



BURWOOD COUNCIL

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The Committee Manager
Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

File No: P.0200.000
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Date: 04 AUG 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

Sportsground Management in NSW

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the issue for the inquiry, in order as per the letter received on 7 July, 2006.

1. Adequacy of provision of sportsgrounds in key demand areas

- The demand for supply of sportsgrounds in the Burwood LGA exceeds the capacity to supply;
- Information obtained from local sporting clubs shows significant increases in the number of registered players over the last three (3) years, with soccer (50-55%), cricket (30%) and touch football (25%);
- There has been a rapid increase in the number of senior players re-entering competitive sport, especially in the over thirty-five (35) years age groups;
- The population in the Burwood LGA was 29,960 (ABS census data 2001) Demographic figures showed that 18,731 people in the area were in the 0-44 age group which constitutes approximately 63% of the overall population. Potentially a large percentage of these people could be involved in competitive sporting activities;
- With the growing trend of older people participating in competitive sports such as soccer, and the likelihood of this sport growing in popularity as a result of Australia's achievements at the recent FIFA World Cup, it is likely that participation rates at all levels will increase, placing further demands on existing sportsgrounds, and an overall need for more grounds;
- Burwood has limited land space available for sportsgrounds with little opportunity to provide any more fields.

2. Current requirement for updating and refurbishment of sportsgrounds and surrounding infrastructure.

- Infrastructure capital upgrades such as new and improved floodlighting, reconstruction of existing sportsgrounds. This would enable better utilisation of playing fields;
- Major capital improvements would require significant support from the State Government;

3. Appropriateness and fairness and of Council pricing principles for facilities

- Council Management Plans are transparent and offer the community the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the provision of facilities in the Burwood LGA;
- Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges are set during the annual budget process and the community has the opportunity to participate in this process;
- Council does periodical comparison checks on what other surrounding Councils are charging for the hiring of sportsgrounds. These checks have shown that Burwood Council's fees and charges for the hire of sportsgrounds are fair and equitable in comparison with what other Councils are charging;
- The maintenance costs for sportsgrounds are not recouped from the income derived from field hire charges;
- With the allocation of sporting fields, preference has been given to local sporting clubs and schools. Some locals clubs have been hiring our sportsgrounds on a seasonal basis for over 40 years;
- Requests from Sporting groups and schools (that reside outside the Burwood LGA) to hire our sportsgrounds have increased;
- The changeover maintenance times required between summer and winter sports has become less with sporting groups starting their seasons early and finishing later;
- The demand for sportsgrounds has seen an increase in the number of unauthorised groups using our fields, subjecting the playing fields to further 'wear and tear', and at times causing conflict between these groups and sporting clubs that do have bookings.

4. Environmental issues, including water conservation and grounds maintenance

- The increased numbers of sporting teams using our playing fields make it very difficult to maintain adequate playing surfaces and have increased maintenance costs. The returfing of worn turf areas has become an annual and increasing maintenance practice;
- Current water restrictions have placed added pressure on sportsgrounds with the irrigation of playing fields only allowed on Monday;
- The use of recycled water should be a priority in the management of sportsgrounds. This would be a high cost capital project and would require considerable support from the State Government.

5. Residential amenity, public liability and security issues

- Community concerns regarding noise and traffic are always an issue around high usage sporting fields. Burwood Council has time restrictions for organised sport, with floodlighting and the use of grounds to cease at 9:00pm Monday to Friday, and competition games to finish by 6:00pm on weekends;
- Council Ordinance Officers frequently patrol car parking areas around sporting venues to ensure compliance with Council parking restrictions.



Henley Park Portland St Enfield start of soccer season



Henley Park end of soccer season

I trust this information has been of some assistance. If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the Director, Technical Services and Operations, Mr Robert Cummins on (02) 9911 9911.

Yours faithfully

**Pat Romano
General Manager**