



# Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan

*PLANNING FOR OUR PEOPLE  
OUR PLACE OUR FUTURE*

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## Document Control Table

Revision	Officer	Description	Date
1	P. Burton	Draft for Public Exhibition	September 2017
2	P. Burton	Draft for Public Exhibition	April 2018
3	K. Harris	Final Document (for adoption)	June 2018
4	K. Harris	Revision 1	November 2019

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# Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its Local Government Area boundaries are the Traditional Lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.



# Mayor Foreword

## COUNCILLOR BOB PYNSENT MAYOR

The Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) is one of the most beautiful in all of Australia, we are home to wonderful open spaces and places where we can enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle.

I am delighted to present the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2017 (Strategic Plan) which sets out a long term direction for the future provision and management of recreation facilities, programs and services in the Cessnock LGA.

The value of recreation and open space is integral to the health and wellbeing of our people, economy and environment. We are committed to building a diverse network of accessible and inclusive spaces that integrate with the built and natural environment, providing for the needs of our community now and into the future. Individuals utilising open spaces and recreational facilities enhance their overall community mindedness. Sharing in community values and contributing to our community is what makes Cessnock a unique place to live.

A concerning trend has emerged, that while a vast majority of Australians are active, adults are considerably more active than children. This Strategic Plan is our commitment to ensuring Cessnock is a vibrant and positive community for every resident, especially children as they develop habits for a healthy future.

This Strategic Plan aims to generate more opportunities for community members to enjoy recreation in a sustainable way and we will all experience the benefits of this.

Importantly this plan has been guided and built around feedback received during community engagement. Thank you for all those have guided and contributed to the studies that have informed this Strategic Plan. I look forward to working towards providing all our community members, both young and old, with improved recreation facilities and services responsive to their needs.



*"We are committed to building a diverse network of accessible and inclusive spaces that integrate with the built and natural environment, providing for the needs of our community now and into the future."*

# Executive Summary

## **Background**

This Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) has been developed to provide a long term strategic direction for the future provision and management of recreation facilities, programs and services in the Cessnock LGA. This Strategic Plan aims to identify the recreational needs of the community, the opportunities which currently exist and appropriate actions to meet identified gaps and improve current provision.

## **Vision and objectives**

The following vision has been set for recreation and open space in the Cessnock local government area (LGA):

*“A diverse and enticing network of accessible and inclusive recreation and open space areas that integrate with the built and natural environment and provide for the active and passive recreational needs of the local and regional community now and into the future.”*

This vision is underpinned by four strategic objectives that will be used to guide Council’s planning and operations to achieve the vision:

1. Create a recreation and open space network that is connected and accessible.
2. Provide recreation and open space facilities that are well utilised and inclusive.
3. Maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from recreation and open space areas.
4. Take a leading role in the governance, leadership and advocacy of recreation and open space facilities and services.

## **Methodology**

This Strategic Plan has been informed by extensive research and community and key stakeholder consultation undertaken during the development of the Cessnock Skate and BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020 (2011), the Cessnock Aquatic Needs Analysis (2014) and the Cessnock Recreation Needs Analysis (2017). Each of these studies adopted a four stage approach:

- Stage 1 – Research and Analysis of the Current Situation
- Stage 2 – Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- Stage 3 – Analysis of Findings and Future Demands
- Stage 4 – Outcomes and Recommendations

The key outcomes and recommendations of these studies are discussed further in **Strategic Context** and **Community and Stakeholder Engagement** and have been considered in the recommendations and actions of this Strategic Plan.

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### **Participation research**

Feedback received during consultation and broader industry research provides valuable insight into the recreational preferences of the Cessnock community. The key findings were:

- The vast majority of Australians are active however adults are considerably more active than children.
- There is an overwhelming preference for informal recreation amongst adults.
- The preferred settings to recreate in are typically non-formal such as footpaths and parks. This preference increases with age.
- The key motivator for playing sport is for fun and enjoyment.
- Men and women are comparatively active over their life stages.
- Boys are more likely to participate in club sport than girls.
- Community sports will progressively become more commercialised.
- Barriers such as time and cost are pushing people towards alternative and modified sports.

### **Gap Analysis**

A Gap Analysis prepared for Council's recreation and open space network compared the current and future provision of recreation and open space facilities against standards set by the NSW Department of Planning. The analysis considered the provision rates across the Cessnock LGA, as well as a closer look at each of the four planning areas being; Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton-Greta and Rural West. The key findings were:

#### **Cessnock LGA**

- There is a current and future shortage of Local and District Parks.
- Whilst there is a surplus in Local and Regional Sportsground, there is a slight deficit of district sportsgrounds by 2036

#### **Cessnock Planning Area**

- There is a notable deficit in Local and District Parks, however this is somewhat offset by the surplus of Regional Parks.
- There is a current and future surplus of sportsgrounds at all levels particularly at the Local and Regional level.

#### **Kurri Kurri Planning Area**

- There is an increasing deficit of Regional Sportsgrounds that will need to be addressed. The shortfall in district sportsgrounds is also steadily increasing
- The provision of Local Sportsgrounds is excessive and should be reduced.
- There is a current and future shortfall of Local and District Parks.

#### **Branxton-Greta Planning Area**

- There is a significant surplus of Regional Sportsgrounds which will increase by 2036. There is also a surplus in Local Sportsgrounds.
- The current deficit of District Sportsgrounds will increase by 2036.
- Park provision is generally well balanced now and in the future.

#### **Rural West Planning Area**

- Recreation and open space provision is generally well balanced.

### Implementation

The following actions have been identified as a high priority and to be undertaken as soon as resources allow.

Ref.	Action
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 – CREATE AN OPEN SPACE NETWORK THAT IS CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE</b>	
A1.1.3	Set aside lineal tracts of open space when planning Urban Release Areas to link key trip generators such as district and regional recreation facilities, schools and commercial areas.
A1.1.4	Identify opportunities to preserve green corridors linking key regional and district recreation and open space areas.
A1.2.1	Develop a prioritised works program to address access compliance issues within existing parks and sportsgrounds.
A1.2.2	Collaborate with community organisations such as Ability Links in the planning of parks and sportsgrounds.
A1.3.3	Collaborate with public transport providers to identify routes to improve services to key recreation facilities.
A1.4.1	Provide for recreation and open space facilities in Council's Contributions Plans and Planning Agreements in accordance with the proximity standards outlined in <b>Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis</b> .
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 – PROVIDE A RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE NETWORK THAT IS WELL UTILISED AND INCLUSIVE</b>	
A2.1.1	Implement the Planning Area recommendations identified in <b>Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis</b> .
A2.1.4	Following a review of existing and proposed areas, establish a works program for embellishments to dog off-leash areas.
A2.1.6	Investigate opportunities to host modified sports (such as Fast 5s Soccer or T20 Cricket) at existing facilities.
A2.1.7	Implement works identified in Council's Four Year Capital Works Program for recreation and open space facilities.
A2.1.8	Review the provision, maintenance and management of public toilets in public open space and identify opportunities to rationalise facilities in line with community needs.
A2.1.9	Review and update Council's Engineering Guidelines in consideration of the design provisions in <b>Appendix B</b> .
A2.2.3	Continue to be a Women's sport NSW Active Council.
A2.2.4	Develop a works program to upgrade existing district and regional sporting facilities to accommodate female players and officials.
A2.3.1	Develop an online 'suggestions box' to allow the community to put forward ideas on how to improve recreation and open space facilities.
A2.3.2	Investigate ways to encourage local artists to undertake projects in public open space in accordance with Council's Art Policy.
A2.3.3	Engage and collaborate with key external stakeholders early in the planning process of recreation and open space facilities.
A2.4.1	Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles in Council's Engineering Guidelines for recreation and open space.
A2.4.2	Develop a shade program to fund the planting and maintenance of shade trees and/or shade structures in recreation and open space areas.
A2.5.1	Prepare an engagement strategy with consideration to engaging isolated and vulnerable groups.



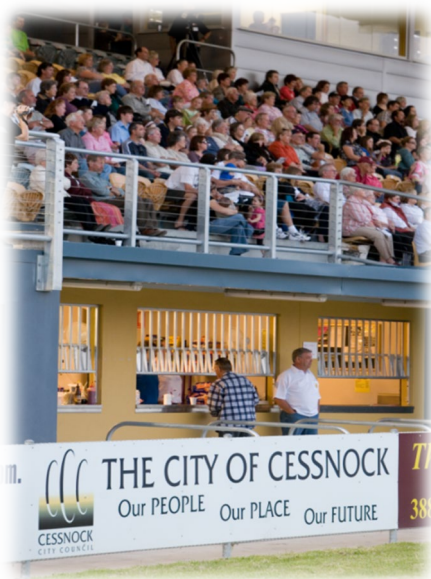
Ref.	Action
A2.5.2	Continue to collaborate with community services that provide employment opportunities for isolated and vulnerable people (such as Work for the Dole and Caloola Vocational Services) in the maintenance and improvement of recreation and open space areas.
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 – MAXIMISE THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS DERIVED FROM RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE AREAS</b>	
A3.1.1	Activate spaces through participating in/hosting programs and events such as Park Run.
A3.1.3	Investigate the feasibility of a mobile playgroup/gymboree that visits a key park in the larger towns each week.
A3.2.2	Adjust the annual program for recreation facility asset renewal and replacement in accordance with the recommendations of Council's Asset Management Plans.
A3.2.3	Develop and review Contribution Plans and Planning Agreements in accordance with the provisions of this Strategic Plan.
A3.3.2	Develop a community building policy to guide the processing of applications to construct buildings on Council land.
A3.4.2	Investigate the feasibility of contracting the management of Council's specialised recreation and community facilities to an external service provider.
A3.7.1	Incorporate Ecologically Sustainable Development and Water Sensitive Urban Design principles into Council's Engineering Guidelines for recreation and open space areas.
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 – TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN THE GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY OF RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>	
A4.1.1	Capture information relating to participation numbers, facility use, and facility issues to utilise in the planning for recreation and open space areas.
A4.1.6	Prepare a discussion paper on the issues encountered by user groups and the general community when undertaking projects on public land.
A4.2.2	Update Council's website to provide information and guidelines on applying for grants.
A4.4.2	Undertake a bi-annual sport and recreation club survey through a consolidated email contact list.
A4.4.3	Develop a communication plan for recreation and open space projects.
A4.4.4	Maintain memberships with industry associations (eg Parks & Leisure Australia) and regional planning groups (eg Hunter Region Organisation of Councils).

# Introduction

## Background

The Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) is located 40 kilometres west of Newcastle and 120 kilometres north of Sydney. The LGA covers an area of approximately 1,950 square kilometres and falls within the growing tourist area of the Hunter Valley.

Currently home to approximately 55,560 (Census, 2016), the Cessnock LGA's population is concentrated in a thin urban belt between the two main towns of Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, with the remaining population located in outlying rural areas.



Within the LGA, there are large amounts of State Forest, grazing lands and areas for viticulture with the region expecting significant population growth and a shift from primary and secondary industries to an increased range of service industries.

Cessnock City Council is one of the many providers of recreation assets, programs and services to our community. The commercial sector, State and Federal Government and adjacent local councils also play a role in providing recreational opportunities for the local residents.

Local councils commonly play a vital role in the provision and management of assets, programs and services that are often financially unviable for the commercial sector but have an immense community benefit e.g. the management of sportsgrounds, natural areas, aquatic facilities and parks. Local government plays a key role in promoting, facilitating and funding recreation at the local level. In

many cases, Councils such as Cessnock also play a substantial regional role.

Councils are custodians and managers of public land and have responsibilities under both *the Local Government Act (1993)* and *Crown Lands Act (1989)* to manage such land for the benefit of the community and the environment. Council owns or manages approximately 254ha of developed open space for the purposes of recreation and plays a pivotal role in the provision of safe, affordable, appropriate and accessible recreation opportunities to the local community.

### *Purpose and Outcomes*

This Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) has been developed to provide a long term strategic direction for the future provision and management of recreation facilities, programs and services in the Cessnock LGA.

This Strategic Plan aims to identify the recreational needs of the community, the opportunities which currently exist and appropriate actions to meet identified gaps and improve current provision. To do this, this Strategic Plan will:

- Identify the strategic objectives and directions for the future provision of recreation and open space.

- Define the different types of recreation and open space and the ways they benefit and service the needs of the community.
- Provide provision guidelines to ensure the appropriate and equitable distribution of recreation and open space areas.
- Identify opportunities to improve the quality and capacity of Council's recreation and open space areas.
- Identify opportunities to improve the sustainability of establishing and maintaining recreation and open space areas.
- Set out a prioritised list of actions to inform the operations of Council and other key stakeholders in the provision and management of recreation and open space areas.
- Identify opportunities to improve the communication between Council and the community in regards to recreation and open space areas.

This Strategic Plan does not attempt to resolve all the recreation and open space issues in the Cessnock LGA, instead it provides a strategic framework to determine the priority needs and issues and assist in long term planning for recreation.

### *Methodology*

This Strategic Plan has been developed in consideration of the outcomes and recommendations of the Cessnock Skate and BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020 (2011), the Cessnock Aquatic Needs Analysis (2014) and the Cessnock Recreation Needs Analysis (2017). Each of these studies adopted a four stage approach involving:

- Stage 1 – Research and Analysis of the Current Situation
- Stage 2 – Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- Stage 3 – Analysis of Findings and Future Demands
- Stage 4 – Outcomes and Recommendations

The key outcomes and recommendations of these studies are discussed further in **Strategic Context** and **Community and Stakeholder Engagement** and have been considered in the recommendations and actions of this Strategic Plan.

## *Defining Recreation and Open Space*

The term 'recreation and open space' is quite generic and open to interpretation. In this Strategic Plan, the term 'recreation and open space' refers to land, buildings, programs and services that provides for a wide range of organised and less structured physical activities that are pursued for enjoyment, health or self-satisfaction. These activities can be further defined as formal active recreation, informal active recreation and passive recreation as discussed below.

Recreation and open space areas are distinct from undeveloped land and environmental conservation areas where there is no provision for the recreational enjoyment of the site. Community facilities that are primarily used for community or cultural activities such as dancing, concerts, arts and crafts, interests or hobbies are also not directly addressed in this Strategic Plan. These facilities are addressed in Council's Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan (2016).



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### *Formal Active Recreation*

Formal active recreation refers to structured recreational activities usually undertaken as part of an organised competition or event. Activities are typically scheduled, seasonal and have specific facility requirements such as floodlighting, line marking or spectator seating. Formal active recreation would typically occur at sportsgrounds and specialised sport facilities. Examples of formal active recreation include:

- Club soccer, rugby league, netball or cricket.
- School athletics carnival.
- A regional swimming carnival.
- A basketball gala day.

### *Informal Active Recreation*

Informal active recreation activities are undertaken in an unorganised or casual manner and are primarily undertaken for leisure and enjoyment. Activities are typically unscheduled and unstructured and are therefore much more adaptable to constraints imposed by infrastructure, weather and other users. Informal active recreation would typically occur in parks. Examples of informal active recreation include:

- Skateboarding or BMXing with friends.
- Riding a horse.
- Playing indoor soccer during a lunch break.
- Playing half-court basketball

### *Passive Recreation*

Passive recreation activities are generally of low impact and are often undertaken without the individual being conscious to the activity's recreational value. Passive recreation activities are commonly undertaken by individuals and often do not require specialised equipment. Passive recreation would typically occur in Passive Parks. Passive recreation activities may include:

- Riding a bike.
- Going for a bush walk.
- Bird watching.
- Social gatherings.
- Deep thinking or reflecting.
- Walking the dog.



## ***Benefits of Recreation and Open Space***

Recreation and open space provides opportunities for people to have fun, be healthy, experience adventure, socialise, learn skills, develop self-esteem and achieve a positive sense of identity. Recreation and open space also contributes to the protection of the environment and improving the liveability and attractiveness of areas.

The NSW Ministry of Health (2013) notes that people who are physically inactive are more likely to develop heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer. They are also more likely to be overweight and suffer from depression and subsequently are less likely to take part in all that life has to offer.

The provision of recreational assets, programs and services enables people to experience and be involved in recreation and adopt an active and healthy lifestyle, which ultimately contributes to the quality of a person's life and their ability to be involved in their community.



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## *Future Direction of Recreation and Open Space*

### *Vision*

All good strategies have a clear vision in which it uses to guide and inform its strategic objectives and directions. The vision identified in Cessnock City Council's Community Strategic Plan 2027 is:

*"Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community needs."*

In consideration of the broader community vision, the vision for recreation and open space is:

*"A diverse and enticing network of accessible and inclusive recreation and open space areas that integrate with the built and natural environment and provide for the active and passive recreational needs of the local and regional community now and into the future."*

### *Strategic Objectives*

The following Strategic Objectives have been identified to assist Council in achieving its vision for recreation and open space areas:

1. Create a recreation and open space network that is connected and accessible.
2. Provide recreation and open space facilities that are well utilised and inclusive.
3. Maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from recreation and open space areas.
4. Take a leading role in the governance, leadership and advocacy of recreation and open space facilities and services.

Each of these objectives are supported by Strategic Directions (refer **Strategic Objectives, Opportunities and Challenges**) and subsequent actions (refer **Implementation of this Strategic Plan**) that provide a higher level of detail on how to achieve each of the four strategic objectives.



# Strategic Context

The following section provides an outline of the strategic framework and context impacting the provision and management of recreation and open space in the Cessnock LGA.

## *State and Regional Strategic Context*

### *NSW Making It Happen*

In 2015, the NSW Government released a number of State and Premier priorities to replace the previously adopted NSW 2021. The diverse social, economic and environmental benefits of recreation will play a key role in achieving the State Government's targets, namely; creating 150,000 jobs by 2019 and reducing overweight and obesity rates of children by five percentage points by 2025.

### *State Infrastructure Strategy 2012-2032*

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

The SIS is largely silent on recreation in the Hunter Region; however it does identify inefficiencies within the education system and recommends the State Government work with Councils to promote the sharing of open space and increase the accessibility of schools outside of school hours.

### *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*

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

Cessnock and Kurri Kurri are identified as strategic centres located within the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area. Branxton and Huntlee are noted as centres of local significance.

The Plan identifies regional priorities to assist in implementing a number of strategic directions and actions for the Hunter. The regional priorities relevant to recreation in Cessnock include; planning for and delivering regional cycleway links along the Richmond Vale Rail Trail; delivering the Branxton Sub Regional Plan; implementing the Cessnock CBD Masterplan and developing a Masterplan for the Kurri Kurri CBD.



### *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan*

The draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan sets out the actions and strategies to transform the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area into an integrated metropolitan city. This will be measured by achieving the following outcomes:

1. Create a workforce skilled and ready for the new economy.
2. Enhance environment, amenity and resilience for quality of life.

3. Deliver housing close to jobs and services.
4. Improve connections to jobs, services and recreation.

The strategies and actions set out in the Plan are to inform the development of Local Plans by the respective Local Government Areas within the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area.

The Local Government Area narrative for Cessnock to assist in the development of the Local Plan sets out the following principles relevant to recreation:

- The rural setting and heritage values must be protected. The lifestyle centres of Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton and Greta must be protected.
- Pokolbin, Wollombi Valley and National Parks are tourism destinations for entertainment and tourism activity.
- Recreation opportunities such as the Great North Walk, Richmond Vale Rail Trail, Baddeley Park sports fields and lookouts in the Watagan and Yengo National Parks are important assets for residents and tourists.

#### *Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan 2014*

The Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan is a joint initiative of Cessnock City Council and Singleton Council, which sets strategic priorities to increase visitation to the Hunter Valley region. The Plan contains a number of strategies/actions relevant to recreation planning in the Cessnock LGA and these are listed below:

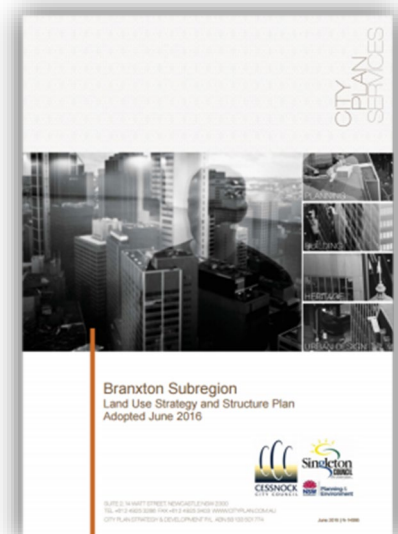
- Strategic priority one - Grow destination appeal and Hunter Valley brand awareness
  - Key action - Deepen the Hunter Valley destination appeal and diversify the market base by building and promoting a second tier of experiences and activities focussed on the themes of nature (soft adventure), golf and other sport, arts/culture and heritage.
- Strategic priority four - Develop the Hunter Valley's destination products and experiences
  - Key action - Improve and increase the range and quality of Hunter Valley attractions, facilities, services and experiences to increase visitor demand. Priority development focus should be in the following experience themes:
    - culture and the arts;
    - heritage;
    - rural/agri tours/accommodation;
    - nature (soft adventure);
    - indigenous; and
    - golf and other sports.
  - Key action - Develop and implement a Bicycle/walking trails/paths network across the Hunter Valley region.
  - Key action - Establish a network of Recreational Vehicle (RV) services, parks and parking areas to capture and retain this market.
- Strategic priority five - Develop coordinated visitor economy planning and place-making
  - Key action - Facilitate stronger place making development in the Hunter Valley towns/villages, along with expansion of public facilities - parks, conveniences, etc. that service combined visitor and community needs.

The strategies and actions identified in the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan have been considered in this Strategic Plan.

### *Branxton Subregional Land Use Strategy and Structure Plan*

Commissioned by Cessnock and Singleton Councils, the Branxton Subregional Land Use Strategy and Structure Plan aims to guide the future development of the Branxton Subregion. The Branxton Subregion includes the towns of Branxton, Greta, Huntlee and North Rothbury. The Land Use Strategy establishes the vision, objectives and future initiatives for housing, employment, open space, infrastructure and environmental improvements.

The Land Use Strategy and Structure Plan identifies that there is adequate provision of open space for now and into the future in the Branxton Subregion, supported by infrastructure agreements for Huntlee.





## Local Strategic Context

### *Integrated Planning and Reporting*

This Strategic Plan forms part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework developed for NSW local government. The IP&R framework allows Councils to build plans of an appropriate size, scale and content for their community. Figure 1 illustrates the IP&R framework.

**Figure 1 - Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework**



This Strategic Plan has been developed to replace the existing Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (2009) and inform the development and implementation of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. To ensure the recreational aspects of the Community Strategic Plan are adequately considered in the development and delivery of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, Council has undertaken a number of targeted needs analyses to inform the recommendations of this Strategic Plan and discussed further in the section.

### *Community Strategic Plan – Cessnock 2027*

The Community Strategic Plan – Cessnock 2027 is the highest level plan prepared by Council. The purpose of the Plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations and identify strategies to achieve them. The Plan is underpinned by extensive consultation with the community which contributed to the development of the following Community Desired Outcomes:

- **A connected, safe and creative community:** developing safe and connected neighbourhoods that support healthy and fulfilling lifestyles for people of all ages.
- **A sustainable and prosperous economy:** achieving long term economic security through a mix of diverse business and employment options.
- **A sustainable and healthy environment:** promoting a sustainable balance between development and preserving our natural environment.



- **Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities:** Increasing the range and accessibility of the services we need along with investment in improved infrastructure.
- **Civic leadership and effective governance:** Ensuring that we have strong leadership and good governance and that we foster community participation in decision-making.

These outcomes have informed the development of the Strategic Objectives of this Strategic Plan.

#### *2017-2021 Delivery Program and 2017-18 Operational Plan*

The Delivery Program 2017-2021 is a statement of how Council aims to achieve the outcomes developed by the community in the Community Strategic Plan Cessnock 2027. The Delivery Program is adopted for a four year period to coincide with the local government elections.

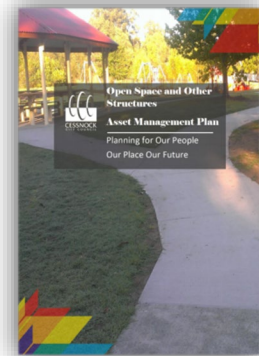
The Operational Plan is developed to implement the operational activities that will achieve the longer term plans set out in the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan will be used to develop and revise the priorities identified in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan relevant to recreation and open space.

#### *Asset Management Plans*

Council has developed Asset Management Plans for all classifications of sport and recreation facilities. These Plans determine how they are to be managed in a sustainable and effective method. The Plans provide the criteria for decisions regarding the creation of new assets and the renewal, replacement or demolition of an existing asset.

It is important that the Plans are kept up to date to ensure the facilities are maintained to an agreed level of service and in a manner that ensures available resources are effectively applied.



#### *Long Term Financial Plan*

The Long Term Financial Plan is a financial projection that quantifies the cost of Council's services over a period of 10 years. It is more comprehensive than a budget and includes, in addition to financial statements, a written commentary, sensitivity analysis and scenario options. It examines the impact of Council's revenue, operational and capital expenditure forecasts, taking into account assumptions for economic factors and changes to service delivery levels.

This Strategic Plan will consider actions that will guide Council in reducing the costs associated with providing and maintaining Council's recreation and open space assets, programs and services.

#### *Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (2009)*

The Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan assists Council to plan and manage the future development and maintenance needs of recreation and open space facilities throughout the Cessnock LGA. The following trends/recommendations are identified in the Plan:

- The predominant preference amongst residents was to maintain the present standard and number of open space and recreation services, keeping rates and charges at present levels.
- Residents showed a preference towards higher quality, centralised regional facilities as opposed to numerous lower quality local facilities.
- Resident use of outdoor sporting and recreational facilities was marginally higher than use of small parks and playgrounds.
- There is a general shift from more traditional social gatherings at community halls to a progressive move towards the establishment of localised community centres. Community centres provide an

opportunity for a rich diversity of services and activities that contribute to the indoor recreational needs of the community.

- The supply of formalised open space in the Cessnock LGA is adequate with the exception of Aberdare, Bellbird, Bellbird Heights, Nulkaba, Neath, Branxton, Ellalong, Paxton where the supply is inadequate and North Cessnock, Pelaw Main, West Kurri Kurri, Weston, Kitchener where there is an over-supply.

#### *Recreation Needs Analysis (2017)*

The Recreation Needs Analysis is a key policy document for the planning, development and management of Council-controlled recreation and sport facilities and open space. The Analysis provides an overview of Council's role in the provision and management of recreation and open space, a snapshot of influences impacting on recreation in the Cessnock LGA, analysis of current and anticipated requirements of recreation and open space, classification of recreation and open space and provision standards for future recreation and open space. Key recommendations from the Recreation Needs Analysis have been considered in this Strategic Plan and include:

- Develop future open spaces in line with the provision tiers and open space assessment (including consideration of available/appropriate utility or riparian open space).
- Specific investigations should be undertaken in the following areas:
  - indoor sports centres;
  - playgrounds, and
  - rationalisation of surplus open space.
- Develop and install consistent and visible signage for Council parks and reserves.
- Review staffing levels within Open Space and Community Facilities department of Council.
- Increase the promotion of sports and recreation facilities.
- Review seasonal usage agreements to ensure consistency across the Cessnock LGA.



#### *Cessnock City Council Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020 (2011)*

The Cessnock City Council Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020 (Skate & BMX Needs Assessment) aims to provide recommendations regarding the current and future needs of skate parks and their users in the Cessnock LGA. The Skate & BMX Needs Assessment analyses current skate and BMX facilities, participation rates, user demand, demographic projections and developed the following key recommendations:

- Upgrade Cessnock Skatepark to a District level facility.
- Retain and upgrade Bellbird BMX track.
- Remove Turner Park skate ramp.
- Upgrade Kurri Kurri Skatepark as a Local level facility.
- Construct a Skate Dot or Spot in Abermain.
- In the long term construct a District Skate and BMX facility in Branxton-Huntlee.
- Undertake further investigation of Heddon Greta, Millfield, Paxton, and Kitchener as potential future locations in the long term.
- Develop Greta Skatepark as a Local level facility.
- All future skate and BMX facilities require a water bubbler/tap and rubbish bin, and larger facilities also require seating, shade structure, car parking, public toilets and pathway access.
- Include user signage at skate parks outlining rules, regulations and contact numbers for emergency services and Cessnock City Council.
- Undertake regular scheduled and ongoing maintenance and repairs to skate and BMX facilities.
- Annually monitor progress of the recommendations.

- Review the needs assessment recommendations five years after implementation.

#### *Aquatic Needs Analysis (2014) and Cessnock Aquatic Centre Feasibility and Design Report (2016)*

The Cessnock Aquatic Needs Analysis aims to provide Council with recommendations regarding the current and future needs of Aquatic Facilities and their uses in the Cessnock LGA.

The Analysis considers current facility provision, participation, user demand, demographic projections and developed the following key recommendations:

- A new aquatic centre is required in Cessnock incorporating indoor and outdoor water.
- Minor upgrades are required at Branxton Pool and Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre.

The Cessnock Aquatic Centre Feasibility and Design Report was prepared in 2016 to identify a preferred site and facility mix for the proposed Cessnock Aquatic Centre. The Report identifies Turner Park, Aberdare as the preferred site and the preferred facility mix to include an indoor 25m pool, outdoor 51m pool, learn to swim pool, leisure pool, warm water program pool, water play, gym, kiosk, retail and administration areas.



#### *Cessnock City Wide Settlement Strategy (2010)*

The Cessnock City Wide Settlement Strategy (CCWSS) sets out the strategic direction for land use planning within the Cessnock LGA. The CCWSS identifies the challenge of providing infrastructure and services for a population that is sparsely populated and spatially set apart. The CCWSS identifies the following population trends within the Cessnock LGA:

- Annual population growth is occurring at 0.42% (2001-2006)
- The proportion of separate dwellings within housing stock is increasing. Medium density development is below the regional average.
- In regards to age, the most significant population changes were residents aged 50-69 (+1457) and resident ages 25-34 years (-285 people).
- Population mobility (i.e. how far and often people change residential address) was lower than the State average.
- Cessnock population has lower than Regional and State average tertiary qualified residents.
- The majority of residences in Cessnock LGA are family households (72.6%)
- The local population earns wages below Regional and State averages.
- Unemployment is higher than the State average
- Half of those employed work within the LGA, the remaining half worked in Singleton, Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Maitland.
- Car ownership is higher than the Regional and State average.

The majority of the population in the LGA is located between Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. Cessnock is the largest settlement area in the LGA containing 38.5 percent of the population in 2006. Kurri Kurri is the second largest settlement area, containing 27.5 percent of the LGA population in 2006. Branxton is expected to experience significant growth with the development of the Huntlee Urban Release Area of 7,200 dwellings.

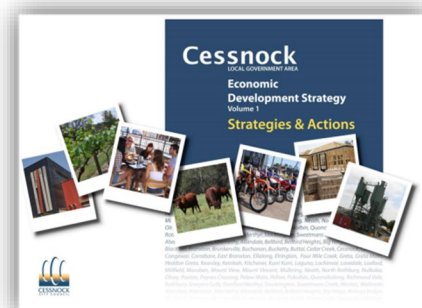
The CCWSS identifies that the recommendations of the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (2009) will inform future amendments to the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan by rezoning and reclassifying surplus recreational land to the most appropriate zone. These recommendations have been reviewed in accordance with the provisions of this Strategic Plan (refer **Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis**).



### *Cessnock Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017*

The Cessnock Economic Development Strategy articulates the objectives and directions for economic development within the Cessnock LGA and provides the strategies and actions to achieve sustainable growth. Strategy 5 is to ensure that the Cessnock LGA is an attractive place to live, work and invest. This includes expanding the range of recreation and leisure facilities available in the Cessnock LGA and this is to be achieved through the following initiatives/ actions:

- 5.3 Integrate the National Parks, State Conservation Areas (SCAs) and State Forests into the recreation and tourism base of the LGA.
- 5.3.1 Encourage the National Parks & Wildlife Services and Forestry Corporation of NSW to identify local 'gems' and explore opportunities to increase access, establish walking trails and visitor facilities and provide quality interpretation and information.
- 5.3.3 Improve the presentation of the National Parks, State Conservation Areas and State Forests, particularly around the urban fringes along the main traffic routes, primarily through definition of access points and effective signage, removal of dumped rubbish and weed eradication.
- 5.5 Ensure that each of the towns and villages has family friendly facilities.
  - 5.5.1 Progressively upgrade and expand playground facilities within each of the towns and villages.
  - 5.5.2 Explore the feasibility of establishing a large (regional) adventure playground (eg. Speers Point), preferably in an area close to shops to achieve spin-off.
  - 5.5.3 Explore options for a BMX track and/or skateboard ramp in the larger villages where there are a concentration of children.



These actions are all relevant to recreation in the Cessnock LGA and have been considered as part of this Strategic Plan.

### *Cessnock CBD Masterplan (2012)*

The Cessnock CBD Masterplan is a long term strategy that aims to establish the Cessnock CBD as a Centre that is safe, connected, inclusive, celebrates its history, has strong community heart and promotes healthy lifestyle. The Masterplan recommends a number of actions relating to recreation and open space, including:

- Deliver a park at the northern gateway opposite the School of Arts (Conway's Corner) to improve the arrival experience to the CBD.
- Investigate how to improve drainage channels e.g. beautification of edges, opportunities for walking/cycle links.
- Investigate the opportunity to partner with the TAFE to develop central parklands, which could incorporate a playground, water sensitive urban design measures and opportunities for community gardens. Improve and maintain the walking paths to Bridges Hill Park.

- Upgrade important public open spaces.

#### *Cessnock Commercial Precinct Project (2017)*

The Cessnock Commercial Precinct Project was conceptualised to deliver a Public Domain Plan and Development Control Plan for the Cessnock Commercial Precinct to implement the strategic recommendations of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan and the Hunter Regional Plan.



Key initiatives identified during the project include establishing a Civic Square at the Cooper Street/Charlton Street Intersection and developing TAFE Park into a Town Park.

#### *Kurri Kurri District Strategy (2018)*

The draft Kurri Kurri District Strategy outlines a collective vision, future directions and actions for land use planning and development in the Kurri Kurri District to 2036. The Strategy is supplemented by two Masterplans for the Kurri Kurri and Weston town centres.

The Strategy sets out five directions under the titles of Urban Form, Transport and Movement Network, Employment Land, Urban Housing and Open Space and Recreation. The direction for Open Space and Recreation is 'the District will capitalise from its open space and recreation facilities'.

The Strategy proposes a number of recommendations in relation to Parks and Sportsgrounds within Kurri Kurri and Weston which are reflected in the recommendations of this Strategic Plan.

#### *Cessnock Cycling Strategy (2016)*

The Cessnock Cycling Strategy sets Council's direction and framework to establish a bicycle friendly environment within the LGA over the next 20 years.

The vision for cycling in Cessnock is to:

*"Create a safe, attractive and accessible cycleway network that improves the community's connections with key destinations and each other and encourages residents of all ages to use their bicycle for recreation and everyday transport."*

The vision is supported by four strategic objectives:

- Provide a cycling environment that is safe, secure and encourages residents to cycle without fear of accident or injury.
- Provide a cohesive and integrated bicycle network that is easy for cyclists to use.
- Integrate cycling into Council's planning processes.
- Promote awareness of cycling amongst the community and road and path user groups.

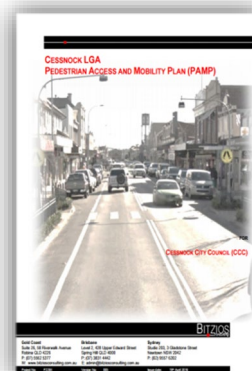
Much of the proposed and existing cycleway network connects with or utilises recreation and open space areas. It is therefore important that the recreation and open space network integrates with the cycleway network to encourage active modes of transport between and within parks and sportsgrounds.

### *Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (2016)*

The aim of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan is to provide a plan to improve pedestrian safety and to encourage walking within the Cessnock LGA. High priority routes were defined, and a comprehensive field audit was conducted to catalogue issues with local footpaths, kerb ramps, bus stops and walking environments. A number of recommended works link pedestrians to key recreational areas and facilities in the towns of Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Branxton and their surrounding areas.

### *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan - 2031 A Vision for the Future*

The Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan provides the strategic direction for community facilities across the Cessnock LGA. Community facilities that are considered within the Plan are defined as indoor spaces used to engage people in social, welfare, cultural, arts or healthy lifestyle related activities and programs. The Plan identifies the following strategies relevant to indoor recreation in the Cessnock LGA:



- By 2031, provide in total two multi-purpose community centres in the Cessnock and surrounds planning area.
- Investigate the feasibility of constructing an indoor recreation space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park) as opposed to construction within the Cliftleigh residential development.
- When combining the Cliftleigh and Heddon Greta localities, the population by 2031 is projected to be a minimum of 7,500. During the life of this plan, flexible community space will be required. The size required for flexible community space could be a minimum of 328 square metres.
- A master plan which considers place activation and revitalisation be developed for both:- DP 758474 (Lot 1,2,11,12), total land area of 4,070m<sup>2</sup> – the site is occupied by Greta Pre-school (heritage listed), Greta Courthouse (heritage listed), Former Greta Council Chambers (heritage listed) and Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall, and DP 627860, DP 1137953 (Lot 1 & 2), total land area is 7280m<sup>2</sup> – the site occupied by Branxton Pre School, Branxton Community Hall and Branxton Play Group.
- Construct one multi-purpose community centre in the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area (is listed in the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement). The multi-purpose community centre should include a dedicated youth space.
- A precinct Masterplan be developed for Millfield Crawfordville Hall and its surrounding lands, to include the provision of an early childhood centre. By 2031, an early childhood facility to be provided servicing the Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and surrounds planning area.

The actions of the Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan have been considered in this Strategic Plan.

### *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021*

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan identifies actions for Council to promote and achieve equality for residents and visitors to the Cessnock LGA. The Plan sets out four goals and subsequent actions, those of which are relevant to recreation and open space are summarised below:

- Goal 1: Develop positive community attitudes and behaviours.
- Goal 2: Support access to meaningful employment.
- Goal 3: Improve access to services through better systems and processes.
- Goal 4: Create Liveable communities.



- Action 4.2: If any new community buildings are to be constructed during the life of this Plan, people with disability will be consulted on building design and accessibility.
- Action 4.4: Where resources and funding allows, undertake audits of community buildings, public toilets and pool facilities to assess compliance with the Australian Standard for Access and Mobility (AS 1428).
- Action 4.5: Council's Asset Management Plans, Plans of Management, Strategic Documents and Masterplans will identify and program access improvements for community buildings, recreational facilities, including pools and parks, to enable improved access and inclusion.

