

Recreation

STRATEGY 2018



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

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Acknowledgment

Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi who are the traditional custodians of the land of Port Stephens.

We also pay our respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and future.

| Issue name | Issue date | Purpose |
|----------------|------------------|--|
| For exhibition | JUNE 2018 | Public exhibition |
| For adoption | 13 NOVEMBER 2018 | Adopted at the Council Meeting 13 November 2018 |

Introduction

Background

The purpose of the Port Stephens Recreation Strategy (the 'Strategy') is to identify opportunities to improve the provision and quality of recreation facilities by developing a clear understanding of the current supply and demand of recreation facilities in conjunction with the needs of the current and future population.

Port Stephens Council recognises the social, environmental and economic importance of recreation to the community. As such, the Strategy will provide the overarching framework and strategic direction for the planning and improvement for recreation facilities and services in Port Stephens to 2036.

Scope

The scope of the Strategy is to:

- Audit and document the current provision of recreation facilities within the Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA).
- Understand the existing and future needs of the Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA) to identify where new recreation facilities are needed, opportunities for improvement and the type of such provision.
- Develop a framework for the future planning and management of recreation facilities including identifying land that has existing or potential recreational value and should be protected from inappropriate development.
- Develop a prioritised implementation plan to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in the strategy.



Why are recreation facilities important?

Recreation areas contribute to the wider environment in many ways, including:



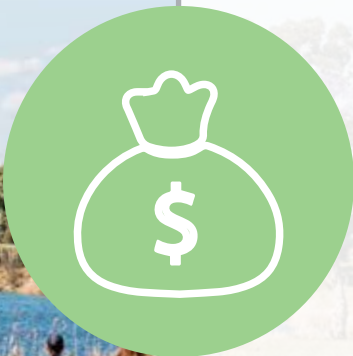
Social

- High quality recreation facilities are vital to a healthy community. These spaces provide cultural, social, recreational, sporting and community facilities and offer people the opportunity to enjoy passive and active recreation.
- Passive and active recreation improves a community's physical and mental well-being. Inclusive open space can improve liveability and community cohesion through providing a place for all members of the community to meet and interact.
- Recreation facilities play a major role in the development and wellbeing of children and young adults. They also provide spaces for unstructured recreational pursuits, which have health benefits across all ages.



Environmental

- Recreation facilities can play an important role in the promotion and protection of biodiversity, natural habitat and cultural heritage. They can help to achieve a softer interface between urban and rural environments while mitigating climate change and flood risk. Protecting natural areas assists in CO2 reduction and open spaces act as intermittent drainage paths and stormwater detention areas.
- Recreation areas generate an appreciation and sense of community ownership evidenced by Council's high levels of volunteer participation. These areas encourage the community to advocate for environmental protection.
- Recreation facilities can be used to define the local landscape character and identity.
- Recreational land enhances the physical character of an area and can influence existing and future development and infrastructure.



Economic

- Recreation facilities stimulate economic growth by supporting tourism, leisure, sporting and cultural activities.
- High quality spaces attract events to the local area generating visitor spending and promoting Port Stephens as an attractive destination.
- Attractive recreation facilities can stimulate business growth and investment which in turn increases the surrounding property values.
- The use of recreation facilities for community and recreation pursuits improves community wellbeing and serves to lower healthcare costs.



Our vision

A sustainable network of recreation facilities that encourage participation, interaction and personal development in a safe and inclusive environment.

Vision

The vision for recreation in Port Stephens LGA is "A sustainable network of recreation facilities that encourage participation, interaction and personal development in a safe and inclusive environment." This vision is underpinned by seven objectives that will be referenced to guide Council's planning and operations to achieve the vision:

Objective 1

Provide recreational facilities that are appropriately scaled and responsive to community need.

Objective 2

Improve the quality and diversity of existing recreation facilities to provide a range of leisure and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Objective 3

Create a network of centralised sporting precincts and facilities.

Objective 4

Provide a recreation facility network that is inclusive and accessible.

Objective 5

Implement environmentally sustainable approaches to alleviate the impacts of climate change on the recreation facility network.

Objective 6

Provide recreation facilities that are safe, attractive and well utilised.

Objective 7

Achieve well managed and maintained recreation facilities through a coordinated and planned approach.

Community engagement

Council sought community feedback to ensure the Recreation Strategy considered all relevant recreational issues in Port Stephens. To inform the strategy, Council reviewed 355c committee Forward Works Priorities, Sports Council's Sport Development Strategies and conducted a public survey. The online survey was open for two weeks and consisted of 12 questions that explored how the community utilises recreation land and facilities.

What are recreation facilities?

This Strategy will focus on land and facilities which are managed by Port Stephens Council (Council) and available to the wider community for the purposes of leisure, recreation and amenity. This includes public parks, reserves, modified foreshores and sportsgrounds.

Other areas such as shared pathway connections, streets, urban public spaces, drainage reserves and natural areas are recognised as providing a valuable contribution to the broader recreational experience. However as these assets are primarily built for purposes other than recreation, they are not specifically covered within the scope of this Strategy.

Recreation Hierarchy

A hierarchy approach is proposed to determine the appropriate level of development and management of Council's recreation network.

The hierarchy assigned to recreation areas considers location, size, quality, accessibility, existing infrastructure, visitor appeal, diversity and capacity for activities offered. The hierarchy tiers are defined as:

Regional – have the capacity to attract people from the wider Port Stephens area and beyond.

District – have the capacity to draw people from more than one Planning Area.

Local – cater for people within the local area within one or two suburbs.

What areas are covered within this Strategy?

This Strategy applies to Council owned and managed land. Council's recreational land typically falls into one of three classifications; community land (parks, sportsgrounds, foreshores), Council managed land (parks, sportsgrounds, foreshores etc. which are owned by the Crown but managed by Council) and operational land (urban and infrastructure property). This Strategy applies to community and Council managed land suitably categorised as Park or Sportsground in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993. Operational land is not included in the scope of this Strategy except where the intent of the land is for recreational purposes (e.g. Ferodale Sportsground, Medowie). Crown land and land managed by other government authorities (such as Marine Parks and National Parks) are not included in the scope of this Strategy.

How to use this document

VOLUME 1 The Strategy – provides the objectives, directions and actions required to achieve the vision for recreation facilities in Port Stephens. The Strategy is the key document and can be read as a stand-alone document.

VOLUME 2 Background and information – contains the supporting information that was used to prepare the Strategy including document reviews, demographic data for the Port Stephens LGA, community engagement responses and a recreation land and facility gap analysis.

Review

This strategy will be reviewed in 5 years and a full revision completed within 10 years.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES





Objective #1

Provide recreation facilities that are appropriately scaled and responsive to community need

1 Recreation land and facility provision

Port Stephens Council owns or manages approximately 415 hectares (ha) of recreational land. Based on the current population of 69,537 (2016 ABS Census) this equates to a provision level of 5.97 ha per 1,000 people and a future provision of 4.59 ha per 1,000 people for the projected 2036 population of 90,387.

Industry benchmarks for open space range between 2.83 ha and 5 ha per 1,000 people. The 2.83 ha benchmark is the most commonly applied standard across the open space planning industry.

Based on this standard, Port Stephens has a relatively high provision of recreational land and this may be placing unnecessary impost on Council's maintenance and renewal budgets. This Strategy therefore proposes a hierarchical approach to the provision of open space to ensure that the residents of Port Stephens have

adequate opportunity to participate in recreational activities whilst maintaining a sustainable level of recreation land and facility provision.

The provision standards for recreation facilities in Port Stephens are as follows and have been developed with consideration to the Draft Local Development Contributions Guidelines (NSW Government, 2009), the Review of Standards Guiding the Provision of Council's Community and Recreational Facilities (AEC, 2013), the Recreation



and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government (NSW Government, 2010), local participation rates, and trends and provision standards adopted by other local government areas and planning authorities. Provision standards for Local Sportsgrounds are not proposed due to their high establishment and maintenance cost relative to their recreational value. Local Sportsgrounds will be retained where there is a demonstrated need that can't be met by District and Regional facilities.

- Local Parks – 0.4ha per 1,000 persons
- District Parks – 0.6ha per 1,000 persons
- Regional Parks – 0.25ha per 1,000 persons
- Local Sportsgrounds – N/A
- District Sportsgrounds – 0.6ha per 1,000 persons
- Regional Sportsgrounds – 0.95ha per 1,000 persons
- AFL – 1 field per 50,000 persons
- Athletics – 1 grass field per 25,000 persons / 1 synthetic field per 100,000 persons
- Basketball – 1 court per 4,000 persons
- Cricket – 1 field per 4,000 persons
- Croquet Courts – 1 court per 40,000 persons
- Equestrian centre – 1 per 42,000 persons
- Football (soccer) – 1 field per 5,000 persons
- Golf – 1 course per 30,000 persons
- Hockey – 1 turf pitch per 25,000 persons / 1 synthetic pitch per 100,000 persons
- Netball Facilities – 1 court per 3,000 persons
- Playground – 1 per 1,700 persons
- Rugby League – 1 field per 5,000 persons
- Rugby Union – 1 field per 25,000 persons
- Skate/BMX parks – 1 facility per 4,000 persons aged 5-24 years
- Softball/Baseball 1 field per 23,500 persons
- Sport/Leisure Centre – 1 facility per 17,500 persons
- Tennis Courts – 1 court per 1,800 persons



The opportunity to address gaps in provision could potentially be addressed through new development or the acquisition of land. The Recreation Facility Guidelines (Appendix A) provide a framework to guide planning and developing new public open space and renewal of existing.

As new development takes place within Port Stephens, it is important to ensure that appropriate open space dedication is made. The Recreation Facility Guidelines have been established to ensure that all dedications of new recreation facilities are a meaningful and quality addition to the network.

Recreation facility planning and design within these new developments or redevelopments needs to be considered as a key component in the overall network and not just as leftover space or an afterthought. This ensures that the gain is of value to the community. This will be particularly critical in Planning District 3 – Medowie where high population growth is predicted and there is a lack of recreation facility provision.

The proposed Kings Hill development north of Raymond Terrace will be a significant future residential area. To ensure parks and sports facilities meet the needs of the new and existing population, a review of the existing Raymond Terrace catchment and facilities should be undertaken to ensure Kings Hill infrastructure offers recreational diversity and meets the future needs of the population.

Strategic Directions

- Provide recreation facilities in accordance with Council's recreation facility standards and guidelines.
- Consider the impacts of neighbouring LGA facilities when planning for recreation.
- Review standards regularly to ensure appropriate level of recreation facility provision.

2 Recreation facility quality

An important aim of the Strategy is to ensure that there is a range of accessible, high-quality and highly valued recreation facilities available to everyone within the Port Stephens network. Whilst the quantitative standard is an important assessment tool for provision, the community's perception of the amount of recreation facilities can be affected by the quality and accessibility of their local spaces.

Community expectations regarding quality and function of recreation spaces have increased. This can be attributed to factors such as higher densities decreasing private open space and an increased awareness of health and wellbeing. The potential to enhance the quality, function and value of recreation spaces can be achieved through a greater emphasis on innovative design and well planned spaces.

The design and level of innovation in Council's recreation spaces has historically been restricted due to a focus on maintenance driven results and limited capital funding. This has caused lack of diversity and some landscapes that do not capitalise on the potential of individual reserves.

Well planned and designed spaces are particularly pertinent for recreation areas that have a high visitation rate. Port Stephens is fortunate to have numerous foreshore reserves, beaches and natural areas which provide an important recreational focus for both residents and visitors alike. Ensuring these spaces are appropriately designed with high quality infrastructure, rather than a reliance solely on the natural assets to provide the focus for recreation, will be key to ensuring Port Stephens remains a highly desirable destination.

Community engagement is important during the planning and design phase of recreational projects. Council needs to work in partnership with the community to ensure parks and sportsgrounds are tailored to meet their needs. Council's community engagement framework helps the

community to participate in a project which in turn leads to higher quality facilities

Port Stephens also has a large number of local parks and reserves. The quality and diversity of these spaces is another opportunity for improvement by Council. The creation of diverse landscape settings and recreational experiences will strengthen the network, with particular focus on achieving diversity within each Planning District.

Key considerations in the planning and design process will be demographic changes and recreation trends. In particular, providing easily accessible spaces and facilities which cater for Port Stephen's aging population will be important. The increase in working age residents and corresponding decline in school age children will also result in a greater demand for more informal recreational activities such as walking and spaces that can facilitate informal community interaction and socialising. Time poor working age residents may also opt for the flexibility of outdoor exercise hubs.

Recreation facilities that are of high value to the community due to its quality, appeal, safety and activity opportunity make for a better quality of life.

Strategic Directions

- Develop multi-use and centrally located recreation facilities.
- Diversify recreational opportunities within existing recreation areas.
- Adopt performance based outcomes for planning and designing recreation facilities.

Objective #2

Improve the quality and diversity of existing recreation facilities to provide a range of leisure and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.



King Street Confectionery



Objective #3

Create a network of centralised sporting precincts and facilities.

3 Sporting precincts and facilities

Participation in organised sport and recreation remains strong within the community of Port Stephens. Council recognises not only the health and wellbeing benefits, but also the importance of sports participation in childhood development and the significant contribution sports clubs play in connecting the community socially.

