



Boroondara Netball Association Inc.

www.bna.org.au

Registration No: AOO33297P
 ABN: 82656813717

Incorporating Boroondara **EXPRESS** Victorian Netball League Teams
 Boroondara **POWER** Association Representative Teams

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TO: City of Boroondara Councillors & CEO
 Cc: Boroondara Netball Association Committee & Members
 The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP
 Nancy Da Silva, Netball Victoria Facilities Development Manager
 DATE: September 1, 2020
 RE: Submission for additional netball courts and lighting

Dear Councillors & Phillip,

I am writing on behalf of the Boroondara Netball Association to express our concerns with the process undertaken by Council relating to our netball facility upgrade. PLEASE take the time to read it as it summarises 5 years work.

FACTS:

Note: BNA = Boroondara Netball Association

Time	<p>The Boroondara Netball Association (BNA) has been advocating for expanded facilities for 5 years - since Council's Sport & Recreation Strategy in 2015, endorsed in 2016. <i>*Please see timeline summary below.</i></p>
Space	<p>The Boroondara Netball Centre is the only facility dedicated to netball in this LGA currently utilising the space of ONE oval. Yet there are no less than 60 ovals dedicated to cricket and football clubs. Refer to your website https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/recreation-arts/sportsgrounds-and-sports-facilities. (Incidentally, Netball is not even listed here as one of the sporting facilities or tenant clubs within Macleay Park and the information relating to BNA on the site is inaccurate and misleading.)</p> <p>This <u>one</u> facility supports netballers from more than 20 community clubs and local schools - current membership sits at 3800.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise that every sporting group will always be advocating for more space, we are simply requesting 4 additional courts = an area equating to less than ½ an oval. This still leaves 59.5 ovals for football and cricket.</p>
Demand	<p>BNA & Netball Victoria have submitted extensive data to Council Officers which indisputably supports the demand for additional netball facilities at the Boroondara Netball Centre. <i>*See attachments</i></p> <p>With just 4 additional courts at the Boroondara Netball Centre we could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cater for up to an additional 960 netballers every Saturday, • maintain basic netball requirements such as reinstating full games (currently 36min only) • reduce the number of byes currently necessary to support the demand. <p>With adequate lighting on courts, our Friday evening Junior program can expand and local community clubs could provide mid-week training opportunities for senior players, unable to train before dark.</p>

<p>Financial</p>	<p>In good faith we sought funding prior to the Federal election in 2019. The Boroondara Netball Association was granted \$1.2million by the Coalition Government for 4 additional courts and appropriate lighting.</p> <p>This funding must be spent before June 2021.</p> <p>In addition, BNA is financially secure thanks to sound, responsible financial management practices and volunteer administration. We have our own significant funds saved specifically for the provision of “facilities and asset investment”.</p> <p>We are not a money making “business”. We are passionate volunteers, advocating for families, primarily young women & children, from your local community. We will continue to facilitate opportunities for netballers who are able to secure a place, many who are now the children of our original junior cohort.</p> <p>The cost for participants is minimal, particularly compared to other sporting codes. Team fees vary but equate to well under \$100 per player for the entire season.</p> <p>We have invested significant funds of our own into the Council owned Boroondara Netball Centre – includes 2x rotundas (public shelters), internal & external storage, external seating, internal cabinetry, audio visual system, alarm system, court resurfacing, artificial grass area, 32 x goal posts & sleeves, kiosk / kitchen equipment. Total: \$399,925.00</p>
<p>Pathway</p>	<p>Whilst the huge Saturday domestic competition at the Boroondara Netball Centre is our “shop window”, the Boroondara Netball Association is the sole provider of Netball Victoria pathway programs in this LGA, covering all aspects of the sport.</p> <p>We provide talent identification programs for players to progress, and umpire / coach / team personnel development pathways from junior to elite levels.</p> <p>At the top of the pathway, we currently have players represented in Melbourne Vixens & Magpies, Queensland Firebirds, National Mens & Mixed teams, an international umpire and Bench Official.</p>
<p>Schools</p>	<p>4 additional courts at the Boroondara Netball Centre would also significantly benefit school competitions – GSV, APS, SSV – which rely on our 8 courts mid-week but are also in urgent need of additional courts. Schools using BNC to host external competitions & training include Carey, Ruyton, Canterbury Girls Secondary College and Balwyn High School.</p> <p>Other schools involved in our pathway programs include Genazzano, Strathcona, MLC, CGGS, MGGS, Fintona, Mont Albert PS, Canterbury PS, Auburn PS, Kew & Kew East PS, Balwyn PS, OLG, Our Holy Redeemer, Deepdene PS, Greythorn PS, Camberwell Sth PS.</p>
<p>Other community programs</p>	<p>Once we are back on court we will be launching our innovative NatureNet program under the guidance of Dr Sally Sherwen (Director Wildlife & Conservation Zoos Victoria & netballer) a sustainability program initially focussing on waste management, recycling & reducing single use plastics.</p> <p>The BNA also has a strong commitment to charitable fund raising, not for netball, but for organisations such as Breast Cancer NA, Fight MND, the Leukemia Foundation, Share the Dignity, Zoos Victoria Palm Oil / Deforestation Program.</p>