The goals and actions of the Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan have been considered in this Strategic Plan.

#### *Cessnock Health and Well-being Plan 2017-2021*

The Cessnock Health and Well-being Plan 2017-2021 provides Council with strategic direction for how it can play its part in improving the health status of residents living within the local government area. The aim of the Plan is to provide Council with localised actions that encourage healthy environments, liveable communities and well-being. The following Strategic Directions and Actions are relevant to recreation and open space areas:

- 1.1 (d) Residents and visitors are provided with opportunity to engage in active living with a wide range of recreation and sporting facilities provided.
  - Action: Implement strategies listed in recreation and open space planning instruments and includes the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan and site specific master plans.
- 1.1 (e) All populations have opportunities to engage in healthy activities.
  - Action: Continue to provide recreational facilities which enable the delivery of a range of health and recreation programs to all population groups and abilities.
- 1.6 (b) Recreation spaces such as children's playgrounds, skate parks and outdoor gyms are designed to provide adequate shelter.
  - Action: Incorporate within Council planning instruments the requirement to consider synthetic sun shelter and natural shading for outdoor recreation and open space areas.
- 1.8 (b) Public pools are a place for the community to learn how to swim.
  - Action: Continue to encourage learn to swim programs being made available at public pools.
- 2.3 (c) Cultural and tourism opportunities that encourage participation in recreation activities are available to residents and visitors.
  - Action: Implement the strategies listed in the Cessnock City Council Economic Development Strategy and Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan that seek to encourage participation in cultural activities, nature based recreation and ecotourism.



*Katherine's Landing, Huntlee*

### *Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy 2018*

The Draft Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy sets the framework for Cessnock LGA's transport network over a period of 25 years. The Strategy identifies several key policy positions that aim to reduce the need for private motorised transport, encourage active transport (walking and cycling) and improve the efficiency of public transport. To do this it is proposed to:

- Locate new development in accessible locations within existing centres, near recreation facilities and near public transport hubs.
- Centres are designed to encourage walking and cycling and improve access to public transport.
- Prioritise active transport infrastructure investment (such as pathways) in major centres.
- Provide a common and legible cycleway network.
- Prioritise pedestrian movement over other modes of transport in centres.
- Provide end of trip facilities in residential, retail and commercial developments.
- Safe cycling routes are provided within 1km of all public schools.
- Walking and cycling programs are used to encourage higher levels of active transport usage.
- Bus service times and frequency support access to jobs, education and important services.

The Strategy also identifies a number of upgraded transport links throughout the LGA which should be considered when planning new recreation and open space areas.





### *Plans of Management and Masterplans*

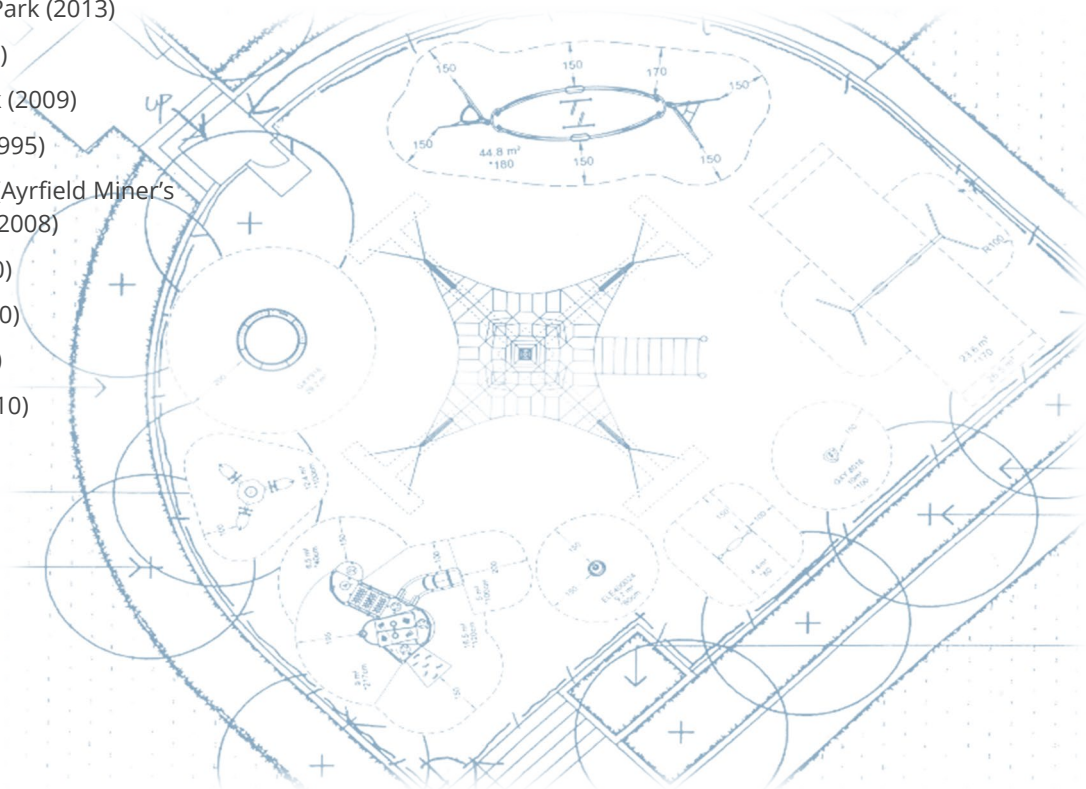
Council has developed a number of Plans of Management and Masterplans to guide the development and management of Council's recreation and community facilities. At the time of writing this Strategic Plan the following Plans of Management and Masterplans have been adopted or are currently being developed (i.e. in draft):

#### **Plans of Management**

- 
- Baddeley Park (2006)
- Birralelee Park (2011)
- Carmichael Park (2006)
- Crawfordville Park (2010)
- Drain Oval (2009)
- Generic Community Facilities (2014)
- Generic General Community Use
- Generic General Community Use – Drainage
- Generic Natural Areas
- Generic Parks (2014)
- Generic Playgrounds (2009)
- Generic Sportsgrounds (2014)
- 
- Greta Central Oval (2008)
- Howe Park (2007)
- Margaret Johns Park (2013)
- Miller Park (2006)
- Mount View Park (2009)
- Mulbring Park (1995)
- North Rothbury (Ayrfield Miner's Memorial) Park (2008)
- Slacks Park (2010)
- Turner Park (2010)
- Varty Park (2007)
- Weston Park (2010)

#### **Masterplans**

- Baddeley Park (Draft)
- Carmichael Park (Draft)
- Chinaman's Hollow/Peace Park (2006)
- Convent Hill, Bridges Hill Park and East End Oval (2016)
- Greta Central Park (2019)
- Kurri Kurri Central Oval (2011)
- Miller Park (2018)
- Mount View Park (2018)
- North Rothbury (Ayrfield Miner's Memorial) Park (2009)
- Pokolbin Park (2007)
- Slacks Park (2010)
- Turner Park (2018)
- Veterans Memorial Park (2010)
- Weston Bears Park (Draft)
- Weston Commercial Centre Masterplan)  
Kurri Kurri Commercial Centre Masterplan, includes masterplans for Rotary Park and Molly Worthington Netball Courts



# Community and Stakeholder Engagement

## *Needs Assessment Consultation*

A significant amount of engagement has been undertaken by Council in the preparation of the various needs analyses that have informed the development of this Strategic Plan.

The following is a summary of the stakeholder and community activities undertaken in the preparation of each of the needs analyses. The key findings from each of these consultative processes have been considered in the development of the Strategic Directions and Actions of this Strategic Plan (refer **Implementation of this Strategic Plan**).

### *Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020*

The Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment stakeholder and community engagement activities involved interviews and workshops from a range of stakeholders and an online questionnaire. The key findings from this process were:

- Scooter and BMX riding are the two most popular activities at existing skate and BMX facilities.
- In the short to medium term there are limited funds to develop new skate and BMX facilities, however there is the opportunity to develop small scale skate/BMX facilities, for example a pathway with active elements.
- There was a preference from stakeholders and users for high quality, larger skate and BMX facilities which cater for all age groups, skill levels and styles rather than a high quantity of low quality facilities.
- All existing and future skate and BMX facilities should include basic amenities and support facilities.
- Users and young people identified that maintaining and improving existing skate and BMX facilities is a priority.

### *Aquatic Needs Analysis 2014*

The Aquatic Needs Analysis stakeholder and community engagement activities involved meetings and focus groups with a range of stakeholders as well as an online and hard copy survey and media releases. The key findings from this process were:

- Cessnock Pool needs to be upgraded into a regional facility.
- Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre can get overcrowded and there is a general lack of dry and wet space.
- Branxton Pool needs to be upgraded including more shade, updated change rooms and a 50m pool.

### *Recreation Needs Analysis 2017*

The Recreation Needs Analysis stakeholder and community engagement activities involved meetings and workshops with a range of stakeholders as well as a hard copy and online survey. The key findings from the community survey were:

- 58 per cent of respondents believe there is not an adequate supply of sporting facilities in the Cessnock LGA.

- When asked about the quality of sporting facilities, the highest response was 'good' (38 per cent) with the next highest was 'indifferent' (29 per cent).
- 70 per cent of people believe there is not an adequate supply of parks in the Cessnock LGA.
- When asked about the overall quality of parks the highest response was 'poor' (31 per cent) with the next highest response being 'indifferent' (30 per cent).
- Desired improvements to increase participation were:
  - New/upgraded cycle and walking paths (57 per cent)
  - New/upgraded parks for recreation use (47 per cent)
  - New/upgraded swimming pools (46 per cent)
  - New/upgraded playgrounds (41 per cent)

The key findings from the sporting group/club survey were:

- Eleven clubs said their facility is meeting their current needs.
- Eleven clubs said their facility is not meeting their current needs.
- Six clubs believe their facility will meet their future needs while the remaining 17 believe they will not or not sure.
- The following issues are affecting sporting clubs to a high degree:
  - Increasing cost of playing and participating (57 per cent)
  - Declining number of volunteers (41 per cent)
  - Disability access to facilities (40 per cent)
  - Insurance costs (35 per cent)
  - Difficulty in accessing grant funding (33 per cent)



## Community Research Survey

### *Cessnock City Council Community Research 2012, 2014 and 2016*

Community research conducted in 2012, 2014 and 2016 posed two important questions to residents related to recreation. The results can be seen below and show that for open space, a relatively high number of respondents agree that there are enough good quality open spaces and this trend is consistent over all survey years. This trend is also evident for recreation and leisure opportunities with a higher portion of respondents, over all three years, agreeing that there is a wide range of leisure and recreation opportunities.

Responses from different age brackets were also recorded in the research. In 2012 and 2014, the age bracket of 30 to 44 years was the most likely to disagree with both statements regarding open space and recreation in Cessnock. In 2016, the 50-59 age bracket was significantly less likely to agree that 'there are enough quality

open spaces'. This would indicate that recreational opportunities in the LGA, suitable for these age brackets (30-44 and 50-59), should be given particular consideration.

**Table 1 - Community Research Survey - There are enough good quality open spaces**

Year	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2012	10%	15%	34%	11%
2014	6%	19%	30%	17%
2016	9%	17%	29%	20%

**Table 2 - Community Research Survey - There is a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities**

Year	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2012	9%	20%	30%	9%
2014	11%	22%	25%	8%
2016	10%	20%	28%	10%

A performance gap analysis was also conducted for select Council services. The table below outlines the results over 2012, 2014 and 2016 for services relevant to recreation. Both parks and recreation areas and swimming pools have an increasing performance gap over the three years. The performance gap for sport fields and building is trending down but still indicates a deficit. Whilst there is an opportunity for improvement, recreation services and facilities are performing relatively well.

**Table 3 - Community Research Survey – Importance and satisfaction with Council Services and Facilities**

Criteria	2012	2014	2016
Parks and recreation areas	-1.12	-1.59	-1.32
Sporting fields and buildings	-0.85	-0.60	-0.66
Swimming pools	-0.64	-0.67	-0.98

# Demographic Profile

## Cessnock LGA Demographic Profile

The way in which the community interacts with open space and participates in recreational activities is largely influenced by its demographic profile. The following section discusses the demographic characteristics of the Cessnock LGA.

Table 4 provides a five year age group comparison of the Cessnock LGA compared to Regional NSW and NSW at the 2016 Census.

**Table 4 - Cessnock LGA 5 Year Age Group**

Age Group	2016			
	Number	Cessnock LGA %	Regional NSW %	NSW %
0 to 4	3,792	6.8	5.8	6.2
5 to 9	3,994	7.2	6.4	6.4
10 to 14	3,590	6.5	6.1	5.9
15 to 19	3,454	6.2	6.0	6.0
20 to 24	3,443	6.2	5.6	6.5
25 to 29	3,520	6.3	5.5	7.0
30 to 34	3,634	6.5	5.5	7.2
35 to 39	3,301	5.9	5.4	6.7
40 to 44	3,567	6.4	6.1	6.7
45 to 49	3,611	6.5	6.4	6.6
50 to 54	3,373	6.1	6.8	6.5
55 to 59	3,731	6.7	7.1	6.3
60 to 64	3,443	6.2	6.7	5.6
65 to 69	3,208	5.8	6.4	5.1
70 to 74	2,314	4.2	5.0	3.9
75 to 79	1,458	2.6	3.7	2.9
80 to 84	1,080	1.9	2.6	2.1
85 and over	1,052	1.9	2.7	2.2
Total Population	55,565*			

\* It is not uncommon for data sets to have anomalies soon after its initial release. It is expected that the total population of the 5 year age groups (55,565) will align with the total population (55,560) in future scheduled revisions of the data.



Table 5 provides a comparison of key statistics of the Cessnock LGA with that of Regional NSW and NSW. Regional NSW information is not available at the time of writing this Strategic Plan and will be included in future scheduled revisions as the data becomes available.

**Table 5 - Cessnock LGA key demographic statistics**

Statistic	2016		
	Cessnock LGA	Regional NSW	NSW
<b>Total Population</b>	55,560	-	7,480,228
<b>Median Age</b>	38	-	38
<b>Ethnicity and Cultural Diversity</b>			
Identifies as indigenous	7.2%	-	2.9%
Born Overseas	14.3%	-	34.5%
Speaks language other than English at home	3.2%	-	26.5%
<b>Household composition</b>			
Family household	72.4%	-	72%
Lone household	24.9%	-	23.8%
<b>Family composition</b>			
Couple family without children	36.5%	-	36.6%
Couple with children	40.8%	-	45.7%
One parent family	21.2%	-	16%
<b>Median weekly income</b>			
Median total personal income (weekly)	\$540	-	\$664
Median total household income (weekly)	\$1177	-	\$1486
<b>Dwelling structure</b>			
Separate house	89.9%	-	66.4%
Townhouse/Unit/Other	9.4%	-	33%

With median ages of 38 years, Cessnock residents are of a comparable age to NSW. Cessnock however has a higher proportion of younger residents (0-19 years) than Regional NSW and NSW. Further, Cessnock has a marginally higher proportion of older residents (60+ years) than NSW however has a lower proportion of older residents than Regional NSW.

The highest growing age groups between 2006 and 2016 in Cessnock were 65-74 year olds (70 per cent), followed by 20-24 year olds (31 per cent) and 25-34 year olds (29 per cent).

The increase of older age groups creates a demand for passive and informal recreation activities. Access to playing fields and formal sport opportunities are still important to younger people, while older people will generally seek walking, cycling and other low impact physical activities (ROSS Planning, 2017).

The younger population is more likely to seek both structured and unstructured recreation and physical activity pursuits, such as competitive and social sporting competitions and quality walking/ cycling paths. The

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significant proportion of people in these age cohorts will place pressure on Council to improve and maintain their sporting facilities, parks and playgrounds and provide access to affordable physical activity programs.

Access to programs that cater for young children and teenagers will also need to be developed, particularly over the school holidays, to keep young people active and entertained. Cessnock City Council still prides itself as being a great destination to live with many lifestyle benefits for families. Approximately 72.4 per cent (up from 70.7 per cent in 2011) of the households in the community are 'family household', of which 62 per cent have children (up from 56.9 per cent in 2011).

With a large number of families living in the Cessnock LGA and the desire of younger people to participate in organised sport, recreation and/or physical activity (particularly young children and teenagers), some families may have to pay 2 or 3 membership fees, along with uniform costs. A decline in junior participation is possible if membership prices continue to rise as families struggle to afford the costs involved.

The average household in the Cessnock LGA has a lower weekly income (\$1,177) than the State average (\$1,486). This means that recreational activities need to be diverse offering a range of options at all affordability levels to ensure equality and encourage opportunities to improve quality of life.

In 2011 the Cessnock LGA scored 936.4 on the SEIFA Index of Disadvantage. The Cessnock LGA is therefore considered to have the highest socio-economic disadvantage of all LGAs in the Lower Hunter and is in the highest quartile within the State. Within the Cessnock LGA, areas of higher disadvantage (i.e. with a lower index score) are clustered around the centres of Cessnock and Kurri Kurri as shown in Figure 2 on the following page.

Figure 2 – Cessnock LGA Areas of Disadvantage

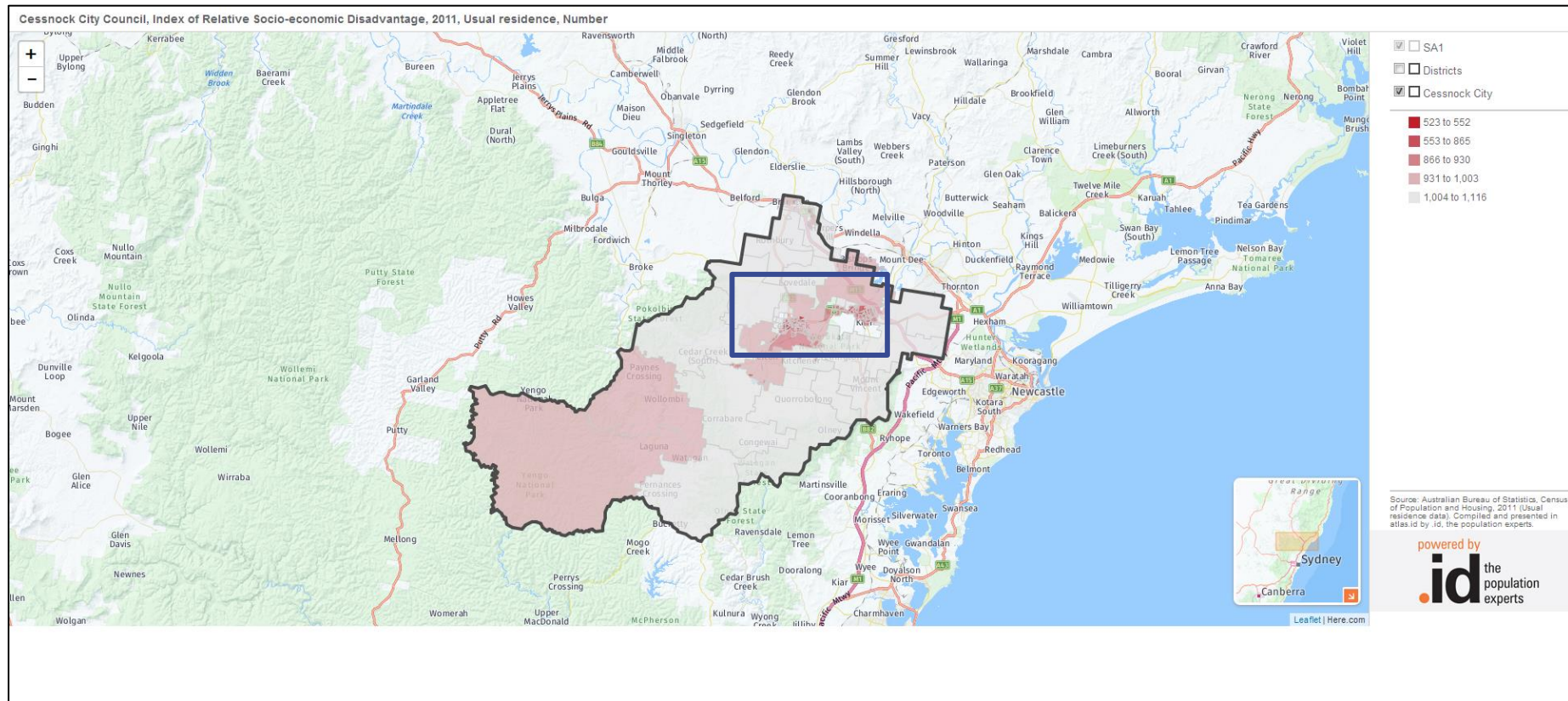
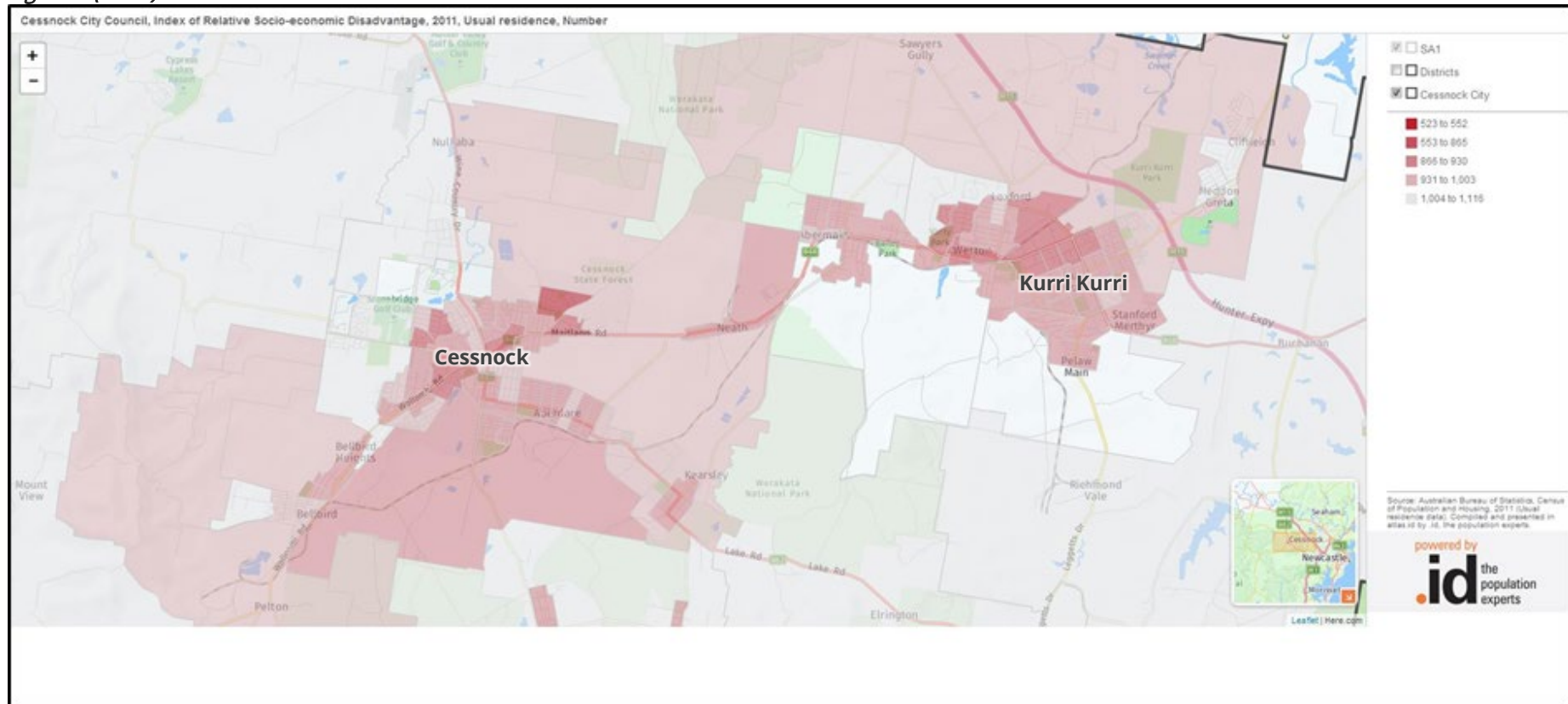


Figure 2 (inset)



### *Cessnock LGA Population Growth*

The population of the Cessnock LGA has grown quickly over the last 10 years, achieving 20 per cent growth between 2006 and 2016. This growth has not occurred evenly across the LGA with some areas outperforming others. The Branxton Greta Planning Area has experienced the highest annual growth averaging 3.7 per cent, followed by the Rural West Planning Area (2.9 per cent), then the Cessnock Planning Area (1.9 per cent) and Kurri Kurri Planning Area (1.6 per cent).

To estimate what the Cessnock LGA population may reach by 2036, a straight line average has been applied to each planning area based on average growth rates between 2006 and 2016 and totalled to give the LGA estimated population. The estimated population for Cessnock LGA at 2026 is 65,052 increasing to 74,525 by 2036. A summary of the population growth in each Planning Area is tabulated in **Planning Area Demographic Profile** below.

Based on 2016 Census data, Cessnock LGA contains a slightly lower proportion of residents who work within the LGA (44 per cent) compared to working outside the LGA (51 per cent). The location of remaining five per cent is identified as 'no fixed place of work'. As a result, there are several things that will impact on the future growth of the population in Cessnock. The continued growth of agricultural and leisure industries associated with the Hunter Valley Wine Country is likely to be a key factor as well as perceived housing affordability in comparison to the wider Hunter Region. The Hunter Expressway also improves the connectivity of the Cessnock area with neighbouring councils, making Cessnock a viable place to live whilst working outside the area.

Other sources contributing to population growth are 'tree changers' (particularly empty-nesters and retirees) looking for a more relaxed lifestyle and:

- The emergence of new industries, particularly in research and development.
- New development projects associated with major land release.
- Attraction of families to the area, based on the amenity of the area.

As a result of the overall projected growth of the Cessnock LGA, it is expected that the proportion of people looking for all types of recreation will increase. In addition to those who work outside the traditional work hours, retirees often seek programs at different times, not just the early morning and evenings.

The growth of population in Cessnock will be catered for largely in Greenfield sites, with the following sites proposed or approved for residential development:

<b>Huntlee</b> (7,500 lots / 21,000 residents)	<b>Kitchener</b> (300 lots / 870 residents)	<b>Rose Hill, Millfield</b> (100 lots / 290 residents)
<b>Bellbird North</b> (3,500 lots / 10,000 residents)	<b>Golden Bear, Rothbury</b> (300 lots / 840 residents)	<b>Hebburn Estate, Weston</b> (90 lots / 250 residents)
<b>Anvil Creek, Greta</b> (1,365 lots / 3,820 residents)	<b>Bellbird Heights</b> (300 lots / 840 residents)	<b>Black Creek 5, Cessnock</b> (75 lots / 215 residents)
<b>Cliftleigh</b> (977 lots / 2,440 residents)	<b>Mount View Road, Millfield</b> (280 lots / 680 residents)	<b>Paxton North</b> (42 lots / 120 residents)
<b>Averys Village, Heddon Greta</b> (960 lots / 2,400 residents)	<b>Wyndham Street, Greta</b> (240 lots / 670 residents).	<b>Weston</b> (20 lots / 55 residents)
<b>Government Road, Cessnock</b> (450 lots / 1,305 residents)	<b>Heddon Greta</b> (195 lots / 487 residents)	<b>Hydro Aluminum, Kurri Kurri</b> (1485 lots/4,158 residents - indicative)
<b>Nulkaba</b> (470 lots / 1,300 residents)	<b>Congewai Creek 5, Millfield</b> (125 lots / 360 residents)	



## Planning Area Demographic Profile

To provide a better understanding of recreational needs at a district level, the Cessnock LGA has been divided into four Planning Areas being Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton-Greta and Rural West. These Planning Areas have been defined in consideration of public transport routes, access to services and facilities, and proximity to commercial districts.

### *Cessnock Planning Area Demographic Profile*

The Cessnock Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Abernethy, Cessnock, Bellbird, Kitchener, Kearsley, Nulkaba, Mount View and Pokolbin. Table 6 compares the age profile of the Cessnock Planning Area to the broader Cessnock LGA.

**Table 6 - Cessnock Planning Area Age Profile**

	2016		
Five year age groups (years)	Cessnock Planning Area (%)	Cessnock LGA (%)	Variation (%)
0 to 4	6.0	6.8	-0.8
5 to 9	6.2	7.2	-1.0
10 to 14	6.0	6.5	-0.5
15 to 19	6.0	6.2	-0.2
20 to 24	6.5	6.2	0.3
25 to 29	6.3	6.3	0.0
30 to 34	6.7	6.5	0.2
35 to 39	6.1	5.9	0.2
40 to 44	6.9	6.4	0.5
45 to 49	6.5	6.5	0.0
50 to 54	6.2	6.1	0.1
55 to 59	6.9	6.7	0.2
60 to 64	6.2	6.2	0.0
65 to 69	5.8	5.8	0.0
70 to 74	4.3	4.2	0.1
75 to 79	3.0	2.6	0.4
80 to 84	2.2	1.9	0.3
85 and over	2.3	1.9	0.4

The age profile of the Cessnock Planning Area is relative to the LGA age profile with no variation in any one age group exceeding one per cent. Overall the Cessnock Planning Area has a slightly older age profile with a notable under representation of the 0 to 14 year old cohort.

**Table 7 - Cessnock Planning Area Population Growth**

Population (Census, 2016)	Projected Population 2036	Change	Change (%)
24,924	32,910	+7,986	+32%

Table 7 indicates that the Cessnock Planning Area is anticipated to experience moderate growth to 2036 and will remain the most populous planning area in the LGA.

**Kurri Kurri Planning Area Demographic Profile**

The Kurri Kurri Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Abermain, Cliftleigh, Heddon Greta, Kurri Kurri, Mulbring, Neath, Pelaw Main, Stanford Merthyr and Weston. Table 8 compares the age profile of the Kurri Kurri Planning Area to the broader Cessnock LGA.

**Table 8 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area Age Profile**

Five year age groups (years)	2016		
	Kurri Kurri Planning Area (%)	Cessnock LGA (%)	Variation (%)
0 to 4	6.6	6.8	-0.2
5 to 9	7.4	7.2	0.1
10 to 14	6.7	6.5	0.2
15 to 19	7.0	6.2	0.8
20 to 24	6.3	6.2	0.1
25 to 29	5.9	6.3	-0.5
30 to 34	6.4	6.5	-0.1
35 to 39	6.0	5.9	0.1
40 to 44	6.7	6.4	0.3
45 to 49	6.7	6.5	0.2
50 to 54	6.6	6.1	0.5
55 to 59	6.8	6.7	0.0
60 to 64	6.5	6.2	0.3
65 to 69	5.7	5.8	-0.1
70 to 74	3.8	4.2	-0.4
75 to 79	2.2	2.6	-0.4
80 to 84	1.6	1.9	-0.3
85 and over	1.4	1.9	-0.5

The age profile of the Kurri Kurri Planning Area is relative to the Cessnock LGA age profile with no variation in any one age group exceeding one per cent. The Kurri Kurri Planning Area has a slightly younger age profile

than the Cessnock LGA with an under representation of 65+ year old cohort. The data also suggests that young families are well represented with a higher proportion of the 35-54 year old and 5-19 year old cohorts.

**Table 9 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area Population Growth**

Population (Census, 2016)	Projected Population 2036	Change	Change (%)
19,648	25,072	+5,424	27.6%

Table 9 suggests that the Kurri Kurri Planning Area is anticipated to experience steady growth to 2036.

#### *Branxton-Greta Planning Area Demographic Profile*

The Branxton-Greta Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury. Table 10 compares the age profile of the Branxton-Greta Planning Area to the broader Cessnock LGA.

**Table 10 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area Age Profile**

	2016		
Five year age groups (years)	Branxton-Greta Planning Area (%)	Cessnock LGA (%)	Variation (%)
0 to 4	8.8	6.8	2.0
5 to 9	9.0	7.2	1.8
10 to 14	7.7	6.5	1.2
15 to 19	5.8	6.2	-0.4
20 to 24	5.2	6.2	-1.0
25 to 29	7.7	6.3	1.4
30 to 34	8.0	6.5	1.5
35 to 39	8.0	5.9	2.1
40 to 44	6.5	6.4	0.1
45 to 49	6.3	6.5	-0.2
50 to 54	4.9	6.1	-1.2
55 to 59	5.9	6.7	-0.8
60 to 64	5.4	6.2	-0.8
65 to 69	4.6	5.8	-1.2
70 to 74	3.1	4.2	-1.1
75 to 79	1.3	2.6	-1.3
80 to 84	1.1	1.9	-0.8
85 and over	0.8	1.9	-1.1

The Branxton-Greta Planning Area has a comparatively young age profile when compared to the Cessnock LGA with a notably higher representation of the 0-14 year old cohort and an under representation of all age groups 45 years and older.

**Table 11 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area Population Growth**

Population (Census, 2016)	Projected Population 2036	Change	Change (%)
6,416	9,881	+3,465	+54%

Table **11** indicates the Branxton-Greta Planning Area is anticipated to experience the greatest relative growth of all planning areas to 2036.

**Rural West Planning Area Demographic Profile**

The Rural West Planning Area includes the villages and enclaves of Ellalong, Paxton, Millfield, Wollombi and Laguna. Table 12 compares the age profile of the Rural West Planning Area to the broader Cessnock LGA.



**Wallabies Training, Cessnock Sportsground**

**Table 12 - Rural West Planning Area Age Profile**

	2011		
Five year age groups (years)	Rural West Planning Area (%)	Cessnock LGA (%)	Variation (%)
0 to 4	4.6	6.8	-2.2
5 to 9	7.1	7.2	-0.1
10 to 14	6.5	6.5	0.0
15 to 19	5.3	6.2	-0.9
20 to 24	4.2	6.2	-2.0
25 to 29	3.9	6.3	-2.4
30 to 34	4.8	6.5	-1.7
35 to 39	4.4	5.9	-1.5
40 to 44	6.0	6.4	-0.4
45 to 49	8.2	6.5	1.7
50 to 54	6.9	6.1	0.8
55 to 59	8.3	6.7	1.6
60 to 64	8.6	6.2	2.4
65 to 69	9.1	5.8	3.3
70 to 74	6.0	4.2	1.8
75 to 79	3.2	2.6	0.6
80 to 84	1.5	1.9	-0.4
85 and over	1.4	1.9	-0.5

The Rural West Planning Area has a relatively older age profile than the Cessnock LGA with an under representation of 0 – 44 years old cohort. The Planning Area also has a notably higher representation of 55 – 74 year olds, suggesting that the area is popular for retirees and seniors.

**Table 13 - Rural West Planning Area Population Growth**

Population (Census, 2016)	Projected Population 2036	Change	Change (%)
4,591	6,662	+2071	+45.1%

Table 13 suggests that the Rural West Planning Area is anticipated to experience moderate – high growth to 2036, however it will continue to contain the lowest population of all planning areas.



# Participation in Sport and Recreation

## *Cessnock Community Survey & Participation Data*

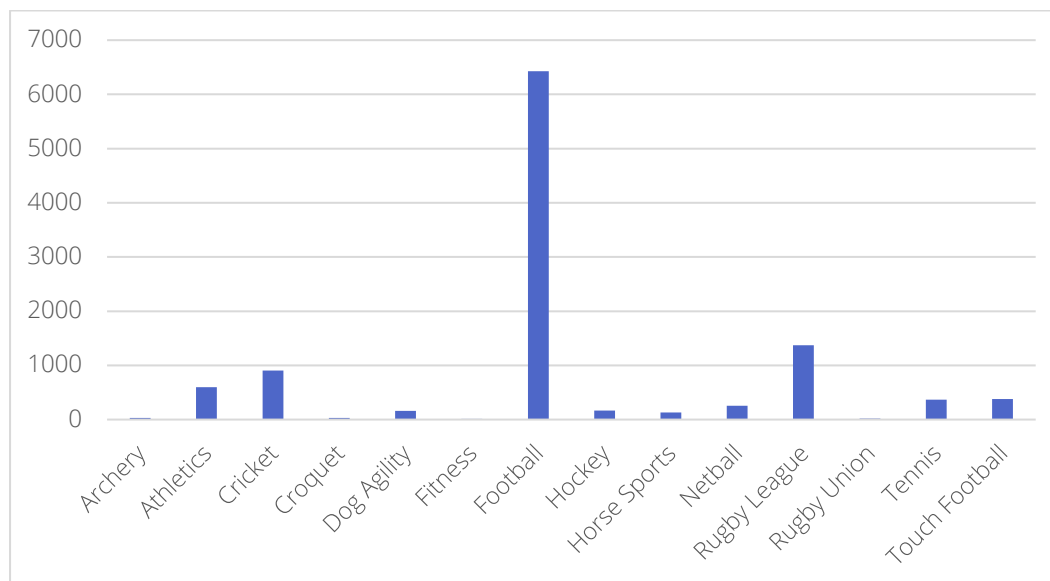
To inform the Recreation Needs Analysis, Council undertook a Community Survey in 2015 to understand participation preferences within the Cessnock Community. The survey included an online questionnaire, hard copy questionnaire and intercept surveys. A total of 216 people responded.

Key participation findings from the Community Survey were:

- Dancing was the most popular formal recreation activity (27 per cent), followed by soccer (25 per cent) and netball (19 per cent).
- AFL was the least popular formal recreation activity (0 per cent), followed by Lawn bowls (two per cent) and Hockey (4.41 per cent).
- Walking was the most popular informal recreation activity (64 per cent) followed by swimming (47 per cent) and gardening (45 per cent).
- Shooting was the least most popular informal recreation activity (five per cent), followed by motorsports (6.16 per cent) and physical activity as transport (seven per cent).
- Local footpaths were the most popular location to recreate with more than half (51 per cent) of respondents noting it.
- The most common barriers to participation were no suitable facilities nearby (52 per cent), looking after young children (28 per cent) and affordability (24 per cent).
- Improved paths were identified as the most popular way Council could encourage participation (57 per cent).

Figure 3 shows the distribution of registered club members at Council's recreation facilities (as at August 2016).

**Figure 3 – Registered Members at Council's Recreation Facilities**



Council's records indicate that soccer is the most popular formal recreational activity, followed by rugby league and netball. Whilst the Community Survey identified dancing as the most popular formal recreation activity, registered dancers are not included in Figure 3 as dancing is typically held at community facilities outside the scope of this Strategic Plan (such as halls and the Performing Arts Centre).

