

30 September 2022

The Hon. Justine Elliot, MP
Federal Member for Richmond
PO Box 6996
Tweed Heads South NSW 2486

CC: Mr Geoffrey Provest MP, Member for Tweed
Mr Troy Green, General Manager, Tweed Shire Council

Dear Assistant Minister

On behalf of the Twin Towns Board of Directors, I am reaching out to you personally in the hope you can assist, or at the very least, guide us in navigating any available funding, grants or other options to save the iconic Twin Towns Oasis Pools facility at Banora Point.

As you are aware, specialist engineers recently conducted geotechnical investigations and leak detection studies at the Oasis Pools complex at Banora Point, in particular, the 50 metre Olympic pool. Expansion joints, hydrostatic valves, sumps and return line pits were also inspected, as well as the filters and all pool walls.

This assessment deemed the Olympic pool 'end of life'. The Twin Towns Board of Directors has been advised that it is unviable to repair and reinstate the existing structure to a standard where it can operate safely and in compliance with current health and safety requirements.

This outcome has been devastating, for the Board and Management of Twin Towns, along with the thousands of people that regularly used the pool for school carnivals, sporting groups, athletes, aqua aerobics classes, seniors, local residents and their families.

The permanent closure of Oasis Pools will mark the end of a facility that Twin Towns has regularly made available to these local schools, sporting groups and organisations since the 1980's. It is unlikely that existing council-operated pool facilities within our region will be able to accommodate all of these local children, people and events.

Here is a snapshot of just some of those within the local community that will be affected:

School Carnivals/Trials

High Schools: Banora Point, Tweed River, Kingscliff, St Joseph's College, Pacific Coast Christian College, Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School, Combined High Schools (CHS) District Swimming Carnival.

Primary Schools: St. James, St. Joseph's, Centaur, Kingscliff; smaller schools combined carnivals Fingal, Cudgen, Coolangatta State, Tweed Heads, Terranora, Lindisfarne, Pacific Coast, Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) Tweed district.

School Swim/Water Safety Programs supervised by Oasis Pools instructors

Tweed Primary, Terranora, Banora Primary, St. James, St Joseph's Tweed, Pacific Coast/Pacific Hope.

Marine Studies supervised by teachers

Tweed River High, Banora High, St Joseph's College, Pacific Coast, Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School.

End of Year School Break-up days

St James, St Joseph's College, St Joseph's Tweed, Pottsville, Cudgen, Duranbah, Murwillumbah East, St Joseph's Murwillumbah.

Surf Lifesaving Clubs Proficiency Swimming

Tweed Heads & Coolangatta, Coolangatta, Kirra, Rainbow Bay, North Kirra, Fingal Head and Cudgen Headlands all conduct their sign-ons and proficiency tests at the pool prior to the Season commencement.

Our engineers advised that it is not considered unusual for a pool that is approaching 40 years of age to be 'beyond repair'. In fact, many other Council and Government-funded aquatic centres across Australia are currently experiencing similar scenarios. Pools are being demolished and rebuilt at a rapid rate by their Local, State and Federal Government operators.

But Twin Towns' situation is vastly different. Despite funding, building, maintaining and opening the doors of the Oasis Pools complex to our local community since the 1980's, we have never received, nor requested, assistance or support from any level of Government.

The facility we built predominantly for Twin Towns members became more regularly used by the wider community, in the same way that communities use their local 'public pool'. The number of Club members using the pool has dwindled significantly over the past decade.

If Twin Towns was to rebuild Oasis Pools, it would require a capital expenditure investment of approximately \$12 million.

Although many in the community have voiced their disappointment that Twin Towns will not outlay these costs to rebuild the pool, there are many underlying factors as to why this is not possible.

Over the past six-plus decades, Twin Towns has built its strength and reputation on a history of sound corporate governance, a duty we have to every one of our 62,000 members.

Twin Towns Services Club is a public company, limited by guarantee, registered under the Corporations Act 2001. Like Directors of all public companies, Twin Towns Directors have duties and obligations under The Corporations Act in relation to key management decisions, especially those relating to capital expenditure.

At all times, they must act in good faith, with reasonable care and diligence, and strictly in the best interests of members. The commercial reality is that this pool facility will run at a considerable annual loss for Twin Towns for many decades to come, similar to most public pools and aquatic centres across Australia.

The Board is therefore bound to determine the scale of capital expenditure required to carry out the works, \$12 million, is not responsible use of the Club's financial resources, managed by them on behalf of all members.

Twin Towns recently approached Tweed Shire Council to request their assistance but acknowledge they are currently dealing with major flood damage and repairs at their Tweed Regional Aquatic Centre at Murwillumbah.

Tweed Shire Council General Manager Troy Green accepted that Oasis Pool is at its end-of-life stage. Whilst he is supportive, understandably, he and Tweed Shire Council are not in a position to render financial support to assist us.

We urgently seek your advice as to what our next steps should be.

- Can we request that you make personal representations to the Ministers responsible for sports, regional development, community and families or anyone you believe may be able to assist with funding?

We believe your personal representation on our behalf, in the first instance, to explain our very unique position would be advantageous. We also encourage you to invite the relevant Ministers to visit the Oasis Pools Complex to meet with us so they can see firsthand its size and scope. Only then can they fully appreciate what an immense loss it would be to our local community if the pool cannot be saved.

- Can State and Federal Governments collaborate to provide the necessary funding to give this much-loved pool back to its community? Twin Towns is prepared to continue to make the space available for this facility on the Club's land at Banora Point as it is a central and suitable location.

As you can see from this correspondence, our situation is unique; one that requires a unique and creative solution.

We appreciate your guidance or support and look forward to your response in due course.

Yours faithfully



R L (Rob) SMITH
Chief Executive Officer



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Member for Tweed
PO Box 6695
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