *The Council's position is:*
  1. *Council continues to actively support the redevelopment of the Adelaide Oval and football and cricket being played there.*
  2. *Council must retain the care and control of the Park Lands.*
  3. *Council will provide a lease to the Minister for the Adelaide Oval core area for up to 80 years.*
  4. *Council will grant a licence to ensure the provision of a maximum of 1450 car parking spaces subject to sustainability within defined areas of the Adelaide Oval Licensed area for events at the Oval and at no other times.*
3. ... [contains requests for ACC staff to address certain matters]
4. *Council authorises the CEO and Acting Lord Mayor to put the resolved Council position to the Opposition and Independents.*
5. *Council instructs the administration to prepare a media strategy to explain and communicate Council's position to the public.*

6. *In accordance with Section 91(7) & (9) of the Local Government Act 1999 and on the grounds that Item 5 listed on the Agenda for the Special meeting of the Adelaide City Council held on 19 May 2011 was received, discussed and considered in confidence pursuant to Section 90(3) (b) (d) and (h) of the Local Government Act 1999, this Special meeting of the Adelaide City Council, do order that:*

- (a) the resolution [excluding paragraph 3], the report, the discussion and any other associated information submitted to this meeting and the Minutes of this meeting in relation to the matter remain confidential and not available for public inspection until 3.30pm on 23rd May 2011;*
- (b) the Chief Executive Officer be delegated the authority to review and revoke all or part of the order herein and directed to present a report containing the Item for which the confidentiality order has been revoked.*

A press release was made on 23 May, hence the confidentiality provision in resolution 6(a) above. Further action by the ACC has been to engage two public relations firms (Rann Communication and Hughes Public Relations) to help to get its message out to the public.

Discussion by APLA Board members focused necessarily on the Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Bill 2011 as presented to the Lower House recently. The Bill is for an Act to facilitate the redevelopment of Adelaide Oval, to provide for the future care, control and management of the Oval and its precinct; and to provide the Adelaide Oval Stadium Management Authority Ltd (the SMA) with the ability to do what it likes in the Oval and precinct. These are Park Lands bounded by King William Street, War Memorial Drive, Montefiore Hill Road and Pennington Terrace, together with Pinky Flat. Land leased or licensed to Memorial Drive Tennis Club Inc, Next Generation Clubs Australia Pty Ltd and the South Australian Tennis Assoc Inc is excluded. Under this Bill, the following Acts will not operate in this 'Core Area' and 'License Area':

- *Adelaide Park Lands Act 2005*
- *Development Act 1993*
- *Local Government Act 1999*
- *Roads (Opening and Closing) Act 1991* (regarding closure of Victor Richardson Road).

Neither will the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy operate in the designated area.

What all this means is that there will be:

- no public consultation on any aspect of the major works in the designated area
- no scrutiny by Parliament of the 80 year lease of the designated area, including any right to an extension or renewal
- no involvement of the Adelaide City Council in the care, control and management of the designated area
- no income to the ACC from car parking in the area

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- no compensation, either to SA Cricket Assoc or ACC, for the cancellation of SACA's lease of the Adelaide Oval expiring in 2044.

The 'Minister' (who I assume is Patrick Conlon, the current Minister for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, though this is not stated in the Bill) will be the person making all the final decisions regarding the leases, licences and development in the designated area.

Strong rumours exist that the area below Light's statue will be terraced to accommodate car parking, and the areas now used temporarily and occasionally will all be 'landscaped' to accommodate more cars every week (and possibly more often, depending on events the SMA runs), rain or shine. This 'landscaping' will consist of large earth works, tree removal, road construction, and weatherproofing car parking. In addition, the Oval footprint is to be extended into Creswell Garden and Pennington Gardens West and, of course, south towards the River Torrens. Grandstands will be put on Oval Number 2 together with a cricket pitch nursery for the drop-in pitches, and any number of developments like the AFL teams' social clubs for their members.

