

The background of the cover page is a photograph of a grassy field. In the foreground, a silver and green children's bicycle with orange reflectors on the wheels lies on the grass. The top half of the page has a grey semi-transparent overlay containing the title and department name. On the left side of this overlay, there is a faint, large, stylized graphic of a flower or leaf.

# RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING









This Report has been prepared by:



for



December 2010

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |   |     |   |  |    |
|---|---|-----|---|--|----|
| Introduction  | 06  | 6   | Prepare the plan                                  | 38   |    |
| The importance of open space and recreation         | 06  | 6.1 | The network and facilities program                | 39   |    |
| Costs effective planning is essential               | 07  | 6.2 | Safety, security and comfort                      | 39   |    |
| Background, scope and application of the guidelines | 08  | 6.3 | Priorities for action                             | 39   |    |
| How to use these guidelines                         | 10  | 6.4 | Evaluation of draft options, actions and projects | 40   |    |
|   |   | 6.5 | Plan contents                                     | 40   |    |
| 1   | Review the context  | 12  |   |  |    |
| 1.1   | Introduction  | 12  | 7   | Identify implementation mechanisms   | 41 |
| 1.2   | State level strategies and policies   | 13  | 7.1   | Introduction   | 42 |
| 1.3   | Local level policies  | 13  | 7.2   | Local Community Strategic Plan and delivery program  | 42 |
| 1.4   | Agency perspectives   | 13  | 7.3   | Facility management, programming and services  | 42 |
| 1.5   | Initial community consultation  | 13  | 7.4   | Statutory planning instruments   | 42 |
|   |   |     | 7.5   | Funding open space and recreation facilities   | 42 |
| 2   | Document existing conditions and supply   | 14  | 7.6   | Pricing and charges plan   | 43 |
| 2.1   | Introduction  | 15  |   |  |    |
| 2.2   | Land capability   | 15  | 8   | Undertake monitoring and review  | 44 |
| 2.3   | Development context   | 15  | 8.1   | Asset management systems   | 45 |
| 2.4   | Documenting existing open space and recreational facilities by type and catchment | 16  | 8.2   | Use of open space and levels of satisfaction   | 45 |
| 2.5   | Detailed inventory  | 19  | 8.3   | Reviews  | 45 |
|   |   |     |   |  |    |
| 3   | Understand demand and needs   | 20  |   | Appendix 1   |    |
| 3.1   | Understanding changing needs  | 21  |   | State government agencies relevant to open space and recreation planning   | 51 |
| 3.2   | Research, profiling and community consultation                                    | 21  |   | Appendix 2   |    |
| 3.3   | Community consultation  | 22  |   | Open space classification system   | 52 |
|   |   |     |   | Appendix 3   |    |
| 4   | Set goals, objectives and standards   | 26  |   | Aligning types of open space and recreation facilities with appropriate zones from the Standard Instrument for LEPs. | 58 |
| 4.1   | Goals and objectives for clear planning directions                                | 27  |   |  |    |
| 4.2   | 'Default' and locally appropriate provision standards                             | 27  |   |  |    |
|   |   |     |   |  |    |
| 5   | Identify opportunities and options to meet needs                                  | 32  |   |  |    |
| 5.1   | Demand – supply gaps  | 33  |   |  |    |
| 5.2   | Opportunities and constraints or SWOT analysis                                    | 33  |   |  |    |
| 5.3   | Options for meeting demand challenges   | 34  |   |  |    |



# introduction

## The importance of open space and recreation

Open space areas have long been recognised as a basic requirement of human settlement planning. These areas are an important resource for social interaction, rest and recuperation and for pursuing healthy activities. Open spaces support community life by providing recreational and leisure opportunities for residents, students, workers and visitors. These opportunities vary by place and usage varies according to abilities, lifestyle and cultural interests— and available time.



## INTRODUCTION

Activities in open spaces may include watching or participating in sports, walking and cycling or family and group gatherings. Recreation and leisure activities go beyond those occurring in public open space, and may include indoor exercise and sport, using the street network for walking and cycling, and arts and cultural pursuits.

The community is actively encouraged to increase participation in sporting and recreational activities. Regular surveys in Sydney show an increasing proportion of people are visiting parks (from 53 percent in 1998 to 58 percent in 2004 in the week prior to each survey). Ninety seven percent of respondents visited a park in the year prior to the 2004 survey.

Open spaces support environmental and heritage conservation and help to preserve important landscapes. They have a positive impact on air and water quality, biodiversity and reduced heat build up in cities and have strong environmental education values.

Open spaces, sport and recreation activities attract investment, support local sport and recreation businesses and provide spaces for major events, attracting tourists and visitors to boost local economies.

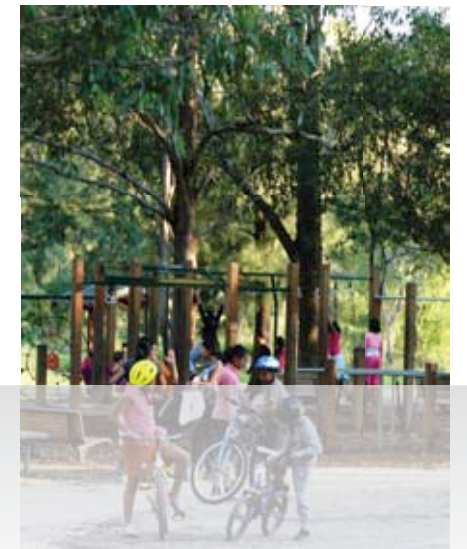
Open spaces make an essential contribution to the liveability of urban, rural and regional areas. Local government, with perhaps the primary role in providing and maintaining open space and recreation facilities, has a particular responsibility to effectively plan for community needs.

## Planning for effective provision is essential

Land values in established and fringe urban areas are high and rising, placing additional pressures on the costs of providing recreation and open space opportunities. The high annual costs of managing park resources are also an issue. The community's expectations of high quality open space and recreation opportunities are rising due to higher education levels, concerns about safety and insurances and the ability to pay for better quality experiences.

The amount of money spent by local councils on recreation and leisure has been increasing, from \$418.2 million in 2004/05 to \$577.2 million in 2008/09. The average spending per capita within NSW increased from \$61 in 2004/05 to \$83 in 2008/09.

Given these significant costs it is important that local government, and others responsible for open space and recreation planning, use resources wisely. Effective strategies and delivery plans are essential.





## Background, scope and application of the Guidelines



Outdoor Recreation and Open Space: Planning Guidelines for Local Government, prepared by the Department of Planning, was published in 1992. The need to update these guidelines was an action in the NSW Government's 2005 Metropolitan Strategy.

The guidelines were prepared to meet the following objectives:

- Promote a *standard approach* to measuring demand for and supply of open space and recreation facilities
- Highlight the *major issues* to be addressed by councils in developing open space and recreation plans, in particular in relation to strategies put forward in the Metropolitan Strategy and by the regional cities plans

- Put forward *options for targets* for local government provision of open space and recreation facilities; and
- Provide a *best practice guide* that will assist Councils in planning their own investments in open space and recreation.

The preparation of these guidelines included extensive consultation with local government, industry and State agencies. Consultation included workshops with representatives from metropolitan and select regional councils. Sessions identified current issues and challenges to recreational and open space planning and provided an opportunity for councils to input into the planning process for the new guidelines.

The guidelines are ultimately a resource for councils to develop their own recreational and open space policies to meet community needs and inform the preparation of:

- Open space and recreation strategies.
- Planning for new release areas
- Planning for renewal or infill development in established areas
- Community Strategic Plans and Resourcing Strategies, as part of Integrated Planning and Reporting under the 2009 amendments to the Local Government Act
- Local Environmental Plans (LEPs)
- s.94 contributions plans.

The guidelines are not intended as directives or a reference against which new LEPs will be assessed, except to the extent that they have informed Community Strategic Plans (which will be a reference against which LEPs are assessed as part of the Department of Planning's gateway process).

The directions and techniques contained in the guidelines can be selectively used at different scales, for example for a suburb, a demographic group in the community, or type of recreational facility, program and service.

The extent of the research conducted at each step of the planning process will vary depending on Council data, past research, available resources and the rates of growth and change. Elements of the planning processes may need to be undertaken regularly in the interests of continual, incremental change. In practice, it is often difficult to resource such an approach and as a result, most councils would undertake the preparation of recreation plans on a seven to ten year cycle, or consistent with the review cycle associated with Standard Instrument LEPs.

The guidelines do not provide a definitive source of information for open space planning. Additional sources have been referred to and planners are encouraged to continue to investigate best practice examples, particularly in areas with a similar context. These guidelines should be considered in parallel with other NSW Government policy and planning guidelines such as the Planning Guidelines for Walking and Cycling (DoP).

The guidelines make a distinction between:

- **Recreation facilities** – natural or built physical resources used for recreational pursuits or provided to enable the delivery of recreation services.
- **Recreation activities** – structured or unstructured recreational pursuits which people take part in
- **Recreation services** – the mechanisms to help people learn about, access and use recreation facilities and participate in recreation activities, including public information, transport, provision grants, lighting, disability access, program and leadership staff and public and professional industry bodies.
- **Open space** – publicly owned land that accommodates recreation facilities and provides spaces for recreational activities.
- **Urban public spaces** – publicly owned street and road reserves, lanes and town plazas and squares.

While private facilities satisfy some recreation needs and must be considered in a needs analysis, the focus of these guidelines is on publicly owned facilities and spaces.

The guidelines focus on open space planning given that the sponsoring agency has State responsibility for land planning and development control. Planning for recreation facilities, programs, activities and services is a discipline in itself and overlaps with cultural, tourism and leisure planning which implies a significant scope beyond that of the current guidelines. Nevertheless the guidelines provide general direction for recreational planning and highlight how it is integrated into open space planning. They also provide references for more detailed recreation planning.



## How to use these Guidelines

The guidelines are organised around steps in the strategic planning process. Users can follow these sections in sequence if they are undertaking a comprehensive plan, or may focus on the material in one or a few sections to hone their skills or seek guidance for a way forward at a particular point in the planning process. The sections are as follows:

- strategic and policy context
- document existing conditions and supply
- understand demand and needs
- set goals, objectives and standards
- identify opportunities and options to meet needs
- prepare the plan
- identify implementation mechanism
- undertake monitoring

It may not be necessary to research all the components: data may be available from other sources, a superficial view may be appropriate, or analysis may only be required for individual or types of facilities, programs or services; for a particular sub-group of the community; or for just a part of a local government area (LGA).

The time allocated to each phase of the research process will clearly vary depending on the scale of the planning study. Planning for individual sites or for particular sub-groups in the community may require as little as several weeks while a LGA-wide or regional study generally requires from six to nine months for completion. Once completed, the findings of the research provide a strong basis for the preparation of community-specific recreation development plans.

Four distinct planning situations or contexts have been identified. The term 'metropolitan' applies to the Sydney region, Newcastle and Wollongong. Each of these situations exhibit particular attributes with regard to historic rates of provision of open space and approaches to open space planning. The four contexts are:

**1. Metropolitan inner urban areas** – these are urban areas predominantly developed prior to 1917 when development patterns changed from relatively high densities with attached dwellings to lower 'suburban' densities with a higher proportion of detached housing. These inner urban areas are characterised by mixed use neighbourhoods, generally developed at medium to high densities. The open space network is largely in place. The predominant form

of new development is infill, often apartments at medium to high densities. This urban form is generally contained to inner Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

**2. Suburban areas** – in the metropolitan areas, these areas were predominantly developed after 1917. This is the urban form typical of regional cities and towns as well. These areas are generally developed at suburban densities and the open space network is largely in place. As with the inner urban areas, the predominant form of new development is infill but with a higher proportion of medium density.

**3. New release areas** – these areas are designated for future urban development, on either the metropolitan fringe or in extensions to cities and towns in regional areas. In new releases the ideal open space network can be developed with sufficient flexibility to accommodate all potential recreational needs. This applies in some cases to large brownfield redevelopment sites in inner urban and suburban areas.

**4. Regional areas** – rural service towns and small towns outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, or areas not otherwise covered by the above.

Constraints and opportunities vary widely across these areas and local circumstances must be thoroughly investigated.

### 1. Review the Policy and Provision Context

- Government policies e.g. NSW State Plan, Metropolitan Plan, subregional strategies and regional strategies
- Sec 117 Direction 6.2 Reserving Land for Public Purposes
- Local Environmental Plans
- Structure plans
- Council policies

### 2. Document Existing Conditions and Supply

- Land capability
- Development patterns
- Open space inventory

### 3. Understand Demand and Needs

- Research
- Profiling
- Consultation

### 4. Set Goals, Objectives and Standards

- Clear planning directions
- Provision standards

### 5. Identify Opportunities and Options to Meet Needs

- Demand-supply gaps: SWOT analysis
- Smarter asset and resource use
- New partnerships and management approaches
- Minimising costs
- Drought events and climate change

Community and agency input

### 6. Prepare the Plan

- Considerations
- Priorities for actions
- Evaluation

### 7. Identify Implementation Mechanisms

- Facility management
- Statutory planning instruments
- Budget funding
- Development contributions
- Pricing and charges policies

### 8. Undertake Monitoring

- Asset management
- Use monitoring

Open space planning process



# review the context

## 1.1 Introduction

The policies and strategies of all levels of government reflect community aspirations and expectations and represent important context to open space and recreation planning. A summary of the policy framework at the Australian, NSW and local government levels and specific agency policies in the areas of environment, health, education, social support and recreation and sport should be prepared.

