

Submission in Support of the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre (HISC)

Introduction

I wish to formally record my support for the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre (HISC).

Although I am Director of RDA Consultancy, which provides governance, risk and compliance services to Basketball NSW, this submission is made as a personal contribution. My comments are grounded in both professional expertise and long-standing involvement in community governance, sport, and risk management.

The project is not only critical for the future of basketball in the Hunter region but also a much-needed piece of social and sporting infrastructure that will bring people together, strengthen community ties, and support population growth in Newcastle and the Lower Hunter.

Historical and Social Context

Basketball has a rich history in Newcastle. The Newcastle Basketball Stadium at Broadmeadow has served the community for over 55 years, producing generations of players, coaches, volunteers, and administrators. It has been the home of elite competitions and grassroots participation, bringing together diverse groups — from school children and social players to state and national representatives.

However, the stadium is now outdated, unable to meet demand, and in need of replacement. Each year, more than 500 players are turned away due to lack of court availability. With Newcastle's population continuing to grow and diversify, this is no longer sustainable.

The HISC project represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to deliver a modern, multi-purpose facility that honours this history while ensuring basketball — and other indoor sports — can thrive for the next 50 years. Importantly, it will also function as a hub that draws communities together in a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment, while freeing the Broadmeadow site for redevelopment in line with the City's broader planning strategy.

Community Need and Broader Benefits

Participation & Inclusion:

The HISC will support basketball, netball, futsal, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, and other sports. It will encourage participation across all ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds, including programs tailored for women and girls, First Nations communities, and people living with disability.

Health & Wellbeing:

Accessible, modern facilities will contribute to physical and mental wellbeing, especially as Newcastle faces population growth and increasing health challenges.

Events & Economy:

By hosting regional, state, and potentially national competitions, HISC will attract visitors, boost tourism, and support local business.



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Education & Schools:

Local schools, including Lambton High, will benefit from direct access to high-quality facilities for both curriculum and extracurricular sport.

Urban Renewal:

The project complements the Broadmeadow Place Strategy, providing a pathway to unlock new housing and development opportunities.

Risk Assessment and Viability

As part of my professional background in governance and risk management, I have undertaken a site-specific risk assessment. While no project is without risk, I believe the HISC can be delivered responsibly with appropriate controls.

Appendix – Risk Register

Risk	Rating	Description	Controls
Flooding and Stormwater	High	Redevelopment could exacerbate local flooding.	Retention/detention basins; permeable surfaces; Flood Emergency Response Plan; independent flood audit.
Traffic & Parking	High	Event clashes could overwhelm roads and local amenity.	Traffic/Event Management Plan; overflow parking agreements; public transport integration; monitoring.
Loss of Green Space	Medium-High	Conversion of ovals reduces open space for cricket, football, schools.	Guarantee alternative facilities; agreements with clubs; landscaping buffers; community access policy.
Financial Sustainability	Medium-High	Construction overruns or insufficient operating revenue.	Multi-stream funding; diversified revenue; sinking fund; independent governance board.
Community Opposition	Medium	Loss of trust if groups excluded.	Community Reference Group; reporting; liaison officer; CSR initiatives.
Environmental Impacts	Medium	Loss of trees, biodiversity reduction.	Biodiversity offsetting; native replanting; energy-efficient infrastructure; audits.
Construction Impacts	Medium	Noise, dust, access disruption.	CEMP with restricted hours; dust/noise suppression; neighbour communication.
Operational Safety	Medium	Incidents during large events.	Event Safety compliance; CCTV/security; drills with emergency services; accessible evacuation.
Maintenance & Asset Deterioration	Medium	Poor upkeep leading to high costs.	20-year Asset Maintenance Plan; lifecycle cost modelling; audits; energy-efficient systems.
Strategic Alignment	Low-Medium	Future land use changes could conflict.	Integration with city strategy; multi-purpose design; secure tenure protections.



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Responsible Growth and Community Development

Newcastle is growing rapidly. The city and its surrounding suburbs must provide infrastructure that matches the needs of its people — not only in transport and housing, but in health, recreation, and community connection.

HISC embodies this principle. It is an investment in people, health, and community cohesion. It demonstrates that growth can be achieved responsibly, in a way that balances development with environmental protection, inclusivity, and long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

The Hunter Indoor Sports Centre is:

- A necessary replacement for an ageing facility.
- A community asset that will bring people together across sport, culture, and generations.
- A regional economic driver that aligns with Newcastle's growth strategy.
- A project with manageable risks that can be controlled through enforceable conditions and transparent governance.

For these reasons, I urge the Department to approve HISC, subject to appropriate conditions ensuring that mitigation measures are robust, enforceable, and inclusive of the community.

This is a rare chance to deliver infrastructure that honours Newcastle's sporting history while building for its future.

Kind regards

Raffaele D'Angelo

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I, Raffaele D'Angelo, confirm that:

- *I have read and understand the Department's Privacy Statement.*
- *The factual statements in this submission are correct, and the opinions expressed are honestly held.*
- *Nothing in this submission is false or misleading, nor have I omitted anything which would make the submission misleading.*
- *This submission does not contain offensive, threatening, or defamatory content.*
- *Any third-party content included has been used with permission or under licence.*
- *I have declared any reportable political donations as required under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*
- *I acknowledge that the Department will publish my submission (including name unless I request it to be withheld) and may reproduce it or convert it for accessibility purposes.*