Of course, the Bill is unnecessary because the current provisions for negotiating licences and leases are perfectly adequate for the situation. And the redevelopment, as described in the media and the Bill, is unnecessary because the latest upgrade of the Oval by SACA is perfectly adequate to cope with AFL crowds. Football could be played in the city under the current arrangements and with the current facilities.

Authority Board members discussed the issues with a passion and at length. I moved a resolution, which was improved by an amendment by Jane Chapman, to make APLA's position clear. The following motion was supported by the majority of Board members present, the dissenting members being the Hon Frank Blevins and Ms Mary Marsland:

*The Adelaide Park Lands Authority advises the Government of South Australia that:*

1. *The Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Bill 2011 is unwarranted and unconscionable, and should be withdrawn as the purpose of this legislation is to permit unfettered commercial development to the detriment of the Park Lands; and*
2. *The Authority supports the Adelaide City Council in its statutory right to remain the custodians and managers of the whole of Park 26.*

On that motion being successfully supported, I further moved, with an amendment by Jane Chapman, that:

*APLA's Executive Officer:*

1. *Writes to the Premier immediately, informing him of the Board's motion, with copies sent to the Lord Mayor, Councillors and ACC CEO; and*
2. *Concurrently, puts out a media release informing the public of APLA's position, namely that the Authority opposes the Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Bill 2011 and not the oval redevelopment per se.*

The letter was delivered on Friday 27 May, and the media release will go out on Monday 30 May. There will be a Council meeting on 31 May at which, no doubt, there will be further deliberations concerning its position on the Bill.

Mary Marsland asked that the APLA Board be kept informed of all the information available about the Adelaide Oval redevelopment issues.

### **University of Adelaide building consolidation**

Item 2 on the agenda was a proposal by the University of Adelaide to consolidate some of the facilities in Warnpangga (Park 10) and Karrawirra (Park 12). The university has a licence over these parks for sports use and leases the buildings for use as change rooms and grandstands. It proposes demolishing four change room/toilet buildings and replacing them with one that has a slightly larger ground footprint than the other four together (378m<sup>2</sup> for the new building, compared with 352m<sup>2</sup> for the old four buildings together). The building would be located on the site of the current 'Graduates Change Room' and has a university budget allocation of \$3m.

In discussion, Board members were appreciative of the fact that four buildings would be consolidated into one and that the ground footprint and the height of the new building was being sensitively managed. One unfortunate aspect is that two trees, an elm and a peppercorn, will have to be removed. However, the university has promised to plant three new trees nearby.

The Board endorsed the recommendation to Council, which in summary said:

- the nominated four buildings could be demolished
- the new structure, with some alterations suggested by Council's Design Team, could be built in the location described
- two trees could be removed
- the new building was to be used as a supporting facility for outdoor sport and recreation, and not for non-sporting related functions
- the university should replace a sub-standard maintenance shed to the rear of the Park 12 grandstand, to Council's satisfaction
- signage installed by the university should comply with the Council's current signage suite.

### **Marketing of the Park Lands**

Some market research has been done on the branding concept presented to the Board in February 2011. The research was reported to confirm that the brand concept was generally supported but that elements needed refining.

The market research consisted of interviewing 18 regular Park Land users in two focus groups: 'About Towners' (living within 5km of the city and leading active social lives), and 'Social Mainstreamers' (living within 5km of the city, between 25 and 55 years old, more family oriented, and able to afford to go out to more selective events). Dr Anne Sharp did not agree with the method used and doubted the validity of the conclusions reached. She thought that the focus groups should have consisted of people not regularly visiting the Park Lands, because these were the people that needed to be convinced to come to the Park Lands.

I wondered why the focus groups did not include over 55s, and how one could come to conclusions on the basis of 18 people's opinions. In particular, it was reported that the tag line 'Adelaide's breathing space' was not favoured, whereas when it was presented to the Board in February it was unanimously endorsed.

The content of the dedicated Park Lands website and the pocket guide is being developed, and progress on the marketing plan will be reported to the Board in August.

### **Adelaide Park Lands Landscape Master Plan**

This Landscape Master Plan will be formally approved by the Council on Tuesday 31 May, according to the Monthly Report.