

13 FURTHER REPORT - ACTIVE LIVING HORNSBY STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS) recommends Council shift its focus towards development of major destination parks and improving local walking and cycle networks.
- The ALHS is underpinned by six strategies, to be implemented by five key action plans following the adoption of the ALHS. This Report recommends that a Sports Plan and a Walking and Cycle Plan be the first priorities among the five plans.
- The ALHS was placed on public exhibition with 15 submissions received from a variety of recreational users including Sydney North Off Road Cyclists, Northern Suburbs Football Association, Save Epping Pool Group and Sydney North Health Services.
- Overall there was agreement with the principles of the strategy, with each of the respondents seeking further investigations in the area of interest.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the findings of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS).
2. Prepare the five key action plans identified in the ALHS, commencing with a Sports Plan followed by a Walking and Cycling Plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to present a response to the public exhibition of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS) and seek endorsement of the strategy.

Endorsement is also sought for the preparation of a the five key action plans that are set out in the ALHS(see below) commencing with a Sports Plan followed by a Walking and Cycling Plan.

BACKGROUND

At the 8 April 2015 General Meeting, Council considered Executive Manager's Report No. IR10/15 on Recreation and Open Space and resolved:

"THAT Council:

- 1. Note the findings of the draft Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS)*
- 2. Endorse placing the draft ALHS on public exhibition with a response to the exhibition to be reported back to Council."*

Council placed the draft strategy on public exhibition in May 2015 with 15 submissions being received.

DISCUSSION

Public Exhibition

There has been extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders as part of the development of the draft strategy with workshops and surveys. The ALHS was placed on public exhibition with 15 submissions received from a variety of recreational users. Overall, there was agreement with the principles of the strategy, with each of the respondents seeking further investigations in the area of interest.

Submissions received include:

Sydney Off Road Cyclist – Building a Shire-wide Network of Mountain Bike Trails

- Sydney North Off Road Cyclists support the focus of the strategy, however they have requested Council investigate building a Shire-wide network of mountain bike trails that are suitable for both walking and cycling.

Response

- The strategy contains numerous references to off road cycling, however these have been further extended as well as suggested additions incorporated following these submissions (pages 70, 71, 89, 90, 99, 109, 117, 119). In total 11 submissions were received from members of the Sydney North Off Road Cyclists group. Further investigation of the cycling network will be carried out as part of the Walking and Cycling Plan.

Northern Football Association – Further Investment for Improving Sporting Facilities

- Northern Suburbs Football Association is supportive of the findings of the ALHS and requests that further investment is required for improving sporting facilities, particularly in the northern region of the Shire.

Response

- The detailed recommendations will be further assessed as part of the Sports Facility Strategy when updated.

Epping Civic Trust – Concerns About the Future of Epping Aquatic Centre

- Epping Civic Trust is generally supportive of the findings however raised concerns about the future of the Epping Aquatic Centre, which has been addressed through Deputy General Manager's Report No. IR19/15.
- The Trust also raised concerns around the timing of the study with possible boundary adjustments as part of the Fit for the Future reforms.

Response

- At the time of writing this Report, Council is in the process of gathering further information about the condition of the pool structures, cost of repairs and the possibility of a replacement aquatic centre. A reference was inserted at page 117 of the ALHS recommending a continuation of these investigations.
- The ALHS is warranted and presents an open space planning framework that would be useful to decision-makers irrespective of any boundary adjustments that may eventuate as part of the Fit for the Future reforms.

Save Epping Pool – Concerns About the Possible Closure of Epping Aquatic Centre

- Save Epping Pool Group raised concerns relating to the possible closure of Epping Aquatic Centre as well as the approach to consultation and accuracy of demographics.

Response

- Council has deferred consideration of the pool closure subject to a separate review process. Information has been added to the introduction of the strategy outlining the background to the issue. No further changes have been made to the document regarding this submission.

Following the submissions being received, adjustments were made to the strategy to align with the concerns raised. A summary of the amendments made to the strategy is attached to this report.

Where to From Here?

The ALHS will become the guiding policy document for a number of strategic directions for Council for the ways in which our community recreates.

Section B1 (from page 103) sets out the six strategies for the management of Hornsby Shire's open space:

1. Drawing on the Shire's Unique Environment
2. Making the Open Space Network Part of Daily Life
3. Responding to the Shire's Diverse Lifestyles
4. Promoting Cycling and Walking
5. Adapting to a Changing Sports Environment
6. Planning for the Next Generations.

To implement these strategies, the ALHS recommends the formulation of five key action plans to bring Council's open space assets closer in line with community needs now and in future:

Sports Plan

Like many councils in Sydney, Hornsby is facing a growing challenge in meeting escalating demand for sports facilities, especially fields and courts, whilst having a limited land resource with which to meet that demand. This is particularly acute in the southern suburbs of the Shire where overcrowding on fields during training and resultant heavy turf wear is common. The continuation of the current situation is not sustainable. A Sports Plan is required to establish a sub-regional and local approach to this matter. The Plan should replace the Sports Facility Strategy (2006) and address all field and outdoor court sports. Community pressure to resolve the congestion on sportsgrounds and courts is the most pressing issue and the Sports Plan should be the next priority in open space planning.

Walking and Cycling Plan

The ALHS proposes the development of a Walking and Cycling Plan that seeks to improve connectivity for walkers and cyclists. Based on representations by cycling groups, and the high community participation levels in walking for leisure and exercise, this plan should be the second priority. The stated goal in the plan is to build new pathways to provide attractive short local circuits connecting parks, schools, shops and local entry points to bushland areas. This is an important element of the ALHS and implies a significant expansion of Council's current footpath development program. The program is also recommended to include an expansion of trails within bushland areas that would provide linkages for both off road cyclists and walkers. At present, no resources are available to extend the cycling plan to encompass increased infrastructure for walking, and scant funds are available to construct consequent capital work.

Open Space Planning and Design Guidelines

These guidelines would help Council to establish best practice benchmarking for all future open space planning and design for new reserves and for upgrading existing reserves.

Open Space Distribution Strategy

The ALHS identifies disparities in provision and access to open space across the Shire, resulting in some communities gaining better recreation opportunities than others. This observation suggests there is a need to review the current distribution and quantity of open space that is available to the public. The Open Space Distribution Plan will provide a detailed evaluation of where new open space may be required in the Shire, where it may benefit from consolidation and where divestment and reinvestment of funds may achieve a better outcome for the community.

Play Plan

The community's perspective on children's play is changing significantly. In recognising the importance of both structured and free play in childhood development there is an increasing call for children to be encouraged to interact more directly with nature, both in formal playground design and in free play. This is of particular value in Hornsby where the extensive bushland landscape offers ideal opportunities for children to safely interact with and become closer to the Shire's natural values.

CONSULTATION

Members of the public, key stakeholders within and outside of Council and Councillors have been consulted during the preparation of the ALHS.

The draft ALHS was also placed on public exhibition with submissions received from the community.

BUDGET

At this stage it is anticipated that the strategies will be developed by Council officers within existing budget and resourcing restrictions. Work has commenced on the development of The Sports Plan.

Any variation to this approach will be reflected in future Delivery Programs. The budget implications of projects arising from the various strategies, such as the Sports Plan and Walking and Cycling Plan, will be reflected in future Delivery Programs that will be considered by Council.

POLICY

The Active Living Hornsby Strategy will constitute new Council policy.

CONCLUSION

The ALHS makes far reaching recommendations for the future management of Council's open space assets, with the aim of enabling Council to respond to changes in local demographics and recreation trends. It recommends that further work is required to address the size and distribution of open space, provide clearer direction to sports facility improvements, to promote walking and cycling and to improve the accessibility of open space lands.

Council will need to engage the community in identifying how any changes may be delivered to achieve the greatest improvements in access to open spaces.

The ALHS creates an exciting opportunity to improve Council's open spaces and it is recommended that the strategy is endorsed.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The officer responsible for the preparation of this Report is the Manager, Parks and Recreation – Peter Kemp, who can be contacted on 9847 6792.

ROBERT STEPHENS

Deputy General Manager

Infrastructure and Recreation Division

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - Final Draft Active Living Hornsby Strategy
2. Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions
3. Attachment 3 - Consultants Response to Public Exhibition Submissions
4. Attachment 4 - Schedule of Amendments Final Draft ALHS

File Reference: F2013/00261

Document Number: D06159067



MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

Held at COUNCIL CHAMBERS, HORNSBY
on Wednesday 14 October 2015
at 6:33PM

INFRASTRUCTURE AND RECREATION DIVISION

13 IR24/15 Further Report - Active Living Hornsby Strategy

(F2013/00261)

RESOLVED ON THE MOTION OF COUNCILLOR TILBURY, seconded by COUNCILLOR GALLAGHER,

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the findings of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS).
2. Prepare the five key action plans identified in the ALHS, commencing with a Sports Plan followed by a Walking and Cycling Plan.

FOR: COUNCILLORS AZIZI, BROWNE, COX, GALLAGHER, HUTCHENCE, RUSSELL, SINGH AND TILBURY

AGAINST: NIL



ATTACHMENTS

GENERAL MEETING

**Wednesday 14 October 2015
at 6:30PM**



HORNSBY SHIRE COUNCIL
ACTIVE LIVING HORNSBY STRATEGY

S13-0152 R-01 10/08/2015

Cover Image:
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ACTIVE LIVING HORNSBY STRATEGY DRAFT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

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S13-0152 R01	A	31/03/2014	Draft Issues Paper	MK	CD	-
	B	18/08/2014	Draft Issues Paper	AJ	-	-
	C	23/09/2014	Draft Needs and Demand	AJ	-	-
	D	20/10/2014	Draft Strategy and Implementation	AJ	AJ	CL
	E	24/12/14	Final	CL	CL	
	F	23/03/15	Final Revised	HN	HN	CL
	G	03/08/15	Final Revised	HN	HN	CL
	H	10/8/15	Final Revised	HN	HN	CL

Note: This document is Preliminary unless validated.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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SETTING THE SCENE

From the steep bushland-clad foreshores of the Hawkesbury River in the Shire's north - a landscape that remains almost unchanged from that which the Guringai and Darug people occupied for thousands of years - through the farmland plateaus in the west that tell of the Shires' early European agricultural settlements, to the contemporary and growing urban centres in the Shire's south, the diversity of 'place' and associated experiences across the Shire is unmatched and provides a powerful narrative of Sydney's evolution.

Council is seeking to conserve and build on these unique values in the planning, management and design of its public realm - be it natural landscape, parkland or inner urban streetscape - to nurture the distinct identity, the vibrant ecology, the cultural context and the economic environment in which an active and healthy Hornsby community can thrive.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

The diverse environment of Hornsby was home to a population of 156,842 people in 2011, a population that is continuing to grow, with a forecast increase to 173,678 by 2021 (an additional 16,822 persons). The lifestyles of this population ranges from rural living in the north of the Shire to inner urban apartment living in parts of the Shire's south. The background of this population is equally diverse with 26% coming from countries where English is not the first language, including China, India, South Korea and Sri Lanka. A growing percentage of the population is ageing (13.8% are older workers and pre-retirees), while 44% of households comprise couples with children (above the 35% Greater Sydney average).

Access to public open space is equally varied across the Council area; the eastern side of the Shire is well served by train, but access in the west and north is principally by road. However, much of the Shire area is National Park and this offers extensive bushland recreation opportunity including through major trails such as the Great North Walk.

With the highest projected residential growth in the eastern and southern urban centres of Hornsby, Waitara and Epping - much of this as apartment living - there is a need to ensure that the quantum, diversity and accessibility of the Shire's open space meets these needs, whilst also ensuring that the needs of communities in rural lower growth areas are also catered for.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN HORNSBY TODAY

Council manages some 374 public open spaces across the Shire, which range in size from 0.03 Ha to 196 Ha. An estimated 47% of these spaces are however smaller than 0.5 Ha in size and significantly 275 of those spaces are under 0.2 Ha, which is less than optimal even for local parks (0.3 Ha is considered a benchmark minimum that permits a variety of recreational uses). There is a total of 1720 Ha of open space, with 82% of the area bushland, 9% sportsground and 7% embellished park.

The dominant open spaces across the Shire by total area and reserve numbers are Bushland, Outdoor Sports and Parkland. Bushland trails are extensive but offer more limited local walking circuits; Outdoor Sports settings mostly occupy level ridge land and continue to receive greater demand for use than the available resource can offer, while Parkland, with some notable exceptions, such as the popular Fagan Park, is mostly comprised of smaller local reserves.

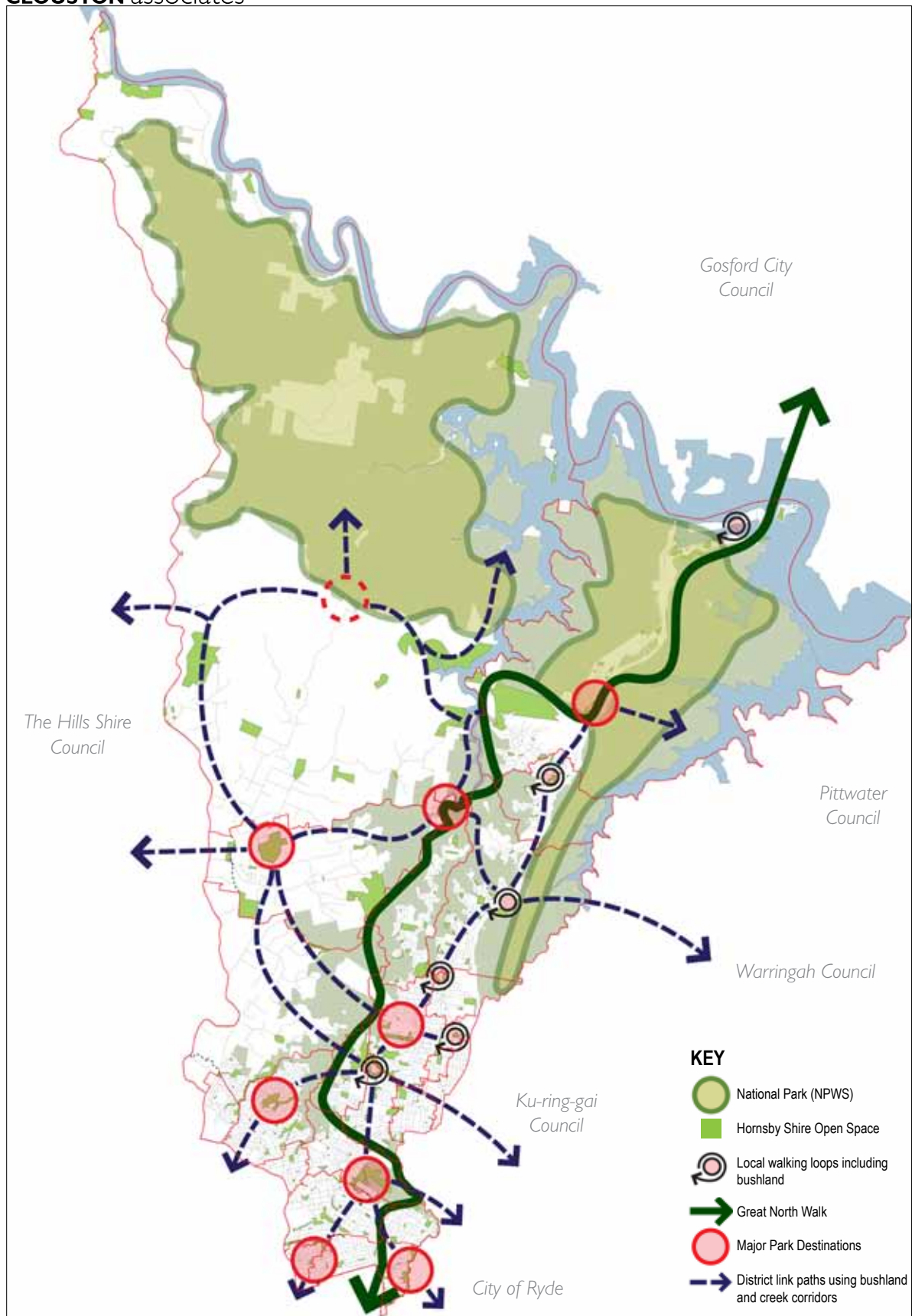


Figure EX-01- Open Space Structure Plan

Analysis of distance from residences in the urban areas of the Shire to the nearest open space demonstrates that most lie within a 400m range (a benchmark maximum distance). However, much of this access is to bushland - often on steep topography - which necessarily limits the types of local recreation available to those residents (ie more limited kickabout and play area opportunities), suggesting the need to review potential local acquisitions and/or improved access in the areas of poorest provision, particularly where these areas coincide with high forecast population growth (eg Waitara, Hornsby, Asquith and Epping).

Unstructured recreation across the Shire matches the diversity of landscape types and the available facilities, with cycling (road, MTB and BMX), fishing, boating and bushwalking all being popular, particularly adjoining bushland, creeks and the Hawkesbury River. The provision of well located and cost effective tourist accommodation would increase opportunities for 2-3 day walks in the National Parks and assist in cycle tourism promotion.

The opportunities to increase the quantum of Outdoor settings in the Shire to meet growing demand is limited by geography, so an approach to increasing existing capacity will necessarily rely heavily on extending the capacity and recreation opportunity within existing reserves

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ASPIRATIONS

The community was widely consulted throughout the preparation of the Strategy, employing an integrated suite of formats including workshops, focus groups, online surveys and open days.

The resulting report indicated a high level of satisfaction (64%) with the existing open space, but also indicated the need to address improved facilities and opportunities for walking (especially local walks connecting urban areas and bushland) and cycling as well as local open space upgrades, more adaptable sports facilities to address a growing demand and the need for more information on what recreation opportunities exist across the Shire.

STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC REALM

The ALHS provides a Rationale for the realisation of the strategy's objectives under the banner of 'City in the Bush', an important distinction from the 'Bushland Shire' moniker, in recognising the desire of many residents today for urban living in a bushland context. (see Fig EX01 opposite). This Rationale is then developed through a series of actions under six strategic headings as follows:

- Drawing on the Shire's Unique Environment
- Making the Open Space Network Part of Daily Life
- Responding to the Shire's Diverse Lifestyles
- Promoting Cycling and Walking
- Adapting to a Changing Sports Environment
- Planning for the Next Generations

These actions also refer to further Plans that need to be actioned in a staged approach, employing the strategy actions as a guiding framework (see Fig EX 01).

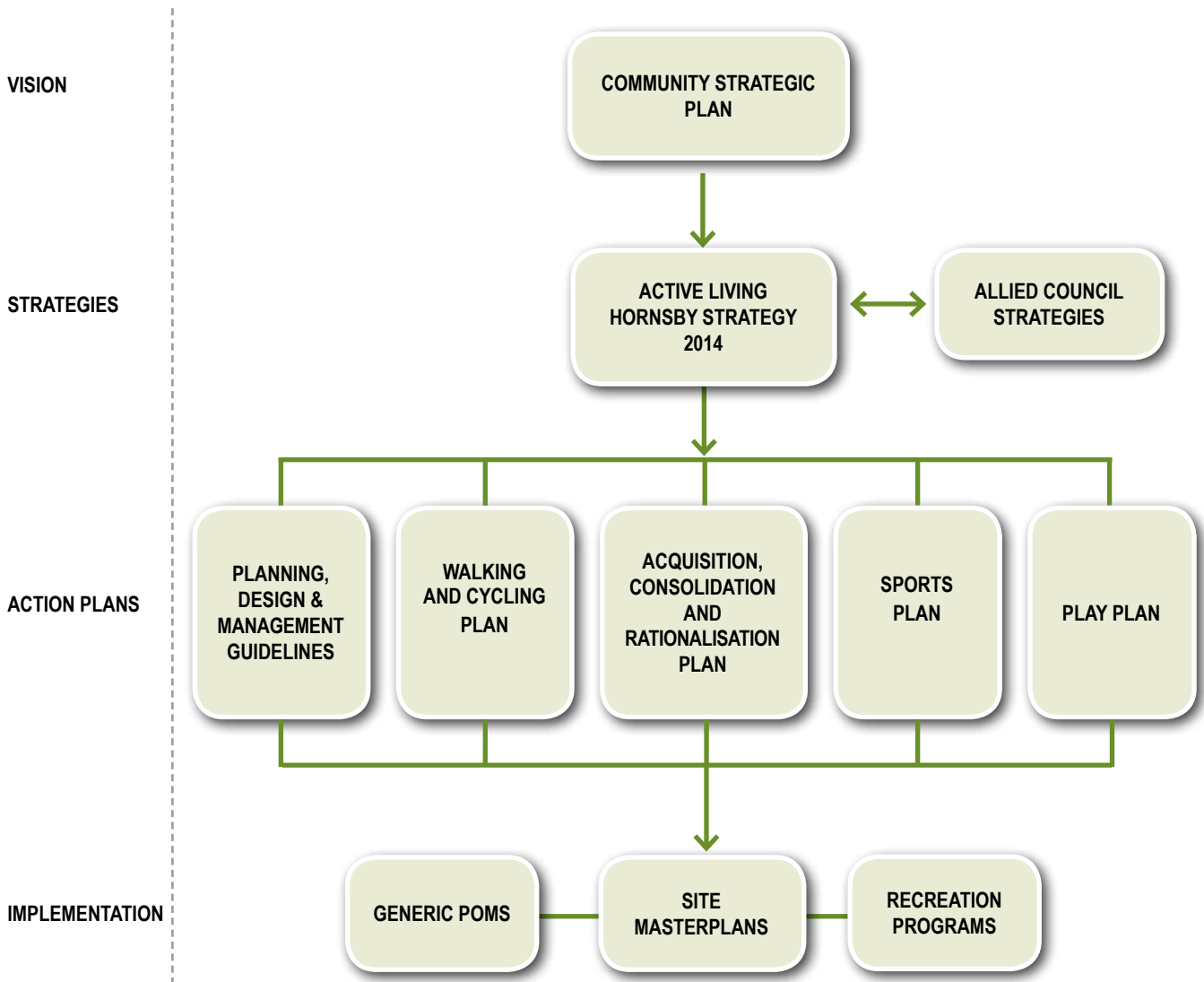


Figure EX-02 - Planning and Implementation Hierarchy

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The ALHS is of its nature a strategic framework document and to that end it sets out a suite of following actions that will assist in the implementation of the recommendations it contains. Figure EX 02 illustrates this top down approach and identifies the critical Plans that will be key to delivering the ALHS. These are:

- **Open Space Planning and Design Guidelines;** these guidelines permit Council to establish best practice benchmarking for all future open space planning and design, be that for new reserves or upgrading existing reserves.
- **Walking and Cycling Plan;** where walking and cycling are planned in concert with the full spectrum of the public domain, the resultant synergies achieve higher usage levels and much more connected communities. This Plan will therefore integrate parks with streets and all other day to day destinations (work, transport, shops, school, play etc).
- **Acquisition, Consolidation and Rationalisation:** the ALHS identifies disparities in provision and access to open space across the Shire, resulting in some communities gaining better recreation opportunities than others. Further, the anticipated growth in population, particularly in the southern suburbs, suggests an urgent need to review supply and demand. This Plan will provide a detailed evaluation of where new open space may be required in the Shire, where it may benefit from consolidation and where divestment and reinvestment of funds may achieve a better outcome for the community.
- **Sports Plan;** as for many Councils in Sydney Hornsby is facing a growing challenge in meeting escalating demand for sports facilities - especially fields and courts - whilst having a limited land resource with which to meet that demand. The continuation of the current situation is not sustainable and this Plan is required to establish a sub-regional and local approach to this matter. The Plan will address all sports and the better integration of unstructured recreation into sports venues.
- **Play Plan;** the community's perspectives on children's play is changing significantly. In recognising the importance of both structured and free play in childhood development there is an increasing call for children to be encouraged to interact more directly with nature, both in formal playground design and in free play. This is of particular value in Hornsby where the extensive bushland landscape offers ideal opportunities for children's play. This Plan will adopt this holistic approach.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The ALHS is supported by an Appendix of documents that expand on the report, including the full open space inventory, an open space tourism strategy and the detailed engagement report.



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

SETTING THE SCENE

"This was a place out of dream, a fierce landscape of chasms and glowering cliffs and a vast unpredictable sky. Everywhere was the same but everywhere was different...One reach resembled all others; cliffs, a fringe of glossy green mangroves, green water...the woods crowded down the ridge to the water. A smudge of smoke hung in the air as if trapped."

The Secret River- Kate Grenville

It is not hard to imagine the awe with which William Thornhill - the fictional character of Grenville's evocative novel - would have viewed the landscape that slowly revealed itself as he navigated his way up the Hawkesbury River in the early years of the nineteenth century; for perhaps more than any in any other part of this region, the landscape of Hornsby Shire retains and reveals the full timeline of Sydney's evolution, reaching back to this era and before.

From the steep bushland-clad foreshores of the Hawkesbury River in the Shire's north - a landscape that remains almost unchanged from that which the Guringai and Darug people occupied for thousands of years - through the farmland plateaus in the west that tell of the Shires' early European agricultural settlements to the contemporary and growing urban centres in the Shire's south, the diversity of 'place' and associated experiences across the Shire is unmatched.

Each of these environments and the distinctive places that they generate become the drivers of energy and activity that are the cornerstone of healthy communities.

So Council is seeking to conserve and build on these unique values for its residential population, for its working population and for its many visitors, from near and far.

To that end, public realm - be it natural landscape, parkland or inner urban streetscape - provides the distinct identity, the vibrant ecology, the cultural context and the economic environment in which active, healthy communities can thrive.

That therefore is the essence and focus of this Strategy.

PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose

The Active Living Hornsby strategy identifies the recreation and open space needs of the Hornsby community and provides a strategic framework from which to guide and manage future open space and recreation planning for Hornsby Shire.

Aims

- Establish a clear understanding of the types of open space and recreation facilities and their distribution in the Shire
- Recognise the recreational, environmental and social values of open space
- Clearly identify the relationship of open space and recreation to the current and proposed population of Hornsby Shire

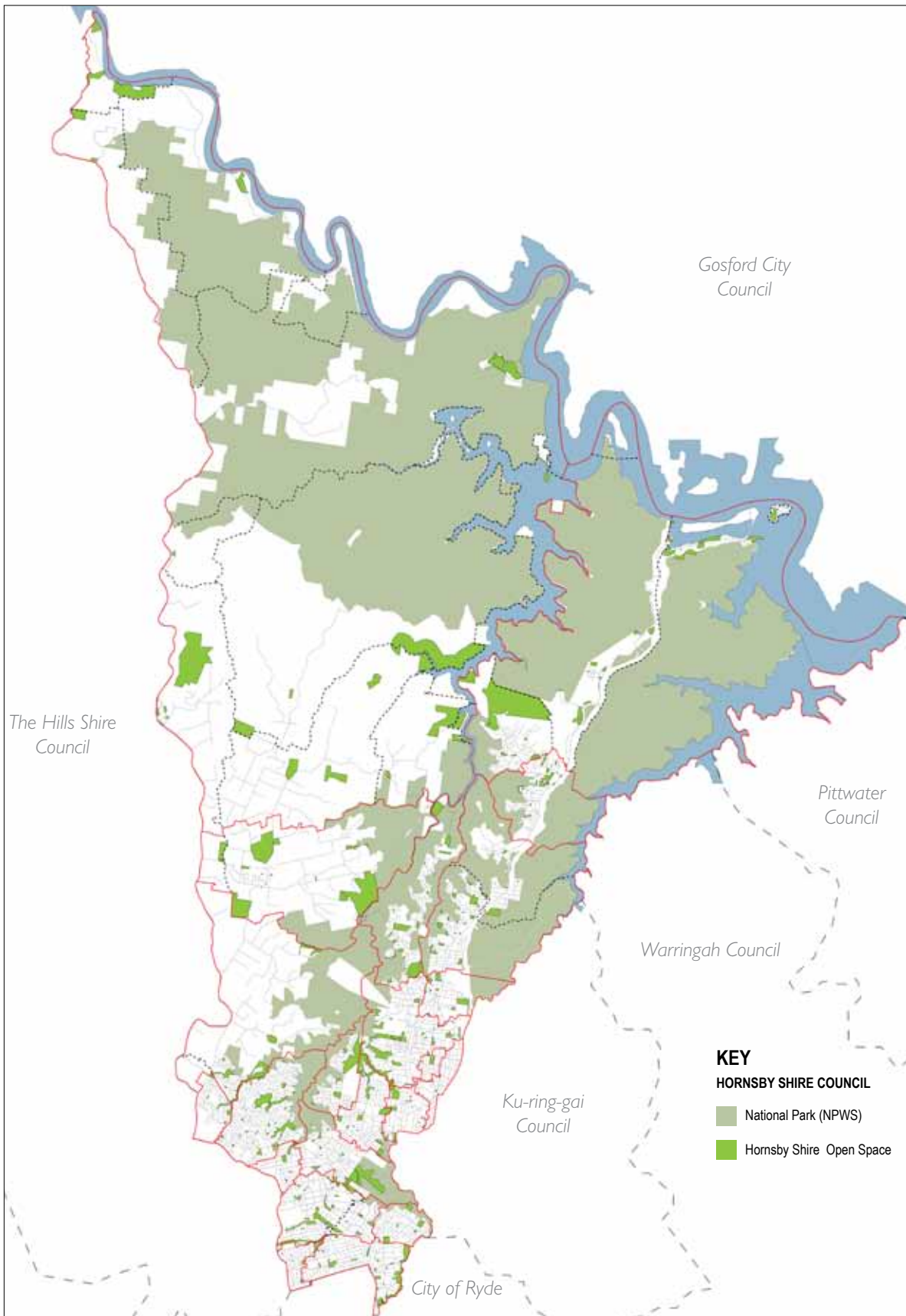


Figure 01.01 - Hornsby LGA and surrounding Council boundaries

INTRODUCTION

- Identify an open space framework that will support the successful transition of the growth precincts from suburban centres to medium to high density urban centres
- Identify opportunities to support the principles of active living through the development of supportive physical, social and cultural environments
- Through detailed engagement, communication and consultation, establish a clear understanding of:
 - Stakeholder and community demands and needs in relation to current and future open space use and recreation needs, taking into account the future growth of the Shire
 - Understand the open space needs and demands identified by different cultural groups within the Shire
 - Understand the open space needs and demands related to high density residential living.

Objectives

- Establish a policy framework for the open space and recreation facility network throughout the Shire
- Understand the values, needs and aspirations of the Hornsby Shire community with regard to open space and recreation provision
- Ensure the policy framework enhances opportunities for Active Living
- Improve linkages within and between open space networks
- Establish priorities, recommendations and an implementation plan to address the outcomes of the open space and recreation needs assessment
- Provide a clear framework for investment priorities and actions to improve open space and recreation facilities.

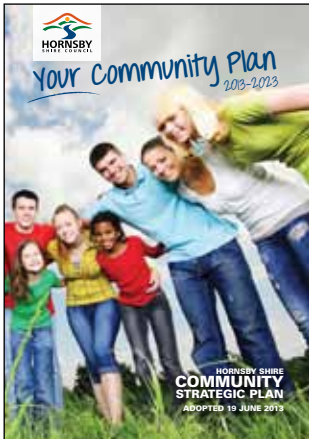
SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

The Active Living Hornsby Strategy:

- Addresses the open space and recreation needs of current and future residents of the Hornsby Shire
- Analyses and assesses the quality and quantity of open spaces within suburb boundaries and across the Shire
- Describes the recreational, environmental and social values of open space
- Describes the varied functions and significance of open space
- Identifies under provision of open space with regard to particular types of open spaces
- Identifies trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation activities.

The strategy considers the wider corporate objectives of Hornsby Shire Council including Healthy Living initiatives and the role of open spaces and recreation facilities in helping to achieve these initiatives.

INTRODUCTION



Prior to and during the preparation of the ALHS up to and including Public Exhibition of this Strategy, the future status of the Epping Pool was uncertain, with Council evaluating whether to close the pool. Accordingly Council requested that specific questions concerning the pool be included in the community survey that formed part of the ALHS, in order to gauge community perceptions and aspirations on the matter.

Following receipt and analysis of community submissions during Public Exhibition Council deferred any decision on pool closure, subject to further investigations.

HISTORY OF OPEN SPACE PLANNING IN THE SHIRE

Between 2000 and 2002 the Hornsby Shire Leisure Strategic Plan was undertaken. It developed strategic directions and action plans that provided a basis for long term leisure planning, services and facility provision for the Hornsby community. A number of these actions have since been implemented and completed.

Since 2002 there has been considerable change to the Hornsby area and further evolution is planned for the future. Hornsby's population profile is also diverse and evolving, with the majority of young families living in the southern parts of the Shire.



The Epping Urban Activation Plan and other population growth centres in Hornsby, Asquith and Waitara will also change the way in which people access and rely on the Shire's open spaces and recreation facilities.

The impact of an increase in migration can be seen in Hornsby, where the proportion of overseas-born residents increased from 27% in 1996 to 38.5% in 2011. Of those Hornsby Shire residents born overseas, 31% came from a non English speaking background.

Council compiled an extensive range of background documents that are relevant to the Strategy including over-arching corporate documents and reports focused on open space and recreation.

Hornsby Shire Council Corporate documents

- Your Community Plan, 2012-2023.
The Community Strategic Plan sets the direction for where the people of Hornsby Shire want to be in 2023 and identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future. The Community Strategic Plan's vision is embodied in four themes, being My Environment, My Community, My Lifestyle and My Council.
- Social Plan, 2010-2014
- Snapshot of Hornsby Shire, 2012



Previous Open Space and Recreation Studies

- Hornsby Shire Sports Facility Strategy, 2006
- Unstructured Recreation Strategy, 2010
- Sustainable Water Based Recreation Facilities Plan, 2012
- Assessment of Indoor Sport and Recreation Needs, 2013
- Integrated Open Space Strategy for Epping, 2013

INTRODUCTION

- NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy
- Park Benchmark User Satisfaction Surveys 2008-2011
- Open Space Recreation Potential Study for Hornsby Quarry, 2013

Refer to Appendix 1 for Background Document Review.

Generic Plans of Management

A series of Generic Plans of Management (PoM) were prepared by Council between 2006 and 2009 to comply with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Crown Lands Act 1989. The Plans cover the Hornsby Shire Council's open space community land and land under Council's care, control and management (generally Crown Land). The Generic Plans of Management have been divided into nine planning districts.

The purpose of the PoMs is to identify the values of the Council's open space, the objectives for management of those values, the issues affecting the lands and the strategies for managing, using and developing the land. The Plans are presented in three parts:

1. Part 1 - Management Strategy
2. Part 2 - Action Plan
3. Part 3 - Categorisation mapping and asset information.

METHODOLOGY

The Strategy has been undertaken in five stages over a period of nine months. The Methodology for the strategy involved the following activities in its preparation and development:

- Initial briefing by Council's Project Control Group (PCG) to review details of scope, program and consultation strategy
- Review of all existing policies, mapping, data and documents provided by Council
- Research of other current documents and strategies for open space and recreation best practice and Government guidelines and policies
- Open Space Audit of all the open spaces and recreation facilities within the Shire
- A detailed assessment of the current open space provision
- A review of current demographics and forecast population
- Identification of opportunities and options relating to improvement of existing open spaces and facilities, acquisition of land for new open spaces, access and connectivity etc.
- Preparation of draft and final strategy with accompanying structure and implementation plans
- Community and stakeholder engagement throughout the project program including
 - Community and stakeholder workshop
 - Community open day
 - Online quiz

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- Online survey
- CALD focus group
- High density living online survey

See section A4 for a summary of key findings. See Appendix 3 for Community Engagement Report.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Definitions of a number of terms and phrases used in this report include:

- **Active Living Hornsby:** an Integrated Open Space and Recreation Strategy for Hornsby Shire that provides a framework to guide and manage the planning of open space and recreation in Hornsby Shire
- **Open Space:** Publicly owned land (including, but not limited to, land zoned as 'Recreation' in the Hornsby Shire Local Environment Plan) that accommodates recreation facilities and provides spaces for recreational activities
- **Recreation:** Any activity that a person participates in for enjoyment, physical activity, relaxation or health. This includes both passive and active activities that are undertaken outside the home
- **Passive recreation:** unstructured activities generally not requiring a high level of physical exertion. Examples include picnicking, going for a walk, visiting a playground or a casual bike ride. Spectating at a sports event is also included under this description as it is non-participatory
- **Active recreation:** participation in a sport involving a moderate to high level of physical activity, usually but not exclusively on a competitive basis (or training for a competitive event) as an individual or as part of a team. Examples include playing soccer, running, swimming etc.
- **Growth precincts:** Precincts defined in the Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy Development Control Plan
- **Demands:** community members recorded results through consultation or survey process regarding demands for open space and recreation facilities
- **Unmet demand:** the absence of facilities or opportunities for recreation that have been identified by the community as being in demand
- **Needs:** an evaluation of all aspects of a community's open space and recreation needs that integrates expressed demands with an analysis of future needs. It can be forecast through analysis of trends but cannot be readily established through consultation
- **Gap analysis:** analysis of both unmet demand and need with an assessment of facilities or opportunities that may require to be prioritised to meet shortfall between the two

INTRODUCTION

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this document:

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ALHS	Active Living Hornsby Strategy
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
DCP	Development Control Plan
DoP	Department of Planning
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
GIS	Geographic Information System
GNW	Great North Walk
Ha	Hectare
HSC	Hornsby Shire Council
LGA	Local Government Area
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
NSROC	Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
PoM	Plan of Management
S94	Section 94 Contributions Plan



Parsley Bay, Brooklyn



A

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



A1: BACKGROUND

A1: BACKGROUND

CURRENT OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE SHIRE

Hornsby Shire Council provides a variety of open spaces and recreation facilities throughout the Local Government Area that take advantage of the Shire's diverse landscape including bushland areas, river foreshores, creek systems, rural settings and new and established suburbs.

Bushland, National Parks Walking and Cycling Trails

Hornsby Shire covers a total of 51,000 hectares of which approximately 67 percent is bushland. This includes major National Parks and nature reserves:

- Ku-ring-gai Chase
- Berowra Valley Regional Park (managed jointly by the Hornsby Shire Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service)
- Marramarra
- Lane Cove National Park
- Muogamarra Nature Reserve

Bushland areas provide ample opportunity for nature appreciation and bush walking. Outside the National Park areas Council manages 6,000 hectares of public bushland which includes 142 km of bushland walking tracks with cycling tracks (many of these along existing management trails), fire trails and access to picnic areas and lookouts.

Two regional walks that pass through the Shire include the Great North Walk track which links Sydney and Newcastle and can be accessed from Berowra Valley Regional Park, near Hornsby; and the Harbour to Hawkesbury Walking Track linking Manly and Berowra.

Council also manage and maintain a 3.3 km single track MTB facility (expanding to 5.5km in 2014) in Old Mans Valley in Hornsby which traverses bushland areas.

Parks and Playgrounds

Hornsby Shire is home to over 184 parks and 137 playgrounds, including:

- Crosslands Reserve - Camping ground on Berowra Creek, within Berowra Valley Regional Park
- Fagan Park - Regional park with formal gardens, Netherby Homestead, picnic shelters, BBQs, regional playground and Eco Garden
- Lilian Fraser Garden - Small, heritage listed, woodland garden with rare and unusual plants
- Lisgar Gardens - Sandstone terraced gardens in gully, heritage camellias, formal lawns, fishponds, waterfalls.

Council also provide eight dog off leash areas:

- Six dedicated off-leash areas for exercising and training of dogs
- One unfenced off-leash area
- Two shared off-leash areas where dogs are not permitted during organised sport and games and maintenance activities.



Part of the Great North Walk at Thornleigh Oval



Devlins Creek adjoining Little Ray Park



Lessing Street Playground

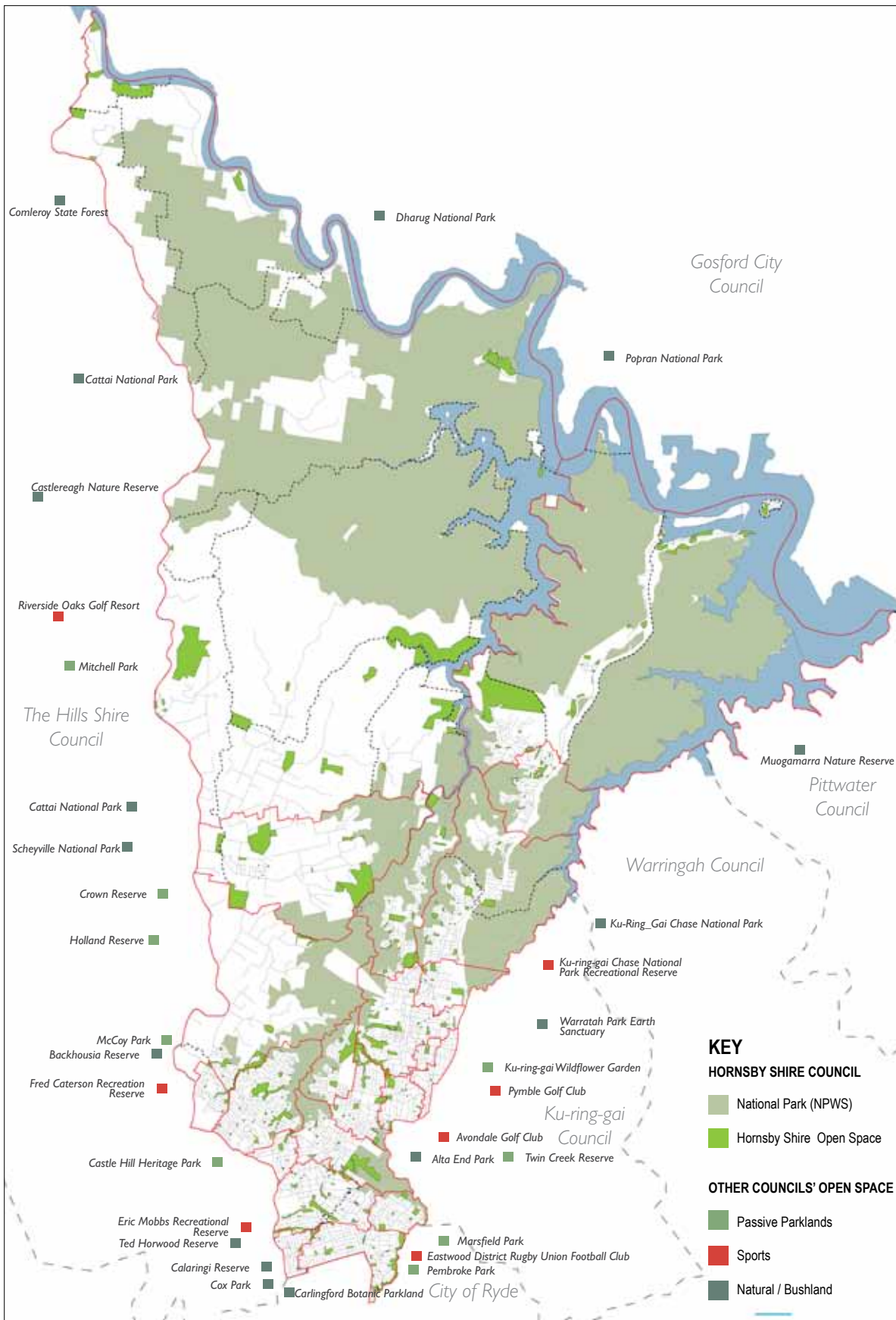


Figure A1.01 - Current open space in Hornsby Shire and surrounding Councils



A1: BACKGROUND

Sportsgrounds, Ovals and Recreation Facilities

There are a number of sportsgrounds, ovals and recreation facilities managed by Hornsby Shire including:

- 40 sportsground complexes (with 85 summer and 102 winter marked sports fields)
- 42 netball courts
- 75 tennis courts at 17 centres including several in the southern part of the Shire and two in the north at Wisemans Ferry and Brooklyn.
- Two dirt jump (BMX) facilities
- Five skate parks
- Four aquatic centres located in Epping, Galston, Cherrybrook and Hornsby
- 1 four hectare Rural Sports Facility providing facilities for equestrian dressage, show jumping, school equestrian activities, casual riding, riding for the disabled and canine activities
- One indoor recreation centre, 'The Brickpit', which provides four championship size basketball courts, court markings for netball, volleyball and badminton; change room facilities and meeting room/training room facilities. Other activities held at the centre include bridge, boxing and children's exercise classes.

Council also manage 31 community centres (including five leisure and learning centres, three arts and cultural centres and one youth and family centre).

Open Space and Recreation Facilities in Adjoining Council LGAs

The open spaces and recreation facilities within the adjoining Council areas provide the residents of Hornsby Shire with additional options for recreation and leisure activities.

Those of significant size and user catchment are:

- Cattai National Park (The Hills Shire Council)
- Scheyville National Park (The Hills Shire Council)
- Castle Hill Heritage Park (The Hills Shire Council)
- Pembroke Park (City of Ryde)
- Marsfield Park (City of Ryde)
- Twin Creek Reserve (Ku-ring-gai Council)
- The Glade Reserve (Ku-Ring-Gai Council).



Rugby played at Pennant Hills Park



Skate Park at Galston Recreation Reserve



Dence Park Creative Leisure Centre and Pool

A1: BACKGROUND



Picnic shelter at Fagans Park



Swimming at McKell Park, Brooklyn



Circuit path at Rofe Park

BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

An increasing body of research from around the world demonstrate the numerous benefits of incorporating outdoor recreation, leisure and exercise into our daily and weekly routines. Recreation provides personal benefits but also benefits the community and environment.

A generalised list of the benefits of outdoor recreation and active living includes:

- **Social skills and interaction** - recreating outdoors provides opportunity to interact with friends, family and co-workers.
- **Mental health** - recreation and contact with nature have psychological benefits, including the prevention of stress associated illnesses.
- **Physical health** - physical benefits of regular exercise include aerobic, cardiovascular and muscular fitness.
- **Local economy** - outdoor recreation and associated tourism creates job opportunities while quality open space increases adjoining property values. Foot fall from walking and cycling also benefit local retail.
- **Environmental outcomes** - Regular recreation in natural environments increases awareness and leads to advocacy for and, active involvement in conserving natural landscapes and habitat.

VALUES OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Great parks, squares and streets make for a better quality of life. A network of well-designed and cared-for open spaces adds to the character of places where people want to live, work and visit.

Open spaces also provide the vital green infrastructure that enable us to deal with storm water or mitigate and adapt to climate change while providing wildlife habitats and corridors, sporting facilities or beautiful parks and meeting spaces.

Open space provides a range of social, environmental, cultural and economic benefits such as through:

- Providing places for the community to meet and participate in leisure
- Providing amenity and attracting significant economic value to an area or region;
- Assisting in shaping local biodiversity and conservation values
- Being a focus for physical activity with associated health and wellbeing outcomes.

The following diagram represents the variety of values associated with open spaces and recreation facilities.

A1: BACKGROUND

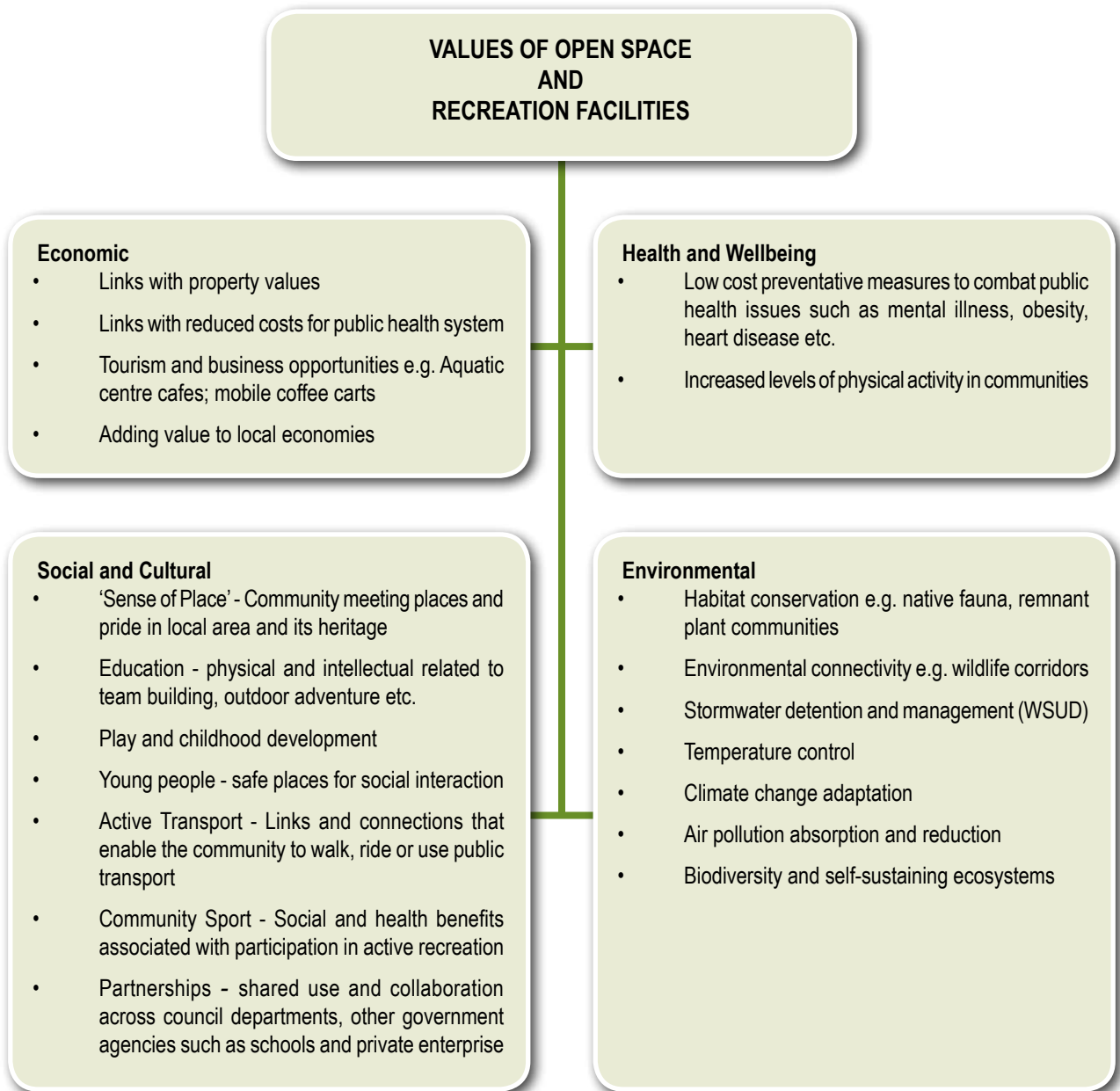


Figure A1.02 - Open Space and Recreation Facility Values

A1: BACKGROUND



Hockey field at Pennant Hills Park



Circuit paths at Ruddock Park



Basketball courts at Greenway Park

TRENDS IN LEISURE AND RECREATION

National trends in sport and physical recreation

As part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Multipurpose Household Survey, for the period of 2009-10, data was collected regarding participation in sport and physical recreation. A summary of key statistics is as follows:

Age and Sex

- 64% of Australians aged 15 years and over had participated in sport or physical recreation at least once within the last 12 months. This figure was down when compared to the 2005-06 participation rate of 66%.
- Participation was highest for 15-17 year olds (79%) and generally declined with increasing age, with a relatively large decline in participation among older people aged 65 years and over.
- The decrease in overall participation (64% in 2009-10, 66% in 2005-06) was largely driven by a fall in female participation, from 66% in 2005-06 to 63% in 2009-10. In 2009-10, the participation rate was only slightly higher for men (65%) than for women (63%), although the reverse was true for regular participation (31% for women and 29% for men).

Socioeconomic status and social capital¹

- People whose weekly household income was in the highest quintile² reported a participation rate of 80%, whereas the participation rate for people in the lowest quintile was just over half this (45%).
- People who had attained a Bachelor degree or above were much more likely to have participated in sport or physical recreation than those whose highest attainment was Year 10 or below (77% compared with 49%).
- According to the ABS 2006 General Social Survey (GSS), among people aged 18 years and over, those who participated in sport or physical recreation were more likely than others to be a volunteer (42% compared with 21% of non-participants), to be actively involved in a social group (75% compared with 43%), or actively involved in a civil or government group (23% compared with 11%).
- Data from the 2006 GSS also indicated that sport participants generally had more frequent contact with their family and friends, had a greater number of friends to confide in and had a greater ability to obtain support in times of crisis than non-participants.

Family situation and work commitments

- In 2009-10, of people aged 15-49 years, lone parents with dependent children (53%) and those in couple relationships with dependent children (66%) had lower rates of participation than people in couple relationships without dependent

¹ Social capital is often defined as a resource founded on networks of mutual support, reciprocity and trust that may benefit health, education and employment outcomes for individuals while also fostering community strength and resilience. The associational nature of sport and sporting clubs is sometimes seen as a forum for the creation of social capital.

² Income quintiles are derived by ranking all the population from lowest to highest income and then dividing that population into five equal groups. The lowest quintile is made up of the 20% of the population with the lowest income. For more information about household income measures see ABS Household Income and Income Distribution (cat. no. 6523.0).

A1: BACKGROUND

children (70%) and people who were neither a parent, nor in a couple relationship (72%).

- The participation rate for people who usually worked 1–34 hours per week was 69%, higher than the participation rate for people who usually worked 60 hours or more in a week (61%).
- People who usually worked 60 hours or more in a week were also less likely than those who usually worked 1–34 hours to have participated regularly, i.e. more than twice a week (26% compared with 35%).

Country of birth

- People born outside Australia but born within main English-speaking countries had comparable participation rates to people born in Australia (66% for each), although they were slightly more likely to have participated regularly (36% compared with 31%).
- People born outside main English-speaking countries had a much lower participation rate (50%) and only 22% participated regularly.

Exercise guidelines

- In line with this, the ABS 2007–08 National Health Survey found that the majority of Australians aged 18 years and over had only a low level of exercise for fitness, recreation or sport in the two weeks prior to interview (36%), or were sedentary (i.e. very low, or no exercise – also 36%).
- The proportion of Australian adults considered to have only a low or sedentary exercise level in 2007–08 (72%) was slightly higher than in 2001 (69%).

Most popular activities

- Of all sports or physical recreation activities, walking for exercise had the highest level of participation (23%). Aerobics, fitness or gym was also a popular activity group (14%).
- Swimming (7.4%), cycling (6.5%) and jogging or running (6.5%) were the only other activities that were participated in by more than one in twenty Australians.
- Both walking for exercise and aerobics, fitness or gym were more popular for women (30% and 17% respectively) than for men (16% and 11% respectively).
- There were other activities that were predominantly participated in by one or the other sex. Netball, for example, had a higher number of women than men participating (12 times as many women as men).
- On the reverse were golf and outdoor soccer. Golf had four and a half times as many men as women participating. Similarly, outdoor soccer had around four times as many men as women.
- Of the ten most popular activities in 2009–10 in terms of participation, only two had grown in popularity since 2005–06. The participation rate in aerobics, fitness or gym increased from 13% to 14%, while jogging or running increased from 4.3% to 6.5%.



Cricket at Storey Park



Circuit path at Rofe Park



Soccer at Mills Park

A1: BACKGROUND



Junior soccer at West Epping Oval

New South Wales state trends in sport, leisure and recreation

Results from the NSW Community Plan Survey (2004 and 2009) found NSW people are showing a preference for recreation that was less structured, home based and affordable. In the Survey, the single most common recreational activity was:

- Walking/walking the dog (40.2%), followed by:
- Watching TV/Videos/DVDs (23.8%),
- Reading (18.9%) and
- Gardening (18.7%).

In addition, apart from walking, Swimming (8.4%) and Cycling (7.7%) were the most common physical pursuits.

From this survey there appears to be a shift in people choosing unorganised, home based, cultural and relaxation activities over what is perceived as more structured and organised sports or recreation.

The published Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Australian Sports Commission data highlight that by far the most popular activities for Australians are walking, swimming and aerobics/fitness. Golf, lawn bowls and tennis have also remained very popular.

Among structured team sports, basketball, netball and soccer are the stand-out activities in terms of participation.

Children and youth participation trends

Physical recreation

- In the 12 months to April 2012, of the 2.8 million children aged 5 to 14 years, 1.7 million (60%) participated in at least one organised sport outside of school hours.
- Approximately two thirds (66%) of all children aged between 9 and 11 years participated in organised sport, higher than the participation rates of those aged 5 to 8 years and 12 to 14 years (56% and 60% respectively).
- More males (949,000) participated than females (727,000). Participation was higher for children born in Australia (61%) compared with those born overseas (52%) and higher for children in couple families (64%) compared with those living in one-parent families (48%).
- The most popular sport for males was outdoor soccer, with 309,700 participants and a participation rate of 22%. Nineteen percent of all females (256,900) participated in swimming and diving, the most popular sport for this group, followed by netball (220,400 females or 16%).
- On average, children spent five hours in the last school fortnight playing and training in organised sport outside of school hours.
- Children's participation in active, unstructured recreational activities increased since 2009, with the proportion of children skateboarding, roller blading or riding a scooter rising from 49% to 54%, and the proportion of children bike riding increasing from 60% to 64%.

Nonphysical recreation based leisure time

- Since 2006, the proportion of children reading for pleasure decreased from 75% to 71%.



Playground at Ruddock Park



Playground at The Brickpit

A1: BACKGROUND

- The proportion of children watching TV, DVDs or videos fell slightly from 2009 (97% to 96%), while the proportion of children participating in other screen-based activities (including the use of a computer, the internet and games consoles) rose from 83% in 2009 to 85% in 2012.
- More females were involved in recreational art and craft (54%) and reading for pleasure (77%) than males (33% and 65% respectively)

Anecdotal Trends Related to Leisure and Recreation

- Increasing impact of technology on leisure choices such as computer games and associated equipment such as hand held devices to simulate croquet bats, tennis racquets etc.
- Increase in the proportion of families with two parents working part or full time (with assumed reduced time for leisure for themselves and possibly their children)
- Increase in the proportion of single parents families with similar consequences for two working parent families
- Changes in recreation and leisure preferences towards varied activities that offer flexibility and are available for longer time periods and even 24 hours such as personal fitness and gyms
- Loss of private open space associated with high density and medium density living
- Pressure on personal free time associated with working longer hours, including travel time to and from work
- Changing community perception of child safety in public places, reducing time spent in parks, streets etc. for recreation, play and physical development

Economic Returns from the Public Realm

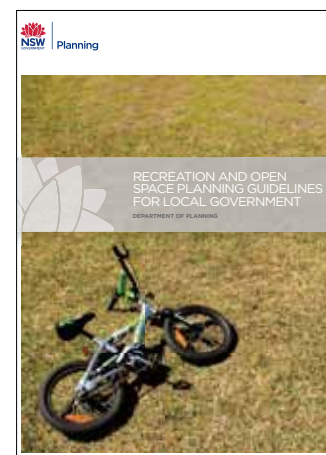
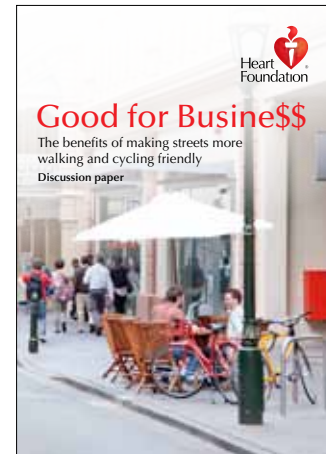
A growing body of research is identifying the direct economic benefits of a high quality public realm. These benefits have direct applications to the ALHS and include:

- Increased values of residential and commercial properties adjoining or close to high quality public open space (The Proximate Principle) with values raised by up to 20%
- Reduced health spending due to a healthier and more socially connected community
- Overall higher annual return on high street retail from walkable and cycle friendly streets than from solely car based streets.

BEST PRACTICE IN OPEN SPACE PLANNING

The long-standing standards in open space planning based approach to open space provision has been progressively superseded by policies, guidelines and performance criteria that recognise the roles of accessibility, diversity of recreation experiences and quality of the user experience.

Recent best practice has also focused on the qualities of place, be that a neighbourhood, suburb or LGA, to deliver open space and recreational assets that are specific to the people, geography and environmental conditions of that landscape. This approach is centred on the critical consideration of 'Place'.



A1: BACKGROUND

Open Space Planning Principles

The Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government provides Councils with a set of guidelines for preparing Open Space and Recreation plans and strategies. The guidelines state that the plan or strategy should identify three main areas, two of which relate directly to open space planning:

1. Network and facilities:
 - At the local level the open space system should be an integrated network incorporating parks, squares, plazas, riparian corridors, playing fields and recreational trails.
 - As a general principle, recreational routes may meander but commuter routes should be direct.
2. Safety, security and comfort:
 - Nearby development should be orientated for passive surveillance of the public domain by, for example, overlooking open spaces
 - Provision for escape routes and areas for quick retreat relating to flooding, bush fires for isolated spaces or spaces within or near bushland and/or rivers and creeks.
 - The micro-climate of open spaces must be considered with ample amounts of shade, protection from rain and places for rest and recuperation.

The Landcom Open Space Design Guidelines form part of a box set, covering a range of urban planning and design topics. The guidelines are structured around eight principles, proposing the design and planning of all public open space should:

1. Be meaningful to place and community
2. Be multi-functional and adaptable
3. Provide diversity
4. Encourage social interaction
5. Promote health and wellbeing
6. Provide equity and accessibility
7. Embody environmental sustainability
8. Ensure financial sustainability

The Department of Planning and Landcom guidelines are integrated into the ALHS in the preparation of Opportunities and Options, incorporation of Active Living principles, overall Vision and Objectives and the Implementation Plan.

A1: BACKGROUND

Amounts, Areas and Types of Open Space

Amounts

The Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government recommends that a default standard of 15% of gross area of land in new developments be set aside for public open space. (9% for local/district open space) This can be varied through the analysis of local characteristics and existing open space provision. However, this standard applies to new developments and is not as relevant to existing, long established communities such as those within the Hornsby Shire.

Area

Another contributing factor in the determination of the amount of open space provision is identified in the Hornsby Section 94 Development Contributions Plan 2012-2021 which states that an additional 28.7 hectares of open space and an additional 8,565 lineal metres of bushland walking track would be required to maintain the current quantitative level of service and/or significant embellishment of existing facilities to cater for additional usage.

For the purposes of the ALHS, the assessment of the adequacy of current and future open space and recreation provision has been based on a range of factors including population analysis by suburb (current and forecast populations), identification of growth areas, accessibility to and connectivity of open space (e.g. existence of open space corridors) and open space provided by other agencies such as NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Types

With regard to the types of open spaces that should be provided within the LGA the Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government identifies nine different settings of open spaces ranging from Parks, Outdoor Sports and Linear and Linkage spaces.

As part of the analysis of the existing open spaces for the ALHS the total number and area of different types of open spaces have been identified. The adequacy of provision across the different categories of open space is measured against local characteristics such as established suburbs, new development areas, with a high proportion of bushland and the general geography of the LGA.

Accessibility and Connectivity

One of the most important considerations in ensuring that open space meets the needs of its community is the issue of access. Urban planning across Australia has progressively moved to an understanding that walking and cycling catchments largely determine people's access to local parks for day-to-day recreation needs.

While guidelines vary to some degree as to the maximum distances/time required for accessing local parks, most research suggests that a 400m walking distance (i.e. a maximum 10 minute walk) should be the maximum distance/time between all residences and some form of public open space within urban areas. This is the standard proposed in NSW Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government

A1: BACKGROUND

With respect to connectivity, the Guidelines also suggest that local linkages and corridors should ideally be 1km in length, 2kms for District and 5-10kms for Regional. Again, these recommendations mostly apply to planning for new developments.

The ALHS incorporates analysis of access to local open space based on the maximum 400m distance and identifies areas where this does not currently apply, with recommendations on how shortfall areas may be addressed.

The Great North Walk, an example of a regional level connection and destination, is the 250 kilometre walking track from Sydney to Newcastle and can be accessed from several areas within the Shire.

Placemaking and Local Identity

Placemaking as a concept has been around for more than 30 years, but over the last decade its role in the planning and design of our living environments has come to the fore, particularly within the public domain.

At the park level this has resulted in planners understanding the opportunities that exist to greatly extend the visitor experience through integration of activities such as community events and celebrations, interpretation of the local environment and heritage, as well as the incorporation of public art in landscape design. In essence, all of these factors contribute to a sense of place and local identity.

Project for Public Spaces (a non-profit organisation based in New York is dedicated to creating and sustaining public places that build communities) has identified 'Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places'.

Key principles include:

- Creation of distinctive landscapes that respond to the specific needs of the local community and any natural or cultural significance or features within that landscape
- Flexibility of spaces to adapt to community needs as they may over time and to maintain and update amenities when necessary
- Co-location of open space and recreation facilities with other service such as libraries, aquatic centre, cafe, school etc., taking advantage of the activity and community interaction that could occur by locating a variety of facilities in close proximity.

Planning and Design for Sports

NSW Sport and Recreation Industry's Five Year Plan (Game Plan 2012; Shaping our community for a sustainable future) was prepared in conjunction with a sport and recreation industry survey. Participants indicated that the following will have the greatest impact on participation over the next five years:

- New or improved access to facilities
- Increase in school participation
- Increase in media coverage
- Increase in popularity of sport

A1: BACKGROUND

As a result one of the key focus areas of the Five Year Plan is the 'fresh approach to facilities' including the following strategies relevant to HSC:

- Incorporate sport and recreation priorities in land use and urban planning
- Encourage joint-use of existing and planned facilities
- Develop new types of multi-sport facilities, e.g. multi-tiered with indoor and outdoor sports, gym, cafe, theatre, sports medicine, sports store etc.
- Ensure facilities and equipment are safe and well-maintained

These strategies have been considered as part of the ALHS.

Other principles relevant to the planning of sports facilities include:

- The need to plan sport at a regional as well as local level, where a number of Local Governments work together with State Government to avoid duplication and achieve strategic outcomes
- The creation of a clear hierarchy of sports facilities ranging from sports hubs or precincts that cater to:
 - High level sports provision at a regional or sub-regional level, through
 - District level facilities usually providing for sports within a local government area or adjoining suburbs to
 - Local open spaces where sports infrastructure is limited but spaces are suitable for training, junior sport and/or informal kickabout
- Levels of sports infrastructure development, carrying capacity, quality of provision, tenure, and allocation that relate directly to the hierarchies as described above
- The need to match Service Level Agreements to the hierarchy of sports settings and associated carrying capacity
- Multiuse space and facilities, involving field and court layouts that suit a wide range of sports and codes or amenity buildings that are shared by a number of clubs, associations or sports across seasons and which can be readily adapted to changes in sports trends and local demography
- Management models that involve clubs and associations in defined and varied aspects of maintenance, allocation and administration of sports facilities, depending on the Council's service models (e.g. Sports Trusts as per current UK models, Sports Councils, etc).

Council has undertaken several studies related to sport in The Shire addressing these issues. Recent reports include the NSROC Regional Sportsground Strategy (2011) and The Sports Facility Strategy (2006). Further details on these strategies can be found in Section A2. Context and Appendix 1 Background Document Review.



A2: CONTEXT

Waitara Oval, Waitara

A2: CONTEXT

THE SHIRE AND ITS PEOPLE

The most recent population data analysed by the company 'profile.id' states that the Hornsby Shire Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for 2012 was 165,090 based on the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This indicates a growth of 1,307 people, or 0.79% from the previous year.

From 2006 to 2011, Hornsby Shire's population increased by 5,555 people (3.7%). This represents an average annual population change of 0.72% per year over the period.

Population Today

The table below (A2.01) provides a snap shot of the key population statistics based on the information captured during the 2007-2011 census. Comparison is shown for the overall Sydney population statistics.

Key Statistic (2011)	2011			2006			Change
	Hornsby	%	Sydney %	Hornsby	%	Sydney %	2006-2011
Population (excluding overseas visitors)	156,842	100.0	100.0	151,328	100.0	100.0	+5,514
Males	76,459	48.7	49.2	73,355	48.5	49.3	+3,104
Females	80,383	51.3	50.8	77,973	51.5	50.7	+2,410
Indigenous population	565	0.36	2.5	447	0.29	2.5	+118
Australian born	96,498	61.5	59.9	96,156	63.5	60.4	+342
Overseas born	55,399	35.3	34.2	48,540	32.1	31.7	+6,859
Australian citizens	134,597	85.8	82.5	130,790	86.4	82.7	+3,807
Non-English speaking backgrounds	40,985	26.1	26.3	34,212	22.6	23.9	+6,773
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	9,546	6.1	6.8	9,081	6.0	6.6	+465
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	14,244	9.1	8.7	14,095	9.3	9.1	+149
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	13,541	8.6	7.4	13,988	9.2	7.9	-447
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	14,489	9.2	9.5	14,391	9.5	9.9	+98
Young workforce (25 to 34)	16,831	10.7	15.4	16,608	11.0	15.3	+223
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	35,233	22.5	21.9	35,470	23.4	22.5	-237
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	21,708	13.8	12.2	20,185	13.3	12.2	+1,523
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	15,105	9.6	9.0	12,639	8.4	7.8	+2,466
Seniors (70 to 84)	12,336	7.9	7.2	11,548	7.6	7.3	+788
Elderly aged (85 and over)	3,809	2.4	1.8	3,282	2.2	1.6	+527

Table A2.01 - Key Hornsby Shire population statistics from 2006 to 2011

The above table indicates growth between 2006 and 2011 in every category with the exception of the Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49) age group. This demonstrates the significant overall growth in the Shire and is explored more in the following sections.

The following pages provide demographic highlights and summaries of information provided by profile.id based on the 2011 ABS census.

A2: CONTEXT

Age Groups

Key highlights include:

- The major differences between the age structure of the Hornsby Shire and Greater Sydney were:
 - A larger percentage of 'Older workers & pre-retirees' (13.8% compared to 12.2%)
 - A larger percentage of 'Secondary schoolers' (8.6% compared to 7.4%)
 - A smaller percentage of 'Young workforce' (10.7% compared to 15.4%)
- The largest changes in the age structure in this area between 2006 and 2011 were in the age groups:
 - Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69) (+2,466 people)
 - Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59) (+1,523 people)
 - Seniors (70 to 84) (+788 people)
 - Elderly aged (85 and over) (+527 people)

Cultural diversity

Key highlights include:

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Census population of the Hornsby Shire in 2011 was 565, living in 292 dwellings. Of the 565 total population 262 were males and 303 were females.
- 40% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households are made up of couples with children (compared with 31% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in New South Wales).
- There were no major changes in family/household types of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Hornsby Shire between 2006 and 2011.
- Compared to Greater Sydney there was a larger proportion of people born overseas, and a larger proportion of people from a non-English speaking background living in Hornsby Shire
- Overall, 35.3% of the Hornsby Shire population was born overseas, and 26.1% were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 34.2% and 26.3% respectively for Greater Sydney
- Overall, 68.9% of the population spoke English only at home
- The largest non-English speaking country of birth in the Hornsby Shire was China, where 4.7% of the population, or 7,364 people, were born
- The dominant language spoken at home, other than English, in the Hornsby Shire was Cantonese, with 5.2% of the population, or 8,085 people speaking this language at home
- 26% of people in the Hornsby Shire come from countries where English is not the first language
- The largest changes in birthplace countries of the population in this area between 2006 and 2011 were for those born in:
 - China (+2,206 persons)
 - India (+1,563 persons)
 - South Korea (+803 persons)
 - Sri Lanka (+338 persons)

A2: CONTEXT

Households

- In the Hornsby Shire, 44% of households are made up of couples with children compared with 35% in Greater Sydney
- The number of households in Hornsby Shire increased by 1,556 between 2006 and 2011. The largest changes in family/household types in the Hornsby Shire between 2006 and 2011 were:
 - Couples with children (+1,129 households)
 - Couples without children (+493 households)
 - One parent families (+192 households)
 - Lone person (+110 households) of which 18% of households contain only one person, compared with 23% in Greater Sydney
- The most dominant household size being 2 persons per household
- The largest changes in households with children in this area between 2006 and 2011 were:
 - Couples with older children¹ (+782 households)
 - Couples with young children² (+535 households)
 - Single parents with older children (+217 households)
 - Couples with mixed-age children (-188 households)
- 74.7% of all dwellings were separate houses; 10.8% were medium density dwellings, and 14.0% were high density dwellings, compared with 58.9%, 19.7%, and 20.7% in the Greater Sydney respectively
- 54% of households in the Hornsby Shire had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 44% in Greater Sydney

Other key statistics

- 5,837 people or 3.7% of the population in the Hornsby Shire report needing help in their day-to-day lives due to a disability
- In the Hornsby Shire 2,372 people ride their bike or walk to work
- Analysis of the means of travel to work of the residents in the Hornsby Shire in 2011, compared to Greater Sydney, shows that 24.0% used public transport, while 56.6% used a private vehicle, compared with 20.0% and 60.0% respectively in Greater Sydney
- In the Hornsby Shire, 33% of households earned an income of \$2,500 or more per week
- Overall, 32.5% of the households earned a high income³, and 13.7% were low income⁴ households, compared with 23.6% and 18.3% respectively for Greater Sydney

¹ Children aged 15 and over only

² Children aged under 15 only

³ Households those earning \$2,500 per week or more

⁴ Households those earning less than \$600 per week

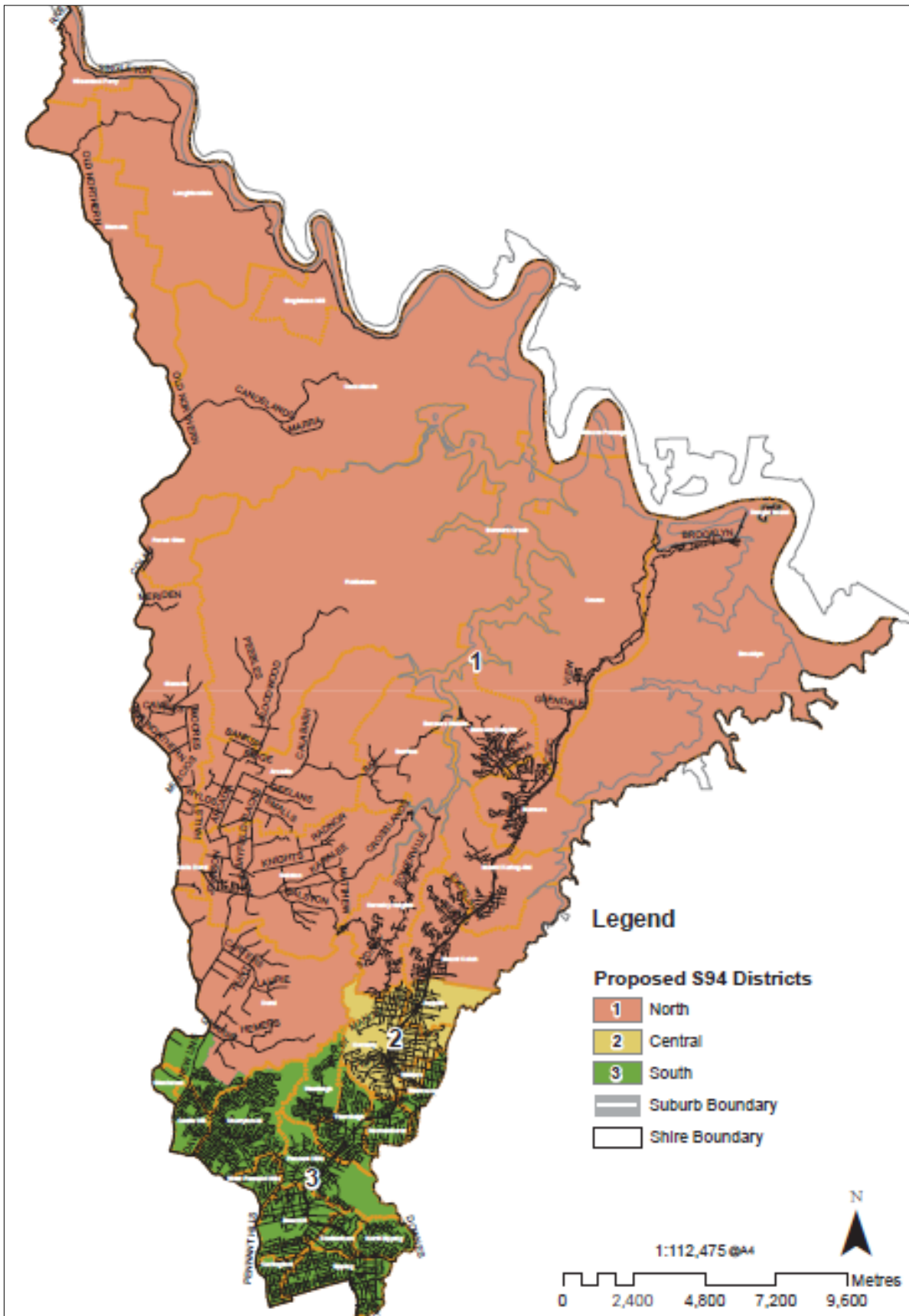


Figure A2.01 - Hornsby Shire Council Proposed S94 Districts

A2: CONTEXT

Population Forecast

Council's Housing Strategy provides a general indication of the population increase from 2014 to 2021 based on the breakdown of age groups and specific suburbs that were the subject of rezoning in September 2011, as illustrated below.

Age (years)	%	Estimated population increase to 2021									
		Asquith	Beecroft	Carlingford	Hornsby	Mt Colah	Normanhurst	Pennant Hills	Thornleigh	Waitara	West Pennant Hills
0-4	6.1	105	30	37	24	20	3	6	22	68	12
5-9	5.7	99	28	35	22	19	3	5	21	64	11
10-14	5.6	97	27	34	22	19	3	5	20	63	11
15-19	5.8	100	28	35	23	19	3	5	21	65	11
20-24	6.3	109	31	38	25	21	4	6	23	70	12
25-29	6.9	120	34	42	27	23	4	6	25	77	14
30-34	7.3	127	36	45	29	24	4	7	26	82	14
35-39	6.1	107	30	38	24	21	3	6	22	69	12
40-44	4.8	84	24	30	19	16	3	5	17	54	9
45-49	5.6	98	28	35	22	19	3	5	20	63	11
50-54	6.7	117	33	41	26	22	4	6	24	75	13
55-59	7.4	128	36	45	29	25	4	7	27	82	14
60-64	7.3	128	36	45	29	25	4	7	26	82	14
65-69	6.0	104	29	37	24	20	3	6	22	67	12
70-74	5.0	86	24	30	19	17	3	5	18	55	10
75+	7.3	126	36	45	29	24	4	7	26	81	14
Totals	100.0	1,736	488	612	392	334	56	94	360	1,118	196
Total population increase from 2014 to 2021											5,386

Table A2.02 - Population forecast by suburb and age group. Highlighted rows indicate top 3 age groups based on proportion of overall increase in population; highlighted columns represent top 3 highest proportion of growth per suburb.

In addition Council have identified population growth from infill development in its Section 94 Plan and also additional development anticipated by the Epping Urban Activation Precinct and the Hornsby West Side Planning Proposal, the growth is divided as indicated in the following table and accompanying map (see Figure A2.01).

District	Housing Strategy	Potential Infill development	Total growth (S94 Plan)	Additional growth in Epping and Hornsby	Total
North	334	625	959		959
Central	3,246	1,827	5,073	2,000	7,073
South	1,806	1,084	2,890	5,900	8,790
Total	5,386	3,536	8,922	7,900	
					16,822

Table A2.03 - Population forecast by district

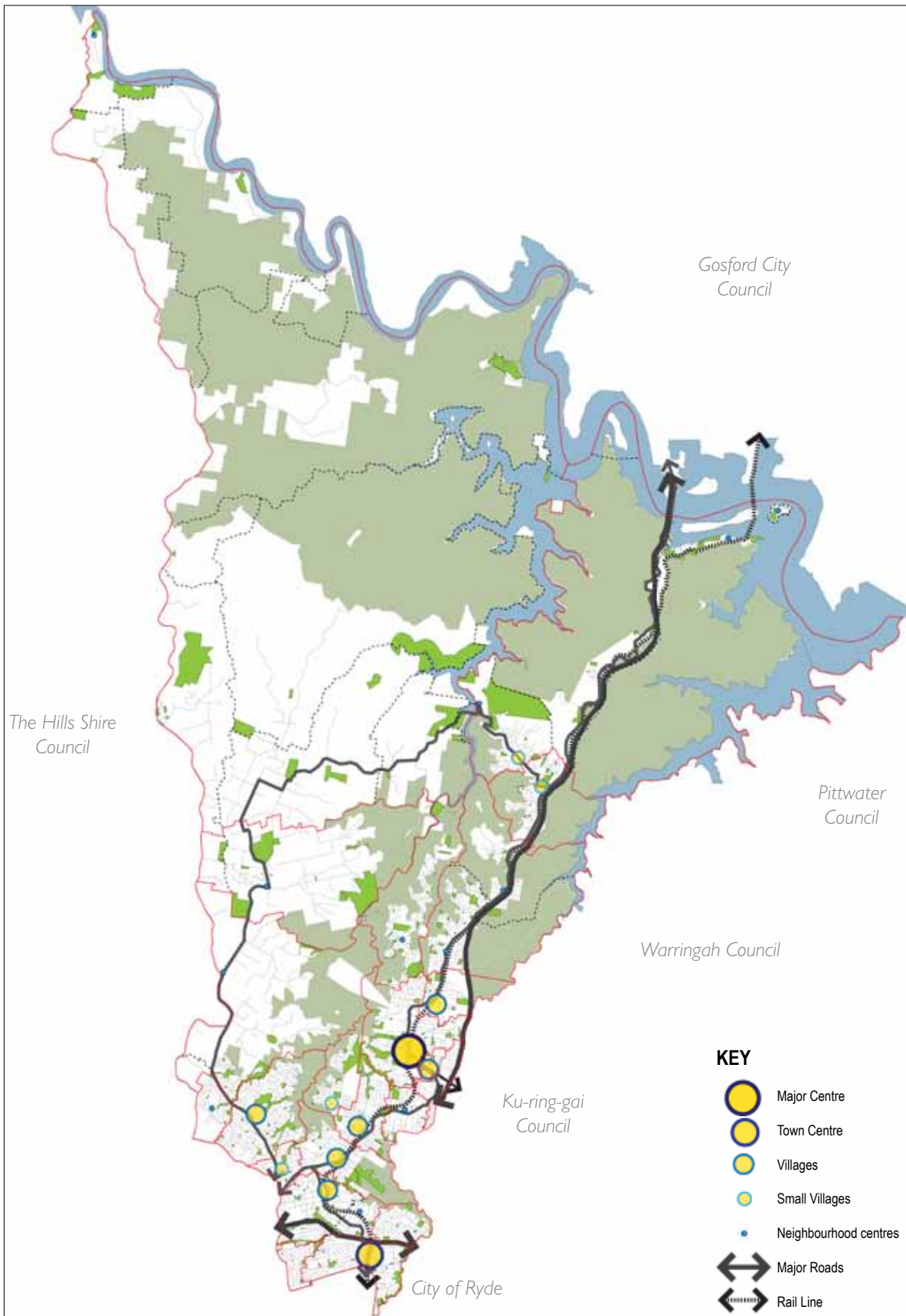


Figure A2.02 - Hornsby Shire Council town centres and corridors strategy

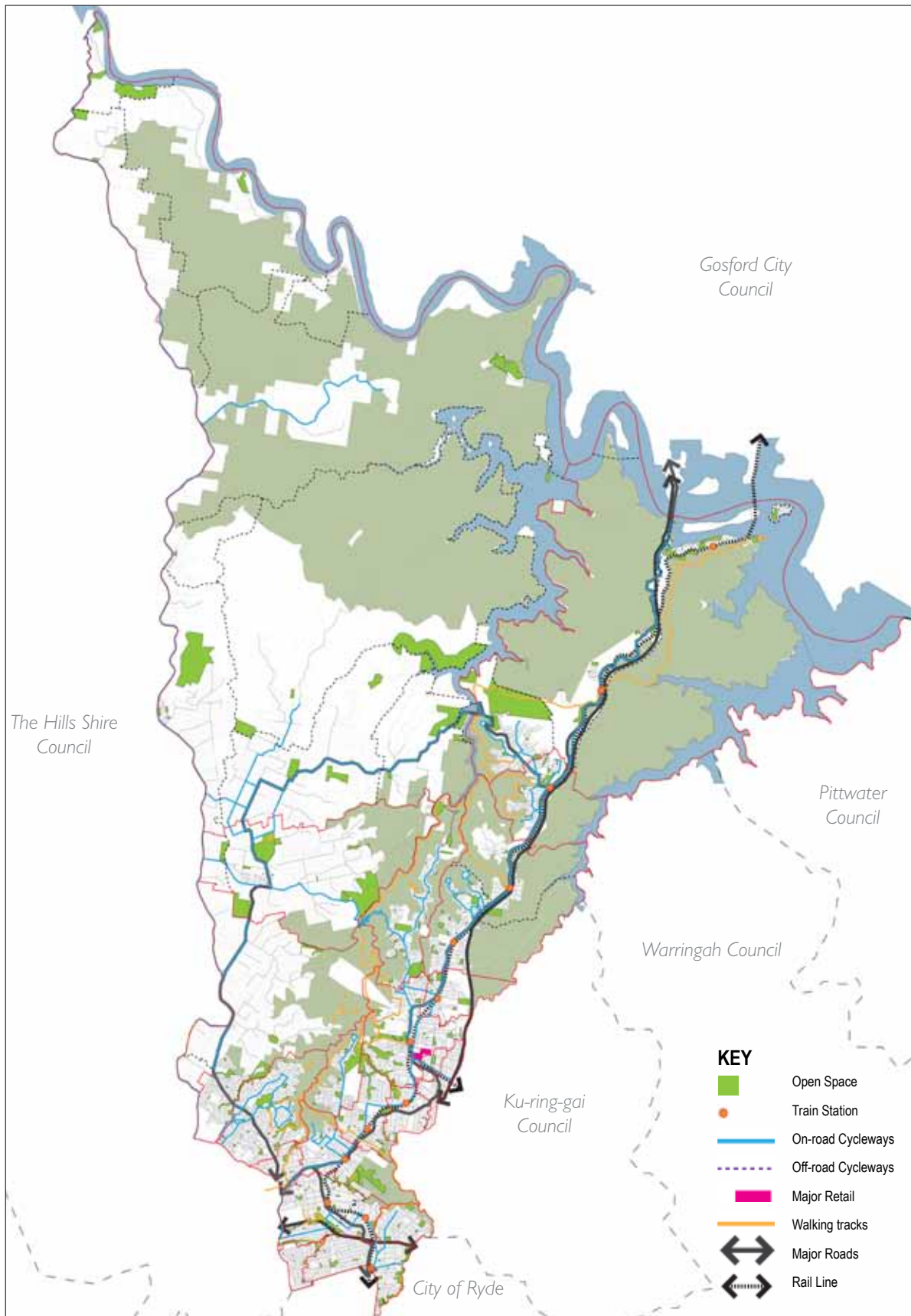


Figure A2.03 - Transport Links

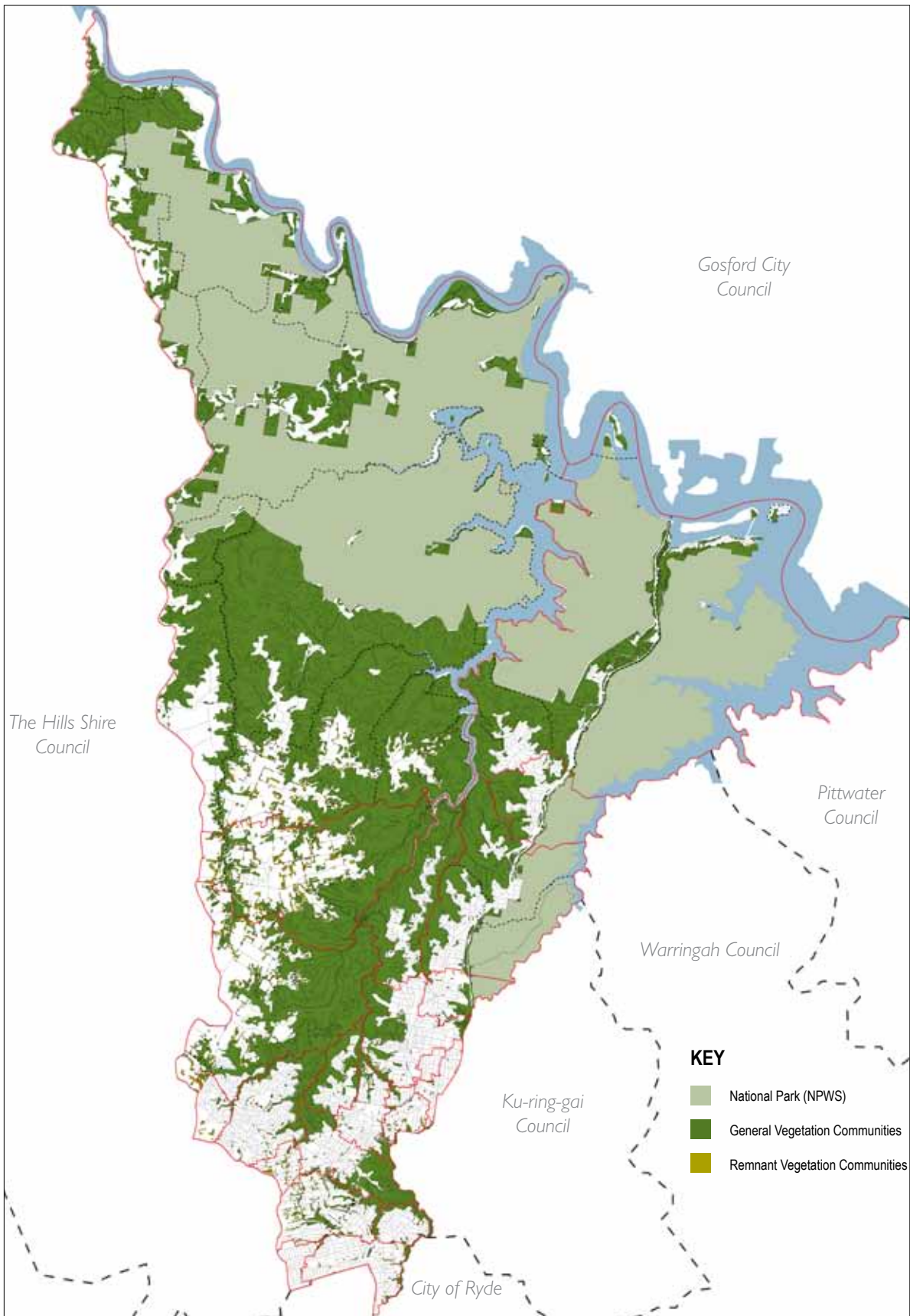


Figure A2.04 - Vegetation and Ecological Communities

A2: CONTEXT

THE SHIRE'S ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Vegetation and Ecological Communities

Hornsby Shire Council has a total land area of approximately 510 square kilometres. National Parks and Reserves comprise two thirds of that total and include such major features as:

- Ku-ring-gai National Park
- Lane Cove National Park
- Marramarra National Park
- Berowra Valley Regional Park
- Muogamarra Nature Reserve
- Hawkesbury River
- Great North Walk

These areas account for a significant part of Hornsby Shire's bushland, which is mainly comprised of Hawkesbury Sandstone vegetation. P & J Smith Ecological Consultants (November 2008) identified a total of 34 native vegetation communities throughout the Hornsby Shire. Twenty-eight of the communities are significant at National, State, regional or local level. Especially significant are Turpentine-Ironbark Forest, Blue Gum Shale Forest and Blue Gum Diatreme Forest, which have been listed as critically endangered ecological communities at either national level (Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999) or State level (NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995).

Aboriginal Heritage

The original owners of the Shire were the Aboriginal people of the Dharug, Guringai and Darkinjung language groups.

Called 'Vhen Ruphen', the Hawkesbury River was a focal source of food for its natives providing yams, eels, fish and shellfish (HSC 2014). The river also provided a source of stones for making tools such as axes. The river system also provided an efficient transport route for the inhabitants' travels through the use of bark canoes.

The land's abundance of sandstone provided the natives an ability to engrave, paint, stencil and make symbols of spiritual and sacred significance. The rocks and cave mouths of the land also provided shelter for the Aboriginals from harsh conditions of cold, rain or searing heat. Stones arrangements were used to form circles, lines and routes. Arrangements identified ceremonial grounds or tribal boundaries. Some were used as fish traps, catching fish in fluctuating tides (HSC 2014).

However, after about 50 years of European occupation, the Aboriginal people were forced from their home lands, destroying the vital relationship between land, culture, custom and ceremonies for Aboriginal people.



Devilins Creek

A2: CONTEXT



The Hawkesbury River at Kangaroo Point, Brooklyn

Significant physical remnants of Aboriginal culture which stand as memorials to their long association with this country, include:

- engravings on sandstone ridges
- rock shelters on the valley slopes containing cave paintings or drawing sites and archaeological deposits
- open campsites and grinding grooves on valley floors
- shell middens along tidal waterways
- scarred trees

Several towns in the Shire have names derived from the Aboriginal language, for example, Berowra (place of many winds); Mt Ku-ring-gai (the local tribe); Dural (dooral - burning logs or standing dead trees, alight within); Berrilee (birra birra - pigs of the white settlers); Cowan (big water).

Non Aboriginal Heritage

European settlement dates from 1794 when the first land grants were made along the Hawkesbury River, with land used mainly for farming. Development was slow, due to limited access. Some growth took place in the 1820s and the 1830s, following the opening of the Great North Road and other tracks.

Growth continued in the 1880s and 1890s, especially in the south-eastern section, spurred by the opening of the Newcastle and North Shore railway lines. Hornsby CBD developed as a railway town, becoming the major centre of the Shire.

Substantial growth occurred between 1945 and 1981, when the population more than trebled from 30,500 to 111,000, with the most rapid growth during the 1950s and 1960s. From the 1970s population growth began to slow, before rising again from 127,000 in 1991 to nearly 155,000 in 2011.

Hydrology, Catchments and Topography

Water catchments within Hornsby Shire include Berowra Creek, Lane Cove River, Cowan Creek and the Hawkesbury River. The Berowra Creek catchment is bounded on the south by Castle Hill Road, to the west by Old Northern Road, to the north by the Canoelands Ridge and to the east by the Pacific Highway. All of the Berowra Creek Catchment is within the jurisdiction of Hornsby Shire Council.

Only the upper reaches of the Lane Cove River Catchment are within Hornsby Shire; this includes Devlins Creek and the sub-catchment is bounded by the upper Lane Cove River and Terrys Creeks. This catchment is dominated by developed urban land uses and some commercial areas as well as bushland areas such as the upper parts of Lane Cove National Park. This is only catchment within the Shire that drains to Sydney Harbour. The western boundary of Cowan Creek Catchment, defined by the Pacific Highway, lies within Hornsby Shire. Cockle Creek and Cowan Creek themselves form part of the Shire boundary.

A2: CONTEXT

The Hawkesbury River Catchment within Hornsby Shire is divided into two areas which include the Wisemans Ferry/Maroota region as well as the Brooklyn area. These areas drain directly to the Hawkesbury River (See Figure A2.06)

The incised valleys of the Hawkesbury landscape create a dramatic topography, particularly in the North of the Shire, with the ridge lines being the site of the Shires major towns and the plateau landscapes in the west being well suited to agriculture and market gardening (See Fig. A2.05).

Open Space and Tourism

The Hornsby Region is home to National Parks and the Hawkesbury River, attractions that draw to visits from around the state, Australia and overseas. The Shire is also well known for its Markets and Festivals. Hornsby Mall and its surrounding suburbs are home to a variety of boutique and charity markets, antiques fair, woodchop festival, Festival of the Arts, the Bushland Country festival and weekly Organic Produce markets.

Hornsby Shire is also home to significant parks and open spaces that draw visitors from outside the Council boundary including Fagan Park in Galston, Crosslands Reserve in Hornsby Heights and Lilian Fraser Garden in Pennant Hills, as well as several National Parks.

The northern part of the Shire is also connected to the Farm Gate Trail Sydney Hills/ Brooklyn Harvest Experience such as Galston Pick Your Own Strawberries, Watkins Family Farm.

Visitor statistics indicate that:

- 692,631 residents aged 12-60 (including 94,223 students aged 12-17) within a 35km radius of Hornsby CBD
- 662,498 Sydney travellers come to the Hawkesbury River and Central Coast each year
- 4.56m domestic travellers to Sydney each year
- 2.19m international travellers to Sydney each year.
- Of the visitors to the Hornsby Shire, over 50% are visiting family and friends.



Parsley Bay, Brooklyn

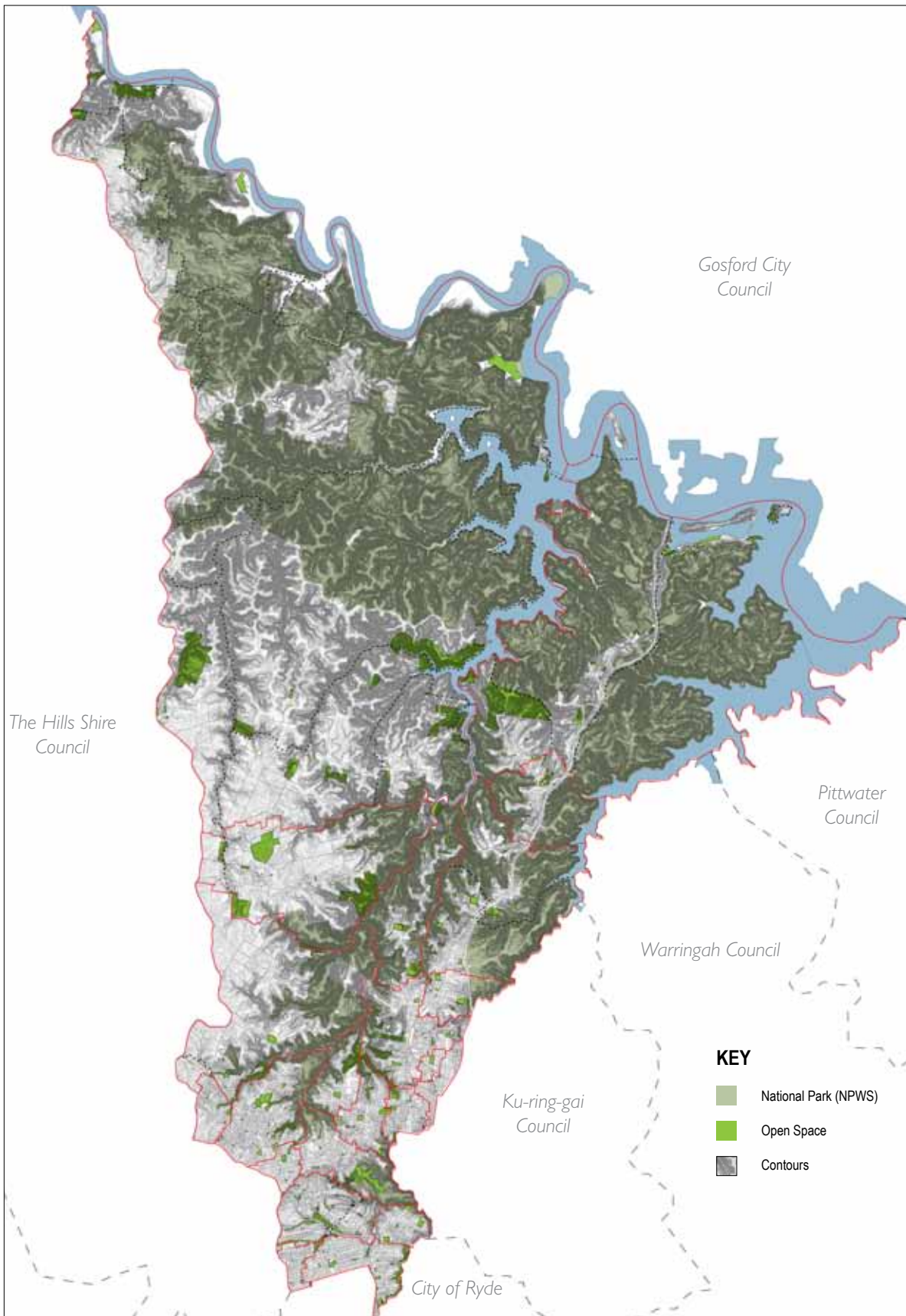


Figure A2.05 - Topography

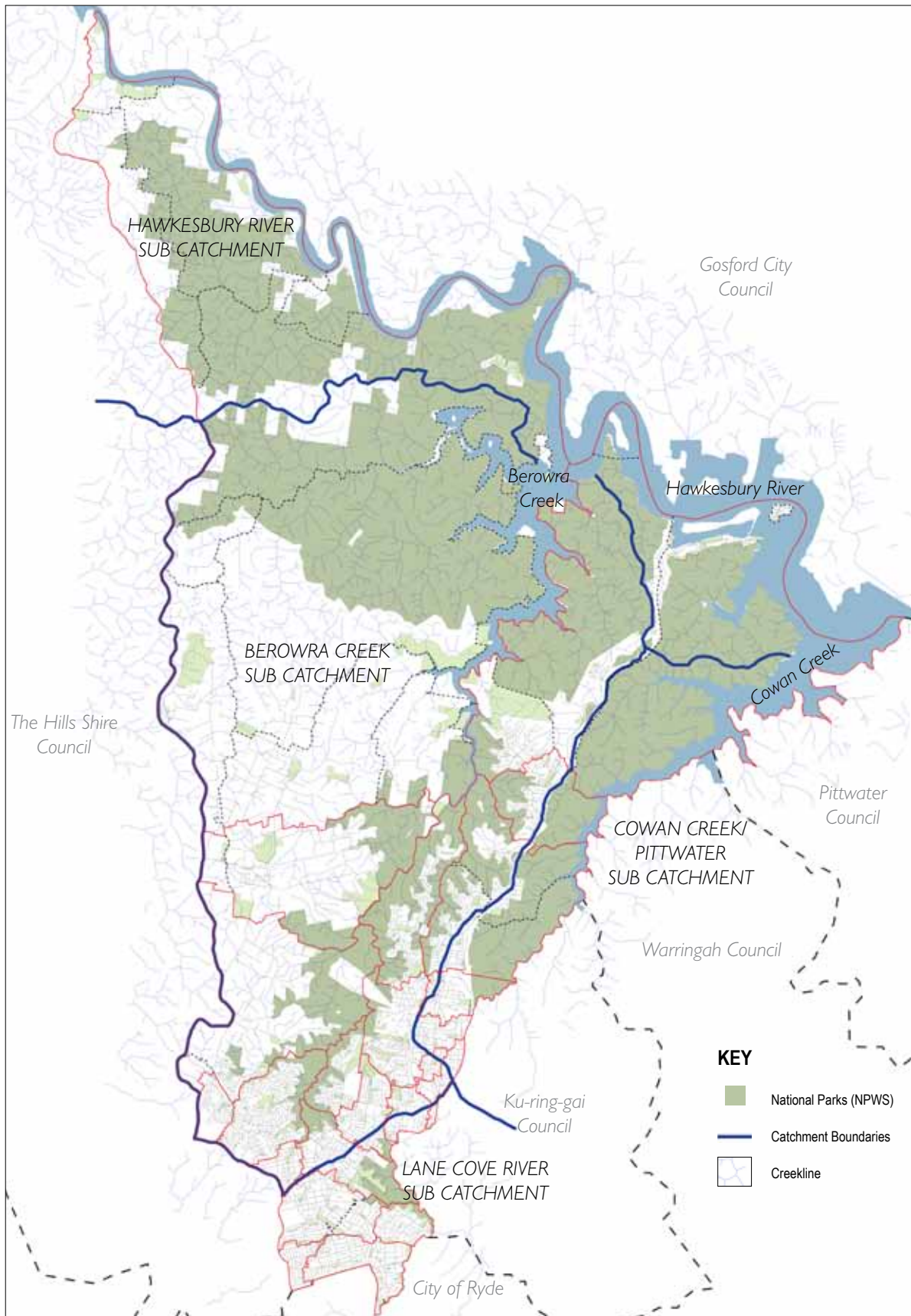


Figure A2.06 - Hydrology and Catchments

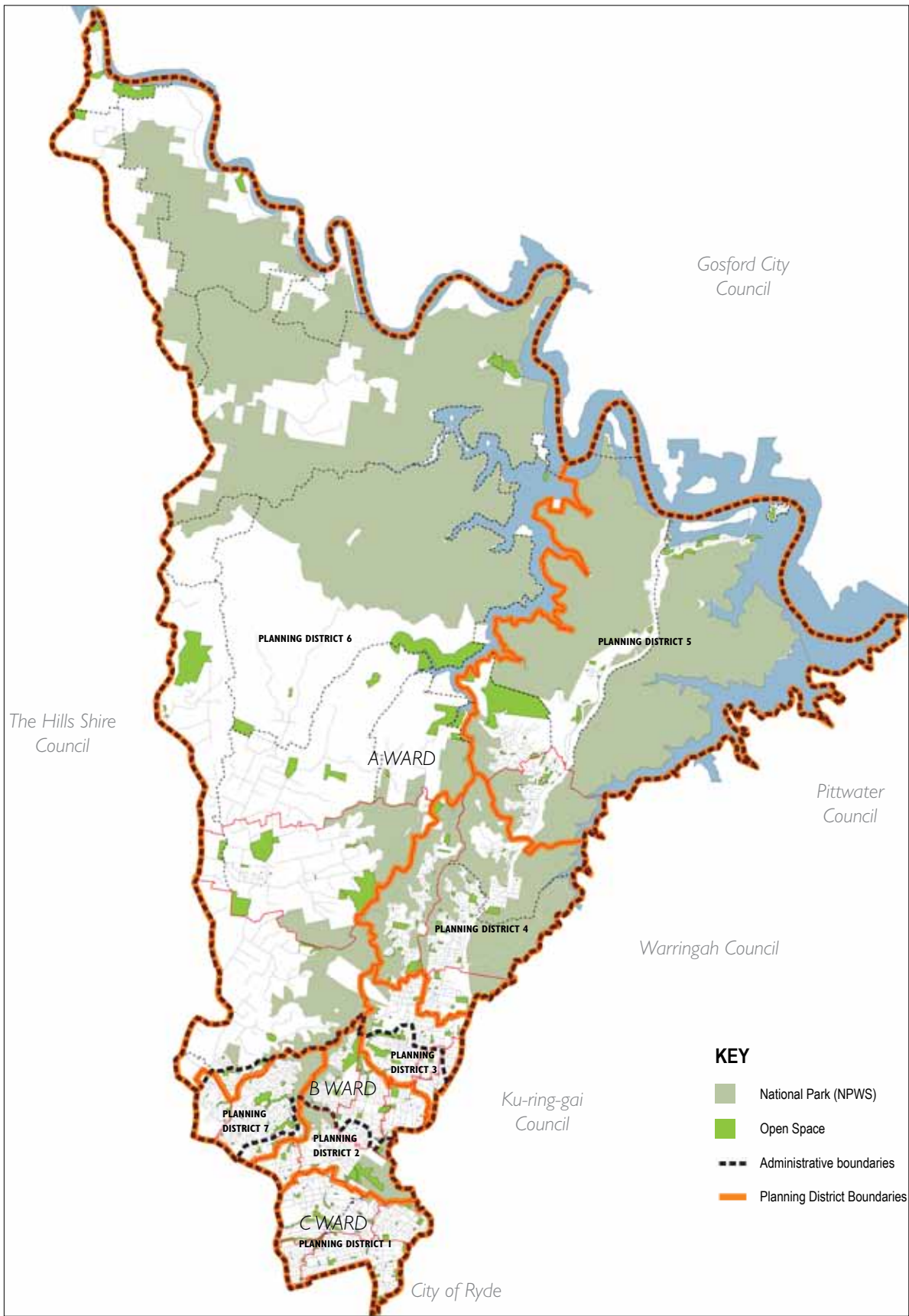


Figure A2.07 - Administrative Boundaries and Planning Districts

A2: CONTEXT

CURRENT OPEN SPACE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The Shire extends from Brooklyn in the north, to Wiseman’s Ferry and Glenorie/Dural in the west, across to Wahroonga in the east, and to Epping on its southern boundary.

The Council area is bordered immediately by five other Councils being The Hills Shire, Parramatta, Ku-ring-gai and City of Ryde and shares a boundary on the Hawkesbury River with Gosford City Council.

Hornsby Shire is part of the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) which comprises six other Councils including Ku-ring-gai, City of Ryde, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, Willoughby and North Sydney (refer to Fig A2.08).

The Shire’s Administration is divided into three wards (refer to Figure A2.07), which are similar to the three S94 districts identified in Figure A2.01. For Planning purposes and in line with the population and open space distribution, the ALHS adopts seven precincts as illustrated in Figure A2.07.

Regional and Subregional Planning Context

A range of planning documents and NSW government policies/frameworks are relevant to the Hornsby Shire and the ALHS. The principal policies/frameworks are summarised here (see also in Appendix 1):

- *North Subregional Strategy* (part of the Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney to 2031) identifies:
 - Hornsby as a major centre for growing retail and office uses and the provision of at least 1,000 additional jobs to 2031
 - The importance of connecting to the north for freight and passengers to the Central Coast, Newcastle and NSW North Coast via the M1 and Main Northern Line, including any future high speed rail corridor
 - The need for increased housing choice along major transport corridors including strategic bus corridors and the North Shore and Northern railway lines
 - The Epping Urban Activation Precinct
 - The importance of protecting the health and resilience of the environmental assets of the subregion, including National Parks
- *NSROC Regional Priorities* identifies seven key actions for Northern Sydney, of which the following are relevant to Hornsby Shire and this Strategy:
 - Critical transport infrastructure projects including completion of the North West Rail link, the Chatswood-Parramatta rail link and the M1-M2 freeway link
 - Provide for ageing including meeting the demand for aged care homes and upgrading community facilities to suit ageing needs
 - Maintain open space and community facilities in increasingly populated areas
 - Reinvigorate existing business centres and commercial parks into more vibrant areas with night time economies and cultural hubs



Figure A2.08 - Northern Regional Organisation of Councils

A2: CONTEXT

- *Sydney Regional Recreation Trails Framework* identifies a number of regional trails that are either complete or in need of extension across Metropolitan Sydney. The trails relevant to Hornsby Shire include:
 - Route 3.1 The Great North Walk - priority 2 and 3
 - Route 3.9 Benowie Track and Waratah Track - priority 1
 - Route 3.15 Northern Suburbs Rail Trail - priority 1 and 2
 - Route 5.8 Cattai Creek (North West) - priority 2
- Northern Sydney Regional Sportsground Strategy – Discussion Paper prepared for the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) summarises many of the challenges faced by these Councils in providing facilities for and promoting sports across the region. In particular, the paper identifies the issues of:
 - The increasing range of sports being pursued by residents in the region
 - The growing number of people involved in sport
 - The pressure on fields and courts created by the above; most sports are now at capacity
 - The growth of Pay As You Play (PAYP) and social sports
 - Increasingly overlapping seasons
 - Increasing competition for space for pre-season competitions and midweek training
 - Pricing policies that do not disadvantage minor or establishing sports.

Hornsby Shire Planning Documents

There are several recent planning documents prepared by Council that are of direct relevance to the ALHS, the conclusions from which are briefly outlined below:

- *Unstructured Recreation Strategy Volume 1:*
 - Attempt to provide one specialty/mixed recreation park in each suburb or planning district, where there is a cluster of facilities for social and unstructured recreation activities suitable for a range of ages
 - Consider a range of locations for additional dog off-leash areas
 - Provide a hierarchy of trails across the Shire to suit a wide range of pedestrian and non-motorised wheeled activities: urban footpaths, equestrian and shared trails; bike trails in urban bushland (along management trails), sealed circuit paths in larger parks
 - Build a hierarchy of BMX facilities for a range of abilities and address the management of existing unauthorised BMX areas
 - Priority for playground development to be given to larger parks such as those with regional, shire-wide or suburb-wide catchments.

A2: CONTEXT

- *Sustainable Water Based Recreation Facilities Plan:*
 - Encourage further dialogue between Hornsby and Gosford Councils over the development of a regional commuter hub at Mooney Mooney Point at Deerubbin Reserve.
 - Need to facilitate canoeing / kayaking launching at one location in Wisemans Ferry to enhance safety.
 - Promote Crosslands Reserve as the primary place for non-motorised boats and canoes / kayaks, on the Lower Hawkesbury.
 - Infrastructure on the foreshore should be incrementally redesigned and upgraded to accommodate people with a disability; in particular, this should include physical access and wayfinding.
- *NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy Volume 1:*
 - Four locations of synthetic hockey pitches (Ryde, Hornsby Shire, North Sydney and Ku-ring-gai)
 - Several new sportsgrounds are being planned because of land Swaps or redevelopments, these include Old Man's Valley and The Old Dairy site in Hornsby Shire.
- *Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program – Hornsby Shire Council Active/Passive Parks:*
 - The average time taken to travel to the park by survey participants (from place of residence, accommodation, work etc.) within Hornsby Shire Council area was 17 minutes.
 - 65% of the survey participants within the Hornsby Shire Council area were regular visitors to the park that they were interviewed in.
 - 36% of participants visited the park more than once a week (with 16% visiting daily and 20% a few days a week), 14% visited weekly, 6% fortnightly, and 9% monthly.

IMPLICATIONS OF CONTEXT TO THE ALHS

The foregoing overview of the context to the strategy suggests a number of implications for the ALHS including:

- The need to ensure adequate open space to meet the need of a growing population.
- The requirement that open space meets the needs of an increasing population of the elderly and those from a range of cultural backgrounds.
- The ramifications of an increasing proportion of the population living in medium or high density residences.
- The opportunity to draw on the unique environmental and heritage values of the Shire.



A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE PROVISION ANALYSIS

This section provides an analysis and evaluation of all the existing public open space within Hornsby Shire. The purpose of this analysis is to establish whether the Shire has enough open space to meet the needs of the existing community as well as the flexibility to meet the needs of future generations.

When establishing the adequacy and accessibility of public open space that serves a given population, a number of factors need to be considered. These factors extend beyond the simple calculation of park numbers or total open space. Contemporary open space analysis generally includes an evaluation of the following topics and these form the basis of this section:

- Open space hierarchy and setting types
- Quantum and size of reserves
- Open Space distribution, accessibility and connectivity
- Relationship of the open space to existing and future population.

The principal data source from which to carry out this evaluation and analysis is a comprehensive inventory of all public open space that is in the care, control and management of Hornsby Shire Council.

Council's inventory of open space has been comprehensively updated and completed in the development of the ALHS, the contents and format of which are outlined on the following pages.

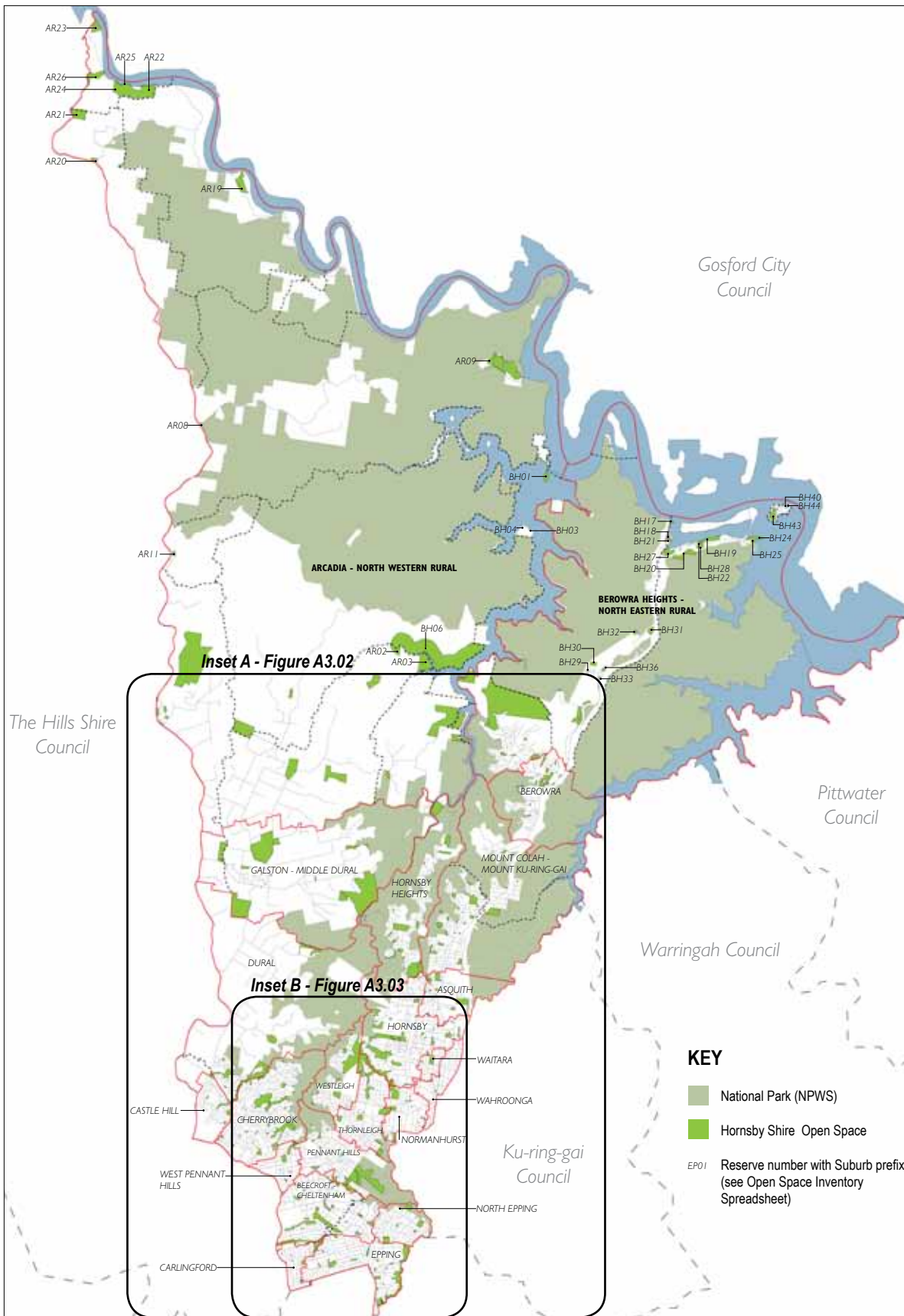


Figure A3.01 - Existing Open Space Inventory Shire wide

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

A key step in the preparation of the ALHS is the structure and contents of the open space inventory. The inventory (see Appendix 2) identifies and describes each property zoned as public open space either owned by Council or owned by State Government but under Council's care control and management.

The inventory provides Council with the baseline data upon which the Shire's open spaces will be managed over time. The location of each open space is identified in Figure A3.01, A3.02 and A3.03 and the details for each open space are documented in a spreadsheet in Appendix 2.

The basic elements that comprise the open space inventory include:

- Park Number and Reserve Name
- Address and Suburb location
- Classification
- Area (m² and Ha)
- Hierarchy
- Settings (Categorisation)
- Connection Association
- Local Government Categorisation
- Assets
- Functions and uses

Where Council acquires new public open space through development processes or where ownership of public open space is transferred to Council by State or Federal government, such spaces should be added to the inventory and mapping and be documented in the same manner.

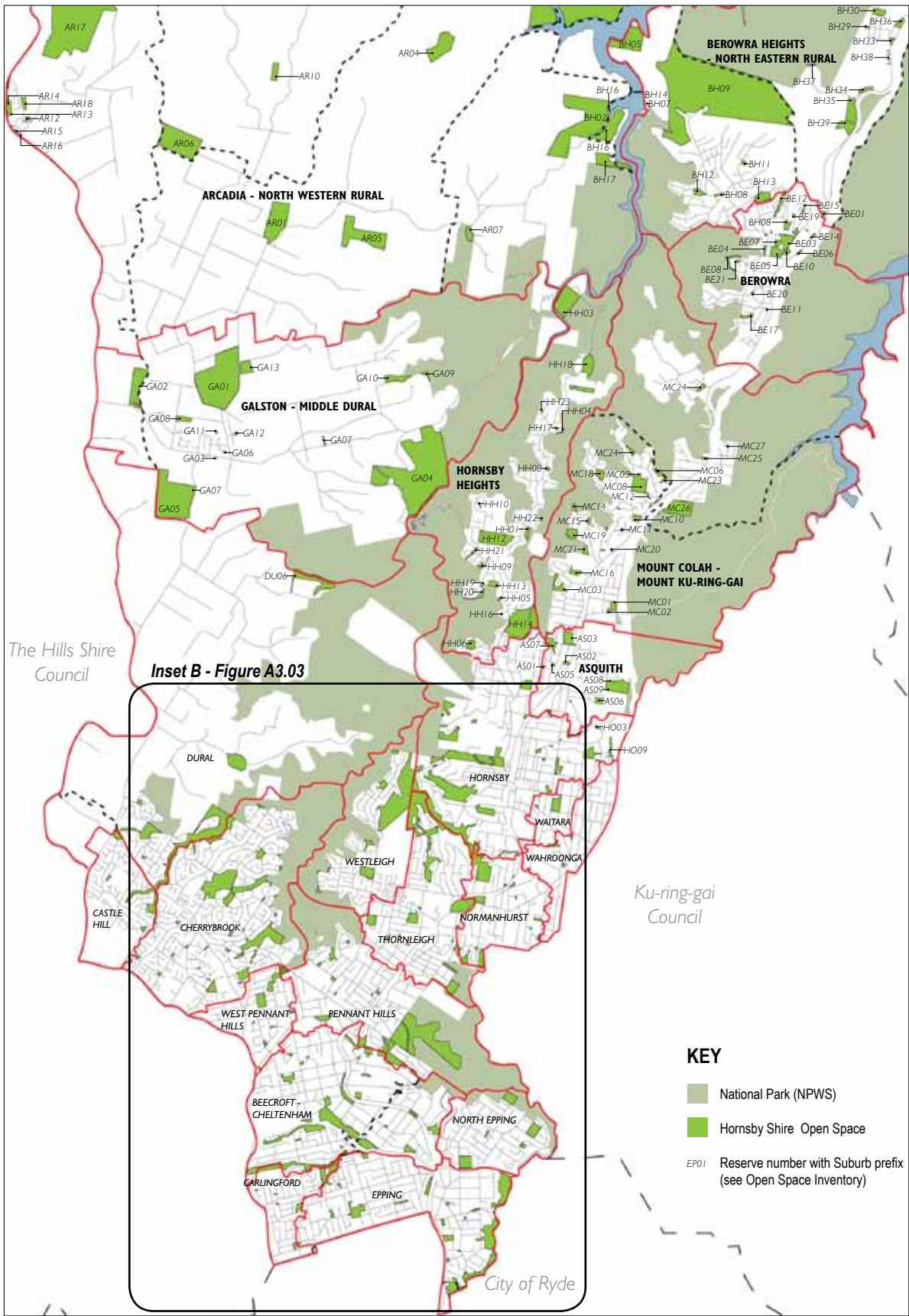


Figure A3.02 - Existing Open Space Inventory: South of the Shire, Inset A



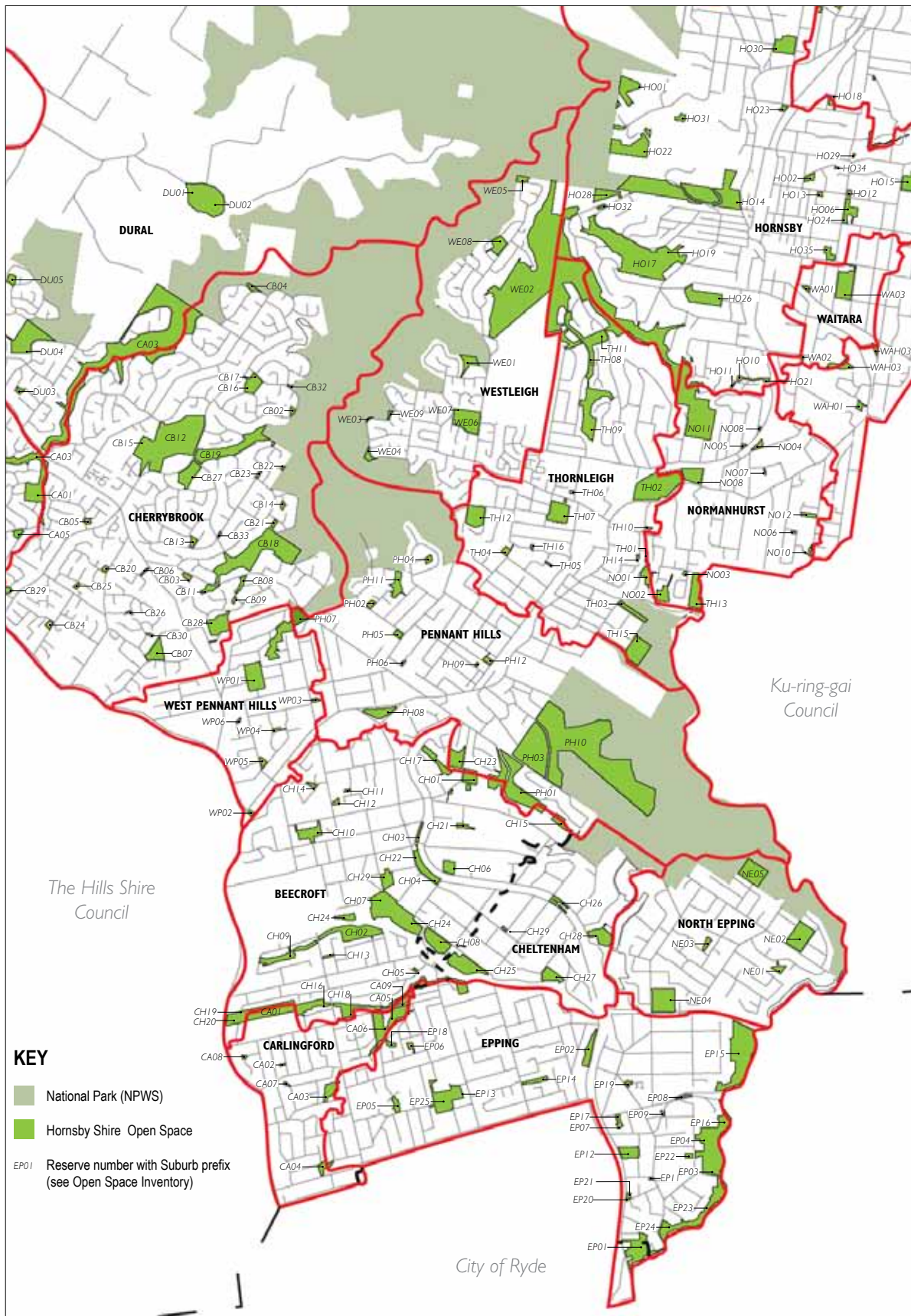


Figure A3.03 - Existing Open Space Inventory: South of the Shire, Inset B

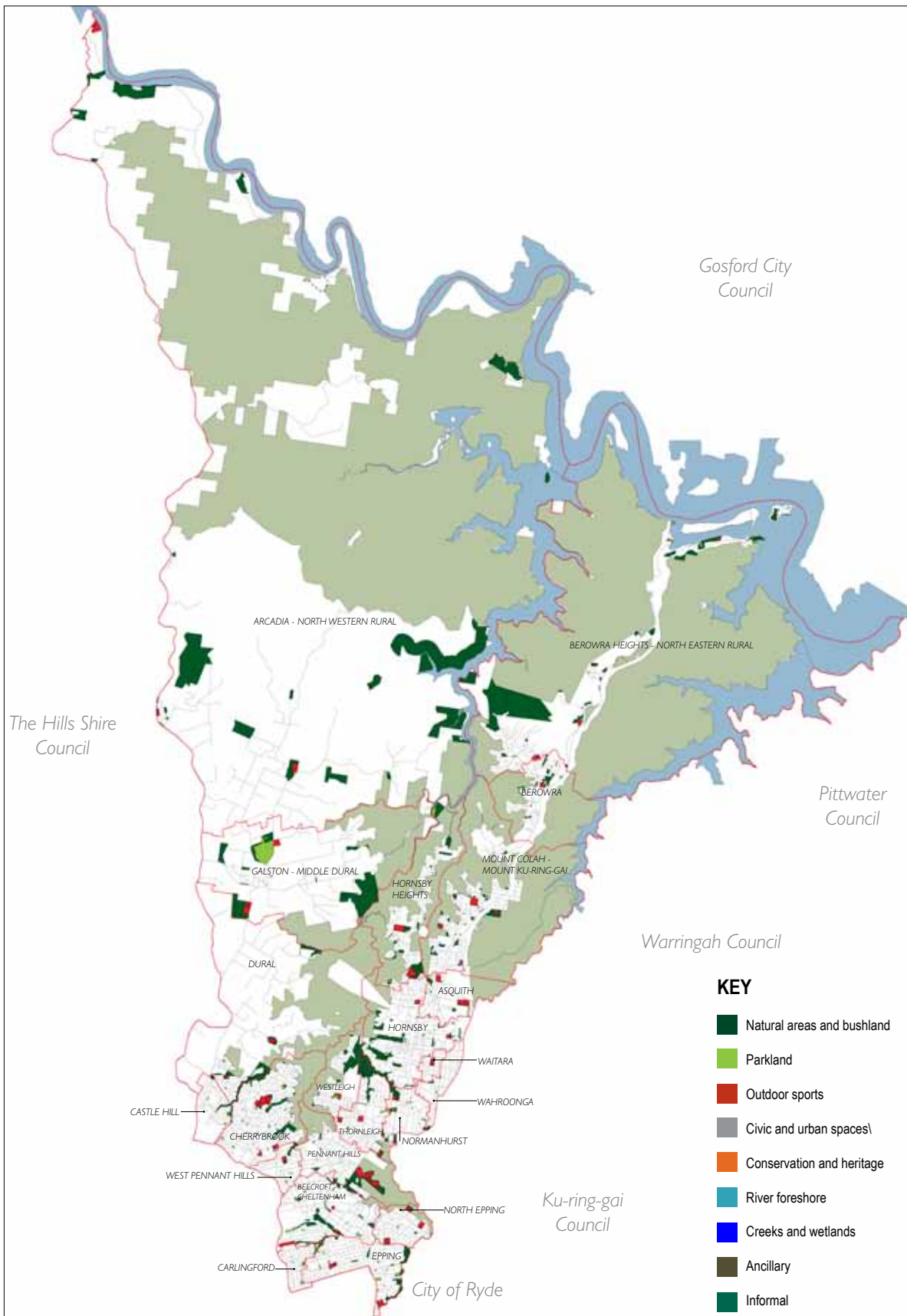


Figure A3.04 - Open Space Settings



A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE SETTING TYPES

The New South Wales Local Government Act 1993 requires that all Community Land be categorised; this categorisation describes the setting type under a series of predetermined descriptors, e.g. Natural Area. Since the 1993 LGA Act the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has published updated setting types that more closely relate to management requirements. The Active Living Hornsby Strategy has adopted the following setting types, based on the 'Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government 2011' and has been adapted to suit the specifics of the Hornsby Shire landscape:

- Natural areas and bushland
- Parkland
- Outdoor sports
- Civic and urban spaces
- Conservation and heritage
- River foreshore
- Creeks and wetlands
- Ancillary
- Informal

Many parks are comprised of more than one setting (i.e. the same park or reserve might contain bushland and a sports ground) and accordingly the Open Space Inventory identifies the primary setting type whilst also listing the secondary and contributory settings. This documentation of multiple settings permits more integrated planning and management, whilst addressing the needs of differing users.

Figure A3.04 shows the distribution of the different open space setting types in the 374 open spaces accounted for in the inventory. Table A3.01 on the following pages provides an outline of the existing status of public open space in each setting type across the Shire.

HIERARCHY OF OPEN SPACE







A three tier hierarchy is proposed for the Open Space Inventory, being Level 1 to Level 3. While size is often a key determinant of hierarchy, other factors such as the 'drawcard effect' (how far people are prepared to travel to visit the open space because of a particular facility that it offers (e.g. a regional playground or an historic landscape) is also used to determine the parks hierarchy.

Generally, Level 3 Reserves are within a 10 minute walking distance of most residences. Level 2 Reserves are usually larger with a district draw card, typically no more than 2-5 kilometres from most residences, while Level 1 Reserves have a regional catchment and may draw visitors from across the subregion of Sydney or from further afield.

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE SETTING TYPE	OVERALL PROVISION	DESCRIPTION / SUMMARY
<p>PARKLAND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 168 open spaces in Hornsby Shire that have Parkland as their main setting type. • Highest numbers per suburb include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cherrybrook (18) – Beecroft-Cheltenham (16) – Epping (15) • Lowest numbers per suburb include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Waitara and Wahroonga (2 each) – Dural (3) – Castle Hill and West Pennant Hills (4 each) • Parklands include small local or 'pocket' parks within suburbs and as a result are small in size, such as Holman Park in Hornsby (0.19Ha) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall quality of open space is high for Level 1 e.g. Fagan Park and Crosslands Reserve and for a number of the Level 2 reserves such as Rofe Park. • Many level 3 open spaces appear to be small, some are rarely used and generally they have poor quality facilities such as play equipment etc. Many of these Level 3 Reserves offer limited basic amenity such as shade, seating, paths and play. The uneven distribution of many Level 3 reserves limits accessibility at a local level. • Some of the larger open spaces are combined with sports fields (such as Rofe Park, Montview Oval) as a primary setting. • Overall maintenance is of a high quality.
<p>OUTDOOR SPORTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 54 open spaces that have Outdoor Sport as their main setting type. • Most suburbs have at least one outdoor sport setting with the exception of Wahroonga which does not have any provided by Council. • Epping has the highest, with 4 sportsgrounds within the suburb boundary • Mount Colah-Mount Ku-ring-gai, Thornleigh and Beecroft-Cheltenham all have 4 outdoor sport settings each • Overall sportsgrounds are generally located in flatter parts of the Shire - usually on ridges, near the Pacific Highway and/or in the southern suburbs and are less likely to be located near the bushland and valley areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of sports are catered for across the 54 sportsgrounds within the Shire including the traditional winter and summer field and sports courts. • In some cases the sportsgrounds also provide for unstructured recreation activities. Through the introduction infrastructure such as circuit walking paths, exercise equipment, dog off leash areas and playgrounds these sportsgrounds are being progressively more used by the wider community. • Most sportsgrounds in the Shire, being sited on the Ridges are also located in close proximity to bushland and provide access to walking tracks, such as at Pennant Hills Park. • Overall maintenance is of a high standard. • Indoor facilities include the Brickpit Park which provides for multiple indoor sports. While there are 4 swimming pools, some of which have other indoor facilities such as gym, rooms for fitness/dance classes etc. • There are 9 sites with tennis courts, most of which are run either by tennis clubs or leased to tennis coaches. • Council is facing a significant challenge in trying to meet the demand for fields and courts to match the growing population.




Table A3.01 - Existing Open Space Settings Summary

HIERARCHY EXAMPLES	PHOTOGRAPHS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – McKell Park, Brooklyn (5.72Ha) – Crosslands Reserve, Hornsby Heights (12.97Ha) – Fagan Park, Galston (54.94Ha) • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ruddock Park, Westleigh (3.91Ha) – The Lakes of Cherrybrook (2.28Ha) – Ray Park, Carlingford (3.71Ha) • Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Robert Road Playground, Cherrybrook (0.27Ha) – Kilpak Park, Carlingford (0.77Ha) – Wollundry Park, Pennant Hills (0.37Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="655 1021 820 1048">Fagan Park, Galston</p>	 <p data-bbox="1038 1021 1246 1048">The Lakes of Cherrybrook</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 - large sportsgrounds usually catering for multiple sports, only 4 within the shire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pennant Hills Park, Pennant Hills Park (31.83Ha) – Greenway Park, Cherrybrook (13.91Ha) – Brickpit Park, Thornleigh (7.11Ha) • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Warrina Street Oval, Berowra Heights (3.21Ha) – Rofe Park, Hornsby Heights (6.16Ha) – North Epping Oval, North Epping (3.35Ha) • Level 3 - generally single or double use sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Booth Park, Beecroft (1.02Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="655 1435 916 1462">Pennant Hills Park, Pennant Hills</p>	 <p data-bbox="1038 1435 1257 1462">Rofe Park, Hornsby Heights</p>
	 <p data-bbox="655 1839 887 1865">Greenway Park, Cherrybrook</p>	 <p data-bbox="1038 1839 1294 1865">North Epping Oval, North Epping</p>

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE SETTING TYPE	OVERALL PROVISION	DESCRIPTION / SUMMARY	
CIVIC AND URBAN SPACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 6 civic and urban spaces across the shire. In some instances there is a civic component within a larger park that has other uses and is also classified under another setting. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Galston Village Common (0.12Ha) – Crossroads Park, Berowra (0.45Ha) – Hornsby Mall, Hornsby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five out of six of the spaces are less than 0.5Ha • They are typically used for an event or ceremony several times a year such as the Anzac Memorials at Crossroads Park and Beecroft Station Park & Worlds War Memorial • There are no formal civic or urban spaces with Hornsby, which is the Shire’s business and civic centre. The Cenotaph Park (on the west side of Hornsby is underutilised) • The progressively more urbanised town centres, especially in the Central District will require more of these spaces. 	
CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 15 conservation and heritage areas within the Shire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 4 in Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural) – 3 in Hornsby – 2 each in Epping and Carlingford – 1 each in Westleigh and Pennant Hills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces such as Lisgar Gardens and Lillian Fraser Gardens, Hornsby Park and Pool are listed as heritage items in the Hornsby LEP and are known for their cultural heritage associated with garden design • Quarter Sessions Road Bushland/Aboriginal Heritage is the only listed space known for its indigenous heritage • The majority of the conservation and heritage assets are in good condition and well cared for by Council. 	
RIVER FORESHORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 26 River foreshore spaces within the Shire • Naturally, 21 of the River foreshore spaces are located in the Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural) area • There are 3 in the Arcadia (North Western Rural) area and 1 each in Epping and Hornsby Heights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the River foreshore spaces share the Natural Areas and bushland setting. • Some River Foreshore areas provide direct access to the Hawkesbury River, either via boat ramps for water craft, informal beaches for swimming or formalised swimming baths such as at McKell Park. • The Water Based Recreation Strategy identifies the need for more kayak launching opportunities and more formalised land based fishing opportunities, such as from river edge platforms. The strategy also identifies the need for upgrades to some boat launching ramps. 	





Table A3.01 - Existing Open Space Settings Summary

HIERARCHY EXAMPLES	PHOTOGRAPHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the civic and urban spaces are classified as Level 3 spaces. • The spaces are not large enough in their own right to host large events, except where the civic or urban space is located adjacent to another type of park or open space. 	 <p data-bbox="657 833 853 857">Galston Village Common</p> <p data-bbox="1040 833 1316 857">Crossroads Park, Berowra Heights</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the spaces have multiple settings such as Foreshores or Natural Areas and bushland. • It is these other settings which dictate the hierarchy and size of the space. For example McKell Park in Brooklyn is 5.72Ha of which the heritage components (WWII gun and emplacements and the bushland headlands) are a portion of the overall size. • Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bar Island, Berowra Creek (4.01Ha) – Wiseman’s Ferry Cemetery, Wiseman’s Ferry (.70Ha) • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Brooklyn Cemetery (.76Ha) – Ray Park and Little Ray Park (2.13Ha) • Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quarter Sessions Road Bushland, Westleigh (.49Ha) – Bloodwood Road Aboriginal Area (3.02Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="657 1451 1013 1476">Wiseman's Ferry Cemetery, Wiseman's Ferry</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are three Level 1 River Foreshores that share other settings which influence the overall hierarchy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Neverfail Bay Bushland, Berowra Creek, which is 179.35Ha and is also classified as Natural Areas and bushland. – McKell Park, Brooklyn (as mentioned above). – Crosslands Reserve, Hornsby Heights (12.97Ha) is also described as Parkland, Natural areas and bushland and Creeks and wetlands. • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wiseman’s Ferry Recreation Reserve (8.35Ha) • Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dangar Island Foreshore Bradley’s Beach (0.33Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="657 1944 837 1968">McKell Park, Brooklyn</p>

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

OPEN SPACE SETTING TYPE	OVERALL PROVISION	DESCRIPTION / SUMMARY	
<p>NATURAL AREAS AND BUSHLAND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 228 Natural and Bushland Areas within the Shire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 32 in Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural) – 24 in Hornsby – 22 in Arcadia (North Western Rural) – Waitara is the only suburb to not have a Natural Area and Bushland setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the Shire’s Natural Areas and Bushland has a direct association with National Parks including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Berowra Valley National Park – Lane Cove National Park – Marramarra National Park – Dharug National Park – Ku-ring-gai National Park – Muogamarra Nature Reserve • Several Natural Areas and Bushland spaces are not fully accessible due to steep topography and limited path connections to urban centres, and consequently offer limited recreational value. • A significant proportion of bushland spaces make up the total area of open space. 	
<p>CREEKS AND WETLANDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 100 Creeks and Wetlands within the Shire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 16 in Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural) – 15 in Hornsby – 13 in Beecroft - Cheltenham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the Shire’s Creeks and Wetlands have a direct association with Natural Areas and Bushland setting. • There are many bushwalking trails and path networks that provide accessibility and connectivity to Creeks and Wetlands within Hornsby Shire. • Not all creeks are well connected into the urban centres and consequently creekside paths are often fragmented. 	

Table A3.01 - Existing Open Space Settings Summary

HIERARCHY EXAMPLES	PHOTOGRAPHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Berowra Heights Reserve - also known as Turner Road Bushland (192.68Ha) – Neverfail Bay Bushland (179.35Ha) – Campbell Crescent Bushland (138.2Ha) – Dog Pound Creek Bushland (43.59Ha) • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Byles Creek Bushland - includes Adder St, Malton Rd, Tristania Way, Azalea Grove, Britannia St Bushland and bushland parts of Pennant Hills Park (39.24Ha) – Pyes Creek and Upper Pyes Creek Bushland (34.2) Florence Cotton Reserve (13.49Ha) – Beecroft, Beecroft South and Chilworth Reserves (13.57Ha) • Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Singleton Mill Road Bushland (53.03Ha) – Kiparra Park (5.54Ha) – New Farm Road Bushland (4.16Ha) – Kanangra Crescent Bushland (1.6Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="657 927 922 954">Pyes Creek Bushland, Castle Hill</p>  <p data-bbox="657 1312 868 1339">Little Ray Park, Carlingford</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Waitara Creek Bushland - includes bushland part of Normanhurst Park (24.59Ha) – Terrys Creek Bushland - includes Upper, Middle, Lower Terrys, Vimiera and Dence Park bushland (18.9Ha) – Crosslands Reserve - foreshore and bushland part (9.3Ha) • Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fagan Park - Carrs Bush and dams (10.82Ha) – One Tree Reach Wetland (12.91Ha) • Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Furber Park, Berowra Waters (13.85Ha) – Larool Creek Bushland - includes Larool Crescent bushland (8.36Ha) – Brooklyn Park (wetland part) (5.39Ha) 	 <p data-bbox="657 1933 903 1960">Terrys Creek Bushland, Epping</p>  <p data-bbox="1042 1933 1201 1960">Dence Park, Epping</p>

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FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

Within each open space throughout the Shire there are a variety of facilities and amenities that are central to its enjoyment and use. The following summarises the current status of facilities and amenities and also identifies proposals contained in the Unstructured Recreation Strategy.

Children's Play

Hornsby Shire has 137 playgrounds throughout the Shire. Many of these playgrounds are located in Level 3 Parklands or Reserves which are located on low profile streets with poor access and connectivity. Whilst still valued by the community as identified in the online Survey, many these areas are considered too small to contain a diversity of play elements for a variety of age groups.

The Unstructured Recreation Strategy proposed a more structured approach to play provision with a focus on a more even distribution of larger play facilities at major parklands and focus on play for smaller children (2-5 years) at a local level. Diversifying the play experience was also proposed.

Skate Parks

Hornsby Shire has five skate parks which are extensively used by youth and are located in close proximity to lit outdoor sporting venues:

- Berowra Oval, Berowra
- Brooklyn Oval, Brooklyn
- Greenway Park, Cherrybrook
- Galston Recreation Reserve, Galston
- Brickpit Park, Thornleigh

Council's concerted program of developing skate facilities over recent years has meant that demand for such facilities has not come through strongly in community feedback.

Off Road Cycling

Off Road Cycling comprises a number of activities including Mountain Biking (downhill, XC Racing, 4X, trail riding and orienteering), general free riding, BMX and Cyclocross.

The Mountain Bike Facility at Old Man's Valley is proving popular and gaining recognition around Sydney. While an opportunity exists to explore a new site at Hayes Park, Galston, the Unstructured Recreation Strategy 2010 suggests the focus should be on improving and extending trails (in negotiation with NPWS, DECC and DOL) while maintaining/upgrading existing stand alone facilities such as at Old Man's Valley. It also recommended that the focus be on developing foundation MTB skills rather than on elite competition sites.

There are a number of management trails across the Shire that are already well used by MTB riders and the maps that accompany the Unstructured Recreation Strategy identify additional mixed use trails and connections that could extend the network of multi-use trails for both riders and walkers. Developing this network across the Shire's landholdings

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and that of other agencies such as NPWS should consider recommendations contained in the NPWS Sustainable Mountain Biking Strategy 2011, which suggests a range of trail lengths from 1-4 hours in ride duration.

Formal BMX infrastructure already exists in locations such as Montview Park in Hornsby Heights, but many such facilities have also been illegally built in bushland areas. The Unstructured Recreation Strategy suggests that Councils' approach should be focused on facilitating legal BMX facilities across the Shire.

Cyclocross is a growing trend in cycling and the Hornsby Shire is a landscape that is well suited to this sport.

Dog off-leash areas

Hornsby Shire has six full time off-leash areas for exercising and training of dogs. The areas are fully fenced and include:

- Asquith Park, Asquith
- Crossroads Reserve, Berowra Heights
- Greenway Park, Cherrybrook
- Rofe Park, Hornsby Heights
- Ruddock Park, Westleigh
- Dawson Avenue Parkland, Thornleigh

Council also maintains one unfenced off-leash area at Lyne Road Reserve in Cheltenham. In addition to the above, Council has two shared-off leash parks where dogs are not permitted during organised sporting games and maintenance activities. These include:

- Epping Oval, Epping
- Ron Payne Park, North Epping

All dog off-leash areas have waste bins, dog waste bags and water basins. However, increasing use of space, conflicts with a multitude of user groups and increased physical activities for dogs also creates maintenance and asset management issues i.e. grassed areas becoming worn out.

Toilets and Amenities

Council has been progressively upgrading toilet facilities in the Shire's open spaces, particularly where these form part of amenities buildings. There are however many toilet facilities that are old, in poor condition and unsafe. Designing for multiuse (such as at Fagan Park) where this combines with shelters and storage and ensures safer facilities in better locations.

Unstructured Recreation Facilities

The Unstructured Recreation Strategy makes recommendation on the provision of additional facilities to encourage active lifestyles including hit-up walls, ball sport courts, kick to kick spaces, kayak and fishing platforms.

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IMPLICATIONS OF SETTING TYPES, HIERARCHY AND FACILITIES

The principal implications for the ALHS of the existing open space settings and the hierarchy of open space summarised below:

Natural Areas

These are extensive, especially in the north of the Shire, and the National Parks are mostly connected into the urban areas by way of the Great North Walk track and its branches; some of the Council parks e.g. Hornsby Park may have some of the GNW branch tracks through them, others are not well connected to the urban areas; there are limited short walk circuits in bushland. A more recreation-oriented approach to integrating these areas into the urban fabric would promote wider use and enjoyment as well as promoting more active lifestyles for urban residents living close to bushland.

Parkland

There are several high quality large parklands in the Shire such as Fagan Park and Galston Recreation Area, but they are mostly car oriented often in its rural locations and not evenly distributed across the Shire. At a local and urban level there are some larger parks like Hornsby Park, Forest Park (Epping) and Lillian Fraser Gardens (Pennant Hills) with good quality facilities. There are numerous small parks of relatively limited quality, opportunity or appeal. Some of these smaller parks are suburban in character and are not being adapted to more urban settings as higher density development progressively surrounds them, however Council's Development Contributions Plan sets out certain parks to be enlarged and/or upgraded. These are near areas rezoned for medium density housing in the Hornsby Local Environment Plan 2013.

Given that the parkland setting is the most visited there is clearly a need for a strategic approach to identifying principal Level 1 and 2 parks across the whole Shire and a wholesale review (acquisition, consolidation and rationalisation) of Level 3 parks.

Outdoor Sports

These represent the most significant category of open space due to the large average size of the parks, the level of infrastructure development, and the level of visitation. They range from comparatively small grounds, mainly in the outlying areas of low population density, to the large parks that contain multiple sports fields and courts.

There is evidence that many of the sportsgrounds are used beyond their carrying capacity - especially those used for winter soccer - and there is therefore an evident necessity to limit scheduled winter football use of some sportsgrounds due to the currently unsustainable levels of use and resultant turf wear on selected grounds, particularly those in Cheltenham, Cherrybrook, Epping, Normanhurst, Thornleigh, Waitara and West Pennant Hills.

This heavy turf wear results in unsatisfactory and unsafe surfaces for sport until the turf has recovered late in spring. The worn condition and appearance of the sportsground surfaces for several months each year is unfair to sports participants and casual park visitors. Council has plans to provide more sportsground space in these areas however there will be a necessity to reduce sportsground availability in the interim.

There is an evident demand to both supply new sports facilities and to improve the resilience of outdoor sports surfaces. Some of the sportsgrounds have the spatial capacity to be upgraded from level 2 to level 1 by introducing new facilities such as multi-court indoor stadiums (West Epping Park, Waitara Park), while the Hornsby Quarry and adjacent reserve space in Hornsby Park and Old Mans Valley presents a large area of comparatively untapped space for new outdoor sports facilities. Council is also investigating acquiring some vacant state government land that may be available in those parts of the Shire where shortage of sportsgrounds is most acute.

There is uneven use of sportsgrounds. Adjoining grounds used by different sports codes might have different levels of demand due to the varying levels of popularity of sports codes. A solution may be an increased level of ground sharing between codes.

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Conversion of selected sportsgrounds from natural turf to synthetic turf increases resilience and allows longer hours per week of use, which will help address supply shortages. Where the funds are not available to convert heavily-worn natural grass surfaced sportsgrounds to synthetic surface, Council may have to impose limits on weekly hours of use and on use for matches on both days of the weekends.

In light of the above overview there is a clear need to start engaging the clubs and associations in a dialogue as to the implications of the finite landscape and to jointly strategise to gain a closer relationship between demand and options for supply.

Civic and Urban Spaces

There are relatively few civic and urban spaces in the Shire. As higher density increases in many urban centres there will be a need for more such multi-use spaces to meet population needs for events, markets, celebration and day to day informal recreation close to home and transport nodes.

Conservation and Heritage

Despite the Shire's rich cultural heritage, there are relatively few such specific reserve settings. In practice, rather than seeking to establish specific reserves of this nature, it will be the better integration and interpretation of heritage features and stories into all other settings that will widen community knowledge and appreciation of this heritage.

River Foreshore

The high natural values of the Hawkesbury River are a major drawcard for locals and tourists alike. While many of these reserves fall within the National Park, the opportunity to upgrade reserves such as Crosslands Reserve and establish long distance walking paths will better integrate this natural setting into the wider Shire. Improved small scale facilities for kayak launching and land based fishing appear necessary.

Creeks and Wetlands

The opportunity to integrate local creek corridors into local path systems will assist natural values, awareness and offer recreational links between urban areas and bushland.

Ancillary and Informal

Such reserves require review to ensure that their functions are indeed of a recreational nature and how they may be best integrated into the wider open space network either permanently or by way of temporary uses.

Hierarchy of Open Space

With respect to open space hierarchies there appears to be a need to review a long term program for achieving a better distribution of Level 3 Parkland at sizes between 0.3 and 0.5 hectares, more even distribution of a small selection of Level 2 and Level 1 Parkland offering different experiences (especially for parklands) and a more strategic re-configuration of Level 1 and Level 2 sports venues. In many cases, there is space to provide more settings and facilities within existing open space.

Facilities and Amenities

While there is a need to continue upgrading sports facilities (amenities, buildings, lighting, irrigation etc.) to increase capacity, the greatest need appears to centre on better basic facilities and amenities such as paths, seating, play, shade, toilets, dog facilities and the like.

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SUBURB	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total Number
Arcadia (North Western Rural)	1	7	18	26
Asquith	0	2	8	10
Beecroft - Cheltenham	0	8	21	29
Berowra	0	2	19	21
Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural)	4	15	26	45
Carlingford	0	3	6	9
Castle Hill	0	3	2	5
Cherrybrook	0	5	28	33
Dural	0	3	3	6
Epping	0	8	17	25
Galston - Middle Dural	4	1	9	14
Hornsby	1	7	27	35
Hornsby Heights	1	5	17	23
Mount Colah - Mount Ku-ring-gai	0	6	21	27
Normanhurst	0	2	10	12
North Epping	0	3	2	5
Pennant Hills	1	1	10	12
Thornleigh	0	4	12	16
Wahroonga	0	1	2	3
Waitara	0	1	2	3
West Pennant Hills	0	1	5	6
Westleigh	0	2	7	9
TOTAL	12	90	272	374

Table A3.02 - Quantity and hierarchy of open space by suburb

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QUANTUM AND SIZE OF RESERVES

The number and sizes of open space across a local government area has a direct bearing on the community's access to open space and the capacity of that open space to meet a range of recreation and leisure activities and needs.

Numbers and Sizes of Reserves

Council manages some 1,720 Ha of public open space (approximately 3.4% of the total local government area) across 374 open spaces within the suburbs of Hornsby Shire. The open spaces vary greatly in size, ranging from the smallest at 0.031 Ha (Dangar Island Bush Fire Brigade) to the largest at 192.68 Ha (Turner Road Bushland, Berowra Heights).

Table A3.02 on page 74 summarises the total number of open spaces in each suburb, based on a three tier hierarchy.

The principal conclusions that can be drawn from this table are:

- 72.3% of all open space in Hornsby Shire are Level 3 (272), this might suggest that the level of local open space is provided for immediate day-to-day need, but analysis of distribution, access and quality (see following sections) heavily qualifies such a conclusion
- The numbers of open space in each suburb varies greatly for example Hornsby has the second highest number of open spaces at 35, whilst West Pennant Hills and Westleigh, both also relatively urban centres only have 1 and 6 reserves respectively.
- Some suburbs like Epping and Beecroft - Cheltenham have no large open spaces (Level 1) but many Level 3 open spaces.

Table A3.03 on page 76 summarises the amount of open space in each suburb, based on series of size brackets ranging from 0 – 0.1 Ha to 10 Ha or more (for the purpose of comparison the average property block size in Sydney is 0.06ha). The sizes of open space at Level 3 have a direct bearing on the recreational opportunities that those open spaces may offer.

The principal conclusions drawn from this table include:

- 47% of the open space in Hornsby Shire is less than 0.5 Ha in size
- 15% of the open space in Hornsby Shire is less than 0.1 Ha in size and more than 25% of the open space is of less than 0.2 Ha in size
- 31 open spaces (8%) in Hornsby Shire are greater than 10 Ha in size, with Arcadia – North Western Rural consisting of 11 open spaces.
- Most tellingly almost 15% (53) of the Shire's open spaces are as small as a single residential block size.

Implications of Quantum and Size of Reserves

The implications of this spread of sizes are that there is a heavy reliance on a large number of very small open spaces for recreation across Hornsby Shire. Significant numbers of the open spaces, whilst valued by the community are not of sufficient size to meet a wide range of day-to-day recreational opportunities and needs such as kickabout or free play.

Some larger reserves such as Fagan Park or Crosslands Reserve are well developed and very popular, nevertheless the distribution and variety of such parks is limited across the Shire.

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SUBURB	0.0 - 0.1 Ha	0.1- 0.2 Ha	0.21 - 0.5 Ha	0.51 - 1.0 Ha	1.1 - 2.0 Ha	2.1 - 5.0 Ha	5.1 - 10 Ha	10+ Ha	Total number of parks
Arcadia (North Western Rural)	1	1	2	2	5	2	2	11	26
Asquith	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	10
Beecroft - Cheltenham	3	1	6	3	10	5	1	0	29
Berowra	4	3	3	6	3	2	0	0	21
Berowra Heights (North Eastern Rural)	7	5	7	1	7	6	6	5	44
Carlingford	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	9
Castle Hill	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	5
Cherrybrook	4	7	11	3	2	3	1	2	33
Dural	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	6
Epping	4	3	4	3	6	4	1	0	25
Galston - Middle Dural	1	2	2	1	1	3	0	4	14
Hornsby	7	6	8	1	3	7	0	3	35
Hornsby Heights	2	5	3	4	5	0	3	2	24
Mount Colah - Mount Ku-ring-gai	4	4	5	6	4	2	2	0	27
Normanhurst	4	1	2	0	4	0	0	1	12
North Epping	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	5
Pennant Hills	2	0	4	0	2	1	2	1	12
Thornleigh	4	3	1	1	0	6	1	0	16
Wahroonga	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Waitara	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
West Pennant Hills	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	6
Westleigh	1	1	3	0	2	1	0	1	9
TOTAL	53	49	72	35	59	51	24	31	374

Table A3.03 - Amounts of open space by size brackets

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OPEN SPACE DISTRIBUTION

When considering the community's ability to access open space as part of their daily lives, the distribution of public open space is of equal, if not higher importance than the size and area of reserves. An overview of Figures A3.01 to A3.03 and A3.04 reveal some important characteristics of open space distribution across Hornsby Shire:

- Distribution of open space is very uneven and does not necessarily relate closely to population centres.
- major road and rail corridors across Hornsby Shire act as barriers for access to parks and open spaces, especially for walkers and cyclists (steep bushland gullies and valleys also act as a barrier particularly for those with disabilities)
- large areas of well-connected open space exist along natural creek systems and bushland corridors including Devlins Creek, Terrys Creek, Pyes Creek and Berowra Creek (with much of the latter being National Park managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service)
- there is a large distribution of outdoor sporting open spaces in Hornsby Shire with most located in the south and south-east sections of the Shire occupying the level ridge land.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

To establish the degree to which open space meets the needs of the Hornsby Shire community, the analysis of the amounts and distribution of open space must also be measured against the accessibility and connectivity of that resource.

Accessibility

Access to public open space in an urban environment is generally deemed to be preferably no more than 400m direct walking distance (or 10 minutes slow walking) from all residences. Figure A3.05 illustrates the results of a Pedshed Analysis (i.e. actual measured walking distances based on streets and public path systems), incorporating a series of 200m bands from the boundaries of all existing open space based on access to any form of public open space.

In contrast, Figure A3.06 illustrates the results of the Pedshed Analysis by removing natural and bushland areas and only incorporates access to parklands other than bushland.

As much of the bushland is on steeper topography and also by definition limits the range of recreation opportunity (e.g. casual kickabout etc.), this is an important consideration in terms of access.

From this mapping it is evident that there is a deficit of locally accessible open space in the rural areas of Dural, Galston and Arcadia – North Western Rural. While this may not be a critical shortfall given the dispersed population in these rural areas and their access to private open space. There are also some evident localised gaps within urban areas such as Hornsby, Asquith and Pennant Hills.

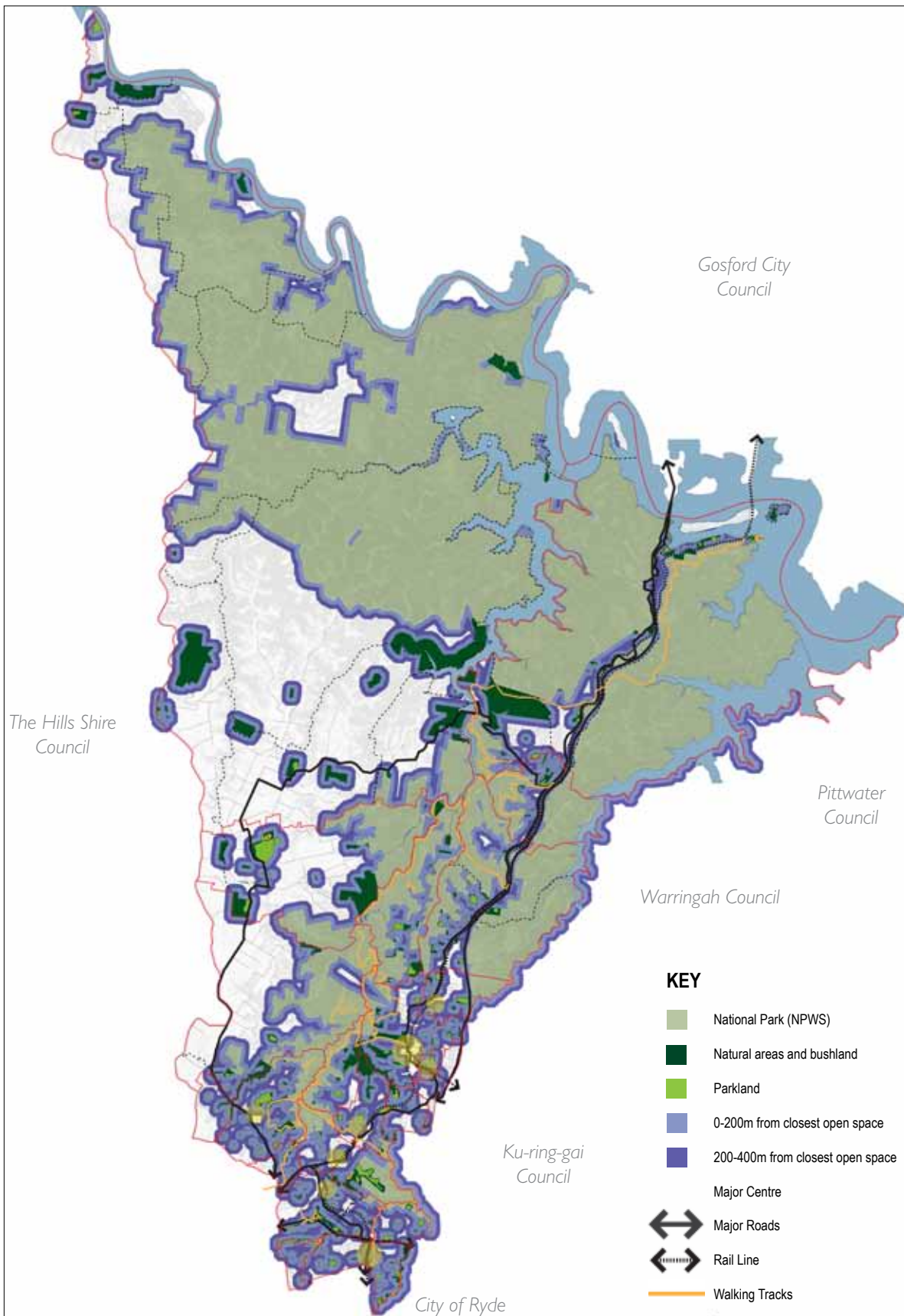


Figure A3.05 - Open Space Distribution and Accessibility: All Public Open Space

0 1 2 3 4 5km



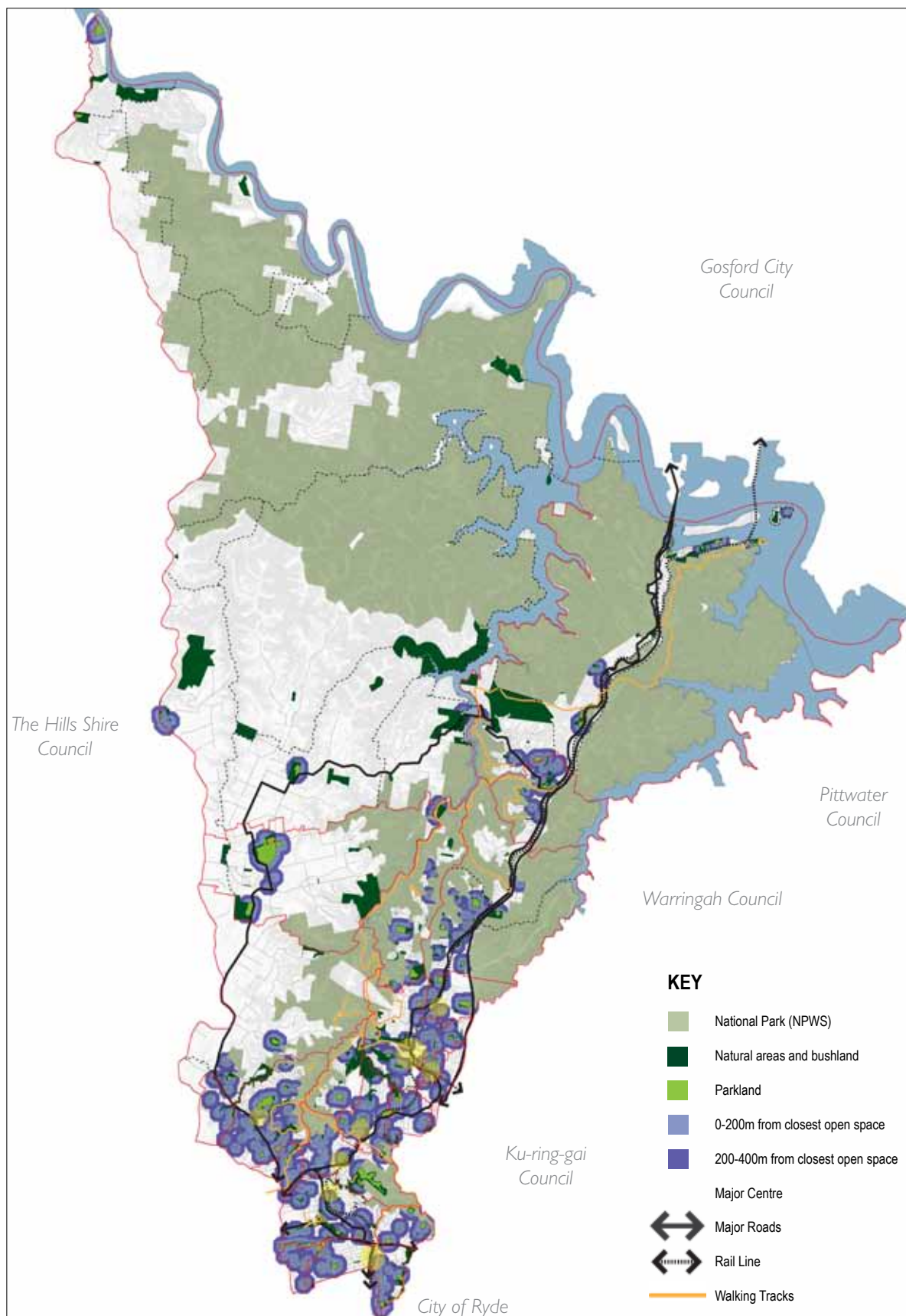


Figure A3.06 - Open Space Distribution and Accessibility: Natural Areas and Bushland

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Barriers

The steep topography of much of the Shire is a significant barrier to pedestrian movement across the Council area. Street layouts, major roads and waterways also are significant barriers to pedestrian movement across the Shire and include the following:

- the Sydney Northern and Western rail line is a significant barrier to east/west movement in the west of the City
- Hawkesbury River and Cowan Creek are significant barriers to movement across other LGA boundaries to access open space and recreation in adjacent Council's open space
- smaller tributaries including Devlins Creek, Terrys Creek, Pyes Creek and Berowra Creek provide a barrier to movement from one side to another, limiting access to adjoining open space and recreation
- busy roads of M1 Motorway, M2 Motorway, Cumberland Highway and Epping Road create major barriers for safe pedestrian passage
- steep topography in suburbs Cherrybrook, Galston, Westleigh, Hornsby Heights, Mount Colah – Mount Ku-ring-gai, Berowra, Berowra Heights and Arcadia – North Western Rural limit access to open spaces.

Topography is also a significant barrier to movement and accessibility in many urban areas bordering bushland valleys. The most level access tends to be along north/south ridgelines. This creates elongated north/south open spaces and level movement corridors in suburbs such as Hornsby Heights, Westleigh and parts of Asquith, Berowra, Berowra Heights, Cheltenham and Hornsby, creating barriers to east/west movements across valleys and gullies.

Connectivity

Exploring the full range of recreational connections and linkages at a local, district and regional level is a core element of the ALHS. Such connections within and outside of parks and open spaces include:

- bushland areas and corridors
- river foreshores and creek corridors
- rail, road and infrastructure corridors
- local road systems, including shared paths and dedicated cycleways and pathways.

While there are extensive long distance paths, not all of these are well connected to the urban areas of the Shire. There is also an absence of pedestrian footpaths on many residential roads, especially in many of the more rural areas, therefore discouraging walking in these localities.

At a district level the Beecroft - Cheltenham LinkTrack is an example of a bushwalking trail that adjoins Devlins Creek and connects Beecroft in the north, Beecroft Reserve, Cheltenham Oval and Epping to the south. Another example of a bushwalking trail is the Terrys Creek Track which follows Terrys Creek and continues through Ryde Council and Lane Cove National Park for approximately 5.5 kilometres to Browns Waterhole. However, both of these trails are not optimally connected to their adjoining urban centres.

Furthermore, there appears to be the need for a more integrated approach within Council to planning walking trails in concert with bushland management.

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The Great North Walk, an example of a regional level connection, is the 250 kilometre walking track from Sydney to Newcastle and can be accessed from several areas within the Shire including:

- Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park - starting from Cowan train station to Brooklyn
- Berowra Valley National Park also known as the Benowie Track - from Pennant Hills to Berowra Waters, takes about two to three days to walk, with several places to camp along the way including Crosslands Reserve
- Hornsby, adjacent to the new Hornsby Aquatic Centre
- Berowra, Mount Ku-ring-gai and Westleigh also have tracks that link to the GNW although the links are not always well-identified
- Lane Cove National Park - this section of the Great North Walk passes through Lane Cove National Park from Thornleigh to East Ryde

The Great North Walk provides an ideal structure around which to connect local district and regional path systems, circuits and loops.

The 'Unstructured Recreation Strategy' (2010) outlined that there is a high demand for a range of paths to suit a range of different cyclists needs in the Shire, these included:

- small circuits in association with social / family park or playgrounds for the purpose of children learning the basic foundation skills and travelling on small bikes or wheeled toys along with family members on circuit paths ("trike tracks"). These circuits may be either sealed or unsealed, depending on the setting in which they are provided
- a demand for longer shared off road trails for recreational cycling away from traffic. These will largely be provided through fire trails and other land managers such as National Park and Wildlife Service. Horse riding is unlikely to be permitted on these trails due to prevailing natural area management policies.
- a demand for more purpose-built single track, roadside horse riding trails and cross-country mountain bike / BMX trails.

Information and Access

For many people, information on what is available by way of park types, facilities, paths and trails is relatively limited. On Councils website such information is not optimally collated and nor is much of it mapped.

Implications of Open Space Distribution

From the analysis of the open space distribution, accessibility and connectivity across the Shire's open space there are opportunities to:

- Review Level 3 parkland distribution for a long term strategy to enhance connectivity and accessibility.
- Better link parks to other destinations and attractors by connected streets and natural corridors (school, work, shops and transport) for walking and cycling
- enhance local park systems surrounding urban centres as circuits for short walks, particularly linking into local bushland
- reduce impacts of barriers by more strategic path connections and crossings.
- expand available information on what paths and reserves are available.

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Total Developed Open Space Area (excluding Natural Areas).	Existing Population 2011 Census	Hectares of Developed Open Space per 1000 people, 2011 population (excluding Natural Area) (A/B) x 1000	Projected Population 2021	Projected new population to 2021 (D-B)	Hectares of Developed Open Space per 1000 people, 2021 population (excluding Natural Area) (A/D) x 1000	Hectares Shortfall of Developed Open Space after allowing for Projected Population Growth to 2021. (C/1000)xE
300	156856	1.91	173678	16822	1.73	32.17

Table A3.04 - Changes in Ratio of Hectares of Open Space per 1000 Persons with Projected Growth 2011-2021

	Shirewide 2011 Population 156856			North 2011 Population 33431 North west and North east rural, Berowra, Galston, Hornsby Heights, Mt Colah, Mt Ku-Ring-Gai			South and central suburbs 2011 Population 73213 West Pennant Hills, Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Dural, Westleigh, Thornleigh, Normanhurst, Pennant Hills, Beecroft and Cheltenham			Central Developing Suburbs 2011 Population 28641 Hornsby, Asquith Waitara			Southern Developing Suburbs 2011 population 21581 Carlingford, Epping and North Epping		
Open Space Category	Hectares	Hectare/1000 people in 2011	% of available open space	Hectares	Hectare/1000 people in 2011	% of available open space	Hectares	Hectare/1000 people in 2011	% of available open space	Hectares	Hectare/1000 people in 2011	% of available open space	Hectares	Hectare/1000 people in 2011	% of available open space
Park	113	0.72	6.6	51	1.53	4.5	24.66	0.34	8	8	0.28	9	6.97	0.32	14
Sportsground	155	0.99	9.1	60	1.80	4.9	56.86	0.78	22	17	0.59	18	15.64	0.72	33
General Community Use and Cultural Site	31	0.20	3.5												
Natural Area	1400	8.93	82	1122	33.57	91	178.72	2.44	63	64	2.23	70	23.43	1.09	49

Table A3.05 - Hectares of Existing Open Space type by Mapped Plan of Management Category

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RELATIONSHIP OF OPEN SPACE TO EXISTING AND FUTURE POPULATION

Table A3.04 illustrates the amounts of open space in the Shire, the relationship between the Shire's population in 2011 and the amount of existing open space and how that ratio would change based on the 2021 population forecast, assuming no additional open space was acquired.

Table A3.05 demonstrates the distribution of open space by mapped Plan of Management category, giving an accurate breakdown of the proportion of open space that is Natural Area compared to Sportsground and Park. Key conclusions from this analysis are that:

- there are higher totals of existing open space per 1000 person in the northern suburbs. The existing available open space per 1000 persons can be expected to reduce significantly in the developing suburbs
- substantial population growth through new housing and/or infill is forecast in Asquith, Epping, Hornsby and Waitara, resulting in reduced open space availability if no further land is acquired.
- outdoor sports areas, while preferably located close to the areas of new population, tend to operate on a Shire-wide basis for Level 1 and 2 Reserves, therefore new sportsgrounds could be established on vacant government-owned land that Council is seeking to acquire in Westleigh.

Based solely on matching 'like for like' in terms of the ratio of embellished open space (excluding natural areas) to head of forecast population for 2021 with that of the 2011 population, an additional 32 hectares of open space would be needed across the Shire to offset any shortfall as a consequence of the new development.

The tables demonstrate how the significant amounts of open space in many suburbs reflects the extensive areas of bushland across the Shire; this bushland, while of high environmental, aesthetic and recreational value, is by its nature limited in its capacity to accommodate many day- to-day recreational needs (eg sports, BBQ, kickabout, skate, structured play etc). In effect simply acquiring more bushland to match the existing amount per head of population will not assist in meeting these needs, particularly in the more urban suburbs with high forecast growth, as identified above.

Implications of Open Space to Population

The principal implications of this analysis is the need for more localised assessment of each suburb to establish priorities for:

- improving access to reserves in the short term (street paths, creek corridor connections addressing barriers etc.) for areas with a localised shortfall
- addressing suburbs with potential existing and future shortfalls of open space
- development of a robust acquisition and rationalisation program over the longer term to achieve closer alignment between centres of population and public open space, particularly for local open space.

When considering these factors in concert with the Pedshed Analysis (Fig. A3.05 and A3.06), the need to address future local open space deficits in suburbs such as Asquith and Hornsby and the opportunities to address these shortfalls through developing recreational facilities at locations such as the Hornsby Quarry takes on a greater urgency.

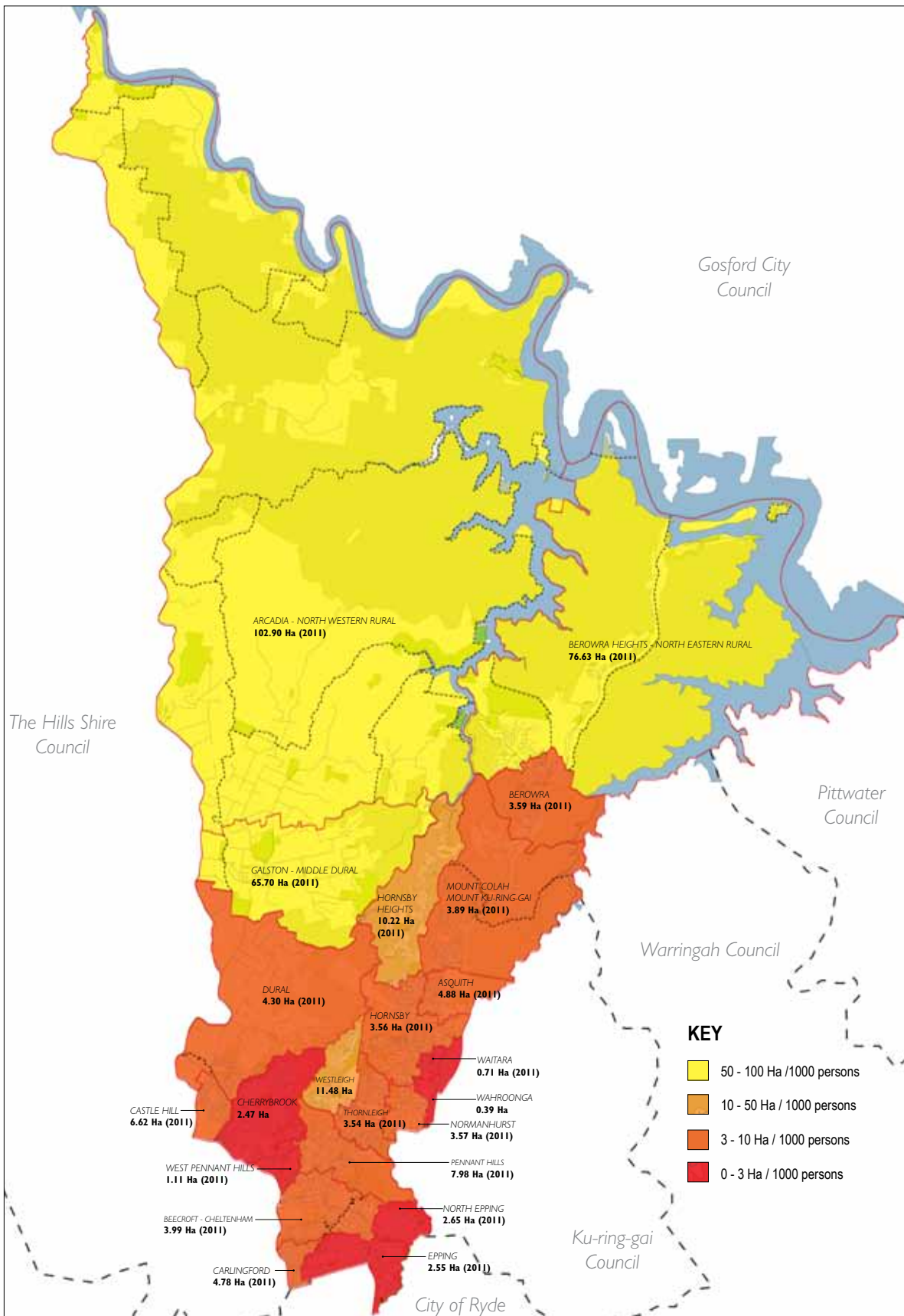


Figure A3.07 - Total Amounts of Open Space to 2011 population ratio (Ha/1000 persons)



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PROVISION STATUS BY PLANNING DISTRICT

Drawing together all of the analysis of the quantum, size, distribution, diversity, accessibility and population forecast, Table A3.06 on the following pages summarises these findings by Planning Districts and identifies the conclusions and implications for the development of the ALHS.

PLANNING DISTRICT	QUANTUM AND SIZE	DISTRIBUTION AND DIVERSITY	RATIO TO POPULATION	ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Planning District 1: <i>Eastwood Epping North Epping Carlingford Cheltenham Beecroft</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 68 open spaces across the Planning District. Diverse range of open space sizes with a large number (18 reserves) in the 1.1-2.0 Ha size bracket. There is no Level 1 open space in the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of open is relatively dispersed with most residences within 400m of open space. Passive parks are scattered across the district. The highest number of sport reserves within the Shire lie in this Precinct (13 no.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest existing population (21% of the Shire). An average amount of overall open space to existing population (3.49 Ha/1000). Projected population growth to 2021 is the highest in the Shire with an expected increase of 7000 people, which will increase demand for open space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epping Road is a major barrier to north-south movement in Epping. The M2 Motorway is a major barrier to north-south movement in Beecroft, Cheltenham, North Epping and Epping. Open space forms a very important link as a natural corridor along Develins Creek/Terrys Creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite no Level 1 open space, this District is well served for public open space. With the highest population growth in the Shire, further embellishment of existing open space would also be complemented by more passive recreation facilities at outdoor sport facilities. Open space network should be extended along natural corridors linking urban areas.
Planning District 2: <i>Normanhurst Thornleigh Westleigh West Pennant Hills Pennant Hills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 55 open spaces across the Planning District. 47% of open space is less than 0.5 Ha in size. One Level 1 outdoor sports facility located at Pennant Hills Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution is even, with most residences within 400m distance of some open space. Diversity is low with most parks and reserves being small passive parklands and many large sport reserves (9 no.) Natural areas and bushland is dominant along creek corridors. Most of the larger reserves are sport focused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current population is high (18% of Shire). On average, there is a relatively high quantum of open space per 1000 persons (5.54 Ha). Projected population growth to 2021 is 706 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumberland Highway and Northern Railway line is a barrier to east-west movement. Connectivity through Berowra Valley Regional Park forms an important link to the northern part of the Shire. Pennant Hills Park is major destination that provides broader connections to Lane Cove National Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This District is mostly well served for public open space. Increasing diversity of unstructured recreation opportunities within many of the sports reserves will be a priority. There is a need for improved recreational links from the town centres to Lane Cove National Park, Berowra Valley Regional Park and beyond. Pursuing acquisition of the Westleigh, Sydney Water Site for sports will assist in meeting current shortfalls.

Table A3.06 - Summary of Open Space Provision Status by Planning District

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

PLANNING DISTRICT	QUANTUM AND SIZE	DISTRIBUTION AND DIVERSITY	RATIO TO POPULATION	ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Planning District 3: <i>Hornsby</i> <i>Waitara</i> <i>Wahroonga</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 41 open spaces across the Planning District. Large numbers of Level 3 open spaces, which are less than 0.5 Ha in size. Only one Level 1 open space located at Hornsby Park and Pool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution is mostly even with few residences more than 400m from a park, except for northern part of Wahroonga. Diversity is uneven, with many small parklands and natural areas and bushland dominant along western boundary of Hornsby. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current population is second highest (19% of Shire). Quantum of open space in Hornsby is 3.56Ha/1000 persons. In contrast, Waitara (0.71Ha/1000) and Wahroonga (0.39Ha/1000) are significantly lower. Projected population growth is third highest in the Shire with an expected increase of 1510 people by 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Railway line, Pacific Highway and Cumberland Highway form barriers for east-west pedestrian movement. Walking trails form an important link connecting urban areas with natural and bushland corridors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The very limited open space in the densely populated urban centre of Waitara has put a large amount of pressure on its existing reserves. This district has the greatest need for improved and extended open space to meet the needs of an expanding high rise population. This also suggests a design focus that transitions from suburban to urban park character.
Planning District 4: <i>Asquith</i> <i>Berowra Creek</i> <i>Hornsby Heights</i> <i>Mount Colah</i> <i>Mount Ku-ring-gai</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 61 open spaces across the Planning District. There is a broad range of open spaces; however 77% of open space is Level 3. There is only one Level 1 open space located at Crosslands Reserve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity is low with most parks and reserves being small Level 3 passive parklands (47 no.). Natural areas and bushland is dominant along creek corridors and valleys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current population is 12% of total population. On average, quantum of open space is 6.33 Ha / 1000 persons. Projected population growth by 2021 is second highest in Shire with an expected increase of 2070 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pacific Highway and Northern Railway line are barriers for east-movement. Steep local topography in Berowra Valley Regional Park limits accessibility but conversely the open space forms a very important link as a natural and recreational corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the highest population growth forecast in Asquith and a subsequent shortage of open space, addressing this shortfall will be a high priority. Overcoming east/west barriers and improving on road cycle links will increase open space accessibility. Better trails and path links to the River will expand recreation opportunity.

Table A3.06 - Summary of Open Space Provision Status by Planning District

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

PLANNING DISTRICT	QUANTUM AND SIZE	DISTRIBUTION AND DIVERSITY	RATIO TO POPULATION	ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Planning District 5: <i>Berowra Berowra Heights Berowra Waters Cowan Milsons Passage Brooklyn Dangar Island</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 65 open spaces across the Planning District. 11 open spaces are greater than 5 Ha in size. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution is uneven with most majority of parks and reserves localised in the township centres. Diversity is low with natural areas and bushland dominant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current population is 7% of the Shire. On average, there is the second highest amount of total Ha of open space per 1000 persons (82.22 Ha). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many streets connecting to parks have no dedicated footpaths or safe cycle routes suitable for children. Steep local topography in Berowra Valley Regional Park and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park limits accessibility but conversely the open space forms a very important link as a natural and recreational corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for improved on street footpaths and cycle paths especially close to township centres. Sports facilities should be catering for unstructured recreation also. Well signed local bushland circuit paths will encourage greater interaction with the local environment.
Planning District 6: <i>Glenhaven Dural Arcadia Galston Mid-Dural Berrilee Maroota Wisemans Ferry Glenorie Forest Glen Fiddletown Canoelands Singleton's Hills Laughtondale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 46 open spaces across the Planning District. 20 open spaces greater than 10 Ha in size. Total of five Level 1 open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of open space is very widespread and localised in the many small townships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current population is 7% of the Shire. Largest amount of total Ha / 1000 persons in the Shire (72.9Ha) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many streets connecting to parks have no dedicated footpaths or safe cycle routes suitable for children. Steep topography in the north of the District further limiting walking catchments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for better on street footpaths and cycle paths especially close to township centres. There are opportunities for liaison with schools on joint use of open space to optimise both structured and unstructured recreation opportunities.

Table A3.06 - Summary of Open Space Provision Status by Planning District

A3: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

PLANNING DISTRICT	QUANTUM AND SIZE	DISTRIBUTION AND DIVERSITY	RATIO TO POPULATION	ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Planning District 7: <i>Cherrybrook</i> <i>Castle Hill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total of 38 open spaces across the Planning District. Only 5 in Castle Hill and 33 in Cherrybrook. 22 open spaces across the District are less than 0.5 Ha 30 Level 3 open spaces and no Level 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution is evenly dispersed with most residents within 400m of open space. Diversity is limited with 79% of open space is Level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Population is 16% of the Shire On average, total of 9.09 Ha of open space per 1000 persons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steep topography in northern parts of Cherrybrook considerably reduces walking environments in this area. Open space forms a very important link as a natural corridor along Pyes Creek and Berowra Valley Regional Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved recreational links from the town centres would improve access to Berowra Valley Regional Park and beyond. A major destination parkland (Level 1) would be beneficial to serve the south western districts of the Shire.

Table A3.06 - Summary of Open Space Provision Status by Planning District

PUBLIC REALM AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

There is presently no Council strategy to guide tourism development opportunities in the the Shire (the only documentation would appear to be a promotional brochure which is not produced by Council and which Council purchases advertising space)

However, a brief tourism report prepared by the Stafford Group for this Strategy (see Appendix 4) identifies the potential for a variety of tourism opportunities that are linked to public realm and open spaces where a revenue stream direct to Council could be generated or the local economy could benefit through private enterprise.

Data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Destination NSW, industry associations, operators and other sources demonstrates a strong Sydney tourism market, with demand for activities that could be provided in the Hornsby Shire:

- There is strong demand for recreational based activities of an unstructured nature which appeal to a local and regional market in particular (mountain biking, walks etc.)
- There are mostly indoor based recreational activities in Sydney but strong appeal for quality outdoor related experiences
- Interstate and international visitors often follow local and regional visitation trends, so when something appears to be particularly appealing to a local market, out of town visitors will gravitate to it
- Hornsby has a natural advantage because of its close proximity (compared to many other LGAs) to the Sydney CBD as the major urban local catchment as well as a base for visitors.

The Stafford Report examines a number of potential tourism opportunities and suggests that three in particular - overnight walks and associated accommodation, cycling and night markets/events - would be likely to have the greatest chance of success in the Shire and be worthy of further exploration.

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Cycling

There are various forms of cycling to be considered which can be segmented primarily into three sub sectors being mountain biking, road cycling and Cyclocross which is a hybrid activity. Whilst road cycling is not necessarily seen as a strong tourism drawcard unless it is centred on events - 'coffee rides' do contribute to weekend cafe trade locally - mountain biking is a significant area of tourism activity.

Mountain biking activity is a standalone activity in its own right, but it also can be developed as part of triathlon and biathlons associated with other sporting activity. Considering the extensive national parks and reserve areas available within the Shire, potential should exist for creating opportunities for:

- Biathlons and triathlon using the natural resources available within the Shire
- Creating standalone mountain biking events, providing the trail networks are sufficiently well developed and maintained for this purpose. Club events are currently held at Old Mans Valley. There could be an opportunity to host larger, regional events at this site after the second stage of the track is constructed.
- Extending the network of multi-use trails (rather than competition trails) so mountain bikers of all ages can undertake trails with various levels of difficulty.



Overnight Walks

There is understood to be a latent demand for day and overnight walk experiences in this region, providing that the various infrastructure elements to support these are put in place by Council. In the absence of provision by National Parks the potential exists for Council to consider creating commercial accommodation on Council reserve land on the fringe of national parks which may enable walkers to walk out of the park without realising they have effectively done so and thereby offering a transparent connection between the Council reserve land and the national park trail.

Overnight walks can be 1, 2 or 3 day walks depending on the terrain, distances and, most importantly, the level of market appeal. Overnight walks will generate far greater economic return than day walk experiences because overnight walks require commercial accommodation, additional meals and food and beverage services and will often require transport connections either to the beginning of a track or to pick up at the end of a track.



Night Markets and Events

Whilst Hornsby would appear to already provide a number of market opportunities, potential may exist to look at developing a market which leverages off the Shire's cultural diversity, particularly focused on cultural food experiences. Potential may therefore exist for expanding night time market activities/events in the Shire which could reflect:

- The growing Asian population within the Hornsby region and the opportunity for food related night markets. The opportunity to work with other ethnic groups within the LGA to see if different forms of market days can be established
- To identify particular events (such as a lantern festival) which could provide a high level of community interaction and which can be used to grow broad community interest and a better understanding of cultural diversity
- The opportunity exists to explore smaller evening events, particularly outdoor based events using various open space venues which Council controls, and encouraging different music genres as well as for performing arts activity.



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IMPLICATIONS OF OPEN SPACE PROVISION FOR THE ALHS

The findings derived from analysis of the Shire's open space provision and the implications these have for the development of the ALHS strategies may briefly be summarised as follows:

- **Quantum and Areas:** in terms of total area of open space the Shire is well served by comparison with many LGAs; however this open space is dominated by large areas of bushland, much of which is not readily accessed for local unstructured recreation such as kickabout; furthermore most of the larger, level open spaces are sports venues
- **Sizes:** there are large numbers of small reserves in the Shire (25% of the open spaces are 0.2 Ha or less) suggesting some limits to recreation opportunity at a local level in particular. Larger well developed parks are popular destinations but unevenly distributed across the site
- **Distribution:** the distribution of open space across the Shire is uneven and while there are numerous reserves close to urban areas, their locations do not necessarily relate to current needs at a local or district level, particularly with respect to current and projected population densities in urban areas
- **Accessibility:** some urban areas have no access to any form of open space within 400ms of residences, while for others there is significant open space but barriers such as busy roads, rail lines and steep topography limit access
- **Connectivity:** some of the smaller parks may have enhanced utility if connected with each other, either through bushland trails or street footpaths, and they can become destinations or routes/circuits for recreational cycling, walking or running.
- **Walkability:** the ridge and valley geography of the Shire acts as a something of a barrier for connections between towns, particularly in an east/west direction
- **Cycling:** many roads in the Shire are not safe for inexperienced cyclists and this tends to discourage cycling for recreation or to reach destinations (school, work, transport etc). There is an evident need to establish a network of connected on and off-road cycle routes (the latter through parks and on management trails) to encourage more cycling
- **Diversity:** there is a relatively limited spread of setting types with the majority comprised of bushland, sports and general parklands. The changing needs of a growing population of diversifying cultures suggests the need to focus on settings such as civic and urban spaces
- **Quality and Identity:** there are numerous high quality reserves across the Shire, many of which have been recently upgraded to best practice standards. However most of these reserves tend to be larger in scale. Numerous small parks have little evident structure or appeal for day to day needs (e.g. shade, seating, play and kickabout)
- **Sustainability:** demand exceeds supply for some forms of outdoor recreation, especially soccer, and junior cricket. Many sportsgrounds, especially in the southern suburbs, have levels of use beyond their carrying capacity' leading to unsustainable wear and tear. Several measures are required to address supply shortages, extend ground resilience, and restrict use of facilities to sustainable levels

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- **Open Space to Population:** there is a significant disparity between the amounts of and accessibility to open space in the Shire. The projected growth to the year 2021 highlights significant further shortfalls if no further open space is acquired, particularly in high population areas and after identifying the proportion of the available open space that is Natural Area.

This analysis suggests that the following factors will be important in the development of the planning strategies of the ALHS:

- accessibility of high quality local open space to meet day-to-day needs, entailing acquisition, consolidation and rationalisation
- development of a network of local paths as circuits based on streets and creeks/ bushland to promote local walking and connections into bushland and day-to-day destinations (school, work, shops and transport)
- distribution and accessibility to several major destination parks offering different experiences across the Shire (e.g. family, adventure, nature, heritage)
- progressive re-configuration and capacity building of sports facilities to centralise facilities to district hubs and to preclude duplication.
- progressive rationalisation of small areas of parkland and reinvestment of proceeds into enlarging other parkland areas to make them function better for recreation purposes
- the 'City in the Bush' character of Hornsby offers a unique opportunity to link the people of their Shire with nature at their doorstep with improved path connections and more information on what is available
- the extraordinarily diverse landscapes of the Shire provide an opportunity to offer a selection of destination parklands that offer the broadest spectrum of recreation opportunities whilst also catering for large visitor numbers.

Finally, as outlined in the overview of tourism-related opportunities, allied to the Shire's public open space, there are some evident synergies that can be explored in the areas of cycling, overnight walks and associated accommodation and night markets/events that will have direct benefits to the local community and its economy, promoting Hornsby as an active living destination.



A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

INTRODUCTION

For almost 12 years prior to the preparation of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy there had been limited direct consultation with the community and other stakeholders. Consequently, a comprehensive engagement strategy has formed a critical component of the ALHS.

The process adopted for engagement, the findings reached and the implications of those findings are summarised in this section.

ALHS Community Engagement Report

The principal objective of the community consultation was to establish a clear understanding of stakeholder and community needs and demands through the analysis of :

- trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation
- activities (comparison of national/state and local rates)
- demographic, cultural and characteristic data
- current participation, facility and program usage rates
- current and future open space and recreation needs
- open space and recreation needs of both older established communities and newer communities
- community satisfaction with existing open space and recreation facilities

The key activities undertaken for the engagement program included:

- Workshops: aimed to provide the community and key stakeholders with an overview of the process involved with ALHS and to seek their inputs
- Community Open Days: targeted at interested community members and testing preliminary ideas that were identified in background research and the community engagement workshops
- Online engagement: an online quiz, an online community survey and a targeted high density living online survey were conducted.

The full Engagement Report and supporting data can be found in Appendix 3.

Related Documents and Strategies

Hornsby Shire Council has previously surveyed participation levels of its residents in several aspects of open space use, recreation and leisure. Key recent documents include:

- Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program – Active/Passive Parks, 2011
- Scape Data: Parkscape – Hornsby Shire Council (2014)
- Unstructured Recreation Strategy Volume 1, (2010)
- Sustainable Water Based Recreation Facilities Plan (2012)
- Sports Facility Strategy (2006)

Findings from these documents has been summarised in this section for comparative purposes in analysing findings from the ALHS Community Engagement process.

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

SUMMARY OF THE ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following is an executive summary of the Engagement Strategy Report prepared for this project by People Place and Partnership P/L.

Participation

The most common leisure activities undertaken by Hornsby Shire residents include:

- Walking and Bushwalking
 - Cycling and mountain biking
 - Visiting outdoor cafes and playgrounds
- #### **Popular Local Spaces**
- Fagan Park - for families, picnics, dogs and for the overall variety
 - Berowra Waters - for families, proximity to the water, range of activities
 - Ruddock Park - range of family activities
 - Pennant Hills Park - for the sporting facilities
 - Willow Park - for the playground equipment
 - Lisgar Gardens - the hidden secret!
 - Crosslands Reserve - for bushwalking

Local Values

What people value most about Hornsby Shire's open space and recreational facilities are for exercise, family gatherings, children play and relaxing. We have heard that amongst all open space and recreation facilities parklands, conservation and heritage as well as bushland is valued highly. Particularly participants of all engagement activities have indicated that they value the following aspects of the Hornsby Shire:

- the proximity to local parks, natural open spaces and bushland setting
- the availability of family leisure outdoor spaces for playgrounds, BBQs, picnics, outdoor cafes and public spaces
- the opportunities available for sport and recreation for people of all ages and for all seasons
- the overall variety and quality of local open space

Satisfaction Levels With Existing Open Spaces And Facilities

Overall there is a 64% satisfaction level with Hornsby Shire open spaces and recreational facilities.

Some Areas For Further Consideration

Some of the ideas that people would like to see further explored is:

- the overall provision of park facilities (like toilets, play equipment, picnic facilities, shelter and shade)
- upgrades to specific parks and ovals for informal and formal recreation activities ensuring open spaces near areas with more people are well maintained and are protected from future redevelopment

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

- ensuring access to a good local park for frequent visitation for daily, weekly and weekend family time (children’s play) exercise and relaxation
- opportunities for more dog off-leash areas
- more information and access to bushland areas.

Information and Communication

For those that responded to the online surveys that are not using open spaces or recreational facilities the key reason identified was a lack of information about facilities (26%, 58 people). The 3 top information sources identified by online participants included:

Self-select online survey:

1. Hornsby Council Website (63%)
2. Hornsby Council E-News (66%)
3. The local paper (50%)

High density living online survey:

1. the Hornsby Council E-News (75%)
2. Hornsby Council Website (57%)
3. HSC E-News (47%)

Testing Some New Initiatives

Feedback from the community engagement workshops and open days had indicated a number of factors that were considered important about local open space and recreational facilities. In order to test some of these ideas and provide direct input into the priorities and focus of the ALHS, the online surveys undertook to test what participants thought about whether a new idea/initiative was essential, desirable, does not matter or not required.

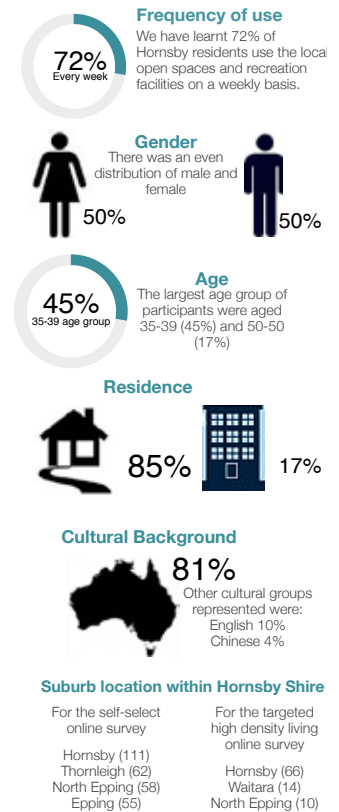
The ideas that were tested around the following key activities; walking, cycling, children’s play, bushwalking, sport. When comparing the information from the self-select online survey (SS) and the high density living online survey (HDL) the most essential or highest desirable idea/initiative was identical for each of the participant groupings:

Walking

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings (48% SS) (59 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for the SS grouping was: more or improved paths and path circuits in our parks (51% SS) and for the HDL grouping ranked as essential was: links to day-to-day destinations such as parks, work, school, shops and public transport (41% HDL).

Cycling

1. For the cycling initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: Cycle path connections between parks (48% SS) (44 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as essential for the SS grouping was: dedicated cycle paths on roads (40% SS) and it was seen as desirable by the HDL grouping with 40%.



A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

Children's Play

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play (48% SS) (43% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings nearly equally weighted were two ideas/initiatives: large and better play spaces (49% SS)(38% HDL) as well as play spaces for ages 8-12 (48% SS) (38% HDL).

Bushwalking

1. For the bushwalking initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: More or better bush walking tracks (56% SS) (57% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: improved signs and access to bush walking tracks (51% SS) (52% HDL).

Sport

1. For the sport initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing (55% SS) (54% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: outdoor basketball and netball courts (54% SS) (40% HDL).

Whilst above illustrates the top two most popular of the ideas/initiatives for both groupings overall many of the ideas received more than 40% of either essential or desirable selections from participants.

The ideas/initiatives for the SS grouping that received the least considerations:

- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (40% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (38% does not matter)
- The ideas/initiatives for the HDL grouping that received the least considerations:
- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (38% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (29% desirable)
- Upgrade of the pool in Epping (28% desirable).

Online Quiz

A short online quiz, based around a series of fun and engaging questions sought to establish recreation personality types.

362 people completed the survey and the dominant personality type was the 'Clan Fan', for whom family activities come first. Second was the 'Rural Ranger' who enjoys bushland and wide open landscapes. Third was the 'Urban Explorer' who enjoys busy urban places, streets or waterfront locations.

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

PREFERENCES AND ASPIRATIONS

While 64% of the participants in the online surveys and workshops were satisfied with the Shire's open space and facilities, participants also expressed the desire to see improvements in a range of matters including:

- protection of existing open space, especially in areas planned for high density apartment living
- improved walking and cycling opportunities both for access to parks (including circuit paths in parks) and for general recreation, in particular safe and convenient footpaths and crossings on streets
- better access to bushland, particularly for local walks and circuit paths accessible from urban centres
- a greater variety of play opportunities across the Shire with a focus on water play, adventure play and natural play, as also play spaces for 8-12 year olds
- more dog off leash areas
- spaces for 12-18 year olds (for skate and for socialising in plazas and malls)
- upgraded facilities at sportsgrounds including amenities buildings, storage, parking, field condition and enhanced capacity, lighting and irrigation
- improved communication between sporting organisations and Council on future planning and the need for extended hours to meet growing needs
- the need for more information on what recreation opportunities are available and where; this was particularly focused on walks and trails
- more local community events held within the public realm.

GAP ANALYSIS

Gap Analysis addresses expressed demands and needs as set against current provision and the future capacity to meet those needs and demands. Importantly, the difference between need and demands should be drawn here, as many in the community may not be aware of all of the factors such as future growth and associated statutory planning that may have a direct bearing on their future needs. In this respect, analysing the demands expressed through the community engagement with the provision analysis detailed in the previous sections of this report suggests that the most significant gaps relate to:

- amounts of accessible local (Level 3) open space to meet both current needs in some suburbs and future populations in growing suburbs such as Hornsby and Waitara. This includes facilities such as play provision and dog exercising
- safe and amenable walking and cycling opportunities both local and district - including better integration with bushland - that foster active lifestyles and enable more social interaction
- field and courts sport provision to match current demand and the expected needs for a growing population
- information and programs that will foster greater participation.

The implications of these gaps for the development of the ALHS strategies is addressed overleaf.

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ALHS

In the development of the Implementation section that follows, the outcomes from the community engagement described in this section can be briefly summarised as follows.

Making More of the Shire's Unique Environment and Landscape

Much of the community commentary on the Shire's open space focuses on its unique bushland environment and the desire for more direct accessibility to that resource. The concept of the 'City in the Bush' seems to be a strong theme for the community and thus improving path connections and circuits into the bush from town centres at a local level and linking these to the wider regional path system, such as the Great North Walk, responds to this need and reflects the proposals also put forward in the Unstructured Recreation Strategy 2.0.

Making The Open Space System Part of Daily Life

The ride to school or the walk to work and public transport should ideally be integrating the Shire's open spaces, be that walking through a park, following a creekline or cycling and walking along safe streets with basic amenity. This requires an audit in each locality to establish where such parks fit in those daily journeys and the paths that connect them.

Planning and Designing for Better Social Spaces

A large part of the community's visitation of parks is centred around family and friends and thus the social dimensions of open space are key. As importantly there are many individuals who visit parks for whom the opportunity to engage with other park visitors, be they dog walkers or fellow exercisers, will enhance their wellbeing and sense of community. The same applies as much to a sports ground as it does to a local parkland and consequently all open space should be offering opportunities for such engagement; this may be as subtle as providing seating in shade where paths meet or ensuring clear lines of sight across parks to increase the chance of unplanned engagement.

Responding to Growth In High Density Living

Much of the community engagement to date has been based on feedback from community members living in detached housing, many with backyards. Feedback from residents in high rise apartments (many in the 25-49 age bracket) undertaken specifically for this project lays emphasis on the need to make access to local open space easy and as a part of their day-to-day destinations both for exercise and relaxation. Connections and local path circuits into adjoining bushland will be important here. Better information on what is available is also important to this demographic.

Adapting to Changing Sports Demands and Needs

There is an evident disjunction between the aspirations of many sports associations for planned growth and the ability of Council to deliver increasing amounts of open space and facilities to meet those needs. At the same time the nature of field and courts sports in particular is changing, with increasing preference for more casual participation. So, while the opportunity to acquire new open space such as the Sydney Water site at Westleigh and the sportsground in Old Man's Valley needs to be grasped, the only practical long term solution to this situation is to create a much clearer hierarchy of facilities, to retrofit existing sites to increase capacity and engaging sports groups in assisting to balance demand against resource. Long term approach is essential here as many of the required shifts and moves towards a more sustainable model will require some years to effect and also require a Regional partnership.

A4: NEEDS AND DEMANDS

Creating Safer and More Appealing Streets and Places for Walking and Cycling

The community evidently places a high premium on safe streets for cycling and walking, not only to gain access to local parks without needing to drive, but also as places for exercise in their own right. Creating synergies between paths within parks, management trails and the adjoining local streets (as also to and from school and work) will add an important stepping stone in encouraging more walking and cycling, especially amongst children.

Establishing a Clear Hierarchy of Open Space Settings

As might be expected, the community's expressed needs are diverse and extensive and are not tied to budgets or resourcing capacity. To better balance cost effective provision there would seem to be a need to develop a clearer hierarchy within each of the settings, especially for outdoor sports and parklands.

Adopting New Approaches to Children's Play and Play Range

There is a strong desire in the community for providing play that fosters creativity and challenge for children, as also in connecting them with nature. While there is evidently still much appeal in major play facilities at larger parks, there appears to be a strong compelling - as suggested in the Unstructured Recreation Strategy - for parklands that encourage children towards free play and to discover the landscape in a safe environment. In particular this suggests that safe connections and short path circuits into bushland adjoining local parkland may encourage progressive extension of independent play range and take some of the pressure off expectations of numerous small local playgrounds.

Getting Information Out on What's Available

More information on what recreation places and activities can be enjoyed, offered across a range of media will assist in increasing participation, particularly for new residents. There is also an opportunity here to build on momentum that Council has already established with social media to get out messages about what is happening on the open space planning front.

Major Parklands

There appears to be a strong desire for and evident use of larger parklands that offer a range of experiences for all generations. Parks Such as Fagan Park and Crosslands Reserve are sound examples at present. However, the distribution of such parks across the Shire is patchy. The Unstructured Recreation Strategy suggests a suite of 'Specialty Parks' (one per planning district) to better meet this need. These parks would seem to align with a concept for perhaps 6-8 Level 1 or Level 2 Parklands, each with a different focus (e.g. adventure, waterfront etc.), but all offering some common elements such as dog off leash, toilets, bush/ creek trails, kickabout, hit up walls, cycle paths etc.

Local Parks

The importance of Hornsby Shire's local parks is evidently recognised in community feedback, however many of these parks require review and upgrading. Field and desktop evaluation suggest that their uneven distribution and accessibility or connectivity much less their size and quality of design and what they offer is key here. Doing the basics well seems to be the critical starting point for a major re-evaluation of their role in meeting the community's day to day needs

Facilities and Amenities

There is a consistent call for provision of basic amenity at all parks; shade, seating, paths and play etc. While there is also a demand for better facilities (toilets, amenities blocks etc) it will be essential that these are planned in line with the hierarchy and priority planning outlined above.



Phillipa O'leary Park, Normanhurst



**PART B: STRATEGY AND
IMPLEMENTATION**



B1: STRATEGY

B1: STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

This section describes the strategic proposals that will underpin the delivery of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy, the outline of the implementation being described in Section B2. The strategies that follow are built around the structure of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP), 'Your Community Plan 2013-2023'. The Vision for the CSP is:

"A trusted sustainable and innovative Council dedicated to improving the quality of life of its community."

The four pillars and associated principles of the CSP that will deliver on that Vision and are central to the objectives of the ALHS. Each of the four pillars of the CSP are reflected in the strategies in this section (see below), which are framed around the broad considerations of Needs and Demands set out in Section A4 and summarised in a rationale for the ALHS under the banner of "City in The Bush".

My Environment

- Protect and enhance biodiversity Strategy 1
- Maintain healthy waterways Strategy 1
- Reduce our ecological footprint Strategy 1
- Respond to climate change. Strategy 1

My Community

- Meet our diverse community needs Strategies 2, 3 and 4
- Create a strong sense of belonging Strategies 3 and 4
- Support healthy interactive communities. Strategies 2,3 and 4

My Lifestyle

- Vibrant and viable living centres Strategy 2, 3, and 4
- Effective infrastructure and services Strategy 3, 4, 5 and 6
- A harmonious built and natural environment Strategies 1, 2 and 3
- A vibrant and resilient economy. Strategies 3 and 6

My Council

- Accountable corporate management Strategy 6
- Timely and responsive services Strategy 6
- Consistent and effective policies and plans. Strategy 6

The titles for each strategy are as follows:

- 1 - Drawing on the Shire's Unique Environment
- 2 - Making the Open Space Network Part of Daily Life
- 3 - Responding to the Shire's Diverse Lifestyles
- 4 - Promoting Cycling and Walking
- 5 - Adapting to a Changing Sports Environment
- 6 - Planning for the Next Generations

Under each strategy the context is briefly summarised under 'Overview' the objective described under 'Goal', the KPIs outlined under 'Indicator and Measure' and the parties central to the development of that strategy and its delivery under 'Council Partners' and 'Other Partners'.

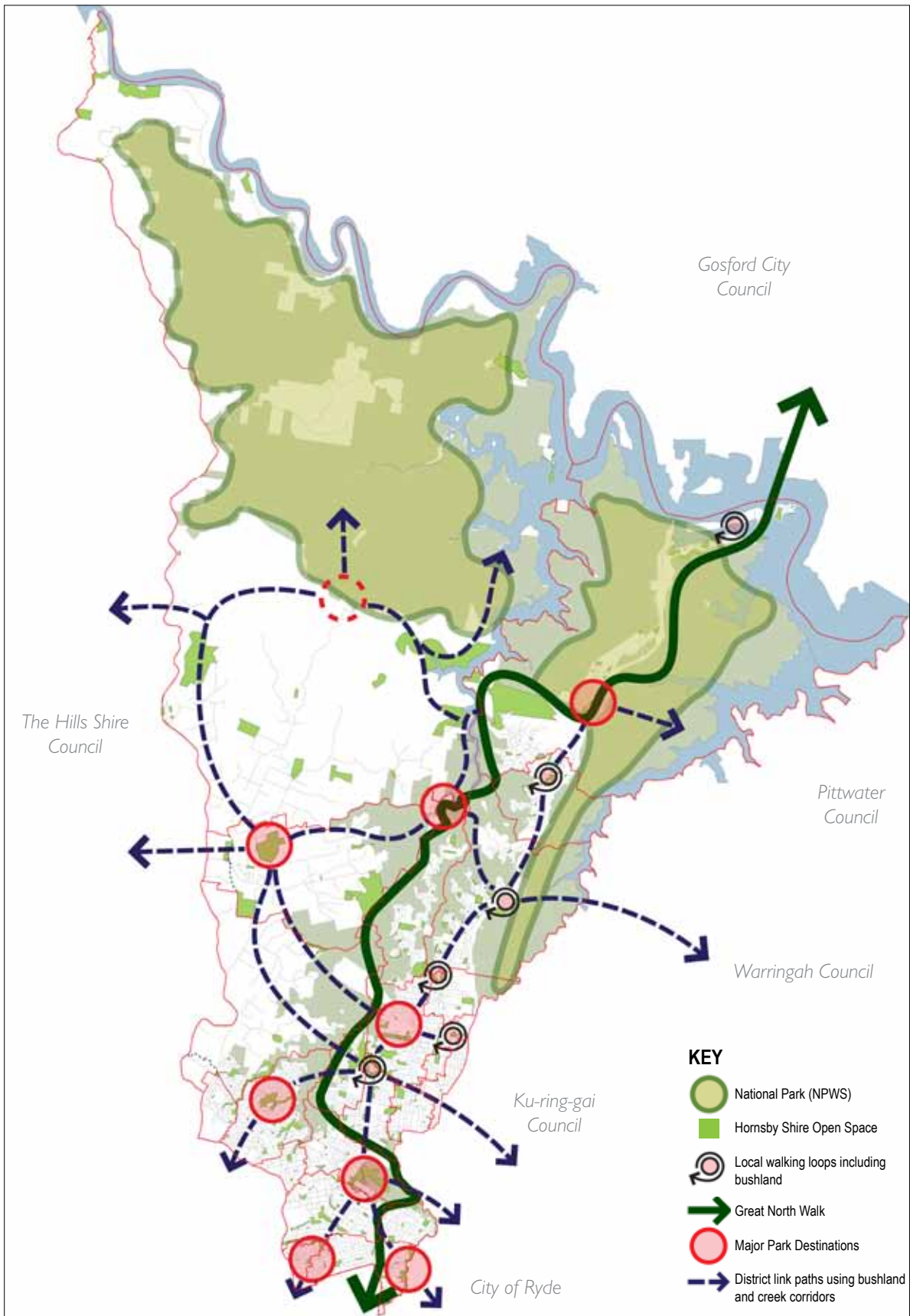


Figure B1.01 - Open Space Structure Plan



B1: STRATEGY - RATIONALE

CITY IN THE BUSH

A persistent theme that permeates community aspirations and attitudes from consultation undertaken for the ALHS and other Hornsby studies over recent years is the desire to retain the bushland character of the Shire; a desire expressed as much by those who live in apartments in the Shire's south as it is by residents of bushland settlements on the Hawkesbury River or in the open farmland of the Shire's rural west. One participant in the community engagement for this project described this concept as 'The City in the Bush.'

In many regards the 'City in the Bush' concept offers an important distinction from Hornsby's long-standing moniker as the 'Bushland Shire'. Recognising as it does, the full spectrum of bushland experience from National Park landscapes that have changed little from those once occupied by the Dharug and Guringai - to narrow creekland reserves that reach into the heart of the Shire's evolving town centres.

The concept also recognises the reality of an increasing population - a growing proportion from urban backgrounds and cultures - that is seeking a city lifestyle close to nature. Indeed, as the opening paragraphs of this strategy allude to, the landscape of the journey from north to south of the Shire offers a very legible narrative of Sydney's evolution expressing both its Aboriginal ancestry and a modern, multicultural city.

It is therefore the capture of that 'City in the Bush' concept that forms the rationale for this strategy, placing it at the heart of the Shire's public realm.

So, whether standing at the Wiseman's Ferry boat ramp, playing hockey at Pennant Hills Park, picnicking with the family at Fagan Park, walking up Pembroke Street to Epping Station or shopping in Hornsby Mall, the strengthening of the bond between Hornsby's community and the rich heritage of its natural environment - through connection, identity, function and sense of place - is the goal of this strategy.



Aerial View of Hornsby city centre and its proximity to the bush



Robust, functional and flexible water edge platforms do much to protect the foreshore's natural environment and enhance recreational opportunity. Narrabeen Lagoon (Source - Aspect Studios 2011)



Creating local path and trail links into bushland, tied in urban walking circuits will provide wider appreciation of the Shire's unique environment.

1 - DRAWING ON THE SHIRE'S UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

GOAL

To enhance the values and appreciation of the Shire's river, creeks and bushland through active recreational usage and community care.

OVERVIEW

The community's expressed desire for the conservation and integration of the Hornsby's unique natural environment into all aspects of planning, design and management for the Shire requires that the river, creeks and bushland form the framework for the full spectrum of Hornsby's public realm, from National Parks to inner urban plazas, streetscape, play spaces and sportsfields.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
1.1	<p>Local Bushland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – increase habitat connectivity through planning of local recreational trails (as below) in concert with bushland conservation, revegetation and restoration – develop short local bush path circuits and trails linked into the path network of all urban centres (see Fig B1.01 and Fig B1.02). Where practical, ensure local circuits provide options for level ridgeline circuits for the less able. – link local paths into district loops and regional connections such as the GNW. – identify, document and conserve principal viewpoints at local track heads. – Ensure all local circuits are well signed with typical completion times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop a local path network plan for all urban centres linked into the Shire-wide (see also Walking and cycling strategy) – priority urban centres are those with highest population densities (current of forecast) e.g. Hornsby, Waitara etc.
1.2	<p>National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – co-ordinate local and district path network connections into National Parks. Develop joint strategy for 2-3 day walks and optimal location for overnight accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – meet NPWS to agree strategy for local path connections and 2 day walk accommodation
1.3	<p>Hawkesbury River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop fishing and kayak launching platforms, as per Sustainable Water Based Recreation Plan 2012 (SWBRP), to protect foreshores and increase recreation access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify priority locations as per (SWBRP- 2012)
1.4	<p>Creeks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review all creeks adjoining or penetrating urban areas and establish how their original head of creek alignments can be referenced in local street planting (see 1.4 Local Streets). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop with 'Grid and Web' Strategy (see Walking/Cycling)
1.5	<p>Local Streets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – use native tree planting in key local streets to reconnect fragmented local bushland and combine this with dedicated walk and cycle routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop with 'Grid and Web' Strategy (see Walking/Cycling)
1.6	<p>Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop comprehensive tree planting for parks/streets for temperature control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Priority localities are suburbs with vulnerable populations (eg aged).
1.7	<p>Information and Interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provide online information on all local walk circuits (combining bush and streets) and ensure that all wayfinding and interpretation on urban bush paths is contemporary in design language and accessible to all cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop as part of recreation and leisure communications strategy.

INDICATOR

Increase in walkers in local bushland and volunteers.

MEASURE

Biennial Parkscape Survey.

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- Environmental and bushland teams, recreation planners and road engineers for all integrated path and trail planning
- Communications team for online information and interpretation.

OTHER PARTNERS

- Community bushcare and walking groups
- NPWS for paths
- Tourism NSW for overnight walk accommodation.

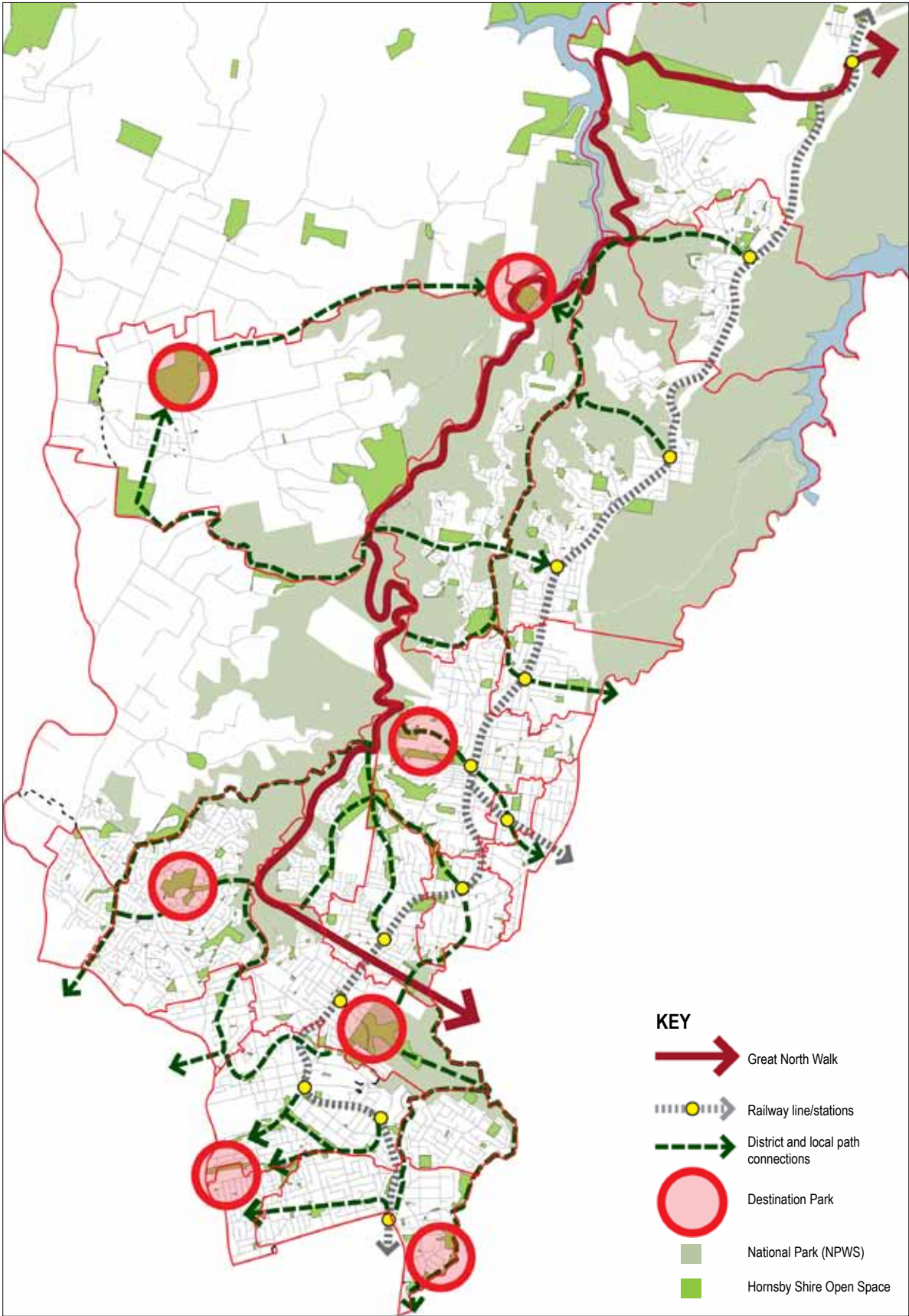


Figure B1.02 - Corridors, Connections & Destinations

0 1 2 3 4 5km



2 - MAKING THE OPEN SPACE NETWORK PART OF DAILY LIFE

GOAL

To increase the day to day recreational and leisure use of all public spaces with a focus on promoting and supporting social engagement.

OVERVIEW

The combined trends of reduced private space for recreation and the increasing pressure on available leisure time caused by work, education and domestic demands, generates the need for easier access to an integrated public realm that forms a natural part of our day-to-day routines and which fosters and supports social engagement as a key to improved community physical health and mental wellbeing.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
2.1	Connecting Parks and Daily Destinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse distribution of parks in all urban centres and review where these lie relative to day-to-day destinations (school, work, public transport, child care, shops etc) and major movement corridors to and from residential areas. develop a priority plan (see Fig B1.02) for an upgraded local walk/cycle network (see also Strategy 4 Grid and Web) for each centre that optimises park locations on these routes and upgrade these parks Level 3 Parks (local) should have precedence with basic amenity as priority (sun, shade, seating, trees etc). Level 2 and 3 Parks in rural towns and small urban centres (see Strategy 3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> first priority centres are those with the densest populations and highest forecast growth (eg Hornsby, Epping, Waitara etc) priority park upgrades should be those on highest pedestrian/ cycle traffic routes
2.2	Local Parks (Level 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review all Level 3 Parks for criteria above as well as for a) population they serve within 400m in urban areas b) shortfall where outside 400m in urban areas c) capacity of all reserves under 0.3 Ha to meet existing and future local needs d) quality of park design and basic amenity (seating, shade, shelter, trees, paths, play for toddlers, defined/ structured spaces, natural surveillance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short term priority is improved access to all local parks (walk and cycle) and amenity upgrades long term priority is acquisition and rationalisation (see Strategy 5)
2.3	Destinations Parks (Level 1 and 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify 6-8 Level 1 or Level 2 'Destination Parks' across the Shire, each building on their unique location, context and landscape character (eg post industrial, riverfront, ridgeline etc.) Destination parks should include some or all of the following facilities and amenities: toilets (open to all public), dog off leash area, generous kickabout space, seating, hit up wall/half ball court, outdoor gym equipment, circuit path (incl children's cycle) BBQ/picnic, links into bushland (incl signed short circuit loop to and from park), cafe or kiosk (see Fig B1.04 for example) ensure that local access to these parks by walk/cycle (and to reduce parking demand) is actively encouraged by developing a 1-2 km radius network of dedicated walk/cycle on-road and off-road connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority parks for analysis and review as to whether they can/do meet these criteria include Fagan Park, C rosslands Reserve, Old Mans Valley/Hornsby Quarry, Pennant Hills Park, Greenway Pk and Somerville Park priority should be 'graduating' children's cycle training in the parks to adjoining safe streets.
2.4	Planning and Design for Social Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure planning and design for every setting type (i.e. sport, civic, river) is focused on promoting and supporting social engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> example is shaded social seating at play areas and path crossings.
2.5	Extending Play Diversity and Play Range <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure planning for play combines facilities with extended play range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> see Strategy 4 Cycling/Walking.

INDICATOR

Increased visitation to all parks by whole community.

MEASURE

Biennial Parkscape Survey.

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- community services, strategic planning, transport engineers, recreation planners, environment and bushland managers for park and on road cycle/walk upgrades
- finance/business/legal for kiosks/cafes.

OTHER PARTNERS

- local community groups
- local school principals
- walking and cycling user groups.



Box Hill Gardens Multipurpose Area. This multi-purpose space provide for a wide range of informal activities and is flexible to many recreation options. (Source - Aspect Studios 2013)



Simple, robust and high quality civic spaces in local centres, as here in West Geelong where the upgraded plaza was implemented in concert with the new library building, become important focal hubs for the community.

3 - RESPONDING TO THE SHIRE'S DIVERSE LIFESTYLES

GOAL

To match recreational provision to the varying needs of the Shire's demography and residential lifestyles from rural to inner urban living.

OVERVIEW

While the broad principles of best practice public realm planning apply to all sectors of the community and to all environments, the practical application of those principles on the ground must respond to context if all sectors of the community are to benefit equitably and if Council are to be seen as providing value for money. So for example, the goal of increased walking and cycling applies equally to rural areas as it does to town centres; how it is delivered is necessarily different.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
3.1	<p>Rural Towns and Villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review and where necessary upgrade the principal park in each rural centre to optimise its flexibility to meet the full spectrum of day-to-day needs (sport, local events, social gatherings, kickabout, play etc.) and to act as the community's social hub. – where viable co-locate community services facilities (e.g. community meeting rooms, day centres, library, childcare) with the principal reserves in these centres (e.g. Berowra Park, Berowra) and ensure indoor/outdoor integration. – promote safe walking and cycling within the heart of rural towns and villages by providing footpaths on both sides of streets that link schools, shops, parks, bushland trails and rail stations. – develop partnership agreements with local schools for shared out-of-hours community use of facilities (playing fields, courts, play spaces etc.) Where necessary co-fund facility upgrades and maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – typical priorities of upgrade works would include circuit paths, dog off leash areas, BBQ and picnic shelters, short bushland circuit path links – typical locations for this strategy would include Warrina Street Oval, Berowra Heights or Galston Recreation Reserve, Galston, Brooklyn Oval, Brooklyn and Cowan Oval, Cowan.
3.2	<p>Residential Suburbs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review all Level 3 Parkland for current and future capacity to meet local recreation needs. In particular review situations with multiple very small reserves in any locality to determine whether consolidation, relocation or rationalisation will serve the community better (see Strategy 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – typical locations for review include numerous Level 3 parks in Cherrybrook.
3.3	<p>Inner Urban/Apartment Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review adequacy of existing open space in major urban centres to determine whether a) they can be readily accessed in a 10 minute walk from say residents' apartment front doors b) they are designed/upgraded for urban living c) they are of adequate size to permit kickabout/runabout for younger children d) barriers to access can be addressed (e.g. road crossing times). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – first priority should be centres with highest population densities, current and forecast such as Hornsby, Epping and Waitara.
3.4	<p>CALD Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – monitor and where successful expand programs that actively engage CALD communities in recreation participation (eg guided bushwalks, designated swimming programs etc.) and assist wider community promotion of culturally diverse programs, e.g. Tai Chi, Yoga etc. incl supportive park environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – first priority are communities are those with large and growing populations i.e. Chinese, Korean, Indian and Sri Lankan.
3.5	<p>Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – integrate youth friendly spaces in parks. eg skate, ball courts, hang-out etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – first priority: isolated rural youth.

INDICATOR

Greater diversity of park uses
MEASURE
 Biennial Parkscape Survey and Walk surveys.

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- community services, strategic planning, transport engineers, recreation planners, environment and bushland managers
- finance department for community/school co-funding arrangements

OTHER PARTNERS

- RMS, DP+E,
- school principals and local PTAs
- CALD community inter-agencies



The number of walkers and cyclists is increasing across Sydney. In the longer term, separation may be required to minimise conflict however initially shared paths in parklands encourages more walking and cycling and is a cost-effective starting point.



Travelling to and from school on foot or by bicycle is a key first step towards increasing children's play range. It provides a safe and controlled environment for parents to foster their children's independence.

4 - PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING CYCLING AND WALKING

GOAL

To increase the participation of the Shire's community from all ages and backgrounds in walking and cycling for recreation, health and transport.

OVERVIEW

The health, wellbeing, environmental and economic benefits of walking and cycling are now widely researched and published; however research also shows that uptake is greatly determined by the supportive environments for walking and cycling within a resident's immediate locality. Convenience, amenity, and safety are critical factors, the latter greatly influencing parental permission for children's independence to walk and cycle to school or for recreation. As parental peer pressure also discourages choice, developing a partner program for school travel plans in a controlled environment is a key first step to wider community behaviour change.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
4.1	Cycling and Walking Plan – develop an integrated Walk and Cycle Plan for the whole Shire incorporating elements as detailed below. Involve local communities and schools for audits in their locality (e.g. Walk Score) in preparing the plan.	– priority should be developing a network that meets recreation, transport and fitness needs.
4.2	Grid and Web Network – Plan an integrated 'Grid' (street based) and 'Web' (creek, river, bushland corridor) network that offers options for walk and cycle speeds and journey times which relate to varying purposes for walking and cycling.	– priority should be on linking residential areas to daily destinations, parks and bushland.
4.3	Promoting Walking and Cycling Through Schools – develop a pilot program for promoting walking and cycling for children through school smart travel plans. Key elements of the plan are: – designation and signage of safe park and street footpaths within a 2km radius of the school suitable for independent and 'walking bus' use. – linking children's cycle circuits in parks to nearby schools via safe streets.	– priority is on involving parents, school principals and staff in all aspects of the auditing and planning of walk and cycle routes around schools to optimise buy-in.
4.4	Increasing Accessibility and Overcoming Barriers – carry out Pedshed Analysis for all localities (see Fig A3.05 and A3.06) when developing the walking and cycling plan to determine where gaps in access to parks exist and to identify what barriers may need to be addressed (e.g. major road crossings, railway lines, creek etc.) – develop Street Walkability audits for each locality that address details such as gradients, materials, noise, pram ramps, street clutter, trip hazards, shade and visual amenity. – employ cycle/walk planning to relink fragmented bushland (see Strategy 1).	– short term priority focus on accessibility to parks is improving immediate walk/cycle access in park's locality – longer term accessibility should address where new parks may be required.
4.5	Recreational Cycling – See Strategy 6 for BMX, MTB, Road and Cyclo Cross strategies.	– See Strategy 6.
4.6	Online Information – develop online maps of walking and cycle routes and circuits across the Shire on Council's website (e.g. Victoria Walks' Walking Maps).	– first priority is on communicating existing popular walks.

INDICATOR

More residents and workers walking and cycling regularly.

MEASURE

Biennial user survey.

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- community services, strategic planning, recreation planners, environment and bushland managers for 'Web' elements
- All above plus transport engineers for 'Grid' elements.

OTHER PARTNERS

- RMS, DP+E, NPWS, Dept of Education
- school principals and PTAs for schools travel plans
- cycling and walking user groups.

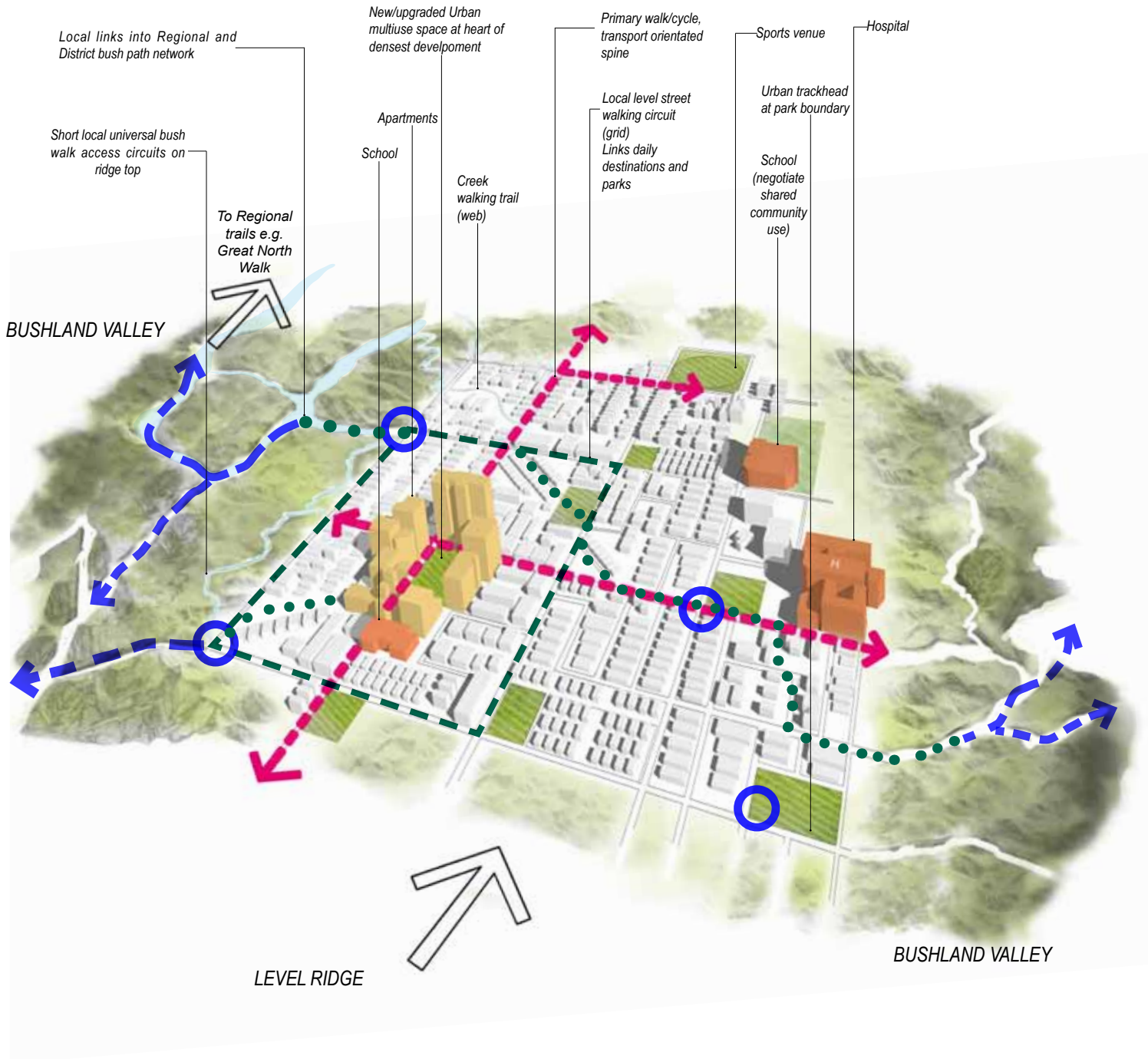


Figure B1.03 - Localised Open Space Network and Linkages in Urban Centres



Figure B1.04 - Typical Destination Park



The dilemma that exists between trying to encourage greater physical activity in our community through sport and the places available to host that activity requires an integrated long-term strategy.



Hornsby Shire offers some remarkable and unique opportunities to draw on the growing interest in sports like cycling.

5 - ADAPTING TO A CHANGING SPORTS ENVIRONMENT

GOAL

- To balance demand for a diverse range of sports with the available land resource in the Shire
- To ensure that all sports facilities also offer unstructured recreation opportunities.

OVERVIEW

The increasing disjunction between demand for sports facilities from a widening range of sports codes - many of which are diversifying their offer but also struggling to maintain or grow overall membership - and the available land resource is becoming critical in the Shire (as also elsewhere in Sydney). Furthermore, significantly the largest amount of open space on level ground in the Shire (which is limited by virtue of topography and bushland) is devoted to sports facilities. What's more, many of these facilities offer little other unstructured recreation opportunity for the two thirds of the community that do not regularly participate in sport, but who also need level open space. The short/long term solutions require better integration of structured and unstructured recreation, multi-using flexibility and co-operative regional planning.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
5.1	Sports Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a Sports Plan (or update the Sports Facility Strategy) for the Shire (drawing on the NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy 2011 - RSMS - and the Unstructured Recreation Plan 2008 - URP) that addresses the current and future needs for all sports across the Shire. The Plan should incorporate the strategies detailed below. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first priorities are on planning and delivery of initiatives that increase capacity of existing sports facilities.
	Regional Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - undertake consultation with clubs and associations at a local and regional level (e.g. through NSROC) in recognition that many strategies can only be successfully addressed at a regional level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first priorities should be on resolving field and courts based pressures.
5.2	Hierarchy of Sports Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and progressively implement/retrofit field and courts facilities to a Level 1 and Level 2 hierarchy (Level 3 should comprise multi-use spaces without permanent sports infrastructure and be suitable for juniors, informal sports use, club training and unstructured recreation uses). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - early priority should be given to optimising and restructuring Level 1/2 facilities such as Pennant Hills Park and West Epping Park.
5.3	Increasing Capacity and Flexibility of Field and Courts Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify and implement initiatives to increase capacity at existing facilities including through lighting, improved soil profiles, drainage, irrigation, synthetic surfaces and season crossover 'threading'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - early priority on extending available carrying capacity and extended times (eg early and late)
5.4	Integrating Unstructured Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure all Level 1 and 2 Sports spaces incorporate unstructured recreation opportunities including circuit paths, play, shaded seating, bush links etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - early priority on basics like toilets accessible to all, storage etc.
5.5	Non Field and Courts Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - address opportunities to extend cycle, watersports, horse riding etc. with a focus on hubs for such activities e.g. Hornsby as a cycling hub. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - see Unstructured Recreation Plan.
5.6	Aquatic Centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investigate viability of continuing to operate the Epping Aquatic Centre and feasibility/best location and configuration for a possible replacement facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor Shire's aquatic centres to ensure relevance to needs and good investment of resources.
5.7	Roles and Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Sports Plan should review Club/Council maintenance and volunteering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - see RSMS 2011

INDICATOR

Satisfaction of user groups and increasing usage.

MEASURE

Biennial Club Surveys

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- strategic planning, recreation planners, environment and bushland managers
- legal/finance/assets for lease and maintenance agreements.

OTHER PARTNERS

- clubs, associations and user groups
- NSW Sport and Recreation
- NSROC



In many cases the costs of maintaining numerous very small parks, offering limited recreation, does not provide value for money to the community. A detailed evaluation of how upgrades, consolidation or rationalisation should be focused on an overall improvement for the park.



The use of boundary paths as management edges ensures that there is a clear definition of lawn area and provides an efficient and cost-effective mowing area.

6 - PLANNING FOR THE NEXT GENERATIONS

GOAL

To achieve a long term sustainable open space and recreation operations and management program that can be demonstrated to meet community needs.

OVERVIEW

The delivery on the ground of the strategies in the ALHS requires that the next steps comprise detailed plans for six major topics as listed below. In concert with these plans is a review of Council's current Service Levels to ensure value for money in management and maintenance. In particular the targeted and specific strategies in the ALHS suggest the need for a refocused maintenance approach that would typically result in reduced mowing and increased native tree planting.

No.	Strategy	First Steps and Typical Locations
6.1	Plans Preparation – prepare the following plans, drawing on the strategies in the ALHS, to inform its implementation (see B2.01 or strategy and plan structure).	– the priority of developing Plans is in the order set out below
6.2	Plan 1: Planning, Design and Management Guidelines – Prepare Planning and Design Guidelines to assist Council, developers and consultants in ensuring that all new opens spaces and all upgrades and retrofits to existing spaces follow these guidelines (see Hawkesbury City Planning and Design Guidelines as an example).	– priority is to identify planning and design principles for new builds first and then progressive retrofitting of existing parks.
6.3	Plan 2: Walking and Cycling Plan – develop an integrated Walk and Cycle Plan for the whole Shire that incorporates on-road and off-road paths/trails (dedicated and multi-use).	– Build on existing cycling strategy and expand it to include recreational cycling and walking networks.
6.4	Plan 3: Acquisition Consolidation and Rationalisation Plan – prepare an Acquisition, Consolidation and Rationalisation Plan that is focused on improvement of the Shire's public realm. – Once developed the Plan should be piloted in one locality with the assistance of the local community and lessons learnt employed for follow up phases.	– First priority is identifying areas of shortfall requiring new reserves or enhanced capacity. Consolidation and/or rationalisation serves that end and assist in funding new works.
6.5	Plan 4: Sports Plan – prepare a Sports Plan in line with the outline proposals in Strategy 5.	– See Strategy 5
6.6	Plan 5: Play Plan – prepare a Play Plan for the whole Shire that takes a holistic approach to all aspects of play from creative play and challenge to free play and extending independent play range (particularly for young females with the most limited range), as well as provision of structured play facilities.	– priority is to identify balance between play provision at local and district levels and extending play range, especially in bushland.
6.7	Sustainable Management and Maintenance – review all existing Service Levels and maintenance regimes to establish that management and maintenance matches the goals in this strategy, is providing value for money and is environmentally sustainable.	– early priority is identifying capital/ recurrent cost options (e.g. more native planting/ less mowing).
6.8	Promoting Open Space – develop map based online information on available recreation facilities.	– early priority is walking/cycling.
6.9	Developing Open Space Tourism – integrate Stafford Group Open space strategies into wider tourism strategy.	– priority is on partner consultation

INDICATOR

Community satisfaction with maintenance and facility standards and quality.

MEASURE

Biennial Parkscape Survey.

COUNCIL PARTNERS

- strategic planning, recreation planners, environment and bushland managers
- asset managers and field staff re-Planning and Design Guidelines

OTHER PARTNERS

- Sports Groups
- NPWS
- Tourism NSW.



B2: IMPLEMENTATION

B2: IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the phase of the ALHS is the next phase in the sequence from Vision (through the CSP) to work on the ground (see Figure B2.01). This section on Implementation outlines the priorities for implementation under Short, Medium and Long Term Actions.

SHORT TERM ACTIONS (TYPICALLY YEARS 1 AND 2)

Short term actions for the ALHS relate principally to setting up the briefs and programs for the Action Plans, developing the partnerships required for implementation and effecting some immediate changes on the ground that are already being undertaken by Council, which meet urgent daily needs and which align with these strategies (ie circuit paths in parks, seating, shade, tree planting, bushland management and trail creation.)

Continuing the Conversation

This Strategy will not and cannot succeed without willing partners to its implementation. The three key partners are Council's Internal Departments, the Shire's Councillors and the External Stakeholders. All three parties have been involved in the development of the Strategy and all have helped shape its direction; so all three need to be directly involved in its Implementation if it is to reflect the aspirations of the broader community and to demonstrably offer value for money.

Central to that outcome is the creation of an ongoing Reference Group with representatives from all three groups (say 15-20 people in all) which would meet perhaps twice a year for the next five years at least. Their role would be to assist Council in offering a range of perspectives on how the implementation can be developed, testing ideas as they are evolved, maintaining an holistic framework and assisting Council to re-strategise and stay on program where changing circumstances require.

To ensure that the overall tasks for the Reference Group are not too onerous, it may be worth considering tasking Working Groups within that total team that relate to the 6 Strategies (or combinations of those strategies). This permits those Working Groups to gain more focus on the key topics, the conclusions from which they can bring back to the wider group to create an integrated outcome.

Taking the Enabling Steps

The delivery of many of the Medium and Long Term Actions will be dependent on enabling processes that are amongst the first priorities. These particularly include:

- negotiations with third parties to gain buy-in and approval to deliver strategies (ie RMS re the Walking and Cycling Plan and improved road crossings, NPWS re overnight walks, accommodation and local links to regional trails and Dept of Education and School Principals re school travel plans around walking and cycling)
- Review of shortfalls in open space provision (detailed Pedshed Analysis by locality, to establish where additional open space may be required over time)
- Revisiting and, where necessary, revising the inventory (settings and hierarchy especially) as the Action Plans are evolved to match the proposed outcomes

One of the first steps would be to agree and sign-off internally within Council the order and outline timeframes for the delivery of the 6 Action Plans. This would assist in establishing how these might best be resourced and funded.

B2: IMPLEMENTATION

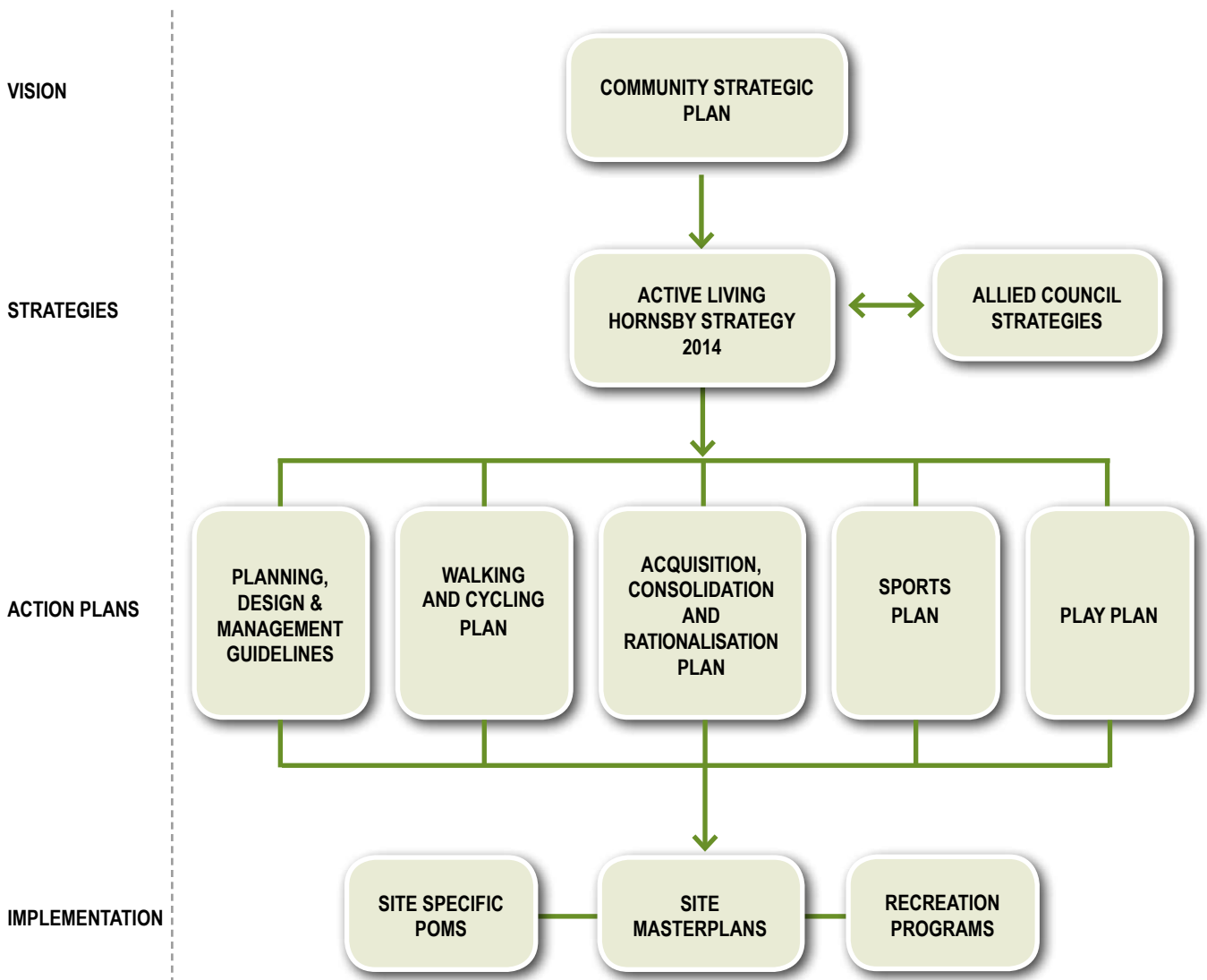


Figure B2.01 - Planning and Implementation Hierarchy

B2: IMPLEMENTATION

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS (TYPICALLY YEARS 3 AND 10)

To secure a strong and ongoing funding base for all of the implementation phases it will be necessary for Council to demonstrate why these are important strategies and how they offer value for money. To that end a number of the strategies need to be commenced through a pilot or demonstration project. In particular the following strategies would benefit from such a Pilot/Demonstration project approach:

- School travel plans around walking and cycling; perhaps starting with a school that is presently suffering from problems with - and safety concerns around - car pick up and drop off
- Destination Park; the development of a master plan for an existing park for the 'retrofitting' of a number of the common elements described in the Strategy would assist the community in understanding the goal and gain support for its wider application
- Walking and Cycling Plan; using the Plan to role a local application of the Web and Grid strategy, particularly in an are of high density and growing population would meet an immediate need and demonstrate a wider application across the Shire. For the purposes of equity a waking/cycling Pilot for one of the rural or smaller centres might also be worth considering
- Acquisition, Consolidation and Rationalisation: once the Shire Wide Plan has been developed a local Pilot will be essential to ensure community ownership of the process and outcome. Ideally, the first such project is carried out in a locality that is in the greatest need.

Not only can the Pilot Projects demonstrate strong outcomes for the community and value for money, but they also provide direct learnings around which the strategy or implementation plan can be refined or refocused.

LONG TERM ACTIONS (TYPICALLY YEARS 10+)

The Strategies in the ALHS are prioritised but there is no specific end date for their delivery as many will necessarily evolve over years and some may not be fully realised for 20-30 years, even if they are progressively rolled out over short and medium term.

The full realisation of some of the strategies that will take the longest time to complete will typically include:

- Retrofitting existing recreation infrastructure across the full Shire, particularly major sports infrastructure
- Strategies that are dependent on land acquisitions that may not be available for a period of years
- Enabling processes outside the direct control of Council (ie road and rail infrastructure upgrades that will permit improvements to say walking and cycling)

Generally, the Long Term actions are being delivered at the same time as review of the performance is being carried out on the success or otherwise of Short and Medium Term actions that the cycle can continue.



Forest Park, Epping



PART C: BIBLIOGRAPHY AND
APPENDICES



C1: BIBLIOGRAPHY

C1: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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C2: APPENDICES

C2: APPENDIX 1 - BACKGROUND DOCUMENT REVIEW

DOCUMENT	DATE	SCOPE	MATTERS RELEVANT TO THIS PROJECT:
Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036	DECEMBER 2010	The Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 is a 20 year plan to build liveable places across Sydney. The document provides an integrated, long term sustainable planning framework for Sydney to guide future planning and investment decisions covering housing, economic development and jobs, open space and transport needed to connect Sydney.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to the corridor was boosted by the Chatswood to Epping Rail Link which connects Macquarie Park and Macquarie University with further residential areas and Major Centres such as Chatswood and Hornsby. - New 2006-2036 dwelling target for Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai is 29,000. - Hornsby noted as a major production area in Sydney's rural areas. - 2006-2036 Employment Growth of +2,000.
DRAFT METROPOLITAN STRATEGY FOR SYDNEY TO 2031 North Subregional Strategy	MARCH 2013	The North Subregional Strategy is the NSW Government's long term land use plan for the region, which covers the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai local government areas. The sub regional strategy contains policies and actions designed to cater for the region's projected housing and employment growth over the period to 2031.	<p>Key principles for the North Subregion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote as a highly accessible and liveable area with outstanding amenity, a growing network of employment areas and a prized natural environment - Improve connections to the Global Economic Corridor via North Sydney and cross-regional links with Chatswood via Brookvale-Dee Why - Improve connections linking the Orbital Motorway Network to the F3 - Improve the connecting corridor to the north for freight and passengers to Central Coast, Newcastle and NSW North Coast via the F3 and Main northern Line, including any future high speed rail corridor - Provide for increased housing choice through redevelopment for a variety of new housing types and densities around identified centres along major transport corridors including strategic bus corridors and the North Shore Line and Northern Line - Facilitate delivery of the Urban Activation Precinct at Epping - Protect the health and resilience of the environmental assets of the subregion, including National Parks <p>Hornsby as a major centre to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance as a location for growing retail and office uses for the subregion and a broader catchment extending to the Central Coast - Promote residential intensification near the centre - Provide for at least 1,000 additional jobs to 2031.

DOCUMENT	DATE	SCOPE	MATTERS RELEVANT TO THIS PROJECT:
Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023	19 JUNE 2013	The Community Strategic Plan sets the direction of where the people of Hornsby Shire want to be in 2023 and identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future. It is a 10 year vision developed collaboratively between community and Council and defines Strategies to achieve community priorities, as well as outlining actions our community can introduce into their everyday lives to help achieve the Outcomes.	<p>The following principles are relevant to the Hornsby IOSRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7B: Provide community access to a range of places and spaces; - 7D: Foster healthy neighbourhood and life balance activities; - 8A: Support the living centres in the Shire to be distinctive and vibrant; - 9A: Provide infrastructure and services that serves current and future community needs, including active and passive recreational facilities and - 10A: Provide infrastructure and services that are socially, environmentally and culturally responsive to community needs.
Social Plan 2010-2014		The Plan promotes a vision for Hornsby Shire Council with a particular focus on groups that may be disadvantaged. The Plan guides the provision of community facilities and services to meet the needs of people within the Shire in a fair and equitable manner.	<p>The following key goals are relevant to the Hornsby IOSRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A network of public places, recreation and open space and opportunities to creatively participate in and contribute to our local community. - The community is particularly interested in open space, the built environment and transport networks. - The desire for more family areas in parks that include shade, especially children's play and more barbeque and picnic places.
A Snapshot of the Hornsby Shire in 2012	AUGUST 2012	This report provides a snapshot of the quality of life and wellbeing of the Hornsby Shire in 2012. It contains information on what is happening in relation to the Shire's key strategic themes of Ecology, Economy, Society and culture, Human habitat and Governance and provides measurement against indicators implemented in 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5% of shire is zoned for open space - Approx. 70% is Environmental Protection or National Park. - 184 parks within the Shire. - Infrastructure that primarily consumes maintenance, upgrade, renewal and new creation expenditure for open space is \$51.6 million.
Sports Facility Strategy	MARCH 2006	The Strategy aims to provide Council with options for the further development of outdoor sports facilities identified as being undersupplied in Hornsby.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall supply of sports specific open space is low compared with industry standard guidelines. - Sportsgrounds were 'generally high in quality' throughout Shire. - With respect to sportsgrounds, there is no excess capacity in the existing open space system capable of absorbing the demands of new populations. - As well as school sites, 3 Council-owned greenfield sites have been

DOCUMENT	DATE	SCOPE	MATTERS RELEVANT TO THIS PROJECT:
<i>Unstructured Recreation Strategy Volume 1</i>	DECEMBER 2008	The Unstructured Recreation Strategy provides a strategic direction for the management of unstructured recreation facilities in the Shire.	<p>recommended for development into outdoor sports fields/courts, as well as a raft of improvement proposals for existing sports facilities with the combined outcome of easing the current shortage of outdoor sports facilities.</p> <p>Selected activities that are covered in the plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of unstructured sports undertaken for pleasure, away from the club competitive environment in social / family settings • BMX and mountain biking • Walking for recreation • Dog socialisation and exercise • Skateboarding and in-line skating • Horse riding trails • Playgrounds • Recreational fishing <p>High priority policy directions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attempt to provide one specialty/mixed recreation park in each suburb or planning district, where there is a cluster of facilities for social and unstructured recreation activities suitable for a range of ages - Consider a range of locations for additional dog off-leash areas - Provide a hierarchy of trails across the Shire to suit a wide range of pedestrian and non-motorised wheeled activities: urban footpaths, equestrian and shared trails; bike trails in urban bushland , sealed circuit paths in larger parks - Build a hierarchy of BMX facilities for a range of abilities and address the management of existing unauthorised BMX areas - Priority for playground development to be given to larger parks such as those with regional, shire-wide or suburb-wide catchments.
<i>Sustainable Water Based Recreation Facilities Plan</i>	APRIL 2012	The purpose of this project was to prepare a sustainable water based recreation strategy for public land in the Lower Hawkesbury by consulting with the community to gain a greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage further dialogue between Hornsby and Gosford Councils over the development of a regional commuter hub at Mooney Mooney Point at Deerubbin Reserve. - Need to facilitate canoeing / kayaking launching at one location in

DOCUMENT	DATE	SCOPE	MATTERS RELEVANT TO THIS PROJECT:
		understanding of the needs of those who participate in water based recreational activities such as fishing, kayaking, motor boating, water skiing and house boats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wisemans Ferry to enhance safety. - Promote Crosslands Reserve as the primary place for non-motorised boats and canoes / kayaks, on the Lower Hawkesbury. - Infrastructure on the foreshore should be incrementally redesigned and upgraded to accommodate people with a disability; in particular, this should include physical access and way finding
NSROC Regional Sportsground Management Strategy Volume 1	JUNE 2011	The Strategy is about improving coordination of Sportsground management across the region, to Deliver greater community benefits. NSROC Councils have identified an acute shortage of community sports facilities, particularly sportsgrounds. This is set to worsen with continued population growth, and increasing demand for organised community sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four locations of synthetic hockey pitches (Ryde, Hornsby Shire, North Sydney and Ku-ring-gai) - Several new sportsgrounds are being planned because of land Swaps or redevelopments, these include Old Man's Valley and The Old Dairy site in Hornsby Shire.
Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program – Hornsby Shire Council Active/Passive Parks	FEBRUARY – JULY 2011	The Benchmark User Satisfaction Survey Program provides information about park users and park usage. It measures user's satisfaction with the level of park maintenance within a management area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The average time taken to travel to the park by survey participants (from place of residence, accommodation, work etc) within Hornsby Shire Council area was 17 minutes. - 65% of the survey participants within the Hornsby Shire Council area were regular visitors to the park that they were interviewed in. - 36% of participants visited the park more than once a week (with 16% visiting daily and 20% a few days a week), 14% visited weekly, 6% fortnightly, and 9% monthly.
Epping Urban Activation Plan Precinct and Structure		The Urban Activation Precinct Report and Structure Plan provide the framework for open space and public domain improvements. The reports also highlight potential open space improvements to benefit existing and future residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New high density housing in town centre - New open spaces and civic spaces



CLOUSTON associates



People Place and Partnership
making a difference

Active Living Hornsby Strategy Community Engagement Report



Report prepared by
People, Place and Partnership Pty Ltd
May to September 2014

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Executive Summary

Overview

Hornsby Shire Council supports healthy active communities and provides and assists in the management of a wide range of open space and recreation facilities. Open space is public land that contains recreation facilities; it's where people can enjoy recreation and sporting activities. Hornsby Shire's open space and recreation facilities support the health and wellbeing of the diverse local population.

The Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS) is a plan for the future of open space and recreational needs of the Hornsby Shire. The ALHS will provide Council with a roadmap for the future, providing a long term framework for making decisions about what needs to be done to improve recreation facilities, parks and open space areas for all users including children, young people, families, the elderly and visitors.

In creating the ALHS Council has been working closely with the community including local recreation users, sporting and environmental groups, residents, community groups, organisations and businesses. This report provides a summary of the community engagement and communication program undertaken during May and September 2014.

Purpose of engaging with the Hornsby community

As the community has not been consulted for 12 years regarding their recreation and open space needs, comprehensive community engagement and consultation was needed.

The consultation goal was to establish a clear understanding of stakeholder and community demands and needs in relation to current and future open space use and recreation needs taking into account the future growth of the Shire:

- trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation activities (comparison of national/state and local rates)
- demographic, cultural and characteristic data of the community
- current participation, facility and program usage rates
- identification of current and future open space and recreation needs
- identification of open space and recreation needs of both older established communities and newer communities
- assess community satisfaction with existing open space and recreation facilities

Engagement and communication approach

During the creation of the ALHS and between the months of May and September 2014, approximately 1645 people have been directly consulted through a number of engagement activities.

The key activities that have been undertaken have included:

- **Workshops;** a community workshop, a stakeholder workshop and a CALD focus group
- **Community open days;** at Hornsby Mall and Pennant Hills Park (near the netball courts)
- **Online engagement;** an online quiz, an online community survey and a targeted high density living online survey
- **Communication program;** identifying a specific project name to 'brand' the overall project as well as utilising Hornsby Shire Council's tools; the HSC Website, HSC Facebook, the E-News as well as preparing project specific postcards, posters and a pop up banner

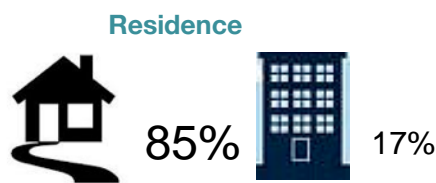
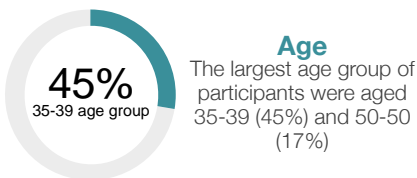
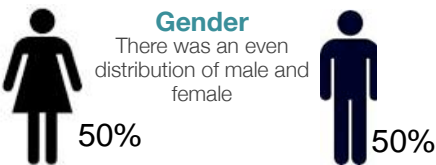
Executive Summary

Key findings

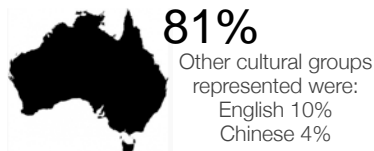
This report identifies the key lessons that have been learnt through the ALHS engagement and communication program.

The profile of the online participants

There were 1126 people that participated in the two online surveys. The following is a summary of the social and demographic profile of the participants.



Cultural Background



Suburb location within Hornsby Shire

For the self-select online survey

Hornsby (111)
Thornleigh (62)
North Epping (58)
Epping (55)

For the targeted high density living online survey

Hornsby (66)
Waitara (14)
North Epping (10)

Common leisure activities undertaken by Hornsby Shire residents include:

- Cycling and mountain biking
- Walking
- Bushwalking
- Visiting outdoor cafes and playgrounds

Popular local spaces:

- Fagan Park - for families, picnics, dogs and for the overall variety
- Berowra Waters - for families, proximity to the water, range of activities
- Ruddock Park - range of family activities
- Pennant Hills Park - for the sporting facilities
- Willow Park - for the playground equipment
- Lisgar Gardens - the hidden secret!
- Crosslands Reserve - for bushwalking

Local values

What people value most about Hornsby Shire's open space and recreational facilities are for exercise, family gatherings, children play and relaxing. We have heard that amongst all open space and recreation facilities parklands, conservation and heritage as well as bushland is valued highly. Particularly participants of all engagement activities have indicated that they value the following aspects of the Hornsby Shire:

- the proximity to local parks, natural open spaces and bushland setting
- the availability of family leisure outdoor spaces for playgrounds, BBQs, picnics, outdoor cafes and public spaces
- the opportunities available for sport and recreation for people of all ages and for all seasons
- the overall variety and quality of local open space

Satisfaction levels with existing open spaces and facilities

- Overall there is a 64% satisfaction level with Hornsby Shire open spaces and recreational facilities

Some areas for further consideration

Some of the ideas that people would like to see further explored is:

- the overall provision of park facilities (like toilets, play equipment, picnic facilities, shelter and shade)
- upgrades to specific parks and ovals for informal and formal recreation activities
- ensuring open spaces near areas with more people are well maintained and are protected from future redevelopment
- ensuring access to a good local park for frequent visitation for daily, weekly and weekend family time (children's play) exercise and relaxation
- opportunities for more dog off-leash areas
- more information and access to bushland areas
- For those that responded to the online surveys that are not using open spaces or recreational facilities the key reason identified was a lack of information about facilities (26%, 58 people)

Accessing information about open space and recreation facilities

The 3 top information sources identified by online participants included:

Self-select online survey

1. Hornsby Council Website (63%)
2. Hornsby Council E-News (66%)
3. The local paper (50%)

High density living online survey

1. the Hornsby Council E-News (75%)
2. Hornsby Council Website (57%)
3. HSC E-News (47%)

Finding out the personality type of Hornsby Shire residents

The online quiz

The online quiz was an internet based question and answer survey. A total of 362 people participated in the online quiz.

There were six key questions asked of participants with a series of multiple choice selections that could be chosen.

Based on the selections the quiz automatically provided each participant with a personality profile that best reflected the answers that were selected.

The Clan Fan and The Rural Ranger being the most popular personality types.



The Clan Fan

Family activities come first! you like to take your kids out riding their bike, or head to the park for a play on the swings, you mostly spend your weekends watching young ones play cricket or netball too! a good time is defined by bonding outdoors with your family.



The Rural Ranger

You live outside the city where animals and open spaces are right next door! you appreciate the wide open landscapes that separates you from neighbours, as well as riding your quad bike, strolling on local bushlands and visiting parks where you and your family can stretch out the picnic rug and take up as much space as you like, the beautiful and calm rural area is your paradise!

Executive Summary

Testing some new initiatives

Feedback from the community engagement workshops and open days had indicated a number of things that were considered important about local open space and recreational facilities.

In order to test some of these ideas and provide direct input into the priorities and focus of the ALHS, the online surveys undertook to test what participants thought about whether a new idea/initiative was essential, desirable, does not matter or not required.

The ideas that were tested around the following key activities; walking, cycling, children's play, bushwalking, sport

When comparing the information from the self-select online survey (SS) and the high density living online survey (HDL) the most essential or highest desirable idea/initiative was identical for each of the participant groupings:

Walking

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings* (48% SS) (59 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for the SS grouping was: *more or improved paths and path circuits in our parks* (51% SS) and for the HDL grouping ranked as essential was: *links to day-to-day destinations such as parks, work, school, shops and public transport* (41% HDL)

Cycling

1. For the cycling initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Cycle path connections between parks* (48% SS) (44 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as essential for the SS grouping was: *dedicated cycle paths on roads* (40% SS) and it was seen as desirable by the HDL grouping with 40%

Children's play

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play* (48% SS) (43% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings nearly equally weighted were two ideas/initiatives: *large and better play spaces* (49% SS) (38% HDL) as well as *play spaces for ages 8-12* (48% SS) (38% HDL)

Bushwalking

1. For the bushwalking initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *More or better bush walking tracks* (56% SS) (57% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: *improved signs and access to bush walking tracks* (51% SS) (52% HDL)

Sport

1. For the sport initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing* (55% SS) (54% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: *outdoor basketball and netball courts* (54% SS) (40% HDL)

Whilst above illustrates the top two most popular of the ideas/initiatives for both groupings overall many of the ideas received more than 40% of either essential or desirable selections from participants.

The ideas/initiatives for the SS grouping that received the least considerations:

- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (40% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (38% does not matter)

The ideas/initiatives for the HDL grouping that received the least considerations:

- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (38% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (29% desirable)
- Upgrade of the pool in Epping (28% desirable)

1. Introduction



Davidson park



Fagan Park



Terrys Creek

Terrys Creek



Mitchell Park



Waitara Oval

1.1 Overview of the project

Hornsby Shire is predominantly a rural and residential area of 46,230 hectares located in Sydney's northern suburbs. Nearly two thirds of the local government area being covered by native bushland, mainly within large national parks.

The current population is 165,090, with a density of 3.57 persons per hectare. An increase in migration can be observed in Hornsby, where the proportion of overseas-born residents increased from 27% in 1996 to 38.5% in 2011. Of those residents born overseas, 31% came from a non English speaking background.

Hornsby Shire faces significant challenges in relation to its ageing population, with infrastructure and recreational needs required to plan for the future, as 10% of the Hornsby Shire population now aged over 70 years.

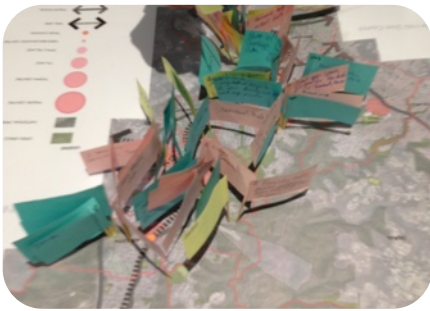
Projected growth for the Shire shows not only increases in population to the year 2031, but also a shift in living styles towards higher density living, particularly for those suburbs such as Epping, Hornsby, Waitara and Asquith. The demographic profile of these suburbs is already changing as new apartment complexes are being developed, focused on public transport nodes.

It has been 12 years since Council last engaged with its community in a substantial way on their needs and aspirations for open space and recreation. The Hornsby Shire Leisure Strategic Plan was undertaken between 2000 and 2002.

It is now time to develop a renewed understanding of the recreation and open space needs for the community of Hornsby Shire and to consider determination of locally appropriate standards of provision for the community.

The Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS) will provide a long term strategic direction and framework to guide Council in developing strategic decisions relating to the provision of assets and services, allocation of resources, strategic partnerships, and facility development. The Strategy aims to identify the recreational needs of the community, the opportunities that currently exist and appropriate actions to meet identified gaps and improve current provision. The framework will also identify how the open space and recreation facilities can support growth precincts in the Shire to successfully transition from suburban centres to quality high density urban precincts.

1. Introduction



Stakeholder workshop

1.2 Purpose of this report

This community engagement report summarises the key communication and engagement activities that have taken place to inform the development of the Hornsby Shire Council, Active Living Hornsby Strategy (ALHS).

To date more than 1645 people have been directly consulted through these activities and this report provides an in-depth summary of these interactions.

1.3 Project objectives

As the community has not been consulted for 12 years regarding their recreation and open space needs, comprehensive community engagement and consultation is required.

As formulated by the Hornsby Shire Council in the Request for Quotation, the consultation goal is to establish a clear understanding of stakeholder and community demands and needs in relation to current and future open space use and recreation needs taking into account the future growth of the Shire:

- trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation activities (comparison of national/state and local rates)
- demographic, cultural and characteristic data of the community
- current participation, facility and program usage rates
- identification of current and future open space and recreation needs
- identification of open space and recreation needs of both older established communities and newer communities
- assess community satisfaction with existing open space and recreation facilities.

1.4 Engagement approach

In undertaking community engagement, the core principles which have governed the approach undertaken include:

- ensure that a diversity of stakeholders are engaged and local issues understood
- from the beginning, giving people the opportunity to shape the development of the ALHS and make it their own
- a continuous process and not just a one off engagement activity, further ensuring that we have a comprehensive program of engagement opportunities throughout the entire program
- clear and straightforward by using methods suitable to the local community being consulted
- planned as a central part of the ALHS process

2. Overview of the community engagement activities

Community engagement and communications tools have been used throughout the ALHS project.

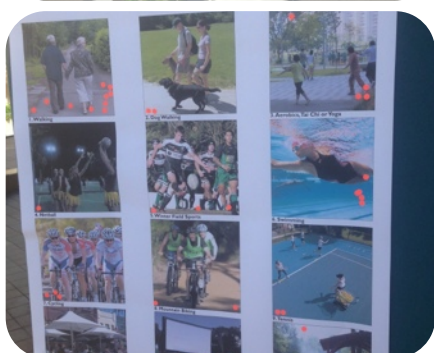
2.1 Engagement activities

The key objectives for the engagement activities have included to:

- provide a clear methodology for engaging with the community and stakeholders during the development of the ALHS
- ensure that different groups of stakeholders are involved – including groups who have not had involvement in the past
- ensure the community and stakeholders are aware of the opportunities to be involved in the development of the ALHS
- provide an opportunity for Council and the community to work together to define a plan for the future of open space provisions
- identify common issues and trends regarding open space
- prioritise community and stakeholder preferences
- maximise representation from a broad cross section of the community that is representative of the age profile and demographics of Hornsby Shire
- manage stakeholder and community expectations with regard to the outcomes of the ALHS

The key activities have included:

Activity	Date	Participants
Workshops		
Community Workshop	Tuesday 6th May	8
Stakeholder Workshop	Wednesday 7th May	44
CALD Community Workshop	Tuesday 5th July	9
Community Open Days		
Hornsby Mall Open Day	Thursday 19th June	50
Pennant Hills Park Netball Courts	Saturday 21st June	50
Online engagement		
Online Quiz		362
Online Survey		1018
High density living online survey		108
Total number of community interactions		1649



Community Open Days

2. Overview of the community engagement activities

2.2 Communication activities

The key objectives for the communications activities have included to:

- Deliver clear and consistent messages about the purpose, aims and objectives of the ALHS to the community and other stakeholders, including the importance and benefits of the ALHS
- Raise awareness with different groups of stakeholders – including groups who are generally not engaged with Council
- Utilise the existing corporate communication approaches; social media, corporate e-newsletter, media releases and advertising in local papers
- Widely promote opportunities for the community to get involved and have their say in the development of the ALHS
- Provide a clear methodology for disseminating information to the community and stakeholders during the development of the ALHS

The key activities have included:

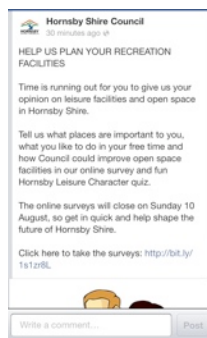
- **HSC Website:**
including information about the project, frequently asked questions, a project area map, and online survey
- **HSC Facebook:**
to promote the project and the key consultation activities
- **HSC Corporate Newsletter:**
to promote the project and the key consultation activities
- **HSC Email Banner:**
Were placed at key locations within the Our River project area
- **Poster and Postcard:**
to promote the online survey
- **Pop up Banner:**
to promote the project and the key consultation activities



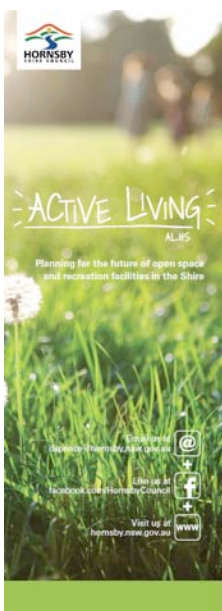
ALHS Poster



ALHS Email Banner



HSC Facebook Post



ALHS Banner



ALHS Web Banner



ALHS Postcard

3. Workshop - key findings

3.1 Workshop overview

The purpose of the two workshops were to provide the community and key stakeholders with an overview of the process involved in developing the Active Living Hornsby Strategy and to gain initial feedback.

3.2 Workshop approach

The two workshops were held at Thornleigh Golf Centre on Thursday 15th and Monday 19th May 2014, from 6:30pm to 9pm.

The workshops were promoted via invitations to community members who were directly invited to attend the meeting.

A total of 52 people participated in the two sessions.

The workshop followed the following broad format:

- Interactive sessions to explore people's local knowledge to understand places people frequent and why, identifying local issues and exploring example images of what people like for the future.
- Welcome and introduction from Dana Spence, Hornsby Shire Council
- Overview of the session from Jo Kelly, People, Place and Partnership
- Presentation of the project from Crosbie Lorimer, CLOUSTON
- Interactive sessions to explore people's local knowledge, to understand places people frequent and why, identifying local issues and exploring example images of what people would like for the future
- Dana Spence, Hornsby Shire Council provided a thank you and clarification of next steps

Appendix A is a complete record of the community feedback recorded during the workshops.

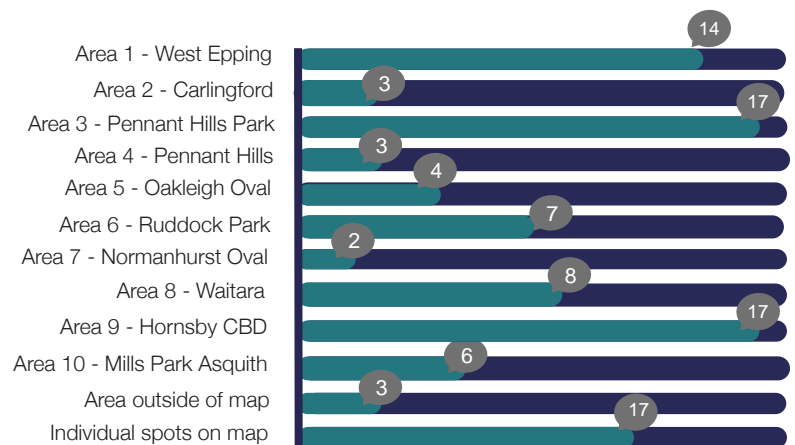
3.3 The key findings from the workshops

3.3.1 Mapping the local area

Participants were asked to plot on a LGA wide map their favourite places, places they go to frequently, how they get there and a place they go to that needs improvement (where and what needs to be improved).

Generally the majority of flags were centred around 10 key locations throughout the LGA as well as some individual locations scattered throughout, with people also placing flags on the outside of the map suggesting that their response related to the whole LGA.

The graph below illustrates the amount of flags each area received with the table below highlighting some of the consistent responses from participants.



Flag topic	Local places
Favourite places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pennant Hills Park • Oakleigh Oval • Ruddock Park • Mark Taylor Oval • Somerville Park
A place you most like to go places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruddock Park • Mark Taylor Oval • Mills Park • Berowra Waters • Pennant Hills Park
A place you go to that most needs improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parking, narrow roads, traffic congestion • lack of maintenance poor and amenities • challenge attracting new players and retaining players, both junior and senior • not child, family friendly • Old Man's Valley needs longer trail length and community buildings around the club • shade in general

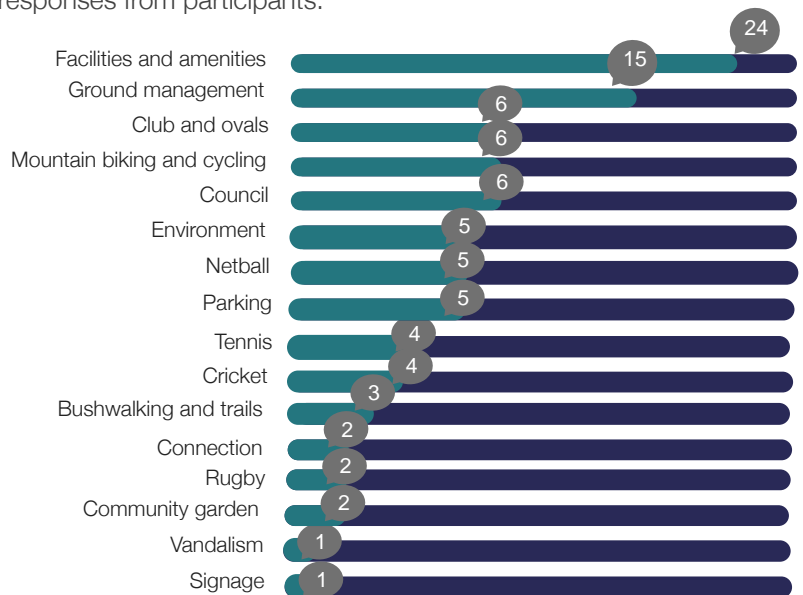
3. Workshop - key findings

3.3.2 Identifying local issues

Participants were asked to provide an insight into three key issues they have regarding anything of relevance to the preparation of ALHS.

Overall 49 individual comments were received. The two most common issues highlighted at the workshop were facilities and amenities as well as ground management.

The graph below illustrates all issues that were highlighted at the workshop. The table below highlighting some of the consistent responses from participants.



Key issues	
Facilities and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall age of facilities availability of sports grounds summer/winter amenities at sports grounds i.e canteen, lights, parking, storage, change rooms, toilets, shade and play parks standard of facilities facilities that are fit for purpose training facilities and availability
Ground management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability turf and synthetic options day and night management sharing grounds/multi-functional grounds permanent grounds cancellation times for wet weather overcrowding quality of grounds - management affects length of season sustainable funding options need to be explored

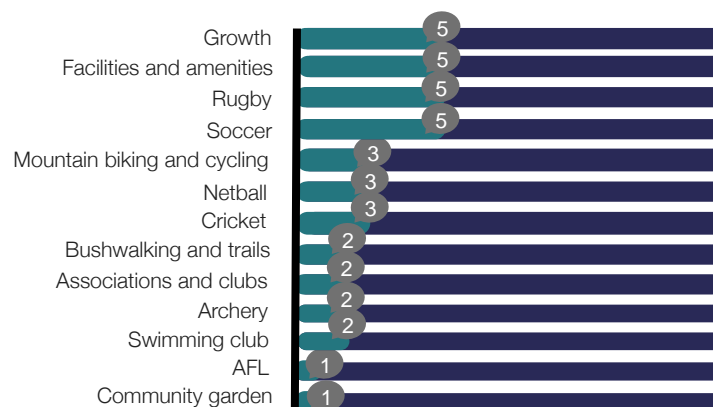
3. Workshop - key findings

3.3.3 Understanding local demand and future growth

Participants were asked to provide some thoughts to the following key question:

- *Are you experiencing growth or decline in the participation in your sport/activity?*

The most common perception of growth related to individual sporting/activities and all comments are highlighted in the below graph and table



Key issues	Common perception	Key issues	Common perception
Overall growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a recognition that the Shire is growing rapidly and therefore community interest in some sports/activities is slowly growing • concerns raised regarding capacity problems 	Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cricket membership is growing • the dominance of national cricket and the new 20/20 format is assisting membership • young cricketers want to join cricket and play representative sport so therefore need turf grounds for elite training
Facilities and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally it was considered difficult to encourage growth in some sports due to inadequate facilities, training grounds, lighting and ground availability 	Bushwalking/trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bushcare groups and bushwalking groups are growing with high rates of older people • increasing awareness of nature
Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it was considered by those in attendance that there was a generally slow decline in junior rugby that could be attributed to poor performance of state and national teams and little marketing investment by national Association • Epping Rugby reporting small growth in junior and seniors 	Associations and clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epping Rugby and Netball Club membership has been steadily growing over the past 10 years • largest funded association in Australia which is growing, difficulty in having activated facilities to introduce players into elite levels
Soccer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • growth is being experienced in juniors but limited by fields and facilities • concerns that there are limitations as clubs are full 	Archery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • archery growing due to International and European movies about archery • going back facilities limits max for tournaments and club activities archery • facilities limit max for tournament and club activities for archery
Mountain biking/cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally it is considered that both maintain biking and cycling are growing rapidly • concerns raised regarding paths, connection links and off road trails 	Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennis Academy is growing but is restricted by existing facilities • membership of most tennis Associations falling as focused changes from competitions to social
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is maintaining 3,000 - 3,500 members bit this is limited to court numbers at Pennant Hills Park • Hills District Netball is managing growth by adding new competitions and formats 	Swimming club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastwood Epping Swimming Club losing members due to changing demographics • access to pools are diminishing
AFL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFL juniors, maintaining number 5 	Community garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community gardens up and coming not established as yet

Aspirational local headlines

Participants at the workshop were asked to provide their response to the following two questions:

- *what headline would you love to see in 10 years time on the front page of the local paper?*
- *what headline do you not want to see in 10 years time on the front page of the local paper?*

There were many fun and entertaining responses to the headline people would love to see.

Most commonly people focused on Hornsby being an active and healthy local area, Council being a strong leader and Hornsby being a Shire of choice for Sydney's residents.

- Hornsby Council has lifted participation in recreation 100%
- Hornsby Active Living still alive
- Hornsby Shire Council awarded International better community award
- Hornsby Council leads the way for all residents activities
- Hornsby most successful sporting Shire in Australian history
- highest ratio of local produce and sustainability initiatives 'The Green Council'

The headline that people didn't want to see was equally as entertaining, however with concerns expressed were around in sport participation, venue's closed, unhealthy/inactive community and poor decision making by Council.

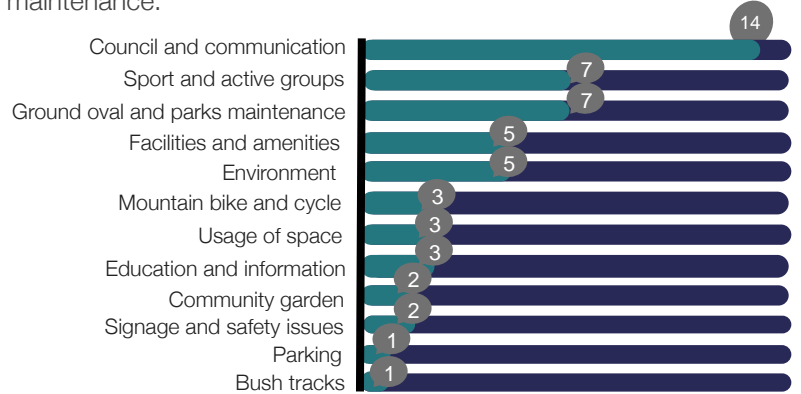
- Hornsby flooded due to poor planning
- Hornsby Shire leads Sydney in obesity, youth boredom
- football club has to shutdown due to no facilities
- residents give up on green and sustainability initiative
- Hornsby Council in liquidation
- Council continues to procrastinate over upgrade works to Pennant Hills Park

3. Workshop - key findings

3.3.4 Small group discussions

Participants worked in six small groups to discuss what they felt were the top priorities for the overall development of the ALHS.

The top three priorities for consideration included Council and communication, sport and active groups, ground, oval/park maintenance.



Key issues	Common perception
Council and general communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better integration and communication between Council's departments • what improvements can Council do to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong leadership • support for making grant applications • reducing conflicts between codes • communicating key messages • find new solutions and then provide strong leadership • organise more group discussions between sporting groups and other interest groups • facilitate discussions to encourage sharing of facilities, resources and equipment • need to come up with hard solutions for traffic and parking around Pennant Hills
Sport and active groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most winter sports are wet weather sport • ground closes at 2:30pm Friday is too early • training – trying to preserve the grounds limits the amount of space we have to do effective training • scouts uncertainly of tenure of facilities • swimming better facilities and more • consider staggering of events perhaps play netball at school grounds instead of descending onto a central facility • numbers should not equal rights, sports with low memberships should have equal access to facility as does sports with higher members and access to appropriate facilities to enable sports to be cancel out at novice there to elite athletes
Ground, ovals and park maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soccer needs more/better kept grounds • rules around ground closures also impacts usage • provide more grounds for winter/summer sports • better use of existing ovals example school oval and other school facilities out of school hours winter/summer sport usage • maintenance cost vs astroturf long-term • planning for issues e.g ovals that are not coping with loads – which ones can be redone as history • sustainability

3. Workshop - key findings

3.4 Key considerations from the workshops

The community and stakeholder interactions that have taken place to date for the ALHS project will be highly effective in assisting to provide direct input into the development of the long term plan for the Hornsby Shire area.

An early focus of key themes has emerged from the workshops. These themes have been further tested during the ongoing community and stakeholder engagement activities.

Facilities and amenities

- the availability of facilities, overall age of facilities, managing capacity and future growth, available amenities at sports grounds i.e canteen, lights, parking, storage, change rooms, toilets, shade and play parks

Ground management

- day and night management of available facilities, sharing grounds/ multi-functional grounds, managing overcrowding, reviewing procedures for cancellation times for wet weather and exploring sustainable funding options to allow for upgrades and new facilities

Overall growth

- there is a recognition that the Shire is growing rapidly and therefore community interest in some sports/activities is slowly growing consideration will need to be given to all sports / activities and how to manage increased capacity problems

Council and key communications

- looking at ways to better integrate Council's departments to ensure better outcomes, consider how Council can provide more effective support to long term improvements in the management and maintenance of facilities and consider new ways to provide strong leadership on some tough issues (ie ground/facility sharing, traffic and transport solutions and managing increased capacity requirements)
- facilitate more group discussions between sporting groups and other interest groups to encourage sharing of facilities, resources and equipment

Access and connections

- a comprehensive look at the connectivity of pedestrian and cycleways throughout the LGA as well as taking a strong position on local transport management solutions around key facilities

4. Community Open Days - key findings

4.1 Open days overview

There were two community open days; one in Hornsby Mall on Thursday 19th June and the second at Pennant Hills Park Netball Courts on Saturday 21st June.

The purpose of the open days were to provide the community with an overview of the process involved in developing the Active Living Hornsby Strategy and to gain initial feedback from interested community members regarding a number of preliminary ideas coming out of the background research and earlier community engagement.

4.2 Open days approach

The two community open days had the following three activities incorporated into the following broad format:

- Understanding what people like to do in their leisure time to start to establish a general indication of participation levels in key local activities
 - Participants were given three coloured sticky dots to place on the activities that they participated in on a regular basis
- Mapping some key local activities:
 - Participants were asked to answer the following key questions by writing on the flags provided and placing on the LGA wide map
 - Flag 1 – What's your favourite spot in Hornsby Shire? where and why?
 - Flag 2 - Are there recreation facilities that could be improved? where and why?
 - Flag 3 - Are there open spaces that could be improved? where and why?
- Providing insight into how to best communicate the ALHS once approved
- Participants were asked to provide their response to *'the most important way for you to access information about Hornsby open space and recreation facilities in the future?'*

A total of approximately 100 people participated in the two sessions.

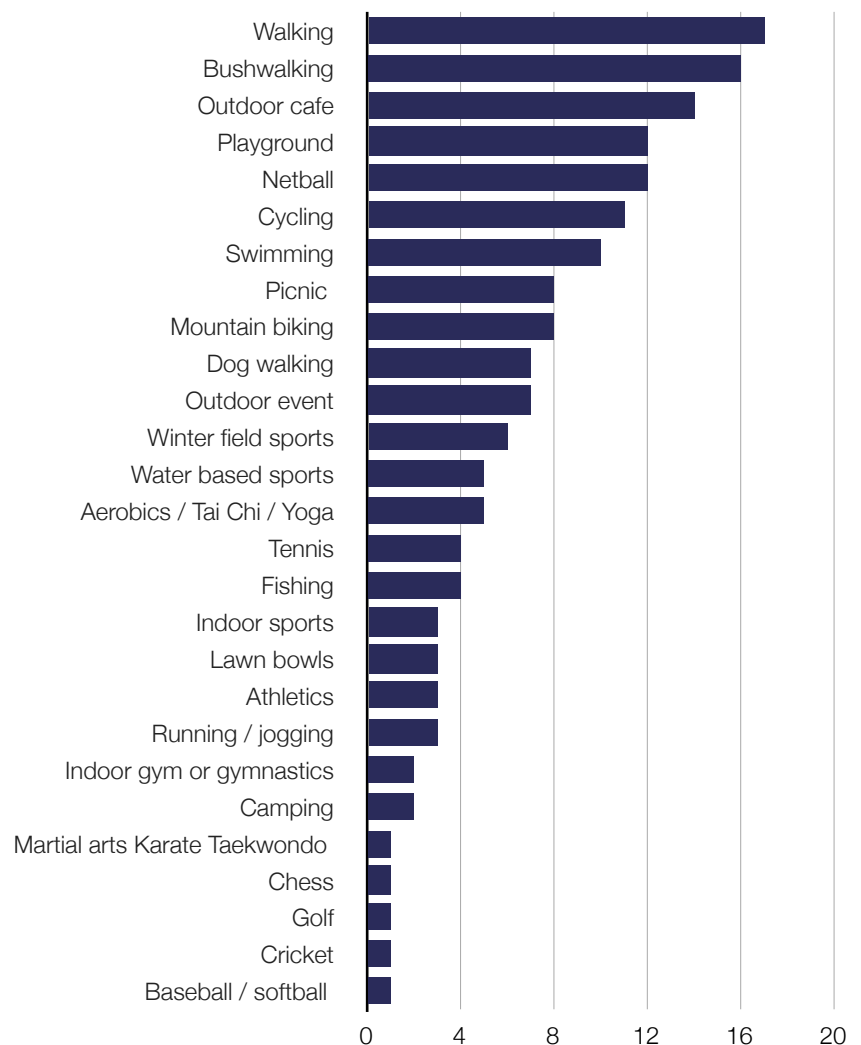
Appendix B is a complete record of the community feedback recorded during the open days.

4.3 The key findings from the open days

4.3.1 Leisure activities

The overall ranking of leisure activities when both open day information is combined is shown below. It is important to recognise that netball is ranked the 5th overall but this will be a direct result of locating the open day at the netball courts in Pennant Hills Park.

Further if the scores for cycling and mountain biking were combined then this would mean that cycling/mountain biking would rank the highest overall leisure activity with those that participate in the open day.



4. Community Open Days - key findings

4.3.2 Local areas

Favorite places

During the open day sessions many places were highlighted as people's favourite places to go within the Hornsby Shire. The places that were noted consistently were:

- Fagan Park - for families, picnics, dogs and for the overall variety
- Berowra Waters - for families, proximity to the water, range of activities
- Ruddock Park - range of family activities
- Pennant Hills Park - for the sporting facilities
- Willow Park - for the playground equipment
- Crosslands Reserve - for bushwalking

Recreational facilities with improvements needed

Recreational facilities that were identified that require improvements included:

- Beecroft Park - lack of playgrounds for middle ages and generally needs fixing
- Pennant Hills Park - safety for pedestrians, accessible footpaths, lack of lighting and signage

Open space facilities with improvements needed

Open space facilities that were identified that require improvements included:

- Willow Park - toilets, hall community space for cultural requirements
- Crosslands Reserve - lack of facilities, more signage needed

4.3.3 Future access and availability of information

Participants were asked to provide their response to *'the most important way for you to access information about Hornsby open space and recreation facilities in the future?'*

Many comments were received about how happy people are with the existing Hornsby Shire Council E-newsletter with many people indicating that this and Council's website were the preferred ways to engage with information from Council. Council's facebook page was also considered a good source of update to date information

Further suggestions and comments received also included things like:

- some families indicated interest in a mobile app that could provide route guidance for bushwalking / cycling / mountain biking.
- include brochures and additional information with rate notices
- signage into the larger parks
- mapping for bushwalks / cycling / mountain biking for the entire Shire that show degrees of difficulty
- specific information regarding playgrounds, what is available, what age groups is it best suited too and headline the key equipment available relevant to age groups
- Council messages should be included and ensure that they reach seniors and young families

Some of the direct quotes that people provided are highlighted below:

'Ruddock Park - my 3 year old thinks its heaven'

'Winter sports suffer due to inadequate lighting'

'Crosslands Park - no facilities for children under 5'

5. Online quiz - key findings

5.1 Online quiz overview

The online quiz was an internet based question and answer site that participants could answer through multiple choice questions to reveal a final personality assessment. Results are displayed at the end of the test. For personality assessment types, the quiz classified the user under eight various categories based on the responses to the quiz questions.

The personality types that categorised the respondents included:

- The Park Royal
- The Eco-Adventurer
- The Urban Explorer
- The Nature Nymph
- The Workout Warrior
- The Clan Fan
- The Rural Ranger
- The Pedal Master

5.2 Online quiz approach

For Hornsby Shire, a personality assessment quiz was available online for a 21 days where participants were able to answer a series of preference based questions showcasing the different features of the Shire's open spaces. By the end of the test, they were classified into one of the eight different user types or personalities in relation to the open space that they are most interested in.

The online quiz had 6 questions:

1. *When I go and unwind, I go to...*
2. *Your idea of a perfect weekend is to...*
3. *I like going out to...*
4. *I always like to have an awesome time with my...*
5. *For me, the best open spaces have...*
6. *My favourite outdoor activity in Hornsby Shire is...*

5.3 Online quiz responses

A total of 362 people participated in the online quiz.

Illustrated on this page are the personality types and the number of participants that received each personality type.

The Clan Fan and The Rural Ranger being the most popular personality types.

5.4 The key findings from the online quiz



The Park Royal

You are the King or Queen of public parks and picnic areas. You like to spend most of your time lounging by the grass, lunching out on a picnic mat, flying a kite or simply, sunbathing, enjoying the green landscape with your loved ones.

45



The Eco-Adventurer

When you hear the word 'reserves' or 'camping', you respond by immediately packing all the things needed for a weekend outdoor adventure, walking on trails, getting lost in the national park, sleeping in a tent, taking photos of nature — these are just some of the activities you look forward to the most.

13



The Urban Explorer

You are either an art lover, a photographer, an entertainment fan, a foodie or simply, a big city fan in general! hanging out in busy public spaces, streets, or waterfront locations excite you! plus, you are always on the lookout for new events, stores and interesting corners to discover in your city.

53



The Nature Nymph

Being around nature gives you peace, serenity and pure happiness! Hawkesbury River or bushwalking make you feel at home, you enjoy walking, cycling and horse riding because the whole earth is your backyard and you're always out to discover more local sights that make you one with mother nature!

32



The Workout Warrior

Let me guess, you're an athlete right? sports enthusiast? fitness fanatic? to you, sports grounds are must-visit places in your local area, whether they're ovals, pools, golf course, tennis courts, bike paths, bowling greens, and sporting fields, your friends always know where to find you — because you always like to train or watch a game there!

35



The Clan Fan

Family activities come first! you like to take your kids out riding their bike, or head to the park for a play on the swings, you mostly spend your weekends watching young ones play cricket or netball too! a good time is defined by bonding outdoors with your family.

73



The Rural Ranger

You live outside the city where animals and open spaces are right next door! you appreciate the wide open landscapes that separates you from neighbours, as well as riding your quad bike, strolling on local bushlands and visiting parks where you and your family can stretch out the picnic rug and take up as much space as you like, the beautiful and calm rural area is your paradise!

63



The Pedal Master

You are unstoppable as long as you are cycling your way through vast urban landscapes and lush open spaces! plus, there's no traffic! whether you bike to work, relax, explore or bond with your buddies, as long as the wind is blowing through your face and you're getting your own slice of exercise while going places, just name it -- and you'll pedal your way through a great day!

14

Participants were asked to select one option for the question:

- *When I go and unwind, I go to...*

The graph opposite indicates how many people selected each of the possible answers.

The top three selected choices were:

- *National parks, the countryside*
- *the park*
- *markets, outdoor cafes*

The urban and natural setting of Hornsby is highlighted as a popular reason for why people choose to live in Hornsby Shire.



Rural Ranger

5. Online quiz - key findings

When I go and unwind I go to...



5. Online quiz - key findings

Participants were asked to select one option for the question:

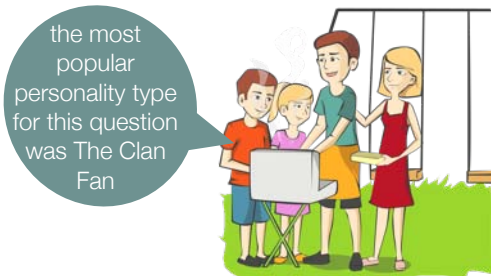
- *Your idea of a perfect weekend is to...*

The diagram opposite indicates how many people selected each of the possible answers.

The top three selected choices were:

- *have a blast with the kids outdoors*
- *have a picnic or go for a leisurely walk*
- *go hiking and bushwalking*

The natural setting and open space social activities are popular with respondents.



The Clan Fan

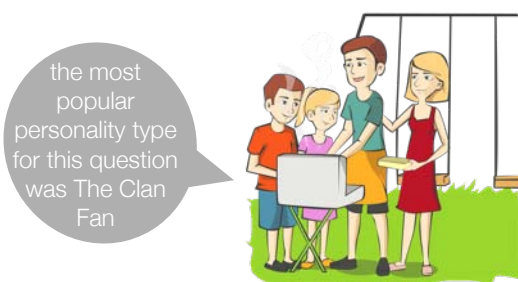
Participants were asked to select one option for the question:

- *I like going to*

The graph opposite indicates how many people selected each of the possible answers.

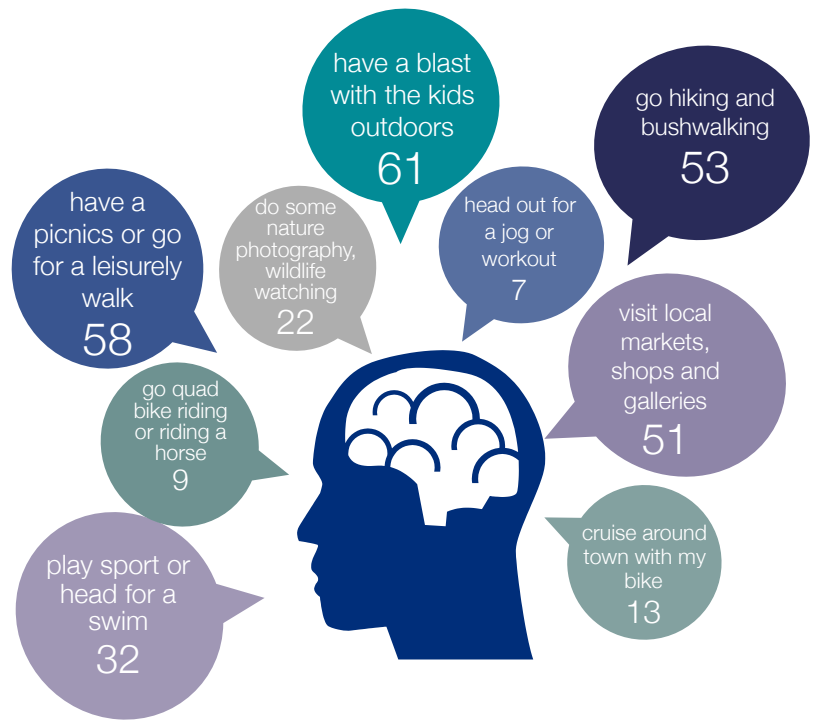
The top three selected choices were:

- *have quality time with family*
- *have a relaxing and peaceful time*
- *discover new places*

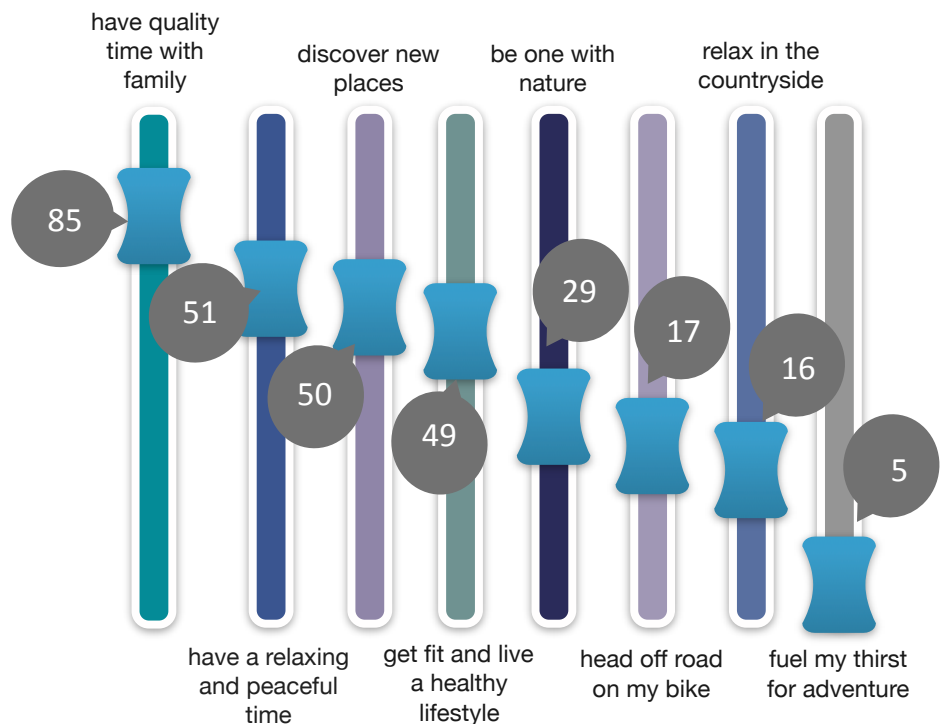


The Clan Fan

Your idea of a perfect weekend is to...



I like going out to...



5. Online quiz - key findings

Participants were asked to select one option for the question:

- *I always like to have an awesome time with my...*

The diagram opposite indicates how many people selected each of the possible answers.

The top three selected choices were:

- *family*
- *friends*
- *my partner*

the most popular personality type for this question was The Clan Fan



The Clan Fan

I always like to have an awesome time with my...



5. Online quiz - key findings

Participants were asked to select one option for the question:

- For me, the best open spaces have...

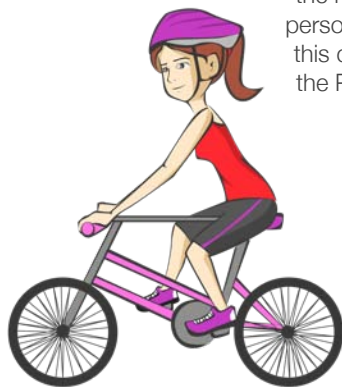
The diagram opposite indicates how many people selected each of the possible answers.

The top three selected choices were:

- wide open fields, natural landscape and bushland set friends
- trees, gardens, plants and wildlife
- lots of relaxing, fun outdoor activities

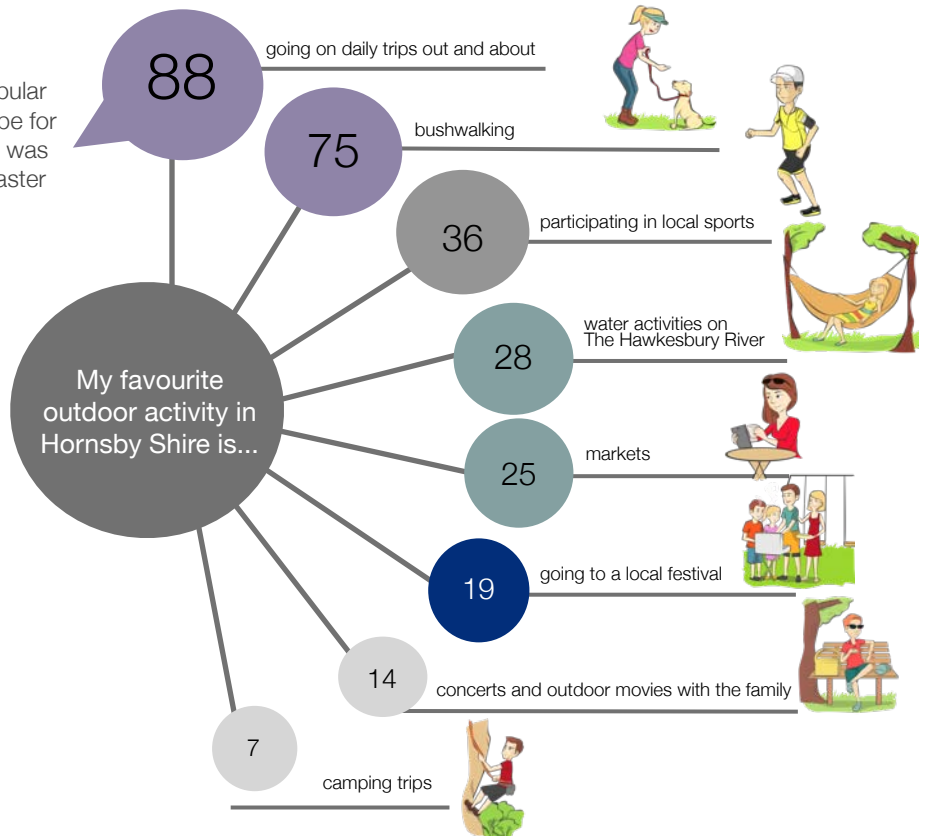
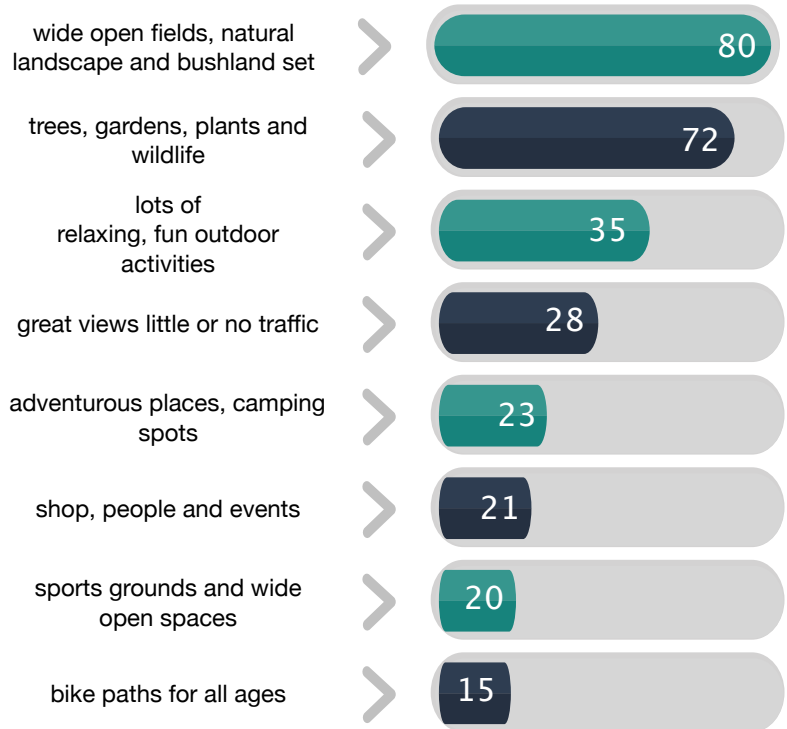


Rural Ranger



the most popular personality type for this question was the Pedal Master

For me, the best open spaces have...



6. Online survey - key findings

6.1 Online survey overview

The purpose of the online survey was to gain initial feedback from interested community members regarding a number of preliminary ideas coming out of the background research and earlier community engagement.

The survey was promoted via Council's website, Facebook posts, posters, postcards and direct email databases.

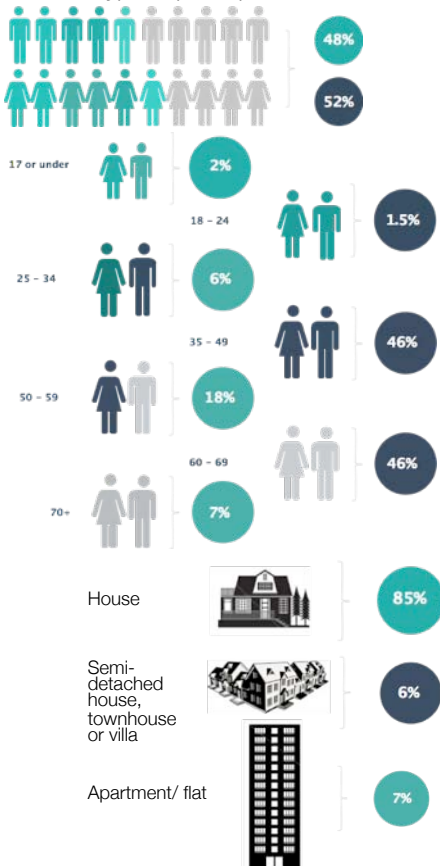
6.2 Online survey approach

The focus of the survey was on the following core elements:

- trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation activities
- demographic, cultural and characteristic data of the community
- identification of current and future open space and recreation needs
- assess community satisfaction with existing open space and recreation facilities.

6.3 Who responded to the survey?

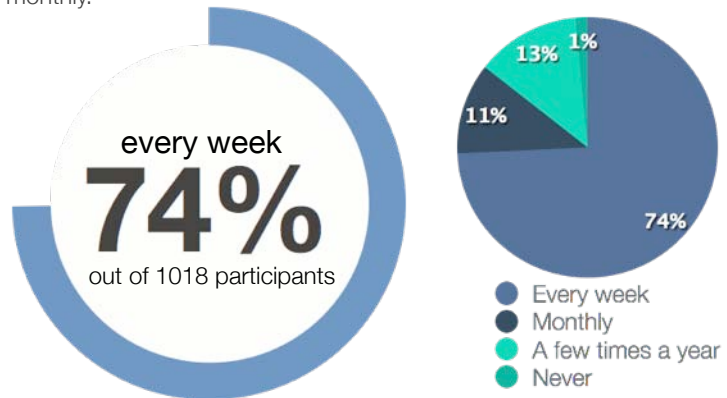
The online survey was available online for 21 days and a total of 1018 people participated in the survey. The following diagrams illustrate the gender, age and resident type of participants.



6.4 The key findings

6.4.1 Frequency of use

There are 85% of the participants that are using the existing open space and recreational facilities of Hornsby Shire on a regular basis either weekly or monthly.



6.4.2 Ranking of the types of things people like to do

Participants were asked to rank 'What open spaces/recreation facilities do you go to most often in Hornsby Shire?' The table below provides an overview of how this question was answered. The number one ranked activities in order of preference were outdoor sports, parklands, natural areas and bushland. It must be acknowledged that this question was recognised as not user friendly once set up in the online survey software and as such may not be a true representation of the local preferences.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Parklands (playgrounds, picnic, BBQ, etc.)	24.75%	20.88%	17.38%	16.13%	10.13%	8.75%	2.00%
	198	167	139	129	81	70	16
Outdoor sports (playing fields, courts, skate parks, etc.)	27.50%	14.75%	12.38%	8.75%	12.25%	12.13%	12.25%
	220	118	99	70	98	97	98
Civic and urban spaces (town squares, public plazas, town gardens, street cafes, outdoor malls etc.)	13.25%	19.50%	22.75%	15.13%	12.63%	10.13%	6.63%
	106	156	182	121	101	81	53
Conservation and heritage (bushland, historic parks, etc.)	6.13%	13.25%	15.50%	21.38%	19.25%	14.63%	9.88%
	49	106	124	171	154	117	79
River foreshores (river beaches, riverside parks, boat ramps etc.)	2.88%	6.50%	7.63%	11.38%	21.25%	20.50%	29.88%
	23	52	61	91	170	164	239
Natural areas and bushland (bushwalking trails, mountain bike tracks, camping grounds)	20.13%	16.00%	14.50%	15.88%	13.50%	15.63%	4.38%
	161	128	116	127	108	125	35
Indoor facilities (swimming pools, courts, gyms, fitness class venues)	5.38%	9.13%	9.88%	11.38%	11.00%	18.25%	35.00%
	43	73	79	91	88	146	280

6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.3 Why people don't use open space regularly

There were 147 people (14%) indicated that they either only used Hornsby open spaces and recreational facilities 'a few times a year or never'. The reasons provided are summarised below.



Some of the direct quotes that people provided are highlighted below:

'lack of personal time, I would like to get out more'

'lack of time after long commuting and full time work'

'I live on acreage and have enough open space at home'

'I live in god's country. I am surrounded by bush and I work outside in the paddocks or bush everyday'

'other than mountain bike track, nowhere off road for cycling with family that isn't heavily pedestrianised'

'leisure time spent in other ways'

'many children's parks are unstimulating and basic'

'I'm lazy'

We heard that some of the key reasons that people don't use open space and recreational facilities regularly were due to:

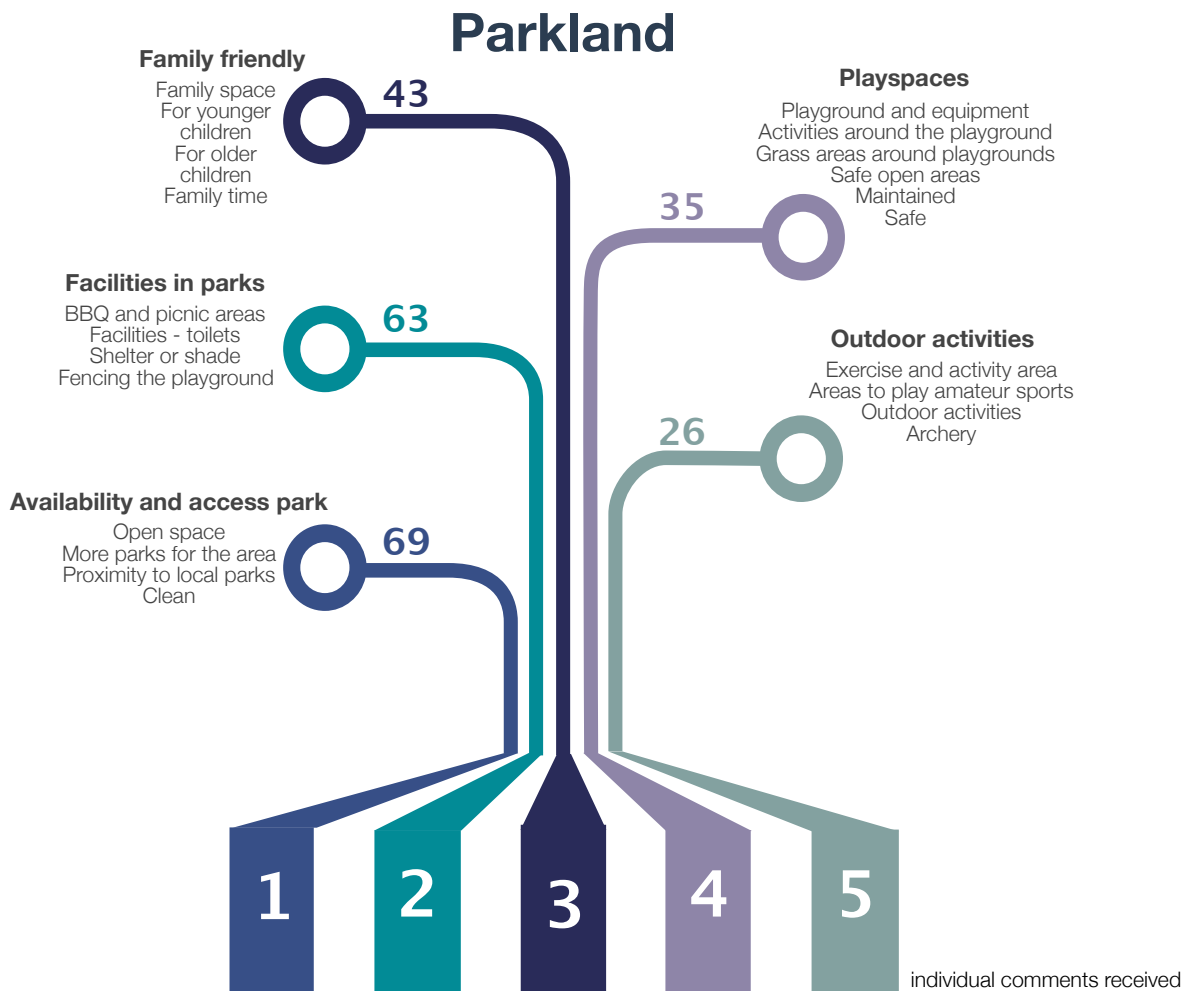
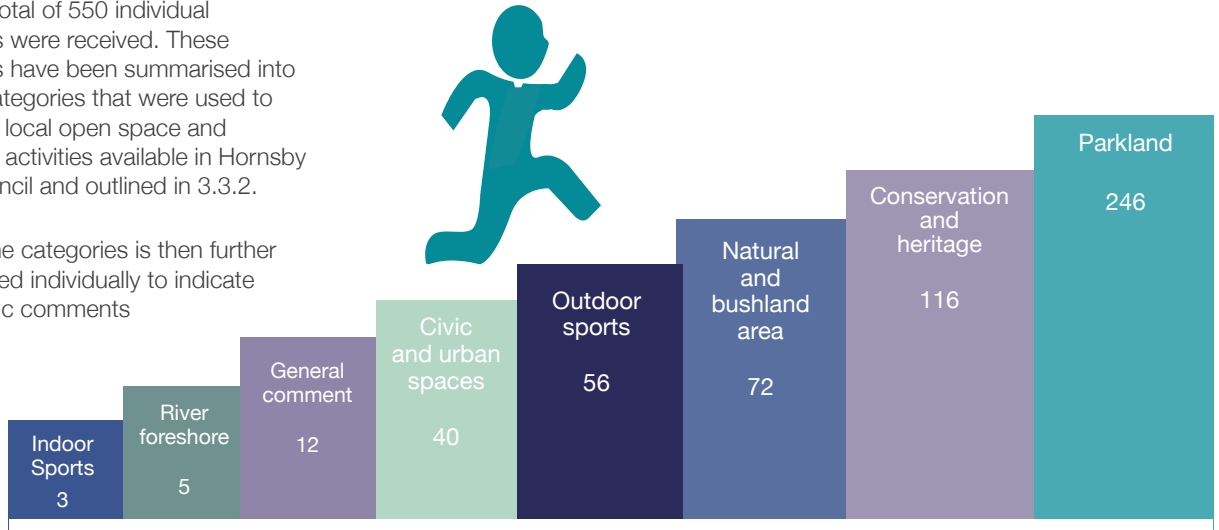
- lack of time
- out of the area
- other activities take up time
- outdated and not enough equipment or facilities
- pools are unavailable

6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.4 Local value of parks and open spaces in Hornsby Shire

Participants were asked an open ended question 'What do people value about parks and open spaces in Hornsby Shire'. A total of 550 individual responses were received. These responses have been summarised into the key categories that were used to define the local open space and recreation activities available in Hornsby Shire Council and outlined in 3.3.2.

Each of the categories is then further summarised individually to indicate the specific comments received.



6. Online survey - key findings

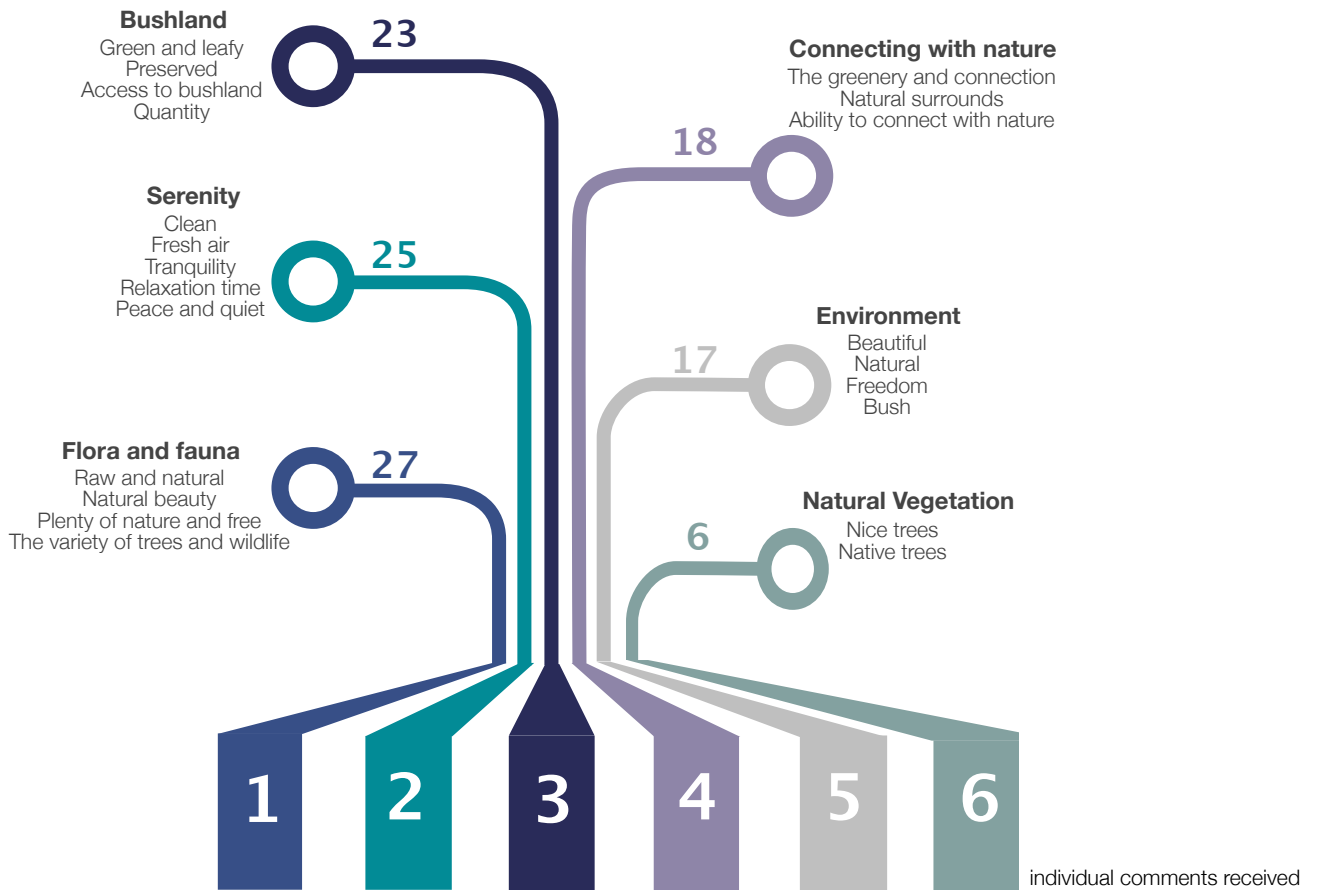
Edgeworth David Garden



Lilian Fraser Gardens



Conservation and heritage



6. Online survey - key findings

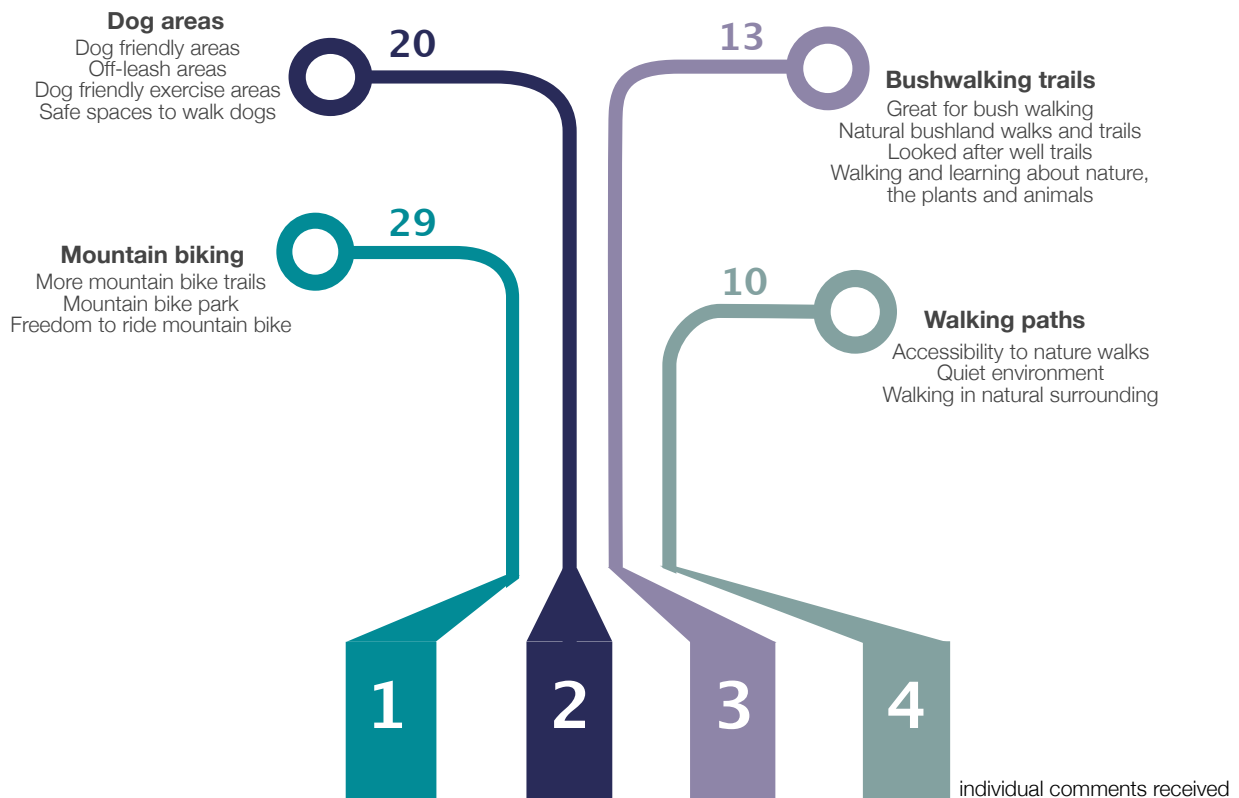
Carmen Park



Little Ray Park



Natural and bushland area



6. Online survey - key findings

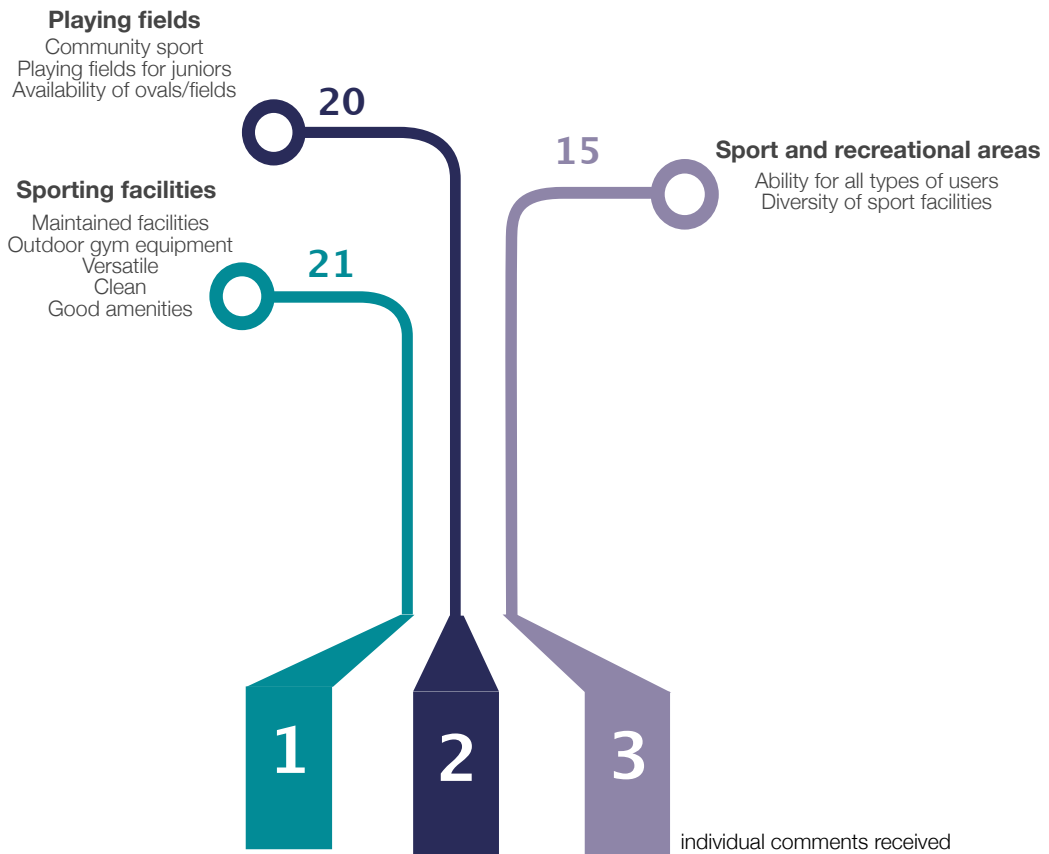
Galston Recreation Reserve



Waitara Oval



Outdoor sports



6. Online survey - key findings

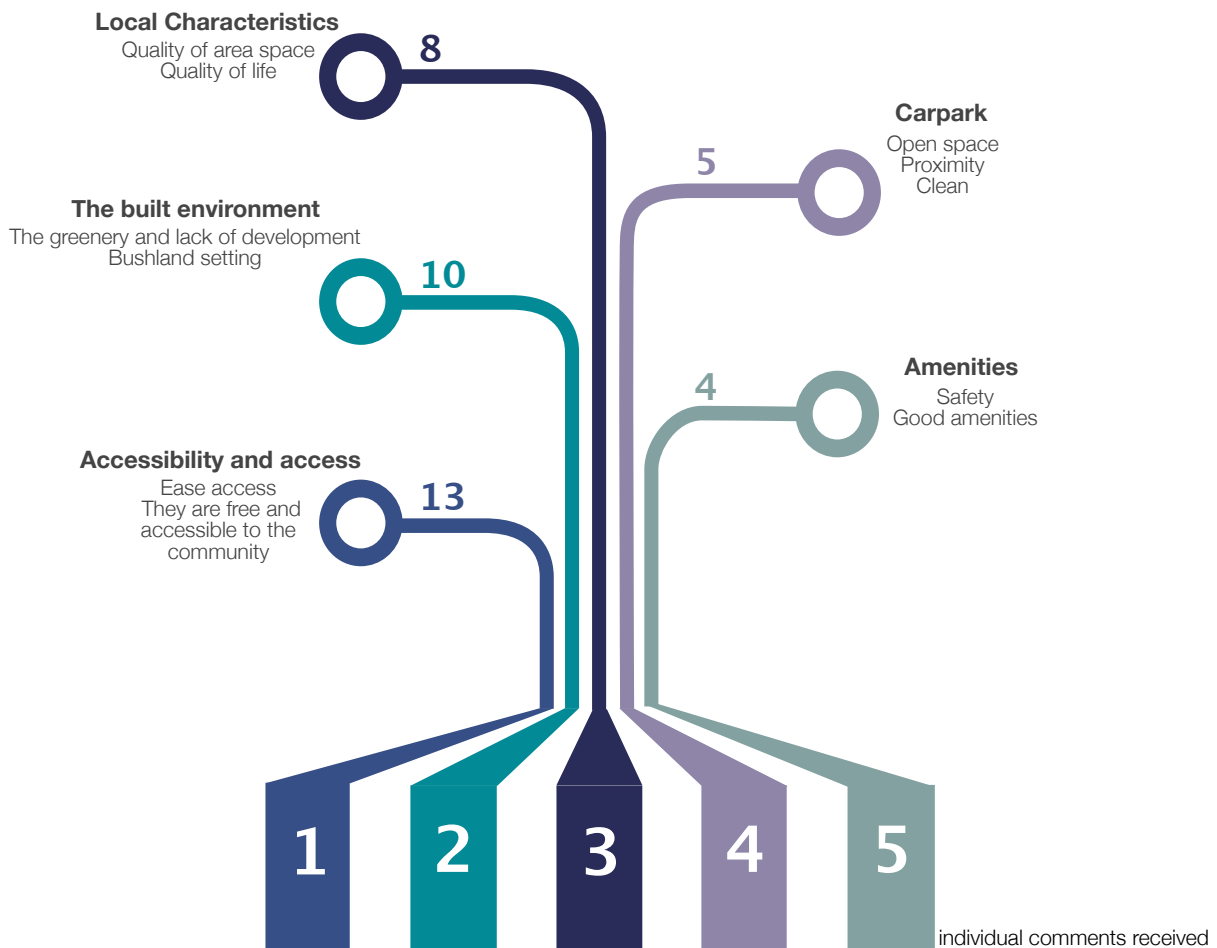
Beecroft Village Green



Crossroads Park Berowra Heights



Civic and urban spaces



6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.5 Satisfaction levels with existing facilities

Overall 64% of people surveyed are very satisfied or satisfied with existing open space and recreational facilities with only 14% unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.



6.4.6 Testing some initial ideas

Feedback from the community engagement workshops and open days had indicated a number of things that were considered important. The purpose of this question was to test what participants thought about whether the idea/initiative was essential, desirable, does not matter or not required.

The purpose of testing these ideas was to provide direct input into the priorities and focus of the ALHS.

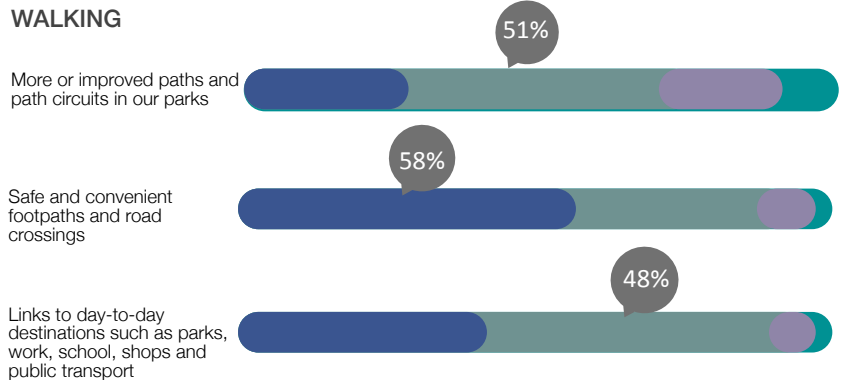
The ideas were tested around the following key activities:

- walking
- cycling
- children's play
- bushwalking
- sport

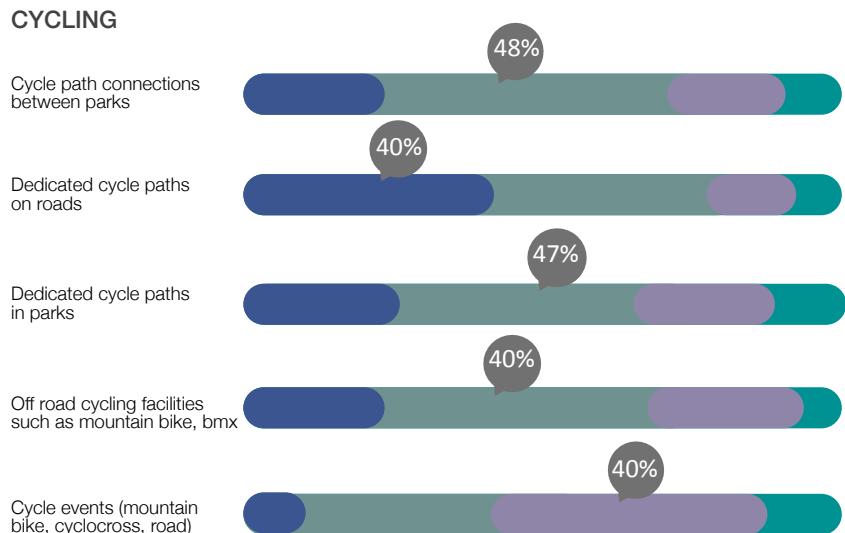
On this page and the following are a number of summary diagrams that highlight the percentage of responses for the highest ranked response for each idea/initiative.



WALKING



CYCLING



6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.6.1 the key findings of testing initial ideas

Walking

For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings* (48%)

Cycling

For the cycling initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Cycle path connections between parks* (48%)

Also interesting to note is that 40% of responses indicated that *cycle events* 'does not matter'.

Children's play

For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play* (48%)

Bushwalking

For the bushwalking initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *More or better bush walking tracks* (56%)

Sport

For the sport initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing* (55%)



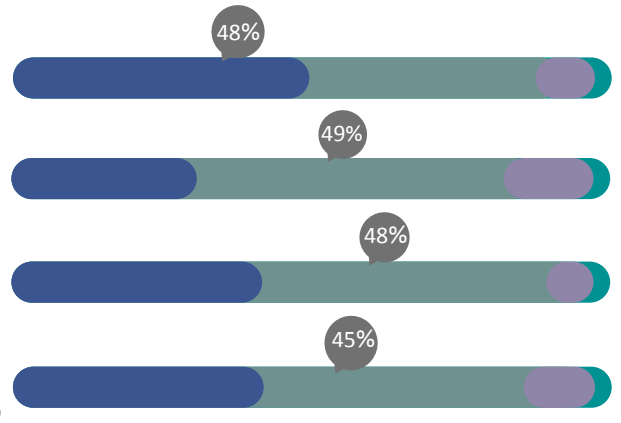
CHILDREN'S PLAY

A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play

Larger better play spaces

Play spaces for ages 8-12

Spaces for 12-18 year olds (skateparks, public plazas, street cafes, outdoor malls)



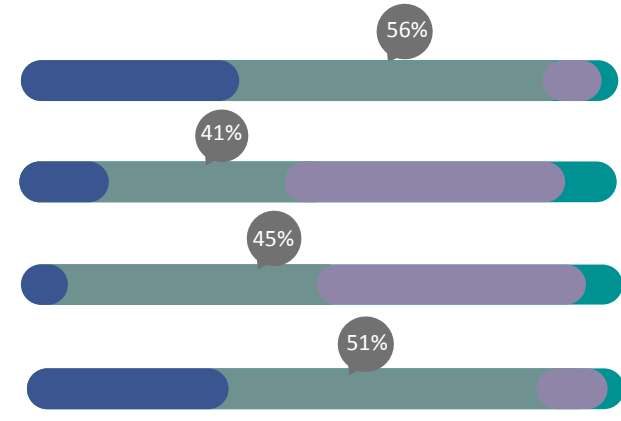
BUSHWALKING

More or better bush walking tracks

Overnight accommodation for longer walks

Guided walks

Improved signs and access to bush walking tracks



SPORT

Synthetic grass playing fields

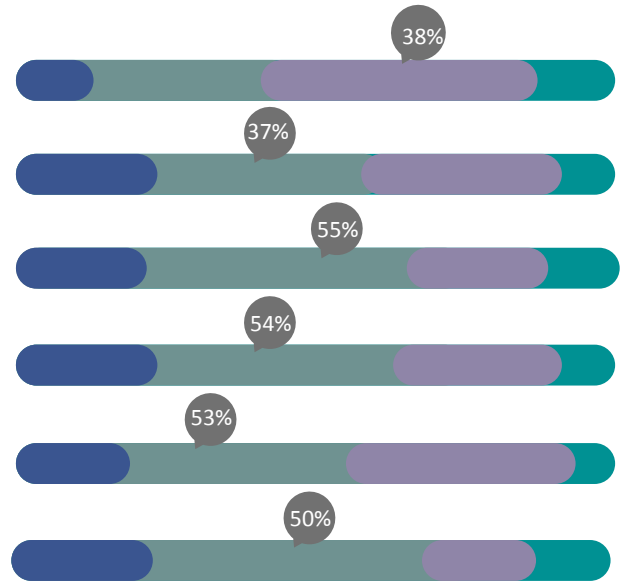
Upgrade of the pool in Epping

Facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing

Outdoor basketball and netball courts

Tennis courts

Indoor sports facilities (courts, gyms etc...)



6. Online survey - key findings

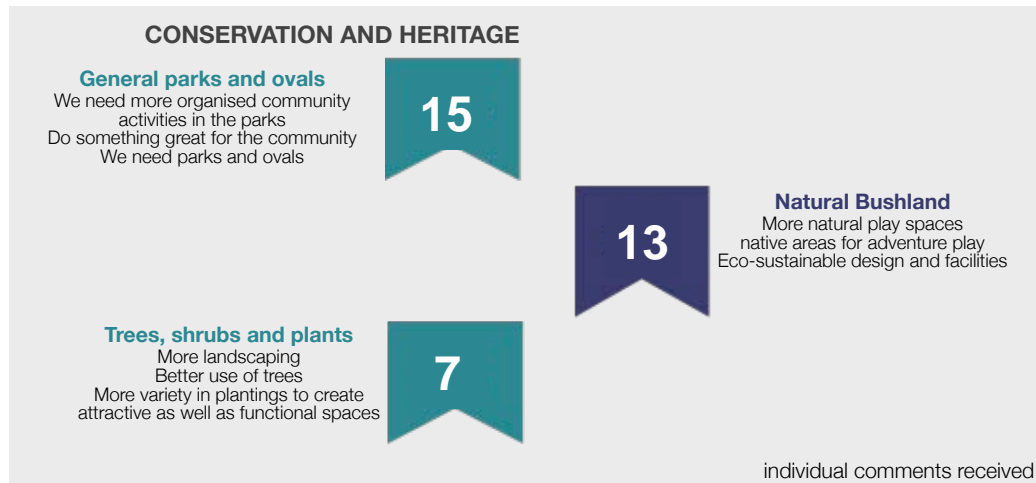
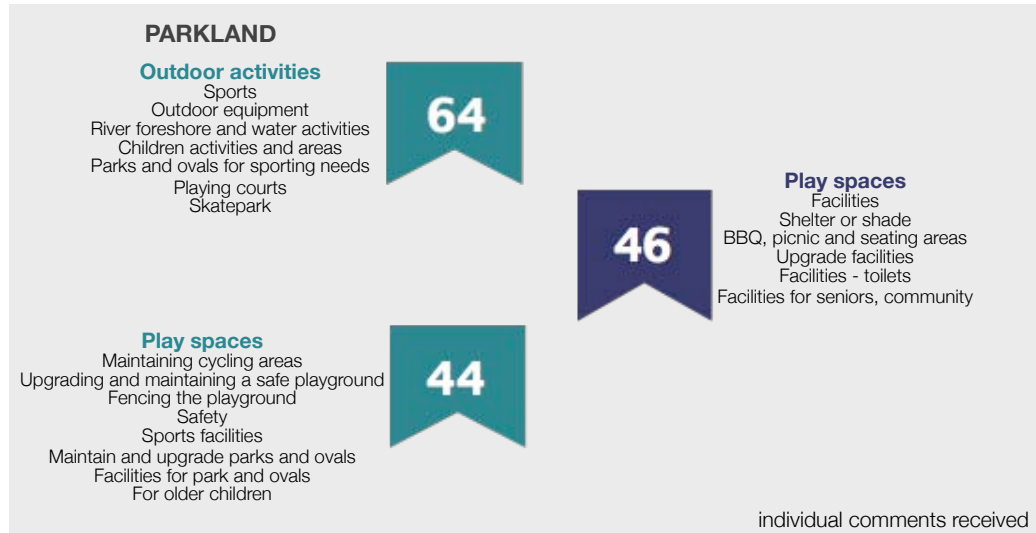
6.4.7 Any additional comments

When asked if there was anything else that people would like to tell Council regarding Hornsby Shire's open spaces and recreational facilities the following are the break down of the key issues and how many individual comments were received for each of the key open space/ recreation types.

The following areas are illustrated on this page and the following:

- Parkland
- Conservation and heritage
- Indoor sports
- Natural and bushland area
- Civic and urban spaces

Only those that received more than a few comments are summarised in the graphs.



6. Online survey - key findings

NATURAL AND BUSHLAND AREA

Off-leash dog parks pr area
More off-leash dog areas
Dog friendly
Lighting in dog areas

15

8

On road cycling
Improved cycling conditions on public roads
Bicycle circuit

New mountain bike trails
Thank you for the Old Mans Valley
mountain bike circuit

8

8

Mountain biking upgrading and new trails
More general access and trails for
mountain bikers

Bike tracks
More or better bike tracks

8

8

Walking tracks for parks and ovals
More paths and circuits

Accessible
Make walkways more accessible
Make it more pram and wheelchair
friendly

7

7

Dog facilities and access
Management and availability

Mountain bike facilities
More mountain bike facilities

7

2

Off road cycling
Better facilities

2

Negative feedback for mountain biking
Damage to natural spaces

individual comments received

CIVIC AND URBAN SPACES

Open spaces
Provision of open space in higher density

15

8

Parking
Provision of parking

Built environment
Need more cafe, shops etc
More meeting areas

8

8

Maintenance
Management and attention

Accessible
Make walkways more accessible
for pram and wheelchairs

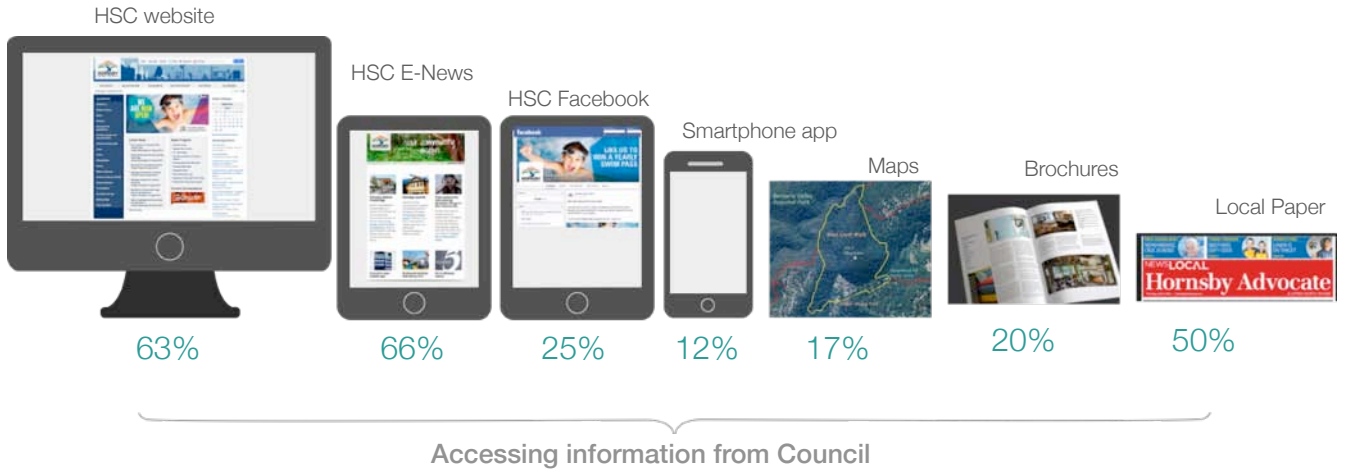
8

individual comments received

6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.8 Access to information for open spaces and recreation areas

Participants were asked 'How would you like to receive or access information about Hornsby Shire Council's open spaces and recreation facilities in the future?' and could choose from the list below all that they felt relevant to them. The 3 top information sources identified by participants included the Hornsby Council Website (63%) Hornsby Council E-News (66%) and the local paper (50%).



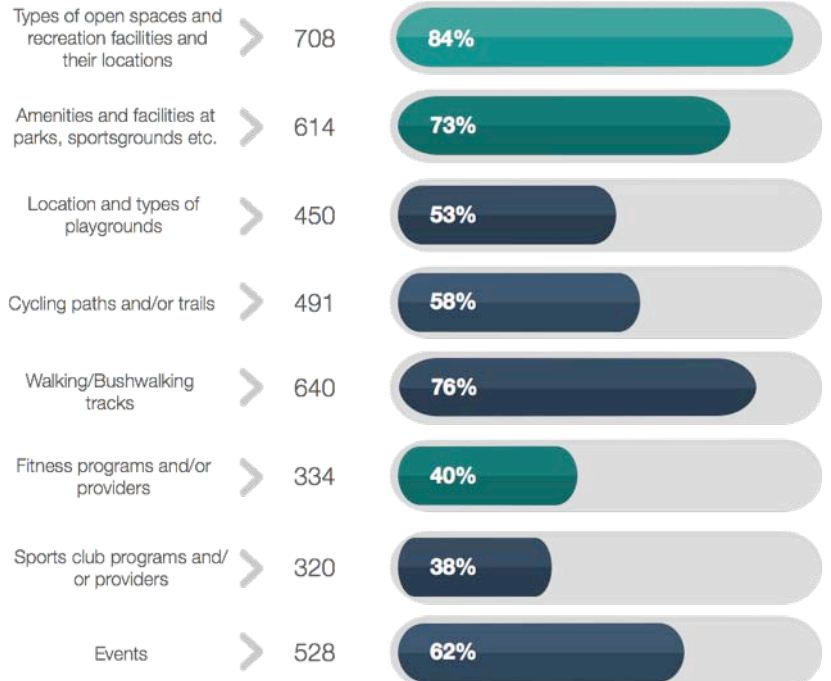
6.4.9 Type of information to be provided

Participants were further asked to indicate the types of things that they would like information from Council about and again could select as many options as were provided.

The graph illustrates the numbers of people and percentage that selected each option provided.

Participants were also able to provide any other additional comments. The focus of the comments included wanting specific information on the following:

- Dog parks
- Cycling and bike paths
- Sports activities (both indoor and outdoor)
- Community gardens
- Markets (locations and dates)
- Council to act as an information source



6. Online survey - key findings

6.4.10 Location of participants

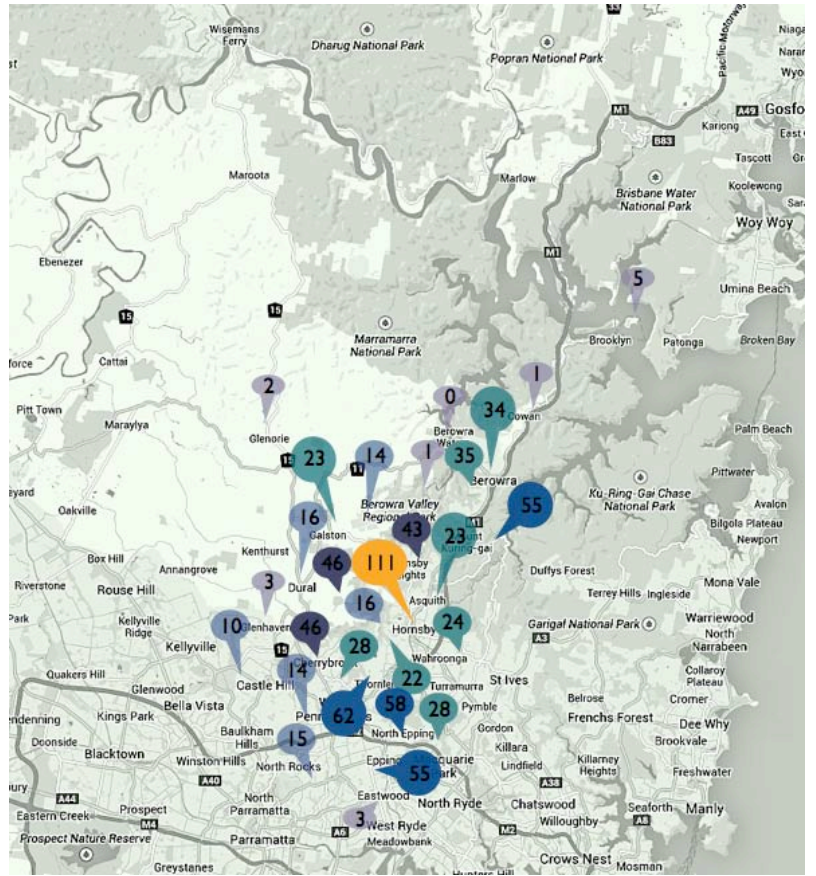
The map opposite indicates the distribution of participants across the Hornsby Shire Council local government area. The most common locations of respondents were:

- Hornsby (111)
- Thornleigh (62)
- North Epping (58)
- Epping (55)

6.4.11 Cultural background

The world map below shows the location of the cultural background of participants. The top areas included:

- Australia (813)
- United Kingdom (85)
- European (31)



7. CALD Focus Group - key findings

7.1 Focus group overview

The purpose of the CALD focus group was to provide the community with an overview of the process involved in developing the ALHS and to gain initial feedback from interested community members regarding a number of preliminary ideas from the background research and earlier community engagement.

There were 9 participants at the focus group.

7.2 Focus group approach

The aim of the focus group was to:

- create an opportunity to engage directly with CALD community members; and gather input and ideas from the CALD community that can influence the future implementation of the ALHS

There were three core elements to the purpose of this engagement

- Understand what places and spaces are important, where are people going and why?
- Understand what participants like to do in their free time (and where) and to gain an understanding of whether improvements are needed
- Testing ideas that have been gathered from the engagement process so far that will assist define feature needs and aspirations

7.3 The key findings

The key reasons to visit:

There were three core elements to this engagement:

- Understand what places and spaces are important, where are people going and why?
- Understand what participants like to do in their free time (and where) and to gain an understanding of whether improvements are needed
- Testing ideas that have been gathered from the engagement process so far that will assist define feature needs and aspirations

7.4 Frequency of use

All 9 of the participants indicated that they are using the existing open space and recreational facilities of Hornsby Shire on a weekly basis. With each participant able to indicate the types of activities that they participate on a weekly, monthly, only occasionally basis.

7.5 Favourite locations

The participants at the focus group are all very active users of the open spaces and recreational facilities within the Shire indicating that they use both local and regional facilities for social gatherings, leisure and recreation

The areas that received specific identification were:

- Ruddock Park
- Fagan Park
- Pennant Hills Park
- Lisgar gardens
- Local parks and playgrounds within close proximity to their homes

7.6 Additional feedback received

The following are some specific comments received directly from participants:

- *Hornsby Shire is proud of its natural environment, we would love to keep this feature, we can travel to other places for artificial parks, money can be spent on keeping the environment*
- *I would prefer more smaller playgrounds because bigger places will be more crowded, smaller close by are more practical for me*
- *the bushwalking book has good clear information*
- *information is clear on Council website however need multi-lingual information*
- *important to know more about the fauna and flora about Aboriginal places along the way*
- *I think what Council is doing now is sufficient - for local sports*

7. CALD Focus Group - key findings



7.7 Testing ideas / initiatives

The key reasons to visit:

Activities	Very Important	Important	Does not matter	Not needed
Walking 1	7			
Walking 2	5	2		
Cycling 1	2	4	1	
Cycling 2	2	2	1	
Cycling 3		3	4	
Children play 1	3	4		
Children play 2		5	2	1
Children play 3	1	5	1	
Bushwalking 1	6	1		
Bushwalking 2	2	5		
Bushwalking 3	5	2		
Sport 1	7			
Sport 2	3	4		

Specific feedback included:

Walking: free maps free maps of the bush in the Shire should be made available at the library or other public places

Cycling: my kids would like to ride to Hornsby North but it is too dangerous, organise dedicated paths and meeting points for students from the same school 'cycle bus'

Children's play: build some big parks and with more fun for both kids and youth, important with water, small pools with water for kids so they can play and get cool during the summer, more adventure and challenge, safe with a variety of options, limit hard surfaces, swings are good but not enough

Bushwalking: signs and information spots and safe places, clear information would encourage people to use more, different experience than a family walk in the local park

Sport: the local pool is very important, consider women only times for the pool, want to have more places for table tennis and badminton

8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.1 Online survey overview

The purpose of the online survey was to gain specific feedback from people living in higher density units, apartments within the LGA.

The survey was promoted via posters, postcards, strata managers, direct email databases and Council Facebook.

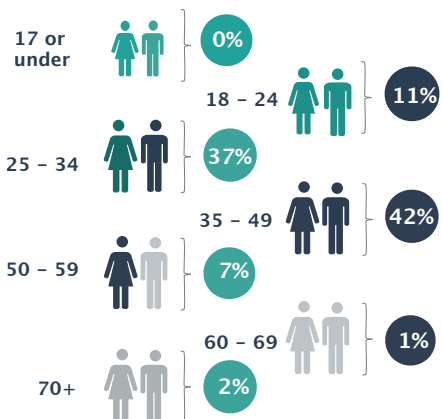
8.2 Online survey approach

The focus of the survey was on the following core elements:

- trends, usage and participation rates for sport and recreation activities
- demographic, cultural and characteristic data of the community
- identification of current and future open space and recreation needs
- assess community satisfaction with existing open space and recreation facilities.
- understand what the higher density residents are using the local open spaces for ie relaxation, exercise or children's play and to understand how they are moving around their local area

8.3 Who responded to the survey?

The online survey was available online for 14 days and a total of 108 people participated in the survey. The following diagrams illustrate the gender, age and resident type of participants.



small complex (less than 12 flats/ apartments)



26%

medium complex (less than 40 flats/ apartments)



43%

large complex (more than 40 flats/ apartments)

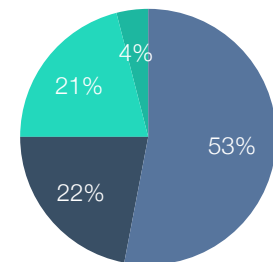


38%

8.4 The key findings

8.4.1 Frequency of use

There are 75% of the participants that are using the existing open space and recreational facilities of Hornsby Shire on a regular basis either weekly or monthly.



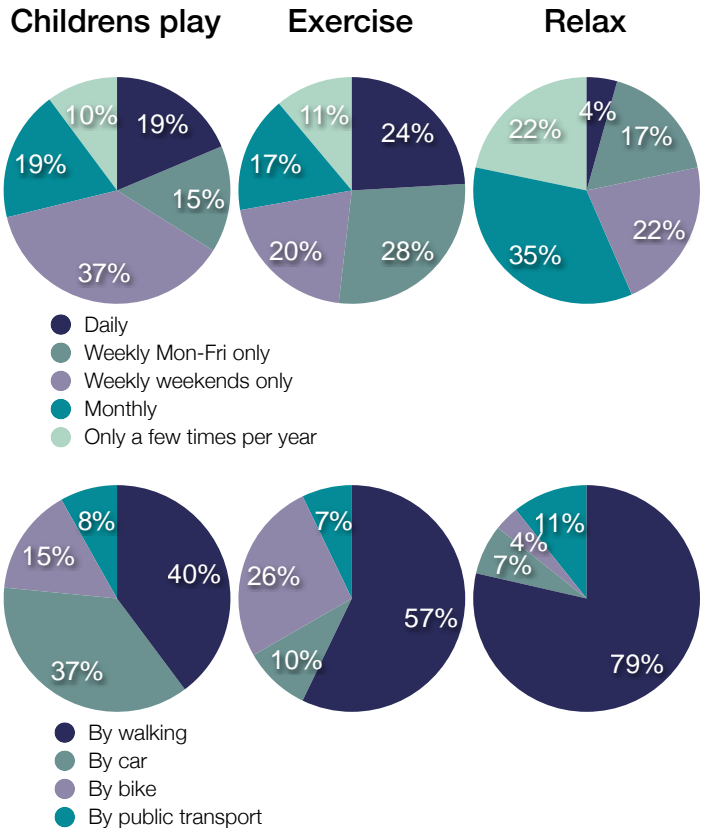
- Every week
- Monthly
- A few times a year
- Never

High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.2 Frequency of use of a local park

Participants were asked to indicate a response of how regularly they are visiting a local park, what they were using the park for, and how they are getting there.

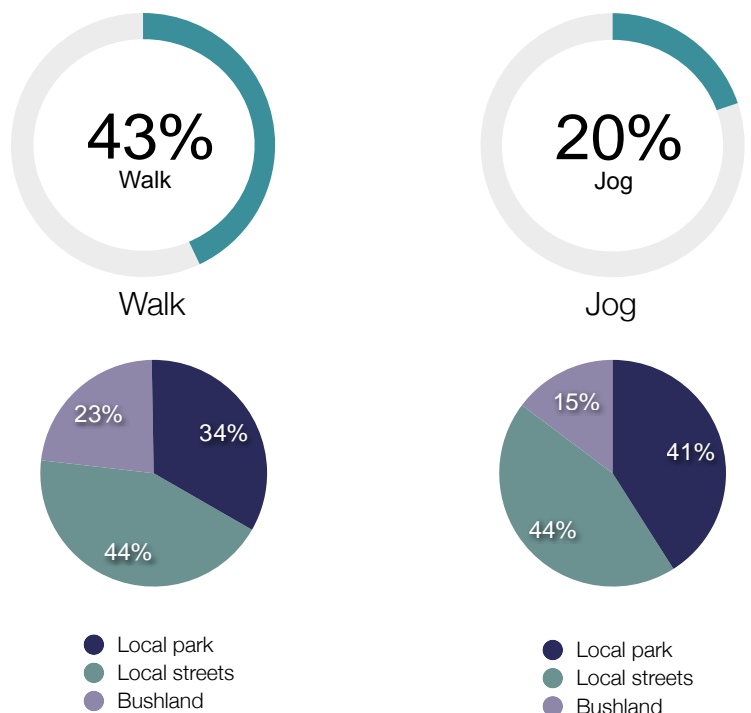
The graphs on this page provide a summary of these responses.



8.4.3 Participation in regular exercise

Participants were asked to indicate whether they walk or jog for exercise from their flat or apartment and if they do where do they undertake this activity in a local park, local streets or bushland setting.

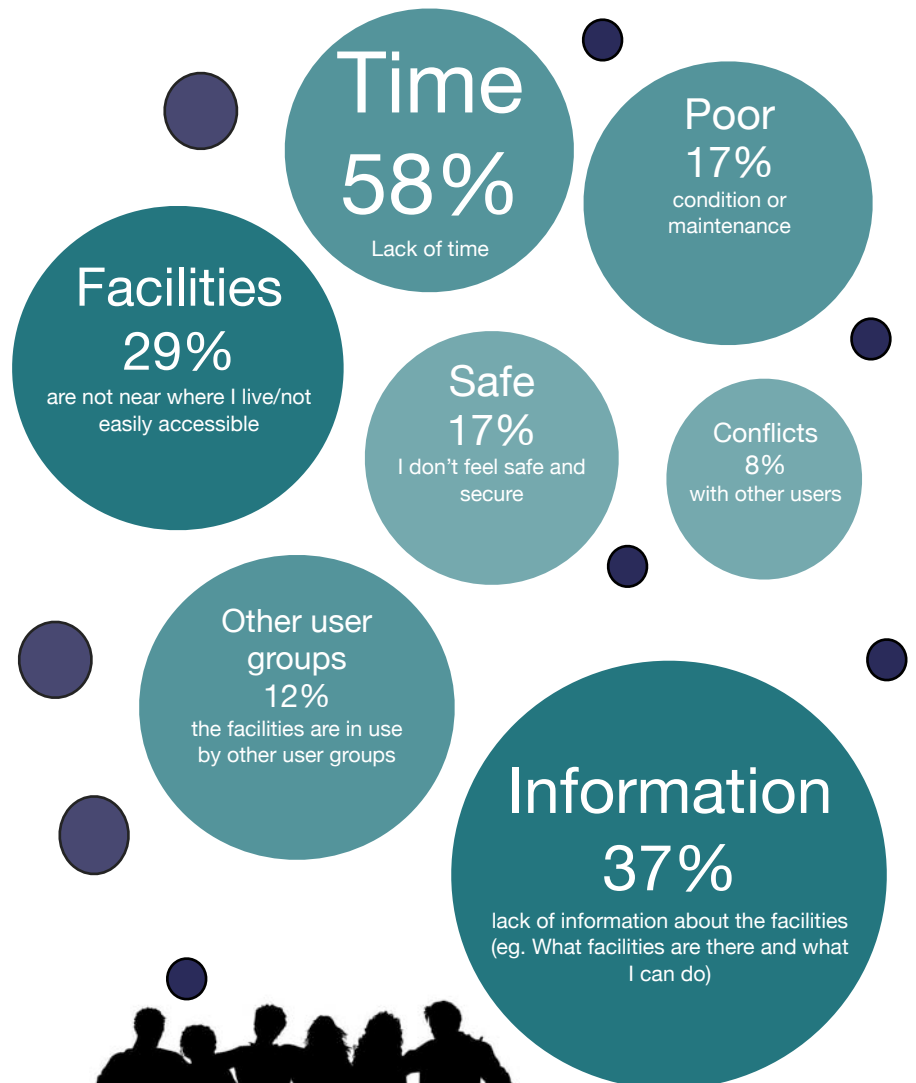
The graphs on this page provide a summary of these responses.



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.4 Why people don't use open space regularly

There were 24 people (21%) indicated that they either only used Hornsby open spaces and recreational facilities 'a few times a year or never'. The reasons provided are summarised in the below diagram, participants were able to select all responses that were relevant to them.



Some of the direct quotes that people provided are highlighted below:

- *'not interested'*
- *'the toilets are always locked - during the day'*
- *'facilities don't exist that I want to use'*



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.5 Local value of parks and open spaces in Hornsby Shire

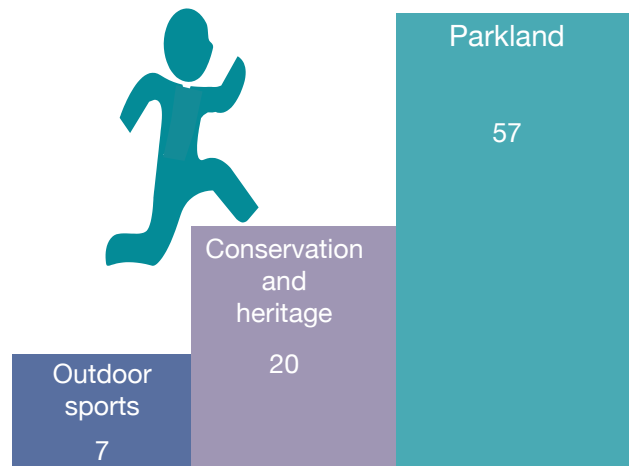
Participants were asked an open ended question 'What do people value about parks and open spaces in Hornsby Shire'. A total of 84 individual responses were received. These responses have been summarised into the key categories that were used to define the local open space and recreation activities available in Hornsby Shire Council and outlined in 3.3.2.

Comments were only received for

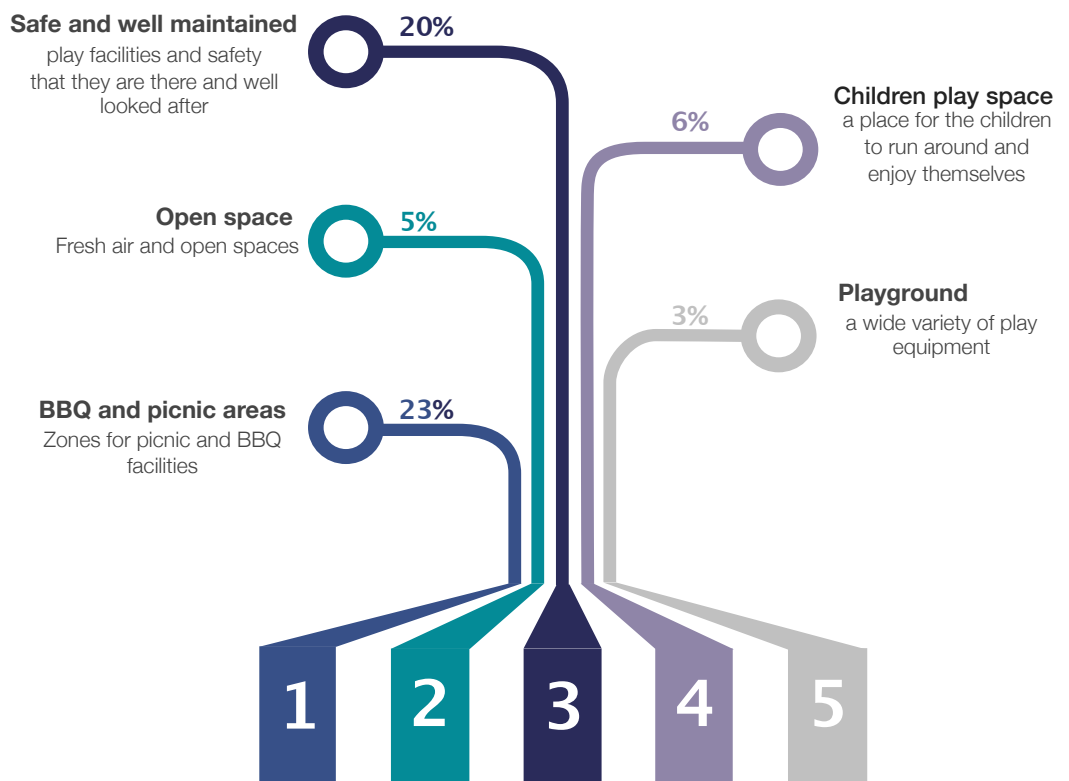
- Parkland - the key comments for this are outlined in the below graph
- Conservation and heritage - consisted of comments about
- Outdoor sports - the comments received related to....

With no comments provided for

- Natural and bushland area
- Civic and urban spaces
- River foreshore
- Indoor sports



Parkland



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.6 Satisfaction levels with existing facilities

Overall 58% of people surveyed are very satisfied or satisfied with existing open space and recreational facilities with only 15% unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.



8.4.7 Testing some initial ideas

Feedback from the community engagement workshops and open days had indicated a number of things that were considered important. The purpose of this question was to test what participants thought about whether the idea/initiative was essential, desirable, does not matter or not required.

The purpose of testing these ideas was to provide direct input into the priorities and focus of the ALHS.

The ideas were tested around the following key activities:

- walking
- cycling
- children's play
- bushwalking
- sport

On this page and the following are a number of summary diagrams that highlight the percentage of responses for the highest ranked response for each idea/initiative.



WALKING

More or improved paths and path circuits in our parks

51%

Safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings

59%

Links to day-to-day destinations such as parks, work, school, shops and public transport

41%

CYCLING

Cycle path connections between parks

44%

Dedicated cycle paths on roads

37%

Dedicated cycle paths on roads

40%

Off road cycling facilities such as mountain bike, BMX

36%

Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road)

38%

8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.7.1 the key findings of testing initial ideas

Walking

For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings* (59%)

Cycling

For the cycling initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Cycle path connections between parks* (44%)

Children's play

For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play* (43%)

Bushwalking

For the bushwalking initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *More or better bush walking tracks* (57%)

Sport

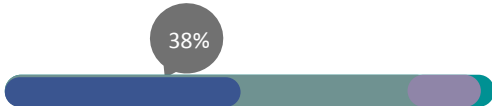
For the sport initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing* (54%)

CHILDREN'S PLAY

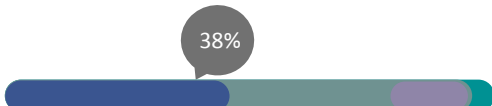
A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play



Larger better play spaces



Play spaces for ages 8-12



Spaces for 12-18 year olds (skateparks, public plazas, street cafes, outdoor malls etc)

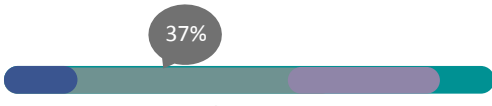


BUSHWALKING

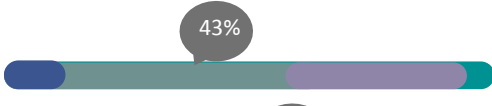
More or better bush walking tracks



Overnight accommodation for longer walks



Guided walks

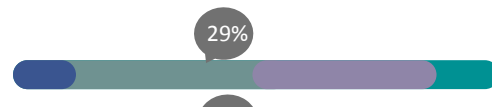


Improved signs and access to bush walking tracks

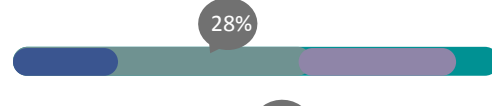


SPORT

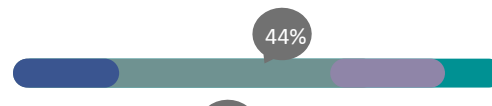
Synthetic grass playing fields



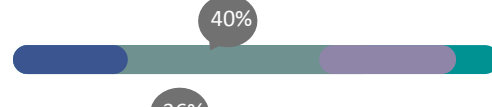
Upgrade of the pool in Epping



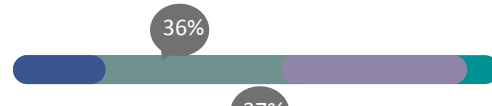
Facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing



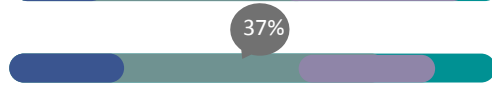
Outdoor basketball and netball courts



Tennis courts



Indoor sports facilities (courts, gyms etc...)



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.8 Any additional comments

When asked if there was anything else that people would like to tell Council regarding Hornsby Shire's open spaces and recreational facilities the following are the break down of the key issues and how many individual comments were received for each of the key open space/ recreation types.

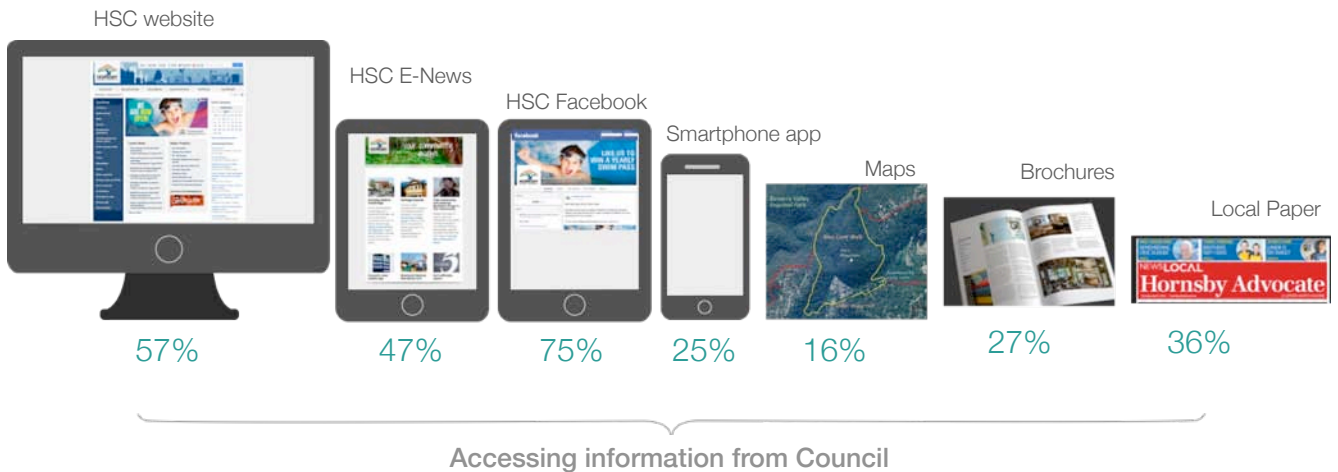
The diagram on this page illustrates a breakdown of the comments received and the key issues identified.



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.4.9 Access to information for open spaces and recreation areas

Participants were asked 'How would you like to receive or access information about Hornsby Shire Council's open spaces and recreation facilities in the future?' and could choose from the list below all that they felt relevant to them. The 3 top information sources identified by participants included the Hornsby Council E-News (75%) Hornsby Council Website (57%) and HSC E-News (47%).



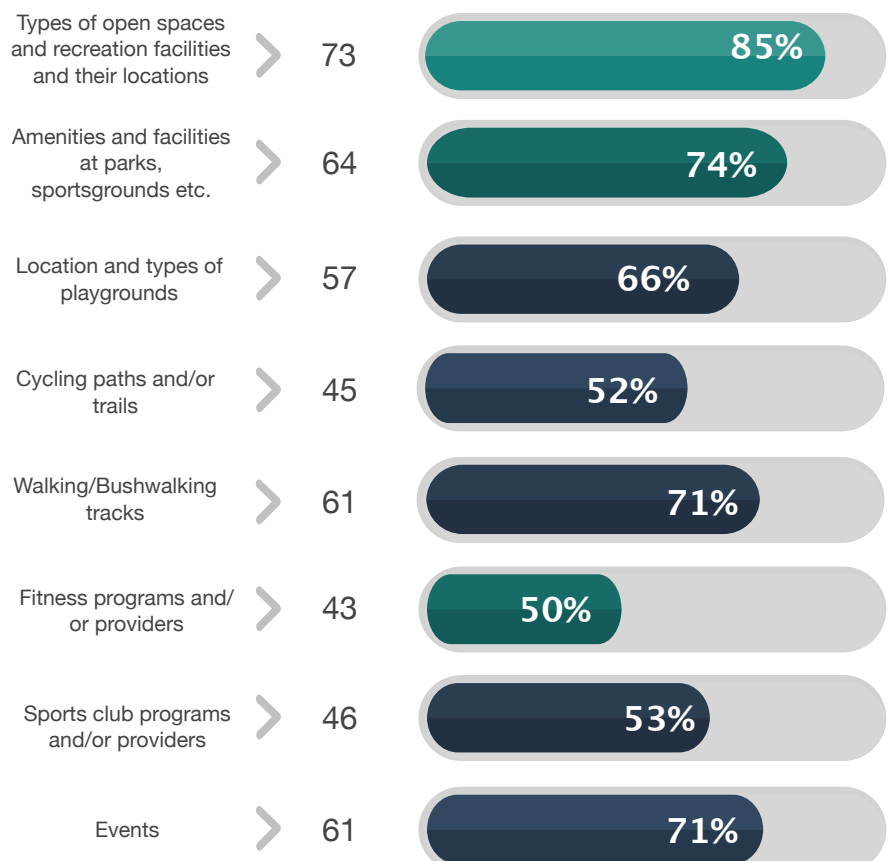
8.3.10 Type of information to be provided

Participants were further asked to indicate the types of things that they would like information from Council about and again could select as many options as were provided.

The graph illustrates the numbers of people and percentage that selected each option provided.

Participants were also able to provide any other additional comments. The focus of the comments included wanting specific information on the following:

- *big events or important information can be mailed to unit block strata managers so the events and news can be posted on the entry of the unit block*
- *Twitter*
- *seasonal events e.g. spring, summer etc*
- *parks that require a fee for booking covered areas*
- *suitable for dogs. nighttime access and lighting (not just for organised sport)*



8. High density living online survey - key findings

8.3.11 Location of participants

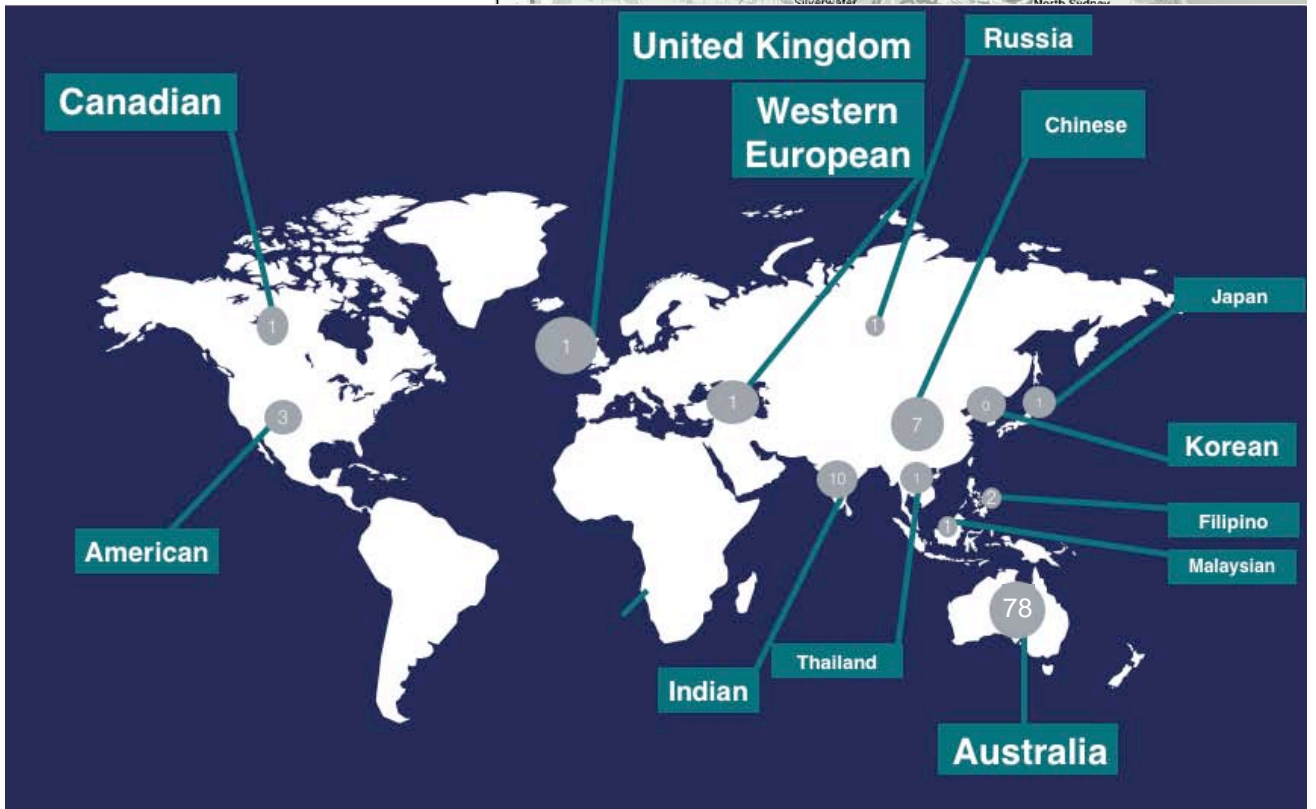
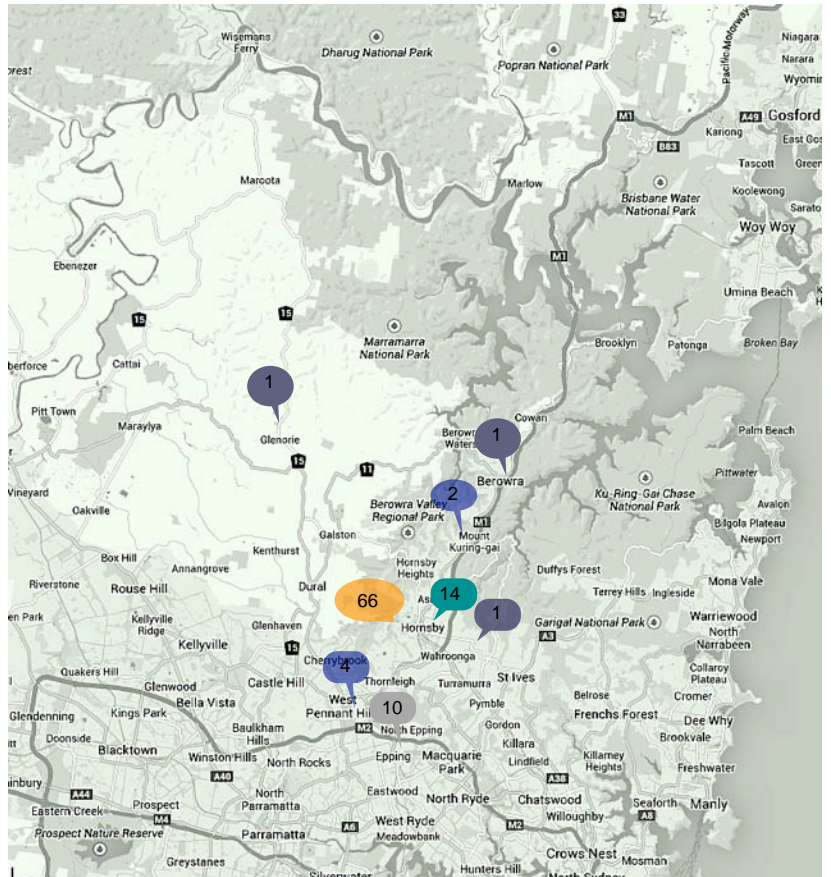
The map opposite indicates the distribution of participants across the Hornsby Shire Council local government area. The most common locations of respondents were:

- Hornsby (66)
- Waitara (14)
- North Epping (10)

8.3.12 Cultural background

The world map below shows the location of the cultural background of participants. The top areas included:

- Australia (78)
- Indian (10)
- Chinese (7)



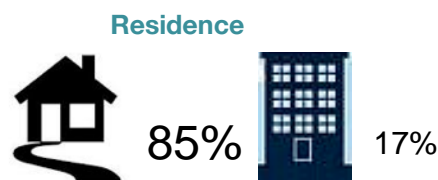
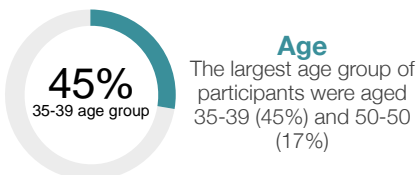
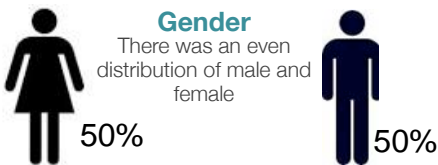
9. Overall key findings

9.1 Demographic and social profile

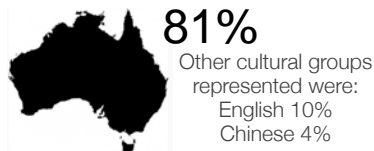
This report identifies the key lessons that have been learnt through the ALHS engagement and communication program.

The profile of the online participants

There were 1126 people that participated in the two online surveys. The following is a summary of the social and demographic profile of the participants.



Cultural Background



Suburb location within Hornsby Shire

For the self-select online survey

Hornsby (111)
Thornleigh (62)
North Epping (58)
Epping (55)

For the targeted high density living online survey

Hornsby (66)
Waitara (14)
North Epping (10)

Common leisure activities undertaken by Hornsby Shire residents include:

- Cycling and mountain biking
- Walking
- Bushwalking
- Visiting outdoor cafes and playgrounds

Popular local spaces:

- Fagan Park - for families, picnics, dogs and for the overall variety
- Berowra Waters - for families, proximity to the water, range of activities
- Ruddock Park - range of family activities
- Pennant Hills Park - for the sporting facilities
- Willow Park - for the playground equipment
- Lisgar Gardens - the hidden secret!
- Crosslands Reserve - for bushwalking

Local values

What people value most about Hornsby Shire's open space and recreational facilities are for exercise, family gatherings, children play and relaxing. We have heard that amongst all open space and recreation facilities parklands, conservation and heritage as well as bushland is valued highly. Particularly participants of all engagement activities have indicated that they value the following aspects of the Hornsby Shire:

- the proximity to local parks, natural open spaces and bushland setting
- the availability of family leisure outdoor spaces for playgrounds, BBQs, picnics, outdoor cafes and public spaces
- the opportunities available for sport and recreation for people of all ages and for all seasons
- the overall variety and quality of local open space

Satisfaction levels with existing open spaces and facilities

- Overall there is a 64% satisfaction level with Hornsby Shire open spaces and recreational facilities

Some areas for further consideration

Some of the ideas that people would like to see further explored is:

- the overall provision of park facilities (like toilets, play equipment, picnic facilities, shelter and shade)
- upgrades to specific parks and ovals for informal and formal recreation activities
- ensuring open spaces near areas with more people are well maintained and are protected from future redevelopment
- ensuring access to a good local park for frequent visitation for daily, weekly and weekend family time (children's play) exercise and relaxation
- opportunities for more dog off-leash areas
- more information and access to bushland areas
- For those that responded to the online surveys that are not using open spaces or recreational facilities the key reason identified was a lack of information about facilities (26%, 58 people)

Accessing information about open space and recreation facilities

The 3 top information sources identified by online participants included:

Self-select online survey

1. Hornsby Council Website (63%)
2. Hornsby Council E-News (66%)
3. The local paper (50%)

High density living online survey

1. the Hornsby Council E-News (75%)
2. Hornsby Council Website (57%)
3. HSC E-News (47%)

9.2 Finding out the personality type of Hornsby Shire residents

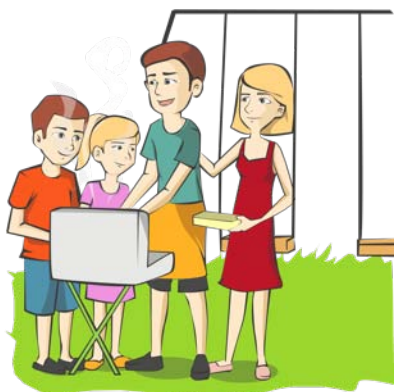
The online quiz

The online quiz was an internet based question and answer survey. A total of 362 people participated in the online quiz.

There were six key questions asked of participants with a series of multiple choice selections that could be chosen.

Based on the selections the quiz automatically provided each participant with a personality profile that best reflected the answers that were selected.

The Clan Fan and The Rural Ranger being the most popular personality types.



The Clan Fan

Family activities come first! you like to take your kids out riding their bike, or head to the park for a play on the swings, you mostly spend your weekends watching young ones play cricket or netball too! a good time is defined by bonding outdoors with your family.



The Rural Ranger

You live outside the city where animals and open spaces are right next door! you appreciate the wide open landscapes that separates you from neighbours, as well as riding your quad bike, strolling on local bushlands and visiting parks where you and your family can stretch out the picnic rug and take up as much space as you like, the beautiful and calm rural area is your paradise!

9. Overall key findings

9.3 Testing some new initiatives

Feedback from the community engagement workshops and open days had indicated a number of things that were considered important about local open space and recreational facilities.

In order to test some of these ideas and provide direct input into the priorities and focus of the ALHS, the online surveys undertook to test what participants thought about whether a new idea/initiative was essential, desirable, does not matter or not required.

The ideas that were tested around the following key activities; walking, cycling, children's play, bushwalking, sport

When comparing the information from the self-select online survey (SS) and the high density living online survey (HDL) the most essential or highest desirable idea/initiative was identical for each of the participant groupings:

Walking

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *safe and convenient footpaths and road crossings* (48% SS) (59 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for the SS grouping was: *more or improved paths and path circuits in our parks* (51% SS) and for the HDL grouping ranked as essential was: *links to day-to-day destinations such as parks, work, school, shops and public transport* (41% HDL)

Cycling

1. For the cycling initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *Cycle path connections between parks* (48% SS) (44 HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as essential for the SS grouping was: *dedicated cycle paths on roads* (40% SS) and it was seen as desirable by the HDL grouping with 40%

Children's play

1. For the walking initiatives the highest ranked as essential was: *A variety of play spaces across the Shire such as water play, adventure play, natural play* (48% SS) (43% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings nearly equally weighted were two ideas/initiatives: *large and better play spaces* (49% SS) (38% HDL) as well as *play spaces for ages 8-12* (48% SS) (38% HDL)

Bushwalking

1. For the bushwalking initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *More or better bush walking tracks* (56% SS) (57% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: *improved signs and access to bush walking tracks* (51% SS) (52% HDL)

Sport

1. For the sport initiatives the highest ranked as desirable was: *facilities for water based recreation such as fishing, kayaking and sailing* (55% SS) (54% HDL)
2. The second highest ranked as desirable for both groupings was: *outdoor basketball and netball courts* (54% SS) (40% HDL)

Whilst above illustrates the top two most popular of the ideas/initiatives for both groupings overall many of the ideas received more than 40% of either essential or desirable selections from participants.

The ideas/initiatives for the SS grouping that received the least considerations:

- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (40% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (38% does not matter)

The ideas/initiatives for the HDL grouping that received the least considerations:

- Cycle events (mountain bike, cyclocross, road) (38% does not matter)
- Synthetic grass playing fields (29% desirable)
- Upgrade of the pool in Epping (28% desirable)

10. Conclusions

10.1 The key lessons

The thorough engagement and communication process of both face to face interactions and online engagement opportunities has seen the ALHS consultation program directly reach more than 1645 people.

Participants were able to provide feedback on:

- the open space and recreational activities that they participate in and how often
- where their favourite local places are throughout Hornsby Shire
- where there may be room for improvement and what types of improvements may be needed
- feedback on some of the new ideas / initiatives being explored by the ALHS
- how in the future they would like to access information from Hornsby Shire Council about open space and recreational facilities as well as exactly what information they are after

We have learnt from those that we have engaged with that they highly value the open space and recreational facilities on offer in Hornsby Shire and many are satisfied with the existing facilities that Council provides. Particularly people are positive about the following:

- the proximity to local parks, natural open spaces and bushland setting
- the availability of family leisure outdoor spaces for playgrounds, BBQs, picnics, outdoor cafes and public spaces
- the opportunities available for sport and recreation for people of all ages and for all seasons
- the overall variety and quality of local open space

Consultation has however identified the need to consider improvements to some services or facilities:

- Available facilities within parkland settings (ie toilets, play equipment, BBQs)
- Upgrades to improve existing sporting grounds and ovals
- Ensuring ongoing local access to local parks and open spaces
- Access to information about local open space and recreational facilities
- Opportunities for more dog off leash areas
- More information and access to bushland settings
- Connecting suburbs and local neighbourhoods to walking and cycling trails

The outcomes from this engagement and communication process will now be incorporated into the Draft ALHS for consideration by Council.

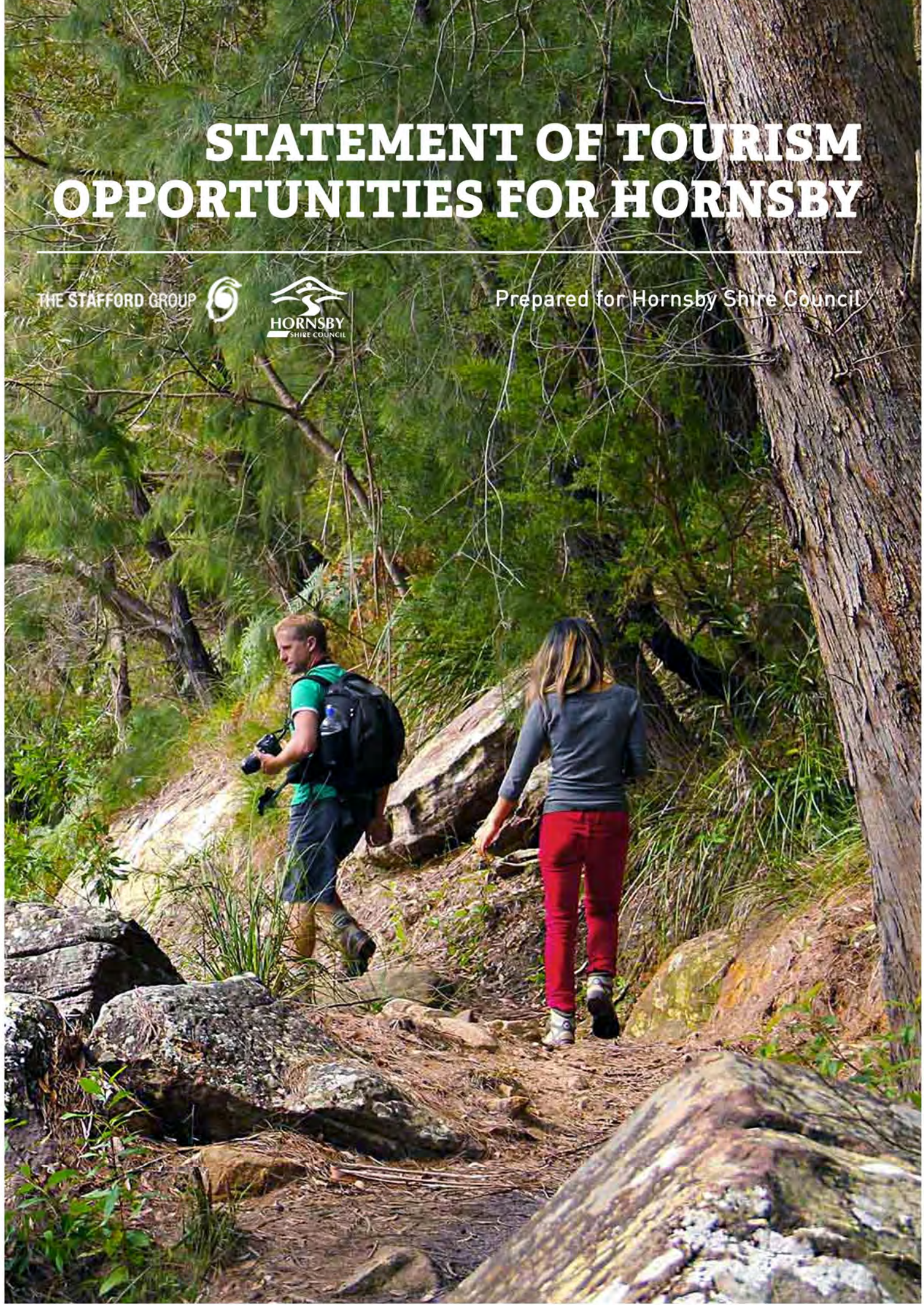
Based on the high take up of online engagement throughout this program it is suggested to Council to formalise the ALHS information on Council's website to continue to keep the community updated with the progress of this work and to also consider an active engagement program for the exhibition of the ALHS later in 2014 or early 2015.

STATEMENT OF TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES FOR HORNSBY

THE STAFFORD GROUP



Prepared for Hornsby Shire Council





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THE STAFFORD GROUP

www.thestaffordgroup.com.au



1. INTRODUCTION

As per the project led by (Clouston Associates) for Hornsby Shire Council (the Council) titled Active Living Hornsby Strategy (the Strategy), The Stafford Group (The Group) have been tasked with identifying tourism related opportunities to integrate into the overall Strategy.

Based on the recent Project Control Group meeting (number 2) which The Group presented at, the following Report sets out a variety of tourism opportunities for Council to consider.

The process as agreed (and based on the limited involvement of The Group), will be for Clouston's to identify specific locations to activate a number of the opportunities identified in this report focused on tourism. Whilst The Group does have some knowledge of the Quarry, Hornsby Mall, Fagan Park, Berowra Regional Park, Nation Park and the foreshore area, it will require the extensive knowledge of Clouston's to provide the specific site details to activate the opportunities.



2. CONTEXT

As identified at the last Project Control Group meeting, there is no Council tourism strategy to guide tourism development opportunities in the Hornsby Shire (the Shire). The only documentation would appear to be a promotional brochure which is not produced by Council and which Council purchases advertising space.

The opportunity to stimulate tourism development and marketing activity therefore may be able to be created within this Active Living Hornsby Strategy, noting the overlap between some recreational activities and tourism.

The following areas aim to help activate the public realm to support a more active and healthy community and to stimulate recreational and tourism based activity. They are not provided in priority order.

2.1. CYCLING

There are various forms of cycling to be considered which can be segmented primarily into three subsectors being:

- Mountain biking;
- Road cycling; and
- Cyclocross which is a hybrid activity.

Whilst road cycling is not necessarily seen as a strong tourism drawcard unless it is centred on events, mountain biking is a significant area of tourism activity.

There are a variety of visitor markets who will travel some distance for high quality mountain biking trails. Some trails already exist as we understand within Berowra Regional Park and in other parts of the Shire. Visitor market segments for mountain biking are likely to primarily focus on:

- The Greater Sydney region, as Hornsby is highly accessible for many visitor markets including those coming from Newcastle and the Central Coast;
- The intrastate market coming for mountain biking events and more aligned with weekend experiences; and



- Interstate visitors coming to participate and support mountain bikers involved in a variety of events.

Whilst mountain biking activity is a standalone activity in its own right, it also can be developed as part of triathlons and biathlons associated with other sporting activity. Considering the extensive national parks and reserve areas available within the Shire, potential should exist for creating opportunities for:

- Biathlons and triathlons using the natural resources available within the Hornsby LGA;
- Creating standalone mountain biking events, providing the trail networks are sufficiently well developed and maintained for this purpose; and
- Creating training trails rather than competition trails so mountain bikers of all ages can undertake trails with various levels of difficulty.

Whilst the number of mountain biking events held state wide, as well as nationally, makes the mountain biking event market competitive, there is likely to be significant opportunity to encourage the family market for non-competitive but healthy lifestyle reasons to go mountain biking in Hornsby. To facilitate this, consideration will need to be given to:

- The potential to create a mountain biking centre (hub) which can get local, regional and state recognition as a major centre to support mountain biking activity (such as maintenance services, food and beverage and information);
- The creation of a dynamic website offering information on trails, their difficulty and how to access them and where they end up; and
- Information on family based and other forms of mountain biking events which Council may wish to facilitate.

With respect to mountain biking trails, we understand an existing trail operates from Old Man's Valley which is behind the new aquatic centre, and we note that there is the potential to expand this to a further stage as the current mountain biking track is noted as too difficult for beginners.

With respect to road cycling, we note that the Three Gorges event is an annual event. Potentially, it may be possible to also develop more regular events (using easier parts of the circuit) to cater for the family market rather than the more experienced cyclist.

2.2. WALKING TRAILS

A key platform to achieve the overall Strategy of Active Living Hornsby and to improve the health and wellbeing of not only the local community but a wider catchment, is to encourage people to

walk more. There is expected to be ongoing demand for a number of day and overnight walk experiences providing that the various infrastructure elements to support these are put in place by Council.

Whilst a large percentage of the Shire is designated as national parks, there are currently strict controls preventing the development of accommodation within these. Though the National Parks and Wildlife Service are under increasing pressure to find new revenue streams, there still appears to be a reluctance to allow any form of commercial accommodation development (including high quality tent camps for glamping) within national park areas.

The potential exists however, for Council to consider creating commercial accommodation on Council reserve land on the fringe of national parks which may enable walkers to walk out of the park without realising they have effectively done so and thereby offering a transparent connection between the Council reserve land and the national park trail.

There are a variety of walking experiences which warrant investigation and include:

- 1 – 2 hour walks (classified as half day experiences) and which the vast bulk of the visitor markets and locals (often seen to represent up to 90% of the market) may be interested in undertaking;
- 4 – 6 hour walks (classified as day walk experiences) which a further 5 – 7% of the total visitor markets are prepared to consider; and
- Overnight walks which can be 1, 2 or 3 day walks depending on the terrain, distances and, most importantly, the level of market appeal.

We also understand the imperative to show that economic returns are able to be generated from tourism activity and walks in particular. Overnight walks will generate far greater economic return than day walk experiences because overnight walks require commercial accommodation, additional meals and food and beverage services and will often require transport connections either to the beginning of a track or to pick up at the end of a track.

The potential could exist for Council to develop an expression of interest to encourage appropriately skilled operators (guided tour companies) to tender for 2 day/1 night or 3 day/2 night over night walking experiences. Council would need to consider the following however:

- To develop an arrangement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service for accessing national park trails as part of the walking experience;



- For allowing high quality tent camps for glamping experiences on Council reserve land on the edge of national parks and where this can be provided without the visitor/walker feeling as though they have exited the national park; and
- Where concession arrangements will allow a commercial operator to provide food and beverage services either from a Council reserve site or through an alternative site able to be used.

In the current economic climate, the onus rests with council's, and government generally, to actively encourage private sector tour operators to take a calculated risk and develop walking experiences. For example, it is noticeable that New South Wales is the only state (other than the Australian Capital Territory) which does not have overnight walking experiences able to be promoted through its state tourism body (Destination NSW) within national parks.

We understand that State Government is very keen to find product to promote overnight walking experiences.

A variety of economic benefits would be generated, and from the work which The Group has undertaken in many jurisdictions (particularly in Queensland, Northern Territory, New Zealand and Borneo Malaysia) these often include a variety of broader benefits. These benefits often include revenue generation and employment to the local community through the supply of goods and services.

A further element which could be included by using walkways/trails is the creation of an orienteering course either within national parks or within a mixture of parks and Council reserve land area. The potential also exists to create a visitor recreation centre (potentially at the Quarry or at other appropriate sites within the Shire) as a hub for walking tours and orienteering programs.

With respect to half day and full day walking experiences, opportunities may exist to link into the Hawkesbury and with the potential for walks within the Brooklyn area, although we understand that the topography is quite steep and so walking trails would offer a high degree of difficulty. This would need to be properly assessed as part of any proposal for walking experiences.

Overall however, walking experiences have a strong connection to activating healthy living and have minimal environmental impacts compared to other forms of recreational activity. The biggest opportunity for the Shire, and generating the most economic benefit, is the creation of overnight walking trail experiences.



2.3. MARKETS AND NIGHT TIME

A well-recognised opportunity to activate the public realm is the creation of various markets, often using car parking areas, open space public areas and actual streets when not in use. As is common nationally, demand exists in the Shire for more evening based activities, and night markets could offer a valuable opportunity to cater for those who want to undertake evening experiences.

We note that currently, the Hornsby Mall is a venue for markets offering farmers markets, food and bric-a-brac. Apparently there are a variety of other markets with details noted as follows:

- The Hornsby Mall every Thursday offering fresh food;
- Thornleigh IBIS car Park which offers a farmers market every third Sunday of each month;
- The Glenorie RSL Club Growers Market which is the fourth Sunday of each month;
- The various special occasion markets for Mother's Day, Easter, the days leading up to Christmas etc. which also utilise the Hornsby Mall;
- The Twilight Food and Craft Market over the summer period only on a Friday evening at the Hornsby Mall;
- The Epping Annual Christmas Market during November which is a twilight market; and
- The Arcadia School Markets which offer food and craft and occur twice a year.

In addition, there is a new winter market starting at the Hornsby TAFE car park on a Saturday offering a mix of fresh food, craft, clothing and art and there is the possibility that Westfield may introduce a market on their shopping centre rooftop but this is yet to be confirmed.

Existing markets are primarily focused on attracting the local resident market, though there generally is a desire to encourage a broader catchment in order support the sustainability of these markets and offer expansion opportunities for stall holders.

Whilst Hornsby would appear to already provide a number of market opportunities, potential may exist to look at developing a market which leverages off the LGA's cultural diversity, particularly focused on cultural food experiences.

The Group's market research highlights that there is a general lack of night time family orientated activities throughout the Sydney CBD and broader Sydney region generally. Other than eating out, going to shows and attending movies, there is relatively little family based entertainment available.

Potential may therefore exist for expanding night time market activities/events in the Shire which could reflect:

- The growing Asian population within the Hornsby region and the opportunity for food related night markets;



- The opportunity to work with other ethnic groups within the LGA to see if different forms of market days can be established;
- To identify particular events (such as a lantern festival) which could provide a high level of community interaction and which can be used to grow broad community interest and a better understanding of cultural diversity; and
- The opportunity exists to explore smaller evening events, particularly outdoor based events using various open space venues which Council controls, and encouraging different music genres as well as encouraging opportunities for performing arts activity.

The Group also understands that currently, there is no public access to the Quarry site and this particular site may lend itself to a number of active pursuits. If there was to be an opportunity for evening based activities, there is certainly local, regional, interstate and international demand for good quality sound and light shows using unique venues and for which the Quarry may be a possible site (subject to investigation).

Consideration should therefore be given to investigating sites such as the Quarry, Brick Pit Recreation Centre, Fagan Park and Hornsby Mall (just a few examples) for creating evening based event experiences, with a focus on performing or visual arts as well as digital animation through appropriate sound and light shows. Recent examples of passive night time lighting experiences in areas such as Centennial Park have shown that with minimal promotion, significant numbers of visitors (particularly families) come out during the evening to visit and enjoy safe and attractive night time experiences. In the case of Centennial Park, whilst the experience itself was offered for free, there were opportunities to purchase food and beverage as well as merchandise which provided revenue streams.

Whether these types of initiatives are facilitated by Council or managed and operated by Council needs to be further explored.

2.4. WATER BASED ACTIVITIES

Whilst Hornsby has the benefit of the Hawkesbury River and access to a variety of waterways, there are significant restrictions on the ability to offer concession leases and arrangements to tourism and recreational operators. From work which The Group has undertaken for the Hawkesbury City Council, discussions with the Roads and Maritime Department indicate significant challenges in activating waterways for commercial purposes.

The Group considers that whilst waterways would logically appear to offer a highly attractive asset to capitalise on, the significant challenges in getting approval to undertake activities limits the



level of operator interest and thus the potential for this. Council however, may wish to raise this with State Government to see if policy changes can occur.

However, exemptions to this may include the use of waterways for kayaking/canoeing as part of triathlons or biathlons events and where this can potentially link into mountain biking trails or walking trails through Council reserve land as well as the national parks.

2.5. SPAS AND WELLNESS CENTRES

The Group has noticed ongoing demand for purpose built day spas and wellness centres to attract a local, regional and interstate market (particularly in unique locations). These facilities need not rely on thermal water sources, although the ability to tap into a spring water source (where the water quality is recognised as high) is an added advantage.

The Group is aware that there are a number of natural springs where spring water is able to be accessed from (north of Hornsby on the Central Coast) and wonder whether natural springs also extend south into the Hornsby LGA. If this is the case, and with strong visitor demand for the product as well as likely local demand, consideration should be given to investigating locations for the introduction of outdoor spa pools (which could be heated) to offer a further leisure based experience.

It may also be possible to link any form of outdoor spa facility with a major activity centre focused on the walkways, mountain biking and other active pursuits possible within the Hornsby LGA. We appreciate that further research would be required to determine whether these types of opportunities (natural spring water) may already exist within the LGA or not. The level of market demand in Sydney for these types of quality facilities is very high, especially where natural outdoor settings may exist which are reasonably easy to access.

2.6. FARMGATE TRAILS AND CIRCUITS

Whilst a number of LGAs, particularly on the fringe of the Greater Sydney region, have investigated and tried to promote farmgate trails, these have generally proven to be unsuccessful. There are significant challenges in creating a sustainable and viable farmgate trail due to:

- Changing ownership of farms and related businesses;
- Changing levels of interest in offering sales direct to the consumer, particularly from larger orchards and other farm related businesses;
- Issues surrounding approval for appropriate farmgate trail signage; and
- Issues associated with seasonality of produce and fluctuating market demand.



Whilst there has often been a romantic notion associated with farm gate trials and the ability to meet the farmer and buy direct, these have often proven problematic. Research into this sector indicates that in the vast majority of cases, farmers prefer to sell in bulk to wholesalers (middle men) as the time and effort required to service farmgate sales does not warrant the return generated.

As such, we would recommend that Council focus on other core areas likely to generate stronger economic returns as previously indicated.

2.7. RELEVANT DATA SETS AND FORECASTS

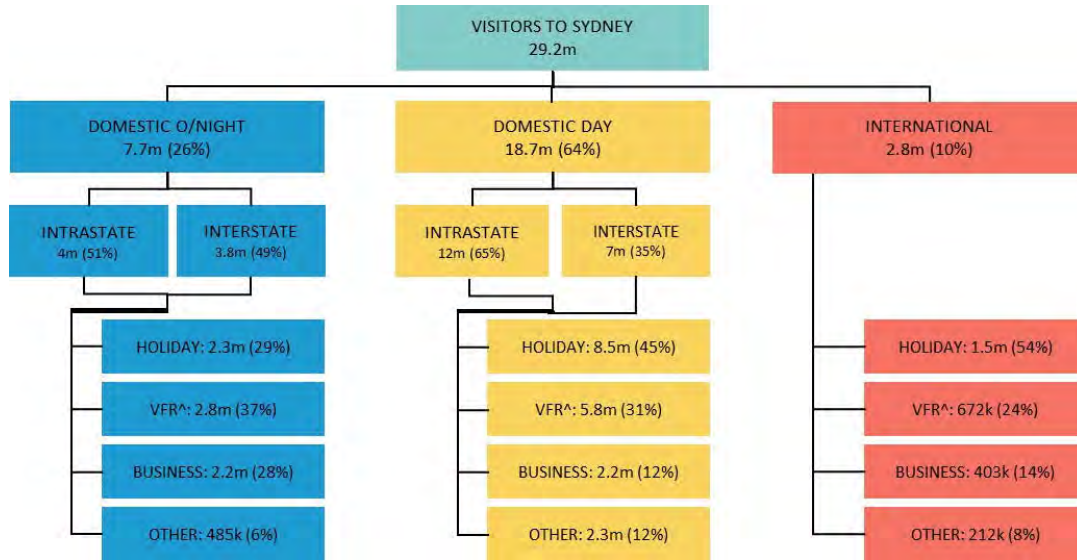
The following tables and diagrams reflect visitation to Sydney and Hornsby as well as historic demand for various active pursuits appealing to a variety of visitor markets. Data has been sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Destination NSW, industry associations, operators and other sources. What is clearly evident is the following:

- Visitation to Sydney has steadily grown, with this increase being driven by the domestic day market;
- There is strong demand for recreational based activities of an unstructured nature which appeal to a local and regional market in particular (mountain biking, walks etc.);
- There are mostly indoor based recreational activities in Sydney but strong appeal for quality outdoor related experiences;
- Interstate and international visitors often follow local and regional visitation trends, so when something appears to be particularly appealing to a local market, out of town visitors will gravitate to it;
- Hornsby has a natural advantage because of its close proximity (compared to many other LGAs) to the Sydney CBD as the major urban local catchment as well as a base for visitors; and
- Consideration is needed to cluster activities in similar areas to enable locals and visitors to try different pursuits so that one activity leverages off another and the critical number of visitors are generated to support the commercial viability of cafés, restaurants, information centres within designated activity hubs.

2.7.1. Visitation to Sydney

The figure on the following page provides an overview of visitation to the Sydney region. In 2013, Sydney received an estimated 29.2m visitors - the majority of these visitors were domestic day trippers (64%) which includes those who travelled more than 25km to get into the Sydney region.

FIGURE 1: VISITATION TO SYDNEY¹

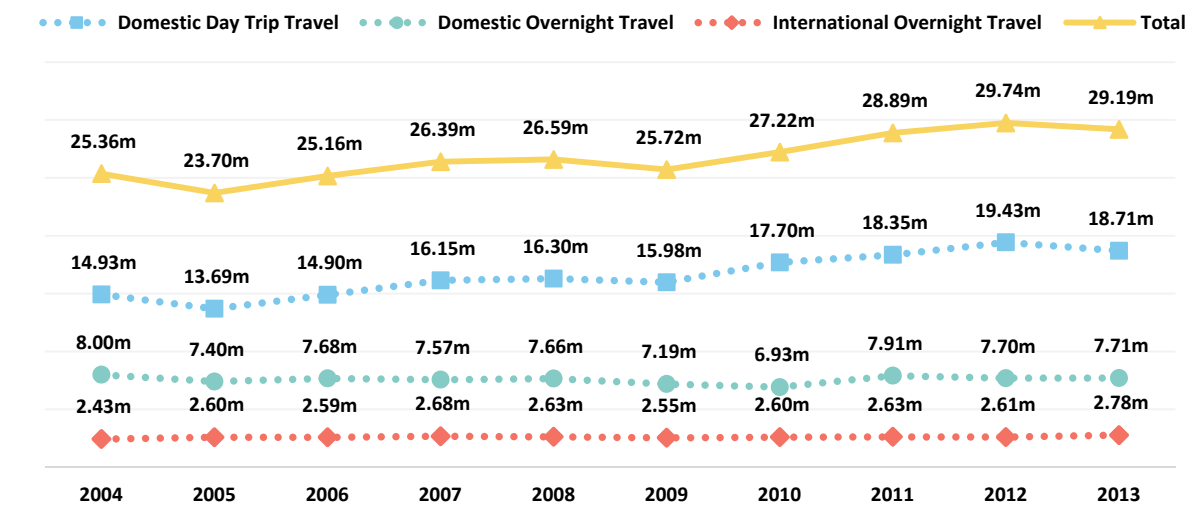


2.7.2. Visitor Types to Sydney

Over the past 10 years, visitation to Sydney has increased by 14%, growing from 25.36m visits in 2004 to 29.19m visits in 2013. Visitation by day trip visitors offers the strongest growth at 25%, increasing from 14.93m visitors to 18.71m visitors, followed by international visitation which has grown by 16%. Domestic overnight visitation on the other hand has declined by 4%, falling from 8m visits to 7.71m visits.

To grow the overnight domestic market, new leisure and recreational activity attractors are required.

FIGURE 2: VISITOR TYPES TO SYDNEY²



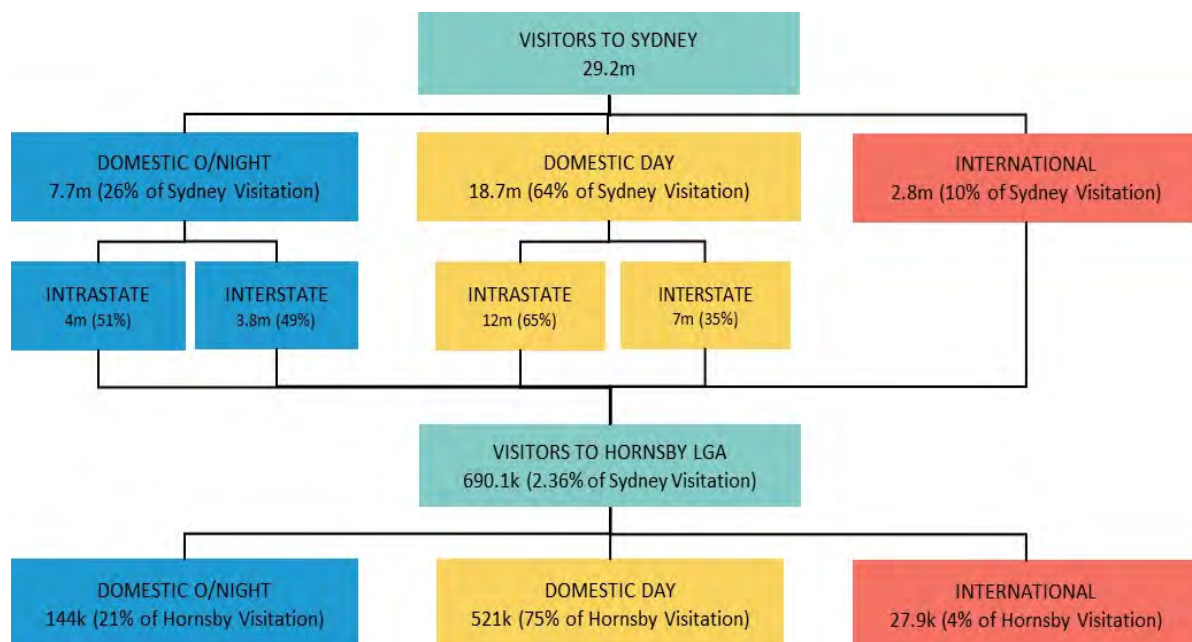
¹ Travel to Sydney Tourism Region, Year ended June 2013

² Travel to Sydney Tourism Region, Year ended June 2013

2.7.3. Visitation to Hornsby

The following figure demonstrates visitation to Hornsby in the context of Sydney visitation. In 2013, Hornsby received just over 690k visitors, capturing approximately 2.4% of Sydney’s visitation. The majority of visitors to the Hornsby LGA are domestic day visitors, comprising 75% (521k) of total visitation to the LGA.

FIGURE 3: VISITATION TO HORNSBY LGA³



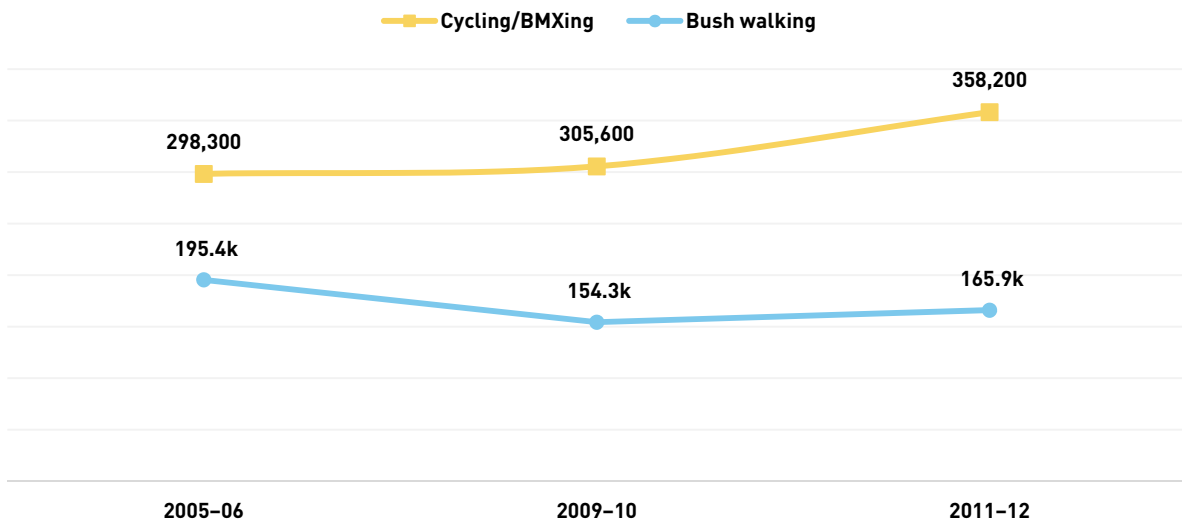
2.7.4. Participation in Cycling/BMXing and Bushwalking

The figure on the following page demonstrates participation in NSW in cycling/BMXing and bushwalking from 2005/06 through to 2011/12. Over this period, participation in cycling/ BMXing has increased by 20% (60k participants) whilst bush walking has declined by 15% (30k participants).

We consider this decline is related to the lack of overnight walking options in NSW, particularly when contrasted with the increase in overnight trekking experiences in Tasmania and New Zealand. Destination NSW and State Government generally are very keen to encourage overnight trekking expenses to help address this.

³ Special data request to Destination NSW – Year ended September 2013

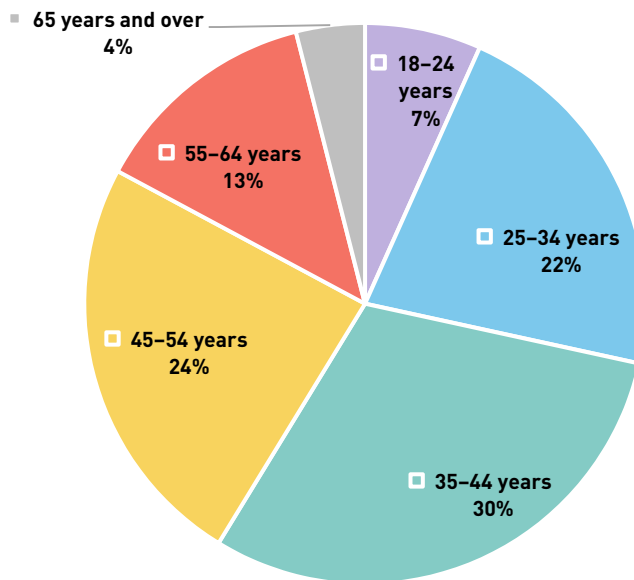
FIGURE 4: PARTICIPATION IN CYLCING/BMXING AND BUSHWALKING⁴



2.7.5. Participation in Cycling/BMXing by Age

Figure 5 below demonstrates cycling/BMXing by age group in 2011/12.⁵ The largest proportion of those who participated in cycling/BMXing were those aged between 35 – 44 years, followed by 45 – 54 years (24%) and those in the 25 – 34 year old age group.

FIGURE 5: PARTICIPATION IN CYCLING/BMXING BY AGE⁶



⁴ Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12 – New South Wales, ABS (released 5th April, 2013)

⁵ Note: data on participation in sport and recreation by age was only included for the top 5 activities undertaken. Bush walking was not in the top 5 and therefore, data on participation by age cannot be provided.

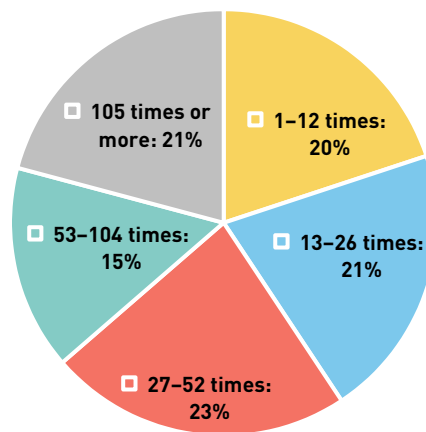
⁶ Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12 – New South Wales, ABS (released 5th April, 2013)

2.7.6. Frequency of Participation in Cycling/BMXing

Figure 6 below demonstrates the frequency of participation in cycling/BMXing in NSW. The largest proportion participated in the activity between 27 – 52 times per year (23%), followed by 105 times or more (21%), 13 – 26 times (21%), 1 – 12 times (20%) and 53 – 104 times (15%).

This demonstrates that cycling/BMXing has a high repeat participation rate, with more than half (59%) undertaking the activity more than 27 times per year.

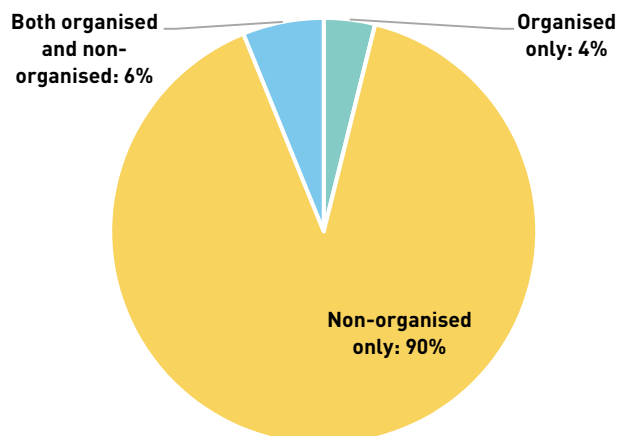
FIGURE 6: FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION IN CYCLING/BMXING PER ANNUM⁷



2.7.7. Type of Participation in Cycling/BMXing

The majority of participants (90%) in cycling/BMXing do so as part of non-organised activity, as demonstrated in the figure below. Only a small proportion (4%) undertake the activity as part of an organised activity.

FIGURE 7: TYPE OF PARTICIPATION IN CYCLING/BMXING⁸



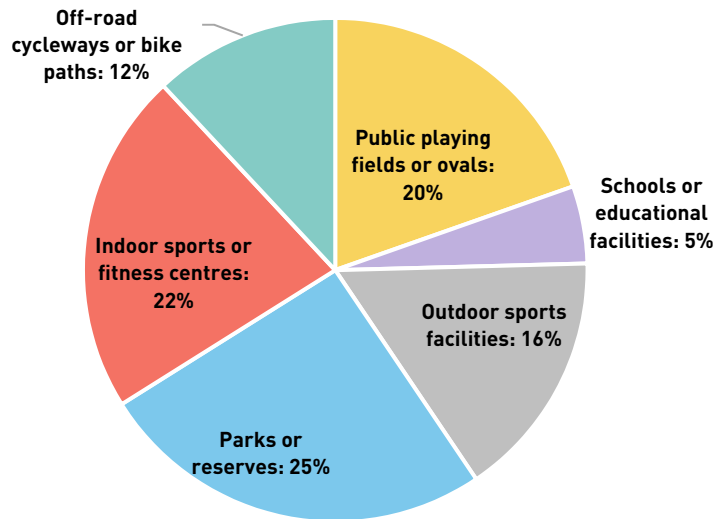
⁷ Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12 – New South Wales, ABS (released 5th April, 2013)

⁸ Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12 – New South Wales, ABS (released 5th April, 2013)

2.7.8. Sport and Recreation in NSW - Facilities Used

Of the 3.8m individuals who participated in some form of sport and recreation in 2011/12, 12% utilised off-road cycleways or bike paths to undertake their activity. The following figure illustrates this.

FIGURE 8: SPORTAND CREATION IN NSW – FACILITIES USED⁹



⁹ Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12 – New South Wales, ABS (released 5th April, 2013). It is important to note that more than one facility can be used by one participant.



3. SUMMARY

The Hornsby LGA is strategically well located within the Greater Sydney region, being within a comfortable 50 minute drive of the CBD; this makes it highly accessible to many day visitors and overnight visitors staying within the Sydney CBD especially.

Many of the tourism and recreational activities identified offer Council the opportunity to significantly grow the economic benefits from tourism on a sustainable basis and by sustainably leveraging off the natural assets which Hornsby has. Most importantly, the activities identified fit very naturally and comfortably into the Active Living Hornsby Strategy being developed.

What is now required is for Clouston's, with input from Council, to identify the specific local sites within the Hornsby LGA which could be activated to encourage the various activities identified. Whilst there is often a natural temptation to try and offer as much as possible, from The Group's experience, we would strongly advocate that Council focuses on a few of activities only which may generate the best opportunities going forward. This may mean identifying 2-3 preferred sites only.

The criteria for deciding these could include the economic benefits which are likely to accrue from their development. The economic benefits can be appropriately assessed once specific sites have been identified. It also needs to be determined whether Council will act as a facilitator to encourage others to develop and operate sites and facilities or, whether Council will look to actually manage and operate specific sites.

From discussions with State Government, and in particular Destination NSW, there is an urgent need for new visitor product to appeal to domestic as well as international markets into Sydney. The lack of new product is seen to be a major challenge to enable NSW (and Sydney specifically) to maintain its position as the major gateway into Australia for international visitors, as well as actively encouraging stronger numbers of domestic overnight visitors (both intrastate and interstate). Currently, domestic overnight visitation into Sydney has been declining and there is a desire to turn this around. Tourism and recreational development within the Hornsby LGA may be able to provide a short term solution to address this problem.



The lack of overnight walking experiences within NSW is a major concern to State Government. Hornsby may provide a ready solution for this if it is possible to create overnight trails into the national parks with appropriate high quality tent camps offering glamping on Council reserve land adjacent to the national parks.

Whilst tourism is only one component of the Active Living Hornsby Strategy, it has the potential to provide the economic rationale to support future Council investment. This can be used to leverage private sector investment and operations and which can support new recreational pursuits as well to the benefit of the local community. Specific sites, such as the Quarry, may have the potential to become an important recreational hub which in turn, can support and drive a number of ancillary activities associated with commercial accommodation and a variety of food and beverage offerings nearby. There are therefore a number of secondary economic benefits (i.e. employment and new investment) which tourism activity can help stimulate, should Council be interested.

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