## *Participation trends 2001 - 2016*

Research conducted by Roy Morgan between 2001 and 2016 tracked participation rates of competitive sports in Australia. Increases in participation were observed in soccer (+46 per cent), Athletics (+9 per cent) and Basketball (+4 per cent) while declines were observed in rugby union (-63 per cent), tennis (-35 per cent), rugby league (-27 per cent), lawn bowls (-25 per cent), golf (-24 per cent), netball (-24 per cent), field hockey (-17 per cent), cricket (-10 per cent) and Australian Rules Football (-1 per cent).

## *Australia Sports Commission – Ausplay Survey*

The Australian Sports Commission (2018) commissioned the Ausplay Survey to inform strategy and fill information gaps left by the Australian Bureau of Statistics when it stopped collecting data in 2014. The Ausplay Survey undertakes over 20,000 interviews annually to understand the sports and physical recreation participation trends of both adults and children. The following discusses the key findings of the 2016-2017 survey released 16 November 2017.

### **How active are Australians?**

The survey found that over 89 per cent of Australians aged 15 or over participated in a sport or physical activity in the preceding 12 months compared to only 73 per cent of children aged 0 - 14. Adult men and women participate at similar levels across the life stages. More than half (62 per cent) of Australians aged 15 or over are participating in sport or physical activity three or more times per week. Only 23 per cent of children aged 0 - 14 are active at least three times per week. A quarter (25 per cent) of Australians aged 15 years or older are participating at least 7 times per week.

### **What motivates Australians to be active?**

Physical health or fitness is the leading motivator for participation, followed by fun and enjoyment and then for social reasons. Women are more likely to be motivated by physical health or fitness (81 per cent) than men (76 per cent) whereas men are more likely to be motivated by fun and enjoyment (52 per cent) than women (40 per cent).

### **What prevents Australians from being active?**

Not enough time is the leading factor for preventing males from being active while poor health or injury is the leading factor for females. Don't like sport is the leading barrier for adults aged 15-17.

Not enough time is the leading barrier for adults up to middle-age which is then surpassed by poor health or injury into their senior years.

The leading barrier for youth aged between 0 and 8 years is the perception [from parents] that the children are too young to participate in sport. Time constraint is the second leading factor during these years and doesn't like sport is the leading factor for 8 - 14 year olds.



### **How do Australians like to get active?**

Adults are more likely to participate in physical activity outside of an organisation or venue; and this preference for non-organisation/venue based recreation increases as Australians get older.

Gyms are the most popular venue for adults to participate with preference being strongest for middle-aged adults. Sports clubs are the second most popular venue and this preference declines as adults get older.

Sports clubs are the primary avenue for children to be active with the exception of the 0-4 age group who are more likely to be active through a gym or fitness club. This preference continues through to the age of 18 before other service providers begin to become the preferred avenue.

Whilst venue based participation is similar for adult males and females, males are almost twice as likely to participate through a sports club. While sport clubs are the main avenue for active boys and girls, throughout childhood boys are more likely to be active through club sport than girls.

### **Most popular activities in NSW**

The Ausplay Survey also segmented data by State. The following tables identify preferred activities for NSW respondents.

**Table 14 - Top 10 activities for adults in NSW (15 years and older):**

Activity	Adults (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)
Walking (Recreational)	42.5	33.4	51.4
Fitness/Gym	33.5	30.9	36.1
Swimming	16.8	15.2	18.3
Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	14.9	16.0	13.8
Cycling	9.8	13.2	6.5
Football/soccer	7.0	11.2	2.9
Bush walking	6.4	7.3	5.4
Golf	5.5	9.2	1.9
Yoga	5.0	1.8	8.2
Tennis	5.0	5.7	4.4

In NSW adults prefer to participate in non-formal recreation activities such as walking (42.5 per cent) and fitness/gym (33.5 per cent). This preference was particularly profound for females with a higher proportion than males participating in walking (51.4 per cent of females compared to 33.4 per cent of males), fitness/gym (36.1 per cent of females compared to 30.9 per cent of males) and swimming (18.3 per cent of females compared to 15.2 per cent of males).

*Table 15 - Top 10 activities for children in NSW (14 years and younger):*

Activity	Children (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Swimming	30.2	29.7	30.8
Football/soccer	21.9	32.1	11.5
Dancing (recreational)	9.2	1	17.5
Gymnastics	8.2	4.1	12.4
Netball	5.9	0	12
Athletics, track and field (includes jogging and running)	4.7	5.2	4.3
Rugby League	4.5	8.5	0.3
Basketball	4.2	3.2	5.1
Tennis	4.2	5.8	2.5
Cricket	3.5	6.8	0.1

The most popular activities for children in NSW were swimming (30.2 per cent), football/soccer (21.9 per cent) and dancing (9.2 per cent). Activities dominated by boys included football/soccer, cricket and rugby league. Activities dominated by girls included dancing, gymnastics and netball.

## *Other factors affecting participation*

### **Global and National trends**

A potential indicator of the rising popularity of sports on a global scale is the Olympic Games program. It was recently announced that the International Olympic Committee agreed to add Baseball/Softball, Karate, Skateboard, Sports Climbing and Surfing to the sports program for the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020 (IOC, 2016). The inclusion of these sports suggests that there is healthy competition across the globe and these sports demand recognition as a professional sport in their own right.

A report prepared by the CSIRO for the Australian Sports Commission (2013) identifies six megatrends that will likely shape the Australian Sport Sector over the next 30 years.

1. A preference for informal recreation.
2. Rise of lifestyle adventure and alternative sports.
3. Greater recognition of the social benefits of sport.
4. Shift towards sports catering for older people and diverse cultures.
5. More expenditure in sport off the back of economic growth in the Asia-Pacific.
6. Community sport organisations to be replaced by organisations with corporate structures.

### **Emerging sports**

There is now a greater range of formal sport and recreation activities than ever before. From a recreation and fitness perspective, a new wave of classes and circuit training opportunities appear to evolve every few years. Similarly, sports offering a variation of a more traditional sport are beginning to grow in popularity such as touch football or futsal soccer. In addition to this, sports once considered extreme (eg BMX, skateboarding and scootering) are becoming more mainstream and with the assistance of sponsors, are becoming a viable way to make a living.

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While participation data for many of these emerging activities has yet to be collected at a broad level, there is some potential that participants may choose to participate in one or two activities each year, spreading thinner the number of participants across new and traditional sports.

#### ***Expectation of flexible hours***

It is widely recognised that people are becoming more time-poor. As a result, participants are seeking flexible hours to undertake activities. Walking, running and cycling are likely to continue to be popular forms of activity as participants can be flexible in choosing when, where and how long they undertake the activity. For other activities to retain or gain in popularity, it is likely they will need to be able to offer longer and more flexible operating hours or more flexible approach to training and competition participation.

#### ***Lengthening seasons***

Further impacting on recreation time choices, is a move toward year round sport. Nation-wide, a number of sports are lengthening their seasons well past the traditional summer/winter season to the point where it becomes difficult for participants to be involved in more than one activity each year (ROSS Planning, 2017). Alternatively sports are running two seasons or a modified season (e.g. Summer 6s soccer) as an adjunct to the primary season.

## ***Summary of Participation Research***

The key outcomes from participation research were:

- The vast majority of Australians are active however adults are considerably more active than children.
- There is an overwhelming preference for informal recreation amongst adults.
- The preferred settings to recreate in are typically non-formal such as footpaths and parks. This preference increases with age.
- The key motivator for playing sport is for fun and enjoyment.
- Men and women are comparatively active over their life stages.
- Boys are more likely to participate in club sport than girls.
- Community sports will progressively become more commercialised.
- Barriers such as time and cost are pushing people towards alternative and modified sports.





# Strategic Objectives, Opportunities and Challenges

This section establishes the strategic framework to guide Council in the provision and management of recreation and open space. The framework has been developed to identify and address the opportunities and challenges derived from the information contained within the preceding sections of this Strategic Plan.

The framework sets out four Strategic Objectives that Council should aim to achieve in order to meet its vision for recreation and open space facilities. Supporting these Strategic Objectives are a number of Strategic Directions that provide Council an additional level of guidance in achieving the vision for recreation and open space.

## ***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:***

### *Create a recreation and open space network that is connected and accessible*

A recreation and open space network that is connected and accessible provides an equitable environment that encourages active living and participation. Connectivity refers to the provision for movement to and from as well as between recreation and open space areas. Movement may be facilitated by way of motorised transport such as cars and buses or by way of active transport such as walking and cycling. Accessibility refers to the ease that people can access and move throughout recreation and open space areas. Both connectivity and accessibility must be considered when planning for recreation and open space.

#### **Opportunities**

##### **Land Release Areas**

The Cessnock LGA is experiencing consistent growth with the vast majority of this growth occurring in Land Release Areas. Land Release Areas present an opportunity to set aside lineal tracts of land to connect open space areas and other trip attractors via green corridors. This would provide safe and convenient routes for people to partake in active modes of transport.

The provision of green corridors to facilitate active transport are more likely to be utilised by adolescents and older cohorts as younger users are commonly deterred by perceived risk from parents (Nicholson et. al., 2014). Council should therefore focus on providing connections between district and regional recreation facilities and other services (such as retail areas and secondary schools) that provide for adolescents and older as opposed to local recreation facilities that generally cater for children.

Council should be selective in the provision of green corridors as there is a maintenance cost associated with managing these assets. Utilising riparian corridors, drainage reserves and residential buffers that are to be dedicated to Council is a cost effective way of establishing green corridors.

##### **Public transport**

Public transport is an affordable and (mostly) convenient way for people to travel. Locating open space near transport routes and stops allows users to commute in a safe and affordable way to recreation and open

space facilities. This is particularly important for district and regional level facilities whereby residents are required to travel further distances to access.

### *Challenges*

#### ***Spatial settlement pattern***

The Cessnock LGA's population is made up of many towns, villages and enclaves. This presents a significant challenge for Council in balancing the proximity of open space to residences with the increasing cost of maintaining Council's open space. Adopting and implementing a facility hierarchy and design and location standards would ensure an equitable and sustainable distribution of recreation and open space areas.

#### ***Land topography***

Parts of the Cessnock LGA are characterised by mountainous terrain which poses a physical barrier to non-motorised transport. Sloping open space areas also constrain the movement of park users, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled. Recreation and open space areas should be located to reduce the impact of sloping land on access.

## ***Strategic Directions***

- SD1.1 Connect the open space network through a series of green corridors that provide for active transport.
- SD1.2 Provide equitable access to and within recreation and open space areas.
- SD1.3 Develop transport networks and options which support participation in recreation.
- SD1.4 Provide developed recreation and open space areas within reasonable proximity to most residents.



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## ***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:***

### ***Provide a recreation and open space network that is well utilised and inclusive***

Providing an open space network that is well utilised and inclusive requires an understanding of the needs and barriers of those who are likely to use it. A community that participates in recreation stands to receive the economic, social and environmental benefits proven to be generated by physical activity. To ensure recreation and open space areas are well utilised and inclusive, Council must ensure that recreation facilities are fit-for-purpose and safe.

#### ***Opportunities***

##### **Co-locating recreation and open space facilities**

Recreation and open space areas that are co-located with other compatible community services and facilities generally encourage greater use from a wider cross-section of the community. Co-locating facilities provides the opportunity to raise public awareness of the facilities and services offered and thereby attract greater use by the broader community. It also improves the efficiency of providing and maintaining recreation and open space areas through allowing the sharing of common uses such as toilets, car parks and turf areas.

##### **Community Involvement**

Community involvement in the planning, construction and maintenance of recreation and open space areas benefits Council in several ways; diverse opinions ensuring all factors are considered and all options are identified; sense of ownership; out-of-the-box ideas; improving Council-community relations and developing skills and relationships within the community. Council must work to empower members of the community through effective engagement and be adequately resourced to facilitate community driven projects on public land.

#### ***Challenges***

##### **Socio-Economic Disadvantage**

Regardless of how socioeconomic status is measured (for example, based on education, household income, workforce participation, private health insurance or area of residence) studies repeatedly find that men and women from low socioeconomic groups have a higher incidence of sedentary behaviour or insufficient physical activity (Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, 2010). Disadvantaged communities face many barriers to participating in sport and recreation such as lack of finances, poor transport options, failing health and social isolation.

The Cessnock LGA is considered to have the highest socio-economic disadvantage of all LGAs in the Lower Hunter and is in the highest quartile within the State. It is therefore critical that Council's efforts to overcome barriers to participation are particularly conscious of those barriers encountered by disadvantaged populations.

##### **Meeting the evolving needs of the community**

The provision of recreation and open space areas is costly and often opportunistic. It is therefore challenging to reactively respond to the changing recreational needs and preferences of the community. To adequately meet the current and future needs of the community, Council is required to recognise existing gaps in the provision of recreation and open space and also anticipate the future needs of the community through robust strategic planning.

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### ***Increasing female participation in formalised sport***

Research shows that participation rates amongst females in formalised sport and recreation declines as they move from adolescents into adulthood. Increasing awareness of gender differences and subsequent insecurities are considered to contribute to the descent of adult female participation in sport and recreation (CAAWS, 2012). To increase participation and utilisation of open space, an opportunity exists for Council to work with sporting groups and government departments to address the complexities imposed by gender differences and increase female participation. This may be achieved through a variety of measures including policies, building design, education and training.

### ***Engaging isolated and vulnerable groups***

Isolated and vulnerable groups refer to members of the community that, due to their circumstances, experience a heightened level of discrimination and/or disadvantage. These groups may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a mental or physical disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with differing sexual orientation, low income families, the elderly and the youth. Engaging isolated and vulnerable groups to participate in recreation is a challenge that Council must consider carefully and plan to ensure the benefits of recreation are exposed to a greater spectrum of the community and reach those who would benefit most.

### ***Getting children active and involved***

Statistics indicate that kids are less active than their adult counterparts and this trend is set to continue with the increasing popularity and influence of technology. While there are a number of movement based computer gaming consoles (such as Wii) that can provide a level of physical activity, a much larger proportion provide predominantly sedentary activity. The increases in the amount of time young people are spending playing computer games, using the internet, watching television and DVD's is limiting available time for sport and recreation opportunities. Children under the age of 15 make up over 20 per cent of the Cessnock LGAs population and particular effort must be made to reducing the barriers preventing this group from participating in recreation and physical activity.

## ***Strategic Directions***

- SD2.1 Provide and manage recreation and open space facilities that are responsive to community need.
- SD2.2 Upgrade existing recreation and open space facilities to be inclusive.
- SD2.3 Encourage innovation and creativity within the recreation and open space network.
- SD2.4 Promote safety and reduce the opportunity for anti-social behaviour in recreation and open space areas.
- SD2.5 Increase participation of isolated and vulnerable groups in the planning, utilisation and management of recreation and open space areas.

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## ***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:***

### ***Maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from recreation and open space areas***

The social, economic and environmental benefits of recreation and open space areas are widely recognised and documented. However without proper planning, recreation and open space can also generate adverse social, economic and environmental outcomes. For example, a poorly lit reserve may encourage loitering and anti-social behaviour, or the irresponsible provision of recreation and open space facilities may impose an unsustainable burden on Council's maintenance budgets. Planning for recreation and open space needs to consider 'the triple bottom line' and respond to minimise adversity and maximise benefit.

#### ***Opportunities***

##### ***Shared use of education facilities***

The shared use of school sport and recreation facilities can be a cost-effective way to promote and provide for physical activity. Schools within the Cessnock LGA that have dedicated recreational infrastructure may be utilised for public recreational purposes. There may also be an opportunity to promote current public recreation and open space areas for school use. A shared agreement between education service providers and Council may identify opportunities to share the management of public open space which could improve the quality and financial sustainability of managing the land.

##### ***Upgrading existing recreation facilities***

Council has a number of recreation and open space areas that are considered to be under-utilised. Improvements and upgrades to increase existing facility capacity and improve usability is a cost-effective way to accommodate additional demand from population growth and changing recreational preferences of the broader community.

##### ***Service levels***

Council maintains a large amount of recreation and open space assets and this comes at a significant cost. Aligning service levels to a standard based on the demand and utilisation of recreation and open space areas may improve the effectiveness and affordability of maintenance programs such as mowing and building renewal.

##### ***Rationalisation of excess open space***

Identifying recreation and open space areas that are surplus to need presents an opportunity to sell the land to reduce maintenance costs and create revenue for capital development.

##### ***External Funding***

To assist in improving the financial sustainability of providing and managing public recreation and open space areas, opportunities to secure external funding must be explored. External funding may take the form of sponsorships, grants and leasing. Outside of these typical external funding methods, a number of alternative funding models exist that may be appropriate to generate funding for recreation and open space areas. These include:

- Capital recycling – raising funds for new projects by selling off existing Council assets surplus to Council need.



- Special purpose financial instruments – preferential treatment to private investors through subsidies or grants.
- Minimum revenue guarantee – offering a guarantee on revenue for investors for a set period of time.
- Social impact bond – investors fund a program or project and only receive a return once a given social outcome is achieved.
- User charge model – a fixed fee applied to users of infrastructure.
- Not for profit organisations – operation and maintenance of Council infrastructure by a not for profit organisation.

Appropriate planning for external funding will be critical to the financial sustainability of Council.

#### **Development Contributions**

The NSW Planning framework provides Council's with the ability to collect funds from developers to deliver community infrastructure. Council should take full advantage of development contributions to improve Council's ability to deliver infrastructure to meet increasing demand from growing populations. Comprehensive development contributions plans supported by robust strategic planning would improve Council's ability to sustainably deliver recreation and open space infrastructure.

## **Challenges**

#### **Financial sustainability**

Council's throughout NSW are facing significant challenges in providing financially sustainable services to the community. The NSW Government has introduced Fit for the Future to identify opportunities to streamline the delivery of community services to make Local Government more financially sustainable. Increasing costs coupled with more stringent budgets and increasing asset maintenance will continue to be a significant challenge for the financial sustainability of Council's recreation and open space areas.

Council should aim for a cost recovery of between 20 and 50 per cent (ROSS Planning, 2017). This may be achieved through methods such as fees and charges, billing for utilities, commercial sponsorship and shifting maintenance responsibilities on to users.

#### **Environmental protection**

Recreation and open space areas support a number of areas with biodiversity value including ecological communities, water ways, natural landscapes, European and Indigenous heritage as well as significant flora and fauna. The increasing footprint of urban development is placing increasing pressure on the natural environment within the Cessnock LGA. The protection and enhancement of the natural environment within recreation and open space areas will be important in the sustainability of Cessnock's natural environment.

#### **Vandalism and anti-social behaviour**

The vast and isolated nature of recreation and open space facilities present a challenge to Council to manage and prevent anti-social behaviour. User groups have expressed their frustration in being victims to vandalism and anti-social behaviour, particularly during off-seasons and at night when passive surveillance from the community is limited. The impact of vandalism and anti-social behaviour not only affects Council financially, but can also be a deterrent or prevent the community from participating in recreational activities.

#### **Energy and water consumption**

Recreation and open space areas require a significant amount of energy and water to operate and maintain. The rising cost of electricity poses a significant risk to Council's ongoing sustainability. To address this, Council has an Energy Efficiency Program to identify a number of initiatives aiming to improve energy efficiency by lowering the kilowatt usage and reducing the operational costs across various sites.

Equally, Council's demand on water for irrigation currently exceeds the available supply generated through rainwater harvesting, preventing Council and user groups from sustainably maintaining sporting facilities and

gardens to a high standard. Investing in water sustainability initiatives, such as utilising recycled water discarded by local industries, is essential to ensure Council remains sustainable now and into the future.

## *Strategic Directions*

- SD3.1 Support projects and programs that deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the region.
- SD3.2 Prioritise funding in accordance with evidence based strategic direction, identified need and whole of life costing.
- SD3.3 Develop pricing and cost recovery policies relative to full lifecycle costs as agreed through asset management and strategic planning instruments.
- SD3.4 Partner and collaborate with external stakeholders in the planning, development and management of recreation and open space.
- SD3.5 Prioritise the utilisation and upgrading of existing facilities.
- SD3.6 Protect and enhance the Indigenous and European heritage of the Cessnock LGA.
- SD3.7 Adopt Ecologically Sustainable Development principles in the provision and management of recreation and open space.



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## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:**

### *Take a leading role in the governance, leadership and advocacy of recreation and open space facilities and services*

Council occupies a privileged position within the local community as a strategic and land use planning authority, provider and manager of facilities and services, a community representative and major employer. As the closest tier of government to the local community, Council has an unparalleled understanding of the needs and values of the community and is the leading organisation in the provision of recreation and open space areas. It is therefore important that Council's policies and procedures are underpinned by sound planning and communication.

#### *Opportunities*

##### **Increase awareness of recreation and open space areas**

Promoting and providing information on Council's recreation and open space network would increase the awareness of the facilities and increase their use. Utilising digital media such as Council's website is an effective way to share information. Signage can also assist in promoting the features of Council's recreation and open space areas.

##### **Participating in regional forums**

Council has access to information and resources that are not readily available to the general public. Participating in regional forums presents an opportunity for Council to represent the issues and challenges facing the Cessnock LGA and take advantage of a regional approach to resolving issues and challenges. Maintaining relationships with regional councils will be critical in the success of coordinating the provision and management of regional facilities and raising the profile of projects to attract State and Federal Government funding.

#### *Challenges*

##### **Managing community expectations**

The Cessnock community is diverse with differing backgrounds, experience and expectations in relation to the delivery and management of recreation and open space. Council will need to balance the standard of service expected by the community with making decisions that are financially responsible, affordable and sustainable. A clear framework in the provision and management of recreation and open space areas is required to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to addressing community requests.

##### **Facility management and community organisations**

The coordination and management of sporting clubs has increasingly become complex. The successful running of a club requires thorough policies and procedures to ensure all legislative and local government requirements are being met. This includes work health and safety, bookkeeping, reporting, insurances and meetings. Many clubs rely on the time and effort of volunteers of which many are torn between work and family commitments and often do not possess the business acumen to keep a club financially sustainable. Ensuring clubs have appropriate training and support will be vital to the ongoing sustainability of these volunteer organisations.

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Over time, the lack of enforcement and inconsistency of management agreements has resulted in a network of inconsistently maintained assets, confusion over roles and responsibilities, declining cost recovery percentages, multiple single use facilities and inconsistent hiring fees across planning areas/towns.

Specialised recreation facilities such as aquatic and indoor sports centres require a heightened level of management capability. To address this, Local Governments often out-source management services to contractors. This method has been adopted by Cessnock City Council with the contracted management of Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre and Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre.

### ***Empowering the community***

Council is an organisation of finite knowledge and resources and can greatly benefit from the knowledge and efforts of those out in the community. The regulative framework in which Council operates severely limits the willingness and ability of community stakeholders to share and contribute information and resources. Often being cited as frustrating, elaborate and expensive, Council must work to streamline its processes for community projects and actively lobby State Government agencies to review regulation in an effort to encourage the community to use and improve public land.

### ***Commercial use of open space***

Generating income through the commercial use of open space is an effective cost recovery method for Council however care must be taken to manage the impacts of commercial activities on the enjoyment and amenity of open space for the broader community.

For example, fitness training is one of the strongest growing types of physical activity. The increasing numbers of fitness trainers choosing to use recreation and sporting parks for their activities has resulted in:

- Equity of access issues – potential conflict with displaced users, management of demand, domination and monopolisation of areas and exploitation of public land by commercial operators.
- Impact on the asset – trainers of larger groups are causing wear-and-tear to recreational facilities.
- Facility management – scheduling of regular, seasonal and reactive maintenance.
- Public liability concerns – trainers with insufficient qualifications or insurance.

A clear and consistent policy on commercial activities on public land is essential to the effective management of commercial activities and the adverse impact on public land and its users.

## ***Strategic Directions***

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| SD4.1 | Lead the planning, management, promotion and facilitation of recreational assets and services for the community.   |
| SD4.2 | Work with external organisations to improve and increase their capacity to provide appropriate and successful programs, assets and services for Cessnock residents.    |
| SD4.3 | Develop and implement administrative frameworks and policies that provide consistency and certainty for administrators and users and that reflect Council's direction. |
| SD4.4 | Engage and empower internal and external stakeholders in the planning, funding, management and promotion of recreation and open space facilities.                      |

# Types of Recreation and Open Space Areas

## *Recreation and Open Space Hierarchy*

Recreation and open space varies in size, form and the range of functions that it performs. As such, it is usually classified according to its function and categorised into a locally appropriate hierarchy. This Strategic Plan has adopted the following hierarchy for recreation and open space areas in the Cessnock LGA:

### **Undeveloped Open Space**

Land acquired or zoned for open space purposes to protect its assets, or to be embellished in the future to meet community demand.

### **Passive Park**

Open space created for their attractiveness and to add to or protect the character/history of the area. Often highly landscaped parks such as entrance statements, monuments, memorials and lookouts.

Passive Parks are distinct from undeveloped open space due to their deliberate capacity to be accessed and used for recreational purposes. This is encouraged through regular maintenance and improvements such as park furniture, formalised access, landscaping and signage.

Passive open space is particularly opportunistic as it is often secondary to localised uses such as environmental conservation, stormwater management or pedestrian movement. In recognition of this, Passive Parks can generally be identified as one of the following:

#### **Pocket Park**

A small maintained open space area providing opportunities for informal recreation. Generally of a low embellishment level, pocket parks are typically located in smaller towns and residential areas.

#### **Civic Square**

A high quality passive open space located within large commercial centres. Smaller than a Town Park, Civic Squares are typically ancillary to commercial uses and not a destination in their own right. Civic squares are highly manicured and incorporate a mixture of hard scape and soft scape treatments.

#### **Scenic**

Scenic Parks are high quality open space often located in rural or remote areas. Scenic Parks offer expansive views and vistas and are frequented by visitors from outside of the local area. Due to often being located in remote areas, embellishments must be of a design to minimise the potential for theft and vandalism.

#### **Town Park**

A large high quality open space located in a central position, Town Parks are cornerstones to a town's identity. Town Parks don't just cater for short term uses such as reading and reflecting, but also longer term uses such as community events and markets. Town Parks integrate with surrounding residential and commercial uses and are generally well vegetated. Due to their size and high

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use, Town Parks may also cater for informal active uses such as kids play and kick about areas.

#### **Natural Area**

Natural Areas contain diverse and high quality ecological communities and are primarily for the purpose of conservation. Recreational uses and built improvements within Natural Areas are typically of low impact and may include boardwalks, viewing platforms and picnic settings.

#### **Utility**

Primarily for the purpose of protecting utility infrastructure and managing stormwater, Utility open spaces prioritise function over form. Embellishments of Utility open space are typically low impact as they must accommodate the operation (including upgrades and maintenance) of utility and stormwater infrastructure.

#### **Green Corridor**

Sites that provide connectivity between residential streets, places of interest and the open space network for pedestrians and cyclists. Primary function is not necessarily community open space but can provide opportunities for linear recreation parks when designed with dual functions in mind.

#### **Local Park**

Local Parks are intended to be small parks that offer residents a supplementary open space to complement their backyards. They are likely to attract users from a small catchment area and generally cater for short visits by very small groups. Local Parks contain minimal infrastructure for recreational use, however, if well-positioned can offer a range of community benefits.

#### **District Park**

District Parks are larger sized parks that service several suburbs or whole communities depending on the surrounding population density by providing a range of facilities and activity spaces for recreation. Often well-known destinations for those people living within their catchment (and beyond), these parks have facilities to cater for large groups.

Ideally, District Parks are located near, or are well-connected to social infrastructure such as schools, community centres, halls and activity centres.

#### **Regional Park**

Regional Parks offer a wide variety of opportunities to a broad cross-section of the Council's population and visitors. Offering unique experiences, these parks are generally large in size, highly embellished for informal recreation, well known amongst residents and are major destinations/ drawcards.

Regional Parks offer exciting and no cost activities for residents and visitors and are often used to host large community events such as carols in the park, Australia Day celebrations and other festivals. People are usually content spending several (4+) hours in these parks.

#### **Local Sportsground**

It is important to highlight that no additional Local Sportsgrounds are supported in the future due to the overall surplus across the LGA and their high establishment and maintenance cost relative to their recreational value.

Local Sportsgrounds have formal to semi-formal maintained sports ovals/fields for a mixture of winter and/or summer sports. The facilities would be of a good standard but may not have the required playing surface or ancillary infrastructure of a district level facility nor comply with State regulations for the sport. Informal



recreation may be restricted to certain parts of the ground. Toilets, changing facilities and car parking are likely to be available and some reserves may have sports club facilities. Clubs (or Council) may have installed floodlights to enable evening training.

Local Sportsgrounds usually consist of one field, basic lighting and minimal amenities. The fields are often used more for training and social purposes than for competition.

#### ***District Sportsground***

District Sportsgrounds are more than a sportsground, rather a facility. They have formally maintained sports field/ovals and courts for a mixture of winter and/or summer sports. The fields/ovals and courts comply and are maintained to State regulations for the sport codes using the grounds. District Sportsgrounds generally include spectator seating, canteen buildings and multiple amenities buildings catering for the range of sports at the ground. Car parking will be extensive and the facility will be suitable to attract competition at a local and regional level and possibly state level. In the case of the Cessnock LGA, and especially in the smaller towns, these facilities are often the hearts of communities, providing a range of sporting, recreation and social opportunities.

#### ***Regional Sportsground***

Regional Sportsgrounds are sporting facilities that could comfortably host regional (or potentially State) competitions. Factors such as the quality of the playing surface, amenities and canteen availability, lighting standards and spectator facilities have been considered. These facilities should be located in large population centres that are expected to grow in the future.

#### ***Specialised Sport Facility***

Specialised Sport Facilities are provided for sporting activities where the nature of the sport precludes the easy transfer of use to an alternative sport, or the nature of the activity precludes free, unrestricted access to members of the public. They include aquatic and indoor sports centres.

## ***Other Open Space***

In some areas of the Cessnock LGA, other open spaces exist that have not been included in the provision calculations later in this section. These include:

- stock routes;
- privately owned land and recreation facilities;
- camping and water reserves;
- scenic reserves;
- State Conservation Areas;
- National Parks;
- rest areas;
- unformed road reserves;
- showgrounds;
- weirs and dams;
- nature reserves;
- 'built' (eg halls) community land; and
- operational land.



These areas may provide for both passive and active recreation within the Cessnock LGA. It is important that Council considers the recreational value of this land when planning for the future provision of recreation and open space. Maintaining strong working partnerships with land owners such as National Parks & Wildlife,

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Crown Land and private owners will ensure full integration of these spaces with Council's recreation and open space network.

## *Indoor Sports Centres*

There are two Council indoor sports centres within the Cessnock LGA being the Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall and the Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre. The Cessnock PCYC is a privately operated indoor sports centre.

The Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall is a multi-purpose community facility. Due to the anticipated population growth, improving the Hall as a dedicated indoor sporting facility should be considered.

Without a major refurbishment, the Greta facility could continue to operate in its present manner to accommodate more local indoor sporting needs, but this may not meet the expected demand resulting from the significant population growth expected for the area. Further, a major refurbishment of the existing Greta centre may not be financially prudent, as refurbishments to allow it to operate as a true indoor sporting facility would cost close to that of building a new, modern facility.

Considered by many to have potential for increased usage, the Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre consists of two full size courts (with limited run-offs), tiered seating viewing area, meeting room, storage, kiosk and eating area and basic ancillary facilities including change rooms and office.

The Centre has previously been licensed to a basketball club that identified the need for more meeting and programming spaces and a general 'facelift' to the facility. Increasing promotion of the Centre should be explored to improve its commercial viability.

Not owned or managed by Council, the Cessnock PCYC provides a range of recreation programs and includes an indoor rock climbing wall, skate park, gymnasium youth space and meeting rooms. The one indoor court is full-size, but the low ceiling height restricts sports such as basketball, making it more suitable for sports such as indoor/futsal soccer.

## *Synthetic Surfaces*

Outdoor sports which have traditionally utilised synthetic surfaces include athletics (track and field), tennis and cricket (wickets) with a later shift towards synthetic surfaces occurring for other sports such as hockey and soccer. Within the Cessnock LGA, there are a number of synthetic tennis courts and one synthetic hockey field.

A key factor driving facility managers to utilise synthetic is the need to find a solution to the wear and tear turf surfaces experience during high use and high maintenance costs associated with irrigation, fertilizers, weed spray and levelling/topsoiling.

Whilst synthetic surfaces can withstand high use and reduce maintenance costs, they do incur a significant capital cost to purchase and install. Synthetic surfaces also have an expected life of around 14 years at which time they would need to be replaced at around 75 per cent of the cost of construction. For example, an international sized synthetic soccer field constructed for \$900,000 would have a replacement cost of \$675,000 after 14 years. This would require a replacement budget of approximately \$48,000 per annum over the life of the asset.

Council should remain open to providing synthetic facilities where an effective cost recovery model can be demonstrated.

# Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis

## *Provision of Recreation and Open Space*

### **Provision standards**

In order to achieve a balanced recreation and open space network, the following set of provision standards is proposed. These standards have been developed in consideration of the Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government (NSW Government, 2010) and localised demand and preference for recreation and open space areas. It should be noted that provision standards for Local Sportsgrounds are not proposed due to their high establishment and maintenance cost relative to their recreational value. The role of Local Sportsgrounds will continue to be provided by existing local facilities as well as existing and proposed district and regional facilities with Council aiming to reduce the number of local sportsgrounds in identified locations.

**Table 16 - Provision standards by hierarchy**

Tier	Recreation Parks	Sportsgrounds
Local	0.5ha/1,000 people	N/A
District	0.6ha/1,000 people	0.9ha/1,000 people
Regional	0.2ha/1,000 people	0.6ha/1,000 people
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1.3ha/1,000 people</b>	<b>1.5ha/1,000 people</b>



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### *Other recreation facilities*

There are some recreation facilities that are quite specific in their use and nature and costly to construct and maintain. Such facilities require a heightened level of planning and investigation to ensure Council works towards a sustainable level of provision. Facilities that fall into this category are skateparks, aquatic facilities and indoor sports centres and provision of such facilities will be considered in accordance with the recommendations of a needs analysis or feasibility study.

## *Proximity to Recreation and Open Space*

The Australian Government's Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPac) prepared an analysis of the proximity of residences to greenspace in the Lower Hunter Local Government Areas of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens, Maitland and Cessnock (DSEWPac, 2013).

The analysis identified that on average, Cessnock LGA residents are required to travel the furthest direct distance to greenspace with 64 per cent of residences located within 400m of greenspace (UK Standard) and 81 per cent of residences located within 800 metres of greenspace (US Standard). This is considerably lower than the Lower Hunter average of 88 per cent and 95 per cent respectively. The analysis does acknowledge however, that whilst the comparison provides an indication of greenspace advantage, the quality of the data cannot derive definite conclusions on disadvantage. It recommends that further consideration should be given to other factors such as un-identified greenspaces and population densities.

The following location guidelines have been developed with consideration to the outcomes of the Australian Government's analysis and the Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government (NSW, 2010).

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

- District and Regional parks and sportsgrounds should be co-located with other compatible land uses such as schools and community halls.
- Maximise street frontage along parks and sportsgrounds and avoid having back and side fences facing onto reserves.
- Local Parks should be located to front low traffic volume streets.
- Parks and sportsgrounds should be provided along existing or proposed public transport routes.
- Green Corridors should be located to create strategically important links with adjoining open space and other land uses.

To determine the appropriate provision of local, district and regional facilities, this Strategic Plan proposes a tiered provision system.

The tiers have been established by grouping places based on their size, population and location.

**Table 17 - Locality description and examples**

Tier	Description	Town/Village Example
Tier One	Town and catchment area servicing over 15,000 people	Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Huntlee
Tier Two	Town and catchment area servicing between 2,000 and 15,000 people	Branxton, Greta
Tier Three	Village and catchment area servicing less than 2,000 people	Wollombi, Millfield

**Table 18 - Preferred locality by facility type**

Facility Type	Hierarchy	Tier one	Tier two	Tier three
Park	Passive	X	X	X
	Local	X	X	X
	District	X	X	-
	Regional	X	-	-
Sportsground	Local	-	-	-
	District	X	X	X
	Regional	X	-	-
	Specialised	X	-	-

Generally, Council will aim to provide developed open space (i.e. Passive, Local, District, Regional and Specialised Sport) within 500m of most residents. Specific catchments have been applied to Council's core recreation and open space facilities (i.e. Local, District and Regional facilities) to identify the reasonable distance for residents to travel when accessing facilities. Catchments have not been specified for Passive Parks and Specialised Sport facilities due to their opportunistic locations and varied intent and use. For example, Scenic Passive Parks such as Bimbadeen Lookout and Mount Bright Lookout are in close proximity (approximately 1.4 kilometres) despite attracting visitors from throughout the region. Another example is Branxton Pool and Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre which are both aquatic facilities but vary significantly in their operational capacity and member catchment. Catchments have also not been specified for Local Sportsgrounds as the provision of Local Sportsgrounds is not included in provision standards (refer Table 16).

**Table 19 - Recreation facility catchments**

The below table is to be utilised as a guide only.

Park	Catchment	Sportsground	Catchment
Local	500m	Local	N/A
District	5km	District	5km
Regional	15km	Regional	15km

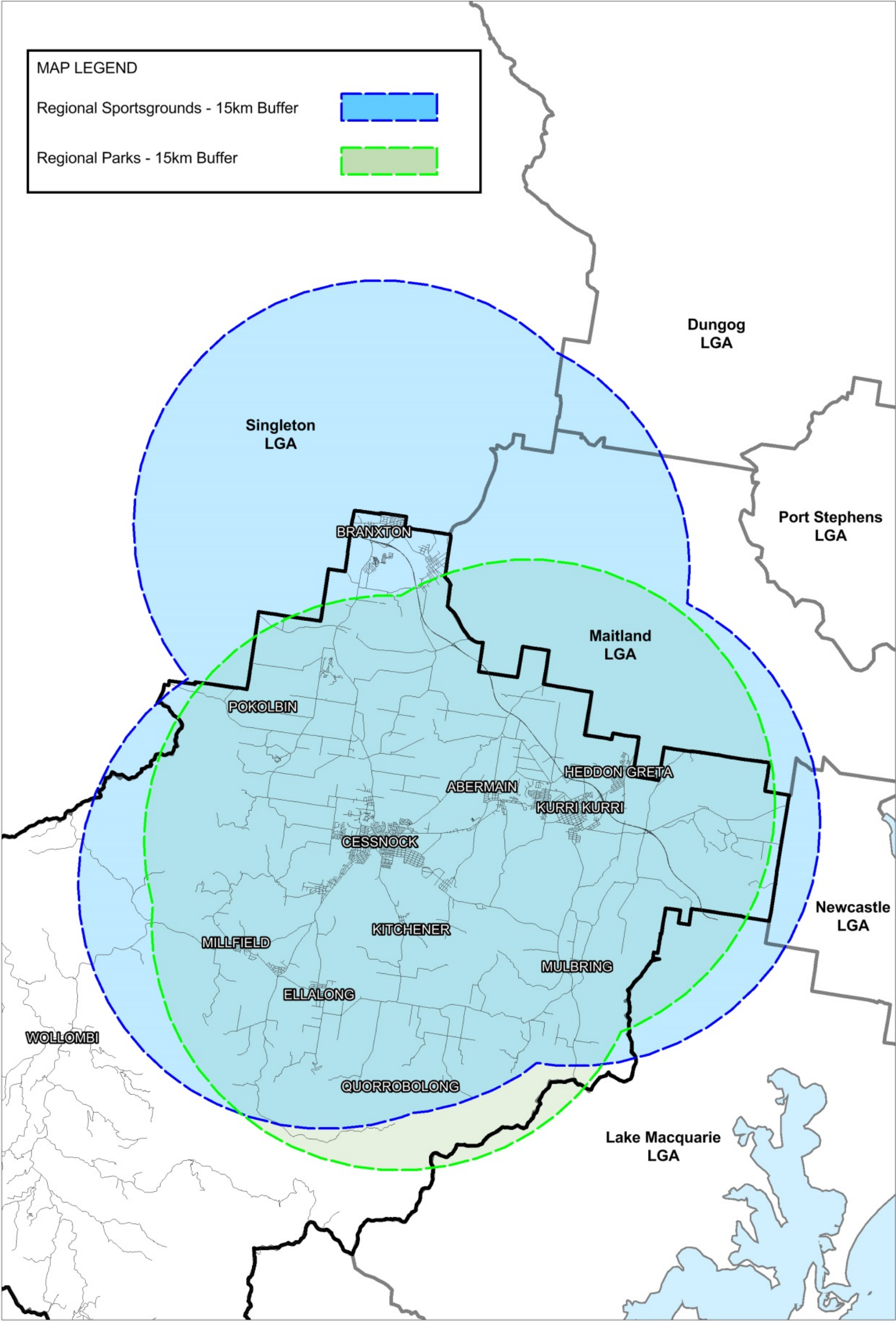
The following maps have been developed to identify the spatial catchments of developed open space and assist in identifying areas where there is an under provision of developed open space within reasonable proximity. Notable gaps in spatial provision include Regional Facilities servicing Wollombi; District Parks servicing the Rural West and Branxton-Greta Planning Areas; and Developed Open Space servicing Aberdare, Cliftleigh, Heddon Greta and Bellbird.



Kurri Kurri Sportsground, Kurri Kurri

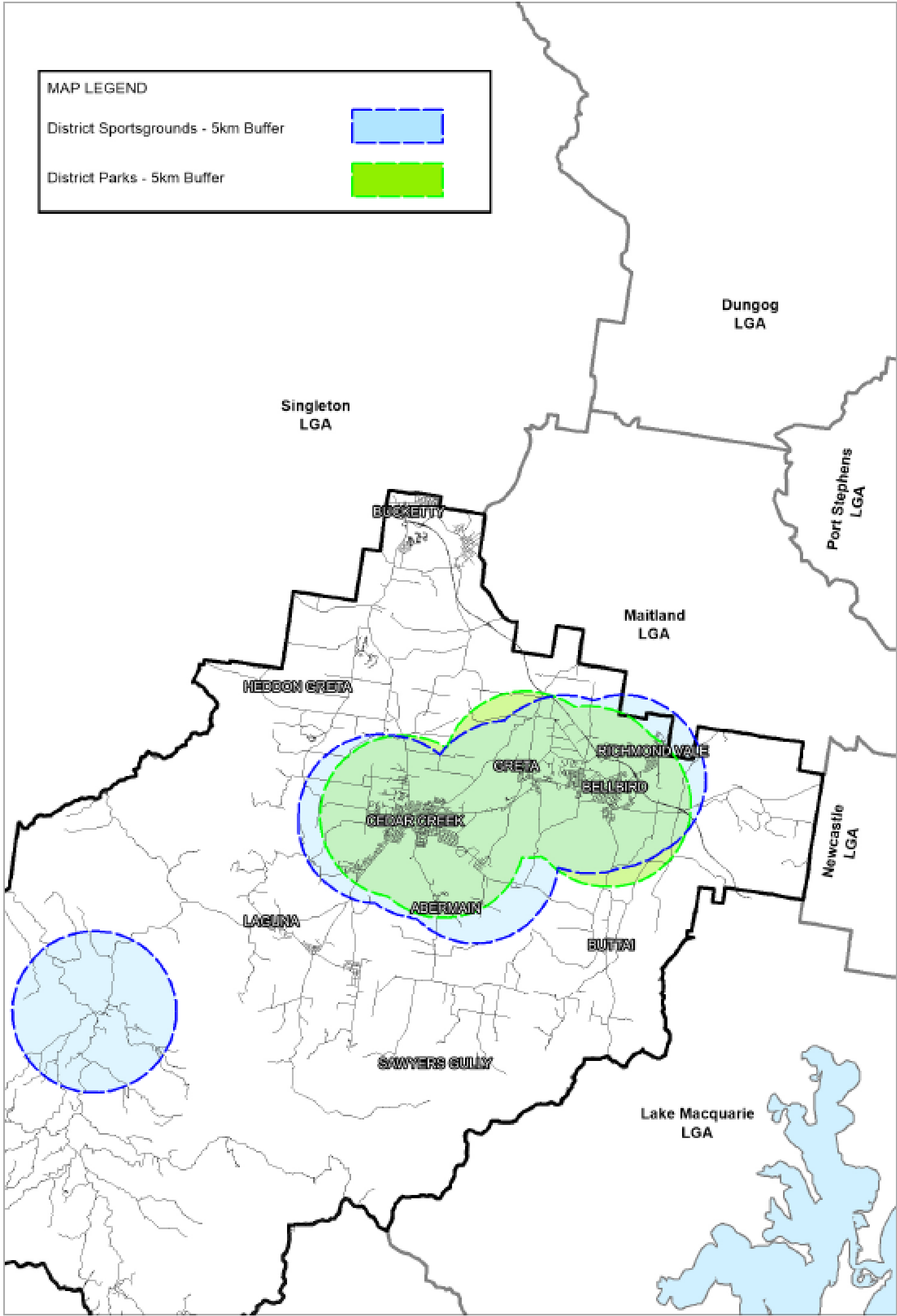


Map 1 - Regional facility catchment



Reference : Regional\_15km Buffer\_120717

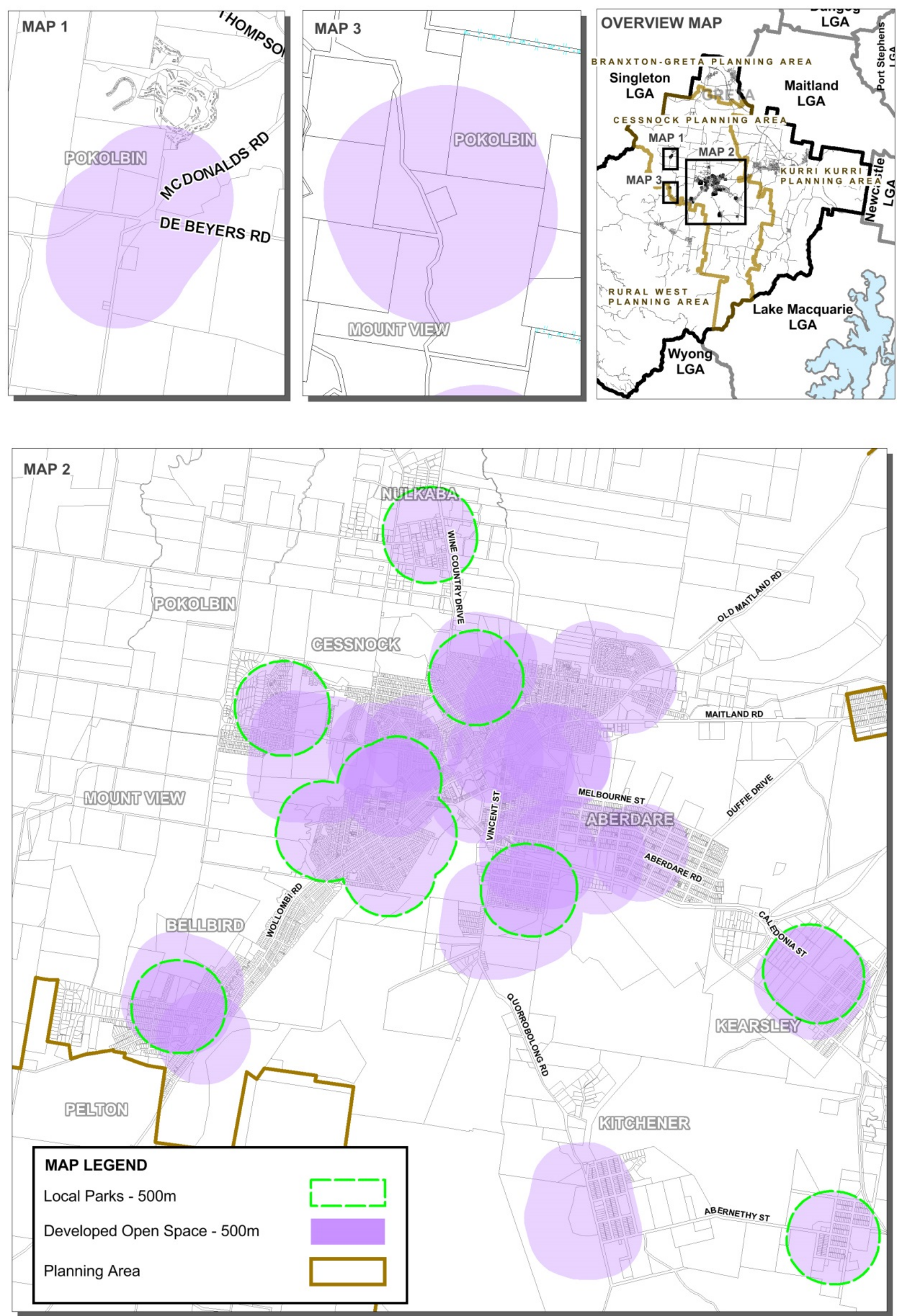
Map 2 - District facility catchment



Reference : District\_5km Buffer\_120717



Map 3 - Cessnock Planning Area local facility and developed open space catchment



Reference : Cessnock Profile Boundary\_500mBuff\_120717



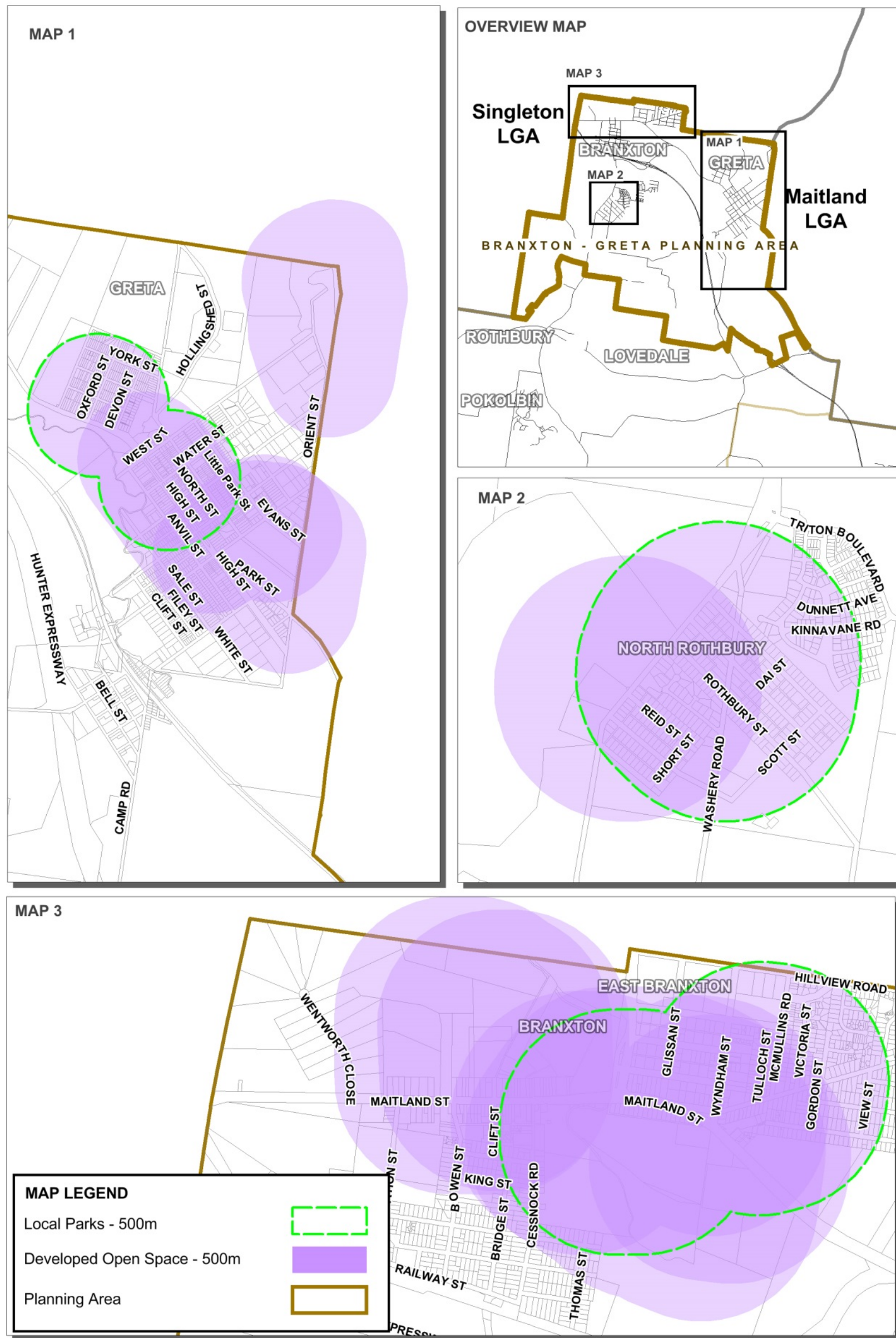
Map 4 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area local facility and developed open space catchment



Reference : Kurri Kurri Profile Boundary\_500mbuff\_120717



Map 5 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area local facility and developed open space catchment





Map 6 - Rural West Planning Area local facility and developed open space catchment



Reference : Rural West\_500mBuff\_120717



## Cessnock LGA Gap Analysis

### **Existing recreation provision in the Cessnock LGA**

The following tables provide a summary of the current and future provision of open space owned and managed by Council for the purposes of recreation. These areas and facilities are further broken down into the four Planning Areas (Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton-Greta and Rural West).

The table below illustrates open space provision within the Cessnock LGA. Additional facilities to be dedicated under an existing Contributions Plan or Planning Agreement have been considered when calculating the anticipated surplus/deficit by 2036.



Table 20 - Developed Open Space Provision in the Cessnock LGA

Type	Number Provided	Total Area (ha)	Surplus/Gap 2016	Surplus/Gap 2036
<b>SPORTSGROUNDS</b>				
Local	13	29.45	29.45	38.05
District	10	56.20	6.18	-4.87
Regional	6	72.06	41.47	42.84
Specialised	5	4.49	-	-
<b>Total Sportsgrounds</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>162.20</b>	<b>77.10</b>	<b>76.02</b>
<b>PARKS</b>				
Passive	33	50.36	-	-
Local	31	12.95	-14.04	-10.84
District	5	7.13	-26.21	-25.11
Regional	3	24.60	13.49	16.20
<b>Total Parks</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>95.04</b>	<b>-26.76</b>	<b>-19.75</b>
<b>TOTAL DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>257.24</b>	<b>50.34</b>	<b>56.27</b>

Overall there is a current and future surplus (50.34ha in 2016 and 56.27ha in 2036 respectively) of total developed open space. Despite this, there is a current and future shortage of Parks (-26.76ha in 2016 and -19.75ha in 2036), which is attributed to the deficit of District and Local facilities. When examining the broader LGA there is a surplus of Local sportsgrounds, however this is particularly evident in the Branxton Greta and Kurri Kurri Planning Areas. There is also an overall surplus in Regional Sportsgrounds, but this is also attributed to specific Planning Areas (being Cessnock and Branxton Greta). There is a significant gap in the supply of regional facilities within Kurri Kurri and a minor deficit in the Rural West Planning Area.

With there being a current significant deficit in the provision of Local Parks, without intervention from Council, this will continue until 2036. There is also a predicted deficit in District Sportgrounds by 2036 which can be attributed to population growth, and needs to be addressed.

#### Recreation Provision (Equestrian, Croquet, Lawn Bowls & Golf)

While there are no specific provision rates for equestrian facilities, investigations into the level of provision of other Hunter councils have revealed that Cessnock's provision rate of 1 facility/13,890 people (4 facilities) is well above the average for the Hunter Region, which is 1 facility/43,578 people (ROSS Planning, 2017).

In regard to croquet, discussions with Croquet New South Wales have established that the current level of provision of the two clubs is adequate for current and projected future needs in the Cessnock LGA (ROSS Planning, 2017).

Lawn Bowls and Golf facilities are largely provided for by private operators and as such the provision of such facilities are responsive to the market conditions at any given time. Anecdotally the Cessnock population is well serviced by Lawn Bowls and Golf facilities and as such are unlikely to be provided by Council in the medium to long term.

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### *Regional Recreation Facilities in Neighbouring LGAs*

It is important to be aware of the provision of facilities in neighbouring LGA's as this often impacts demand and affects catchment areas when planning for new facilities. The following recreational facilities in neighbouring LGAs service the Cessnock population:

#### *Maitland LGA*

- Maitland Indoor Sports Centre - a four court centre providing cricket, soccer, dodgeball and netball.
- Gravity-X Trampoline Park, Rutherford.
- Flip Out (trampolining), Thornton.
- Maitland Park, Maitland - regional sports complex which includes an olympic swimming pool and indoor pool, synthetic hockey field, lawn bowls, cricket ovals, football fields, netball courts and a passive recreation area.

#### *Lake Macquarie LGA*

- Hunter Sports Centre, Glendale - high quality athletics and gymnastics centre.
- Playgrounds Park, Warners Bay - indoor action sports facility incorporating trampolining.
- Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility, Speers Point- includes 12 synthetic five-a-side pitches and two full-size synthetic fields.
- Newcastle Indoor Sports Centre, Warners Bay – indoor netball, soccer, cricket and an inflatable world

#### *Singleton LGA*

- Singleton Gym and Swim

## Cessnock Planning Area Gap Analysis

The Cessnock Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Abernethy; Bellbird; Bellbird Heights; Cessnock; Kearsley; Kitchener; Mount View; Nulkaba and Pokolbin. Cessnock and its surrounds is the largest settlement area within the LGA and plays a supporting role to tourism in the area. The population is supported by the Cessnock Commercial Precinct and a number of recreation and open space areas ranging from pocket parks all the way through to indoor sports and aquatic facilities.

**Table 21 - Cessnock Planning Area Park Inventory**

Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
PP1	Alkira Avenue Park	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP2	Apex Park	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP3	Bellbird Miner's Memorial Park	Bellbird	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP4	Convent Hill Park	Cessnock	Passive (Natural Area)
PP5	Conways Corner	Cessnock	Passive (Civic Square)
PP6	HJ Sternbeck Park	Cessnock	Passive (Civic Square)
PP7	Hall Park Dog Off Leash Area	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP8	Manning Park	Cessnock	Passive (Green Corridor)
PP9	Mount Bright Lookout	Mount View	Passive (Scenic Park)
PP10	Pokolbin Park	Pokolbin	Passive (Scenic Park)
PP11	TAFE Park	Cessnock	Passive (Town Park)
LP1	Abernethy Playground	Abernethy	Local Park
LP2	Carmichael Park Playground	Bellbird	Local Park
LP3	Hall Park	Cessnock	Local Park
LP4	Jeffery Park Playground	Kearsley	Local Park
LP5	Macquarie Avenue Playground (O'Neil Park)	Cessnock	Local Park
LP6	Margaret Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park
LP7	McFarlane Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park
LP8	North End Playground	Cessnock	Local Park
LP9	Nulkaba Park	Nulkaba	Local Park
LP10	O'Brien Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park
LP11	Vineyard Grove Park	Cessnock	Local Park
DP1	Buckland Avenue Playground	Cessnock	District Park
DP2	Veterans Memorial Park	Aberdare	District Park

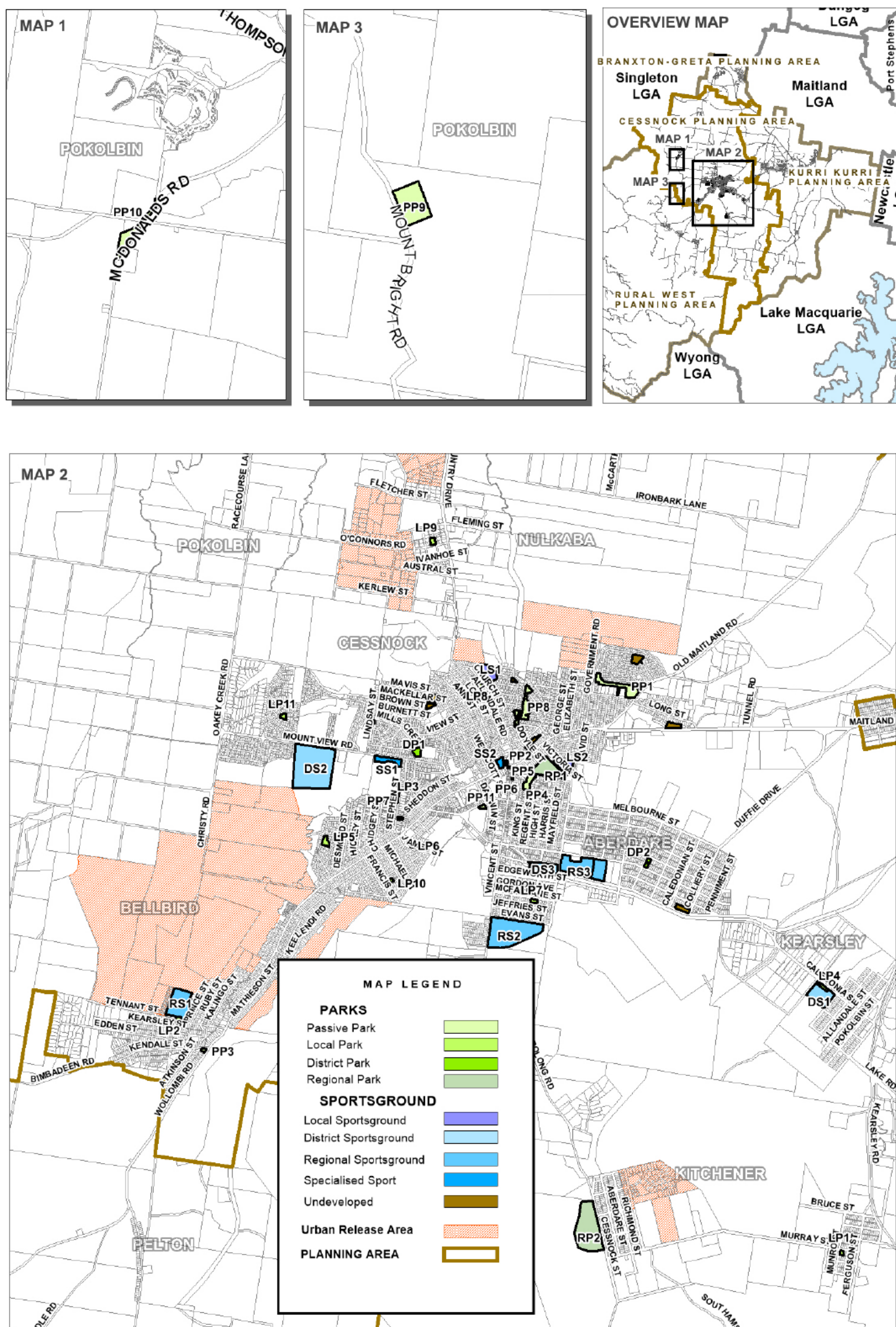
Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
RP1	Bridges Hill Park	Cessnock	Regional Park
RP2	Poppet Head Park	Kitchener	Regional Park

*Table 22 - Cessnock Planning Area Sportsground Inventory*

Map Ref.	Sportsground	Suburb	Hierarchy
LS1	Drain Oval	Cessnock	Local Sportsground
LS2	East End Oval	Cessnock	Local Sportsground
DS1	Jeffery Park	Kearsley	District Sportsground
DS2	Mount View Park	Cessnock	District Sportsground
DS3	Vernon Street Netball Courts	Cessnock	District Sportsground
RS1	Carmichael Park	Bellbird	Regional Sportsground
RS2	Cessnock Sportsground/Baddeley Park	Cessnock	Regional Sportsground
RS3	Turner Park	Cessnock	Regional Sportsground
SS1	Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre	Cessnock	Specialised sport
SS2	Cessnock Pool/Shakespeare Park	Cessnock	Specialised sport



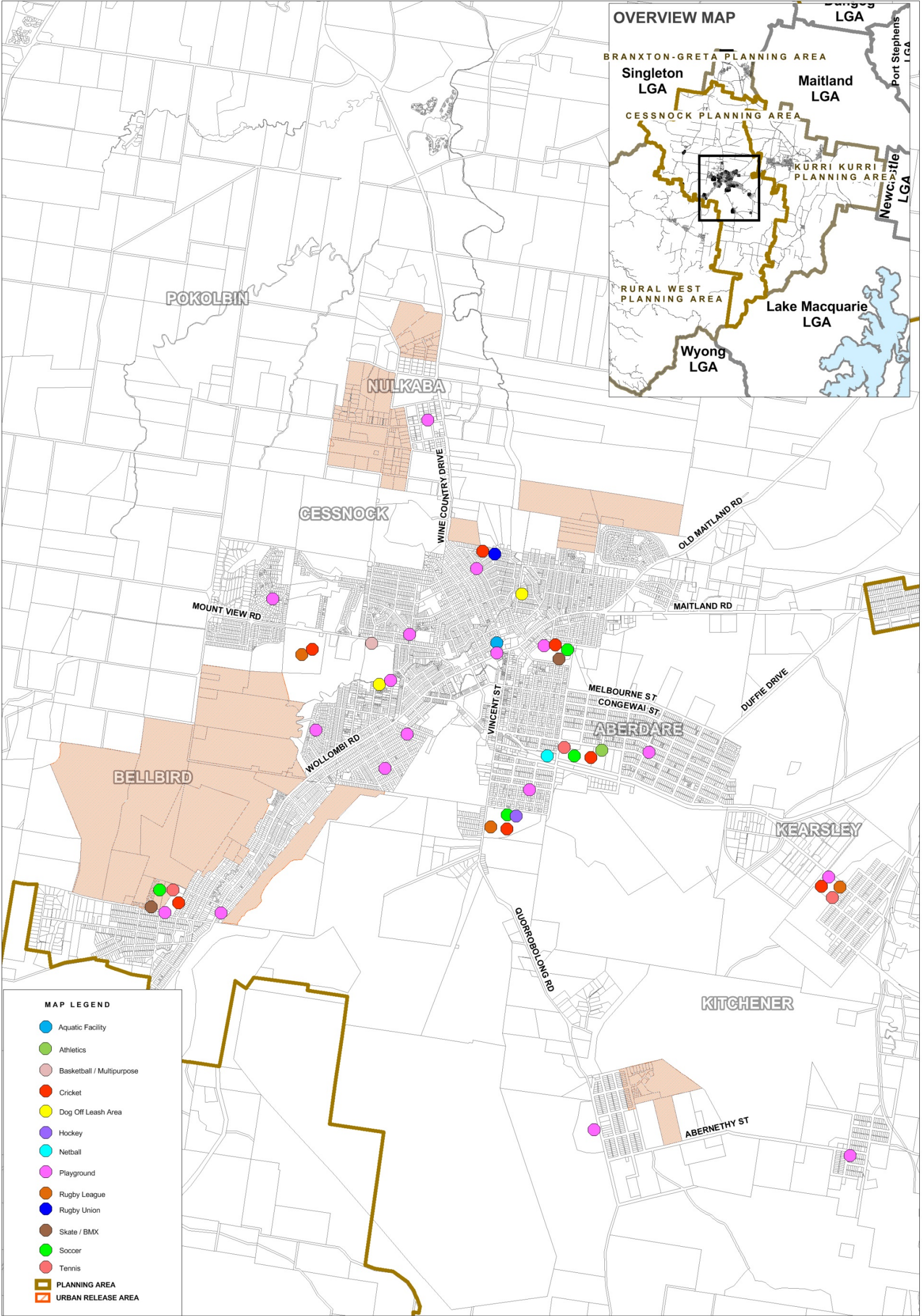
Map 7 - Cessnock Planning Area Recreation and Open Space Areas



Reference: Cessnock Profile Boundary\_300617



Map 8 - Cessnock Planning Area Recreation and Open Space Facilities



Cessnock Profile Boundary\_Park\_Fac\_300617

The table below illustrates open space provision within the Cessnock Planning Area. Additional facilities to be dedicated under an existing Contributions Plan or Planning Agreement have been considered when calculating the anticipated surplus/deficit by 2036.

**Table 23 - Open space gap analysis for the Cessnock Planning Area**

Type	Hierarchy	Existing provision (ha)	Surplus/Gap 2016 (ha) (Pop 24,924)	Surplus/Gap 2036 (ha) (Pop 32,910)
Park	Local	3.45	-9.01	-8.01
	District	1.12	-13.83	-16.63
	Regional	17.27	12.29	10.69
Sportsground	Local	5.73	5.73	5.73
	District	28.13	5.69	4.51
	Regional	32.58	17.63	12.83
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88.28</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>9.12</b>

The Cessnock Planning Area is well serviced by all levels of sportsgrounds to 2036. The surplus of Regional and District Sportsgrounds is declining as a result of population growth; however this decline has been somewhat offset by the addition of another District Sportsground as part of the Bellbird North development.

The surplus of Regional Parks is partly offsetting the deficit of District and Local Parks, however it is recommended that Council increase provision of District and Local Parks to ensure an adequate mix of recreational areas are available to the community.

#### **Land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need**

Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2009 identifies a number of parcels of community land surplus to need or for acquisition. A number of these sites have been rezoned, developed or acquired since the adoption of the Plan in 2009. The remaining sites still up for consideration are discussed in Table 24 below. Where applicable, site maps are included in **Appendix D**

**Table 24 – Cessnock Planning Area land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
<b>SURPLUS LAND</b>				
Lot 7/A DP 5015 – 16A Stephen Street Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 – Public Recreation	0.19	Land is of limited recreational value due to its size and proximity to Hall Park. Land is surplus to need.
Lot 3/J DP 4927 – 6 William Street Cessnock	Cessnock	R3 – Medium Density Residential	0.04	Land is of limited recreational value due to its size and location. Land is surplus to need.
Lot 1 DP 597795 – 31 Lindsay Street Cessnock	Cessnock	R2 – Low Density Residential	0.17	Land is suitable for development as a pocket park to ensure local residents are within 500m of developed open space.
Lots 3 – 6 DP 13454 and Lot 7 DP 657199 – 10 Newton Avenue Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 Public Recreation / R3 – Medium Density Residential	0.28	Land forms part of Manning Park (PP8) and provides a buffer between concrete drain and nearby residents. Land has passive recreational value and should be retained.
Lots 7 – 10, Lots 12 – 15 and Lots 20-23 DP 9164 – 9 Mavis Street Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 Public Recreation	1.17	Land presents opportunity to be developed as a local park and should be retained.
Lot 9 – 12 DP 758576 – 29 Cessnock Street Kitchener	Cessnock	RU5 Village	0.40	Land is of limited recreational value due to proximity to Poppet Head Park. Land is surplus to need.
<b>LAND ACQUISITION</b>				
Lot 1 DP 1103032 – 1A Doyle Street Cessnock	Cessnock	R3 Medium Density Residential / RE1 Public Recreation / B4 Mixed Use	0.69	Land is identified for acquisition for flood management. Opportunity to utilise as a passive park area.



The Cessnock LEP sets out the local environmental planning provisions for development within the Cessnock LGA. Where Council has identified a shortfall in recreational land, the LEP identifies sites that are reserved for acquisition for recreational purposes in accordance with Section 27 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Land identified for acquisition in the Cessnock Planning Area is identified in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4 – Cessnock Planning Area land proposed for acquisition in the Cessnock LEP**



The land identified in the Cessnock LEP for acquisition on South and West Avenue, Cessnock (Figure 4 top-left) has no recreational value due to its proximity to TAFE Park and acquisition for recreational purposes is not required.

The land identified on Mount View Road, Cessnock (Figure 4 top-right) is currently utilised as a regional showground. Partial acquisition may be required to accommodate an expansion of the Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre, however currently there is no demand for the land for recreational purposes.

The land on Quorrobolong Road, Kitchener (Figure 4 bottom-centre) is undeveloped and if acquired for the establishment of sporting facilities, would further increase the surplus of sportsgrounds in the Cessnock Planning Area. Therefore acquisition is not required.

#### *Other land identified for acquisition or disposal*

Through the preparation of various strategies and masterplans, Council has continued to identify land for acquisition that present an opportunity to improve the recreation and open space network. Site maps of each site are included in **Appendix D**.

The Turner Park Masterplan 2018 identifies an opportunity to acquire Lot 3 Sec 50 DP 758002, 49B Aberdare Road, Cessnock to facilitate the expansion of recreation facilities at Turner Park (RS 3). Acquiring this land would increase the surplus of Regional Sportsgrounds in Cessnock Planning Area, however expanding an existing facility in line with demonstrated demand is consistent with the Strategic Objectives of this Strategic Plan.



In 2017 Council conducted a survey of Cessnock Pool users to better understand the demand for car parking when visiting the pool. More specifically, the survey was designed to better understand the demand for car parking in Apex Park (PP2). The survey was made available in hard copy at Cessnock Pool and online and received a total of 433 submissions. Key findings of the survey were:

- 91 per cent of respondents indicated they travel by car when visiting Cessnock Pool.
- On street parking in residential areas is the most common parking method (51 per cent) followed by the area opposite the main pool entrance (38 per cent) and then on-site carpark (24 per cent).
- Parking in Apex Park was the least common parking method (15 per cent).

The results for the survey suggest that there is limited demand from pool users for car parking in Apex Park. The condition of the car park is deteriorating and would require a considerable investment to improve its condition. Council should therefore consider options for the site including improve, dispose or alternate use.

### Other Undeveloped Open Space

The following parcels of undeveloped open space are located in the Cessnock Planning Area. Where applicable, site maps are included in **Appendix D**.

**Table 25 – Cessnock Planning Area undeveloped open space**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
Lot 9 DP: 253077 – 1A Lee-Ann Crescent, Cessnock	Cessnock	R2 Low Density Residential	0.14	Land is of limited recreational value due to size and proximity to Drain Oval (LS1) and Manning Park (PP8). Land is surplus to need.
Lot 6 DP 116107, Lot 5F DP5091, Lot 1 DP 397021, Lot 1 DP 663612 – 4 Doyle Street, Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 Public Recreation	1.25	Land provides buffer between residential development and open concrete drain. Land presents opportunity to be utilised as Green Corridor. Land is to be retained.
Lot 38 DP 755215 – 19 Quarry Street, Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 Public Recreation	0.90	Land presents opportunity to be developed as a Local Park and should be retained.
Lot 313 DP 566724, 11 Duguid Close, Cessnock	Cessnock	RE1 Public Recreation	0.96	Land is of limited recreational value due to its location, being heavily vegetated and historically utilised for illegal dumping. Land is surplus to need.
Lots 11-18 DP 758002, 62-76 Cessnock Street, Aberdare	Cessnock	R2 Low Density Residential	0.78	Land is of limited recreational value due to shape, location and proximity to Veterans Memorial Park. Land is surplus to need.



### Non-Council Recreation Programs and Facilities

The following recreational programs and facilities are provided in the Cessnock Planning Area at the time of drafting this Strategic Plan. These have been identified to illustrate the broad range of recreation facilities provided within the Cessnock Planning Area, and to highlight that a number of facilities/services are supported and provided by the private industry:

- three 24-hour gyms and one restricted hours gym,
- a police community youth centre (PCYC), which has a high quality gymnasium, skate park and indoor rock climbing,
- three yoga/fitness studios,
- two dance studios,
- three golf clubs and one aqua golf facility,
- two bowling clubs (lawn)
- one pistol club,
- one rifle range,
- one clay target shoot,
- one motocross track,
- three defence classes (kickboxing, karate and taekwondo), and
- two horse riding programs.

**Table 26 - Cessnock Planning Area Recommendations**

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
C1.1	Investigate tenure options with TAFE NSW to develop TAFE Park (PP11) into a District Park incorporating Town Park features.	There is a current shortage of District Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. There is also demand for a large open space to host community events and passive recreation activities in the Cessnock CBD. This recommendation also aligns with the provisions of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.
C1.2	Develop Buckland Avenue Playground (DP1) as a Local Park.	There is a current shortage of Local Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. Buckland Avenue playground is not an ideal location for a District Park (i.e. minimal road frontage and constrained by an open stormwater drain) and is in close proximity to the proposed District Park in recommendation <b>C1.1</b> .
C1.3	Develop a portion of Manning Park (PP8) as a local park.	There is a current shortage of Local Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. Utilising existing open space is a sustainable approach to increasing the provision of core recreation facilities.
C1.4	Investigate redeveloping tennis courts at Jeffrey Park, Kearsley (DS1) (RS1) into multi-purpose courts.	These facilities are currently in poor condition and as a result are not being utilised. Opportunities to increase use should be investigated
C1.5	Investigate installing multi-purpose courts at within open space areas in line with the design guidelines in <b>Appendix B</b> .	To provide adaptable and well utilised facilities
C1.6	Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal or alternate use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot 7/A DP 5015 – 16A Stephen Street Cessnock</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 3/J DP 4927 – 6 William Street Cessnock</li> <li>Lot 9 – 12 DP 758576 – 29 Cessnock Street Kitchener</li> <li>Lot 9 DP: 253077 – 1A Lee-Ann Crescent, Cessnock</li> <li>Lots 11-18 DP 758002, 62-76 Cessnock Street, Aberdare</li> <li>Portion of Drain Oval (LS1) – Dover Street, Cessnock</li> </ul>	
C1.7	<p>Develop the following parcels of land as Passive Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 1 DP 597795 – 31 Lindsay Street Cessnock (Pocket Park)</li> <li>Lot 1 DP 1103032 – 1A Doyle Street Cessnock (Green Corridor)</li> <li>Lot 6 DP 116107, Lot 5F DP5091, Lot 1 DP 397021, Lot 1 DP 663612 – 4 Doyle Street, Cessnock (Green Corridor)</li> </ul>	To ensure most residents are within 500m of developed open space and to promote opportunities for active transport (i.e. walking and cycling) within the Cessnock Planning Area.
C1.8	<p>Develop the following parcels of land as Local Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lots 7 – 10, Lots 12 – 15 and Lots 20-23 DP 9164 – 9 Mavis Street Cessnock</li> <li>Lot 38 DP 755215 – 19 Quarry Street, Cessnock</li> </ul>	To reduce the gap in Local Park provision at 2036.
C1.9	<p>Investigate acquiring the following parcels of land through the Strategic Property Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 3 Sec 50 DP 758002, 49B Aberdare Road, Aberdare.</li> <li>[a portion of] Lot 1 DP 1100097 and [a portion of] Lot 30 DP 1013326, 1 North Avenue, Cessnock.</li> <li>[a portion of] Lot 1 DP 1114018 and Lot D DP 339311, Lot E DP 384895, Lot F DP 354733, Lot G DP 347929, Lot H DP 384894, 219 Wollombi Road, Cessnock</li> </ul>	<p>To accommodate potential expansion of Turner Park (as per the draft Turner Park Masterplan 2018).</p> <p>To accommodate a central Civic Square and Green Corridor in the Cessnock Commercial Precinct. Recommendation aligns with the provisions of the Cessnock Commercial Precinct Project.</p>
C1.10	<p>Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove the following parcels of land from the land acquisition register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 123 DP 1110717 – 111 Mount View Road, Cessnock.</li> <li>Lot 558 DP 729017 – Quorrobolong Road, Kitchener</li> <li>Lot 3 DP 574111 and Pt Lot 51 DP 1128812 – West Avenue, Cessnock</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.
C1.11	Amend the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan to remove the proposed skate park at Carmichael Park (RS1) and reallocate funding towards a new	To improve facilities in line with the recommendations of the Skate and BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020.

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
	BMX facility within the LGA or the proposed Regional skate park at Mount View Park (DS2).	
C1.12	In consultation with Cessnock Netball Club, amend the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan to reallocate contributions from tennis courts at Carmichael Park (RS1).	Multipurpose courts are more suitable within this district sports facility
C1.13	Amend the Nulkaba Section 94 Plan to reallocate contributions from upgrading Drain Oval (LS1) to improving facilities at Mt View Park (DS2), Turner Park (RS3) or Baddeley Park (RS2).	The Cessnock Planning Area has a surplus of Local Sportsgrounds and a portion of Drain Oval is to be considered for disposal (refer <b>C1.7</b> ).
C1.14	Amend the Nulkaba Section 94 Plan to reallocate contributions from upgrading Nulkaba Park (LP9) to establishing a new Local Park within the development area.	The Cessnock Planning Area has a shortfall of Local Parks and a new park would be required to maintain proximity standards between residents and developed open space.



## ***Kurri Kurri Planning Area Gap Analysis***

The Kurri Kurri Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Abermain; Cliftleigh; Heddon Greta; Kurri Kurri; Mulbring; Neath; Pelaw Main; Stanford Merthyr and Weston. Kurri Kurri and its surrounds is the second largest settlement area within the LGA. The local population is supported by the Kurri Kurri town centre and located within close proximity to the Maitland town centre. Two major interchanges on the Hunter Expressway are located at Buchanan and Heddon Greta providing connectivity to the Upper Hunter and Lake Macquarie and Newcastle. Recreation and open space areas within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area range from Pocket Parks to Regional Parks, Regional Sportsgrounds and Aquatic Facilities.

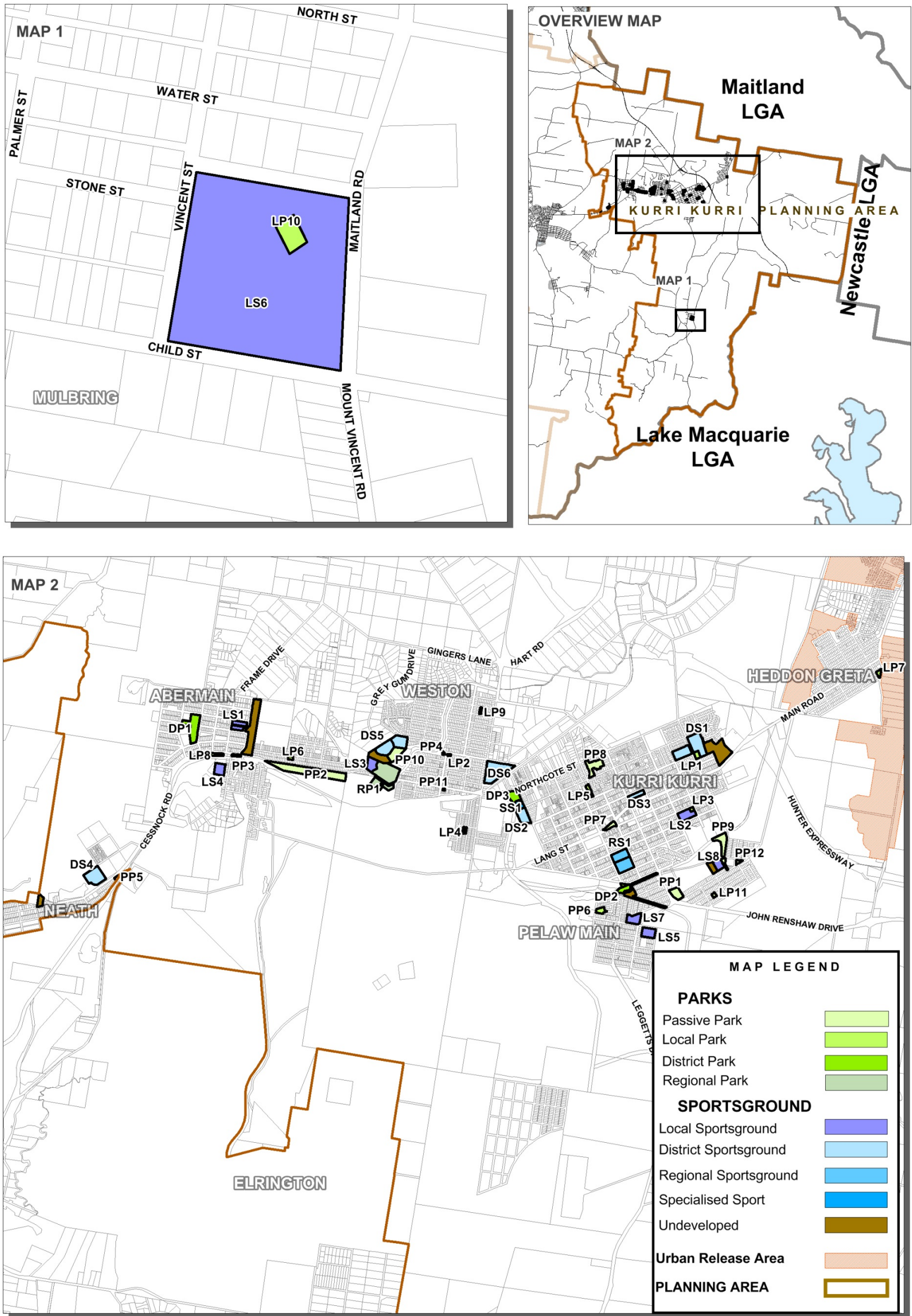
**Table 27 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area Park Inventory**

Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
PP1	Apex Park	Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP2	Bailey Park	Abermain	Passive (Green Corridor)
PP3	Edgeworth David Park	Abermain	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP4	Fell Park	Weston	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP5	Fire Fighters Park	Neath	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP6	Lloyd Park	Pelaw Main	Passive (Utility)
PP7	Rotary Park	Kurri Kurri	Passive (Town Park)
PP8	Simm Park	Kurri Kurri	Passive (Utility)
PP9	Stanford Merthyr Park	Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP10	Varty Park Dog Off Leash Area	Weston	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP11	Weston Memorial Park	Weston	Passive (Civic Square)
PP12	Wickham Street Reserve	Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)
LP1	Birrale Park Playground	Kurri Kurri	Local Park
LP2	Bluey Frame Park	Weston	Local Park
LP3	Booth Park Playground	Kurri Kurri	Local Park
LP4	Ernie Dunlop Park	Weston	Local Park
LP5	George Winter Park	Kurri Kurri	Local Park
LP6	Harle Street Playground	Abermain	Local Park
LP7	Hedleigh Park	Heddon Greta	Local Park
LP8	Jeffries Park	Abermain	Local Park
LP9	Meredith Park	Weston	Local Park
LP10	Mulbring Park Playground	Mulbring	Local Park
LP11	Stanford Merthyr Playground	Stanford Merthyr	Local Park
DP1	Centenary Park	Abermain	District Park
Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
DP2	Log of Knowledge Park	Pelaw Main	District Park
DP3	Margaret Johns Park	Kurri Kurri	District Park
RP1	Chinaman's Hollow / Peace Park	Weston	Regional Park

**Table 28 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area Sportsground Inventory**

Map Ref.	Sportsground	Suburb	Hierarchy
LS1	Abermain Soccer Ground	Abermain	Local Sportsground
LS2	Booth Park	Kurri Kurri	Local Sportsground
LS3	Chinaman's Hollow Cricket Oval	Weston	Local Sportsground
LS4	Howe Park	Abermain	Local Sportsground
LS5	Jacob's Park	Pelaw Main	Local Sportsground
LS6	Mulbring Park	Mulbring	Local Sportsground
LS7	Pelaw Main Centenary Park	Pelaw Main	Local Sportsground
LS8	Stanford Merthyr Park Pony Ground	Stanford Merthyr	Local Sportsground
DS1	Birrilee Park	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground
DS2	Johns Park	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground
DS3	Molly Worthington Netball Courts	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground
DS4	Neath Pony Ground	Neath	District Sportsground
DS5	Varty Park	Weston	District Sportsground
DS6	Weston Park	Weston	District Sportsground
RS1	Kurri Kurri Central Oval/Kurri Kurri Sportsground	Kurri Kurri	Regional Sportsground
SS1	Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre	Kurri Kurri	Specialised Sport

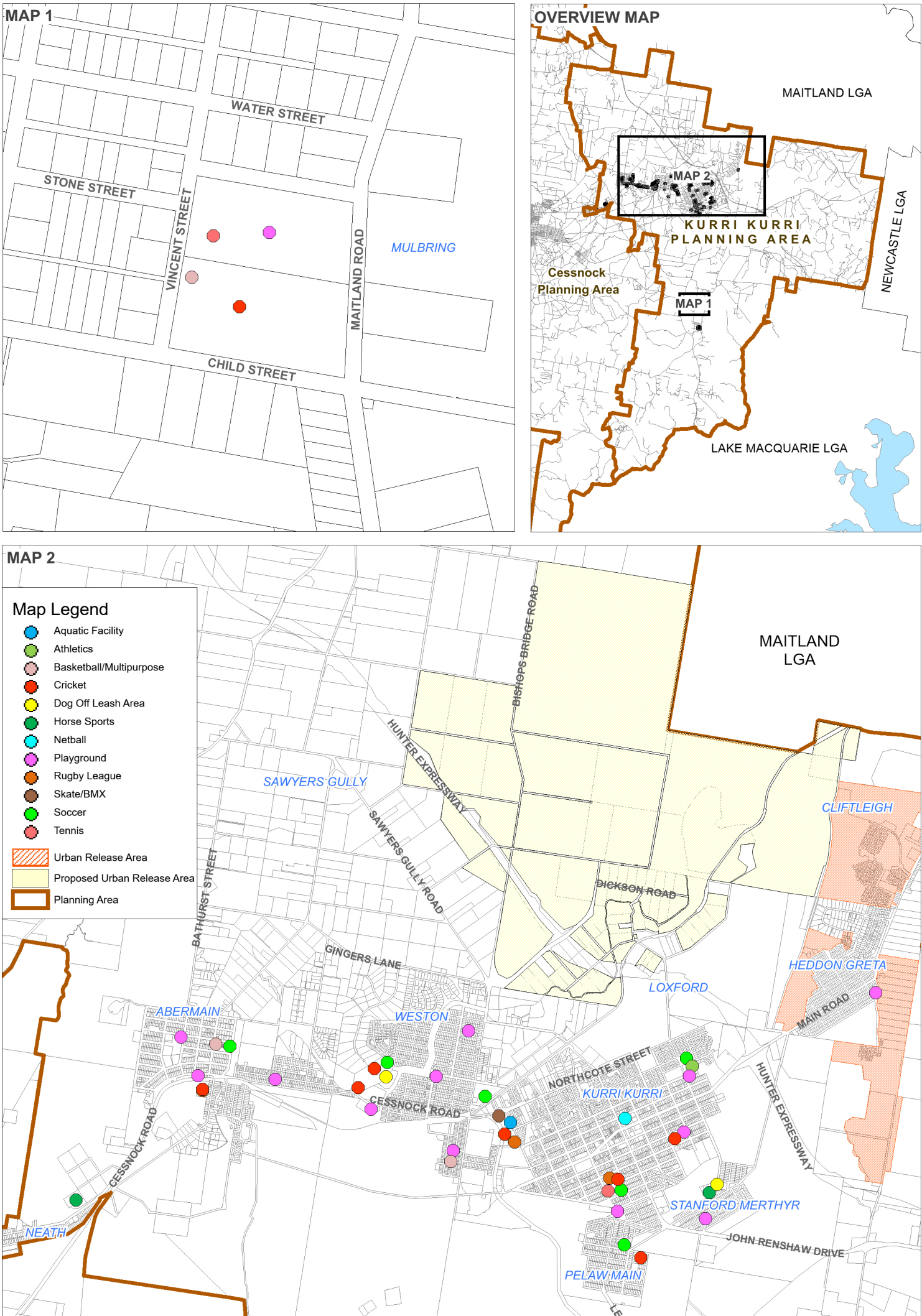




Reference : Kurri Kurri Profile Boundary300617



Map 10 – Kurri Kurri Planning Area Recreation Facilities



Kurri Kurri Profile Boundary\_Park Fac\_050618

The table below illustrates open space provision within the Cessnock Planning Area. Additional facilities to be dedicated under an existing Contributions Plan or Planning Agreement have been considered when calculating the anticipated surplus/deficit by 2036.

**Table 29– Open space gap analysis for the Kurri Kurri Planning Area**

Type	Hierarchy	Existing provision (ha)	Surplus/Gap 2016 (ha) (Pop 19,648)	Surplus/Gap 2036 (ha) (Pop 25,072)
Park	Local	4.63	-5.19	-6.41
	District	6.01	-5.78	-6.83
	Regional	7.33	3.40	2.32
Sportsground	Local	15.82	15.82	15.82
	District	22.75	5.07	0.19
	Regional	4.34	-7.45	-10.7
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60.88</b>	<b>5.87</b>	<b>-5.61</b>

The total developed open space provided in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area is anticipated to be in slight deficit by 2036. District Sportsground provision in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area is adequate to 2036, however there is a current and future deficit of Regional Sportsgrounds to 2036. Opportunities to reduce the surplus of Local Sportsgrounds and the deficit of District and Local Parks should be investigated.

The Draft Hydro Aluminium Section 7.11 Contributions Plan (as identified in Table 34) was still being drafted at the time this document was completed. The Hydro planning proposal lodged with Council indicates a subdivision of 1485 residential lots. This major future urban release area will extend from Gillieston Heights in the Maitland LGA to south of the Hunter Expressway on Hart Road and will also include major employment areas in addition to residential development.

The recreation and open space needs outlined within the final Section 7.11 Plan will be incorporated within this Plan through the annual review process (as outlined within the Monitoring and Review section of this document). It is anticipated the Hydro proposal will trigger the need for a regional sportsground, embellishment to a district facility, cycleway links as well as the provision of a number of local parks. These facilities will positively impact the gaps currently identified within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area.

**Land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need**

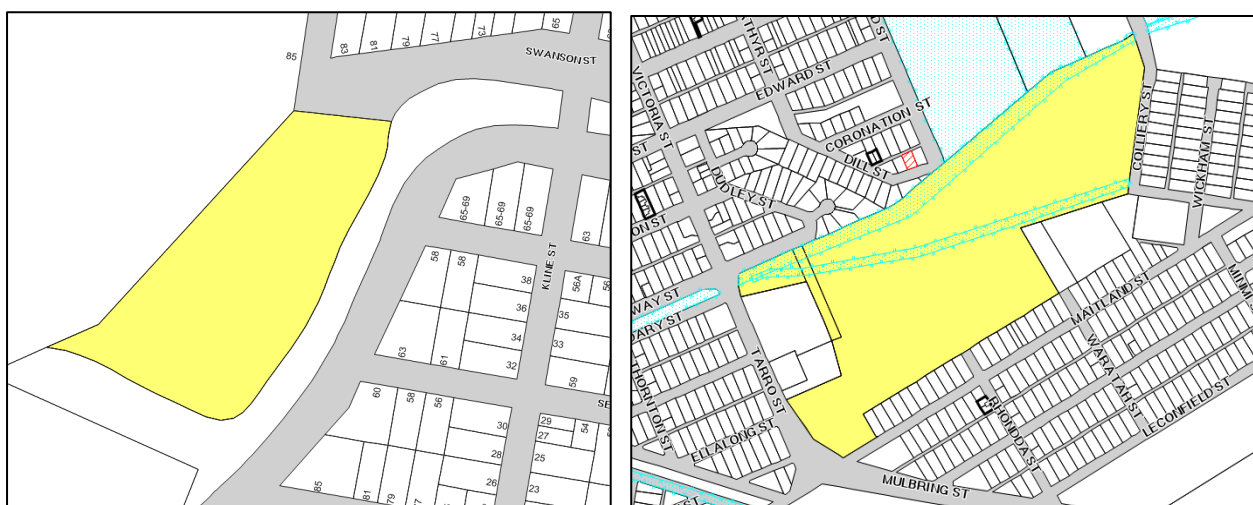
Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2009 identifies the number of parcels of community land surplus to need or for acquisition in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area. A number of these sites have been rezoned, developed or acquired since the adoption of the Plan in 2009. The remaining sites still up for consideration are discussed in Table 30. Where applicable, site maps are included in *Appendix D*.

**Table 30 – Kurri Kurri Planning Area land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
<b>SURPLUS LAND</b>				
Lot 61 DP 263594 – 47 Evatt Street, Pelaw Main	Kurri Kurri	R2 Low Density Residential	0.62	Land is identified as Lloyd Park and is to be retained as a Passive Park (Utility) (PP6).
Lot 1 DP 382568 – 10 Embelton Street, Weston	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation	2.52	Land is of limited recreational value due to location and drainage. Land is surplus to need.
Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
Lot 38 DP 262837 – 15-17 Brooks Street, Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation	0.26	Land is Crown land managed by Council. Land is of limited recreational value due to location and proximity to Birrale Park Playground and Booth Park Playground. Land is surplus to need.
<b>LAND ACQUISITION</b>				
PT Lot 2 DP 1239939 - 27A Charles Street, Abermain	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation	0.39	Crown Reserve to be acquired to accommodate Howe Park (LS4).

The Cessnock LEP sets out the local environmental planning provisions for development within the Cessnock LGA. Where Council has identified a shortfall in recreational land, the LEP identifies sites that are reserved for acquisition for recreational purposes in accordance with Section 27 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Land identified in the LEP for acquisition is identified in Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5 Kurri Kurri Planning Area land proposed for acquisition in the Cessnock LEP**



The parcel of land identified for acquisition on Swanson Street, Weston (Figure 5 left) would accommodate the expansion of Varty Park. There is a current and future surplus of District Sportsgrounds in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area negating the need to expand Varty Park and therefore acquisition is not required.

The land identified in the Cessnock LEP for acquisition on Tarro Street, Stanford Merthyr (Figure 5 right) includes Apex Park and Stanford Merthyr Park and is currently managed by Council under a Crown Reserve Trust. The land presents an opportunity to integrate several recreational uses (such as bowling club, passive parkland, and dog off-leash area and horse sports) through improving the site with formalised pedestrian links and open space embellishments. The land should therefore remain in the LEP proposed for acquisition.

#### *Other Undeveloped Open Space*

The following parcels of undeveloped open space are located in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area. Where applicable, site maps are included in **Appendix D**.

**Table 31 – Kurri Kurri Planning Area undeveloped open space**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
Lot 86 DP 755259 – 129 Cessnock Road, Neath	Kurri Kurri	RU2 Rural Landscape	0.81	Land is a Crown Reserve managed by Council. Land presents opportunity to be developed as a Local Park and should be retained.
Lot 7321 DP 1167549 – 20 Railway Street, Pelaw Main	Kurri Kurri	SP2 Infrastructure	0.67	Land is a Crown Reserve managed by Council. Land presents an opportunity to be developed as Green Corridor and should be retained.
Lot 8081 DP 1142888 – 177 Cessnock Road, Abermain	Kurri Kurri	RU2 Rural Landscape	5.67	Land is a Crown Reserve managed by Council. Land presents an opportunity to be

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
				developed as a Green Corridor and should be retained.
Pt Lot 260 DP 1160174 - 85 Swanson Street, Weston	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation	11.48	Land presents opportunity to be developed as a Green Corridor or Natural Area and should be retained.
Lot 7017 DP 1021277 & 7311 DP 1167240 - 2A Stanford Street, Pelaw Main	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation / SP2 Infrastructure	1.61	Land presents an opportunity to be developed as a Green Corridor and should be retained.
Lot 8043 DP 816416 - Main Road Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri	RE1 Public Recreation	5.28	Land is a Crown Reserve managed by Council. Land presents an opportunity to accommodate the expansion of Birrale Park (DS1) and Playground (LP1) and should be retained.

#### *Non-Council Recreation Programs and Facilities*

The following recreational programs and facilities are provided in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area at the time of drafting this Strategic Plan. These have been identified to illustrate the broad range of recreation facilities provided within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area, and to highlight that a number of facilities/services are supported and provided by the private industry:

- two 24-hour gyms,
- three dance studios,
- two defence classes (taekwondo and karate), and
- one golf club
- two bowling clubs (lawn)



**Table 32 - Kurri Kurri Planning Area Recommendations**

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
KK1.1	Investigate establishing a Regional Sportsground within the Hydro Land Release Area.	There is a current and future gap in Regional Sportsground provision in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area. A facility at Hydro would be appropriately positioned to service Weston, Kurri Kurri, Heddon Greta, Cliftleigh and beyond.
KK1.2	Amend the Avery's Village Contributions Plan to reallocate contributions from Local Sportsgrounds to improve existing or proposed regional and/or district sporting facilities in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area.	The provision of Local Sportsgrounds is not consistent with proposed standards. Establishment of a regional sportsground in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area will increase capacity to service the sporting needs of the Heddon Greta population.
KK1.3	Investigate the disposal or redevelopment of Local Sportsgrounds Jacob's Park (LS5) and Booth Park (LS2). Retain a portion of Booth Park as a Local Park. Update 2019: Planning proposal has commenced for Jacobs Park.	There is a current and future surplus of Local Sportsgrounds. Alternate uses for these sites to be considered
KK1.4	Investigate the feasibility of disposing of Varty Park (DS5) to fund the upgrade of Weston Park (DS6) as part of the Strategic Property Review. Update 2019: Planning proposal has commenced.	There is a current and future surplus of district sportsgrounds in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area. Varty Park is an under-utilised facility that is frequently targeted by vandalism and requires a significant amount of investment to bring up to acceptable condition. The works identified in the Weston Park Masterplan are currently unfunded and the additional facilities proposed at Weston Park would offset the loss of facilities at Varty Park.
KK1.5	Investigate installing multi-purpose courts at District and Regional facilities in line with the design guidelines in <b>Appendix B</b> .	To provide adaptable and well utilised facilities and reduce the gap in the provision of basketball courts.
KK1.6	Construct a District Park at Margaret Johns Park, Kurri Kurri (DP3).	To provide accessible district recreation facilities to the residents of Weston and Kurri Kurri. This recommendation also aligns with the provisions of the Margaret Johns Park Plan of Management and Masterplan.
KK1.7	Investigate the co-location of a Local Park and Playground at Molly Worthington Netball Courts, Kurri Kurri (DS3) Should an alternate location be confirmed for relocation of the netball courts	To reduce the deficit of Local Parks in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area
KK1.8	Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal; return to the crown; or alternate use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 1 DP 382568 – 10 Embelton Street, Weston</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.



Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 38 DP 262837 – 15-17 Brooks Street, Kurri Kurri</li> </ul> <p><i>Update 2019: Planning proposal has commenced for 10 Embleton Street</i></p>	
KK1.10	Establish tenure over a portion of Lot 7325 DP 1167677 - 27A Charles Street, Abermain	To accommodate the existing recreation facilities at Howe Park, Abermain (LS4).
KK1.11	Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove Lot 1 DP 508142 – Cessnock Road (Swanson Street), Weston from the land acquisition register.	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.
KK1.12	<p>Develop the following parcels of land as Local Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 86 DP 755259 – 129 Cessnock Road, Neath</li> <li>Lot 8043 DP 816416 – Main Road Kurri Kurri</li> </ul>	To reduce the gap in Local Park provision and ensure local residents have access to suitable local open space.
KK1.13	<p>Develop the following parcels of land as Passive Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 7321 DP 1167549 – 20 Railway Street, Pelaw Main (Green Corridor)</li> <li>Lot 8081 DP 1142888 – 177 Cessnock Road, Abermain (Green Corridor)</li> <li>Lot 260 DP 1160174 – 85 Swanson Street, Weston (Green Corridor or Natural Area)</li> <li>Lot 7017 DP 1021277 &amp; 7311 DP 1167240 – 2A Stanford Street, Pelaw Main (Green Corridor)</li> </ul>	To ensure most residents are within 500m of developed open space and to promote opportunities for active transport (i.e. walking and cycling) within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area.
KK1.14	Undertake investigations for redevelopment or disposal of the eastern portion of Simm Park (PP8) to determine the feasibility of an alternate use (such as residential). Retain the western portion of the Park as a Passive Park (Green Corridor).	The eastern portion of Simm Park (PP8) is relatively inaccessible, has poor surveillance and constrained by drainage from adjacent properties. I

## Branxton-Greta Planning Area Gap Analysis

The Branxton-Greta Planning Area includes the towns, villages and enclaves of Branxton; East Branxton; Greta; North Rothbury and Rothbury. The local population relies significantly on higher-order commercial centres within the Singleton and Maitland LGAs. A major interchange on the Hunter Expressway is located at Branxton providing connectivity to Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. Recreation and open space facilities are dominated by higher order sportsgrounds and aquatic facilities. There are no District or Regional Parks in the Planning Area.

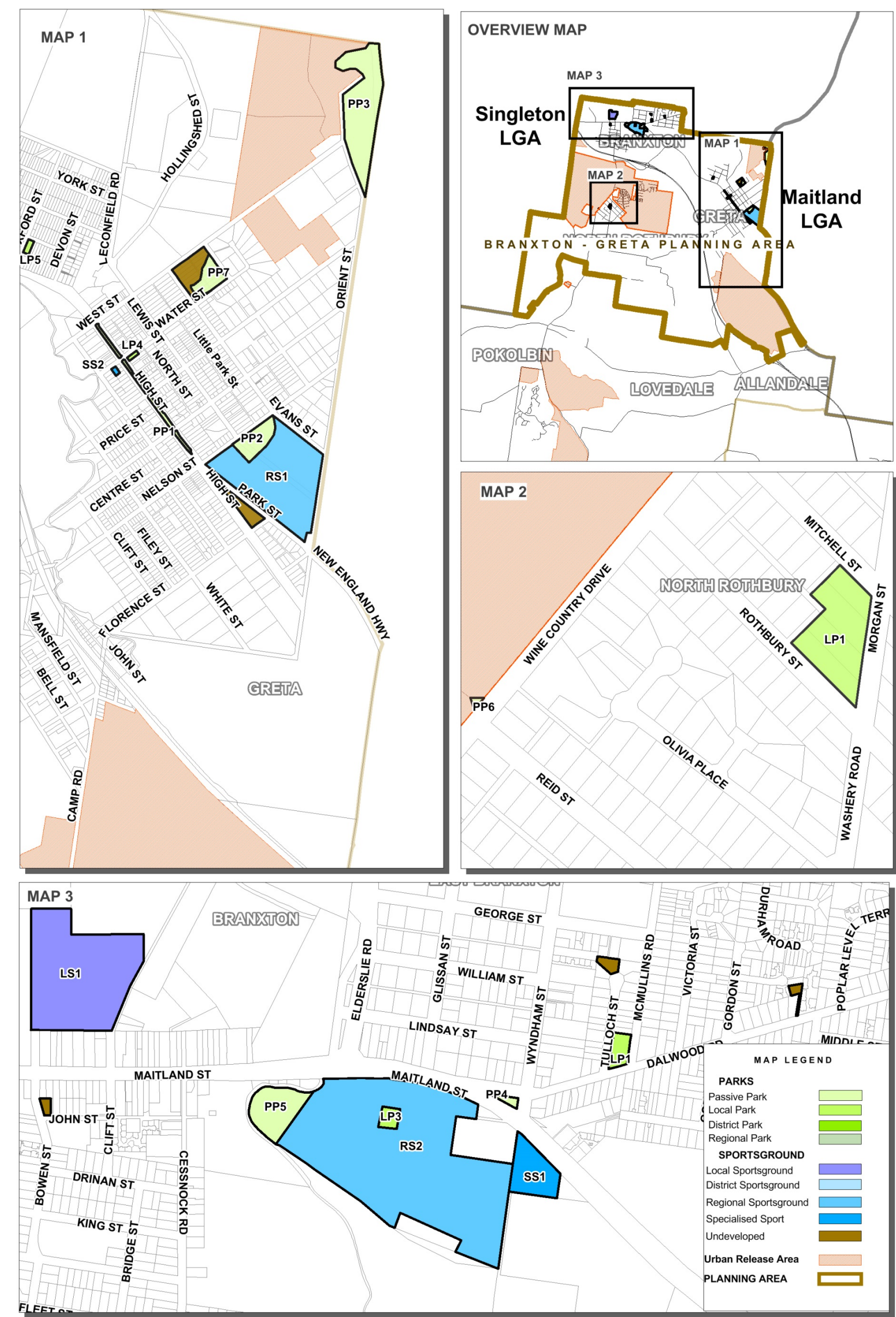
**Table 33 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area Park Inventory**

Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
PP1	Greta Median Strip	Greta	Passive (Green Corridor)
PP2	Greta Central Oval Dog Off Leash Area	Greta	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP3	Hunter River Reserve	Greta	Passive (Natural Area)
PP4	Lions Park	Branxton	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP5	Miller Park Dog Off Leash Area	Branxton	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP6	Rothbury Riot Miner's Memorial	North Rothbury	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP7	Victoria Park	Greta	Passive (Pocket Park)
LP1	Ayrfield Miners Memorial Park	North Rothbury	Local Park
LP2	Brunner Park	East Branxton	Local Park
LP3	Miller Park Playground	Branxton	Local Park
LP4	Norman Brown Park	Greta	Local Park
LP5	Whitburn Playground	Greta	Local Park

**Table 34 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area Sportsground Inventory**

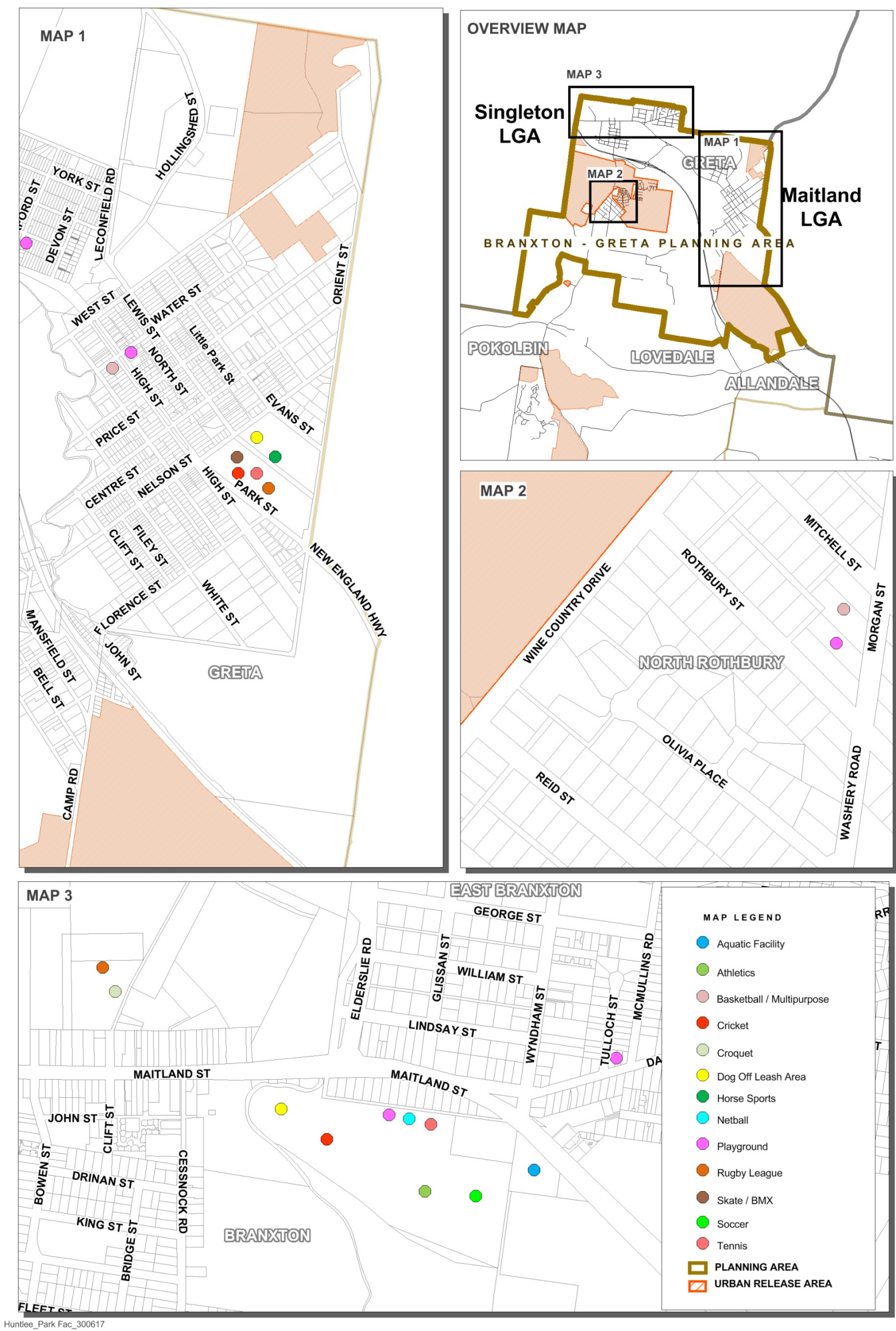
Map Ref.	Sportsground	Suburb	Hierarchy
LS1	Branxton Oval	Branxton	Local Sportsground
RS1	Greta Central Oval	Greta	Regional Sportsground
RS2	Miller Park	Branxton	Regional Sportsground
SS1	Branxton Pool	Branxton	Specialised Sport
SS2	Greta Arts and Sports Centre	Greta	Specialised Sport

Map 11 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area Recreation and Open Space Areas





Map 12 – Branxton-Greta Planning Area Recreation Facilities



The table below illustrates open space provision within the Branxton Greta Planning Area. Additional facilities to be dedicated under an existing Contributions Plan or Planning Agreement have been considered when calculating the anticipated surplus/deficit by 2036.

**Table 35 - Open space gap analysis for the Branxton-Greta Planning Area**

Type	Hierarchy	Existing provision (ha)	Surplus/Gap 2016 (ha) (Pop 6,416)	Surplus/Gap 2036 (ha) (Pop 9,881)
Park	Local	1.21	-1.20	2.75
	District	0	-3.85	2.35
	Regional	0	-1.28	4.52
Sportsground	Local	5.50	5.50	14.10
	District	0	-5.77	-8.89
	Regional	35.14	31.29	40.71
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>41.85</b>	<b>24.69</b>	<b>55.54</b>

The Branxton-Greta Planning Area is well serviced by open space now and into the future. Opportunities to reduce the deficit of District Sportsgrounds and the surplus of Local and Regional Sportsgrounds should be investigated within a separate detailed feasibility study and identified as a priority action within the Implementation Section of this Strategy.

#### *Land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need*

Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2009 identifies a number of parcels of community land surplus to need or for acquisition in the Greta Branxton Planning Area. A number of these sites have been rezoned, developed or acquired since the adoption of the Plan in 2009. The remaining sites still up for consideration are discussed in Table 36 below. Where applicable, site maps are included in **Appendix D**.

**Table 36 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area land previously identified for acquisition or surplus to need**

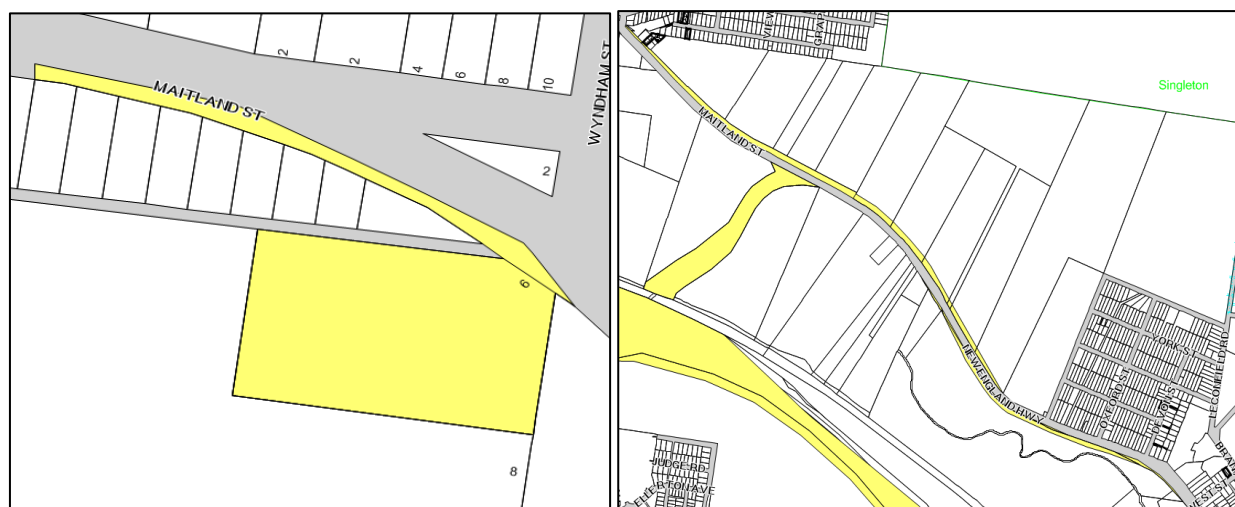
Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
<b>SURPLUS LAND</b>				
Lot 9 DP 259718 – 26 Tulloch Street East Branxton	Branxton – Greta	R2 Low Density Residential	0.13	Land is of limited recreational value due to size and location and is surplus to need.
Lot 2 DP 1049557 – 4 John Rose Avenue Branxton	Branxton – Greta	RE1 Public Recreation	2.12	Land is utilised as Branxton RV Area and is to be retained and developed as a Passive Park (Pocket Park).

The Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 sets out the local environmental planning provisions for development within the Cessnock LGA. Where Council has identified a shortfall in recreational land, the LEP identifies sites that are reserved for acquisition for recreational purposes (i.e. 'Local Open Space [RE1]' in



accordance with Section 27 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Land identified for acquisition in the Branxton-Greta Planning Area is identified below.

**Figure 6 – Branxton-Greta Planning Area land proposed for acquisition in the Cessnock LEP**



The land identified in the LEP for acquisition includes 6 Maitland Street East Branxton (Greta Workers Sports & Recreation Club) (Figure 6 left) and lineal land adjacent to the New England Highway (Figure 6 left and right). The acquisition of 6 Maitland Street East Branxton is not recommended due to the current and future surplus of Regional Sportsgrounds in the Planning Area. The land adjacent to the New England Highway would accommodate the proposed shared cycleway between Branxton and Greta and is recommended for acquisition.

Hunter River Reserve, Greta



#### *Other Undeveloped Open Space*

The following parcels of undeveloped open space are located in the Branxton-Greta Planning Area.



**Table 37 – Branxton-Greta Planning Area undeveloped open space**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
Lot 8 DP 255269 – 10 Redgrove Court, East Branxton	Branxton-Greta	R2 Low Density Residential	0.08	Land is of limited recreational value due to size and shape. Land is surplus to need. Update 2019: Planning proposal has commenced
Lot 33 DP 1126892 – 30 Park Street, Greta	Branxton-Greta	RU2 Rural Landscape	1.20	Land is of limited recreational value due to proximity to Greta Central Oval. Land is surplus to need.
Lot 1 – 21 DP758474, 35 Water Street, Greta	Branxton-Greta	R2 Low Density Residential	2.26ha	Land is of limited recreational value due to adequate provision of open space in the Planning Area and proximity of passive open space on the balance of the site. Land is surplus to need.

#### **Non-Council Recreation Programs and Facilities**

The following recreational programs and facilities are provided in the Branxton-Greta Planning Area at the time of drafting this Strategic Plan. These have been identified to illustrate the broad range of recreation facilities provided within the Branxton Greta Planning Area, and to highlight that a number of facilities/services are supported and provided by the private industry:

- one golf club,
- two bowling clubs (lawn),
- one health and fitness program,
- one toddler dance program, and
- one defence class (taekwondo).

**Table 38 - Branxton-Greta Planning Area recommendations**

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
BG1.1	Develop Greta Central Oval (RS1) as a District Sportsground.	To address the gap in provision of District Sportsgrounds and reduce the surplus of Regional Sportsgrounds.
BG1.3	Investigate repurposing the playing field at Branxton Oval (LS1) to an alternative use that complements the RV Area and Croquet Club.	To assist in reducing the oversupply of open space within the Branxton-Greta Planning Area. The formal sporting needs of local residents would continue to be serviced by Miller Park, Greta Central Oval and proposed District and Regional Sportsgrounds at Huntlee.
BG1.4	Develop a Local Park in Branxton south of the New England Highway. An opportunity may exist to establish shared recreation facilities at Branxton Public School.	To address the gap in provision of developed open space in Branxton south of the New England Highway.
BG1.5	Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal or alternate use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot 9 DP 259718 – 26 Tulloch Street East Branxton</li> <li>• Lot 8 DP 255269 – 10 Redgrove Court, East Branxton</li> <li>• [a portion of] Lot 1 – 21 DP758474, 35 Water Street, Greta</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.
BG1.6	Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove 6 Maitland Street, East Branxton (Miller Park Sports Club) from the land acquisition register.	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.
BG1.7	Amend the Anvil Creek Planning Agreement to reallocate contributions from the proposed Local Sportsground to improving Greta Central Oval (RS1).	There is a surplus of Local Sportsgrounds in the Branxton-Greta Planning Area. Upgrades to Greta Central Oval will support the recreational needs of the residents at Anvil Creek.

## Rural West Planning Area

The Rural West Planning Area includes the villages and enclaves of Ellalong; Laguna; Millfield; Paxton and Wollombi. The local population is significantly reliant on the higher order services provided in the Cessnock town centre. Characterised by semi-rural development, population density within the Planning Area is the lowest of all Planning Areas in the Cessnock LGA. Recreation and open space facilities are generally limited to lower order sportsgrounds and parks.

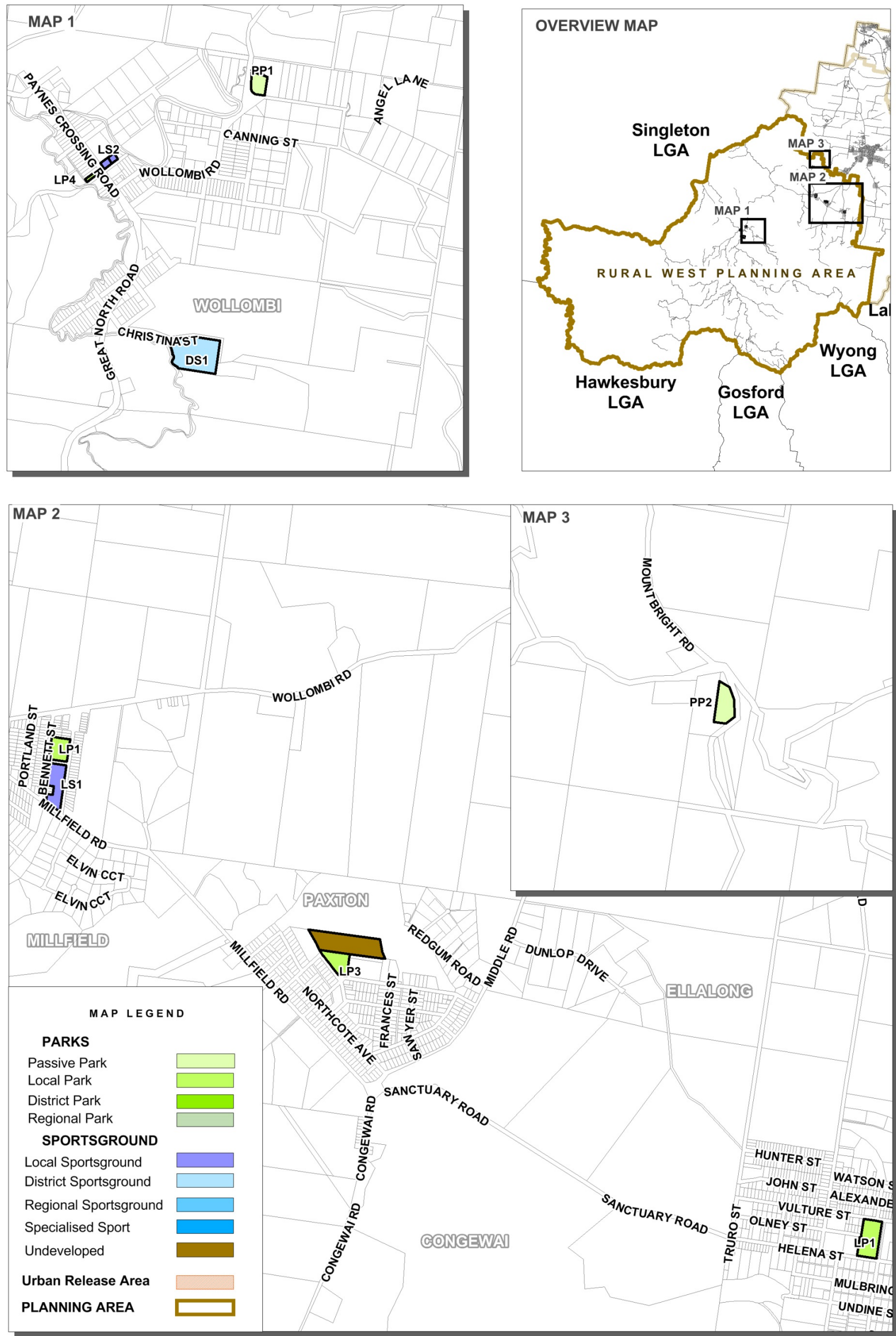
**Table 39 - Rural West Planning Area Park Inventory**

Map Ref.	Park	Suburb	Hierarchy
PP1	ANZAC Reserve	Wollombi	Passive (Pocket Park)
PP2	Bimbadeen Lookout	Mount View	Passive (Scenic Park)
LP1	Ellalong Park	Ellalong	Local Park
LP2	Millfield Playground	Millfield	Local Park
LP3	Paxton Park	Paxton	Local Park
LP4	Slack's Park	Wollombi	Local Park

**Table 40 - Rural West Planning Area Sportsground Inventory**

Map Ref.	Sportsground	Suburb	Hierarchy
LS1	Crawfordville Park	Millfield	Local Sportsground
LS2	Wollombi Tennis and Croquet Courts	Wollombi	Local Sportsground
DS1	Wollombi Recreation Ground	Wollombi	District Sportsground

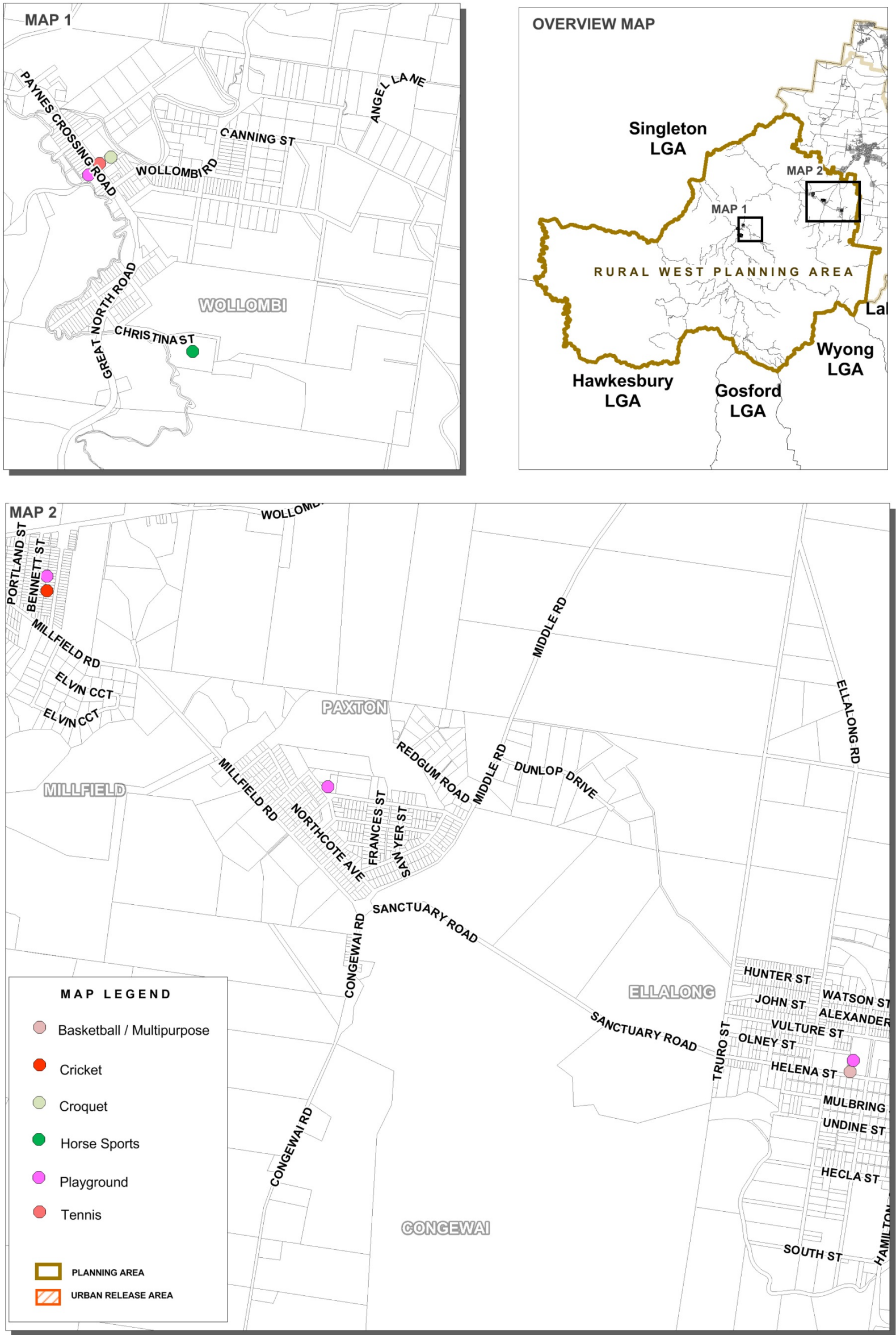
Map 13 - Rural West Planning Area Recreation and Open Space Areas



Reference : Rural West\_300617



Map 14 - Rural West Planning Area Recreation Facilities



Rural West\_Park Fac\_300617

The table below illustrates open space provision within the Rural West Planning Area. Additional facilities to be dedicated under an existing Contributions Plan or Planning Agreement have been considered when calculating the anticipated surplus/deficit by 2036.

*Table 41 - Core open space gap analysis for Rural West Planning Area*

Type	Hierarchy	Existing provision (ha)	Surplus/Gap 2016 (ha) (Pop 4,591)	Surplus/Gap 2036 (ha) (Pop 6,662)
Park	Local	3.66	1.36	0.83
	District	0	-2.75	-4.00
	Regional	0	-0.92	-1.33
Sportsground	Local	2.40	2.40	2.40
	District	5.32	1.19	-0.68
	Regional	0	-2.75	-4.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.38</b>	<b>-1.47</b>	<b>-6.78</b>

Overall, the Rural West Planning Area has a relatively well-balanced provision of open space to 2036. Deficits in district and regional facilities are somewhat offset by local facilities. This is an ideal distribution of open space in a Planning Area comprised mostly of Tier 3 towns.



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#### **Other Undeveloped Open Space**

The following parcels of undeveloped open space are located in the Rural West Planning Area.

**Table 42 –Rural West Planning Area undeveloped open space**

Title	Planning Area	Land Use Zone	Area	Comments
Lot 1 DP 327619, 46 McDonald Avenue, Paxton	Rural West	R5 Large Lot Residential	3.78	Land presents an opportunity to be developed as a District Park.

#### **Non-Council Recreation Programs and Facilities**

The following recreational programs and facilities are provided in the Rural West Planning Area at the time of drafting this Strategic Plan. These demonstrate there are additional facilities being provided for (on private land) for this Planning Area:

- one dance class
- one bowling club (lawn)
- one 25m swimming pool
- one local sportsground

*Table 43 - Rural West Planning Area recommendations*

Ref.	Recommendation	Rationale
RW1.1	Develop Paxton Park (LP3) into a District Park by utilising a portion of Lot 1 DP 327619, 46 McDonald Avenue, Paxton.	To address the gap in provision of District Parks. Paxton is central to Ellalong and Millfield and a District Park would service these three villages.



# Implementation of this Strategic Plan

## *Implementation context*

The following section discusses the various contexts that affect the implementation of this Strategy.

### *Financial Sustainability Initiative*

The Financial Sustainability Initiative was endorsed by Council in mid-2014. It has been developed in response to achieving a sustainable long term financial position for Cessnock City Council. The Initiative attempts to generate adequate funds to provide the levels of infrastructure and service that Council has agreed with the community. Nine projects were identified to achieve financial sustainability and the relevant ones for this Analysis include:

- Service review - will examine each service provided by Council for whether it should be provided, to what standard and how it can be done most efficiently.
- Sponsorship and subsidies review - will improve equity and governance around all donations and sponsorships.
- Strategic property review - will result in under-used assets being converted into revenue-generating assets
- Fees and charges review - will develop a consistent, robust and equitable method for pricing services.
- Developer contributions review - will assess current contributions plans and the general framework to ensure equitable apportionment is applied to infrastructure costs.

The Financial Sustainability Initiative projects have been incorporated into Council's Fit for the Future Improvement Proposal and their implementation will have an impact on both Council's capacity and approach to delivering the actions and recommendations of this Strategic Plan.

### **Strategic Property Review**

Council has a large portfolio of land and building assets that are used for a wide variety of purposes to ultimately benefit the community. The Strategic Property Review is part of Council's Financial Sustainability Initiative. It emphasises the effective and efficient management of Council's property portfolio to maximise utility and value for money from operational properties and to generate sustainable revenue streams from investment properties. Consistent with the Strategic Property Review, the rationalisation of low-use recreation facilities contributes to providing the community with access to a better range of quality experiences and reduces ongoing costs to Council.



Property Management Guidelines have been developed as part of the Strategic Property Review identified in Council's Financial Sustainability Initiative. The purpose of the Guidelines is to "establish a consistent approach to property management and an integrated framework for all elements of property ownership". The Guidelines will help Council create sustainable revenue streams and address the risks associated with Council owned property, including recreational facilities.

Parks, open space and leisure facilities are identified as operational property, which provides a "direct community service" and is necessary for Council to carry out its functions.

The Guidelines also set out Council policy for:

- buying property,
- owning property,
- managing property, and
- releasing property.

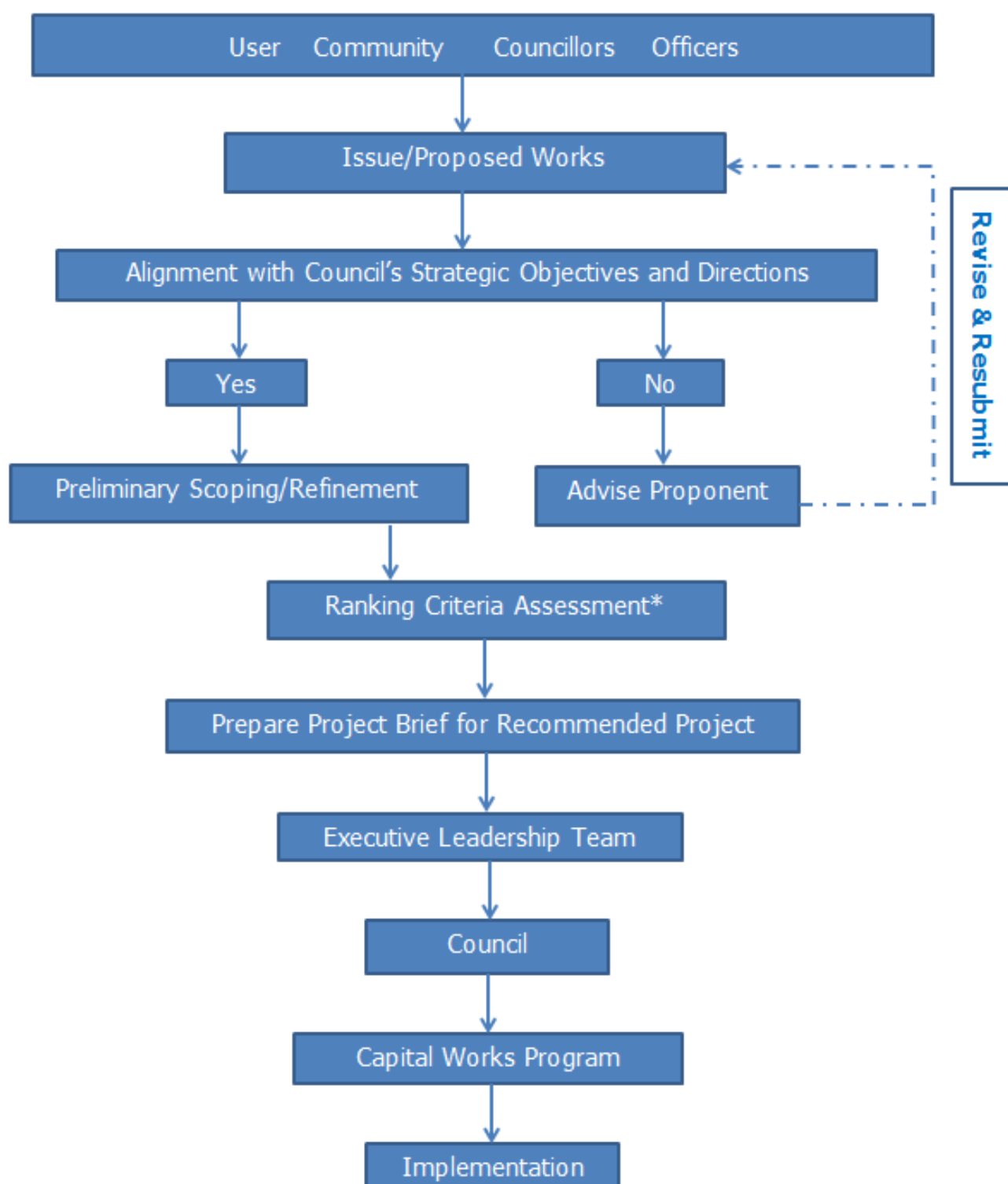
The land identified in **Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis** as surplus to need or suitable for acquisition would be considered as part of the Strategic Property Review.

#### ***Implementation of Capital Works***

Council adopts a Delivery Program every four years that sets out a Capital Works Program for implementation. Council also adopts an Operational Plan each year outlining the works to be completed within that year. Due to the breadth of Council's roles and responsibilities, this program is often amended to include or exclude works relative to their importance and urgency. To ensure Council gives due consideration to all projects in a consistent and fair manner, the following assessment process is proposed to identify recreation and open space works which are to be included in the Capital Works Program.



Figure 7 - Capital Works Flow Chart



*\*The Ranking Criteria Assessment determines the priority of projects to be funded in accordance with the Assets Priority Ranking Criteria set out in Council's Asset Management Plans.*



## Implementation Plan

To successfully achieve the vision of this Strategy a number of actions need to occur over the short, medium and long term. The following table sets out our prioritised actions to achieve the overarching Strategic Directions and Objectives. The following table sets out and prioritises actions to be delivered within the life of this plan. To determine the priority of actions the following prioritisation criteria was applied.

COST		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
< \$10,000 or less than 6 months	\$10,000 - \$50,000 or 6 – 12 months	> \$50,000 or more than 12 months

BENEFIT		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Only benefits a small group of users and residents in a local area	Benefits multiple groups of users and the broader district or planning area	Benefits a large group of multiple users and the broader LGA

PRIORITY		
A	B	C
As soon as resources allow	1 – 5 years	5 – 10 years

BENEFIT				
COST		Low	Medium	High
	Low	B	A	A
	Medium	C	B	B
	High	C	C	C

**Table 44 – Prioritised actions**

Reference	Action	Rationale	Benefit	Cost	Priority
<b>SO1 CREATE AN OPEN SPACE NETWORK THAT IS CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE</b>					
<b>SD1.1 Connect the open space network through a series of green corridors that provide for active transport</b>					
A1.1.1	Develop and install consistent and visible directional signage for Council parks and reserves, consistent with Council's Signage Strategy.	To promote and increase awareness of recreation and open space areas.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A1.1.2	Develop an LGA-wide Streetscape Masterplan to identify the appropriate embellishment of road reserves and gateways.	Well planned streetscapes provide effective means for way finding and active transport.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A1.1.3	Set aside lineal tracts of open space when planning Urban Release Areas to link key trip generators such as District and Regional recreation facilities, schools and commercial areas.	To provide safe and convenient connections for pedestrians and cyclists.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A1.1.4	Identify opportunities to preserve green corridors linking key regional and district recreation and open space areas.	To plan for the protection of existing corridors within urban areas.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
<b>SD1.2 Provide equitable access to and within recreation and open space areas</b>					
A1.2.1	Develop a prioritised works program to address access compliance issues within existing parks and sportsgrounds.	Many facilities are not compliant with the requirements of the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> .	High	Low	<b>A</b>
A1.2.2	Collaborate with community organisations such as Ability Links in the planning of parks and sportsgrounds.	The knowledge and insight of community organisations will contribute to informed planning decisions.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
<b>SD1.3 Develop transport networks and options which support participation in recreation</b>					
A1.3.1	Develop cycle ways and end of trip facilities at parks and sportsgrounds in accordance with the Cessnock Cycling Strategy.	To provide non-motorised transport options for users of open space.	High	High	<b>C</b>
A1.3.2	Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders regarding the Richmond Vale Rail Trail.	To provide increased opportunities for informal and passive recreation activities.	High	High	<b>A</b>
A1.3.3	Upgrade car parks in regional recreation facilities.	Many regional facilities contain unformalised car parking which causes access and environmental issues.	Medium	High	<b>C</b>

A1.3.4	Collaborate with public transport providers to identify routes to improve services to key recreation facilities.	Public transport provides and affordable way to travel to and from recreation facilities.	High	Low	A
Reference	Action	Rationale	Benefit	Cost	Priority
<b>SD1.4 Provide developed recreation and open space areas within reasonable proximity to most residents</b>					
A1.4.1	Provide for recreation and open space facilities in Council's Contributions Plans and Planning Agreements in accordance with the proximity standards outlined in <b>Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis</b> .	To ensure an efficient and equitable distribution of recreation and open space facilities for existing and incoming populations.	High	Low	A
A1.4.2	Develop Buckland Avenue Playground (DP1) as a Local Park.	There is a current shortage of Local Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. Buckland Avenue playground is not an ideal location for a District Park (i.e. minimal road frontage and constrained by an open stormwater drain) and is in close proximity to the proposed District Park in recommendation <b>C1.1</b> .	Low	High	C
A1.4.3	Develop the following parcels of land as Passive Parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot 1 DP 597795 – 31 Lindsay Street Cessnock (Pocket Park)</li> <li>• Lot 1 DP 1103032 – 1A Doyle Street Cessnock (Green Corridor)</li> <li>• Lot 6 DP 116107, Lot 5F DP5091, Lot 1 DP 397021, Lot 1 DP 663612 – 4 Doyle Street, Cessnock (Green Corridor)</li> </ul>	To ensure most residents are within 500m of developed open space and to promote opportunities for active transport (i.e. walking and cycling) within the Cessnock Planning Area.	Low	High	C
A1.4.4	Develop the following parcels of land as Local Parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots 7 – 10, Lots 12 – 15 and Lots 20-23 DP 9164 – 9 Mavis Street Cessnock</li> <li>• Lot 38 DP 755215 – 19 Quarry Street, Cessnock</li> </ul>	To reduce the gap in Local Park provision at 2036.	Low	High	C
A1.4.5	Investigate the disposal or redevelopment of Local Sportsgrounds Jacob's Park (LS5) and Booth Park (LS2).	There is a current and future surplus of Local Sportsgrounds	Low	Low	B

A1.4.6	Develop the following parcels of land as Local Parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 86 DP 755259 – 129 Cessnock Road, Neath</li> <li>Lot 8043 DP 816416 – Main Road Kurri Kurri</li> </ul>	To reduce the gap in Local Park provision and ensure local residents have access to suitable local open space.	Low	High	C
A1.4.7	Develop the following parcels of land as Passive Parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 7321 DP 1167549 – 20 Railway Street, Pelaw Main (Green Corridor)</li> <li>Lot 8081 DP 1142888 – 177 Cessnock Road, Abermain (Green Corridor)</li> <li>Lot 260 DP 1160174 – 85 Swanson Street, Weston (Green Corridor or Natural Area)</li> <li>Lot 7017 DP 1021277 &amp; 7311 DP 1167240 – 2A Stanford Street, Pelaw Main (Green Corridor)</li> </ul>	To ensure most residents are within 500m of developed open space and to promote opportunities for active transport (i.e. walking and cycling) within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area.	Low	Medium	C
A1.4.8	Develop Greta Central Oval (RS1) as a District Sportsground.	To address the gap in provision of District Sportsgrounds and reduce the surplus of Regional Sportsgrounds.	Medium	High	B
A1.4.9	Develop a Local Park in East Branxton, north of the New England Highway.	To address the gap in provision of Local Parks.	Low	High	C
<b>SO2 PROVIDE A RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE NETWORK THAT IS WELL UTILISED AND INCLUSIVE</b>					
<b>SD2.1 Provide and manage recreation and open space facilities that are responsive to community need</b>					
A2.1.1	Implement the Planning Area recommendations identified in <b>Recreation and Open Space Gap Analysis</b> .	To bring the current and future provision of recreation and open space facilities in line with the proposed provision standards.	High	Low	A
A2.1.2	Undertake a detailed Indoor Sports Centre analysis.	To ensure the provision of such centres is undertaken strategically across the LGA to meet the significant expected growth and that facilities will function as dedicated indoor sporting centres.	High	Low	A
A2.1.3	Investigate provision and demand for off leash dog exercise areas within each of Council's Planning Areas	There is currently no strategic document to guide off leash areas. This	High	Low	A

		investigation will ensure there is adequate provision of off leash dog exercise areas			
A2.1.4	Undertake a review of Council's Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020	The existing needs assessment is outdated and needs to be reviewed to ensure there is adequate provision of skate and BMX facilities.	High	Low	A
A2.1.5	Opportunities to reduce the surplus of Local Sportsgrounds and the deficit of District and Local Parks within the Kurri Kurri Planning Area to be investigated.	To ensure appropriate levels of open space are provided for the community	Medium	Low	A
A2.1.6	Opportunities to reduce the deficit of District Sportsgrounds and the surplus of Local and Regional Sportsgrounds within the Branxton Greta Planning Area should be investigated.	To ensure The Greta Branxton Planning Area is well serviced by open space now and into the future	Medium	Low	A
A2.1.3	Undertake a detailed sportsground playing surface, amenity buildings and field lighting audit.	To assist in establishing a program to improve such facilities to meet sporting groups' needs.	Medium	Medium	B
A2.1.4	Following a review of existing and proposed areas, establish a works program for embellishments to dog off-leash areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bubblers (designed for both people and dogs),</li> <li>• obstacles,</li> <li>• fencing</li> <li>• shaded seating areas,</li> <li>• solar lighting,</li> <li>• bins,</li> <li>• small dog/large dog areas, and</li> <li>• Signage.</li> </ul>	To ensure dog off-leash areas provide for the safe and enjoyable exercising of dogs.	High	Low	A



Reference	Action	Rationale	Benefit	Cost	Priority
A2.1.5	Revise the Cessnock Skate & BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020 to address current and anticipated demand for such facilities.	The demographic information used to inform the Assessment is outdated. Revising the document will ensure current and future skate and BMX facility needs are identified and addressed.	High	Medium	B
A2.1.6	Investigate opportunities to host modified sports (such as Fast 5s Soccer or T20 Cricket) at existing facilities.	Participation data indicates that modified sports are growing in popularity and overcome participation barriers such as cost and lack of time.	Medium	Low	A
A2.1.7	Implement works identified in Council's Four Year Capital Works Program for recreation and open space facilities.	To continue to improve recreation facilities and ensure facilities remain fit for purpose.	High	Low	A
A2.1.8	Review the provision, maintenance and management of public toilets in public open space and identify opportunities to rationalise facilities in line with community needs.	To ensure the sustainable provision of public toilets that meets the community's needs.	Medium	Low	A
A2.1.9	Review and update Council's Engineering Guidelines in consideration of the design provisions in <b>Appendix B</b> .	To provide clarity around the expectation and standard of recreation and open space development.	High	Low	A
A2.1.10	Implement the recommendations of the Cessnock Aquatic Needs Analysis 2014.	To ensure the adequate provision of aquatic facilities in the Cessnock LGA.	High	High	C
A2.1.11	Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal or alternate use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 7/A DP 5015 – 16A Stephen Street Cessnock</li> <li>Lot 3/J DP 4927 – 6 William Street Cessnock</li> <li>Lot 9 – 12 DP 758576 – 29 Cessnock Street Kitchener</li> <li>Lot 9 DP: 253077 – 1A Lee-Ann Crescent, Cessnock</li> <li>Lots 11-18 DP 758002, 62-76 Cessnock Street, Aberdare</li> <li>Portion of Drain Oval (LS1) – Dover Street, Cessnock</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	A

A2.1.12	<p>Investigate acquiring the following parcels of land through the Strategic Property Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 3 Sec 50 DP 758002, 49B Aberdare Road, Aberdare.</li> <li>[a portion of] Lot 1 DP 1100097 and [a portion of] Lot 30 DP 1013326, 1 North Avenue, Cessnock.</li> <li>[a portion of] Lot 1 DP 1114018 and Lot D DP 339311, Lot E DP 384895, Lot F DP 354733, Lot G DP 347929, Lot H DP 384894, 219 Wollombi Road, Cessnock</li> </ul>	<p>To accommodate potential expansion of Turner Park (as per the draft Turner Park Masterplan 2018).</p> <p>To accommodate a central Civic Square and Green Corridor in the Cessnock Commercial Precinct. Recommendation aligns with the provisions of the Cessnock Commercial Precinct Project.</p>	Medium	Low	A
A2.2.13	<p>Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove the following parcels of land from the land acquisition register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 123 DP 1110717 – 111 Mount View Road, Cessnock.</li> <li>Lot 558 DP 729017 – Quorrobolong Road, Kitchener</li> <li>Lot 3 DP 574111 and Pt Lot 51 DP 1128812 – West Avenue, Cessnock</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	A
A2.2.14	Amend the Avery's Village Contributions Plan to reallocate contributions from Local Sportsgrounds to improve existing or proposed regional and/or district sporting facilities in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area.	The provision of Local Sportsgrounds is not consistent with proposed standards. Improvements to district and/or regional sportsgrounds in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area will increase their capacity to service the sporting needs of the Heddon Greta population.	Medium	Low	A
A2.2.15	<p>Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal; return to the crown; or alternate use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 1 DP 382568 – 10 Embleton Street, Weston</li> <li>Lot 38 DP 262837 – 15-17 Brooks Street, Kurri Kurri</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	A
A2.5.16	Undertake investigations for the eastern portion of Simm Park (PP8) to determine the feasibility of an alternate use	The eastern portion of Simm Park (PP8) is relatively inaccessible, has poor	Low	Low	B

	(such as residential). Retain the western portion of the Park as a Passive Park (Green Corridor).	surveillance and constrained by drainage from adjacent properties.			
A2.2.17	Consider the following parcels of land in the Strategic Property Review for disposal or alternate use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 9 DP 259718 – 26 Tulloch Street East Branxton</li> <li>Lot 8 DP 255269 – 10 Redgrove Court, East Branxton</li> <li>Lot 33 DP 1126892 – 30 Park Street, Greta</li> <li>Lot 1 –21 DP758474, 35 Water Street, Greta</li> </ul>	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	A
<b>SD2.2 Upgrade existing recreation and open space facilities to be inclusive</b>					
A2.2.1	Investigate the installation of picture communication boards in Local, District and Regional recreation facilities.	To allow non-verbal children to communicate and raise awareness of differing forms of communication within the community.	Medium	Medium	B
A2.2.2	Upgrade existing regional and district playgrounds to incorporate all abilities playground equipment.	To provide recreational opportunities to isolated and vulnerable populations.	Medium	High	C
A2.2.3	Investigate tenure options with TAFE NSW to develop TAFE Park (PP11) into a District Park incorporating Town Park features.	There is a current shortage of District Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. There is also demand for a large open space to host community events and passive recreation activities in the Cessnock CBD. This recommendation also aligns with the provisions of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.	Medium	High	C
A2.2.4	Develop a portion of Manning Park (PP8) as a local park.	There is a current shortage of Local Parks in the Cessnock Planning Area. Utilising existing open space is a sustainable approach to increasing the provision of core recreation facilities.	Low	High	C

