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MAJOR PARTNERS



Dear Paul

Re: Request for licence to use West Lakes Oval

I am writing to formally request that SANFL be granted a 21+21-year non-exclusive licence to use the oval at West Lakes, historically known as Football Park. If this licence is granted, SANFL plans to establish a football facility for the states most talented junior players, on the land adjacent to the Mosaic Hotel (which is owned and operated by SANFL).

SANFL already has an extremely strong and well-established relationship with the City of Charles Sturt and as outlined below we believe we can build a long-term mutually beneficial partnership at the West Lakes site.

SANFL Overview

Formed in 1877, SANFL is a not-for-profit sporting organisation that's mission is to protect, lead, manage and deliver the promotion and development of Australian Football for the people of South Australia.

SANFL is affiliated to the national body, the Australian Football League (AFL), but is governed by the South Australian Football Commission and is the peak body for Australian Rules Football in South Australia.

While SANFL is predominantly recognised in the public domain as a state league Australian Rules Football competition, the organisation is responsible for the overall health, sustainability, and growth of the sport in South Australia. This includes promotion of the sport, facilitating opportunities for participants to engage in the sport via competition and program management, support and education for affiliated competitions and clubs to increase their own capacity as organisations, amongst many other activities.

There are over 300 players directly involved in SANFL Talent programs, which include junior male and female teams, first nations and multicultural teams, as well as participants with an intellectual disability. These young boys and girls will access the West Lakes oval to pursue their dreams of playing at the highest level. There are also a further 700 players at eight (8) SANFL Clubs who will from time to time have the benefit of using the football facility at West Lakes.

SANFL also runs the SANFL Junior Competition for 13,000 girls and boys aged 6 to 17 across the metropolitan area. Many Clubs are often looking for additional playing venues. While not included in the hours of use request, SANFL is very open to working with the Council, at the request of a junior club from within the Charles Sturt Council area, to allowing Football Park (together with the SANFL change rooms) to be used for junior games on Sunday mornings.

Background

For 40 years Football Park at West Lakes was the home of football in South Australia, until 2014 when AFL games were relocated back to Adelaide Oval and the land was sold to Commercial & General to take the precinct into the next generation.

As the owner of the land at West Lakes, SANFL knew it will eventually have to find a new football facility and oval to run and manage its various programs, particularly its talent pathways for the best boys and girls in the state to realise their potential and pursue excellence.

By December 2019, SANFL had been transferred the head lease for Thebarton Oval from the Adelaide Footy League and secured \$11m in government funding (\$5m State Government, \$6m Federal Government) to build its new talent facility at Thebarton Oval.

SANFL was informally approached by the Adelaide Football Club in October 2020 regarding the possibility of co-locating at Thebarton Oval, which SANFL was willing to consider on the basis there was access to two ovals (Thebarton Oval and King Reserve). The Adelaide Football Club at the time were considering several options.

At this time, SANFL had its project fully funded and ready to proceed. It had begun negotiations with the City of West Torrens Council on a new 21+21-year lease at Thebarton Oval, to replace the current lease, which is due to expire in 2031. In early 2022, the City of West Torrens Council resolved it would not consider a new long-term lease for the SANFL at Thebarton Oval, as its priority was to allow the Adelaide Football Club to establish its headquarters at Thebarton Oval.

SANFL then began looking at alternative locations to build its talent facility and relocate its \$11m of government funding.

West Lakes Strategic Alignment

Following the events outlined above, SANFL engaged with City of Charles Sturt and Commercial & General to investigate options to relocate to West Lakes.

Whilst the change in plans has been disruptive to our business, we feel extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to return to West Lakes once again and reestablish Football Park as the home for talented young players in South Australia, many of whom will reside in the local area. At the same time, it will provide a potential alternative venue for junior football clubs from within the City of Charles Sturt.

Our vision at SANFL is to connect communities through the enjoyment of footy and through this vision, we believe we can partner with City of Charles Sturt to create a place that achieves shared desired outcomes for people, place, and business for many years to come.

