

NICSE SPORTS HUB MASTER PLAN

OCTOBER 2023







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Tamworth Regional Council
NICSE Master Plan, prepared by the
Regional Services Directorate of Tamworth Regional Council



INTRODUCTION

Tamworth Regional Council acknowledges the significant contribution sport and recreation brings to the community and places high value on the benefits engagement in passive and active recreation provides for the community. In 2019 Tamworth Regional Council embarked on a process to draw all its efforts toward a coordinated approach for future planning and infrastructure delivery, known as Blueprint 100. This is an overarching strategy that provides a roadmap to take the Tamworth Region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and high living standards with a population of 100,000. Blueprint 100 takes into account the design of all open space and the needs of the growing community in relation to structured and unstructured recreation. The Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence (NICSE) is a significant regional sports hub that is one component in achieving Blueprint 100.

Sports Hub's are the preferred sport infrastructure delivery model by the NSW Office of Sport. Regional Sports Hubs aim to:

- Deliver diverse facilities and activity opportunities that broaden community involvement in sport and recreation participation, and contribute to the health, wellbeing and sense of belonging within the community;
- Draw facilities, sports and activities together to raise the profile and potential quality of facilities and spaces;
- Provide an opportunity to connect diverse facilities and spaces. This includes the potential to link sport, recreation, entertainment, education and community facilities to create an integrated precinct that is high profile, strategically promoted and well used;
- Enable an integrated and coordinated approach to the delivery of sport and recreation to avoid unnecessary duplication and create complimentary facilities within the network;
- Enable the strategic and coordinated management of sport and recreation facilities and spaces;
- Provide community access and the opportunity for children and young people to experience higher level facilities and progress through to higher grade participation;
- Benefit sport through improved facilities which will assist in increased members, economies of management and the potential for athletes to achieve higher standards of participation;
- Support events and spectator based sport and recreation activities, which provide a social focus for the community and economic benefits for the region;
- Integrate a range of facilities to optimise efficiency and create business synergies;
- Promote the region and encourage a healthy community;
- Create a destination in the wider context for the regional community;
- Deliver benefits to a whole region; and
- Explore opportunities for innovation in facility and service delivery

NICSE encompasses specialised sport and recreational facilities for community groups, sporting clubs, schools, organisations, businesses and the general public in one location. NICSE has the capacity to host and secure international, national, state and local sporting competitions and boosts sport tourism, investment and liveability in the region; as well as enhancing opportunities for additional competitions, events, training and talent development.

This 100ha precinct is already home several key community assets that can be grouped into three categories as follows:

- Sports Hub
 - o Tamworth Sports Dome
 - o Tamworth Regional Hockey Complex
 - o Tamworth Regional Gymnastics Centre
 - o Tamworth Regional Athletics Centre
 - o Tamworth Regional Cycling Centre
- Equine
 - o Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC)
 - o Refer; Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Strategic Master Plan – 2022 to 2023
- Entertainment
 - o Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre (TRECC)

The purpose of this master plan is to identify future sport development at the Sports Hub within the Tamworth Sport and Entertainment Precinct

The Sports Hub is supported with sufficient amenities such as access roads, car parking and cycle ways and close to accommodation and services.



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The strategic direction for sport and recreation is influenced by a number of policies and plans as well as peak body strategic directions at various levels, including international, federal, state, regional and local.

Alignment with these policies and plans will steer the direction of future stages of NICSE ensuring they meet the demands and expectations of the broader community.

The following is a summary of key policies, plans and strategies that the future stages of NICSE aligns with:

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- **Sport 2030** is the Australian Government's strategic sports plan. It recognises the role physical activity and sport plays in the lives of all Australians and importantly recognises the role sport plays in the Australian economy.

