



Shellharbour City Council

Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities

Needs Study Report

March 2010



This document has been prepared by Shellharbour City Council with the assistance of GHD.
The conclusions and recommendations contained in this document do not necessarily represent those of GHD.

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- D Sports Group Consultation Summary
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Acronyms

Expanded Meaning	Acronym
Australian Football League	AFL
Asset Protection Zone	APZ
Bicycle Motocross	BMX
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	CPTED
Ecologically Sustainable Development	ESD
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre	IPAC
Local Government Area	LGA
Mountain Bike	MTB
New South Wales	NSW
Cross Country	XC

Executive Summary

In planning for long term resident needs in the Shellharbour local government area, Council has initiated this *Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study* to ensure that Council is planning now for the City's needs all the way through to 2021.

The *Needs Study Report* provides the basis for moving ahead with a range of findings that will enable Council to confidently direct the development of open space, parks, sporting fields and community facilities. The three key areas of the project are:

- ▶ Passive open space (or parks);
- ▶ Active open space (or sporting grounds); and
- ▶ Community facilities.

Passive Open Space

The findings for passive open space, or otherwise known as parks, identify a large excess of all types of parks within the three level - local, district and citywide - park hierarchy. However this overall picture masks several areas where access to appropriate spaces is spatially inadequate or the quality of existing spaces is below the suggested standards. These issues are particularly relevant to the more established suburbs, where coastal and the lake foreshore parks have been embellished and upgraded to a high standard, but smaller local parks away from the foreshore have been somewhat neglected.

Active Open Space

Like the parks discussed above, active open spaces, or otherwise known as sports grounds, are generally well provided as a whole across the local government area. Council's maintenance of these fields is generally of a high standard, although the ancillary facilities - such as storage areas,

canteens and toilets - are of a much poorer standard and often unused as a result.

Nevertheless, many sports continue to flourish within the LGA, particularly soccer and cricket, both of which continue to grow in large numbers. Other sports have more stable growth, including rugby league, hockey and netball. Interestingly, AFL has grown very rapidly from a very small base since being reintroduced in the area in 2005. Over the next 15 years, growth in AFL is therefore difficult to predict.

Community Facilities

In providing for a range of community services and spaces for events, Council currently owns and operates a range of community facilities. Council has generally provided community centres and meeting spaces to a high standard, particularly with a number of new centres opening in the past few years.

With this strong basis of provision and continued population growth, opportunities will exist over the next 15 years to build upon the social and cultural capital through the implementation of various new facilities. Council's *Shellharbour City Civic Centre* plan has the potential to provide many of these needs in a central civic setting. Other specific requirements for cultural and arts facilities will also need to be met in the City Centre and elsewhere.

Moving Forward

Rectifying existing gaps and introducing new facilities and spaces cannot be undertaken without some clear directions and processes to enable Council to move beyond previous standards. This *Needs Study Report* provides for some of these key directions, including an open space prioritising process for the master planning and upgrade of parks and sports grounds, and the identification of other future key community and cultural projects.

Recommendations

Specific recommendations have been made to address the range of open space, recreation and community facility requirements through to 2021.

The recommendations are supported by other management and issue specific recommendations that seek to overcome potential blockages and distractions from the core delivery of quality open space and community facilities requirements. Together these recommendations will work to provide Council with tangible measures of success in implementation of this study.

1. The Brief

1.1 Need for the Study

The *Illawarra Regional Strategy: 2006-31* (the Regional Strategy) identifies Shellharbour as the local government area (LGA) in the region that has:

“...taken the major responsibility for regional Greenfield land releases over the last 30 years at Albion Park, Blackbutt, Flinders and Shell Cove. As the current estates reach completion, the focus for Shellharbour will shift towards urban renewal opportunities around towns and centres such as Oak Flats.” (Department of Planning 2007)

The Regional Strategy, which covers the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama LGAs, identifies the need to accommodate an additional 47,600 residents over the next 25 years. This population will be housed in around 38,000 new dwellings and will create continued demand on local government supply of services and infrastructure. Within the Shellharbour LGA, these trends are highlighted by population projections that show Shellharbour growing by 12% over the next 15 years to more than 71,000 by 2021 (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

To meet the growth targets set by the Regional Strategy, demand for housing over the next 20 years is expected to be high, with an increase in the level of medium and high-density housing. This presents new challenges for Council to provide for parks, open spaces and community facilities that meet growing and changing demands.

1.2 Council’s Brief

Shellharbour City Council commissioned GHD Pty Ltd to undertake a comprehensive open space, recreation and community needs study of the Shellharbour LGA. The purpose of the study is to provide Council with the

information and planning tools to strategically plan for future open space, recreational and community facilities to meet the needs of the Shellharbour LGA to the year 2021.

The project will also assist Council’s corporate planning by providing a strategic basis for setting expenditure priorities on community facility and open space infrastructure provision and a framework for Section 94 contributions planning.

1.3 Support for the Study

Council supports the provision of a range of open space and community facilities and encourages its residents to participate in a healthy and socially active lifestyle. A range of Council’s staff have provided valuable input and support to this study, including participation in a number of internal Council workshops on a range of issues.

The project has also been supported by Healthy Cities Illawarra and the *Child Friendly by Design* and *Park and Play* project teams.

1.4 The Study Area and Scope

The study is focussed on providing information relating to the needs and demands of the Shellharbour LGA resident population. While the analysis of land was constrained to land within the LGA, the project recognises and takes into account the relationship of the facilities and services that are provided outside of the LGA, in particular regional facilities.

The study focus is also on the provision of Council owned land and services, though again, other State Government and private sector facilities are considered, particularly where regional sporting, recreational and community facilities are provided in the surrounding neighbouring LGAs of Wollongong and Kiama. The Shellharbour LGA in the regional context is shown at Figure 1.

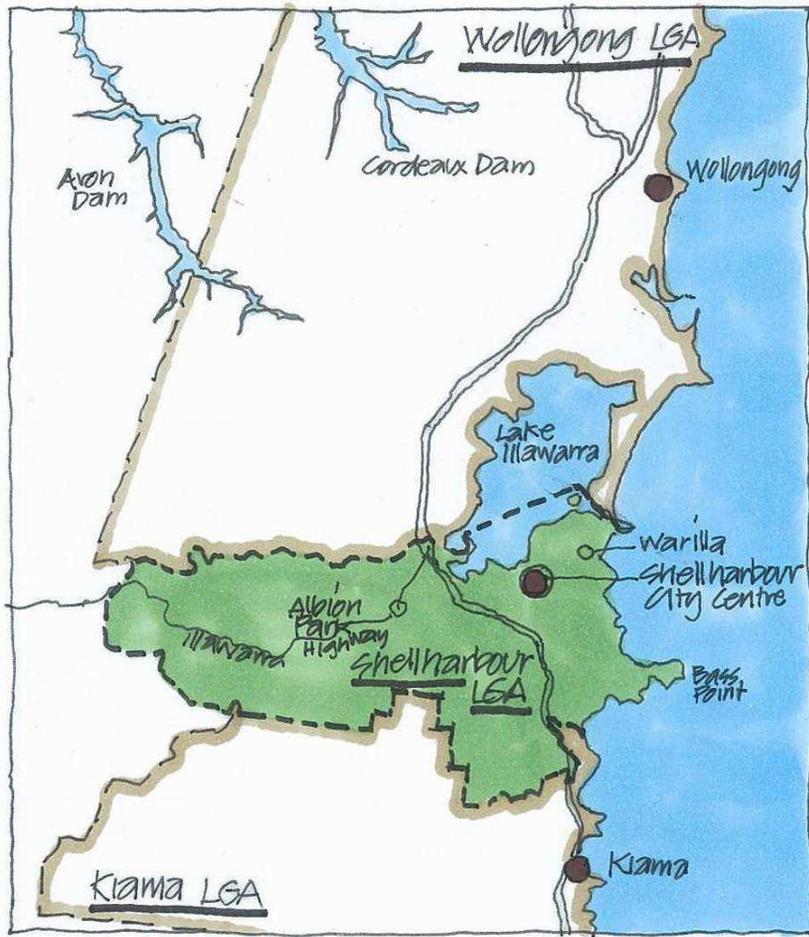


Figure 1: Study Area

1.5 Structure of this Document

This document is divided into eleven sections covering five main areas:

- ▶ Sections 1 and 2 provide the basis for the study and the physical and policy context;
- ▶ Sections 3 and 4 examines the trends that influence the study, including demographic trends and recreation, open space and community facilities planning trends;
- ▶ Section 5 establishes hierarchies, design principles and standards of provision for the facilities;
- ▶ Sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 examine the supply and demand for passive and active open spaces, community facilities and other open spaces; and
- ▶ Section 10 then identifies specific management and delivery issues to be overcome and is followed by the summarising of all recommendations in Section 11.

1.6 Methodology

The structure of this document is designed to identify issues and trends that will influence outcomes and recommendations at the end of the document. This structure mirrors the project methodology, which was a five stage process designed to “build-up” the level of information and understanding of the issues before analysing supply and demands on the provision of spaces and facilities. The five stage process entailed:

- ▶ Collation and review of existing data, previous studies and literature;
- ▶ Targeted community and user group consultation and surveys;
- ▶ Trend research and analysis;
- ▶ Suburb-by-suburb analysis; and
- ▶ Preparation of the Needs Study.

Examinations of supply and demand for passive open spaces (parks) are detailed on a suburb by suburb basis, as well as being aggregated to an east / west and whole of LGA scale. Sporting facilities and community facilities are aggregated on an east / west and whole of LGA scale only, as they are typically accessible to a greater community than a single suburb – these suburbs and aggregations are identified in Figure 2 below.

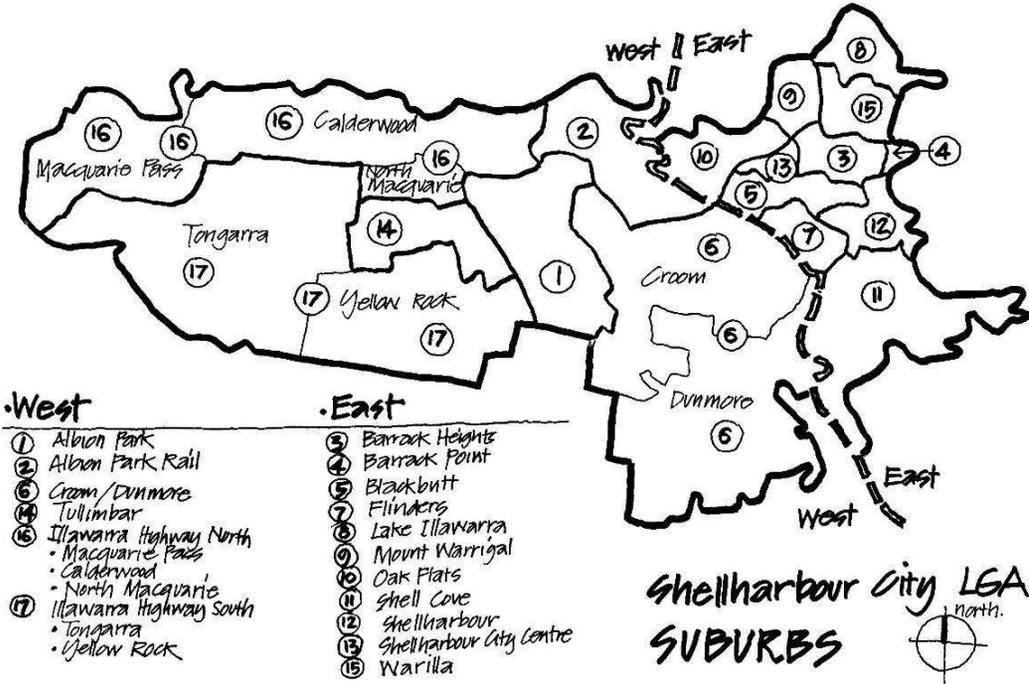


Figure 2: Suburb Plan

2. Context for the Study

2.1 Physical Context

The Shellharbour LGA is located approximately 100km by road from Sydney and at the Illawarra regional level, is around 20 km south of the Wollongong city centre. The LGA is bordered to the north by Wollongong, to the south by Kiama and to the west by the Wingecarribee local government areas.

Shellharbour LGA's area is some 154km² and its land mass is bound by the foreshore of Lake Illawarra to the north, Macquarie National Park to the west and the Minnamurra River to the south. It also contains major State Recreational Reserves at Bass Point and the Killalea State Park.

The urban area of Shellharbour is concentrated in the north east of the LGA, with the Princes Highway and South Coast Rail line intersecting the urban area and creating a significant physical east / west divide. The most westerly urban area of Albion Park has been a location for significant growth in recent years, along with the south eastern areas of Flinders and Shell Cove. The more established suburbs are concentrated in the north, bordering Lake Illawarra and the coastal areas fronting the Pacific Ocean.

Shellharbour City Centre is recognised in the Regional Strategy as a major regional growth centre and as a location to lead employment growth over the next two decades. The Strategy also identifies Warilla and Albion Park as major towns within the Illawarra Region.

2.2 Council's Role in Providing Facilities

The *Local Government Act* 1993 (the Act) provides councils with wide powers to carry out certain functions conferred or imposed on them by the Act or other legislation. In carrying out these functions councils must

pursue a charter laid down in Section 8 of the Act. The charter is a fundamental set of principles to guide all councils' operations. It includes a number of principles that directly relate to the provision of public open space and community facilities. These include the efficient management of services and facilities, ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles, the promotion of cultural diversity, planning for children and accountability for and effective management of public assets.

Chapter 6 Part 2 of the *Local Government Act* provides the legislative framework for the classification, use and management of public land as defined under the Act.

Councils must also comply with the provisions of the *Crown Lands Act* 1989 for the management of Crown lands under their control as Trust Manager or lands under their care, control and management. Principles for the management of Crown land are set down in Section 11 of the *Crown Lands Act*.

2.3 Information Review

An information review was undertaken to highlight important and relevant aspects of current studies and other documents that set the context for the needs study as identified by Council. Key documents reviewed included:

- ▶ Shellharbour's Social Plan 2005 – 2009;
- ▶ Draft Shellharbour Cultural Resources Study (Guppy & Associates/Collaborations) – May 1999;
- ▶ Shellharbour City Council Review of Community Facilities – August 2000;
- ▶ Shellharbour City Council: Report on Library Requirements (State Library of NSW) – April 2007 and December 1999;

- ▶ Shellharbour Recreation and Community Facilities Usage Study, including Annex 1 (IRIS Research) – May 1996;
- ▶ 2007 Shellharbour City Community Survey Management Report (IRIS Research) – July 2007;
- ▶ Shellharbour Section 94 Contributions Plan 2005;
- ▶ Shellharbour City Centre Master Plan (2007);
- ▶ Revised Shellharbour City Centre Development Control Plan (Annand Alcock Urban Design) - December 2003;
- ▶ Illawarra Regional Strategy 2006-2031 (Department of Planning); and
- ▶ Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections 2008 (SGS Economics and Planning).

A summary review of these documents is provided in Appendix A.

2.4 Relevant Local Programs

In addition to previous studies and information, two local programs are currently operating which provide an additional insight to the use and design of parks and community spaces at the local level. Both programs are funded through the Federal Government's Communities for Children Program which is directed towards the 2527 and 2529 postcodes, both of which are within Shellharbour.

2.4.1 Park and Play Shellharbour

Park and Play is a program developed by Family Services Illawarra to encourage increased and more creative use of local parks in the Shellharbour LGA by young children and their carers. The Park and Play team has undertaken an evaluation of a selected number of parks in regard to design and planning issues as well as extensive interviews and

surveys of park users. These evaluations and surveys have been used to inform the Needs Study.

2.4.2 Child Friendly by Design Project

The Child Friendly by Design Project is a project being undertaken by a specialised team led by Healthy Cities Illawarra. This project seeks to involve users and the local community in the planning and design of two selected parks in the Shellharbour areas represented by postcodes 2527 and 2529. These parks include a Greenfield site at Shell Cove and the redesign of an existing park and community space in Albion Park.

The project has also developed a set of Child Friendly Indicators to assist planners, developers and designers in Shellharbour to create more child friendly spaces. The Indicators and findings of this project have been used to inform the Needs Study.

3. Population, Housing and Demographic Trends

Careful consideration of population, housing and demographic trends is important to ensure that the forward planning of open space and community facilities accurately reflects the likely growth of the area.

Population and housing trends in this section are based on various sources including work undertaken on behalf of Council by SGS Economics & Planning in 2008. Their report, *Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household and Demographic Projections* (SGS Economics & Planning 2008) has been used in addition to and other relevant census data to identify trends and implications for the Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study project.

Trends have been identified on three levels: the whole of LGA trends; east / west LGA trends; and trends within suburbs.

3.1 Shellharbour LGA Trends

This section provides details on the broader LGA perspective in comparison the region, state and country. Six key indicators have been used to identify a number of broad directions for consideration during the detailed suburb analysis. These key over-arching indicators are:

- ▶ Population;
- ▶ Age distribution;
- ▶ Income;
- ▶ Family Characteristics;
- ▶ Household composition; and
- ▶ Dwelling type.

These comparisons will assist in an overview of the area and is meant for general comparison only. Statistics in this sub-section are sourced from 2006 Census Data unless otherwise noted.

3.1.1 Population

The Shellharbour LGA population grew by around 15,300 persons over the period 1991 to 2006, from around 48,200 to 63,500 persons. This represents 28% growth over a 15 year period. This high growth rate is particularly notable in comparison with the Illawarra at only half that rate (13%) and NSW at 15% (ABS 2008 - 3218.0 Regional Population Growth).

While a high growth rate is still expected in the next 15 years, with 7,500 additional residents, the growth rate will fall to just 12% over the 2006-2021 period (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

The population characteristics suggest particular implications for the need for open space, recreation and community facilities. These implications may include:

- ▶ Overall increase in the aging of the population as a result of slowing population growth;
- ▶ Continued development of community facilities and maintenance
- ▶ Need for support services for elderly and disabled people as the population ages; and
- ▶ Regeneration of existing passive open space to ensure continued relevance to local communities.

3.1.2 Age Distribution

The Shellharbour LGA is currently characterised by a younger than average population, particularly in the 0-4 and 5-14 year old age groups. These relative statistics are likely to remain, as new growth areas in Shell Cove and Tullimbar primarily involve family orientated detached dwelling

type development. In the older age groups, from 15 through to 65+, the Shellharbour area has a population typical of NSW and Australia, with an increasing elderly population overall. The age profile for the LGA is illustrated in Figure 3 (2006 Census Data).

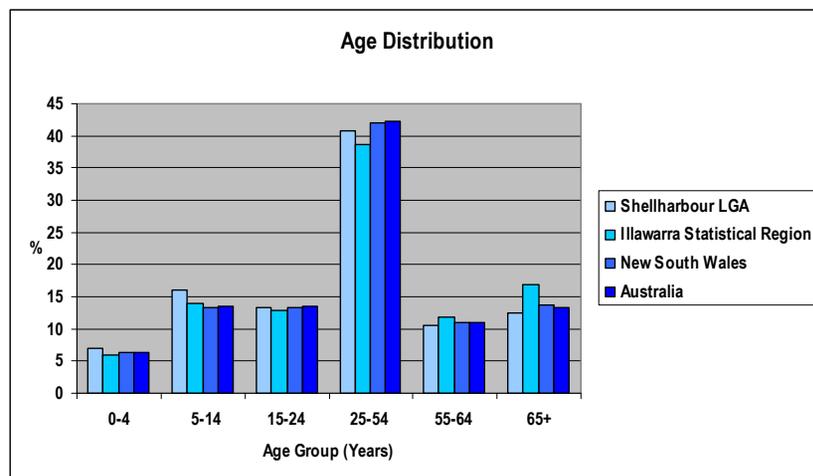


Figure 3: Age Distribution

The age distribution characteristics suggest particular implications for the Shellharbour population. These implications may include:

- ▶ Need for local parks and passive open spaces that are targeted at younger children and young families, particularly in newly developed areas;
- ▶ Need in the medium term for passive and active open spaces and activity areas/facilities to accommodate teenagers and younger adults;
- ▶ Need for spaces and facilities to support older people, with accessibility and provision of low-key passive open spaces being high priorities; and
- ▶ Need for support services for elderly and disabled people as the population ages.

3.1.3 Income

Individual incomes throughout the Illawarra, including the Shellharbour area, are substantially lower than the NSW and Australian average. Although the median household income within Shellharbour compares more favourably than the greater Illawarra area, it is still below the NSW and Australian figures.

The difference in the median individual and household statistics for the Shellharbour and Illawarra areas suggest that there is a larger than average proportion of two income families or multiple earners in households in Shellharbour. This could have the potential to increase demand for child care and other supervisory services such as after school care. The median weekly incomes for the Shellharbour area are also consistently below the state and national averages, suggesting that affordability of services would be important. These economic factors will continue to be highlighted with rising costs of fuel, particularly with a large portion of the population being employed in Wollongong.

The income statistics are illustrated in Figure 4 (2006 Census Data).

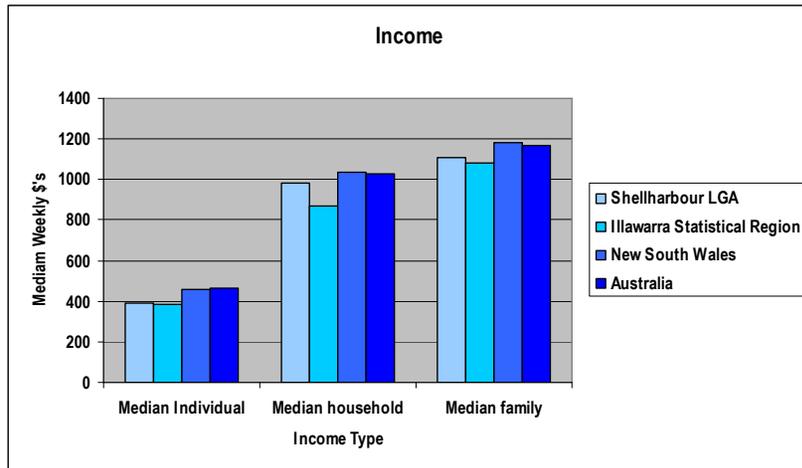


Figure 4: Median Weekly Income

The possible specific demands resulting from the income distribution on community and open space facilities can be summarised as:

- ▶ Need for affordable services and facilities, including child care and other support activities; and
- ▶ Need for facilities to be easily accessible to reduce costs of access, particularly for local passive open space needs.

3.1.4 Family Characteristics

The family type characteristic in the Shellharbour area is notable for the high proportion of children, either with a couple or with a lone parent. In both these cases, Shellharbour is above the Illawarra, NSW and Australia figures and, in contrast, there are a lower proportion of couples without children. Family characteristic statistics are illustrated in Figure 5 (2006 Census Data).

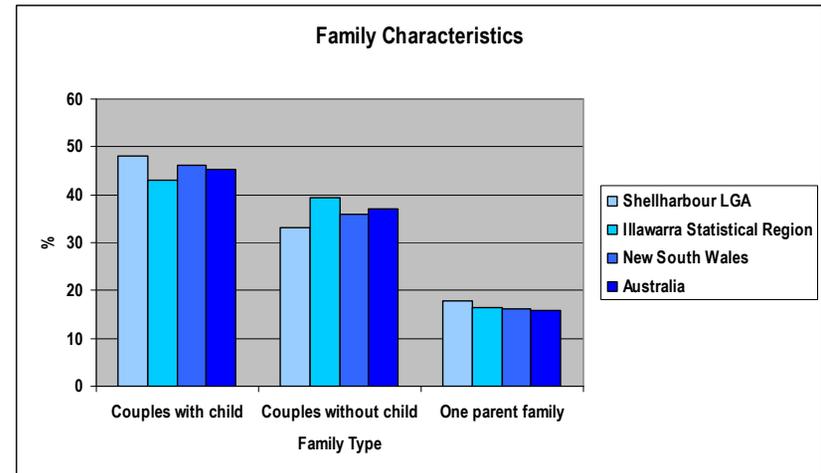


Figure 5: Family Characteristics

These figures reinforce the age distribution statistics, which identify higher proportions of younger and middle-aged persons. Of particular note is the larger proportion of one parent families, where the lower median individual incomes of Shellharbour persons possibly exacerbate the difficulties of raising children as a single parent. The implications of the family characteristics on community and open space facility demand can be summarised as:

- ▶ Need for affordable services and facilities, including child care and other support activities; and
- ▶ Need for facilities and spaces where parents are able to interact with other parents to facilitate social interaction.

3.1.5 Household Composition

Shellharbour household composition again reinforces the age and family characteristic findings, with a high proportion of family households, close to 10% above the national average. Conversely, the proportions of single households and group households are lower than other areas, though both likely to be rising as an overall proportion, consistent with national trends. Household composition statistics are illustrated in Figure 6 (2006 Census Data).

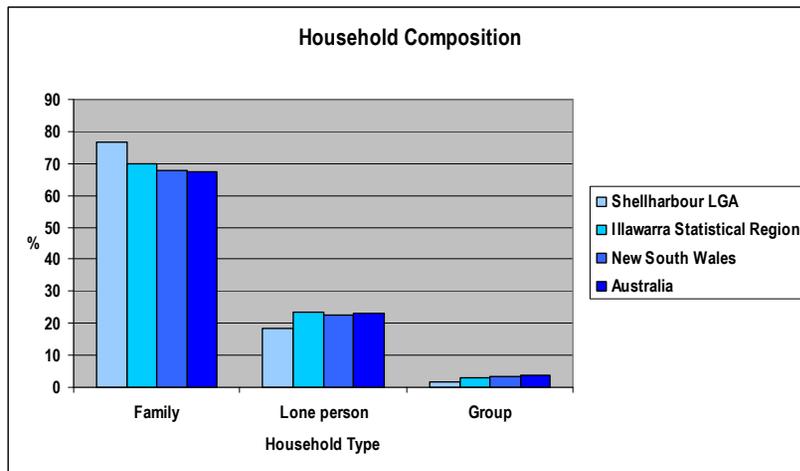


Figure 6: Household Composition

The very high level of family households in the LGA suggests that there is a larger portion of younger families, typical of faster growing areas with more affordable housing. Importantly, the provision of facilities for families and younger residents may need to be offset by facilities for older people in the next 10 or 15 years. Household composition characteristics are likely to have the following implications for community and open space facility planning:

- ▶ Need for family orientated facilities, particularly for younger families that can then be transformed for older children and young adults, particularly in established suburbs; and
- ▶ Need for careful planning to ensure that lone person household services are easily accessible and not neglected with an expectation of growth in this household type.

3.1.6 Dwelling Type

The dwelling type within the Shellharbour LGA is dominated by separate single houses (low density), with few attached or unit type developments (medium density). While these statistics suggest that individual household would have high accessibility to private open space, the nature and style of newer housing identifies a trend towards larger houses on smaller lots, with private open space often being sacrificed. The dwelling type statistics are provided in Figure 7 (extrapolated from 2006 Census Data).

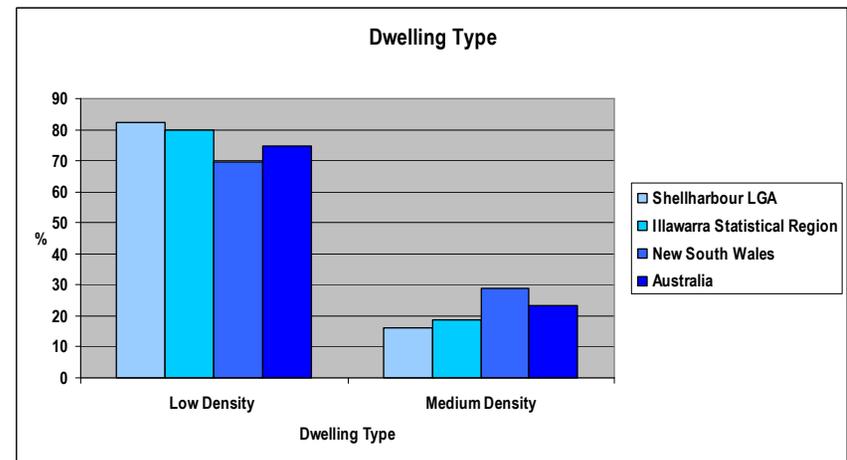


Figure 7: Dwelling Type

Historical areas with high levels of separate low-density housing cover much of the LGA, along with much of the newer growth areas. The number of families within detached housing can be expected to be higher than in semi-detached housing or flats, though as described earlier, the nature of new detached housing is such that these areas are likely to have an equivalent or greater need for public open space to meet recreational needs.

The dwelling type statistics are likely to have the following implications for community and open space facility planning:

- Need for family orientated parks and active open spaces, particularly in new development areas to cater for a range of recreational needs

3.2 East-West LGA Trends

Council recognises that there is a perceived, and to large extent physical, split between the eastern and western areas of the LGA, generally aligning with the Princes Highway and South Coast Railway corridors. The east / west split map was previously identified in Figure 2 on Page 5. Utilising the suburb based data from the *Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections* of May 2008 by SGS Economics & Planning, an east / west comparison of existing and future population and housing trends has been prepared.

3.2.1 Western LGA Trends

The overall population trend in the western portion of the LGA shows growth of around 3,500 people between the 2006 census data and the projected 2021 population. Within this overall growth, large increases in both younger (5-24) and older (40+) residents are expected, while the proportion of very young (0-4) and middle aged (25-40) residents is reduced. These trends are illustrated in Figure 8 (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

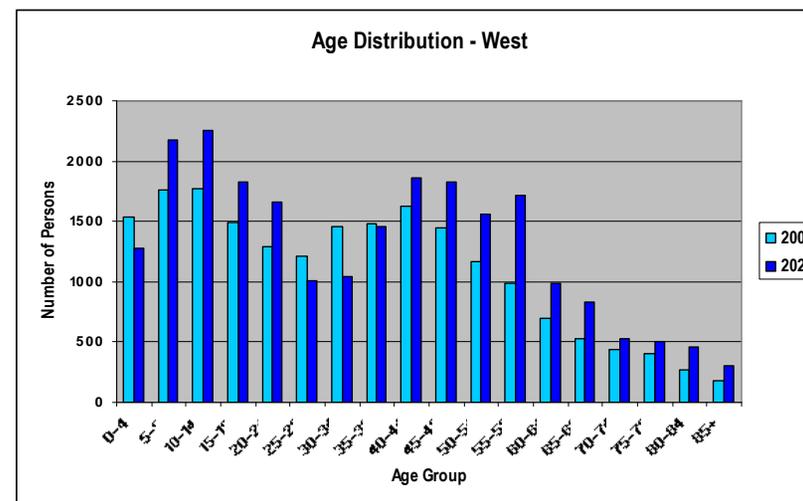


Figure 8: West LGA Population Growth by Age

The growth of population in the western area has been divided into two housing types: low density (detached) and medium density housing. A combined total of close to 2,500 new dwellings is expected, with growth of around 1,500 low density and 900 medium density dwellings. As a relative proportion of existing dwellings however, it notable that the number of medium density dwellings will increase by more than 100%, compared with growth of just over 20% in low density development. These statistics are illustrated in Figure 9 (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

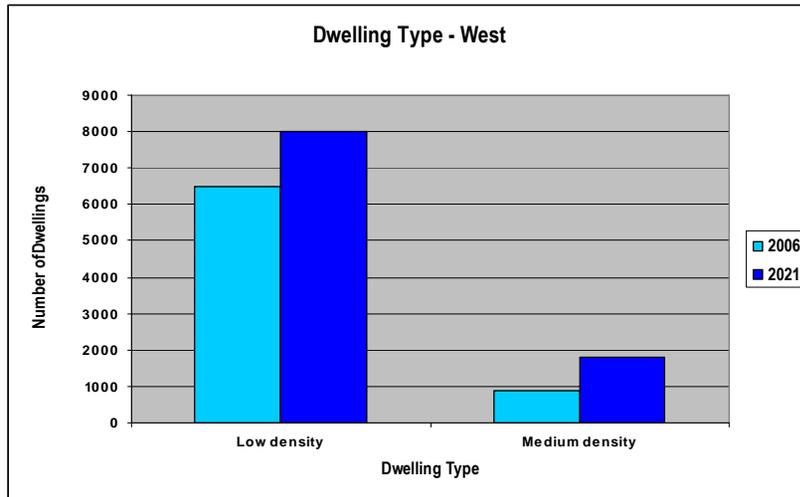


Figure 9: West LGA Housing Growth

Implications

There are a number of implications that can be associated with the trends that are evident from the population and housings statistics for the western area of the LGA. These could include:

- ▶ Needs for high quality spaces and facilities across the 5-24 year old age groups, particularly for teenage and young adults;
- ▶ Recognition of the aging population and provision of spaces, services and facilities to cater for this growth; and
- ▶ Increase in accessibility for local and district style parks where residents in smaller dwellings can access passive open spaces.

3.2.2 Eastern LGA Trends

The overall population trend in the eastern portion of the LGA shows growth of around 4,000 people between the 2006 census data and the projected 2021 population. While this figure is around 500 people higher than the western area, as a proportion of existing population, this increase is just under 10%, compared with growth of around 18% in the west.

Within the overall eastern area growth, increases are expected for all younger age groups from 0-19 years, with particularly high growth in the 10-14 year age group by 2021. Increases in the older population are also expected by 2021, with all age groups from 35 years and older increasing. Again there is pronounced growth by 2021 in particular groups, in this instance the 45-49 and 55-59 year old groups. Residents in the middle aged groups from 20 to 35 year olds are expected to decrease. These trends are illustrated in Figure 10 (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

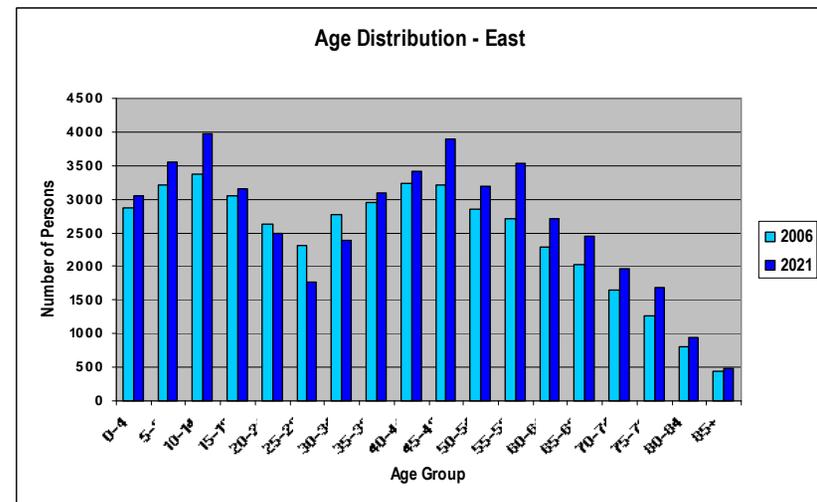


Figure 10: East LGA Population Growth by Age

In terms of household type growth, there is again significant growth in both groups, with around 1,700 new low density dwellings, and close to 2,100 new medium density dwellings by 2021. As a relative proportion of existing dwellings it is again notable that the number of medium density dwellings will increase by 65%, compared with growth of just below 13% in low density development. These statistics are illustrated in Figure 11 (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

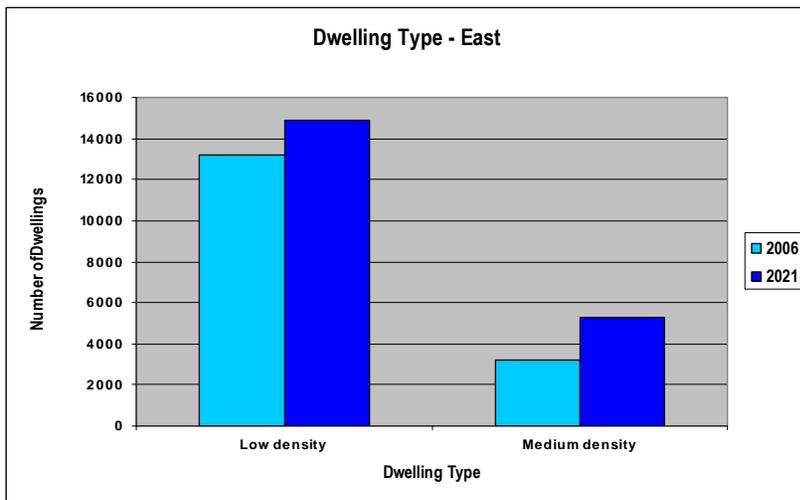


Figure 11: West LGA Housing Growth

Implications

The implications associated with these trends for the eastern portion of the LGA show some similarities to the western portion of the LGA, particularly with respect to growth in elderly residents. However, the eastern portion has some notable differences in needs for younger children, as well as the significant growth in medium density housing. The broad implications for the eastern portion of the LGA could include:

- ▶ Needs for passive and active open spaces to suit a range of age groups, from very young to teenage years;
- ▶ Recognition of the aging population and provision of spaces, services and facilities to cater for this growth; and
- ▶ Need for effective passive open spaces to suit growth of medium density development, particularly where such development is aimed at the non-family demographic.

3.3 Suburb Level Trends

The suburb level data is important to ensure the broader implications at the whole of LGA and the east/west split are brought into a local context that can particularly be applied to passive open spaces (parks). The suburb level assessment is again based on the population and housing projections provided within the *Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections* of May 2008 by SGS Economics & Planning.

A table showing population and dwelling projections for each suburb is provided at the start of each suburb summary section, to give context to the size of the suburb and its growth predictions. These tables are based on figures within the *Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections* report.

The use of suburbs reflects Council's preference to utilise these planning areas rather than existing precincts as identified under the current Section 94 Plan.

The suburb plan was previously illustrated in Figure 2 on Page 5.

Suburb Summaries

3.3.1 Albion Park

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	10,879	10,917
Dwellings	4,081	4,611

The Albion Park suburb shows a generally stable population, which will remain unchanged through to 2021. The population is generally aging, though still maintaining a historically high proportion of younger residents (0-19 year olds at 32.4% a reduction of 2.5%). While the relative proportions of dwelling type (low and medium density) will remain unchanged, steady growth of dwelling numbers will offset lower average household size to maintain a steady overall population. Albion Park will remain the most populous suburb in the LGA.

Implications:

- ▶ Refurbishment / embellishment of existing parks may be required to ensure that the parks provided continue to match the suburb demographic needs; and
- ▶ Local community facilities require close assessment due to the relative isolation of this large urban area from the City Centre and other urban areas.

3.3.2 Albion Park Rail

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	7,287	6,869
Dwellings	2,733	2,901

Albion Park Rail will see a gradual decline in population resulting from a reduction in average household size. The total population change will be -419 between 2006 and 2021. The population will generally age, reflecting minimal new development and only sporadic provision of new dwellings.

Implications:

- ▶ Consideration will need to be given to targeting of passive open space for older children and adults, particularly as the population ages in the longer term; and
- ▶ Possible rationalisation of some passive open space given the negative growth of the area, however enhancement and refurbishment of existing parkland to cater for the aging population will be crucial.

3.3.3 Barrack Heights

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	6,672	6,005
Dwellings	2,503	2,536

Barrack Heights, like Albion Park Rail, will have minimal growth in dwelling numbers over the next 15 years, resulting in an aging population and reduction of overall population (-667) due to lower average household size. This reduction in population is the largest in the LGA. Barrack Heights will also have a relatively high proportion of older residents (60+) at 24.3%.

Implications:

- ▶ Similar to Albion Park above, consideration will need to be given to targeting of passive open space for older children and adults, particularly as the population ages in the longer term; and
- ▶ Possible rationalisation of some open space given the negative growth of the area, however enhancement and refurbishment of existing parkland to cater for the aging population will be crucial.

3.3.4 Barrack Point

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	710	751
Dwellings	266	317

Barrack Point has a historically low population, which will remain relatively constant, growing by just 41 persons over the next 15 years. The area will have a high proportion of 35-59 year old residents, with the lowest proportion of 0-19 year olds in the LGA. Interestingly, this area will also reduce in population of those over 60, making way for predominantly 35-59 year olds.

Implications:

- ▶ Need to assess existing parkland for potential to make greater provision for the needs of middle aged adults; and
- ▶ Additional requirement to ensure the quality (rather than quantity) of local parks for children.

3.3.5 Blackbutt

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	3,223	3,655
Dwellings	1,208	1,543

Despite an increase in the overall population by 432 persons, a significant reduction in 0-19 and 20-34 year old residents reflects the aging population of Blackbutt. Increased low density housing will account for the majority of

growth, resulting in a greater proportion of low density dwellings compared with medium density.

Implications:

- ▶ With an increasing and aging population, targeting of passive open space for adults and older people will be a priority, particularly in the longer term; and
- ▶ Opportunities for enhancement of existing underutilised areas and assurance of new park provision being appropriately designed.

3.3.6 Dunmore / Croom

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	1,072	952
Dwellings	402	402

Dunmore / Croom's negative population growth (-120 persons) will be characterised by a young population, with the highest proportions of 0-19 and 20-34 year olds within the LGA. Older people will provide only a low proportion of residents, at less than 30% of the population above 34 years old. Housing will remain of a low density with limited growth.

Implications:

- ▶ With a highly dispersed population, there is a need to ensure open spaces are appropriately accessible, cognisant of the local setting, and appropriate to the young demographic of the area.

3.3.7 Flinders

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	4,079	4,900
Dwellings	1,530	2,070

Population growth in Flinders will be positive, with an additional 821 people by 2021. Growth in the proportion of 0-19 year old people will be relatively high at 37.9% by 2021, while the proportion of 20-34 year olds will reduce to accommodate younger residents. Dwelling growth will be predominantly through low density development, with around 500 new dwellings by 2021.

Implications:

- ▶ Need to ensure that any new active or passive open space associated with additional residential development is appropriate in respect to quality, location and focus; and
- ▶ Need to cater for and focus opportunities within existing open space for children and younger people.

3.3.8 Lake Illawarra

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	4,018	3,617
Dwellings	1,507	1,528

Lake Illawarra residents are some of the proportionally oldest in the LGA, with 26.6% being over 60 years old by 2021. Combined with a small increase in the proportion of younger residents, 20-34 year olds will be significantly reduced in proportion. With the number of new dwellings remaining low, the population will reduce through lower household population, with the total population reducing by 401 over the next 15 years. Lake Illawarra also contains a relatively high proportion of medium density developments and visitor / tourist populations.

Implications:

- ▶ Assessment needed of existing open space to ensure high quality and accessibility, as well as being appropriately design for the older population and children; and
- ▶ Opportunities for rationalisation will be high given the reduced population, with opportunities for creating an icon park along the foreshore supported by local open spaces.

3.3.9 Mount Warrigal

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	5,435	4,859
Dwellings	2,038	2,052

The population of Mount Warrigal will reduce for similar reasons to Lake Illawarra – that is low dwelling growth – losing 576 people over 15 years. Proportions of 35-59 and 60+ residents will increase over that time, reflecting the steady aging of the population who remain in the area.

Implications:

- ▶ As with Lake Illawarra above, the combination of an aging and negative population growth presents significant opportunities for rationalisation and focusing of existing assets.

3.3.10 Oak Flats

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	6,909	6,830
Dwellings	2,591	2,885

The Oak Flats population will remain steady with a population loss of only 80 residents. Proportions of 35-59 and 60+ residents will increase, reflecting a steady long term population base. 293 additional dwellings will be provided over the 15 year timeframe, predominantly within the medium density category.

Implications:

- ▶ The aging and negative growth scenarios of Lake Illawarra and Mount Warrigal are again seen in Oak Flats, however the growth in medium density housing may require attention to the accessibility of open space.

3.3.11 Shell Cove

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	2,602	6,839
Dwellings	975	2,889

Shell Cove represents one of only two suburbs with significant growth over the coming 15 years. A significant increase in younger (0-19 year old) residents, from 35.8% to 42.3%, will see this area have the second highest proportion of young persons. Almost 2,000 new dwellings will create a population increase of 4,237, the greatest increase of any suburb. A large proportion of this dwelling increase will be through medium density housing.

Implications:

- ▶ Land of sufficient quality and quantity are required to be provided to support the significant new growth, particularly with the number of new families and children;
- ▶ Medium density development will place greater pressure on quality and accessibility of new parkland; and

- ▶ Parkland around the new Marina Precinct will need to play a citywide or regional role, as well as serving local residents.

3.3.12 Shellharbour

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	3,406	3,250
Dwellings	1,277	1,372

The Shellharbour population will reduce over the coming 15 years by 156 persons, reflecting slow dwelling growth of just 95 dwellings. The population will slowly age, though the proportion of the 0-19 year old age group will remain constant.

Implications:

- ▶ Need to ensure that the foreshore and local open spaces cater for the whole population, as well as the significant tourist/sub-regional focus; and
- ▶ Existing local parkland may need to be rationalised, ensuring sufficient quality parks that meet local needs, particularly of the changing demographic and aging population.

3.3.13 Shellharbour City Centre

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	52	629
Dwellings	19	266

The City Centre will become home to a growing proportion of 35-59 year olds, all within medium density housing. A total of 577 additional people will live in the suburb, in a total of around 250 new dwellings. This area will be highly accessible to jobs and entertainment, with a likely high proportion of working professionals.

Implications:

- ▶ Parkland and facilities in this area will play a LGA-wide role, though will also need to cater for a growing local population in medium density housing;
- ▶ Provision of appropriate facilities for younger people will be important, working in association with the Blackbutt Youth Centre; and
- ▶ Accessibility and diversity of space will be important to cater for the range of residents and visitors.

3.3.14 Tullimbar

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	21	4,112
Dwellings	8	1,736

With a population growth of 4,000+ over the next 15 years, Tullimbar represents the second major growth area of Shellharbour. With a 2006 population of just 21, the population growth will drive the need for many new facilities in this area. A relatively high proportion of 0-19 year old residents are expected within an equal number of new low and medium density residential dwellings.

Implications:

- ▶ Provision of new high quality open space and facilities is critical to ensure proper servicing of this relatively isolated new community;
- ▶ Open spaces will need to cater for a younger population, with standards to be appropriate for longer term maintenance by Council; and
- ▶ Given the significant increase in population, needs for community and sporting facilities will be important to ensure integration and cohesion of the new population.

3.3.15 Warilla

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	6,586	6,449
Dwellings	2,470	2,724

A small reduction in the overall population of 138 will result from relatively low dwelling growth (predominantly medium density) being offset by falling household population. The proportion of resident age will remain reasonably constant, with the exception of 20-34 year olds, whose proportion is set to drop 15% to 11%.

Implications:

- Warilla's consistent population trend, with high proportions of young and old, suggests that delivery of services and open space catered to the current population is also likely to suit future population growth.

3.3.16 Illawarra Highway North

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	210	187
Dwellings	79	79

The rural area of "Illawarra Highway North" will have a minor loss in population, resulting from reduced average household population. No dwelling growth is expected, while the average age is expected to buck the

trend by reducing over time, with higher proportions of 0-19, 20-34 and 35-59 year olds at the expense of the 60+ age group.

Implications:

- Generally there are minimal implications for services and open space due to the semi-rural and low density of the area; and
- Access to citywide facilities and services is critical for these areas.

3.3.17 Illawarra Highway South

A summary of the population and dwelling projections between 2006 and 2021 is provided in the table below (SGS Economics & Planning 2008).

	2006	2021
Population	247	219
Dwellings	93	93

Within "Illawarra Highway South", a similar slow decline as with the north is expected, losing 28 residents over 15 years with no dwelling growth. The proportion of both younger (0-19) and older (60+) residents is expected to grow at the expense of the middle age groups.

Implications:

- As for Illawarra Highway North, access to LGA wise facilities and services will be important, particularly with a large proportion of both younger and older residents.

4. Trends in Recreation, Open Space and Community Facility Planning

The design, implementation and establishment of parks and open spaces are dynamic practices, with the requirements of both users and managers changing over time, reflecting a variety recreation and leisure trends. These trends can be categorised into broad recreational and open space trends that have been highlighted through activities such as state-wide consultations¹, and local trends which have been highlighted through localised consultation activities and other local observations².

4.1 Broad Trends in Leisure and Recreation Planning

Broad trends experienced across the State and which are likely to be applicable to the Shellharbour LGA context include:

- ▶ Increased participation in formal recreational activities (sports), including a particular increase in female participation rates;
- ▶ Changes in housing types, with larger houses on smaller lots, resulting in a general reduction in “backyard” space and recreational opportunities;

¹ For example, consultation sessions undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning on behalf of the State Government in March and April 2008 in review of the Department of Planning’s 1992 Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government, and observations by GHD staff in undertaking various open space planning and Section 94 projects throughout NSW.

² Consultation undertaken by GHD relating to the Shellharbour Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study, project evaluation and park appraisals by Family Services Illawarra for the Park & Play Illawarra Program and other observations from Shellharbour City Council and Child Friendly by Design Project staff/consultants.

- ▶ Increased demand on informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling;
- ▶ Shifts in the popularity and changing expectations of various sports, suggesting a need for flexible spaces that can be modified over time;
- ▶ Increasing resources needed to provide ongoing maintenance to ageing physical infrastructure;
- ▶ Increasing expectations of local government to provide high quality open spaces, including embellishments and maintenance;
- ▶ Increased pressure on Councils to provide after hours use of open spaces, particularly for sporting grounds and including car parking and lighting. In addition, shared use of school sports fields outside of school hours as a means to meet this demand are being explored as opportunities; and
- ▶ Increasing expectation for the provision of facilities that are well organised, comfortable, safe, high quality, and well provided for in terms of support/ancillary facilities (such as toilets, car parking and lighting).

4.2 Local Trends in Open Space Planning

Within the Shellharbour LGA the above trends can be further focused as follows:

- ▶ Limited but well defined areas of high growth that will require new passive open spaces which primarily targets families with children;
- ▶ Existing established areas with limited growth opportunities, aging resident population and decreasing average household population, where passive open space areas may need to be reorientated to service a changing demographic;

- ▶ Increasing demand for higher quality embellishments, particularly among sporting groups, including requirements for fencing, shade, lighting, field surface improvement, toilets, canteens and other ancillary facilities; and
- ▶ A tendency to under utilise local passive open space. Usage has been shown to significantly increase when organised activities are facilitated by others (such as in the case of the *Park & Play* project activities).

4.3 Trends in Sports Activities and Organisations

A number of identified competitive sports are played within the Shellharbour LGA. Trends within each sport, both at the local and higher level are identified in this section. These trends are identified through direct consultation with local sporting groups and organisations, ABS Statistics (catalogue number 4177.0) on *Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation* and anecdotal evidence from GHD personnel observations.

4.3.1 Athletics

Two Little Athletics clubs exist within the Shellharbour LGA, utilising two athletics facilities, one in each of the east and west portions of the LGA. Senior athletics, under Athletics NSW, also participate in the region at Wollongong (Beaton Park). Growth in athletics can be expected to follow population trends and to peak around major events such as the Olympics, though no major long term growth is foreseeable.

4.3.2 Australian Rules Football (AFL)

The growth in AFL is well documented among many areas of Australia, with active promotion of the game through local development officers, including in the Illawarra. The sport commenced in Shellharbour in 2006, and now has around 150 juniors in two clubs. Growth plans raised by the

AFL Illawarra Development Manager envisage a third junior club feeding into a single Shellharbour senior club with potential for an AusKick Centre (AFL junior program) to be constructed as a base for the sport in Shellharbour, though no location or funding commitment from the AFL has been made at present time.

4.3.3 Baseball

Strict safety and field quality requirements mean that baseball is a sport which can be difficult to cater at a local level. The quality of existing fields within the Shellharbour LGA is an issue which is believed to restrict the growth of local clubs, making latent demand difficult to determine. To achieve the required standards of the regional baseball association, a dedicated baseball field would be required.

4.3.4 BMX / Cycling

BMX riding is a growing sport within the LGA. A publicly accessible track at the Croom Road Sporting Complex provides high quality facilities that are maintained in the most part by the South Lake BMX Club and are used on Wednesday and Friday nights for club practice and racing. BMX has recently been included for the first time in the 2008 Olympics and is expected to gain continued attention among teenagers and young adults.

Road and track (velodrome) cycling is currently catered for by the regional club and velodrome facility at Unanderra, located 20km to the north of Shellharbour in the Wollongong LGA.

Mountain biking (MTB) is another fast growing sport in the Illawarra and South Coast. There are two racing styles, downhill and cross-country (XC) racing, with XC racing being a current Olympic sport. Facilities are currently provided at Appin (Southern Sydney), in the Southern Highlands and the Shoalhaven, though no purpose built facilities currently exist in the Shellharbour LGA.

4.3.5 Cricket

The growth of cricket as a proportion of population has continued to place pressure on the provision of ovals and facilities. At the broader level, the popularity of cricket is expected to increase with the introduction of the 20/20 format. At the local level, several Shellharbour LGA based clubs are experiencing continued growth and expansion pressures. Ovals are used for competition only on Saturdays.

4.3.6 Equestrian

Wider scale national and state trends in equestrian and horse riding activities show little or no growth over the last 10 years. Local equestrian clubs (the South Coast Equestrian Club and Stoney Range Pony Club) both identify potential for growth and facility improvement at Terry Reserve, though participant numbers have been impacted by the recent outbreak of Equine Influenza.

4.3.7 Hockey

Two synthetic hockey pitches are located at the Croom Regional Sporting Complex, which cater for local use and as part of the regional competition. Growth in hockey at both the local and higher levels is consistent with population growth, with no significant variation below or above. Use of relatively expensive artificial turf, including high water use and resulting higher participation expenses is also a potential barrier to growth.

4.3.8 Netball

On a state level, Netball continues to grow approximately in-line with the population, and remains the predominant team sport for women. At the local level there are 3 clubs in the Shellharbour LGA with around 600 players. The regional Val Curren Netball Centre at Berkeley is used for all

competition games, with training and off-season competitions played on grass and some paved courts in the LGA.

4.3.9 Rugby League

Trends in rugby league participation have been relatively static at the state level, which is reflected in many clubs within the Shellharbour area. At the upper level of professional and semi-professional competition, the safety and quality requirements imposed on club facilities change significantly, in some instances requiring significant upgrade or relocation of club games.

4.3.10 Rugby Union

Like rugby league, rugby union participation has been relatively static in recent years at the state and national levels. No rugby union teams currently exist within the LGA, with players from Shellharbour participating through teams in other parts of the region. Several shared fields are provided for the sport, but would appear to be dominated by rugby league or other uses.

4.3.11 Skateboarding

In 2003, 31% of children participated in skateboarding or rollerblading over a two week survey period. These numbers are likely to have increased significantly, particularly with the increasing popularity of scooter riders utilising skate parks. Three skate parks are currently operated by Council in the LGA.

4.3.12 Soccer

Continued strong growth in the popularity of soccer is being seen at all levels, from local clubs, to state and national trends. Between 1995/96 and 2005/06, the number of participants in NSW grew by around 250%, with around 220,000 NSW participants in 2005/06. This growth is reflected

in several local Shellharbour clubs, with several large junior and senior clubs present in the LGA showing significant ongoing growth.

Changes are currently occurring within the structure of the district and regional soccer body, as well as the introduction of small-sided games for junior sides. These changes are likely to impact on the field design and requirements of clubs, though full impacts are not yet known.

4.3.13 Softball

Trends in softball have shown minimal growth in the local context, a trend which would appear to be consistent throughout Australia. Softball and baseball have recently been removed as Olympic sports, further damaging opportunity for growth and promotion, though local level promotion aimed at school aged children may attract new participants.

4.3.14 Tennis

The popularity of tennis has been trending down for several years, with 20% less participants between 2002 and 2005/06. Within the Shellharbour LGA, tennis clubs exist at Oak Flats, Lake Illawarra, Croom, Albion Park and Albion Park Rail, however the condition and ongoing viability of some clubs has been under continued pressure. Nevertheless, the condition of the facilities and management of courts/clubs plays a strong role in utilisation and could be improved into the future.

4.3.15 Touch Football and OZTAG

With combined membership of over 2,500 members, touch football and OZTAG represent large organised sports, with only tennis, swimming and soccer with higher participation on a national basis. Extensive use of shared fields, with minimal fixed facilities makes touch football and OZTAG relatively easy to cater for. Within the local context, the sport is growing in terms both summer and winter competitions, with fields at Albion Park and

Flinders being used on weeknights throughout summer, and increasingly in winter – requiring, in some instances, additional flood lighting.

4.4 Trends in Community Facility Planning

Within the area of community facilities planning a number of recent trends can be seen. These trends relate to three main areas, demographic trends, service provision trends and planning trends. An outline of these issues is provided below:

4.4.1 Demographic Trends

- ▶ Relative income in the LGA is lower than the State and National average, with areas of particularly low socio-economic advantage. Similarly, an aging population and reliance on government welfare will require affordable and equitable access to facilities; and
- ▶ Increasing land values in the eastern portion of the LGA and a shortage of greenfield sites may inhibit facility provision and increase the importance of maintaining existing facilities and sites.

4.4.2 Services Delivery Trends

- ▶ Increasingly, there is a focus on regulatory requirements and issues such as equitable access, risk management, occupational health and safety and children's protection. While all such issues are extremely important, trends that focus on regulation, monitoring and compliance will dissipate funding and potentially distract from core service provision;
- ▶ Service delivery from the State and Federal Government (and other bodies) is becoming more centralised, reducing access potential from local neighbourhoods and causing an increase in demand for existing community facilities to host outreach or sessional services, including increased demand for meeting and consultation rooms;

- ▶ Many programs and activities are being developed with an increasing expectation that local communities will sustain their ongoing existence without financial support. This places pressure on availability of spaces at low cost; and
- ▶ Opportunities are becoming more available for innovative delivery of services, particularly those aimed at younger groups, such as online services.

4.4.3 Planning Trends

- ▶ Flexible design of community facilities is becoming the norm in response to the changes in community expectations and needs. Flexible design will allow changes in the type of facility and level of amenity to meet community needs over time;
- ▶ There is an increasing trend toward the provision of district level facilities to enable greater and more dynamic use of facilities. Co location of functions and services within multi-purpose facilities also increases accessibility;
- ▶ Increasing urban density within the city centre and other localities such as Tullimbar will increase demand on localised community facilities and services. Upfront provision of facilities will be critical in these areas;
- ▶ There is potential for a decrease in funds being available from Section 94 contributions under revised planning legislation;
- ▶ Life cycle costings should be factored in to the total cost to better plan for the ongoing maintenance costs of facilities; and
- ▶ Local government, including Shellharbour, is giving an increasing commitment to community consultation, thus raising expectations and costs in strategic planning, but potentially resulting in facility and service delivery that is better targeted to community needs.

4.5 Trend Conclusions

Many of the trends seen in the preceding sections are directly applicable to the current study and Shellharbour LGA generally. In assessing and making recommendations on the provision of services, spaces and facilities, these trends will be used to ensure the effectiveness of this plan over the longer term.

5. Design Principles, Hierarchies and Provision Standards

The use and effectiveness of parks, sporting grounds and community facilities is directly related to the quality of design, accessibility and range of facilities provided. This section identifies the organisation of these facilities into three areas:

- ▶ Design principles to ensure effective high quality design outcomes;
- ▶ Hierarchy of facilities to ensure a range of park types and facilities to meet all needs; and
- ▶ Provision standards to ensure that sufficient facilities are provided to meet community needs.

5.1 Design Principles

A number of principles exist which relate to the design and implementation of open spaces and community facilities. To facilitate the implementation of high quality and appropriate design in open spaces, *Park and Recreation Space Guidelines* (the Guidelines) have been prepared at Appendix B. These Guidelines will assist Council and others to design and construct parks and open spaces that exhibit a consistent level of design standard and embellishment.

The Guidelines provide overall open space design principles which are then applied to a hierarchy of parks and sporting grounds. An abbreviated version of the design principles can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Abbreviated Park & Sporting Grounds Design Principles

Issue	Principle/s
Safety	Design and maintain open spaces to ensure that public safety is commensurate to the level of use and targeted user groups by the use of the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles (CPTED). Design areas to ensure safe operation and appropriate placement of embellishments.
Access	Provide for safe and convenient access to open spaces within and between communities.
Spatial Distribution	Provide equitable access to parks and open spaces to ensure that the type, location and quality of the infrastructure are appropriately distributed.
Sustainability	Design, development and management of open space should respond to environmental values and conditions, community aspirations and economic considerations and must remain viable in the long term.
Place Making	Locate open spaces to build on the special attributes of an area for long-term public amenity and connecting people with locations. Designs should also recognise and incorporate local indigenous, cultural and historical attributes and characteristics of the place, as well as providing public art opportunities.
Physical Attributes	Provide open space, which is physically suitable for its purpose and which will accommodate the nominated active and passive recreational uses.

Issue	Principle/s
Clustering	Cluster/group sports fields and facilities in order to maximise flexibility of use and to minimise disruption to residential areas (noise, light spill and parking/ traffic issues and impacts). Locate parklands where possible adjacent to town centres, schools and community areas to encourage greater access and shared use of parking.
Integration	Connections should be made between open space areas by the use of consistent vegetation, linked walkways or cycle routes within the local area.
Variety	Provide a variety of open spaces to serve a range of different active and passive recreational roles to meet the diversity of community needs.

Further detail on the design of open spaces can be found in the full Guidelines at Appendix B.

Design considerations for community facilities require similar design principles, with a particular emphasis on accessibility and safety. Detailed design will be dependent on the type of facility being provided, and specialist designers should be engaged to advise on such areas.

5.2 Hierarchies of Facilities

Open space and community facilities should be developed using a hierarchical approach. In terms of parks and sporting grounds, this approach can be relatively easily applied through differences in size, embellishment and accessibility. Such hierarchies can have a variety of titles and layers, but for the purposes of the Shellharbour LGA is represented through the following park hierarchy:

- ▶ Local Park;
- ▶ District Park; and
- ▶ Citywide Park.

And for sporting grounds:

- ▶ District Sporting Ground; and
- ▶ Citywide Sporting Ground.

Further details on parkland and sporting ground hierarchies can be found in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 respectively.

For community facilities, a hierarchical approach is more difficult. Facilities are typically provided at the neighbourhood or citywide level, though level of provision may depend on the facility being provided and often on its historical existence. No strict hierarchy has been applied to community facilities in the Shellharbour LGA though further work could be undertaken to apply this philosophy.

5.2.1 Passive Open Space (Parkland) Hierarchy

The establishment of a hierarchy of passive open spaces, or parks, can be used to assist Council in the design, delivery and maintenance of these areas. A detailed examination of the parkland hierarchy for the Shellharbour LGA can be found in the *Park and Recreation Space Guidelines* at Appendix B.

In this document, details are provided on the three hierarchical levels of local, district and citywide parks. Each level of park has increasing size and level of embellishment, but typically with a lesser quantity of higher level parks. For example, a local park are more likely to be within 400m of 5 minutes walk from most local residents, though the embellishments provided may be minimal such as simple play opportunities and seating.

District parks on the other hand are likely to be well embellished, with all the embellishments of local parks as well as additional elements such as picnic facilities, toilets and car parking. Citywide parks may again be larger, with specialist facilities such as water features, larger picnic areas to cater for large groups and may incorporate significant landscaping. These types of parks (district and citywide) may be further away from residential areas and may require a long walk or short car journey to access. A brief summary of the three levels are provided below.

Local Parks

The objective of a local park is to provide public open space which primarily serves a local neighbourhood, being highly accessible for pedestrians within a local catchment with an appropriate level of embellishment suited to the local population.

Local parks are likely to contain a mix of embellishments such as:

- ▶ Walk / cycle pathways;
- ▶ Landscape improvements;
- ▶ Play opportunities;
- ▶ Signage; and
- ▶ Basic seating, bins, tables and shade structures.

A sample local park plan is provided in Figure 12.

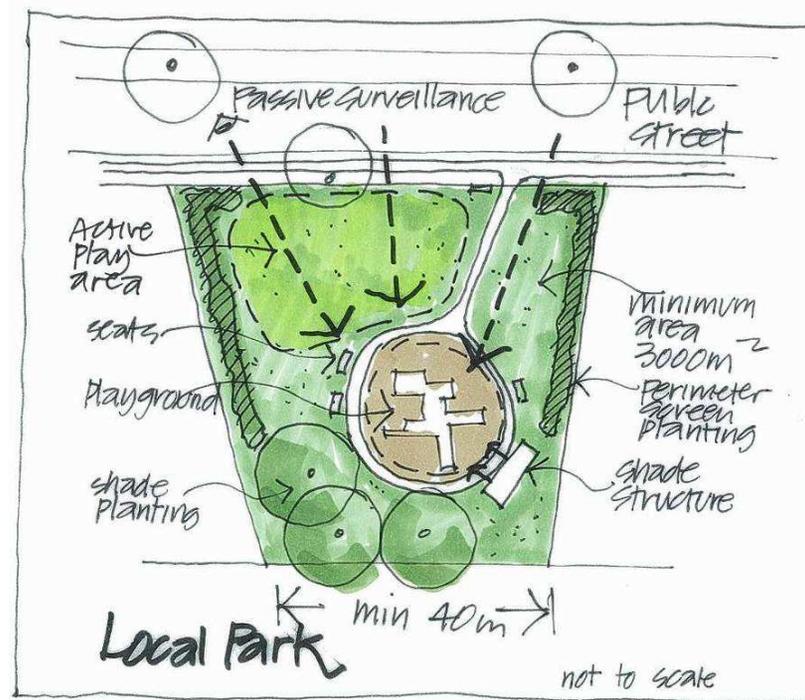


Figure 12: Sample Local Park Plan

District Parks

District parks are generally of a more substantial size and are well developed to cater for a broad range of recreational opportunities. District parks are to be more sparsely distributed than local parks, with it acceptable for them to be within an 800m or 10 minute walk from most residential areas. Embellishments are provided to cater for the more complex and varied recreational activities and for multiple user groups and may include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Walk / cycle pathways;
- ▶ High quality landscape improvements;
- ▶ Playgrounds and like opportunities for a range of ages;
- ▶ Combined seating, tables, bins and shade structures / pavilions;
- ▶ Signage;
- ▶ Lighting (where designed for use at night);
- ▶ Barbeques;
- ▶ Toilets;
- ▶ Car parking;
- ▶ Structures and hard-standing areas to provide for informal sporting activities (eg. netball/basketball half court, tennis rebound wall etc) as appropriate to local needs; and
- ▶ Other structures required on a case-by-case basis.

A sample district park plan is provided in Figure 13.



Figure 13: Sample District Park Plan

Citywide Parks

Citywide parks typically have a number of characteristics that make them significant recreational destinations for the entire LGA and potentially the surrounding region. These characteristics include high visitation levels, significance for local and visitor perceptions of Shellharbour, high tourism values, proximity to surrounding tourist attractions and potential for flow on commercial benefits. These areas may also have high environmental values.

Citywide parks are not intended to be developed to a specified standard but will be embellished to a level consistent with user expectations, their

natural setting and the special requirements and opportunities provided by individual sites.

As a guide, citywide parks should receive as a minimum high quality landscaping, lighting of major public spaces, public artworks and interpretive signage together with an appropriate level of recreational opportunities, supporting amenities and user facilities.

Icon Parks

In addition to the three-tier hierarchy of parks discussed above, in some instances, parks will have a particularly special purpose or place within the community – or otherwise known as *Icon parks*. These parks can be within any level of the hierarchy and would attract a particular set of embellishments and maintenance standards commensurate to the proposed use and values of the park.

Local and district level parks with an iconic status may receive higher levels of design attention, embellishments and maintenance than is normally associated with the standard provision identified in the parks hierarchy. For example, Wentworth Cottage Park in Blackbutt is a district park with heritage significance, where pioneer D’Arcy Wentworth’s cottage is celebrated through interpretive signage and a memorial garden in the shape of the original cottage. The park is also located at the highest point of the Stoney Range, where Carmody’s Lookout provides magnificent views to the Shellharbour City Centre, Lake Illawarra and the Pacific Ocean.

5.2.2 Active Open Space (Sporting Grounds) Hierarchy

In a similar fashion to the hierarchy of parks discussed in the previous section, a hierarchy of sporting grounds can also be used to assist Council in determining future design, delivery and maintenance of these areas. A detailed examination of the sporting ground hierarchy for the Shellharbour

LGA can be found in the *Park and Recreation Space Guidelines* at Appendix B. In this document, details are provided on the two hierarchical levels of district and citywide sporting grounds. A brief summary of the two levels are provided below.

District Sporting Grounds

District level sporting grounds primarily serve a district catchment (individual or group of suburbs) with an appropriate level of embellishment suited to regular use by a number of sporting groups. District sporting grounds are predominantly used for local or district level competitions defined by local sport associations and for visiting organisations for competition. They also provide local use benefits as well as venues for club training.

Basic embellishments provided to district sporting grounds could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Vehicular access and parking;
- ▶ Sporting grounds and facilities to the appropriate standard for individual sports at district level competition;
- ▶ Amenities building including referee room, change rooms, toilets, equipment storage and canteen facilities;
- ▶ Specific training facilities such as cricket practice nets as appropriate;
- ▶ Playing field lighting to an appropriate standard for the proposed use;
- ▶ Limited fencing and barriers to ensure safety of users and spectators;
- ▶ Spectator seating, bins, and signage; and
- ▶ Landscape improvements such as shade planting and wind protection.

Citywide Sporting Grounds

Citywide sporting grounds tend to be clustered together and located away from residential areas to maximise flexibility of use and to reduce the potential impacts of noise, vehicular movements, parking and ground lighting on local residents.

Like district level sporting grounds they should be strategically located adjacent to major roads to maximise visibility and to facilitate accessibility, however citywide sporting grounds will tend to be utilised by senior teams and for senior competitions that may require additional embellishments such as change rooms and high level lighting.

Basic embellishments provided to citywide sporting grounds fields could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Vehicular access and parking including provision for buses;
- ▶ Sporting grounds and facilities to the appropriate standard for individual sports at regional level competition;
- ▶ Specialist surfaces and facilities such as synthetic grass for hockey;
- ▶ Amenities building including referee room, change rooms, toilets, equipment storage and canteen facilities;
- ▶ Clubrooms;
- ▶ Higher standard field and where appropriate off-field lighting to an appropriate standard for the proposed use;
- ▶ Specific training facilities such as cricket practice nets as appropriate;
- ▶ Tiered spectator seating with some undercover seating,
- ▶ Perimeter fencing to allow the ground to be secured;
- ▶ Scoreboard structures and signage;
- ▶ Bins, picnic and barbecue facilities; and

- ▶ Higher level landscape improvements such as footpaths, hard-standing areas, screening and shade planting.

5.2.3 Other Open Space

In addition to the sporting ground and park hierarchies, other forms of open space also exist that do not have a primary recreational function. These spaces have been categorised into two areas:

- ▶ Environmental reserves; and
- ▶ Ancillary reserves.

Detailed objectives of these areas can be found in the *Park and Recreation Space Guidelines* at Appendix B, with a summary provided below.

Environmental Reserves

Environmental reserves are able to serve a range of purposes from riparian corridors and drainage management areas, to existing areas of mature vegetation or water front areas with existing flora or fauna attributes.

Where environmental reserves do not provide any recreational values they will generally not be counted towards the provision requirements for open space. Nevertheless, the provision of shared user pathways along environmental corridors to create linkages between areas is encouraged and these areas may then be considered as part of a greater open space system subject to agreement with Council.

Ancillary Reserves

Ancillary reserves are residual public open spaces which include narrow drainage and service easements, local infrastructure sites, various buffer areas such as asset protection zones, road side landscaping and other areas that do not have any specific recreational uses nor defined provision standards.

Like environmental reserves, ancillary reserves are not generally counted towards the provision of public open space as they may not provide any recreational values.

5.3 Provision Standards

Standards of provisions can be used and measured in a number of ways. Standards are beneficial to give an overview of an open space or community facility situation at any give point in time. While numerical or quantitative standards are commonly used to check if an appropriate amount of facilities or spaces are provided, such benchmarks will need to be verified through qualitative means to ensure that the quality, location and type of facility is appropriately provided.

This section investigates provision standards for open space, including both parks and sporting grounds, and for community facilities.

5.3.1 Open Space

The appropriate level of provision of open space is difficult to determine and is in many ways a value judgement. In numerical terms, the provision of open space is generally referred to as an area (ha) per 1,000 residential persons. As identified in recent open space guideline review consultation workshops by the NSW Department of Planning³, the most widely used approach to open space provision is the 2.83 hectares of open space per 1,000 residents, which was derived from early studies in the 1900's where British planners identified 7 acres per 1,000 residents as an appropriate standard. This standard has repeatedly been referred to by the NSW Land and Environment Court when determining open space matters.

³ Council Consultation workshops by SGS Economics and Planning during April 2008 for the NSW open space provision guidelines revision project

This framework can be criticised for not taking into account the nature and quality of open space or locally specific demands. However, it does provide a workable and commonly utilised standard for determining overall levels of area provision based on population size.

The breakdown of this overall standard into an appropriate hierarchy as discussed in the previous sections is also difficult. A review of similar local governments has identified an appropriate comparison with the Ballina Shire Council. Like Shellharbour, Ballina is considered as an 'Urban Region Large' classification of councils as defined by the Department of Local Government. The Ballina figures are also broadly consistent to standards used by other councils in the same classification such as the Tweed and Shoalhaven.

Ballina Shire Council utilises the 2.83 ha per 1,000 population figure for all usable open space which is further broken down as follows:

- ▶ 0.33 ha per 1,000 people for local parks;
- ▶ 0.5 ha per 1,000 people for district parks;
- ▶ 1.7 ha per 1,000 people for sporting fields; and
- ▶ 0.3 ha per 1,000 people for citywide parks.

These standards are based on previously available NSW Department of Sport and Recreation figures which assumed a 60/40 split between active and passive recreation. These standards act as a guide, and if applied, should be used to consider open space requirements alongside a more qualitative needs based analysis. A review of the 1992 *Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government*, which is currently being undertaken by the NSW Department of Planning, will aim to provide a more consistent approach to these standards and review of these figures upon completion of the Department of Planning's review may therefore be necessary.

Nevertheless, these provision standards have been applied to measure current supply in the Shellharbour LGA as a part of this study.

5.3.2 Community Facilities

Provision benchmarks for community facilities are more difficult to justify than open space provisions, though both can suffer from similar criticisms of being about the number rather than quality of facilities. Benchmarks from a range of sources, typically State and Federal Government Departments, can be used to determine the adequacy of the number of facilities. However the size and use of a community facility can vary significantly. The following facility types have been identified with comments on potential provision standards.

Facility Types

A number of different community facilities are often identified, promoted and funded by local government in NSW. These facility types and provision standards from AMCORD Practice Note 11 (1992) are identified in Table 2 below. Comments have also been added that relate to the applicability of the provision standard to the Shellharbour LGA context. These comments are based on GHD's observations of existing facilities within the LGA.

Table 2: Community Facility Types and Provision Standards

Facility Type	Provision Standard	Comments
Community Centre	1 per 10,000 – 20,000 people	The size and complexity of community centres can vary widely from local un-staffed hall type centres, to multi-use centres providing a range of professional services. In Shellharbour community centres generally fall into the later category with significant

Facility Type	Provision Standard	Comments
		overlapping and complementary services. The upper end of the provision standard is therefore recommended.
Child Care	1 space per 10 children aged 0-4	While Shellharbour Council owns a number of childcare centres, they operate only one centre. The trend away from community based child care to commercial and home care facilities means that Council is unlikely to increase its operations in this area. Three baby clinics are also available in the LGA.
Aged Care Services	1 aged persons facility per 8,000 – 10,000 people	A number of senior citizen centres are operated by Council in the LGA to provide for seniors services. Aged care accommodation and sessional services are also available within the LGA, however the growing average age of the population and need for aged care requirements will continue to grow.
Community Hall	1 small hall per 10,000 people 1 large hall for every 20,000 people	Several smaller and some larger halls exist within the LGA. These facilities are often integrated with other uses such as scouts/girl guides and community centres ensuring effective utilisation and availability.
Youth Centre	1 youth centre per 20,000 people	Like community halls, youth services in the LGA are typically integrated with other services such as community centres. The integrated nature of many services allow for the use of spaces

Facility Type	Provision Standard	Comments
		outside of times such facilities would otherwise be used by youth activities.

Other Community Facilities

Libraries

The State Library of NSW was commissioned by Council in 2007 to provide a report on the library requirements and future directions for the LGA. The report identifies the use of benchmarks as identified in *People places: A guide for public library buildings*, published in 2005 by the State Library of NSW. These benchmarks provide for two approaches – a service based benchmark and a population based benchmark.

The 2007 report identifies a policy approach to service provision and associated recommendations based on population growth and service delivery. The benchmarks used and subsequent findings of this report are considered to be sound and consistent with current planning techniques.

Sessional Services

As identified in by the trends in community facility planning at Section 4.4, there is an increasing need for sessional services, including meeting and consultation rooms and storage facilities. These services cannot be benchmarked, though trends suggest an increasing need for such facilities in the LGA.

Accommodation Needs

Additional to the need of external organisation to provide sessional services from a base outside the LGA, consultation with community groups has also identified a need for accommodation of groups, whether on a permanent, project or part time basis. Such services may only require

single offices or shared facility space, but are unlikely to require larger facilities, nor be in a position to rent such facilities at market rates.

Cultural and the Arts

The provision of cultural and arts facilities were also recognised during consultation as being facilities which are required in the LGA. These facilities are required in both terms of “wet” and “dry” facilities, where artists undertake their work, and gallery type space, where works are exhibited.

Theatres and performing arts spaces are similarly difficult to quantify in terms of provision standards and will often relate to the availability of spaces and facilities on a sub-regional or regional level. As such, facilities such as the Win Entertainment Centre and Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) need to be taken into consideration.

5.4 Application of Design Principles, Hierarchies and Standards

Sections 6, 7 and 9 will apply the design principles, hierarchy of open spaces and provision standards to the Shellharbour LGA to determine requirements over the next 15 years. These sections identify the whole of LGA, east / west and suburb level needs.

6. Passive Open Space (Parks)

6.1 Consultation

Consultation in determining the use and demand of passive open spaces or parks can be very difficult and time consuming. User surveys are highly dependent on external influences such as weather, season, time of day and day of the week. Surveys can also be highly skewed where they coincide with one-off users of the site – for example where a large group meets for a special occasion.

For the purposes of this study, passive open space consultation was therefore undertaken through in-depth discussions with existing detailed park user projects – *Park & Play* and *Child Friendly by Design* – as discussed in Section 2.4, and through detailed discussions with relevant Council staff.

The *Park & Play* project provides particularly in-depth information on park user requirements and user patterns, though is limited in regard to its target audience and geography. The program has performed two evaluations including surveys with program participants. The *Child Friendly by Design* team have undertaken extensive consultation, with detailed surveys undertaken with over 250 Shellharbour residents.

Informal observations have also been noted by the GHD project team during field verification and assessment work.

6.2 Supply

The existing supply of parks is largely the result of historical sub-division and development patterns in the LGA. Parks have generally been upgraded or embellished on an “as needs” basis, often in response to lobbying from local residents and subsequent requests from elected

Councillors. In older areas of the LGA, the planning and subdivision patterns have resulted in park designs which result in smaller ad-hoc provision, with limited connections to other open space and areas that are often “hidden behind” residential properties.

In newer areas, park design is much more integrated with other spaces including sporting fields and environmental areas such as drainage corridors. Such parks often adjoin public roads and the frontages of houses which provide a higher level of surveillance, creating safer spaces and a reduction in vandalism and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

Over the entire LGA, the supply of parks is high, with over 270ha of space being identified. The breakdown of this space by the park hierarchy identifies high levels of all park types. Table 3 identifies the breakdown of this space by suburb and over the east and west portions of the LGA in terms of each park type. These figures are geographically illustrated in the Accessibility Buffer Map at Appendix D which demonstrates local and district park accessibility with combined buffers 400m and 800m respectively. Subsequent maps were then developed which demonstrates open space walkable buffers to 400m. The purpose of these maps were to illustrate existing gaps in accessibility by applying and refining the accessibility criteria as used in the design guidelines at Appendix B.

Table 3: Supply of Parks by Hierarchy

Area	Local Parks (ha)	District Parks (ha)	Citywide Parks (ha)
Whole LGA	35.88	120.93	116.69
East	25.23	99.59	116.69
West	10.65	21.34	0

Area	Local Parks (ha)	District Parks (ha)	Citywide Parks (ha)
Albion Park	6.50	14.76	0
Albion Park Rail	3.30	6.58	0
Barrack Heights	1.96	1.92	0
Barrack Point	0.87	2.75	0
Blackbutt	4.17	9.49	100.71
Dunmore/Croome	0	0	0
Flinders	3.43	6.74	0
Lake Illawarra	1.22	10.05	8.33
Mount Warrigal	5.18	9.29	0
Oak Flats	0.64	16.89	0
Shell Cove	0.69	25.56	0
Shellharbour	3.94	7.88	2.56
Shellharbour City Centre	0.07	0	5.09
Tullimbar	0	0	0
Warilla	3.06	9.29	0
Illawarra Highway North	0	0	0
Illawarra Highway South	0	0	0

6.2.1 Regional Park Supply

In addition to the above parks, three NSW State Government owned regional parks are located within the LGA – Macquarie Pass National Park, Killalea State Park and Bass Point Reserve. All three areas provide significantly large spaces of natural attraction, with Killalea and Bass Point being located on the coast and Macquarie National Park on the western boundary of the LGA. The areas of these spaces have not been included in the above statistics, but play an important regional role in provision of open space.

6.3 Demand

Provision Based Demand

As discussed in Section 5.3.1, the provision of parks can be provided at the following rates:

- ▶ 0.33 ha per 1,000 people for local parks;
- ▶ 0.5 ha per 1,000 people for district parks; and
- ▶ 0.3 ha per 1,000 people for citywide parks.

Based on this rate of provision and the most recent population figures (2006), Table 4 identifies the current provision, population based demand (based on population projections provided by SGS Economics & Planning 2008) and future overall requirements for the whole LGA and for the east and west portions thereof. It should be reiterated that this is a quantitative standard which has limitations. It has been applied here to provide an indication on what open space may be required in the Shellharbour LGA subject to additional considerations as outlined in the *Parks and Recreational Space Guidelines* (Appendix B).

The final column of this table, entitled “Over / Under Supply”, presents the supply of parks required between now and 2021. In many instances there is an oversupply of parks, represented as a positive amount – indicating that no new parks would be required. Conversely, a negative figure represents an undersupply of parks in that location. These figures are further broken down throughout this section on a suburb by suburb basis, where additional analysis of need is discussed.

Table 4: Population Based Park Demand

Location / Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / Under Supply (Ha)
Whole LGA				
Local Parks	20.92	35.88	23.44	12.43
District Parks	31.70	120.93	35.52	85.41
Citywide Parks	19.02	116.69	21.31	95.38
East LGA				
Local Park	14.42	25.23	15.77	9.46
District Parks	21.85	99.59	23.89	75.70
Citywide Parks	13.11	116.69	14.34	102.35
West LGA				
Local Park	6.51	10.65	7.67	2.97

Location / Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / Under Supply (Ha)
District Parks	9.86	21.34	11.63	9.71
Citywide Parks	5.91	0	6.98	-6.98

As demonstrated in this table, the overall provision of parks is generally well above the provision requirements, particularly in the east of the city where significant citywide and district parks exist. The notable exception from this provision is the absence of any citywide park in the western portion of the LGA. It should also be noted that these figures do not include environmental and ancillary open space, which are additional to the above figures and discussed further in Section 8.

6.4 Analysis of Existing Provision and Future Needs

Current Supply versus Demand

The overall LGA area of parks is clearly meeting the nominated provision targets. In the western portion of the LGA, the provision of local and district spaces is more closely aligned with the benchmark requirements, though still above the provision minimum. The absence of any area provided for a citywide park should be addressed and opportunities for such an area could be considered by Council either in conjunction with the *Child Friendly by Design* project or through new development areas. This provision is further discussed in the suburb level analysis below, where there are a variety of requirements to ensure all residents have an acceptable level of access to passive open space.

6.4.1 Albion Park

Provision

The provision of parks within the Albion Park suburb is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Albion Park Suburb Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	3.59	6.50	3.6	2.90
District Parks	5.44	14.76	5.46	9.30
Citywide Parks	3.26	0	3.28	(3.28)

These parks are illustrated in the Albion Park Suburb Maps at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Albion Park is generally well supplied with both local and district parks, with a particularly good spread of local parks throughout the suburb. While the provision of district parks is acceptable in terms of overall area, the geographic spread of these facilities is concentrated to the south and east of the suburb, resulting in poor access from the north-west. This area is clearly seen in the Accessibility Buffer Map at Appendix D.

The provision of access to a citywide park in the suburb, or close to the suburb is important. Opportunities within the existing urban area of Albion Park are limited, though the outcomes of the *Child Friendly by Design* project at the community core area at Russell Street (incorporating Di Gorman Oval and Con O’Keefe Park) may provide such an opportunity.

Quality and Useability

The quality of parks in the newer southern areas of the suburb is generally high as is useability with integrated facilities including play spaces, seating and shade provided (refer for example to Plate 1 in Figure 14). In the more established areas to the north of the suburb, the quality and useability of parks is of a lesser quality where large grassed areas with minimal embellishments and poor layout exist (refer for example to Plate 2 in Figure 14).

Opportunities exist within the north of the suburb for the significant upgrade and improvement of parks to meet the design guidelines in Appendix B.



Figure 14: Albion Park Suburb Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Investigate opportunities for the provision of a district park to enable accessibility within 800m of residents in the north-west of Albion Park;
- ▶ Provision of a citywide park be considered within the context of the *Child Friendly by Design* project incorporating the community core area at Russel Street; and
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for the upgrade of existing parks in the northern section of Albion Park to better cater for resident needs.

6.4.2 Albion Park Rail

Provision

The provision of parks within Albion Park Rail is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Albion Park Rail Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	2.40	3.30	2.27	1.03
District Parks	3.64	6.58	3.43	3.14
Citywide Parks	2.19	0	2.06	(2.06)

These parks are illustrated in the Albion Park Rail Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Albion Park Rail is generally well supplied with both local and district parks, with a reasonably good spatial distribution of both park types. An important park location on the Princes Highway which services the Albion Park Rail Station provides for good opportunities to interact with commuters and passing vehicular traffic. Pedestrian access to Oak Flats provides for some further opportunities, particularly in spatial links between the Lake Illawarra foreshore areas.

Opportunities for the provision of a citywide park in the suburb are low. Further residential development opportunities are very limited and the overall population is predicted to fall over the life of the plan. It is therefore logical to provide for citywide parks in other localities.

Quality and Useability

The primary concern with parks in Albion Park Rail is the poor quality, particularly in key locations. For example the quality of the district park at the Albion Park Rail Station is not conducive to use by passers by or rail commuters (refer Plate 1 in Figure 15). Similarly, some local parks opportunities are free from any embellishment, particularly in key location where access from other areas can also be encouraged – for example the pedestrian link to Oak Flats as illustrated in Plate 2 of Figure 15.

Opportunities exist within several areas for significant improvements to the quality of parks that can be designed to suit the demographic changes over the planning period, which should be the primary objective for this area given there is no under-supply or growth in population expected.



Figure 15: Albion Park Rail Park Photos

Recommendations: None

6.4.3 Barrack Heights

Provision

The provision of parks within Barrack Heights is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Barrack Heights Suburb Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	2.20	1.96	1.98	(0.02)
District Parks	3.34	1.92	3.00	(1.08)
Citywide Parks	2.00	0	1.80	(1.80)

These parks are illustrated in the Barrack Heights Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The relatively poor distribution of parks in Barrack Heights reflects the under-provision of spaces in the suburb. In the southern area of the suburb, no parks are immediately accessible with the exception of the neighbouring district level park within Blackbutt Reserve. While this park provides some offset to the under-provision at the district level parks in Barrack Heights, access to the park is steep and unlikely to be easily accessible for much of the aging community. Future provision of a local or district level park in the southern central area of the suburb is recommended.

The eastern and western areas of the suburb are well catered for in terms of both local and district parks, while sporting grounds in the northern portion of the suburb provide some district park type facilities.

Blackbutt Reserve adjoins the suburb to the immediate south and is designated as a citywide park. Citywide foreshore parks are also within a short drive of Barrack Heights, suggesting that new citywide park facilities for Blackbutt are not required.

Quality and Useability

The existing parks within Barrack Heights are typical of many older areas in the east of the LGA. Many parks are poorly embellished and utilised, with large areas requiring maintenance but serving little recreational purpose (refer for example to Plate 1 in Figure 16). In some instances, sporting fields, such as Jock Brown Oval, provide for local park purposes, but are still under embellished and poorly utilised (refer to Plate 2 in Figure 16). Opportunities existing within many spaces to undertake master planning and improvement to meet the standards set by the design guidelines in Appendix B.



Figure 16: Barrack Heights Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Investigate opportunities for the provision of a local park in the southern central area of Barrack Heights to enable easy local accessibility for local residents.

6.4.4 Barrack Point

Provision

The provision of parks within the Barrack Point is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Barrack Point Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	0.23	0.87	0.25	0.62
District Parks	0.36	2.75	0.38	2.37
Citywide Parks	0.21	0	0.23	(0.23)

These parks are illustrated in the Barrack Point Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Barrack Point is the smallest suburb in the LGA, but still maintains sufficient provision which is easily accessible by local residents. Two local parks provide sufficient space and facilities, while the generous district parks are popular foreshore locations. The provision of access to a citywide park in the suburb is not considered necessary given the accessibility to such parks at Shellharbour and Blackbutt Reserve.

Quality and Useability

The quality of parks in the suburb is generally of a high standard, with good design elements such as high passive surveillance and appropriate embellishments (see for example Dawes Park in Plate 1 of Figure 17). Some foreshore areas are of variable quality, but will be included in planned foreshore improvements currently in the design phase. Local parks, such as that in Plate 2 of Figure 17, are well designed for simple operation and use of space, allowing easy access for local residents.



Figure 17: Barrack Point Park Photos

Recommendations:

- Foreshore district parks be upgraded in accordance with the previously endorsed *Shellharbour City Foreshore Master Plan* by Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects (2007)

6.4.5 Blackbutt

Provision

The provision of parks within Blackbutt is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Blackbutt Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	1.21	4.17	1.21	2.96
District Parks	1.83	9.49	1.83	7.66
Citywide Parks	0.97	100.71	1.10	99.61

These parks are illustrated in the Blackbutt Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Blackbutt is generally very well supplied with both local and district parks, with a significant district park linking through the centre of the suburb. The undulating topography suggests that local accessibility is particularly important, and the plentiful provision of local parks in key locations provides this service with the exception of the north-western area, where no local park play opportunities are provided and the topography and major roads around the area precludes easy access to other spaces. It is noted that play opportunities had previously been provided but removed from a small pocket park adjoining Pioneer Drive.

The location of Blackbutt Reserve within this suburb provides for a large excess in citywide park provision. Accessibility of this area is restricted

through limited access points and by topographical constraints, though passive opportunities within the park for walking and informal exercise are significant. The Blackbutt Reserve map showing walking circuits and other fitness opportunities is shown in Figure 18.

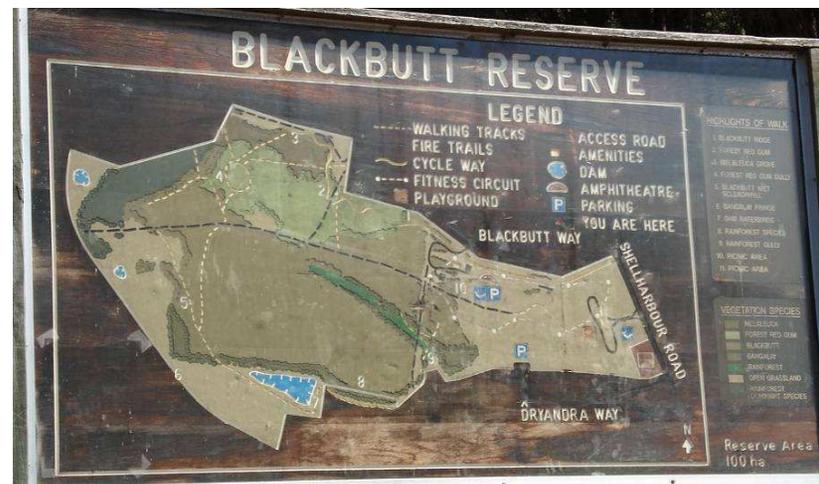


Figure 18: Blackbutt Reserve Map

Quality and Useability

The quality of maintenance and provision in most parks is generally of a high quality in Blackbutt. It is notable however that very large areas of maintained grasslands and unembellished areas exist, creating a large maintenance burden on Council (such as the space identified in Plate 1 in Figure 19, which is located adjoining the western playground in Blackbutt Reserve). Opportunities exist for the potential landscaping or modification of spaces to reduce this imposition.

In addition, opportunities exist for the improvement of Wentworth Cottage Park, which is park of the core district park and which is recognised as an

Icon Park. This park is provided with a number of embellishments consistent with a district park, but lacks key facilities to encourage the use of the park as a destination, such as toilets and barbeque facilities. Similar under-embellishment is seen at Shipman's Park (refer Plate 2 of Figure 19).

Opportunities exist within several areas for significant improvements to the quality of parks, which should be the primary objective for this area given there is no under-supply or growth in population expected.



Figure 19: Blackbutt Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Investigate opportunities for the provision of a local park in the north-west of Blackbutt to enable localised access in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B; and
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for embellishment improvements at Wentworth Cottage Park in accordance with its designation as an icon park.

6.4.6 Dunmore / Croom

Provision

There are no parks currently provided within the Dunmore / Croom combined suburb area. However, within the suburb is the Croom Road Regional Sporting Complex, which provides both formal sporting and informal recreation and open space opportunities. The Dunmore (Croom) Suburb Map at Appendix C identifies the spatial distribution of this facility and other suburb features.

As the population in the combined Dunmore suburb is projected to decline over the period of the plan, justification for provision of parks is minimal. While the current provision standards suggest a combined park allocation of around 1ha, the geographic spread of residents makes provision in a fixed location difficult to service all residents. Opportunities for local park provision may exist in the Dunmore area, but are not recommended due to the small population catchment.

Recommendations:

- ▶ None

6.4.7 Flinders

Provision

The provision of parks within Flinders is shown in Table 10 .

Table 10: Flinders Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	1.35	3.43	1.62	1.81
District Parks	2.04	6.47	2.45	4.02
Citywide Parks	1.22	0	1.47	(1.47)

These parks are illustrated in the Flinders Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Flinders is well supplied with a range of parks from highly developed local and district parks, to companion animal dedicated parks and environmental open spaces. All parks are well distributed throughout the suburb providing high level of access. Future urban development in the north-west of the suburb will provide further park development in that location, but should be orientated to the local park setting to avoid over-supply and maintenance burden of district parks on Council. Being located adjoining Blackbutt reserve, the provision of a dedicated citywide park is not considered appropriate in this location.

Quality and Useability

The quality and useability of parks in Flinders is generally of a very high standard. User requirements have been carefully considered with, for example, the integration of play areas and picnic spaces within “Picnic Park” (refer Plate 1 in Figure 20). However some design elements have resulted in unsafe areas, such as the access point from the playground onto the high-speed Munmorah Circuit at the “Woodlands Village Green” (refer Plate 2 in Figure 20). This park area should be audited for safety, with potential for further embellishment and other works to become a full district park in accordance with design criteria in Appendix B.



Figure 20: Flinders Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ A design and safety review of the Woodlands Village Green at Flinders should be completed, with future changes to be in accordance with the design guidelines at Appendix B.

6.4.8 Lake Illawarra

Provision

The provision of parks within Lake Illawarra is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Lake Illawarra Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	1.33	1.22	1.19	0.03
District Parks	2.01	10.05	1.81	8.24
Citywide Parks	1.21	8.33	1.09	7.24

These parks are illustrated in the Lake Illawarra Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

Lake Illawarra is well supplied with a range of parks from highly developed citywide and district foreshore parks to local parks and sporting fields. All parks are well distributed throughout the suburb, with larger parks on the foreshore of Lake Illawarra and Warilla Beach providing extensive linkages and linear parks suitable for social exercise including walking and cycling. Smaller local parks also exist in the areas set back from these foreshore areas, providing good coverage for all residents.

Quality and Useability

The standard of most parks in the area is of a high quality; particularly those on the foreshore areas (refer for example to Plate 1 in Figure 21).

Given the aging suburb population and limited future growth, important future work will include ensuring the appropriate design for an aging community of the smaller local parks that are set back from the foreshore and the district park with frontage to Commerce Drive. Good linkages between the foreshore parks and other areas to build on Council's *Shared User Path Strategy* should also be continued. Better integration of foreshore parks and other community and sporting facilities, such as the Lake Illawarra PCYC, should also be investigated (refer Plate 2 in Figure 21).



Figure 21: Lake Illawarra Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Review non-foreshore local and district parks in Lake Illawarra to ensure suitability for aging population, in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B; and
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for better integration of the Lake Illawarra PCYC and Hooker Park into the adjoining district foreshore park.

6.4.9 Mount Warrigal

Provision

The provision of parks within Mount Warrigal is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Mount Warrigal Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	1.79	5.18	1.6	3.58
District Parks	2.72	9.29	2.43	6.86
Citywide Parks	1.63	0	1.46	(1.46)

These parks are illustrated in the Mount Warrigal Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

With a significant ribbon of foreshore park and smaller parks set back into the suburb, Mount Warrigal is well supplied with both local and district parks. Spatial distribution throughout the suburb meets the required standards, with park areas along watercourses in the south of the suburb providing future opportunities for further improvements.

Opportunities for the provision of a citywide park in the suburb are low, and with citywide parks located further along the Illawarra Lake foreshore the provision of such a facility in the suburb is considered unnecessary, particularly given the negative population growth expected over the next 15 years.

Quality and Useability

The quality and useability of local parks in the suburb are generally of a poor quality, with many having minimal or no embellishments. Other local parks, such as that seen as Plate 1 of Figure 22, have modern play equipment, but in a poor design setting with limited appeal due to a lack of weather protection, landscape, pathways or sealed areas. Conversely, the foreshore district parks are in very good condition and well embellished with a variety of infrastructure (see for example Plate 2 of Figure 22).

Opportunities therefore exist within the local park context and for improving the quality and integration of parks in the south of the suburb.



Figure 22: Mount Warrigal Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ That local park embellishment and design be reviewed in Mount Warrigal to ensure useability for aging local residents, in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B; and
- ▶ Integration of parks in the south of Mount Warrigal with existing waterways be considered in any design review of these areas.

6.4.10 Oak Flats

Provision

The provision of parks within Oak Flats is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Oak Flats Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	2.28	0.64	2.25	(1.61)
District Parks	3.45	16.89	3.42	13.48
Citywide Parks	2.07	0	2.05	(2.05)

These parks are illustrated in the Oak Flats Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The spatial distribution of parks in Oak Flats is highly skewed to larger district parks and sporting facilities, leaving Oak Flats as the only established suburb with a notable deficit of local parks. While this is not generally a significant issue given the abundance of district park space, the concentration of district (and sporting space) to the north, east and west of the suburb, leaves a gap of accessibility in the central area of Oak Flats where several community services exist. This area is clearly seen in the Accessibility Buffer Map at Appendix D. Possible integration of local park spaces with the community centre or school may be options for developing such a facility in this location.

No citywide park exists within the suburb, but such a facility is reasonably accessible being at Shellharbour City Centre. No such provision is therefore required.

Quality and Useability

The quality of parks in Oak Flats are of generally poor condition, though some district parks and the Oak Flats citywide sporting area are of a much higher standard. Balarang Reserve in the east of the suburb is particularly large and poorly designed, with extensive vacant grassed areas backing onto residential properties (refer Plate 1 in Figure 23). Local park examples are also poorly design and/or embellishment, with hidden playgrounds and poor accessibility (see for example Plate 2 in Figure 23).



Figure 23: Oak Flats Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Investigate options for the provision of a local park in the central commercial area of Oak Flats; and
- ▶ Jack Wickham Park and Balarang Reserve in the east of Oak Flats be identified for review / master planning to provide more effective integration with surrounding areas.

6.4.11 Shell Cove

Provision

The provision of parks within Shell Cove is shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Shell Cove Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	0.86	0.69	2.26	(1.57)
District Parks	1.30	25.56	3.42	22.14
Citywide Parks	0.78	0	2.05	(2.05)

These parks are illustrated in the Shell Cove Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The current development direction and Master plan for the ongoing development of Shell Cove demonstrate a very strong commitment to high quality and extensive open spaces. The area is currently well oversupplied in the area of district parks, which act as integrated environmental / local / district parks in many instances. The proposed Master plan for the entire suburb suggests a continuation of this trend, which may result in significant maintenance for Council into the future.

No citywide park currently exists within the suburb, but may be a feature of future stages where the proposed boat harbour is planned. Access to the citywide foreshore space at Shellharbour and the regional parks of Killalea and Bass Point also make for provision in this type of park.

Quality and Useability

As with provision, the quality of parks in Shell Cove is above that normally required or provided. While this also results in high useability, the ongoing expectation of maintenance by Council may prove costly in future years. Well embellished district park areas and areas that contain integrated environmental attributes are prevalent (refer for example Plate 1 and Plate 2 respectively in Figure 24). Where local parks are provided they are of a similarly high design standard.



Figure 24: Shell Cove Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ None

6.4.12 Shellharbour

Provision

The provision of parks within Shellharbour is shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Shellharbour Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	1.12	3.94	1.07	2.87
District Parks	1.70	7.88	1.63	6.26
Citywide Parks	1.02	2.56	0.98	1.59

These parks are illustrated in the Shellharbour Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The spatial distribution in the majority of Shellharbour is very good, with the exception of the area west of Shellharbour Road, which backs onto the citywide park of Blackbutt Reserve but does not contain any local or district parks. In the east of the suburb, the foreshore area provides for both district and local park functions. The remainder of parks in the suburb remains very well distributed, allowing for easy access for residents to the east of Shellharbour Road. Part of Blackbutt Reserve extends into the Shellharbour suburb, providing some citywide park space.

Quality and Useability

Parks in the Shellharbour suburb are in a variety of condition, from very high quality foreshore spaces to poorly embellished and exposed local

parks. In areas set back from the foreshore, many local parks are particularly exposed and unembellished, creating unattractive spaces that are unlikely to be well utilised (refer for example Plate 1 in Figure 25). By contrast, the highly embellished and maintained foreshore reserves attract extensive use which is catered for by extensive picnic and shelter facilities (see Plate 2 in Figure 25).



Figure 25: Shellharbour Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Investigate options for the provision of a local park within Blackbutt Reserve to service Shellharbour residents to the west of Shellharbour Road; and
- ▶ Review the role of existing local parks to improve quality and useability for Shellharbour residents.

6.4.13 Shellharbour City Centre

Provision

The provision of parks within the Shellharbour City Centre is shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Shellharbour City Centre Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	0.02	0.07	0.21	(0.14)
District Parks	0.03	0	0.31	(0.31)
Citywide Parks	0.02	5.09	0.19	4.90

These parks are illustrated in the Shellharbour City Centre Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The Shellharbour City Centre area is one of the smallest suburbs in the LGA, but is likely to have the greatest density of residential population within the life of this plan. The size of the suburb means that access is generally very good from all proposed residential areas. It is notable that the suburb is undulating and access for older residents may be more difficult.

While the City Centre has only one urban local park and one citywide park, the overall accessibility of those areas means that supply is suited to the size of the locality.

Quality and Useability

The unique nature of the City Centre compared with other areas of the LGA provides for a similarly unique approach to parks. The existing local park is the only “urban park” of its kind in the LGA (refer to Plate 1 in Figure 26). While there is no play opportunities, the area provides for seating and rest areas, with potential of being a “meeting space” when the City Centre is fully developed.

The major park in the area is the citywide park adjoining the main commercial centre. This large space is well landscaped, with a memorial on the eastern side and the Blackbutt Youth Centre in the south-east corner. Other improvements are minimal, with opportunities for informal recreation upgrades or play opportunities available as the population grows and the centre further develops (refer to Plate 2 in Figure 26).



Figure 26: Shellharbour City Centre Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ As population growth continues in the City Centre, provide further improvements to the citywide park to meet local residents, worker and visitor needs.

6.4.14 Tullimbar

Provision

The provision of parks within Tullimbar is shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Tullimbar Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	0.01	0	1.36	(1.36)
District Parks	0.01	0	2.06	(2.06)
Citywide Parks	0.01	0	1.23	(1.23)

Currently no parks exist in Tullimbar due to its early stage of development. Therefore a suburb map has not been provided. However the Master Plan for the Tullimbar Village estate indicates future parks as shown in Figure 27 below.



Figure 27: Tullimbar Master Plan

(Image from www.tullimbarvillage.com.au)

Spatial Distribution

The conceptual nature of Tullimbar Village is to provide a walkable neighbourhood which has easy access to public parks and open spaces. The proposed development pattern provides for smaller allotments with often minimal private open space, which places greater emphasis on the provision of quality public parks and open spaces. This can be achieved through the application of the design guidelines at Appendix B. The proposed Master Plan appears to provide acceptable distribution of public parks and open spaces.

Quality and Useability

As with the spatial distribution, the quality and useability of parks should be developed in accordance with the design guidelines at Appendix B. These spaces should generally be aimed at the demographics described in Section 3. Consideration should also be given to the provision of a city wide park within the wider district, if appropriate.

Recommendations:

- ▶ Ensure that public parks and open spaces with Tullimbar Village are embellished in accordance with the design guidelines at Appendix B; and
- ▶ Consideration should also be given to the feasibility of a citywide park within the wider district if appropriate.

6.4.15 Warilla

Provision

The provision of parks within Warilla is shown in Table 18.

Table 18: Warilla Park Provision

Park Type	2006 Demand (Ha)	2008 Supply (Ha)	2021 Demand (Ha)	Over / (Under) Supply (Ha)
Local Parks	2.17	3.06	2.13	0.93
District Parks	3.29	9.29	3.22	6.07
Citywide Parks	1.98	0	1.93	(1.93)

These parks are illustrated in the Warilla Suburb Map at Appendix C, which show the spatial distribution of parks and other suburb features.

Spatial Distribution

The distribution of parks within Warilla is typical of many of the LGAs coastal suburbs. Extensive linked parks exist to the east of the suburb along the foreshore, with smaller local parks located further west.

In the centre of the suburb, a district park provides for good access from a large portion of the Warilla residents, with a “community hub” providing a community centre, senior citizens centre and pool. Informal sporting facilities including a basketball court and extensive grassed areas suitable for kicking space are also provided.

Links to the citywide park further north along the foreshore provide access to these facilities within a longer walk or short drive of Warilla residents.

Quality and Useability

While the presence of numerous parks provides for high accessibility, the quality of parks is generally of poor condition. The foreshore areas are currently sparsely embellished, providing effective linear exercise routes, but lacking other associated facilities such as seating and landscaping (refer Plate 1 in Figure 28). Upgrades to the foreshore parks are currently being designed and implemented as part of the Shellharbour City Foreshore Master Plan project.

Smaller local parks are in a variety of condition, typically containing playground equipment, but few other embellishments. In particular opportunities exist to improve the movement within and between parks and open spaces, particularly where part of their function is to provide pedestrian and cycle linkages (see for example Plate 2 in Figure 28).



Figure 28: Warilla Park Photos

Recommendations:

- ▶ Upgrade Warilla foreshore parks in accordance with the *Shellharbour City Foreshore Master Plan* project; and
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for improvements to local parks which are poorly developed or undeveloped within the non-foreshore areas of Warilla.

6.4.16 Illawarra Highway North

Provision

There are no parks currently provided within the Illawarra Highway North combined suburb area. There is little justification for implementation of new parks for the following reasons:

- ▶ The population in the combined suburb area is predicted to decline over the next 15 years (resulting from lower household population size);
- ▶ The required size of combined parks under the provision standards would indicate a park size which is well below the minimum recommended size for any park; and
- ▶ The rural nature of development suggests that there is ample private open space available to residents.

On the basis of these findings, development of new parks is not recommended. Nevertheless, should the development pattern or population assumptions of this area change over the planning period, suitable parks based on the design guidelines at Appendix C should be implemented.

Recommendations:

- ▶ None

6.4.17 Illawarra Highway South

Provision

Similar to the Illawarra Highway North combined suburb area above, there are no parks currently provided within the Illawarra Highway South. Again, there is little justification for implementation of new parks for the following reasons:

- ▶ The population in the combined suburb area is predicted to decline over the next 15 years (resulting from lower household population size);
- ▶ The required size of combined parks under the provision standards would indicate a park size which is well below the minimum recommended size for any park; and
- ▶ The rural nature of development suggests that there is ample private open space available to residents.

On the basis of these findings, development of new parks is not recommended. Nevertheless, should the development pattern or population assumptions of this area change over the planning period, suitable parks based on the design guidelines at Appendix C should be implemented.

Recommendations:

- ▶ None

6.5 Conclusions

It is clear that the overall provision of parks throughout the LGA is high, though the distribution and quality of these spaces is variable from suburb to suburb. Specific management and delivery issues for passive open space or parks are further discussed Section 10. Recommendations provided within this section are also further detailed in Section 11.

7. Active Open Space (Sportsgrounds and Facilities)

7.1 Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with a range of sporting groups and associations through a range of activities. Primarily these included:

- ▶ Face to face interviews with representatives of various sporting associations and regional bodies;
- ▶ Written surveys to sporting clubs and groups within the LGA; and
- ▶ Research and background information on clubs and sporting groups.

The purpose of consultation was to identify and establish trends and requirements of various sporting groups in the LGA. Such trends for each sports type has been discussed in Section 4.3. Generalised observations from these consultations include:

- ▶ Significant growth in some sports being recorded (such as soccer and AFL), while others have remained steady (rugby league and hockey) or are declining in popularity (tennis);
- ▶ The organisation of district and regional competitions was based on the availability and location of sportsground and facilities within and outside of the LGA – for example a regional netball facility is based outside the LGA but is used by all Shellharbour based teams;
- ▶ Groups generally recorded that they are happy with the provision and availability of space for their sports, and Council's maintenance of those spaces or surfaces;
- ▶ The quality of embellishments, such as toilets, storage, canteens and carparking, are generally of poor condition requiring repair or replacement; and

- ▶ Sports competing at higher competition levels are bound by the facility requirements of organising bodies, which often change from season to season and are costly to implement.

A summary of outcomes from face to face interviews are provided in Appendix E.

7.2 Supply

The existing supply of sporting fields and facilities is the result of historical use and trends within the LGA. Council has typically identified needs and provision of additional sporting facilities on a case by case basis without any significant strategic planning. This process has resulted in a degree of ad-hoc provision, with opportunities for integration and co-location being limited.

Nevertheless, the overall supply of sporting open space is high, with 212ha being identified within the whole of the LGA, with the breakdown between the east and west portions of the LGA with 87.21 and 124.79ha respectively.

At the individual sport level, the primary sports played in the LGA (and region generally) are identified in Table 19. This table identifies the current supply of facilities for each sport throughout the entire LGA, and on an east / west basis.

Table 19: Sporting Grounds Use Based Supply

Sporting Type	Shellharbour LGA	East	West
Athletics (oval)	2	1	1
AFL (field)	2	1	1
Baseball (diamond)	1	1	0
BMX (track)	1	0	1
Cricket (pitch)	22	15	7
Equestrian (facility)	2	0	2
Hockey (field)	2	0	2
Rugby League (field)	19	12	7
Rugby Union (field)	10	6	4
Netball (court)	22	7	15
Skateboarding (park)	3	1	2
Soccer (pitch)	21	11	10
Soccer (Junior pitch)	10	6	4
Softball (diamonds)	3	1	2
Tennis (courts)	20	6	14
Touch (fields)	18	10	8

This supply is based on field observations, aerial photo interpretation, Council data and other anecdotal evidence. Actual use of fields may differ depending on the season, and where dual use of spaces exist, the provision for each sport has been included – for example in summer, touch football is generally allocated two fields to every one rugby league or soccer field, who use the field in winter. These fields are therefore counted twice in the above table.

7.3 Demand

Demand for sporting grounds and facilities can be measured in two ways; through provision based demand based on population growth, or through use based demand, which takes into account demand on individual sports. Each of these demand types is discussed below.

7.3.1 Provision Based Demand

As discussed in Section 5, the provision of sporting grounds and facilities should be provided at a generalised rate of 1.7 ha/1,000 persons. Based on this rate of provision and the most recent population figures (2006), Table 20 identifies the current provision and population based demand (based on population projections provided by SGS Economics & Planning 2008) at the LGA and east / west portion levels.

Table 20: Sporting Grounds Provision Based Demand

Location	2006 Demand	2008 Supply	2021 Requirement	Over / Under Supply
LGA	107.80 ha	212.00 ha	120.77 ha	91.23 ha
East	74.28 ha	87.21 ha	81.23 ha	5.98 ha
West	33.52 ha	124.79 ha	39.54 ha	85.25 ha

As demonstrated in this table, the overall provision of sporting lands is well above the provision requirements, particularly in the West of the city where significant large citywide sporting facilities exist (Terry Reserve and Croom Regional Sporting Complex).

7.3.2 Use Based Demand

While the area based calculations are a sign of plentiful supply, the quality of spaces and the effective allocation of those spaces to particular sports must also be determined on a use basis. By applying use based needs and information gained through consultation and research activities, the changes in trends between sports, popularity of individual clubs and the needs of clubs entering various levels of competition can be accommodated. Individual sport demand and future space requirements are summarised at Table 21 with further discussion on the demand and allocation discussed in detail in Section 7.4 below.

Table 21: Use Based Demand for Sporting Grounds

Sporting Type	LGA	East	West
	Existing / Required	Existing / required	Existing / Required
Athletics (fields)	2 / 2	1 / 1	1 / 1
AFL (field)	2 / 3	1 / 2	1 / 1
Baseball (diamond)	1 / 2	1 / 2	0 / 0
BMX (track)	1 / 1	0 / 0	1 / 1
Cricket (pitch)	22 / 29	15 / 19	7 / 10
Equestrian (facility)	2 / 2	0 / 0	2 / 2
Hockey (field)	2 / 2	0 / 0	2 / 2

Sporting Type	LGA	East	West
Rugby League (field)	19 / 21	12 / 13	7 / 8
Rugby Union (field)	10 / 6	6 / 6	4 / 0
Netball (court)	22 / 22	7 / 7	15 / 15
Skateboarding (park)	3 / 4	1 / 2	2 / 2
Soccer (pitch)*	21 / 31	11 / 18	10 / 13
Soccer (Junior pitch)*	10 / 10	6 / 6	4 / 4
Softball (diamonds)	3 / 3	1 / 1	2 / 2
Tennis (courts)	20 / 22	6 / 8	14 / 14
Touch (fields)	18 / 20	10 / 10	8 / 10

*NOTE: Soccer facilities are subject to further detailed discussions with all clubs including potential for field reconfiguration and new facilities. Ten additional senior fields have been identified which should be allocated as necessary between junior and senior requirements.

7.4 Analysis of Existing Provision and Future Needs

Current Supply versus Demand

The overall area of sporting facilities is clearly meeting the provision target of 1.7 ha per 1,000 persons. In the eastern portion of the LGA, the area provided for sporting facilities is more closely aligned to the provision requirements, though still exceeding this level.

In relation to use or individual sport based analysis, there are a variety of requirements. These are discussed by individual sport below:

7.4.1 Athletics

With two existing facilities located on each side of the LGA, demand for athletics facilities would appear to be catered for into the foreseeable future. Discussions have been raised as to the provision of a permanent facility including dedicated tartan surfaced running track. While demand for this type of facility would appear to be limited (particularly given the existing Illawarra Regional Athletics Facility at Beaton Park in Wollongong), any future provision of this kind should be developed in association with existing clubs rather than as a new facility.

Recommendation: Maintain existing athletics facilities with minor upgrade and other maintenance activities as required.

7.4.2 Australian Rules Football (AFL)

With the growth of AFL in the region likely to continue, facility requirements over the next 15 years will also need to make corresponding allowances. While the longer term growth of the sport is difficult to predict at such an early stage of the sports development in the LGA, plans for a third junior team feeding to a single Shellharbour senior team seems likely to occur in the near future and provision for a third field/club should be provided.

Along with the need for Cricket facilities which utilise similar oval sizes and ancillary facilities, and under a shared lease arrangement, a combined AFL / Cricket facility should be provided in the eastern portion of the LGA (as is also required for Cricket). Such a facility could also be considered in the future as an "Auskick" centre in association with the AFL.

Recommendation: Investigate the provision of a shared AFL / Auskick / Cricket facility in the eastern portion of the LGA

7.4.3 Baseball

The existing quality and safety restrictions of baseball require careful consideration with regard to existing facilities. While significant growth in the sport is not expected, current infrastructure within the LGA is not of an appropriate standard for the standard of competition currently played by the Shellharbour club. Existing diamonds are located in areas where balls can become dangerous to vehicular traffic as well as other open space users and while these existing grounds are appropriate for lower level competition ("Minor Leagues"), they do not meet "Major League" standards.

Recommendation: Further investigate the need for a dedicated Baseball facility which meets the minimum requirements of the Illawarra Baseball League Inc "Major League" requirements including lighting and mounding

7.4.4 BMX / Cycling

The existing BMX facility is currently well utilised for both competition and as informal recreation. The facility is in good condition and will require a high level of maintenance given the risk levels associated with the sport. This responsibility needs to be shared between Council and the BMX Club. Road and track (velodrome) cycling is currently catered for in the regional club and velodrome facility at Unanderra located 20km to the north of Shellharbour.

MTB facilities are located in various locations well outside the Shellharbour LGA. Opportunities may exist for formalised MTB tracks within forested areas owned or managed by Council. Such facilities would be best maintained and operated by a local club and Council should consider the provision of such a facility only where such commitments are made.

Recommendations:

- ▶ The existing BMX facility at Croom Regional Sporting Complex be maintained and improved as required; and
- ▶ MTB facilities be considered only where they can be supported and maintained by a localised MTB club.

7.4.5 Cricket

With the continued growth of cricket participation, the number of available fields is constraining growth of the game. An acute shortage of playing fields was identified by the regional association, with an additional seven grounds required to meet growth. These fields should be provided across the LGA with a particular shortage of fields on the eastern portion of the LGA where less than one third of pitches service several clubs.

Discussions should also be held with key associations and clubs to determine the feasibility of playing on both weekend days, rather than only on Sundays.

Recommendations:

- ▶ Where possible all new sporting facilities are to be designed to cater for cricket as a shared arrangement;
- ▶ Investigate the provision of a higher quality turf cricket pitch / field in a shared use arrangement with the AFL in the east of the LGA;
- ▶ Discussions be initiated with the appropriate associations and clubs to investigate opportunities for games to be played on both Saturdays and Sundays to reduce the demand on existing fields; and
- ▶ Pending the outcome of above discussions, Council aim to provide additional cricket fields over the life of the plan.

7.4.6 Equestrian

Current equestrian facilities in the LGA are both popular and well suited to the needs for the sport. The Terry Reserve area and Croom Regional Sporting Complex both provide large areas suitable for competition. Due to the space requirements for parking, floats and storage, these existing facilities should be maintained and enhanced as required over the course of the plan.

Recommendation: Maintain existing equestrian facilities and undertake improvements as necessary.

7.4.7 Hockey

The existing hockey facilities at Croom Road are used as part of the Illawarra regional hockey competition, along with fields at Unanderra and the University of Wollongong. The fields cater for current need and further fields are unlikely to be necessary in the foreseeable future (particularly when new synthetic fields are constructed in the Shoalhaven as planned over the next two years). However both existing synthetic field surfaces are likely to reach replacement age within the life of the plan, and considerable funds will be required for replacement.

Recommendation: Maintain existing hockey facility with surface replacements by association as required under existing licence agreement.

7.4.8 Netball

The continued growth of netball combined with aging infrastructure within the Shellharbour LGA will require attention over the life of the plan. While the introduction of the regional Val Curren Netball Centre at Berkeley will cater for future high level competition, there remains a needs at the local level for training and off-season competitions within the Shellharbour LGA. Ongoing maintenance and mechanisms for protection of existing courts (fencing) is required to ensure new courts are protected.

Recommendation: Existing netball facilities be maintained and upgraded to meet training and off-season competition needs.

7.4.9 Rugby League

Rugby league is generally well catered in the Shellharbour LGA. Rationalisation and reorganisation of clubs and facilities may be required to meet growth demands and competition requirements imposed on some clubs.

Recommendation: Where new cricket facilities are proposed in the future, design facilities to cater for rugby league including club relocation where required.

7.4.10 Rugby Union

Given the absence of any rugby union teams in the LGA, and need for an increase in provision of such fields in the foreseeable future is unlikely. Should new teams or regular competition be played in the LGA, further review of facilities could be conducted, though current supply is likely to meet such demand.

Recommendation: Maintain opportunities for rugby union facilities in conjunction with shared sport facilities.

7.4.11 Skateboarding

The growth in popularity and ongoing use of skate parks as a social outlet for older children and teenagers provides good opportunities for skate parks to continue to be provided in conjunction with associate community and youth facilities. While consultation and development of any future skate parks will need to be carefully managed, opportunities will exist for future parks to be constructed, particularly in areas where growth in the older children and teenage age groups are expected to live or congregate such as the Shellharbour City Centre.

Recommendation: That provision of a new skate facility be considered in development of the Shellharbour City Centre.

7.4.12 Soccer

Catering for the growth of soccer presents the most significant individual sporting need in the LGA. The growth of individual clubs, as well as the sport generally needs to be addressed through additional field provision and potentially the reorganisation of team home grounds. In the east of the LGA, the Shellharbour junior club has outgrown their home ground at Barrack Heights Sport Field and may need to be moved to a new larger home at a future date.

Existing facilities, such as Albion Oval, should also be identified for reconfiguration to allow for possible expansion with the growth of clubs and the sport generally. In-depth discussion with clubs and all leagues should be undertaken to allow a consultative and integrated approach to growth issues, including any implications of the introduction of small-sided games for junior teams. Opportunities for the development of a single city-wide premier league team with several feeder clubs should also be investigated through this consultation process.

It is likely that up to 10 additional full sized fields are required within proposed sporting facilities throughout the LGA to cater for growth.

Recommendations:

- ▶ Where possible integrate junior and senior soccer facilities in the LGA including the potential for co-habitation with cricket ovals; and
- ▶ The allocation of fields and competition organisation should be subject to in-depth consultation with all soccer clubs and leagues.

7.4.13 Softball

Overall foreseeable potential for growth in softball would restrict any significant infrastructure plans for this sport during the life of the needs study. Nevertheless the existing field arrangement and facilities at Albion Oval are below standard and should be addressed as part of the above investigations for better utilisation of space for soccer (including ancillary facilities which can be utilised by the softball code).

Recommendation: That existing softball facilities are maintained and the sport is integrated with any future changes to Albion Oval.

7.4.14 Tennis

Tennis NSW undertook a detailed review of existing facilities in the LGA in 2006. This review has led to the closure of some smaller court facilities and a facility plan for others. Findings of the report suggest that some clubs should be expanded as current demand outstrips availability of courts – this is particularly prevalent in the eastern portion of the LGA which has just 6 courts, compared with 14 in the west. The report suggests the expansion of the Oak Flats facility where strong membership and use is present.

Recommendation: That existing tennis facilities are maintained and any future additional courts are only developed where sustained membership, utilisation and growth can be demonstrated.

7.4.15 Touch Football and OZTAG

The popularity and relative ease of accommodating touch football and OZTAG enable it to be integrated into existing sports facilities. However, this ease of accommodation can lead to the sports being a forgotten partner to a shared facility. Where these sports are played, Albion Oval and Flinders Reserve, consultation should be undertaken to integrate and better utilise space and facilities.

Consideration to be given to the provision of lighting for use during winter competition in association with other sporting requirements under shared field arrangements.

Recommendation: Existing facilities are maintained with consideration of touch football and OZTAG in facility and space assessments (including lighting requirements).

7.5 Existing Sporting Ground Condition

The condition and use of a number of sporting grounds is an issue for a number of groups that require specific requirements due to sports type, competition level or insurance arrangements. A number of such facilities have been identified for embellishment by sporting groups including:

- ▶ Keith Bond Oval (soccer);
- ▶ Ron Costello Oval (rugby league); and
- ▶ Andrew Park (netball);

Other sports including baseball, AFL and soccer additionally identified the need for new facilities designed to meet specific competition needs. It is recommended that development or redevelopment of these facilities be considered within a broad framework of master planning for sites (refer Section 10.1.1 for further information).

7.5.1 Other Sporting Facilities

In addition to sporting field requirements, other sporting facilities also need to be considered. In the Shellharbour LGA the primary indoor sporting facility is Shellharbour City Stadium, located at the Croom Road Regional Sporting Complex. The Stadium caters for a range of sporting groups and can be set up in a variety of configurations including:

- ▶ 3 x Netball courts;
- ▶ 3 x Basketball courts;
- ▶ 3 x Indoor soccer courts;
- ▶ 4 x Badminton courts;
- ▶ 3 x Volleyball courts; or
- ▶ 3 x Indoor hockey fields.

7.6 Conclusions

It is clear that the overall provision of sporting grounds within parks throughout the LGA is high, though the distribution and quality of these spaces is variable from suburb to suburb. Specific management and delivery issues for passive open space or parks are further discussed Section 10. Recommendations provided within this section are also further detailed in Section 11.

8. Other Open Space

8.1 Environmental Reserves

As discussed in Section 5.2.3, environmental reserves ordinarily do not have a significant recreational value, and are therefore generally not included in the provision of open space. Nevertheless, environmental reserves do play an important role in the protection of sensitive areas, and often provide an open space landscape setting to adjacent residential areas. For these reasons, environmental reserves are considered to be an integral part of the open space system.

In the whole LGA, close to 270 hectares of environmental reserves exist, often in the form of significant vegetation and watercourses. These spaces are evenly spread across the east and west of the LGA, with Albion Park, Albion Park Rail and Dunmore providing the largest portions of environmental areas on a suburb level. Not included in these figures are the significant regional environmental spaces of Bass Point Reserve, Killalea State Park and the Macquarie Pass National Park.

Additional areas of environmental reserves may be passed to Council as open space in future development areas, particularly in dedicated watercourses where riparian corridors are required to be protected under relevant State legislation. In these instances, efforts should be made to integrate and utilise environmental reserves as linkages between other active open spaces – as has occurred in newer urban development areas in Albion Park, Flinders and Shell Cove.

Importantly, Council should ensure that the condition of these areas at the time of handover is appropriate for Council's ongoing maintenance, including for example being free from weeds and other invasive species. Management plans, which clearly define ongoing maintenance and

management requirements, should be prepared for all areas prior to hand-over to Council.

8.2 Ancillary Reserves

Like environmental reserves, ancillary open spaces are an important component of the open space system, often providing access or linkages between areas. Within newer estates and subdivisions, the ancillary open spaces have been used for the purposes of landscaping, as asset protection zones (APZ) for access and bushfire setbacks, underground infrastructure and other amenity based uses.

In the whole LGA, over 11.5 hectares of ancillary reserves exist. In future development areas, efforts should be made to reduce these areas, or to ensure that their purpose aligns with the requirements of Council and will not become a maintenance burden.

As with environmental spaces, Council should ensure that the condition of these areas at the time of handover is appropriate for Council's ongoing maintenance, including for example is easily accessible, free from weeds and other invasive species.

8.3 Design Standards

The design standards for environmental reserves and ancillary reserves will typically be as required for the purpose of the spaces. Further details as to the objectives and purpose of these areas can be found in Appendix B – Park and Recreation Space Guidelines.

9. Community and Cultural Facilities

9.1 Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with a range of community and cultural groups through a range of activities. Primarily these included:

- ▶ Face to face interviews with various community and cultural organisations and companies;
- ▶ Discussions with relevant Council staff regarding particularly sectors;
- ▶ Review of recent Council reports on areas such as child care and aged care; and
- ▶ Research and review of background information on services providers.

The purpose of consultation was to identify and establish trends and requirements of the various community sectors and to extrapolate needs into foreseeable requirements of Council. It is important to note that Council is not the sole provider or level of Government responsible for development and funding of community facilities and services and cannot be expected to fulfil such a role. Trends in the community facility and service sector were also discussed in Section 4.4.

Generalised observations from these consultations include:

- ▶ Relative low socio-economic advantage and aging population require higher care with lower costs;
- ▶ Effective delivery of services is necessary, recognising that not all services come from traditional “Community Centres”;
- ▶ Delivery of community services is often undertaken on a regional basis with complementary and supporting services operating in Shellharbour from bases in neighbouring LGAs;

- ▶ Upfront provision of facilities through planning agreements and other sources are critical to providing initial infrastructure for future services; and
- ▶ Ongoing community engagement needs to be well targeted to ensure expectations of the community can be met by Council.

A summary of outcomes from face to face interviews are provided in Appendix F.

9.2 Supply

The existing supply of community and cultural facilities is a consequence of historical relationships, ad-hoc projects and identification of priorities through various Council strategic planning documents. The supply or provision of community and cultural facilities is difficult to readily define and benchmarks as previously discussed are similarly difficult to apply.

Nevertheless, a relative indication of supply of services is provided below in the various community facility sectors. This supply commentary is based on field observations, verification with Council staff and discussions with service providers. Actual use of these facilities may differ significantly depending on current activities being offered, operational funding and staff availability.

9.2.1 Community and Neighbourhood Centres

Council has a total of eight community and neighbourhood centres at:

- ▶ Albion Park;
- ▶ Albion Park Rail;
- ▶ Flinders;
- ▶ Oak Flats;
- ▶ Shell Cove;
- ▶ Shellharbour; and
- ▶ Two centres in Warilla (Oakleigh Park and Warilla).

These centres provide a range of services, typically in an integrated service approach with a number of programs and operational staff.

9.2.2 Youth Centres

Dedicated youth centres are provided at Shellharbour City Centre (Blackbutt Youth Centre) and the Lake Illawarra PCYC. However integrated youth services are also offered by the following groups/centres:

- ▶ Central Illawarra Youth Service at the Albion Park Community Centre;
- ▶ Albion Park Rail Community Centre; and
- ▶ Warilla Neighbourhood Centre Youth Group.

In addition to these groups, the Shellharbour Aboriginal Community Youth Group (SACYA) operate from Oakleigh Park Hall in Warilla.

9.2.3 Libraries

Several library services located in the Shellharbour LGA, namely:

- ▶ Warilla Library;
- ▶ Albion Park Library;
- ▶ Oak Flats Library; and
- ▶ Shellharbour Library

These facilities provide a range of services including programs for children, teenagers and multicultural services. Libraries also operate a range of computing and educational services.

9.2.4 Aged Services and Community Care

Senior citizens centres and Home and Community Care (HACC) Centres are provided within the LGA at:

- ▶ Albion Park HACC Centre;
- ▶ Oak Flats Senior Citizens Centre; and
- ▶ Warilla Senior Services Centre.

These facilities provide a range of services primarily targeted at the aged community. In addition to these facilities, other services are often integrated to other community centres and through other aged care service providers.

Funding has also been received by Council (and others) from a number of other sources to provide services in a range of care services in the LGA. Many of these services are home care services which support residents within their own home, reducing requirements for travel and access.

In addition to aged services facilities, aged care accommodation is also provided through a variety of privately operated homes including:

- ▶ Warrigal Care – providing a total of 230 beds;
- ▶ John and Margaret Land Hostel – providing a total of 63 beds;
- ▶ Daintree Aged Care – providing a total of 151 beds; and
- ▶ A range of providers with independent living units – providing a total of approximately 170 units.

9.2.5 Child Care and Early Childhood Centres

Five early childhood centres (baby health clinics) operated by South Eastern Illawarra Area Health Service (NSW Health) are located in the Shellharbour LGA at Albion Park, Oak Flats, Mt Terry, Warilla and as part of the Flinders Community Centre. The centres provide a range of services including child health care, child development and parental support services.

A total of 39 child care centres exist within the LGA, some owned by Council. These child care centres are operated by a range of community based service providers including Illawarra Area Child Care (IACC), Illawarra Children’s Services (ICS), the Department of Education and Training and private organisations with the exception of the Warilla Child Care Centre which continues to be operated by Council. The Warilla Child Care Centre is owned by NSW Housing

9.2.6 Public Art Galleries and Centres

Lack of exhibition space, artist activity and working space, as well as spaces for meeting and art groups are all identified issues within the Shellharbour LGA. At present no permanent private or Council operated gallery type facilities exist within the Shellharbour urban area, with the

Wilga Close arts facility (Smarts Studio) at Albion Park Rail providing the only known “wet” area where arts activities are undertaken.

In addition to these facilities, the former Council Chambers on Addison Street at Shellharbour have also been transformed into a “Men’s Shed”. The Shed is designed as a place for local men to gather, learn new skills, exchange ideas and get involved in various artistic and community projects.

9.2.7 Museum and Exhibition Spaces

The Tongarra Museum is located between the Albion Park Community Centre and Library and is the primary museum space in the LGA. The museum is staffed 1.5 days per week, with a volunteer base enabling the museum to open on Wednesdays and Saturday mornings.

The Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) is located at the Illawarra Regional Airport at Albion Park Rail, and provides a unique experience of aircraft restoration and annual events.

The Illawarra Railway Museum on Tongarra Road at Albion Park Rail also operates historic trains and events.

9.2.8 Shared Sessional Spaces, Meeting Rooms

Shared sessional spaces and meeting rooms are provided in a range of locations throughout the LGA. These spaces are commonly associated with community centres and similar facilities where centre managers are able to book and promote services available at regular intervals.

9.2.9 Community Theatre and Performance Spaces

The Harbour Theatre on Addison Street in Shellharbour is the only public owned performance facility in the LGA. The Theatre is operated by the Roo Theatre Company who provide up to six community based theatre performances throughout the year, as well as ongoing training and educational courses.

In addition to the activities undertaken by the Roo Theatre Company, the Harbour Theatre is also used for tap dancing classes and hosts a range of “school plays” each year.

The theatre has aging equipment and infrastructure and the ongoing cost of maintenance is difficult for the Roo Theatre Company to cover without the assistance of Council.

9.2.10 Aboriginal Services

A range of Aboriginal services are operated in the Shellharbour LGA including the Shellharbour Aboriginal Community Youth Association (SACYA), Illawarra Koori Men’s Support Group and Illawarra Dubays (Aboriginal women’s group). The Oakleigh Park Hall is currently leased by SACYA, with the Dubays also utilising the site.

The Koori Men’s Group meet in the arts building at Wilga Close, Albion Park Rail, where they have their own storage facilities and undertake art and other projects. However, the SACYA facilities are utilised for administrative needs. It is understood that the space provided by Oakleigh Park Hall and former tennis club buildings are still insufficient for the needs of these groups.

9.2.11 Pools

While pools can be considered as a sporting or recreational facility, their purpose and use by Council has historically been provided as a community benefit: with minimal or no cost for use and substantial subsidy for ongoing maintenance.

There are currently four pools in the Shellharbour LGA located at Albion Park, Oak Flats, Shellharbour and Warilla. All of these locations contain 50m outdoor pools which are open during the warmer months with the exception of the Shellharbour pool, which is located within the Shellharbour foreshore as a saltwater ocean pool and open all year. The Oak Flats facility also contains a heated 25m pool which is also open all year.

Trends in the utilisation of these pools suggest decreasing usage. Additionally, costs for providing these facilities continue to rise, increasing around 30% in the past five years to more than \$1 million last financial year. These figures are exacerbated by aging infrastructure and increasing costs per user.

Trends in pool provision at the local government level has been characterised by a move towards integrated “leisure centres” which include year round swimming facilities and a variety of other associated uses such gyms, child care, aerobic activity and other indoor sporting facilities.

9.3 Demand

Demand on a range of community facilities continues to grow in Shellharbour, linked to population growth, increased community expectations on the provision of services from local government and from the aging of the population.

As community facilities are frequently inter-linked, the demand on facilities is best described in regard to an analysis of existing provision and the future development requirements as seen in the next section.

Importantly, demand on services and facilities is directly related to the availability of funding to instigate, promote and operate programs and events. While volunteer positions can provide an important resource for many community facilities and services, funding for positions and other resources will typically provide significantly more opportunity to engage with the community and therefore build demand for services. In this context the future availability of grant or other funding may require deviation from the analysis provided herein. In these instances, case-by-case assessment of facility needs may be required.

9.4 Analysis of Existing Provision and Future Needs

An analysis of the future provision of community and cultural facilities is provided in this section. This analysis seeks to identify gaps in the existing provision of community and cultural facilities, as well as future needs over the next 15 years (based on population projections provided by SGS Economics & Planning 2008, and the trends in planning for Community Facilities).

9.4.1 Community and Neighbourhood Centres

A majority of the community and neighbourhood centres appear well patronised and are likely to modify services and events over time to suit the changing needs of their catchment. In Warilla where two facilities currently exist, Oakleigh Park Hall has been leased to SACYA, predominantly making this a youth and cultural facility.

The future growth areas of Tullimbar and Shell Cove are the only areas where the introduction of a community centre or similar facility may be considered. In Shell Cove, a future community facility is planned within the Marina Precinct to replace the existing temporary centre. In Tullimbar, the Tullimbar Village development has earmarked a Town Hall and other community facilities.

Utilising the AMCORD criteria in Section 5.3.2, it is also clear that current provision is sufficient to meet demand over the life of the plan, with around 4 centres required and 7-8 being provided. Given this current availability and spread of existing community centres, future additional facilities are unlikely to be required.

Recommendation: That community and neighbourhood centres be maintained and improved in accordance with a Community Facility Management Plan to be developed by Council.

9.4.2 Youth Centres

Similar to the provision of community and neighbour centres in the LGA, the provision of youth centres appears well utilised. The geographic distribution of the centres and integrated services suggest that a similarly integrated service may be required in the south-east of the LGA, potentially in conjunction with the Shell Cove community centre.

While state trends in the provision of PCYC's are for these facilities to be closed, opportunities would potentially exist for Council to maintain or

replace this service should this be required by the term of the plan. Nevertheless, even without this facility, the AMCORD criteria for youth centres would still be met.

Another important element of future provision and demand is the support of the SACYA facility at Oakleigh Park. The current facility is understood to be well utilised and currently also facilitating other Aboriginal groups of Dubays and the Koori Men's Support Group. Ensuring the suitability and potential expansion of this facility during the plan period will be important.

Recommendations:

- ▶ That existing youth facilities and services be maintained and improved in accordance with a Community Facility Management Plan to be developed by Council; and
- ▶ That dedicated youth services be considered within the design and implementation of the Shell Cove Community Facility.

9.4.3 Libraries

The assumptions used to develop the 2007 Library Facilities Review for the Shellharbour LGA remain fundamentally unchanged. The review proposed the provision of three branch libraries supported by a central library in the City Centre. This configuration results in the removal of the Oak Flats and Shellharbour Libraries, upgrade of the Warilla and Albion Park Libraries and the creation of new libraries at Shell Cove and the City Centre.

Recommendation: Council develop a Strategic Plan for the provision of Library services in the LGA and that the findings of the Shellharbour City Council Report of Library Requirements (April 2007) be taken into consideration in the development of the Plan.

9.4.4 Aged Services and Care

The aged services and care sector in the LGA continues to be under high demand for both service provision and accommodation. The three services facilities currently provided in the LGA provide for effective services, however with the anticipated growth of the aged population these facilities will need to be complimented.

Within the LGA, growth in the 55+ age group represents a 23% or 2590 person increase in the east, and a 53% or 1836 person increase. This proportional increase is likely to require a proportional response, which is also reflected in the AMCORD provision standards. The current three facilities under the AMCORD provision scenario would require an additional four centres over the plan period. However, this provision does not account for the integrated aged care services from many community centres and provision of four facilities is considered excessive in this context.

The geographic context of existing services also identifies the provision of services in the south east of the LGA, within the Flinders, Shell Cove and Shellharbour areas. A similar situation can be identified in the Albion Park Rail area, which can become isolated with the lack of east-west transport to other parts of the City. These two areas would be logical areas to facilitate new senior's facilities, potentially in the case of Shell Cove, in association with other new community centre facilities.

These facilities should provide for meeting and sessional services space to enable the growth and localisation of service providers in the Shellharbour area as identified by Council's *Report on Aged Care for Residents of Shellharbour City* (February 2008).

With regard to the provision of aged care accommodation, the current supply would appear to be sufficient in terms of the Federal Department of Health targets for aged accommodation (113 beds per resident above 70 years of age). However the demand for various bed types (low, care, high

care and dementia) can be difficult and a co-ordinated approach to the continued delivery of these services is required.

Not-for-profit accommodation service providers also indicate difficulties in securing land and development approval in appropriate areas to accommodate future needs – particularly at affordable prices. Council could play an important role in facilitating the availability of such land or similar incentives.

Recommendations:

- ▶ Council consider incorporating aged services facilities, such as meeting spaces, session services and service provider outlets as part of any community facility development in Shell Cove and Albion Park Rail; and
- ▶ Council undertake an integrated study to determine the availability and demand for aged accommodation and incentives by Council to facilitate future accommodation growth

9.4.5 Child Care and Early Childhood Centres

While the child care sector was largely government based and supported during the 1970's and 80's, the trends since the mid 1990's have been the provision of childcare on a market basis, with introduction of several large scale private sector providers. These trends were highlighted by a report undertaken on behalf of Council in July 2006 examining the future of the Warilla Child Care Centre – the only centre currently operated by Council operating out of an ageing building owned by Housing NSW (Australia Street Company 2006). That report additionally highlighted the importance of local government participation in the delivery of child care services in areas of economic disadvantage – which were found to be poorly serviced by private sector providers. The report identified that the Warilla centre lease should be retained, with a revitalised community hub developed around the centre, or within a new purpose built facility.

Given the trends associated with private sector investment in the child care sector and the current government policy in strengthening the child care rebate, it is likely that this trend will continue as care becomes more affordable for lower income families. These assumptions need to be balanced with Council's ability to ensure the delivery of affordable and appropriately located facilities through ownership and/or operation of centres. Retention of existing Council run facilities is therefore crucial to this sector.

Early Childhood Centres (baby health clinics) are operated by the NSW State Government and subject to ongoing funding through NSW Health. These centres provide important drop-in and home services, particularly in the follow-up to child birth. While provision of these clinics in private and Council owned facilities is subject to ongoing funding availability out of the control of Council, their provision is supported.

Recommendations:

- ▶ That Council retain ownership of existing child care facilities in various locations to allow flexibility in delivery of services ; and
- ▶ Council investigate opportunities for a Warilla community hub incorporating children services facilities.

9.4.6 Public Art Galleries and Centres

A number of proposed facilities are likely to provide for some form of gallery or exhibition space including the Shellharbour City Civic Centre development and the proposed cultural centre on the Bass Point Tourist Road. However neither of these facilities provides a dedicated gallery facility and will not be purpose built for such a space. Nor are these facilities likely to provide for “wet” space to enable the active participation in the arts.

While the demand for such facilities is difficult to gauge given the existing lack of this type of community facility, discussions with Council's Arts Development Officer and other community groups identifies extensive need for a full range of services from meeting space, wet and dry space for undertaking workshops and training to hanging and exhibition spaces.

Such an integrated facility is envisaged within the Shellharbour City Centre Master Plan and is supported by this study.

Recommendation: That an integrated arts facility be developed within Shellharbour City Centre to accommodate a range of arts requirements including gallery space, arts workshops and meeting rooms. Noting that such a facility should not replicate regional facilities available in the Wollongong LGA.

9.4.7 Museum and Exhibition Spaces

The need for museum and exhibition space is currently being met through a variety of locations within the City. Under the Shellharbour City Centre Master Plan museum and exhibition spaces would form part of the civic/cultural precinct.

It is anticipated that such spaces would provide for increased exposure to display opportunities currently provided by the Tongarra Museum, but other space will still be required for storage, research and operation needs. The provision of this storage and additional exhibition space has the potential to be provided within a new historical precinct that is linked with the HARS facility and the Illawarra Railway Museum, which are located in Albion Park Rail.

Recommendations:

- ▶ That a museum and art exhibition space be developed within the Shellharbour Civic Centre;

- ▶ Council investigate opportunities for the integration of HARS and Illawarra Railway Museum. In addition, Council investigate opportunities for purpose built museum storage, research and display facilities; and
- ▶ The Council investigate the provision of a new permanent purpose built city museum to replace the existing Tongarra Museum. This facility could be co-located with the central library in the proposed Shellharbour Civic Centre.

9.4.8 Shared Sessional Spaces, Meeting Rooms

Recognition of the needs for sessional services and community meeting rooms should be considered in development of the Shellharbour City Civic Centre. This need was confirmed through consultation with a range of regional and localised service providers. Several issues were identified with access and accessibility of such facilities at individual community centres, with a central Council operated facility in the Shellharbour City Centre being seen as an ideal opportunity for maximising LGA wide sessional service opportunities.

Importantly, several groups identified the need for regular booking times to build recognition of services. It was also recognised that a centralised facility "noticeboard", which would be seen by residents visiting the central library and Council administration offices would provide an important community opportunity to spread knowledge of other available services.

Recommendations: That sessional services and community meeting rooms (including appropriate storage space) are provided and operated by Council as part of the Shellharbour City Centre Civic Precinct.

9.4.9 Community Theatre and Performance Spaces

The provision of community theatre and performance spaces is in a similar position to the provision of Museum space. The existing facilities at the Harbour Theatre, while sufficient for the provision of existing activities, is unlikely provide for sufficient growth over the planning period of 15 years. In addition, the existing Harbour Theatre building is likely to require significant upgrade during this time if it is to continue to provide for performance space.

A community theatre and performance space is identified as a key element of the City Centre Civic Precinct in the Master Plan. This facility was also supported by the Guppy & Associates/Collaborations Cultural Resources Study (1999) and is a logical facility and location for this precinct.

Recommendation: Investigate opportunities for the provision of new community theatre and performance spaces within the Shellharbour City Centre Civic Precinct. These facilities should also be available for community based performance groups.

9.4.10 Aboriginal Services

Council has shown an increased level of commitment to the Aboriginal community through various planning and community funding activities. This level of support has shown a high level of response and participation, with all local groups showing positive participation rates.

This growth in provision has also highlighted the need for dedicated facilities and services to recognise and respond to the needs for the local Aboriginal community. Provision of facilities to SACYA in the form of the Oakleigh Park Hall has proved to be a positive step in creating a base for this group, and a review of the growth in services and requirements of this group presents an opportunity to build on this success.

The Koori Men's Support Group and Dubays women's group require their own needs to be met with suitable meeting and activity space. The Koori Men's Support group use of the Smarts Building in Albion Park Rail should be investigated to establish if a permanent home can be developed in this location for the group. The Dubays group will also require dedicated space, though this may be appropriately located within the Oakleigh Hall facility.

The development of a tourism/commercial and cultural opportunity on the Bass Point Tourist Road, known as the Bass Point Interpretive Centre, has been identified in the Bass Point Management Plan and Shell Cove development context. This facility will provide an important outlet for Aboriginal arts and cultural activity, particularly in association with the important Aboriginal lands of Bass Point.

Recommendations:

- ▶ In association with the Community Facilities Management Plan review the long term requirements of the local Aboriginal community; and
- ▶ Council continue to work with relevant parties in securing funding and planning for the Bass Point Interpretive Centre.

9.4.11 Pools

The ongoing delivery of pool services for residents is a matter for Council to determine in accordance with their policies and views on access. However it is clear from trends within the leisure industry that the development of individual pools and associated services is becoming increasingly rare, with larger integrated facilities being more frequently developed as a citywide facility.

A recent study undertaken on behalf of Wingecarribee Shire Council identifies a trend away from 50m outdoor pools to 25m indoor pools in an integrated facility – a trend which was recommended by that study in

conjunction with a single 50m outdoor pool being retained in the Wingecarribee LGA (Prior + Cheney Pty 2006).

In the instance of the Shellharbour LGA, the continued maintenance and operation of the pools is increasingly costly due to aging infrastructure and the increase in administrative requirements. Should Council seek to reduce these costs through the gradual closure of pools, a new centrally located single high level integrated facility or two smaller integrated facilities within the east and west of the LGA would be recommended.

With respect to the existing facilities, Oak Flats pool provides the greatest opportunity to build upon an existing facility, with many aspects of an integrated facility already being available. The character of the Shellharbour pool also provides a reduced cost option, currently operating at less than 20% of the cost of other facilities. Warilla and Albion Park pools are considered the most expensive and underperforming of existing pools and would be the more likely to be replaced.

Recommendation: That Council undertake a detailed study of services and community needs with respect to Council operated pools, including cost structures aimed at balancing community provision with operational and capital costs.

9.4.12 Community Gardens

The use of public land for community gardening provides many socio-economic benefits. In particular it strengthens the general sense of community in an area while also supporting principles of sustainability. Benefits of community gardens include (based on information from the Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network):

- ▶ Health: including an active pursuit which yields fresh food;

- ▶ Learning: including principals of gardening and good production, community education opportunities such as waste minimisation, recycling of wastes and water conservation;
- ▶ Social: including opportunities to meet others, share information, and to learn skills in decision making, problem solving and negotiation; and
- ▶ Urban improvement: through the regeneration of spaces from vacant or derelict spaces to productive community areas.

Recommendation: That Council prepare a strategy for the facilitation of community gardens on council owned land.

9.5 Conclusions

The development of community facilities requires detailed discussion with user groups and target audiences to ensure facilities are appropriately designed. This section of the Needs Study has identified gaps in the provision of community facilities and needs arising from population growth and trends in community facility planning. Further detailed work is likely to be required before implementation or costing of these facilities is undertaken.

10. Management and Delivery Issues

This section identifies a number of issues relating to the management and delivery of open space and community facilities. The section identifies these issues in terms of passive open space (parks), active open space (sporting facilities) and community facilities. Where issues overlap one or more of these areas, they have been included in the outset under the broader heading of “General Issues”.

The purpose of this section is to identify and explore solutions to issues commonly raised which may impact on the implementation of the recommendations discussed throughout the previous sections. By exploring these issues now, it is hoped that implementation can be smoother and easier for Council.

10.1 General Issues

10.1.1 Prioritising Capital Works for Open Space

The identification of a system for the prioritisation of Council’s capital works expenditure on open space has been identified by Council staff as a key outcome of this project. Prioritising spaces is a difficult process and will always be subject to a degree of subjectivity. Nevertheless a consistent and common approach can provide residents, Council and other stakeholders with a mechanism to facilitate a higher degree of involvement in quality outcomes.

Council has identified a need for the preparation of “master plans” for parks and sporting grounds, which will then identify a process of upgrades, maintenance and provision requirements – and in turn leading to clear capital works requirements, costs and timeframes. This master planning

process is supported and appropriate prioritisation criteria and consultation processes have been identified in Appendix G to assist in this process.

It is envisaged that many parks and sporting grounds will be “master planned” over time, allowing a co-ordinated approach to capital works improvements. It is however recognised that preparation of master plans take significant time and effort and cannot all be completed at once. It is anticipated that with around 200 parks and sporting grounds within the LGA (not all of which will require a master plan), the master planning process will take at least 5 – 10 years and potentially become a rolling program.

Recommendation: That Council commence a rolling programme of park and sporting ground master planning based on the prioritisation criteria and consultation processes at Appendix G.

10.1.2 Equitable Distribution of Funding and Resources

It is inevitable that some sectors of the community will consider that provision of funding or services in their area to be below a fair representation. Through the application of the prioritisation system discussed in the previous section, it is anticipated that Council will be able to appropriately allocate and undertake capital works in an open and transparent way. This process should direct funds where most needed and reduce conflict regarding the equitable distribution of funds.

10.1.3 Multi Use Facilities

Various parties raised the concept of sharing of facilities – whether sporting clubrooms and grounds, community facilities or other spaces provided by Council. Sharing of facilities provides a number of benefits, including:

- ▶ the more effective use of limited funds;
- ▶ reduction of “down-time” for facilities, ensuring safer areas that are less prone to vandalism or damage;
- ▶ higher level of facility availability; and
- ▶ ability to groups or users to learn from and associate with other facility users.

However, the shared use of such facilities is often restricted by either leasing arrangements or by the design for facilities, which restricts users to only one segment of the community. Retrofitting and co-leasing arrangements, particularly where they provide clear guidance for responsibility and roles of all parties, can assist in providing for the co-use of facilities. Such examples might include:

- ▶ Use of sporting facility clubrooms for community purposes during week days;
- ▶ Multi-use of sporting facilities by numerous clubs within the same sport or in various sports played at different times of the year; and
- ▶ Design of community hubs for co-use of outdoor spaces.

Recommendation: That Council develop a new policy aimed at encouraging the shared use of community and sporting facilities with specific investigations into available management options.

10.1.4 Facility Accessibility

A significant issue arising from consultation with numerous recreation, sporting and community facility groups is the difficulty of access to facilities between the east and west of the LGA. While several groups identified the availability or use of a citywide or regional facility, the ability of their constituents to access such facilities was often limited, particularly within the community services industry.

Council's Community Transport service provide access to essential and other services for a range of groups included disabled, low income and elderly. While this service makes a worthwhile contribution accessibility in the LGA, it is a pre-booked facility and unlike typical public transport does not operate by timetable, making more sporadic access needs difficult.

State Government funded public transport provision in the Illawarra is provided by Premier Illawarra, who provide a range of bus routes throughout the Shellharbour LGA. While peak services are reasonably frequent, routes are generally indirect and off-peak services of very poor frequency.

Unless these services are improved through changes to the related State Government service agreements, which appears unlikely, this situation provides an impetus for Council to ensure essential services are provided through the grouping of community and recreational facilities. This type of development opportunity is evident in areas such as Oak Flats, Warilla, Shell Cove and most predominantly the Shellharbour City Centre.

Recommendation: Integrated development of community and recreational facilities be promoted to enable access to a range of services and to reduce travel requirements.

10.1.5 Maintenance Issues

Adequate maintenance of open space and facilities is essential to maintain the useability and utility of the assets, manage risks to users and to ensure the physical quality of the asset are retained. To achieve this outcome, the design of parks, sporting grounds and associated facilities must recognise the future cost of maintenance (life cycle costs), with the associated standards of maintenance (commonly referred to as “level of service”) developed by Council being consistent with these budgetary constraints.

A number of issues and practices need to be critically assessed by Council in order to improve maintenance outcomes. These include:

- ▶ Undertaking regular detailed audits and inspections of facilities (including playing surfaces) provided in local parks and sportsgrounds in order to assist in planning future maintenance requirements;
- ▶ Utilisation of a more standardised and robust range of facilities and fixtures throughout the LGA (eg. seating, picnic shelters, signage, waste bins etc) but allowing for an adequate range of some facilities such as playground equipment to cater for different user needs;
- ▶ Utilisation of low maintenance landscape materials and planting such as mulches and grasses / plant species that require low levels of water and attention; and
- ▶ Ensuring that design briefs for new parks and sporting grounds and associated facilities clearly define the appropriate level of future maintenance to be utilised by Council.

Recommendation: That whole of life costing be applied to the maintenance of parks, recreation facilities and community facilities during the design and master planning process.

10.2 Passive Open Space (Parks) Issues

10.2.1 Demand for Higher Quality Spaces

The demand for higher quality spaces and facilities from Council is an ongoing issue in the delivery of local government services. The delivery and maintenance of public open space reflects these issues, with Council being expected to deliver better parks and sports fields within an ever tightening budget.

For Shellharbour City Council, this process is exacerbated by the large amount of underutilised parks and other open spaces. As discussed in Section 6, there is almost 200ha of open space which is over and above the provision standards recognised in this study. While much of this area is integral to the open space network, other areas are likely to be underutilised and more effectively used for other community or commercial purposes.

By reducing the area of land being maintained, Council will have a stronger opportunity to deliver at a higher quality in more targeted areas. It should be noted that this concept would not envisage a reduction in the optimal provision standards, but simply a reduction in the over supply.

Recommendation:

- ▶ That Council investigate longer term strategic planning opportunities for the future provision and the possible reduction of excess open spaces in accordance with the requirements of this Study in order to assist the ongoing targeted funding for higher quality spaces; and
- ▶ Master planning of existing local and district parks be undertaken to identify upgrade and improvements to meet the design guidelines in Appendix B.

10.3 Active Open Space Issues

10.3.1 Previously Identified Future Facilities

A number of sporting fields and facilities have been identified through existing development and previously negotiated planning agreements including:

- ▶ Myimbarr Sporting Grounds;
- ▶ Shell Cove Sports Grounds;
- ▶ Benson Basin Sporting Fields; and
- ▶ Tullimbar Sports Field.

These facilities will add significant capacity to the existing sporting facilities and to increase the proportion of sporting open space available to the eastern portion of the LGA. The allocation of sports or clubs to these facilities has not been determined, therefore creating a number of opportunities to accommodate growing or specialist sporting requirements.

It is however anticipated that a number of facilities could be directed to the known growth sports of soccer, cricket and AFL, as well as providing for the specialist needs for baseball. In all instances, the master planning and design of these areas should be cognisant and include consultation with the relevant sports.

Recommendation: That the allocation of fields and facilities to prospective sports be identified and consultation be undertaken with all proposed users to ascertain the most effective master planning and development of those sites.

10.3.2 Quality of Ancillary Facilities and Embellishments

Several clubs and surveys respondents raised various issues regarding the quality and maintenance of existing ancillary facilities and embellishments. In many instances the space and quality of playing

surfaces were not viewed as being inhibitive to growth and development of the sport or to the safety of its players.

Conversely however, the quality of ancillary facilities or associated infrastructure was identified as restricting the organisation of the sport or the social aspect of the sport whereby fund raising and social activities were restricted by the lack or condition of facilities. Safety concerns were also raised by a number of clubs, particularly where ancillary buildings were seen as unsafe for use for junior players.

Recommendation: That Council develop a system of funding and co funding of embellishment upgrade and replacement of facilities within sporting grounds based on master planning and long term management plans.

10.3.3 Sporting Facilities Management

The leasing of sporting facilities, responsibilities of clubs and responsibilities of Council are viewed differently between the various stakeholders, sporting types and clubs. In many instances sporting clubs commented that Council's maintenance of sporting grounds was of a high quality, however maintenance of built structures was poor. The level of professionalism and organisation between sports also demonstrated the disparate nature of reliance on Council's support.

Similarly, Council reported that the ability of some clubs and sports displayed a far greater level of care for facilities than others. Consistently however, it is apparent that both Council and groups/clubs have differing expectations of their respective responsibilities. Clarity in this area is likely to enhance the overall delivery of Council's services.

Recommendation: That Council develop a Sporting Facility Management Plan to assist in the consistent management, maintenance and utilisation of sporting facilities.

10.4 Community and Cultural Facilities Issues

10.4.1 Integrated Service Delivery Model to Community Planning

Through discussions and workshops with Council, it was clear that Council was operating under an individual facility management approach - that is that facilities are frequently managed independently. Community facilities, and particularly community and neighbourhood centres, have funded “facility managers”, who under lease or other arrangements may provide council with a range of performance assessments, such as:

- ▶ Needs assessments;
- ▶ Surveys of facility users and user groups;
- ▶ Reviews of service offerings; and
- ▶ Analysis of future services required.

This process often results in the preservation of existing services within the facility, with a focus on increased user rates and user satisfaction in a single area. An alternative “integrated service delivery model” would enable Council to have a stronger role in ensuring their community facilities are addressing community needs in a more holistic fashion.

Anecdotal evidence and discussions with various groups suggest that some facilities are operating at or near capacity, while others are used in a more sporadic and inconsistent way. Factors that influence this process may include:

- ▶ Poorly focused services that do not meet user requirements;
- ▶ Inadequate promotion or lag time allowance for services to become known;
- ▶ Over supply of certain services due to poor co-ordination; or
- ▶ Poor access to facilities.

Co-ordinating the service delivery in an integrated service delivery model would provide the holistic analysis of these factors by Council whilst utilising the combined knowledge and input of facility managers.

A facilities management approach, as is currently used, does not provide a strategic framework for determining the capacity of Council to respond to the facility needs identified throughout this report. A service delivery model for example may demonstrate that innovative multi-use policies would facilitate a better spread of sessional services and meetings rooms.

The successful implementation of the service delivery model would require the regular co-ordination and meeting of facility managers with Council under a Council committee type structure.

Recommendation: That Council develop a Community Facility Management Plan to assist in the consistent management, maintenance and utilisation of community facilities.

10.4.2 Place Making and Public Art

Place making is about creating spaces that people are drawn to and feel comfortable being in. Good place making responds appropriately to the local context to create spaces that are linked culturally and historically to the area. Public Art can play an important role in creating this sense of place especially when it involves the local community and draws upon the local social and physical environment for inspiration.

Recommendation: That Council consider developing a Place Making and Public Art Policy for open space and community facility embellishments and developments

11. Summary Recommendations

11.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the recommendations discussed through the previous five sections. Recommendations are provided in the following order:

- ▶ Management and other issues;
- ▶ Parkland;
- ▶ Sporting grounds; and
- ▶ Community Facilities.

Management of other issues recommendations have been provided at the outset as they will influence and assist in the more detailed recommendations of the parkland, sporting grounds and community facilities sections.

11.2 Management and other Issues

Recommendations for management and other issues are provided in Table 22 below.

Table 22: Recommendations for Management and Other Issues

Section	Issue	Recommendation
Section 10.1.1	Prioritising Capital Works for Open Space	That Council commence a rolling programme of park and sporting ground master planning based on the prioritisation criteria and consultation processes at Appendix G
Section 10.1.3	Multi-Use of Community and Sporting Facilities	That Council develop a new policy aimed at encouraging the shared use of community and sporting facilities with specific investigations into available management options
Section 10.1.4	Facility Accessibility	Integrated development of community and recreational facilities be promoted to enable access to a range of services and to reduce travel requirements
Section 10.1.5	Maintenance Issues	That whole of life costing be applied to the maintenance of parks, recreation facilities and community facilities during the design and master planning process
Section 10.2.1	Demand for Higher Quality Spaces	That Council investigate longer term strategic planning opportunities for the future provision and the possible reduction of excess open space in accordance with the requirements of this study in order to assist the ongoing targeted funding for higher quality spaces
Section 10.2.1	Demand for Higher Quality Spaces	Master planning of existing local and district parks be undertaken to identify upgrade and improvements to meet the design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 10.3.1	Allocation of Previously Identified Future Sporting Facilities	That the allocation of fields and facilities to prospective sports be identified and consultation be undertaken with all proposed users to ascertain the most effective master planning and development of those sites
Section 10.3.2	Quality of Ancillary Facilities and Embellishments of Sporting Grounds	That Council develop a system of funding and co funding of embellishment upgrade and replacement of facilities within sporting grounds based on master planning and long term management plans

Section 10.3.3	Sporting Facilities Management	That Council develop a Sporting Facility Management Plan to assist in the consistent management, maintenance and utilisation of sporting facilities
Section 10.4.1	Community Facilities Management	That Council develop a Community Facility Management Plan to assist in the consistent management, maintenance and utilisation of community facilities
Section 10.4.2	Place Making and Public Art	That Council consider developing a Place Making and Public Art Policy for open space and community facility embellishments and developments

11.3 Parkland

Table 23: Recommendations for Passive Open Space

Section	Location	Recommendation
Section 6.4.1	Albion Park	Investigate opportunities for the provision of a district park to enable accessibility within 800m of residents in the north-west of Albion Park
Section 6.4.1	Albion Park	Provision of a citywide park be considered within the context of the <i>Child Friendly by Design</i> project incorporating the community core area at Russell Street
Section 6.4.1	Albion Park	Investigate opportunities for the upgrade of existing parks in the northern section of Albion Park be investigated to better cater for resident needs
Section 6.4.3	Barrack Heights	Investigate opportunities for the provision of a local park in the southern central area of Barrack Heights to enable easy local accessibility for local residents
Section 6.4.4	Barrack Point	Foreshore district parks be upgraded in accordance with the previously endorsed <i>Shellharbour City Foreshore Master Plan</i> by Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects (2007)
Section 6.4.5	Blackbutt	Investigate opportunities for the provision of a local park in the north-west of Blackbutt to enable localised access in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 6.4.5	Blackbutt	Investigate opportunities for embellishment improvements at Wentworth Cottage Park in accordance with its designation as an icon park
Section 6.4.7	Flinders	A design and safety review of the Woodlands Village Green at Flinders should be completed, with future changes to be in accordance with the design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 6.4.8	Lake Illawarra	Review non-foreshore local and district parks in Lake Illawarra to ensure suitability for aging population, in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 6.4.8	Lake Illawarra	Investigate opportunities for better integration of the Lake Illawarra PCYC and Hooker Park into the adjoining district foreshore park
Section 6.4.9	Mount Warrigal	That local park embellishment and design be reviewed in Mount Warrigal to ensure useability for aging local residents, in accordance with design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 6.4.9	Mount Warrigal	Integration of parks in the south of Mount Warrigal with existing waterways be considered in any design review of these areas

Section 6.4.10	Oak Flats	Investigate options for the provision of a local park in the central commercial area of Oak Flats
Section 6.4.10	Oak Flats	Jack Wickham Park and Balarang Reserve in the east of Oak Flats be identified for review / master planning to provide more effective integration with surrounding areas
Section 6.4.11	Shellharbour	Investigate options for the provision of a local park within Blackbutt Reserve to service Shellharbour residents to the west of Shellharbour Road
Section 6.4.12	Shellharbour	Review the role of existing local parks to improve quality and useability for Shellharbour residents
Section 6.4.13	Shellharbour City Centre	As population growth continues in the City Centre, provide further improvements to the citywide park to meet local residents, worker and visitor needs
Section 6.4.14	Tullimbar	Ensure that the public parks and open space within Tullimbar Village are embellished in accordance with the design guidelines at Appendix B
Section 6.4.14	Tullimbar	Consideration should also be given to the feasibility of a citywide park within the wider district if possible
Section 6.4.15	Warilla	Upgrade Warilla foreshore parks in accordance with the <i>Shellharbour City Foreshore Master Plan</i> project
Section 6.4.15	Warilla	Investigate opportunities for improvements to local parks which are poorly or undeveloped within the non-foreshore areas of Warilla

11.4 Sporting Grounds

Recommendations for future provision of active open space or sporting grounds are provided in Table 24.

Table 24: Recommendations for Active Open Space

Section	Sport	Recommendation
Section 7.4.1	Athletics	Maintain existing athletics facilities with minor upgrade and other maintenance activities as required
Section 7.4.2	AFL	Investigate the provision of a shared AFL / Auskick / Cricket facility in the eastern portion of the LGA
Section 7.4.3	Baseball	Further investigate the need for a dedicated Baseball facility which meets the minimum requirements of the Illawarra Baseball League Inc "Major League" requirements including lighting and mounding
Section 7.4.4	BMX / Cycling	The existing BMX facility at Croom Regional Sporting Complex be maintained and improved as required
Section 7.4.4	BMX / Cycling	MTB facilities be considered only where they can be supported and maintained by a localised MTB club.
Section 7.4.5	Cricket	Where possible all new sporting facilities are to be designed to cater for cricket as a shared arrangement
Section 7.4.5	Cricket	Investigate the provision of a higher quality turf cricket pitch / field in a shared use arrangement with the AFL in the east of the LGA
Section 7.4.5	Cricket	Discussions be initiated with the appropriate associations and clubs to investigate opportunities for games to be played on both Saturdays and Sundays to reduce the demand on existing fields
Section 7.4.5	Cricket	Pending the outcome of above discussions, Council aim to provide additional cricket fields over the life of the plan
Section 7.4.6	Equestrian	Maintain existing equestrian facilities and undertake improvements as necessary

Section	Sport	Recommendation
Section 7.4.7	Hockey	Maintain existing hockey facility with surface replacements by association as required under existing licence agreement.
Section 7.4.8	Netball	Existing netball facilities be maintained and upgraded to meet training and off-season competition needs
Section 7.4.9	Rugby League	Where new cricket facilities are proposed in the future, design facilities to cater for rugby league including club relocation where required
Section 7.4.10	Rugby Union	Maintain opportunities for rugby union facilities in conjunction with shared sport facilities
Section 7.4.11	Skateboarding	Provision of a new skate facility be considered in development of the Shellharbour City Centre
Section 7.4.12	Soccer	Where possible integrate junior and senior soccer facilities in the LGA including the potential for co-habitation with cricket ovals
Section 7.4.12	Soccer	The allocation of fields and competition organisation should be subject to in-depth consultation with all soccer clubs and leagues
Section 7.4.13	Softball	That existing softball facilities are maintained and the sport is integrated with any future changes to Albion Oval
Section 7.4.14	Tennis	That existing tennis facilities are maintained and any future additional courts are only developed where sustained membership, utilisation and growth can be demonstrated
Section 7.4.15	Touch football and OZTAG	Existing facilities are maintained with consideration of touch football and OZTAG in facility and space assessments (including lighting requirements)

11.5 Community Facilities

Recommendations for future provision of community facilities are provided in Table 25.

Table 25: Recommendations for Community Facilities

Section	Facility Type	Recommendation
Section 9.4.1	Community and neighbourhood centres	That community and neighbourhood centres be maintained and improved in accordance with a Community Facility Management Plan to be developed by Council
Section 9.4.2	Youth Facilities	That existing youth facilities and services be maintained and improved in accordance with a Community Facility Management Plan to be developed by Council
Section 9.4.2	Youth Facilities	That dedicated youth services be considered within the design and implementation of the Shell Cove Community Facility
Section 9.4.3	Libraries	Council develop a Strategic Plan for the provision of Library services in the LGA and that the findings of the Shellharbour City Council Report of Library Requirements (April 2007) be taken into consideration in the development of the Plan
Section 9.4.4	Aged Services	Council consider incorporating aged services facilities, such as meeting spaces, session services and service provider outlets as part of any community facility development in Shell Cove and Albion Park Rail to cater for aging populations in those districts
Section 9.4.4	Aged Care	Council undertake an integrated study to determine the availability and demand for aged accommodation and incentives by Council to facilitate future accommodation growth
Section 9.4.5	Child Care and Early Childhood Centres	That Council retain ownership of existing child care facilities in various locations to allow flexibility in delivery of services
Section 9.4.5	Children Services/Community Hub	Council investigate opportunities for a Warilla community hub incorporating children services facilities
Section 9.4.6	Arts Centre	That an integrated arts facility be developed within Shellharbour City Centre to accommodate a range of arts requirements including gallery space, arts workshops and meeting rooms

Section	Facility Type	Recommendation
Section 9.4.7	Museum and Exhibition Space	That a museum and art exhibition space be developed within the Shellharbour City Civic Centre
Section 9.4.7	Museum, Exhibition and Storage Space	Council investigate opportunities for the integration of HARS and Illawarra Railway Museum. In addition, Council investigate opportunities for purpose built museum storage, research and display facilities
Section 9.4.7	Museum	The Council investigate the provision of a new permanent purpose built city museum to replace the existing Tongarra Museum, This facility could be co-located with the central library in the proposed Shellharbour Civic Centre
Section 9.4.8	Sessional Services	That sessional services and community meeting rooms (including appropriate storage space) are provided and operated by Council as part of the Shellharbour City Centre Civic Precinct
Section 9.4.9	Community Theatre and Performance Space	Investigate opportunities for the provision of new community theatre and performance spaces within the Shellharbour City Centre Civic Precinct. These facilities should also be available for community based performance groups
Section 9.4.10	Aboriginal Services	In association with the Community Facilities Management Plan, review the long term requirements of the local Aboriginal community
Section 9.4.10	Aboriginal Services	Council continue to work with relevant parties in securing funding and planning for the Bass Point Interpretive Centre
Section 9.4.11	Pools	That Council undertake a detailed study of services and community needs with respect to Council operated pools, including cost structures aimed at balancing community provision with operational and capital costs
Section 9.4.12	Community Gardens	That Council prepare a strategy for the facilitation of community gardens on council owned land

12. References and Resources

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- Australia Street Company 2006, **Future of the Warilla Child Care Centre: a review of options and opportunities**, Australia Street Company + Heather Nesbitt Planning, Sydney
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- Prior + Cheney Pty Ltd in association with Recreation Planning Associates 2006, **Leisure Centre Master Planning & Swimming Centres Business Planning Study**, Wingecarribee Shire Council
- SGS Economics & Planning 2008, **Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections**, SGS Economics & Planning, Sydney
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- Shellharbour City Council 2004, **Shellharbour’s Social Plan 2005-2009**, Shellharbour City Council
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Wollongong City Council 2008, **Parks Safety Audit**, Community, Cultural and Library Services Division

Appendix A

Information Review Summary

Provides a summary of relevant documents to the Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study as provided by Council

Information Reviews

This section provides a summary of documents reviewed during the initiation of the project. These documents include:

- » Shellharbour's Social Plan 2005 – 2009;
- » Draft Shellharbour Cultural Resources Study (Guppy & Associates/Collaborations) – May 1999;
- » Shellharbour City Council Review of Community Facilities – August 2000;
- » Shellharbour City Council: Report on Library Requirements (State Library of NSW) – April 2007 and December 1999;
- » Shellharbour Recreation and Community Facilities Usage Study, including Annex 1 (IRIS Research) – May 1996;
- » 2007 Shellharbour City Community Survey Management Report (IRIS Research) – July 2007;
- » Shellharbour Section 94 Contributions Plan 2005;
- » Shellharbour City Centre Master Plan (2007);
- » Draft revised Shellharbour City Centre Development Control Plan (Annand Alcock Urban Design) - December 2003;
- » Illawarra Regional Strategy 2006-2031 (Department of Planning); and
- » Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections – 2008 (SGS Economics and Planning).

Shellharbour Social Plan 2005 – 2009

Purpose: The purpose of the Social Plan is to provide a tool for Council to achieve its aims to:

- » Promote an informed environment, which encourages harmony, tolerance and acceptance of all members of our community; and
- » Ensure that all residents are able to access effective, appropriate services and facilities that enhance the quality of life.

The Plan aims to provide a framework for the provision of programs, services and facilities, and a direction for policy to ensure that the community develops in an inclusive, equitable and accessible way.

Findings:

- » Children (0-12 years): Shortage of child care exists for the 0-2 year age group. Accommodation for service providers is also generally low. A lack of activities for 5-12 year olds was also identified;
- » Young People (12-25 years): High unemployment and low Year 12 completion rates are prominent in this age group. Drug and alcohol service and mental health service gaps were identified, along with the need for emergency accommodation and exit housing. Youths in this age group were often associated with crime and anti-social behaviour;
- » Women: Family and domestic violence services were identified as a key issue in this group. Communications and access to information was a key missing gap, as was the provision of space designed for young women in public spaces. A Business and Professional Women's group was identified as a potential new service that would be utilised;
- » Older People: Difficulties in securing land for development of aged care facilities, particularly low cost accommodation. Increased demand on services that assist elderly residents to remain in their own home. Safety and perceptions of safety were high for elderly residents.

- » Disabled residents: Funding shortages amongst service providers. Increased recreational opportunities and activities were identified (“recreational guide” suggested). Community education on disability issues was required. Targeted employment opportunities needed to be addressed.
- » Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities: Lack of employment and training identified as a major issue. Aboriginal Interpretative Centre to assist the maintenance of Aboriginal history and culture was recognised. Safe place for young people to go is needed. Recognition of important cultural events is needed.
- » Culturally diverse backgrounds: Population of foreign born residents was reduced between 1996 and 2001, with only 2% arriving after 1999 (or should this be 1996?). Meeting and social activity spaces were needed. Older residents needs in this group was lacking.
- » Other issues: Transport – travelling east/west across the City continues to be a problem without private transport. Communications – Recognition of the need for Council to improve communications with all target audiences. New communities – Community infrastructure in new areas will be required to match population growth and demographics.

Shellharbour City Council Review of Community Facilities: August 2000

Purpose: The purpose of the report was to examine existing community facilities within the City of Shellharbour. The report sought to determine:

- » Types of existing facilities, their location and standards;
- » Existing levels of use; and
- » Future needs of the City.

Eight planning precincts were examined, consistent with the Section 94

Plan.

Findings:

- » 4 halls exist, with the Albion Park Community Centre being utilised close to 100% of days, with the Centenary Hall and Oak Flats Progress Hall around 75% of days and Oakleigh Park Hall being utilised closer to 30-40% of days;
- » The Albion Park Community Centre is in the best condition with modern facilities, reflecting its high usage patterns;
- » Several other Council owned properties are used for specific purposes, or leased to external organisations;
- » Generally, facilities are well utilised, and in some instances the quality or size of the facility is restraining the offer of further services. However, poorer quality facilities are often less utilised and upgrades are recommended for Oakleigh Park Hall, Oak Flats Progress Hall and Dawes Park Hall.

Shellharbour City Council Report of Library Requirements

Purpose: The April 2007 report was undertaken to review and update the 1999 report on the provision of public library facilities and services within the Shellharbour LGA.

Findings:

- » Trends in planning and design of Library facilities identified included a growing demand on services and resources, growing expectations of services and growing demand for IT services/resources;
- » Four library centres currently operate – Warilla (795sqm), Albion Park (465sqm), Oak Flats (405sqm) and Shellharbour (65sqm);
- » The concept of a central library (in the City Centre) with branches is

endorsed for the Shellharbour LGA with branches in Albion Park (435sqm extension), Shell Cove (580sqm) and Warilla (150sqm extension);

- » Mobile library services and joint-use facilities (with schools for example) are not recommended for Shellharbour.

Shellharbour Cultural Resources Study (Draft): May 1999

Purpose: The aim of the study was to develop a cultural vision for Shellharbour which included a strategic framework for the integration of cultural issues into urban, social and economic planning processes over the following 20 years.

Findings:

- » The report provides a range of recommendations, based on the eight Section 94 Planning Precincts, for various community and cultural facilities and policy directions. In summary these directions are as per below;
- » City Image: A lack of identity is present within Shellharbour, reflecting the fast growth of the city and lack of a “City Centre” which should be a priority for development;
- » Natural Environment: Several opportunities exist within the natural environment to build upon the cultural base of the LGA, including the lake/beach lifestyle, Bass Point Aboriginal heritage and rural areas. Outdoor performance spaces should also be recognised;
- » Localities: Older suburbs have a well developed idea of local identity, and public spaces such as parks, village centres, cultural activity centres and development of social need to be well planning by Council if new and old localities are to develop strong cultural meanings;
- » Cultural Diversity and Population Growth: A demographically diverse

and fast growing population will continue to be a feature of the Shellharbour LGA;

- » A Creative Community: The LGA demonstrated strong participation in the arts, including visual arts and craft, dance and theatre. This is expected, at the very least, to increase in line with population growth. No exhibition spaces exist, and accommodation and facilities are generally poor, with little or no support from Council;
- » Encouraging Economic Development: LGA has all the right attributes for increased cultural tourism. Shellharbour Village (incorporating the Roo Theatre) provides particular opportunities to develop such a focus.
- » City wide facilities recommended: Central library, performance theatre, performance venue (outdoor), multifunction arts centre, civic auditorium, sessional service space, regional sports centre and a public art levy; and
- » Local/precinct community facilities; including new wet/dry space in all new community centres, specific arts development focus in certain locations, artist accommodation projects and a public art and design levy on all construction.

Shellharbour City Community Survey Management Report

Purpose: The report presents the results of Council’s 2007 Community Survey. The survey utilised a telephone based interview technique of 500 people (50% completion rate). The survey targeted areas including Council services and facilities, Council performance and planning directions.

Findings:

- » Community safety was considered a major concern for residents, with a perceived worsening of safety at night being present;

- » 88% of respondents identified provision and upkeep of parks as being very important. Health and human services and cultural and educational services were seen as less important at 81% and 77.6% respectively. Recreation and sporting fields were less important again;
- » Around half (53.4% - 57.5%) of respondents thought that cultural and educational services, recreation services and local parks supply and maintenance were satisfactorily provided by Council. Health and human support services were more poorly supplied, with 37.3% rating high satisfaction;
- » Human and health services are recognised as a priority in service area improvement;
- » Providing adequate infrastructure for an increased population is the major issue for respondents in the next 10-15 years; and
- » While many respondents thought that sufficient sporting and recreational facilities were provided and were of a good quality, others felt the opposite, with insufficient and poorly maintained facilities being a major concern.

Recreation and Community Facilities Use Survey

Purpose: The 1996 survey sought to identify resident usage and views on provision within the Shellharbour LGA. The survey concentrated in the facilities and services consistent with Section 94 planning requirements.

Findings:

- » Local parks were the most used facility, with beaches (65%) outranking pools (57%) in summer times;
- » Almost half (48%) of respondents used one of Shellharbour Council's Libraries;
- » Slightly more than half (53.2%) of all residents surveyed participated in

some form of active sports;

- » Reddall Reserve (southern shore of Lake Illawarra) (33%), Blackbutt Reserve (22%), Little Park at Shellharbour (22%), Boonerah Point (9%) and Bass Point (7%) were the most frequently used open space areas;
- » Only 7% though availability of parks was poor, while 11% felt that they were poorly equipped;
- » Only 7.6% of respondents had used a community centre (three available – Albion Park, Warilla and Albion Park Rail) over the previous 12 months, though 66% were aware of their existence;
- » Many respondents used facilities external to the LGA or not Council owned, for example movies (75%), Wollongong Performing Arts (26.5%), art gallery (18%), Wollongong or educational facility libraries (~20%);
- » Community halls were used by only 12% of the respondents, with Centenary Hall at Albion Park being most frequently used at 8%, followed by Oakleigh Park Hall at Warilla (3.7%), while only 0.5% used Dawes Park Hall in Barrack Point; and
- » Movie theatre was the most requested new facility at 80%, while an indoor pool (57%) youth activity centre (53%) also being popular amongst their target audiences.

Shellharbour Section 94 Contributions Plan

Purpose: The Shellharbour Section 94 plan provides Council with the mechanism to enable developer contributions to be levied from development within the LGA. Contribution requirements must follow strict requirements and are designed to cater for increased demand for public facilities and services. Open space, community facilities, traffic, drainage works and car parking are all considered under the plan.

Findings:

- ▶ A three tier structure is provided, with city-wide, precinct and special purpose benefit area facilities and services identified;
- ▶ 8 planning precincts are identified: Warilla, Shellharbour, Blackbutt, Oak Flats, Albion Park Rail, Rural East, Albion Park and Rural West;
- ▶ Contribution rates range from \$4,223 in Rural East to \$7,850 per new dwelling in Albion Park. Generally, rural areas have a lesser cost in the Plan for facilities and services than urban areas;
- ▶ Total costs within the plan for all completed facilities and services total ~\$28.2m, of which ~\$14.8m is apportioned to developers with around 47% having been paid to 2007;
- ▶ Total costs within the plan for all uncompleted facilities and services total ~\$87.78m, of which 68% is apportioned to developers with the remainder funded by Council. Around \$30m in developer contributions has been paid for these projects;
- ▶ A total of 27 open space facilities are identified, with completed projects including Shadforth Sports Centre, Pioneer Park, Blackbutt Reserve, the Shellharbour City Stadium, Con O'Keefe Reserve as well as various cycleways; and
- ▶ A total of 18 community facilities and services are identified, with completed projects including the Warilla, Oak Flats and Albion Park Rail community centres.

Revised Shellharbour City Centre Masterplan

Purpose: The masterplan was developed to provide guidance and direction for the future development of the Shellharbour City Centre – creating a lively 24 hour precinct with an integrated mix of uses.

Findings:

- ▶ Clustering of complementary uses should be used including precincts for:
 - entertainment, cultural, cafes/restaurants;
 - general retail, residential, commercial;
 - bulky goods, service trades including auto related.
- ▶ Integration of uses and “activity areas” by strong pedestrian and movement areas is critical to future functionality of the City Centre;
- ▶ Stockland, a major land owner in the City Centre, have developed a Master Plan (2007) which provides for a “City Square” which links the existing major shopping complex with memorial Drive (main street);
- ▶ A major City Park is proposed on the western side of the city centre, incorporating active uses, water features and passive areas;
- ▶ A major active park (Village Green) area is proposed on the eastern side and will include a cricket oval, football fields and other active uses surrounded by native planting; and
- ▶ Other pedestrian and public domain areas may function as public spaces and act as part of, or in conjunction with, the broader open space network.

Revised Shellharbour City Centre DCP

Purpose: The purpose of the plan is to facilitate and provide the appropriate planning controls for the City Centre area to ensure the character and use of the area is consistent with the agreed masterplan. The plan provides for detailed requirements, though in exceptional circumstances these may be differed through the DA process where alternative concepts still achieve the desired outcomes.

Findings:

- ▶ The City Centre area is broken into a number of site or precincts, applications for these areas should precede detailed site specific development applications, though exceptions are allowed where overall objectives can be demonstrated;
- ▶ The DCP identifies the public and private domain requirements and standards, including material palettes, styles and parking requirements; and
- ▶ Civic Park and Open Space are the predominant uses in precincts B and L, with other structured publicly accessible open space opportunities existing within the Main Street and forecourt type areas.

Illawarra Regional Strategy

Purpose: The Illawarra Regional Strategy's primary purpose is to ensure that adequate land is available and appropriately located to sustainably accommodate the projected housing and employment needs of the Region's population over the next 25 years.

Findings:

- ▶ Shellharbour City Centre is identified as a major regional centre, with Warilla and Albion Park identified as major towns;
- ▶ Urban renewal opportunities will be the focus after 30 years of

greenfield expansion and growth, with a target split of 60% detached, 38% medium density and 2% high density housing (placing greater pressure on existing suburban parks);

- ▶ Development of the Calderwood area will be considered if population growth exceeds regional projections; and
- ▶ A shortfall exists in the provision of employment lands within the Shellharbour LGA with areas including Albion Park identified as targeted renewal areas where employment opportunities should be developed.

Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projections

Purpose: The Shellharbour LGA Small Area Household & Demographic Projects Study was developed to help identify new social and recreation services and infrastructure demand at a suburb by suburb level. The planning horizon for the projections is 10 to 15 years, with projections in five-year periods (to 2021) being prepared to identify households, housing type, sex and age profile of suburbs in the LGA.

Findings:

- ▶ Shellcove and Albion Park are identified as the most significant growth areas between 1991 and 2006, reflecting extensive subdivisions in these areas;
- ▶ The numbers of residents in the 60+ age group has risen significantly between 1991 and 2006, with the population continuing to age significantly over the 2006 to 2021 period;
- ▶ Future population growth will be centred around the Tullimbar, Shellharbour City Centre and Shellcove areas – with population increasing be around 7,500 people, or 12% between 2006 and 2021;

and

- Tullimbar, Shellharbour City Centre and Shellcove will also supply much of the new dwelling growth in the LGA, around half of which will be in medium density housing.

Appendix B

Parks and Recreational Space Guidelines

Shellharbour City Council
Shellharbour Open Space, Recreation
and Community Facilities Needs Study
Parks and Recreational Space Guidelines

March 2010



This document has been prepared by Shellharbour City Council with the assistance of GHD.
The conclusions and recommendations contained in this document do not necessarily represent those of GHD.

