



Byron Shire Open Space and Recreation Needs Assessment and Action Plan

2017 - 2036





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Strategy purpose

People are increasingly recognising the benefits to their quality of life and wellbeing from participating in recreation and sport. Byron Shire Council (Council) takes a leading role in the planning and provision of recreation services and facilities and is committed to promoting health and wellbeing in the Shire.

However, as the population changes, recreation and sporting interests become more diverse and people begin to seek a wider range of recreational and sporting opportunities.

Council has sought to undertake a recreation needs assessment to increase its knowledge and understanding of the community's recreation and sporting needs, existing opportunities and relevant trends impacting on recreation services or facility provision. The assessment will provide Council a clear planning framework to 2036, which considers the community's current and future recreation and sporting demands, existing options for meeting those demands, the nature of spaces required for particular activities, and the types of services that support particular activities.

Summary of objectives

- identify trends in active and passive recreation and use of public open space specific to the study area demographics
- identify gaps in the requirements for and provision of existing open space and recreational facilities
- identify possibilities for equitably addressing gaps in recreational facility and open space supply and demand
- inform Council's approach to any rationalisation of open space
- provide recommendations that allow for the development of a clear policy framework

Scope

The Plan focuses on Council owned or managed public open space (community land, Crown land under Council control and road reserves). Natural areas, including state-owned bushland reserves, have been considered for their role in providing for nature-based recreation.

This Plan does not provide detailed analysis of each individual Council reserve or detailed operational actions. It does provide strategic guidance on key issues identified from the assessment for the Shire's open space network and recreation facilities.

Information contained within this Plan is based on an audit and assessment of Council's open space network and recreation facilities and is a snapshot in time only. This information is accurate as at August 2017. Any open space or recreation facility developments or data updates since this time have not been taken into account.

Wide-ranging engagement was undertaken to ensure community and Council perception and preference assisted to identify demand. A summary of the engagement strategy and key outcomes is included in a separate section.

Context

Providing open space and recreation facilities and services for the health and wellbeing of locals and visitors is an important part of what Council does.

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the main priorities and aspirations of the community, providing a clear set of strategies to achieve this vision of the future. Plans and studies, like this one, are guided by Council's Community Strategic Plan and need to be read and applied along-side other relevant Strategic Plans. Collectively the strategic plans inform the actions that are included in Council's 4-year Delivery Program and 1-year Operational Plans.

Some examples of Other Strategic Plans that will influence this Study and how its actions are implemented are shown in Figure 1. For example:

- Council has resolved to become carbon neutral by 2025 and to source 100% of our energy through renewable energy sources within 10 years by 2027. This means that future expanded or new services and facilities (eg extra lighting or new fields and facilities) will need to be at least carbon neutral. Implementation of all actions identified in this Study will have to be consistent with Council's 'zero emissions' strategic objective.
 - The Community has adopted a Byron Bay Town Centre Masterplan, and Masterplans for other areas are being developed, eg Bangalow and Mullumbimby. These Masterplans provide additional detail that compliment and influence implementation of actions from this Study.
 - A main way to fund open space and recreation facilities is developer contributions levied under s94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The way Council can collect and spend developer contributions is heavily regulated and contributions can only be spent as set out in Council's Developer Contributions Plan.
- The Developer Contributions Plan will identify what, if any, actions from this Plan can be part-funded from developer contributions and, in turn, this Plan will help inform future reviews of the Developer Contributions Plan.

These are just some examples. This Plan should be read in conjunction with the most recent Community Strategic Plan and other relevant strategic plans. Please refer to Council's website for copies and call Council if you have questions.

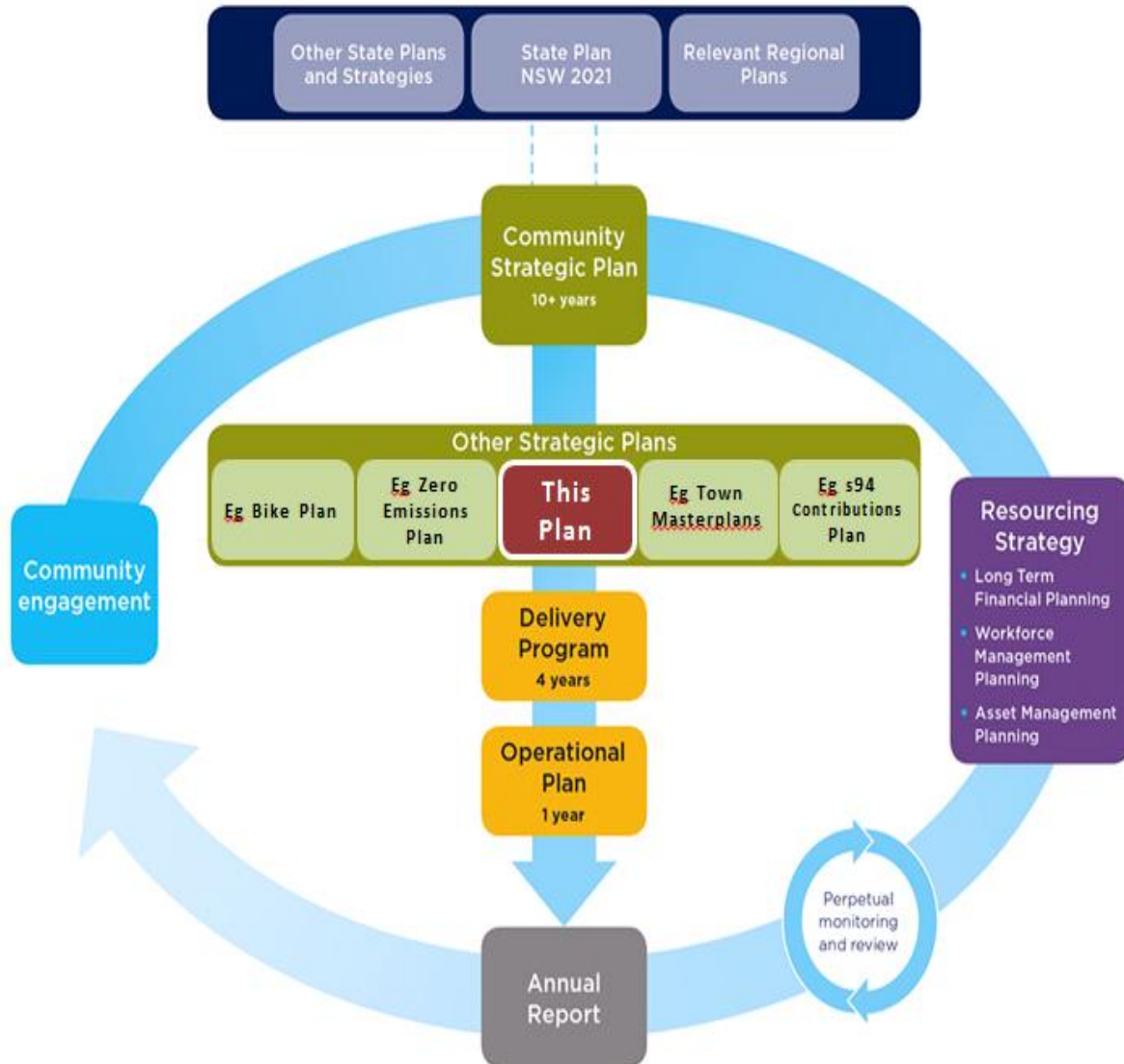


Figure 1: Diagram of how this Plan fits into Council's overall strategic planning

Defining key terms

For ease of reference throughout the Plan, key terms described below have been split between *activities* (what is undertaken) and *spaces* (where the activities are undertaken).

Types of recreation

Passive recreation

A range of unstructured activities and social interactions undertaken for enjoyment, relaxation, physical and mental health. Passive recreation can be undertaken in all forms of open space (parks and natural areas) and may include walking, cycling, children's play, picnicking, fishing, kayaking and relaxing in nature.

Active recreation

A range of structured activities capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and skill, that is competitive or training for competition.

Other types of active recreation refer to organised forms of passive recreation activities such as Park Run events and charity bike rides.

Spaces

Open space

Land and water bodies that are broadly available for public recreation, pedestrian and cycle movement, sport or for nature conservation purposes. Open space is the over-arching term for sports parks and parks.

The open space network is further complemented by other types of spaces where the provision of recreation is their secondary purpose, after drainage, conservation, natural buffer between land uses or aesthetics. They have been included in the spaces hierarchy.

Sports park

Designed to primarily support a range of active recreation activities for training and competition. These sports parks are designed to accommodate the playing surface and infrastructure requirements of specific sports. Free, unrestricted access to the community is provided at times when formal active recreation activities are not being conducted. Examples of sports parks include ovals and tennis and netball courts.

Parks

Settings for passive recreation and social activities. Parks provide a range of embellishments such as play equipment, kick-about areas, picnic facilities, formalised walks, gardens, landscaped areas, access to water bodies and car parking.

Spaces hierarchy

The provision and management of a successful open space network requires the integration of urban planning and design, community development, engineering and operations. An open space hierarchy describes the level of development of each type of open space, the service it provides and to whom, and the level and type of embellishments required to deliver the service.

The Shire’s existing open spaces have been classified according to their function (classification) and role/service (hierarchy) within that function. This Plan focuses on the parts of the network shown in red boxes below. A summary of the hierarchy is provided below and further explained in Appendix A.

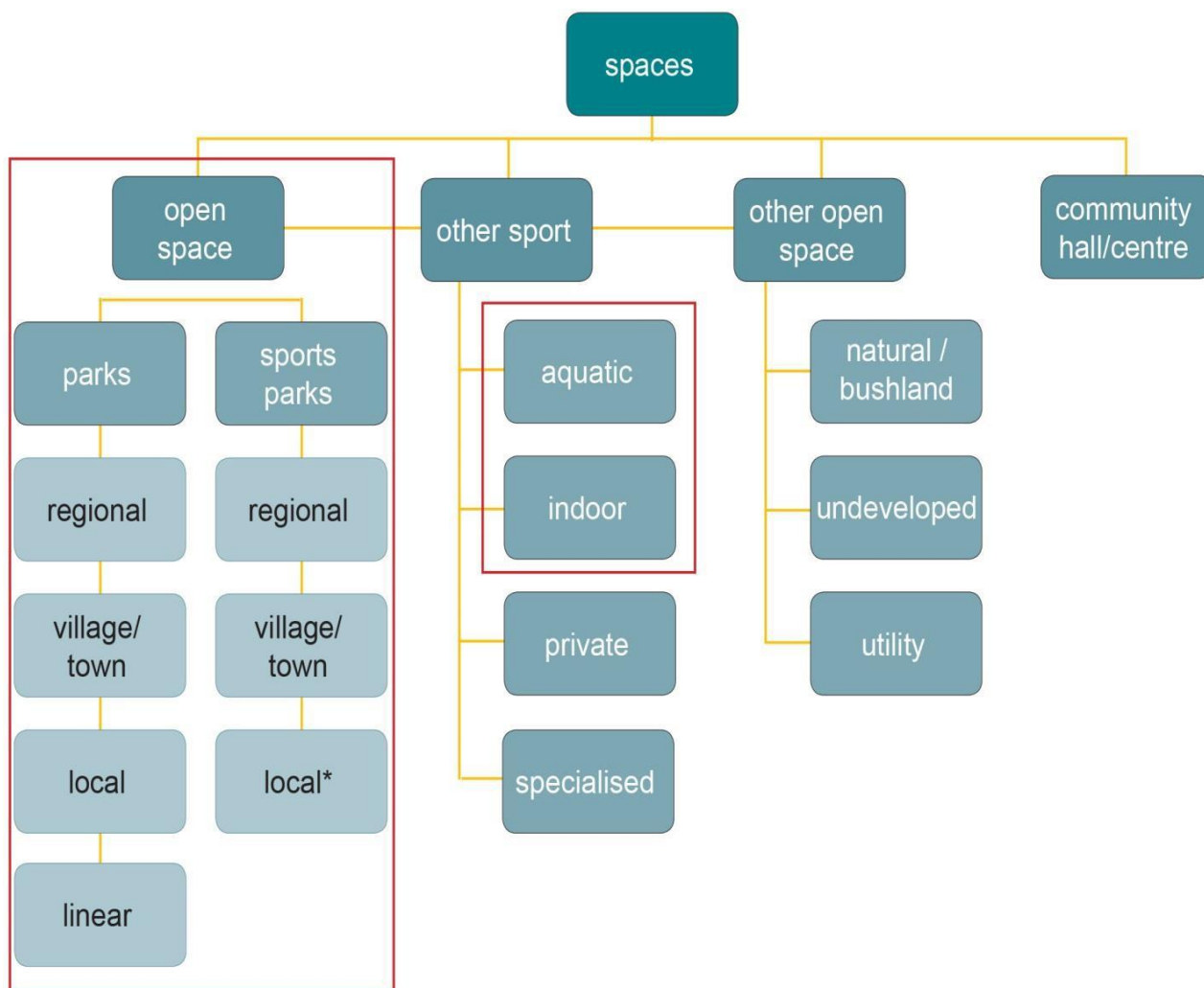


Figure 2: Hierarchy of space across Byron Shire the provide passive and active recreation opportunities.

Table 1: Description of each type of space across the Byron Shire providing passive and recreation opportunities

Spaces	Hierarchy	Description
Open space		
Parks	Regional	<p>They have unique values that differentiate them from other types of recreation parks. They are usually associated with attractive natural landscapes that make them very popular with residents and visitors.</p> <p>Typically, the park will offer high order all ability play experiences for toddlers through to teenagers. The park should also contain a sufficient number of picnic facilities such as barbecues and shelters, and clean, contemporary and accessible public amenities to keep users entertained and comfortable for several hours. These facilities should be accessible.</p> <p>Depending on location, these parks may also include boat ramps, canoe launch facilities and fishing infrastructure. They also may host regional and local events such as a markets, musical events and film nights</p>
	Village/town	<p>Spread throughout the Shire, some may experience high levels of visitation for short periods of time, such as an event or over the holiday season, while others tend to have a more consistent level of visitation over the year. The park will offer a variety of experiences such as youth play, natural area play or community gardening.</p> <p>Local community events that require a park-based setting such as markets, musical events and film nights can usually be accommodated in a village/town recreation park.</p> <p>These parks may also include boat ramps, canoe launch facilities and fishing infrastructure.</p>
	Local	<p>Located within a residential setting these parks cater for the surrounding residents. They are often smaller in size and usually accessed by walking or cycling. The level of embellishment varies among parks and caters for short visits by very small groups.</p>
	Linear	<p>Linear open space provides opportunities for formal walking/cycling pathways and connectivity between residential streets, places of interest and the open space network.</p> <p>The primary function of the land supporting the linear recreation open space does not necessarily have to be community open space (e.g. could be utility land).</p>

Table 1 cont.

Spaces	Hierarchy	Description
Sports parks	Regional	<p>Regional sports parks are more than a sports park, rather they are a precinct. They have formally maintained sports field and courts for a mixture of winter or summer sports. The fields/ovals comply and are maintained to state regulations for the sporting codes using the facility and infrastructure reflects the potential for hosting events and carnivals.</p> <p>Regional sports parks generally include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spectator seating • canteen buildings and multiple amenities buildings • large central ‘club house’ building • storage facilities • formalised car parking and internal road floodlights that enable evening training • floodlights that enable evening competition games on at least one field/oval. • informal recreation opportunities (eg. playground or skate parks)
	Village/town	<p>Village/town sports parks generally contain one or two formally maintained sports fields/ovals/courts that cater for a mixture of winter or summer sporting codes. The fields/ovals/courts are of a high standard but may not comply to, or be maintained to, state regulations for the sporting codes using the park.</p> <p>Village/town sports parks generally include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic spectator seating amenities and canteen building storage facilities • formalised car parking • floodlights that enable evening training • floodlights that enable evening competition games on at least one field/oval/court.
	Local	<p>Local sports parks generally contain one field/oval and are used for training purposes only.</p>

Table 1 cont.

Space	Hierarchy	Description
Other sport		
	Aquatic	Council owned facilities (regardless of management structure) that offer outdoor (uncovered), indoor or a mix of both, aquatic facilities
	Private	Open space that is privately owned
	Specialised	Parks providing for sporting activities where the nature of the activity precludes free, unrestricted access to members of the public or where land and infrastructure needs of the sport/activity is specialised and transferring the use to another sport is difficult. Specialised sports include motocross/motorcycling, equestrian, golf, shooting, etc. Many of the specialised sport uses are likely to be considered 'hard to locate' or 'noisy' sports.
	Natural / bushland	These areas could be considered as conservation areas or bushland areas and as such, may have differing ecological values. The sites may vary from large sites with a diversity of ecological communities and extensive connectivity to smaller sites, which although fragmented, provide or have the potential to provide a habitat for significant vegetation and animals. Sites may contain some cleared or degraded areas requiring rehabilitation.
	Undeveloped and Utility	Areas of open space that provide basic recreation opportunities, but are limited in their functionality, maintenance and development potential due to primary use for services or constraints including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utility infrastructure (e.g. electricity transmissions, telecommunications, water and sewerage) • on-site or adjacent detention basins and drainage corridors water bodies • contaminated land • steep slope, dense vegetation or topography lack of road frontage or access • location from, or lack of general appeal to, a wide population base
Community halls and centres		
Council-managed buildings that provide the community, clubs and service providers with a facility to conduct their activities, meetings, gatherings or provide free or low-cost social, educational and community support activities or programs to a broad range of the community. Programs and activities vary from centre to centre, and may include family support, adult education, employment skills, support group and physical activity classes.		

Beach access points

Beach access points are small parks, or sections of a regional or village/town recreation park that provides pedestrian access to the beach. The access path through the dunes is often unstructured.

Major beach access point

These accesses are often associated with, or part of, a foreshore regional or village/town park. Access to the beach is treated as an additional embellishment of the park. Quite often these accesses are located at a patrolled beach.

Additional infrastructure to complement the beach access point includes:

- outdoor showers
- wash down area
- accessible viewing platforms/areas with bench seats.

Minor beach access point

Supporting embellishments provide basic infrastructure for passive recreation, such as bench seats. Depending on the location, some points may contain formal car parking and public amenities. If a formalised car park is provided at the access point, an outdoor shower/wash down area should be present.

Classifying spaces

A type of space can be comprised of one or multiple land parcels. Additionally, a space element can have either one singular function, or multiple functions (such as a primary function of village/town sport, with a secondary function of a local park).

The overall/final classification of the land parcel is determined by its primary function (depicted by the largest portion of the pie graphs below). Table 2 below provides some examples:


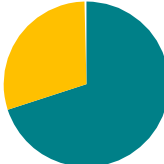
Space	Composition		Classification
Mullumbimby Recreation Ground and Sportsfields, Mullumbimby	70% Village/Town sports park 20% Village/Town park 10% Specialised sports park		Primary function: village/town sports park Secondary function: village/town park & specialised sports park
Mia Court Park, South Golden Beach	70% Local recreation park 30% Minor beach access point		Primary function: local park Secondary function: beach access

Table 2: Example of how to classify spaces when there are two or more primary functions

Benefits of open space and recreation

Council and the community strongly advocate the benefits of open space and complementary recreation activities, not only for the health and wellbeing benefits and aesthetic values, but also wider community benefits including:



empowers, inspires and motivates individuals



provides work/life balance



sport and recreation clubs are the hub of community life, especially in villages/rural towns



helps to sustain the environment through protecting open space and natural areas



contribute to higher levels of self-esteem and self-worth



creates opportunities for, and promotes volunteering



contributes to the local economy and healthy workers are more productive and take less sick days



provides a vehicle for inclusion, drawing together people of different races, religion and cultures



contributes to social capital



fosters community pride



provide a sense of belonging



eases pressure on the health system



improves mental health



active kids learn better and are more likely to enjoy school



keep kids away from the television or computer screen



binds communities and families through shared experiences



can help to prevent cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancer



reduces obesity



economic growth through business investment, employment, major events and tourism



contribute to lifelong learning and develops leadership skills



promotes a healthy, active lifestyle



tones and strengthens the body

Engagement summary

Community engagement

Byron Shire is known for its diverse community, with each town and village having its own distinctiveness and mix of cultural values. To help Council understand the role open space and recreation facilities play in the social fabrics of these towns and villages, a wide community engagement strategy was adopted to ensure all interested people had multiple opportunities to comment during the development of the Plan.

Engagement with the general community and user groups (sporting clubs and community groups) involved various key methods:

1. Community drop-in stalls at key locations around the Shire

- Byron Farmers Market, Byron Bay
- Ocean Shores Shopping Centre, Ocean Shores
- Bangalow Market, Bangalow
- Brunswick Heads Farmers Market, Brunswick Heads
- Mullumbimby Farmers Market, Mullumbimby.

2. Community survey (online and hard copy surveys)

Throughout the consultation period Council received 778 community surveys. Of these respondents:

- 65% were between 35 and 59 years of age
- 10% were people living with a disability
- 2% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 10% spoke another language other than English at home.

Overall, the distribution of respondents was relatively consistent with the distribution of residents across the Shire.

