



Telephone Enquiries to:
Brian Wilkinson
Council's Reference:
P.020.00 BW/AP

17 July 2006

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

Dear Sir

Reference is made to your correspondence dated 7 July 2006 in regard to the Inquiry into Sportsground management in New South Wales.

The following comments are provided in relation to the key issues of the Inquiry:

1. The provision of quality sportsgrounds is becoming increasingly difficult due to population increases and the diversity of requirements i.e. there is a changing shift in the type of facilities required as the community do not become as entrenched in one sport as they have previously.

To cater for this, there needs to be more attention given to the establishment of multi-purpose facilities. Like other community infrastructure, it is becoming increasingly difficult for local government to allocate funds for the upgrade/improvement of sporting facilities. The integration of actual sporting facility needs with land use planning is extremely difficult, particularly in rural areas where population numbers are limited.

2. Sportsgrounds and associated facilities have historically had a community obligation component incorporated as part of their operations, i.e. a full user pay system has not been applied to specific facilities and accordingly these are subsidised from general revenue (which includes rate revenue from those who do not participate in sport).

All correspondence should be addressed to

**The General Manager.
RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL**

Administration Office - Cnr. Walker St. & Graham Place (Locked Bag 10) CASINO NSW 2470

Accordingly, the ability to have revenue arrangements which can accumulate funds for capital upgrades is difficult and as such there is an ongoing reliance on government grants. These processes can be assisted greatly by detailed strategic planning for facilities, however, the capacity of local government areas to undertake such planning is limited.

3. From a broader perspective, it is difficult to see effective arrangements between the tiers of government to produce better outcomes for sporting facilities, i.e. the programs of the three levels of government and the "agenda" of the private sector do not link to one another and it is generally the case that sportsgrounds etc. that are built are for a motive/outcome other than a strategically planned community need. This lack of integration makes it more difficult for health outcomes, social cohesion and the like to be achieved.

In summary, the provision of sportsground facilities can be more effective via the implementation of strategic and integrated land use planning initiatives. However, this is something that needs to be addressed by all tiers of government with funding to implement the strategies to be identified so that outcomes can be achieved.

Yours faithfully



Brian Wilkinson
GENERAL MANAGER