

# RECREATION LAND AND FACILITY GAP ANALYSIS





# Provision standards for recreation facilities

The following provision standards have been identified to assist Council in identifying where there are notable gaps in the current and future provision of open space. Provisions standards for Local Sportsgrounds are not proposed to encourage development of centralised multi-use District and Regional sporting facilities. Where justified, existing Local Sportsgrounds would be retained to support district and regional facilities.

The standards have been developed with consideration to the Draft Local Development Contributions Guidelines (NSW Government, 2009), the Review of Standards Guiding the Provision of Council's Community and Recreational Facilities (AEC, 2013), the Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government (NSW Government, 2010) local participation rates and trends and provision standards adopted by other local government areas.

Local Parks – 0.4ha per 1,000 persons

- District Parks – 0.6ha per 1,000 persons
- Regional Parks – 0.25ha per 1,000 persons
- Local Sportsgrounds – N/A
- District Sportsgrounds – 0.6ha per 1,000 persons
- Regional Sportsgrounds – 0.95ha per 1,000 persons

The following provisions standards apply to sport facilities.

- AFL – 1 field per 50,000 persons
- Athletics – 1 grass field per 25,000 persons / 1 synthetic field per 100,000 persons
- Basketball – 1 court per 4,000 persons
- Cricket – 1 field per 4,000 persons
- Croquet Courts – 1 court per 40,000 persons

- Equestrian centre – 1 per 42,000 persons
- Football (soccer) – 1 field per 5,000 persons
- Golf – 1 course per 30,000 persons
- Hockey – 1 turf pitch per 25,000 persons / 1 synthetic pitch per 100,000 persons
- Netball Facilities – 1 court per 3,000 persons
- Playground – 1 per 1,700 persons
- Rugby League – 1 field per 5,000 persons
- Rugby Union – 1 field per 25,000 persons
- Skate/BMX parks - 1 facility per 4,000 persons aged 5-24 years
- Softball/Baseball 1 field per 23,500 persons
- Sport/Leisure Centre – 1 facility per 17,500 persons
- Tennis Courts – 1 court per 1,800 persons



# Location standards for recreation facilities

The Australian Government's Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) prepared an analysis of the proximity of residences to greenspace in the Lower Hunter Local Government Areas of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens, Maitland and Cessnock. The analysis found that Port Stephens had a well-represented percentage of residents within a 'direct distance' and 'network distance' of 400m (UK Standard) and 800m (US Standard) when compared to the other LGAs in the Lower Hunter. In terms of average distance, Port Stephens registered an average direct distance of less than 400m and an average network distance of just over 600m. This indicates that on average, Port Stephens residents are within reasonable proximity to green space.

Not all greenspace however is suitable for recreation and consideration must be given to the proximity of Council's core recreation network to local residents. On average, the network distance to greenspace is approximately 55 percent further than the direct distance. Therefore the following catchments are proposed for council's core recreation facilities.

Facility	Direct distance	Est network distance	Est time
Local Park	500m	775m	Up to 10min walk
District Park	10km	15.5km	Up to 20min drive
Regional Park	LGA Wide	LGA Wide	Up to 45min drive
Local Sportsground	N/A	N/A	N/A
District Sportsground	10km	15.5km	Up to 20min drive
Regional Sportsground	LGA Wide	LGA Wide	Up to 45min drive



The location of recreation facilities is important to the sustainability and utilisation of open space areas. The provision of recreation facilities needs to consider proximity to residents as well as Council's ability to fund construction and maintenance of facilities. The following principles are identified to assist in the appropriate locating of recreation facilities:

- District and Regional facilities should be co-located with other compatible land uses such as schools and community halls.
- Facilities should be located to maximise street frontage and avoid having back and side fences facing onto reserves.
- Local Parks should be located to front low traffic volume streets.
- Recreation facilities should be provided along existing or proposed public transport routes and/or cycleway connections.

Recreation facilities should be situated with consideration to supporting services and local demand. For example, a Regional facility that may attract users from throughout the LGA and beyond should be located close to key transport links and large commercial areas offering supporting services such as accommodation and restaurants/supermarkets/food premises.



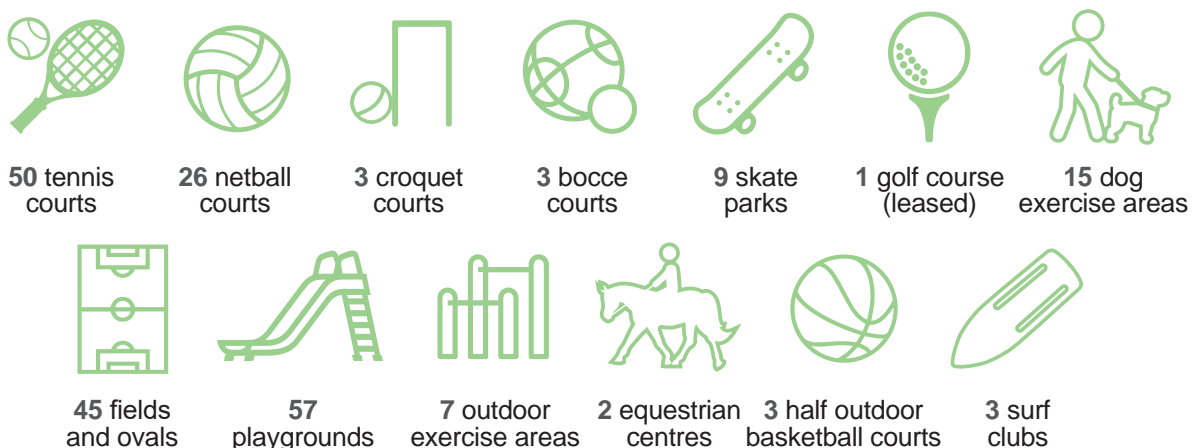


# Port Stephens LGA

## Existing recreation facilities

Across the local government area, Port Stephens Council is responsible for managing approximately 490ha of parks and sportsground land, which is the focus of this Strategy. Not all open space managed by Council is Council owned. Of the reserves subject to this strategy, 107 are Council owned, totalling 252ha. Council is trustee of an additional 59 reserves, totalling 238ha. An example of council managed land is Crown Land Trust.

Upon this land, Council is responsible for managing a wide range of assets including:



This analysis has involved categorising each parcel of public open space into an 'open space type' and a further assessment of the network provision by allocating a 'hierarchy' level.



## Other recreation facility providers

The Strategy also recognises that there is a number of other 'open space types' which are highly valued and contribute to the broader recreation network. Whilst the Strategy does not specifically plan for these spaces, their roles have been considered as part of the network and are defined below:

Type	Definition
Community Buildings	Land that primarily supports community buildings, like community halls or centres and indoor aquatic centres. Council operates 16 halls and community centres. Council owns 3 aquatic centres, currently managed by an external contractor.
Cultural Significance	Land that has deep cultural significance and is managed by Council according to that specific purpose, including cemeteries.
General Community Use	Drainage / detention basin.
Linear and Linkage	Linear and linkages include land that is part of a linear corridor or connection which supports walking and bike riding.
Natural Area	Land for which the predominant distinguishing characteristics have arisen naturally and without planning or physical modification. This includes wetlands, bush corridors, unmodified foreshores and watercourses.
Urban Public Spaces	Urban public spaces include street and road reserves, lanes and town plazas and squares which accommodate walking, cycling, social gatherings or outdoor dining.

## National Parks, Beaches, Rivers and Port Stephens - Great Lakes Marine Park

Within Port Stephens there is approximately 25,839 hectares of Crown Land Estate, National Park and State Park land in the Port Stephens Council area. This comprises of approximately 3,053ha of Crown Land Estate, 19,318ha of National Parks and 3,468ha of State Park. Council is trustee for a proportion of the Crown Land Estate and this has been included in recreation facilities inventory as Council managed land.

Crown Land Estate, National Parks and State Parks land provides significant recreational opportunities to the local community and visitors. Infrastructure supporting recreation on this land includes walking trails, beach access points and interpretative signage. Activities include bushwalking, mountain bike riding, picnicking and open space for relaxation.

The Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park is approximately 980 km<sup>2</sup>. The marine park contains a diverse range of habitats, including beaches, seagrass beds, mangroves, saltmarsh and open waters. The Marine Park provides a vast array of recreational opportunities such as recreational boating, kayaking, sailing, surfing and stand up paddle boarding. The conservation zoning of the Marine Park may limit activities in some zones such as fishing.

## Privately Owned Recreational Facilities

There are a number of privately owned facilities providing recreational opportunities to the local community and visitors to the area, including:

- **Golf courses** - There are 7 privately owned golf courses located in the Raymond Terrace, Karuah, Fern Bay, Medowie and Tomaree planning district catchments.



- **Bowling greens** - There are 7 privately owned bowling greens located in Port Stephens.
- **Indoor recreational facilities** - The Nelson Bay PCYC is an indoor facility offering indoor basketball, dancing, Parkour, over 55s fitness, karate, gymnastics, futsal, boxing and archery.
- **Raymond Terrace PCYC** offers gym, kindergym, boxing, and gymnastics. Other privately owned indoor recreation facilities include squash courts in Medowie and Raymond Terrace and indoor rock climbing at Tomaree.
- **Pistol clubs and Rifle Range** - Within the Port Stephens LGA there is a pistol club at Nelson Bay (Crown Land) and a rifle range at East Seaham (private land).
- **Fitness centres** - Numerous privately owned gyms operate across the LGA.
- **Marinas** - Privately owned marinas such as Soldiers Point Marina and d'Albora Marinas Nelson Bay offer recreational boating opportunities to the local community and visitors to the area.
- **Outdoor recreation** - A number of outdoor recreation opportunities are provided across the LGA including putt putt golf, 4WD sand dune adventures, horse riding tours, surf schools, kayak and stand-up paddle board providers.
- **Gated communities** - Port Stephens has a number of gated communities with private recreational facilities exclusively used by their residents. This community is less reliant on public open space and this can decrease the provision requirements. Examples of gated community infrastructure can be found at a number of Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove mature age lifestyle villages and Fern Bay Seaside Estate. Council does not own or manage these recreation facilities.

## Surrounding Local Government Areas

Bordering local government areas Newcastle, Maitland, MidCoast and Dungog offer active and passive recreational opportunities to Port Stephens residents. Maitland and Newcastle Councils have regional facilities that attract sportspersons from across the Hunter region.

### • Maitland Council

- Maitland Park is a regional facility offering a number of recreational experiences including an equal access regional playground, sporting fields, indoor/outdoor swimming pool with splash pad.
- Maitland Sportsground Complex is currently being developed into a regional sports facility. The Athletics Centre will be constructed to a regional standard and include a synthetic running track.

### • Newcastle City Council

- Fern Bay and Tomago Planning Districts border the Newcastle Council Local Government Area. Fern Bay residents are in close proximity to Stockton's sportsgrounds and open spaces.
- Newcastle hosts large scale sporting events and high grade sporting clubs. These clubs attract players from across the Hunter.
- In NSW State Government announced in July 2017 a plan to revitalise Hunter Sports and Entertainment Precinct at Broadmeadow, Newcastle. It is intended that the sporting facility will be a high performance sporting centre that will develop elite sportspeople from across the Hunter Region.



# Recreation land and facility gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks (ha)</b>								
Local	123.15	0.0004	69528	27.81	95.34	90387	36.15	87.00
District	79.71	0.0006	69528	41.72	37.99	90387	54.23	25.48
Regional	25.5	0.00025	69528	17.38	8.12	90387	22.60	2.90
<b>Sportsgrounds (ha)</b>								
Local	52.54	0	69528	0	52.54	90387	0	52.54
District	81.15	0.0006	69528	41.72	39.43	90387	54.23	26.92
Regional	53.33	0.00095	69528	66.05	-12.72	90387	85.87	-32.54
<b>Facilities (units)</b>								
AFL	2	1/50000	69528	1	1	90387	1	1
Athletics (Grass)	4	1/25000	69528	2	2	90387	3	1
Athletics (Synthetic)	0	1/100000	69528	0	0	90387	0	0
Basketball	3	1/4000	69528	17	-14	90387	22	-19
Cricket	25	1/4000	69528	17	8	90387	22	3
Croquet Courts	3	1/40000	69528	1	2	90387	2	1
Equestrian	3	1/42000	69528	1	2	90387	2	1
Football	17	1/5000	69528	13	4	90387	18	-1
Golf	1	1/30000	69528	2	-1	90387	3	-2
Hockey (Turf)	2	1/25000	69528	2	0	90387	3	-1
Hockey (Synthetic)	0	1/100000	69528	0	0	90387	0	0
Netball	26	1/3000	69528	23	3	90387	30	-4
Playground	57	1/1700	69528	40	17	90387	53	4
Rugby League	12	1/5000	69528	13	-1	90387	18	-6
Rugby Union	3	1/25000	69528	2	1	90387	3	0
Skatepark	9	1/4000	16296	4	5	18617	4	5
Softball/ Baseball	2	1/23500	69528	2	0	90387	3	-1
Sport/Leisure/ Aquatic Centre	3	1/17500	69528	3	0	90387	5	-2
Tennis	48	1/1800	69528	38	10	90387	50	-2

- There is sufficient land allocated to recreation to 2036.
- There are notable surpluses in Local and District Parks and Sportsgrounds.
- Notable gap in the provision of basketball courts and Regional Sportsgrounds.
- Continue to monitor local participation rates and trends to ensure sufficient provision of facilities.
- Regional level facilities are suitably located close to large town centres.







# Raymond Terrace

Raymond Terrace | Nelson Plains | Heatherbrae

## Existing recreation facilities

- The suburb of Raymond Terrace has an existing network of recreation facilities distributed across the suburb. Nelson Plains does not have any public open space however the larger lot sizes and a lower population density satisfies the demand. Heatherbrae consists of lower density housing and commercial properties and Elkin Ave Reserve provides public recreation space to residents and school children.
- This Planning District contains the regional facilities of Boomerang Park and King Park Sports Complex.
- A variety of recreational opportunities are available to the community ranging from playgrounds, skateparks, sportsgrounds, courts, riverside foreshore picnics areas and an indoor/outdoor swimming pool.
- Focus for the Raymond Planning District should be centred on improving existing recreation facilities and reducing the overlap of facility catchments.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	23.62	0.0004	13645	5.46	18.16	17695	7.08	16.54
District	4.28	0.0006	13645	8.19	-3.91	17695	10.62	-6.34
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	3.56	0	13645	0.00	3.56	17695	0	3.56
District	17.06	0.0006	13645	8.19	8.87	17695	10.62	6.44

- There is sufficient land allocated to recreation in Raymond Terrace Planning District.
- There are notable surpluses in Local Parks projected by 2036.
- Focus for the Raymond Planning District should be centred on improving existing recreation facilities and reducing the overlap of facility catchments.





# Rural West

Balickera | Brandy Hill | Butterwick | Duns Creek | Eagleton | East Seaham  
Glen Oak | Hinton | Osterley | Seaham | Woodville | Wallalong

## Existing recreation facilities

- The district is predominately rural with large amounts of private open space. This indicates that residents have reduced reliance on public open space.
- Community land categorised as predominantly sportsgrounds also have play equipment and function secondly as a park e.g. Bowthorne Park and Stuart Park.
- For regional parks and sports facilities, residents typically travel to Raymond Terrace and Maitland Council LGA.
- Parks, playgrounds and sports facilities are located in the three larger suburbs of Seaham, Wallalong and Hinton.
- Due to the rural nature of the district, it is not for all residents to be within walking distance of playgrounds.
- Due to the low population density of the district, residents outside of the Hinton, Wallalong and Seaham towns must travel by car to utilise public parks and sports facilities.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	0.2	0.0004	5293	2.12	-1.92	8766	3.51	-3.31
District	4.72	0.0006	5293	3.18	1.54	8766	5.26	-0.54
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	14.56	0	5293	0	14.56	8766	0	14.56
District	3.95	0.0006	5293	3.18	0.77	8766	5.26	-1.31

- There is a notable surplus of Local Sportsgrounds by 2036.
- There is a notable deficit of Local Parks by 2036 however due to the larger lot sizes in this district, residents have greater access to private open space.
- Focus in the Rural West Planning District should be centred on consolidating local sporting facilities into higher quality, multi-use district facilities and increasing recreational opportunities suitable for an ageing population.



# Medowie

Medowie | Ferodale | Campvale

## Existing recreation facilities

- Residents can access regional sporting facilities at Raymond Terrace and Tomaree.
- A number of sportsgrounds have play equipment and function secondly as a park e.g. Kindlebark Oval playground and Boyd Oval skatepark.
- The shared path linking Medowie along Grahamstown Dam to Raymond Terrace provides a good linkage to Raymond Terrace facilities.
- Other recreation opportunities- Medowie is bounded by National Park to the north and it provides mountain bike and bush walking opportunities to the community.
- Medowie has a range of lot sizes and population density. Currently open space is centred in the higher population density areas of Medowie. Areas with larger lot sizes do not have parks within short walking distances. They do however have larger amounts of private open space.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks (ha)</b>								
Local	4.22	0.0004	9684	3.87	0.35	16495	6.60	-2.38
District	0.33	0.0006	9684	5.81	-5.48	16495	9.90	-9.57
<b>Sportsgrounds (ha)</b>								
Local	17.85	0	9684	0	17.85	16495	0	17.85
District	9.86	0.0006	9684	5.81	4.05	16495	9.90	-0.04

- There is a projected deficit of all tiers of Parks by 2036.
- There is a notable surplus of Local Sportsgrounds by 2036.
- Focus in the Medowie Planning District should be centred on providing more parkland including a large-scale, centrally located park and consolidating local sportsgrounds into higher quality, multi-use district facilities.





# Tilligerry Peninsula

Lemon Tree Passage | Mallabula | Tanilba Bay | Oyster Cove

## Existing recreation facilities

- Large amounts of natural bushland area and foreshore areas maintained as parks offer recreational opportunities for walking and passive recreation. The district has numerous boat launching facilities providing access to the Port.
- The Mallabula Sports Complex is centrally located between Tanilba Bay and Lemon Tree Passage.
- District parks are located along the foreshores.
- Residents of Oyster Cove do not have public open space within walking distance.
- Residents have access to regional sporting facilities at Raymond Terrace and Tomaree.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	32.8	0.0004	6767	2.71	30.09	7179	2.87	29.93
District	4.63	0.0006	6767	4.06	0.57	7179	4.31	0.32
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	0	0	6767	0	0	7179	0	0
District	19.01	0.0006	6767	4.06	14.95	7179	4.31	14.70

- There is a notable surplus of Local Parks by 2036.
- There is a notable surplus of District Sportsgrounds by 2036.
- Focus of this district should be to investigate the rationalisation/consolidation of local parks to improve the quality of recreation facilities that offer the greatest benefit to local residents and visitors.





# Tomaree Peninsula

Anna Bay | Boat Harbour | Bobs Farm | Corlette | Fingal Bay | Fishermans Bay  
Nelson Bay | One Mile | Salamander Bay | Shoal Bay | Soldiers Point | Taylors Beach

## Existing recreation facilities

- Residents and visitors have access to large parcels of Crown Land Estate and National Parks. This land provides passive recreation, bush walking, picnic facilities and mountain bike recreational opportunities and is a key tourist attraction.
- The suburbs of the Tomaree planning district are located along foreshores, providing residents with access to beaches and waterways. The district has a number of public boat launching facilities that provide access to the Port and off-shore beaches.
- Regionally classified, Tomaree Sports Complex is centrally located in the planning district.
- Many of the Tomaree parks located on foreshores are classified as district due to their high profile and usage. These parks have high levels of use during peak tourism season and contribute to the Port Stephens tourism branding of beautiful beaches and its natural landscape.
- Asset renewals in this planning district occur more regularly due to harsh coastal conditions.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	58.21	0.0004	26737	10.69	47.52	30104	12.04	46.17
District	58.66	0.0006	26737	16.04	42.62	30104	18.06	40.60
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	12.39	0	26737	0	12.39	30104	0	12.39
District	17.29	0.0006	26737	16.04	1.25	30104	18.06	-0.77

- There are notable surpluses of Local and District Parks to 2036.
- There are notable surpluses of local Sportsgrounds to 2036.
- Focus of this district should be to investigate the rationalisation/consolidation of district and local parks and local sportsgrounds to improve the quality of recreation facilities that offer the greatest benefit to local residents and visitors.





# Rural East

Salt Ash | Tomago | Williamstown

## Existing recreation facilities

- The district is predominately rural with large amounts of private open space. This indicates that residents have reduced reliance on public open space.
- Salt Ash Sports Grounds- High quality equestrian centre hosting a number of clubs and high profile equestrian events.
- Rural East residents can utilise open space in neighbouring catchments. For example Salt Ash residents can access district sportsgrounds at Mallabula or Medowie and regional facilities in Raymond Terrace and Tomaree.
- Key recreation facilities are the Salt Ash Community Hall playground and park and Salt Ash Sports Grounds.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	2.06	0.0004	2296	0.92	1.14	2512	1.00	1.06
District	1.23	0.0006	2296	1.38	-0.15	2512	1.51	-0.28
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	0.19	0	2296	0	0.19	2512	0	0.19
District	13.98	0.0006	2296	1.38	12.60	2512	1.51	12.4

- There is a notable surplus of District Sportsgrounds to 2036 however this is due to the large land size of the well patronised equestrian centre.
- Focus in the Rural East Planning District should be on maintaining recreation facilities.





# Fern Bay

Fern Bay | Fullerton Cove

## Existing recreation facilities

- This planning district has a number of mature aged villages. These villages are gated and have private recreational facilities. The residents of these villages have a lesser reliance on public open space. Examples of the gated community infrastructure include tennis court, bowling green, swimming pool and gymnasium.
- Seaside Fern Bay development is a large development with private open space managed by the estate. The open space includes several parks, bushland reserve, informal sporting oval, playground and picnic facilities.
- State and National Parks- Surrounding National and State Parks provide recreational opportunities such as mountain bike riding and bush walking. These reserves provide a linkage to Stockton Beach.
- The suburb of Fern Bay shares open space with the neighbouring Newcastle City Council suburb, Stockton. Stockton has a number of recreational facilities to cater for the growing population of Fern Bay including four sporting fields hosting cricket, Football (soccer), athletics track and rugby league; aquatic centre; bowling club; tennis courts; sailing club and SLSC.





## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	0	0.0004	3330	1.33	-1.33	4729	1.89	-1.89
District	0.67	0.0006	3330	2.00	-1.33	4729	2.84	-2.17
<b>Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>(ha)</b>							
Local	0.27	0	3330	0	0.27	4729	0	0.27
District	0	0.0006	3330	2.00	-2.00	4729	2.84	-2.84

- The provision of recreation land in Fern Bay Planning District is adequate to 2036 due to private recreation facilities and Council working together with Newcastle City Council to provide District level facilities within the Newcastle local government area. Future new release areas will also add to the recreation network.
- Focus in the Fern Bay Planning District should be on maintaining existing facilities to service future populations and increasing recreational opportunities for younger populations.





# Karuah and Swan Bay

Karuah | Swan Bay | Twelve Mile Creek

## Existing recreation facilities

- Karuah has high levels of social disadvantage and quality open space within walking distance is important to the health and well-being of the community.
- The Karuah community has access to a number of recreational opportunities including skatepark, BMX track, sporting oval, tennis courts, foreshore reserves with play equipment and boating facilities.
- Swan Bay and Twelve Mile Creek has low population density with a mixture of medium to large lot sizes. Private open space suitably caters for demand in these areas.
- There is an additional park with play equipment and a half basketball court area on Mustons Road privately owned by the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council.



## Recreation land gap analysis

	Provision	Rate	2016 population	Desired provision 2016	2016 gap	2036 population	Desired provision 2036	2036 gap
<b>Parks (ha)</b>								
Local	2.04	0.0004	1776	0.71	1.33	2907	1.16	0.88
District	5.19	0.0006	1776	1.07	4.12	2907	1.74	3.45
<b>Sportsgrounds (ha)</b>								
Local	3.72	0	1776	0.00	3.72	2907	0.00	3.72
District	0	0.0006	1776	1.07	-1.07	2907	1.74	-1.74

- The provision of recreation land in Karuah Planning District is adequate to 2036.
- Focus in the Karuah Planning District should be to upgrade existing recreation facilities.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



# Community engagement

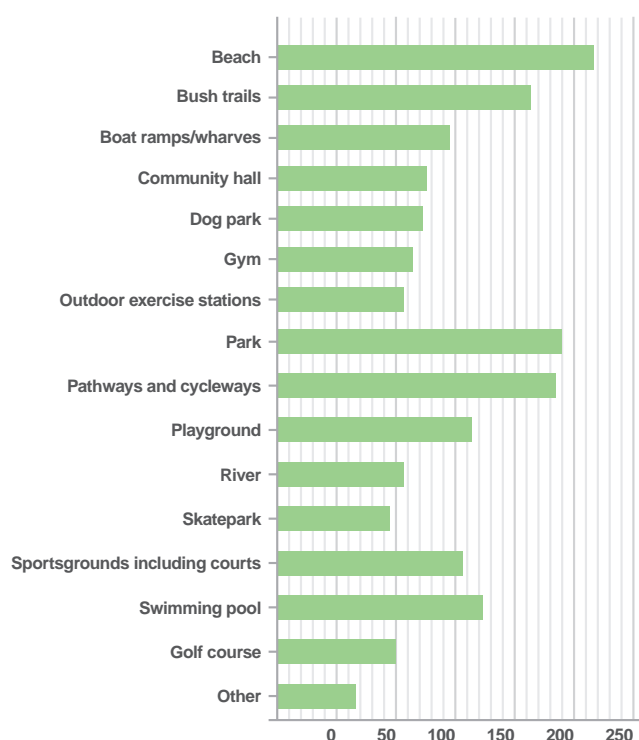
To ensure the Recreation Strategy considered all issues relevant to recreation in Port Stephens, Council sought community feedback through a public survey. The online survey was open for two weeks from the 20th March 2018 to the 3rd April 2018 and consisted of 12 questions that explored how the community utilises recreation and open space.

The survey was promoted via the following means:

- Council website
- Council social media including Facebook
- Page 2 article in the local Port Stephens Examiner newspaper
- Direct notification emails to Council 355c committees, Sports Council club delegates, engagement HQ contacts
- Paper survey copies were distributed to Raymond Terrace Library, Tilligerry Library, Tomaree Library and Community Centre and Raymond Terrace Council Administration building

## Survey results

**Q1. What local facilities do you use for recreation and sport?**  
Please select all that apply:

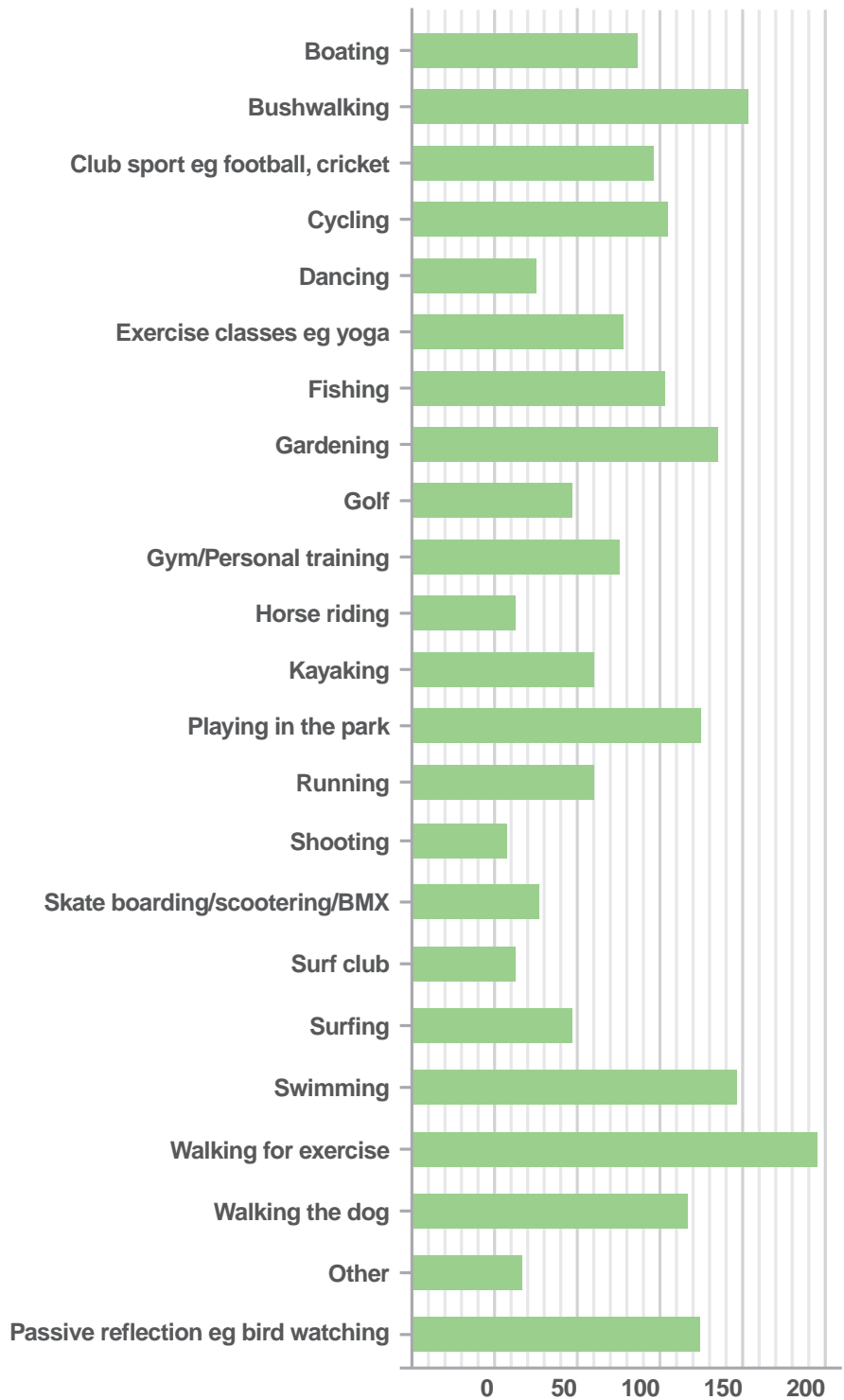


Other local facilities identified in the survey included:

- 4WD Tracks
- National Parks and waterways including moorings
- PCYC
- Williamtown Park Radio Control Car Club Track
- Yacht moorings and pump out facilities



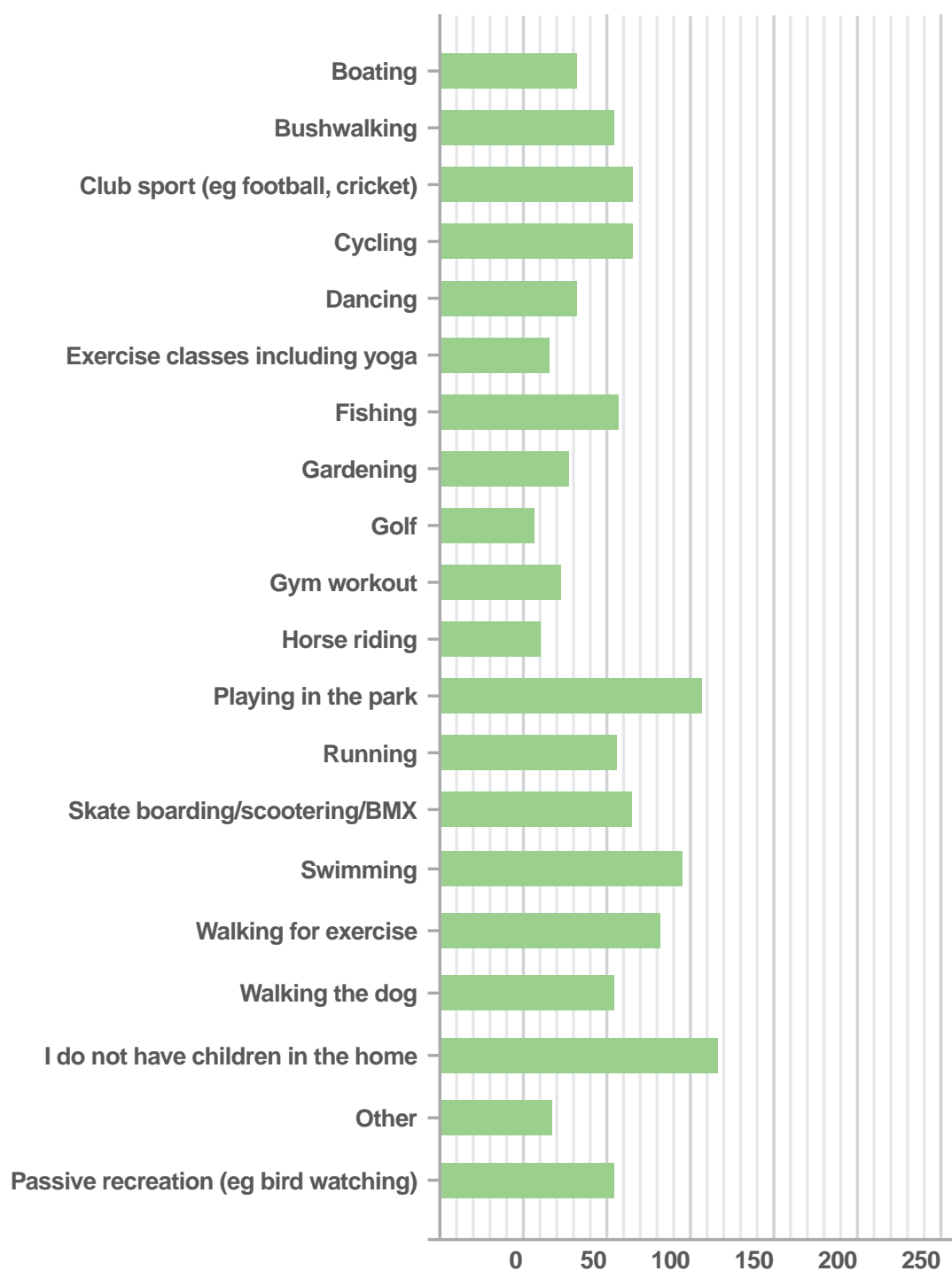
## Q2. What recreational and physical activities do you do?



Other recreational and physical activities identified in the survey included:

- Basketball
- Camping
- Martial Arts
- Mountain biking
- Paddle boarding
- Painting, photography and craft
- Passive recreation
- Radio control car racing
- Scouts
- Snorkelling and Scuba Diving

### Q3. If you have children in your home, what activities do they do?

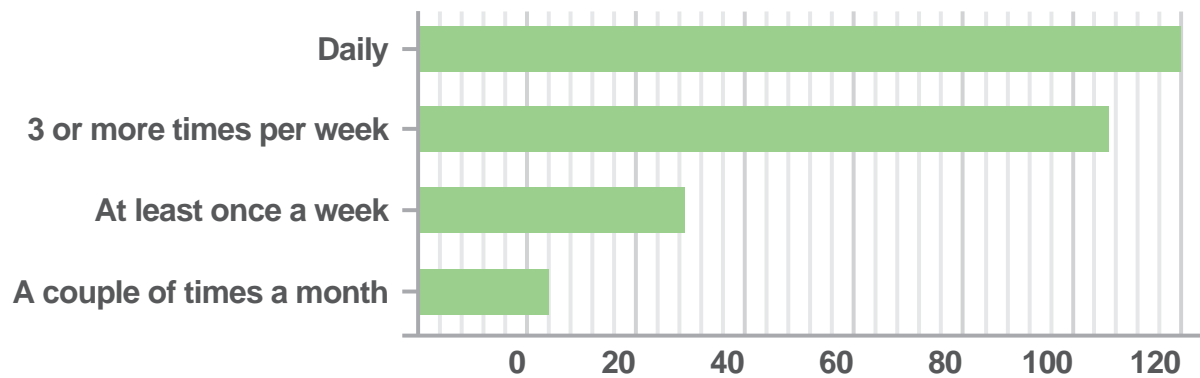


Other children's recreational and physical activities identified in the survey included:

- Aerial circus skills
- Arts and craft
- Basketball
- Camping
- Computer games
- Gymnastics
- Martial arts
- Mountain Biking
- Radio control car racing
- Scouts
- Surfing



**Q4. How often do you undertake recreational and physical activity?**



**Q5. Do you think Port Stephens has enough parks? Why?**

The majority of respondents to this question believed that Port Stephens had enough a sufficient supply of parks. Many of the responses highlighted the important role parks and natural areas play in their quality of life.

While it was recognised that provision was sufficient by many, it was noted that the quality of the existing park facilities needed to be improved to increase usage and enjoyment.

Key areas of concern included lack of facilities at Medowie, Fern Bay and Anna Bay and improving access to dog exercise areas.

Survey quotes:

There have been big improvements in this in the past few years. The good parks used to be concentrated in the Nelson Bay Area, but there seems to be more of an effort to improve park facilities across other areas now. Don't stop! Not everyone lives at Nelson Bay!

