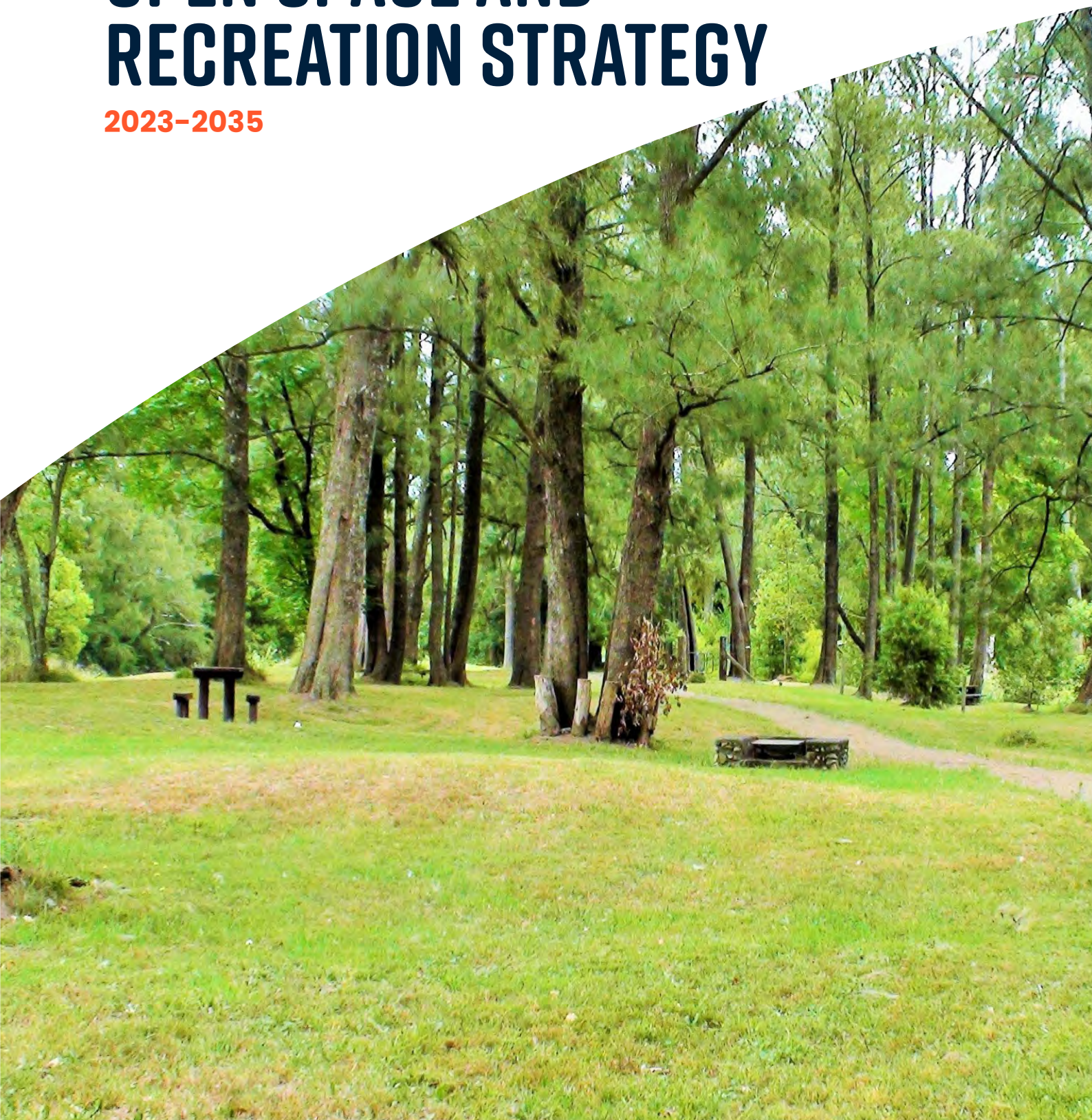
MIDCOAST
council

MIDCOAST OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION STRATEGY

2023–2035



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, the Gathang-speaking people and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside in the MidCoast Council area. We extend our respect to elders past and present, and to all future cultural-knowledge holders.

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Glossary of Terms Used in this Strategy

Public open space and/or open space: terms used primarily by local government to describe all land, whether it be crown land managed by Council on behalf of the state, or land that is owned by Council that is accessed by the public for recreation and leisure. Land types can include parks, reserves, sports fields, coastal reserves, beaches, road corridors and village greens.

Crown Land: land that is owned by the State, managed through the NSW Crown Land Management Act (2016) and is often managed on behalf of the State by local government or other authorities and organisations; such as showgrounds and parks.

Community Owned Land: term outlined in the Local Government Act (1993) to denote land owned by a local government authority whose purpose is for the community, such as parks, reserves, village greens.

Park and/or Reserve: Can have two specific meanings, one being a general description of an area set aside for the public for recreation. The other being a formal term for a park set aside, such as a national park or reserve, for specific purposes.

Recreation: a term that has two meanings and both are used in this Strategy. One is an overarching description for every physical activity that is undertaken by people, includes: structured sport, unstructured sport, active and passive recreation, fitness activities, aquatics, play. The other meaning is specific to physical activities that are not a structured or unstructured sport, such as Quidditch, bike riding, running or walking.

Structured Sport: an activity undertaken by people that involves physical activity, normally confined to a prescribed area such as a sports field or court, has rules, and is normally undertaken as a part of a competition.

Un-Structured Sport: more recent term used to describe a sport activity that is not part of a larger competition, such as an informal game of cricket, or football.

Sports fields and facilities: land set aside for the primary purpose of structured outdoor sports. Active open space for team sports, training and competition and typically features sports facilities such as playing fields, change rooms, and car parks. It may accommodate unstructured community or individual use when not required for its primary purpose, such as dog walking and could include informal lawns, memorial gardens, play, and other facilities as part of a larger community “hub”.

Aquatics: refers to all water-related activities, inclusive of swimming, boating, ocean and lake-based activities.

Bushland: passive open space that includes vegetation which is either a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land or, if altered, is still representative of the structure and floristics of the natural vegetation. Includes biodiversity corridors, reserves, national parks, wetlands and state forests.

Community: a group of people living in the same area or place, or a group of people having certain characteristics, attitudes, and interests in common.

Play: an informal physical activity that involves unstructured activity whose primary purpose is fun, and which does not include all the factors of sport. Is often undertaken in formal playspaces, but not always.

Nature Play: any activity that gets children active or thinking actively outdoors, primarily in natural settings or involves natural materials, with the end goal of building skills and ability to play without the need for parental or adult control.

Fitness: Group or individual activity whose primary purpose is physical activity for fitness, such as Parkrun, bootcamp, running.

Leisure: Defined by its “quality of experience”, such as sightseeing, birdwatching. Denoted by little or no physical activity.

Outdoor Recreation: Any activity that is physical and specific to natural spaces, such as canoeing, rogaining or trail running.

Active Transport: Any form of physical activity whose primary purpose is getting from one place to another.

Adaptive Management: is an approach to managing open space that involves processes and strategies designed to achieve outcomes in the face of uncertainty.

Carrying Capacity: is a planning concept where all natural systems, such as a natural turf sports field, bushland or nature reserve have an inherent amount of use or impact that they can sustain before negative signs or degradation are observable or measurable. Impacts can include overuse by humans and/or effects of climate change such as extreme rain events or bushfires.

Impact Assessment Model: a planning mechanism that provides to land managers an iterative decision-making model for identifying the state of any natural system and the effects of external impacts on that system. The decision-making component of adaptive management.

No Net Loss of Open Space: a planning concept that states that there should be no loss of public open space that is not replaced or enhanced. The total amount of public open space should not decrease.

Canopy Coverage: the amount of tree canopy i.e. branches, leaves and shade that exists within a certain area. Normally indicated by a percentage of coverage.

Ausplay: annual data set produced by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) that details what physical activities Australians are undertaking and in what proportion. The leading planning data set for analysis and provision of sport and recreation programs and infrastructure.

Sport and Play Hierarchy: a defined order of facilities and the embellishments that should be provided for each, such as Local, District, State and National. Used as a planning mechanism that addresses community need.

Desired Standards (of provision): a set of standards that we plan for and strive to achieve. In relation to sport and recreation infrastructure a guide for provision.

Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR): a financial planning mechanism that identifies the Return on Investment of a facility.

CAPEX: Capital Expense. Money spent on the building or upgrading of a facility or open space.

OPEX: Operational Expense. Money spent on the maintaining of a facility or open space.

Parks estate and/or portfolio: all parks, reserves and public open space that make up the whole.

Landscape and/or landscape planning: considers the natural ecosystem as a whole and not just individual parks.

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is all the plants and animals that live in a particular area together with the complex relationship that exists between them and their environment.

Strategy Summary

Our community places a high value on the benefits provided by our open spaces.

This *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* identifies, provides for and encourages equity of access to our beautiful natural environment for all our community, regardless of background or ability. In producing this strategy, we seek to enhance the lives of people living, working, playing and visiting our region, through high quality public open spaces and amenity. Our goal is to deliver open space that is protected, accessible, walkable and welcoming, and that promotes social inclusion.

Our MidCoast population of over 96,800 is a diverse community with an exciting future. The region of 10,052 square kilometres extends from the coastline, west to the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range, on the mid north coast of New South Wales.

The area spans from beaches on the coast to mountains in the hinterland and numerous national parks and green spaces in between. It includes the Manning River valley, the Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes systems, the northern foreshore of Port Stephens, the agricultural hinterland and the rugged, forested ranges of the Barrington Tops, Woko and Tapin Tops National Parks.

We are a region rich in cultural pride and connection to the landscape and we embrace the spirit of reconciliation. Being well known for our natural beauty, our region encompasses 58 national parks and reserves, five coastal lagoons, one marine park, an internationally recognised wetland in the Myall Lakes, eight Aboriginal Places and the magnificent World Heritage listed area of the Barrington Tops.

We value our diverse community and recognise the opportunity to embrace and celebrate local Aboriginal culture through this Strategy. We will continue to strengthen our relationships and develop stronger partnerships with Aboriginal people as we deliver the MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy.

We recognise the importance of our parks and other open spaces to our community, and the value that they bring. We also acknowledge the role our open space plays in delivering lifestyle benefits to the MidCoast community. Our open space and sport and recreation facilities:

- Enhance our lifestyles and deliver long-term health and social benefits.
- Bring activity and events to our area that generate regional economic benefits
- Are our green spaces, generating environmental benefits, including mitigating the effects of climate change.
- Protect, celebrate and offer opportunities to share stories and learn about our cultural connection to Country and our First Nation people.

This document presents a set of guiding principles that explains how we will manage open space and the natural environment. We recognise the need to develop a long-term vision and framework for the provision and management of our open space and sport and recreation facilities, so that we can continue to cater for the community's sport and recreation needs. We have tried to achieve a balance between opportunities for the community in the short term with longer term participation opportunities.

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* has been developed in consultation with the community and other stakeholders, who have told us that they value our open

space, and recognise the social cohesion that comes from visiting them and undertaking activities in them. Sport has a grand tradition in our country and our region, and this Strategy sets out a plan to provide for this for many years to come.

The Strategy lays out a framework for future management to ensure that the community continues to enjoy their quality of life, that our natural environment plays such an important role in delivering.

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* highlights the significant challenges faced by MidCoast Council as we seek to manage our open space. In developing the strategy, we have taken into account the known and predicted impacts of climate change and considered the future carrying capacity of our open space portfolio. This will help us to sustainably manage our eco-systems, and ensure they continue to deliver desired outcomes for the community.

We recognise that we are one of a number of key providers of sport and recreation to the community. There are several other government and community organisations that are both land managers and program managers. They include the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), state and private schools, and commercial service providers. Through this Strategy, we will continue to work with these other providers as we deliver open space for our community.

With limited and competing funding priorities, we seek to act in a measured and sustainable manner to fulfill our role in responding to the community's sport and recreation needs. This includes being part of a coordinated and regional approach.

The *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* is a critical source document for the *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035.* The Needs Analysis is the supporting document for the Strategy, containing the data on which the Strategy's assumptions, vision and actions are based. Both should be read together, with each supporting the other's assumptions and outcomes.

Where important information is provided in the *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* it is not repeated in the Strategy, unless critical to content understanding.

One such example from the *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* is the Key Findings, which we have included below.

- There is generally an adequate amount of public open space across MidCoast, though some areas have a potential shortfall in formal sports grounds and facilities and required improvements in the quality of public open spaces (both active and passive) is widespread.
- Public open spaces are best provided in a way that allows the space to be diverse, adaptable, universally accessible and resilient and to provide improved opportunities for socio-economic benefits.
- Improved connectivity is required between existing public open spaces to encourage use and active transport.
- Evolving concepts of recreation such as 'nature play' should be considered for future embellishments and upgrades of existing open spaces. The concept of nature play should also be realised through interaction with natural areas and informal recreation spaces of relevance to cultural identity and wellbeing.

- Planning for public open space in MidCoast needs to consider lifecycle costs as well as the community's return on the investment. The development cost of public open space should be considered as part of the up-front cost of the infrastructure. This will mean that into the future increased funding or improved efficiencies may be required to maintain public open space to meet the community's expectations.

- Performance indicators should be workshopped with the individual communities in each CPA to determine whether open spaces within MidCoast meet the community's expectations and needs, collectively and individually, and to prioritise actions for improving open space. In particular, priority areas will need to be identified for master planning.

These Key Findings form the basis of the *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* and have directed the development of the narrative and assumptions in this strategy. The Key Findings also provide direction for individual actions in the Action Plan. Performance indicators in the action plan are based on community feedback received during the engagement process undertaken during 2022.

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* provides a key planning mechanism for MidCoast Council in managing our public open spaces. It fits within a hierarchy of Council strategies and plans. The action plan contained within the strategy provides guidance for individual projects recommended to be undertaken over the lifecycle of this Strategy.

This is a "living" document, for use by the community, Council officers and other stakeholders. It is intended that this document be used as a guide. Also, it should be reviewed and updated, if and when Council feels that the situation warrants it and in alignment with the review timelines identified in the last chapter of the Strategy.

Our desire is for this planning document to guide Council in providing for a healthy and active community, who enjoy their quality public open spaces, and who live in harmony with our dynamic environment.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Introduction and Purpose

Planning our open space is one of the most important things that councils do.

What is an Open Space and Recreation Strategy?

This open space and recreation strategy provides a strategic framework to guide the sustainable use, improvement, maintenance and management of public open space and the activities that take place on it. It seeks to balance the interests of all users of public open space. The strategy provides direction and actions to achieve the community's vision. These directions and actions have been formed through research and consultation with the community to identify an approach to sustainable future use and management.

A major component of the strategy is the action plan. Together, the strategy and the action plan provide strategic and operational direction for the improvement and management of all public open space in the MidCoast local government area.

Why is one needed for the MidCoast region?

Recognition of the value of public open space is significantly increasing in government policy. The environment in which Australian sport and recreation operates is changing rapidly, placing pressure on councils to be adaptable and provide high-quality and diverse recreational spaces.

Most areas within MidCoast have a sufficient quantity of public open space, though several areas have a shortfall in the quantity of active open space (e.g., formal sports fields) or facilities, which may reduce activity participation rates, particularly among the younger age groups. There are also significant opportunities for improvements to the accessibility, resilience and diversity of our public open space, both active and passive.

Feedback from the community and results from the *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* indicate that Council has a significant number of recreation and public open space assets and facilities that require major remediation or complete rebuilds. Historically the former councils which make up MidCoast Council largely relied on clubs and community groups to obtain grant funding for renewals or new facilities. A small capital renewals budget for recreation facilities and assets has now been established by MidCoast Council, which will make some difference to facilitating improvements to the infrastructure backlog.

Various disruptors such as climate change are increasingly challenging the use and management of recreational areas. Such disruptors cause significant damage and destruction of facilities and assets, increasing maintenance costs and burdening staff resources. This is compounded by the evolving community expectation that high quality open space should be available year-round for multiple and diverse uses.

Purpose of this Strategy

The purpose of the *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* is to:

Deliver a comprehensive and prioritised plan for the sustainable management of the MidCoast public open space as well as for future development on those spaces, including sport and recreation facilities and programs in the MidCoast local government area to 2035.

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 - 2035* aims to:

Provide a balanced response between sustainable management and meeting the existing and future community needs in the local government area.

The *Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* will guide the provision of open space, sport, recreation and facility development to 2035 and will:

- Consider the sustainable management of public open space in the MidCoast area
- Consider the future development and upgrade of existing sport and recreation facilities within the MidCoast local government area.
- Cover active sport and recreation, structured sport, unstructured recreation activities and the provision of new facility development, along with the upgrade to existing infrastructure.

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* is supported by the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022*, which provides detail on the research and analysis done to support the Strategy.

The Strategy's scope and process

MidCoast Council was formed by an NSW Government proclamation on 12 May 2016 through the merger of the former Councils of Great Lakes, Greater Taree and Gloucester. MidCoast Water became part of MidCoast Council the following year. The merged area covers more than 10,000 km^2, has 190 km of coastline, 3,590 km of road and 487 bridges. It has a population of over 96,000 people.

The recreation and open space strategies that were current at the time of the merger were:

- Great Lakes Council Recreation and Open Space Strategy, July 2006
- Draft Gloucester Recreation Management Plan, undated
- Greater Taree Open Space and Recreation Strategy, 2011

Regional Demographics

The estimated resident population of MidCoast in 2021 is 96,800 and the population forecast to 2036 is 113,147. This represents an increase of 18.4%. The importance of the MidCoast Council area as a destination for families and retirees is expected to continue up to 2036 with notable gains of both young and established families and older adults representing the empty nester/early retiree and retiree category, aged 50-69 years (.idcommunity, 2021).

Pressure for residential expansion within MidCoast from both existing residents and from people moving to the area is expected to continue, and different land supply options will cater for this demand. In terms of spatial migration, MidCoast typically gains residents from Blacktown, Parramatta, the Central Coast and the Northern Beaches Council areas. It loses population to larger centres such as Newcastle and South East Queensland, a common trend in regional centres where younger segments of the population, usually 17-24 year olds, move out of the area in search of adventure, education and employment (.idcommunity, 2021).

We recognise the traditional custodians of the land which makes up MidCoast - the Gathang-speaking (Biripi and Worimi) people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 6.2% of

our population, more than double the State and Australian Averages (2.9% and 2.8% respectively). The diverse MidCoast community contributes extensively to the culture and society of the area.

The diverse cultural background of MidCoast means that open space should be accessible to everyone. An inclusion-based approach to the provision of public open space will remove obstacles and barriers that prevent people of all ages, abilities (physical and mental), and cultural backgrounds from accessing and enjoying open space.

Age Demographics

The age structure of the MidCoast region provides insight into the level of demand for age-based services and facilities, including open space and recreation facilities. For an understanding of how age demographics have been considered in the development of the Strategy, refer to the relevant section in the *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022*, as well as planning considerations in specific sections of this Strategy.

Needs Analysis

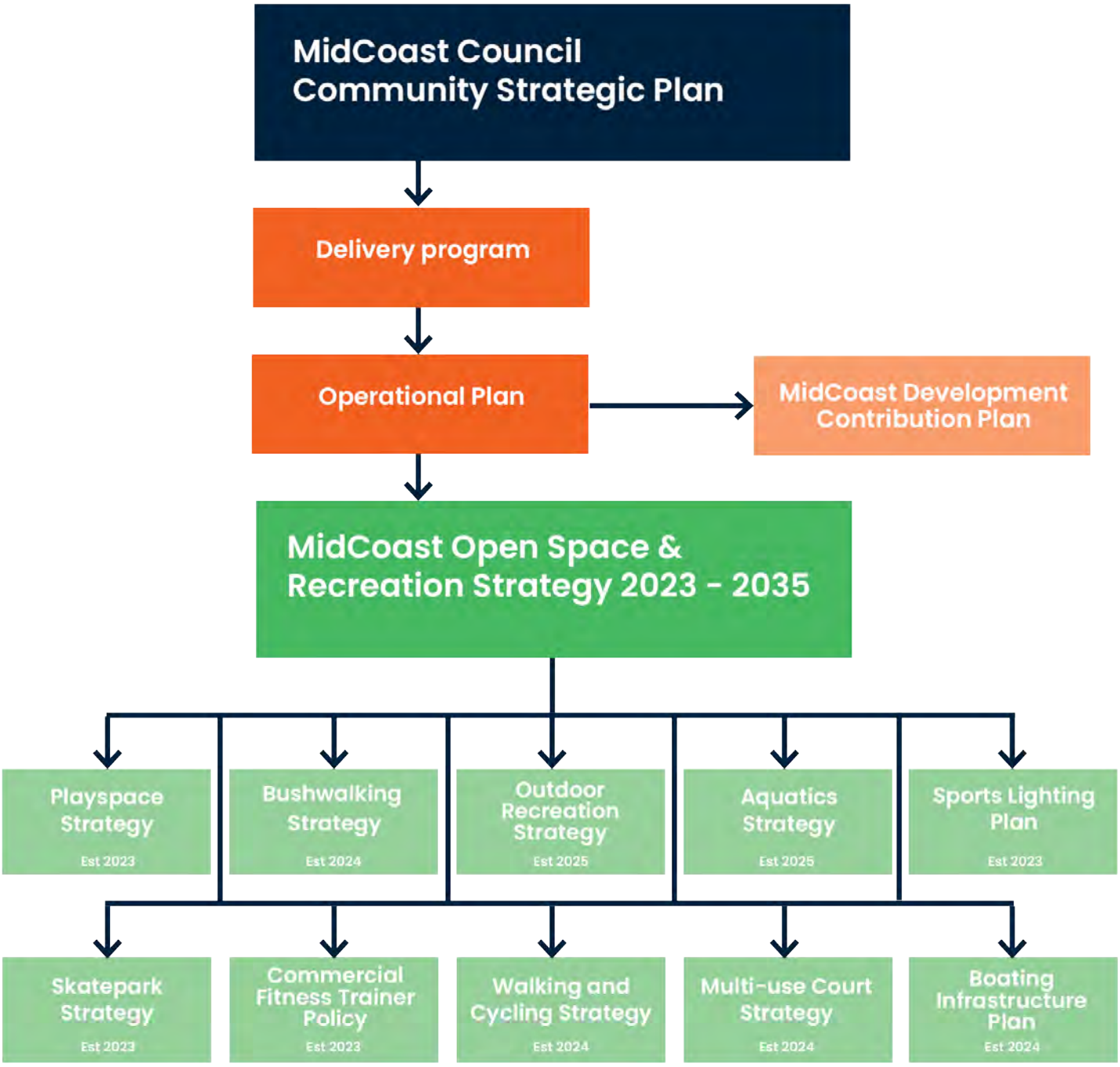
In 2022 Council undertook an analysis of the current open space portfolio and activities in the MidCoast local government area, excluding other public land, such as parks managed by the state, and private land made available for public access.

The *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* has been used to inform this Strategy. The 2022-2035 timeframe we've used in the analysis aligns with State government population forecasts and strategies and gives us a thirteen-year plan for addressing open space and recreation needs.

The *Draft MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* was released in June 2022 as part of the community engagement program, which included online engagement, workshops, pop-ups and meetings with key stakeholders. The themes of the feedback received are reported in the Community Engagement chapter of this Strategy and the separate engagement report. The engagement themes played a major role in developing the assumptions and outcomes of this Strategy.

Council's Open Space Planning Framework

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035* is one of Council's corporate, open space, sport and recreation related strategies. The figure below is a summary of our planning strategies, their relationships and current status. A number of the specific strategies and plans are actions from this Strategy.



VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vision and Guiding Principles

We love our parks, and we want to see them protected.

The vision

The MidCoast Council vision is:

> *We strive to be recognised as a place of unique environmental and cultural significance. Our strong community connection, coupled with our innovative development and growing economy, builds the quality of life we value.*

The following vision for our open spaces has been developed from the feedback that we received from the community and reflects the value that our community places on our quality open spaces.

The vision for the delivery of open space and recreation services for the MidCoast community is:

> *The MidCoast's open spaces are a collection of unique and varied landscapes. From coastal cliffs, sandy beaches, sports fields and bushland, they allow visitors to escape the hustle and bustle of modern life. Indigenous culture and history abound in our open spaces, where Traditional ownership is recognised and celebrated. Our open spaces provide green spaces that protect biodiversity and habitat for local fauna. Our parks can be a place of quiet reflection or a place of vibrant activity. They are a place to relax with friends and family, picnic or play. The parks are a place for locals and visitors alike. The community feel a very strong connection to their open spaces. The open spaces are a cared-for and much-loved asset. They are the pride of the community and will be preserved and cherished for many generations to come*.

Guiding Principles for Open Space and Recreation Management

To guide us in our management and delivery of open space in the MidCoast region, we have developed guiding principles to be applied to the management of our spaces.

Our guiding principles for open space and recreation management are:

Maintain and strengthen parks

Statement of Principle

Parks will be managed in line with the purpose for which they are reserved and to protect their environmental, cultural and social values. All actions should enhance the estate, be purposeful and embrace design for all. Park management will reflect best practice, and parks will be fit for their identified purpose and function.

Principle Intent

Parks and reserves are established under relevant legislation for particular purposes, including the protection of many and diverse values, and will be managed for those purposes. The physical connections between parks and other land tenures that provide connected recreation experiences, cultural landscapes and habitat corridors need to be recognised. Connectivity will be improved in parks and with surrounding landscapes and seascapes in collaboration with Traditional Owners and other land managers, non-government organisations and the community.

Prepare for the future

Statement of Principle

Park plans and management will support the preparation for and response to emerging environmental and social issues and anticipate how the park estate will be used in the future. This includes responding to forecast changes resulting from climate change and changing recreational patterns.

Principle Intent

Effective planning anticipates what the future holds and allows for action. Adapting to the environmental, social and economic changes brought about by climate change will need to be considered, including increased threats from extreme weather on environmental, cultural and visitor experience values. The visitor experience will be considered in all aspects of planning, with assets and park settings fit for purpose to meet service commitments and to manage the visitor impact on the estate now and into the future. This includes consideration of increased visitation, changed visitor expectations and new or emerging uses of technology for and by visitors.

Connect with community

Statement of Principle

Parks will be inclusive destinations that provide for a range of visitor experiences and access for all. The community will have a variety of ways to engage with, connect to, understand and be active in parks. Parks will be recognised and appreciated not only for their environmental, cultural and landscape values, but also for the services that provide broader community benefits including health and wellbeing, sense of community, clean water, climate regulation, coastal protection and pollination services. Traditional Owner connections to Country will be respected and supported.

Principle Intent

There are diverse ways that the community can enjoy and benefit from the park's estate, through the spectrum of recreation activities, events, tourism activities, education programs and volunteering. Park visitors gain a deeper connection and even a lifelong appreciation of the importance of parks through interpretive and educational experiences. Diverse and ongoing social and cultural connections to parks will be recognised. Appropriate use of the park estate encourages the connection between people and nature that in turn can provide health and wellbeing benefits.

Use knowledge and evidence-based management

Statement of Principle

Decisions will be supported by science, knowledge, understanding of risks and community values. Evidence-based management that uses the best available science and knowledge will be used to deal with uncertainty and drive adaptive management.

Principle Intent

Adaptive management will be supported by clear results and risk-based priorities for park management to address the highest threats to the most important values. Research and evaluation in the parks estate will focus on addressing critical information gaps in understanding environmental and social values and benefits of parks as well as quantifying management effectiveness and results. Results will be adjusted based on the evidence by measuring the effectiveness of the actions delivered. Land management will be based as far as possible on the latest research and knowledge.

Protect natural and cultural values

Statement of Principle

The ecological and cultural integrity of parks will be strengthened by being protected and actively conserved to become sustainable and resilient to adapt or recover from the disturbance of major threats.

Principle Intent

The structure and function of ecosystems is fundamental to natural values and the ecosystem services provided by parks. The resilience of parks is maintained and improved when ecosystem processes and threats are managed at the landscape scale. The core habitat areas for threatened species and ecological communities that parks protect will be improved through active management intervention. Reducing threats to the estate is a core management approach to maintain and improve the condition of the natural capital of the parks estate. Aboriginal cultural heritage sites will be identified and protected. Where appropriate the community and visitors will be encouraged to understand and appreciate the tangible and intangible cultural values and significance of Country for Aboriginal people, and the importance of maintaining and improving the health of cultural landscapes.

Build Partnerships

Statement of Principle

Partnerships and community involvement that provide mutual benefits to parks and the community will be sought and supported across landscapes. These are to provide mechanisms for effective management and realising emergent opportunities.

Principle Intent

Partnerships with other public land managers, neighbours and many other community, government and corporate organisations, can support more effective and efficient park management through knowledge sharing, better use of resources and pro-aspiration of value-added services. Agreements with service providers and licence holders will be developed that complement or add value to the park estate. Aboriginal commercial enterprises will be encouraged and supported.

Promote public safety and adopt a risk-based approach

Statement of Principle

There is an element of risk in experiencing natural environments and the outdoors. Managing risk, including preparing for and managing fire and other threats, responding to emergencies, and appropriately managing risks to park visitors will be a key consideration in park management decision making.

Principle Intent

A safe environment is provided as far as practicable, while recognising that risk and adventure is part of experiencing the outdoors. The systematic application of communicating, consulting, establishing the context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk will be used. Risk management will be integrated across tenures. Decisions and actions will be based on sound risk management principles, consistent with organisational objectives and which comply with required by law, legislative and regulatory responsibilities. All reasonable efforts will be taken to keep visitors safe and provide information to visitors so that they can make informed decisions.

Apply rational decision making

Statement of Principle

All strategic decision-making will be characterised by rationality and predictability using, where appropriate, structured decision support systems such as the thresholds of change model which will form the basis of adaptive open space management. Judgement will be used to consider all stakeholders involved. All decisions will be consistent with a risk-based approach to meeting the requirements of policies, plans, programmes and legislation.

Principle Intent

The Thresholds of Change assessment and management model will form the basis of management practices and decisions for all our open spaces. Decisions that affect parks and the community's connection with parks will be taken to achieve results consistent with the guiding principles and intent of legislation governing the management of the estate. Decisions in parks will consider benefits for conservation of the environment and cultural heritage, appreciation of park values, be necessary for the management of parks and show that risks to environmental, cultural and social values and public safety can be assessed and managed. Where trade-offs are unavoidable, decisions will be guided by these principles and made transparently.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Planning Context

Planning our public open spaces is the first step in protecting and enhancing them.

MidCoast Council has responsibility for the planning of our open spaces. When planning the allocation and protection of our open space, there are a number of state and federal government legislations including the Crown Land Management Act (2016), the Local Government Act (1993) and the Native Title Act (1993) that we need to follow, as well as policy documents that provide guidance, including Our Vision for Regional Communities Action Plan 2022 - 2025[1] and Greener Places[2].

This section of the strategy provides information on these planning considerations and mechanisms and details our responsibilities in complying with each of these acts.

Ownership and Management

The MidCoast open space portfolio consists of both lands owned by MidCoast Council and land owned by the State and managed by Council, referred to as Crown Land.

Crown Land

Crown land is governed by the Crown Land Management Act (2016). It provides a framework for the NSW Government, local councils and community members to work together to care for, control and manage Crown reserves[3]. It ensures that Crown reserves are responsibly managed and that natural resources such as water, flora and fauna and scenic beauty are conserved through sustainable and adaptive management. They also seek to encourage the protection of traditional owner and cultural character, while also promoting public use and enjoyment of the land.

Crown land management

The *Crown Land Management Regulation 2018* provides clarity and certainty for Crown land managers, tenure holders, and users of Crown land about how parts of the Crown Land Management Act (2016) are implemented. Importantly, the Regulation covers a range of operational matters relevant to Crown land managers, including:

- The protection of Crown land, including activities prohibited and penalty notice offences on Crown land
- The management of Crown land, including the requirements of non-council Crown land managers
- Information on activities, dealings and holdings.

[1] Our Vision for Regional Communities Action Plan
[2] https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/policies/greener-places
[3] https://alc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Crown-land-2031-State-Strategic-Plan-for-Crown-land.pdf

The objectives and principles of Crown land management are key values that guide the management of Crown land to benefit the people of NSW, and to ensure that Crown land is managed for sustainable, multiple uses.

Objectives of Crown land management

The objectives of Crown land management as identified in section 1.3 of the Crown Land Management Act (2016) are to:

- Provide for the ownership, use and management of the Crown land of NSW
- Provide clarity concerning the law applicable to Crown land
- Require environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic considerations to be taken into account in decision-making about Crown land
- Provide for the consistent, efficient, fair and transparent management of Crown land for the benefit of the people of NSW
- Help the use of Crown land by the Aboriginal people of NSW because of the spiritual, social, cultural and economic importance of land to Aboriginal people and, where appropriate, to allow the co-management of dedicated or reserved Crown land
- Provide for the management of Crown land having regard to the principles of Crown land management.

Principles of Crown land management

The principles of Crown land management as identified in section 1.4 of the Crown Land Management Act (2016) are that:

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land
- The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged,
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity
- Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

Public purpose

Crown land is to be used for the original purpose for which they were dedicated or reserved. Multiple uses of reserves are encouraged, where those uses are consistent with the original purpose of the reserve and the use does not impact on native title rights and interests under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Leasing and Licencing on Crown Reserves

Under the Crown Land Management Act (2016), a lease or licence is a type of tenure that gives permission to occupy and use Crown land for a specified purpose and term. The Crown Land Management Act (2016) allows council Crown land managers to enter into leases and licences under the Local Government Act once a compliant plan of management is in place or the land is classified as operational, whichever occurs first. Council cannot enter into agreements for use, as

lessor or licensor, on devolved reserves. The leasing and licensing of Crown land ensures there is legal and suitable occupation of Crown land.

As a Crown land manager, we are required to ensure all monies received from the use of community land is directed to maintaining and sustaining long-term use and enjoyment of the reserves. The income generated from leasing and licencing is a primary form of funding for a Crown land manager. It allows us to cover long-term running costs (at a minimum) and invest over the long term for future generations to use and enjoy the Crown land in their community.

All Crown land managers should have lease and licence agreements in place with users of the reserves that they manage.

Within the MidCoast local government area, there are a number of existing licenses and leases for community groups, including sports clubs. These leases and licences are consistent or ancillary to the purpose of the reserves being for public recreation.

Classification and categorisation of Crown land

The document *Developing plans of management for community land Crown reserves – guidelines, December 2018* identifies that managers of Crown reserves must ensure there is a compliant plan of management for all Crown land that they manage as community land. This is to ensure that Crown land is lawfully used and occupied, which is an essential part of our role as a manager of Crown land.

Under the Crown Land Management Act (2016), council managers must assign to all Crown land under their management one or more initial categories of community land referred to in section 36 of the LG Act. The initial category must be assigned as soon as practicable after a council's appointment as a Crown land manager. It is important that the initial category aligns closely with the original gazetted reserve purpose.

Crown land your neighbour

Crown reserves are often bordered in many places by free-hold private land. Private landowners have a number of specific responsibilities when their property borders crown land. The Crown Land Act (2016) provides guidance on what private landowners are and are not allowed to do. For example, a landowner cannot dispose of garden waste on to crown land and cannot channel storm water run-off from their land on to crown land. Any form of land clearing, specifically the removal or pruning of vegetation is prohibited.

CLM guidelines for landowners[4] neighbouring crown land state *"Clearing vegetation or undertaking even minor road works on Crown public roads requires written approval from the department"*. In addition, *"Landowners must ensure that private property and all associated occupation is wholly contained within their property boundary. Landlords or their agents must ensure residential tenants do not encroach onto adjoining Crown land."*

The NSW Government monitors crown land for infringements. They state:

> *"We will investigate any concerns reported from members of the public or other government agencies, or issues identified through aerial imagery or site inspections to control unauthorised use of the Crown estate. Using Crown land without approval is an offence. We can take compliance regulatory action if we need to.*

[4] https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/488928/Crown-land-your-neighbour-Information-sheet.pdf

Compliance enforcement actions can include:

- *directions to remove structures, vehicles or materials illegally placed on Crown land*
- *stop-activity orders issued 'on the spot' to stop or prevent unlawful activities taking place on Crown land*
- *issuing penalty infringement notices – $1,100 for each infringement.*

Community Land

A significant proportion of the parks and reserves that make up our public open space portfolio belong to Council. For the community there is no difference between crown land and council land. They are all parks and reserves, they are managed and maintained in the same way and they are embellished in the same way. The most notable difference, that the community might notice is the types of signage within the parks and reserves. In managing these spaces, we have different management and legislation requirements that we have to meet.

Community land managed under the Local Government Act (1993)

We also manage public open space that is owned by Council. This is referred to as community land or in some cases operational land. Like crown land we are responsible for identifying what our public land can be used for.

The Local Government Act 1993 sets out a framework for making decisions around authorisations:

- *Local Government Regulation 2005 – Guidelines for authorisations*: Provides criteria for deciding which categorisations are most applicable to a piece of community land.
- *Local Government Act 1993*: Identifies core objectives for categories. Objectives provide goals towards which management efforts are directed. Plans of management identify how it is going to achieve the goals and any other objectives.

The *Local Government Act 1993* also requires that councils identify:

- the category of land
- objectives and results for the land
- the means by which Council proposes to achieve objectives and results
- the way by which council proposes to assess its performance.

The nature and use of community land may not change without an adopted plan of management. A plan of management for community land must identify management categories for the open space. The Local Government Act sets out a framework for making decisions around categorisation.

Native Title

As outlined in *Guidelines for Council Crown Land Managers December 2016*, Crown reserve management must be compliant with the required by law requirements prescribed by both the Crown Land Management Act (2016) and the LG Act. This includes a requirement for council Crown Land Managers to obtain written advice from a qualified native title manager that any plan of management covering Crown land that is not 'excluded land'.

Excluded land is defined in the Crown Land Management Act (2016) to include:

a) Land subject to an approved decision of native title (as defined in the *Native Title Act 1993* of the Commonwealth) that has determined that:

   i. All native title rights and interests in relation to the land have been extinguished, or

   ii. There are no native title rights and interests in relation to the land

b) Land where all native title rights and interests in relation to the land have been surrendered under an indigenous land use agreement (as defined in the Native Title Act 1993 of the Commonwealth) registered under that Act;

c) An area of land to which section 24FA protection (as defined in the Native Title Act 1993 of the Commonwealth) applies;

d) Land where all native title rights and interests in relation to the land have been compulsorily acquired;

e) Land for which a native title certificate is in effect.

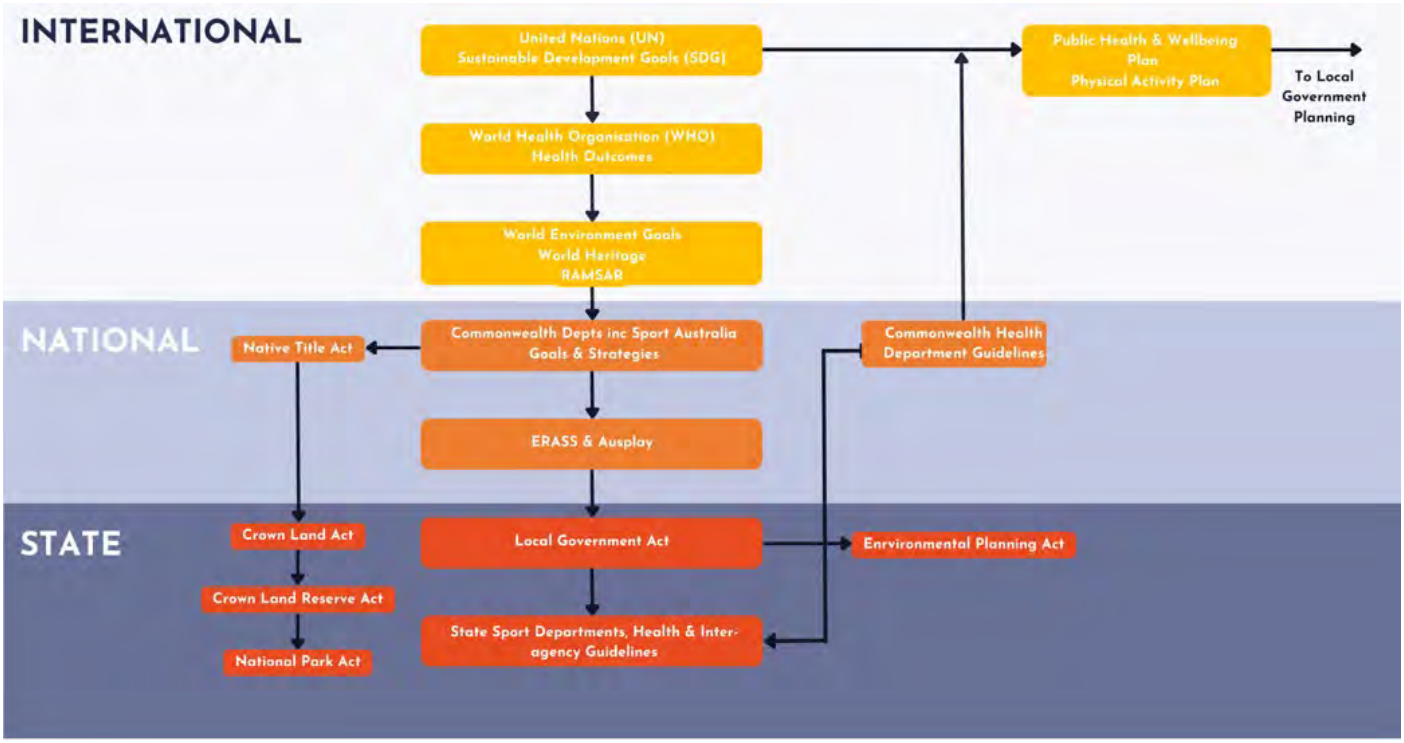
Section 8.7 of the Crown Land Management Act (2016) and the *Native Title Manager Workbook* clearly set out that written native title manager advice is required before a council Crown land manager does any of the following:

a) Grants leases, licences, permits, forestry rights, easements or rights of way over the land;

b) Mortgages the land or allows it to be mortgaged;

c) Imposes, requires or agrees to covenants, conditions or other restrictions on use (or removes or releases, or agrees to remove or release, covenants, conditions, or other restrictions on use) in connection with dealings involving the land;

d) Approves (or submits for approval) a plan of management for the land that authorises or permits any of the kinds of dealings referred to in paragraph (a), (b) or (c). Accordingly, native title manager advice must be obtained prior to the approval (or submittal for approval) of a plan of management that allows a dealing in (a)–(c) and the execution of any lease, licence, permit, etc. that may be authorised under that plan.



Recreation Planning Hierarchy – International, National and State

International planning context

There are a number of international planning strategies that directly relate and provide guidance for the management of open space and the activities that take place in those spaces. The United Nations (UN) has created the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals have been endorsed by all member countries of the UN. The UN has identified physical activity and sport and recreation as crucial to meeting key SDGs by creating improved health and wellbeing results. SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG 4: Education, SDG 5: Gender Equality, and SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions are directly aligned with human physical activity and leisure that takes place in open spaces. In relation to open space management SDG 6: Clean Water, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 13: Climate Action, SGD 14: Life in Water and SDG 15: Life on Land are directly related to sustainable management of ecosystems. (UN, 2019).

“Throughout history, sport (and recreation) has been a platform for change, a forum for dialogue and an opportunity to dismantle barriers between men and women of all origins. Recreation breaks down cultural, social, racial and political barriers, promoting dialogue and ultimately building bridges” (UN, 2019). Human interaction with open spaces, through sport, recreation and leisure is a core right for all. Through our provision of open space, we provide the opportunity for interaction between the community and our reserves to improve health and wellbeing in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Health outcome policies and guidelines also play a role in management of open space. The World Health Organisation (WHO), along with Australian and state government health agencies, have developed policies which provide generic guidance for land managers in relation to physical activity and its health benefits for the community.

National planning context

At the national level a number of policy documents provide guidance to local government in the management of open space, and to a lesser degree the activities that our communities do on them. The most important of these is the Native Title Act. Also providing guidance are policy documents from Sport Australia, the Australian Sports Commission, Federal departments of health and others.

Sport Australia, through their Clearing House for Sport unit, produce the Ausplay data set. This data is critical to our understanding of what Australian's are doing and the trends in physical activity. Ausplay is the primary source in our understanding of trends in sport and recreation and is the data set that this Strategy is based on.

State planning context

The principal planning legislation in New South Wales is the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) that governs planning and development assessment.

The EP&A Act requires a determining authority to have written consent from the legal owner of any affected land before granting consent for development. Development on Crown land requires Crown land approval for any development application. The EP&A Act, regulations and state planning policies apply to all development in our parks and reserves. This legislation defines the process that any proposal must follow.

When managing reserves, we must comply with all relevant laws that apply to the use of the community land.

This includes the *Crown Land Management Regulation 2018* as outlined in section 3.2 along with:

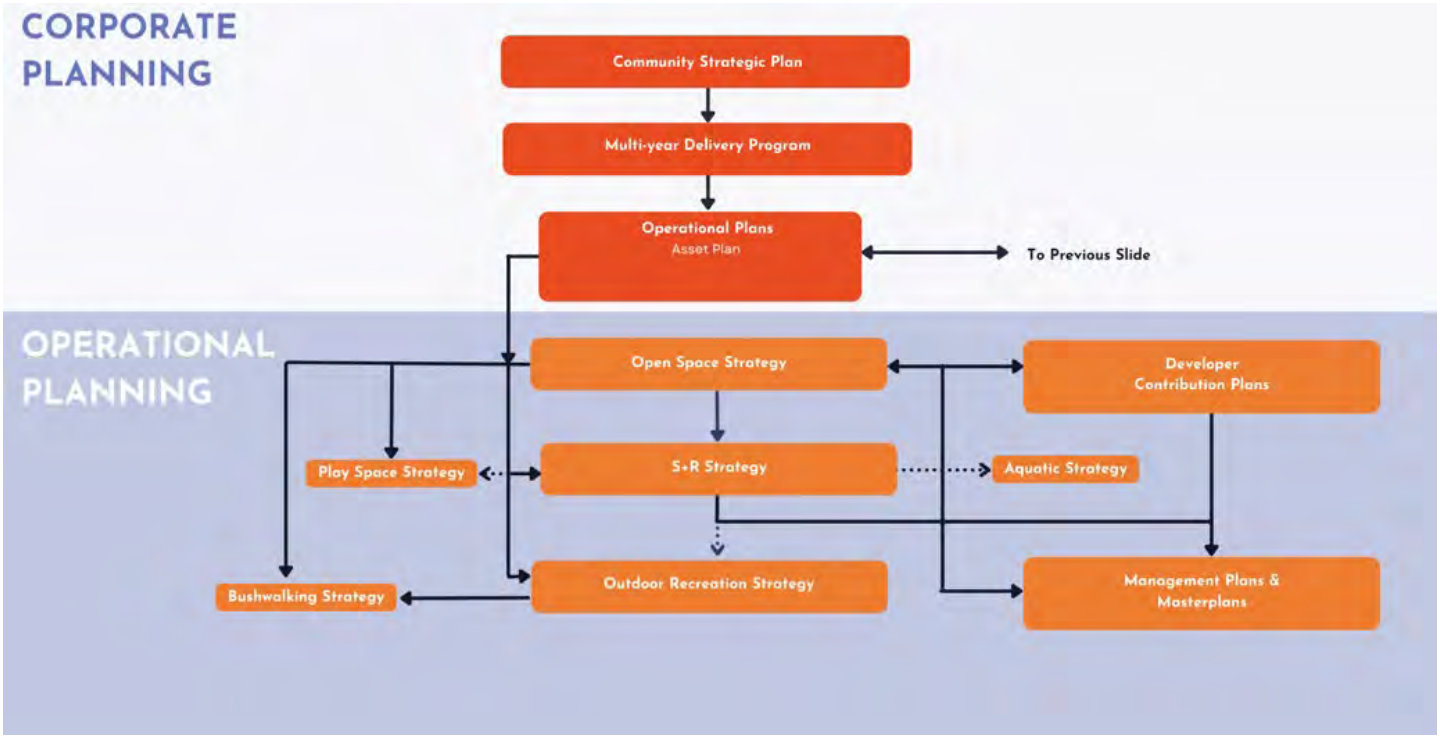
- *Local Government Act 1993: requires plans of management to be prepared for public land and reserves under the responsibility of local councils. It requires that council-owned community land be categorised according to the function desired by the community. Councils must manage this land in line with the core objectives specified in the Act.*
- *Native Title Act 1993: Section 8.7 of the Crown Land Management Act (2016) and the Native Title Manager Workbook sets out requirements in line with the Act before entering into a number of proscribed actions on community land*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021: provides for development permitted without consent and exempt development on state land.*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes 2008): provides for development permitted without consent and exempt development of state land. Exempt development includes works such as compliant access ramps, play equipment, fences, bollards, paths, barbecues and signs.*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992: applies to existing premises, including heritage buildings, those under construction, and future premises. It extends beyond the building to include outdoor spaces in open space. This Act recognises the importance of providing equality, dignity and independence to people with a range of abilities. This Act establishes that it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disability in the provision of access to premises and public open spaces.*
- *Companion Animals Act 1998: requires environmental initiatives by councils to promote responsible animal ownership. This Act directs local government in the management of animals, in particular dogs, including the development of dog areas.*

Regional planning context

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment sets out regional and metropolitan plans that inform our Local Environmental Plans and policy position by providing direction on matters including housing, jobs, affordable housing and open space.

In 2017 the Department finalised regional strategic land use plans for the whole of NSW. The regional plans set a 20-year framework, vision and direction for strategic planning and land use to ensure regions have the housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment, access to green spaces and connected communities to continue to be vibrant places for people to live, work and visit. The NSW Government provides planning guidance for the MidCoast region through the Hunter Regional Plan 2041[5] which was released in December 2022.

Finally, there are several state level guidelines that provide direct guidance into this Strategy. They include; the Greener Places strategy and the Everyone Can Play Strategy.



Recreation Planning Hierarchy – Local Government

Local planning context

At the local level we have a number of planning documents that impact how we plan our open space. These include:

- *MidCoast Community Strategic Plan*[6]
- *Future Land Use Planning Strategy*[7]

[5] https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/mysppau/uploads/redactor_assets/documents/6e175c5cf8aad3d6c0554e8a89c914b96224989778448aae81e02acfb9f130ce/10448/Draft_Hunter_Regional_Plan_2041__1_.pdf
[6] Community Strategic Plan - MidCoast Council
[7] Future land use planning strategies - MidCoast Council

- *Regional Economic Development Strategy*[8]
- *MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036*[9]

These documents, as well as specific Council policies, form the basis for our planning for open space.

Open space planning context

Open space planning fits within a larger hierarchy of strategic planning. As detailed, planning and legislation that influences or directs our open space planning exists at the local, state, national and international level. Our local approach to open space planning is articulated through our open space strategies and management plans, as well as specific planning documents. We also take direction from planning and legislation from other government agencies.

This strategy is the premier source document for the management of all open space in the MidCoast region. It sets out the vision, goals and management philosophy for all open space. Along with state and national planning documents the strategy will direct all management plans and masterplans. The Strategy highlights the importance of identifying and adaptively managing within the capacity of each individual open space. The long-term management of open space, within the limitations of the carrying capacity of those spaces provides the over-arching management approach for our open space.

Adaptive Management

This strategy is based on an adaptive management approach to open space management. Adaptive Management is defined as:

> *Adaptive management, also known as adaptive resource management or adaptive environmental assessment and management, is a structured, iterative process of robust decision making in the face of uncertainty, with an aim to reducing uncertainty over time via system monitoring.*

The *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023– 2035* has been developed with an adaptive management approach. This approach is in alignment with the Guiding Principles of Open Space management as set out earlier in this document. Adaptive management is based on two planning principles, Carrying Capacity and an Impact Assessment model, known as the Thresholds of Change model.

Carrying Capacity

Carrying Capacity is defined as:

> *The maximum amount of use that any given environment or ecosystem can accommodate before a negative impact is apparent or observed, while continuing to meet the visitor's experience expectation. The aim of identifying Carrying Capacity is to manage the impact on the space 10% short of any negative impact.*

We manage our open space portfolio to support a range of visitation and physical activity opportunities, along with providing a variety of settings catering for different visitors without compromising environmental and sustainability results.

[8] Regional Economic Development Strategy - MidCoast Council
[9] MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036

There are two separate components to Carrying Capacity, namely, maintaining the environment (including structured forms) in the desired state, and second, meeting the visitor experience expectation. Our open space management approach is focused on prescribed strategies and actions, structured through our open space planning framework, characterised by a thresholds of change adaptive intervention model.

For practical purposes, an example would be the monitoring of the state of a sports field. There are accepted standards for the total amount of hours of use a natural sports field can maintain. To ensure that usage does not exceed the carrying capacity of the field that limit is enforced. In a practical application this would mean limiting usage short of damage occurring. Damage does not just mean wearing out of the natural turf, but also includes compaction of the sub-surface soil, damage to specific sites, such as goal mouths and entry points and in the case of synthetic fields the laying over of synthetic grass fonds.

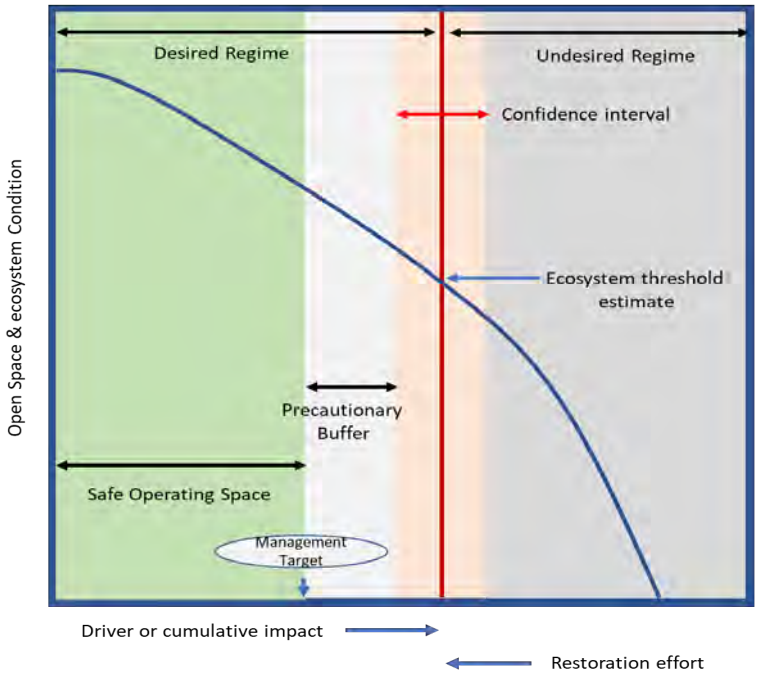
Impact Assessment Model – Thresholds of Change

The Thresholds of Change model is a specific Impact Assessment model. The model assists land managers in identifying impacts to specific sub-components of their parks. The model allows for effective identification of the carrying capacity of the space. A thresholds of change framework allows for observable changes to public open space to be monitored as they happen, and which then trigger management actions to sustainably manage the space and its visitation.

An active open space and/or ecosystem threshold is a point at which the environment or ecosystem cannot recover. Thus, causing tipping points for both the maintenance of the open space and the activities that take place on the space. Once an ecosystem passes its threshold, it cannot return to its original state, or if a return is possible, then mechanisms to return it are not economically or socially viable. An environmental threshold is the point at which there is an abrupt or gradual change in an ecosystem quality, property, or phenomenon, or where small changes in one or more external conditions produce large and persistent responses in an ecosystem.

Ecological thresholds occur when external factors, positive feedbacks, or nonlinear instabilities in a system cause changes to propagate in a domino-like fashion that is potentially irreversible (Holling, C.S. 1978).

Carrying Capacity & Thresholds of Change Model



In the case of the MidCoast public open spaces, a threshold would be the point where, due to overuse, the sports field at Omaru Park becomes unusable and cannot be repaired or needs to be taken “off-line” for an extended period to allow for repair. In an environmental sense the degradation of coastal heath in one of our coastal reserves would be a threshold. The thresholds of change model is a structured, iterative process driven decision-making model designed to function in the face of uncertainty or a lack of evidence, with an aim to reducing uncertainty over time via general and specific system monitoring.

Model explanation

The model is designed to be used on any open space, natural setting or ecosystem. It assumes that the site starts off being functional and fit for purpose and/or in its natural state. The intent of management is to keep the space in the Desired Regime area. This is obtained by an effective maintenance program, monitoring and management of use. The Management Target is indicated at the bottom of the model.

However, for all spaces there are drivers and cumulative impacts from external factors. One such factor is climate change, and another would be allowing over-use of the space. Climate change is a macro effect and must be addressed at the macro level. Overuse is at the micro level and can be addressed through mitigation strategies. Some of our reserves are currently used for passive recreation. However, they are also used for dog walking. These two activities cause overuse of the space (Carrying Capacity) with the resultant deterioration of the reserve. A mitigation strategy to ensure that specific reserves don’t move into the Precautionary Buffer, or worse, would be to provide alternative dog walking opportunities or enforcement strategies.

The desired state is to put in place strategies that have a restoration effect on the space, noting that once damage has occurred, it is more difficult to return to the previous state. If a space is allowed to deteriorate in condition it will then move into the Precautionary Buffer. This is where we start to see obvious signs of degradation. Once these signs of degradation are observed we have passed the carrying capacity for the space. Our aim is to ensure we don’t enter this phase. At this point confidence in the fit for purpose state of the space is affected.

During this degradation process the fit for purpose nature of the space has been decreasing, to the point where it reaches the Ecosystem threshold estimate. This is the ultimate threshold for the space. Beyond this threshold is irreparable damage. This is the Undesired Regime.

We will use this strategic model to understand, monitor and explain management decisions, to manage up to the threshold of each open space. Strategies and decision points will be put in place to ensure that our spaces remain in a desired and fit for purpose state.

A number of actions in the Action Plan directly relate to the Impact Assessment model.

No Net Loss of open space

The New South Wales Government supports the concept of No Net Loss (NNL) to open space and diversity through its Biodiversity Offsets Scheme[10].

Definition of No Net Loss of Open Space

The point at which the impacts on any given environment, biodiversity or community value are balanced by measures taken to avoid and minimise the impacts or to offset significant residual impacts, if any, on an appropriate geographic scale.

[10] https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/biodiversity-offsets-scheme/about-the-biodiversity-offsets-scheme

The concept of no net loss is an overarching guiding principle for estate and open space planning and management. It can be applied to the many components of open space and their management. Further, it can be applied to the provision of open space as well as an approach that aims to neutralise negative environmental impacts from human activities.

No net loss is achieved through:

- environment protection
- creation of new open space
- restoration, enhancement, and management
- education, research, and information

In its environmental application, the concept of NNL is governed in Australia through the Federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act), Environmental Offsets Policy, which seeks to "improve or maintain the viability of matters of national environmental significance" and whose application is triggered by "dynamic scenarios, usually declining" to provide offsets to replace lost environmental values.

In New South Wales the legislation governing development on Crown Land is the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, which uses a transparent, consistent and scientific approach to assessing biodiversity values and offsetting the impacts of development on biodiversity.

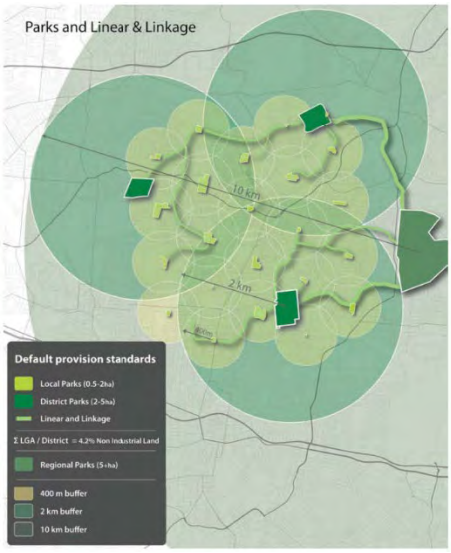
The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) is based on the 'avoid, minimise, offset' hierarchy.

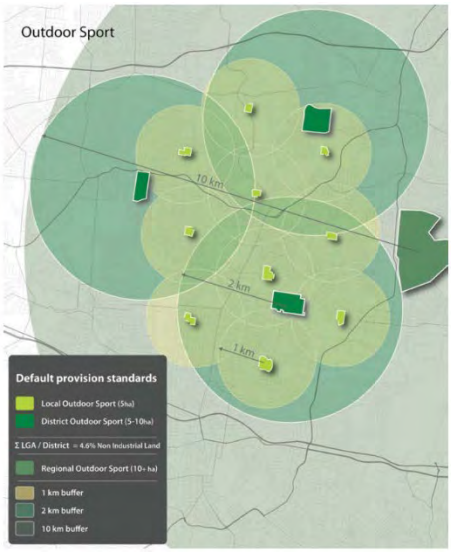
- Using the hierarchy proponents must:
- first consider whether the development can avoid a negative impact on the environment:
- next consider whether the development can minimise any negative impacts that cannot be avoided:
- once all reasonable steps to avoid or minimise environmental impacts have been exhausted, consider whether any remaining impacts can be offset.

In considering the management of open space in our local government area, we are guided by the principle of No Net Loss. When considering an embellishment to open space, planning of the project includes considering the impact of the project on the overall space, and on community enjoyment of the space.

Distribution of open space and facilities

The NSW Department of Planning recognises the value of distribution in the planning for open space and facility provision. The image below demonstrates how parks and linkages to parks should be set out (left-hand figure) and how sport should be distributed (right-hand figure). This planning is best used in greenfield development (new developments). However, distribution of parks and facilities is also a useful planning tool for established locations such as we have in the MidCoast. This planning aligns with the Desired Standards of Provision that are highlighted in the People in Parks chapter later in this strategy. As our population grows, and demand changes, we will seek to apply the concept of distribution in providing new parks and facilities.





COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Community Consultation

The most important part of any planning process is asking the community what they want.

Research conducted by several universities in 2022 found that the community wants their respective local government authority to play a more extensive and diverse role in delivering services to the community[11]. The research found that residents think that local government should be taking a more proactive role in issues such as climate change. They also found that residents see local government's role including providing for a healthy and active lifestyle for residents.

Consultation summary

Consultation is a critical component of the development of the *MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023– 2035.* Consultation occurred in two phases:

- Phase One – Stakeholder and community engagement on the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022*
- Phase Two - Stakeholder and community engagement on the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023 – 2035*

Phase One was conducted between June and December 2022. This extensive engagement period has provided the community's aspirations for their public open spaces, while also ascertaining the management requirements from key stakeholders.

We appreciate the time, effort and resources that the community has contributed to this strategy.

What we heard

As part of the Phase One engagement a phone survey was conducted throughout the MidCoast community. The phone survey sought feedback from the community on their values and behaviours for their outdoor space and recreational needs.

The phone focussed on four key areas, with the following results:

What are residents using:

- Foreshore area
- Sportsground
- Park (local)
- Walking tracks or trails
- Bushland areas, including national parks

What are residents doing?

- Walking (other)
- Picnics or BBQs
- Bushwalking, birdwatching
- Relax, sit or meditate

[11] The changing role of local government in Australia: national survey findings (apo.org.au)

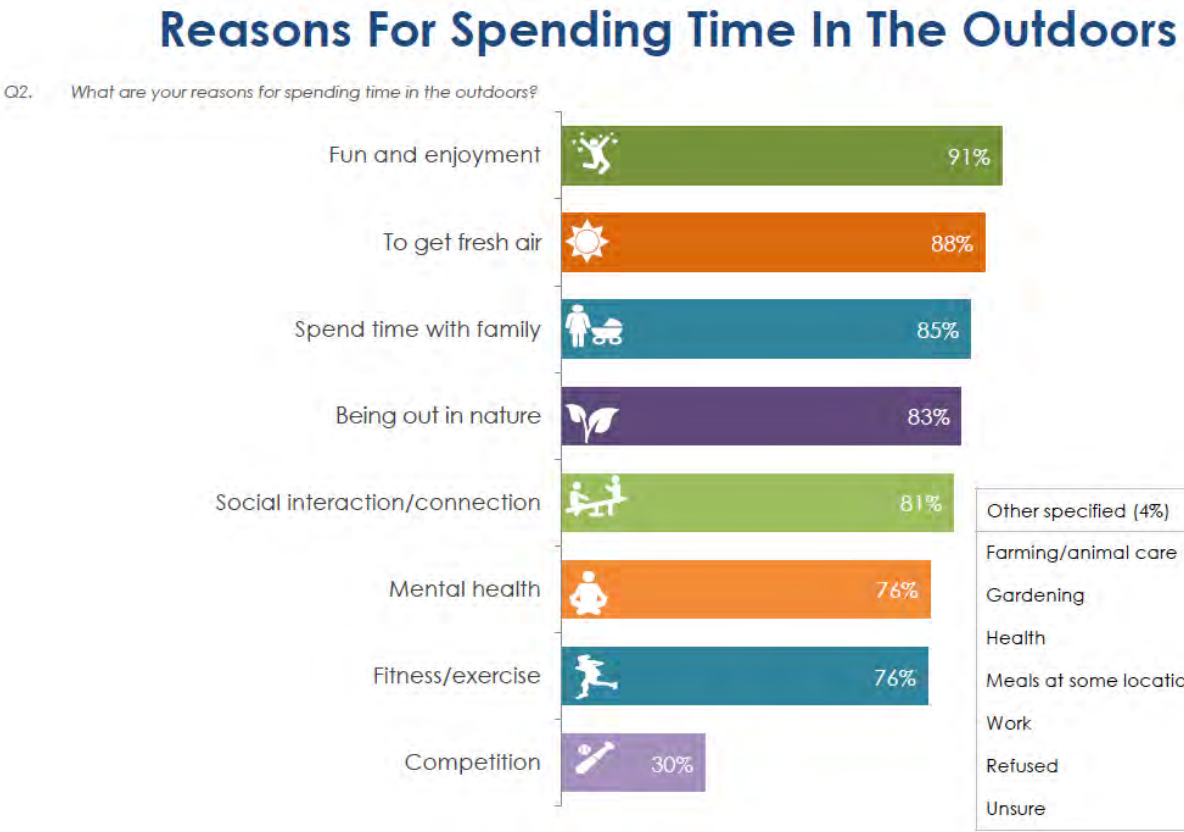
What's stopping them from doing more?

- Lack of time
- Health problems
- Lack of facilities close by

What do residents want prioritised?

- Foreshore area
- Outdoor picnic area or BBQ facilities
- Outdoor play spaces for young people
- Walking track or trail

The phone survey also asked respondents why they spend time in our public open spaces.



Other specified (4%)	Count
Farming/animal care	2
Gardening	1
Health	1
Meals at some locations	1
Work	1
Refused	1
Unsure	1

We also asked what they do when they visit our public open spaces.

The results in the above image align with what national data sets are telling us, that more people walk than any other physical activity. The high levels of bushwalking are unique to the MidCoast region and reflects the abundance of bushwalking opportunities in our region. The community also told us that they visit our open spaces just to relax. The fishing response is very much MidCoast centric, with a much larger cohort doing fishing than in any other region in Australia. Play is significant and aligns with other data. The major issue in this group is walking with the dog. Almost 50% of MidCoast residents report that they walk with their dog in our public open spaces. This aligns with national trends (see separate section on People with Dogs later in the Strategy).

Consultation themes

During the community consultation conducted between June and November 2022, the community told us that:

- Maintenance of open space needs to be improved
- Our existing open spaces need to be made more accessible and better connected
- Open space needs could be better provided for by making spaces more flexible
- Cycling and walking are very important to our community
- Partnerships between community, council and volunteers need to be encouraged
- Future generations need to have access to good quality open space

We also heard some improvement ideas from the community. These improvements to open space to be prioritised are:

- More and better cycleways and footpaths
- Places for young children to play

- More challenging open space activities that encourage adventure
- More shade, seating and toilets in existing open spaces
- Make better use of our existing open space such as views, access to foreshore areas and enhancing and protecting the natural environment
- These are some of the interesting ideas we were asked to consider:
- Off-road cycling tracks
- Install viewing platforms in more foreshore areas
- More challenging skateparks
- Painting handrails and installing art to freshen up a park
- A frisbee golf course
- Ninja course
- Using fire trails as shared walking and cycling paths
- Lighting and better drainage to allow sports fields to be used at night
- Native gardens and wildflower trails
- Splash zone for children
- Installing outdoor gym equipment for everyone to use
- Solar powered fairy lights and more power outlets installed at BBQ areas

Analysis of feedback

The feedback we received reflects physical activity trends we are seeing nationally. The feedback was primarily focused on active recreation, and less on structured sport. This reflects national trends, that show that Australian's are undertaking their recreation, and fitness, in less structured ways than past generations. The focus on the quality of our parks, as well as the desire to see less structured activities catered for is reflective of the wider population. Activities such as frisbee golf, pickleball, and fitness activities such as Parkrun and ninja, as well as the pleasure that our community derives from quality open spaces is expected.

We heard that the community wants us to continue to provide and upgrade our path network. With so many people walking, running and cycling the need to do so safely and enjoyably is a high priority. These activities appear often in the Action Plan.

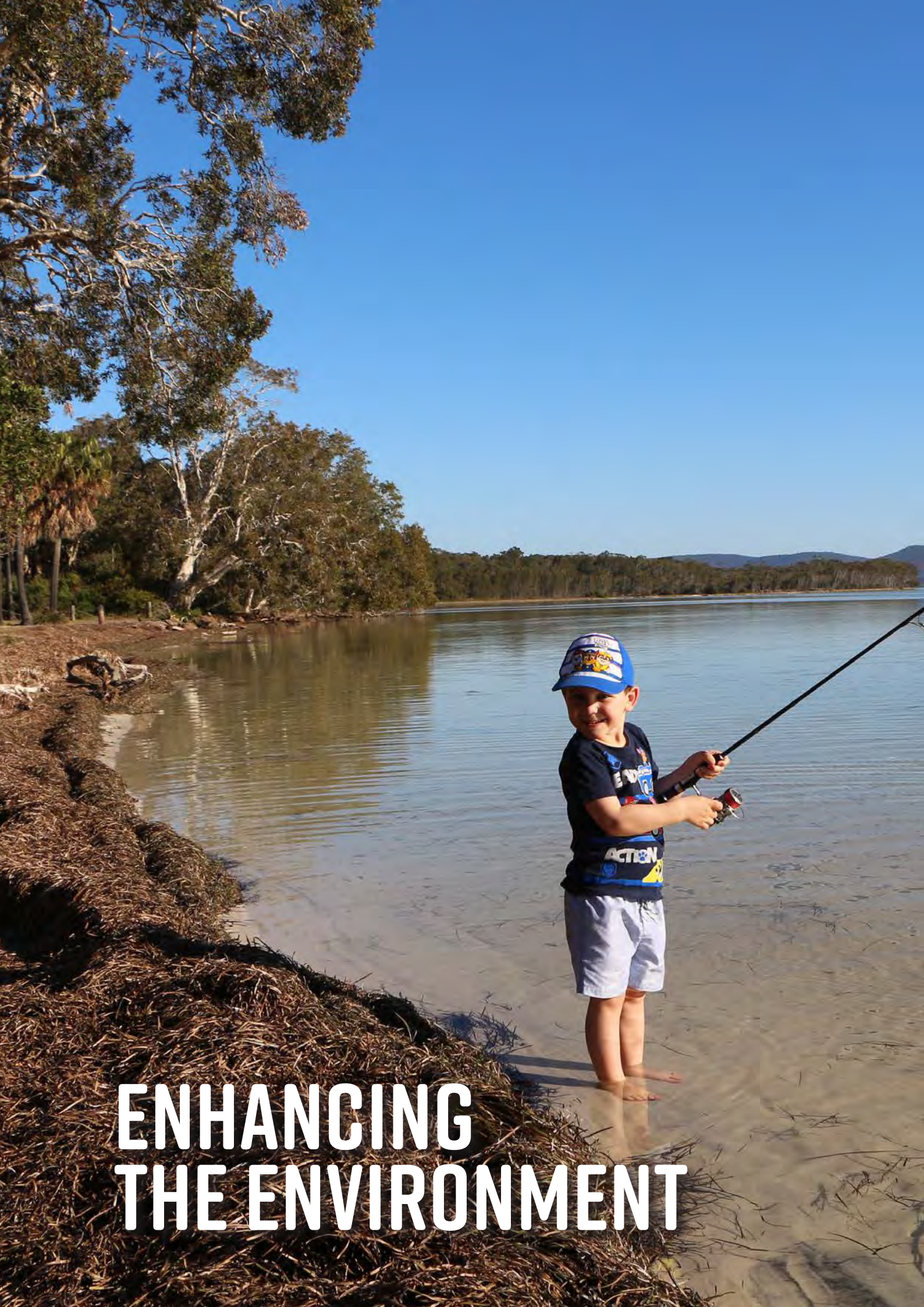
We also heard that ensuring our youth have access to quality recreation facilities is critical to our community. We currently have 15 skateparks scattered across our local government area, most of them aging, and too small to provide for our contemporary population. An action in the Action Plan is to develop a Skatepark Plan, that will identify the need for more skateparks, where they should be, and what elements should be offered. This is a long-term objective and will be prepared during the life of this Strategy.

We heard that our community wants us to explore the idea of using existing firetrails for multiple uses. This is already occurring in many places, depending on what activities are allowed on different land tenures. In the MidCoast area we have thousands of firetrails scattered across the landscape. We will need to analyse what firetrails would provide the best community outcomes, and then work with all land managers to ascertain its feasibility. This has been highlighted in the Action Plan.

The feedback also highlighted the current state of sports lighting of our sports facilities. Aged systems, with poor lux levels are apparent on many of our sport facilities, along with no sports

lighting. A detailed look at sports lighting is included in the People in Parks chapter of this Strategy. The section also includes a Desired Standards to guide us in the provision of contemporary sports lighting. Sports lighting is very expensive to provide, and the number of sports facilities that require sports lighting or an upgrade are many. Therefore, bringing all our sports facilities up to acceptable levels will be expensive and will be a long-term project. External funding will be required, and so we will seek funding support from external agencies such as the NSW Government and Commonwealth Government. We will also work with local sports clubs to seek grants for this purpose. This is outlined in the Funding section at the end of this Strategy.

The community engagement process provided significant input into the development of this strategy. The community expressed to us how important our public open spaces are to them, and this is reflected in all components of the Strategy.



ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

Enhancing the Environment

Before we can use it, visit it, and appreciate it we have to protect it.

The MidCoast region is home to a rich variety of native plants and animals located in our wetlands, in the sea, on the beaches, in our coastal reserves and our inland parks. Our reserves provide important habitats and refuges for animal and plant species of local, national, and international significance. This strategy provides opportunity to better care for and showcase our natural biodiversity so that it may be healthy and valued into the future.

This strategy takes a landscape approach to environmental planning. No park, reserve or public open space exists in isolation, with natural linkages joining our parks into a landscape. Our native species move throughout this landscape and rely on natural corridors for their survival. Protecting one park, in isolation, does little to protect our fauna and flora, whereas a landscape approach to ecosystem management ensures that the whole is conserved and potentially enhanced.

Conservation planning aims to ensure that natural values, including flora and fauna, are protected and that partnerships underpin conservation efforts. The moderate size and linear nature of a lot of our coastal reserves, and our larger inland reserves highlights the need for complementary management across the landscape. A cooperative approach between managers of our public open space portfolio, including Crown land, Community Land, waterways, municipal land and neighbouring freehold land will be required to help maintain the ecological character of our spaces so that they may provide for the long-term protection of threatened species and ecological communities.

Along with the Guiding Principles detailed in the Vision section of this plan the following considerations are foremost in our planning for the protection of our eco-systems:

- Large areas of the natural environment in our region are managed for the primary objective of conservation.
- Native vegetation and priority habitats will be protected, and their condition improved by reducing disturbance, rehabilitating priority areas, managing weeds and pests, and put in place control measures to achieve appropriate and sustainable access to and use of our public open space
- The protection of vulnerable fauna will require reducing threats to these species through controls on the key impacting activities, such as introduced feral species, and human based activities, such as dog walking
- Collaboration with land and agency managers for estuary opening, shoreline erosion and responding to emergency events will further assist in addressing impacts on natural values.

Managing coastal ecosystems

The MidCoast region features a variety of onshore ecosystems including beach, vegetated areas of sandy beaches, coastal dune grasslands and scrub. It also includes estuary systems, which form the transition zone between river environments and marine environments. Conservation planning allows strategies to be developed that target defined elements of the natural environment (conservation assets) for which threats have been identified. The emphasis is on identifying strategies that tackle threats that pose the greatest risk to priority conservation assets and key ecological attributes and that will contribute most to meeting the expected conservation results.

We have developed a number of planning documents that deal with the protection of our environment. These include;

- MidCoast Greening Strategy[12]
- Manning River Estuary Catchment and Management Program 2021-2031[13]
- Climate Change Strategy[14]
- MidCoast Council Biodiversity Framework 2021-2030[15]

In addition, both the NSW and Federal Government's provide guidance to local government in managing public open spaces and the eco-systems that they contain. These strategies are listed on the Local Government NSW website.[16]

This strategy is aligned with and supports these environmental documents.

Regional Microclimate

The MidCoast's climate has been generally temperate, with four reasonably discernible seasons. First Nations knowledge tells us there are in fact six seasons on the east coast[17]. It is mainly sunny throughout the year with cool, mild winters and hot, humid summers. The NSW MidCoast mean annual rainfall is 1,212mm. Average temperatures range from between 14.13-20.3 degrees Celsius in winter, to 23-29 degrees Celsius in summer. Many of our coastal foreshore parks are exposed to coastal weather systems that have a dramatic effect on their individual eco-systems. The coastal environment can present conditions including lite sea spray, strong winds, and heavy wind-driven rainfall. The high points along the coast can be subjected to high winds and driving rain.

Many of our popular parks, where sport and active recreation take place, are in fact flood retention and flood detention zones, set aside for that purpose many years ago. Their primary purpose is protection of assets from overland flooding. Many of our parks therefore experience overland flows of water. The incidence of this occurrence received during increasingly extreme rain events will be a future maintenance challenge. Damage caused by overland flows, and the management of retained water on sport surfaces will need to be mitigated or adapted for in strategies and infrastructure improvements.

12 MidCoast_Greening_Strategy
13 Manning River Estuary & Catchment Management Program
14 Climate Change Strategy - MidCoast Council
15 Biodiversity Framework
16 https://lgnsw.org.au
17 www.bom.gov.au

Climate change

Climate change is the greatest challenge for this generation. We act, or we lose it.

"Preserving biodiversity 'as is' may have been feasible in a stationary climate (one that is variable but not changing), but this will not be possible with the widespread, pervasive, and large ecological changes anticipated under significant levels of climate change. This makes the impacts of climate change quite unlike other threats to biodiversity." —Dunlop et al. (2013)

Climate change impacts are expected to continue to alter natural processes and regimes in sometimes unpredictable ways, which may mean that current conservation methods become less effective over time. Thus, while we can be certain that climate change will cause significant and widespread changes to biodiversity and natural ecosystems over time, the exact nature and scale of changes, and the degree to which individual species, populations and ecological processes can adapt, is uncertain.

The NSW Government, in its publication *North Coast Climate change snapshot*[18] highlights the impacts that our region should expect from climate change. A changing climate could have a range of impacts on our coastal environment. The following impacts from climate change on our coastal areas are widely accepted:

- Rising sea levels are predicted to cause increased flooding of low-lying coastal areas, greater coastal erosion, higher storm surges and higher costs of managing coastal land.
- Higher ocean temperatures are likely to change ocean currents.
- Dissolving of additional carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, leading to ocean acidification, may disrupt marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Higher temperatures will bring longer, hotter and drier periods and greater threats from bushfires.
- More intense rain events will cause increased riverine and estuarine flooding and higher inflows of catchment pollutants.
- Inundation and erosion will squeeze some coastal habitats against immobile barriers such as cliffs and infrastructure, change the distribution of some species and increase pressure from pest plants and animals.

While the coastline is already subject to many of these threats, a changing climate will exacerbate the impacts. Research suggests the vulnerability of estuaries and coastal areas to climate change is much higher and will manifest earlier than for other environmental assets in the region. For example, estuaries within the region are reported to be experiencing sea surface temperatures increasing at a rate of around four times the global average (CSIRO 2015)[19].

Wetland systems are recognised to play an important role in climate change mitigation through the capture of organic carbon. The protection of coastal wetlands and natural hydrology can therefore result in significant carbon sequestration as well as having additional social, ecological and economic benefits[20].

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18 https://www.climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-06/North%20Coast%20climate%20change%20snapshot.pdf
19 https://www.csiro.au/en/research/environmental-impacts/climate-change/state-of-the-climate/oceans
20 https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.14319

Adaptive measures accept the reality of sea-level rise and coastline retreat and seek to increase coastal resilience. Measures to promote resilience include the protection of vegetation and stabilisation of dunes, the maintenance of sediment supply and the provision of buffer zones, rolling easements or setbacks that allow the landward migration of the coastline. Long-term data sets describing either the natural dynamics of beach systems or the magnitude of climate change impacts on beaches are scarce. Research will be required to understand these impacts and inform the adaptive management approach.

Our inland reserves are not as vulnerable to climate change through sea level rise, but they are exposed to effects of climate change through other impacts, such as overland flow and bush fire.

Increasing temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns will lead to changes in habitats and the abundance, distribution and composition of native species. Climate change may also exacerbate existing pressures from weeds and introduced pest animals. Changing landscapes and climatic conditions will also have implications for existing recreational and cultural values. Climate change impacts will vary across different eco-systems. Our best defence against climate change is a resilient landscape. We are actively managing our parks and reserves to maintain healthy habitats, which will give flora and fauna the best chance to adapt to climate change.[21]

All open spaces are facing challenges from a changing climate. All levels of Government recognise the serious threats posed by climate change. Evidence of slow-onset changes has been mounting for several decades, and extreme weather events are intensifying. The most concerning of these are heatwaves and subsequent bushfires, heavy precipitation, strong winds and more frequent severe weather. Expected increases in average temperature, with more very hot days, reduced average rainfall and fewer rainfall days (with heavier rainfall), may lead to very large changes in the intensity of extreme events. Extreme weather events over the past decade have already led to changes in the management of parks. Management interventions that were once periodic have become part of ongoing operations. The carrying capacity of the regions open spaces are directly affected by the impacts of climate change, and the ability to sustainably maintain natural ecosystems within our open spaces will be challenged.

These future challenges from climate change will increase financial and economic costs for MidCoast Council.

Our open space managers will face a high degree of complexity and considerable uncertainty in the future management of our open spaces, particularly in the face of climate change. We will use climate science along with the adaptive management model detailed in this strategy to inform adaptive management strategies and programs, to ensure flexible and effective responses to emerging impacts from changes to climate.

Habitat Protection

Around Australia, critical habitats that support our precious plants and animals are under threat. Recent reports suggest that more than 1,500 football fields worth of native woodland and scrub is being cleared each-and-every-day[22]. Habitat conservation or habitat protection is a management practice that seeks to conserve, protect and restore habitats and prevent species extinction, fragmentation or reduction in range.

With one of the largest portfolios of open space of any local government authority in Australia, in the form of 826 individual parks and reserves, we have a critical role in habitat protection. Remnant bushland is vital in not just supporting biodiversity of flora but also in protecting fauna, such as our threatened koala population. As the major land manager in the region we have an important role to

[21] https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/national-parks/parks-australia/climate-change
[22] https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/our-insights/perspectives/habitat-protection-facts/

play in relation to this issue. We have a dedicated koala website, where residents are encouraged to report sightings[23].

> *"Defining the nature of our local koala populations and better understanding the range of threats affecting them will be critical to conserving the species into the future" It has been widely reported that koala populations across most parts of NSW are declining. Unfortunately, this also appears to be the case for koalas across the MidCoast".*

The key planning consideration that supports this strategy is Adaptive Management, through the Thresholds of Change Impact Assessment model. This model, and the management strategies that flow from it, allows us to manage our open space short of negative impacts on those spaces (see Planning Context section). Being able to identify the thresholds of our habitat, and then putting in place management practices that ensure we remain within the Desired Zone will ensure that our habitats, and the animals that live in them are protected.

Sustainability

Other than threats from sea level rise, and other climate change impacts, the main sustainability issue for many of our parks, but specifically our sports parks, as a portfolio, is from the human impacts of visitation. All public open spaces around Australia are experiencing increased visitation, especially post COVID19. It is not just an increase in pure numbers but also a change in visitation type. Passive and active recreation activities now dominate visitation to public open spaces, one example being the increasing levels of dog walking.

Local sports clubs, that lease our sports fields average approximately 25 hours of activity per week. The industry standard for a natural turf field is 22.5 hours per week. However, even though sport usage is relatively easy to monitor, what is not seen is the high levels of unstructured community use of these parks. Often high levels of recreation, including dog walking is occurring on a sports field when it is not being used for sport. This is why this strategy presents the Impact Assessment Model to provide a rationale decision making structure to manage the spaces.

The Planning Context section of this strategy details that the carrying capacity of our public open spaces is limited, and signs identified through the Thresholds of Change model indicate that some of our more popular reserves may be reaching or have exceeded their carrying capacity. The model provides guidance to our staff to allow management strategies to

[23] https://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Community/Our-environment/Environmental-Projects/MidCoast-Koala-Mapping

be implemented when signs of deterioration of the landform become apparent.

Fauna and Flora

The MidCoast region has a highly varied ecosystem with each sub-area presenting its own fauna and flora. However, as a portfolio of reserves they would be described as being very similar, including high cliffs, rocky outcrops, natural lawns and turf, bushland, native grass and coastal heath.

Land management practices over the past 100 years have resulted in the degradation of the native bushland in some of our parks.

In areas of degradation, we have put in place an *Ecological Restoration Action Plan* (ERAP) to re-establish native species where applicable. Works carried out by Bushcare or similar groups such as “Friends of” will continue to be promoted and supported by Council, along with the commissioning of professional contractors to do this work, where we are not able to.

The aim of the ecological restoration is to:

- Increase the quality of the habitat availability for native fauna and attract more species into the area;
- Restore and increase the occurrence of native vegetation in the area and provide higher quality passive recreation and educational opportunities;
- Greatly increase the visual amenity of the area; and
- Reduce a major source of exotic weed seed spreading into surrounding remnant native bushland patches.

There are patches of remnant vegetation in many of our parks and reserves. On the coastline this remnant vegetation is mainly Coastal Heath and Littoral Rainforest. The remnants range in ecological condition from heavily weed-infested to low levels of weed occurrence. Bush regeneration works are routinely done within the larger remnants. Connectivity planting is recommended to support the remnant vegetation in numerous locations.

Wildlife corridors (Biodiversity Corridor)

Many sports parks and passive parks provide critical wildlife corridors and linkages for native wildlife. Ground based fauna, such as koalas have been known to use sports fields as linkages to move across the landscape, especially in breeding season. Native birds, including the Black Cockatoo move across our landscape via our diverse open spaces.

The habitats and corridors aid wildlife movement, interbreeding and colonisation through the provision of habitat and buffer vegetation. Individual habitats are a resource for a wide range of native fauna species. Each reserve’s habitat is a temporary refuge for transient bird species and a permanent home for native frogs, reptiles and small to medium-sized birds and mammals.

In our coastal parks individual cliff lines support low to moderate levels of native flora and fauna habitat. Vegetation generally occurs as sparse to dense shrub layer with areas of dense native understorey/groundcovers. The shrubby vegetation provides moderate perching and foraging habitat of value to small passerine birds.

Our open space provides critical pathways for movement. It is vital therefore that all our parks are sustainably managed and protected, not just for their diversity, or the use that humans make of them, but also for the movement of our fauna. We have implemented a Biodiversity Study for specific areas, including coastal areas such as Hallidays Point.

Canopy coverage

Recent research conducted by the University of Wollongong and the University of NSW[24] has shown that there is a health benefit for humans being in green. They further state that tree canopy has a direct impact on not only ambient temperatures during extreme heat events, but also that tree canopy positively affects human health. They have found that tree canopy can lower blood pressure, heart rates, improve mental health and assist in other health issues.

Many councils are now introducing canopy targets in their planning. The City of Melbourne has a canopy target of 40%, the City of Sydney[25] 27% among many.

The MidCoast region is blessed with large areas of natural spaces. Council manages more than 4100 hectares of public open space, much of which has large areas of tree canopy. A deeper dive into the canopy cover on public land shows that the average public open space canopy cover in MidCoast is 31%, which falls short of the guidance suggested in the NSW Greener Neighbourhood Guide[26], being 45%. Park canopy cover within town centres is higher than the overall urban average, ranging from 35-45% but varies significantly across towns and villages of MidCoast suggesting capacity and priority for improvement requires further investigation. Likewise, public road reserve canopy cover averages 34%, yet varies widely across town and villages. In centres of highest population density, such as Taree and Tuncurry, levels of public road reserve canopy cover in 2018 were much lower at 21.2% and 22.6% respectively. This is well below the target suggested in the NSW Greener Neighbourhoods Guide of 40-50% to support shaded and attractive roadside pathways for walking and cycling.

Other land managers, primarily National Parks and Wildlife Service, also manage large areas of remnant vegetation and tree canopy in our region. In 2023 we completed canopy mapping for all of the urban zoned areas within our area and which identifies priority areas for greening. Urban areas of the region have 40% canopy cover of which 10% is public land, which is 30% vegetated. Our urban canopy cover sits well above the State average of 26%.

This strategy, and the actions that it contains, are designed to ensure that our natural environment is enhanced through our interaction with it. This includes the protection of existing tree canopy and the increase of canopy where possible. As part of the implementation of this Strategy, we will continue to enhance our canopy cover.

Coast Care, Beach Care

Our coastline, and our beaches hold special value to our community, and visitors alike. They are seen as places of contemplation and pleasure. They are sought out and valued for their natural beauty, and for the value that they bring to those that visit them. However, their contribution to our natural environment has by and large been seen as being one of appreciation rather than a critical component of the eco-system. Contemporary research has found that our beaches play a far more important role than just a place for humans to enjoy, or a place that delineations sea and land. Recent research has found that our beaches are better described as giant nets. The sea is full of life-forms, which are subject to the normal cycle of life. Sea-borne animals die, and when they do, they are often deposited up on to beaches. Land based animals, primarily birds, then scavenge those dead sea animals for food. This seaborne detritus also supports a vast range of other land-based animals, from small lizards, snakes, right up through the food chain. The whole coastal ecosystem relies upon dead animals being deposited on to our beaches.

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[24] 2019: Urban trees found to improve mental and general health - University of Wollongong – UOW
[25] https://meetings.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/documents/s60484/Attachment
[26] https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities/greening-our-city/greener-neighbourhoods

Researchers at the University of the Sunshine Coast[27] have found that our beaches are in fact the most critical component in sustaining our coastal eco-systems. Researchers observing beaches found that raptors would circle above a beach, and when dead fish were washed up, they were taken within seconds.

> *"Researchers have set up hidden cameras at beaches right across Australia. The cameras revealed beaches were the foundation of sprawling food webs. The ocean is so rich with life and so much washes up on beaches. That feeds sea eagles, whistling kites, dingoes, and even lace monitors. Far more food is being taken from the beach than from areas a few hundred metres inland.*
> *"The rate of consumption on the beach is extraordinary. You put a fish there and it's usually gone in minutes, and that's why you don't find many fish on the beach." It's not just scavengers. Tumbleweed seeds from the dunes attract large flocks of parrots."*

However, human activity is having a negative impact on this critical eco-system. Researchers posited that when we clean up our beaches of seaweed and other detritus, we are removing habit for bird hatching. We also acknowledge that four-wheel drives have an impact on our beaches. In consideration of this we undertook the Share the Shore[28] campaign which sought to educate the community on the impact of driving on our beaches, and suggested measures that the community can take to minimalise their impact.

We understand that some members of the community value being able to take their vehicles on to our beaches. This activity has been conducted for many decades and we have supported this activity with policy, permits and access points.

We seek to find a balance between those that wish to undertake this activity and protecting the environment. We have an agreement with the Coastcare group in supporting their work to remediate and maintain our coastal areas[29].

However, with a clearer understanding of how important our beaches are to sustain our natural environment, we will have a conversation with the community about how we manage this vital ecosystem more effectively.

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27 https://scbusinesscouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CGB-Forum-Prof-Thomas-Schlacher.pdf
28 https://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Community/Our-environment/Environmental-Projects/Share-the-Shore
29 https://midcoast2tops.org.au/manning-coastcare/

PEOPLE IN PARKS

People in Parks

People love their parks, being in them and being active in them. And our parks are great for our health.

While Australia is facing significant challenges with physical inactivity levels, healthy eating habits and associated health implications, the MidCoast region both reflects overall trends, as well as having its own unique challenges in this area. While it is not the sole responsibility of local government to overcome these challenges, we recognise that we play a significant role in providing opportunities for members of our community to be physically active, eat healthily and improve their overall health and wellbeing. Activating our public open spaces and community spaces with a diverse mix of formal and informal sport and recreation facilities, programs and events that encourage greater physical activity are key ingredients to reversing these societal trends.

Ausplay data, produced by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) since 2015, and released annually and more often when required, clearly shows a societal shift away from structured sport. Prior to COVID19 the average membership of sports clubs in Australia was 21%, consistently dropping over decades, down from a high-point of 79% in the mid 1980's. Post COVID19 club membership has dropped into the teens[30].

The individual trends in recreation and sport, outlined below, are a recent (2021) snapshot of what is impacting recreation in general and sport specifically. The MidCoast region's activity participation reflect these trends.

While structured sport is decreasing in general in Australia the big "winner" is recreation. Recreation, as a term, includes all those physical activities that do not occur within a structured sport environment. These activities often include fitness activities, such as Parkrun, trail running and mass physical activity events such as the Forster Running Festival. This shift to unstructured sport activities take place outside of a competition. For local government, who are tasked with providing facilities for the activities that their community's wish to do, this shift has created significant challenges. At present most of our sport infrastructure is being used to capacity, and in most cases exceeding capacity. However, assuming that the data is correct, it could be anticipated that soon this infrastructure could be expected to become "stranded assets", with less and less use, whilst at the same time there being a lack of infrastructure for those activities that the community now wishes to undertake.

Therefore, planning for future community participation, such as through this strategy, is vitally important. These trends also highlight the importance of planning for our spaces as well as planning for the activities that take place on those places.

[30] https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results

Trends in recreation and sport

Changing sport and recreation participation mean we will need to adapt our sport and recreation facilities and services to meet our community's needs. Key trends influencing the provision and design of sport and recreation facilities and services are[31]:

Participation in physical activity has increased, however, the majority of the growth has been in unstructured activities, such as walking and cycling, and gym/ fitness.

New facilities should be developed within a multi-use hub precinct to ensure the maximum value of investment is achieved while also not duplicating facilities in neighbouring councils.

While nature and intensity of participation in sport may change over time in consideration of the type of sport, the need for suitable spaces to accommodate community demand will remain. Future facility provision and design needs to ensure spaces are adaptable in order to accommodate changing participation trends.

It will be critical that the development or improvements of facilities and grounds are multiuse, and are not putting unnecessary financial pressure on Council, and do not duplicate facilities with available capacity.

Sports parks need to incorporate opportunities for co-location of sport with recreational offerings, including providing opportunities for walk/ run paths and trails, as this is the highest participation physical activity done by the community.

The location of sport and recreation facilities need to be accessible to the majority of the community, in order to encourage maximised use.

Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of local recreation facilities, and the growing expectations from the community around the quality of their open spaces and sporting facilities.

The large growth in female participation within traditionally male oriented sports is increasing pressures on playing facilities and increasing the need to diversify amenities to be universally accessible.

Volunteering is declining and becoming more onerous. Exacerbating this issue is the impact by COVID-19 on operations and the financial position of the club.

Skill divide between children is becoming a main determent in whether a child will continue to do sport. Children have such low hand eye skills that when they come across someone with high skills they are intimidated.

Sport Australia suggests the average Australian child of the 1980's would finish 250m in front of a modern equivalent over a distance of 1600m, a metric mile.

[31] https://www.otiumplanning.com.au/

People in Sport

Since the end of World War 2 Australians have been world leaders in our embracing of and involvement in structured sport. In the 1970's and 1980's almost 80% of Australians were members of sports clubs. We not only play but we also volunteer.

However, Australian's love of sport, at least in a participation sense, is waning. There are many reasons for this, time-poor, financial and the significant change in our societal makeup are affecting change.

The Future of Australian Sport

This trend in a shift away from structured sport was first highlighted in the early 2000's and detailed again in 2009 and 2023 through individual government reports such as the Crawford Review and The Future of Australian Sport megatrends[32] report. Both these reports clearly found a shift in Australian society regarding sport participation. The Crawford Review, titled *The Crawford Review of Australian Sport (2009)* [33] was commissioned to investigate the reforms required to ensure that Australia's sporting system remains prepared for the challenges of the future. The report examined elite and community level sport as well as sport for young people, women and men, sport for people with a disability and the engagement of Indigenous and ethnic Australians.

Research shows that Australians love their sport, and they love being part of their community.

The Sport Australia megatrends report *The Future of Australian Sport (2022)* highlighted 6 Megatrends in Australian Sport. A megatrend is a long-term foundational trend that originates in society, rather than in individual sports, but which has a significant impact on all sports. The report was a review of the original report produced in 2013 by the CSIRO. The report stated:

> *Australian sports, and the ways in which we engage with sport and physical exercise, are being transformed by new technologies, changing environmental conditions, shifting value systems, new habits and lifestyles and the increasing diversity of the Australian population.*

The megatrends report provided the following graph to pictorially represent the six trends that have dominated the Australian sport industry for the last 20 years and will continue to dominate the industry.

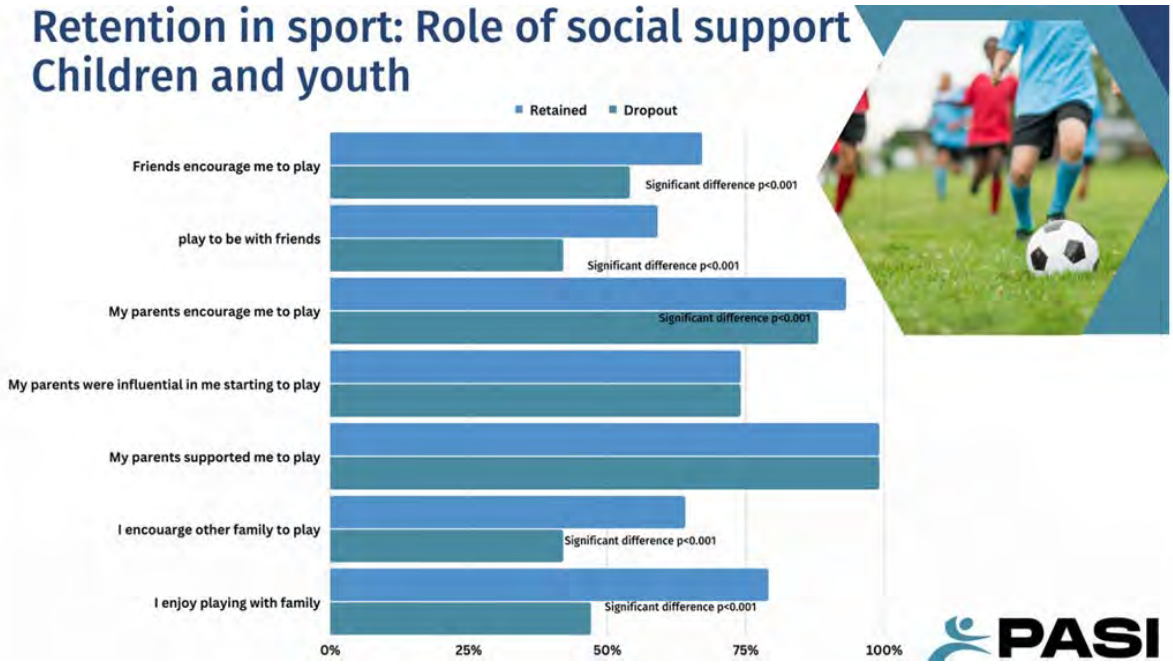
[32] https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/future
[33] https://apo.org.au/node/19766

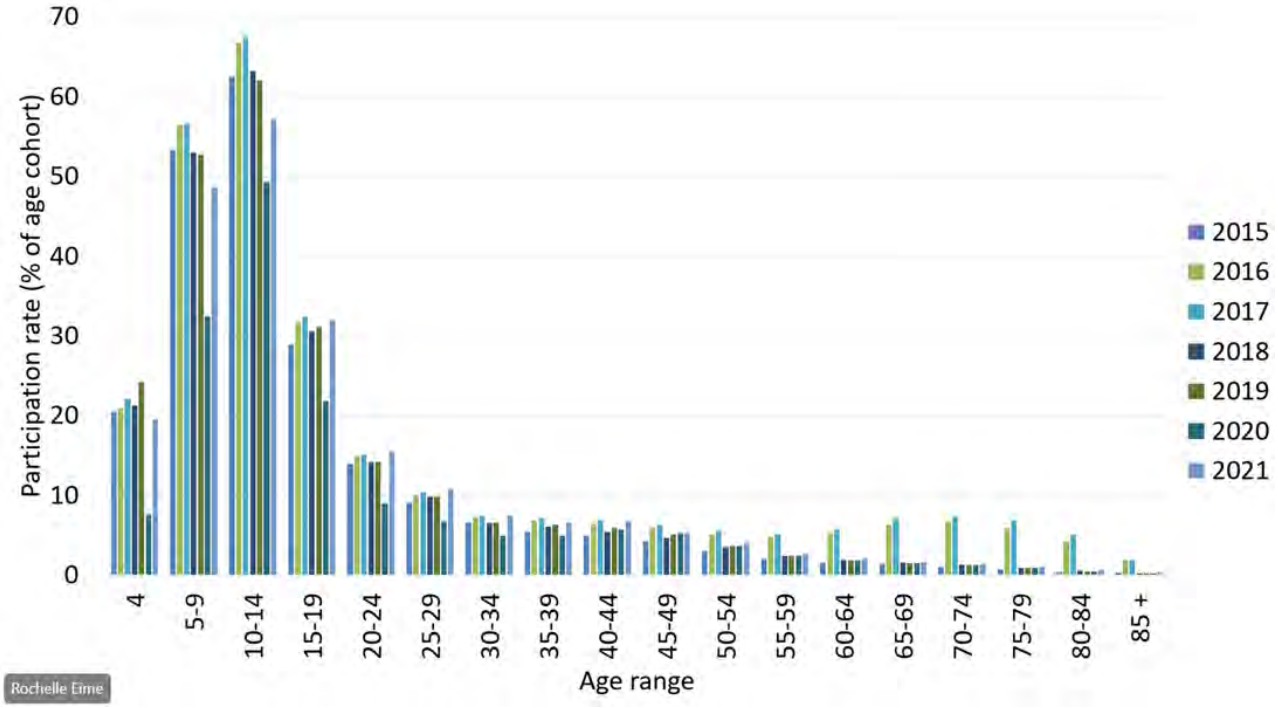
As opposed to the trends in recreation and sport that are highlighted in this section, the megatrends highlight how changes in Australian society have a direct impact on how, what and why people undertake physical activity. The megatrends set out the underlying factors that influence participation, and what we should expect to see in ten years' time, in effect for the lifecycle of this Strategy.

