



27 February 2015

Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal

Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place
Sydney NSW 2000

Email: ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Ashfield Council Special Rate Variation – submission in support

I am writing on behalf of UNSW Wests Water Polo Club and the water polo playing community generally.

Western Suburbs Amateur Water Polo Club was formed 50 years ago by Ashfield residents and the Ashfield Aquatic Centre has been our 'home pool' since it became available for water polo about 47 years ago.

Two years ago the Club joined with the UNSW Water Polo Club to assist interested athletes to gain scholarship opportunities at University.

The pool is also important for use by other groups including school competitions, other water polo clubs and junior and senior metropolitan and state competitions and carnivals and the National League competition.

Our Club teaches and trains children from ten years of age in the sport of water polo. This involves comprehensive swimming and skills training and allows the players to develop physical fitness and skills in a team environment.

The Club has always consisted of members from the local area and has been run entirely by volunteers. Their efforts and the calibre of our coaches over the years has allowed our athletes to achieve their potential and in many cases this has led to regional, state and national representation, including Olympians.

We have members as old as 70 years still playing competitive water polo with the Club and this is a great example to the young ones coming through.

We are consistent users of the water polo pool at Ashfield and we do our best to work with Council and Council's staff to ensure the efficient running and care of the pool. We were actively involved in the procurement of the economical maintenance works five years ago and we stand ready to offer assistance in the future.

Wests Water Polo Club

c/- 15 Coronet Court, North Rocks NSW 2151
0418 249 914



We have had discussions with Water Polo Australia and Water Polo NSW and they have offered to do everything in their power to assist Council to enable a water polo pool to be maintained at Ashfield.

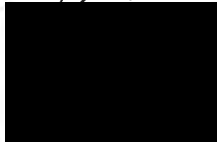
We believe that we are important users of the centre as a non-profit organisation providing so many opportunities for our youth to participate in a healthy and challenging sport.

We were so pleased that Council voted to adopt Option 3, which will mean that a water polo pool is not lost at Ashfield. Loss of the pool would mean the end of our Club after 50 years, as other pool options do not exist to provide the many hours required for training and competition.

We are grateful to the Council for maintaining the facility over the years and whilst we are happy to continue to use the pool as it is, we know that the pool is ageing and needs upgrading to allow continuity and more efficient maintenance into the future. We also understand that there will need to be an increase in rates to allow for the work to proceed but we see first hand the tremendous benefits to the youth of the neighbourhood in having this important infrastructure.

We have attached letters from the CEO's of Water Polo Australia and Water Polo NSW which were provided to Council in support of the retention of a water polo pool at Ashfield.

Yours faithfully,



Phil de Gail
President

Att.

cc: The Hon. Paul Toole, MP
office@toole.minister.nsw.gov.au



7th October 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

RE: Ashfield Aquatic Centre

I am writing to you in my role as CEO of Water Polo Australia (WPA) and in reference to the redevelopment of the Ashfield Aquatic Centre.

The Western Sydney area has produced many wonderful water polo players over many, many years. The UNSW Wests Water Polo Club, primarily based out of Ashfield pool is one of Australia's oldest and most successful clubs.

A high number of Australian representatives have been developed in the area and all consider themselves a big part of the area's water polo community. Clubs like the UNSW Wests; organisations such as local schools are the lifeblood of our sport.

However, we struggle for space, and indeed space designed for our game. There are not enough pools in Sydney for Water Polo at present, meaning the game cannot grow even though the demand exists.

In your area, UNSW Wests and local schools cannot get enough pool space as it stands for games and training. As one of the last remaining Water Polo specific pools in Sydney, the loss of the Ashfield pool will put the sport of Water Polo in decline. The loss of the Ashfield pool will significantly affect junior development in the area with no clubs to play for or facilities to train in.

The involvement of clubs in hosting both International teams and National Water Polo League is instrumental to the success of high performance competitions in Australia.

Water Polo Australia implores Ashfield Council to consider the need for a Water Polo specific pool when making its decisions concerning the redevelopment of Ashfield Aquatic Centre.

A pool of Water Polo dimensions could make the Ashfield venue capable of holding international games, generates ongoing income for council in the way of entry and hire fees, as well as providing a valuable community asset.

I hope you afford me the opportunity to discuss this further with you and our local stakeholders.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Harrison
Chief Executive Officer
Water Polo Australia Limited





15 October 2014

The General Manager
Ashfield Council
260 Liverpool Road
Ashfield NSW 2131

Dear Ms Chan,

Re: Ashfield Aquatic Centre

Water Polo NSW has been advised by one of our first division clubs, UNSW Wests Water Polo, that the Council is in the process of making strategic plans for the possible redevelopment of the Ashfield Aquatic Centre.

We are advised that these plans may mean that a water polo pool will no longer be available for use by the Water Polo community.

Ashfield, apart from being the home pool of UNSW Wests Water Polo for nearly 50 years, is a very important pool for the sport of Water Polo in the greater Sydney area. It is well located in central Sydney and is one of very few dedicated water polo pools that is not forced to share with swimming programmes. It is for this reason that we hold metropolitan, state and other elite competitions at Ashfield and we believe that Water Polo NSW has been a great supporter of the facility over the years.

We understand that the facility requires an ever increasing amount of maintenance and we would welcome an upgrade of the facility.

As an organization we are keen to offer any assistance we can to ensure that a dedicated water polo facility is maintained at Ashfield and we would welcome the opportunity to meet with Council at your convenience.

Yours faithfully,

David Whittaker
Chief Executive Officer
(mobile: 0439-198348)
(email: david.whittaker@waterpolonsw.org.au)