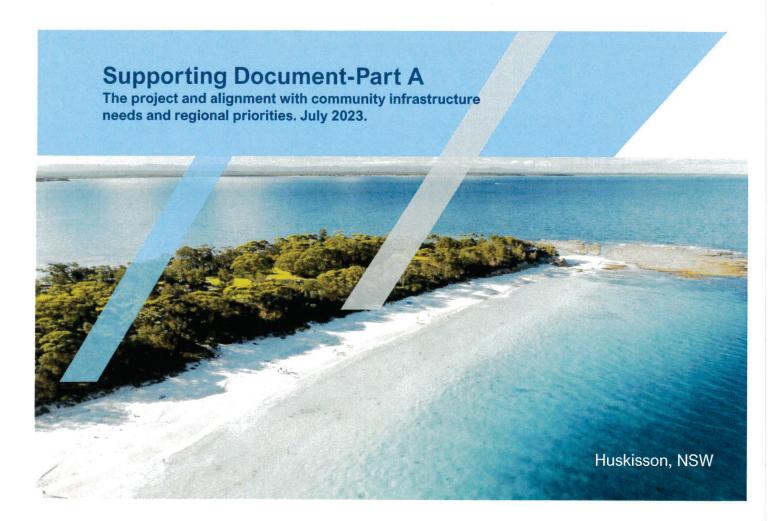
# **Expression of Interest**

# **Growing Regions Program-Round 1**

Applicant: Huskisson Bowling Club Inc

Project: "The Huskisson Multi Use Facility and Event Centre"





Report prepared by Bruce Goldsmith-Town Planner Email: goldsmith2540@gmail.com
Mob: 0418 410 319

## **Executive Summary**

This document has been prepared by Bruce Goldsmith a Consultant Town Planner to support and assist the Huskisson Bowling Club Ltd (ABN 54 001 059 007) to apply for a grant to help transform the business into a vibrant, first-class "community-based" regional facility to be known as the "**Husky Sports and Community Club"** (HS&CC).

Formed in 1966 as a purely lawn bowling club, it has over the last ten (10) years had to change its core business to adapt to a general decline in bowling as a sport and to find other ways to be financially viable.

Around 2018, through business diversification and responding to some community needs the club believed it had found "the way forward" i.e., until Covid 19, bushfires and extreme weather events took a further toll on the business. A new way forward is now needed.

The "writing on the wall" is clear. The club cannot simply return to the days of just being a bowling club. It must continue to diversify and appeal to new markets. But, with its new vision and plan and with prudent capital investment, there is little doubt the club and bowls can prosper as an exciting broad-based "Sports Club + Community Hub + Event Centre".



Existing Club House-recently renovated



Proposed Huskisson Events Centre-Concept drawing only (roof subject to detailed design)

# The Proposal

This report is in two parts:

### **Supporting Document-Part A**

The project and alignment with community infrastructure needs and regional priorities. July 2023.

### **Supporting Document-Part B**

Financial Statement. Approval Documentation, Costs and Quotations

During the Covid 19 closure period the club undertook some internal renovations (Stage 1 works) and planned for extensions (Stage 2-DA approved) which are about to get underway. This will result in an innovative and important outdoor family entertainment and hospitality area called "**The Station**" which will be part of an existing mini golf and barefoot bowling complex. This work will be under construction the latter half of 2023 and does not form part of this grant application.

The grant proposal is intended so the club can undertake some further and much needed renovations and improvements (as a Stage 3 including some parts of Stage 2 to the existing Club building and assets). Stage 3 is intended to transform its bowling green No2 into a synthetic green with a cover (roof). This in turn will provide the club with a first-class bowls facility and the community with a multi-use facility (MUF) that has been loosely called "The Huskisson Event Centre."

The project name is: "The Huskisson Multi Use Facility and Event Centre."

## **Implementation**

The project can easily be commenced by 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024. If selected to go to GBR Stage 2 a full application would be prepared to demonstrate that most of the works involved are currently approved or do not require Council approval. Only the proposed roof over a green will require consent and that can be obtained before the end of 2023 or early 2024 and lodged concurrently with the GBR Stage 2 application.

### The Context

Huskisson, NSW is one of 15 villages that form what is known as the **Bay and Basin** area of the Shoalhaven. The Bay and Basin has the second largest population in the Shoalhaven with 22,350 people.

