

Dear Madam/Sir,

**Re: concerns around the proposed Olympic Athletics Warm up Facility at Raymond Park**

Raymond Park has been earmarked for the future athletics warmup track and field facility for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As a local resident, and member of Friends of Raymond park group, I am concerned that the proposal to develop Raymond Park will have serious long-term consequences for the area and the community. Raymond Park is an established green open inner city public park that currently services the surrounding communities within Kangaroo Point, East Brisbane and Woolloongabba. It is an important public space in such a high-density neighbourhood (highest in Queensland). Raymond park is highly utilised, servicing a range of formal and informal recreational activities, for a large and diverse residential population. It is a well-loved park and highly valued by the (large surrounding) community and visitors. The green open space that the park provides important shade and cooling for the many visitors that frequent the park. Furthermore the green space and large trees help reduce the heat island effect in a dense urban environment. The large Moreton Bay fig trees within the Park are well over 50 years old and some of the palm trees are over 100 years old. Facilities within Raymond Park include playground, dog offleash, outdoor exercise gym, skate bowl, basketball court, picnic and barbeque facilities, soccer/hockey field and cricket pitches. The park also forms important pedestrian thoroughfare and connection routes between Sinclair Street, Wellington Road and Baines Street. Maintaining this shady pedestrian through route is important for the greater community who utilise these routes for both exercise and commuting. Other than the formal parkland embellishments the park is also used for picnics, parties, kickabout and a number of other informal activities. The park is highly used and valued by the local communities within East Brisbane, Woolloongabba and Kangaroo Point South. It provides an important green space for socialising, gathering, meeting and respite. Many community members have got to know each other through regular use of the facilities within the park. Raymond Park also provides important

habitat for a number of bird species including a resident curlew family. The parkland sits within a leafy Character Residential neighbourhood, which is surrounded by high density residential. Many of the houses within the Character Residential Zone live adjacent to Raymond Park with a number of residential houses that share their boundary fences up against the parkland. A number of community members, including those from the surrounding high-density residential developments use and rely on Raymond Park for green open space. Some of the new developments showcase Raymond Park as one of the selling features for unit sales.

**Impacts of Proposed Warm up Athletic Facility If constructed at Raymond Park, the proposed athletics track will result in:** •

The loss of a number of highly utilized facilities such as the dog offleash, playground, kickabout, picnic facilities, basketball court and outdoor gym • People will lose their homes forever for a temporary event. Please note that Minister Miles was incorrect- residents have not been consulted. Mature trees and canopy removed for a temporary event • Loss of an important walking and cycling commuter pathway network and connector • Loss of community meeting space and wellbeing Furthermore there will be a number of significant negative impacts to 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 • Lighting impact as a result of required flood lighting in close proximity to surrounding residences • Traffic impacts during a minimum 12 month construction phase and during game period (noting the local area is already congested and Baines, Sinclair and Rosina Street are relatively small residential streets) • Noise and dust impacts to residential neighbourhood during construction and game period • Increase of heat island effect to neighbourhood due to significant hardscaping extents and buildings and removal of trees and green open space Large scale sporting facilities are usually located in larger open spaces where there is little impact to communities or at least a buffer can be provided. The proposal is incongruous with the surrounding residential fabric and the space required will not provide any buffering to residential homes. Furthermore restricting access to the local residents during games within a high density residential area is impractical and not feasible.

Given the information provided above regarding the high value that the Raymond Park has within the wider community, and the significant impacts that loss of this green space will have as a result of the proposed warm up athletics facility, the question is asked as to whether due diligence has been undertaken by the government, including: • The mix of Character residential, surrounded by high density residential is not an appropriate location for a world class sporting facility. Has due diligence been undertaken as to the precedence and appropriateness of such a proposed facility in this location? • The deficit of green open space, with no proposal to acquire/offset green open space in the nearby vicinity to replace the loss of open space is inconsistent with the desired standards of service of green open space as stipulated in the planning scheme. Has consideration been given to acquiring new open space that can equally accommodate the loss of green public space as a result of the proposed warm up facility.

**Recommendation**

I believe that the 2032 Ceremony could be held at the Gabba, where minor upgrades can be maintained and that the Cross River Rail Site become a park and forecourt supporting the Ceremony. This upgrade will assist with future cricket and AFL games. I recommend that the Athletics be relocated to: - Carrara as recommended by the IOC in the 2021 Olympic Bid, - at Queensland Sport and Athletic Centre (QSAC) which is 10kms from the city; or - at Albion as

originally proposed in the Olympic Bid These options provide more positive legacy outcomes for SEQ/Brisbane and would be more inline with the messaging of the IOC and government in providing a sustainable 2032 Olympic Games” The proposal to locate the Olympics Athletics Warm up track at Raymond Park has no benefit to the community, to Brisbane, to tourism, to the economy or to the environment. It will become a white elephant in a place is currently highly used and valued by the community. It is not in keeping with the objectives of the IOC and government in terms of creating positive legacy outcomes. To date the Save Raymond Park petition has almost 3000 signatures opposed to the construction of such a development on green public open space. I urge all those who have a part to play in selecting a venue for the Athletics warm up facility to undertake further due diligence and to select a venue that is fit for purpose, that has sustainable and positive legacy outcomes, that does not take away valuable green open space or homes.

### **Saving East Brisbane State School**

I am extremely saddened and disappointed at the Government’s announcement to continue with the Gabba rebuild and its resulting impact on East Brisbane State School. For almost two years the school has received negligible information and been kept in the dark about the future of the school. This has caused anxiety in the children and disquiet in our community. The only alternatives now offered by the State Government have either involved building a new school in another catchment, or requiring students to enrol and relocate to other existing schools in the surrounding suburbs. This will require all parents/carers to have to drive their children to and from school, further clogging our already heavily congested roads. Presently the majority of the students walk, cycle or scooter to school.

The 2032 Olympics & Paralympics is meant to leave a lasting legacy, yet its lasting legacy for our community may be:

- The lack of a local state school
- The loss of opportunity for our children, and future children, to walk to school
- The loss of our cultural and built heritage (EBSS is listed on the State Heritage register)

We live in area of rapid population growth. School enrolments have increased by 8% since the start of 2022 and 48% since 2016.

These children need a place to go to school, and they should have the opportunity to attend a local school where they can make local friends. The School creates a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community that should not be destroyed for a 4-week sporting event.

East Brisbane State School should stay in East Brisbane. This would allow the community to walk to school, for current students to continue their education with the same friends, and under the same teaching staff and ethos of our school.

Yours Faithfully,  
Rosalind Searle

