

Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Review

Strategic Alignment - Our Places

Public

Tuesday, 1 April 2025
City Community Services and Culture Committee

Program Contact:

Sarah Gilmour, Associate
Director Park Lands, Policy &
Sustainability

Approving Officer:

Ilia Houridis, Director City
Shaping

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the findings and recommended actions of the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Evaluation (the evaluation) and seek Council authorisation to submit a request to the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs to extend the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation for a further three years from 22 June 2025 to 22 June 2028.

In 2014, the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation (the Regulation) was established as a trial to address the impacts of alcohol-related behaviour in the southern Park Lands, and to reduce reported amenity impacts on the community.

In 2021, Blue Gum Park / Kurangga (Park 20) and Veale Park / Waylu Yarta (Park 21) became Dry Areas 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Dry Area was established in response to the ongoing impact on residential amenity in this location due to excessive alcohol consumption by large groups and associated challenging behaviours.

Since the introduction of the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation, no comprehensive evaluation has been conducted of its effectiveness and impact on reducing alcohol-related harm and crime.

On 14 November 2023, Council resolved to request an 18-month extension to the existing Adelaide Park Land Dry Areas until 22 June 2025. This extension was conditional on the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation process for the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas by the State Government, and would include:

- A review of the data and outcomes related to the continuation of the Dry Area to be conducted during 2024 and presented to Council in early 2025, with proposals for alternative measures to be established.
- A report on the wrap-around services delivered by the State Government in support of the Dry Area.

On 15 April 2024, the Department of Human Services (DHS) advised the City of Adelaide (CoA) that after thorough consideration it had determined that the scope of the evaluation extends beyond the remit of the Safety and Wellbeing Taskforce, led by DHS.

The CoA engaged Urbis (consultants) to conduct an independent assessment, and nine recommended actions are made to support the effective implementation of the Regulation and better community outcomes. The responsibility for actions extends to State Government and other Agencies.

A Chief Executive Officer briefing was held with Council Members on 18 March 2025 to share and discuss the evaluation findings and recommended actions.

This report recommends that the CoA apply to the State Government to extend the existing Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas until 22 June 2028. It also requests that the State Government work with the CoA to develop a plan for implementing the recommended actions to commence from 2025/26.

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 8 April 2025 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL
THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Evaluation report as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the Community Services and Culture Committee held on 1 April 2025.
 2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to prepare and submit an application to the State Government to extend the current arrangements for the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas 1 (8pm on each day to 11am on the following day) and Area 2 (continuous) for a further three years until 22 June 2028.
 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to request that the State Government work with the Administration to prioritise the development of a plan for implementing the recommended actions as contained in the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Evaluation commencing in 2025/26.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community Objective: Support our communities to thrive. Outcome: 1. Create safe, inclusive and healthy places for our community.
Policy	Not as a result of this report
Consultation	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 26 stakeholders, including those from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), CoA, community organisations, the South Australian Government, South Australian Police, traders, and two people with lived experience. Given the recent 2023 engagement with residents, another Our Adelaide survey was not conducted. The 2023 and 2020 public consultations, including a resident requested follow-up conversation, were included as part of the evaluation.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	This report relates to the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation as an instrument under the <i>Liquor Licensing Act 1997</i> (SA).
Opportunities	The Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation is one regulatory tool to support community safety and wellbeing outcomes. City of Adelaide will continue to work with the Safety and Wellbeing Taskforce to pursue strategies to address the drivers that influence excessive alcohol consumption.
24/25 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	\$115,390 reallocation of existing strategic project budgets once the State Government advised it would not lead the evaluation.
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. In 2014, the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation (Regulation) was established as a trial to address the impacts of alcohol-related behaviour in the southern Park Lands, and to reduce reported amenity impacts on the community.
2. In 2021, Blue Gum Park / Kurangga (Park 20) and Veale Park / Waylu Yarta (Park 21) became Dry Areas 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Dry Area was established in response to ongoing impact on residential amenity in this location due to excessive alcohol consumption by large groups and associated challenging behaviours.
3. On 14 November 2023, Council resolved to request an 18-month extension to the existing Adelaide Park Land Areas until 22 June 2025. This extension was conditional on the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation process for the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas by the State Government, would include:
 - 3.1. A review of the data and outcomes related to the continuation of the Dry Area to be conducted over the next 12 months and presented to Council, with proposals for alternative measures to be established.
 - 3.2. A report on the wrap-around services delivered by the State Government in support of the Dry Area.
4. The restrictions outlined above are depicted spatially in Figure 1:

City of Adelaide Dry Zone Map

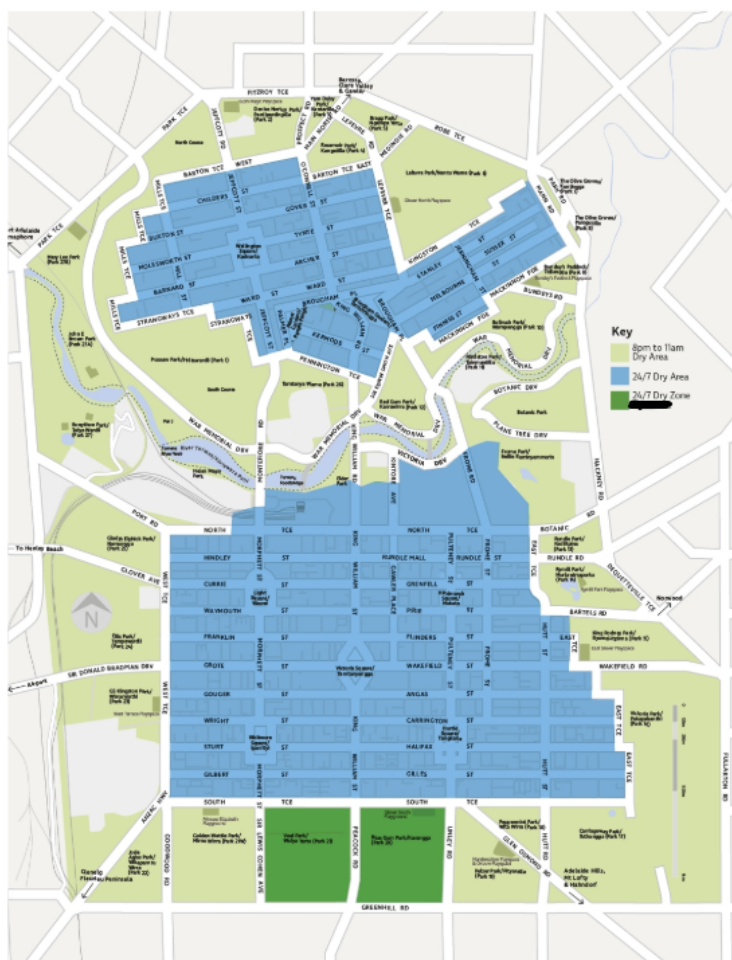


Figure 1: Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas as at 1 April 2025

- 4.1. On 5 December 2023, the City of Adelaide (CoA) requested that the Safety and Wellbeing Taskforce, led by the Department of Human Services (DHS), lead the evaluation of the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation.
- 4.2. On 15 April 2024, the DHS advised the City of Adelaide that after thorough consideration it had determined that the scope of the evaluation extended beyond the remit of the Taskforce.

Project purpose and methodology

5. The CoA engaged Urbis (consultants) to complete an independent assessment to determine the effectiveness and impact of the Regulation, and to provide recommendations about their continuation and potential alternative measures that could support outcomes for all community members and stakeholders who use the Adelaide Park Lands.
6. The evaluation assessed the:
 - 6.1. Implementation of the Regulation (i.e. the strategies used in the implementation, the effectiveness of these strategies, the appropriateness of the Dry Area time span and the barriers and enablers to successful implementation), focusing on the previous 12 months.
 - 6.2. Effectiveness of the Regulation in reducing alcohol related crime and harm, and improving public amenity.
 - 6.3. Impact of the Regulation on a range of target groups, including, residents (based on existing information), traders near the Adelaide Park Lands, local health and community workers, SA Police (SAPOL), SA Government service providers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, young people (18-25 years of age), and CoA employees working in the Adelaide Park Lands.
 - 6.4. The current wrap-around services delivered by the SA Government and social service organisations in support of the Dry Areas.
7. The evaluation was undertaken over a four-month period from October 2024 to February 2025. This included semi-structured interviews with 26 stakeholders and 2 people with lived experience, analysis of documentation and data relating to the Regulation, analysis of the 2023 and 2020 CoA Your Say public engagements, and desktop mapping of the service environment in response to Dry Areas.

Evaluation findings

8. The evaluation report is provided in **Attachment A**. The key findings of the evaluation are divided into four areas as follows:
 - 8.1. Implementation of the Regulation
 - 8.1.1. The Regulation has been implemented well. There is thought to be good public awareness about the Regulation, although some groups, such as young people and visitors, may be less aware of the specific bans.
 - 8.1.2. The Regulation is an important 'tool' for intervening and reducing alcohol-related harm and crime in the Adelaide Park Lands. The enforcement approach adopted by SA Police is valued with some consideration of the effectiveness of tipping alcohol out as an intervention measure.
 - 8.1.3. Enablers for successfully implementing the Regulation include the approach of SA Police; inter-agency collaboration and having culturally safe gathering places.
 - 8.1.4. Two potential barriers to effective implementation of the Regulation is appropriate service support and awareness of the Regulation among community members.
 - 8.1.5. There are mixed views about the appropriateness of the Dry Area time span to meet the Dry Area objectives. Most people interviewed preferred the 8pm to 11am restriction as a balanced approach.
 - 8.2. Effectiveness of the Regulation
 - 8.2.1. There is insufficient quantitative data available to demonstrate the Regulation's efficacy with inconsistent data collection and sharing amongst agencies since 2014 making it difficult to assess the Regulation's effectiveness.
 - 8.2.2. There are mixed views about the extent to which the Regulation helps to reduce alcohol-related harm and crime and improve public amenity.

