

# Kadaltilla

Adelaide Park Lands Authority

## Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24) Sports Facilities

**Thursday, 23 November 2023**

**Board Meeting**

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Public

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## Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek the advice of Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority on a proposal received from the Adelaide Comets Football Club ('the Club') to upgrade facilities in Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24) to enable the hosting of National Premier League (NPL) and Women's National Premier League (WNPL) games.

An NPL and WNPL competition is established in each state of Australia and involves community soccer clubs participating in their respective States.

The proposed use of Park 24 as an NPL and WNPL venue is consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy (APLMS) and strengthening the role of the Park Lands as a regional destination for competitive sport and a variety of active and passive forms of recreation (Strategy 1.6).

The Club is an amateur soccer club with over 600 playing members making up over 40 senior and junior men's and women's teams. To accommodate their teams, the Club holds lease agreements with the City of Adelaide for facilities at Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24) and Pelzer Park / Pityarilla (Park 19).

Due to non-compliance with Football South Australia's (FSA) Venue Requirements Policy, the Club's top tier men's and women's teams currently host 'home' games of the NPL and WNPL at other venues including Santos Athletics Stadium (Mile End) and State Sports Park (Gepps Cross).

As part of a pre-election commitment, the Club was granted \$1.75 million from the State Government to upgrade facilities at Park 24. It was envisaged that these upgrades would enable the Club to meet FSA minimum requirements for NPL and WNPL games.

Upgrades approved by Administration to date include new sports lighting across all their licensed playing fields in Park 24.

The Club is seeking approval to install a permanent 1.1 metre high black mesh fence and ball stop nets. As per the APLMS, it is desirable to limit fencing in the Park Lands, and only provide for safety purposes. The proposed permanent fence will be low scale and have multiple openings on non-game days. The Club is also seeking a 1.8 metre wide perimeter path around the main pitch in Park 24, this is not an FSA requirement.

The remainder of elements needed to meet FSA minimum requirements will be temporarily installed on game days.

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## Recommendation

THAT THE KADALTILLA / ADELAIDE PARK LANDS AUTHORITY ADVISES COUNCIL:

That the Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority:

1. Supports the Adelaide Comets Football Club ('the Club') proposed facility improvements to Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24) as shown in Attachment A to item 6.1 on the Agenda for the Meeting of Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority held on Thursday 23 November 2023, subject to:
  - 1.1. All gates on the permanent main pitch fence remaining open on non-game days with no permanent signage except wayfinding.

- 1.2. The temporary outer spectator fence being installed no earlier than one day before a game, removed following conclusion of the final scheduled game, and only displaying wayfinding signage and stored off-site on non-game days.
- 1.3. The use of compacted sand or other appropriate permeable material for pathways and hard stand areas.
- 1.4. Species selection of new trees informed by Administration.
- 1.5. Detailed landscape plans submitted to Administration for approval.

# Implications

<p>Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy 2015-2025</p>	<p><a href="#">Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy 2015-2025</a></p> <p>This proposal supports strategies ‘1.5 - Create spaces to accommodate cultural, sporting, artistic and recreational events of varying types and sizes’ and ‘1.6 - Strengthen the role of the Park Lands as a regional destination for competitive sport and a variety of active and passive forms of recreation’.</p> <p>The Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy (APLMS) describes Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24) as a ‘multi-use community sport, recreation and event space accommodating a wide variety of informal and formal activities’.</p>
<p>2020-2025 Strategic Plan</p>	<p><a href="#">Adelaide Park Lands Authority 2020-2025 Strategic Plan</a></p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment – Advice</p> <p>Provide advice on plans, projects and policies for the Adelaide Park Lands.</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p>The Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan recommends to ‘support and facilitate the upgrading of the West Terrace Sports Area as a regional sports area containing flexible programmable spaces and multi-use facilities’ and to ‘support the upgrading of lighting of sports fields’.</p> <p>The APLMS recommends to ‘ensure fencing to sporting areas is kept to an absolute minimum and is provided solely for safety reasons rather than for security purposes’.</p>
<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Not as a result of this report</p>
<p>Resource</p>	<p>The management of this project will be resourced by the Adelaide Comets Football Club (‘the Club’).</p>
<p>Risk / Legal / Legislative</p>	<p>Elements of the proposed improvements will require Development Approval.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>The hosting of National Premier League and Women’s National Premier League games will attract more visitation to the Adelaide Park Lands and support the APLMS target of growing Park Lands utilisation.</p>
<p>City of Adelaide Budget Allocation</p>	<p>Not as a result of this report.</p>
<p>Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset</p>	<p>Aligned to the lease term, which expires in 2039.</p>
<p>Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)</p>	<p>As per the lease agreement, repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of the Lessee.</p>
<p>Other Funding Sources</p>	<p>This project will be funded by the Lessee utilising a State Government grant of \$1.75 million, of which approximately \$550,000 is allocated to works proposed in this report.</p>

