

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics:

Richardson Park

- 1. When will work at Richardson Park start – i.e. as listed in the Budget Papers demolition of structures, upgrade playing field and landscaping?**

Demolition works were tendered on 8 July 2019 and are expected to be complete this year.

The design for the extension and upgrade of Richardson Drive has commenced and will be complete in December 2019.

Construction works will take place in the dry season of 2020 and be complete by the end of 2020.

- 2. Does the Government intend Richardson Park to be used for Rugby League once again? If so, why is the pre-existing infrastructure being bulldozed?**

Richardson Park is intended to become a space for the whole community. That includes Brothers and Nightcliff Rugby League Clubs being able to use it.

The existing structures would be expensive to upgrade to meet current requirements under the Construction Code of Australia, including disability access, fire suppression and fixtures and fittings. Upgrades would also be needed to power, water and sewerage. An upgraded facility would also be highly expensive to operate and maintain.

The Northern Territory Government has supported Rugby League in the Territory and has delivered the new \$25.3 million Territory Rugby League Stadium in Marrara, establishing it as the home for Rugby League and NRL NT HQ.

The new facility will help grow rugby league in the Territory, including encouraging more women and girls to play and allow the code and local competition to be run from within its main stadium. There has already been an increase in participation numbers since the opening of Territory Rugby League Stadium.

3. Will the playing surface be maintained sufficiently for regular use by Rugby League clubs?

The playing surface will be upgraded to provide a surface that is fit for purpose and it will be maintained in this manner into the future.

4. Was the joint proposal for the redevelopment of Richardson Park by Nightcliff and Brothers Rugby League Football Clubs ever considered by Government?

Yes, the proposal was carefully and thoroughly considered.

5. Minister, are you aware that certain NT Rugby League legends have been immortalised at Richardson Park by having their ashes either interred or spread at the site?

Yes, as a born and bred Territorian and sportsman, I am very well aware of the story of Richardson Park. The Government will continue to work with NRL NT clubs to ensure the history and significance of Richardson Park is respectfully recognised and maintained, including the memorial for Mr John Mount, known as Shadow.

The story of Rugby League will be preserved and told at the new community space, including the Shadow Memorial and other Darwin Rugby League legends.

6. Have the families of these NTRL immortals been consulted about your plans to bulldoze the site?

I have met with the CEO and President of Rugby League NT, and the Presidents of Nightcliff and Brothers Rugby League Clubs to advise them of the plans of Government for Richardson Park.

The NT Government understands that Richardson Park holds a special place for some members of the Rugby League community. The proposed redevelopment will provide the opportunity for those members to remain connected to Richardson Park into the future.