

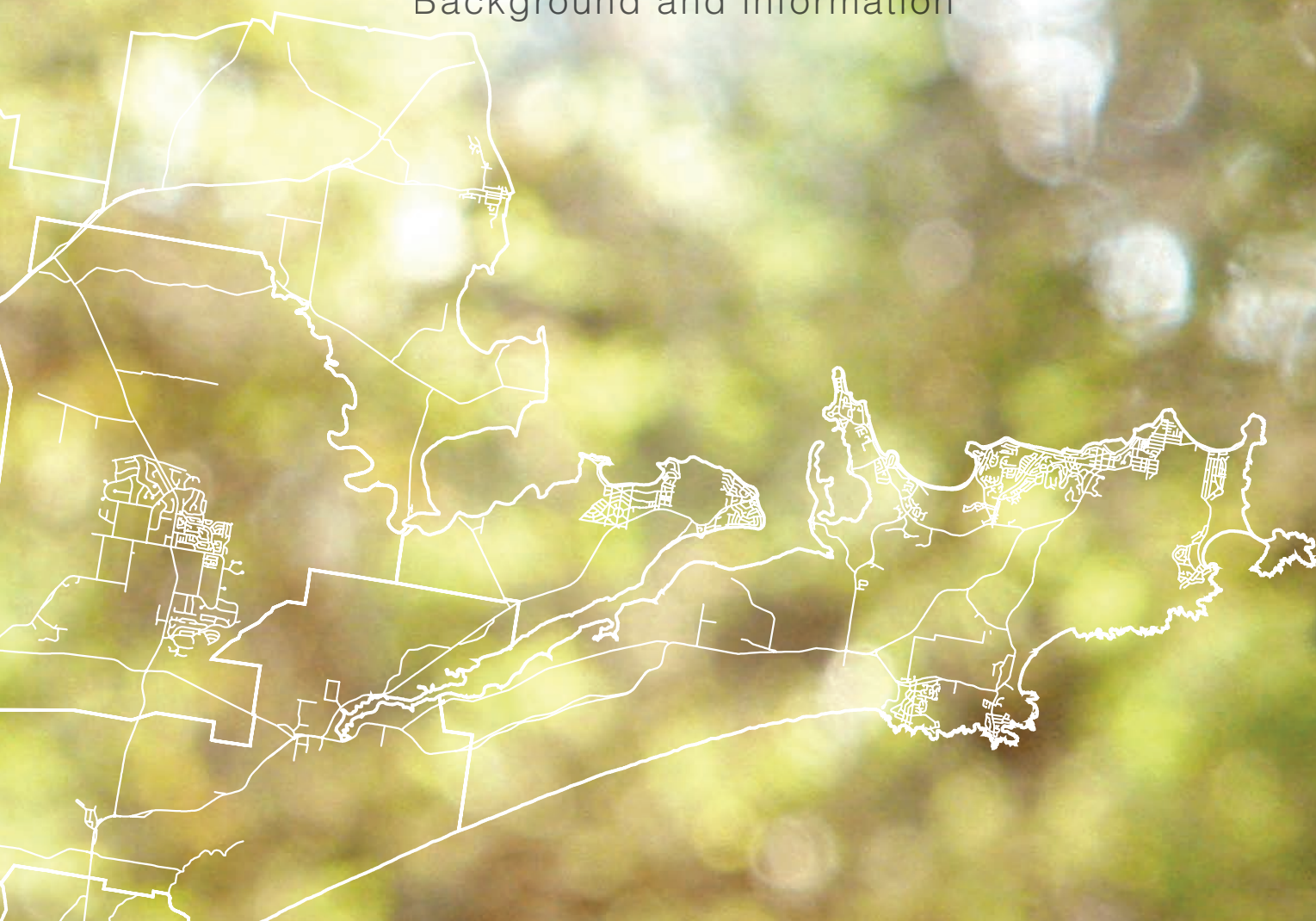
DRAFT

Volume two

Recreation

STRATEGY 2018

Background and information



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

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Acknowledgment

Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi who are the traditional custodians of the land of Port Stephens.

We also pay our respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and future.

Introduction

The Port Stephens Recreation Strategy Volume 2 – Background and Information contains the supporting information that was used to prepare the Port Stephens Recreation Strategy (the Strategy).

This document provides detailed information on the resources and methodologies used to inform the development of the Strategy.

Planning Context – a document review of State, Regional and Local planning strategies and policies relevant to recreation in Port Stephens.

