

NEWS FROM THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS AUTHORITY

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No 24

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

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BETWEEN MEETINGS

Last Board meeting, the question of how Adelaide High School was going to be allowed to expand was discussed and the Board recommended to State Government and Council that the expansion should be within the existing footprint of the school and not take any more of the Park Lands. The expansion was discussed subsequently on 21 November on ABC 891 Adelaide radio by Ian Henschke and commentators who included Ross Treadwell from the Education Department, David Pisoni from the Liberal Party, and Kathleen Patitsas from the Adelaide Park Lands Preservation Assoc. During the broadcast, Ross Treadwell said that Council and the APLA Board had been involved in discussions, without revealing that the Board had recommended that the proposed expansion onto the Park Lands should not go ahead—an interesting omission, I thought.

A Special Meeting of the APLA Board was held on 24 November to consider an item that was deemed to be confidential. So I can't tell you anything about it because the majority of Board members agreed to the need for confidentiality.

The Council had a Special Meeting on 1 December to agree to the final form of the 80-year licence (20 years plus three renewals of 20 years each) for the Licence Area around Adelaide Oval (north and west of the Oval). This licence came into effect on 1 December, as required by the State Government. The final negotiations resulted in the following amendments:

- If the licensee (ie the State Government) wants to engage in works not expressly covered by the current Management Plan, the licensee must ask for Council approval or ask for a change to the Management Plan.
- The permitted uses are only those detailed in the *Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Act 2011*.
- The public retains the right to access the Licence Area, and the ability to use the area under a sub-licence, with fees charged being commensurate with those charged by Council.
- The licensee must maintain the Licence Area to a standard that is equivalent to adjacent Park Lands.
- The Licence Area is recognised as being Park Lands.
- The licensee is responsible for any contamination caused.

Previously, the 80-year lease over the Core Area of the Adelaide Oval had come into effect on 17 November. Neither the lease nor the licence earns the Adelaide City Council anything.

CURRENT MAIN ISSUES

The whole APLA Board met on 1 December 2011.

Plantings in the Park Lands

Councillor Tony Williamson had a question on notice regarding the Board's policy on unauthorised plantings in the Park Lands. Martin Cook will provide information on this at the next Board meeting.

Adelaide Park Lands Funding Model

Maintaining and enhancing the 608ha of the Adelaide Park Lands under the care and control of the ACC is a costly exercise. Most of the resources are provided by the ACC (for 2010–11, approximately \$21.2m), with a small additional amount supplied by the State Government (for 2010–11, I estimated about \$3.3m). The Park Lands Management Strategy and the Park Lands 10 Year Action Plan will both present funding challenges under the current funding model.

Martin Cook presented a report on the recurrent and enhancement costs together with draft policy principles for a more sustainable funding model. This funding model included:

- the concept of deriving additional funding of necessary maintenance costs from 'partnerships' with users of the Park Lands
- supplementary enhancement funding from special uses of the Park Lands such as car parking
- establishment of a foundation that has Deductible Gift Recipient status.

Board members discussed the various implications of the funding model proposed and, in an aside, expressed their concerns about the unknown amount of built form and hard surfaces occupying the Park Lands already. Mary Marsland and Anne Sharp asked for a mapping exercise to be undertaken to establish the current percentage of built form and hard surfaces so that we can all discuss, more intelligently, what amount of building and hard surface might be too much. According to the 1999 management strategy, approximately 4 per cent of the Park Lands were covered by built form. However, as recently as 8 November, according to the Presiding Member's Report given at the beginning of the Board meeting, a Council Committee endorsed an upgrade of CBC courts in Tuttangga (Park 17) involving artificial (ie non-permeable) surfaces and lighting towers for a multi-use facility, which will have associated landscaping using more hard surfaces in the form of paving.

The major concern of Board members regarding the proposed funding model was the introduction of a foundation into the mix. From previous research that Martin Cook had done, it was evident that the only workable model for obtaining philanthropic funding was the 'Independent Trust Model'. This has to be set up as an independent foundation (a trust) whose principle purpose has to be the protection of the natural environment of the Park Lands. It has to have its own management committee, bank account, and a capability to administer the requisite auditing and reporting. It has to demonstrate that it actively seeks donations. It brings with it the need to recognise contributors appropriately when that sort of request is made.

An example of such a foundation is the Centennial Parklands Foundation in Sydney. Its Board of Governors meets quarterly. The foundation's mission is to foster commitment to the Centennial Parklands and has raised money to replace ageing and ailing trees, to introduce water saving initiatives through

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use of pond water and collected rainwater for irrigation, to reduce pest species such as European Carp, to restore threatened flora species, to develop education tools and resources for school excursions, and to provide accredited training for young people working on environment and heritage projects.

