



**Attention-  
Chairman,  
Right Honorable  
Senator Anthony Chisholm  
Senate Select Committee on Administration of Sports Grants**

- Please find below and attached a Written Submission from NEWCASTLE OLYMPIC FC, completed by the Hon. Secretary, Con Gounis
- Please also find attached our COMMUNITY SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATION FORM CS1022332018 AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION



**Right Honorable Senator Anthony Chisholm,**

My Name is Con Gounis, and I am Honorary Secretary of Newcastle Olympic FC (NOFC) a position I have held continuously since 1982, with this year my 39<sup>th</sup> in that position with the club. I was also a Primary school teacher in Newcastle, employed by the NSW Department of Education, with 36 years of service until my retirement in 2014.

Our Club play in the top level of football in the Hunter Valley, playing in the Northern NSW Football competitions, fielding **three Senior teams in the National Premier Leagues (NPL)**. We also have **four NPL Youth teams**, Under 13s, Under 14s, Under 15s and Under 16s. The club began in 1976, and has had a long and proud history of football in the Hunter Region.

We are a very well supported club. We run Skill Acquisition Program which develops 9 year old kids up to the age of 12. After the SAP Program is completed, players enter the NPL Youth. Our **Community Juniors teams** are also very strong, with 12 teams using Darling St. Oval, Hamilton as our home base. These teams are from the ages of Under 5 to Under 8s. We encourage children of all backgrounds to become involved in our sport, as team sports are of paramount importance in shaping the development of each individual. We also cater for a number of children who come from the Public Housing Estate at Hamilton, which is right next to our Oval. For these children, sport is critical in fostering and nurturing their belief in themselves

As of December, 2019, the Club for the first time has entered 4 Women's teams in the NEWCASTLE HERALD WOMENS PREMIER LEAGUE in 2020: Under 14s, Under 17s, Reserve Grade and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. This will be the Club's inaugural involvement in Women's Football, which the Club are most excited about. In total, we have 30 teams that play under the name, Newcastle Olympic FC.

Our club is unique in Northern Soccer in that we are one **combined Junior and Senior** club, operating under the one umbrella, managed by the one committee.



## **BACKGROUND- DARLING STREET OVAL**

Newcastle Olympic FC has been the winter users at Darling Street Oval since 1987. At that time the following conditions were prevalent at the Oval-

Round (circular) perimeter fence around playing area.

Turf cricket pitch in the middle of the ground

No second playing/ training ground

No Grandstand

No ground enclosure fencing

No trees along northern (Darling Street) and western (Hassall Street) borders

Minimal, low grade lighting on deteriorating, above ground timber poles.

Minimal canteen area with very little cooking. Heating or cooling facilities.

There has slowly over the years been improvement to the facilities at Darling Street Oval since it became our home base.

The majority of this capital works has been funded and completed by Club volunteers in association with various small NSW GOVERNMENT GRANTS and City of Newcastle SPORT PARTNERSHIP GRANTS.

The club has expanded to such an extent that to continue to meet current needs and future development, the club made a conscience decision to apply for the Community Sports Infrastructure Programme 2018. After many hours of submission writing, the application from Newcastle Olympic FC was submitted on time. (See attached submission, with all relevant details)

We had the full support of the Newcastle City Council ( now known as City of Newcastle) all relevant stakeholders, and we believe a strong case to be successful in our application. While there were no doubt many other strong candidates for funding, all our Club desired was there to be a level playing field, where all applications were judged on their merits, not on external influences.

The ABC 7.30 report journalist, telephoned me last week to inform the Club had received a score of 76 points, which would have given the Club a decent opportunity to receiving funding.

The Club trust and hope that the Senate inquiry makes recommendation for at least another Round of Community Sport and Infrastructure Grants to be offered, so those worthy organisations that were unsuccessful in the



tainted process can reapply, and be judged on their merits.

If the Senate Inquiry accepts then Club's submission, and requires me to attend the Public Senate hearing, I would be more than happy to appear.

Regards,  
Con Gounis  
Hon. Secretary  
Newcastle Olympic FC