People

Our vision for the site focuses on people and increasing public amenity to the iconic oval, whilst also providing safe and functional linkages to our high-performance football facility. With SANFL use being largely programmed in the later afternoon and evening, the oval space will be highly accessible for community use. With the ability to light the oval, the space will be accessible winter mornings for fitness and dog walking (as currently demonstrated at Unley Oval); Young children and families visiting the library and shopping centre during the day can walk down to the oval to spend time playing on the immaculate grass; teenagers can practice their goal kicking with mates; local runners and walkers will add the new oval running loop into their regular fitness sessions around West Lakes. The accessible open space will be crucial to providing required amenity for surrounding residents both now and in the future.

Place

SANFL has a strategic imperative to deliver Quality Facilities at all Levels. The SANFL talent football facility (which will include community use change rooms) is no exception to this imperative with the building complimenting its surroundings and contributing to a welcoming and inclusive precinct. The community use changerooms can be utilised by a variety of clubs from within the City of Charles Sturt and this investment by SANFL will save Council approximately \$2m+ as Council would have had to have built standalone change rooms at the oval to allow community use.

SANFL's connection to place at West Lakes is significant and the iconic building will provide a recognisable anchor point for people to meet at the oval.

Business

The co-location of Mosaic Hotel, X Golf and Hey Caddy and the new SANFL talent facility will enable excellent business outcomes for the precinct by providing ongoing local jobs and increased visitation numbers to the area. Our ability to manage multiple venues from the same precinct will be a significant factor in its success. Through the development of welcoming and inclusive public open space, more people will be attracted to the precinct to spend time and contribute to the thriving social fabric of residential, recreational, hospitality and retail offerings.

Football Programs and Usage

The usage of the oval has been critically reviewed by SANFL and was as presented to the City of Charles Sturt Councillors on 21 August 2023 (attached). SANFL is requesting approval for monthly usage up to 100 hours, comprising of 80 hours (Monday – Friday) and 20 hours (weekends).

Proposed annual usage equates to 850 hours per annum, which is approximately 20% of the available hours between 7am to 7pm.

Licence Request

SANFL is formally requesting to enter into a 21+21-year non-exclusive licence to use West Lakes oval. A long-term licence is critical given the proposed investment into the precinct is approximately \$27m with SANFL committing to ongoing maintenance of the public amenity (oval and field lighting) equalling approximately \$120,00 per annum. Included in the \$27m is also a \$1m contribution to oval and precinct development which will have substantial community benefits in addition to the community use changerooms previously mentioned.

The negotiation on the commercial terms of the licence have commenced in good faith with City of Charles Sturt Management and are progressing well.

In terms of capital contribution, asset replacement and maintenance for the site, SANFL is committed to the following, pending favourable outcomes on other items being discussed.

SANFL Capital Investment	
SANFL high performance and community football facility	\$22.6m
Carpark development	\$3.3m
Precinct & Oval Development (perimeter fence \$150k, interchange area \$50k, field lighting \$600k, scoreboard \$150k, relocation of goalposts \$50k)	\$1.0m
TOTAL	\$26.9m
SANFL Capital Renewal	
Lighting	100%
Scoreboard	100%
SANFL Ongoing Maintenance	
Playing Surface	100%
Lighting	100%
Scoreboard	100%
Goal post and behind goal netting	100%

Timelines

Based on the current timelines, SANFL is hopeful that the non-exclusive licence can be approved by Council at its last meeting this year on 11th December 2023 following public consultation.

We would be able to then sign the non-exclusive licence as soon as practical to commence once the oval is vested with Council. We assume the most appropriate time for the oval to vest with Council would be once the Adelaide Football Club have relocated to Thebarton Oval, likely to occur in 2026.

In relation to our facility, we are aiming to lodge the planning application by December 2023 and commence construction in July 2024 with completion expected by December 2025.

Thanks again for your support of football in South Australia and we look forward to working with you on delivery a fantastic outcome for the West Lakes community.

Yours Sincerely

SA NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE INC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Chandler', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darren Chandler

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER