



# **Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan**



**CITY OF  
PARRAMATTA**



## Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan

This Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan (SSAP) provides a detailed roadmap for the provision of the City of Parramatta Council's (Council) sportsground network to meet existing and future community needs.

It builds upon Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy (CIS), adopted July 2020, which outlines strategic directions, targets and high-level recommendations for the delivery of community infrastructure to meet the needs of the City of Parramatta's (The City) fast growing population until 2041.

The SSAP complements and delivers on the strategic directions in the CIS, through provision of detailed recommendations that will be used by Council to increase the number of sporting fields available to the community, and prioritise and guide the equitable resourcing of sportsground upgrades across the City. Taken together, implementing the recommendations in the SSAP will support our growing community to live active and healthy lives.



# Recognition of the Dharug Peoples

The City of Parramatta respectfully recognises the traditional owners of the land and waters of Parramatta, the Dharug Peoples.

Nunanglanungdyu Baramada  
gulbanga mawa naa Baramadagal  
Dharug ngurrawa badura Baramada,  
Dharug yura.

## Contents

<b>Section 1 - Introduction</b>	06
Our City is transforming	07
Our future residents	08
What is Council's role in providing sportsgrounds?	10
Integrating the SSAP into Council's planning	11
Council's sportsgrounds	12
How well positioned is our current sportsground network?	24
Emerging trends in sportsground provision	25
 <b>Section 2 - The Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan</b>	 34
Purpose of the SSAP	35
How we developed the SSAP	36
Objectives of the SSAP	37
Principles for sportsground delivery	38
Future needs and targets	45
Our future sportsground network	46
Focus areas and key recommendations	48
How will we implement the SSAP?	74





## Our city is transforming

We want to capitalise on the opportunities within the changing City landscape to ensure that our sportsground network can grow and will help the community of today, and tomorrow, live active and healthy lives.

Our City is home to some of Sydney's most significant heritage and civic assets, transport hubs, parklands and vibrant town centres. Major urban renewal is transforming the area from low scale suburban neighbourhoods, to the centre for infrastructure and employment in Western Sydney, where more than half of Sydney's population live.

The pace and scope of change in the City is unprecedented. In just over twenty years, an additional 217,000 people will

live in our City, increasing the population from 271,000 residents in 2020 to 488,000 residents in 2041.

It is expected that in the coming years billions of dollars will be invested in constructing light rail, hospitals, schools, roads and new public places. The intensity of investment in the City will create many opportunities for a new and more diverse mix of high-quality housing, jobs and infrastructure in a liveable, productive and sustainable City.





# Our future residents

## Who will we be and what will we need from sportsgrounds?



### We will be fast growing

- In 2041, 488,000 people will live in the City and 23% of the population will be under 19 years (+57,404 people between 2016-2041)
- The number of dwellings in the City is forecast to grow from 104,300 in 2020 to 194,000 in 2041, with the average household size falling from 2.78 to 2.60 by 2041 and 70% living in high density.

### So what?

- This growth will intensify demand for sportsgrounds. Sportsgrounds will become people's backyards and will have to work harder to support more use.



### We will be diverse

- The City and Western Sydney will continue to be a centre of immigration for Australia, and a place where migrants are likely to settle. Today, 50% of our community were born overseas and 52% speak a language other than English at home.

### So what?

- This suggests demand for multi-purpose spaces that meet a variety of needs.



### We will be established, young and family oriented

- In 2041, 43% of households are expected to have children and the average household size is expected to be 2.6 persons per dwelling.

### So what?

- This suggests a high demand for junior and grassroots level sport.



### There will be income inequality and we will have vulnerable communities that need support

- Inequality across Australia has risen over the past 20 years. The share of wealth and income going to the richest 20% has risen over the past 20 years, while the share going to the lowest 20% has decreased (ACOSS 2015). Communities who are more disadvantaged when it comes to access to public open spaces, connectivity and proximity also tend to suffer from obesity and mental health issues.

### So what?

- Sportsgrounds play a critical role in the health of people and communities. They not only provide an important space for exercise but can play a critical role in bringing a community together and growing social networks.



### Our neighbourhoods will continue to be unique and have their own demographic qualities

- We need to continue to plan, service and support each of our neighbourhoods differently as they will remain unique and require their own tailored approach.

### So what?

- Sportsgrounds provide opportunities for connection, such as meeting together, social interaction for people of all ages, cultural expression, and community events.



# What is Council's role in providing sportsgrounds?

Council is the major provider of sportsground facilities across the City, enabling opportunities for the community to participate in organised sport and informal recreation by providing facilities that are accessible, and relevant to the needs of people and sporting clubs.

As the level of government with the closest connection to the community, local government is increasingly acknowledged as having an important role to play in creating healthy and connected communities through:

- Planning, provision and maintenance of recreation and open space assets
- Implementing facilities management processes through local plans and policies
- Engaging and supporting local people through programs and promotion

- Shaping local places through effective planning and production, and
- Implementing efficient management processes through local plans and policies.

We acknowledge that all three levels of government play key roles in the provision of sport and recreation to the broader community, often working collaboratively to achieve greater community outcomes.

# Integrating the SSAP into Council's planning





# Council's sportsgrounds

Many community members experience a strong sense of enjoyment and belonging through participating in sports and engaging with their various sports clubs and organisations. Council recognises the importance of sportsground facilities to the open space network within the City, in providing opportunities to improve health and well-being and enhance the lifestyle of residents.

## Definitions:

**Sportsground:** Is land that is used or proposed to be used primarily for formal sporting activities involving organised sports or the playing of outdoor games.

**Sporting field:** Is the playing surface (natural or synthetic) located at a sportsground.

**Formal sport:** The defining elements of sport are that it is – physical (exertion and/or skill), competitive/has rules, and organised (e.g. governing bodies).

**Sporting club:** A registered organisation that exists to promote and develop participation in a sport or physical activity.

# Local and district sportsgrounds - the focus of this SSAP

Council categorises its sportsgrounds according to a hierarchy. The SSAP focuses on actions that Council will take, with others, to strengthen its network of local and district sportsgrounds which deliver the most value directly to our community.

## Local sportsgrounds

Refers to sportsgrounds with a primary catchment area of a single local government area or multiple suburbs. These sites focus on club competition and provide a mix of recreational, competitive and programmed formats for participants. Local facilities generally service the needs of sporting clubs for home and away fixtures, including finals, training activities and participation programs.

## District sportsgrounds

Refers to sportsgrounds with a primary catchment of a large local government area, and also often catering for adjoining Councils due to the nature of the competition or sport. District facilities cater for association competition as well as service a local catchment to provide a mix of recreational, competitive and programmed formats for participants. These sites serve as a local sporting finals venue or as a central venue facilitating regular competition for multiple clubs and/or teams.

## Regional sportsgrounds

Refers to sportsgrounds with a primary catchment of multiple local government areas. These sites also service a local catchment and can support high level training and competition and are designed and maintained to a higher standard. Regional facilities provide a broad range of sport and recreation activities and events, often hosting regional tournaments and carnivals with large numbers of teams across multiple days. Regional facilities can also be a significant single sport facility of a high quality, catering for high levels of competition.

## National and/ or state sportsgrounds

Refers to sportsground and facility sites with the primary catchment being state level. They attract users and visitors from interstate and overseas. They provide for the highest level of sporting competition which may include international events and competitions, national league(s) and associated state and national team and squad training centre(s). These facilities also assist to promote sports and provide community access and pathway opportunities for participants. As these facilities provide for the highest level of competition, they also have a high entertainment value and attract large numbers of spectators.

*Note: While the SSAP focuses on Council's sportsground network specifically those with sporting fields, Council recognises that there are several other sport and recreation facilities which community members also participate in formal and informal sport including courts (tennis, netball), aquatic facilities (swimming, water polo) and indoor recreation facilities (basketball, gymnastics) as examples and these facilities will be considered in more detail separately.*

*Regional/state and national facilities need to be planned with consideration of increasing maintenance and operational resources, where neighbouring regional facilities are located, capital expenditure and funding sources, return on investment analysis and community benefit. Council is committed to working in collaboration to plan for and manage these facilities as we acknowledge that they are a significant resource for our community, with access to both regional and national facilities. However, the development of these facilities should not take away the investment required for Council to deliver quality local and district sportsground facilities which are predominantly serving the City's sporting community and residents.*



# Current sportsground provision

Currently, Council has 33 sportsgrounds which provide 64 sporting fields. The sporting fields cover 53.6ha, with the total land area of the sportsgrounds being approximately 150ha.

Council's sportsgrounds are used for a range of sporting activities by sporting clubs and associations, schools and community groups, as well as by residents and others for informal recreation, fitness activities groups and events. Council's sportsgrounds are used differently in winter compared to summer with varying levels of demand and associated maintenance requirements. Understanding the impact of these factors informs the way Council plans for and manages its sportsground network.

## Current provision of synthetic sporting fields

There are currently two sportsgrounds within Council's sportsground network that include synthetic sporting fields. There is a further sportsground site where a synthetic field is being considered.

### West Epping Park

A master plan was developed for West Epping Park incorporating synthetic sporting fields to help improve and rationalise existing sports use and provide for changing community needs. Council delivered the project and opened the park to the community in early 2018. The park includes one full-size synthetic sporting field and one smaller synthetic sporting field (with cricket wicket) (Field 1 and 2).

During winter the fields are used by a local football (soccer) club, and during summer the field is used by the local cricket association and the football club run a night-time summer competition.

### Rydalmere Park

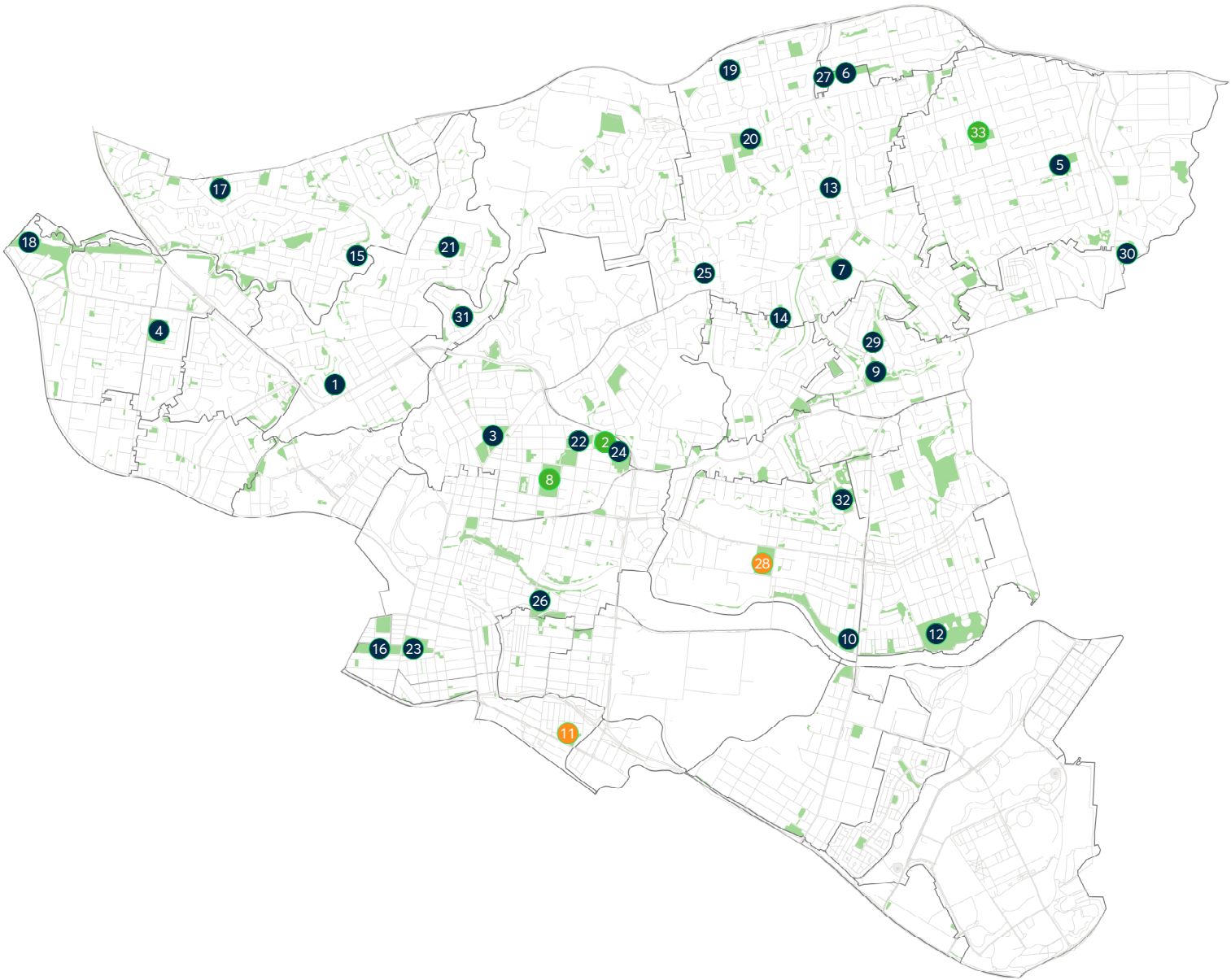
In 2019 Council developed a master plan for Rydalmere Park which proposed enhancing sporting infrastructure to meet current and future needs, including one full-size field synthetic field with a warmup area (field 3) to meet Football NSW National Premier League requirements. The first match was hosted at the field in July 2020.

The field is used by a local football (soccer) club which participates in both grassroots and representative competitions. The field also has line markings for small sided games.

### Newington Reserve

Through the CIS Council identified the potential for a full-size sporting field at the existing passive park Newington Reserve. Beyond this reserve there are limited available opportunities for additional sporting field supply in catchment 6 which includes the suburbs of Silverwater, Newington and the high growth areas of Sydney Olympic Park, Wentworth Point and Lidcombe/Carter Street. To ensure this field can address greater demand given there are limited opportunities for further community sporting fields in catchment 6 the provision of a synthetic full-size field and mini field is being considered.

The field will be used by a local football (soccer) club during winter, with additional use in winter and summer considered through an expression of interest process.



#### Current sportsgrounds

- 1 Arthur Phillip Park
- 2 Barton Park
- 3 Belmore Park
- 4 Binalong Park
- 5 Boronia Park
- 6 Carlingford Schools Oval
- 7 Cox Park
- 8 Doyle Ground
- 9 Dundas Park
- 10 Eric Primrose Reserve
- 11 F S Garside Park
- 12 George Kendall Riverside Park
- 13 Harold West Reserve
- 14 Homelands Reserve
- 15 John Curtin Reserve
- 16 Jones Park

- 17 Max Ruddock Reserve
- 18 McCoy Park
- 19 Murray Farm Reserve
- 20 North Rocks Park
- 21 Northmead Reserve
- 22 Old Saleyards Reserve
- 23 Ollie Webb Reserve
- 24 P H Jeffrey Reserve
- 25 Peggy Womersley Reserve
- 26 Robin Thomas Reserve
- 27 Roselea Reserve
- 28 Rydalmere Park
- 29 Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve
- 30 Somerville Park
- 31 Speers Road Reserve
- 32 Upjohn Park
- 33 West Epping Park

#### Sportsground classification

- Regional sportsgrounds
- District sportsgrounds
- Local sportsgrounds
- Parks & Reserves



# Current sportsground configuration

Sportsground use for formal sports is managed around two distinct seasons (summer and winter). Council's sportsground network is configured differently in winter and summer to accommodate the different formal sporting uses that occur between the seasons.

**In the winter season (April to September), Council's sporting fields are configured to deliver the following:**

- 10 x  
Rugby  
league  
fields


- 38 x  
Football  
(soccer)  
fields


- 1 x  
Athletics  
field


- 5 x  
Rugby  
union  
fields


- 4 x  
Baseball  
fields



**In the summer season (September to March), Council's sporting fields are configured to deliver the following:**

- 30 x  
Cricket  
wickets


- 5 x  
Baseball  
fields


- 2 x  
Athletics  
field


- 22 x  
Touch  
football/oz  
tag fields



Throughout the winter and summer season, many of the fields cater for more than one sporting code. Council's sporting fields are also used for training and competition for AFL, softball, grass hockey and ultimate frisbee.





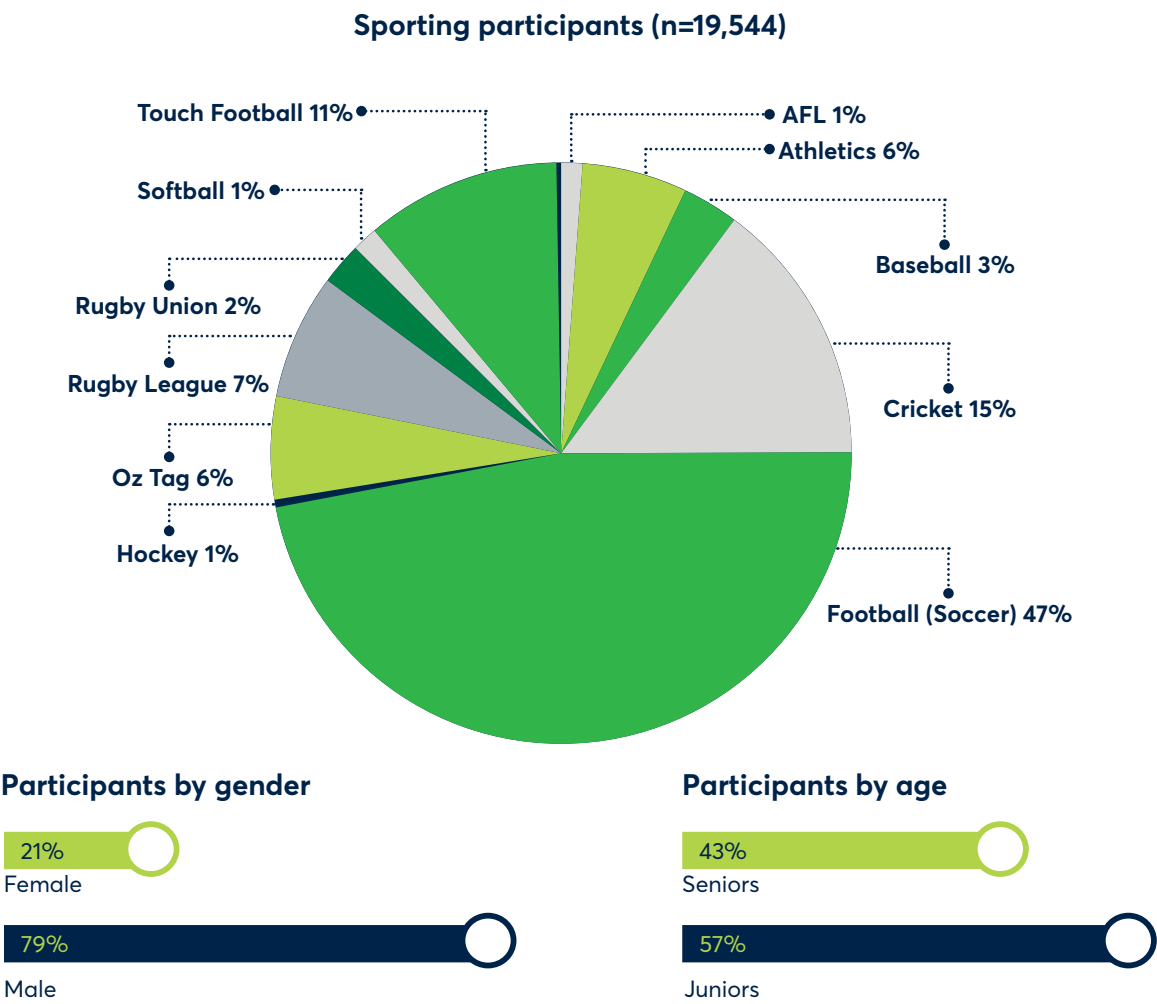
# Current formal sport participation

Different sporting uses and participants require different sporting field configurations and supporting infrastructure that result in varying levels of wear and tear which impacts on maintenance and management of Council's sportsground network.

Use of Council's sportsground network can be formal (such as club competition), or informal (such as kicking around a ball after school or work).

Council's sportsground network is used year-round for a wide range of formal, club-based sporting activities. Based on available data provided by sporting clubs there are

approximately 37 clubs and 25 associations representative of 20,000 participants. Football (soccer) the highest participated in formal sport in the City, followed by cricket, rugby league and athletics. Junior participants generally make up most of the membership. Male participants also account for most of the participation.



# Current bookings of sportsgrounds

Formal sports use requires a booking to be made through Council's booking system. As a result, Council has a good understanding of the level of formal sports use across our sportsground network. Council currently prioritises its use of sportsgrounds facilities to sporting clubs and schools.

The level of informal sportsground use is more difficult to determine as this does not require a booking, occurs on an

as-needs basis, and is often spontaneous and unpredictable.

Based on available data, Council currently allocates approximately 1565 hours per week of sportsground use to sporting clubs during the winter season, 949 hours per week during the summer season and 325 hours of school use throughout each school term.

Hours of use for seasonal bookings



- School use – school use is recorded but due to inconsistencies in details and impacts they are not included in the core analysis. It is important to note that school use of council's sportsgrounds is increasing due to higher student numbers and limited open space opportunities on school grounds
- Other recreational use – is increasing due to population growth and changing participation trends. Usage data is difficult to quantify, however, its impact on capacity is an important consideration.
- Casual Bookings – are one-off bookings for uses such as events or private functions. This use is also recorded but is not included in the core analysis as it is infrequent in nature and varies across the sportsground network

*\*Data has been obtained from approved bookings for the Winter 2019 and Summer 2019/20 sporting seasons and is based upon information submitted by sporting clubs and associations for their respective seasons.*





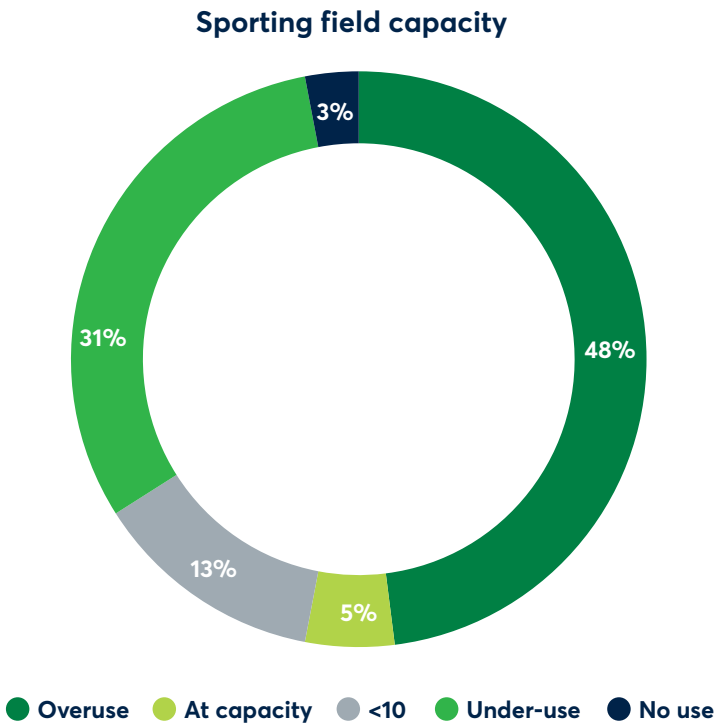


# Current sportsground capacity

The standard capacity of a sportsground refers to how much use, in hours per week, the sporting field can provide to the community before the quality of the playing surface is compromised. It is widely acknowledged that if a turf sporting field is used more than 25 hours a week it is likely that the surface will deteriorate.

An analysis of the current formal sports usage patterns of Council's sportsground sites based on 25 hours per week of use in winter\* by sporting clubs shows of the 33 sites:

- 48% experience overuse
- 5% are at capacity
- 13% are within 10% of capacity
- 31% experience underuse
- 3% experience no use



As shown above, use is spread across most of its supply network, but is not evenly distributed with many sites being 'over allocated' whilst others are 'under allocated'.

Sites that are over allocated (over 25 hours) are, on average, 16 hours over their current practical capacity.

As a proportion of the total sporting field capacity, this represents approximately 13.5%.

This is essentially the current gap between demand and supply. That is, Council would need to boost capacity by 13.5% to effectively meet the current allocation demand.

*\*During the winter season demand reaches its peak and at the same time natural turf sporting fields are at their most fragile due to growing conditions for natural turf. If sporting fields have enough capacity during winter, they are also likely to have enough capacity during summer. The uneven distribution can be attributed to a number of factors with some of these considered on page 23 for example the site which has no use is one that doesn't have floodlights but is still used during the day by schools and by summer hirers.*

# Practical capacity

To understand the capacity of the City's sportsground network, we need to consider the size (area) of each sporting field and how many hours (time) each field can be used. In addition to area and time, other factors have practical impacts on usage and the realistic output of a sporting field. These include elements like lighting, amenities, safety, and the neighbourhood context like closeness of the field to residential dwellings. When these factors are combined a sporting field's 'practical capacity' can be calculated and used to model changes in capacity of current facilities along with the provision of new ones.

**Understanding the practical capacity of the City's sportsground network**

- Practical Capacity considers the realistic output of our sporting fields by considering field area, hours of use and site-specific features including lighting, amenities, safety and neighbourhood context
- The SSAP identifies that the practical capacity of 1 sporting field is equivalent to a 0.8ha (area) full-size rectangle field, that can be used for 25 hours per week (time). Currently, Council's 64 sporting fields provide the practical capacity of 55 sporting fields
- This is because not all of Council's sporting fields are 0.8ha in size and/or have elements which limit it from reasonably being able to be used for 25 hours per week
- If the current practical capacity of 55 fields is multiplied by the 13.5%, the gap between supply and demand then the current practical capacity to meet current demand would be approx. 63 sporting fields.



**Council would need to boost its practical capacity by 8 sporting fields to meet the current demand for formal sport.**



# How well-positioned is our current sportsground network?

## The strengths of our sportsground network include:

- Our sportsground network can accommodate a variety of sports and uses
- Many sportsgrounds are co-located with other recreation uses (e.g. playspaces, fitness equipment, courts, walking and cycling pathways)
- Some of our sportsgrounds have recently been upgraded
- There are several sportsgrounds that, if embellished, have the capability to be district level facilities and/ or support a broader range of uses.

## Despite some strengths, our sportsground network has weaknesses:

- Use and wear and tear is not spread evenly across sportsgrounds and this means there are some fields that operate above capacity and others that operate below capacity
- There is a current lack of sportsground provision in suburbs that are projected to have high population growth into the future
- Only some sportsgrounds are flexible in design to accommodate multiple and changing uses
- There are several sportsgrounds without appropriate supporting infrastructure (such as floodlighting, cricket pitches and pavilions), reducing the overall functionality and capacity of these sites
- Some of our sportsgrounds are in poor condition and are not adequately constructed
- Increasing number of schools are heavily reliant on using Council's sportsgrounds for their sporting activities due to reduced availability of facilities within school grounds and growing student numbers
- Not all land identified for the development of sportsgrounds has adequate space to accommodate a full-size field and the required supporting infrastructure.

# Emerging trends in sportsground provision

The City continues to undergo transformational change. Growth and development are creating an increasingly urbanised environment, putting pressure on the future of our sportsground network.

Council considers the following trends as critical to the future of our sportsground network:

## How people are participating:

- There is growing demand for more social and self-directed forms of participation
- There is a need to support and encourage physical activity for all ages, abilities, genders, cultural and socio-economic groups ensuring they employ universal design and access principles.

## How activity structures are changing:

- Sports are creating products that cater to different age groups, genders and accessibilities for example deaf football, league tag and T20 cricket
- There is an increasing provision of commercial fitness, casual and social recreation opportunities – “turn up and play activities”
- There is increased demand for formal sports use - season overlap and across season usage is becoming more prevalent with sports wanting products that run 12 months of the year as opposed to being seasonal.

## Social factors:

- We are becoming older and more ethnically diverse leading to a greater variety of recreation activities reflecting a wide range of interests, schedules and new activities
- The way we live, work and engage in sport has changed. Where once people planned their weeks around sporting and physical activity, today many Australians now look for sporting and physical activities that work around their other commitments
- An increase in gender equity and accessibility in sports participation can be difficult to accommodate within the limited availability of sporting fields and the appropriate supporting infrastructure
- Participation in sport and recreation can help achieve mental and physical health, crime prevention and social development objectives. Opportunities for community involvement, especially through sport and recreation, can help to reverse feelings of isolation and create a stronger association with the community

- Declining volunteerism and increased accountability issues due to reduced time to volunteer and rigorous child safety and child protection matters leaving many community-based organisations struggling with administration, facility and program management and provision.

## Economic factors:

- The cost of living is rising, which increases the cost of participating in formal sport, which is an affordability barrier for many people affecting their health, wellbeing and connections with community
- Increasing costs associated with accelerated sporting field life cycle and community expectations. Sportsgrounds need to be developed to withstand increased wear and tear, especially in the context of changing climatic conditions like floods and extreme heat, which costs more. There is greater pressure on Councils due to ageing assets and increasing community expectations of quality and diversity of inclusions. Maintenance costs are affected by the expectations of sporting clubs in relation to the development of high-quality sportsground facilities which includes the preparation of sporting fields and upkeep of associated infrastructure, and Council's financial ability to maintain these to expectations
- There is declining land availability and increasing cost of land and infrastructure provision. Continued public funding pressures require intense efforts to demonstrate broad community value. Tensions exist regarding sport and recreation funding paradigms, one viewing this infrastructure as a significant 'cost to community' and another viewing this as 'investment, impact and value' for a healthy active community
- The Department of Education faces significant challenges to providing enough primary and secondary school places to meet existing and future demand based on projected population growth. As a result of this, a common approach is to develop more educational spaces on existing school sites and use space currently allocated for recreation and sport. This, in turn, makes schools more reliant on Council's sportsgrounds to provide for formal sport and informal recreation needs of students. If this trend continues, the capacity of Council's sportsground network is likely to suffer as a result.



# Innovative and new approaches to provision

**Council's CIS recognised using historical approaches to the planning and delivery of community infrastructure for the City simply will not work to deliver the best outcome for our people into the future.**

There is growing evidence about the best ways to provide community infrastructure and we are inspired by these innovative approaches. By drawing on these, we can develop and deliver a great sportsground network for our community.

## Shared use

Sharing the use of existing community infrastructure has significant potential to maximise the use and efficiency of a variety of spaces for community benefit. Sharing existing space may decrease the need to build new facilities that replicate already existing infrastructure, making assets work harder for the benefit of all. Work is currently being undertaken to explore shared use arrangements with schools in City of Parramatta, but Council must also consider how to open up usage in facilities that are currently underutilised or currently only available to a single user group.

## Community consultation is key

The planning and management of community infrastructure can no longer employ 'fixed' solutions. Growing populations and changing community demands and expectations, both for current and future generations, mean that no two communities are the same. The way the community interacts with infrastructure now and into the future is changing and as a result, consumer behaviour is shifting to reflect this. Understanding consumer behaviour and actively engaging with communities allows for a 'bottom-up' approach. This will help drive solutions that generate significant impact and resonate with communities.

## Using a network approach

Community infrastructure should not be planned in isolation but be considered as a broader network of facilities that work together to meet a broad range of community needs, across a neighbourhood, suburb, catchment or region. This integrated, strategic approach allows facilities to provide a different but complementary range of offerings. By considering assets as part of a network, duplication of all resource allocation can be avoided, therefore, representing a more economically sustainable approach to community infrastructure planning.

## Getting more out of existing infrastructure

Much existing community infrastructure, in its current configuration and with current management approaches, is at or exceeding capacity. In the context of unprecedented population growth and increasing community expectations, improving the capacity, efficiency and performance of existing facilities will need to be a priority in order to meet demand. Opportunities exist to make smaller, more incremental investments where significant capacity enhancements can be delivered through our existing infrastructure. Planning and managing community infrastructure in this way and making use of available data and information surrounding facilities and their use, will provide an opportunity to incentivise behaviours to help better manage peak demand and optimise overall use.

## Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

Public Private Partnerships allow governments and the private sector to work together and share resources to plan for, deliver and manage major projects. This usually involves governments providing incentives for the private sector to deliver a public asset or service. To be successful, these partnerships require shared vision, early commitment and comprehensive planning. PPP's usually have the public interest at heart and can deliver increased value for money.

## Environmentally Sustainable Design

Community infrastructure offers opportunities for councils to lead by example, demonstrate new sustainable materials and technologies and deliver leading practice projects with an educational role. Environmentally sustainable facilities typically have lower operating costs and are, therefore, more financially viable and sustainable to operate. Delivering environmentally sustainable development means that facilities are located so as to promote walking, cycling, and public transport, which also has a positive impact on fostering healthy, active communities.

## Establishing community infrastructure within community hubs

The term 'community hub' refers to the integration of community facilities in one location to provide better access to a wider range of services as well as a more cost effective way of delivering and operating these services. Integrating community infrastructure within community hubs helps to achieve key gathering points within a community with a variety of offerings. This approach improves efficiency through encouraging compatible uses, supporting partnerships between different service providers and increasing the overall flexibility and activity of the given area. Community hubs provide opportunities to attract a range of users, increase access to services and allow for the coordination of supporting services like public transport.

## Revenue streams

Many facilities operate on a not-for-profit basis with income generation approaches ranging from hiring spaces, to fund raising, to receiving grant funding. To enhance the costeffectiveness and sustainability of community infrastructure, many facilities rely on rental income to fund operations but even then, there is usually a gap between income and expenses, including maintenance costs. Increasingly within community infrastructure, operations of assets like community facilities, rely on revenue methods that generate reliable and increased sources of income in order to improve financial viability and sustainability.





# A note about sportsground maintenance

## Analysis shows Council could increase the practical capacity of its sportsground network by improving sporting field maintenance.

In some instances, increasing maintenance schedules and practices can help to achieve a higher level of sustainable carrying capacity (time the fields can be used for an activity) of sporting fields. The cost of maintenance, however, will increase in order to maintain high-quality standards and withstand increasing weather events like droughts and floods, whilst providing for increased demand for formal and informal sports and recreation facilities from a growing population.

Sportsground maintenance can include grass mowing, field and sports infrastructure management, building repairs and refurbishments, season changeover, and many other routine, ongoing tasks associated with both the sportsground site and adjoining park.

Maintenance also needs to be considered when re-building or constructing new sporting fields. A poor field profile (soil and turf type) and fields without well-designed irrigation and drainage systems will be severely restricted in the surface quality and carrying capacity they can achieve, even with the appropriate maintenance.

### What maintenance practices can help Council increase the practical capacity of its sporting fields?

- Soil amendments
- Mowing practices
- Pre-emergent application
- Aeration practices
- Growth regulators
- Pesticide application
- Over-sowing cool season grass varieties
- Fertilisation
- Soil testing
- Renovations and turfing
- Wetting agents

# Opportunities and constraints with synthetic sporting fields

The anticipated growth in our population will put increasing pressure on our sportsground network. To meet the needs of our community, Council needs to consider innovative approaches to sportsground provision. Facilities such as synthetic sporting fields (also referred to as artificial turf fields) can provide alternative options for the community to engage in formal and informal recreation opportunities.

Synthetic sporting fields pose an alternative to traditional natural turf surfaces. They are flexible, multi-purpose assets which have the capacity to handle higher levels of usage. As community demand increases, many councils in NSW and interstate have chosen to invest in the provision of synthetic sporting fields as a means of increasing the carrying capacity (time the fields can be used for activity) of sporting fields.

### Opportunities:

- Can accommodate up to 60 hours of use per week
- Condition of playing surface is more consistent and durable
- Reduces annual renovation costs
- Aesthetics
- Less weather dependant
- Provides environmental benefits including water saving
- Provides a year-round option for high impact sport usage
- Incorporates advances in technology.

### Constraints:

- Environmental concerns, including possible microplastics and contamination risks
- Contribution to urban heat
- Artificial feel
- Costly to install
- Disposal of materials at end of life
- Shorter asset life – typically lasts between 7 years (for 60 hours of use per week) to 10 years (for 40 hours of use per week)
- Maintenance costs considered lower then turf but doesn't always take into account level of use and requirements outside of general grooming.

Council investment in synthetic sporting fields must be guided by a framework that considers factors such as return on investment to ensure that they are sustainable and provide an optimal outcome for the community. Investment in on-going maintenance and specific hardware will be needed to ensure successful functioning of the playing surface (costs increase as levels of usage increase) and that the constraints mentioned above are considered and mitigated.

It is estimated that individual synthetic sporting fields would need to be replaced every 7 to 10 years if it is constructed and maintained well. The estimated replacement fund for approximate whole of life costs show that the field would be replaced in years 11, 21 (requires shock pad and base rectification) and 30 (requires shock pad replacement/ disposal and civil works for drainage and pavement) with the following aspects considered:

### Approximate whole of life costs

Field Costs	After 10 years	After 20 years	After 30 years
Pitch sub-total	\$570,500	\$1,192,500	\$2,283,000
Ancillary costs i.e. fencing/ lighting/ equipment	\$86,620	\$172,640	\$259,500
Contracted maintenance of field	\$370,000	\$740,000	\$1,110,000
Total replacement costs for field and maintenance	\$1,027,120	\$2,105,140	\$3,652,500



# The impact of COVID-19 on sport and recreation

COVID-19 has impacted almost every aspect of our lives since it was first identified in Australia in January 2020 and participation in sport and physical activity is no exception. With the shutting down of organised sport and the closure of venues such as gyms and studios, we have had to adapt our physical activity to the new environment.

To begin to understand changing behaviours before they appear in AusPlay's long-term data, some questions were added for survey periods for April-June 2020 (first wave of COVID-19) and July-September 2020 (second wave of COVID-19) that asked about activity in the previous seven days. Together with other research conducted by Sport Australia and other organisations, the AusPlay Focus report provides some early indications of what the impact of COVID-19 might be on participation in sport and physical activity.

In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on organised sport as these gatherings were put on hold to adhere to health advice. The Australian Government, through Sport Australia and the Australian Institute of Sport, has helped sporting organisation's adapt to a COVID-19 environment and a safe return to sport when possible.

AusPlay also kept in touch with the Australian community during the pandemic to understand how their activity behaviours have changed and how they're feeling about getting involved in sport.

## The impact of lockdown

### Children were more impacted than adults

This makes sense given that organised sport, particularly club sport is the main staple of organised activity for children outside of school

### Some children's activities were more likely to be continued

Instead of the usual popular activities such as swimming and football sports like dancing and tennis increased as they may have been able to continue virtually and/or continue to be permitted as little physical contact with others is require to participate.

### Younger and middle-aged Australian adults were more impacted than older Australians

Younger and middle-aged Australians experienced significant disruption with many losing their employment and others being forced to work from home. Parents working from home also had to juggle children at home as school students switched from classroom to online learning.

### Recreational and fitness activities were most popular

These activities, particularly those that can be done solo or physically distanced, were more immune to COVID-19 disruption with some even increasing. This trend was also driven largely by females.

### Australians have missed sports being in their lives

Sport is a part of Australian culture and many people miss it when it's not there. In April 2020, after it had been suspended for several weeks, almost half of Australians (44%) said that beyond being active they missed sport being in their life. This fell steadily since professional and community sport restarted across most of the country, to 26% in March 2021.

Information sourced from "Clearinghouse for Sport" To view the full report visit: [clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results](https://clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results)



### What does the future hold?

The impact of COVID-19 on participation trends largely depends on:

1. How long COVID-19 lasts. If the pandemic and its restrictions on sport and physical activity last longer than AusPlay's 12-month recall it's likely to be more noticeable in future trend data; and
2. If Australians return to sport post-COVID-19, and how quickly activity behaviours get back to 'normal' or what does the new normal look like?

This enthusiasm to get back to sport may provide hope for a post-pandemic future and helped many get back into organised sport as soon as they could. Some players had chosen not to return to all or some of their sport but more often it was because their sport was yet to start again. Furthermore, some people had started playing sport when they hadn't expected to or weren't sure if they would pre-COVID-19.







# Case study

## Valuing our green spaces

In late 2018, City of Parramatta Council, in partnership with Western Sydney Local Health District, commissioned a social return on investment (SROI) evaluation to assess the social and economic value created by the parks and sportsgrounds owned and maintained by Council.

### What is an SROI?

A SROI evaluation identifies the investment that is required to deliver a service, asset or activity and compares it with the value of the outcomes experienced by stakeholders.

The seven core principles of SROI are:

- Understand what changes
- Involve stakeholders
- Value the things that matter
- Only include what is material
- Do not over-claim
- Be transparent
- Verify results



### Why is green space valuable?

- Access to quality green open space is beneficial for physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Green open space improves social connections and supports the development of vibrant communities by providing a place for activity and opportunities to interact
- Accessible and safe green open spaces foster active play, which is associated with physical, cognitive and social benefits for children
- Residents in high rise dwellings particularly benefit from the provision of accessible green space since they often don't have access to private open space

### What did we do?

The value created for the community was determined based on-site evaluations of two sportsgrounds (Max Ruddock Reserve and Robin Thomas Reserve) and three parks (Jubilee Park, West Epping Park and Ray Park). The findings of these site-based SROI evaluations were then used to scale the results across all 33 sportsgrounds and 124 local and district parks in the City.

### What did we find?

For every dollar invested in Council parks and sportsgrounds, \$10 of social and economic value is created for and experienced by a range of stakeholders per year.

### Sportsground findings

For every dollar invested in Council sportsgrounds, \$38 of social and economic value is created for and experienced by a range of range of stakeholders per year.

### Value of the SSAP

Successful delivery of the SSAP, could create approximately \$5b in social and economic value for stakeholders.







## Section 2 - draft Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan

## The purpose of the SSAP

**Successful implementation of the SSAP will realise Council investment in quality sport and recreation services and facilities to support our growing community to live active and healthy lives.**

The SSAP outlines the actions Council will take in the planning, provision and long-term management of sportsgrounds. The SSAP focuses on sportsgrounds under the ownership or management of Council, as well as those that Council has chosen to play a role in delivering or seeks to advocate for on behalf of the community.





# Objectives of the SSAP

The SSAP is a detailed roadmap for Council that strengthens our role in the delivery of sport and recreation to the community through:

- Detailed service area planning to deliver adequate, quality, best practice sportsgrounds and associated facilities to meet sport, physical activity and population needs
- Advocating for the provision of adequate, quality, best practice sportsgrounds and associated facilities to meet population needs
- Helping secure funding and partnership opportunities for sport
- Providing an evidence base to challenge, where appropriate, the scale, location or appropriateness of proposed sportsground upgrades and development in the context of impact and outcomes for the community
- Supporting preparation of operational and capital works budgets for the short, medium and long term
- Supporting preparation of short, medium and long-term asset management plans.



# How we developed the SSAP



## Community Infrastructure Strategy

This document, endorsed by Council in July 2020, identifies high level gaps and needs for sportsgrounds through analysing and understanding current assets, current and future estimated population, future high growth areas, rates of provision now and a future ideal based on best-practice benchmarks.

The CIS identifies high level strategic directions to help harness the opportunities of the City's growth and to be proactive in Council's advocacy, collaboration and partnerships to realise adequate and quality infrastructure provision for the community into the future.



## Public exhibition of a draft SSAP

On 26 July 2021, Council endorsed the draft SSAP for a round of community consultation. The draft document was publicly exhibited from 1 September to 13 October 2021.

Council asked what the community thought of the priority areas, and whether or not there was anything missing from the draft SSAP.



## Sportsground supply and demand analysis

Detailed analysis and development of a robust model to estimate the gap in sporting field supply, focusing on capacity of current sporting fields, as well as opportunities for acquisition and dedication of additional land.

This analysis used the professional knowledge and experience of staff and consultants (Smart Connect Consultancy and Xypher Sport + Leisure), and relied on information provided by sports clubs, sports associations, recent facility audit surveys, and other relevant industry research.



## Preparation of final Sportsground Strategy and Action Plan

Following the 2021 public exhibition period, Council staff worked to prepare the updated SSAP. The final SSAP is the result of the combined efforts of many.

The following page contains a summary of the process and outcomes of the 2021 public exhibition of the draft SSAP.



## Preparation of draft SSAP

Working across Council teams to understand the implications of sportsground strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, as well as community needs and preferences. Identifying key focus areas and priority actions to realise quality and adequate sportsground provision for the community, in the context of the high-level strategic directions and recommendations in the CIS.



# What you told us

The opportunity to provide feedback on the draft SSAP was open to the community, sporting stakeholders and industry partners from Wednesday 1 September to Wednesday 13 October 2021.

## Here's what you told us

Sportsgrounds are highly valued for both sport and recreation:



68% of respondents use sportsgrounds atleast once a week



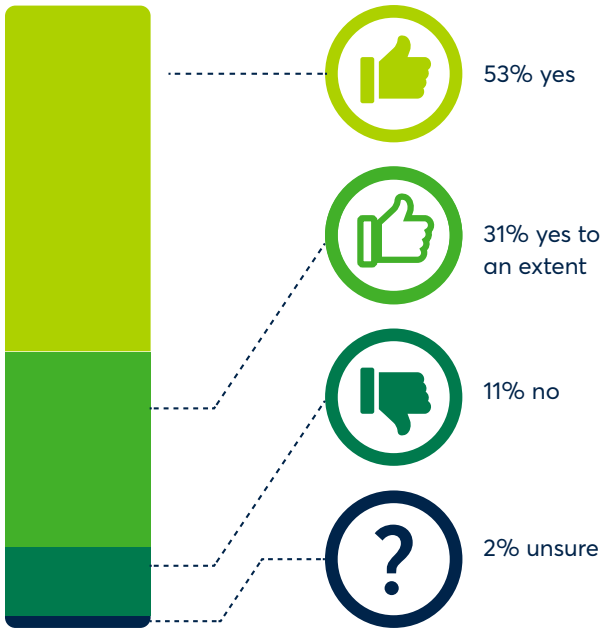
35% of respondents were affiliated to a sporting club



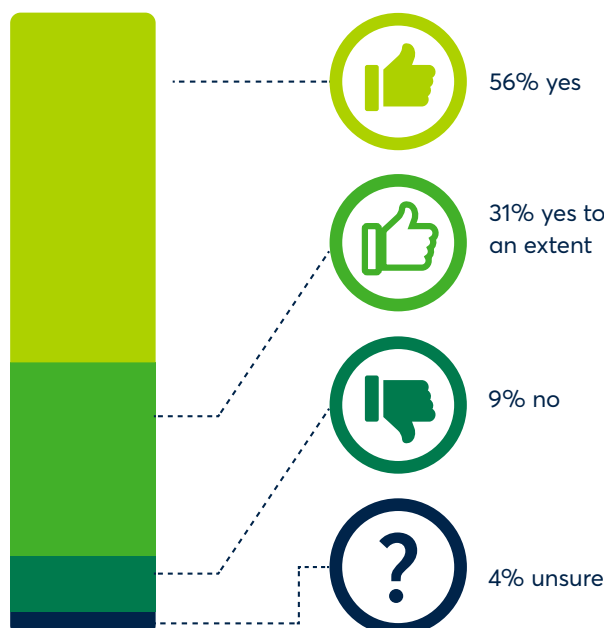
The top three uses of sportsgrounds were for formal sport, exercise/fitness and walking

## Actions

We asked if you supported the proposed recommendations:



We asked overall, if you supported the draft SSAP:



## What else did you tell us?

The most common themes were:

Individuals:



Under utilisation of some sportsgrounds and the need for an upgrade of others



Provision of parking



Availability of facilities for a variety of activities



Distribution of sportsground facilities

Sporting stakeholders commented on:

- Strategy implementation in achieving outcomes
- Delivering best practice, accessible and fit for purpose facilities
- Historic inequitable resourcing of sportsgrounds
- Collaboration between stakeholders for whole of community benefit
- Concern about recommendations for Barton Park

Challenges anticipated by respondents:

- Keeping pace with population growth
- Some stakeholders supported the delivery of synthetic facilities and those that didn't had concerns regarding environmental and heat impacts
- The need to consider sportsgrounds together with other open space plans and strategies and not in isolation

## Who participated?



119,179 people were presented with the opportunity



6 stakeholder interviews



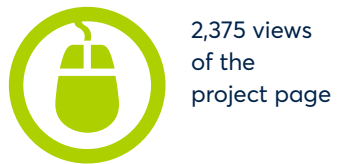
2,568 engagements



18 webinar participants



62 formal contributions



2,375 views of the project page



62 sporting clubs, associations, peak bodies, government organisations and agencies were approached



# Principles for sportsground delivery

Decisions related to the planning and delivery of all sportsground facilities will be undertaken in accordance with the following principles.

- **Best value** – projects that maximise funding opportunities and provide a strong return on investment
- **Best fit** – provision of a diverse range of sportsground facilities at local and district level which maximise opportunities for multi-use and shared-use of sports infrastructure
- **Best practice** – projects that can implement industry, sustainability, and universal best practice principles in the planning, design and use of new facilities.

## Best value

Sportsgrounds should be financially viable for the long term and provide a return on investment for their users, owners and operators. Sportsground infrastructure may be secured by a range of funding measures including government, not-for profit and commercial sector investment in addition to development contributions.

## What does this mean in practice?

- Distributing available Council resources equitably across the sportsground network
- Prioritising Council budget towards improving local and district sportsground facilities for conducting grassroots sport, as opposed to contributing towards individual club-based requests and elite facilities. Where facilities are not primarily focused towards grassroots sports, the sports code will be expected to justify need and provide a reasonable contribution towards capital costs
- Valuing Council partnerships with sporting organisations, Government and schools to investigate funding and upgrade opportunities, including grant funding
- Seeking contributions from developers through development contributions (Section 7.11 and 7.12) or VPAs (Section 7.4) for the acquisition and embellishment of sportsground facilities that meet benchmark requirements and increase quality or capacity of the existing sportsground network.

## Best fit

Sportsgrounds will enable a flexible and multi-use approach to facilities, ensuring gender equitable and accessible design, as well as design for specific user requirements that provide for a range of skill levels and types of activities.

## What does this mean in practice?

The design, configuration and location of sportsground facilities will ensure capacity and participation opportunities are maximised for the whole community:

- Facilities and sites will be developed as multi-purpose facilities for broad sports participation and for access by the whole community
- Fields, pavilions and associated infrastructure will be designed and managed to support shared use by multiple sports and activities
- When appropriate, multi-purpose community spaces will be considered in sportsground pavilions
- Functional spaces will be provided for sports to operate and evolve, particularly to address contemporary issues and trends relating to facilities
- Facilities will be planned and designed with adequate size to accommodate complimentary recreational infrastructure like circuit paths, play spaces, picnic areas, practice nets, hard-courts and/or fitness equipment.

## Best practice

The quality and design of sportsground facilities must reflect best practice approaches to meet growing community expectations.

## What does this mean in practice?

Sportsground design and construction is to be fit for purpose and future proofed:

- Sportsground construction will be in accordance with Australian Standards, Council's service levels and consider national/ state sporting organisations facility guidelines
- Future sportsground and ancillary facility provision will be located and designed so they are not constrained by easements, underground infrastructure, unsuitable landforms, overshadowing or frequent flooding
- Future sportsground and facility provision will be universally and sustainably designed and optimise operational and maintenance practices
- Council will maximise the management, maintenance and operation of sportsground facilities through using new and smart technology.

# Best practice sportsground design considerations

Every new sportsground facility or upgrade will need to satisfactorily address the following criteria:

## Site suitability

- Q. Has size, topography, environmental constraints, contamination and location been considered?
- Q. Is it free of significant overshadowing with good solar access?
- Q. Is the land connected to active transport networks through footpaths and cycleways external to the park?
- Q. Can the facility be accessed by the whole community?

## Design

- Q. Will the facility have the flexibility to accommodate more than one sport?
- Q. Is parking, shade and seating considered?
- Q. Does it employ universal access and environmental design principles?
- Q. Is scale developed in accordance with the classification of the facility?

## Functionality

- Q. Does the upgrade allow for the appropriate and reasonable maintenance?
- Q. Does the facility consider the regulation standards or guidelines for sport for example correct orientation, safety buffers, lighting requirements and dimensions?
- Q. Do the fields have carrying capacity infrastructure like irrigation and drainage?
- Q. Does the pavilions include changerooms (players and referees), kiosk, storage and toilets?





# Benchmarks

## New local and district sportsgrounds

A full-size field can be various shapes and sizes when it comes to different sports. For example, when you compare a full-size football (soccer) field to a full-size cricket boundary a football field is rectangle in shape compared to a cricket boundary which is oval. Many sports can also provide a range of sizes for the fields they use based on the level of competition, age group and/ or skill level. When planning for sporting field it is important to not just consider what the current sporting use of the field is but what other sports

and activities could also access the facility, what modified and junior size fields can be considered so available space is maximised and to future proof the site for possible changes in participation trends and demand.

The table below shows how providing a full-size rectangle field can maximise a number of sporting field layouts. There are also other sports for example baseball and/or athletics that can fit but may require additional infrastructure like mounds and throwing cages for the sport to operate.

### Quantity of full-size sporting fields

Full size rectangle sporting field (116mx68m)	Football (soccer) (105mx68m)	Rugby league/ union (116mx68m)	Cricket (60m diameter)	Touch Football/ Oz tag (70mx50m)	Hockey (91.4mx55m)	AFL (165mx135m)	Ultimate frisbee (100mx37m)
One	One	One	One junior boundary	Two	One	Training space	One
Two	Two	Two	One senior boundary	Four	Two	One senior oval	Two
Three	Three	Three	One senior/ one junior boundary	Six	Three	One senior oval	Three
Four	Four	Four	Two senior boundaries	Eight	Four	Two senior ovals	Four

There are three (3) key layouts that Council will accept when developing or re-developing sportsground facilities they include:

1. Layout 1 - this is the preferred layout
  - a) Allows for marking two rectangle fields and a cricket wicket in between the two fields and AFL oval
2. Layout 2
  - a) Allows for marking two rectangle fields and a cricket wicket in between the two fields
3. Layout 3
  - a) Allows for a single rectangular field.

### Common requirements of sportsgrounds include:

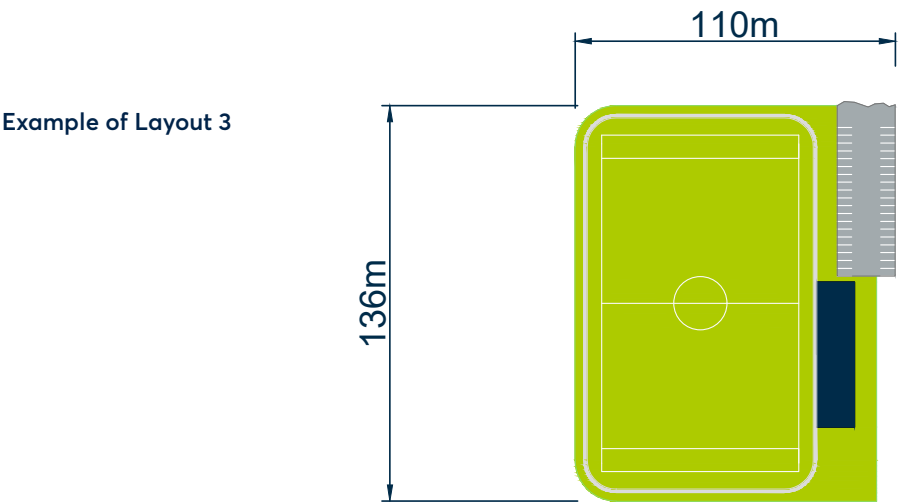
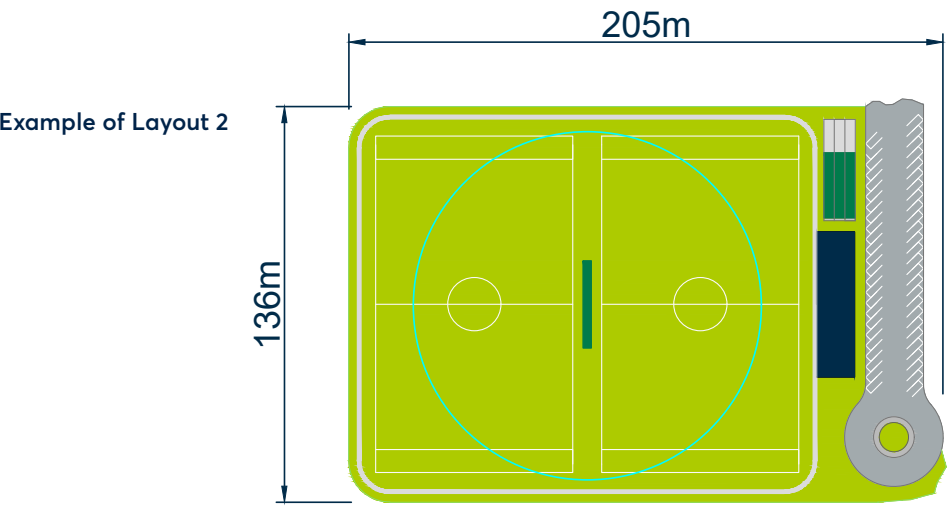
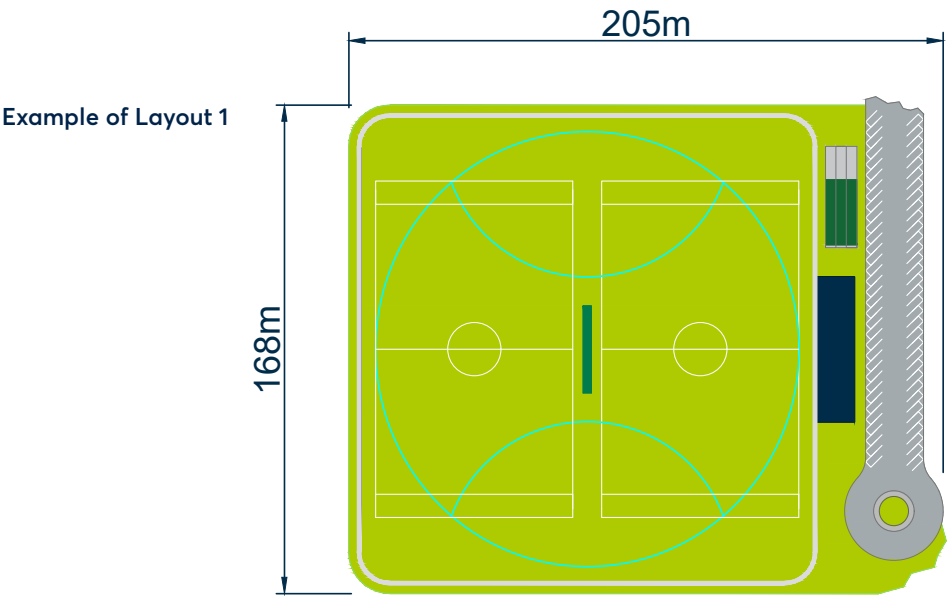
#### Local

- Minimum of 2ha in size
- One or two full size rectangle field/s
- Minimum 50 lux lighting for ball and physical training
- Sportsground pavilion with standard facilities

- Turf sporting field/s
- Roadside car spaces.

#### District

- Minimum of 4ha in size
- Two full-size rectangle fields or more
- Facilities provide both training and competition use
- At least one field with 100 lux lighting (may be higher for non-football code like cricket or baseball)
- Sportsground pavilion includes administration area
- May be turf or synthetic sporting field/s
- Facilities can service 2 or more sports
- Minimum of 1 field with sub-surface drainage and irrigation
- Greater frequency of maintenance activities to support level of use
- Combination of on-site and roadside spaces
- Provides additional active and passive recreation opportunities for the community.





# Benchmarks

## New local and district sportsground pavilions

The needs and functions of sporting clubs have increased as have sporting club's and community expectations around the quality and type of infrastructure provided. The need for pavilions to service both genders, work place health and safety, Disability Discrimination Act and Food Health requirements, as well as providing for maximum flexibility are all placing existing infrastructures under pressure.

To ensure a consistent, systematic and equitable approach to the development and funding of new facilities Council is developing standard specifications for the development of new infrastructure to meet the requirements of a range of sporting functions. Many sporting organisations provide guidelines for infrastructure to assist Councils with servicing the needs of their sport, which will be used to inform these standards.

The dimensions and layouts for individual pavilions may vary from the schedules due to design resolutions, site constraints, building and planning processes and issues around residential impact and amenity.

### Standard sportsground pavilion

Category	1 field quantity	1 field sqm of area/space	2 field quantity	2 field sqm of area/space	3 + field quantity	3 + field sqm of area/space
Toilets		28		28-38		38+
Female	3 toilet pans	10	4 toilet pans	10-15	5 toilet pans	15+
Male	2 toilet pans	10	3 toilet pans	10-15	3 toilet pans	15+
Accessible/ family change	1 toilet pan	8	1 toilet pan	8	1 toilet pan	8
Change rooms		100-125		110-140		200-250
Referee	1 room 1 shower 1 toilet pan	10-15	2 rooms 1 shower 1 toilet pan	10-15	2 rooms 1 shower 1 toilet pan	10-15
Home	1 room 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55	1 room 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55	2 rooms 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55
Away	1 room 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55	1 room 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55	2 rooms 2 showers 1 toilet pan	45-55
Storage		50		70		70+
Clean	2 rooms	20	2 rooms	30	2+rooms	30+
Dirty	2 rooms	5	2 rooms	5	2+rooms	5+
Kiosk						
Servery	1 room	20	1 room	20	1 room	30
Storage	2 rooms	6	2 rooms	6	2 rooms	6
Total		210-235		240-280		350-400+
Administration area e.g. first aid, office (district sportsgrounds only)	1 room	6	1-2 room	6-10	1-2 room	6-10

\*Not all current and future sportsground sites can meet these benchmarks but where possible these benchmarks are the ideal provision for a sporting field layout and sportsground pavilion which maximises functionality and multi-purpose use.

### Multi-purpose community room

Council's CIS indicates the need for approximately 37,280m2 of community space by 2041, which is approximately 22,000m2 more than current provision. Including community space within non-traditional sites is critical to meeting the community infrastructure needs of our growing community. New sportsground pavilions are non-traditional facilities that can be designed flexibly to support sporting club use as well as a range of community uses, such as meetings, exercise activities, functions and events. When deciding whether to include multi-purpose community space within a sportsground pavilion, the following matters should be considered:

- How close is the sportsground facility to other community spaces?
- What is recommended in relevant catchment for future provision?
- Does the sportsground pavilion meet the criteria for a community space:
  - Co-located with other facilities like play spaces and/or picnic facilities?
  - Accessible and close to public transport services and main roads?
  - Close to services and amenities such as shops and schools?
  - Can be a minimum of 100m2 plus provide storage and a kitchenette?
  - Can be used separately and simultaneously as a sportsground facility and community space?





# Case study

## Aberfeldie Park Pavilion

Moonee Valley City Council is committed to providing sports facilities that will encourage a healthy and active community. Through detailed pavilion planning and review of existing infrastructure it was determined that the sportsground pavilion at a sportsground used by a cricket and AFL club ranked low in condition and functionality and required upgrade.

The pavilion was funded by council from concept design to construction. The concept incorporated relevant state sporting association facility guidelines for AFL and cricket and aligned to the council's minimum pavilion standards developed to cater for females and males.

The facility incorporates key gender equitable design considerations such as:

- Family and child friendly design approach to space planning
- Unisex provision for showers and toilets (officials and players)
- Baby changing facilities
- Proximity to car parking
- Proximity to playing fields
- Equitable access for all sports

- Playground facility
- Well-lit interior and exterior spaces
- Enhanced utilisation of natural light to interiors
- Multi-purpose community space for all users
- Use of universal colour schemes.

The building design addressed access issues associated with the building positioned on a steep embankment, while also providing optimum internal and external viewing for spectators. User conflicts were generally resolved by splitting public and player accommodation across the ground and first floor. Equitable access was provided across the two floors through the provision of an internal lift and internal and external stairs.

The architectural design incorporated the use of sustainable materials and earthy tones to suit the reserve setting. The selection of interior finishes focused on organic colours, particularly in the unisex player amenities where a mixture of brown, yellow and green themes were used. A neutral palette throughout the public areas within the building was maintained particularly in the community space where impact was achieved through maximising elevated views to the playing fields and parks.



Image: Moonee Valley City Council.

\*Information sourced from "Sport and Recreation Victoria: Publication and Resources"

# Future needs and targets

## Future needs

Council currently has 64 sporting fields which have the practical capacity of 55 sporting fields.

Based on Council's analysis if the provision gap is increased by the forecast population growth then the City will require the practical capacity of 106 sporting fields by 2041. This is an additional practical capacity of 51 sporting fields to meet the needs of a growing population, which is set to double by 2041.

### City of Parramatta ideal sporting field provision against practical capacity benchmark at 2041



## Targets

Practical capacity highlights that there are a number of measures that can contribute to addressing the shortfall in the supply of sportsgrounds.

City of Parramatta Council will seek to realise the practical capacity of 51 sporting fields within our sportsground network by 2041, through collaboration, partnerships and the resources of many.

The practical capacity of 51 sporting fields translates to the following targets:

-  Upgrading **26** existing sportsgrounds
-  **Improved and increased** maintenance of sporting fields
-  Increased carrying capacity of **10** sporting fields
-  Delivering **8** new sportsground facilities
-  Increasing community access to **16** sporting fields not owned by Council.

### A note on provision standards

There are various provision standards that can be employed when determining future community needs and potential gaps related to sportsgrounds. It is acknowledged that supply and demand modelling is indicative as it is based on a range of assumptions which are subject to several variables. However, they do provide a means to quantifying the likely demand and supply factors. Council has used practical capacity as a means to calculate the required number of sporting fields as opposed to land area (ha) as it cannot easily deliver the required number of new sportsground facilities which have been identified through the CIS's land area benchmarks (an additional 338ha by 2041) and targets (17 new Council fields and 13 non-council owned fields).



# Focus areas and key recommendations

The SSAP identifies five focus areas that will enable us to achieve the SSAP’s purpose.

The SSAP will incorporate an action plan to address focus areas which outline short, medium and long term priorities to guide the development of the City’s sportsground network over the next 20-years. The action plan will assist Council and it’s partners in advocating for and aligning resources to recommended projects however, each action will need to go through the required feasibility/ business case process before it is determined the project can be delivered. The prioritisation and delivery of these activities may also change as new opportunities and constraints arise.

These five focus areas are:

- a) Improve maintenance and upgrade existing sportsgrounds to increase capacity
- b) Consider the role of natural, hybrid and synthetic turf surface technology to increase field carrying capacity
- c) Deliver new sportsground facilities
- d) Increase community access to sporting fields not owned by Council
- e) Implement efficient management processes to support and maximise the use of sportsground facilities.

# Business case process

Business case and feasibility proposals/ processes are often used to justify and determine the viability of a project, program or portfolio.

The considerations of these processes can vary based on the scale of a project, program or portfolio and often it is possible that suppliers, users, subject matter experts and external consultants may contribute. To support the delivery of a successful action plan that meets the needs of Council, stakeholders and the community the following should be considered when investigating each key recommendation:

## 1. Project summary

- Project outline and background
- Project type
- Justification
- Strategic alignment

## 3. Approval

- Endorsement by Management, delivery partners, subject matter experts and client representatives

## 2. Business case

- Benefits
- Alternatives
- Scope
- Environmental and social impacts
- Assumptions and constraints
- Dependencies
- Financial implications
- Capacity to deliver
- Stakeholder identification
- Milestones
- Governance
- Risk assessment and management
- Consultation and engagement processes

## 4. Review

- Review as new opportunities and constraints arise and/ or as project develops
- Update as required
- Keep stakeholders informed



## a) Improve maintenance and upgrade existing sportsgrounds to increase capacity

Council will seek to upgrade its sportsgrounds and increase their maintenance to improve efficiency, increase carrying capacity and use of the existing sportsground network. This will help deliver maximum value for the community to meet their increasingly diverse needs.

Council will undertake a variety of initiatives to increase the capacity and quality of its sportsgrounds network including:

- a) Reconfiguration to provide additional sporting fields and/or increasing field sizes considering both existing and potential future users
- b) Installing irrigation, drainage and floodlighting
- c) Improving surfaces
- d) Progressively improve and increase maintenance practices prioritising suitable and upgraded sites
- e) Identifying specific requirements for the upgrade of ancillary facilities to compliment capacity upgrades, support sport functionality and improve universal design
- f) Upgrade local facilities to district facilities.

**The SSAP will deliver:**

Upgrades to 26 existing sportsgrounds  
Improved and increased maintenance of sporting fields



## Key recommendations - increasing capacity

### Short term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Purpose	Classification	Primary funding approach
A1	Barton Park Field 1/ PH Jeffrey Reserve Field 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade field to improve drainage</li><li>Consider consolidation of buildings to serve both Barton Park and PH Jeffrey Reserve</li></ul>	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A2	Belmore Park Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prepare a concept plan to investigate turf wicket and boundary for grade cricket, one full-size and smaller size sporting field with support facilities</li></ul>	Re-configuration	Regional	Partnership
A3	Boronia Park Field 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade field to improve levelling</li></ul>	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A4	Doyle Ground Field 1,2,3,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade field to improve drainage, turf quality and levels</li></ul>	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A5	Eric Primrose Reserve Field 1, 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prepare a concept plan to investigate an additional full-size sporting field and oval</li><li>Upgrade fields to improve drainage</li></ul>	Re-configuration	Local	Developer Contributions
A6	F.S Garside Park Field 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade field and install drainage and irrigation</li></ul>	Functional improvement	Regional	Partnership
A7	George Kendall Riverside Park Field 3 and 4	Central Precinct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields, oval and support facilities</li></ul>	New field	District	Partnership
A8	George Kendall Riverside Park Field 5 and 6	South West Precinct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields, oval and support facilities</li></ul>	New field	District	Developer Contributions



## Short term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Purpose	Classification	Primary funding approach
A9	George Kendall Riverside Park Field 7	South West Precinct: • Prepare a concept plan to investigate one full-size baseball/ softball field and support facilities	New field	District	Developer Contributions
A10	Jones Park Field 1,2,3	• Prepare a master plan for Jones Park sporting and community facilities • Analyse opportunities for connection with Ollie Webb Reserve • Upgrade fields to improve soil profile and drainage	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A11	Ollie Webb Reserve Field 1, 2 and mini field	• Upgrade field to improve drainage, levelness and turf • Analyse opportunities for connection with Jones Park	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A12	Robin Thomas Reserve Field 1 and 2	• Upgrade field to improve soil profile, turf, irrigation and drainage	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A13	Rydalmere Park Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields, oval and support facilities • Upgrade field to improve soil profile, turf, drainage and provide irrigation	Re-configuration	Regional	Partnership
A14	Upjohn Park Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields, oval and support facilities • Install floodlighting	Re-configuration	District	Developer Contributions

## Medium to long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Purpose	Classification	Primary funding approach
A15	Arthur Phillip Park Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields that improve field levelness • Upgrade field to improve irrigation and drainage	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A16	Dundas Park Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate development of district sportsground site investigating increase in sporting field sqm • Upgrade field to improve drainage	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A17	Harold West Reserve Field 1	• Upgrade field to improve levelling and turf	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A18	Homelands Reserve Field 1	• Upgrade field to improve turf and soil compaction	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A19	Murray Farm Reserve Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate two full-size sporting fields retaining baseball functions • Install floodlighting	Re-configuration	Local	Developer Contributions
A20	Northmead Reserve Field 1 and 2	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate one full-size sporting field retaining baseball functions • Upgrade fields to provide irrigation and improve drainage • Install floodlighting	Re-configuration	District	Developer Contributions
A21	Peggy Womersley Reserve Field 1	• Upgrade field to improve turf	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A22	Somerville Park Field 1 and 2	• Improve floodlighting	Functional improvement	District	Developer Contributions
A23	Speers Road Reserve Field 1	• Upgrade field with a re-build	Functional improvement	Local	Developer contributions



Long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Purpose	Classification	Primary funding approach
A24	Binalong Park Field 1,2,3,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare a concept plan to investigate development of district sportsground site investigating increase in sporting field sqm</li><li>• Upgrade field to improve turf</li></ul>	Re-configuration	District	Developer Contributions
A25	John Curtin Reserve Field 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare a concept plan to investigate re-build of one full-size sporting field to improve field levelness</li><li>• Upgrade field to provide irrigation and improve drainage</li><li>• Relocate cricket nets</li></ul>	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A26	Roselea Park Field 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upgrade field to improve turf and soil compaction</li></ul>	Functional improvement	Local	Developer Contributions
A27	Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve Field 1 and mini field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare a concept plan to investigate mini-field</li><li>• Upgrade fields to improve irrigation and drainage</li></ul>	Re-configuration	Local	Developer Contributions





# Case study

## Rydalmere Park upgrade

Council already recognises that attention was needed to improve the capacity and sustainability of sportsgrounds. In 2019 it commissioned a master plan for Rydalmere Park to fulfil the needs of the neighbouring growing community for open space and recreation including enhancing sporting infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

Council was also successful in receiving a grant from the NSW State Government to undertake the sporting

- infrastructure works. The works are anticipated to be completed in 2022 and include:
- Sporting field upgrade including drainage and irrigation
  - Reconfiguration of field 2 to a full-size sporting field
  - Installation of cricket nets
  - New LED floodlighting
  - Upgrade of Field 3 to a synthetic field



# b) Consider the role of natural, hybrid and synthetic turf surface technology to increase field carrying capacity

The sports industry is challenged with finding solutions to the ever-increasing demand placed on sporting fields. Council accepts that natural turf, hybrid and synthetic surface technology have a role in increasing the capacity of the sportsground network, noting that these innovations may not be suited to all sites or sports.

A decision about alternative surfaces will consider balancing sporting club needs with wider community access demands, as well as the long-term maintenance and replacement strategy required, and what that means for any ongoing financial burden.

## Turf, hybrid and synthetic innovations:

- Natural turf:** Natural turf fields can be designed and managed to withstand more use, drain more effectively, reduce reliance on water for irrigation, and be available during or immediately after bad weather.
- Hybrid turf:** Some hybrid turf options that may offer alternative solutions to enhancing sporting field capacity and durability, include, profile reinforcement to increase the durability of the root zone, integrating synthetic turf blades into natural grass, and selectively using synthetic turf in high wear areas.
- Synthetic turf:** Alternative construction materials and methods, hybrid sports surfaces, and the use of organic infill layers have the potential to mitigate against some of the challenges traditionally faced by adopters of synthetic surfaces.

Framework for increasing the capacity of sporting field surfaces:

## 1. Site selection considers:

- Is the facility sufficient in size to accommodate the field/s?
- Are the existing ground conditions able to accommodate an alternative surface?
- Is there existing supporting infrastructure for example sportsground pavilion, car parking, floodlighting?
- Will the development impact on residents, current or other users?
- Is the facility located near existing synthetic/ hybrid fields or future high growth areas?

## 2. A business case is required to investigate feasibility of each proposed site, including:

- Land suitability (including sub-surface, topography and drainage conditions)
- Environmental risk assessment (including possible contamination, microplastics, heat and temperature impacts)
- Financial viability including maintenance, capital development and replacement cost
- Required performance standards of the sport balanced against access to the wider community.

## 3. To achieve the above and greatest return on investment, field quality and community outcome Council should directly manage the fields and:

- Allocate through a seasonal license to clubs/ association
- Encourage other community club and association usage from turf fields
- Consider summer and winter programs for higher capacity fields to generate income through an Expression of Interest process for example social small-sided games or corporate competitions.





Sites for further investigation

Old Saleyards Reserve

North Parramatta and the nearby CBD are projected to house an additional 36,353 residents by 2041 with the network of sporting fields in North Parramatta crucial in planning for this growing community. Already the “Heart of Play” North Parramatta master plan has told us that the network needs to support increased capacity, flexibility and amenity of sporting spaces to improve formal and informal sporting use. Old Saleyards is already a district sportsground site with good quality supporting infrastructure which wouldn’t require significant design changes to accommodate increased usage of the site.

