



# STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria  
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

## MEDIA RELEASE



### Soccer Infrastructure Needed in Barwon South West Region

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Member for Western Victoria, Stuart Grimley MP has asked the Minister for Sport if the Government's plans on soccer infrastructure spending in the Barwon South West region will meet demand.

According to the Football Victoria (FV) Facility Strategy 2018, the Barwon South West region will need anywhere between 16 and 27 new soccer pitches to meet participation demand by 2026.

The world game is continuing to grow in popularity in Victoria, particularly in Greater Geelong, Warrnambool and the Surf Coast. These areas are projected to account for 95 per cent of registered players in the Barwon South West region in 2026, according to the FV Facility Strategy 2018.

It is no secret that Geelong, and much of Barwon South West, have fantastic grassroots facilities for local AFL clubs. There is a long history of churning out AFL stars, who often end up playing for the Geelong Football Club.

Whilst this is welcomed, Mr Grimley says opportunities could be missed to develop future Socceroos or Matildas, especially if important grassroots infrastructure is left unfunded.

The City of Greater Geelong currently have a commitment to prepare a feasibility and business case for the delivery of a regional soccer facility in Geelong.

#### Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"I was the inaugural secretary for Armstrong United FC, a club that was founded in 2018 in the growing suburbs of Armstrong Creek and Mount Duneed. The local community loved seeing a new club and support was aplenty. It is clear that soccer is growing in popularity in the Barwon South West region, but we need the grounds and infrastructure to support the demand.

The forecast growth for soccer in Geelong is extraordinary. It is important that our grassroots facilities keep up with the demand. This includes fit-for-purpose facilities for both male and female participants.

I've been approached by locals who are involved in the soccer community. They are telling me that many of the current facilities are old and need improvements. With the local season ending prematurely due to COVID-19 restrictions, the time is right to fund upgrades or at least plan for new facilities. Who knows: the Barwon South West region could produce the next Tim Cahill or Samantha Kerr."

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