



North Sydney Recreation Needs Study





About this Document

This document is the Recreation Needs Study prepared by @leisure planners.

Additional supporting information and the findings from the community engagement process can be found in a separate volume: Supporting Document.

Acknowledgements

@leisure Planners appreciates the contribution made to the project by:

- The Study Steering Group
- The project managers Megan White and Kate Bambrick-Browne
- Local community organisations
- North Sydney Council staff, and
- All community members, clubs and organisations who were interviewed, attended meetings, filled in a survey or provided further information/comments.

All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, by any means, without the prior written permission of North Sydney Council and @leisure



Rear 534 Mt Alexander Rd
Ascot Vale Vic 3032
P: 03 9326 1662
E: info@atleisure.com.au
www.atleisure.com.au



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	5	6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	49
1.1 The project	5	6.1 Overall Goals and Strategies.....	49
Objectives.....	5	6.2 Specific Issue Based Strategies and	
Methods	5	Actions	51
1.2 The last recreation plan	6		
1.3 Policy and planning influences	6		
Council’s mission	7		
Council’s vision	7		
Council’s role	7		
Council’s charter.....	8		
2. DEMAND FOR RECREATION AND SPORT	9		
2.1 Demographic influences on recreation			
participation	9		
2.2 Projected participation in recreation			
activities	13		
2.3 Community preferences and demand	14		
3. RECREATION FACILITIES IN NORTH SYDNEY	19		
3.1 Range and type of facilities and activities ..	19		
3.2 Overview of facilities by type.....	20		
3.3 Distribution of facilities	22		
3.4 Carrying capacity of existing facilities.....	25		
4. OVERARCHING GOALS AND STRATEGIES.....	26		
Goals	26		
5. KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	28		
5.1 Off road trails for walking and cycling	29		
Key Strategies And Actions: Off-Road Trails .	30		
5.2 Water Based Recreation	32		
Key Strategies And Actions: Water Based			
Recreation	33		
5.3 Social/ family recreation (SFR) space	35		
Key Strategies And Actions: Social /Family			
Recreation	36		
5.4 Sport.....	37		
Key Strategies And Actions: Sport	40		
5.5 Open Space.....	44		
Key Strategies And Actions: Open Space.....	47		

Executive summary

North Sydney Council engaged @leisure Planners to prepare a Recreation Needs Study (RNS).

The preparation of this plan included extensive community and stakeholder engagement, as well as a review of demographics, policies and plans, projected participation in activities and the distribution and nature of existing opportunities.

The previous RNS was prepared in 2005. Many issues raised in 2005 are still current. For example the demand for sports and water based recreation opportunities outstrips their supply. In 2014, additional pressure is being applied on limited open space and sports facilities by increasing densities of development and an increasing residential, student and worker population.

There is a good range of recreation facilities in the North Sydney area, however maintaining an adequate supply; quality and diversity of opportunity will be an ongoing challenge.

The key issues and opportunities revolve around: off road trails and the demand for cycling and walking, provision for sport, social/ family recreation parks, and water based recreation, and the protection of open space.

Path and trail infrastructure is likely to provide the most opportunities for residents, visitors, workers and students in the North Sydney area.

There are considerable opportunities to develop a network of park perimeter paths, circuits around residential areas and trails along corridors and the foreshore.

It is unlikely that all demand for sporting infrastructure can be met locally due to cost and lack of availability of suitable land. Both indoor and outdoor facilities are at capacity. However some gains should be made by: extending the indoor centre, further provision of synthetic grass fields, and indoor court sport developments within multi level buildings or car parks, in conjunction with commercial and /or educational partners. Sports that have indicated a significant level of demand for additional (or indeed any) facilities include: hockey, soccer, netball, touch, basketball (indoor), badminton and squash.

Trends in recreation activities and social indicators (such as patterns of work and income) are likely to generate additional demand for short duration group fitness, indoor sports opportunities and for sports that are based on a 'pay and play' model.

Council maintains sporting infrastructure very well to maximise yield/capacity of the grounds. However, many users have indicated that the supporting infrastructure (amenities, lighting, car parking etc.) is lacking or requires upgrading. Continuing a program of asset renewals with current demand in mind will be important.

Practically all residents live within 400m of some public open space. However, a considerable amount of the local government area is not within walking distance of a social/ family recreation park that provides recreation activities for people all ages and abilities.

Much of the open space in North Sydney is small in size and fragmented, yet its character and large canopy trees are highly valued. Ensuring that more parks, trails and play areas are accessible to older adults and people with a disability will enhance their value to the whole community.



Where development opportunities arise, deficiencies in open space in southern Kirribilli, near Military Road in Neutral Bay, along the Pacific Highway corridor in Crows Nest/St Leonards, around Pine Street in Cammeray and immediately east of the railway line in Wollstonecraft should be addressed, and additional foreshore land reserved for public use.

Continued protection and replacement of trees and further policing of use of bushland sites is likely to be warranted to protect their function as important urban flora and fauna refuges, and for nature appreciation.

The goals emanating from this study are:

1. Increased participation in physical and social opportunities
2. Enhanced use of existing resources, whilst minimising overuse
3. A diversity of recreation opportunities for the widest range of the population, now and in future
4. Maintenance of the green nature and character of the North Sydney area
5. Co-operative, effective and sustainable service delivery

A revision of planning controls is warranted to facilitate sport and recreation developments, and encourage public access to those in educational and commercial developments, as well as protect and enhance existing opportunities.

In addition to infrastructure planning and development, Council should take a larger role in information provision and sports development in conjunction with existing providers.

Council will need to actively seek external funding to implement this plan, along with support from educational, commercial, and community organisations.

An implementation plan with all strategies and actions is provided with priorities in Chapter 6.

1. Introduction

1.1 The project

Objectives

The objectives of this Recreation Needs Study are to:

- determine the current supply of sport and recreation facilities and services, along with the current and projected demands
- engage stakeholders (including local residents, workers, schools, sporting groups etc.) in order to produce a meaningful Study with a high level of acceptance
- provide directions on capital works priorities and actions, and ensure “best practice” planning and management of open space and recreation facilities
- ensure the best allocation of resources possible in the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities and services that meet the identified needs
- identify potential funding options for the provision and/or improvement of identified facilities and services
- encourage and facilitate partnerships with community and other public and private stakeholders for the planning, provision, development and management of open space and recreation facilities.

Methods

The process employed to determine needs and whether additional facilities are required, included the following:

- Determining local demographic influences on recreation participation
- Projecting potential demand using known participation data and local population projections and indicators
- Interviewing existing clubs and organisations
- Holding workshops and presentations for stakeholders and the community to express their preferences and issues
- Conducting a survey of clubs and community groups as well as householders
- Assessing demand and issues from secondary data, existing Council plans, policies and reports
- Classifying existing recreation facilities based on their function and use, for comparison with demand
- Preparing an inventory of facilities and programs/activities offered
- Classifying existing facilities according to function
- Assessing the distribution and diversity and quality of opportunities available
- Inspecting existing facilities
- Assessing the carrying capacity of local facilities

1.2 The last recreation plan

Council undertook the last Recreation Study in 2005. Key recommendations that have been actioned, include the following:

- Toilet/amenity building upgrades
- Developed the Outdoor Fitness Training Code of Conduct
- Progressing the NSROC Sports Management Plan
- Upgrades to the cricket practice nets and wickets
- Develop consistent park signage
- Supporting community garden projects
- Updates to Plans of Management
- Water based recreation upgrades: Ramp and storage at Kurraba Reserve, and Dinghy racks at Folly Point and Tunks Park

Some recommendations not able to be actioned to date include the following:

- Upgrades to the Olympic Pool (now in progress)
- Synthetic surface (Cammeray Park, now in progress)
- Develop a bike plan (now complete)
- Demand for additional courts, particularly netball and tennis (an agreement was negotiated with North Sydney Girls High for use of netball courts)

1.3 Policy and planning influences

A range of policies and plans guide recreation provision in North Sydney.

Key policies and plans of relevance to this project are:

- Community Strategic Plan 2013
- North Sydney LEP 2013, associated policies and amendments
- North Sydney Section 94 Contributions Plan 2013
- St Leonards Park Conservation Management Plan 2013
- North Sydney Open Space Provision Strategy 2009
- Twelve Plans of Management for public open space in North Sydney
- Playgrounds Methodology 2011
- Water Based Recreation Needs Study Report 2006
- North Sydney Recreation Needs Study 2005
- North Sydney Companion Animals Management Plan 2004

The role, function and general use of public open space in North Sydney is documented in and protected through the Plans of Management. The Plans of Management cover a range of sites or park types. Many of the actions advocated in the Plans are derived from other documents (such as the 2005 Recreation Needs Study and the 2006 Water-based Recreation Study). The Plans of Management are reviewed and updated every 5-6 years.

Protecting land for recreation and balancing and managing uses on the land is a common thread in all plans.



Current planning controls do not provide adequate protection of open space, nor require Council to report on impacts of development on open space and recreation opportunities. Neither do they provide Council with adequate leverage, or opportunities to provide planning incentives to achieve negotiated outcomes with commercial, or educational partners that could provide physical activity and open space benefits to the whole of the North Sydney Community.

Council's mission

Council's mission is to:

To be leading edge in serving the community of North Sydney by:

- caring for its assets
- improving its appearance
- delivering services to its people in a financially, socially and environmentally responsible manner.

Council's vision

Shaping a progressive, diverse and vibrant North Sydney community.

Council's role

Students and workers contribute to the vibrancy and the economic sustainability of the LGA.

The resident and worker population in North Sydney are of a similar size and the CBD provides a high proportion of rates. The student population is also considerable - approximately a third of the resident population.

All these populations are Council stakeholders and will contribute to the LGA staying young and active.

Council plans identify that residents, workers, visitors and students are all part of the North Sydney community and that provision of recreation opportunities need to target all these groups, not just residents.

This plan seeks to address the recreation needs of the whole of North Sydney 's community.

Council's charter

In addition to the Council's Charter under Section 8 of the Local Government Act, 1993, North Sydney Council has adopted its own Charter. Key sections of the charter relevant to this plan include the following:

We will leave to future generations a better environment than we inherited.

Sustainability will be a call to action across our community.

In partnership with our community, we will ensure that responsible stewardship of the local environment is a guiding principle in all our activities.

We will develop new local parks and sporting facilities, broaden the use of our existing open space and recreation resources and improve how we care for and manage them.

We will work with other organisations, locally and regionally, to realise these ends.

The importance of providing opportunities for community health and wellbeing will be central to all of our open space and recreation planning.

We will work with our community to create a built environment that is well designed, welcoming, safe, accessible and beautiful and which truly reflects our local heritage.

We will protect the character of our urban environment whilst managing growth.

We ensure that North Sydney's networks of roads, footpaths, seawalls and other local infrastructure are maintained to a standard that meets our community's expectations.

Funding for major new infrastructure will be spread over the life of the asset.

We will bring together other levels of government in sharing responsibility for our local infrastructure.

We will make North Sydney pedestrian and bike friendly. The use of public transport and other alternatives to the private car will be encouraged through the improvement and expansion of sustainable transport options and the encouragement of car sharing options.

We will preserve the economic vitality of the North Sydney Central Business District and unique commercial centres. From a strong commercial heart, our CBD will host a thriving business community, provide diverse social and cultural activities and work in harmony with surrounding residential areas and other commercial centres nearby. The CBD will be internationally recognised as a place for innovation, excellence and Ecologically Sustainable Development. Our commercial centres will remain economically viable, healthy and attractive.

Our neighbourhoods will be strengthened so that there are village centres with shops and places to meet within walking distance of residential areas.

We will strengthen bonds in our community and give more recognition and support to our social and cultural diversity.

A safer environment for people who live in and visit North Sydney will be created, and we will promote a sense of community responsibility for our collective wellbeing.

We will ensure 'universal access' to our community services and facilities through continuous needs analysis and planning.

We will pursue investment opportunities to enhance community assets under Council's care in the interests of quality of life, amenity and public safety.

We will work in partnership with other levels of government in planning and providing services. Central to our focus will be the needs of youth, families and older people as well as those with special needs.

We will maintain a healthy and secure financial position whilst providing our community with a high level of service.

North Sydney will be greener and cleaner."

2. Demand for recreation and sport

2.1 Demographic influences on recreation participation

The size of the population and the projections, as well as demographic characteristics such as age, ethnicity, income and education, impact on participation in sport and physical activities. These were analysed for the Council area and by suburb.

Population in the North Sydney Council area is nearing 69,000 and is estimated to reach approximately 77,000 by 2021. This growth is likely to be accommodated through increasing residential density, especially around the activity hubs of North Sydney CBD and Crows Nest - St Leonards (see Figure 1). However, much of the local government area is expected to see population growth through infill development.

Key population and growth characteristics

The area has high employment, discretionary income and education levels.

Overall 50.9% of households earn \$2,500 or more per week, whilst 11% are low-income households, earning less than \$600 per week. Overall, 61.8% of the population hold tertiary qualifications compared with 40.5% for the Sydney average.

Higher income families are likely to have more access to private recreation facilities such as swimming pools, tennis courts and gyms, water based sports, and be members of private clubs, as well as spend money on travel, equipment (such as boats and sport equipment) and membership fees, than people with a lower discretionary income.

More affluent and educated residents are likely to have a higher degree of awareness about benefits of recreation and physical exercise. This will motivate individuals to participate, as well as nurture existing open space, which in turn could lead to higher demand for facilities and spaces.

Of the working population, 25.6% live and work in North Sydney (9,657 people) but 68% work outside the area (25,720 people).

A large portion of the population live alone (34%) or as a couple without children (28%), with only 21% indicating the household represents a family structure with children.

A large proportion of the residential population is aged 25 – 39 years (37.2%). This implies that the residential population will be relatively active.

The last census indicated a small proportion of people with school-aged children (8.5%), although anecdotally this appears to be changing. This is reinforced by the likelihood that a new school would be built within the LGA in the near future. However there is a significant student population that travels to and from North Sydney. A 2011 survey of educational institutions suggest a student population of 17,445, of which 12% of primary students, 86% of secondary students and 88% of tertiary students travel to North Sydney from outside the area.

In 2011 the estimated number of workers in North Sydney was 56,000. The young adults in North Sydney for employment are likely to create a high demand for corporate and employee recreation.

There are also fewer older people 75 years and older (5.3%) than the profile for the rest of Sydney. This implies that a high proportion of the population are likely to be in the workforce and time pressures are likely to impact on sport and leisure behaviour.

The vast majority of residents live in medium or high-density housing (86.5%). This implies that private open space is likely to be in a short supply, and hence opportunities for home based relaxation, socialising, pets, and physical activity will be limited. Improving access to natural areas and places for visual and scenic amenity to mitigate against loss of private open spaces, and complement dense urban setting will become increasingly important.

High levels of employment outside the LGA and amount of time per day spent travelling to work are likely to impact preparedness to volunteer.

Less than one-fifth of the population participates in voluntary work; this is likely to reflect the age and life stage of residents. Many being young “time poor professionals”. This profile suggests that providing more ‘pay as you play’ and term based, conveniently scheduled activities, where participants are not expected to volunteer are likely to be attractive, as well as gym and fitness activities rather than team sports. Providing more opportunities for active transport (walking, running, cycling) to the CBDs is warranted.

North Sydney is also becoming increasingly culturally diverse with 36.5% of residents born overseas, including 28% who don't speak English at home (including Chinese 3.6%, Japanese 1.7%, Indian 1.5%, Malaysian 0.9%, South Korean 0.8% and Filipino 0.8%). This suggests that the population will have a wide range interested in activities, as sports preferences are often culturally based. However, people born overseas from non-English speaking backgrounds typically have lower participation rates in sport and physical activities. Encouraging existing sport clubs to provide for wider range of ages and abilities- through different forms of the same game e.g. cricket, rugby, and netball will be important, as well as catering to sports such as badminton that have a high proportion of participants from Asian countries.

North Sydney Council says in its charter:

“We will strengthen bonds in our community and give more recognition and support to our social and cultural diversity”.

North Sydney has two CBDs, North Sydney and Crows Nest/St Leonards. These are important hubs for commercial activities, transport, services and shopping.

Council’s charter says: “We will preserve the economic vitality of the North Sydney Central Business District and unique commercial centres. From a strong commercial heart, our CBD will host a thriving business community, provide diverse social and cultural activities and work in harmony with surrounding residential areas and other commercial centres nearby. The CBD will be internationally recognised as a place for innovation, excellence and Ecologically Sustainable Development. Our commercial centres will remain economically viable, healthy and attractive. “

Forecast changes

By 2031 the resident population is expected to grow by 9,806 people (to projected population of 76,860) however, much of this growth (6,333 people) is expected to occur by 2021. The growth is likely to be concentrated in Crows Nest/St Leonards (2,070 new residents) and North Sydney (1,484 new residents). These areas are currently those least well served by open space.

The population is expected to age slightly, however 53.3% will still be aged 25 – 49 years old. Figure 1 below illustrates the projected population growth by suburb up to 2021.

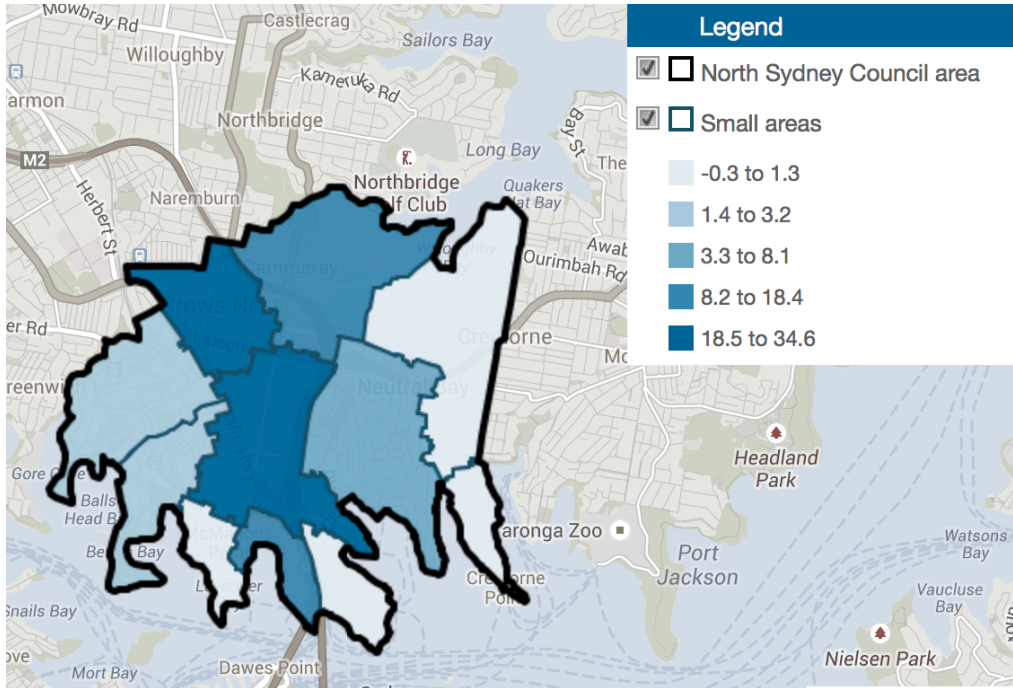


Figure 1: Population growth in North Sydney from 2014 to 2021 (Source: Forecast.ID)

Challenges in service delivery

The population increase and profile in conjunction with the physical characteristics of North Sydney will bring some significant challenges in service delivery. These include the following:

- The impact of limited private open space (no backyards) offered to residents in medium- and high-density households will affect Council facility provision and use. General open space and natural areas will be needed to meet people’s desire to have contact with the environment. There are limited opportunities to provide additional open space to meet the needs of an additional population.
- Available public space (including parks and public footpaths) is likely to be more heavily patronised in higher density areas.
- The high proportion of adults without dependents may increase demand for adult physical activity and sport as a social outlet.
- Improved connection to nature through recreation and social connectedness will significantly benefit people living in lone person households. The household survey showed that there are an increasing number of people who seek companions to do things with, or need some form of assistance to get to and participate in recreation activities.
- The limited additional capacity of sports fields is likely to have an increasing impact on participation rates in physical activity, fitness and team sports across age groups, as the worker and resident population increases.
- A limited additional number and diversity of opportunities to play sport can be provided if grounds are at capacity or over used.

- With a larger population and a greater range of cultures present there will be need for additional information to match the wider range of people with different abilities and interests with available opportunities. Accessible content in a range of media will be necessary to communicate to the North Sydney community.
- The additional cultural diversity will mean an additional diversity of recreation and sporting activities will be desired.
- Potential additional demand for activities offered at night, weekends and on all-weather facilities which are more attractive to young, busy, working adults.
- Additional resources will be required to make aging facilities, parks, paths and clubs more physically accessible and inclusive.

Supply and location influences

Regardless of the high proportion of healthy adults without children, the population requires a diversity of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities, relatively equitably distributed across the LGA. There are still a significant number of children, young people, older people and people requiring assistance with core activities, and an equitable distribution of opportunities reduces the need to continually revise provision.

This plan recommends where possible the following distance thresholds to recreation facilities be adopted:

- 300m to any type of open space
- 400m to play opportunities
- 500m to social, family recreation park
- 1000m to a public sports facility
- 400m to a shared path, and
- 800m to an off-road trail circuit

There is a need to ensure a greater focus on distribution of open space and activities as accessibility becomes more important to a less mobile and “time poor” population.

Additional promotion of the location, quality and accessibility of facilities (not just sporting facilities but also to recreation paths, access to foreshore and water areas and to facilities not provided by Council) including the suitability and permitted use of these areas will be important as populations increase and turn over.

Crows Nest/St Leonards and North Sydney suburbs are likely to experience the highest growth rates, as well as a move towards more mixed-use developments. The CBDs will be increasingly important locations for living, commercial activities, shopping and entertaining. However North Sydney in particular is very compact and vertical, and it will be difficult to introduce new facilities and services cost effectively.

Increasing densities will mean loss of private open space and potentially restorative values and home-based activity such as gardening and playing with children and pets in the backyard. Whilst much of the LGA will be affected by high density, the following suburbs are currently the most dense; Milsons Point - Lavender Bay; Kirribilli and Neutral Bay.

The LGA has an attractive green character and a high level of visual amenity due to incidental vegetation, foreshore reserves, views of harbour, architectural character etc. This enhances the motivation for people to walk.

2.2 Projected participation in recreation activities

Applying State-level participation data to the local residential population helps build an understanding of potential demand for recreation facilities, and likely priorities.

A summary of the likely numbers of people who may use different recreation facility types can be found in the following table. Note: these only include the projected resident population (i.e. not visitor or worker populations).

Table 1: Potential use of key types of recreation facilities based on state participation and North Sydney residential population projections

Facility type	2011	2021 Projected	2031 Projected	Difference 2011 -2031
Trails	30,153	38,847	34,399	4,246
Sportsgrounds -total	12,318	13,430	14,059	1,741
▪ <i>Oval sports</i>	3,203	3,475	3,631	428
▪ <i>Rectangular codes</i>	8,685	9,487	9,939	1,254
▪ <i>Diamond sports</i>	430	467	489	59
Indoor gym/fitness facility	11,960	13,166	13,835	1,876
Swimming pool	9,385	10,279	10,779	1,394
Outdoor sports courts	6,540	7,146	7,487	947
Golf	4,569	5,028	5,283	714
Indoor dance/martial arts/gymnastics facilities	4,553	4,934	5,153	600
Indoor sports courts	3,996	4,376	5,718	1,722
Water based facilities	3,068	3,376	3,547	479
Skate park	2,145	2,197	2,242	97
Lawn bowls green	1,314	1,447	1,520	206



A review of participation rates and local membership data also indicates the following:

- Most activities are expected to see an increase in demand; this is attributed to the projected population increasing for both children and adults.
- Walking and cycling remain the most popular activities and will necessitate significant investment in trail and path infrastructure in both residential and commercial areas.
- Sportsground demand is high, especially for soccer and touch.
- Demand for indoor sport and recreation activities will continue to rise; this is represented by demand for gyms and indoor sports courts.
- There is a demand for additional facilities in nearly all sports, with the exception of possibly lawn bowls and golf where existing facilities have some additional capacity, due to the drop off in juniors and female participation.

2.3 Community preferences and demand

Community engagement for this project included surveys, community workshops, and the opportunities to make comment and send submissions.

The following table indicates the number of people/organisations contributing to the community engagement process.

Nature of Consultation	No.
Online survey responses	340
Sport and recreation groups surveyed and/or interviewed	31
Community and focus group meetings (number of attendees)	50
Schools	7
Formal submissions	19
Interviews with neighbouring local governments	3
Facility managers	3
Regional and state sporting organisations	23
Website comments	5
Comments on discussion paper	3
Comments on draft recreation needs study	7

A full list of the feedback from the consultation can be found in Chapter 4-9 of the Supporting Document.

Some of the key findings of the community householder survey are provided below. Specific findings are included in the discussion on issues and opportunities later in this document (Chapter 5).

Current participation in recreation activities

Some 29% of respondents regularly participated in walking, jogging or running and 9% cycled.

Swimming was the next most popular activity, followed closely by picnicking, play, kicking a ball etc. and other unorganised activities in Council parks.

Generally, the activities undertaken by respondents in North Sydney were in line with most popular activities State-wide.

Facilities used

The facilities used by the most respondents (in descending order of frequency) were:

- open spaces for relaxation (with no facilities except seats and paths)
- bushland reserves
- parks for social/family recreation (e.g. play facilities and exercise equipment)
- swimming pool / beach swimming areas
- lookouts
- off road trails (for walking and cycling).

Activities liked, but not undertaken

The online survey results indicated a demand for:

1. additional sports fields (hockey¹, soccer, football and rugby touch)
2. cycling
3. park-based activities (such as yoga, Pilates etc.)
4. outdoor fitness (equipment), and
5. more water based recreation facilities

These were the activities the most respondents wanted to do, but did not.

¹ it is important to note that there were 21 hockey players/volunteers that completed the survey (most popular sport represented in the survey)

In order of priority, respondents indicated ways the Council could assist them in doing these activities:

- by providing additional or new facilities for this activity
- improving the quality of existing facilities
- providing better information about what is available and where
- providing suitable programs / or classes

Outcomes from the community meetings and other consultation events indicated a desire for safe walking and cycling infrastructure and facilities/activities for older people.

Priorities for Council

Across the various forms of consultation participants advocated for improving what is available now before building new facilities.

Many residents identified that it is a priority to retain all and maintain the quality of open, green space and parks over all other recreation and sporting facilities. Furthermore, public toilet improvement was a common request by respondents in the online survey.

There was also evident demand for an artificial sporting pitch, with hockey specified as the preferred sport to be played on the ground (primarily from the online survey only).

Other priorities the community requested Council to consider included:

- walkways, especially connections along the foreshore
- more activities/facilities for older people.

The community also noted that there was considerable capacity to work with other providers, in particular schools, to help improve the range of sporting facilities available.

Schools

All local schools were provided the opportunity to discuss recreation facilities they have, their use of Council facilities and ideas for future provision.

Most schools have some recreation facilities however nearly all schools rely on access to Council's grounds to fulfil their sport and recreation needs.

Cammeray Public School, St Aloysius, North Sydney Boys High School and North Sydney Girls all allow community groups to use their facilities outside school use.

Detailed notes from all consultation events can be found in Chapter 5 of the Supporting Document.

Other recreation providers

Clubs and associations, regional and state recreation peak bodies, and key recreation facility managers (Council facilities) were interviewed for this project.

Common themes that local clubs that use Council facilities reported include:

- getting access to grounds and facilities is difficult due to the limited hours available for use
- cost of hiring sportsgrounds is high in comparison to other nearby local government areas
- quality of the playing surfaces varies across grounds. Primrose Park was the most cited as being a poor facility (fencing, field drainage etc.)
- Council has a strict policy of closing grounds in wet weather, resulting in the loss of many games
- car parking was identified as problematic at Tunks Park, Cammeray Park, at the North Sydney Olympic Pool and North Sydney Oval.
- additional field lighting was often requested (especially at Tunks Park)
- the lack of a synthetic turf pitch for hockey (and other sports) was raised a number of times.
- supporting infrastructure (amenities, car parking etc.) is lacking or requires upgrading.

Regional and state bodies reinforced the undersupply of facilities for hockey and netball, squash and badminton.

- There is considerable unmet demand for small vessel storage (row boats, dinghies and kayaks) and boat moorings in the region.

Surrounding local government authorities with a direct border to North Sydney were asked to comment on key recreation issues and opportunities at their local level, and whether there was opportunity for cross-border considerations.

All adjacent Councils expressed that demand for recreation facilities is higher than supply and that they are all looking for greater efficiencies in delivering facilities. Initiatives being explored are synthetic surfaces, improved lighting and water efficiencies.

The Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) confirms that the main items of discussion at their sport forums recently have focussed on:

- planning and delivering synthetic surfaces
- seeking solutions to protect open space (for structured and unstructured recreation needs)
- impact of increasing densities on provision of facilities
- dealing with the increasing demand for indoor sport.

Secondary demand

A wide range of documents were scanned to identify whether demand for specific types of activities or facilities had previously been documented.

Protecting land for recreation and balancing and managing uses on land is a common thread in most plans reviewed.

A common theme from documents reviewed was that there are too few parks and sporting fields to meet the expressed and latent demands from current and projected populations.

Population growth, increasing population density, lack of suitable land and cost of land acquisition were considered major deterrents from achieving the desired level of provision of recreation opportunities in North Sydney.

Alternate strategies suggested in the literature solely in regard to relieving pressure on outdoor and indoor sports facilities include:

- undertake a regional planning approach for sports fields with neighbouring local governments
- investigate options for synthetic fields to increase yields on grounds
- look at viable options at existing council properties to provide indoor sport, such as car park rooftops.

In 2011 the Northern Sydney Regional Organisations of Councils (NSROC) completed a regional management strategy to help identify sport pressures and seek regional solutions across the seven member Councils.

The report identified that demand for established sports including: soccer, rugby union, cricket and hockey already exceeded supply, making it difficult for emerging sports to access facilities. Some progress in actioning the recommendations have been noted.

3. Recreation facilities in North Sydney

3.1 Range and type of facilities and activities

The supply assessment has shown that there is a relatively good range of recreation activities and facilities in the North Sydney area. However, with projected population growth and diversification this will not be sufficient in future.

North Sydney has 144ha of open space that is owned by Council or managed by Council on behalf of the Crown. Most sports and indoor facilities are located in Council open space.

The quality of public open space and the general public domain contributes significantly to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. This quality is enhanced by harbour views, the presence of historic features, large mature trees and vegetation, as well as the quality of adjacent housing.

North Sydney has seven main sportsgrounds:

- St Leonards Park (North Sydney Oval and Bon Andrews Oval)
- Tunks Park
- Anderson Park
- Cammeray Park
- Primrose Park
- Forsyth Park, and
- Waverton Park.

Map 1 shows the location of all sports fields in the North Sydney Council area.

An inventory of facilities was prepared from a range of sources, including Council information, Internet research and aerial photography. Where information was available, commercial and communal facilities were identified.

A complete inventory can be found in Chapter 10 of the Recreation Needs Supporting Document.

Facilities were classified by type for the purpose of analysis. Key types of facilities classified by function included:

- Outdoor sportsgrounds
- Outdoor sports courts
- Greens and rinks (golf courses, lawn bowls, croquet etc.)
- Outdoor skate/BMX facilities
- Play and social family recreation spaces
- Outdoor gym and fitness equipment
- Bushland / open space for biodiversity
- Open spaces for relaxation
- Visual amenity spaces
- Community horticulture / garden
- Memorial parks
- Off-road Trails.

A list of over 100 providers (clubs etc.) was compiled from a number of sources and membership information was sought.

Considering the small geographic size of the local government area, there is a good range of sport and recreation opportunities available. However, population growth and changing trends are likely to create additional demand that will be challenging to meet locally.

The likely number of facilities required was compared to the number of facilities available, to derive the recommended number of additional facilities.

Available activities

Recreation opportunities available in North Sydney LGA include the following:

- Aerobic / fitness
- Aquarobics
- Basketball
- Bushwalking
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Cricket (14 synth, 4 turf)
- Cycling
- Croquet (2)
- Fishing (Boat ramps (2))
- Fencing
- Golf
- Handball
- Hockey (junior/ training 1)
- Lawn bowls (7)
- Netball (2)
- Orienteering
- Roller sports
- Rowing
- Rugby league
- Rugby union
- Running / jogging
- Sailing (Dinghy storage (7))
- Soccer football (6 + 5 mini)
- Swimming / diving (3)
- Tennis (18)
- Touch football
- Walking for exercise
- Water polo (1)
- Water skiing / power boating
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Billiards / snooker / pool
- Boxing
- Carpet bowls
- Dancing
- Darts
- Gymnastics
- Martial arts
- Table tennis
- Volleyball
- Weight training
- Yoga

Recreation facilities not currently provided in North Sydney

The following recreation facilities are currently not provided in the Council area. Note: these are not necessarily required or desired by the local community:

- Athletics / track and field
- Australian rules football

- Baseball
- Equestrian activities
- BMX (track competition)
- MTB
- Motor sports
- Rock climbing
- Shooting sports
- Softball / tee ball
- Triathlon
- Cycle sports
- Volleyball
- Cricket (indoor)
- Hockey (indoor and competition outdoor)
- Tenpin bowling.

Since the past RNS some sports facilities have been lost to North Sydney. These include tennis courts, lawns bowls greens, squash and futsal courts, and competition hockey. Roller sports have permanent facilities not available in 2005. These include the skate park in Cammeray Park and Roller Derby at Luna Park.

3.2 Overview of facilities by type

Parks (including open space for social family recreation)

Social / family recreation open space provides unorganised play and social opportunities for a range of age groups and abilities. Open spaces in North Sydney that provide a social / family recreation function are listed in the Facilities Inventory in Chapter 10 of the Supporting Document.

North Sydney Council manages 32 play spaces (see Map 3).

Council staff indicated that there is a perception that there are not enough facilities for older children's play. Several community members also noted that the range and distribution of play facilities is poor in places, and the play value of some spaces should be improved.

Dog exercise and socialisation areas

Dog walking is a popular activity. There is substantial demand for safe dog walking areas, including dedicated dog off leash spaces.

North Sydney is a dog-friendly area; dogs are allowed off-leash in all parks and reserves with several exceptions (bushland reserves), within 10 metres of children's playgrounds and marked sportsfields while organised sports are taking place).

Outdoor skate / BMX facilities

North Sydney has one outdoor skate facility located at Cammeray Park. Consultation indicates that the facility is highly used, including by Rollerblading Sydney.

There are no facilities dedicated to BMX or other recreational cycle sports, aside from Brightmore Reserve that features a tricycle track suitable for young children.

Outdoor gym and fitness facilities

Council has fitness equipment located at North Sydney Civic Centre Park, Tunks Park and Cremorne Reserve (in association with the playground). Equipment is due to be installed in 2 additional locations in 2014/15.

Sets of steps in many parks in North Sydney offer opportunities for personal fitness training. A high level of use of parks for group and personal fitness was observed.

Water based recreation facilities

Water based recreation facilities in North Sydney are shown on Map 4.

Maccallum Pool is an outdoor harbour pool at Cremorne Point. The North Sydney Olympic Pool has a 50m, and a 25m indoor pool. The pool is a heritage listed site and iconic aquatic facility regionally. A master planning exercise for this pool is currently being conducted.

Boat ramps are located at Tunks Park, Milson Park and Quibaree Park.

Council provides formal dinghy storage at Berry Island Reserve, Folly Point Reserve, Kurraba Wharf Reserve, Quibaree Park, Shellbank Reserve, Tunks Park and Wrixton Park.

The Department of Roads and Maritime Services report that there is significant unmet demand for storage racks in Harbour areas.

Jetties and wharves are valuable in providing a setting for fishing. Jetties and wharves are located at:

- Kurraba Wharf Reserve
- Quibaree Park
- Sawmillers Reserve (pontoon)
- Beulah Street Reserve
- Cremorne Reserve
- Kesterton Park.

Off-road paths (walking tracks)

The Gadyan Track, Bradfield Park Heritage Walk and Cremorne Point Foreshore Walk are trails that are noted as Places of Interest on the Council website.

A cycling map is provided that supports that North Sydney Bike Strategy 2009. Council completed the North Sydney Integrated Cycling Strategy in 2014.

Indoor recreation facilities

North Sydney Indoor Sports Centre is the main provider of indoor court sports in North Sydney. This facility is near capacity.

Schools in North Sydney provide important facilities for indoor sports. Fencing operates from the gymnasium at North Sydney Girls High School in Crows Nest. Badminton and the UTS Handball Club play out of North Sydney Boys High School.

There is no publicly accessible indoor facility in North Sydney that caters to indoor cricket, hockey or gymnastics.

The North Sydney Leagues Club has two squash courts. The demand for badminton is increasing and there are some incompatibilities with basketball and other sports due to air movement. Racquet sports should be considered, as there is considerable potential for them to be accommodated in the North Sydney CBD.

Recreation facilities associated with other providers

Some church facilities in North Sydney (Baptist Centre, Crows Nest Uniting Church Park, St Francis Xavier Church Hall, St Johns Uniting Church, and St Joseph's Church Hall) provide dance, music and crafts.

1st North Sydney Scout Group is located in McMahons Point.

The PCYC North Sydney provides boxing, weights, martial arts, gymnastics, Irish dancing, indoor soccer, yoga, group fitness classes and Zumba.

North Sydney Leagues Club offers: a fitness and wellness centre, a 530-seat auditorium, 2 squash courts, and other indoor recreation activities (e.g. bridge, chess, and indoor bowls).

The club offers 20 different sports clubs including baseball, softball, little athletics, Aust. Rules Football, lawn bowls, rugby league, cricket, fishing and table tennis, although these clubs use facilities outside North Sydney Council area.

There are a number of private gyms and fitness providers in North Sydney.

A thorough assessment of supply with further discussion can be found in the Recreation Needs Supporting Document.

3.3 Distribution of facilities

It is evident that most residential dwellings have reasonable access to open space of some form. However there are areas with limited open space. Some areas of high population density have limited open space, particularly in Cremorne (along the Military Road corridor) and St Leonards/Crows Nest (along the Pacific Highway corridor) and in Kirribilli.

Areas outside 1km of a sportsgrounds are: Southern areas of Kirribilli and McMahons Point, and Cremorne Point. (See Map 1).

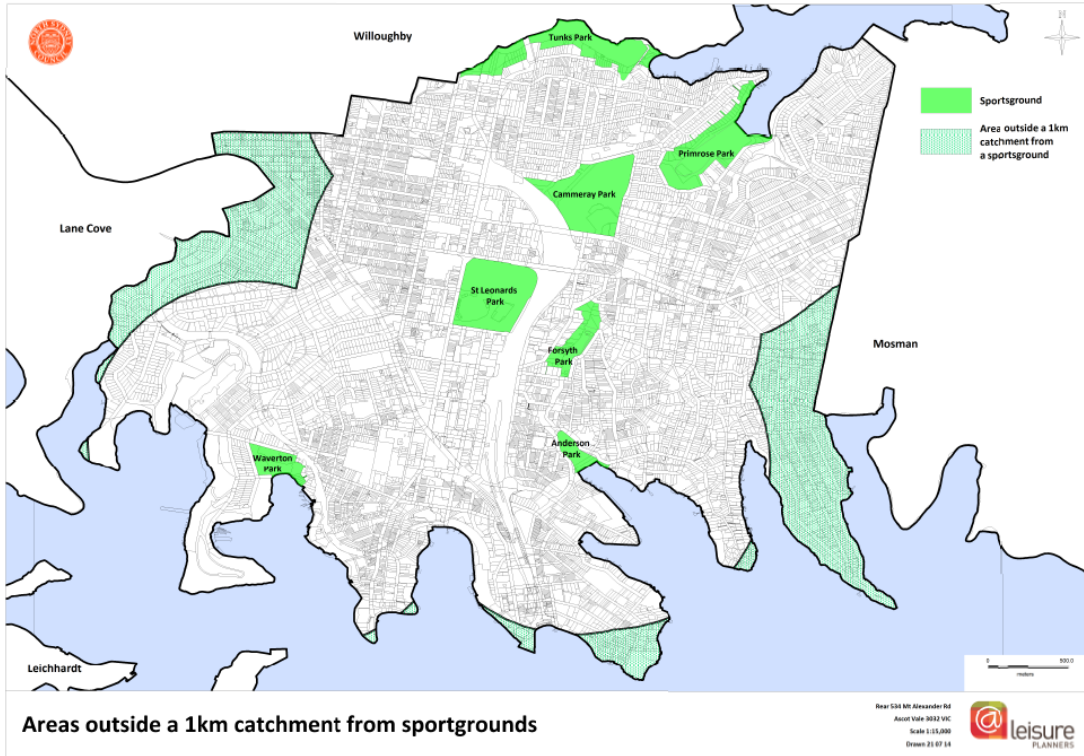
Several sportsgrounds are located close by in adjacent local government areas. Willoughby Council is well serviced for sportsgrounds. Northbridge Oval, War Memorial Playing Fields, Willoughby Courts, Flat Rock Reserve, Hallstrom Park, Naremburn Park and Gore Hill Park are all located within 500m of North Sydney's north western boundary. Gore Creek Reserve is located nearby in Lane Cove.

Map 2. Illustrates the distribution of outdoor sports courts and greens.

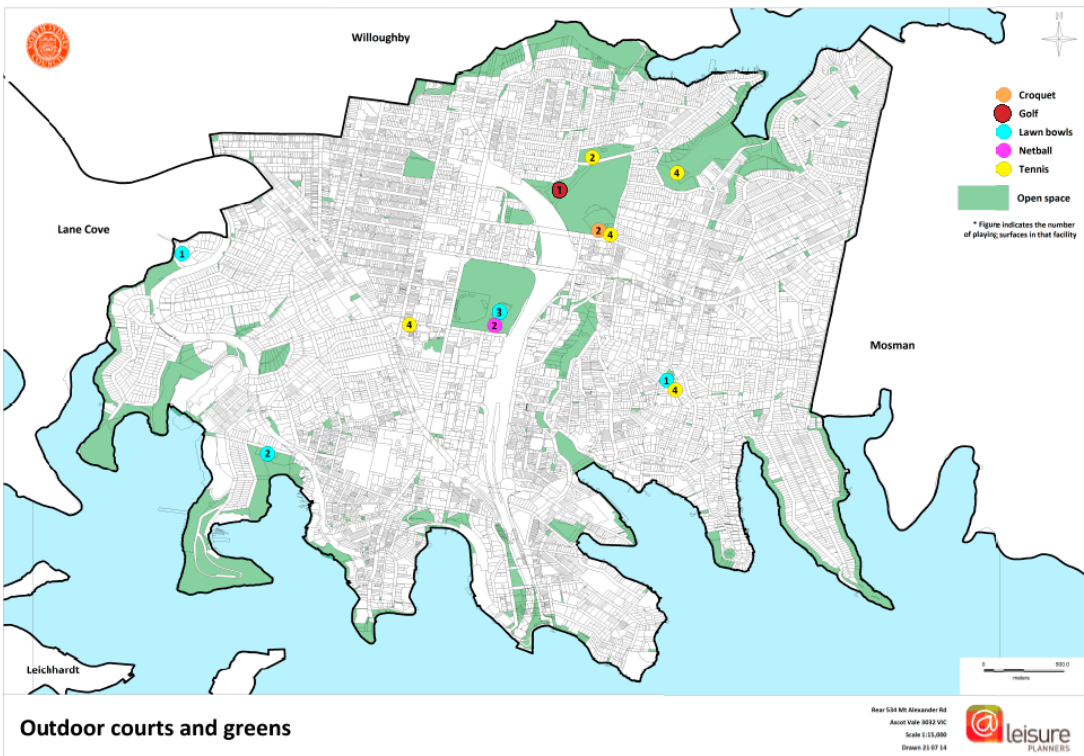
Areas in North Sydney outside 400m of a play space are: Southern Kirribilli, Military Rd, Neutral Bay, and around Pine St, Cammeray. (See Map 3.)

Map 4 illustrates the distribution of water based recreation facilities. Areas in the west of the North Sydney council area have less access to water based opportunities, although there is more green space close to the foreshore than in other parts of the LGA.

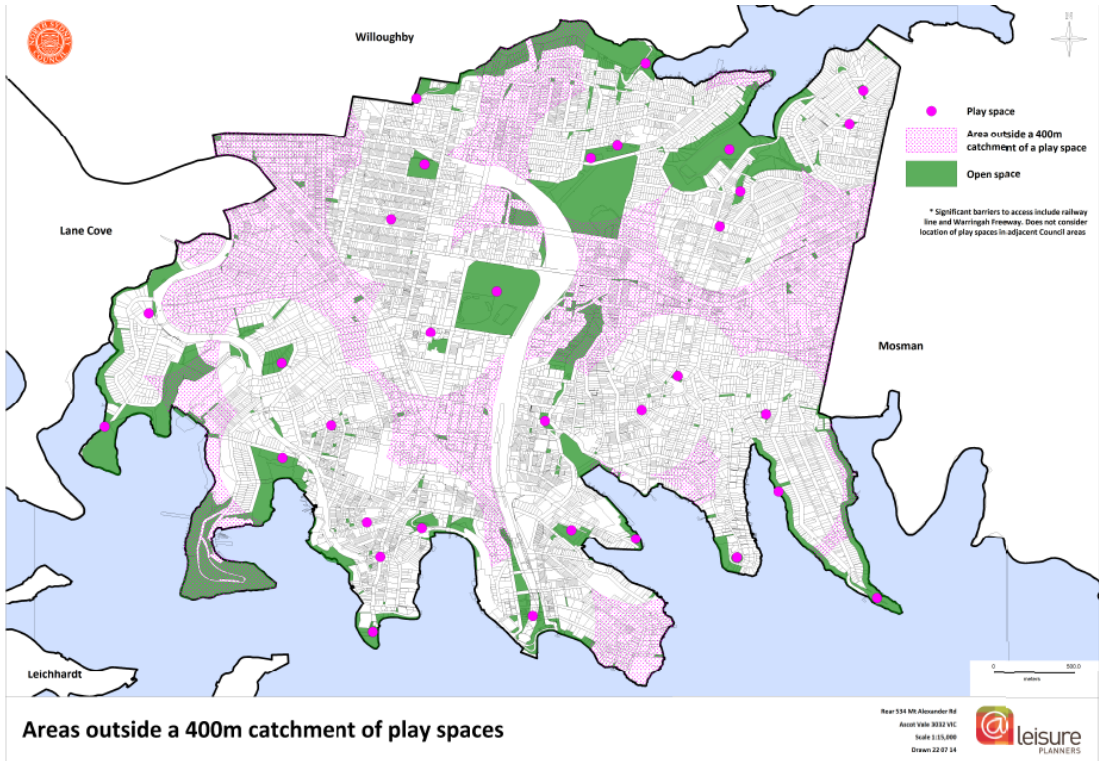
Map 1: Sportsgrounds



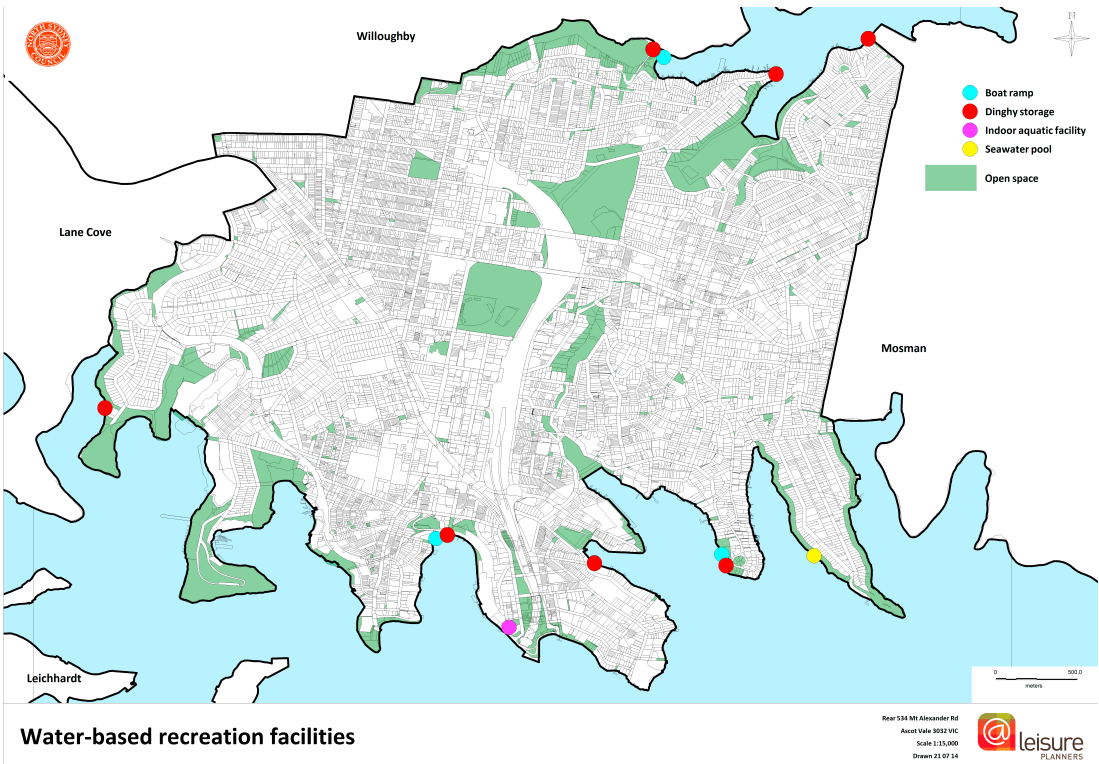
Map 2. Outdoor sports court and greens



Map 3. Play spaces



Map 4. Water based recreation facilities





3.4 Carrying capacity of existing facilities

Council maintains sporting infrastructure very well to maximise yield/capacity of the grounds.

A review of licences and bookings indicate that all grass pitches are being extended beyond their desirable carrying capacity in winter; however, there is some capacity to increase use over the summer season.

Cammeray, Forsyth 2 and Anderson Parks are the most heavily used sports fields, each yielding over 30 hours per week in winter.

St Leonards Park is also highly used and council tries to divert demand for sports and group activities away from areas experiencing overuse.

This carrying capacity and use is discussed in Chapter 11 of the Recreation Needs Supporting Document.

4. Overarching Goals and Strategies

Goals

The goals emanating from this study are:

1. Increased participation in physical and social opportunities
2. Enhanced use of existing resources, whilst minimising overuse
3. A diversity of recreation opportunities for the widest range of the population, now and in future
4. Maintenance of the green nature and character of the North Sydney area
5. Co-operative, effective and sustainable service delivery

Goal 1. Increased participation in physical and social opportunities

- Strategy 1.1. Provide additional information about the nature of recreation opportunities in the LGA targeting groups such as workers, visitors, students, women and families, people born overseas, and people with a disability
- Strategy 1.2. Continue to renew infrastructure, especially sport and park infrastructure and green assets to meet demand
- Strategy 1.3 Provide additional infrastructure to meet local recreation or sporting demand that will increase the number of people participating, where the quality and quantity of green space can be protected, and resources allow
- Strategy: 1.4 Work with sport peak bodies and clubs to support sport pathways and club development, and grow participation

Goal 2. Enhanced use of existing resources, whilst minimising overuse

- Strategy: 2.1 Program existing facilities and open space to increase use of available opportunities in off peak periods, including the night time
- Strategy: 2.2 Encourage uses of facilities and open space by more women, people born overseas from non-English speaking countries, and people with a disability
- Strategy: 2.3 Utilise commercial and brown field space, and transport infrastructure, and non-green space for sport and recreation use
- Strategy: 2.4 Seek additional public access to and along the Harbour
- Strategy: 2.5 Increase the carrying capacity of existing sports facilities or divert demand to facilities with higher carrying capacity
- Strategy: 2.6 Provide lighting on additional sports grounds and trails
- Strategy: 2.7 Rescope civil and landscape design services to increase accessibility of existing open space and infrastructure generally

Strategy: 2.8 Repurpose non-recreation space ie tops of buildings, car parks, brownfield sites etc, for sport and recreation

Strategy: 2.9 Encourage the colocation of facilities and the development of hubs of activity, for example; offering recreation and community services

Goal 3. A diversity of recreation opportunities for the widest range of the population, now and in future

Strategy: 3.1 Maximise the diversity of people provided for and opportunities provided at each site

Strategy: 3.2 Seek to enable physical and social opportunities at each site

Strategy: 3.3 Diversify the range of functions and landscape setting types of parks across the LGA, and provide a continuum of open space spaces – from those with a strong environmental focus to those with a social focus

Strategy: 3.4 Provide an equitable distribution of different types of open space and recreation facilities

Strategy: 3.5 Maintain a diversity of sports and recreation activities in the LGA

Goal 4. Maintenance of the green nature and character of the North Sydney

Strategy: 4.1 Enhance the distribution of green space and canopy trees across the LGA

Strategy: 4.2 Minimise the provision and impact of buildings and structures in green space

Goal 5. Co-operative, effective and sustainable service delivery

Strategy: 5.1 Partner commercial entities and educational institutions to deliver more recreation opportunities and green space in the CBDs and the education precinct

Strategy: 5.2 Partner with education providers to deliver sports facilities and enhance access to facilities for social and sports training

Strategy: 5.3 Partner with corporate partners to deliver programs, fitness and social sports and facilities to support physical activity

Strategy: 5.4 Partner with and support volunteer organisations, sporting clubs, community and service organisations in seeking funds for, delivering, and maintaining recreation opportunities and public open space

Strategy: 5.5 Work with NSROC and adjoining Councils to develop and deliver recreation and sporting opportunities cost effectively and co-operatively

Strategy: 5.6 Actively seek funds from external sources including philanthropic organisations, government grants and community fund raising activities to deliver public recreation opportunities.



5. KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The key issues and opportunities identified in this plan include:

1. Off-road trails for walking and cycling
2. Water based recreation
3. Social/ family recreation spaces
4. Meeting the demand for sport
5. Distribution and protection of green space

A discussion about each issue, as well as key strategies and actions to address, follows.

In some cases, for completeness, similar actions are contained in each section. Where an action is similar to another it has been marked with the symbol +.

5.1 Off road trails for walking and cycling

Demand

Off-road trails are the one type of recreation facility that will serve more residents, visitors, workers and students in North Sydney, than any other.

The online survey results indicated that walking, running, and cycling were the most common recreation activities conducted by respondents. Survey respondents indicated:

- 75% use off-road trails
- 54% use on-road cycle lanes
- 17% use off-road trails more than 50 times per annum
- 44% used on-road cycle lanes more than 50 times per annum

For persons over 55 years, walking /bush walking was most frequent activity undertaken. For children under 15 years of age, cycling was the 4th most frequent recreation activity undertaken.

Cycling was the activity identified by the most people as an activity that they would like to do, but currently do not. For people who want to cycle but currently do not, the main suggestion for Council to encourage them to cycle was “provide additional or new facilities”, followed by “improve the quality of existing bicycle infrastructure”.

Off- road trails was the priority type of improvement recommended by survey respondents. This included “keeping trails off-road”, “provide additional trails for cycling”, and “improving the safety of existing trails”.

Some 30% of females and 17% of males walk for recreation, exercise, or active transport.

Walking, jogging, running and cycling continue to be the most popular recreation activities. There is a strong and increasing demand for places for dog walking.

Some 30,000 people are estimated to use trails in North Sydney now.

There are considerable benefits of providing off-road trails. People of all ages and abilities can use them. They encourage physical activity; provide active transport; and enable younger and older people to get around safely. They enable children to use small wheeled toys and learn to ride a bicycle, away from traffic. They can bring people into contact with nature and provide restorative benefits.

Providing off-road circuits throughout each suburb will provide opportunities for active transport and exercise for all age groups close to home, and encourage more children to walk or ride to school.

Existing trails and Information

A Sydney Walker Map App and a large number of history and historical society walks are well documented. The Gadyan Track, Bradfield Park Heritage Walk and Cremorne Point Foreshore Walk are already documented on Council’s website in: Places of Interest In North Sydney.

Additional people could be encouraged to use existing tracks and trails by providing additional information about suitable routes and the nature of the paths. This might include: suitability of routes for specific activities such as cycling, identifying routes accessible to people using wheelchairs and mobility aids, distances, quality of track surface, and steepness for example.

Some large parks provide an opportunity for perimeter path exercise circuits that people can use for jogging and walking away from traffic. In other areas these have become popular for local events such as “park runs” and are used by schools for training and physical education. Cammeray Golf Course, Waverton Park and St Leonards Park provide opportunities to develop perimeter paths.

Some accessible trail routes to selective bushland sites may provide opportunities for people with a disability to experience the outdoors and nature, that otherwise may not be accessible. One comment made in the Community survey was the desire to have a wheelchair accessible bushwalking trail that leads to a view of the Harbour.

North Sydney has a number of unmade roads that provide pockets of green and off road routes for walking and cycling. Further opportunities exist to connect and sign post these, and to provide kerb crossings, line marking and lighting that would encourage use and overcome 'inadvertent obstacles' to mobility.

Site inspections identified a number of locations where inadvertent barriers exist at entries to open spaces, or on path access points and road crossings between open spaces. These inhibit accessibility for people with mobility devices and prams.

Cycling facilities

Council has commenced a program of streetscape improvement works aimed at improving facilities for walking and cycling, as well as amenity and accessibility

A large number of cyclists were observed in traffic. These are likely to be largely commuters and cyclists training. Further enhancements to key roads could be made to accommodate these cyclists, including cyclists training.

The North Sydney Integrated Cycling Strategy 2014 investigates infrastructure for cycling, primarily from a transport perspective, but including the provision of cycle support facilities such as parking and storage facilities. There is a particular need for these facilities in the North Sydney and Crows Nest/ St Leonards CBDs. This current plan doesn't investigate recreational or cycle sports or address off-road issues and opportunities.

North Sydney Council says in its charter:

We will make North Sydney pedestrian and bike friendly. The use of public transport and other alternatives to the private car will be encouraged through the improvement and expansion of sustainable transport options and the encouragement of car sharing options.

Key Strategies And Actions: Off-Road Trails

1. **Continue to develop and extend a network of off-road trails across the Council area to include:**
 - **Trail circuits and identified routes around all suburbs**
 - **Perimeter exercise paths around large reserves**
 - **Links through open space and regional trails**
- 1.1. Continue to capitalise on unmade roads as off-road trail routes to expand the length and distribution of existing trails
- 1.2. Construct a perimeter exercise path around suitable large parks such as the Cammeray Park Golf Course, Waverton Park and St Leonards Park and any other park larger than approximately one hectare (where practical)
- 1.3. Seek to extend the public off-road trail routes around the foreshore as subdivision, land development and other opportunities allow
- 1.4. Support regional cycleway proposals that benefit the North Sydney community
- 1.5. Include an off-road trails category of infrastructure in future development contributions plans.
- 1.6. Ensure all new housing developments (for example in brownfield sites) include off-road trail circuits and trail connections to existing infrastructure.
- 1.7. Seek partnerships with other land managers, foreshore developments and adjacent LGAs to develop and expand the network of trails.
- 1.8. Prepare a design guideline for recreation tracks and trails and park perimeter paths that include materials, treadway, and a landscape buffer and right of way on each side of trails. +

2. Enhance the connections and trail routes between open spaces

- 2.1. Create more accessible connections between pockets of open space in McMahon's Point, and sign post these.
- 2.2. Continue to pursue walking path connections around the harbour as opportunities allow.
- 2.3. Provide a trail connection between (and around) Cammeray Park Golf Course and Green Park.

3. Manage cycling use of parks and roads to avoid conflict with other users

- 3.1. Continue to identify and develop key routes for recreational and training sports cyclists on-road, and undertake further enhancements to key roads that can be used for training and commuting routes for cyclists
- 3.2. Continue to manage the use of internal park pathways to protect pedestrians from cyclists
- 3.3. Manage shared trails and educate users to reduce the conflicts between dogs and other users, and dogs in environmental areas

4. Provide additional signage, embellishments to surfaces, and accessibility and landscape surrounds, to encourage use by people of all ages and abilities

- 4.1. Provide lighting for recreational walking in key areas and routes, e.g. around St Leonards Park and Lavender Bay Foreshore
- 4.2. Enhance the accessibility of the interface between streets, parks and trails and create accessible paths of travel into and through open space, and along trails
- 4.3. Make trails to selective bushland reserves and other key trails accessible to people with prams and using mobility devices
- 4.4. For future trail routes seek to provide trails in landscaped corridors with a right of way and buffer with shade trees on either side +

- 4.5. Ensure information about available trails and cycling and walking opportunities is detailed, up-to-date and easily accessible, to enhance the number and types of people who can use them
- 4.6. Update the series of walking maps around North Sydney to provide additional levels of detail about trail conditions, suitable activities for specific routes, and accessibility of routes
- 4.7. Continue to provide signage on trail routes, around the Council areas, including indicators of accessibility
- 4.8. Provide break out spaces and bench seats at regular intervals along paths to allow people to stop off the path
- 4.9. Provide rails on steps through and into open spaces to enable additional people to use these.

5. Encourage people to walk and cycle

- 5.1. Seek to identify more cycle friendly routes for cycle sports training and recreation through North Sydney
- 5.2. Encourage businesses to provide end of trip facilities for workers to cycle or walk to work, but also showers and lockers to enable workers to run or play sport during breaks (as per the Development Control Plan 2013).
- 5.3. Support running and cycling events in the LGA including orienteering etc.
- 5.4. In the planning and development of the CBDs provide wider footpaths to accommodate more people, and where possible shared zones for cycling, walking and jogging.

5.2 Water Based Recreation

Demand

Due to North Sydney's climate, proximity to the foreshore, and the high environmental quality of the harbour, the expressed demand for water based recreation is high.

The householder survey for this project found:

- A number of people would like participate in water based activities but currently don't (recreational boating, kayaking, canoeing, wind surfing, and rowing).
 - Recreational boating was the 12th most frequent activity participated in.
 - Water based recreation ranked 5th as an activity that people would like to participate in but currently don't. The major factor that would encourage people to be able to participate in recreational boating was: provide additional or new facilities. This was followed by better information about where to go.
 - Some 80% of respondents use local pools or beaches.
 - Some 55% use boating/sailing facilities.
 - Swimming was the 4th most frequent recreation activity participated in.
 - For children less than 15 years, swimming was the main recreation activity participated in.
 - For people with a disability, water-based activities were the main recreation activity participated in. This included hydrotherapy, remedial swimming, and swim lessons. There was demand to provide better for these at the North Sydney Pool.
 - North Sydney Olympic Pool was the 2nd most frequented location used for recreation activities.
 - Swimming pools were the main recreation facility respondents have access to at home.
- There was a high demand for improvements to the North Sydney Pool, including learn to swim opportunities, hydrotherapy, and accessible features and improved car parking.
 - Few survey respondents indicated they want to swim but currently are not able to. This is probably an indication of the high availability of options to swim: at home in a public pool or in the Harbour.
 - Several clubs and survey respondents identified that water based recreation facilities posed a number of physical barriers to older people, and suggested the North Sydney pool and gym needed to be made more accessible to seniors.

Several clubs indicated that additional access to water, through pontoons/ramps is required. Council could work closely with schools to improve access to and storage for water-based recreation, as schools share access with clubs. Clubs said, "If North Sydney could invest it would be best to create easy access and storage."

The community also suggested there is an opportunity for Council to facilitate the development of a kayak/small boat hire scheme, and encourage access to skill development and "come and try" activities.

One submitter indicated that kayaking, boating, fishing and general access to the Harbour is so important to the North Sydney community, however there is a lack of information regarding Council's policy on these activities.

There was considerable unmet demand identified in the community engagement for: small vessel storage (row boats, dinghies and kayaks) and also for boat moorings. The Department of Roads and Maritime Services report that there is significant unmet demand for storage racks. However there are limited opportunities to provide additional storage facilities. Assistance may be available through the Government's 'NSW Boating Now' program to provide storage.

Clubs say there is a high demand for additional moorings and this reinforced by Department of Roads and Maritime Services' waiting list. There is a Sydney Harbour Boat Storage Strategy 2013 that intends to increase the number of moorings and marinas around the Harbour.

Supply of water based recreation facilities

Water based recreation facilities in North Sydney are shown on Map 4. Areas to the west of the Council area are less well served by water based recreation facilities.

Council has two public swimming facilities: Maccallum Pool, an outdoor harbour pool at Cremorne Point, and The North Sydney Olympic Pool. The Olympic Pool is a heritage listed site and an iconic regional aquatic facility. A master planning exercise for this pool is currently being conducted. Council and pool management has expressed a desire to increase the leisure opportunities at the pool as part of the master plan project.

Boat ramps are located at Tunks Park, Milson Park, and Quibaree Park.

Council provides formal dinghy storage at Folly Point Reserve, Kurraba Wharf Reserve, Quibaree Park, Shellbank Reserve, Tunks Park and Wrixton Park. Informal storage is available at many other foreshore parks and reserves including Berry Island Reserve.

A number of public mooring areas are available in the Harbour adjacent to North Sydney.

Jetties and wharves provide valuable opportunities for fishing.

The Foreshore Parks and Reserves Plan of Management recommends seeking opportunities to link North Sydney's foreshore parks and reserves or to extend existing parks, reserves and pathways as opportunities arise. The PoM is due to be updated in 2015/16.

Like many other sports, there is an aging club profile in sailing clubs and facilities are aging.

Opportunities for junior development, school programs and more social/casual opportunities should be encouraged to keep these assets, and groups sustainable.

Key Strategies And Actions: Water Based Recreation

1 Create opportunities for increased participation in water based recreation and sport

- 1.1. Where possible provide additional opportunities to store light vessels (boards, dinghies and kayaks)
- 1.2. Work with peak bodies and clubs to facilitate water sports development programs for juniors and social water based recreation opportunities to enhance the sustainability of existing clubs
- 1.3. In conjunction with other stakeholders (including the state government) investigate the renewal of and greater accessibility of, foreshore water based assets, parking/rigging areas, sharing and occupancy arrangements, and the opportunity to increase the carrying capacity of such facilities.
- 1.4. Encourage a wider range of activities provided through water based clubs and better promotion of opportunities available.
- 1.5. Facilitate dialogue between water based recreation clubs, and between clubs and schools, to encourage sharing, information dissemination, club and skill development and potential hire of equipment.



2 Investigate further options to extend recreation and sport opportunities at future foreshore development sites

- 2.1. Seek opportunities to provide additional access to the Harbour, and along the Harbour foreshore.+
- 2.2. Consider providing additional water based and other recreational opportunities at the Coal loader and in the future development of the HMAS Platypus site.+

3 Upgrade the North Sydney Olympic Pool to enhance participation and the quality of what is being offered in keeping with the heritage significance of the facility

- 3.1 Enhance the accessibility of facilities to people with a disability and older adults.

5.3 Social/ family recreation (SFR) space

What is a social, family recreation space?

Social / family recreation (SFR) open spaces provide unorganised play and social opportunities for people of a range of age groups and abilities. Typically these spaces would include a play space, area for kicking balls, a perimeter path, free access social sports facilities such as hard courts or a hit up wall, skate and picnic facilities, possibly dog exercise, tables and seats, landscape elements including canopy trees, and possibly gym equipment for example. They may be sited in conjunction with a sports facility.

These are more than children play spaces. In future children play spaces are best provided as spaces for all the family. They should be accessible, intergenerational spaces, with physical and social opportunities as well as natural elements.

Social, family recreation spaces should be bigger and more diverse than single purpose play areas and they should have significant landscape amenity and shade. They tend to have a larger catchment and sphere of attraction. Therefore, they can be distributed slightly further from residences than small play spaces. With fewer larger play spaces they tend to be more cost effective to maintain. A good distribution of social, family recreation spaces will future proof Councils' open space parks against demographic change. In new residential development these types of parks are the priority for provision along with off-road trails.

As assets age there will be opportunities to embellish and redesign existing play spaces to increase what they offer for older people and to add additional imaginative and creative play elements as they are renewed.

The community survey highlighted the value and importance of these and children's play facilities.

These types of parks are typically sought after by groups of young mothers, and also teenagers.

North Sydney Council says in its charter:

Central to our focus will be the needs of youth, families and older people as well as those with special needs.

Eighty one percent of survey respondents used social, family recreation spaces (3rd highest ranked facility by number of survey respondents), following open spaces for relaxation, and bushland reserves. There was a very high level of participation evidenced in activities that usually are undertaken in this type of park. This included the following:

- Walking
- Running
- Cycling
- Picnicking
- Children's play
- Dog walking

More than 50% of survey respondents use an SFR space at least fifty times in a year.

The consultation for this project indicated that there is a perception that there are not enough facilities for older children's play. The scouts indicated there is a demand for a fire pit with social, family recreation opportunities in Green Park. As risk and challenge and opportunities to learn about fire are important for children this would seem a suggestion worthy of further consideration.

These types of spaces provide opportunities for enhancing physical activity, especially for older people in their own neighbourhood.

To an extent these types of spaces will substitute for recreation opportunities traditionally accommodated in private spaces. For example: areas for informal ballgames, social or intergenerational play and community gardens.

The community engagement process illustrated resident's desire to maintain high environmental quality, places for imaginative play and a sense of adventure created by nature in this type of park in North Sydney. Brennan Park for example should continue to provide low key nature based play and residents suggest this should not be replaced by a "plastic playground".

Distribution

Several residential areas in North Sydney are without play spaces within 400m.

These include:

- Southern Kirribilli
- Military Rd, Neutral Bay
- Around Pine St, Cammeray, and
- Immediately east of the railway line in Wollstonecraft

Areas of North Sydney, that would benefit from the provision of SFR, and that are currently more than 500m from SFR open space include:

- Crows Nest / Wollstonecraft around the railway line
- Cremorne around Rangers Rd
- North Sydney / Waverton south and west of St Leonards Park

Key Strategies And Actions: Social /Family Recreation

1 Incrementally develop selective play spaces into social / family recreation parks, suitable for people of all ages and abilities.

- 1.1. In any new residential development require the provision of access to a social, family recreation space as a priority.

2 Seek to enhance the distribution of social / family recreation (SFR) parks to provide one in approximately 500m of every dwelling

- 2.1. Consider providing additional skate opportunities in a central hard space (for example at Bradfield Park)
- 2.2. Provide more tables and seating, free access ball courts, and sports practice facilities such as cricket nets that can be used by families, and things like ping pong tables, in social, family recreation open spaces
- 2.3. As Council's Plans of Management are updated seek to address the gaps in distribution by identifying selective parks for development as SFR parks.

5.4 Sport

Demand

There is a high demand in North Sydney for sport and physical activity, from residents and workers and the student population. This is not surprising given the young profile of these populations.

Demand for sport includes social, event based, club, and corporate sports.

Demand outstrips the supply of outdoor playing fields and indoor courts.

The online survey results indicated demand for additional sports fields (hockey², soccer, football and touch rugby), then cycling, and park-based activities (yoga, Pilates etc.), outdoor fitness equipment and more water based recreation facilities, as being most needed.

There is a strong demand also for sports such as basketball, netball, and racquet sports. The demand for badminton is increasing, supported by the changing demographic profile, and there is some incompatibility between badminton and basketball, due to air movement.

There is considerable competition for space between basketball and netball because of the same peak times, and lack of available venues to serve both equally.

Some 62% of the survey respondent use indoor sports facilities, 26% use them at least weekly.

Some 30% of survey respondents use sports grounds outside of North Sydney, and they do so more than 50 times a year.

Currently there is a very frequent use of outdoor sports courts (8% of respondents used them more than 50 times a year, and 6% use outdoor greens/ courts more than 50 times per year).

For children less than 15 years, hockey (21), soccer (17), and tennis (14) were the favoured recreation activities away from home.

For people over 15 years the activities: hockey (36) tennis (8), and netball (6) were the most common recreation activities undertaken.

Some 55% of survey respondents said there was additional demand for recreation activities and facilities in North Sydney. Apart from providing additional facilities, the main ways in which Council could encourage survey respondents to participate more, included:

- 'Provide suitable programs/or classes in existing facilities' (46)
- 'Put me in touch with a club/centre that offers this activity' (34)
- 'Put me in touch with other who have this interest or someone to go with' (17)

The greatest opportunities Council has to increase participation without providing new infrastructure are programming, sports development and the provision of information; matching the current demand with available opportunities; be they private or public.

With a young and increasingly diverse population it will be important to maintain a good diversity of sports in the area, as well as different ways to participate in them. There is a high demand for corporate and "pay as you play" sports. With a large worker and student population this market could enhance the viability of local facilities as well as utilise down times during the day. Examples might include use of the North Sydney Pool, bowls clubs, the indoor sport centre and the golf course.

² It is important to note that there were 21 hockey players/volunteers that completed the survey (most popular sport represented in the survey)

Supply of sports facilities

North Sydney has some spectacular sports fields set close to the harbour and surrounded by bushland. These are highly valued.

Council has done an excellent job maintaining sporting infrastructure to maximise yield/capacity of the grounds – despite many being in low lying areas and their proximity to residences that mean use must be carefully managed. Most of these grounds are extended beyond desirable carrying capacities in winter and there are only limited opportunities to meet identified demand. The times that are available for use tend not to be sought after. The possibility of providing additional use for “pay as you play sports” at these times should be explored to increase viability and meet current demand.

Many users have indicated that the supporting infrastructure (amenities, lighting, car parking and toilets etc.) is lacking or requires upgrading. Some additional infrastructure upgrades to surfaces and lights may enable some additional use (i.e. through synthetic surfaces for example) or enable greater flexibility in use.

Continuing a program of asset renewals with current demand in mind will be important rather than just replacing like with like.

In some cases there may be some opportunities to reduce training and fitness on sports grounds by promoting the use of selected stairs and non-green space in appropriate locations as well as school facilities.

Council and the community have clearly indicated that it will be important to maximise the potential of existing infrastructure before new facilities are acquired.

A number of sports facilities have been lost to North Sydney since Council’s previous Recreation Needs Study was prepared. These mostly include tennis courts and bowls greens as well as futsal facilities. Interestingly there appears to be a high demand for tennis that current facilities are not meeting.

Council does not currently have any facilities for Australian Rules football, and due to the size of the field it is unlikely to be able to provide for club level games. Facilities are however available in the neighbouring Councils of Mosman and Willoughby.

As the residential population ages slightly and the young worker and student population increases with cultural diversity, it will be important to maintain a good diversity of sports, both indoor and outdoor.

Council has one main indoor sports centre that is also at capacity. However there may be an opportunity to expand this centre by one court, and to include more indoor social-based programs and classes for dance, fitness and sport, in times of low sporting demand. Occupancy agreements should encourage this.

There is no publicly accessible indoor facility in the North Sydney area that caters to indoor cricket, hockey, or gymnastics. Netball, badminton and squash also have limited access to indoor facilities. Council has a number of options that could be explored to provide additional indoor sports courts including the Ward Street and Ridge Street car parks.

Clubs

There are considerable pressures on clubs to survive with changing patterns of use and economics. At the same time there is considerable pressure on aging facilities, to meet demand and there are site constraints on many outdoor sports reserves.

A number of successful sports have an aging profile, such as golf and bowls and sailing. They need assistance with sports and product development and more programming of facilities, to encourage juniors, and to target students, people with a disability and workers, and to provide better information for the public about what is available and when.

More 'pay as you play' and term based, conveniently scheduled activities, where participants are not expected to volunteer as well, need to be embraced.

Interestingly the main membership type of survey respondents was private gyms and group fitness clubs, rather than sports clubs.

Council could also encourage multi-code clubs to develop where there are different facilities in one park, to reduce costs and enhance shared use. St Leonard Park (Bon Andrews Oval/netball courts) Forsyth Park, Primrose Park, and Cammeray Park lend themselves to such arrangements.

Distribution

There is, generally, a good array of sport and recreation opportunities and facilities in the North Sydney Council area, considering its small size. However there are some residential areas outside the 1km distance threshold to a sports ground.

These include:

- Southern areas of Kirribilli and McMahons Point
- Cremorne Point
- Wollstonecraft

Future provision

Due to the high demand and precious nature of existing open space Council should explore utilising non-open space assets to provide additional sports facilities. Opportunities for providing sport might include industrial areas, central activity centre developments (e.g. Willoughby Leisure Centre) brownfield sites, and importantly, car parks.

Whilst the cost of providing for indoor sport is generally high, there may be more opportunities to provide for indoor activities due to the relative small footprints required compared to outdoor sport, and the ability to provide these in multi level developments.

Additional indoor sports could take some pressure off modifying outdoor sports facilities, although at least one more synthetic sports field suitable for sports including hockey, is recommended.

As a priority Council should consider providing an additional indoor sports centre at one of Council's car parks in the vicinity of the CBD or the education precinct in North Sydney. It should also pursue options for additional courts with schools such as the North Sydney Boys High School, and a small sports centre in the CBD. Racquet sports are small footprint sports, and the potential to accommodate these in the North Sydney CBD should be investigated.

Schools have an important role to play due to their importance for incidental play, unorganised sport and source of friends (with smaller households).

The design of the new primary school proposed on the former Anzac Club site does not include sports facilities for the proposed 1000 students, or opportunities to use the hall or outdoor space for shared use by the community. This is not in keeping with the well-documented need to enhance physical activity and sports opportunities among children, nor the goals related to community use of education facilities.

Planning controls will also restrict public use of the site after 8pm on weeknights. Council should seek to negotiate with the government to enable the design of the indoor hall and external courts to be compliant for sport and available for community use.

It would have been desirable for the Education Precinct Master Plan to include in its vision the provision of additional opportunities for sport and physical activity. These have been achieved in similar such precincts elsewhere, as shown in the image below in Melbourne for example.



Image: Peter Elliott Architecture

In future developments, opportunities to provide the community with sports should be considered a merit, rather than an impact, as amenity issues and noise can be designed out and managed.

Council should investigate the revision of planning controls to: a) critically appraise proposed developments in terms of what they may contribute to open space values, and recreation and sporting opportunities for the North Sydney Community, b) to remove any impediments to future public use of private or public educational facilities, and c) provide incentives to developers to include public sporting or gym and fitness facilities in their developments.

Key Strategies And Actions: Sport

1. **Progressively upgrade the quality and carrying capacity of sports facilities and supporting infrastructure (grounds, amenities, lighting, car parking etc.) to meet current standards**
 - 1.1. Upgrade North Sydney Oval to become more competitive as a stadium for regional and state events.
 - 1.2. Provide or improve lighting to all outdoor sports facilities to enhance flexibility of use. In particular: North Sydney Oval, Forsyth Park, and any school facilities that can be used by the community, to enhance flexibility of use.
 - 1.3. Add an additional court to the North Sydney indoor sports centre.
 - 1.4. Progressively improve all the support facilities at outdoor sportsgrounds providing compact, shared spaces with good storage, shade, referee, first aid, canteen, toilet and change facilities.
 - 1.5. Provide an additional synthetic field in North Sydney LGA – as a priority, suitable for sports including hockey.
 - 1.6. Investigate options for parking, shared path/cycle access, and other transport opportunities for existing sports precincts.
 - 1.7. Investigate opportunities for other sports activities on, or around the golf course, including at night.
2. **Seek to provide access to additional sports facilities in North Sydney, including those targeting workers and students**
 - 2.1. Investigate options to provide a racquet sports centre in the North Sydney CBD (for badminton and squash).+
 - 2.2. Seek to provide free access outdoor sports courts in or close to the North Sydney CBD, in conjunction with a private or education provider.+
 - 2.3. Monitor the implementation of NSROC (Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils) Sports Management Plan, and progress funding for regional initiatives. +

- 2.4. In assessing future developments in the CBD, consider introducing planning incentives for private landowners to provide community sport and recreation opportunities in suitable prominent locations.
 - 2.5. In future education developments in North Sydney, encourage schools to provide sports facilities on their own premises.
 - 2.6. Review planning controls to: assess open space and recreation/ sporting opportunities as part of all developments; remove any impediments to future public use of private or public educational facilities; and provide incentives for developers to provide public sporting facilities
 - 2.7. Work with Educational Institutions in North Sydney to provide additional indoor sports court and aquatic facilities for community use.
 - 2.8. In conjunction with a hockey association and potentially an education institution, provide a synthetic hockey facility in North Sydney.+
 - 2.9. In the master planning of St Leonards Park seek a redesign of the eastern side of the park (taking into consideration the St Leonards Park Pedestrian and Cycling Path Feasibility Study 2014) to provide a shared trail, better integration of existing outdoor sports facilities, increased capacity, as well as enhanced environmental values.
- 3. Provide resources to assist with club and sports development and information provision, to ensure facilities are programmed and clubs remain viable**
 - 3.1. Consider employing additional resources and/ or volunteers to provide Council with a sports development role.
 - 3.2. Encourage all existing sport clubs to provide for juniors, females and males, older adults and people with all abilities- through different forms of the same game.
 - 3.3. Give greater priority to women's and junior sports in occupancy agreements, allocation and booking procedures etc. as these are important to the viability of clubs, (i.e. cricket, hockey, golf, soccer, hockey etc.)
 - 3.4. Encourage clubs such as bowls and golf to form multiple code clubs with field and court sports, to enhance viability and appeal.
 - 3.5. Work with the golf club to target a broader range of people including juniors, workers and encourage other sports to use the golf course.
 - 3.6. Work with tennis NSW and local providers to further investigate the state of tennis in North Sydney. This should include assessing the high demand for tennis and impact of the management on delivering opportunities, as well as opportunities to enhance service offer, pathways for juniors to high levels of competition, non-club and social competitions. Co-operatively develop different products, more sports development programs and utilise courts for workers and students.
 - 3.7. Consider orchestrating a North Sydney Sports program for staff and CBD workers that utilises school and community sports facilities and parks (park runs) during the day.
 - 3.8. Investigate opportunities to market bowls and provide sports development opportunities with corporate and school bowls to ensure these clubs are not lost, and explore additional use of facilities for other activities such as fitness and dance.

- 4. Create partnerships with commercial entities present in North Sydney (such as Coca, Cola, SAP, MLC, and Tennex) to provide sports opportunities suitable for employees and other workers.**
 - 4.1. Investigate new information and booking products to provide convenient access to the sports and fitness facilities currently available in the LGA.
 - 4.2. Investigate partnership opportunities with community organisations for expanding the range of community based recreation programs to meet and target specific user groups, especially older people, youth, people with a disability, and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.
 - 4.3. Seek to include more social facilities in conjunction with competition sports facilities to encourage more social sports activities (such as petanque or bocce).
- 5. Consider utilising non-open space assets to provide additional sports facilities, and divert use from playing fields**
 - 5.1. Pursue opportunities for providing sport that include industrial areas, transport hubs, commercial and retail areas, brown fields sites, rooftops and car parks.
 - 5.2. Consider providing an additional indoor sports centre at one of Council's car parks in the vicinity of the CBD or the education precinct in North Sydney.
 - 5.3. Continue to work with schools and other educational institutions to provide additional sport facilities that serve workers, students and residents.
 - 5.4. Provide additional cricket practice nets for shared club and community use.
- 6. Seek to maintain a good diversity of sports activities in North Sydney, as well as different ways these can be played**
 - 6.1. Seek to retain the range of current sports activities in the LGA, and adopt a "no net loss" principle for sports landuse.
 - 6.2. Maintain a suite of sports opportunities from "pay as you play", short term and conveniently scheduled activities, to suit women, workers and students, and where participants are not expected to volunteer, as well as local club sport, school sport and regional events at Nth Sydney Oval.
 - 6.3. Provide facilities suitable to retain a hockey competition in North Sydney.+
 - 6.4. Seek to provide for racquet sports in the CBD+.
- 7. Seek to enable workers to utilise available sport and recreation facilities– during the day time on week days**
 - 7.1. In providing an additional sports centre in the North Sydney area, ensure capacity to provide for a range of indoor sports, program based and "pay as you play" indoor activities.
 - 7.2. Seek to provide social outdoor courts sports/ basketball facility in the North Sydney COD. +
 - 7.3. In the master planning for sports facilities, seek additional access for social sports, and community access to practice facilities, as well as complementary facilities such as perimeter paths.
 - 7.4. Provide incentives for developers to contribute space for shared group fitness or indoor sports activities in the CBD. Shared or public facilities are preferred to individual business having small-unsupervised fitness facilities.
 - 7.5. Investigate providing more opportunities for more "pay as you play sports" – near the two CBDs.
 - 7.6. Provide an additional synthetic sports surface in North Sydney for sports including hockey. +



8. Continue to pursue Regional Sporting Initiatives

- 8.1. Investigate opportunities for cross-border collaboration with Mosman and the NSROC Councils, to deliver a wide range of sports opportunities for local and regional competition, and pathways from foundation to participation, and performance levels of sport.
- 8.2. Seek to develop a more regional approach to information provision, booking and allocation and a consistency in conditions, categories and methods of payments for sports grounds.
- 8.3. Pursue integrated capital work planning and funding for synthetic and regional facilities
- 8.4. Creatively package funds from multiple sources to fund sports improvements.

5.5 Open Space

Quality and diversity

The open space network in North Sydney is characterised by high quality and historic parks. Many spaces have large canopy trees. There are pockets of bushland, unmade road reserves, and harbour foreshore.

Many of these spaces have important natural, restorative and scenic values, particularly in the highly urban settings across the Council area.

The community engagement program illustrated that public parkland is highly valued, and that its protection and maintenance is very important. A strong desire to increase the diversity of recreation activities available, but without loss of green space was evident.

As North Sydney is becoming increasingly dense, open space is of increasing importance for health and wellbeing of residents, workers and visitors, for the social, environmental and economic benefits it provides.

Providing a continuum of spaces is important: from those primarily environmental in character and having limited facilities, to those that are highly social and provide numerous facilities, conveniences and considerable comforts. This continuum can extend to open spaces that are highly manicured and to those that are ephemeral and natural; from those with a high level of community involvement and stewardship, to others that have defined design parameters. These different types of open spaces are required to meet a wide range of human needs, to provide benefits to the community, and to suit people of different ages and abilities.

A classification of spaces by function and landscape setting type assists planning equitable distribution and maintaining diversity. Such functions include:

Conservation, Relaxation/ contemplation, Visual amenity, Community garden, Memorial park, Social/ family recreation, Access way trail, and Sport. Landscape setting types include: Bushland /forest, Manicured garden, Treed parkland, Open grassy area or Managed turf, Foreshore, Plaza, and Food garden, for example.

The greatest use of open spaces by type by survey respondents was parks for relaxation (85%), followed by bushland.

North Sydney has three community gardens that are run by community groups, and numerous community street plantings. These contribute to local character, connect people with nature and provide community development and horticultural benefits. The demand for these types of spaces is likely to increase, and they should be encouraged. They have application in the CBD with corporate and worker involvement and can extend to food production and bee keeping for example. They have the added value for limited capital and community management can reduce Council's recurrent open space costs.

North Sydney has approximately 43 hectares of bushland, most of which are narrow, small areas abutting residential developments. These areas provide:

- Important habitat and conservation of flora and fauna
- Visual amenity and restorative values
- Stabilisation on some steep slopes
- Access to nature and environmental education
- High quality settings for walking relaxing, nature appreciation and bird watching. They are also major contributors to air and water quality, and in reducing the heat island effect of hard surfaces in residential areas.

Where bushland can't be re-established, canopy tree planting in buffers should be encouraged, and existing trees protected.

As urban density increases so will the benefits of providing restorative qualities in open space, enhancing opportunities for contact with nature, providing respite from urban sights and sounds and reducing the heat island affect through planting in open space. Council has taken initiatives to promote green walls and roofs and these will provide welcome diversity in recreation settings.

Apart from the spectacular settings in which North Sydney's parks and reserves are located, much of the character of Council's open space is due to mature canopy trees. Council will need to continue to manage and renew this aging asset to maintain the attractive green, leafy character of its open space. New developments are likely to impact on trees, through removal, disturbance, damage and increased use. The new school development for example may impact on the trees and open space at Anzac Park, and careful management is needed to protect this site.

Quantity and distribution

Parks and reserves in North Sydney are primarily located on the foreshore and in a band down the centre of the Council area. Additional green space will be needed to provide the increasing population of residents, students, workers and visitors in the North Sydney and Crows Nest/St Leonards CBDs with opportunities for relaxation and social and physical activity, as well as with visual amenity.

Most residences have open space within 400m, however some spaces are relatively small, and fragmented. Many of the very small spaces offer important connections between streets, to water frontages or to public transport hubs and community facilities. They are important to retain in addition to other spaces that have a focus on social and physical activity.

Some areas of high population density, including Cremorne (along the Military Road corridor) and St Leonards/Crows Nest (along the Pacific Highway corridor and in Kirribilli) have limited open space.

The consultation for this study identified "a huge need for parks in the Crows Nest/St Leonards area, that is exacerbated by current big new developments".... Priority areas to improve access to open space include St Leonards/Crows Nest, North Sydney and Cremorne..." The whole strip North of St Leonards Park – has no open space, and "inadequate open space linkages and connections".

Previous plans identified opportunities for new open space provision, including:

- CBD sites through set backs for example
- pursuing land opportunities at the Graythwaite site (in private ownership)
- accessing additional railway land (through leases) and
- working with the Harbour Trust to influence/encourage access to open space such as at the HMAS Platypus and other former defence sites for example.

The community has indicated a strong objection to the unsolicited proposal to build sports courts underground in St Leonards Park. The proposal is inconsistent with much of the intent of the Conservation Management Plan for the heritage-listed site. Such a development is not dependant on a parkland setting.

Accessibility and inclusion

Many people are currently excluded from using parks and reserves due to physical barriers including getting onto parks, getting to areas of social activities (such in play spaces) and getting onto the shared trails. The site inspections for this project indicated a number of inadvertent barriers to access at the entry to parks and trails and along footpaths. These need to be rectified and the civil design process need to incrementally upgrade structures to embrace universal design principles and to address 'access to premises' requirements of the building code.

Not all trails and park equipment can be made fully accessible to people, especially due to North Sydney's topography. Therefore a hierarchy of accessibility, and an equitable distribution of accessible places need to be created. Access to at least one social point in every park, selective trails through open space as well as information about accessibility should be provided, so people using mobility devices can make informed choices.

North Sydney Council says in its charter: *"We will ensure 'universal access' to our community services and facilities through continuous needs analysis and planning"*.

Managing pressures on open space

Council's parks are under increased pressure. Many are used by personal trainers and for group fitness. This use is guided by a code of conduct. Park-based physical activity/ gym ranked 3rd in the household survey as an activity liked but not undertaken.

There is also an increasing demand for use of parks for social sports and training. These activities, whilst needing to be carefully managed to protect parks from excessive wear, are very important to the community. They provide convenient opportunities for physical activity and social opportunities for time poor people. They enable a large number of women for whom routine, organised or club based activity is not possible to participate, and they have had a positive effect in activating spaces, as well as providing mental health benefits due to the green settings in which they are conducted.

The demand for cycling in open space (often in narrow pedestrian spaces where conflicts are likely) is also increasing.

Council officers report that managing remnant bushland is becoming increasingly difficult due to the areas being well used and loved by residents. Bushland reserves are heavily used for walking however running and cycling in these spaces is not encouraged due to their impact. Providing perimeter paths around some large parks may assist in managing the demand for cycling and running through parks, as well as providing an additional recreation resource, and an opportunity for events.

There is an increasing demand for events in open space- these include fun runs and sports events as well as private celebrations etc. Most parks should be able to accommodate small events or programs.

The community engagement process illustrated the value of large heritage parks such as St Leonards Park, and a strong objection to development proposals such as provision of an indoor sports centre under the park.

With increasing demand for recreation facilities and community infrastructure it will be important to protect green space from incremental infrastructure development that is not dependant on a parkland setting and to:

- Ensure footprints of support facilities are consolidated on reserves, and kept to peripheries –to maximise green space
- Ensure any new indoor sport recreation facilities do not negatively impact on green space.

Programming and information

Commercial operators are an increasing user of open space and Council facilities for:

- Group fitness, personal training and indoor physical activity
- Lunch time /corporate sports / opportunities and academies
- Personal and dog training, and
- Events

Maintaining a good dialogue with these users will be important in managing the quality of open space, and for planning purposes.

Council is preparing a marketing campaign for the CBD. This could include promoting available sport and recreation facilities programs and open spaces, as well as opportunities to cycle and walk to the CBD.

North Sydney Council says in its charter:

- *We will leave to future generations a better environment than we inherited.*
- *We will develop new local parks and sporting facilities, broaden the use of our existing open space and recreation resources and improve how we care for and manage them.*
- *We will protect the character of our urban environment whilst managing growth.*

- *The importance of providing opportunities for community health and wellbeing will be central to all of our open space and recreation planning.*
- *Our neighbourhoods will be strengthened so that there are village centres with shops and places to meet within walking distance of residential areas.*

Key Strategies And Actions: Open Space

1 Provide additional green spaces in the North Sydney area to provide for social gathering, play and events, sport and physical activities and horticulture, and to provide restorative benefits

- 1.1. Encourage the provision of additional green space in North Sydney, especially in the CBDs. In doing so seek to provide a diversity of functions such as social /family recreation, gym and fitness, sport, (e.g. outdoor ball courts) as well as relaxation.
- 1.2. Seek to provide a variety of landscape settings across the LGA, as well as in the CBDs; including treed and open grassy areas, manicured and food gardens, water and natural areas.
- 1.3. Encourage more food gardens and canopy trees or forest, in the CBDs in preference to plaza space.
- 1.4. Continue to pursue opportunities to acquire land on the harbour foreshore and to create additional foreshore links as opportunities arise.
- 1.5. Consider the potential for future open space and park sites in new development areas such as HMAS Platypus and the former quarantine depot at Berrys Bay.+
- 1.6. Maximise use of rooftops and access commercial spaces (where conditions are compatible) to provide additional green space, green walls or food gardens.
- 1.7. Investigate opportunities to create additional areas or corridors of bushland, (such as along rail or freeway corridors) to provide multiple benefits.

- 1.8. Continue to pursue opportunities for new open space and recreation opportunities, including:
 - CBD sites, through set backs and building redevelopments for example
 - additional leases of railway land
 - in the Crows Nest/St Leonards Pacific Highway corridor, and in areas without open space within 300m of residential dwellings.
 - access to open space at former defence sites including the HMAS Platypus +.
- 2 Continue to protect the character of existing open spaces and trees on public and private land**
 - 2.1. Protect existing trees in all development sites through planning controls and incentives such as bonds.
 - 2.2. Seek to protect all trees and the quality of Anzac Park in the light of additional use from the proposed Anzac Club primary school, and maintain existing public uses.
 - 2.3. In the development of sports facilities seek to provide more canopy trees (or structures for shade where trees are not a viable option).
 - 2.4. Protect and progressively renew open space assets; enhance their appearance, functionality and viability while simultaneously minimising the size of their footprint on Council's parks and reserves
 - 2.5. Protect and renew the urban forest, trees and natural areas to provide benefits including: access to nature, mental health and well-being and productivity.
 - 2.6. In assessing and reporting on future land development proposals and the upgrade of community and sporting infrastructure, address any potential impact of the development on open space and recreation, and seek opportunities to provide good open space outcomes for the North Sydney Community.
- 3 Incrementally improve the accessibility of parks, and sport and recreation infrastructure to expand the number of people who can be included in public life**
 - 3.1. As a priority seek to: address physical barriers to buildings and associated spaces serving older adults e.g. Waverton North Sydney Club.
 - 3.2. Provide a social space within all play spaces, accessible to people using mobility devices.
 - 3.3. Alleviate physical barriers into parks, between public open spaces, and along trail routes.
 - 3.4. Create new trails, and identify select trail circuits that can be made accessible to people using mobility devices.
 - 3.5. Provide handrails on stairways in public space.
- 4 Market the opportunities available in open space across the LGA to better match available spaces with demand, enhance stewardship and encourage appreciation and appropriate use**
 - 4.1. Continue to provide interpretation about the history and quality of Council's open space
 - 4.2. In the marketing campaign for the CBD include promotion of available sport and recreation facilities, programs and open spaces, as well as opportunities to cycle and walk to the CBD.
 - 4.3. Develop a good dialogue with the community and users (including educational and commercial users, and corporate stakeholders) about open space development and management.
- 5 Continue to intensively manage Council's open space to minimise conflicts, and maximise experiences**
 - 5.1. Continue to manage use of sportsgrounds by clubs and school groups (e.g. by rotating use, and limiting training to outfield areas to maximise the longevity of fields).
 - 5.2. Seek to address conflicts between users of open space. Conflicts include those between pedestrians, cyclists, and people walking dogs, and off-leash dog-walking in bushland.
 - 5.3. Consider preparing a code of conduct for open space and trails, to minimise conflicts between users.

6. Implementation plan

The following tables provide a list of all strategies and actions with an indication of priority: One is the most important/ urgent and three the lower priority.

6.1 Overall Goals and Strategies - Priorities

(As per section 4: ‘Overarching Goals and Strategies’)

Strategies	Capital Works Priority	Planning / Projects Priority
Goal 1. Increased participation in physical and social opportunities		
Strategy 1.1. Provide additional information about the nature of recreation opportunities in the LGA targeting groups such as workers, visitors, students, women and families, people born overseas, and people with a disability.		3
Strategy 1.2. Continue to renew infrastructure, especially sport and park infrastructure and green assets, to meet demand.	2	
Strategy 1.3 Provide additional infrastructure to meet local recreation or sporting demand that will increase the number of people participating, where the quality and quantity of green space can be protected, and resources allow	1	
Strategy: 1.4 Work with sport peak bodies and clubs to support sport pathways and club development, and grow participation.		1
Goal 2. Enhanced use of existing resources, whilst minimising overuse		
Strategy: 2.1 Program existing facilities and open space to increase use of available opportunities in off peak periods, including the night-time		1
Strategy: 2.2 Encourage use of facilities and open space by more women, people born overseas from non-English speaking countries, and people with a disability		1
Strategy: 2.3 Utilise commercial and brown field space, and transport infrastructure, and non-green space for sport and recreation use	1	
Strategy: 2.4 Seek additional public access to and along to the Harbour		1
Strategy: 2.5 Increase the carrying capacity of existing sports facilities or divert demand to facilities with higher carrying capacity	1	
Strategy: 2.6 Provide lighting on additional sports grounds and trails	2	
Strategy: 2.7 Rescope civil and landscape design services to increase accessibility of existing open space and infrastructure generally	1	
Strategy: 2.8 Repurpose non-recreation space ie tops of buildings car parks, brownfield sites etc., for sport, recreation and etc.	1	
Strategy: 2.9 Encourage the colocation of facilities and the development of hubs of activity, for example; offering recreation and community services		1



Strategies	Capital Works Priority	Planning / Projects Priority
Goal 3. A diversity of recreation opportunities for the widest range of the population, now and in future		
Strategy 3.1 Maximize the diversity of people provided for and opportunities provided at each site.		1
Strategy 3.2 Seek to enable physical and social opportunities at each site		1
Strategy 3.3 Diversify the range of functions and landscape setting types of parks across the LGA, and provide a continuum of open space spaces – from those with a strong environmental focus to those with a social focus.		2
Strategy 3.4 Provide an equitable distribution of different types of open space and recreation facilities		1
Strategy 3.5 Maintain a diversity of sports and recreation activities in the LGA		1
Goal 4. Maintenance of the green nature and character of the North Sydney		
Strategy: 4.1 Enhance the distribution of green space and canopy trees across the LGA	1	
Strategy: 4.2 Minimise the provision and impact of buildings and structures in green space		1
Goal 5. Co-operative, effective and sustainable service delivery		
Strategy: 5.1 Partner commercial entities and educational institutions to deliver more recreation opportunities and green space in the CBDs and the education precinct		1
Strategy: 5.2 Partner with education providers to deliver sports facilities and enhance access to facilities for social and sports training		1
Strategy: 5.3 Partner with corporate partners to deliver programs, fitness and social sports and facilities to support physical activity		2
Strategy: 5.4 Partner with and support volunteer organisations, sporting clubs, community and service organisations in seeking funds for, delivering, and maintaining recreation opportunities and public open space		1
Strategy: 5.5 Work with NSROC and adjoining Councils to develop and deliver recreation and sporting opportunities cost effectively and co-operatively		2
Strategy: 5.6 Actively seek funds from external sources including philanthropic organisations, government grants and community fund raising activities to deliver public recreation opportunities		1
Strategy: 5.7 Publicise the achievements and progress made on the implementation of the Recreation Needs Study and provide a regular updates on the status of actions.		2

6.2 Specific Issue Based Strategies and Actions - Priorities

(As per section 5: 'Key Issues and Opportunities')

The following table lists all actions and whether each is planning related/ a project, or is capital works. For completeness, the symbol "+" denotes a similar action that is also contained in another section.

Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
6. Off road trails	Priority	Priority
6.1 Continue to develop and extend a network of off-road trails across the Council area to include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trail circuits and identified routes around all suburbs 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perimeter exercise paths around large reserves 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • links through green space and to regional trails 		
6.1.1. Continue to capitalise on unmade roads as off-road trail routes to expand the length and distribution of existing trails	3	
6.1.2. Construct perimeter exercise paths around suitable large parks, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cammeray Park Golf Course • Waverton Park and • St Leonards Park • Also consider the suitability of any other park larger than approximately one hectare 	1	
6.1.3. Seek to extend the public off-road trail routes around the foreshore as subdivision, land development and other opportunities allow		1
6.1.4. Support regional cycleway proposals that benefit the North Sydney community		1
6.1.5. Include an off-road trails category of infrastructure in future development contributions plans		1
6.1.6. Ensure all new housing developments (for example in brownfield sites) include off-road trail circuits and trail connections to existing infrastructure		1
6.1.7. Seek partnerships with other land managers, foreshore developments and adjacent LGAs to develop and expand the network of trails		1
6.1.8. Prepare a design guideline for recreation tracks and trails and park perimeter paths that include materials, treadway, and a landscape buffer and right of way on each side. +		
6.2 Enhance the connections and trail routes between open spaces		
6.2.1. Create more accessible connections between pockets of open space in areas where connections are poor (eg McMahons Point), and sign post these.		2
6.2.2. Continue to pursue walking path connections around the harbour as opportunities allow.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
6.2.3. Provide a trail connection between (and around) Cammeray Park Golf Course and Green Park.	2	
6.3 Manage cycling use of parks and roads to avoid conflict with other users		
6.3.1 Consider recommendations of the North Sydney Integrated Cycling Strategy 2014 and identify key routes for recreational and training sports cyclists on-road, and further enhancements to key roads that can be used for training and commuting routes for cyclists		1
6.3.2 Continue to manage the use of internal park pathways to minimise the potential for conflict between different user groups		2
6.3.3 Manage shared trails and educate users to reduce the conflicts between dogs and other users, and dogs in environmental areas		3
6.4 Provide additional signage, embellishments to surfaces, and accessibility and landscape surrounds, to encourage use by people of all ages and abilities		
6.4.1 Provide lighting for recreational walking in key areas and routes, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • around St Leonards Park and • Lavender Bay Foreshore 	1	
6.4.2 Enhance the accessibility of the interface between streets, parks and trails and create accessible paths of travel into and through open space, and along trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an assessment to determine priority areas and schedule works 	1	
6.4.3 Make trails to selective bushlands and other key trails accessible to people with prams and using mobility devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess all bushland tracks for suitability and schedule work. 	2	
6.4.4 For future trail routes seek to provide trails in landscaped corridors with a right of way and buffer with shade trees on either side +		1
6.4.5 Provide detailed information about available trails and cycling and walking opportunities to enhance the number and types of people who can use them		1
6.4.6 Update the series of walking maps around North Sydney to provide additional levels of detail about trail conditions, suitable activities for specific routes, and accessibility of routes		1
6.4.7 Continue to provide signage on trail routes, around the Council areas, including indicators of accessibility		1
6.4.8 Provide break out spaces and bench seat at regular intervals along paths to allow people to stop off the path		3
6.4.9 Provide rails on steps through and into open spaces to enable additional people to use these. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an assessment to determine priority areas and schedule works 	2	



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
6.5 Encourage people to walk and cycle		
6.5.1 Seek to identify more cycle friendly routes for cycle sports training and recreation through North Sydney	1	
6.5.2 Encourage businesses to provide end of trip facilities for workers to cycle or walk to work, but also showers and lockers to enable workers to run or play sport during breaks.		1
6.5.3 Support running and cycling events in the LGA including orienteering etc.		2
6.5.4 In the planning and development of the CBDs provide wider footpaths to accommodate more people, and where possible shared zones for cycling, walking, jogging and skating.		1
7. Water based Recreation		
7.1 Create opportunities for increased participation in water based recreation and sport		
7.1.1 Where possible provide additional opportunities to store light vessels (boards, dinghies and kayaks)		2
7.1.2 Work with peak bodies and clubs to facilitate water sports development programs for juniors and social water based recreation opportunities to enhance the sustainability of existing clubs		1
7.1.3 In conjunction with other stakeholders (including the state government) investigate the renewal of and greater accessibility of, foreshore water based assets, parking/rigging areas, sharing and occupancy arrangements, and the opportunity to increase the carrying capacity of such facilities.		1
7.1.4 Encourage a wider range of activities provided through water based clubs and better promotion of opportunities available.		1
7.1.5 Facilitate dialogue between water based recreation clubs, and between clubs and schools, to encourage sharing, information dissemination, club and skill development and potential hire of equipment.		1
7.2 Investigate further options to extend recreation and sport opportunities at future foreshore development sites		
7.2.1 Seek opportunities to provide additional access to the Harbour, and along the Harbour foreshore. +		1
7.2.2 Consider providing additional water based and other recreational opportunities at the Coal loader and in the future development of the HMAS Platypus site. +		1
7.3 Upgrade the North Sydney Olympic Pool to enhance participation and the quality of the offer in keeping with the heritage significance of the facility		
7.3.1 Enhance the accessibility of facilities to people with a disability and older adults. This should be a major consideration as the new Master Plan for the Olympic Pool is prepared	1	



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
8. Sport		
8.1 Progressively upgrade the quality and carrying capacity of sports facilities and supporting infrastructure (grounds, amenities, lighting, car parking etc.) to meet current standards		
8.1.1 Upgrade North Sydney Oval to become more competitive as a stadium for regional and state events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific works to achieve this are scheduled in the North Sydney Oval Business Plan 	2	
8.1.2 Provide or improve lighting to all outdoor sports facilities to enhance flexibility of use. In particular schedule improvements at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Sydney Oval Forsyth Park, and any school facilities that can be used by the community. 	1	
8.1.3 Add an additional court to the North Sydney indoor sports centre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This action should be considered as part of the Hume Street Park redevelopment project 	1	
8.1.4 Progressively improve all the support facilities at outdoor sportsgrounds providing compact, shared spaces with good storage, shade, referee, first aid, canteen, toilet and change facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the assessment of all support facilities at outdoor sportsgrounds, prioritise required works and schedule works 	1	
8.1.5 Provide an additional synthetic field in North Sydney – as a priority, suitable for sports including hockey. + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anderson Park has been selected as the most appropriate location, and a Development Application has been prepared to facilitate the work 	1	
8.1.6 Investigate options for parking, shared path/cycle access, and other transport opportunities for existing sports precincts.		2
8.1.7 Investigate opportunities for other sports activities on, or around the golf course, including at night.	1	
8.2 Seek to provide access to additional sports facilities in North Sydney, including those targeting workers and students		
8.2.1 Investigate options to provide a racquet sports centre in the North Sydney CBD (for badminton and squash)		2
8.2.2 Seek to provide free access outdoor sports courts in or close to the North Sydney CBD, in conjunction with a private or education provider.+		1
8.2.3 Monitor the implementation of NSROC (Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils) Sports Management Plan, and progress funding for regional initiatives. +		2
8.2.4 In assessing future developments in the CBD, consider introducing planning incentives for private landowners to provide community sport and recreation opportunities in suitable prominent locations.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
8.2.5 In future education developments in North Sydney, require schools to provide sports facilities on their own premises.		1
8.2.6 Review planning controls to: assess open space and recreation/ sporting opportunities as part of all developments; remove any impediments to future public use of private or public educational facilities; and provide incentives for developers to provide public sporting facilities		1
8.2.7 Work with Educational Institutions in North Sydney to provide additional indoor sports courts and aquatic facilities for community use	1	
8.2.8 In conjunction with a hockey association and potentially an education institution provide a synthetic hockey facility in North Sydney. +	1	
8.2.9 In the master planning of St Leonards Park consider the findings of the 'St Leonards Park Pedestrian and Cycling Path Feasibility Study 2014' and seek a redesign of the eastern side of the park to provide a shared trail, better integrate outdoor sports facilities and increase capacity, as well as enhance environmental values.		1
8.3 Provide resources to assist with club and sports development and information provision, to ensure facilities are programmed and clubs remain viable		
8.3.1 Consider employing additional resources and/ or volunteers to provide Council with a sports development role.		1
8.3.2 Encourage all existing sport clubs to provide for juniors, females and males older adults and people with all abilities- through different forms of the same game.		2
8.3.3 Give greater priority to women's and junior sports in occupancy agreements, allocation and booking procedures etc. as these are important to the viability of clubs, (i.e. cricket, hockey, golf, soccer, hockey etc.)		2
8.3.4 Encourage clubs such as bowls and golf to form multiple code clubs with field and court sports, to enhance viability and appeal.		2
8.3.5 Work with the golf club to target a broader range of people including juniors, workers and encourage other sports to use the golf course.		1
8.3.6 Work with tennis NSW and local providers to further investigate the state of tennis in North Sydney. This should include assessing the high demand for tennis and impact of the management on delivering opportunities, as well as opportunities to enhance service offer, pathways for juniors to high levels of competition, non-club and social competitions. Co-operatively develop different products, more sports development programs and utilise courts for workers and students.		2
8.3.7 Consider orchestrating a North City Sports program for staff and CBD workers that utilise school and community sports facilities and parks (park runs) during the day.		2
8.3.8 Investigate opportunities to market bowls and provide sports development opportunities with corporate and school bowls to ensure these clubs are not lost, and explore additional use of facilities for other activities such as fitness and dance.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
8.3.9 Create partnerships with commercial entities present in North Sydney, such as Coca, Cola, SAP, MLC, and Tennex to provide sports opportunities suitable for employees and other workers.		3
8.3.10 Investigate new information and booking products to provide convenient access to the sports and fitness facilities currently available in the LGA.		3
8.3.11 Investigate partnership opportunities with community organisations for expanding the range of community based recreation programs to meet and target specific user groups, especially older people, youth, people with a disability, and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.		2
8.3.12 Seek to include more social facilities in conjunction with competition sports facilities to encourage more social sports activities (such as petanque or bocce).		3
8.4 Consider utilising non-open space assets to provide additional sports facilities, and divert use from playing fields		
8.4.1 Pursue opportunities for providing sport that include industrial areas, transport hubs, commercial and retail areas, brown fields sites, rooftops and car parks.		1
8.4.2 Consider providing an additional indoor sports centre at one of Council's car parks in the vicinity of the CBD or the education precinct in North Sydney. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Carry out a site selection assessment to determine the most appropriate location for an additional indoor sports centre	1	
8.4.3 Continue to work with schools and other educational institutions to provide additional sport facilities that serve workers, students and residents.		2
8.4.4 Provide addition cricket practice nets for shared club and community use.		2
8.5 Seek to maintain a good diversity of sports activities in North Sydney, as well as different ways these can be played		
8.5.1 Seek to retain the range of current sports activities in the LGA, and adopt a "no net loss" principle for sports landuse.		1
8.5.2 Maintain a suite of sports opportunities from "pay as you play", short term and conveniently scheduled activities, to suit women, workers and students, and where participants are not expected to volunteer, as well as local club sport, school sport and regional events at Nth Sydney Oval.		1
8.5.3 Provide facilities suitable to retain a hockey competition in North Sydney. +		1
8.5.4 Seek to provide for racquet sports in the CBD+.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
8.6 Seek to enable workers to utilise available sport and recreation facilities– during the day time on week days		
8.6.1 In providing an additional sports centre in North Sydney, ensure capacity to provide for a range of indoor sports, program based and “pay as you play” indoor activities.		3
8.6.2 Seek to provide social outdoor courts sports/ basketball facility in the North Sydney CBD. + <ul style="list-style-type: none">Carry out a site selection assessment to determine the most appropriate location	1	
8.6.3 In the master planning for sports facilities, seek additional access for social sports, and community access to practice facilities, as well as complementary facilities such as perimeter paths.		1
8.6.4 Provide incentives for developers to contribute space for shared group fitness or indoor sports activities in the CBD. Shared or public facilities are preferred to individual business having small-unsupervised fitness facilities.		1
8.6.5 Investigate providing more opportunities for more “pay as you play sports” – near the two CBDs.		1
8.6.6 Provide an additional synthetic sports surface in North Sydney for sports including hockey. +	1	
8.7 Continue to pursue Regional Sporting Initiatives		
8.7.1 Investigate opportunities for cross-border collaboration between North Sydney and the Mosman and the NSROC Councils, to deliver a wide range of sports opportunities for local and regional competition and pathways from foundation to participation, and performance levels.		2
8.7.2 Seek to develop a more regional approach to information provision, booking and allocation and a consistency in conditions, categories and methods of payments for sports grounds.		2
8.7.3 Pursue integrated capital work planning and funding for synthetic and regional facilities		2
8.7.4 Creatively package funds from multiple sources to fund sports improvements.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
9. Open Space		
9.1 Provide additional green spaces in the North Sydney area to provide for social gathering, play and events, sport and physical activities and horticulture, and to provide restorative benefits		
9.1.1 Encourage the provision of additional green space in North Sydney, especially in the CBDs. In doing so seek to provide a diversity of functions such as social /family recreation, gym and fitness, sport, (e.g. outdoor ball courts) as well as relaxation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a site selection assessment to determine the most appropriate location/s for additional green space 	1	
9.1.2 Seek to provide a variety of landscape settings across the LGA, as well as in the CBDs; including treed and open grassy areas, manicured and food gardens, water and natural areas.		1
9.1.3 Encourage more food gardens and canopy trees or forest, in the CBDs in preference to plaza space.		1
9.1.4 Continue to pursue opportunities to acquire land on the harbour foreshore and to create additional foreshore links as opportunities arise.		1
9.1.5 Consider the potential for future open space and park sites in new development areas such as HMAS Platypus and the former quarantine depot at Berrys Bay. +		1
9.1.6 Maximise use of rooftops and access commercial spaces (where conditions are compatible) to provide additional green space, green walls or food gardens.		2
9.1.7 Investigate opportunities to create additional areas or corridors of bushland, (such as along rail or freeway corridors) to provide multiple benefits.		2
9.1.8 Continue to pursue opportunities for new open space and recreation opportunities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CBD sites, through set backs and building redevelopments for example ▪ additional leases of railway land ▪ in the Crows Nest/St Leonards Pacific Highway corridor, and in areas without open space within 300m of residential dwellings. ▪ access to open space at former defence sites including the HMAS Platypus +. 		1
9.2 Continue to protect the character of existing open spaces and trees on public and private land		
9.2.1 Protect existing trees in all development sites through planning controls and incentives such as bonds.		1
9.2.2 Seek to protect all trees and the quality of Anzac Park in the light of additional use from the proposed Anzac Club primary school, and maintain existing public uses.		1



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
9.2.3 In the development of sports facilities seek to provide more canopy trees (or structures for shade where trees are not a viable option).		2
9.2.4 Protect and progressively renew open space assets; enhance their appearance, functionality and viability while simultaneously minimising the size of their footprint on Council's parks and reserves	1	
9.2.5 Protect and renew the urban forest, trees and natural areas to provide benefits including: access to nature, mental health and well-being and productivity.	1	
9.2.6 In assessing and reporting on future land development proposals and the upgrade of community and sporting infrastructure, address any potential impact of the development on open space and recreation, and seek opportunities to provide good open space outcomes for the North Sydney Community.		1
9.3 Incrementally improve the accessibility of parks, and sport and recreation infrastructure to expand the number of people who can be included in public life		
9.3.1 As a priority seek to: address physical barriers to buildings and associated spaces serving older adults. • For example the Waverton North Sydney Club is a priority site.	1	
9.3.2 Provide a social space within all play spaces, accessible to people using mobility devices. • Carry out an assessment of all playgrounds in North Sydney to determine which are the most appropriate for provision of complementary social family recreation facilities • Determine priorities and schedule work	1	
9.3.3 Alleviate physical barriers into parks, between public open spaces, and along trail routes.	1	
9.3.4 Create new trails, and identify select trail circuits that can be made accessible to people using mobility devices.		1
9.3.5 Provide handrails on stairways in public space. • Carry out an assessment of stairways in public space and determine priorities for new handrails on stairways in public space. • Schedule new works according to priorities	2	
9.4 Market the opportunities available in open space across the LGA to better match available spaces with demand, enhance stewardship and encourage use appreciation and appropriate use		
9.4.1 Continue to provide interpretation about the history and quality of Council's open space		2
9.4.2 In the marketing campaign for the CBD include promotion of available sport and recreation facilities, programs and open spaces, as well as opportunities to cycle and walk to the CBD.		2



Strategy and Action	Capital Works	Planning/ Projects
9.4.3 Develop a good dialogue with the community and users (including educational and commercial users, and corporate stakeholders) about open space development and management.		2
9.5 Continue to intensively manage Council's open space to minimise conflicts, and maximise experiences		
9.5.1 Continue to manage use of sportsgrounds by clubs and school groups (e.g. by rotating use, and limiting training to outfield areas to maximise the longevity of fields).		2
9.5.2 Seek to address conflicts between users of open space. Conflicts include those between pedestrians, cyclists, and people walking dogs, and off-leash dog-walking in bushland.		2
9.5.3 Consider preparing a code of conduct for open space and trails, to minimise conflicts between users.		2