



# AGENDA

Council Chambers  
Date: 4 August 2022

A meeting of the **Sport and Recreation Reference Group** will be held on Cammeraygal Land at the Ros Crichton Pavilion Council Chambers, 200 Miller Street, North Sydney at 6:00 PM on Monday 15 August 2022.

The agenda is as follows.

Rob Emerson  
**A/GENERAL MANAGER**



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## **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 May 2022, copies of which had been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

## **2. Disclosures of Interest**

Nil.

### **3. Committee Reports**

#### **3.1. Primrose Park Reconfiguration and Hockey Opportunities**

**AUTHOR:** David Manson, Manager Parks and Reserves

**ENDORSED BY:** Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

**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.

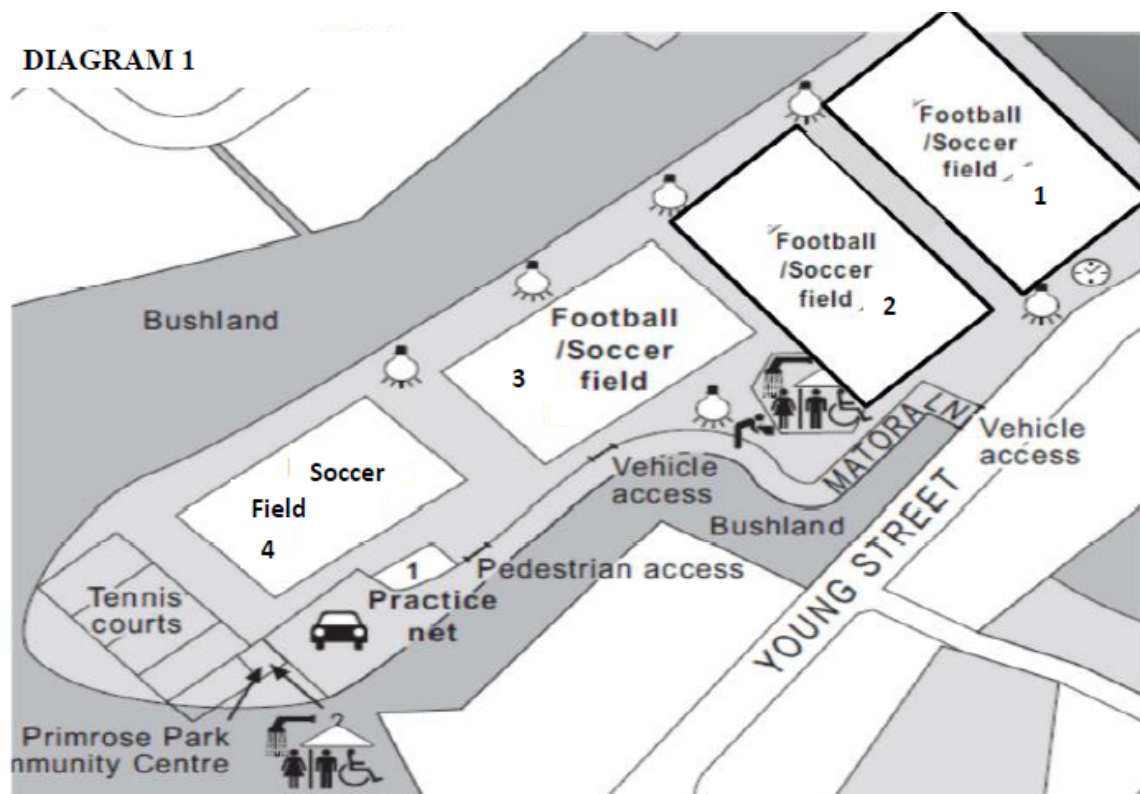


## CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

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.

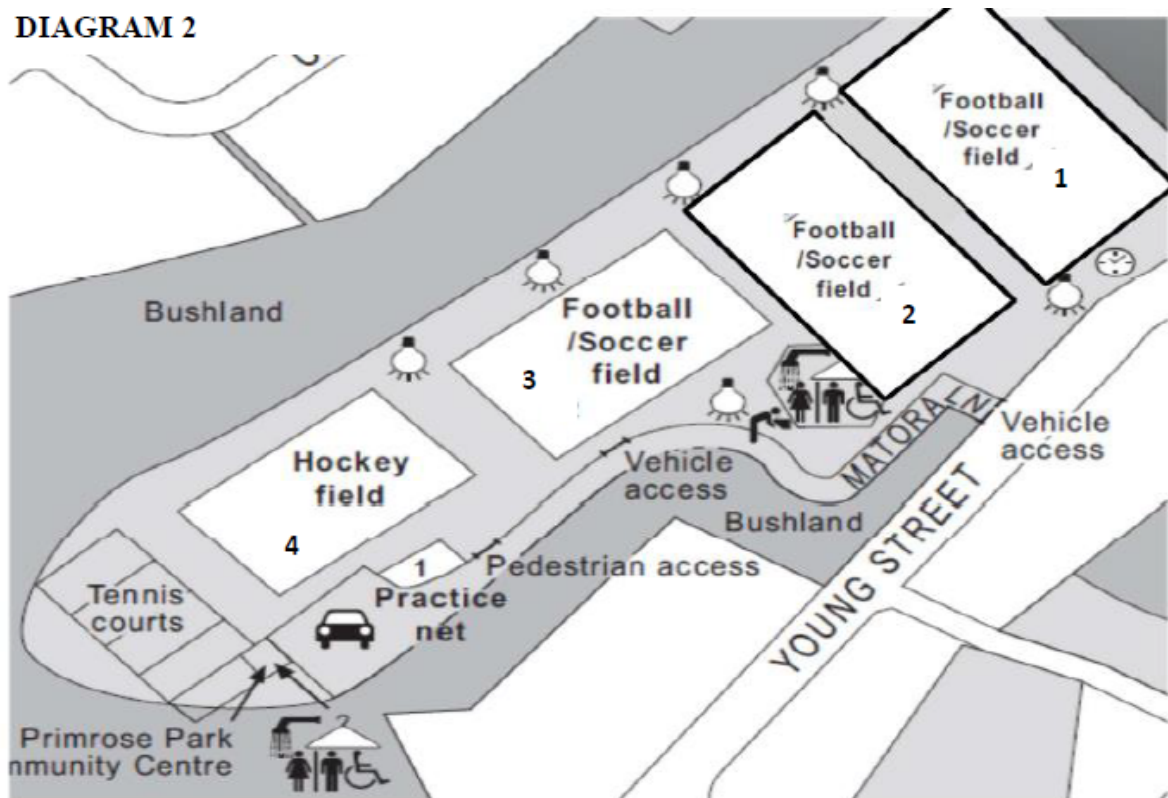
The aim of this concept plan is so that it can be used for initial community consultation and will include the following detail:

- 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.

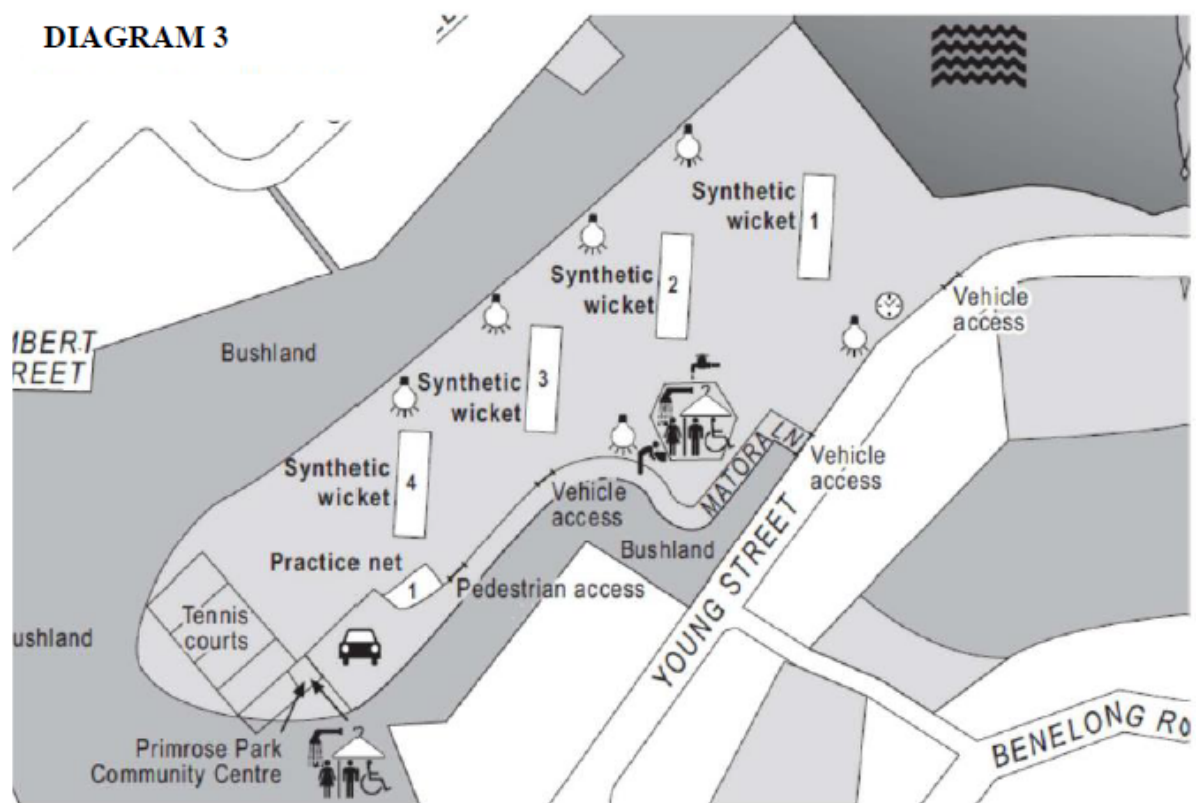
North Sydney Council staff have had discussions with Hockey patrons including

- 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.

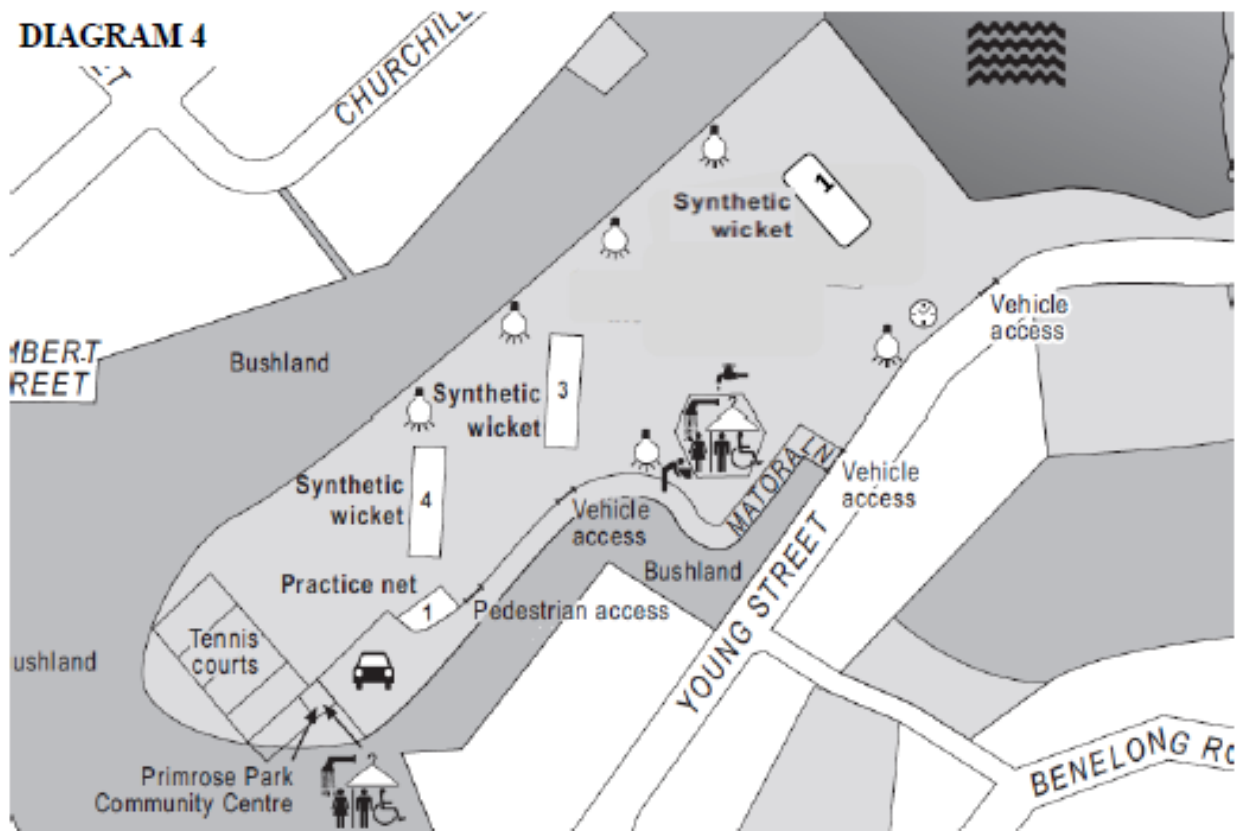
As stated in previous reports Primrose Park was the 3<sup>rd</sup> option in the Synthetic surface feasibility study undertaken in 2014. Anderson Park was the 2<sup>nd</sup> option for a Synthetic surface however was not approved by Council due to community opposition. If a dedicated synthetic field 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.

### **3.2. Cammeray Park Usage and Extension of Operating Hours**

**AUTHOR:** David Manson, Manager Parks and Reserves

**ENDORSED BY:** Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

**PURPOSE:**

To present information on the requirements to extend the hours of use at Cammeray Park Sportsfield.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report presents information on the requirements to extend the hours of use under the current Development Application (DA) conditions at Cammeray Park Sportsfield.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

No funding has been allocated to this project

**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

In 2013 under Development Application number 207/13 approval was given to proceed with the installation of a Synthetic Turf Sportsfield at Cammeray Park. The hours of operation statement of the DA are as follows:

“The football field shall only be used for training or matches between the hours of 8am- 9pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday. During those times the field shall only be used for such purposes for a maximum of 62 hours each week”.

A resolution at the Sport and Recreation reference group meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 that was adopted by Council at its meeting in November proposed to lodge a section 96 for an extension of hours of use at Cammeray Oval.

This section 96 was lodged on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 in relation to Development Application (DA) number 207-13.

The amendments related to altering the current operating hours of the Sportsfield. There were no changes to the use of the site or the maximum weekly hours (62) available.

After a successful 12 month trial period the changes to the hours in which user groups will be able to book and use Cammeray Park Sportsfield are currently as follows

- 7.00am-9.30pm Monday-Friday and
- 8.00am-9.00pm Saturday only

At the Sport and Recreation reference group meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 Mr Simon Cox (President of North Sydney United Football Club) discussed the potential to utilise the Cammeray Park Sportsfield lights on a Sunday evening until 6.45pm. It was resolved to recommend:

**1. THAT** a report come back to the next meeting advising of the requirements of the changes to the DA and the time frame for allowing floodlights at Cammeray Park until 6.45pm on a Sunday night between 1 April and 31 August each year to allow for an extra Senior Women’s Competition Football fixture.

## CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

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

## **DETAIL**

To implement this change a new DA would need to be lodged. This would involve the engagement of an external consultant to prepare a Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE). The SEE will need to include reports on the Lighting, Acoustic and Traffic information of the site.

The original reports undertaken for DA 207-13 can be utilized however they will need to be assessed by the external consultant. Upon assessment addendums or compliance letters will need to be issued in line with the original reports.

The DA would then be assessed by the North Sydney Local Planning Panel for determination. This is a panel of independent experts with the authority (NSW Govt mandate) to consider and determine DAs on behalf of Council and provide advice on other planning matters, including planning proposals.

The whole process would be expected to take up to 6 months at an approximate cost of between \$10,000.00 - \$15,000.00.

### **3.3. Informal Bike Tracks/Jumps**

**AUTHOR:** David Manson, Manager Parks and Reserves

**ENDORSED BY:** Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

**PURPOSE:**

To present information on opportunities to provide a Mountain Bike jump track in the North Sydney LGA.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report presents information for discussion on potential sites within the North Sydney LGA for the installation of a Mountain Bike jump track.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

No funding has been allocated to this project

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. THAT** the report be received.