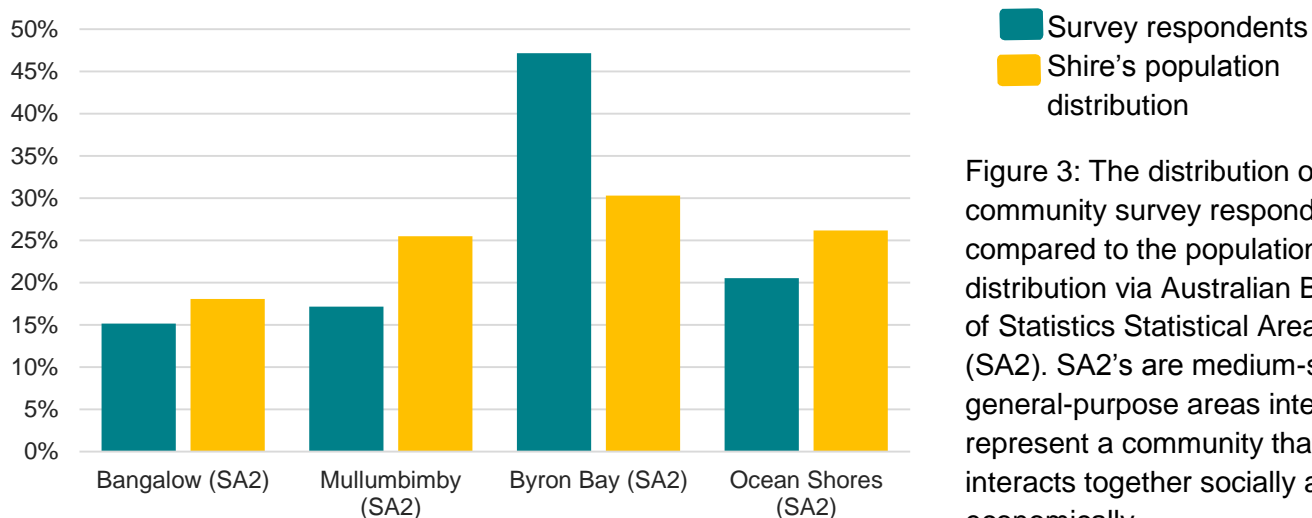


Figure 3: The distribution of community survey respondents compared to the population distribution via Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Area 2 data (SA2). SA2's are medium-sized general-purpose areas intended to represent a community that interacts together socially and economically.

3. Sport and community groups online survey

Council received twenty-five surveys from the local sporting or community groups. Unfortunately, they did not represent a wide cross section of sporting codes. However, community survey respondents that participated in organised sport recorded future upgrades or issues with sports parks.

4. Social media

Council's Facebook page was used to invite and encourage discussion about the project and Council's open space network. The post reached 12,555 people, was liked by 103 users, shared 33 times and generated over 100 individual comments.

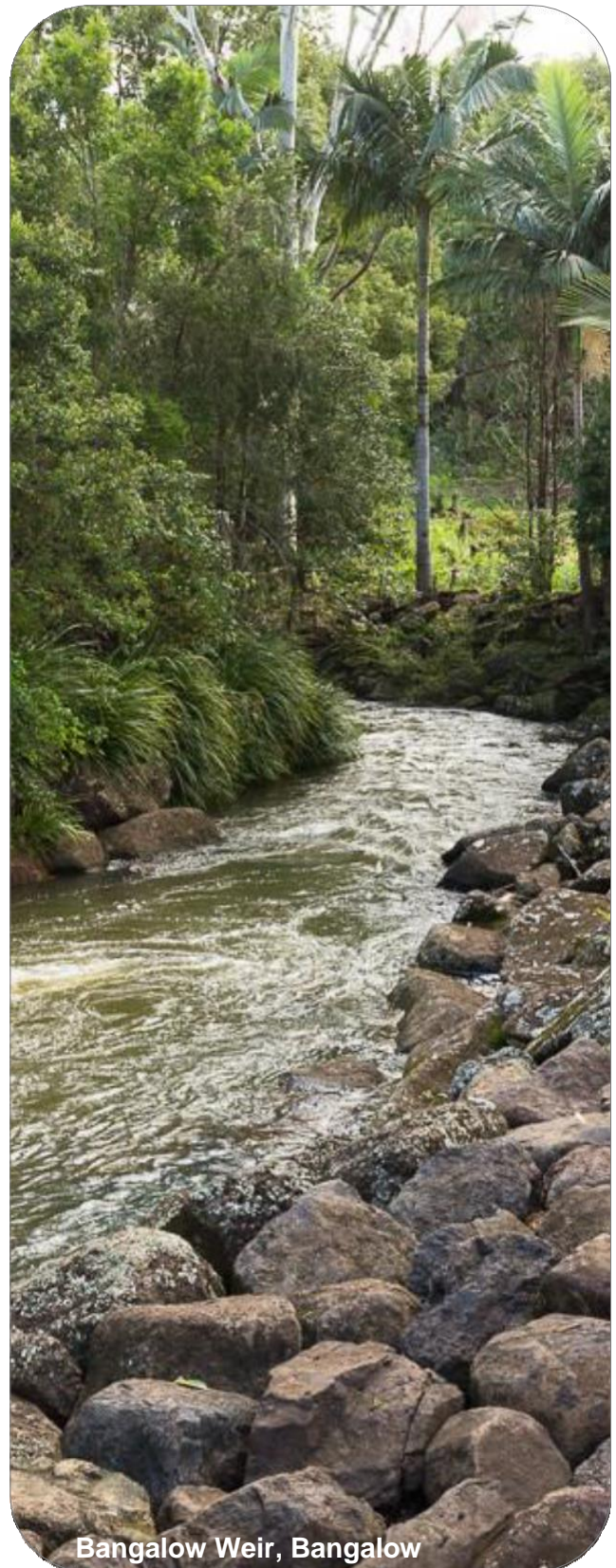
5. School visits (primary and secondary schools)

Children from grades 2, 5, 8 and 10 were interviewed about their recreation patterns. Schools included:

- Byron Bay Public School
- Mullumbimby High School
- Mullumbimby Public School
- Bangalow Public School
- Ocean Shores Public School
- Brunswick Heads Public School

Additional community engagement activities included:

- intercept surveys
- school principal surveys
- discussions with people with a lived experience of disability via Council's Access Consultative Working Group
- stakeholder meetings
- workshop with Councillors
- small group and individual interview with relevant council officers.



Bangalow Weir, Bangalow

2 Recreation in the Shire

Current supply of spaces

The Byron Shire community has access to a range of natural assets, including National Parks, beaches, hinterland landscapes and Council owned or managed spaces, providing a variety of recreational experiences across the Shire. Approximately 6,100ha in total, Council owns or manages around 10%. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services manage or/owns the majority.








Table 3 provides a summary of the total hectares of each space type within the Shire.

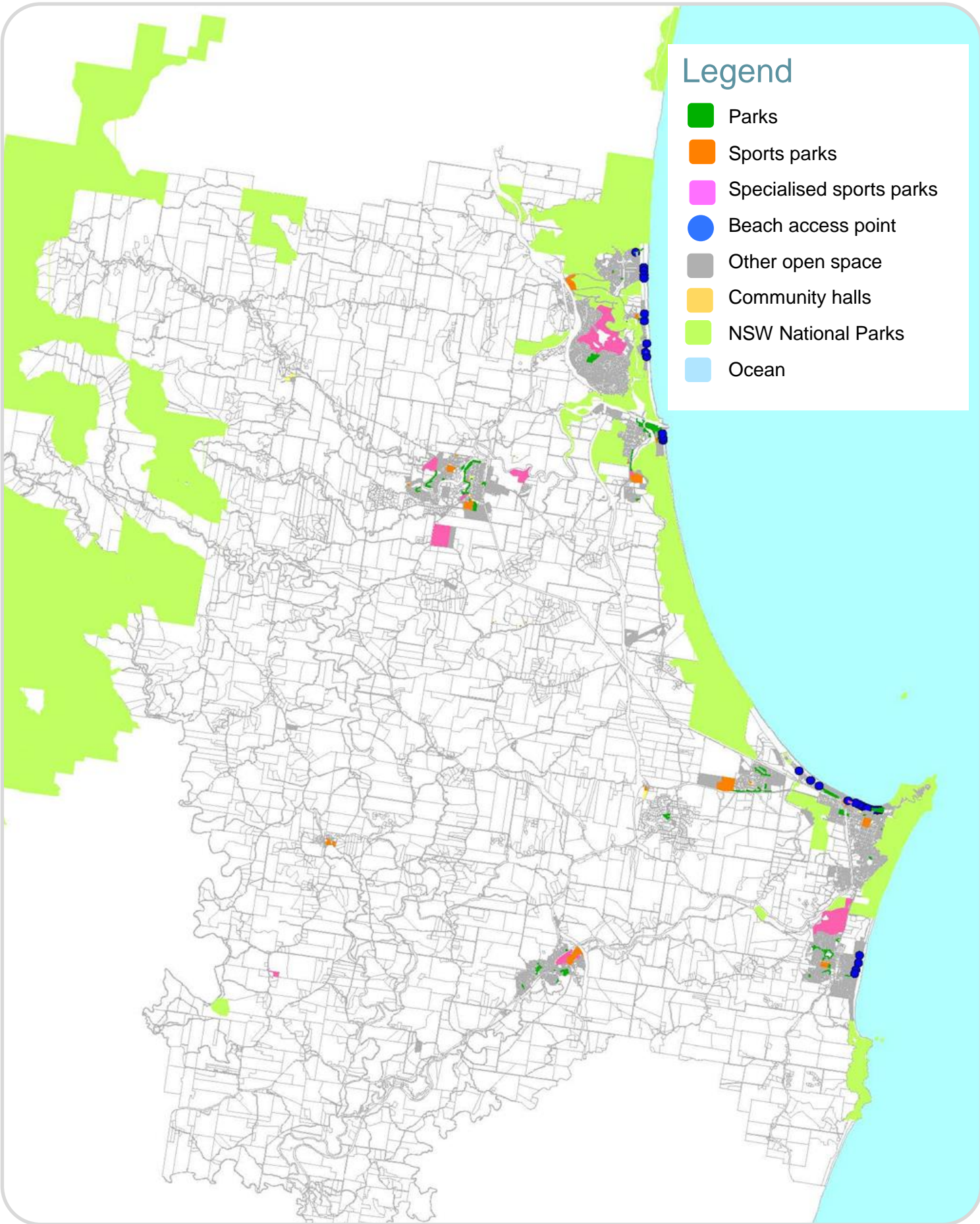
Table 3: Summary of the total hectares of spaces providing passive and active recreation according to the hierarchy

Spaces	Hierarchy	Total Ha	Ha's in road reserve*
Parks	Regional	6.73h	-
	Village/town	22.38h	2.41ha
	Local	12.26h	1.18ha
	Linear	22.87h	3.58ha
	Amenity	0.36h	0.82ha
Sports parks	Regional	18.60h	-
	Village/town	40.21h	-
	Local	7.81h	-
Specialised	Aquatic	1.13h	-
	Private	175.90h	-
	Specialised	20.64h	-
Other open space	Natural / bushland	220.75h	0.26ha
	Undeveloped	47.97h	-
	Utility	10.64h	-
Community facilities		5.41h	-
Sub total		613.66h	8.25ha
NSW National Parks		5,486.14h	-
TOTAL		6,099.80h	-

*A number of open space land assets were found to utilise part *road reserve*.

Legend

-  Parks
-  Sports parks
-  Specialised sports parks
-  Beach access point
-  Other open space
-  Community halls
-  NSW National Parks
-  Ocean



Provision of open space

Desired standards of service

It is important to develop open spaces that meet the needs of the community. It can also be important that development reflects desired standards of service (DSS) for provision. These standards articulate the preferred directions that councils strive to provide.

Desired standards of service for open space are, generally, categorised under three broad measures:

- quality of land for open space: identifies the recommended minimum standards for the provision of land for open space, generally presented as hectares/1,000 (population)
- access to open space: refers to preferred maximum distances between residential areas and each open space type
- level of embellishment: indicates preferred facilities and activities within each open space type

The demand and gap analysis shows that there is currently an oversupply of parks and sports parks and aquatic facilities for the population of the Shire and the towns and hinterland.

The analysis of future demand, based on future growth projects, also indicates that there will be an oversupply of aquatic facilities in the Shire and oversupply of parks and sports parks in all areas except Mullumbimby where there will be a very small deficit (0.15ha) predicted in 20 years.

In this Plan, there are a number of tables with supply and demand data and in them.

Quantity of land (ha/1,000)

- a positive (+) indicates that supply exceeds demand and there is surplus land;
- a negative (-) indicates that demand exceeds supply and there is a 'gap' in land supply.

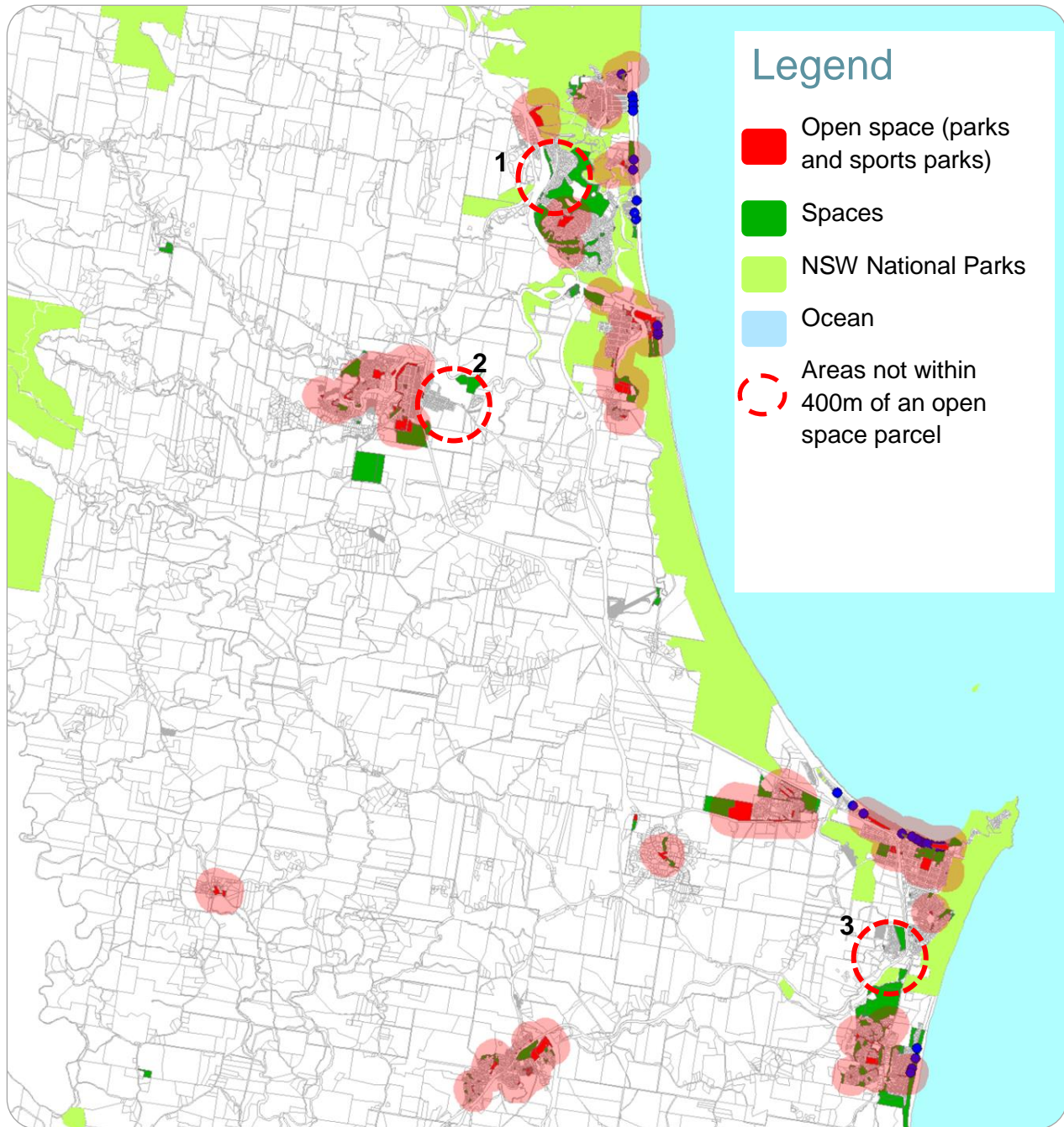
Table 4 shows the current provision of open space in Byron Shire, the NSW standards for open space and whether or not the current demand is being met, from a standards perspective.

Table 4: Simple demand and gap analysis of the current open space network.

Planning area	Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	Current population	Current provision (ha / 1,000 people)	Demand according to NSW standards (2.83ha / 1,000)	Meeting demand (demand minus current supply)
Shire	Parks	65.11ha	31,556	2.05ha/1,000	44.65ha	+20.46ha
	Sports parks	66.62ha		2.11ha/1,000	44.65ha	+21.97ha
Brunswick Heads – Ocean Shores	Parks	23.05ha	8,212	2.81ha/1,000	11.62ha	+11.43ha
	Sports parks	16.76ha		2.04ha/1,000	11.62ha	+5.14ha
Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland	Parks	6.92ha	7,993* (3,532 live in Mullumbimby)	1.96ha/1,000	5.00ha	+1.92ha
	Sports parks	8.97ha		2.54ha/1,000	5.00ha	+3.97ha
Byron Bay and Suffolk Park	Parks	27.04ha	9,514	3.15ha/1,000	13.46ha	+13.58ha
	Sports parks	28.02ha		2.95ha/1,000	13.46ha	+14.56ha
Bangalow and Southern Hinterland	Parks	5.12ha	5,664* (2,021 live in Bangalow, 688 live in Federal)	1.89ha/1,000	3.83ha	+1.29ha
	Sports parks	12.54ha		4.63ha/1,000	3.83ha	+8.71ha

Access to open space

The National Heart foundation recommends that urban residents be within 400m walk of open space, regardless of its classification. A 400m buffer was placed around Council's existing open space network (parks and sports parks).



Map 2: The 400m walkability standard applied to urban areas and the Shire's existing open space network.

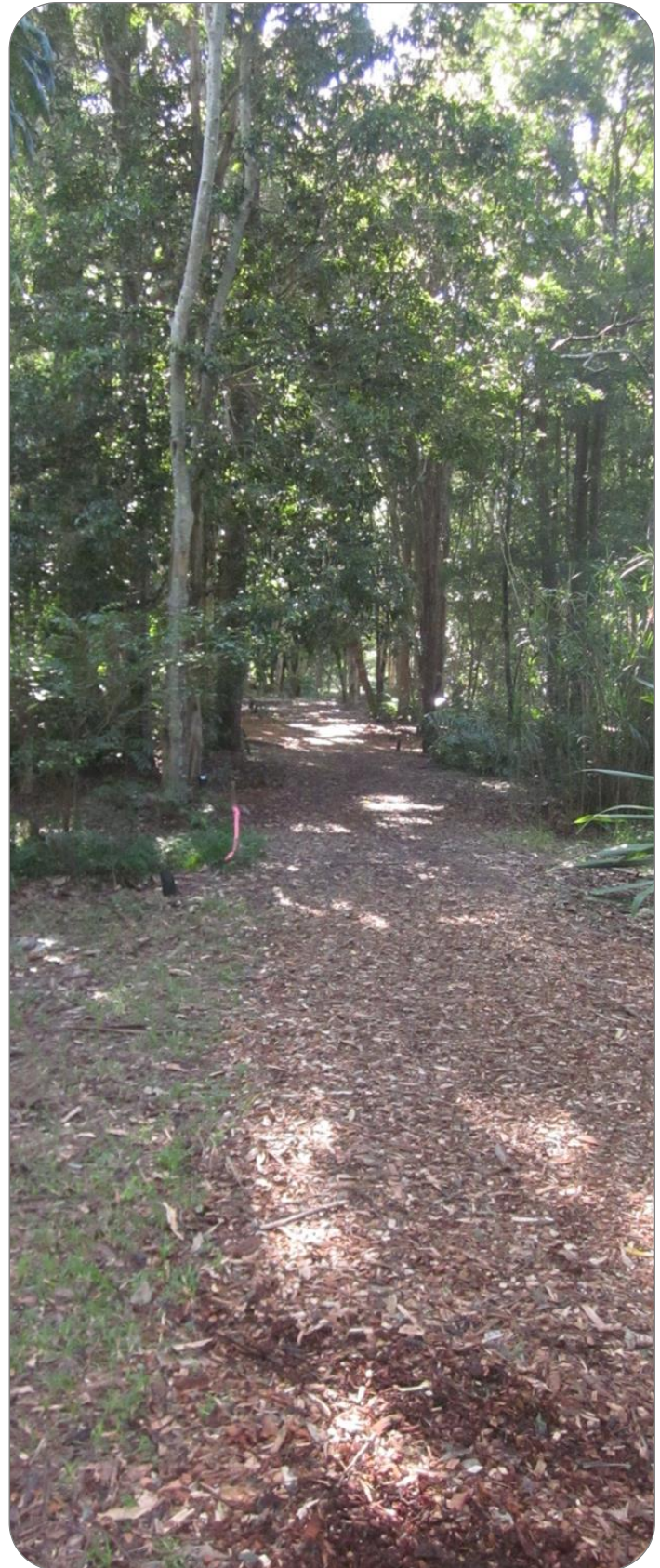
Overall, the majority of residents in the urban area are within 400m walk of open space, except for three:

1. Ocean Shores: Residents still have access to Ocean Shore Country Club and Marshalls Creek Nature Reserve
2. Mullumbimby: The analysis shows that residents on the eastern side of the railway line are not within a 400m walkable radius of open space but do have access to Apex Park, which is located on State Government owned railway corridor land
3. Area between Byron Bay and Suffolk Park: Residents in this area are within close proximity to the coastline and beaches and the Arakwal National Park with walking tracks

Summary

From a standards perspective, the Shire is well supplied with land for open space, with all planning areas containing a surplus of embellished open spaces for passive and active recreation. However, successful open space and recreation planning is more than meeting a 'quantity of land' standard and ensuring urban residents are within 400m walk of a park.

Understanding the community's needs and recreation preferences, demographic changes and usage of existing facilities is equally, if not more important to ensure the spaces and activities provided by Council for recreation are appropriate to the current and future communities.



Popular places to recreate

Overall, the community had mixed perceptions about the quality of open space and recreation opportunities available across the Shire. The lack of walk and cycle paths was a key issue consistently identified during consultation, with existing walk and cycle paths the most common places for people to recreate. Due to the surrounding natural environment it is no surprise that respondents also prefer to recreate and visit the natural waterways and bushland. The local aquatic facilities were also identified as popular places to recreate.

Respondents were further asked to identify where the spaces/places are located and why they chose to recreate there.

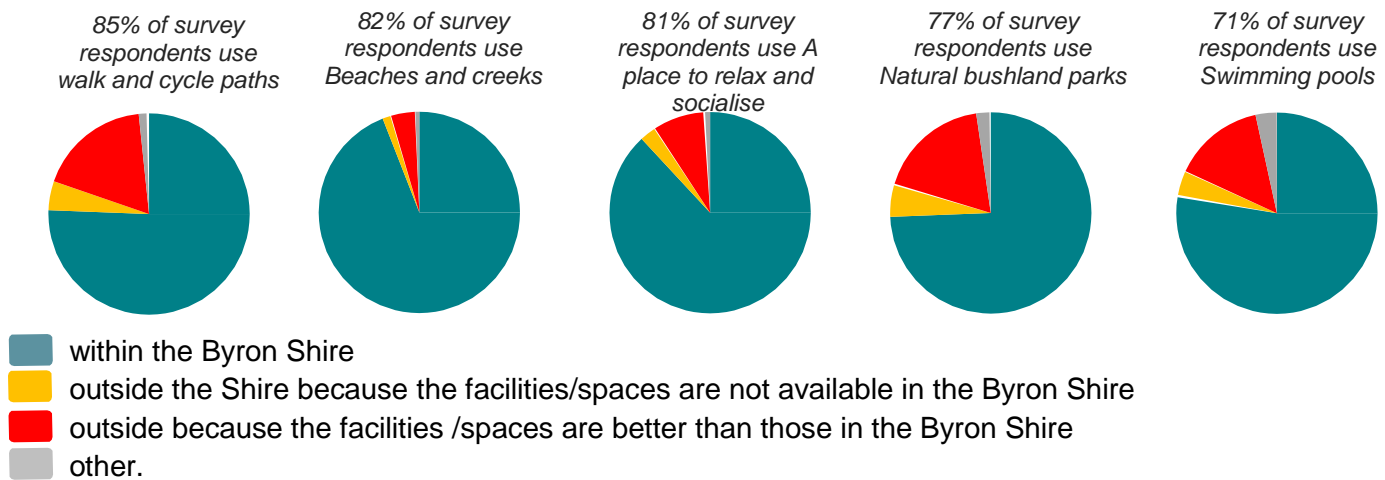


Figure 4: Five most popular places to recreate identified in the community survey

Of the five most popular places, over 75% of those using the space did so in the Shire. However, higher ‘outside the Shire because the facilities/spaces are better than those in the Byron Shire’ were observed in walk and cycle paths and swimming pools (natural areas have been excluded) with many preferring to go to Tweed or Ballina Shires. The two most common reasons for visiting these two shires include:

- better quality and safer off-road walk and cycle paths that families can use together
- both provide access to a year-round indoor swimming pool

Whilst Byron Shire’s community is physically active, respondents noted mixed satisfaction levels regarding the open space and facilities (figure 5).

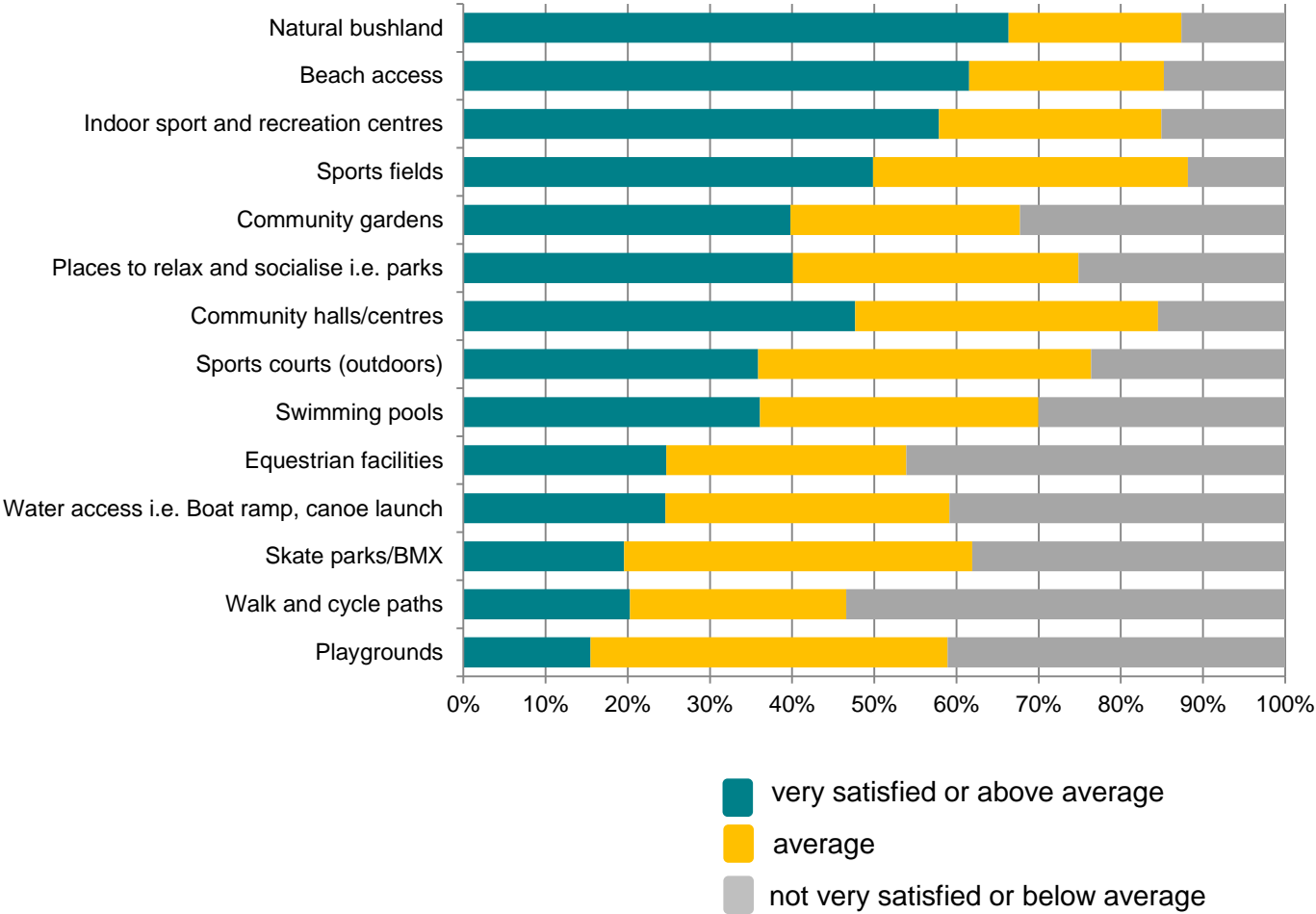


Figure 5: Community survey respondents’ level of satisfaction with recreation activities and facilities across the Shire.

Participation in recreation activities

Having a picnic or barbecue (86%) was the most popular activity to participate in while using the Shire's open spaces. Swimming in the ocean and creeks was a close second at 82%.

When respondents were asked to identify the activities they participated in, they were further asked to specify where and why.

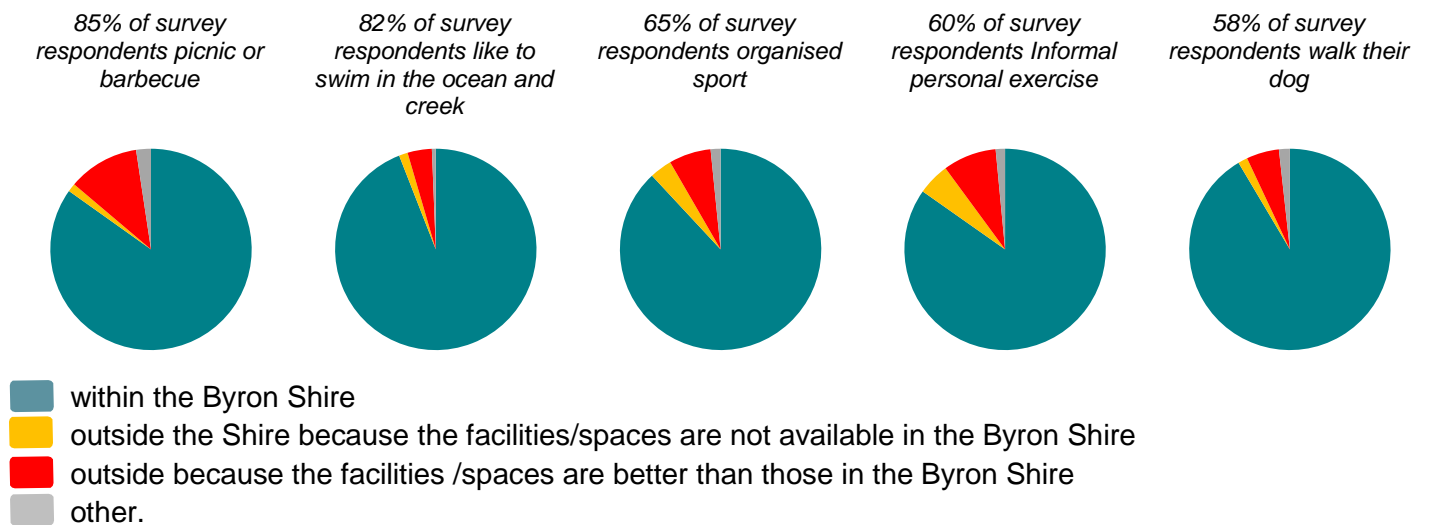


Figure 6: Five most popular activities participated in identified in the community survey

Respondents were happy with the number of activities offered and available within the Byron Shire. What respondents did note, was the quality of the infrastructure that supported the activities. Many were unsatisfied with the variety of playgrounds and picnic facilities within the open space network. The lack of formalised paths creating links between playgrounds, picnic facilities, toilets and carparks were also highlighted, especially among those with restricted mobility.

Other common activities included surfing, cycling (recreation) and indoor recreation activities (eg. yoga, pilates, boxing etc). It may be assumed that walking is also a very popular recreation activity participated in by local residents. Due to the way in which the questions were asked on the survey, there was no dedicated "walking" option, however, the assumption is supported by the high usage of walk and cycle paths and participation rates in informal personal exercise and walking my dog responses.

Current challenges

Passive recreation challenges

Connecting off-road paths

Walking and cycling (road and recreation) are popular activities among the Shire's residents. However, the lack of connecting and safe off-road paths was consistently mentioned throughout the community engagement process. Traffic around the Shire is becoming an ongoing issue, particularly during peak periods and weekends. Many residents feel that if the existing cycle and pedestrian paths were upgraded, made safer and extended to connect key destinations and towns/villages, many people would cycle as it would be quicker than driving, particularly during peak seasons.

Key cycle and pedestrian suggestions made during the consultation include:

- connection between South Golden Beach and Ocean Shores
- endeavour to make active use of the rail corridor (including connections between Ocean Shores, Mullumbimby, Byron Bay, Bangalow and Lismore)
- recreation path along the Brunswick River

Community/user group expectation

The lack of quality playgrounds to meet the needs of multiple age groups and abilities at the one time was identified as an issue within the Shire. Some respondents even noting that they travelled to other council areas to visit a good playground.

Others however, want good quality playgrounds, toilets and picnic facilities in each suburb. Council's sporting parks are also under similar pressure, with user groups wanting higher standards of maintenance and better-quality clubhouses, canteens and changerooms.

The absence of an open space framework that specifies what type and level of embellishments and supporting infrastructure in each type of space has led to unrealistic expectations on what Council should be providing around the Shire, whether it be high quality playgrounds or ensuring the existing/new facilities are accessible for all (eg. footpaths connecting the car park to amenities).

Recreation access to water

There are many informal water access points along the Shire's waterways that support canoe, kayaking and fishing activities. Due to their increasing popularity, identified during community consultation, many of these access points need to be formalised to prevent bank erosion and potential safety issues.

Dogs in open space

Dogs in Council's open space network and along the beaches is a heated topic among the Shire's residents. Over half of respondents liked to walk their dog/s in the open space network or take their dogs to dog exercise areas. While it was agreed among respondents that there needs to be more dog-friendly areas (as those that are not in favour of dogs want them out of the open spaces and off the beaches), many were in disagreement regarding whether they should be fenced, unfenced, off-leash, on-leash or allowed on patrolled beaches.

Lack of supporting infrastructure

With an ageing community, increasing participation numbers in walking and great views and natural scenery, the open space network is significantly lacking infrastructure that allows users to relax. The addition of bench seats and water bubblers along the walk and cycle paths, more shade at parks, particularly over the play areas, and picnic facilities that can be used by those with mobility issues (eg. picnic tables that have space for wheelchair parking) creates a more comfortable environment for users.

The lack of ancillary facilities was also identified as an ongoing issue at sports parks. Many clubs noting that simple upgrades such as spectator areas, shade covers and bench seats would improve their facility. Accessibility to the facilities was also noted as a concern by those with mobility difficulties and parents with children in prams.

Active recreation challenges

Membership

Two thirds of community survey respondents participated in active recreation. Participation trends identified by the Shire's recreation and sports clubs were consistent with the national and state participation trends with junior participation increasing since 2013, while senior participation declined slightly.

Despite the declining numbers in senior memberships, two thirds (68%) of clubs are confident that memberships will increase over the next three years. Only 45% of the clubs rated falling membership as an issue of high concern. Only one club expects membership numbers to decrease.

Those clubs expecting a growth in membership numbers were worried about their ability to accommodate new members and ensure that the quality of the ovals and ancillary infrastructure continues to meet the needs of existing members (eg. lighting at an existing facility to allow evening training).

New/upgraded infrastructure requests

41% of sporting clubs raised concerns about their lack of knowledge about where to access grant funding or who to contact regarding new/upgraded infrastructure.

Quality sports parks

Half of the community survey respondents rate the quality of sport parks as either good or great. However, this appreciation for sports parks is not necessarily shared by the sporting clubs using them. Clubs were provided with a list of facilities most commonly found at the Shire's sports parks and asked to indicate whether the facilities that they used were suitable for their requirements. One third of clubs indicated that the current number of playing fields/oval/courts at their facilities were not suitable for their needs. Just over half were concerned that their current facilities could not accommodate increasing membership numbers.

The main concerns for clubs were themed around ancillary facilities such:

- shade, seating and water
- clubhouse
- storage areas.

Additionally, consultation (and facility audits) have identified that some sports parks are under-utilised or that the capacity of a facility could be improved by increasing the number of fields with training (or competition) standard lighting.

Indoor sport

The suggestion of an additional indoor court at the Cavanbah Centre was noted through consultation with the community and Council staff. The existing indoor multi-purpose Centre contains two courts; however, the Cavanbah Centre was designed so that an additional court could be added to meet demand.

Some community members would like to see an indoor climbing wall developed at the Cavanbah Centre.

Markets, performing arts and events

The Shire's residents clearly enjoy being outdoors and are enthusiastic supporters of outdoor markets and events.

Council recognises the importance of open space as an event space and supports the delivery of a range of events including:

- markets
- film festivals, arts and cultural events
- sports events
- health and wellbeing events
- community events
- commercial events.



Bangalow Markets, Bangalow Showgrounds



Demand for recreation

Participation patterns in recreation are changing at a community level. Factors such as a move toward non-organised structured sport, increased use of technology, and increased time pressures have all had a significant impact on how people recreate. Understanding these trends (and their impacts) is important as Council looks to develop strategies, programs and facilities to encourage people to engage in recreation activities.

Open space and play trends

Open space planning is beginning to take a new direction. While people still value their local recreation park and the green escape they provide, Shire residents often described them as boring and lacking in creativity, while health professionals consider today's playgrounds too safe. There is a growing trend towards more challenging and imaginative play for all age groups at the one location.

Multi-use parks

Multi-use parks are a new type of park being developed more frequently. They generally feature multiple play areas to cater for different ages and abilities, gardens, water play areas and lagoons, large open grassy spaces, shady picnic spots with quality facilities, duck ponds and water features, areas of natural woodland and vegetation, and kilometres of shared paths and boardwalks to explore. High tree house structures, sky walks and natural elements are introducing risk back into play, enabling children to develop an awareness of limits and boundaries.

Consultation identified that the community would prefer to see fewer playgrounds, but with a higher level of embellishments that service a number of age groups at the one time. There are currently no parks within the Shire that offer this level of play variety for all ages. Denning Park, as identified in the Byron Bay Town Centre Master Plan, has the potential to become Council's 'premier' playground park. Alternatively, Banner and Terrace Parks in Brunswick Heads could also be developed into a multi-use park that uses the natural assets (Brunswick River and beach) to provide a variety of high quality recreation experiences.

Interaction with nature

With the future trend of small residential blocks and higher density living, people are having less contact with the outdoors (including backyards). As such, a term referred to as 'returning to nature', has emerged where people feel the desire to become reconnected to their natural environments - an escape from modern lifestyles. This, combined with a growing awareness of the environment and the challenges it's facing (global warming, pollution and urbanisation), has facilitated a growth in visitation to various natural areas such as Brunswick Heads Nature Reserve and Arakwal National Park.

As individuals become more affluent, the proportion of income spent on recreation goods and leisure increases. Whilst outdoor recreation equipment such as kayaks, mountain bikes and camping goods may have previously been considered too expensive for many in the community, they are becoming increasingly affordable. As such, a diversification of natural areas offering unique experiences and higher levels of infrastructure are often in demand.

It is estimated that the market for nature-based tourism is increasing at six times the rate of tourism overall¹. Some of the factors that have contributed to this growing trend in nature-based tourism are that people are looking for new experiences, adding diversity to their experiences, combining business travel with holidays, and looking to “get back to nature”.

Three of the top five most popular nature-based experiences that visitors seek are readily available in the Shire¹:

- going to the beach (76% of visitors to the Shire went to the beach)
- visit national parks/state forests – (23% of visitors to the Shire visited a national park/state forest)
- bushwalking/rainforest walks – (32% of visitors to the Shire went bushwalking/rainforest walk.

There has been a dramatic shift in childhood activity from outdoors to indoors. Nature play is an emerging trend particularly in urban environments, where access to nature is not as readily available as it is in the Byron Shire. Byron Shire is fortunate that a large proportion of land within its boundaries has strong environmental and cultural values. People living and visiting the Shire should be encouraged to engage with their natural environment. Developing nature themed play spaces, as an alternative to traditional playgrounds, is a way to reintroduce children back into the outdoors.

Recreation trends

Passive recreation

Move towards passive recreation

National participation rates in active recreation, particularly sport, have been declining for a number of years as participants move toward more social (drop-in drop-out) sport, informal recreation and outdoor recreation activities.

Changes in work patterns, shift work and the increasing numbers in part-time and casual employment and family commitments influence participation as:

- people do not have the time to commit to active recreation and social clubs as a regular member or volunteer
- participants are seeking facilities with flexible hours.

The community is already concerned with the limited network of safe, off-road cycle paths. As people seek more individualised passive recreation opportunities, the pressure and demand for a quality cycle network that connects key destinations will continue to be an ongoing issue for the community.

¹ Tourism Australia 2016, Byron Shire Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey

Ageing community

The Byron Shire is an older community, with a median age of 44 years (much higher than the State with a median age of 38 years)². Currently, 16% of the population is aged 65 years and over, however by 2031, it will increase to a quarter³.

Also, three-quarters of the visitors to the Shire were aged under 54 years old⁴.

An ageing community requires:

- greater emphasis on low impact physical activity
- access to community infrastructure will require wider pathways, improved accessibility, more lighting, shaded seats and accessible parking wider pathways and hallways to accommodate increased use of mobility scooters as a favourable method of transportation.

Edible landscapes

The development of community gardens is becoming more commonplace for councils. Recognition of the benefits of the social interaction resulting from community gardening and the importance of edible landscapes is particularly important in urban settings where backyards are becoming smaller. However, in an area like Byron Shire, where the population is ageing, community gardens can provide a recreation outlet for residents that may not necessarily be able to maintain their own gardens full-time.

There are currently two formal community gardens in the Shire at Mullumbimby and Ocean Shores and some other edible landscapes and informal gardens.

Impacts of technology

Technology remains one of the main contributors towards decreased physical activity and increased sedentary behaviour. However, there are also increasing expectations of technology within open spaces including WiFi access in key parks, promoting existing geocaching and by using QR codes on tracks and signage.

Changes in technology for recreation are also bringing about an increasing divergence of outdoor recreation activities. Participants are able to map their route, record their times and upload digital images of their experience. This allows them to compete and compare results with past and future users (Strava, Map My Ride/Run etc). Growth in these activities has encouraged research into more refined technologies to encourage wider participation, such as geo-caching and mountain biking.

² ABS 2016, Census 2016

³ Byron Shire Council 2016, Byron Shire Preliminary Draft Residential Strategy

⁴ Tourism Australia 2016, Byron Shire Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey

Active recreation trends

Field sharing

With many sports extending the lengths of pre-season and season fixtures, sharing of field space is becoming more difficult. Additionally, there is a trend toward year-round sport with a number of codes also providing alternate opportunities in the off-season (e.g. small-sided football conducted in the summer sporting season). While providers strive to maximise the use of community resources (and State Governments espouse field sharing), the reality is that shared use of ancillary facilities (e.g. clubhouses, carparks) rather than fields may be a more appropriate goal.

This Plan outlines the importance of Council allocating preferred 'homes' for each sport across the Shire.

Field and court quality

Facility providers face an increasing trend to develop and re-develop sporting fields and courts to a higher level in order to increase carrying capacity. Upgrades, such as lighting and field irrigation, allow training and competition times to be extended and increases the ability of turf playing fields to cope with the resulting wear and tear. Further, to achieve ongoing field quality, fields need 'rest periods' (of up to four weeks) where necessary maintenance can be undertaken.

According to the clubs that completed the sports club survey and site audits, the playing fields within the Shire are in appropriate condition. However the condition of ancillary facilities varied across the Shire. Due to increasing membership numbers and participation trends in particular sporting codes, a number of upgrades are proposed for ancillary facilities such as spectator facilities and changerooms.

Volunteer sport organisations

The rate of volunteering in sport and recreation clubs has been declining for many years. Often, the responsibility for running clubs falls to one or two key personnel. To address this issue, there is a move toward amalgamations, with multi-sport clubs becoming more common. In other cases, organisations may become aligned to larger licensed clubs that take over some or all of the volunteers' roles as well as asset management responsibilities.

