



23 May 2023

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary,

RE: Preservation of Inner-City Green Space Parkland - Raymond Park

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architecture (AILA) is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture. AILA champions quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities, and greater environmental stewardship. With our members, we anticipate and develop a leading position on issues of concern in the industry.

AILA supports the Queensland Government's plans to deliver a climate-positive summer Olympics and applauds the vision for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to leave a legacy. We believe that leaving a legacy will unite communities and foster long-term benefits. But it is important to hold all impacts of the Olympic Games to account and ensure all actions are in keeping with these visions.

AILA is concerned about the proposal to develop Raymond Park into a temporary warm-up athletics facility of the Gabba hosting athletics during the games. We also believe that the current plans to rebuild the stadium for the Olympics will have serious long-term consequences for the community, including significant implications for access to community facilities, green open spaces and shady parklands near Brisbane's CBD.

The agenda for the 2032 Olympics is to be one that is sustainable with facilities that provide an ongoing legacy. *"Our focus has never been on a few weeks of competition. It must be on decades' worth of investment that will set up Queensland for the next 20 years"* Annastacia Palaszczuk, Courier Mail, 23/02/2022.

Please find attached Appendix 1, with further information and evidence, particularly around the 2032 Olympic games legacy objectives, to support the below proposals and recommendations from AILA.

AILA proposes that an alternative venue for the warm-up facility be considered as recommended by the IOC, to ensure no loss of green public open space and community facilities. AILA also proposes that any developments associated with the Olympics in Brisbane and statewide do not result in the loss of green public open space, natural shade, public access as well as no increase in ambient temperature. Constructing a world class facility with the embellishments required as a temporary measure, is not a sustainable solution and would not be a positive legacy outcome for Brisbane.

It is understood that along with this option the proposal for the Gabba is to demolish the existing stadium, rebuild it to include athletics and then decommission the athletics facility post games and return the Gabba back to cricket and AFL, where it serves in its current capacity. In a climate where people are struggling with the cost of living, and rising inflation rates, the cost of building a temporary facility on top of the \$2.7 billion stadium cost, will have a lasting negative economic impact on Queenslanders.

While the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Brisbane and an opportunity to leave a legacy for our city and state, we believe that such a large project as

stadium reconstruction will have long-term implications for our community's future and requires careful consideration.

According to the IOC and government messaging in providing a sustainable 2032 Olympic Games, there are a number of alternative options for an Olympic warm-up athletics facility that would provide more positive legacy outcomes for SEQ/Brisbane.

- **Option 1:** Locate the athletics facility at Carrara as recommended by the IOC in the 2021 Olympic bid. It is worth noting that, following the Commonwealth Games, the Gold Coast and its surroundings have a plethora of suitable world-class facilities.
- **Option 2:** Locate the athletics facility at Queensland Sport and Athletic Centre (QSAC) where there is an existing stadium and adjacent warm up track, allowing for quick and safe transition for the athletes between warm up and game events, without disruption to residents. This is located only 10kms from the CBD.
- **Option 3:** Locate the athletics facility in Albion as originally proposed
- We would welcome any further opportunities to discuss this project. Please contact Melanie West, AILA Queensland Chapter Manager on 0417 666 622 or melanie.west@aila.org.au

Yours sincerely,



Tessa Leggo
Queensland Chapter President
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

APPENDIX 1:

Further information and evidence to support the AILA recommendations for the Gabba and Warm Up Facility for the 2032 Olympics

1. The Surrounding Neighbourhood and Context

The suburbs surrounding the Gabba and Raymond Park, namely Kangaroo Point, East Brisbane and Woolloongabba have one of the highest residential population densities in Queensland. The planning provisions around this precinct allow for a number of high-density residential unit blocks, to which Raymond Park provides an important green public open space to service the community.

This area is already under-served in terms of meeting its Desired Standards of Service for public open space provision, and as the population grows, it will become increasingly important to protect the green space, shade trees, and all existing (frequently used) park facilities.

As more families move into these apartment buildings, amenities like large grassy kickabouts, cool shady trees, dog off leash parks, playgrounds, basketball courts, and exercise equipment become increasingly important places for people to play. Raymond Park's facilities are well used and highly valued by the community. Furthermore, the park serves as a vital pedestrian thoroughfare and link between Sinclair Street, Wellington Road, and Baines Street. In terms of the environment, the grassy spaces serve as a natural detention basin during heavy rainfall events, and the grass and large shady trees help to reduce the heat island effect in a dense urban environment.

2. Proposed Warm up Athletic Track

The Track and Field Facilities Manual 2019 - Construction requirement for a warm-up facility include a "Category 1 construction for competition facilities", ranging from tracks to spectator stands.

The physical location of warm up track - preferably, within the same sports complex, can be adjacent to the competition facility, however, there is no maximum limit in distance set. If a facility is being considered for a major international event, the location and standard of the warm-up facilities will be assessed by the relevant governing body.

