

3.1. Primrose Park Reconfiguration and Hockey Opportunities

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ATTACHMENTS: Nil

PURPOSE:

To present information on the potential for the return of Hockey to Primrose Park.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Reference Group with advice on the Primrose Park reconfiguration with the potential for the return of Hockey.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Funding for the feasibility and concept design of the Primrose Park Sportsfield Reconfiguration project has been allocated in the current financial year 2022/23.

Funding for the implementation of the Primrose Park Sportsfield Reconfiguration project has been allocated in the following financial year 2023/24.

No funding has been allocated to the implementation of a Synthetic Hockey Pitch at Primrose Park.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report be received.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

1. Our Living Environment
- 1.4 Well utilised open space and recreational facilities

BACKGROUND

A Notice of Motion by Councillors Keen and Mutton – Re: The Return of Hockey to North Sydney was discussed at the Council Meeting held on 27 August 2018, where it was resolved (Min. No. 295):

1. *THAT Council in principle support a hockey field in the North Sydney LGA.*
2. *THAT Council report on the options available for hockey.*

The matter was discussed at the Sport and Recreation Reference Group on 18th November 2019.

A meeting with the local Hockey Club was held on 24 July 2020 to consider, amongst a number of issues, the option for maintaining one grass field to a very high standard exclusively as a hockey pitch in the winter season.

At its meeting on 28 September 2020, Council considered a report on this matter and resolved:

1. *THAT the report be received.*
2. *THAT Council continue to liaise with Hockey representatives to create opportunities to provide local training facilities.*
3. *THAT Council further investigate the opportunity of having a dedicated natural turf facility for Hockey.*

The Council report was presented at the Sport and Recreation Reference Group on 10th November 2020 where it was resolved to recommend:

1. THAT the Return of Hockey to North Sydney report be received.

As a general business item at the Sport and Recreation Reference Group on 20th May 2022 a request of a citizen group member was to revisit the Primrose Park sports precinct planning and the need for multiuse water Astro turf for Hockey. It was resolved to recommend:

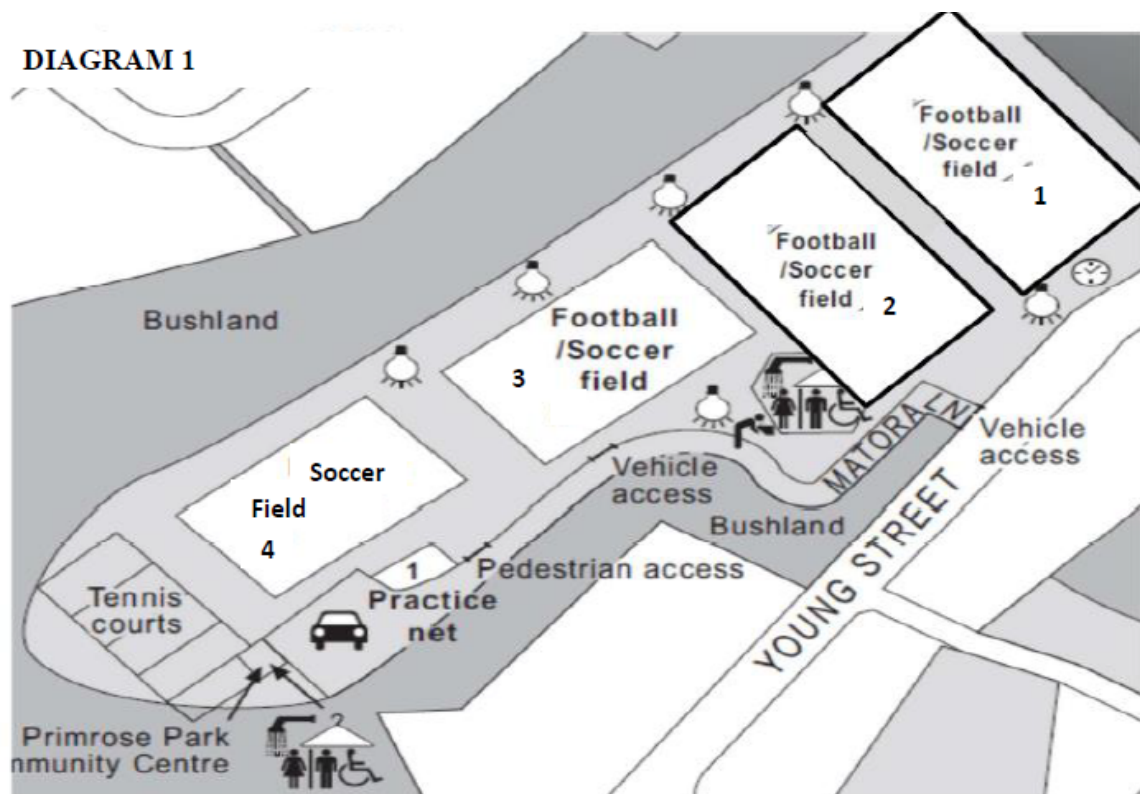
1. THAT the update on Return of Hockey to North Sydney - Response to Notice of Motion report be received.
2. THAT a further report come back to the next meeting regarding the availability of Hockey being played in Primrose Park.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

DETAIL

Council has dedicated capital works funding in this current financial year to develop a concept plan in regard to the Primrose Park Sportsfield Reconfiguration project. This proposal involves rotating the current field at the eastern end (field 1) to face north/south and adding another pitch opposite it facing the same way. This can be seen in diagram 1 below



To achieve this would require the removal of the existing amenities block currently located adjacent to the eastern end field. As you can see in Diagram 1 above the new field location partially covers the existing amenities block

The reconfiguration of Primrose Park will have associated ramifications including the following:

- Increased patronage of the site resulting in increased vehicle movements and associated parking implications;
- The demolition of the existing amenities block and the need to build a new facility in an alternate location;
- Increased noise due to the increased associated usage; and
- Some minor earthworks in selected locations.

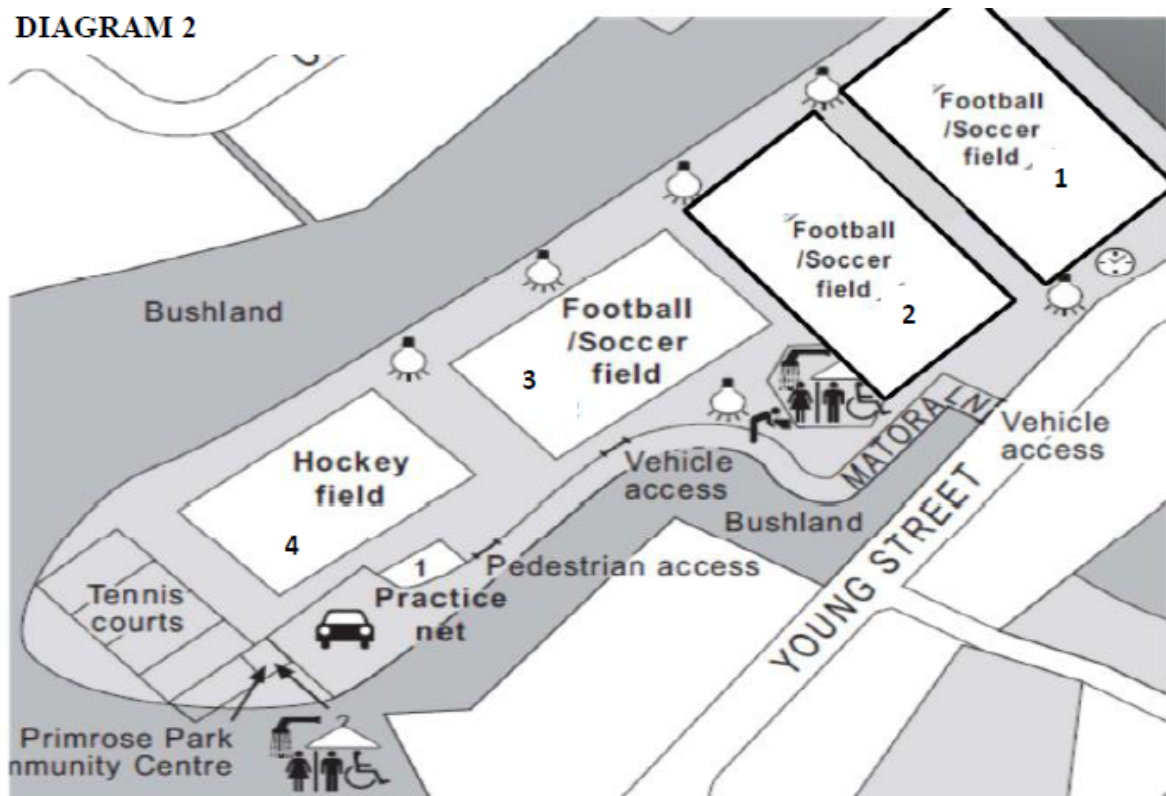
The aim of this concept plan is so that it can be used for initial community consultation and will include the following detail:

- the additional Sportsfield and new layout;
- an Acoustic assessment of the proposal;
- the location and footprint for the potential new amenities building; and
- a detailed Traffic and Parking Assessment based on adding another field.

Further to this Council has committed \$1,120,000.00 of capital works funding to implement the Primrose Park Sportsfield Reconfiguration project in 2023/24 financial year.

The reconfiguration project will provide an opportunity for Hockey to return to Primrose Park. In the new configuration Field 4 could be utilised as a dedicated hockey pitch without the loss of any current winter sport field capacity for the existing users at Primrose Park.

DIAGRAM 2



A dedicated Hockey pitch at Primrose Park would then free up space for alternative uses (currently used for Hockey) on both fields at Forsyth Park.

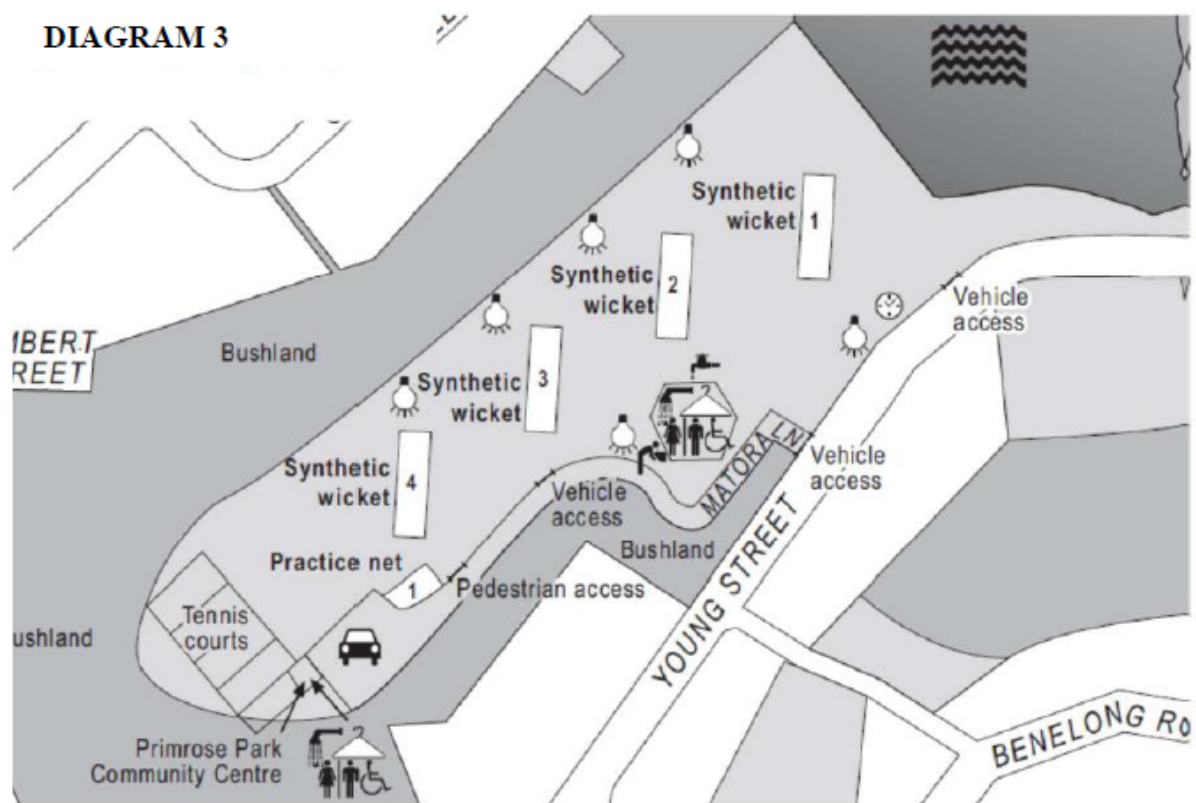
North Sydney Council staff have had discussions with Hockey patrons including

- Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College
- Loretto Kirribilli and
- North Sydney Hockey

regarding the possibility of a dedicated natural turf Hockey field maintained at a high standard. However, to satisfy the current and future growth of Hockey a competition synthetic water-based field is the preferred option.

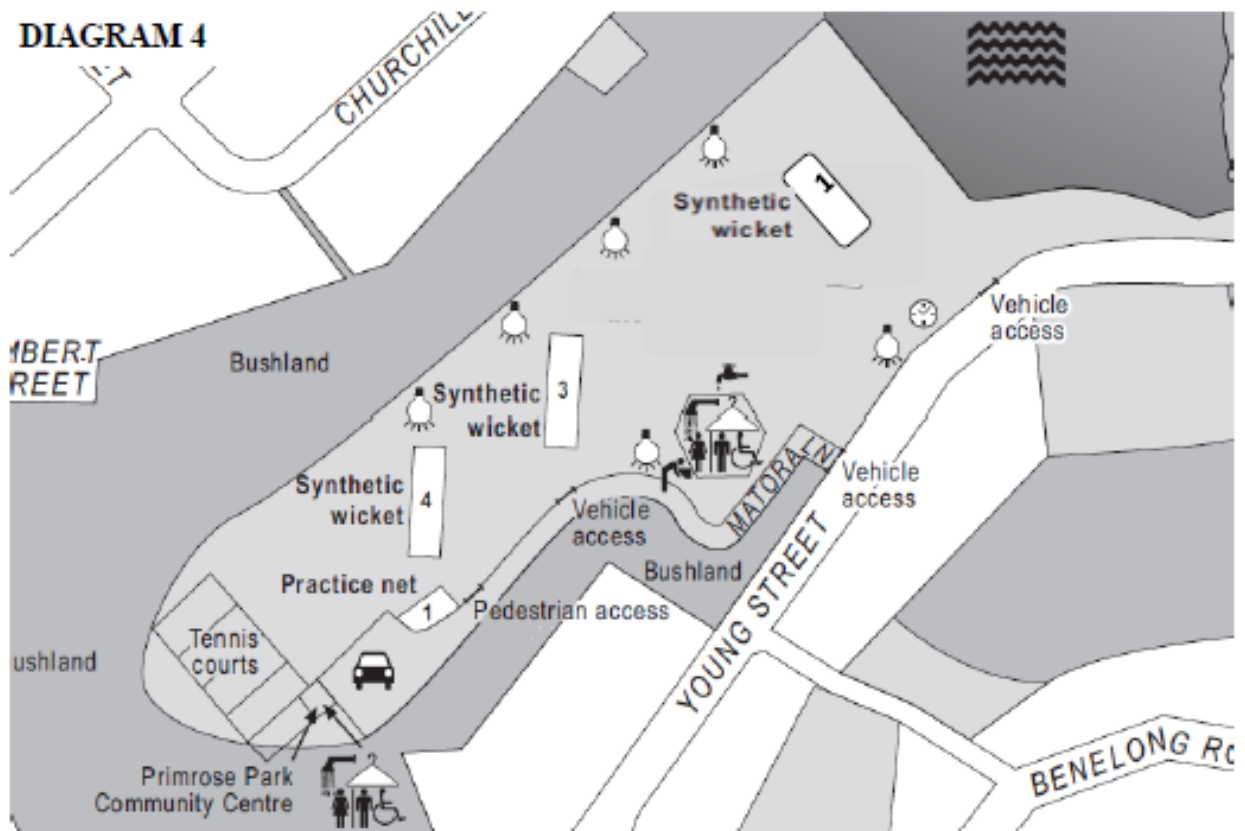
As stated in previous reports Primrose Park was the 3rd option in the Synthetic surface feasibility study undertaken in 2014. Anderson Park was the 2nd option for a Synthetic surface however was not approved by Council due to community opposition. If a dedicated synthetic field for Hockey is the preferred option, then Primrose would be the most appropriate location. A synthetic surface installed here would require a Development Application to be lodged.

The reconfiguration project involves the removal of number 2 Cricket Pitch as seen in diagram below.



Once removed a new wicket would be installed in between the two new fields. This can be seen in the diagram 4 below.

DIAGRAM 4



If a synthetic Hockey surface is installed it would have ramifications on the Cricket community as it would result in the loss of Cricket Wicket # 4. This would be in addition to the loss of # 2 due to the reconfiguration project.

Cricket pitch # 2 is currently in a position that it doesn't offer a lot of use because it is located very close to pitches 1 and 3. For senior games pitch 2 cannot be utilised as the proximity to other games makes it too dangerous for play.

If a Synthetic surface is installed it would be impossible for Cricket to utilise pitch # 4. This is because half the outfield would be synthetic and the other half natural turf. The potential of a fence being installed at the eastern end of the synthetic field would also be an issue. The loss of Cricket pitch #4 would be problematic as there are no other Sportsfields within North Sydney where a replacement could be accommodated. Waverton, Forsyth, Tunks and Anderson Parks have existing Cricket pitches in place.