A2.2.5	Investigate redeveloping tennis courts at Jeffrey Park, Kearsley (DS1) into multi-purpose courts.	These facilities are under-utilised and in poor condition. Alternate uses should be considered.	Low	Low	<b>B</b>
A2.2.6	Amend the Nulkaba Section 94 Plan to reallocate contributions from upgrading Drain Oval (LS1) to improving facilities at Mt View Park (DS2), Turner Park (RS3) or Baddeley Park (RS2).	The Cessnock Planning Area has a surplus of Local Sportsgrounds and a portion of Drain Oval is to be considered for disposal (refer <b>C1.7</b> ).	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.7	Amend the Nulkaba Section 94 Plan to reallocate contributions from upgrading Nulkaba Park (LP9) to establishing a new Local Park within the development area.	The Cessnock Planning Area has a shortfall of Local Parks and a new park would be required to maintain proximity standards between residents and developed open space.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.8	Construct a District Playground at Margaret Johns Park, Kurri Kurri (DP3).	To provide accessible district recreation facilities to the residents of Weston and Kurri Kurri. This recommendation also aligns with the provisions of the Margaret Johns Park Plan of Management and Masterplan.	Medium	High	<b>C</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
A2.2.9	Continue to be a Women sport NSW Active Council through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting and supporting participation of women and girls in sport.</li> <li>Check the allocation of sports grounds in programs and policies; support Girls Get Active Events.</li> <li>Partner with sports clubs to build capacity.</li> <li>Improve sports amenities for gender equity.</li> <li>Play an active role in promoting health of community through Council's Community Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	To increase the participation of women in active recreation and sport.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.10	Develop a works program to upgrade existing district and regional sporting facilities to accommodate female players and officials. Works may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide private change and shower facilities</li> <li>Install female hygiene disposal units.</li> </ul>	Participation data indicates that female participation in formalised sports decreases dramatically once they leave secondary school. A contributing factor	High	Low	<b>A</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide power points, mirrors and large wash basins.</li> <li>• Lockable storage.</li> <li>• Hair and body wash dispensers.</li> </ul>	to this is inadequate/unsuitable facilities.			
A2.2.11	Amend the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan to remove the proposed skate park at Carmichael Park (RS1) and reallocate funding towards upgrading the BMX track or construct the proposed Regional skate park at Mount View Park (DS2).	To improve facilities in line with the recommendations of the Skate and BMX Facilities Needs Assessment 2020.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.12	Co-locate a Local Park and Playground at Molly Worthington Netball Courts, Kurri Kurri (DS3).	To reduce the deficit of Local Parks in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area and gap in provision of playgrounds near the Kurri Kurri CBD.	Medium	High	<b>C</b>
A2.2.13	<i>Establish tenure over a portion of Lot 7325 DP 1167677 - 27A Charles Street, Abermain</i>	To accommodate the existing recreation facilities at Howe Park, Abermain (LS4).	Low	Low	<b>B</b>
A2.2.14	Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove Lot 1 DP 508142 – Cessnock Road (Swanson Street), Weston from the land acquisition register.	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.15	Amend the Cessnock LEP to remove 6 Maitland Street, East Branxton (Miller Park Sports Club) from the land acquisition register.	Land has been identified as being of limited recreational value and is surplus to need.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
A2.2.116	Amend the Anvil Creek Planning Agreement to reallocate contributions from the proposed Local Sportsground to improving Greta Central Oval (RS1).	There is a surplus of Local Sportsgrounds in the Branxton-Greta Planning Area. Upgrades to Greta Central Oval will support the recreational needs of the residents at Anvil Creek.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
<b>SD2.3 Encourage innovation and creativity within the recreation and open space network</b>					
A2.3.1	Develop an online 'suggestions box' to allow the community to put forward ideas on how to improve recreation and open space facilities.	To capture the ideas of the community and consider implementation in accordance with Council's Delivery Program.	High	Low	<b>A</b>



A2.3.2	Investigate ways to encourage local artists to undertake projects in public open space in accordance with Council's Art Policy.	To support local talent and create open spaces that are interesting and unique.	High	Low	A
A2.3.3	Engage and collaborate with key external stakeholders early in the planning process of recreation and open space facilities.	To consider a diverse range of ideas and opinions when planning recreation and open space facilities.	High	Low	A
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>SD2.4 Promote safety and reduce the opportunity for anti-social behaviour in recreation and open space areas</b>					
A2.4.1	Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles in Council's Engineering Guidelines for recreation and open space.	To reduce the opportunity for anti-social behaviour within Council's recreation and open space areas.	High	Low	A
A2.4.2	Develop a shade program to fund the planting and maintenance of shade trees and/or shade structures in recreation and open space areas.	To improve the safety, comfort and aesthetics of recreation facilities.	High	Low	A
A2.4.3	Investigate opportunities to promote the use of sportsgrounds for informal recreation between formal sporting programs.	To increase the utilisation of existing recreation facilities and reduce the likelihood of vandalism and anti-social behaviour during off-seasons and other times of low use.	Low	Low	B
A2.4.4	Investigate installing multi-purpose courts at District and Regional facilities in line with the design guidelines in <b>Appendix B.</b>	To provide adaptable and well utilised facilities and reduce the gap in the provision of basketball courts.	High	Low	A
<b>SD2.5 Increase participation of isolated and vulnerable groups in the planning, utilisation and management of recreation and open space areas</b>					
A2.5.1	Prepare an engagement strategy with consideration to engaging isolated and vulnerable groups.	A coordinated approach to engaging vulnerable and isolated groups will stand a better chance at succeeding.	High	Low	A
A2.5.2	Continue to collaborate with community services that provide employment opportunities for isolated and vulnerable people (such as Work for the Dole and Caloola Vocational Services) in the maintenance and improvement of recreation and open space areas.	To improve skills within the local community, improve relationships with Council and extend the benefits of recreation to vulnerable and isolated groups.	High	Low	A

SO3 MAXIMISE THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS DERIVED FROM RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE AREAS					
SD3.1 Support projects and programs that deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits to the region					
A3.1.1	Activate spaces through participating in/hosting programs and events such as Park Run.	To increase utilisation of recreation facilities and increase participation.	Medium	Low	A
A3.1.2	Investigate the development of facilities such as amphitheatres/stages within Regional and Town Parks.	To diversify uses within large parks and increase utilisation.	Low	Low	B
A3.1.3	Investigate the feasibility of a mobile playgroup/Gymboree that visits a key park in the larger towns each week.	To provide for the anticipated growth of young families.	Medium	Low	A
Reference	Action	Rationale	Benefit	Cost	Priority
SD3.2 Prioritise funding in accordance with evidence based strategic direction, identified need and whole of life costing					
A3.2.1	Prepare detailed master plans of all core parks and sportsgrounds in priority of utility and service catchment.	To ensure a strategic and coordinated development of each site and maximise the cost-benefit ratio.	High	Medium	B
A3.2.2	Adjust the annual program for recreation facility asset renewal and replacement in accordance with the recommendations of Council's Asset Management Plans.	There is a general ageing of sports ancillary facilities across the LGA which are being replaced on an ad-hoc basis (or not at all).	High	Low	A
A3.2.3	Develop and review Contribution Plans and Planning Agreements in accordance with the provisions of this Strategic Plan.	To ensure adequate funding is received from developers to provide suitable recreation facilities for new growth.	High	Low	A
SD3.3 Develop pricing and cost recovery policies relative to full lifecycle costs as agreed through asset management and strategic planning instruments					
A3.3.1	Review seasonal usage agreements with sporting clubs to ensure consistency across the LGA and to maximise Council's return on investment.	Feedback received from both Council staff and sporting clubs that the current processes lack consistency and that the current financial return is not sustainable.	High	Medium	B
A3.3.2	Develop a community building policy to guide the processing of applications to construct buildings on Council land.	Council does not currently have a policy to guide the assessment of applications to build on Council land.	High	Low	A
A3.3.3	Develop a policy on fees and charges for the use of sporting venues.	Current fees and charges are ad-hoc with no policy to support them.	Medium	Low	B
SD3.4 Partner and collaborate with external stakeholders in the planning, development and management of recreation and open space					

A3.4.1	Investigate opportunities with education establishments such as schools to share, co-locate or acquire recreational facilities.	An opportunity exists to share the provision and management of recreation facilities to improve sustainability.	Medium	Medium	<b>B</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
A3.4.2	Investigate the feasibility of contracting the management of Council's specialised recreation and community facilities to an external service provider.	Contracted management of facilities has proven to be a sustainable management model for various Councils.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
A3.4.3	Continue to collaborate with neighbouring Council's in developing cross-boundary planning strategies and development contributions plans.	Cross-council collaboration is critical to delivering successful regional outcomes and ensuring an equitable distribution of development contributions is received.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A3.4.4	Collaborate with NSW National Parks & Wildlife Services, Forestry Corporation of NSW and NSW Department of Lands to identify and promote recreational opportunities in National Parks, State Conservation Areas and Crown Reserves.	State governed reserves offer additional recreational options for the community. Collaboration with NSW Government agencies will provide a coordinated approach to promoting these options.	Medium	Medium	<b>B</b>
A3.4.5	Develop a Local Park in Branxton south of the New England Highway. An opportunity may exist to establish shared recreation facilities at Branxton Public School.	To address the gap in provision of developed open space in Branxton south of the New England Highway.	Low	High	<b>C</b>
<b>SD3.5 Prioritise the utilisation and upgrading of existing facilities</b>					
A3.5.1	Investigate opportunities to accommodate increased demand from population growth at low utilised facilities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East End Oval, Cessnock</li> <li>• Mulbring Park, Mulbring</li> <li>• Stanford Merthyr Park Pony Ground, Stanford Merthyr</li> <li>• Neath Pony Ground, Neath</li> <li>• Crawfordville Park, Millfield</li> <li>• Wollombi Recreation Ground, Wollombi</li> </ul>	Increasing utilisation of existing facilities is a sustainable approach to accommodating increasing demand.	Medium	Medium	<b>B</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wollombi Tennis and Croquet Courts, Wollombi</li> </ul>				
A3.5.2	Investigate establishing a Regional Sportsground within the Hydro Land Release Area.	There is a current and future gap in Regional Sportsground provision in the Kurri Kurri Planning Area. A facility at Hydro would be appropriately positioned to service Weston, Kurri Kurri, Heddon Greta, Cliftleigh and beyond.	High	Low	A
A3.5.3	Investigate repurposing the playing field at Branxton Oval (LS1) to an alternative use that complements the RV Area and Croquet Club	. The formal sporting needs of local residents would continue to be serviced by Miller Park, Greta Central Oval and proposed District and Regional Sportsgrounds at Huntlee.	Low	Low	B
A3.5.4	Develop Paxton Park (LP3) into a District Park by utilising a portion of Lot 1 DP 327619, 46 McDonald Avenue, Paxton.	To address the gap in provision of District Parks and reduce the surplus of Local Parks. Paxton is central to Ellalong and Millfield and a District Park would service these three villages.	Low	High	C
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>SD3.6 Protect and enhance the Indigenous and European heritage of the Cessnock LGA</b>					
A3.6.1	Prepare a Conservation Management Strategy for open space areas containing areas and items of historical significance.	To establish a planning framework to manage and improve European and Indigenous Heritage.	High	High	C
<b>SD3.7 Adopt Ecologically Sustainable Development principles in the provision and management of recreation and open space</b>					
A3.7.1	Incorporate Ecologically Sustainable Development and Water Sensitive Urban Design principles into Council's Engineering Guidelines for recreation and open space areas.	To improve the environmental sustainability of recreation facilities.	High	Low	A
<b>SO4 TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN THE GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY OF RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>					
<b>SD4.1 Lead the planning, management, promotion and facilitation of recreational assets and services for the community</b>					
A4.1.1	Capture information relating to participation numbers, facility use, and facility issues to utilise in the planning for recreation and open space areas.	To inform planning decisions for recreation and open space areas.	High	Medium	A

A4.1.2	Complete the development of Plans of Management for Community and Crown Land under the care and control of Council.	To meet the legislative requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and provide effective governance for the use and management of public land.	Medium	Medium	<b>B</b>
A4.1.3	Where permitted, incorporate sites covered by an existing Plan of Management that is more than five years old into the relevant Generic Plan of Management.	To streamline Council's public land management framework and ensure all Plans of Management are up to date.	Low	Medium	<b>C</b>
A4.1.4	Update council's website to provide on-line booking information.	To improve the efficiency and convenience of booking Council facilities.	Low	Medium	<b>C</b>
A4.1.5	Review staffing levels within the Open Space and Community Facilities department of Council.	To ensure Council is adequately resourced to plan and manage recreation and open space assets and services.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A4.1.6	Prepare a discussion paper on the issues encountered by user groups and the general community when undertaking projects on public land.	To identify opportunities to improve processes and empower the community to use and improve public land.	Medium	Low	<b>A</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
A4.1.7	Subject to the outcomes of <b>A4.1.6</b> , review Council's policy and procedures with the aim to reduce the complexity and cost of undertaking community projects on public land.	Community groups often cite working with Council on community projects as frustrating, expensive and time consuming.	Medium	Medium	<b>B</b>
<b>SD4.2 Work with external organisations to improve and increase their capacity to provide appropriate and successful programs, assets and services for Cessnock residents</b>					
A4.2.1	Establish an education program for clubs that addresses various issues such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative delivery methods (catering for drop in-drop out sports),</li> <li>• governance issues and processes,</li> <li>• fund raising,</li> <li>• volunteer attraction and retention,</li> <li>• business planning, and</li> </ul>	To raise the self-sufficiency of clubs and allow them to cope with the ever-changing nature of sport and recreation provision.	High	High	<b>C</b>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field management (including scheduling team use of fields).</li> </ul> <p>To be reviewed and evaluated every 6-12 months for its effectiveness. Attendance should be encouraged through offering simple incentives (such as catering).</p>				
A4.2.2	Update Council's website to provide information and guidelines on applying for grants.	Many grant programs allow sporting and community groups to attract funding to improve Council facilities.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>SD4.3 Develop and implement administrative frameworks and policies that provide consistency and certainty for administrators and users and reflect Council's direction</b>					
A4.3.1	<p>Develop a sponsorship and signage manual for clubs using Council sporting fields and courts. Due to the multi-use of many sites, the manual will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require applications to demonstrate all users of a site (and their respective sponsors) approve of the proposal.</li> <li>Clearly articulate that any Council approvals are for a set duration (1-5 years) and that sponsorship recognition must not extend past that time.</li> <li>Ensure consistency with the provisions of the Cessnock Development Control Plan.</li> </ul>	To provide a policy position and framework for clubs to seek funding to enhance their facilities and support their club functions. The duration of any Council approvals will need to be enforced to avoid outdated sponsorship recognition remaining without ongoing contributions from sponsors.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A4.3.2	<p>In addition to those identified in <b>A3.3.2</b> and <b>A3.3.3</b>, develop/update Council's policies in relation to recreation and open space assets, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising on Recreation Grounds (2014)</li> <li>Parks-Playgrounds (2015)</li> <li>Pools – Child Supervision (2014)</li> <li>Grant Funding for Community Projects Policy (proposed)</li> <li>Recreation Facility Allocations (proposed)</li> <li>Commercial use of community land (proposed)</li> </ul>	Updating existing policies and developing new policies will improve consistency and clarity around Council's processes.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>

**SD4.4 Engage and empower internal and external stakeholders in the planning, funding, management and promotion of recreation and open space facilities**

A4.4.1	<p>Increase the promotion of sport and recreation facilities and the services they provide through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated web pages that provide more detail on what is available at each facility and their exact location.</li> <li>• Improved directional and entry signage to sport and recreation facilities (refer <b>A1.1.1</b>).</li> <li>• Increase use of local media through regular media releases regarding current initiatives.</li> </ul>	Many residents and sporting clubs indicated they were unaware of what was available in regard to facilities, programs and events.	High	Medium	<b>B</b>
A4.4.2	Undertake a bi-annual sport and recreation club survey through a consolidated email contact list.	To monitor the needs of sporting clubs and identify opportunities to improve facilities.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
A4.4.3	Develop a communication plan for recreation and open space projects.	To ensure that the community, internal and external stakeholders have an appropriate level of input into community projects and are informed of Council's operations.	High	Low	<b>A</b>
A4.4.4	Maintain memberships with industry associations (eg Parks & Leisure Australia) and regional planning groups (eg Hunter Region Organisation of Councils).	To provide staff with training and resources provided by industry associations and organisations.	High	Low	<b>A</b>

# Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the Strategy's implementation will be crucial to its success. An annual review of the progress of implementation will provide advice on the achievements to date, changes in Council's strategic direction and barriers to implementing the actions. In order to review the progress of the implementation of the Strategy actions, a number of key performance indicators and measures have been adopted (refer Table 45).

The actions within the Strategy are proposed to be delivered over a ten year time frame and included, where appropriate, within Council's four year delivery program. The implementation of the actions within the identified timeframes will be subject to budget allocation, resource availability and Council priorities. It is recommended that a full review of strategic actions be undertaken after five years and a review of demographic data be undertaken as soon as practicable after its release.

**Table 45 – Performance measures**

<b>Measure performance against Strategic Objective 1 – Create an open space network that is connected and accessible</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Source</b>
Accessibility of recreation and open space facilities	Number of DDA non-compliance issues recorded at parks and sportsgrounds.	Council
Proximity to developed open space	Percentage of residents within the spatial catchment of passive, local, district, regional and specialised facilities.	Council
Provision of green corridors	Length of green corridors containing pathways.	Council
<b>Measure performance against Strategic Objective 2 – Provide a recreation and open space network that is well utilised and inclusive</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Source</b>
Formal sport participation rates	Number of participants utilising recreation and open space facilities.	Council
Adequacy of good quality parks and recreation areas	Percentage of residents who agree there are adequate number of good quality open spaces	Council's Community Research Survey
Provision of parks and sportsgrounds that are inclusive	Number of sportsground amenities with provisions for female players and officials.	Council
	Number of playgrounds with all-abilities equipment.	Council

**Measure performance against Strategic Objective 3 – Maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from recreation and open space areas**

Indicator	Measure	Source
Attraction of large sporting and cultural events	Number of regional, state, national and international events held in Cessnock LGA.	Council
External funding	Amount of external funding received for recreation and capital development.	Council
Water and electricity consumption	Amount of electricity and water utilised at recreation facilities.	Utility Providers
Anti-social behavior	Reported incidences of vandalism and crime within recreation and open space areas.	Community Safety Precinct Committee

**Measure performance against Strategic Objective 4 – Take a leading role in the governance, leadership and advocacy of recreation and open space facilities and services**

Indicators	Measures	Source
Increased awareness of recreation opportunities	Number of visits to Council's Recreation and Community Facilities web page	Council
Stakeholder Engagement	Number of residents who are satisfied with community involvement in Council decision making and information supplied to residents about Council activities	Council's Community Research Survey
Supporting clubs and community groups	Amount of money awarded through Council's Dollar for Dollar Grant.	Council

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## Appendix A – Recreation Facility Inventory

Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Local Sportsground					
Crawfordville Park	Millfield	Local Sportsground	1.97	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fencing</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li><li>1 turf cricket pitch</li></ul>
Wollombi Tennis and Croquet Courts	Wollombi	Local Sportsground	0.43	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Amenities</li><li>1 croquet lawn</li><li>2 tennis courts</li></ul>
District Sportsground					
Wollombi Recreation Ground	Wollombi	District Sportsground	5.32	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Amenities</li><li>Barbeque</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Picnic benches and tables</li><li>Pony ground</li></ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements	
CESSNOCK PLANNING AREA					
Passive Park					
Alkira Avenue Park	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)	3.58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Public art (tiled mural)</li><li>Sandstone plaque memorial</li></ul>	
Apex Park	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Car park</li><li>Lighting</li><li>Ornamental tree plantings</li><li>Sheltered picnic benches and tables</li><li>Storage building</li></ul>	
Bellbird Miner's Memorial Park	Bellbird	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Barbeque</li><li>Drinking fountain</li><li>Gardens</li><li>Memorial</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li></ul>	
Convent Hill Park	Cessnock	Passive (Natural Area)	1.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bitumen and gravel walking trails</li><li>Paved stairs</li></ul>	

Conways Corner	Cessnock	Passive (Civic Square)	0.07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bench seat</li> <li>Hedging</li> <li>Paved pathway</li> </ul>
HJ Sternbeck Park	Cessnock	Passive (Civic Square)	0.07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brick steps</li> <li>Hedging</li> <li>Irrigation</li> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Picnic benches and tables</li> </ul>
Hall Park Dog Off Leash Area	Cessnock	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Practice Concrete Cricket Pitch</li> </ul>
Manning Park	Cessnock	Passive (Green Corridor)	2.94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated dog off leash area</li> </ul>
Mount Bright Lookout	Mount View	Passive (Scenic Park)	1.61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No improvements.</li> </ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements
Pokolbin Park	Pokolbin	Passive (Scenic Park)	1.78	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barbeques</li> <li>Paths</li> <li>Public toilets</li> <li>Sheltered picnic benches and tables</li> <li>Timber bridge</li> </ul>
TAFE Park	Cessnock	Passive (Town Park)	0.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gazebos</li> <li>Hedging</li> <li>Irrigation</li> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Paved paths</li> <li>War memorial</li> </ul>
<b>Local Park</b>				
Abernethy Playground	Abernethy	Local Park	0.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
Carmichael Park Playground	Bellbird	Local Park	0.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Pool fencing</li> <li>Shaded playground</li> </ul>
Hall Park	Cessnock	Local Park	0.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community building</li> <li>Designated dog off leash area</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
Jeffery Park Playground	Kearsley	Local Park	0.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> <li>• Water bubbler</li> </ul>
Macquarie Avenue Playground (O'Neil Park)	Cessnock	Local Park	0.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picnic bench and table</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
Margaret Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park	0.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Gardens</li> <li>• Gazebo</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
McFarlane Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park	0.32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Netball hoop</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Shaded picnic bench and seats</li> </ul>
North End Playground	Cessnock	Local Park	0.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Community hall</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Public toilets</li> <li>• Shaded picnic benches and seats</li> </ul>
Nulkaba Park	Nulkaba	Local Park	0.41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Water bubbler</li> </ul>
O'Brien Street Playground	Cessnock	Local Park	0.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
Vineyard Grove Park	Cessnock	Local Park	0.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Shaded playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> <li>• Water bubbler</li> </ul>

District Park						
Buckland Avenue Playground	Cessnock	District Park	0.71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bench seats</li><li>Path</li><li>Playground</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li></ul>		
Veterans Memorial Park	Aberdare	District Park	0.41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Barbeque</li><li>Gardens</li><li>Gazebos</li><li>Lighting</li><li>Paved path</li><li>Playground</li><li>Public toilet</li><li>War memorial</li></ul>		
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements		
Regional Park						
Bridges Hill Park	Cessnock	Regional Park	4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bench seats</li><li>Gazebos</li><li>Path</li><li>Playground</li><li>Skate park</li><li>Water bubbler</li></ul>		
Poppet Head Park	Kitchener	Regional Park	12.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Barbeque</li><li>Car parking</li><li>Large sheltered picnic bench and table</li><li>Remnant mining infrastructure</li><li>Path</li><li>Playground</li><li>Public toilet</li><li>Timber boardwalk</li></ul>		
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements	
Local Sportsground						
Drain Oval	Cessnock	Local Sportsground	3.13	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Amenity building</li><li>Car park</li><li>Fencing</li></ul>	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kiosk building</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• 1 turf cricket pitch</li> <li>• 1 rugby union field</li> </ul>
East End Oval	Cessnock	Local Sportsground	2.60	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity building</li> <li>• Car park</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• 1 turf cricket wicket</li> <li>• 1 soccer field</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> </ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
District Sportsground					
Jeffery Park	Kearsley	District Sportsground	4.43	Medium/High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity building</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 turf cricket wicket</li> <li>• 2 tennis courts</li> </ul>
Mount View Park	Cessnock	District Sportsground	20.09	Low/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity building</li> <li>• Car park</li> <li>• Club building</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> <li>• 1 mod rugby league field</li> <li>• 2 rugby league fields</li> <li>• 2 mini rugby league fields</li> <li>• 4 concrete cricket wickets</li> </ul>
Vernon Street Netball Courts	Cessnock	District Sportsground	3.29	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity building</li> <li>• Car Park</li> </ul>



					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Hedging</li> <li>• Seating</li> <li>• 12 netball courts</li> </ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Regional Sportsground					
Carmichael Park	Bellbird	Regional Sportsground	8.48	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities building</li> <li>• Car parking</li> <li>• Cricket nets</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• 1 BMX track</li> <li>• 2 soccer fields</li> <li>• 2 junior soccer fields</li> <li>• 2 turf cricket wickets</li> <li>• 2 tennis courts</li> <li>• 6 mini soccer fields</li> </ul>
Cessnock Sportsground/Baddeley Park	Cessnock	Regional Sportsground	14.29	Medium/High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities buildings</li> <li>• Car parking</li> <li>• Cricket nets</li> <li>• Dog training area</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Grandstand</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and seats</li> <li>• 1 synthetic hockey field</li> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mod rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mod soccer field</li> <li>• 2 soccer fields</li> <li>• 3 turf cricket wickets</li> </ul>

Site		Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Turner Park		Cessnock	Regional Sportsground	9.60	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities buildings</li><li>• Car parking</li><li>• Community building</li><li>• Cricket nets</li><li>• Floodlighting</li><li>• Grandstands</li><li>• Irrigation</li><li>• Public toilet</li><li>• Sheltered picnic benches and tables</li><li>• 1 grass athletics track</li><li>• 1 soccer field</li><li>• 1 turf cricket wicket</li><li>• 5 mod soccer fields</li><li>• 18 tennis courts</li></ul>
Specialised Sport						
Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre		Cessnock	Specialised sport	1.72	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities</li><li>• Car parking</li><li>• Tiered seating</li><li>• 2 indoor basketball courts</li></ul>
Cessnock Pool/Shakespeare Park		Cessnock	Specialised sport	0.69	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities</li><li>• Car parking</li><li>• Leisure pool</li><li>• Toddler pool</li><li>• Tiered seating</li><li>• 50m heated outdoor pool</li></ul>
Site		Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements	
KURRI KURRI PLANNING AREA						
Passive Park						
Apex Park		Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)	1.46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Picnic bench and table</li></ul>	
Bailey Park		Abermain	Passive (Green Corridor)	7.54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Path</li><li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li></ul>	

Edgeworth Park	David	Abermain	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car park</li> <li>• Hedging</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Pedestrian bridge</li> <li>• Public art (mural)</li> </ul>
Fell Park		Weston	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Path</li> </ul>
Fire Fighters Park		Neath	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden</li> <li>• Log fencing</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> <li>• Tourist information sign</li> </ul>
Lloyd Park		Pelaw Main	Passive (Utility)	0.62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No improvements.</li> </ul>
Rotary Park		Kurri Kurri	Passive (Town Park)	0.63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbeques</li> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Gardens</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Memorials</li> <li>• Paved paths</li> <li>• Picnic bench and tables</li> <li>• Public art (sculptures)</li> <li>• Public toilet</li> <li>• Rotunda</li> <li>• Tourist information board</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>		<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
Simm Park		Kurri Kurri	Passive (Utility)	2.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Log fencing</li> </ul>
Stanford Park	Merthyr	Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)	2.90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated dog off leash area</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Gardens</li> </ul>

Varty Park Dog Off Leash Area	Weston	Passive (Pocket Park)	2.03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No improvements.</li> </ul>
Weston Memorial Park	Weston	Passive (Civic Square)	0.04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garden</li> <li>Path</li> <li>Public toilet</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> </ul>
Wickham Street Reserve	Stanford Merthyr	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing</li> </ul>
<b>Local Parks</b>				
Birrlee Park Playground	Kurri Kurri	Local Park	0.48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bench seat</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Playground</li> </ul>
Bluey Frame Park	Weston	Local Park	0.08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bench seat</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
Booth Park Playground	Kurri Kurri	Local Park	0.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Public toilet</li> </ul>
Ernie Dunlop Park	Weston	Local Park	0.28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> <li>1 multi-purpose court</li> </ul>
George Winter Park	Kurri Kurri	Local Park	0.53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Play spot</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
Harle Street Playground	Abermain	Local Park	0.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bench Seat</li> <li>Playground</li> </ul>
Hedleigh Park	Heddon Greta	Local Park	0.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bench seat</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>

Jeffries Park	Abermain	Local Park	1.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Memorial</li> <li>• Paved path</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Public toilet</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
Meredith Park	Weston	Local Park	0.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
Mulbring Park Playground	Mulbring	Local Park	0.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> </ul>
Stanford Merthyr Playground	Stanford Merthyr	Local Park	0.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> <li>• Water bubbler</li> </ul>
District Park				
Centenary Park	Abermain	District Park	3.69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seat</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Water bubbler</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
Log of Knowledge Park	Pelaw Main	District Park	1.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Park</li> <li>• Memorial</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> <li>• Tourist information board</li> </ul>
Margaret Johns Park	Kurri Kurri	District Park	2.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Car Park</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Path</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> </ul>



				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skatepark</li><li>• Water bubbler</li></ul>	
Regional Park					
Chinaman's Hollow / Peace Park	Weston	Regional Park	7.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Barbeque</li><li>• Car park</li><li>• Large sheltered picnic bench and tables</li><li>• Playground</li><li>• Public toilets</li><li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li><li>• Water features</li></ul>	
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Local Sportsground					
Abermain Soccer Ground	Abermain	Local Sportsground	1.62	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities building</li><li>• Car park</li><li>• Floodlighting</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• 1 soccer field</li><li>• 1 junior soccer field</li><li>• 1 basketball half court</li><li>• 2 mini soccer fields</li></ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Booth Park	Kurri Kurri	Local Sportsground	1.94	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cricket nets</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li><li>• 2 concrete cricket wickets</li></ul>
Chinaman's Hollow Cricket Oval	Weston	Local Sportsground	1.71	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities building</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• 1 turf cricket wicket</li></ul>
Howe Park	Abermain	Local Sportsground	1.61	Low/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities building</li><li>• Bench seating</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Floodlighting</li><li>• Irrigation</li><li>• 1 rugby league field</li></ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 turf cricket pitch</li> </ul>
Jacob's Park	Pelaw Main	Local Sportsground	1.65	Nil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing</li> <li>1 concrete cricket pitch</li> </ul>
Mulbring Park	Mulbring	Local Sportsground	4.42	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amenities building</li> <li>Cricket nets</li> <li>Grandstand</li> <li>1 turf cricket wicket</li> <li>1 basketball court</li> <li>2 tennis courts (w/ lighting)</li> </ul>
Pelaw Main Centenary Park	Pelaw Main	Local Sportsground	1.70	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amenities building</li> <li>Bench seats</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Floodlighting</li> <li>1 soccer field</li> </ul>
Stanford Merthyr Park Pony Ground	Stanford Merthyr	Local Sportsground	1.17	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amenities building</li> <li>Fencing</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Utilisation</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
<b>District Sportsground</b>					
Birralee Park	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground	6.20	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amenities buildings</li> <li>Bench seating</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Irrigation</li> <li>Public toilet</li> <li>Tiered seating</li> <li>1 grass athletics track</li> <li>3 soccer fields</li> </ul>
Johns Park	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground	2.04	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amenities building</li> <li>Car park</li> <li>Cricket nets</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Floodlighting</li> <li>Irrigation</li> <li>Public toilet</li> <li>Tiered seating</li> <li>1 turf cricket pitch</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mod rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mini rugby league field</li> </ul>
Molly Worthington Netball Courts	Kurri Kurri	District Sportsground	0.99	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities buildings</li> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Flood lighting</li> <li>• 8 netball courts</li> </ul>
Neath Pony Ground	Neath	District Sportsground	3.48	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities building</li> <li>• Fencing</li> </ul>
Varty Park	Weston	District Sportsground	4.92	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities building</li> <li>• Designated dog off leash area</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• 1 concrete cricket wicket</li> <li>• 2 soccer fields</li> </ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Weston Park	Weston	District Sportsground	5.39	Low/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities building</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Grandstand</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• 2 soccer fields</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Sportsground</b>					
Kurri Kurri Central Oval/Kurri Kurri Sportsground	Kurri Kurri	Regional Sportsground	4.81	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities buildings</li> <li>• Bench seats</li> <li>• Car Park</li> <li>• Cricket nets</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Grandstand</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• RV parking</li> <li>• 1 soccer field</li> <li>• 1 turf cricket pitch</li> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8 tennis courts</li></ul>
Specialised Sport					
Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre	Kurri Kurri	Specialised Sport	0.89	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Amenities</li><li>Gym</li><li>Indoor 25m metre pool</li><li>Leisure water</li><li>Program water</li></ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements	
BRANXTON-GRETA PLANNING AREA					
Passive Park					
Greta Median Strip	Greta	Passive (Green Corridor)	1.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gardens</li><li>Gazebo</li><li>Memorial</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li><li>Path</li></ul>	
Greta Central Oval Dog Off Leash Area	Greta	Passive (Pocket Park)	2.46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fencing</li><li>Practice concrete wicket</li></ul>	
Hunter River Reserve	Greta	Passive (Natural Area)	10.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Picnic Bench and table</li></ul>	
Lions Park	Branxton	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fencing</li><li>Gardens</li><li>Monument</li><li>Path</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li></ul>	
Miller Park Dog Off Leash Area	Branxton	Passive (Pocket Park)	1.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Picnic bench and tables</li></ul>	
Rothbury Riot Miner's Memorial	North Rothbury	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bench seat</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Gardens</li><li>Memorial</li></ul>	
Victoria Park	Greta	Passive	1.81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No improvements.</li></ul>	

		(Pocket Park)			
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements	
Local Park					
Ayrfield Miners Memorial Park	North Rothbury	Local Park	0.56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bench seats</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Multi-purpose court</li><li>Playground</li><li>Public toilet</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li></ul>	
Brunner Park	East Branxton	Local Park	0.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bench seat</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Playground</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and seats</li></ul>	
Miller Park Playground	Branxton	Local Park	0.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fencing</li><li>Outdoor gym</li><li>Shaded playground</li><li>Sheltered picnic benches and tables</li></ul>	
Norman Brown Park	Greta	Local Park	0.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Playground</li><li>Public toilet</li><li>Water bubbler</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li><li>Fencing</li></ul>	
Whitburn Playground	Greta	Local Park	0.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Playground</li><li>Sheltered picnic bench and table</li></ul>	
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Utilisation	Improvements
Local Sportsground					
Branxton Oval	Branxton	Local Sportsground	5.50	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Amenities building</li><li>Bench seats</li><li>Car Park</li><li>Club house</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Floodlighting</li></ul>



					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gazebo</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Memorial</li> <li>• Public toilet</li> <li>• RV Dump Point</li> <li>• RV Parking Area</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic benches and tables</li> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> <li>• 2 croquet lawns</li> </ul>
Regional Sportsground					
Greta Central Oval	Greta	Regional Sportsground	18.15	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities buildings</li> <li>• Designated dog off leash area</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• 1 Skatepark</li> <li>• 1 pony ground</li> <li>• 1 rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mod rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 mini rugby league field</li> <li>• 1 turf cricket wicket</li> <li>• 1 concrete cricket wicket</li> <li>• 2 tennis courts</li> </ul>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Utilisation</b>	<b>Improvements</b>
Miller Park	Branxton	Regional Sportsground	12.62	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities buildings</li> <li>• Car park</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Floodlighting</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Public toilet</li> <li>• 1 grass athletics track</li> <li>• 2 asphalt netball courts</li> <li>• 2 grass netball courts</li> <li>• 2 turf cricket wickets</li> <li>• 2 soccer fields</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 mod soccer fields</li><li>• 3 junior soccer fields</li></ul>
Specialised Sport					
Branxton Pool	Branxton	Specialised Sport	1.08	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities</li><li>• Outdoor 33m pool</li><li>• Toddler pool</li></ul>
Greta Arts and Sports Centre	Greta	Specialised Sports	0.11	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities</li><li>• Car park</li><li>• 1 indoor basketball court</li></ul>
Site	Suburb	Hierarchy	Area	Improvements	
RURAL WEST PLANNING AREA					
Passive Park					
ANZAC Reserve	Wollombi	Passive (Pocket Park)	1.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Memorial</li><li>• Picnic bench and table</li></ul>	
Bimbadeen Lookout	Mount View	Passive (Scenic Park)	0.81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avenue tree plantings</li><li>• Informal parking</li><li>• Radio transmission tower</li></ul>	
Local Park					
Ellalong Park	Ellalong	Local Park	2.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Composite sports goals/posts</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Playground</li><li>• Shelter picnic bench and table</li><li>• 1 basketball half court</li></ul>	
Millfield Playground	Millfield	Local Park	1.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Car park</li><li>• Community building</li><li>• Playground</li><li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li></ul>	
Paxton Park	Paxton	Local Park	1.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bench seat</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Lighting</li><li>• Path</li></ul>	

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and table</li> </ul>
Slack's Park	Wollombi	Local Park	0.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• Gardens</li> <li>• Large sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Public toilet</li> <li>• Sheltered picnic bench and tables</li> </ul>

## *Appendix B - Recreation & Open Space Design*

### *Design principles*

The following design principles have been developed to ensure that the provision of open space is appropriate for the Cessnock LGA. The principles are based on the values and needs expressed by the community throughout consultation and the objectives of the Cessnock 2027 Community Strategic Plan. The future provision and improvement of open space must be reflective of these principles:

- People have diversity and choice within the open space network leading to a variety of vibrant opportunities.
- The parks are attractive and desirable places for people to enjoy regardless of their age and ability.
- Innovation and creativity are encouraged within the area's open space network.
- Towns are designed with enhanced greenspace and strong connections to the natural environment, including the rural surroundings.
- The open space network is connected through a series of green nodes including parkland and streetscaping.
- The open spaces and communities are linked via the green web, encouraging active transport (particularly pedestrian focussed) options.
- Social interaction and physical activity is encouraged through regular activation of open space.
- Community safety principles are incorporated into open space planning and design.
- Multiple-use of open space is encouraged to provide cost effective options for Council to maintain while still providing community health and well-being benefits.
- Equitable access is achieved considering differing community values and expectations.
- Consideration of different social and demographic profiles is given to the location, design and enhancement of the open space, now and in the future.
- A network that considers the character of places and spaces and incorporates these themes into open space design.
- The principles of ecologically sustainable development, including ecological integrity, economic vitality and social wellbeing, are considered in all aspects of open space planning, design, construction, maintenance and use.
- Open space is planned and designed to respond to and protect significant natural and cultural features.
- The location, design and development of open space contributes to the creation of a desirable and distinct local character.
- Implement Ecologically Sustainable Development principles (including Water Sensitive Urban Design) to provide attractive, environmentally sustainable, multi-purpose areas for the community.

## Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines for parks and sportsgrounds have been developed to assist in translating the previous design principles into design outcomes. It is important to note, that each open space area will be assessed on a case by case basis, and as such, essential embellishments may vary based on the sites location, demographics and other factors influencing demand. Further to this, the list of essential embellishments is not all inclusive, and there may be occasions where unique or alternate embellishments are proposed based upon the open space area being considered.

