



Fitzroy
Junior Football Club

EMBARGOED UNTIL 5AM Saturday July 13.

COMMUNITY SPORTS CLUBS SLAM YARRA COUNCIL DELAYS ON BRUNSWICK ST OVAL UPGRADE

PICTURE OPPORTUNITY

Saturday July 13, 2pm

Brunswick St Oval.

Fitzroy Women's Side 10th Anniversary Game vs Aquinas.

Junior Girls playing at half time.

Community sporting clubs at the historic Brunswick St Oval are demanding the City of Yarra begins long overdue works on modern facilities before this year's council elections, warning six years of delays risk driving girls and women away from community sport.

In 2018 the State Government allocated \$6.5 million to build a permanent home for the Fitzroy Junior FC, Fitzroy Football Club and Edinburgh Cricket Club at the historic Brunswick St Oval. An extra \$6.3 million was allocated in the 2022 state budget to complete the project because of the council's delays.

Despite the allocation of nearly \$13 million of taxpayer's money the City of Yarra has failed to advance the project, with three different architects and three different project managers used.

The clubs that have revitalised usage of Brunswick St Oval, which was home to Fitzroy Football Club until 1966 and Fitzroy Cricket Club until 1986 and feel betrayed and frustrated by the continued delays.

More than 1500 people play sport at the three clubs – including many from local public housing estates. Thousands more volunteer and support the clubs, who are part of the fabric of the community yet continue to operate without permanent club facilities.

The clubs have unanimously backed an approved design for a two-storey pavilion that has also been endorsed by the community and want construction to start without further delay.

Through their own efforts the three sporting clubs have driven an enormous rise in women and girl's participation in sport yet have not been provided with the basic facilities required to accommodate the many female players and teams now using Brunswick St Oval.

FJFC is home to more than 600 players, making it one of the largest junior football clubs in Melbourne, while Edinburgh Cricket Club has fielded a senior women's team and four junior girls teams in recent seasons.

FJFC Vice-President Bridget Smith said:



**FITZROY
FOOTBALL CLUB**
INCORPORATING THE FITZROY REDS



Fitzroy
Junior Football Club

“The existing facilities are no longer suitable and not fit for purpose in the current environment.

“That the project appears stalled after constructive engagement over a number of years from ourselves and our partner tenant clubs is frustrating, particularly in the context of growing female participation at our club for players, coaches, umpires and administrators.

“Close to one third of our players are female. The Brunswick St Oval development will provide modern change room and toilet facilities, catering for the huge growth in female participation, importantly at our showcase home ground. The proposed club room facilities will allow us to further engage with our community and rebuild the social fabric of the club, sadly lost during the COVID year.

“After six years of waiting, we need the council to act as soon as possible. We need action before the council elections. We don't want to miss out on this once in a generation opportunity to build a proper home for our great clubs, who serve their communities so well.”

This weekend FFC celebrates 10 years' of women's football, and has pioneered female participation in the local competition.

Club director of Player Wellbeing, and past Fitzroy captain, Cass Blake said:

“A lack of clubrooms makes it difficult to run important development and education program for young players.

“The facilities are outdated, and many players have to go home to have a shower after the games. That's not acceptable. We're an inclusive club but we need space to allow everyone to feel welcome.

“We've been promised proper clubrooms for six years. Council needs to hear their community's concerns and get on with it.

FFC president David Leydon said:

“Enough is enough. We got the first grant six years ago and nothing has happened. We need our councillors to stand up for their communities and support our clubs to have a proper home with proper and modern facilities for our women.

“We feel betrayed. Council keeps putting up plans that they know will get rejected. It makes you wonder if they want to support their local clubs. We need action before the election. Councillors are on notice.”

ECC secretary Jane Seeber said the explosion in girls and women playing cricket meant that better facilities were long overdue.



FITZROY
FOOTBALL CLUB
INCORPORATING THE FITZROY REDS



Fitzroy
Junior Football Club

“We can’t wait any longer. Council needs to get on with this. Edinburgh has doubled in size and doubled again in the last 10 years and our players, parents and particularly young girls need suitable change rooms.

“Edinburgh has been recognised nationally as one of the most outstanding clubs in Australia with amazing junior programs, including programs with special needs and for the CALD communities in the Atherton public housing buildings.

“We need a suitable club space to create welcoming and inclusive environments to bring this community together.”

PICTURE OPPORTUNITY

Saturday July 13, 2pm

Brunswick St Oval.

Fitzroy Women’s Side 10th Anniversary Game vs Aquinas.

Junior Girls playing at half time.

For further info

David Leydon FFC President 0408 998 849

Matt Drew General Manager FJFC 0416 208 829

CASE STUDIES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST