




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba, Olympics Legacy

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.12 pm): I want to talk about an Olympic legacy for Toowoomba. There was great fanfare when we started looking at the Olympics. It would be a 45-minute train journey from Toowoomba to Brisbane—that is gone. The west ticketing system stops at Ipswich. There are a few things west of Ipswich, I just wanted to add. We do have a desperate need for our stadium at the Toowoomba sports ground or the Clive Berghofer Stadium or the athletic oval to be upgraded. It would be good to see some investment there to transform it into a boutique stadium. However, I am very concerned about the temporary nature of the stadium. We do not want this just for the Olympics. I think it would be better to invest the money in something of a more permanent nature.

What I would really like to see in Toowoomba—we have done a bit of an audit—is the government to address the lack of female changing rooms and female facilities so that girls and women can participate in sport. Sport is exploding, whether it be Rugby League, AFL or rugby union. All of the football codes and all sport is growing. We do not have the facilities: we do not have the pedestals in the changing rooms, we do not have girls' changing rooms and we do not have ladies' changing rooms. I would love to see part of the legacy of the Olympics for Toowoomba to provide these kind of facilities to encourage our young girls and young ladies not only to get started and participate in sport but to continue playing sport in the lead-up to the Olympics. Some of them might play at the Olympics, but the main thing is that they have the opportunity to participate in sport. I think that is very important.

Another area of concern is that Toowoomba does not have a tartan track outside of a private school. We have one tartan track, but it is not a full-sized track and it is at a private school. We need a tartan track in Toowoomba. We have a Commonwealth Games gold medallist thrower, but we do not have a throwing circle of any standard at all to be able to use. We do not have a decent athletics facility.

I would encourage the minister to engage with the university, to engage with the council and take a serious look at building at least a district level athletics facility. Perhaps with the university and the council contributing as well, we can get something that will allow us to host district sports. It is embarrassing for Toowoomba not to have these facilities. This is our opportunity. If we really want an Olympic legacy, let's get the female changing rooms up to scratch, let's make sure that our girls can participate in all the sports, let's make sure that we have an athletics track and a full athletics facility available to at least host district level competition. In addition, when we do upgrade the athletic oval or Toowoomba stadium or the Clive Berghofer Stadium, let's not just do it with scaffolding and of a temporary nature, let's do it properly so that it is there for the long term.