



Pottsville Beach Football Club  
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The General Manager  
Tweed Shire Council,  
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Dear General Manager,

Thank you for the opportunity to have our say on the Draft Sport & Active Recreation Strategy 2023-2033 and Implementation Plan hereby referenced as '10-year plan'. Please see below the Pottsville Beach Football Club statement and feedback.

## Current State of Play – Pottsville Beach Football Club

Pottsville Beach Football Club (PBFC) currently has over 500 players in 2024 who both train and play at least once a week during the season, and relevant pre-seasons and shoulder seasons. The club has a year-on-year grow rate of 38% in 2024.

When comparing clubs (of any sport) on the Tweed Coast from Kingscliff to Wooyung, of a similar size club we understand that:

- PBFC is the most closed ground of any primary home ground.
  - The club was closed over 60% of days in the month prior to 23<sup>rd</sup> of May.
  - Numerous days over this period other grounds in the area were open, Koala Beach remaining closed due to poor drainage rather than rainfall.
  - This is a common issue every year as the ground takes longer to dry out than other grounds meaning it can be days of no rainfall before the poor draining fields dry and the fields are able to be opened.
- PBFC has the smallest change rooms.
  - 2 x changerooms that can barely fit a 16-person team in each and neither can fit a massage table or any other changeroom related equipment
  - Between the two changerooms there are just 6 showers, these are primarily shared between 7 senior teams (over 100 adults including 32 women) midweek for training. These are then shared between the 4 different teams that utilise the 2 grounds at any one time on weekends (given there are two fields and over 500 members). This can include both a mix of adults and children, and male and female teams simultaneously who obviously cannot share these changing/shower facilities simultaneously. Regardless of the demographics, there is insufficient space.
- PBFC has the smallest shelter/covered area for supporters.

- o The current space barely shields 40 people shoulder to shoulder from the elements. Games which yield a higher spectator rate such as the championship home games regularly exceed this number of spectators.
- o This is a disincentive for supporters to attend and support the sport and their friends and family
- o The current undercover area is currently utilised as a changing area due to the inadequate changeroom facilities.
- PBFC has the smallest clubroom.
  - o The clubroom functionality is significantly limited, it cannot feasibly function as a clubhouse for any socialising due to its size. There is barely enough space for the club to utilise this area to sell club merchandise, let alone function as a clubhouse.
- PBFC has arguably the worst parking availability
  - o For 500 participants across two full sized grounds Koala Beach has just 70 car parking spaces, meaning when both fields are fully utilised (as they were this Saturday) some members and spectators had to park on the side of the road for hundreds of meters down the road, a road not built to facilitate curb side parking). This is highlighted when teams are transitioning between timeslots which would include ~128 players plus supporters.

## Future State of Play – Koala Beach

The club would therefore expect improvements to our ground to be considered a high priority given Koala Beach, considering the above, is essentially the worst facility of a club of our size on the Tweed Coast.

In contrast to this expectation, the Tweed Shire Council has allocated just 1 action for this ground in the 10-year plan. For comparison similar sized clubs in the area such as Tweed Coast Raiders and Tweed Coast Tigers have 4 action items each.

These two clubs, which already have superior facilities, have been allocated actions that include such upgrades as to their clubhouse facilities, canteen, toilets, lighting, carparking, gym and high-performance facilities. In contrast PBFC's ground at Koala Beach has the sole action by the council to merely "consider" drainage improvements or forcing the club to relocate to a facility (Black Rocks) that currently has no lighting, no change rooms, no clubhouse, and no canteen. Tweed Shire Council have offered a refurbishment of the clubhouse and changerooms at Koala Beach. Alternatively, the council has suggested to move the club to a new ground at Dunloe Park Urban Release housing development, in which just one field is listed for football (compared to our current 2 fields) which is completely inadequate to facilitate 500 players let alone the massive growth the club is experiencing.

In essence the council has committed to do no substantial improvement. Our club, as illustrated above, has the least adequate facilities of any club of its size on the coast. We make particular note of the council's commitment to funding other clubs whom already have superior facilities. We feel this goes against concepts of fairness, equity, equality, and funding based on need and participation.

## PBFC's Recommended Review Points

### **(1) Amend Section 2.8 reference L.8.5**

- The 1 action the council has for Koala Beach should be made a High Priority (within 1-3 years), escalated up from a Medium Priority (4-7 years)  
AND
- The word “consider” should be replaced with a word that infers action will actually be undertaken by the council not just considered.

This will assist in addressing the inequality that our members endure sooner with respect to having the most closed ground in the area. Which in recent years has not only given our members poor recreational use in times of closure but has even led to teams withdrawing from scheduled seasons due to persistent closures.

### **(2) Add the following actions to Section 2.8 for South Coast – Pottsville, Hastings Point & Wooyung**

- Increase the size of the playing area (additional 2000m<sup>2</sup>) to have juniors playing separate to the full size fields, so that competition games can be played at the same time.
- Delivery of two (new) additional changeroom facilities at Koala Beach
  - This would meet the needs of two open (adult) women female teams (32 players) along with well over a hundred female juniors. The current female participation growth rate year-on-year is well over 120% in the last year and over 300% in the last 3 years. A set of female and a set of male changerooms are urgently required.
- Increase the size of the covered area for spectators at Koala Beach
  - Currently space is also used as a changing area due to insufficient changerooms.
  - Usually at capacity during championship home games
  - Often at capacity after training midweek.
  - Even if this space is doubled it would still be significantly smaller than clubs of comparable size on the coast.
- Expand clubroom size at Koala Beach
  - Current clubroom space provides little more than an area to sell club merchandise.
  - The club should, like other similar sized clubs have a reasonable sized clubroom, to facilitate players and spectators that wish to get out of the elements and sit inside for periods of time and hold necessary club based social events.
- Increase parking capacity around Koala Beach
  - In the most feasible way, this doesn't necessarily need to be sealed, the club merely wishes to have enough parking for our ratepayers to utilise our

facilities and not have to walk hundreds of meters and park on curb sides not built for parking.

- Increase & improved parking capacity around Blackrocks
  - In the most feasible way, this needs resealing or regravelling, as the carpark hasn't been addressed for many years, the club merely wishes to have more spaces made available behind the mens shed all the way to the croquet fields (if possible)
- **If Koala Beach drainage deemed unfeasible**

If the council concludes that drainage work is unfeasible at Koala Beach, then the council should provide lighting, clubrooms, changerooms, canteen and undercover areas at Black Rocks suitable for a quickly growing club with over 500 current members.

The club believes the above recommendations should be given due consideration to address the persistent inequity our members/participants face. Inequality that is exacerbated as the club continues to grow and councils' inaction become increasingly evident.

## Future State of Play – Black Rocks L.8.1

The club has utilised Black Rocks on numerous occasions across recent seasons due to superior drainage than Koala Beach. The club appreciates the facilitation of this venue as a last resort. Whilst the fields have fantastic drainage which allowed daylight training and games, the facility does not allow for night-time training (due to lack of lights) necessary for most participants during winter. Neither does the venue provide a canteen, change rooms, clubhouse necessary to run a sustainable club on matchdays.

Given Koala Beach is in many respects at capacity or over capacity, across nearly every key element of a sports club e.g. changerooms, parking, covered areas, clubrooms, toilets, and hectares of usable recreational space per player. The club with its growth rate requires additional space particularly for training and games at night-time. Therefore, the club wishes to put forward Black Rocks as the most feasible solution to enable club growth. To enable training at Black Rocks the club would merely require lighting.

### PBFC's Recommended Review Point

#### **(3) Amend Section 2.8 reference L.8.1**

- To include provision of lighting at Black Rocks  
This will provide an alternate training and match-day venue

## Future State of Play – Recreational Facilities across New Developments on the Tweed Coast including Dunloe Park

Football is by far the largest organised participation sport in NSW. The only two football clubs on the Tweed Coast (Kingscliff to Wooyung) being Kingscliff Wolves and PBFC who are currently constrained by recreation area, turning players away and inadequate facilities. It seems to the club that the allocation of the recreational area in the four new developments

(Kings Forest, Dunloe Park Urban Release Development, West Kingscliff Urban Release, Depot Road) is disproportional to underlying need and demand.

For example, across these four new developments approximately 20 hectares of recreational area will be allocated to AFL (who only have 17 Junior/Senior teams vs PBFC who have close to 50) compared to 14 hectares allocated to football. Even though the two football clubs on the coast are more constrained by recreational area than the AFL clubs. PBFC has a higher growth rate of 38% and general football participation rates in this state are over 5 times greater than AFLs and have been for decades.

Taking all the above into account it is disappointing to see what feels like recreation area being distributed based on sporting code influence rather than underlying demand.

Major sporting events including the Women's Asian Cup 2026 which Australia is a favourite to win, and held in NSW, and the Olympics 2032 in Brisbane are likely to significant boost interest in football over this 10-year period further illustrating the need for football recreational area in this council plan.

PBFC is particularly concerned that the nearest development to the clubs home ground, Dunloe Park Urban Release Development includes half the allocation of recreational area to football as is allocated to AFL. Even though all the constraints listed above that the club currently is experiencing are at Koala Beach. The club would expect at the very least equivalent recreational area allocation at Dunloe Park as AFL for future growth and general demand from the new development (equivalent to 2 full-sized football fields).

Also, of note the council seems to have overlooked the number of football clubs in the municipality. The document states there are 5 football clubs affiliated with Football Queensland. There are in fact at least 8 football clubs in Tweed Shire Council; 4 are aligned with Football Far North Coast (Burringbar, Pottsville, Tumbulgum and Uki) and 4 are aligned with Football Queensland (Kingscliff, Tweed, Murwillumbah and Bilambil Terranora). All of which have hundred/s of members. It is concerning that in the sports analysis section of the 10-year plan this has been overlooked much like any concrete action plan for football at Koala Beach or Black Rocks.

PBFC's Recommended Review Point

**(5) Amend Section 2.8 reference L.8.3**

- To include provision of '2 x full sized football fields'

We look forward to seeing the reviewed Sport & Active Recreation Strategy 2023-2033. For any clarification on any of the above please do not hesitate to contact us

Your Sincerely

Aaron Lee - Club President  
The Pottsville Beach football Club Committee



**POTTSVILLE BEACH  
FOOTBALL CLUB**  
PANTHERS . EST 1994

*Aaron Lee*