

# Integrated Open Space Plan 2013



### **About this document**

This document is the Integrated Open Space Plan for The Hills Shire.

This document presents the key directions and goals found through an analysis of open space supply, demand and demographics, and suggests strategies to take forward into the Final Plan.

### **Acknowledgements**

@leisure acknowledges the contribution made by staff of The Hills Shire Council, particularly the Project Steering Group.



Rear 534 Mt Alexander Road Ascot Vale VIC 3032 Australia  
+61 3 9326 1662 info@atleisure.com.au www.atleisure.com.au

## Contents

<b>1. The project.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Responding to future demand for open space.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Residential growth will have a major impact on the demand for open space .....	5
2.2 Residents participation and perceptions of open space.....	6
2.3 Anticipated changes in demand in recreation activity and experiences.....	7
2.4 Managing increased demand .....	8
<b>3. Council's vision and goals.....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Vision.....	9
3.2 Integrating Open Space Goals with Council's Strategic Directions .....	10
3.3 Open Space Strategic Directions .....	11
<b>4. Plan on the basis of community benefit and to deliver an equitable distribution and diversity of open space opportunities .....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 A clear planning framework .....	12
4.2 Core service levels.....	14
4.3 Distribution and diversity of open space .....	14
4.4 Distribution of Open Space by Primary Function.....	16
<b>5. Provide places for family recreation and social gatherings.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6. Manage spaces for sustainable sport .....</b>	<b>22</b>
6.1 Distribution of sports opportunities.....	22
6.2 Planning and design of sports facilities .....	23
6.3 Sports management .....	25
<b>7. Link the trail network and cater for additional people walking and cycling.....</b>	<b>27</b>
7.1 Off-road trail circuits are a priority .....	27
7.2 Distribution and existing off-road trails .....	27
7.3 Opportunities to enhance trails .....	28
<b>8. Promote open space opportunities and facilities.....</b>	<b>29</b>
8.1 Beyond open space infrastructure development and maintenance .....	29
8.2 Reinforcing the brand.....	29
8.3 Encouraging contact with nature and community engagement .....	30
<b>9. Implementation of the Integrated Open Space Plan .....</b>	<b>32</b>
9.1 Core Service Levels .....	32
9.2 Funding and resourcing .....	32
9.3 Priorities .....	33
9.4 Monitoring and implementation .....	33
9.5 Implementation Plan .....	35
<b>10. Appendices .....</b>	<b>41</b>
Appendix 1. Classifications of Open Space .....	41
Appendix 2. Core Service Levels .....	44
Appendix 3. Opportunities to add Diversity and Address Gaps in Distribution .....	56
Appendix 4. Criteria to Evaluate the Priority of Open Space Actions.....	57
Appendix 5. Maps.....	58

## 1. The project

### Aims of the project

The purpose of The Hills Integrated Open Space Plan is to provide a framework to guide the planning, development and management of open space within the Hills Shire in line with Council's adopted strategic outcomes.

The project objectives are:

- To ensure that the quality of open space is sustained and enhanced into the future
- To respond to forecast changes in population in established as well as green field locations
- To ensure that plans, policies and strategies that affect Council are integrated under one plan for open space
- To keep in step with emerging recreation participation trends and subsequent change in lifestyles
- To support the provision of adequate facilities and services and open space assets
- To ensure best-practice planning and management of open space.

### Methodology

This Draft Integrated Open Space Plan has been produced following:

- A review of the previous Recreation Strategy and a wide range of Council plans, strategies and other documents
- Review of secondary demand information including previous consultation with sporting groups, park user surveys, etc.
- Mapping and classifying of all open spaces according to a open space function and landscape setting type
- Site inspections

- Analysis of the distribution and quality of open space by locality and Shire
- Community and stakeholder consultation (as described in the section below)
- Assessment of the projected demand for outdoor recreation activities, and the demographic influences on demand for open space by locality.

### Community and stakeholder engagement

A householder telephone survey was undertaken in December 2012, to understand current participation and residents' perceptions of open space. The survey consisted of a stratified sample of 350 householders aged 15 years and over across the Shire.

Consultation was also undertaken with peak sporting codes and other key organisations, including:

- AFL NSW and ACT
- NSW Rugby League
- Cricket NSW
- Hills District Netball Association
- Tennis NSW
- Hills District Tennis Association
- Hockey NSW
- Athletics NSW
- NSW Touch Association
- Baseball NSW
- Golf NSW
- Ultimate Frisbee NSW and Hills
- Agility Dog Club of NSW
- Granville & Districts Soccer Football Association.

A workshop with selected groups was undertaken in 2012.



Secondary demand information from the following reports was analysed:

- Yardstick Parkcheck Visitor Measures, 2012 The Hills Shire Council Parks Survey (the '2012 Yardstick Survey')<sup>1</sup>
- The Hills Shire Council Community Survey 2010/11 (the '2010/11 Community Survey')<sup>2</sup>
- Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program – The Hills Shire Council 2010 (the '2010 Benchmark Survey')<sup>3</sup>
- The household telephone survey that was undertaken in 2006 as part of the preparation of the Baulkham Hills Shire Recreation Strategy<sup>4</sup>.

A separate Demand and Consultation Findings report was prepared for this project – this is included in Volume 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Key Research Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> Prepared by Iris Research.

<sup>3</sup> Prepared by Integrated Open Space Services (IOSS).

<sup>4</sup> Stratcorp Consulting (2007)

## 2. Responding to future demand for open space

### 2.1 Residential growth will have a major impact on the demand for open space

Participation rates in recreation and leisure activities is not likely to change significantly over the next 10 years but the number of people participating will.

An additional 70,000 people may make the Hills their home by 2031. More than 80% of those are likely to want to use open space for sporting, physical and social activities at least once per year.

Increased urbanisation and a more diverse population in the Hills Shire will stimulate demand for a greater diversity of recreation opportunities in open space.

The likely number of people to use specific types of recreation facilities in open space is shown in the following table.

**Table 1: Likely numbers of residents using open space facilities 2021 and 2031**

Outdoor facility type	2021	2031
Off-road trails <sup>1</sup>	112,000	135,600
Grass sportsgrounds <sup>2</sup>	39,000	47,200
Swimming pools <sup>3</sup>	29,200	35,400
Tennis / netball / courts	20,400	24,700
Skate parks	15,300	18,500
Golf courses	12,700	15,400
Bushland recreation area <sup>4</sup>	11,900	14,400
Waterway / lake <sup>5</sup>	6,100	7,400
Lawn bowls greens	3,800	4,600
Outdoor basketball courts <sup>6</sup>	3,200	3,900
Motorsport	2,400	2,900
BMX track	2,300	2,800
Hockey facility	2,260	2,700
Target sports facilities	1,600	2,000
Equestrian facilities	1,600	2,000

1. Includes participation in cycling, running, skateboarding / rollerblading and walking.

2. Includes football sports, athletics, baseball and softball.

3. Includes participation in swimming, aquarobics and triathlon.

4. Includes cross-country running, mountain biking, orienteering, rock climbing and bushwalking.

5. Includes participation in boating, water-skiing / power boating, fishing, canoeing / kayaking, sailing and rowing.

6. Includes only non-organised basketball. May include some indoor activity.

In addition to local demand, as population density increases in inner-city suburbs there is likely to be an increasing number of people travelling outward to the Shire for broader acre sports, trail and equestrian activities, mountain boarding, biking and bushwalking, physical challenge events, and water skiing.

### **Demographic profile has an influence on open space**

Participation in recreation activities is higher in school-aged children than any other age group. This group will continue to represent 22% of the population in 2032, which means there will continue to be significant demand for sports and recreation facilities. However, a greater focus on making open space more relevant to teenagers is required, as they currently make limited use of parks, other than sports facilities.

Young adults (aged 20-34 years) make up approximately 18% of the Shire's population. A similar percentage is projected in 2031. This age group requires a range of sports and outdoor recreation facilities, conveniently located to home and work and social and family recreation opportunities in a variety of settings.

People aged 35-64 years make up approximately 42% of The Hills Shire population. This percentage is projected to decrease slightly through to 2031. An increasing proportion of people in this age group are running, walking and cycling and playing sport, as well as participating in social and physically challenging outdoor pursuits.

Older people (aged 65 years and over) make up approximately 12% and an increasing proportion of the population. There is an increasing need for parks and trails to encourage older people to remain active and social later in life. Physical activities that promote social connectedness are important to older people. Conservation, volunteer and horticultural activities are also commonly in demand from this age group.

## **2.2 Residents participation and perceptions of open space**

The survey of 350 residents aged 15 years and over was undertaken in December 2012 from a stratified sample of households across the Shire. The survey found that:

- Walking for exercise has the highest participation of physical activities (this includes walking the dog)
- Participation in fitness-based activities is also high (gymnasium as well as park fitness activities)
- Participation in organised sports is generally consistent with national averages
- The highest demand for open space facilities is for "playgrounds", and places for family based recreation activities
- Demand was also high for off-road walking and cycling trails
- Use of sports playing fields continues to be significant
- Most respondents used parks at least once a week.

Participation in 2012 compared to that measured in previous Council surveys, is shown in the following table.

**Table 2: Participation rates in the Top 10 activities 1995-2012**

Activity	% Participation		
	1995	2005	2012
Walking for exercise (including dog walking)	32.8	36.6	38.3
Aerobics / fitness / gym	10.6	18.5	10.9
Jogging / running	4.9	7.1	6.3
Swimming	20.4	16.4	4.3
Soccer (outdoor)	5.4	5.7	4.0
Tennis	15.4	9.1	3.7
Bushwalking	17.7	7.0	3.7
Cycling	8.4	8.9	3.4
Netball	4.9	3.2	2.9
Golf	10.7	7.6	2.6

Note: These are the top ten, and many people participate in multiple activities – hence they do not add up to 100%. Fitness includes weight training and outdoor activities such as boot camps and use of outdoor exercise equipment.

In terms of future improvements to open space, respondents indicated:

- They would be prepared to walk 500 metres to a higher quality park rather than having smaller and lower quality parks closer to home (77% support)
- Upgrading one larger selected park in each suburb is a priority over doing a small amount of work in each park (59% support)
- Council should consider allowing coffee carts and events in selected larger destination parks to encourage use and help pay for maintenance (81% support)
- As the Shire grows, sport facilities, parks and off-road trails will need to be retained or additional ones provided to serve higher density residential areas, shopping precincts and around railway stations (86% support).

## 2.3 Anticipated changes in demand in recreation activity and experiences

Key points relating to changing demand that will influence the way people use facilities include the following:

- Walking and cycling are anticipated to have the largest increase in participation over the next ten years
- There is demand for an increasing range of activities in, and uses of public open space, such as escapism and action sports, challenge events and private celebrations
- There are more social and small-sided game formats of the traditional sports being played
- The need for better and more available information is increasing
- As competition for limited space will increase an easier and more accessible booking system will be required
- There will be an increasing demand for nature based activities such as bushwalking, rock climbing, rogaining, orienteering and river based aquatic sports
- Gym and fitness activities will continue to be one of the fastest growing uses of open space
- User expectations are increasing - the experience of a park user and ultimately whether they return, is likely to be determined not just by the main activity sought, but also by what happens in the whole "trip cycle" (the choice making, onsite orientation, the trip there and back and what was taken away and reflected on)
- There is a reawakening interest in nature and the outdoors among early childhood professionals and parents, and there is a high demand for nature play, camping and outdoor education such as forest kindergartens



- The duration of park use by residents is relatively short; hence more convenient access, information and quality of experiences targeting different age groups will be required to increase length of stay
- There will be more dogs in parks in the future.

## 2.4 Managing increased demand

Additional demand will require additional management.

Potential conflicts in use may arise as a result of increased demand or outdoor facilities. As the total amount of open space (e.g. school, Crown, private) reduces, competition between uses and user groups will increase. This will need to be managed.

The increase in the number of dogs has potential to create conflicts. Dog use in and around playgrounds and sports fields, conservation sites and on trails will need to be further managed through education and monitoring.

There will be a demand for more commercial and assumed private use of public open space, and a need for there to be more intensive management of some parks and sports fields. These will need to be balanced with residential amenity issues.

The capacity of shared paths in residential areas where residential density will increase will need to be increased. The carrying capacity of trails will also need to be managed. A hierarchy of trails will be needed to divert demand and limit conflicts; a code of conduct for trail users, and continued marketing of trails to encourage acceptable types and level of use, will be required.

### 3. Council's vision and goals

#### 3.1 Vision

The following is the vision for open space in The Hills Shire:

"An open space network that provides a diverse range of sport and recreation opportunities in a garden setting, to support the development of healthy, active and inclusive communities."

### 3.2 Integrating Open Space Goals with Council's Strategic Directions

The key open space directions for each theme are provided below.

The Hills Shire Plan provides strategic directions under the following themes:

- Proactive Leadership
- Vibrant Communities
- Balanced Urban Growth
- Protected Environment
- Modern Local Economy.

Theme	Community Outcome	Relevant Directions of This Plan
Proactive Leadership	<i>Council works together with the community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new open space planning framework is adopted that focused on benefits to the user and demand for activities</li> <li>Funds and resources are allocated based on agreed core service levels for different types and a hierarchy of open spaces</li> <li>The community is informed and engaged in the planning and use of open spaces</li> <li>Sports facilities are provided based on carrying capacity and managed to support sustainability</li> </ul>
	<i>Council's finances and assets are responsibly managed</i>	
	<i>Our community is transparently governed</i>	
	<i>Council is an employer of choice</i>	
Vibrant Communities	<i>There are places to play and be active</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of physical, social and environmental activities are provided in open space to support an active, healthy lifestyle</li> <li>Open spaces are attractive, safe, accessible and well-maintained</li> <li>Open spaces opportunities are inclusive for people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds</li> <li>Use of open space is increased by adding physical opportunities to social spaces and social opportunities to sporting places</li> </ul>
	<i>I can feel safe and healthy</i>	
	<i>I am connected to the community</i>	
	<i>There are services and facilities to suit my needs</i>	
Balanced Urban Growth	<i>I can get where I need to go</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A safe, convenient and accessible off-road trail network is provided that enables movement through and around the Shire</li> <li>Open spaces are integrated with other community facilities and activity centres, and accessible by off road trails and public transport</li> <li>Open space is provided equitably throughout development areas, based upon local needs and participation, not on a standards-based approach</li> </ul>
	<i>Lifestyle options that reflect our natural beauty</i>	
Protected Environment	<i>Our Shire is green and pollution free</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The natural environment is protected, maintained and enhanced</li> <li>People are connected to nature by maintaining nature in local parks and close by via a network of linked open spaces and trails</li> <li>Opportunities for nature-based recreation are provided along with social and sporting settings</li> </ul>
	<i>I can feel close to nature</i>	
	<i>Our natural resources are used wisely</i>	
Modern Local Economy	<i>Our Shire attracts new businesses and visitors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New businesses and workers are attracted by the lifestyle and amenity values of open space throughout the Shire</li> <li>Destination parks, trails and recreation facilities are developed to accommodate visitors and events</li> <li>Open space supports industries that generate significant economic activity annually; these include: sport, fitness, tourism and landscape related businesses.</li> </ul>
	<i>I can work close to home</i>	

### **3.3 Open Space Strategic Directions**

Responding to community aspirations, an analysis of anticipated demand and Council's strategic direction as outlined in the Hills Shire Plan, this Integrated Open Space Plan recommends five key strategic directions:

- 1. Plan on the basis of community benefit and deliver an equitable distribution and diversity of open space opportunities**
- 2. Provide places for family recreation and social gathering**
- 3. Manage places for sustainable sport**
- 4. Link the trail network and cater for additional people walking and cycling**
- 5. Promote open space opportunities and facilities**

These key strategic directions will ensure Council is well placed to meet the future demand for recreation activities of its growing population.

A summary of opportunities and recommended actions has been provided for each of these directions in the following chapters.

## 4. Plan on the basis of community benefit and to deliver an equitable distribution and diversity of open space opportunities

### Challenges ahead

The size and unique physical characteristics and diversity of the Shire's landscape present a number of challenges for the provision, distribution and management of open space. Key challenges to consider include:

- Balancing the needs of the community and the environment
- Sydney's increasing population; due to the location of The Hills Shire
- The density of residential development, and other non-recreation or community facilities not dependant on an open space setting
- The loss of open space not reserved as such (e.g. from schools and other institutions)
- Topography, as it impacts on access to facilities, and the ability to provide large open space spaces and multiple playing fields together, for example.
- Meeting expressed demand for open space in established areas as well as developing new opportunities in new release areas, and non residential areas
- Achieving a balance between the requirements of heritage, tourism, environmental and recreational uses of open space
- The land development / open space contributions process.

### 4.1 A clear planning framework

There isn't a clear hierarchy of open space at the moment; most parks are trying to be all things to all people. This is not sustainable, and will limit the range of experience available in future. In addition, there may also be some benefits of open space desired by residents that are not being provided. This is the purpose of comparing the attributes of existing open spaces with a spectrum of function and landscape setting types that reflect specific human benefits.

The proposed open space planning framework assists planners to assess and enhance:

- The **accessibility** to key opportunities
- The **diversity** of opportunities
- **Equity** in provision
- The **quality** of opportunities, against the range of specific benefits open space is designed to provide.

The framework does this by introducing a four-tiered open space classification system that includes:

- Settlement type
- Open Space Function type
- Open Space Catchment type
- Open Space Landscape setting type.

These four open space classifications, taken together, can be used to determine the amount of open space required and where it should be provided. This can be applied consistently for both new release areas and established areas of the Shire.

Appendix 1 provides definitions of the classifications in the planning framework.



## Settlement type

Settlement type describes the nature and density of a residential settlement, and the likely availability of private open space and incidental green space that results in the local area. This context is an important influence on demand. It is therefore used in determining the model of public open space provision, especially distribution and priority open space function types.

The Hills Shire has three existing distinct settlement types, and two additional forms of settlement that require a specific open space planning approach.

1. (a) Conventional established **urban areas** in the south, and  
(b) new release areas (currently in the west of the Shire from Box Hill to Baulkham Hills).  
  
In these new release areas the planning process should be the same as in established areas, however the open space function type, priorities and the model of provision will differ from other settlement types.
2. **Medium and high-density housing** will develop in nodes, and should be considered differently to lower density residential areas. Higher density developments may also include mixed use/ employment and commercial areas. These areas are likely to require open space for visual amenity due to the lack of incidental open space in the public or private domain.
3. Rural areas in the central and northern areas of the Shire, that include: (a) **rural area / rural living**, and (b) **rural village**.

## Function type

Open space function type is a reflection of the purpose, and role of the open space in the network based on key benefits sought by the community from the space. The quality of an open space can only be assessed once the function type of an open space is defined.

It is not possible therefore, to successfully design and manage an open space without knowing its function.

By providing a range of open space function types across a given area and the Shire, Council can 'future proof' the network to accommodate demographic change, and ensure that a full range of benefits will be provided and the greatest range of the population served.

For each open space function type the critical requirements or core service levels are identified to ensure it is fit for that purpose (attributes related to size / location and distribution, and quality and design) should be defined, according to the catchment hierarchy of the open space.

The priority open space function types to provide in all settlement types are:

- Social gathering / family recreation
- Sport
- Off-road trail.

However other functions are also important to provide across the Shire, such as:

- Neighbourhood relaxation
- Conservation
- Heritage
- Community garden / farm
- Campground
- Memorial park / cemetery
- Lookout and visual amenity.

Not all these spaces need to be provided by Council. However, there are benefits of all available types of spaces being promoted by Council.

### Catchment type

The catchment (local, district and sub-regional) of an open space determines its sphere of influence; the nature and scale of development required by the likely number of users, and how far they travel.

Catchment, in conjunction with open space function type, determines the core service level for a space to ensure it is fit-for-purpose. This is outlined in Appendix 2.

Core service levels should be defined for the priority open space function types in the Shire.

### Landscape setting type

Open space landscape setting type is a measure of diversity and available experiences, as well as access to nature. It reflects existing vegetation in an open space, and assists with matching requirements for specific activities, user preferences and biophysical conditions.

Advertising the landscape setting type for each open space can assist potential users to make a choice between sites for different reasons, and explore new places.

A landscape setting type classification will assist with the differentiation of sites based on experiences and environmental quality they offer and sustainability, and for planning, management and marketing purposes.

## 4.2 Core service levels

Location, distribution, size, quality and design and management requirements that ensure that open spaces are “fit for purpose” for the function type they are designed to serve, and they provide the intended benefits, are defined as **core service levels** in this Plan.

These core service levels are provided for each of the priority open space function types (sport, social gathering / family recreation, play and off-road trails), for each level of catchment hierarchy.

These core service levels are described in Appendix 2.

## 4.3 Distribution and diversity of open space

There is over 1,200ha of open space in The Hills Shire owned or managed by Council. Some 391ha (30%) of this is specifically provided for sport and recreation<sup>5</sup>.

The following table outlines the number of hectares and parcels of open space by suburb.

Much of the valleys and waterway corridors in the Shire have been retained as bushland (e.g. Bidjigal Reserve, Cumberland State Forest and William Joyce Reserve). This provides considerable environmental and recreational benefit.

Several large sporting complexes serve the Shire.

The more established areas of the Shire are home to a greater proportion of single ovals and smaller open spaces.

<sup>5</sup> Combination of social gathering / family recreation, sport, off-road trail / accessway, play, neighbourhood relaxation and water-based recreation open space. Does not include future open space.

**Table 3: Supply of total Council owned/ managed open space by suburb (including non recreational space)**

Suburb	Parcels (No.)	Area (ha)
Baulkham Hills	103	166
Beaumont Hills	19	15
Bella Vista	27	40
Box Hill	2	1
Carlingford	27	51
Castle Hill	101	193
Glenhaven	21	85
Kellyville	86	109
North Rocks	30	81
Northmead	8	12
Oatlands / North Parramatta	6	7
Rouse Hill	19	44
West Pennant Hills	39	43
Rural areas	48	410

Some suburbs lack a diversity of open space in terms of open space function types and landscape settings.

As land is developed for urban purposes, it will be important to protect existing mature trees and other vegetation, and to extend the urban forest estate. This will be particularly important in areas with higher housing density and/or larger houses.

Several large open spaces are located on the Shire's boundaries in adjoining municipalities. These include Scheyville National Park and Marramarra National Park in the north, and Lake Parramatta, Rouse Hill Regional Park, Toongabbie Creek, and Castlebrook Lawn Cemetery and Crematorium in the south.

The Hawkesbury River provides the major opportunity for water-based recreation, on the Shire's northern boundary.

There are some established and developing areas without a good network of off-road trails, a sports reserve and a social gathering / family recreation open space. These open space functions represent a good baseline provision of open space for a community.

Sports fields are at, or nearing capacity and will not be able to sustain necessary standards of safety or quality at current levels of use. This is addressed in Chapter 6.

The trail network for walking / cycling is planned but could be enhanced by creating more continuous and circuit trails, and increasing safety and standards of consistency. This is addressed in Chapter 7.

Enhancement to distribution, quality and diversity of open space opportunities should be pursued. This could be achieved by the following:

- Creating diversity through changing the function or landscape setting type of selective spaces (refer to Appendix 3)
- Creating diversity through revegetation of open space in new development areas
- Increasing the carrying capacity of sports facilities, social gathering / family recreation open space and off-road trails
- Increasing the minimum size of sports reserves and parks for social gathering / family recreation
- Adding opportunities for physical activities to social open space and opportunities for social activities to sports open space.

## 4.4 Distribution of Open Space by Primary Function

Some high level comments are provided below related to availability and distribution of each open space by function type.

The separate Issues Paper prepared for this project provides a detailed analysis of the quality, diversity, distribution and opportunities within each suburb in the Shire.

### Social gathering / family recreation

There are seven parks in the Shire that currently have social gathering / family recreation (SGFR) as a primary function type. Numerous sports open spaces also provide this as a secondary function.

The main urban areas without this type of open space in close proximity of all homes are; west of West Pennant Hills, Castle Hill south of Old Northern Road, eastern Baulkham Hills, Kellyville / Castle Hill north of Showground Road and most of Carlingford.

There is no park with this function in Glenhaven or Oatlands.

There are a number of spaces that could serve a broader social gathering / family recreation function if they were designed to provide social and physical activities for multiple age groups and people of all abilities.

This function type is discussed further in Chapter 5.

### Sport

Most residential dwellings in the Shire are within 1km catchment of sports open space. The main urban areas outside catchments of sporting reserves are; eastern Castle Hill and Glenhaven, eastern West Pennant Hills, Oatlands, eastern Beaumont Hills and southern North Rocks.

This function type is discussed further in Chapter 6.

### Off-road trail / accessway

The western urban areas are generally better served with off-road trails than eastern areas of the Shire. Castle Hill is not well served by trails.

Off-road trails are generally oriented north-south (along drainage corridors), with fewer running east-west.

Of the existing trails, few are connected into circuits through residential areas.

There are opportunities for more sports reserves to have complete park perimeter off-road trails.

This function type is discussed further in Chapter 7.

### Campground

There is an increasing value of providing camping to enhance contact with nature and for environmental education. Camping is permitted in some State Forests / National Parks and private holiday accommodation and ski parks (not Council owned or managed).

### Community garden / farm

Older and culturally diverse populations are increasingly seeking out opportunities to be involved in horticulture. There are two private community gardens (e.g. in Rouse Hill). These are not Council owned or managed.

### Play

Play spaces are well distributed throughout urban areas, particularly Baulkham Hills, Castle Hill and Kellyville. Many, however, are small. In future, play opportunities should be provided as a part of larger social gathering / family recreation areas, that cater for people with a broader range of age groups and abilities.

A number have suitable attributes to be embellished as social gathering / family recreation.

### **Neighbourhood relaxation**

There is a predominance of parks servicing this function focusing on environmental quality for contemplation, and without other recreation facilities, in Oatlands, North Rocks, Carlingford and Baulkham Hills.

### **Visual amenity / lookout**

There are lookouts located in West Pennant Hills and Dural.

Generally many parks provide visual amenity values however this type of open space will be required in higher density areas to provide restorative opportunities for residents and workers, and is suitable for small pockets of open space too small to meet the requirements of social and physical activities.

### **Conservation**

Conservation sites are mostly associated with waterway corridors and patches of remnant vegetation, including along Cattai Creek (Glenhaven and Castle Hill), Bidjigal Reserve (West Pennant Hills), along Hunts Creek (Northmead, North Rocks and West Pennant Hills) and around William Joyce Reserve (Baulkham Hills).

Conservation areas owned and managed by the Crown such as State forests and national parks are also located in the Shire (predominantly in the northern rural areas).

### **Heritage**

The Shire has six open spaces reserved for heritage purposes, located in Castle Hill (2), Bella Vista (1), Kellyville (2) and Kenthurst (1).

### **Memorial park / cemetery**

Sites with this primary function are located in Castle Hill, North Rocks and Dural. These could be better promoted to residents and visitors.

### **Water-based recreation**

The Hawkesbury River at Wiseman's Ferry provides the main water based recreation in the Shire. This is an increasingly important resource for fishing and boating, due to water quality in other waterways in the Sydney Basin. Cattai Creek is also used for fishing and kayaking. These could be better promoted to residents.

#### **ACTIONS – Plan on the basis of community benefit and to deliver an equitable distribution and diversity of open space opportunities**

1. Adopt the open space planning framework based on community benefits as policy, and apply the open space classifications set out in this Integrated Open Space Plan: Settlement type, Open Space Function, Landscape setting, and Catchment.
2. Ensure that planning controls effectively provide for a diverse range of open space functions, settings and recreation opportunities.
3. Utilise the qualitative open space planning processes based on open space function type, and those specified in the core service levels, as well as demand projections for activities, to determine the nature and quantity of open space, rather than population ratio standards.
4. Adopt the principles of; accessibility, equitable distribution, enhancing participation, quality and diversity of opportunities that underpin the open space planning framework.
5. Adopt social gathering / family recreation, off road trails and sport as the priority open space function types, and identify sites for these functions as early as possible in development planning.
6. Adopt the distances thresholds identified in the core service levels as the basis of equitably distributing open space for social gathering / family recreation, off-road trails and sporting open space.



**ACTIONS – Plan on the basis of community benefit and to deliver an equitable distribution and diversity of open space opportunities (cont'd)**

7. Seek to modify existing or provide additional open space, to address areas outside the recommended distance thresholds recommended for social gathering / family recreation, off-road trails and sport open space.
8. Create diversity in open spaces across the Shire and, where possible, in each suburb. This could be achieved through changing the function or landscape setting type of selective existing open spaces (as outlined in Appendix 3) and/or providing diversity in the function or landscape setting type of new open spaces.
9. Ensure that in areas of higher density developments, including commercial activity centres there is an availability of green space and the priority types of open space identified for each settlement type, in accordance with the core service levels.
10. Ensure that rural communities have access to the priority open space function (off-road trails, a sports reserve and a social gathering / family recreation open space) within village centres at Kenthurst, Maroota and Wiseman's Ferry.
11. Provide a higher level of environmental amenity in open spaces and allow people to connect with nature by protecting existing mature trees / vegetation and revegetating selected cleared areas.

## 5. Provide places for family recreation and social gatherings

### What is a social gathering / family recreation open space?

An open space with a function of social gathering / family recreation (SGFR) is a space that can cater for people of all ages and abilities rather than being a single purpose play space just for children.

This function of open space encapsulates all the key themes of this plan: diversity, choice, and providing higher environmental amenity, social and physical activity closer to home.

This open space provides opportunities for visitors and employees, as well as residents.

Typically opportunities beyond that provided by play equipment can be encouraged through provision of hard courts and nets, table games, tables and chairs, play and fitness equipment, goal posts for social sports, open green space for kick-to-kick, areas for personal training, and circular path systems for exercise. Other facilities to cater for skating, cycling, community gardens, environmental education and events may also be provided.

In addition, a higher standard of amenity will be needed to keep people there. These parks would be more intensively designed and landscaped as a key hub in each suburb, and provide a diversity of vegetation, tree canopy and supports such as paths, areas for pet exercise, and seats and tables.

To meet these requirements these parks will need to be larger (over 1ha) than the traditional children's playground or pocket park. Evidence suggests many more people are willing to travel slightly farther for these higher quality open spaces.

### Social gathering / family recreation open space in The Hills Shire

There are several parks in the Shire that currently have social gathering / family recreation function type, as either a primary or secondary function type.

As discussed in Section 4.4, some residential areas are not in close proximity of these open spaces.

To meet this shortfall, this Plan recommends that a local-level social gathering / family recreation open space be provided within 800m of all residential dwellings. Existing open spaces that meet the criteria are:

- Bella Vista Village Green, Bella Vista
- Castlewood Community Reserve, Castle Hill
- Coolong Reserve, Castle Hill
- Craigmore Drive Reserve, Kellyville
- Don Moore Reserve, North Rocks
- George Gollan Reserve, Oatlands
- Glenhaven Reserve, Glenhaven
- John Wearn Reserve, North Rocks
- Kellyville Rotary Park, Kellyville
- Rainbow Farm Reserve, Carlingford
- Rutherford Avenue Reserve, Kellyville
- Speers Road Reserve, North Rocks
- Stringer Reserve, Kellyville
- Turkeys Nest, Beaumont Hills
- Ullundri Drive Reserve, Castle Hill.

All of these open spaces, except Bella Vista Village Green, Castlewood Community Reserve, Coolong Reserve, Glenhaven Reserve and John Wearn Reserve, will require improvements to meet all the core service levels for this classification (refer to Section 4.2).

District-level open spaces will also be distributed to meet a desired catchment distance of 2km. The following existing open spaces that meet this criteria:

- Balcombe Heights Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Bernie Mullane Reserve, Kellyville
- Castle Hill Heritage Park, Castle Hill
- Connie Lowe Reserve, Rouse Hill
- Crestwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Fred Caterson Reserve, Castle Hill
- George Thornton Reserve, West Pennant Hills
- North Rocks Park, North Rocks
- Ted Horwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills.

Of these open spaces, Castle Hill Heritage Park, Fred Caterson Reserve and George Thornton Reserve will require improvements to meet all the core service levels for this classification (refer to Sections 4.2 and 9.1).

These social gathering / family recreation open spaces are shown on Map 1.

A number of these spaces are currently sports open spaces, and will be embellished to have a secondary social gathering / family recreation function type.

The current amount of land dedicated to a play function, and the small proportion of the population directly served by play spaces, suggests that providing social gathering / family recreation spaces is more sustainable and represents a better return on investment than providing single purpose spaces just for children's play.

Where play equipment comes up for renewal in Council's asset management plan Council should seek to redesign these small play spaces or develop them for other purposes, which might mean removing existing elements. Rather than adding more play equipment items in spaces that have poor relationships with adjacent residences or can't be more diverse or inclusive, it would be desirable to provide fewer spaces with a play function and more with a social gathering / family recreation function.

### **Priority new social gathering / family recreation open spaces**

Of the above existing open spaces, the following should be redesigned and embellished as social gathering / family recreation open space as a priority:

- Castle Hill Heritage Park
- Craigmores Drive Reserve
- Fred Caterson Reserve
- George Gollan Reserve
- George Thornton Reserve
- Kellyville Rotary Park
- Rainbow Farm Reserve
- Speers Road Reserve
- Ted Horwood Reserve
- Turkeys Nest.

This is to most effectively fill the gaps in current provision of these open spaces close to residential areas.

**ACTIONS – Provide places for family recreation and social gatherings**

12. Over time selectively migrate larger sites provided for play to social gathering / family recreation, in particular to cater better for teenagers, older adults and people with a disability.
13. Seek to provide open spaces for social gathering / family recreation that are at least one hectare in size.
14. Selectively redesign and embellish open spaces in each suburb for social gatherings / family recreation, with the priorities being:
  - Castle Hill Heritage Park (district)
  - Craigmore Drive Reserve (local)
  - Fred Caterson Reserve (district)
  - George Gollan Reserve (local)
  - George Thornton Reserve (district)
  - Kellyville Rotary Park (local)
  - Rainbow Farm Reserve (local)
  - Speers Road Reserve (local)
  - Ted Horwood Reserve (district)
  - Turkeys Nest (local).
15. Develop Bella Vista Farm Park as a regional park destination and tourism opportunity in accordance with the adopted Conservation Management Plan and Plan of Management.
16. Provide more social and physical activities that include all family members, and provide additional environmental amenity, shade and aesthetic values in parks for social gathering / family recreation.
17. Consider providing opportunities for an extended range of activities in parks to meet demand, these may include group fitness, dog socialisation and exercise, social organised sports, roller sports, water based recreation, community horticulture, environmental education and events.

## 6. Manage spaces for sustainable sport

Because of population growth, some 12,000 additional participants are likely to want to undertake outdoor sports and recreation activities in the Shire in 2036.

### 6.1 Distribution of sports opportunities

An equitable distribution of sports facilities is important for young people and because the Shire's topography and lack of public transport increases travel time. Fortunately, most dwellings in urban areas are within 1km of a sports facility. This is discussed in Section 4.4.

To ensure that sports open spaces are designed and managed to be "fit for purpose" this Plan recommends that three catchment levels be used. Core service levels will apply to each of these catchments (refer to Sections 4.2 and 9.1).

The following are proposed local-level social sports open spaces, with a desired catchment of 1km:

- Russell Reserve, Rouse Hill
- Annangrove Park, Annangrove
- Stringer Reserve, Kellyville
- Arnold Avenue Sports Complex, Kellyville
- Holland Road Reserve, Glenhaven
- Glenhaven Reserve, Glenhaven
- Wrights Road Reserve, Castle Hill
- Castle Glen Reserve, Castle Hill
- Greenup Park, Castle Hill
- Castlewood Community Reserve, Castle Hill
- Eric Mobbs Reserve, Castle Hill
- Murray Farm Reserve, Carlingford
- Harold West Reserve, Carlingford
- Peggy Wormsley Kingsdene Oval, Carlingford
- Don Moore, North Rocks
- Speers Road Reserve, North Rocks

- Francesco Crescent Reserve, Bella Vista
- Bella Vista Farm Park, Bella Vista
- AH Whaling Memorial Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Yattenden Oval, Baulkham Hills
- Charles McLaughlin Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Torry Burn Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Gooden Drive Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Col Sutton Park, Baulkham Hills
- Northmead Reserve, Northmead.

District-level sports open spaces will be distributed to meet a desired catchment distance of 2km. These are:

- Kellyville Netball Complex, Kellyville
- Bernie Mullane Sports Complex, Kellyville
- Kellyville Memorial Park, Kellyville
- Bruce Purser Reserve / The Hills Centenary Park, Rouse Hill
- Crestwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Ted Horwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- Balcombe Heights Reserve, Baulkham Hills
- George Thornton Reserve, West Pennant Hills
- North Rocks Park, Carlingford.

Fred Caterson Reserve, Castle Hill, is proposed to be a sub-regional sports open space, with a desired catchment of 4km.

These sports open spaces are shown on Map 2.

It is also important to retain and/or provide sports facilities in activity centres and higher density housing developments. As a minimum, small footprint social sport facilities could be provided in these areas.



## 6.2 Planning and design of sports facilities

A number of new sporting facilities will be required to meet the increases in population projected to 2036. Table 6 identifies the likely number and nature of additional sports facilities required.

The table also shows the new sports facilities that are currently planned in the new growth areas of the Shire.

On the basis of what is currently planned, there is a deficit of facilities for certain sports, including athletics, Australian Rules football, hockey, rugby league, softball, tennis and touch football.

To address this, new facilities could be developed for a different sport to meet an identified demand.

Examples that should be investigated are:

- Purpose-building the northern field at Balmoral Road Reserve for Australian Rules football, with the current club activities at Kellyville be relocated to this field
- Redesign of Kellyville Park to accommodate better facilities for rugby league, when the access from Memorial Avenue is achieved
- Allocation of the proposed playing fields at Terry Road, Box Hill for hockey
- Allocation of the southern playing fields in the North Kellyville Release Area for Australian Rules football
- Allocation of the proposed fields at The Water Lane for softball.

New cricket facilities could also be developed to enable sharing with winter sports, such as Australian Rules football and rugby league. Provision of complexes with multiple fields should be maximised to provide for flexibility in sport activities.

More multiple and lit playing surfaces would also provide greater opportunities for social sports activities in reserves, including pay-as-you-play sports (such as touch football, OzTag and disc golf) and free-access sports (such as basketball, tennis and volleyball). This will increase participation.

Provision of new or upgraded facilities will need to recognise fluctuations in demand for sports, changes in club operations and the rate that new residents move into an area.

A clear hierarchy of facilities per sport, in line with the sporting code's strategic plans will be important, as well as an equitable distribution of facilities to meet a range of needs, and code compliant facilities with adequate support facilities including canteen, amenities and storage will allow clubs to operate more effectively and efficiently.

Ensuring sports facilities are provided on larger sites, not susceptible to inundation, would reduce maintenance costs, lessen impact on residential amenity of facilities too close to houses, and enhance the opportunity of sustaining a quality surface.

Larger sites will also enable: greater shared usage of facilities; the development of bigger clubs that are generally more sustainable and offer better service; and greater flexibility to meet changing community needs.

Opportunities should also be sought to utilise sports reserves as hubs for social gathering / family recreation in future developments, and if such a dedicated open space is not available in the locality. Refer to Chapter 5.

**Table 6: Additional sports complexes required to meet projected demand 2012-2031**

Sport	Existing No. of fields 2012	Assumed participation 2012 (est.)	Assumed participation 2021 (est.)	Additional complexes required 2012-2021 (a)	Assumed participation 2031 (est.)	Additional complexes required 2021-2031 [over and above (a)]	Facilities Currently Planned to 2031
Athletics	3	2,071	2,588	2 facilities, preferably shared with other sports	3,337	1 facility, preferably shared with other sports	1
Australian Rules football	3	3,628	4,208	5 x 2-field complexes, preferably shared with cricket	5,091	1 x 2-field complex, preferably shared with cricket	1
Baseball	15	2,302	2,670	1 x 3-diamond complex	3,230	1 x 3-diamond complex	3
Cricket	43	2,850	3,306	None. Opportunity to share planned grounds with other sports	3,999	None. Opportunity to share planned grounds with other sports	13
Disc golf	2	250	290	None	351	None	0
Golf	4	7,574	8,786	None	10,628	None	0
Hockey (outdoor)	1	196	1,458	1 x dedicated complex with 2 pitches and 1 practice / warm up area	2,720	Review participation and consider additional complex; provided at school and/or shared with another sport (e.g. tennis). This would depend on provision of facilities outside the Shire	1
Lawn bowls	10	1,859	2,157	None	2,609	Review participation and consider additional complex	0
Netball (outdoor)	62	4,837	6,770	None	8,704	None	6
Rugby league	8	1,700	3,106	1 x 2-field complex, preferably shared with cricket	4,512	1 x 2-field complex, preferably shared with cricket	0
Rugby union	2	1,912	2,218	2 x 2-field complexes, preferably shared with cricket	2,683	None	5
Soccer	45	5,052	9,754	None	14,456	(a) 1 dedicated 6-pitch (min.) complex, (b) a dedicated 2-pitch complex, and (c) a 3-pitch complex (preferably shared with cricket)	22
Softball	0	180	693	1 x 2-diamond complex, preferably shared with other sports	1,207	1 x 2-diamond complex, preferably shared with other sports	0
Swimming	1	15,311	17,760	Subject to separate Council assessment	21,485	Subject to separate Council assessment	0
Tennis	43	15,577	18,069	2 additional courts at Fred Caterson Reserve plus 2 x 6-court complexes	21,858	1 sub-regional complex (12 courts)	18
Touch football	1	5,309	6,158	1 x 4-field complex, preferably shared with other sports	7,450	1 x 4-field complex, preferably shared with other sports	0

### 6.3 Sports management

Additional management of surface wear and ground conditions will be required to accommodate an increasing number of sports participants.

Selective synthetic sports fields could provide for better football training and preseason use, and protect turf fields from over-use. It is anticipated that all synthetic surfaces would be subject to joint funding agreements and substantial grant funding from State Government and/or sporting associations.

To encourage use, simpler booking arrangements and a management presence especially at court facilities is desirable.

The professional management of facilities should be considered to improve their operation and maintenance, increase opening hours and provide commercial opportunities for shopfronts or cafes. This may also increase use.

Additional female and emerging sports could be encouraged through allocation priorities and then potentially through pricing incentives.

Council can assist clubs to be more viable through partnership arrangements during facility planning, and incentives created through occupancy agreement conditions.

The Recreation Plan 2007 recommended: *(43) Provide support to clubs and groups.* This is an ongoing action and remains relevant.

A clear policy for sports clubs and community groups concerning capital contributions, that provides incentives for user groups to contribute under consistent guidelines, and on the basis that no ownership of facilities is implied, would encourage greater investment in support facilities. Refer to Section 9.2.

#### ACTIONS – Manage spaces for sustainable sport

18. Undertake an audit of the existing supply of sports facilities and seek to address gaps in provision, and facilities where the current facilities do not meet the core service levels.
19. Seek to provide a clear hierarchy of sports facilities across the Shire, in keeping with the requirements of each sport; the desirable level of competition, and the sustainable number of fields / courts in complexes.
20. Continue to provide a range of facilities and venues that support a wide variety of organised sport participation opportunities, suitable for females and males.
21. Consistently provide practice facilities to support competition sport, and that can be used for casual use.
22. Continue to work closely with user groups, clubs and associations to progressively plan and manage sporting facilities.
23. Ensure sports facilities are provided on land that is not encumbered by poor drainage, flooding, heritage controls or excessive slope.
24. Provide fewer, more functional, and shared support facilities on sportsgrounds, by:
  - a) Continuing to upgrade support facilities on sportsgrounds to provide adequate storage and canteens, amenities, to become code compliant, and enable sharing; and
  - b) Providing amenities and parking on the perimeter of sportsgrounds so as to maximise playing space for sports and enhance club viability.
25. Continue to facilitate the growth in sports codes, to cater for: a greater depth of competition in the Shire; pathways from children's development programs through to senior club competition; people with a disability; and larger clubs catering to males and females. Recognise the development of the following locations for the codes identified in conjunction with the relevant peak sporting association:
  - a) Australian Rules football and cricket – Bruce Purser Reserve
  - b) Soccer – Fred Caterson Reserve (along with tennis, basketball, BMX and baseball)
  - c) Rugby league and baseball – Kellyville Park
  - d) Softball – The Water Lane Reserve

**ACTIONS – Manage spaces for sustainable sport (cont'd)**

26. Continue to seek opportunities to share facilities that are currently seasonally allocated.
27. Plan future infrastructure that maximises the number of playing fields: per code in the one season, and on the one level, and minimises the number of buildings per site.
28. Enhance the carrying capacity of sports fields by ensuring all grounds have lights (suitable for at least training), drainage and irrigation, and that can be programmed for social events.
29. Introduce synthetic surfaces at selected locations to increase carrying capacity and assist in reducing the wear on main playing surfaces.
30. Work closely with all peak sporting associations to establish a strategic approach to the development of sporting facilities in the Shire. Reassign the anticipated sport codes at the following locations:
  - a) Australian Rules football – Balmoral Road Reserve (northern field);
  - b) Rugby league – Kellyville Park;
  - c) Hockey – Terry Road Reserve, Box Hill;
  - d) Australian Rules football – southern playing fields in the North Kellyville Release Area; and
  - e) Softball – The Water Lane Reserve.
31. Seek opportunities to improve facilities for BMX sports (such as at Fred Caterson Reserve).
32. Redesign Fred Caterson Reserve to meet sub-regional standards of sport that includes:
  - a) A premier oval with seating for 300-400 people
  - b) Match play standard lighting
  - c) Small club rooms
  - d) A synthetic playing surface.
33. Seek improved opportunities to provide for event sports such as Tuff Mudda and Triathlons.
34. Continue to improve access to information about sporting facilities and opportunities available.

## 7. Link the trail network and cater for additional people walking and cycling

It is anticipated that approximately 112,000 people will use off-road trails in The Hills Shire in 2021. This is likely to increase to about 135,600 by 2031.

### 7.1 Off-road trail circuits are a priority

Off-road trails provided as circuits, are a priority open space type needed close to home, as the most popular recreational activities are undertaken on trails.

To meet the requirements for a range of users, a hierarchy of trails are needed. This includes; local park perimeter trails, trail circuits around suburbs that link local destinations, trails along major open space, waterway and bushland corridors, and trails connecting communities and other Council areas.

Off-road trails provide a range of benefits including:

- Opportunities for people to be physically active, socialise and experience nature
- They enable people to move safely and cheaply around the neighbourhood, especially for younger and older people who cannot drive
- Provide opportunities for children to develop physically active habits and way finding skills, safely ride a bike and easily connect with friends
- Important recreation opportunities for visitors.
- Reducing carbon footprint and non pervious spaces on open space required for car parking
- Off-road trails are relatively inexpensive to build and maintain (in comparison with other recreation facilities).

### 7.2 Distribution and existing off-road trails

The Shire has undertaken extensive trail work in recent years. Securing the Greenway through new residential development areas has been a very positive outcome for the Shire.

An off-road trail circuit provided and promoted in each suburb should be a priority. The creek / bushland corridors provide an ideal setting for trails, however where possible trails should be provided in a variety of settings.

The western urban areas are generally better served than eastern areas of the Shire. Castle Hill for example is not well served by off-road trails.

Off-road trails are mostly oriented north-south (along drainage corridors) in the Shire, with fewer running east-west.

Inter-suburb trails give users wider opportunities to access and experience other areas of the Shire, as well as a progression of different length trail for individuals and families building up their fitness and riding experience.

Council should seek to link growth areas in Box Hill, Rouse Hill and Beaumont Hills back to established areas of the Shire.

Map 3 illustrates the priority trail routes to be developed in the urban areas in the south of the Shire.

In the north of the Shire, the Hawkesbury River is a significant natural feature, and is an increasingly important destination for water-based recreation, as well as an environmental asset for the Greater Sydney region. Several regional trails are associated with the Hawkesbury River and rural areas of the Shire, such as the Great North Walk, Great River Walk and Great North Road.

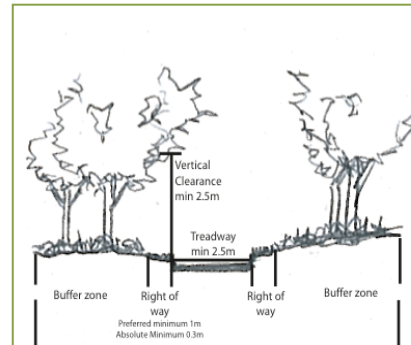


### 7.3 Opportunities to enhance trails

There are opportunities to enhance the value and increase the use of trails by:

- Providing more detailed classification and mapping of trails
- Providing more park perimeter trails, especially around sport and social gathering / family recreation open space
- Develop and extend existing trails to create further circuits
- Design off-road trails so that they are purpose built, away from the building line, and when in open space with a buffer zone, right of way and treadway (refer to Figure 1)
- Provide a hierarchy of trails – and illustrate the suitability of these for specific types of activities (e.g. people using wheelchairs, mountain biking, equestrian use and skating)
- Consider dedicating a network of equestrian trails in the rural areas
- Enhance the quality and design of off-road trails to better meet user needs, including where they travel through residential streets
- Target visitors and connections to regional trails in the north, as well as trails that take users on longer routes between suburbs and beyond the Shire
- Expand provision in some areas
- Acquire routes in dedicated corridors through new release area (such as the Greenway)
- Adopt a standard definition and design for an off-road trail, and allocate an annual budget for their planning and construction
- Seek to secure a public corridor of open space along the Hawkesbury River through development
- Continue to seek regional grants for trails construction.

Figure 1: Anatomy of an off-road trail



#### ACTIONS – Link the trail network and cater for additional people walking and cycling

35. Extend the network of off-road trails to include: park perimeter trails, a local trail circuit of trails around each suburb, and trails that connect suburbs and trails beyond the municipality.
36. Continue to implement the actions of the Tracks and Trails Strategy and the key links in the Bike Plan.
37. Introduce consistent wayfinding signage across the trail network
38. Continue to use the tracks and trails branding on promotional materials and signage associated with the off-road network.
39. Prioritise off-road trails over on-road routes.
40. Develop a hierarchy of off-road trails that include local, district and sub-regional trails.
41. Actively participate in the development of regional trails, such as the Great North Walk, Great River Walk and Great North Road. Provide sub-regional trails that connect with these trails and provide access beyond the municipality (including the Cattai Creek Trail).
42. Agree on relatively standard design and construction guidelines for off-road trails and undertake a systematic upgrade to signage, line marking, promotion and maintenance priorities.
43. Seek a continuous corridor of public land along the Hawkesbury River, in the long term. Protect the riparian habitat and provide nodes for social gathering / family recreation, and off-road trails.
44. In conjunction with peak bodies investigate the opportunity to develop a circuit track around an existing sports field for training or criterion racing.
45. Investigate opportunities for a major mountain bike and nature-based trail facility.

## 8. Promote open space opportunities and facilities

The quality of open space is one of the competitive strengths of the Shire, as it contributes to the health and wellbeing of its people, and helps unite the character of its urban neighbourhoods and rural areas.

### 8.1 Beyond open space infrastructure development and maintenance

Council has a role not only in providing parks but also in promoting their use and value. This can be done indirectly through online promotion, and through signage, but also actively through programming activities such as walks, in reserves.

Marketing and information is a key role for Council to ensure that a good return is made for its investment in open space. It is important to measure the outcomes of Council's investment in terms of participation and benefits accrued.

Access to good information means that residents will have better choice, and are more likely to make better decisions about what to do and where to go, and therefore be more likely to be satisfied with their experience. This applies particularly to those with specific needs, such as:

- Physical accessibility of facilities
- Availability of toilets
- Equipment suitable for specific age groups (e.g. preschool children, dog on-leash areas, or parks accessible from an off-road shared trail)
- Motivation to use of open space is generally achieved by providing suitable and attractive opportunities, convenience and promotion.

The Hills Shire has an increasingly large and diverse population, with equally diverse needs for open space. This will require a diversity of forms and formats of promotion and information.

Council has excellent information about its parks and trails. There are opportunities to diversify the nature and use of this information including taking advantage of social technologies and mobile devices. A wide range of information off-site and on-site is required to encourage appropriate use.

Council should review its signing of parks, and develop a consistent design palette for the suite of name, directional, information and risk management signs.

It will be important to increase education about the responsible use of parks, trails, sports grounds and conservation areas, including for dog owners.

### 8.2 Reinforcing the brand

The Hills Shire is branded as the 'Garden Shire'. In Hills 2026, the community clearly desired that this continue into the future. Open space is a critical component of the Shire's future.

When Council markets the brand, it could also market the benefits of using open space. Simply put these should include:

- Play, learning and stimulation
- Physical activity / sport
- Social gathering and interaction
- Relaxation and restoration
- Contact with and appreciation of nature
- Civic pride

Trees are an essential element of the brand, and because the Shire has a considerable number of trees, there is likely to be some complacency with respect to their protection and planting.

Marketing of Council's parks and open space should be part of attracting business investment and promoting the Shire to visitors and prospective businesses. Corporate and outdoor sport and recreation events could have a key role to play in the Hills future.

### 8.3 Encouraging contact with nature and community engagement

There are considerable benefits to health and wellbeing of green space and access to nature.

Children growing up in urban areas have less attachment to nature and therefore are less likely to protect it. Parks and play spaces therefore have an important role in promoting interaction with, psychological interest in, and attachment to nature, and motivate residents to go outdoors and play.

As the Shire grows and more people come to live here from other places, Council information about parks and sport should be directed more at new residents. Promoting appropriate activities that are sustainable and consistent with the function and management objectives of a park will help to deter undesirable uses.

Due to the high education levels and professional nature of the population in some areas of the Shire, there will be an increasing willingness and expectation that the community will be involved in some aspects of planning, development and management of open space. People with high income and education levels are also generally more interested and informed about healthy living and environmental protection.

There is considerable value in engaging residents more in the planning and development of open space. Greater ownership of parks will enhance resident's willingness to care and protect them, and encourage use. Engaging residents more will mean that local wants are also more likely to be met.

Similarly, ensuring that hiring and occupancy processes and pricing are transparent means users will understand the degree to which Council subsidises their use and this will help change attitudes.

#### **ACTIONS – Promote open space opportunities and facilities**

46. Continue to promote open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Shire to residents, employers and visitors. Utilise existing strategies and activities / events by Council, community / sporting groups or other organisations where possible.
47. Continue to promote the 'Garden Shire' and 'Sydney Hills' as a destination for new businesses and events, and at the same time promote the benefits of open space.
48. Provide a variety of information on site and off site about open space, and sport and recreation facilities in the Shire using a range of methods and media. Utilise more social technology to connect young people with parks and activities.
49. Review the signing of parks, and develop a consistent design palette for a suite of name, directional, information and risk management signs in accordance with the catchment level of the park.
50. Include signage that highlights the positive attributes of parks, and activities that could be undertaken.
51. Incorporate interpretive elements in key open space to improve visitor experiences, and recognise the history, character and significance of a place.
52. Continue to work with key partners to increase participation in activities in parks (physical, social and environmental), particularly by targeting children, families, older adults and isolated people.

**ACTIONS – Promote open space opportunities and facilities (cont'd)**

53. Continue to plant a significant number of trees in parks and streets, for shade, amenity, and natural values and reinforce neighbourhood character and the Shire's brand.
54. Investigate opportunities to conduct mass sport and recreation participation events that:
  - a) Promote the benefits of an active lifestyle;
  - b) Showcase the Shire's natural assets; and
  - c) Attract visitors to the Shire.
55. Provide regular opportunities for residents to get involved in parks and open space planning and development projects.
56. Provide more transparent information to user groups about open space, and costs of maintenance, and encourage more community support in the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the Shire's open space.
57. Support community initiated and funded projects that:
  - a) Have a sound policy and strategy basis;
  - b) Conform to clear design and construction guidance, naming protocols and contributions policy; and
  - c) Have sustainable management plans.
58. Support community driven open space projects by Council policy, agreed design standards, professional planning and design input, clear guidelines or policy about ownership and management of the outcomes, and the principles and actions of this plan.
59. Consider facilitating and supporting residents and community groups undertaking:
  - a) Significant planting for civic pride, amenity and environmental benefits, such as along town entries, main streets and waterways;
  - b) Greening programs and Landcare work; and
  - c) Developing off-road trails.
60. Enhance education about responsible use of parks, trails, sportsgrounds and conservation areas, including that directed at dog owners.
61. Continue to support major physical events such as the Sydney Hills Dirt Fest, and the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic.

## 9. Implementation of the Integrated Open Space Plan

### 9.1 Core Service Levels

Core service levels are requirements related to size, location and distribution, quality and design or management that will ensure that an open space of a particular function type is fit for that purpose, and will provide the corresponding community benefits for which it is provided.

These core service levels are defined according to each catchment hierarchy of open space (local, district and subregional), as the scale, quality and complexity of infrastructure increases as the sphere of influence and distance travelled to an open space increases.

These core service levels or provision standards are most relevant to open spaces provided in urban settlement types. They will assist Council in determining what types of spaces are required when development occurs: how big, where spaces should be located, how that should be distributed and what core infrastructure should be provided, once demand for activities has been determined. These basic requirements should be used to inform Section 94 plans and policy input into plans developed by the state government, as well as design briefs.

Core service levels assist Council to distribute resources more equitably. They minimise duplication and over-servicing by not maintaining or developing local spaces beyond their core requirements (as may be promoted by residents or developers), and ensuring subregional and visitor destinations are more adequately resourced.

Core service levels provide a benchmark to enable more efficient decision making about development proposals and dealing with external requests for facility improvements. They inform asset management plans, and help to establish maintenance regimes in keeping with the role of the space and level of importance and use of a space. Core service levels also enable more accurate forecasting of costs.

Where proposals for facility improvements are above the core service levels, alternate funding will need to be sourced to fill the gap between the increased costs and Council's allocated funding.

Core service levels proposed are outlined in Appendix 2 for each of the priority open space function type.

### 9.2 Funding and resourcing

Council currently allocated funding for open space capital works by a four-year rolling works program. There is, however, currently no capital works budget for off-road trails – the only ways these are provided are through development contributions or external grants. Due to the priority of trails, this needs to be addressed.

A minor grants program was established through the previous Recreation Strategy to support the establishment of new sport and recreation participation opportunities through partnerships with external providers.

Council has pursued the development and management of school grounds for sport. This is a more cost effective option than purchasing additional land.

Council could seek contributions from users and groups who desire infrastructure to a standard over and above local core service levels. A clear policy, however, needs to be in place before this is promoted.

A number of options to recoup and minimise costs are available, including:

- Different pricing for volunteer clubs, not for profit sports and commercial users
- Increasing sharing and user compliance to times allocated and user conditions
- Crowd funding projects
- Advertising opportunities for sponsorship
- Encourage residents to bequeath funds for specific development projects or types of infrastructure.

### 9.3 Priorities

Funds and resources need to be allocated equitably across a range of open space, and sport and recreation facilities.

Key criteria to determine the priority (importance) of actions are:

- Participation outcomes
- Equitable distribution of opportunities
- Diversity of opportunities
- Accessibility to target groups

It is critical that the Integrated Open Space Plan aligns with Council's core business. The actions found within this Plan align with the themes of The Hills Shire Plan (refer to Chapter 3):

- Proactive leadership
- Vibrant communities
- Balanced urban growth
- Protected environment
- Modern local economy

These should also be used to prioritising actions of this Plan. In addition criteria that can be used to prioritise actions include those associated with risk management and the practicality of undertaking and funding the action.

The preferred criteria for prioritising actions are provided as Appendix 4.

Detailed scoping and costings of the various initiatives in each suburb need to be developed as part of an annual implementation plan for consideration in future capital works budgets.

### 9.4 Monitoring and implementation

Open space planning currently requires input from staff from different areas of Council.

To ensure it is implemented in a coordinated and efficient manner, the Integrated Open Space Plan needs to have:

- An implementation plan, with allocated priorities
- Funds to implement key works
- A formalised implementation and monitoring process
- Staff allocated to champion the plan, with coordination through a working group or similar.

The Implementation Plan is provided in the following section.

#### ACTIONS – Implementation of the Integrated Open Space Plan

62. Utilise the criteria set out in Appendix 4 to determine the priorities for action.
63. Establish an annual and rolling capital works budget for off-road trails.
64. Continue to develop partnerships with schools and private providers to meet open space demand.
65. Actively seek external funding to provide and improve open space, including government grants, private investment, philanthropic trusts, and other initiatives.
66. Determine eligible projects for and actively seek Metropolitan Green space funding.
67. Prepare a policy on capital contribution by sports clubs and community groups, that provides incentives for user groups to contribute, under consistent guidelines and on the basis that no ownership is implied.
68. Continue with monitoring and long-term financial planning to address funding shortfalls in contributions plan areas.
69. Continue to liaise with adjoining Councils and relevant State Government agencies to improve planning, funding and delivery of cross-boundary connections to open space.

**ACTIONS – Implementation of the Integrated Open Space Plan (cont'd)**

70. Facilitate a multidisciplinary approach within Council when planning and delivering open space projects.
71. Ensure that the asset management system includes the upgrade of infrastructure to current standards, in addition to the provision of new infrastructure.
72. Continue to work with the State Government to ensure high quality open space outcomes in new release areas.



## 9.5 Implementation Plan

The following table outlines the recommended actions from this project. These have been grouped under the relevant Strategic Direction, as well as general implementation of the Integrated Open Space Strategy.

It also identifies a broad probable cost and which department should lead each project.

Actions have been defined as capital works (CW), policy / facilitation (PF) or project planning (PP). High priority actions have been indicated, based on the criteria outlined in Appendix 4.

Indicative probable costs have only been determined for selected capital work actions. A high proportion of actions relate to policy and facilitation with generally an internal cost. The cost of other actions will need to be determined.

Departments that should take lead responsibility for each action have been identified: Infrastructure Planning (IP), Forward Planning (FP) and Community Services (CS).

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Respons-ibility
<b>Planning on the basis of community benefit</b>					
1.	Adopt the open space planning framework based on community benefits as policy, and apply the open space classifications set out in this Integrated Open Space Plan: Settlement type, Open Space Function, Landscape setting, and Catchment.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
2.	Ensure that planning controls effectively provide for a diverse range of open space functions, settings and recreation opportunities.	PF		Internal cost	IP
3.	Utilise the qualitative open space planning processes based on open space function type, and those specified in the core service levels, as well as demand projections for activities, to determine the nature and quantity of open space, rather than population ratio standards.	PF		Internal cost	IP
4.	Adopt the principles of: accessibility, equitable distribution, enhancing participation, quality and diversity of opportunities that underpin the open space planning framework.	PF		Internal cost	IP
5.	Adopt social gathering / family recreation, off road trails and sport as the priority open space function types, and identify sites for these functions as early as possible in development planning.	PF		Internal cost	IP
6.	Adopt the distances thresholds identified in the core service levels as the basis of equitably distributing open space for social gathering / family recreation, off-road trails and sporting open space.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
7.	Seek to modify existing or provide additional open space, to address areas outside the recommended distance thresholds recommended for social gathering / family recreation, off-road trails and sport open space.	CW		To be determined	IP
8.	Create diversity in open spaces across the Shire and, where possible, in each suburb. This could be achieved through changing the function or landscape setting type of selective existing open spaces (as outlined in Appendix 3) and/or providing diversity in the function or landscape setting type of new open spaces.	CW		\$ 650,000	IP

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Respons-ibility
9.	Ensure that in areas of higher density developments, including commercial activity centres there is an availability of green space and the priority types of open space identified for each settlement type, in accordance with the core service levels.	PF		Internal cost / to be determined	FP
10.	Ensure that rural communities have access to the priority open space function (off-road trails, a sports reserve and a social gathering / family recreation open space) within village centres at Kenthurst, Maroota and Wiseman's Ferry.	PF		\$ 555,000	IP
11.	Provide a higher level of environmental amenity in open spaces and allow people to connect with nature by protecting existing mature trees / vegetation and revegetating selected cleared areas.	CW		Internal cost / to be determined	IP
<b>Provide places for family recreation and social gathering</b>					
12.	Over time selectively migrate larger sites provided for play to social gathering / family recreation, in particular to cater better for teenagers, older adults and people with a disability.	PP		To be determined	IP
13.	Seek to provide open spaces for social gathering / family recreation that are at least one hectare in size.	PF / PP		Internal cost / to be determined	IP
14.	Selectively redesign and embellish open spaces in each suburb for social gatherings / family recreation, with the priorities being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Castle Hill Heritage Park (district)</li> <li>▪ Craigmores Drive Reserve (local)</li> <li>▪ Fred Caterson Reserve (district)</li> <li>▪ George Gollan Reserve (local)</li> <li>▪ George Thornton Reserve (district)</li> <li>▪ Kellyville Rotary Park (local)</li> <li>▪ Rainbow Farm Reserve (local)</li> <li>▪ Speers Road Reserve (local)</li> <li>▪ Ted Horwood Reserve (district)</li> <li>▪ Turkeys Nest (local).</li> </ul>	CW	✓	\$ 2,110,000	IP
15.	Develop Bella Vista Farm Park as a regional park destination and tourism opportunity in accordance with the adopted Conservation Management Plan and Plan of Management.	CW	✓	To be determined	IP
16.	Provide more social and physical activities that include all family members, and provide additional environmental amenity, shade and aesthetic values in parks for social gathering / family recreation.	PP		To be determined	IP
17.	Consider providing opportunities for an extended range of activities in parks to meet demand, these may include group fitness, dog socialisation and exercise, social organised sports, roller sports, water based recreation, community horticulture, environmental education and events.	PP / PF		Internal cost / to be determined	IP

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Respons-ibility
<b>Manage places for sustainable sport</b>					
18.	Undertake an audit the existing supply of sports facilities and seek to address gaps in provision, and facilities where the current facilities do not meet the core service levels.	PP		Internal cost	IP
19.	Seek to provide a clear hierarchy of sports facilities across the Shire, in keeping with the requirements of each sport; the desirable level of competition, and the sustainable number of fields / courts in complexes.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
20.	Continue to provide a range of facilities and venues that support a wide variety of organised sport participation opportunities, suitable for females and males.	PP	✓	To be determined	IP
21.	Consistently provide practice facilities to support competition sport, and that can be used for casual use.	PP		To be determined	IP
22.	Continue to work closely with user groups, clubs and associations to progressively plan and manage sporting facilities.	PF		Internal cost	CS
23.	Ensure sports facilities are provided on land that is not encumbered by poor drainage, flooding, heritage controls or excessive slope.	PF / PP		To be determined	FP / IP
24.	Provide fewer, more functional, and shared support facilities on sportsgrounds, by: a) Continue to upgrade support facilities on sportsgrounds to provide adequate storage and canteens, amenities, to become code compliant, and enable sharing; and b) Provide amenities and parking on the perimeter of sportsgrounds so as to maximise playing space for sports and enhance club viability.	PP		Already included in Resourcing Strategy	IP
25.	Continue to facilitate the growth in sports codes, to cater for: a greater depth of competition in the Shire; pathways from children's development programs through to senior club competition; people with a disability; and larger clubs catering to males and females. Recognise the development of the following locations for the codes identified in conjunction with the relevant peak sporting association: a) Australian Rules football and cricket – Bruce Purser Reserve b) Soccer – Fred Caterson Reserve (along with tennis, basketball, BMX and baseball) c) Rugby league and baseball – Kellyville Park d) Softball – The Water Lane Reserve	PF / PP	✓	To be determined	CS
26.	Continue to seek opportunities to share facilities that are currently seasonally allocated.	PF		Internal cost	CS
27.	Plan future infrastructure that maximises the number of playing fields: per code in the one season, and on the one level, and minimises the number of buildings per site.	PF / PP		To be determined	IP
28.	Enhance the carrying capacity of sports fields by ensuring all grounds have lights (suitable for at least training), drainage and irrigation, and that can be programmed for social events.	PP		Already included in Resourcing Strategy	IP
29.	Introduce synthetic surfaces at selected locations to increase carrying capacity and assist in reducing the wear on main playing surfaces.	PP		To be determined	IP

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Respons-ibility
30.	Work closely with all peak sporting associations to establish a strategic approach to the development of sporting facilities in the Shire. Reassign the anticipated sport codes at the following locations: a) Australian Rules football – Balmoral Road Reserve (northern field); b) Rugby league – Kellyville Park; c) Hockey – Terry Road Reserve, Box Hill; d) Australian Rules football – southern playing fields in the North Kellyville Release Area; and e) Softball – The Water Lane Reserve.	PF		Internal cost	IP
31.	Seek opportunities to improve facilities for BMX sports (such as at Fred Caterson Reserve).	PP		To be determined	IP
32.	Redesign Fred Caterson Reserve to meet sub-regional standards of sport that includes: ▪ A premier oval with seating for 300-400 people ▪ Match play standard lighting ▪ Small club rooms ▪ A synthetic playing surface.	CW	✓	\$1,800,000	IP
33.	Seek improved opportunities to provide for event sports such as Tuff Mudda and Triathlons.	PF		Internal cost	CS
34.	Continue to improve access to information about sporting facilities and opportunities available.	PF		Internal cost	CS
<b>Link the trail network and cater for additional people walking and cycling</b>					
35.	Extend the network of off-road trails to include: park perimeter trails, a local trail circuit of trails around each suburb, and trails that connect suburbs and trails beyond the municipality.	CW	✓	\$596,850	IP
36.	Continue to implement the actions of the Tracks and Trails Strategy and the key links in the Bike Plan.	PP		To be determined	IP
37.	Introduce consistent wayfinding signage across the trail network	PP		Included in Action 40	IP
38.	Continue to use the tracks and trails branding on promotional materials and signage associated with the off-road network.	PF		Internal cost	IP
39.	Prioritise off-road trails over on-road routes.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
40.	Develop a hierarchy of off-road trails that include local, district and sub-regional trails.	PP	✓	To be determined	IP
41.	Actively participate in the development of regional trails, such as the Great North Walk, Great River Walk and Great North Road. Provide sub-regional trails that connect with these trails and provide access beyond the municipality (including the Cattai Creek Trail).	CW / PF		\$1,284,000	IP
42.	Agree on relatively standard design and construction guidelines for off-road trails and undertake a systematic upgrade to signage, line marking, promotion and maintenance priorities.	CW / PF	✓	\$200,000 p.a.	IP
43.	Seek a continuous corridor of public land along the Hawkesbury River, in the long term. Protect the riparian habitat and provide nodes for social gathering / family recreation, and off-road trails.	PF / PP		To be determined	IP

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Responsibility
44.	In conjunction with peak bodies investigate the opportunity to develop a circuit track around an existing sports field for training or criterion racing.	PF / PP		To be determined	IP
45.	Investigate opportunities for a major mountain bike and nature-based trail facility.	PP		To be determined	IP
<b>Promote open space opportunities and facilities</b>					
46.	Continue to promote open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Shire to residents, employers and visitors. Utilise existing strategies and activities / events by Council, community / sporting groups or other organisations where possible.	PF		Internal cost	CS
47.	Continue to promote the 'Garden Shire' and 'Sydney Hills' as a destination for new businesses and events, and at the same time promote the benefits of open space.	PF		Internal cost	CS
48.	Provide a variety of information on site and off site about open space, and sport and recreation facilities in the Shire using a range of methods and media. Utilise more social technology to connect young people with parks and activities.	PF		Internal cost	CS
49.	Review the signing of parks, and develop a consistent design palette for a suite of name, directional, information and risk management signs in accordance with the catchment level of the park.	PP	✓	To be determined	IP
50.	Include signage that highlights the positive attributes of parks, and activities that could be undertaken.	PP		To be determined	IP
51.	Incorporate interpretive elements in key open space to improve visitor experiences, and recognise the history, character and significance of a place.	PP		To be determined	IP
52.	Continue to work with key partners to increase participation in activities in parks (physical, social and environmental), particularly by targeting children, families, older adults and isolated people.	PF		Internal cost	CS
53.	Continue to plant a significant number of trees in parks and streets, for shade, amenity, and natural values and reinforce neighbourhood character and the Shire's brand.	PP		To be determined	IP
54.	Investigate opportunities to conduct mass sport and recreation participation events that: a) Promote the benefits of an active lifestyle; b) Showcase the Shire's natural assets; and c) Attract visitors to the Shire.	PP / PF		To be determined	CS
55.	Provide regular opportunities for residents to get involved in parks and open space planning and development projects.	PF		Internal cost	CS
56.	Provide more transparent information to user groups about open space, and costs of maintenance, and encourage more community support in the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the Shire's open space.	PF		Internal cost	
57.	Support community initiated and funded projects that: a) Have a sound policy and strategy basis; b) Conform to clear design and construction guidance, naming protocols and contributions policy; and c) Have sustainable management plans.	PF		Internal cost	CS

No.	Action	Project Type	High Priority	Indicative Probable Cost	Lead Respons-ibility
58.	Support community driven open space projects by Council policy, agreed design standards, professional planning and design input, clear guidelines or policy about ownership and management of the outcomes, and the principles and actions of this plan.	PF		Internal cost	CS
59.	Consider facilitating and supporting residents and community groups undertaking: a) Significant planting for civic pride, amenity and environmental benefits, such as along town entries, main streets and waterways; b) Greening programs and Landcare work; and c) Developing off-road trails.	PF		Internal cost	CS
60.	Enhance education about responsible use of parks, trails, sportsgrounds and conservation areas, including that directed at dog owners.	PF		Internal cost	CS
61.	Continue to support major physical events such as the Sydney Hills Dirt Fest, and the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic.	PF		To be determined	CS
<b>Implementation of the Integrated Open Space Plan</b>					
62.	Utilise the criteria set out in Appendix 4 to determine the priorities for action.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
63.	Establish an annual and rolling capital works budget for off-road trails.	PP	✓	Internal cost	
64.	Continue to develop partnerships with schools and private providers to meet open space demand.	PF	✓	Internal cost	CS
65.	Actively seek external funding to provide and improve open space: including government grants, private investment, philanthropic trusts, and other initiatives.	PF		Internal cost	IP
66.	Determine eligible projects for and actively seek Metropolitan Green space funding.	PF		Internal cost	
67.	Prepare a policy on capital contribution by sports clubs and community groups, that provides incentives for user groups to contribute, under consistent guidelines and on the basis that no ownership is implied.	PF		Internal cost	CS
68.	Continue with monitoring and long-term financial planning to address funding shortfalls in contributions plan areas.	PF		Internal cost	IP
69.	Continue to liaise with adjoining Councils and relevant State Government agencies to improve planning, funding and delivery of cross-boundary connections to open space.	PF		Internal cost	IP
70.	Facilitate a multidisciplinary approach within Council when planning and delivering open space projects.	PF		Internal cost	IP
71.	Ensure that the asset management system includes the upgrade of infrastructure to current standards, in addition to the provision of new infrastructure.	PF	✓	Internal cost	IP
72.	Continue to work with the State Government to ensure high quality open space outcomes in new release areas.	PF / PP		Internal cost	FP / IP

## 10. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Classifications of Open Space

#### Settlement Type

Settlement type	Definition
Rural area / rural living	Area of large residential blocks or farms with likely access to areas of incidental open space and/or the natural environment.
Rural village	Small collection of residential blocks with a community hub such as school, commercial enterprise, hall or community facility, generally with at least one central area of open space (e.g. recreation reserve) and access to incidental open space and/or the natural environment.
Urban area	Residential area where houses generally have at least some private open space. There is limited access to incidental open space and / or the natural environment. These areas consist of conventional residential areas and new release areas that may have different urban forms. The scale of the settlement necessitates that open space and community facilities are located at multiple nodes.
Medium / high density urban area	Areas where residences have limited private open space and are likely to be two or more storeys. These may be located in a mixed use area / activity centre. There is limited or no access to incidental open space and / or the natural environment. This category also includes commercial / employment areas where employees and visitors may use open space.

#### Open Space Function Type

Function Type	Definition
Social gathering / family recreation (SG / FR)	Open space areas reserved or provided for social, group and physical activities of people from a wide range of age groups and abilities. These areas typically provide opportunities for play, social gatherings, games and sports activities, exercise, as well as including amenity and environmental elements.
Sport	Open space areas reserved or provided for sporting pursuits.
Off-road trail / accessway	Open space areas reserved or provided for off-road trails, or pathways, that provide connections between streets and spaces.
Campground	Open space areas reserved or provided for recreational camping. Generally provided in natural area to enhance quiet enjoyment. These may not necessarily have permanent built accommodation or support facilities.
Community garden / farm	Open space areas reserved or provided for community garden or farm activities.
Future Open Space	Land purchased or identified in the Local Environment Policy for future open space use.
Heritage	Open space areas reserved or provided for the protection of European or indigenous cultural heritage.
Memorial park / cemetery	Open space areas reserved or provided for the memory of people or events, including avenues of trees.



Function Type	Definition
Play	Open space areas reserved or provided for children's play, and which do not cater for other age groups or recreation facilities, physical activity and environmental components.  Note: In future, single purpose play facilities are not recommended; rather social gathering / family recreation areas should replace them. Some of these open spaces should be converted to social gathering / family recreation or neighbourhood relaxation functions.
Neighbourhood relaxation	Open space areas reserved or provided for quiet, contemplation pastimes and with high environmental and amenity qualities. These areas would have only minor improvements such as seats, paths, viewing areas and / or interpretative signage, no other facilities.
Visual amenity / lookout	Open space areas reserved or provided to provide visual relief from urban surroundings, protect view sheds and view corridors and ridgelines, or enhance the visual amenity of neighbourhoods.  These spaces are typically provided to enhance aesthetics, contribute to neighbourhood character and enhance civic pride.
Water-based recreation	Open space areas reserved or provided to support water-based recreation activities (e.g. swimming, fishing, boating).
Conservation	Open space areas reserved or provided for the protection of flora and fauna. This may include existing bushland, grassland, wetlands and waterways, as well as potential habitat / biolink and carbon sinks.
Drainage / stormwater	Open space areas reserved or provided for drainage and management of stormwater. This includes retarding basins and water quality treatment devices.
Utilities and services	Open space areas reserved or provided to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accommodate electricity, gas, sewerage or water supply infrastructure;</li> <li>Provide a buffer from incompatible land uses or activities such as industry, hazardous areas, agricultural land or transport routes; or</li> <li>Accommodate areas of other environmental constraints, such as landslip or contamination.</li> </ul>

## Landscape Setting Type

Landscape Setting Type	Definition
Formal garden	A garden area designed with ornamental flowering and / or foliage plants (typically exotic), which may include garden beds, lawns, specimen trees and pathways. Other decorative features may be included such as fountains, pools and artwork.
Sealed or paved area	An area that is sealed or paved such as a plaza or square.
Managed turf	An area of mown turf managed for sports, dog exercise, aesthetic purposes, social gatherings, social games and sports, and / or exercise.
Specialised sports surface	An area of synthetic turf or specialised playing surface (not natural turf) used for sports such as tennis, netball, hockey or equestrian sports.
Open grassland	An open area of rough grass (typically exotic) that is not specifically cultivated as lawn or managed turf for sports, etc. Some trees may be located around boundaries.

Landscape Setting Type	Definition
Treed parkland	A treed open space with open areas of lawn or grass otherwise in between. Typically, this form of open space only has two storeys of vegetation – grass and trees.
Pasture	An area cultivated for food or animal production, such as vegetable garden, pasture, farmland or vineyard.
Bushland	A bushland or forested area (generally indigenous or native), with high degree of tree canopy and without open areas or a grass understorey. May have more than one storey of vegetation.
Native grassland / wetland	An area of indigenous grassland or wetland.
River / lake	An area where water is a key feature / landscape element.
Foreshore / estuary	An area abutting the waters edge, and including any foredune, or mudflats.
Rough natural area	An area that is degraded, unmanaged or not designed, and which is not fenced or protected for conservation purposes. It typically has some trees and may have more than one storey of vegetation. This area may include rocky outcrops, etc.

### Catchment Type

Catchment type	Definition
Local	Open space predominantly serving an immediate local catchment. This has a relatively small size (e.g. up to 1ha); services daily and weekly needs, and is generally accessed by walking or cycling from surrounding areas.
District	Open space predominantly serving a township, precinct, or group of suburbs.
Sub-regional	Open space predominantly serving the whole municipality or region. This may have significance to a large population including visitors.

## Appendix 2. Core Service Levels

### Core service levels: outdoor sport

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>LOCATION, DISTRIBUTION, SIZE, ACCESSIBILITY</b>			
<b>Minimum size and minimum dimensions</b>	A single oval with at least two winter sport fields and small amenities building. Some on-street car parking may be required but will be avoided if possible. Area to be determined by available land however typically 4ha minimum size. Typical examples are: Les Shore Reserve, Glenorie, George Thornton Reserve, West Pennant Hills.	A double oval with at least four winter sports fields, larger amenities building and off-street car parking. Area to be determined by sporting code and optimum complex size. Ideal minimum size is 8ha). Typical examples are: Eric Mobbs Reserve, Castle Hill, and Bernie Mullane Sports Complex, Kellyville.	At minimum a double oval (typically more) with at least four or more winter sports fields. An indoor recreation facility with community meeting facilities. Several amenities blocks may be provided. Possible synthetic surface to one or more fields. Minimum size 12ha to accommodate a range of sporting activities in response to sub-regional sporting demand analysis. A typical example is: Fred Caterson Reserve, Castle Hill.
<b>Model of provision for employment, commercial, industrial and residential areas</b>	May be provided in rural, residential, business, and industrial zones. Parcel to be zoned as RE1 or RE2 depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.	May be provided in residential, business, and industrial zones. Parcel to be zoned as RE1 or RE2 depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.	May be provided in residential, business, and industrial zones. Parcel to be zoned as RE1 or RE2 depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.
<b>Provided in prominent locations for surveillance</b>	Prominent locations with high visibility that draws local users	Prominent locations with high visibility that draws users from beyond a suburb	Prominent locations with high visibility that draws users from across the Shire.
<b>Equitable distribution in urban areas / one in each township</b>	At least one in each suburb, and within 1km of every household in an urban area (without having to cross an arterial road / railway or other major physical barrier). In rural areas will be typically located within 1km of the town centre. Distribution responds to participation trends.	At least one in each suburb, and within 2 km of every household in an urban area (without having to cross an arterial road / railway or other major physical barrier). Distribution responds to participation trends.	Sub-regional open space not subject to distance thresholds. Distribution responds to participation trends.
<b>Hierarchy of roads / public transport routes</b>	Provided central to a community.	May be located on collector / arterial roads (as long as they are central to the catchment it is designed to serve). Located on public transport routes.	Located on collector / arterial roads. Must have access to major public transport routes.
<b>Relationship with community facilities</b>	Community hub with relationship with local facilities.	Provided in conjunction with major activity centres and secondary schools (to be collectively made available to the community after hours). May be established as part of open space for social gathering / family recreation	Whilst not necessary to be located in conjunction with schools and activity centres, there should be consideration of access and proximity to these facilities. May be established as part of open space for social gathering / family recreation.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Internal path systems to access facilities</b>	May be accessible to major facilities through internal path systems.	Accessibility to major facilities through internal path systems	Fully accessible internal path system to all facilities.
<b>Accessibility of infrastructure to people with a disability</b>	May be accessible to people with a disability and accessible toilets.	Key elements accessible to people with a disability and accessible toilets.	Full accessibility to people with a disability.
<b>STANDARD OF INFRASTRUCTURE</b>			
<b>On-site car parking</b>	Standard space requirements. Two coat seal finish. Street lighting to car park.	Standard space requirements. Street lighting to car park. Asphaltic concrete finish. Line marked spaces. Barriers may be provided to restrict vehicle access.	Standard space requirements. Street lighting to car park. Asphaltic concrete finish. Line marked spaces. Barriers may be provided to restrict vehicle access.
<b>Bicycle parking</b>	Bicycle rack provided.	Bicycle rack provided.	Bicycle lock up facility provided.
<b>Signage</b>	Regulatory signs (s.632). Reserves name. Remove redundant signs.	Regulatory signs (s.632). Reserves name. Directional and way finding signs. Remove redundant signs. Interpretive signs.	Regulatory signs (s.632). Reserves name. Directional and way finding signs. Remove redundant signs. Interpretive signs.
<b>Goal area</b>	Means of securing goal posts. Reinforced goal mouth.	Means of securing goal posts Reinforced goal mouth. Alternative goal sleeves.	Means of securing goal posts. Reinforced goal mouth. Alternate goal sleeves.
<b>Provision of toilets</b>	May include public accessible toilet facilities.	Public accessible toilet facilities.	Accessible toilet facilities. May include multiple facilities dependant on the size of open space.
<b>Shade, shelter and seating</b>	Areas of natural and built shade, shelter and seating.	Areas of natural and built shade, shelter and seating.	Significant natural and built shade, shelter and seating.
<b>Play space</b>	Small play space may be provided.	Playground that is accessible, shaded and possibly fenced.	Large playground that is disabled accessible, shaded and fenced.
<b>Clubrooms / pavilion</b>	Change rooms not necessarily required. Consider converting existing change rooms to club storage.	Small change rooms available.	Clubrooms, appropriate to predominant sport may be available.
<b>Other specific recreation facilities:</b>	May include BBQ subject to demand.	To include some hard court ball courts e.g. free access tennis, basketball or multisport courts. May include skate, mountain bike or BMX facilities. May include BBQ subject to demand.	To include some hard court ball courts e.g. free access tennis and basketball courts. May include skate, mountain bike or BMX facilities. Will include BBQ facilities including large family shelter.
<b>Provision of lighting</b>	Match practice 100 lux Fluorescent lighting to amenities / buildings. Street lighting to park.	Match practice 100 lux (match play if provided by club) Low spill design. Fluorescent lighting to amenities / buildings. Street lighting to park	Match play 150 lux (minimum) Low spill design. Fluorescent lighting to amenities / buildings. Street lighting to park

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Fencing / entry</b>	Lockable entry gate.	Lockable entry gate. Fully secured boundary that may include bollards, low fencing, landscaped areas and/or mounding.	Lockable entry gate. Fully fenced boundary. Main oval fully fenced.
<b>Storage</b>	Not required.	Includes storage facilities.	Includes storage facilities.
<b>Tree / garden planting</b>	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority.	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority. Garden beds provided.	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority. Garden beds provided.
<b>QUALITY, COMPLEXITY</b>			
<b>Range of age groups</b>	Predominantly caters to junior sport.	Capable of accommodating senior sports. Provides a wide range of facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups.	Capable of accommodating senior sports. Provides a wide range of facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups. Potential to cater for grand final activities for a range of sports.
<b>Solar access</b>	Areas of sun and shade.	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings.
<b>Spectator viewing</b>	May include bench seating. Grass mounding with trees.	Bench seating. Grass mounding with trees.	Covered grandstand / seated viewing for 300-400 people. Bench seating. Coach boxes and player enclosures (sport appropriate).
<b>STANDARD OF MAINTENANCE</b>			
<b>Appropriate grass / tree species / mulching</b>	To use hardwearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation.	To use hardwearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowering plants and trees. Garden mulching maintained to minimum 80 mm depth.	To use hardwearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowering plants and trees. Garden mulching maintained to minimum 80 mm depth.
<b>Irrigation and drainage</b>	Considerable areas under irrigation, using recycled or harvested water from water irrigation tanks. Playing fields to support drainage infrastructure.	Considerable areas under irrigation, using recycled or harvested water from water irrigation tanks. Irrigation to garden beds. Playing fields to support drainage infrastructure	Considerable areas under irrigation, using recycled or harvested water from water irrigation tanks. Irrigation to garden beds. Playing fields to support drainage infrastructure.
<b>Rubbish and collection</b>	Wheeled bins provided.	Stylised bin enclosure. Rubbish collection service to be provided.	Stylised bin enclosure. Rubbish collection service to be provided.

## Core service levels: social gathering / family recreation

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>LOCATION, DISTRIBUTION, SIZE, ACCESSIBILITY</b>			
<b>Minimum size and minimum dimensions</b>	Minimum size of 1 ha and minimum dimensions of 70m in any direction (for new open space).	Minimum size of 1ha and minimum dimensions of 70m in any direction.	Minimum size of 2ha and minimum dimensions of 70m in any direction.
<b>Street frontage</b>	Street frontages on at least three sides. Not to be located cul-de-sac heads.	Street frontages on at least three sides. Not to be located cul-de-sac heads.	Street frontages on all sides. Not to be located cul-de-sac heads.
<b>One in each township, plus equitable distribution in urban areas</b>	In urban areas without social gathering / family recreation, provide within 800 m of every household (without having to cross an arterial road / railway or other major physical barrier). Spaces to be developed with a range of landscape setting types to create diversity.	At least one in each suburb, and within 2 km of every household in an urban area (without having to cross an arterial road / railway or other major physical barrier). In rural areas will be typically located within 1km of the town centre. Spaces to be developed with a range of landscape setting types to create diversity.	Sub-regional open space not subject to distance thresholds. Internal spaces to be developed with a range of landscape setting types to create diversity.
<b>Suitable topography</b>	Generally flat to undulating topography.	Generally flat to undulating topography.	No specific requirement other than one area. Generally flat to undulating topography.
<b>Space not to be taken as encumbered land, but may be located contiguous to it to provide a larger overall area</b>	Not to be provided on encumbered land (including retarding basins).	Not to be provided on encumbered land (including retarding basins).	Not to be provided on encumbered land (including retarding basins).
<b>Relationship with waterway corridors</b>	May be co-located adjacent to waterway corridors, however a minimum 30m wide riparian buffer is required (encumbered land will not be considered an open space contribution).	May be co-located adjacent to waterway corridors, however a minimum 30m wide riparian buffer is required (encumbered land will not be considered an open space contribution).	May be co-located adjacent to waterway corridors; however a minimum 30m wide riparian buffer is required (encumbered land will not be considered an open space contribution).
<b>Hierarchy of roads / public transport routes</b>	Should not be located on collector / arterial roads. Located central to the catchment it is designed to serve.	May be located on collector / arterial roads (as long as they are central to the catchment it is designed to serve). Located on public transport routes.	Located on collector / arterial roads. Located on public transport routes.
<b>Relationship with schools and activity centres</b>	Provided in conjunction with neighbourhood activity centres and primary schools (to be collectively made available to the community after hours).	Provided in conjunction with major activity centres and secondary schools (to be collectively made available to the community after hours).	Whilst not necessary to be located in conjunction with schools and activity centres, there should be consideration of access and proximity to these facilities.
<b>Co-location with community facilities</b>	Centrally located in community activity node e.g. adjacent to sports, commercial or community meeting facilities.	Centrally located in community activity node e.g. adjacent to sports, commercial or community meeting facilities.	Preferably centrally located in community activity node e.g. adjacent to sports, commercial or community meeting facilities.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Provided in prominent locations for surveillance</b>	Prominent locations within a development with high public visibility. Overlooked by houses, businesses or public areas on at least three sides.	Prominent locations with high visibility that draws users from beyond a suburb. Overlooked by houses, businesses or public areas on at least three sides.	Prominent locations with high visibility that draws users from across the Shire. Overlooked by houses, businesses or public areas on at least three sides.
<b>Buffers between highways / transport corridors</b>	Provided with adequate width between the open space and highway / transport corridor ensuring safety.	Provided with adequate width between the open space and highway / transport corridor ensuring safety.	Provided with adequate width between the open space and highway / transport corridor ensuring safety.
<b>Accessible path of travel</b>	An accessible path of travel is provided into the space.	An accessible path of travel is provided into the space.	An accessible path of travel is provided into the space.
<b>Off-road shared path / trail</b>	Served by an off-road shared path / trail.	Served by an off-road shared path / trail.	Served by an off-road shared path / trail.
<b>Landscape plan requirements / permit conditions</b>	Specify proposed open space function type, landscape setting and catchment.	Specify proposed open space function type, landscape setting and catchment.	Specify proposed open space function type, landscape setting and catchment.
<b>Zoning</b>	Parcel to be preferably zoned as RE1 or RE2, depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.	Parcel to be preferably zoned as RE1 or RE2, depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.	Parcel to be preferably zoned as RE1 or RE2, depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.
<b>STANDARD OF INFRASTRUCTURE</b>			
<b>Perimeter exercise path</b>	2.5m wide perimeter exercise path if the space is above 1ha in size.	2.5m perimeter exercise path	2.5m perimeter exercise path
<b>Internal path systems to access facilities</b>	Accessibility to major facilities through internal path systems.	Accessibility to major facilities through internal path systems.	Fully accessible internal path system to all facilities.
<b>Accessibility of infrastructure to people with a disability</b>	Key elements accessible to people with a disability and accessible toilets.	Key elements accessible to people with a disability and accessible toilets.	Full accessibility to people with a disability.
<b>Access to drinking water</b>	Access to drinking water in existing facilities only.	Access to drinking water.	Access to drinking water.
<b>Solar access</b>	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings (through building setbacks).	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings (through building setbacks).	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings (through building setbacks).
<b>On-site car parking</b>	No on-site car parking. Barriers to restrict vehicle access to sensitive areas.	On-site car parking. Barriers to restrict vehicle access to sensitive areas.	Sealed on-site car parking. Barriers to restrict vehicle access to sensitive areas.
<b>Bicycle parking</b>	Bicycle parking may be provided depending on expected usage.	Bicycle parking.	Bicycle parking.
<b>Public art works</b>	No public art works.	Public art works.	Public art works.
<b>Provision of toilets (may be in conjunction with sporting fields)</b>	No toilet facilities.	Accessible toilet facilities.	Accessible toilet facilities. May include multiple facilities dependant on the size of open space.
<b>BBQ and associated facilities</b>	No BBQ facilities.	Some areas to have picnic / BBQ, and additional facilities.	To include picnic / BBQ, and / or food and beverages.



CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Play equipment</b>	May include play equipment depending on proximity to other play areas.	Includes play equipment for various ages and abilities.	Includes play equipment for various ages and abilities.
<b>Shade, shelter and seating</b>	Some shade, shelter and seating.	Areas of natural and built shade, shelter and seating.	Significant natural and built shade, shelter and seating.
<b>Other specific recreation facilities: e.g. skate facilities, mountain bike, BMX or hard ball courts e.g. free access tennis and basketball courts</b>	May include some multipurpose hardcourt ball courts (e.g. for free access tennis and basketball).	Skate facilities and multipurpose hardball courts (e.g. for free access tennis and basketball). Possibly mountain bike or BMX facilities, depending on provision in catchment and size of space.	Skate facilities and multipurpose hard court ball courts (e.g. for free access tennis and basketball). Possibly mountain bike or BMX facilities, depending on provision in catchment and size of space.
<b>Dog off-leash area</b>	May include provision of a dog off-leash area depending on distribution of other dog off-leash areas in the area and size of park.	Likely to include provision of a dog off-leash area depending on distribution of other dog off-leash areas in the area and size of park.	Likely to include provision of a dog off-leash area depending on distribution of other dog off-leash areas in the area and size of park.
<b>Synthetic soft fall under play equipment</b>	Minimal use of synthetic surfaces.	May include areas of synthetic surfaces under playground facilities.	Likely to include facilities with synthetic surfaces or soft pour rubber under playground facilities.
<b>Provision of lighting</b>	May include security lighting dependent on activity.	May include the provision of pathway lights for some night activities where site is suitable.	Will include extensive pathway and recreation area lighting for some night activities.
<b>Fencing</b>	When a selection of parks in one neighbourhood, fence a suitable site. If play equipment is to be fenced ensure a large area of open space is contained inside the fence.	When a selection of parks in one neighbourhood, fence a suitable site. If play equipment is to be fenced ensure a large area of open space is contained inside the fence.	When a selection of parks in one neighbourhood, fence a suitable site. If play equipment is to be fenced ensure a large area of open space is contained inside the fence.
<b>Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures</b>	Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures and storage should not be located on local social gathering / family recreation open space. Site in other types of land or in road verges to be located underground.	Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures and storage should not be located on local social gathering / family recreation open space. Site in other types of land or in road verges to be located underground.	Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures and storage should not be located on local social gathering / family recreation open space. Site in other types of land or in road verges to be located underground.
<b>Tree planting</b>	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority. Minimised dense vegetation that blocks casual surveillance (between 0.7m and 2.4m above the ground).	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority.	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority. Extensive planting of trees or multiple storeys to create areas of denser vegetation.
<b>Range of age groups</b>	Provides facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups.	Provides a range of facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups.	Provides a wider range of facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups. Provide some dedicated facilities for teenagers and older adults.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Range of activities</b>	Includes areas for cooperative play and games, some props and range of surfaces, kick about space, loose materials / contact with nature, equipment for exercise, areas with places to hide and retreat from activity, screened from boisterous play.	Includes areas for cooperative play and games, some props and range of surfaces, kick about space, loose materials / contact with nature, equipment for exercise, areas with places to hide and retreat from activity, screened from boisterous play.	Includes areas for cooperative play and games, some props and range of surfaces, kick about space, loose materials / contact with nature, equipment for exercise, areas with places to hide and retreat from activity, screened from boisterous play.
<b>Views into the space and proximity to residences, schools, hospitals, employment areas</b>	Good views into the space. Views out of the space preferably beyond the immediate residences and visible from neighbouring streets, schools and other buildings. Consider proximity to major community facilities.	Good views into the space. Views out of the space beyond the immediate residences and visible from neighbouring streets, schools and other buildings. Consider proximity to major community facilities.	Good views into the space. Views out of the space beyond the immediate residences and visible from neighbouring streets, schools and other buildings. Consider proximity to major community facilities.
<b>Appropriate grass / tree species</b>	Use hard wearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowing plants and trees.	Use hard wearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowing plants and trees.	Use hard wearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowing plants and trees.
<b>STANDARD OF MAINTENANCE</b>			
<b>Emergency and maintenance vehicle access</b>	Emergency and maintenance vehicle access avoids sports turf, formed paths and synthetic surfaces.	Emergency and maintenance vehicle access avoids sports turf, formed paths and synthetic surfaces.	Emergency and maintenance vehicle access avoids sports turf, formed paths and synthetic surfaces.
<b>Irrigation</b>	No irrigation required unless there is multiple spaces in a neighbourhood then irrigate one space.	Include some areas of irrigated green lawn. Irrigate with recycled or harvested water.	Could include considerable areas under irrigation, using recycled or harvested water.
<b>Rubbish collection</b>	No rubbish collection service to be provided.	Rubbish collection service is provided	Rubbish collection service is provided