## 1. REVIEW THE CONTEXT

### 1.2 State level strategies and policies

Many NSW Government policies support the planning, provision and management of open space and recreation (see references). The NSW Government is committed to promoting participation in sport and recreation, though it recognises the limitations - including the cost of land - of open space planning.

The *NSW State Plan* sets the direction for NSW for the next 10 years. It sets forward a list of priorities and targets to achieve these priorities, including :

- Increase the number of visits to NSW Government parks by 20 percent by 2016
- Increase the number of people participating in sporting activities and exercise and physical exercise by 10 percent by 2016.

The State Plan should inform the development of goals and objectives in regional and local open space and recreation planning.

The *Metropolitan Plan* for Sydney and the eight *Regional Strategies* provide a guide to planning for the future of Sydney and various NSW regions.

The Metropolitan Plan deals with the broad structure for growth and development and the environment, transport and other infrastructure including the planning and provision of open space.

The Metropolitan Plan highlights the importance of open space for Sydney to achieve:

- A living environment that delivers equity and social inclusion
- A strong quality of life, health and wellbeing.

The Regional Strategies for the Far North Coast, Lower Hunter, Illawarra, Central Coast, Sydney Canberra Corridor, Mid North Coast, South Coast and the Murray contain Neighbourhood Planning Principles that build upon the Metropolitan Plan. The Regional Strategies plan for a mix of open space, recreational space and green space by including principles such as the value of maintaining conservation lands in and around development sites to help protect biodiversity and provide open space for recreation.

Many issues and principles in the existing Regional Strategies may be relevant in regions outside the scope of the Regional Strategies.

*State Environmental Planning Policies* (SEPPs) are environmental planning instruments that have statutory force. Many of these affect planning for open space and conservation at a state or regionally significant level. Examples include SEPP 29 (Western Sydney Recreation Area), SEPP 19 (Bushland in Urban Areas), SEPP 59 (Central Western Sydney Regional Open Space and Residential) and SEPP Western Sydney Parklands.

### 1.3 Local level policies

At a local level, the council policies and strategic planning framework will help guide consistency. Community Strategic Plans, which include planning for social and environmental issues, may identify community goals and aspirations which can be supported by open space and recreation planning.

Open space strategies should be tied to council capital works programs as part of resourcing strategies and asset management plans.

### 1.4 Agency perspectives

State agency plans and intentions affect the context for open space and recreation planning. Contact details and websites for these agencies are included in Appendix 1.

Typically, consultation with State agencies will involve one-on-one interviews or discussions with relevant officers.

### 1.5 Initial community consultation

Community input and ownership is essential and achievable through updates on council's website, existing newsletters or newspaper columns.

This early consultation will be broad based; more specific consultation will be required for the needs assessment phase and in evaluating the options that lead to the final plan. A community forum can promote the planning exercise and identify broad goals.





# document existing conditions and supply

## 2. DOCUMENT EXISTING CONDITIONS AND SUPPLY

### 2.1 Introduction

An existing conditions and assets analysis is about understanding existing supply and comparing it to the outcomes of a needs analysis to identify the gap between supply and future demand.

An existing conditions analysis should focus on:

1. Land capability, including environmental values.
2. Development and infrastructure conditions and context to inform the opportunities and constraints analysis.
3. The existing types of open space and recreation assets and their regional, district and local catchments.
4. The quality and character of each asset.

### 2.2 Land capability

Land capability analysis assesses the ability of land to support and cope with the impacts of development, in this case open space and recreation activities. It may be based on a 'sieve mapping' method, ideally using GIS techniques, where opportunities (e.g. to incorporate features into a diverse open space network) and constraints (e.g. restricting the use of areas from development for active or passive open space) are documented.

Values and features to be identified include:

- Slope.
- Flooding.
- Hazards (e.g. tunnels, shafts, landfills, soil contamination from prior activities).
- Bushfire risk.
- Rainfall and drainage patterns (which may be shifting from the impact of climate change).
- Areas of existing environmental significance, including riparian features.
- Areas of potential environmental significance.
- Areas of high value agricultural lands.
- Cultural heritage.
- Sites required for infrastructure.
- Incompatible uses (e.g. housing near an open space activity that may emit noise).
- Salinity.

### 2.3 Development context

Understanding the development context for open space and recreation planning must consider:

- Development patterns - including existing and future residential and employment areas and existing and possible new centres of all types (e.g. major centres, towns, villages). New development will be the focus for new open space networks while recreation facilities and open space embellishments may be focused on open space areas within centres, with good transport access. This approach recognises that open space and recreation investments can support and sustain other activities (shopping or business).
- Major transport and infrastructure networks to underpin accessible and functional open space and recreation assets - the network and capacity of water and sewerage services will impact the location of open space.
- Assets such as schools, surplus government held land and private recreation facilities - with potential for asset sharing or dual use arrangements.

This information should be available in planning documents and summarised in GIS mapping.



2.4 Documenting existing open  
space and recreational facilities  
by type and catchment

The different types of open space should be classified according to their function; definitions used in these guidelines include parks (‘passive’), outdoor sports areas (‘active’), urban public spaces, conservation and heritage, landscape and amenity (both ‘environmental conservation’) and linear and linkage.

The definitions, shown in Table 1,

acknowledge conventions in open space and recreation planning, and align with commonly used alternative terms. Each parcel of land (or part of a parcel of land) should be allocated to one of the open space types.

Table 1. Types of open space

| Type of open space        | Description  | Commonly used alternative terms  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Parks                     | Reserves which have had their physical character and/or vegetation modified to support community recreation, community development and wellbeing uses. Includes ornamental gardens, play facilities, community gardens and informal lawns. | Passive open space   |
| Outdoor sports areas      | Venues designed to support team sports training and competition.   | Active open space  |
| Urban public space        | Street and road reserves, lanes and town plazas and squares which accommodate walking, cycling, social gatherings or outdoor dining.   | The public domain  |
| Conservation and heritage | Reserves created to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources.  | Bushland or environmental conservation as defined by the Growth Centres Development Code |
| Landscape and amenity     | Reserves created for their attractiveness and to add to or protect the character of an area. Includes reserves adjoining residential and industrial areas, ridge lines, river flats and sections of road reserves.                         |  |
| Linear and linkage        | Small pathways linking residential streets in urban areas to municipal and regional trails using former rail and water race reserves and dedicated land. Includes creek and river reserves and floodways.                                  | May be described as ‘green corridors’ or ‘greenways’.                                    |
| Utilities and services    | Land reserved for urban and rural infrastructure and support services.   |  |
| Undeveloped               | Land acquired or zoned for open space purposes to protect its assets, or to meet assessed community needs once development of an area proceeds.  |  |
| Proposed                  | Land proposed to be zoned or acquired for open space purposes to protect assets or to meet assessed community needs once development of an area proceeds.  |  |

Regional, district and local open space and recreation planning refers to different sized catchments which facilities serve.

- Regional** – serves whole cities or metropolitan subregions, or multiple towns and settlements in non-metropolitan regions. Because of the extent of the catchment regional open space often requires State agency management.
- District** – serves a number of neighbourhoods and may have a catchment extending beyond the LGA that hosts it.
- Local** – serves one neighbourhood and is located close to or within residential areas.

Open space with conservation and heritage, or landscape and amenity values (environmental conservation areas) has intrinsic and broad-based merit, and does not necessarily have a notional catchment of users, so the levels may not be relevant for this type of open space.

A matrix describing the open space assets can document each parcel of open space fitting the categories, with size and other characteristics. The matrix below includes examples from across Sydney.

Of course many open space assets will fall into multiple cells in such a matrix (for example, a local park may also provide linear and linkage functions). Desirably, the part of the parcel of land associated with each type and level in the hierarchy should be distinguished.

Whilst local government will need to consider the State or Federal Government’s ownership of open space and any opportunities and constraints this presents, the main types of open space that will be subject to detailed planning are Crown reserves and local government community land (see box overpage).

|          | Parks                              | Outdoor sport                            | Urban public space  | Linear and linkage   | Conservation and heritage   | Landscape and amenity   | Undeveloped   | Proposed                              |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Regional | Millennium Parklands, Homebush Bay | Olympic Park Tennis Centre, Homebush Bay | Level in hierarchy possibly not relevant<br><br>Darling Harbour<br><br>Old Town Centre Plaza, Bankstown | Level in hierarchy possibly not relevant<br><br>Prospect Street Reserve West, Smithfield | Level in hierarchy possibly not relevant<br><br>Lake Parramatta Reserve, North Parramatta | Level in hierarchy possibly not relevant<br><br>Deepwater Regional Park, Milperra | Parts of the St Marys development (ex ‘ADI’ land in Western Sydney) will be a regional park | For example: proposed park Barangaroo |
| District | Maluga Passive Reserve, Birrong    | Middleton Park, Yagoona                  | King Street Plaza, Rockdale   | Cardigan Street Reserve, Guildford   | Vineyard Creek Reserve, Telopea   | Greystanes Creek Reserve, Toongabbie  |   |                                       |
| Local    | Bolaro Street Park, Greystanes     | Lockwood Park, Greenacre                 |   | Montg’ry Reserve, Revesby  | Edna Hunt Sanctuary, Epping   | Kurung Reserve, Holroyd   |   |                                       |



**Australian, NSW and  
Local Government  
owned open space**

The Australian Government and their agencies own some open space in urban areas (e.g. the Department of Defence and the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Trust).

Crown land, owned by the NSW Government, comprises approximately half of all land in the state and includes parks and reserves, sporting, camping and recreation areas, and lands managed and protected for their environmental importance including National Parks. Other Crown land is leased for commercial or agricultural purposes.

The Department of Lands is responsible for the management of Crown land. Crown land becomes 'Crown reserves', providing one or more public purposes, following a process of reservation and dedication necessary to consider future uses and identify management responsibilities. Crown reserves are generally managed by either Department of Lands

or other government departments, reserve trusts (e.g. Western Sydney Parklands Trust), statutory or commercial authorities (e.g. Sydney Olympic Park Authority) or local councils. Plans of management are required to be prepared and communities and stakeholders are provided with opportunities to comment. In some cases, these are prepared by, or on behalf of councils.

In the Sydney metropolitan area open space owned by local government councils accounts for approximately 4% of open space land area. Land that is owned or the responsibility of local governments (with some exceptions) is defined as public land under the Local Government Act 1993 and is classified as either 'community' or 'operational' land.

Councils are able to deal with operational land in a relatively unfettered manner, subject to sale, leasing, planning and development constraints typical of most privately owned land. Community land is meant for public access and use and though it is a small share of the total it is the

open space that is 'closest to the community' and is fundamental to liveability and the quality of life in neighbourhoods.

All community land must be categorised (for example, using the categories outlined earlier) with plans of management prepared. Once approved by Council these provide the basis for use and activity, development opportunities and constraints, leasing and licensing, and set the parameters for management of the land and its assets. Community land leasing and licensing provisions are more constrained than operational land provisions and is restricted to the time length of the agreement (not greater than 21 years, and generally less than five years) as well as the need for public exhibition and notices.

**2.5 Detailed inventory**

A detailed and up-to-date open space and recreation inventory is an essential asset management tool and provides an information base to inform the planning process. To be useful, an inventory should extend the simple classification of open space identified above. It should provide information on:

- The location and type of each venue
- Its sub-components
- Quality/condition
- Amenities
- Site size
- Capacity for redevelopment/extension
- Existing utilities or adjoining uses which may strengthen or hamper development initiatives
- Links to other venues, centres and community assets
- Ownership
- Management
- Land values
- Use opportunities and fees
- Current uses

This would be compiled from council's asset data bases and from mapping, aerial photography and fieldwork.

The tabulation of inventory data by venue type, hierarchical position, quality and location provides a basis for the assessment of any physical, spatial and managerial shortcomings. It also allows assessment of provision gaps compared to potential future needs. These are considered in the gap analysis phase (section 5).





# understand demand and needs

# 03

## 3. UNDERSTAND DEMAND AND NEEDS

### 3.1 Understanding changing needs

The need for additional open space or services is particularly acute where a population is growing rapidly. But a changing community (e.g. ageing, diversifying culturally or becoming more or less affluent) or general shift in community attitudes will also lead to a shift in needs and preferences. For example, increased appreciation of natural and conservation values has increased demands for the retention and protection of land with landscape and environmental values.

Typically, a LGA-wide open space and recreation plan includes a comprehensive program of research, profiling and consultation to understand these changing needs. Alternatively, the needs analysis may be focused on a particular community or on the future of a particular facility.

This focus will be on the different community aspirations provision must meet, the most effective mix of provision and how that provision might be staged, funded, developed, managed, programmed and resourced. Differences from one community to the next, and from area to area should be considered, as should the recreation patterns and preferences of the whole community, of relevant community sub-groups, or of particular localities.