Council supports a wide range of organised sports facilities distributed across the local government area. Two large facilities have been ranked as being regional level; Tomaree Sports Complex in Nelson Bay and also King Park Sports Complex, Raymond Terrace. Council has recently developed masterplans for both Tomaree Sports Complex and Ferodale Sports Complex in Medowie which have a vision to expand and improve both sites.

Port Stephens is expected to experience significant aging of its population. As a result it will be important to invest in infrastructure that facilitates participation of this particular age group in sporting and active recreation facilities. This also includes the supporting infrastructure required, such as accessible amenities buildings and pathways. These measures will be necessary to promote social inclusion and community development.

A needs based assessment has considered current and forecast population numbers, density, demographic profile and registered player numbers across

the local government area. To encourage the development of centralised sporting precincts to meet anticipated demand, this Strategy proposes to focus resources on creating and upgrading District and Regional level facilities and moving away from isolated local sporting facilities.

It is recommended that the focus should be on enhancing the quality and capacity of the existing sportsgrounds and facilities to ensure that these facilities can support current and future participation.

Strategic Directions

- Accommodate sporting needs within existing facilities suitable for an ageing population.
- Develop sporting facilities in accordance with the recreation facility hierarchy.
- Encourage player retention through developing regional facilities suitable for higher level competition and modified sport.
- Prioritise utilising existing sporting facilities to accommodate future demand.



Objective #4

Provide a recreation facility network that is inclusive and accessible.

4 Inclusive recreation facilities and connections

All members of the community should have equal opportunity to experience and enjoy recreation facilities regardless of their age, gender, ability, cultural background or status. Inclusive and accessible open spaces and facilities have a strong influence on the quality of people's lives by welcoming diversity, promoting mobility, improving health and creating cohesive communities.

Inclusive facilities are safe, accessible, practical and enjoyable to all. Council recognises that improvements need to be made to the design and the infrastructure of Port Stephens parks and sportsgrounds to optimise equitable access and enjoyment. If existing and future facilities are developed to be responsive to people's needs and easy to use, spaces can be evenly and fairly shared by all. Examples of inclusive infrastructure include gender neutral amenities, accessible park furniture, sensory play equipment, pathways connections, multi-lingual signage and beach access ramps.

Connections between open spaces and residences are essential for the community to be able to enjoy these spaces. Practical and convenient connections between recreation facilities and the community are critical to supporting unrestricted participation. Strengthening the accessibility of the network will increase the use and value of recreation facilities, support sustainable transport and the ongoing health and wellbeing of the community. The Pathway Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) development are integral to improving these connections.

Council has adopted a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to deliver a network of accessible facilities throughout Port Stephens. Opportunities to improve access to, and utilisation of, recreation facilities must continue to be developed to ensure an equitable provision of recreation opportunities.

Strategic Directions

- Locate recreation areas in accordance with Council's standards and guidelines for recreation facilities.
- Provide accessible public and sporting amenities within district and regional facilities.
- Seek specialist access and inclusion advice when planning and designing large recreation projects.
- Utilise universal design to create inclusive spaces.
- Facilitate unimpeded and adequately serviced pedestrian movement to and through recreation facilities.
- Promote the participation of women in sport.

Objective #5

Implement environmentally sustainable approaches to alleviate the impacts of climate change on the recreation facility network.



5 Environmental management and climate change adaptation

Mitigation and adaptation strategies aimed to reduce the impacts of climate change are increasingly becoming a priority in Australia. Local government is at the forefront of managing activities that contribute to mitigating the adverse effects of climate change. Council needs to be committed to adopting environmentally sustainable approaches to manage its recreation network. Water management, tree planting and energy use reduction are three potential areas of influence for Council.

Water management is a key consideration for this strategy, given it is the main resource used for maintaining recreation facilities. Adopting water conservation practices to reduce the use of mains water can be achieved through water collection and re-use in parks, low water tolerance plant selection and reducing the areas requiring irrigation.

Planting large canopy trees has the potential to strengthen the habitat value, contribute to alleviating the effects of climate change, provide rich aesthetic value and also provide shade and shelter to support usage in hot weather.

Another key area Council can increase the environmental performance and sustainability of the network is through energy use reduction. The ongoing

installation of solar lighting in parks and LED lighting with smart controllers at Council's sports facilities will help improve energy efficiency.

Strategic Directions

- Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design principles into the design of new and existing recreation facilities.
- Utilise low energy technology such as solar and LED lighting within recreation facilities.
- Minimise the clearing of vegetation when designing and constructing recreation areas.
- Reduce the need for irrigation through the establishment of quality soil profiles.



Objective #6

Provide recreation facilities that are safe, attractive and well utilised.

6 Place making and place activation

Port Stephens has a diverse landscape and distinctive town centres that all contribute to creating a sense of place. Place making and activation is a collaborative approach to managing the issues, challenges and opportunities across Port Stephens town centres and other significant locations. Port Stephens Council plays a crucial role in building tangible relationships amongst local business, residents and visitors to grow social, cultural and economic benefits for our community.

Effective place making and activation requires ownership from both Council and the community to create vibrant spaces that provide the opportunity for a diverse range of experiences and activities. These unique spaces should respond to the culture and identity of each community and ultimately, contribute to the wellbeing of those that use the space.

Council's recreation network is the setting where a number of place making activities take place. This can vary from small scale commercial operators such as kayak hire and surf schools, to medium scale community markets and large scale community events such as Bluewater Country Music Festival and Tastes at the Bay.

Place making and activation is highly valued by the community and visitors to the Port Stephens area. Forward planning and the design of open spaces should seek to facilitate and improve place making activities.

Strategic Directions

- Provide recreation facilities that reflect Port Stephens character and cultural identity.
- Integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles into the design of new and existing recreation facilities.
- Support community groups and organisations in activating open space areas with high quality services.
- Improve facilities to support community and cultural events in popular recreation areas (such as water, power, lighting and access).

7 Recreation facility management

The servicing of recreation facilities impacts its usability and value to the community. Adopting a hierarchy approach to manage the recreation network will ensure that community expectations are consistent with the level of service provided.

The main issue around the current level of recreation facility provision is whether it is sustainable to meet community expectations within Council's allocated resources. Insufficient resources for management and maintenance of a large number of facilities can result in too many poorly maintained areas. Poorly maintained spaces are visually unappealing and may discourage recreational use. This can cause reduced community ownership and community pride instead of being the attractive and highly valued assets that the community wants to keep. A hierarchy approach to planning and managing recreation facilities will assist in managing community expectation and the allocation of Council resources.

Foreshore erosion is a topical issue amongst coastal communities. The interface between our foreshore reserves and waterways is a complex and dynamic environment. Its behaviour depends on a variety of factors such as coastal processes, past management and public use. The inter-relationship of these factors vary for every site; affecting the suitability of the management approach. Management is based on cost /benefit, risk, maintenance, sustainability, environmental impact, safety and access.

Protection of all foreshore areas is neither appropriate nor feasible. Works managing impacts on coastal processes will be guided by the relevant coastal management plan or program rather than this Strategy.

Strategic Directions

- Use evidence based approaches to planning recreation facilities.
- Encourage community involvement in the management of recreation facilities.
- Utilise external funding sources to manage and upgrade recreation facilities.
- Maintain recreation facilities in accordance with Council service level agreement.



Objective #7

Achieve well managed and maintained recreation facilities through a coordinated and planned approach.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



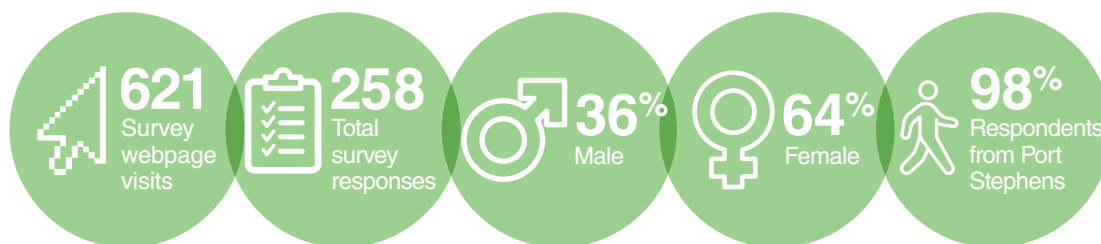
Community engagement

Council sought community feedback to ensure the Recreation Strategy considered all issues relevant to recreation in Port Stephens. To inform the strategy, Council reviewed 355c committee Forward Works Priorities, Sports Council's Sport Development Strategies and conducted a public survey. The online survey was open for two weeks from 20 March 2018 to 3 April 2018 and consisted of 12 questions that explored how the community utilises recreation facilities.

The survey was promoted via the following means:

- Council website.
- Council social media including Facebook.
- Page 2 article in the local Port Stephens Examiner newspaper.
- Direct notification emails to Council 355c committees, Sports Council club delegates, engagement HQ contacts.
- Paper survey copies were also distributed to Raymond Terrace Library, Tilligerry Library, Tomaree Library and Community Centre and Raymond Terrace Council Administration building.

Survey results



Do you think Port Stephens has enough parks? Why?

The majority of respondents to this question believed that Port Stephens had enough a sufficient supply of parks. Many of the responses highlighted the important role parks and natural areas play in their quality of life.

While it was recognised that provision was sufficient by many, it was noted that the quality of the existing park facilities needed to be improved to increase usage and enjoyment.

Other areas of concern included lack of facilities at Medowie, Fern Bay and Anna Bay and improving access to dog exercise areas.

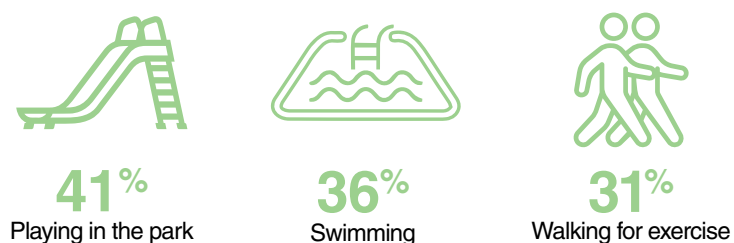
What can Council do to encourage you to use sportsgrounds more?

- Accessible facilities for everyone, of all ages and abilities to enjoy.
- Seating, shelter and supporting infrastructure e.g. BBQs, shade trees, signage and waste bins.
- Car parking, improved lighting, shared pathways linking communities to grounds.
- Cleaner toilets and changerooms.
- Ground surface improvements.
- Outdoor exercise equipment around ground perimeters.

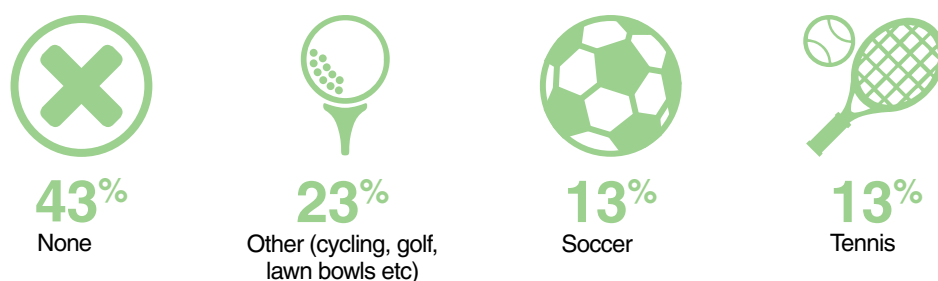
Top 3 activities of respondents



Top 3 activities for children of respondents



The top 3 sports respondents play



More centrally organised club sport. I am single parent of 5 kids and can't get all my kids to a game.

