



Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Recreation Strategy 2020-2030



recreation
open space
and sport
specialists

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Document Control:

Version	Date	Document	Author	Reviewer	Recipient
V1.0	15.03.19	Draft Recreation Strategy	HC & DC	CP	DA & RtB
V2.0	25.09.19	Amended Draft Recreation Strategy	HC & DC	CP	DA & RtB
V3.0	16.03.20	Final Draft Recreation Strategy	HC & DC	CP	IG & DA
V4.0	30.04.20	Recreation Strategy	HC & DC		IG & DA

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land; the people of the Kamilaroi nation and their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of the Liverpool Plains Shire.



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Executive Summary

Liverpool Plains Shire is a vibrant, dynamic and economically strong rural area located four hours north of Sydney and 45 minutes south of the regional centre of Tamworth. The region has a rich agricultural history and picturesque beauty encompassing the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and the sweeping expanse of the fertile Liverpool Plains. The area offers the opportunity for a true rural lifestyle in a friendly atmosphere with excellent transport links.

Serving a population of almost 8,000 residents, Liverpool Plains Shire Council supports its residents to be active and healthy by providing a range of recreation and sport facilities in towns and villages across the Shire. The largest population centre is Quirindi with about 2,700 residents, followed by Werris Creek with about 1,500. Smaller villages throughout the Shire range in population size between 100-400 residents. As the area is predominantly agricultural, people living on properties across the Shire travel into service centres to access facilities and services that meet their needs, including diverse recreation and sport pursuits.

This Recreation Strategy provides strategic direction to assist Council focus its efforts to support the community to be active and healthy through needs based planning, the provision of appropriate facilities and supporting programs to activate public spaces. Development of two Master Plans: one over the Quirindi Racecourse and Showground and the second over Longfield Oval, Golland Fields and the surrounding precinct. These Master Plans are the result of more detailed consultation with users, site inspections and analysis and detailed planning. They include a staged and prioritised implementation plan.

The document is structured to provide the reader with a logical progression referencing existing relevant Council planning and policy documents, emerging trends, the Shire's demographic profile and the results of previous community consultation, site audits and community engagement undertaken specifically to inform the Recreation Strategy.

A park hierarchy is provided to guide development of parks and reserves to ensure adequate facilities are provide while avoiding ad hoc development and over-embellishment.

The Strategy includes a comprehensive recreation analysis section detailing key findings and recommendations for the Shire and each town and village. An evaluation framework is also provided to enable Council to assess the success of the strategies and actions in enabling recreation and sport participation.

Key recommendations of the Strategy include:

- implementation of Master Plans over the Quirindi Racecourse and Showground and Longfield Oval, Golland Fields and surrounding precinct
- development of a Design Guide to ensure the unique character of towns and villages is captured and place-making principles are applied to parks and open spaces
- development of a Public Space and Street Tree Strategy to increase shade and amenity in parks, public spaces and along walk and cycleways
- prioritising applications for external grants to fund infrastructure projects identified in the Strategy
- undertaking comprehensive needs analysis prior to replacing assets, particularly those with high capital and ongoing operational costs, such as the Quirindi Swimming Centre
- implementing and supporting programs to activate public spaces and encourage participation in recreation and sport activities.



Background

1.1 Purpose

The Recreation Strategy (the Strategy) aims to guide the provision of sport and recreation facilities to support active and socially connected lifestyles on the Liverpool Plains for the long term.

The Strategy provides Council with a framework to understand the community's current and likely future sport and recreation needs and supports the provision, management, development and delivery of sport and recreation by:

- ☐ understanding the regional, state and national sport and active recreation sectors in relation to Liverpool Plains
- ☐ development of an inventory of existing and proposed sport and recreation organisations, services and facilities in Liverpool Plains and those of relevance in adjoining local government areas
- ☐ reviewing sport and active recreation trends and implications, particularly for the ageing demographic
- ☐ development of an agreed vision and guiding principles for sport and recreation facilities in the shire
- ☐ identifying support mechanisms for the ongoing development of community volunteer managed sport and recreation organisations
- ☐ identifying land requirements for future sport and active recreation opportunities
- ☐ identifying opportunities for shared use of facilities
- ☐ identifying future prioritised facility development and potential funding opportunities based on trends, demands and community needs
- ☐ identifying opportunities to better support the evolution of emerging or alternative sports
- ☐ identifying healthy lifestyles particularly for ageing residents in the community
- ☐ clarifying roles and responsibilities of Council and the community in the provision of sport and recreation.

1.2 Scope

The Strategy focuses on Council owned and/or managed public open space (parks, sport facilities, active transport corridors). However, natural areas have been considered for their role in providing for nature-based recreation and tourism while privately-owned sport facilities have also been included given the pressure they take off Council for provision.

This Strategy does not necessarily provide detailed analysis of each individual Council park or reserve nor detailed operational actions. However, it provides strategic guidance on key identified issues from the open space network and includes actions to encourage opportunities for increased participation in sport and recreation by a broad cross-section of the community.

Detailed analysis was undertaken to develop Master Plans for Longfield Oval, Quirindi and the Quirindi Racecourse and Showgrounds as part of the overall project. The Master Plans are standalone documents and drawings, however are referenced in this Strategy.

Information contained within this Strategy is based on an audit and assessment of the Council's recreation and sport facilities, and is a snapshot in time only. This information is accurate as at February 2019. Any sport, park and/or recreation facility developments or data updates since this time may not have been taken into account.

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

It is also essential that Council is open and honest with the community regarding what it can afford to build and maintain and what the community will be required to contribute in order to provide sport and recreation opportunities. Innovative and pragmatic funding models and clear funding responsibilities need to be applied to deliver the Strategy.

1.3 Strategy inputs and outputs

The development of the Strategy has been informed by relevant local strategies and plans and an effective community engagement process to ensure a current assessment of residents' priorities and needs.



Quirindi Racecourse and Showgrounds

1.4 Defining key terms

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

Spaces



Recreation Park

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



Sports facilities

Designed to primarily support a range of recreation activities for training and competition. These sports parks are designed to accommodate the playing surface and infrastructure requirements of specific sports. Sports facilities are further broken down into a number of categories.

Traditional sports parks

Sports facilities that cater to traditional field and court sports.



Lawn sports and golf

Sports that are often associated with large clubs such as bowls clubs, croquet and golf.



Aquatic facilities

Council owned swimming pools.



Hard-to-locate

Sports that require large amounts of space to function effectively or are too noisy for the urban areas.



Indoor facilities

Provide opportunities for sports indoor, often courts sports. Quirindi High School allow community use of the indoor sports hall.

Activities



Sport

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



Recreation

Recreation describes activities undertaken during leisure time and is further categorised as passive or active recreation



Active recreation

Active recreation refers to organised forms of recreation activities such as Parkrun, yoga and pilates, gym workout and group fitness.



Passive recreation

Passive recreation are typically outdoor recreation activities such as nature observation, bird watching and hiking, that require a minimum of built facilities and have minimal impact on the site.

1.5 Benefits of sport and recreation

Sport and recreation is one avenue that can help to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of our community and has far reaching social, economic, environmental and health benefits for the region.



Physical health

- ☐ reduced risk of chronic disease
- ☐ reduced risk of developing, and potentially dying from, a variety of cancers
- ☐ prevention of weight gain when coupled with healthy nutrition and improved weight management
- ☐ reduced risk of osteoporosis and osteoarthritis
- ☐ increased energy and improved sleep quality
- ☐ reduced risk of falling and fracturing bones
- ☐ improved mobility, flexibility and functional ability



Mental health

- ☐ contributes to prevention and treatment of anxiety and depression
- ☐ stress reduction, improved mood and sense of well-being
- ☐ improved concentration, enhanced memory and learning, and better performance
- ☐ increased vitality, psychological well-being and improved body image



Social

- ☐ sport and recreation clubs are the hub of community life, especially in rural towns and villages
- ☐ creates opportunities for, and promotes volunteering
- ☐ provides a vehicle for inclusion, drawing together people from different backgrounds, religions, cultures and nationalities
- ☐ contributes to social capital
- ☐ fosters community pride
- ☐ provides a sense of belonging
- ☐ active children are more likely to engage in and enjoy school
- ☐ binds communities and families through shared experiences
- ☐ contribute to lifelong learning and develops leadership skills



Economic

- ☐ contributes to the local economy
- ☐ healthy employees are more productive
- ☐ a healthy community eases pressure on the health system
- ☐ economic growth through business investment, employment, major events and tourism



Environmental

- ☐ reduced storm water runoff through on-site capture in open spaces
- ☐ lower daytime temperatures in shaded parks compared with surrounding streets
- ☐ improved local neighbourhood amenity when traffic is reduced

1.6 Council's role

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is committed to supporting the community to be healthy and active. This Plan reconfirms Council's endeavours to work in partnership with community organisations, private providers and government agencies to achieve shared goals. It is important for Council to be clear about its role and the role of other organisations in the provision of recreation and sport to the community. Council's role is explored in more detail below.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Council's role is to take a long-term view to planning sustainably for the provision of recreation opportunities through:

- local environment plan
- strategic planning and partnership development
- policy development
- master planning for open space, active transport, infrastructure and facilities
- sustainable asset management practices.



RESEARCH AND TREND IDENTIFICATION

Strategic direction requires evidence-based planning and policy development. Council has a responsibility to ensure its decision making is based on research including:

- social planning and demographics
- community specific research.



PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCACY

Collaboration, co-operation and forming strategic partnerships with government, business and community sectors to support the provision of recreation and sport to the community including:

- identifying key stakeholders in the provision of recreation and sport and building and maintaining strong working relationships that are action and results driven
- encouraging and supporting community organisations to increase awareness of their products and services to the community
- supporting funding applications that are consistent with Council's strategic direction, lodged by community organisations
- developing strong relationships with state and federal government departments and agencies including: Office of Sport, Education, Health, Planning and Industry, Transport, Premier and Cabinet, Destination NSW.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Council provides strategically targeted funding opportunities to community organisations and individuals to support the provision of recreation and sport including:

- subsidised hire of Council facilities including hall hire
- community and regionally significant event sponsorship
- infrastructure improvements
- youth scholarships for education and employment.



PROVIDER AND FACILITATOR

Council delivers services to meet community, recreation and sport club's needs by:

- undertaking community consultation to inform strategic planning and policy positions
- providing quality sporting grounds that are under lease, licence or user agreements with Council
- providing a range of recreation parks catering for all age groups across the LGA.

1.7 Community Strategic Plan

Liverpool Plains Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 identifies the community's priorities for allocation of resources - time, effort and financial - for the next decade. Four key themes have been identified and actions relevant to the Recreation Strategy have been summarised below.



A GREAT RURAL LIFESTYLE WITH ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES

- promote and support the businesses, club and community organisations and social hubs that make our region great
- support our local groups, including our sporting, youth and recreation organisations
- explore the potential for new events which celebrate our sporting, family, and cultural life
- support well maintained infrastructure across the region.



STRONG COMMUNITY, COUNCIL AND BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

- recognise the contributions of volunteers in the sporting clubs, community organisations, emergency services and charities and churches that make our shire great
- actively recruit and promote people to participate as volunteers
- work hard to ensure genuine relationships between community groups, and clubs, local businesses and council by fostering a transparent approach
- support an equitable approach across the towns in the region in regard to costs and access to services, facilities and infrastructure
- acknowledge community contributions and achievements.



A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

- ensure planning for our infrastructure and maintenance is integrated, well planned and timely.



A THRIVING ECONOMY

- value our cultural, community and recreational facilities
- work together to take stock of facilities we no longer use and identify where they may be re-purposed to meet our needs
- explore new facilities and opportunities
- work together to build on current events in the Shire and surrounding areas that attract tourists.

1.8 Local Environment Plan 2011

The Liverpool Plains Local Environment Plan (LEP) aims to make local environmental planning provisions for land in the Shire to encourage the proper management of the natural and man-made resources of the Liverpool Plains.

Council adopted a Development Control Plan in 2017 that includes provision for contributions of a minimum area of 0.5 hectares (5,000 square metres) of open space land as part of future residential developments, if additional open space land is deemed a requirement by Council.

This Strategy should be referred to when considering contributions of additional open space land as part of residential development.

1.9 Local Government Act 1993

The Local Government Act provides the legal framework for the system of local government in NSW and sets out the responsibilities and powers of councils and councillors in a system that is accountable to the community¹.

Part 2 of the Act requires all public land to be categorised as either community or operational and requires preparation of Plans of Management for community land recognising core objectives for their categorisation.

Also of relevance to this Strategy, Section 68 of the Act sets out a range of activities that require Council approval. The process required, commonly referred to as Section 68 approvals are in addition, or ancillary, to standard development application requirements.

1.10 Development contributions

As a consequence of development, there may be a requirement for contributions (including for cycleways, community facilities and local open space land and embellishments) to be made as a condition of development consent in accordance with Council's development contributions plan(s).

Council has included a number of recreation and sport facilities in development contribution plans proposed development including:

- ☐ new swimming pool in Quirindi
- ☐ pool amenities in Werris Creek
- ☐ indoor sports stadium in Quirindi
- ☐ improvements in village parks
- ☐ improvements to Golland Fields
- ☐ improvements to the Quirindi Racecourse/Showgrounds
- ☐ improvements to King George V Park at Willow Tree

1 Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) Chapter 2, Section 7 (Australia)

- ☐ pedestrian pathways in town centres in Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree
- ☐ cycleway in Quirindi connecting Werris Creek Road to the golf course
- ☐ investigation into rail overpasses at Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree.

This Strategy has considered these projects when analysing data and research, and when making recommendations regarding priority projects to achieve recreation outcomes.

1.11 Crown Land Management Act 2016

With the introduction of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 all Crown reserves under the control of Council are to be managed as public land under the Local Government Act 1993. Crown reserves classified as community land require a Plan of Management to be prepared under the Act.

Council is required to provide a list of Crown reserves it manages with a nominated categorisation and classification to the Minister for Lands and Forestry for approval, prior to development of Plans of Management.

Plans of Management can be generic (over a number of different reserves that have similar characteristics) or specific (over reserves where a range of matters require investigation, planning and proposed action).

This Strategy provides a strategic framework for reference when developing Plans of Management over Council land and Crown reserves classified for community purposes.

1.12 Population projections

In 2015 Council commissioned an assessment of future population trends for the Liverpool Plains, particularly with regard to major resource developments identified for the region. The study projected the population of Liverpool Plains to reach 9,412 persons by 2031, representing annual average growth of 1.0%², assuming the resource developments proceeding as planned.

Uncertainty in the coal mining sector has seen coal mining expansion slow in the Gunnedah Basin resulting in reduced direct employment and scaling back the use of contractors. The assumption underpinning the population projections have not been realised and the population of the Liverpool Plains at the 2016 Census was closer to NSW Planning projections of 7,900 by 2016 (officially 7,687³) and 7,850 by 2031.

The direction provided by this Strategy is relevant for the current and potential population and should be referenced when planning to accommodate additional residents.

2 Liverpool Plains Shire Population Projections, Lawrence Consulting, 2015

3 ABS 2016 Census QuickStats Liverpool Plains

1.13 Community satisfaction research

In 2013, Council engaged a research company to assist it gain an understanding of the community's priorities and satisfaction with Council activities, services and facilities, its overall performance and to identify any trends or benchmarks from previous research.

The Community Facilities category included town centres and public places, parks, public toilets, indoor recreation centres, sporting ovals, libraries, swimming pools and animal control. The facilities were rated for importance and satisfaction, with the following results (descending from very important/satisfaction (5) to moderately low importance/satisfaction (2)):

Importance		Satisfaction	
Public toilets	5	Libraries	5
Quality of town centres and public spaces	4	Sporting ovals	4
Animal control	4	Parks	4
Parks	4	Swimming pools	4
Sporting ovals	3	Quality of town centres and public spaces	4
Swimming pools	3	Public toilets	3
Libraries	3	Animal control	3
Indoor recreation centres	2	Indoor recreation centres	2

The report recommended Council focus on improving public toilets, with animal control and indoor recreation centres defined as niche, meaning they are important to a particular segment of the community. Sporting ovals, parks, swimming pools and quality of town centres and public spaces were considered core strengths and Council could rationalise focus on these services to balance resources for identified priorities.

It is important to acknowledge that the research is now five years old and perceptions of satisfaction in the community may have evolved over that time. Nevertheless, it has been taken into consideration when developing the Recreation Strategy.

1.14 Asset Management Plan

The Buildings and Other Structures Asset Management Plan completed in 2012 indicates that a significant number of assets at recreation parks and sport facilities have reached or surpassed their useful life. When considering replacement or new assets, this Strategy should be used to contribute to decision making.

1.15 Bike Plan and PAMP

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council Bike Plan and Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) were adopted by Council in 2015.

Walking is an activity which is synonymous with a healthy lifestyle and the LPSC PAMP provides the framework for developing safe and convenient pedestrian routes or areas identified as important for enhanced sustainable safety, convenience and mobility. Progressive implementation of the PAMP recommendations supports residents to be active while undertaking every day tasks. It is acknowledged that the highways and major roads in the towns and villages of the Shire can be barriers to walking and cycling.

The Bike Plan provides a long term plan for the development of safe cycling within the Liverpool Plains region via a coordinated and strategic approach including infrastructure and promotional programs. A significant number of projects identified in the Bike Plan have been completed and Council plans on completing more in the future. With walking being the activity with the highest participation across the Shire, shared paths are a sound investment.



Tamarang Polo Club/Liverpool Plains Shire



Recreation in the Shire

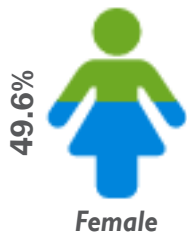
2.1 Community profile

An individual's preference to participate in sport and/or recreation activities and their level of participation is influenced by their stage in life. Understanding the Shire's demographic variations, such as age, household composition, income and employment patterns is fundamental to responding to, and planning for the future provision of the Shire's sport and recreation spaces, facilities and programs. The following data originates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census. (Please note that variables in data interpretation used by the ABS may result in slight differences in population totals.)

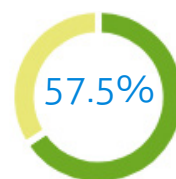
Population

Population **7,687**

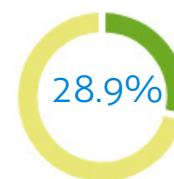
Median age **45**



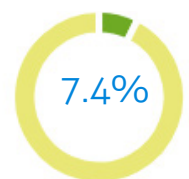
Employment



full-time work

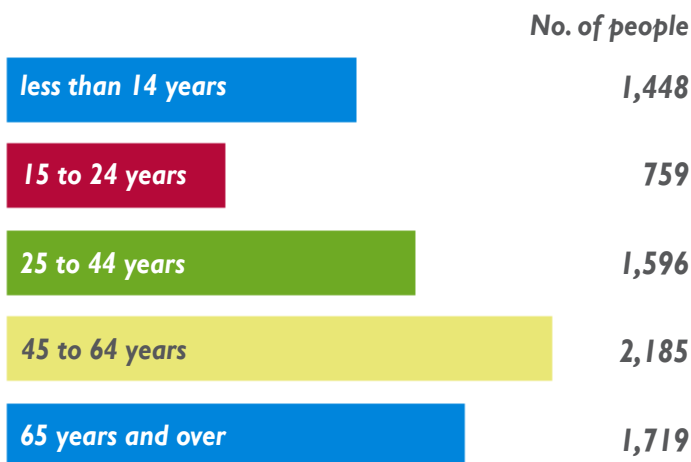


part-time work



unemployed

957 Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander



Income

Median weekly personal income

\$533

Median weekly household income

\$1,032



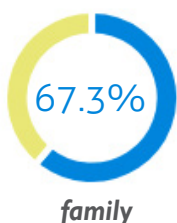
Vehicle

Access to one or more motor vehicles

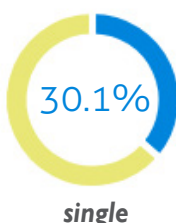
89.7%



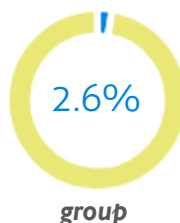
Household



family



single



group

Internet

Households with access to the internet

69.5%

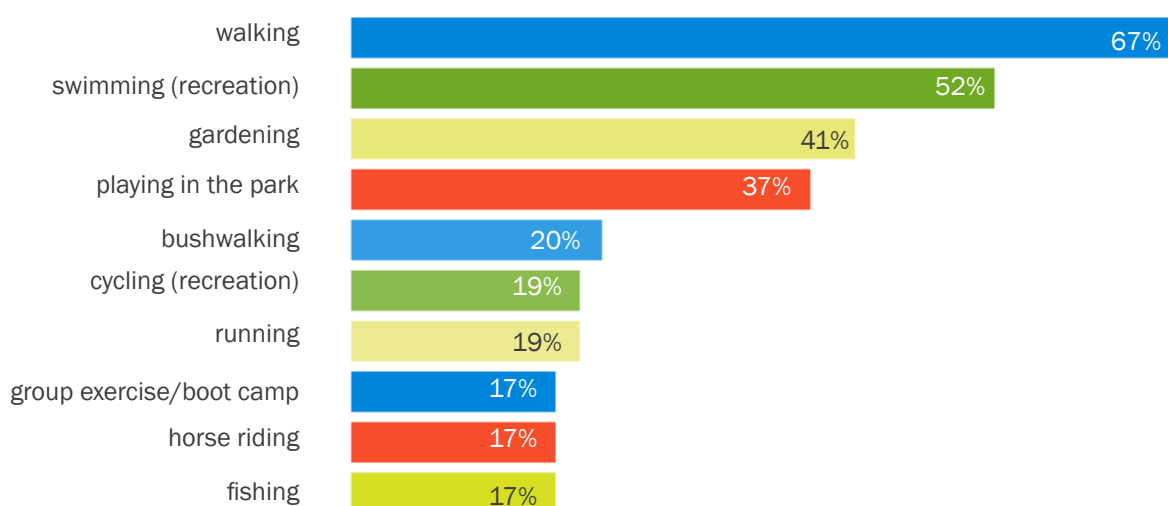


2.2 Participation in recreation and sport

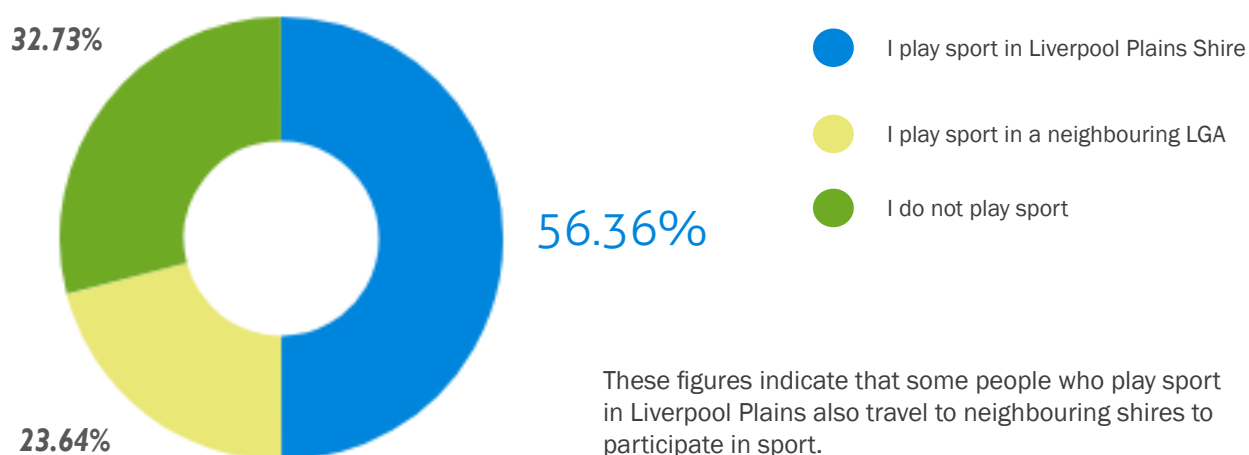
Liverpool Shire residents responded to an online survey aimed at gathering data to better understand the recreation and sport activities participated in and the places where these activities take place. The results of the survey are referred to throughout the Strategy, along with other research, to support recommendations. The survey is only one source used to reflect the attitudes and recreation habits of the population of Liverpool Plains. As detailed previously, the demographic profile of the Liverpool Plains is diverse and the information below is provided as a snapshot to assist establish a framework for the provision of recreation in the future.