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

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### **1. Our Living Environment**

#### **1.4 Well utilised open space and recreational facilities**

## **BACKGROUND**

During the several Covid-19 lockdowns in Sydney, Mountain Biking and riding bikes in general became a very popular form of exercise due to the shutdown of community sport, gyms, and personal training.

In many areas over the LGA, resourceful children were using what they could to build tracks, ramps and jumps to ride their mountain bikes on and over. Areas such as St Leonards Park, Forsyth Park, Grasmere Reserve and Lodge Road Reserve were utilised for this.

Council was in receipt of several complaints from residents and members of the public regarding these informal tracks. Complaints were mainly around soil and sediment damage being caused, littering as well as potential accidents sustained using these informal tracks.

If the informal tracks were not causing environmental harm and the risk to the greater public was minimal then the council practice was that they were not removed, recognizing the mental and physical health benefit.

At the Council meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2021 a Notice of Motion (No. 19/21) was lodged by Councillors Keen and Mutton where it was resolved:

- 1. THAT** Council look for suitable bike jumps within the North Sydney Area, noting that these are separate to official cycleways.
- 2. THAT** Council report back through the Sport and Recreation Reference Group to determine the best locations including consideration of the southern end of Forsyth Park and discuss how to progress this for the North Sydney residents

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

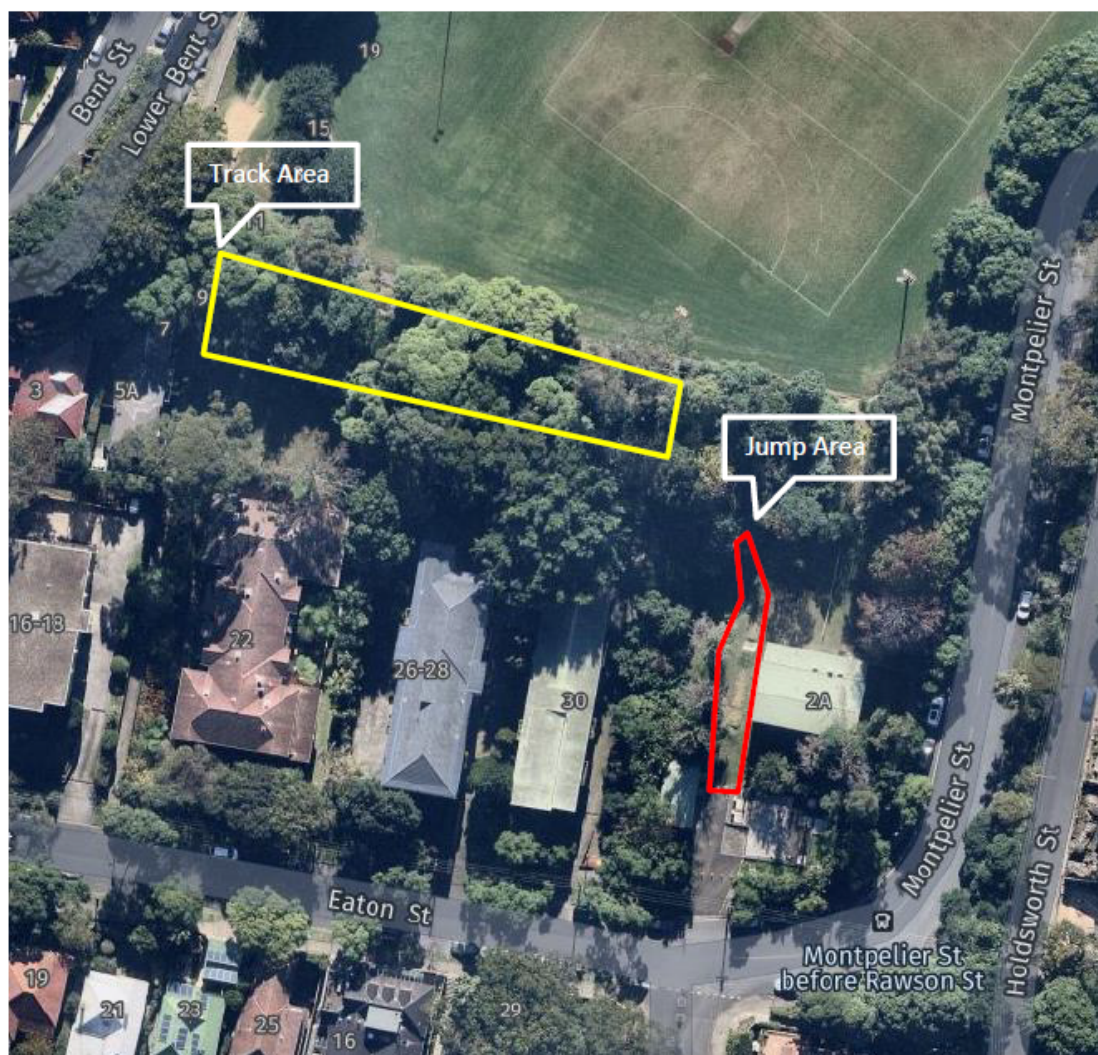
Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

## DETAIL

Council staff have taken some time to investigate the potential locations that a formal bike jump track could be installed in the North Sydney LGA.

The following sites have been identified:

1. **Forsyth Park** – located at the southern end of the park, this is a site that currently has a track and some jumps on it. The jump area is planned to be demolished as it is causing damage to infrastructure and does not appear to be utilized in recent times.





**Jump Area**



**Track Area**





- Green Park** – located along Cammeray Road, Green Park has an area to the eastern end of the park (highlighted in yellow in below picture) that is currently just a minimally used passive recreation area that runs downhill from the Scout hall.





3. **Grasmere Reserve** – located in Cammeray and runs on a downslope from south to north and could provide a track and/or jumps quite easily. Proximity to residences may provide challenges in gaining community acceptance.





4. **Brightmore Reserve** – located in Cammeray opposite the Primrose Park Sportsfields towards the South of the park (highlighted in yellow) has a slight slope where a track or jumps could be installed. The area is currently being utilised by Sydney Water undertaking repairs to the Northern Suburbs Ocean Outfall Sewer (NSOOS) pipeline



### **3.4. Wet Weather Approach and Sportsfields**

**AUTHOR:** David Manson, Manager Parks and Reserves

**ENDORSED BY:** Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Sydney weather cancels sport, closes ovals across city [**3.4.1** - 4 pages]

**PURPOSE:**

To present information on wet weather procedures and Sportsfields.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report presents information on the current process of assessing North Sydney Council's Sportsfields for suitability of play during wet weather. It also presents details on the problems many Councils have been faced with for the duration of this current period of extreme rainfall.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

No financial implications.

**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**

Many local government areas of NSW have been heavily affected by the extreme rainfall events during this current calendar year. The monthly averages combined from March 22 through until July 2022 total 556mm. North Sydney has seen double that with 1169mm of rainfall. The non-availability of Sportsfields due to the rain events has been one of many concerns especially through this current winter season.

This issue on top of the last two seasons being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, sporting communities, understandably, are becoming very frustrated.

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

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

## **DETAIL**

North Sydney Council along with many other Councils in the Sydney catchment have been faced with unprecedented amounts of rain for the last 6 months

North Sydney Council has a permanent weather station located at the Coal Loader that measures the rainfall and as well as items such as humidity, wind speed and wind direction. The monthly rainfall amounts from the start of March 2022 can be seen in the table below.

Analog Input	Date and Time	Value	Unit	Average
Monthly Rainfall - The Coal Loader	March 2022	437.55	mm	118
Total March 2022	Total March 2022	437.55	mm	
Monthly Rainfall - The Coal Loader	April 2022	207.67	mm	115
Total April 2022	Total April 2022	207.67	mm	
Monthly Rainfall - The Coal Loader	May 2022	88.31	mm	101
Total May 2022	Total May 2022	88.31	mm	
Monthly Rainfall - The Coal Loader	June 2022	6.77	mm	144
Total June 2022	Total June 2022	6.77	mm	
Monthly Rainfall - The Coal Loader	July 2022	428.76	mm	78
Total July 2022	Total July 2022	428.76	mm	

This continuing precipitation trend has opened debate within sporting clubs and the media on the closure of sporting fields due to wet weather. It is also leading to in-depth discussions on the inability for many natural turf fields to cope with the conditions and be returned to play as quickly as possible.

The latest Sydney Morning Herald article entitled “Winter deluge cancels local sport; climate change threatens to ruin it” (attached to this report) is a clear indication of the frustrations across Sydney. The article also touches on the lack of sporting facilities to cope with the growing number of participants. It references the report undertaken by the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) of which found the North Shore needed an additional 62 hectares of playing space – equivalent to 78 rectangular fields – by 2026 for sports such as soccer, football, cricket, and hockey.

In the financial year 2021/22 North Sydney Council spent \$1,165,607.00 on Sportsfield maintenance. The income received from hire fees was \$334,225.00 (this was slightly affected due to covid pandemic relief). Resulting in a return of 28% on the total spent on maintenance of Sportsfields (excluding North Sydney Oval)

As a comparison over the past 4 years the averages are as follows

- Income - \$378,800.00
- Expenditure - \$1,188,700.00
- return is 32%

## Wet Weather Closures – Criteria for Assessment

Industry experts state the minimum requirement for all fields, irrespective of the level of competition, is to provide a surface that meets the following criteria:

- Grass covers of 90 – 100% at the commencement of the season. Greater than 85% grass cover mid-season.
- No obvious holes or excessive surface level variation
- Provide a reasonably stable footing.
- Not excessively hard (i.e., < 120g) as measured using the Clegg Soil Impact Tester.
- Turf wickets to be well grassed, level and have an even and consistent bounce. In regard to turf wickets, less pace and bounce can be acceptable at lower grades of competition. However, there must be no compromise with respect to levelness of the surface and consistency of bounce so that the surface is not dangerous.

Currently Council's Greenkeeping staff evaluates when to close grounds based on the field demonstrating the following characteristics:

- The potential for safe play and injury to players;
- If the sport allocated to that field for training or play is likely to cause extensive damage to the playing surface;
- Surface water present – Extensive puddling on the surface (this indicates soil is at its saturation point;)
- Surface is slippery;
- The short-term weather forecast;
- The time of year and the cumulative amount of stress on the field; and
- Drainage capabilities of the field.

In order to have as little impact on play as possible, Council staff assesses each field on its merits and only close fields when absolutely necessary. North Sydney Council's current procedure during wet weather periods includes daily inspections of each field both morning and afternoon on weekdays and mornings on weekends. A decision is made on these daily assessments on each individual ground. This means that grounds with more than one playing field may have some fields closed and some open.

Damage to the playing surface is defined as being beyond general wear and tear. Playing in wet conditions causes major damage that can force fields to be closed for longer periods of time. Impacts such as compaction, complete turf removal and unevenness of the surface are intensified when a wet soil profile is played on.

National NSW Kids' sport

## Winter deluge cancels local sport, climate change threatens to ruin it



By [Andrew Taylor](#)

July 23, 2022 – 3.22pm

Wet weather has played havoc with winter sports competitions, with clubs forced to cancel training and games because local councils have closed waterlogged ovals.

But kids are also missing out on games because of a lack of sports grounds and facilities that are ill-equipped to deal with extreme weather.



East's Junior Beasties RUFC players Charlie Hourigan, Remy Scott, Felix Connor and Ceilim O'Kelly at training in Rose Bay. JANIE BARRETT

7/26/22, 2:01 PM

Sydney weather cancels sport, closes ovals across city

Sport NSW chairwoman Carolyn Campbell said rain and floods in NSW had been devastating for sports already dealing with the existing pressure on facilities.

“The sector knows the impact of climate change and associated weather extremes is a major threat to sports participation and the quality and maintenance of infrastructure needed to support future growth,” she said.

Campbell said sporting organisations wanted to work with governments to build sporting facilities that will withstand future weather events.

“Clearly, the outdoor field sports have been most affected by the weather, but right now, pretty much all our members are telling us the biggest hurdle they face is finding places to play,” she said. “Many sports are telling us they’re restricted from growing, often turning away potential participants, because of a lack of facilities – and that is a sad state of affairs.”



Roselea Football Club has been forced to cancel many training sessions and weekend games this year because of waterlogged sports grounds. WOLTER PEETERS

Roselea Football Club has not been able to use three ovals in Carlingford since March, forcing the club to train its 60 junior and adult teams on just two fields instead of five.

When the fields are open, the uneven playing surface is “detrimental to competitive play”, the club’s director of development Rohan Primrose said.

“They have patchy grass and dusty hollows in the dry which become boggy in the wet,” he said. “The fields have no drainage or irrigation leading them to be the first to close and the last to reopen during the mildest wet weather.”

Primrose said the state of the sporting fields had restricted the growth and training capacity of the football club: “Many training sessions and weekend games have been cancelled in the 2022

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7/26/22, 2:01 PM

Sydney weather cancels sport, closes ovals across city

season due to the sodden fields at our grounds and across the association.”

A Football NSW spokesman said half of Sydney’s football fields did not have drainage, leaving turf ovals in “a moderate to poor state”.

“There are some fields in Sydney that haven’t been used for the winter season due to rain in March, let alone the torrential rain that we have experienced over the last few weeks,” he said.

Soccer clubs that use turf grounds had been forced to cancel training sessions over the past few weeks because of wet weather, he said. “Fields have been closed during the rain and then consequently closed days and weeks post the rain event.”



Under-12 footballers Samaira Bagga, Charlotte Keller and Casey Ahn. WOLTER PEETERS

He said kids were missing out on participation due to the poor condition of sporting facilities: “Kids have had two seasons impacted by COVID-19 and now they have had a third season in a row where competition and training has been affected.”

Some areas of Sydney also lacked enough sporting ovals to cope with the number of people who wanted to play soccer, Football NSW’s spokesman said.

There is an average of one soccer pitch in NSW for every 166 players, but Hunters Hill Council has only one pitch every 518 players.

Soccer players in the Sutherland Shire (one pitch for every 293 players), northern beaches, Blue Mountains and Lane Cove also lack sporting fields.

A 2017 report commissioned by the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils found the north shore needed an additional 62 hectares of playing space – equivalent to 78 rectangular fields – by 2026 for sports such as soccer, football, cricket and hockey.

Other football codes have also been forced to cancel or postpone training or games.

A NSW Rugby spokesman said parts of Sydney with growing population have struggled to provide more open public space.

“As a result, there is a growing need for access to all-weather facilities such as purpose-built synthetic pitches and improved sharing of existing greenfield space,” he said.

He said NSW Rugby supported more all-weather sporting grounds as well as improved lighting to increase the number of hours facilities can be used.

Head of rugby at Easts Junior Beasties Matt Souter said the club was fortunate to share a synthetic rugby field that was unaffected by bad weather. However, two grass ovals at Eastern Suburbs Rugby Union Football Club in Rose Bay have been out of action for most of the year due to wet weather.

7/26/22, 2:01 PM

Sydney weather cancels sport, closes ovals across city

Souter said a number of home and away games had been cancelled because of unfit playing surfaces. “When it comes down to ground closures, all the kids miss out.”

But the use of fake grass in parks and open spaces is controversial, with grassroots community groups across Sydney fighting councils planning to install artificial turf.

But Football NSW’s spokesman said a disparity was beginning to creep into community sport because clubs with access to synthetic fields have been less affected by wet weather.

“Teams that train on natural turf fields have had training cancelled multiple times throughout the season,” he said.

“They are playing against teams that haven’t missed a training session. This puts the clubs using natural turf fields at a severe disadvantage no matter what level of competition they are participating at.”

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**Andrew Taylor** is a Senior Reporter for The Sydney Morning Herald. Connect via [Twitter](#) or [email](#).

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#### **4. General Business**

##### **Update on the Commemorative Plaque for the Sydney Olympic Marathon Start Line (Matt Dawson – North Sydney Parkrun)**

Council's Historian has advised that he has been waiting for at least 6 months for the sign which will mark the significance of the blue line to arrive from the manufacturer in Melbourne. He doesn't have an eta despite enquiring several times.

## 5. Closure