

Adelaide Park Lands Association

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National Park City Foundation
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Dear National Park City Foundation

Re: Application from Adelaide, South Australia

The Government of South Australia has commenced the process of applying to have the greater metropolitan area of Adelaide recognised as a National Park City.

I would welcome Adelaide being recognised as a National Park City. However, paradoxically, the purpose of this letter is to urge you to reject this application, on the basis that the Government of South Australia has an anti-Parks agenda. It is actively working against the principles of the Universal Charter for National Park Cities ("the Charter"). Large scale developments promoted by the South Australian Government are regularly reducing the Open Green Public spaces of the Adelaide Park Lands and replacing public Parks with large new buildings.

The Charter urges communities to "make cities greener". The Charter urges communities to work together for:

- better relationships with nature,
- better wildlife, trees and flowers;
- better places, habitats, air, water, sea and land.

Relevant assessment criteria for National Park Cities include a city being:

- a place, vision and community that aims to be greener, healthier and wilder;
- supported by appropriate government authorities through consent, investment and/or partnership; and
- supported by meaningful policies to protect, increase and enhance nature, culture, heritage, the environment and public space in your urban area.

The application from the South Australian Government must be marked down on each of these criteria. Its actions have made (and will make) Adelaide less green, less wild. Its authorities are investing not in Parks but in buildings that replace Parks. The South Australian Government has no effective policies to protect the Open Green Public spaces of the Adelaide Park Lands.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au

In just the past five years its various agencies have either approved, permitted, or taken steps towards re-zoning open public spaces within the Adelaide Park Lands to allow construction of:

- two hotels;
- a seven-storey high school;
- a 27-storey office tower and retail complex;
- a new hospital;
- a multi-storey car park, and
- a 15,000 seat sports or entertainment stadium.

Information about the Adelaide Park Lands is provided at Attachment 1.

Details, imagery and links to further information about each of the recent and planned Park Lands alienations are provided at Attachment 2.

Information about the Adelaide Park Lands Association is provided at Attachment 3.

In short, the Government of South Australia is chipping away, undermining the world-unique, National Heritage-listed Adelaide Park Lands.

I urge the National Park City Foundation not to offer an imprimatur or endorsement to this ongoing relentless process of diminishing Adelaide's greatest asset.

I urge the National Park City Foundation to insist that recognition as a National Park City can occur only when the South Australian Government takes meaningful steps to stop continual plunder of the Park Lands by its own agencies and put in place enduring legal protection for this irreplaceable green asset.

Yours sincerely



Shane Sody
President

16 August 2021

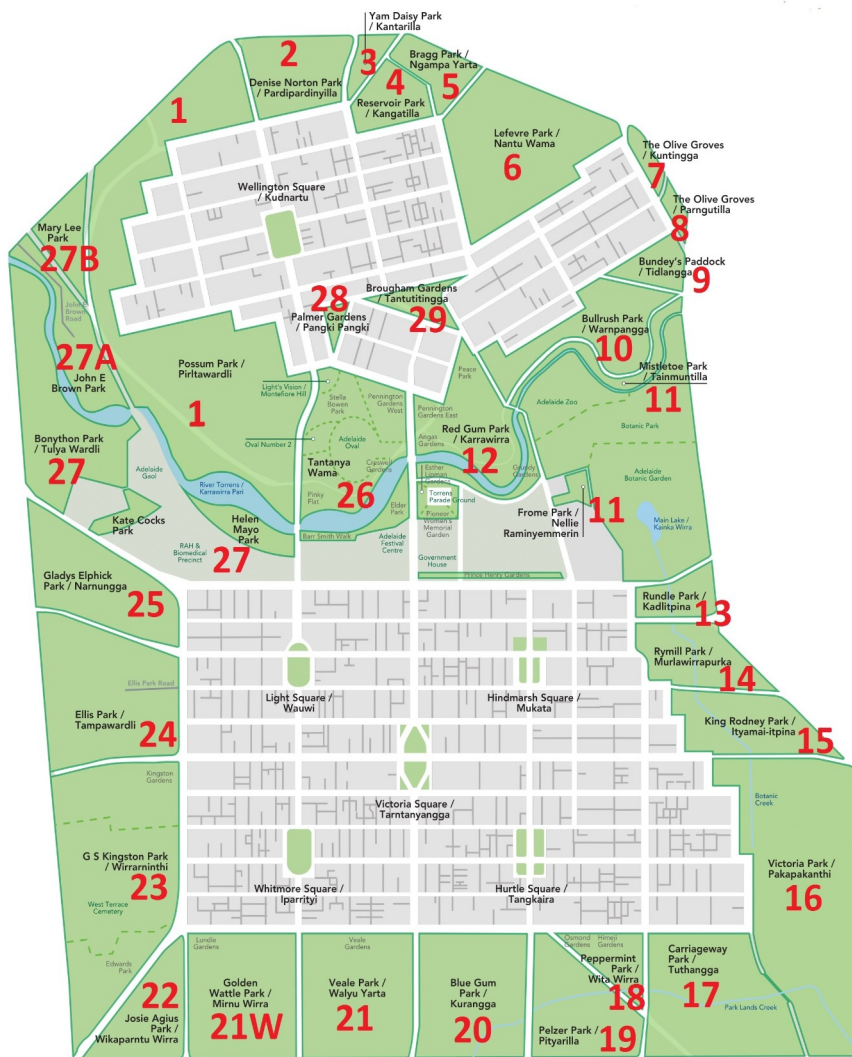
Attachments

1. Significance of the Adelaide Park Lands
2. Recent Open Public Space losses
3. The Adelaide Park Lands Association

ATTACHMENT 1

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS

The Adelaide Park Lands garland the CBD and North Adelaide in a figure-8 loop. The Adelaide Park Lands are world-unique. Their historic significance is recognised by Australian National Heritage listing (since 2008)¹ and potential UNSECO World Heritage listing, being investigated by the City of Adelaide and others.² Adelaide is the world's only city built inside a Park.