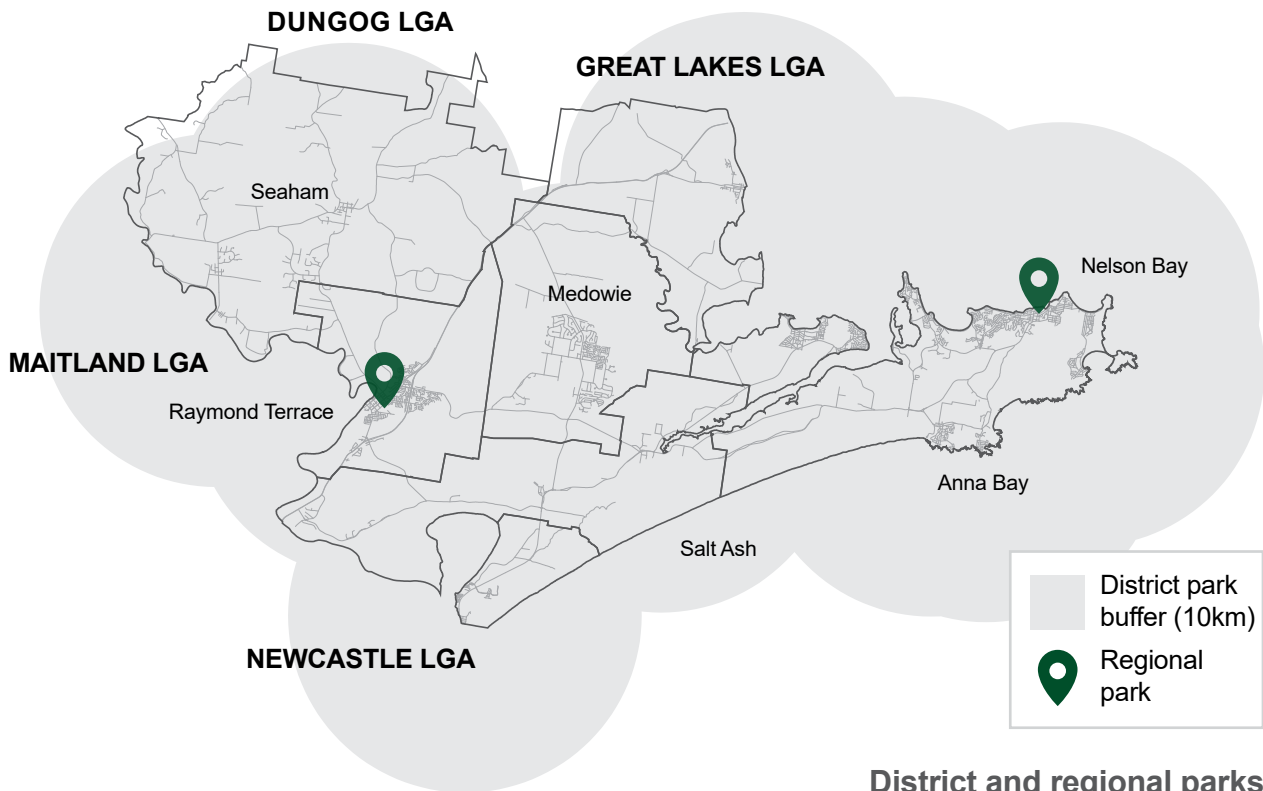
Survey response: *How can Council encourage greater sportsground use?*



PLANNING PROFILES



Port Stephens Local Government Area



Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 69,537
- Projected population (2026): 77,955
- Projected population (2036): 90,387

Recreation land and facilities gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| Regional | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| Regional | MONITOR | MONITOR |
| Facility | 2016 | 2036 |
| AFL | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Athletics (Grass) | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Athletics (Synthetic) | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Basketball | DEFICIT | DEFICIT |
| Cricket | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Croquet Courts | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Equestrian | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Football | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Golf | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Hockey (Turf) | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Hockey (Synthetic) | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Netball | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Playground | SURPLUS | ADEQUATE |
| Rugby League | MONITOR | MONITOR |
| Rugby Union | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Skatepark | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| Softball/Baseball | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sport/Leisure/Aquatic Centre | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Tennis | SURPLUS | ADEQUATE |



Opportunities for Port Stephens Local Government Area

Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate surplus recreational land – The provision of recreation land across the LGA is projected to be 162 ha in surplus by 2036. Many local and district facility catchments overlap which suggests an overprovision of recreation facilities in areas.

Increase Basketball facilities within existing District and Regional Sportsgrounds – The provision of basketball courts is in deficit. Council data does not capture participation rates in basketball however it is the fourth most popular sport in Australia for persons age 14 and older.

Improve quality of infrastructure for football – Despite football facility provision being identified as adequate to 2036, the notable popularity of the sport and feedback received through consultation with sporting clubs suggests improved facility quality may be required to service demand.

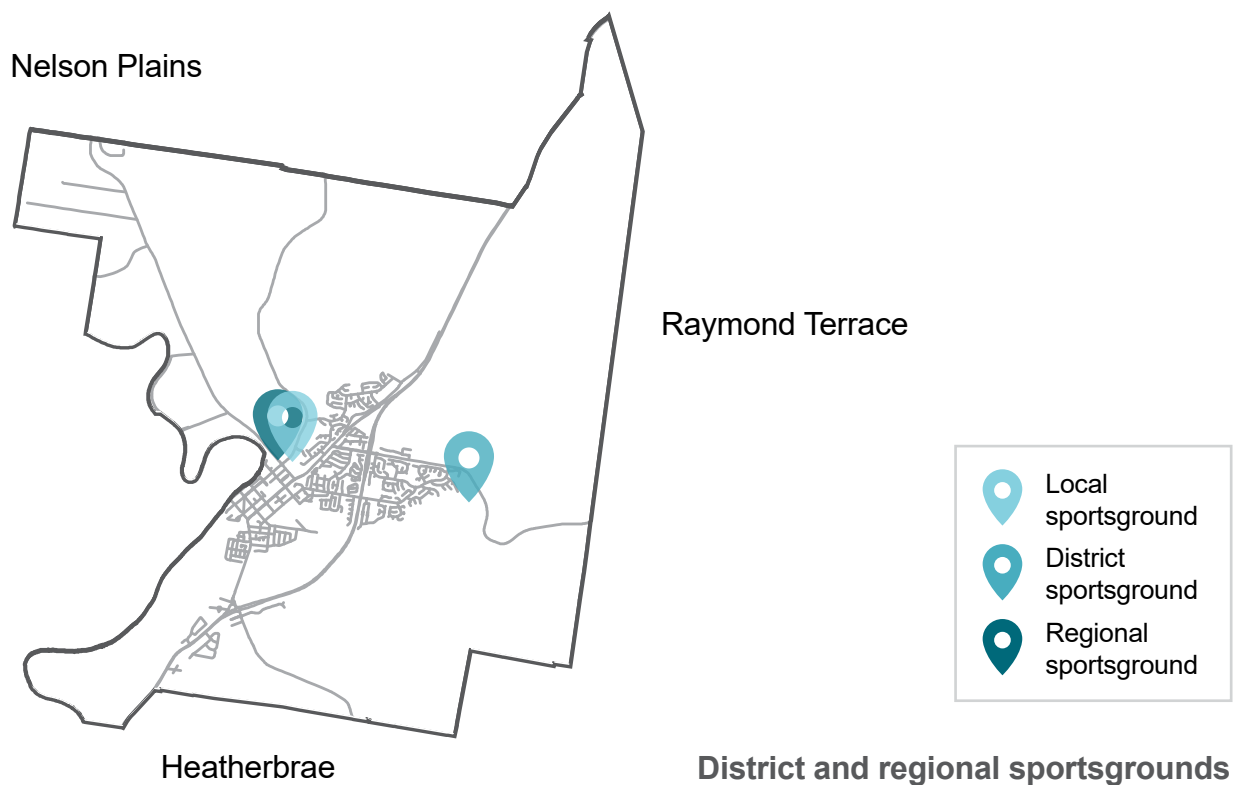
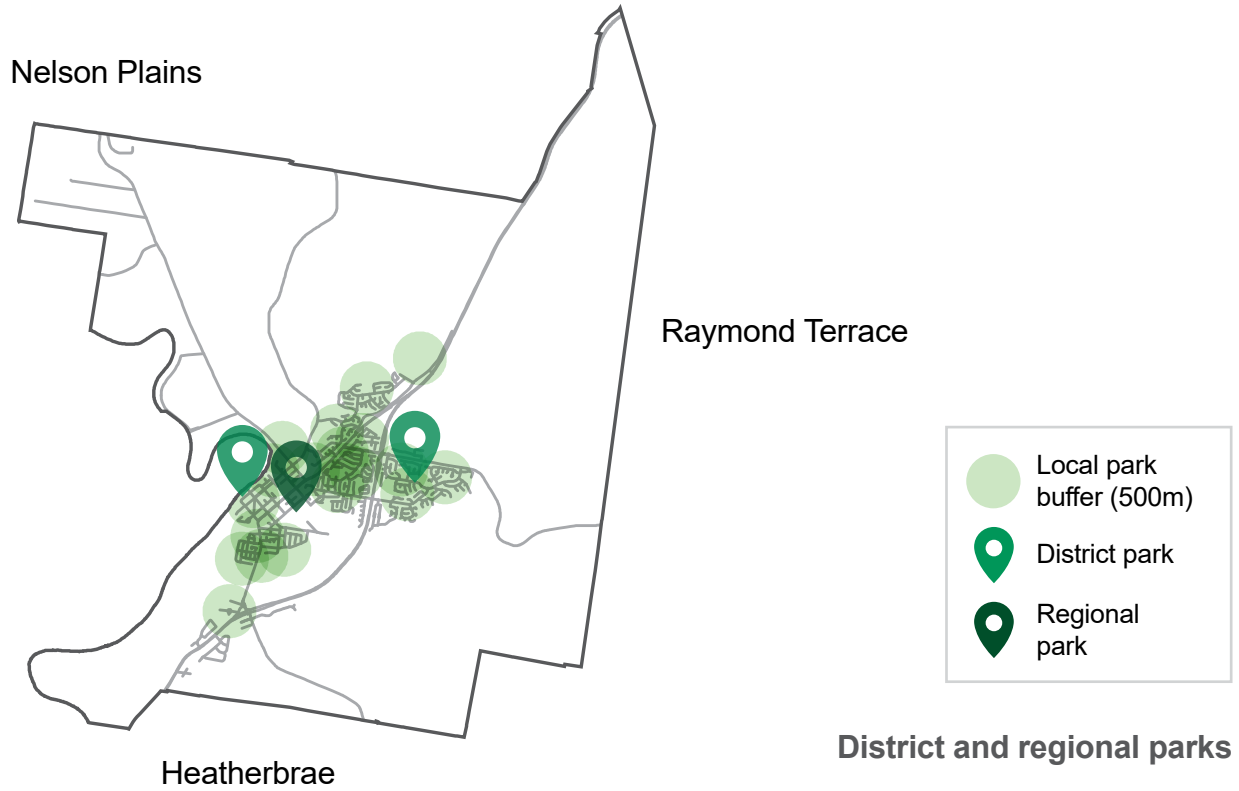
Monitor demand for rugby league facilities within existing District and Regional Sportsgrounds – The provision of rugby league fields are sufficient to meet current participation rates. Local participation trends should be monitored to ensure adequate field supply continues and existing turf assets utilised if trends change.


Review the provision of skateparks – The provision of skateparks is anticipated to remain in surplus to 2036. An analysis to understand the demand for skate facilities should be undertaken to identify provision is relative to demand.

Expand existing regional sportsgrounds – Existing regional facilities at Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace are suitably positioned to service the LGA and provide a diverse offering of sporting uses. Opportunities to expand existing regional facilities should be investigated to address the anticipated deficit by 2036.

Raymond Terrace

Raymond Terrace | Nelson Plains | Heatherbrae





Raymond Terrace is identified as a Strategic Centre within the Hunter Region.

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 13,654
- Projected population (2026): 15,263
- Projected population (2036): 17,695

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

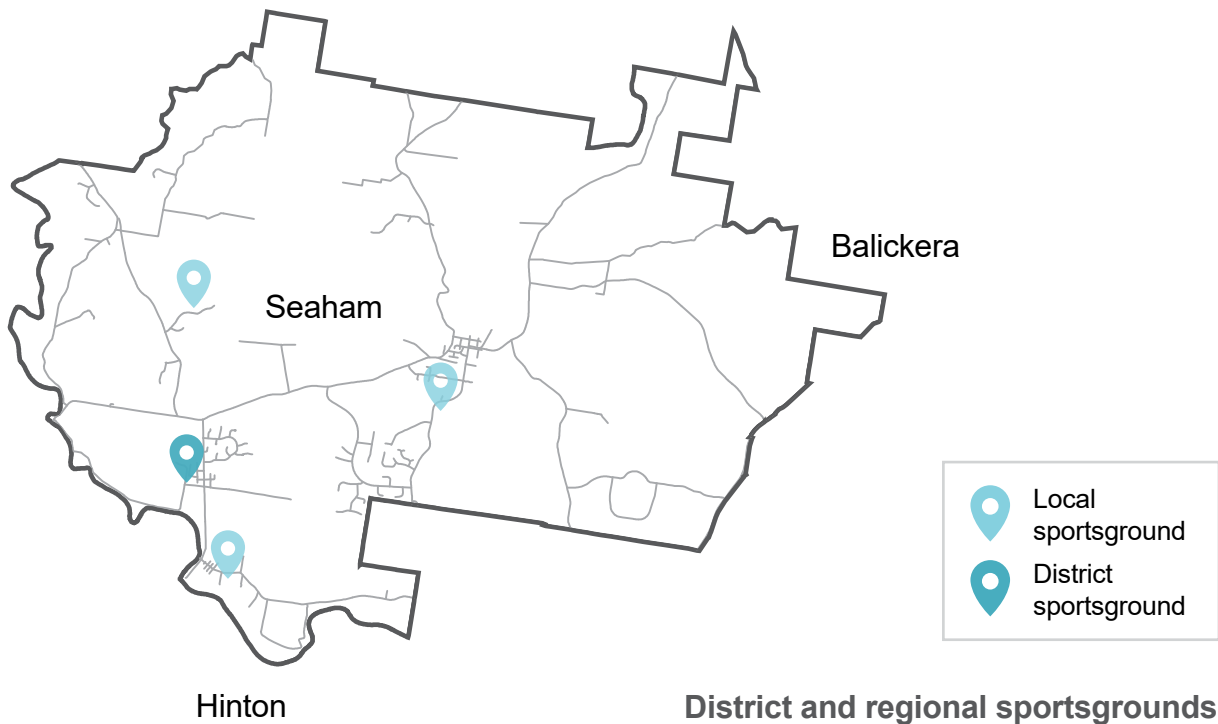
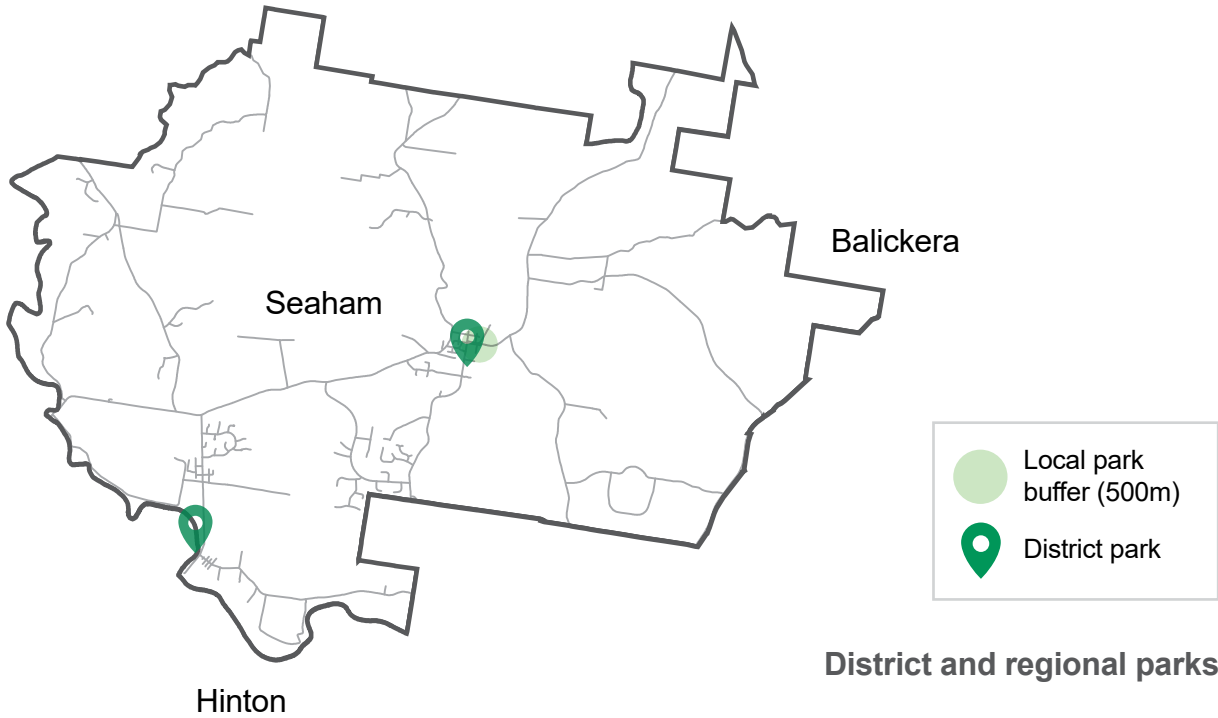
Opportunities for Raymond Terrace

Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate Local Parks that are surplus to need – There is a projected surplus of Local Parks across the Raymond Terrace Planning District and the Port Stephens LGA by 2036.

Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate Local Sportsgrounds that are surplus to need – The Jack Johnson Trotting Track is the lone local sporting facility in Raymond Terrace. As equestrian facility provision across the LGA is adequate to 2036, it is recommended that further consideration be given to the need of this facility and any opportunities to potentially repurpose and amalgamate into the King Park Regional Sportsground Complex.

Rural West

Balickera | Brandy Hill | Butterwick | Duns Creek | Eagleton | East Seaham
Glen Oak | Hinton | Osterley | Seaham | Woodville | Wallalong



Sportsgrounds can also have play equipment and function secondly as a park or passive recreation area.



Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 5,293
- Projected population (2026): 5,439
- Projected population (2036): 8,766

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

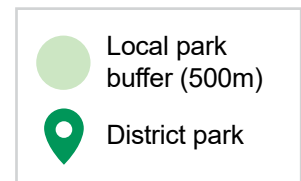
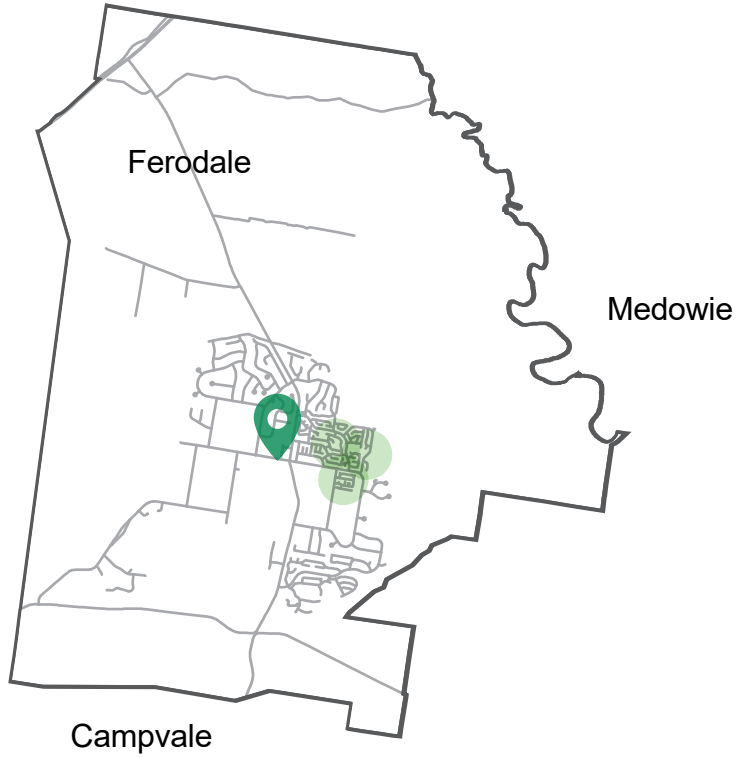
Opportunities for Rural West

Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate Local Sportsgrounds that are surplus to need – There is a projected surplus of Local Sportsgrounds across the Rural West Planning District and the Port Stephens LGA by 2036. Within communities such as the Rural West, local sportsgrounds may provide a multi-purpose community space and consideration must be given to secondary uses of these sites before repurposing or rationalising.

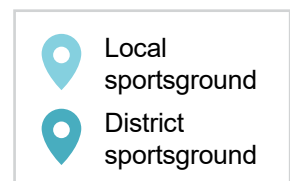
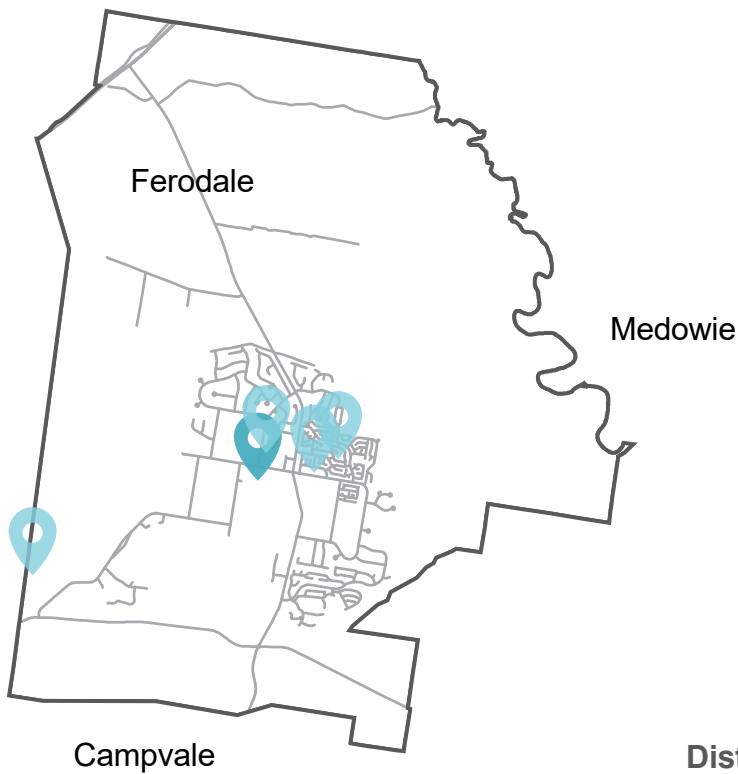
Retain existing provision of Local Parks – The Rural West has a relatively low population density due to predominantly being comprised of rural and semi-rural properties and the population is predicted to continue to age. Local sporting facilities provide local recreation facilities such as playgrounds. Therefore increase in demand for local parks is anticipated to be minimal to 2036.

Medowie

Medowie | Ferodale | Campvale



District and regional parks



District and regional sportsgrounds



The provision of sports facilities needs to be monitored and a funding strategy be developed to deliver the Ferodale sports complex master plan.

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 9,684
- Projected population (2026): 12,369
- Projected population (2036): 16,495

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | DEFICIT | DEFICIT |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

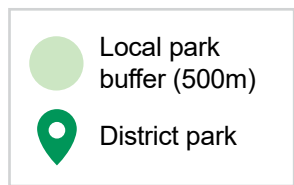
Opportunities for Medowie

Provide a District Park in close proximity to central Medowie – The current and future population of Medowie would benefit from an easily accessible and centrally located high quality large-scale park. Land acquisition may be required to achieve this destination space.

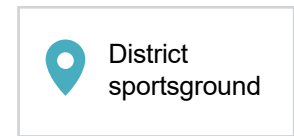
Increase the provision of District facilities – To improve the recreational opportunities in the Medowie Planning District an opportunity exists to focus on providing higher quality district facilities in place of local facilities.

Tilligerry Peninsula

Lemon Tree Passage | Mallabula | Tanilba Bay | Oyster Cove



District and regional parks



District and regional sportsgrounds



“ The focus should be on improving the existing facility to increase its capacity on a demand basis.”

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 6,767
- Projected population (2026): 7,082
- Projected population (2036): 7,179

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

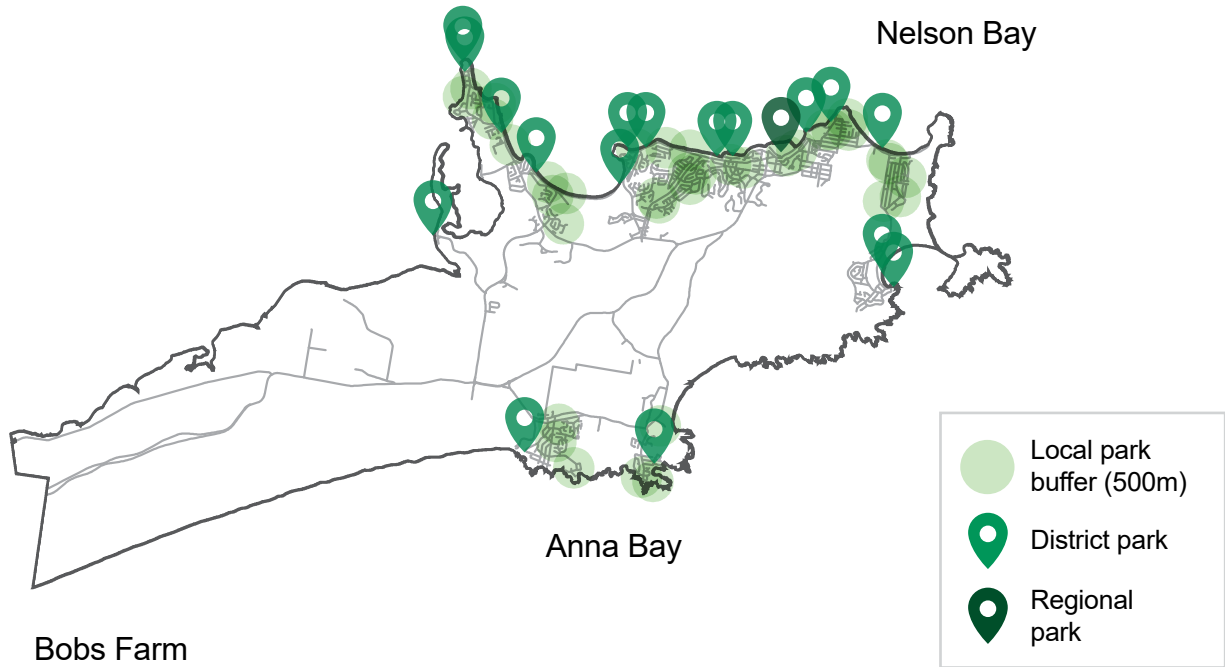
Opportunities for Tilligerry Peninsula

Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate Local Parks that are surplus to need – There is a projected surplus of Local Parks across the Tilligerry Peninsula Planning District and the Port Stephens LGA by 2036. Growth in this Planning District is predicted to be minimal with large amounts of passive recreation opportunities within bushland areas.