Passive Park	
Type	Embellishments
Pocket Park	Fencing and barriers; paths; picnic table and benches; picnic shelters; trees; turf; signage
Civic Square	Trees; turf; decorative paving; fountain; gardens/hedging; irrigation; seating; public art; signage, paths; bollards; bicycle parking
Scenic Park	Paths; viewing platforms; fencing and barriers; toilets; car parking; picnic shelters; picnic bench and tables; bins; interpretive signage
Town Park	Fountain; gazebo; stage; memorial; lighting; gardens; irrigation; seating; paths; public art; signage; bins; picnic table and benches; picnic shelters; local playground; toilets; car parking; canopy trees; turf; fencing and barriers; café/kiosk; bicycle parking; water bubbler; signage
Natural Area	Vegetation regeneration; boardwalks; trails and tracks; paths; viewing platform; fencing and barriers; seating; picnic benches and tables; picnic shelter; signage, car parking
Utility	Fencing and barriers; paths; picnic table and benches; picnic shelters; trees; turf; signage
Green Corridor	Directional signage; trees; turf; paths; seating; picnic benches and seating; picnic shelter
Local Park	
Size	Minimum 0.5ha of useable land
Catchment	Within 500m of most residents
Shape	The preferred shape is square to rectangular with side no greater than 2:1.
Road Frontage	50% of the perimeter to have direct road frontage (preferably 2 active street frontages).
Gradient	Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the park. To facilitate wheelchair access to parks, areas with a grade of 1:14 will also be provided, where possible. Variable topography is satisfactory for the remaining area.
Flood Immunity	15% of total park area to be above the 1:100 year flood level and free of hazards
Potential Embellishments – Essential elements to be confirmed with Council Officers upon assessment and review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of activity nodes (2-3) typical activity nodes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ rebound wall</li> <li>○ multi-functional gazebo</li> <li>○ a play spot containing one or two play elements catering for the 0 – 5 age bracket (eg a swing and see-saw)</li> <li>○ small path circuit</li> <li>○ flat kick-a-bout area.</li> <li>○ outdoor exercise stations</li> <li>○ play equipment catering for 0-9 age bracket <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreed safety surfacing</li> <li>▪ All abilities play</li> <li>▪ shade</li> <li>▪ small play unit containing slide, climbing apparatus, swing, spring rocker</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ multi-purpose half court</li> <li>• fencing to prohibit vehicle access</li> <li>• synthetic shade or clustered shade trees near activity nodes (shade coverage at maturity)</li> <li>• turf</li> <li>• lighting</li> <li>• pathways</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• drinking fountain</li> <li>• bench seats</li> <li>• picnic/gathering shelter</li> <li>• picnic setting and table</li> <li>• bins</li> <li>• Irrigated gardens</li> </ul>
<b>District Park</b>	
Size	Minimum 2ha of useable land
Catchment	Within 5km of most residents
Shape	The preferred shape is square to rectangular with side no greater than 2:1.
Road Frontage	50% of the perimeter to have direct road frontage (preferably 2 active street frontages).
Gradient	Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the park. To facilitate wheelchair access to parks, areas with a grade of 1:14 will also be provided, where possible. Variable topography is satisfactory for the remaining area.
Flood Immunity	At least 25% of total area to be above 1:50 year flood level with main activity areas above 1:100 year flood level.
Potential Embellishments Essential elements to be confirmed with Council Officers upon assessment and review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of playground activity nodes (6-8): typical activity nodes include (in addition to that of local) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ free water play</li> <li>○ multipurpose Court with Hit Up Wall</li> <li>○ skate/bmx park</li> <li>○ learn-to-cycle facility</li> <li>○ outdoor exercise stations</li> <li>○ play equipment catering for the 0-12 age bracket. Teens to also be catered for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreed safety surfacing</li> <li>▪ all-abilities play</li> <li>▪ climbing structures</li> <li>▪ Medium-sized play unit containing a slide, climbing apparatus, swing set, spring rockers and slide.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• fencing - bollards or log and rail to prohibit car access</li> <li>• synthetic shade clustered shade trees near activity nodes (shade coverage at maturity)</li> <li>• turf and irrigated gardens</li> <li>• lighting</li> <li>• pathways</li> <li>• bicycle parking</li> <li>• internal pathways</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• drinking fountain</li> <li>• bench seats</li> <li>• picnic/gathering shelter</li> <li>• picnic seating and table</li> <li>• bins</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• car park (10-20 spaces)</li> <li>• Fenced off leash dog exercise area</li> <li>• Electric Barbeques</li> <li>• Toilet facilities</li> <li>• RV facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Park</b>	
Size	Minimum 5 ha of useable land
Catchment	Within 15km of most residents
Shape	The preferred shape is square to rectangular with side no greater than 2:1.
Road Frontage	Between 30-50% of the perimeter to have direct road frontage (preferably more than one road frontage).
Gradient	Average grade of 1:20 for main use areas, 1:50 for kick about areas and variable topography for the remainder.
Flood Immunity	At least 50% of total area to be above 1:50 year flood level with main activity areas above 1:100 year flood level.
<b>Potential Embellishments</b> Essential elements to be confirmed with Council Officers upon assessment and review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of activity nodes (10-12) typical activity nodes include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ large skate/bmx facility</li> <li>○ multi-purpose court with Hit Up Wall</li> <li>○ variety of pathways and circuits</li> <li>○ amphitheater</li> <li>○ lookouts</li> <li>○ Outdoor fitness stations</li> <li>○ play equipment catering to all ages                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreed safety surfacing</li> <li>▪ all-abilities play</li> <li>▪ large climbing structure</li> <li>▪ flying fox</li> <li>▪ obstacle course</li> <li>▪ sensory play</li> <li>▪ water play</li> <li>▪ Large play centre incorporating slide, climbing apparatus, swing set, spring rockers and vertical spinners</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• fencing - bollards or log and rail to prohibit car access</li> <li>• synthetic shade clustered shade trees near activity nodes (shade coverage at maturity)</li> <li>• turf</li> <li>• lighting</li> <li>• pathways</li> <li>• bicycle parking</li> <li>• irrigation (gardens and turf)</li> <li>• internal pathways</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• drinking fountain</li> <li>• bench seats</li> <li>• picnic/gathering shelter s</li> <li>• picnic seating and tables</li> <li>• electric barbecues</li> <li>• bins</li> <li>• car park (50-100 spaces)</li> <li>• internal road</li> <li>• toilet block</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artwork</li> <li>• Fenced off leash dog exercise area</li> <li>• RV Facilities</li> <li>• Stage</li> </ul>
<b>District Sportsground</b>	
Size	Minimum 6ha of useable land
Catchment	Within 5km of most residents
Shape	To maximise the area available for playing fields, a square or rectangular shape is considered most efficient. Fields and courts to be as close to north/south configuration as possible (+/- 5 degrees)
Road Frontage	Between 25- 50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage (preferably more than one street frontage)
Gradient	Maximum grade of 1:100 for all playing surfaces
Flood Immunity	At least 90% of land above 1:20 year flood level, with fields and courts above 1:50 year flood level and facilities to be above 1:100 year flood level
Potential Embellishments Essential elements to be confirmed with Council Officers upon assessment and review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity Building</li> <li>• field lighting (competition)</li> <li>• playing fields and courts (including multipurpose with hit up wall)</li> <li>• Outdoor fitness equipment</li> <li>• Subsurface field drainage</li> <li>• irrigation</li> <li>• Field fencing</li> <li>• water bubbler/tap</li> <li>• bench seats/tiered shaded spectator areas</li> <li>• car park</li> <li>• shade clustered trees near spectator areas</li> <li>• bins</li> <li>• bicycle parking</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• internal pathways</li> <li>• playground</li> <li>• skatepark/BMX facility</li> <li>• Picnic/gathering shelter and seating</li> <li>• Public toilets</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Sportsground</b>	
Size	Minimum 10ha of useable land
Catchment	Within 15km of most residents
Shape	To maximise the area available for playing fields, a square or rectangular shape is considered most efficient. Fields and courts to be as close to north/south configuration as possible
Road Frontage	50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage (preferably 2 active street frontages)
Gradient	Laser levelling to a maximum gradient of 1:100 for playing surfaces
Flood Immunity	At least 90% of land above 1:20 year flood level, with fields and courts above 1:50 year flood level and facilities to be above 1:100 year flood level
Essential Embellishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity building</li> <li>• field lighting (competition)</li> <li>• playing fields and courts (including multipurpose courts and hit up wall)</li> <li>• Outdoor fitness equipment</li> <li>• irrigation</li> <li>• grandstand/tiered seating and other shaded spectator areas</li> <li>• subsurface field drainage</li> <li>• internal pathways/connections</li> </ul>

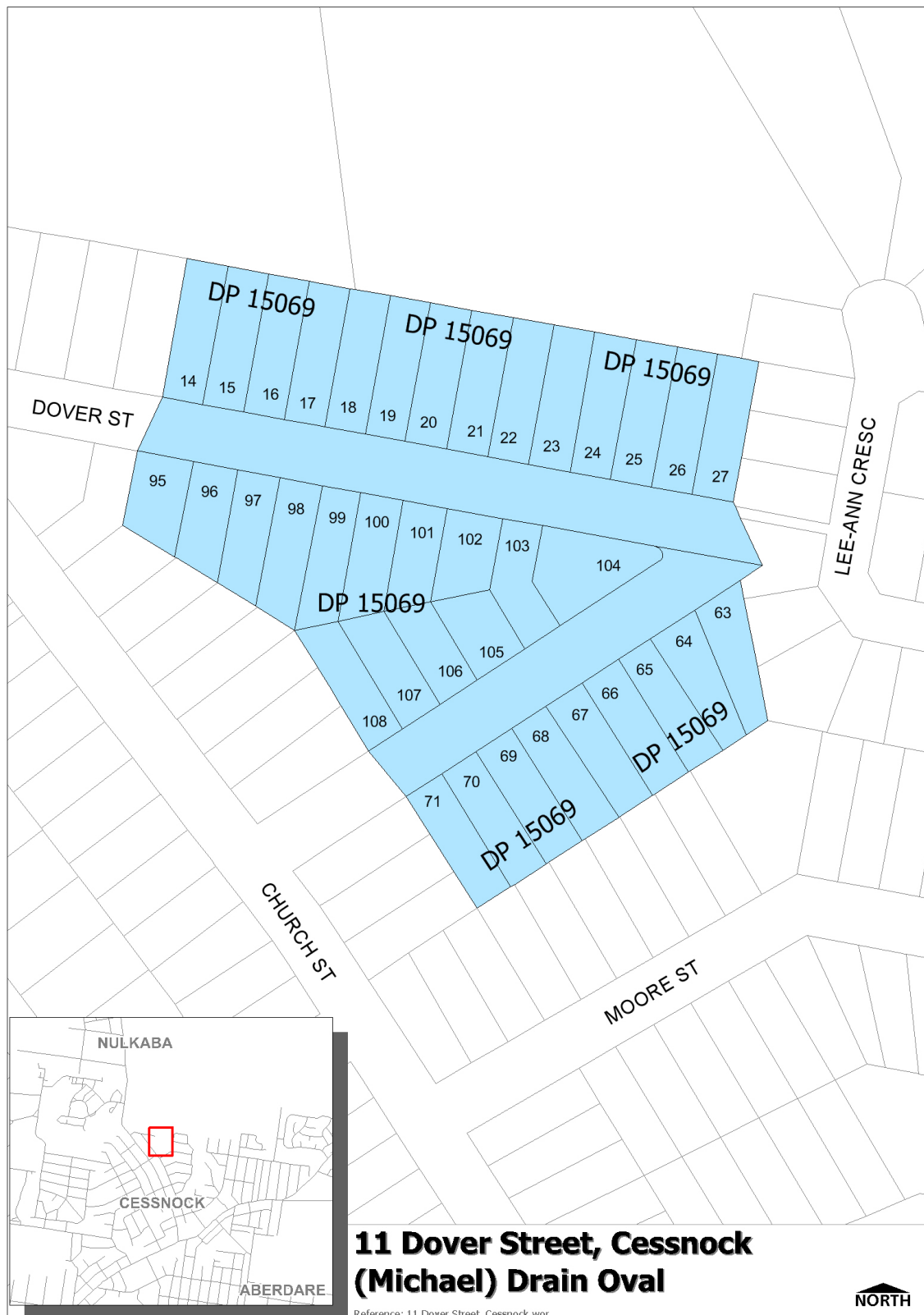
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• field fencing</li> <li>• signage (including entry statement and directional)</li> <li>• security lighting</li> <li>• water bubblers/taps</li> <li>• bench seats</li> <li>• picnic/gathering shelter and seating</li> <li>• bins</li> <li>• bicycle parking</li> <li>• large car park/s (100-150 spaces)</li> <li>• internal road</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Skatepark/BMX Facility</li> <li>• Public toilets</li> <li>• RV Facilities</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
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## Appendix D – Site Maps

(Surplus Land)





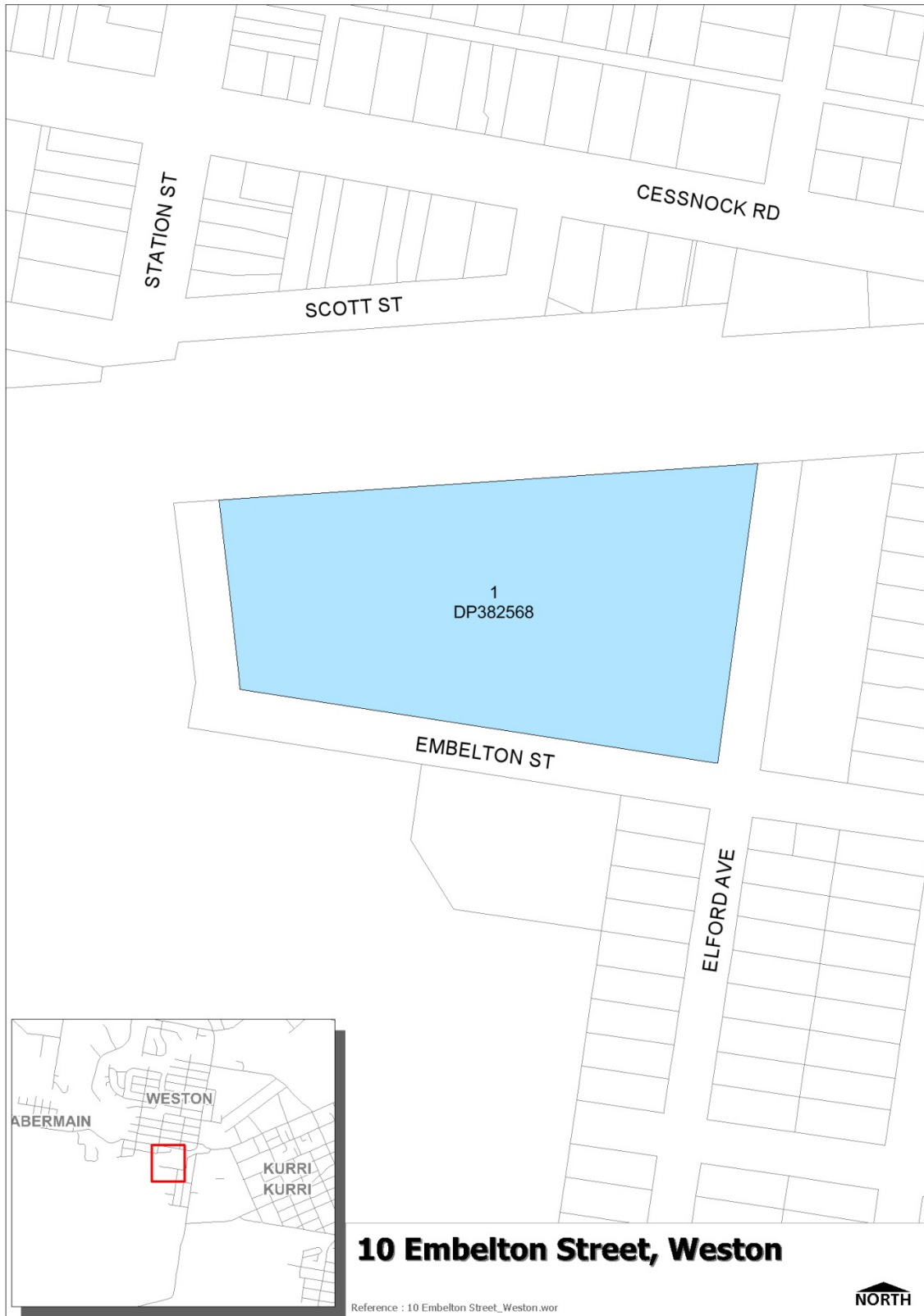








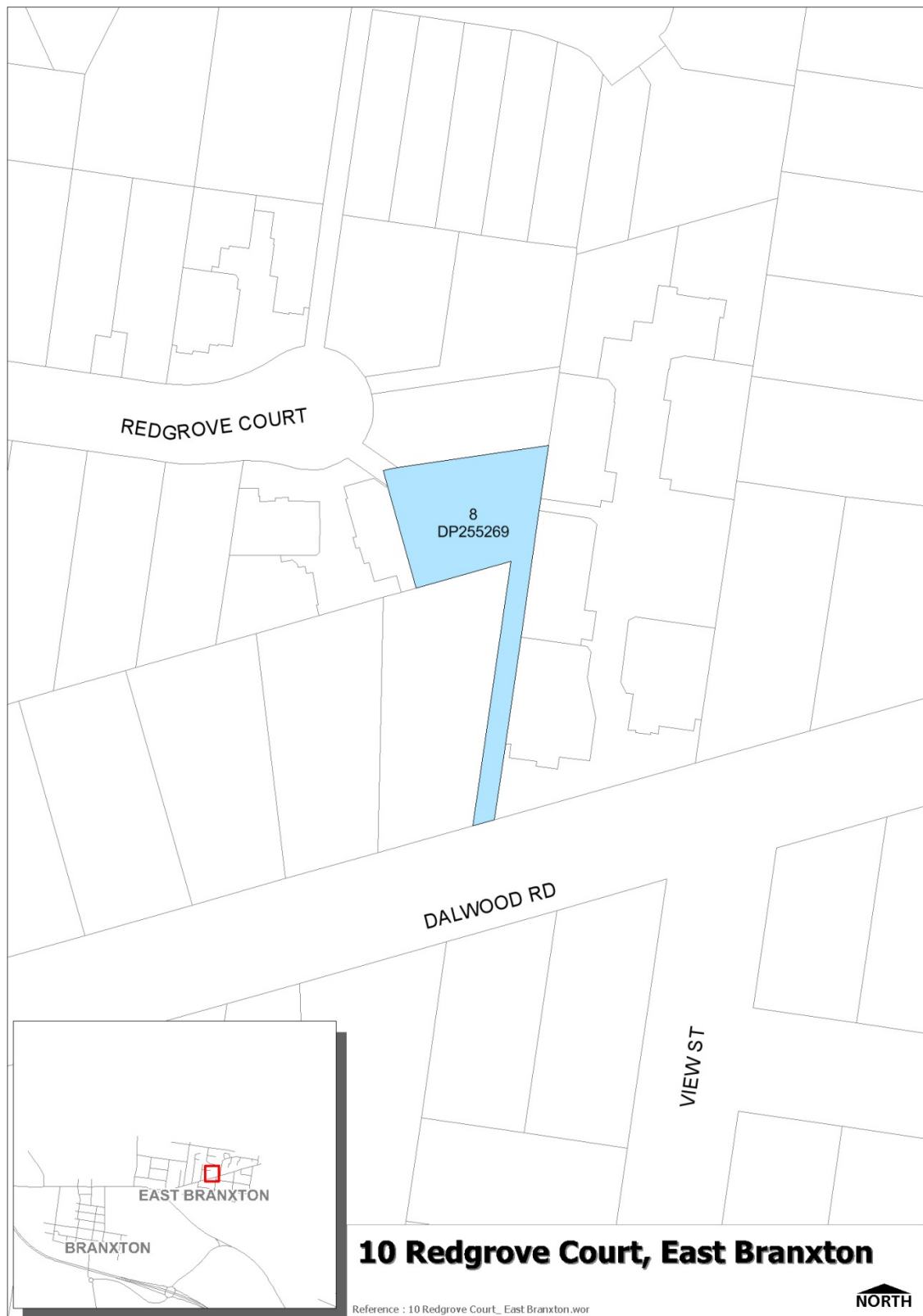


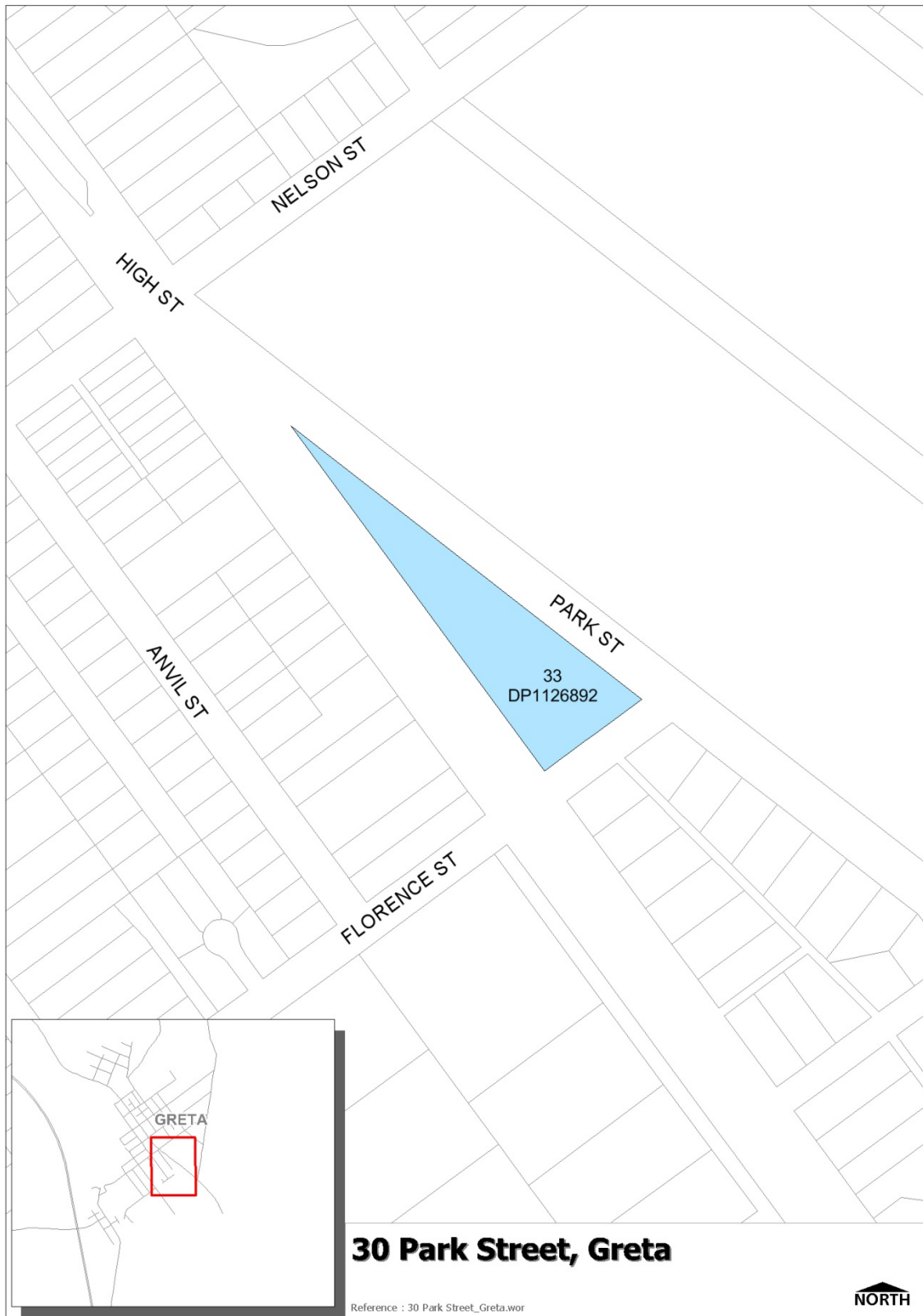












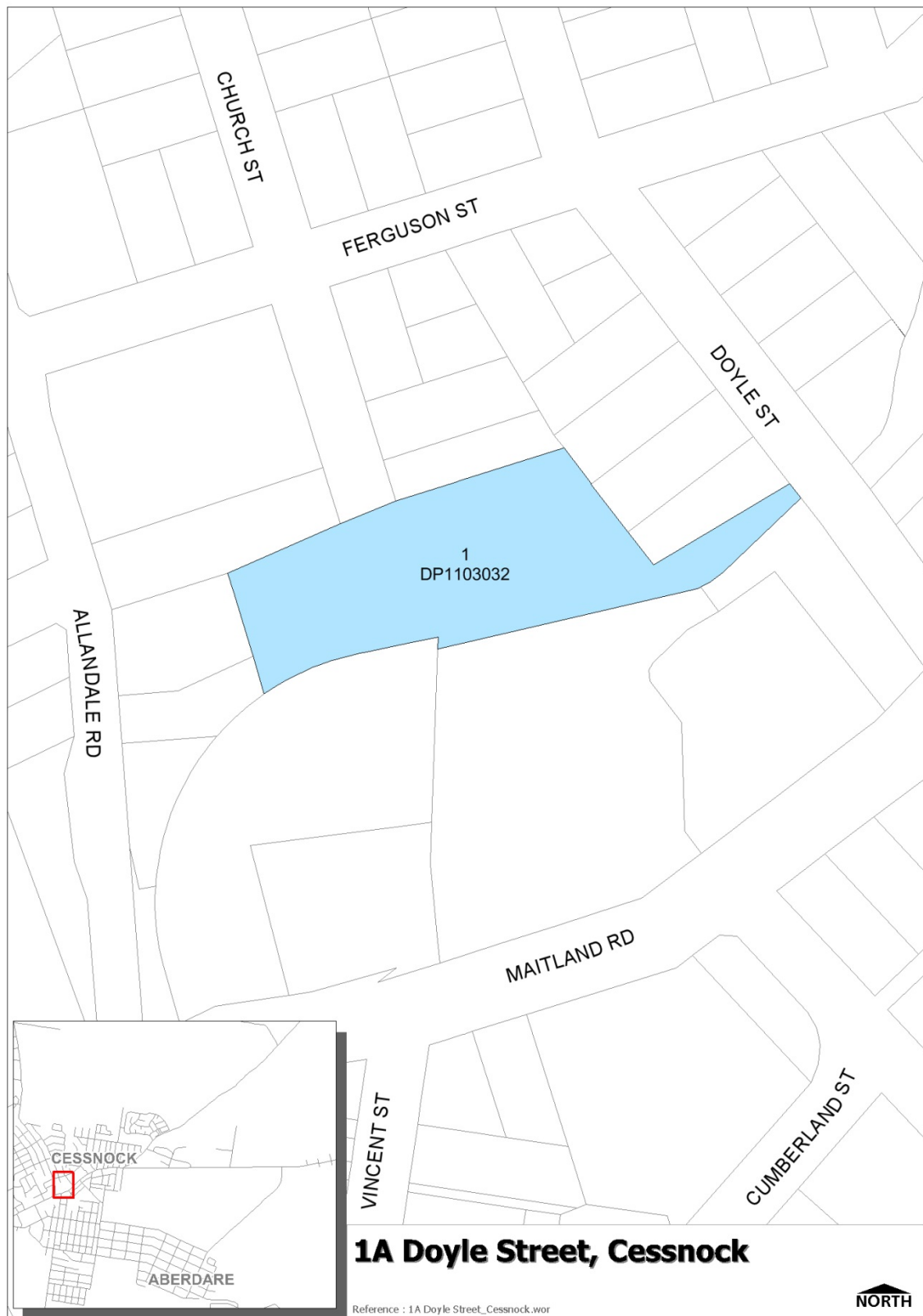
Note



## APPENDIX D – Site Maps

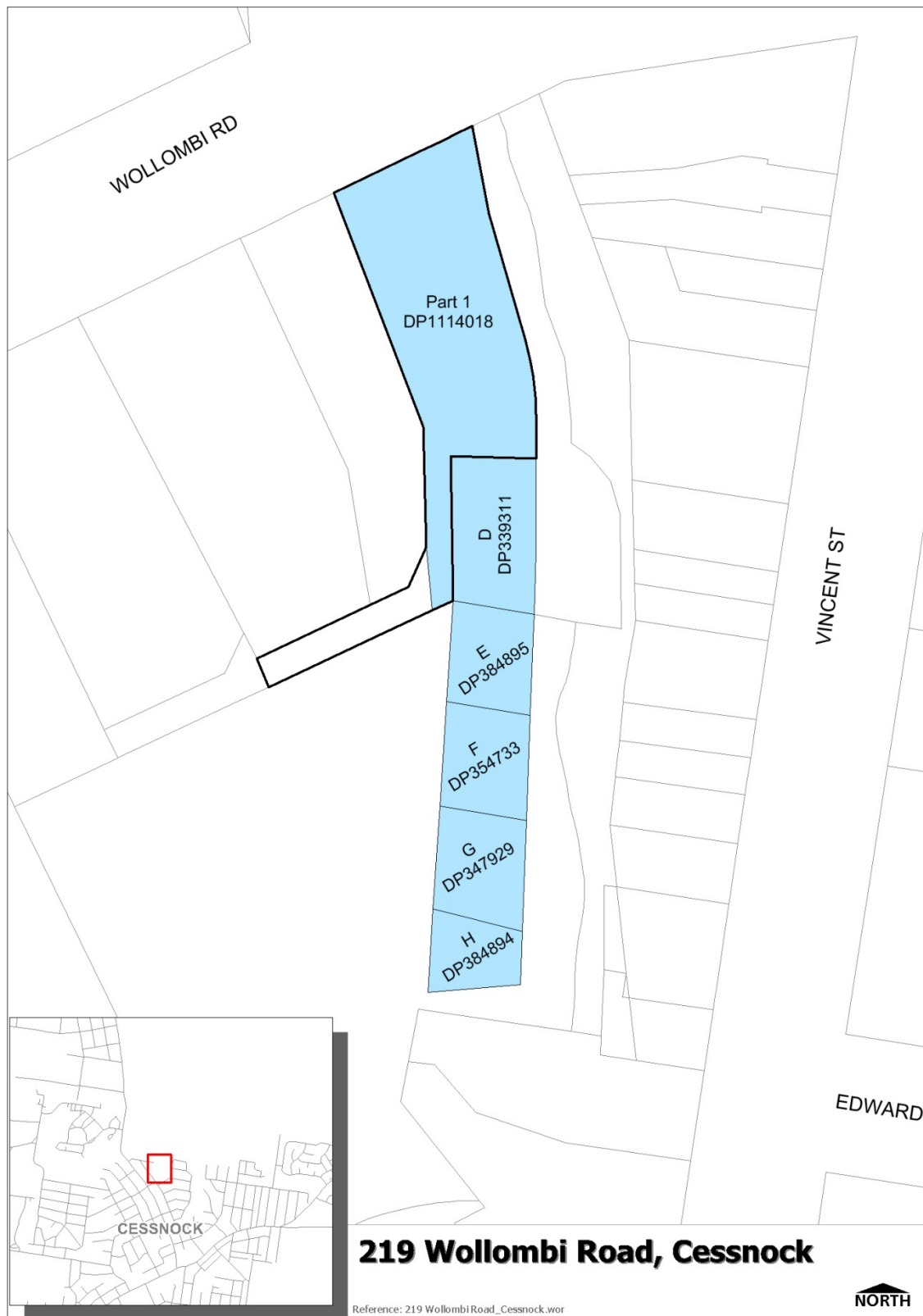
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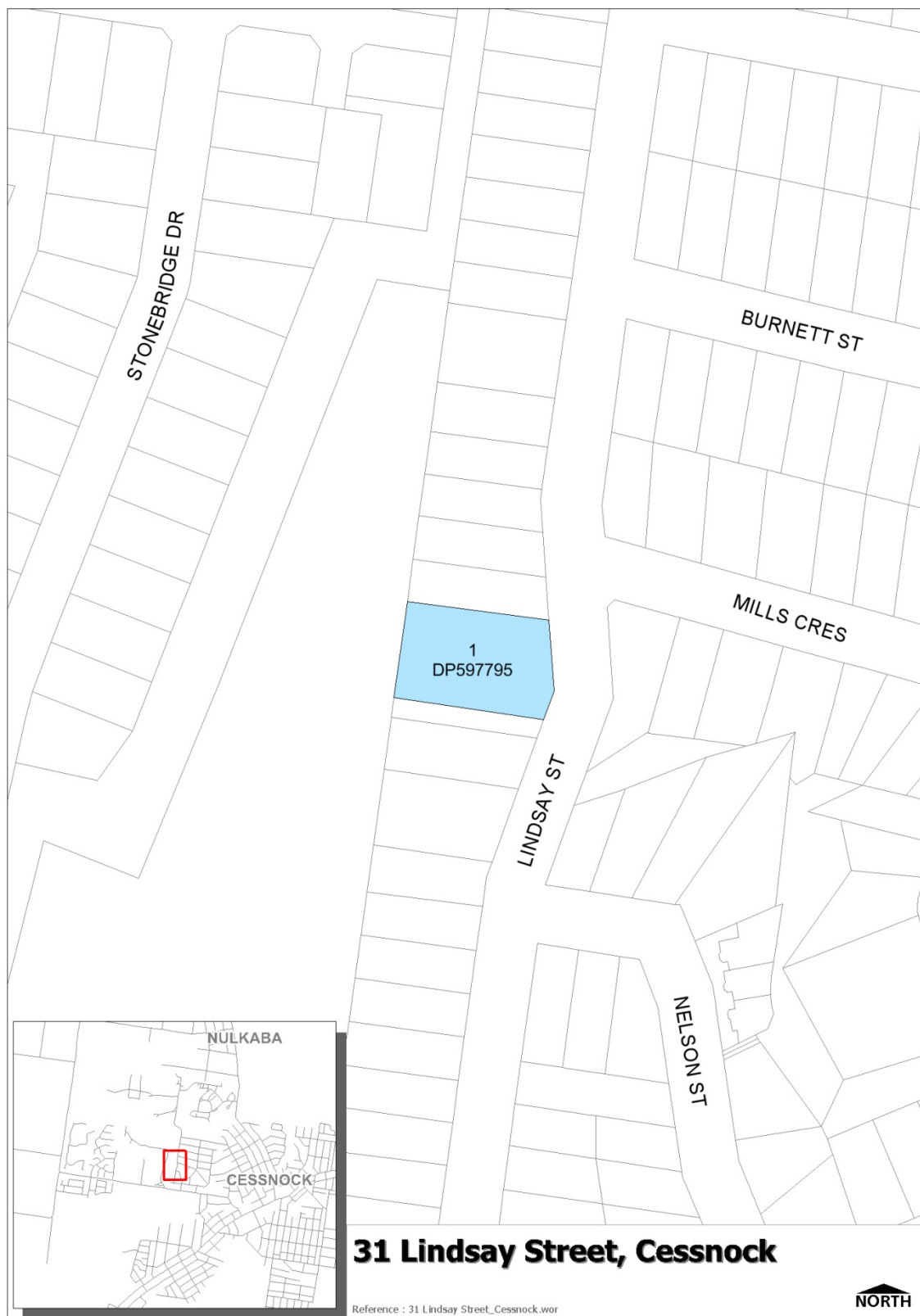






## APPENDIX D – Site Maps

(Land Development)









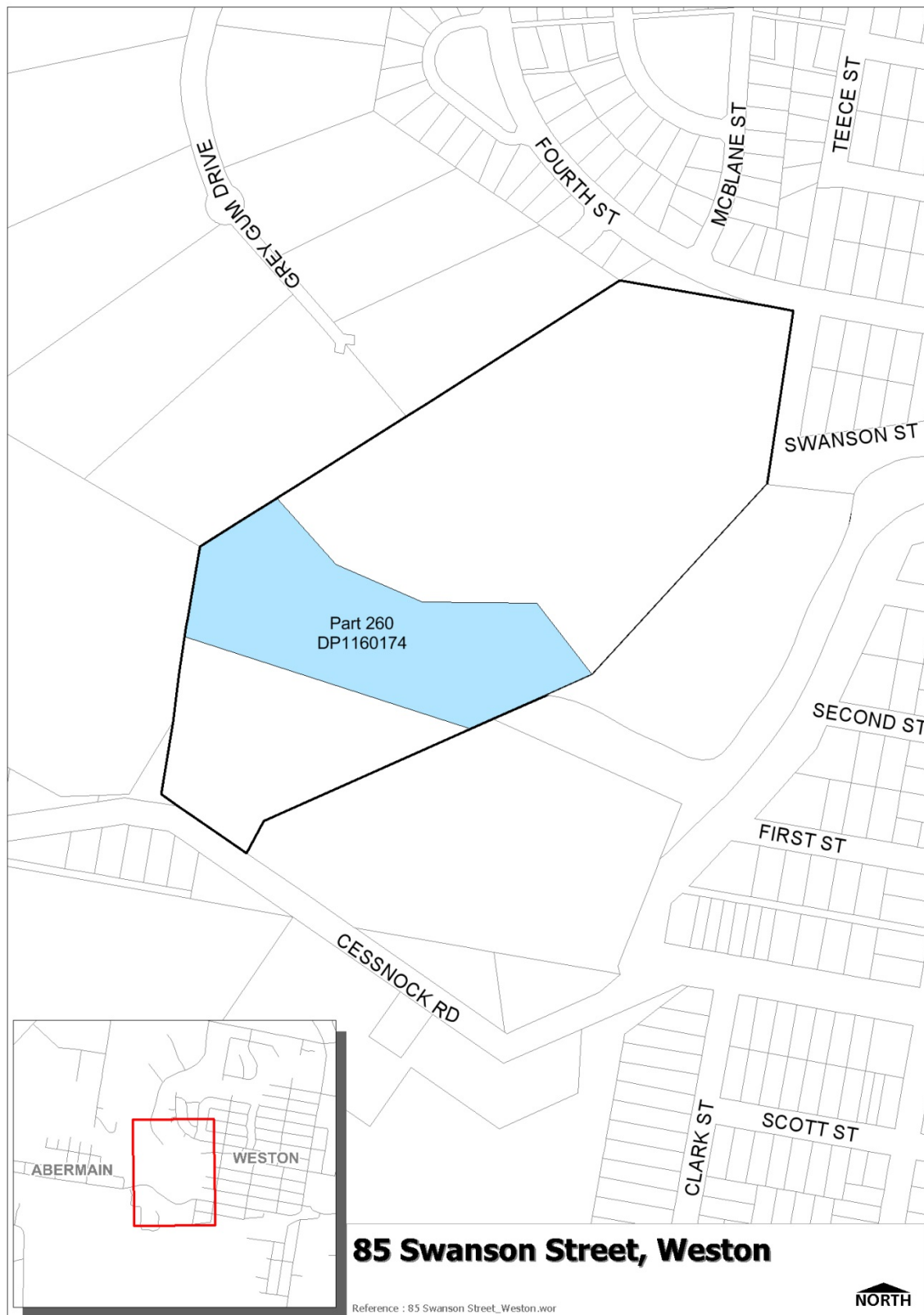




















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