



Our ref: SH/cr: 60/25/2-2-4

25 July 2006

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

Dear Sir/ Madam

**RE: Inquiry into Sportsground Management – Submission from Narrandera Shire Council**

Thank you for the opportunity for Narrandera Shire Council to provide a submission to the inquiry into Sportsground Management in New South Wales. Council's submission is based on the inquiry's key issues as follows;

***Adequacy of provision of sportsgrounds in key demand areas***

With a combination of declining population numbers in rural areas, demand for Council managed Sportsgrounds within Narrandera Shire is consistent and Council is able to accommodate a variety of sporting and recreational activities. Currently, Council is examining the possibility of rationalising the number of Council managed facilities in order to improve the quality of recreational facilities whilst continuing to meet community recreational and sporting needs. Rationalisation will allow Council to focus on effectively managing and improving a number of major sporting facilities rather than undertaking a piecemeal approach where small amounts of work are conducted on numerous facilities.

***Current requirement for updating and refurbishment of Sportsgrounds and supporting infrastructure***

Infrastructure related issues that occurred at Sportsgrounds managed by Narrandera Shire Council during the previous twelve months include,

- The completion of the Narrandera Sportsground Floodlighting Project which now provides the residents of the Narrandera Shire and Riverina a Sportsground facility that has the ability to host events at night.
- Capital upgrade works have been undertaken to improve the quality of the playing surfaces at the Narrandera and Barellan Sportsgrounds and Henry Mathieson Oval.
- Narrandera Shire Council continues to face the problem of aging infrastructure at Sportsgrounds with the canteen and changing facilities at the Barellan Sportsground and public toilet facilities at the Narrandera Sportsground are in need of upgrade works in order to meet user needs and expectations.

***Appropriateness and fairness of council pricing principles for facilities***

Narrandera Shire Council's user charges for Sportsgrounds in 2006 are as follows,

**Barellan Sportsground**

- AFL/ Rugby league Annual Ground User Charge - \$430
- Cleaning Charge for Home Games - \$60

### **Narrandera Sportsground**

- AFL/ Rugby League Home Game Ground User Charge (including cleaning charge) - \$370 per home game
- AFL/ Rugby League Finals and Special Matches (including cleaning charge) - \$800 per day

### **Henry Mathieson Oval**

- There are no user charges applied to the use of Henry Mathieson Oval as it is used predominantly for junior sporting events.
- All clubs using each facility are required to pay electricity and other operational charges.

### ***Environmental issues, including water conservation and grounds maintenance***

In order to promote water conservation and ensure sustainability, Council is aware of the need to have effective irrigation of playing surfaces. Narrandera Shire Council has undertaken significant improvements with all irrigation systems now fully automated. Through the availability of funding from the Australian Government Community Water Grants, Council will be preparing a submission to seek funding to further improve water use and management on the Councils Sportsgrounds.

Council undertakes regular maintenance works on Sportsground playing surfaces to ensure a high quality and safe facility is available for users. Council is aware of the environmental issues associated with maintenance of a playing surface and is selective when applying fertilizers and herbicides. Council has also used environmentally friendly fertilizer products as an alternative but these have recorded mixed rates of success. Soil tests have been undertaken to determine soil quality and these have provided favourable results for Council.

### ***Residential amenity, public liability and security issues***

There are minimal problems with Sportsgrounds managed by Narrandera Shire Council in relation to residential amenity and security issues. Any disruption to residents usually occurs when higher rates of visitation are prevalent due to our Sportsgrounds hosting more significant events including football finals or other community based activities. Security issues are very rare and isolated and may relate to minor vandalism which may occur on an irregular basis.

As with most small Councils, the issue of public liability is an ongoing challenge. Council must ensure that all risk management issues present within Sportsgrounds are managed appropriately. Regular checks of the Sportsgrounds are undertaken to ensure that a safe facility is provided for all and maintenance is regularly undertaken to address any issues that may arise.

If you have any further queries concerning our submission or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Council's Open Space and Recreation Manager, Simon Harrison on 6959 5560 or via email at [council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au)

Yours faithfully



**Paul Gallagher**  
Director of Technical Services