

Vision Statement

The Southern Highlands Indoor Sports Centre (SHISC), teamed with the proposed Wingecarribee Shire Council (WSC) Lackey Park Sports Hub, will be sports central on the Southern Highlands.

The ability for the SHISC to facilitate multiple sports and major events is an exciting prospect and will add enormous value at a number of levels to the Southern Highlands community. Not only can the proposed stadium in conjunction with the current stadium provide 6 basketball courts, the intended layout will facilitate up to 6 Netball courts a **minimum** of 2 indoor soccer/Futsal courts or 2 Indoor hockey courts. In addition, Badminton, Volleyball, Gymnastics, Martial Arts and Cricket can all be accommodated within the proposed activity areas.

The needs of the abovementioned sports are not being adequately catered for in the Southern Highlands. The SHISC will present the solution to the enormous void that currently exists and continues to expand with the growth of the region. Organised sport carnivals throughout Australia are a growing economic and social phenomenon and the Southern Highlands currently has no ability to effectively participate in the indoor component of this market. These events range from junior sporting carnivals and championships to University games and Masters tournaments. The Bowral Blacks Sevens tournament and Goulburn Masters Indoor Hockey hosted in their Veolia Centre are local examples of what is possible. The Southern Highlands is a perfectly located and desirable location for these events that would bring enormous direct and indirect benefits to the Southern Highlands.

In addition to organised sports current trends in recreation participation across Australia show a need for centers such as the SHISC that can also accommodate individual fitness and recreational activities and pursuits. There is a substantial growth occurring in indoor sport and recreation and centers such as the proposed SHISC will provide flexible recreational opportunities to suit people's varying lifestyle and working arrangements. The center would provide the opportunity for activities such as school holiday programs, rock climbing and other cyclical or on trend recreation pursuits that will assist in getting younger residents active whilst contributing to the overall usage and performance of the centre. With the continued concern with growing obesity the centre provides enormous direct benefits through the provision of a safe, accessible all year-round facility to improve the health and social outcomes for the community.

The SHISC can provide a central meeting and administration center for all southern highlands sporting groups with multiple meeting rooms and office spaces, corporate function room, multipurpose rooms and a fully functional café and bar facility. With volunteer administrators and record keepers becoming harder to recruit and retain, the proposed centre can provide professional administrators and clerical staff to fill this void. Staff will operate out of the single venue utilising up to date sports-based software to ensure accurate records and communication is achieved. Each individual sport can provide the information and practical expertise to manage the operations of their sports. The operating cost of these administrators would be shared among the sports and events utilising the centre.

The Café, with its commercial standard kitchen, will service the needs of not only the indoor sports facility but also Lackey Park, residents and local industry. The café could be a contract operation to industry standards as already occurs in many other centres of this nature. The Café could also cater for corporate and sport functions in the proposed corporate function room overlooking the sports floors and Lackey Park.

With the proposed WSC Lackey Park Sports Hub, there will be opportunities to integrate usage and share facilities between the two areas thereby reducing duplication of infrastructure. The grouping of sports into a single hub allowing the sharing of carparking and other infrastructure upgrades is a sensible and established trend in Local Government areas rather than having dispersed facilities. The indoor center could be managed by an experienced sporting management contractor or employee who would aim to maximise usage and develop the center into a valuable multi usage community facility.

The proposed SHISC has two large multipurpose rooms available for community meetings and the centre could also act as an Emergency Evacuation Centre if required. High capacity internet and communication capabilities could be included to facilitate this usage. The size of the centre also allows for a wide variety of exhibitions and entertainment. The size of the SHISC will allow exhibitions that may not have been catered for elsewhere to visit the Southern Highlands. The ability to have show courts that can accommodate up to 800 – 1000 people comfortably will allow visiting national and state teams to play locally as occurred recently with NBL Basketball matches over several years (typically up to 700 in attendance).

Our environment is our future so sustainable features will be incorporated into the design. The northerly aspect has been utilised for natural lighting and all powered lighting will be high efficiency LED or other low energy equipment. Solar power will be utilised, storm water will be retained in underground tanks for reuse, concrete wall panels are proposed for insulation qualities with the added benefit of minimising the impacts upon neighbours. In our beautiful Southern Highlands temperature extremes are common so insulation of the stadium and enclosed internal areas will be utilised to minimise air conditioning requirements. Natural air flow and changeover opportunities are included in the design.

Many of regions current facilities are not fully accessible. The proposed SHISS will allow full accessibility for all ages and abilities and is designed to meet the latest standards. Low impact exercise functions like walking basketball and wheelchair sports can be provided for our community.

All that sounds wonderful but why now? In 2011 Simon Taufel (Southern Highlands Cricket) and Chris Alleyne (Moss Vale Basketball) were looking at ways to invest in the future of Southern Highlands and Indoor Sport via a multipurpose indoor sports stadium. Moss Vale and District Basketball were and are still running at capacity with the last court constructed in 1983 when the Southern Highlands population was around 24000. Local Member Ms. Prue Goward recognised this need and financed Feasibility and Economic Impact studies into the construction of more courts in the Highlands through a NSW Government grant. Otium Planning Group were contracted to complete a feasibility study and revealed MVDBAI were running at twice the utilisation per court as the regional and state averages. This finding was also established 15 years ago when previous studies for a potential four court facility were completed. This finding does not include provision for other sports needs in the Southern Highlands. Michael Connell and Associates were contracted to complete an Economic Impact Study. This report models an economic benefit to the community of approximately \$29m over 20 years.

The proposed site is on MVDBAI land adjacent to Lackey Park and the current Basketball Stadium and is appropriately zoned under WSC planning controls. Facilities, such as these, would normally be the responsibility of Government Departments to research, justify, provide, manage and maintain. The MVDBAI has taken the initiative to develop the proposal due to the identified shortfall in facilities that currently exist and are growing in the Southern Highlands.

In 2018 MVD BAI were assured \$6.5 to \$8.5M by NSW State Government and the local Federal Member indicated there would be federal funding available. These assurances were provided WSC would contribute \$2M as a co contribution. Unfortunately, despite numerous meetings over the past 6 years WSC could not provide the required funds.

MVD BAI decided to continue its commitment to the project and, with the assistance of a WSC interest free loan continued to move toward a development application to get the project “shovel ready” for grant applications and funding opportunities. We are at this point through the commitment of MVD BAI and the ongoing commitment and countless hours contributed by a small group of MVD BAI volunteers being Chris Alleyn, Peter Mitchell and Paul Barcicki. We have a design, center management options, identification and recognition of need (that continues to grow) an Economic Impact Assessment Report outlining the broader financial benefit, a commitment from MVD BAI to lease the land on a long term minimal rental (land valued at approximately \$1.7M), ongoing interest from the NSW Government, support of Basketball NSW and Cricket NSW. What we seek moving forward is the broader communities support and commitments to finance and leadership from the three levels of Government.

We have developed a FAQ information sheet to accompany this Vision Statement. Reports by Otium Planning Group regarding the feasibility and justification for a centre, and Michael Connell and Associates on Economic Impact are available for review. Plans for the proposed SHISS have been developed by Facility Design Group an experienced operator in this space having also designed and managed the Moss Vale Indoor Aquatic Centre and the Mittagong PCYC for WSC. They have also designed Port Macquarie’s additional court space, Tamworth Regional Indoor Sports Centre and have been involved with numerous other regional and metropolitan facilities. They are renowned for providing practical and cost-effective design solutions for these facilities.