NSW GOVERNMENT

- The NSW Government **Premier's Priorities** reflect the Government's commitment to a whole-of-government approach to tackling important issues for the people of NSW.
- The **Office of Sport Regional Sports Hub Model** aims to integrate facilities and services to deliver efficient and effective sport hubs that service regions.
- The **Office of Sport Strategic Plan 2018-2022** seeks to maintain and grow the state's vibrant and valued sport and recreation sector that enhances the lives of people in NSW.
- The **NSW State Infrastructure Strategy Update 2014** identified a priority to *"Deliver targeted upgrades to the State's cultural, sporting and environmental infrastructure to drive growth in the visitor economy, realise the economic and social benefits of strong cultural and sporting sectors, and support local participation, creativity and liveability"*.
- Lower North West **Regional Economic Development Strategy** has the vision of strong, resilient and sustainable economic growth, building on key industries of Agriculture, Agri-processing, Mining, Transport and Tourism and encompasses the regional areas of Tamworth, Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains.
- The **Infrastructure NSW – State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038** sets out Infrastructure NSW's independent advice on the current state of NSW's infrastructure and the needs and priorities over the next 20 years.
- The **New England North West Regional Plan 2036** is a 20-year blueprint for the future of the region. The NSW Government's vision for the New England North West Region is: *"Nationally valued landscapes and strong, successful communities from the Great Dividing Range to the rich black soils of the plains. Funding will be coordinated for regional infrastructure including open space and recreational precincts."*
- The **NSW Regional Development Framework** is a plan focused on providing quality services and infrastructure in regional NSW, aligning the efforts to support growing regional centres.

STATE SPORTING ORGANISATIONS

State sporting organisation strategic plans and sports infrastructure plans have been reviewed in the development of this plan to ensure it aligns with identified participation growth on a local, regional and national level.

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

- In 2019 Tamworth Regional Council embarked on a process to draw all its efforts toward a coordinated approach for future planning and infrastructure delivery. This has been coined **Blueprint 100**. It would encompass the Local Strategic Planning Statement, Growth Management Strategy and other Council initiatives. Blueprint 100 is an overarching strategy that provides a roadmap to take the Tamworth region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and high living standards with a population of 100,000. Tamworth Regional Council acknowledges the significant contribution sport and recreation brings to the community and places high value on the benefits engagement in passive and active recreation provides for the community. Blueprint 100 takes into account the design of all open space and the needs of the growing community in relation to structured and unstructured recreation.
- The **Key Change Community Strategic Plan, 2017 – 2027**, is the major strategic document developed to guide the delivery of services and facilities over the next decade, and outlines the goals of this elected Council. The Plan identifies actions that Council will undertake to achieve those goals and deliver successful, measured outcomes. It genuinely reflects community aspirations thanks to an extensive consultation process as evidenced in the Community Engagement Strategy expressly prepared for Key Change 2017-2027. Delivered as a result of executing NICSE, the Plan outlines Councils strategy to provide high-quality specialised sporting facilities to drive sporting excellence for the region and state.
- Council's **Sport and Recreation Strategic Plan** provides a road map for planning and developing sport and recreation facilities (structured and unstructured) across the Tamworth region over the coming 10 plus years. The Plan identifies Council's need to strategically plan for the continued development of NICSE with the provision of regional, state and national-level facilities which cater for the local community, elite sport pathways, competitions and events, and maintain Tamworth's position as 'Australia's home of equine sports'.

DEMAND

There is a demand for sporting and recreational infrastructure to service the region and the state that exceeds the current capacity of the existing facilities at NICSE. Further development of NICSE will transform the experience of current sports participants; attract new and more significant events; and act as the catalyst for existing sport bodies to promote and expand their sports through Development Officers within the region.

The investment in infrastructure facilities such as those proposed in this master plan encourages the growth of sporting events and delivers social, health and economic benefits for the region. The proposed investment would provide new opportunities for community segments including children, youth, families, indigenous communities, and seniors and act as an attractor to the region and the state. In addition, there is a national sense of 'value' related to personal and community wellbeing and national pride derived from participation or perceived affiliation with sport.

Clear benefits to the region include:

- significant financial benefits of increased sport-based tourism and employment;
- enhanced sporting experiences and facilities; and
- increased volunteering experiences.

The strategic alignment of future stages of NICSE to policies, plans and strategies of the Federal Government, State Government, Tamworth Regional Council and national and state sporting organisations ensures NICSE increases the number and types of regional sporting facilities, improves the standard of existing regional sporting facilities and increases participation in sport.

PRIMARY OUTCOMES

The development of future stages of NICSE will achieve the primary outcomes of:

- Boosting local tourism through sport;
- economic benefit;
- sporting infrastructure that meets current and future demands;
- provide the region with access to high quality sport facilities otherwise only accessed in capital cities;
- enhanced competition standard;
- "future proof" NICSE;
- employment generation;
- social benefits;
- improved regional health, wellbeing and liveability;
- retention of athletes, coaches, and general community members;
- increased volunteering and participation opportunities; and
- increased training and talent development opportunities.