Yes. I think they have adequate green space to look after especially as many are

looked after by volunteers.

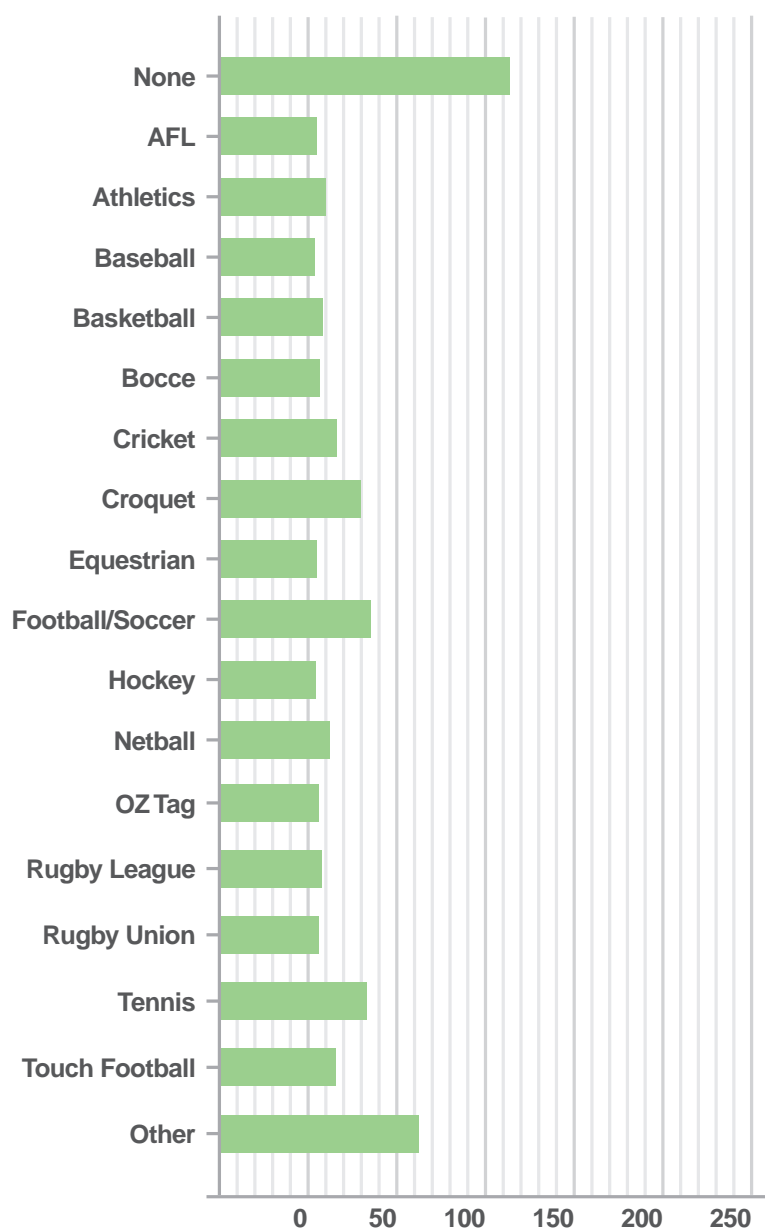
Our parks and bushland are so important. We can never have too many. New developments should allow for swathes of natural bushland and green zones within residential zones.

Port Stephens has a reasonable supply of parks and each is important. We cannot afford to lose one, and it is important that they be maintained adequately. They are the green that everybody moves to, or visits, Port Stephens for.

No. That's why we all have to converge on the bay, where there are large parkland areas, toilet facilities and safe walking paths.

No. You can never have too many parks in any area.

## Q7. What sport(s) do you play?



Other sports identified in the survey included:

- Aqua aerobics
- Cycling
- Fencing
- Figure skating
- Futsal
- Golf
- Kayaking
- Lawn bowls
- Martial arts
- Mountain bike riding
- Quoits
- Running
- Sailing
- Skateboarding/Scooter
- Snorkelling/Scuba diving
- Squash
- Surf lifesaving racing, body surfing
- Surfing
- Swimming
- Volleyball



## Where do you play sport?

Responses within Port Stephens included:

At home	Beaches, Waterways, National Park	Boat Harbour Tennis Courts
Bowling Clubs- Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay	Boyd Oval, Medowie	Bush and cycle paths
Fern Bay	Fingal Bay Oval	Fingal Bay Tennis Courts
Hinton and Wallalong	Kindlebark Oval, Medowie	King Park Sports Complex
Lakeside Aquatic Centre	Lakeside Sports Complex	Local gyms
Mallabula Tennis Courts	Martial Arts Academies	Medowie Netball Courts
Medowie Tennis Courts	Nelson Bay Tennis Courts	PCYC- Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace
Port Stephens Yacht Club	Raymond Terrace and District Tennis Club	Raymond Terrace Athletics Centre
Raymond Terrace Netball courts	Salamander Sports Complex	Tomaree Aquatic Centre
Tomaree Sports Complex including Croquet Courts	Golf Clubs- Nelson Bay, Tanilba Bay, Horizons	Shoal Bay Tennis Club
Yulong Park, Medowie	Tilligerry Aquatic Centre	Fingal Bay Parkrun Course

Responses outside of Port Stephens included:

Beresfield Touch Football	Broadmeadow	Corroba Oval, Stockton
Fieldsend Oval, Metford	Gyms	Hunter Ice Skating Stadium
International Hockey Centre, Kotara	Maitland	Newcastle Netball Association
Stockton	Wallsend	

## Q8. What can council do to encourage you to use sportsgrounds more?

A wide range of survey responses were received for this question. Improving the quality of existing facilities was an overarching theme with priorities including:

- Accessible facilities for everyone, of all ages and abilities to enjoy
- Seating, shelter and supporting infrastructure e.g. BBQs, shade trees, signage and waste bins
- Car parking, improved lighting, shared pathways linking communities to grounds
- Cleaner toilets and changerooms
- Ground surface improvements
- Outdoor exercise equipment around ground perimeters

The importance of well-maintained grounds and buildings were recognised including drainage, irrigation and weed management.

Other requests included:

- Improved grounds and facilities at King Park to cater for growing club membership
- Additional croquet courts at Tomaree Sports Complex
- Multi-use, more centralised sports facilities

- Improved quality of Medowie sporting facilities
- Sport grounds in Fern Bay
- A basketball court in Raymond Terrace
- A mountain bike park
- Indoor sports complex and pool at Raymond Terrace

Survey quotes:

More centrally organised club sport i.e. all games in one location like in Sydney. I am single parent of 5 kids and can't get all my kids to a game

Assist older facilities to upgrade their clubhouses - renew toilets. Better shade for spectators. More consistent mowing of parks in summer.

Make sure car parking is accessible and sport fields relate to cycleways and footpaths. Keep sports field central in the community for accessibility and group them when possible to share facilities. Well drained and irrigated field are more likely to be used more frequently.

## Q9. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about recreation and sport in Port Stephens?

Survey quotes:

I think the maintenance of the facilities is so important. It's great to provide facilities but they need to be well for ongoing support in the future.

Make parks a place where everyone can go and find some sort of recreation.

PSC does provide some great support but this needs to be consistent across the council area. Some areas seem to get favoured over other areas, especially when it comes to funding.

