



Adelaide Park Lands Association

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Parliamentary Officer
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Parliamentary Inquiry into the Urban Forest

I acknowledge that the Committee is concerned with tree canopy within the entire metropolitan area, but this submission will be concerned solely with the world-unique Adelaide Park Lands. No other city in the world is built entirely within a Park. The Adelaide Park Lands are on the National Heritage register.

State Heritage listing was recommended by the State Heritage Council on 6 December 2018. Despite the lapse of more than four years, State Heritage listing of the Adelaide Park Lands still has not yet been actioned by the State Government. During this time, the Park Lands (including their tree canopy) have continued to come under regular attack, usually from State Government agencies seeking building sites at the expense of open, green public spaces and their trees.

If the Committee believes that it's important to stop destruction of Adelaide's urban forest canopy, then at the very least, it should challenge the State Government over its existing (lack of) policies towards the Park Lands and their trees. The Committee should urge the State Government to re-think its plans to attack hundreds of Park Lands trees. New public buildings can and should be located on re-purposed brownfield sites, which would offer opportunities to increase tree plantings around the new buildings; rather than targeting Park Land sites, containing many mature trees.

Imagine the outcry in New York, if Central Park were to be diminished by new public or private buildings. One of the largest cities in the world is careful to preserve its iconic Park and the tree canopy within that Park. When new building sites are required for the public of New York, they are found within the City, not within its Central Park.

In contrast, sections of the world-unique Adelaide Park are regularly sacrificed for new buildings, as executive Government seems to attach little or no value to the open, green, public spaces that garland Adelaide. Agencies seem incapable of the vision required to repurpose alternative, sometimes-neglected near-city brownfield sites. Park Lands losses are cumulative and are rarely reversed.

The Adelaide Park Lands Association urges the Environment, Resources and Development Committee to consider in its report, the lack of legislative protection for the Adelaide Park Lands and their trees. The Committee has an opportunity to recommend an immediate cessation of hostilities; and creation of new strengthened legislative protection for the Park Lands.

Yours sincerely

Shane Sody, President

13 February 2023

Recent examples of State Government attacks on Adelaide Park Lands and their trees.

Kate Cocks Park (Park 27)

The State Government is proposing to destroy a forest of about 15 swamp she-oaks and 38 olive trees in Kate Cocks Park, to make way for an eight-storey car park, to be adjacent to the proposed new Womens and Children's Hospital.¹



Denise Norton Park / Pardipardinyilla (Park 2)

The State Government is proposing to destroy dozens of decades-old trees with an \$82 million Aquatic Centre in this Park, despite overwhelming public demand for an alternative brownfield site (such as in Thebarton or Hindmarsh) with better public transport connections. Choosing a brownfield site would rejuvenate the chosen area and allow a full restoration of Park 2, with a net addition of tree canopy in that Park, and surrounding a new Aquatic Centre on a brownfield site.²



Frome Park / Nellie Raminyemmerin Park (Park 11)

Construction has already begun on an extension of Botanic High School, which will now encroach further into this Park, threatening trees adjacent to the existing school buildings. No brownfield site was contemplated for this school extension.³



Police mounted unit relocation

Legislation passed in November 2022 allows the Police Minister to confiscate Park Lands for new SA Police facilities.⁴ At the time of writing, no preferred site had been announced, but legislation allows the Police Minister unfettered discretion in relation to the Park Lands and their trees.



1 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/car-park>

2 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/new-aquatic>

3 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/botanic-high-school-expansion>

4 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/police-mounted-unit>