Huskisson itself, while a small village of about 840 residents, is a prime tourist and entertainment destination and is known as the "Gateway to Jervis Bay". Its population expands considerably during holiday periods.

Husky as it is known locally, hosts major events such as:

- · The Husky Triathlon,
- South Coast Food and Wine Festival,
- · The Husky Carnival,
- The Bay Games-Jervis Bay, and
- Regular weekend markets

It has many up-market restaurants and cafes, several breweries an RSL, hotel and tavern, exceptional beaches and lagoons, water-based activities such as stand-up paddling, kayaks, sailing, whale watching and charter boat tours. Naturally with all this activity there is a significant amount of tourist and holiday accomodation located at Huskisson.





1Location

All these factors tend to lead to most local businesses responding to and relying on much higher demand in the holiday periods than in the off season.

Husky Sports is located at the northern gateway of the village and is at the centre of where community events like the monthly Husky Markets and Annual Carnival are held. It is also near the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum & Gallery.

### **Current Business**

The business provides a large main lounge, bar, TAB, gaming area, restaurant, two lawn bowls greens, a mini golf course and an outdoor family area.

Profitability is mainly driven by liquor and gaming profits with minor income from a leased Chinese Restaurant. Mini golf is very popular particularly in the holiday season and it also serves a need for many age groups, families, and disability groups.

An interesting feature of the business is that while competition bowls membership and patronage have declined, social or barefoot bowls has grown rapidly, and this is particularly the case for the holiday maker market looking for family-based entertainment options. It also serves a similar market to mini golf.

Husky Sports is used extensively by the community including local dance groups, bingo, darts, Ukulele groups and Probus. The club provides discounted access to mini golf and barefoot bowls for local schools, club rooms for community groups and for fund raising events. Relevantly to this application the club provides free barefoot bowls for disability groups.

The building is in good condition and has recently had cosmetic renovation with some works still needing urgent attention. Such as:

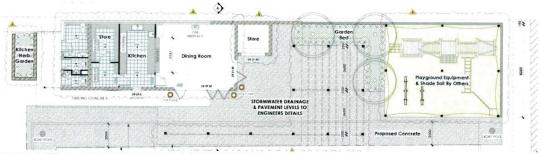
- · The main male toilets
- A large greenside retaining wall.
- Solar panel repairs and replacement
- Green 2 needs a full renovation mainly due to the heavy demand it has received from barefoot bowls and business restrictions during Covid 19.

The current business is stable due to prudent business practice but is in urgent need of renewal and revitalisation. If there is to be a more certain future, real growth in patronage and retention of its community-based focus and activities there must be the change and a new vision as suggested.

### **New Business Direction-The Vision**

During the Covid Pandemic the Club started a renovation - **Stage 1**, that would freshen up and repair its facilities and the Board of Directors developed the idea of a new outdoor hospitality area called **"The Station"** as a **Stage 2**.

A DA and CC was secured for Stage 2 in 2021 and during 2023 Husky Sports will embark upon this project with a shift in business direction to further embrace "community and family development" as an integral part or "core principle" of their future business plans. The idea is to transform the facilities into a truly unique "Community Club". Stage 2 will become the new foundation and future for the Club. See below:



Proposed Alfresco Food & Beverage and Children's Play areas.



Image of The Station and the associated Children's Play facilities.

To take this further and on the advice of Bruce Goldsmith-Town Planner the club is now developing plans for a future Stage 3 that will build upon "The Station" and make Husky Sports and Community Club a major tourist and community facility and attraction in the Shoalhaven.

The working titles for Stage 3 are the "MUF" or "Huskisson Event Centre" This would involve a roof over Stage 2 and include a synthetic bowling green next to "The Station" facilities.

The MUF would add a much needed under cover bowling facility that would:

- · reduce the cost of greens maintenance.
- · reduce water costs.
- · increase bowls participation time and opportunity.
- provide a substantially weatherproof facility.
- required sun protection.
- provide a disability and child friendly facility and environment.

The MUF would add a much-needed community facility that would:

- · host a wide range of events.
- be accessible and disability friendly.
- become a venue to conduct programs for "healthy and active living choices" in a safe environment.
- Increase community participation in sport and other activities.