Consistent with national trends, walking is the most popular recreation activity for 66.67% of survey respondents in the Shire. Swimming for recreation (not sport) is also popular (51.85%) along with gardening, playing in the park, bushwalking, cycling and a range of unstructured recreation activities (refer to the graph below). These results reflect national trends that indicate a decline in participation in organised and structured recreation, such as sport.

Top 10 recreation and sport activities



Percentage of survey respondents participating in sport



2.3 Community engagement summary

Sport and recreation is one avenue that can help to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of our community and have far reaching social, economic, environmental and health benefits for the region.



Community workshops

- ☐ 1 x Werris Creek
- ☐ 1 x Quirindi.



Community survey (online and hard copies were available)

Throughout the community engagement period Council received **57** community surveys. Of these respondents:

- ☐ over 71% live in Quirindi
- ☐ almost 10% live in Werris Creek
- ☐ over 5% live in Spring Ridge
- ☐ over 5% live in Willow Tree
- ☐ remaining live in Blackville, Wallabadah, Carroona and Braefield.



Sport and recreation club surveys

A total of **15** sport and recreation clubs and associations completed the club survey.

School chats and surveys

Children in primary school were interviewed about their recreation patterns, while high school students were asked to complete a simple survey about their sport and recreation preferences. Schools visited include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackville Public School | <input type="checkbox"/> St Joseph's Primary School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Currabubula Public School | <input type="checkbox"/> Walhallow Public School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Premier Public School | <input type="checkbox"/> Wallabadah Public School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quirindi High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Werris Creek Public School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quirindi Public School | <input type="checkbox"/> Willow Tree Public School. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Ride Public School | |



Additional stakeholders

Additional community engagement activities include:

- ☐ intercept surveys at parks, sport facilities and public places
- ☐ sport and recreation facility managers in neighbouring local government areas
- ☐ neighbouring local government authorities
- ☐ district, regional or state sporting organisations.



Walking path/Liverpool Plains Shire



Walhallow playground/Liverpool Plains Shire



Spring Ridge tennis courts/Liverpool Plains Shire



Longfield Oval Quirindi/Liverpool Plains Shire

2.4 Key values and identified issues

Below is a summary of relevant key issues identified through engagement processes conducted specifically for this Strategy or previously undertaken by Council to inform its Community Strategic Plan and to leverage state and federal government funding opportunities.



Popular place and activities

The community overwhelmingly rate parks and sport facilities as very important, with a third visiting their favourite place at least weekly, a quarter visiting on most days and others visiting daily, monthly, twice a week or fortnightly. While many residents participate in recreation activities at home, other popular places that rated highly include swimming for recreation (not sport) at the public swimming pools, walking and cycling on local footpaths and roads, playgrounds and sports facilities. Golf courses and gyms or fitness centres were as popular as playgrounds and typical sport facilities. Quirindi pool was identified the most often by people when asked what park or facility they would upgrade, due to its age and lack of a deep/diving end. Additional community events in public parks was sought by almost 30% of survey respondents.



Natural settings are highly valued

Almost two thirds of survey respondents selected the natural setting of parks and open spaces as a key value. This was the highest rated value above spending time with family and social interaction. As a rural area with small concentrations of towns and communities dispersed across the Shire, residents have access to creeks, rivers, dams and lakes, as well as national parks in close proximity. The predominant vista in the Shire consists of plains and rolling hills that are highly valued by residents and visitors.



Lack of shade

The need for additional shade was identified as a barrier to using parks and sport facilities by over 43% of survey respondents (the highest barrier identified). Lack of shade in summer and an inability to shelter from cold in the winter can prevent people from participating in and enjoying recreation and sport activities. Weather (too hot/too cold) was identified by almost 23% of survey respondents as a barrier. Interestingly, while many parks and sport facilities in the Shire have ample shade and shelter by either established trees and/or built shelters, others provide very limited shade at locations where users need it the most. Additional trees for shade along walk and cycle pathways was also highlighted by survey respondents.



Family and community is important

Being able to spend quality time with the family (60.71%) in a setting that appealed to the whole family (51.79%) and encouraged social interaction with the broader community (50%) were highly valued by survey respondents and were three of the top five values identified. Parks and sport facilities were identified as important places to spend time with friends by over 46% of respondents. Social connection is a key component of strong and resilient communities and recreation and sport is a recognised tool to support opportunities for interaction and development of friendships.



Improved standard of facilities

One of the survey questions asked respondents to identify the top three priorities to fund over the next 10 years. Improvement of the quality of sports grounds, ovals and courts was the top response selected by almost 40% of respondents. Improved access to, and facilities at, creeks or dams were also identified by almost a third of respondents. By contrast, park maintenance is perceived by the majority of residents as not requiring improvement with only 10% of respondents stating dissatisfaction with the current maintenance standard. Ageing facilities, particularly public swimming pools, were highlighted in comments by respondents with statements that the facilities were old and outdated and aspirations for a new improved facility including improved change facilities, heating for year-round use and a deep end for dive starts.





Aquatic facilities

Swimming is the second most popular recreation activity in the Shire, second only to walking, with almost 52% of survey respondents selecting swimming (for recreation, not club). 58% of survey respondents selected the public swimming pools as a favourite place to recreate. Council's and the Quirindi High School's solution to providing access to the pool for secondary school students is innovative and an example for other local governments. The pools are popular locations for people to cool off, have fun, learn to swim and undertake low impact exercise. Swimming clubs in Quirindi and Werris Creek represent a small portion of the total population. Both the Quirindi and Werris Creek pools are ageing. The Werris Creek facility has recently undergone upgrades to its water filtration system and had children's splash toys installed. The Quirindi facility is fast approaching the end of its useful asset life. Provision of two public swimming pools for a population of under 8,000 people within a short drive requires review. Council will need to initiate an open and robust conversation with the community regarding replacement of the Quirindi Swimming Centre.



Walk and cycle path network

Improved walking and cycling connections between key destinations was identified by almost 23% of respondents, however only 7% identified new or upgraded walk and cycle paths as a priority. Ensuring continuity of pathways and completing connections between key destinations and or circuits was highlighted by respondents.



Places and activities for youth

Half of survey respondents rated activities for youth as poor with almost 35% selecting *improved facilities for youth* in the top three priorities for funding. This was the second highest priority by survey respondents, after *improved quality of sports grounds/ovals/courts*. Several comments highlighted the value of skate parks while simultaneously calling for improvements to increase the appeal and challenge/technical difficulty for users. The lack of public transport for youth to move independently between towns, particularly on weekends, was raised by several people.



Community use of school facilities

Community use of school facilities is increasingly recognised as a way to maximise the use of existing facilities and provide recreation and sport opportunities. This is particularly relevant in small communities where the public school is a community focal point and provides high quality play opportunities for students. There are clear benefits when community organisations contribute to development and maintenance of school facilities including access to external grants and funding that schools may not be eligible for. In turn, school facilities are established and usually in locations central to residential areas in towns and villages. The primary function of a school is as a place of learning and during school hours it is essential that schools are used for educational purposes. Schools in NSW are encouraged to make their facilities available for use by the community, for appropriate purposes.



Universal Design Principles

There is a growing awareness and acceptance of universal design principles in development of community infrastructure. The benefits of doing so includes greater functionality, safety, flexibility and inclusiveness. The seven principles of universal design are:

- ☐ equitable use
- ☐ flexibility in use
- ☐ simple and intuitive use
- ☐ perceptible information
- ☐ tolerance for error
- ☐ low physical effort
- ☐ size and space for approach and use.



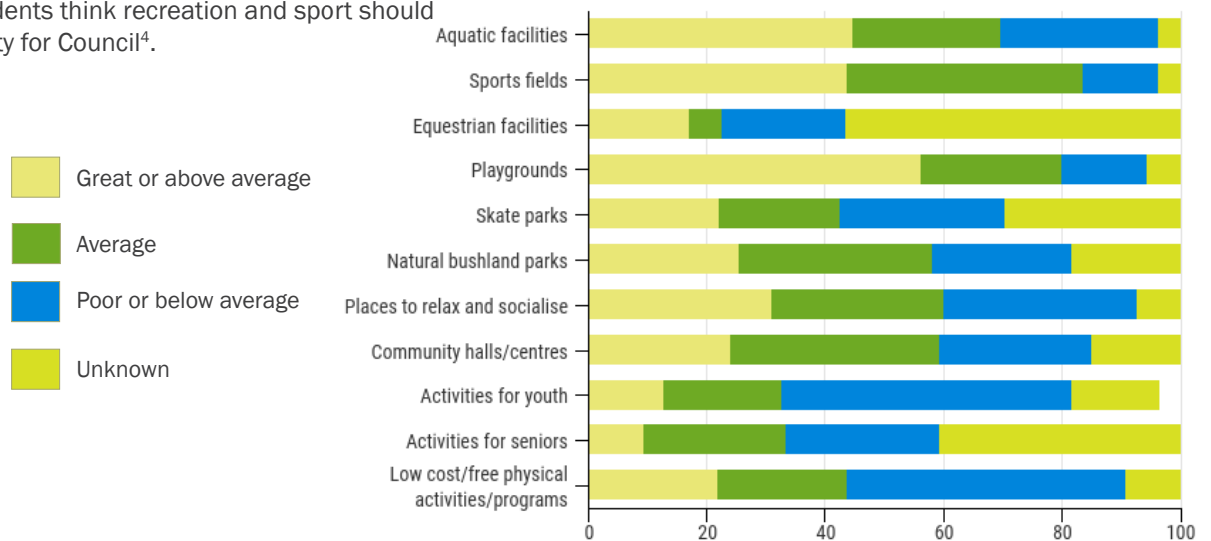
Current supply of places

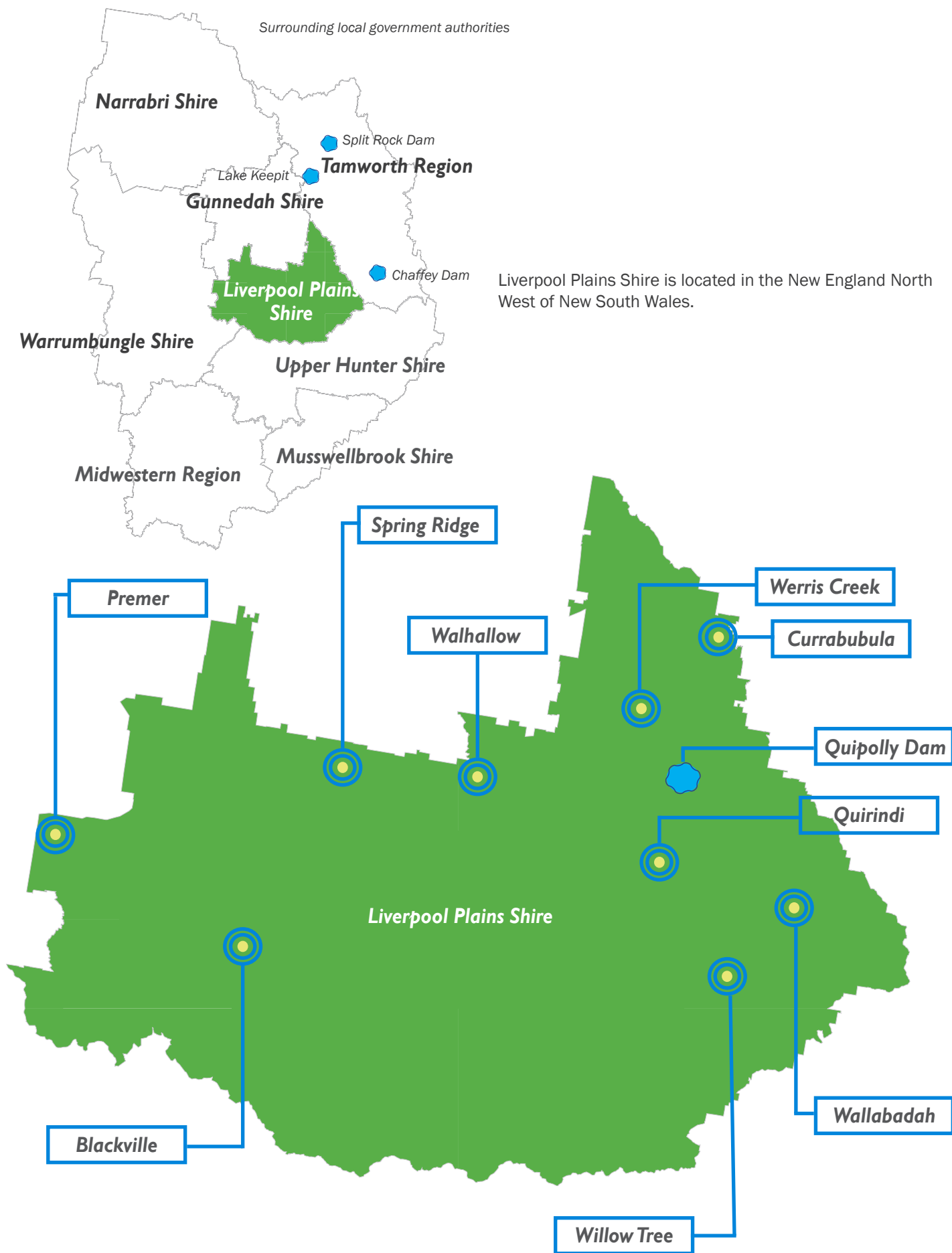
People living in Liverpool Plains Shire have unlimited access to expansive open space including agricultural plains for cropping and grazing, ridge lines with remnant vegetation, creeks, dams and waterways and national parks on the doorstep. In towns and communities, there are established sporting facilities, recreation parks, playgrounds and pathways for safe walking and cycling. Neighbouring local government areas with greater population concentrations provide additional recreation and sport facilities to standards reflecting higher user numbers due to a district or regional population catchment. Generally, Liverpool Plains residents are prepared to travel to access the sport or recreation facility of their choice within the Shire or beyond, if required.

Community engagement to inform the Strategy included a community survey. Survey responses revealed that Council has created an environment where:

- ☐ 75% of respondents visit parks or sport facilities once a week or more
- ☐ 91% of respondents view open space (playgrounds, sport fields/courts, skateparks, picnic facilities etc.) as *important or very important*
- ☐ 96% of respondents think recreation and sport should be a high priority for Council⁴.

During the development of this Strategy, residents were asked to rate the overall quality of the recreation and open space opportunities/facilities in the Shire. While the results referred to previously note that the open space network is well-used and is considered an important priority, respondents indicated mixed satisfaction in quality. Combined satisfaction ratings of *great* and *above average* of at least 55% (see graph below) were noted for playgrounds, with aquatic facilities and sports fields rating just over 40%. Places to relax and socialise secured the fourth highest rating with about one third of respondents rating these highly. However, respondents were generally displeased with the Council's activities for youth and seniors, lack of low cost/free physical activities/programs, community halls and skate parks. It is important to critically analyse these results as they represent expressed opinions of only a portion of the community and may not accurately reflect the provision of facilities and activities.





Liverpool Plains Shire towns and communities

3.1 Current Supply overview

The Liverpool Plains Shire community currently has access to a wide range of facilities and spaces, providing numerous opportunities for recreation.

active recreation	2 aquatic facilities	1 dams	2 squash courts	1 fitness centre/gym
	10 playgrounds	2 skate parks	12 community halls	3 National and State Parks
organised sport	6 reserves with active sport clubs	8 ovals	4 ovals with cricket pitches	4 clubhouses
	3 cricket nets	6 soccer fields	7 bowling greens	1 indoor court
	2 netball courts	10 tennis courts	5 equestrian venues	2 shooting venues

3.2 Neighbouring LGA Supply overview

Neighbouring local government authorities in relatively close proximity to Liverpool Plains Shire, provide additional facilities and opportunities for residents to access. In particular, residents living in Liverpool Plains are attracted to activities in Tamworth, Gunnedah and Upper Hunter local government areas.

Discussions with school students and survey respondents in Liverpool Plains revealed that many residents travel to access recreation facilities and activities in neighbouring local government areas. Survey respondents indicated that, generally, travelling for recreation and sport was accepted and expected, particularly for higher level competition or more specialised sporting pursuits.

Due to neighbouring Tamworth Regional Council's population size, a greater range and number of recreation facilities and activities can be provided. The Tamworth region population forecast for 2019 is 63,142 and is forecast to grow to 79,468 (25.68%) by 2041⁵. As Tamworth is within a one hour drive from the Liverpool Plains' larger population centres of Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree, many Liverpool Plains residents take advantage of the additional sport and recreation opportunities on offer. The range of recreational facilities cater for a broad spectrum of activities and include:

- parks, gardens and reserves
- lookouts
- public swimming pools
- heated swimming pool
- sporting facilities
- indoor sports centre
- skateparks
- range of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Liverpool Plains residents also travel north to the Gunnedah Shire and south to Upper Hunter Shire to participate in sporting competitions and to access specialised recreation and sport activities, however this occurs to a lesser extent than travel to Tamworth.

It is essential that Liverpool Plains Shire Council continues to provide adequate facilities for residents to choose a range of recreation activities to participate in and to live active, healthy and connected lives. The proximity of a larger centre such as Tamworth allows Council to strategically plan for a sustainable framework of recreation facilities for the current and future population of Liverpool Plains by augmenting opportunities provided in the wider region.

3.3 Council achievements

Council actively supports the community to be active and healthy with a diverse range of opportunities for people to participate in recreation and sport opportunities of their choice. Recently Council has committed to undertake development of the following facilities to encourage physical activity in the community:

- new and upgraded water filtration system at the Werris Creek Swimming Pool
- new children's play equipment at the Werris Creek Swimming Pool
- installation of solar water heating at the Werris Creek Swimming Pool
- new fence at the playground at Currabubula
- resurfacing and line marking multi-sport courts at Currabubula
- new fence for the perimeter of the oval at Spring Ridge
- installation of irrigation system at Golland Fields in Quirindi
- resurfacing tennis courts to cater for basketball and netball in Quirindi
- upgrading the amenities at the Quirindi Racecourse and Showground.

5 id forecasts

3.4 Park hierarchy

Desired standards of service

Standards-based approach

It is important to develop open spaces that meet the needs of the community. It can also be important that development reflects desired standards of service (DSS) for provision. These standards articulate the preferred directions that Council strives to provide. DSS for open space are, generally, categorised under three broad measures:

- quantity of land for open space
- access to open space
- level of embellishment.

The *quantity standard* identifies the recommended minimum standards for the provision of land for open space.

Standards are generally presented as hectares/1,000 (population).

The *access standard* refers to preferred maximum distances between residential areas and each open space type (e.g. 5 minute walk/400m).

The *level of embellishment standard* indicates preferred facilities and activities within each open space type.

The access and quantity standards are, traditionally, the two primary measures used to assess and plan for open space land demands. However, for a number of key reasons (outlined in the adjoining discussion) this ‘traditional’ approach to open space planning is not preferred for Liverpool Plains Shire.

Needs-based approach

The standards-based approach (DSS) to open space planning is most effectively used in greenfield situations where significant population growth is forecast. However, in a number of instances, this approach is not necessarily the only approach for consideration. Alternate approaches may be appropriate when:

- infill development (rather than greenfield development) is planned
- limited population growth is expected
- planning areas consist of a number of separate smaller towns and villages.

Liverpool Plains Shire is typified by:

- limited expectations of growth over the next 20 years
- towns and small villages distributed across the Shire
- generally larger residential block sizes.

Given these aspects of the Shire, the analysis presented in the Strategy has taken more of a needs-based approach to open space planning. While the standards-based approach outcomes for access and embellishment have been considered for each planning area, more weight is given to the planning area ‘needs’ as it considers the social, demographic and environmental characteristics of an area for which open space is needed and/or the type of embellishment required in an open space. Not only does the needs-based approach consider the number of people living in the area (more akin to standards-based planning), but importantly it also takes into account recreation preferences, demographic changes and existing facilities.

Access to experiences

For each planning precinct (town/village), the Strategy considers the location, activities (or experiences) and embellishment of existing open space facilities and preferred outcomes for that planning area (town or village) to address any demand.

It is recognised that not every locality will provide access to each of these experiences (especially given how small a number of the villages are). However, ensuring that each of these opportunities is, at least, available at a Shire-wide level is a key component of the Plan.

The range of activities and experiences considered as key elements in the Shire’s open space network include:

- water-based recreation
- access to nature
- escape, break out and recreation areas
- comfort/safety
- indoor recreation/community meetings
- outdoor recreation
- picnics
- playgrounds
- sport
- activities
- walking and cycling
- cultural/community events.

Tiered hierarchy approach to access and distribution

A tiered hierarchy of open spaces within Liverpool Plains Shire has been proposed, in order to appropriately plan for the future open space, sport and recreation needs of each community. The tiers provide detail on the level of facilities and embellishments that the community can expect, as well as indicative travel distances for the community to access additional facilities.

The sustainability of open space and sports facilities must be considered in the provision of future open space, with an important component being Council's ability to fund, operate and maintain the network and assets.

TIER	RECREATION PARKS		SPORTS PARKS			OTHER OPEN SPACE		
	TOWN	LOCAL	TOWN	LOCAL	SPECIALISED	PRIVATE	UTILITY	CAMPING
ONE								
Quirindi	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
TWO								
Werris Creek	✓		✓		✓ [^]	✓	✓	✓
THREE								
Currabubula Premier Spring Ridge Walhallow Wallabadah Willow Tree		✓ [*]		✓ [*]	✓ ^{^*}	✓	✓	✓
* preferably shared use of the playground/oval at the local school (where they exist) [^] only tennis courts, preferably shared use of the tennis courts at the local school (where they exist)								

Embellishment

As previously noted, the Plan proposes an open space classification and hierarchy based around local and town level sport and recreation facilities (as the core open space). The table below outlines indicative embellishment standards (facility inclusions) for each of these four classifications of park. It assists to classify existing facilities and to guide future development and upgrade.

Embellishment standard	Recreation parks		Sports parks	
	Local	Town	Local	Town
Playground (activity node)	●	●	●	●
Wheeled recreation device activity node (Skate park)		●		●
Shade trees clustered near activity nodes	●	●	●	●
Lighting	●	●	●	●
Internal pathways and paving	●	●	●	●
Bicycle racks	●	●	●	●
Shade structures	●	●	●	●
Tap/bubbler	●	●	●	●
Bench seating	●	●	●	●
Bins	●	●	●	●
Electric barbecue		●		
Picnic shelters		●		
Toilets		●	●	●
Internal road and car parking			●	●
Clubhouse			●	●
Spectator facilities			●	●
Sports fields			●	●
Sports courts			●	●



Emerging trends

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

4.1 Open space/play trends

Open space planning is beginning to take a new direction. While people still value their local recreation park and the green escape they provide, many contain the 'kit playground', often described as boring, lacking in creativity and too safe. There is a growing trend towards more challenging and imaginative play for all age groups at the one location, increasingly referred to as destination parks.

Challenge parks

Challenge parks are an emerging type of park. They generally feature multiple play nodes to cater for different ages, gardens, water play areas and water bodies, large open grassy spaces, shady picnic spots with quality facilities, water features, areas of natural woodland and vegetation and kilometres of shared paths and walkways to explore. High tree house structures, sky walks and natural elements are introducing risk back into play, enabling children to develop an awareness of limits and boundaries. Currently, there is no facility that offers this level of recreation experience for all ages in the Shire. In contrast, Tamworth Regional Council has, in recent years, developed its Regional Playground that has attracted unprecedented usage and received national awards. While a park of this nature may not necessarily be the direction Council wishes to take, a more challenging play node that caters for multiple age groups is needed within the Shire.

Nature play

In just one generation, there has been a dramatic shift in childhood activity from outdoors to indoors. This has been driven by factors such as computer technology, a significant reduction in the size of backyards in cities and an increasingly risk-averse culture.

Nature play is an emerging trend particularly in urban environments, where access to nature is not as readily available as it is in the Shire. Residents and visitors should be encouraged to engage with their natural environment. Awareness of the benefits of children's contact with nature is also growing, and many councils are embracing the concept of developing nature play spaces within their parks and bushland reserves.



Natureplay/Bangalow Parklands/Plummer & Smith

4.2 Informal recreation trends

Ageing community

Liverpool Plains Shire is an aging community, with a median age of 45 years (higher than the State with a median age of 38 years)⁶.

An ageing community requires:

- ❑ greater emphasis on low impact physical activities such as walking, gentle strength and resistance exercises, swimming and shallow water exercise, bike riding and dancing
- ❑ access to community infrastructure will require wider hallways and pathways, improved wheelchair/disabled access/parking, more and better lighting and shaded seats at intervals for resting along pathways
- ❑ infrastructure that accommodates increased use of mobility scooters as a favourable method of transportation
- ❑ consultation with this age group and service providers when planning facilities.

Impacts of technology

Technology remains one of the main contributors towards decreased physical activity and increased sedentary behaviour. However, active gaming is becoming a contemporary approach to exercise. In technology-based games, participants are engaged in physical movement by using their bodies as the controllers (while increasing their heart rate and burning calories).

There are also increasing expectations of technology within recreation areas including WiFi access in key parks, promoting existing geocaching and by using ibeacons and similar on tracks and signage.

Move towards informal recreation

National participation rates in organised sport have been declining for a number of years as participants move toward more social (drop-in drop-out) sport and informal recreation. A range of natural areas exist in the Shire for residents to take advantage of, and additional areas are within a short drive away. An opportunity exists for Liverpool Plains to act as a 'home-base' for travelling visitors sampling natural areas across the region.

Rationalisations

Where open space parcels are undeveloped, are poorly located, are attracting regular anti-social behaviour and/or are not providing recreation opportunities desired by the nearby catchment (and are thus sitting idle), opportunities may exist to rationalise the land. Depending on the land tenure, this may include re-purposing as an alternate use, sale of the land or returning the land to the State. Councils are becoming more cognisant of not retaining (and maintaining) open space that does not serve a community recreation function.

4.3 Sporting trends

Field sharing

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

Field and court quality

Facility providers face an increasing trend to develop and re-develop sporting fields and courts to a higher level in order to increase carrying capacity. Upgrades, such as lighting and field irrigation, allow training and competition times to be extended and increases the ability of turf playing fields to cope with the resulting wear and tear. Further, to achieve ongoing field quality, fields need 'rest periods' (of up to four weeks) where necessary maintenance can be undertaken. Generally, the playing fields within the Shire are in appropriate condition. However, it is important to note that a number of upgrades are proposed for ancillary facilities such as spectator facilities and change rooms.

4.4 Volunteer sport organisations

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

While the response rate to the club survey was satisfactory, (it was not representative of all clubs in the Shire), only two respondents indicated that the declining numbers of volunteers was a low issue for their club (with all others suggesting it was a medium or high level issue).

Lack of time

Shift work, increasing numbers in part-time and casual employment and family commitments influence participation as people do not have the time to commit to organised sport and social clubs as a regular member and/or volunteer and participants are seeking facilities with flexible hours. However, it is important to note that *I just don't have time* was identified by only one respondent as a barrier to participation in the community survey suggesting that lack of time may not be a trend impacting the Shire.

Participation trends

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducted a nation-wide Children's (5 to 14 years) Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities Survey every three years between 2000 and 2012. Overall, participation in organised sport has not changed significantly across these years with rates of between 59% and 64%, identified across the five surveys (2000, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012). For those children involved in organised sport, 32% are only involved in one sport.

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 has 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 shows that participation in organised sport reduced slightly whilst non-organised sport reported increases.

Participation trends in organised sport in Liverpool Plains reflect the trends with two-thirds of clubs offering social/casual competitions. In contrast with trends, traditional sport participation appears to be strong. The club survey responses indicate many sports enjoying growth in junior participation while senior participation results are mixed. The one clear trend is that in the smaller towns and villages where fewer sporting opportunities are available, participation in formal sport decreases.

4.5 Outdoor recreation trends

Increasing health and environmental awareness

People are becoming increasingly concerned about their health, with conditions such as obesity and stress on the rise. Surveys conducted in Melbourne and Sydney indicated that residents having good access to the natural environment reported a higher quality of life (regardless of public or private housing)⁷ (and it is acknowledged that these areas are cities unlike the Liverpool Plains). The surveys showed steady increases in people's preference for large, managed and accessible natural areas. This, combined with a growing awareness of the environment and its challenges (climate change, pollution and urbanisation), has led to a growth in visitation to natural areas. A term referred to as 'returning to nature' has emerged where people feel the desire to become reconnected to their natural environments.

Technology advances (apps)

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

From a Council perspective, a disadvantage of the growing trend in the use of technology for outdoor recreation is that it is difficult to monitor the information users share. It is through the means of social media, blogs and forums that users can promote areas as sites for inappropriate activities (despite them being considered unsafe or not preferred by authorities).

7

SKM 2006, Recreation Implication from Residential



Polocrosse



Movies in the park



Increasing affluence and expectations of recreation

As a society, Australians are becoming more affluent - the proportion of income being spent on recreation goods and leisure is increasing. Whilst outdoor recreation equipment such as kayaks, mountain bikes and camping goods may have previously been considered too expensive for many in the community, discount department stores (such as Kmart, Aldi and Target) are increasing access to affordable options. As people spend more money on outdoor recreation and associated equipment, an increase in outdoor recreation activities by individuals has been observed. (Previously, these activities were associated with commercial operators). As such, demand is increasing for a diversification of natural areas offering unique experiences and higher levels of infrastructure. For example, several survey respondents requested water craft launching locations to improve access to creeks for kayaks.

Tourism – cultural and nature appreciation

It is estimated that the market for nature-based tourism is increasing at six times the rate of tourism overall⁸. Some of the factors that have contributed to this growing trend in nature-based tourism are that people are looking for new experiences, adding diversity to their experiences, combining business travel with holidays, and looking to “get back to nature”.

The number of nature-based visitors to NSW increased between 2012 and 2016 by 7.8% to 26.9 million (international and domestic)⁹.

Interestingly, two of the top five most popular nature-based experiences that visitors seek are readily available in the Shire:

- ☐ visit national parks/state forests
- ☐ bushwalking.



Quirindi swimming pool

8 Tourism Australia, 2015
9 Destination NSW 2016, Nature Based Tourism to NSW



Nature appreciation



Recreation analysis

5.1 Vision and guiding principles

Our vision for open space in Liverpool Plains Shire is:

“Liverpool Plains Shire has a sustainable network of engaging public places, parks, recreation and sport facilities that are connected by walk and cycle pathways supporting residents to be active every day, participating in a range of active transport, recreation and sport activities that help us to connect socially and contribute to our rural lifestyle. Liverpool Plains has a network of recreation infrastructure that builds on current strengths and meets the recreation and sport needs of residents without duplicating facilities in neighbouring Shires.”

The vision sets the desired future for recreation participation across the Shire. It reflects the community's aspirations and Council's objective to continue to be a community that respects and values the natural environment, and understands the need to balance recreation opportunities with sustainability.

The guiding principles describe the over-arching intentions for the provision and management of recreation opportunities for the Liverpool Plains Shire. The guiding principle themes are listed below and have been used to guide development of the Strategy.

- ☐ Quality planning: recreation and sport parks and facilities will be planned to ensure use by as many members of the community as possible and to achieve value for money for the community
- ☐ Accessible and connected: each town and village will have access to a recreation facility where a broad cross-section of the community can meet to make friends and participate in a range of activities
- ☐ Sustainable places: provision of high-quality, accessible destination parks where the Shire's population is more concentrated, to meet the needs of the Shire
- ☐ Promoted and informed: cross-promotion of recreation, exercise and sport opportunities, recreation and sport parks and facilities and community events to residents to encourage participation, community connection and lifestyle
- ☐ Adequately resourced: allocation of adequate capital and ongoing operational resources to maintain recreation and sport parks and facilities.
- ☐ Partnerships: common goals provide an opportunity for partnerships between community organisations, Council and funding bodies (State, Federal Government and others)
- ☐ Attractive and adaptable: recreation and sport facilities are designed and effectively maintained to an appropriate quality that offer diversity of choice to meet the varied needs of the community.

The following analysis of recreation opportunities details the two main population centres of Quirindi and Werris Creek first and then the remaining communities in the Shire in descending alphabetical order.



Annette McNamara bridge



Quipolly Dam



Walk and cycle path/Jacob and Joseph Creek, Quirindi



View of Quirindi from Who'd A Thought It Lookout

Liverpool Plains Shire

A broad range of recreation opportunities exist across the Shire made possible by the geography, topography and open spaces, as well as activities reliant on built infrastructure such as fields, courts and halls.

Large agricultural properties with ample space provide opportunities for people living in the Shire to access horse riding, motorbikes, trail and quad bikes as well as bushwalking, swimming in creeks and dams, bird watching and a host of informal, unstructured and outdoor recreation activities. A network of natural creeks, as well as dams and lakes resulting from agriculture and securing water supplies for Liverpool Plains and neighbouring local government areas, allow residents to fish, kayak, sail, ski and swim, as well as camp. In towns and villages, people can access venues providing training and competition facilities for equestrian sports (including Showgrounds), field and court sports, public swimming pools and indoor halls.

Facilities for specialised sport pursuits including motorcycling and archery have been developed by community groups to allow participation by residents in these activities.

Outdoor recreation

Outdoor recreation activities are those undertaken in the outdoors, without built facilities or infrastructure, at times requiring large areas of land, water and/or air and requiring predominantly unmodified natural landscapes. Outdoor recreation provides the opportunity to connect individually, in small groups or as a community, with the outdoor environment. Access to and the impacts of outdoor recreation can sometimes be better managed by providing facilities and site modifications, however participating in outdoor recreation activities is not reliant on these¹.

Outdoor recreation activities occur on local government, state and privately owned and/or managed land. State Government land includes water catchments, national parks and state forests. There are clear links to be made between outdoor recreation opportunities and tourism.

The Liverpool Plains has ample natural features to actively identify and promote outdoor recreation activities. The Kokoda Track Memorial walkway is a proposed walking trail extending between Quirindi and Werris Creek that could be simply and appropriately enhanced by development of a trail head at each end including signage to promote visitation. Natural and cultural heritage trails are worth further investigation.



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	7,687
0 - 14 years	18.8%
15 - 24 years	9.8%
25 - 34 years	10.0%
35 - 44 years	10.6%
45 - 54 years	13.0%
55 - 64 years	15.4%
65 years and over	22.3%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	957
Median age (2016)	45
Households with children	53.7%
One parent family	17.8%
Households without vehicle	178
Households with internet connection	69.5%

Outdoor recreation can be categorised into five main groups:

- ☐ bushwalking, cycling and horse riding
- ☐ picnicking and nature study
- ☐ orienteering and geocaching
- ☐ canoeing, kayaking and fishing
- ☐ rock climbing and abseiling.

A trail head is the point at which a trail begins and usually includes signs with maps, information including brochures about the trail and its features, parking areas for vehicles and toilets (if warranted). Trail heads can also be located at the end of trails if the trail is not a circuit.

High quality signage at a site complies with relevant Australian Standards, is fit for purpose, readily identifies trails and recreation facilities and enhances the safety and enjoyment of its users. Signs are invaluable tools to identify trails and recreation facilities, provide directions, clarify rules for safe usage and provide basic and unique information relating to the possible experiences. Effective signage can also play a role in minimising the environmental impact of recreation users.

Connection to Place

Liverpool Plains Shire Council would benefit from development of a framework that guides the delivery and ongoing maintenance of park and public space furniture and embellishments. The guide could include guiding principles and processes established from emerging and good practices in urban design, with the goal of setting an achievable benchmark standard for the design and activation of Liverpool Plains' public spaces.

The guide would identify and apply best practice approaches to 'place making' in a regional and rural context by providing advice on the character, design, appointment and activation of key public spaces to reflect established 'place character' and community identity. The guide would prescribe infrastructure requirements for open space materials, finishes and forms, and address the maintenance requirements associated with such items, and consider the suitability of materials in the context of the prevailing climatic conditions in the region.

¹ Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation (QORF)

Community Halls

Typical of many rural and regional areas, there are a number of community halls in towns and villages across the Shire, and some at locations that signify important gathering points for surrounding residents on large agricultural properties. The halls have long and interesting histories reflecting the earlier days of the area and its development over time.

Traditionally, community halls have provided all-weather locations for community gatherings and events. While the need for in-person meetings has reduced with technological advancements (e.g. radio, telephone, television, internet), community halls continue to play an important role in many communities. Currently, some halls provide a valued location for recreation activities including dance, yoga, pilates and group fitness ('bootcamp').

As community halls age, and operating and maintenance costs escalate, pragmatic assessment of the need to replace these buildings is required. In some cases, decommissioning, sale and relocation, or demolition and rehabilitation of the site may be necessary. This assessment should be undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

Current halls across Liverpool Plains Shire include:

- ☐ Blackville Hall
- ☐ Borambil Hall (managed by Trust)
- ☐ Caroon Mechanics Institute Hall (managed by Trust)
- ☐ Returned Services League (RSL) Hall, Currabubula
- ☐ Pine Ride Hall (managed by Trust)
- ☐ Spring Ridge Hall
- ☐ Wallabadah Hall
- ☐ Warrah Creek Hall
- ☐ Craft Cottage, Spring Ridge
- ☐ Willow Tree Memorial Hall
- ☐ Country Womens Association (CWA) Hall, Quirindi
- ☐ Children's Centre and Hall, Quirindi.



Quipolly Dam boat ramp

Plant trees for shade and amenity

A significant barrier to participation in recreation activities is lack of shade. It is recommended that Council develop a Public Spaces Tree Strategy to guide selection, location, planting and care of shade trees in parks, open spaces and along walk and cycle pathways in towns and villages in the Shire. 'Signature' tree species could be selected to act as visual cues indicating entries to towns and villages, public parks or avenues. Walk and cycle pathway design and construction should include planting of shade trees as an essential element.

Quipolly Dam

Quipolly Dam is the town water supply for the Shire and is located between Quirindi and Werris Creek. A major upgrade in 2014 funded by Council with significant financial support from state and federal governments expanded the capacity of the dam and contributed to water security for the Shire. While the current drought conditions have resulted in necessary restrictions on recreational use, the dam has potential to provide for a range of water-based and outdoor recreation activities within easy access to many residents of the Shire, as well as visitors.

Recreational facilities include:

- ☐ boat ramp
- ☐ car and trailer parking
- ☐ jetty/casting wharf
- ☐ toilets
- ☐ picnic shelters and barbeque
- ☐ small playground
- ☐ shade trees planted throughout
- ☐ walking trails and bird watching facilities.

Ongoing maintenance of these facilities, including during drought, will ensure they remain fit-for-purpose when more favourable conditions allow the dam to be reopened for recreational use.



Quipolly Dam picnic facilities

Walking and Cycling

Liverpool Plains Shire Council developed a Bike Plan and Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) for the Shire in 2015. The plans are currently being updated and focus on built infrastructure to provide a safe environment and infrastructure for walking and cycling. There are additional barriers and enablers to walking and cycling. This section aims to highlight these to allow Council to increase the number of residents walking and cycling regularly for enjoyment and health benefits.

Walking is the main form of exercise and recreation for over two thirds of residents living in the Shire. Walking is also an excellent form of transport. Walking should be the preferred method for trips that are less than one kilometre in distance. Given the relatively compact form of the towns and villages in Liverpool Plains, most trips within a 1-2 km radius of people's home could be by walking (and further when cycling).

The benefits of walking include:

- ☐ reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke
- ☐ managing weight, blood pressure and cholesterol
- ☐ prevention and control of diabetes
- ☐ reducing your risk of developing some cancers
- ☐ maintaining your bone density
- ☐ improving balance and coordination.

Walking is an ideal exercise, particularly older adults, providing suitable facilities are available. Council can support more people to walk more often by tackling these identified barriers:

- ☐ lack of shade
- ☐ lack of rest stops
- ☐ dogs that are off-leash or not under control
- ☐ poorly maintained footpaths (uneven surfaces and trip hazards)
- ☐ lack of connectivity/missing links
- ☐ poorly lit footpaths (evenings when cooler, foggy winter mornings, darker earlier in afternoon)
- ☐ cyclist behaviour on shared paths (giving way, speed)
- ☐ distance and estimated time for routes and circuits.

There is a large range of programs available for communities to implement to encourage people to be more active, that also provide opportunities for social connection. This is particularly important for older residents who need to stay active and avoid isolation for positive health outcomes.

Use of scooters (and skateboards to a lesser degree) is emerging as a popular form of transport for children travelling to school and should be encouraged. The needs of scooter-riders are similar to those of walkers (safe and connected pathways) and cyclists (secure parking).

Cycling is a common form of transport, recreation and sport. In the Liverpool Plains, cycling is predominantly for recreation and transport. Like walking, encouraging and promoting cycling is dependant on more than providing the routes and circuits to ride on. Supporting infrastructure to encourage everyday bike riding for transport and recreation includes:

- ☐ secure bike parking at key destinations (cages at schools, racks at shops, work places, food and beverage locations)
- ☐ clear signage for navigation, shared paths, hazards and right-of-way (pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles)
- ☐ raising awareness of the rules and etiquette for use of footpaths, shared paths and road lanes
- ☐ programs to increase vehicle driver awareness on safely sharing the road with bike riders.

Heart Foundation Walking

Heart Foundation Walking provides options to either walk with a group of people in your local area, or walk solo using a phone app. The app integrates with other tools like Fitbit, for example.

Heart Foundation Walking was originally promoted through the Just Walk It campaign.

Parkrun

Parkrun is a free, weekly 5km timed run (or walk) in communities around the world, usually held in park environments. The organisation aims to have a parkrun event in every community that wants one and provides extensive assistance and support to establish the event.

"Already operating in hundreds of locations around the globe, we understand Parkrun is about so much more than a free, weekly, timed 5km run. It's about friendships, families and bringing people together to help one another achieve sustainable and healthy changes to their lifestyle."

There are currently 63,124 Parkrun events Australia-wide with 591,715 registered runners. Directing and coordinating the weekly Parkrun requires volunteers who are usually Parkrunners who take turns running or volunteering each week.

As with any organised sport or recreation activity, the key is to find the right person to lead the event as a local volunteer, and to slowly but surely build a strong volunteer team to deliver the event.



Footpaths



Shared paths



Pedestrian crossings and refuges



Seating and rest options

Swimming pools

Many public swimming pools were constructed as functional memorials (and aptly named memorial pools) to commemorate those who had fought and fallen during the world wars and also as a testament to the safeguarding of a modern, egalitarian society. Furthermore, at the Olympics held in Melbourne in 1956, Australian swimmers dominated with eight out of a possible 13 gold medals and 14 medals overall. This success further embedded the aspirations of communities across Australia to construct public swimming pools.

The capital cost to design and construct public pools as well as the ongoing cost to operate them was a serious and intensely debated topic for regional and rural Councils. Consequently, funding of public pools was predominantly through community fund raising efforts, with limited financial support from State Governments to Councils. Accumulating the necessary funds and lobbying for government support extended for many years and sometimes decades.

Many public and memorial swimming pools were constructed 50-70 plus years ago. The pool structures and original entry and amenity buildings typically have an asset life of approximately 50 years, before major maintenance or replacement of the asset is required to ensure the facility remains fit-for-purpose. In recent decades, technological developments have resulted in innovative and effective methods to maintain water quality and extend the life of pool structures, however high capital costs are still inherent in constructing and refurbishing public pool structures.

Rising operational costs (e.g. electricity, water, chemicals, staffing) as well as dwindling popularity of outdoor public pool use and changing attitudes to sun exposure have seen many public pools closed over the past 30 years. Despite this, people living in many country towns have fought hard to retain their public pools due to the significant contribution of the facilities to the social capital of communities.

Legislation and guidelines

The NSW Public Health Act 2010 (including the Public Health Amendment (Review) Act 2017) and Public Health Regulation 2012 aim to control the public health risks associated with public swimming pools.

Splash or water parks are subject to the same water disinfection requirements as public pools, to protect users from disease transmission in these environments.

In addition to legislation and regulation, the Royal Life Saving Society of Australia publish Guidelines for Safe Aquatic Venues and Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation (GSPO) as risk based management tools for managers of public pools and aquatic facilities to meet minimum requirements and best practice.

Aquatic facility trends

Since the emergence of public swimming pools in Australia there have been a number of trends impacting on use and popularity. These trends are impacting on the provision of, and attendance at, public swimming pools across Australia. These trends include:

- ☐ increased number of backyard pools
- ☐ increased demand for heated pools with structured programs
- ☐ higher expectations on the standard and quality of facilities
- ☐ multi-purpose aquatic facilities providing for high-cost aquatic activities to be cross-subsidised by health and fitness, food and beverage and entertainment
- ☐ increasing demand and need for accessible facilities
- ☐ emergence of three distinct aquatic markets: recreation /leisure; competitive/training/fitness; health/education/therapy.

In the Liverpool Plains Shire area, the Werris Creek Swimming Pool currently provides for a broader range of these markets, due to the pool structure including depth at one end allowing diving (for competition and training).

Increase in backyard pools

Approximately 10% of households in regional NSW own a swimming pool¹. In the Liverpool Plains, the number of backyard pools has increased substantially in the past decade.

Indoor heated pools

There is an increasing demand for heated pools with structured programs including infant and children's learn-to-swim classes and older adult exercise classes. Changing attitudes to sun exposure has also contributed to increased demand for indoor heated public pools. Indoor heated pools are typically characterised by the following:

- ☐ indoor climate controlled environment
- ☐ water temperature in the pool is heated to approximately 27-29 degrees Celsius, however those using the pool for exercise may demand cooler temperatures
- ☐ ramp access (rather than stairs) to maximise access by a broad range of users
- ☐ include teaching space (e.g. learn-to-swim)
- ☐ designed for flexibility to cater for diverse users
- ☐ incorporate commercial elements (e.g. cafe, retail) to contribute to financial viability.

1 Swimming pool ownership increases in Australia, November 23, 2018. Roy Morgan

Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy (external) uses immersion of the body in cool or warm water to utilise the heating effects on the skin and underlying tissue. Hydrotherapy pools are heated to cause sweating and to relax muscles. It is an effective method to treat poor circulation, arthritis rheumatism, muscle pain and inflammation as well as to prepare for and recover from surgery and assist with neurological conditions such as strokes and brain injury.

Hydrotherapy pools are typically characterised by the following:

- ☐ indoor climate controlled environment
- ☐ water temperature in the pool is heated to approximately 33-36 degrees Celsius and uses the heat of the water to support the benefits of exercises
- ☐ shallow depth to allow standing, walking and assistance from health professionals and carers
- ☐ ramp access (rather than stairs) and rails for support
- ☐ dry land assessment area, accessible entry and egress, change rooms.

Hydrotherapy pools can also cater for learn-to-swim classes.

Splash Parks (Water Parks)

Splash parks (also referred to as water parks) are:

- ☐ classified as an aquatic facility
- ☐ required to use treated and usually heated water that requires control and monitoring for health reasons
- ☐ usually aimed at cooling-off and active play rather than immersion
- ☐ either zero depth or include shallow pools (the latter requires a lifeguard)
- ☐ considered a destination by the public therefore require support facilities including car parking, toilets, change rooms, shaded seating, rubbish bins and picnic facilities for example
- ☐ usually targeted to infants and primary aged school children and their families
- ☐ typically accessible for people with mobility issues
- ☐ relatively expensive to manage.

Needs assessment

As assets reach the end of their useful lives and are no longer fit-for-purpose, Council needs to consider if replacement of the asset is warranted. Replacement of community assets, such as public pools, does not necessarily need to be on a like-for-like basis. Council has the opportunity to review the purpose of the facility as well as use and participation patterns and trends to ensure any new infrastructure meets the current and future needs of the community. This is particularly important when considering that replacement of the Quirindi Swimming Centre will cost between \$3.5-4.5 million (minimum estimated capital cost).

When considering replacement of public swimming pools in the Shire, Council should ensure that the needs and benefits to the community are weighed against the capital and operational costs to the community. A transparent and robust conversation with the community is required to ensure decision-making reflects planning principles including long-term financial sustainability.

In the recent past, Council has fielded interest from private investors interested in development of a hydrotherapy pool in Quirindi. It is recommended that this option is fully explored by Council with public access negotiated for appropriate use (e.g. recreation, leisure and learn-to-swim).

Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Quirindi

The Quirindi Swimming Centre is located on Henry Street and is directly adjacent the main oval at Longfield Park. The original pool was opened in 1929 (over 90 years old) and was extended and expanded to include:

- ☐ 50 metre 6 lane swimming pool
- ☐ toddler/children's pool with three fixed splash elements
- ☐ entry/kiosk/office
- ☐ male and female change rooms and toilets
- ☐ sheds for plant (filter and bore)
- ☐ chemical storage
- ☐ tables and chairs
- ☐ shade structures and shade trees
- ☐ perimeter fencing.

The Quirindi pool's deepest part is in the middle of the pool and therefore diving is generally not permitted due to safety concerns (lack of water depth). This limits training and competition at the pool and results in predominantly recreational use. Schools can choose to undertake a risk assessment to allow diving for carnivals, under guidelines from Royal Life Saving and NSW Education.

Werris Creek

The Werris Creek War Memorial Pool was constructed in 1969 and the pool will be 50 years old in 2019. The facility includes:

- ☐ 50 metre pool 6 lane swimming pool
- ☐ children's pool with new play elements
- ☐ entry/kiosk/office
- ☐ male and female change rooms and toilets
- ☐ sheds for plant
- ☐ chemical storage
- ☐ shade structures and shade trees
- ☐ perimeter fencing
- ☐ swim club building.

Upgrades to the amenities including refurbishment and installation of hot water for showers was completed during the 2017/2018 financial year. An upgrade to the filtration system was completed in 2019 and included replacement of the gravity filters with pressure filters, new pipework, pumps and separation of the children's and 50 metre pool water filtration systems to comply with water quality standards. Inclusion of three water play elements in the children's pool is also part of the upgrade.

Similar sized Councils

Aquatic facilities provided by other local government authorities with similar population sizes has been provided below to allow a relative comparison. This is a brief summary and more detailed information should be sought to inform significant decision-making by Council.

Blayney Shire Council

Blayney Shire Council covers an area of approximately 1,600 square kilometres and is located west of Bathurst in mid-central New South Wales. The Shire was home to approximately 7,342 people² in 2018.

The CentrePoint Sport and Leisure Centre is Blayney's single aquatic facility servicing the Shire and is currently undergoing a \$4.2 million upgrade funded by the Federal Government and Blayney Shire Council. The project will result in:

- ☐ accessibility upgrades
- ☐ 25m and middle pool upgrades
- ☐ toddler pool
- ☐ plant room and plant infrastructure upgrades
- ☐ building works including toilets, change rooms, lighting, floor heating, ventilation, pre- and post-shower area.

Forbes Shire Council

Forbes Shire Council covers an area of approximately 4,720 square kilometres and is located about 400km inland from Sydney in the Lachlan River Valley. The Shire was home to approximately 9,910 people³ in 2018.

Council provides a single aquatic facility that includes a 50m x 6 lane Olympic Swimming Pool, children's splash park with water features, learn to swim pool and canteen facilities as well as amenities.

Tenterfield Shire Council

Tenterfield Shire Council covers an area of approximately 7,333 square kilometres and is located in the hinterland of north-east New South Wales. The Shire was home to approximately 6,628 people⁴ in 2016.

Council provides the Tenterfield Memorial Baths during warm months and the facility includes a heated 33m x 6 lane pool and children's wading pool with related amenities.

2 communityprofile.com.au/blayney/population
3 communityprofile.com.au/forbes/population
4 tenterfield.nsw.gov.au

Neighbouring Councils

Tamworth Regional Council

Tamworth is approximately one hour's drive from Quirindi and forty minutes from Werris Creek. Many Liverpool Plains residents travel to Tamworth to access sport and recreation opportunities including public swimming pools.

Tamworth Regional Council currently owns and operates six swimming pool facilities in the local government area at Barraba, Kootingal, Manilla, Nundle, the South and West Tamworth Memorial Pools (also known as Scully) and the Tamworth Olympic Swimming Pool. The pool opening hours vary according to the community they service with access during winter limited to the Barraba hydrotherapy pool.

In addition to Council provided facilities, a commercial fitness centre in Tamworth currently offers an indoor aquatic facility featuring an eight-lane, 25 metre lap pool that is open to the public for exercise and is used for learn to swim and swim squad.

In late 2018, Tamworth Regional Council resolved to develop a business case including a funding strategy for a new aquatic centre representing an investment of over \$60 million. Concept plans used for community consultation purposes indicate a regionally significant destination with options including:

- ☐ 25 or 50 metre indoor pool
- ☐ 50 metre outdoor pool
- ☐ adventure slides
- ☐ beach entry and toddler pool
- ☐ warm water program pool
- ☐ cafe/wet and dry lounge areas
- ☐ spas and saunas
- ☐ gym and group fitness
- ☐ children's creche
- ☐ business, administration, first aid and ancillary facilities.

If this facility proceeds it will provide modern aquatic facilities catering for an extensive range of water-based leisure, recreation, exercise, rehabilitation, training and competition pursuits.

Gunnedah Shire Council

The town of Gunnedah is located about an hour drive north of Quirindi and Werris Creek. The Gunnedah Memorial Pool Complex was recently upgraded and reopened in December 2018. The new pool complex is located on the same site as the original pool which was built as a war memorial, largely funded by community donations and voluntary labour. The new complex includes:

- ☐ 50 metre 8 lane outdoor swimming pool (FINA compliant)
- ☐ 25 metre indoor heated pool
- ☐ children's water park/playground
- ☐ children's playground
- ☐ new pavilion and amenities
- ☐ kiosk/cafe facilities
- ☐ seating and shaded areas
- ☐ large open irrigated lawn areas.

Opening hours currently extend from early morning into the evening. The indoor heated pool allows year-round use.

Quirindi

Quirindi is the administrative centre of the Liverpool Plains and is the largest town in the Shire with 2,680 people recorded in the 2016 Census. While limited future growth is predicted, the town continues to support a strong agricultural base with related industries including freight, agricultural manufacturing and, to a lesser degree, resource extraction and processing related businesses.

With a median age of 44, Quirindi's population is older than New South Wales' (NSW) median age of 38. The proportion of people aged 55 and older is significantly higher than the NSW figures, indicating an ageing population over the next decade or so, presenting challenges and opportunities for Council and the community to provide suitable recreation opportunities in the future.

Quirindi's central business district is located centrally in the town, which has a linear form. The town's main sporting grounds and public swimming pool are located on the eastern side of the town with a high-quality path network creating a spine connecting recreation facilities with schools, businesses and some residential areas. Two significant recreation parks with playgrounds, a popular lookout park along with the two primary schools and high school are located on the western and southern sides of the town, as well as the Council operated Plains Fitness (gym).

Residential areas surround the central business district and agricultural land stretches in all directions beyond the town limits. The Quirindi and Jacob and Joseph Creeks wind through the town in a generally east-west direction. The Kamilaroi Highway passes through the southern end of town and Rose Lee Park near the intersection is popular with travellers, attracted by the convenient public amenities, internal park road and car park (accommodating turning circles of recreation vehicles) and well-maintained gardens and picnic facilities.

Community facilities and public places in Quirindi are connected by an extensive network of shared pathways and footpaths. The system of paths allows residents to walk or cycle to key destinations within town including shops, schools, sport facilities, the swimming centre, racecourse and showgrounds. The compact form of Quirindi makes walking and cycling a practical and equitable active transport alternative for the whole community. Use of the paths for exercise is popular with walking being selected by 66.67% survey respondents. Walking is an effective exercise to maintain health and protect against preventable illnesses.

Lack of shade was a key issue identified by the community as a barrier preventing them from participating in active recreation and sport. There are parks in Quirindi and throughout the Shire that have established, mature trees providing shade; Longfield Oval is an excellent example.



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	2,680
0 - 14 years	18.1%
15 - 24 years	11.5%
25 - 34 years	10.3%
35 - 44 years	10.5%
45 - 54 years	11.4%
55 - 64 years	13.4%
65 years and over	24.9%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	414
Median age (2016)	44
Households with children	56.9%
One parent family	25.7%
Households without vehicle	88
Households with internet connection	66.4%

A tree planting program extending across the walk and cycle network will enhance these green corridors and increased shade in the future will encourage physical activity, increased use, amenity and contribute to the aesthetics of Quirindi. Additional shade (trees and built structures) are also necessary at sport facilities and recreation parks to provide shelter and relief from the elements, particularly during summer months when temperatures can extend into the low-mid 40 degrees Celsius. Tree planting in wide road reserves and at the entrances of smaller villages can improve aesthetics and reduce the area requiring maintenance (slashing). Planting out of undeveloped open space is one way to preserve land for community purposes without adding to Council's asset maintenance schedule.

Overall, Quirindi is an active town and offers a variety of recreation and sporting opportunities to residents and visitors. The main sporting hub of the Shire, there is a large sporting precinct including a variety of sport fields, tennis and netball courts and public swimming pool. This hub, incorporating Longfield Oval, Quirindi Swimming Centre, Quirindi Tennis and Golland Oval, has undergone a Master Planning process during development of this Strategy. One of two master plans, the second was undertaken over the Racecourse and Showground. Between them, these two facilities cater for the vast majority of sporting pursuits in the town and Shire. The Racecourse and Showground is an impressive facility which is home to, and caters for, a range of equestrian activities including televised races.

These Master Plans are separate documents detailing the vision for each site and proposed development over the next 10-15 years based on consultation with current and potential user groups and other design drivers. The Master Plan layouts are provided on pages 38-40, for reference.

Several specialised sporting facilities have been developed by the community and include the RSL Golf Club and Lions Rugby Union Club that are located on either side of Werris Creek Road to the south of Quirindi. The Golf Club amalgamated with the Quirindi RSL a number of years ago and is managed by a sub-committee of the RSL.



To retain existing and attract new members as well as provide additional activities, the golf course requires access to affordable water for irrigation. Its main priorities include securing funding for a water bore and irrigation system for the course. The club has also identified that the steep dirt access road needs to be upgraded and sealed to cater for the increasing number of two-wheeled and low-height vehicles used by club members.

In addition to the Racecourse and Showgrounds there are private equestrian facilities on the outskirts of Quirindi. The Quirindi Polo carnival club provides a facility of high quality for its members and is apparently well-resourced and self-sufficient.

Sporting shooters club using a various types of ranged weapons are catered for in Quirindi at specialised facilities developed by the community. Compliance with requirements of the Firearms Registry is a priority for sporting shooters clubs, with access road maintenance a secondary priority.

Sport facilities and venues are connected by shared walk and cycle paths that create a network throughout the town. Recreation parks connected by the network allow children, youth and older adults to move between activities easily and safely. Council's plans to continue development of the shared pathway network is supported by this Strategy. An indoor sport hall at the high school is available for community use, primarily basketball training, however the court size does not comply with current standards (safety run-offs). There is high potential to design the proposed new Pavilion at the Racecourse and Showgrounds to accommodate an indoor basketball court compliant with relevant standards.

Bell Park is popular with parents and grandparents who like the playground and large grassed area, picnic shelters and barbeque. The park is located on the north-western side of Quirindi and has a large playground in a fenced area with a combination of rubber and bark chip softfall. The play equipment is modern and suitable for infants through to primary aged school children. Half of the play equipment is covered by a shade structure, and nearby trees provide occasional shade over a tall climbing frame and smaller individual pieces in the other half of the playground. Improvements suggested by survey respondents include relocation of the toilet building closer to the playground and internal pathways connecting park elements to improve access into and through the park, particularly by people using prams and those with mobility issues.

Rose Lee Park is also popular with residents and attracts travellers due to its location on the highway intersection heading north and south. This park caters for older children and youth who use the skate park and the grassed areas along the creek bank. A children's playground and picnic facilities including a large shelter with barbeques compliment the attractive and well-maintained grounds and toilets. This is a park where friends and family groups could comfortably recreate for half a day. Suggested improvements by survey respondents include landscaping and maintenance of the creek bank to improve the aesthetics of the park and allow better views of the waterway.

Survey respondents indicated that they travel to destination parks and both Bell and Rose Lee Parks appeal to residents across the Shire.

Bill McNamara Park is a small local park servicing the immediate residential estate nearby. The timber playground is unsafe and should be removed. Landscaping this park and including materials that can be used by children for imaginative play, such as boulders and timber posts, is proposed for this park. Native trees, shrubs and ground covers planted around the perimeter of the park and bench seating will provide a park setting that all neighbours can use and that contributes to the amenity of the estate.

Playgrounds at Bell and Rose Lee Parks cater predominantly for infants and primary school aged children (0-12 years) excepting the climbing net at Bell Park that may attract teens. Survey responses indicate that Bell Park is more popular for parents and grandparents to visit with young children/grandchildren. Bell Park's proximity to residential areas and resident's ability to access the park by walking or cycling from homes (on the western side of town) without the need to cross major roads may be a contributing factor to its popularity.

The playground equipment at Bell Park is in good condition and fully fenced. Families with multiple young and pre-teen children are well catered for. Bell Park would benefit from additional landscaping (shade trees and low maintenance garden beds) to define outdoor 'rooms' to provide areas for teenagers and youth to kick a ball, play Frisbee and 'hang out' in a safe and appealing environment.

By comparison, Rose Lee Park is located on the southern side of Quirindi, connected to the main part of town by a shared path encouraging residents to walk or cycle to the park, particularly youth attracted by the skate park. The skate park is in good condition however additional elements could provide opportunities for technical difficulty as well as skill and technique development.

The playground is ageing and outdated and requires refurbishment. Imaginative play elements are recommended along with contemporary models of traditional play equipment including swings, climbing frames and slides. Imaginative play can include elements such as:

- ☐ shops - a serving window encourages children to role play a common life experience
- ☐ wheels and gears - steering wheels and gears can be imagined for trucks, cars, trains, boats and aeroplanes
- ☐ sensory garden - using plants that provide sensory stimulation including scent, touch and colour.

Most of the residential homes near Rose Lee Park are on the opposite side of the Kamilaroi Highway (to the park) and this could be a perceived barrier for those wishing to walk or cycle to the park. Ample vehicle parking internal to the park allows residents to park safely at Rose Lee Park.

When the playground is upgraded, consideration should be given to a landscaping treatment (or fence) that creates a barrier between the internal road and car park, and the playground.

Swimming for recreation (not sport) was selected by 51.85% of survey respondents, second only to walking as the most popular recreation activity. The swimming pools at Quirindi and Werris Creek are highly valued by the community and are two of the most popular recreation venues in the Shire. The majority of survey respondents also rated the quality of Council's swimming pools as good or great (44.65%) with just over a quarter rating the pools as below average or poor quality. A number of factors are likely contributors to the negative perception. It is acknowledged that the pool and facilities are ageing. In addition, the lack of depth at one end preventing safe diving as well as the lack of heating during winter were cited as reasons detracting from the pool's overall quality. Replacement of the Quirindi pool will be required within the next 3-7 years and is supported by this Strategy. Further detail is contained in the Quirindi Recreation Precinct Master Plan.

Interestingly, the need for additional promotion of facilities and programs was highlighted in the survey results to ensure residents were aware of available activities and key details including location, date, time and services on offer. This comment extended to promotion of community events within the Shire.

The table below summarises the recreation facilities available and activities on offer for residents of Quirindi and the Shire.

Map ref.	Park or reserve name	Current classification	Activities
Recreation parks			
3	Bill McNamara Park	Local	playground, passive recreation, aesthetics and amenity
4	Bell Park	Town	playground, picnicking, community events
14	Quirindi walk and cycle corridor	Town	walking, cycling, nature appreciation
16	Who'd A Thought It Lookout	Local	playground, picnicking, lookout views, nature appreciation
18	Rose Lee Park	Local	playground, picnicking, skate park (wheeled recreation), nature appreciation, walking, cycling
Sport parks			
6	Ye Olde Cricket Pitch	Local	undeveloped
9	Golland Fields	Local	football (soccer), athletics (track and field), cricket,
11	Longfield Oval	Town	rugby league, football (soccer), cricket, tennis, touch football
Specialised sport parks			
13	Quirindi Swimming Centre	Aquatic	swimming, aquatic programs
1	RSL Golf Club	Private	golf
2	Quirindi Lions Rugby Union Club	Private	rugby union
8	Quirindi Polo carnival Club	Private	polo, equestrian
10	Quirindi Bowling Club	Private	lawn bowls
12	Quirindi District Tennis Club	Private	tennis
15	Quirindi Racecourse and Showground	Showgrounds	equestrian
Community facilities			
NA	Plains Gym	Community facility	indoor exercise and fitness activities
NA	Royal Theatre	Community facility	indoor activities, community events, meetings

Quirindi RSL Golf Club	
Q1	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to install a bore for cost-effective irrigation of fairways
Q2	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to install an irrigation system for fairways to improve the playing surface and amenity of the golf course
Q3	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to construct and seal the internal road from Werris Creek Road to the clubhouse to improve access
Q4	Promote activities at the golf club, including social (putt-putt golf) and indoor activities that utilise the club rooms (yoga), to older and retired adults and school groups
Q5	Consider partnering with the golf club to host outdoor events for the community including sporting and cultural events (music concerts)
Q6	In relation to the age of the building, offer the provision of technical advice and planning to the golf club regarding ongoing asset maintenance particularly major repairs and asset replacement items
Quirindi Lions Rugby Union Club	
Q7	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to upgrade field lighting to competition standard to extend field use into evenings
Q8	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to upgrade the clubhouse kitchen to allow social functions
Q9	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to develop additional fields to accommodate juniors and training
Bill McNamara Park	
Q10	Remove the playground and landscape the park to develop a central grassed area with gardens and bench seats on the perimeter. Native plants including appropriate trees should be selected to establish, over time, a community park. Landscape materials used for gardens could act as play elements (boulders, timber posts)
Bell Park	
Q11	Develop a concept plan over the park identifying ideal locations for public toilets, large shelter, lighting, bench seating and additional shade trees, with internal pathways connecting park elements and surrounding footpaths/cycleways (external to park)
Q12	Demolish the toilet building and construct a new toilet that is closer to the playground and picnic facilities (as per the concept plan above)
Q13	Construct internal park paths connecting internal park elements (playground, shelters, toilets) and existing street paths to improve access
Q14	Consider construction of a large shelter that can accommodate multiple groups and large groups (birthday parties etc)
Q15	Consider developing play facilities for older children and youth (teens) in the southern part of Bell Park
Quirindi Public School	
Q16	Encourage community use and access to the playground (off Nowland Avenue) and the sport field (off Munro Avenue) out-of-school-hours

Quirindi Polo carnival Club	
Q17	Support and promote activities and events at the Polo club
Ye Olde Cricket Ground	
Q18	Lease land for agistment (at commercial rates) and/or investigate potential to re-purpose or dispose (sell) the land
Quirindi High School	
Q19	Facilitate opportunities for the school, community user groups and Council to identify and resolve issues relating to use of the high school sports hall, including applications for external funding to improve facilities
Golland Fields	
Q20	Implement the Quirindi Sport and Recreation Precinct Master Plan
Quirindi Bowling Club	
Q21	In relation to the age of the building, offer the provision of technical advice and planning to the bowling club regarding ongoing asset maintenance particularly major repairs and asset replacement items
Longfield Oval	
Q22	Implement the Quirindi Sport and Recreation Precinct Master Plan
Quirindi District Tennis Club	
Q23	Implement the Quirindi Sport and Recreation Precinct Master Plan
Quirindi Racecourse and Showground	
Q24	Implement the Quirindi Sport and Recreation Precinct Master Plan
Who'd A Thought It Lookout	
Q25	Develop a simple concept plan over the lookout to rationalise the road (loop) and reconfigure car parking, identify a more prominent location for public toilets, lighting and bench seating to capitalise views
Q26	Replace damaged information and interpretative signs. Consider placing these at 'table' height, angled toward the reader, to allow visitors to read the signs while looking at the views
Q27	Remove the outdated brick shelter and replace with an open design shelter
Q28	Colocate the obelisk (direction marker) with other park furniture, or reclaim the land it is situated on as part of the park, the road separating the direction marker from the lookout park
Q29	Identify a route for a walking trail to the Lookout, ideally across country and connecting with Rose Lee Park
Quirindi Pony Club	
Q30	Implement the Quirindi Racecourse and Showground Master Plan
Quirindi Swimming Centre	
Q31	Commence planning and design for replacement of the swimming pool facility including capital costs for construction and ongoing operating costs. Engage the community in a robust and transparent discussion regarding the social and community benefits of the pool as well as the financial costs to Council and the community



Longfield Oval



Bell Park



Rose Lee Park



Quirindi Racecourse and Showground



Master Plans

QUIRINDI RACECOURSE AND SHOWGROUND

The Master Plan is a stand-alone document that should be referred to for specific detail regarding proposed development.

The Racecourse and Showground is located on Wallabadah Road on the eastern side of Quirindi and is home to the following organisations and activities:

- ☐ Quirindi Jockey Club
- ☐ Poultry Club
- ☐ Pony Club
- ☐ Campdraft
- ☐ Trotting
- ☐ Quirindi Show Society
- ☐ Polocrosse.

The Quirindi Racecourse is known as the show course of country racing in New South Wales. The Quirindi Jockey Club hosts 15 race meetings annually including the Akubra Quirindi Cup and the GA Hill Lightning Handicap.

The aim of the master plan is to provide a realistic and achievable vision for the Racecourse and Showgrounds, where the needs and requirements of the user groups, community and Council are established and balanced. Importantly, the project will require development to be staged in a manner that provides for smooth implementation limiting impact on users. Ultimately, the report will guide community, Council and user group decision-making and resource allocation.

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A master plan provides a vision for a site, identifying what it should look like and how it should function into the future. It establishes a strong and consistent direction, providing a framework for ongoing improvement. It considers the interrelationship between:

- current character and functionality of the landscape
- public expectations and needs
- emerging issues and trends
- the realities of the economic, social, environmental and legislative context of the time.

The result is a plan that balances needs across a range of often conflicting interests.

Proposed ultimate embellishment for the Racecourse and Showground includes:

- ☐ retention of the existing 1400m racecourse and shutes
- ☐ equestrian opportunities
 - interior of Main Arena developed into all-weather multipurpose surface
 - new relocated campdraft and rodeo facility
 - repositioned polocrosse fields
 - extended cross-country course
 - new day yards
 - new amenities building
 - new clubrooms and kitchen
 - new all weather access to new campdraft and rodeo facility
- ☐ sport and recreation opportunities
 - large multi-purpose pavilion (indoor court size)
- ☐ common areas
 - redirected entry and access roads to separate vehicle, horses and pedestrians
 - new pedestrian entry to the facility.



Quirindi Racecourse and Showground

LONGFIELD OVAL, GOLLAND FIELDS & SURROUNDING PRECINCT

The Master Plan is a stand-alone document that should be referred to for specific detail regarding proposed development.

A range of sports utilise the facilities within the precinct and a combination of factors have established the need for a master plan to guide future development. These factors include ageing infrastructure, changing trends in sport participation creating demand for field, court and facility changes, and the need to ensure cost-effective and efficient use of limited resources.

The Precinct is located on the eastern side of Quirindi and is home to both field-based sports (cricket, football (soccer), touch football, athletics) and court-based sports (netball, basketball and tennis).

The aim of the master plan is to provide a realistic and achievable vision for the Precinct, where the needs and requirements of the user groups, community and Council are established and balanced. Importantly, the project will require development to be staged in a manner that provides for smooth implementation limiting impact on users.

Ultimately, the report will guide community, Council and user group decision-making and resource allocation.

Through site analysis, background research and consultation, the project aims to provide optimal use of the Precinct for sport and recreation groups and the wider community.

Proposed ultimate embellishment for the Precinct includes:

- ☐ sporting opportunities
 - two turf wicket cricket ovals
 - two synthetic wicket cricket ovals
 - retain full-size senior rugby league field
 - retain and realign two full-size soccer fields
 - retain junior soccer fields
 - retain and reposition five touch football fields
 - retain tennis courts (x4 granite and x2 synthetic)
 - future additional tennis courts (x2)
 - expanded pavilion servicing the soccer/cricket fields
 - multi-sport courts
 - athletics track & field and long jump.
- ☐ recreation opportunities
 - proposed playground, youth hub and passive recreation area
- ☐ community facilities
 - planning and design for replacement of the Quirindi Swimming Centre
- ☐ caravan park
 - retain existing caravan park
- ☐ common areas
 - on-street and additional off-street car parking areas
 - new entry signage reflecting the quality of the facility
 - upgraded pedestrian pathway network
 - proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge
 - retain existing community nursery.



Longfield Oval, Quirindi - the Master Plan also includes Golland Fields and the tennis courts

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1a. Relocate Campdraft & Rodeo to #1b.
- 1b. New Campdraft, Rodeo & Yards
- 1c. Demolish campdraft building.
2. Investigate gate at track crossing
3. Repurpose existing canteen into new office once #13 is developed
4. Relocate gate access to field
5. Demolish old toilets
6. Replace fence
7. Demolish Pavilions 1 & 2 and replace with one large multi-purpose facility (indoor court size)
8. New surveillance tower to be installed (by J.C.)
9. Parking, camping and existing and new day yards (see 14)
10. New 100 x 100m Show Jumping Arena
11. New amenities building
12. New Clubrooms and kitchen
13. New Dressage Arena
14. New Day Yards

PROJECT DETAILS:

MASTER PLAN FOR QUIRINDI SHOWGROUNDS

LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE

CLIENT:



SCALE:
1:3000 at A3

DATE:
Mar 2020

ISSUE:
Rev D - Final Draft

NORTH

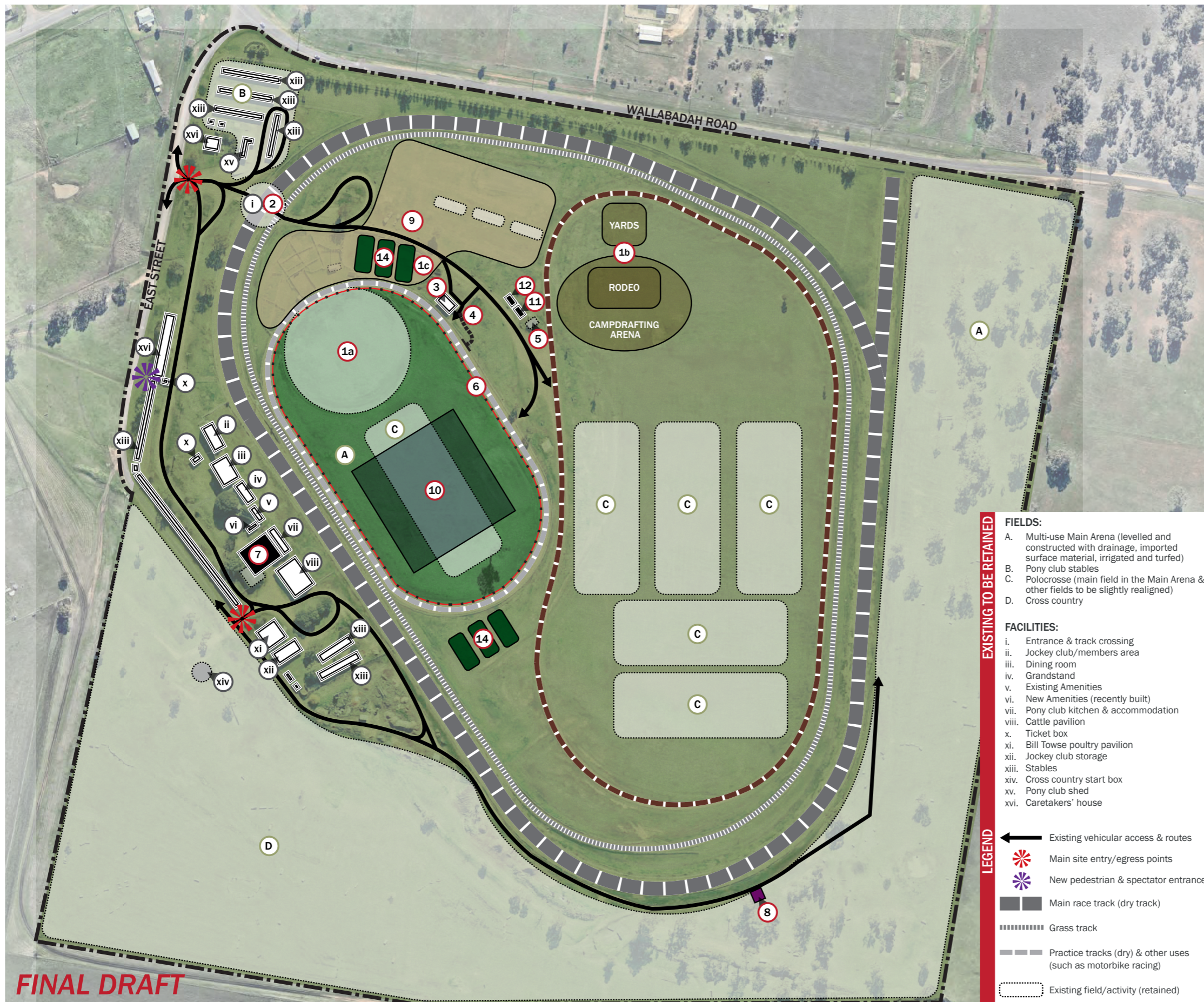


Fig. 01 Draft Master Plan for Quirindi Racecourse and Showground



Fig. 02 Draft Master Plan for Longfield Oval, Golland Fields and surrounding precinct

Werris Creek

Werris Creek is located off the New England Highway, 19 kilometres north of Quirindi, 44 km south-west of Tamworth and 373 km north of Sydney. In 2016, 1,442 people lived in Werris Creek; approximately one quarter of those were aged 24 years or younger and over a third were aged 55 or older.

Werris Creek's history is closely linked with the construction of the railway particularly as a junction was constructed allowing freight and passenger transport to either Armidale or Moree via rail. The pride held by residents in their railway history is evident throughout the town and has been preserved at the Werris Creek Railway Precinct, a state significant heritage site. A number of Victorian and Federation railway buildings have been preserved and represent the importance of the Werris Creek junction in the late 19th century.

A large portion of Werris Creek's recreation and sport facilities are located along Werris Creek Road, or Single Street, as it is known when in the town itself. Railway artefacts can be found along the linear parkland flanking the railway line. Lions Park includes a number of disused rail items as park features. While the value of these to community members is undeniable, it is recommended that as items age or become unsafe, that they are removed and either restored professionally and included in the Werris Creek Railway Precinct or offered for purchase by private owners.

Hoamm Park is also located on the linear parkland adjacent to the railway line. An attractive and appealing contemporary playground has been established in recent years to supplement the existing play area. Of note is the flying fox, climbing net and nest swing that extend challenging play opportunities to the early teens age group. Between these two playgrounds, play equipment is provided for infants, primary school aged children and early teens. Play areas are covered with shade sails where practical and pathways allows easy access to the playgrounds as well as other key community facilities. A skatepark consisting of ramps and grinding rails is located immediately south of the fenced playground area with bench seating and shade trees nearby.

Discussions with students revealed concerns about the volume of cars and heavy vehicles travelling along Single Street and the need to cross this street to access the parkland. These concerns are a perceived barrier for children old enough to play independently (without constant supervision).

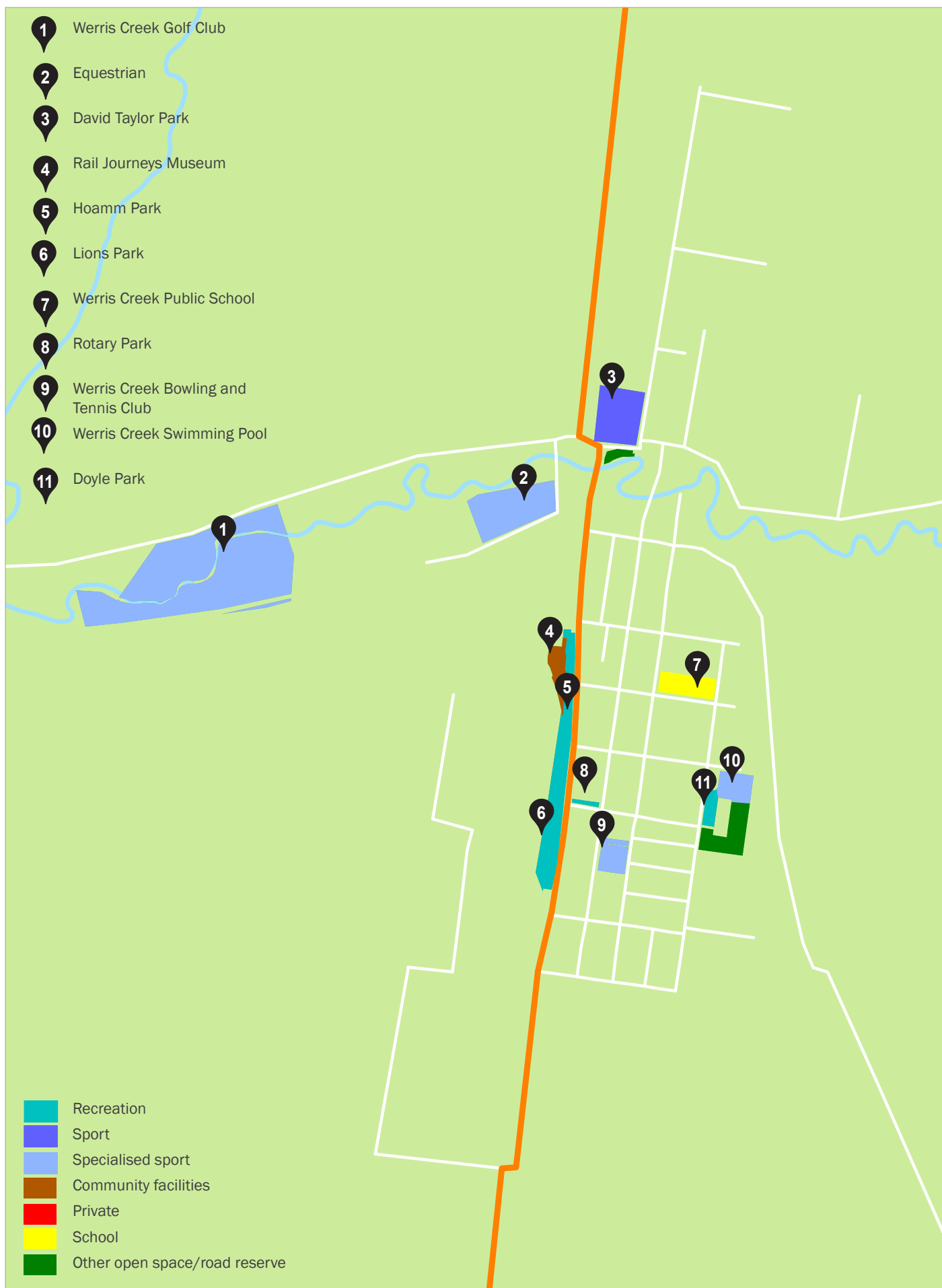
SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	1,442
0 - 14 years	16.4%
15 - 24 years	8.8%
25 - 34 years	10.1%
35 - 44 years	9.4%
45 - 54 years	11.1%
55 - 64 years	15.7%
65 years and over	20.4%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	295
Median age (2016)	50
Households with children	53.2%
One parent family	22.7%
Households without vehicle	59
Households with internet connection	57.8%

David Taylor Park is the sports park for Werris Creek and is located on the southern edge of town. It includes a rugby league field, covered tiered seating pavilion, change rooms, ticket gate, storage shed and a bitumen basketball court. The latter is for social use and appears to lack regular use. Consideration should be given to resurfacing the court to provide for multiple sports. Options include basketball, netball and handball. Lighting the court would allow increased use during summer evenings when temperatures are more conducive to exercise and physical activity outdoors.

The field is maintained to a high standard. Council recently secured funding for construction of a new canteen and public toilets, also identified by the club as high priorities. Upgraded field lighting and an electronic score board have also been highlighted to allow night competition games, with the score board capitalising on modern technology and increasing efficiency (remote data uploads). The club has recently negotiated to use a large social room including a bar and toilets at the Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club. This agreement is underpinned by the club's commendable intent to separate alcohol consumption from the sporting grounds during training and competition.

The Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club is a commercial club with very well maintained recreation facilities providing a social venue for residents and visitors. The venue has eight synthetic tennis courts and two lawn bowl greens. Participation in bowling and tennis has declined over the past years however the club continues to provide a venue for community members and visitors to socialise and recreate. Partnerships with other clubs, such as the arrangement with rugby league, will contribute to the club's continued viability. The club could benefit from assistance promoting social sport competitions and activities targeting cross-sections of the community.



The Werris Creek Golf Club is located on the western side of town on Gap Road and includes nine sand greens and irrigated fairways. The club has been proactive in recognising that members are ageing and is currently seeking external grants to fund construction of a shed to store golf carts aimed at allowing members to continue enjoying golf despite reduced mobility. This is an immediate need for the club to maintain its current membership base. The clubhouse is timber construction and as it ages, requires ongoing and increasing maintenance. The club has refurbished the kitchen in recent years and has also identified a need to upgrade toilets to make them accessible and refurbish the bar area to ensure the club remains attractive for external functions which bring in necessary income.

The Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club facilities are located on the edge of Werris Creek township and directly off Silo Road. The site is approximately 4.5 - 5 hectares and includes two dressage arenas and an extensive grassed area that provides a warm-up area. Basic facilities have been developed at the grounds including a functional iron wall and roof club room and a concrete block toilet building connected to a septic system. Town water is connected at the site.

The club grounds are located on Council owned land and adjacent to a significant and growing timber milling operation. Concern was expressed by the club regarding the potential for the land the club is occupying to be sold to facilitate growth of the adjacent timber mill, however Council has indicated that the club can continue at the current site for the foreseeable future.

The club was originally the Horse and Rider Club and included a range of horse sports, however it has evolved over the years and now predominantly attracts people interested in dressage. The two dressage arenas require upgrading including resurfacing and replacement of arena borders. Levelling and improvement of the grassed area would also be of benefit. Club events require people to travel from surrounding areas and the club intends to approach Council to investigate approvals allowing primitive camping on site. This would assist the club to attract participants to its events, in turn supporting its ability to attract members as well as raise funds.

Werris Creek's public swimming pool is located at the peak of a hill on the eastern flank of Werris Creek overlooking the town to the west and farmland to the east. The pool includes a 50 metre 6 lane pool and children's wading pool set in a park like setting with mature shade trees and picnic settings. The entry, office and change rooms as well as a separate club room for the swimming club are contained in three buildings at the entry to the pool immediately off a sealed circular drop-off and car parking area.

The pool is highly valued by the community for recreation swimming, particularly due to the very hot summers that are experienced in the area with temperatures reaching into the mid- 40 degrees Celsius.

The pool structures (concrete floor and walls holding water) and many of the buildings are ageing and reaching a point where maintenance will no longer be cost effective and replacement of the asset will be necessary. Fifty plus years ago, many public pools (like those in Werris Creek and Quirindi) were constructed after World War II and in recognition of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. At the time, communities banded together to raise funds prior to the local Council and State Government providing financial support for construction¹⁰.

A number of factors are contributing to Council's considering how they can continue to provide public pools due to a number of factors including:

- ☐ rising costs to operate including electricity for pumps and filtration systems, and water sanitisation including chemicals
- ☐ workplace health and safety regulations
- ☐ increasing need for qualified supervision resulting in increased wage costs
- ☐ reduced popularity particularly due to private backyard pools
- ☐ changing attitudes to sun exposure
- ☐ community expectations regarding water temperature and the quality of public places.

It is undisputed that the Werris Creek Swimming Pool is a highly valued community asset contributing to the social capital of the town and district. As the pool continues to age Council will need to have an open and robust conversation with the community regarding replacement of the pool facility. The capital cost of replacement as well as ongoing operating costs will be significant for Council and the community.

Serious consideration should be given to planning and design of a replacement facility including a pool of reduced length (25m) with a focus on leisure and water play elements, while continuing to provide some lanes for exercise and training purposes.

¹⁰ Big splash as Werris Creek Pool celebrates 50 years (Sportsdesk, 2018) The Northern Daily Leader

Map ref.	Park or reserve name	Current classification	Activities
Recreation parks			
5	Hoamm Park	Local	playground, picnicking, passive recreation, walking, community events
6	Lions Park	Local	playground, picnicking, community events
8	Rotary Park	Local	passive recreation, aesthetics, amenity
11	Doyle Park	Local	passive recreation, aesthetics, amenity
Sport parks			
3	David Taylor Park	Town	rugby league, basketball, walking, running, social sport
Specialised sport parks			
10	Werris Creek Swimming Pool	Aquatic	swimming, aquatic programs
1	Werris Creek Golf Club	Private	golf, community events, social functions
9	Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club	Private	lawn bowls, tennis, social gatherings for other sports
2	Equestrian	Private	equestrian
Community facilities			
NA	Rail Journeys Museum	Community facility	community events, meetings



Werris Creek public art depicting early railway worker

Werris Creek Golf Club

WC1	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding for construction of a shed to store golf carts for members that are ageing and have mobility issues.
WC2	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to refurbish the toilets to be accessible
WC3	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to refurbish the bar area to ensure functions can support the ongoing financial viability of the club
WC4	Provide support to the Golf Club to provide and promote social recreation activities at various times and for different groups in the community

David Taylor Park

WC5	Secure funding to resurface the basketball court to transform it into a multi-sport court. Consider lighting the court to allow use particularly during the evenings in summer
WC6	Support the Rugby League Club's efforts to attract funding to upgrade field lighting
WC7	Replace the public toilets at the park to encourage use by the general community for unstructured recreation (walking, running, social sport games etc.)
WC8	Support the Rugby League Club's efforts to secure funding to construct a new canteen building

Hoamm Park

WC9	Continue to maintain the park and playground to the current high standard
WC10	Investigate road crossing or calming devices that could be installed to remove the barrier created by traffic volumes on Single Street

Quirindi Dressage and Equitation

WC11	Support the Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club's efforts to attract external funding to upgrade the dressage arenas and surrounding grounds
WC12	Assist the Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club to investigate the requirements for primitive camping at the grounds to support events

Skate Park

WC13	Consider extending the skate park to cater for beginner skaters, scooters and bmx riders
------	--

Werris Creek Lions Park

WC14	Remove the small infants playground (spring toys and activity frame) when they reach the end of their useful lives (within 1-3 years)
WC15	Review the historical significance of railway artefacts in Lions Park in close liaison with the museum and Lions Club and develop a plan for preservation and/or relocation
WC16	Undertake additional tree planting and landscaping to better define Lions Park as an attractive passive recreation setting for residents and visitors

Werris Creek Rotary Park

WC17	Continue to maintain the park and consider forming a community volunteer group to assist. Consider transforming the park into a community garden.
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Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club

WC18	Provide support to the Bowling and Tennis Club to provide and promote social recreation activities at various times and for different groups in the community
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Werris Creek Swimming Pool

WC19	Commence planning and design for replacement of the swimming pool facility including capital costs for construction and ongoing operating costs. Engage the community in a robust and transparent discussion regarding the social and community benefits of the pool as well as the financial costs to Council and the community.
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Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club





Hoamm Park



Skate park



Shed between skate park and Lions Park



Werris Creek Lions Park



Werris Creek Lions Parks



Blackville

Blackville is 57 kilometres from Quirindi, which is the closest 'larger' town in the Shire and the region. At the 2016 Census, there were 113 people living in Blackville. Interestingly, a quarter of the population in 2016 were children aged 14 years or younger (27 people).

Residents living in Blackville have access to recreation facilities including a sport field, community hall and playground. Unfortunately, these facilities range from fair to poor condition. There is limited shade which is particularly apparent at the Play Centre Park where play equipment is exposed. The current very dry conditions and lack of irrigation contribute to recreation and sport parks appearing less appealing than they could, given more favourable conditions.

It also needs to be recognised that the maintenance of the facilities within Play Centre Park was poor. The disused tennis facility, damaged barbecue and rotting picnic table all need to be removed. The picnic table should be replaced with a more sturdy structure. Given the state of the existing facilities within the Park, it is not surprising that it is not regularly frequented by local children. The students highlighted that the Park has limited shade and little 'to do'. The Park could be re-developed as a more popular venue for recreation - the playground requires upgrading (and shade) and the tennis court area would be better served as a large concrete pad for riding bikes and scooters and for ball play such as handball.

The sports oval is only used for school activities while a large parcel of undeveloped open space surrounds the Rural Fire Brigade facility. There is no demand for upgrade or development of any of the open space areas outside Play Centre Park.

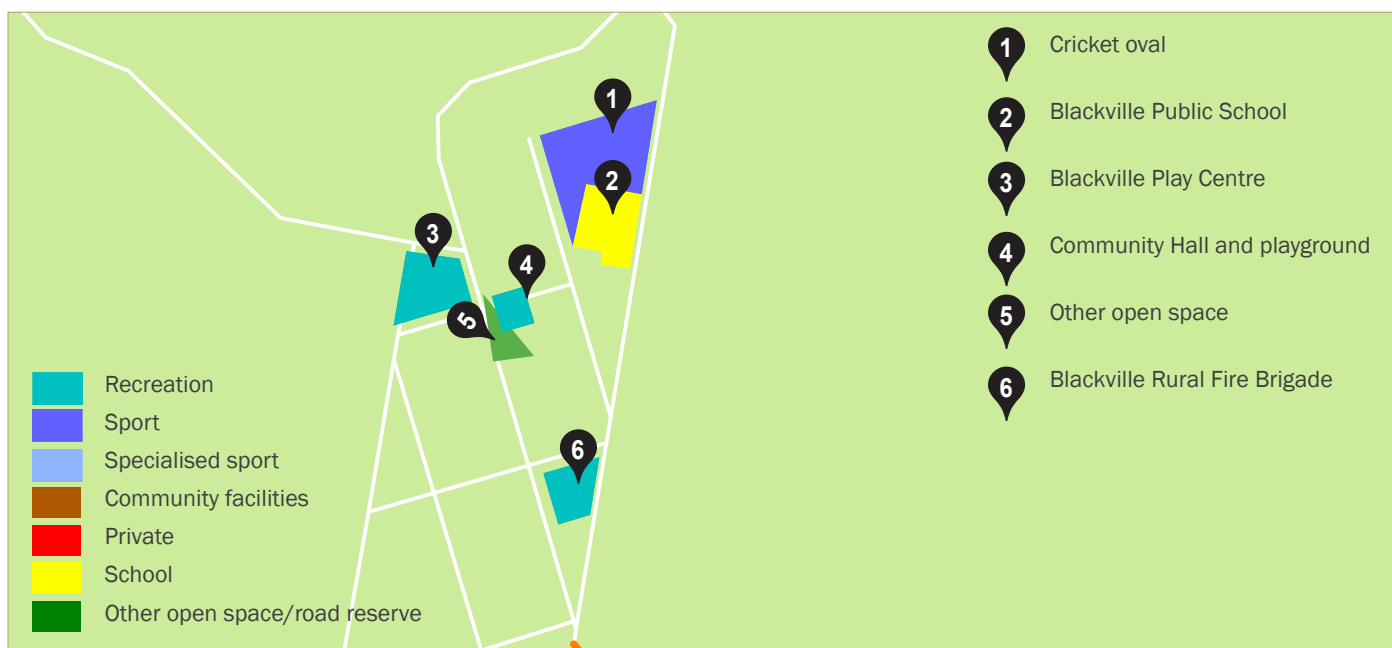


SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	113
0 - 14 years	25%
15 - 24 years	5.6%
25 - 34 years	13.9%
35 - 44 years	6.5%
45 - 54 years	16.7%
55 - 64 years	16.7%
65 years and over	15.8%
Median age (2016)	46
Households with children	48.5%
Households without vehicle	0
Households with internet connection	81.2%

Play Centre Park

B1	Remove the damaged and disused embellishments (tennis facility and barbecue)
B2	Replace the damaged picnic table
B3	Upgrade the playground and provide shade cover
B4	Develop a large concrete pad for riding bikes and scooters and for ball games





Blackville Play Centre



Blackville Community Hall



Blackville Rural Fire Brigade



Blackville Play Centre/play equipment and picnic facilities

Currabubula

Currabubula is located on Werris Creek Road about 15 kilometres (km) north-east of Werris Creek and 36km north-east of Quirindi. Tamworth is 30km north-west of Currabubula. The population in 2016 was recorded at 332 people and almost a quarter (22.2%) are aged 0-14 years.

A key feature of Currabubula for recreation and sport is the Recreation Reserve which boasts the following embellishments:

- ☐ fenced oval
- ☐ two tennis courts and clubhouse
- ☐ children's playground
- ☐ public toilets
- ☐ picnic facilities
- ☐ horse stables and stock yards
- ☐ various storage buildings
- ☐ Currabubula function centre
- ☐ rural fire brigade shed.

Currabubula Creek meanders along the rear of the Recreation Reserve and quiet country roads nearby provide ample places for horse enthusiasts to exercise safely.

In 2019 Council received funding to resurface the tennis courts to create multi-sport courts, fence the children's playground and develop a multi-purpose arena. The multi-sport court and children's playground initiatives are supported by consultation outcomes, facility audits and assessment of recreation need in Currabubula. The multi-purpose arena is a specialised equestrian facility aimed at existing horse sports at the Reserve.

In addition, there are two recreation parks in the town. Lorna Byrne Park provides a pleasant natural setting with established native trees and a single shelter, table and bench seats. A mound with large boulders and paved pathways provide visual interest as well as practical or recreation use for users (sitting, walking or climbing). Views into and through the park are clear from surrounding roads and homes, providing a feeling of safety, while being removed from the built environment. Access to the park is very easy for walkers or bike riders, and parking is available on surrounding streets. An excellent interpretive sign provides information about the park's namesake and is an example for use in other parks across the Shire.

Currabubula Bicentennial Park is similarly a natural setting with two basic picnic setting shelters. The park was established as a visitors rest stop, to honour Major Thomas Mitchell's exploration of the area in the early 1800s. While the park has ample internal parking, the vehicle access is just after a bend in the main road running through town.



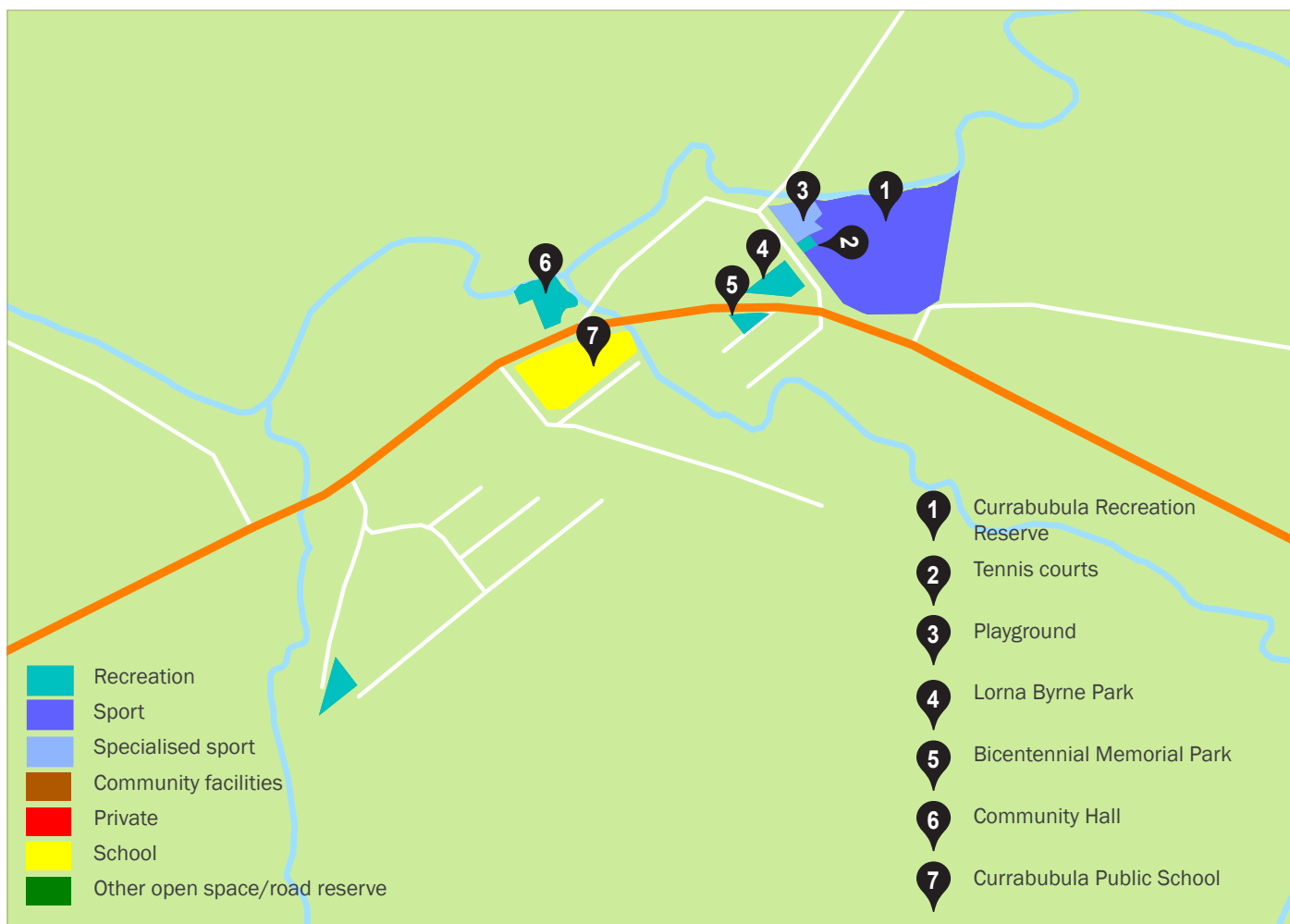
SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	332
0 - 14 years	22.2%
15 - 24 years	7.7%
25 - 34 years	8.0%
35 - 44 years	14.2%
45 - 54 years	13.8%
55 - 64 years	16.6%
65 years and over	17.5%
Median age (2016)	45
Households with children	51.7%
Households without vehicle	7
Households with internet connection	79.5%

The park is more likely to be accessed by surrounding residents walking or cycling to the park.

Discussion with students and staff at the school and drawing on outcomes of consultation undertaken, highlight a number of key issues and directions for consideration:

- ☐ participation in organised sport is not high
- ☐ a relatively large number of children participate in swimming club
- ☐ children ride horses, bmx and trail bikes on private property
- ☐ families travel to Werris Creek, Quirindi or Tamworth to play competition sport and to access more exciting recreation parks
- ☐ running training, field games and sports are difficult at the reserve oval due to uneven surfaces, burrs and long grass
- ☐ freedom camping at the reserve inhibits some children from using the reserve independently/unsupervised, when visiting recreation vehicles are present
- ☐ children are seeking a hard surface to ride bikes, scooters and skate boards on (in the absence of a skate park)
- ☐ increased use of the hall for activities including boxing, chess and exercise classes (yoga, pilates) was suggested.



Currabubula Recreation Reserve

C1	Plant additional shade trees and landscaping in the grassed area adjacent the playground and sport courts to create an outdoor room and expand the play area available as well as provide additional spectator space for the sport courts
C2	Separate the children's playground from vehicle and horse movements via a fence or other effective barrier (such as landscaping)
C3	Define car and recreation vehicle parking areas internally in the Reserve (bollards, boulders, landscaping or fencing) to separate vehicle movement from pedestrian and horse movements
C3	Develop a simple wayfinding signage plan for the site to consolidate entry signage and provide clear direction for different users, particularly recreation vehicles, campers and visiting sport participants (equestrian)

Tennis Courts (part of Recreation Reserve)

C4	Refurbish existing court surfaces to create multi-sport courts with lights and pedestrian access to allow public use for social games
C5	Undertake repairs on the court fencing

Lorna Byrne Park

C6	Continue to maintain Lorna Byrne Park as a passive recreation park
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Bicentennial Memorial Park

C7	Continue to maintain Bicentennial Memorial Park as a passive recreation park, however reduce picnic shelters to a single set reflecting use
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Currabubula Recreation Reserve



Currabubula Recreation Reserve/playground



Currabubula Recreation Reserve/tennis courts, clubhouse and toilets



Currabubula Recreation Reserve/main oval with pony clubhouse and stables in distance



Lorna Byrne Park



Lorna Byrne Park/picnic facilities and interpretive sign



Currabubula Bicentennial Park/dedication plaque



Currabubula Bicentennial Park/picnic facilities

Premier

Premier is a small town in the north-west of Liverpool Plains Shire. It had a population of 85 people recorded at the 2016 Census (ABS State Suburbs).

The town is flanked by cropping and grazing agricultural land to the east and tracts of native forest to the west. Larger towns are about an hour drive away and include Quirindi, Coonabarabran (Warrumbungle Shire) and Gunnedah (Gunnedah Shire).

Residents living in Premier have access to recreation facilities including two sport fields (one is disused), tennis court and playground. Whilst the sport and recreation park is a popular overnight and day rest stop for travellers, a number of the embellishments within these facilities are ageing.

When compiling this strategy, persistent drought had heavily impacted on agricultural production in the district. The effect of drought, in addition to ongoing mechanisation of agriculture generally, as well as slowing and scaling back of contractors in the resources sector has resulted in significantly reduced employment opportunities in the district. These factors have contributed to the population of Premier declining by almost two-thirds since 2006.

Premier Public School has outstanding facilities for a school of its size. In relation to physical activity, recreation and sport, the school facilities include a basketball court, playing field, obstacle course, athletics jump pits, modern playground equipment, table tennis and a range of active games such as hopscotch. Unfortunately, the population decline in Premier, and particularly the lack of enrolments of primary school aged children, has resulted in the school going into recess for 2019. The school may reopen in the future if sufficient enrolment applications are received.



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	85
Median age (2016)	43
Households with children	22
Households without vehicle	2.1

Due to the small population in Premier, limited information is available for Premier from the ABS.

Premier Rest Stop

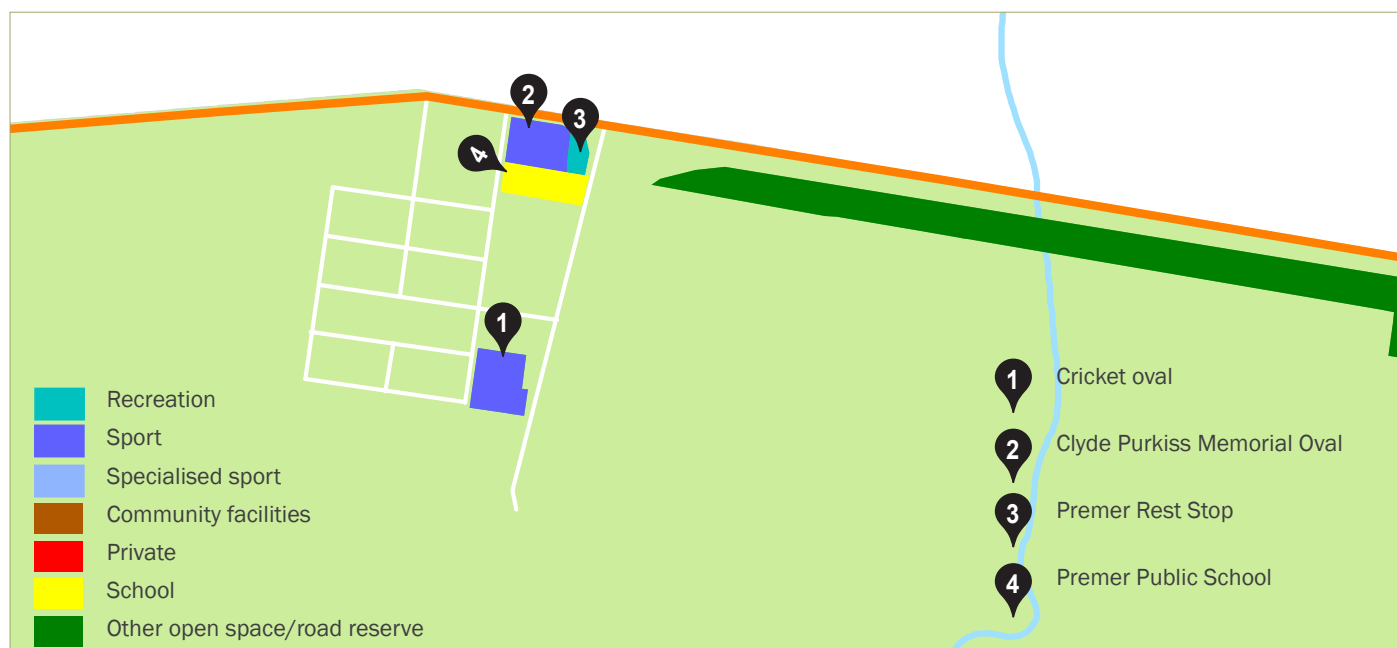
P1	Continue to maintain the facilities within the recreation park for both locals and visitors
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Cricket oval

P2	As there is no current (nor expected future) demand for the disused sports oval, continue to undertake the lowest levels of maintenance. Consider rationalisation if an alternate use of the land parcel is identified
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Premier Public School

P3	Approach NSW Education regarding community use of the school facilities, particularly for young people in the town
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Clyde Purkiss Memorial Oval/park sign



Premer tennis court



Premer rest stop/shelter with picnic settings and barbeque



Clyde Purkiss Memorial Oval/playground

Spring Ridge

Spring Ridge is located almost 50 kilometres (km) from Quirindi and 64 km from Gunnedah (in the neighbouring Gunnedah Shire). The town provides key services for the surrounding agricultural properties.

Locals and visitors have access to a range of sport and recreation opportunities. From tennis and golf, to cricket and touch, to shooting and motorsports, to play in a well-developed shaded park - there are options for most ages and preferences. Interestingly, the students at the local school are highly engaged in sport (with 85% participating outside the school system). Additionally, this participation is spread across fourteen different sports. Cricket, touch and rugby union are the most popular sports for boys, while girls prefer swimming, hockey and touch.

Lachlan Campbell Park is heavily embellished and is well used by all ages of younger children. The Park is a popular location for birthday parties. With recent drought conditions, the large shade cover over the play node and the irrigated lawns at the Park are an attractive feature.

Darby Reserve is the focus venue for community sporting activities. The facility includes an oval with synthetic cricket wicket, field lighting to half the oval, amenities, large shed, raised announcer's building, ticket booth and shower facility. Unfortunately, the outfield and synthetic cricket wicket are in poor condition. In fact, in 2018 the school athletics carnival was cancelled given the poor state of the field. Opportunities to irrigate the field, extend the lighting and upgrade the toilets should be considered. The Reserve is also a designated freedom camping location and the recently constructed toilet and shower facility has been well-received by travellers. In recent years, a ladies 5-day harness sulky drive has grown rapidly. The event is conducted at Darby Reserve and attracts at least 40 drivers. The facilities at the

SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	240
0 - 14 years	18.9%
15 - 24 years	11.6%
25 - 34 years	17.6%
35 - 44 years	9.9%
45 - 54 years	13.3%
55 - 64 years	15%
65 years and over	18.4%
Median age (2016)	43
Households with children	50.8%
Households without vehicle	3
Households with internet connection	77.2%

Reserve meet the requirements for the event well. Equestrian activities and motorbike riding through the State Forest are also popular pursuits for young locals.

While the Country Club facilities are ageing (and areas such as the clay courts are no longer used), the committee continues to seek grant funding for facility upgrades (and repair).

Darby Reserve

SR1	Investigate opportunities to irrigate Darby Reserve
SR2	Replace the synthetic cricket wicket
SR3	If irrigation establishes a more quality field and results in increased use of the facility, consider undertaking a field lighting project for the entire venue

Spring Ridge Country Club

SR4	Continue to support the Country Club in its endeavours to seek grant funding for facility upgrades
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Lachlan Campbell Park



Darby Reserve/key buildings



Darby Reserve/concrete cricket wicket



Spring Ridge Country Club

Walhallow (Carroona)

Walhallow is a small village located 35 kilometres west of Quirindi. The residences are managed by the Walhallow Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation. The village has a limited range of recreation areas, community hall, church, health clinic and public school.

A heavily embellished park is located centrally within the village and directly across the road from the School. The park is fenced and includes five play nodes (the largest of which is shaded), covered barbecue area and picnic settings. The park appears heavily used with students commenting that they visit daily. The only potential improvement identified by the students was the need for power within the park to allow opportunities for music and device charging.

The multi-sport court 'rage cage' is also a popular venue. However, the facility has no shade, seating or bubblers.

The students enjoy swimming and fishing in the Mooki River - particularly in and around the bridge where it is shaded. Many of the students ride their bikes and scooters to the River via the recently developed path. With all students being regular bike and scooter riders, additional opportunities for these activities within the village would be well-received.

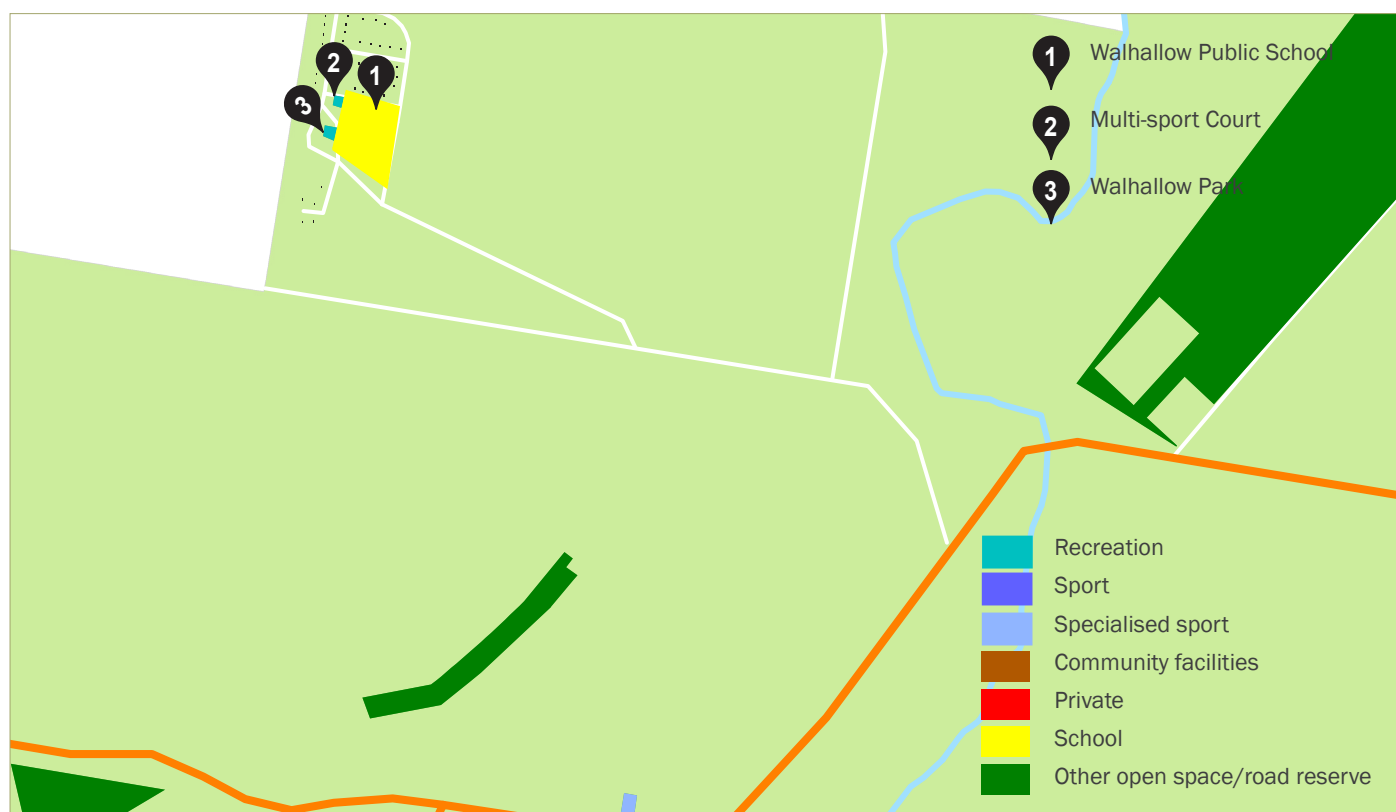
SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	85
Median age (2016)	43
Households with children	22
Households without vehicle	2.1

Due to the small population in Premer, limited information is available for Premer from the ABS.

Walhallow Park and Multi-sport Court

WH1	Ensure a regular maintenance regime and replace embellishments as the approach the ends of their useful life
WH2	Construct shaded seating and a bubbler near the multi-sport court
WH3	Investigate opportunities to develop a learn-to-ride bike activity track in the open space area adjoining the multi-sport court





Multi-sport court



Park picnic facilities and playground



Mooki River Bridge/Coonabarabran Road/Picnic area and rope swing



Park with playground, shade and picnic facilities

Wallabadah

Wallabadah is a small village about 16 kilometres east of Quirindi and 55km from Tamworth on the New England Highway. In 2016 the population was 212 people with a median age of 56, significantly older than the Shire's median age of 45. Almost a third (28.2%) of residents are over 65 years old, with a further 23.3% aged between 55 and 64 years old. In comparison, just over 11% of people living in Wallabadah are aged 0 to 14 years.

Wallabadah boasts the First Fleet Memorial Garden, a quality landscaped park with winding pathways are bordered by stone tablets engraved with the names of crews, passengers, servicemen and convicts along with histories of the ships they sailed on. The park reportedly attracts descendants for family reunions as there are no other memorials in Australia listing all the names of the people who sailed on the First Fleet. Well maintained and modern public toilets are also available at the Memorial Garden.

Parkland along the Wallabadah Creek provides a more natural setting with mature trees, picnic facilities and parking areas for visitors including campers in recreation vehicles. A children's ship-themed playground is located near parking and picnic facilities. The creek provides further opportunity for recreation activities, particularly imaginative and nature-based play for children.

Wallabadah Racecourse is located on the outskirts of the village and hosts a community race day most years. A short golf course was developed in the centre of the ring a number of years ago, however persistent drought has prevented maintenance of this recreation facility.

The tennis courts and clubhouse located at the 'Town Common' across the road from the Wallabadah Public School have deteriorated over time and are not usable in their current condition. The school owns a parcel of land beside the tennis courts which is undeveloped and presents as a 'paddock' currently.

Discussion with students and staff at the school and drawing on outcomes of consultation undertaken, highlight a number of key issues and directions for consideration:

- ☐ participation in organised sport is not high
- ☐ children prefer to ride horses and motor and trail bikes on private property
- ☐ families travel to Quirindi or Tamworth to play competition sport and to access more exciting recreation parks
- ☐ additional and more challenging play equipment at the playground including a flying fox and see-saw
- ☐ children are discouraged from riding their bikes at the Memorial Park, and these are the only paths in the village



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	212
0 - 14 years	11.2%
15 - 24 years	6.2%
25 - 34 years	7.1%
35 - 44 years	5.3%
45 - 54 years	18.4%
55 - 64 years	23.3%
65 years and over	28.2%
Median age (2016)	56
Households with children	48.2%
Households without vehicle	0
Households with internet connection	70.2%

- ☐ children are seeking paths and hard surfaces to ride bikes, scooters and skate boards on (in the absence of a skate park)
- ☐ there is an expressed need for a regular social event, such as Friday night barbeque or similar, for families to socialise
- ☐ there is a desire to redevelop the tennis courts and clubhouse as a community social venue
- ☐ increased use of the hall for activities including a gym and exercise classes (yoga, pilates) was suggested.

First Fleet Memorial Park

WB1	Promote the significance of the park (only First Fleet Memorial Park in Australia) as a destination for residents within the Shire and Region, and across Australia
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Wallabadah Creek Park

WB2	Define vehicle access areas from recreation areas to preserve the amenity and attractiveness of the creek banks, and improve separation between visitors (particularly children and older people) and vehicles
WB3	Continue to support community groups undertaking weed control and rehabilitation along the creek banks
WB4	As play equipment reaches the end of its useful life, replace with pieces that provide more challenging play experiences

Wallabadah Tennis Club/Town Common

WB5	Clear weeds from the surface of the tennis courts and encourage children to use the hard surface for bikes, scooters and skateboards
WB6	Consider redevelopment of one tennis court into a multi-sport court (tennis, basketball, netball)

Wallabadah Racecourse

WB7	Provide appropriate support to community events at the Racecourse as an opportunity for community connection
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Wallabadah Public School

WB	Liaise with the Principal to encourage community use and access to the playground and the sport field out-of-school-hours
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First Fleet Memorial Garden



Wallabadah Creek/picnic facilities



First Fleet Memorial Garden



Wallabadah Park play equipment



Wallabadah Park playground





Quirindi Creek bordering Wallabadah Park



Wallabadah tennis clubhouse/Town Common



Wallabadah tennis courts



Wallabadah Racecourse

Warrah Creek

The Warrah Creek Hall was built in 1912 and the community that use the hall, tennis courts and sports field celebrated the hall's centenary in 2012. The hall and sport facilities are located on the corner of Warrah Creek and Swinging Ridges Roads, approximately 15 kilometres from Willow Tree and just over 30km from Quirindi. Warrah Creek meanders along the western flank of the site.

The hall and sport facilities are located in a central position surrounded by agricultural properties and serves as a focal point for community events including Australia Day cricket and barbeque, the Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea, travelling musicians, local plays and the local writers group.

When the Willow Tree Bowls Clubhouse at Willow Tree was destroyed by fire in 2017, the number of social tennis players on the courts at the Warrah Creek Hall were supplemented. The tennis courts are lit and the Warrah Night Tennis competition in summer is popular drawing people from surrounding towns and communities. Sunday social tennis during winter is also well-supported by families.

Recent improvements at the hall include a free dual plate electric barbeque and airconditioning of the hall.

Warrah Creek Hall and Tennis Courts	
WC1	Provide appropriate support to the Warrah Creek Hall to assist maintain the hall and sport and recreation facilities for residents and visitors



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	49
Median age (2016)	36
Households with children	13

Due to Warrah being an agricultural district, limited information is available from the ABS.





Children playing on tennis courts/Warrah Creek Hall and Tennis Courts



Edgar's diary/Warrah 1912 subdivision centenary



Warrah Creek tennis courts



Warrah Creek Hall/ABC News/John Drew

Willow Tree

Willow Tree is a village composed of 308¹¹ permanent residents, located in the south-east of the Shire. The village is 14 kilometres south of Quirindi near the junction of the Kamilaroi and New England Highways. Willow Tree provides services to the surrounding agricultural district including Warrah and Mount Parry.

Despite being a small village, Willow Tree offers the community a variety of recreation experiences, including:

- ☐ King George V (KGV) Memorial park - a local recreation park with a playground, shelters, picnic facilities and public toilets
- ☐ tennis courts (not Council owned/managed)
- ☐ bowling greens (not Council owned/managed)
- ☐ recreation reserve
- ☐ community hall.

In January 2017 the clubhouse at the Bowling Club was destroyed by fire after over 60 years of operation. Two lawn bowling greens and two tennis courts were not affected by the fire and remain in good condition. The club intends rebuilding the clubhouse.

The Willow Tree Public School provides for preschool to year 6 and is located on the southern edge of the village, separated from the main residential area by the New England Highway and the railway line. Discussions with students and staff at the school, and responses to the community survey, highlight a number of key issues and directions for consideration:

- ☐ ageing facilities at the park and recreation reserve
- ☐ outdated play equipment at King George V Park currently only caters for infants and young children
- ☐ improved walk and cycle paths and connections
- ☐ improved access to waterways
- ☐ improved facilities for picnicking
- ☐ more community events in public parks
- ☐ improving pavilions at the Quirindi Showground.

A high proportion of students at the school indicated they ride motor bikes and bikes for fun and recreation, and the top five sports played included cricket, rugby league and union, pony/equestrian and swimming clubs. When asked to list their favourite activities, students listed facilities and opportunities in other towns. These included public swimming pools, skate parks, dams and lakes and walk and cycle pathways connected to key destinations, as found in Quirindi.



SNAPSHOT

Current population (2016)	308
0 - 14 years	17.2%
15 - 24 years	10.9%
25 - 34 years	11.9%
35 - 44 years	8%
45 - 54 years	13%
55 - 64 years	16.9%
65 years and over	22.2%
Median age (2016)	46
Households with children	45.8%
Households without vehicle	5
Households with internet connection	67.3%

The Visitor Information Centre (VIC) for Liverpool Plains Shire is located in a prominent position on the highway in Willow Tree, in close proximity to the Graze Inn and restaurant, modern cafés and boutique stores. The street frontage of the VIC is attractively landscaped and inviting to travellers.

The local recreation park adjacent the VIC contains outdated facilities and appears unattractive, contrasting with the appeal of refurbished and landscaped businesses in the immediate perimeter of the park.

Annual events held at the Recreation Reserve include the annual agricultural show and school sports athletics carnivals and sports days. The grounds are not irrigated therefore these events are dependant on favourable weather (rain) in preceding weeks and months. Free camping is available at the Recreation Reserve for recreation vehicles and campers. Council has installed donation boxes at these sites across the Shire to encourage voluntary contributions from users. Collected funds are used to provide upgrades at the free camping sites.



King George V Memorial Park

WT1	Develop a concept plan over King George Memorial Park to avoid ad hoc improvements and guide future development, particularly as assets require replacement. Include picnic facilities, internal paths and diverse play opportunities for infants, primary students and older youth, integrating landscaping with the VIC
WT2	Replace the public toilets at King George Memorial Park to cater for locals and visitors
WT3	Consider inclusion of a concrete pad with a basketball hoop and netball ring (back-to-back) for older youth

Recreation Reserve

WT4	Remove (demolish) old buildings that no longer serve any purpose and that are in disrepair
WT5	Plant additional trees around the perimeter of the show ring to provide improved shade and amenity in the longer term

Community Hall

WT6	Advertise for expressions of interest from residents interested in running active recreation programs in the community hall (such as dancing, yoga classes, indoor bowls, parents playgroup etc.)
WT7	Investigate heating and cooling of the hall during the peak of summer

Willow Tree Bowling Club

WT8	Work with the community to facilitate community events (movies or social bowls) using the tennis courts and bowling greens
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Borambil Creek

WT9	Investigate provision of improved pedestrian access to Borambil Creek, potentially near the Oaklyn Road bridge or from the rear of the Recreation Reserve.
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King George V Memorial Park/decorative gate



King George V Memorial Park/information sign and playground



Playground/King George V Memorial Park



Willow Tree Bowling Club greens



Willow Tree Bowling Club tennis courts



Willow Tree Recreation Reserve/sports ground/showring



Willow Tree Recreation Reserve/storage building



Willow Tree Recreation Reserve/Public toilets



Willow Tree Recreation Reserve/Stock yards



Willow Tree Community Hall including World War Honour Boards



Action plan

6.1 Evaluation framework

Council's Community Strategic Plan provides the following four key areas under which objectives are grouped:

- ☐ Social - a great rural lifestyle with access to quality services
- ☐ Civic leadership - strong community, council and business leadership
- ☐ Environment - a sustainable environment
- ☐ Economic - a thriving economy.

The following evaluation framework aims to align with Council's key areas and is suggested to support measurement, reporting and review of the Strategy, particularly implementation of the identified actions.

Implementation of the Action Plan

Capital projects identified in the Action Plan have been included in Council's Long Term Financial Plan including notes Council's intent to fund the project in its entirety or the percentage of the project as well as identifying potential external funding sources.

Where increased or amended maintenance regimes have been identified, these maintenance costs have been calculated and incorporated into operational budget planning documents for consideration by Council for the following financial year.

The following questions are suggested to assist Council prioritise projects when developing Delivery and Operational Plans:

- ☐ What Council funding is available?
- ☐ What external grant funding is available?
- ☐ What partnerships are available in the delivery of Strategic outcomes?
- ☐ Are there any scheduled/funded works that may bring forward an Action's priority e.g. scheduled road surfacing may allow for installation of a pedestrian crossing, earlier than planned.

Completion of projects in the Action Plan is an effective indicator to evaluate implementation of the Strategy.

Recommendations in the Strategy have been allocated a priority of high, medium or low. The timeframes for the priorities are generally:

High = 1-2 years

Medium = 3-6 years

Low = 7+ years

Vision and guiding principles

The vision and guiding principles provide key indicators to guide evaluation of the Strategy:

- ☐ Is quality planning guiding capital works?
- ☐ Are facilities accessible and connected?
- ☐ Do residents and visitors know what places and activities are available in the Shire?
- ☐ Has sufficient capital funding been allocated for project construction/development?
- ☐ Has sufficient operational budget been allocated to meet the maintenance standard agreed upon with the community?
- ☐ Are partners being identified and opportunities for partnering being utilised?
- ☐ Is the majority of the community satisfied with parks and facilities for recreation and sport?

Club and Community Surveys

Consider gathering data from clubs and the broader community regularly (every 2-3 years) to allow analysis of:

- ☐ participation trends in sport and active recreation (steady, increasing, decreasing)
- ☐ feedback on parks and facilities particularly projects resulting from master plans and the Strategy
- ☐ satisfaction with maintenance standards and levels of service (playing surface, cleaning)
- ☐ awareness of where to find information about places and activities
- ☐ greatest need for assistance identified by clubs (writing grant applications, capital works project management, overseeing major maintenance contractors)
- ☐ emerging issues and/or barriers to participation.

Analysing this data will allow Council to evaluate if outcomes of the Strategy are resulting in positive outcomes for the community.

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE-WIDE			
Planning, Policy and Budget			
LP1	Develop a design guide for park embellishments to ensure place-making principles are applied to parks and open spaces and to reflect the unique character(s) of towns and villages in the Shire through application of consistent approaches to the selection of park furniture, surface finishes, materials, colour palettes and hard and soft landscaping	High	Internal resources or est. \$30,000 (outsourced)
LP2	Ensure projects identified in Council's Recreation Strategy and Master Plans are prioritised by including criteria in Council's policy and assessment process for community grants, and through considered responses when supporting applications by community organisations for external grants (particularly if multiple applications under the same program are proposed)	High and ongoing	Internal resources
LP3	Identify a single point-of-contact within Council for sport and recreation enquiries to improve coordination and collaboration across Council functions and support consistent decision-making. Reflect this in the relevant position description to clearly define the role, responsibilities and delegated authority, particularly in relation to implementing the Recreation Strategy and Master Plans	High	Internal resources
LP4	Review Council's long term financial plan to include capital projects identified in the Recreation Strategy and Master Plans	High	Internal resources
LP5	Ensure operational budgets reflect the park hierarchy and level of service required for parks, sport and recreation facilities to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose and are maintained at the required standard to encourage use	Ongoing	Internal resources
LP6	Continue to implement Council's Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Bike Plan ensuring that essential supporting infrastructure such as shade, water and rest areas at regular intervals are included as essential elements of Council's standard design	Ongoing	Internal resources
LP7	When reviewing or developing new Plans of Management (POMs) over community land or Crown land, ensure POMs are consistent with the Recreation Strategy and Master Plans	High	Internal resources
LP8	Refer to the Recreation Strategy and Master Plans for guidance and direction when considering major maintenance, renewal or replacement of assets to ensure a full review of the purpose and need for the asset is undertaken	Ongoing	Internal resources
LP9	Investigate opportunities for Village Advisory Committees to coordinate and contribute to parks and open space maintenance with financial support and technical advice provided by Council	Medium	Internal resources
LP10	Develop and implement a policy and/or procedure for community organisations to follow to seek and receive formal approval on the design, location, and construction of assets and infrastructure on Council owned or managed land, to ensure compliance with strategic plans, master plans, asset management plans, relevant standards and codes and design intent for parks and open spaces. Include a list of internal Council Officers for referral and consultation to ensure potential opportunities/conflicts can be identified and explored/resolved	Medium	Internal resources
LP11	Develop a Public Space and Street Tree Strategy and planting program to increase shade and amenity in the long term, placing trees along walk and cycle routes and circuits wherever possible	High and ongoing	Annual budget allocation
LP12	Continue to implement the LPSC Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Bike Plan including consideration of supporting infrastructure to remove barriers to walking and cycling such as shade, seating and rest stops and water	High and ongoing	Refer to PAMP and Bike Plan

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
Awareness and promotion			
LP13	Identify effective methods to ensure community, sport and recreation organisations in the Shire make their contact details and facility location available to the broader community, new residents and visitors via a community directory or similar database (preferably online) recognising that many clubs and groups use social media platforms (e.g. Facebook)	High	Internal resources
Programs			
LP14	Investigate options and identify community champions to lead organised programs in towns and villages using established programs such as the Heart Foundation Walking, 10,000 Steps and Parkrun, for example	Medium	Internal resources

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
QUIRINDI			
Quirindi RSL Golf Club			
Q1	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to install a bore for cost-effective irrigation of fairways	Medium	Internal resources
Q2	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to install an irrigation system for fairways to improve the playing surface and amenity of the golf course	Medium	Internal resources
Q3	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to construct and seal the internal road from Werris Creek Road to the clubhouse to improve access	Low	\$50,000
Q4	Promote activities at the golf club, including social (putt-putt golf) and indoor activities that utilise the club rooms (yoga), to older and retired adults and school groups	High	Internal resources
Q5	Consider partnering with the golf club to host outdoor events for the community including sporting and cultural events (music concerts)	Medium	Internal resources
Q6	In relation to the age of the building, offer the provision of technical advice and planning to the golf club regarding ongoing asset maintenance particularly major repairs and asset replacement items	High	Internal resources
Quirindi Lions Rugby Union Club			
Q7	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to upgrade field lighting to competition standard to extend field use into evenings	Medium	Internal resources
Q8	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to upgrade the clubhouse kitchen to allow social functions	Medium	Internal resources
Q9	Support the Rugby Union Club's effort to secure funding to develop additional fields to accommodate juniors and training	Low	Internal resources
Bill McNamara Park			
Q10	Remove the playground and landscape the park to develop a central grassed area with gardens and bench seats on the perimeter. Native plants including appropriate trees should be selected to establish, over time, a community park. Landscape materials used for gardens could act as play elements (boulders, timber posts)	Medium	\$30,000
Bell Park			
Q11	Develop a concept plan over the park identifying ideal locations for public toilets, large shelter, lighting, bench seating and additional shade trees, with internal pathways connecting park elements and surrounding footpaths/ cycleways (external to park)	High	Internal resources or \$10,000
Q12	Demolish the toilet building and construct a new toilet that is closer to the playground and picnic facilities (as per the concept plan above)	High	\$60,000
Q13	Construct internal park paths connecting internal park elements (playground, shelters, toilets) and existing street paths to improve access	Medium	\$45,000
Q14	Consider construction of a large shelter that can accommodate multiple groups and large groups (birthday parties etc)	Medium	\$50,000
Q15	Consider developing play facilities for older children and youth (teens) in the southern part of Bell Park	Medium	\$80,000
Quirindi Public School			
Q16	Approach the School Principal regarding community use and access to the playground (off Nowland Avenue) and the sport field (off Munro Avenue) out-of-school-hours	Medium	Internal resources
Quirindi Polo Carnival Club			
Q17	Support and promote activities and events at the Polo club	Medium	Internal resources

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
Ye Olde Cricket Ground			
Q18	Lease land for agistment (at commercial rates) and/or investigate potential to re-purpose or dispose (sell) the land	Low	Internal resources
Quirindi High School			
Q19	Facilitate opportunities for the school, community user groups and Council to identify and resolve issues relating to use of the high school sports hall, including applications for external funding to improve facilities	Medium	Internal resources
Golland Fields			
Q20	Implement actions identified in the Master Plan that includes Golland Fields	Various	Various
Quirindi Bowling Club			
Q21	In relation to the age of the building, offer the provision of technical advice and planning to the bowling club regarding ongoing asset maintenance particularly major repairs and asset replacement items	High	Internal resources
Longfield Oval			
Q22	Implement actions identified in the Master Plan that includes Longfield Oval	Various	Various
Quirindi District Tennis Club			
Q23	Implement actions identified in the Master Plan that includes the tennis courts	Various	Various
Quirindi Racecourse and Showgrounds			
Q24	Implement actions identified in the Master Plan - Quirindi Racecourse and Showground	Various	Various
Who'd A Thought It Lookout			
Q25	Develop a simple concept plan over the lookout to rationalise the road (loop) and reconfigure car parking, identify a more prominent location for public toilets (safety), lighting and bench seating to capitalise views	High	Internal resources or \$10,000
Q26	Replace damaged information and interpretative signs. Consider placing these at 'table' height, angled toward the reader, to allow visitors to read the signs while looking at the views	Medium	\$3,000
Q27	Remove the outdated brick shelter and replace with an open design shelter	Medium	\$30,000
Q28	Colocate the obelisk (direction marker) with other park furniture, or reclaim the land it is situated on as part of the park (the road separating the direction marker from the lookout park)	Medium	\$3,000
Q29	Identify a route for a walking trail to the Lookout, ideally across country and connecting with Rose Lee Park	Medium	\$15,000
Quirindi Motocross Club			
Q30	Support the Motocross Club's efforts to secure funding to continue development of facilities	Medium	Internal resources
Quirindi Swimming Centre			
Q31	Commence planning and design for replacement of the swimming pool facility including capital costs for construction and ongoing operating costs. Engage the community in a robust and transparent discussion regarding the social and community benefits of the pool as well as the financial costs to Council and the community	High	\$30,000 - \$40,000

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
WERRIS CREEK			
Werris Creek Golf Club			
WC1	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding for construction of a shed to store golf carts for members that are ageing and have mobility issues.	Medium	\$30,000
WC2	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to refurbish the toilets to be accessible	Medium	\$30,000
WC3	Support the Golf Club's efforts to secure funding to refurbish the bar area to ensure functions can support the ongoing financial viability of the club	Low	\$20,000
WC4	Provide support to the Golf Club to provide and promote social recreation activities at various times and for different groups in the community	High	Internal resources
David Taylor Park			
WC5	Secure funding to resurface the basketball court to transform it into a multi-sport court. Consider lighting the court to allow use particularly during the evenings in summer	Medium	\$60,000 - \$180,000
WC6	Support the Rugby League Club's efforts to attract funding to upgrade field lighting	High	\$100,000
WC7	Replace the public toilets at the park to encourage use by the general community for unstructured recreation (walking, running, social sport games etc.)	High	\$60,000
WC8	Support the Rugby League Club's efforts to secure funding to construct a new canteen building	Medium	\$80,000
Hoamm Park			
WC9	Continue to maintain the park and playground to the current high standard	High	Ongoing
WC10	Investigate road crossing or calming devices that could be installed to remove the barrier created by traffic volumes on Single Street	High	\$20,000
Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club			
WC11	Support the Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club's efforts to attract external funding to upgrade the dressage arenas and surrounding grounds	Medium	\$50,000
WC12	Assist the Quirindi Dressage and Equitation Club to investigate the requirements for primitive camping at the grounds to support events	High	Internal resources
Skate Park			
WC13	Consider extending the skate park to cater for beginner skaters, scooters and bmx riders	Medium	\$30,000
Werris Creek Lions Park			
WC14	Remove the small infants playground (spring toys and activity frame) when they reach the end of their useful lives (within 1-3 years)	Medium	\$2,000
WC15	Review the historical significance of railway artefacts in Lions Park in close liaison with the museum and Lions Club and develop a plan for preservation and/or relocation	Medium	Internal resources
WC16	Undertake additional tree planting and landscaping to better define Lions Park as an attractive passive recreation setting for residents and visitors	Low	\$5,000
Werris Creek Rotary Park			
WC17	Continue to maintain the park and consider forming a community volunteer group to assist. Consider transforming the park into a community garden.	Low	Internal resources
Werris Creek Bowling and Tennis Club			
WC18	Provide support to the Bowling and Tennis Club to provide and promote social recreation activities at various times and for different groups in the community	High	Internal resources

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
Werris Creek Swimming Pool			
WC19	Commence planning and design for replacement of the swimming pool facility including capital costs for construction and ongoing operating costs. Engage the community in a robust and transparent discussion regarding the social and community benefits of the pool as well as the financial costs to Council and the community.	Medium	\$30,000 - \$40,00
BLACKVILLE			
Play Centre Park			
B1	Remove the damaged and disused embellishments (tennis facility and barbecue)	High	\$2,000
B2	Replace the damaged picnic table	Medium	\$1,500
B3	Upgrade the playground and provide shade cover	Medium	\$40,000
B4	Develop a large concrete pad for riding bikes and scooters and for ball games	Medium	\$20,000
CURRABUBULA			
Currabubula Recreation Reserve			
C1	Plant additional shade trees and landscaping in the grassed area adjacent the playground and sport courts to create an outdoor room and expand the play area available as well as provide additional spectator space for the sport courts	Medium	\$10,000
C2	Separate the children's playground from vehicle and horse movements via a fence or other effective barrier (such as landscaping)	High	\$5,000
C3	Define car and recreation vehicle parking areas internally in the Reserve (bollards, boulders, landscaping or fencing) to separate vehicle movement from pedestrian and horse movements	High	\$10,000
C4	Develop a simple wayfinding signage plan for the site to consolidate entry signage and provide clear direction for different users, particularly recreation vehicles, campers and visiting sport participants (equestrian)	Medium	\$3,000
Tennis Courts (part of Reserve)			
C5	Refurbish existing court surfaces to create multi-sport courts with lights and pedestrian access to allow public use for social games	High	\$150,000
C6	Undertake repairs on the court fencing	Medium	\$5,000
Lorna Byrne Park			
C7	Continue to maintain Lorna Byrne Park as a passive recreation park	Ongoing	Internal resources
Bicentennial Memorial Park			
C8	Continue to maintain Bicentennial Memorial Park as a passive recreation park, however reduce picnic shelters to a single set reflecting use	Medium	Internal resources
PREMER			
Premier Rest Stop			
P1	Continue to maintain the facilities within the recreation park for both locals and visitors	Ongoing	Internal resources
Cricket Oval			
P2	As there is no current (nor expected future) demand for the disused sports oval, continue to undertake the lowest levels of maintenance. Consider rationalisation if an alternate use of the land parcel is identified	Low	Internal resources
Premier Public School			
P3	Approach NSW Education regarding community use of the school facilities, particularly for young people in the town	Low	Internal resources

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
SPRING RIDGE			
Darby Reserve			
SR1	Investigate opportunities to irrigate Darby Reserve	Medium	\$80,000
SR2	Replace the synthetic cricket wicket	High	\$10,000
SR3	If irrigation establishes a more quality field and results in increased use of the facility, consider undertaking a field lighting project for the entire venue	Low	\$150,000
Spring Ridge Country Club			
SR4	Continue to support the Country Club in its endeavours to seek grant funding for facility upgrades	Medium	Internal resources
WALHALLOW			
Wallhallow Park and Multi-Sport Court			
WH1	Ensure a regular maintenance regime and replace embellishments as they approach the ends of their useful life	Medium	Internal resources
WH2	Construct shaded seating and a bubbler near the multi-sport court	Medium	\$30,000
WH3	Investigate opportunities to develop a learn-to-ride bike activity track in the open space area adjoining the multi-sport court	Medium	\$45,000
WALLABADAH			
First Fleet Memorial Park			
WB1	Promote the significance of the park (only First Fleet Memorial Park in Australia) as a destination for residents within the Shire and Region, and across Australia	High	Internal resources
Wallabadah Creek Park			
WB2	Define vehicle access areas from recreation areas to preserve the amenity and attractiveness of the creek banks, and improve separation between visitors (particularly children and older people) and vehicles	High	\$5,000
WB3	Continue to support community groups undertaking weed control and rehabilitation along the creek banks	High	Internal resources
WB4	As play equipment reaches the end of its useful life, replace with pieces that provide more challenging play experiences	Low	\$40,000
Wallabadah Tennis Club/Town Common			
WB5	Clear weeds from the surface of the tennis courts and encourage children to use the hard surface for bikes, scooters and skateboards	High	\$3,500
WB6	Consider redevelopment of one tennis court into a multi-sport court (tennis, basketball, netball)	Medium	\$80,000
Wallabadah Racecourse			
WB7	Provide appropriate support to community events at the Racecourse as an opportunity for community connection	Medium	Internal resources
Wallabadah Public School			
WB8	Liaise with the Principal to encourage community use and access to the playground and the sport field out-of-school-hours	Medium	Internal resources

Action no.	Action	Priority	Indicative cost
WARRAH CREEK HALL AND TENNIS COURTS			
WC1	Provide appropriate support to the Warrah Creek Hall to assist maintain the hall and sport and recreation facilities for residents and visitors		
WILLOW TREE			
King George V Memorial Park			
WT1	Develop a concept plan over King George Memorial Park to avoid ad hoc improvements and guide future development, particularly as assets require replacement. Include picnic facilities, internal paths and diverse play opportunities for infants, primary students and older youth, integrating landscaping with the VIC	High	Internal resources or \$8,000
WT2	Replace the public toilets at King George Memorial Park to cater for locals and visitors	High	\$80,000
WT3	Consider inclusion of a concrete pad with a basketball hoop and netball ring (back-to-back) for older youth	Medium	\$15,000
Recreation Reserve			
WT4	Remove (demolish) old buildings and structures that no longer serve any purpose and that are in disrepair	High	\$2,000
WT5	Plant additional trees around the perimeter of the show ring to provide improved shade and amenity in the longer term	Medium	\$5,000
Willow Tree Bowling Club			
WT6	Work with the community to facilitate community events (movies or social bowls) using the tennis courts and bowling greens	Medium	Internal resources
Borambil Creek			
WT7	Investigate provision of a walking trail and access point at Borambil Creek, potentially near the Oaklyn Road bridge or from the rear of the Recreation Reserve.	Low	Internal resources



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