
Request to be heard?: No, but please email me th

Full Name: Michael Girdler

Organisation: Watsonia Heights FC

Affected property:

Attachment 1: NELP_-_WHFC_Fi

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: In Summary, the Watsonia Heights FC fully support the proposed S.M.A.R.T. Taxpayer Design and fully support the building of the North East Link. If we are to lose the use of Gabonia Avenue Reserve for the duration of the build, we have supplied what we'll need to replace what we have lost during the build and what we'd like to come back to - after the build. Thank You Michael Girdler - President of Watsonia Heights FC



7 February 2019

North East Link Project

RE: Watsonia Heights (Soccer) FC and Gabonia Avenue Reserve

To N.E.L.P,

Since 1970, the Watsonia Heights Football Club (WHFC) has been the home to aspiring young football players in an inclusive, diverse and family orientated community setting.

It is this sense of Community, Enjoyment and Development that underpins the core culture at WHFC. It is this culture that has attracted the largest membership in Banyule City Council area of any football club with over 500 registered players in 2019 including men and women from U7 to over 35's.

This success has been supported with community fundraising events and donations by Banyule City Council to improve the club's facilities. These improvements include state-of-the-art club rooms for the senior players at Gabonia Avenue Reserve and separate male and female changerooms added for the junior players at the Elder Street Reserve clubhouse.

However, the WHFC also recognise that our youth are important to our future and that education extends beyond the classroom and football pitch.

This is our reason to make sure we can secure the best facilities for our future development and continuous building of our community club.

Below shows our club history

- Club started in 1970 as a club for Junior teams and evolved into a club for senior teams in 1986.
- In 2001, the club started up the junior teams as well as the senior teams.
- In 2007, the club started a third senior men's team
- In 2009, the club started its first senior women's team
- In 2014, the club had a second senior women's team.
- In 2019, the club started the Senior men's Master's team
- In 2019 we have 21 junior teams, 6 senior teams, over 100 hundred mini-roos participants and even a Soccer-Mum's program.



As of May 2019, WHFC have over 500 participants representing Watsonia Heights FC and a strong supporter base that always attend our home and away fixtures for all our teams.

To ensure continued success and should we need to be relocated due the North – East Link Project, the Watsonia Heights Football Club would need to secure the following requirements to continue our achieved success and Growth path.

- Alternative Grounds to support our Senior Teams, as we now have 4 Men's and 2 Women's teams, with an inclusion of a state 5 women's team in 2020.
- Minimum two change rooms (home and away) with female friendly showers and toilets
- Referees room with shower and toilets (As we have multiple referees on Game days)
- Full sized soccer pitches with coach's boxes (5 seats) and room for crowds to watch the game
- Adequate lighting for training and night Games in the evenings (during winter)
- A fully functional semi-commercial Kitchen and canteen to sell drinks, food etc.
- A social room with toilets (separate to change rooms) to hold club functions for revenue raising. (For at least 120 people)
- Our Preferred option would be to have an artificial pitch created at Greensborough College.
- Our second preferred option would be to have an upgraded pitch and facilities at Central Park in Greensborough.
- We would need to use the Elder Street Reserve and facilities 12 months of the year to accommodate Pre-season training for all teams, summer mini-roos programs and football academy training. (This would mean the Greensborough Cricket club would need to relocate their 6 games played at Elder Street) This includes the installation of at least one synthetic pitch to the Elder Street Reserve to support the increased usage during winter season.
- We would need the Elder Street Reserve Car park to be expanded to accommodate the extra use and the bigger crowds we get for senior team games. Currently, the Elder Street Reserve Car Park is already inadequate for the use it gets on weekends and weeknights.

Once the NELP has finished with Gabonia Avenue Reserve, we'd like the following:

- The Current Pitch to be expanded to meet FFA's full size regulations
- The Coach's Boxes to be relocated to the other side of the ground
- An additional pitch to be added – preferably artificial
- Improved lighting for both pitches – to enable night games (The Synthetic Pitch would need Full Stadium type lighting)
- New 2 story club room with Kitchen on second floor and Facility to accommodate 150 People (Windows looking onto both Grounds.) Bottom floor will Change rooms and Referees room, including Members Bar and small canteen size kitchen. (Kitchens will need to be semi commercial) Multiple toilets on both floors.
- We would love our facilities to be to be used by other parts of the community with Watsonia heights managing the facility and events on behalf of Banyule City Council.
- Additional car parking to be added where the power lines are currently located.



The Watsonia Heights (Soccer) FC also fully supports the S.M.A.R.T. Taxpayer Design.

The Club is concerned that the proposed Reference Design by N.E.L.P using the 'Cut and Cover' technique will create a 'Grand Canyon' from Yallambie to Watsonia that will deter 30%-40% of our current membership from crossing the 'Great Divide' between Watsonia and Watsonia Heights. This will slow down and maybe even stall our growth as a Community club for the number of years while the North-East Link is being built.

The disruption caused by the 'Cut and Cover' technique will deter prospective and current players, supporters and local community members from crossing 'East to West' to support or be part of our club. As a Community Club, we rely heavily on our members and supporters to be in attendance especially on game days to support our teams, build our presence and purchase food and beverages from our canteens.

We believe the S.M.A.R.T. Taxpayer Design negates the need for this lengthy disruption. By extending the TBM twin tunnels to within 500 metres south of Grimshaw Street, this will limit (If not remove) most of the adverse effects caused by both the build and eventual creation the north-east link trench thorough Yallambie - Watsonia and Greensborough.

We would like you to undertake our requests with serious thought. The Watsonia Heights Football Club is a major part of our community and retains it respect for giving and supporting Junior, Youth and Senior football programs with Great Facilities, Fantastic Grounds and a community spirit second to none.

On behalf of our Executive team and all our club members please consider all the above requests so that we can move forward in our continuous building of our Great Club.

Yours Sincerely,

Michael Girdler

President Watsonia Heights FC

Community Representative – North East Link Project