The MUF or Event Centre could be the go-to facility for major shows, concerts, and other events in the Shoalhaven outside of the Entertainment Centre in Nowra and it would become the **Home of the Husky Hounds** as the premier bowling club and facility on the South Coast.

We think our little Club could have a very big and bright future. However, the Club will need financial assistance to bring this to fruition.







The Huskisson Event Centre-Home of the Husky Hounds



Photo of the Paradise Point Bowling Club indoor bowling facility on the Gold Coast, Qld. Similar roof design as proposed.



Event Centre use of the similar Paradise Point Complex, the Gold Coast NSW

# **Growing Regions Program Objectives**

### These are stated to be:

- Constructing or upgrading community infrastructure that fills an identified gap or need for community infrastructure.
- Contributing to achieving a wide range of community socio-economic outcomes
- Is strategically aligned with regional priorities.

# **Regional Priorities for the Area**

The following are the major planning documents for the Region that have relevance to this application and project.

The project can be assessed in the context of four (4) main planning documents. They are the:

- Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (May 2021)
- Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan (2023 update)
- Shoalhaven 2040 Our Strategic Landuse Planning Statement (September 2020)
- Bay& Basin-Community Led Strategic Plan (September 2021)

Each document has been examined to determine relevant objectives and outcomes.









### Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan.

The "Bay and Basin" area in which Huskisson is located is nominated as a Strategic Centre in the Illawarra Shaolhaven Regional Plan (ISRP).

Objectives 5,12 and 24 have the most relevance. See below.

While the major centers of Woollongong and Nowra /Bomaderry take a higher order regional profile the role and importance of smaller centres is not overlooked in the plan.

The project will assit to implement the ISRP recommendations as follows:





Husky Sports and Community Club is a significant tourist and holiday maker facility and business in the Bay and Basin. There are only two bowling clubs in the area and they attract visitors from wide and far. More importantly they are an important reason why many visitors choose to stay in the Bay and Basin.

The proposed Stage 2 and 3 works will enhance the visitor experience to the Jervis Bay area and add a new experience in terms of the Events Centre.

# Objective 12: Build resilient places and communities

Growing and enhancing our "Resilience and Adaption" to change and adverse events are an important part of todays needs and are key required planning directions. Having major community gathering spaces is critical on many levels to the formation of community development and spirit. The proposed "Event Centre" can be a significant contributor to achieving this outcome.

In addition the range of community related activites provided as part of the business have a role to play.

#### Objective 15:

Plan for a Net Zero region by 2050

The club already has 100 solar panels installed and would double or triple this by using the roof of the proposed MUF. This is consistent with the Regonal Plan objectives for sustainabilty and green grid. There are also plans in devlopment for an electric vehicle charging facility and possible solar battery that could connect to a future micro grid.

#### Objective 24:

Support major events, public art and cultural activities

The main space for events, specifically shows, is the Nowra Entertainment Centre located in Nowra which is a considerable distance away and does not directly benefit local business and initiatives at the local or Bay and Basin scale. There is an auditorium in the St Georges Basin Country Club (about 8kms away) which has a stage and raked floor but not a flexible event space such as is proposed. The Country Club auditorium is no doubt an important aspect of their business but there is nothing else within the Huskisson/Bay and Basin area.

Outdoor events are popular but finding a suitable covered space as a staging point is a challenge. There can be little doubt that a new events facility in the Bay and Basin area would have many benefits.

### **Objective 5:**

### Create a diverse visitor economy

Almost 12 million visitors come to the Illawarra Shoalhaven each year, representing eight per cent of total visitors to NSW.<sup>18</sup> Natural features, a vibrant arts scene, food and beverage trails, characterful towns and historic villages and a calendar of music, sporting and cultural events are key attractors.

Increasing visitation and growing expenditure requires complementary products and experiences, including eco-accommodation, nature-based and cultural experiences, food and wine (including agri-tourism) experiences, adventure activities, and events.

### **Objective 15:**

# Plan for a Net Zero region by 2050

All four councils participate in the Cities Power Partnership, which provides a platform for collaborative projects and knowledge sharing to combat climate change. Wollongong City Council joined the international Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and set a target of net zero emissions by 2050 for the LGA and a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for its own operations.