### New trends and needs to consider:

- Greater diversity in activities.
- Wider array of participants.
- Participation across a wider period of the day and week.
- Growth in concern for the protection of, but more recreational use of, the natural environment.
- Increased community awareness of the role of recreation and open space in promoting health.
- Demand for higher quality, safer and more accessible facilities.

### 3.2 Research, profiling and community consultation

The research and profiling component may use:

- State and national data on trends and community participation in sporting and recreational activities - from agencies such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics or Australian Sports Commission.
- Data on the demographic or cultural characteristics of potential users - this should be assessed as a pointers to recreation demand. The size of the community indicates the scale of provision, while the mix and type of facilities will be influenced by the age profile, cultural background, household make-up, economic status, education and employment, mobility and local climate and environmental resources.
- Participation, facility and program use data - these surveys of recreation clubs and associations, venue bookings and user profiling represent a primary source of information on patterns of usage and trends, and existing user expectations. Care must be taken in drawing conclusions from this data as usage may be dictated by the nature of current supply and could lead to 'more of the same'.
- National, state and local level studies of conservation values and landscape qualities of candidate areas - for protection or special management regimes as part of the open space system.



3.3 Community consultation

Community consultation generates further information, allows testing of perceptions and assumptions

from the research and tests profiling.

Understanding the community's recreation aspirations helps identify and implement strategies to

enhance the opportunities, experiences, benefits and the quality of life for the community.

The community should have the widest possible opportunity to put forward their views on three critical issues:

- 1. Which of the existing recreational provision works well and must be protected and strengthened?
- 2. What recreational opportunities need fixing and how might they be fixed?
- 3. What will ensure the community has access to the activities it would like to pursue or those that are available elsewhere?

Community recreation needs and aspirations can be assessed through:

- Community, club or organisational surveys.
- Public meetings or on-site meetings or reviews.
- Personal interviews with key community members.
- Design competitions.
- Reviews of complaints and submissions to relevant planning bodies.

The type and scope of surveys will depend on resources. While telephone surveys may be most effective in capturing people who do not currently use open space, they can be costly. Online surveys are increasingly popular but require careful design and distribution.

Focus group discussions may be held with a cross section of community groups to obtain in-depth qualitative information from a small group of participants on particular themes.

Current approaches favoured by councils include telephone surveys, focus groups and interviews with community groups and representatives.

There is a risk that the community response will be, 'we need everything!' As with all components of the planning process, care must be taken in interpreting any needs and aspirations data. The desired provision may already exist but community members are simply not aware of it; similarly, the expressed need may be aspirational in nature (in that people see them as good for the community but have no intention of using them).

As such, the recreation planner needs to make a reasoned and professional evaluation rather than simply accepting what the community says as true. In fact, an important role of the consultative process is to educate the community as to what exists, what is appropriate and how it might best be provided.

Table 2 adapts material from the 1992 guidelines and summarises the applicability of the different needs analysis and collection techniques and their advantages and disadvantages.

Special considerations in different planning contexts

Inner urban and suburban areas

Understanding the different needs of visitors (for example, those visiting beach foreshore areas or harbourside parks) while protecting local interests may be a challenge. Direct consultation or surveys of both user groups will be important to understand competing demands.

New release areas

In new release areas there is no constituency for open space. However, surveys or focus groups with buyers of new housing in recently developed new release areas may identify what aspects of the open space provision in these areas is worth replicating in new areas and what might be done differently.

Regional areas

In regional areas experiencing rapid rates of growth, particularly in certain age groups, the planning context may be similar to suburban areas or to new release areas (albeit on a smaller scale), and the issues may be the same.

In some areas, particularly coastal resort towns, tensions may arise from the different needs of the resident population and tourists. Permanent residents may find their traditional use patterns and access arrangements have to adjust when the visitor population expands, and planners need to be aware of these issues in investigating needs.

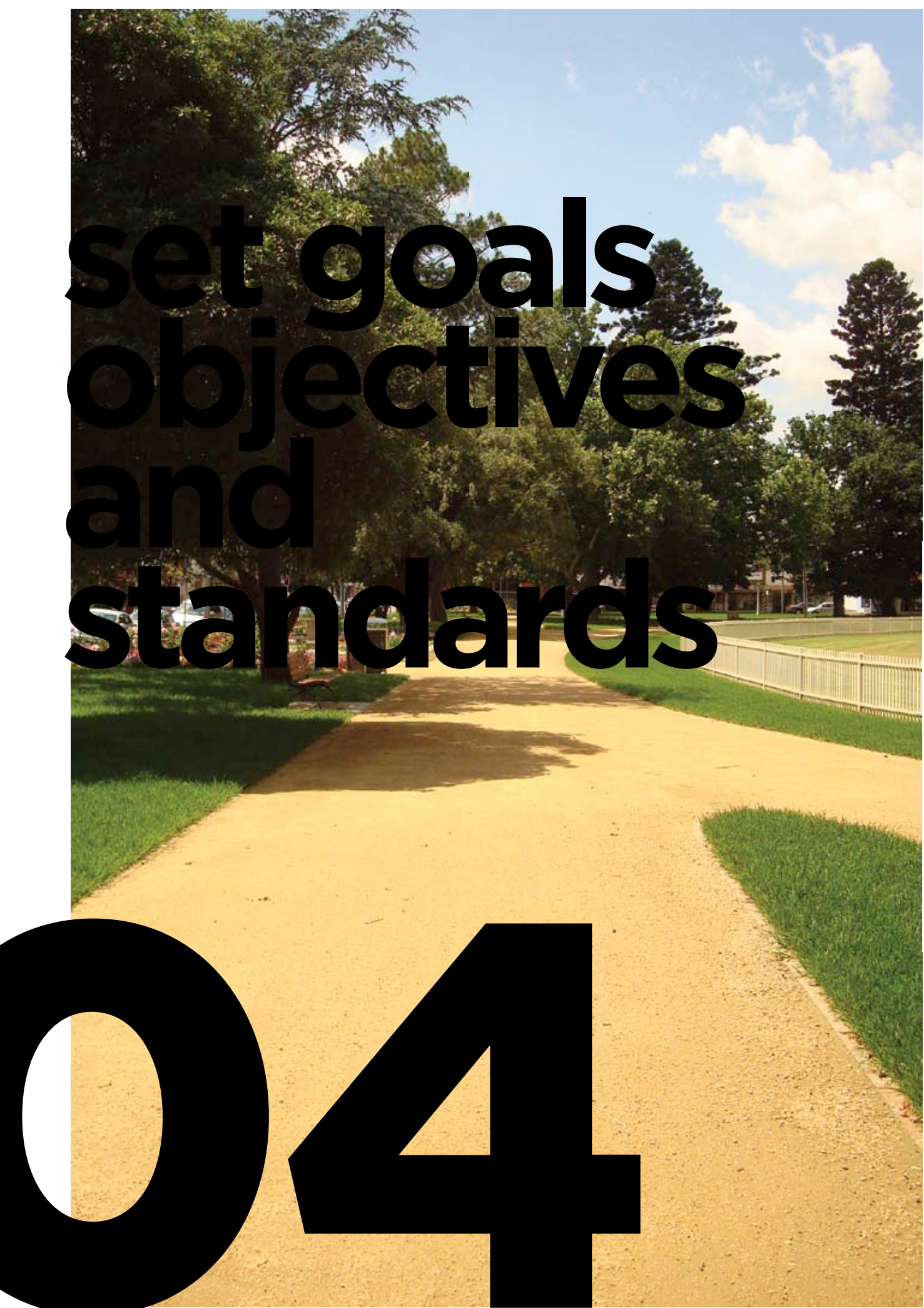
A particular dilemma in regional areas will be the call from residents of different towns for their town to host a recreation facility, for reasons of access and equity, even if demand thresholds have not been met. Councils may have to make difficult decisions in these circumstances to invest in one town but not another though this can be informed by relevant considerations (see section 5).



| Technique                  | Suitability for inner urban areas | Suitability for suburban areas | Suitability for new release areas | Advantages  | Disadvantages   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Community profile</b>   | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✓                                 | Essential basis to planning.<br>Can be updated.<br>Flexibility in deriving information.<br>Level of detail.                           | Suits the application of standards.<br>Unable to be utilised alone.                         |
| <b>Resident surveys</b>    | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✗                                 | Most accurate information.<br>Ability to match with supply.<br>Ability to ask a range of questions.<br>Needs of non-users considered. | Cost and time.<br>Difficult to understand youth recreation (parents answering for youths).  |
| <b>Organisation survey</b> | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✓                                 | Ongoing relationships.<br>Qualitative information.<br>Extra input for decision making.  | Supply creating demand.<br>Only speaking to organisations.<br>Ignoring the silent majority. |
| <b>Focus groups</b>        | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✗                                 | Quick and cheap achievable ends.<br>Reasonable results if comparable area is well chosen.   | Getting the right cross-section of people is crucial.                                       |
| <b>User surveys</b>        | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✓                                 | Good indication of existing use.<br>Accurate information.   | Supply creates demand.<br>Non-users ignored.  |
| <b>Standards</b>           | ✓                                 | ✓                              | ✗                                 | Starting point and cost effectiveness.<br>Easy to implement.  | No consideration of local characteristics, location, quantity.<br>No fundamental basis.     |

Source: Adapted from Department of Planning (1992) Recreation and Open Space Guidelines, Table 2, p.14





4. SET GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

4.1 Goals and objectives for clear planning directions

The plan must clearly articulate intent and directions so administrators, Councillors and the community understand what is being proposed. The identification of a vision, principles, goals or objectives is key to this process (identifying actions to achieve the goals and objectives follows later).

—**A Vision** is a broad statement of a future improved outcome. For example, ‘Create a network of resource efficient quality public open space across the City that will satisfy current and future recreational needs in an equitable and sustainable manner’ from the Stirling (WA) Public Open Space Strategy 2008.

—**Principles** or **Goals** (these may be referred to as aims) are statements of broad intent which give effect to vision statements. They should reflect what is practically possible and the community’s values. Objectives are closely related but are usually more precise statements of outcomes, that is, what will be achieved. Typically, they should be measurable and thereby provide an empirical basis for evaluation and monitoring. For example, ‘Provide open space that is connected and accessible for people of all ages and abilities and well served by a range of transport options’ from the Yarra (Vic) Open Space Strategy 2006.

Open space plans which are tightly focussed on establishing an open space network (as might be the case in new release areas in particular) may contain just one or two goals and objectives relating to the satisfaction of needs.

The review and evaluation of existing council, regional and NSW Government policies and those relating to community development, health and wellbeing and recreation, undertaken as part of the context review, should inform the generation of more specific goals and objectives.

4.2 ‘Default’ and locally appropriate provision standards

The most basic way to identify need is via general provision rates of open space and recreation facilities from elsewhere.

These standards should only be a starting reference point; over reliance on such standards in lieu of rigorous and consultative research into the community’s requirements may produce unsatisfactory results in terms of rates of provision and the location of open space.

In NSW the ‘fixed’ standard of 2.83ha of open space per 1,000 people has often been applied. This is derived from the British seven acres per 1,000 residents standard from the early 1900s which is irrelevant to contemporary planning and ignores the fact that open space of different types needs to be provided to accommodate different needs.

The simple fixed, quantitative standard is also irrelevant given observed rates of provision in the different parts of metropolitan Sydney (see Table 3). About five percent of inner urban Sydney is classified as open space. If the 2.83 ha per 1,000 people standard was applied about 16 percent of the area would be devoted to open space. The reality is that the residents of inner urban Sydney have access to a range of recreational and leisure opportunities that the existing open space assets (including high quality urban public spaces and harbour and beach foreshores) manage to deliver (though there may be some pressure on outdoor sports areas).

Table 3. Existing provision of non-regional recreation areas in different parts of metropolitan Sydney and area required to meet 2.83 ha/1,000 persons standard

| Planning context | Average actual level of provision (% of urban residential areas) | Average level of provision based on 2.83ha/1,000 persons (% of urban residential areas) |
|------------------|--|---|
| Inner urban      | 5%   | 16%   |
| Suburban inner   | 10%  | 10%   |
| Suburban outer   | 26%  | 8%  |



4. SET GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

A review of standards used elsewhere and a detailed analysis of current provision rates in Sydney's West Central subregion is the basis for a default standard applied in the guidelines. West Central is an established area, mostly developed during the second half of the 20th century, with a resilient and adaptable urban structure and a good distribution and range of open space types.

Table 4 shows the relevant default standards, with the pale shaded boxes being the key items for consideration. A catchment access based standard (the service area radius or maximum distances which residents should have to travel) is used. The typical, associated area-percentage standard

(identifying the area of non-industrial land that might be devoted to open space) is also included as a secondary guide.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate these standards graphically for Local and District level Parks, Linear and Linkage and Outdoor Sport.

The information generated by the previous steps, using the default standards as a reference, can help develop locally specific provision standards to take into account likely or expressed community needs and particular local circumstances and assets; and identify what rates or modes of provision of open space or recreation facilities is locally appropriate. The final column in

Table 4 also provides a guide to the alternatives that might be considered to generate locally specific standards.

Figure 3 provides a simple example.

