

I object to the proposed Hunter Indoor Sports Centre at this location (Wallarrah & Blackley Ovals, New Lambton). My reasons are grounded in the ill-considered site choice and the resulting adverse impacts. Having read the reports I am concerned about the lack of insight the planners seem to have about the very real permanent impacts these changes will have on residents and students at Lambton HS. I find the statement that “*no adverse environmental, social or economic impacts will result from the proposal*” ridiculous. How can they believe a development of this size will have no impact on the local community and their day to day liveability? A significantly better alternative is the Hunter Park sporting precinct, which aligns with strategic planning and delivers broader community benefit. My concerns are outlined as follows:

1) Disruption to Lambton High School

- **Usage:** The ovals serve 1,200 students for curriculum (PDHPE), recess/lunch, special events (e.g., colour runs, cross-country), and emergency evacuation. I do not find the mitigation for the loss of these ovals acceptable- statements that students can use nearby ovals such as Arthur Edden and Harker oval simply are not true. My understanding is there is no agreement for Lambton HS to use either of these locked ovals. This would mean the next option is Ford or Kentish. To access either of these ovals requires crossing a road which then has great implications for teacher ratios, shortens lesson time and adds organisational and safety burdens on teachers and students.
- **Indoor usage:** The proponents claim that Lambton HS will be granted “significant access” to the new facility is inadequate—an indoor venue cannot replicate open air green soft ovals and access to sunlight and fresh air. These students do not need more time inside - they are in class all day.
- **Construction noise:** said to be “limited” to 7am-6pm Monday to Friday - prime time for when students are in class attempting to learn. The proponents say the construction team will liaise with the school about noise - but there are in class assessments and every day learning every single school day that will be disrupted. The school also has 8 special needs classes, many of which are likely to contain students with sensitivity to noise.
- **Flooding in the Covered outdoor area:** “*Within the outdoor covered area in the south-west corner of Lambton High School the baseline velocities of 0.1-0.2 m/s are increased to 0.3-0.7 m/s.*” This indicates that the flood risk at Lambton high will increase as a result of this development, which puts students safety at risk.

2) Traffic, access and parking concerns

- **Peak conflict:** Basketball use is anticipated between 4-9 pm on weekdays (up to 500 visitors/hour), coinciding with commuter peaks on Turton Road—raising legitimate concerns about congestion, queuing, and safety. Again the proponent quotes a report that says these roads can cope with this much excess traffic - I question the legitimacy of this. They were asked to prepare updated traffic measures yet I fail to see evidence of this.

- **Overflow plans:** I was shocked to see overflow measures for events with up to 1700 people being “*park in adjacent streets*”. The fact the proponents think this is acceptable is very concerning. These streets are narrow and when cars are parked on both sides it is impossible to pass each other. This requires great safety concerns as you can expect parents to be flying around these streets looking for parking for their child's games or training.
- **Access to the site:** the left in/left out access to the site means only people travelling from the south can easily access the entry way. This means that all other cars entering will be forced to drive around the local streets trying to navigate their way back to the carpark. Human behaviour tells us it is highly unlikely people will do this and the quickest drop off point will be the Monash rd bridge. Monash road doesn't have footpaths on either side so dropping children off in the middle of the road creates significant danger. If parents want to park and come in, they will look for spots on the local side streets like Monash rd, Gloucester ave, Marina ave.
- **The use of boomgates:** Despite reading Transport NSW don't support boomgates, due to the potential for queuing on Turton road, I read that boomgates or a ticketing agent are again part of the plan. This is very concerning.

4) Cost and justification concerns

- **Total projected cost:** exceeds \$90 million, but the proponent recently stated they only have \$22million left—creating a substantial funding gap.
- The proponent has told basketball patrons they will aim for funding for stage one (which they claim is \$35 million) and will then extend their lease where they currently are by another 10 years - completely contrary to their reports that they must vacate the current site by 2028 (source: Tony Guilhort Teams meeting 3/9/2025). What will this mean in terms of disruption from construction if this build goes on for many years? What if the extra funding is never secured?

Conclusion

This is not a debate about indoor sport; it is about putting the right facility in the right place. Building HISC on these ovals trades away essential community green space, compromises school operations, and pushes traffic/parking burdens onto residents. I have not covered flooding as it is not an area I know a lot about but I do have big concerns about building on a flood plain. The proposal does not meet DPHI guidelines of being in the best interests of the public in that the benefits for the basketball community do not outweigh the permanent , significant impacts on the surrounding community. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposal be rejected at this location.



Picture shows the high school evacuating onto the ovals - where will all of these people safely go?