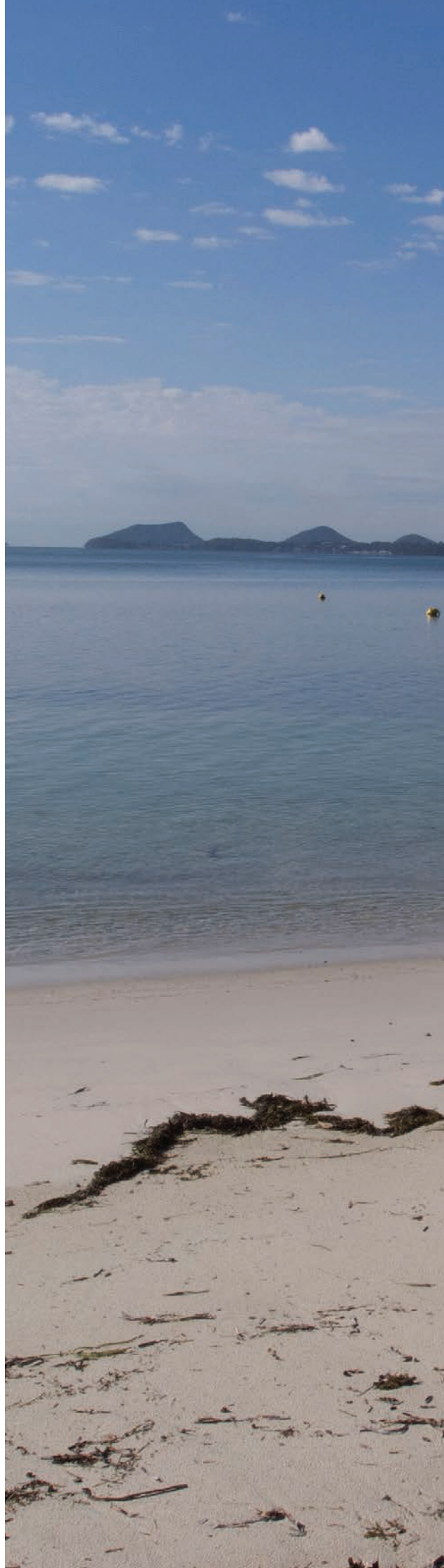
Participation Trends – a summary of the key findings of national, state and local studies on how people recreate and why.

Categorisation of Recreation Land – provides a definition of Council's recreational land impacted by the recommendations of the Strategy.

Planning Profiles – a summary of the key demographical characteristics of the Port Stephens LGA and subsequent Planning Districts. Also lists details of each site located within each Planning District.

Recreation Land and Facility Gap Analysis – provides a quantified assessment of recreation facilities required to meet anticipate demand by 2036.

Community Engagement – a summary of the methodology and results of community engagement undertaken during the development of the Strategy.





PLANNING CONTEXT





Planning context

The development of the Strategy has involved the consideration of a number of preceding documents that impact the way in which open space is managed. The Strategy has been developed to align with State and Regional strategic plans and Port Stephens Council's Community Strategic Plan to ensure a clear line of sight from all levels of government. Local planning documents relating to open space have also been reviewed as a benchmarking exercise to ensure that Port Stephens Council's current and future management actions are consistent with that of the Hunter and greater NSW. Below is a brief summary of key strategic documents.

State

State Infrastructure Strategy

Established by the Infrastructure NSW Act 2011 (the Act), Infrastructure NSW is tasked with preparing the 20 year State Infrastructure Strategy (the SIS) for the Premier. The Act States that the SIS must assess the current state of infrastructure in NSW and the strategic priorities for infrastructure over 20 years. The SIS is Infrastructure NSW's independent advice to Government on the specific infrastructure investments and reforms needed in NSW.

The SIS is largely silent on recreational matters in the Hunter Region, however it does identify inefficiencies within the

education system and recommends the State Government work with Councils to promote the sharing of open space and increase the accessibility of schools outside of school hours.

Draft Greener Place Policy

The Office of Planning and Environment have drafted a policy to guide the planning, design and delivery of Green Infrastructure in urban areas across NSW. It aims to create a healthy, liveable and sustainable urban environment by improving community access to recreation and exercise, supporting walking and cycling connections and improving the resilience of urban areas.

Regional

Hunter Regional Plan 2036

The Hunter Regional Plan is a strategic land use plan to guide development within the Hunter over 20 years to 2036. The Plan replaced the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, the mid North Coast Regional Strategy and the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan.

Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay are identified as strategic centres with Raymond Terrace also included in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area. Salamander Bay, Anna Bay, Medowie, Karuah, Tanilba Bay, Lemon Tree Passage, Fern Bay, Hinton, Woodville and Seaham are noted as centres of local significance.

The Plan identifies regional priorities to assist in implementing a number of strategic directions and actions for the Hunter. The regional priorities relevant to recreation in Port Stephens include: Investigate increasing social, transport and economic connections in Raymond Terrace to surrounding communities and centres across the Greater Newcastle Area; maintain Nelson Bay as one of the primary tourist centres for the region and a hub for the Tomaree Peninsula; investigate opportunities in Nelson Bay for high-density development that maintains and enhances the tourist, recreational and residential appeal of the centre.

Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036

The draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan aligns with the vision and goals of the Hunter Regional Plan 2036, and delivers on the priority action to prepare a Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan.

In addition to identifying King Park as a Metropolitan Sport Facility, the Draft Plan identifies the following objectives and subsequent actions relevant to recreation in Port Stephens:

2.1 Create better buildings and great places.

2.2 Create more great public spaces where people come together.

- create and activate public spaces in the strategic centres that are suitable for community events like markets, festivals, commemorations and assemblies.
- promote public lookout places to maintain views to iconic buildings and vistas.
- protect and enhance waterfront parkland areas.
- identify, protect and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage.

2.3 Enhance the Blue and Green Grid and the urban tree canopy.

- improve local access to open space, recreation areas and waterways so that 90 per cent of houses are within a 10-minute walk of open space.
- make cooler Greater Newcastle by greening urban areas, buildings, transport corridors and open space to enhance the urban forest.
- the NSW Office of Sport will develop a Greater Newcastle sport and recreation facilities plan.

2.4 Protect rural amenity outside urban areas.

- encourage niche commercial, tourist and recreation activities that compliment and promote a stronger agricultural sector, and build the sector's capacity to adapt to changing circumstance.

2.5 Improve the resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

Local

This Strategy forms part of the *Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R)* framework developed for NSW local government. The IP&R framework allows Councils to build plans of an appropriate size, scale and content for their community. This Strategy sits within 'supporting local strategies and plans' as illustrated in the figure below. This Strategy has been developed to recognise the recreational needs of the community expressed in the Community Strategic Plan and guide matters relevant to recreation in the development and implementation of Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.



The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) represents the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by Council, outlining the main priorities and 10 year vision of the local community. The plan identifies objectives to achieve community ambitions and sets out what Council can do to respond to these aspirations. The Strategy will be influential in delivering the Community Strategic Plan objectives.

Other local strategic documents relating to Council's open space network that have been considered are:

Anna Bay Strategy and Town Plan adopted by Council on 16 December 2008. This strategy had a number of recommendations relating to recreation and community facilities. Recommendations included:

- Pursue a multipurpose community space close to the town centre
- Locate an additional skate park in the area or enlarge the existing facility
- Include interpretation of Aboriginal heritage in coastline landscape works
- Upgrade Ocean Ave Reserve
- Provide a new picnic and interpretation area at end of Morna Point Road
- Improve pedestrian connections
- Provide an alternative carpark to cater for tourist buses and 4WD operators

Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan finalised 2009. The document plan contains treatment actions/responses for the predicted impacts of climate change.

Karuah Growth Strategy adopted by Council on 20 December 2011. Key recommendations of the strategy relating to Open Space include:

- Short to medium term- Improve and maintain local community facilities such as oval, parks, BMX track, entrance to wetlands and public amenities.
- Short to long term- Develop links between town, Riverside Park and the wetlands. Improve the foreshore and develop playgrounds in Memorial and Longworth Park.
- Long-term- Identification of an alternate sports ground site once population exceeds Lionel Morten capacity.

Medowie Planning Strategy adopted by Council on the 13 December 2017. The strategy discussed improving existing open spaces, reviewing the demand for additional tennis courts and considering local scale parks in new urban release areas. Key recommendations of the study include:

- Short term – Implementation of the Ferodale Master Plan
- Medium term - Monitor population growth against the standard provisions of sporting fields



- Medium to long term- Plan for a high quality public open space in the town centre commercial area and include public amenities

Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy 2012 adopted by Council on 24 April 2012. This strategy is currently under review. This strategy originally recommended the following for open space:

- Provision of wayfinding signage throughout the town centre and foreshore.
- Preparation of a Masterplan for Apex Park. This plan is now completed.
- Public art opportunities should be identified.

Port Stephens Ageing Strategy adopted by Council in 2016. The strategy outlines proposed key priorities that achieve positive and practical outcomes for the ageing population in Port Stephens and informs actions in both Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Port Stephens Council Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management approved by the Department of Planning in 2002. This document aims to conserve and manage koala habitat to reverse the current trend of population decline. The document provides guidance for strategic and development planning decision making.

Port Stephens Cultural Plan 2015 – 2018 adopted by Council on the 10 February 2015. The document recognises and values the role that culture plays in helping to create vibrant and healthy communities. Actions relevant to the Recreation Strategy include supporting place based cultural events/celebration/festivals; establishment of a public art policy and the integration of cultural tourism opportunities into tourism planning and delivery.

Port Stephens Disability Inclusion Action Plan adopted by Council in 2017. The focus of this document is focus on enriching Councils commitment to creating a place that is more inclusive, accessible, and provides opportunities for all abilities and backgrounds. Key actions relating to open space include:

- Implement a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan to determine a prioritised approach to upgrading and constructing new footpath infrastructure;
- Review and audit Council managed outdoor spaces, toilet blocks and buildings to determine areas where work is required;
- Implement two liberty swings;
- Increase compliant disability parking



Port Stephens Pathways Plan adopted by Council in May 2016. This plan was a series of maps showing existing pathways and identified locations for future pathway construction.

Port Stephens Planning Strategy 2011-2036 was adopted by Council on 20 December 2011. It aims to provide high level strategic direction for spatial planning in the Port Stephens Local Government Area. The strategy analyses the profile of the population and describes Council's strategy for residential, commercial and industrial development in Port Stephens. The forecasting in this strategy is currently under review.

Raymond Terrace and Heatherbrae Strategy 2015-2031 adopted by Council on the 24 November 2015. Key actions of the strategy relating to Open Space include:

- Medium term- Improve the quality of the existing public open space through implementing the Boomerang Park Masterplan; explore activation of undeveloped sites; produce a Street Design Guideline.
- Long term- Look to secure a passive civic open space.

Youth Strategy 2015-2018 adopted by Council 2015. A key action of this strategy relating to open space was the involvement of young people in the development of open and public space planning.