An Illawarra Shoalhaven Sustainability
Roadmap will set a framework of collaboration
to drive energy efficiency, reduce emissions,
encourage the use of renewable energy and
position the region as a leader in innovation
and sustainability. It will identify collaboration
initiatives and set out a path for stakeholders
to show leadership and enact change.

### Objective 12:

### Build resilient places and communities

The NSW Government supports building more resilient places and communities across NSW.

To build resilient places and communities, shocks and stresses should be considered holistically, including from a people centred, cultural, economic, built form and environmental perspective.

Communities need the skills and knowledge to effectively deal with shocks and stresses and to ensure they are better placed to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from place-based risks that they may experience.

Episodic shocks are sudden, short term events that threaten places and communities, and include natural hazards such as heatwaves, bush fires, flooding, storms or infrastructure failure.

### Objective 24:

### Support major events, public art and cultural activities

The region is home to the Wollangung Art Gallery, the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, the Shellharbour Civic Centre, the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, a world-class equestrian centre at Willinga Park, and the Bundanon Trust's arts and cultural institution at Riversdale.

The proposed Kiama Arts and Cultural Precinct Development could be an all-season performance and exhibition space that utilises new and existing infrastructure including the heritage-listed Old Fire Station. It is proposed to house a new Arts Centre with a 220-seat theatre, restaurant and bar, workshop spaces and gallery/exhibition spaces. The Precinct is supported by the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund, the Regional Cultural Fund, and the Economic Development Strategy for Regional NSW.

Working with councils, the NSW Government will work to improve access to cultural facilities through the development of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Green Grid identified in objective 14.



Support public art, major events and cultural activities.

Strategic planning and local plans should consider opportunities to:

- enhance and protect creative work and performance spaces, and related facilities
- support the temporary use of vacant buildings for performance and creative work
- · support the night-time economy
- facilitate opportunities for creative and artistic expression and participation with a minimum regulatory burden
- encourage the diversification of uses, or activation of underutilised facilities
- facilitate street art to enhance urban areas and contribute to the attractiveness of neighbourhoods.

# **Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan**

The Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan sets out the communities' aspirations for the future and like the ISRP it stresses the importance of measures taken to address community resilience and sustainable business development.

Measures include:

### Resilient, Safe, Accessible & Inclusive Communities

- Provision of recreation and leisure facilities
- Increased opportunities to be healthy and active.
- Improved access to places and activities for people with disabilities.

### **Thriving Local Economies that meet Community Needs**

- Strengthen and diversify the economy.
- Enhance opportunities for a diverse sustainable visitor economy.
- Provision of employment for people of all ages and abilities.
- Deliver safe, vibrant, and attractive public spaces.
- · Provision of recreation and leisure facilities.





Key Priority		Outcomes	Council's Role	Our Partners
1.1	Support inclusive, safe and commented communities	Clemmunities are more prepared and more smallered following desired following d	Leader Advocate Service provider Facilitator Capacity builder Planner Regulator	NSW Government Resilience NSW Response agencies Oevelopers Community housing provides Community groups Council advisory committees
12	Preserve, support and develop cultural and creative vitality across our communities	Active participation in an inclusive arts community     Provision of cultural facilities     Creator awareness, understanding and respect of local Aboriginal and Torses Steak Islander culture, heritage and histories	Leader Advocate Service provider Facilitator Capacity builder	NSW Government Community members Community groups Council advisory committees
1.3	Support community wellbeing through fostering active and healthy communities	Improved access to opportunities for Diffelong learning and to help others  Provision of recreation and to help others  Increased opportunities to healthy and active improved access to places and activities for people with disability highlight disability.	Service provider Facilitator Capacity builder Planner	NSW Government Community members Community groups Council advisory committees



Key Priority		Outcomes	Council's Role	Our Partners
3.7	Strengthen and diversify the economy	Increased investment and new businesses Procession of employment for people of all ages and abilities Enhanced opportunities for a diverse surfamable visitor economy	Leader Advocate Facilitator Capacity builder	NSW Government Businesses Chambers of Commerce
12	Deliver safe, uibrant & attractive public spaces	Strong commercial centres and active CBDs Neighbourhoods, streets and public spaces provide quality places and facilities increased participation in the civic and cultural ide of the City	Leader Advocate Service provider Facilitator Capacity builder	Businesses Chambers of Commerce Community members

Shealkavan City Council - Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan | Page 3

# Shoalhaven 2040 our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement

This is the Council plan for future growth. Two priorities have relevance to this application. Promoting events and strengthening commercial centres.

# **Planning Priority 16**

Promoting events and public art

Shoalhaven is widely known for its iconic towns and villages, its diversity of natural landscapes, and its arts, culture and fine food. Our region is home to many public events catering for locals and visitors of all demographics. These include regionally acclaimed markets and garden festivals, triathlors and sporting events, agricultural shows and annual festivals that celebrate art, music, food and wine. In recent years, Shoalhaven has become a popular destination for many events, with its natural assets and scenic amenity providing a setting for these events.

Shoalhaven's local communities take great pride in their public places, from heritage listed showgrounds, scenic public recreation areas and pristine coastal reserves, to the vibrant public spaces in our town and village centres. However, we also recognise that many of our places are underutilised or in need of revitalisation.

Our communities have consistently told us of their desire to create withant and inviting town centres and public spaces, and to provide greater opportunities for creativity, celebration, and reflection.

Such opportunities, however, must be balanced and managed in a way that is sympathetic to the existing character and natural attributes of our unique places.

Council will work with local communities to create new opportunities and vibrancy within our public spaces, for example, by facilitating local events, or activating underutilised spaces through public art. We will continue our Nowra Murals coilaboration project throughout the Nowra CBD and investigate opportunities for similar public art in other towns and villages in the City.

We will also continue to monitor and amend planning controls, where necessary, to manage the impacts of temporary events on both public and private land, to ensure a balanced and sustainable approach for temporary land uses.



hoalhaven City Council - Shoalhaven 2040 Our LSPS - September 2020 | Page 16

# **Planning Priority 6**

Strengthening commercial centres

Shoalhaven's commercial and retail centres support its communities with necessary shops and services. The retail sector is the second largest employer in the City. Shoalhaven's towns and villages also play an important part in contributing to the visitor economy. Retail is particularly important in Nowra City Centre and Ulladulla Town Centre. These places are likely to undergo significant change over the next 5-7 years. In each case, this change must reinforce the role of these centres to ensure they complement, rather than compete, with each other. The detail of our work for Nowra and Ulladulla is provided in separate Planning Priorities.

Retail activity is also important for Shoalhaven's smaller villages and towns, such as Berry, Kangaroo Valley, the Bay and Basin area, Culburra Beach, Sussex Inlet and Milton. It provides local jobs, supports the visitor economy, and offers a variety of local retail experiences. We need to plan to allow these centres to change to ensure they continue to provide the services and shops demanded by a growing population. We also need to ensure the provision of diverse employment opportunities continues. The retail sector and methods of shopping have been undergoing and continue to undergo significant change.

We need to undertake an audit of retail activity in Shoalhaven's towns and villages to identify: - Opportunities and weaknesses of the retail sector,

- Opportunities and weaknesses of the retail sector, Identify national retail trends and how they affect the Shoalhaven, and
- Confirm the amount and type of retail floorspace required in the next 5-10 years.

We need to focus' place-making and management activities on those key centres requiring revitalisation, redevelopment, or a change in their primary role(s) to increase activity, economic growth, and vibrancy. Some centres may require this work because of significant change, such as the delivery of new infrastructure, for example planned road bypasses.

Potential outcomes should all work to create places where people want to spend time. Examples include, expanding the types of retail and associated experiences, improving the public domain. better transport connections, and providing co-working spaces. Increasing the number of people living in and around centres also supports shops and businesses.

We have already commenced community engagement to help develop a place strategy for the Burton Street Shops in Vincentia. Many other centres would benefit from similar work, but we have identified Bomaderry as an initial focus because of the opportunities provided by the train station and its linear, spread-out nature.

## **Bay & Basin - Community Led Strategic Plan**

This is a relatively new and innovative strategic planning document prepared by the community of the Bay and Basin and supported by the Council to focus specifically on this area of Shoalhaven.

The plan is about orderly and sustainable development with the expectation of quality social and environmental outcomes.

The project would support recommendations (see below) for quality recreation, community, and cultural facilities. Of importance is the better utilisation of an existing community asset and a project that strives to be a successful low impact business that offers commercial facilities to meet local and tourist needs.

#### Strategic Plan Themes



Community Services

The importance of recreation, community and cultural facilities is expressed by the community's support for a large range of health and well-being, as well as sport and arts activities captured in this Strategic Theme.



Commercial Activity

Creating successful low impact businesses and targeted local employment, in line with the emerging demographic needs, is an important Strategic Theme - including work from home opportunities. This Strategic Theme also captures the community desire to encourage more diverse commercial offerings, to meet local and tourist needs.

### Strategic Plan Directions

 Strengthen and support the local economy by encouraging innovation in the business sector





- Enable work from home and other low impact employment opportunities
- Respond to the changing needs of retail and other businesses in the Bay & Basin area
- Ensure tourism-based businesses protect and enhance the natural environment

# How does the application address the project objectives?

 Constructing or upgrading community infrastructure that fills an identified gap or need for community infrastructure.

This project is an upgrade of existing publicly accessible community infrastructure that is operated on a not-for-profit basis.

It addresses a gap in the provision of required infrastructure for community gathering and events that if constructed would help support many community groups and their needs including assisting with the affordability and access to disability facilities and programs related to the sport of bowls.

The current provision of sport-related disability facilities in the region and locally is not satisfactory. This project would assist in fulfilling that need.

Shoalhaven Council prepared a "Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026" the basic structure of which is outlined below. Theme 2 is of importance. The plan identifies that 7.7% or 7,654 people in the Shoalhaven are living with a disability.

One of the initiatives cited was increasing events to recognise Shoalhaven's diverse disability community and celebrate inclusion through International, Day of People with a Disability and Disability Service expos. The proposed Events Centre could hold these types of events.



### Contributing to achieving a wide range of community socio-economic outcomes

The Bay and Basin area has a significant indigenous community and Husky Sports adopts the principles of inclusiveness. The Booderee National Park is jointly run by the local aboriginal community so there is good scope to foster inclusiveness with this project. Husky Sports appeals to a broad range of ages and needs. Stages 2&3 will enhance that situation with:

- o Promotion of bowls for juniors through special school programs
- o Fitness programs and activities for the elderly
- o Community engagement through healthy lifestyle programs
- Social and Cultural Events
- o Providing and Entertainment Hub
- o Growth in bowls as a sport
- o Providing a much-enhanced diverse family-based facility.
- Providing a tourism boost to the local economy

### Is strategically aligned with regional priorities.

This is addressed earlier in this report where it is considered that the project is well aligned with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan and the specific Shoalhaven Strategic Plans. In particular:

- A diverse visitor economy
- o Resilient places and communities
- Supporting major events and cultural activities
- o Thriving local economies, and
- o Strengthening commercial centres

## Summary

The proposed MUF or Event Centre could potentially be a major regional go-to facility for major shows, trade events, concerts etc., and other community events in the Shoalhaven outside of the Entertainment Centre in Nowra. As a multi-use facility, it has many advantages and presents many opportunities rather than a dedicated single use facility.

If implemented, Husky Sports would also become the "Home of the Husky Hounds" as one of the premier bowling clubs and facilities on the South Coast and the only covered bowls facility between Warilla in Wollongong and Merrimbula on the Far South Coast.

As part of a major tourist town with established facilities and accommodation and located in an area that is already the focus of major community events (including state level sports) it has a great start to ensure success. As an Event Centre the location would be hard to beat.

The proposal is consistent with the four (4) relevant regional plans, and which form a consistent suite of intended planning outcomes for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Region. In particular, the Objectives of:

- Creating a diverse visitor economy
- Building resilient places and communities
- Planning for a Net Zero Region by 2050
- · Supporting major events, public art, and cultural activities

With this proposal and as a community-based club, Husky Sports can begin to grow its community participation and reach, and fill existing gaps in disability, aged, junior, and family participation in sport and entertainment offerings.

**Husky Sports and Community Club** could have a very big and bright future. However, the Club will need financial assistance to bring this to fruition.

Bruce Goldsmith - Town Planner BTP (Hons) LGTP RPIA FPIA

Date: 25 July 2023



The proposed Huskisson events precinct and the potential for Husky Sport and Community Clubs to make a significant contribution.

Click link below for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/node/5861
Click link below for the Shoalhaven Community Strategic Plan https://doc.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Displaydoc.aspx?Record=D22/390974