## Discussion

1. The Adelaide Comets Football Club ('the Club') is an amateur soccer club with over 600 playing members making up over 40 senior and junior men's and women's teams. To accommodate their teams, the Club holds lease agreements with the City of Adelaide for facilities in Ellis Park / Tampawardli (Park 24), expiring in 2039, and Pelzer Park / Pityarilla (Park 19), expiring in 2026.
2. The Club leases a two level clubroom and licences multiple playing fields at Park 24, and leases changerooms and licences two soccer pitches at Park 19.
3. The facilities at Park 24 are currently programmed year round and are used by a range of other organisations including:
  - 3.1. Western Athletics Club (sub-lessee who shares the building and playing fields)
  - 3.2. Saint Mary's College (sub-licensee who uses the playing fields during the day)
  - 3.3. One Culture Support Services (not-for-profit disability service provider who runs powerchair football (soccer) programs)
  - 3.4. ACH Group (not-for-profit aged care organisation who runs walking football (soccer) programs for people living with neurological conditions or have had a stroke)
  - 3.5. Adelaide Rugby Union
  - 3.6. Australian Blind Football
  - 3.7. Adelaide High School
4. The Club's growth has led to five of its 40 teams participating in the National Premier League (NPL) and Women's National Premier League (WNPL).

### **Football SA National Premier League Minimum Requirements**

5. To host Premier League games, a facility must meet Football South Australia's (FSA) Venue Requirements Policy.
6. The Club can currently meet most of the minimum requirements needed to host NPL and WNPL games at Park 24, except for:
  - 6.1. A permanent fence or fencing as approved by Football SA fully enclosing the field of play and that is a minimum of two metres in distance from the side lines and goal lines. The fence must be in good condition and safe.
  - 6.2. A player's race that leads directly from the dressing room of the players and match officials to the field of play.
  - 6.3. Two covered coaches/substitutes benches/dugouts or as approved by Football SA, with adequate seating for at least 13 people, six substitutions and seven team officials.
  - 6.4. Spectator amenities that are fully enclosed with a perimeter fencing ensuring admission into the ground is controlled.
  - 6.5. A media area that provides unobstructed views of the playing field and scoreboard.
  - 6.6. A fully functional scoreboard (including the names of each participating team), which is clearly visible to spectators and the media/ press box.
7. Due to non-compliance with this Policy, the Club is required to hire alternative venues for its home games. Most of the Club's home games are held at Santos Athletics Stadium (Mile End) and State Sports Park (Gepps Cross).

### **Grant Funding**

8. As part of a pre-election commitment, the Club was granted \$1.75 million from the State Government to upgrade its facilities in Park 24. The funding was provided to the Club for:
  - 8.1. Replacing the existing sports lighting with new LED lighting across all the playing fields in Park 24 (approximately \$800,000).
  - 8.2. Installing new turf and irrigation of the main pitch (approximately \$400,000).
  - 8.3. Purchasing and installing various elements around the main pitch to enable hosting of NPL and WNPL games (approximately \$550,000).

## Works to Date

9. The Club has completed turf and irrigation improvements to the main pitch, increasing the quality of the playing surface and its capacity to withstand regular use by senior men's and women's teams. Due to its proximity to the clubrooms, the main pitch is heavily programmed.
10. The Club has received Development Approval for new sports lighting and will have this work completed by December 2023. The new lighting will be more energy efficient and meet the standard for community soccer training and competition.

## Works Proposed

11. To meet the FSA National Premier League minimum requirements and host NPL and WNPL games at Park 24, the Club has developed a facility upgrades concept plan (see **Attachment A**).
12. The concept plan includes:
  - 12.1. Proposals to meet FSA requirements:
    - a permanent 1.1 metre high black mesh fence around the main pitch
    - temporary spectator fencing
    - retractable sports netting behind each goal
    - a retractable player's race
    - moveable shelters for player's and officials
    - a moveable media/press box
  - 12.2. Other proposals for the venue
    - a portable electronic scoreboard
    - irrigated turf viewing mounds
    - 1.8 metre wide accessible path
    - enhancements to the western side of the clubrooms with additional open area storage (not enclosed built form)
    - two accessible parking spaces and emergency vehicle access driveway
    - paving between the clubrooms and the main pitch
    - in fill tree planting along the western edge of the main pitch for increased shade and weather protection
    - landscape improvements along the Park Lands roadway (to the north of the clubrooms)
13. The table below is Administration's assessment of the concept plan against the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy (APLMS).

