

# Hunter Indoor Sports Centre



**Project Status - November 2024**



## Overview

The Hunter Indoor Sports Centre will deliver state of the art multi-purpose indoor sports courts; allied health suites; cafe, social spaces; gym/movement studio, multi-purpose function rooms; change rooms; spectator seating and car parking. Co-located with the visionary Hunter Park Precinct, the project will deliver crucial indoor sport infrastructure to serve the Lower Hunter as well as providing an excellence hub for the Hunter Region.

The design vision for the Hunter Indoor Sports Centre (HISC) is for a multifaceted sports hub that serves the whole community. All facilities are fully accessible and inclusive for all users regardless of age or ability. Courts will be marked and fitted out for multiple sports including basketball, netball, volleyball, badminton and futsal.

The facility has been designed in modules to enable a range of activities and services to be provided at one time but connected through a central movement zone.

## Background

- The existing stadium site is earmarked as a first mover site (within 5 years) for future development as part of the Broadmeadow Place Strategy.
  - proposed to be zoned R4 high density residential with 90m height limit and 4:1 floor ratio
- Basketball Association of Newcastle Limited (BANL) already has over 6,000 members but many others are unable to participate due to a lack of courts.
  - Over 500 players are turned away each season, there is growth potential for over 10,000 members
- There is a chronic shortfall in indoor sports courts in the Newcastle area (around 20 needed to cater for demand) and the current 55-year-old facility is effectively past the end of its useful life.
- BANL has \$25m in funding from the NSW Government from the 2019 state election.
- Numerous alternative sites were investigated and found to be unviable with almost \$1m expended on previous investigations and planning assessments.
- A site at Blackley and Wallarah Ovals was formally offered to Newcastle Basketball via the City of Newcastle and State Government in March 2023 following preliminary site assessments and investigations.
- A design for a state significant 12 court Hunter Indoor Sports Centre has been prepared to meet contemporary standards and growing demand of for indoor sports in the region.
- BANL's project team have developed a comprehensive suite of planning and assessment documentation to satisfy a State Significant Development Application which has now been submitted for assessment.



6,000 Members



20 Indoor Courts  
Needed



\$25m Funding

## Benefits

The project will increase the opportunity for sport and physical activity including basketball, volleyball, pickleball, netball, futsal, and badminton along with a range of other indoor activities for schools and other community groups. The HISC will host a range of activities from local community focused programs through to national events generating multi-faceted and significant economic and social benefits for the Hunter Region. The facility will act as a hub for regional sport and health partners.

The HISC will allow more people and diverse communities to participate and be involved in indoor sport through inclusive and accessible design and increased capacity, resulting in an increase in physical activity. Without intervention, participation and engagement rates will remain low, about 50% lower than potential, and compound the health impacts related to physical inactivity which are already apparent and will only be exacerbated by forecast population growth.

## Social benefits

- The facility will provide increased access and opportunity for participation in indoor sports within a welcoming and safe environment, including a place for older age groups to participate in physical activity in a safe and controlled environment.
- Sporting and recreational activities and events contribute to the development of stronger social networks and more cohesive communities – for participants, volunteers, and supporters. The HISC will provide increased opportunities for social engagement, support local community networks, and create an inclusive environment for participants, volunteers, and supporters.

## Health benefits

- Improvement in the health and wellbeing for over 600,000 local and regional visitors including children, young people, families, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people who are socially disadvantaged, seniors and people with disabilities.

## Economic benefits

- Visitors to special events at the HISC (estimated to be per 35,000 per annum) will spend within the LGA. Informed by previous events, tourism data and anecdotal feedback from BANL, it is forecast that one-third of event visitors will come from outside the LGA, generating an average expenditure of \$144/person.
- The development of the HISC will generate 260 construction jobs (with 115 direct jobs).
- The operation of the HISC will generate 91 operational jobs (including 52 direct jobs).
- Completion of the whole project and relocation of BANL will free up the current site for redevelopment and help facilitate implementation of the Broadmeadow Place Strategy.



Increasing economic opportunity, health and economic productivity



Increasing visitor / tourist and resident expenditure



Increasing social inclusion and community connectedness



Construction and ongoing employment benefits

## Planning and Environmental Considerations

BANL's project team have developed a comprehensive suite of planning and assessment documentation to satisfy a State Significant Development Application (SSDA). The project has been reviewed by the State Design Review Panel and the Test of Adequacy is complete. A formal submission was made in late September. Land Owner's Consent to lodge the SSDA has been provided by Crown Lands.

