



Adelaide Park Lands Association

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NEWS RELEASE

Thursday showdown for Government's Aquatic Centre Park attack 98% feedback support for Park Lands Petition exceeds 7,000 signatures

The State Government's apparent determination to ignore its own community will be tested on Thursday afternoon, when Kadaltilla / Park Lands Authority looks at the feedback to a proposed huge new construction project on your Open Green Public Adelaide Park Lands.

The Authority has been presented with a staff recommendation to ignore or dismiss the concerns of 98% of respondents to the City Council's own consultation process.

At the same time, a petition calling on the State Government to choose an alternative brownfields site for a new Aquatic Centre has soared past 7,000 signatures.

The City Council was legally obliged to seek community feedback on a proposed 42-year lease of a massive three hectares of Park Lands for the State Government's proposed two-storey \$135 million megalith Aquatic and Commercial centre.

The Council's bare-minimum consultation was not widely advertised. Many concerned residents were not aware of it until after the three-week consultation had already closed on 3 August. There were only 280 respondents but of those, 97.9% urged the Council NOT to lease Park Lands to the State Government, and push instead for a brownfield site.

At the same time, a separate petition to protect this part of your Park Lands and choose a brownfield site for a new Aquatic Centre has been gathering more and more support; now including over 7,000 signatures.

Kadaltilla / Park Lands Authority is meeting from 4.30pm on Thursday 24 August. It will make a recommendation to the next meeting of the City Council on 12 September.

President of the Adelaide Park Lands Association, Shane Sody says:

"If local government consultation is to have any meaning or purpose at all, it is hard to imagine how the Authority could reject feedback that is so overwhelming.

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“The Authority now has a duty to recommend that the Council and State Government pursue a different plan; as the community is demanding. They must recommend pursuing an alternative brownfield site, and get a win-win for swimmers, trees, wildlife, and your Park Lands.

“The State Government’s current plans are deeply unpopular, because they break three of the Government’s own promises,” Mr Sody said.

- “a promise to consult on an Aquatic Centre site (the Government started off on the wrong foot, by insisting that only Park Lands would be targeted);
- “a promise to protect Adelaide’s tree canopy (on the Government’s own figures, their plans would destroy 15 “regulated” trees and seven “significant” trees along with many others); and
- “a promise to keep the old Aquatic Centre open while a new one was being constructed.

“In addition, despite increasing demand for soccer venues in the wake of the FIFA Women’s World Cup, current Government plans would destroy two existing soccer fields in Denise Norton Park / Pardiparsinyilla (Park 2).

“Your Adelaide Park Lands are listed on the National Heritage Register. This is a national issue. This campaign has **the support of the Australian Heritage Council chair, former Victorian Premier, Ted Baillieu**, and many petition signatures have come from interstate.

“The State Government is purchasing 524 properties to upgrade South Road,” Mr Sody said. “But it’s been unwilling to consider purchasing any brownfield site for a new Aquatic centre.

“The Government claims that the new Centre would be no larger than the old centre and would therefore represent no net loss of Park Lands. That argument ignores the loss of wildlife habitat. It’s also a win-lose strategy; rejecting the possibility of a three hectare win-win Park Lands restoration opportunity, and rejecting these 7,000 petition signatures.

“If the State Government Loved Your Park Lands then it would be looking for a win-win, not a win-lose” Mr Sody said.

Contact: Shane Sody, President
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Mr Sody will be available for interview outside the Town Hall at 4.00pm, prior to the 4.30pm meeting of Kadaltilla / Park Lands Authority, or earlier by arrangement.

See the petition here: **<https://www.change.org/p/save-these-trees-choose-a-brownfield-site-for-new-aquatic-centre>**

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