

Comments on the “Castle Hill Showground Draft Plan of Management”

By:

representing Budokan Judo Club

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I/My son/My daughter have/has been a member of Budokan Judo Club for months / years.

During that time my family has been made to feel very welcome by the coaches and committee of this special club. The training environment is very family-oriented and unique. The structure and quality of training and care on the mat is first class. The diversity in, and growth of the club’s membership, and the success of its athletes in competition are all testament to the level of service and care being provided.

In response to a Council request for comments on the Castle Hill Showground Draft Concept Master Plan in 2020, a significant number of Budokan members and the club President, provided submissions mounting a strong case for a presence in the new Castle Hill Showground and both Council and the consultants provided feedback that the existing clubs in the Showground will be looked after. I want to explain why this is so important to both the Judo and local communities. The positive impact that this club provides in terms of health and wellbeing and the need for healthy competition is so significant, that it is difficult to measure. This club takes shy children and develops their confidence and self-esteem. It teaches children to integrate into a community who enjoy play yet are disciplined and goal-driven. It helps children take on challenges and overcome adversity, all lessons valuable in all aspects of life’s journey. Budokan contributes significantly in terms of membership and service in Judo in NSW and Australia. It is the third largest Judo club in Australia - it’s growth is sustainable and a new venue needs to address this.

This community and family-oriented club is balanced with a significant high-performance component. Consistently the best performing club at Judo Australia interstate Open competitions, since 2020, on the international circuit, we have had representations at 2 more Olympic Games (Tokyo and Paris), 2 medals at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, Gold and Silver medals at the Virtus Asia Oceania Games for athletes with intellectual disabilities, Bronze medal at the Kata World Championships and numerous representations at Cadet (U/17 years), Junior (U/21 years) and Senior World Championships and International Judo Federation events. We currently have 1 categorised athlete under the ASC’s AWE program, the only Australian male categorised at “Podium Potential” and looking for his third Olympic qualification; 2 athletes on the National Cadet Development Squad; and 5 athletes on the National Junior Development Squad, representing 27% of all Australian athletes on these squads.

Council wishes to build a vibrant community and prosperous economy by increasing opportunities for participation in sporting and recreation activities. Budokan Judo Club fits perfectly into this objective. A review of the Showground Draft Plan of Management indicates that whilst numerous references to sporting facilities and existing active clubs are made, including specific reference to Budokan Judo Club, none of the diagrams within the Draft Plan of Management make any reference to sporting-based venues and this needs to be addressed.

In summary, as one of the many members of Budokan Judo Club, and to ensure maximum utilisation of the facility, it is clear that there is a need for a dedicated “Combat Centre” with the 3 current Horticulture Pavilion tenant clubs as primary users. The facility should be similar to the concept drawing provided previously to Council and to the consultants, allowing for the significant increase in membership since the club’s establishment almost 30 years ago. There should be adequate close parking and building construction should be scheduled to provide a seamless transition venue-to-venue, so that continuity of training services is not impacted. This is critical given the significant domestic and international competition schedule of a large portion of the club members who compete.

Yours sincerely,