



## Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

15<sup>th</sup> August 2017

Mr. Andrew Hartcher  
NSW Department of Planning & the Environment  
GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001

### **Reference: Application number SSD 16\_7942 - URBN SURF - Open Water Surf Sports Lagoon Facility, Sydney Olympic Park**

Dear Mr Hartcher

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) is delighted to have the opportunity to provide this submission to the NSW Department of Planning & the Environment in regard to the proposed Open Water Surf Sports Lagoon Facility at Sydney Olympic Park.

#### Background

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) is a truly iconic Australian organisation and has been an influential force in the direction and development of Australian agriculture through competitions, education and events since its foundation in 1822. In 2022 we celebrate our bicentenary and enter our **3<sup>rd</sup> century** of continued operation.

The RAS is based at Sydney Showground in the heart of Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) and is operated on a long term 99 + 99 year lease from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA).

Home to the RAS and the Sydney Royal Easter Show (SRES), the Nations' largest annual ticketed event, Sydney Showground also provides a year-round exhibition and events venue that hosts a diverse range of activity, exhibitions, sporting events, corporate functions and music events. Sydney Showground is a complementary venue to the new International Convention Centre at Darling Harbour and is Western Sydney's number 1 event venue. Sydney Showground is also home to the AFL's Greater Western Sydney Giants and cricket's Sydney Thunder both playing out of the Sydney Showground Stadium otherwise known as Spotless Stadium, Western Sydney's premier sporting oval.

SOP is the premier event centre in NSW and all development undertaken at the site should be compatible with or complementary to its prime purpose as an event centre.

#### Sydney Olympic Park and GPOP

While the RAS is a supporter of improved amenity and activation at SOP we are surprised, given the proposed densification of the precinct and the potential for both Parramatta Light Rail and Metro West to travel to and from SOP at considerable cost including potentially adjacent to the subject site, that the site has not been earmarked for highest and best use that would create a much higher return to the State and enable Government to offset some of the potential infrastructure costs. We therefore respectfully suggest a more suitable location be identified for the proposed Wave Pool elsewhere within SOP where its impacts will be felt positively not negatively.

#### The Proposed Development and its compatibility

We would like to inform the proponent and remind the consent authority of the activities undertaken both by the RAS so it can adjust its proposed operation to fit these existing requirements. To this end the RAS is disappointed the

proponent has elected not to consult with us so we can ensure they are fully aware of current activities and the effect they may have on the proposed development.

Every year for a period of approximately 40 days the RAS sets up, operates and de-fits the areas required for the nation's largest annual ticketed event, the Sydney Royal Easter Show. This includes the closure of Australia Avenue from Murray Rose Avenue to Kevin Coombs Avenue for a continuous period of 14 days prior to and 7 days after the current year SRES. Section 5.3.2 clause 25 – Transport states 'In addition, Olympic Park Railway Station is within walking distance being approximately 1km to the south of the site'. The proponent should be aware that during the approximate 40 days of the aforementioned annual SRES due to road closures the walking distance to the station would be considerably longer than 1km.

Currently the RAS fully utilises the proposed development site P5B for parking of vehicles related to the operation of the SRES and the loss of this capability will have a significant effect on the SRES and on public parking for it as the RAS will now seek to utilise P5A rendering it unavailable for public parking. From an operational perspective this will be far from ideal during both the SRES and other large precinct event days and will also likely lead to a reduction in parking revenue available to SOPA. The RAS is extremely concerned regarding the continued reduction of available 'event' parking spaces at SOP both through their respective removal to facilitate alternate uses such as this EIS proposes but also through site densification leading to permanent car space requirements reducing available stock for events. This is inconsistent with the State Government's stated desire to maintain SOP as Sydney's pre-eminent event precinct and is exacerbated by the lack of certainty and continued speculation over vital infrastructure projects such as Parramatta Light Rail and Metro West that could provide transport alternatives.

At the 2016 SRES and for the first time, we introduced a new system utilising the bus lanes at the rear of P5B to bump out cattle reducing dramatically the congestion that this significant task has previously caused, particularly along Bennelong Parkway impacting on multiple stakeholders. The new system that was supported by SOPA and was a significant improvement on previous experiences enabled the RAS in 2017 with the experience of the previous year to bump out over 1500 head of cattle in approximately 4 hours and decrease the disruption to local residents. Should this capability be removed we will need to return to the previous, much less efficient system but would prefer to identify an alternative strategy to ensure the improved efficiencies of 2017 can be retained.

The Statement in the EIS 5.3.2 Clause 24 – Major events capability 'The proposed development is remote from the SOP Town Centre and does not impact on the management of crowd movements and transport services to and within the precinct' is completely inaccurate and clearly the current SRES use has not been considered or investigated in relation to this statement. To reiterate, the SRES is Australia's largest annual ticketed event and attracts approximately 900,000 attendees over the 2 week duration of the event. It is a significant undertaking and there is no other event with which it can be compared. The SRES creates a significant amount of economic and social benefit for the State of NSW and we are extremely disappointed that the proponent has paid such little attention to it through the preparation of the EIS. We really don't think the proponent quite understands the scale of this event or the issues their proposal will cause for the SRES, SOP stakeholders and in fact the Wave Pool itself during the SRES. The annual SRES traffic utilising the P5 parking complex will continue to access this location via Hill Road leading to increased traffic that may affect travel times for users of the proposed Wave Pool.

Furthermore, the statement made by the proponent in the next paragraph 'While the proposal does result in the removal of 678 public car parking spaces and a bus parking area from the underutilised P5 Pod B carpark, it is considered that other more sustainable transport options are available during major events, and the loss of these spaces does not impact on the Park's capability to host major events'. Could we respectfully request that the proponent detail what it considers these 'other more sustainable transport options' to be as 20 years into our tenure at SOP we have not yet identified them.

Sydney Showground at  
Sydney Olympic Park



The RAS is concerned that, should construction of the proposed Wave Pool be undertaken during the time period of a SRES that the proponent must have in place a suitable construction traffic management plan and other procedures required to ensure the RAS can still access and utilise the remainder of the P5 car park complex without interference or hindrance to its operations.

The RAS has reviewed the CEMP and suggests that pedestrian and bicycle access should be maintained at all times along the existing footpath to the South of P5B so access can be achieved between car parks, the BMX and archery facilities can be accessed from Holker Street and pedestrians/cyclist can access Holker Street and the Holker Street Bridge from P5C to walk/cycle South to the SOP Town Centre.

**Section 5.20.1 Construction Traffic and Parking states that Section 4.9 of the EIS and Appendix B of the CEMP (Attachment 9 of the EIS) prepared by InSite Remediation Services contains the Traffic Management Plan however there is no Section 4.9 in the EIS and Appendix B and Section C of Attachment 9 are both missing from the CEMP. We assume this has already been identified by the consent authority as the EIS cannot be fully considered without them and we'd be appreciative if they could they be provided separately for our review.**

The RAS would be pleased to meet with the consent authority and the proponent to be able to discuss the likely impacts of the SRES and other events to the proposed development.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission, should you require anything further please do not hesitate to contact our Head of Property Development, Jonathan Seward.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brock Gilmour', written over a white background.

Brock Gilmour  
Chief Executive