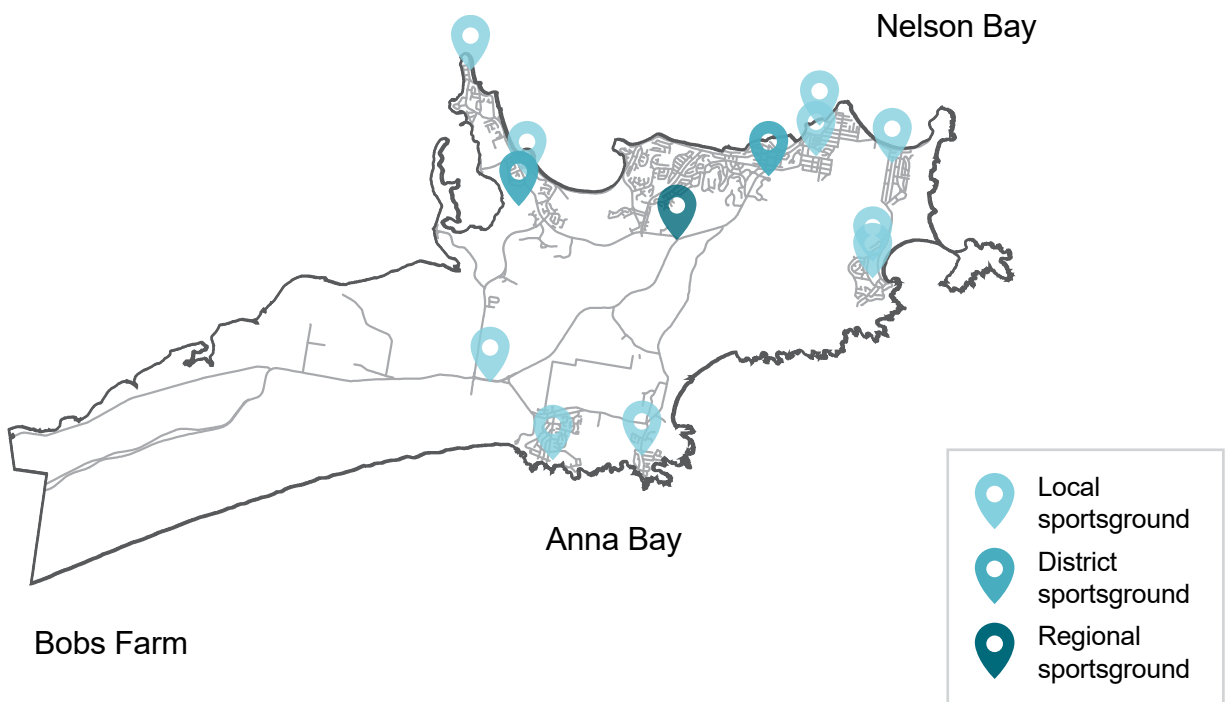
Retain District Sportsgrounds – Centralised District facilities are consistent with the provision standards of the Strategy. Maintaining existing facilities will continue to service populations beyond 2036.

Tomaree Peninsula


Anna Bay | Boat Harbour | Bobs Farm | Corlette | Fingal Bay | Fishermans Bay
Nelson Bay | One Mile | Salamander Bay | Shoal Bay | Soldiers Point | Taylors Beach



District and regional parks



District and regional sportsgrounds



Tourism in the Tomaree Planning District is a key economic driver, there is increased demand on open space throughout peak season.

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 26,737
- Projected population (2026): 28,037
- Projected population (2036): 30,104

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | SURPLUS | SURPLUS |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

Opportunities for Tomaree Peninsula

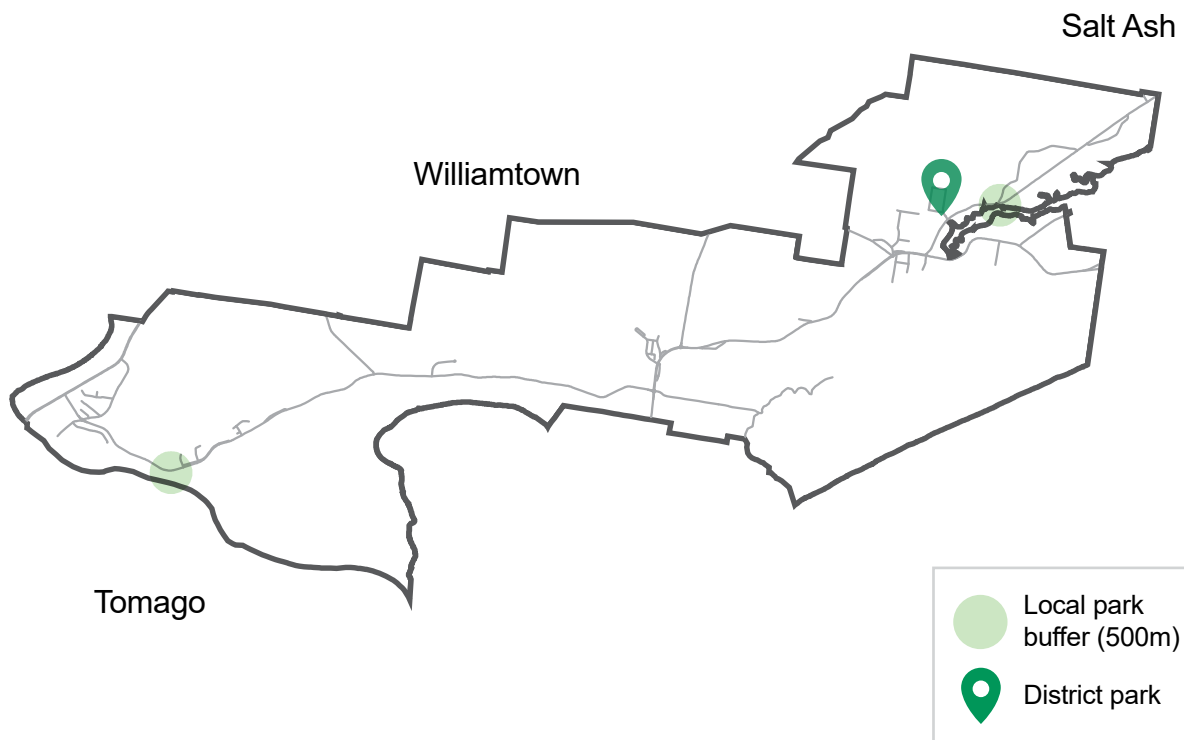
Rationalise/repurpose/consolidate Local and District Parks that are surplus to need

– There is a projected surplus of Local and District Parks across the Tomaree Peninsula Planning District and the Port Stephens LGA by 2036. Residents and visitors have access to large parcels of Crown Land Estate and National Park that provide passive recreation, bush walking, picnic facilities and mountain bike recreational opportunities and are a key tourist attraction. Council has an advocacy role to work with land holders for the development of recreational pursuits on these lands to meet local demand. Reducing the amount of Local and District facilities will improve the sustainability of the recreation network.

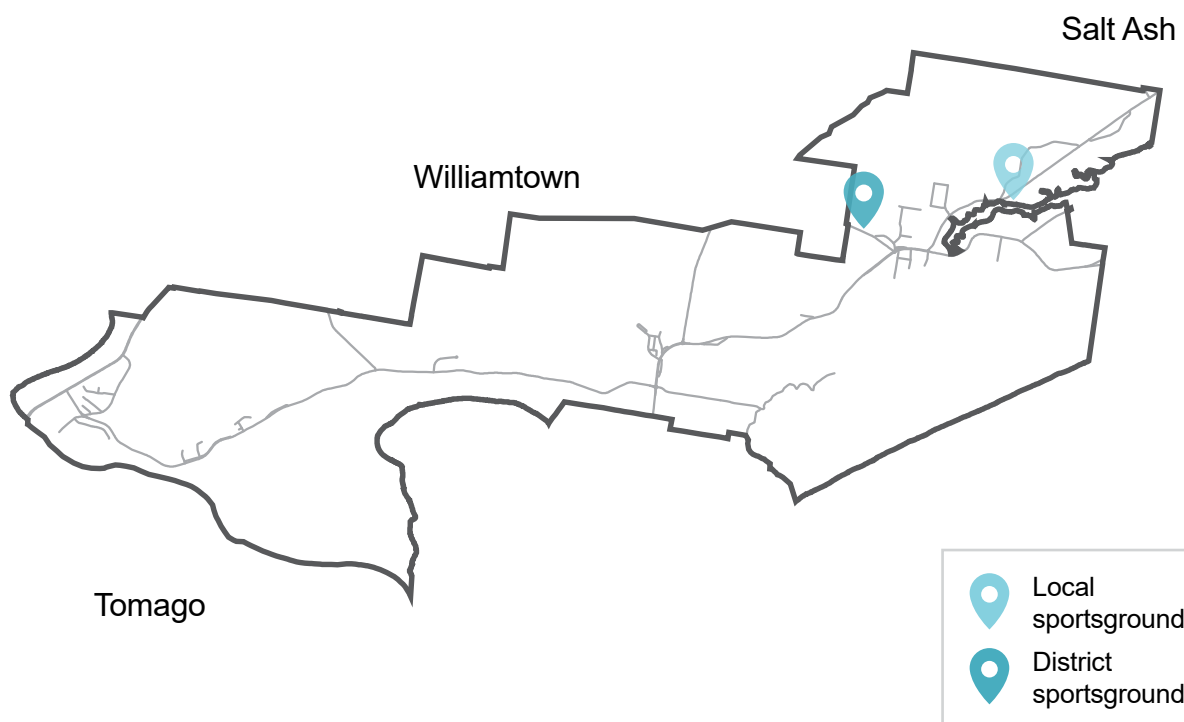
Increase Regional sport facility provision – To ensure a balanced provision of sporting facilities to 2036, opportunities to rationalise local sporting facilities may be investigated to support the expansion of the Regional Tomaree Sporting Complex.

Rural East

Salt Ash | Tomago | Williamstown



District and regional parks



District and regional sportsgrounds



“ Salt Ash has a high quality equestrian centre hosting a number of clubs and high profile equestrian events.”

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 2, 296
- Projected population (2026): 2,462
- Projected population (2036): 2, 512

Recreation land gap analysis

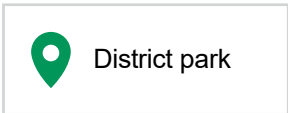
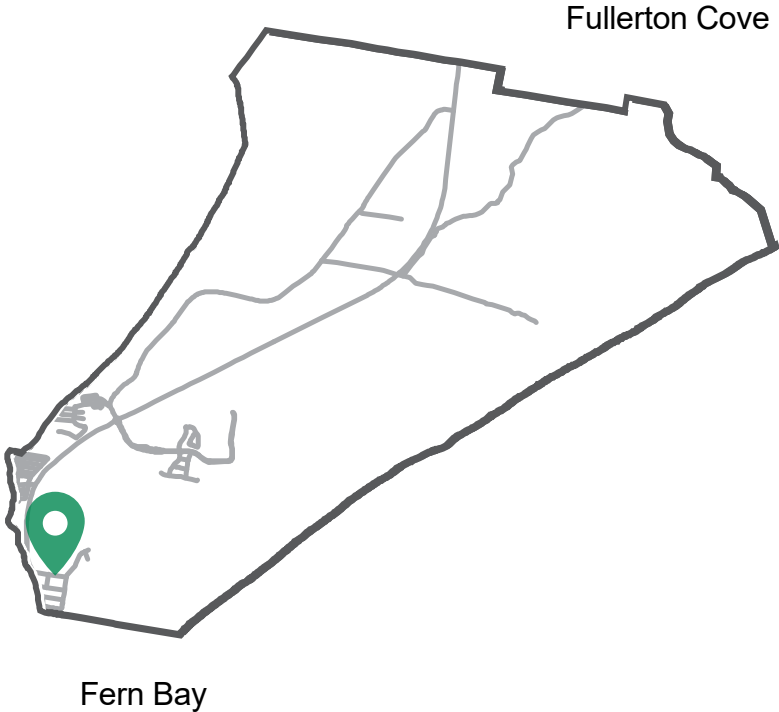
| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

Opportunities for Rural East

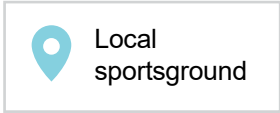
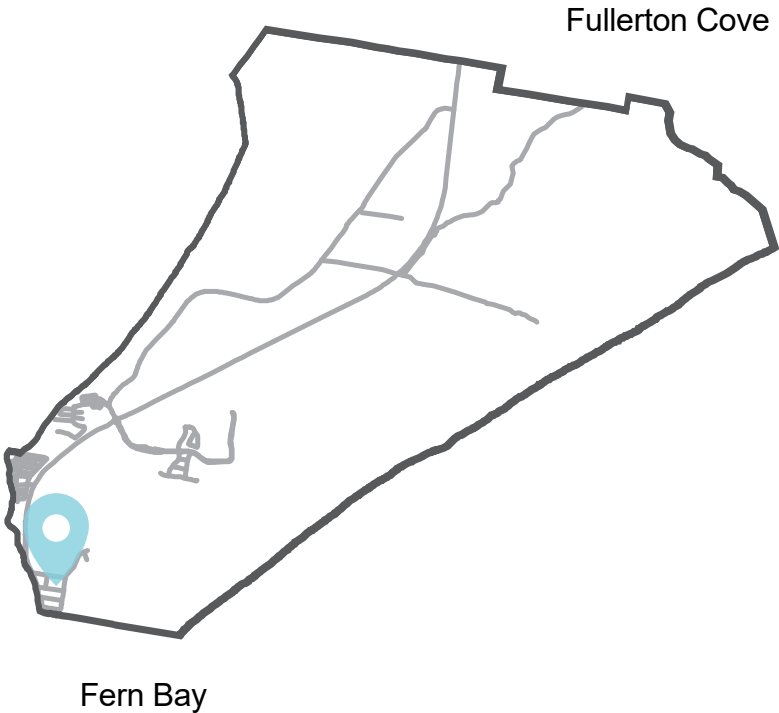
Retain District Parks and Sportsgrounds – Centralised District facilities are consistent with the provision standards of the Strategy. Maintaining existing facilities will continue to service populations beyond 2036.