Plans of Management and Masterplans- The Local Government Act 1993 requires all public land that is classified as 'community' to be managed and used in accordance with a council adopted Plan of Management. Port Stephens Council has site specific and generic Plan of Managements. Masterplans aims to guide development by graphically presenting the vision for the reserve.

The following Plans of Management and Masterplans apply to land and facilities addressed in this Strategy:

- Boomerang Park Plan of Management
- Ferodale Sports Complex Masterplan
- Keel Street Reserve Plan of Management
- Mallabula Sports and Recreation Complex Masterplan
- Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management
- Apex Park Masterplan
- Urban Parks, Foreshores, Sportsgrounds and Natural Area Generic Plan of Management.

The recommendations and outcomes of each of the planning documents have been considered in the development of the Strategy.

Tennis Facility Strategy 2003 recommends the following for each of the planning districts:

Rural West

- Investigate a centralised neighbourhood tennis facility at Seaham comprising 3-4 courts.

Raymond Terrace

- Expand the existing tennis facility to a 9-10 court district facility.

Medowie

- Continue to improve existing facility as a neighbourhood level facility comprising 5 – 6 courts.

Karuah/Swan Bay

- Continue to maintain tennis facility at Karuah as a neighbourhood facility. No further expansion proposed.

Tilligerry

- Continue to maintain tennis facility at Mallabula as a neighbourhood facility comprising 4 – 5 courts.

Tomaree Peninsula

- The area requires a centrally located district tennis facility and three strategically located neighbourhood facilities.

- Future sustainable court provision is between 17-18 courts.
- Further investigation on a combined Anna Bay / Boat Harbour complex should be undertaken.

Fern Bay

- Maintain existing tennis facility as a 2 court neighbourhood facility with no further expansion proposed.

Rural East

- No expansion required.
- Investigate relocating to centralised facilities at Mallabula or Medowie.

Local Infrastructure Contributions

Council is able to collect contributions for the provision of local infrastructure and facilities under section 7.11 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This generally occurs through the development assessment process whereby Council can place conditions on certain types of development to require the levy of these contributions.

Contributions enables Councils to seek funds from developers towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public amenities and services. It is an essential service to ensure adequate provision of infrastructure to serve the needs of our growing population.

Councils Development Contribution Plan outlines the process for the collecting and expending local infrastructure contributions.

Councils Development Contribution Plan's work schedules are currently under review to determine their suitability to be funded by local infrastructure contributions. The outcomes of this review will be considered to determine the impact additional facilities would have on the future provision of recreation facilities.



PARTICIPATION TRENDS



Participation in Sport

Australian Sports Commission

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) leads a national population survey called AusPlay to monitor and track trends in sport and recreation participation.

Key findings released in November 2017 for data collected July 2016 – June 2017 found:

- 61.8% of Australians aged over 15 years participated in sport and physical activity 3 or more times per week.
- 23.3% of Australian children participate in organised sport or physical activity outside school hours 3 or more times per week
- Sporting clubs are the primary avenue for children to be active. While sport remains an important activity throughout life, sport clubs are not the main choice for participation as people age. Non-sport related physical activity becomes more important.
- Barriers to participation vary depending on the life-stage of the person. The main barrier for young children's participation in organised sport or physical activity, outside of school hours, is parent's perception that they are too young or they are the wrong age to play. The primary barrier for middle age adults is lack of time and as they age, poor health and injury.

The table below demonstrates the top 10 sports and physical activities undertaken by children and adults in NSW (Ausplay November 2017 State and Territory Results).

Top 10 NSW Children (under 15 years) Sport and Physical Activities		Participation Rates
1	Swimming	33.5%
2	Football/soccer	21.7%
3	Dancing (recreational)	10.9%
4	Gymnastics	8.7%
5	Netball	5.7%
6	Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	5.1%
7	Rugby league	4.4%
8	Basketball	4.3%
9	Tennis	4.2%
10	Cricket	4.1%



Top 3- Male Children - Under 15 years All sport and physical activity

Football (soccer)	33.9%
Swimming	31.1%
Rugby League)	7.9%

Top 3- Female Children - Under 15 years All sport and physical activity

Swimming	35.9%
Dancing (recreational)	18.9%
Gymnastics	12.9%

Top 10 NSW Adult Sport and Physical Activities

Participation Rates

1	Walking (Recreational)	42.5%
2	Fitness/Gym	33.5%
3	Swimming	16.8%
4	Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	14.9%
5	Cycling	9.8%
6	Football/soccer	7.0%
7	Bush walking	6.4%
8	Golf	5.5%
9	Yoga	5.0%
10	Tennis	5.0%

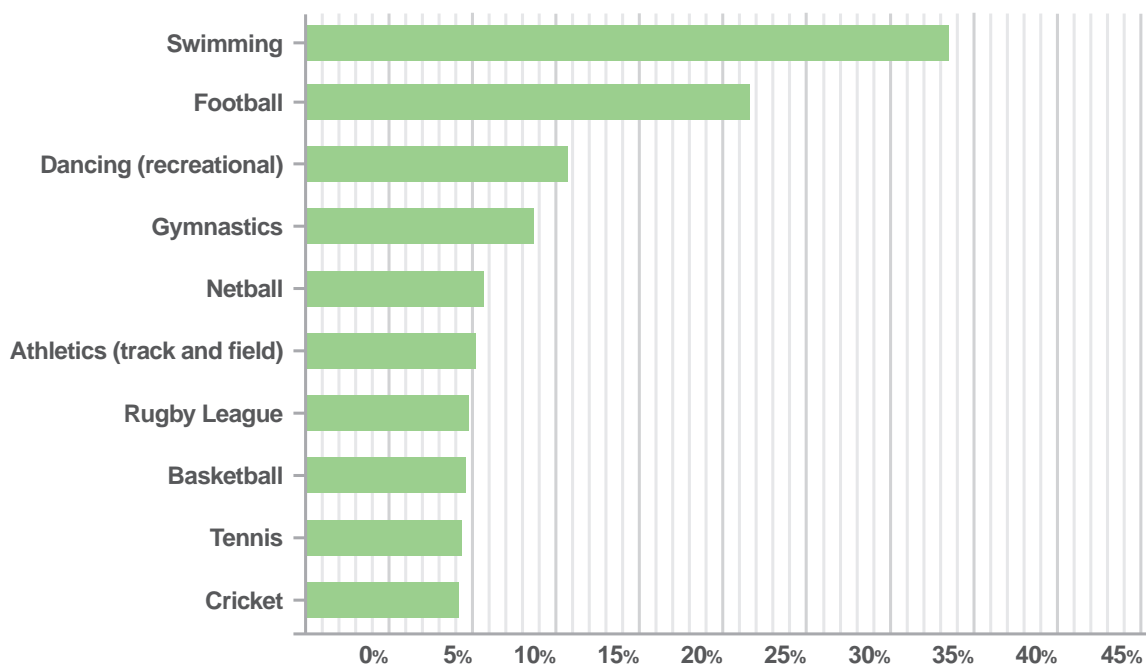
Top 3- Male Adults All sport and physical activity

Walking	33.4%
Fitness/Gym	30.9%
Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	16.0%

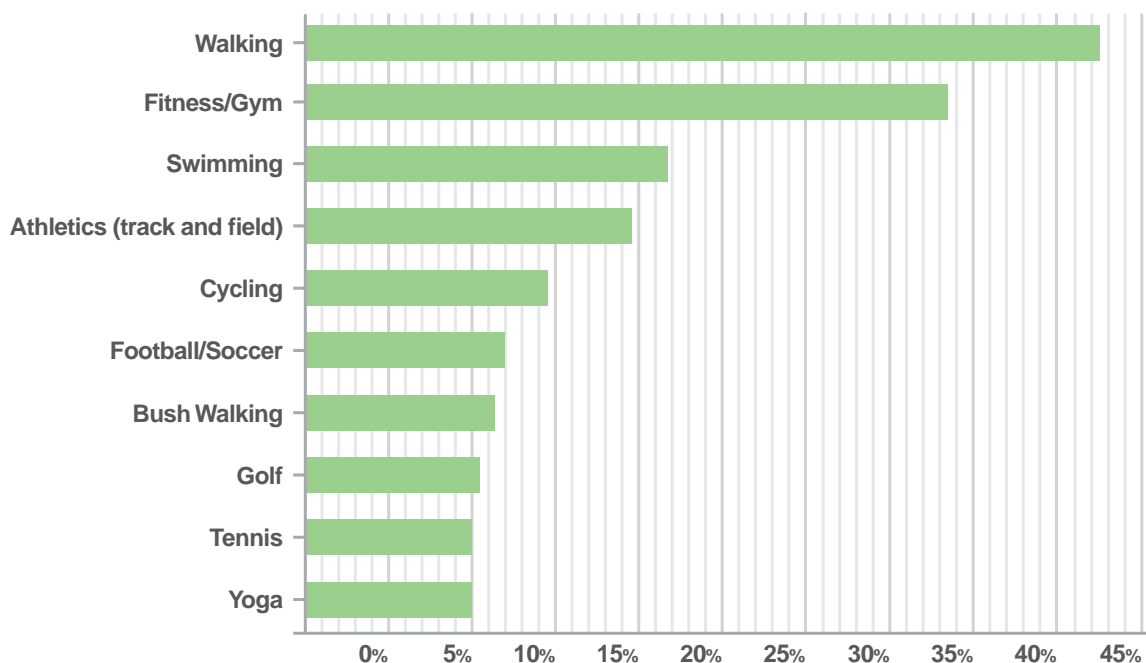
Top 3- Female Adults All sport and physical activity

Walking	51.4%
Fitness / Gym	36.1%
Swimming	18.3%

Children - NSW Top 10 Sports and Physical Activities



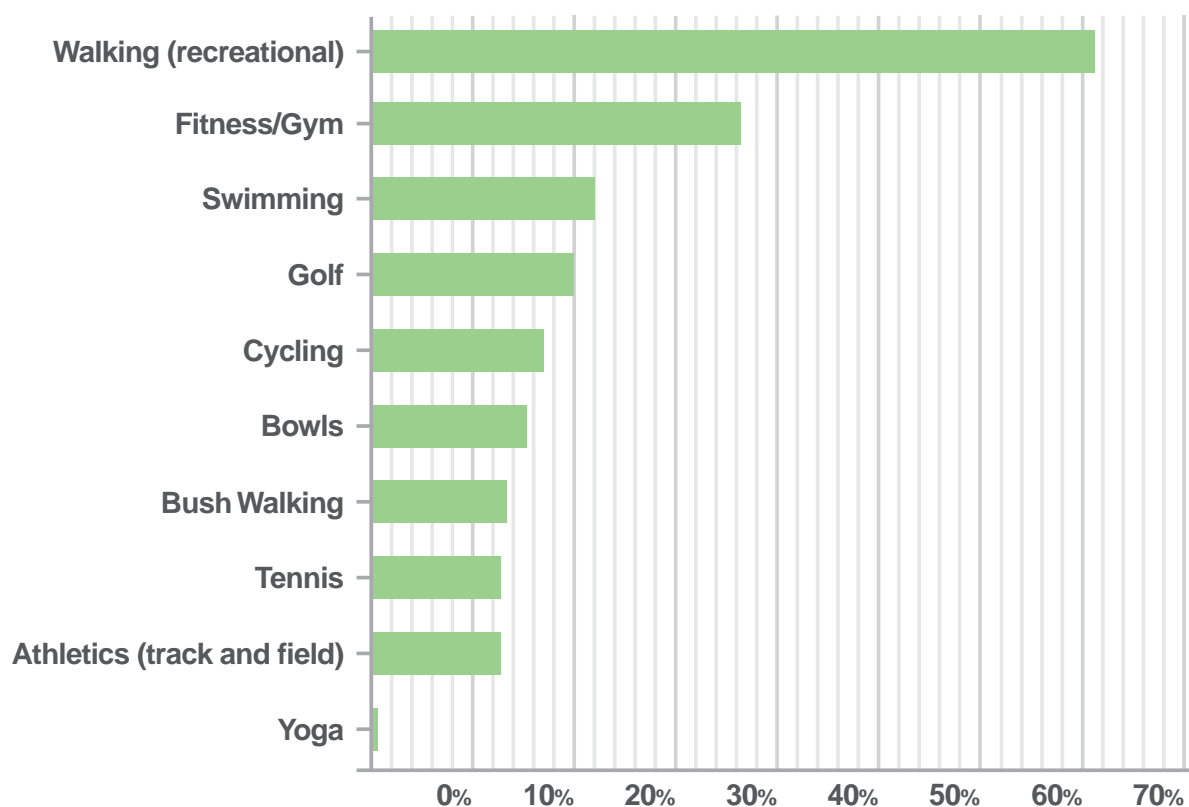
Children - NSW Top 10 Sports and Physical Activities



The survey found the preferred form of activity for people aged over 65 years in Australia was recreational walking. The below identifies the top 10 sport and physical activities undertaken by people aged 65 years and over.

Top 10 +65 Years Sport and Physical Activities		Participation Rates
1	Walking (recreational)	61.7%
2	Fitness/Gym	26.2%
3	Swimming	11.5%
4	Golf	10%
5	Cycling	6.7%
6	Bowls	4.9%
7	Bush walking	3.9%
8	Tennis	3.5%
9	Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	2.4%
10	Yoga	2.3%

+65 Years Australian Top 10 Sports and Physical Activity



Implications for Open Space Provision:

- A rise in individual physical activity in adults should be supported through the provision of pathway networks and infrastructure such as outdoor exercise equipment or water bubblers.
- Sporting facilities should be multi-purpose to ensure they are adaptable to changes in sport popularity.
- To encourage participation of time-poor adults, sports are changing their formats to shorter playing times, requiring smaller fields. This may impact field layouts and surface requirements. Examples include 6 a side football (soccer).

Port Stephens Participation Data

Registered player numbers across Port Stephens in 2016 were collected for this strategy. A total of 7,400 people participated in registered club sport in the winter and summer 2016 season at Port Stephens facilities. This consisted of 4,876 junior players and 2,524 adult players. Please note that some people may participate in both winter and summer sports and this will elevate total numbers. For sporting codes that operate in both seasons, the registered player numbers from their principal season were used. Data on tennis court usage was not available.

Key observations from analysing club data include:

- The Tomaree Peninsula offers the greatest choice in sporting codes.
- Traditional male dominated sport, Football, AFL and rugby league, reported an increase in female membership.

Top 3 Junior Sports Across Port Stephens

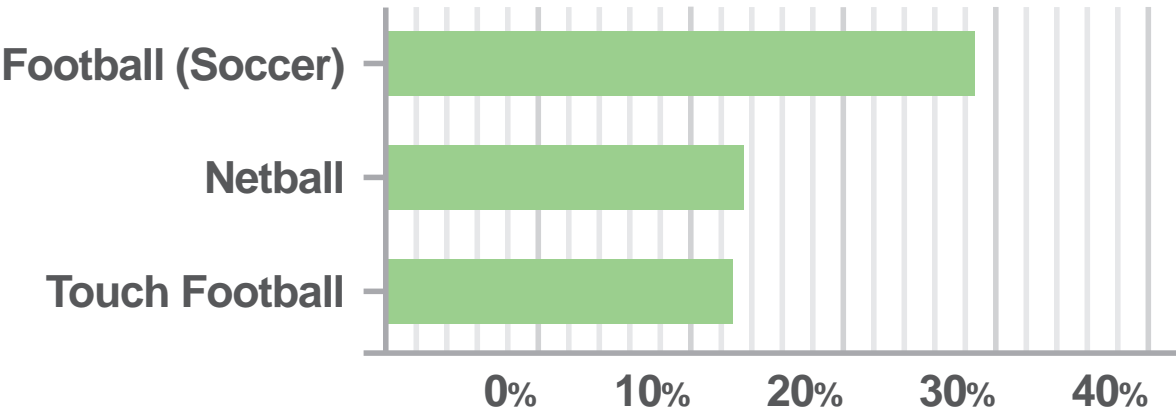
Football (soccer)	28.32%
Netball	13.86%
Touch Football	13.25%

Top 3 Adult Sports Across Port Stephens

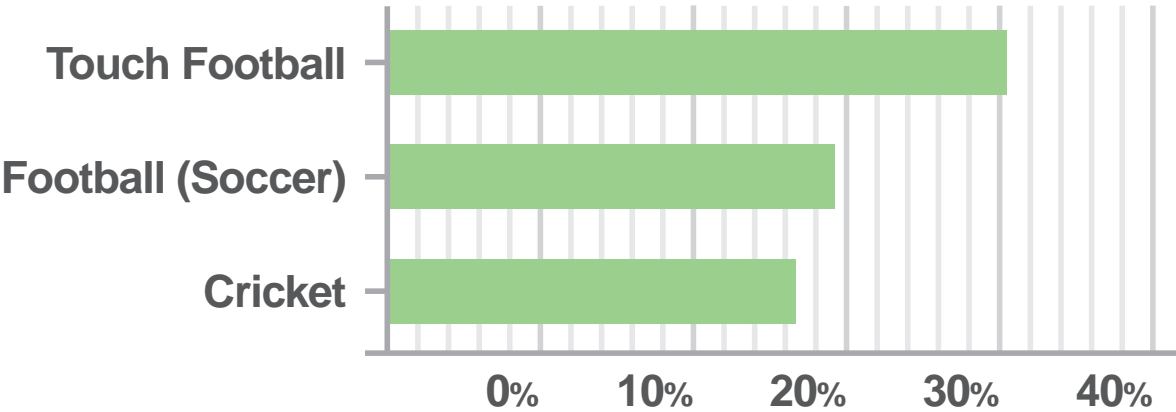
Touch Football	30.19%
Football (soccer)	19.57%
Cricket	16.28%



Top 3 Junior Sports Across Port Stephens



Top 3 Adult Sports Across Port Stephens





2016 participation numbers across Port Stephens based on primary sport season

Junior Sporting Codes	Jnr Numbers		Adult Sporting Codes	Snr Numbers	
Football (soccer)	1381	28.32%	Touch Football	762	30.19%
Netball	676	13.86%	Football (soccer)	494	19.57%
Touch Football	646	13.25%	Cricket	411	16.28%
Athletics	563	11.55%	Netball	299	11.85%
Rugby League	532	10.91%	OZ Tag	150	5.94%
Rugby Union	294	6.03%	AFL	105	4.16%
Cricket	286	5.87%	Rugby League	104	4.12%
AFL	213	4.37%	Croquet	86	3.41%
Hockey	154	3.16%	Rugby Union	72	2.85%
OZ Tag	130	2.67	Athletics	49	1.94%
Baseball	1	0.02%	Baseball	48	1.90%
			Hockey	30	1.19%
Total	4876		Total	2524	

Source: The registered player number data provided by clubs to Sports Council or directly to Council.



Women and girls participation and rise of women's sport

In November 2017 the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) released a focused report on women and girls participation in sport and physical activity based on Ausplay survey data. The report found that women and girls are just as active as boys and men however active sessions for women were of shorter duration than men. The data identified that women and girls are more likely to take part in non-sport related physical activities, with women seldom participating in team sports.

Conversely, the Office of Sport 2016-2017 Annual Report identified a rise in women's sport. They recognise public exposure of women's national competition has grown substantially in the past year with high profile televised games and record crowds especially in netball, AFL and cricket. There are increasing opportunities for females athletes to become professional sports people.

This rise in professional women's sport promotes participation in sport and physical activity to women and girls. Clubs across Port Stephens have reported a greater interest for female teams in sports such as AFL, rugby league and football (soccer).

Implications for recreation Provision:

- Open spaces need to support a variety of physical activities to encourage participation.
- Sports facilities in Port Stephens need to be supportive and welcoming for female participants, volunteers and officials. For example change rooms that provide privacy.
- Sports grounds should support modified formats for clubs that are changing structures to attract increased women's participation.

