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Woollahra Municipal Council

Recreation Strategy

Adopted by Council 24 July 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

recreation
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1 Introduction

Public open space enhances the character of the Woollahra local government area's (LGA) neighbourhoods, supports health and active lifestyles and brings communities together. The role and value of open space is becoming increasingly important as living patterns within Woollahra LGA continue to change. According to 2021 ABS data, just under 80% of Woollahra residents live in medium to high density dwellings (including terraces and townhouses), with minimal or no communal outdoor space. As such, greater emphasis is placed on Woollahra's public open space network to provide and support a diverse range of areas for recreation, sport and social activity, as well as establishing physical links that support social networks and create a sense of community.

Woollahra's highly established neighbourhoods allow limited opportunities to increase the quantity of public open space within the LGA for a number reasons, including: high land values which make the acquisition of land for open space cost prohibitive; relatively low revenue from development contributions, which is a key source of funding for land acquisitions in other council areas; and the relatively steep topography of the land, making land very expensive to embellish for sizeable, good quality, useful open space. As a result of these significant constraints to the creation of new open space, Council's focus should be on enhancing the quality and usability of the existing open space network.

Like many other Sydney Councils the use of public open space in Woollahra is increasing. The area's high to medium density living environment, combined with the picturesque foreshore parks attracting visitors from outside the LGA, has created high demand for quality open space and competing interests.

Woollahra Council has sought to develop the Recreation Strategy to provide strategic directions and recommendations to develop and manage a quality open space network with facilities that support the Woollahra community's recreation and sporting preferences.

LOCAL PROSPERITY

Open space and recreation facilities often attract visitors from outside the LGA, whether it is for sporting purposes, passive recreation, visiting family or friends and site seeing, often supporting many of the local businesses (e.g. coffee purchase).

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Open space and recreation facilities create spaces for people to come together and feel a sense of belonging within the community. They also provide places where people have access to a range of spaces, facilities and programs.

QUALITY SPACES AND PLACES

Well planned, maintained and accessible open space and recreation facilities create a safe and attractive place to live and enhance quality of life. A well designed footpath network encourages active transport.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Sporting organisations, recreation clubs and community groups form partnerships with Council to ensure their voice is heard and community needs are being considered and met.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Open space can help to protect and conserve the natural environment and preserve vegetation and wildlife habitats. Well designed and connected footpaths/cycle ways encourage active transport options, reducing congestion and pollution.

Fig. 01 The role of open space and recreation

The Strategy focuses on Council owned and/or managed public open space. However, natural areas and waterways have been considered for their role in providing for water-based recreation and tourism. Part of the Greater Sydney Commission's Eastern City District (the Eastern City District), it is not uncommon for Woollahra residents to use the open space network within neighbouring LGAs. The Strategy has taken into account key public open space destinations in nearby LGAs, given the pressure they take off Council for provision.

To be read as a support document of the Council's Community Strategic Plan, Woollahra 2032 and in conjunction with the Woollahra Play Space Strategy 2023 (Woollahra Play), the Strategy will assist Council to prepare future budgets, quickly evaluate community requests, and ensure shovel-ready projects for when funding becomes available. Additionally, it will provide data and direction to ensure that Council is making informed decisions with a strategic focus, rather than ad-hoc reactions to immediate issues.

Strategy inputs and outputs

The development of the Strategy has been informed by relevant local, and district, strategies and plans and an effective community engagement process to ensure a current assessment of Woollahra residents' priorities and needs. Workshops were held with both Councillors, Council staff and local sporting organisations early in the process to provide valuable input, and while the engagement process was significantly hampered following these workshops by the COVID-19 restrictions, interviews were held with key stakeholders and surveys (on-line and pop-up at the Council library) were undertaken with both the community and local sporting organisations. The responses to these surveys have been incorporated throughout the Strategy with the club and community responses, and the responses to a pop-up survey undertaken in the library included in the appendices.

While engagement with the community was restricted due to COVID-19 restrictions, in the case of strategies such as this that provide high-level directions for Council, the point where the most meaningful engagement with the community occurs once the Draft Strategy is displayed for comment. Feedback received from this public display period was carefully assessed by the project team and incorporated where appropriate into the Final Strategy.

As mentioned, the Strategy has been developed over 2020-21, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, the negative and positive impacts of this have been considered. The most significant outcome of the pandemic in relation to the Strategy is the public's heightened appreciation of parks and open space. This increased appreciation will bring with it increased use of, and expectations for, quality open spaces throughout the LGA - resulting in additional demands on Council resources.

The information gathered and generated throughout this process provides the various outputs required to produce a robust quality Strategy.

Fig. 02 Strategy context

2 Background

Defining key terms

To assist in the interpretation of the Strategy, a number of key terms are detailed in the tables below. For ease of reference, the terms described below have been split between activities (what is undertaken) and spaces (where activities are undertaken).

Table 1: Key terms

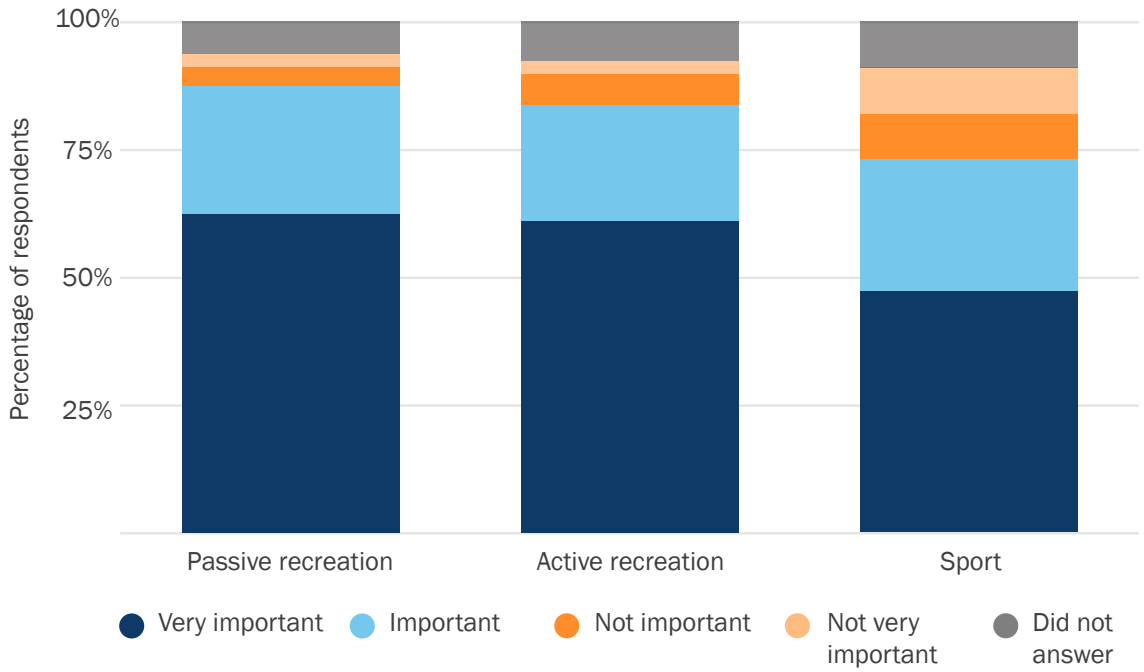
Activities	
Sport	A range of structured activities capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or skill, that is competitive or training for competition. Sport is considered to be an 'organised' activity
Passive recreation	A range of unstructured activities and social interactions undertaken for enjoyment, relaxation, and mental health, with limited physical exertion. Passive recreation can be undertaken at all forms of open space and may include the use of playgrounds, reading, meditation and relaxing in nature
Active recreation	Refers to recreation activities that require physical exertion but are unstructured, such as park run events, skateboarding, casual basketball and charity bike rides
Outdoor recreation	A range of unstructured activities undertaken in more natural settings that are not reliant on built infrastructure. Typical activities include mountain biking, bushwalking, fishing and kayaking/canoeing

Spaces	
Open space	Council-managed land and water bodies that are broadly available for public recreation, pedestrian and cycle movement, sport or for nature conservation purposes. Open space is the over-arching term for active parks and passive parks
Active open space (sports parks)	Designed to primarily support a range of formal structured sport activities such as competitions, physical skill development and training. These parks are designed to accommodate the playing surface and infrastructure requirements of specific sports. Free, unrestricted access to the community is provided at times when formal sporting activities are not being conducted
Passive open space	Settings for informal recreation and social activities that enhance physical and mental health through activity that provides relaxation, amusement or stimulation. Passive parks provide a range of embellishments such as play equipment, kick-about areas, picnic facilities, formalised walks, gardens, landscaped areas, access to water bodies and car parking

Benefits of physical activity

Sport and recreation play an important role in increasing the physical activity levels of residents. Unfortunately, as people continue to lead increasingly busy lives, the time for, or priority of, physical activity and opportunity to enjoy the outdoor spaces is declining. Despite this decline, over 80% of respondents to Council's community survey said that it is either very important or important for residents to have access to passive and active recreation activities and sporting opportunities.

Fig. 03 Importance to the community



From walking the dog, picnicking in the park, swimming in the ocean or visiting parks, being physically active enriches lives. Regular physical activity is one of the most important influences on personal health.

Lyne Park foreshore

Rushcutters Bay Park

Health Benefits

51% of respondents to Council's latest Community Capacity Survey (2017) rated their health as "excellent" and 38% as "good". Research demonstrates that participating in regular moderate-to-vigorous physical activity provides many health benefits, physical and mental, that can be seen across all ages groups.

Physical health

Physical activity is an important factor in preventing or reducing overweight and obesity, a leading contributor to disease in Australia. Regular, on-going participation in sport and/or active recreation activities lowers the risk of all-cause mortality, cardiovascular disease and developing and/or slowing the progression of a wide range of chronic diseases.

Children and adolescents who are physically active, be it through sport, recreation activities or play, have higher bone mass, improved bone structure and greater bone strength. In addition, they often have higher levels of cardio-respiratory fitness, stronger muscles and lower body fat.

Active middle aged and older adults have a lower risk of functional limitations than inactive adults. Regular physical activity also helps those with osteoarthritis or other rheumatic conditions affecting the joints.

Mental health

It is estimated that almost half of all Australians aged 16 to 85 will experience mental illness at some point in their life[1]. Regular participation in physical activity has significant positive effects in preventing or reducing the risk of depression and suicide, as well as neurodegenerative disorders. Decreased levels of mental stress, life dissatisfaction and anxiety are also associated with increased levels of physical activity.

In addition to improving quality of life, regular physical activity improves sleep, aspects of cognitive function, vocabulary learning, memory and creative thinking.

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2021, (online) https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/mental-health-services/mental-health-services-in-australia/report-contents/summary/prevalence-and-policies

Social benefits

Building communities

Many sport and active recreation clubs/groups view their members as 'family' or a 'community' within the broader community. The associational nature of these activities and clubs can be helpful in facilitating social introductions, providing opportunity for social networking and connections, increasing levels of generalised trust, reducing social isolation and, hence, have potential to support the development of social capital, particularly at the neighbourhood level.

Club leaders, often volunteers, help create connections on behalf of their club/group with the broader community. These connections not only provide clubs/groups with access to knowledge, funding, expertise, resources, and facilities; but provide significant benefits to social and business connections within the Woollahra community.

McKell Park

Economic benefits

Physical inactivity is a very serious health threat impacting the Australian economy. However, the infrastructure that supports sport and active recreation activities has significant economic value to the Australian and Woollahra communities.

Workforce and productivity

It is estimated that the economic value of sports infrastructure to the Australian community is approximately $6.3 billion:

- $5.5billion for increased economic activity associated with the construction, maintenance and operation of community sport infrastructure
- $0.8 billion in increased productivity due to people being physically active as a result of such infrastructure.

It is important to note that these figures do not take into account the infrastructure and facilities that support active recreation.

Volunteers are a crucial element in the delivery of sport and active recreation activities to participants. It is estimated that the annual monetary value of volunteers to the Australian economy is $1.3 billion (important to note that this value does not include those who volunteer in active recreation activities).

Tourism

Sports tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the tourism industry. Active recreation events continue to increase in popularity, with economic impact studies estimating the City2Surf generates $41 million for the NSW economy, of which approximately $13.2 million is spent within the City of Sydney. The Gold Coast Marathon adds an estimated $28.5 million into the local economy and Victoria estimates that active recreation tourism contributes $3.8 billion annually to their economy.

Events held at major and regional sports facilities, such as AFL and cricket tests, also deliver benefits to local communities, from the tourism expenditure associated with the visits to local celebrations.

Environmental benefits

Built environment

Sport and active recreation activities are often conducted on Council open space. Understanding their important role in enhancing opportunities for physical activity and social capital, councils often invest into well-designed sport and recreation parks. Councils are learning that high quality recreation parks with a variety of features such as walking/cycling trails, water features and playgrounds, increase physical activity rates. Rushcutters Bay Park is an example of an existing space that could accommodate such a range of features. Sports parks are being developed with shared facilities and quality ancillary facilities that not only encourage participation but provide comfort for spectators. The development of new facilities, or the redevelopment of existing facilities, often results in an amenity uplift to the environment in which it is situated creating a quality open space network for the Woollahra community. Sports infrastructure also has a number of community uses outside of sport, such as events, training programs and health clinics.

Natural environment

Several of Woollahra's open spaces, such as Nielsen Park (owned and managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service), Cooper Park, Trumper Park, Gap Park and Parsley Bay Reserve also have environmental values. Parcels of open space may act as corridor linkages between larger areas of open space with environmental value and provide habitats that support ecosystems. Even highly embellished parks can be host to a range of mammals, insects, birds and aquatic plant life.

Footpaths, cycle ways and walking paths/trails play an important role within the LGA, providing safe off-road access to community facilities, services, public transport and open space via active transport. Walking and cycling not only increase physical activity levels, but replace car trips, creating additional environmental benefits such as reduced traffic congestion, reduced air pollution, reduced greenhouse emissions and reduced noise pollution.

Open space and COVID19

The 2020 COVID19 pandemic has had a massive impact on the lives of all Australians. Although much of this impact has been negative, there have been positive outcomes, one of which is the increased appreciation of parks and open space for recreation purposes.

While much of the evidence for this increased appreciation and use is anecdotal at this stage, the following summarises some of the publications that have been released to date.

ABC News article

(Source: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-28/sydneys-green-space-use-booms-during-covid-19/12400104)

This article outlined the main outcomes of the May 2020 "Public Space During COVID-19" survey undertaken by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, completed by over 750 people. The results demonstrated how Sydneysiders' use of green spaces increased dramatically during the Coronavirus pandemic as people were forced out of gyms and public swimming pools to exercise.

It was found that double the number of people used the 60 kilometres of tracks and trails in Western Sydney Parklands, while the Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan recorded more than half a million visitors during COVID-19 restrictions.

Most people who completed the survey said local parks had been "especially useful" or "appreciated more" during COVID-19 restrictions, and almost all said they used public spaces for walking, running, fitness exercise and cycling.

There was also a big increase in people viewing digital maps of walking, running and cycling routes in the Western Sydney Parklands and Parramatta Park.

It was noted that spending time in green spaces offers much-needed solace and is proven to reduce feelings of anxiety, lower blood pressure and create a sense of wellbeing, which is especially appreciated as a result of the pandemic

Grillex* newsletter

(Source: https://www.grillex.com.au/news/general/how-parks-have-helped-australians-navigate-the-covid-19-crisis-27-jul-2020)
*a private supplier of a range of open space infrastructure

This newsletter noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis that has confined people to their homes, and taken a toll on Australian health and wellbeing. As the pandemic threat still hovers over Australian communities, it is now more important than ever to recognise the benefits of Australian parks in a world impacted by COVID-19 and to take steps to ensure these spaces are safe - both during and after the crisis.

The mental health impact of COVID-19

With lockdowns enforced, it is not surprising that Australian health and wellbeing has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Being unable to venture outdoors except for essential errands or exercise has resulted in community disengagement and created or enhanced feelings of isolation, loneliness and anxiety, according to the Australian Government.

Mental health impacts have been on such a rise that the Australian Government channelled an additional $500 million into mental health services as of May 2020.

The benefits of Australian parks on health and wellbeing

The great outdoors is a key feature of Australian culture. With our beautiful skies, warm weather, and vast array of flora and fauna, it is unsurprising that Australians feel connected to the natural world.

A study by the Australian Government in 2010, dubbed Healthy Parks Healthy People, concluded that greenspaces and parks have incredible benefits for Australian people. Being exposed to parks can reduce crime and stress, boost immune systems, nurture psychological wellbeing and enhance productivity, and are essential for human development, health and wellbeing.

Greenspaces thriving in a pandemic

As gyms and public pools closed, Australian's turned to parks for exercise and to go somewhere that wasn't their own backyard or balcony.

The increased visits to parks in Sydney and across Australia during this period demonstrate why Australians should value our public spaces and work together to enhance them.

The article noted that the available statistics and the positive public response to Australian parks demonstrate just how important it is for governments to prioritise the funding, develop and consistently improve parks, and to make steps to create greenspaces that are optimised for a world impacted by COVID-19.

Summary

The positives to take out of the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions on 'normal' life include:

- a greater appreciation of parks and open space by the majority of the population
- anticipated higher use of these spaces to continue afterwards, resulting in a more active and healthy population in general
- greater emphasis on developing/improving such spaces in government budgetary processes, hopefully including grant funding from State and Federal Governments for local councils.

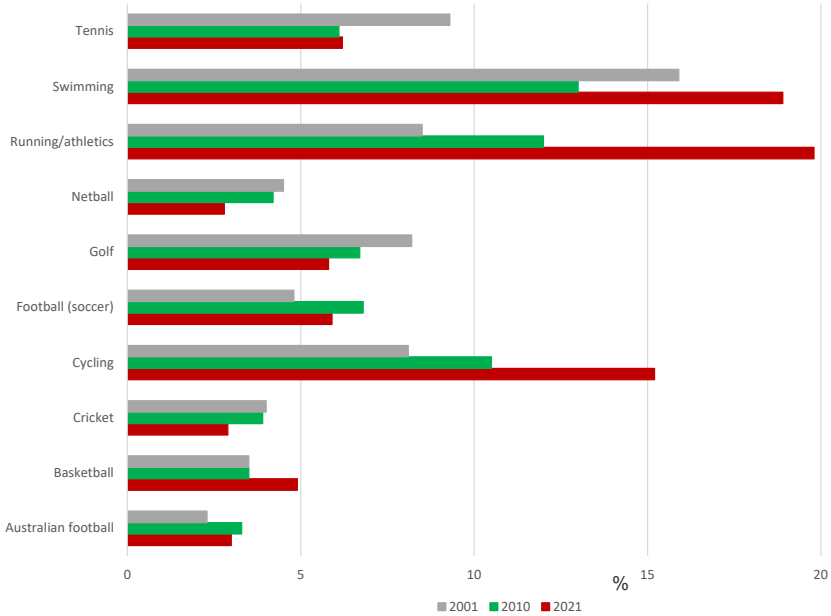
Yarranabbe Park

Participation trends

At a national-level, the reduction in available leisure time has resulted in a trend for adults to move away from organised sport toward physical activity and non-organised (social) sport. The ABS conducted a nation-wide Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation Survey for adults over 15 years of age in 2005/06, 2009/10 and 2011/12. The survey showed that participation in organised sport reduced slightly while non-organised sport reported increases. This trend has continued to the present and is expected to continue into the future.The data utilised to provide the summaries in this section was sourced from AusPlay, a large scale national population tracking survey funded and led by Sport Australia (https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results). This data was last updated in October 2021.

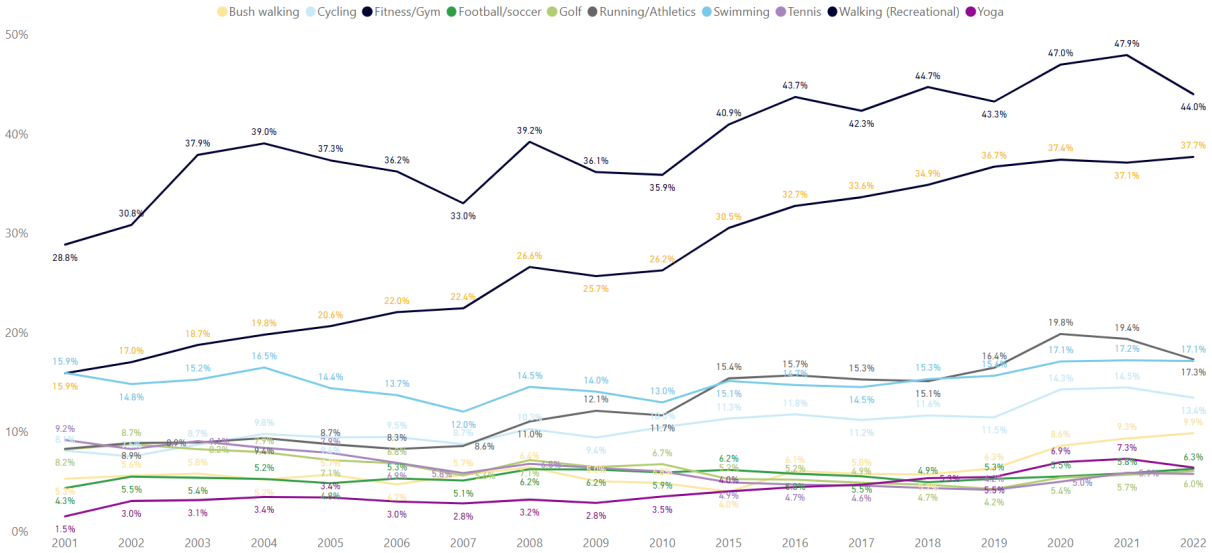
National - Sports

The graph below shows a summary of the national participation rate (% of National population) trends for the 10 most popular sports across Australia from 2001 to 2021. It should be noted that the activities demonstrating the most significant growth (swimming, running/athletics and cycling) include people undertaking the activity in an informal and individual manner. It is further noted that gymnastics has a national participation rate for adults of 0.4% and 9.5% for children 0-14 years.



National - Sport & Non Sports Recreational Activities

Top 10 activities over the years: participation in non-sport recreational activities such as walking and fitness.gym have inccreased most. Individual sport activites such as running/jogging and cycling have also seen upticks.



General trends in open space

Open space plays multiple roles in establishing and maintaining a community's quality of life; ensuring the health of residents and contributing to the economic and environmental wellbeing of a community.

A quality open space is one where:

- multiple activities are undertaken
- celebrations are held
- family and friends socialise
- a variety of play experiences are offered
- different cultures and age groups mix
- economic exchanges occur (e.g. markets)
- passive recreation (or active transport) is the easiest form of transportation.

In general terms, there are four design principles that make a high quality open space:

Accessibility and linkage

People will frequent open spaces that are easy to see and easy to get to and from. Walking has become the preferred physical activity for people and, therefore, path systems that provide safe and convenient connectivity between and within places are crucial.

A successful open space has good connections, both visual and physical, to its surroundings. The path system should be easy to understand for a first-time user.

Nodes (clustered activity areas) should also be well connected within the actual open space itself. Internal paths should cater for all people, including those with limited abilities.

Use and activities

Activities are the basic building blocks of an open space. Providing activities within open space gives people of various ages and abilities a reason to come to the park - and to return. These activities should provide for a range of demographics and users wishing to relax, watch, meet people, gather or be active. The open space design should be flexible enough to allow for a wide range of activities.

Good open space has a mix of recreation nodes that comprise clustered activities, such as picnic and play areas. Basic elements such as shade, pathways, adequately spaced benches, water bubblers, bike racks and signage make the space more comfortable for, and attractive to, users.

Comfort, safety and image

A safe, comfortable and attractive open space is a successful park. They have adequate provision and a good range of embellishments (including adequate seating in convenient locations) and a positive image.

People are drawn in by what they can see from the street, such as activity nodes, shade and greenery. Some of these "drawcards" should be highly visible and within close proximity to the adjoining street network. They are safe places that are clean, well maintained, tidy and free of litter and graffiti.

Lighting in certain areas within a park (pathways, amenities and shelters) also creates a sense of safety.

Sociability

If a community or group feels that they connect with or belong to an open space, they will invariably look after and utilise it. As such, open space should provide facilities that encourage social interaction with friends, family or even providing an opportunity to interact with new people.

Activities such as skate parks, pump tracks, dog parks and gathering areas are examples of spaces that provide good places for communities.

Parks should be programmed to encourage community engagement and events. This can include exercise or activity programs (e.g. boot camps), events (e.g. community festivals) and other regular activities such as markets.

General trends in physical activity

Being active in the outdoors has always been a big part of the Australian culture. In an area where the climate allows residents (and visitors) to enjoy participation in sport and recreation activities all year-round, understanding what type of sport and recreation activities people want to participate in is important as Council looks to develop facilities to support and encourage people to live healthy lifestyles.

Changing population

It is well known that the Australian population is ageing. An ageing population will have different sport, fitness and recreation needs, behaviours and preferences than young adults and families.

Engagement in low impact and non-competitive, playful sport and active recreation can enhance the quality of life of ageing adults. Modified sports, such as walking netball, have had enormous success amongst the older community, particularly women, with walking netball programs being rolled out across the country as participation numbers and demand increase.

Facilities that can provide opportunities for an ageing population (especially in areas where older residents live in medium-high density housing) include improved walking paths with seating (to provide rest stops), outdoor fitness stations and the addition of information signage and technology (such as QR codes).

Lawn bowls, golf, croquet and sailing clubs are all popular sporting activities for older adults, especially those in Woollahra LGA. Quite often it is the social environment of these clubs that attract members. Physical activity for many is just an added bonus.

Families with children will be looking for sporting opportunities, quality playgrounds and safe cycling/pedestrian networks that provide connectivity to key destinations (schools, shopping centres and open space).

Young adults will be looking for social and/or competitive sporting opportunities and comfortable open spaces that allow them to hang-out and socialise with friends.

Time fragmentation and individualised activities

Lack of time is consistently identified as a common barrier to participation in physical activities. People are constantly juggling work and family commitments. With 69% of the Woollahra's workforce employed full-time and 30.3% of the households being family households, a proportion of the community may be struggling to find time to participate in physical activities.

Convenience is a key driver in one's choice of physical activity, with less people willing (or able) to commit time for training and set fixtures in team sports. As a result, society is seeing a rise in individualised active and passive recreation activities such as running, walking, cycling, martial arts and yoga/pilates.

Events such as fun runs, which can be both team and individual based, are becoming increasingly popular, and can take the form of 'traditional' fun run events, novelty themed runs, gender specific, obstacle and extreme runs. Event focus is not on competition, but instead creating a sense of community among the participants, with many entering as a team with friends, family, or work colleagues.

Those with a competitive nature, that are not interested in individualised activities, may be turning to non-organised sports such as mountain biking, surfing and water-based recreation and sports.

Spoilt for choice

The variety of sport and recreation activities available can be overwhelming. In the Woollahra LGA alone, residents can participate in traditional club sport, sailing, boating, surfing, cycling, yoga, pilates, dance, martial arts and golf, just to name a few. Many of these activities are available all-year round, taking away the seasonal switch between sporting codes.

Just under half of community survey respondents said that they did not experience any barriers to participating in recreation activities and sport. Those that did, were more concerned by over-crowding and parking issues.

As individuals become more affluent, the proportion of income spent on goods and leisure increases. There are more people participating in outdoor and passive recreation activities, previously offered by commercial operators (eg. stand-up paddle boarding, canoeing and kayaking), as specialist stores sell affordable recreation equipment. Despite cost being a barrier to participation in organised sport, participants appear more prepared to make a one-off investment in equipment for passive recreation that they can use at their convenience.

Technology

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

Changes in technology for recreation are also bringing about an increasing divergence of outdoor recreation activities.

It is believed that people are becoming less competitive and instead concerned about beating their personal best, resulting in a rise of fitness apps. Available on a variety of devices (smart-phones, tablets and wearable devices), they are attractive to a wide range of demographic. Users are able to map their route, record their times and upload digital images of their experience. This allows them to compete and compare results with past and future users (Strava, Map My Ride/Run etc).

A current trend in the fitness sector is the use of social media to build and foster sporting communities, such as Facebook groups. Many clubs now use Facebook as their main source of communication.

Sharing of facilities

With many sports extending the lengths of pre-season training and season fixtures, sharing of field space is becoming more difficult. While providers strive to maximise the use of community resources, the reality is that shared use of ancillary facilities rather than fields (e.g. clubhouses, carparks) may be a more appropriate goal.

All of Council's sporting clubs share facilities. A number of clubs did identify this as an issue during consultation as it often affected the quality of, and availability of, the fields/ovals, particularly when seasons and preseason training overlapped.

Community Gardens

Woollahra Councils recognises community gardening as a valuable community recreation activity that contributes to health and well-being, positive social interaction, sustainability education and the protection and care of public open space.

We have three community gardens, located at Paddington, Cooper Park North and Rose Bay. The incorporated community groups dedicated to these gardens have transformed these previously under-utilised areas of land into thriving and beautiful community hubs. Garden members grow produce, share their knowledge of organic gardening practices and host community environmental events for the broader community.

There are also smaller, more informal communal gardens at Holdsworth Community Centre and Windsor Street Paddington.

Since 2011 our community gardens have been operating under Council's Community Gardens Policy that aims to recognise the value of the gardens and ensure they are managed efficiently and maintained to an acceptable standard. Council supports community gardens by assisting during the process of identifying and preparing garden sites and through our environmental grants program.

3 The Woollahra Community

Context

Located five kilometres east of Sydney City, Woollahra LGA is a highly desirable place to live. Extending over 12 square kilometres, the area's natural features include 16 kilometres of harbour foreshore consisting of rocky headlands, coastal cliffs and beaches, and approximately 30 hectares of bushland located in five reserves.

Part of the Eastern City District, the Woollahra LGA is surrounded by many regionally significant facilities and destinations including Bondi Beach and Centennial Parklands. It is important to note, when assessing community demand for local open space and recreation facilities that 63% of residents surveyed in the Woollahra Community Capacity Survey (2017) defined their local area at the "Eastern Suburbs", compared to 9% who said "council area".

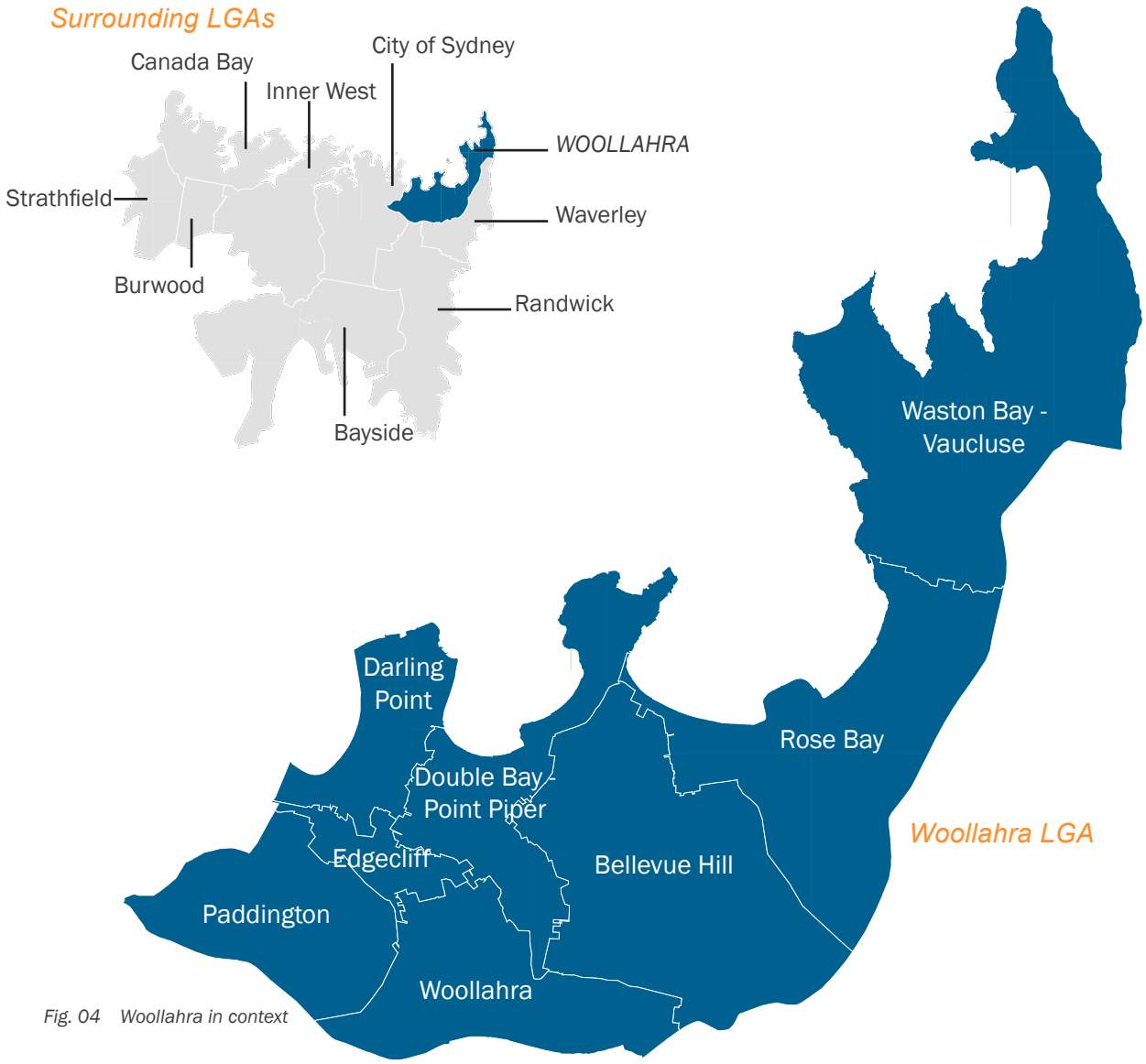


Fig. 04 Woollahra in context

People of Woollahra

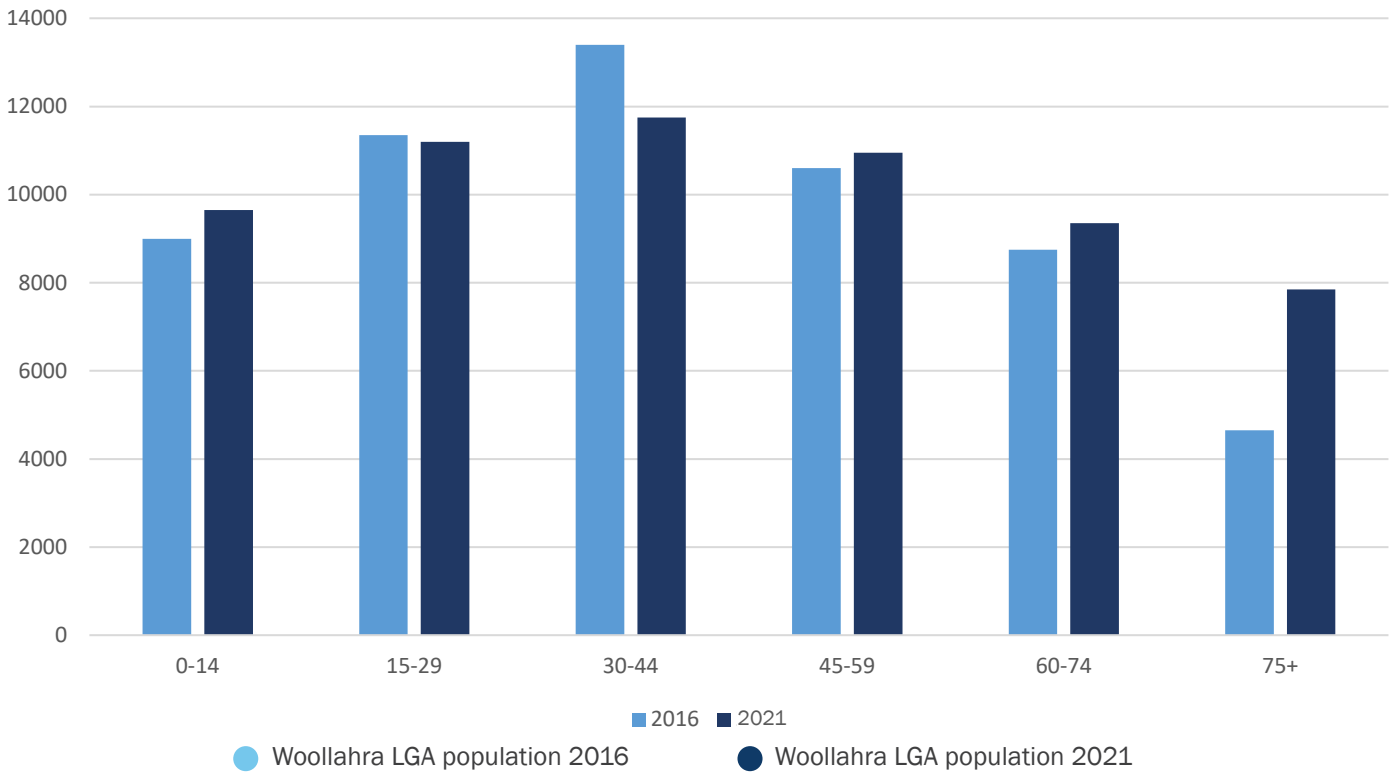
The Woollahra community value and appreciate the lifestyle that the LGA supports, with 89% of residents rating their quality of life as “very good” or “excellent”. The local bushland, open space, recreation facilities, beaches, coastal walks and sea pools allow residents to live healthy lifestyles, with 72% regularly participating in passive and active recreation and 31% in an organised sporting/recreation group.

Research has shown that an individual’s preference to participate in passive and active recreation activities and sport is influenced by their age and stage in life. Understanding Woollahra’s demographic variations and estimated population growth is fundamental to responding to, and planning for, the future provision of Woollahra’s open spaces, recreation facilities and programs.

The following snapshot provides an overview of key demographic information that may influence the use and need of different open spaces and facilities across the LGA.

Woollahra LGA has an estimated population of 53,891 (ABS, ERP 2021) with minimal increase expected over the next 20 years, with the estimated population for 2041 being 60,750[1]. The biggest growth in population will occur in those aged 66 years and over. It is predicted that there will be a decline in those aged 0 to 4 years of age (within the 0-14 age cohort illustrated below).

Fig. 05 Woollahra population projections



1 Planning NSW - 2019 NSW Population Projections

People

- current LGA population 53,891
  - just under 40% of the population live in Bellevue Hill and Paddington
- LGA has a population density of 44.90 persons/ha
  - Paddington (86.26 persons/ha) and Edgecliff (82.18 persons/ha) have the highest population densities
- median age in the LGA is 41 years
  - Darling Point have an older population with a median age of 49 years
- Vaucluse and Watson Bay have the highest proportion of residents aged between 5 to 17 years at 23.9%, compared to 18.2% for the LGA. Bellevue Hill is also above the LGA average at 16.9%
- Paddington (20.7%) and Edgecliff (21.4%) have a higher proportion of residents aged between 25 and 34 years, compared to 15.7% for the LGA
- consistent with the highest median age, 37.4% of Darling Point's residents are aged over 60 years, compared to 26.4% of the LGA average.

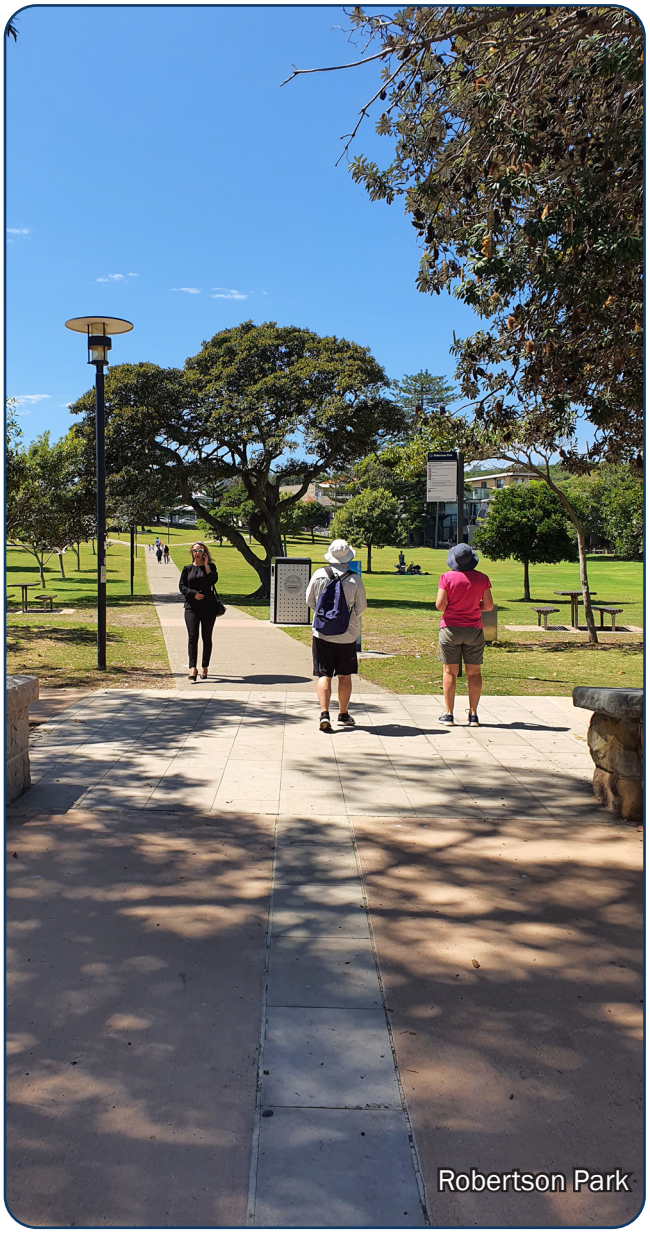
Households

- almost half of the LGA households (48.6%) live in high density dwellings, significantly higher than Greater Sydney (27.1%)
  - those areas that have the highest level of high density dwellings are Darling Point (81.9%), Edgecliff (69.1%) and Double Bay - Point Piper (68.7%)
  - medium density dwellings are common in Woollahra (41.3%) and Paddington (60.7%)
  - the dominant type of dwelling in Vaucluse-Watson Bay is separate housing (63.0%)
- 48.7% of households in the LGA have a household income over $3,000 or more per week, compared to 38.3% of Greater Sydney households
  - Edgecliff, Rose Bay, Darling Point, Woollahra, percentages are slightly lower than the average
- 24% of LGA households have children, lower than Greater Sydney (34.4%)
  - almost half (42.9%) of the households in Vaucluse-Watson Bay has children
  - under 20% of households in Edgecliff and Darling Point have children
- 15.1% of LGA households do not have access to a vehicle, similar to Greater Sydney (14%)
- 83.1% of households in the LGA have access to internet connection, consistent with State and National figures

Influence on open space and activities

The main demographic influences outlined on the previous page have the following influence on considerations for the Recreation Strategy:

- older population will be looking for low impact activities
- young adults are looking for more social opportunities:
  - with limited commitment to weekly training and competition responsibilities
  - with a preference for convenience and the type of activity that can be done in their own time - and often utilising smart phone exercise apps and more social events
- the relatively high incomes across the LGA indicates that people are able to afford out of reach activities (such as health clubs, golf, and sailing/ yachting)
- despite only a third of households in the LGA with children, there is still demand for organised sporting activities. While participation rates are likely to drop as children age (consistent with sporting participation trends across the country), this can be addressed locally by offering increased opportunities through initiatives such as improved field lighting to existing sporting fields/courts
- given the high level of residents in high density housing, people use public open space as their backyard, and as such are inclined to be more protective or against change to these spaces.


Robertson Park

4 Current supply

Open space network

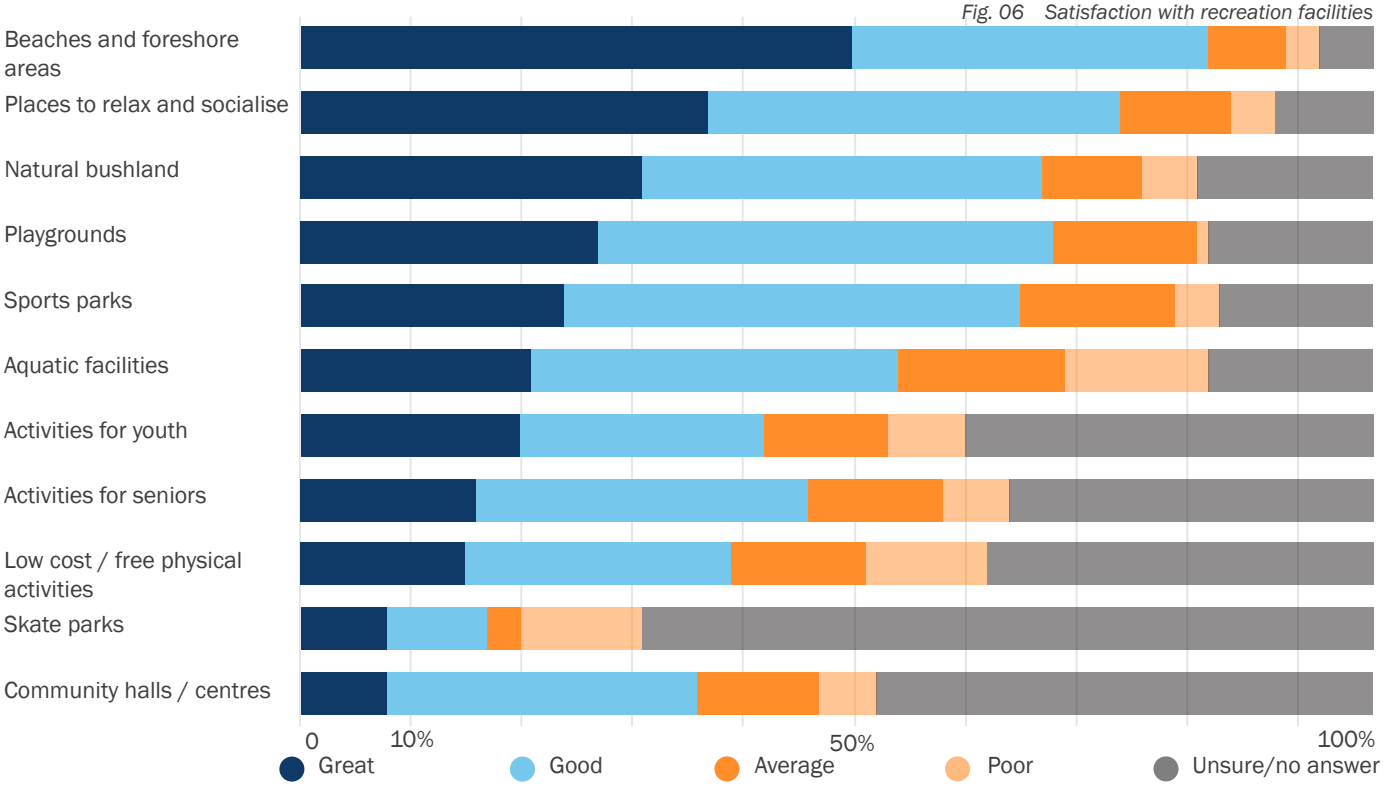
Public open space is a form of green infrastructure that enhances the character of the Woollahra and surrounding LGAs and is highly valued by the local community (94.2% of community survey respondents view the LGA's open space network as "important" or "very important").

Residents have access to a variety of open spaces, including the Sydney Harbour National Park, kilometres of foreshore parkland, shady kick-about areas and formalised sports parks. With approximately 224ha of open space, the network provides daily opportunities for recreation, sport and social interactions, creating a sense of community among residents (98.8% of survey respondents visit the network daily[1]).

Woollahra LGA, similar to other LGAs in the Eastern City District and Greater Sydney, has a deficiency of open space, from a planning perspective, with relatively few opportunities to increase the quantity. Consistent with the open space vision for the Eastern City District, Council needs to place greater emphasis on improving the quality and distribution of its open space network, recreation and sporting facilities.

A survey undertaken during the development of the Strategy shows that residents are relatively satisfied with the current open space network and the opportunities and facilities within it. Two thirds of respondents were satisfied ("great" or "good") with the LGA's beach and foreshore areas, places to relax and socialise, natural bushland and playgrounds. However, respondents were generally displeased with the Council's availability of low cost/free physical activities, skate parks and aquatic facilities. A summary of the results is provided below.

Fig. 06 Satisfaction with recreation facilities



N.B: It is important to critically analyse these results as they represent expressed opinions and may not accurately reflect the provision of facilities and activities, especially since 45% of respondents were aged over 60 years and the high number of "unsure/no answer" responses.

1 It is important to note that the online community survey took place during the 2020 Covid 19 lockdown period, where public open space was the only environment in which people were allowed to recreate in. This may have influenced the extraordinarily high percentage of daily visits.

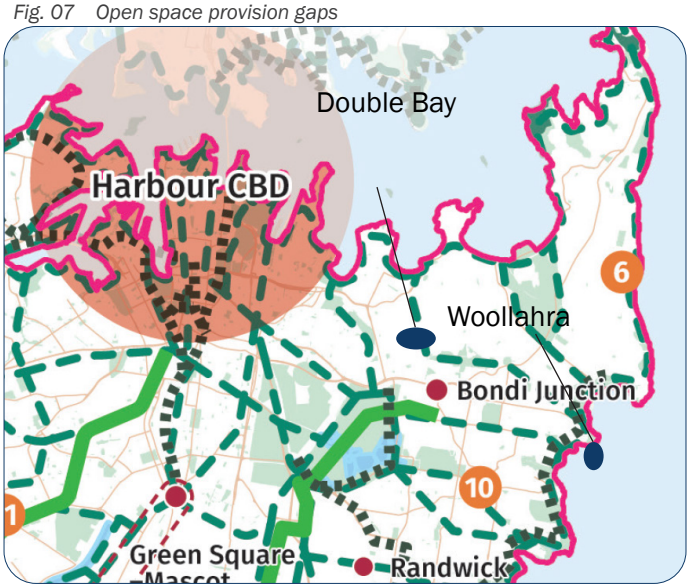
With just under half of households in the LGA (more in Darling Point and Edgecliff) living in high density dwellings, public open space is used like a shared backyard, providing an outdoor space to relax, connect with nature, be social and active. As such, open space needs to be easily accessible, durable and cater for a variety of users. It is generally recommended by Councils across Australia that all residential areas be within 400m of open space.

The Eastern City Districts Plan identifies a number of residential pockets within the LGA, where residents are not within the 400m radius of open space. These include Double Bay and Woollahra (map below).

Greater Sydney Green Grid

The Greater Sydney Green Grid is a long-term vision for a network of high quality green spaces that connects communities to the natural landscape (map below). In areas where green spaces and/or recreation links can not provide connections, streets have been identified as alternative connections. A number of these "street" connections have been identified within the Woollahra LGA area. Using the "Park Street" design concept, these connections have the potential to act as open space, particularly in suburbs like Darling Point and Woollahra where open space is already limited.

Fig. 07 Open space provision gaps



Greater Sydney Green Grid priority corridor

other green grid opportunities, including streets

residential pockets where residents do not have access to open space within a 400m radius, as identified in the Eastern City Districts Plan

Waterways

Woollahra's picturesque waterways, extending approximately 16km from Rushcutters Bay to Watsons Bay, play an integral role in creating a sense of place, and providing recreation opportunities and supporting economic activities.

The role of these waterways for local residents and the role they play in attracting tourists to the LGA is extremely important.

There are currently five swimming areas in the LGA, four of which are managed by Council, the other by National Parks and Wildlife (Shark Beach, Vaucluse). A number of Council's foreshore parks also have supporting facilities, such as dinghy storage areas. Camp Cove Beach is a patrolled beach for water safety and Council is planning to install roll-away portable accessibility mats at Parsley Bay Beach and Camp Cove Beach to improve accessibility to the water for mobility impaired people, as a high priority.

As the LGA and Eastern City District's population grows, demand for access to the waterways is expected to increase.

Consistent with the vision for the Eastern City District, Council needs to manage the cumulative impact of recreation activities and associated infrastructure such as moorings, marinas and boat launching facilities while ensuring public access to the waterways (boating and swimming) and small boat and kayak launching areas from public open space.

A number of popular walk trails also extend along the coastline.

The Park Streets concept

The Park Street concept involves design principles that change the perception of streets "as places for cars" to "streets as places". The concept encourages the activation of local streets with temporary or permanent street closures and involves a range of measures such as:

- lower speed limits
- traffic calming techniques
- smarter street planting and landscaping
- street play opportunities
- bike parking
- wider footpaths
- public art (potentially for climbing and sitting)
- tables, seats and lighting

Activating Woollahra's local streets as parks can facilitate local play and recreation, provide engaging pedestrian links to local landmarks and public areas, and become attractive places for people to gather and recreate.

Open space in the Eastern City District

Residents and visitors to the Eastern City District have access to a variety of high quality open spaces, including:

- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Centennial Parklands
- Moore Park
- Heffron Park
- Randwick Environmental Park
- Malabar Headland National Park
- Bondi and Coogee Beach.

Other highly valued open spaces include the Bondi to Coogee Beach coastal walk, the Botany wetlands and the long corridor of open space and cycle paths along the foreshore of Botany Bay and the Cooks River.

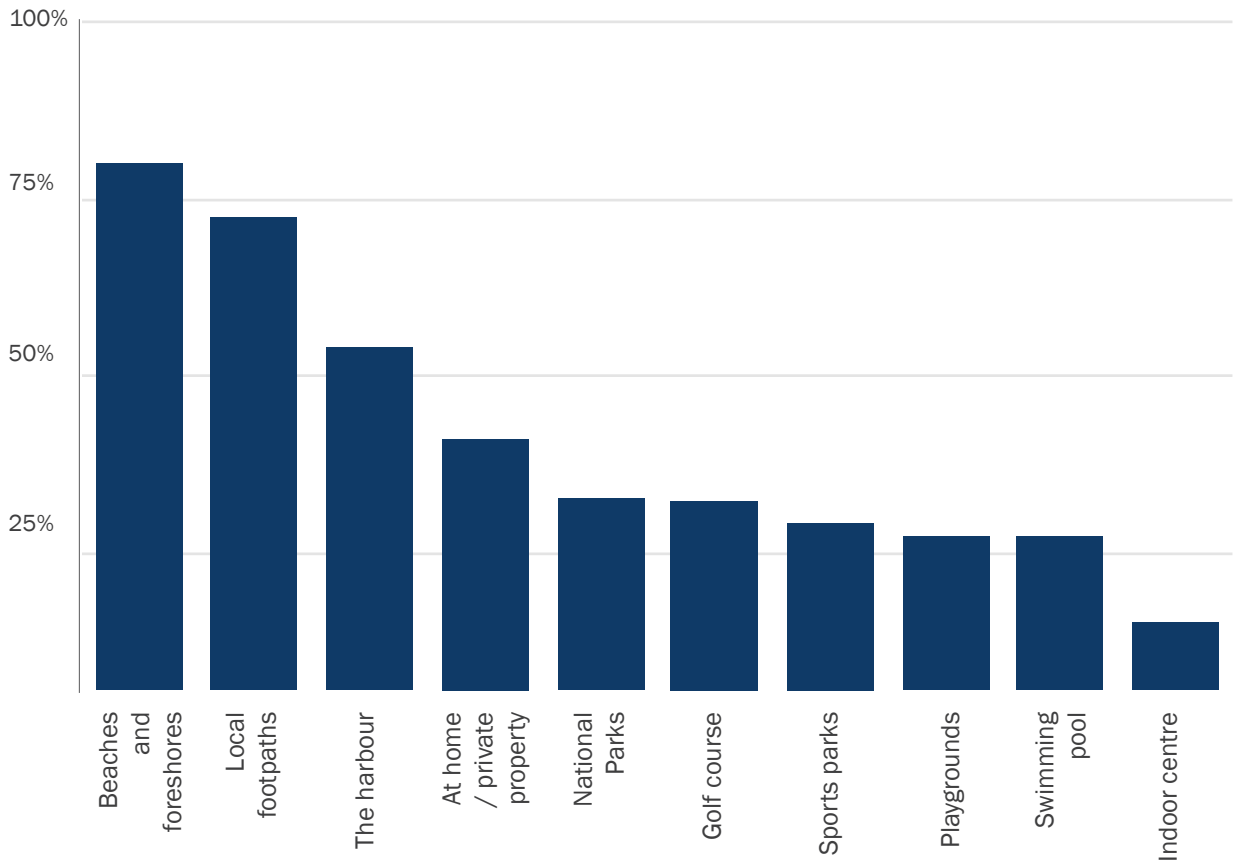
Community use

Popular places to recreate

Nearly all of the community survey respondents used the open space daily. This was further reiterated throughout open space inspections (weekday and weekends). Respondents were asked to identify their preferred open spaces and facilities to participate in passive and active recreation activities. Overall, the beach and foreshore was the most popular place to recreate, followed by local footpaths and the harbour. A summary of the top 10 is presented below. In addition to the survey, people were regularly seen swimming in the harbourside baths.

It should be noted that respondents were able to provide multiple responses to this question.

Fig. 08 Preferred open spaces



Popular activities

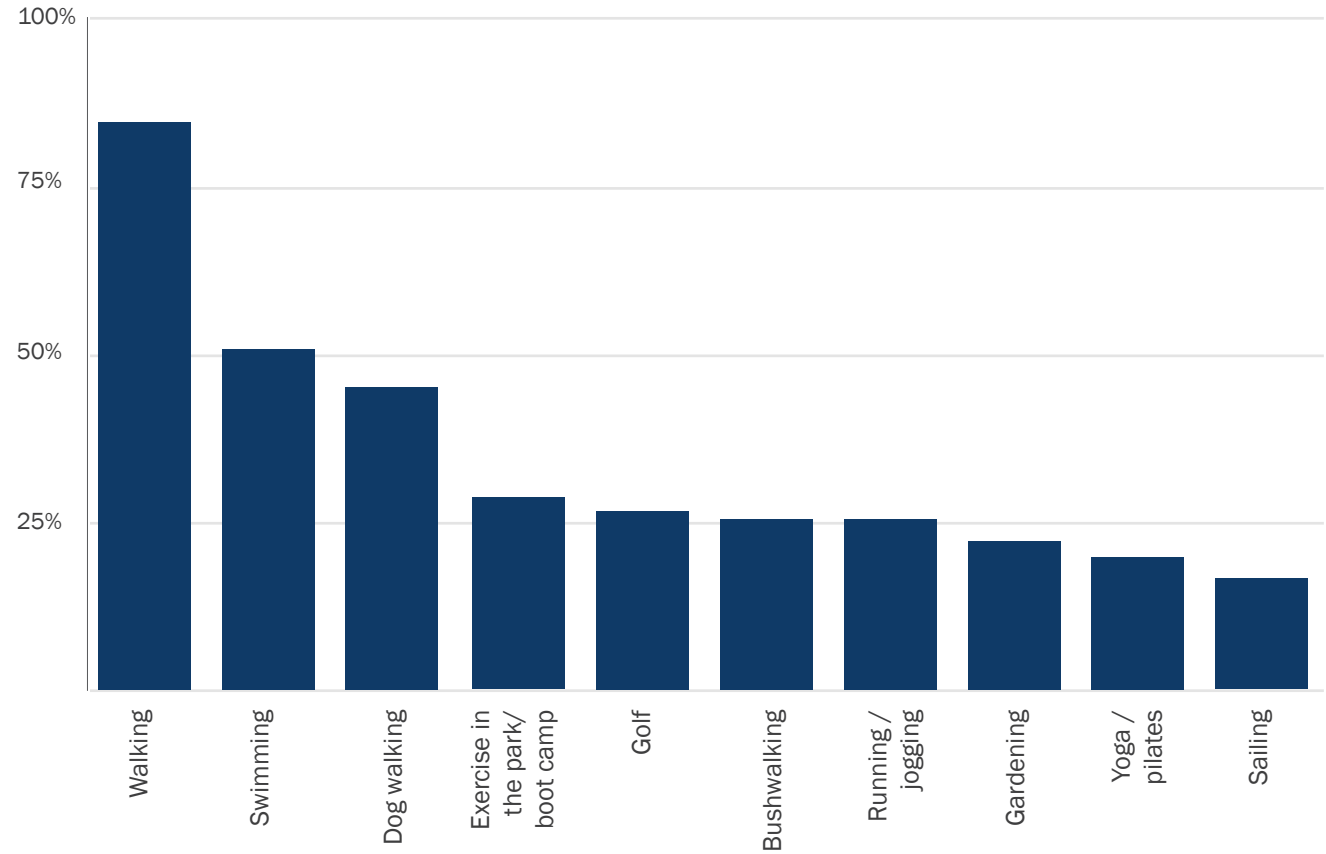
Consistent with the adjacent findings, walking, swimming and dog walking are the most popular activities to participate in. Interestingly, recreation cycling (15.0%) and road cycling (8.7%) was not as highly participated in as expected, which may due, in part at least, to the lack of appropriate roads and pathways. This finding is in contrast to the high number of active transport commuters in the LGA (particularly in Paddington (19.9%) and Edgecliff (11.3%), and the state and national level results that show cycling as one of the highest participation activities (behind only walking, fitness/gym, running and swimming).

It should also be noted that water-based activities were popular, with swimming and sailing in the top ten responses. During site inspections a large number of people were observed participating in water based recreation, including kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding and fishing. Many families were seen in the playgrounds, while others were using the passive open space for dog play.

Over the weekends, nearly all the cafes and takeaway shops next to the more popular open spaces were busy. Council's community capacity survey showed that social activities such as eating out at a cafe or pub was a common and regular recreation activity among Woollahra residents.

As for the previous question, it should be noted that respondents were able to provide multiple responses to this question.

Fig. 09 Popular activities



Managing open space

The 224ha of open space across the LGA is owned and managed by a variety of stakeholders, including:

- Woollahra Municipal Council
- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Private stakeholders
  - Sydney Harbour Federation Trust
  - NSW Tennis Association LTD
  - Royal Sydney Golf Club
  - Property NSW
  - Historic Houses Trust.

It is important to build partnerships across all providers to ensure that the open space network provides high quality outcomes that meet the needs of communities.

Overall, Council owns and/or manages 101.1ha of open space, approximately 45% of the total network. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services owns approximately 18% of the network, most of which is located along the foreshores and harbour. The remaining 37% is private open space belonging to the Royal Sydney Golf Club and the Hakoah Club.

Quite often the community is unclear on who owns the public open space, as such it is important that Council and other stakeholders work together with a clear vision to ensure recreation, conservation and economic values are balanced. This is achieved by a Plan of Management.

Plans of Management

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires all Council owned land classified as Community Land to be managed and used in accordance with a Plan of Management. The document outlines how the open space is intended to be used, developed, managed and maintained. There are currently 21 Plans of Management for parks owned by the Crown managed by Council. There are also 25 plans of management for parks owned by Council.

Council publicly exhibited the Crown Lands Plans of Management (PoMs) between 13 February - 03 April 2023, whereby Council reviewed all submissions and adopted the Plans of Management on 24 July 2023. The PoMs should be read in conjunction with this Strategy to ensure a consistent approach to the ongoing management of the relevant sites. Included in the development of these Plans was extensive community consultation, with 60% of respondents to the community survey stating that recreational opportunities were highly valued.

As the Crown Lands POMs have been completed. The next priority is for Council to commence the process of updating its Plans of Management for parks owned by Council.

Policies

To ensure positive outcomes and consistency across open space planning and uses, Council has developed a number of polices that enhance community wellbeing. These include:

- Commercial Fitness Training Activities On Public Open Space Policy
- Community Gardens Policy
- Leasing and Licensing Council Controlled Land Policy
- Community Facilities Study

In addition to its own policies, Council is also committed to a range of State policies that are relevant to the management of and access to public open spaces such as the *State Strategic Plan – A Vision for Crown Land*; *Greener Places – An Urban Green Infrastructure Design Framework*; and the *NSW Public Spaces Charter.*

Due to the multi-use nature of Council's active open spaces, sporting clubs have seasonal licences, under the Leasing and Licensing Council Controlled Land Policy, over the active open spaces that they use for training and competition.

Council owned and managed open space

Non-Council owned or managed open space

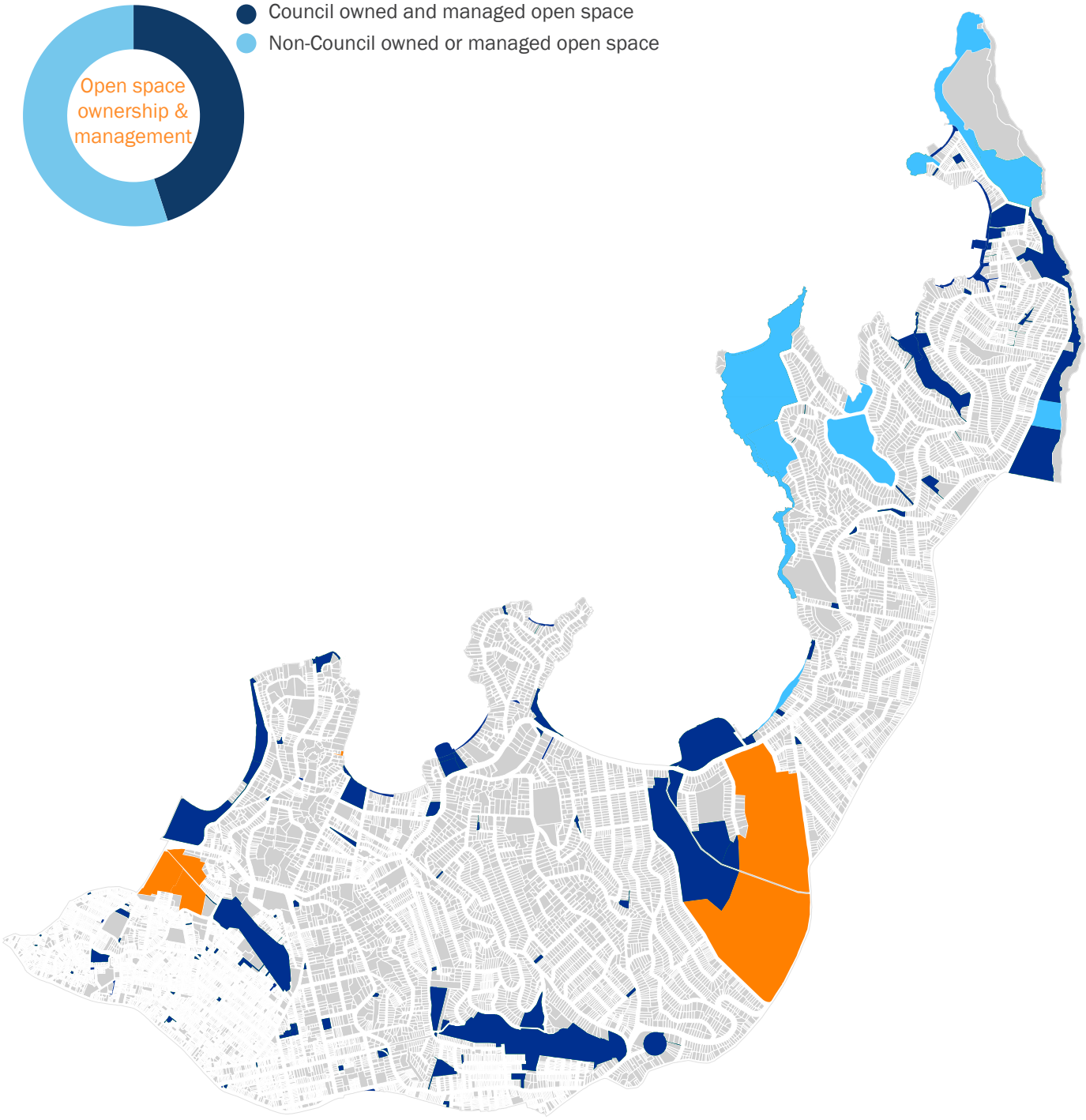


Fig. 10 Open space provision and management

Woollarha LGA's public open space network

- Council owned and managed
- State Government Agencies and Trusts owned and managed
- Privately owned

Steyne Park

Robertson Park

Parsley Bay Reserve

Trumper Park

Rushcutters Bay Park

Passive open space

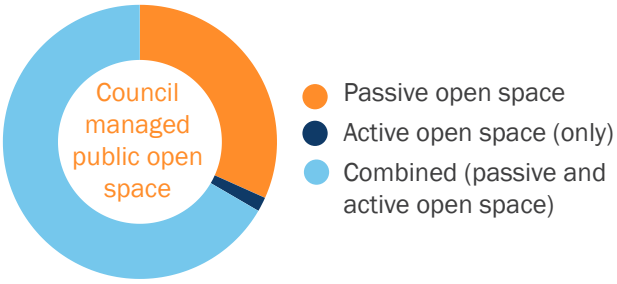
The quality of open spaces (passive and active), parks and facilities around the LGA are of a high standard and supports a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities. It is noted that of the 100ha (approximately) of Council owned and/or managed passive open space, 67.5ha of it is also classified as active open space, ensuring its multi-purpose nature for a variety of uses.

There are approximately 110 parcels of Council owned/managed passive open space that offer varying levels and types of recreation opportunities. Some parcels have limited embellishments and service adjacent suburbs only, while others have high quality features that attract people from across the LGA and beyond.

The remaining local parks are often small parcels of green space, with limited scope for additional facilities/activities, however, are still valuable green infrastructure enhancing the amenity of the built environment and liveability for surrounding residents, particularly in high density areas where there is little or no private open space.

While this Strategy focuses on Council owned/managed open space, the community often have little idea regarding the ownership over the open space, but know that it is public and available for use. As such, it is important to acknowledge all the public passive open space within the LGA and the physical activity opportunities they provide to residents.

The existing passive open space network, including foreshore and national parks, provide numerous opportunities for residents to participate in a variety of physical and social activities to improve their wellbeing. The table and map over the page provides a summary of the main passive recreation parks.



Gap Park

Table 2: Main passive recreation parks and community facilities

ID	Park name	Suburb	Council owned/ managed	Activities										
				Passive / informal				Play		Water based			Active	
				picnic facilities	kick-about / green space	walking / cycling path	lookout	playground	basketball court	swimming enclosure	non-motorised boat launch area	non-motorised boat storage	sports field	outdoor fitness equipment
1	Cooper Park	Bellevue Hill	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔					✔	
2	Lough Playing Fields	Bellevue Hill	Yes		✔								✔	
3	Bellevue Park	Bellevue Hill	Yes				✔	✔						
4	Cooper Park Community Hall	Bellevue Hill	Yes		✔			✔						
5	McKell Park	Darling Point	Yes	✔	✔	✔	✔							
6	Rushcutters Bay Park	Darling Point	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔					✔	✔
7	Yarranabbe Park	Darling Point	Yes	✔	✔	✔					✔			✔
8	The Drill Hall, the Studio and Sail Loft	Darling Point	Yes											
9	Canonbury Cottage	Darling Point	Yes				✔							
10	Blackburn Gardens	Double Bay	Yes	✔			✔			✔				
11	Double Bay Beach	Double Bay	Yes		✔	✔				✔	✔			
12	Murry Rose Pool, Seven Shillings Beach	Double Bay	Yes	✔			✔			✔				
13	Steyne Park	Double Bay	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔			✔	✔	✔	
14	The Bay Room	Double Bay	Yes											
15	Cross Street, Studio 1	Double Bay	Yes											
16	Trumper Park	Paddington	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔					✔	
17	EJ Ward Paddington Community Centre	Paddington	Yes											
18	Lyne Park	Rose Bay	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	
19	Rose Bay Park	Rose Bay	Yes	✔		✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔		
20	Tingira Memorial Park	Rose Bay	Yes	✔						✔	✔	✔		
21	Woollahra Park/Ovals	Rose Bay	Yes		✔								✔	
22	Woollahra Golf Course	Rose Bay	Yes			✔								
23	Rose Bay Cottage	Rose Bay	Yes											
24	Christison Park	Vaucluse	Yes	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔				✔	✔
25	Hermitage Foreshore Reserve	Vaucluse	No	✔		✔	✔							
26	Lighthouse Reserve	Vaucluse	Yes	✔	✔	✔	✔							
27	Nielsen Park	Vaucluse	No	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔				
28	Parsley Bay Reserve	Vaucluse	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔			
29	Signal Hill Reserve	Vaucluse	Yes	✔	✔	✔	✔							
30	Strickland House*	Vaucluse	No	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔				
31	Vaucluse Park*	Vaucluse	No	✔	✔	✔								
32	Camp Cove Beach	Watsons Bay	Yes			✔	✔			✔				
33	Gap Park	Watsons Bay	Yes	✔		✔	✔							
34	Green Point Reserve	Watsons Bay	No			✔	✔							
35	Robertson Park	Watsons Bay	Yes	✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔			
36	South Head Reserve	Watsons Bay	No	✔		✔	✔							
37	Holdsworth Community Centre	Woollahra	Yes		✔			✔						

* Formal gardens

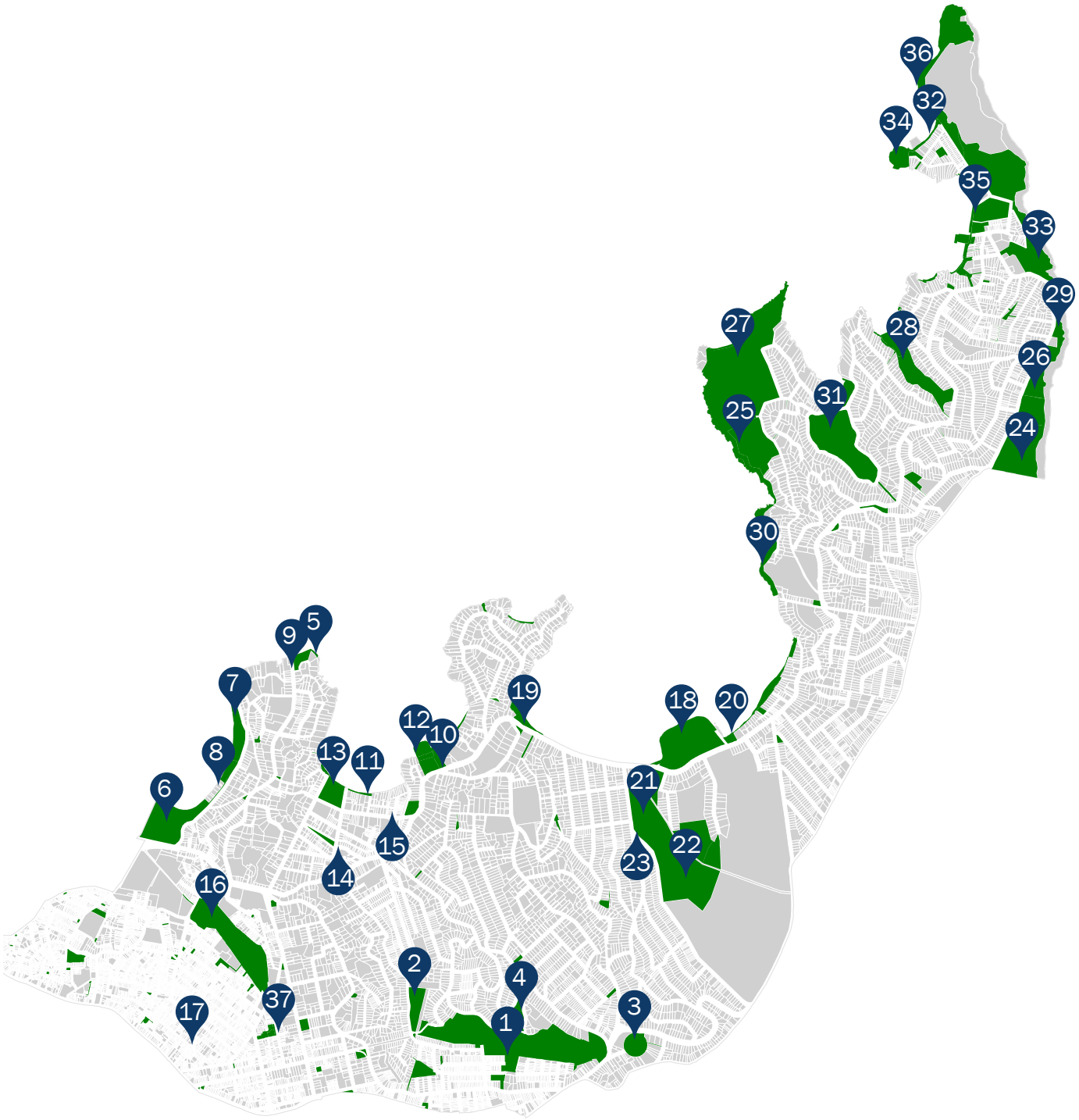


Fig. 11 Significant Open Space and Community Centres

Residents also have access to three community

Gardens, a variety of outdoor exercise equipment dispersed around the LGA, and some interesting, historical and incredible walking trails. The major walks in the LGA include:

- Cooper Park Trail – including the Go Slow for a Mo' Nature Wellness Trail
- Watsons Bay Trail – including the Go Slow for a Mo' Nature Wellness Trail at Gap Park
- Trumper Park Trail
- Gap Park Historic Tramway Trail
- Double Bay Tree Trail
- Art and Culture Walks – DIY walks
- Bondi To Manly Walk
- The Harbour Walk - Rushcutters Bay to Rose Bay
- The Harbour Walk - Rose Bay to Watsons Bay
- Coast Walk - Christison Park to Inner South Head
- Bush Tucker Walks – guided
- Historic Walks - guided

These walks are described in detail on Council's website at the following link:

https://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/recreation/walks_in_woollahra

Trumper Park has been identified by Government Architects NSW (GANSW) as a key "Green Grid" site. There is significant opportunity for improved community access through the park down to the harbour.

Current challenges / issues

Just under half (46.6%) of the community survey respondents did not experience any barriers to using the LGA's open spaces and recreation facilities with many respondents preferring Council to leave the passive open space network as it is.

For those respondents that did experience barriers, over-crowding of open space and the flow-on effects (rubbish, lack of maintenance, parking) was consistently identified as the main barrier. A summary of the key issues identified during consultation is provided below.

Camp Cove Reserve

Steyne Park/Double Bay Wharf

Capacity/Crowding

The area's high to medium density living environment, combined with the picturesque foreshore parks attracting visitors from outside the LGA, has created high demand for quality open space.

A number of respondents felt that the open spaces, particularly along the foreshore, were often too crowded and/or too busy with a variety of users, especially when sporting fixtures were on. This often led to car parking issues, congestion for local residents and unsafe streets.

Despite the vast majority of residents within the LGA being within 400m of open space and 65.6% of survey respondents valuing the close proximity of open space to their homes, car parking at these spaces was identified as the most common barrier to open space usage.

The foreshore parks are popular for non-motorised boats, especially kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding. Site inspections often saw people parking illegally while unloading their equipment and driving off looking for a place to park. Those interviewed noted that it was an inconvenience but that's just what you do if you want to paddle on the Harbour. Interestingly, the lack of storage for dinghys and kayaks was not identified as an issue in the survey or during consultation, although it has been identified by Council officers.

The popularity of the open spaces, particularly along the foreshores, has led to maintenance and cleanliness issues.

Maintenance standards

The second most common barrier, almost a quarter (23.5%) of survey respondents that had experienced barriers to using open space, expressed dissatisfaction with the standard of maintenance being undertaken in parks, along foreshores and beaches. Due to the popularity of Council's open spaces, particularly over the weekends, rubbish is often present and the cleaning and maintenance of picnic facilities and toilets is not maintained. While is it acknowledged that users need to clean up after themselves, the lack of, or overflowing bins, is an ongoing problem.

Lack of shade

The lack of shade throughout the open space network was a consistent theme throughout the engagement processes, ranking as the third most common barrier to using open spaces. However, many respondents were not in favour of shade sails and shelters and preferred to see more natural shade provided around the area.

During site inspections it was observed that a number of passive open spaces had impressive large trees around the perimeter and over the playgrounds.

Better and variety of play facilities for the youth

Consistent with Council's draft Play Space Strategy, community workshop attendees highlighted the lack of play opportunities for youth, with many of the parks catering for toddlers and young children. Parents and children are keen for the development of more active recreation facilities such as skate parks, designed specifically to cater for a variety of users (scooters, bikes and skate boards) and skill levels. Multi-use courts were also identified as facilities that would provide increased opportunities for youth.

However, it must be noted that many survey respondents also had concerns and strong objections to similar developments, stating that they consume too much (already limited) green space.

The basketball court at Lyne Park is very popular among the youth. Acting as a multi-purpose space, youth were often observed scootering on the court, amongst those playing social basketball. This highlights the need for a bigger, multi-purpose space for youth.

The varying opinions regarding play spaces is reflected in the community survey responses, while it is noted that new/upgraded playgrounds ranked as the seventh (14.9%) most common perceived priority for Council.

Youth/play facilities

There are currently no dedicated youth facilities such as skate parks across the LGA.

This has been clearly identified by the draft Play Space Strategy which suggests in its Action Plan to:

> *"Complete the Youth Recreation Area project at Rushcutters Bay, including skate and basketball elements, to cater for older children."*

On 15/10/2018 Council resolved to endorse the endorse the concept plan for the Youth Recreation Area at Rushcutters Bay Park, with the detailed design and construction of the facility to proceed, subject to environmental planning assessment and approval.

Noting the Heritage listing of the park, Council is also required to prepare a Conservation Management Strategy for the site and a Statement of Heritage Impact for the Youth Recreation project. Following these studies approval to proceed is required from Heritage NSW.

On 22/08/2022 Council resolved to submit an application for approval under Section 60 of the Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act) to undertake the project; and to continue with the preparation of the Review of Environmental Factors if Heritage approval is granted.

$1,151,800 has been allocated in Council's 2022/23 budget for the project, which will include skate/scooter and basketball facilities.

It should be noted that although this development will help address the lack of youth facilities across the LGA, it is believed that further such facilities are also needed to cater for future demand. Any additional facilities at other sites to that proposed for Rushcutters

Lyne Park

Bay should be designed to complement that facility and not duplicate its proposed features.

Lyne Park, given its location, popularity and existing features is well placed for serious consideration as a location for such a future youth facility.

Lack of supporting facilities

Despite an ageing community, increasing participation numbers in walking, busy recreation parks and access to existing natural scenery; the open space network is lacking supporting infrastructure that allows users to relax and enjoy their visit. The lack of features such as seating, shade structures, rubbish bins, water bubblers and toilets in popular open spaces was a common theme identified throughout the engagement process and ranked third as a common usage barrier (tied with lack of shade). Difficulty accessing the toilets was also highlighted among older residents.

A fifth of survey respondents would like to see Council focus on increasing supporting infrastructure and facilities such as seats, bubblers and toilets as a priority in the future.

Natural settings are highly valued

The natural setting of Council's open space is highly valued by community survey respondents (74.7%). The most common values were access to water (beaches and foreshore areas), interaction with the natural environment and the views they provide.

These findings are reinforced by:

- beaches and foreshores, the harbour and national parks being amongst the top five most common places to recreate
- improved bushland maintenance and management bodies being highlighted as the top priority for Council (27.1% survey respondents).

Active open space

Active open space is in high demand across the LGA and the Eastern City District, with limited opportunity to provide additional capacity alongside growth. Field utilisation rates are high, with some sporting clubs unable to access fields as needed or courts for training within the LGA. The four sites with field lighting (Andrew Petrie Oval, Woollahra Ovals 2/3, Trumper Oval and Lyne Park) are currently averaging over 40 hours of use per week (Christison Park not included due to insignificant lighting). Those without field lighting (Christison, Rushcutters Bay, Steyne and Cooper Parks, and Lough Playing Fields) are currently only providing an average usage of less than 15 hours per week.

There are eight council owned/managed open spaces that are classified as active open space. Each of these can be used for a variety of sports and activities as the playing surfaces can easily be configured depending on demand and summer and winter sport requirements. The dominant sports in winter are football (soccer) and rugby union, with cricket dominating in summer.

Andrew Petrie Oval

The quality of the playing surfaces and ancillary facilities varies between each active open space. Trumper Park, Woollahra Oval 1 (synthetic field - Andrew Petrie Oval) and Woollahra Oval 2 & 3 are of a higher standard with regards to playing surface, change room facilities and storage. The other active spaces are generally of an adequate but not high standard, with evidence of over-use. Support facilities such as car parking, change facilities, spectator seating and storage at these parks is minimal and basic, with improvements to their functionality possible with minor improvements (refer Action Plan in Section 6).

Nearly all of Council's active spaces are also classified as passive open space, which further impacts on the quality of the playing surfaces. Rushcutters Bay and Lyne Park, considered district and regional level open space respectively, are popular spaces for passive recreation, social activities and dog walking/play. However, in the afternoon and weekends, the flat grassed areas in these parks are designated for sports training and competition.

From a land perspective (lot and plan), Council has approximately 69ha of active open space. In reality, the area dedicated specifically for sporting activities is less, as many of the fields/courts are located within areas with an overall designation as passive open space. This is not a negative situation, but one that is necessary for a Council that has an overall lack of open space across the LGA.

Regardless of land supply, Council provides a range of sporting facilities to the community including various sporting fields, courts and a public golf course.

In addition to the traditional fields sports, there are approximately 9 sailing clubs and other water sport related clubs, numerous fitness providers/gyms, private golf course and tennis club, dance schools, yoga and pilates studios and martial arts clubs around the LGA.

Current active open spaces

Table 3: Active open spaces

ID	Sports Park	Area	Main Organised/ Booked Activity	Current winter usage^	Field Lighting and Standards
1	Cooper Park (1 x junior rectangular field, 1 x junior synthetic cricket wicket)	Bellevue Hill	» soccer » cricket » tennis*	Rarely booked in winter, but popular with dog walking	✕
2	Rushcutters Bay Park (1 x full size rectangular field, 1 x $^3/_4$ size rectangular field, 1 x junior synthetic cricket wicket)	Darling Point	» soccer » rugby » cricket » kickball	20hrs per week (daylight hours only)	✕
3	Lough Playing Fields (2 x junior synthetic cricket wickets, 2 x $^3/_4$ size rectangular fields, grass netball court)	Double Bay	» cricket » soccer » netball	27.5hrs (daylight hours only)	✕
4	Steyne Park (1 x $^3/_4$ size rectangular field, 1 x synthetic cricket wicket)	Double Bay	» hockey » cricket	12hrs per week plus daily usage by Double Bay Public School	✕
5	Trumper Oval (1 x turf cricket wicket, 1 x full size oval field, 2 x cricket practice nets)	Paddington	» AFL » cricket » athletics » tennis*	37hrs per week	✓
6	Lyne Park (1 x full size rectangular field, 1 x half size rectangular field)	Rose Bay	» soccer » rugby » tennis*	30hrs per week	✓ (on full size field only)
7	Andrew Petrie Oval (1 x full size rectangular synthetic grass field)	Rose Bay	» rugby » soccer » American Football (Gridiron)	60hrs per week	✓
8	Woollahra Ovals (2&3) (1 x turf cricket wicket, 2 x full size rectangular fields, croquet greens)	Rose Bay	» rugby » cricket » touch football » croquet	37hrs per week	✓ (training only)
9	Christison Park (2 x full size rectangular field, 2 x junior rectangular fields, 2 x synthetic cricket wickets, 2 x netball/basketball hard multi-courts)	Vaucluse	» cricket » hockey » soccer » rugby » netball » basketball	15hrs per week	✓ (very limited, training only)
10	Woollahra Golf Course	Rose Bay	» golf		

* While the anecdotal popularity of tennis is noted, bookings are not managed by Council
^ Usage data sourced from report to Finance, Community & Services Committee of 19 August 2019

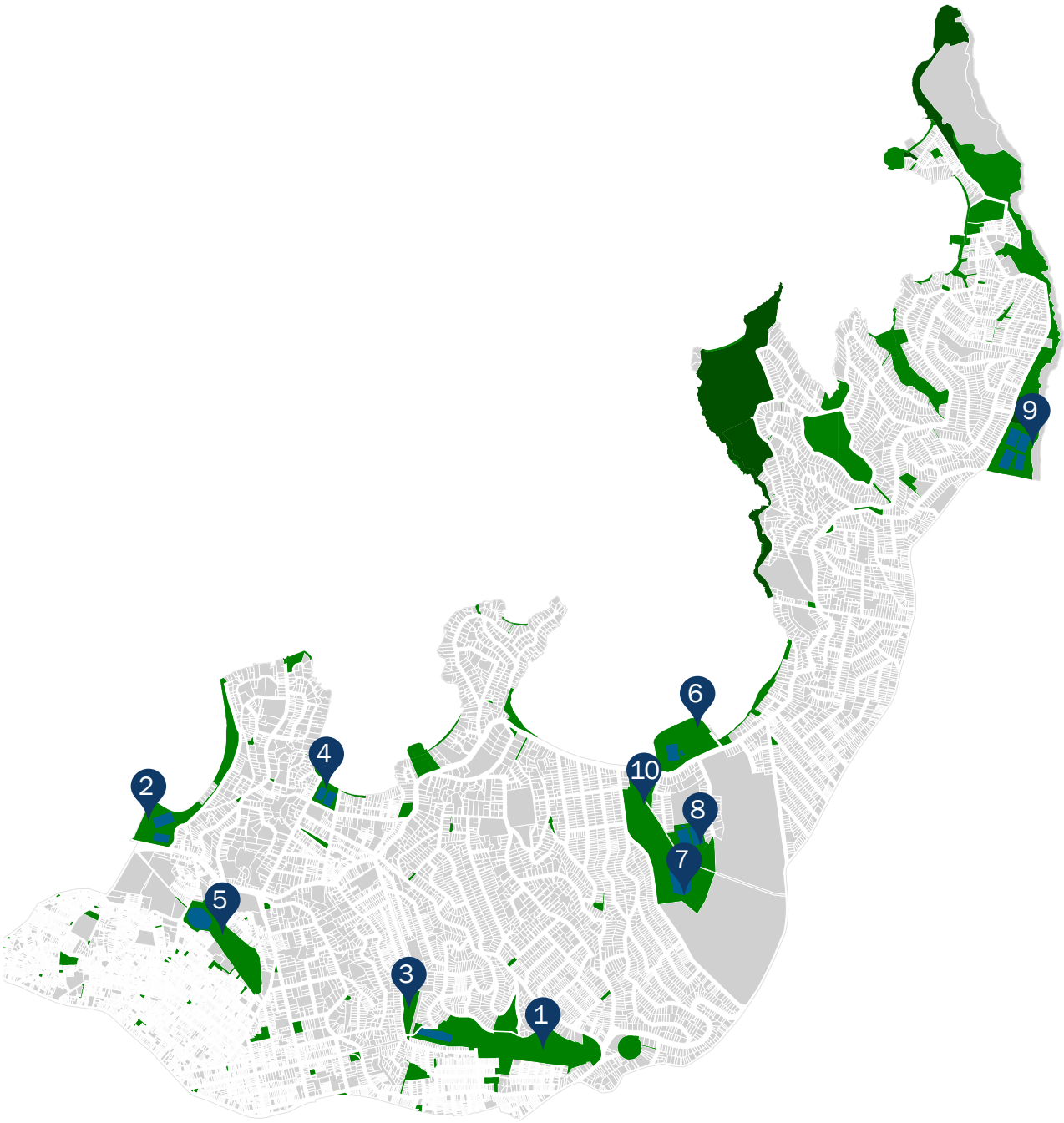


Fig. 12 Council active open space

1. Cooper Park
2. Rushcutters Bay Park 1&2
3. Lough Playing Fields 1&2
4. Steyne Park
5. Trumper Park
6. Lyne Park 1&2
7. Andrew Petrie Oval
8. Woollahra Ovals 2&3
9. Christison Park 1-4
10. Woollahra Golf Course

Active open space challenges / issues

Sports clubs within the Woollahra LGA were given the opportunity to complete a Sports Club Survey to provide details about their organisation, their type and frequency of use of Council active open spaces, suitability of those spaces and ancillary facilities, any potential upgrades required and issues, and to provide general comment.

This, in conjunction with background research and site inspections undertaken, has provided the information for identifying the most relevant issues facing Council regarding the provision of active open space.

General issues

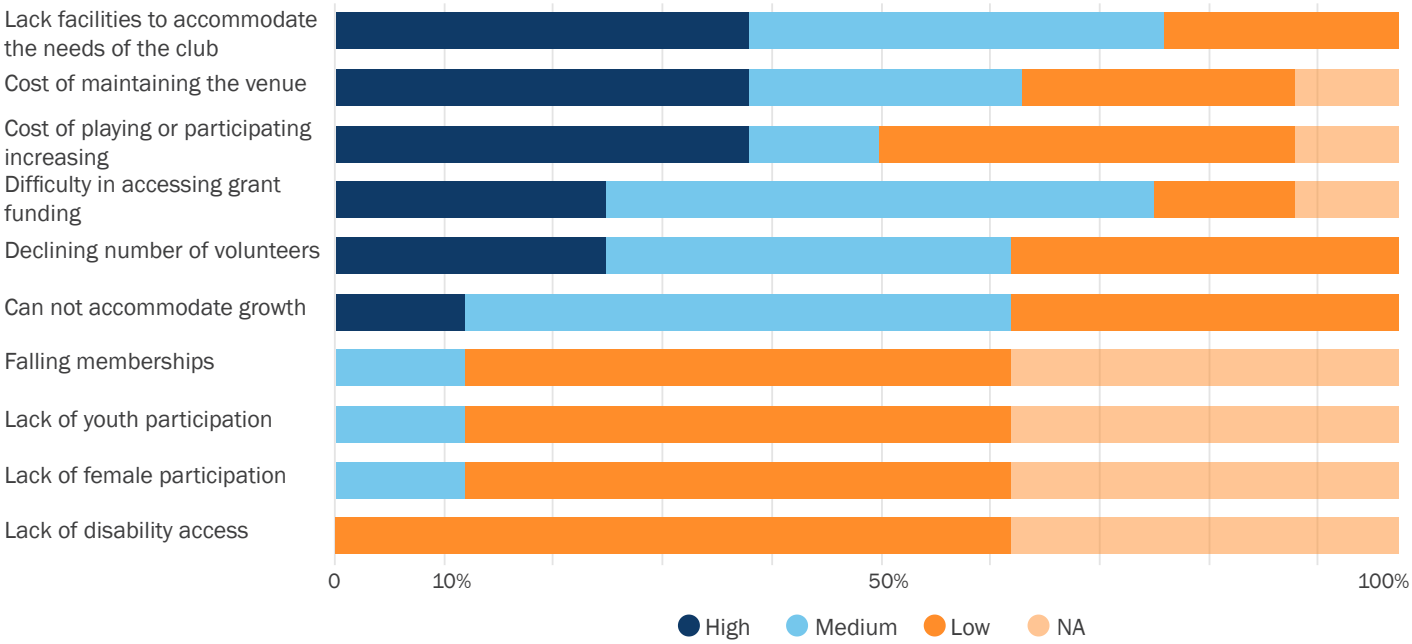
The top three issues affecting clubs within the LGA are:

1. Lack of facilities to accommodate the needs of the club (lack of field lighting and fields/courts for existing members)
2. Cost of maintaining the venue for your activity
3. Cost of playing or participating is increasing.

The lack of facilities to accommodate clubs' needs will continue to increase into the future, particularly as 50% of clubs were concerned about their ability to accommodate future members. Despite an ageing population in the LGA, all clubs indicated increasing membership numbers between 2017 and 2019 with rugby union and football (soccer) both reporting increases of over 50%. Cricket currently has the highest reported participation numbers at 870, and is expecting membership numbers to grow into the future, especially with the growing popularity of the sport with females.

Difficulty in accessing grant funding was also identified as a common issue for clubs. Lack of disability access was not identified as an issue for all clubs, with two thirds stating that it was of low concern or that they did not have members with mobility issues. As participation rates grow in modified sports such as wheelchair rugby, there may be missed opportunities for a number of clubs due to inadequate access to facilities.

Fig. 13 General issues faced by clubs



A summary of the general issues identified by local clubs/organisations is presented below.

Suitability of facilities

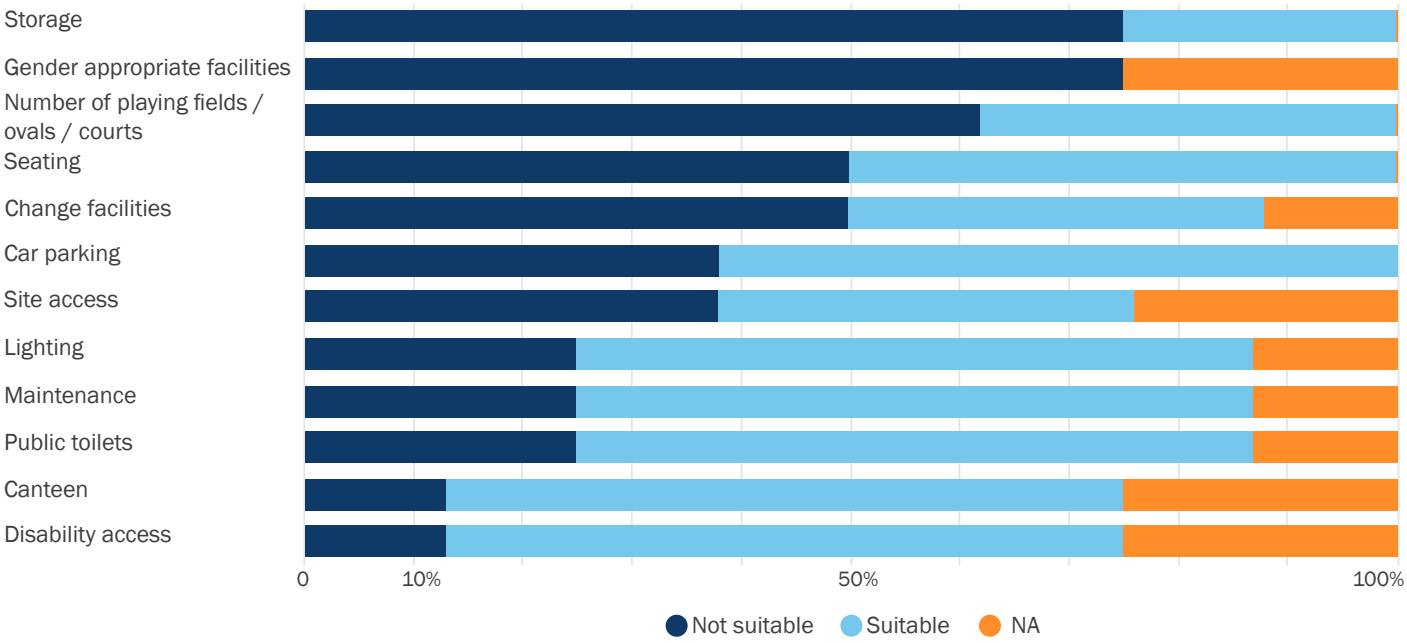
As previously mentioned, there is an overall lack of active open space in the LGA and Eastern City District, with limited capacity to develop new spaces now and into the future. With a growing demand for more training sessions and facilities and with increasing membership numbers, it is important that the current facilities are suitable for the users' needs and any upgrades to increase each facility's usage capacity is identified. Clubs were asked to review the suitability of their facilities. The top three facilities rated as "not suitable" are:

1. storage
2. gender appropriate facilities
3. number of playing fields/ ovals/ courts.

The lack of field lighting was also identified by many clubs as an issue with this being addressed later in this section.

A summary of the suitability of facilities is presented below.

Fig. 14 Facility issues faced by clubs



Storage

Clubs identified a lack of storage facilities or space at the active open spaces they use.

Considering the multi-purpose nature of many of Council's active open spaces, sporting clubs that use those spaces need somewhere to store their equipment for training and game days. Apart from Andrew Petrie Oval and Trumper Park, the more established sports facilities, the remaining spaces lack a dedicated storage facility. Users of Lyne Park currently store their equipment in the change rooms, while others have to take it to and from the fields.

Woollahra Oval 2 and 3 have a dedicated storage area, however, the area is leased to Colleagues Rugby Union Club and is already at capacity. Other users of the facility have nowhere to store their equipment.

For a number of clubs, the lack of a dedicated home ground exacerbates the storage issue.

Across other LGAs, sporting clubs use shipping containers for storage. In the Woollahra LGA, where the public open space is very highly valued by the community and individual active open spaces are used by a variety of sporting codes, the scattering of shipping containers around spaces such as Rushcutters Bay, Lyne and Christison Park will impact on their natural beauty and picturesque views.

Number of playing fields/ ovals/ courts

The LGA has no significant dedicated, multi-court hard court facility. Small hard courts can be found at:

- Christison Park
  - 2 x basketball/netball courts (multi-purpose hard courts, floodlights)
- Lyne Park
  - 1 x basketball court (no floodlights)
- Lough Playing Fields*
  - 1 x netball court (*natural grass - space for 2 courts, no floodlights)

The LGA participation rates in netball are increasing each year. With 200 plus players, the Double Bay Diamonds are struggling to find training locations, with many teams currently travelling to Moore Park and Waverley, two facilities outside the LGA already nearing capacity. As membership numbers increase, the Club is concerned with its ability to accommodate the growth. It is important to note that competition games are played at Heffron Park, Maroubra.

Given the pent up demand for netball and basketball courts and the outstanding success of the two new (July 2020) outdoor floodlit netball/basketball hard courts at Christison Park, the opportunity exists to convert the two grassed netball courts at Lough Playing Fields into multi purpose hard courts with flood lighting to address the lack of netball training facilities across the LGA.

There is also the opportunity to upgrade and reconfigure the cricket practice nets at Lower Cooper Park to incorporate a multi-court facility (given the size restrictions, a half court facility may only be possible).

The number of fields and ovals within the LGA is an ongoing issue for Council and others in the Eastern City District. During the winter season, a number of sports parks are nearing capacity with rugby union, football (soccer) and AFL fixtures and training. Although cricket continues to dominate the summer season, the longer pre-season training demands and/or off-season fixtures of the winter sporting codes are also starting to impact field and oval availability in the summer months.

As an example, Trumper Oval is the only AFL facility in the LGA. Home to the UTS Australian Football Club and the East Sydney Junior AFL Club, training sessions are split between Trumper Oval and Moore Park. If Club membership numbers continue to increase, Council will need to discuss additional training opportunities for the clubs.

Bowls, tennis and croquet clubs

There is currently adequate provision of lawn bowls, tennis and croquet opportunities across the LGA:

Croquet

» Sydney Croquet Club - immediately north of Andrew Petrie Oval within Golf Club grounds - very picturesque and locked in between golf course and Andrew Petrie Oval.

Bowls

» Bowls Clubs - essentially the only viable facility in the LGA is the Double Bay club with uncertain future management options and uses for the Vaucluse and Paddington facilities. Given the lack of open space available across the LGA, it will be important to retain these two facilities for community recreation purposes.
  - Double Bay Bowling Club (3 greens)
  - Vaucluse Bowling Club (2 greens and 2 tennis courts). Management of Vaucluse Bowling Club site transferred From Crown Lands to Woollahra Council by Gazettal in December 2022. The area of the park not leased to Vaucluse Bowling Club is to be the subject of a future landscape master plan to determine its future design and priorities for capital improvements, including potential recreational and play elements.
  - Paddington Bowling Club (Paddo Bowls) (2 greens). Continue discussions with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council regarding their priorities and vision for the site.

Tennis

» There are a number of public tennis courts located within the municipality that are available for hire
  - Cooper Park Tennis Courts (8 courts)
  - Lyne Park Tennis Centre (6 courts)
  - Trumper Park Tennis Centre (8 courts)
  - there is also a range of privately/school managed courts across the LGA.

It is noted that unused tennis courts can be re-purposed to facilitate a range of sports/activities such as futsal, basketball, mini-games and scootering which may be a better use for such facilities that are otherwise dormant.

Water based activities

» 9 sailing clubs
  - Woollahra Sailing Club
  - Pacific Sailing School
  - Cruising Yacht Club of Australia
  - RAN Sailing Association
  - Double Bay Sailing Club
  - Royal Motor Yacht Club of NSW
  - Vaucluse 12 Footers
  - Vaucluse Yacht Club
  - Double Bay 18 Footers League

It is noted that on 24 September 2018, Council approved the upgrade to the Northern section of Yarranabbe Park to include harbour stairs to access the water (Northern Plaza upgrade). It was noted in the report to Council that the stairs would provide a location to interact and access the harbour, provide additional recreational pursuits such as launching non-motorised vessels (kayaks/paddleboards) and enhance the use of the park. This project was put on hold shortly after being approved due to the Heritage listing of the Park. Council is currently preparing a Conservation Management Strategy for the park and a Statement of Heritage Impact for the project to address the requirements of the State Heritage Listing.

Discussions with some of the above user groups revealed various desired facility developments which will need further discussions with the relevant Council staff to determine their viability and level of Council involvement.

» Council currently has dinghy storage facilities at Steyne Park (Rose Bay), Rose Bay Park, Tingira Memorial Park (Rose Bay), Gibsons Beach Reserve (Watsons Bay), and Marine Parade (Watsons Bay)

» Lyne Park, Rose Bay provides a twin lane trailer boat launching ramp and a new launching ramp for sail craft has been built at the Woollahra Sailing Club

» Council managed swimming areas:
  - Camp Cove Beach, Watsons Bay
  - Parsley Bay Swimming Enclosure, Vaucluse
  - Murray Rose Pool, Double Bay
  - Watsons Bay Baths, Watsons Bay

» Managed by National Parks and Wildlife:
  – Shark Beach, Nielsen Park, Vaucluse

These Council managed beaches and swimming areas in the harbour are of critical importance to Woollahra's residents, as there are no public indoor or outdoor swimming centres in the LGA and the harbour pools and beaches provide wonderful recreational and social opportunities as well as relief and respite on hot days.

In terms of recreational opportunities, the LGA's harbour pools and beach allow residents and visitors to undertake a wide range of activities, such as swimming fishing, sailing, boating, sailboarding, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, outrigger canoeing, dragon boating, scuba diving, snorkeling, etc.

On 14 April, 2023, Council resolved to investigate swimming opportunities in many of Woollahra's harbour beaches and pools.

THAT Council:

A.Notes:

» 1. That its harbour beaches and pools (including Camp Cove Beach, Parsley Bay, Murray Rose Pool/ Redleaf Beach and Watsons Bay Baths) are much adored and well utilised Council facilities;
» 2. The popularity of swimming throughout the LGA (as identified in Council's draft Recreation Strategy (dated January 2023);
» 3. That the LGA has:
» i.no public indoor or outdoor swimming centres;
» ii.picturesque waterways, extending approximately 16km from Rushcutters Bay to Watsons Bay; and
» iii. a rich history of providing public access to the harbour for swimming.
» 4. The improvement to water quality in the harbour and advances in technology to monitor pollution and water quality;
» 5. That the harbour and its waterways are a valuable public asset;
»
» 6. The importance of exercise for physical and mental health and wellbeing;
» 7. The recent decisions by the:
» i.Canada Bay Council to open Bayview Park on the Parramatta River;
» ii.City of Sydney to open Pirrama Park, Pyrmont; and
» iii.the NSW State Government to:
» a. open Marrinawi Cove, Barangaroo for bathers and swimmers; and
» b. explore opening a floating swimming pool at Nawi Cove, Barangaroo.
» 8. That the harbour and its adjacent waterfront areas provide residents with respite from the impacts of the warming climate change.
» B. Resolves:
» 1. To commission a report subject to funding being considered and approved as part of the 2023/24 Budget process to investigate the feasibility (or otherwise) of creating a more accessible, safe and swimmable harbour, including identifying potential locations, with the focus of the report to be on the western harbour area of the LGA;
» 2. That Council staff also:
» i. explore and apply for any relevant grant funding to deliver such a report; and
» ii. liaise with relevant City of Sydney Council officers to explore the possibility of a joint investigation of the potential for swimming opportunities at Rushcutters Bay and surrounds.
» 3. To advance and amend Action Item 4.7 in the draft Recreation Strategy to: 'provide improved facilities (including accessible access) at our harbour beaches, bays and inlets to support swimming and relaxation, including seating, showers and safety facilities'.
»

Field lighting

The popular booking requests for the sports parks is for after school and work hours. With only four of the eight sports parks currently lit, these fields are already at full capacity and cannot cater for additional growth. Council officers have advised that requests from clubs for field usage need to be regularly declined due to the lack of availability. If the fields at other sports parks were lit to training standards, Council would be able to accommodate an additional 160+ hours of field/ oval usage (refer to below table for individual sports parks). Field usage increases are based on lit fields being available from 5:30-9:30pm, five days a week.

The increased usage would need to be managed and the resultant wear and tear of the fields addressed accordingly through increased maintenance. Clubs would also have to take into the increased costs of training due to lighting bills.

Sports Park	Lighting	Potential use increase if lit
Christison Park	1 floodlight (25 lux) covering a small section of field 1	60hrs/week (over 4 fields)
Cooper Park	No	20hrs/week
Rushcutters Bay Park	No	20hrs/week
Lough Playing Fields	No	40hrs/week (over 2 fields)
Steyne Park	No	20hrs/week
Trumper Park	Yes	Nil
Lyne Park	Yes	Nil
Andrew Petrie Oval (synthetic oval)	Yes	Nil
Woollahra Park/Ovals (2&3)	Yes	Nil
	Total	160 hours

Table 4: Potential increased use due to field lighting

Synthetic playing fields

The use of synthetic fields to reduce pressure and increase field capacity has been investigated by Council and others in Greater Sydney.

There are a number of benefits to the synthetic field at Andrew Petrie Oval, most notably the additional use. Since opening, the field has not closed due to wet weather, as the infill and drainage allows play 365 days per year. The durability of the surface has increased usage from 30 hours per week to over 60 hours per week (on particular weeks).

While an additional synthetic field in the LGA would benefit the sporting community, it is believed that proposed field lighting increases would be a more effective manner to increase sporting opportunities. Currently, all Council's active open spaces are freely accessible to the public, outside the allocated training hours.

In regard to the two above issues of field lighting and synthetic playing fields, Council's resolution of 19 August 2019 is noted:

» A. THAT Council defer a decision on the installation of another artificial turf field for 24 months to allow for further investigation of Woollahra Oval including the following consideration:
  – i. re-certification of Woollahra Oval
  – ii. an increase in usage of the field in particular during school hours
  – iii. further time to review the general wear and tear, usage and longevity.

» B. THAT Christison Park be noted as a possible location for an artificial turf field depending on further investigation and planning.

» C. THAT staff investigate sports lighting at existing sportsfields including Rushcutters Bay Park, Lough Playing Fields, Lower Cooper Park and Christison Park with the aim to increase the fields' usability.

» D. THAT a further report be presented back to the Committee to include costing, proposed timing, consultation plan, funding options and planning considerations for the installation of sports lighting as per recommendation C.

Furthermore, Council resolved on 12 June 2023:

THAT Council:

» A. Notes

» (i) its resolution of 5 July 2021 and that its moratorium on the installation of synthetic turf in Woollahra remains in place.

» (ii) the Department of Planning and Environment's report published in August 2021 titled, Synthetic Turf Study in Public Open Space, currently under review by the NSW Chief Scientist; and its request of staff to provide a report to Council once the final version of the latter is issued.

» B. Requests

» (i) Council staff give consideration to the findings and recommendations of the Department of

Environment and Planning report of August 2021, and the Chief Scientist's progress report, when reviewing and reporting a final version of its Plans of Management for Woollahra's parks and its Recreation Strategy.

Absence of home ground

Sporting clubs continue to express concern over the lack of a dedicated home ground with a club house, change room facilities and storage areas.

The only dedicated clubhouse facilities are at Andrew Petrie Oval and Woollahra Ovals 2-3, both of which are managed by the tenant rugby union clubs through respective leases with Council. There are essentially amenities blocks also at Trumper Park and Christison Park, containing basic change facilities, limited storage and toilets.

Traditionally and in other local government areas, clubs have a dedicated sports ground that they share with another code in the alternative season. However, in the Woollahra LGA, the multi-use and multi-purpose nature of each active open space makes it difficult to assign one or two codes to an individual space. The fact that many of these open spaces are regularly used for passive recreation activities also makes it difficult.

From a clubs point of view, the absence of a home ground means they are unable to attract sponsorship and raise funds through canteen sales. This, combined with the increasing costs of playing, insurance and decline of volunteers is placing financial pressure on some clubs.

Facility upgrades

Two thirds of community survey respondents rated the quality of Council's sports facilities as either "good" or "very good". Only 16.3% felt that Council should improve the quality of the sports facilities into the future.

Overall, the majority of sports clubs believed that the ancillary facilities were suitable for the needs of their users, but mentioned that they would like to see the quality improved. Change room facilities and seating were among the most common responses.

It was noted by several clubs that female membership

numbers are increasing in traditionally male dominated sports such as rugby union, football (soccer), cricket and AFL. As such, state sporting associations require that clubs provide separate change room facilities, in addition to an umpire/referees room. At the time of preparation of this Strategy, East's Rugby Club have received funding for new changerooms to facilitate improved female amenities. A development application was approved by Council in December 2022 for the construction of new facilities at Andrew Petrie Oval by Easts Rugby Club. In early 2023, Easts Rugby Club made the decision not to proceed with the approved DA and to prepare new plans for the facilities in the Oval which will be the subject of a new DA or modification to the existing consent.

In mid 2023, Easts Bulldogs Junior AFL Club, in conjunction with AFL NSW/ACT and Woollahra Council, received a grant of $310,000 from the NSW Government Office of Sport Female Friendly Community Sport Facilities and Lighting Upgrades Grant Program for the construction of accessible and female friendly change rooms and amenities at Trumper Oval. Construction of the facilities will occur during 2023/24.

All access

All of the clubs surveyed felt that they did not have any issues regarding all-abilities access to and within their facilities, while more than half agreed that the current situation was suitable to their needs.

It may be argued that many of the clubs do not cater for those with mobility issues and as such do not currently require the facilities.

Council's Disability Inclusion Plan identified that 70% of people with a disability expressed an interest in 'passive recreation or cultural activities' and 66% 'active recreation and fitness programs', indicating a need for improved access to such activities/facilities.

There may be an opportunity for Council and sporting clubs to investigate modified sports activities, such as wheelchair rugby and other fitness programs.

Maintenance

To prevent perceived ownership over an active open space and to encourage multi-use, clubs are issued with licence agreements to enter and use the land/facility for an agreed period.

Clubs pay a licence fee to Council that contributes to the cost of maintenance (the licence agreement stipulates the areas of the facility/land that the club must maintain). While the majority of the clubs are satisfied with the level of maintenance, the frequent use of the fields/ovals during the winter season are starting to effect the quality of the ovals and pitches for summer sporting codes, particularly at Trumper Oval.

The ability of clubs to meet maintenance/licence costs without being able to raise funds via canteen sales and sponsorship is an ongoing issue for many clubs.

It is noted that the cleanliness of change rooms and toilets at venues was also raised as an ongoing concern by some clubs.

It is also noted that the Council is currently undertaking a review of its provision/maintenance of garbage bins, with the intent to increase capacity. This will hopefully assist in the cleanliness of sporting and open space areas.

Car parking

During site inspections it became clear that car parking at active open spaces was significantly limited. Andrew Petrie Oval, Woollahra Ovals 2 & 3 and Lyne Park were the only active open spaces with internal parking, with on street parking being the only option at the remaining sites.

Interestingly, it was not mentioned as an issue from any clubs. However, it could be argued that many of the visiting teams struggle to park at the LGA's sport parks. The streets of Woollahra LGA are significantly busy already, the additional vehicle and pedestrian traffic around the sports parks on training and competition days not only results in increased traffic congestion but creates an unsafe environment for children. However, their is no easy solution to this issue, as space for parking facilities is as limited as that for additional passive or active open space across the LGA.

It was noted that the car park at Woollahra Ovals 2 & 3 is also of poor quality. Car spaces are too small and there is no organised flow around the car park.

Funding

A quarter of clubs identified that they have trouble accessing funding and grants. All clubs surveyed felt they would benefit from education and training opportunities in grant applications and/or fundraising.

Aquatic and indoor

Although the Woollahra LGA doesn't have any indoor sport or aquatic centres, residents can access such facilities from surrounding LGAs. Council facilities that are available include, but are not necessarily limited to:

City of Sydney

Aquatic facilities

- Prince Alfred Park Pool (Surry Hills)
  - 50m heated, outdoor pool and splash deck
- Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre (Ultimo)
  - 50m heated pool, program pool and leisure pool (including play features), all indoor
  - spa, sauna and steam room
  - health club (gym)
- Victoria Park Pool (Camperdown)
  - 50m heated, outdoor pool and splash pool
  - health club (gym)
- Andrew (Boy) Charlton Pool (The Domain)
  - 50m outdoor, heated saltwater pool, heated outdoor leisure pool
- Cook + Phillip Park Pool (City centre)
  - 50m pool, hydrotherapy pool and leisure/wave pool, all indoor and heated
  - health club (gym)
  - indoor sports court.

It is also noted the new Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre (Zetland) is now open, and includes the following:

- 50m outdoor heated pool
- 25m indoor heated pool and leisure pool with water play
- hydrotherapy pool
- Health club (gym)
- outdoor synthetic multipurpose sportsfield and playground.

Indoor sport/recreation centres

- Perry Park Recreation Centre (Alexandria)
  - 2 multi-purpose indoor sports courts
- Ultimo Community Centre (Ultimo)
  - small indoor court suitable only for modified ($^3/_4$) court sports
- King George V (KGV) Recreation Centre (The Rocks)
  - 2 multi-purpose indoor courts and 1 outdoor synthetic field/court
- Peter Forsyth Auditorium (Glebe)
  - 1 indoor multi-purpose court

Randwick City Council

Aquatic facilities

- Des Renford Leisure Centre (Maroubra)
  - 50 metre heated outdoor pool
  - 25 metre heated indoor competition pool
  - 25 metre heated indoor training pool
  - Enclosed outdoor dome heated pool
  - Outdoor toddler pool (seasonal)
- 8 ocean pools

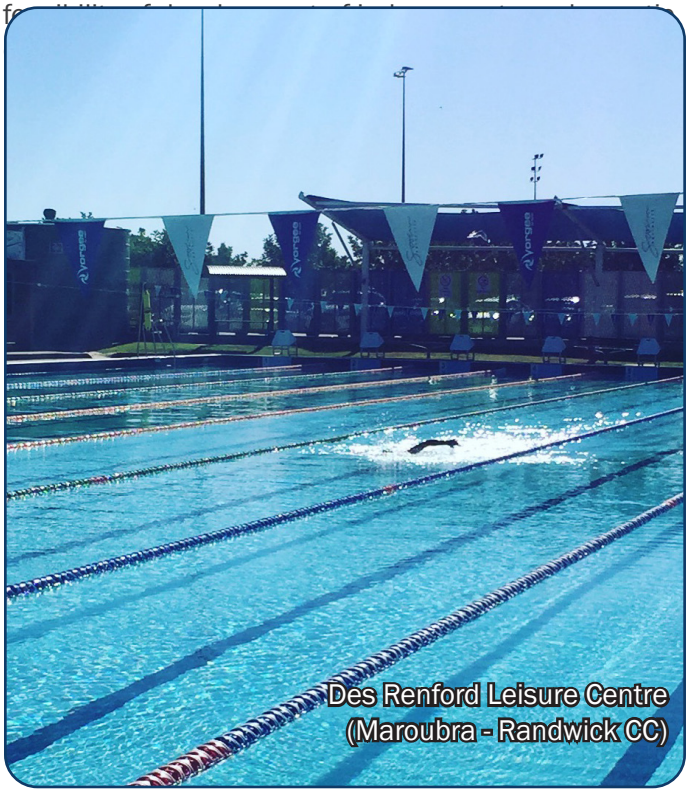
Indoor sport/recreation centres

- Council is planning to build a new sporting facility in Maroubra's Heffron Park known as The Heffron Centre. Initial plans for the Centre are to provide a gymnastics centre and a multi-purpose indoor sports court

Waverley Council

- No aquatic centres identified
- Margaret Whitlam Recreation Centre (Bondi Junction)
  - 1 multi-purpose indoor sports court.

It is noted that the possibility exists for Woollahra and Waverley Councils to cooperatively investigate the


Des Renford Leisure Centre
(Maroubra - Randwick CC)

5 Open space analysis

This section provides a discussion of the key issues identified during the development of the Strategy. The issues have been grouped under the following broad headings and provide the basis for the Action Plan in Section 6:

» Management
» Passive open space
» Active open space

For each issue the main source (research and consultation) has been identified along with a discussion of the needs assessment and where appropriate, identification of possible directions to address community needs.

Management

Table 5: Key identified issues

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Management		
Outdated Plans of Management, many requiring review to reflect changing community needs	As more people reconnect with local open space network, particularly those along the foreshores and harbour, and participation trends in passive and active recreation activities increases, the management plans for Council open spaces should be reviewed as a priority to ensure the environmental and recreation values are being balanced and managed sustainably	Under the Crown Land Management Act 2016, Woollahra Council must develop Plans of Management (POMs) for Crown Land Park it manages on behalf of the Crown. After public consultation of the draft POMs between 13 Feburary and 03 April, 2023, Council adopted the final POMs on 24 July, 2023. Approval from the Department of Planning and Environments (DPE) is required. Council has ensured the guiding principles from this Strategy are reflected in the management plans to present a consistent vision for open space, passive and active recreation and sport
Inability to develop new active open spaces due to lack of available space	Providing access to active open space is an ongoing concern for Council and sporting clubs. With no space for additional active open spaces, enhancing the current spaces capacity is the main focus	» Council should aim to develop master plans for the active open spaces to evaluate field and facility layout, user groups interests and potentially identify additional field capacity. The community's passive and active recreation needs will also need to be considered » In line with Council's draft Woollahra Play, master plans should be developed for key passive open spaces to ensure development is consistent with the desired vision and use the park » Consistent with 7.12 Contribution Plans, if a developer is unable to provide land as a contribution, ensure that an appropriate financial contribution towards a recreational development in the vicinity is received » Investigate opportunity sites to install unobtrusive and/or temporary play elements catering for youth play and interaction » Review current facilities to enhance recreational opportunities to meet community needs » Actively investigate feasibility of re-purposing and/or renovating current facilities and opportunities to increase provision of facilities that are under-represented when renewing leases and licences

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Management		
Strategic alliances with other government managers/owners of public land will be important to help resolve current and likely future shortages in open space for both passive recreation and sporting activities	» Council has a limited capacity to develop or acquire new parcels of land for public open space purposes » Demand for access to quality public open space is likely to remain high. The community are currently satisfied with Council's public open space	» Work in partnership with National Parks to ensure community's outdoor recreation values and experiences can be met sustainably » Continue working collaboratively with other Councils in the Eastern City District to ensure residents of the region have access to a range of activities » Investigate increased access to school facilities, particularly those schools that provide access to their aquatic and indoor facilities
Lack of accessible active recreation and fitness programs (residents access half of these activities from outside the LGA)	70% of people with disability expressed an interest in 'passive recreation activities' and 66% 'active recreation and fitness programs'	» Opportunity for Council to better communicate the availability of accessible active recreation and fitness programs and/or develop new programs » Create a community that enables people with disability to participate independently in passive and active recreation activities » Integrate planning across Council to improve the accessibility to and throughout public open spaces, walking paths and community facilities including universal design principles, seating and shade, rest stops and public toilets
Communication of activities and local sporting clubs	» difficult to advertise the presence of clubs due to few home grounds (no signage) » due to the multi-use nature of sites, community unsure of when certain sports are offered at sites	» Development of a local community directory » Promote and assist with 'come and try' days » Facilitate an annual forum for sport and recreation clubs, preferably around the release of Council's annual budget, to inform clubs about the year's vision for sport and recreation
Satisfaction surveys	With the high level of importance the community places on parks and open space, regular feedback could be sought to improve wherever practical	Undertake user satisfaction surveys at key recreation parks to determine visitation, user satisfaction and supply gaps
Lack of directional signage	User uncertainty exists due to: » Foreshore/significant walks often detour into residential streets » Passive parks being used by sporting clubs for training	» Install directional and information signage at key points of interest and sport and recreation facilities » Signage at passive parks to inform when (and what areas) they are used for on training and game days

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Management		
Relationship with water-based recreation clubs	Traditionally not a close working relationship with Council due to different tenancy arrangements and specific facility needs	Increased communication with such clubs/ organisations, including invitations to 'traditional' sports forums
Lack of clear embellishment and maintenance standards across active recreation parks	Clubs want clubhouses and better quality change room facilities	Desired standards of service or policy that addresses whether Council provides training or competitive venues/facilities, and to what standard
Opportunity exists to broaden and intensify the use of community facilities for recreational purposes	On 29 September 2020 Council resolved to endorse the 2019 Woollahra Community Facilities Study and to utilise the Study to assist in informing future decisions for the use and development of community facilities across the Local Government Area	Use the data provided in the 2019 Woollahra Community Facilities Study when promoting and planning indoor recreation and fitness programs where appropriate.
Private clubs and private schools regularly book Council open space and facilities while the general public has no access rights to their recreational facilities	Due to high land values Council does not have the opportunity to purchase and develop land to meet open space demand in the community	Investigate the possibility of including or facilitating community access to private clubs and private schools (to utilise their facilities for community recreational purposes) as a condition of development consent where possible, and also with agreements that are not associated with developments

Passive open space

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Passive open space		
Capacity and crowding has led to traffic and parking issues	» The LGAs high to medium density living environment, combined with the picturesque foreshore parks has created high demand for quality open space » Demand is expected to increase due to population growth in the Eastern City District and people's revived respect for public open space » Combination of resident car parking and visitor car parking has resulted in congestion at popular open spaces	» Investigate and promote car share facilities, carpooling, active transport, public transport and any other measures to reduce car usage when visiting parks » Promotion of other parks in Council's existing open spaces to spread the demand wherever possible
Maintenance issues - especially in peak periods	» Rubbish is often left behind or bins are overflowing » Toilets unmaintained over busy weekends.	» Review maintenance schedule - particularly around long weekends and special celebrations (potential for booking a space and the requirement to clean afterwards/up front refundable fee - subject to administrative burden) » More rubbish and recycling bins » Increased communication with clubs/ user groups to remove waste and to encourage recycling programs

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Passive open space		
Perceived lack of shade	» Identified in consultation that residents felt there was a lack of shade	» Increase natural shade in passive open spaces especially around existing playgrounds that do not have shade structures » Investigate the feasibility of installing shade structures at playgrounds taking into consideration community consultation
Lack of play facilities for children and the youth	» Playgrounds are more for young children and toddlers » No skate parks or places for youth to socialise » Basketball courts are often too busy with a variety of users » Issue with acceptance of a suitable location of youth area » Due to existing lack of green space, residents reluctant have additional infrastructure within parks	» Rushcutters Bay Park has been identified as the preferred location for a skatepark. Noting the Heritage Listing of the park, Council is required to prepare a Conservation Management Strategy for the site and a Statement of Heritage Impact for the Youth Recreation project. Once this is complete, approval will be sought from Heritage NSW prior to preparing a Review of Environmental Factors for approval under the Part 5 of the EP&A Act » An additional site might allow the development of further youth facilities to complement, not duplicate those proposed at Rushcutters Bay. Lyne Park is well positioned for such a development given its location and current user groups » Continue to investigate the feasibility and design of a multi purpose hard court facility at Lough Playing Fields » Upgrade cricket practice nets at Lower Cooper Park and investigate their reconfiguration to allow a multi-sport hard court facility (full or half) in this location
Opportunities for an ageing population	Identified through site inspections, community survey responses and discussions with Council officers	» Investigate opportunities to increase features that cater for older residents such as improved pathways, seating (resting spots), outdoor fitness equipment, informative signage (including historical facts) and the use of technologies such as QR codes » Identify areas with a high need such as the medium-high density housing for older residents in the areas around Woollahra Ovals 2/3 where such infrastructure could be accommodated.
Lack of supporting facilities	Identified in community survey	Investigate the installation of supporting features within passive open space such as additional pathways, seating, shade structures, bins, toilets and water bubblers