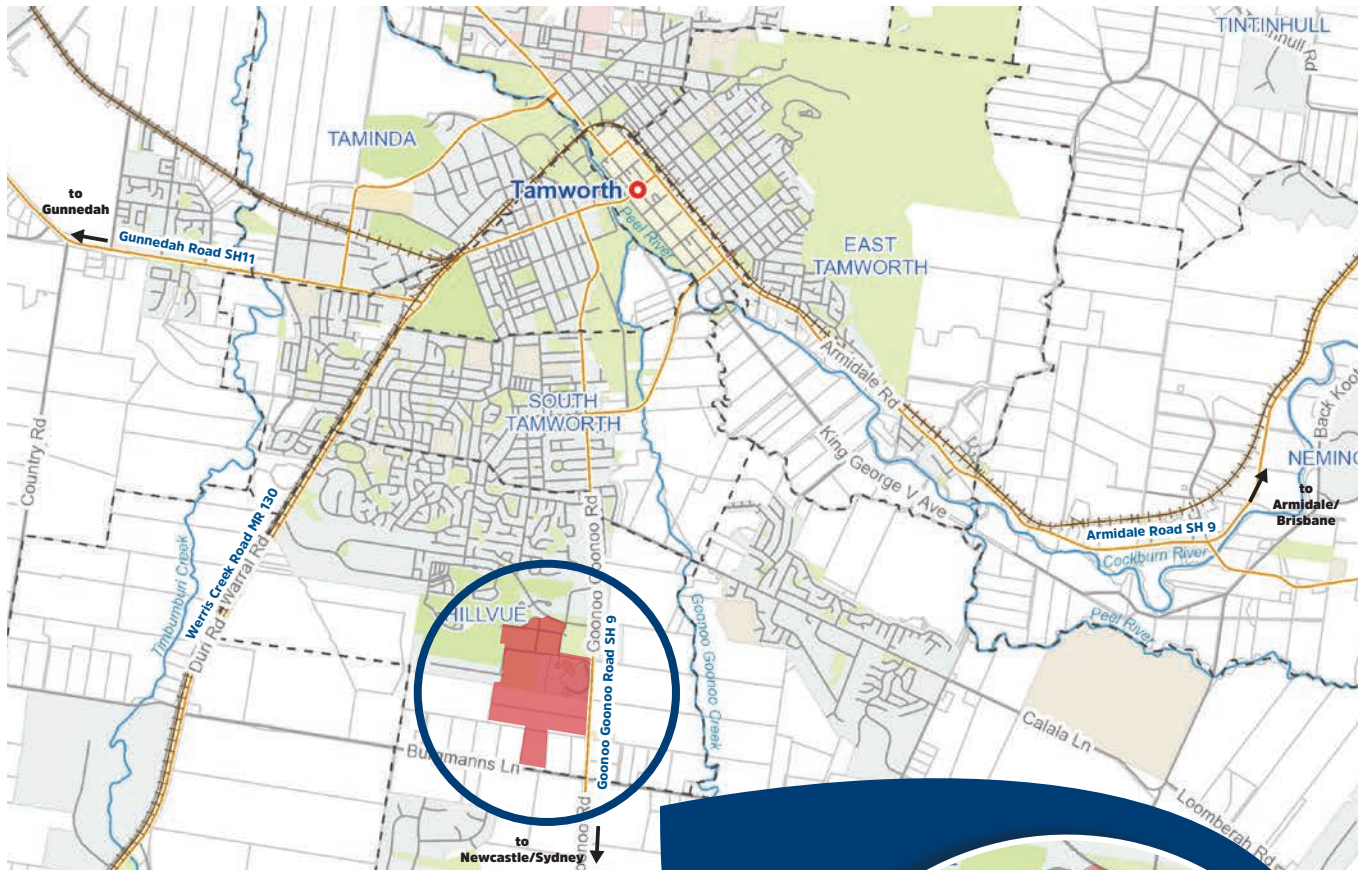
COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

The NICSE precinct provides commercial opportunities for Council. Council acknowledges the significant capital costs associated with the enhancements of NICSE and, in addition, the ongoing operational, maintenance and renewal costs associated with the Centre will be substantial and need to be carefully considered. A sustainable business model that maximises commercial opportunities across NICSE is required to offset these ongoing costs.

THE SITE

The sporting hub is located five kilometres from the Tamworth CBD and covers 100 hectares, under the ownership of Tamworth Regional Council, refer to Image 1.0. The site is adjacent to a strong commercial precinct featuring entertainment, accommodation, hospitality, tourism and retail facilities.

Image: 1.0 NISCE site



NICSE MAP

KEY

Existing Infrastructure

Identified Future Infrastructure

NICSE Boundary



IDENTIFIED FUTURE WORKS AND JUSTIFICATION

SPORT

TAMWORTH REGIONAL AQUATIC CENTRE

The Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre will be a fully accessible aquatics facility, combined with contemporary elements for leisure, social engagement, fitness, health and active recreation, for current and future generations. The Centre will enhance and compliment the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence, servicing the local community and Northern Inland NSW. It will have the potential to host elite events at regional, state and national level, as well as athlete development and training pathway programs.

The Centre will contribute to economic sustainability, growth and liveability for the Tamworth Region, through employment generation, tourism and increased visitation associated with major sporting events and an extraordinary recreational facility.

NORTHERN INLAND CENTRE OF SPORT AND HEALTH

The Northern Inland Centre of sport and Health will integrate with the Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre to provide a sports hub with business accommodation, integrated learning, sport and health research along with medical and allied health services.

The Northern Inland Centre of Sport and Health will be an inclusive facility that provides sport, education, and health opportunities to residents via a one-stop-shop. It will deliver expertise from sporting organisations, clinical and allied health professionals and the education sector through partnerships that maximise outcomes and enhance operational sustainability. The facility will provide elite performance sport infrastructure providing the opportunity for the community, athletes, sporting teams, and school groups to partake in educational programs and high-performance training in a modern indoor setting.

A strategic partnership with the University of New England with the integration of teaching spaces with sports and health science facilities will deliver a range of benefits including theory and practical based learning through professional placements and future career opportunities.

Importantly, the Northern Inland Centre of Sport and Health will provide a contemporary facility for the regions Sport Development Officers to administer their respective sports. These offices will provide a coordinated approach to sport development, improved knowledge sharing and efficiencies through resource sharing.

GYMNASTICS CENTRE EXTENSION

The Gymnastics Centre expansion will address the current demand of the sport, and offer additional facilities to its members. The expansion will enable the facility to host championships in the region, bringing tourism to Tamworth.

FUTURE SPORT DEVELOPMENT SPACE

This parcel of land is dedicated to a yet to be determined sport and or facility. Many factors steer a regions growth, development and interest in sport such as finances, success (i.e. Olympics), access, trends and emerging technologies. It is critical NICSE has a flexible approach to the changing recreational pursuits and demands in Australia and globally. With this, this future development space will be an option for the provision of a new or rapidly growing yet to be identified sport.

SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

OPEN GREEN SPACE

The open green space area will be a multiuse parcel of park land. The area will provide the opportunity for passive recreation, play and unstructured recreation.

DETENTION BASIN

Stormwater detention is required to maintain peak stormwater discharge at pre-development rates. Additional hard surfaces within NICSE would otherwise increase stormwater peak flows leaving the site, which would reduce the flood immunity of the New England Highway, adjacent to NICSE.

SEATING AND SHADE

Seating and shade infrastructure throughout the precinct will provide users with a welcoming environment and respite from environmental conditions. The infrastructure will support and encourage community utilisation of the precinct and assist in meeting the sunsafe protocols of the main user groups.

PLAYGROUND

Positioned centrally within the precinct a playground will provide a space for unstructured recreational activity allowing users to engage in elements that develop key cognitive, social and physical skills. Integrated into the existing infrastructure, the playground will complement the precinct providing a recreational space for users when they are not engaged in structured activities, a space for those accompanying those engaging activities and or a tool to entice additional users to the precinct at large.

CARPARKING and OVERFLOW PARKING

The masterplan identifies a total of six areas of formal carparking across the sport precinct with an accumulative total of 675 spaces. The four existing carparks have a total of 453 spaces with an additional two carparks proposed with an approximate total of 222 spaces.

The breakdown is as follows.

Identifier	Name	Spaces
CP1	Car Park 1	70
CP2	Car Park 2	126
CP3	Car Park 3	231
CP4	Car Park 4	56
CP5	Car Park 5	96
CP6	Car Park 6	96

COMPLETED ACTIONS

Identified future infrastructure completed from August 2022 Master Plan

- Playground installation
- Outdoor gym installation





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