An athletics warm up facility meeting the Track and Field Facilities Manual 2019 requirements will see the hard surfacing of a green open space, with embellishments including sealed track and field facilities, spectator grandstands, changerooms, flood lighting, parking, bus turnaround and circulation pathways. The facility will also be fenced off to the public.

It is likely the construction will take a minimum of 12 months, with the games being a period of 6 weeks, during which the athletics warm-up facility location will be inaccessible to the public.

3. Impacts of Proposed Warm up Athletic Facility

If constructed at Raymond Park, the proposed athletics track will see **the loss of** (minimum):

- The existing dog off leash facility (highly utilised)
- The existing playground (highly utilised)
- The existing BBQ and picnic facilities (highly utilised)
- A number of large shade fig and palm trees (as well as other trees that provide shade to existing embellishments)
- The existing outdoor exercise gym area (highly utilised)
- The existing basketball court (highly utilised)
- A number of homes through compulsory acquisition. (some homes are character homes, which have long-term residents).

- Public green open space to a fenced off hardscape facility, which is located within a high-density residential area (highly utilised and valued)
- Public access and thoroughfare (highly utilised)
- An important walking and cycling commuter pathway network and connector (highly utilised)
- The existing heritage WWII air raid shelter.

4. Negative Impacts to the Community and Neighborhood

There will be a number of significant negative impacts on the community and surrounding area including:

- Net loss of green open space and parkland, resulting in a deficit of parkland within a dense residential area
- Light pollution, or artificial light at night as a result of the required flood lighting in close proximity to surrounding residence
- The removal of public access due to new fencing restricting important pedestrian and bicycle active transport and commuter thoroughfare
- Traffic impacts during a minimum 12-month construction phase and during the games period (The local area is already congested with slower speeds, longer trip times and increased vehicular queuing. Baines street, Sinclair Street and Rosina Street are relatively small residential streets).
- Noise and dust impacts to the surrounding residences during construction and games period (as a minimum)
- Increase of heat island effect to the neighbourhood due to significant hard landscapes and additional built form as well as the removal of trees and green open space. This park is currently used by elderly people who sit on the park benches under the trees.
- The loss of an existing strong neighbourhood sense of community and wellbeing. The 'sense of place' for the area will be dramatically changed.
- The loss of access to the streets and neighborhoods during the 5-6 weeks of games, as there will likely be restricted access between a warm-up facility and a main stadium (hence why they are usually located adjacent to each other)

5. Alternative Options

No precedent of such a facility in such close proximity to residential houses has been found to date from previous Olympic events. Large-scale sporting facilities are usually located in larger open spaces where there is little impact to communities or at least a significant buffer can be provided. The warmup track proposal is incongruous with the surrounding residential fabric and the space required will not provide sufficient buffering to residential homes. Furthermore, a high population of residents will likely be impacted by restricted access routes for the competitors during the games.

AILA proposes that an alternative venue be considered as recommended by the IOC, to ensure no loss of green public open space and community facilities.

Whilst the warmup track may be considered "temporary" the loss of mature trees, green space and park facilities, resumption of character residential houses and displacement of families is a permanent loss and cannot be reinstated. Constructing a world class facility with the embellishments required as a temporary measure is not a sustainable solution and would not be a positive legacy outcome for Brisbane.

The extensive construction period, the games period, the decommissioning and removal of the facility and substructures would mean that there would be multiple years whereby this location would not be publicly accessible, with extended periods of construction, noise, dust and lighting.

The proposed use of Raymond Park as a warm-up facility also highlights the diminishment of available green spaces for this inner-city location. As density increases, the importance of green spaces increases dramatically. As private residences lack larger spaces in their backyards, this increases the demand for high quality public and community spaces. These green spaces should not be given up so easily.

We recommend a detailed assessment of the long-term effects on the community, potentially with more considered precinct master planning of the newly extended PDA around the Gabba.

6. Supporting Evidence

Below is supporting evidence of the 2032 Olympic games legacy objectives:

- Olympic Agenda 2020- the "New norm"- invites opportunities to reduce venue sizes, rethink transport options, **optimize existing infrastructure** and reuse the field of play for various sports
- International Olympic Committee Charter (2020):
 - **2-14** to encourage and support a responsible concern for environmental issues, to promote sustainable development in sport and to require that the Olympic Games are held accordingly;
 - **2-15** to promote a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities, regions and countries;
 - **34** location, sites and venues of the Olympic Games, **priority must be given to the use of existing or temporary venues and infrastructures**. The construction of new permanent venues or infrastructure for the purposes of the organisation of the Olympic Games shall only be considered on the basis of sustainable legacy plans.
- IOC Feasibility Assessment 2021- Recommendation from IOC to consider reusing existing Carrara Stadium in Gold Coast for Athletics and the Gabba for ceremonies (used at the 2018 Commonwealth Games -P24-25).