

# Miller Park

## Plan of Management



January 2006

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## Introduction

This plan of management has been prepared by Cessnock City Council for Miller Park in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993.

This plan of management is an important document providing a clear framework for the future management of land in the care and control of council. This plan will enable Cessnock City Council to produce a consistent and effective set of guidelines which will govern the management of its community land.

The Local Government Act, 1993 states that community land is land that is reserved for community use. The Act also states that councils must categorise all community land according to its function. The majority of community land covered by this Plan is categorised as Sportsground in accordance with Section 36 (4) of the Act (refer to Figure 1). The core objectives of community land categorised as Sportsground are:

- (a) To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games; and
- (b) To ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.

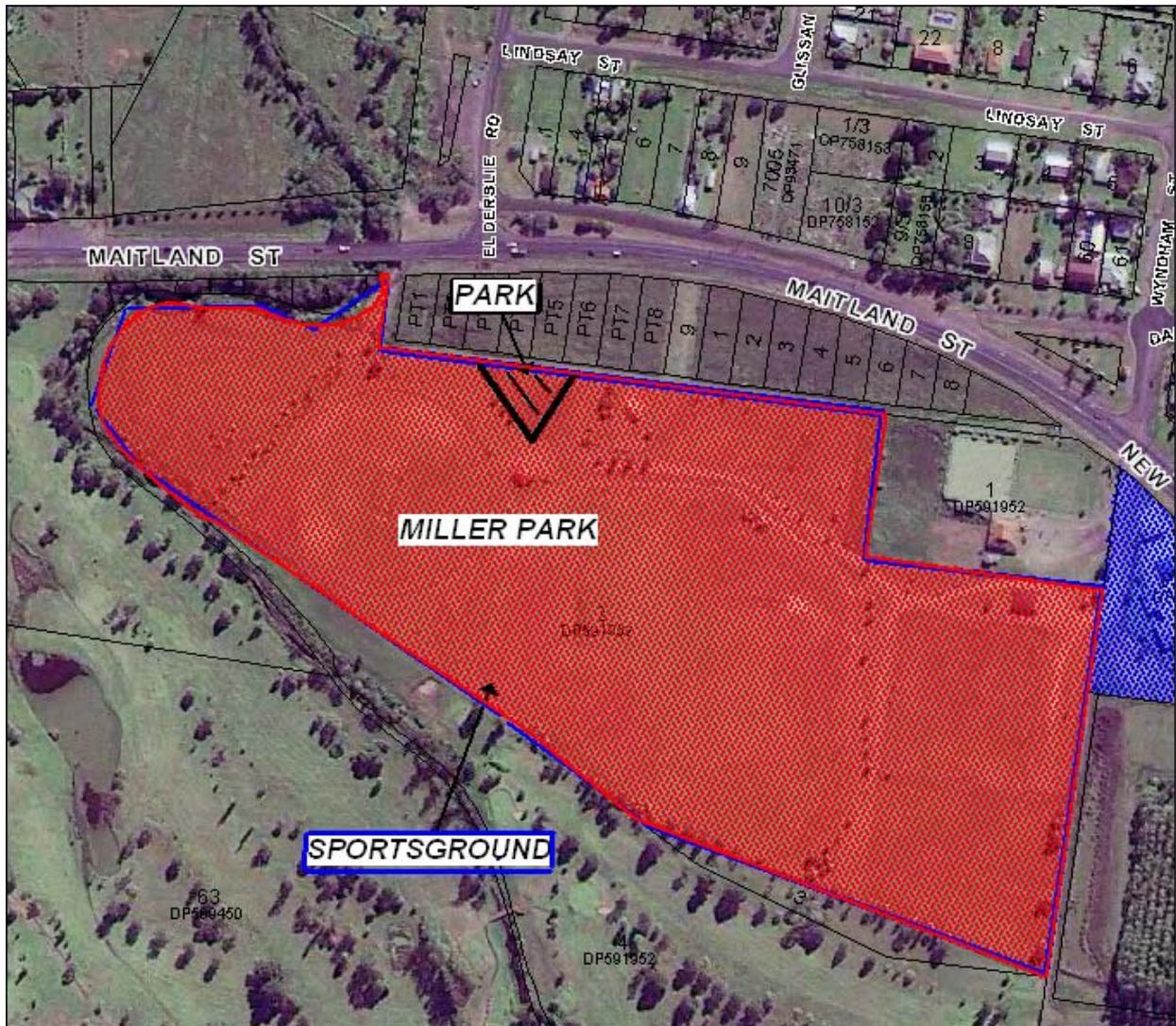
In addition there is Parkland located within the site, this area is categorised as Park in accordance with section 36 (4) of the Act (refer to Figure 1). The core objectives for management of community land categorised as park are:

- (a) To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities; and
- (b) To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

This Plan of Management will be reviewed quarterly and annually during the budget process to assess implementation and performance, and fully reviewed after five years to allow policy and planning issues to be updated.

## Figure 1: Site Plan

### MILLER PARK



Cessnock City Council (C)  
62-78 Vincent Street  
CESSNOCK NSW 2325

Property Information :

Address : 0 Maitland ST, BRANXTON  
Authority ParcelID : 11869  
Title : LOT: 2 DP: 591952  
Area : 124642.04 sq m  
Perimeter : 1732.9 m  
Council Type : Community  
Title Description : Council Owned Land  
Property Description: Miller Park  
Legal Docs:  
Assessment No. : 155523

Postal Address :

Cessnock City Council (C)  
62-78 Vincent Street  
CESSNOCK NSW 2325

## Objectives

The key objectives which give direction to this plan are:

- To plan for the continual development and maintenance of recreational resources to a high standard within Miller Park for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of the parks and sportsgrounds within Miller Park as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events at Miller Park;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land within Miller Park;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe, high quality recreational opportunities at Miller Park;
- Distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates in regards to Miller Park;
- To maintain clear communication channels with stakeholders, the public and nearby residences;
- To make provision for the sale of undesirable open-space areas, leases, licences and agreements in respect of the utilisation of council's recreational assets; and
- To make provision for licence agreements for periods up to 21 years in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets.

## **Background**

Prior to the recent redevelopment of Miller Park the site consisted of cricket fields, soccer fields and a large open space area. A number of key factors initiated the redevelopment of this site. As illustrated in Councils Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan there was a recognised need for additional recreation facilities within the Branxton and Greta area to cater for the growing number of sporting and community groups. Miller Park was nominated as the most suitable site due to its centrality and its potential for further redevelopment.

Miller Park is a sub-regional sporting facility consisting of netball courts, tennis courts, soccer fields, cricket fields, an athletics track, a children's playground and a large open space area.

## **The Physical Setting**

Miller Park is situated in Branxton. Vehicle access to the facility is available via a turn off from the New England Highway. In addition pedestrian access is available via Maitland Street by the way of a walking path. Miller Park consists of 12.46 hectares owned by Cessnock City Council. Miller Park comprises the following parcel of land – 0 Maitland Street Cessnock, Lot 2, DP591952.

## **Buildings and Facilities**

Miller Park is a multi-use outdoor sporting facility that services the Branxton, North Rothbury and Greta communities. The site contains a number of facilities including netball courts, tennis courts, cricket fields, soccer fields, a passive park area, and an athletics track. Each of these facilities will be analysed individually to present a more detailed overview.

### **Soccer fields**

There are four soccer fields located on the eastern side of Miller Park. Two of these fields are junior fields and two are senior fields.

A senior soccer field is located in front of the amenities block near the entrance to Miller Park. The field is well grassed and in relatively good condition. The field contains metal goal posts at either end of the playing area. Located in the North West corner of this field is a metal stand, containing the junior soccer clubs logo. Located on the western side of the senior field are two metal shelters containing timber bench seats. This area is utilised by participants during half time as a rest area and is also used by substitutes waiting to take the field.

To the rear of this soccer field are two junior soccer fields. These fields are well grassed with the surface being relatively flat and smooth. Each of the junior fields contains metal goal posts at both ends of the playing field.

Bordering the southern side of the junior fields is Branxton Golf Course. The golf course is sectioned off along the length of Miller Park with a barbed wire fence.

The three fields are fully fenced on three sides.

An additional soccer field is located to the east of the main soccer fields. This field is well grassed and in relatively good condition. This field is a combined use field catering for little athletics and soccer. Four floodlights are situated around the perimeter of the field. A metal fence surrounds the field. An informal roadway and carpark separate both fields. Newly planted trees are situated within this area.

### **Soccer Amenity Block**

A brick amenity block is located at the entrance to Miller Park facing the main soccer fields. The building is relatively old but is in fair condition. Two changerooms are located within the amenity block. Each changeroom contains bathroom amenities consisting of showers, toilets and hand basins. The amenity block contains a men's toilet and a ladies toilet. A kiosk is located at the front of the building providing an open view of the soccer fields. The kiosk contains benches for serving and preparing food, and kitchen amenities consisting of a kitchen sink and hand basin. Fixture chalk boards are mounted on the wall on the northern side of the building. The amenities block also contains a store room where cleaning and sports equipment are stored.

A storage container is located to the right of the amenities block.

### **Athletics Field**

The athletics field is a combined use field with little athletics occurring in the summer season and soccer taking place in the winter season.

The athletics field is located on the eastern side of Miller Park alongside the soccer fields. A metal fence is situated around the perimeter of the field. The field is well grassed and in relatively good condition.

During the summer season the field is marked for little athletics. This field contains a 400 metre running track, a field events area and a long jump pit.

## **Netball Courts**

There are two asphalt netball courts located at Miller Park. These courts contain metal goal posts at each end of the courts. This area is fenced in along the southern and western sides of the facility. Four floodlighting poles are situated around the perimeter of the netball courts.

## **Tennis Courts**

Located next to the netball courts are two synthetic grass tennis courts. These courts contain a large fence around both courts as well as a fence between courts. Four eco lights are situated around the perimeter of the tennis courts. These lights enable night games/competitions and training.

## **Children's Playground**

A children's playground is located to the right of the netball facilities. Sails cover the playground to provide a shaded play area. The playground was the LGA's first accessible playground and contains ramps and bridges, climbing apparatus, a slippery slide, activity panels, a fitness track and a see-saw. The play equipment is in good condition and a combination of synthetic grass and coarse river sand is used as softfall material.

There are three picnic shelters and a wooden picnic table located within the playground. A covered barbeque and an old bubbler are also situated within this area.

## **Tennis/Netball Amenity Block**

A new amenity block was being constructed at the time of this plan. It is located between the netball and tennis courts at the northern end of Miller Park and is due to be operational in March 2006. The amenity block contains purpose built netball and tennis facilities incorporating storage, kiosk, kitchenette, changeroom facilities and outdoor shaded areas. Additionally, male, female and accessible toilets are located at the front of the building.

## **Cricket Fields**

The cricket fields are located in the western portion of Miller Park. The main cricket oval is located to the east of the passive parkland. This oval is well grassed and in relative good condition. A metal fence surrounds the perimeter of the field. The field contains a turf cricket pitch in the middle of the oval. The cricket pitch possesses an automatic irrigation system which aids in the maintenance of the site.

A second cricket oval is located to the east of the main cricket oval. Grass coverage on this field is satisfactory. The oval contains a turf cricket pitch. The field is surrounded by a metal fence. Newly planted trees are situated along the western fence line.

## **Cricket Amenity Block**

A third brick amenity block is located between the two cricket ovals. This building contains a men's and ladies toilet, and a store room. A shaded area is provided at the front of the building where metal benches are also located. Located alongside the amenity block is a scoreboard.

There are two practice cricket nets located in front of the amenity block. The nets have concrete flooring with a synthetic grass cover and are enclosed by a chain wire fence. Mounted upon the fence is a memorial sign stating 'Ron Dixie Duggan, Memorial Nets'. To the rear of the practice nets is a metal fence. This fence aims to prevent stray cricket balls from continuing through Miller Park.

## **Passive Parkland**

A passive park area is located in the western portion of Miller Park. This area contains trees scattered throughout and three picnic tables and settings. An off leash dog exercise area has recently been proposed in the western most part of Miller Park.

## **Land Use and Activity**

Miller Park is a sub regional recreation facility that caters for a number of sports and community events. The redevelopment of this site has directly benefited sporting and community groups and residents within the Branxton, North Rothbury and Greta area.

The fields located within Miller Park are utilised on an annual basis for a number of sports including little athletics, cricket and soccer. Activities these sporting groups undertake include general club competition and training.

Netball is a popular sport which occurs year round on the newly constructed netball courts. Activities undertaken on these courts include general club competition and training.

The newly constructed tennis courts located within Miller Park are utilised year round. General club competition and training occur at the site. The tennis courts are also utilised by local community groups such as playgroups.

The playground is utilised year round by children. This area is also a popular destination for playgroups.

The grounds within Miller Park are utilised for passive recreational use such as walking and running. Picnicking is an activity that occurs often within the open space areas provided at the site.

All of the sporting facilities within Miller Park are utilised by local primary and high schools for school sport and competitions.

The exercising of dogs off their leashes in the western most part of Miller Park is expected to be formalised by Council in 2006.

## Maintenance of Facilities

Council is responsible for the maintenance of the grassed sporting fields, the netball courts, the playground and the passive park area. Maintenance responsibilities for these areas include:

- Line marking - Council line marks playing fields once a year. Clubs are responsible for any additional line marking;
- Maintenance of playing field surfaces;
- Mowing of all grassed areas within the boundary of the premises;
- Maintenance of playground;
- Maintaining fences and barriers;
- Maintaining picnic shelters and all other forms of seating;
- Drainage;
- Floodlighting;
- Irrigation; and
- Amenities.

At the time of this plan Council was negotiating a lease agreement with the Branxton District Tennis Club regarding the use of the tennis facilities located within Miller Park. It is anticipated this agreement will be for a period of five years. Maintenance responsibilities will be outlined in this agreement.

This plan of management authorises the granting of easements where the Council decides it is necessary to do so.

In addition this plan of management authorises the granting of leases and licences or delegation of management of the land for purposes consistent with the goals, issues and objectives included in the plan. Leases and licences may be for periods up to 21 years, subject to the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993.

## **Future Land Use**

Future plans for the use of the facilities within Miller Park are varied. Future short term casual uses include:

- Food Vending;
- Busking and Entertainment;
- Sale of Alcohol;
- Community and Private events;
- Filming; and
- Use of buildings.

Fees may be charged for the use of Miller Park, which will be dependant on the type of use. These fees will be determined by Council.

## Management of the Land

The objective and performance targets below provide the framework for the management of Miller Park. The objective and performance targets listed are consistent with anticipated availability of resources.

The priorities in this implementation action plan have been determined through community consultation and recreation planning data and are subject to the availability of resources.

This action plan will be reviewed annually and adjustments made in conjunction with the annual estimates process.

The key objectives which were cited in the introduction are revisited to illustrate what each strategy is aiming to achieve.

- To plan for the continual development and maintenance of recreational resources to a high standard for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe high quality recreational opportunities;
- Distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates;
- To maintain clear communication channels with stakeholders, the public and nearby residences; and
- To make provision for the sale of undesirable open-space areas, leases, licences and agreements in respect of the utilisation of council's recreational assets; and
- To make provision for licence agreements for periods up to 21 years in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets.

## Implementation Action Plan

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Recreation Resources</b>	To continually enhance and develop the buildings located at the site as resources become available.	A new soccer amenity building is constructed at Miller Park.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community regarding buildings.
	To continually enhance and develop the facilities at the site as resources become available.	A formalised entry to Miller Park is created and a carpark is constructed at the base of the tennis and netball facilities.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the formalised entry and carparking.
		The soccer amenity building is demolished and relocated between the soccer and athletics field.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the amenity building
		The land fronting the netball and tennis courts is acquired for the future expansion of Miller Park.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the acquisition of land.
		The children's playground is upgraded	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the playground.
		Facilities are improved as required, based on their current condition.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community regarding facilities.
<b>Community Competitions and Events</b>	Encourage, organise and administer sporting and community events.	Allocation of recreational resources for sporting and community events to occur on a regular basis.	Records of frequency & types of events to be kept, as well as attendance figures.