Generating alternative and locally appropriate standards is particularly relevant in inner urban and suburban areas where the main thrust of an open space plan will be enhancement of existing recreation facilities and open space and where urban public spaces are identified as being able to fulfil recreation needs. Thus, streets, which can comprise 20 percent to 30 percent of the public domain, can form a legitimate role in satisfying recreation pursuits (e.g. open space links, bike and pedestrian paths, 'café culture' activities in main streets).

Figure 3. Deriving locally appropriate provision standards

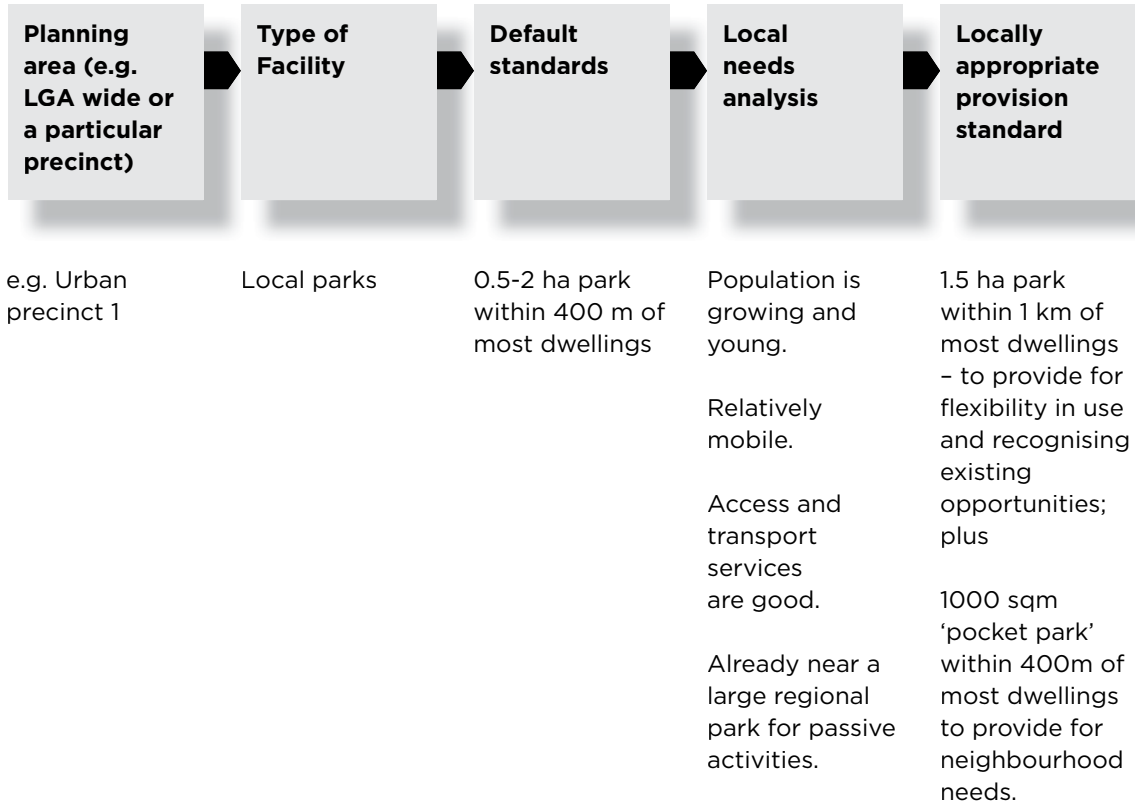


Table 4. Default standards for open space planning in NSW

|                                      | Hierarchy level | Size       | Distance from most dwellings | Share of non-industrial land | Locally specific alternatives to meeting this standard   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Parks                                | Local           | 0.5-2 ha   | 400m                         | 2.6%                         | Civic spaces, plazas, pocket parks, portion of a regional park or quarantined area of a conservation or landscape area |
|                                      | District        | 2-5 ha     | 2 km                         | 0.6%                         | Beach and river foreshore areas, or quarantined area of a conservation or landscape area                               |
| Linear and Linkage                   | Local           | up to 1 km | n/a                          | 0.9%                         | Local primary schools, portion of a district park  |
|                                      | District        | 1-5 km     | n/a                          | 0.1%                         | Secondary schools, portion of a regional park  |
| Sub-total (Parks/Linear and Linkage) |                 |            |                              | 4.2%                         |  |
| Outdoor sport                        | Local           | 5 ha       | 1 km                         | 2.0%                         | Local primary schools, portion of a district park  |
|                                      | District        | 5-10 ha    | 2 km                         | 2.6%                         | Secondary schools, portion of a regional park  |
| Sub-total (Outdoor Sport)            |                 |            |                              | 4.6%                         |  |
| Total (Local/District)               |                 |            |                              | 8.8%<br>Say 9%               | Could be reduced through shared areas using above alternatives   |
| Parks                                | Regional        | 5+ ha      | 5-10 km                      | 2.3%                         |  |
| Linear and Linkage                   | Regional        | 5+ km      | 5-10 km                      | 0.7%                         |  |
| Outdoor Sport                        | Regional        | 10 +ha     | 5-10 km                      | 2.9%                         |  |
| Total (Regional)                     |                 |            |                              | 5.9%<br>Say 6%               |  |
| Grand Total                          |                 |            |                              | 14.7%<br>Say 15%             |  |



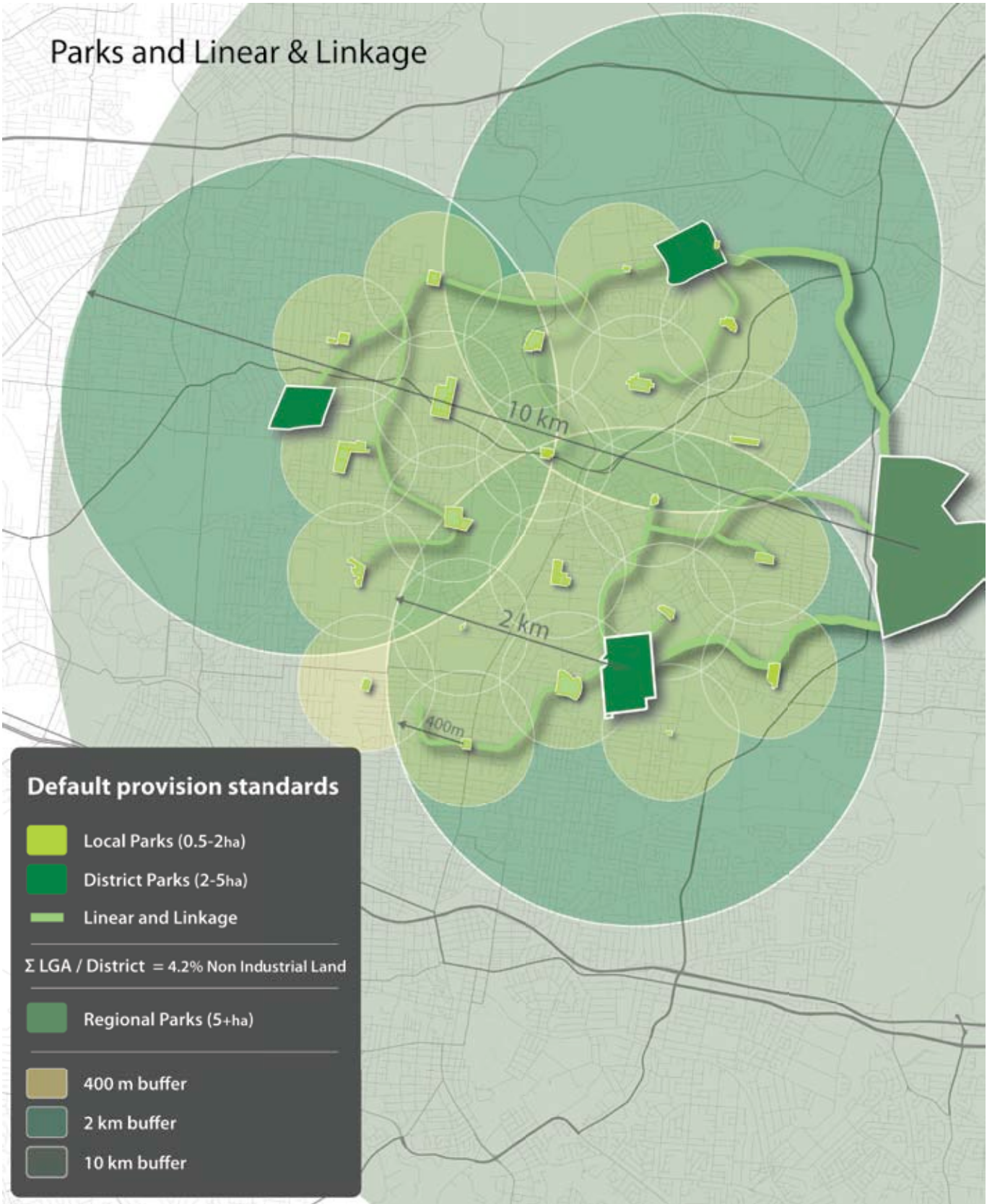


Figure 1. Idealised application of default open space provision standards: Parks and Linear and Linkage

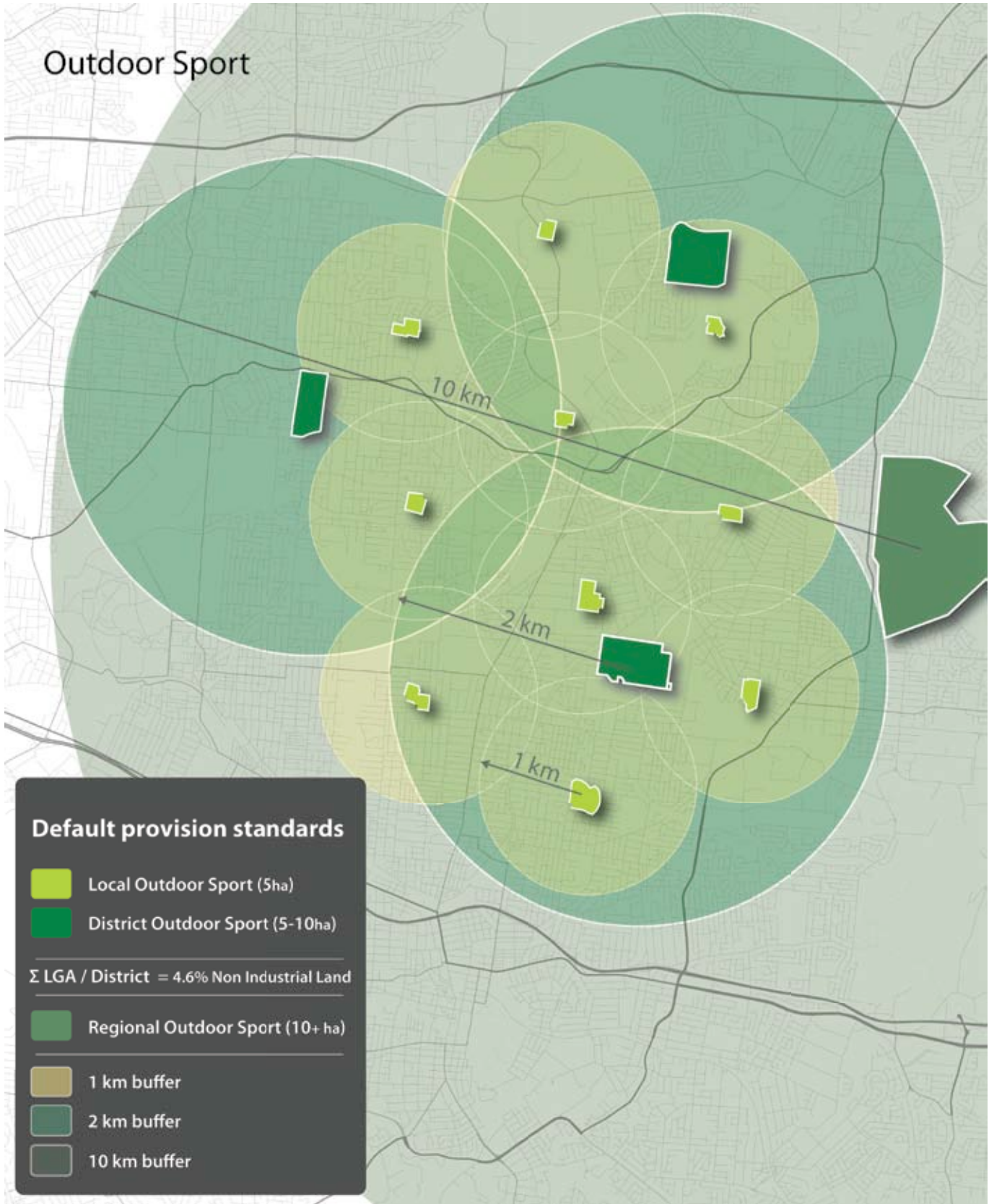


Figure 2. Idealised application of default open space provision standards: Outdoor Sport



# Identify opportunities & options to meet needs

# 05

## 5. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS TO MEET NEEDS

This analysis phase compares supply and demand and identifies gaps, opportunities and constraints.

