

Northcote Tennis Courts need urgent attention!

The Northcote Tennis Courts behind the Aquatic Centre and next to McDonnell Park are an asset to our community. For years these courts have served us well with public use and coaching programs, yet the condition of the facility does not meet current standards. Essential upgrades to the facility would bring the tennis courts up to standard with many of Darebin's other sports and recreation investments.

Darebin Council has an adopted Outdoor Sport Infrastructure Framework that guides Council in prioritising its capital works programs. This framework considers several factors including facility condition as well as access and equity outcomes that can be achieved through facility investment. Below are some of Council's investment priorities;

\$63.5M — Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre

\$35 M — John Cain Memorial Park — Narrandjeri Stadium

\$10.3 M — Bill Lawry Oval Pavilion Redevelopment

*Source: <https://yoursay.darebin.vic.gov.au/>

The Northcote tennis courts have been overlooked and are in urgent need of upgrade and significant investment for the benefit of our community.

Currently the facility has six usable courts. The court surface is synthetic grass and are in reasonable condition for play at this time. The surrounding facilities are in sub-standard condition as follows;

Toilets

Currently there is a single porta-loo to service this facility. At any one time there can be upwards of 35 people playing on the courts plus many people spectating. One toilet is not sufficient. Further to this, the porta-loo is not accessible for all. Stepping up into a small, confined area is not usable for wheelchairs, walking frames or anyone with a physical disability, injury or a sensory disorder. The porta-loo is positioned in an exposed area and does not provide suitable privacy.

Club House/Office

These courts are without a proper club house. Currently there is a shipping container used for the office for the head coach and staff. Outside the shipping container there is a decked area which requires a step up which is not disability friendly. There is an old shed used for storage of tennis equipment and one of the small undercover pavilions/gazebos is also used for storage. There is exposed wiring on the exterior of the shipping container and rust and exposed light fittings in the shed. All buildings are an eye sore which attract graffiti, vandalism and littering.

Nets

All six of the tennis nets are old and worn with holes and in need of replacement including the net posts which are inoperable.

Lights

There has been issues with the lights for much of the past year. Currently they are not working and the courts are not operational after dark. Once daylight savings finishes the courts will not be usable from 5pm onward. This cuts out a significant time slot when many people choose to play after work and join in community tennis groups and squads. The potential for night time competitions is also eliminated.

Drinking Water

There is one very old drinking fountain which needs upgrading

Fencing and Gates

The current fencing is old and in need of repair or complete replacement. The entry gate is heavy and difficult to open.

Landscaping and Bins

Landscaping surrounding the courts need improvement and upgrading. The garden beds are overgrown or the plants are dead. The garden bed retaining edging/sleepers are starting to rot and move causing potential trip hazards. There is a combination of concrete, gravel, and grass, none of which is maintained. Currently there is not enough bins and as a result the courts are littered with rubbish. Seating for spectators could be improved both on the courts as well as seating surrounding the courts.

Communication and consultation with the community has begun. We have started social media pages to encourage local involvement and to give updates to the community. Please follow and share these pages.

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/northcotetennisclub>

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/northcote_tennis_club_campaign

Petition — Northcote Tennis Courts — Essential Facility Upgrades

We, the undersigned, call on the City of Darebin to consider the current sub-standard conditions at the Northcote Tennis Courts.

REQUESTS

We request the following redevelopment and upgrades be made to the facility for the benefit of our community.

Clubhouse

- A new clubhouse to accommodate the use of the courts including;
 - Public Toilets for all genders and disability access.
 - Change rooms/shower facilities
 - Office space and associated needs (wi-fi access, power etc)
 - Kitchenette with Tea/Coffee making facilities.
 - Space for groups to gather for presentations/ meetings/indoor seating

Lights

- Tennis court lights to be repaired or replaced and maintained.

Nets

- New tennis nets and net posts for all six courts

Drinking Water

- New outdoor drinking fountains

Fencing/Gates/Paths/Parking

- New or repaired fencing and gates with wide access point and ramps, no steps.
- Dedicated tennis court parking in car park and improved access from car park.
- Disability parking closest to courts.
- Increased bicycle parking.

Landscaping and Environment

- New landscaping with sufficient seating, shade, accessible paths/ramps and suitable low maintenance planting.
- New outdoor bins including recycling, compost and general waste.

OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

Upgrades to this facility would ensure many positive outcomes for the local community as follows;

Access and Equity Outcomes

- Equal opportunity for all children and adults to participate in the sport of tennis.
- A gender diverse environment where young girls are especially encouraged to get involved in sport in a welcoming and safe atmosphere.
- Accessibility for all community members including disability access.
- Potential for wheelchair tennis involvement
- Safer and more accessible entrance to courts with more appealing environment to welcome visitors.

Sport and Recreation Outcomes

- A tennis club that is in keeping with the new state of the art sporting facilities the City of Darebin has already invested in. (Northcote Aquatic Centre, John Cain Memorial Park, Bill Lawry Oval Pavilion and more.)
- Creating further opportunity for the community to engage in health and fitness.
- Opportunity to update court surfaces to ensure top quality.
- Potential to include courts specific to Padel Tennis. Exclusive to this area!

Community Involvement Outcomes

- Encourage new players to the courts.
- Inviting environment for young people and families.
- Serving the local community to avoid local residents seeking tennis clubs elsewhere to develop their skills further. (ie: Competition tennis at Clifton Hill Tennis Club in Yarra City Council)
- Potential for participation in tennis competitions for both Juniors and Adults.
- A clubhouse and toilet facilities allow the hosting of other clubs on game days/nights.
- Opportunity for a more engaged tennis club with social tennis, coaching, holiday programs, club championships, community fundraising events and so on.

Northcote Tennis Club has the potential to be a wonderful asset to the City of Darebin and we ask that this petition be presented to the Council for immediate review and action.

SIGN HERE >>>

