



## Media Release

Friday, March 21, 2003

### New Stadium designs released

The Hunter International Sports Centre Trust has released plans for the first stage of the redevelopment of EnergyAustralia Stadium – the construction of the new Eastern Grandstand.

The Hunter ISC Trust Chairman, Ted Atchison, said that the Trust would soon be releasing an expression of interest document to seek a design team to complete detailed plans for the construction of the new Eastern Grandstand.

Target date for the commencement of construction of the new stand is September 1.

Mr Atchison said that the NSW Department of Public Works would manage the EOI process to assist in the selection of design and construction firms for the Eastern Grandstand.

He said the Department was also co-ordinating contracts for remedial works and enhancements to changerooms, media facilities and the installation of a lift for disabled access serving the current Western Grandstand.

“We expect the designers to be engaged as soon as possible to complete detailed plans for the new eastern grandstand, while we are on schedule to engage the builder within the next three months for a September 1 construction start,” Mr Atchison said.

“The project is being scheduled to minimise any disruption to the Newcastle Knights program this season while the six month construction and fitout phase is not expected to impact significantly on Newcastle United’s activities during the 2003/04 National Soccer League season.

The Hunter ISC Trust is still seeking a Federal Government commitment to complete the \$44 million redevelopment of EnergyAustralia Stadium.

The NSW Government has already handed over \$23.6 million to the project which is funding the construction of the new Eastern grandstand and remedial works to the existing Western Grandstand.

The funding submissions were presented to both governments in May last year. A presentation supporting the submission was made to the Prime Minister’s office in October last year.

This submission included a funding option to assist Federal Government financing of the project.

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The Chairman of the Hunter ISC Trust, Mr Ted Atchison said that the Lord Mayor's Task Force was continuing discussions with the Prime Minister's office and Hunter representatives of the Government in the hope of securing a commitment from this year's the Federal Budget.

He said the Taskforce members who met with the Prime Minister's office would be seeking another discussion before completion of Budget estimates in May.

Mr Atchison also said an extremely positive response was being received from the Calls for Proposals to develop land adjacent to EnergyAustralia Stadium.

The 3.3 hectare Sports Facility is earmarked by the Hunter ISC Trust to become the hub of sports administration, education and promotion in the Hunter.

Details of the Call for Proposal were announced by the NSW Minister for Sport and Recreation, Morris Iemma in late January. The process is being advertised nationally by the Honeysuckle Development Corporation on behalf of the Trust and will close on March 28.

Mr Atchison said it was hoped to announce the successful developers for this privately funded project in the next two months, which will complement the existing and future facilities of the Hunter ISC Trust's Master Plan for the entire precinct.

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***An electronic or hard copy of the artist's impression of the EnergyAustralia Stadium redevelopment is available on request.***