Both report's findings have not only been proven correct but have been shown to be conservative in their findings. Even though the Crawford Review is more than 10 years old its observations still apply, and the Sport Australia report identifies current megatrends driving sport participation. Both reports are supported by the regular Ausplay[34] data set also produced by the ASC.

Several researchers regularly provide updates on how our population engages with sport, and what reasons they state for their engagement. Researchers from the Physical Activity and Sport Insights (PASI)[35] group at the Federation University and Victorian University canvas Australians to gauge their sport participation. As opposed to the two reports highlighted above these surveys show the granular trends in individual sport participation. Below are several of their latest results on why Australian's play sport:

[34] https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1077544/AusPlay-National-Sport-and-Physical-Activity-Participation-Report-November-2022-V2.pdf
[35] https://www.pasiglobal.com/


Retention in sport: Role of social support
Children and youth
Retained
Dropout
Friends encourage me to play
Significant difference p<0.001
play to be with friends
Significant difference p<0.001
My parents encourage me to play
Significant difference p<0.001
My parents were influential in me starting to play
My parents supported me to play
I encouarge other family to play
Significant difference p<0.001
I enjoy playing with family
Significant difference p<0.001
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%
PASI


Participation rate (% of age cohort)
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
4
5-9
10-14
15-19
20-24
25-29
30-34
35-39
40-44
45-49
50-54
55-59
60-64
65-69
70-74
75-79
80-84
85 +
Age range
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
Rochelle Eime

The above two graphs are a good snapshot of contemporary trends in sport participation. They show that boys, girls and women participate in structured sport for social reasons. Play with friends is the theme throughout the research. The second graph shows participation in structured sport by age. This is an informative piece of data, highlighting that by the age of 25 less than 10% of Australian's are members of a sports club. The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has described these numbers as a "crisis point" for physical activity and sport participation in Australia.

We understand that we have a responsibility to ensure that sport programs and services are tailored to meet the desired societal outcomes of our community. The data provided above shows that Australians play sport for a number of social reasons, with pure competition being low down on the scale of why people join sports clubs. The graphs, as a collective, also highlight the move away from structured sport into recreation activities.

With this in mind, we encourage local sports clubs to embrace fun as part of their programming and if they wish to increase their membership numbers to implement the following strategies:

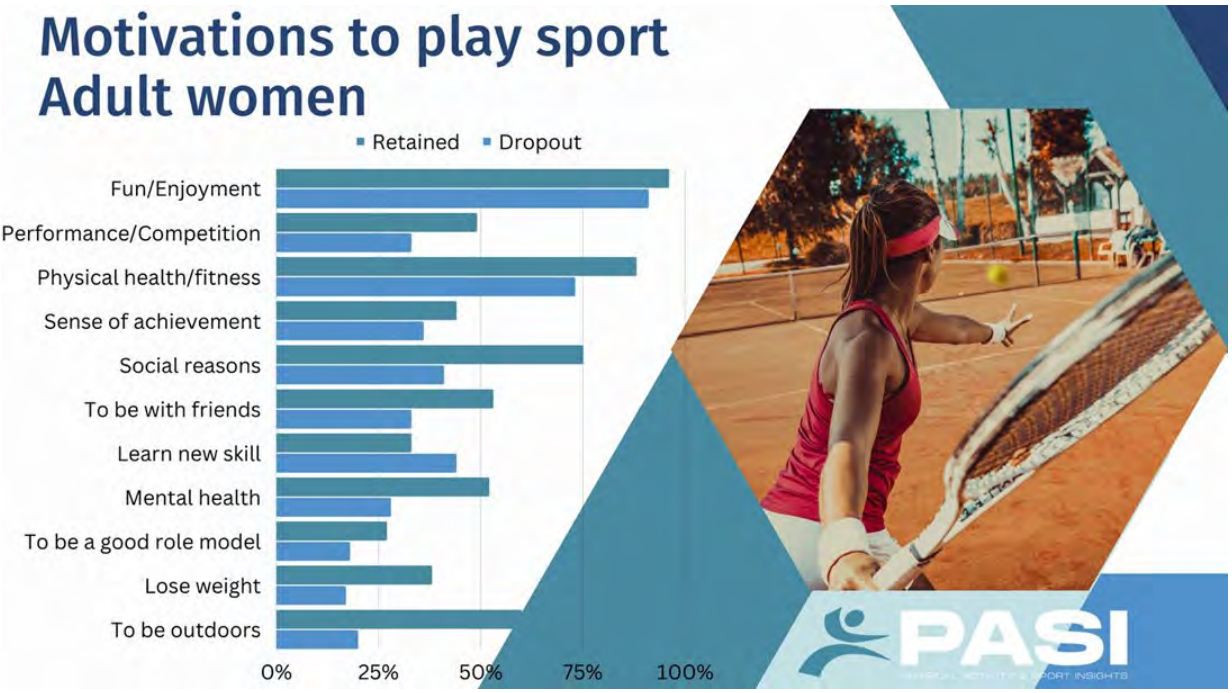
- developing strategies and programs that focus on fun and enjoyment in the sport
- ensure training and competitions allow all players to improve their skills, not just elite members
- assist with costs by re-purposing equipment or uniforms or offering discounts to volunteers.

The overarching themes from the research form the basis for the planning, provision, and maintenance of our open space. These long-term trends in participation, established over the last two decades, is why local government in Australia, supported by the other two levels of government, is directing more money into infrastructure that supports recreation, and in particular play. The play section later in the chapter highlights the value of play to children and to all community members. Sport infrastructure still delivers strong community outcomes, and the actions in the Action Plan of this strategy strongly supports sport, however, limited funds for infrastructure needs to be spent wisely and where the community is demanding it.

The Local Scene

Having laid out the national scene for physical activity, at the local level the MidCoast community remains highly motivated in their sport pursuits, with sports fields and facilities being well used. As the infographic from the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis Survey 2022* contained in the Community Consultation section shows 27% of MidCoast residents participate in structured sport. This is 6% more than the current national participation level (21%), showing that MidCoast residents still love playing sport in sports clubs. However, this figure (27%) is down from the high of 79% in the early 1980's.

Sport has always been stronger in the country than in the city, and so trends that we see in large population centres are not yet apparent in our region. However, as this strategy has a 12-year lifecycle we need to plan for the long-term.



The two graphs above show female specific data for women and girls' participation in structured sport[36]. A significant trend over the last five years has been the increase of women and girls in traditionally male dominated sports, such as rugby league, football (soccer) and cricket. This trend,

[36] https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/news-events/news/community-sport-research-shows-girls-just-want-to-have-fun?utm_campaign=SM-gen&utm_content=1673329191&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter

while welcomed, has created equity issues, especially in regard to sport facility access. For example, the standard model for sport changerooms has always been two changerooms per amenity building. However, with more female teams and competitions the provision of only two changerooms has seen lack of equitable access for females. Also, the actual internal design of changerooms has not been conducive to female use. Design features that encourage use by all are now being included.

Councils, as the primary land manager for sports facilities in Australia, have therefore taken on the responsibility of rectifying this situation. In addition, equitable access to limited leased sports fields has also become an issue, with demand by expanding sports club teams surpassing supply.

We are keen to ensure access for all. We play a role in ensuring that every member of our community has equal access to the facilities and services that we provide. We therefore encourage our sports clubs to implement policies and strategies to ensure that all who want to play can play. It is our aspiration for sports clubs to implement equal access and equal opportunities in their services and programs, wherever possible.

Strategies which seek to achieve equality of opportunity for sport access have been implemented by sporting bodies, at the national, state and regional level, with local clubs being encouraged to align their programs with those strategies. At this point no identified sport equity strategies are enforceable but are guides only.

Sports bodies and councils understand that sports clubs are community organisations and are run by volunteers. Therefore, enforcement, for any issue, is discouraged.

In addition, there are limitations in facility provision, from both a supply and demand perspective, as well as from a functional perspective, that create barriers to participation that clubs are unable to overcome, such as not enough sports fields, having two changerooms and not four, and a general lack of players from targeted minority cohorts.

To encourage parity in opportunity it is recommended that equality criteria be included in the long-term licence, lease, and hire process, which will guide applying clubs on what actions they should be undertaking to achieve equality in their clubs.

These will take into consideration the NSW Office of Sport's eight key steps club committees should follow to create safe and fair clubs. These are essential foundations to preventing discrimination and other issues and include:

- Club's policies should align with their affiliated peak sporting body, at the national, state or association level.

- Club's policies should express the values of the club to foster a positive culture. Values could include respect, fair play, fun, appreciation, inclusion and safety.

- Club's policies must reflect current relevant laws. These are generally issue based. For example, there are laws in Australia and NSW governing child protection, discrimination, liquor licensing, privacy, food handling, work, health and safety, match fixing and more. Clubs must understand and comply with their legal responsibilities.

- Clubs must have established rules and policies. Rules and policies are an important foundation for creating fair and safe clubs. They allow you to set clear expectations and deal with inappropriate behaviour. Every sport and every club will be different, but some of the common types of rules and policies you may have to support fair and safe sport include:

    - Club constitution and by-laws which may contain, for example, disciplinary processes

    - Codes of Conduct – for players, administrators, coaches, officials, spectators

- Policies, which may cover (standalone or combined)
    - Member protection.
    - Complaints management.
    - Technology/social media/e-safety.
    - Child protection or safeguarding children.
    - Bullying, harassment, and discrimination
    - Inclusion
    - Varying safety-related issues; e.g. heat policy, injuries, concussion.
    - Team selections.
    - Privacy.

- Clubs should have an education program for members and a communication plan. Strong education and communication to members is essential to achieving a safe and fair club.

- Clubs should consider how they can proactively engage and manage the club and have in place strategies and guidelines to deal with matters promptly, professionally, transparently and according to your established rules and processes.

- Appoint a club 'champion', president or board of club representatives to help drive and represent the club and be responsible for ensuring club policies are enacted.

- Set in place an annual review process for club policies and codes of conduct to ensure the club continues to operate in alignment with its values, rules and regulations and legal responsibilities.

Objectives

- We provide community facilities that are accessible to local residents, community groups and organisations and which meet the needs of the local community.

- We ensure fair access and equity in relation to the hiring of Council's community facilities.

- We aim to provide a wide range of activities across our community venues that benefit people of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels.

Hierarchy of facilities

Our Council, and the previous councils that made up the region, have worked for many decades to provide infrastructure and services to our respective communities. Local sports fields and other specialist sport facilities have been provided over many years. However, as noted in the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis* 2022 the portfolio of sport facilities is aging, and the need to upgrade and rationalise the portfolio is pressing and is one of the major motivations in producing this Strategy.

To provide the right facilities, in the right locations, for the right people, at the right time we use a Hierarchy of Facilities. There are two hierarchies, one for sport, and one for play facilities. These hierarchy provide a guide for what should be provided, depending on where the facility fits within the hierarchy. The hierarchy we use has been developed by Dr Ken Marriot, in *Planning for the provision of leisure and recreation in Australia (2010).* [37]

The hierarchical position of a recreation venue is often overlooked as a planning consideration and planning tool. However, allocating each asset to a position in a hierarchy is an important planning strategy because, as with the classification of assets, it helps with the assessment of what already exists and particularly, of its capacity to meet various types of need in the community. For instance, if the majority of sporting venues were classified as Local, this could well mean that clubs would have difficulty competing at higher standards and/or that they may have to travel away to gain higher standards of competition. Similarly, a Local sports facility, where only one sports field is provided, will not cater to a club that has a growing membership base.

Sport Hierarchy

The hierarchy of sports facilities is:

- Local
- District
- Regional
- State*
- National/international**

These different components within the sport hierarchy have definitions and provisions applied to them. See the table below.

* State level facilities are not the responsibility of local government. However, there are rare occasions when local government will provide a state level facility. Cases such as shooting ranges, or niche sport and recreations.** National or International facilities are not the responsibility of local government. There should be no reason that local government is providing these facilities. They are part of the hierarchy but not provided by local government.

[37] https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/358979/Recreation_Planning_Manual.pdf

Classification	Planning considerations	Definition
Local (Facility that caters for local competition)	• Lower level local or junior levels of competition sport • Smaller ovals • Reasonable playing surface with limited or no irrigation • Partial or unfenced ovals • Basic training lights <80 Lux • Limited or no car parking • None or small amenities	Local recreation venues predominantly serve small rural localities, small townships, and neighbourhoods or suburbs within the urban areas of one council. They are classified as local because: • They are generally small in size and thus have little or no capacity to serve a whole council or region • They provide opportunities which are similar to those available at a number of other locations and thus do not attract people from far away and do not need to serve people from far away • Their natural or built features are unremarkable and as a result, they do not draw users from a wide area • They have been designed and sited in a way which ensures good access from nearby areas and possibly even, discourages access and use from more distant areas. Playgrounds, ball sport kick-about areas, small reserves, neighbourhood pathways and local halls are common local recreation venues.
District (Facility that caters for district competition)	• Higher levels of competition sport • Larger fields • Multiple fields • Turf wickets • Sports Precinct • Sole use • Good quality grass surface with irrigation, limited or no drainage • Fenced ovals • Minimum 100 lux competition lighting • LED lighting • Amenities to suit • Car Parking • Cost of maintenance borne by council	District recreation venues serve the total community living in a council area. They are classified as municipal because: • They are used by individuals, groups or teams which are drawn from across the whole local government area • They are provided by a council, or other bodies for the residents of one council. Other councils provide their own venues for their residents • They are often the only resource of their type in the local government area • Their natural or built features are sufficiently significant to draw users from across a whole council • The size of the land requirements, the higher cost of provision and, for some types of use, the size of catchment needed to ensure viability, mean that no more than one or two venues can be provided by a council

		• They have been sited so as to be accessible to the whole council community. District level recreation venues may include sports grounds, city/town centre reserves, botanic gardens, walking/cycling trails, indoor aquatic leisure centres, and undeveloped reserves retained to meet future municipal needs.
Regional (Facility that caters for regional competition)	• Grounds capable/suitable of housing highest levels of competition sport • High standard playing surface including both irrigation and drainage • Synthetic surface • Larger ovals • Multiple fields • Sports Precinct • Sole use • Larger Amenities • Intensively maintained with quality grass surface • Turf wickets • Perimeter fencing • Minimum 100 lux competition lighting • LED lighting • Car Parking • Fenced fields • Cost of maintenance borne by council	Regional recreation venues serve the needs of the residents of a number of councils. They are classified as regional for one or more of the following reasons: • They are larger than other facilities of the same type and can accommodate a far larger number of visitors • They need a substantial market or service area to remain viable and they need to draw that market from the council in which they are located and its surrounding region • The council in which they are based generally has greater drawing power than other councils in the area • Their natural or built features are so outstanding; they draw users from a wide area • They support either a wide mix of uses or high specialisation of use • They are generally of higher quality than venues which are lower in the hierarchy • They are generally costly to provide and/or maintain • They are often unique to a region • They have environmental, heritage, amenity or other special significance • There is a low frequency of provision or natural occurrence. Regional recreation venues frequently include golf courses, major sports grounds, major indoor aquatic leisure venues, long distance trails, and various types of heritage and nature reserves e.g. forests, lakes, rivers, wetlands and waterfalls.

Sport Facility Benchmarking

Applying benchmarks is a means of understanding provision and allowing a snapshot comparison between similar places. Benchmark provide a guide, however. they do not allow for consideration of specific circumstances around quality of space, utilisation and access, which influences provision and demand. Benchmarks are considered alongside community and stakeholder feedback and the demographic profile as planning considerations.

Benchmarking can be a useful exercise that provides a guide to what other local government authorities with similar populations, topography, and with a similar size public open space portfolio are providing for their communities. The table in Appendix 2 shows a benchmarking exercise that was done through the development of this strategy.

Facilities

The challenge is not that we don't have enough. The challenge is the condition of what we do have.

MidCoast Council's biggest challenge in delivering sport and recreation facilities is not the amount of sports facilities that we have, but rather the condition of those facilities.

Compared to national and international standards, the MidCoast region has sufficient capacity in our existing sports facilities for the population today. We also have enough spare capacity to accommodate projected population increase during the life of the strategy.

There are several towns within the MidCoast council area that have more sports fields and facilities than what they need for their populations, while a handful of others do not have enough. This is the result of having several different councils prior to amalgamation. Each council, over many decades, tended to oversupply, based on demand of the community and because of a surplus of available and suitable land. Each town had its own sports fields, its own skatepark, its own tennis courts and its own playgrounds. For other localities within our LGA, population growth has resulted in not enough sports facilities being available. For those areas further supply will be needed over the life of the strategy.

The challenge of improving and maintaining the condition of our sports facilities is acknowledged in the strategy. Many of the actions in the Action Plan are directed at improving and maintaining what we have. In many locations, our sports facilities are run down, not fit for purpose, and in some cases poorly designed and do not reflect contemporary design and construction, or community expectations.

The community consultation conducted during 2022 showed strong support in the community for the upgrading of existing facilities. Examples of facilities and amenities that do not meet contemporary standards can be found throughout the area. Our aim is to provide modern facilities for our community. Replacing and upgrading facilities over the lifecycle of this strategy is the challenge and hence why many actions in the Action Plan relate to the replacement and upgrading of facilities and not the provision of new facilities.

Overall, the MidCoast region has a significant open space portfolio of land that is managed by Council. For a full list of facilities and their type refer to Appendix 2 to this Strategy. Our public open space portfolio is made up of the following components:

Open Spaces (managed by Council)

Category	Total Spaces	Total Area
Park	179	338ha
General Community Use	236	505ha
Natural Area Foreshore	96	420ha
Natural Area Wetland	21	733ha
Natural Area Bushland	152	1,474ha
Natural Area Watercourse	64	93ha
Natural Area Escarpment	1	25ha
Other (Road Reserves)	30	17ha
Area of Cultural Significance	2	2ha
Sports Ground	45	544ha
Total	**826**	**4,134ha**
Crown Land Reserves	247	1,895ha

There are 826 Council-managed open spaces in the MidCoast region of which 247 are Crown Land reserves. These open spaces take several forms and provide for different purposes. Their overarching purpose is the sustainable protection of their individual ecosystems.

Of these reserves a number are set aside for sport and recreation. Sport and recreational facilities and spaces are provided by a range of entities including Council, the Department of Education (via schools), National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Forest NSW and private recreation groups and clubs who also provide and manage recreational facilities.

The table below sets out a breakdown of the different types of sport facility managed by Council and their categorisation. Sport facilities not managed by Council are not included in the table.

Sport Facilities

Category	Local	District	Regional	Total Fields
Sports Grounds				45
Multi-purpose field	8	4	2	16
Rectangular field	14	14	26	54
Hockey fields			3	3
Junior sized fields			10	10
Total Full-sized Fields				**73**
Outdoor netball courts	10 (10)	24 (2)		34
Tennis courts	42 (21)	36 (5)	15 (1)	88
Croquet	7 (7)			7
Basketball	4 (4)			4
Skateparks	15 (15)			15
Criterium track			1	1
BMX track			1	1

() indicates number of facilities in different locations

Of our parks and reserves 338 have facilities in them, which include amenity buildings, lighting, courts, changerooms and pavilions that vary in age and condition. Most are in an average condition and some are no longer fit for purpose. The renewal of these assets will be a challenge for our Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and a strategic approach is required to deliver and manage community expectations.

Open Space and Facility Analysis

Having set out the sport hierarchy, the benchmark and the existing facilities we can conduct analysis of where the MidCoast open space and facility portfolio aligns with similar provision in other council areas and how our provision aligns with current trends in physical activity. The following general observations are made:

- MidCoast Council manages a large portfolio of open space, spread across a large number of reserves. Many of these reserves are small. These small reserves provide open space for both their local communities and the wildlife that lives and moves across our landscape. This number of reserves, spread across such a large area, is a maintenance burden on our resources, however, is considered critical to our quality of life.

- The MidCoast region has a diverse assortment of open space, with a number of Council managed foreshore parks as well as a much larger number of General Community Use and Other parks and reserves.

- For our current and future projected population, we have an acceptable number of sports fields, both in round fields for AFL and cricket, as well as rectangular fields for rugby, rugby league and football (soccer).

- The number of individual skateparks around the region, scattered among our small and large towns is more than what you would normally see for a population of this size. The nature of skatepark provision in the past has been to build small local facilities in each town where there was a demonstrated need. Future planning for skatepark provision should focus on providing larger Regional level facilities in high use locations. It is the recommendation of this strategy to develop a Skatepark Strategy to assist us to better plan for future skatepark provision.

- Both this Strategy and the supporting Needs Analysis highlights that our current facilities are aged and needing upgrading. Sports facilities have been constructed over many decades, most of which were unplanned. Therefore, a continuous rolling upgrade program needs to be done to bring our sport and recreation facilities to an acceptable and fit for purpose state. The Action Plan lists the projects that should be done.

Design Principles

In order to ensure future investment in sport and recreation facilities, maximise community use and the viability of the assets, the design principles for new and regional sports hubs should be incorporated into future planning, design and delivery of this infrastructure.

Design Principles for New Sport Facilities

The following principles are provided to guide the planning and design of **new** sport and recreation facilities and spaces:

- Where possible, land for sport and recreation facilities and spaces are developed as a precinct or community 'hub' providing for more than one sporting code, to maximise efficiencies from shared infrastructure. Sport and recreation facilities and spaces are to be well integrated within the context of urban design and the communities they serve.
- Be accessible by road, bikeway and within 500m of a public transport stop.
- Direct street frontage to a minimum of 50% of the sport and recreation reserve/ park boundary to promote casual visual surveillance and public access.
- Road frontage to a major collector or higher order road.
- Square or circular shape, as opposed to a narrow linear shape, to maximise useability. As a rule of thumb, no boundary should be less than 150m and allow for correct orientation to help safe use.
- Sporting fields must be level and generally have slopes no greater than 1:100 for active use areas.
- Universal Design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to be incorporated in all aspects, including inclusive and universal change facilities.
- Playing fields and surfaces should not be subject to regular inundation and generally would be expected to achieve immunity of 20% AEP (annual exceedance probability) or greater.
- Land should be free of contamination or hazards such as high voltage transmission lines, land fill, or contaminated waste.
- Land is not situated adjacent to noxious industries or other uses that would be incompatible with high levels of public use.
- Land is situated and/ or developed, so as to minimize residential conflict from noise or light issues.
- Consideration of integration with other community infrastructure such as community centres and informal outdoor recreation opportunities.

Design Principles for Regional Sports Hubs

Design principles for regional sports hubs are different than for smaller sports precincts and Local or District facilities. These design principles will inform future facility function and form. Major sport and recreation facilities and hubs of the future will:

- **Take a place making approach.** The Creating Places for People[38] urban design protocol will be used in designing sport and recreation facilities and spaces. This approach will be supported by adherence to Universal Design and Female Friendly design principles.
- **Meet contemporary standards** for building and sports including for national and international competition.

[38] https://www.urbandesign.org.au/

- **Be high quality.** Major sport and recreation facilities and hubs will offer a high level of service and quality design standards.
- **Be multi-purpose, promote shared-use and offer mixed-use programming.** This will create sport and recreation facilities and hubs that are active and will engage the venue seven days a week. The space synergies include sports, recreation, entertainment, transportation, food, healthcare, retail, hospitality, conferencing, urban farming, housing and education.
- **Be designed to deliver multiple solutions.** A canopy that provides shade for daily activities and capture rainwater; a roof structure with solar panels that generate energy for the building; maximise use of natural light and double glazing for climate control; flexible lighting systems that offers security and safe passage for pedestrians and also add aesthetic and entertainment.
- **Be sustainable.** Strategies include harvesting water, creating energy, turning waste into food, enhancing the habitat and adding value for the surrounding community.
- **Respond to the community.** Design decisions will interact with and support community activity. The facilities will not be just a standalone project.
- **Consider biomimicry in design.** Major sport and recreation facilities and hubs will respond to the local climate, allowing the building to breathe, provide comfort for every human sense and adapt to year-round requirements.
- **Embrace technology.** Major sport and recreation facilities and hubs will respond to new technology in terms of entertaining, operations and monitoring facility performance.
- **Efficient.** Major sport and recreation facilities and hubs will consider the maintenance and operational requirements of facilities with a view of making efficient and easy to maintain.
- **Keep budget in mind.** We are operating in a tight fiscal environment and therefore the design must balance the above principles with delivering the service objectives of major sport and recreation facilities and hubs and to a reasonable budget.

Desired Standards of Provision

Having considered the recommended planning standards of provision, and identified the benchmark, a Desired Standards of Provision has been developed. The desired standards of provision will assist us to recognise the capacity and catchment of facilities and to identify the level of infrastructure required to adequately support the level of sport or recreation activity accommodated at the facility[39].

Catchment	Local	District	Regional
Accessibility Standard	15 minutes travel time	20 minutes travel time	25 minutes travel time
Playing Fields	1ha – 2ha providing for 2 senior rectangular fields/ 1 x oval overlay.	Quantity and design considerations are to be fit for purpose for the desired activity.	Meet requirements of district sport facilities and contain a higher level of fit-for-purpose embellishment.
Netball Courts	Two to four court configurations with lighting to support localised training. Consideration to multi-use opportunities such as basketball configurations where appropriate.	A minimum of 12 courts for centralised competition.	Quantity and standards of courts to be determined in collaboration with Netball

[39] https://www.otiumplanning.com.au/

Tennis Courts	A minimum of four courts with lighting and electronic booking systems.	6 to 12 courts with supporting infrastructure including amenities with associated clubhouse.	12 to 16 high quality surface courts with at least 8 courts are required to be the same surface type.
Lighting	Lighting to recommended Australian Standards for training and some amateur competition acknowledging electrical supply may influence feasibility.	Lighting to recommended Australian Standards for amateur competition.	Lighting to recommended Australian Standards for standard of competition.
Amenities	Around 375sqm to 475sqm, located in a highly visible and central location with universally designed and flexible/ adaptable player and official change-rooms, spectator toilets, canteen and storage areas.	The size of district sports amenities is larger than local level facilities and are more than 500m^2. Additional and/ or larger change facilities, and a medical room is recommended.	As per district facilities with consideration to administration space, media capacity and potential co-location with grandstands. Often a number of Local sized amenity buildings are provided around the precinct to meet the need of individual clubs.
Fencing	Site fencing to prohibit illegal vehicle access. Fencing to separate spectators from player areas may be permitted where it does not limit flexible use of spaces. Fencing around Local sports fields can provide for off-leash dog walking.	Site fencing to prohibit illegal vehicle access. Fit for purpose fencing as required by the activity and level of competition.	Site fencing to prohibit illegal vehicle access. Fit for purpose fencing as required by the activity and level of competition.
Supporting Infrastructure	Irrigation systems are highly desirable to enhance field carrying capacity and safety. Seated spectator areas. Car parking to accommodate the proposed use. Cricket nets, athletics throwing cases and long jump pits.	As per local facility. Show-court for tennis and/ or netball. Increased consideration to circulation and spectator areas are required, due to the nature of district level facilities. Drainage systems can be provided at this level.	As per district facility with additional spectator and broadcast infrastructure.
Maintenance	See maintenance section	See maintenance section	See maintenance section

Project management process

Traditionally, the provision of recreation infrastructure in the MidCoast area has been piecemeal, with the individual councils taking different approaches. A lack of planning has led to many sport facilities being poorly located, poorly designed and poorly maintained. Often sports clubs would receive funding from a state or federal funding program, gaining preliminary landowner permission from the council and then do the work themselves, which involved the entering into contracts with contractors, and the dealing with services and other matters. Allowing a volunteer organisation such as a sports club, to undertake these works is problematic, as sports clubs do not have the expertise or experience to manage complex recreation infrastructure delivery. Sports clubs undertaking their own projects also means that we have very little visibility of the project, if things go wrong. We need to know what is happening on land that we manage.

The design principles and Desired Standards of Provision listed above set out the standards that we seek to achieve with our facilities. To achieve, we need to take responsibility for the provision of infrastructure.

It is the recommendation of this strategy that in the future if a local sports club receives a grant, it is to work with us in the construction. Our staff will manage the project, brief the club, and then when completed the club will transfer the grant to us. This will ensure that the Standards are achieved, problems are rectified, cost increases and project variations are better managed and funding agencies have assurance of the quality of the final product. A flowchart detailing this process is provided in the last chapter of this strategy.

Sports Lighting

One of the major innovations for sport infrastructure and sport service provision over the last 20 years has been the introduction and development of sports lighting. Sports lighting is the installation of high lux (light) to sports facilities, mainly sports fields but also many other sport facilities, such as tennis courts, netball courts, multi-purpose courts and even shooting ranges.

Sports lighting level recommendation

Activity	Local	District	Regional
General community use	80lux	100lux	100lux
Training	80lux	100lux	150lux
Basic competition	100lux*	150lux	250lux
High level competition	Not recommended	250lux	500lux

(*Sports lighting to competition standard is not recommended for Local sports facilities. High quality sports lighting attracts participants to Local clubs, increasing their club membership, and resulting in the club petitioning us for higher quality amenity and more fields, all resulting in the Local sport facility being over-embellished for its purpose, and creating maintenance and replacement issues.)

When sports lighting was first introduced the costs and quality of light meant that many councils installed singular light poles, often wooden street light poles at one location on the boundary of a sports field. At that point it was felt that this would be sufficient for basic training, on one part of the field. Some of these arrangements still exist in MidCoast. There are many issues with this approach, including wearing out of the natural surface where the light is, lack of high-quality training, restrictions on who and how many people can use the facility and the condition of these old poles.

Sports lighting has become one of the most effective strategies for the impact of climate change. With extreme heat events, being able to move both training and competition to the evening has meant that sports clubs have been able to provide a safer environment for their activities. It is anticipated that more sport programs will be moved into night-time hours in the future.

Case Study: Tuncurry Sports Complex, South St Oval

> *The round cricket oval at the Tuncurry Sports Complex has one 18m light pole. The luminaire is an old metal halide. By the age of the luminaire it is expected that this single light will be providing less than 20lux to a small part of the western side of the field. You can see where the grass is of poorer quality on this part of the field. It is doubtful that the club is using this light for extended periods.*
>
> *The installation of 4 X 25m metal poles, preferably base-hinge, with LED luminaires to the field would allow the cricket club to not only move their training to the evening, increase junior time on the field, introduce women's cricket but ultimately to ensure the longevity of the club.*

As the above case study shows effective contemporary sports lighting not only provides a higher quality experience for sport participants, it also allows us more flexibility in offering sports facilities to a greater mix of activities.

The singular greatest challenge for us, over the lifecycle of this Strategy, will be replacing the hundreds of wooden sports lighting poles that are dotted around our sports fields. Replacing one or two would be fairly easy, but our sport portfolio is dominated by these old wooden poles, and the sub-standard metal halide luminaries that sit on them. And it is not just our sports fields, with many of our tennis courts having the same wooden poles. To light a sports field or court with a contemporary lighting system, including base-hinge poles, and LED luminaries, will cost from $100,000 for a court system to $250,000 for a sports field. Multiplied over the entire portfolio adds up to tens of millions of dollars.

It is a recommendation of this Strategy (see Action Plan) that a MidCoast Sports Lighting Plan be developed. This Plan would include a full audit of all existing sports lighting at all the sports facilities in MidCoast. It would also include activity recommendations for all fields i.e. what activity should be done there, either training only, low-level competition or high-level competition. Finally, it would also include a full works schedule for projects to upgrade the lighting systems to meet the recommended activity.

The Action Plan also details individual sports lighting upgrades, independent of the Sports Lighting Plan. This is to ensure that upgrades to systems are not reliant on the completion of the plan, but also sets out a list of potential projects that the Sports Lighting Plan can refer to. These individual actions use base-hinge poles and LED luminaries as the default provision for our sports fields. Base-hinge poles are now freely available, with a number being installed at our facilities. It is estimated that a base-hinge system provides savings over the lifetime of the poles of $50,000, through reduced maintenance. LED luminaries have steadily decreased in cost since arriving on the market. At this point a LED system is comparable to a legacy metal halide system in capital costs (installation). Regarding ongoing expense (OPEX) the LED is far superior to the metal halide system. Whoever holds the electricity account, be it the sports club or Council, will see a reduction of 2/3 in power costs with LED.

Sports lighting systems are expensive, but prices, especially for LED have been steadily coming down. We should not be expected to cover the cost of all these systems. Rather, both state and federal governments have funding programs, where sports lighting systems are eligible projects. We will apply for, and work with local sports clubs to apply for grants to upgrade sports lighting at individual sports grounds. With the Sports Lighting Plan, we will be able to, over the period of this strategy, to increase the quality of sports lighting, and ultimately the quality of the participant experience.

Tennis Courts

Like many locations around Australia the MidCoast region has many tennis courts (88). For many decades tennis has been the most popular sport for Australians to do. Tennis courts were traditionally quite easy to construct, and their relatively small footprint, compared to a football field, was easy to find. Many small country towns built tennis courts in the centre of town, and these facilities became the focal point for community gatherings. In Australia we have tens of thousands of these tennis facilities.

However, in more recent times Australian's have not been participating in tennis in the numbers that we have in the past. Tennis still remains a popular activity, mainly due to its ease of participation i.e. you don't need a team, just two people and a court. However, tennis as a structured sport has been steadily decreasing, with tennis participation numbers holding up due to its popularity as a recreation.

Tennis has one of the oldest average ages of participation of any structured sport in Australia. The participation numbers of older Australians, shown in the graph in the Trends section of this strategy is mainly due to tennis, along with lawn bowls. Many tennis clubs are dominated by older players, due to growing up with the sport during the period when it was hugely popular. Older players are also attracted to the health benefits of tennis, whilst also being a low impact activity. Due to this older age cohort dominating the sport, tennis court surfaces are important. Older people do not like playing on acyclic or cushioned acyclic surface courts, as they are harder on their legs. Synthetic grass surfaces are the preferred choice of older players. This factor has driven most new tennis court development over the last ten years at the local level and is why we have so many synthetic tennis courts. However, younger players, who are seeking higher level competition seek out acyclic surface courts for the greater ball speed and skill development. This creates planning issues for councils who must balance the competing needs of their community.

Many of the tennis courts in the region are aging. There is a diverse range of court surfaces, from concrete, asphalt, poured acrylic, and synthetic. In addition, because of the legacy of their provision many are in locations that no longer attracted players.

In 2021 NSW Tennis undertook a "health check" of all the tennis courts and facilities in the region. The health check confirms that the condition of many of the tennis facilities is not up to standard, with upgrades needed for many of them. It also recommended, for the longevity of the sport, that facilities be diversified to offer other sports such as netball, basketball, futsal and pickleball as well as tennis.

To upgrade all 88 tennis courts would be prohibitively expensive, and some of them should not be upgraded, due to lack of use. During the life of this Strategy, we will develop a Tennis Court Strategy. This strategy will include an audit of all the tennis courts in MidCoast, note their condition, analyse the need for the respective court/s and make a recommendation on the future for each facility. Until the Tennis Court Strategy is produced, we will be more selective in providing support to clubs who wish to upgrade their facilities, either through their own funds, Council funds or grants. The production of the Tennis Court Strategy will ensure that future tennis facilities are fit for purpose and are located where there is genuine need.

Aquatic Facilities

Discussion and consideration of the MidCoast aquatic facilities are not considered as part of this strategy. The natural swimming areas, such as rockpools and river baths have been, and are reflected in several of the actions in the Action Plan. There is information about the existing aquatic facilities in the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022*. It is a recommendation of this strategy that an independent aquatic or community facility plan be developed, that deals with aquatic centres in more detail.

Amenity Buildings

A contemporary amenity building is essential for the provision of recreation services to the community. It is no longer satisfactory to provide sports fields and/or facilities without an amenity building to support the activity. Best practice design for sports amenity buildings should include 4 x changerooms, officials changeroom, club room, canteen, and storage. Recent trends in sport has shown that changerooms with multiple showers are no longer needed, with most participants in sport not making use of showers. Contemporary design has therefore increased the number of changerooms, to provide for multi-gender facilities, whilst reducing the amount of space for showers that are not being used.

The benchmark and the Desired Standards of Provision detailed earlier provide a guide on design and provision of amenity buildings. A Local to District level sports facility should have a 350m2 amenity building provided. This size amenity building provides for a local sports club of up to 800 members, dependant on the programming of the club's games. The desired standard of provision for amenity buildings is therefore a 350m2 contemporary facility, and we will seek to provide this as the standard for future provision. For Regional facilities either multiple amenity buildings spaced out around the sports precinct, or a large amenity building of more than 600m2 should be provided, as detailed in the Desired Standards of Provision.

Sports Storage

Sports storage is a critical provision for sports facilities and clubs. Traditionally sports equipment may have been stored at a club member's home and carried around in the boot of a car. Modern clubs now have large quantities of sports equipment, from training, field, portable goals, water containers, and even maintenance equipment. Therefore, the provision of adequate storage space for clubs is our responsibility. The standard rule for storage, that is included within a larger amenity building is 10% of total floor space, dependant on the type of resident club. A junior football club will easily fill 10% storage in a 350m2 amenity building. However, a little athletics club will need more than 20% storage in a 350m2 building, due to the size and shape of their field equipment. The storage facility detailed in the photo above, provided at the sports complex at Old Bar should be the standard for all multi-club facilities. This design provides for individual storage units for each club and allows for economies of scale and services savings for Council.

We will seek to provide a minimum of 10% storage in all new amenity buildings constructed.

Skateparks

Ausplay data, produced by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) indicates that more than 250,000 Australians reported that they took part in skate activities in 2021. Of these 146,000 were male and 104,000 were female. In addition, a further 180,000 children (1-14 years old), or 10% of their cohort reported that they were participating in skate activities. At 10% of an age cohort this puts skate in the top five physical activities done in this group. Even though skate participation does not compare with the large number of Australians participating in other physical activities it is still significant in itself.

Skateparks (ramp-parks) are one of the most dynamic facilities within the recreation portfolio. Firstly, they do not have a resident club who supervises, maintains and upgrades the facility, they remain our responsibility. Second, they cater for all age groups, making them unique in active recreation, as the facility is not age dependant, as playspaces are. And third, their play value experience is completely dependent on the original design, with a poorly designed skatepark excluding a large cohort of the participant population.

Take for example the existing skatepark at Gloucester. This was built in the 1980's, when skatepark design was in its infancy, and when councils were only just starting to provide them for the community. This design excludes almost all riders, except for experienced riders, as the bowl element is the most advanced element in skateparks. In the Olympics the bowl is the only element provided, to test the skills of the riders. Beginners of all ages will not ride at this park due to it only providing the bowl, with a very small basic element in the bottom of the bowl.

A more contemporary design can be found in the recently completed Stroud skatepark. This facility provides riding elements for riders with different skill and experience levels. It still has the downwards bowl drop, but also includes several other riding experiences. This facility, and larger versions of it is an example of what we will seek to provide in the future.

Skate Planning Considerations

There are several planning considerations involved in the provision of skate facilities. They fall under three categories: Visibility, Accessibility and Connectivity (VAC). A skate facility needs to be in a location that has both active and passive surveillance. This is often obtained in a high profile "village green" location or where there is significant passing traffic and is observable from a distance. This does not apply to a number of skate parks in MidCoast. Passive visibility helps to alleviate anti-social behaviour, but also provides the level of observation that participants seek in this activity.

Second, the facility needs to be accessible, not just for all-ability access but also for the cohort that frequents these facilities i.e., young teens who don't drive. Access to public transport and active transport is critical for the success of skate parks. Lastly, the facility should be connected to other places that youth wish to be at. This could be a shopping precinct, a beach, or other park facilities.

Unless these planning considerations form the basis of locating a facility not only will the facility not be used by youth, but experience has shown that the general community will not support any new facility that doesn't align with these planning considerations.

Skate planning has come a long way, and it is now considered highly desirable to only build Regional level skateparks. The same definition and inclusions that apply to the play hierarchy (see the People who Play section) apply to skateparks. Regional level skateparks are extensive, provide many different ride elements and include amenities such as seating, shade, toilets and youth hang-out spaces. Youth will travel for a high quality skatepark. It is the elements that are provided that drive visitation. The more dynamic and challenging the park, while also encouraging learner riders, the more visitation.

MidCoast has 15 skateparks spread throughout the MidCoast local government area. As with sports fields and other recreation infrastructure these skateparks have been provided in several small towns, purely on demand. Most are of very basic design and provide very limited play value. The majority would be classified as Local.

This strategy recommends the development of a Skatepark plan, which will conduct an environmental scan of our existing skateparks, identify need, and make recommendations on rationalising our existing skateparks and recommending the construction of Regional level skateparks in high use, and accessible locations.

Economic Development from recreation services

Significant economic benefits can come from recreation activities and events (see the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) section in the last chapter of the Strategy for a full breakdown). The general functioning of a local sports club creates economic activity, through the purchasing of food for canteens, to equipment purchases, to minor works on sport facilities, and from events conducted by the club. All these activities inject monies through the local economy, creating jobs and helping to create a circular economy.

Sport and recreation events are major economic drivers. In addition to the community benefits that are detailed extensively in this strategy the recreation sector provides significant drive to the local economy. Consultancy company KPMG produced their *Measuring the Value of Sport (2021)* document for the federal government in 2021.[40] The report found that each year more than $12B is spent on sport infrastructure and services in Australia, and that that investment returned $16B in community benefit, half from economic activity, a third from health results and the other third from social results. They found that for every dollar spent on sport in Australia there is a $1.33 return. The economic value of sport services to the local MidCoast region is significant. Some businesses would not exist without it.

Major recreation events attract visitors to the region. Those visitors book accommodation, they buy food, they purchase petrol. All creating that flow-through that is vital to any local economy. When we upgrade a sports amenity building, or build a new playspace, we are not only providing new recreation opportunities for the community, we are also assisting local contractors.

A simple example is Parkrun. Parkrun is the largest physical activity program in Australia, attracting hundreds of thousands of participants each Saturday. Many of these "Parkrunners" travel to other towns and their courses, to experience a new run. These thousands of "Parkrun Tourists' spend money in these local economies. So, when an event is run on open space, we are seeking not just community outcomes, but also economic outcomes.

[40] https://home.kpmg/au/en/home/insights/2021/04/social-value-of-sport.html

Drainage to sports fields

Many sports fields are affected by either overland flow or riparian flooding. This is not because of poor locating of sports fields, but rather a deliberate decision to place them in those locations. A significant majority of sports fields in Australia are located on flood retention and flood detention areas and basins. This is because the sports field is not the primary purpose of the open space, but rather its purpose is either a means to control overland flow, to stop it inundating properties, or because the land is unsuitable, due to historic flooding, for construction. Because this land cannot be used for development it is provided for sports fields, and public open space.

The Taree Recreation Grounds are a good example of land put aside for flooding that is used for sports fields.

Having recognised that a large percent of our sports fields naturally flood we can then consider the installation of drainage systems in a different light. Having sports fields flooded, often for long periods of time, is disruptive to sports clubs and their sport programs. This is unfortunate, however, the installation of drainage to rectify this situation should be carefully considered. If the field is not in a flood prone area, then drainage can be considered as a viable solution.

Drainage systems come in several forms. They start with a simple aerating of the field using aerating machines. This puts hundreds of holes in the natural surface which then allow water to drain down into the water table. You can also install spoon drains to move water off the field. Additionally, sand slit drainage can be undertaken. This is where slits are drug across the field down to 50mm, and river sand is placed in the slits, the grass grows over the top of the slit and water is able to more easily move down into the water table. Lastly, we can do a full rebuild of the field surface, with deep drainage systems, down to 1m with a number of layers of different material, with drains under them, all designed to move water quickly away.

All of these options are expensive. As noted, they should only be considered where there is no history of flooding, so that the chosen system can work effectively. In addition, it is standard practice that drainage should only be considered where a number of fields are located together and where higher-level competition, and hence higher quality fields are required. Therefore, installing any drainage system above aerating should only be considered at District and Regional level sports facilities. The previous hierarchy table indicates this.

Recreation Reserves

Recreation reserves can be defined as areas of consolidated open space catering for a range of activities, particularly active recreation. Larger reserves provide opportunities for activities such as ball games, kite flying, jogging, and general exercise. Smaller reserves cater for more informal recreational activities such as reading, walking, meeting places and family outings, resting, sunbaking, circulation and access.

Activities in recreation reserves are very much determined by their physical characteristics such as terrain, level of exposure to winds and views. The more protected and steeper sites with good views are more conducive to informal recreation, and the large flatter sites are generally more actively used.

Most foreshore reserves in the MidCoast local government area provide specialised amenity in the spectacular views of the coastline.

Nature appreciation dominates the reasons that people come to both our coastal reserves as well as our inland reserves. Coastal reserves offer a unique experience that is not found in other locations. High clifftops and crashing surf on to rocks is often sought-after by people visiting any coastline. Therefore, passive recreation dominates visitation. Activities such as social gatherings, BBQ's and dog walking are the most regular activities done within the parks.

The findings of the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* community engagement indicated that our passive reserves are used for:

- The most common activities were viewing, walking and walking with dogs.
- Jogging, exercising, relaxing and socialising were also very popular activities.
- Most people say they generally stay for one to two hours.
- Some people come multiple times per day.

Trails

The Draft Open Space and Needs Analysis 2022 community feedback received a significant amount of demand for trails throughout our parks and reserves. This demand aligns with the latest participation data that found that walking, walking with dogs, bushwalking and trail running dominate activities undertaken by Australians. On land that we manage it is our aim to provide high quality trail experiences for our community. There are a number of specific trail projects in the Action Plan and it is a recommendation of this Strategy to produce a Walking and Cycling Strategy, which will look more closely at trail provision.

- There is a strong underlying community network based on the presence of intergenerational residents.
- Some activities are more common in certain areas and at certain times of the day.
- Many people enjoy the use of grassed areas as this provides open space for small and large group activities. This is popular through midday and into the afternoon in daylight.
- Most activities are self-organised. People appear to bring all the items they require to entertain themselves but rely on the use of amenities (toilets, showers and change rooms) and sometimes purchase food.

Active Recreation Activities

Recreation activities, separate from structured sport, take place in most of our reserves, but mainly in our recreation reserves. Recreation activities are those that involve human movement, are physical in nature, but are conducted outside of the parameters often found in structured sport, such as a defined space, rules and officiation. Examples of recreation activities include Parkrun, mountain biking (outside of competition), surfing (once again outside competition), trail running and many water-based human activities. National Ausplay data shows that there has been a significant shift from structured sport into recreation activities over the last five years. This trend was occurring before COVID19, however COVID19 caused this trend to accelerate.

Many recreation activities take place in our passive reserves, both inland and coastal. These informal spaces are well suited for these activities.

Below is a short list of some recreation activities that take place in our public open spaces. It is in no way exhaustive.

Walking

Walking is one of the most popular activities in all our reserves and is listed in the Ausplay data set as the number one physical activity that Australian's do. Walking is an overarching category, which also includes walking with dogs, and bushwalking. It is also a general fitness activity. In the MidCoast region all forms of walking are undertaken significantly more than the national average for those activities. With so many Australians' undertaking walking for exercise and enjoyment the need to provide more walking paths and multi-use paths should be and is our number one action is this strategy's action plan. The community feedback conducted in 2023highlighted that providing more walking infrastructure, such as pathways was the community's number one request.

Picnicking and Barbecuing

Some of our reserves have picnic shelters and barbecues and so are very popular for meeting friends and family.

Exercising (fitness)

Ausplay data from the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has shown a significant increase in fitness done by Australians over the last five years. Group and individual classes with commercial fitness providers, as well as individual fitness activities is now the second highest physical activity, after walking. During the COVID19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 fitness activity was the primary physical activity done by Australians. Post this period the activity levels have remained higher than the period leading up to 2020. Fitness activities are higher among females than males, with males representing in higher numbers for structured sport than females. These fitness trends are reflected in the MidCoast regional population as well.

The majority of our coastal and foreshore reserves are popular for individuals to come and exercise. Most have walking and cycling paths provided, which is a main attractor for both walking (with or without dogs) and running. People report that they typically exercise in the morning.

We are mindful of the complexities of planning for fitness activities, especially the provision of fitness equipment. In providing fitness equipment, commonly provided in two different forms, trail and station, Council seeks to locate them in areas of high traffic and specifically where there are already high levels of individual fitness activity i.e. walking and running. In the past fitness equipment has been placed in locations that are not evident of high levels of exercise activity. This strategy has identified an action to develop a Commercial Fitness Provider policy, which will provide guidance on fitness equipment placement.

Fitness (commercial)

Some commercial fitness providers are active in the MidCoast local government area. These are individuals or groups that operate as a business, providing fitness programs and classes. They provide fitness programs for members of the community who pay a fee. They often use high quality open spaces for their activities, as these provide an extra attraction for participants. They do not pay a fee for the use of these parks for their commercial activities. Foreshore parks are highly popular for this activity. Often exercise equipment, such as long ropes, large tyres and free weights are used.

As our aim is an active and healthy community all service providers are a benefit to the community. However, balance needs to be found, where all members of the community can enjoy our open space and do their chosen activity. Clashes between commercial fitness providers and the general community are common, with some groups taking over prime locations, hence driving the community away.

In 2021, during the COVID19 outbreak, there was a massive shift in park visitation across the country. With lockdowns in place many people, who did not visit parks in the past, chose to do fitness activity in parks. This increase in visitation also involved commercial fitness providers, who were not able to conduct their activities in their normal indoor venues, thus taking their individual and group classes into local parks. Anecdotal evidence indicates that this increase in commercial fitness providers using public open spaces has not returned to pre-COVID19 levels. Thus, creating a challenge for councils.

Many councils have had issues with these commercial fitness services. A policy to govern the use of our open space for these commercial activities needs to be developed and is an action in the Action Plan of this document.

Ball Games

Open grassed areas are often used as an informal kick-about area, Frisbee is also popular. Informal ball games are permitted in most reserves; however, organised ball sports are not permitted where chosen.

Kite Flying

There are many ideal situations for kite flying along our coastline, especially the high points and headlands. This activity is generally accepted as an appropriate use for the reserves except in areas within close proximity to residences.

Surfing

Australia is renowned as one of the world's premier surfing destinations. The MidCoast region offers some of the best surf opportunities in a country that abounds in great surf. Locals are attracted to the surf life and surf culture, and tourists come to feed off of that culture.

Surfing is classified as both a sport (competition) and recreation. Most surfing is recreational, with very few participants taking part in competition. Surfing is a great physical activity, with the physical nature requiring a level of fitness comparable to running. It also appeals to all age groups.

Latest (2022) research undertaken by La Trobe University in Melbourne has shown that surfers play a critical role in swimmer rescue. They estimated[41] that hundreds of drownings are prevented by surfers who have performed rescues on swimmers that have gotten into trouble. Surfers are well placed to perform this unofficial role, as they are in the location, they often have a highly developed situational awareness of the surf environment, and they have in their possession a perfect rescue board. This unofficial role complements the great work done by our surf life savers.

We do not play a major role in providing surfing opportunities in the region. The activity has its own space and participants chose their location based on a number of factors, including conditions and personal choice. The only role we play in supporting surfing is in land-based facilities, such as car parking, paths and public showers. We have a regular program of infrastructure upgrades, and these are detailed in our operational program.

Fishing

Fishing is one of the most popular activities for MidCoast residents, with 44% of respondents to the 2023survey indicating that they participate in fishing. It is not technically a physical activity, and so this strategy does not deal with it in-depth. Fishers do make use of our public open spaces, often as amenity to the actual activity. Examples of this amenity are boat ramps and fishing washdown facilities.

Boat ramps and fish washdown facilities

We provide a number of boat ramps throughout the region. These are generally categorised as local or regional level boat ramps. These boat ramps are often located within parks and reserves and so their impact on our public spaces are considered in overall planning. Fish washdown facilities are often co-located with boat ramps and the support infrastructure for these facilities, such as water supply often affect our spaces. This strategy lists some individual actions for specific boat ramps, however, planning for boat ramps is covered in other Council asset renewal programs and strategies. However, the impact of fishing and other boating activities on our open space is noted, and from an environmental perspective is considered in provision planning.

Cycling

Cycling as a recreation currently sits at number three on the Ausplay activity dataset. Australian’s have chosen to participate in cycling in large numbers since the mid 1800’s, when cycling was the number one physical activity for Australians. Cycling includes all the sub-disciplines, including road cycling, mountain biking, criterium, BMX, cross-country and others. We play a major role in encouraging cycling within our community, both in promotion and facility provision. Off-road facilities, such as downhill courses, criterium tracks and pump tracks, as well as hundreds of kilometres of cycle

[41] https://www.latrobe.edu.au/news/articles/2023/release/surfers-save-hundreds-from-drowning-each-year

paths encourage our community to cycle. We have provided a number of cycling facilities and this Strategy supports the continued provision.

Recreation cycling is by far the most popular form of cycling. A family outing with mum and dad and the children, all on their bikes, riding our coastal pathways can often be seen. Because of the high levels of tourism in the MidCoast area visitors also chose to bring their bikes, which are often seen as the best form of casual transport. We also support active transport (see separate section).

Lawn bowls

Lawn bowls is another sport that is also an active recreation. Often the line between competition and recreation for bowls is blurred, due to the nature of the bespoke space that is used. Ausplay data shows that lawn bowls dominates the older age cohort, with a large part of the 10% of older Australians who are involved in sport, involved in lawn bowls. Lawn bowls greens are ubiquitous across the Australian landscape no more so than in the MidCoast region. Most population centres in our area have at least one green. Even though we have little to do with the provision and management of individual bowls greens and clubs these facilities are often located on Council managed land, with the clubs involved having a number of different types of tenure arrangements with Council. Therefore, we strongly support their provision, and will always seek to ensure the continued presence of the activity in the community.

Mountain Bike Riding

Mountain bike riding is one of those activities that can be described as both a structured sport and a recreation. Often it is a recreation, with participants undertaking the activity outside of formal competition. Like most areas around Australia that have large areas of bushland reserves, as well as ranges and hilltops mountain biking is very popular in our local government area. The mountain bike trails in the Kiwarrak State Forest are some of the best in NSW, offering challenging riding for participants[42].

Areas to ride off-road are on both Council and other land managers' land, primarily NSW Forestry Corporation. Illegal trail construction is an ongoing issue as it is for many local government areas. We are conscious of providing opportunities for participants to ride their bikes off-road and will continue to support the authorisation of areas for this use. Rangers also remove illegal jumps and close off illegal tracks when they come across them. The primary reason for removing an illegal track is both ecosystem protection as well as protection for other users of our parks.

Events

Events play a critical role in providing and enhancing community cohesion. Most community outdoor events take place on public open space, in our parks, our sports precincts and our village greens. We support the conducting of events in our region, especially those that provide for physical activity.

[42] https://trackslesstravelled.com/taree-mtb-trails-best-mountain-biking-in-new-south-wales/

Running events, such as Run Forster are perfect examples of our residents living active and healthy lifestyles, and we will continue to support this.

MidCoast Council actively promotes our coastal environment and world class surf beaches and will continue to work with surfing event organisers to bring surf events to the area.

Conducting events in our public open spaces is managed through our events policy and organisers seeking to conduct an event should speak to Council staff.

Parkrun

Parkrun is recognised world-wide as the world-leading physical activity program. This event, which started in London in the early 2000's has spread throughout the world. The concept of a 5km timed run, with the support of a group of locals who volunteer to run the event has proven to be hugely popular, and the MidCoast region is no exception.

Starting at Main Beach on the Gold Coast in 2010, it has now grown to more than 418 different events around the country. Parkrun is not just world leading "best practice" for a physical activity program but is also best practice for a volunteering program. Whereas only 53% of volunteers returned to sport after COVID19, Parkrun has only increased its volunteer base. Parkrun is an example of how a singular event can activate a whole community for societal benefits.

Parkrun is also one of the main attractors of people into our parks. Many councils have found that the creation of a Parkrun in one of their parks or reserves has resulted in a significant increase in visitation to that park. This then flows through into our planning and embellishment of the park, resulting in outcomes for the whole community.

The MidCoast region currently has the following Parkruns[43]:

- Taree
- Forster
- Gloucester

Parkruns have a designated course, which they use each week. Often councils work with each Parkrun to "mark out" the course with permanent distance markers. This not only assists those partaking in Parkrun, it also promotes Parkrun to the wider community, and allows people looking to do a 5km run or walk to have a professionally marked out course which they can use outside of the actual Parkrun. The Action Plan contains an action to work with each of the three MidCoast Parkruns to professionally mark out their courses.

[43] https://www.parkrun.com.au/events/events/#geo=11.6/-31.662/152.7835

People with dogs

All of our public open spaces attract a variety of activities, including dog exercise. Dog control has been identified as a major management issue, particularly in high use reserves, especially our coastal reserves and pathways. Examples of issues include unleashed dogs and dog faeces, which are common community concerns.

As a nation, we own more dogs per head of population than any other country. The RSPCA reports that there are over 29 million pets in Australia, and we have one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world. Around 61% of households in Australia own pets, with dogs being the most common (40%), followed by cats (27%). Dogs continue to be Australia's most popular pets, with just over 5 million dogs across the nation. Forty per cent of Australian households have at least one dog.

The College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences, City University of Hong Kong conducted a meta-analysis of Google searches for dog adoption during COVID19 and extrapolated a significant increase in dog ownership around the world, estimated to be a 20% increase, mainly due to lock-downs." In MidCoast local government area, for a population of 96,8000 (Census 2021) it would be expected that there would be more than 16,000 dogs. At present the management of dogs has not become the major management issue that it has for many other councils around the country, due mainly to our high percentage of public open space for head of population, but in our high visitation parks we are starting to see these issues arise.

The Companion Animals Act (1998) states that dogs are legally required to be on a lead and cleaned up after, in public spaces. Violation of this Act can result in infringement notices of up to $75.00 for individual offences. Enforcement of these ordinances is difficult even with the regular dog inspections currently in practice. The Companion Animals Act (1998) also places limitation and restrictions how close a dog can get to a community facility, for example, a dog is not to be allowed within 10m of a playspace, a BBQ or shade area. This restriction restricts the types of facilities that we can provide in our reserves, for example, co-locating a playspace and an off-leash dog area within 10m of each other would be a breach of the Act. The community is often not aware of this restriction.

The *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* community engagement showed very strong support in the community for both the continuation and enhancement of dog visitation opportunities throughout our reserves. Respondents to the survey reported that the main reason that they visit specific reserves is to walk with their dogs. Respondents reported that dog facilities, such as water bubblers, pooh bag dispensers, shade structures, and fenced dog run areas, referred to as Fenced off-leash Dog Areas (FOLA) were highly sought after. The Action Plan will direct that new Fenced Off-leash Dog Areas (FOLA) be constructed in a number of our public open spaces.

Dogs on Beaches

People like to walk on the beach with their dogs. However, dogs on beaches impact the environment in different ways than a dog walking in a park. Dog faeces, if left on the sand, has more of an impact on a beach. In addition, dogs let to run off-leash on a beach can impact other wildlife, especially nesting birds. Dogs off leash on a beach, even when permitted, impact other people far more than they do in a park or reserve, because of the linear nature of beaches. For these reasons, we will continue to closely regulate dog walking on our beaches. Where it is permitted the following regulations apply:

Great Lakes Beaches

- Nine Mile Beach, Tuncurry is an off-leash area in line with areas shown on the dog walking map[44].
- Dogs can be walked on leads only between 5am – 9am and 5pm – 8pm on the following beaches
- Tuncurry Beach – between the breakwall and northern Beach car park access track
- One Mile Beach, Forster
- Boomerang Beach
- Sandbar Beach, Smiths Lake
- Blueys Beach
- Bennetts Beach, Hawks Nest
- Yaccaba

Manning Valley Region

Dogs are allowed on beaches in the Manning Valley as long as they are kept away from the following areas:

- More than 50m away from a patrolled swimming area
- Black Head ocean pool
- Away from Little Tern nesting areas (Farquhar Inlet and fenced off areas)
- Sign posted walking trails in bush land reserves
- Outside any National Park exclusion zone, which include:
    - North of the Manning Point beach access
    - North of the area on Mudbishops Road, locally known as “Second Corner”
    - Charleys Island
    - Mudbishops Island
    - Farquhar Park

[44] Dogs in public spaces - MidCoast Council

People who volunteer

Australians volunteer more than any other country. We are the world's leaders in volunteering.

Australians have always loved to volunteer, whether it be their local sports club, or the Sydney Olympics, Australians have a mind-set to volunteer. If there is one aspect that has developed our world-leading sport model, that allows us to "punch above our weight" it is the volunteers that run our local clubs. Other than the upper echelons of our national sport bodies almost every person that works in sport is a volunteer. To say that our volunteers are critical to the effective functioning of our sport industry is the truest of statements.

Our sport clubs, like all community groups, are governed by their individual state's incorporation act. These act's give structure, governance and guidance for members of the community that wish to be involved in community activities, such as sport. The incorporation acts detail that there are two compulsory positions within a sports club, the president and the secretary. In effect, if both chose "to stay home' then the club does not exist. Therefore, more than any other formalised structure community groups are the most tenuous.

Ausplay[45] data from 2021 highlights the following statistics for volunteering in sport:

- 14.3% of people aged 15+ are involved as volunteers in sport and active recreation annually (15.6% participate in a non-playing role; 91.9% of these are volunteers).
- Just over half of volunteers in sport are men. 56% (1.6 million) men and 44% (1.3 million) women volunteering in sport in Australia. This reflects the profile of organised sport participants generally – women are less likely than men to participate or volunteer. The gender profile of volunteers generally follows the profile of the sport's adult participants.
- Peak ages for volunteering are 35-54 for both men and women. Younger coaches and officials (aged 15-24 years) are more likely to be paid than older volunteers.
- The most common volunteer roles across both genders are coach, instructor, trainer, or teacher; official, and administrator or committee member.
- Most people who volunteer in a sport already have a strong connection to that sport – they are often players themselves or have children playing – and are motivated to volunteer simply to help their own or their children's activity. The proportion of male volunteers who also play the same

[45] https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/kb/volunteers-in-sport/statistics

sport is higher than for female volunteers – 60% for men, 51% for women. Compared with the population, volunteers are much more likely to have children in their household.

- People from non-English speaking, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are less likely to both participate in organised sport and volunteer in sport than those from English-speaking backgrounds. Other groups that are under-represented in organised sport are people with disability and those on the lowest household incomes.

- Volunteering is more common outside of the major cities where population density is lower, despite participation rates for organised sport being similar across regions. This perhaps reflects the strong role sports clubs play in rural and regional social and community life.

And most importantly:

- In 2020/21 we may have started to see the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic limiting the amount of organised sport and a reluctance of some volunteers to return, which was outlined in the Ausplay June 2021 COVID-19 update. The decrease in non-playing roles was most pronounced among men.

The above Ausplay data has found that there has been a steady decrease in volunteer numbers over the more recent years, that parallels the decrease in club membership numbers. For sport clubs, but not for other community groups, there is a symbiotic link between club membership and volunteer numbers, and that is because the parent that brings their child to play a sport is more often than not likely to volunteer for the club. And so decreasing members and decreasing volunteerism are linked.

Noting the steady decrease in volunteering, research conducted in 2022 found that only 53% of people that have volunteered at sports clubs before the COVID19 outbreak and lockdowns have returned. Tracking of this significant decrease has shown that this number is steady and has not returned to 2019 levels. As volunteering is critical to sports club sustainability the ability to attract and retain volunteers to Australia's thousands of grass-roots sports clubs is critical. There is an action in the action plan that confirms our involvement in and responsibility to assist in managing volunteers in our local clubs.

MidCoast Council actively works to attract volunteers and to support programs where local residents can give their time in volunteering in different programs. Volunteer organisations such as Bushcare and Coastal Care are active in the area and we provide ongoing support to these organisations to undertake their work. Volunteers are also involved in parks maintenance programs, providing valuable time and resources to assist us in maintaining our parks, sports fields and infrastructure.

Green space, physical activity and loneliness

One of the greatest challenges for public health is the epidemic of loneliness affecting our community. The Australian Government, through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare[46] reports that 54% of Australians report that they felt lonely most of the time.

Social isolation and loneliness can be harmful to both mental and physical health. They are considered significant health and wellbeing issues in Australia because of the impact they have on peoples' lives.

Latest research conducted by the Universities of Wollongong and UNSW report:

Urban greening may reduce loneliness by offering opportunities for solace, social reconnection and supporting processes such as stress relief. We assessed associations between residential green space and cumulative incidence of, and relief from, loneliness.[47]

[46] https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/social-isolation-and-loneliness-covid-pandemic
[47] https://academic.oup.com/ije/article/51/1/99/6289969?login=false

A lower cumulative incidence of loneliness was observed among people with more green space within 1600m *of home, especially for people living alone.*

The built space is now being referred to as Lonelygenic environments[48], being those spaces that aggravate loneliness or in the case of public open space, spaces that alleviate loneliness. The value of our public open spaces, and our green spaces has always been known, but until recently that value was placed more on the opportunities that it provided for people to get active, rather than the value of the space itself, or the health benefits that come from green space. But now research, as detailed above, shows that health benefits come not just from being active in nature, but from just seeing nature. It is now accepted that standing in a park with trees around you will lower your blood pressure and lower your heart rate. When you combine that affect with physical activity, we have the "silver bullet". As more of us suffer from loneliness the ability to be surrounded by green (and blue) like we are here in the MidCoast region ensures a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle for our residents.

Active Transport

Active transport involves walking, cycling and other physical modes of travel to work, school, parks, cafes, shops or other destinations. Using public transport such as catching a bus or train also involves active travel when walking or cycling to and from stops, stations, home and destinations. Choosing to walk or cycle for transport offers many important benefits for human health, the community and also the environment!

MidCoast Council supports our residents adopting active transport options. We support safe road environments for all road users—pedestrians (which include most wheeled mobility and recreation devices such as skateboards, roller skates and roller blades) and cyclists. Active Transport planning is incorporated into our transport plans and active transport features are included in road work and enhancement where practical.

The Action Plan in this Strategy includes a number of active transport actions, including the installation of more bike racks in our major population centres, the development of a Cycling Strategy, the investigate of providing pathway linkages between our coastal hamlets and generally more paths and cycleways where appropriate and practical.

[48] https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(22)00306-0/fulltext

People who play

Our play planning and provision is based on the NSW Government's world recognised play planning guidelines "Everyone can Play". These guidelines present three simple questions to play planners: Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?

Play[49] and understanding its importance has come a long way in recent years with many local authorities now developing strategies that not only assess playspaces as assets that need to be managed, but also their relevance in design and the changing needs of a child as they grow and develop. Play is now seen as one of several mechanisms that can lead to positive health and development results, thus resulting in enhanced community outcomes. To this end, the traditional playspace equipment by way of slide, swings, and rockers while still important, are today being considered as only one component of the play spectrum. Other design elements are therefore being introduced to encourage an array of learning and development opportunities including the use of the natural environment (nature play), creative landscaping, and additional features that promote a sense of belonging and place to a park.

Playspaces are now considered not only as areas for children, but also the whole family and therefore can now include elements for adults and carers, such as toilets, barbeques, shade and shelter and end of trip facilities such as water, bike racks, paths and trails, carparks and in some instances fencing to offer a sense of security for children and families in larger parks near to main roads or traffic. In addition, a major trend is in providing Inclusive playspaces, that are designed specifically to provide inclusive play for those living with a disability are now being provided. One of these Inclusive playspaces has been built in Taree and is known as a Livvi's Place playspace (see later section on Inclusive Play).

[49] https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Guidelines/everyone-can-play-guideline-2019-02-0.pdf

Play standards have also come a long way with equipment now designed and developed to include and consider adult use and weight bearing to allow social interaction and play with and between children. Additionally, the introduction of fitness equipment is also becoming increasingly popular with both adults and children and offers a unique element to many parks and playspaces. They are often standalone areas separate from children's playspaces.

From a planning perspective, the notion of playspaces being developed in areas where young families are prevalent is now an outdated planning method as the needs of a child (and demographics generally) will change in relative short periods of time (2-3 years) whereas a playspace as an asset may last more than twenty years.

Modern trends in planning for playspaces are therefore now based on an even distribution of facilities to ensure access for all including grandparents, aunties and uncles, people with disabilities and carers and families. It also considers the playspace hierarchy, design and distribution based on local through to regional, each offering their own unique experiences.

Liability and risk is always a key factor in the provision of any service or facility that is available to the public, and while councils have an obligation and duty of care, aspects such as the promotion of nature play has caused some concern in recent years due to the absence of standards for 'nature'. However, more innovative and proactive councils are working with their respective insurers to ensure a range of opportunities can be provided and children and their parents protected from perceived risks while still enjoying and benefiting from the experience of play in a natural setting.

Play Value

One of the most important planning concepts to have arisen in the field of play planning over the recent period is that of *Play Value.* Play Value can be described as;

Play Value is the essential value that is derived from a play experience, including from the space itself.

The term is frequently employed in the field of child development for the assessment of playspaces. When they are fun and engaging, playspaces are said to have play value; those that are quickly discarded or are considered uninteresting do not. In short, objects of play must be compelling and encourage the child's involvement in order to have true play value. Play value has been defined as 'how much play can you get out of something".

The concept of play value is now deeply imbedded in play planning and provision. It is not enough to "stick" some play elements in the middle of a park and expect the child to derive value from the experience. Play elements are now designed for specific age groups, fit together as a group of elements, are blended into a natural environment, link together to other play zones, encourage others

to engage with the experience, such as parents and grandparents, and to cause the child to want to "linger' in the play experience, ultimately delivering increased child development.

The issue of child development and play has become foremost in modern recreation infrastructure planning. It is now recognised that a large cohort of modern children are not receiving the level of development that children have in the past. A good example of this is the concept known as "social triggers from the built space". In some communities the level of communication development in children is lower than the Australian average. There are many causes for this, but one basic cause is the level of interaction between parent and child, especially in language and spatial development. Our built space, in which we move every day, has "triggers" imbedded in it. An obvious example is traffic lights and crossing signals. From an early age a child is taught that red means stop, green means go, and that a walking green figure means they can walk.

However, research has shown that many children are not being taught these triggers in our built space. Therefore, it has become best practice to build these triggers into a child's play experience. Building inclusive playspaces, is viewed as a high value approach to planning. A child will therefore experience many social triggers built into the playspace as they engage with the space. This is one example of play value being delivered through intuitive play planning.

We use a hierarchy for play, much like we do for sport facilities. The Play Hierarchy is:

Play Hierarchy

- Local
- Neighbourhood
- District
- Regional

Like the sport hierarchy the play hierarchy has both planning considerations as well as definitions applied to each level of the hierarchy. Each level of provision fits within the larger play offering, complimenting each other and graduating the play offering through the different levels that suit both the family's aspirations of play for their children and the desire for a particular play experience.

Classification	Planning Considerations	Definition
Local (Village) (Facility with a catchment of 400m walking radius)	• Length of Stay (LOS) of 20 minutes • 400m Pedshed walking radius • Radius not to include "firewalls" such as major roads, railways, or industrial areas • Around 6 play elements • No or limited seating • No shade • No BBQ's • No toilets • Limited planting • Minor maintenance	• Normally small in size (approx. 0.1 – 0.2ha) • Offering passive and low-key recreation opportunities such as seating and landscaping, • local playspaces would be small in nature and would target toddlers and/or juniors (0-3 and 3-6 year old) • Equipment would normally include basic swing and slide aspects and minor landscaping • Complement other larger playspaces within the portfolio, and may have a Neighbourhood or a District level playspace nearby

Neighbourhood (Facility with a catchment of 1km walking radius)	• Length of Stay (LOS) of 30-45 minutes • 1km Pedshed walking radius • Radius not to include “firewalls” such as major roads, railways, or industrial areas • Up to 10 play elements • Seating • May have limited shade • No BBQ’s • No toilets • Plantings • Regular maintenance	• Targeting a broader demographic catchment and therefore (normally) located on larger parcels of land • Neighbourhood playspaces would include equipment for toddlers to seniors and may include assets such as seating, shade bins and picnic tables. • Complement other larger playspaces within the portfolio
District (Facility with a catchment of 10km driving radius)	• Length of Stay (LOS) of 1 hour+ • 10km driving radius • Up to 15 multi-play elements • Can include play “zones” and quiet areas for Inclusive playspaces • Seating • Shade • BBQ’s • Toilets • Large areas of plantings • Regular maintenance	• Usually attracting a wider catchment and located on larger parcels of land also used for other activities such as sport or other forms of recreation • These playspaces offer a wider variety of play ‘choice’ from toddler – senior and in some instance’s youth. • District level facilities normally include seating, shading, shelter and end of trip facilities such as water fountains and bicycle racks for example. • Accessible playspaces are often considered in District level classifications or higher.
Regional (Facility with a catchment of more than 10km driving radius)	• Length of Stay (LOS) of more than 2 hours • More than 10km driving radius • Normally has a “signature” play element which is the focus of the space • More than 20 multi-play elements • Includes play “zones” and quiet areas for Inclusive playspaces	• These types of facilities attract visitation from outside a council boundary • Are generally those places where people tend to stay longer and would therefore require facilities and services such as toilets, water, shelter and shade. • The playspace themselves often offer a unique aspect or feature which encourages use, whether this be a special feature, larger open spaces, or just the range of play opportunities.

	• Seating, including sandstone barriers as seating • Shading of specific play zones • An offering of BBQ's in different breakout areas • Toilets, including all accessible • Large areas of plantings, including mature shade trees • Daily cleaning and maintenance	

Play Facility Benchmarking

Whilst there is no universally accepted ratio of residents per playspace, similar studies across Australia have shown a distribution of anywhere between 1:200 if considering children only to 1:2000 if considering the whole population and the notion of balancing provision to ensure good access and distribution.

Given the principle of access for all and considering similar NSW local authorities populations and playspace provision, the table below highlights a mean supply of playspaces of seven urban and peri-urban councils as being one playspace for every 1448 residents. Each individual playspace offers its own planning considerations, and so the benchmark should be a planning guide. The MidCoast region has many small hamlets and settlements, which currently have small playgrounds. These hamlets have far less population than the benchmarked ratio, however, mitigating planning factors come into play, such as the amount of passing visitation that comes from being close to the Pacific Highway, distance to the nearest playspace and predicted age and makeup of the future population of the hamlet. These factors are considered when we are planning for play.

LGA	No. of Playspaces	Approximate Pop	Playspace per 1000
Blacktown	295	337,000	**1,142**
Camden	76	77,000	**1,013**
Central Coast	243	339,000	**1,395**
Lake Macquarie	114	213,845	**1875**
Liverpool	96	205,000	**2,135**
MidCoast	79	96,800	**1,225**
Penrith	140	194,134	**1,387**
Randwick	52	143,776	**2,765**
Waverley	40	71,769	**1,794**
Wingecarribee	48	52,456	**1092**
Wollongong	155	208,000	**1,342**
Woollahra	24	53,891	**2,245**
Yarra Ranges	119	157,419	**1322**
Mean number of playspaces per 1000			**1,448**

Types of play

Nature Play

There has been much attention on the concept of “nature play” over the last few years. Natural play is giving access to children to natural spaces or materials, which allow them to “free-play”. It is widely accepted, and demonstrated through numerous research projects, that being in nature, and being physically active in nature delivers the best health results for children and adults. Community feedback on play often includes the provision of nature play.

The benefits of nature play are many. Nature play is a great way to connect our community with place and can turn a playspace into a place of connection, discovery and celebration. Nature stimulates the imagination and encourages exploration, adventure and risk-taking, helping children learn new skills such as adaptability, coordination and resilience. A growing body of research shows being in nature can lower stress hormone levels, enhance immune system function, reduce anxiety, increase self-esteem and improve mood.

We are keen to offer nature play as part of our play portfolio. Where opportunities exist to include it in the upgrade of existing or new playspaces, we will consider it as part of the play experience. However, it is understood that providing nature play in every play setting is not possible.

Smart Play and Augmented Play

Technology is impacting every facet of life, and play is no exception. Smart Play, where QR codes and other triggers are built into a play experience are now becoming common. Augmented Play (AP) is where the real world, such as a park is blended with a virtual reality, such as available on a smart phone or tablet. In the case of open space, the augmentation is the introduction of electronic features into the real park. AP can be applied in several ways but has 2 main common treads; it’s a group experience and it blends in with the real world by overlaying 2D/3D content in our field of view. At present AP is experienced through a tablet, while also looking at the park and moving around through the real space to queues provided by the technology. In the future you could assume that the experience will be enhanced with the use of transparent glasses which allow you to see 2D/3D content overlaid in your own real/live environment without having to look through the lens of a smartphone or tablet.

AP and Smart Play will drive its own provision; however, we will consider the inclusion of augmented play in our playspace upgrades and replacements as directed through community engagement.

Intergenerational Play

In times past, older generations were much more involved with younger people, and vice versa. But times change, and that isn’t as much the case with today’s society for a number of reasons. Non-profit groups Generations United and The Eisner Foundation published a study titled “I Need You, You Need Me: The Young, The Old, and What We Can Achieve Together”[50] in which all surveyed admitted we live in an age-segregated society. In this study 53% of adults say that they don’t regularly spend time with individuals much older or younger than they are, outside of their family.

Parents are having children later in life and living greater distances from their own parents. Lives are busier and more scheduled as many households have two working parents, or only one parent, and children either have a busy calendar of extracurricular activities or don’t have the interaction of parents as in times past.

Young people are more apt to move to new cities and/or states for meaningful work. A large number of people, including older people themselves, see social disengagement among older people with

[50] https://www.gu.org/resources/i-need-you-you-need-me-the-young-the-old-and-what-we-can-achieve-together/

young people as a natural part of aging. There may also be differences in physical and cognitive functioning between different age groups, which leads to the occupying of separate physical spaces and different activities.

People of all ages benefit from increased physical activity and the reduction of health risk factors associated with outdoor activity. For children, play can provide a positive impact across all five developmental domains: physical, social-emotional, sensory, cognitive, and communicative. Being in an outdoor environment helps people relax and can help to restore the mind from specific age-related stresses such as school, work, family pressures or loneliness. Green spaces may be particularly beneficial for older adults as they can provide safe opportunities to be active and interact with other people while stimulating the mind and senses. Additionally, access to shared public spaces can reduce overall stress, improve coping abilities, encourage multigenerational interaction, reduce social isolation, enhance relationship-building skills, and improve or maintain cognitive function. The demand for quality children and youth services compounded with the increasing need for creative older adult programs creates an environment ripe for innovative intergenerational spaces.

However, it's important to note that while space may be multigenerational, it may not be intergenerational. Multigenerational simply refers to a composition, people from different generations are present. Intergenerational refers to an active exchange or connection between and among the generations, and this is where there is a great opportunity, gained through intergenerational play, to enrich both people and the environment while promoting a wealth of positive benefits for all.

Many local government authorities are embracing intergenerational play, by providing specific play elements in their playspaces that not only give older people something to "do" when in a playspace with their children or grandchildren but play elements that all generations can do together. We are keen to provide intergenerational play and will seek opportunities to do so and will ensure that intergenerational play is a major feature of the future Playspace Strategy which is a major action from this Strategy.

Inclusive Play

Any physical activity can be excluding. By its nature being physically active requires a level of ability that is not available to all. With 25% of Australian's living with a disability many activities that the majority of the community take for granted are not able to be done by all. Inclusive play is a planning consideration that seeks to address this restriction for a large minority of the community.

In understanding inclusive play, it is important to consider it in two ways. The first is inclusion by opportunity. In this sense playspaces are designed to allow any person to access each element within the space. Design elements such as access paths and ensuring that no barriers are present form this design consideration. However, inclusion by opportunity does not guarantee that a child will be able to undertake the activity presented by the play element, it just means that they can get to it. The second area of inclusive is inclusion by activity or inclusion by outcome. This is where the person can not only access a play element, but can use the element, regardless of ability. And this applies to the whole playspace.

Inclusion by opportunity is now included in all playspaces that are built. A good example of this is the Tuncurry playspace. Inclusion by activity is exclusive to Inclusion playspaces, such as the Livvi's Place playspace in Taree.

Not all playspaces need to be inclusive by activity, but we will seek to provide playspaces that allow all to access, and at a minimum some elements can be used by all.

The MidCoast "State of Play"

There are 79 individual play facilities spread throughout the open space in MidCoast. However, over the years there has been very little play planning involved in the development of these 79 play facilities. This is not unusual. Traditionally play equipment was placed into public open spaces on a piecemeal basis. It is not unusual to see one, two or three pieces of old play equipment in a park. These "playgrounds" range in age, and hence condition.

The provision of play equipment in the past was generally not a planned process. Only in recent times has significant planning consideration been applied to the provision of play for our communities. Therefore, the existing portfolio of play for the MidCoast area is generally in line with other similar councils i.e. not fit for purpose. The play hierarchy detailed above will now be applied to future play provision, resulting in a play portfolio that is more balanced, targeted and which provides play for all age groups, and which will result in a significant improvement in play provision in the MidCoast region.

More recently, as we have upgraded old playgrounds to contemporary playspaces a more considered approach has been taken, with play-value for our children being the foremost consideration. In the near future, a Playspace Strategy will be developed (see Action Plan), which will detail what we have, what we need, and where they should be. This strategy will result in a play portfolio that is diverse, well located, and which aligns with our growing community.

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Management and Maintenance

It's no use building it and then forgetting it, you must maintain it. Our community wants well maintained parks.

As has been highlighted throughout this Strategy, we will seek to manage our parks and sports facilities in the face of uncertainty, created by climate change and increasing impacts from overuse, through the impact assessment model. Maintenance of our eco-systems is by far the most critical component of providing high quality spaces for our community. It is fairly easy to build something, but far more difficult to maintain it, especially something that is living, and which requires a certain set of parameters to be met for its sustainability.

All of the open space in the MidCoast local government area, and their associated buildings and infrastructure are maintained and managed by MidCoast Council. The high level of visitation to our reserves and the use of any infrastructure in them requires careful management and intensive maintenance of infrastructure and resources. Feedback from the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis 2022* indicated that visitors are generally satisfied with the cleanliness and maintenance of the individual parks and reserves. However, the community expect the assets to be maintained to a high standard.

This section of the Strategy details the services that we provide in managing and maintaining the sites to ensure that they are well maintained and therefore will be available for future generations.

In maintaining and managing our public open spaces the following activities are considered:

Maintenance Functions
Activities and Events: Some of our reserves are also used for 'one-off temporary events' – the approval for events is assessed on the potential impact and time of the proposed activities, detailed under our Use and Hire of Public Open Spaces.
Waste Services: Garbage is collected from individual bin collection areas throughout the parks. Bins are collected by garbage trucks daily, both garbage and recycling trucks enter the neighbouring streets around each reserve. A number of our reserves do not have bins.
Maintenance: We oversee all the maintenance requirements of the individual reserves. Council work crews have a program of maintenance seeing them do routine maintenance on a park roster basis. We are generally responsible for maintaining assets such as turf, gardens, paving, roads, fences, handrails and cleaning. We are also responsible for cleaning any facilities and amenities throughout the reserves. A service level review of all maintenance being provided by us is to be conducted in the short term, with a view of developing a Desired Standards of Service model.
Playground Maintenance: We maintain the playgrounds in our public open spaces where they are located. The playground rubber softfall surface is routinely patched and cleaned. Equipment is maintained and parts replaced from time to time. We audit playgrounds annually to ensure they meet safety requirements. Further play maintenance considerations are found later in this section.
Building Maintenance: Any buildings located in reserves are maintained and repaired by Council
Environmental Services: We are responsible for identifying and putting in place energy, water savings and renewable opportunities within reserves. This includes identifying ways to reduce waste to landfill; encouraging visitors to use sustainable transport options; educating the community on the environmental significance of the area; and preparing for the future impacts of climate change.
Safety and Regulations: Our rangers patrol the individual parks on a regular basis, enforcing regulations to promote safety and equitable access for visitors. Activities that adversely affect other

patrons' pleasure of reserves are regulated. On occasion rangers and other Council staff need to manage antisocial behaviour across the reserves. Controlled activities include dog walking, consumption of alcohol, commercial training, ball games, bicycle riding, skateboard riding, use of portable barbecues and littering. Dogs are allowed off-leash in those reserves that have been chosen for the activity. Where off-leash is not chosen dogs must be on-leash at all times. Dogs are prohibited within 10 metres of children's playgrounds and the barbecues. Dog regulation signage is provided where required.

The following regulations are enforced in those public open spaces where indicated:

Public Open Space Regulations
No alcohol
No camping or staying overnight
No un-authorised ball games
No commercial activities without Council approval
No skateboards or rollerblades
No kites or kite activities
No portable barbecues or open fires
No smoking on the beach

It is our aim to keep vehicular activity within our parks to a minimum. However, it is necessary for service vehicles to access our reserves. Oftentimes access is gated to individual parks. Vehicles that require access include the garbage truck and staff with utes. Occasional access is required by other agency vehicles. Emergency vehicles may require access to individual reserves. When service vehicles do access parks all care is taken, and public safety is paramount.

Playspace maintenance considerations

Playspaces are unique. Even though they are a facility that is constructed in our open spaces, much like a sports facility, playspaces have a unique set of maintenance requirements. In addition, playspaces have more legislation and standards applied to them than any other recreation infrastructure, and as such therefore require a higher level of maintenance.

Below are detailed a comprehensive set of maintenance principles that MidCoast Council applies to playspace provision and upkeep.

Sports club leasing and licencing

The leasing and licencing of sports facilities to community not for profit incorporated sports clubs will continue to be controlled, monitored, and implemented via our Leasing and Licensing of Council Land and Buildings Policy.[51]

[51] https://haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/leasing-and-licensing-council-land-and-buildings-policy

Maintenance Consideration	Principle
Mowing	It is important to ensure that edging around soft-fall or any other structures provided at playspaces are able to be mown. Sharp and weird lines and angles may be funky for designers but getting a mower around them should be a long-term consideration. Mowers used by Council should be able to effectively maintain the turf around edging.
Edging	Playspaces often have edging constructed around them to provide boundaries and barriers for soft-fall zones, ascetics, passive fencing, create play zones, seating, climbing elements and other purposes. The material provided for edging is varied. Planning should consider that materials used for edging, which may be concrete, grass, sandstone, metal, plastic, plantings or others, can be maintained, including that suitable equipment and plant are available for maintenance
Plantings	Advice should be sought from either Council's horticulturalist or outside sources to ensure any plantings for the playspace conform with our planting policy and are suitable for the environment and locale. Before installation ensure that we have the necessary equipment required to maintain any new plantings, especially in the long term and that any existing trees can still be accessed and maintained when the new playspace is constructed
Inspections	All play equipment needs to be inspected periodically in line with AS4685. We bare the budget liability to cover these independent inspections. Ensure sufficient budget is available and who can do inspections. Independent companies exist that provide a regular inspection regime. Consideration should be given to contract an inspection regime, if budget allows or if internal capacity does not exist
Colours and Styles	We may have a standard colour and style palette for open space equipment. Planners should ensure that the playspace conforms with any standards policy
Playspace softfall	A number of different soft-fall options are available for playspaces. All provide different experiences, tactile interactions, budget implications and above all, maintenance requirements. Low maintenance softfall such as SBR, EPDM and TPV rubber products will need to be inspected for continued compliance with AS4422. More tactile softfall, which provides a more advanced play experience, require far more supervision and maintenance than the rubber options. Softfall such as play sand, wood shavings and other natural products need to be confirmed to ensure we have the capacity to maintain the surface at its AS4422 standard. Regular "top-ups" of tactile softfall will need to be covered by internal budgets and plant needs to be available to do these works. In addition, tactile softfall, such as play sand, will need to be raked on a regular basis to both provide a quality play experience, and to ensure that levels and compaction fall within AS4422
Access and recreational paths	Playspaces are provided in open space. Often our open spaces are not adjacent to transport infrastructure. Therefore, both access and recreation multi-use paths will either need to be provided for within the playspace budget or will need to be provided through budget allocation. Likewise, maintenance of these paths will need to be identified and budgeted for within the work schedule
Access for plant	Planners and designs should ensure that suitable access for heavy plant is provided. Often large trucks need to access the playspace,

	going over paths and edgings. Suitably constructed heavy use crossing points need to be constructed in paths and other infrastructure during the construction phase
Equipment replacement	From time to time play elements will need to be replaced, due to manufacturing faults or end of life replacement. We should ensure that we are aware of details for replacement, including country of origin and product name and service number
Shade	If shade is provided, we need to implement an inspection regime. We should confirm that we have the plant required to carry out inspections and to do any minor repairs or work
Council inspection checklist	Ensure we have a standard inspection checklist for playspaces?
Environmental integration	A contemporary play option is to integrate play elements within the natural environment. This primarily involves connecting play elements such as balance and climbing elements to trees and other natural objects, including rocks, in the site location. Construction of these integrated elements will be done by the tendered construction company in line with AS4685. However, ongoing maintenance and inspection of these integrations will need to be done by us to ensure the ongoing suitability of the natural object, the connections, and the equipment
Sun effect	If metal surfaces are to be provided, mainly as sliding elements, then these need to be shaded from direct sun. Metal surfaces become un-usable with direct sun. We will need to ensure, during routine inspection regime, that all metal surfaces are constantly in shade, whether natural or manmade
Chemicals	Council Operations need to ensure that chemicals currently being used for turf, plant and general open space maintenance can be used in proximity of playspaces
Vandalism and graffiti	All community infrastructure is subject to vandalism and graffiti. Playspaces are a major focal point for Council and Council's reputation is often set by how community infrastructure such as playspaces are presented. We have a graffiti policy and a graffiti removal regime.
Contemporary, state-of-the-art or bespoke play elements	Every council wants to provide a unique play experience for their community, and to be seen to be providing the latest in play experience. However, we need to ensure that play design and elements are able to be maintained, accessed and replaced within the resources available to us.
Public amenities	Where people go, they want amenities. No use putting in a contemporary playspace and receiving complaints that there are no toilets, no seating, you can't get a pram or a wheelchair near, no bins, no shade, no wind shelter, or no water. Facilities should be provisioned in alignment with their hierarchy. We need to ensure that provision of public amenities conforms with standard provision, can be maintained and can be accessed. At the same time, we need to be careful not to over-embellish playspaces beyond their intended classification. A major public toilet, provided with a Local playspace, would be an over-embellishment.
Can you add to it	Most playspaces are provided within a limited budget. Often the community's excitement may exceed the playspace provided. We need to ensure that there is capacity within the new design and construction to add in new elements in the future, and that we have the capacity to resource and maintain a more enhanced play provision

IMPLEMENTATION, FINANCIALS AND MONITORING

Implementation, Financials and Monitoring

This strategy is going to be expensive, but it is over 13 years, and we can't afford not to do these things

Funding for implementing this strategy will either be allocated for future upgrade works (capital works) or maintenance and management. Funding for the management and maintenance is currently provided through our annual budget allocation.

To fund the proposed new or upgrade works, we will set aside capital works funds in future years that will cover a percentage of the proposals in the strategy, which will be combined with any future grant funding.

Council's budget for the strategy is not expected to accommodate all proposals in the short- or long-term plan. Additional funding options that may be investigated include:

- state and federal grants
- voluntary planning agreements
- section 7.11 development contributions
- partnerships with community groups or businesses.

The amount of funding through these streams is difficult to anticipate as it is dependent on development and grant programs. Regardless of the type of current or future enterprises, we must also ensure that legitimate costs of upgrading our public open spaces are recouped wherever possible.

Financial

The sustainable protection of our public open spaces, and the embellishment that we undertake on them to meet community need is expensive. The Action Plan in this strategy represents a significant investment by Council in the long-term viability of our public open space portfolio. The life cycle of this strategy is 12 years, and so the projects identified form a works schedule for that period. All projects have been given a time period priority, based on their importance to the community, and to ensure that infrastructure on our open spaces meet contemporary standards and remain safe and functional.

We do not bare all the financial burden of maintaining world class open space. Both state and federal governments acknowledge their role in protecting our environment, as well as ensuring that our communities are healthy, happy and active. They therefore provide contributing funds to the provision and upgrading of open space infrastructure. However, ongoing cost (OPEX – Operational Expense) is borne exclusively by us. Therefore, the projects identified in the Action Plan have been well considered and have been driven by feedback provided by the community, on what they want their open spaces to be.

Even though the projects in this strategy are meant to be delivered within the life cycle of this plan, it is anticipated that some may not. In these cases, those projects will be tested in future reviews of the strategy, and if confirmed that they are still needed they will be "rolled over" into future versions.

Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) for Recreation Infrastructure

In 2021 the consultancy firm KPMG was commissioned by Sport & Recreation Victoria to produce a report on the value of sport infrastructure to Australia, called "*The value of community sport and active recreation infrastructure"52 report*. KPMG found that in any given year approximately $12B is spent by all levels of government, and the private sector, on sport and recreation infrastructure in Australia. KPMG estimated that for this $12B we receive a benefit of $16B, broken into three distinct categories; economic, social and health benefits.

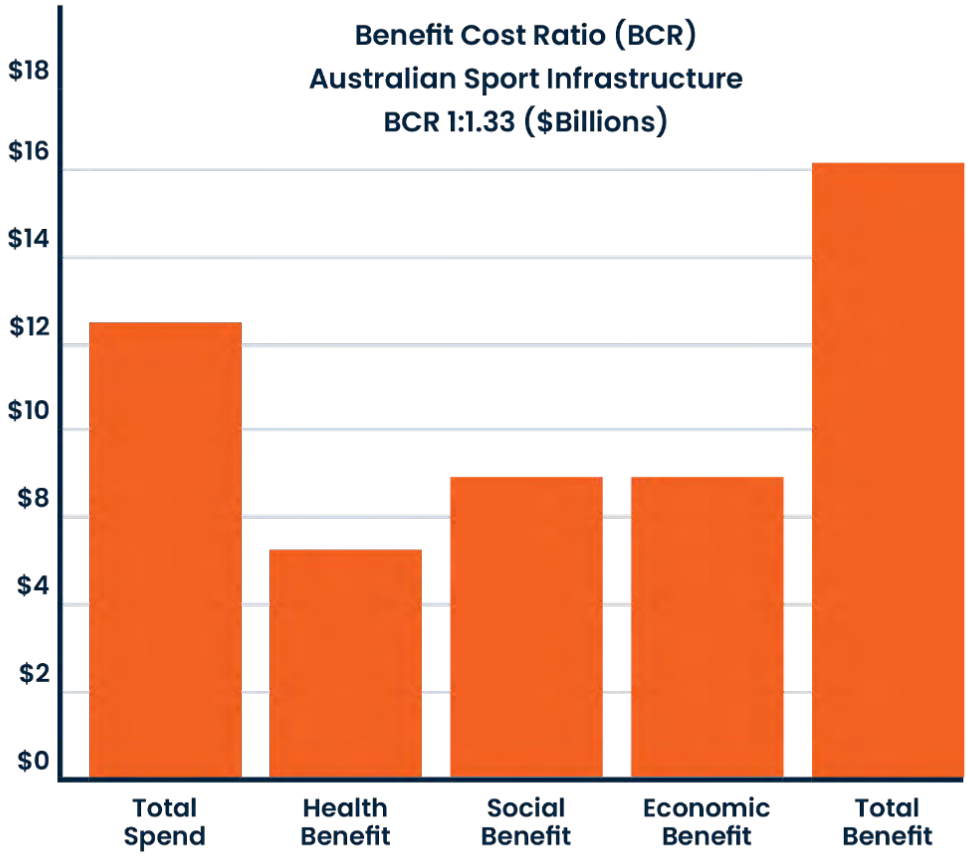
Infrastructure Australia (IA), the peak government advisory agency, tasked with prioritising infrastructure projects and funding use the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) system to identify the value that infrastructure projects bring to Australia, and to decide whether a specific project should or should not be funded. The BCR is a simple equation that shows whether the return from a project exceeds the capital expense of the project. To calculate the BCR they take the total cost, and then divide it by the economic gain from the project. If the BCR is greater than 1.0 then the return is greater than the expense, if the BCR is less than 1.0 then the expense will exceed the gain.

When we input KPMG's work into the IA's BCR equation the BCR for recreation infrastructure is 1.33. That means that for every dollar that we spend on recreation infrastructure there is a return, to the community of $1.33.

Case Study

Council receives a $1M grant to build a new amenity building at the local football field. Council contributes $1M, giving a $2M budget. Once the project is completed the entire $2M has been spent. The value of that project to the community is $2,266,000.

The above calculations are pictorially represented in the graph.



[52] https://sport.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0030/155685/Value-of-Community-Sport-Infrastructure-FINAL-REPORT.pdf

Ongoing financials – Maintenance

Recreation infrastructure is often highly dynamic, technical, innovative and bespoke. Open spaces themselves, unless they are national parks, being preserved in their natural state for ecosystem and diversity protection, require regular maintenance to maintain them to a standard that is acceptable to the community. Our ultimate outcome is for our open spaces to be visited by the community, to achieve that outcome the open spaces must be maintained. However, that comes with costs.

These costs are ongoing and are often referred to as OPEX (Operational Expense). Maintenance forms one component of OPEX, but which is the most visual, with Council staff often seen in our open spaces doing maintenance. These operations come at a cost. Below is an indicative table for general maintenance of public open spaces. It should be noted that MidCoast Council has an open space portfolio of 1600ha (16,000,000m^2).

Maintenance cost per hectare for Parks and Open Spaces

Type of Park	Direct FTE Cost Per Hectare	Direct Non-FTE Cost Per Hectare	Total Cost Per Hectare
Gardens, including memorial	$7,314	$1,324	$8,637
Historic Parks	$261	$57	$317
Metro Parks	$1,175	$514	$1,689
Regional/Rural Parks	$35	$16	$52

Notes

- Costs are annual
- FTE is direct labour
- Non-FTE is material, including running costs of machinery and plant but does not include purchase of plant and equipment

Ongoing financials – OPEX

Recreation infrastructure involves a substantial upfront cost, commonly referred to as CAPEX (Capital Expense). This is often funded through a combination of state and federal government grants and council contributions. However, there are also significant ongoing costs, commonly referred to as OPEX (Operational Expense). OPEX is always borne by Council, as there are no funding programs that provide grants for OPEX. OPEX can include costs such as ongoing maintenance to the facility, insurances and depreciation. It is the depreciation cost that is the most significant, but which also is the most unconsidered. Depreciation is a figure calculated on the life of the asset. If an asset costs $2m to provide (CAPEX) and its life is 20 years, then a depreciation cost needs to be carried by Council's budget for each year of the asset's lifecycle. Many councils do not calculate depreciation, assuming that the money will be found when the asset needs replacing.

The table below shows the depreciation for the standard range of recreation infrastructure.

Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Financial Analysis - OPEX										
Financial	Regional Playspace Upgrade	Local Playspace Upgrade	Sport Amenity Building	District Sports Facility Upgrade	Regional Sports Facility Upgrade	BMX Facility	Skatepark	Sports Lighting	Synthetic	Courts
Cost	$2,000,000	$250,000	$1,200,000	$3,000,000	$5,000,000	$1,000,000	$750,000	$500,000	$2,000,000	$60,000
Depreciation – future	$133,000	$16,600	$40,000	$100,000	$166,667	Nil	$20,000	$416,667	$860,000	$3,000
Total future costs	**$133,000**	**$16,600**	**$40,000**	**$100,000**	**$166,667**	**Nil**	**$20,000**	**$416,667**	**$860,000**	**$3,000**
	Assume life @ 15 years		Assume life @ 50 years					Assume life @ 20 years	Assume life @ 10 years	

Project Assessment

An open space and recreation infrastructure scoring matrix has been developed to help assess future projects and inform Capital Works programs. The matrix can be used for two specific purposes, namely, to ascertain if a project should proceed, and to compare one potential project with another. It is not required to be used for projects already endorsed by Council through adopted master plans, developer contribution plans or similar strategic plans. The matrix is an assessment model that details key criteria and includes an associated scoring mechanism. This tool will assist us in comparing one project against another when funding is limited.

Each question has been given a weighting, as some questions carry more importance than others. For example, priority 1 *"Identified as a high need in the Open Space & Recreation Strategy"* carries more significance as projects identified in the Action Plan of this Strategy have been tested with the community, against Council internal priorities and have been considered in our long term financial planning. Likewise, priority 8 *"Existing facility is at capacity"* demonstrates a higher need for the facility improvement to go ahead over priority 20.

To calculate the weighting on each criterion they have been placed in order of importance, with a percentage weighting allocated to each depending on importance.

Scoring Matrix for Prioritising Open Space and Recreation Facility Projects

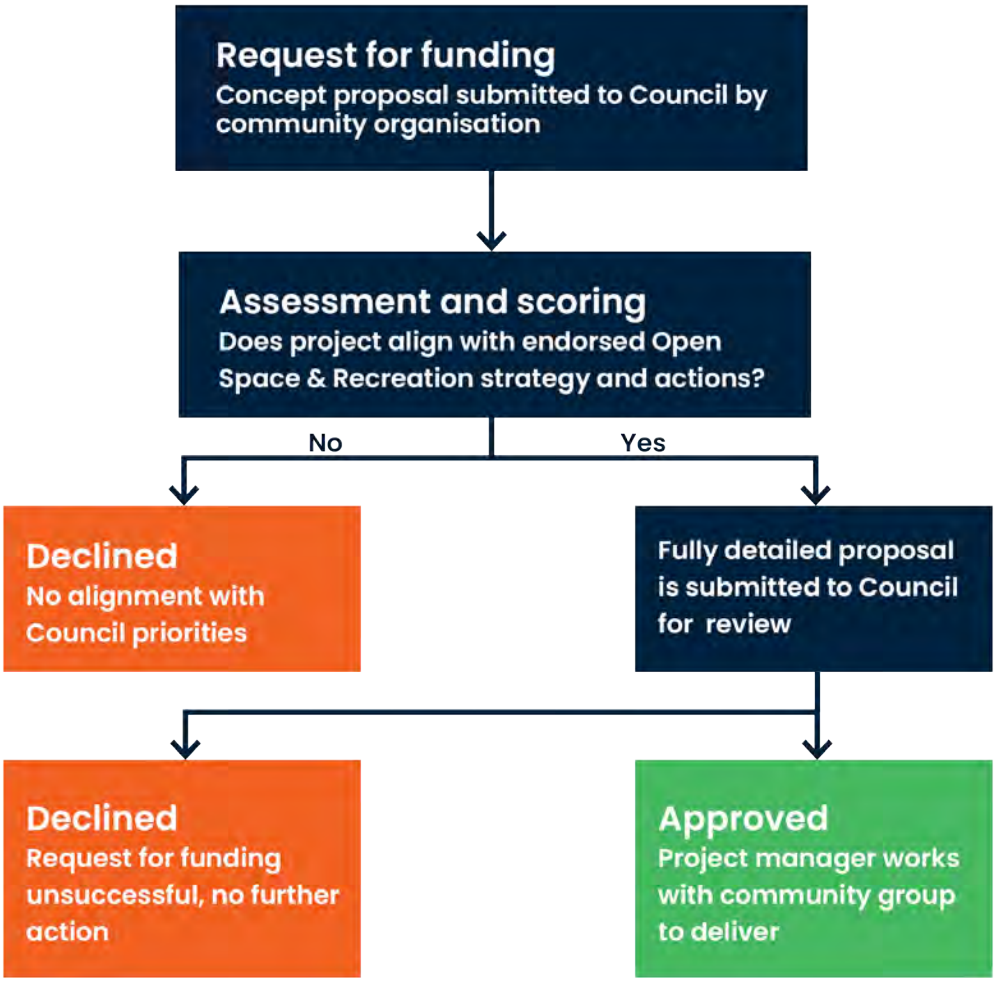
Priority	Criteria	Value	Score
Essential	Is project permissible under the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP	Y / N	N/A
Essential	Has Native Title been considered	Y / N	N/A
Essential	If on Crown Land is it consistent with the Plan of Management	Y / N	N/A
Essential	Is there a current land claim on the land	Y / N	N/A
1	Aligns with the Open Space & Recreation Strategy	Y / N	20
2	Aligns with Council's Community Strategic Plan outcomes	Y / N	15
3	Part of an endorsed master plan	Y / N	15
4	If not addressed, there is a high-risk exposure to Council	Y / N	10
5	Addresses safety and risk management issues	Y / N	10
6	Has lower impact on future Council operating expenditure	Y / N	5
7	Identified as a high need in other Council strategies	Y / N	5
8	Has minimum impact on sensitive environmental or cultural areas	Y / N	5
9	Improves participation opportunities for people with disabilities	Y / N	5
10	Facility is situated within high growth area	Y / N	2
11	Existing facility is at capacity	Y / N	2
12	Improves the functionality of land (drainage, lighting, amenities, parking)	Y / N	2
13	Benefits multiple community user groups	Y / N	2
14	Addresses lack of facility provision	Y / N	1
15	Is eligible for council funding or has high potential of partnership funding	Y / N	1

Note: Pass score is 65. This does not mean that the project will proceed, dependant on funding and approvals.

Grant Management

The majority of recreation infrastructure provided on public open space by local government is funded, either jointly or fully, by grants. These grant programs are administered by either the NSW or Federal governments, through numerous funding programs. MidCoast Council does not have the financial resources to be able to fund all projects that need to be undertaken on our public open spaces, and so relies upon grants. Both Council and community groups, such as sports clubs, are often eligible to apply for grants. However, as detailed previously, we will seek to project manage all projects on Council managed land. However, this does not stop community organisation from applying for grants. MidCoast Council strongly supports community groups seeking alternative funding.

To ensure that we are fully aware of projects, and grant applications, we will implement a grant submission process. The process, detailed below in the flowchart, will allow community clubs to work with us in the scoping and development phases of projects, and will allow Council to ensure that project proposals are in alignment with the Open Space & Recreation Strategy actions, which have been endorsed by Council.



Performance indicators

To effectively put in place the action plan, performance indicators are required to demonstrate that the desired results from the plan have been achieved.

The action plan identifies suggested performance targets and measures for each action. In addition, the following methods can supplement and complement the monitoring of progress and performance of the action plan:

Surveys: carry out surveys and questionnaires periodically (around every five years), accompanied by a survey of user numbers in various parts of the area. This survey should be qualitative and quantitative. This survey should establish any changes in public open space usage, visitor experience and perceptions. Additionally, online surveys could be done to request feedback on the implementation of particular programs and management strategies.

Register of correspondence: review of letters, emails and community requests received each year (positive and negative) on various subjects related to the site. This register can be used to indicate general trends, changes in issues, opportunities and the management of the space.

Photographic survey: taken at key and consistent locations every five years to establish degrees of change (either positive or negative). This could be compared with aerial photographs reviewed every five years.

Review and monitoring

If this strategy is to remain relevant in the future it is essential that its implementation is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure any relevant changes are incorporated. Changes that may need to be addressed include new legislation, changes in community values, project priorities, funding resources and new opportunities for future upgrades.

Given that community expectation and requirements change over time, this strategy also needs to have some flexibility to adapt to any changes of circumstance.

It is recommended that the strategy be reviewed in the following sequences and time spans:

- Annually, review progress and delivery of action plan
- Every two years: review management and administration structures and update priorities
- Every five years: do a major review of all values based on revised analysis of issues and amended planning legislation. Review results against survey information, photographic record and register of correspondence.
- Every 10 years: review the strategy, or
- As directed by the Department of Planning and Environment, who are the responsible agency for the Crown Land Management Act (2016) which governs the development of crown land related documents.
- In addition, in line with the Native Title Act any native tittle claims that affect the planning area

APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

This Action Plan provides individual actions that illustrate how the objectives and performance may be achieved for each of our public open spaces.

It is important to note that the Action Plan will act as Community Infrastructure Plans for guiding the future provision of open space and recreation infrastructure projects across communities within the MidCoast local government area until 2036.

The actions in the Action Plan relate to what we heard as being important to the community and connect directly to their individual headings as follows:

- Design Actions
- Planning Actions
- Enhancing the Environment Actions
- People in Parks Actions
- Management and Maintenance

How did we prioritise these actions?

We used four connected decision drivers to identify both the actions and their priority.

These are listed in the table below:

Decision Driver	Rationale
Evidence approach	Each action has been tested through community feedback, analysis of community need, analysis of current activity trends and its impacts on the environment. The priority placed on each action is a result of analysis of the impact on either the community or the environment if that project is not undertaken.
Equitable provision	Actions were also developed through an equitable lens, in that each location within the LGA was considered for what they have received in the past, how long since that location received a new facility and the feasibility of delivering their individual projects at a certain point in time (e.g. availability of funding).
Asset portfolio condition	As has been noted in the People in Parks section the state of our recreation portfolio is aged, and some of the individual components are no longer fit for purpose. In developing the actions and their priorities the condition of existing infrastructure, and its projected life was a strong determinant in setting its priority.
Financial Sustainability	The prioritisation of the actions in the Action plan, and the ability for projects to progress to delivery in the future, has also been influenced by considering the associated financial operating model and/or the long term asset management requirements in minimising future financial burdens to Council. This financial planning of actions also includes the consideration of access to future potential funding programs, the funds of which the vast majority of the actions will require.

If circumstances change, such as new funding programs, changes within individual communities, or changes in community participation we will revisit the priorities. This might mean a community comes to us and asks for a project to be brought forward, which, when considered, can be done, we will.

The actions listed in the Action Plan are not all the actions that we need to undertake. Other actions will be identified in the other planning documents that need to be produced, specifically the Playspace Strategy and the Sports Lighting Plan.

Not all actions listed will be completed in the life cycle of the Strategy. The review process identified previously will re-consider each action to ascertain its continuing applicability.

Action Plan structure

The action plan is the working part of a strategic planning document such as an Open Space and Recreation strategy. They detail the key actions and implementation priorities needed to achieve the objectives of the strategy for the reserves.

The Action Plan table describes the objectives of the action plan, how they will be achieved, who will be responsible, the timeframe, the availability of funding, the desired results and monitoring and reporting requirements. The table is separated into two sections, namely, LGA Wide Actions and Location Specific Actions.

The table is broken down into the following headings:

Action: The statements provide the main reference point for each set of actions.

Who: There are many departments within Council involved in carrying out the actions of this strategy. The managers of these divisions are responsible for ensuring the actions are done. The responsible divisions are:

OSR	Open Spaces and Recreation
CA	Community Assets
SP	Strategy and Projects
Trades	Trades
Gov	Governance (Property and Legal teams)
SP (WHS)	Strategy and Performance (WHS team)
NS	Natural Systems
LUP	Land Use Planning
W	Waste
BE	Building and Environmental Health Services
MARS	Major Assessment and Regulatory Services
CE	Customer Experience

GEDT	Growth, Economic Development and Tourism
LCS	Libraries and Community Services
ECE	Engagement, Communication and Education
TA	Transport Assets

Time: The actions are prioritised and will be achieved in the following timeframes:

S	Short term (S): 0–3 year
M	Medium (M): 3-8 years
L	Long term (L): 8-12 years
O	Ongoing (O)

Funding implications ($):

E	Existing funding is mainly associated with recurring park maintenance, planning and development works. These works must occur annually and include the maintenance and upgrades required in all MidCoast LGA parks.
LTFP	Other works are to be included in the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP). These LTFP projects will need to be prioritised by Council.
TBD	To-be-determined funding (TBD) involves an initial investigation and preparation of a business case to Council.
G	Opportunities to obtain grant funding (G) are also noted.

Performance Targets

These value statements will guide the future development and management of our public open spaces to achieve the vision for all the reserves as a collective as well as individual reserves. The values have been tested and are responsive to site analysis, consultation feedback and best-practice principles outlined throughout this strategy.

CC	Character Conserved
DR	Design Review
DO	Design realises objectives

DM	Design reviewed at key milestones
IV	Increase in Visitation
VE	Visitor Experience
ED	Excellence through Design
PE	Participant Experience
IBP	Industry Best Practice
AI	Actions Implemented
SR	Strategic Review
FSI	Function and safety improved
OSM	On site monitoring
MNS	Maintenance of natural systems
AM	Adaptive Management
AI	Awareness Improved
RO	Review on Inspection
CF	Community Feedback
SP	Sustainability Performance Improved
HZI	Habitat Zone Increased
%	Weed % Decreased

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
	LGA WIDE ACTIONS												
1	Ensure any future building and infrastructure design addresses community need, is visually unobtrusive, does not detract from the natural landscape character of our parks and reserves, and considers the heritage impact.					OSR, CA, SP	CC, DR	E					
3	Ensure landscape design: a) Maintains the natural topography b) Maintains and enhances coastal views through coastal reserves c) Maintains areas of exposed natural rock where practical d) Uses semi-formal and informal planting design in reserves e) Maintains the openness of parks and reserves f) Protects native remnant vegetation areas where applicable					OSR, CA, SP, NS	CC, DR	E					
4	Ensure character protection: Ensure future planting design is consistent with the character areas. a) Protect natural growth, including coastal heath b) Ensure that uses of parks and reserves comply with the Impact Assessment model by maintaining individual landscape character c) Biodiversity is protected in parks and reserves that reflect the landscapes character					OSR, CA, SP, NS	CC, DR	E					
5	Coastal views: a) Coastal views form a significant feature of our coastal reserves. Planning and future provision for both planting and infrastructure will seek to protect current views, in alignment with community expectations. b) Develop a planting schedule and materials palette that preserves the integrity of each site and considers significant view corridors.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	CC, DR	E LTFP					
6	Infrastructure a) Where infrastructure is to be provided ensure the selection of materials is appropriate to its setting. b) Consider materials that are graffiti resistant. c) Ensure materials are selected to withstand coastal environments to minimise corrosion or degradation					OSR, CA, SP, NS	CC, DR	E					
7	Ensure future building works are complimentary to their surroundings. Works to ensure: Compliance of new building works to building controls and which comply with Australian Standards.					CA, SP, NS	DO, DM	E					
8	Develop a lighting plan for those parks and reserves considered to require lighting that considers: a) Pole or bollard lighting to major pathways b) Lighting to the high visitation pathways and reserves c) Lighting to buildings and particularly amenities buildings.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	DO, DM, CC	LTFP					
9	Replace furniture and fixtures when they reach the end of their life with Council's preferred palette in keeping with heritage values and plans.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	DM, CC	E					
10	Review the alignment of pedestrian entrances into each reserve to ensure they are connected to pedestrian crossings, the Coastal Walk and thoroughfares.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	DO	LTFP					
11	Review and where necessary redesign entrances into the individual reserves to ensure they are welcoming and easily accessible.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	DR, DO	LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
21	Develop master plans for all Regional level facilities. These master plans will detail future project and upgrades to be done.					OSR, CA, SP, ECE	ED, VE	LTFP					
22	Investigate the development of the Taree disused riverside rail corridor into a multi-purpose trail creating a link between the urban area and the river in accordance with design principles as outlined in this strategy.					OSR, CA, SP, ECE, LUP	ED, VE	TBD					
26	Provide further opportunities to support habitat by increasing planting opportunities and using local native species throughout our reserves.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	HZI, %, DR	E					
27	Continue to support the environmental volunteer program to undertake the regeneration of remnant vegetation.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AM	E					
28	Maintain trees and canopy within individual reserves in line with Council's tree management policies.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AI	TBD					
29	Signage actions: a) Install interpretative signage to all reserves that have bushland remnants, and native buffer plantings, particularly in vandalism hotspots.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AI	LTFP					
30	Design buildings and landscape works to consider environmental sustainability and adaptation to future climatic conditions.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	ED	TBD					
31	Put in place the Impact Assessment Model, Thresholds of Change, as a mechanism to manage up to the carrying capacity of each of our individual reserves					OSR, CA, SP, NS	RI, AM	TBD					
32	Explore options for the improvement and implement of environmental sustainability through such measures as site design, layout and building design. a) Consider the use of local materials in the construction of buildings and infrastructure b) Design buildings with the local climatic conditions in mind, with consideration of local heating and cooling requirements c) Minimise impact on the environment through appropriate footprint design and techniques.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AM	TBD					
33	Support: a) Support programs that provide environmental education on-site. b) Collaboration with local landowners to develop environmental programs and outcomes					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AI, CC	E					
34	Incorporate environmental information on promotional materials and signs.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	AI, CF	TBD					
35	Controlled activities on beaches a) Monitor condition of beach access by 4X4 for damage by vehicles or beach erosion. b) Install "No Fires on Beaches" signage on all beach access points. c) Investigate horse access and where conflict exists control access. d) Signage required to control RV camping on beachside residential streets.					OSR, CA, SP, NS, MA&RS	AI, CF	E					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
35	Assist local sports clubs in attracting and retaining volunteers.					OSR, CA, SP	VE, CC	N/A					
36	Create sustainable spaces in parks and reserves for events.					SP, GEDT	VE, CC	TBD					
37	Accessibility a) Assess opportunities for all ability access to beaches. b) Put in place beach accessibility improvements as per recommendations from the all abilities beach access assessment.					OSR, CA, SP, MA&RS	VE, CC	TBD					
38	Develop and put in place strategies to maximise the use of Council parks and reserves for events in line with Council's identified priorities.					OSR, CA, SP, Trades	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
39	Investigate the feasibility, location and construction of: a) a disk golf course in the area. Action completed b) ninja fitness facility					OSR, CA, SP, GEDT	VE, CC, IA	LTFP					
40	Investigate locations as part of the development of the Dog Management Strategy for the provision of Fenced Off-leash Dog Areas (FOLA) in the region					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
42	Put in place natural shade at all local playgrounds (includes succession planting where shade sails exist)					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, CS, VE	E					
43	Maintain the natural ecosystems within each of the reserves as a whole system, seeing each individual component, such as sports fields and flora and fauna as being part of the whole ecosystem services offered and understanding that all the reserves link together as part of a whole green system within the larger MidCoast local government area.					OSR, NS	ED, CS, VE	E					
45	Capacity Management strategies Management and mechanisms are based on the capacity of the ecosystems within each of the reserves. Identify the thresholds of change for each of the main ecosystems within the reserves, including: a) Natural sports fields b) Softfall where it is installed, such as on playspaces. c) Natural tactile surfaces where used on paths d) Flora ecosystems, such as plantings, trees, gardens e) Use these thresholds to manage each ecosystem within their individual thresholds to maintain the element at its optimum and to maintain community confidence in the overall space.					OSR, NS	MNS	TBD					
46	Manage and program activities to minimise conflict and ensure that each place can continue to function during events.					OSR, NS	FSI, OSM	E					
47	Shared use of common areas of parks. Maintain and promote awareness of the cooperative use of the common areas of reserves.					OSR, NS	FSI, OSM	TBD					
48	Ensure safety is considered in all design projects within the individual reserves and continue to work with relevant stakeholders (local Police) to address identified safety concerns.					OSR, NS	FSI, OSM	E					
49	Provide information on general beach, sun and surf safety.					OSR, NS, SP	FSI, OSM	E					
50	Improve passive surveillance into the individual reserves to manage antisocial behavior.					OSR, NS, CA	FSI, OSM	TBD					
51	Ensure a continual upgrade of lawn, paths and planting areas and other reserve assets in line with Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP).					OSR, NS	FSI, OSM	E					
52	Do reactive maintenance of the reserves such as graffiti removal.					OSR, NS, CA, Trades	FSI, OSM	E					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
53	Continue to monitor the use of dog off-leash areas. Do any necessary campaigns to educate dog-walkers about regulations and dog-owner responsibilities. Enforce regulations as required.					OSR, NS	FSI, OSM	E					
54	Integrate compliance signage with a signage and wayfinding strategy and update signs accordingly.					OSR, NS, CA, MA&RS	FSI, OSM	TBD					
55	Ensure the relevant information to allow for practicable enforcement of regulations, such as timed dog off leash.					OSR, NS, CA, MA&RS	FSI, OSM	TBD					
56	Review driveways and turn-around areas for vehicle/pedestrian shareway and provide appropriate areas and signage.					OSR, NS, CA, TA	FSI, OSM	TBD					
57	Investigate the identification of prioritised irrigating systems for sports fields and open space during drought by selecting those sports facilities that are a high priority to maintain.					OSR, CA, SP	VE	N/A					
62	Work with each of the Parkruns in our region to install distance markers to their courses					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
	LOCATION SPECIFIC ACTIONS												
1	Black Head - Black Head Sports Complex Investigate the following projects a) Upgrade sports lighting. Action completed b) Upgrade existing natural turf surface at the croquet court to improve player experience c) Provide seating on the eastern berm to the main field d) Improve playing surface e) Investigate carpark upgrade f) Install awning in front of canteen g) Investigate providing accessible access to amenity building					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
2	Black Head - Wylie Breckenridge Black Head Skatepark Develop the following project a) Construct a new skatepark in Black Head Action completed b) Complete multi-purpose court c) Upgrade playspace. See recommendation in Playspace Strategy.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
3	Boomerang Beach Develop the following projects a) Provide a lifeguard tower for more effective surveillance of the beach for the lifeguards b) Investigate Pedestrian/Bike Path around the Pacific Palms Loop (Boomerang Drive to The Lakes Way to Lakeside Crescent). c) Investigate development of existing viewing platforms					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
5	Boomerang Beach - Pacific Palms Sports Complex Investigate the following projects a) Investigate the addition of new sports fields and infrastructure b) Upgrade sports lighting. Action completed c) Provide lighting to the multi-purpose court d) Install Local Playspace e) Provide pathway connection from housing development to the south to allow community access to sports fields					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
6	Brimbin a) Finalise master planning for Brimbin					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
7	Bulahdelah Investigate the following project a) Investigate actions to improve the entry statements to the town.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
8	Bulahdelah Investigate the following project a) Investigate walk from future highway service station to state forest					OSR, CA, SP, TA, GEDT	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
9	Bulahdelah Investigate the following projects a) Create access by constructing a path from town to the Myall River b) Investigate creating linkages between existing spaces and mountains					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
10	Bulahdelah - Jack Ireland Sports Complex Investigate the following project a) Investigate the installation of a drainage system at sports fields					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
11	Bulahdelah - Showground Tennis Investigate the following projects a) Upgrade synthetic surface on the tennis courts when at end of life b) Replace 8 x wooden light poles at end of life with 18m base-hinge poles with LED luminaries at the tennis courts c) Investigate converting one tennis court to multi-purpose court Action completed d) Investigate upgrade of clubhouse and amenity to meet contemporary standards					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
12	Bulahdelah - Wade Park Develop the following project a) Upgrade playspace to Local level.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
13	Bulahdelah - Bulahdelah Showground a) Put in place all actions identified in the Bulahdelah Showgrounds Plan of Management.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
14	Coolongolook, Wang Wauk and Wallingat River Catchment Develop the following projects a) Investigate upgrading picnic facilities, the boat ramp and parking opportunities at Cedar Park to encourage local and visitor use access to services, attractions and activities. b) Upgrade amenity building at Coolongolook Park c) Lobby the State Government to re-open targeted existing facilities in forests, parks and reserves d) Develop an Oval master plan that includes landscaping, signage, amenities and better access from the western side of the highway					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
15	Coomba - Coomba Park Foreshore Park Develop the following project a) Installation of solar lighting to the carpark b) Investigate upgrade to existing aquatic club building, including driveway, launching ramp, storage shed c) Complete and formalise hand launching ramp, installation of fishing platform and volunteers shed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
16	Coomba - Coomba Park Develop the following project a) Investigate linkage between two urban village areas					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
17	Coomba - Town Wide Investigate the following projects a) linkage to join lakeside Walks, including to Clive Manners Walk b) interpretive signage highlighting our Aboriginal and European history; including the largest Aboriginal settlement on Wallis Lake. Known as "Wallamba" c) Make "all access" disabled parking and entry to pool d) Provide safe access between the public toilets and the pool. e) Investigate provision of multi-use courts for basketball and netball Action completed f) an accessible boardwalk with educational signage; behind the mangroves g) Investigate the upgrade of the children's playground. See Playspace Strategy h) Repair tennis court fencing i) Fence the current dog area j) Investigate the installation of public toilets at the Recreation Club on The Lakes Way					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE, CC	G, LTFP					
18	Coopernook Develop the following project a) Investigate the construction of a toilet in the vicinity of the educational shelter in the Cattai Wetlands.					OSR, CA, SP, NS	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
19	Coopernook Investigate the following projects a) Investigate a Coopernook to Cattai Wetlands linkage in collaboration over private land b) Investigate developing a multi-use trail from town to Harrington over private land					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
21	Coopernook Investigate the following project a) Investigate pump track / skatepark in Coopernook					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
23	Crowdy Head Investigate the following projects a) Install a water refill station at the surf club b) Seal the existing non-formalised car park at surf club Action completed c) Provide pathway between beach and boat ramp					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (0-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
24	Crowdy Head - Muir Park Investigate the following project a) Consider rationalising or diversifying usage opportunities of the tennis court in line with future Tennis Strategy recommendations					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
25	Cundletown Investigate the following project a) Construct cycleway from Cundletown to Taree					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
26	Cundletown Investigate the following project a) Investigate constructing a walk and cycle link to Brimbin					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
27	Diamond Beach – Diamond Park Develop the following project a) Do minor works to include new footpath, new equipment storage, a new basketball backboard and the resurfacing of the basketball and pickleball court. Partially Complete b) Upgrade playspace in accordance with recommendations in Playspace Strategy.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
28	Diamond Beach - Diamond Beach Sport Ground Develop the following project a) Install sports lighting to the senior sized sports field b) Upgrade existing amenity building to include changerooms and storage.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
29	Diamond Beach - Fantail Rise Reserve Develop the following project a) Investigate the need for a Local level playspace.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
31	Elizabeth Beach Develop the following projects a) Investigate boat ramp and pontoon upgrade at Wallis Lake Foreshore Reserve Action completed b) Linkages from the community to Elizabeth Beach – advocacy role c) Investigate safe walkway to Sunset Picnic Area (NPWS land).					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
32	Forster - Belton Park Develop the following projects a) Remove car parks in riverside foreshore park and turn into green spaces (refer to ED Strategy) b) Linkage to civic precinct					OSR, CA, SP, GEDT	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
33	Forster Develop the following project a) Extend Little Street foreshore walkway to Forster Keys as part of the Lakes to Oceans Trail b) Investigate upgrading of Little St Baths, including accessible access and upgrade to existing infrastructure Partially Complete					OSR, CA, SP, GEDT	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
34	Forster Develop the following project a) Integration and liaise with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to develop linkages from the Forster township through to the PWS managed lands such as national parks.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
35	Forster – Forster Sports Complex Develop the following project a) Investigate the construction of a 4 lane cricket training facility.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
36	Forster Develop the following projects a) Investigate completing missing links and formalization of the Lakes to Ocean walking circuit. Action completed b) Investigate, design and construct improvements to Rotary Walk at One Mile Beach. Improvements to include extension to the walk, rectification of damaged existing walkway, additional signage and supporting amenity such as seating. Investigation to include identification of accessible access to some sections of the Walk. Investigation to include feasibility of a connection from Bennett's Walk to One Mile Beach. c) Add linkage path from traffic lighting into Town Park d) Investigate developing pedestrian linkages through drainage reserves – Cape Hawke Drive to Lakes Estate to Lakes Drive e) Identify locations for basketball half-courts and hoops for general recreation					OSR, CA, SP, GEDT, NS	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
37	Forster - Forster Main Beach Develop the following projects as part of finalising the Forster Main Beach Master Plan a) Provide a lifeguard tower for more effective surveillance of the beach for the lifeguards b) Investigate providing all abilities access in Forster Main Beach Master Plan					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
39	Forster - The Sanctuary Develop the following project a) Extend trails network throughout the park					OSR, CA, SP, NS	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
40	Gloucester - King George V Memorial Park a) Investigate the upgrade of the playspace to District level					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
41	Gloucester - All town Investigate the following projects a) Extend and connect cycleways and pathways within the CBD and to neighbouring villages, such as cycleway to Barrington b) Continue to advocate for the development of mountain bike and bushwalking trails within Barrington tops and surrounding areas					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
42	Gloucester - Billabong Park Investigate the following projects a) Upgrade and extend existing skatepark to Regional level. Provide skate elements for all age groups b) Upgrade pedestrian bridge in Billabong Park Action completed c) Encourage beautification of Billabong Park through community projects such as fruit tree planting, edible gardens and public art/sculpture d) Continue use of the park for markets, festivals and community events Action completed e) Upgrade the existing playspace f) Upgrade rider training course g) Develop missing pathway linkages in park h) Provide accessible toilets i) Construct new suspension bridge in park (short term priority – 2023). Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
44	Gloucester Develop the following project a) Complete missing pathway linkages from Gloucester township to Bucketts					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
45	Gloucester Develop the following project a) Investigate the best use of community land adjoining southern side of Gloucester District Park					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
46	Gloucester Develop the following projects a) Investigate upgrading the viewing point at Kia Ora and Morgrani b) Install interpretive signage					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
49	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park - Bert Gallagher Memorial Oval Develop the following projects a) Replace 4 X wooden light poles at end of life with base-hinge poles and provide LED luminaires b) Install irrigation					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
50	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park Develop the following project a) Consider management options for the Recreation Centre					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
51	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park Develop the following project a) Install new shade sails at pool. Action completed b) Construct a new pump track.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE, YA	G, LTFP					
52	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park – Netball facility Develop the following projects a) Replace 4 X wooden light poles at end of life. Install base-hinge poles with LED luminaries					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
53	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park - Number 1 Oval Develop the following project a) Investigate options for the upgrade of the heritage listed grandstand. New grandstand to include changerooms, officials' rooms, public accessible toilets.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
54	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park - Number 1 Oval Develop the following project a) Replace 4 X wooden light poles at end of life. Install base-hinge poles with LED luminaries					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
55	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park - Southern Football Fields Develop the following project a) Install sports lighting to all fields					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
56	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park - Tennis facility Develop the following project a) Replace 9 X wooden light poles at end of life. Install base-hinge poles with LED luminaries					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
58	Hallidays Point Develop the following projects a) Investigate the construction of new Hallidays Point Sporting Fields at Tallwoods b) Coastal Path from Blackhead to Redhead village – continue through Seascape development to Diamond Beach and then through to Saltwater in accordance with existing planning c) Investigate planting of trees/vegetation in fingers of land that will not impact amenity or views					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
59	Harrington a) Put in place Master Plan for Oxley Reserve					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
61	Harrington Develop the following project a) Construct linkages from area near hotel waterways					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
62	Harrington Develop the following project a) Move cycleway at Wards Creek to other side of road into Oxley Reserve					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
64	Harrington - Esmond Hogan Park Develop the following projects a) Investigate the installation of a drainage system at sports fields b) Construct new amenity building Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
65	Hawks Nest Develop the following project a) Construct Stage 2 of Amenities Building at Myall Park. Partially complete.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
66	Hawks Nest Develop the following projects a) Investigate bird viewing platform at Winda Woppa b) Investigate fenced leashed free dog area at Providence Park Action completed c) Access to lookouts and vision of the water d) Work with Myall Koala and Environment Group to install interpretive signage along Hawks Nest Nature Walk. Action completed e) Upgrade of the Singing Bridge boat ramp. Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
67	Johns River Advocate for the provision of a multi-use path around the town					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
68	Krambach Develop the following projects a) Replace wooden light poles at tennis courts at end of life and add LED luminaries to the existing 4 X metal poles					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
70	Lansdowne Develop the following projects a) Investigate opportunities for multi-use sports and recreation facilities b) Upgrade drainage on sports fields					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
71	Lansdowne - Lansdowne Nature Reserve Develop the following project a) Advocate on behalf of community for better access to Lansdowne Nature Reserve					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
72	Manning Point Develop the following projects a) Investigate the upgrade of swimming enclosure b) Investigate the upgrade of the public toilet					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
73	Nabiac - Nabiac Showground a) Put in place all actions identified in the Nabiac Showgrounds Plan of Management. b) Investigate the construction of a covered equestrian facility as recommended in the Nabiac Showgrounds Management Plan.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
74	Nabiac Develop the following projects a) Develop a village landscape plan incorporating appropriate native exotic and fruit trees to produce shade, atmosphere and community food b) Investigate the upgrading of the existing sport amenity to align with current and projected future use of the sport complex Action completed c) Investigate upgrade of existing skate park					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE, CC	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
75	Nabiac - Nabiac Oval Investigate the following projects a) At the tennis courts replace 4 x wooden light poles at end of life with 18m base-hinge poles with LED luminaries Action completed b) Upgrade tennis court surface Action completed c) Incorporate additional sports markings to court to allow for other uses Action completed d) Investigate sports lighting for training at the oval. To include 4 x base-hinge poles with LED luminaries e) Investigate drainage of the sports field at Nabiac Oval					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE, CC	G, LTFP					
77	North Arm Cove and Carrington - Town wide Develop the following projects a) Develop and put in place a plan for walking/exercise trails and exercise stations. b) Casuarina Park upgrades in line with approved plans c) Develop Medina Bay reserve landscaping plan d) Assess the need for skateboard and BMX facilities, and put in place if feasible Action completed e) Assess the need for children's play facilities, and put in place if feasible Action completed f) Determine the need and location for a protected swimming area, and if feasible, develop a plan to put in place g) Determine the most appropriate location for an Emergency Evacuation jetty, and if feasible, develop a plan to put in place Action completed h) Do a feasibility study to identify a suitable location for a community boat ramp outside of the NAC village Action completed i) Survey public waterfront access pathways and build paths for pedestrian access to the water. j) Do a feasibility study to identify a suitable location for a public boat ramp and jetty to service the Carrington and Tahlee communities, and if feasible, develop a plan to put in place k) Investigate construction of a half-court multi-sport court at the Community Centre					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
78	North Arm Cove Develop the following projects a) Investigate boat launching facility at Beauty Point b) Investigate enhancement opportunities at Heros Beach as per community developed Master Plan					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
79	Old Bar - EG Trads and Old Bar Reserve Investigate the following projects a) Improve drainage and irrigation b) Upgrade lighting to eastern field c) New storage facility d) Provision of new changerooms for female players					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
80	Old Bar- Mud Bishops Reserve Develop the following projects a) Investigate embellishment Mud Bishops Reserve b) Extend, rationalise and enhance trails in the area, to include wayfinding and interpreting signage.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
82	Old Bar - Old Bar Park a) Develop the actions from the masterplan.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
83	Old Bar - Old Bar Park Investigate the following projects a) Provision of new changerooms for female players b) Solar panels on storage sheds c) Upgrade to sports light from metal halide to LED d) New lighting to the courts e) Ball catch fence to the courts f) Add pickleball line marking to the two netball courts (short-term priority) Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
84	Pipers Bay Recreation Reserve Investigate the following projects a) Provide a Local playspace in the reserve b) Provide seating c) Provide bubblers and dog bag dispenser					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
87	Smiths Lake Investigate the following projects a) Investigate community walking trails and connectivity back to Smiths Lake Recreation Park b) Consider implementation of the community's Smiths Lake Recreation Park Master Plan c) Investigate the corridor and construction of the foreshore trail.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
89	South Pindimar Investigate the following project a) Investigate the provision of a dump point at South Pindimar					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE, CC	LTFP					
91	Stratford a) Conduct feasibility analysis for Stratford reserve for future provision consideration					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	LTFP					
92	Stroud Develop the following projects a) Consider providing pathway access to the water via Mammy Johnson Reserve b) Advocate for the development of a long-distance trail along Nevilles Rd Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
93	Stroud - Silo Hill Reserve a) Investigate the future provision and embellishment					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
94	Taree a) Conduct feasibility study for a potential cycleway to Wingham					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
95	Taree a) Plan for, scope location and deliver Regional level skate park in Taree					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
96	Taree Develop the following project a) Consider underpass for the shared cycleway between Browns Creek and Victoria St Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
99	Taree - Edinburgh Park a) Investigate the upgrade of the play space at Edinburgh Park. See Playspace Strategy.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
100	Taree - Hughes Street Reserve a) Investigate the construction of a small trail network through the reserves, for walking and mountain biking.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
102	Taree - Taree Leagues a) Partner with the current owner and advocate for the upgrading of the sports lighting and the upgrade of the amenity building.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
104	Taree - Taree Rugby Park a) Investigate upgrade of lighting and amenities at Urara Lane Park					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
106	Taree - Wrigley Park Investigate the feasibility for the following projects a) Formalise full-size sports field b) Install sports lighting c) Upgrade tennis court surface when existing surfaces are no longer useable. d) Investigate rationalisation of amenities Action completed e) Construct a new pump track in the north-eastern corner Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
107	Taree – Johnny Martin Oval Develop the following projects. a) Upgrade skatepark – To be covered by Skatepark Strategy. Refer to Action 94. b) Field upgrade c) Installation of white picket cricket fence d) Upgrade of field surrounds e) Investigate improving amenity building.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
108	Taree – Omaru Park Develop the following projects. a) Investigate installation of sports lighting to outer fields. Covered in Sports Lighting Plan b) Investigate irrigation to main field.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
109	Taree - Foreshore a) Develop a feasibity study for the expansion of the boat launching area in front of the Taree Rowing Club facility. b) Construct a concrete access pathway from the concrete area at Manning Quays to the eastern end of the ramp at the front of the Riverstage. Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
109	Tea Gardens Develop the following projects a) Investigate provision of new sporting fields b) Investigate the relocation of the Tea Gardens skatepark to a more suitable site					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
110	Tea Gardens - Myall Street Reserve a) Develop a masterplan for the reserve, that considers future use and embellishment					OSR, CA, SP	VE	TBD					
112	Tinonee - Bob Collier Recreation Ground Investigate the following projects a) extension of sports fields to the East a) Replace 2 X wooden light poles at end of life. Replace with 4 X base-hinge poles and LED luminaries b) Replace synthetic surface on the tennis courts c) Replace wooden light poles at tennis courts. Replace with 18m base-hinge and LED luminaries					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
113	Tuncurry - Tuncurry Sports Complex Investigate the following projects a) Upgrade sports lighting to South St Oval. New system to provide lighting to competition standard through the installation of 4 25m base-hinge poles and 16 LED luminaires. b) Upgrade sports lighting to tennis courts. New system for competition through replacing the existing lighting poles with base-hinge poles and installing new LED luminaries c) Consider upgrade of amenities building and provide more storage for clubs. d) Replace and change location of the existing athletic field facilities, long jump and discus.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
114	Tuncurry Develop the following project a) Consider appropriate provision of open spaces and recreation facilities and embellishment for planned North Tuncurry residential area					OSR, CA, SP, LUP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
115	Tuncurry Develop the following project a) Investigate relocation of Point Road boat launching area and formalised parking					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
116	Tuncurry - John Wright Park Develop the following project a) Investigate design for amphitheater at John Wright Park					OSR, CA, SP, GEDT	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
117	Tuncurry - Jonnel Park/Bay Street Reserve Investigate the following projects a) providing a Local playspace in the northern end of the reserve Action completed b) Provide seating c) Provide bubblers and dog bag dispenser					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
118	Tuncurry – North Tuncurry Sports Complex Peter Barclay Sports Fields a) Replace 8 X wooden sports light poles at end of life with 8 X base-hinge poles to increase capacity across both fields					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					

	Actions	Short term (1-3yr)	Medium term (3-8yr)	Long term (8-13yr)	Ongoing	Who	Performance measures	Funding	Design Action	Planning Action	Enhancing the Environment Action	People in Parks Action	Management and Maintenance Action
119	Tuncurry - Rock Pool Develop the following project a) Upgrade public amenities					OSR, CA, SP, NS	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
120	Tuncurry - Vincent Fazio Park Investigate the following project a) The development of a masterplan for Fazio Park, to include bike park, pump track, parking, picnic, connectivity					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
121	Wards River - Wards River Community Park Investigate the following project a) Investigate feasibility for the upgrade of the playspace and amenities in Wards River					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
123	Wingham - Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve a) Investigate linkages from Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve to town centre					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
124	Wingham – Wingham Sports Complex a) Investigate the upgrade of the amenity building, including new inclusive changerooms.					OSR, CA, SP, TA	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
125	Wingham - Central Park a) Develop Master Plan Central Park Action completed b) Upgrade playspace – In accordance with Playspace Strategy c) Investigate installation of fencing around new playspace. Confirm through community consultation. Action completed					OSR, CA, SP	VE	TBD					
127	Wingham a) Investigate the upgrading of the Wingham skatepark. See Skatepark Strategy.					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE	G, LTFP					
129	Wooton Develop the following project a) Investigate creating a walk through the bush area behind the hall, with interpretive signage					OSR, CA, SP	ED, VE, CC	LTFP					

Appendix 2 – Sports facility benchmarking

Sports Facility Provision Benchmark

Number	Location	Location Details	Population	Fields		Outdoor Courts			Indoor (Courts)	Aquatics (Municipal Facilities)		Other	Standard Ancillary Building x SQM	Total Area
				Rectangular	Round	Tennis	Netball	Multi Purpose		50m	25m			
1	**Highfields**	Toowoomba, QLD	5,000	3	1	0	2	2	2	0	1		300 SQM	7.5ha
2	**The Ponds**	Sydney, NSW	4,000	3	1	10	4	4	0	0	0		240 SQM	9ha
3	**Cranbourne East (Casey)**	Melbourne, Vic	8,211	1	6	10	3	0	2	1	0	1 x Athletic 1 x Golf Course	820 SQM	21ha
4	**Ruse**	Campbelltown, NSW	5,502	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0		300 SQM	4.5ha
5	**Raby**	Campbelltown, NSW	6,340	10	4	2	0	1	0	0	1		300 SQM	22.5ha
6	**Springfield**	Ipswich, QLD	6,617	6	2	4	0	0	2	0	0		240 SQM	12.5ha
7	**Narellan**	Camden, NSW	3,492	5	0	4	42	0	1	0	1	3 x Hockey 4 x Softball 1 x Golf Course	210 SQM	7.5ha
8	**Oran Park**	Camden, NSW	4,753	7	4	0	0	0	1	0	0		250 SQM	19ha
9	**Moruya**	South Coast, NSW	3,500	3	1	6	0	2	1	1	0	1 x Golf Course	200 SQM	7ha
10	**Riverstone**	Sydney, NSW	6,191	2	2	6	4	0	2	1	0		310 SQM	9ha
11	**Glenfield**	Sydney, NSW	7,558	4	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	1 x Softball	820 SQM	10.5ha
12	**Bradbury**	Campbelltown, NSW	8,738	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1		350 SQM	7ha
13	**Appin**	Southern Highlands, NSW	1,803	3	1	5	0	0	0	0	0		750 SQM	6.5ha
14	**Picton**	Southern Highlands, NSW	3,983	5	1	16	4	1	1	1	0	1 x Bowls Green	300 SQM	9.5ha
15	**Bowral**	Southern Highlands, NSW	12,154	2	7	8	0	2	2	1	1	2 x Bowls Green 1 x Golf Course	320 SQM	24ha
16	**Seymore**	Gippsland, Vic	6,316	0	4	16	0	3	2	1	1	2 x Bowls Green 1 x Golf Course	300 SQM	13ha
17	**Emu Heights**	Penrith, NSW	3,362	7	3	4	0	4	0	0	0	1 x Athletic	380 SQM	16.5ha
18	**Glenbrook**	Penrith, NSW	4,945	3	2	11	0	0	0	1	0	1 x Athletic 2 x Bowls Green	250 SQM	10ha
19	**Woy Woy**	Central Coast, NSW	10,114	7	1	6	0	0	2	1	0	3 x Bowls Green 1 x Golf Course	350 SQM	11ha
20	**Gatton**	Lockyer Valley, QLD	6,869	4	3	4	4	0	2	1	0	1 x Showgrounds 1 x Golf Course 2 x Bowls Green	200 SQM	14ha
21	**Laidley**	Lockyer Valley, QLD	3,518	5	2	8	6	0	0	0	1	1 x Showgrounds 1 x Softball 1 x Bowls Green	300 SQM	12ha
22	**Byron Bay**	North Coast, NSW	4,959	10	1	7	0	4	2	1	0	2 x Bowls Green 1 x Golf Course	350 SQM	15ha
23	**Elizabeth Downs**	Adelaide, SA	5,143	7	7	0	22	0	2	1	1	1 x Softball	800 SQM	30ha
24	**Halls Head**	Perth, WA	6,408	9	4	4	2	6	2	1	1	1 x Golf Course	500 SQM	23.5ha
25	**Hastings**	Melbourne, Vic	7,000	5	5	14	4	2	2	1	0	2 x Bowls Green 1 x Golf Course	350 SQM	22ha
	Total		140,296	113	66	150	97	33	28	14	9		9,270 SQM	346ha
	Mean		5,611	4.52	2.64	6	3.88	1.32	1.12	0.56	0.36		370 SQM	13.84 ha
	Benchmark	**Average Population - 5,000**	**5,000**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**2**	**1**	**0.4**	**0.2**	**0.4**		**350 SQM**	11ha

Appendix 3 – Sports Club List

Organisation	
1st Bulahdelah Scout Group	Forster Tuncurry Winter Swimming Club
Achieve Fitness with Leon	Forster Turtles
AFL Masters North Coast	Forster Tuncurry Rugby League Football Club
AFL NSW/ACT	Forster Tuncurry Rugby Union Football Club
Allworth & District Social Fishing Club	Gloucester & District Junior Touch Football Inc
AMSAG Inc	Gloucester & District Netball Assoc
Australian Miniature Horse and Pony Registry	Gloucester District Athletics Centre Inc
AYC Fishing Tournaments	Gloucester Hockey Club
Black Head Surf Lifesaving Club	Gloucester Junior Cricket Association Inc
Boomerang Beach Boardriders	Gloucester Junior Rugby League
Bulahdelah Cricket Club	Gloucester Mountain Man Tri Challenge
Bulahdelah Dressage	Gloucester Rugby League Football Club
Bulahdelah Fishing Club Inc	Gloucester Rugby Union
Bulahdelah Pony Club	Gloucester Soccer Club Inc
Bulahdelah Showground Committee	Gloucester Thunderbolts Swimming Club Inc
Bulahdelah Soccer Club Inc	Great Lakes Cheerleading
Cape Hawke Surf Lifesaving Club	Great Lakes Cricket Club
Cooomba Aquatic Club	Great Lakes Pearl Dragons Inc
Coomba Park Tennis Club	Great Lakes United FC
Crowdy Head Surf Lifesaving Club	Great Lakes United Football Club
Wallis Spirit Dragons (Coomba Park)	Great Lakes Junior Cricket Club
Coomba Park Golf Club	Great Lakes Netball Association
Comboyne Rugby League Football Club	Group 3 Junior Rugby League
Cricket NSW	Group 3 Rugby League
Cundletown Football Club	Hallidays Point Cricket Club
Cundletown Jets Rugby League FC	Hallidays Point Pickleball Club
Football Mid North Coast	Hallidays Point Sports Club
Forster Tuncurry Junior RL Football Club	Harrington Hurricanes Rugby League
Forster Athletics Club	Harrington Little Athletics
Forster Bodyboarding Club	Harrington Netball Club
Forster Rovers Football Club	Hockey NSW
Forster Surf Life Saving Club	Horseabout
Forster Triathlon Club	Hunter Horse Driving Society Inc
Forster Tuncurry Board Riders	Hunter Surf Lifesaving
Forster Tuncurry Little Athletics Club	Iron Arena
Forster Tuncurry Little Athletics Club	Karuah Tea Gardens Cricket Club
Forster Tuncurry Mudcrabs	Kerrie Renee Dance Studio
Forster Tuncurry Touch Association	Lane Cove Junior Rugby Union

Lansdowne Football Club	Old Bar Cricket Club
Last Man Stands T20 Cricket	Old Bar Little Athletics
Lakers Softball Club	Pacific Palms Cricket Club
Lower Mid North Coast Rugby Union	Pacific Palms Netball Club
Manning Junior Cricket Association	Pacific Palms Twilight Cricket Association
Manning Model Aero Club	Pacific Palms Surf Lifesaving Club
Manning River District Cricket Assoc	parkrun Australia Ltd
Manning River Ratz	PCYC Taree
Manning River Rowing Club Incorporated	Pinks Amusements
Manning Valley AFL 9's	Saltwater Board Riders
Manning Valley Cycle Club	Ski Racing NSW Inc
Manning valley Hockey Association	Snap Fitness Taree
Manning Valley Hockey Association	South Taree Rugby League Football Club
Manning Valley Mustangs Australian Football	Southern United FC (Coastal United Inc)
Manning Valley Netball Association	St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days Inc
Manning Zone PSSA	Stroud Cricket Club
Mid North Coast Barrel Racing & Horse Ass	Stroud Horse Riding Club Inc
Mid North Coast Veterans Cricket Association	Stroud Ladies Soccer
Mid North Coast Veterans Cricket Association	Stroud Pony Club
Mid North Working Equitation Club	Stroud Rodeo
Moorland Devils Soccer Club Inc	Stroud Rugby League Football Club
Myall Coast Little Athletics Centre	Stroud Seals Swim Club
Myall Coast Mudcrabs RU Football Club	Taree Old Bar Surf Lifesaving Club
Myall Masters Swimming Club Inc	Taree Tigers Hockey Club
Netball NSW	Taree Touch Association
Nabiac Team Penning	Taree Touch Association (Inc)
New England Rugby Union	Taree Twilight Cricket Association
Newcastle Griffins Rugby Union Club	Taree West Cricket Club
Normanhurst Eagles Football Club	Taree Wildcats Soccer Club
Northern NSW Football	Taree Panthers Junior Rugby League Football Club
NSW Police Rugby League	Taree Basketball
NSW Rugby Union Ltd	Taree City Bulls Rugby League Football Club
NSW Touch Association	Taree Historic Motor Club
Old Bar Pirates Touch Association	Taree Little Athletics Club
Old Bar Tennis Club	Taree Over 40's Touch
Old Bar Barbarians Football Club	Taree Red Rovers Junior RL Football Club
Old Bar Netball Club	Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Surf Life Saving
Old Bar Pirates RLFC	Tinonee Cricket Club Inc
Old Bar Pirates Rugby League Football Club	Tea Gardens Hawks Rugby League Football
Old Bar Pickleball	Tea Gardens Soccer Club
Old Bar Beach Rugby Union Football Club	Tinonee Soccer Club

Tuncurry Forster Football Club
United Cricket Club
Wallamba A&H Association
Wallamba Bulls Rugby Union Football Club
Wallamba Football Club
Wallamba Junior Campdraft Assoc. Inc.
Water Skills For Life Inc
Wingham Cricket Club
Wingham District Rugby League Football
Wingham Football Club Inc
Wingham Junior & Senior Cricket Club
Wingham Junior & Senior Cricket Club
Wingham Junior Cricket Club
Wingham Junior Rugby League Football Club
Wingham Touch Football

Appendix 4 – Asset List

The following Asset List details all the parks and reserves managed by MidCoast Council. It also details the purpose for each reserve, where the park has a purpose, such as for sport.

Facility	Location	Hierarchy	Sports Stadium	Sports Ground	Sports Currently / Recently Played	Full Size	Junior Size	Netball Courts	Tennis Courts	Croquet	Basketball	Hockey	Play Ground	Fitness Equip	Skate Park
Allworth Baths	Allworth	Local													
Allworth Community Centre	Allworth	Local													
Allworth Foreshore	Allworth	Local													
Edith Waters Reserve	Allworth	Local											y		
Barrington Reserve	Barrington	Local													
Barrington Skate Park	Barrington	Local													y
Rocky Crossing Reserve	Barrington	Local													
Diamond	Blackhead	Local													
Blackhead Lagoon and Flora Reserve	Blackhead	Local												y	
Blackhead Sports Fields - James Foster Reserve	Blackhead	District		y	Football (Soccer) Croquet	1				1					
Blackhead Reserve, Surf Club, Ocean Baths, Playground	Blackhead	Local											y		
Blackhead Wetlands	Blackhead	Local													
Seabreeze Parade Reserve	Blackhead	Local													
Wylie Breckenridge Park	Blackhead	Local			Tennis				2 Synthetic						
Blueys Beach	Blueys Beach	Local													
Williams Park Blueys Beach South	Blueys Beach	Local													
Bobin Recreation Reserve	Bobin	Local													
Bohnock Boat Ramp Reserve	Bohnock	Local													
Boomerang / Blueys Headland	Boomerang Beach	Local													
Boomerang Beach - North	Boomerang Beach	Local													
Boomerang Beach South	Boomerang Beach	Local													
Belbourie Crescent Reserve	Boomerang Beach	Local													
Pacific Palms Sports Complex	Boomerang Beach	Local		y	Football (Soccer), Touch football, Netball training Cricket	2									
Bowman Reserve	Bowman	Local													
Bretti Camping Reserve	Bretti	Local													
Wade Park	Bulahdelah	Regional											y		
Bulahdelah Showground, Pool and Jack Ireland Sports Complex	Bulahdelah	District		y	Football (Soccer), Cricket, Tennis	2			4 Synthetic						
Mountain Park	Bulahdelah	District											y	y	y
Bulahdelah VIC	Bulahdelah	Local													
Church Street Foreshore Reserve	Bulahdelah	Local													
Lions Park Bulahdelah	Bulahdelah	Local													
Riverside Park	Bulahdelah	Local													
Flora Close Reserve	Bulahdelah	Local													
Pleasant View Parade Reserve	Bundabah	Local													
Steve Rich Reserve	Bundabah	Local													
Pier Place Reserve	Bundabah	Local													
Cedar Reserve	Bundabah	Local													
Top of the Myall Rest Area	Bungwahl	Local													
Rocks Crossing Reserve	Caffreys Flat	Local													
Charlotte Bay Foreshore	Charlotte Bay	Local													
Chatham Park	Chatham	Local		y	Football (Soccer), Touch Football Cricket	1									
Cedar Park	Coolongolook	Local													
Coolongolook Oval Reserve	Coolongolook	Local		y	Tennis	1			1				y		
Wallinghat River Foreshore Reserve	Coolongolook	Local													
Coomba Park Foreshore	Coomba Park	District											y	y	
Memorial Park Coomba	Coomba Park	Local													
Coomba Aquatic Gardens	Coomba Park	Local											.		
Coomba Hall & Tennis site (Moorooba	Coomba Park	Local			Tennis				1						y
Cattai Wetlands	Coopernook	Regional													
Coopernook Oval	Coopernook	Local		y	Pony club	1									
Coopernook Park	Coopernook	Local											y		
Coopernook Foreshore Reserve	Coopernook	Local													
Copeland Camping and Heritage Reserve	Copeland	Local													
Craven Park / Rest Area	Craven	Local											y		
Croki Reserve	Croki	Local													
Crowdy Head Back Beach, Foreshore	Crowdy Head	District													
Crowdy Head Beach - SLSC	Crowdy Head	District													
Muir Park	Crowdy Head	Local			Tennis				1						
Cundletown Park	Cundletown	Local		y	Football (Soccer), Touch Football, Tennis Cricket	1			4 Synthetic				y		
Kendall Reserve	Cundletown	Local													
Market Square	Cundletown	Local											y		
War Memorial Park	Darawank	Local													
Riverview Place Reserve	Darawank	Local													

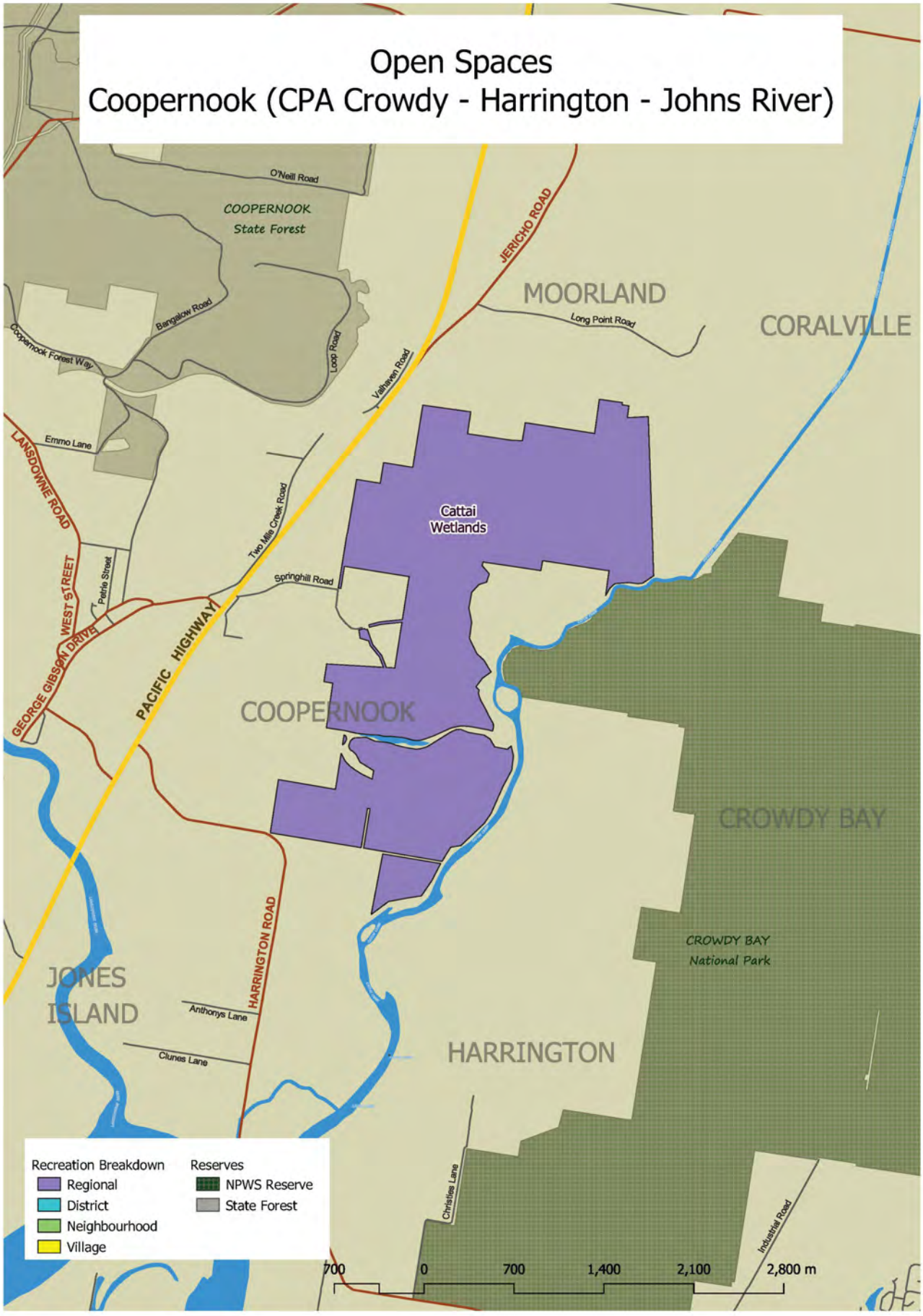
Facility	Location	Hierarchy	Sports Stadium	Sports Ground	Sports Currently / Recently Played	Full Size	Junior Size	Netball Courts	Tennis Courts	Croquet	Basketball	Hockey	Play Ground	Fitness Equip	Skate Park
Diamond Beach Sports Fields	Diamond Beach	Local		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket	1									
Diamond Park	Diamond Beach	Local		y	Netball training, Pickleball						1		y		
Ellenbourgh Falls	Elands	Regional													
Rapids Reserve	Elands	Local													
Pacific Palms Community Centre	Elizabeth Beach	Local			Tennis				2 All				y		
Wallis Lake Foreshore (Adjacent to Rec	Elizabeth Beach	Local													
Reinbergers Rest Area	Faulkland	Local													
Belton Park	Forster	District													
Boronia Park	Forster	District		y	Football (Soccer) Netball	3		8x Plexipav e 4x grass							
Ehlefeldt Reserve - Little St Baths	Forster	District													
Forster Main Beach & Surf Club	Forster	District												y	
Forster Marine Rescue Reserve and Boat	Forster	District													
Forster Ocean Baths	Forster	District													
Forster Sports Complex	Forster	District		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket, Croquet, Tennis	2			10 Synthetic 2 All weather 2 Dirt	2					
John Holland Park	Forster	District													
One Mile Beach	Forster	District													
Palmgrove Park	Forster	District											y		
Bennetts Head	Forster	Local													
Burgess Beach Reserve	Forster	Local													
Collendina Park	Forster	Local													
Forster Heights Park	Forster	Local											y		
Forster Town Park	Forster	Local											y		
Gregory Reserve and Pelican Boardwalk	Forster	Local													
Lions Park Forster	Forster	Local													
Little Street Foreshore	Forster	Local													
Little Street School of Arts /Health Centre /	Forster	Local													
Marjorie Debert Reserve	Forster	Local											y		
Mark Street Reserve	Forster	Local													
Middle Street Drainage Reserve	Forster	Local													
Mini Golf and Trampolines (Lions Club)	Forster	Local													
Surfriders Promenade Reserve North One	Forster	Local													
Pebbly Beach, Bicentennial Park and	Forster	Local											y		
Pilot Hill Forster	Forster	Local											y		
Pioneer Park	Forster	Local													
Second Head Reserve	Forster	Local													
The Sanctuary	Forster	Local													
Cape Hawke Drive Reserve	Forster	Local													
Cape Hawke Reserve	Forster	Local													
Casuarina Park Reserve	Forster	Local													
Dolphin Reserve	Forster	Local													
Elizabeth Reserve	Forster	Local													
Elouera Crescent Reserve	Forster	Local													
Goldens Road Drainage Reserve	Forster	Local													
Lakes Estate Sports Ground	Forster	Local											y		
Marcel Terry Reserve	Forster	Local													
Melaleuca Reserve	Forster	Local													
Pipers Bay Drive Reserve	Forster	Local													
Pipers Bay Foreshore Reserve	Forster	Local													
Southern Parkway Drainage Reserve	Forster	Local													
Tahiti Avenue Reserve	Forster	Local													
Tea Tree Road Reserve	Forster	Local													
The Southern Parkway Reserve	Forster	Local													
Wyuna Reserve	Forster	Local													
Gloryvale Reserve	Gloryvale	Local													
Billabong Park	Gloucester	Regional											y		y
Gloucester District Park, Rotary Park and Swimming Pool	Gloucester	Regional	y	y	Rugby League Rugby Union Football (Soccer) Cricket Athletics Netball, Croquet,	7	2	5x Netball Bitumen	15 Synthetic				y	y	
Babbler Reserve	Gloucester	Local													
Bill Sansom Memorial Park	Gloucester	Local													
Captain Cook Park	Gloucester	Regional		y	Hockey	3									
Henderson Reserve	Gloucester	Local													
King George V Memorial Park	Gloucester	Local											y		
Lemans Lookout	Gloucester	Local													
Lions Park Gloucester	Gloucester	Local													
Memorial Park Gloucester	Gloucester	Local													
Mograni Lookout	Gloucester	Local													
Ted Woolford Park	Gloucester	Local													
Kia Ora Lookout	Gloucester	Local													
Latham Rest Area	Gloucester	Local													
Relfs Landing	Gloucester	Local													
Bottlebrush Close Reserve	Green Point	Local			Tennis				2				y		y
Green Point Foreshore	Green Point	Local													

Facility	Location	Hierarchy	Sports Stadium	Sports Ground	Sports Currently / Recently Played	Full Size	Junior Size	Netball Courts	Tennis Courts	Croquet	Basketball	Hockey	Play Ground	Fitness Equip	Skate Park
Smokehouse Beach	Green Point	Local													
Oxley Reserve Playground and Skate Park	Harrington	District											y		y
Oxley Reserve #2 (next to pub)	Harrington	District											y	y	
Captain Cook Bicentennial Park and Pilot	Harrington	Local													
Dolphin Park Crescent Reserve	Harrington	Local													
Esmond Hogan Park	Harrington	District		y	Cricket, Athletics, Netball (training only) Croquet, Tennis	1		1x grass netball	2 Synthetic						
Gordon Smith Reserve	Harrington	Local											y		
Harrington Waters Foreshore Reserve and	Harrington	Local													
Alexander Newton Reserve and Manor	Harrington	Local													
Oxley Reserve - opposite Elizabeth Street	Harrington	Local													
Providence Bay Park	Hawks Nest	District											y		
Winda Woppa Reserve	Hawks Nest	District											y		
Bennetts Beach Hawks Nest	Hawks Nest	Local													
Booner/Yamba Street Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local													
Jimmy's Beach Day Area	Hawks Nest	Local											y		
Jimmys Beach Foreshore	Hawks Nest	Local													
Mirreen Street Road Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local													
Moira Parade Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local											y		
Myall Park Sports Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local		y	Rugby League, Tennis Athletics, Croquet	1			4 Synthetic	2					
The Anchorage Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local													
Albatross Avenue Reserve	Hawks Nest	Local													
Yacaaba Headland	Hawks Nest	Local													
Alice Street Reserve	Karuah	Local													
Killabakh Community Reserve	Killabakh	Local			Tennis				1						
Kimbriki Tennis Reserve	Kimbriki	Local			Tennis				1						
Leo Carney Park	Krambach	Local			Tennis				2				y		
Krambach War Memorial Park	Krambach	Local											y		
Lansdowne Recreation Reserve	Lansdowne	District		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket, Tennis	2			2 Synthetic				y		
Limeburners Creek Community Hall	Limeburners Creek	Local											y		
Manning Point Foreshore and Vic	Manning Point	Local											y		
Carsons Lookout	Mares Run	Local													
Marlee Recreation Reserve	Marlee	Local			Tennis				1 All						
Nabiac Oval and swimming pool	Nabiac	District		y	Cricket, Tennis	1			2 All				y		y
Nabiac Showground and Aub Ferris Sports Complex	Nabiac	District		y	Rugby Union Football (Soccer), Equestrian sports	1									
Memorial Reserve Nabiac	Nabiac	Local													
Bullocky Wharf Recreation Reserve	Nabiac	Local													
The Local Green	Nabiac	Local													
Heron Street Reserve	Nerong	Local													
Redbill Park	Nerong	Local											y		
Waterhen Park	Nerong	Local													
Nerong Harbour and Reserve	Nerong	Local													
Casuarina Park Reserve	North Arm Cove	Local													
North Arm Cove Community Centre	North Arm Cove	Local			Tennis				1				y		
Promontory Way Reserve	North Arm Cove	Local													
Yallarwah Road Reserve	North Arm Cove	Local													
Cove Boulevarde Reserve	North Arm Cove	Local													
Promontory Way Reserve	North Arm Cove	Local													
Old Bar Park	Old Bar	District		y	Rugby League, Tennis, Cricket Athletics Touch Football Netball (training only)	2		2x Netball Plexipave	5 Synthetic				y		y
Apex Park	Old Bar	Local													
Badgers Park	Old Bar	Local											y		
Bluehaven Reserve	Old Bar	Local											y		
Charles Boyce Park	Old Bar	Local													
David Street Reserve	Old Bar	Local													
Drury Close Reserve	Old Bar	Local													
EG Trad Sportsground	Old Bar	District		y	Football (Soccer) Rugby Union Cricket	3									
Ivy Crescent Reserve	Old Bar	Local													
Mistral Reserve	Old Bar	Local													
Molong Reserve	Old Bar	Local											y		
Mudbishops Point	Old Bar	Regional													
Old Bar Tennis	Old Bar	Local													
Carle Park	Old Bar	Local													
Waterman Street Reserve	Old Bar	Local													
Wilkes Park	Old Bar	Local													
Pampoolah Reserve	Pampoolah	Local													
Leone Fidden Memorial Park	Pindimar	Local											y		y

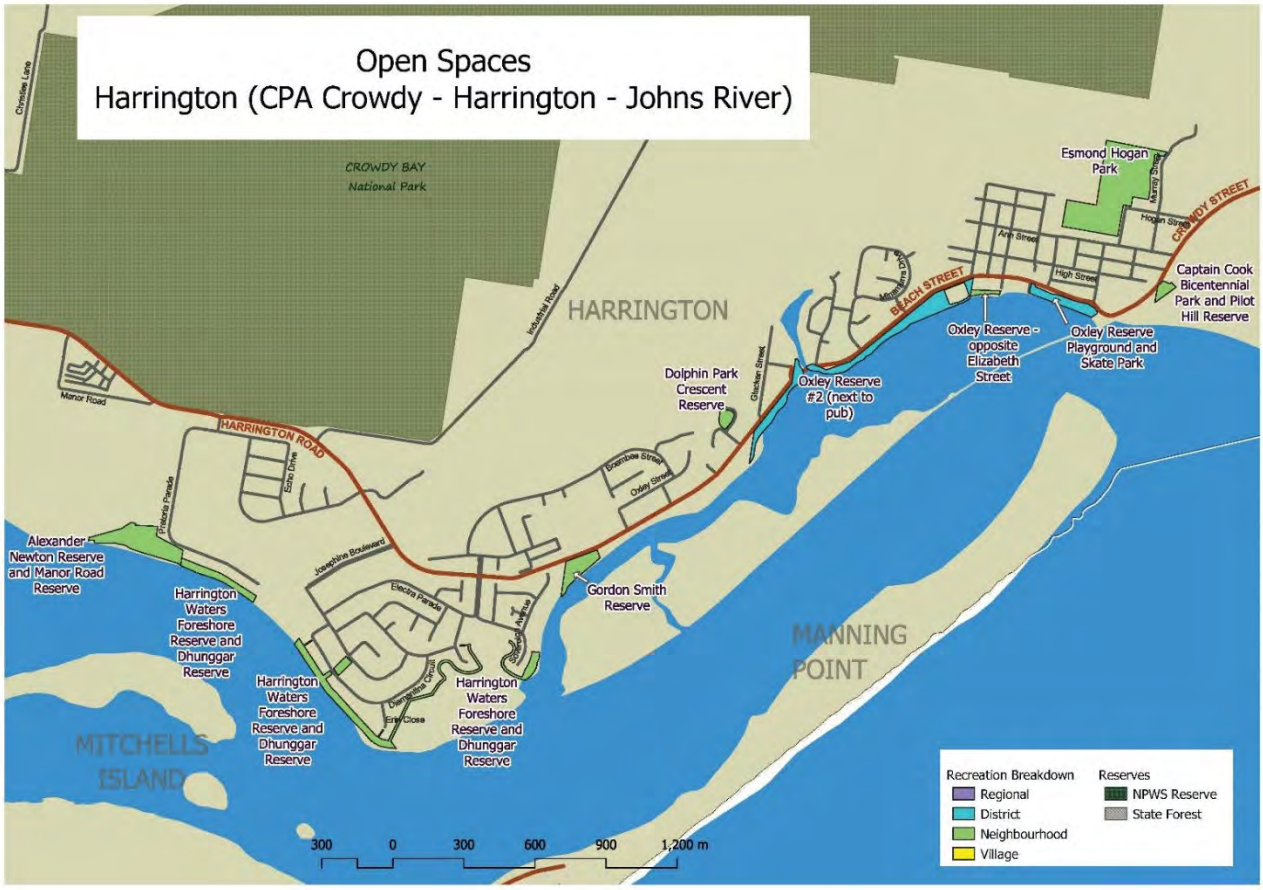
Facility	Location	Hierarchy	Sports Stadium	Sports Ground	Sports Currently / Recently Played	Full Size	Junior Size	Netball Courts	Tennis Courts	Croquet	Basketball	Hockey	Play Ground	Fitness Equip	Skate Park
Pindimar South Reserve	Pindimar	Local													
Kore Kore Creek Reserve	Pindimar	Local													
Pindimar South Reserve	Pindimar	Local													
Seascape Reserve	Redhead	Local													
Redhead Reserve	Redhead	Local													
Boat Beach & Andys Corner	Seal Rocks	Local													
Number One Beach	Seal Rocks	Local													
Smiths Lake Foreshore	Smiths Lake	Local											y		
Smiths Lake Recreation Reserve	Smiths Lake	Local			Netball training			1							y
The Jack	Smiths Lake	Local													
Stratford Reserve	Stratford	Local											y		
Allen Park	Stroud	District											y		
Stroud Showground and Kevin Francis Park	Stroud	District		y	Rugby League, Tennis Football (Soccer), Equestrian sports Cricket	1			3 Synthetic						y
Mill Creek Lions Park	Stroud	Local													
Silo Hill Reserve	Stroud	Local													
Scenic Park	Stroud Road	Local											y		
Taylor Park	Stroud Road	Local											y		
Brambles Recreation Reserve	Tarbuck Bay	Local													
Tarbuck Bay Foreshore Reserve	Tarbuck Bay	Local													
Endeavour Reserve and Bicentennial	Taree	Regional												y	
Fotheringham Park	Taree	Regional											y		
Queen Elizabeth Park	Taree	Regional											y	y	
Taree Recreation Ground and Rotary Park	Taree	Regional	y	y	Rugby League Hockey Athletics Cricket Touch Football Cycling Football (Soccer)	4	3x Jnr R/L 2x Jnr Cricket	8x Plexipave 4x Grass			2	3x Synthetic		y	
Harry Bennett Park	Taree	District													
Omaru Park	Taree	District		y	Football (Soccer)	4									
Wrigley Park	Taree	District		y	Tennis, grass sport training Can be used for cricket or grass sport training	1			7 Synthetic 3 Synthetic (not in use)				y		
Boronia Reserve	Taree	Local													
Bushland Park	Taree	Local													
Andrews Reserve	Taree	Local													
Apex Lookout	Taree	Local													
Barton Walk	Taree	Local											y		
Bays Hill Reserve	Taree	Local													
Boyce Park	Taree	Local											y		
Debrecency Park	Taree	Local											y		
Edinburgh Park	Taree	Local		y	Cricket, sports training overflow	1							y		
Kanangra Drive Reserve #1	Taree	Local											y		
Kanangra Drive Reserve #2	Taree	Local													
Manning Waters Reserve	Taree	Local													
Martin Reserve	Taree	Local											y		
Mitchell Reserve	Taree	Local											y		
Muscio Park	Taree	Local		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket	2									
Railway Park	Taree	Local													
Ruprecht Park	Taree	Local											y		
Saxby Park	Taree	Local													
Stokes Park	Taree	Local		y	Cricket training	1							y		
Bayview Reserve	Taree	Local													
Blackbutt Place Reserve	Taree	Local													
Taree Park (Johnny Martin Oval)	Taree	District		y	AFL Cricket Croquet	1				2			y		y
Urara Lane - BMX and Rugby Park	Taree	Local		y	BMX, Rugby Union	1									
William Wynter Park	Taree	Local													
Winton Reserve	Taree	Local											y		
Bangalow Place Reserve	Taree	Local													
Butea Drive Reserve	Taree	Local													
Craiglea Close Reserve	Taree	Local													
Dolphin Park	Taree	Local													
Edinburgh Drive Reserve	Taree	Local													
Hughes Street Reserve	Taree	Local													
Mill Close Reserve	Taree	Local													
Petken Drive Reserve	Taree	Local													
Riverlinks Reserve	Taree	Local													
Skye Park Reserve	Taree	Local													
Spotted Gums Reserve	Taree	Local													
Waratah Place Reserve	Taree	Local													
Whitbread Street Reserve	Taree	Local													
Wyoming Close Reserve	Taree	Local													
Marine Drive Reserve	Tea Gardens	Regional													
Anzac Park	Tea Gardens	District													
Banksia Park	Tea Gardens	Local													
Admiralty Avenue Reserve	Tea Gardens	Local													
Dunshea Avenue Reserve	Tea Gardens	Local											y		
Elouera Park (Lions Lookout)	Tea Gardens	Local													
Memorial Park Sports Field	Tea Gardens	Local		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket	1									
Myall Street Reserve TG Skatepark	Tea Gardens	Local													y

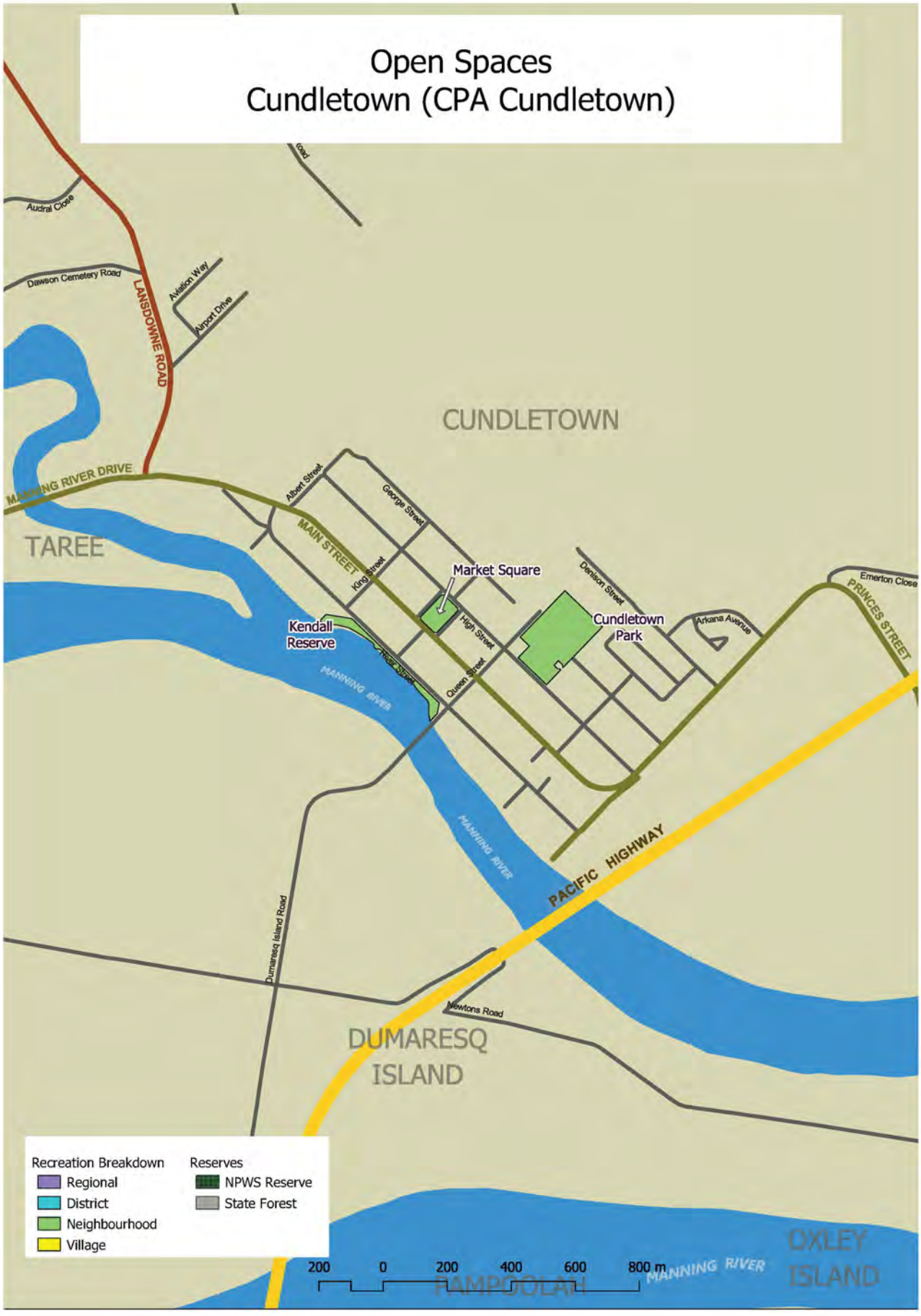
Facility	Location	Hierarchy	Sports Stadium	Sports Ground	Sports Currently / Recently Played	Full Size	Junior Size	Netball Courts	Tennis Courts	Croquet	Basketball	Hockey	Play Ground	Fitness Equip	Skate Park
Tea Gardens Library and Swimming Pool	Tea Gardens	Local											y		
Toonang Drive Reserve	Tea Gardens	Local													
The Admirals Green	Tea Gardens	Local													
Tinonee Recreation Reserve	Tinonee	District		y	Football (Soccer), Tennis, Touch Football Cricket Netball (Training only)	1		1x grass	2 Synthetic				y		
Horrace Dean Memorial Park	Tinonee	Local											y		
Tallships Reserve	Tinonee	Local											y		
Beecher Street Reserve	Tinonee	Local													
John Wright Park	Tuncurry	Regional													
North Tuncurry Sports Complex	Tuncurry	Regional		y	Rugby League Rugby Union Touch Football	4									
Point Road Reserve	Tuncurry	District													
Nine Mile Beach, Rockpool Road Reserve	Tuncurry	District											y		
Tuncurry Sports Complex (South Street)	Tuncurry	District		y	Football (Soccer) Cricket, Athletics, Tennis	4			8 All Weather				y		
Tuncurry Water Park and Fazio Park	Tuncurry	District													y
Jonnell Cove Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
Palmway Crescent Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
Banksia Estate Reserve	Tuncurry	Local											y		
Bicentennial Flora Park	Tuncurry	Local													
Bickford Park	Tuncurry	Local													
Chapmans Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
John Oxley Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
Lone Pine Memorial Park	Tuncurry	Local											y		
Ohmas Bay Foreshore	Tuncurry	Local													
Ohmas Bay Jonnell Park	Tuncurry	Local													
Tuncurry Foreshore Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
Wallamba Cove Reserve	Tuncurry	Local													
Wallabi Point Foreshore Park	Wallabi Point	Local													
Walter Fay Street Reserve	Wallabi Point	Local													
Shelley Close Reserve	Wallabi Point	Local											y		
Wards River Community Park	Wards River	Local											y		
Wherrol Flat Reserve	Wherrol Flat	Local			Tennis				1 Dirt						
Central Park	Wingham	District		y	Cricket	1							y	y	
Mick Tuck Riverside Reserve (incorporating	Wingham	District													
Wingham Sporting Complex	Wingham	District	y	y	Rugby League Football (Soccer) Cricket Touch Football, Go Karts	5	3				1				
Abbott Street Reserve	Wingham	Local											y		
Apex Park	Wingham	Local											y	y	
Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve	Wingham	Local		y	Cricket	1									
Chrissy Gollan Park	Wingham	Local													
Memorial Park Wingham	Wingham	Local													
Price Street Reserve	Wingham	Local											y		
Railway Bridge Park	Wingham	Local													
Wingham Skate Park Reserve	Wingham	Local													y
Wingham Swimming Pool	Wingham	Local													
Wingham Tennis Courts	Wingham	Local			Tennis				4						
Wingham Wetlands	Wingham	Local													
Jacaranda Avenue Reserve	Wingham	Local											y		
Anzac Park	Tea Gardens	District													

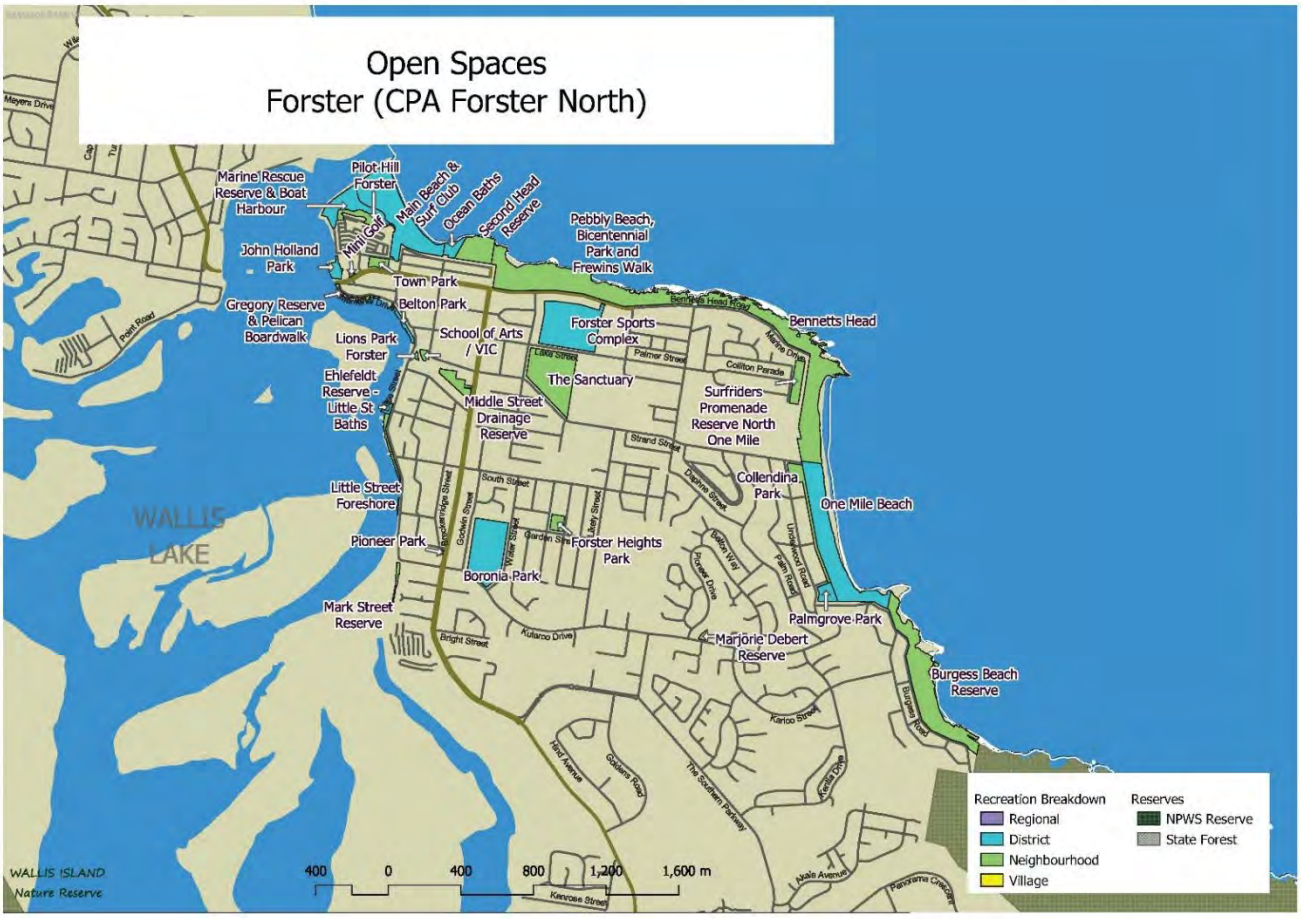
Appendix 5 – Maps

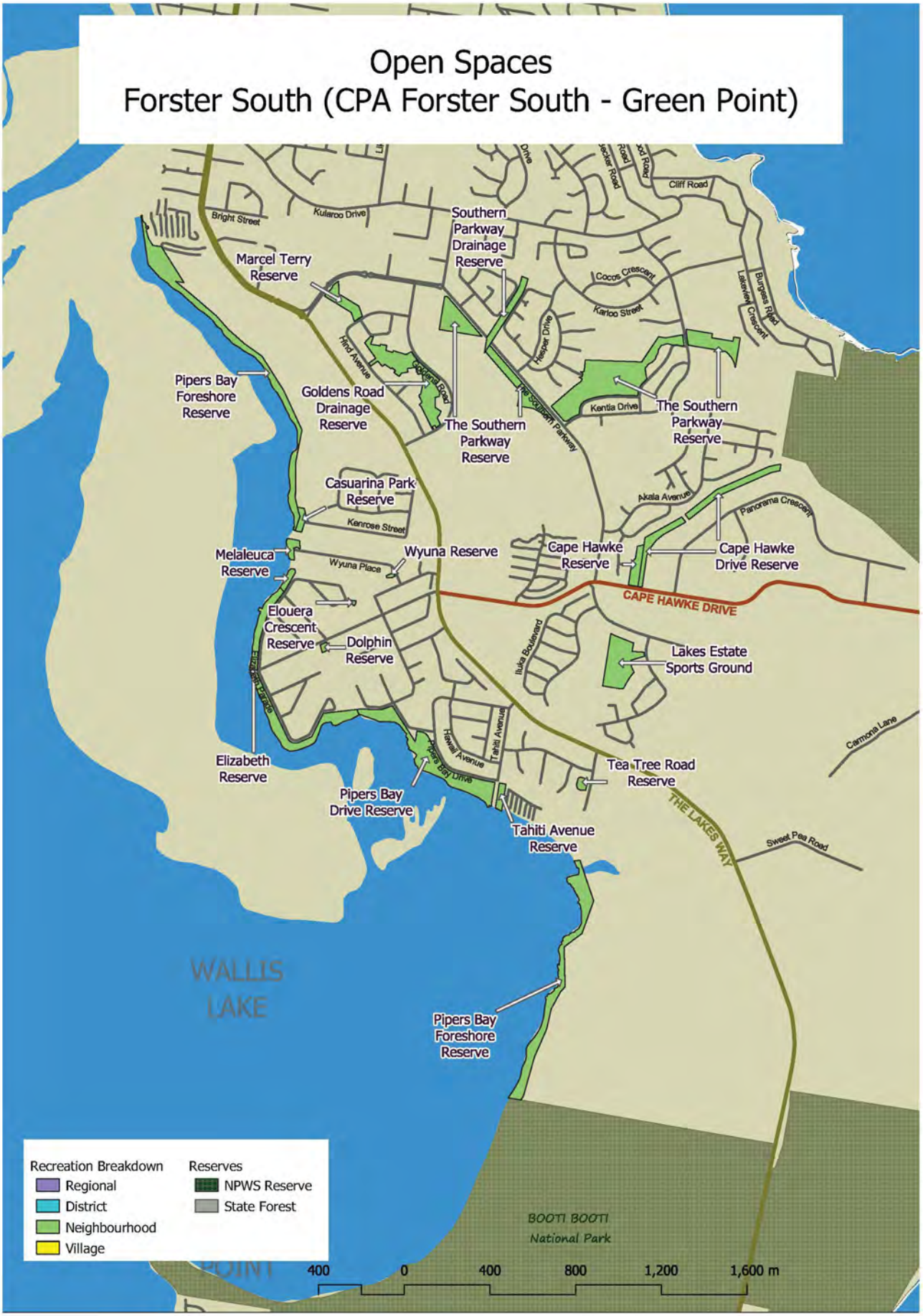

Open Spaces
Coopernook (CPA Crowdy - Harrington - Johns River)
O'Neill Road
COOPERNOOK
State Forest
JERICHO ROAD
MOORLAND
Long Point Road
CORALVILLE
Bangalow Road
Coopernook Forest Way
Loop Road
Valhaven Road
Emmo Lane
LANSDOWNE ROAD
Cattai
Wetlands
Two Mills Creek Road
Springhill Road
Petrie Street
WEST STREET
GEORGE GIBSON DRIVE
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
COOPERNOOK
CROWDY BAY
CROWDY BAY
National Park
HARRINGTON ROAD
JONES
ISLAND
Anthonys Lane
Clunes Lane
HARRINGTON
Christies Lane
Industrial Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
700
0
700
1,400
2,100
2,800 m

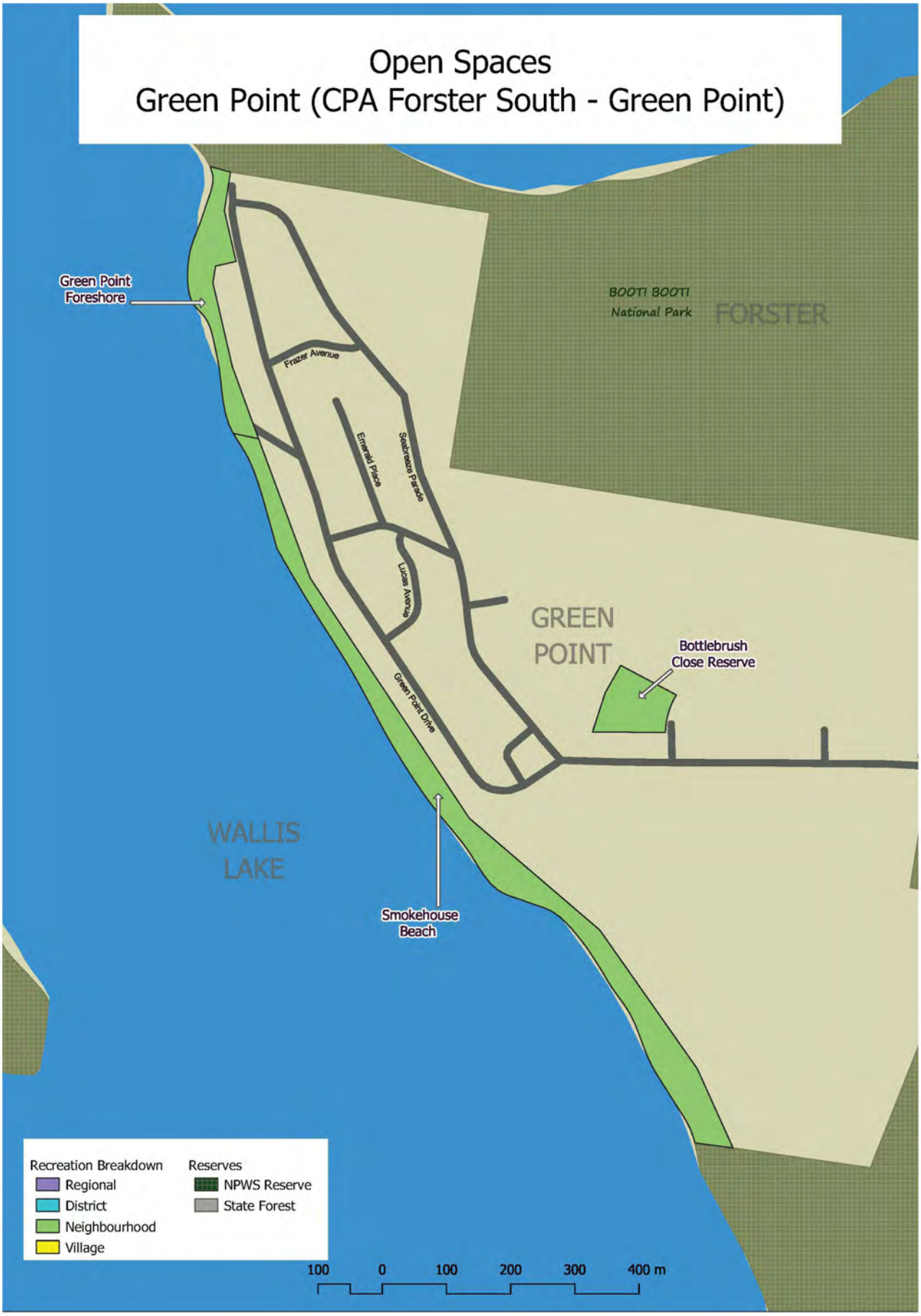
Open Spaces
Crowdy Head (CPA Crowdy - Harrington - Johns River)
Crowdy Head Foreshore Reserve
Muir Park
Pacific Drive
Leopold Street
Elizabeth Street
CROWDY BAY National Park
CROWDY HEAD ROAD
Crowdy Head Beach - SLSC
Crowdy Head Foreshore Reserve
Crowdy Head Back Beach
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m

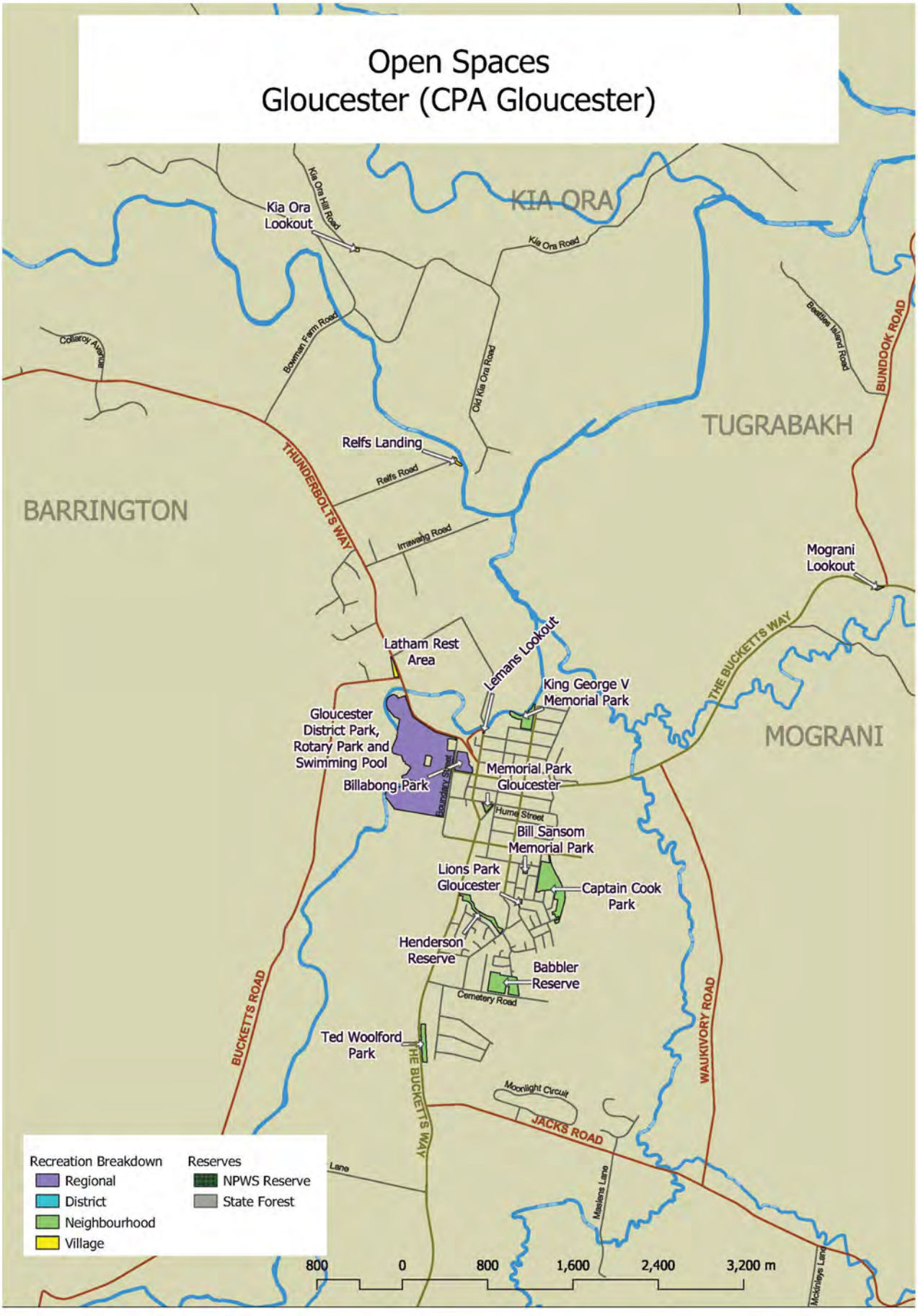

Open Spaces
Harrington (CPA Crowdy - Harrington - Johns River)
CROWDY BAY
National Park
HARRINGTON
MANNING
POINT
MITCHELLS
ISLAND
Esmond Hogan
Park
CROWDY STREET
BEACH STREET
Captain Cook
Bicentennial
Park and Pilot
Hill Reserve
Oxley Reserve -
opposite
Elizabeth
Street
Oxley Reserve
Playground and
Skate Park
Oxley Reserve
#2 (next to
pub)
Dolphin Park
Crescent
Reserve
HARRINGTON ROAD
Manor Road
Industrial Road
Gordon Smith
Reserve
Alexander
Newton Reserve
and Manor Road
Reserve
Harrington
Waters
Foreshore
Reserve and
Dhunggar
Reserve
Harrington
Waters
Foreshore
Reserve and
Dhunggar
Reserve
Harrington
Waters
Foreshore
Reserve and
Dhunggar
Reserve
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest

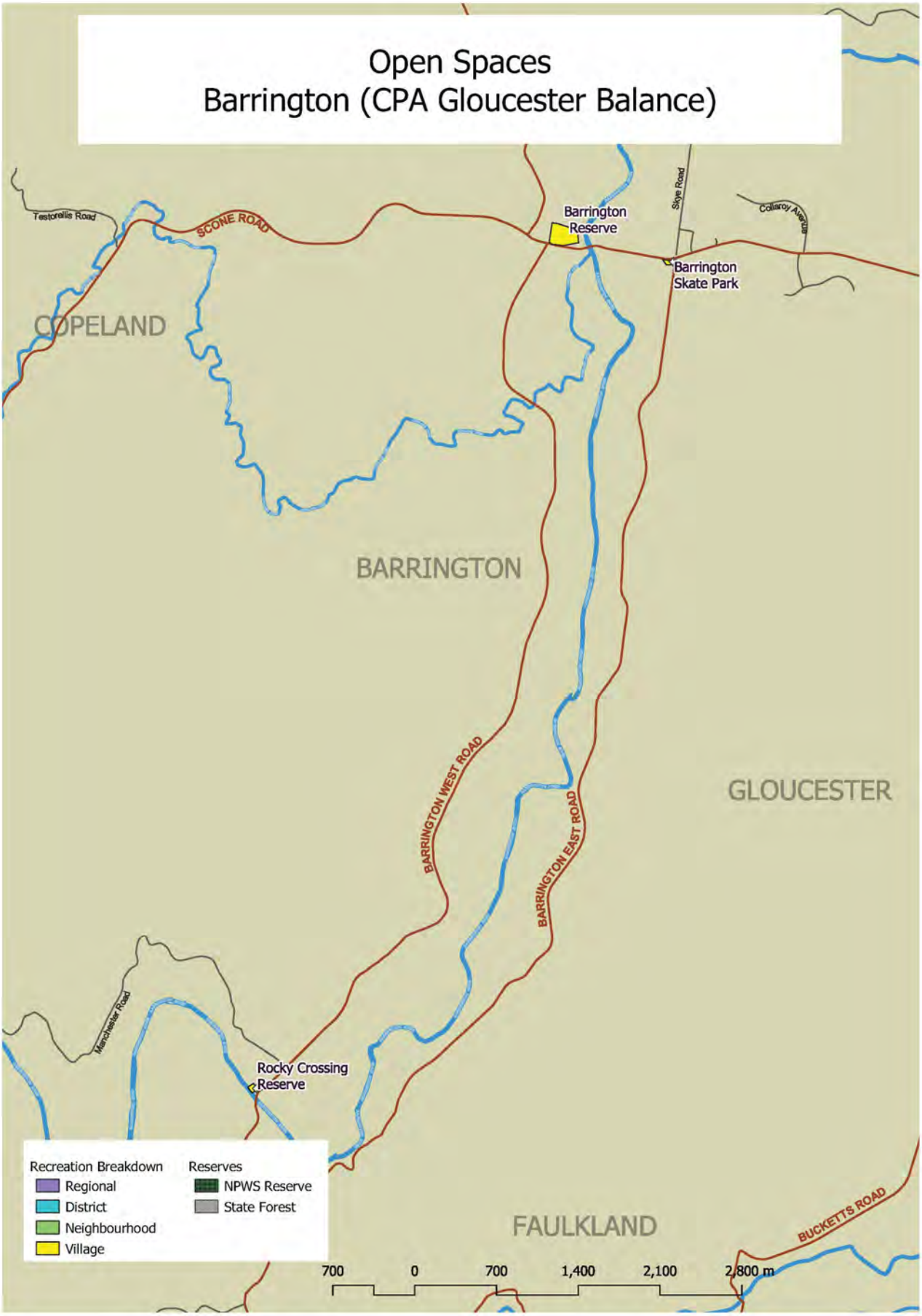

Open Spaces
Cundletown (CPA Cundletown)
Audral Close
Dawson Cemetery Road
LANSDOWNE ROAD
Aviation Way
Airport Drive
CUNDLETOWN
MANNING RIVER DRIVE
TAREE
Albert Street
George Street
MAIN STREET
King Street
Market Square
Denison Street
Emerton Close
PRINCES STREET
Kendall Reserve
High Street
Cundletown Park
Arkana Avenue
Queen Street
MANNING RIVER
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
Dumaresq Island Road
Newtons Road
DUMARESQ ISLAND
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200 0 200 400 600 800 m
MANNING RIVER
OXLEY ISLAND
PAMPOOLAH


Open Spaces
Forster (CPA Forster North)
Marine Rescue Reserve & Boat Harbour
Pilot Hill Forster
Main Beach & Surf Club
Ocean Baths
Second Head Reserve
Pebbly Beach, Bicentennial Park and Frewins Walk
John Holland Park
Mini Golf
Town Park
Belton Park
Gregory Reserve & Pelican Boardwalk
Lions Park Forster
School of Arts / VIC
Forster Sports Complex
Bennetts Head
The Sanctuary
Ehlefeldt Reserve Little St Baths
Middle Street Drainage Reserve
Surfriders Promenade Reserve North One Mile
Collendina Park
One Mile Beach
Little Street Foreshore
Pioneer Park
Forster Heights Park
Boronia Park
Mark Street Reserve
Palmgrove Park
Marjorie Debert Reserve
Burgess Beach Reserve
WALLIS LAKE
WALLIS ISLAND Nature Reserve
400 0 400 800 1,200 1,600 m
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest

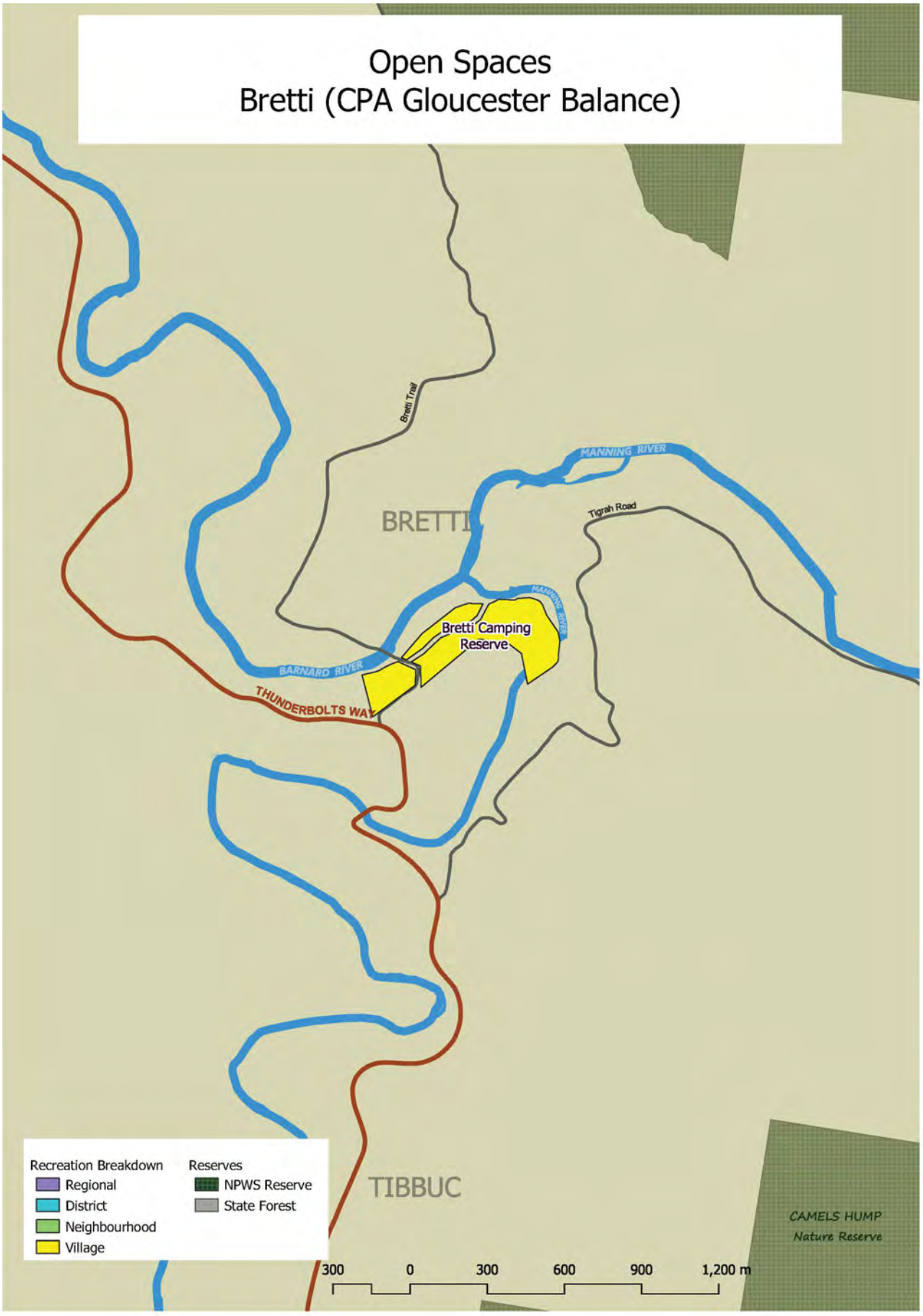

Open Spaces
Forster South (CPA Forster South - Green Point)
Bright Street
Kularoo Drive
Marcel Terry Reserve
Southern Parkway Drainage Reserve
Cliff Road
Cocos Crescent
Karloo Street
Hesper Drive
Lakeview Crescent
Burgess Road
Hird Avenue
Goldens Road
Pipers Bay Foreshore Reserve
Goldens Road Drainage Reserve
The Southern Parkway Reserve
Kentia Drive
The Southern Parkway Reserve
Casuarina Park Reserve
Kenrose Street
Akala Avenue
Panorama Crescent
Melaleuca Reserve
Wyuna Place
Wyuna Reserve
Cape Hawke Reserve
Cape Hawke Drive Reserve
CAPE HAWKE DRIVE
Elouera Crescent Reserve
Dolphin Reserve
Illuka Boulevard
Lakes Estate Sports Ground
Elizabeth Reserve
Hawai Avenue
Tahiti Avenue
Pipers Bay Drive
Pipers Bay Drive Reserve
Tea Tree Road Reserve
Camona Lane
THE LAKES WAY
Tahiti Avenue Reserve
Sweet Pea Road
WALLIS LAKE
Pipers Bay Foreshore Reserve
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
BOOTI BOOTI National Park
400 0 400 800 1,200 1,600 m

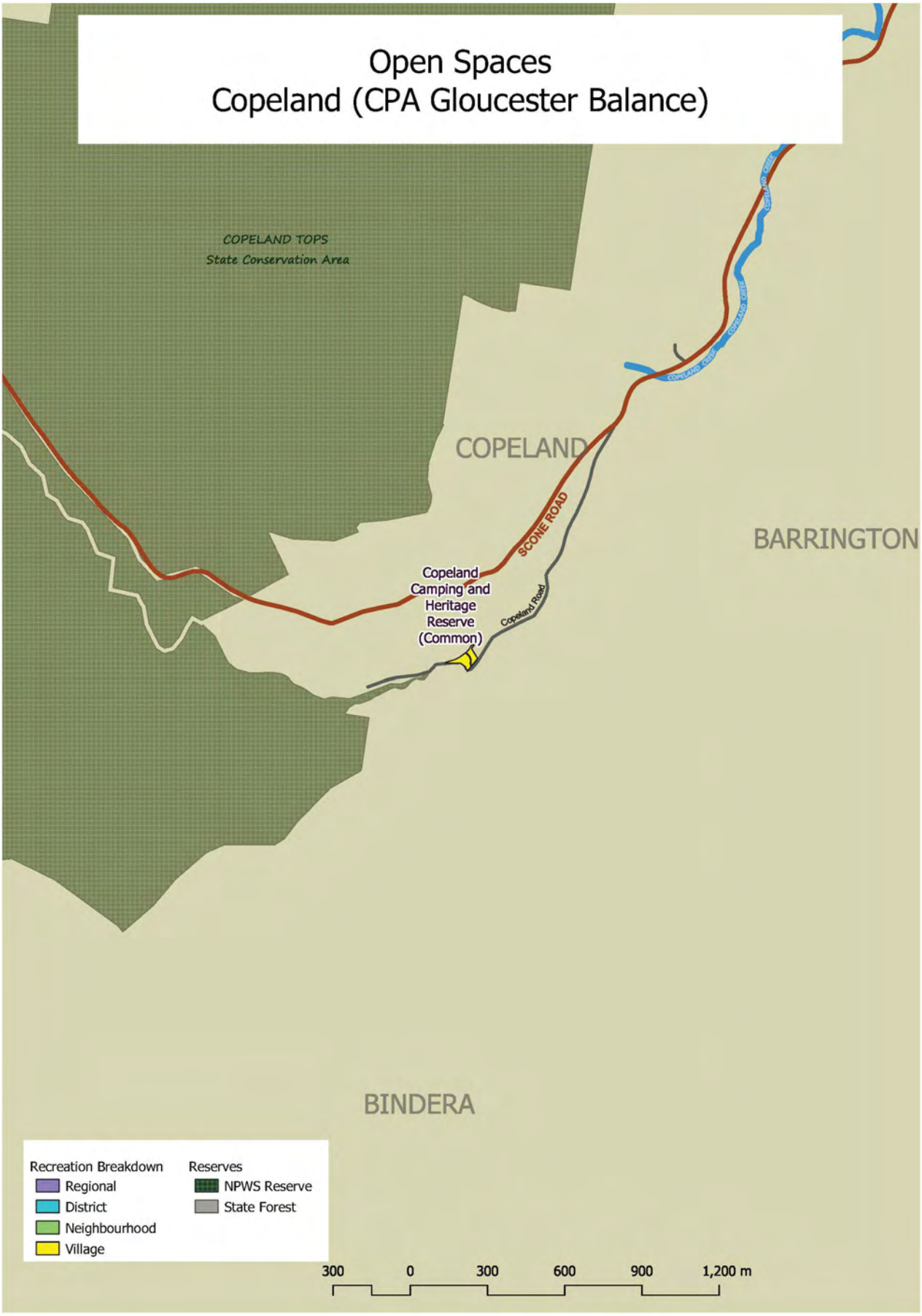

Open Spaces
Green Point (CPA Forster South - Green Point)
Green Point Foreshore
BOOTI BOOTI National Park
FORSTER
Frazer Avenue
Emerald Place
Seabreeze Parade
Lucas Avenue
Green Point Drive
GREEN POINT
Bottlebrush Close Reserve
WALLIS LAKE
Smokehouse Beach
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m


Open Spaces
Gloucester (CPA Gloucester)
KIA ORA
TUGRABAKH
BARRINGTON
MOGRANI
Kia Ora Lookout
Kia Ora Hill Road
Kia Ora Road
Collaroy Avenue
Bowman Farm Road
Old Kia Ora Road
Boatlee Island Road
BUNDOOK ROAD
Relfs Landing
Relfs Road
THUNDERBOLTS WAY
Irrawang Road
Mograni Lookout
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Latham Rest Area
Lemans Lookout
King George V Memorial Park
Gloucester District Park, Rotary Park and Swimming Pool
Billabong Park
Boundary Street
Memorial Park Gloucester
Hume Street
Bill Sansom Memorial Park
Lions Park Gloucester
Captain Cook Park
Henderson Reserve
Babbler Reserve
Cemetery Road
Ted Woolford Park
BUCKETTS ROAD
THE BUCKETTS WAY
WAUKIVORY ROAD
Moonlight Circuit
JACKS ROAD
Maslens Lane
Mcklnleys Lane
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
800 0 800 1,600 2,400 3,200 m


Open Spaces
Barrington (CPA Gloucester Balance)
Testorellis Road
SCONE ROAD
Barrington Reserve
Skye Road
Collaroy Avenue
Barrington Skate Park
COPELAND
BARRINGTON
BARRINGTON WEST ROAD
BARRINGTON EAST ROAD
GLOUCESTER
Manchester Road
Rocky Crossing Reserve
FAULKLAND
BUCKETTS ROAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
700
0
700
1,400
2,100
2,800 m

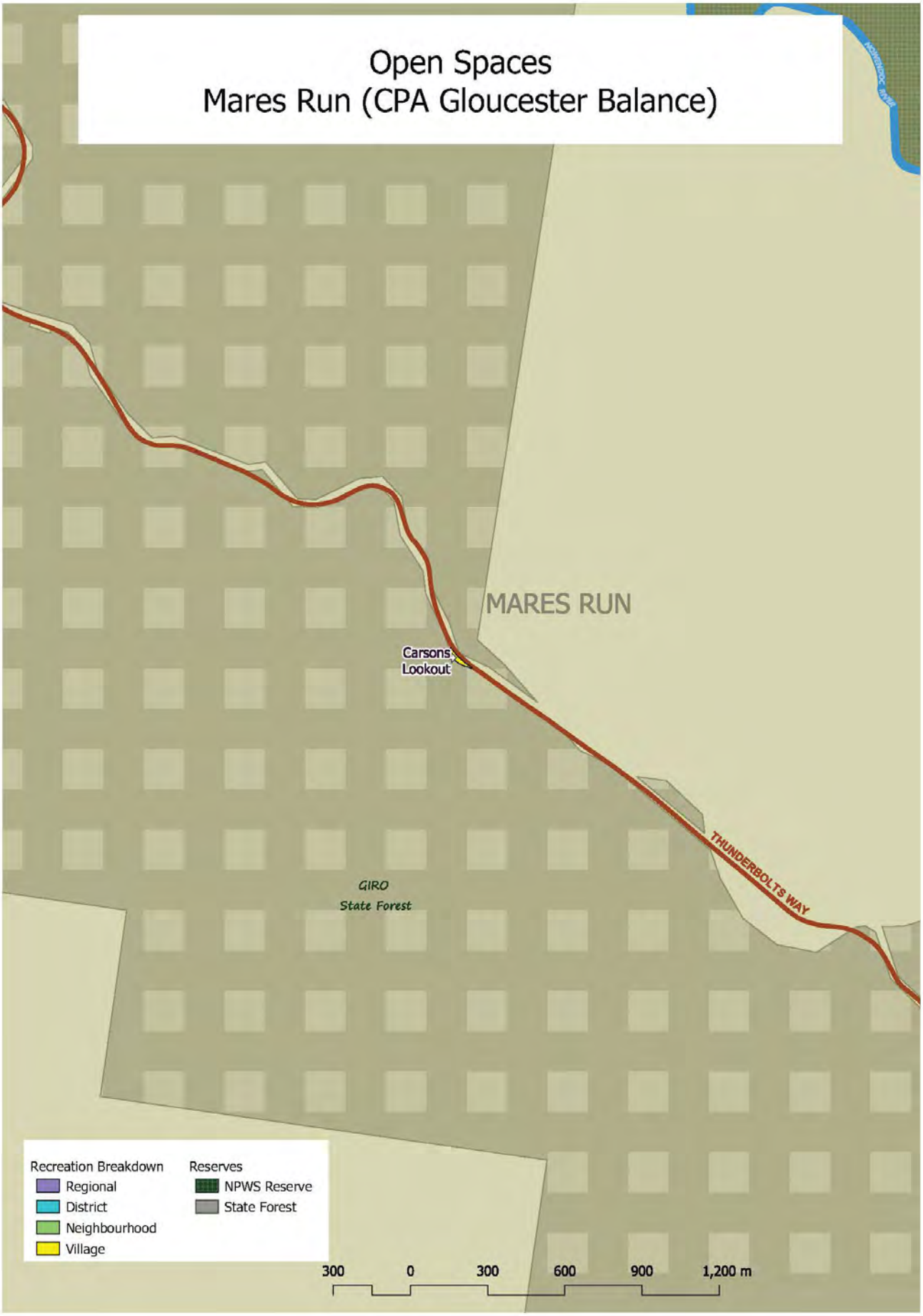
Open Spaces
Bowman (CPA Gloucester Balance)
CONEAC
State Forest
Crawen Plateau Road
ROOKHURST
BOWMAN
State Forest
COBARK
Bowman Reserve
BOWMAN
BOWMAN RIVER ROAD
COPELAND TOPS
State Conservation Area
COPELAND
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
700
0
700
1,400
2,100
2,800 m


Open Spaces
Bretti (CPA Gloucester Balance)
Bretti Trail
MANNING RIVER
BRETTI
Tigrah Road
Bretti Camping Reserve
BARNARD RIVER
THUNDERBOLTS WAY
TIBBUC
CAMELS HUMP
Nature Reserve
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

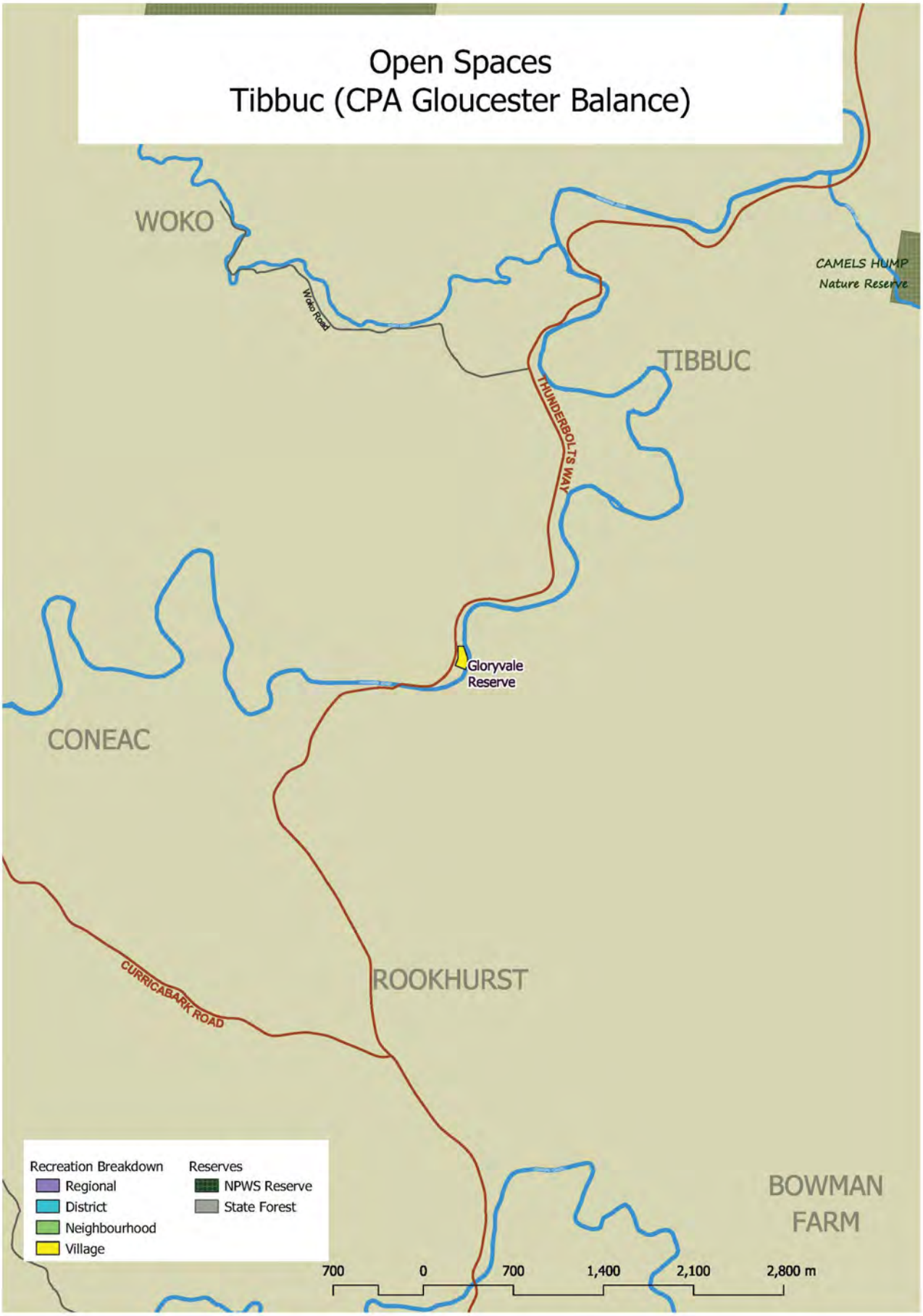

Open Spaces
Copeland (CPA Gloucester Balance)
COPELAND TOPS
State Conservation Area
COPELAND
BARRINGTON
BINDERA
SCONE ROAD
Copeland Road
Copeland Camping and Heritage Reserve (Common)
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Craven (CPA Gloucester Balance)
Upper Avon Road
CRAVEN
Woods Road
Craven Park / Rest Area
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Glen Road
WARDS RIVER
Pages Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

Open Spaces
Faulkland (CPA Gloucester Balance)
BARRINGTON
BARRINGTON RIVER
GLOUCESTER RIVER
Reinbergers
Rest Area
FAULKLAND ROAD
FAULKLAND
STANTONS LANE
GLOUCESTER TOPS ROAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m


Open Spaces
Mares Run (CPA Gloucester Balance)
MARES RUN
Carsons Lookout
THUNDERBOLTS WAY
GIRO
State Forest
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

Open Spaces
Stratford (CPA Gloucester Balance)
AVON RIVER
Bridge Street
William Street
Anne Street
Crowthers Road
Avon Street
High Street
Wood Street
Bowens Road
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Stratford Reserve
CRAVEN
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m


Open Spaces
Tibbuc (CPA Gloucester Balance)
WOKO
Woko Road
CAMELS HUMP
Nature Reserve
TIBBUC
THUNDERBOLTS WAY
Gloryvale
Reserve
CONEAC
CURRICABARK ROAD
ROOKHURST
BOWMAN
FARM
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
700
0
700
1,400
2,100
2,800 m

Open Spaces
Blackhead (CPA Hallidays Point)
RED HEAD ROAD
Maslin Close
Headland Drive
HALLIDAYS POINT
Coromont Drive
Hope Street
Clarence Street
Beachfront Avenue
Blackhead Sports Fields - James Foster Reserve
Meers Drive
Bellevue Place
Blackhead Wetlands
BLACKHEAD ROAD
Meadows Close
Glen Court
Seabreeze Parade Reserve
Blackhead Lagoon and Flora Reserve
Blackhead Reserve - Playground Area
Wylie Breckenridge Park
Blackhead Reserve, Surf Club, Ocean Baths
Coolinda Street
Albert Street
Main Street
William Street
High Street
First Avenue
Third Avenue
Fourth Avenue
Blackhead Flora Res - Headland & Back Beach
The Pines Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m

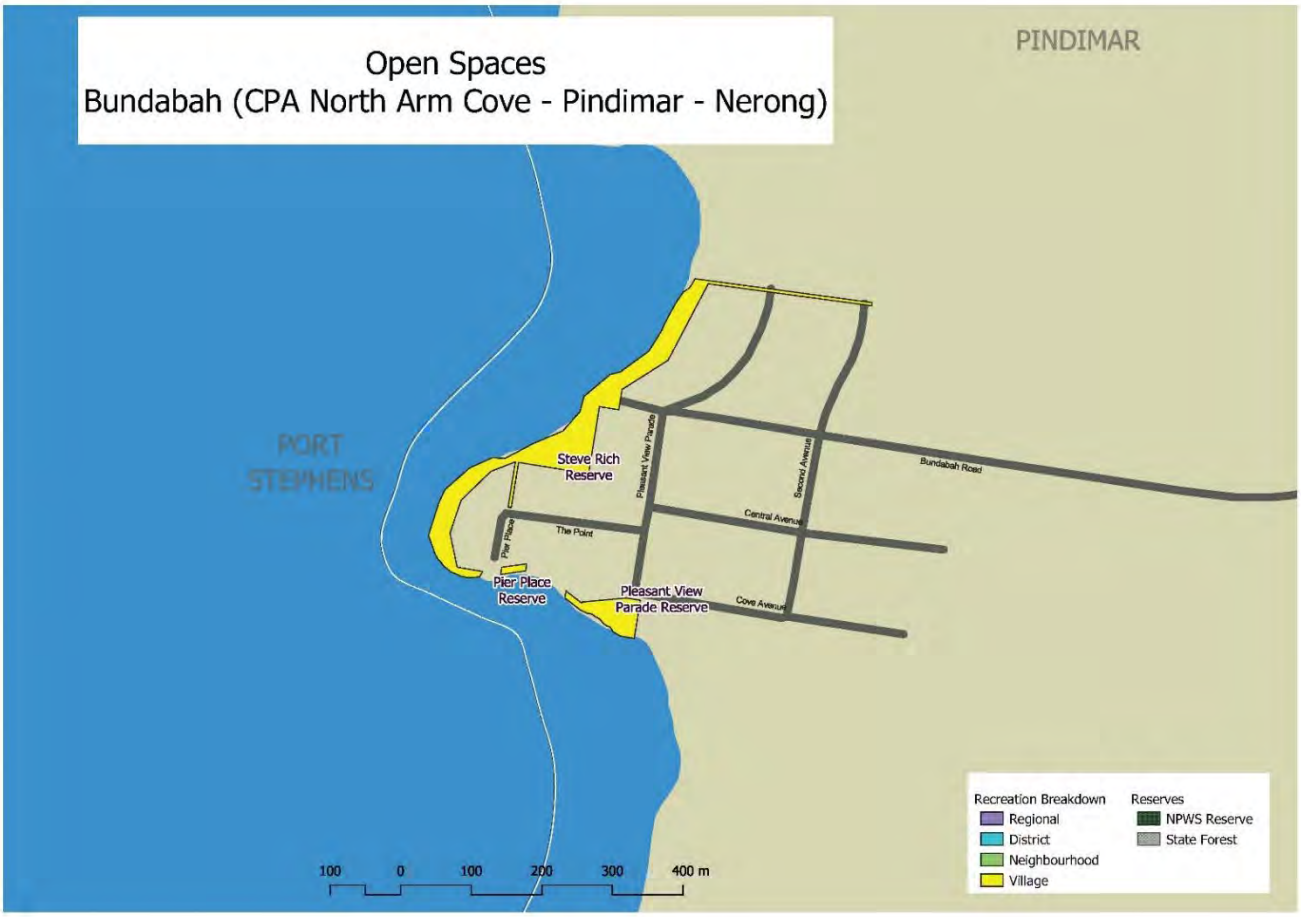
Open Spaces
Diamond Beach (CPA Hallidays Point)
Sundew Avenue
Red Ash Place
Bangalay Place
Kangaroo Grass Place
Olax Place
Old Soldiers Road
Diamond Beach Sports Fields
Edgewater Drive
Majestic Place
Figtree Drive
Shores Crescent
The Sands Way
Fantail Rise
DIAMOND BEACH ROAD
Saltwater Crescent
Panorama Drive
Gary Road
Diamond Park
Jubilee Parade
Diamond Drive
Seaview Street
Escapade Avenue
Emerald Drive
Anniversary Drive
Vincent Close
Jade Crescent
Golden Drive
Noosa Crescent
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m

Open Spaces
Redhead (CPA Hallidays Point)
RAINBOW FLAT
Sundew Avenue
Red Ash Place
Olax Place
Old Soldiers Road
Edgewater Drive
Majestic Place
Figtree Drive
Fernhill Rise
Saltwater Crescent
Gary Road
Diamond Drive
Seaview Street
Vincent Close
Panorama Drive
DIAMOND BEACH ROAD
Golden Drive
Belgraiv Close
RED HEAD
Cottesloe Circuit
Seascape Reserve
Myalup Court
Redhead Reserve
Masile Close
RED HEAD ROAD
Coromont Drive
Hope Street
POINT
BLACK HEAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200 0 200 400 600 800 m

Open Spaces
Coolongolook (CPA Nabiac - Failford - Darawank - Rural North)
COOLONGOLOOK
Nature Reserve
MILLS ISLAND
Nature Reserve
SHALLOW BAY
Shallow Bay Road
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
WILLINA ROAD
Lockells Crossing Road
Cedar Park
Park Street
Lombard Street
Coolongolook Oval Reserve
COOLONGOLOOK
Platts Road
Telerarse Creek Road
Wallinghat River Foreshore Reserve
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
Kennedys Gap Road
BACHELOR
State Forest
WOOTTON
WALLINGAT
National Park
Harveys Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
800 0 800 1,600 2,400 3,200 m

Open Spaces
Darawank (CPA Nabiac - Failford - Darawank - Rural North)
Glider Avenue
Jordie Avenue
Aquatic Road
Riverview Place
Darawank Close
DARAWANK
Nature Reserve
Riverview Place Reserve
DARAWANK
Elliots Road
WALLAMBA RIVER
THE LAKES WAY
NABIAC
War Memorial Park
The Pines Road
Midge Orchid Road
Manns Road
TUNCURRY
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

Open Spaces
Nabiac (CPA Nabiac - Failford - Darawank - Rural North)
Candoormakh Creek Road
Hardy Road
Woolstars Lane
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
Abbott Street
Brushgrove Park Road
Clarkson Street
Parkes Street
Cowper Street
Robertson Street
Martin Street
Failford Street
Memorial Reserve Nabiac
Nabiac Oval and swimming pool
WALLANBAH ROAD
Hoskins Street
NABIAC
Byron Street
Bullocky Wharf Recreation Reserve
The Village Green
Showground Lane
Nabiac Street
CANDOORMAKH CREEK
Candoormakh Crescent
Nabiac Showground and Aub Ferris Sports Complex
WALLAMBA RIVER
GLEN ORA ROAD
MCKINNON ROAD
Aerodrome Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m


Open Spaces
Bundabah (CPA North Arm Cove - Pindimar - Nerong)
PINDIMAR
PORT STEPHENS
Steve Rich Reserve
Pleasant View Parade
Second Avenue
Bundabah Road
Central Avenue
The Point
Pier Place
Pier Place Reserve
Pleasant View Parade Reserve
Cove Avenue
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m

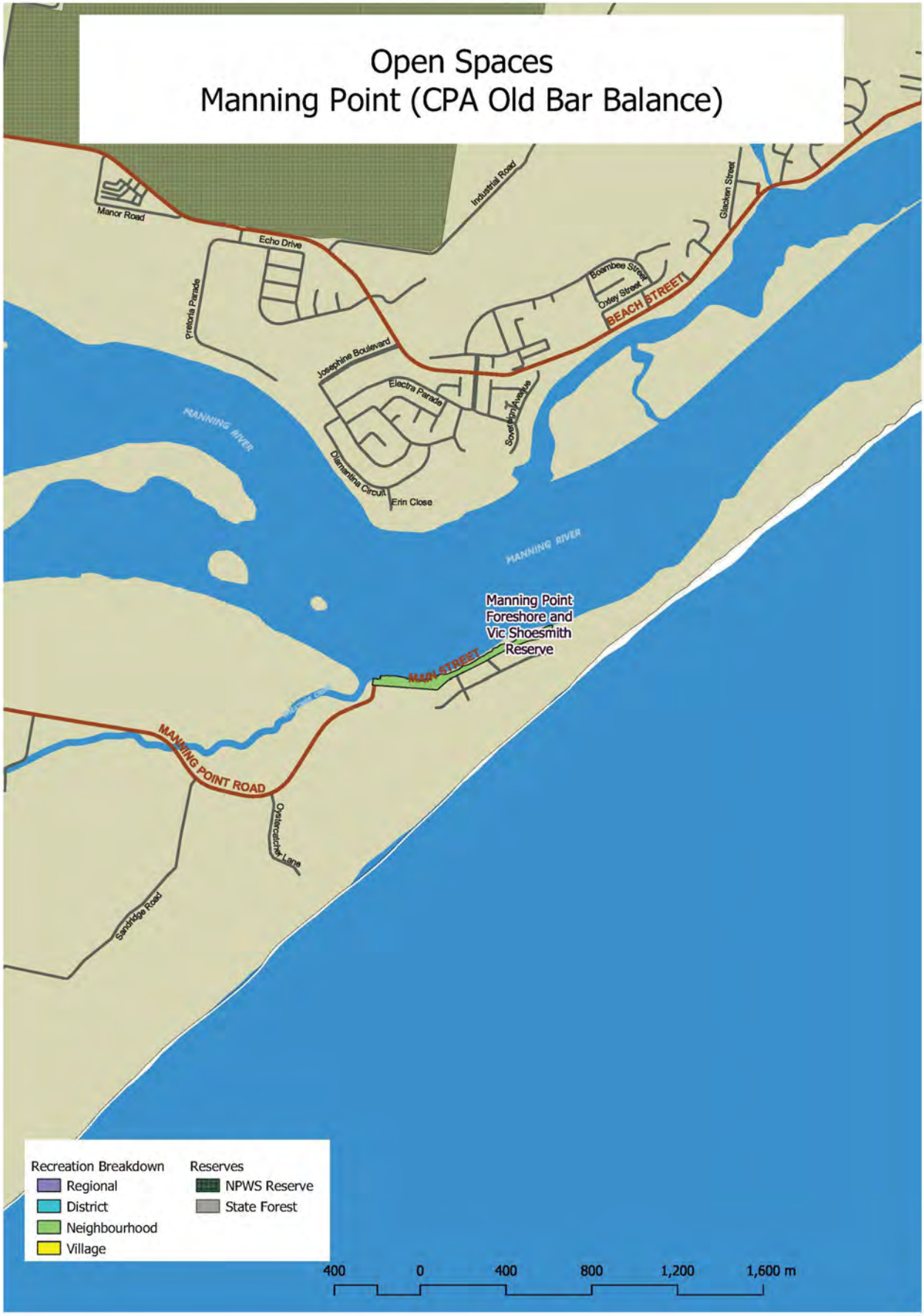
Open Spaces
Nerong (CPA North Arm Cove - Pindimar - Nerong)
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
Redbill Road
Redbill Park
Heron Street
Spoonbill Close
NERONG
Heron Street Reserve
Egret Street
Nerong Harbour and Reserve
MYALL LAKES National Park
Curlew Crescent
Waterhen Park
Plover Place
Whimbrel Drive
NERONG INLET
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m

Open Spaces
North Arm Cove (CPA North Arm Cove - Pindimar - Nerong)
CARRINGTON
PORT STEPHENS
BUNDABAH
Railway Road
Station Way
Uralla Street
Commerce Way
Watchie Street
Morna Boulevard
The Ridgeway
Eastslope Way
Casuarina Park Reserve
Inland Way
North Arm Cove Community Centre
Yallarwah Road Reserve
Emmett Street
Waterside Parkway
Inverell Circuit
Maitland Street
Estuary Way
Paterson Place
Greta Street
Hamilton Street
City Crescent
Tamworth Street
Crest Road
Promontory Way
Overseas Way
Cove Boulevard
Outlook Drive
Flannery Street
Promontory Way Reserve
Point Circuit
The Esplanade
Cove Boulevarde Reserve
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m

Open Spaces
Pindimar (CPA North Arm Cove - Pindimar - Nerong)
Kore Kore Creek Road
Kore Kore Creek Reserve
Pindimar Road
PINDIMAR
Bulga Street
Wari Street
Wombo Street
Peel Street
Koala Street
Leone Fidden Memorial Park
CORRIE ISLAND
Nature Reserve
Clarke Street
Peace Parade
Cook Street
Curlew Avenue
Cambage Street
Myall Street
PORT STEPHENS
Pindimar South Reserve
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

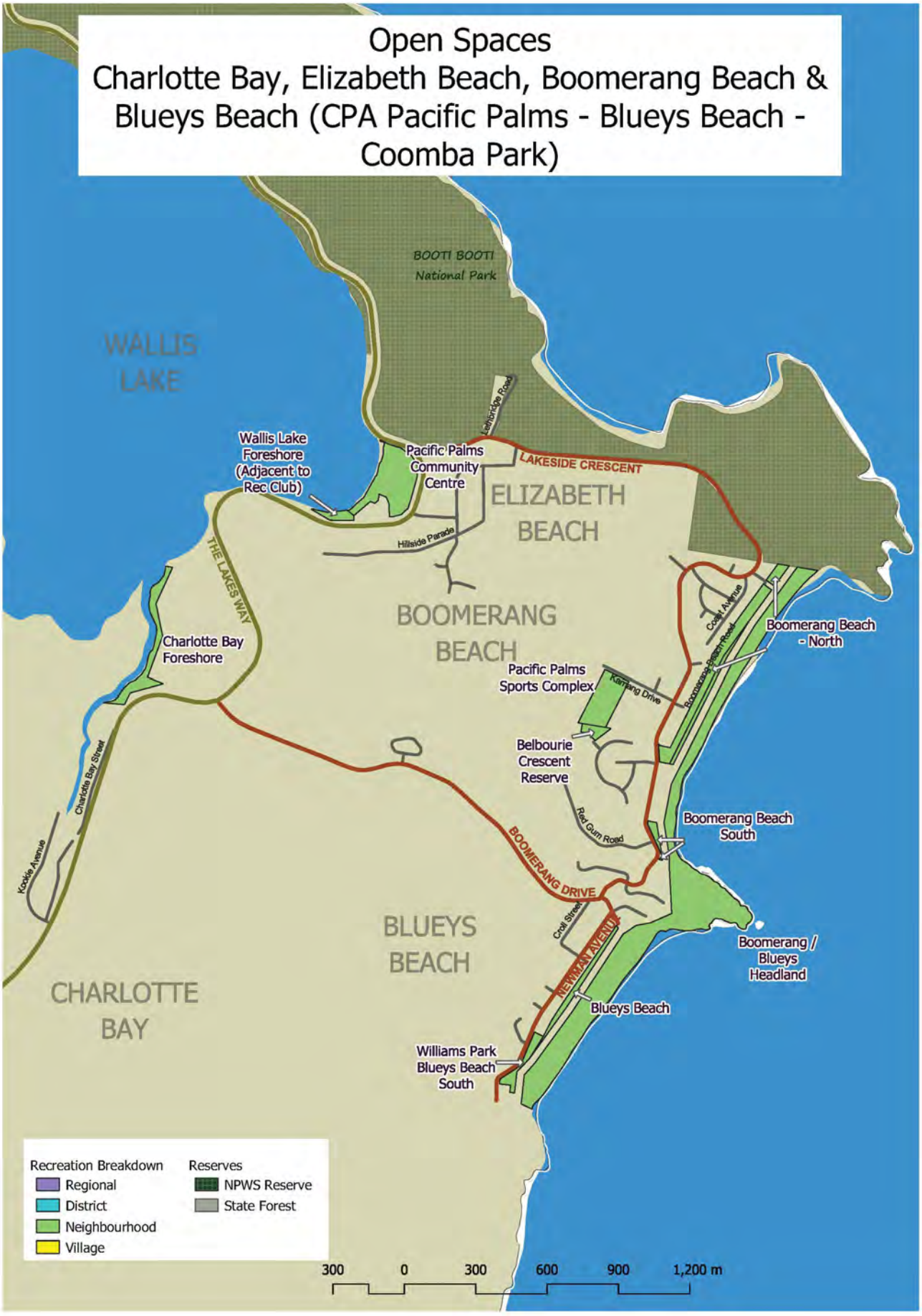
Open Spaces
Old Bar - Wallabi Pt (CPA Old Bar - Wallabi)
Bohnock Boat Ramp Reserve
Bohnock Road
CABBAGE TREE ISLAND
Mudbishops Point
Waterman Street Reserve
Molong Reserve
Ivy Crescent Reserve
Drury Close Reserve
Mistral Reserve
Old Bar Park
Apex Park
Charles Boyce Park
Old Bar Tennis
Carle Park
David Street Reserve
Badgers Park
Wilkes Park
Bluehaven Reserve
EG Trad Sportsground
Walter Fay Street Reserve
Wallabi Point Foreshore Park
Shelley Close Reserve
WALLABI POINT
KHAPPINGHAT National Park
KIWARRAK State Forest
MANNING POINT ROAD
OLD BAR ROAD
SALTWATER ROAD
Red Gum Road
Heron Road
Warwilla Road
Hannogate Lane
Joy Close
Yallinda Drive
Forest Lane
Fig Street
Lewis Street
Pine Trees Avenue
Link Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
600 0 600 1,200 1,800 2,400 m

Open Spaces
Bohnock (CPA Old Bar Balance)
OXLEY
ISLAND
CABBAGE
TREE
ISLAND
OLD BAR
Murdochs Lane
Polsons Road
Layton Road
Cowans Lane
Goudy Lane
Thomas Lane
MANNING POINT ROAD
Broadoaks Road
Warwicks Road
Fairview Lane
Bohnock Boat
Ramp Reserve
Bohnock Road
Heron Road
South Heron Road
Red Gum Road
Spotted Gum Drive
Harrogate Lane
Little Tern Street
Barber Road
Meadowie Road
Gannet Crescent
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
KHAPPINGHAT
National Park
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m


Open Spaces
Manning Point (CPA Old Bar Balance)
Manor Road
Echo Drive
Industrial Road
Glacken Street
Boambee Street
Oxley Street
BEACH STREET
Pretoria Parade
Josephine Boulevard
Electra Parade
Soverign Avenue
MANNING RIVER
Diamantina Circuit
Erin Close
MANNING RIVER
Manning Point Foreshore and Vic Shoesmith Reserve
MAIN STREET
MANNING POINT ROAD
Oystercatcher Lane
Sandridge Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
400
0
400
800
1,200
1,600 m

Open Spaces
Pampoolah (CPA Old Bar Balance)
MANNING RIVER
Midgy Ghamet Road
Marney Lane
OXLEY
ISLAND
Poksons Road
Pampoolah
Reserve
Newby Road
PAMPOOLAH
Layton Road
Redbank Road
Wilga Road
Warwilla Road
OLD BAR
Heron Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m
Half Chain Road
KIWARRAK
State Forest

Open Spaces
Bungwahl (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
TARBUCK BAY
WALLINGAT State Forest
Sugar Creek Road
BUNGWAHL
Top of the Myall Rest Area
THE LAKES WAY
Liberty Street
Barrack Street
SMITHS LAKE
SEAL ROCKS ROAD
Nerrabi Street
Dogwood Road
MYALL LAKES National Park
Horse Point Road
Nerrabi Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m


Open Spaces
Charlotte Bay, Elizabeth Beach, Boomerang Beach & Blueys Beach (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
BOOTI BOOTI National Park
WALLIS LAKE
Lanhridge Road
Wallis Lake Foreshore (Adjacent to Rec Club)
Pacific Palms Community Centre
LAKESIDE CRESCENT
ELIZABETH BEACH
Hillside Parade
THE LAKES WAY
BOOMERANG BEACH
Charlotte Bay Foreshore
Coast Avenue
Boomerang Beach - North
Boomerang Beach Road
Pacific Palms Sports Complex
Kamilaroi Drive
Belbourie Crescent Reserve
Red Gum Road
Boomerang Beach South
BOOMERANG DRIVE
Charlotte Bay Street
Kookia Avenue
Croll Street
NEWMAN AVENUE
BLUEYS BEACH
Boomerang / Blueys Headland
Blueys Beach
CHARLOTTE BAY
Williams Park Blueys Beach South
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Coomba Park (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
Kirribilli Avenue
Tallawalla Road
Kiewa Place
Coomba Hall & Tennis site (Moorooba Road Reserve)
Warralong Street
Coomba Road
Memorial Park Coomba
Moorooba Road
Elanora Street
WALLIS LAKE
Yarran Place
Burranjurra Avenue
Coolangatta Street
Wallaroo Street
COOMBA ROAD
Coomba Aquatic Gardens
Warramutty Street
Coomba Park Foreshore
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m

Open Spaces
Seal Rocks (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
Number One Beach
SEAL ROCKS ROAD
SEAL ROCKS
Boat Beach & Andys Corner
KINKA ROAD
Thomas Road
Lighthouse Road
MYALL LAKES National Park
Yagon Road
Treachery Camp Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

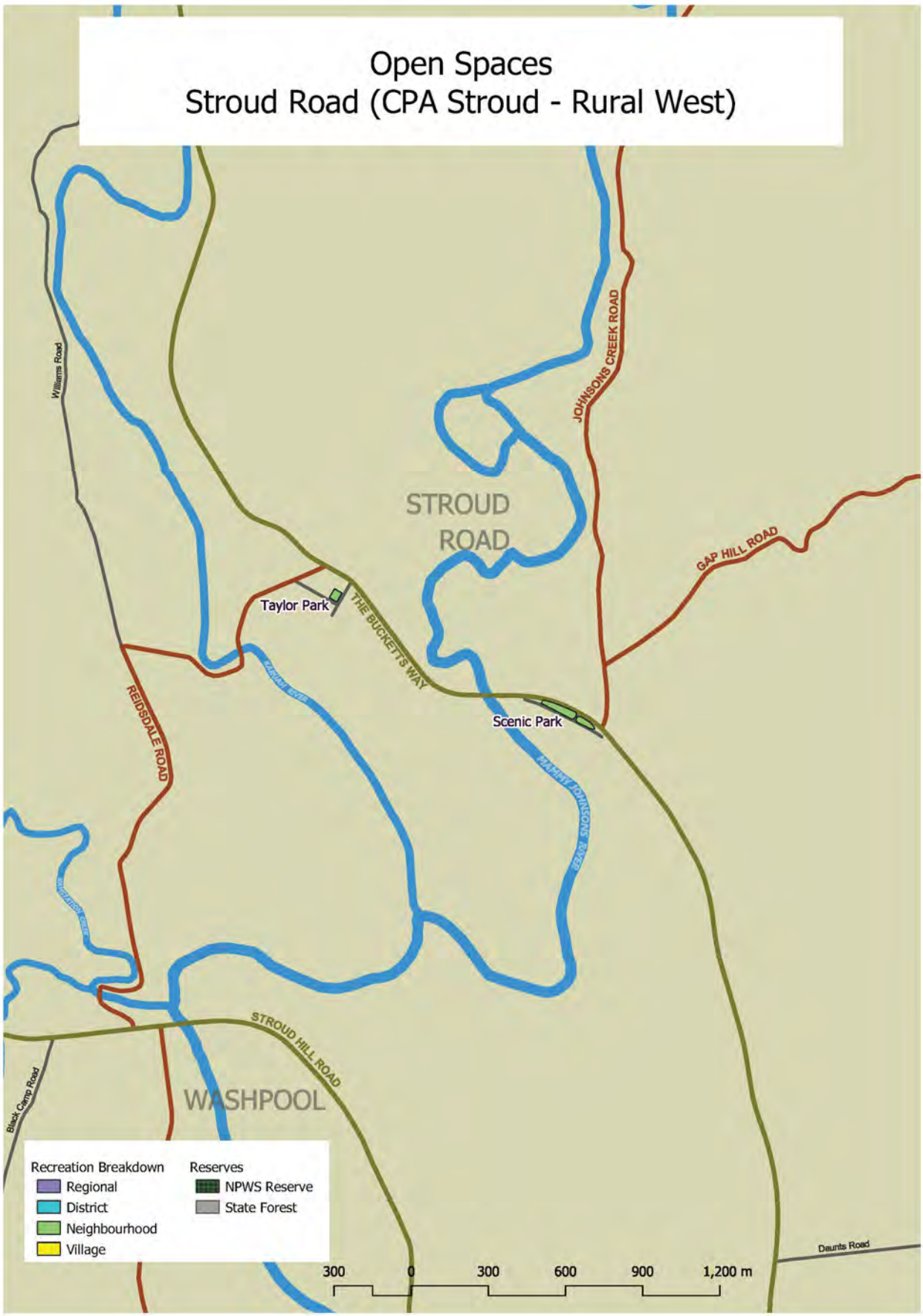
Open Spaces
Smiths Lake (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
TARBUCK BAY
CHARLOTTE BAY
SANDBAR
SEAL ROCKS
THE LAKES WAY
SANDBAR ROAD
Smiths Lake Recreation Reserve
Paradise Drive
New Forster Road
First Ridge Road
Maxwood Road
Gordon Crescent
Charles Street
The Jack
The Jack
Kalish Crescent
Lyn Crescent
Third Ridge Road
Phillip Road
Amarco Drive
Patsye Flat Road
Smiths Lake Foreshore
BULL ISLAND
Nature Reserve
Horse Point Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

Open Spaces
Tarbuck Bay (CPA Pacific Palms - Blueys Beach - Coomba Park)
CHARLOTTE BAY
Tarbuck Park Road
TARBUCK BAY
Windsor Street
Crown Close
BUNGWAHL
Sugar Creek Road
THE LAKES WAY
Tarbuck Bay Foreshore Reserve
Brambles Recreation Reserve
SMITHS LAKE
SMITHS LAKE Nature Reserve
Dogwood Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
MYALL LAKES National Park
Horse Point Road
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Allworth (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
Allworth Road
Myall Street
Karuah Street
Lamont Street
Edith Waters Reserve
Stroud Street
Bacral Parade
Allworth Baths
Amsley Street
Allworth Community Centre
Allworth Foreshore
Short Street
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
80
0
80
160
240
320 m

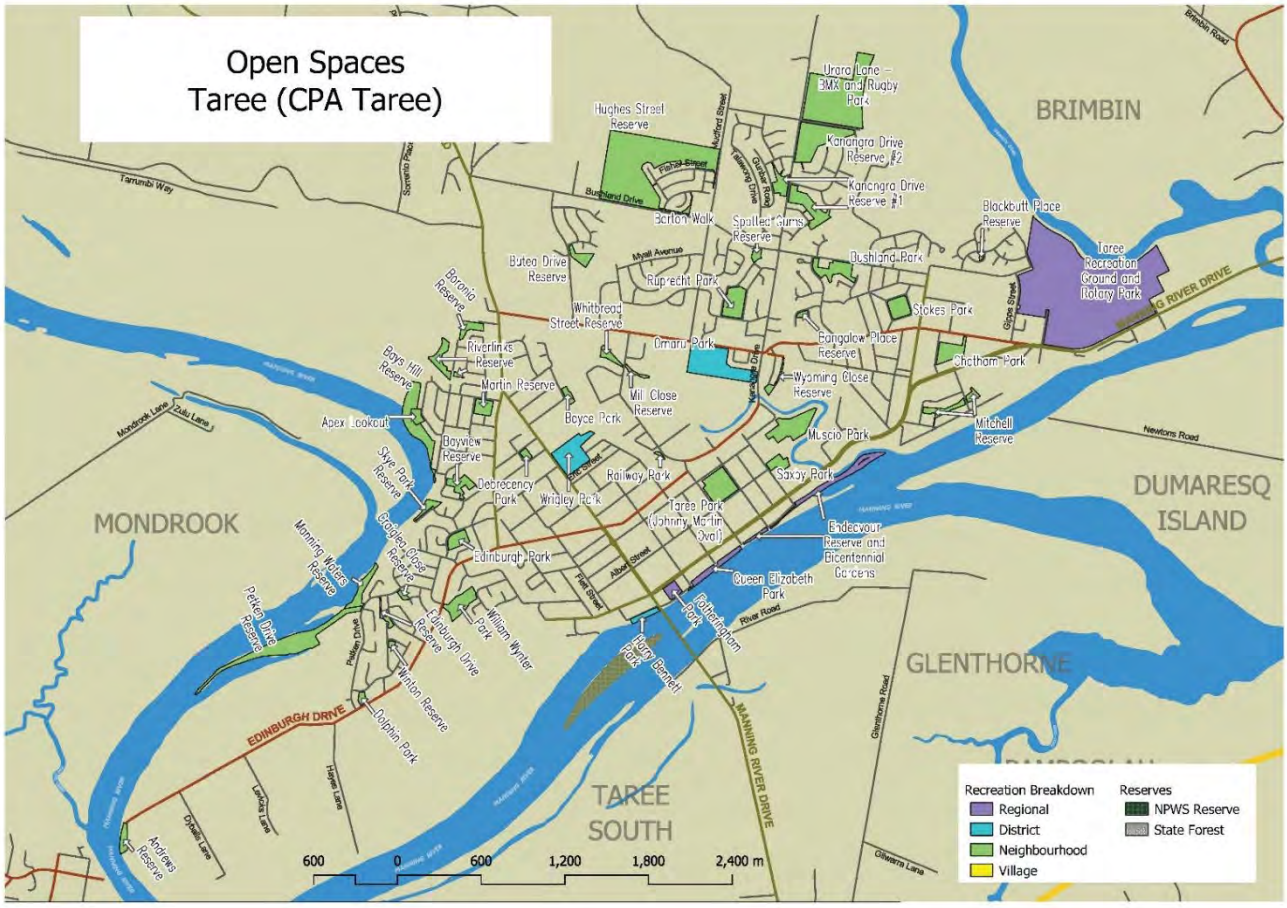
Open Spaces
Karuah (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
Riverside Drive
Mustons Road
Boronia Road
KARUAH
Alice Street Reserve
Alice Street
TAREAN ROAD
Franklin Street
Bonser Lane
George Street
Wattle Street
Engel Avenue
Bundabah Street
Barclay Street
Johnson Avenue
Mary Street
Holdom Road
Morante Road
KARUAH RIVER
KARUAH
Nature Reserve
PORT
STEPHENS
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m

Open Spaces
Limeburners Creek (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
LIMEBURNERS CREEK
KARUAH National Park
Hobarts Forest Road
Old Coach Road
Baldy Knob Road
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Limeburners Creek Community Hall
LIMEBURNERS CREEK ROAD
Captain Hills Creek Road
Lone Pine Road
KARUAH
WALLAROO State Forest
Gatlee Trail
Scotia Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m


Open Spaces
Stroud Road (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
STROUD ROAD
WASHPOOL
Taylor Park
Scenic Park
JOHNSONS CREEK ROAD
GAP HILL ROAD
THE BUCKETTS WAY
REIDSDALE ROAD
STROUD HILL ROAD
Williams Road
Black Camp Road
Daunts Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Stroud (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
THE BUCKETTS WAY
MILL CREEK ROAD
Millbrook Road
Dawson Street
COWPER STREET
Mill Creek Lions Park
Stroud Showground and Kevin Francis Park
BRITTON COURT ROAD
MILL CREEK
Erin Street
Gidley Street
Memorial Avenue
Nairn Street
Bede Street
Allen Park
Church Street
King Street
Lovely Street
Broadway Street
GORTONS CROSSING ROAD
Silo Hill Reserve
Malon Street
LAMAN STREET
BERKELEY STREET
Spencer Street
Bridge Street
Saville Street
Simmsville Road
Avon Street
Wye Street
Nicholls Street
Hinton Street
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200 0 200 400 600 800 m

Open Spaces
Wards River (CPA Stroud - Rural West)
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Burbons Road
Wards River
Community Park
Ward Street
TERREEL ROAD
Maddens Lane
JOHNSONS CREEK ROAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
WEISMANTELS
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m


Open Spaces
Taree (CPA Taree)
BRIMBIN
MONDROOK
DUMARESQ ISLAND
GLENTHORNE
TAREE SOUTH
Hughes Street Reserve
Urara Lane – BMX and Rugby Park
Kanangra Drive Reserve #2
Kanangra Drive Reserve #1
Blackbutt Place Reserve
Taree Recreation Ground and Rotary Park
Spotted Gums Reserve
Bushland Park
Buteo Drive Reserve
Ruprecht Park
Stokes Park
Whitbread Street Reserve
Omaru Park
Bungalow Place Reserve
Chatham Park
Riverlinks Reserve
Martin Reserve
Wyoming Close Reserve
Mil Close Reserve
Boyce Park
Muscio Park
Mitchell Reserve
Apex Lookout
Bayview Reserve
Railway Park
Saxby Park
Deprecency Park
Wridley Park
Taree Park (Johnny Martin Oval)
Endeavour Reserve and Bicentennial Gardens
Edinburgh Park
Queen Elizabeth Park
Rotherham Park
Hugo Bennett Park
William Wynter Park
Edinburgh Drive Reserve
Dolphin Park
Wilton Reserve
Peters Drive Reserve
Manning Waters Reserve
Craigley Close Reserve
Skye Park Reserve
Andrews Reserve
EDINBURGH DRIVE
MANNING RIVER DRIVE
River Road
Newtons Road
Glenthorne Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
600 0 600 1,200 1,800 2,400 m

Open Spaces
Tinonee (CPA Taree)
TINONEE ROAD
MANNING RIVER
EDINBURGH DRIVE
TAREE
Lewis Lane
Dyalla Lane
Alpine Drive
Pine Tree Creek
Horrace Dean Memorial Park
COTTON STREET
Millad Road
RIDGE ROAD
CLAXTON STREET
Harper Street
Burdett Street
Manchester Street
Winter Street
Pevarll Street
Carmichael Lane
Golian Avenue
Beecher Street Reserve
Tallships Reserve
THE BUCKETTS WAY
BEECHER STREET
Park Street
TINONEE
Tinonee Recreation Reserve
View Place
Beauty Road
Buff Hill Road
Deans Creek Road
KIWARRAK
KIWARRAK State Forest
Tinonee Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200 0 200 400 600 800 m

Open Spaces
Coopernook (CPA Taree Balance)
High Street
Bangalow Road
WEST STREET
Petris Street
Coopernook
Park
Mitchell Close
MACQUARIE STREET
GEORGE GIBSON DRIVE
Coopernook
Oval
COOPERNOOK
LANSDOWNE RIVER
MOTO
Wharf Road
LANSDOWNE RIVER
COOPERNOOK ROAD
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
HARRINGTON ROAD
Coopernook
Foreshore
Reserve
Old Bridge Road
North Moto Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m

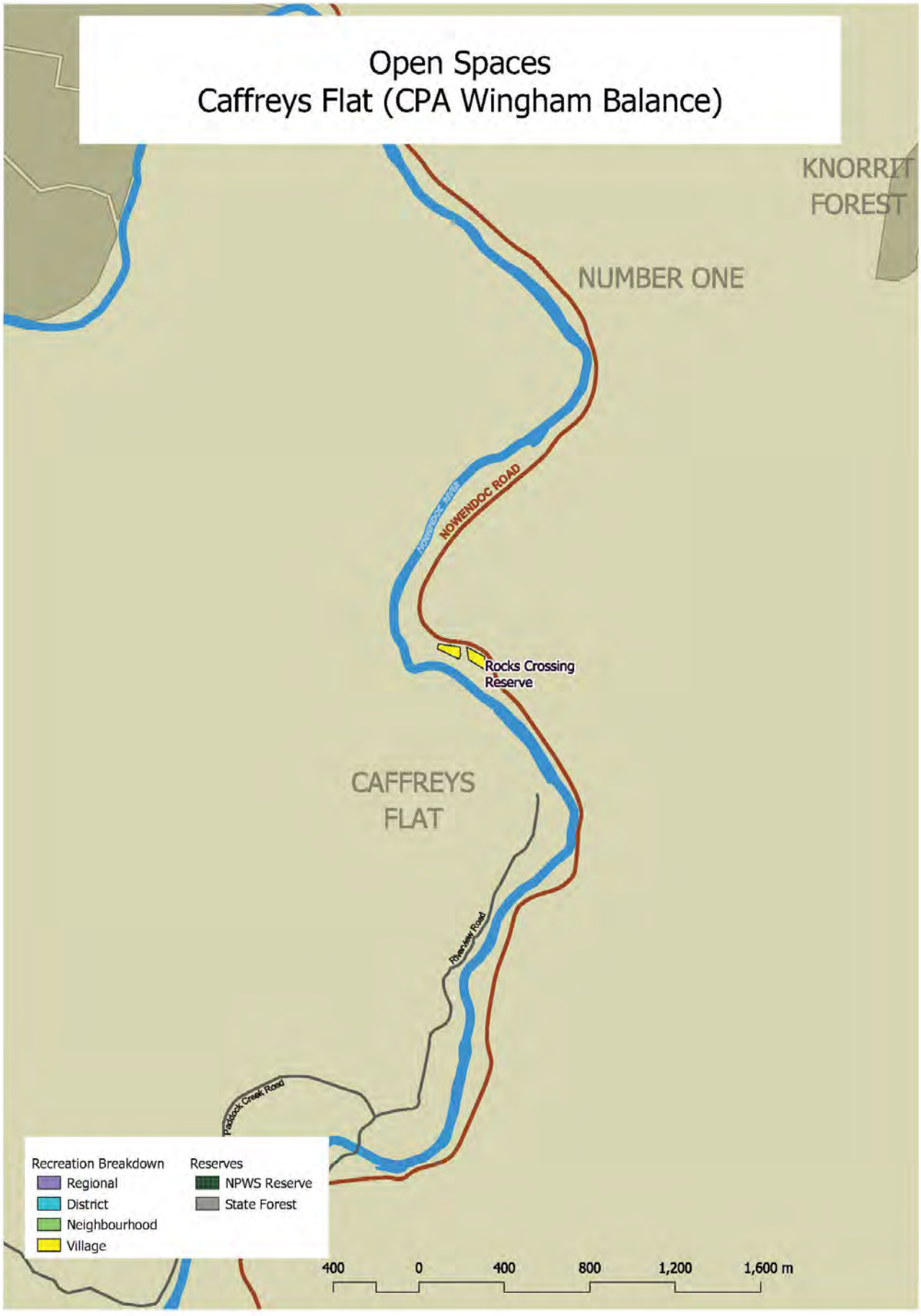
Open Spaces
Croki (CPA Taree Balance)
Wallis Lane
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
JONES ISLAND
Croki Road
Barton Street
CROKI
Reid Street
Ferry Road
Croki Reserve
MANNING RIVER
Leslies Lane
Ruprechts Road
MITCHELLS ISLAND
OXLEY ISLAND
Surbiton Place
Lauries Lane
Factory Road
Carramar Drive
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200 0 200 400 600 800 m

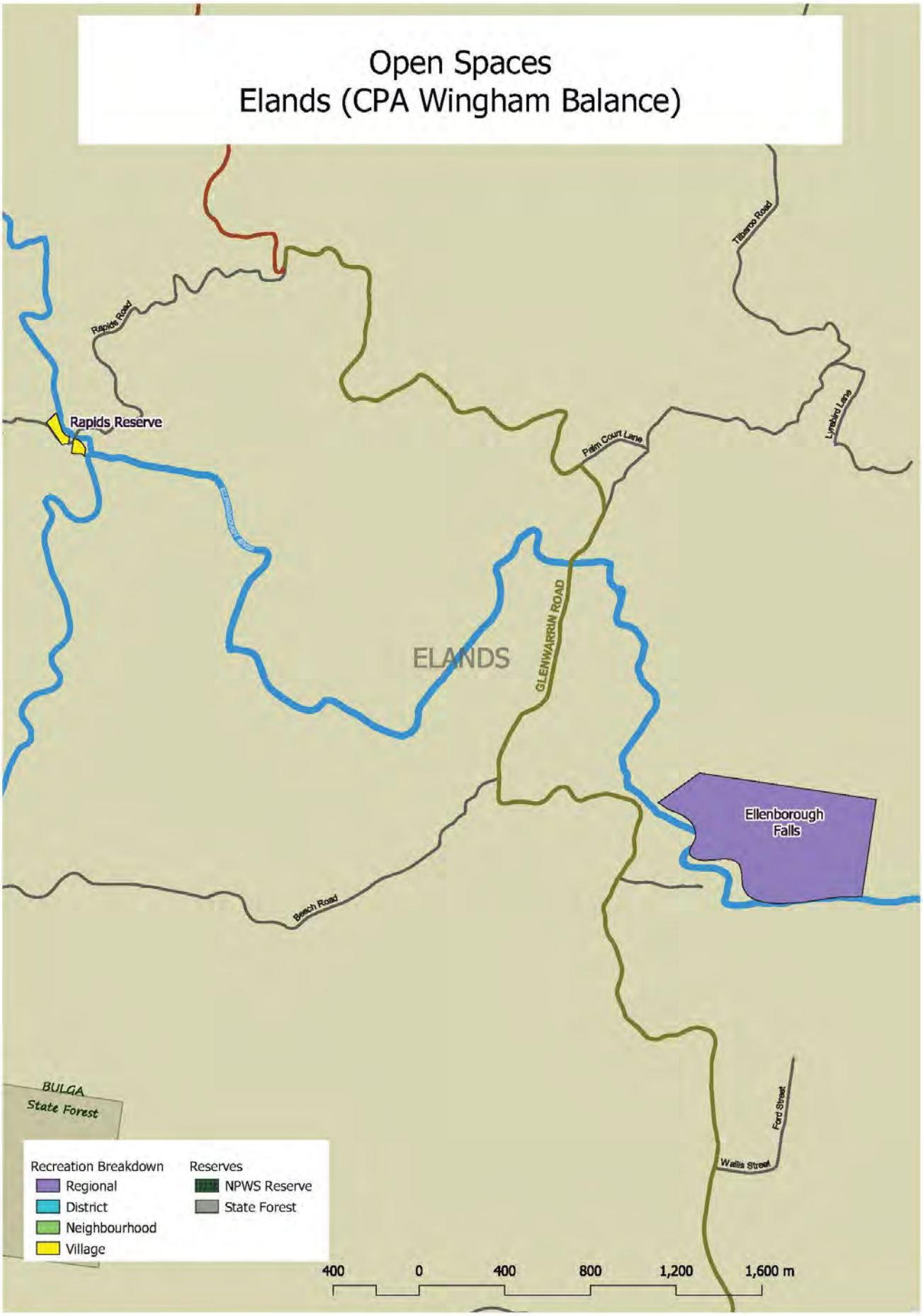
Open Spaces
Lansdowne (CPA Taree Balance)
Salter Road
Newbys Lane
Berlins Lane
CENTRAL LANSDOWNE ROAD
LANGLEY VALE
LANSDOWNE State Forest
LANSDOWNE
Lansdowne Recreation Reserve
Warrens Lane
Yurong Street
Croki Street
LANSDOWNE ROAD
CUNDLE ROAD
Macquarie Street
East Lansdowne Road
Kew Lane
Morrison Lane
4th Street
LANSDOWNE Nature Reserve
LANSDOWNE RIVER
MELINGA
MOTO
North Moto Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Hawks Nest (CPA Tea Gardens - Hawks Nest)
MYALL RIVER
Koonwarra Drive
Albatross Avenue Reserve
Albatross Avenue
MUNGO BRUSH ROAD
Ibis Avenue
Kurrawong Avenue
Dolphin Avenue
Curlew Avenue
Sanderling Avenue
Myall Park Sports Reserve
Binda Street
Moira Parade
Booner/Yamba Street Reserve
Providence Bay Park
Moira Parade Reserve
Booner Street
Moola Street
Mirreen Street
Russell Street
Bennett Street
The Anchorage Reserve
Winda Woppa Reserve
The Boulevarde
The Anchorage
Jimmys Beach Foreshore
Jimmy's Beach Day Area
Coorilla Street
Beach Road
Bennetts Beach Hawks Nest
Yacaaba Headland
Ogden Street
Marine Drive
Witt Street
MYALL STREET
TEA GARDENS
PORT STEPHENS
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

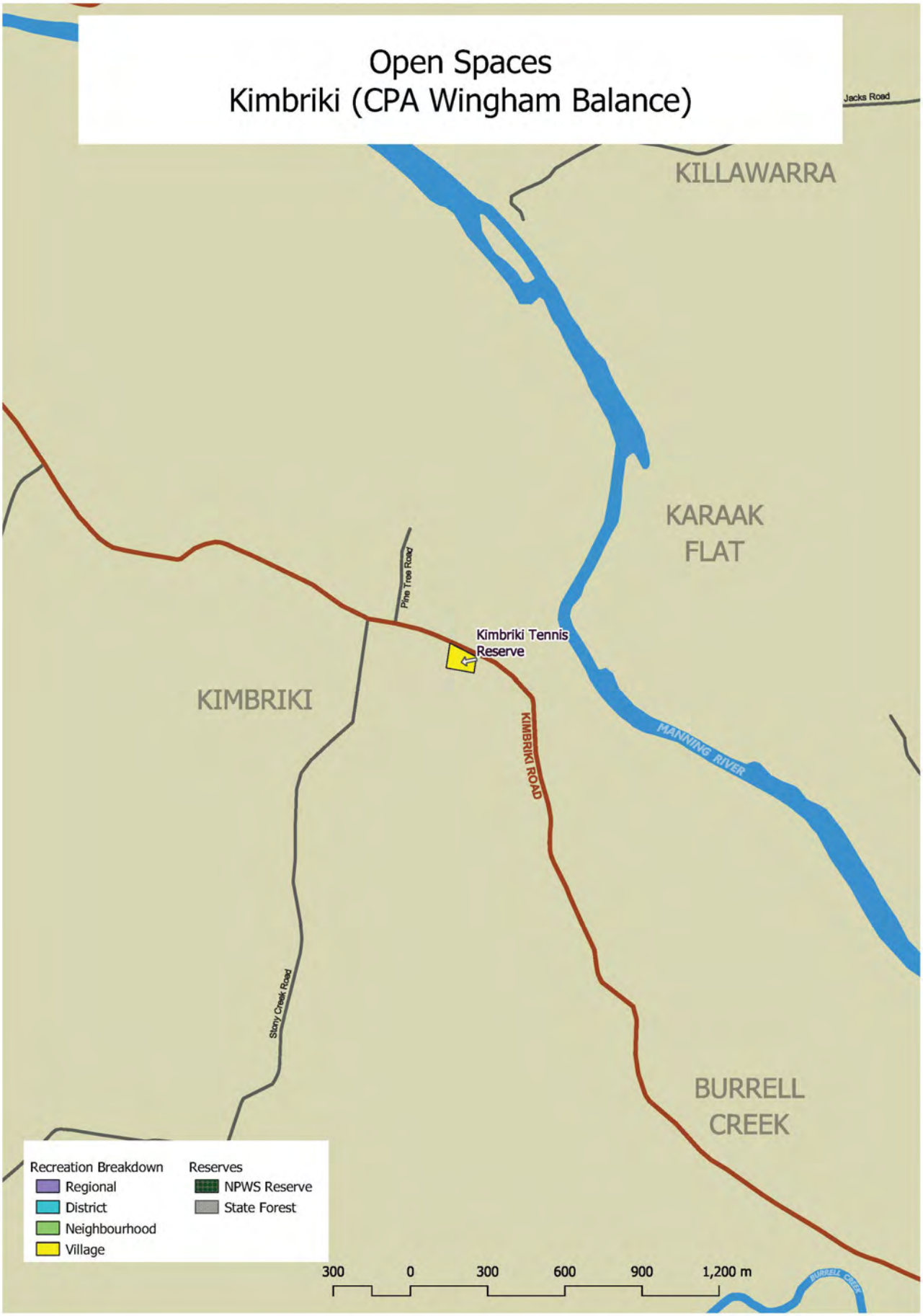
Open Spaces
Tea Gardens (CPA Tea Gardens - Hawks Nest)
Toonang Drive Reserve
Vinny Creek Road East
Wombourne Road
Boomerang Road
Toonang Drive
MYALL WAY
Elouera Park (Lions Lookout)
Wanya Road
MYALL RIVER
Myall Street Reserve TG Skatepark
Leeward Circuit
Shoreline Drive
The Admirals Green
Admiralty Avenue
Admiralty Avenue Reserve
MYALL STREET
Spinifex Avenue
Coupland Avenue
Motum Avenue
Dunshea Avenue Reserve
Dunshea Avenue
Banksia Park
Iluka Street
MYALL LAKES National Park
Koorawatha Drive
Albatross Avenue
HAWKS NEST
Marine Drive Reserve
Marine Drive
Isis Avenue
Clinton Street
Latona Street
Calypso Street
Helena Avenue
Limeklins Road
Memorial Park Sports Field
Witt Street
Anzac Park
Tea Gardens Library and Swimming Pool
Nora Parade
Binda Street
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Open Spaces
Tuncurry (CPA Tuncurry)
Chapmans Reserve
Chapmans Road
Fleeting Place
THE LAKES WAY
Banksia Estate Reserve
Robur Court
Grandis Drive
Leo Street
Parr Road
Grey Gum Road
North Tuncurry Sports Complex
Pacific Parade
Bicentennial Flora Park
Wilson Street
Flora Parade
Bickford Park
Tuncurry Foreshore Reserve
Mayers Drive
Rankie Crescent
Tuncurry Sports Complex (South Street)
Wharf Street
Wallis Street
Tuncurry Street
Parkes Street
Millikin Street
Beach Street
Nine Mile Beach, Rockpool Road Reserve & Breakwall
Eden Place
Parkway Drive
Mills Parade
South Street
Carpet Street
Lake Street
Bent Street
Rockpool Road
Wallamba Cove Reserve
Lachlan Avenue
John Oxley Reserve
Kent Street
Palmway Crescent Reserve
Jonnell Cove Reserve
John Wright Park
Peel Street
Dolphin Drive
Palmway Crescent
Taree Street
Ohmas Bay Foreshore
Reef Point Parade
Tuncurry Water Park and Fazio Park
Lone Pine Memorial Park
FORSTER
Ohmas Bay Jonnell Park
Point Road
Point Road Reserve
WALLIS LAKE
Lake Street
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m

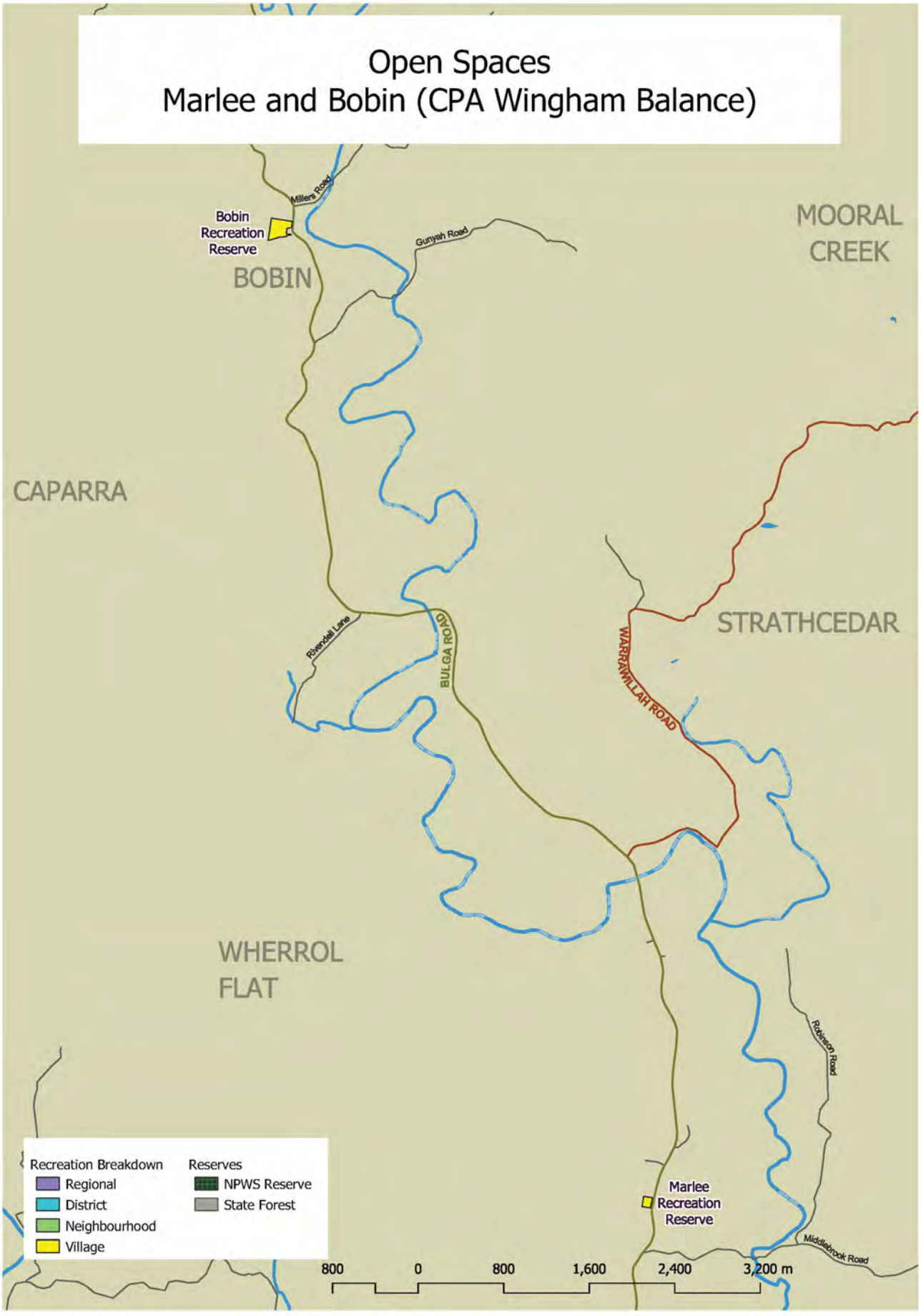

Open Spaces
Caffreys Flat (CPA Wingham Balance)
KNORRIT FOREST
NUMBER ONE
NOWENDOC ROAD
Rocks Crossing Reserve
CAFFREYS FLAT
Paddock Creek Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
400 0 400 800 1,200 1,600 m

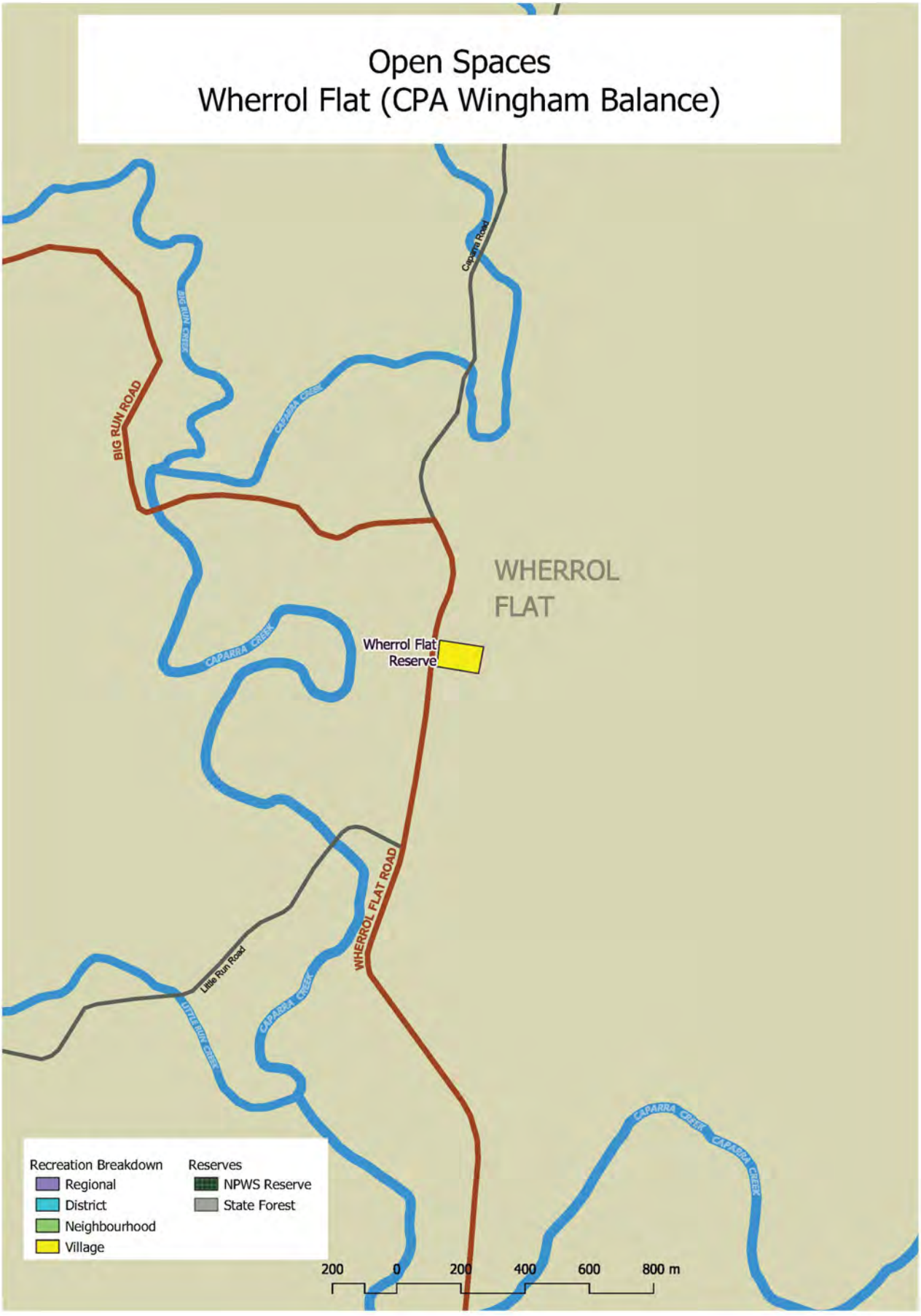

Open Spaces
Elands (CPA Wingham Balance)
Rapids Road
Rapids Reserve
Tilbarcoo Road
Palm Court Lane
Lyndaird Lane
GLENWARRIN ROAD
ELANDS
Ellenborough Falls
Beach Road
BULGA State Forest
Ford Street
Wallis Street
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
400 0 400 800 1,200 1,600 m

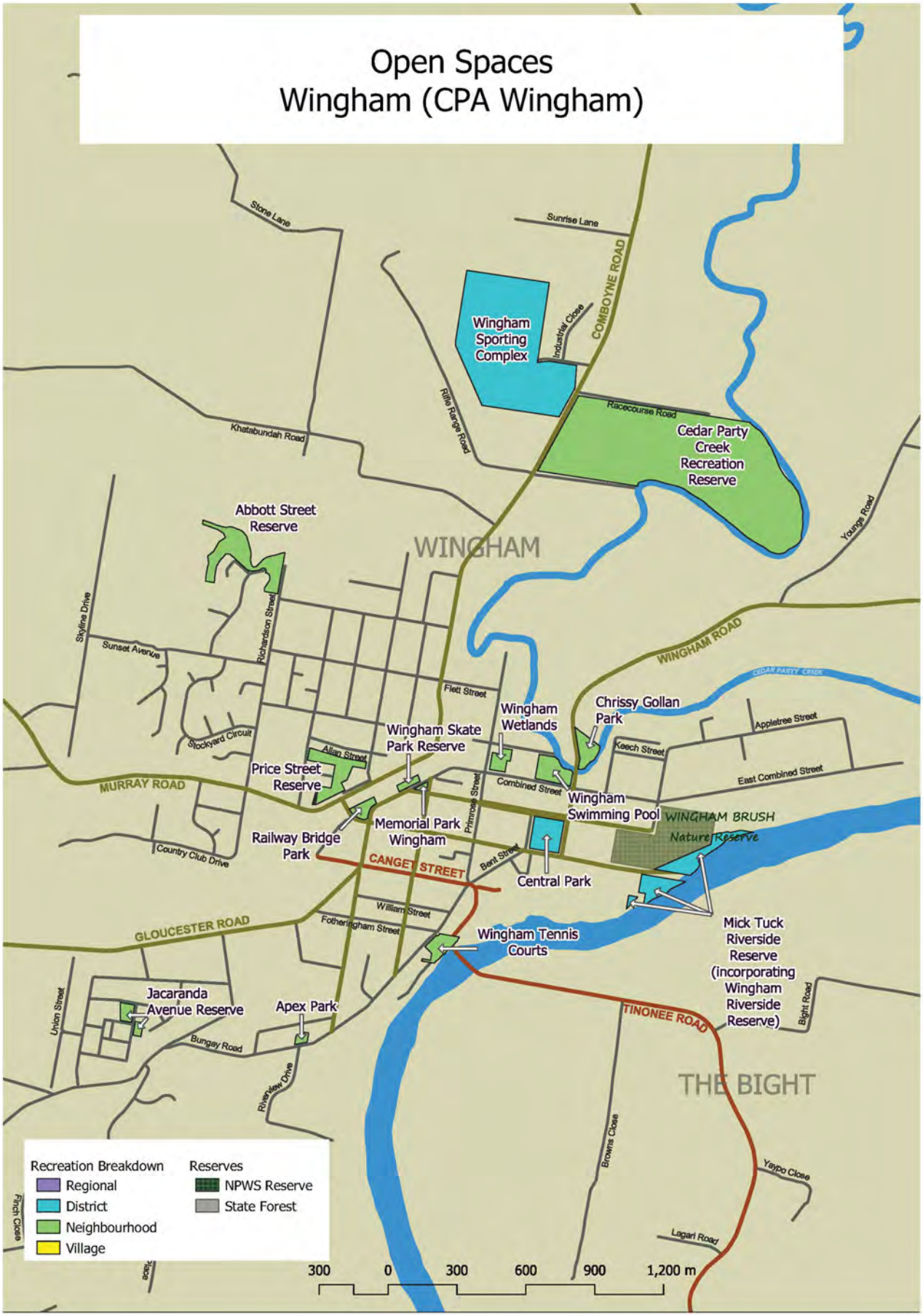
Open Spaces
Killabakh (CPA Wingham Balance)
GOONOOK
Nature Reserve
Alfred Road
McGilvrey Road
KILLABAKH
Killabakh
Community
Reserve
YARRATT
FOREST
Yarnold Road
Leggetts Road
COMBOYNE ROAD
Morens Road
Potts Road
Chalvers Lane
YARRATT
State Forest
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m


Open Spaces
Kimbriki (CPA Wingham Balance)
Jacks Road
KILLAWARRA
KARAAK
FLAT
Pine Tree Road
Kimbriki Tennis
Reserve
KIMBRIKI
KIMBRIKI ROAD
MANNING RIVER
Stony Creek Road
BURRELL
CREEK
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300
0
300
600
900
1,200 m
BURRELL CREEK

Open Spaces
Krambach (CPA Wingham Balance)
THE BUCKETTS WAY
Krambach War Memorial Park
FIRE STATION ROAD
KRAMBACH
Leo Carney Park
MILL STREET
AVALON ROAD
FIREFLY ROAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
100 0 100 200 300 400 m


Open Spaces
Marlee and Bobin (CPA Wingham Balance)
Millers Road
Bobin Recreation Reserve
Gunyah Road
BOBIN
MOORAL CREEK
CAPARRA
Rivendell Lane
BULGA ROAD
WARRAWILLAH ROAD
STRATHCEDAR
WHERROL FLAT
Robinson Road
Marlee Recreation Reserve
Middlebrook Road
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
800 0 800 1,600 2,400 3,200 m


Open Spaces
Wherrol Flat (CPA Wingham Balance)
BIG RUN ROAD
BIG RUN CREEK
CAPARRA CREEK
Caparra Road
WHERROL
FLAT
Wherrol Flat
Reserve
CAPARRA CREEK
WHERROL FLAT ROAD
Little Run Road
LITTLE RUN CREEK
CAPARRA CREEK
CAPARRA CREEK
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
200
0
200
400
600
800 m


Open Spaces
Wingham (CPA Wingham)
Wingham Sporting Complex
Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve
Abbott Street Reserve
WINGHAM
Price Street Reserve
Wingham Skate Park Reserve
Wingham Wetlands
Chrissy Gollan Park
Wingham Swimming Pool
WINGHAM BRUSH Nature Reserve
Railway Bridge Park
Memorial Park Wingham
Central Park
Wingham Tennis Courts
Mick Tuck Riverside Reserve (incorporating Wingham Riverside Reserve)
Jacaranda Avenue Reserve
Apex Park
THE BIGHT
COMBOYNE ROAD
WINGHAM ROAD
MURRAY ROAD
CANGET STREET
GLOUCESTER ROAD
TINONEE ROAD
Recreation Breakdown
Regional
District
Neighbourhood
Village
Reserves
NPWS Reserve
State Forest
300 0 300 600 900 1,200 m

Appendix 6 - Completed Actions as at September 2026

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
	LGA Wide Actions			
2	Put in place a grant funding recreation infrastructure project management framework with local sports clubs and local community groups.	Completed in 2023		
12	Develop a Playspace Strategy that will include an audit of existing playgrounds and which provides a prioritised works schedule for upgrading and the provision of new playspaces in the MidCoast region. Include fitness equipment as part of strategy. Include fitness equipment as part of plan.	Completed. Adopted December 2023.		
13	Develop a Commercial Fitness Provider policy to manage commercial fitness companies and individuals.	Completed. Adopted March 2024.		
14	Develop a MidCoast Walking and Cycling Strategy that will include a works schedule for pathway provision and upgrades.	Completed. Adopted July 2025.		
15	Develop a Bushwalking Plan	Completed. Incorporated into the Walking, Cycling and Trail-based Activity Strategy which was adopted in July 2025.		
16	Develop a Skatepark Plan	Completed. Adopted December 2023.		
17	Continue to develop individual and generic Plans of Management for large reserves and for collections of smaller parks with similar characteristics as per Council's current plans for plans of management.	The following Plans of Management have been adopted since the adoption of the OSRS: o Bulahdelah Showground PoM o Nabiac Showground PoM o Stroud Showground PoM o North Tuncurry Sports Area PoM o Forster Foreshore PoM o Community Land PoM		
18	Develop a MidCoast Sports Lighting Plan.	Completed. Adopted February 2024.		
19	Develop a Public Toilet Plan. Strategy to identify where public toilets should be provided, with a focus on providing public toilets in our parks.	Completed. Adopted February 2025.		
20	Develop a MidCoast Multi-use Court Plan. The strategy will conduct an audit of all Council-owned tennis courts in the area, analyse the need for each facility, and make recommendations on their future provision.	Completed. Adopted February 2024.		
23	Develop boating infrastructure plan based on the Taree-Great Lakes Regional Boating Plan.	Completed. Adopted June 2024.		
24	Develop grant application policy (guidelines)	Completed.		
25	Council to endorse and become a signatory to the NSW Public Spaces Charter.	Completed. Council became a signatory to the Charter in 2023.		
39	Investigate the feasibility, location and construction of: a) a disk golf course in the area	Action completed. Potential sites were considered but none proved suitable.		

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
41	Investigate more cycling racks, especially in major centres, such as Taree, Wingham and Forster.	Partially complete. Recent bike rack installations at Crowdy Head and Black Head. More sites to be considered.	$9,000	
44	Develop a standard “Desired Levels of Service” for maintenance and minor works for all parks and reserves.	Completed in 2023.		
58	Develop a signage policy for all signage to be installed in parks and reserves.	Completed.		
59	Develop boating infrastructure strategy	Completed. Adopted June 2024.		
60	Develop grant application policy	Completed.		
61	Investigate a suitable location for the construction of a disc golf course	Completed. Site investigations conducted, project deemed not to be feasible based on availability of Council land to meet the spatial requirements for the activity.		
	Location Specific Actions			
1	Black Head - Black Head Sports Complex Investigate the following projects a) Upgrade sports lighting	Completed in 2024	$68,093	$181,743
2	Black Head - Wylie Breckenridge Develop the following project a) Construct a new skatepark in Black Head	Completed Sep 2025.	$423,968	$435,000
4	Boomerang Beach - Pacific Palms Sports Complex Develop the following project Upgrade sports lighting.	Completed in 2024.		$288,399
5	Boomerang Beach - Pacific Palms Sports Complex Investigate the following projects b) Upgrade sports lighting.	See Action #4 above.		
11	Bulahdelah - Showground Tennis Investigate the following projects c) Investigate converting one tennis court to multi-purpose court	Completed in 2025.		$150,000
17	Coomba - Town Wide Investigate the following projects e) Investigate provision of multi-use courts for basketball and netball	Completed in 2025.	$9,000	$35,000
20	Coopernook - Coopernook Park Develop the following project Upgrade playspace	Completed in 2024.	$32,000	$160,000
22	Croki Develop the following project a) Investigate options for the upgrade of the swimming enclosure b) Upgrade wharf	Swimming enclosure upgraded in 2024. The wharf was removed in 2024 due to structural issues.		$484,909
23	Crowdy Head b) Seal the existing non-formalised car park at the surf club	Completed in 2025.		$841,000
27	Diamond Beach a) Do minor works to include new footpath, new equipment storage, a new basketball backboard and the resurfacing of the basketball and pickleball court.	Partially completed (new footpath and basketball backboard)		$50,000

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
30	Elands - Ellenborough Falls Investigate the following project Investigate the enhancement of Ellenborough Falls facilities to support activation opportunities	Completed in 2023.		$311,000
31	Elizabeth Beach Develop the following projects a) Investigate boat ramp and pontoon upgrade at Wallis Lake Foreshore Reserve	Completed in 2024.		$283,100
33	Forster Develop the following project b) Investigate upgrading of Little St Baths, including accessible access and upgrade to existing infrastructure	Partially completed 2026 (re-decking works and new handrails)	$21,077.00	$50,000.00
36	Forster a) Investigate completing missing links and formalisation of the Lakes to Ocean walking circuit.	Complete 2025. Project proposal finalised with identification of missing links and associated costings to formalise the trail.		
38	Forster - Gregory Reserve a) Extend the Pelican Boardwalk on the river foreshore in Forster	Completed in 2026.	$883,167.00	$2,649,501.00
42	Gloucester - Billabong Park Investigate the following projects d) Continue use of the park for markets, festivals and community events i) Construct new suspension bridge in park	Completed in 2025.		$260,000
43	Gloucester Investigate the following project a) Investigate the construction of a multipurpose synthetic hockey field, including a full-size field, sports lighting and support facilities	Gloucester Hockey club is working directly with NSW Department of Education to construct the facility on the Gloucester High School site.		
47	Gloucester - Farley Gates Investigate the following project Investigate the rationalisation of the playground at Farley Gates.	Completed in 2023.		
48	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park a) Construct a Fenced Off-leash Dog Area (FOLA)	Completed 2026		$40,000 (Duralie fund)
51	Gloucester - Gloucester District Park Develop the following project a) Install new shade sails at pool.	Completed in 2024.		$150,000
57	Gloucester – Oak Reserve Develop the following project a) Construction of new Fenced Off-leash Dog Area (FOLA) at Oak Reserve. b) Investigate provision of a new playspace. See Playspace Strategy.	Completed in 2026 The FOLA was constructed in Gloucester District Park and the Playspace Strategy identified that a play facility was not required in Oak Reserve.		
60	Harrington a) Investigate the construction of a cycleway between Harrington and Crowdy Head	Feasibility Study completed in 2026		Funded by Manning River Rotary (Harrington)
63	Harrington - Dolphin Park Develop the following projects a) Improve the entry Action completed b) Improve way-finding signage to the park	Completed in 2025.	$30,000	$22,750
64	Harrington - Esmond Hogan Park Develop the following projects b) Construct new amenity building	Completed in 2024.		$500,000
65	Hawks Nest Develop the following project a) Construct Stage 2 of Amenities Building at Myall Park.	Partially complete. Stage 2A completed in 2026.		$130,000
66	Hawks Nest Develop the following projects b) Investigate fenced leashed free dog area at Providence Park d) Work with Myall Koala and Environment	b) Completed in 2026. d) Completed in 2025.		Funded by TGHN Lions

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
	Group to install interpretive signage along Hawks Nest Nature Walk. e) Upgrade of the Singing Bridge boat ramp.	e) Completed in 2024.	$205,000	$636,974
69	Krambach Develop the following project a) Upgrade the existing playspace to a Local level facility in accordance with the Playspace Strategy.	Completed in 2023.	$80,000	
74	Nabiac Develop the following projects b) Investigate the upgrading of the existing sport amenity to align with current and projected future use of the sport complex Action completed	See Action #75.		
75	Nabiac - Nabiac Oval Investigate the following projects a) At the tennis courts replace 4 x wooden light poles at end of life with 18m base-hinge poles with LED luminaries b) Upgrade tennis court surface c) Incorporate additional sports markings to court to allow for other uses	Tennis facility upgraded in 2026.		$1,062,583 (Federal government grant and contributing funding from the Nabiac Neighbourhood Centre)
76	Nerong Inlet Investigate potential development of facilities at Nerong Inlet as proposed in Nerong Boating Redevelopment Plan	Completed. Work undertaken to upgrade the pontoon. Further actions identified and confirmed in the Recreational Boating Infrastructure Plan.		$118,856
77	North Arm Cove and Carrington - Town wide Develop the following projects d) Assess the need for skateboard and BMX facilities, and put in place if feasible e) Assess the need for children's play facilities, and put in place if feasible g) Determine the most appropriate location for an Emergency Evacuation jetty, and if feasible, develop a plan to put in place h) Do a feasibility study to identify a suitable location for a community boat ramp outside of the NAC village	All actions considered during the development of supporting strategies.		
78	North Arm Cove Develop the following projects a) Investigate boat launching facility at Beauty Point	Not supported during the development of the Recreation Boating Infrastructure Plan.		
81	Old Bar - Old Bar Park Develop Master Plan for Old Bar Park	Completed in 2025		
83	Old Bar Park – Old Bar Investigate the following projects f) Add pickleball line marking to the two netball courts	Completed in 2025		
85	Seal Rocks Develop plans for rehabilitation of the eastern reserve (as a passive recreation space), and addressing informal beach access points at Number 1 Beach, Seal Rocks	Completed in 2025		
86	Seal Rocks Develop the following project a) Consider provision of public access at eastern end of Number One Beach (consider aboriginal heritage)	Completed in 2024.	$273,360	
88	Smiths Lake Investigate the following projects c) Endorse the Smith's Lake Recreation Reserve Master Plan	Completed. Smiths Lake Recreation Park (Paradise Drive) master plan adopted July 2024.		
90	Stratford Develop the following project a) Replacement of synthetic cricket wicket at oval and install bollards to secure it.	Completed in 2024.		$28,000

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
92	Stroud Develop the following projects b) Advocate for the development of a long-distance trail along Nevilles Rd	Action was considered during the development of the Walking, Cycling and Trail-based Activity Strategy. Not supported.		
96	Taree a) Consider underpass for the shared cycleway between Browns Creek and Victoria St	Natural surface walkway was constructed under the underpass, linking Bicentennial Gardens with Browns Creek Reserve until such time that grant funding is secured to formalise the linkage.	$20,000	
97	Taree - Craiglea Place Reserve Develop the following project a) Investigate suitability for development into a Local park, including the potential installation of a multi-purpose court, or Local playspace.	Action not supported by Playspace Strategy.		
98	Taree - Taree Recreation Grounds Develop a masterplan for the Taree Recreation Grounds	Completed in 2025		
101	Taree - Manning Waters Reserve a) Investigate the construction of a District level playspace.	Action was not supported during the development of the Playspace Strategy.		
103	Taree – Taree Recreation Grounds Develop the following projects: a) Investigate the feasibility of developing Taree Recreation Grounds into a regional facility (including incorporating Jack Neal Oval into the precinct). b) Investigate replacement of the Dawson River Boardwalk and extend trail network c) Replace the synthetic surface at the cricket training facility	a) Completed (under development of the MidCoast Regional Sporting Precinct Master Plan). b) Not supported after analysis, noting flooding implications in this area. c) Completed in 2025.		$30,376
105	Taree - Telopea Drive Reserve a) Investigate the need for a playspace.	Action not supported by the Playspace Strategy		
106	Taree - Wrigley Park Investigate the feasibility for the following projects d) Investigate rationalisation of amenities e) Construct a new pump track in the north-eastern corner	d) Undertaken during development of the supporting strategies. e) Not supported during the development of the Skatepark Strategy.		
109	Taree Foreshore Develop the following projects. b) Construct a concrete access pathway from the concrete area at Manning Quays to the eastern end of the ramp at the front of the Riverstage.	Completed in 2025.		$10,000
111	Tinonee - Horrace Dean Memorial Park Develop the following project a) Consider boat ramp and jetty upgrade at Horrace Dean Memorial Park	Completed in 2024. However, asset damage occurred during May 2025 flood event.		$120,894
117	Tuncurry - Jonnel Park/Bay Street Reserve Investigate the following projects a) providing a Local playspace in the northern end of the reserve Action completed	Action investigated during the development of the Playspace Strategy and was not supported.		
122	Wingham - Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve (Wingham Racecourse) Develop Master Plan for Cedar Party Creek Recreation Reserve	Completed in 2025		
125	Wingham – Central Park a) Develop Master Plan Central Park c) Investigate installation of fencing around new playspace. Confirm through community consultation.	Completed in 2025. Master Plan adopted at the July 2025 Council meeting.		
126	Wingham – Chrissy Gollan Reserve Develop master plan for Chrissy Gollan Reserve	Plan completed in 2025. A plan for the reserve was undertaken after the May 2025 flood. With the completion of the upgrade of Cedar Party Creek Bridge we developed, in	$150,000	

	Actions	Outcome	Council Funding	Grant Funding
		consultation with key stakeholders in Wingham, a plan for the new park, and construction of the park was completed in July 2026.		
128	Wingham a) Investigate the location for the provision of a Fenced Off-leash Dog Area (FOLA).	Railway Reserve selected. Completed in 2025.		$100,000
			$2,204,665	**$9,130,085**

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