



9 December 2024

To Whom it May Concern,

Letter of Support – Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs' Centre of Excellence

It gives me great pleasure to submit a statement on behalf of the National Rugby League (NRL) supporting the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs' application for the proposed Centre of Excellence at Belmore Sports Ground.

Rugby League is the major elite and participation sport played in New South Wales.

The Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs has a rich history in the NRL and is committed to fostering rugby league from the grassroots to the elite as well as serving as the heartbeat of the local community. Its current facilities, however, do not meet the standards required for a club of its stature, particularly as the club prepares to enter the NRLW in 2025. The proposed Centre of Excellence will address these deficiencies by providing state-of-the-art facilities that support both male and female athletes.

Community and Economic Impact

The Belmore area, where the Centre will be located, is a vibrant and multicultural community. The development of the Centre of Excellence is expected to bring significant community and economic benefits, including:

Economic Stimulus – the construction and ongoing operation of the Centre will create jobs and stimulate local businesses. The addition of 62 parking spaces and improved pedestrian access will enhance the overall usability of the Belmore Sports Ground.

Community Engagement – the Centre will serve as a hub for community activities, providing new change rooms, toilets, and storage spaces that will benefit local sport teams and community groups.

Youth Development – The Centre will support youth development programs, ensuring that young athletes have access to top-tier training and development pathways.

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Benefits of the Centre of Excellence

The Bulldogs' catchment area includes a diverse population with a strong passion for rugby league. The Centre will provide numerous benefits, including:

Enhanced Training Facilities – the Centre will include gymnasiums, medical and rehabilitation facilities, aquatic recovery pools, and lecture theatres, ensuring athletes have access to the best possible resources.

Inclusivity and Gender Equality – the Centre will be the first NRL gender-equal high-performance centre in Australia, with equal facilities for male and female athletes.

Social Impact – by promoting inclusivity and providing opportunities for all community members, the Centre will foster social cohesion and improve the health and well-being outcomes across the community.

The Bulldogs publicly committed to creating a facility that not only supports athletes but also serves the broader community. This commitment is reflected in the design and planned operations of the Centre, which will support both the NRL and NRLW teams, as well as community programs.

The NRL is in full support of the Bulldogs' proposed Centre of Excellence and believes it will deliver major benefits to rugby league and the Belmore community more broadly.

Please contact me with any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Abdo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Abdo
Chief Executive Officer
National Rugby League

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