

November 2024

Thank you for accepting my submission for SSDA number : 65595459

As a concerned resident I wish to voice my opposition to the proposal to build the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre on No1 and No 2 Wallarah Ovals and Blackley Oval in New Lambton.

The EIS released on 15 October 2024 was proposed by Newcastle Area Basketball Limitedin all further references in this submission being called " Newcastle Basketball "

The site is outside Hunter Park on the western side of Turton Road. Access to the site is from Turton Road as well as a footbridge from Monash Road over Ker-rai Creek stormwater drain in all further references in this submission the site being called " the 3 ovals "

The proposed stadium has been named the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre ... in all further references in this submission being called the " HISC "

Please find following my very real concerns regarding this proposal by Newcastle Basketball. These concerns are what my opposition is based on.

Appendix LL Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

3.3 Stakeholders

At no point in the entire published list of Stakeholders was there inclusion of nearby affected residents.

Under the EIS terms of reference Newcastle Basketball was required to complete a Social Impact Assessment according to the Guidelines (2022). It is my belief that Newcastle Basketball failed to comply with these guidelines and undertake community engagement to understand how this proposal may impact affected residents. " The purpose of engagement with the community and key stakeholders was to share information and consult to collect information and insights" The following points reference how this was not applied to surrounding and affected residents -

- On 22 March 2023 a media release by Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes accompanied by Lake Macquarie MP Greg Piper was convened on Blackley Oval, New Lambton, where they announced that " A basketball stadium will be built on these Broadmeadow ovals " This was the first time that residents had heard of this project despite being told through the press release, on that day, that all parties being sports, school and affected residents had been consulted. The site was continually referred to as " Broadmeadow " which in fact confused many residents and still does to this day. Only nearby residents realised it was these 3 ovals . In fact Newcastle Basketball had conducted formal meetings with Newcastle Council representatives 12 times prior to this date !! 12 times with the Council and still absolutely no contact with affected residents who were feeling " blindsided "

THIS WAS THE **FIRST** TIME that Newcastle Basketball DID NOT TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH AFFECTED RESIDENTS

- Newcastle Basketball then held an information session for their Association members at Newcastle City Hall on 6th December 2023. Note that only members were informed and invited on this night with only 36 members attending. No notice was given to invite affected residents !!

At the conclusion the session was available online. As I watched the online broadcast, I was again left with many questions regarding the proposal to build a new Stadium. Still we, the residents, waited for engagement and for discussion with Newcastle Basketball.

THIS WAS Newcastle Basketball's **SECOND** OPPORTUNITY OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH AFFECTED RESIDENTS THAT WAS NOT ACTED ON

- On 12th March 2024 a neighbour with children attending Lambton High School informed us that an information night/meeting was being held at the school that night for school parents. A notification to the Lambton High community had been included within the weekly school notices.

Having been starved of any information, and out of sheer frustration, a group of local residents decided to "politely invite ourselves" to see if we could understand what was proposed for the 3 ovals as it had been 12 months since the first announcement.

Prior to attending I prepared some basic relevant and respectful questions regarding construction time lines, traffic and flooding control to ask of the chairperson.

I sat quietly with my journal and pen in hand but, as soon as the presentation started, I was promptly told by Mr Joe Lanz, the meeting chairman "there's no need to take notes, everything you need to know will be on the slide show".

This was **Instruction** not **Consultation and Engagement** !!!!!

Afterwards I gave them my email address, at their request, on the assurance that it would be used to update me on the proposal's progress Not one email was received by me from Newcastle Basketball.

THIS WAS Newcastle Basketball's **THIRD and SIGNIFICANT** MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO ACTUALLY CONSULT AND ENGAGE WITH AFFECTED RESIDENTS

- On Saturday 16th and Monday 18th March 2024, Newcastle Basketball held two drop in information sessions at the current basketball stadium in Broadmeadow. Contrary to what was reported by Newcastle Basketball not all of the 200 residents in the affected area received notification of these dates, I did not. Once again it was word of mouth among residents that notified each other of these so called information sessions from Newcastle Basketball. But, in fact not one representative of Newcastle Basketball even attended when I was there on the 16th to speak with us attendees, despite the fact that they were held in their own stadium. A printed copy of the previously mentioned slide show presented at Lambton High School was merely distributed by the paid consultant.

THIS WAS Newcastle Basketball's **FOURTH and MOST SIGNIFICANT** IGNORED OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT AND ENGAGE WITH AFFECTED RESIDENTS

At this point, as you have read above, these 4 times of unwillingness to take the opportunities available to consult and engage with affected residents demonstrates the inaccuracy of the statement from Newcastle Basketball when they clearly state that they have consulted with affected residents.