Fern Bay

Fern Bay | Fullerton Cove



District and regional parks



District and regional sportsgrounds



“ This Planning District has a number of high density, mature aged villages.

Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 3, 330
- Projected population (2026): 4,452
- Projected population (2036) 4,729

Recreation land gap analysis

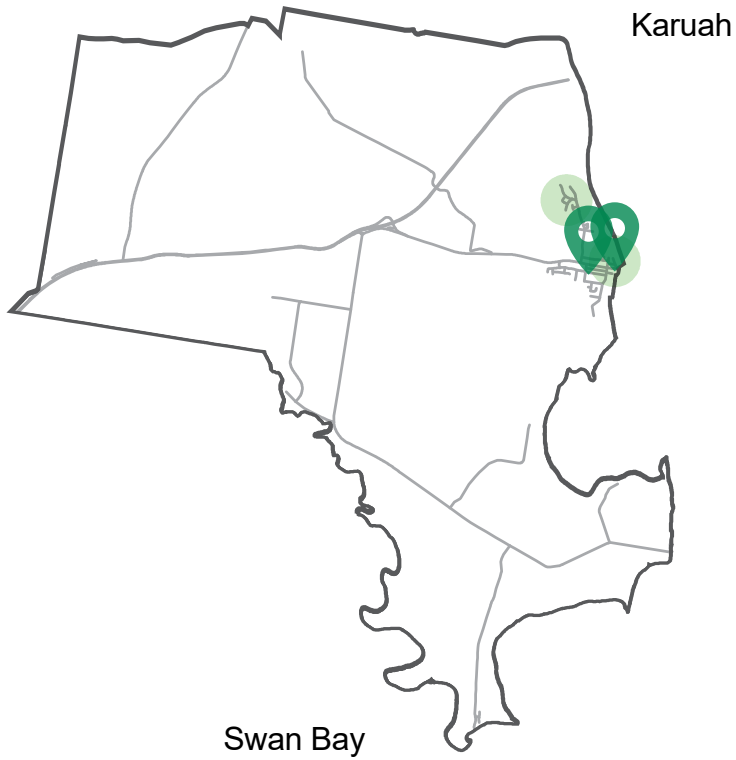
| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |



Opportunities for Fern Bay

Retain existing recreation facilities – Recreation facilities are consistent with the provision standards of the Strategy and are adequate to service the Planning District beyond 2036. Many residents also have access to private recreation facilities within gated communities and community title estates and the recreational facilities provided in nearby Stockton. Surrounding National and State Parks also provide recreational opportunities such as mountain bike riding and bushwalking. Port Stephens Council and Newcastle City Council work together to provide district level facilities to Fern Bay residents within the Newcastle City Council Local Government Area.

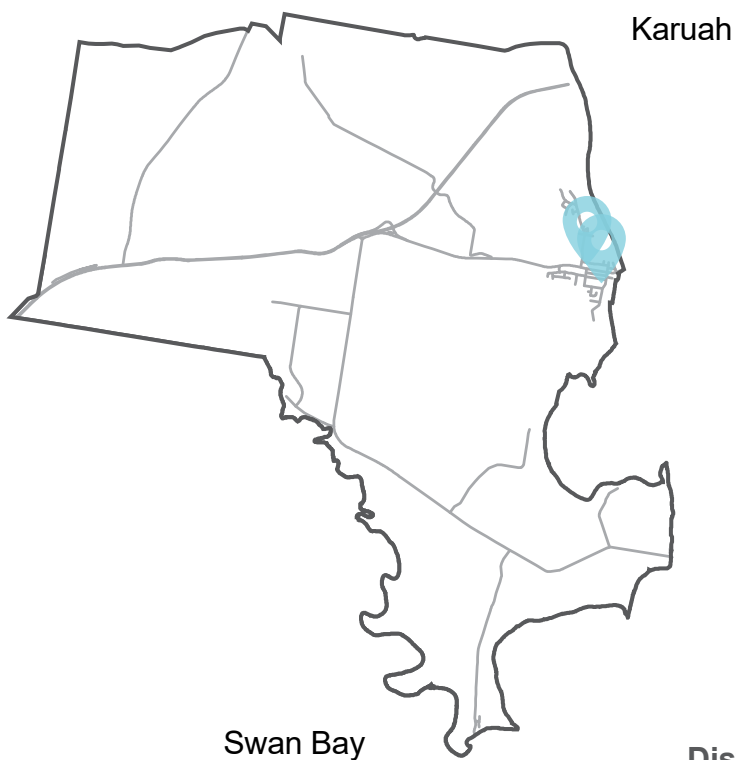
Karuah


Karuah | Swan Bay | Twelve Mile Creek



-  Local park buffer (500m)
-  District park

District and regional parks



-  Local sportsground

District and regional sportsgrounds

Quality open space within walking distance is important to the health and well-being of the community.



Forecast in population change

- Actual Population (2016): 1,776
- Projected population (2026): 2,851
- Projected population (2036): 2,907

Recreation land gap analysis

| Parks | 2016 | 2036 |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| Sportsgrounds | 2016 | 2036 |
| Local | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |
| District | ADEQUATE | ADEQUATE |

Opportunities for Karuah

Retain existing recreation facilities – Recreation facilities are consistent with the provision standards of the Strategy and are adequate to service the planning district beyond 2036.

Relocate playground in Karuah – The two Council-owned playgrounds in Karuah are located closely together on the Karuah River foreshore. Relocating one playground from Memorial Park to Aliceton Reserve will improve accessibility to quality open space and diversify recreational opportunities in Aliceton Reserve.

IMPLEMENTATION



Implementation

A co-ordinated approach to implementing the Strategy will be required. There are four components to this Strategy that will require implementation:

1. Strategic Objectives
2. Strategic Directions
3. Recommendations/Actions
4. Recreation Facility Guidelines

Strategic Objectives

The aim of each strategic objective is to provide guiding principles for future projects. Each strategic objective may influence the development of projects but may not necessarily be reflected in all works.

Strategic Directions

The Strategic Directions provide measurable outcomes that will help Council achieve the overarching Strategic Objectives. The Directions remain performance based to ensure they stay relevant as the factors that influence recreation inevitably change.

Strategic Actions

The Actions are prescriptive and provide a logical method to achieve the overarching Direction. Where appropriate, the actions will need to be incorporated into future works programs as resources become available. It is also recognised that these Actions will evolve as detailed planning and further stakeholder consultation is undertaken.

Recreation Facility Guidelines

These guidelines are provided as a guide only and will evolve over time to reflect best practice principles. They have been established as a planning tool for Council and other stakeholders in relation to open space provision, development, management and maintenance level of service.

Expenditure and funding considerations

Funding for the capital works and land acquisition required for the projects identified in the Strategy will be sourced from a combination of:

- Council revenue/capital expenditure.
- Development contributions.
- Maintenance resources.
- External grants from other State and Federal Government agencies.
- Partnership opportunities through open space contributions and works in kind arrangements.

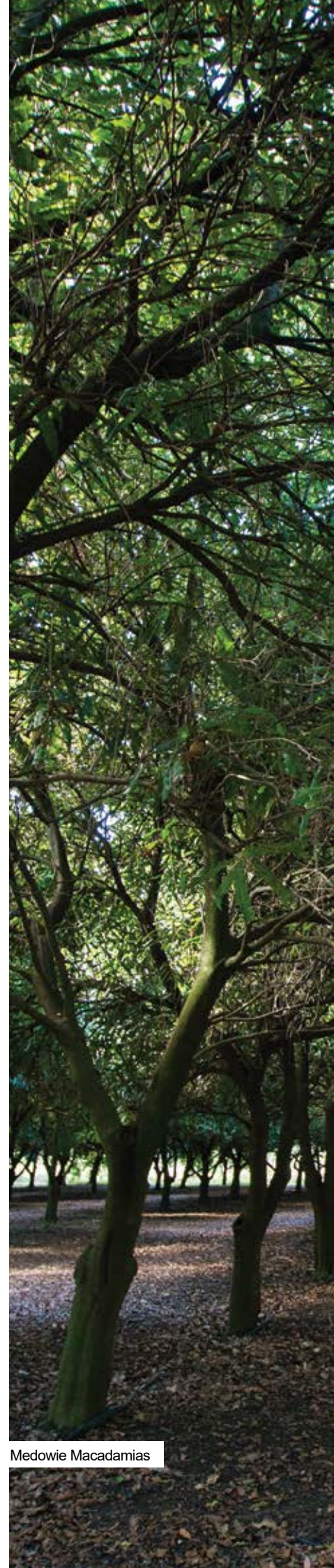
Capital Works Expenditure

\$1 million is allocated annually to fund capital repair and replacement works on the 11 different types of assets. The budget is allocated from Council's asset rehabilitation fund. This fund is restricted to major capital works renewal projects. Every year the proportion of funds spent on each asset class varies, depending on community demand, asset condition and levels of risk. The Asset Funding Strategy prioritises funds towards the renewal and maintenance of assets with the aim to reduce the organisation's infrastructure backlog.

Other Funding Sources

Councillor and Mayoral Ward funds – To provide an annual allocation of funds to assist Councillors to provide facilities in each ward under section 356 of the Local Government Act. Community and Recreation capital works projects may be allocated Ward funds or indirectly community organisations may receive funding to improve a community asset.

External Grants – Council actively applies for grants through state and federal government funding bodies and private organisations. Grants cannot be relied upon annually as there are no guarantees that they will



Medowie Macadamias



be received again in the following year. Often grants require equal matching funding.

Partnership Opportunities

The *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* enables Council to levy contributions from development to fund community infrastructure. These contributions are essential in providing quality facilities and services to an expanding local population.

Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA) and Works-In-Kind agreements – These agreements are entered into by Council and a developer. Under a Voluntary Planning Agreement, a developer agrees to provide or fund public amenities and public services; affordable housing; transport or other infrastructure instead of paying a cash contribution. In a Works-In-Kind agreement, a developer constructs infrastructure instead of paying a cash contribution.

Contributions from community organisations and committees – 355c committees, community groups, sporting clubs and occasionally members of the public invest into community assets. These organisations fully fund capital improvement works on community assets and contribute funds to projects Council is undertaking. The contributions and works of these groups and individuals are highly valued as they continue to improve community assets.



Council provides some great support but this needs to be consistent across all areas.

Survey response: *Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about recreation and sport in Port Stephens?*



Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the Strategy's implementation will be crucial to its success.

This strategy will be reviewed in 5 years and a full revision completed within 10 years.

The actions within in the Strategy should aim to be delivered over a 10 year time frame and included, where appropriate, within Council's delivery program and monitored through the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework processes.

The implementation of the actions will be subject to budget allocation, resource availability and Council priorities.

Strategic Actions

To successfully achieve the vision of this Strategy a number of actions need to occur over the short, medium and long term. The table on the following page sets the Strategy's prioritised actions to achieve the overarching Strategic Directions and Objectives.