	Promote sporting and community events through respective local, state and regional areas.	Events are recognised in media releases, advertisements and other forms of promotional material.	Level of media coverage and general awareness of events.
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Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Partnerships with Stakeholders</b>	Facilitate regular contact with stakeholders, such as key users, i.e. soccer, little athletics, tennis and netball clubs.	Quarterly meetings are held with key stakeholders.	Minutes from meetings are recorded and acted on.
		Contact details are kept up to date and contact is made as needed.	Assessed through Councils internal Customer Request Management System.
	Where necessary, any queries, requests or complaints are passed on.	Queries, requests and complaints are recorded and referred to the relevant party in a timely manner.	Complaints and requests are recorded via Councils internal Customer Request Management System and acted on in a timely manner.
	Provide financial reports for activities occurring in regard to the land.	Reports are available and provided when requested, e.g. licence agreement requirements, grant applications.	Information provided within financial reports.
<b>Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups</b>	Identify and communicate funding opportunities available to the sporting clubs and community groups.	Organisations are notified of Dollar for Dollar grant opportunities as well as other funding initiatives operating within Council.	Number of grants applied for by community groups. Level of support from Council with preparation of grants. Number of successful applicants.
		Clubs are notified of all government department grants that are available e.g. The Regional Sports Facilities Program which is provided by the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation.	Number of grants applied for by community groups. Level of support from Council with preparation of grants.

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups</b> (Continued)	Provide professional advice with regard to development concepts /designs and management issues.	Council maintains contact with local sporting clubs. When requested, Council provides accurate and prompt advice. Where appropriate Council may instigate a project.	Minutes from meetings are distributed and acted on.
	Where possible, provide funding support for developments and improvements made to Miller Park.	Appropriate projects are added to the Capital Works Program, or alternate funding sources identified.	Amount of funding provided from Council or alternate source. Completion of projects in a timely manner.
<b>Informal/Social Recreation</b>	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games.	Miller Park provides areas where sporting activities and organised games can be conducted.	Number of activities and games conducted on an annual basis.
	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities.	Allocation of Miller Park for this type of use. Miller Park provides areas where recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities can be held.	Number of patrons attending organised events, number of people utilising passive park areas. Diversity of events.
	To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games.	Open space area is provided within Miller Park for passive recreation.	Number of patrons attending organised events, number of people utilising passive park areas.
	Maximise availability for passive recreational use within Miller Park.	Promote use of Miller Park outside peak sporting use, and limit organised activities in passive recreation areas.	Ongoing promotion of area by Council. Data is made available on attendance figures.

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Communication</b>	Ensure that activities and events are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.	Sporting Clubs, Community Clubs and Council develop and adopt consultation protocols.	Feedback is reviewed via Councils internal Customer Request Management System.
	Provide advance notice to nearby residents of any events/activities that may produce excessive noise or traffic congestion.	Nearby residents receive notice (verbal or written) of any such events/activities at least two days prior to the event taking place.	Feedback received from community regarding proposed events.
	Offer opportunities for residents to provide feedback in regard to the management of Miller Park.	Residents are provided with organisation and Council details.	Level of feedback received from community regarding management of Miller Park.
<b>Licence Agreements</b>	Ensure that all lease and licence agreements pertaining to Miller Park are current.	Renegotiate lease and licence agreements as they expire.	Lease agreements are reviewed as required.
	Ensure all lease and licence agreements are consistent with the core objectives for management of community land categorised as Sportsground and Park.	Relevant legislation regarding lease and licence agreements is readily available when negotiating new lease and licence agreements.	Plans of Management are reviewed as required.

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Licence Agreements</b> (Continued)	Provide facilities on the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public. In relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land.	Negotiate and implement leases, licences and estates as required.	Leases, licences and estates are reviewed on an annual basis.
	To make provision for lease and licence agreements to extend to 21 years.	Licences are reviewed upon expiry and provision for 21 year licence is made by application to the Minister for Planning where appropriate.	Feedback received from Minister for Planning.
<b>Future Needs</b>	Provide facilities on the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public. In relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public.	Land in front of tennis and netball courts is purchased to cater for any expansion of the site.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups
		Miller Park is recognised in Councils Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan.	The plan is reviewed every five years.