### 5.1 Demand – supply gaps

The existing provision of open space and recreation facilities (and activities and programs) should be compared to the needs identified, or provision standard adopted or generated earlier. This should be done systematically for each category of open space or recreation activity to identify gaps in provision (or excess and underutilised capacity).

### 5.2 Opportunities and constraints or SWOT analysis

A scan of the environment can consider the positive trends or opportunities which might be built upon, and how constraints or weaknesses might be overcome. Strategists use an opportunities and constraints, or SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), framework for this analysis.

In established urban areas opportunities to provide new open space will be limited (though very important when they arise). Filling gaps in provision, or meeting emerging needs then, will require innovations drawn from the findings of a SWOT or similar analysis.

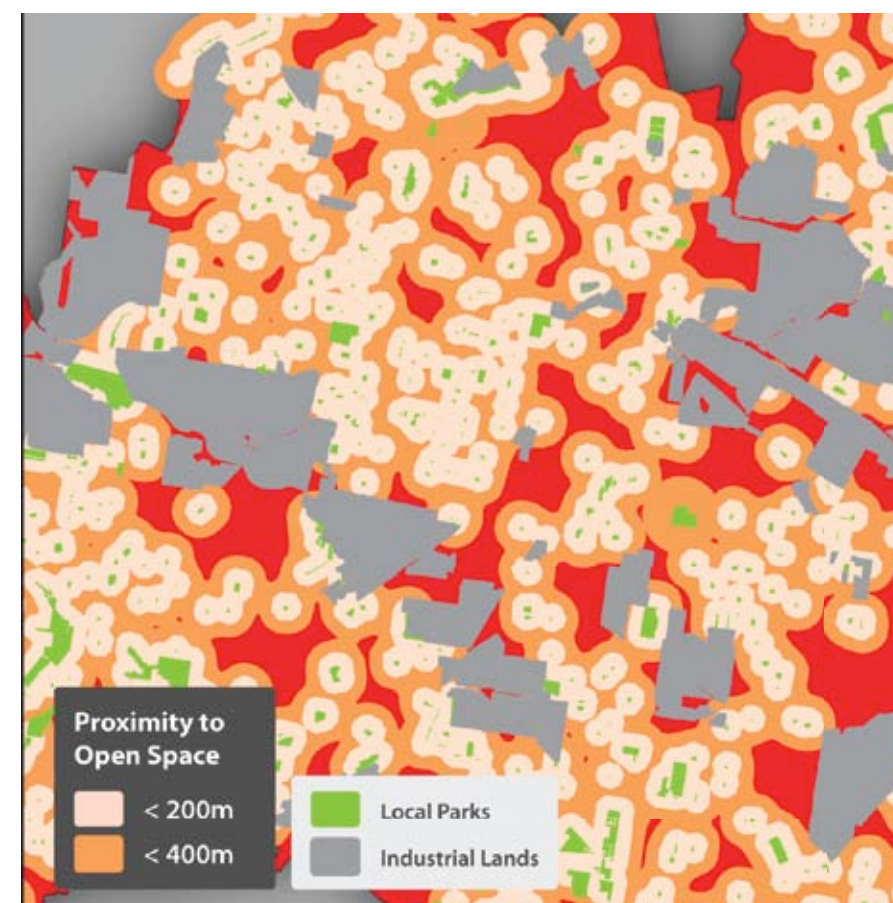


Figure 4. Example of applying standards to identify supply gaps

The red areas are apparently 'under-served' when the default standard of 400m catchments around Local Parks provision is applied.



5.3 Options for meeting  
demand challenges

Smarter asset and resource use

The growth in demand from population growth in urban areas is putting pressure on finite open space and the capacity of existing facilities. Smarter options to address these trends are required.

Converting or adapting  
existing open space

Some open space areas may be underutilised and small areas within existing open space areas can be adapted for smaller, local facilities such as playgrounds, skate parks or dog running areas.

Strategic land acquisition to  
improve linkages and maximise  
the open space resource

In established urban areas, the acquisition of key sites would improve open space connectivity to maximise open space resources. Whether in public or private ownership procurement strategies can be pursued to secure these sites.

Integrating the mix recreation  
facilities and programs and  
co-locating with other services

Integration and co-location achieves capital and operational savings, allows cross-pollination of activities and use and ensures leisure offerings are accessible and seen as mainstream community services.

Using alternative, commercial  
facilities and venues for recreation  
on an opportunistic basis

Commercial facilities and venues for recreation used on an opportunistic basis could include acquiring old factories or working with commercial providers, licensed sporting clubs and property developers to secure facilities and venues, even if only at certain times of the day or week.

Using new technologies  
and enhanced design

New technologies and enhanced designs can overcome space and time shortages at existing venues and optimise services provided through new venues. Examples include night lighting (and new forms of lighting which do not impact on adjoining uses), synthetic playing fields and removable goals which allow longer hours for training. Cost control and flexibility are served by better quality turf varieties and higher maintenance standards. More effective venue designs and layouts can allow more fields to be accommodated on a site.

Improved designs can also boost usage where access issues or a lack of parking, lighting and pathways may have led to underutilisation.

Providing increased indoor  
recreation facilities to ensure an  
equitable mix of outdoor and indoor  
recreation opportunities

More diverse recreation needs are being met by the provision of indoor sports stadia, indoor aquatic and fitness venues and multi-use community centres. These means that more diverse opportunities can be offered in hours not subject to the whim of the weather or the season.

Rationalising facilities

In some suburban areas the legacy of open space provision may require rationalisation of open space assets, recognising that some facilities are underutilised or poorly located, and could be closed or merged with a more suitable facility in a more accessible location. Consultation must be sensitively handled and must highlight benefits and alternatives.

New partnerships and  
management approaches

Meeting more diverse demands, and providing additional open space and facilities requires new relationships and partnerships.

Seeking agreements with  
educational or other institutions for  
co-use of open space

Recreational open space within school boundaries often goes unused outside designated school hours or school sports times. For state schools, agreements with the Department of Education and Training (DET) are required that will manage issues such as responsibility for maintenance, insurance and where liabilities lie.

Examples of agreements  
between councils and  
schools to share  
open space

**Gosford City Council** has been working with DET over the last 7 years to develop a ‘joint-use agreement’ template for the use of DET open space. Under the proposed agreement between Gosford Council and Erina High School, Council will outlay \$2.5 million in improvements and maintenance to the sports field (including the provision of flood lights, landscaping etc) and have full access to the field outside of school hours (afternoons from 4pm to 10pm and weekends). In order for the School to use the field during these designated times they will have to apply to Council for a permit.

**Sutherland City Council** has agreements with schools in place. Generally, schools reserve the right to use the playing fields during school hours. Council may choose to embellish the school’s land and contributes to maintenance of the surface. Agreements are through works in kind, rather than through rent or other financial transactions. Issues have arisen where the playing field is only accessible through the school grounds. This raises security concerns.



5. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS TO MEET NEEDS

Seeking cross boundary or subregional coordination

It is increasingly difficult for a single council to plan for open space and recreation effectively and meet all local needs. The Division of Local Government has prepared guidance for councils to share resources. Councils may jointly prepare strategies or consider supply side issues at a subregional level. The focus is likely to be on district and regional level provision of parks and outdoor sports areas, as well as cross region linear and linkage reserves.

Minimising open space and maintenance costs

Meeting the costs of purchasing new open space, infrastructure and assets and maintaining them is a continuing challenge. Options to minimise costs include the following.

Utilising marginal land that is acceptable for open space purposes

Land provided or allocated for open space needs to be appropriate for its intended purposes, recognising that these may evolve. Flood prone land may be appropriate for open space (particularly for outdoor sports) so long as the degree and frequency of likely inundation on this land, and possible future maintenance burden, is properly assessed. Other marginal land such as landfill sites may be used to replace habitat or as open space where the hazard risk is acceptably low.

Acquiring larger sites for multiple and changing uses over time

Larger sites can support multiple uses - a better use of space than separate sportsgrounds, parks, informal gardens and amenity reserves. Reserving areas for expansion will provide flexibility as new needs emerge. Maintenance costs are minimised where there are fewer but larger open space areas.

Planning in foreshore areas and in urban public spaces may have to accommodate larger crowds at peak times, requiring larger open space and recreation areas than the permanent population would warrant. Out of season, these larger areas and expanses may be underutilised. The choice of materials and landscaping will be important to minimise out of season maintenance costs.

Maintenance actions should be directed to efficient resource use

Councils should use approaches as summarised in the 1992 guidelines:.

- Higher skills levels in park maintenance managers at local government level.
- Increased use of contracting and day labour, particularly for repetitive tasks such as mowing, fertilizing and watering.
- A more reasoned approach to maintenance, recognising the need to produce higher maintenance standards in some areas and less intense maintenance standards in others.
- Increased use of technology.

For councils with new release areas, the specification of maintenance standards should be consistent with the intended role and function of the open space or facilities and the available resources.

Adapting for climate change and reduced rainfall reliability

Open space and facilities are being used more intensively, bringing maintenance and programming challenges, and areas are impacted by more frequent drought events and extreme weather days, less rainfall and regularly imposed water restrictions. These have serious implications for open space planning and management.

Challenges include:

- maintaining outdoor sports areas to playing standard while meeting water restrictions
- preserving trees exposed to more extreme weather
- providing shaded areas for spectators and vehicles.

Options to address these challenges include:

- ensuring greater local water recovery (in tanks from pavilions or other buildings in the vicinity of the playing fields, for example), grey water storage and recycling
- improving and upgrading irrigation systems
- improving turf management practices
- increasing mulching in garden beds and around trees
- choosing appropriate trees for endurance and shade
- additional watering for new trees during establishment periods
- erecting mobile and rudimentary but hardy shade structures
- reviewing and monitoring key open space areas to limit excessive use.

Special considerations in different planning contexts

Inner urban areas

In inner urban areas the average rate of provision of non-regional open space represents about five percent of the development area. The population is generally denser, and there may be less private open space available to residents. Better use of the available resources, and appropriate development and management of open spaces, is essential as the potential for new open space is limited. Joint/shared use opportunities are important where they can be reasonably developed and planned.

Creatively providing alternatives is important. Lower order streets and lanes planned as pedestrian or cycleways can be integral to open space or linear networks, and paths along beach or foreshore areas may provide a high quality alternative to riparian and environmental corridors. These connections contribute to 'healthy city' objectives and reduced car dependence.

Renewal or infill development presents an opportunity to augment the wider public open space network. Not only could small parks be dedicated to the public domain, but also streets, lanes and green links could have wider benefits. An open space and recreation plan can anticipate renewal projects and opportunities. Systems of land dedication, or frameworks for development agreements to secure these areas, can also be established prior to development occurring.

Suburban areas

In these areas there are similar issues to those above although the rate of provision of open space is often more generous (around 10 percent on average). Consequently, providing environmental areas and connections is less problematic and often the road network provides more opportunities for functions such as safe pedestrian and cycle circulation.

New release areas

It is not so much the absolute quantity of open space in the new release areas but its location, connectivity and quality of development that is important. The principles inherent in the above discussion should be incorporated.

Regional areas

In some regional areas a significant threat may be declining populations, and in some cases, idle open space areas and excess facility capacity. Changing the character of underutilised open space, for example, from higher maintenance sports fields to revegetated bushland may be necessary.

The population in regional towns may not reach the thresholds required to support particular facilities. Where a council has to make choice between one town and another in locating facilities clear criteria should be established. Such criteria would include:

- economies of scale - scope to co-locate or share with other facilities to minimise start up and running costs
- which town provides the most accessibility for the wider region
- which town is slated for the greatest share of future growth.

Provision of like facilities in multiple towns may be unavoidable but the cost must be acknowledged and reflected in relevant charges and subsidies.



# prepare the plan

# 06

## 6. PREPARE THE PLAN

### 6.1 The network and facilities program

An options paper or draft plan can identify how the desired open space network and recreation facilities and services program will be achieved. Both should be subject to evaluation as part of a feedback process before moving to finalisation.

Open space network options should reflect the ability to meet needs as expressed in the locally appropriate standards, modified by the understanding of opportunities and constraints. The network should be clear on the amount of open space, its distribution, its use and its location. At the local level the open space system should be an integrated network incorporating parks, squares, plazas, riparian corridors, playing fields and recreational trails. As a general principle, recreational routes may meander but commuter routes should be direct.

Appendix 2 provides details on the roles, assets and management issues for the different types of open space. These should be considered in the development of the plan.

### 6.2 Safety, security and comfort

Safety, security and comfort for users are essential. Nearby development should be orientated for passive surveillance of the public domain by, for example, overlooking open spaces.

The Australian Standards for Playgrounds (in particular Playground Equipment Standard AS4685- 2004) provide guidelines for the design, installation, maintenance and operation of playgrounds. They are not intended to provide totally risk free environments and are a minimum benchmark. They are only mandatory where referenced in legislation or regulation.

Open space networks along with transport networks can minimise risks associated with natural and man-made disasters. Where open space is located away from roads, escape routes must be designed in. Flooding must be managed to allow quick retreat via alternative routes and, in a similar manner, people must be able to avoid bush fires. Access must be provided for emergency vehicles and places of refuge for people and, where possible, for fauna. In most cases playing fields provide refuge from bush fires. It follows that the requirements of a disaster plan must be taken into account when planning for open space.

