

I strongly object to the Hunter Indoor Sports centre Proposal (HISC). Although I agree the current facility of Newcastle Basketball is outdated and needs updating, I disagree that the Blackley and Wallarah Ovals are a suitable location.

My concerns are:

1. Lack of Resident Consultation
2. Loss of Community Access Green Space
3. Loss of Use of the ovals to Lambton High students
4. Loss of the community bike path
5. Flood zone risk
6. Ovals are already fully utilised
7. Parking and noise impact
8. Lack of transparency about the future funding source and risk of a half complete inadequate facility.
9. Constant lighting disturbing residents
10. Lack of clarity over use and access

1. I live 190 m from the proposed development. (Attachment 1- the site of the ovals (red arrow) taken from the road at the end of my driveway). I can see the ovals from my front garden. I was not included in the community consultation notification, (Appendix LL pg 24) and did not even know the meetings were scheduled until after they had occurred. I do not feel the residents who will be substantially impacted by this development have had an opportunity to be heard. Local community opposition has been loud and evident, but no attempt has been made to allow these voices to be heard. This will impact my day-to-day life, and it is inadequate to not be consulted prior to the Major Projects stage. In the list of Community consultation (pg. 12& 55 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) local residents are strikingly absent. A letterbox drop to 240 residents (pg 55 EIS) is manifestly inadequate when my home is just outside of this zone.

2. Community access green space is precious and once lost, is gone forever. This project results in a net loss of green space for our community without adequate alternatives. The substantial increase in nearby residents in the Broadmeadow Place strategy makes maintaining free community access green spaces even more important. The ovals are used on a daily basis- by residents, organised sport, and Lambton High school. It is not suitable to suggest this use can be met by nearby green fields (e.g. Ford, Kentish ovals) as these spaces are already fully utilised. In addition, this proposal takes a currently free access community space with equity of access and replaces it with an access limited, cost involved facility, which overall means a net loss of community amenity.

3. Lambton High school uses the ovals on a daily basis- the students use them at recess and lunch, as well as for their organised PE and sport sessions. This is essential to meet the curriculum of NSW secondary students, as well as allowing recreation and exercise during their lesson breaks. This is essential for mental and physical health. Ongoing temporary access during construction is meaningless. The students already have access to undercover basketball courts in the covered outdoor learning area, so access to the external half outdoor court adds nothing (pg. 58-59 EIS). It is disingenuous to suggest the students could use the green spaces up the road- this changes a free access green area to an excursion requiring a parent permission note and two supervising teachers- clearly not a twice a day every day solution. As a parent of a Lambton High student, students need space and time to move their bodies for optimal health and learning. Negotiating use of an indoor space (pg 59, 64 EIS) does not replace access to

outdoor green spaces. The remnant green space (pg 62 EIS) is not adequate for the number of students.

The remaining small area of green space at the front of the school is woefully inadequate for the current > 1000 students, and with increased population density in the Broadmeadow Place strategy, the school facilities need to be maintained, not reduced as the student population will climb.

4. The cycle path along the Lambton Ker-rai creek is used as a commuter bike path to the city, and John Hunter Hospital as well as a recreation track by the local community. When governments are adding cycleways to encourage bike use (Hunter Regional Plan 2041 Objective 4- connected without car-dependent communities), the loss of a chunk of this path (Figure 4 Pg 17, pg.63 EIS) does not make sense.

5. On moving from Mount Hutton to New Lambton in 2023, my Home and Contents insurance cost escalated sharply, and many insurers would not offer coverage at all. This is because of the substantial flood risk in the area of this proposal (Pg 13, 86 EIS). Many local residents have lived through flooding in this area even with the current water drainage. The ovals function as a huge sponge, slowing and managing the flow of water into the Ker-Rai creek drainage system. With the loss of this huge land mass to absorb and manage rainwater flow, and a very inadequate plan in the proposal, all of this water will quickly overwhelm the Ker-rai drainage system and substantially increase the risk of flooding in the surrounding streets. The concrete car park will not absorb or hold water (Pg 13 EIS), but instead it will run off towards local residences. For this critical reason, this green space must be maintained.