While the response rate to the club survey was relatively low, half of the respondents indicated that the declining numbers of volunteers was a high to medium issue for their club.





Recreation analysis

Spaces analysis

Byron Shire is typified by:

- limited expectations of growth over the next 20 years (just over 8,000 residents). Of this growth, Byron Bay and Suffolk Park will accommodate half (approximately 3,700)
- small villages and towns distributed from the northern to the southern boundaries of the Shire, with additional villages located throughout the hinterland
- beach and natural areas as the most common places to recreate (for both residents and visitors).

Given these aspects of the Shire, this analysis has taken more of a needs-based approach to open space planning. While the standards-based approach outcomes are still listed for each planning area (e.g. the supply analysis in hectares is provided), more weight is given to the planning area needs as it considers the social, demographic and environmental characteristics of an area for which open space is needed or the type of embellishment required in an open space. Not only does the needs-based approach consider the number of people living in the area (more akin to standards-based planning), but importantly it also takes into account recreation preferences, demographic changes and existing facilities.

Key themes

Infrastructure and recreation

Consistent with national and state physical activity trends, walking and cycling is a popular activity enjoyed by residents. Although Council has provided a number of walk and cycle paths around the Shire, they lack connectivity between towns, villages and key destinations. The existing walk and cycle network could be expanded to provide greater connectivity and opportunities for safe walking and cycling via the recommendations in Council's Bike Plan. At the time of preparation of this Plan, competing infrastructure priorities mean that Council has insufficient funds to implement the Bike Plan's recommendations.

With the Shire's ageing population and regular influx of visitors (mainly families), it is important that any future upgrades to the walking/cycling network are to a standard for improved wheelchair/disabled access and use by mobility scooters and include complementing infrastructure, such as bench seats, water bubblers, bike racks and wayfinding/directional signage, to allow users to rest. These facilities will also promote areas of recreation, scenic and cultural importance.

Play

Despite the abundance of natural play opportunities around the Shire, the Shire lacks quality playgrounds. Children at school visits expressed that the existing play was 'boring' and only catered for younger children and toddlers. Many wanted to see larger, more risky play activities such as flying foxes, climbing nets and giant slides. Water play was also consistently mentioned as a preferred opportunity.

With the beach being the most frequented open space and largely functioning as a local recreation park for many, it is not recommended that Council start adding challenging play equipment to all their recreation parks. Instead, a number of popular recreation parks could be upgraded to become destination parks for the area.

It is recommended, however, that one facility be upgraded to include high quality challenging play equipment that caters for all ages and abilities. There is potential to develop it as a small scale multi-use park and include areas of natural play and potentially water play. The site should be in Byron Bay, given the existing population base and holiday period influx. The Byron Bay Town Centre Master Plan identified Denning Park as the destination play area.

Activities for young people

As noted throughout the Plan, a lack of activities for youth was raised by many respondents to the survey. Skate parks are considered quality facilities to develop for young people - they are hard-wearing and require limited maintenance. Additionally, they not only provide an activity space for users but also an area for young people to socialise, particularly when suitable ancillary facilities such as covered seating, bubblers and power are provided.

The need for a new skate park in Byron Bay and improved facilities at Mullumbimby was identified during consultation.

Quality sports parks

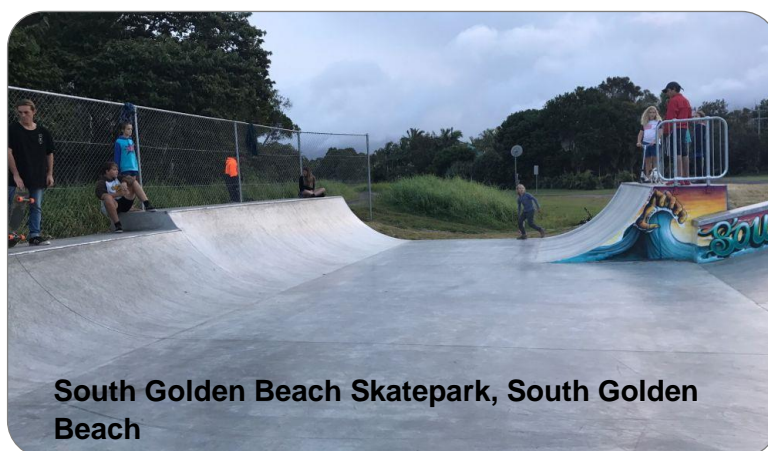
Having high quality sporting fields to play on is only one component of a sports park. The open space framework stipulates what types of embellishments are appropriate within the hierarchy of sports parks. This clarifies the community's and sporting clubs' level of expectation at their facility.

The sports club survey identified that a third of sporting clubs believed that the current number of playing fields and courts at their facilities was not suitable for their needs. The carrying capacity of many playing fields or courts could be increased by the simple addition of training lights, however, Council would have to investigate a usage agreement with the clubs and lighting has to be appropriate to the location for example it impacts on environment, natural and built, and crime prevention through environmental design principles have to be assessed.

Requests during consultation for improvements or new infrastructure included:

- shade
- seating
- storage areas

Assigning “home” grounds to sporting clubs allows them to develop Strategic Plans to guide the development of their club, regardless of committee changes. Knowing what type of development is permitted on their site allows them to apply for future funding opportunities, with Council support, and to fundraise for a specific cause.

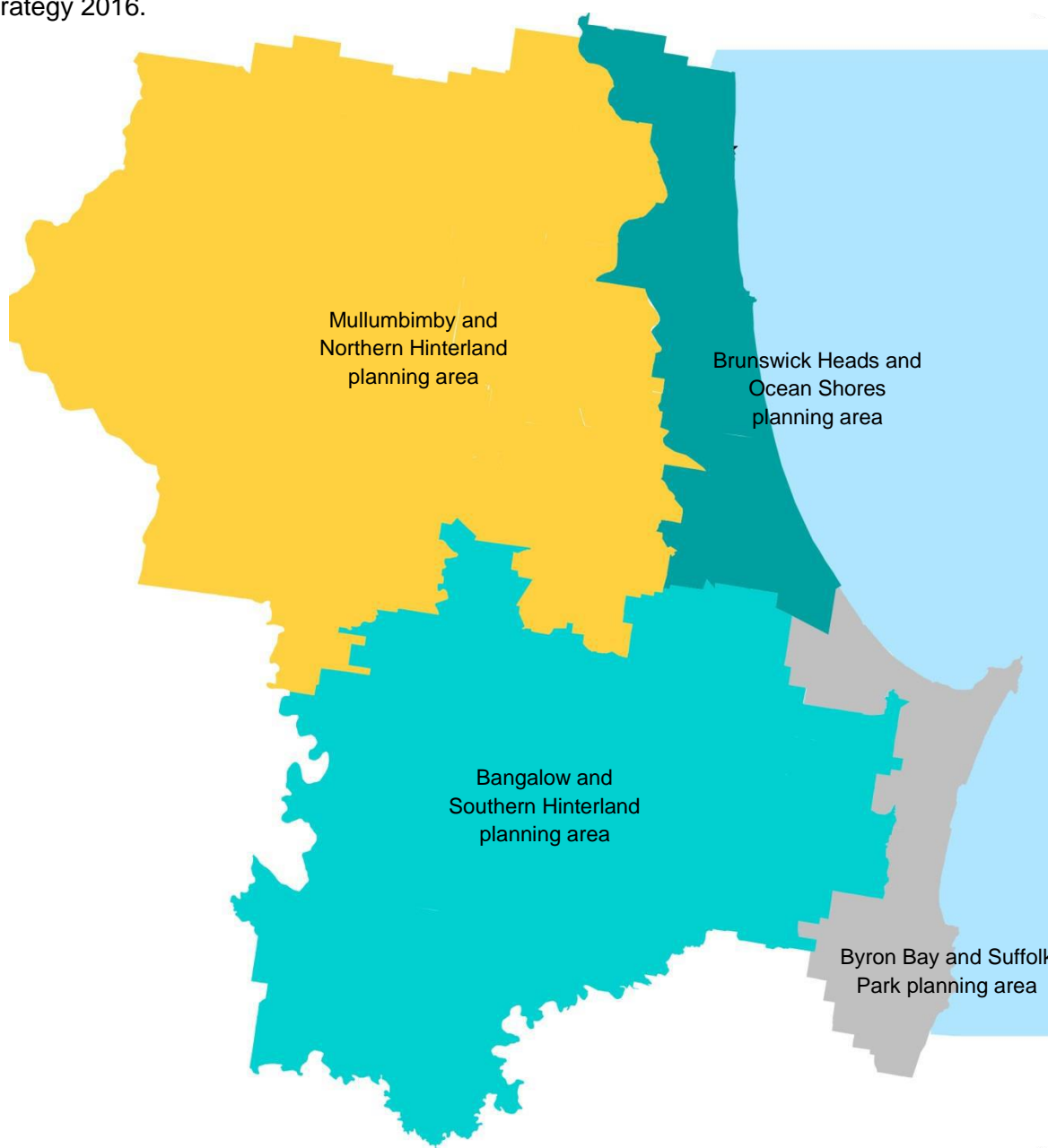


Planning areas analysis

Demographics, surrounding natural environment and land uses influence the way in which one recreates and uses open space. As such, the Byron Shire has been divided into four planning areas:

- Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area
- Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland planning area
- Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area
- Bangalow and Southern Hinterland planning area

The planning areas are aligned with those used in the 2016 Census and Byron Shire Residential Strategy 2016.



Brunswick Heads - Ocean Shores planning area

Overview

Located along the coast in the northern section of the Shire, Brunswick Heads – Ocean Shores planning area is made up of four villages; South Golden Beach, Ocean Shores, New Brighton and Brunswick Heads.

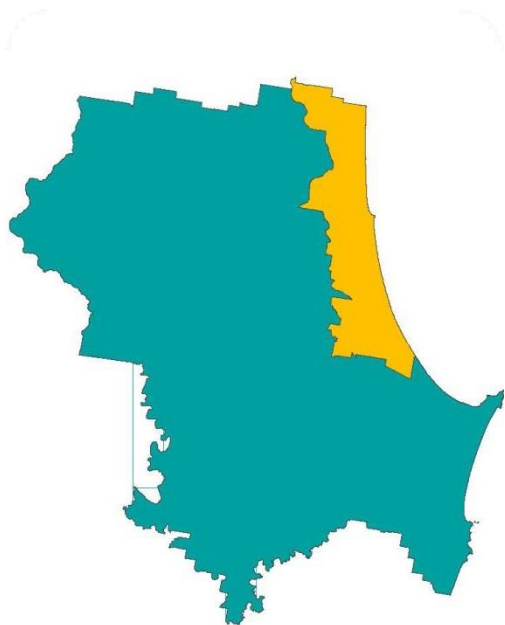
The villages are surrounded by a variety of natural environments including:

- Brunswick River
- Yelgun Creek
- Simpsons Creek
- Brunswick Heads Nature Reserve
- Billinudgel Nature Reserve
- Beaches

The natural environment, open space and complementing infrastructure (boat ramps, boardwalks, picnic facilities and cycleways) around the area create numerous opportunities for passive and active recreation activities for residents and visitors. Markets are regularly held across the open space network, further activating and promoting the planning area's natural assets.

With a current population of 8,212, two thirds of the people reside in Ocean Shores, while New Brighton remains a quiet coastal village. Brunswick Heads, separated from the other villages by the Brunswick River, is the fourth most visited area in the Shire, especially by families.

By 2036, an additional 1,500 people are expected to reside in the planning area. The majority of the growth will be shared between Ocean Shores and Brunswick Heads. The area's proximity to Byron Bay and the Tweed Coast, new housing developments and Ocean Village Shopping Centre has made it a popular location for families to reside, particularly in Ocean Shores. Despite this, the planning area is ageing.



Snapshot

Current population (2016)	8,212
0 – 14 years	16.8%
15 – 24 years	6.1%
25 – 34 years	3.5%
35 – 44 years	9.0%
45 – 54 years	14.0%
55 – 64 years	15.2%
65 years and over	17.5%
Median age (2016)	45
Future population (2036)	9,712
Households with children	59.5%
Do not have a motor vehicle	3.9%
Need assistance with core activities	5.0%
Have internet at home	83.3%
Volunteered in the past 12 months	25.5%

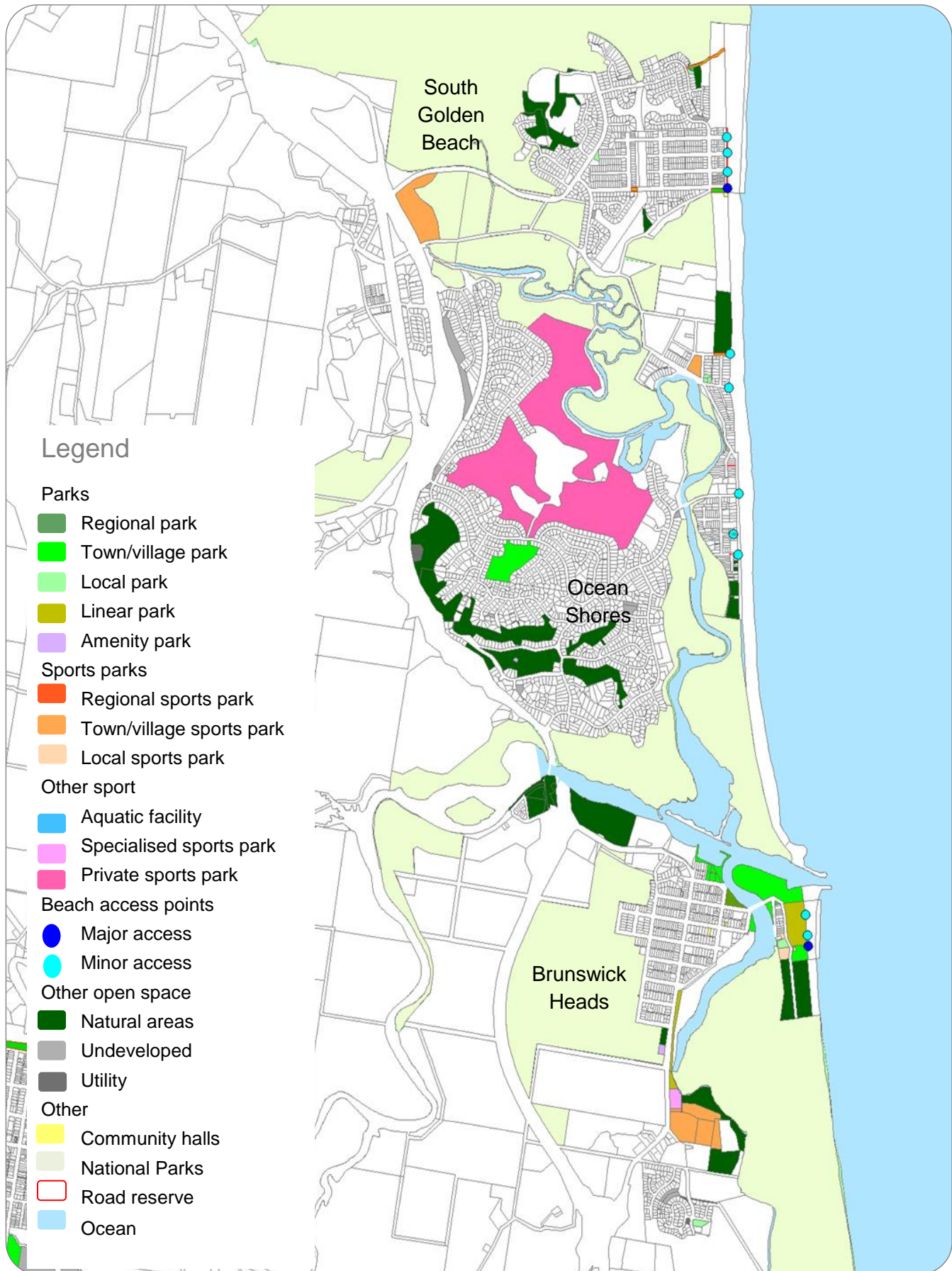
Current and future open space planning should aim to provide safe, off-road access around the planning area, particularly connections between South Golden Beach, Ocean Shores and New Brighton. Access to the natural areas, especially the waterways, and open space (parks and sports parks) and the infrastructure to support these activities will also be important for current and future residents and visitors.

Open space in planning area

Current supply

Type of open space	ha	% of current network (excluding National)
Parks		
Regional park	0.74ha	0.12%
Village/town park	15.45ha	2.52%
Local park	1.45ha	0.24%
Linear park	5.04ha	0.82%
Amenity	0.36ha	0.06%
Sports parks		
Regional sports park	-	-
Village/town sports park	16.04ha	2.61%
Local sports park	0.72ha	0.12%
Other sports parks		
Aquatic facilities	-	-
Private sport	73.06ha	11.91%
Specialised sport	1.01ha	0.16%
Other open space		
Natural areas	75.91ha	12.37%
Undeveloped	6.30ha	1.03%
Utility	1.05ha	0.17%

Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area



Current access to recreation activities and spaces

The open space network in the Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area offers a large variety of experiences and activities, especially outdoor recreation activities, for residents and visitors. Creating supportive environments for these activities and experiences is also an important ingredient to facilitating increased use and value of the open space network.

South Golden Beach

Residents in South Golden Beach have access to the beach via two beach access points (one minor and one major) which provides access to a number of informal recreation activities, such as natural play, swimming and surfing. However, Mia Court Park is the only location for structured play opportunities. During development of this Plan construction of a playground with shade at the South Golden Beach Hall Grounds next to the new skate park was completed (prior to this residents travelled to Ocean Shores to visit a quality playground). The skate park, half basketball court and tennis courts at Mia Court Park offer passive and active recreation activities for the older young people in the area.

New Brighton

Similar to South Golden Beach, there are limited structured play opportunities in the suburb, with one small playground at Tom Kendall Reserve. However, the suburb's natural assets, such as the beach and Marshalls Creek offer a variety of water-based recreation experiences.

Tom Kendall Reserve is also the only sports park for the area. The facility has one field and ancillary infrastructure in an average condition. Currently the facility is only acting as a training field.

Ocean Shores

Despite two thirds of the planning area's population residing in Ocean Shores, Waterlily Park is the only embellished recreation park in the suburb. Servicing the recreation and play needs of the local residents and those in New Brighton and South Golden Beach, the Park offers a variety of experiences (natural and artificial). There are limited footpaths throughout the suburb to provide safe connections to the only playground in the suburb.

Other experiences and activities in Ocean Shores include The Shara Community Gardens and Devines Hill Lookout (a popular destination for wedding and special events as well as walkers and runners).

Shara Boulevard Sports Field is a new town/village sports park in the area. The facility only has one field, there is potential to enhance the capacity of the facility.

Brunswick Heads

The riverfront parks along Simpsons Creek and the coastline provide a large informal area for residents and visitors to engage in a variety of recreation experiences and activities. The supporting infrastructure, while ageing, creates a supportive environment for family and social gatherings and community events. Due to the large amount of holiday accommodation in the area, the parks can become quite busy in peak holiday periods and on the weekends.

Brunswick Heads Recreation Ground is the main sporting facility within the planning area. It is also the location of the local skate park.

Current use and values

Community survey respondents from the Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area make-up one fifth of the total survey responses. A summary of the responses is presented below.

Popular spaces

The most popular spaces to participate in recreation or sporting activities were walk and cycle paths, places that allowed users to relax and socialise and natural bushland parks.

Almost a third (30.6%) of respondents that used walk and cycle paths for recreation preferred to go outside the Shire to better facilities. Similar trends were also observed in respondents that used natural bushland parks (this is consistent with the trends for outdoor recreation), swimming pools and indoor sport and recreation centres.

The community’s most common reasons for travelling outside the Shire to use other council’s open spaces and infrastructure include:

- the walk and cycle paths are safer and more family friendly than those around the Shire
- better quality parks that cater to a variety of age groups at the one time
- other council areas are more dog friendly
- respondents worked on the Tweed Coast and using their facilities was more convenient.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a number of open spaces and facilities within the Shire/planning area. Similar to the whole of Shire trend, respondents are mostly satisfied with the Shire/planning area’s natural bushland parks, beach access points and community gardens. Respondents are least satisfied with skate/BMX parks, sports fields and community halls/centres.

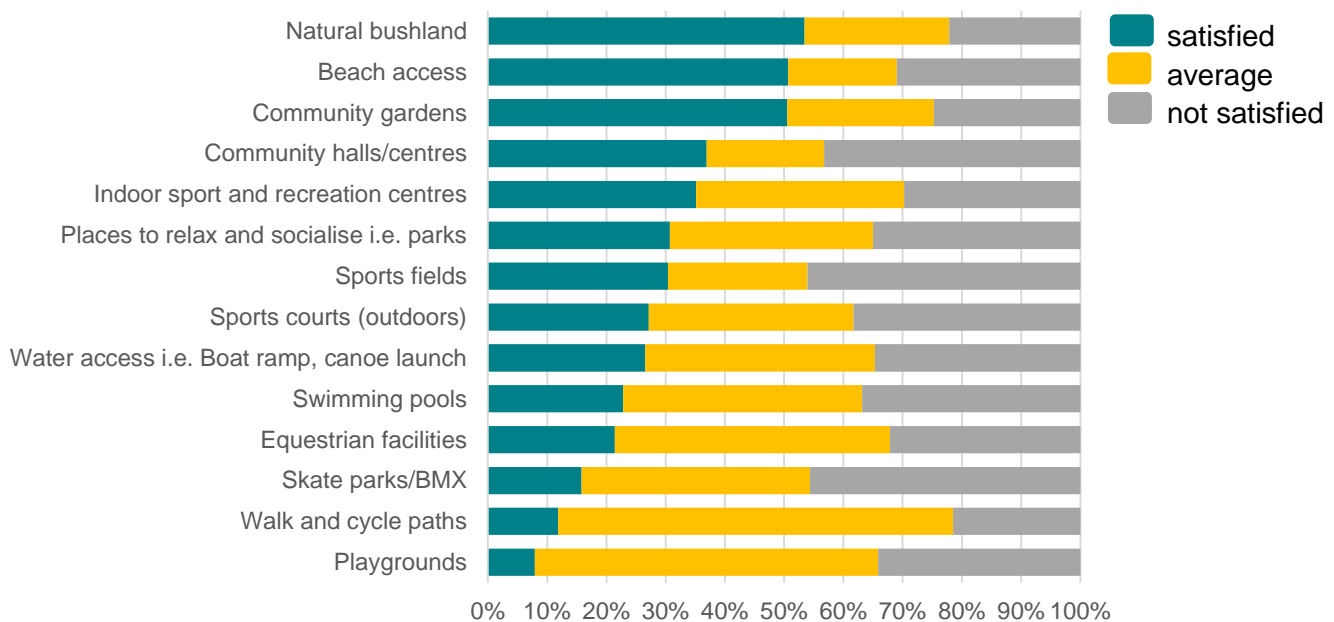


Figure 7: Community survey respondents (Brunswick Head and Ocean Shores planning area) levels of satisfaction with recreation activities and facilities across the Shire/planning area

Popular activities

The top three most popular activities to participate in are ocean/creek swimming, picnic or barbecues and informal/personal exercise in the park. For the majority of these activities, more than half of respondents participated within the Shire. In contrast, more than half of the respondents that participated in organised, low cost/free physical activities/programs, activities for young people and mountain biking/BMX are leaving the Shire to do so, highlighting a gap in the provision of these activities.

Examples of what the community responding to the survey would like to see in the Shire or planning area

- Ocean Shores/New Brighton Recreation Precinct embellished to become a sport and recreation precinct and activate Marshalls Creek
- ocean pools similar to Newcastle, NSW
- indoor or year-round swimming pool
- connecting walk and cycle paths between suburbs
- Council to endeavor to make active use of the rail corridor exercise equipment along foreshore walks
- more recreation opportunities in Ocean Shores
- Council to develop recreation parks as destinations for people to gather and socialise activate the Brunswick River, a valuable link between Bangalow and Brunswick Heads.

Community suggestion - "Improve and extend walking/cycle paths in South Golden Beach, New Brighton and Ocean Shores so kids can safely walk and cycle to Ocean Shores School and so residents of South Golden"

Devine's Hill Lookout, Ocean Shores



Analysis of open space

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	Short term gap (1 to 10 years) (ha)	Medium term gap (11 to 20 years) (ha)	Long term gap (20 years plus) (ha)
Parks	23.05ha	+11.43ha	+10.75ha	+9.33ha
Sports parks	16.76ha	+5.14ha	+4.46ha	+3.04ha

From an open space standards perspective, the Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area is well serviced with land for passive and active recreation activities, now and into the long term (20 years plus). It was identified through consultation with the community that many members are not happy with the quality of infrastructure and experiences provided by these open space parks. However, it should be noted that a number of parks in Brunswick Heads are owned by State Government and managed by North Coast Holiday Parks, not Council. This generates confusion with some in the community assuming that these areas and facilities are managed by Council when Council has no control over how they are maintained or developed.

A needs based approach has to be used to ensure the current and future recreation needs of the Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores community are met and an action to collaborate with Crown Lands over future planning and development is included.

Parks

Overall, the planning area is well supplied with land for recreation open space, however, the distribution of this land is not consistent with that of the population. Despite this, it is not recommended that Council purchase additional land to minimise this gap. Alternatively, Council should focus on upgrading its existing open space network and using safe, off-road walk and cycle paths to increase accessibility.

The planning area lacks a quality regional recreation park that provides a range of experiences and activities for all ages. Whether it is more challenging play opportunities, picnic facilities, informal grassed areas, access to the water, active recreation opportunities (eg. half basketball court, skate park) or community events, the planning area has the potential to deliver these experiences and activities at the one location, Brunswick Heads.

There are a number of parks around the planning area, particularly Ocean Shores where the topography of the land prevents many of these spaces being redeveloped into local recreation parks or rationalised for residential purposes. However, they do add to the scenic amenity of the area. As such, it is recommended that the majority of these spaces be maintained as natural bushland.

Upgrade Waterlily Park

Waterlily Park is already a popular recreation area. The additional embellishments included within the Plan of Management will help to ensure the facility remains attractive to a wide range of residents and visitors. Additional embellishments include:

fenced dog off-leash park in the northern section of the Park off Orana Road

- boardwalk and viewing platform around the lake
- shade over the play areas
- internal walking path the provides connections to Tindara Avenue and Orana Road.

Upgrade South Golden Beach Hall Grounds

Continue to upgrade the park with the addition of a new play node.

Master plan Brunswick Heads riverside and foreshore parks as a precinct

The Plan recommends that Council collaborate with Crown Lands to prepare structure plans for the redevelopment of Banner, Torakina, Venture, South Beach Parks as a riverside and foreshore recreation precinct. Community consultation identified that the area is already well used but was lacking a variety of safe play and barbecue and picnic facilities for extended stays. The current pavilion does not complement the surrounding scenery and lacks casual surveillance. With 1,500 residents expected to relocate to the planning area by 2036 and the increasing popularity of Brunswick Heads as a tourist destination, pressure will be placed on the existing infrastructure and car parking. Working with Crown Lands to master plan the area will enable Council to forward plan and ensure the precinct becomes an iconic regional park.

Master plan Ocean Shores/New Brighton Recreation Precinct

Apart from the beach, Ocean Shores and New Brighton Recreation Precinct is the only community gathering space in New Brighton. Already a busy park, the current layout and location of existing buildings is limiting the potential of the site to function as a community hub and sporting facility. The growing desire to use the site as a trail head for canoe and kayaking launching into Marshalls Creek is adding to the site's popularity.

The Plan recommends that Council master plan Ocean Shores and New Brighton Recreation Precinct as a community and recreation precinct and include Marshalls Creek and a section along Cassons Road (a popular swimming and canoe/kayak access point). The layout should investigate the shared use of a sporting/community building and amenities block. It would be beneficial to the community if formal access to Marshalls Creek was able to be achieved for water based recreation activities consistent with Marshalls Creek Plan of Management, such as canoeing. Accessibility should be incorporated into the design.

Sport open space

There are three sports parks in the Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores planning area that, land wise, meet the needs of the user groups, now and into the future.

Shara Boulevard Sports Fields, Ocean Shores

Home to the Shores United Soccer Club, Shara Boulevard Sports Field is a new facility completed in 2016. Land is available on the eastern side of the field for future expansion. Ideally, Council should cease investment into Tom Kendal Reserve (currently used as a training facility for Shores United Soccer Club) as a sports park and focus on the development of a second field and ancillary infrastructure, including irrigation, at Shara Boulevard Sports Fields. Tom Kendal Reserve (Ocean Shores/New Brighton Recreation Precinct) should be developed as a town/village park for informal recreation.

Brunswick Heads Recreation Ground, Brunswick Heads

A large sporting facility, the Ground is home to the Brunswick Valley Bulldogs Junior AFL Club and the Mullumbimby Brunswick Cricket Club.

The fields are in a good condition, however, upgrades to a number of ancillary facilities are required:

- lighting for training
- storage facilities
- kitchen repairs.

The netball courts are no longer used by an organised club. During the consultation there were many requests to convert the courts into outdoor basketball courts that can be used informally by the young people in the area.

Analysis of activities

Many of the residents in the planning area were concerned about the lack of low cost/free activities available for young people. The popularity of the skate park in South Golden Beach and Brunswick Heads presents opportunity community organisations to run activities specifically targeted at young people at the facility. Local competitions and events and come and try days are great ways to draw talented young people and introduce the sports to new people. Providing intergenerational facilities provides opportunities for social inclusion.

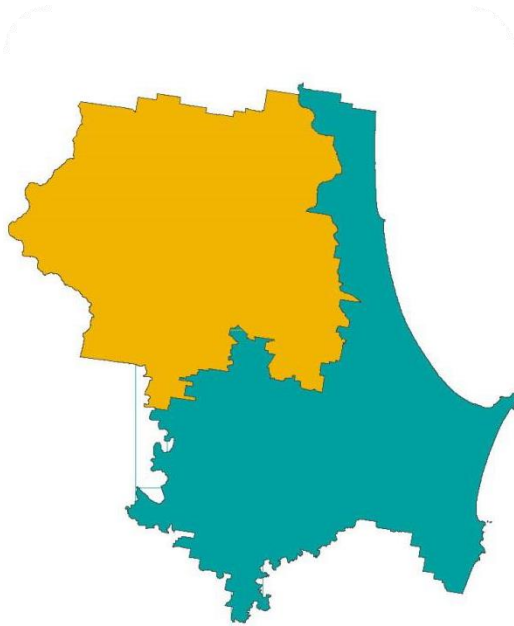
The location of dog exercise areas is an ongoing debate in the planning area. There are currently three dog off-leash beach areas (South Golden Beach, New Brighton and Brunswick Heads) and three on-leash dog exercise areas (Waterlily Park and Devines Hill Lookout, Ocean Shores and off Kingsford Drive, Brunswick Heads). With half of community survey respondents indicating that they take their dog with them while visiting open space (some illegally) or visit dog exercise areas, it is recommended that Council develop a number of fenced dog off-leash parks in the planning area. Ideally, they would be located along the walk and cycle network so that owners can walk their dogs to the park and include embellishments such as dog waste bag dispensers, bench seats, water bubblers, shade and dog agility obstacles. Appropriate locations for fenced dog off-leashed parks include:

- Waterlily Park (northern section of the Park off Orana Road)
- in the Brunswick Heads Recreation Precinct (to be considered as part of the master plan)
- in the recommended Ocean Shores/New Brighton Recreation Precinct (to be considered as part of the master plan).

With a number of waterways running through the planning area it is no surprise that the community is keen to participate in canoe and kayaking activities. The Ocean Shores/New Brighton Recreation Precinct Master Plan and Brunswick Heads Recreation Precinct Master Plan should both investigate suitable canoe and kayak launching sites.



Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland planning area



Overview

Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland planning area is located on the western side of the Pacific Highway and consists of a number of small villages including:

- Goonengerry
- Myocum
- Main Arm
- Palmwoods
- Billinudgel
- The Pocket
- Wilsons Creek

Mullumbimby town, located at the base of Mount Chincogan, is the main hub of the planning area. Approximately 7,993 people currently reside in the planning area and half of the population live in Mullumbimby town.

Consistent with the Shire's population trend, the residents in the area are ageing. More than a third of the population was aged 55 years and above at the last census (2016). This is expected to increase by 2036. Despite this, the Mullumbimby planning area has the highest proportion of children aged under 14 years of age compared to other planning areas, suggesting that the area is becoming a favoured location for young families.

The majority of the planning area's open space is found within Mullumbimby town. A key natural asset, the Brunswick River runs through the town providing a location for walking, cycling, picnicing and water-based activities. Community events like the Mullumbimby Farmers Market regularly activate the open space network and create a vibrant community atmosphere for residents and visitors.

The Mullumbimby community enjoys a mix of mainstream and alternative lifestyles, as such, the recreation demands and needs in the area will vary. Young families will be looking for traditional sporting and recreation opportunities, while older residents will prefer activities orientated around low impact. Non-traditional activities include slack-lining, busking and outdoor performance spaces.

Snapshot

Current population (2016)	7,993
0 – 14 years	18.2%
15 – 19 years	5.0%
20 – 24 years	3.2%
25 – 34 years	7.8%
35 – 44 years	12.9%
45 – 54 years	16.5%
55 – 64 years	18.5%
65 years and over	18.0%
Median age (2016)	46
Future population (2036)	9,457
Households with children	61.8%
Do not have a motor vehicle	3.0%
Need assistance with core activities	4.7%
Have internet at home	82.9%
Volunteered in the past 12 months	25.7%

Open space in planning area

Current supply

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	% of current network (excluding National)
Parks		
Regional park	-	
Village/town park	4.04ha	0.66%
Local park	1.30ha	0.21%
Linear park	1.58ha	0.26%
Amenity	-	
Sports parks		
Regional sports park	-	
Village/town sports park	5.46ha	0.89%
Local sports park	3.51ha	0.57%
Other sports parks		
Aquatic facilities	0.67ha	0.11%
Private sport	45.26ha	7.38%
Specialised sport	10.56ha	1.72%
Other open space		
Natural areas	9.06ha	1.48%
Undeveloped	33.49ha	5.46%
Utility	0.65ha	0.11%

Community suggestion: *“More bike paths, not just in Byron Bay. Put a bike path on the train line from Mullumbimby to Byron Bay and Mullumbimby to Brunswick Heads”*

Mullumbimby



Legend

Parks

- Regional park
- Town/village park
- Local park
- Linear park
- Amenity park

Sports parks

- Regional sports park
- Town/village sports park
- Local sports park

Other sport

- Aquatic facility
- Specialised sports park
- Private sports park

Beach access points

- Major access
- Minor access

Other open space

- Natural areas
- Undeveloped
- Utility

Other

- Community halls
- National Parks
- Road reserve
- Ocean

Current access to recreation activities and spaces

There are a number of experiences and activities available in Mullumbimby town. However, open space audits identified that many of the parks have ageing infrastructure and do not complement the surrounding natural areas.

Heritage Park is the main recreation park in the planning area. The park offers picnic facilities, walking trail, informal access to the Brunswick River, playground and an off-leash dog zone. The Park has potential to become the destination park (embellished to a standard equivalent to that of a town/village park) and assist in the activation of the Brunswick River.

The Mullumbimby Recreation Ground Sportsfields is the regional home for netball and tennis, creating a busy hub with parking issues, especially on the weekends. Unfortunately, there are no formal sporting clubs currently using the Sportsfields' oval/field, which is suitable for soccer, rugby league/union, cricket and little athletics. The Mullumbimby skate park is located towards the rear of the Sportsfields. There is debate among community members regarding the current position of the skate park, and if there is a more appropriate, centralised location that allows casual surveillance over the facility. Consultation with skate park users is crucial to any reconsideration of the design or location of the skate park.

A valuable community asset, the Mullumbimby Community Garden adjoins the Sportsfield.

The Petria Thomas Swimming Pool is the only 50 meter pool in the Shire. Open between October to March, some survey respondents indicated they are keen for the facility to be heated and open year-round. Council's Access Consultative Working Group advised that access into the facility is not currently provided, for example there is no disabled parking, kerb and guttering or all abilities pedestrian access, making access to utilise the facility difficult. It is recommended that the Access Consultative Committee Working Group, Mullumbimby High School and Petria Thomas Swimming Pool operators work with Council to review pedestrian movement to address these issues. In addition, while it is extremely expensive to add a ramp into the pool, any future retrofitting or redesign of the pool should consider the addition of a ramp, especially with an ageing community.

Current use and values

Community survey respondents from the Mullumbimby planning area made-up 16% of the total survey responses. A summary of the responses is presented below.

Popular spaces

The most popular spaces to participate in recreation or sporting activities were walk and cycle paths, places that allowed users to relax and socialise, and swimming pools.

Nearly all respondents used the space and facilities within the Shire to participate in their recreation and sporting activities. Just over a quarter of respondents indicated that they left the Shire to use walk and cycle paths, this is consistent with the lack of walk and cycle paths around the planning area and Shire. Interestingly, a quarter of respondents from this planning area that used indoor sport and recreation centres did so outside of the Shire, despite the Cavanbah Centre in Byron Bay being 20 minutes' drive away.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a number of open spaces and facilities within the Shire/planning area. Despite living in the hinterland, respondents are mostly satisfied with the Shire's beach access points, the Mullumbimby community garden and sports fields. Respondents are least satisfied with walk and cycle paths, equestrian facilities and playgrounds.

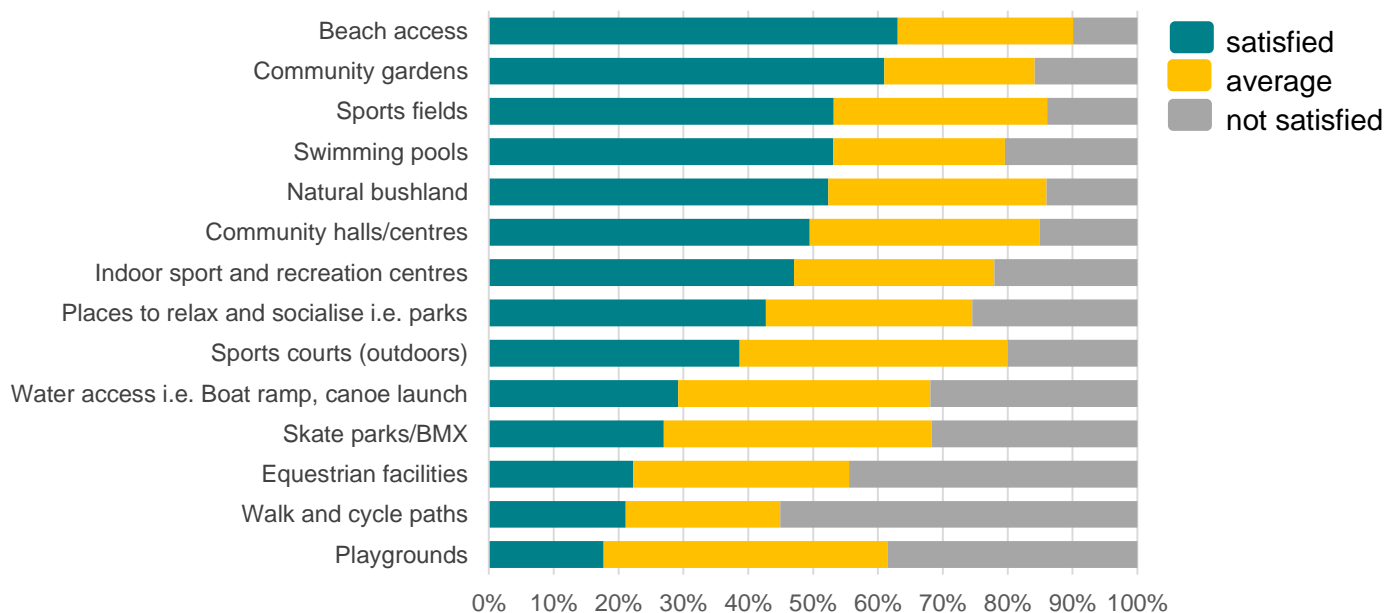


Figure 8: Community survey respondents (Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland planning area) levels of satisfaction with recreation activities and facilities across the Shire/planning area

Popular activities

The top three most popular activities to participate in are ocean/creek swimming, picnic or barbecues and walking my dog i.e. on a beach or path. For the majority of the activities participated in, more than half of participants did so within the Shire.

Examples of what the community responding to the survey would like to see in the Shire or planning area

- Apex Park upgraded and possibly fenced
- Heritage Park upgraded to become Mullumbimby's feature park
- relocate skate park to a more visible location
- improve access to the Brunswick River
- better quality ancillary facilities at sporting grounds for players and spectators
- exercise equipment along the Brunswick River walk or around Sportsfield
- cycleway connections between Mullumbimby, Bangalow, Brunswick Heads and Byron Bay.

Community suggestions: *"Lighting for the skate parks would be amazing! I know that youth in Brunswick Heads and Mullumbimby especially would benefit a lot from this. Would be great to have a place and activity that youth can get themselves involved in at night time that is free!"*



Mullumbimby Recreation Ground Sportsfield, Mullumbimby

Analysis of open space

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	Short term gap (1 to 10 years) (ha)	Medium term gap (11 to 20 years) (ha)	Long term gap (20 years plus) (ha)
Parks	6.92ha	+1.92ha	+1.12ha	-0.15ha
Sports parks	8.97ha	+3.97ha	+3.17ha	+1.90ha

The open space demand and supply analysis, which uses ha/1,000 people, only looks at developed recreation parks (local, town/village, regional and linear parks) and concludes that Mullumbimby is well supplied with open space for recreation purposes now and into the future, despite a minimal deficiency of 0.15ha by 2036. This deficiency however, is not significant due to the large amount of open space currently residing in road reserves, particularly along the Brunswick River and sections of Heritage Park (which have not been included in this analysis). As such, it is considered that Lot 22 DP 1073165, excluding the section currently developed as the community garden, is surplus to forecasted demand.

It is noted that Council is undertaking public submissions regarding the future use of Lot 22 and it is recommended that this process determine its future.

While there is an excess of land, it was identified through consultation with the community that many members are not happy with the quality of infrastructure and experiences provided by these open space parks. As such, a needs based approach has to be used to ensure the current and future recreation needs of the Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland community are met.

Parks

Overall, Mullumbimby and adjoining communities are well supplied with open space for passive recreation. While many of the hinterland villages do not have parks, the rural lifestyle and size of their properties often reduces the need and demand for a local sized park. Those looking for a destination park for social gatherings or day trips would come into Mullumbimby or go towards the coast.

Similar to the trend across the Shire, the infrastructure, or lack of, is providing unsatisfactory recreation activities and experiences.

There are a number of parks around Mullumbimby that have no recreation value, but add to the scenic amenity of the area. As such, with the exception of part of Lot 22 DP 1073165, it is recommended that the majority of these spaces be maintained as natural bushland.

Master plan Heritage Park

Heritage Park has the potential to be a quality recreation park, located on the Brunswick River. The playground is frequently visited by local families, but the quality of picnic facilities restrict users from staying for extended stays. A master plan will provide future direction for the Park and ensure it is developed to its full potential as a quality town/village park. The master plan should include:

- connections to Palm Park along the Brunswick River
- access to Brunswick River for canoe and kayak launching, informal swimming and fishing
- picnic facilities that support social gatherings internal walking paths.

Upgrade Apex Park and Swimming Pool Park

Simple upgrades to the play and picnic facilities at Apex Park and Swimming Pool Park would enhance the quality of these local parks.

Community suggestions: *“It would be wonderful to have better access to the river in Mullum. It’s not particularly user friendly at the moment”*



Heritage Park, Mullumbimby

Sport parks

There are two sports parks in the Mullumbimby planning area that, land wise, meet the needs of the user groups, now and into the future. Upgrades to the ancillary infrastructure are required at both facilities.

Master plan Mullumbimby Recreation Ground Sportsfields

The oval/field at the Sportsfield is not being formally used by a sporting code. The Mullumbimby Brunswick Valley Football Club currently operates out of Pine Avenue Soccer Fields. There is opportunity for Council to suggest the Club use the oval at the Sportsfields as training overflow. An alternative option is to maintain the field/oval as an informal sports oval and develop the facility as a youth precinct.

The Sportsfield is the regional hub for tennis and netball. In poor condition, the carparks cannot accommodate the cars on competition day and popular training nights. The public toilets and netball amenities building are ageing.

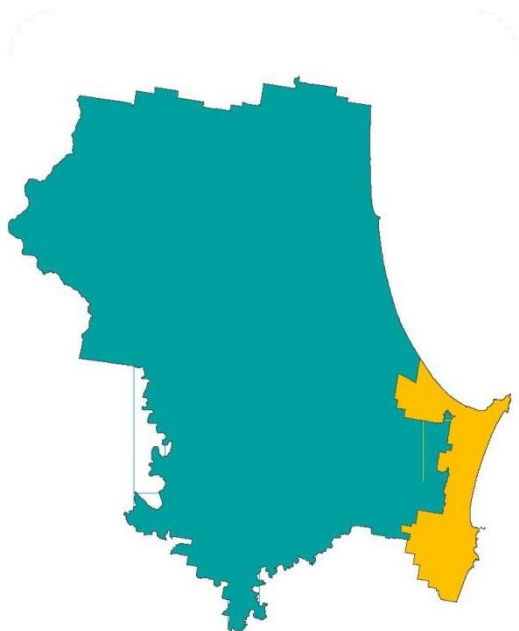
It is recommended that a master plan be developed for the Sportsfield that looks at:

- the extension and upgrade of the netball carpark
- new amenities/canteen/storage facility to cater for the needs of netball and future users
- formalised entrance into the Sportsfield
- additional two tennis courts
- relocation/removal of the skate park to either a different location within the site or a new site
- BMX/pump track
- walking track within exercise equipment
- fenced dog off-leash park

Upgrade Pine Avenue Soccer Fields

- upgrade and formalise the carpark at the facility and undertake drainage and irrigation works.

Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area



Overview

Located along the coastline, Byron Bay and Suffolk planning area has the largest population with 9,502 residents residing in the area as of the last Census (2016). An extremely popular holiday destination, the area currently attracts over 2 million visitors each year.

Compared to the Shire’s other planning areas, Byron Bay and Suffolk Park have a younger median age of 41 years. Despite this, just over a third of the households in the planning area have children, suggesting that there is a high proportion of middle aged couples/people in the area with no children. Visitor surveys conducted by Tourism Research Australian indicate that families are the most common type of visitors to the area⁵.

Planning for open space and recreation activities and experiences will need to consider the needs and expectations of local residents, taking into account concurrent use by visitors.

In 2016 the Byron Bay Town Centre Master Plan was developed as a 20 year vision for the area. Extending from Butler Street to the west, coastal foreshore to the north, Massinger Street to the east and Browning Street to the south, many of the Plan’s recommendations alter and enhance the existing open space and experiences. The Plan has been considered in the development of this Plan.

By 2036, the planning area’s population is expected to increase by an additional 4,500 people. Multi-unit dwellings are expected to accommodate the majority of this growth. With smaller or no backyards, people will look to public open space for outdoor experiences and escape.

Snapshot

Current population (2016)	9,514
0 – 14 years	14.3%
15 – 19 years	4.4%
20 – 24 years	5.1%
25 – 34 years	16.0%
35 – 44 years	14.6%
45 – 54 years	13.8%
55 – 64 years	16.2%
65 years and over	15.6%
Median age (2016)	41
Future population (2036)	13,891
Households with children	37.0%
Do not have a motor vehicle	5.4%
Need assistance with core activities	3.9%
Have internet at home	85.2%
Volunteered in the past 12 months	22.4%

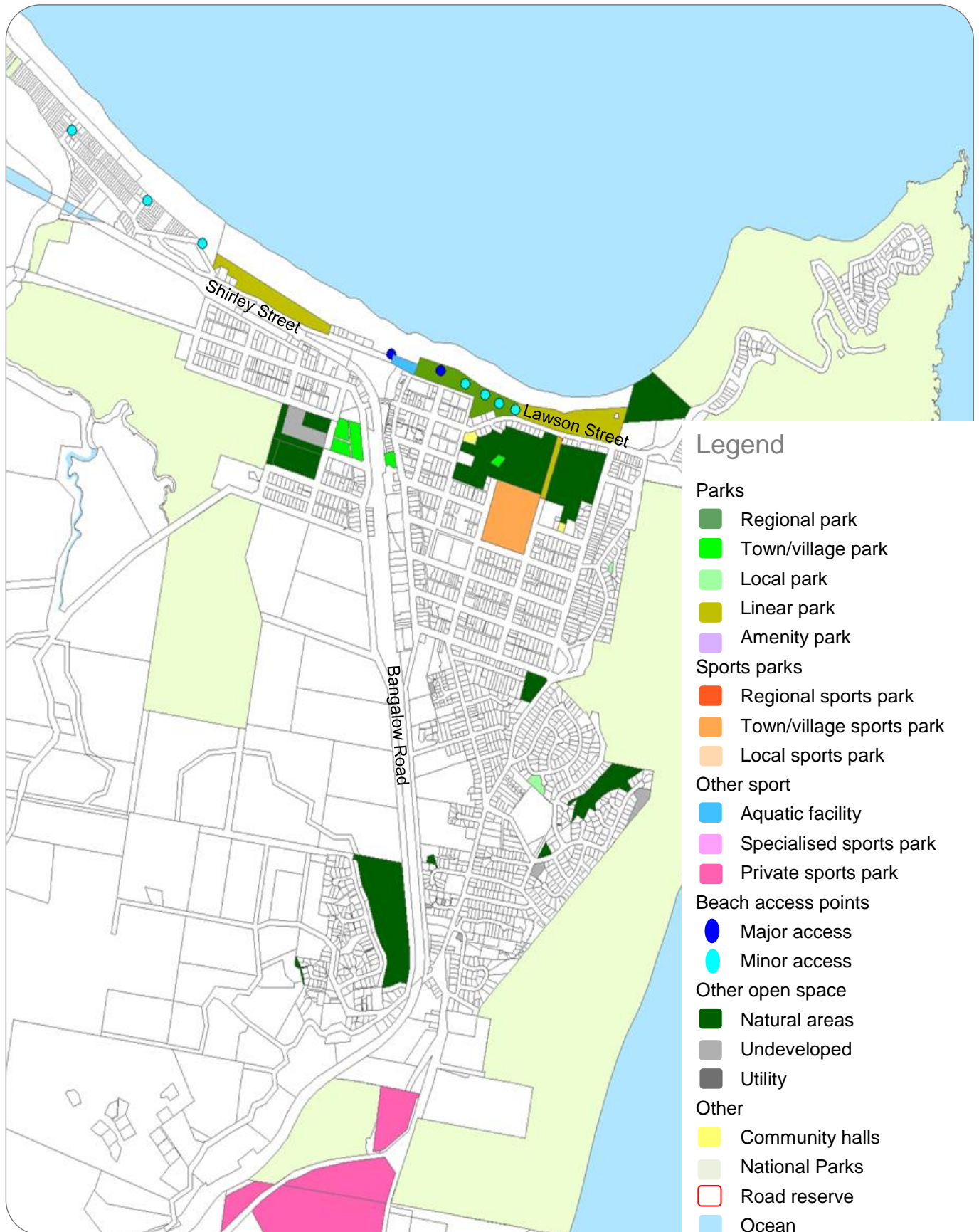
⁵ Tourism Australia 2016, Byron Shire Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey

Open space in planning area

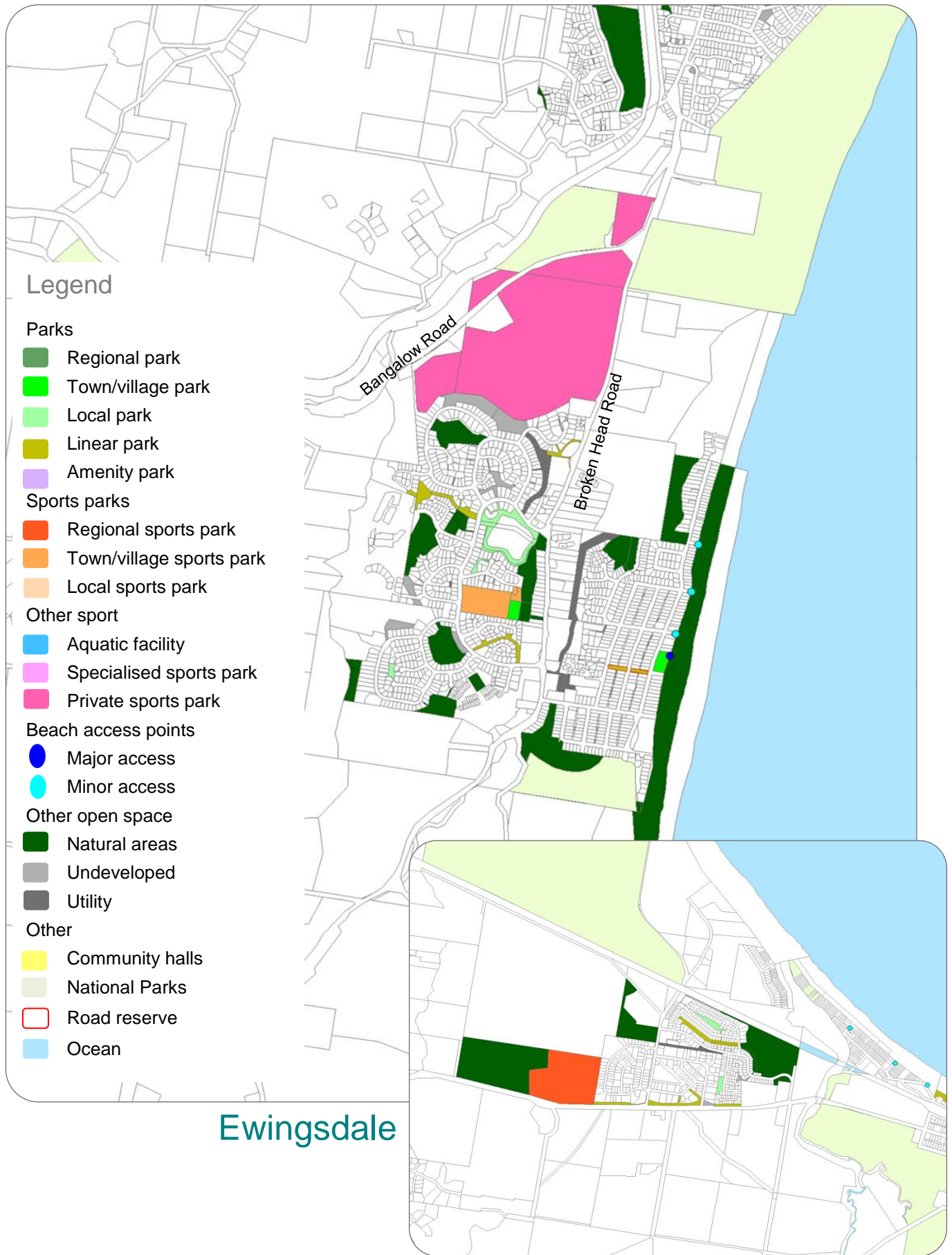
Current supply

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	% of current network (excluding National Parks)
Parks		
Regional park	3.81ha	0.62%
Village/town park	3.17ha	0.52%
Local park	6.11ha	1.00%
Linear park	13.94ha	2.27%
Amenity	-	-
Sports parks		
Regional sports park	18.60ha	3.03%
Village/town sports park	8.47ha	1.38%
Local sports park	0.95ha	0.15%
Other sports parks		
Aquatic facilities	0.46ha	0.07%
Private sport	55.06ha	8.97%
Specialised sport	-	-
Other open space		
Natural areas	131.34ha	21.40%
Undeveloped	8.22ha	1.34%
Utility	7.47ha	1.22%

Byron Bay



Suffolk Park



Current access to recreation activities and spaces

Byron Bay and Suffolk Park offer a large variety of experiences and activities to local and Shire residents and visitors. Despite the length of the popular foreshore park, it remains relatively undeveloped with two playgrounds, basic picnic facilities, and a shared walk and cycle path. Due to time and consistent use, the infrastructure is beginning to age and the community is expecting higher quality facilities and experiences.

Byron Bay

Residents living in and visiting Byron Bay have access to a variety of recreation parks, ranging from local recreation parks to regional recreation parks, depending on their desired experience. Apex Park continues to be the Shire's iconic beachfront park with a large playground (nearing the end of its life), toilets and barbecue facilities. Its proximity to the surf club only adds to its popularity.

Apart from the beach, there are limited opportunities for the older young people in Byron Bay. The skate park on Gilmore Crescent is nearing its end of life and the outdoor basketball court is run down. Many young people are creating their own entertainment by setting up slacklines in the parks or hanging-out at the Byron Bay Swimming Pool.

The Byron Bay Swimming Pool, built in 1966, is an old facility nearing the end of its life.

The area's open space network is well set-up to host community events. Butler Street Reserve currently caters for markets. Railway Park, Apex Park and the Byron Recreation Ground also host markets and community events.

Similar to the rest of the Byron Shire, safe off-road walk and cycle paths are lacking in the area. As traffic and parking issues continue to increase, residents and visitors will be looking for alternative transport methods.

Access to bushwalking is available at Cape Byron Conservation Park and Arakwal National Park and provides access to the world renowned lighthouse and lookout.

Main Beach- Belongil (western side of Main Beach car park to Manfred Street) (off-lead) is the only designated companion animals exercise area in Byron Bay.

The Cavanbah Centre, the only indoor sports facility in the Shire, is also located within the planning area.

Suffolk Park

Approximately 2km from Byron Bay, Suffolk Park's open space network is less embellished. Gaggin Park is the only formalised foreshore park in the area. It has been embellished with picnic facilities and a small playground to maintain its natural atmosphere.

There are a number of local parks serving residents and Suffolk Park Sports Field is the main sports park in the area. A skate park and full size basketball court are also located within the Sports Field. An informal (unauthorised) BMX/pump track and community garden also exists in the sport park.

There are two designated off-lead companion animals exercise areas in Suffolk Park; Tallow Beach and Beech Drive Public Reserve.

Walk and cycle paths are also limited in the area.

Current use and values

Community survey respondents from the Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area make up 44.6% of the total survey responses. A summary of the responses is presented below.

Popular spaces

The most popular spaces to participate in recreation or sporting activities were walk and cycle paths, places that allowed users to relax and socialise and ocean and creeks.

Nearly all respondents used the Shire’s open space and facilities to participate in their passive and active recreation activities, indicating minimal to no gaps in supply in this planning area, particularly compared to others.

Just under a third of respondents indicated that they left the Shire to use boat ramps and canoe launching facilities. This is markedly different to responses from Brunswick Heads planning area indicating that beyond the immediate area the facilities are located in, there may be an information gap about where the water access facilities are currently available in the Shire.

Interestingly, a quarter of respondents that used community gardens for recreation did so outside of the Shire, despite there being some in the Shire.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a number of open spaces and facilities within the Shire/planning area. Respondents were mostly satisfied with the Shire’s natural bushland, beach access points, and the Cavanbah Centre. Respondents are least satisfied with the skate parks, playgrounds and outdoor sports courts.

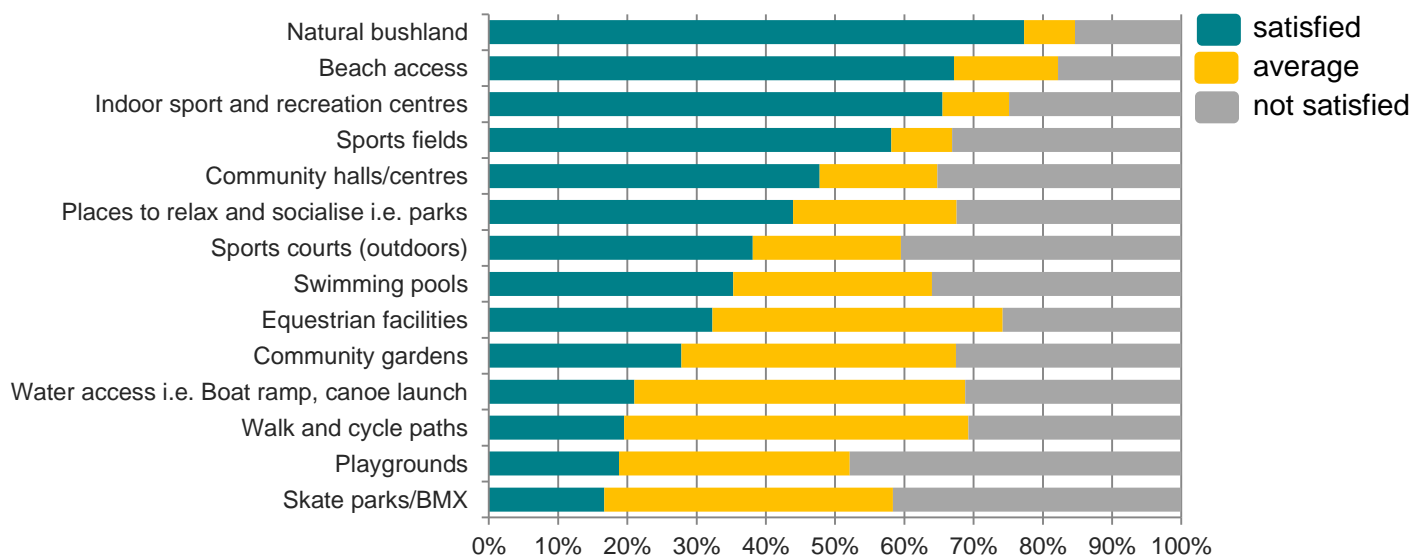


Figure 9: Community survey respondents (Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area) levels of satisfaction with recreation activities and facilities across the Shire/planning area.

Popular activities

The top three most popular activities to participate in were picnic or barbecues, ocean and creek swimming and organised sport. The only activities where more than 20% of participants did so outside the Shire include cycling (off-road), mountain biking/BMX (dependent of local terrain) and activities aimed at seniors.

Examples of what the community responding to the survey would like to see in the Shire or planning area

- the Byron Recreation Grounds remain a sport park that can also host community events
- shade (natural and artificial) provided over playgrounds
- quality play areas that cater for all age groups and are linked by a walk and cycle network
- skate park in Byron Bay
- endeavor to make active the rail corridor between Byron Bay and Bangalow
- more dog friendly areas in Byron Bay
- BMX/pump track in Byron Bay
- more activation of the recreation parks, such as outdoor movies, physical activity programs and lounge areas
- walk and cycle paths so that residents don't have to drive everywhere.



Minor beach access at Suffolk Park, Suffolk Park

Analysis of open space

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	Short term gap (1 to 10 years) (ha)	Medium term gap (11 to 20 years) (ha)	Long term gap (20 years plus) (ha)
Parks	27.04ha	+13.58ha	+8.99ha	+7.38ha
Sports parks	28.02ha	+14.56ha	+9.97ha	+8.36ha

The Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area is well supplied with land for passive and active recreation over the next 20 years. Linear parks account for 50% of the parks due to the linear nature of the planning area. In addition to the surplus of land for parks, beach access points are scattered along the coast line, providing access to the most popular location to recreate, the beach.

Despite the surplus of both parks and sports parks, the rationalisation of parks is not recommended. During peak holiday periods, the parks network, particularly along the coastline, can become quite crowded. The small local parks in the residential areas provide an escape for residents in these busy times.

Parks

Overall, the Byron Bay and Suffolk Park community area well supplied with open space for recreation. Community engagement also did not identify a lack of recreation parks. Rather, residents were more concerned about the lack of variety and quality of the network.

Discussions with the young people in the area identified the desire for adventure style play, which caters for all ages. The Town Centre Master Plan has marked Denning Park as the key location for this type of play experience.

There are a number of local recreation parks around town that currently have little recreation value or usage. However, it is not recommended that Council rationalise these spaces, as they will become important local recreation parks in the future as the population and visitor numbers increase.

A large proportion of the open space network in the planning area is linear and travels along the coastline. It is important that Council avoids over-embellishing these parks, instead, focus should be on providing walk and cycle paths and supporting infrastructure, such as bench seats, picnic tables and outdoor lounges to encourage users to relax.

Master plan Denning Park

As the signature recreation park for the Shire, a master plan for Denning Park is required. Consultation with the local young people about what should be included is required. The master plan must complement the Town Centre Master Plan and provide connections into the “open space circuit”.

Master plan the Byron Recreation Grounds

The Byron Recreation Grounds is a quality town/village sports park. However, due to its location, it has the potential to also function as a quality recreation precinct, when not being used for active recreation. It is recommended that a simple master plan be developed for the site, to identify appropriate locations for infrastructure that supports community use, such picnic facilities.

Gaggin Park

Upgrade the play facilities within the Park. Continue with the natural theme and incorporate nature play elements in the design. Relocate the toilets to the front of the Park at the end of their useful life. Improve CPTED and sightlines to the beach access point.

Railway Park

Already a busy recreation park, maintain and develop as a passive park. If the rail corridor is used in future to provide connections between places, consider developing the Park as the 'trail head'(information site).

Apex Park

Decommission the play facilities in Apex Park once construction has started on Denning Park and redevelop as a passive park with picnic tables, seating and natural shade.

Byron Bay Town Centre Master Plan

This Plan supports the open space and recreation direction proposed in the Town Centre Master Plan.

Sport open space

There are three sports parks in the Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area, that when embellished to the appropriate standard will meet the needs of the user groups.

Suffolk Park Sports Fields

The Fields act as a town/village park and sports park servicing Suffolk Park residents. The new playground and skate park offer a number of recreation experiences to the young people of the area. With a growing demand for a BMX track in the Byron Bay and Suffolk Park planning area, it is recommended that Council develop a formalised BMX/pump track in the park, and decommission the informal track in the nearby bushland.

Suffolk Park Sports Fields are underutilised. The club currently using the Fields has experienced a slight decline in membership numbers over the past two years. While this is a trend across the sporting industry, the club believes the addition of training lights at the Fields will enable the club to retain and attract new members. Other requests for the sports park include:

- clubhouse
- changerooms
- canteen facility.

It is recommended that Council consult with community to develop a Plan of Management for the site and, as part of that, investigate the future of the club and whether the investment into the desired infrastructure, particularly lighting, will attract new members and enhance the club's future.

Additionally, it is recommended that the entrance off Beech Drive be formalised and the old playground removed at the end of its useful life.

Byron Bay Recreation Grounds

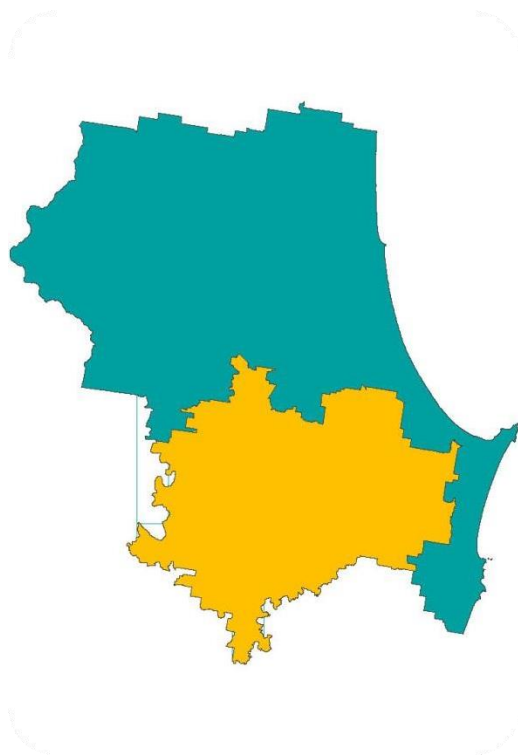
The facility currently meets the needs of the Byron Bay Football Club, however, the ancillary facilities used by the football and rugby clubs are starting to age and in need of repair. The facility is classified as a town/village sports park. It is important that any upgrades to the Grounds and ancillary infrastructure are consistent with that of a town/village sports park.

Cavanbah Centre

The Cavanbah Centre is the Shire's regional sporting facility - refer to section 5 for detailed information and recommendations.



Bangalow and Southern Hinterland planning area



Overview

Bangalow planning area is located in the south-western section of the Shire. The planning area consists of a number of small hinterland villages:

- Bangalow
- Federal
- Eureka
- Coorabell
- Possum Creek
- Binna Burra
- Nashua
- Talofa.

The majority of the planning area's open space is found in Bangalow town.

With a population of 5,664 as of the last Census (2016), approximately 50.0% reside in Bangalow town. With a median age of 45, two thirds of the population are 35 years of age or older. Consistent with the State and Byron Shire trend, the population in the Bangalow planning area is ageing.

Bangalow town has become a popular tourist destination, with many day-trippers popping in to escape the crowds in Byron Bay. Every Saturday the Bangalow Markets transform the Bangalow Hotel carpark into a busy pedestrian street, complementing the planning area's open space network.

Minimal growth is expected over the next 20 years (approximately 900 people). However, the town's tourism industry will continue to attract visitors to the town looking for quality recreation parks. As such, the planning of open space and recreation experiences needs to cater for an ageing population that desire low impact activities, and tourists with families looking for somewhere to relax and play.

Snapshot

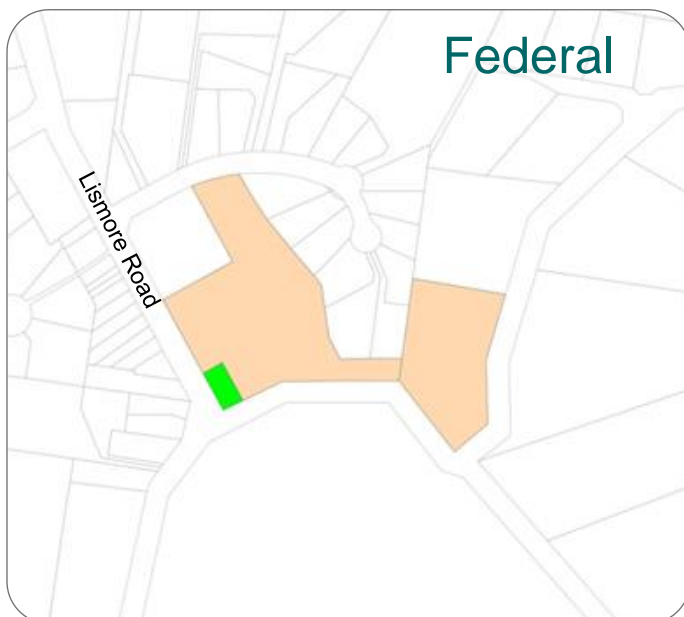
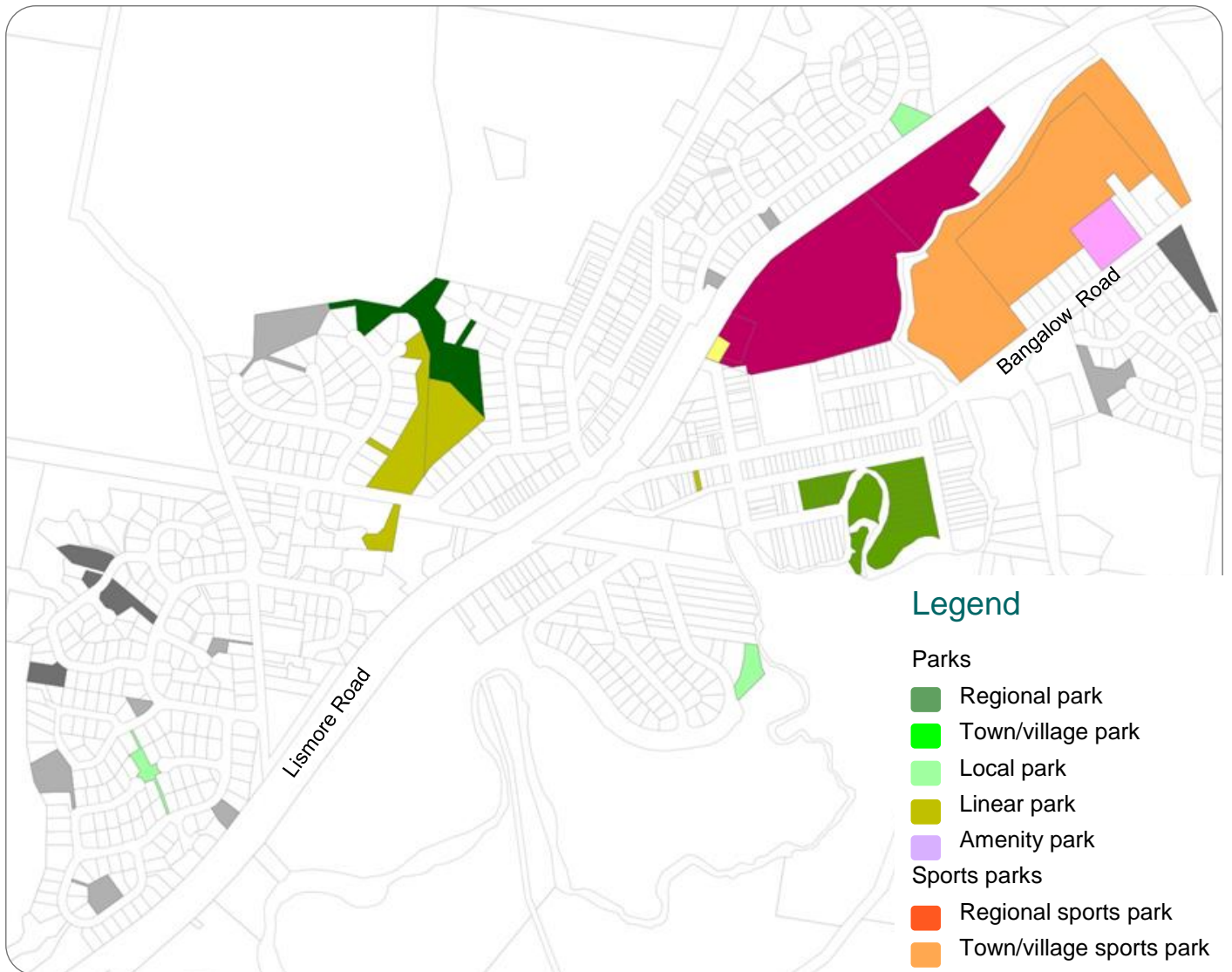
Current population (2016)	5,664
0 – 14 years	18.8%
15 – 19 years	5.0%
20 – 24 years	2.9%
25 – 34 years	8.9%
35 – 44 years	14.1%
45 – 54 years	17.3%
55 – 64 years	17.4%
65 years and over	15.8%
Median age (2016)	45
Future population (2036)	6,570
Households with children	39.3%
Do not have a motor vehicle	1.0%
Need assistance with core activities	3.7%
Have internet at home	90.1%
Volunteered in the past 12 months	27.7%

Open space in planning area

Current supply

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	% of current network (excluding National)
Parks		
Regional park	2.18ha	0.36%
Village/town park	0.07ha	0.01%
Local park	0.64ha	0.10%
Linear park	2.23ha	0.36%
Amenity	-	
Sports parks		
Regional sports park	-	
Village/town sports park	9.91ha	1.61%
Local sports park	2.62ha	0.58%
Other sports parks		
Aquatic facilities	-	
Private sport	2.52ha	0.41%
Specialised sport	9.07ha	1.48%
Other open space		
Natural areas	3.46ha	0.56%
Undeveloped	2.33ha	0.38%
Utility	3.42ha	0.56%

Bangalow



Current access to recreation activities and spaces

A number of experiences and opportunities are available across the Bangalow – Southern Hinterland planning area. While the number of experiences is not as high or varied as other planning areas, Bangalow and the Southern Hinterland is surrounded by numerous natural areas offering outdoor recreation activities.

Bangalow

Bangalow Reserve is the main recreation park in the planning area. Surrounded by Byron Creek and Bangalow Weir, the park offers picnic facilities, wedding/events area, a natural weir pool, pedestrian bridge, off leash dog area and playground.

Rankin Drive Park is a local park, which despite its size offers a half basketball court, playground and basic picnic facilities. The Bangalow skate park is located at the Bangalow Sports Fields.

Classified as a town/village sports park, the Bangalow Sports Fields is the only sports park in town. The infrastructure at the park supports tennis, football and rugby league and informal play.

Federal

Federal Parklands is a large parcel of open space that offers passive and active recreation communities. As the only park in the area, it services the local and surrounding communities. Embellishments include:

- half basketball court
- skate park
- small playground
- one tennis court (lit)
- internal pathways
- informal grasses areas.

There are no recommendations for this park, but to continue to maintain the facility as is.



Current use and values

Community survey respondents from the Bangalow planning area make-up 14.6% of the total survey responses. A summary of the responses is presented below.

Popular spaces

The most popular spaces to participate in recreation or sporting activities were natural bushland parks, swimming pool, and walk and cycle paths.

For seven of the eleven spaces that respondents used to participate in recreation activities and experiences, a quarter of participants preferred to go outside the Shire to better facilities, particularly those using an indoor sports centre or visiting a community garden. Interestingly, respondents preferred to stay within the Shire/town to relax and socialise and use the community halls/centres and dog exercise areas.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a number of open spaces and facilities within the Shire/planning area. Respondents were mostly satisfied with the Shire’s natural bushland, Cavanbah Centre and beach access points. Respondents are least satisfied with the skate parks, sportsfields and playgrounds.

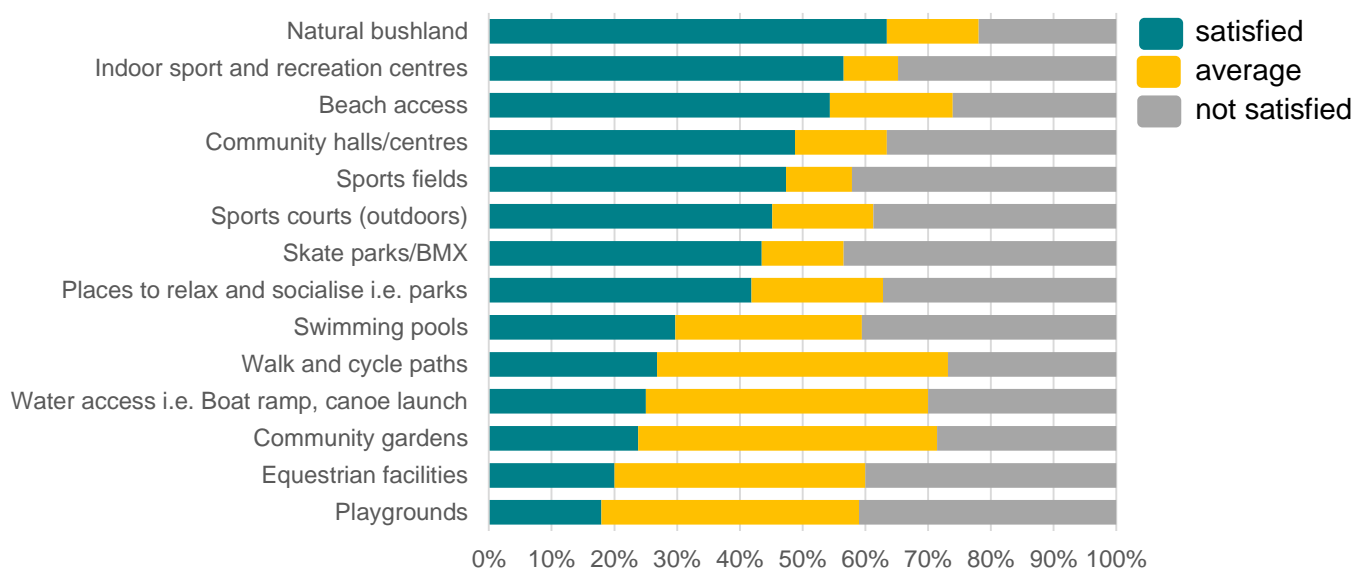


Figure 10: Community survey respondents (Bangalow and Southern Hinterland planning area) levels of satisfaction with recreation activities and facilities across the Shire/planning area.

Popular activities

The top three most popular activities to participate in were picnic or barbecues, ocean and creek swimming and walking my dog. The only activities where more than a third of participants did so outside the Shire include cycling (on- and off- road), organised, low cost physical activity programs, mountain biking/BMX (dependent of local terrain) and activities aimed at older and young people . Consultation identified that many respondents travelled to Ballina or Lennox Heads to use their facilities because they either worked there and it was more convenient (because they wanted to avoid the Byron Bay traffic).

Examples of what the community responding to the survey would like to see in the Shire or planning area

- quality play areas that cater for all age groups and are linked by a walk and cycle network
- lighting of open space to increase usage, particularly during the winter months
- improved skate park at the Bangalow Sports Fields
- endeavor to make active use of the rail corridor between Byron Bay and Bangalow
- strong support for a swimming pool in Bangalow
- netball court for training at the Bangalow Sports Fields
- walk and cycle paths around town and connections to Byron Bay, Mullumbimby and Lennox Heads.

Community suggestions: *“The women and girls of Bangalow are not being provided for with opportunities for year-round exercise and female only sports.*

Please build outdoor hard surface netball courts with lights.

Please light the walking track at Bangalow Sports Fields to enable night time use in winter and a safe environment up to 8pm”

Analysis of open space

Type of open space	Current supply (ha)	Short term gap (1 to 10 years) (ha)	Medium term gap (11 to 20 years) (ha)	Long term gap (20 years plus) (ha)
Parks	5.12ha	+1.29ha	+0.65ha	+0.01ha
Sports parks	12.54ha	+8.71ha	+8.07ha	+7.43ha

Those living in Bangalow and the Southern Hinterland planning are well supplied with land for passive and active recreation. Despite the surplus, it is not recommended that Council rationalise any spaces, as they are well distributed across Bangalow, with most of the residents being within a 400m walk of a parcel of embellished open space.

From a sports park perspective, Federal Parklands (approximately 2.63ha) also acts as a large passive park for residents and the Bangalow Sports Fields are well used by the local sporting clubs.

Recreation open space

Bagalow residents have access to a number of local recreation parks with play and picnic embellishments appropriate for a local recreation park. All of the local parks contain barbecue facilities. It is advised that Council refrains from placing barbecues in local parks to reduce maintenance resources and develop an embellishment standard consistent with the open space typology (Appendix A).

The planning area has a lot of undeveloped parcels of land dedicated as open space from the previous planning tools. While many offer little or no recreation value, they add to the scenic amenity of the town.

Upgrade Bangalow Reserve

It is recommended that upgrades be made to Bangalow Reserve to make it the village/town recreation park. Once the play equipment has reached its end of life, redevelop the play area as a nature play park, complementing the natural surroundings and waterway.

Rankin Drive Park, Parrot Tree Place Park and Charlotte Street Park

Remove the barbecue from Rankin Drive Park at the end of its life. The electric barbecues in Parrot Tree Place Park and Charlotte Street Park should be removed and relocated to other town/village parks in the Shire. Council needs to discourage developers from placing barbecues and over embellished picnic facilities in local recreation parks. One could be relocated to the Bangalow Sports Fields and used by the sporting clubs.

Elkhorn Place Playground

Undertake planting to improve the amenity of the park. Remove the giant stumps or convert into play opportunities.

Community suggestions: *“Better playgrounds for children, Bangalow in particular – very poor for a town with so many young families”*

Rail trails

The respondents to the survey from the local community indicated they are keen to see Council endeavor to make active use of the rail corridor, especially the Bangalow to Byron Bay segment. Until the trail has been approved, it is recommended that Council formalise the section of the trail between the Bangalow Sports Field and the center of town to improve connectivity and provide an alternative for people from walking/cycling along Byron Bay Road.

Sport open space

Bangalow Sports Field

Bangalow Sports Field is the only sports park in the planning area. As the Bangalow Blue Dogs Football Club’s home ground, a number of upgrades are required to make the facility a quality town/village sports park. These include:

- an all-in-one facility with changerooms, clubhouse and canteen
- upgrade lighting on the fields to a training standard
- formalise the entrance off Byron Bay Road, next to the bowls club
- remove the posts from the grass netball courts and redevelop the area as two informal netball/basketball court for the community and location netball club training
- continue to irrigate Jeff Schneider Field.

A simple master plan should be developed to provide direction and prevent ad-hoc development on the site.

Bangalow Swimming Pool

It is acknowledged and consultation confirmed, that there has been a long standing request from sections of the Bangalow community for a swimming pool to be constructed in Bangalow. Currently, the Shire is over supplied with aquatic facilities and projected population growth will not change this.



Bangalow Sports Fields, Bangalow



The Cavanbah Centre

Formerly known as the Byron Regional Sport and Cultural Complex, the Cavanbah Centre is the Shire's premier and only regional sport and recreation facility.

Located on Ewingsdale Road, the main entry thoroughfare into Byron Bay, the Cavanbah Centre is very well known by the Shire's and surrounding communities. Its location is highly visible, reasonably central and easily accessed.

As demonstrated previously in this Plan, approximately half of the expected population growth in the Shire is expected to occur in the Byron Bay/Suffolk Park planning area. This projected growth and the favourable location of the Cavanbah Centre, reinforces the importance of maintaining and developing the site as the premier sport and recreation facility in the Shire, including features such as an extended indoor sports centre and aquatic facilities.

Current users

- AFL Queensland – regional office
- Byron Football Club (AFL)
- Byron Bay Basketball Club
- Summer Futsal
- Bay Rollers
- Suffolk Park Football Club (soccer)
- Byron Bay Runners
- Byron Bay Cricket Club, Byron Bay High School, Little Kickers, Rugby Tots, Tai Chi, Netball and social volleyball
- Byron Bay Cycle Club
- Red Cross
- general community use.

Other regular users of the site include Byron Shire Council and various local businesses and community groups. In addition, ad hoc users of the site include training providers, meeting coordinators or event promoters for example.

Existing facilities

Indoor multi-purpose facility

Centrally located within the site, the indoor multi-purpose facility contains two indoor sports courts, a stage, two function and two meeting rooms, a commercial grade kitchen, change rooms and amenities, reception area, offices and an outdoor undercover area.

The facility caters for a range of sports including basketball, volleyball, badminton, roller derby and futsal. Given its size and flexibility, it also provides opportunities for dance, martial arts, pilates, lifeball, and various health and community programs. It also caters for cultural events, festivals, forums, meetings, functions, office space, and training and education classes/programs.

Within the facility, AFL Queensland leases an area for administration for the Region and the commercial kitchen is leased.

Outdoor sporting fields/courts

Essentially, there are four main playing field areas within the site:

1. premier AFL and football (soccer) fields immediately to the west of the indoor centre. These provide very high quality fields for competition and training
2. two high quality sporting fields are to the immediate north of the indoor centre catering for AFL, football (soccer) and rugby union, also utilised for competition and training
3. the field to the north-east of the indoor centre contains a turf athletics track and a large area within that was originally proposed for a hockey field
4. to the south-east of the indoor centre is a large sporting field with a synthetic cricket pitch that caters for cricket and various other outdoor sport/recreation activities
5. immediately to the east of the indoor centre are three asphalt outdoor basketball/netball courts.



Other ancillary outdoor facilities/features

- amenities block/ canteen/ changerooms
- storage sheds
- discus and shot put cage
- fixed and mobile spectator seating
- scoreboard
- kicking rebound wall.

The future

Community use

The Plan of Management for the Cavanbah Centre allows the site to cater for a wider range of sports and recreation as well as additional and ancillary activities for example, but not limited to:

- primitive camping eg. “glamping”
- markets
- training camps
- aquatic centre
- wellness centre
- skate park
- BMX track
- outdoor and indoor entertainment and events.

Indoor sport and recreation

The indoor centre is currently the only Council-managed indoor sporting facility within the Shire. However, given the generally accepted provision rates for such facilities (1:60,000 people) this is considered adequate for the indoor sport and recreation needs of the Byron Shire community. Further, development approval for an additional court has been granted, increasing the facility’s ability to adequately address such needs into the future.



The Cavanbah Centre

Outdoor sport and recreation

The sporting fields and courts at the Cav provide high quality sporting opportunities for the Shire and they should continue to be maintained to this level, strengthening the Cav's role as a premier Regional sport and recreation facility for the Shire. While the proposed hockey field and netball courts are currently under-utilised, they provide options for future growth in the use of the site and should be retained to meet future demand.

Future development of ancillary facilities of a Regional standard such as field lighting, club/change rooms and spectator accommodation should not be fragmented across town/village facilities but rather focused at the Cav. Further investigations into the development of additional storage areas within the site should be undertaken to address current and future user needs and possibly provide Council with an additional revenue stream.

Ancillary facilities

Council has investigated opportunities to reduce the costs to ratepayers of operating and maintaining the Cav and increase its long-term financial sustainability (in turn releasing limited funds for expenditure on other parts of the network and other services). Investigations have all indicated that expansion of ancillary services and facilities at the Cav is necessary to increase revenue potential and reduce operating costs, with a view to at least making its operations cost neutral.

Café

Council will need to give due consideration to the business model it adopts when entering into a lease over the food and beverage services within the site.

6 Aquatic facilities

Generally accepted provision rates for aquatic facilities by local governments are:

Town/village facilities

- provision rate of 1:60,000 people
- typically may include a heated 25m indoor program pool or a 25m or 50m outdoor lap pool, leisure pool, water play area and associated ancillary facilities.

Major/metropolitan facilities

- provision rate of 1:60,000 people
- typically may include an outdoor 50m lap pool, spectator seating, indoor 25m or 50m sports and activities pool, leisure pool or water play area, and associated ancillary facilities.

With a projected population of around 40,000 in 20 years' time, only one quality aquatic facility is required to meet current, as well as long-term future demand, according to accepted standards of service.

On 1 February 2018 Council resolved that concept plans for options for possible refurbishment of the Byron Bay Pool and possible extensions to the Cavanbah be prepared for community consultation to ascertain community priorities and preferences.

Council also resolved that feasibility reports, including costs, be provided for both the Byron Bay Pool and Cavanbah Centre sites during the exhibition to enable greater community understanding – Resolution 18-039.

This separate work is currently underway and needs to be completed to inform options for future management of aquatic facilities in the Shire.



Action plan

The Recreation Needs Assessment Plan represents an opportunity for Council to maintain and build upon the diversity of recreation services and facilities for residents and visitors.

Implementation of the recommendations outlined in this Plan will require strong leadership, appropriate resources from Council and a commitment to making some difficult decisions.

The dominant theme that came through the range of engagement processes and analysis is a direction to maintain and upgrade the existing network without necessarily focusing on building more facilities. There is limited population growth across the Shire. As a result, population-related demand for additional facilities is very limited. In essence, the focus of the Plan is to improve the quality open space facilities that Council and the community has already achieved and to further activate existing open spaces through tailored facility upgrades and embellishment. In the design of any new works or replacement of equipment accessibility should be a primary consideration.

One of Council's key intentions in developing this Plan was ensure it was realistic and achievable for the community and Council. It was important to avoid developing a long list of unrealistic community and user group expectations.

While this Plan presents a key guiding vision for Council and the community, the overlaying issue will be the capacity to fund and resource it. Exact individual project timing will be dependent on the availability of necessary funding (be it from local clubs, Council, State or Federal Governments).

The recommendations of this Plan are detailed below and are grouped by planning area - Shire-wide first. This allows interested readers easy access to those actions most directly related to them.

Priorities are assigned for each action:

- short-term recommendation should be undertaken if resources allow in the next 1-10 years
- medium term action in the next 11-20 years
- long term in 20+ years.
-

The information provided is designed as a flexible guide - changes in user priorities or earlier opportunities for funding may alter development.

Action No.	Action	Priority
SW01	Ensure that the Recreation Needs Assessment is considered in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan	Short - ongoing
SW02	Re-position the 'importance' of sport and recreation as a key community service obligation within Council. Ensure that recreation is 'positioned' as highly as formal sport.	Short - ongoing
SW03	Review and update Plans of Management to allow for greater flexibility and ensure permissible uses meet the demands of the community's changing social, sporting and recreation trends.	Short - ongoing
SW04	Adopt the open space framework as proposed in this Plan.	Short
SW05	Adopt the classification and hierarchy system over the open space network (recreation parks and sportsparks) to clarify what type of embellishments are provided and manage community/user groups expectations	Short
SW06	Develop an annual beach access point renewal program. Major access points to be a high priority, with minor completed on a north to south schedule	Short
SW07	Review user agreements and provide clearer direction over who maintains the fields and facilities and to what standard	Short
SW08	Review the Bike Plan to address cycle path issues and connectivity across the Shire	Short
SW09	Conduct an information session for councillors, the executive team and senior officers regarding modern play opportunities (consider undertaking site visits of modern play nodes in nearby councils)	Short
SW10	Complete a cost and feasibility assessment of possible options for extensions to the Cavanbah Centre and aquatic facilities as per Council's Resolution 18-039 (February 2018)	Short
SW11	Utilise the embellishment standards in this Plan as the basis for a Style Guide for parks	Short - ongoing
SW12	Review the following existing policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sun Protection - include the importance of suitable tree species as natural shade in and around play/picnic nodes Companion Animal Exercise Areas – amend as per the recommendations in this Plan Sportsfield User Policy – amend as per the recommendations in this Plan Commercial and Other Activities on Public Lands and Roads Policy – eg consider including organised informal/formal active recreation activities (bootcamps, personal trainers, Park Run etc.) 	Short / Medium

Action No.	Action	Priority
SW13	Promote widely the existing recreation and outdoor recreation opportunities, including canoeing and kayaking to residents and potential visitors	Short – ongoing
SW14	Undertake a canoe/kayak/water access strategy for the Shire	Medium
SW15	Review potential use of railway corridor consistent with the findings of the report commissioned to review Multi Use of the Rail Corridor (<i>however, should be undertaken as part of the Bike Plan (action SW08)</i>)	Short-Medium
Brunswick Heads and Ocean Shores Planning Area		
BHOS1	Ensure new or upgrades to footpaths and shared paths and recommendations from the Bike Plan (<i>action SW08</i>) address accessibility and include supporting infrastructure such as seating, water bubblers, shade and lighting.	Ongoing
BHOS2	Investigate the feasibility of adding an additional field to Shara Boulevard Sports Fields (this will determine if Tom Kendal Reserve, New Brighton (<i>action BHOS5</i>), is redeveloped as a community and recreation precinct). If feasible, develop the additional field.	Short Medium
BHOS3	Master plan Banner, Torakina, Venture and South Beach Parks into a riverside and foreshore recreation precinct	Short
BHOS4	Upgrade the playspace at South Golden Beach Hall Grounds, South Golden Beach. Incorporate natural and artificial shade.	Short
BHOS5	Master plan Tom Kendal Reserve, New Brighton, as a community and recreation precinct, and subject to the outcomes, decommission Tom Kendal Reserve as a sports park and redevelop the Reserve as a community and recreation precinct	Medium
BHOS6	Increase the usage capacity of the fields at Brunswick Heads Recreation Ground by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lighting the fields (investigate the costs of lighting all fields to a training standard and the main field/oval to competition standards) install bench seats, spectator facilities and shade structures upgrade the canteen facilities adding storage area 	Medium
BHOS7	Investigate appropriate canoe and kayak launching sites at the following locations (<i>should be undertaken as part of the canoe/kayak and water access strategy - action SW14</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshalls Creek (Tom Kendal Reserve or Cassons Lane) Simpsons Creek (Brunswick Heads riverfront and just north of the Brunswick Heads Bowling Club) Yelgun Creek (Kolara Way Park, South Golden Beach) 	Medium

Action No.	Action	Priority
BHOS8	Upgrade the embellishments at Waterlily Park, Ocean Shores to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal walkway • boardwalk and viewing platforms • shade over play • fenced off-leash dog park 	Short - Medium
Mullumbimby and Northern Hinterland Planning Area		
MU1	Ensure new or upgrades to footpaths and shared paths recommendations from the Bike Plan (<i>action SW08</i>) address accessibility and include supporting infrastructure such as seating, water bubblers, shade, lighting and dog waste bag dispensers.	Ongoing
MU2	Working with Council's Access Consultative Working Group, Mullumbimby High School and Petria Thomas Swimming Pool operators, review pedestrian movement, crossings, disabled parking and accessibility in that area.	Short
MU3	Master plan Heritage Park to become a quality recreation park with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connections to Palm Park along the Brunswick River • access to the Brunswick River for canoe and kayak launching and fishing • picnic facilities that support social gatherings • internal walking paths 	Short
MU4	Master plan Mullumbimby Recreation Grounds Sportsfields as a youth and sporting precinct with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extension and upgrade of the netball carpark • new amenities/canteen/storage facility to cater for the needs of netball and future users • formalised entrance into the Sportsfield • additional two tennis courts • relocation of the skate park • BMX/pump track • walking track with exercise equipment • fenced dog off-leash park 	Medium
MU5	Formalise the carpark at Pine Avenue Soccer Fields and undertake drainage and irrigation works	Medium
MU6	Upgrade the play and picnic facilities at Apex Park	Long
MU7	Upgrade the play and picnic facilities at Swimming Pool Park	Long
Byron Bay and Suffolk Park Planning Area		

Action No.	Action	Priority
BBSP1	Ensure new or upgrades to footpaths and shared paths recommendations from the Bike Plan (<i>action SW08</i>) address accessibility and include supporting infrastructure such as seating, water bubblers, shade, lighting and dog waste bag dispensers.	Ongoing
BBSP2	Master plan Denning Park to become the signature playground for the Shire with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play elements are adventurous • there are a variety of elements that cater to all ages (even adults) • a proportion of elements must be all accessible • a themed approach to honour the Byron Shire celebrated lifestyle connections to surrounding open space • mix of natural and artificial shade 	Short
BBSP3	Decommission the playground at Apex Park once construction has commenced on Denning Park	Medium
BBSP4	Review potential use of railway corridor consistent with the findings of the report commissioned to review Multi Use of the Rail Corridor.	Short-Medium
BBSP5	Upgrade the ancillary facilities at Suffolk Parks Sports Field to a town/village sports park standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lighting to a training standard • formalise the entrance of Beech Drive • remove the old playground at the end of its life • investigate the development of all-in-on clubhouse/ changeroom/ canteen facility • construct a BMX/pump track in the Park 	Medium
BBSP6	Upgrade the play facilities in Gaggin Park. Continue with the natural theme and incorporate nature play elements in the design. Relocate the toilets to the front of the Park at the end of their useful life. Improve CPTED and sightlines to the beach access point.	Medium
BBSP7	Investigate a new location for the Byron Bay skate park	Short
BBSP8	Continue to develop the Byron Recreation Grounds in accordance with adopted Plan of Management	Medium
Bangalow and Southern Hinterland Planning Area		
BA1	Ensure new or upgrades to footpaths and shared paths recommendations from the Bike Plan (<i>action SW08</i>) address accessibility and include supporting infrastructure such as seating, water bubblers, shade, lighting and dog waste bag dispensers.	Ongoing

Action No.	Action	Priority
BA2	Remove the electric barbecues from the following local recreation parks (and discourage from placing barbecues in local recreation parks in the future): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rankin Drive Park • Parrot Tree Place Park • Charlotte Street Park 	Short
BA3	Upgrade the play and picnic facilities in Bangalow Reserve to make it the destination village/town recreation park. Once the play equipment has reached its end of life, redevelop the play area as a nature play park, complementing the natural surroundings and waterway	Medium
BA4	Develop a shared pathway along the disused railway line to connect Bangalow and Byron Bay (<i>should be undertaken as part of the Bike Plan action SW08, SW15 and BBSP4</i>)	Medium
BA5	Upgrade the ancillary facilities at Bangalow Sports Field to a town/village sports park standard, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an all in one facility with changerooms, clubhouse and canteen • upgrade the lighting on the fields to a training standard • formalise the entrance off Byron Bay Road, next to the bowls club • remove the posts from the grass netball courts and redevelop the area as two informal netball/basketball courts for the community and local netball club for training • continue to irrigate Jeff Schneider Field 	Medium
BA6	Undertake planting in Elkhorn Place Playground to improve the amenity of the park. Remove the giant stumps or convert into play opportunities	Long



Appendices

Appendix A: Open space typologies

Local park

Description and intent

Local parks provide a range of recreation opportunities for local residents. These parks contain limited infrastructure, yet offer local community benefits.

Local parks are intended to offer residents a complementary open space to their backyards and the beaches. They are likely to attract users from a small catchment area and generally cater for short visits by individuals or small groups.

Local parks will be centrally located to the catchment or as hubs along recreation corridors (where such corridors exist). There are many cost and land efficiencies (such as from dual use of land and consolidation of embellishments) that can be gained by developing hubs along pathways that connect key community areas such as: residents to schools, commercial hubs etc.

Where a number of parks are to be provided, or are to receive embellishment upgrades within an area or community, community recreation master plans may be developed. These plans will ensure that the park embellishment suitably and collectively meets the needs and demands of the community. Furthermore, each park should complement nearby open space and be relevant to the local area, its character and demographic.

Design considerations

The following elements should be considered when designing and developing a local park:

- park to be located in a residential area and easy for residents to walk and ride to
- accessibility for users
- facilities to be clustered in an activity area, ideally located under natural shade where possible
- mix of 3 activity options, such as:
 - basic toddler play (spring toy, slide and swing)
 - rebound wall
 - path circuit
 - flat kick-about area
- multi-generational equipment to service a range of age groups
- multi-functional equipment which can be used for both play and exercise (e.g. parkour equipment, monkey bars)
- picnic table and seats to be located where they can oversee and access the activity area (preferably under a shade tree), along the internal path
- surveillance of the majority of the park should be available from adjacent properties and from the road
- internal paths to connect to on-road pathway system and connect to the key activity area in the park. If the park can act as a short cut for pedestrians it may also encourage them to stop and utilise the facilities
- embellishments in the parks complement those in nearby parks (increasing the range of facilities available to nearby residents) and be relevant to the local area's character and demographic
- design and embellishment of parks reflect the demographic desires of the local catchment .

Village/town park

Description and intent

Village/town parks are larger sized parks providing a range of opportunities and activity spaces for recreation. These parks have facilities to cater for large groups and are appealing to a wide range of users. Village/town parks can service several suburbs depending on population density, and are well known destinations for those people living within their catchment. Ideally, village/town parks are located near social infrastructure such as schools, community centres and halls.

Design considerations

The following elements should be considered when designing and developing a village/town park:

- design should reflect a broad range of needs (i.e. something for all ages and abilities) and accessibility for users should be a key design consideration
- one main activity node which has clusters of activities for different age groups (i.e. park equipment designed for teenagers to be together, and near to the activity node for younger age groups). This helps separate the age cohorts but keeps all activities in one larger area to assist carers monitoring activities
- the activity area could include (in addition to those listed in the local recreation park type):
 - skate park, climbing structure, outdoor table tennis
 - bike activity track/learn-to-cycle facility
 - outdoor exercise stations
 - all-abilities play (design and layout should seek to integrate all of the play facilities together to provide social inclusion and integration of all abilities)
 - gazebos for larger groups
 - unisex toilets
 - grouped picnic toilets
- activity area to be ideally located under natural shade, however, may be supplemented by artificial shade
- there should be clear sight-lines into the park from nearby road and other land uses, especially the main activity area
- picnic areas located where they oversee the activity area
- embellishments in the parks could be themed
- if there are multiple town/village parks in the same suburb/s each should have a range of (preferably different) recreation opportunities
- amenities to be near road and activity area for surveillance
- pathways link areas within the park and externally
- off-street car parking is required.

Regional park

Description and intent

These open spaces are major recreation parks that offer a wide variety of opportunities to a broad cross-section of Byron's residents and visitors. They are large, embellished for recreation, are well-known amongst residents and are major destinations.

People are usually content spending several hours in these parks. Regional parks offer unique experiences. They are often used to host large community events such as carols in the park, Australia Day celebrations and other festivals. Regional parks offer exciting and no cost activities for residents and visitors.

Design considerations

The following elements should be considered when designing and developing a regional park:

- undertake a master plan of the park. This is likely to include a long-term vision that can take many years to activate (potentially 10-15 years). The master plan should be staged so that it can be rolled out as demand is generated (and as resources allow)
- community input into the design of the park should occur (at master plan stage and as changes occur). This is important as the community will have specific thoughts and concerns regarding this level of park
- accessibility and inclusion must be key design considerations
- multiple activity nodes may exist. However, these nodes will be unique, not replicated within the park and will add to the overall quality and attractiveness of the park
- potential to have some low key commercial activity such as kiosks, cafes, museums
- potential to have an array of buildings that offer some community service such as a nursery offering free street trees, environmental education centres, community training rooms, libraries etc
- park to be located where people can access easily
- park should preferably have a variety of settings, from natural areas to highly-embellished activity areas, including zero-depth water play.

Town/village sports park

Description and intent

Town/village sports parks and courts provide the vast majority of the venues for the Shire's training and club fixtures. A range of sports are catered for in these multi-use buildings including both field and court sports. Supporting buildings provided at town/village sports parks and courts allow clubs to effectively operate and include amenities, pavilion, storage, lighting and car parking.

Design considerations

The following elements should be considered when designing and developing town/village parks:

- undertake a site master plan to set the direction for the facility
- where possible, aim for sports facilities to meet state sporting organisation preferred standards
- internal path network to allow for connections within and to land adjacent to the facility
- accessibility and inclusion for both users and spectators must be key design considerations
- maximise trees and natural shade around fields and courts (although careful tree selection for court areas is important to avoid issues associated with root invasion and limb, leaf or seed fall)
- long benches and spectator areas should be placed under shade trees where possible. Shaded spectator grass mounds can also provide good viewing areas
- hard surfaces should be minimised by developing the minimum number of sealed parking bays, and providing turf/unsealed overflow parking (for bigger spectator games, if required)
- consideration to be made regarding noise and light spillage with regards to its impact on surrounding land uses
- all field and court orientation to be north-south (or as close to as possible)
- facility to include clubhouse with basic infrastructure that is suitable for a variety of uses. Clubhouse to be centrally located where possible. Internal spaces to include:
 - amenities, changerooms and public toilets
 - kitchen/kiosk
 - first aid, massage/strapping areas
 - office and storage
 - social area
- flexible design to allow for multiple current (e.g. summer and winter sporting season) and future uses of the open space
- design consideration to allow for potential alternative events and temporary uses (circus, festivals, events, commercial activities, activities identified in Plans of Management etc)
- consider collocating with local/town/village park – especially in smaller communities to maximise land efficiencies.

Regional sports park

Description and intent

Regional open space (sports parks and courts) are larger parks providing a greater number of fields/ovals and multi-purpose courts for formal sporting purposes. These parks include a range of training and competition infrastructure as well as supporting infrastructure such as clubhouses, amenities, car parking, lighting and passive recreation nodes.

The level and quality of facilities at regional open space buildings enable clubs (or associations) to host higher-level competitions and multi-day carnivals.

Sports parks and courts provide free, unrestricted access to the public when formal sport is not being undertaken. Public access may also include special and community events being hosted at these larger facilities including exhibitions, shows and festivals.

Design considerations

The following elements should be considered when designing and developing regional open space:

- undertake a master plan for the site to ensure appropriate development in line with the established direction
- accessibility and inclusion for both users and spectators must be key design considerations
- ensure an internal path network to allow for connections within and to the wider network
- maximise trees and natural shade around fields and courts (although careful tree selection is important to avoid issues associated with limb, leaf or seed fall)
- benches and spectator areas should be placed under shade trees where possible. Shaded spectator grass mounds can also provide good viewing areas in addition to built grandstands
- hard surfaces should be minimised by developing the minimum number of sealed parking bays, and providing turf/unsealed overflow parking (for bigger games and events)
- internal road and parking layout to accommodate bus drop-off and turn around
- consideration to be made regarding noise and light spillage and impact on surrounding
- uses field and court orientation to be north-south (or as close to as possible)
- provision of ample storage. Should be located near the clubhouse(s) and form one single large shed (or preferably be combined into clubhouse design to reduce built structures)
- clubhouse to be of significant size and offer flexibility in design to cater for a range of uses (consider beyond those sports anticipated to use the site at opening). Clubhouses to be centrally located to service fields. Internal spaces to include storage, kitchen/kiosk, multiple change rooms and amenities, public toilets, offices, versatile function/activity space and medical rooms
- recreation/activity area to consider the users of sports when designing nodes (e.g. play for spectators/children). These should ideally be clustered together and located under natural shade (where possible)
- complementary commercial opportunities could be considered at the facility (physiotherapy, personal trainers etc.)
- provision of adequate signage especially within large, multiple use regional sports parks (e.g. directional and information signs).

Appendix B: Department of Education sport and recreation facilities

School	Facilities
Public Schools	
Bangalow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 50m x 100m of grass space within school grounds for play/sport purposes • Playground equipment
Brunswick Heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Netball court • Approx 80m x 40m grass space
Byron Bay	Approx. 60m x 100m oval space
Coorabell	Tennis court
Crabbes Creek	Rectangular oval approx. 100m x 30m
Eureka	150m x 150m oval space shared with the football club
Goonengerry	Medium oval space
Main Arm	Small oval space
Mullumbimby	Medium sized grassed area
Ocean Shores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30m x 50m grass space for sport purposes • Play equipment • Large grass area at back of school for sport/play purposes
The Pocket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30m x 50m grass space for sport purposes • Play equipment • Large grass area at back of school for play/sport purposes
Secondary Schools	
Byron Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full size rectangular sports field • Two synthetic Netball and basketball courts • Indoor multi-purpose centre (basketball, volleyball, etc) • Large, lit sports oval in adjacent St Finbar's Catholic Primary School
Mullumbimby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-purpose hall • Outdoor basketball, tennis and volleyball courts • Sports field and athletics track