CSIRO - 'The Future of Australian Sport'

In April 2013 the CSIRO released a report for the Australian Sports Commission called 'The Future of Australian Sport'. The report identifies 'megatrends' defined as important patterns of social, economic and environmental change likely to shape the Australian Sports industry over the next 30 years. Key trends are:

Rise in individual sports and fitness

activities: This includes aerobics, running, walking and gym memberships, which have all raised sharply over the past decade, while participation rates for many organised sports have held constant or declined. It is reported that people are fitting sport into their increasingly busy and time-fragmented lifestyles to achieve personal health objectives. Individual sport and fitness activities allow flexibility, rather than commit to a regular organised sporting event.

This trend is evidenced by the above top 5 activities undertaken by NSW adults- walking, fitness/gym, swimming, athletics (jogging/running) and cycling. In an effort to increase membership, sporting clubs are modifying their game formats to attract time poor community members. This is reflected in the increasing popularity of competitions such as 20/20 cricket, hot shot tennis and 6 a side soccer.

Implications for recreation Provision:

- The rise of non-organised physical activity means linkages and pedestrian and cycleway networks are important to recreation provision.
- Greater demand for commercial operators such as personal trainers to utilise public recreation facilities. Port Stephens already has a number of commercial operators working from parks and sports grounds.
- Short sporting game formats require flexibility in surface and court layouts.

Rise in extreme sports:

Adventure and alternative lifestyle sports, such as skateboarding, are attracting more participants, particularly in the younger generations. Social media and sites such as YouTube are exposing people to a wider range of sports that offer self-expression.

Implications for recreation Provision:

- Skateboard, court facilities and alternate recreational activities are important for young people.
- Spaces for young people to socialise need to be provided.

Changing cultural make-up of Australia:

With an aging population and an increasingly multi-cultural society, the types of sports played and how we play them need to evolve to cater for the changing demographics. CSIRO found that there is an increasing participation amongst older people, multicultural groups and people with a disability. In future, traditional sporting organisations may find it be challenging to capture interest and involvement with these groups.

Implications for recreation Provision:

Port Stephens needs to provide sport and recreation opportunities that attract a broader range of ages, abilities and cultural groups. Facilities need to be accessible and welcoming to these groups.

CATEGORISATION OF RECREATION LAND



Categorisation of recreation land

Open space in Port Stephens ranges from the natural areas including the wetlands, bushland and environmental reserves through to the more developed spaces such as parks, foreshore reserves, urban public spaces and sportsgrounds.

Recreation Land Categories

For the purposes of this Strategy the focus will be on two recreation land categories, as defined below:

Category	Definition
Park	Open space which has been physically modified to support various informal recreation and community events. This includes urban parks, foreshore reserves maintained as parks, formal gardens, community gardens, play facilities and informal lawns.
Sportsground	Outdoor open space or venue designed to support sporting activities and could include fields, ovals, courts and other defined sporting areas. These areas also typically include clubhouses, change rooms, and equipment storage facilities.

The focus of the strategy is land primarily used by the community for recreation.

It does not specifically plan for other open space types such as natural areas, wetlands, cemeteries, community halls, aquatic centres, linear corridors, drainage/detention basins and civic spaces. These land categories have been considered in the development of the strategy as they are highly valued and contribute to the broader recreation network, however they are not the focus of this document.

Recreation Land Hierarchy

A 'hierarchy' approach is proposed by this Strategy to determine the appropriate level of development and management of Council's recreation network; it is recognised that not all facilities are able to be developed and managed to the same level or standard.

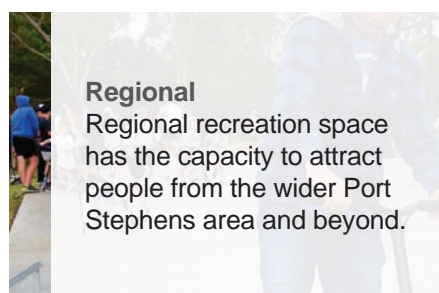
The suggested hierarchy levels are consistent with the framework widely adopted and applied across the industry. The three levels proposed are: **Regional, District and Local.**

In principle the hierarchy level allocated for each open space parcel of land has been determined through consideration of a number of factors including location, size, quality, accessibility, existing infrastructure, uniqueness, visitor appeal (including the geographical catchment of people attracted), flexibility or type and capacity for activity offered.

Generally regional and district recreation facilities will be higher quality and have the potential to cater for a wider catchment of people. Local spaces will typically cater for local communities, be less developed and have a lower profile.

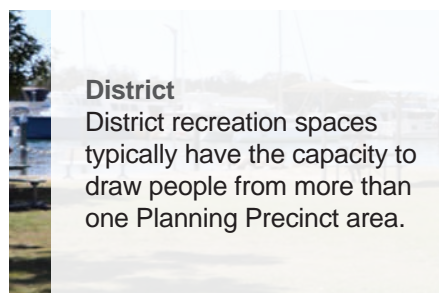
This hierarchy level can be changed for each parcel of recreation land to reflect the changing community needs, although generally improvements should be consistent with the hierarchy level allocated through this Strategy.

The 'hierarchy' of recreation land within the network has been defined as follows:



Regional

Regional recreation space has the capacity to attract people from the wider Port Stephens area and beyond.



District

District recreation spaces typically have the capacity to draw people from more than one Planning Precinct area.



Local

Local recreation spaces will generally cater for people within the local area within one or two suburbs.