Cox Park

Located near Carlingford Town Centre a high growth precinct which will deliver an expected 4500 new dwellings by 2041, Cox Park will be a significant open space providing sport and recreation opportunities. The site through re-design may be able to provide an additional full-size field and realising the benefits of turf innovations could assist in accommodating an increasing population living in high density who require access to spaces outside the home to play sport, recreate and relax.

North Rocks Park

North Rocks Park is a highly used and valuable community sporting facility. The Carlingford and North Rocks suburbs have higher than average proportions of 5-9yr old’s and 10–19yrs highlighting demand for grassroot sporting facilities to service current and future populations. Increasing capacity of the sporting fields will help accommodate the current high levels of use, future population growth and provide an resilient weather surface for sporting users within the catchment.

McCoy Park

Increasing field carrying capacity will activate McCoy Park as a sportsground facility and transfer use from nearby sportsground facilities which are over capacity. The facility has sufficient space and supporting infrastructure that would help support its selection for innovative surfaces.

George Kendall Riverside Park

Quality sporting fields will cement the park as a district sportsground site which enhances the condition and functioning of the sports facilities in the park to provide for a range of organised sports activities. Given the size and scale of the park there is adequate amenity and infrastructure to support higher visitation and alternative surfaces will not compete with existing uses and the natural and green elements of the park. The park is also located adjacent to the Melrose Park precinct which is experiencing significant high density development.

NSW Government Synthetic Turf Study:

While it is clear that hybrid and synthetic types of surfaces can provide positive outcomes in terms of access to public open space and participation in recreation and sporting activities, the absence of consistent guidelines, consultation with communities and transparent consideration of potential alternatives has lead to distrust and concern over decisions to implement synthetic sporting fields.

The NSW Government is building on the Synthetic Turf Study in Public Open Space with the preparation of Guidelines on the use of synthetic surfaces in public open space with a range of departments and agencies during the first half of 2022. Further investigation by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer with research in more environmentally responsible synthetic surface methods will also commence and will inform the preparation of the guidelines.

Council is dedicated to reviewing how these guidelines can be implemented via this strategy once they become available.

**The SSAP will deliver:**

Increased carrying capacity of 10 sporting fields.

Key recommendations - increase field carrying capacity

Short term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
B1	Cox Park Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate increasing the capacity of two full-size sporting fields and support facilities</li><li>Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields</li></ul>	District	Developer Contributions

Medium to long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
B2	North Rocks Park Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate increasing the capacity of two full-size sporting fields and support facilities</li><li>Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields</li></ul>	District	Developer Contributions

Long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
B3	George Kendall Riverside Park Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate increasing the capacity of two full-size sporting fields and support facilities</li><li>Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields</li></ul>	District	Developer Contributions
B4	McCoy Park Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate increasing the capacity of two full-size sporting fields and support facilities</li><li>Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields</li></ul>	District	Developer Contributions
B5	Old Saleyards Reserve Field 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate increasing the capacity of two full-size sporting fields and support facilities</li><li>Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields</li></ul>	District	Developer Contributions

To access the NSW Government’s Synthetic Turf Study in Public Open Spaces Report visit: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Open-space-and-parklands/Synthetic-Turf-Study>



# Case study

## Fairfield Showground

Fairfield Showground is home to Fairfield Council's first synthetic field and along with turf fields, show arena and amenities building it forms part of the delivery of the Fairfield Showground master plan, developed for its community's sporting and event needs.

Sporting groups who wished to hire the field were encouraged, to make a formal expression of interest, which allowed council to allocate suitable times and space

to groups based on best fit for the location and overall demand.

The new synthetic field which opened in January 2020, is designed for the highest level of competition but will be accessible to all and is certified by FIFA, the NRL and ARU. The synthetic field means that training and sporting fixtures are less likely to be impacted by the weather.

The field hire rates range from \$100 to \$180 per hour.



Image: Fairfield Council.

*\*Information sourced from "Fairfield Council" and "Fairfield Champion: Sporting groups encouraged to use new synthetic pitch"*





## c) Deliver new sportsground facilities

Council will seek to deliver new sportsground facilities in order to meet growing demand. Where possible sportsground facilities will be located within 2km drive of all homes. Alternative innovative options for provision in a highly urbanised environment will be considered, along with land dedication and creation of new facilities. This will include:

- Repurposing parks/ existing suitable land to accommodate both formal and informal sport without displacing current uses and users
- Seek land acquisition/ dedication in high growth areas for sporting fields as part of precinct renewals and new developments
- Investigate options to repurpose alternative (non-traditional) spaces for both formal and informal sport and recreation for example multi-story car parks.

Harnessing the potential of our 12 high growth precincts, including Westmead, Camellia, Melrose Park and Carter Street, especially where land uses are fundamentally changing and new communities are being developed, will be critical to increasing the supply of sportsgrounds that require large parcels of land and are hard to retrofit into existing built neighbourhoods. Proactively advocating for, and planning with, developers of larger sites for provision of sporting open space in both traditional and non-traditional forms is part of the solution.

Every new sportsground facility will;

- a) Provide the type of sportsground appropriate to SSAP hierarchy regarding local and district sportsgrounds requirements
- b) Provide north/south orientation where appropriate for that sport
- c) Provide appropriately sized sporting fields
- d) Provide buffer distances to adjacent infrastructure
- e) Provide an adequate level of safety relative to risk assessment

- f) Allow for runoff and rainfall events within acceptable time limits
- g) Provide acceptable and durable grass cover
- h) Provide playing surfaces that are of acceptable hardness with the ability to be decompacted to safe user levels
- i) Comply with water sensitive urban design (WSUD) guidelines
- j) Provide appropriate lighting for sportsgrounds to the required Australian Design Standard
- k) Provide irrigation to maintain appropriate sportsground playing surface conditions
- l) Provide ancillary facilities appropriate to the standard of playing field
- m) Provide car parking or public transport links appropriate to the demand generation
- n) Provide convenient and safe access to sportsground facilities for vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and disabled persons
- o) Provide appropriate access for emergency and service vehicles
- p) Provide for shade, shelter and amenity landscaping that is appropriate to the use areas, and
- q) Provide appropriate access for maintenance vehicles and legitimate users, whilst preventing (through fencing and/or bollarding) access to unauthorised people who may cause vandalism.

### The SSAP will deliver:

8 new sportsground sites.

## Key recommendations - deliver new sportsgrounds

### Short term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
C1	Dan Mahoney Reserve	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate one full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Developer Contributions
C2	Newington Reserve	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate one full-size sporting field and support facilities • Floodlighting for ball sport competition and match practice to all fields	District	Developer Contributions

### Medium to long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
C3	Carter Street	• Through land dedication	Local	Developer Contributions
C4	Fred Spurway Reserve	• Prepare a concept plan to investigate one full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Developer Contributions

### Long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
C5	Camellia	• Through land dedication	Local	Developer Contributions
C6	Granville	• Through land dedication	District	Developer Contributions
C7	Melrose Park	• Through land dedication	Local	Developer Contributions
C8	Westmead	• Through land dedication	Local	Developer Contributions



Case study

The Rozelle Interchange and Iron Cove Link

The Rozelle Interchange and Iron Cove Link will provide a new underground motorway interchange to City West Link and provide an underground bypass of Victoria Road between the Iron Cove Bridge and the ANZAC Bridge, with links to the proposed Western Harbour Tunnel.

The interchange in Rozelle will be mostly underground and located at the site of the old Rozelle Rail Yards. By building the interchange mostly underground, the project will deliver new active transport options in Rozelle and up to 10 hectares of new open space "The Rozelle Parklands" by 2023.

A draft landscape plan for the parklands was on public display from August 2020 which outlines the proposed landscape, rectangular field and cricket oval, pedestrian and cyclist connections, playground equipment, fitness stations and lighting.

Under the plans, the parklands will be managed by the council but remain owned by Transport for NSW. The plans have been welcomed by Inner West Council and sporting organisations as a way to help reduce the shortfall in sporting facilities in the Inner West.



West Connex: Artist impression of Rozelle Interchange

*\*Information sourced from "WestConnex" and "Sydney Morning Herald: Sydney's newest inner city park to feature much needed sporting fields"*





# d) Increase community access to sporting fields not owned by Council

Council will seek to work with partners to increase community access to sportsgrounds outside of its own network for both formal and informal uses. Expansion of Council's current sportsground sites through redesign and capital works is possible and necessary, but there will still be a gap in sportsground provision for our fast-growing population.

A few sports are already utilising facilities on school land to meet their needs including for such things as sporting fields, sporting courts, swimming pools and indoor sport halls.

There are several public schools and non-government schools within the City that have sporting fields of an appropriate size that have been identified as having the potential to service the broader community for formal sports. Even more benefit could be realised from these facilities by using innovative surfaces which may also be necessary in some cases to ensure the sustainability for both school and after hours use.

The Department of Education has prepared a policy on joint provision of facilities which it hopes will facilitate a greater number of Council/ Education partnership opportunities. Other educational campuses such as universities and private colleges and schools could also be identified and accessed by the community for sport. The principles for providing community access to these education facilities should be like those identified for school facilities.

Framework to providing community access to sporting fields not owned by Council:

A legally binding Joint Use Agreement will be executed that outlines the responsibilities of both parties in relation to but not limited to the following aspects:

- a) Funding contributions and the ongoing associated costs
- b) Construction and maintenance responsibilities considering safety and security
- c) Duration of agreement
- d) Hours of use, including community access outside of standard education hours (where applicable)
- e) Termination of agreement – compensation of capital contribution.

Council should also continue to pursue opportunities to work with other landowners to advocate for sporting field provision including Parramatta Park Trust and Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

## The SSAP will deliver:

Community access to 16 sporting fields not owned by Council

# Key recommendations - increase community access

## Short term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
D1	Continue access to Carlingford High School Ovals Field 1, 2,3	Three full-size sporting fields and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D2	Parramatta Park (shared with Parramatta High School)	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership

## Medium to long term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
D3	Muirfield High School	Two full-size sporting fields and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D4	Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School	Two full-size sporting fields and support facilities	Local	Partnership

## Long Term

Action	Sportsground	Potential upgrade	Classification	Primary funding approach
D5	Cumberland High School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D6	James Ruse Agricultural High School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D7	Karonga School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D8	Macarthur Girls High School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D9	Pendle Hill High School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D10	Rydalmere Public School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D11	Toongabbie East Public School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership
D12	Toongabbie West Public School	One full-size sporting field and support facilities	Local	Partnership





## Case study

### Hills Shire Council and Bella Vista Public School

Formerly known as Kellyville South Public School, opening in 2019 Bella Vista Public School has been upgraded to include a new primary school on a green field site. The \$44 million dollar project caters for 1,000 primary school students and included a range of learning facilities.

The sporting facilities include a single full-size synthetic football field and a two-court multi-purpose sports hall, and was made possible after the Hills Shire Council and the Department of Education entered into a Joint Use Agreement, which would see the school's sporting field and hall open to the public outside of school hours.

Hills Football Association's representative junior and senior female football teams use the synthetic field and is the direct result of two tiers of government (local and state) working together.

Hill's Council invested \$8 million into the field and sports hall reinforcing that where there is a demonstrated need for more sporting fields and facilities, access to non-council owned facilities can deliver positive outcomes for both the school and public communities.



Image: School Infrastructure NSW.





## e) Implement efficient management processes to support and maximise the use of sportsground facilities

Council will have an on-going interest in the sustainability of local sporting clubs and community groups, in order to support participation opportunities for the community and maximise use of existing and new facilities.

To optimise the use of sportsground facilities and the community benefits that they provide Council will consider a range of processes to:

- Ensure maximum use is effectively balanced against equity of access
- Improve monitoring of actual use and associated impacts where possible
- Continue to improve management practices to preserve and increase capacities
- Facilitate scheduling between different sports clubs and codes where possible
- Maintain a diversity of sports across the City to suit changing populations and lifestyles: age, ability, cultural backgrounds and demand for new sport formats and schedules.

Council will work together with its sporting clubs, Sporting Organisations and State and Federal Government to ensure our sportsground network is able to respond to the needs and expectations of both our current and future communities.

Opportunities exist for greater collaboration between Councils, different levels of government, and between sport and active recreation organisations and the non-government and commercial sector for the benefit of sport.