6. The identified low utilisation (Pg. 57 EIS) does not reflect current usage. The ovals have daily use of the schools, community, and organised sport, including soccer and cricket. Access to community ovals is highly contested, with local clubs turning players away as they cannot be accommodated in the current facilities. Loss of these three ovals will mean even fewer opportunities for access. As this situation exists in all the limited green space in the area, there are no unoccupied fields this can be transferred to. Children and adults should be able to train for and play community sport in their local area. (Hunter Regional Plan 2041 Objective 3- Create 15-minute neighbourhoods). With the expansion of residents in the Broadmeadow precinct, the demand for these spaces will rise.

7. The number of planned car parks (240; Page 10 EIS), as well as difficulty accessing them (Left turn only, in and out on Turton Road; Pg 77 EIS) is well under the number of car parks required for the stated number of people per hour (500+ during peak times 4-8pm daily) who will use the proposed Basketball courts. As local residents we acknowledge the impact on our narrow streets of the parking for events at MacDonald Jones Stadium- the NRL games and A- League games, as well as special events (e.g. concerts, motorbike event). The nearby Hockey International Stadium holds event days for which parking overflows into our streets. The streets are narrow- when parked legally on both sides it is difficult for emergency vehicles to access. The Stadium publishes each year a list of dates for the local residents to allow them to be aware of when these events occur- an example of good community engagement. Sadly, on most occasions, cars are illegally parked in the nearby streets, despite clear road markings. When this occurs, I am unable to gain access to my property by car as the road is too narrow to allow access. As my home is 190m from the new stadium, and the inadequate parking provisions for regular use, let alone event use, it is likely that our streets will be parked out, and often illegally parked out by users of the proposed stadium daily. In addition, the noise disturbance as patrons

walk back their vehicles with bouncing basketballs potentially up to 11pm at night will mean this noise is a constant 7 day per week disturbance to residents. This situation will exist 6am-11pm 7 days per week (Pg 32 EIS).

Also of note, the proposed use of the MacDonald Jones carpark for event days by Newcastle Basketball (pg 79 EIS) is not supported by the Broadmeadow Place proposal rezoning to E2 Commercial which may result in this car park no longer existing.

The traffic impact study has no data on the impact on the local resident roads directly adjacent to the proposal such as Duke, Gloucester, Marina, Young Roads. This is essential information to consider and does not exist.

8. Where is the funding for completion of the proposed project to come from? The initial grant of 25 million, which has now reduced to below 20 million as this is the third attempt at finding a suitable site is 70 million below the final project estimate cost, without adding the cost of inflation or ongoing maintenance of the facility. There is no clarity on where the rest of the cost will come from (pg. 3 Scoping report (SR)). Less than half the project is currently funded. It is my understanding that the \$15 million grant application noted on pg. 5 of the scoping document was NOT successful. This risks the final project being very much smaller and half complete, so the facility the community ends up with paying to access in place of their green fields is not what is described in the proposal.

9. The proposal has 24/7 lighting attachment to it- disturbing the local community who currently contend with lighting from MacDonald Jones Stadium and the International Hockey field. Although reduced overnight, it is never off completely (pg.69-70 EIS), adding to the pre-existing light pollution. It also makes the outdoor gym, courts, seating and gathering areas usable 24/7, potentially causing a noise disturbance.

10. Although named the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre, the project description and applicant (Basketball Association of Newcastle) clearly indicates the application is for a new basketball complex. I note the application contains Mezzanine level function rooms. What are these rooms planned to be used for, and how often? Will this add to the impact on the local community? No transparency is available as to the full use of the proposed development.

Overall, the improved amenity to the members of Newcastle Basketball is far outweighed by the negative impacts of this proposed development and I recommend this proposal be declined and an alternative site for the development be sought.

Dr Shaylee Iles

23rd October 2024