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1. Introduction

This paper provides planning guidance for the design of parks and open spaces within the Shellharbour City Council local government area (LGA). The guidelines are designed to be used when creating new spaces or in the redevelopment of existing spaces, to ensure a consistent and transparent approach of open space provision, planning and design.

The guidelines are divided into six parts, being:

- ▶ A discussion of the general design principles to be applied to open space, parkland and sporting grounds in the Shellharbour LGA;
- ▶ Trends in open space and park planning in both general and LGA specific terms;
- ▶ Development of a Park Hierarchy;
- ▶ Development of a Sporting Ground Hierarchy;
- ▶ Identification of environmental and other open spaces; and
- ▶ Detailed design considerations for safety.

Developing clear guidelines for the design, delivery and maintenance of open space and parks provides Council, developers and the community with a clear set of expectations, which can be reviewed and updated when required.

1.1 Open Space and Sporting Grounds in Shellharbour

The existing network of open space and sporting grounds provides a range of opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation and Shellharbour's unique landscape. The Shellharbour LGA enjoys a variety of spaces, from the beaches on the east linking through to Lake Illawarra to the north and the escarpment to the west. Within the urban areas, existing networks of parks and sporting grounds are complimented by natural

parkland areas such as Blackbutt Forest and the undulating rural hills to create a balance of structured and natural areas.

1.2 Council's Support for Open Space

Council supports the provision of a range of parks, sporting areas and recreational opportunities, fostering a healthy environment for all residents from our children to the elderly and for people with a disability. The mental and physical health of our community can be improved through engagement in recreational opportunities, which in turn fosters greater community well-being and community connectedness.

Council aims to create a system of parks and recreational spaces which provide for all sections of the community. Spaces should recognise and respect Indigenous and European history, and where appropriate include a range of public art and cultural elements appropriate to the type and context of the space.

Parks and recreational spaces provide affordable access and social interaction opportunities – from family gatherings to random interactions of parents and children. Within the urban environment, the importance of effective public open spaces as part of the community's social fabric should not be dismissed.

Sporting grounds, or active open spaces, provide the community with the opportunity to participate in organised recreational pursuits – creating opportunities for team building and social interaction. Council is also committed to the development of spaces that are sustainable and promote environmentally sensitive practices in line with Council's commitment to the *Illawarra Sustainability Roadmap*¹.

¹ The *Illawarra Sustainability Roadmap 2008* is a joint commitment of Shellharbour, Kiama and Wollongong Councils to bring sustainability to the region through a co-ordinated approach across all areas of local government.

1.3 Council's Role in Providing for Open Space

The *Local Government Act* 1993 provides councils with wide powers to carry out certain functions conferred or imposed on them by the Act or other legislation. In carrying out these functions councils must pursue a charter laid down in Section 8 of the Act. The charter is a fundamental set of principles to guide Councils' operations. It includes a number of principles that directly relate to the provision of public open space and community facilities. These include the efficient management of services and facilities, ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles, the promotion of cultural diversity, planning for children and accountability for and effective management of public assets.

Chapter 6 Part 2 of the *Local Government Act* provides the legislative framework for the classification, use and management of public land as defined under the Act.

Councils must also comply with the provisions of the *Crown Lands Act* 1989 for the management of Crown lands under their control as Trust Manager or lands under their care, control and management. Principles for the management of Crown land are set down in Section 11 of the Crown Lands Act.

2. Background and Design Principles

The provision of public open space, parklands and sporting grounds is commonly initiated through the subdivision and development of land. Spaces can also be improved or redeveloped by Council as part of capital works programs. Within these processes, a number of overarching principles can be used to assist in establishing the basis for the provision of sustainable and effective parks and sporting grounds.

In addition to these design principles, life-cycle costing of open space areas, including the materials used, maintenance requirements and replacement costs should always be considered and an integral part of the planning process.

Table 1 identifies a number of these design principles.

Table 1: Park and Sporting Grounds Design Principles

Issue	Principles
Safety	<p>Design and maintain open spaces to ensure that public safety is commensurate to the level of use and targeted user groups ensuring the use of the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles² (CPTED) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Surveillance ▶ Access Control ▶ Territorial Reinforcement ▶ Space/Activity Management <p>Design of areas is to ensure the safe operation and the appropriate placement of embellishments; including separation of play and sports areas from traffic, safe play opportunity design and the safe design of water bodies.</p>
Access	<p>Provide for safe and convenient access to open spaces within and between communities, and where possible co-locate open spaces with shops, schools and other community facilities to reduce parking requirements and minimise walking distances.</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>Provide equitable access to parks and open spaces to ensure that the type, location and quality of the infrastructure are appropriately distributed.</p>

² Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 2001 – *Crime Prevention and the assessment of development applications*

Issue	Principles
Sustainability	<p>Design, development and management of open space should respond to environmental values and conditions, community aspirations and economic considerations and must remain viable in the long term.</p> <p>In certain locations and as part of an integrated design, open space areas should provide for and assist in the detaining and cleansing of stormwater.</p>
Place Making	<p>Locate open spaces to build on the special attributes of an area for long-term public amenity and connecting people with locations; for example an open-space network may include hilltops, mature trees, places with panoramic views, rocky outcrops and remnant native vegetation.</p> <p>Open spaces should also be designed to recognise and incorporate local indigenous, cultural and historical attributes and characteristics of the place, as well as providing public art opportunities which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Interactive landscaped gardens; ▶ Creative play opportunities; ▶ Creative walking and cycling paths; ▶ Standalone sculpture; or ▶ Interactive signage.
Physical Attributes	<p>Provide open space, which is physically suitable for its purpose and which will accommodate the nominated active and passive recreational uses. Attributes may be defined by slope, orientation, configuration and area of the land.</p>

Issue	Principles
Clustering	<p>Cluster/group sports fields and facilities in order to maximise flexibility of use and to minimise disruption to residential areas (noise, light spill and parking/ traffic issues and impacts).</p> <p>Locate parklands where possible adjacent to town centres, schools and community areas to encourage greater access and shared use of parking.</p>
Integration	<p>Where possible, connections should be made between open space areas by the use of consistent vegetation, linked walkways or cycle routes within the local area. These areas should also be linked into the regional open space system where such opportunities exist.</p>
Variety	<p>Provide a variety of open spaces to serve a range of different active and passive recreational roles to meet the diversity of community needs.</p>

These principles are applied to a park and sporting ground hierarchy in Sections 4 and 5 respectively.

2.1 Consultation and Site Planning

Where parks or sporting grounds are being developed or redeveloped within an existing community, consultation should be undertaken to ensure a sense of ownership and place. Such consultation should be undertaken with local residents, including children and young people, as well as with agencies or potential user groups. Consultation should be appropriately timed to ensure input to the design and embellishment of the spaces.

In instances where parks or sporting grounds are being developed in

currently undeveloped areas, consultation with relevant areas of Council is encouraged to ensure local issues and information can be shared.

Within Council itself, multi-disciplinary consultation amongst professional staff is required where Council is seeking to provide a new or redeveloped space, or where major parks are being proposed by others. Such consultation between different areas of Council will provide a variety of perspectives and knowledge and skill gaps can be identified and procured where necessary.

In association with consultation, site analysis should be undertaken to determine the appropriate site design for issues such as solar orientation, wind protection, identification of desire lines and safety/traffic implications. Up-front site analysis will assist in the design process to ensure useability and comfort of park users is maintained during the ongoing use of the site.

2.2 Post Occupancy Surveys

Once a space is operational, it is important to ensure its use and maintenance is consistent with user needs and requirements. Post occupancy surveys can provide value information for Council that may lead to significant cost savings and overall improved useability of the spaces. Surveys may be undertaken by Council or as directed by Council as a condition on development consent.

3. Local Area and Open Space Trends

The design, implementation and establishment of parks and open spaces is a dynamic activity, with the requirements of both users and owners changing over time, reflecting recreation and leisure trends. These trends can be categorised into broader recreational and open space trends that have been highlighted through activities such as state-wide consultations³, and local trends which have been highlighted through localised consultation activities and other local observations⁴.

These trends are presented in this section as a precursor to the provision of design standards for parks in Sections 4 and sporting grounds in Section 5.

3.1 Broad Trends in Leisure and Recreation Planning

Broad trends experienced across the State which are applicable to the Shellharbour LGA context include:

- ▶ Increased participation in formal recreational activities (sports), including a particular increase in female participation rates;

³ For example, consultation sessions undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning on behalf of the State Government in March and April 2008 in review of the Department of Planning's 1992 Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government, and observations by GHD staff in undertaking various open space planning and Section 94 projects throughout NSW.

⁴ Consultation undertaken by GHD relating to the Shellharbour Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study, project evaluation and park appraisals by Family Services Illawarra for the Park & Play Illawarra Program and other observations from Shellharbour City Council and Child Friendly by Design Project staff/consultants.

- ▶ Changes in housing types, with larger houses on smaller lots, resulting in a general reduction in "backyard" space and recreational opportunities;
- ▶ Increased demand on informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling;
- ▶ Shifts in the popularity and expectations of various sports, suggesting a need for flexible spaces that can be modified over time;
- ▶ Increasing expectations of local government to provide high quality open spaces, including embellishments and maintenance;
- ▶ Increased pressure on Councils to provide after hours use of open spaces, particularly for sporting grounds and including car parking and lighting; and
- ▶ Increasing expectation for the provision of facilities that are well organised, comfortable, safe, high quality, and well provided for in terms of support/ancillary facilities (such as toilets, car parking and lighting).

3.2 Local Trends in Open Space Planning

Within the Shellharbour LGA the above trends can be further focused as follows:

- ▶ Defined areas of high growth with new open spaces being required which primarily target families with children;
- ▶ Existing established areas with limited growth opportunities, aging resident population and decreasing average household population, where open space areas may need to be reorientated to service an older population;
- ▶ An increasing demand for improved embellishments, particularly

among sporting groups, including requirements for fencing, shade, toilets, canteens and other embellishments; and

- ▶ A tendency to under utilise local open space. Usage has been shown to significantly increase when organised activities are provided by others (such as in the case of the *Park & Play* project activities).

3.3 Trends within User Groups

An important aspect of open space design is to recognise and incorporate the special needs of targeted user groups. These groups can usually be identified through a combination of demographic analysis and community consultation. Once the targeted user group or groups are identified, the following trends and principles may assist the design process.

Design for Younger Children (0-4 years)

The provision of safe, challenging and appropriate play spaces and playgrounds for children must recognise the importance of play as an informal mechanism for the development of a child's physical, cognitive, emotional and intellectual skills.

Some basic principles⁵ should be considered when developing parks and open spaces for younger children. These include:

- ▶ Sensory richness: Initial contact with a park or playground is a sensory experience for younger children. Design should introduce different textures to feel and touch, with dappled light, colour, external outlooks, smells, shapes and wall displays can all contribute to extend the sensory experience. Inclusion of a vantage point (0.5 - 1.5m above ground) will provide an over viewing place;

⁵ Based on the *Concepts Underpinning Play Analysis*, by Prue Walsh and Play Environment Consulting 2005 (<http://www.playconsulting.com/current.htm>)

- ▶ Variety and diversity: Younger children can move quickly from one activity to another as they explore a public space. Activity areas should be flexible to accommodate a range of activities and to challenge them to acquire additional skills. Open-ended activities not specifically linked to standard playground offerings can be made more (or even less) complicated to hold the children's interest.

These concepts can be translated into design features such as:

- ▶ Innovative play and appropriated sized climbing structures and motion apparatus which provide for sensory experiences such as reflective materials, climb throughs spaces and oversized games or activities; and
- ▶ Ground manipulation to provide for grassed mounds, logs, water, sand and other natural materials and structures to allow creative play opportunities.

Design details should also ensure that play areas are fenced where necessary and shade structures are provided to protect younger children and their carers, particularly in summer.



Plate 1: Younger Children Design Examples

1: Photo-Steve Thompson, 2: Greater London Authority 2008

Design for Older Children (4-12)

Development of park spaces for older children should allow for a variety of experiences and challenges that suit the interests of this group. These needs include the provision of areas for sports related informal leisure activities such as ball games. These types of designs are also often family orientated, and may include sub-activities for adults or younger children.

Considerations for the design of open space for older children could include:

- ▶ Provision of linear pathways for riding bikes and skateboards;
- ▶ Informal tracks and mounds for BMX riding and active games;
- ▶ Adventure opportunities such as climbing structures; and
- ▶ Observation places and structures (children like to perch on top of play equipment and mounds).



Plate 2: Older Children Design Examples

1: Photo-Steve Thompson, 2: Greater London Authority 2008, 3: Photo-Steve Thompson

Design for Teenagers

Design of park spaces for teenagers is generally similar to those for older children, but should include areas for social interactions (hanging out) and to allow for provision of more formal recreation activities such as purpose designed BMX tracks and skateboard parks.

Provision of hard-standing areas and structures for games such as tennis rebound walls, basketball/netball half courts or ring areas provide for increased informal active recreational opportunities.



Plate 3: Teenager Park Design Examples

1: Photo-Steve Thompson, 2&3: Greater London Authority 2008

Design for Adults

Parks for adults should provide convenient comfortable spaces and adequate shelter from sun and wind, picnic facilities and comfortable seating. Quality landscape embellishments and use of adjoining natural area and views can contribute to the provision of contemplative public spaces.

Convenient seating and weather protection for parents and carers adjacent to children's play areas will result in increased usage of the park by young children. Options for recreation, such as fitness courses and exercise routes, could be used to provide alternatives to indoor fitness. The provision of larger spaces for the gathering of larger groups for picnics and other social activities will also attract adult users.



Plate 4: Adult Park Design Examples

1: Photo-Steve Thompson, 2: Photo- Warwick Francis

Design for Older People

Spaces for older people should provide for convenient and safe access and movement with a high level of safety and security. Historical or traditional design elements such as arbours or rotundas and more formalised gardens should be considered, particularly where such gardens can be associated with groups such as community service clubs and organisations. Spaces suitable for older people should be implemented within and co located with other passive open space areas to ensure sites are suitable for multiple ages, for example, shaded seating areas are provided around playground facilities.

Design issues should generally be similar to those for adults with ease of walking, gentle slopes and the provision of shaded and protected areas for rest, relaxation and contemplation being very important.



Plate 5: Older People Park Design Examples

1&2: Photo- Warwick Francis, 3: Photo- Steve Thompson

Design for People with a Disability

It is essential that the design of public open space take into account the needs of people with a disability both in regard to access to the park and movement within the space and the use of the equipment and facilities.

Design should address issues such as the adequacy of accessible parking, the provision of even walkway surfaces and gradients, and the

detailing of kerbs, ramps, handrails, signage and facilities such as toilets.

Spaces suitable for people with a disability should be implemented within and co located with other passive open space areas to ensure dignified access to all areas, for example, playground facilities should include equipment and play opportunities for people of all abilities.

4. Park Hierarchy

The establishment of a hierarchy of passive open spaces, or parks, can be used to assist Council in the design, delivery and maintenance of these areas. A commonly used hierarchical system to establish the level of provision and location of parklands is based on local, district and citywide parks. These three levels then provide for specific requirements to suit the relative importance and complexity associated with the use of these types of parks.

This section utilises the principles for design discussed in Section 2, providing a practical application of the principles to a hierarchy of parks. Each level of parks in the hierarchy is also provided with broad objectives for those parks and the typical types of embellishments that can be expected.

A basic premise that should be applied to all levels of park is:

- ▶ That 90% of all residential lots should be within 400m safe walking distance to any open space area. This includes local, district and citywide parks, and sporting grounds with accessible entry points;
- ▶ That open space should adhere to the minimum size requirements as outlined in the Design Principles;
- ▶ That the 2.83 ha standard should be applied as a guide only to assist in determining the appropriate mix of open space areas.

The information that follows provides specific requirements for each level of park.

4.1 Local Parks

Local parks are generally located within residential areas and are designed to be easily accessible to local residents and workers by foot.

The objective of a local park is to:

- ▶ Provide public open space which primarily serves a local neighbourhood, being highly accessible for pedestrians within a local catchment with an appropriate level of embellishment suited to the local population.

4.1.1 Design Principles

As discussed in Section 2, the overarching design principles can be applied to local parks as described in Table 2:

Table 2: Local Park Design Principles

Principle	Application to Local Parks
Safety	<p>Ensure a minimum of 50% of the frontage is orientated to a public street</p> <p>Buildings and structures to be orientated for passive surveillance of active park areas</p> <p>Avoid rear fences backing onto parks. Where avoidance is not possible, open form fencing is preferred.</p> <p>Ensure all park areas can be readily viewed from public streets and from surrounding active building frontages</p> <p>Fencing should only be introduced where necessary to protect the safety of children's play areas. In all instances such fencing should be see-through style fencing of no more than 1.2m in height</p> <p>Landscaping should be provided for weather protection and scenic amenity. Species selection and maintenance should ensure clear vision through landscaping between 0.6m and 1.8m in height above ground level</p>
Access	<p>Access pathways should follow natural desire lines and provide passive surveillance of active park areas</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>90% of all residential lots should be within 400m safe walking distance to any open space area. Reference should be made to Council to ensure this</p>

Principle	Application to Local Parks
	<p>accessibility standard is achieved whilst ensuring a mix of park types is provided. The breakdown of the 2.83 ha standard can be applied to assist with determining an appropriate hierarchy (see 6. provision standards)</p> <p>In areas with significant levels of medium density residential development, additional local parks may be required to cater for increased use</p>
Sustainability	<p>Environmental attributes, such as drainage lines or significant trees, should be integrated into the park design</p>
Place Making	<p>Attributes of the site should be highlighted to provide character and place making for the park</p>
Physical Attributes	<p>The park area should be a minimum of 0.2 ha of useable space, free from environmental reserves</p> <p>Parks should be regular in shape with a minimum width of 40m</p> <p>Grassed open activity areas with a slope less than 1V:20H and greater than 1V:150H</p> <p>Maintained parkland with gradients no steeper than 1V:4H if grassed and 1V:3H where planted with vegetation (1V:6H preferred)</p>
Clustering	<p>Cluster local parks with other open space linkages or localised community facilities where possible</p>
Integration	<p>Local parks should form part of a linear park system or recreation corridor where possible with linked cycle and pedestrian paths</p>

Principle	Application to Local Parks
Variety	Local parks should be designed to target the predicted demographic users for the area (refer Section 3.3) Embellishments should also include consideration of sub-groups who are also likely to use the park – for example seating and shade for elderly people in conjunction with younger children’s play areas

4.1.2 Embellishments

Embellishments within local parks could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Walk / cycle pathways;
- ▶ Landscape improvements;
- ▶ Play opportunities;
- ▶ Signage; and
- ▶ Basic seating, bins, tables and shade structures.

Within local parks, lighting would generally not be provided.

A sample local park plan is provided in Figure 1.

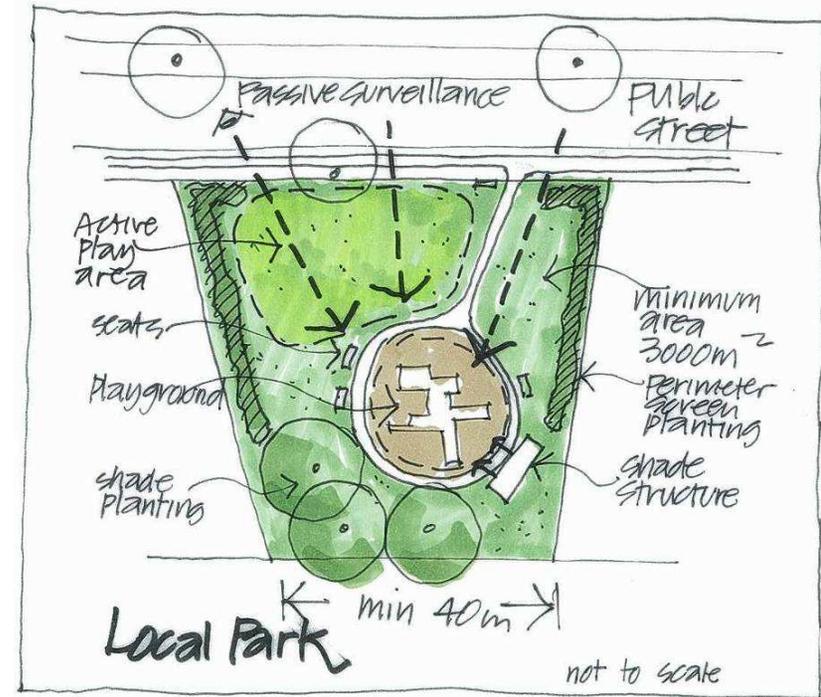


Figure 1: Sample Local Park Plan

4.2 District Parks

District parks are generally parks of substantial size which are well developed to cater for a broad range of recreational opportunities and have a district rather than a local user catchment. Embellishments are provided to cater for the more complex and varied recreational activities and for multiple user groups.

The objective of a district park is to:

- Provide a larger public open space with more advanced embellishments to provide for wide range of recreational activities on a district user catchment basis.

4.2.1 Design Principles

As discussed in Section 2, the overarching design principles can be applied to district parks as described in Table 3:

Table 3: District Park Design Principles

Principle	Application to District Parks
Safety	<p>Ensure that at least two of the park boundaries have public street frontages or back onto other public open space</p> <p>Buildings with active frontages to be orientated for passive surveillance of active park areas</p> <p>Avoid rear fences backing onto parks. Where avoidance is not possible, open form fencing is preferred.</p> <p>Ensure all park areas can be readily viewed from public streets and active building frontages</p> <p>Fencing should only be introduced where necessary to protect the safety of children’s play areas. In all instances such fencing should be see-through style fencing of no more than 1.2m in height</p> <p>Lighting of essential public circulation paths that are designed to be used at night.</p>
	<p>Landscaping should be provided for weather protection and scenic amenity. Species selection and maintenance should ensure clear vision through landscaping between 0.6m and 1.8m in height above</p>

Principle	Application to District Parks
	<p>ground level</p>
Access	<p>Access to the park would be via pedestrian access and private vehicle. Car parking space should therefore be available. Kerb-side parking is preferred, although performance criteria should be applied to determine the need for designated car parking space.</p> <p>District parks are to have convenient vehicular and pedestrian access from the surrounding residential areas – access points should reflect such desired movement patterns</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>90% of all residential lots should be within 400m safe walking distance to any open space area. Reference should be made to Council to ensure this accessibility standard is achieved whilst ensuring a mix of park types is provided. The breakdown of the 2.83 ha standard can be applied to assist with determining an appropriate hierarchy (see 6. Provision Standards)</p> <p>District parks should be located to cover the whole local government area with reasonable access to surrounding groupings of residential areas</p> <p>Distribution of district parks should generally be around 800m from other similar parks to create a even distribution</p>
Sustainability	<p>Environmental attributes, such as landscape features, drainage lines or significant trees, should be integrated into the park design</p> <p>Environmental education and interpretive opportunities should be developed with an appropriate signage strategy</p>

Principle	Application to District Parks
Place Making	<p>A district park should be located where possible in a physically prominent space or local landmark area in order to capitalise on special site attributes to maximise recreation opportunities and environmental values.</p> <p>District park sites should be physically well defined to develop special character and sense of place for the space</p>
Physical Attributes	<p>The park area should be a minimum area of 1.0 ha of useable space, free from environmental reserves</p> <p>District parks should generally be regular in shape and not less than 50m wide</p> <p>Linear parks such as foreshore reserves may be elongated subject to the minimum width indicated above</p> <p>Some variation in landform and landscape setting is desirable, however sufficient level land must be provided for informal recreation activities</p>
Clustering	<p>Integration with other district or higher level facilities should be incorporated where possible, for example community centres, district retail shops or sports grounds</p>
Integration	<p>District parks should form part of a linear series of parks or recreation corridor, enabling a start/end point for walking and cycling pathways</p>
Variety	<p>A range of infrastructure should be included in district parks to cater for a variety of use and recreational activities</p> <p>In certain instances district parks may provide specialised recreational opportunities to suit their natural attributes and setting</p>

4.2.2 Embellishments

Embellishments within district parks could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Walk / cycle pathways;
- ▶ High quality landscape improvements including planting, ground shaping and retaining walls as required;
- ▶ Playgrounds and like opportunities for a range of ages;
- ▶ Combined seating, tables, bins and shade structures / pavilions;
- ▶ Signage;
- ▶ Lighting (where designed for use at night);
- ▶ Barbeques;
- ▶ Toilets;
- ▶ Car parking;
- ▶ Structures and hard-standing areas to provide for informal sporting activities (eg. netball/basketball half court, tennis rebound wall etc) as appropriate to local needs; and
- ▶ Other structures required on a case-by-case basis including boardwalks, viewing platforms etc.

A sample district park plan is provided in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Sample District Park Plan

4.3 Citywide Parks

Citywide parks typically have a number of characteristics that make them significant recreational destinations for the entire local government area and surrounding regional areas. These characteristics include high visitation levels, significance for local and visitor perceptions of Shellharbour, high tourism values, proximity to surrounding tourist attractions and potential for flow on commercial benefits. These areas may also have high environmental values.

The objective of a citywide park is to:

- Provide a large strategically located park which due to its unique setting and/or physical attributes provides a unique recreational resource for the entire LGA and potentially the surrounding region. Citywide parks typically have high levels of visitation and offer significant tourism opportunities.

4.3.1 Design Principles

As discussed in Section 2, the overarching design principles can be applied to citywide parks as described in Table 4:

Table 4: Citywide Park Design Principles

Principle	Application to Citywide Parks
Safety	<p>Ensure high level of visibility with frontages and access from main roads and located in locations where high visibility is maintained</p> <p>Buildings with active frontages to be orientated for passive surveillance of active park areas</p> <p>Avoid rear fences backing onto parks or provide for a consistent fencing type that is appropriate for the location and environmental conditions</p> <p>Internal fencing should only be introduced where necessary to protect the safety of children's play areas. In all instances such fencing should be see-through style fencing of 1.0m in height</p> <p>Lighting of key public walkway areas (where designed to be used at night)</p>

Principle	Application to Citywide Parks
	Landscaping should be provided for weather protection and scenic amenity. Species selection and maintenance should ensure clear vision through landscaping between 0.6m and 1.8m in height above ground level
Access	<p>Access to the park would be via private vehicle as well as pedestrian access by nearby local residents – car parking should therefore be provided</p> <p>Access roads and parking areas should be provided from higher level roads, avoiding suburban streets and access through residential suburbs</p> <p>Wherever possible, access by public transport should be encouraged, through appropriately located bus stops or other infrastructure</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>90% of all residential lots should be within 400m safe walking distance to any open space area. Reference should be made to Council to ensure this accessibility standard is achieved whilst ensuring a mix of park types is provided. The breakdown of the 2.83 ha standard can be applied to assist with determining an appropriate hierarchy (see 6. <i>Provision Standards</i>)</p> <p>Citywide parks are spatially distributed according to need and setting requirements, and no standard can be applied to their distribution</p>
Sustainability	<p>Environmental attributes, such as drainage lines, stands of significant vegetation, foreshore dunes and the like should be integrated into the park design</p> <p>Environmental education and cultural interpretive opportunities should be developed with an appropriate signage strategy</p>

Principle	Application to Citywide Parks
Place Making	<p>A citywide park is typically located in a prominent area with the park capitalising on site attributes to maximise future recreation, environmental and tourism values</p> <p>Areas should be well defined to develop character and sense of place for the space</p> <p>Public art could be utilised to reinforce the unique character and attributes of the park</p> <p>These attributes could include cultural, indigenous, historical and physical characteristics</p>
Physical Attributes	<p>The shape of a citywide park is typically a consequence of its location or physical attributes. Where linkages or narrow areas are proposed, these should not be less than 50m wide</p>
Clustering	<p>Integration of local or district style parks adjacent to the citywide park is desirable, particularly where such areas can provide increased use and safety around the greater park area</p> <p>Other regional sporting, public and retail type facilities may also be located with the citywide park to capitalise on shared facilities such as parking</p>
Integration	<p>Citywide parks are typically the centrepieces of the integrated park system, with linear parks, footpaths and cycleways leading to these areas.</p>
Variety	<p>A range of infrastructure should be included in citywide parks to suit the environmental attributes recreational uses and expected visitation numbers and demographics</p>

4.3.2 Embellishments

Citywide parks are not intended to be developed to a specified standard but will be embellished to a level consistent with user expectations, their natural setting and the special requirements and opportunities provided by individual sites.

As a guide, citywide parks should receive as a minimum high quality landscaping, lighting of major public spaces, public artworks and interpretive signage together with an appropriate level of recreational opportunities, supporting amenities and user facilities.

4.4 Icon Parks

In some instances, parks will have a particularly special purpose or place within the community. These parks are can be within any level of the hierarchy and would attract a particular set of embellishments and maintenance standards commensurate to the proposed use of the park.

Local and district level parks with an iconic status may receive higher levels of design attention, embellishments and maintenance than is normally associated with the standard provision identified in the parks hierarchy.

5. Sporting Ground Hierarchy

In a similar fashion to the hierarchy of parks discussed in the previous section, a hierarchy of sporting grounds can also be used to assist Council in determining future design, delivery and maintenance of these areas. Within the sporting ground context, a two level approach is used with district and city wide sporting grounds.

5.1 District Sporting Grounds

District level sporting grounds tend to be grouped together to serve a number of adjacent residential areas and suburbs. While they also play a local role with “home teams”, they are predominantly used by a number of teams on a regular basis (typically weekly during competition seasons). They tend to be strategically located to maximise visibility and to facilitate vehicular access as many users will be travelling to the site by car.

The objective of district level sporting grounds is to:

- Provide sporting grounds that primarily serve a district catchment (group of suburbs) with an appropriate level of embellishment suited to regular use by a number of sporting groups. District sporting grounds are predominantly used for local level competitions defined by local sport associations and for visiting organisations for competition. They also provide local use benefits as well as venues for multiple-club training.

5.1.1 Design Principles

As discussed in Section 2, the overarching design principles can be applied to district sporting grounds as described in Table 5:

Table 5: District Sporting Ground Design Principles

Principle	Application to District Sporting Grounds
Safety	<p>Ensure that the sporting ground has a complete frontage to a public road to facilitate passive surveillance</p> <p>Sporting fields and ancillary buildings are to be orientated for passive surveillance from surrounding streets, but being cognisant of sport requirements outside of fields (for example space behind goals for ball over-run and light spill)</p> <p>Fencing should also be introduced where necessary to protect fields and grounds from illegitimate access (eg. vehicle barriers) or to protect users or spectators from balls leaving the grounds into other areas</p> <p>Ensure the provision of lighting of playing areas and facilities, as well as circulation paths to provide for safe usage if proposed to be used at night</p>
Access	<p>Access to sporting grounds would typically be via private vehicle - car parking should therefore be provided</p> <p>Wherever possible, access by public transport should be encouraged, through appropriately located bus stops or other infrastructure</p> <p>Access should be from non-residential roads where possible to avoid traffic impacts on residential areas</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>Distribution of district sporting grounds will be subject to sporting and community requirements of the LGA, but in new development areas should be conveniently accessible for residential areas while providing physical separation from dwellings</p>

Principle	Application to District Sporting Grounds
Sustainability	<p>Design, development and management of sporting grounds should respond to environmental values and conditions, community needs and economic considerations and must remain viable in the long term</p> <p>In certain locations and as part of an integrated design, sporting grounds should provide for and assist in the detaining and cleansing of stormwater runoff</p> <p>Turf and landscape planting species should be of low maintenance and have low water requirements</p>
Place Making	<p>Locate sporting grounds to ensure that special attributes of an area are protected and enhanced. Due to the extensive flat area often required for sporting grounds, initial site planning should avoid sensitive areas.</p>
Physical Attributes	<p>Land for district sportsgrounds should have the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Land should be regular in shape to maximise the number and layout of the playing fields ▶ Land should be relatively level, with individual fields having a slope no greater than 1V:66H, with Council preferring 1V:100H. The slope required will be determined by Council and will be based on the existing contours of the land and the proposed sport. ▶ Playing fields should have a north-south orientation of the long axis ▶ Land should be fully serviced, with adequate drainage systems to ensure player safety and appropriate field conditions during rain events ▶ Adequate space should be made available for the provision of ancillary facilities and landscape buffers to minimise impacts of noise, floodlighting and traffic impacts on neighbouring properties

Principle	Application to District Sporting Grounds
Clustering	<p>Cluster/group sports fields and facilities in order to maximise flexibility of use and to minimise disruption to residential areas (noise, light spill and parking/ traffic issues and impacts)</p> <p>While aimed at a target audience based on LGA and regional demographics, use of additional embellishments (for example pathways and seating) to facilitate broad use should be considered</p>
Integration	<p>Where possible, make connections between open space areas and sporting grounds within the local open space network</p>
Variety	<p>Designs should provide for a variety of seasonal sports uses, which will assist in providing year round use and allow flexibility as trends change</p> <p>Use of clubhouses and ancillary facilities for other community uses should also be considered where these can be used around sporting use times</p>

5.1.2 Embellishments

Basic embellishments provided to district sporting grounds could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Vehicular access and parking;
- ▶ Sporting grounds and facilities to the appropriate standard for individual sports at district level competition;
- ▶ Amenities building including referee room, change rooms, toilets, equipment storage and canteen facilities;
- ▶ Specific training facilities such as cricket practice nets as appropriate;

- ▶ Playing field lighting to an appropriate standard for the proposed use;
- ▶ Limited fencing and barriers to ensure safety of users and spectators;
- ▶ Spectator seating, bins, and signage; and
- ▶ Landscape improvements such as shade planting and wind protection.

5.2 Citywide Sporting Grounds

Citywide sporting grounds tend to be clustered together and located away from residential areas to maximise flexibility of use and to reduce the potential impacts of noise, vehicular movements, parking and lighting on local residents. Like district level sporting grounds they should be strategically located adjacent to major roads to maximise visibility and to facilitate accessibility, however citywide sporting grounds will tend to be utilised by senior teams and may therefore require additional embellishments such as change rooms and high level lighting.

The objective of citywide level sports fields is to:

- ▶ Provide sporting grounds that primarily benefit the entire city regardless of physical location and to cater for competitions beyond one association or organisation in addition to providing district level benefits. They should also cater for competitions in selected sports at the regional and in some instances the State or National level. Embellishments are to be provided to a high standard appropriate to the needs of the regional and higher level competitions.

5.2.1 Design Principles

As discussed in Section 2, the overarching design principles can be applied to citywide sporting grounds as described in Table 6:

Table 6: Citywide Sporting Ground Design Principles

Principle	Application to Citywide Sporting Grounds
Safety	<p>Ensure that the sporting ground has a complete frontage to a public road to facilitate passive surveillance</p> <p>Sporting fields and ancillary buildings are to be orientated for passive surveillance from surrounding streets, but being cognisant of sport requirements outside of fields (for example space behind goals for ball over-run and light spill)</p> <p>Fencing should be introduced in some instances to provide perimeter security to the grounds and to allow the control of entry</p> <p>Fencing should also be introduced where necessary to protect fields and grounds from illegitimate access (eg. vehicle barriers) or to protect users or spectators from balls leaving the grounds into other areas</p> <p>Ensure the provision of lighting of playing areas and facilities, as well as circulation paths and car parking areas to allow for safe usage at night</p>
Access	<p>Access to sporting grounds would typically be via private vehicle and bus/coach during larger events - car and bus/coach parking are therefore required</p> <p>Wherever possible, access by public transport should be encouraged, through appropriately located bus stops or other infrastructure</p> <p>Access should be from non-residential roads where possible to avoid traffic impacts on residential areas</p>
Spatial Distribution	<p>Distribution of citywide sporting grounds will be subject to sporting and community requirements of the LGA and regional requirements</p>

Principle	Application to Citywide Sporting Grounds
Sustainability	<p>Design, development and management of sporting grounds should respond to environmental values and conditions, community needs and economic considerations and must remain viable in the long term</p> <p>In certain locations and as part of an integrated design, sporting grounds should provide for and assist in the detaining and cleansing of stormwater runoff</p> <p>Turf and landscape planting species should be of low maintenance and have low water requirements</p>
Place Making	<p>Locate sporting grounds to ensure that special attributes of an area are protected and enhanced. Due to the extensive flat area often required for sporting grounds, initial site planning should avoid sensitive areas</p>
Physical Attributes	<p>Land for citywide sportsgrounds should have the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Land should be regular in shape to maximise the number and layout of the playing fields ▶ Land should be relatively level, with individual fields having a slope of no greater than 1V:66H, with Council preferring 1V:100H. The slope required will be determined by Council and will be based on the existing contours of the land and the proposed sport. ▶ Playing fields should have a north-south orientation of the long axis ▶ Land should be fully serviced, with adequate drainage systems to ensure player safety and appropriate field conditions during rain events ▶ Adequate space should be made available for the provision of essential infrastructure and landscape buffers to minimise impacts of noise, floodlighting and traffic impacts on neighbouring properties

Principle	Application to Citywide Sporting Grounds
Clustering	<p>Cluster/group sports fields and facilities in order to maximise flexibility of use and to minimise disruption to residential areas (noise, light spill and parking/ traffic issues and impacts)</p> <p>While aimed at a target audience based on LGA and regional demographics, use of additional embellishments (for example pathways and seating) to facilitate broad use should be considered</p>
Integration	<p>Where possible, make connections between open space areas and sporting grounds within the local open space network</p>
Variety	<p>Designs should provide for a variety of seasonal sports uses, which will assist in providing year round use and allow flexibility as trends change</p> <p>Where single use facilities are to be provided, emphasis on the use of the facility in the off-season should be encouraged</p> <p>Use of clubhouses and ancillary facilities for other community uses should also be considered where these can be used around sporting use times</p>

5.2.2 Embellishments

Basic embellishments provided to citywide sporting grounds fields could include a mix of the following:

- ▶ Vehicular access and parking including provision for buses;
- ▶ Sporting grounds and facilities to the appropriate standard for individual sports at regional level competition;

- ▶ Specialist surfaces and facilities such as synthetic grass for hockey;
- ▶ Amenities building including referee room, change rooms, toilets, equipment storage and canteen facilities;
- ▶ Clubrooms;
- ▶ Higher standard field and where appropriate off-field lighting to an appropriate standard for the proposed use;
- ▶ Specific training facilities such as cricket practice nets as appropriate;
- ▶ Tiered spectator seating with some undercover seating,
- ▶ Perimeter fencing to allow the ground to be secured;
- ▶ Scoreboard structures and signage;
- ▶ Bins, picnic and barbecue facilities; and
- ▶ Higher level landscape improvements such as footpaths, hard-standing areas, screening and shade planting.

6. Provision Standards

Standards of provision refer to the amount of open space to be required by Council measured by the amount of people in an area. In numerical terms, the provision of open space is generally referred to as an area (ha) per 1,000 residential persons. The most widely used approach to open space provision is the 2.83 hectares of open space per 1,000 residents, which was derived from early studies in the 1900's where British planners identified 7 acres per 1,000 residents as an appropriate standard. This standard has repeatedly been referred to by the NSW Land and Environment Court where determining open space matters.

Within the overall figure, further breakdown is required into the hierarchy as discussed in the previous sections. In the context of the Shellharbour LGA the following breakdown can be applied:

- ▶ 0.33 ha per 1,000 people for local parks;
- ▶ 0.5 ha per 1,000 people for district parks;
- ▶ 0.3 ha per 1,000 people for citywide parks; and
- ▶ 1.7 ha per 1,000 people for sporting grounds.

These standards are based on previously available NSW Department of Sport and Recreation figures which assumed a 60/40 split between active and passive recreation. These standards act as a guide, and if applied, can be used to consider open space requirements alongside a more qualitative needs based analysis. The design principles for open space including the 400m walkable distance to any open space area and the minimum size requirements must be applied.

A review of the 1992 *Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government*, which is currently being undertaken by the NSW Department of Planning, will aim to provide a more consistent approach to these standards and review of these figures upon completion of the Department of Planning's review may therefore be necessary.

7. Other Open Spaces

Other open space areas are likely to be required or already exist within an integrated system which cannot be included in the above park and sporting ground hierarchy. These areas are typically smaller environmental areas, minor landscape improvements or service easements. These areas have been divided into two categories: Environmental Reserves, and Ancillary Reserves.

7.1 Environmental Reserves

Environmental reserves are able to serve a range of purposes from riparian corridors and drainage management areas, to existing areas of mature vegetation or water front areas with existing flora or fauna attributes. Where environmental reserves ordinarily do not provide any recreational values they will generally not be counted towards the provision requirements for open space. Nevertheless, the provision of shared user pathways along environmental corridors to create linkages between areas is encouraged and these areas may then be considered as part of a greater open space system subject to agreement with Council.

7.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of environmental reserves are to:

- ▶ Provide public open space that are not specifically embellished and managed as parkland or sports grounds and that may include natural areas or areas that provide an informal landscape setting to adjacent urban development; and
- ▶ Manage, conserve and protect natural areas including native bushland and foreshore reserves (which include beaches and coastal

foreshores, estuaries, lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands) and in particular areas that contain habitat for threatened species and or the presence of threatened species or endangered ecological communities or the existence of cultural heritage items.

Where environmental reserves are located as part of a larger urban park or sporting ground, appropriate safety principles should be applied in accordance with the appropriate level of the park hierarchy as discussed in earlier sections.

7.2 Ancillary Reserves

Ancillary reserves are residual public open spaces which include drainage and service easements, local infrastructure sites, various buffer areas such as bushfire asset protection zones (APZ) and similar setbacks for maintenance purposes, road side landscaping and other areas that do not have any specific recreational uses nor defined provision standards.

Like environmental reserves, ancillary reserves are not generally counted towards the provision of public open space as they may not provide any recreational values.

7.2.1 Objectives

The objective of ancillary reserves is to:

- ▶ Provide public open space that is not specifically embellished and managed as parkland or sports grounds, but are required to enable a range of uses that are important to the operations of Council or of benefit to the community.

8. Detailed Safety Considerations

Designing for the safe use of an open space is of particular importance in the open space design process. Recent auditing of parks in the Wollongong LGA⁶ has identified a number of significant findings in relation to park design and instances of safety and vandalism/anti-social behaviour. Significant findings from this audit which are relevant to Shellharbour and the appropriate design response to those issues are provided in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Significant Audit Finding and Design Response

Significant Finding	Design Response
<i>Car Parking:</i> Providing car parking within an open space area is a significant factor in a park being used for anti-social behaviour	Provision of car parking should only be considered for district and higher level parks and sports fields. For local parks and most district parks, on street parking is preferred.
<i>Lighting:</i> Lighting of open spaces has the potential to encourage use the space for illegitimate reasons, meaning the lighting is not an answer to discouraging anti-social behaviour	Lighting should only be used where an area is designed to be used for legitimate purposes at night or along essential pedestrian routes that are to be used at night. Controlled use of space at night through the closing of car parking areas should also be utilised to reinforce desired use patterns.
<i>Size:</i> The size of a park is	In larger parks, design elements

⁶ Wollongong City Council: Community, Cultural and Library Services Division, *Parks Safety Audit 2008*

Significant Finding	Design Response
associated with the chances of illegitimate activities occurring, particularly in areas where passive surveillance is poor	should ensure that gathering spaces have high passive surveillance. The size of parks should reflect its use and need.
<i>Night-time use:</i> Extensive areas of open space that attract night-time use is problematic for surveillance and law enforcement	Where open space is designed to be used at night, they should be well defined in terms of their entry and exit points, smaller and on major roads where passive surveillance and easy access can be achieved.
<i>Co-location:</i> Parks co-located within business or town centre precincts are found to be underutilised in non-business times, leading to anti-social behaviour and crime	Where parks are to be co-located with community or business./retail areas, efforts should be made to ensure that other land uses (for example residential housing) also provide passive surveillance. Retail and businesses should provide a frontage to these open spaces, not “turn their backs” on such spaces.

8.1 Other Safety Considerations

Other safety considerations that must be addressed in the design of open space include:

- ▶ Provision of landscape planting that does not compromise visual surveillance. For example the use of trees with high canopies and low shrubs and hedges that allow good sightlines and the monitoring of children’s play;
- ▶ The location and design of water bodies that allow a high level of

surveillance and provide safe conditions (for example the provision of a gently graded bank and shallow water); and

- ▶ Pedestrian and vehicular circulation should be separated where possible to ensure the safety of children and other open space users. All vehicular traffic areas should also be designed as shared spaces, cognisant of use by young children, families, prams and other similar users.

9. References

Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (2001) *Crime Prevention and the assessment of development applications*, NSW Government, Sydney

Greater London Authority (2008) *Supplementary Planning Guidance: Provision for Children and Young People's Plan and Informal Recreation*, Greater London Authority, London

Kiama Municipal Council, Shellharbour City Council and Wollongong City Council (2008) *Illawarra Sustainability Roadmap*

Wollongong City Council (2008) *Parks Safety Audit 2008*, Community, Cultural and Library Services Division, Wollongong

Appendix C

Suburb Maps

Albion Park (2 Sheets)

Albion Park Rail

Barrack Heights

Barrack Point

Blackbutt

Flinders

Lake Illawarra

Mount Warrigal

Oak Flats

Shell Cove

Shellharbour

Shellharbour City Centre

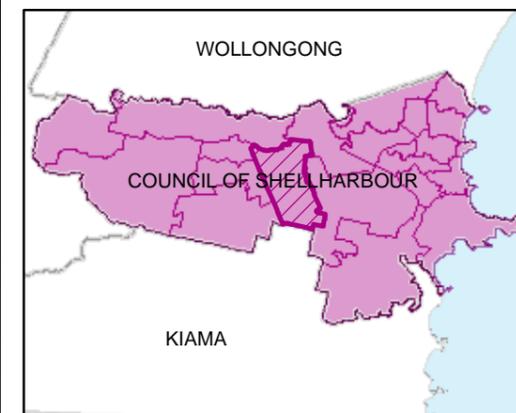
Warilla

Croome / Dunmore

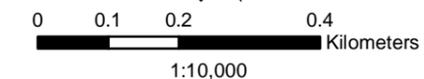


LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
- Ancillary
- Library
- Community Centre
- Council Hall
- Childcare Facility
- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map

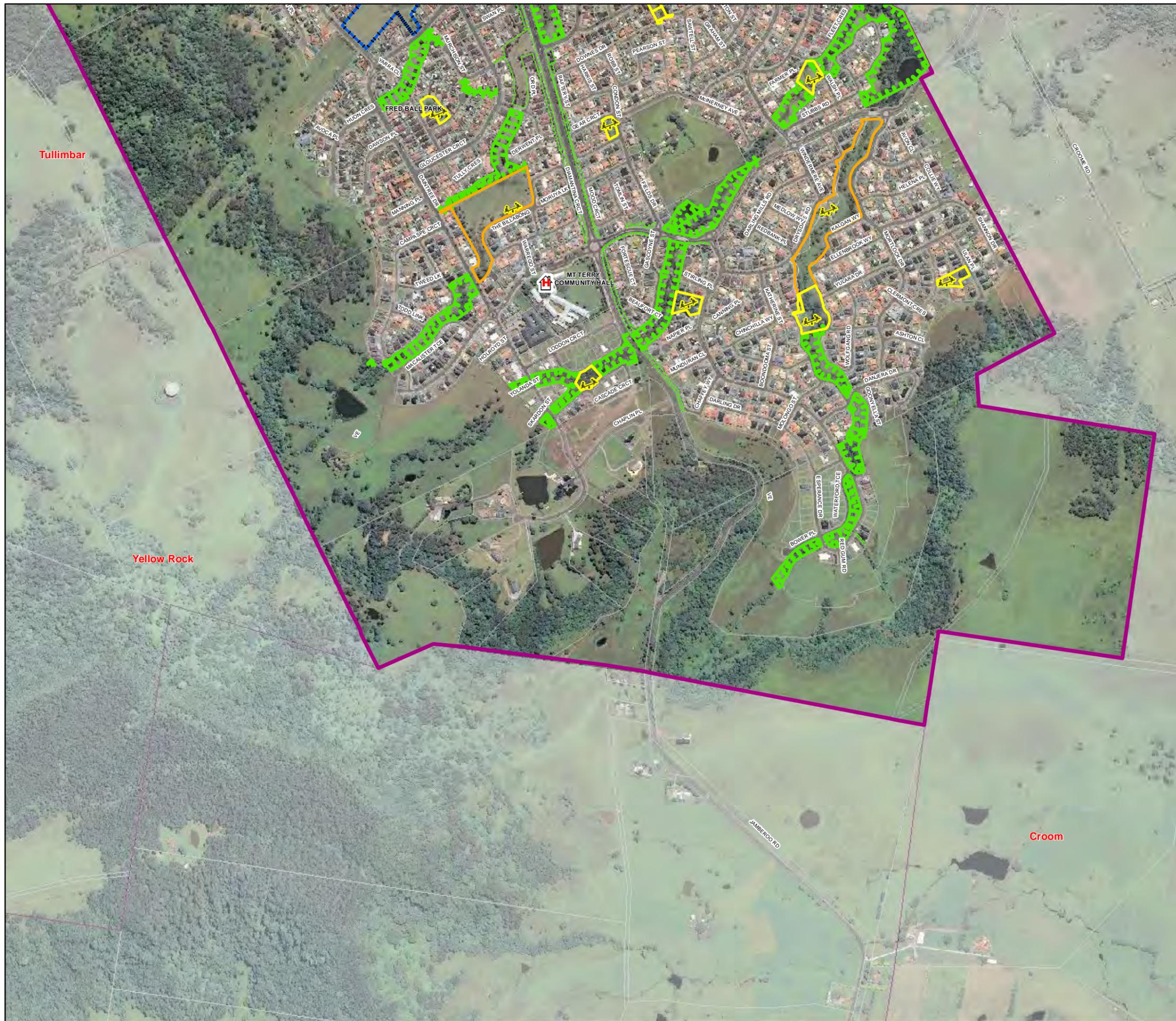


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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

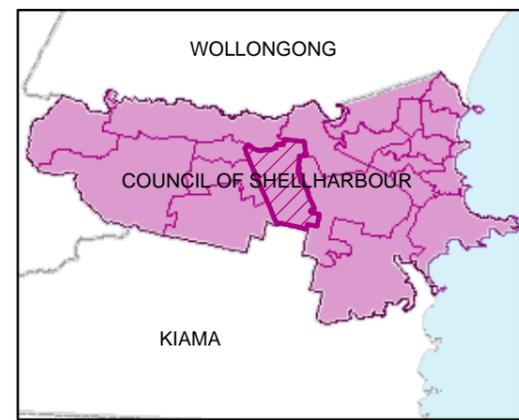
**Albion Park
Suburb Map**
Sheet 1 of 2



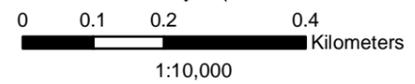


LEGEND

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Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Albion Park
Suburb Map**
Sheet 2 of 2



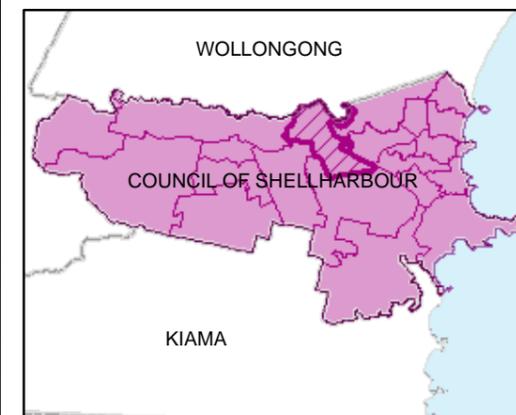
Project: 23/12736

01/09/2008

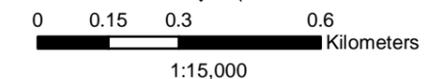


LEGEND

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Locality Map

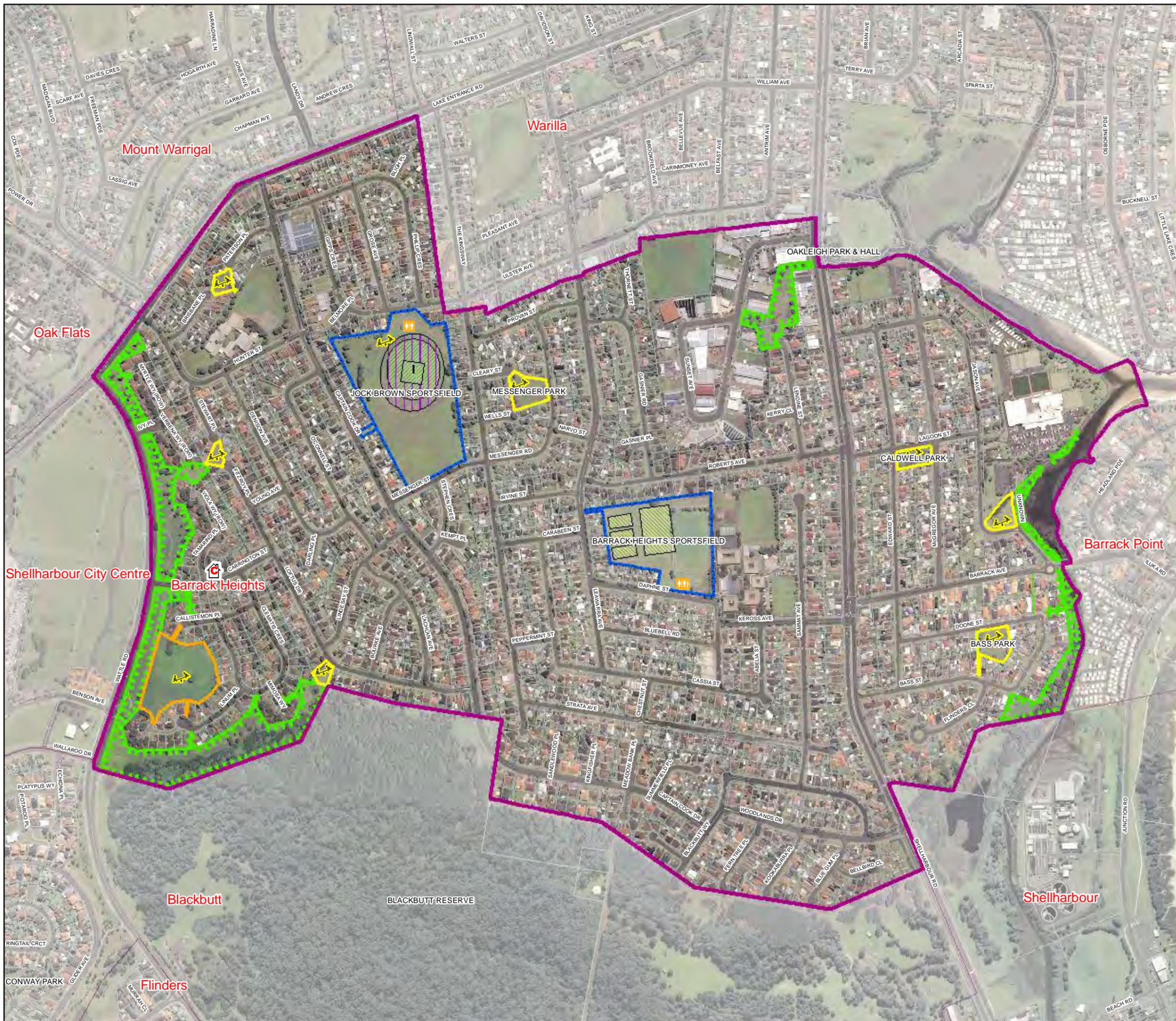


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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Albion Park Rail
Suburb Map**



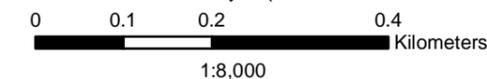


LEGEND

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Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

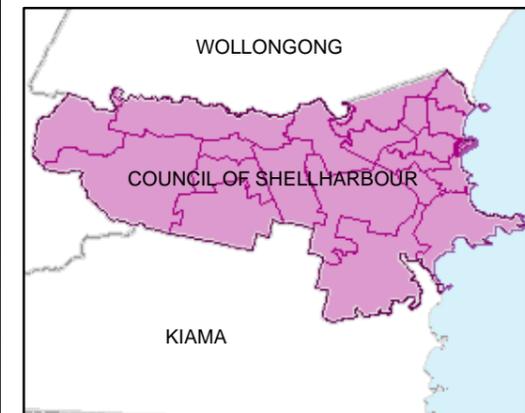
**Barrack Heights
Suburb Map**





LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
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- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
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Locality Map



1:3,500

Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Barrack Point
Suburb Map**



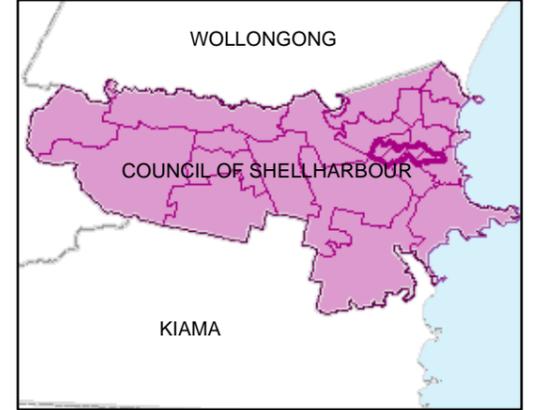
Project: 23/12736

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LEGEND

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- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
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Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

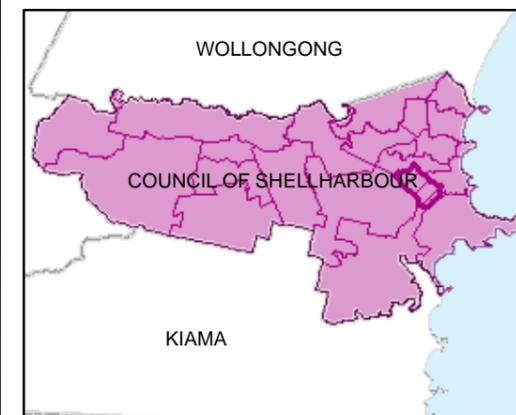
**Blackbutt
Suburb Map**





LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
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- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
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- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

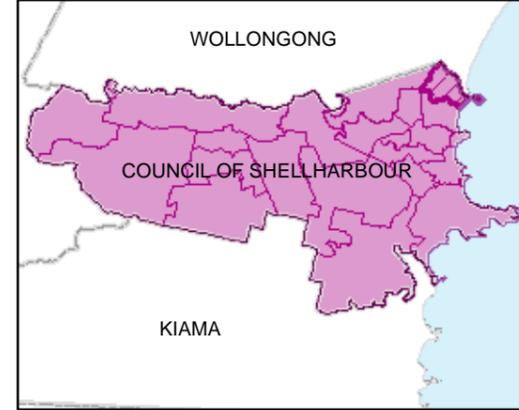
**Flinders
Suburb Map**





LEGEND

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- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Lake Illawarra
Suburb Map**



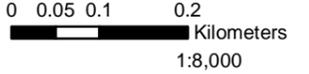


LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
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- District Sporting Ground
- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
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- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Mount Warrigal
Suburb Map**





LEGEND

-  Suburb Boundary
-  Local Park
-  District Park
-  Citywide Park
-  District Sporting Ground
-  Citywide Sporting Ground
-  Environmental
-  Ancillary
-  Library
-  Community Centre
-  Council Hall
-  Childcare Facility
-  Toilets
-  Playground
-  Swimming Pool



Locality Map



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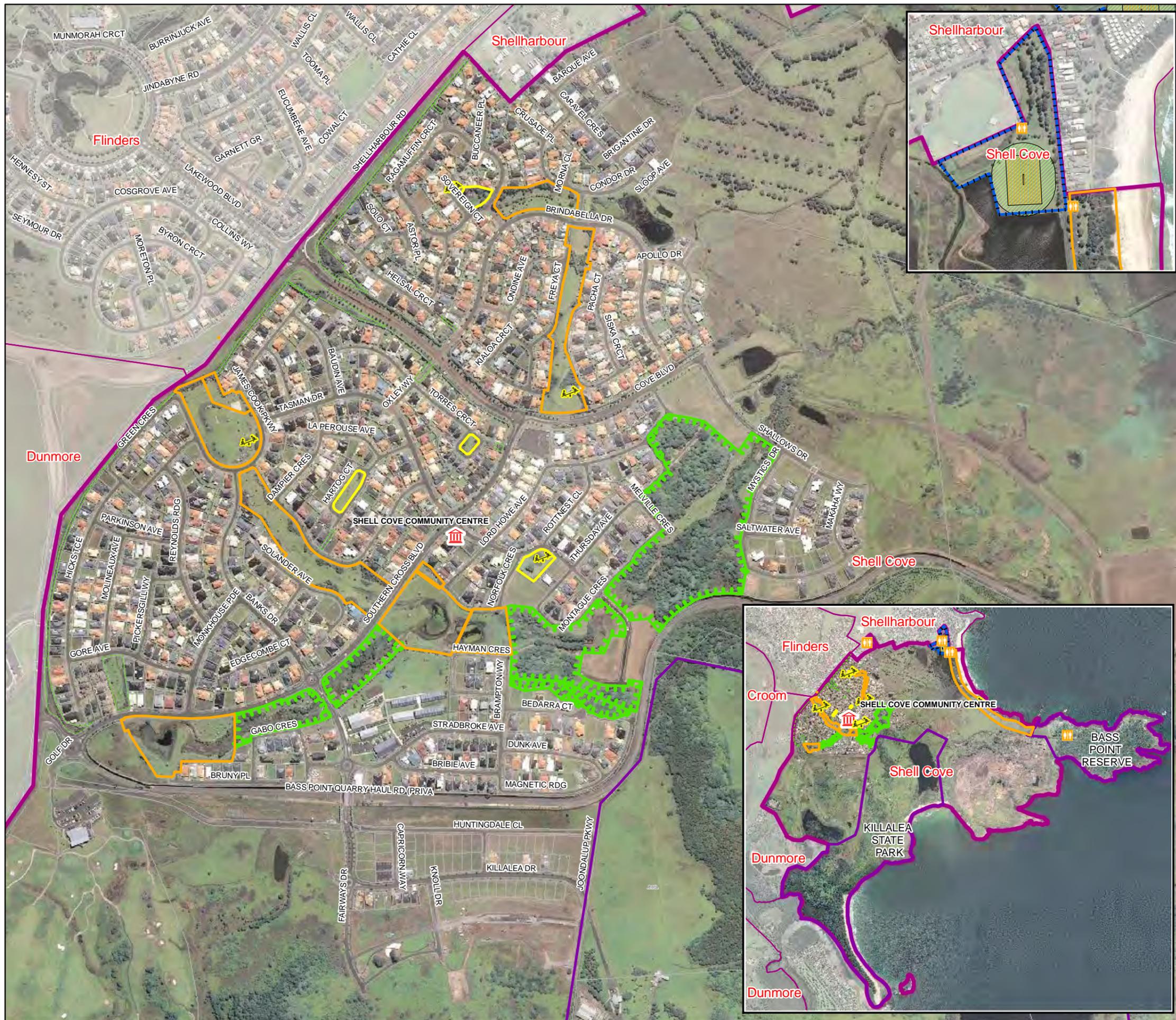
PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Oak Flats
Suburb Map**



Project: 23/12736

01/09/2008

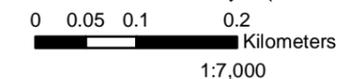


LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
- Ancillary
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- Community Centre
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- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

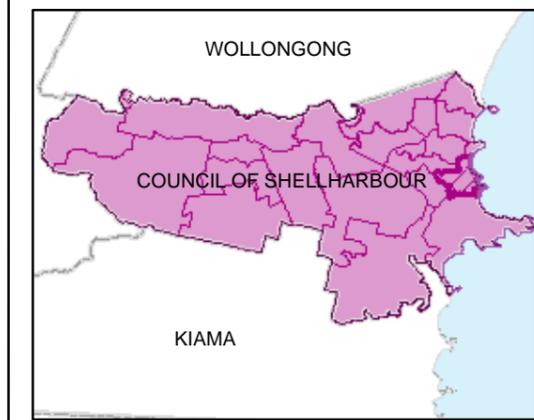
**Shell Cove
Suburb Map**



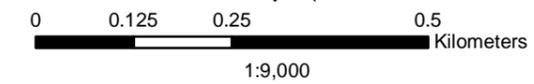


LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
- Ancillary
- Library
- Community Centre
- Council Hall
- Childcare Facility
- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Shellharbour
Suburb Map**



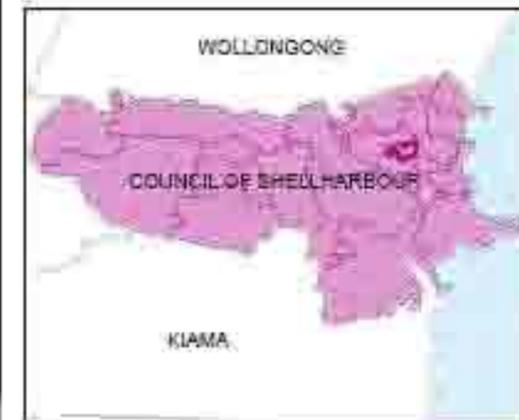
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LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
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- Environmental
- Ancillary
- Library
- Community Centre
- Council Hall
- Childcare Facility
- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool
- Future Sports Fields



Locality Map



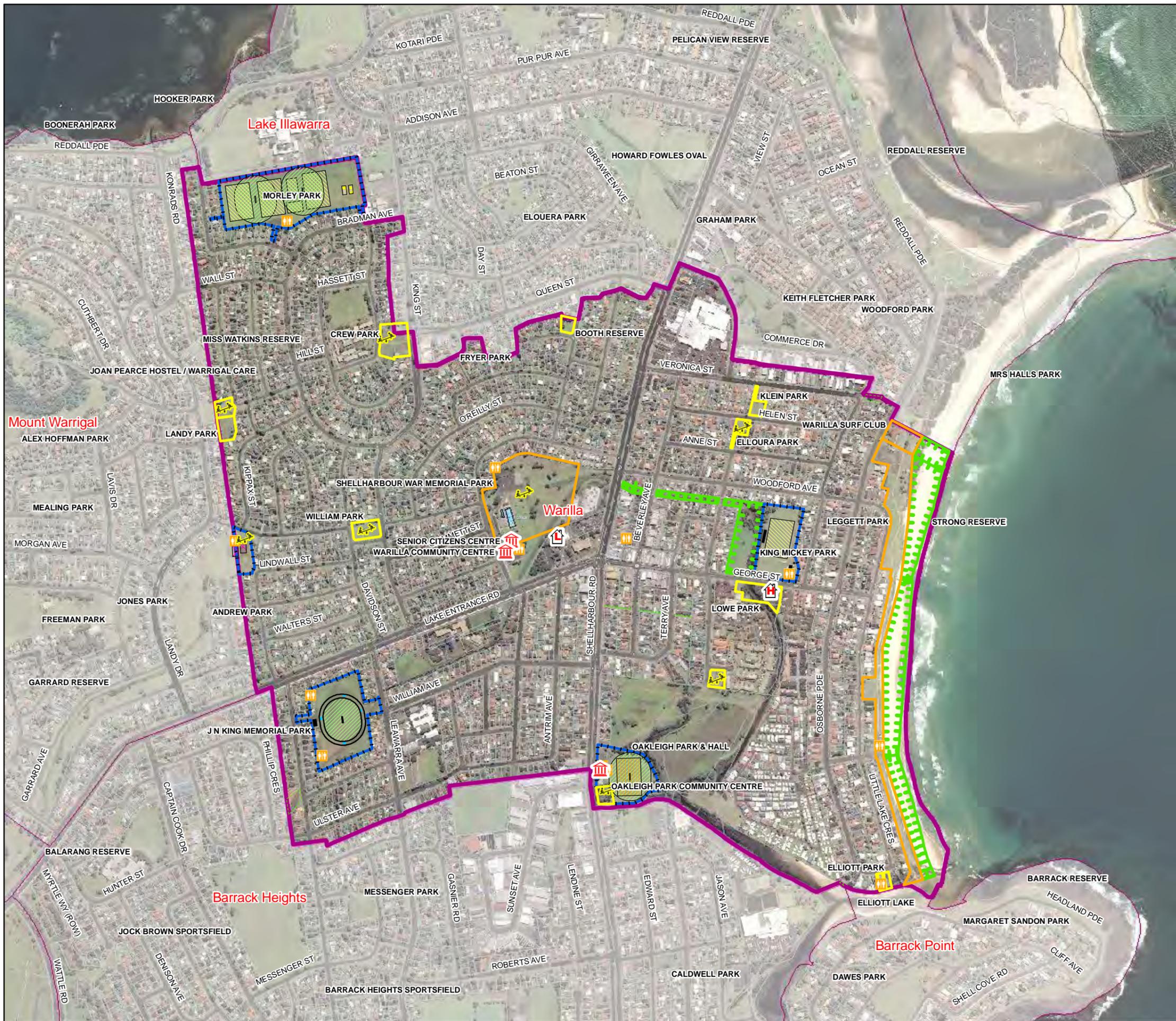
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PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

Shellharbour City
Suburb Map

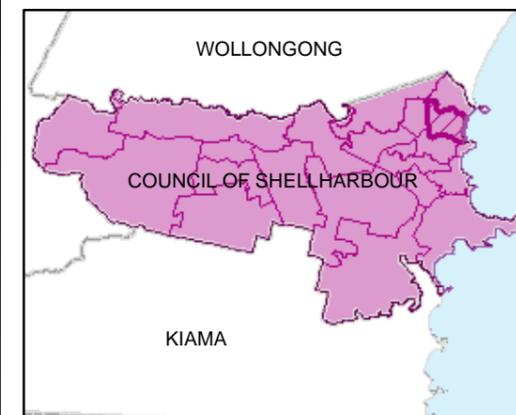


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LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
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- Environmental
- Ancillary
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- Childcare Facility
- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

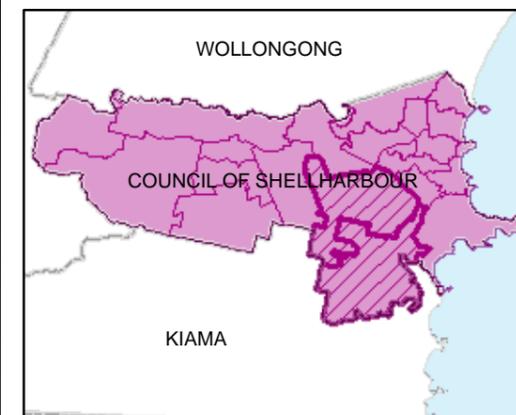
**Warilla
Suburb Map**





LEGEND

- Suburb Boundary
- Local Park
- District Park
- Citywide Park
- District Sporting Ground
- Citywide Sporting Ground
- Environmental
- Ancillary
- Library
- Community Centre
- Council Hall
- Childcare Facility
- Toilets
- Playground
- Swimming Pool



Locality Map



Datum: AGD66
Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

**Croom/Dunmore
Suburb Map**



Appendix D

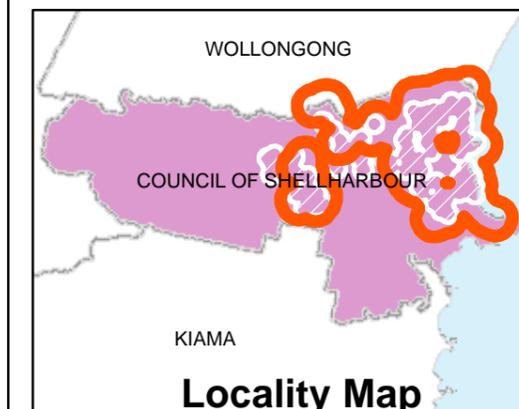
Accessibility Buffer Maps

Indicating 400m and 800m walking buffer from Local and District Parks



LEGEND

-  Local Park 400m (Buffer)
-  Local Park
-  District Park 800m (Buffer)
-  District Park
-  Suburb
-  Cadastre



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Projection: NSW ISG Zone 56/1

PROJECT
**Shellharbour Open Space
Recreation and Community
Facilities Needs Study**

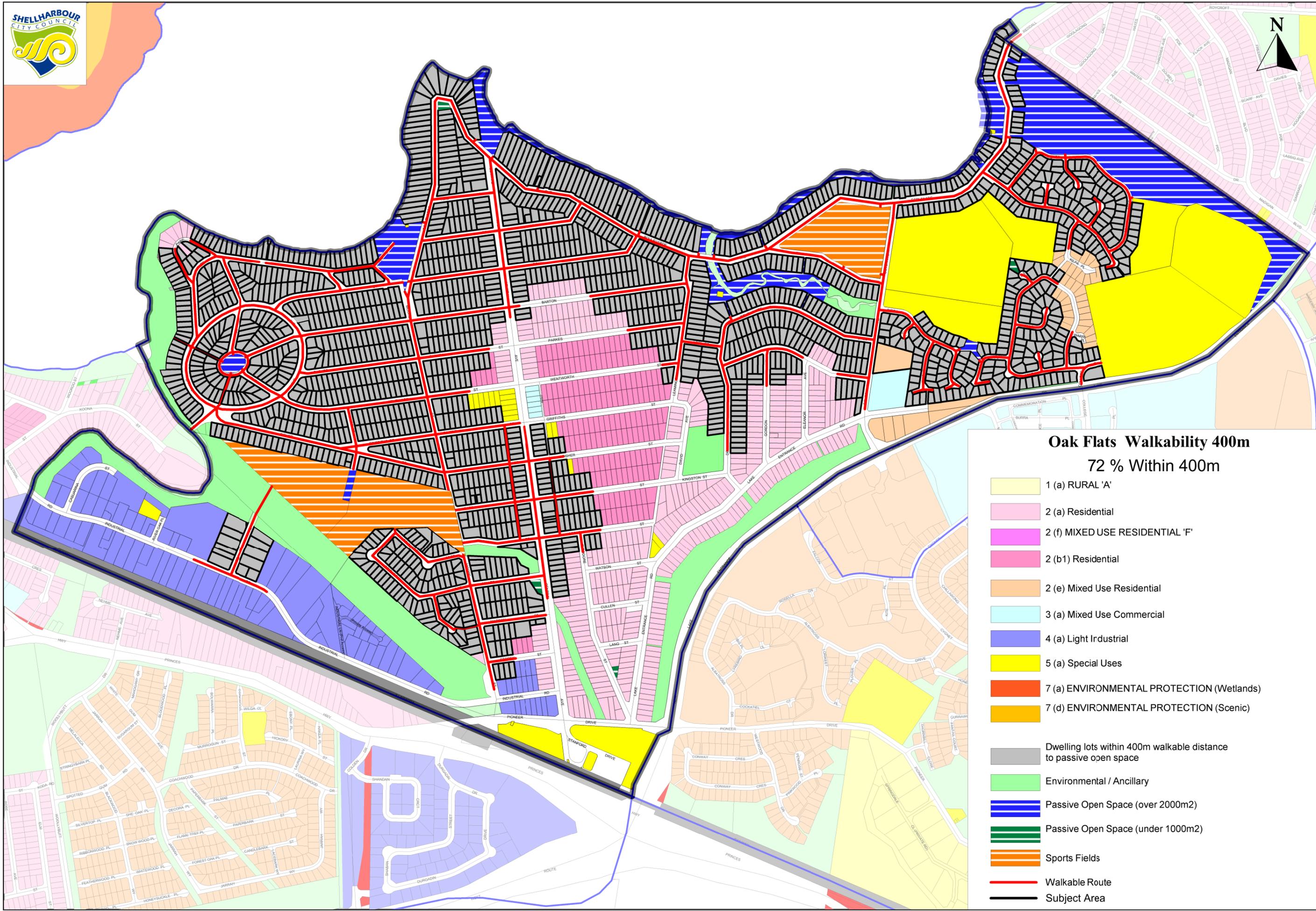
**Accessibility
Buffer Map**



Project: 23/12736

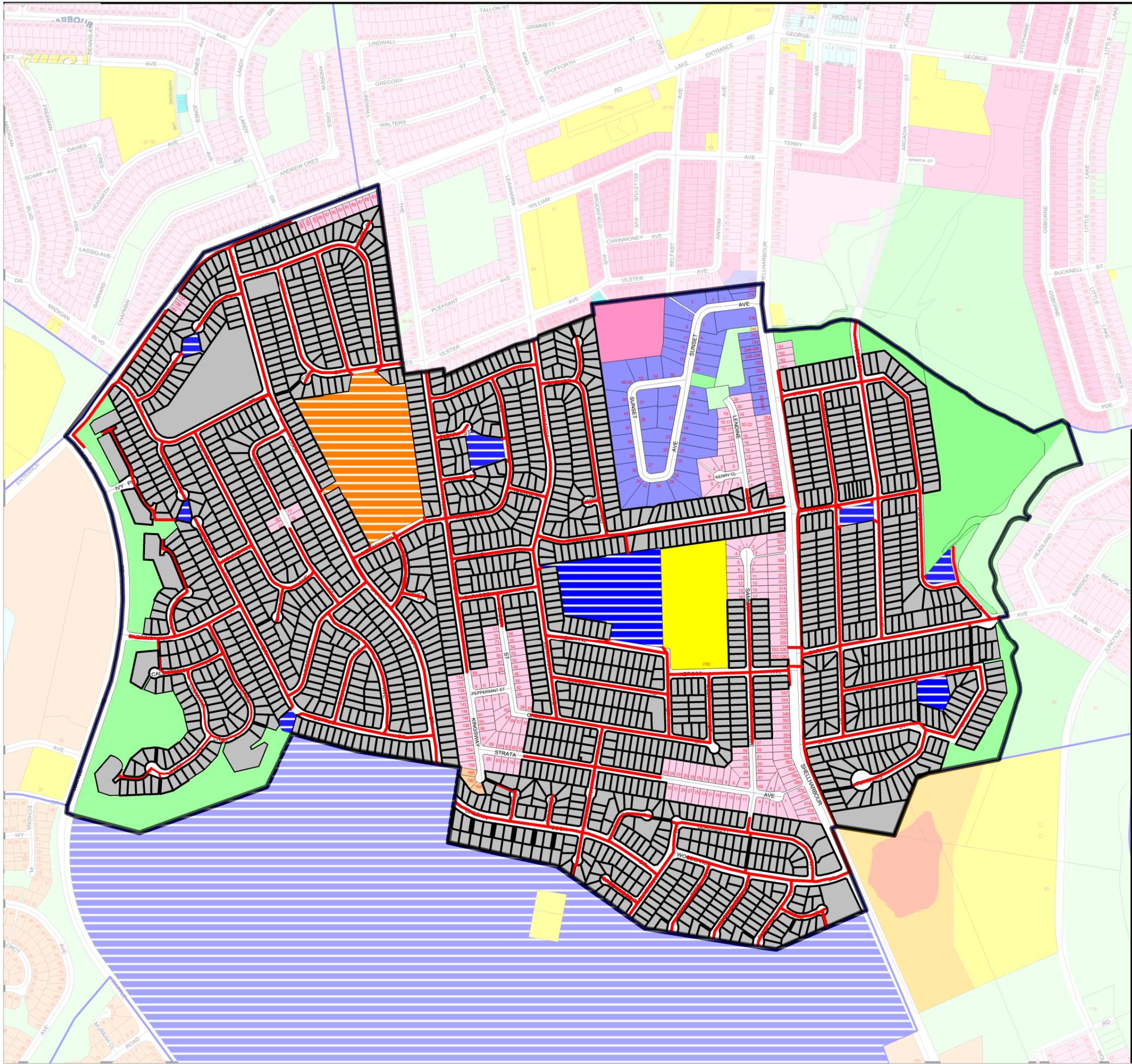
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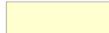
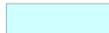
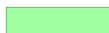


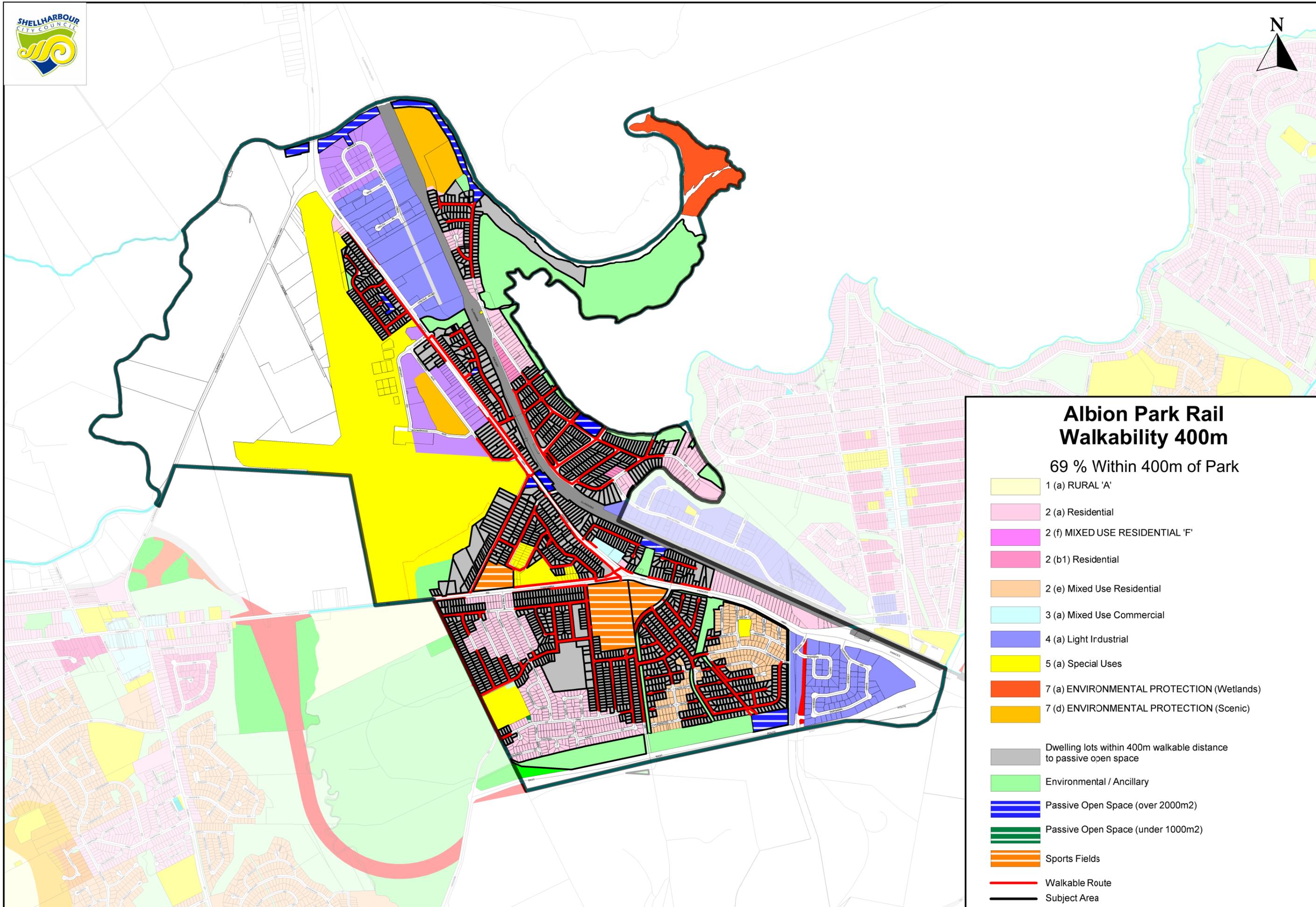
Oak Flats Walkability 400m
72 % Within 400m

- 1 (a) RURAL 'A'
- 2 (a) Residential
- 2 (f) MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL 'F'
- 2 (b1) Residential
- 2 (e) Mixed Use Residential
- 3 (a) Mixed Use Commercial
- 4 (a) Light Industrial
- 5 (a) Special Uses
- 7 (a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Wetlands)
- 7 (d) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Scenic)
- Dwelling lots within 400m walkable distance to passive open space
- Environmental / Ancillary
- Passive Open Space (over 2000m2)
- Passive Open Space (under 1000m2)
- Sports Fields
- Walkable Route
- Subject Area



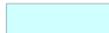
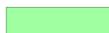
Barrack Heights Walkability 400m 90 % Within 400m

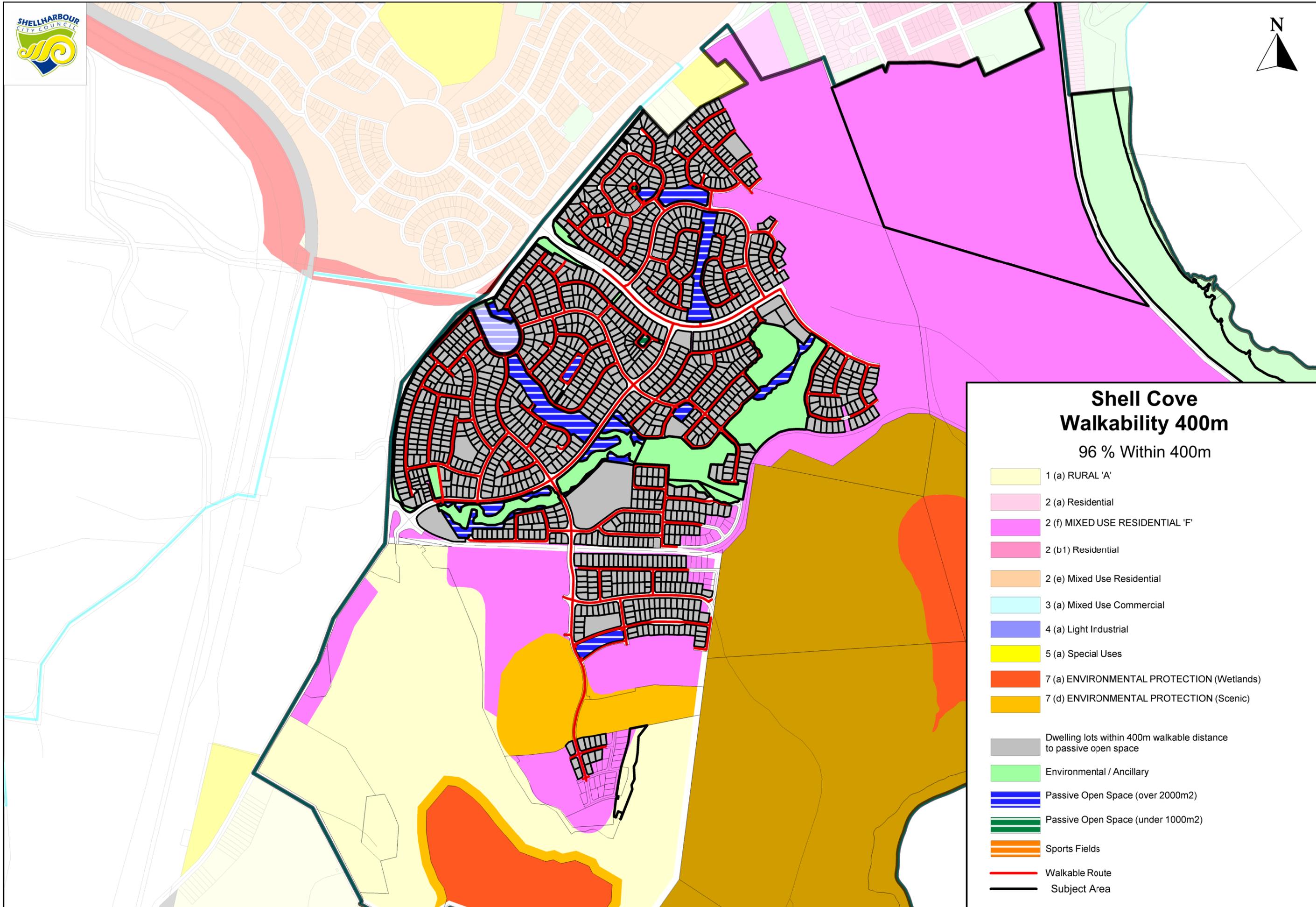
-  1 (a) RURAL 'A'
-  2 (a) Residential
-  2 (f) MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL 'F'
-  2 (b1) Residential
-  2 (e) Mixed Use Residential
-  3 (a) Mixed Use Commercial
-  4 (a) Light Industrial
-  5 (a) Special Uses
-  7 (a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Wetlands)
-  7 (d) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Scenic)
-  Dwelling lots within 400m walkable distance to passive open space
-  Environmental / Ancillary
-  Passive Open Space (over 2000m2)
-  Passive Open Space (under 1000m2)
-  Sports Fields
-  Walkable Route
-  Subject Area



Albion Park Rail Walkability 400m

69 % Within 400m of Park

-  1 (a) RURAL 'A'
-  2 (a) Residential
-  2 (f) MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL 'F'
-  2 (b1) Residential
-  2 (e) Mixed Use Residential
-  3 (a) Mixed Use Commercial
-  4 (a) Light Industrial
-  5 (a) Special Uses
-  7 (a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Wetlands)
-  7 (d) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Scenic)
-  Dwelling lots within 400m walkable distance to passive open space
-  Environmental / Ancillary
-  Passive Open Space (over 2000m2)
-  Passive Open Space (under 1000m2)
-  Sports Fields
-  Walkable Route
-  Subject Area



Shell Cove Walkability 400m

96 % Within 400m

- 1 (a) RURAL 'A'
- 2 (a) Residential
- 2 (f) MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL 'F'
- 2 (b1) Residential
- 2 (e) Mixed Use Residential
- 3 (a) Mixed Use Commercial
- 4 (a) Light Industrial
- 5 (a) Special Uses
- 7 (a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Wetlands)
- 7 (d) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Scenic)
- Dwelling lots within 400m walkable distance to passive open space
- Environmental / Ancillary
- Passive Open Space (over 2000m²)
- Passive Open Space (under 1000m²)
- Sports Fields
- Walkable Route
- Subject Area

Appendix E
Sports Group Consultation Summary

Sporting Group Consultation Responses

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Illawarra Junior Soccer Association	Illawarra area junior Soccer	~8,000 members across the competition. In Shellharbour 4 junior clubs with ~1,500 members	Shellharbour club at Barrack Heights Oval and other clubs in varying places. Varying degree of quality.	Barrack Heights is used 7 days per week and club has outgrown the space	For Shellharbour club, Fields ok, but size of club (at ~30% growth per year) has outgrown space.	Generally need more of all facilities - massively growing sport. New home for Shellharbour Club needed, perhaps at Myimbarr.	Strategic planning for this sport needed to accommodate grow, particularly if Australia continues with World Cup success.
Illawarra Football Association	Semi-professional league including Illawarra, Southern Highlands, Campbelltown, and possibly Shoalhaven next year	1,400 players plus 600 officials with 28 clubs and 2 divisions (Premier and district leagues). Albion Park, Warilla and Shellharbour City clubs in Shellharbour. With amateurs and juniors 12 - 14,000 players/officials	Terry Reserve, King Mickey and Keith Bond Ovals for each club respectively.	Used for club games and training, up to 7 days per week.	King Mickey Park not up to Premier League standard. Nor is Keith Bond, but Shellharbour not currently in that league.	Need improvements to Keith Bond particularly, as well as a "home" for Illawarra Football Association (when unified with Juniors and Amateurs). Myimbarr Park option for this has been discussed with councils GM.	Growing sport and when unified will be the most significant user under one umbrella in the area.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Illawarra Men's Hockey <hr/> Illawarra Junior Hockey Association	Men only - Senior and junior associations are now combined. Covers Illawarra, northern Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands.	1500 members in the Illawarra Men's Hockey Association. 40 Senior teams, 20 Junior and 10 Minky teams.	Croom Road facility has two fields. All games and training is done here (Oak Flats, Albion Park and Kiama clubs)	Games are all day Saturday and Sunday. Training at night during week and school and championships / training event during the week.	Facilities are very good. Second field (sand based turf) is of a poorer quality. When re-laid in coming years, this should be made into water based turf. No need for more fields.	Car park sealing and fencing could be improved, but generally very good facility.	Potential for low cost accommodation at the Croom Road complex would be well used with Championships and training workshop type activities - not only for hockey.
Illawarra Basketball Association	Wollongong and Shellharbour Area	850 Juniors and 600 seniors in comps. Dropped from 2500 in mid 90's, but starting to pick up again.	Croom road is one of three major facilities in the Illawarra. 3 court centre.	Used on weekends and weeknights, but not at capacity.	Facilities were at capacity in mid-late 90's, but now room for growth.	None. Wollongong centres also available and can cater for foreseeable growth.	None
Illawarra Baseball League Inc	Major and Minor League (5 grades) across Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven	300 Senior Players (14+) and 400 Juniors. Clubs at northern Wollongong, Shoalhaven, Kiama, Dapto (x2), Berkeley, western Wollongong and Shellharbour	Senior games in Winter at home clubs - Shellharbour Club at Howard Fowles Oval. Training at Shane Lee Oval (to take advantage of lighting).	Shellharbour club 4th grade (minor league) uses home field. 3rd grade (major league) use fields in other LGAs, so field at Howard Fowles is sub-standard.	Poor conditions, particularly for high quality comp. No canteen, no permanent mound, no dirt running area, too close to housing, too close to road, no bull pen etc.	No purpose built facility. Myimbarr Park at Shell Cove supposed to have purpose built facility. Only need one field, but needs to be purpose built for major league.	Lack of quality facilities is holding back the club - cannot attract and keep good players or develop juniors.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
South Coast Group 7 Rugby League	Shellharbour to Batemans Bay area	2738 junior members and 985 seniors. Shellharbour clubs at Albion Park/Oak Flats, Shellharbour, Stingrays and Warilla. ~1,000 local members of these clubs. Warrigal Koori's in addition.	Each club has a home ground, Croom Road, Ron Costello Oval, Flinders Oval and Cec Glenn Holmes Oval respectively. Koori's play at Des King Oval.	Juniors 6-16 play Saturdays only, usually in the mornings. Seniors play Friday night, Saturday and Sunday.	Ron Costello Oval is highly constrained and club may need new home ground in the future. Flinders Oval needs fencing and lighting work. Croome Road/Centenary Oval OK.	Need new facilities, and Shellharbour club (Juniors) is most constrained and in need for new facilities. Option for move to Shell Cove former tip area?	
Illawarra Netball Association	Illawarra Area	11 larger clubs and several smaller school or similar clubs. Three in Shellharbour - Shellharbour, Southern Suburbs and Albion Park (~600 players)	40 court centre at Berkeley (Val Curren Centre), Andrew Park at Warilla has 3 hard and 6 soft courts.	Saturdays - Juniors in mornings and Seniors in afternoons. Training during the week.	Clubhouse and storage has recently been constructed. Consistent overall growth in sport and need to look after clubs at local level.	More grass roots facilities. Resurfacing of the Andrew Park courts needed.	

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Illawarra District Softball Association	Co-ordinators of Softball in the Wollongong, Kiama Shellharbour and northern Shoalhaven areas	Junior and Senior competitions - 60 Juniors (4 teams) and 150 Seniors (~10 teams). Clubs in Dapto, Shellharbour, Warilla and Albion Park. Another competition in Kiama	Albion Park Rail fields, sharing with soccer.	Games are Sundays only on two diamonds - Juniors mornings and Seniors all day.	Canteen in poor condition and would be much better utilised if in better condition. Change rooms in poor conditioned, but not used anyway. Toilets ok for purpose.	Room for additional diamonds in the area, so no current growth constraints. Targeting more juniors, so potential for growth, though currently static. Canteen in the main concern.	Potential for a permanent field at the "cow paddock", plans previously proposed, but do not seem to have gone anywhere - Belinda to supply plans.
South Coast District Cricket Association South Coast Junior Cricket Association	Windang to Gerringong Competition.	39 Senior (400 players) and 55 Junior (770 players) teams.	Croom Road, Geoff Shaw Oval and Keith Grey Oval facilities are good examples. Otherwise 6 turf and 13 synthetic (including 4 concrete) wickets in area.	All games on Saturdays, typically over a two week period. Juniors 8-12 and Seniors 1-6:30.	Facilities are of variable quality. General lack of shade, side screens and other specialist equipment. Only small grants available to fix things. Council mows fields well.	Fields are at saturation point. Need for 7 new grounds identified 6-8 months ago. Game continues to grow.	Strategic Plan has been prepared and provided to Council. One of few summer sports. Opportunity to consider Sunday use of fields if reaching capacity?

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Australian Football League	Illawarra and Southern Highlands areas	Two clubs in Shellharbour, with ~150 members, though growing very quickly. 2005 no AFL.	Swans at Jock Brown Oval and Crows at Croom Road sharing with Cricket.	Saturday games.	Jock Brown is a purpose built facility, but in very poor condition. Crows grounds with Crick ok, but no storage or any facilities for Crows use.	Massive growth potential. Opportunity for Aus-Kick centre at Jock Brown or for new facility as part of Myimbarr sports complex. Growth projections difficult, but ultimately seeking three junior clubs to feed into one Shellharbour Senior Club.	AFL seek more involvement with Council. AFL doing a lot of work with schools and Aus-Kick and similar programs - so high growth potential.

Appendix F

Community Group Consultation Summary

Community Group Consultation Responses

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Warilla Community Centre	DOCs funded neighbourhood centre. variety of programs and uses including line dancing, women's groups, legal aid, art and craft etc.	Aimed at whole community with variety of service providers. Particularly targeting youth 12-17.	Warilla Library and Shellharbour Swimming Pool are used for some programs. Both good.	As needed for one off and programmed events.	Good. Swimming pool needs bus parking. Some compromises with community centre due to budget, but room for expansion.	Better transport/accessibility. Opportunity for open space park next to facility - currently a stormwater drain.	Tourist office poorly located. More secure parking required, and perception of security for elderly. More beautification of city.
The Rail Neighbourhood Centre / Illawarra Forum	Not for profit community organisation with funding from DOCS. Aimed at disadvantaged community within the Albion Park Rail area.	Programs, information, drop-in services, meeting spaces and community development activities aimed at everyone, provided by a number of providers.	Rail Community Centre with sports fields and skate park.	All the time.	Facilities are good and there is room for growth. Office space is at a premium.	Additional office space and improved transport services.	Improved open space and park design in the area would be highly valued - particularly the Illawarra Lake foreshore. .
Southern Youth and Family Services	Adolescent family services including youth refuge, supported accommodation, family services (migrants, mental health, young mums etc)	Young people subject to disadvantage or difficulty, particularly families. Servicing Shellharbour and Illawarra/South Coast. 21% of clients from Shellharbour (~2,300 cases of provision)	Albion Park Neighbourhood Centre	4 days per week available but not current utilising all this time. Space is provided free of charge.	Building not appropriate for private counselling type needs.	Require purpose built facility with 6 staff spaces, 2 meeting rooms, 4 interview rooms, and waiting areas.	No other such services are locally available. Need to be central - Albion Park Rail or City Centre.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Family Services Illawarra	Community based NGO undertaking core family services (parenting, domestic violence, child welfare) and other projects such as Park and Play.	Offices at Corrimal, Flinders and Albion Park Rail, aimed at families in the Shellharbour and Wollongong areas.	Flinders Children and Families Centre (Community Centre). Council managed not NGO managed as per Albion Park Rail.	Full time for various activities and office.	Good facility, but design was for childcare and acoustics are not good for other things. Not a purpose built community centre.	Would seek a light industrial type area anywhere (not necessarily in Shellharbour) for office space. No council need.	Increasing doing work traditionally done by DOCS in terms of child welfare and protection.
Barnardos South Coast / Albion Park Neighbourhood Association	Barnardo's has 40 paid staff and 100 volunteers, including 2.5EFT staff in the \$3million Communities for Children (C4C) FACSIA programme.	Barnardo's does foster care, family support, play groups, mentoring and indigenous programs. C4C targeted at 2527 and 2529 post code areas.	Primarily a home based service or programs in schools etc. No current direct use.	NA	NA	Conference style facilities and performance space for children are current facilities that are lacking but would be utilised.	C4C is also the overarching funder for the Child Friendly by Design and the Park and Play project that are currently being undertaken. Transport issues raised.
Illawarra Multicultural Services	Care for refugee and migrants, particularly family, women, youth.	17-20 full and part time staff providing services and programs.	Warilla Health Centre used until Jan 08 but space no longer available. Was not appropriate in any case.	No current use due to no available space.	Women's Community Health Centre not appropriate. No other facilities available.	Need office space for provision of a consistent and available drop in centre.	Venues are generally too small with a need to have 100-150 people at some programs.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
South Coast Writers Centre	Incorporated Not for Profit Group that is mostly state funded with additional assistance from Wollongong Council. Covers Illawarra and South Coast	235 members with target audience of all people with targeted activities for selected groups - children, elderly etc. Organisation provides literary programs, as well as support for local writers.	No extensive use, and usually based on programs or one-off events. Will hold events where people want them. Have used Warilla Library and Warilla Bowling Club in recent times	Warilla Library currently used on monthly basis for writing workshops. Others sporadically.	Warilla Library not particularly suitable. Need variety of spaces from meeting rooms to activity spaces and larger event spaces.	No current additional requirements, but would utilise many of the spaces envisaged in the Shellharbour City Centre development.	None
Tongarra Heritage Society	Heritage museum and historical programs and activities	All community - school groups to retired and research people working on heritage projects - 60 members	Tongarra Museum at Albion Park. Curator funded for two days per week.	Open to research and volunteers and public two days per week.	Vandalism problems at facility and rumour that they will move to the Airport where the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) current exist.	Potential to move Dunmore historic buildings to the airport site and link in with HARS and steam train (currently existing). Also need for library research facilities in new central library.	The Illawarra Family History Society have a "Toothbrush Room" where they undertake research work and have a week drop-in facility.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
Warrigal Care	Provision of aged care facilities and services, includes retirement villages, high care facilities, and dementia facilities.	Retired and elderly residents (from Illawarra, South Coast and Southern Highlands).	No specific facilities. Use of parks and open spaces for day trips (for example Wollongong Botanical Gardens)	Sporadic use only.	NA	City Centre facilities are important and will be welcomed, but need to ensure good access and recognition of some steep slopes for elderly.	Sites for aged care development (affordable) is extremely limited and will cause ongoing stress in the older community. Council needs to identify and protect sites.
SACA / DUBAYS / Koori Men's group	Targeted at indigenous men and boys of all ages. Men's and women's group (DUBAYS) are separate.	Up to around 30 men attend the weekly men's groups. Youth group (SACYA) has two funded youth workers and have various programs. At holidays around 50-85 kids per day.	Use Oakleigh Hall for office facilities, with Wilga Place at Albion Park Rail for meetings and programs for Men's group. All SACYA activities at Oakleigh Hall.	Oakleigh Hall used full time. Wilga Place used on Fridays usually between 10 and 2 for arts groups or various weekly activities.	Would like office/administration of Men's Group from Wilga Place, with opportunity to them expand services. Spaces sufficient at present.	Integrated facility for Men's group.	No real involvement with DUBAYS
Roo Theatre	Community Theatre organisation. School plays, training activities, and up to 5 productions a year.	220 members. Open to general public.	Former Town Hall building in Shellharbour.	Full-time use for various activities.	Facilities in fair condition but building and acoustics are great for theatre.	No additional facilities.	Rumour of being removed from the facility and being moved to a hall in Albion Park.

Group Name	Main organisational responsibilities	Clientele or Target Audience Type and Numbers	Which Council facilities do you use?	When do you use them?	Condition of facilities and suitability for activities	What additional facilities would you require?	Other Comments
The Disability Trust	Aimed at disabled residents around Illawarra, South Coast and Southern Highlands. 300+ staff.	Target disabled residents with Community Service programs, Vocational services and Respite + residential services.	Predominantly in-home services, with minimal need for Council facilities. Use Blackbutt Youth Centre for a fortnightly Art and Craft Program (15 times per year). Have also used the Stadium.	Blackbutt Centre is perfect for current activities. Stadium was expensive and would only use on rare occasions.	Good	Meeting type spaces are used in Dapto and Corrimal, and may be utilised if more available in Shellharbour - perhaps at the City Centre area.	None

Appendix G

Prioritisation of Open Space Capital Works

Open Space Prioritisation Criteria

A series of criteria have been developed to ascertain the need for and extent of masterplanning required for any open space area. The criteria identify key elements to determine the need for open space capital works and therefore for a masterplan to precede such works to guide its implementation. Most criteria apply to both passive and active open spaces, however an additional criterion is also applied to active open spaces that is based on the use of the site. As the consistent use of grounds by sporting groups can be easily measured and latent demand is much less of an issue than with passive open space, it is considered appropriate to use the “use” criterion for active spaces only.

The criteria have been developed as a tool to be used and refined by Council through experiences gained in using the process. The criteria are not envisaged to be static, but can be adjusted to best reflect the priorities and policies of Council over time. What is important is that the criteria are used consistently when comparing open spaces, and that the criteria provide a comparative outcome by which Council can make informed funding and planning decisions.

The criteria are summarised in Table 1 below and further discussed thereafter.

Table 1: Criteria for Prioritising Parks

Criteria	Description	Weighting Factor	Range	Equivalent Score
Purpose	Is the park meeting and fit for its intended purpose?	0.25	Does not meet purpose	10
			Can meet purpose with minimal modifications	5
			Meets Purpose	0
Sustainability	Is the open space performing well with regard to its environmental attributes?	0.25	Ecological (Poor = 5, Average = 3, Good = 0)	Add score from each sustainability element
			Economic (Poor = 5, Average = 3, Good = 0)	
			Social (Poor = 5, Average = 3, Good = 0)	

Criteria	Description	Weighting Factor	Range	Equivalent Score
Risk	What is the level of risk associated with current design and layout of the space?	0.15	High	10
			Medium	5
			Low	0
Condition	Based on condition assessment of existing infrastructure	0.15	Poor (Aging infrastructure, condition critical. Major works, repair or rebuild required)	10
			Good (Everything in working order, no new work required)	5
			Excellent (New or as-new)	0
Use*	Based on the popularity and consistency of use of the facility	0.20	High use in all seasons	10
			Regular use in single season	5
			Low or irregular use only	0

* Note – This criterion should be used for active open spaces (sporting grounds) only.

Using the Criteria

The criteria are used to give a relative priority to a series of parks or sporting grounds. As an additional criterion has been added to measure the level of use of sporting grounds, the process should not be used to directly compare sporting grounds with parks. The process for utilising the criteria would include:

- » Survey of parks or sporting grounds to gather information in relation to each criterion. This may need to include field inspections, background research and identification of the space within the Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study. Internal discussions within Council may also be necessary to identify the desired future purpose of the space.
- » Identification of the equivalent score for each criterion using the table above and further detailed information for each criterion below.
- » Equivalent scores should then be multiplied by the weighting factor as indicated in the table above, resulting in a “weighted score” for each criterion.
- » Weighted scores for each criterion are then added together to create a “priority score” for the park or sporting ground.
- » Parks or sporting grounds can then be compared on a comparative basis with high priority scores being prioritised above lower priority scores.

Further detailed information on accessing parks or sporting grounds against each criterion are provided below.

Purpose

A key element in the identification of the need for significant masterplanning is whether an existing park is meeting its intended purpose or role in the community. In many instances this purpose might have changed, or no purpose exists for the space. As a first step, the type of park identified by the *Shellharbour Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Needs Study 2008* (the “Needs Study”) and a comparison to the corresponding *Park and Recreation Space Guidelines* (the “Guidelines”) will provide an indication of whether the space is meeting the purpose envisaged by the Needs Study. A comparison of the current embellishments and the demographic needs discussed in the Guidelines will also assist in identifying particular needs of the local community.

In many instances a park will be fit for its purpose, or may require minor works, such as landscape, seating or shade improvements. However of particular importance to this criteria is where a park clearly does not meet its required purpose – this finding has a corresponding high score.

Sustainability

The sustainability of an open space can be measured in three ways: ecological, economic and social sustainability. Each element should be considered in assessing the spaces overall sustainability.

Ecological sustainability relates to the quality of the natural environment, and whether the park responds to the natural attributes. Relevant questions to ask would include:

- » Are drainage lines well defined and treated?
- » Is there native vegetation on site and how is it cared for?
- » Does the space have effective water sensitive urban design (WSUD) treatments?

Economic Sustainability relates to the cost of maintaining and repairing the current space. Costs may include grass cutting, embellishment maintenance and regular repair of infrastructure as a result of vandalism or anti-social behaviour. Relevant questions to ask would include:

- » Are there excessively large and unused grassed areas that can be replaced with low maintenance garden beds or other planting?
- » Are playgrounds and other structures subject to regular damage or vandalism requiring repair?
- » Are existing playgrounds and other structures complex or difficult to maintain due to poor design and space layout?

Social sustainability of open space relates to opportunities for users to interact and share experiences. Such interactions may be as a consequence of primary activities, like playgrounds, but may also be facilitated interactions in key locations. For example, relevant question might include:

- » Where children's play opportunities are provided, has seating or other facilities been provided where adults can supervise and interact with other carers?
- » Are there meeting points or locations where uses "cross paths" creating opportunities for informal interaction?

Risk

The criterion for risk is concerned with risks associated with the design of spaces, rather than risks associated with the condition of individual pieces of equipment (risks with which should be remedied immediately). Risks for example may include play equipment or play opportunities being located adjoining roads, play equipment being hidden from street view, or landscape which presents a risk to injury.

High risk areas are those that require significant redesign to rectify safety issues. Medium risk areas may be easily remedied, but may require other planning or design work to ensure solutions are integrated to the park design.

Condition

The condition of a park is another key element in the decision to undertake a masterplan and subsequent upgrade work. The condition of parks relates to a number of issues including the condition and age of equipment such as seating, play grounds, fencing and any landscape works.

Condition may also relate to the maintenance condition, such as weed invasion, problems with vandalism, rubbish presence or broken glass etc. The range of assessment is based on a simplified three step system of poor condition – where equipment is in need of replacement in the short term and maintaining maintenance standards is difficult; good condition – where equipment is in reasonable useable condition and maintenance is managed to ensure use of the park is not impeded; and excellent condition – where maintenance and equipment is of a condition which encourages use and does not impede park users from utilising the available space.

Use

With respect to active open space areas and sporting grounds, the extent of use is also important. High use of sporting grounds will often reflect the need for ancillary facilities such as car parking, toilets, change rooms, club houses, canteens and the like. Many of these ancillary facilities are in poor condition around the Shellharbour LGA and the co-ordination of their upgrade will be critical to addressing the needs of all clubs and sports.

The use criterion is again split into three areas as follows: High use – a majority of or all fields are used throughout the year for one or more sporting clubs; Regular use – a majority of or all fields are used during at least one full sports season; or Low use – where the fields are only used sporadically or as overflow for other primary fields.

Masterplanning Consultation

While the size and complexity of an open space area will dictate the type of masterplanning process undertaken, it should not dictate IF a masterplan should be completed. In all instances, it is important that this process include the local community in the decision making process. Suggested consultation activities for each open space are as follows:

- » Local Park
 - Information gathering survey to all residents within 400m walking distance;
 - Public meeting with draft park masterplan options for feedback (with residents within 400m walk to be invited); and
 - Final plan mail-out and feedback form for final comments.
- » District Park
 - Information gathering survey to all residents within 800m walking distance;
 - Public meeting with draft park masterplan options for feedback (advertised through local media); and
 - Final plan display in local centre and feedback form for final comments (advertised through local media).
- » Citywide Park
 - Information gathering survey to all residents within 800m walking distance;
 - Public meeting with draft park masterplan options for feedback (advertised through local media); and
 - Final plan display in local centre and City Centre, with feedback forms for final comments (advertised through local media).
- » District Sporting Grounds
 - Information gathering survey to sports groups and potential space users and residents within 400m walking distance;
 - Detailed discussions with sporting clubs associated with the grounds;
 - Public meeting with draft sporting grounds masterplan options for feedback (sports groups and residents within 400m walking distance to be invited); and
 - Final plan display in local centre, with feedback forms for final comments and notified to local residents within 400m.

» Citywide Sporting Grounds

- Information gathering survey to all sporting groups associated with the grounds and residents within 800m walking distance;
- Detailed discussions with sporting clubs associated with the grounds;
- Public meeting with draft sporting grounds masterplan options for feedback (advertised through local media); and
- Final plan display in local centre and City Centre, with feedback forms for final comments (advertised through local media).

It is important during the consultation process that design standards in accordance with the Guidelines are clearly articulated to residents and users so as to not raise unreasonable expectations. The budget and example costs should also be considered and explained during the consultation period where possible so that stakeholders have a clear idea of what financial constraints exist.