**The SSAP will deliver:**

- Supporting plans and policies
- Regular and valid monitoring of sport participation to use for an evidence base.
- Commitment to collaborate with key sporting stakeholders

## Key recommendations - maximise sportsground facilities

Action	Recommendation
E1: Prioritise and develop supporting plans and policies which will guide the provision of infrastructure, services and programs including:	E1.1 Sportsground Allocation and Floodlighting Policies to guide equitable and transparent use of sportsground facilities including consideration of cost recovery to balance increasing/ improving maintenance, upgrades to existing sites and delivering synthetics E1.2 Asset Management Plans for the upgrade, renewal and maintenance of sportsground infrastructure E1.3 Sportsground Construction Specifications in accordance with Australian Standards, National/ State Sporting Organisations Facility Guidelines and Council's Service Levels. E1.4 Prioritised sportsground pavilion replacement program with recommended locations of future multi-purpose community rooms in sportsground pavilions which best service both Council's community facilities and sportsground network. This should include what the requirements of the room are including capital and operational.
E2: Monitor sport participation rates and trends against utilisation and allocations investigating opportunities for:	E2.1 A data gathering methodology which captures information on the actual use of individual fields that can be compared against booking data and sporting club membership. E2.2 Securing an online data driven toolkit which provides an up-to-date evidence base.
E3: Commit to collaboration with key Sporting Stakeholders (including sporting organisations, all levels of government and clubs/ associations) to:	E3.1 Support good governance, sustainable operations, and strategic facility planning and development E3.2 Increase participation and remove barriers to participation for the following priority groups: females, LGBTI, people of all abilities and multi-cultural and indigenous communities E3.3 Promote the programs and services of sporting partners and investigate partnership opportunities for delivery to the community.





# Case study

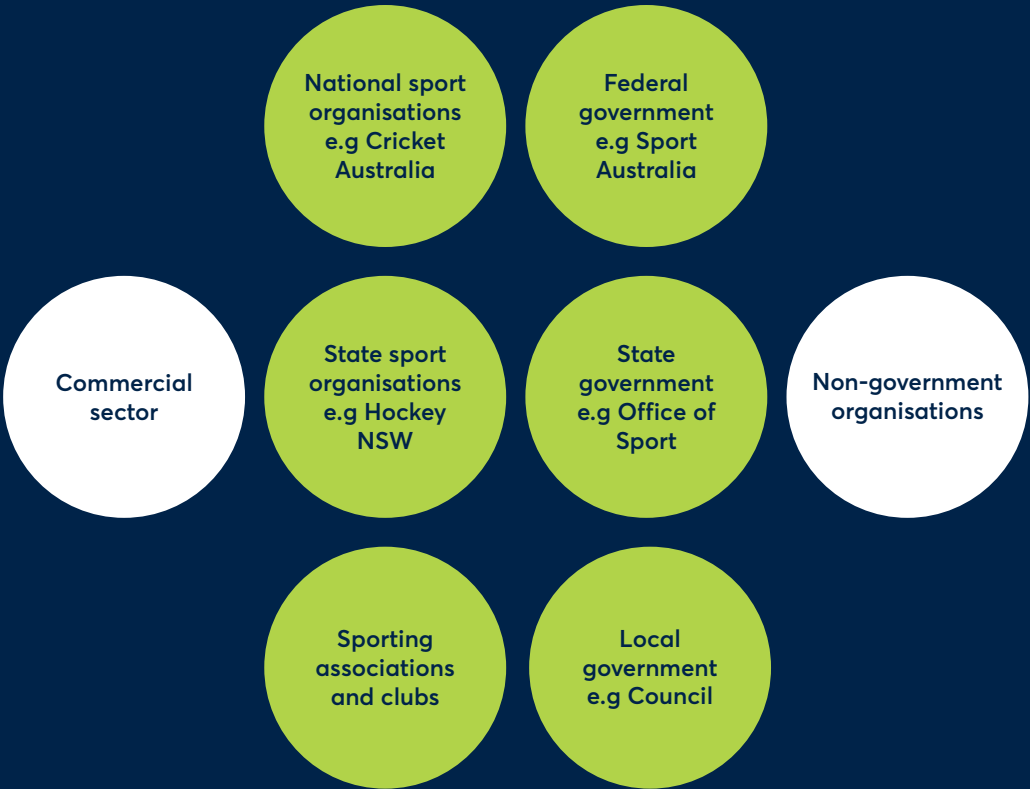
## Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

When true collaboration exists, the outcomes are, in general, better than when it has not occurred.

The Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) is a voluntary organisation of local government established to provide strong local government leadership, work co-operatively for the benefit of the Northern Sydney Region and effectively advocate on agreed regional positions and priorities. The member councils are Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Ryde and Willoughby.

Open space and sports facility management are common issues for NSROC councils given the movement of sporting groups activities within the region. NSROC

meets on an irregular basis to look at coordination and sports management issues and have also developed a Sportsground Management Strategy for the region. The Strategy was commissioned to improve coordination of community sportsground management across the NSROC region, maximise participation opportunities, and deliver community health and amenity benefits. Some of the actions recommended in consultation with its key sporting stakeholders include standardised pricing and allocation agreements, negotiation of funding packages with sporting organisations and other levels of government and undertaking joint capital works planning.





# What our future sportsground network could look like

## Current sportsgrounds

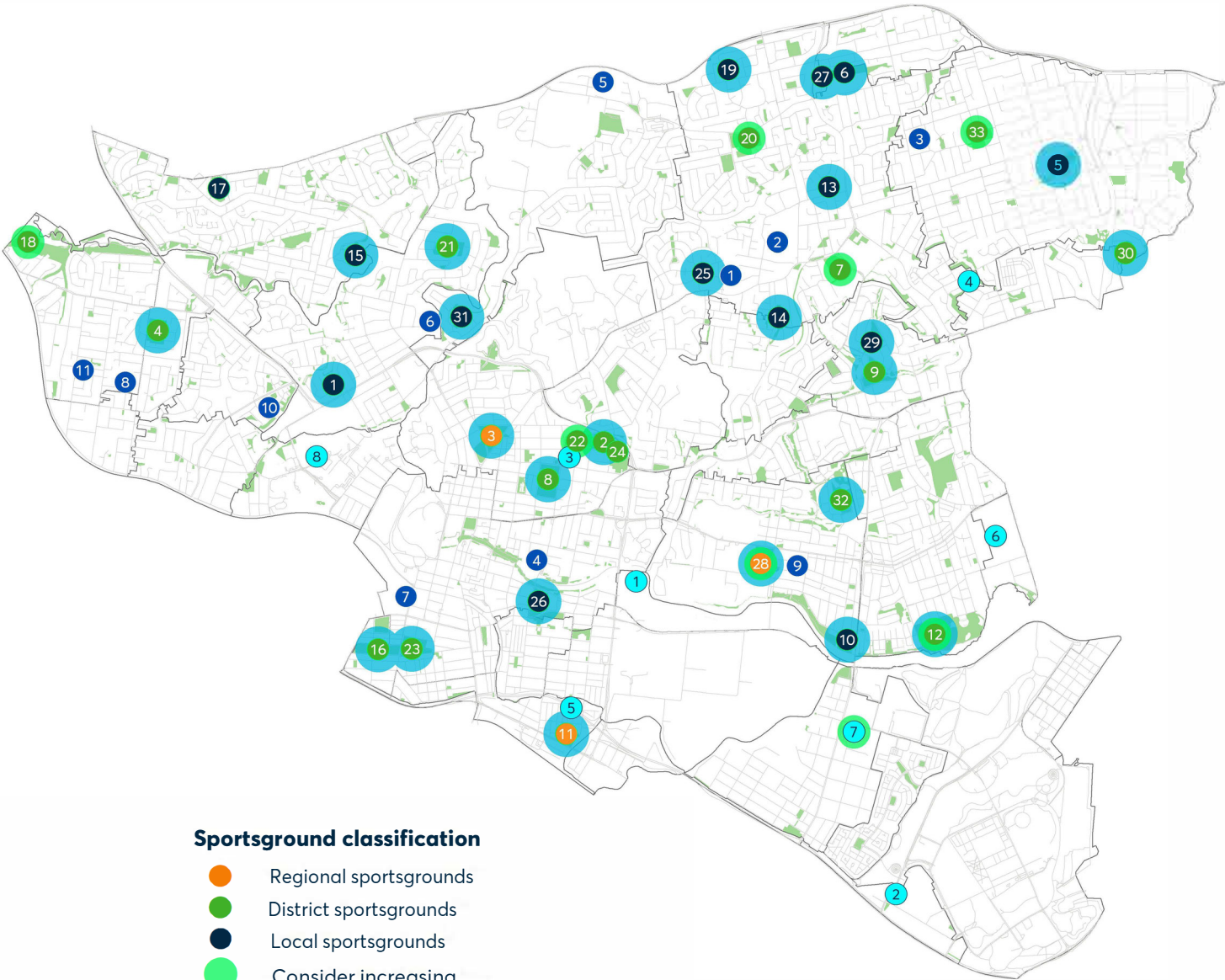
- 1 Arthur Phillip Park
- 2 Barton Park
- 3 Belmore Park
- 4 Binalong Park
- 5 Boronia Park
- 6 Carlingford Schools Oval
- 7 Cox Park
- 8 Doyle Ground
- 9 Dundas Park
- 10 Eric Primrose Reserve
- 11 F S Garside Park
- 12 George Kendall Riverside Park
- 13 Harold West Reserve
- 14 Homelands Reserve
- 15 John Curtin Reserve
- 16 Jones Park
- 17 Max Ruddock Reserve
- 18 McCoy Park
- 19 Murray Farm Reserve
- 20 North Rocks Park
- 21 Northmead Reserve
- 22 Old Saleyards Reserve
- 23 Ollie Webb Reserve
- 24 P H Jeffrey Reserve
- 25 Peggy Womersley Reserve
- 26 Robin Thomas Reserve
- 27 Roselea Reserve
- 28 Rydalmere Park
- 29 Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve
- 30 Somerville Park
- 31 Speers Road Reserve
- 32 Upjohn Park
- 33 West Epping Park

## Proposed community access

- 1 Cumberland High School
- 2 James Ruse Agricultural High School
- 3 Karonga School
- 4 Maccarthur Girls High School
- 5 Muirfield High School
- 6 Northmead CAPA High School
- 7 Parramatta High School / PPT
- 8 Pendle Hill High School
- 9 Rydalmere Public School
- 10 Toongabbie East Public School
- 11 Toongabbie West Public School

## Proposed new sportsgrounds

- 1 Camellia Development
- 2 Carter Street Development
- 3 Dan Mahoney Reserve
- 4 Fred Spurway Reserve
- 5 Granville Development
- 6 Melrose Park Development
- 7 Newington Reserve
- 8 Westmead Development



## Sportsground classification

- Regional sportsgrounds
- District sportsgrounds
- Local sportsgrounds
- Consider increasing carrying capacity
- Sportsground upgrades
- Parks and Reserve



# How will we implement the SSAP?

The SSAP enables and equips Council to deliver new and upgraded sportsgrounds to our community. Once adopted, to deliver the SSAP, we will:

- Actively plan for and seek opportunities to deliver recommendations of the SSAP.
- Identify and secure funding under Development Contribution Plans, Voluntary Planning Agreements and other infrastructure funding sources.
- Undertake advocacy, planning and negotiation with the State Government Department of Education, and the private sector, to meet sportsground needs within precinct plans and to facilitate access to non-Council owned land.
- Align current funding streams and budgets with the SSAP and seek out new funding opportunities (including grants) and partnerships.

## How will we fund the recommendations?

The funding of the recommendations within the SSAP will result in higher capital and maintenance costs to Council. The recommendations require a variety and combination of funding sources which will include:

- Developer Contributions including Section 7.11 funding and/or Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs)
- Council funding sources from general revenue
- External funding sources for example grant funding or funding partnerships with other organisations like Federal and State Government, Sporting Organisations and/or the Department of Education.

Of the proposed projects the majority are expected to be delivered through development contributions and voluntary planning agreements supported by Council and grant funding. For projects which provide access to sportsgrounds which are not owned by Council it is recommended that funding partnerships will need to be delivered once a Joint Partnership Agreement is agreed upon.

## Who is responsible?

The delivery of Council's sportsground network is a partnership between the Community Services and City Assets and Operations directorates on behalf of the Council:

- Recreation Facilities and Programs - customer outcomes owner
- Parks Services - service provider
- Open Space and Natural Resources - asset manager

These three core teams, with support by numerous teams within Council, will align and coordinate processes and planning for the maintenance, renewal, and upgrade of existing Council sportsgrounds, and the delivery of new sportsgrounds for the community, in accordance with this SSAP.

## Review

The SSAP will be reviewed every five years, to ensure that it reflects updated infrastructure demand analysis and costs, reviews funding received, considers Council's capital works plan and identifies new opportunities and constraints.

## For more information?

This SSAP draws on the knowledge and experience of our consultants and many staff from across Council who have a passion for sport and sportsground facilities. Together with feedback from our community, and our key stakeholders, implementation of this document will be a shared effort.

For further information on Council's SSAP the following resources are available:

- City of Parramatta Community Infrastructure Strategy
- City of Parramatta Council's website: [cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](http://cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)
- City of Parramatta Customer Contact Centre: **1300 617 058**
- For access to demographic data log onto [profile.id.com.au/parramatta](http://profile.id.com.au/parramatta)