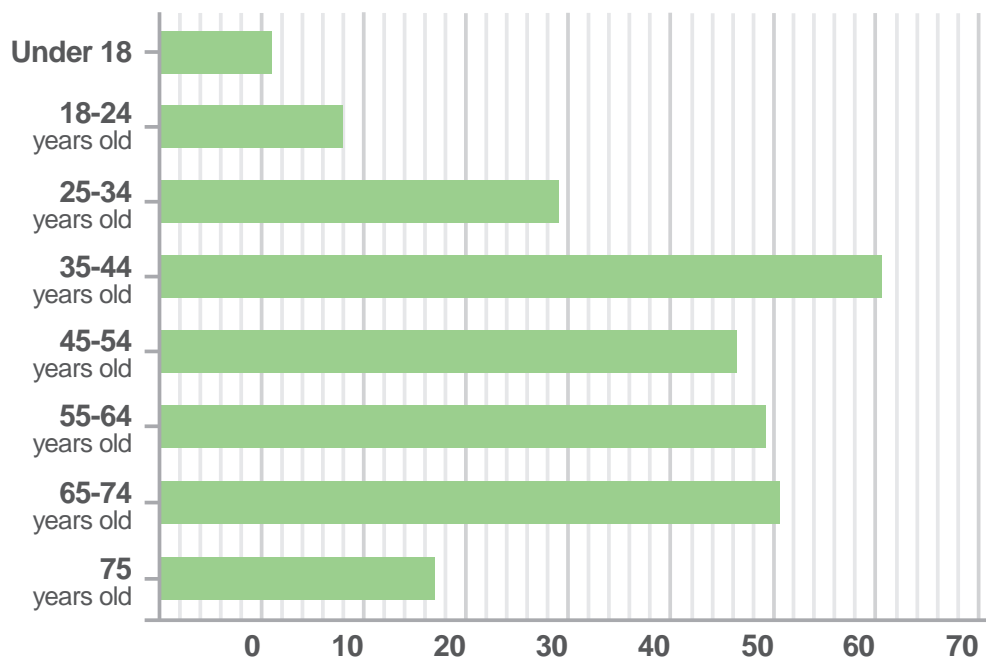
Keep making it better and people will come, but more important is to make the residents that pay rates to be happy not just tourists.

We have a beautiful natural area to live in and need to make sure that we respect that.





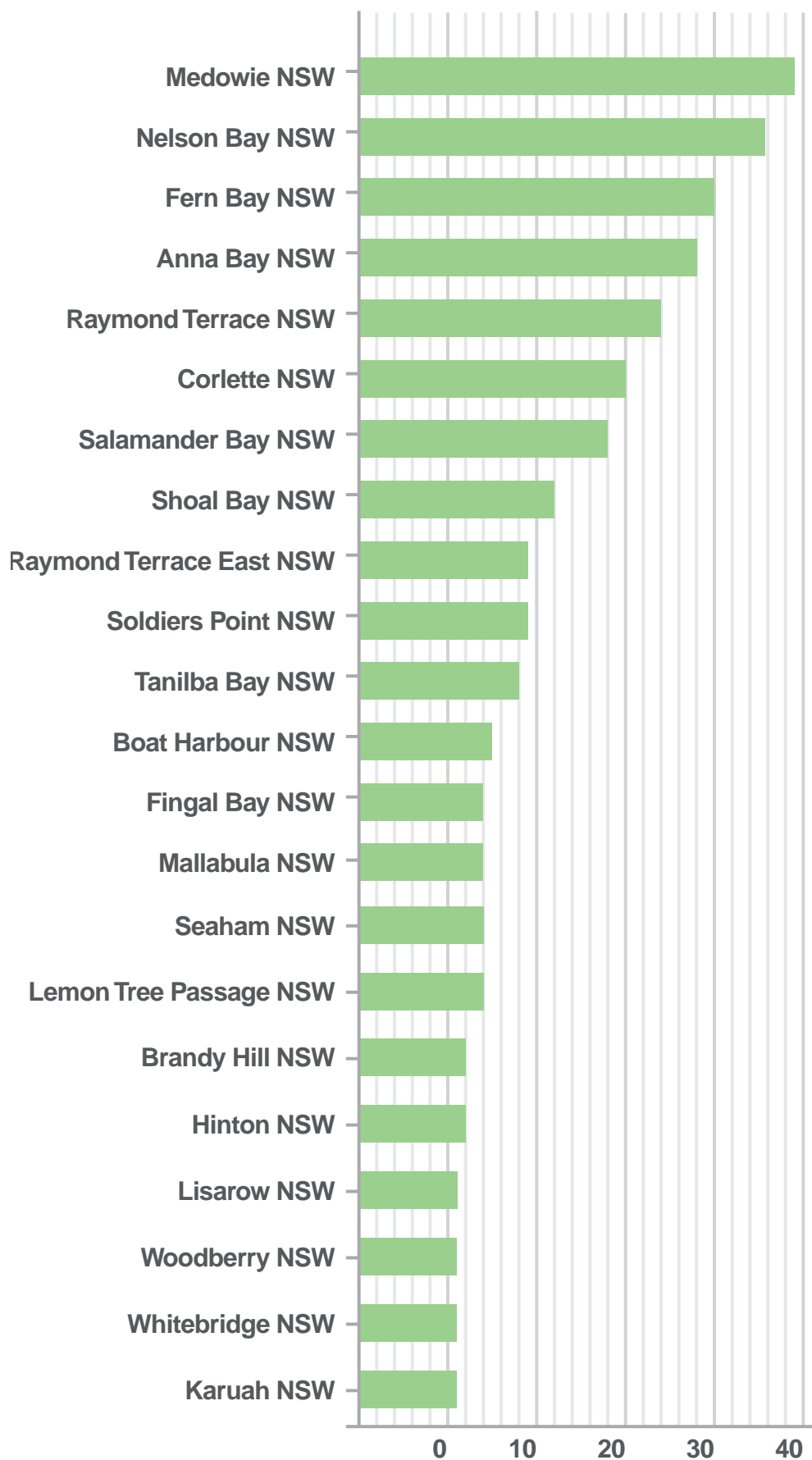
#### Q 10. What is your age?



#### Q11. What is your gender?

Male	95
Female	165
Unidentified	1

**Q17. What suburb do you live in?**





# PLANNING IMPLICATIONS FOR RECREATION





# Planning implications for recreation

## Planning context

The State Government is aiming to increase the utilisation of its education facilities outside of school hours. Council should therefore consider opportunities to utilise school facilities to supplement gaps in the recreation facility network. Alternatively, opportunities for schools to utilise Council reserve for their recreation needs could also be investigated. Council should ensure that the NSW Government contributes to the management of shared facilities to improve sustainability. Council also has an advocacy role to work with Crown Lands and National Parks and Wildlife for the development of recreational pursuits that benefit residents and visitors.

The Hunter Regional Plan recognises Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay as strategic centres within the Ports Stephens LGA. Strategic Centres are recognised for their role in supporting the regional population of the Hunter. Council therefore needs to respond by locating its regional facilities within the strategic centres to increase their accessibility and utilisation.

At a local level, a number of Council's planning strategies identify the need for upgraded recreation facilities to address the anticipated increase in demand from population growth. Council therefore needs to consider the future provision of recreation facilities in accordance with the provision standards of this Strategy to ensure the sustainable provision of facilities into the future. Council's planning documents also recognise the challenges imposed by climate change and an ageing population both of which need to be managed in the planning and provision of recreation areas.

Council needs to be committed to adopting environmentally sustainable approaches to manage its open space network. Strategic Objective 5 for Environmental Management and Climate Change Adaptation, proposes some strategic directions which aim to influence better design and planning responses to the adverse effects of climate change. The challenge for Council will be securing adequate funding and resources to fulfil these directions effectively.

Improving access to facilities is a reoccurring direction throughout Council planning documents. Access refers not only to how people travel to recreation areas but also how they move and interact within recreation areas. Consideration to facilities and how people use them needs to be considered when planning recreation facilities to ensure barriers to participation are not created through poor design.





## Participation trends

Participation data is showing that there is a strong preference for low /no impact sports and physical activities. This preference increases as people get older. Sporting clubs are the primary avenue for children to be active and therefore must be supported moving forward to continue to facilitating kids being active. Kids are considerably less active than adults and Council must look at ways to address barriers to encourage more kids to get active. The key barriers for young, middle aged and older populations are perceived risk and inability to participate (by parents), lack of time and poor health and injury.

Council therefore needs to respond by providing infrastructure and services that eases the impact of these barriers throughout a person's lifetime.

Opportunities include providing safe and fit for purpose facilities for residents, providing multi-use and adaptable facilities that can respond to changing recreation preferences and environments. Council should focus on easing the barriers to participation in younger years as a preventative measure to reduce the likelihood of failing health and injury in later years.

Local participation data indicates that there is a rise of female participation in traditionally male-dominated sports. Council therefore needs to respond by ensuring that facilities are suitable for both male and female players including supporting modified formats of traditional sports that aim to increase female participation.



## Planning profiles

### Port Stephens LGA

A large portion of Port Stephens is rural and characterised by village type settlements separated by large bodies of water and nature reserves. This creates a significant barrier to accessing Council's recreation facilities and Council needs to consider how to provide accessible facilities for its residents without over supplying and creating an unsustainable network. Port Stephens has a higher representation of Australian born residents, people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and median age than the average of NSW.

Port Stephens has a higher portion of low income earners than the NSW average with almost a quarter of households earning less than \$650 per week. Opportunities to provide affordable recreational opportunities accessible by low cost transport options must be considered to encourage broad participation in recreation and physical activity.

Port Stephens is seen as a well-established, stand-alone destination in NSW and hosts a number of regional events throughout the year. As a major regional visitor destination in NSW,

Port Stephens attracts an average of 1.3 million visitors per year and generates an estimated 1,840 jobs and an excess of \$391.393 million in output for the local economy (Dec, 2016).

Destination Port Stephens provides reports on visitor activity, with recent data identifying a steady international market and large spikes in visitation particularly in the January to March period. The spikes in visitation reflect the seasonal nature of the tourism



market. The primary focus for tourism is on the Tomaree Peninsula with visitors drawn to its expansive bushland and marine surroundings, which are synonymous with the character of Port Stephens.

It is anticipated that the tourism and events market in Port Stephens will only grow, with the planned expansion of the Newcastle Airport, shorter travel times from Sydney due highway improvements and the proposed Newcastle Cruise Ship Terminal.

Demand for recreation facilities is seasonal in popular tourist areas such as the Tomaree Peninsula. The majority of visitors to Port Stephens are domestic day trippers. Domestic visitors to Port Stephens are predominantly families and older retired couples and therefore opportunities for informal recreation.

Council recognises that tourism provides much needed economic stimulus to the area. Events may require access to permanent supporting infrastructure and this places a pressure on

community infrastructure, generating a need for additional maintenance and infrastructure upgrades.

Open space and supporting infrastructure needs to be adaptable in order to support a diverse range of activities e.g. adventure sport events, community markets, mobile vendors and cultural festivals.

The seasonal influx of visitors to Port Stephens increases demand for quality open space and recreational infrastructure. This demand is predicted to increase with future growth in the tourism and event market. Open space planning must meet both the needs of the local community and that of the area's visitors.

The domestic and international visitor profile is diverse and this needs to be reflected in open spaces that provide recreational opportunities for a range of ages, abilities and cultures.

Port Stephens is well serviced by recreation facilities to 2036. Focus should therefore be on consolidating, rationalising and improving existing facilities to help improve the sustainability and diversity of Council's recreational network.



### **Planning District 1 - Raymond Terrace**

The Raymond Terrace Planning District is anticipated to experience moderate growth to 2036 and will retain the second largest residential population in the LGA. The majority of population growth is anticipated to occur in the urban release area of Kings Hill north of Raymond Terrace town centre. The Raymond Terrace Planning District is considered to be the second most disadvantaged in the LGA. The planning area is well serviced by recreation facilities however there is a notable imbalance of parks with the current network lacking district level parks. Two of Council's premier recreation facilities being Boomerang Park and King Park are located within the Raymond Terrace Planning District.

Focus for the Raymond Planning District should be centered on improving existing recreation facilities and reducing the overlap of facility catchments.

### **Planning District 2 - Rural West**

The Rural West Planning District is anticipated to experience considerable growth to 2036 with the demographic structure showing proportional growth in the 55 years and over cohort and a notable decline in the proportion of residents aged under 25 years. The recreation facility provision in the Planning District is dominated by local sporting facilities.

Focus in the Rural West Planning District should be centred around consolidating local sporting facilities into multi-use district facilities and increasing recreational opportunities suitable for an ageing population.





### **Planning District 3 - Medowie**

The Medowie Planning District is anticipated to experience high population growth to 2036 and experience the greatest growth in the over 55 year old cohort in all of Port Stephens. The average household income in Medowie is above the Port Stephens average. Recreation facility provision in the Planning District is dominated by local facilities.

Focus in the Medowie Planning District should be centered around providing higher level parks and consolidating local sportsgrounds into multi-use district facilities.

### **Planning District 4 - Tilligerry Peninsula**

The Tilligerry Peninsula is anticipated to experience minimal population growth to 2036 with a continued high representation of the 55 year and older cohort. Bound by the Karuah River and Tilligerry Creek, the district is linear in shape offering a mix of water and land based recreational activities. Recreation facilities currently offered are well represented by local parks and district sportsgrounds.

Focus in the Tilligerry Peninsula should be on rationalisation/consolidation of local parks that are surplus to need.

### **Planning District 5 - Tomaree Peninsula**

The Tomaree Peninsula is anticipated to experience relatively low population growth to 2036 with a continued high representation of the 55 year and older cohort. The local resident population is predominantly made up of middle aged couples and retirees living in separate houses. The Planning District experiences high tourist visitation during peak seasons. Recreation facilities provision in the Planning District is dominated by local and district parks.

Focus in the Tomaree Peninsula should be on rationalisation/consolidation of district and local parks and local sportsgrounds that are surplus to need.

### **Planning District 6 - Rural East**

The Rural East Planning District is anticipated to experience low population growth to 2036 with a slightly increased representation of over 75 year old cohort and a slight decrease in residents aged under 25 years. Recreation facility provision is a mixture of local and district facilities.

Focus in the Rural East planning District is to maintain existing facilities.

### **Planning District 7 - Fern Bay**

The Fern Bay Planning District is anticipated to experience moderate population growth to 2036. The age structure is anticipated to experience an increase in the proportion of under 25 year olds and a decline in the population aged 55 years and over. Much of the population is serviced by privately owned open space within the masterplanned over 55s residential areas and seaside development. Council works together with Newcastle City Council to provide District level facilities for Fern Bay residents within the Newcastle local government area. Future new release areas will provide the opportunity to compliment the open space network.

Focus in the Fern Bay Planning District is to maintain existing facilities to service future populations and increase recreational opportunities for younger populations.

### **Planning District 8 - Karuah**

The Karuah Planning District is anticipated to experience moderate-high population growth to 2036. The largest growth is anticipated to occur in the over 55 year age group. The Karuah Planning District experiences the highest level of social and economic disadvantage.

Focus in the Karuah Planning District is to upgrade existing recreation facilities.







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