

Beecroft Sports Club Incorporated
Cheltenham Oval, Castle Howard Rd
Cheltenham NSW 2119



Submission to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure on the North West Rail Link Environmental Impact Statement 1

Application no. SSL-5100

Attention: Director, Infrastructure Projects

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Beecroft Sports Club (the **Club**), which was established in 1956, acts on behalf of Netball, Football and Cricket sporting divisions to coordinate use of shared facilities at Cheltenham Oval and provide assistance with administration.

The Club is an integral part of the local Beecroft/Cheltenham community. Collectively, the divisions have almost 1,000 members (Netball, 276; Cricket, 85; and Football, 579). Most come from Beecroft/Cheltenham, with some from surrounding suburbs, and members range from 4 to 60 years of age. We participate in fundraising events and activities that support local businesses, promote healthy participation in sport at all ages, and seek to improve local sporting facilities.

Convenient and safe access to high quality, local facilities is absolutely essential in maintaining the Club's health and allowing it to continue to be of value to the community.

I write as President of the Club regarding proposed works on the North West Rail Link (**NRWL**) that will affect facilities at Cheltenham Oval. I refer to the Environmental Impact Statement 1 (**EIS 1**), as well as correspondence from Hornsby Shire Council, detailing that construction of a service centre at Cheltenham Oval will require the demolition of four netball courts and lights, three cricket nets, the amenities building, play equipment and the car park. Our understanding is that construction will have no effect on the oval playing surface.

The Club conditionally supports the proposal. However, loss of facilities during construction will have a significant negative impact on the Club and its divisions. Our support is therefore predicated by the assumption that alternative facilities will be provided for use during the period of construction. These alternative facilities must be to the satisfaction of all divisions of the Club.

This response comprises a summary of options put forward by the divisions, and a list of factors that should be considered in determining the best alternatives.

Beecroft Sports Club Incorporated

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Secretary: Lachlan Marginson | 0402 767 455 | in2cricket@beecroftcricket.com
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I direct you to separate submissions by the Beecroft Netball, Cricket and Football divisions which explain in detail the impact construction will have on each division. These submissions set out a number of options for the provision of alternate facilities. The Club fully supports these submissions and endorses the options put forward.

The table below sets out a summary of proposed options, in order of preference:

Facility	Currently used for:	Impact	Alternatives (in order of preference)
Oval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football training and matches Cricket matches, training & Junior In2Cricket programme School sport PSSA – Beecroft Zone 	No impact	N/A
4 netball courts with lights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Netball training School sport Grading and umpire training PSSA – Beecroft Zone 	Demolished	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Construct courts, parking, amenities and lighting on the far side of the oval, opposite the existing amenities building. Upgrade tennis courts at Cheltenham Recreation Club to be multipurpose with lighting. Upgrade of the tennis courts at Cheltenham Girls High School, use of existing courts and the installation of lighting. Installation of netball courts, parking, amenities and lighting at Lyne Park
3 cricket nets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cricket training (Note: Nets must be co-located with grassed area for training) 	Demolished	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Build 3 replacement nets at Cheltenham Oval located in the South-West corner Build 3 replacement nets at Booth Park Build 3 replacement nets at Lyne Park
Amenities building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change rooms Toilets Large meeting room Extensive, secure storage for each division Canteen Council storage room Large covered area 	Demolished	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary amenities building fulfilling all these functions to be located on site, not encroaching on oval
Car park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking by all divisions and local community 	Demolished	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Construct new car park on the far side of the oval

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the NWRL and the Council to agree which options are most appropriate and where alternative facilities should be located. We ask that in making these decisions consideration be given to the following points:

1. There is a scarcity of sporting facilities in the immediate area

The facilities at Cheltenham Oval are the only publicly available multi-sport facilities in the Beecroft/Cheltenham area. And Cheltenham Oval is the only full-size field.

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- Cricket nets and ovals are used four nights per week and on Saturday and Sundays during the period from September to March each year. And for pre-season training from July.
- Netball courts are used five nights per week and during the off season for grading and umpire training.
- The oval is used for training every night of the week during the football season, for matches all day Saturday and often also on Sunday. Beecroft Football Club has one of the highest ground utilisation rates in the GHFA.

The facilities are also used by the Primary School Sporting Association - Beecroft Zone, which includes 11 schools on a rotating schedule. As well as Cheltenham Girls High School, Beecroft Primary School, representative cricket teams from HK&HDCA, St Gerards Netball Club, Arden Primary School, Epping Heights Primary School, and not least, local families.

High priority needs to be given to at least maintaining, if not improving access to sporting facilities in the local area.

2. Local facilities are essential for divisions to recruit players and maintain their identity and viability

Having a local home ground is an absolute essential for any club. It is important because it is close and convenient for players and parents, and because it is familiar and provides a gameday advantage.

As such, locating alternative facilities outside the Beecroft/Cheltenham area will impair the Club's ability to retain players and recruit new ones. Over the long course of construction this has the potential to harm the viability of the divisions -- particularly netball and cricket -- even to the point that they disappear.

In the case of Netball there is already dissatisfaction that players have to travel through heavy traffic to play matches at Pennant Hills. Friday night matches have had to be rescheduled to later to account for traffic. For this reason, the option to relocate netball training to Pennant Hills Park is not acceptable. A senior member of the Netball division commented in response to this: "We may as well not have a club."

Furthermore, the identity and future of the Club depends on *shared* facilities being available. Splitting facilities up for each division should be a last resort.

3. Construction will limit access to the oval and increase risks to safety

The playing surface will not be affected, but access will be restricted owing to increased traffic movements around the site and the loss of the car park. Moreover, there is concern for safety of players and spectators because of the lack of parking and increased traffic levels around the oval.

4. The amenities building serves many purposes

The amenities building houses change rooms, toilets, a large meeting room, extensive, secure storage for each of the divisions, a canteen, Council storage room, and also provides a large covered area for parents and children in case of rain and to protect spectators from the sun during the day.

Our understanding is that a temporary amenities building will be provided for the duration of the construction. The temporary amenities building needs to provide for all of these functions.¹ Careful consideration must also be given to where the temporary building is located.

In addition, storage in the building was upgraded last year at considerable cost to the Club and each of the divisions (\$17,500 in total). The loss of this investment is noted with considerable regret, as it took some 20 years for the Club (a not-for-profit community group) to reach a financial position where it could afford the renovation.

5. Facilities that are newly constructed or enhanced as alternatives lesson ‘make good’ requirements and improve local facilities

Some of the options outlined above call for the enhancement of existing community facilities or the construction of new facilities to be used as alternatives for those that will be demolished.

Any newly constructed facilities or existing facilities that are enhanced for use during the period of construction has the potential to both lessen the cost of ‘making good’ the facilities at Cheltenham Oval at the completion of construction, and also markedly increase access to facilities in the Cheltenham/Beecroft area.

The five points raised above should be considered in deciding which options are most appropriate and where alternative facilities should be located.

In closing, I will emphasise that high quality, local sporting facilities are essential to the Community and critical in maintaining the Sports Club’s health. I reiterate our willingness to work with the NWRL and the Council to devise a plan for the period of construction that is satisfactory to all parties.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly, and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Burger
President, Beecroft Sports Club

¹ Note in addition that GHFA mandates that premier league football teams provide changes rooms and a canteen at their home ground.