## Core service levels: play

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL (for higher catchment hierarchy levels see social gathering / family recreation)
<b>LOCATION, DISTRIBUTION, SIZE, ACCESSIBILITY</b>	
<b>Model of provision for employment, commercial, industrial and residential areas</b>	May be provided in residential, business, and industrial zones. Parcel to be zoned as RE1 or RE2 depending on significance to ensure adjacent land uses do not encroach onto the space.
<b>Provided in prominent locations for surveillance</b>	Prominent locations within a development with high public visibility. Not to be located at cul-de-sac heads.
<b>Space not to be taken as encumbered land, but may be located contiguous to it to provide a larger overall area</b>	Not to be provided on encumbered land (including retarding basins).
<b>One in each township, plus equitable distribution in urban areas</b>	In urban areas without social gathering / family recreation, provide within 400m of every household (without having to cross an arterial road / railway or other major physical barrier). Spaces to be developed with a range of landscape setting types to create diversity.
<b>Hierarchy of roads / public transport routes</b>	Should not be located on collector / arterial roads. Located central to the catchment it is designed to serve.
<b>Frontage</b>	Overlooked by houses on at least three sides. Street frontages on all sides, and be separated by a road from overlooking houses.
<b>Suitable topography</b>	Generally flat to undulating topography.
<b>Relationship with schools and activity centres</b>	Provided in conjunction with neighbourhood activity centres and primary schools (to be collectively made available to the community after hours).
<b>Colocation with community facilities</b>	Centrally located in community activity node e.g. adjacent to sports, commercial or community meeting facilities.
<b>Relationship with waterway corridors</b>	May be co-located adjacent to waterway corridors if central to the catchment, however a minimum 30m wide riparian buffer is required (encumbered land will not be considered an open space contribution).
<b>Buffers between highways / transport corridors</b>	Provided with adequate width between the open space and highway / transport corridor ensuring safety.
<b>An accessible path of travel into the space</b>	An accessible path of travel into the space.
<b>Shared path or off-road trail</b>	Served by a shared path or off-road trail.
<b>Designed to include a perimeter exercise path</b>	May be designed to include a perimeter exercise path if the space is above 1ha in size.
<b>Internal path systems to access facilities</b>	Accessibility to major facilities through internal path systems.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL (for higher catchment hierarchy levels see social gathering / family recreation)
Accessibility of infrastructure to people with a disability	Key social elements accessible to people with a disability.
Access to drinking water	Access to drinking water in existing facilities only.
<b>STANDARD OF INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
On-site car parking	No on-site car parking. Barriers may be provided to restrict vehicle access.
Bicycle parking	Bicycle parking may be provided depending on expected usage.
Public art works	No public art works.
Provision of toilets (may be in conjunction with sporting fields)	No toilet facilities.
BBQ and associated facilities	No BBQ facilities.
Play equipment	May include play equipment depending on proximity to other play areas.
Shade, shelter and seating	Some shade, shelter and seating.
Other specific recreation facilities: e.g. skate facilities, mountain bike, BMX or hard ball courts e.g. free access tennis and basketball courts	May include some hard court ball courts e.g. free access tennis, basketball or multi-sport court.
Dog off-leash area	May include provision of a dog off-leash area depending on distribution of other dog off-leash areas in the area and size of park.
Synthetic soft fall under play equipment	Minimal use of synthetic surfaces.
Provision of lighting	May include security lighting dependent on activity.
Fencing	When a selection of parks in one neighbourhood, fence a suitable site. If play equipment is to be fenced ensure a large area of open space is contained inside the fence.
Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures	Non-recreational structures such as substations, environmental monitoring stations, and emergency service structures and storage should not be located on local social gathering / family recreation open space. Site in other types of land or in road verges to be located underground.
Tree planting	Provide boundary, shade and amenity planting as a priority. Minimised dense vegetation that blocks casual surveillance (between 0.7m and 2.4m above the ground).
Range of age groups	Provides facilities that cater to a range of abilities and age groups.
Range of activities	Includes areas for cooperative play and games, some props and range of surfaces, kick about space, loose materials / contact with nature, equipment for exercise, areas with places to hide and retreat from activity, screened from boisterous play.
Solar access	Areas of sun and shade, not to be directly overshadowed by adjoining multi-storey buildings. For parks of 1ha, desirably multistorey buildings to be set back not immediately abutting the park.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL (for higher catchment hierarchy levels see social gathering / family recreation)
Views into the space and proximity to residences, schools, hospitals, employment areas	Good views into the space. Views out of the space preferably beyond the immediate residences and visible from neighbouring streets, schools and other buildings. Consider proximity to major community facilities.
Not immediately adjoining private rear yards	Not immediately adjoining private rear yards. Street frontages on at least two sides, and be separated by a road from overlooking houses.
Landscape plan requirements / permit conditions	Specify proposed open space function type, landscape setting and catchment.
Appropriate grass / tree species	Use hard wearing grass species e.g. Kikuyu to minimise need for irrigation. Minimise areas mowed, through planting of hardy flowering plants and trees.
<b>STANDARD OF MAINTENANCE</b>	
Emergency and maintenance vehicle access	Emergency and maintenance vehicle access avoids sports turf, formed paths and synthetic surfaces.
Irrigation	No irrigation required unless there is multiple spaces in a neighbourhood then irrigate one space.
Rubbish collection	No rubbish collection service to be provided.

## Core service levels: off-road trails

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>LOCATION, DISTRIBUTION, SIZE, ACCESSIBILITY</b>			
<b>Relationship with other open spaces</b>	In logical places that are well used along creek corridors. Considers links to routes on other open space in the proximity.	As part of larger open spaces. Trails should not dominate space. Considers links to routes on other open space in the proximity.	Trails between suburbs, along former rail easements and creeks. Connections to social gathering / family recreation areas, other regional attractions, and scenic areas.
<b>Distance thresholds</b>	Within 400m of every dwelling in urban areas.	Within 800m of every dwelling in urban areas.	Sub-regional trails not subject to distance thresholds. All dwellings should have reasonable access to sub-regional trails.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Urban shared trails to be accessible paths of travel for all users. Consideration of trail gradient. Sealed trails to Standards Australia 'accessible path of travel' where possible.	Peri-urban trails to be relatively accessible paths of travel. Sealed trails to Standards Australia 'accessible path of travel' where possible.	Lower degrees of accessibility for more remote or specific paths of travel. Sealed trails to Standards Australia 'accessible path of travel' where possible.
<b>QUALITY, COMPLEXITY</b>			
<b>Targets users / activities</b>	Targeted at local users of a range of abilities and accessible to people using wheelchairs and mobility aids.	Accommodate use by horse-riders, cyclists and pedestrians, and sealed trails designed for cycling, skating and accessible to people using wheelchairs and mobility aids.	Targeted at cyclists, horse riders, and longer distance walkers.
<b>Appropriate surface types</b>	Ensure surface materials are stable, firm, relatively smooth and slip resistant in wet or dry conditions. Gradients suitable for users with prams and mobility aids. Minimal use of steps.	Ensure surface materials are stable, firm, relatively smooth and slip resistant in wet or dry conditions. Formed paths including consolidated gravel pavement or granitic sand (not screenings or topping) or asphalt, or concrete depending on key activities to be accommodated. Gradients suitable for users with prams and mobility aids. Minimal use of steps.	Ensure surface materials are stable, firm, relatively smooth and slip resistant in wet or dry conditions. Sealed surfaces for wheeling / skating. Unsealed for perimeter paths / jogging tracks / mountain bike tracks. In shaded or dark locations wire may be required over some timber path structures to promote slip resistance and increase durability.
<b>Trail / corridor width and dimensions</b>	Minimum width of 2.5m. Trail corridor (especially in urban areas and when travelling at the rear of side of private yards) should be greater than 10m.	Minimum width of 2.5m. Where a trail is to accommodate equestrian or shared use for commuting traffic the width should be at least 3m. Trail corridor (especially in urban areas and when travelling at the rear of side of private yards) should be greater than 10m.	Sealed trails to be a minimum of 3m. Trail corridor (especially in urban areas and when travelling at the rear of side of private yards) should be greater than 10m. Single track trails in bushland setting should have a minimum width of 300m if they have a higher degree of difficulty.
<b>Form of trails</b>	Local circuits for fitness walking and jogging / dog walking through residential areas. Perimeter paths around large open spaces with links to district trails. Shared trails along open space corridors.	Circuits established around suburbs, and the perimeter of major open spaces.	An equitable distribution of a variety of trail types including rail trails, trails between townships, and large circuits. More remote trails as destinations for specific activity enthusiasts.

CHARACTERISTIC	LOCAL	DISTRICT	SUB-REGIONAL
<b>Trails in wet / sensitive riparian areas / river banks</b>	Trails to be kept away from sensitive riparian areas / river banks unless specifically designed to address environmental impacts.	Trail provided with a buffer and a single approach to the watercourse so there is only one single impact point. Trails to be kept away from sensitive riparian areas / riverbanks.	Trail provided with a buffer and a single approach to the watercourse so there is only one single impact point. Trails to be kept away from sensitive riparian areas / riverbanks. Crossings to be well signed and carefully designed to minimise risk.
<b>Treadway, right of way and buffer zone</b>	Buffer zone not required on perimeter paths. Ensure appropriate border edging.	In a bushland / conservation area a buffer zone and right of way should be established on either side of the treadway to protect from trampling. Ensure appropriate border edging.	In a bushland / conservation areas a buffer and right of way should be established on either side of the treadway to protect from trampling. Ensure appropriate border edging.
<b>Setting types</b>	Trail may be provided with a range of setting types dependent on trail length.	Provide a range of setting types along the length of long trails to provide sunny and shaded areas, connections with views and environmental stimuli.	Provide a range of setting types along the length of long trails to provide sunny and shaded areas, connections with views and environmental stimuli.
<b>Sun and shade</b>	Ensure vegetation is used to provide shade for trail users, with adequate spaces for natural light.	Provide a range of setting types along the length of long trails to provide both sunny and shaded areas, connections with views and environmental stimuli.	Ensure sections of the trails are provided with sun and shade to provide respite for users.
<b>Connection with residential areas</b>	To be provided throughout residential areas (particularly in through perimeter paths of social gathering / family recreation and sport open space), with connection to district-level trails.	All new residential areas to be provided with shared trail circuits, with connection with sub-regional trails.	Scenic and sub-regional trails targeting visitors will require connections to local residential areas, to enhance opportunities and usability.
<b>STANDARD OF INFRASTRUCTURE</b>			
<b>Service / emergency access</b>	Service / emergency access generally provided directly off neighbouring streets.	Service / emergency access required in peri-urban at key intervals depending on terrain.	Service / emergency access points to be provided along key points (including more technical sections of trails). Avoid maintenance vehicles entering at multiples locations and damaging vegetation. Consider mobile coverage in the planning of remote sections of trails.
<b>Interpretation</b>	Interpretation signage not required.	Interpretation signage not required unless the trail attracts high use and is of particular significance.	For trails likely to attract high use and visitors, as well as those servicing sites of biological or cultural significance, consider providing robust interpretive signage.
<b>Access to seating and drinking water</b>	Provide accessible seating that are arranged to facilitate social interaction and are aligned to outlook attractive vistas and points of interest. Seating at key intervals with a minimum of 1m clearance from the path. Drinking water required only if toilet facilities are provided in conjunction with it.	Provide accessible seating that are arranged to facilitate social interaction and are aligned to outlook attractive vistas and points of interest. Seating at key intervals with a minimum of 1m clearance from the path. Access to seating and drinking water at nodes.	Provide accessible seating that are arranged to facilitate social interaction and are aligned to outlook attractive vistas and points of interest. Seating at key intervals with a minimum of 1m clearance from the path.



### Appendix 3. Opportunities to add Diversity and Address Gaps in Distribution

#### Suggested changes to open space function types

Potential changes to the function type of open spaces are provided below. This is to create diversity in open spaces across the Shire and, where possible, in each suburb.

These recommendations would be subject to future consideration by the Council in its annual review of the Resourcing Strategy, and have not been included in the funding estimates identified in the Implementation Plan.

Reserve Name	Existing Function Type	Proposed Function Type
Turon Avenue Reserve	Neighbourhood relaxation	Social gathering / family recreation
Gumbuya Avenue Reserve	Future open space	Neighbourhood relaxation
Monteith Reserve	Future open space	Neighbourhood relaxation
Roy Dudley Park	Play	Social gathering / family recreation
Cumberland Avenue Reserve	Future open space	Neighbourhood relaxation
Ambleside Drive Reserve	Play	Neighbourhood relaxation
Woodhill Street Reserve	Future open space	Neighbourhood relaxation
Kirkwall Avenue Reserve	Future open space	Neighbourhood relaxation
Coolong Reserve (central area)	Play	Social gathering / family recreation
Pioneer Place Reserve	Play	Social gathering / family recreation
Ulundri Drive Reserve	Play	Social gathering / family recreation
Bill Wood Reserve	Conservation	Social gathering / family recreation
Sandhurst Crescent Reserve	Conservation	Neighbourhood relaxation
Elizabeth Macarthur Park	Play	Neighbourhood relaxation
Lavender Avenue Reserve	Play	Neighbourhood relaxation

## Appendix 4. Criteria to Evaluate the Priority of Open Space Actions

CRITERIA	HOW THIS IS MEASURED
<b>A. OPEN SPACE PRINCIPLES</b>	
<b>Participation</b>	There is evidence of demand for the proposal The proposal will target activities with the highest participation or highest increases in participation The proposal will serve areas of projected highest population growth and/or housing density.
<b>Equitable distribution of opportunities</b>	The proposal is in an area outside the recommended distance threshold from residences for the priority open space type (400m for social gathering / family recreation and off-road trails, and 1km for sports).
<b>Diversity of opportunities</b>	The proposal will add to the range of activities currently provided in the Shire The proposal will meet the needs of one or more activities that has identified high or growing demand, and for which isn't currently well provided The proposal is considered to be Council's core business.
<b>Accessibility to target groups</b>	The proposal will improve the use of open space by people with a disability, young people, women, people aged over 65 years, people on low income or people from a non-English speaking background.
<b>B. OTHER CRITERIA FROM THE HILLS SHIRE PLAN</b>	
<b>Proactive Leadership</b>	The proposal will improve the sustainability of an existing open space asset The proposal will increase community participation in the planning and management of open space assets.
<b>Balanced Urban Growth</b>	The proposal will add to the district or sub-regional off-road trail network The proposal will integrate with other community facilities and activity centres, and be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
<b>Protected Environment</b>	The proposal will enhance biodiversity and/ or protect the natural environment The proposal will increase opportunities for people to be connected to nature and participate in nature-based recreation.
<b>Modern Local Economy</b>	The proposal will improve the lifestyle and amenity of the Shire for new businesses and workers The proposal will increase the provision of destination parks and recreation facilities for visitors and events.
<b>C. PRACTICALITY OF ACTIONS BEING COMPLETED IN THE LIFE OF THE PLAN</b>	
<b>Practicality of being able to address easily</b>	The proposal has no major impediments that cannot be reasonably be resolved, such as biophysical constraints (e.g. flooding, geotechnical, heritage), political intervention, planning issues or uncertainty of timeframe.
<b>Already has Council / budget commitment</b>	The proposal has been identified in Council's budget, capital works program or Shire Plan.
<b>Likelihood of being externally funded</b>	The proposal meets criteria for funding through programs such as Regional Development, S94 and NSW Facility Grants.
<b>Risk of not proceeding</b>	There is high risk if the proposal does not proceed (e.g. personal or property, Council's reputation, loss of service).
<b>Operating and lifecycle costs</b>	The proposal has a high value for operating and lifecycle costs.

## **Appendix 5. Maps**

Map 1: Proposed hierarchy of social gathering / family recreation (SGFR) open space

Map 2: Proposed hierarchy of sport open space

Map 3: Priority district off-road trail opportunities