The micro-climate of open spaces must be considered with ample amounts of shade and places for rest and recuperation. Consideration should be given to providing shelter from rain at key points.

### 6.3 Priorities for action

Typically, the findings of the analysis in each of the previous stages will be brought together and evaluated in order to identify a series of short, medium and long term priorities for action. Actions may be community wide or tailored by facility or program type, or for different user groups.

Priorities will be determined by reference back to the strategy context, goals and objectives and the needs analysis. Through a series of iterative assessments and refinements, a picture of needs and priorities for action across a range of issues, groups and localities will emerge until a final draft plan is created.



## 6. PREPARE THE PLAN

### 6.4 Evaluation of draft options, actions and projects

Plans should be reviewed through an internal officer process, by Councillors, and by the community to clarify issues, and identify gaps and alternative conclusions and responses.

Techniques to evaluate actions or projects include:

- qualitative approaches such as an objectives achievement matrix where a scoring system is applied to the options against the stated objectives
- a 'cost benefit analysis' for larger plans that quantifies benefits and costs, including non-financial items, in dollar terms over an extended timeframe. In instances where significant capital and ongoing expenditure may be involved a discounted cash flow analysis may be required to identify the net value of the project
- a feasibility analysis for particular projects, looking at the capital and recurrent costs and revenues to expose the extent to which outside funding may be required.

NSW Government guidance for evaluating state projects through the Gateway and Treasury's economic assessment processes may provide useful reference material.

Draft strategies will be exhibited and comments and feedback invited. Where specific options or proposals impact on individual parties, targeted consultation is appropriate to minimise surprises and involve these groups in the preparation of the options or draft plan. An external reference group could serve this purpose.

### 6.5 Plan contents

As with any plan the level of detail must reflect the purpose and scope of the plan. A comprehensive plan that has followed these guidelines will include references to outcomes and findings of the different steps. A proposed structure is:

- introduction, vision and goals
- review of process and community input
- existing conditions and supply assessment
- needs including:
  - demographic characteristics and trends
  - community needs and forecasts
  - changing processes of leisure provision
- locally appropriate provision standards
- key gaps in open space and recreation provision – comparison of demand and supply
- strategies, objectives and actions to meet needs and address gaps
  - the open space plan, set in a geographic framework and setting out networks and movement, nodes and areas
  - the recreation plan
- implementation strategy including allocation of responsibilities, resourcing, monitoring.



# identify imple- mentation mechanisms

# 07



7. IDENTIFY IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

7.1 Introduction

A comprehensive implementation plan should consider:

- integration into the Community Strategic Plan and delivery program
- facility management, programming and services
- statutory planning instruments
- funding including development contributions (to support a s.94 plan)
- pricing and charges plan.

7.2 Local Community Strategic Plan and delivery program

Open space and recreation strategies should be tied to council’s Community Strategic Plan and four year delivery program, supported by a resourcing strategy which includes asset management plans, long-term financial plans and workforce management plans. The delivery program is supported by an annual operational plan which details the activities to be engaged in by the council as part of the delivery program and associated revenue policy for that year.

References to open space and recreation needs will be linked across these plans and be incorporated into LEPs, s.94 plans and site or precinct specific planning controls.

7.3 Facility management, programming and services

Management and facility programming should be geared to delivering against goals and objectives to tailor programs and services to different segments within the community.

At the Council level and the management of the facility providing the service, management structures and operational procedures must address gaps in services, provide sufficient diversity

of programming and provide appropriate staffing for the mix of recreation opportunities.

7.4 Statutory planning instruments

The Standard Instrument for LEPs contains the zones and definitions which should be aligned to open space types in plan making. These include Zone RE1 Public Recreation, Zone RE2 Private Recreation and Zone E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves (not available as open space to councils), RU2 Rural Landscape and potentially Zone E2 Environmental Conservation and Zone E3 Environmental Management.

The business zones of B2 Local Centre, B3 Commercial Core, B4 Mixed Use, B5 Business Development and B6 Enterprise Corridor will also be appropriate for many indoor recreation facilities

Appendix 3 provides guidance on the alignment of open space types with the zones from the Standard Instrument.

7.5 Funding open space and recreation facilities

Australian councils spend upward of 30 percent of their annual budgets on sport, recreation and leisure facilities and demands are increasing. Reviews will ensure ongoing funding meets current need rather than historical need.

Benchmarking against other councils, particularly those successfully responding to similar challenges, will help to refine the analysis of recreation expenditures. Comparative statistics are available from the Division of Local Government.

Funding options include:

- Section 94 contributions** – are paid in NSW as development contributions for associated public amenities or public services including new open space and improvements to the efficiency and relevance of existing open space areas. The strategic justification must be contained in relevant documents, such as Open Space Plans and include a supply and demand analysis.
- Voluntary Planning Agreements** – are made by council and the developer of land and may provide for either or both funds and land to be directed towards public amenities and services in fulfilment of development contributions.
- Special or separate rates** – may be applied to some or all ratepayers to fund particular open space projects when approved by the Division of Local Government, which notes ‘the council must be able to demonstrate that the affected ratepayers will benefit from and are generally in favour of the proposal, unless it addresses a specific public health or safety issue.’ They are particularly relevant in established areas, where projects or proposals benefit existing residents. Section 94 contributions cannot be used for such projects.
- Grant funding may be available** – through programs such as the Metropolitan Greenspace Program, which aims to assist councils in the embellishment of regional open space, or the Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program, assisting Councils and recreational organisations in the Harbour catchment, which seeks to improve public access to and the recreational enjoyment of Sydney Harbour and its tributaries’. Both programs provide funding to councils on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

- Sponsorship** – in the form of funds from corporate or commercial sources for advertising or naming rights.

7.6 Pricing and charges plan

When developing the pricing and charges plan the principle should be that the more exclusive the access, the higher the price. For example, a sporting club that seeks a sportsground on an almost exclusive access basis should pay a higher lease fee.

Charges for occasional use of recreation and open space facilities should ensure the user respects the facility but is not denied access because of an inability to pay, consistent with Council’s costs, financial capacity and willingness to provide operating subsidies.

User charges should cover basic operating costs, though major maintenance and capital costs may need to be sourced from other funding sources.

When the operation and management of recreation facilities is outsourced, councils typically strike a contract that establishes operating standards and a basic pricing schedule, though there may be performance fees and other incentives for the operator included.

Special considerations in different planning contexts

Inner urban, suburban and regional areas

In established urban areas the open space plan will be based on forecasts of future residential and other development, and estimated requirements for recreation facilities and services based on locally appropriate provision standards. These requirements will be matched to the available open space and facilities and options to meet future demand.

Three possibilities arise where open space shortages are identified:

1. open space fulfils pre-existing needs and there is no justification for development contributions
2. open space fulfils only the needs of new development and development contributions are justified.
3. open space fulfils a mix of existing and future needs and potentially those of visitors and development contributions are justified for only an equitable part of the cost.

Development contributions may be land, or cash to a value that enables open space to be purchased. In instances where development contributions are justified for a minority proportion of the cost, the proportion must be funded in a timely manner.

Works such as landscaping, safety measures, bicycle facilities and street furniture may be included in a development contributions plan.

New release areas

In new release areas an opportunity is afforded to provide the optimal amount of open space to accommodate future facilities. Nevertheless the same principles on cost apportionment apply.

In areas with large land holdings, the dedication of land may be appropriate. The open space plan will calculate the percentage of developed land necessary to fulfil the open space needs, and the general location of parcels and links will be delineated.

To ensure dedicated land is usable for open space it should not be subject to regular inundation, or, if it is it, should only be partly so and additional land must be dedicated to make up for its reduced functionality. The following hypothetical format may be considered:

*The open space development contribution shall be 10 percent of the developable land except that up to 50 percent of the dedicated land may be subject to inundation provided it is suitable for recreation purposes. When land subject to inundation is provided it shall be at double the rate of developable land.*

When a land dedication approach is adopted, a cash-in-lieu option for subsequent development (not much affected by the proposed network) may be necessary. In areas where land holdings are fragmented monetary contributions may be required in the first instance, with the provision of off-setting land in accordance with the open space plan also allowed.





# undertake monitoring and review

# 08

## 8. UNDERTAKE MONITORING AND REVIEW

### 8.1 Asset management systems

Councils should maintain a comprehensive database of relevant data on open space and recreation facilities in the area, including:

- the location and area of each open space parcel and recreation facilities linked to a GIS system
- the classification of each parcel (see definitions)
- improvements on each parcel (buildings with areas, playing fields by type and infrastructure)
- the condition of improvements, replacement costs and depreciated value
- management, operation and maintenance costs
- occupants and tenure
- rent and other income

Reports from the database will include:

- total value and extent of depreciation of improvements of open space land by type
- forecast of all revenues and costs by open space type
- information for council's budget setting processes and open space planning.

The data will underpin decisions to modify approaches to open space provision or changed maintenance regimes. It will assist the communication of these changes to the public to avoid imposing ill-considered proposals for selling open space or changing standards of care and maintenance to the public. Good data on assets and usage is critical to good decision making.

### 8.2 Use of open space and levels of satisfaction

Periodic surveys can monitor and gather feedback on performance including:

- Permitted user surveys – surveys of the sporting clubs and other user groups who have access rights via a lease, permit or other agreements. Information should include the number of people using the land at various times by activity type.
- Casual user surveys – surveys of the people using open space for activities on a casual basis, via field surveys that capture visitor numbers at various times of the year, week and day. It will necessary to apply a sampling approach.
- Usage and user satisfaction surveys – surveys designed to gauge levels of usage and user satisfaction using sampling techniques. The surveys should ascertain:
  - origin of visitor
  - visitor characteristics
  - purpose of visit
  - activities carried out
  - time engaged in activities
  - frequency of use
  - positive aspect of the space
  - negative aspects of the space.

### 8.3 Reviews

The plan should also contain a commitment to both comprehensive review (on say a seven to ten year cycle, or consistent with Standard Instrument LEPs reviews) and interim or ad hoc reviews (if there is a major change in the planning context, for example if the state or federal government provides funding for a major new facility which changes the supply side context).





## REFERENCES

### Introduction

CABE Space (2009), Open space strategies: best practice guidance, Mayor of London,

< <http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/open-space-strategies.pdf> >

Department of Planning (1992) Outdoor Recreation and Open Space: Planning Guidelines for Local Government

Department of Planning (2005) City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future

Hamilton-Smith (1993), E., Strategic Planning for Community Health Centres and Other Community Services. A tool for the use of Community Health Centres and other Community Support Services, Hepper Marriott and Associates, Melbourne

Marriott, K. L. (1989) Recreation Planning: A Manual for Local Government, HM Leisure Planning, Melbourne, 2nd edit.

SUPER Group (2005), Sydneysiders' Use of Parks and Gardens,  
< <http://sydneyparksgroup.net.au/research/> >

Veal, A. J. (2006) Research Methods for Leisure and Tourism, A Practical Guide, Prentice Hall, Harlow, Essex, 3rd edit.

### Section 1

#### NSW Government Documents

New South Wales Government Premiers Department (2006) State Plan: a new direction for NSW, Crown Copyright.

<http://www.nsw.gov.au/stateplan/>

New South Wales Treasury (2008) State Infrastructure Strategy 2008-2018, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/5049/part1-pp1-52.pdf](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/5049/part1-pp1-52.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2010) Metropolitan Plan, for Sydney 2036, Crown Copyright.

<http://www.metroplansydney.nsw.gov.au/>

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Draft Subregional Strategies, Crown Copyright.

<http://www.metroplan.nsw.gov.au/Subregions/tabid/59/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

New South Wales Sport and Recreation (2006) Game Plan 2012: New South Wales Sport and Recreation Industry Five Year Plan, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.sportnsw.com.au/WebRoot/ecornerhosting/Shops/sportnsw/47F2/ED96/3118/343A/2A9B/COA8/D20C/60D0/01-3177\\_0020\\_Industry\\_0020\\_plan\\_0020\\_FINAL\\_0020\\_MARCH\\_0020\\_08.pdf](http://www.sportnsw.com.au/WebRoot/ecornerhosting/Shops/sportnsw/47F2/ED96/3118/343A/2A9B/COA8/D20C/60D0/01-3177_0020_Industry_0020_plan_0020_FINAL_0020_MARCH_0020_08.pdf)

New South Wales Sport and Recreation (2006) Sport and Recreation Industry Strategic Directions - a Five Year Plan, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/assets/pubs/industry/sportindustryplan\\_discussion.pdf](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/assets/pubs/industry/sportindustryplan_discussion.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2004) Planning Guidelines for Walking and Cycling, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/guide\\_pages.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/guide_pages.pdf)

New South Wales Premier's Council for Active Community (2008) Guidelines for the Use of Physical Activity for Community Development Purposes, prepared by Stoneham and Associates.

[http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/32318/Recommended\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_Physical\\_Activity\\_for\\_Community\\_Development\\_Purposes.pdf](http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/32318/Recommended_Guidelines_for_the_use_of_Physical_Activity_for_Community_Development_Purposes.pdf)

New South Wales Growth Centre's Commission (2006) Growth Centre's Development Code, Crown Copyright.