- 8.2.3. The Regulation alone is insufficient to reduce alcohol-related harm and crime in the Adelaide Park Lands, which will persist until the underlying drivers related to substance use, health, housing and employment are addressed.
- 8.2.4. The ability to responsibly consume alcohol in the Adelaide Park Lands is viewed as important for upholding the personal rights of residents and visitors.
- 8.3. Impact of the Regulation
 - 8.3.1. There is concern among some stakeholders that the Regulation disproportionately impacts marginalised communities, including people experiencing homelessness and those from remote communities.
 - 8.3.2. Most stakeholders agreed the removal of the Regulation without service reform could have a detrimental impact on the health of individuals and the experience of the broader community. The role of the Regulation to intervene and de-escalate problematic drinking was emphasised and valued.
 - 8.3.3. The Regulation increases the sense of safety for some stakeholders, including traders, CoA employees and residents by allowing SA Police to manage alcohol consumption and mitigate behaviours that impact public perception of safety.
- 8.4. Service Landscape
 - 8.4.1. There is a range of specialist services to support people experiencing problems with alcohol and drug use in the City of Adelaide.
 - 8.4.2. The Regulation relies on resourcing for services to meet demand in response to the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Areas. The service response after hours tends to be less person centred, trauma informed, and culturally safe.
 - 8.4.3. Challenges can be experienced by people seeking to access appropriate services and supports for their needs.
 - 8.4.4. Future approaches should provide culturally safe, wrap-around support and a service response that improves access services including alcohol and other drug services and supports, housing and safe spaces, and services that operate after hours.

Recommended actions

- 9. There are nine recommended actions arising from the evaluation to support the effective implementation of the Regulation and better community outcomes. Some of the recommendations have resource implications for State Government Agencies.
- 10. The City of Adelaide has met with relevant State Government Agencies to share the findings and recommendations, and to discuss policy and resourcing implications.
- 11. Recommended actions are organised under the following four themes:
 - 11.1. Regulation continuation
 - 11.1.1. Extend the current Regulation for a further three years. This will provide sufficient time for the development of a robust Data Strategy. Any decision to extend the Regulation beyond this should be based on a thorough evaluation.
 - 11.1.2. Assess lifting the 24/7 ban in Area 2 (Parks 20 and 21) to be consistent with the Restrictions in Area 1 (8pm to 11am), once data collection methods are well established.
 - 11.2. Strengthen Regulation implementation
 - 11.2.1. Develop and implement clear guidelines and protocols for enforcing the Regulation to ensure consistency and minimise biases.
 - 11.2.2. Ensure that SA Police responses are person-centred, relational, and culturally safe, and that these responses are scaled as needed, including on weeknights and weekends and during times of high demand.
 - 11.2.3. Develop a public awareness strategy about the Regulation and services available. A refreshed awareness strategy should consider the use of signage, Aboriginal language and include the promotion of specialist services (e.g. youth services, Aboriginal-led services).

- 11.3. Decision-making informed by robust data and evaluation
 - 11.3.1. Develop a Data Strategy to enhance data collection arrangements and effectively track the impact of the Regulation and other complementary strategies over time.
 - 11.3.2. Conduct an evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the Regulation and supporting strategies, commencing at least one year before expiration.
- 11.4. Early intervention strategies to address the underlying drivers of alcohol consumption and to support better outcomes.
 - 11.4.1. In close collaboration with community services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, further investigate the design and delivery of tailored and intensive wrap-around support services to better support people who access the Adelaide Park Lands experiencing challenges related to alcohol and other drugs, homelessness and chronic health and wellbeing issues. This should include assertive outreach, support services after hours and on weekends, and culturally appropriate and safe services for Aboriginal rural and remote visitors including appropriate in-language services.
 - 11.4.2. Co-design, with Kurna Elders and local community, a culturally safe gathering place for Aboriginal people including Aboriginal people from rural and remote areas. The gathering place should provide facilities for visitors and facilitate connections with specialist services (see recommendation 8). The place should be run and managed by Aboriginal organisations in ongoing partnership with the Kurna community.

Next steps

- 12. Pending a decision by the Council to extend the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation, the process for requesting an extension is:
 - 12.1. The Chief Executive Officer applies to the State Government via Consumer and Business Services and the Commission for Liquor and Gambling.
 - 12.2. The Liquor and Gambling Commissioner will review the application and make a recommendation to the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs.
 - 12.3. If approved by the Minister, the Dry Area Regulation is made by public notice in the Government Gazette.
- 13. Should an extension to the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation be approved, Administration will:
 - 13.1. Request that the State Government work with the CoA to prioritise the development of a plan for the implementation of the actions as contained in the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Evaluation.
 - 13.2. Advise engagement participants of the outcome of the Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulation Evaluation.
 - 13.3. Update information on the City of Adelaide website.
 - 13.4. Continue to work in partnership with State Government Agencies and other stakeholders, where appropriate, to support the implementation of the recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A –Adelaide Park Lands Dry Area Regulations Evaluation Report Urbis

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