This unique resource gives Adelaide an advantage that no other city in the world can match.

During summer heat waves the Adelaide Park Lands effectively lower the temperature in the CBD³ and also reduce electricity consumption in CBD buildings, especially those located close to the Park Lands.⁴

Over 184 years, the Adelaide Park Lands have been subjected to hundreds of accumulated losses.⁵

The rate of attrition has accelerated within the past decade.⁶

1 <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/adelaide-parklands>

2 <https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/messenger/city/adelaides-tourism-would-rise-up-to-30-per-cent-if-parklands-were-world-heritage-listed-report-says/news-story/bc678f8dcff306b48e6d2e64195df5c9>

3 Guan et al "Effective surface areas for optimal correlations between surface brightness and air temperatures in an urban environment" *Journal of Applied Remote Sensing* Vol. 9, 2015

4 Guan et al "Response of office building electricity consumption to urban weather in Adelaide, South Australia" (2014) *Urban Climate* 10 (2014) pp 42-55

5 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/open-green-public>

6 <https://www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/current-issues>

ATTACHMENT 2

RECENT OPEN PUBLIC SPACE LOSSES

These projects supported or enabled by the Government of South Australia (over only the past five years) have each resulted (or will soon result) in built encroachments on the Adelaide Park Lands.

The former Festival Plaza

An open public space (albeit not green) within Park 26 has been privatised by the Walker Corporation for a 27-level office tower and retail complex.

Under construction in 2021.



Adelaide Casino Hotel

An extension of the Adelaide casino onto an adjacent part of the former Festival Plaza. Construction now complete.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/festival-plaza



Adelaide Oval Hotel

An area of Park 26 previously devoted only to sport now also includes a 140-room private hotel.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/oval-hotel



Botanic High School

A 7-storey building constructed on Park 11.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/high-school



15,000 seat stadium

Announced in March 2021 for construction in 2023, on Park 27.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/stadium



Womens and Children’s Hospital

Announced in March 2021 for construction in 2022, on this part of Park 27.

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/wch



Multi-storey car park

Announced in July 2021 for construction in 2022 on Park 27

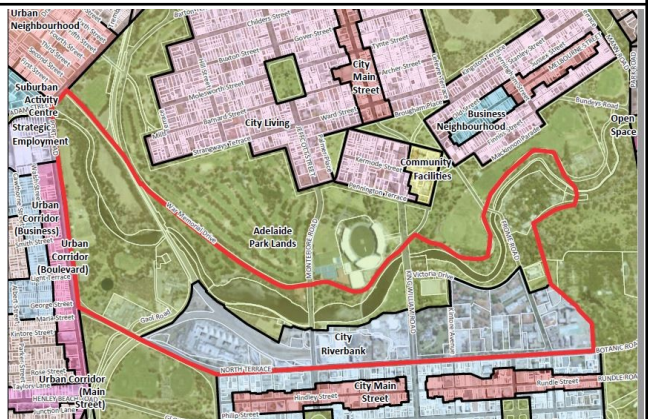
www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/car-park



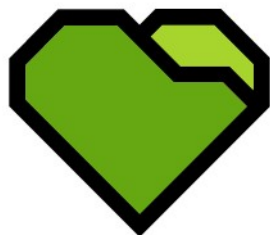
“Riverbank precinct”

Current proposal to change planning rules in all of the red-outlined area to reflect Government policy, to transform these Park Lands into a “health, entertainment and cultural boulevard”

www.adelaide-parklands.asn.au/rezoning



ATTACHMENT 3



Adelaide Park Lands Association

Our Association was founded in 1987⁷ as a non-profit community based organisation - a ‘watchdog’ to guard Adelaide’s greatest treasure: the world-unique, National Heritage-listed Adelaide Park Lands. But we are much more than a watchdog. We:

EXPLORE – conducting regular Guided Walks and publishing Trail Guides;

INSPIRE – with a daily photo, regular videos, and a biennial Adelaide Park Lands Art Prize;

PROTECT – campaigning to prevent a never-ending stream of built-form encroachments;

RESTORE – working with other community groups to clean up and re-green where possible.

As an incorporated body our Vision Objectives are enshrined in our Constitution:

VISION

The Adelaide Park Lands Association is committed to a vision of preserving and, where possible, restoring the Adelaide Park Lands as the pre-eminent green open space precincts, surrounding the City of Adelaide, to continue providing the public with freely accessible areas for open-air recreation and environmental benefit.

OBJECTIVES

The Objectives of the Association are to ensure that:

- 1) the Park Lands are reserved as a place for public recreation, leisure and enjoyment;
- 2) the public, so far as practicable, has free and unrestricted access to and use of the Park Lands;
- 3) the Park Lands are preserved and maintained to give priority to biodiversity, including gardens, grassland, water, wetlands, trees and other vegetation rather than buildings, fences or artificial surfaces;
- 4) alienated areas of the Park Lands are restored to Park Lands
- 5) the open space character of the Park Lands as a place dividing the City of Adelaide from the suburbs is preserved;
- 6) the Park Lands are preserved and maintained in a manner that enhances their special place in the design of the City of Adelaide;
- 7) the amenity of the Park Lands is not impaired by inappropriate development on Park Lands;
- 8) the Park Lands are included and maintained on State, National and World Heritage lists.

⁷ Until April 2021, the Association was named: “Adelaide Park Lands Preservation Association”