<http://www.gcc.nsw.gov.au/media/Pdf/Corporate/DEVCODE/devcodeintro.pdf>

Landcom (2008) Open Space Design Guidelines.

[http://www.landcom.com.au/downloads/uploaded/2008\\_Open\\_Spaces\\_Design\\_Guidelines\\_4a54\\_e43f.pdf](http://www.landcom.com.au/downloads/uploaded/2008_Open_Spaces_Design_Guidelines_4a54_e43f.pdf)

#### Regional Strategies

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Far North Coast Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/fncrs\\_strategy\\_fin.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/fncrs_strategy_fin.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Far North Coast Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/midnorthcoast\\_regionalstrategy\\_final.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/midnorthcoast_regionalstrategy_final.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/regional/pdf/lowerhunter\\_regionalstrategy.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/regional/pdf/lowerhunter_regionalstrategy.pdf)



New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Illawarra Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/illawarra\\_regional\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/illawarra_regional_strategy.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Central Coast Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/central\\_coast\\_regional\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/central_coast_regional_strategy.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/sydcancorridor\\_regional\\_strategy\\_final.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plansforaction/pdf/sydcancorridor_regional_strategy_final.pdf)

New South Wales Department of Planning (2006) South Coast Regional Strategy, Crown Copyright.

[http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/southcoast/p/southcoast\\_regionalstrategy.pdf](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/southcoast/p/southcoast_regionalstrategy.pdf)

**Local Government Strategic Plans**

New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet (2010) Integrated Planning and Report Guidelines, Division of Local Government.

[http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg\\_IntegratedPlanningIndex.asp?sectionid=1&mi=20&ml=9&AreaIndex=IntPlanRept&index=1201](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg_IntegratedPlanningIndex.asp?sectionid=1&mi=20&ml=9&AreaIndex=IntPlanRept&index=1201)

**Section 2**

Department of Planning (2003), Sydney Open Space Inventory, NSW Government, unpublished

**Section 3**

Australian Bureau of Statistics [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

- For recreation specific statistics under “National Statistics” in the left hand column go to “Census Data” and then follow on from there. Under “Themes”, select “People” and then “Culture and Recreation”
- Australian Social Trends is published annually and features articles on recreational issues
- Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview (2003) ABS Catalogue No. 4156.0 includes references to a wide range of other Bureau reports on leisure and recreation participation in Australia

Australian Sports Commission (2007), Go to research page on the website,

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/information>

Also Participation in Exercise, recreation and Sport Survey, 2006 Annual Report, Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet. For comparative data go to

[http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg\\_DocumentsIndex.asp?mi=3&ml=2&sectionid=1&documenttype=6&title=&year=#CI](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg_DocumentsIndex.asp?mi=3&ml=2&sectionid=1&documenttype=6&title=&year=#CI)

Department of Planning

- Northern Sydney Region Regional Recreation Demand and Opportunity Studies
- Southern Sydney Region Regional Recreation Demand and Opportunity Studies
- Western Sydney Region Regional Recreation Demand and Opportunity Studies
- Central Coast Region Regional Recreation Demand and Opportunity Studies

**Section 4**

Stirling (WA) Public Open Space Strategy 2008.

Yarra (Vic) Open Space Strategy 2006.

**Section 5**

Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet (2007), ‘A Guidance Paper: Collaboration and Partnerships between Councils’,

< <http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/Files/Information/Collaboration> >

< %20and%20Partnerships%20between%20Councils%20-%20A%20Guidance%20Paper.pdf >

Standing Committee on Public Works (2006), ‘Inquiry into Sports ground Management in NSW Report No. 53/08 – November’

ICLEI Oceania, Local Government Climate Change Adaptation Toolkit, Department of Climate Change

< [http://www.iclei.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/ANZ/CCP/CCP- AU/Projects/AI/AdaptationToolkit/Toolkit\\_CCPAdaptation\\_Final.pdf](http://www.iclei.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/ANZ/CCP/CCP- AU/Projects/AI/AdaptationToolkit/Toolkit_CCPAdaptation_Final.pdf) >

**Section 6**

Department of Treasury, Information on the Gateway evaluation process [http://www.nswprocurement.com.au/Government-Procurement-Frameworks/Gateway-Review/Gateway-Review-Toolkit/Gateway-A3-Map-Handout\\_dnd\\_2.aspx](http://www.nswprocurement.com.au/Government-Procurement-Frameworks/Gateway-Review/Gateway-Review-Toolkit/Gateway-A3-Map-Handout_dnd_2.aspx) >

and

< [http://www.nswprocurement.com.au/Government-Procurement-Frameworks/Gateway-Review/Gateway-Review-Toolkit/Gateway-Toolkit\\_2006\\_dnd.aspx](http://www.nswprocurement.com.au/Government-Procurement-Frameworks/Gateway-Review/Gateway-Review-Toolkit/Gateway-Toolkit_2006_dnd.aspx) >

New South Wales Growth Centres Commission (2006), Growth Centres Development Code, Crown Copyright.

Eager, David. (2005) New Playground Equipment Standard, Paper for IPWEA NSW Division Annual Conference

Geason, Susan and Paul R Wilson (1989) Designing out crime: crime prevention through environmental design, Canberra : Australian Institute of Criminology

Landcom, Open Space Design Guidelines

[http://www.landcom.com.au/downloads/uploaded/2008\\_Open\\_Spaces\\_Design\\_Guidelines\\_4a54\\_e43f.pdf](http://www.landcom.com.au/downloads/uploaded/2008_Open_Spaces_Design_Guidelines_4a54_e43f.pdf)

**Section 7**

Department of Planning

Funding Programs:

Metropolitan Greenspace Program

< <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Programsservices/FundingPrograms/>

MetropolitanGreenspaceProgram/tabid/130/language/en-AU/Default.aspx >

Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program

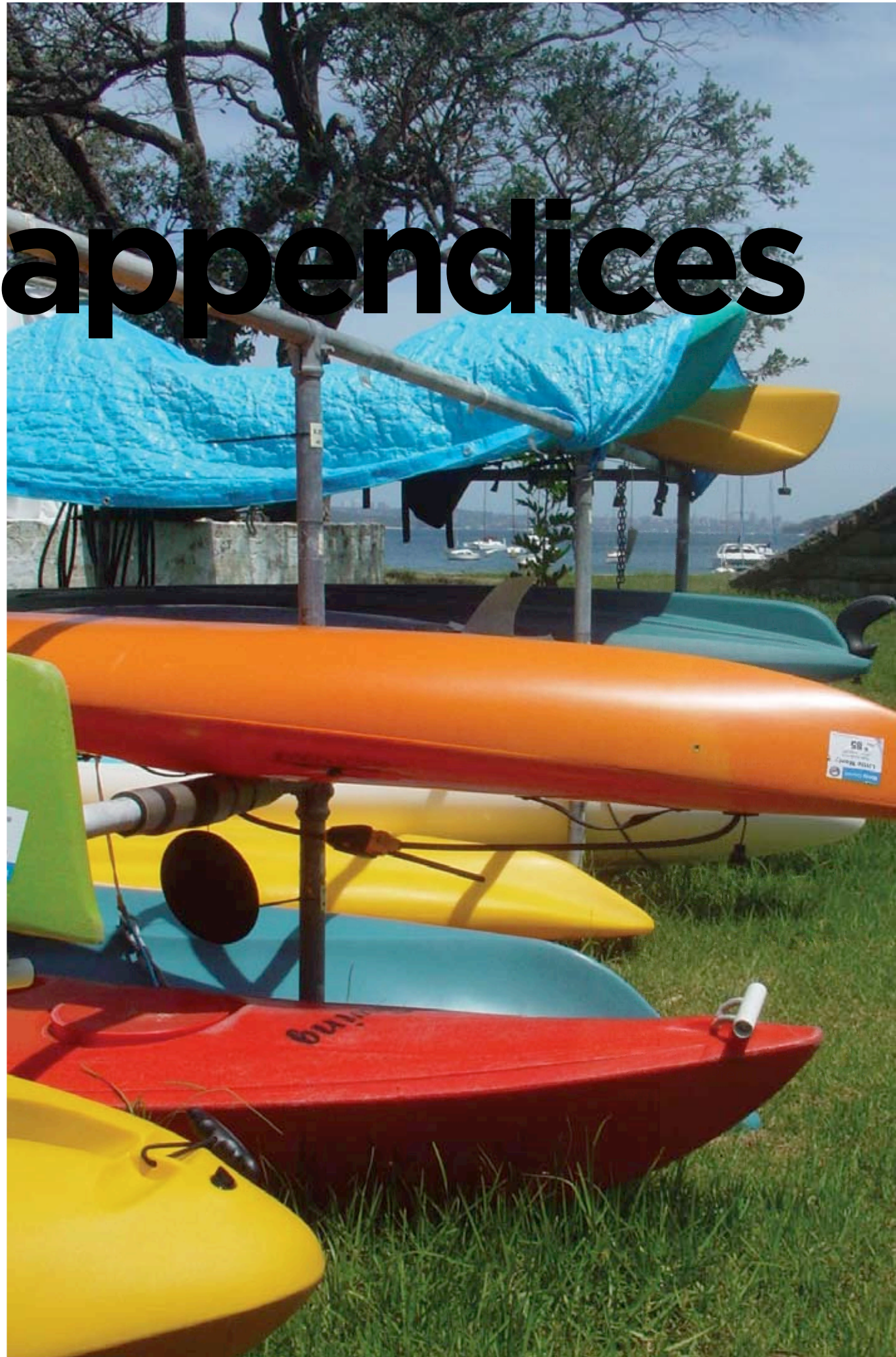
[www.planning.nsw.gov.au/harbour](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/harbour)

Section 94 guidelines:< <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/PlanningSystem/DevelopmentContributionsSystem/Directionsandtechnicaladvice/tabid/91/language/en-US/Default.aspx> >

Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, ‘Guidelines for the Preparation of an Application for a Special Variation to General Income 2009/2010’

< [http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlgHome/documents/Information/09-07%20-%20Special%20Variation%20Guidelines%202009\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlgHome/documents/Information/09-07%20-%20Special%20Variation%20Guidelines%202009_2010.pdf) >





APPENDIX 1: STATE  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES  
RELEVANT TO OPEN  
SPACE AND RECREATION  
PLANNING

| Department (and responsibilities)   | Contact Details   | Weblinks   |
|---|---|--|
| NSW Department of Environment<br>Climate Change and Water<br>(National Parks and Wildlife Division)<br>(Environmental open space strategic<br>direction and management) | 59-61 Goulburn Street, Sydney<br>PO Box A290, Sydney South<br>NSW 1232<br>Phone: +61 2 9995 5000  | <a href="http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au">http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au</a><br><a href="http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nationalparks/">http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nationalparks/</a> |
| NSW Land and Property<br>Management Authority<br>(Land ownership and management)  | Prince Albert Road<br>Queens Square<br>NSW 2000<br>GPO Box 15, Sydney<br>NSW 2001<br>Phone: +61 2 9228 6666   | <a href="http://www.lands.nsw.gov.au">http://www.lands.nsw.gov.au</a>  |
| Sydney Water Corporation<br>(Catchment management)  | Sydney Water<br>PO Box 399<br>Parramatta NSW 2124<br>Phone: 13 20 92  | <a href="http://www.sydneywater.com.au/">http://www.sydneywater.com.au/</a>  |
| NSW Department of Planning<br>(Strategic planning and<br>management)  | 23-33 Bridge Street,<br>Sydney NSW 2000<br>GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001<br>Phone: 02 9228 6111   | <a href="http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au">http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au</a>  |
| NSW Roads and Traffic Authority<br>(Major road reserves)  | 101 Miller Street, North Sydney 2060<br>Phone: 132 213  | <a href="http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au">http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au</a>  |
| Tourism NSW   | Tourism House<br>Level 2, 55 Harrington Street<br>The Rocks NSW 2000<br>Phone: +61 2 9931 1111  | <a href="http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/">http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/</a>  |
| NSW Communities (Sport and<br>Recreation) (Sporting and Open<br>space management and strategic<br>direction)  | NSW Sport and Recreation Level<br>3, 6 Figtree Drive Sydney Olympic<br>Park NSW 2127 Locked Bag 1422<br>Silverwater NSW 2128 Telephone:<br>(02) 9006 3700 | <a href="http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/">http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/</a>  |
| NSW Department of Education<br>(School sporting and open space<br>land management and ownership)  | 35 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW 2000<br>GPO Box 33, Sydney NSW 2001<br>Phone: +61 2 9561 8000  | <a href="https://www.det.nsw.edu.au">https://www.det.nsw.edu.au</a>  |



These descriptions have no legislative recognition, but are important in terms of planning for open space and understanding what open space is used for.