To determine the priority of actions, the following prioritisation criteria was applied.

| Cost | | |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Low | Medium | High |
| < \$10,000 or less than 6 months | \$10,000 – \$100,000 or 6 to 12 months | > \$100,000 or more than 12 months |

| Benefit | | |
|--|---|--|
| Low | Medium | High |
| Only benefits a small group of users and residents in a local area | Benefits multiple groups of users and the broader district or planning area | Benefits a large group of multiple users and the broader LGA |

| Priority | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| A | B | C |
| As soon as resources allow | 1 – 5 years | 5 – 10 years |

| Benefit | | | | |
|---------|--------|-----|--------|------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Cost | Low | B | A | A |
| | Medium | C | B | B |
| | High | C | C | B |

| Ref | Direction / Action | Planning District | Priority |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Objective 1 – Provide recreation facilities that are appropriately scaled and responsive to community need. | | | |
| D1.1 | Provide recreation facilities in accordance with Council's recreation facility standards and guidelines. | | |
| A1.1.1 | Align Council's various plans and strategies with the provision rates set out in this Strategy. | LGA | A |
| A1.1.2 | Review the need for recreation facilities that are inconsistent with the standards and guidelines of this Strategy. | LGA | B |
| A1.1.3 | Investigate and action the opportunities identified within each Planning Profile within this Strategy. | LGA | B |
| A1.1.4 | Investigate a large-scale, centrally located park in Medowie. | Medowie | A |
| D1.2 | Consider the impacts of neighbouring LGA facilities when planning for recreation. | | |
| A1.2.1 | Collaborate with neighbouring Councils during the planning of recreation facilities to avoid duplication and poor planning outcomes. | LGA | A |
| D1.3 | Review standards regularly to ensure appropriate level of recreation facility provision. | | |
| A1.3.1 | Review recreation facility standards in accordance with timeframes set out in this Strategy. | LGA | A |
| Objective 2 – Improve the quality and diversity of existing recreation facilities to provide a range of leisure and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. | | | |
| D2.1 | Develop multi-use and centrally located recreation facilities. | | |
| A2.1.1 | Investigate consolidating playgrounds and swing set at Mallabula. | Tilligerry Peninsula | B |
| A2.1.2 | Investigate consolidating playgrounds at Fingal Bay. | Tomaree Peninsula | A |
| A2.1.3 | Investigate relocation of recreation facilities at Memorial Park to Aliceton Reserve. | Karuah | A |
| D2.2 | Diversify recreational opportunities within existing recreation areas. | | |
| A2.2.1 | Recognise the importance of well-designed and planned foreshore reserves and appropriately fund renewal works to enable investment in high quality facilities to strengthen their destination value. Particular priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside Park, Raymond Terrace. • Shoal Bay Foreshore, Shoal Bay. • Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay. • Little Beach Foreshore, Nelson Bay. | Raymond Terrace / Tomaree Peninsula | B |
| A2.2.2 | Plan for the upgrade of facilities at Hinton Foreshore Reserve. | Rural West | B |
| D2.3 | Adopt performance based outcomes for planning and designing recreation facilities. | | |
| A2.3.1 | Reference recreation facility guidelines when planning and designing recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| Objective 3 – Create a network of centralised sporting precincts and facilities. | | | |
| D3.1 | Accommodate sporting needs within existing facilities suitable for an ageing population. | | |

| Ref | Direction / Action | Planning District | Priority |
|--|---|------------------------------------|----------|
| A3.1.1 | Continue to support the construction of a croquet lawns identified in the Tomaree Sports Complex Masterplan. | Tomaree Peninsula | A |
| A3.1.2 | Investigate opportunities to consolidate local tennis facilities into District and Regional LGA sportsgrounds. | LGA | B |
| D3.2 | Develop sporting facilities in accordance with the recreation facility hierarchy. | | |
| A3.2.1 | Ensure future works are consistent with the recreation facility guidelines within this Strategy. | LGA | A |
| D3.3 | Encourage player retention through developing regional facilities suitable for higher level competition and modified sport. | | |
| A3.3.1 | Investigate opportunities to host modified sports (such as Fast 5s soccer or T20 Cricket) at existing regional facilities. | Raymond Terrace/Tomaree Peninsula | B |
| A3.3.2 | Continue to develop regional sporting facilities to attract and support representative and regional competition. | Raymond Terrace/ Tomaree Peninsula | C |
| D3.4 | Prioritise utilising existing sporting facilities to accommodate future demand. | | |
| A3.4.1 | Undertake a playing surface audit to determine the capacity of King Park, Raymond Terrace to accommodate additional demand from residents of Kings Hill urban release area. | Raymond Terrace | B |
| A3.4.2 | Plan for upgraded spectator seating at Bowthorne Park. | Rural West | B |
| A3.4.3 | Improve the playing surface at Yulong Park and investigate floodlighting to cater for increased demand. | Medowie | B |
| A3.4.4 | Support the implementation of the Tomaree Sports Complex Masterplan with priority given to upgrading the multi-purpose building and improved playing field layout. | Tomaree Peninsula | C |
| A3.4.5 | Implement the Ferodale Sports Complex Masterplan. | Medowie | C |
| Objective 4 – Provide a recreation facility network that is inclusive and accessible. | | | |
| D4.1 | Locate recreation areas in accordance with Council's standards and guidelines for recreation facilities. | | |
| A4.1.1 | Align Council's various plans and strategies with the location guidelines set out in this Strategy. | LGA | A |
| D4.2 | Provide accessible public and sporting amenities within district and regional facilities. | | |
| A4.2.1 | Plan for accessible amenities to service playground and skatepark at Lakeside Number 2 Reserve. | Raymond Terrace | C |
| A4.2.2 | Plan for accessible amenities at King Park (Vi Barnett Oval, tennis, netball). | Raymond Terrace | C |
| D4.3 | Seek specialist access and inclusion advice when planning and designing large recreation projects. | | |
| A4.3.1 | Investigate opportunities to collaborate with external service providers such as Ability Links. | LGA | A |
| D4.4 | Provide inclusive play experiences within playgrounds. | | |
| A4.4.1 | Upgrade District and Regional playgrounds to include inclusive play elements. | LGA | B |
| A4.4.2 | Investigate installation of picture communication boards in recreation areas. | LGA | B |

| Ref | Direction / Action | Planning District | Priority |
|--|---|-------------------|----------|
| A4.4.3 | Integrate the principles and considerations of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's 'Everyone Can Play' guidelines into project briefs for playgrounds. | LGA | A |
| D4.5 | Facilitate unimpeded and adequately serviced pedestrian movement to and through recreation facilities. | | |
| A4.5.1 | Continue to update the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Pathways Plan to develop further connectivity opportunities. | LGA | B |
| A4.5.2 | Consider proposed connections identified in the Pathway Plan in the planning and design of recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| A4.5.3 | Seek funding opportunities for pathway linkages between and within key recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| D4.6 | Promote the participation of women in sport. | | |
| A4.6.1 | Develop a works program to upgrade existing sporting facilities to accommodate female players and officials. | LGA | B |
| A.4.6.2 | Adopt Universal Design Principles in the planning of sport facilities. | LGA | A |
| Objective 5 – Implement environmentally sustainable approaches to water management, tree planting and replacement programs and energy efficiency to alleviate the impacts of climate change on the recreation facility network. | | | |
| D5.1 | Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design principles into the design of new and existing recreation facilities. | | |
| A5.1.1 | Investigate the feasibility to adopt water conservation practices and stormwater reuse opportunities to reduce the reliance on mains water. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of drought tolerant plant species. • Harvesting stormwater on site for reuse. • Reduction of area requiring irrigation and investigate irrigation efficiencies and alternate water sources. | LGA | A |
| D5.2 | Utilise low energy technology such as solar and LED lighting within recreation facilities. | | |
| A5.2.1 | Continue to implement the use of low energy technology at Council's recreation facilities. | LGA | B |
| D5.3 | Minimise the clearing of vegetation when designing and constructing recreation areas. | | |
| A5.3.1 | Initiate a tree planting program for recreation areas. | LGA | B |
| A5.3.2 | Consider opportunities to support biodiversity networks in the planning of recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| D5.4 | Reduce need for irrigation through establishment of quality soil profiles. | | |
| A5.4.1 | Undertake soil testing to identify opportunities to improve soil profiles for playing field surfaces at District and Regional sporting facilities. | LGA | B |
| Objective 6 – Provide recreation facilities that are safe, attractive and well utilised. | | | |
| D6.1 | Provide recreation facilities that reflect Port Stephens character and cultural identity. | | |
| A6.1.1 | Support the implementation of the Birubi Point Aboriginal Place Masterplan. | Tomaree Peninsula | A |

| Ref | Direction / Action | Planning District | Priority |
|---|---|-------------------|----------|
| D6.2 | Integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles into the design of new and existing recreation facilities. | | |
| A6.2.1 | Adhere to Council's Design Guidelines when planning and designing recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| D6.3 | Support community groups and organisations in activating open space areas with high quality services. | | |
| A6.3.1 | Continue to support volunteers and not for profit organisations through the administration of community grants. | LGA | A |
| A6.3.2 | Continue the timely processing of Working on Council Land and Event applications. | LGA | A |
| D6.4 | Improve facilities to support community and cultural events in popular recreation areas (such as water, power, lighting and access). | | |
| A6.4.1 | Investigate place making initiatives at Riverside Park to attract community events. | Raymond Terrace | B |
| A6.4.2 | Upgrade foreshore areas with supporting infrastructure to attract and retain events at Nelson Bay and Shoal Bay. | Tomaree | B |
| A6.4.3 | Support the implementation of the Apex Park Masterplan to improve the reserve's amenity and activate the space. | Tomaree | C |
| Objective 7– Achieve well managed and maintained recreation facilities through a coordinated and planned approach. | | | |
| D7.1 | Use evidence based approaches to planning recreation facilities. | | |
| A7.1.1 | Develop Masterplans for all District and Regional recreation facilities. | LGA | C |
| A7.1.2 | Develop a funding strategy to inform the implementation of the Ferodale Sports Complex and Tomaree Sports Complex Masterplans. | Medowie / Tomaree | A |
| A7.1.3 | Undertake a Needs Assessment of key recreation infrastructure including pools, indoor sports centres and skateparks. | LGA | B |
| A7.1.4 | Review the provision, maintenance and management of public toilets in public open space and identify opportunities to rationalise facilities in line with community need. | LGA | A |
| A7.1.5 | Develop plans of management for Council managed reserves in accordance with the Crown Lands Management Act 2016. | LGA | A |
| A7.1.6 | Undertake a community and recreation facility audit of Raymond Terrace to prepare for the needs of the Kings Hill urban release area. | Raymond Terrace | A |
| D7.2 | Encourage community involvement in the management of recreation facilities. | | |
| A7.2.1 | Continue to recruit, support and acknowledge the efforts of Port Stephen's volunteer community. | LGA | A |
| A7.2.2 | Continue to work with 355c committees and Sports Councils in identifying projects from their Forward Works Priorities list and Sports Development Strategy. | LGA | A |
| A7.2.3 | Undertake an expression of interest for the external management of under-utilised recreation facilities. | LGA | A |

| Ref | Direction / Action | Planning District | Priority |
|--------|--|-------------------|----------|
| D7.3 | Utilise external funding sources to manage and upgrade recreation facilities. | | |
| A7.3.1 | Investigate opportunities for greater commercial use within recreation facilities. | LGA | A |
| A7.3.2 | Approach the NSW Department of Education to explore opportunities for shared facilities. | LGA | B |
| A7.3.3 | Council to continue its advocacy role with Crown Land and NPWS on joint initiatives. | LGA | A |
| D7.4 | Maintain recreation facilities in accordance with Council service level agreement. | | |
| A7.4.1 | Develop a comprehensive suite of Plans of Management for recreation facilities setting out agreed service levels in accordance with their assigned level (i.e. Local, District or Regional). | LGA | B |

New developments should allow for swathes of natural bushland and green zones within residential zones.

Survey response: *Do you think Port Stephens has enough parks? Why?*



APPENDIX A



Recreation Facility Guidelines

The following Recreation Facility Design Principles have been developed to provide a framework to guide planning and development of new recreation facilities and the improvement of existing. The Principles have been developed through open space industry benchmarking and assessment of the needs of the Port Stephens LGA.

Principles

Diverse range of experiences and opportunity

Considerations

- Adopt universal design principles when planning open space.
- Connect and relate to neighbouring uses to maximise opportunities for a diversity of experiences.
- Consider seasonal variation to provide a diversity of experiences all year round, for example deciduous trees for variations in sun and shade as well as spring and autumn colour.
- Cater for users that have mobility or sensory impairments, including parents with prams.
- Locate new open space in highly visible and accessible locations close to transport links and interchanges, residential areas, commercial areas and/or educational establishments.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Park furniture is located on hardstand surface with adequate circulation and integrated with the path network.
- Facilities are collocated with commercial areas to create synergy of use and encourage incidental recreation.
- Signage is legible to people of all ages, abilities and cultural orientations.
- Sporting amenities include gender neutral changerooms and toilets that provide an appropriate level of privacy.

Financially sustainable

Considerations

- Minimise maintenance costs through design wherever practical.
- Consider the life cycle costs of materials in constructing and managing open space.
- Use robust and enduring materials and products, particularly in coastal locations, which are affordable to replace.
- Where practical, limit one-off items that are not readily replaceable to significant locations.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Utilised materials are robust, fire resistant, vandal proof, sourced locally, non-corrosive and consistent with Australian Standards.
- Planting along hard edges such as kerbs, paths and pavements are offset so that when mature the plant does not over hang the hard edge, requiring pruning, or break up the hard edge from root intrusion.
- Landscaping incorporates low maintenance and drought tolerant species.
- Embellishments are adequately spaced to allow access for large mowing equipment.
- Bins and amenities requiring regular servicing are readily accessible for maintenance staff.
- Water harvesting and energy efficient products are utilised to reduce utility costs.

Principles

Encourage positive social interaction

Considerations

- Locate furniture and designated travel paths to encourage incidental social interaction.
- Plan and design open spaces to minimise conflict between incompatible uses.
- Provide spaces for community meetings and events.
- Utilise Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles to limit opportunities for anti-social behaviour.
- Address safety risks that may be a barrier to participation and use.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Internal areas of open space are visible to passing pedestrians, drivers and adjacent land uses.
- Designated pedestrian routes are void of any opportunity for concealment.
- Access to elements vulnerable to vandalism is obscured.
- Durable materials and anti-graffiti coatings are utilised.
- Incompatible uses are physically separated by open space or barrier treatment (eg. fencing, landscaping, water body).
- Compatible uses are clustered into activity zones.
- Pathways connect activity zones and are of adequate width to allow for the safe passing of pedestrians.
- Barrier treatments are provided to prevent children readily accessing hazardous areas such as roads, car parks and water bodies.
- Communal spaces including picnic and spectating areas are protected from prevailing and adverse weather conditions.

Promote active living

Considerations

- Integrate recreation facilities with pedestrian and cycling connections to promote non-motorised transport options to and from recreation facilities.
- Provide circuit or boundary paths wherever possible to provide for walkers, joggers, cyclists and dog walkers.
- Create a comfortable microclimate throughout the year and through variations in weather. Design to maximise seasonal opportunities for summer shade and cool breezes, winter sun and protection from rain.
- Incorporate amenity lighting wherever practical to encourage evening use and increase safety.
- Provide clear and consistent signage to assist users to navigate to, from and throughout recreation facilities with confidence.
- Provide suitable end of trip facilities.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Wayfinding signage that provides clear, legible information is provided at facility entrances and confusion points.
- Designated pedestrian alignments are intuitive and deter short-cutting.
- Pathways link places of interest, form circuits, maintain a steady grade and following natural contours where practical.
- Bicycle parking in visible and convenient locations.
- Low level lighting along key pedestrian routes.
- Deciduous tree plantings maximise solar exposure during winter and minimise exposure during summer.

Principles

Meaningful to place and community

Considerations

- Integrate existing physical geographic features into design such as topographic features, trees, water bodies, rocky outcrops.
- Preserve and promote Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal heritage through art, infrastructure and landscaping.
- Design spaces that accommodate community events, celebrations, memorials, markets.
- Responsive to needs expressed by the broader community.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- A play space that incorporates natural features sourced from the local area such as rocks, endemic plants and logs.
 - Infrastructure incorporates theming communicating local history.
 - Utilisation of public art to create interest and deter vandalism (eg a wall mural, sculptures preventing illegal vehicle access).
-

Multi-functional and adaptable

Considerations

- Provide opportunities for dynamic spaces that facilitate multiple uses.
- Design sporting facilities for the optimum practical range of multi-users, allowing for flexible field configurations.
- Co-locate compatible uses such as sporting fields, playgrounds, aquatic centres and community halls to encourage use at all times of the week.
- Promote turf growth through design to improve durability of playing surfaces including soil specification, irrigation, drainage and orientation.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Centrally located amenities servicing multiple playing fields, courts and informal recreation areas.
 - Shared use of car parking and internal access roads.
 - Communal spaces with suitable vehicle and pedestrian access and inground services to support community events including temporary food services, dance and music performances, club days, outdoor cinemas and markets.
 - Service pits, drainage pits, post sleeves and other in-ground infrastructure located outside of playing areas or treated to not pose a risk of injury to participants.
 - Integrated informal recreation areas within sporting facilities.
-

Environmentally Sustainable

Considerations

- Plan and design for energy and water conservation, optimised lifecycle and selection of materials with low embodied energy.
- Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) into park design.
- Plan and design parks to not adversely impact natural, cultural or heritage features and values.
- Provide opportunities, where feasible, for environmental and cultural values of the place to be interpreted as an educational resource.

Desirable Design Outcomes

- Boundary fencing allows unfettered access for wildlife.
- Mature vegetation is retained to control illegal vehicle access.
- Interpretive signage and other infrastructure communicate the natural and cultural significance of sites.
- Surface water is collected from hardstand areas and directed to gardens and bio-retention swales.
- Landscaped areas utilise drought tolerant native species.

Hierarchy framework

This Strategy is recommending a ‘hierarchy’ approach as a basis for determining the appropriate level of development and management. The hierarchy level allocated for each open space parcel of land has been determined through consideration of a number of factors including location, size, quality, accessibility, existing infrastructure, uniqueness, visitor appeal (including the geographical catchment of people attracted), flexibility or type and capacity for activity offered.

This hierarchy level can be changed for each parcel of open space to reflect the changing community needs, although generally improvements should be consistent with the hierarchy level allocated through this Strategy.

The ‘hierarchy’ of open space within the network has been defined as follows:

| Hierarchy | Definition | Catchment | Potential Activity Level |
|-----------|--|-----------|---|
| Regional | Regional open space has the capacity to attract people from the wider Port Stephens area and beyond. | LGA wide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regional sports facility has the capacity to cater for a number of sporting codes, higher grade sport teams, state or national competitions and may also attract community events. • A regional park or foreshore reserve has a high recreational value and the potential for major recreation or visitor focus, including through community events. |
| District | District open spaces typically have the capacity to draw people from more than one Planning District area. | 10km | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A district sports facility may have the capacity to cater for a number of sporting codes and be a potential venue for regional competitions and events. • A district park or foreshore reserve has the capacity to cater for a number of visitors/users and activities, including community events. |
| Local | Local open spaces will generally cater for people within the local area within one or two suburbs. | 500m | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally local sports facilities will typically cater for local sporting competition and/or team training. • Local parks and foreshore reserves will cater for local activities including relaxation, walking or play. |

Development guide for parks

The following table provides a guide as to the types of facilities that may be considered for the development of new parks or upgrade of existing. This is an indicative list only and development may not include all the items specified below or other items may be considered:

| Facility Component | Regional | District | Local |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5+ ha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1+ ha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5+ ha |
| Shape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular with no side greater than 2:1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular with no side greater than 2:1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular with no side greater than 2:1 |
| Gradient | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average grade of 1:20 for main use areas, 1:50 for kick about areas and variable topography for the remainder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the park with a maximum grade of 1:14 for wheelchair access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the park with a maximum grade of 1:14 for wheelchair access |
| Flood Immunity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of the total area above 1:50 year flood level with main activity areas above 1:100 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% of the total area above 1:50 year flood level with main activity areas above 1:100 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% of total park area to be above the 1:100 year flood level and free of hazards |
| Buildings and amenities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiosk or café • Quality amenities with disability access toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality amenities with disability access toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No amenity |
| Play spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All abilities play equipment • Natural play elements • Shade structure • Quality play space catering for all ages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality play space catering for different ages • Shade structure (where appropriate) • All abilities play equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality play space catering for select ages (merit based approach) |
| Other recreational facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise equipment • Skate park or BMX • Bike and scooter circuits or paths • Other facilities e.g. outdoor ping pong table, tennis hit up wall, half courts, parkour • Event space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise equipment • Skate park or BMX • Bike and scooter circuits or paths • Other facilities e.g. outdoor ping pong table, tennis hit up wall, half courts, parkour | |
| Picnic areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating • Tables • Shelters • BBQ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating • Tables • Shelters • BBQ (where appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating |
| Pathways and connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3m wide shared pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking paths (minimum 2m) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not include pathways |

| Facility Component | Regional | District | Local |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Supporting infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bins • Water drinking fountain • Bike racks • Car parking • Beach shower (where appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bins • Water drinking fountain • Bike racks • Car parking (on-street where appropriate) • Beach shower (where appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bins |
| Landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shade trees • Irrigated areas • Gardens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shade trees • Irrigated areas (where appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shade trees |
| Public art and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretive, regulatory and way finding signage • Site specific art work or features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be included and merit based approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Interpretive, regulatory and way finding signage ◦ Site specific art work or features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be included and merit based approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Interpretive, regulatory and way finding signage |

Development guide for sports facility development

The following table provides a guide as to the types of facilities that may be considered for the development of new sports facilities or upgrade of existing. This is an indicative list only and development may not include all the items specified below or other items may be considered:

| Facility Component | Regional | District |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10+ ha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6+ ha |
| Shape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Square or rectangular with fields and court orientated north/south. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Square or rectangular with fields and court orientated north/south. |
| Gradient | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grade of 1:100 for all playing surfaces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grade of 1:100 for all playing surfaces. |
| Flood immunity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 90% of land above 1:20 year flood level, with fields and courts above 1:50 year flood level and buildings to be above 1:100 year flood level. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 90% of land above 1:20 year flood level, with fields and courts above 1:50 year flood level and buildings to be above 1:100 year flood level. |
| Buildings and amenities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large quality clubhouse building including changing rooms, showers, toilets, referees room, kitchen and kiosk, social/ community room, storage areas, administration area, first aid room. • Accessible public toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubhouse building including changing rooms, showers, toilets, referees room, kitchen and kiosk, meeting/community room, storage areas. • Accessible public toilets |

| Facility Component | Regional | District |
|--|--|--|
| Other optional recreational facilities (in addition to playing fields and courts) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground with shade structure (where appropriate) • Exercise equipment • Skate park or BMX • Bike and scooter circuits or paths • Other facilities e.g. tennis hit up wall, half courts, parkour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground with shade structure (where appropriate) • Exercise equipment • Skate park or BMX • Bike and scooter circuits or paths • Other facilities e.g. tennis hit up wall, half courts, parkour |
| Pathways and connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3m wide shared pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking paths (minimum 2m) |
| Supporting infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodlighting • Scoreboard • Spectator seating • Seating, tables and shelters • Bins • Water drinking fountain • Bike racks • Car parking • Reserve fencing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodlighting (training) • Scoreboard • Spectator seating • Seating, tables and shelters • Bins • Water drinking fountain • Bike racks • Car parking |
| Landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shade trees • High quality fields with markings and excellent drainage • Irrigation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shade trees • High-medium quality fields with markings and good drainage |
| Signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretive, regulatory and way finding signage • Site specific art work or features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be included and merit based approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Regulatory and way finding signage |

APPENDIX B



General Condition

Performance Grading

- Expected minimum conditions

Park

Regional

Park infrastructure – Sound and well maintained but showing minor wear, tear and deterioration e.g. slight cracking of timber, minor impact damage, but no loss of protective coating or corrosion of fasteners. Deterioration has no significant impact on strength, functionality and appearance of the infrastructure.

Playground – Sound equipment, designed to current standards and well maintained with no defects.

Amenity Turf/Grass surfaces – Well maintained grass, <5% bare ground and undesirable species.

District

Park infrastructure – Furniture functioning sound but appearance affected by minor defects e.g. impact damage, loss of protective coatings, staining of steel, splitting of timber, corrosion and loosening of fastenings. Some deterioration beginning to be reflected in the strength, functionality or appearance of the infrastructure.

Playground – equipment may show minor wear, tear and deterioration e.g. minor impact damage, weathering of timber, staining of fastening and welds. Deterioration has no significant impact on strength, appearance or functionality.

Amenity Turf/Grass surfaces – Grass showing slight defects and deterioration. <10% bare ground and undesirable species. Deterioration has no significant impact on the parks appearance, user comfort and safety.

Local

Park infrastructure – Furniture functioning sound but appearance affected by minor defects e.g. impact damage, loss of protective coatings, staining of steel, splitting of timber, corrosion and loosening of fastenings. Some deterioration beginning to be reflected in the strength, functionality or appearance of the infrastructure.

Playground – equipment may show minor wear, tear and deterioration e.g. minor impact damage, weathering of timber, staining of fastening and welds. Deterioration has no significant impact on strength, appearance or functionality.

Turf/Grass surfaces – Grass generally sound but showing minor defects with minor uneven ground, less than <15% bare ground and undesirable species. Some deterioration beginning to affect park appearance, user comfort and safety. These surfaces are not maintained to the same frequencies as regional or district parks.

Sportsground

Regional

Sporting structures – Asset is functional and displays superficial defects with only minor signs of deterioration to finishes, fixtures and fittings. Deterioration has no significant impact on stability, safety, appearance and user functionality.

Sportsground surface – Well maintained sports field only showing slight defects. Field showing <10% visible sign of physical wear and usage, some drainage problems infrequently effecting use. Appropriate grass species with reasonable sward coverage and evenness. Deterioration has no significant impact on field appearance, safety and useability.

District

Sporting structures – Asset is functional and displays minor defects, wear and tear, and deterioration to finishes, fixtures and fittings. Deterioration has no significant impact on stability, safety and user functionality.

Sportsground surface – Sports field showing slight defects and deterioration. Field showing <20% visible sign of physical wear and usage with <10% bare ground or undesirable species. Some drainage problems infrequently effecting use. Deterioration has no significant impact on field appearance, safety and useability.

Local

Sporting structures – Asset is functional and displays moderate defects, wear and tear, and deterioration to finishes, fixtures and fittings. Deterioration has no significant impact on stability, functionality and safety. Some deterioration beginning to be reflected in appearance and user satisfaction.

Sportsground surface – Sports field generally sound but showing minor defects. Field showing <30% visible sign of physical wear and usage with <15% bare ground or undesirable species. Some water ponding temporarily effecting use. Some deterioration beginning to impact on field appearance however not safety and useability.



Make sure car parking is accessible and sport fields relate to cycleways and footpaths.

Survey response: How can Council encourage greater sportsground use?

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p (02) 4988 0255 | **e** council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au
116 Adelaide Street | PO Box 42 Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU    