



creating a living environment

Unstructured Recreation Strategy Volume 1

Prepared by @leisure in conjunction with Hornsby Shire Council

About this document



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This document is Volume 1. Unstructured Recreation Facility Plan. It has been prepared by @leisure with substantial research and composition by Hornsby Shire Council.

This plan addresses the key infrastructure in the Shire that is used for informal leisure activity, and is not addressed in the Sports Facility Strategy.

This plan should be read in conjunction with Volume 2. Skate and BMX Management Policy and Plan.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unstructured Recreation Strategy was developed to provide a strategic direction for the management of unstructured recreation facilities in the Shire.

Selected activities are dealt with in the plan including:

- 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

In general, prior to the development of any new facilities, the decision as to whether to proceed with any such construction shall be made in consideration of the total life asset management costs and the financial implications for council.

Funds have not been identified for the implementation of the polices discussed here, however the following is a summary of the policy directions developed for each section of the strategy and are considered to be those of the highest priority:

- 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. Typically, this park would have a play space, kick-to-kick area, an off-leash dog exercise area, hard court for informal ball play as well as an accessible formed

path circuit suitable for children's cycling and people with disabilities, and access to toilets (at key reserves)

- Promote existing opportunities in the Shire to play unstructured sports and activities
- Proceed with the skate park currently designed at Galston; consider providing an additional subregional skate park in C Ward (if a suitable site can be found) and upgrade the Cherrybrook skate park (if space allows)
- Consider a range of locations for additional dog off-leash areas
- Council will seek to establish a three level hierarchy of designated off-leash areas:
 - Primary - the major areas with specialised facilities
 - Secondary - smaller with less facilities
 - Local - the smaller local 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
- Facilitate mountain bike activities on a similar basis to BMX but give priority to providing foundation level skills development, not elite level facilities or racing
- Consider a managed BMX facility on one site eg Old Mans Valley
- Develop an asset management approach to the portfolio of playgrounds where cost benefit and total life costs are priority considerations
- Priority for playground development to be given to larger parks such as those with regional, shire-wide or suburb-wide catchments; no expansion of the number of playgrounds in small neighbourhood parks; removal of playgrounds that are no longer safe or functional, replacement only where park is of suitable size and prominence
- Introduction of a maze at Fagan Park

INTRODUCTION

This plan

This report was undertaken for the Hornsby Shire Council to further develop issues arising from the Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan undertaken in 2002. This highlighted a deficiency in the provision of some sporting, leisure and recreation facilities. In 2004 a Sports Facility Strategy was undertaken to help council better provide for the delivery of structured sporting activities.

This report builds upon these two projects in guiding Council in the delivery of unstructured recreation within the Shire.

What does unstructured recreation include?

Unstructured recreation is defined as those activities undertaken for leisure in parks and reserves / sport facilities, outside organised use (i.e. a club, school or organised program). Selective activities are dealt with in this plan. These include:

- A range of sports such as basketball netball, soccer, tennis and golf 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

Walking, horse riding and road cycling are dealt within this plan only in a general sense, as the focus is on recreation conducted in open space areas.

The Shire context

The Shire of Hornsby is the second largest Local Government Area in the Sydney region, at 510 square kilometres in area. It is located some 25 kilometres north of the Sydney Central Business District and stretches from the suburbs of Epping and Carlingford in the south, to Wisemans Ferry and Brooklyn in the north, Galston and Dural in the west, and Berowra and Hornsby to the east.

The Shire is quite unique in that it covers a variety of types of settlement: a range of established areas (south), and the Hornsby Central Business District, relatively new suburban areas such as Castle Hill, Cherrybrook and Dural, as well as rural communities and isolated river settlements.

The Shire is located on the Hornsby Plateau, which rises from the south to its highest point at Cowan. The Plateau is dissected with steep gullies and valleys, and much of this central and northern spine comprises large areas set aside as National Parks. This country is particularly attractive to mountain bike riders.

Approximately 10% of the Shire is zoned and used for urban development, 16% for rural purposes and 23% for open space. The remainder is National Park or Nature Reserve, (such as Kuring-gai Chase National Park, Marramarra National Park, Muogamarra Nature Reserve and Berowra Valley Regional Park) providing large areas of bushland in the Shire that protect the native vegetation and animals, and provide a wide range of unstructured recreation opportunities.

The Hornsby Shire has been broken into 9 districts for the purposes of planning, as outlined in Table 1.

The planning districts vary significantly in terms of demographic characteristics, urban development and landscape character.

Table 1: Suburbs in each of the Planning Districts in Hornsby Shire

Planning District 1	Planning District 2	Planning District 3 & 9	Planning District 4	Planning District 5	Planning District 6	Planning District 7	Planning District 8
Eastwood	Pennant Hills	Hornsby	Asquith	Berowra	Glenhaven	Brooklyn	Cherrybrook
Epping	West Pennant Hills	Waitara	Berowra Creek	Berowra Waters	Dural	Dangar Island	Castle Hill
North Epping	Westleigh	Wahroonga	Hornsby Heights	Milson's Passage	Arcadia		
Carlingford	Thornleigh		Mt Colah	Cowan	Galston		
Cheltenham	Normanhurst		Mt Ku-ring-gai	Berowra Heights	Mid Dural		
Beecroft					Berrilee		
					Maroota		
					Wiseman's Ferry		
					Glenorie		
					Forest Glen		
					Fiddletown		
					Canoeleands		
					Singleton's Hill		
					Laughtondale		

The Shire belongs to the North Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils that includes seven Councils in the Northern region of Sydney (Hornsby, Kuring-gai, Ryde, Willoughby, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and North Sydney Councils).

RELEVANT COUNCIL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

Council strategies relevant to this plan are as follows:

- Council Management Plan 2007/08-2009/10
- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan 2003
- The Sports Facility Strategy 2006
- Hornsby Social Plan: 2005 - 2010

Key directions from existing plans

Council's overall mission or intent is to 'create a living environment'.

Council has determined to achieve this through:

- Working with our community
- Conserving our natural environment
- Contributing to community development through sustainable facilities
- Fulfilling our community's vision in planning for the future of the shire
- Supporting our diverse economy
- Maintaining sound corporate and financial management

Council Management Plan 2007/08-2009/10

Within the context of Council's overall mission, Council's Management Plan identifies a range of key issues and strategic themes of relevance to the future planning and management of leisure facilities and services – including the following:

- Closing the asset renewal gap
- Increasing the income stream (including a 3% increase in user fees for parks)
- Preparing longer range budgets including asset management plans
- Containing the growth in operating costs within budget constraints
- An improved capacity to lead, predict and adapt to the changing needs in the community
- The provision of responsive and relevant services

The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan 2003 (Hornsby LSP)

The Hornsby LSP found that additional research was required to plan for an appropriate suite of sport and recreation facilities to meet existing and future needs. Although it was noted that the Shire has a 'generous supply of high quality bushland' and a range of excellent facilities, the report also noted that there is a deficiency in some recreation types to meet the needs of the existing population. The LSP noted that many playgrounds were of poor quality, and many parks were too small and had poor access.

The report noted that there was a need to improve the range of recreational facilities and opportunities in parks (including dog 'off leash' areas) and that many of the parks in the Shire were very small and incapable of supporting 'kick about' areas for active informal ball games.

The strategy identified that a range of youth orientated play facilities including skate facilities and basketball rings are required at key accessible sites within the Shire as they provide one of the major opportunities for youth and older children for 'unstructured' play. These are identified as the 'playground equivalent' for children over nine or ten years of age and current provision levels are inadequate to meet the demand of the community.

The Sports Facility Strategy 2006 (SFS)

The SFS study had (among others) the following aims and objectives:

- enable Council to appropriately identify the means of supplying a regional equestrian facility; and
- prepare a strategic approach to the provision of facilities for non-organised sports including skateboarding, in-line skating and BMX riding

The SFS highlighted specific gaps in the provision of facilities for skateboarding, equestrian sports and BMX riding.

The SFS report highlighted the need for a regional or Shire-wide skateboarding facility that is centrally located and within walking distance of a railway station. It was noted that although a new facility had been constructed in Berowra with additional facilities in the proposal stage that there was still unmet demand for skateboarding.

Hornsby Social Plan: 2005 - 2010

The Local Government (General) regulation 1998 requires all Councils in NSW to develop a social / community plan addressing the needs of the following target groups:

- children
- young people
- people with disabilities
- aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people
- women
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- older people

Each target group has a separate plan as outlined below.

Children Services Strategic Plan

The Shire's strategy for children deals with the needs of children aged 0 – 12 years and their parents and guardians. Recreation issues that were addressed in the strategy include:

- Children's safety in public space including fencing play areas
- A shortage of covered recreation areas for children and families. Parents acknowledged that parks in the Shire are great for families however park facilities and equipment need upgrading
- A need for play equipment for children of all ages not just older children
- Recreation for children generally requires adult supervision

Youth Strategy

The Shire's Youth Strategy¹ indicates a key goal of council is to enhance the recreation options for young people.

The Youth Strategy² indicates that young people want:

- more skateboard facilities
- after hours activities that are close to home
- more local legal graffiti walls
- more general recreation options
- access to outdoor sporting and recreation activities

Young people said safety is a high priority in choosing recreational activities, and that it's often hard to get to where they want to spend their recreation time.

The strategy identified that recreational options differ significantly across the Shire as a result of both affluence and geography.

The issue of young people having a place to hang out and meet with friends is a recurrent theme across the Shire, and public space recreation facilities such as skate, and bike parks and ball courts as well as shopping centres are places where this commonly occurs.

Strategies in the plan, relevant to this project are:

- To extend the Beat Graffiti Strategy to include the development of further legal sites in the Shire, and
- Investigate options for the development of additional skate facilities in the Shire.

Strategic Plan for People with a Disability

The purpose of the Strategic Plan for people with a disability is to create an environment that:

- Ensures an equitable and appropriate distribution of resources to service the needs of people with a disability
- Promotes and encourages the valuable contribution that people with a disability make to the community
- Builds the capacities and opportunities of people with a disability in the Shire
- Ensures that people with a disability are invited to participate in the decision making processes of Council
- Enhances and promotes participation by people with a disability in the community

Council has recommended that they investigate the allocation of resources to address the recreation needs of people with disabilities living in the Shire and to ensure that the recreational facilities that are developed within the shire are physically accessible.

¹ Hornsby Shire Youth Services Strategic Plan 2005-2010

² Hornsby Shire Youth Services Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Strategic Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

The purpose of the ATSI Social Plan is to create an environment that:-

1. Ensures an equitable and appropriate distribution of resources to service the needs of indigenous people.
2. Promotes and encourages the valuable contribution that indigenous people make to the community.
3. Builds the capacities and opportunities of indigenous people in the Shire.
4. Ensures that indigenous people are invited to participate in the decision-making processes of Council.
5. Enhances and promotes the participation of indigenous people in the community

Strategic Plan for Women

The purpose of the Women's Strategic Plan includes creating an environment that:

- Ensure an equitable and appropriate distribution of resources to service the needs of women
- Build the capacities and opportunities of women in the Shire
- Enhance and promotes participation by women in the community

The Social Plan for women has recommended that Council conduct research into the recreation needs of women living in the Hornsby Shire to determine whether there is an imbalance in Council's planning and service provision.

Strategic Plan for Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Communities

The purpose of the Diverse Communities Action Plan is to create an environment that:-

- Ensures an equitable and appropriate distribution of resources to service the needs of culturally diverse people
- Promotes and encourages the valuable contribution that culturally diverse people make to the community
- Builds the capacities and opportunities of people from diverse cultural backgrounds in the Shire
- Ensures that people from CALD backgrounds are invited to participate in the decision making processes of Council
- Enhances and promotes participation by CALD groups in the community

Strategic Plan for Older people (55 years and over)

The purpose of the strategic plan for older adults includes ensuring the distribution of services and facilities is adequate across the shire and to encourage such things as healthy lifestyle programs and participation in age related leisure, learning and social activities.

The Social plan for older people discusses the role Council plays in the recreational requirements of older people.

Council aims to provide opportunities for older people to participate in leisure and recreational activities.

Strategies adopted to encourage greater participation include: setting up leisure activities in Senior Citizen Centres and forming partnerships with other organizations providing innovative recreational, leisure and social opportunities for older people.

THE ISSUE

Available participation rates show that the proportion of the population that participate in physical exercise, as well as sporting and recreation pursuits, is generally increasing.

Participation in sport and physical activity tends to peak at 15-24 years of age and decline steadily through to 65 years of age. However, participation rates in more recent years suggest that the older age groups are remaining more active.

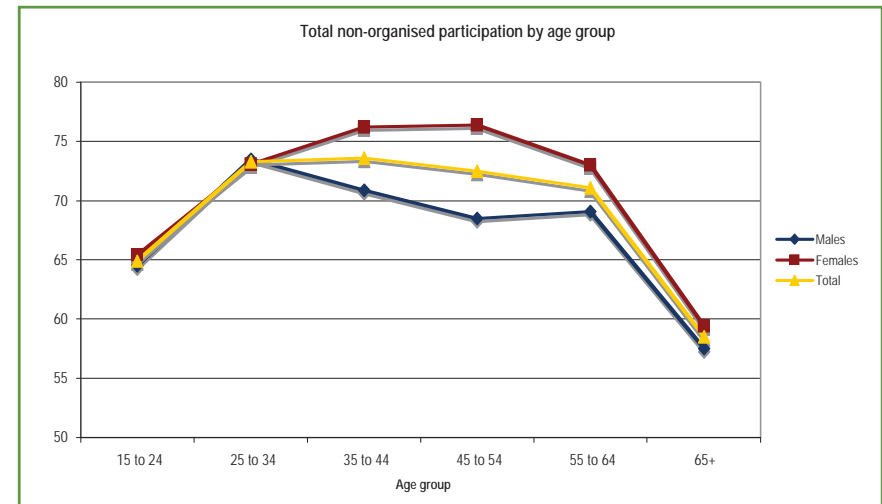
Trends suggest that more people are seeking active pursuits that are outside a club environment and do not require ongoing routine commitment.

More women especially middle-aged women are participating in non-organised physical pursuits. The 2005 Exercise, Recreation and Sports Statistics³ for NSW indicates the following:

- Total non-organised participation⁴ is greatest among persons in the 25 to 34 year and 35 to 44 year age groups (73.3% and 73.6% respectively)
- Whilst organised participation is greater in males, total non-organised participation⁴ is greater among females (males 67.8%, females 70.8%)
- A greater percentage of people participate in non-organised activities than in organised activities (69.3% compared with 41.8%)
- In 2005, 41.5% of Australian people only participated in non-organised exercise, recreation and sports activities

- Since 2001 the greatest increase in participation has been identified in female participation in non-organised activities increasing by 13.8%. Organised participation has increased 4.8% while non-organised participation increased 9.3%
- Non-organised participation remains high for age groups up to 64 years after which it drops off dramatically. This is highlighted in Figure 1

Figure 1: Non-organised physical recreation and sport participation by age



³ Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport - Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport – Annual Report 2005.

⁴ Non-organised participation is participation in sport and recreation activities that are not organised in full or in part by a club, association or other type of organisation.

The Hornsby Leisure Strategy highlighted the following points about local participation⁵:

- In 2001, visiting parks/gardens was the third most popular 'away from home' leisure activity in Hornsby (after visiting friends and relatives, and dining out)
- Other popular 'away from home' leisure activities in 2001 that require the use of public facilities included walking/walking the dog, picnics/barbecues in public areas, bush walking, taking kids to parks/playgrounds, swimming (non sport), informal games (eg kites) and jogging/running
- 27% of residences in urban areas are "poorly served by accessible local open space", with access being especially poor in PD's 5 and 6: a minimum of 35% of residents and 80% of residences in these areas respectively are "without reasonable proximity to local open space"
- There is an uneven distribution of parks across Hornsby with "relatively low provision in Planning Districts 2, 5 and 8 (p105, stage 2 report)
- 50% of local parks are too small (< 0.3 hectares) to provide "a diversity of "walk to" recreation opportunities"
- The Stage 2 report has a section titled "Outdoor Informal Recreation" (p.100) and makes reference to surveys showing a need for park improvements such as accessible pathways, skate and bike facilities, basketball hoops, cycle tracks and play facilities for older children⁶
- The report identified a gap in "user friendliness" of sports fields and the need to locate playgrounds adjacent to them. p 188, Stage 2 report). The Stage 3 report recommends that sports grounds upgrade their "family friendliness" (p10) and that "at least one high quality play area in a local or district park in each district" be developed eg a playground or junior bike circuit
- The increasing size of the middle aged and older population requires 'improved access and amenity in parks and open spaces'

The following table highlights the change in participation rates over time for activities undertaken within a non-organised environment (i.e. activities that have not been organised by a club, association, fitness centre or other type of organisation).

- Non-organised walking has had the most participants and significant increase since 2001, however has decreased in recent years
- Participation in non-organised cricket has seen large decline in recent years

The figures are based on national participation rates and rates may differ considerably at a local level. The actual participation rates of non-organised activities are likely to be similar across Australia however local factors such as supply of facilities and demographic considerations will have an impact on the level of participation.

The key unstructured activities that based on past trends, are likely to continue to experience an increase in participation are: Walking, Cycling, Running, Walking (bush), Basketball, Football (outdoor), and Australian Rules Football. See Table 2.

⁵ Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan, 2002 – Stage 2 Reports

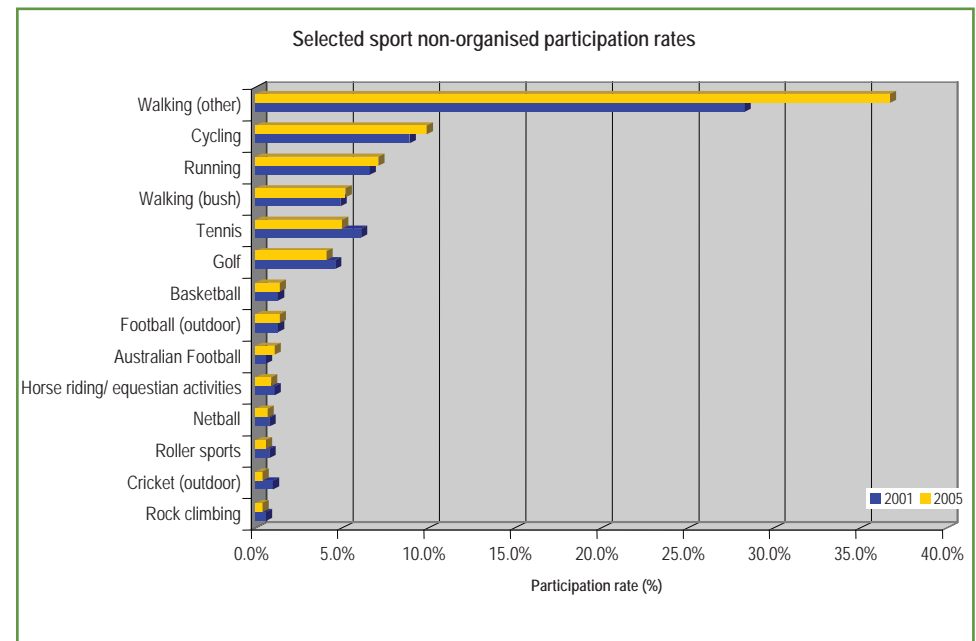
⁶ However it should be noted that this section is based on surveys conducted in 1997

Table 2. Participation rates in non-organised activities 2001-2005⁷

Activity	Non-organised sport and recreation participation					Change '01 - '05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Walking (other)	28.3%	30.2%	37.2%	38.6%	36.7%	8.4%
Cycling	8.9%	8.8%	9.0%	10.1%	9.9%	1.0%
Running	6.6%	7.0%	7.0%	7.9%	7.1%	0.5%
Walking (bush)	4.9%	5.1%	5.3%	4.6%	5.2%	0.3%
Tennis	6.1%	5.3%	5.7%	5.2%	5.0%	-1.1%
Golf	4.6%	4.8%	4.4%	4.3%	4.1%	-0.5%
Basketball	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%	0.1%
Football (outdoor)	1.3%	1.7%	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%	0.1%
Australian Football	0.6%	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%	1.1%	0.5%
Horse riding/ equestrian activities	1.1%	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	-0.2%
Netball	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	-0.1%
Roller sports	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	-0.2%
Cricket (outdoor)	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%	1.0%	0.4%	-0.6%
Rock climbing	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	-0.2%

The following figure highlights the change in non-organised participation from 2001 – 2005. Walking is clearly the most participated in activity at a non-organised level and has seen the greatest increases.

Figure 2: Change in participation rates from 2001 to 2005 in non-organised activity



The Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes statistics on the participation of children (aged 5 – 14 years) in cultural and leisure activities. Participation of children in organised sporting activities has been increasing since 2000 especially girls and in the younger age categories (6 – 10 years).

There is limited available data about unstructured recreation in children. The following table highlights the changing participation rates of children in skateboarding / rollerblading and bike riding.

⁷ Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport - *Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey – Annual Report 2001 - 2005*. For persons aged 15 years and over.

Table 3: Participation rate of persons aged 5 – 14 years in skate and bike riding

Activity	2000		2003		2006		Change	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Skateboarding/ rollerblading	35.6%	26.1%	28.5%	16.9%	29.2%	17.6%	-18.0%	-32.6%
Bike riding	71.1%	56.2%	70.5%	53.3%	73.4%	61.9%	3.2%	10.1%

The demand for mountain biking and BMX is consistent with an increase in demand for activities that:

- Are physical and can be conducted in a social setting
- Are appropriate to a wide range of age groups and proficiencies
- Do not require ongoing routine commitment.

@leisure's observations reinforce that these trends appear to be consistent with what has occurred, although there will be local variations due to local population characteristics and supply of facilities. Trends in children's behaviour is much more locality dependant than that of adult with local cyclic fluctuations and fashion having a significant influence on children's participation.

Based on the above participation rates and population projections for 2016, Council should plan for some 7700 skateboarders in the Shire.

HORNSBY'S POPULATION AND INFLUENCES ON DEMAND

Summary

The key features of the population that are likely to influence leisure generally and unstructured sport and recreation in Hornsby include the following:

- The population of Hornsby is expected to grow by some 8000 by 2016. This equates to significant number of additional people walking and cycling, and undertaking a range of other unstructured recreation activities. The suburbs with the highest population and therefore expressed demand are likely to be Hornsby (19,300), Cherrybrook (18,411) and Epping (13,712)
- In denser areas there may be more pressure on existing open space and recreation facilities and additional conflicts between users arising. This is likely to be the case for: Epping (this has the most people and the highest population density at 29.0 pph), Wahroonga/Waitara (28.1) Castle Hill (27.0), Carlingford (25.8), and West Pennant Hills (25.0)
- The age group with the greatest projected population growth is the 60 to 74 year cohort. The effect of this growth will be to constrain growth for activities that are typically vigorous (such as running), are of a competitive or endurance nature or are a contact sport
- The core sport playing ages 5 to 24 years have low projected population increases, from 2001 to 2006 the 5 to 14 year age group decreased however there was a 3.5% increase in the number of people aged 15 to 24 years
- Relatively low incomes in newer areas where there will be additional young people may have an impact on demand for unstructured recreation activity by providing a substitute for more expensive leisure pursuits and competitive sports
- The main countries of birth outside Australia include the United Kingdom, China, Hong Kong and India. The implications on demand for unstructured recreation activities are additional demand for social racquet sports, basketball, martial arts and relaxation/movement activities such as tai chi
- Housing trends suggest there will be fewer dwellings with private space in Hornsby sufficient for incidental play and physical activity. Hence there may be an increase in demand for local streetscapes and parks to accommodate this activity.
- There have been significant increases in the number of people in the Shire from China (66% increase from 2001), India (42%), Korea (37%) and Sri Lanka (21%), with decreases in people from New Zealand and European Countries (in particular UK, Italy, Netherlands and German).
- There has been a 32% increase in the number of people speaking Chinese languages (an additional 3,272 people), Hindu (51% increase, 539 people) and Korean (41%, 920 people)

Hornsby's population

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing estimated the resident population of the Hornsby Shire in 2006 to be 151,326, an increase of 3% from 2001. This growth is slower than had been expected for the area and is slower than the growth rate for the Central Northern Sydney region of NSW (6.2%).

A large majority of this population live in the older more established suburbs in the southern area of the Shire (between Hornsby and Epping).

Aspects of the Shire's population correlate closely to the indicators for both Sydney and NSW as a whole, particularly in terms of age profile, family structure and ethnic diversity. The difference in characteristics across the Council's suburbs are however much more diverse.

The suburbs with the highest population and population density according to 2006 ABS statistics are as follows.

Table 4: Suburbs with the highest population and population density

Population	Highest population density (persons per hectare)
■ Hornsby (19,300)	■ Epping (28.9)
■ Cherrybrook (18,411)	■ Wahroonga/Waitara (34.0)
■ Epping (13,712)	■ Castle Hill (25.4)
■ Beecroft/Cheltenham (10,423)	■ Carlingford (23.7)
■ Mt Colah/ Mt Kuring-gai (8,614)	■ West Pennant Hills (24.2)

The following table outlines the 2006 population density of each suburb in the Hornsby Shire. Also noted are the population densities for the whole of the Hornsby Shire as well as the Sydney Statistical Division.

Table 5: Population density of each suburb – persons per hectare

Suburb	Hectares	2006 Population	Density (pph)
Arcadia/North Western Rural	24,583	3,450	0.14
Asquith	344	2,840	8.2
Beecroft/Cheltenham	653	10,423	15.9
Berowra	872	3,448	3.9
Berowra Heights/ North Eastern Rural	11,309	7,379	0.6
Carlingford	131	3,117	23.7
Castle Hill	221	5,634	25.4
Cherrybrook	837	18,411	21.9
Dural	2,633	5,254	1.9
Epping	474	13,712	28.9
Epping North	229	4,134	18.0
Galston/Middle Dural	2,516	3,075	1.2
Hornsby	837	19,300	23.0
Hornsby Heights	1,019	5,946	5.8
Mount Colah/Mount Kuring-gai	2,235	8,614	3.8
Normanhurst	215	4,938	22.9
Pennant Hills	619	6,211	10.0
Thornleigh	386	8,011	20.7
Wahroonga/Waitara	242	8,228	34.0
Westleigh	381	4,412	11.5
West Pennant Hills	157	3,808	24.2
Sydney Statistical Division	1,214,469	4,119,190	3.4
Hornsby Shire	50,894	151,325	3.0

Source: 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics

Population characteristics by suburb

Hornsby is one of the largest council's in the Sydney metropolitan area, and the suburbs of Hornsby Shire have significantly different characteristics. Key findings concerning population characteristics by suburb that may influence the need for unstructured recreation facilities through out the Shire are identified below.

- The proportion of 5 – 24 year olds in Cherrybrook, Arcadia/ North Western Rural and Westleigh are significantly higher than the State and Council average, Wahroonga/ Waitara and the Hornsby CBD have much lower proportions of this age group.
- The proportion of older adults (aged 60+ years) living in Castle Hill, Wahroonga/ Waitara and Normanhurst is above the state and council average whilst Berowra, Hornsby Heights, Berowra Heights/ North Eastern Rural and Dural have a smaller proportion of older adults.
- The suburbs with the highest percentage of people from non English speaking backgrounds (NESB) are Carlingford (1,015 people, 33%), Epping (4,283 people, 32.8%), Cherrybrook (5,040, 28%) and Hornsby (4,924, 28%). The main countries from which these people come are China and Hong Kong. Note: The Hornsby Shire in 2006 had approximately 13,488 people who speak Chinese languages.
- Suburbs with the largest percentage of households with higher income earners (earning \$1,200 or more per week) were Westleigh (57.6% or 750 households), Cherrybrook (55.2% or 2,964 households) and Beecroft/ Cheltenham (54.9% or 1,830 households). Suburbs with the most low income earners (less than \$500 per week) were Castle Hill (24.5%, 458 households), Wahroonga/ Waitara (18%, 526 households) and Hornsby (21.5%).
- Hornsby has a high proportion of families who are couples with dependant children.

Population characteristics by planning district

There are significant differences in population characteristics between the planning districts (PD's). These will influence the need for unstructured recreation opportunities across the Shire.

- The proportion of 0 – 19 year olds in PD's 4, 5 and 8 are significantly higher than the Shire average.
- The proportion of older people (aged 65+ years) is below the Shire average for PD's 4, 5 and 6 and above average for 1, 3/9 and 7.
- The proportion of older people (aged 65+ years) ranges from 5.8% in PD 5 to 16.3% in PD 3/9 (compared to 12.1% for the Hornsby Shire).
- Planning districts 1 and 8 have the highest proportion of people born in NESB countries. PD 1 has approximately 6,000 people (19.9%) from NESB with 5,400 people (23.8%) from NESB in PD8.
- Household incomes in all but two districts are well above average, however PD's 3/9 and 7 have household incomes below the Shire average.

Population growth

Population growth in the last two decades has been relatively high compared to the Northern Sydney region and the NSW average. This is mainly attributed to the new release area developments (at Cherrybrook, Dural, Castle Hill and Glenhaven) but also to urban consolidation and the construction of large apartment buildings close to the Hornsby CBD.

Feature of growth patterns in the Shire include:

- Higher demand for smaller dwellings from an aging population and for smaller families
- Significant increase in migrants from non English speaking countries particularly to the Cherrybrook area, doubling from 1986 – 1996 (from 11,368 to 23,363). Main countries of origin include Hong Kong, Malaysia, Korea and China
- Established suburbs in the South have experienced slight population declines
- Primarily the forecasted population growth is expected to occur in planning districts 3 and 9, however there is also reasonable growth in planning districts 2, 4, 6 and 8

Age as an influence on leisure behaviour

The age profile of the future population is an important indicator of demand for recreation activities within the Shire. The following table indicates that there will be a major increase in the proportion of people in the 60-74 year and over 85 years age groups (highlighted in yellow) and a general decrease in the proportion of persons less than 20 years of age.

Table 6: Projected population (number of persons) by age group⁸

Age group	2006		2011		2016		Change	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4 yrs	4,600	4,270	4,400	4,090	4,360	4,050	-5.2%	-5.2%
5-9	5,320	5,160	5,020	4,920	4,880	4,780	-8.3%	-7.4%
10-14	5,690	5,850	5,700	5,760	5,480	5,570	-3.7%	-4.8%
15-19	6,250	6,230	6,240	6,280	6,240	6,210	-0.2%	-0.3%
20-24	5,730	5,420	5,930	5,600	5,990	5,680	4.5%	4.8%
25-29	4,500	4,430	4,640	4,550	4,810	4,700	6.9%	6.1%
30-34	5,070	5,280	4,780	5,010	4,950	5,160	-2.4%	-2.3%
35-39	5,620	5,890	5,710	5,990	5,550	5,800	-1.2%	-1.5%
40-44	6,210	6,450	6,140	6,320	6,290	6,470	1.3%	0.3%
45-49	6,110	6,450	6,300	6,400	6,330	6,370	3.6%	-1.2%
50-54	5,480	5,510	5,820	5,910	6,040	5,920	10.2%	7.4%
55-59	4,960	5,050	4,960	4,950	5,300	5,320	6.9%	5.3%
60-64	3,760	3,510	4,280	4,320	4,310	4,270	14.6%	21.7%
65-69	2,550	2,690	3,050	3,050	3,530	3,770	38.4%	40.1%
70-74	1,950	2,210	2,170	2,410	2,620	2,750	34.4%	24.4%
75-79	1,740	2,150	1,630	1,980	1,860	2,190	6.9%	1.9%
80-84	1,280	1,980	1,400	1,920	1,360	1,820	6.3%	-8.1%
85+	980	2,400	1,330	2,790	1,620	3,060	65.3%	27.5%
Total ages	77,800	80,920	79,510	82,250	81,500	83,870	4.8%	3.6%

⁸ Source: Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, transport and population data centre. NSW SLA population projections, 2001 to 2031, 2004 release.

Implications of demographic profile for unstructured recreation facilities

Based on the projections provided for activities and likely changes in demographic profile it is likely that:

- The use of tracks and trails for walking, cycling and bushwalking will increase, and there will be a demand for a hierarchy of trails to suit a wide range of pedestrian and non-motorised wheeled activities
- The demand for parks with opportunities to exercise pets will increase, however pet related exercise is not likely to be subject to significant variations due to age, income, or gender. Although there may be some relationship between pet ownership and ethnicity.
- For older adults – social sports such as tennis, bowls and golf are likely to remain in high demand
- The demand for unstructured recreation activities will be different for people in different life cycle stages and therefore a diversity of opportunities to participate in unstructured recreation needs to be available across the Shire and in each Planning District, in addition to specific places that serve specific target groups.
- Planning districts with a high proportion of young people (i.e. PD 4, 5, and 8 will be the priority for skate and BMX facility provision
- Local parks that provide a diversity of social opportunities for a wide range of lifecycle groups as well as activity choices, will be well used and will not require major redevelopment of facilities when demographics change. The designation of these social / family parks is a key strategy in this plan. (See Schedule 2.)
- Demand for children's playgrounds will not significantly increase (see Table 7)

Policy Directions: Council's role

- Provide several facilities for unstructured recreation clustered together in one main specialty/mixed recreation park in each planning district, or where this is not possible, in separate spaces.
- Council will aim to provide for a number of unstructured activities as outlined in Table 7
- Council will provide for these activities as a hierarchy of parks and facilities that can:
 - serve both a local catchment (lower quality and less complex facilities within walking distance of home) as well as those of a higher quality and sphere of influence – for those who will travel some distance (district or regional catchment)
 - serve a range of people in different lifecycle stages and with different abilities
 - serve a range of people with different levels of proficiency in the activity, but in particular those people who are developing the foundation skills
- Council will seek to provide for these activities (as a priority) in areas of high population and population density, and where there are a large number of children.

Table 7: Council facility provision role by unstructured recreation activity

Activity	Council facility provision role
Walking (other)	<p>Assistance for community groups to keep tracks and trail maintained</p> <p>Promotion of the key walking trails eg: The Great North Walk track links Sydney and Newcastle, and The Harbour to Hawkesbury Walking –links Manly and Berowra</p> <p>Provide trail circuits as satellite off the main trails, and along road reserve verges</p> <p>Provide perimeter trails around large parks and provide sealed circuit paths in SF parks</p>
Cycling	Provide on-road cycling routes as per Bike Plan, provision for BMX and mountain biking facilities as outlined in Chapter 3.5 and 3.6
Running	Provide perimeter trail around large parks and provide sealed circuit paths in SF parks
Walking (bush)	Provide trail circuits as satellite off the main trails and through Bushland Parks (see Schedule 4.)
Tennis	No additional free access courts will be provided outside leased facilities. Leased facilities will encourage community hire
Golf	Access to golf driving range and putt putt ie Dural

Activity	Council facility provision role
Basketball	Provide free access ball courts in key SF parks; encourage schools to open space facilities to community use
Football (outdoor)	Opportunities for kick to kick at key SF parks
Australian Football	Opportunities for kick to kick at key SF parks, and programs such as AusKick at leased reserves or schools.
Horse riding/ equestrian activities	<p>Regional provision equestrian facilities only. Trails to connect with these – such as Bayfield Rd Galston</p> <p>Equestrian use allowed on some trails</p>
Netball	<p>Netball and basketball rings will be installed in social ball court facilities in selected specialty/mixed recreation parks.</p> <p>Encourage schools to open facilities to community use</p>
Roller sports	Council will provide a selection of skate facilities in key parks cross the Shire
Rock climbing	Council will not provide any climbing walls other than as play equipment
Children’s playgrounds	Council will continue to favour upgrading or replacement of existing playgrounds rather than creating new playgrounds. Shade provision will be through tree planting, and landscaping will be used to introduce diversity into play experiences

TARGETING DIFFERENT LIFECYCLE AND POPULATION GROUPS

There are considerable benefits for providing unstructured recreation opportunities and related personal benefits of social interaction and physical activity for all life cycle stages, as well as for population groups who are commonly marginalised from organised sports provision.

Consistent with council policy, there are added benefits of providing for:

- Older people with opportunities to get out and about, stay active and feel connected to their local communities
- For adolescents to provide supportive local environments and enhance social and physical developmental outcomes
- For people with a disability
- For culturally and linguistically diverse populations who may have preferences for specific activities or like to participate within their own cultural groups

Policy directions: target groups

- Council will ensure facilities for unstructured recreation are made accessible and inclusive for people with a disability - who may not be able to participate in club or competition activities
- Ensure specialty/mixed recreation parks have good accessible paths of travel through them, and to facilities and that they have seats and tables at regular intervals, and access to toilets (at key reserves)
- Provide for physical activities that are culturally appropriate in areas where a high proportion of people are from the same cultural ancestry i.e. Chinese: opportunities for social racquet games, communal horticultural activities, etc. in Cherrybrook
- Provide robust durable facilities to support ball play for adolescents in social settings i.e.: table games, ball courts and playing surfaces with goal posts etc.
- Provide path circuits suitable to prams, wheel chairs and small wheeled toys in the vicinity of at least one main play equipment area for young children in each district
- Provide suitable access and support facilities to make key playgrounds accessible and enjoyable for older adults (grandparents and carers), paths, shelter etc.

CONVENIENT ACCESS TO UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Convenience is a large factor as to whether most people and especially young people and older adults will capitalise on opportunities for unstructured recreation.

Therefore, it is essential that there is a good distribution of low-level local opportunities to participate as well as opportunities to travel to higher quality district opportunities. This applies to trails, BMX, mountain bike and skate facilities as well playing fields, courts and dog exercising areas.

There is value in providing unstructured opportunities at sportsgrounds for two reasons:

- to enhance use when competition sport is not being played – (i.e. during the day and after hours)
- to enable people to learn foundation sport skills, provide opportunities for role modelling and connect with clubs to further develop interest skills and participation, and their potential club participation

During the summer sports season there is less use of sportsgrounds for evening training than during winter and longer daylight hours provide an opportunity for unstructured recreation at sportsgrounds.

There is also value in ensuring that unstructured recreation activities are well promoted to ensure that residents have a good choice and know what is available.

Policy directions: convenient access

- Ensure all relevant clubs to encourage social / casual membership, and affordable hire of their facilities
- Consider when planning for sport that opportunities to play socially and learn the basic foundation skills (in an unstructured setting) are accommodated at sportsgrounds and specialty/mixed recreation parks
- Encourage clubs to provide better access to facilities for non club sport (i.e. (tennis and golf) and seek to ensure that cost is not a barrier to people who wish to play (tennis, golf) socially
- Ensure all (tennis) clubs identify courts can be hired for social use
- Promote existing opportunities in the Shire to play unstructured sports and activities
- Provide a hierarchy of trails across the Shire to suit a wide range of pedestrian and non-motorised wheeled activities
- Attempt to provide specialty/mixed recreation parks 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. Typically, this park would have a play space, kick-to-kick area, an off-leash dog exercise area, hard court for informal ball play as well as a formed path circuit
- Provide space for kick-to-kick, low level playing fields for social use and opportunities for Goal Kick and Aus kick, and other junior development programs to be run
- Provide play spaces not just as single purpose playgrounds but that meet a range of different family members needs, and therefore includes toilets (at a district level), play, picnic tables, social sports facility, tracks, trails, and vegetation, fitness equipment, and opportunities to play with pets
- Specialty/mixed recreation parks should generally:
 - cater for a range of age groups and contemplative as well as physical activity
 - be larger than 1 ha
 - Include an open grass area as well as area for tree, shrub and groundcover plantings
 - be overlooked by adjacent houses
 - where possible include the following:
 - play spaces, hard court ball areas, wall or hit up or soccer practice, grass area for kick to kick and picnics, a formed path system, circuit walking path shade, furniture include bins, seats, tables and preference an dog exercising area.
 - District level facilities may also include skate and /or BMX facilities, toilets and shelters
 - Aim to provide one park for off-leash dog activity area in every planning district
- Due to the potential impact on neighbours, Council will not provide additional lighting in parks but seek to enable access to lit sportsgrounds for use for unstructured activity after formal use, and around formal playing fields during times when they are lit (for example for walking, dog exercising and unstructured ball games)

3.1 DOG SOCIALISING AND EXERCISING

Almost two thirds of Australian households currently own a pet⁹. There are approximately 21,000 dogs and 9,000 cats residing in Hornsby. These figures are some of the highest in the State.

Dog ownership is increasing and as private space is becoming smaller the use of public space for dog socialisation and exercising is becoming increasingly important, as is the demand for off leash areas.

There are well-documented social, health and companionship benefits of pet ownership.

Responsible dog owners know that exercise and socialisation is important. Lack of exercise and social activity is detrimental in terms of both the health and behaviour of a dog.

While dog owners need to exercise their dogs, this activity must be balanced against environmental considerations and the rights and safety of others.

Council aims to promote responsible pet ownership and increase community awareness of companion animal issues.

⁹ PetNet publication at <http://www.petnet.com.au/acac/2.html>

Current participation

The following information is from the "Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program", Round 6, March-June 2007 conducted by IOSS.

- 11% of respondents visited the parks surveyed to walk the dog or for "dog play" (this compares to 5% for visitors surveyed in Sydney region). However, 2 of the 5 designated dog off lead parks, namely Asquith Park and Rofe Park in Hornsby Heights and one of the two time share ovals, Wood Street Reserve in North Epping, are not covered by this survey. The 11% figure would be likely to be higher if these 2 parks were included in the survey.
- Walking / walking the dog was the sixth most popular leisure activity in Hornsby in 2001, with 75.3% of respondents to a resident survey stating they had participated in this activity in the past 12 months.¹⁰
- The same survey found that 3.1% of respondents felt there was an unmet demand for jogging / walking for pleasure / walking the dog (this was the third highest activity mentioned as representing an unmet demand after swimming / aquatic activities and cycling / mountain biking).

Existing provision

Hornsby Shire has five full time off-leash areas for exercising and training of dogs as outlined in Schedule 1. These are:

- Asquith Oval, Rotherwood St, Asquith (PD 4)
- Crossroads Reserve, Cnr Turner / Berowra Waters Rds, Berowra Heights (PD 5)
- Greenway Park, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook (PD 8)
- Rofe Park, Galston Rd, Hornsby Heights (PD 4)
- Ruddock Park, Eucalyptus Drive Westleigh (PD 2)

¹⁰ Information from Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan- stage 2 and 3 reports

3.1 DOG SOCIALISING AND EXERCISING

All are fully fenced, and provide seating, shade, bubblers, dog waste bins and bags etc. There are also two shared off leash areas on ovals:

- Ron Payne Park, Wood St. North Epping (PD 1)
- Epping Oval, Norfolk Rd. Epping (PD 1)

Current issues

Due to the demand for dog exercising areas and off-leash areas, and the constraints of space in established areas, the impact on grass cover, as well as potential conflicts with other formal uses there is a need for additional policy and provision associated with dog exercise areas.

Council has trialled shared time use zones on some sportsgrounds that has not been successful.

Some pet owners seek confined spaces to exercise their pets. There is an increased interest in providing fenced dog parks, agility areas, specialised animal play equipment and cafes where pets are welcome.

Several of the existing dog parks have evidence of use levels beyond their carrying capacity, leading to poor quality grass surfaces. These need to be improved which would result in increased capacity and quality. This may be a costly exercise involving the rebuilding of turf profiles and turf coverage, irrigation from non-potable water sources, or possibly trialling of synthetic turf at some locations.

In line with Council’s stated strategic direction of achieving financial sustainability, the problems at existing dog parks must be solved before moving to create any new facilities where the problems of managing the assets may become unaffordable.

The park user surveys recorded a number of comments regarding dogs, including those in the following table (table 9).

Table 9: Community comments regarding dogs in Hornsby’s parks

Park	Comments re provision/ improvements/ issues
Crosslands Reserve	"allow dogs"
Epping Oval	dislike dogs especially dog droppings conflict with sporting clubs
Greenway Park	need for better drainage under tap in dog area owners should remove dog waste Puppy classes but no licence agreement Conflict with turf wicket
Pennant Hills	Pennant Hills needs a dog park
Montview Park	dog waste needs to be removed
Pennant Hills Park	a dog off-lead area needed
Ruddock Park	tap/dish for dogs; dog swimming pool; dog waste bins; closed off section for small dogs; prevent dogs digging around fences and seats; clean dog waste bin with bleach increase dog owner awareness of responsibilities

Source: "Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program", Round 5, March-June 2006, conducted by IOSS.

3.1 DOG SOCIALISING AND EXERCISING (continued)

In the shared off-leash areas on ovals, (Ron Payne Park in North Epping and Epping Oval, Epping) there have been problems with conflicts between sporting groups and dog users, especially in the case of Epping Oval due to its turf wicket. In practice, dogs are allowed to use the area whenever it is not being used for sport, provided dogs don't go on the wicket.

These time shared ovals do not appear to have been as successful as the designated dog areas due to dog waste and uncontrolled dogs and dogs interfering with the turf wicket.

There are dog obedience clubs operating at Galston adjacent to the equestrian facility and one at Rofe Park in Hornsby Heights. (This has exclusive use at certain times). At the Rural Sports Facility, Galston (currently under construction) there will be capacity for dog obedience groups to use the facility.

There is a lack of dog off-leash areas in the Cheltenham and Beecroft areas. There may be potential to provide for dogs in some way in Lyne Road Reserve in Cheltenham. This area is currently a recreation area that would have scope for an unleashed dog area and possibly a BMX area (there is a problem with inappropriate BMX activity nearby at Cheltenham Oval). This issue can be addressed in the park master plan proposed for Lyne Road Reserve.

There are currently no official dog exercising and training areas in Planning Districts 3, 6 or 7. However Planning Districts 6 and 7 are primarily rural / national park areas with very low population density and therefore the provision for off-leash dog facilities is less pressing.

Planning district 3, incorporating Hornsby, Waitara and Wahroonga, has however significantly high population density (between 21 and 26 people per hectare) and there is a need for dog off-leash areas.

Rules that apply to all dog off-leash areas (including time-share areas) include:

- Keep your dog in sight
- Your dog must be under control by voice
- Pick up and dispose of all waste correctly
- Do not let your dog rush at or harass other dogs and people
- Keep your dog on a lead until inside the fenced area and put it back on a lead before leaving

3.1 DOG SOCIALISING AND EXERCISING (continued)

Selection criteria

Where new sites are desirable, the following criteria should be used as a general guide to site selection of dog off-leash parks:

- Away from vehicle traffic
- No shared use with sportsgrounds
- Relatively large open spaces:
 - where dogs can run
 - easements or drainage reserves without significant indigenous vegetation
- Some relatively flat space or can be accessed by an “accessible path of travel”
- Suitable, if necessary to be fenced
- Have access to a water supply
- Include a variation in landscape setting type across all sites. Some sites should have:
- A good chance of meeting other dogs there (i.e. have dogs to play with)
- Access to water or ponds for dog swimming (these must not be sites of biological significance)
- Vegetation that is not just mown grass i.e. some shade and rough area

Policy directions: dog parks

- Seek to establish a three level hierarchy of designated off-leash areas (refer to Schedule 1):
 - Primary - the major areas with specialised facilities
 - Secondary - smaller with less facilities
 - Local - the smaller local areas
- Assign a hierarchy to each dog off-leash park and develop in accordance with the guidelines
- All off-leash areas within the Shire should be assigned a level in the hierarchy and identified on a map.
- Council will seek to establish additional off-leash areas and investigate the following sites for this purpose:
 - Lyne Rd open space, Beecroft
 - Eddy Park, Thornleigh
 - Dawson St, corner of Pennant Hills Park
 - Kenley Park near BrickPit Park, Normanhurst
 - Plympton Rd open space, Carlingford
 - Flora Ave drainage Reserve /Hunt Reserve west edge Mt Colah
 - Wisemans Ferry Old Northern Road, Wisemans Ferry
- Seek suitable off-leash areas in PD3, (Hornsby, Waitara and Wahroonga)
- Provide dog parks equitably and cost effectively

3.1 DOG SOCIALISING AND EXERCISING (continued)

- For Epping Oval and Ron Payne Park that are also sportsgrounds, dogs are required to be:
 - Outside playing surfaces when sports training or games are in progress
 - Outside all synthetic surfaced playing surfaces, and turf cricket wickets at all times
- Simplify rules associated with dog use in public space to include:
 - unless signed otherwise all areas are on-leash
 - dogs should be on-leash while on (and within 5m each side) all shared pathways, even if the pathway is within a designated off-leash area
 - dogs are not permitted whether restrained or otherwise in Conservation Parkland/ Bushland areas, (endangered vegetation communities (Sydney turpentine / ironbark forest or Sydney Bluegum high forest communities) or within ten metres of playgrounds, public BBQs and skate/ BMX parks
 - dog owners must carry a plastic bag with them at ALL times (even if they have cleaned up and disposed of faeces).
- Ensure there are park bins (not necessarily specialised dog bins) in off-leash areas
- Undertake cyclical education and awareness campaigns about 'picking up'
- Promote extensively the Shire-wide on-leash policy unless signed.
- Ensure that signs advertise all off leash and no dog areas at all entrances to these areas
- Widely promote shared pathways as dog on-leash, including five metres either side
- Support dog clubs/ groups in finding suitable sites for dog obedience/puppy school (in each planning district) as well as agility programs, dog sports or equipment where there is demand, and ensure each has an up to date user agreement/licence
- Maintain ongoing dialogue with dog activity groups about issues facing pet owners and in terms of dog parks and programs

3.2 BALL SPORTS COURTS, HIT-UP/ KICK AND GRAFFITI WALLS

Ball courts

Basketball and other ball courts and walls provide the major opportunities for young people for 'unstructured' play.

The Hornsby LSP notes that ball courts are the 'playground equivalent' for children over 9 years of age.

Current participation

Comments made in previous surveys include the following:

- Ball sports were mentioned in the "Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program"¹¹ as a reason for visiting Hornsby parks
- Four percent of respondents mentioned tennis, while basketball, cricket, football, soccer and "unspecified sport" were each mentioned by 1% of visitors as the reason for visiting
- Two percent of visitors stated their reason for visiting was to play social/ ball games, although the survey shows that 5% of participants were playing social/ball games at the time of interview. This 5% of Hornsby Park visitors compares with 2% for the Sydney region
- The four parks where playing social/ball games was recorded were Montview Park (5), Epping Oval(3), McKell Park Lower(1) and Ruddock Park(1)
- There was a comment at Ruddock Park that a basketball hoop was needed

¹¹ Round 5, March-June 2006 conducted by IOSS

3.2 BALL SPORTS COURTS, HIT-UP/ KICK AND GRAFFITI WALLS (continued)

Existing provision

Basketball Half and Full Courts

Basketball half and full courts are provide in the following locations:

- Oxley Drive Reserve, Oxley Drive, Mt Colah
- Mills Parks, Chelmsford Avenue, Asquith
- Erlestoke Park, Whipbird Close, Cherrybrook (full court)
- Charles Curtis Park, Corner Pine & Myrtle Streets, Thornleigh
- Greenway Park, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook (full court)
- North Epping Oval, Boundary Rd, North Epping
- Warrina Oval, Warrina St, Berowra (full court)
- Montview Oval, Montview Pde, Hornsby Heights (full court)

Graffiti (youth mural) Walls

- Greenway Park, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook

Hit up Wall

- Mills Parks, Chelmsford Avenue, Asquith

Kick Wall

- Cheltenham Oval, Castle Howard Road, Cheltenham
- Thornleigh Oval, Ferguson Street, Thornleigh
- North Epping Oval, Boundary Road, North Epping
- Campbell Park, Wilga Street, West Pennant Hills

Hit-up Wall / Graffiti Wall

- Ruddock Park, Coral Heath Avenue, Westleigh

These facilities are currently maintained based on their status (hierarchy), i.e. in accordance with the number of designated services per year.

3.2 BALL SPORTS COURTS, HIT-UP/ KICK AND GRAFFITI WALLS (continued)

Policy directions: ball courts

- Designate specialty/mixed recreation parks in each Planning District and where possible in each suburb, provide hard court areas and a hit-up wall where space allows
 - Where possible seek to ensure that the sealed court area provides for a number of different sports and is larger than the typical ½ court
 - Council will not generally provide lighting of courts or walls unless required for competition
 - Manage these facilities according to their catchment size
 - Ensure regular inspection and maintenance programs consider the items listed above
- Ensure regular inspections are undertaken of ball court areas. These should include:
 - No loose earth abutting and migrating onto the playing surface
 - No major gaps in joints >5mm
 - No major depressions >3mm or multiple depressions
 - No cracking or uneven lifting of the slab evident
 - No glass, rubbish and debris present
 - No foreign substances such as paint or tacky / sticky substances present
 - Basketball towers (including hoop, backboard, support, netting): All elements are intact and as designed/constructed and in serviceable condition
 - All bolts intact and secured
 - Supports are secure and not bent or damaged
 - All signs (including "No slam dunking/ or hanging from this hoop") are readable and not defaced
 - No graffiti requiring removal
 - Surface free from major pools of water
 - Drains operating and free of obstructions
 - All support furniture, bubblers, bins, seats and tables present and in a serviceable condition
 - Walls: no tagging, or inappropriate graffiti
 - No damage to walls that may impact on structural integrity
 - All joints and mortar intact
 - Council will not generally provide lighting of courts or walls unless required for competition
 - Council should continue to maintain these facilities in line with their catchment hierarchy
 - Ensure regular inspecting and maintenance programs consider the items listed above.

3.3 SKATE FACILITIES

Although demand may have flattened out in the last three or so years, the base skateboard market is likely to be larger than it has ever been. The mass appeal of the sport has grown and the age of participants has widened.

The demand for skate facilities is largely focused on street skating, although there is still demand for transitions and vertical (vert) ramps from older skaters. Most skate parks are now concrete (unless indoors) and “skate plaza” style facilities are popular, although they often don’t provide the diversity of opportunities needed to meet a range of skaters needs including younger skaters.

Whilst there is still a strong individualistic, anti establishment element in skateboarding, the skateboard market has broadened its appeal to the family market. As skaters mature and become parents there is evidence that they are visiting skate parks with their children, to teach, encourage and watch. There has also been a corresponding demand for programs involving skateboarding, particularly for young children, and an increased trend for community and youth groups embracing skate activities in association with outreach services.

Information from previous plans

- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan report found that the two skate parks in Cherrybrook and Brooklyn have been successful. It found that additional skate facilities were required¹².
- The park user surveys recorded a number of comments regarding bikes and skateboarding, including the following:

Park	Comments re provision/improvements
Montview Oval	Need bike track; motor bike track for kids; skate park: ramps, pipe, fun box, 1/2 pipe
Greenway Park Cherrybrook	Need for safe cycle paths between park and remove graffiti from skateboard ramp

¹² The Hornsby LSP was produced before the completion of a further skate park in Berowra

3.3 SKATE FACILITIES (continued)

Existing provision

There are currently four skate facilities in Hornsby, and one in the planning stage.

These parks can be classified as fulfilling subregional and local functions.

These skate parks are:

- Cherrybrook Skate Park, Greenway Park Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook – a large bowl facility, lit until 9:30pm (subregional)
- Brooklyn Oval skate park, Brooklyn – a small concrete street skate park (local)
- Berowra Oval Skate Park, Berowra Waters Rd, Berowra – a street style park, lit until 9.30pm (subregional)
- Brickpit Park, Dartford Rd, Thornleigh – a more advanced bowl and street park (subregional)
- Galston Recreation Reserve, Galston Rd, Galston - currently in the design phase in February 2008 (subregional)

A feasibility study was conducted concerning a future skate park in Hornsby, however no suitable site has emerged, nor is likely to in future. Hornsby Park was previously considered then rejected by Council as being an unsuitable site. Schedule 3 suggests the appropriate nature of facility by hierarchy.

Current issues

The need for additional facilities

A hierarchy of skate facilities is desirable considering the dispersed nature of settlement in the Shire, and what is currently available, in the immediate vicinity. The closest regional facility is the Monster skate park in Homebush. This includes an outdoor vert ramp and street course as well as an indoor park. It has merchandising, additional services and program options.

In Hornsby Shire a suite of subregional and small facilities could be justified.

It would be beneficial to expand and upgrade the Cherrybrook skate park and where possible provide an additional park in the Shire. There has been expressed demand for a skate park in C ward and the Hornsby CBD in the past, unfortunately, after some investigation it has been determined that suitable sites in these areas are not available.

Due to limited funding and the need to address the provision of unstructured recreation facilities in an equitable manner across the Shire, the provision of additional skate parks may not be a high priority. With the development of a skate park in Galston, there would be a range of skate parks available across the Shire. Any new park would need to complement the existing parks.

It is assumed that all skate parks will permit use by BMX riders and would be managed accordingly.

3.3 SKATE FACILITIES (continued)

Policy directions: skate facilities

A three level hierarchy of skate facilities is typical: local, sub-regional or regional. This accords with the likely number of people each level of facility serves, the nature and complexity of the facility, and suitability of the site to sustain such a facility. As a basic rule of thumb:

- a regional facility will cater for approximately 6-10,000 skaters (all skaters in the Shire)
- a sub-regional skate park may cater for up 1000 skaters
- a local skate park could cater for approximately 250 skaters
- Proceed with the skate park currently designed at Galston; consider providing an additional subregional skate in C Ward (if a suitable site can be found) and upgrade the Cherrybrook skate park (if space allows)
- Continue to support sport development opportunities at skate parks such as clinics, demonstrations, school holiday programs and where appropriate occasional competitions
- Utilise the planning and design checklists provided as Schedule 3 to maximise the use of skate parks and the chances of skate parks being supported by the community
- Review the inspection checklist used to regularly assess the condition of skate parks, and implement a routine maintenance and cleaning program for the skate parks

3.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND HORSE RIDING TRAILS

Current participation

- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan found that walking and walking the dog were among the most popular leisure activities in Hornsby Shire in 2001, with 51% of respondents participating more than 20 times per year.
- The 2001 resident survey showed 6.4% of respondents felt there was an unmet demand for cycling / mountain bike riding (this was the second highest activity mentioned in terms of unmet demand)
- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan concluded there was significant demand for more cycling opportunities in the Shire. The need for safe cycling facilities for children was mentioned in particular (P189, stage 2 report)
- The trend toward unstructured recreation by young people has resulted in service gaps in youth specific leisure opportunities such as skate facilities, basketball hoops, safe bike, scooter and skateboard routes¹³
- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan stage 3 report recommends that Council “build upon the existing network of local and regional walking and cycling trails and paths”(p10) and provides “a range of youth-oriented play facilities including skate facilities, basketball rings and play facilities for youth at key accessible sites within the Shire”¹⁴
- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan showed that almost 10% of survey respondents had engaged in horse riding within the previous 12 months, much higher than the national average of about 1%

There is a high demand for a range of paths to suit a range of different cyclists need in the Shire:

- At the lowest level there is a need for 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.
- The next level there is 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.
- At the next level there is demand for more purpose-built single track, roadside horse riding trails and cross-country mountain bike / BMX trails.

¹³ Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan - stage 2 p192.

¹⁴ Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan - stage 3 p10.

3.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND HORSE RIDING TRAILS (continued)

Current issues

- Council’s Leisure Strategic Plan, and many worldwide studies show walking to be the most popular form of outdoor exercise.
- The Western Australian Adult Physical Activity Survey showed that 63% of surveyed females used streets and footpaths for recreation in the week of the survey, compared to 47% use of facilities at home and 18% use of parks.
- It has been estimated that encouraging a further 10% of the Australian population to engage in walking five days per week could save 330 deaths per year from cardiovascular diseases and diabetes and save a minimum of \$150 million in direct health costs.¹⁵
- Another study concluded that functional features to be more important for walking for recreation near home than safety aesthetic or destination features. These functional items include the presence of a well-maintained, continuous footpath system; the design of the street system; and traffic volume, speed and traffic calming devices.¹⁶
- Although facilities for jogging and walking ranked only third in the list of unmet demand for leisure/recreation activities in The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan, research information and experience elsewhere shows that an investment in functional improvements to the footpath system and promotion of it will encourage greater participation in walking for exercise.

Comments made in park users surveys include;

Park	Comments re provision / improvements
Crosslands Reserve	Bike track and; bike track for children
Greenway Park	Need for safe cycle paths between park and remove graffiti off skateboard ramp
Mills Park	Bike path in complete loop
Montview Park	Need bike track
Pennant Hills Park	Recreational bike trail
Ruddock Park	Better drainage on bike track after rain; gentler slope on cycle path near playground
Willow Park	Wider pathways; bigger bicycle track

Most of these issues have been addressed.

¹⁵ The health benefits of walking – Professor Adrian Bauman

¹⁶ University of Western Australia – *A study of the physical environmental factors in the local environment that may influence walking for recreation and for transport among sedentary workers and home makers, 2004.*

3.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND HORSE RIDING TRAILS (continued)

Policy directions: walking, cycling, and horse riding

- Prior to the development of any new trails, standards for costing and maintenance are to be reviewed or developed, and the decision as to whether to proceed with any such construction shall be made in consideration of the through-life asset management costs and the financial viability implications
- Where possible the hierarchy of trails in the shire will include the following:
 - An improved network of urban footpaths that perform a recreation as well as commuter function, is promoted for that purpose and designed to promote 'urban permeability' and pedestrian safety.
 - equestrian and shared trails provided in select locations in the roadside verge, primarily to provide safe access to equestrian facilities and key sport and recreation facilities and schools i.e. in Galston
 - perimeter paths around key reserves
 - bike trails and walking tracks in suitable bushland areas
 - A sealed circuit path through major social/ family recreation reserves (2.5 m concrete paths)
- Council will produce a footpath, tracks and trails brochure, and website package, and information on Council's website about location of these different types of paths
- Councils Environment Division and Works Division will be responsible for designating suitable routes for these trails in conjunction with the community and preparing information for the community on the location of routes and off-road bicycle facilities.
- Consider a roadside horse riding trail stretching from Arcadia Park in the north to Galston Recreation Reserve in the south, taking in Fagan Park and the Rural Sports Facility
- If this central horse riding trail is established, consider future trails branching from it
- Council will continue to promote the Great North walk as its major trail route and develop other satellite trails in suitable locations
- Council will continue to develop local trail circuits in major parks to encourage people to walk, run and cycle
- Council's bushland team will be responsible for ongoing monitoring and path maintenance of paths in bushland in conjunction with community groups and residents.
- Consider providing a circuit path for small wheeled toys and children learning to ride at each social/ family park. Address in future master plans and update of management plans. (Provide some as sealed and others unsealed tracks to provide choice.)
- Map all existing off-road shared trails suitable for cycling and update the Council plan identifying the hierarchy of trails, and their suitability for cycling, wheelchairs and horses.

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES

These facilities are primarily **BMX and mountain bike facilities**. There is some overlap between mountain bike and BMX facilities. There is some use of mountain bike single track by BMX riders and use of BMX dirt jumps by mountain bike for example, and both may use tracks for competition. Also both may be seen using skate parks.

Terminology

BMX

Bicycle motocross; a form of cycling that uses a small framed and wheeled bicycle. Types of BMX competition include flatland, racing, freestyle and dirt jumping.

Mountain Bike

The term "Mountain Bike" refers to any bicycle designed for off-road riding. Mountain bikes originated as all-purpose machines, but as the sport grew, mountain bikers began to ride a variety of terrain and products developed to address needs that are more specific. Types of mountain bikes can now generally be divided into: XC racing, XC Trail, All-Mountain, and Freeride.¹⁷

Trails or runs

These refer to either a series of dirt jumps in a line or a designated trail. Dirt jumps (refer to Schedule 5) consist of two parts (doubles) – a launch and landing jump, these are separated by a space that is jumped.

Single track refers to trails that are only wide enough generally for one rider at a time. They are generally constructed by directing a line of use to a particular area that may include timber and stone obstacles, and in higher-level tracks timber ladders and stairs, (rather than formal construction of an entire route).

¹⁷ Sourced from www.shimano.com.au

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

Demand for BMX

Expressed demand for BMX freestyle in Hornsby is estimated to be of a similar size to the skateboarding and aggressive in-line skate market. Demand for BMX will include freestyle use of skate parks (street and vert facilities) as well as other disciplines in BMX including dirt jumping, track racing and down hill/cross country trails. These facilities may be (and commonly are) shared with mountain bikes.

BMX may have a greater growth potential than skateboarding, however this demand is dispersed across a number of different disciplines that require different facilities.

BMX use is likely to continue to be strong at skate parks and in outlying areas, and use and construction of BMX dirt jumps for informal use is also likely to continue.

There has been some growth in BMX racing, after it peaked in the late 1980's/early 1990's. However, competition tracks are now generally provided only a regional basis. Current growth may now reflect BMX becoming an Olympic sport. There may be demand for a competition track in the Shire or region if not currently provided.

The provision of BMX and mountain bike activities does warrant some further investigation. A hierarchy and range of facilities to suit different disciplines of BMX is warranted, however in the short term there does need to be a focus on addressing the existing use and the management of existing facilities to ensure they are not impacting on biodiversity values.

Current BMX issues

Some Council's have sought to restrict the number of BMX bikes using skate parks because in times of high use they are seen to conflict with skateboarders. Because of the number of larger bikes now using jump areas and skate parks, codes of conduct are advisable.

There are few public BMX dirt facilities in the Shire to meet the relatively high demand.

There are jumps establishing in environmentally sensitive areas that need to be removed. Several areas where jumps have been developed are in suitable locations, however riders have expanded the area beyond what is acceptable and some environmental degradation has occurred.

Provision of space for young people to be able to design and construct their own BMX jumps with contributions and supervision from council would serve demand. Other Councils allow jump areas to be designed and constructed by riders at agreed sites and under guidance of Council. This is generally a satisfactory arrangement.

Sometimes mountain bike trail designers, or BMX event promoters are employed to design BMX jumps, and overlook the specific requirements of these in a public environment.

One of the major issues is "illegal" jumps – those jumps that have been developed on public land without the authority of the landowner or manager. The question of who is responsible when an accident occurs is a major issue.

Recent law reforms encourage participants to take more responsibility for their actions and make it harder to sue Councils when accidents occur. However Council owes a duty of care to its residents and this would indicate that Council must manage its BMX facilities to ensure they remain in an acceptable condition, and use is consistent with the facilities provided. Council has an obligation in design, signage, maintenance, and overall management to protect users from foreseeable danger.

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

There are several areas in Hornsby parks where BMX tracks and jumps have developed. These require more specific management input and in some instance reconfiguration. Care needs to be taken to not to over design BMX facilities for young riders and to ensure layout does not compromise young riders safety.

Common issues associated with the “illegal” BMX sites are:

- There is no water for riders to refine the lip of the launch jump
- There is no soil provided to do this and holes are dug in inappropriate locations
- Heights of jumps may be more than the recommended maximum of 1.2-1.5m in a public place (for proficient riders and less for beginners)
- Riders bring timber and other loose materials to the site to supplement jumps and to create additional challenge
- Jumps may intrude on significant areas of bushland and contribute to environmental degradation
- Riders may cut down trees adjacent to the jumps or trails
- Riders may lay carpet to address drainage issues
- Riders may not provide a range of jump heights to facilitate graded challenge and assist skill development
- Riders may deviate from the main runs and cross lines that may cause conflict for other riders.

All these issues must be addressed with riders at BMX dirt jump sites.

Schedule 6 provides a process for when an illegal trail or jumps are found.

Schedule 8 provides a preliminary assessment of sites where jumps have been developed.

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

Policy directions: BMX facilities

Council will:

- Prior to the development of any new facilities, standards for construction and maintenance are to be reviewed or developed, and the decision as to whether to proceed with any such construction shall be made in consideration of the through-life asset management costs and the financial viability implications
 - increase its service in the areas of BMX facility provision to include a hierarchy of BMX facilities, that meets the wide range of interests of young people, (relatively equitably distributed across the Shire)
 - manage existing skate and BMX facilities to ensure environmental and park values are protected, and to meet the needs of a broader range of users with different levels of proficiency
 - consider the provision of BMX opportunities beyond facilities, to include programming and sports development activities that in turn ensure facilities will be well utilised
 - provide opportunities for BMX riders to have an agreed involvement in the development and maintenance of BMX dirt jumps, (and develop agreements and service levels with riders, based on the issues described above)
 - agree on management and maintenance regimes for all BMX facilities in order to manage the conditions of assets and their use, thus maximising their social and recreation benefits
 - implement a management regime for BMX facilities to include:
 - codes of conduct
 - a process for assessing illegal jumps (see Schedule 6.)
 - clear roles and responsibilities for all management tasks
 - some sites are clearly the designated responsibility of Bushland and others the Parks and Landscape departments. In the first instance Parks with recreation planning expertise should assess the demand for sites and agree (with Bushland staff if a bushland) and determine, (with other relevant land managers) the strategic placement of the sites, and determine which sites are suitable and capable of sustaining public facilities
 - Parks should be responsible for communicating with users in the design and development of these sites.
- Then the relevant department should organise to manage the sites (undertake ongoing monitoring and minor maintenance) under consistent guidelines and processes agreed as a result of this Plan.
- a cyclic maintenance and capital works program supported by an approved cost plan over the lifecycle of each facility should be agreed for council constructed sites and in conjunction where possible with any relevant club or user group.
 - other processes and systems should be agreed including the following:
 - a regular cleaning and inspection program for BMX as well as skate sites should also be put in place.
 - a system for organising and recording inspections
 - a system for checking and signing off maintenance and rectification work
 - training programs for personnel responsible for inspections, hazard reports, and rectification works
 - a system for monitoring demand and use
 - a system for recording accidents
 - regular communication with users
 - a signage system

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

Mountain bike facilities

There are four main types of mountain bikes; XC (cross country) trail, XC racing, All-Mountain, and Freeride bikes.¹⁸ Disciplines of MTB include: downhill and XC racing, 4X, trials and orienteering. The sport generally uses single tracks and trails or constructed jump circuits/trails in natural areas or parks. 4X, one of the newest disciplines and where a larger proportion of the growth is, uses a constructed track, similar to a BMX racing track, running down a slope.

The sale of mountain bikes accounts for the majority of all bike sales, however there are a lack of formalised facilities, which has led to conflicts with other park users and land managers.

There are numerous sites with established mountain bike use in the Berowa Regional Park, and other bushland sites managed by Council. In the local area, trails have been formed in bushland reserves causing damage to sensitive flora and posing potential risks to other park users on narrow tracks. There is one known mountain bike trails facility in the Shire provided on private land. The Manly Warringah MTB club have a track at Arcadia (Peebles Rd Arcadia).¹⁹ It is not accessible to the public.

A number of other local councils and land management agencies in Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria have developed public mountain bike parks. There is a 4X track in Homebush that is also used by BMX riders.

Demand for mountain bikes

There are few statistics available concerning the demand for mountain bikes or the demographic profile of riders. However, anecdotal evidence suggests there is significant growth in the activity as a competitive sport, and as a non-competitive activity, especially by older adults.

Mountain Bike Australia membership has increased by almost 400% over the last 5 years. Only 5 – 10% of mountain bike owners actually belong to an organised group or club.²⁰

NSW has the largest proportion of Mountain Bike Australia memberships with over 1,500 members from NSW.

Mountain biking has traditionally been undertaken predominantly by males²¹ however there has been an increase in female participation in cycling over the last five years²² that is likely to correspond to increasing demand in mountain biking for women.

With the advancements in technology and rider skill there is an increased demand for more challenging trails to test rider skill and deter construction of trails in inappropriate locations.

The provision of mountain bike activities in the Hornsby Shire warrants some further investigation.

Various studies such as Assessing Recreation Demand and Opportunities Northern Sydney Region" study Feb 2004 by Parkland Environmental Planners for Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, and the DIPNR regional trails findings 2005 by HASSELL have identified demand for off-road cycling opportunities in the Northern Sydney Region.

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

Key issues

The key issues associated with mountain bikes in the Shire are similar to BMX issues:

- The significant demand for Mountain bike trails in the Shire
- The absence of a formally designated public facilities
- The construction of trails in inappropriate sites
- The need to assess existing sites and designate the nature of management- or remove
- The need to establish a process to liaise with other land managers (eg NPWS) clubs and user groups about facilities and ongoing demand
- The need to establish agreed management process for designated sites

There is established mountain bike use in natural areas in the Shire including on crown and other public land, however mountain bikes are not a permissible use of National or Regional Parks managed by NPWS except on a fire trail or management track.

NPWS currently have a major enforcement issue in relation to MTB in reserved crown land.

There are opportunities to embrace and manage mountain bike use in selective areas as has been done in Tasmania and Victoria.

There is a need to have a consistent approach by the Shire and other land managers to cross country MTB trails (especially DECC for Berowra Valley Regional Park and to a lesser extent Department of Lands). It would be desirable for Council to pursue this further with all agencies.

There are a number of significant risks associated with providing high-level MTB facilities, unless there is a high degree of management of trails, enforcement of the wearing of protective clothing and control over who rides what facilities. Most downhill trails and freeride jumps or all-mountain bike trails will not be able to be facilitated by Council in the urban environment unless in conjunction with a club and other relevant land owners or managers.

¹⁸ Cross-country (XC) trails bikes are generally an all-purpose mountain bike providing more control but generally less speed. Cross-country (XC) racing bikes: mostly used by those who are focusing on fitness and endurance, where speed is a key objective –and there is less focus on control as required in steep descents.

All-mountain bikes (downhill) generally have bigger tires, advanced suspension and brakes and are suited to downhill and steep terrain.

Freeride bikes are designed to ride the most extreme types of terrain; steep chutes, large rocks and roots, big jumps and drop-offs-and any other terrain.

¹⁹ See photos and plan (www.mwmtb.com/xc%20location.htm). There is also a MTB club that meets at Arcadia.

²⁰ International Mountain Bike Association Website.

²¹ 90% of riders are male (Goefit & Alder 2000)

²² ERASS

3.5 OFF ROAD CYCLING FACILITIES (continued)

Policy directions: Mountain bike facilities

- Facilitate MTB activities on a similar basis to BMX
- No new facilities to be built without prior consideration of through-life asset management costs and the financial viability implications
- Give priority to providing foundation level skills development, not elite level facilities or racing
- Give priority for MTB facilities to:
 - Negotiating consistent approach to provision of cross country trails with NPWS DECC and DOL
 - addressing the management of existing trails in bushland, (eg Old Mans Valley);
 - managing select single track MTB sites or jumps areas on suitable flat areas for MTBs (rather than down hill trails)
 - developing new sites in appropriate urban locations such as Hayes Park, Galston
- Work closely with local clubs and seek funds from Sport and Recreation or other sources to plan, design and manage one site eg Old Mans Valley.
- Where a jump areas or trail is provided; ensure beginner and intermediate runs are provided to ensure there are graded challenges for riders. This will encourage skill development, and enable riders to ride a level of facility suitable to their level of proficiency.
- Council should not provide for downhill MTB disciplines or provide sites suitable for competition unless a club manages the site and any competition.
- Address issues identified with user constructed tracks as identified under BMX facilities (in the previous chapter)
- See Schedule 6 for a process to address unauthorised locations.
- See Schedule 7 for MTB site selection criteria
- See Schedule 9 for specific actions regarding existing sites.
- See Volume 2, Skate and BMX Management Policy and Plan (Internal policy document).

3.6 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS

Current Playground Issues

Anecdotal evidence and some recorded history indicates that until the mid 20th century, children's play experiences were centred around opportunities in bushland and local watercourses or large private backyards. It was the world of Ginger Meggs.

Since those days there has been an increasingly formulated approach to playgrounds.

Design and spatial objectives received little consideration and playgrounds became centred on manufactured play objects.

Today there is considerable knowledge and research that highlights the need for spaces and places for children to play, imagine and socialise rather than relying just on objects.

Through play, children develop qualities necessary in adulthood, such as:

- Problem solving
- Socialising
- Independence
- Self awareness
- Body development such as balance and motor skills
- Creativity
- Resilience
- Spatial knowledge
- Flexibility and ability to deal with change
- Risk taking and judgement.

Today, backyards are shrinking, and security concerns, real or perceived, means that pre-teenage children are rarely allowed to explore the extensive bushland areas that permeate the entire Shire. Parents usually have an expectation that children will be supervised meaning that both adults and children need to be considered when developing playground spaces. This needs to be balanced with offering children a challenging experience in a space created and controlled by adults.

The design of playgrounds still centres around manufactured objects. There has been an increasing emphasis on the safety of children using playgrounds. Australian Standards for playground safety have been adopted, dictating the design of manufactured objects and the way that they are configured in the landscape. Potential fall heights must be limited and soffall surfaces must be installed where fall heights are above limits. These standards, while reducing the potential for injuries, have tended to drive up the costs of replacing playgrounds that have reached the end of their asset life. Replacing a playground at 2007 prices would range from \$80,000 to \$100,000.

3.6 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS (continued)

Current Playground Assets

Council currently has 131 playgrounds throughout the Shire. 96 of these are in neighbourhood parks, many of which are below optimum size for a park containing a playground setting.

More than 50% of Hornsby Shire's parks are less than 0.3 hectares in area

This is considered too small to contain a good range of facilities and still provide space for informal games

Many do not contain other features, such as a natural areas that would add to the attractiveness of a playground

Many are located on low-profile streets without good walking or driving access

Many are the quality of the playground structures was often old and at the end of its design life, or of poor quality that failed to meet modern safety standards.

Over the past 9 years, 53 playgrounds have been upgraded, replaced or augmented. 3 new playgrounds have been installed, including a playground designed for older children at Brickpit Park, and a regional scale playground is scheduled for construction at Fagan Park in 2008.

While there has been a move to provide playgrounds in parks of a regional or district scale, there would be benefit in focussing more on this type of facility in the future

Since about 1999, many of these playgrounds have been progressively removed and some not replaced due to the unsuitability of the park site and the near proximity of other playgrounds. Those that were replaced have incorporated improved design and safety principles.

Changes in the design of play equipment (driven largely by changes in playground standards) and a reduced life cycle of play equipment have increased playground renewal and upgrade costs.

As a result of the above works, the functionality, safety and setting of the older (20 + year old) parks that contain playground settings has significantly improved.

However, it has proven challenging to avoid a sense of uniformity when designing a playground based around manufactured objects.

3.6 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS (continued)

Playground Asset Management Issues

Asset management and associated financial sustainability has become one of the most important issues facing local government in recent times. The increased replacement cost and reduced life cycle of modern playground equipment has increased the asset management costs of playgrounds. This raises concerns about the future financial sustainability of maintaining Council's portfolio of playgrounds at the current level at the same time as attempting to expand the range of facilities for unstructured recreation as set out in this Strategy.

It is likely that future management of playgrounds will include the need for hard decisions about playground replacements and the cost/benefits of retaining playgrounds as against competing recreation projects.

Along with the trend in safety design of manufactured playground objects, there has been an Australia-wide trend towards providing artificial shade structures to moderate temperature and UV radiation. These structures are costly to erect, prone to vandalism and have a limited life before becoming dilapidated in appearance. Hornsby Council has for the most part avoided erecting playground shade structures as sun exposure management is largely in the hands of parental supervision, and can be supplemented as effectively and at less cost with tree planting near playgrounds.

Fencing is provided in some playgrounds especially where the playground is situated near a busy road or some other hazard. In a general sense, fencing a playground off from the larger park area is not desirable as children should be free to explore and play in the largest possible space.

The major cause of playground injuries is children falling from play equipment onto a hard surface. Reducing the height of equipment and providing undersurfacing should help reduce the severity of injuries (Kidsafe 1998). Certified undersurfacing under and around playground equipment should be installed in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 4422.1996 Playground Surfacing. The standard relates to impact attenuation and fall zones and requires that undersurfacing is placed under and around play equipment in order to reduce the risk of falls and their impact.

Wet-pour recycled rubber compounds, pine bark, sand and synthetic grass surfacing can all give satisfactory fall absorption when newly absorbed, many of these types of surface require continual maintenance to maintain these properties. The least maintenance is required by wet-pour rubber but it is also the most expensive at around \$20,000 per site. Through life costs and effectiveness make this type of surface the preferred treatment.

While most of the parks that contain playgrounds are accessible to people of various abilities, little of the equipment is designed for disabled children. At Willow Park, Hornsby, a well used playground has accessible play equipment. There has been little promotion of its accessibility nor of the level of use it receives from disabled children.

3.6 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS (continued)

Policy directions: Playgrounds

- Priority for playground development to be given to specialty/mixed recreation parks as they have regional, shire-wide or suburb-wide catchments
- Continuation of the establishment of a hierarchy of parks as regional parks, specialty/social/family parks, and local parks, with playground dimensions and settings commensurate with the position of the park within the hierarchy
- Continue to improve diversity of playground appearance and play experience
- Priority for playground development to be given to larger parks such as those with regional, shire-wide or suburb-wide catchments
- Design specialty/mixed recreation parks and sportsgrounds to cater for unstructured recreation for a range of age groups including adolescents
- Varying the play experience at each park, particularly at specialty/mixed recreation parks and sportsgrounds
- Investigate ways to increase accessibility into parks and to play areas
- Play units should provide for swinging, sliding, climbing, spinning, rocking, balancing
- Playgrounds for 2-5 year olds could include: areas to crawl; low platforms with multiple access such as ramps and ladders; ramps with pieces attached for grasping; low tables for sand, water and manipulation of materials; tricycle paths with various textures; flexible spring rockers; sand areas (may require covers); and shorter slides.
- Playgrounds for 5-12 year olds could include: rope or chain climbers on angles; climbing pieces; horizontal bars; cooperative pieces such as tyre swings, merry go rounds, see saws; slides and sliding poles; open spaces to run and play ball; and semi-enclosed structures to promote fantasy play and socialising.
- Ensure appropriate levels of carer comfort through seating, tables and shelters positioned for good viewing over play areas and which also facilitate adults engaging with children's play
- Plant semi-mature native trees to establish small groupings with a view to creating long term landscape settings
- Specialty/mixed recreation parks and sportsgrounds could include areas that support activities such as ball games, crawling, running, made-up games, and role playing. These areas also often appeal to older children and teenagers
- Remove playgrounds that are no longer functionally appropriate nor safe
- Replacement of removed playgrounds to occur only at parks that are large enough and accessible enough to support a playground with a variety of elements, with evidence of good past visitation levels and public support.
- For asset management and financial viability reasons, no expansion of the number of playgrounds in small neighbourhood parks
- Evaluate the success of the accessible playground at Willow Park and consider converting further playgrounds to accessible design.
- Shade provision at playgrounds to continue to be through tree planting
- Fence provision around playgrounds only when the danger of young children straying onto busy roads is present
- Introduction of a maze at Fagan Park

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING

Relevant background documents

The **Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan 2002** identified participation in fishing – but did not propose specific actions for Council to address this activity.

Council Plans of Management have identified appropriate infrastructure for recreation fishing.

Relevant strategies in the draft Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan include:

- Develop a strategy for sustainable recreation through Hornsby, which states the sustainability of locations, facilities and access based upon recreational survey and other data.
- Ensure adequate waste disposal facilities for people aboard boats and recreational fishers on land. This includes installation / provision of approved bins on hire boats, commercial fishing boats, moored boats and trailable boats, and supporting waste services on land.
- Establish a regular monitoring program to assess the impacts of recreation at various locations and times of year (such as peak periods), to ensure ongoing sustainability of such locations.
- Ensure suitable controls are contained within planning instruments for the design of foreshore development, including recreational facilities, to maintain the estuary shoreline in as natural state as possible and minimise potential for bank erosion.
- Educate recreational users/general visitors about estuary values and the estuarine system, recreational impacts, and actions they may take to reduce impacts on priority areas (seagrass, harvest areas, recreational swimming) in the estuary (eg signage, boating stickers, brochures etc).
- The Department of Primary Industries are currently undertaking an extensive study on Recreational Fishing in the Sydney Region Study.

Current participation

Sources

Participation rates in recreational fishing can be estimated from several sources. These include the following state sources:

- Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS)
- The National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey (NRIFS), 2003
- State Fishing Licence numbers

Local sources include:

- The Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan 2003
- The Recreational Fishing Survey in the Sydney Region 2008 (in preparation).

It has not been possible to obtain relevant licensing information for residents of Hornsby Shire from NSW DPI Fisheries. This information may be useful for planning purposes.

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Estimates of participation

The estimates of participation in recreation fishing vary considerably depending on the source.

- Based on NSW ERASS participation rates, (2.1%) the estimated number of people who fish for recreation in Hornsby is estimated at 3147 (2006).
- According to NRIFS the proportion of the NSW 2003 population that fish for recreation was 16.3%. (Almost 24% of the NSW male population go fishing while only 10% of females, fish.) This equates to over 24,000 people in the Shire. (See Table 1.)
- The NRIFS 2003 indicates that participation rates in fishing are much lower in the metropolitan area than regional NSW. Sydney (in which Hornsby Shire is located) recorded the lowest participation rate of any region (13.1%) or 19,631 people fishing in Hornsby. However, the Sydney metro area had the largest number of recreational fishers (482,739 fishers) by virtue of its population size.
- Based on participation rates collected for the Hornsby Leisure Strategic Plan, approximately 30% of people fished in the last year (2003). This equates to over 44,900 people.

²³ ERASS 2006 Recreation and Sport Survey, National Activity Projection

²⁴ The National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey", Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. July 2003

Fishing clubs in Hornsby Shire

Less than one percent (.2%) of the population participate in recreation fishing as part of an organisation or program. ²³

There are five fishing clubs in Hornsby Shire:

- The Ku-Ring-Gai, Hornsby Angling & Casting Club Inc.
- Windybank's Fishing Club
- Hornsby RSL Fishing Club
- The Anglers Rest Fishing Club
- Sea Bees Boating Club Inc. (Metro Sydney)

Table 10. Estimated number of recreational fishers in Hornsby Shire based²⁴ on NRIFS (state participation)

Age Cohort	Males % pop	Females % pop	Total % of pop	No. of people in Hornsby
5 to 14yrs	30.0%	20.4%	25.2%	5,546
15 to 29	23.8%	8.8%	17%	5,535
30 to 44	27.2%	13.3%	20.3%	7,013
45 to 59	23.5%	8.0%	14.1%	4,728
60 to 74	16.3%	4.5%	9.1%	1,521
75 yrs plus	8.7%	0.4%	2.7%	287
Sydney			13.1%	19,631

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Table 11. Number of recreational fishers in Hornsby Shire in 2006 (over 15 years based on ERASS).

	State/Shire	No. of participants
ERASS 2.1%	NSW	128,700
	Hornsby	3,147

Based on ERASS, 4% of the NSW male population fish, 0.3% of the female population fish and overall 2.1% of the Hornsby population fish.

This survey shows fishing to be one of the activities least likely to be organised (with only 10.5% of people who fish choosing to do so as part of a club organisation or centre). This is as compared to walking (2.8%), cycling (8.5%), running (10.8%), surf sports (12.7%), swimming (14.0%) and bushwalking (14.5%).

²⁵ ERASS 2006 Recreation and Sport Survey, National Activity Projection

²⁶ Lyle J et al, Survey of Recreational Fishing in New South Wales, NSW DPI, 2000/01, p 4

Fishing is participated in relatively frequently. It is in the top 20 activities by frequency, after the major sports.

The table below shows the number of times people in Hornsby fished in the last twelve months in 2003.

Table 12. The number of times people in Hornsby fished in the last 12 months, based on theHornsby Leisure Strategic Plan

Times fished in past 12 months	Proportion of fishers %
1-6 times	22.4%
7-20 times	5.6%
>20 times	2.3%

Motivations

Key motivating factors related to fishers' psychological state, the physical environment, social interactions and resource status are among the primary motives for fishing. Fishers in New South Wales rated "relax and unwind" as the most important incentive to fish (43%), followed by fishing "for sport" (27%) and "to be outdoors" (15%).²⁵

Nature of the fishing setting

Recreational fishing activity is more common in estuarine waters (47% of events) followed by coastal waters (28%), freshwater rivers (15%), then lakes and dams (10%). Fishing in saltwater accounts for 76% of the recreational fishing undertaken in NSW.²⁶

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Council's main roles in recreational fishing

Fishers over 18 years of age in NSW are required by law to pay a Recreational Fishing Fee. This applies to fresh and salt waters: spear fishing, hand lining, hand gathering, trapping, bait collecting and prawn netting. Money raised is placed into the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account and spent via grants on improving recreational fishing in NSW. This is an important source of money for Council whose primary role in recreational fishing is providing infrastructure. Council has been very successful in the past in drawing on these funds.

Recreational fishing management entails not only the conservation of fish stocks and habitat but also the provision of fishing opportunities.^{27 28} For example, an objective of the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries -Fisheries is: "to promote quality recreational fishing opportunities".

Council has two major roles in provision for recreational fishing. The first is to provide access to fishing opportunities. This is done by providing points of entry to waterways for shore based and boat based fishing, and to consolidate those points of entry to manageable sites. The second role is to provide and manage infrastructure to enable people to fish, and to enhance their fishing experience.

In order to fulfil these roles Council relies on funds made available through grants from the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account, which utilises fishing licence fees. A major constraint for Council in its work is the lack of funds to maintain this infrastructure.

A number of other roles of Council for example Estuary Management and Bushland support recreational fishing indirectly through waterway habitat and fish breeding site management, and by providing educational and interpretative information to the public.

Council does not play a major sport or club development role in recreational fishing as this role is undertaken by The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI). They run fishing clinics and work with clubs on education.

²⁷ New South Wales Fisheries Management Act.

²⁸ Henry W & J Lyle, The National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey, NSW Fisheries, 2003.

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Existing provision

NSW waters are classified into five categories of water body type to describe the distribution of fishing effort. These categories are offshore waters (>5km from the coast), coastal waters (shoreline to 5km), estuarine, freshwater rivers and freshwater lakes / dams. Recreational fishing activity is greatest in estuarine waters (47% of total visits)²⁹. This is the category most prevalent in Hornsby Shire. There are two main estuary systems in Hornsby Shire:

- Berowra Creek Estuary (Planning District 5), and
- Brooklyn Estuary (Planning District 7).

Council's management of estuarine areas extends from Wiseman's Ferry to Broken Bay as shown in Map 1. This map outlines the extent of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan and where existing management plans are in operation at Brooklyn and Berowra.

The four principal sites at which Council provides infrastructure are at Parsley Bay, Kangaroo Point (off Pacific Highway, near Brooklyn turn off), Crosslands Reserve, (Berowra Valley Bushland Park) in Hornsby Heights and Wiseman's Ferry.

There is also some freshwater fishing from Tunks Creek and Galston Gorge (Planning District 6) for Bass. Bass have been released in Galston Gorge in the past. The dam in Fagan Park has also been known to have Bass.

The Brooklyn Dangar Island Sewage Scheme has a discharge point at the deepwater hole, popular for Mulloway, under the F3 Freeway bridge.

Council currently provides a range of infrastructure to support fishing. The majority of this is associated boating infrastructure such as boat ramps, car and trailer parks, boat wash down areas, and pump out facilities (eg at Kangaroo Point) and fish cleaning tables and toilets. These are provided at consolidated points of entry to the estuaries.

Council is currently upgrading facilities at Parsley Bay (ie fish cleaning facilities). Council, in partnership with Oceanwatch Australia, have recently addressed the concern for wildlife being affected by tackle, in an environmentally sustainable way, by installing tangle bins for lines, tackle and sinkers to be recycled.

²⁹ Lyle J et al, Survey of Recreational Fishing in New South Wales, NSW DPI, 2000/01, p 8

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

See list of water based facilities that support recreational fishing in the Hornsby Shire in Table 13. Note: fishing is prohibited from wharves and pontoons.

Table 13. Boating and fishing infrastructure in Hornsby Shire

TYPE OF FACILITY	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Wharves	Brooklyn - Dangar Road Brooklyn	Wharf Timber & Shelter Shed - Timber
	Dangar Island - water access only	Wharf Timber & Shelter Shed - Timber
	Kangaroo Point - Off Pacific Highway, near Brooklyn turn off.	Wharf Timber
	Milson's Passage - water access only	Wharf Timber & Shelter Shed - Timber
	Wiseman's Ferry - Off Wiseman's Ferry Road, Wiseman's Ferry	Wharf Timber
Pontoons	Berowra Waters - East Kirkpatrick Way off Berowra Waters Rd	Timber Pontoon
	Berowra Waters West - Off Bay Rd Berowra Waters Recreational Reserve / Dusthole Bay	Concrete Pontoon
	Brooklyn - Off Dangar Road, in McKell Park recreational Reserve	Concrete Pontoon with Timber Deck
	Parsley Bay 1 (West) Off George Street Brooklyn	Concrete Pontoon
	Parsley Bay 2 (East) Off George Street Brooklyn	Concrete Pontoon
Boat ramps	Brooklyn - Kangaroo Point	Sewerage Retrieval System
	Berowra Waters - In Berowra Waters Recreational Reserve	Concrete, lighting, fish cleaning table, 2 lanes, fuel, kiosk, BBQ, toilets, accessible to people with a disability
	Kangaroo Point - Off Pacific Highway, near Brooklyn turn off.	Concrete, pump out
	Parsley Bay - Off George Street Brooklyn	Concrete, lighting, fish cleaning table, 3 lanes, wash down, BBQ, toilets, accessible to people with a disability
Loading dock	Wisemans Ferry	Concrete, 1 lane, lighting, kiosk, BBQ and toilets
	Dangar Island	Concrete
	Parsley Bay Off George Street Brooklyn	Concrete
Car parks	Berowra Waters - In Berowra Waters Recreational Reserve	
	Brooklyn - Dangar Road Brooklyn	
	Parsley Bay - Off George Street Brooklyn	
	Kangaroo Point - Off Pacific Highway, near Brooklyn turn off.	
	McKell Park - Off Dangar Road, in McKell Park recreational Reserve	
	Parsley Bay - Off George Street Brooklyn	

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Current issues

- 1) Ongoing environmental issues concerning recreation fishing include possible:
 - Injury to birds and aquatic life by hooking and entanglement in lines or tackle
 - Damage to banks and vegetation, through trampling, clearing, camp fires, or wake from boats
 - Removing snags from waterways
 - Leaving rubbish or fish remains
 - Transporting fish, water or weeds from one waterway to another
 - Creating dams or weirs in waterways
 - Constructing illegal jetties and piers
 - Habitat protection for seagrass, saltmarsh and mangrove communities
- 2) There will be a continuing need to protect key fish habitats and fish breeding in the Shire; mangroves, seagrass beds, and salt marsh are key aquatic communities essential to fish breeding. In order to protect these, areas may need to be clearly identified as such, as they are not always obvious to fishers. Council have taken initiatives in this area by putting buoys around an area with seagrass at Dangar Island to make them more identifiable to boat owners.
- 3) As sewerage treatment plants are built adjacent to favoured fishing sites (such as the one under Brooklyn freeway bridge) in the Shire, these outfall areas would be best identified to fishers.
- 4) There is no one source of information about facilities for recreation fishing in Hornsby Shire, nor clubs and groups to contact. This could be a key role for Council.
- 5) There is no plan for managing or developing the wide range of water based recreational uses in the Shire and possible conflicts between these and other activities ie houseboats, motor boating, kayaking or fishing etc.
- 6) Council needs to have a clear indication of demand before it invests in additional infrastructure. However there are no mechanisms in place to capture latent demand for recreational fishing by sectors of the community who currently don't fish, who cannot use existing infrastructure, or who may not be able to lobby Council. One main population group that is likely to be underserved are people with a disability. Fishing platforms that are accessible to children and people who don't own a boat; by public transport; via an accessible path of travel, and suitable for use by people who use a wheelchair may not be adequately provided.
- 7) Council provides considerable infrastructure to support recreational fishing for visitors to the Shire, yet they have no dedicated source of income to maintain these. In fact, Council does not have sufficient funds to maintain boating infrastructure to the degree desirable. Council has been very successful in obtaining funds through grants from the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account and other grant schemes and provides matching contributions for these. However most grants cannot be used for general maintenance.
- 8) Shore based angling can provide considerable damage to riparian areas, though trampling and damage to vegetation, as well as erosion. In recent times anglers have been forging multiple access points to the water along Hawkesbury River at Singleton Road Wiseman's Ferry. Council should continue to work to consolidate the number of access points to the Hawkesbury River for fishing along Singleton Road Wiseman's Ferry.

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

Issues raised by fishing clubs

- 1) Fishing clubs in Hornsby have indicated that Council staff are very helpful and approachable, and they acknowledge Councils effort and keenness to see the health of river/s maintained and improved, together with increased opportunity for recreational fishing. Issues raised by clubs include:
- 2) Funding of boating infrastructure is an issue for Council like Hornsby where a large number of visitors use their facilities and this needs to be addressed as a big picture concern.
- 3) Council could assist clubs more with the education of children and delivering fishing clinics.
- 4) The quality of infrastructure is a significant concern as nothing has been improved at locations such as Parsley Bay. Other locations have been identified for additional boat launching ramps but for various reasons these have not materialised.
- 5) Access is becoming a significant issue for recreational fishers and there needs to be a plan prepared which indicates where recreational fishing is permitted from the land or shore, where cleaning facilities are provided, toilets, parking and the like. Locations where sensitive areas are identified, sea grasses, erosion areas, bank failures, sanctuary zones and the like should be identified as areas not really suitable for fishing until improvements are carried out.
- 6) Council does not currently allow fishing from wharves and jetties. The Sydney Harbour NSW Maritime is considering resuming ownership and responsibility for this infrastructure and allowing fishing under certain conditions and possibly in / on certain areas and / or times. This approach should be considered by Hornsby Council.
- 7) Additional fishing platforms would be beneficial to provide for recreational fishers. These could be fixtures or pontoons. These should not be for mooring of boats, and need management to address offal and waste disposal.
- 8) The design and location of cleaning tables and wash down facilities warrant further investigation. Wash down facilities and tables may be able to use salt water, as in other states, and be designed to keep cleaner for other users as well as to address bird droppings and feeding issues.
- 9) With an increase in the number of overseas born residents who may not be strong swimmers, Council could consider installing angel rings at specific estuary fishing locations
- 10) There is a closed season for Bass between June and August that applies to recreational fishers. As most recreational anglers catch and release, anglers feel they are being unfairly targeted when commercial trawling in estuaries (that can impact on breeding fish) is allowed at this time.
- 11) The number and location of sewerage outfalls is a concern to fishers. There is an impact on fish due to nutrient levels in the water and weed growth, especially in times of low rainfall.

3.7 RECREATIONAL FISHING (continued)

- 12) Land management practices impact on recreation fishing. Increased clearing of riparian vegetation where land is held in private ownership is occurring and this, in conjunction with additional water based recreation activities such as wakeboarding, and larger boats, fishers are seeing a loss of fish habitat and amenity values along waterways.
- 13) The security of trailer parking is an issue at boat ramps. It is not uncommon for fishers to return after an overnight trip to find their trailers gone. Council should consider this issue in the design of boating infrastructure and car park design.

Policy directions

- Continue to identify important fish breeding locations to ensure fishers avoid these areas.
- Continue to work co-operatively with the NSW DPI Fisheries and other fishing stakeholder groups and land managers to develop and manage facilities, estuaries, fish habitat and educate fishers as to recreation fishing issues.
- Prepare a basic guide to recreation fishing facilities in the Hornsby Shire, and include contacts for fishing clubs.
- Support the conduct of additional research into the demand for and preferences of people who would like to fish, as such is being conducted by NSW DPI Fisheries and integrating information collected in licences to provide local sources of demand.
- Support the implementation of strategies within the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan eg draft Lower Hawkesbury.
- Consider preparing a water based recreational uses plan to address, amongst other things, the possible conflicts between water based uses and other activities ie houseboats, motor boating, kayaking or fishing etc, as well as the need for additional fishing platforms, security of parking and the design and location of cleaning and washdown facilities.
- Ensure that all new fishing infrastructure is Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant and that a water based recreation uses plan consults with and specifically addresses issues raised by people with disabilities.
- Ensure that whole of life costs are estimated at design stage for new infrastructure and maintenance costs are assigned for their management.
- Continue to work to consolidate the number of access points to the Hawkesbury River for fishing along Singleton Road, Wiseman's ferry.
- Consider convening a discussion between the Council's Works Division, Council's Estuary Management Committee, NSW Maritime, and the fishing clubs and stakeholder groups on a regular basis.

SCHEDULE 1: DOG EXERCISE AREAS: OFF AND ON-LEASH AREAS

Off- leash areas

Hornsby Shire Council has five full-time and two time-share off- leash areas for exercising and training dogs. The facilities are fully fenced and have waste bins, dog waste bags, taps and water bowls.

Full-time sites are located at:

- Rofe Park, Galston Rd, Hornsby Heights
- Ruddock Park, Eucalyptus Drive, Westleigh
- Greenway Park, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook
- Asquith Park, northern side of Asquith Oval
- Crossroads Reserve, cnr Turner & Berowra Waters Rds, Berowra Heights

Areas available outside of sporting use only are located at:

- Epping Oval, Norfolk Road, Epping
- Woods St Oval, Woods St, North Epping

On-leash areas

Council has designated the following wildlife protection areas as on-leash.

LOCATION	RESERVE
Arcadia Park Bushland Reserve	Arcadia
Carrs Bush Conservation Reserve	Arcadia
Callicoma Conservation Reserve	Cherrybrook
Cherrybrook Lakes Conservation Reserve	Cherrybrook
McKinley Place Conservation Reserve	Cherrybrook
Upper Pyes Creek Conservation Reserve	Cherrybrook/Castle Hill
Lower Pyes Creek Bushland Reserve	Cherrybrook/Dural
Galston Gorge Conservation Reserve	Galston
Galston Bushland Reserve	Galston
Forsters Bushland Reserve	Middle Dural
James Henty Park Bushland Reserve	Dural
Wisemans Ferry Lookout Bushland Reserve	Wisemans Ferry
Singleton Mill Bushland Reserve	Wisemans Ferry
Berowra Park Conservation Reserve	Berowra Heights
Furber Park Bushland Reserve	Berowra Waters
Brooklyn Park Conservation Reserve	Brooklyn
McKell Park Bushland Reserve	Brooklyn
Mt Kuring-gai Park Bushland Reserve	Mt Kuring-gai

Continued over page >

SCHEDULE 1: DOG EXERCISE AREAS: OFF AND ON-LEASH AREAS (continued)

LOCATION	RESERVE
Hornsby Park Conservation Reserve	Hornsby
Florence Cotton Bushland Reserve	Hornsby
Rofe Park Bushland Reserve	Hornsby Heights
Dog Pound Creek Conservation Reserve	Hornsby/Westleigh
Waitara Creek Conservation Reserve	Normanhurst
Azalea Grove Conservation Reserve	Pennant Hills
Britannia Street Conservation Reserve	Pennant Hills
Pennant Hills Park Conservation Reserve	Pennant Hills
New Farm Road Conservation Reserve	West Pennant Hills
Corang Road Bushland Reserve	Westleigh
Larool Creek Bushland Reserve	Thornleigh
Chilworth Conservation Reserve	Beecroft
Beecroft South Bushland Reserve	Beecroft
Beecroft Conservation Reserve	Beecroft
Castle Howard Conservation Reserve	Beecroft

Desirable characteristics of off-leash areas by hierarchy

HIERARCHY	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence to fully enclose the area enabling pets to roam freely • Double gate entrance to the park (effectively creating an interim holding pen) to keep dogs from escaping whilst facilitating wheelchair access • Prominent and accessible location • Frequent maintenance • Large open area for running • An area and outdoor furniture that is accessible for people with a disability • Likely co-location with other social / family recreation facilities such as BBQ, Picnic, sport or play areas • Likely co-location with other social / family recreation facilities such as BBQ, Picnic, sport or play areas • Potential co-location with dog obedience club, dog agility equipment and café • Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area, and the park rules • Park bins in close proximity to the entrance for the correct disposal of dog droppings • Drinking fountains with fitted dog bowls at its base in close proximity to the entrance • A public toilet in close proximity • Off-street car parking should be in close proximity • Seating and shade • Future access by shared pathway

SCHEDULE 1: DOG EXERCISE AREAS: OFF AND ON-LEASH AREAS (continued)

Desirable characteristics of off-leash areas by hierarchy (continued)

HIERARCHY	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area, and the park rules • Frequent maintenance • Large open area for running • Park bins in close proximity to the entrance for the correct disposal of dog droppings • Drinking fountains with fitted dog bowls at its base in close proximity to the entrance • Seating and shade
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area, and the park rules • Park bins in close proximity to the entrance for the correct disposal of dog droppings

Rules associated with use of off-leash areas

The following rules apply to dog exercising areas in the Shire.

- Council has declared Wildlife Protection Areas in bushland reserves which are being managed to conserve the unique biodiversity of the region
- Keep your dogs on a leash in designated Wildlife Protection areas
- Stay on designated tracks and utilise Council's off-leash areas
- Owners of dogs found roaming in bushland off leash in Wildlife Protection Areas can incur a penalty of \$165 under Section 14 of the Companion Animals Act (1998)
- For a full list of Wildlife Protection Areas visit www.bushland.hornsby.nsw.gov.au or ring 9847 6832 for more information

SCHEDULE 2: SPECIALTY/MIXED RECREATION PARKS

- Mills Park, Baldwin Ave, Asquith
- Berowra Oval, Berowra Waters Rd, Berowra
- McKell Park, Dangar Rd, Brooklyn
- Erlestoke Park, Bellwood Pl, Cherrybrook
- Fagan Park, Arcadia Rd, Galston
- Galston Recreation Reserve, Galston Rd, Galston
- Crosslands Reserve, Somerville Rd, Hornsby Heights
- Rofe Park, Galston Rd, Hornsby Heights
- Oxley Drive Park, Beryl Ave, Mt Colah
- Brickpit Park, Dartford Rd, Thornleigh
- Ruddock Park, Quarter Sessions Rd, Westleigh

SCHEDULE 3: SKATE PARKS

Nature of subregional and local skateparks

CRITERIA	Hierarchy	
	Subregional	Local
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in key centres or sporting complexes • in District level specialty parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in neighbourhood centres • in specialty parks
Context/ site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sportsgrounds or specialty parks • suitable for the conduct of small scale events and sport development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally not suitable for competitions
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lighting until 9.30, support services such as picnic facilities, toilets and shelter, shade, car parking and drinking water • specific facilities for beginner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no support facilities other than perhaps drinking water, rubbish bins and seats • basic level of facility for at least young or inexperienced riders plus more challenging elements • basic level of support services, assuming their availability in the vicinity
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • served by shared trail and preferable a railway station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • served by shared trail
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program of events, including competitions etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic program of activities
Number served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to serve 1000 skaters in the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to serve more than 250 skaters in the area

SCHEDULE 3: SKATE PARKS (continued)

NAME	DESCRIPTION	HIERARCHY	AMENITIES	Other
Berowra Skate Park Berowra Oval Berowra Waters Rd, Berowra	Plaza style facility with two 4ft quarters, hubbas and flatbank hips, bump to ledge and a manual pad/bank to ledge combination	Subregional	Toilet, bubbler, seating, shade, bins and parking	Close to Berowra train station, food and drink
Brooklyn Skate Park Brooklyn Oval Brooklyn Rd, Brooklyn	Pre-cast concrete ramps and street area. 5ft high quarterpipe, 4ft flatbank/roll-in, 2ft high wedge to wedge and a 1ft high rails which is 12ft long	Local	Toilet, seating, shade, bins and parking	Brooklyn train station and town centre approximately 1.5 km away
Thornleigh Skate Park Brickpit Park Dartford Rd, Thornleigh	Open bowl of varying heights, street section with rails, euro gap down ledges and spine to opposing flatbank with quarters of varying height	Subregional/Regional	Toilet (inside sports stadium), bubbler, seating, parking, bins	Normanhurst train station approximately 1 km away, drink and snack machines in Brickpit sports stadium
Cherrybrook Skate Park Greenway Park Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook	Concrete bowl 3ft high escalates to 5ft with funbox which is 2ft high on three sides with a 1ft high block on the side	Subregional	Toilet, seating, bins and parking	Adjacent to Cherrybrook Village Shops
Galston Skate Park Galston Recreation Reserve Galston Road, Galston	Concrete skatepark. Peanut bowl with tiles and pool coping, 8ft deep end with 7ft transition + 1ft of vert, 6ft shallow end with 6ft transition. Connected to street plaza with handrails, flat bars, hubbas, hips, euro gap, ¼ pipe, ledges, manual pad, wall ride and jersey barrier.	Subregional	Toilet, seating, bins, shade and parking	Galston Town Centre approx 1.5 km away

SCHEDULE 3: SKATE PARKS (continued)

Skatepark Location Checklist

The following checklist is provided as a guide to selecting a location and site for future skate facilities.

1. Identify the location (suburb/vicinity)

- Where there is a gap in the available facilities.
- Where the existing and projected age of the population is largest for 8-24 year olds.
- Where there is a site (most likely a sports ground or adjacent to a shopping centre where noise and lighting are not likely to cause conflict) relatively close to public transport.
- Where there is any existing services or facilities where a skate facility could benefit from co-location.
- Where a mayor community hub or central area with undeveloped land (either Council-owned or Crown land) is available, is being recycled, or has low value for other users (eg under freeway fly-overs).
- Where planning approval from other responsible authorities may not be necessary.
- What sites in this location might be suitable for a skate development.
- Not too close to existing structures, houses, sandy or wet areas, environmentally sensitive areas.
- Where the skate facility is likely to consistent with the zoning and ownership of the land located where young people want to be, or adjacent to where they congregate.
- The catchments (regional or local) match the proposed facility.
- Co-location or partnerships with existing shopping centres, sport or recreation facilities, or interested schools may be possible.

Skatepark Siting Checklist

2. Identify a suitable site

- Site planning scheme zone.
- Suitably sized (allow for expansion, and space for parking if a sub-regional skate park).
- Suitable soil, slope and environmental conditions (desirably relatively flat).
- Emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance).
- Visually prominent, pleasant site with good public surveillance for safety and high marketability (eg for obtaining sponsorship).
- Associated amenities, such as a telephone, toilets, water, shelter, and shade are available or cost effective to provide.
- Adequate distance from residential dwellings and incompatible land uses (i.e. site in conjunction with sport to avoid noise and light intrusions).
- Where there will be minimal conflict with other users (eg pedestrians) other sports (female dominated sports such as netball), or one other age group (toddlers playground).
- Suitable to fence if required (eg where a skate bowl is sited or where it is desirable to restrict access at night).
- Served by an off-road shared bicycle path network or route.
- Not too close to a busy road.
- Restricted access to vehicles to prevent skating at night by car lights.
- Free access to users and spectators.
- Close to shops selling food and drink.
- On a local circulation route.
- Not within walking distance from a hotel or night club.

SCHEDULE 3: SKATE PARKS (continued)

Skatepark Pre-design Checklist

3. Questions to consider during the planning stage and before design include:

- Funding and Allocation: Are there sufficient funds allocated for a skate/BMX facility that is adequately supported by ancillary elements?
- Community Consultation: Have the community been consulted on what type of space they would like?
- Target Users: Have all target users been considered (BMX riders, Inline-skaters, Skateboarders, parents and female participants)? Have the needs of spectators been considered in the planning and design?
- Image and Public Perception: Have the community been informed on the positives and potential negative impact of skate/BMX parks?
- Alternatives sites: Have other sites been considered in the site selection process?
- Accessibility: Is the potential site accessible for users by public transport, foot, bicycle, car etc?
- Community Hubs: Is the chosen site well situated to local food and beverage outlets, community facilities, a main road, other recreational facilities (i.e. sports fields)?
- Community Input: Have adjoining residents, business owners, users of the park, school, etc. been consulted during the site selection stage?
- Visibility: Is the site clearly visible from main roads, local businesses, residential dwellings?
- Existing skate/BMX Facilities: Is the site likely to complement rather than duplicate of well other facilities for the case code?
- Skate/BMX Parks Elements: Are elements challenging for a variety of skill levels?
- Mix of Elements: What are the elements of the facility and do they reflect the potential users' ideal and skill levels?
- Landscape Amenity: Does the design include ancillary facilities such as rubbish bins, seating, drinking fountain, paths, landscaping, shade structures, (and car parks, and toilets if a subregional facility)?
- Safer by Design: Has the design considered safety of users, spectators and nearby/ adjoining land uses?
- Signage: Has signage been located in a highly visible area of the park?
- Lighting: Will the facility be lit at night? If so until what time?
- Risk Assessment: Has a risk assessment of design been undertaken before construction and acceptable standards and guidelines been considered?
- Management: Has a management plan been prepared (addressing all the items above), and agreed with all stakeholders?
- To ensure the facility remains a safe, enjoyable environment for users and spectators? Who will be managing the facility (private – user pays, Council – free to access, etc?)
- Skate Committee: Has a committee been formed to manage, report and notify Council of issues and concerns associated with the facility?
- Skate/BMX Facility Officer: Has an officer been appointed?
- Marketing and Programming Initiatives: Have skate demos and regular competitions events and carnivals been considered at the park?

SCHEDULE 4: BUSHLAND TRACKS AND TRAILS

Known walking trails within the Shire

NAME	ROUTE	DISTANCE	SUITABILITY
The Benowie Walking Track	The track has six access points: Bellamy Street, Thornleigh; Rosemead Road, Hornsby; Galston Gorge; Glenview Road, Mount Kuring-Gai; Crosslands Reserve and Berowra Waters	25 km	Moderate to difficult
Berowra Waters Walk, Berowra Waters	Starts from the end of Berkely Close, Berowra Heights to Berowra Waters	3.6 km	Moderate to difficult
Blue Gum Walk (Joes Mountain circuit) Hornsby	This loop walk starts at Rosemead Road, Hornsby and ends at Ginger Meggs Park (about 400 metres from Rosemead Road starting point, which can be reached by following the road up to the left) There is access to this walk from Hornsby Station, through Dural St. and down the steep convict steps	4.3 km, allow about 1.5 to 2hrs	Moderate to difficult
Brooklyn River and Foreshore Walk, Brooklyn	The entrance to the walk begins in Brooklyn Park, off Brooklyn Rd, near the War Memorial	250m - about 15 mins	Easy. Wheelchair access
Callicoma Walk, Cherrybrook	A circuit track from the Lakes Reserve at the corner of Shepherds and Macquarie Drives in Greenway Estate, Cherrybrook	5 km; 2 to 3 hrs	Moderate
Carrs bushwalk, Galston	Loop through Fagans Park Entry from Carrs Rd, Galston	30 mins Loop walk	Easy track Dogs are allowed on leads
Elouera Walk, Westleigh	Start at De Saxe Close, Westleigh. Finish at Rosemead Road Hornsby.	9 km or about 4 to 5 hours	Moderate with a few short difficult sections

Known walking trails within the Shire (continued)

NAME	ROUTE	DISTANCE	SUITABILITY
Fagan Park	Garden of Many Nations	2km; 1.5 hours	Easy
The Great North Walk	There are trackheads (entry points) at Berowra, Mt Kuring-gai (Glenview Road), Mt Colah, Asquith, Hornsby, Galston Gorge, Pennant Hills (Bellamy Street) and Cherrybrook (Callicoma Walk)	NB: Only sections are located in the Hornsby Shire	People of all ages and levels of experience. Trail bikes and horse riding are not permitted
Heritage Bridges Walk	This walk begins at the Clarinda St. Wetlands in Hornsby and ends at the bottom of Galston Gorge. A car can be left at the Galston Gorge picnic area.	5.4km one-way	Moderate to difficult
Jungo Walk, Pennant Hills	Starting at Bellamy Street, Pennant Hills to Thornleigh then back to Morrison Place, Pennant Hills, returning to Bellamy Street via Laurence	5km; 2 hours	Easy to moderate
Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park	Gibberagong Track	6.5km; 3 hours	Moderate to difficult
	Ku-ring-gai Track	4km; 2.5 hours	
	Berowra Track	8km; 5 hours	
	Jerusalem Track	2.5km; 1 hour	
Lyrebird Gully Walk	From the intersection of Glenview Rd. and Pacific Hwy. Mt Kuring-gai to Crowley Rd. Berowra, via Berowra Creek. Walkers may park a car at either end or catch the train back to the start	9km; 4 hours	Moderate to hard
The Mambara Track Pennant Hills	A circuit commencing from the Entrance to Pennant Hills Sporting Complex (Britannia St) Pennant Hills	30 min walk. An 800m track	Wheelchair/pram-friendly
Mangrove Walk, Brooklyn	Entry from Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Road. At low tide further along the boardwalk the mud flats come alive with tiny crabs	15 minutes	Easy track Wheelchair access
Marramarra National Park	Weavers Ridge Trail	3km; 2 hours	Moderate
	Duckponds Ridge Trail	3.5km; 2 hours	Moderate
	Smugglers Ridge Trail	4km; 2 hours	Moderate
	Marramarra Ridge Trail	6km; 3.5 hours	Moderate
	Coba Ridge Trail	9km; 5 hours	Moderate
	Canoelands Ridge Trail	8km; 5 hours	Moderate
	Big Bay Trail	3km; 3 hours	Moderate to difficult

Known walking trails within the Shire (continued)

NAME	ROUTE	DISTANCE	SUITABILITY
McKell Park Walk, Brooklyn	McKell Park is at the end of Dangar Road, Brooklyn and overlooks the Hawkesbury River Federation' interpretive walk meanders through the bushland at the top of the cliffs down through the sandstone formations to Flat Rock Point	1km; ½ hour	Walk around Flat Rock Point is flat and wheelchair friendly.
Muogamarra Nature Reserve (Peats Bight Fire Trail)	Point Loop; Lloyds Trig; Peats Crater; Tom's Loop	2km; 1 hour	Easy and wheelchair friendly
Pennant Hills Park Walking Tracks, Pennant Hills	Pennant Hills Park Mambara Access Track Lookout Walk Lorna Pass Walk Shale Ridge Walk Whale Rock Circuit	1km; ½ hour 1.5km; 1hour 2km; 1 hour 1km; ½ hour 5.3km; 2.5 hrs 8km; 3.5 hours	Easy and wheelchair friendly Easy Moderate Easy Moderate Moderate to difficult
Pioneers' Track, Epping	Pioneers' Track meanders through Epping, Beecroft and Carlingford The track can be accessed at Ray Park, Little Ray Park, Ridge St. and behind the Scout hall on Plympton Rd, Epping Pennant Hills	2.8km. Ray Park circuit 750m)	It traces the early European history of the area.
Pogson Trig Walk	Start at fire trail gate, end of Quarry Road, Dural. Follows fire trail to Pogson's Trail Station. Features include short walk	2km or approx 1–2 hrs.	Easy
Refuge Rock	Trevor Lane off Purchase Rd, Cherrybrook to Refuge Rock and return	2km	This walk is suitable for families and older adults
Salt marsh track; Crosslands Reserve, Hornsby Heights	This track follows a section of the Great North Walk	20 minutes return. A further 1.2km track. 1hr return. Children's bike track at northern end.	No dogs or horses permitted Boardwalk appears to be wheel chair accessible
Terrys Creek Walk, Epping	The walking track runs between Vimiera Park (Essex St) and Dence Park (Stanley Rd) Epping	1.5km	Easy track

SCHEDULE 5: BMX FACILITIES

BMX Dirt jumps criteria

- High numbers of existing and projected 10 – 24 year olds
- Located where young people want to be
- Served by a shared / off road trail
- Relatively easy access by train (if only a few sites are to be provided across the Shire)
- The catchment of the park (i.e. regional, district or neighbourhood) matches the proposed facility
- Not in an area with high conservation values i.e. ground flora

BMX Siting checklist

- Suitable planning scheme zone.
- Relatively flat site
- Suitably size for at least three runs of doubles i.e. beginners, intermediate and advance i.e. (to provide graded challenge and opportunities for young riders to learn)
- A minimum area of approx 70m in length, by 25m will be required, depending on location of vegetation
- Suitable soil, slope, drainage & environment conditions (not wet). Note: soil may need to be brought in to enable it to: be packed, (not too friable or sandy) hold its shape in the damp, but not be too hard, so as it can be manipulated
- Emergency and maintenance vehicle access possible (fire and ambulance), and for depositing additional soil
- A sheltered (part treed or protected) site so as the jumps do not dry out too quickly
- Not too remote from residences
- Preferably served by water supply (for jump construction and drinking water)
- Not in the main thoroughfare (where people will inadvertently walk across)
- Not too close to a busy road or transport corridor
- Could be in association with skate park or other facility serving young people

SCHEDULE 6: PROCESS BMX/MTB FACILITIES IN UNAUTHORISED LOCATIONS

Step 1. Quickly determine the nature of risk to those other than professional riders

Step 2. Quickly ascertain the level of environmental damage

Step 3. Quickly determine the suitability of the site for this activity (i.e. to become a designated MTB or BMX area)

Step 4. Determine the appropriate action based on the following table

LEVEL OF RISK	DESCRIPTION	LIKELY USERS	LIKELY ACTIONS	TIMING
Level 1	Elevated timber structures that are easily accessible to pedestrians or riders, or that may not be sound	Older or professional riders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Erect a temporary sign with words to the effect: WARNING this is not a Council facility. Users must accept sole responsibility for injury or death incurred because of use Address users (or if the facility is unattended) leave a note addressing users. Congratulate them on their work, indicate that a council officer has inspected the facility and report on the findings of Step 1-3 Recommend the users contact the relevant council officer urgently to discuss options of accommodating this sport (elsewhere if the site is inappropriate) or in a more acceptable manor) Demolish structures after seven days unless they are in an appropriate location and they can be made safe. Distribute media release explaining the issue to the public – not necessarily identifying the location. If close to houses letter box adjacent residents ie within 400m Meet with users to discuss options for use or development of similar facilities in a more suitable location, making the facility safe, and future management etc <p>Rationale: Considerable effort and expertise is required to construct these facilities. They provide considerable value to proficient riders. Riders should given the opportunity to discuss the issue with council and for council to explain issues associated with risk, environmental damage and possible appropriate site for development of similar facilities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> On the same day as identified On the same day as identified Within 7 days After 7 days if no contact made, and if deemed necessary Within 14 days

LEVEL OF RISK	DESCRIPTION	LIKELY USERS	LIKELY ACTIONS	TIMING
Level 2	Dirt jumps more than 1.5m high that may not be in orderly runs and may include dug holes, found materials etc, and jumps close to trees that could present trip hazards and hazards to unskilled riders	Older or professional riders	Same as for the above	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the same day as identified 2. On the same day as identified 3. Within 7 days 4. After 7 days if no contact made, and if deemed necessary 5. Within 14 days
Level 3	Home made timber structures such as ramps brought onto flat ground / paths or existing skate parks, (these may not be sound, or may present trip hazards etc.)	May include younger riders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect for structural integrity and method of construction. If deemed not structural sound remove. 2. If deemed structurally sound, move off from the rideable surface and affix sign, with a WARNING this is not a Council facility. Users must accept sole responsibility for injury or death incurred because of use. This structure will be confiscated in 48 hours if not removed by its owners. Provide a contact number for council so that it may be retrieved. 3. Provide a press release indicting why this is not good practice. 	To be determined
Level 4	Dirt jumps without graded challenges and not in orderly runs with adequate distances/ clearance from structures and or with some holes found materials etc, or close to trees that could present trip hazards and hazards to unskilled riders	Younger riders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Erect temporary sign with a WARNING this is not a Council facility. Users must accept sole responsibility for injury or death incurred as a result of use..... 2. If in a suitable location letter box adjacent residents 	To be determined
Level 5	Minor dirt mounds or tracks / berms circuits dug out of the ground.	Younger riders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter box residents to either a) suggest refinement if in appropriate location, or b to indicate that they will be removed in 48 hours and the reasons. Nominate a time for discussion about the future eof the jumps or an alternative site close by 2. If in an inappropriate location, Install temporary sign explaining that they will be removed 3. If in an appropriate location refinement may include to provide multiple runs for different levels of proficiency, protect vegetation and minimise the impact of the activity (i.e. number of tracks), address any holes, design issues i.e. corner too tight, berm not high enough, proximity to trees 	To be determined

SCHEDULE 7: MTB TRAILS

MTB (single track) location and site checklist

Note: there are a range of other MTB disciplines that have different specification; for example XC and downhill. Site selection and design will be dependant on: the nature intended user, desired difficulty level, and desired experience.

MTB Single Track Location checklist

- High numbers of existing and projected 10 – 24 year olds
- Minimum parcel of land 1 ha preferably larger – only small proportion of this areas will be used by the track. Located on a site capable of sustaining a track typically 18 to 24 inches wide, but wide enough for optional lines where obstacles/technical features are to be placed; in a circuit form
- Possibly disturbed or filled land that may not be able to be used for other residential / commercial industrial or sport or recreation uses
- Areas served by a shared/off road trail
- Partly treed area and desirable wit some undulation or slope (up to 15% grade)
- Relatively easy access by train (if only a few sites are to be provided across the Shire)
- The catchment of the park (i.e. regional, district) matches the proposed facility
- Not in an area with high conservation values i.e. ground flora, or in fragile areas that will require high maintenance (eg steep slopes, gullies, waterways, wetlands, erodible soils, rock outcrops, historic places)

SCHEDULE 7: MTB TRAILS

Siting checklist

- Preferably a site that is: not intensively used for other uses, especially motorised uses, is a relatively natural setting and where there is screening of the treadway or a visual buffer around the trail (so the trail can be unobtrusive and the view of the user protected)
- Site: can be as small as a 400m reserve perimeter trail to several kilometres through undulating bushland. A larger site is preferred so looped trails can avoid high use and vehicle areas
- A site where it is possible to have a series of tight and twisty turns around obstacles to create the sense of speed
- Suitable planning scheme zone
- Preferably a site allowing a trail to wind around obstacles such as trees, large rocks, and bushes, and that don't require the construction of timber
- If a bush land is available – look for areas with relatively dense vegetation – as indicators of where the soil will be deeper (not shallow bedrock)
- An area where water can be kept off the tread of the trail (to stop water)
- Adequate space for fall zones where there are obstacles and at tight turns
- Emergency and maintenance vehicle access possible (fire and ambulance)
- Minimise the need to cross the trail to other high use activities (i.e. if around a sports field it may be necessary to cross the trail to get to the playing surface)
- Not too close to a busy road or transport corridor
- Could be in association with skate park or other facility serving young people
- Where there are already "desire lines" indicating a preference for a route, and "natural platforms" for switchbacks, to better suit the land, and minimise impact of construction
- Can occupy buffer space between less compatible zones, eg between a golf course and natural area, or between residential land and a wetland
- Route Planning:
 - Identify potential Control Points from aerial photos of a location that meets most criteria
 - Control points are places where the trail has to go, where there is no choice because of:
 - Gaps or passes
 - Stream crossings
 - Rock outcrops
 - Known areas to avoid (significant flora and fauna, poor soils)
 - Known features to include (scenic overlook, waterfall)
 - Connect the control points and determine approximate grades along the route
 - Verify control points and identify additional control points not picked up on aerial photos
 - Determine if the preliminary mapped route is feasible
 - Find the best alignment that fits all objectives
 - Identify natural features to enhance the user's experience
 - Validate that the route is reasonable to construct and maintain

SCHEDULE 8: PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF BMX AND MTB TRAIL SITES

ADDRESS	SUBURB / PD	LAND MANAGER	LOCATION DETAILS	DESCRIPTION/ ASSESSMENT	COMMENTS
Gully Road	Berowra (PD 5)	Crown	Below no 116, 100m along trail, Gully Road	Large jump sets to 6ft high	Not Council responsibility. Contact land manager
King Road end Tennis Courts	Berowra (PD 5)	HSC	King Road end	Small jumps removed, rebuilt by kids Doesn't have considerable impact. Serves a high population area 15 m by 25 mm	Could send a photo Assess if big enough Then work with community to design small BMX runs
Beecroft Reserve	Beecroft (PD 1)	HSC	Behind 1 – 7 Castle Howard Rd, near tennis courts Or Western edge Cheltenham Oval into bushland Or Beecroft Reserve Sth Near Kirkham Street	Small jumps continually built There is an issue that this site conflicts with the site managed by local bushcare volunteers In sufficient size adjacent to oval	Assess whether the jumps can be provided away from the site significance ie not the site local bushcare volunteers manage. If sufficient size – undertake a process to determine what is appropriate and confirm exact site ie either near tennis or Sth near Kirkham. Lyne Rd may be preferable to a Beecroft Reserve site
Gooraway Crescent	Berowra Heights (PD 5)	HSC		Jumps formed over rock faces Aboriginal land claim area Sensitive bushland area	Not a suitable site for trail or jumps Direct to another location close by
Turner Road	Berowra Heights (PD 5)	HSC managed Crown land connects to Nat Park to the north	End of Turner Rd	Single tracks Trails only – not jumps High conservation significance	Better than site above (Gooraway Crescent). Limit to flat– or less sensitive areas and control new tracks – Do not allow down Hill tracks in this location. Good potential for a managed track here with approval from the Crown

ADDRESS	SUBURB / PD	LAND MANAGER	LOCATION DETAILS	DESCRIPTION/ ASSESSMENT	COMMENTS
Greenway Park	Cherrybrook (PD 8)	HSC	Bushland in NE Corner	Small jumps Too small a site jumps are eroding an already very small ecological endangered community. Need an environmental assessment if was to proceed Further work would degrade site even further	Find another site in Cherrybrook – that is not important for biodiversity
Hayes Park	Galston (PD 8)	HSC	Sth East of the oval	Large BMX jumps area – sets to 3ft High conservation significance	Relocate BMX jumps to another location perhaps in the vicinity of future skate park adjacent to indoor pool and netball. Work with users to plan relocation and design
Hayes Park	Galston (PD 8)	HSC managed land	West behind the oval	Fire trail and single tracks	No action – except to monitor extent of trails on an ongoing basis
Glenorie Park	Glenorie (PD 6)	HSC	mountain and motor bikes occasionally use this land	No identified track or jumps	No action – except monitor extent
Hopeville Park	Hornsby Heights (PD 4)	HSC	Formal track that has caused problems in the bushland	Authorised HSC BMX run site	Redesign small track and manage with conjunction with users and adjacent residents
Somerville Rd	Hornsby Heights (PD 4)	NPWS	200m along the road to Crosslands Reserve. Motor bikes use this track	Jump sets to 3ft Single tracks	Look at extent (Parks – Bushland sections) Assess with NPWS
Western Crescent	Westleigh (PD 2)	HSC	Next to playground in bush	Low level circuit through trees – and minor jumps Some excess paths could be removed Not high conservation area. Drainage and compaction could be managed around several trees.	Undertake minor redesign and refine trail (manual job – ie shovel not machine). Reform as a junior circuit only in conjunction with adjacent residents. One main trail with appropriate radii curves etc.
Lyne Road,	Cheltenham	HCC		An areas with little conservation value. Creek to be rehabilitated and wetland to be built here. Good potential for small scale mountain	This site is preferable to Beecroft Reserve sites. Undertake a consultation and design exercise with community and interested club.

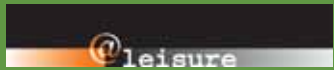
ADDRESS	SUBURB / PD	LAND MANAGER	LOCATION DETAILS	DESCRIPTION/ ASSESSMENT	COMMENTS
Dog Pound Warrigal Drive	Westleigh	Small part HCC mostly Sydney land	Adjacent water board land Council	Some jumps and trails	Narrow access not suitable
MontView Oval	Hornsby Heights	Crown / Ex land com	See description	Some trails in lower land / easement. Area long the carpark and eastern edge of oval may be suitable for jumps. Degraded bushland on lower area; quarry and fire trails has two street frontages. Suitable for Mountain bike trails	Reasonable site trail circuit / _open quarry and fire trails and two street frontages. Consider contacting a club about joint development. Conduct a consultation process with potential users and adjacent residents. Small run of BMX adjacent to oval may also be appropriate. Under taken a design process with residents and interested riders.
Old Man's Valley	Hornsby	HSC	Ex quarry land highly degraded – council not decided what future use is to be	Adjacent bushland off Valley Rd –and Rosemead Rd – lots of illegal trails. Also use of fire trails. Some very big jumps – significant impact on conservation projects in this area. Need monitoring assessment and management of trails Down hill components not suitable for public	Undertake an assessment of condition and scale of trails. Remove unsuitable elements in significant sites, and develop and manage suitable scale trail in conjunction with the club. Seek funds from Sport and Rec. for upgrade of trails
Pennant Hills Park,	Pennant Hills	HSC	Behind archery	Surrounded by NPWS	Not recommended in this location and may escalate problem with trails in adjacent areas Review other sites in the vicinity
Eddy Avenue	Thornleigh	HSC Managed as a park	Very small and steep (1000m2) Not used	Constrained site	Consult with community Undertake a design process Whilst small has potential as a BMX or junior mountain bike circuit

SCHEDULE 9: THE KEY SITES FOR UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION FACILITIES

MAP IDENTIFIER OR PARK NAME	PARK NAME	FACILITY
1	Crossroads Park, Berowra Waters Rd, Berowra	Dog Off Leash Area
2	Berowra Oval, Berowra Waters Rd, Berowra	Skate Park
3	Crosslands Reserve, Somerville Rd, Hornsby Heights	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
4	Rofe Park, Galston Rd, Hornsby Heights	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
5	Mills Park, Baldwin Ave, Asquith	Basketball Court (full or half court)
6	Mills Park, Baldwin Ave, Asquith	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
7	Ruddock Park, Quarter Sessions Rd, Westleigh	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
8	Brickpit Park, Dartford Rd, Thornleigh	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
9	Fagan Park, Arcadia Rd, Galston	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
10	Galston Recreation Reserve, Galston Rd, Galston	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
11	Greenway Park, Shepherds Drive, Cherrybrook	Dog Off Leash Area
12	Erlestoke Park, Bellwood Pl, Cherrybrook	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park

MAP IDENTIFIER OR PARK NAME	PARK NAME	FACILITY
13	Woods St Oval, Woods Street, North Epping	Dog Off Leash Area
14	Epping Oval, Norfolk Rd, Epping	Dog Off Leash Area
15	North Epping Oval, Boundary Rd, North Epping	Basketball Court (full or half court)
16	Brooklyn Oval, Brooklyn Rd, Brooklyn	Skate Park
17	McKell Park, Dangar Rd, Brooklyn	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
18	Oxley Drive Park, Beryl Ave, Mt Colah	Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
19	Warrina Oval, Warrina St, Berowra	Basketball Court (full or half court)
20	Cheltenham Oval, Castle Howard Rd, Cheltenham	Kick Wall
21	Thornleigh Oval, Ferguson St, Thornleigh	Kick Wall
22	Campbell Park, Wilga St, West Pennant Hills	Kick Wall
23	Charles Curtis Park, Cnr Pine & Myrtle Streets, Normanhurst	Basketball Court (full or half court)

MAP IDENTIFIER OR PARK NAME	PARK NAME	FACILITY
A	Hopeville Park, Meredith Ave, Hornsby Heights	BMX Facility
B	Lyne Rd Open Space, Lyne Rd, Beecroft (also potential family friendly)	Potential BMX Facility, Speciality/Mixed Recreation Park
C	Montview Oval, Montview Pde, Hornsby Heights	Potential BMX Facility
D	Hayes Oval, Galston Rd, Galston	Potential BMX Facility
E	Western Crescent Park, Western Cr, Westleigh	Potential BMX Facility



Unstructured Recreation Strategy Volume 1

All information in this report was true and correct to the best of council's knowledge at the time of printing.

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