| Open Space Type  | Description  | Primary Uses   | Secondary and Other Uses   | Amenities to be Assessed for Provision   | Indicative Sizes and Buffers  | Management Issues   |
|------------------|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| 1. Parks         | Reserves which have had their physical character and/or vegetation modified to support community recreation, community development and wellbeing uses.<br><br>Venues include ornamental gardens, play facilities, community gardens, informal lawns. | Social activities, picnics, play activities, sightseeing, displays, cycling/walking, informal sports, relaxation.<br><br>Cultural activities: performances, fairs, exhibitions, painting, dance. | Conservation/nature study, heritage protection, flood mitigation, fauna/flora habitat, landscape and amenity<br><br>Halls, swimming pools, stadia, indoor/outdoor sporting, club, social, cultural, community services facilities  | Toilets, changerooms, seating, shade and weather shelters, parking, lighting, bins, protective fencing, food services, user information and regulations        | Minimum size to be determined by primary uses.<br><br>Local, 0.5-2 ha. min.<br><br>District, 2-5 ha. min.<br><br>Regional, 5+ ha. depending on uses<br><br>Buffers dependent on hierarchical position: Local, 3 m. from buildings, roads if fenced; 10 m. without fencing; District and regional, 10 m. | Noise, lighting, traffic and waste management<br><br>Retention of quality<br><br>Use management and controls to protect resource quality                        |
| 2. Outdoor sport | Venues designed to support team sports training and competition  | Competitive sport<br><br>Special events: fairs, shows; displays  | Play facilities, pavilions, pools, stadia, social and management facilities, informal lawns, gardens<br><br>Walking/cycling, picnics, barbeques, amenity<br><br>Emergency meeting points<br><br>Buffering, flood mitigation, habitat preservation<br><br>Open space types 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 as appropriate | toilets, changerooms, parking, seating, shade, weather shelters, lighting, storage , bins, protective fencing, food services, user information and regulations | Dependent on whether local, district, or regional:<br><br>Local, 5 ha. min.<br><br>District, 5-10 ha. min<br><br>Regional, 10+ ha. depending on uses  | Noise<br><br>Lighting<br><br>Traffic<br><br>Waste management<br><br>Use management and controls to protect resource quality<br><br>Protection of secondary uses |

| Open Space Type       | Description  | Primary Uses   | Secondary and Other Uses   | Amenities to be Assessed for Provision   | Indicative Sizes and Buffers   | Management Issues  |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3. Urban public space | Footpaths, street lanes and road reserves, plazas and squares that accommodate walking, cycling, social gatherings and outdoor dining. Mainly made up of the extensive network of space between the fronts of buildings and the road transport system. | Walking linkages.<br><br>Venue for the public life of a place. | Walking pets, cycling, social activities, window shopping, resting, meeting place, sightseeing, deliberate exercise/ jogging, outdoor eating, café culture, protest space. | As for Linear and Linkage and:<br><br>—Streets are connected, coherent, direct, attractive, continuous, level and unobstructed footpaths<br><br>—Secure by passive surveillance, slowed traffic through centres, limited use of roundabouts.<br><br>Ground floors with active uses such as doors and windows, rather than blank facades; entrances at grade, driveways level to allow cars to stop before crossing the footpath<br><br>—Comfortable with shade, lighting, intermittent rest spots, drink fountains, response to views. | The Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 13:<br><br>Pedestrians (Ref 2.2) is the key national traffic engineering guideline for design of pedestrian facilities. It includes detailed design information on footpath materials, widths and grades, road crossings and building entrances.<br><br>Buffering is needed from traffic noise, accidents, fumes, parking cars and safe crossing points. Need to use various methods to ensure pedestrians and cyclists are not overpowered or unfairly inconvenienced by vehicle traffic priority. | All public domain should be high quality however priority and management focus should be given to routes leading from residential areas to local errand and public transport destinations, work and educational commuter routes and open space destinations of all types.<br><br>The use of urban public space as open space can therefore be incidental to going about daily activities as well as a considered activity. |



These descriptions have no legislative recognition, but are important in terms of planning for open space and understanding what open space is used for.

| Open Space Type            | Description   | Primary Uses   | Secondary and Other Uses  | Amenities to be Assessed for Provision  | Indicative Sizes and Buffers   | Management Issues   |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| 4. Conservation & Heritage | Reserves created to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources  | Natural and cultural resource conservation and protection and enhancement<br><br>Fauna, flora research and study<br>Scientific research  | Water management<br>Fire management<br>Study/research<br><br>Walking/cycling<br>Camping<br>Heritage appreciation<br>Amenity<br><br>Non-competitive, intellectually-focused leisure pursuits                   | As per 1., (Parks) dependent on asset rarity, conservation significance, fragility, location, user experiences to be provided, and management regime/objectives | Minimum to be determined by primary uses, area required to ensure environmental sustainability and relevant government guidelines  | Protection from introduced plant species and feral animals; degradation, vandalism and inappropriate uses; weeds and rubbish.<br>Selection of appropriate species for regeneration programs<br>Clearing of native vegetation on private land<br>Application of development controls over private land |
| 5. Landscape & Amenity     | Reserves created for their attractiveness and to add to or protect the character of an area<br><br>Venues include reserves adjoining residential and industrial areas, ridge lines, river flats and sections of road reserves | Buffers between different types of land use<br>Enhancing all forms of rural and urban land use<br>A backdrop to all forms of recreational open space and Utilities & Services reserves | Walking and cycling<br>Nature study<br>Conservation activities<br>Educational activities<br>Painting, photography<br><br>Managing and directing urban form<br>Nature conservation, protection and enhancement | Dependent on types and scale of secondary uses  | Minimum 2 m. width and 4 m. length but dependent on plant species used, associated land uses and open space types and relevant government guidelines<br><br>Buffers dependent on hierarchical position: Local, 1-3 m. from buildings, roads; District and regional, 3 m. | Weed and rubbish control<br>Selection of appropriate species<br>Clearing of native vegetation on private land<br>Application of development controls over private land  |

| Open Space Type     | Description  | Primary Uses  | Secondary and Other Uses  | Amenities to be Assessed for Provision   | Indicative Sizes and Buffers  | Management Issues   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| 6. Linear & Linkage | Small pathways linking residential streets in urban areas to municipal and regional trails using former rail and water race reserves and dedicated land<br><br>Creek and river reserves, floodways | Walking and cycling activities; linkage to recreational and other activities<br><br>Commuter travel<br><br>Habitat corridors<br><br>Urban amenity and buffers | Conservation/nature study<br><br>Amenity<br><br>Utilities and services<br><br>Recreation trails (when used as habitat corridors)<br><br>Urban amenity and buffers (when used for recreation)<br><br>Commuter/shopper access | Signs<br>Toilets at points of intersection with other open space types<br>Seats and shelter<br>Lighting<br>Road crossings<br>Trees<br>Protective fencing | Units of 200 m to 1 km. long dependent on location & destination.<br><br>10 m min. width unless preconditions limit this<br><br>Local, less than 1 km<br><br>District 1-5 km min<br><br>Regional, 5+ km<br><br>Buffers dependent on hierarchical position: Local, 3 m. from buildings, roads; District, 5 m. from buildings, roads; Regional and above, 20 m. | User safety<br><br>Path materials<br><br>User conflicts<br><br>Rubbish control<br><br>Control of inappropriate uses<br><br>Management of impacts on surrounding land uses<br><br>Positioning of amenities |



These descriptions have no legislative recognition, but are important in terms of planning for open space and understanding what open space is used for.

| Open Space Type         | Description  | Primary Uses                    | Secondary and Other Uses       | Amenities   | Indicative Sizes                                | Management Issues                                    |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 7. Utilities & Services | Venues reserved for urban and rural support services | Water and irrigation reservoirs | Linear trails                  | Dependent on any constraints imposed by primary use                             | Dependent on any requirements of primary use(s) | Ensuring secondary uses do not impact on primary use |
|                         |  | Pipe and powerline easements    | Model aircraft flying areas    | As per linear and linkage reserves if developed as linear routes for recreation |   | Weed and rubbish control and management              |
|                         |  | Road sides and road reserves    | Bird observing/conservation    |   |   | Fire management                                      |
|                         |  | Council depots                  | Boating                        | Safety barriers, signs  |   | Control of inappropriate uses                        |
|                         |  | Sewerage treatment poundages    | Golf                           | Advisory signs  |   |  |
|                         |  | Airports and flight lines       | Horse agistment                | Protective fencing  |   |  |
|                         |  |                                 | BMX                            |   |   |  |
|                         |  |                                 | Motor bike courses             |   |   |  |
|                         |  |                                 | Flora/fauna habitat, corridors |   |   |  |
|                         |  |                                 | Landscape and amenity          |   |   |  |

| Open Space Type | Description  | Primary Uses   | Secondary and Other Uses                                  | Amenities                                    | Indicative Sizes  | Management Issues  |
|-----------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| 8. Undeveloped  | Land acquired or zoned for open space purposes to protect its assets, or to meet assessed community needs once development of an area proceeds | To be determined by future needs and feasibility studies         | Landscape and amenity value                               | Generally nil but dependent on existing uses | Dependent on projected use but other-wise minimum of 0.75 ha. | Weed and rubbish control   |
|                 |  | Examples: Former mining wastes; farmland; forest on private land | Informal, short-term uses                                 |  |   | Environmental protection   |
| 9. Proposed     | Land proposed to be zoned or acquired for open space to protect it or to meet community needs once development of an area proceeds             | Uses to be determined by future needs and feasibility studies    | Landscape and amenity value                               | Generally nil but dependent on existing uses | Dependent on projected use but otherwise minimum of 0.75 ha.  | Fire management  |
|                 |  | Examples: Former mining wastes; farmland; forest on private land | Informal, short-term uses                                 |  |   | Control of inappropriate uses                                      |
|                 |  |  | Others dependent on nature of any residential development |  |   | Weed and rubbish control   |
|                 |  |  | Others dependent on nature of any residential development |  |   | Environmental protection   |
|                 |  |  |   |  |   | Fire management  |
|                 |  |  |   |  |   | Control of inappropriate management prior to zoning or acquisition |

(Source: Adapted from HM Leisure Planning Pty Ltd)



ALIGNING TYPES OF OPEN SPACE  
AND RECREATION FACILITIES WITH  
APPROPRIATE ZONES FROM THE  
STANDARD INSTRUMENT FOR LEPS.

| Type of open space        | Description   | Likely zones  | Typical uses (definitions)   |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| Parks                     | Reserves which have had their physical character and/or vegetation modified to support community recreation, community development and well-being uses. Includes ornamental gardens, play facilities, community gardens and informal lawns. | RE1 Public Recreation   | Kiosks; recreation areas; environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads  |
| Outdoor sports            | Venues designed to support team sports training and competition.  | RE1 Public Recreation<br>RE2 Private Recreation   | Community facilities; kiosks; recreation areas; recreation facilities (indoor); recreation facilities (outdoor); environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads |
| Conservation and heritage | Reserves created to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources.   | Zone E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves (not available as open space to Councils) E3 Environmental Management  | Uses authorised under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (according to a plan of management for the park)  |
|                           |   | Zone E2 Environmental Conservation and Zone (typically for pristine land in private ownership or Crown Land not held under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974)                            | Environmental protection works   |
|                           |   | Zone RE1 Public Recreation  | Kiosks; recreation areas; environmental protection works   |
| Landscape and amenity     | Reserves created for their attractiveness and to add to or protect the character of an area. Includes reserves adjoining residential and industrial areas, ridge lines, river flats and sections of road reserves.                          | Zone RU2 Rural Landscape<br>Zone E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves (not available as open space to Councils),<br>Zone E2 Environmental Conservation and Zone<br>E3 Environmental Management | Uses authorised under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (according to a plan of management for the park)  |

| Type of open space | Description  | Likely zones   | Typical uses (definitions)  |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
|                    |  | Zone E2 Environmental Conservation and Zone (typically for pristine land in private ownership or Crown Land not held under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974) | Environmental protection works  |
|                    |  | Zone RE1 Public Recreation   | Kiosks; recreation areas; environmental protection works                                  |
| Linear and linkage | Small pathways linking residential streets in urban areas to district and regional trails using former rail and water race reserves and dedicated land. Includes creek and river reserves and floodways. | Zone RU2 Rural Landscape<br>RE1 Public Recreation  | Kiosks; recreation areas; environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads |

Other recreation facilities

|                     |  |   |  |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Indoor sports arena |  | RE1 Public Recreation<br>RE2 Private Recreation<br>B2 Local Centre<br>B3 Commercial Core<br>B4 Mixed Use<br>B5 Business Development<br>B6 Enterprise Corridor | Community facilities; kiosks; recreation areas; recreation facilities (indoor); recreation facilities (outdoor); environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads |
| Aquatic centre      |  | RE1 Public Recreation<br>RE2 Private Recreation<br>B2 Local Centre<br>B3 Commercial Core<br>B4 Mixed Use<br>B5 Business Development<br>B6 Enterprise Corridor | Community facilities; kiosks; recreation areas; recreation facilities (indoor); recreation facilities (outdoor); environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads |
| Gymnasium           |  | RE1 Public Recreation<br>RE2 Private Recreation<br>B2 Local Centre<br>B3 Commercial Core<br>B4 Mixed Use<br>B5 Business Development<br>B6 Enterprise Corridor | Community facilities; kiosks; recreation areas; recreation facilities (indoor); recreation facilities (outdoor); environmental facilities; environmental protection works; roads |





Planning