Such objectives and achievements would sit well with a foundation set up for the Adelaide Park Lands. However, the costs of setting up and running the foundation are unknown and this was a major concern of Mary Marsland. As well, the amount of money that could be raised and the expertise and effort needed to achieve it are also not known. These unknowns were the main reason why Board members elected not to endorse the recommendation to Council (as published on page 10 of the agenda papers) but to make a separate recommendation that Administration staff prepares a report on the costs and benefits of setting up an independent foundation. Not only will the Board members be better able to make a decision regarding the proposed foundation but the ACC Administration will also have more information about the support and resources that might be expected of the ACC in a funding model that includes an independent foundation.

Park Lands Community Land Management Plan

The process of renewing the Park Lands Community Land Management Plans (CLMPs) has started. The new version suggested consists of one document, the CLMP, covering framework information common to all parks in the first chapter and followed by individual chapters of management details and desired characteristics for specific parks and groups of parks.

The CLMP is a management document that gives guidance to Park Lands users; lessees/licensees; asset managers, horticulture staff, event managers and other Council staff; and the general public. Its new format is intended to make it:

- more useable and relevant
- less detailed to improve community understanding and Council decision making
- reduce duplication of information available in other ACC policy, plan and management documents
- through reduction of duplication, ensure consistency with Commonwealth and State legislation.

Board members were assured that no information from existing CLMPs would be lost. Each chapter covering a park or a group of parks will provide:

- contextual map/s
- management directions for the area based on a Desired Future Character Statement
- background on issues, consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy, such as heritage, landscape, recreation and natural systems
- map/s of existing leases and licences
- electronic links to other information sources.

An example given of a group of parks suitable for covering in one chapter was Tuttangga (Park 17), Wita Wirra (Park 18) and Pityarrilla (Park 19). This group is seen to have common uses, issues or character.

The process for developing the individual chapters of the CLMP will consist of:

- writing the draft using existing information, site visits and internal discussion
- internal and external consultation on the draft chapter
- report to the APLA Board and the Council
- public consultation for four weeks
- report on consultation results to the APLA Board and the Council, seeking endorsement of final draft.

The CLMP framework chapter and chapters for Kurrangga (Park 20) and Walyo Yerta (Park 21) were provided to Board members for endorsement.

I was less concerned with the contents of these chapters as with the new format. From my reading of the information in the agenda papers, I got the impression that I would need to not only read the individual chapter on a park but also then go to several electronic links or get hard copy of other documents in order to achieve the same level of information as in the old CLMPs. Instead of having one document to read, I would need to refer to at least five, including:

- the CLMP itself
- the Cultural Landscape Assessment Study
- the Park Lands 10 Year Action Plan
- Asset Management Plans
- the Integrated Movement Strategy.

I would be using my time and my resources to hunt up information from a variety of sources, instead of having it all in one document. For me this would not be an improvement in 'useability and relevance'.

However, my colleagues did not see it this way and voted to recommend to Council that the Board endorses the approach taken, the CLMP framework chapter, and the chapters on Kurrangga (Park 20) and Walyo Yerta (Park 21). The Board also agreed to delegate authority to the CEO to make editorial changes to the CLMP chapters without materially affecting their content. On the face of it, this last part of the recommendation seems innocuous but I wonder who will judge whether a change is material or not, and which professional editor will be engaged to make the changes. I didn't get a chance to tease out this one. I was one against nine, so it was no contest, and the recommendation went ahead in full.

As a forewarning, watch out for the Tarndanya Womma (Park 26) (Adelaide Oval area) CLMP chapter. According to the schedule in the agenda papers, this will come up towards the end of the whole review process unless 'matters of urgency arise'. The current CLMP is the relevant one for the *Adelaide Oval Redevelopment and Management Act 2011*. The CLMP can be amended, replaced or revoked only with the agreement of the Minister for Infrastructure. It would be nice to think that the CLMP could be left as is but it refers to now irrelevant management documents, does not take into account the closure of Victor Richardson Road, relates to the Adelaide Oval Core Area which will be redeveloped, and areas on the southern bank of the Torrens which will be subsumed in a Riverbank Precinct plan. Writing the CLMP chapter on this part of the Park Lands will be a most challenging task.

Meeting schedule for 2012

The Board agreed to meet at 5pm in the Colonel Light Room on the following dates in 2012:

30 January
16 February
8 March
12 April
10 May
14 June
12 July
9 August
13 September
11 October
8 November
13 December

And then it will be Christmas once again. Merry Christmas for 2011, and a Happy New Year to all my readers!