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Passive open space		
Increased use of, and expectations for, open space	Identified as a result of raised appreciation of open space as a result of COVID-19 impacts	» Investigate alternative initiatives for developing open spaces such as Park streets/Street Play Install directional and information signage at key points of interest and sport and recreation facilities » Signage at passive parks to inform when (and what areas) they are used for on training and game days. » Install directional and information signage at key points of interest and sport and recreation facilities » Signage at passive parks to inform when (and what areas) they are used for on training and game days
Value natural settings	Ongoing disagreement within community concerning nature-based play vs built playgrounds.	Undertake actions identified by the draft Woollahra Play document, taking into consideration the natural environment.
Signage (also mentioned in management)	Distance markings and wayfinding signage would address that foreshore/significant walks often detour into residential streets	» Install directional and information signage at key points of interest and sport and recreation facilities » Signage at passive parks to inform when (and what areas) they are used for on training and game days
Use of public golf course	» Given the lack of open space, this large parcel of open space only really used by members/paying players. » Eastern City District Plan looks at using golf courses to help with the under supply of open space	Investigate the inclusion of designated walking paths, and potential use for community events such as park runs. Investigations much address the public safety issues of such use and the continued availability of the public golf course
Informal and ad-hoc personal water craft storage.	Identified during site inspections, can be unsightly, potentially dangerous and restrict public access to foreshore areas	Although not wide-spread, additional storage sites could be investigated, but while considering the increasing issue of ad-hoc kayak storage, also consider the balance between the need for storage and retaining public access and views
Dog off-leash exercise and management	One of the most common themes throughout the 2020 consultation process for the Crown reserves draft Plan of Management was dog management. Some users want more areas for dog exercise while others want dogs to be restricted and / or prohibited from certain reserves	Given this split in the community on this issue, it is recommended that Council undertake a review of dog regulations throughout the municipality
Regulation and compliance by commercial fitness trainers	An issue that was raised during the 2020 consultation process for the Crown reserves draft Plan of Management was the non-compliance of commercial fitness trainers in open space	Benchmarking has also shown that Woollahra Council charges significantly less for commercial fitness permits than surrounding councils. Undertake a review of Council's Commercial Fitness Training Activities in Public Open Space Policy

Active open space

Issue	Needs assessment	Future direction
Active open space		
Field lighting	» Site inspections (evidence of over-use) » Common response to club surveys » Council resolution of 19 August 2019: – *C: that staff investigate sports lighting at existing sportsfields including Rushcutters Bay Park, Lough Playing Fields, Lower Cooper Park and Christison Park with the aim to increase the fields' usability*	Undertake an audit and feasibility study for the provision of field lighting with a view to increasing these fields' ability to cater for increased use. Proposed sites for lighting increases include, but are not necessarily limited to: » Christison Park » Cooper Park » Rushcutters Bay Park » Lough Playing Fields (including netball courts) » Steyne Park
Over-use of fields	» Site inspections (evidence of unauthorised use, especially during wet weather) » Club survey responses demonstrated active spaces showing wear and tear from high levels of use	» Increased maintenance program on active spaces » Undertake field lighting developments as per above
Lack of female friendly facilities/storage	» Common response from club survey » Limited built infrastructure identified during site and facility inspections » Increased female participation in traditionally male-dominated sports	» Undertake a detailed audit of existing buildings servicing active open spaces to develop a works schedule for their upgrade over time including: – the inclusion of female friendly facilities (including at Trumper Park to fulfil the NSW Government's $310,0000 Female Friendly Sport Facilities Program) – increased storage options – general toilet/change room upgrades (including at Andrew Petrie Oval by Easts Rugby Club) – access for people with a disability » Investigate low-impact storage options for sites with no such facilities
Inadequate change facilities	» Site inspections » Common response to club surveys	As above, especially in regard to female sports (detailed audit and works schedule)
Lack of spectating facilities	Site inspections, club survey responses and Council officer feedback	Work with sports club at Woollahra Ovals 2 & 3 to develop adequate spectating facilities
Club assistance	Various responses to club survey	Increase the promotion of assistance/ education available for key areas of operation such as volunteer management, financial management and accessing external funding
Bowls clubs	The currently un-used Paddo Bowls and the struggling Vaucluse Bowling Club facilities could possible be better utilised, especially given the LGA's lack of open space	Pursue a master plan for Samuel Park / Vaucluse Bowling Club to determine its future design and priorities. Continue discussions with La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council regarding the future use/management of Paddo Bowls.

6 Strategic direction

Vision for open space and recreation activities

The vision for recreation and sport in the Woollahra LGA is:

> *Residents (and visitors) of the Woollahra area are aware of and have access to a diverse range of recreation and sporting facilities that create opportunities for physical activity and ensure a great quality of life for all ages, cultures and abilities.*

Guiding principles

The guiding principles outlined below describe the overarching intention for the provision and management of sport and recreation facilities and physical activity opportunities for Council. These principles have helped to guide and shape the individual recommendations presented in the Strategy. They can be further altered to ensure any new policies or policy reviews are in accordance with the desired outcomes of the LGA's vision for sport and recreation facilities and physical activity.

Quality planning

Council will ensure a strategic approach to the provision of sport and recreation facilities and physical activity opportunities. Facilities will be fit-for purpose and, once developed, adaptive management practices (i.e. regular reviews) will be undertaken.

When planning for sport and recreation facilities and physical activity opportunities, consideration will be given to the desired standards of service, community need and demand and Council resources (financial and staff). Not all activities and expectations will be accommodated (nor need to be accommodated) across all areas of the Local Government Area.

Enhancing existing provision

Council has limited resources to maintain and upgrade the range of recreation and sporting facilities, and the open space it already manages. There is also not the opportunities to purchase and develop significant additional lands to meet demand.

With these significant constraints in mind, Council will focus on upgrading and improving the functionality of existing facilities. This will include investigating the re-purposing of current open space facilities where the demand exists, and where appropriate to do so, while continuing to maintain a diverse range of recreational opportunities throughout the LGA for Woollahra residents.

Adequately resourced

Council will identify and allocate resources for the provision of recreation and sporting facilities and physical activity opportunities in a strategic, efficient, transparent and equitable manner in line with Council's capacity to fund.

Partnerships

Council will work closely with other key land managers (e.g. NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, private providers) to ensure an integrated approach to recreation and sporting facilities and physical activity opportunity management.

Key strategies/documents from these agencies to consider include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- State Strategic Plan – A Vision for Crown Land
- Greener Places – An Urban Green Infrastructure Design Framework
- NSW Public Spaces Charter.

Attractive

Council will ensure that recreation and sporting facilities are designed and effectively maintained to an appropriate quality to encourage the community to value them and to foster high levels of use.

Adaptable

Council will ensure that multi-use facilities offer a diversity of choices that reflect the varied needs of the community.

Accessible and connected

Council will strive to develop well-linked and accessible locations that enhance opportunities for health and well-being for all.

Action plan

Following the issues and future directions identified in Section 5 (Open Space Analysis), the following Action Plan provides a concise summary of specific actions that are recommended to occur in order for Council to achieve its vision for the provision of recreation, sport and open space opportunities over the next ten (10) years.

It should be noted that this Draft Recreation Strategy and the subsequent following Action Plan have considered:

- the importance of play spaces and the need to provide a variety of experiences
- that public open space greatly enhances the character of the Woollahra local government area's (LGA) neighbourhoods, supports health and active lifestyles and brings communities together. The role and value of open space is becoming increasingly important as living patterns within Woollahra LGA continue to change. Just under 80% of Woollahra residents live in medium to high density dwellings, with minimal or no communal outdoor space. As such, greater emphasis is placed on Woollahra's public open space network to provide and support a diverse range of areas for recreation, sport and social activity, as well as establishing physical links that support social networks and create a sense of community
- Woollahra LGA, similar to other LGAs in the Eastern City District and Greater Sydney, has a deficiency of open space, from a planning perspective, with relatively few opportunities to increase the quantity. Consistent with the open space vision for the Eastern City District, Council needs to place greater emphasis on improving the quality, and access to, its open space network, recreation and sporting facilities
- the objectives, priorities and guidelines from State Government policies, documents and strategies such as the *State Strategic Plan – A Vision for Crown Land*; *Greener Places – An Urban Green Infrastructure Design Framework*; and the *NSW Public Spaces Charter.*

Implementation of the recommendations outlined will require strong leadership, appropriate resources from Council and a commitment to making some difficult decisions. There is a history of residents raising objections to various proposed initiatives across the LGA and it is therefore important for the need of potential projects to be clearly demonstrated through the undertaking of thorough feasibility studies (or similar) and comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation

The dominant theme that came through the engagement processes and analysis is a direction to maintain and upgrade the existing network without necessarily focussing on building more facilities.

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

The recommendations of this Plan are detailed on the following pages and are grouped into four strategic areas:

- Management
- Passive open space
- Active open space
- Water-based and other

Priorities are assigned for each action. A high recommendation should be undertaken as soon as resources allow (within 1 - 4 years) while medium (in the next 5 - 8 years) and low priorities (in the next 9+ years) are not as urgent. Indicative costs are provided for the total project cost (not necessarily Council's financial burden). More detailed costing should be undertaken for each project as its nears commencement.

Priority Table	
High	1-4 years
Medium	5-8 years
Low	9+ years

Table 6: Action plan

Action No.	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Indicative cost
1.0 Management				
1.1	Update Plans of Management for open spaces	High	Council	Internal resources
1.2	Undertake master plans (consistent with any relevant PoMs) for the following sites: – Lyne Park – Rushcutters Bay Park (including David Martin Reserve, Yarranabbe Park and the resident sailing/yacht clubs) – Christison Park – Lough Playing Fields and Cooper Park – Trumper Park – Steyne Park – Samuel Park	High	Council	Rushcutters Bay Park – $70,000 Lyne Park – $60,000 Christison, Lough/ Cooper and Trumper – $50,000 each
1.3	Investigate increased access to public and private school facilities, in line with State Government objectives and principles	High	Council	Internal resource
1.4	Develop a local community directory on Council's webpage to assist in the promotion of active and passive open spaces	Medium	Council	Internal resources
1.5	Undertake user satisfaction surveys in both active and passive open spaces (every two years)	Medium (and Ongoing)	Council	Internal resources
1.6	Establish clear standards of service related to the provision of active open space facilities such as club houses, scoreboards and other ancillaries	Medium	Council	Internal resources
1.7	Continue the shared nature of open spaces (passive/active) to make the best possible use of the limited open space available across the LGA, with improvements to active spaces as indicated elsewhere in this Action Plan to increase their functionality for the delivery of organised sport by clubs	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
1.8	Continue working with City of Sydney, Randwick and Waverley Councils and National Parks in a collaborative approach to provide a variety of recreation and sporting opportunities	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
1.9	Increase promotion of accessible active recreation and fitness programs where appropriate	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
1.10	Investigate feasibility of re-purposing and/or renovating current facilities including the Fletcher Street Depot and Grafton Street carpark (Waverley LGA) to incorporate possible recreational facilities	Low	Council	Internal resources
1.11	Investigate recreational opportunities in all new community facilities and/ or upgrades to street domain including the Wilberforce Car Park and Cross Street Car Park developments	High	Council	Internal resources
1.12	Pursue external sources of funding, such as grants and funding from other levels of government and the business community to improve recreation facilities and Council-run programs	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
1.13	Use the data provided in the 2019 Woollahra Community Facilities Study when promoting and planning indoor recreation and fitness programs where appropriate	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
1.14	When preparing future strategic open space plans, refer to the Greater Sydney Commission (Eastern City District) Sports Infrastructure Plan, a significant body of work that has been prepared by the Commission, in consultation with Woollahra Council and other councils in the district, which provides a strong foundation for future facility provision and participation in sport and active recreation in the district	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources

Action No.	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Indicative cost
1.15	Investigate the possibility of including or facilitating community access to private clubs and private schools (to utilise their facilities for community recreational purposes) as a condition of development consent where possible, and also with agreements that are not associated with developments	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
2.0 Passive open space				
2.1	Development of youth spaces – continue to progress the development of a youth facility (skate park) in Rushcutters Bay consistent with that proposed by the draft Play Spaces Strategy and relevant Council resolutions	High	Council	$1,151,800 (allocated in 2022/23 budget)
	– undertake a feasibility study for the development of a significant youth precinct at Lyne Park (or another appropriate site) providing complementary features to that proposed at Rushcutters Bay	Medium	Council	$50,000
2.2	Install directional and informative signage at key points of interest and popular walking trails (including the Bondi to Manly walk)	High	Council	$150,000 (over 2 years)
2.3	Investigate the possible increased use of the public golf course though the inclusion of designated pathways and use by community events	Medium	Council	Internal resources
2.4	Increased number of rubbish and recycling bins Continue to investigate ways to better manage waste through parks including; - the continued review of smart bins - continued rollout of larger capacity bins - education program targeting park users including recycling and waste reduction	Medium	Council	Internal resources and $30,000 (over 2 years)
2.5	Promotion of less used passive open spaces	Medium	Council	Internal resources
2.6	Develop a Shade Policy to include: » Increase natural shade in passive open spaces especially around existing playgrounds that do not have shade structures » Investigate the feasibility of installing shade structures at playgrounds taking into consideration community consultation.	Medium	Council	Internal resources
2.7	As per Council's 2020 resolution, Council officers to liaise with their Waverley counterparts in regard the feasibility of undertaking a similar trial as Waverley's *Street Play Initiative* in Woollahra, giving priority to streets in the Paddington and Cooper Wards	Medium	Council	Internal resources
2.8	Investigate the possibility of additional water craft storage at appropriate sites across the LGA	Low	Council	Internal resources
2.9	Undertake the recommended actions of Woollahra Play (Play Space Strategy) once complete	Ongoing	Council	TBD
2.10	Undertake a review of dog regulations throughout the municipality	High	Council	Internal resources
2.11	Undertake a review of Council's Commercial Fitness Training Policy	High	Council	Internal resources
2.12	Investigate the land owned by Sydney Water surrounding the Vaucluse Reservoir (Clairvaux Rd) for future public recreation uses	High	Council	TBD
2.13	Investigate the development of heritage walks with informative signage and the use of technology (such as QR codes with links to maps and further information) for greater user experience and interaction'.	Medium	Council	TBD
2.14	Further develop and promote all walking trails in the LGA	Ongoing	Council	TBD
3.0 Active open space				
3.1	Undertake an audit of existing sports field lighting and a feasibility study to identify costs, environmental impacts, benefits and locations of field lighting across the LGA	High	Council	$60,000 - $80,000 Sites identified as priorities include: » Christison Park » Cooper Park » Rushcutters Bay Park » Lough Playing Fields » Steyne Park

Action No.	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Indicative cost
3.2	Design and construct increased sports field lighting at priority sites identified by the above action. Designs must consider the possible impact of such lighting on residents and the potential for objections	High	Council	» TBD
3.3	Undertake a detailed audit of buildings servicing active open spaces with particular attention to: – change rooms (including the ability to incorporate female friendly facilities) – storage – toilets – canteen facilities – access for people with disabilities. Audit report to include a proposed schedule of works	High	Council	$100,000
3.4	Undertake the schedule of works as detailed in the above Audit Report	As identified by Audit Report	Council/ contractors	TBD by Audit Report
3.5	Develop hard court netball/basketball courts at Lough Playing Fields (including flood lighting to further meet the significant demand for netball training opportunities)	High	Council	$650,000
3.6	Pursue a master plan for Samuel Park / Vaucluse Bowling Club to determine its future design and priorities. Continue discussions with La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council regarding the future use/ management of Paddo Bowls.	High	Council	Internal resources
3.7	Upgrade cricket practice nets at Lower Cooper Park and investigate their reconfiguration to allow the incorporation a co-located multi-court facility	Medium	Council	$50,000
3.8	Investigate low-impact storage options for sites without existing infrastructure	Medium	Council	Internal resources
3.9	Investigate the development of an accessible pathway network around Trumper Oval incorporating the inclusion of seating opportunities for spectating and resting (2022/23 Budget).	Medium	Council	$180,000
3.10	Undertake a detailed feasibility study to investigate the need, benefit and possible location/s of future synthetic sporting fields/ovals, subject to Council's 2019 resolution, including the following considerations: » re-certification of Woollahra Oval » an increase in usage of the field in particular during school hours » further time to review the general wear and tear, usage and longevity *Note:* In June 2023, Council placed a moratorium on synthetic sporting fields, as noted in the discussion on Synthetic Playing Fields on page 42.	Medium	Council	$60,000 - $80,000
3.11	Investigate the development/increase of spectating facilities (with storage incorporated where possible) at Lyne Park and Andrew Petrie Oval, Woollahra Ovals 2/3.	Medium	Council	Internal resources
3.12	Upgrade car parking area at Woollahra Ovals 2/3	Medium	Council	$150,000
3.13	Promote assistance/education opportunities available to sporting clubs through State and Federal governments	Ongoing	Council	Internal resources
3.14	Upon renewal of a license for the management of a tennis court facility staff investigate other uses of the courts to be more multi-purposed	Ongoing	Council	TBD
4.0 Water based and other				
4.1	Audit/investigation to improve access to harbour pools for people with a disability undertaken in 2022/23. Beach access roll out mats for Camp Cove Beach and Parsley Bay Beach included in 2022/23 Budget ($36,000).	High	Council	$36,000
4.2	Hold a forum with the user groups based between Rushcutters Bay and Yarranabbe to determine specific needs (such as a launching facility over the spillway and the possibility of an elevator in the building next to the Drill Hall)the viability of these needs, and the likely level (if any) of Council's contribution.	High	Council/clubs	Internal resources
4.3	Increased regular communication with water clubs and the facilitation of a specific forum to discuss their needs and aspirations	High	Council and Clubs/groups	Internal resources

Action No.	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Indicative cost
4.4	Continue to progress the Yarranabbe Park - Northern Plaza upgrade including harbour stairs to allow better interaction with the harbour and a location to launch non-motorised vessels including kayaks and stand up paddleboards	High	Council	$400,000+
4.5	Investigate further opportunities for dinghy storage facilities at areas where unauthorised storage is an issue (including Parsley Bay Reserve)	High	Council	TBD
4.6	Investigate wheelchair accessible options for Camp Cove and Parsley Bay Beach	High	Council	$40,000
4.7	Provide improved facilities (including accessible access) at our harbour beaches, bays and inlets to support swimming and relaxation, including seating, showers and safety facilities. *Note*: Council resolved on a 14 April 2023, A Swimmable Harbour as discussed in Water Based Activities on pages 40 and 41	Medium	Council	TBD
4.8	Investigate temporary play facilities on beaches / foreshores	Medium	Council	TBD
4.9	Continue to investigate accessibility options for Murray Rose Pool (as outlined in the Redleaf and Blackburn Gardens Plan of Management)	Medium	Council	TBD
4.10	Continue to work with NSW Maritime, Sydney Water and internal Council teams to assist in the improvement of stormwater and pollution on beaches including the installation of informative and educational signage	High	Council	Internal resources
4.11	Action Council's resolution from 13 March 2023, and 'commission a report to investigate the feasibility (or otherwise) of creating a more accessible, safe and swimmable harbour, including identifying potential locations, with the focus of the report to be on the western harbour area of the LGA'.	Medium	Council	TBD