Concept Plan	Administration Comment	Administration Recommendation
Permanent 1.1 metre high black mesh fence around main pitch with eight various sized gates FSA requirement of permanent fencing for the safety of players and officials on game days	It is desirable to minimise fencing in the Park Lands, however the proposed permanent fence will be low scale and have multiple openings on non-game days. The secondary spectator fence will only be in place on game days and stored off-site at other times. There are multiple precedents of playing facilities fenced in the Park Lands This is consistent with the APLMS and fencing provided for safety reasons rather than security purposes (Strategy 1.6)	Support installation of permanent fence around main pitch as per concept plan, subject to all gates remaining open on non-game days with no permanent signage except wayfinding
Temporary spectator fencing FSA requirement that spectator amenities are fully enclosed with	The APLMS seeks to investigate methods to minimise the use of temporary event fencing and deliver temporary fencing options that retain visual amenity, visual	Support game day temporary spectator fencing as per concept plan, subject to installation no earlier than one

a perimeter fencing ensuring admission into the ground is controlled	permeability and public accessibility (Strategy 1.5)	day before a game, removed after the final game, and only displaying wayfinding signage
1.8 metre wide path around main pitch to facilitate access for spectators  Three material options proposed – exposed aggregate concrete (preferred option) / compacted sand / permeable pavers	The new paths will enhance accessibility and reduce turf maintenance around the main pitch  Although it will require higher maintenance by the Lessee, the use of compacted sand will complement the park setting  This is consistent with the APLMS of providing internal path networks that are both accessible to users and designed with a 'light touch' to complement each park setting (Strategy 2.4)	Support installation of path network as per concept plan using compacted sand
Retractable mesh sport netting behind each goal	This is consistent with APLMS of fencing provided for safety reasons rather than security purposes (Strategy 1.6)	Support installation of retractable sport netting as per concept plan
In fill tree planting along western edge	This is consistent with APLMS and sport and recreation areas typically consisting of large areas of irrigated open space and partially bounded by copses of trees providing a visual backdrop and shade for spectators (Landscape Types – Sport and Recreation).	Support new tree planting subject to tree selection determined by Administration
Two accessible parking spaces on the western side of the clubrooms	The provision of two accessible spaces will support attendance to a range of programs and events held in Park 24  This is consistent with APLMS of providing car parking on and adjacent to the Park Lands only where need has been demonstrated and no reasonable alternative exists (Strategy 2.8)  The Club is not requesting additional car parking and will direct visitors to utilise on street parking and public transport	Investigate the impact of including two accessible parking spaces as per concept plan with appropriate wayfinding signage, either adjacent the clubroom as provided in Attachment A, or convert two existing spots in the current roadway that enables access into Park 24 from West Terrace.
Irrigated turf viewing mounds on western side of main pitch	This is consistent with APLMS and upgrading playing areas, buildings, viewing areas, exercise equipment and other facilities to support sport and recreation (Strategy 1.6)	Support installation of turf viewing mounds as per concept specifications
Landscape improvements around the clubrooms	This is consistent with the APLMS and establishing a range of natural, ornamental and cultural landscapes celebrating the diversity of the Park Lands (Strategy 3.3)	Support landscape improvements subject to detailed landscape plans approved by Administration

14. The Club's proposal is consistent with Strategy 1.6 of the APLMS and strengthening the role of the Park Lands as a regional destination for competitive sport and a variety of active and passive forms of recreation.

### Programming

15. The Club aims to host:
- 15.1. NPL and WNPL senior games on Friday evenings, with typical crowd sizes of 250 to 500 people, up to a maximum of 1,000. As per the City of Adelaide's Adelaide Events Guidelines, an event of less than 1,500 people is considered a minor event.
  - 15.2. NPL and WNPL reserves and under 18s on Saturday afternoons, with spectators traditionally friends and family.

16. In 2023, there were 22 NPL and 18 WNPL rounds. It is envisaged that games would be scheduled at Park 24 on at least 11 weekends each year, and up to a maximum of 20 weekends.
17. The scheduling of these games will not displace any existing use of the playing fields in Park 24.

#### **Next Steps**

18. Subject to support from Kadaltilla, this matter will be presented to Council in February 2024.
19. Subject to Council approval, Administration will write to the Club advising of the approval conditions and their requirement to adhere to these conditions as per clause 8.7.2.2 of their lease agreement with the City of Adelaide. This clause states that 'the Lessee must carry out any approved alterations and additions in accordance with the conditions and approvals imposed by the Council (as Lessor under this Lease)'.  
This clause states that 'the Lessee must carry out any approved alterations and additions in accordance with the conditions and approvals imposed by the Council (as Lessor under this Lease)'.
20. The Club hopes to implement the concept plan in time to host NPL and WNPL games in the latter half of the 2024 season (June to August).

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## **Attachments**

**Attachment A** – Adelaide Comets Football Club – Facility Upgrades Concept Plan