Disappointingly, Newcastle Basketball has not made any effort to Consult and Engage with affected residents. No wonder there was frustration felt by residents at this lack of contact. This was clearly evidenced when it resulted in hand painted signs on surrounding residences asking “ when will we be consulted ? “

So, to follow on, I present my concerns. They are listed, but not limited to, the following points :

Appendix NN. External Lighting Impact Assessment

• External lighting of the proposed stadium

Item 5.6 , work carried out by Electrical Projects Australia, states that

- All external lighting will operate at 100% from dusk until 10 pm
- From 10 pm until dawn all external lighting will operate at 30% on a light sensor system meaning 3 lights will operate at 100% until the motion causing object or person has passed.

Item 7.1 Facility Rules,

However, Newcastle Basketball's List of Rules states that the use of the HISC will be managed through the implementation of facility rules to reduce impacts to nearby neighbours. Included in the list

- External lights are to be switched off following the completion of daily operations

Two very contradictory statements from Newcastle Basketball and Electrical Projects Australia.

Consequently, I find it impossible to write an objective submission relating to external lighting on the HISC when obviously different / incorrect information has been supplied in the compilation of the EIS. This is not good enough to address a major impact. Either the external lights on the HISC are on at 30% with periodic sensor activation to 100%, or, they're not on at all. This will directly affect the residential amenity of nearby residents each and every night.

Appendix OO. Operational Management Plan

Section 2. Operational Details

2.1 Use of the Facility

On a weekly basis the HISC according to Newcastle Basketball will accommodate **26, 995** people for regular training and local competitions. This means that Newcastle Basketball's anticipated numbers they are publishing are more than **1 million** visitors a year or a daily expectation of more than **3, 000** visits.

2.3. Hours of operation

6 am - 11 pm daily

Busy time for juniors is between 4pm and 9pm so it is not unreasonable to anticipate an hourly attendance of about 600 players.

Given that the total capacity of the completed carpark is only 240 car spaces, it is to be expected that a large portion of attendees will simply choose to park in the surrounding residential streets. According to Newcastle Basketball 240 spaces will be sufficient. I would have to question and disagree with this assertion. I can't see how all patrons will be able to safely enter and exit the carpark through the single access point on Turton Road between these hours as this time coincides with the busiest 5 hours for all traffic on Turton Road.

I would be extremely disappointed and annoyed if I was a basketball player, parent or spectator trying to find parking space on a busy school day afternoon or night and was confronted with a lack of parking coupled with traffic congestion. I really hope Newcastle Basketball see how much the parking and traffic issues will affect them and reconsider the suitability of these 3 ovals as a site.

The Department of Roads acknowledges the traffic problems, obviously, as on event days signs are erected within 1 kilometre of the 3 ovals, in all directions, advising all sporting patrons of the predicted traffic congestion and recommending traffic takes an alternate route to travelling along Turton Road.

Not encouraging for players and parents and spectators On event days online Live Traffic advises patrons that “parking will be limited” and patrons should park in the streets.

With regards to parking, several of the streets in the block facing the ovals are very narrow. Duke Street, parallel to Monash Road, is a prime example as when cars are parked on either side of the street it leaves a space of only one car width in the middle.

An elderly relative lived in this street. On several occasions in 2020 she needed to be transported to hospital. Unfortunately, it coincided with an event being held at McDonald Jones Stadium which resulted in cars attending and parking right to the edge of her driveway making it impossible for the attending Paramedics to access. Unnecessary distress was caused when she had to be loaded into the ambulance in the middle of the street. I shudder every time I think about it.

The 80 year old streets are just too narrow to cope with any extra traffic now and difficulty with access will be experienced by both residents and sports patrons as well as emergency vehicles parking in gridlocked streets every day !

Appendix R

Construction Traffic Management Plan

3.5. Construction Parking

Construction workers have been instructed to park on the northern side of Monash Road. This requires vehicles to angle park at 90 degrees to the stormwater drain. Construction working times are advised as between 7am and 6 pm on Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1 pm on Saturday.

Newcastle Basketball states that they are in discussion with Venues NSW regarding availability of car parking at McDonald Jones Stadium for basketball players and spectators yet, when parking is required for the HISC construction workers, the workers have been directed to park on a residential street for 6 mornings a week.

Appendix S. Traffic Event Management Plan

2.7.1. Event coordination with McDonald Jones Stadium

Discussions held between McDonald Jones Stadium and the HISC Project Team regarding parking for HISC attendees resulted in the following statement -

Venues NSW communicated that “60 - 70 days a year the carpark will not be available for shared parking due to planned concert and sporting events.”

In addition, for 5 days a week the carpark at McDonald Jones Stadium is used for parking for vehicles belonging to John Hunter Hospital staff and construction workers using the shuttle bus service. it must be accepted that there will be very few days when the carpark will be available to HISC patrons.