## SSDA Process

- The SSDA is an extensive and transparent 10 step process which includes a public exhibition process prior to assessment by the Department of Planning and potentially the NSW Independent Planning Commission.
- This process will consider all potential environmental and social impacts and benefits of the project in order to make a determination.
- A comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared for the project including 45 supporting reports, assessments, and/or management plans.
- The project has been reviewed by the State Design Review Panel with comment incorporated into the developed design.
- Design and planning documents were submitted for the Test of Adequacy with responses to comments now resolved for formal SSDA submission.

## Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

- An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) has been prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment to identify any potential Aboriginal objects and other cultural heritage values within the study area.
- The assessment found that the study area is unlikely to contain Aboriginal objects based on the following:
  - An Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) extensive search and a review of previous archaeological literature did not reveal any previously known Aboriginal sites within the study area.
  - No previously unrecorded Aboriginal objects, sites or areas of potential archaeological deposits were identified within the study area as a result of the archaeological survey.
  - The study area has been subject to considerable modification from historical disturbance, with recorded fill / topsoil reaching depths of 1.4m.

## Flooding

- The potential impact of the proposed development has been considered in terms of potential changes to existing flood behaviour. The design has been modified to mitigate impacts to a point where the post-development change is negligible. At the 1% AEP (2050) event, changes in the modelled peak flood level are effectively contained within the site

## Site Contamination

- Site contamination testing identified elevated concentrations of contaminants of potential concern (CoPC) were prevalent across the entirety of the site. Based on these findings, additional testing was undertaken. The additional testing and subsequent reporting found the remediation strategy for the site will be to cap and contain the disturbed soil noting the significant expense of removing contaminated soil from site would be prohibitive to any future development. The project will effectively address this issue by capping and containing the contaminated soil.

## Traffic and Carparking

- Extensive traffic and car parking modelling has been undertaken to ensure adequate provisions are in place to mitigate impacts to existing traffic conditions and optimise parking availability.
- Major events will be coordinated with other venues in the area to ensure there are no significant conflicts.

## Sustainable Design

- The proposal incorporates initiatives to contribute positively to energy efficiency and environmental sustainability to reduce energy and water consumption.

## Consultation and Support

- Community and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken by the project team in the preparation of the design and preparation of the SSDA documents. This includes direct engagement and consultation with:
  - City of Newcastle Council and State government agencies (Transport for NSW, Office of Sport, Department of Education, Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure, Venues NSW, NSW Police, Crown Lands, Government Architect, DPE – Biodiversity Conservation and Fire and Rescue NSW).
  - The Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council and NSW Aboriginal Land Council.
  - Community organisations (Basketball Association of Newcastle community, Lambton High School, Lambton High School Parents & Citizens Committee, local sporting authorities [Newcastle District Cricket Association, Newcastle Football Association & Lambton Jaffas Football Club]).
  - Adjoining landowners and occupants.
  - Regional and state sporting organisations
- The outcomes of the community and stakeholder engagement have been incorporated into the project planning:
  - Some issues related to the proposal have been raised by the community and specific stakeholders, these are outlined in the Environmental Impact Statement along with subsequent planning responses.
- As noted above, the SSDA process will also include a public exhibition period and provide a further opportunity for community and stakeholder submissions.
- Formal project support has been received from a range of stakeholders including City of Newcastle, Newcastle District Cricket Association, Newcastle Football Association, Basketball NSW, Netball NSW, Volleyball NSW, Hunter Academy of Sport, Hunter Volleyball and Hunter Pickleball.
- Over 2,000 people have indicated support for the project through online and hard copy petitions.

## Timeline

|                        | 2024 |    |    |    | 2025 |    |    |    | 2026 |    |    |    |
|------------------------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
|                        | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Concept Design         | ■    | ■  | ■  |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |
| Stakeholder Engagement | ■    | ■  | ■  |    |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |
| Development Assessment |      |    |    | ■  | ■    | ■  | ■  | ■  |      |    |    |    |
| Detailed design        |      |    |    | ■  | ■    | ■  | ■  | ■  |      |    |    |    |
| Tender                 |      |    |    |    |      |    | ■  | ■  |      |    |    |    |
| Construction           |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    | ■    | ■  | ■  | ■  |



## Design Images