OUR CONCERNS:

A Project Working Group (PWG) was established after we received the Government funding. However this has been a very inefficient process due to the following issues:

- There has been a continual change of Officers representing Council, meaning that whenever we achieve any headway into the project, we have to start all over again.
- We have had only 5 meetings since April 2018, the last one being Feb 2020. All but one of these meetings were instigated at the insistence of BNA due to lack of follow up.
- Communication has been poor. Netball Victoria and BNA submitted the demand analysis and gap analysis with usage tables, scheduling and demographics to Council Officers in February.
- We are not confident that Councillors have received this data as we have not had any feedback from either the Executive Leadership team or Councillors with reference to the Macleay Park project, issues, questions or considerations - until the incidental email referred to below.
- We were advised by Officers not to involve Councillors directly as this created additional work for officers in preparing reports for Councillors. We respected this decision in trust, to give officers the opportunity to collate and present findings.

A recent email from the CEO was the first communication we have had advising us that the “ideal outcome” of 4 additional courts at Macleay Park Boroondara Netball Centre would not be progressing.

Whilst we have informally suggested the under-used oval number 5 would be an appropriate site - based on information from the Myrtle Macleay Park Management Plan - at no stage has this been discussed in detail with BNA. Neither has Council provided information as to the viability of any other options at Macleay Park, so that we may be able to better understand options to the Association in further detail.

Regardless, no-one has explained to us the reasons why this site or other options in Macleay Park are unsuitable. What consultation, including traffic analysis was undertaken at the site? How has Council reached its current position of not expanding the current facilities for Netball at Macleay Park?

In the same email we were advised that Council were planning to construct 4 additional courts at another location as part of a bigger project at Fritsch Holtzer. Whilst this is a step in the right direction for the LGA in terms of creating additional, much needed provision for Netball, unfortunately this will not benefit the Boroondara Netball Association at all for the following reasons.

The Boroondara Netball Association is the sole provider of Netball Victoria **pathway programs** in this LGA, covering all aspects of the sport including player, coach, umpire and administrator development. In order to provide these pathway programs & opportunities, it is imperative that the facility is situated at the **one location** – many netballers have multiple roles over the day. They will not only play their game but also coach a number of junior teams, umpire a few games, train umpires/ coaches and attend on-site workshops under the supervision & guidance of our trained mentors. This is what differentiates a Netball Association offering pathway programs from a simple netball Competition.

This information has been provided to Council in our very comprehensive submissions and numerous discussions but seems to have been ignored or overlooked. We have been accused of being uncompromising in our stance to maintain our integrity and professionalism in supporting Netball Victoria’s pathway programs.

***see attachments**

Correspondence suggests that Council intended to access funding provided to the Boroondara Netball Association specifically, to construct a 2 court stadium at Fritsch Holtzer. The funds cannot be deployed or the auspice swapped without the approval of the original grantee, Boroondara Netball Association.

The purpose of the funding is to support the Boroondara Netball Association programs and our 3800 members. The intention is to support that primary purpose, not other Council projects which are of little use to us.

We were led to believe that this was a “priority project” for Council who were “working towards resourcing a master plan for the whole site”. If Council has eliminated Macleay Park as an option, we are keen to understand the rationale behind that decision and what Council’s alternate plans are to support us:

- ? another site adjacent to or in Macleay Park
- ? re-configuring the layout of the existing Boroondara Netball Centre “footprint”
- ? a completely new venue at another site with 12 courts & pavilion

There has been no mention from Council of the status of lighting at BNC. The Government grant also acknowledges “site upgrades which include compliant lighting to enable BNA to expand its services.....”

Inadequate provision of lighting – **3 courts only** – limits our Friday evening Junior Program during Winter and also limits mid-week club training, particularly for senior players who cannot train before 5pm.

We concur with the following quotes from both Jane Addis & Cynthia Watson in the August 2020 Boroondara Bulletin:

“...Council’s vision that everyone in Boroondara, regardless of their circumstances, should have opportunities to actively participate in sport and recreation activities..... recognise the important role sports clubs play in enhancing our community’s health and wellbeing through increasing participation in physical activity and fostering social connections”

Why does this vision not apply to netballers?

Boroondara Netball Association Board seek equality in sporting outcomes for its members and ask Council to investigate the process in this matter, provide detailed information pertaining to the additional provision at Macleay Park or alternate options as specified in this letter.

Kind regards



Dr Sue Reddish
President, Boroondara Netball Association

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Boroondara Netball Association Data & Findings **
= full document produced by BNA and Netball Vic for Council
- 2) Schedule of Current & Desired Usage
- 3) Timeline summary
- 4) Eastern Metropolitan Zone Profile
- 5) Boroondara LGA Summary