Long term plans outlined in the Broadmeadow Concept show this carpark being rezoned for retail outlets and accommodation. No parking will be available then !!

Traffic Access

Access to the site on the 3 ovals is via Turton Road, with both an entrance and exit. This access will be available only to traffic travelling from the southern direction. Any traffic from the north, east or west will not be able to directly access because of the concrete median strip on Turton Road. Vehicles will be required to use the recommended "ring road of Young, Womboin, Wallarah and Monash roads" all residential streets. And yet, considering this, the Monash Road and Turton Road intersection was not considered in the study of affected intersections between Lambton Road and Griffiths Road. This must make the traffic studies of the Turton Road intersections invalid !!

As well, on event days Venues NSW traffic controllers block access to both Monash Road and Young Road for several hours affecting all traffic wishing to enter these roads from the north and eastern direction. No warning is ever given to Monash Road residents of the time this will occur.

Appendix CC. Flood Risk Impact and Assessment

The stormwater drain along the southern side of the 3 ovals is the path a creek once took. This creek is now named Ker-rai Creek. As well, there is a natural spring that runs continually into the drain from the confines of Arthur Edden oval.

The green space of the 3 ovals is integral to managing flood water by absorbing rainwater and reducing runoff into the stormwater drain, thereby slowing down the flow. They are, in fact, like giant sponges as nature fully intended. Ker-rai Creek flows into Styx Creek so any overflow has repercussions further down, including the area of Hunter Park which is a section of the proposed Broadmeadow Concept.

To cover these 3 ovals with concrete would have serious impacts !!

City of Newcastle Council clearly state in their publication distributed to all ratepayers on the Throsby, Styx and Cottage Creek Flood Study

" We are legally responsible for flood risk management under legislation passed by the NSW Government "

2.1.2. Flooding of the Site

When the capacity of Lambton Ker-rai Creek is exceeded at Turton Road flood waters inundate the floodplain at the site of the 3 ovals **and the residential area to the south of Monash Road.**

The residents' fear of being flooded because of the construction and poor location of the HISC is very real. Major damage and loss of property, as well as the tragic loss of several lives, was experienced in June 2007 in the streets surrounding the 3 ovals. On a personal note, our family home was inundated with a metre of contaminated flood water and we lost irreplaceable family treasures. We were heartbroken over our losses and we were left with months of repairs and replacements.

This has resulted in dramatically increased insurance costs as well. Several insurance companies have refused to give us the Flood Cover option on our Home Insurance policy as we are now considered to be in a high risk flood zone.

We live in constant fear of the stormwater drain overflowing and flooding our home again and consequently are on watch every time we have a continued heavy downpour.

If this disaster occurred when the 3 ovals were green and absorbing rainwater, then the effects of rainwater runoff will be magnified many times if the 3 ovals are covered in concrete and a stadium.

Appendix UU. Flood Emergency Response Strategy

• Flood risk mitigation

outlines the flood mitigation measures proposed in the EIS. Rainwater tanks are to be installed on the western side of the proposed stadium. This, according to calculations, will be inadequate in a rain storm of greater than 7mm per hour and the overflow will be directed to the Ker-rai Creek stormwater drain resulting in an instant rise in water level in the drain !!

Item 6.14.3

Newcastle Basketball's answer in the EIS to this prospect is

" Suitable bollards will be employed along the northern and southern boundaries of the stadium carpark area to prevent vehicles from being washed into the Lambton Ker-rai Creek or other key drainage infrastructure ". The safety of patrons and players is outlined in **6.14.4**, also in the Flood Emergency Response Strategy as " The flood refuge area is the first floor level of the building. With an available floor area of around 2000 square metres, the Flood Refuge can accommodate up to 2000 people potentially on the site"

My very concerned understanding of these measures, namely a carpark being under water and so not allowing vehicles to exit, means that the level of runoff rooftop rainwater overflowing the collection tanks into the stormwater drain is above the top level and has reached extreme flood level.

If the HISC management has planned to evacuate patrons to the mezzanine floor and have bollards to prevent vehicles washing into the stormwater drain then the surrounding residences will be inundated. This must mean that the flood mitigation measures being planned are acknowledged as being potentially and obviously inadequate. It is indeed an acknowledgement from the HISC management of the definite probability of a flood event occurring. It would be difficult to see the benefit to the community of the HISC when your home has been inundated with rainwater that had run off the HISC roof and hard surfaces surrounding it !!

Appropriate and adequate mitigation measures must be installed to ensure there is absolutely no risk of resident's homes flooding due to the rainwater runoff from the stadium's very large roof area and carpark. Newcastle Basketball needs to ensure this happens.

Appendix IIv

• Loss of open green space and social impact

The most important thing I can say is "When it's gone it's gone forever " !!!!
Green space has to be defended for our future generations at all costs.

Presently, these 3 ovals are available every daylight hour of every week all year. They are free to be enjoyed by all citizens and I stress ALL individuals and families.

At this time, all children have the opportunity to run and kick a ball, play, and socialise on the free and open green space these 3 ovals offer them. Newcastle Basketball says the courts will be available to all, **but neglect to say at a cost.**

We must take into serious consideration that not all parents are in a financial position to pay membership fees for their children to play out of school hours sport. With the destruction of these 3 ovals they will miss the opportunity now available.

This can, and will, cause serious social and mental health impacts for families and must be considered with the projected population growth within the many additional housing units to be built on the present basketball stadium site. An estimated 20, 000 new families will be in residence to begin with.

These families must be included as this green space belongs to us all. On the other end of the scale, open and available green space has been found to be essential in delaying the onset of

dementia symptoms and general wellbeing, particularly important to be taken into account with the aging population living in our inner city suburbs. Importantly, the 1200 students of Lambton High School must be considered as well. The 3 ovals are the only direct access they have to play outdoor sport, conduct PE lessons and gather for school evacuation should the need arise. The importance of free access to green space for their physical as well as mental health can never be underestimated. Originally, approval for construction of the school was granted on the grounds that these 3 ovals were readily available and maintained. In fact, the school pays a fee to the Newcastle Council for their use.

Appendix G. Estimated Development Costs

• Projected costs of construction Report from a Quantity Surveyors

As at September 2024 the projected costs are \$ 82, 614, 419 exclusive of GST

Disturbingly, the above projected costs for the establishment of the HISC on these 3 ovals has revealed a major discrepancy in the funds held by Newcastle Basketball for construction.

At the present time we are led to believe that they hold less than the original \$25 million they were granted by the NSW Government. This is due to costs associated with the Hillsborough site.

The HISC construction has been applied for it to be built in stages. But, no costings have been released for each of these stages. If they plan to build just 6 new courts and a scaled down carpark in the first stage

- where are the costings for this first stage ??
- where is the finance for the next 2 stages coming from ??
- when is the finance for the next 2 stages going to become available ??
- if the last stage, which includes the show court, has to go to tender again, has contingency been made for the extra cost due to the inflation in prices we are all experiencing ??

We must take into account that Newcastle Basketball is a not for profit organisation so must rely on government grants. They applied to the Commonwealth Growing Regions Program for a further \$15 million earlier this year but it was not granted.

If Newcastle Basketball experiences difficulty with securing the extra \$60 to \$70 million they need to complete the HISC what will the outcome be ?

Are we going to see the 3 ovals destroyed for just 6 courts and a scaled down carpark of only 110 spaces ? This would be an extremely disappointing outcome for all the sporting parties involved.

More certainty regarding funding grants to Newcastle Basketball surely must be available before it's too late. Approval cannot be given before this is available.

Landowners Consent - Hunter Indoor Sports Centre Appendix QQ. Site Description

I note with some concern that the Lots are described as having a total area of 7.83 ha and feature 3 ovals and an amenities block and a grassed field used for sporting activities. Given that the total size of the 3 ovals in Newcastle Basketball's HISC proposal is calculated at approximately 3.1 ha my question that must be asked is **is it simply a miscalculation or are there future plans yet to be revealed ?**

Disappointingly, I must repeat that the required Communication and Engagement with all affected residents according to the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines was not undertaken by Newcastle Basketball.

A much more appropriate site for the needed HISC and the retention of free, open and available green space on the 3 ovals must be our goal. In our vibrant Newcastle city that prides itself on environmental sustainability I cannot believe this is not possible.

I have been looking at the entire Broadmeadow Concept Plan proposed by the NSW Government and the Newcastle Council

- The overall site size for the Broadmeadow Concept Plan is reported as 313 ha
- The size of the site of the 3 ovals proposed for the HISC is 3 ha with a carpark !
- This according to my mathematics is only 1% of the entire area. It would mean all sports would be in the same area designated as a sporting precinct (that's across Turton Road and incorporates the McDonald Jones Stadium, hockey fields, league fields etc) and in the same area with the planned housing with easy access to all.
- It's hard to believe that just 1% of space cannot be found within the area to preserve a very valuable 3 ovals to be free for all.

This would be a small effort for such a large benefit for all the sports teams that use it, residents now and in the future, and the high school students who use it on a daily basis.

There are way too many social impacts if we do not get this right. Future generations of junior Novocastrian sportspeople and junior basketballers are relying on us all.

Finally,

The area of the 3 ovals already has flooding issues.

The area surrounding the 3 ovals already has traffic issues.

The area surrounding the 3 ovals already has parking issues.

For all these reasons, which increasingly affect our enjoyment of our own home, and more, this is just not the right location for the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre.

The benefits simply do not outweigh the issues that will result.

Thank you for reading my submission.