

Open Space Strategy 2019–2029



Contents

A NEW OPEN SPACE STRATEGY	5
Introduction	6
Building on our success	7
Defining open space	8
Our open spaces.....	9
Benefits of open spaces.....	11
Purpose of the Open Space Strategy.....	12
Strategic context and relevant legislation and policy	13
Methodology	14
Community engagement	15
SETTING THE SCENE.....	19
Demand and consultation outcomes	20
Open space planning framework.....	31
Open space supply	38
Tweed Shire	44
Bogangar, Cabarita and Tanglewood	46
Cobaki, Bilambil, Bilambil Heights, Piggabeen & District.....	47
Mid Coast – Casuarina and Cudgen	48
Murwillumbah, Condong, Kielvale, Nunderi & District.....	49
North Coast – Kingscliff, Chinderah & Fingal Head	50
North East Hinterland - Tumbulgum	51
North West Tyalgum & Chillingham	52
South Coast – Pottsville, Hastings Point & Wooyung.....	53
South East Hinterland – Burringbar, Stokers Siding, Mooball, Crabbes Creek	54
South West Tweed - Uki	55
Terranora	56
Tweed Heads	57
Tweed Heads South & Banora Point	58
Tweed Heads West	59
STRATEGY TO ACTION:	
REGIONAL AND DISTRICT ACTIONS	61
Open space vision and guiding principles.....	62
Outcomes	63
Outcome 1	64
Outcome 2.....	71
Outcome 3.....	75
Outcome 4.....	81
Outcome 5.....	92
IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY	97
References	100



A NEW OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



Introduction

Council acknowledges the Ngandowal and Minyungbal people of the Bundjalung nation, in particular the Goodjinburra, Tulgi-gin and Moorung-moobah clans as being the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and water within the Tweed Shire boundaries.

The Tweed Shire is unique for its diversity of open spaces and natural features. The Wollumbin Caldera, the stunning Tweed coastline, a continuous foreshore reserve running the length of the Tweed Coast, the Tweed River and its tributaries, creeks, bushland reserves, parks and sports fields makes the Tweed a highly desirable place to live, work, play and visit.

Open spaces are the places we go to picnic with our family and friends, play sport, socialise, walk, cycle, sit at lunchtime, encounter nature and engage in cultural activities. Open spaces accommodate a range of sport, recreation and park facilities that provide a wealth of recreational, environmental and tourism opportunities for the region. Open spaces add to the amenity, character and identity of our towns and villages and provide areas to celebrate our heritage and culture.

As population growth and development continues in the Tweed, Council is committed to improving the quality and diversity of the open space network. We aim to find the balance between supporting a vibrant, prosperous community life and protecting our much loved natural environment. We will build on what we have achieved so far to provide a better open space network for future generations.

The Open Space Strategy is the product of extensive consultation with residents, stakeholders, open space users and the broader community. We listened and engaged the community to determine what needs to be done over the next decade to protect and enhance the open space network. Making the most of what we have, improving community health and well-being, fostering greater access and equity, connecting people and spaces and protecting natural and cultural heritage are the community's key priorities.

We will ensure our future open spaces provide sport and recreation opportunities that appeal to all ages and abilities. We will work hard to establish high standards and consistent levels of service so that our parks and open spaces meet both community and visitor needs. We aim to deliver a sustainable open space network that delivers a range of social, environmental, cultural and economic benefits.

The *Open Space Strategy 2019-2029* sets the vision for the future of open space and provides the overarching framework and strategic direction for public open space planning in the Tweed Shire for the next 10 years. Whilst the strategy presents broad strategic directions for the Shire, it also includes specific actions relating to future works in parks and open spaces in local communities. This makes the Open Space Strategy both a strategic and an operational planning document. Implementation of the strategy will ensure that our open spaces provide existing and future residents and visitors with diverse, dynamic and enjoyable places to live, work and play.

Building on our success

Much has been achieved over the past decade to protect, enhance and expand the quantity and quality of Tweed Shire's open space network. We are proud of our achievements and we want to build from this foundation. The following projects have contributed to improving the quality of life of our residents and enhancing the Tweed's natural and built environments.

Open space improvements

Regional/district park or sport field upgrades

Upgrade of Jack Evans Boat Harbour, Tweed Heads
Development of Rowan Robinson Park, Kingscliff
Upgrade of Knox Park, Murwillumbah including skate park, playground, netball courts and public toilets (Stage 1 Knox Park Master Plan)
Development of Stage 1 Arkinstall Park Master Plan, Tweed Heads South
District park upgrades in Pottsville, Hastings Point, Cabarita, Salt, Kingscliff, Fingal Head and Tweed Heads
Terranora tennis courts and playground
NSW Coastal Cycleway

Local/neighbourhood park or sport field upgrades

Numerous neighbourhood and local park and playground upgrades
Provision of modern outdoor fitness equipment in Kingscliff and Tweed Heads
Provision of off-leash dog areas
Construction or redevelopments of lookouts at Cabarita, Tweed Heads and Tyalgum
Rural village park and playground upgrades including Uki, Tyalgum and Tumbulgum
Development of new sports fields including Seabreeze Sports Fields, Koala Beach Sports Fields and Black Rocks Sports Ground, Pottsville
Upgrade of Cabarita Skate Park

Civic space or streetscape upgrades

Bay St CBD Streetscape Upgrade, Tweed Heads
Pottsville Village Centre improvements
Cabarita Town Centre Master Plan

Improved access to waterways for recreation

Anchorage Island boardwalk upgrade (Tweed Heads)
Budd Park pontoon upgrade and river bank rehabilitation
Pontoon upgrades in Murwillumbah, Tumbulgum, Fingal Head and Chinderah
Condong boat ramp and river bank erosion stabilisation
Construction of numerous boat ramps and jetties
Canoe launch site at Clarrie Purnell Park, Byangum

Policy development

Sports Field Strategy (2014)
Environmental Sustainability Prioritisation Strategy (2015–2020)
Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (2014)
Tweed Development Control Plan – Section A19 Biodiversity and Habitat Management (2018)
Draft Coastal Management Program for Tweed River Estuary (2018–2028)
Coastal Zone Management Plan for the Tweed Coast Estuaries (2013)
Tweed River Bank Erosion Management Plan (2014)
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (2018)
Youth Strategy and Action Plan (2013–2017)
Tweed Shire Access and Inclusion Plan (2018–2021)
Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (2014)
Commercial Recreation Activities on Public Open Space (2017)
Events Strategy (2016)
Draft Kingscliff Locality Plan (Volume 3) Development Control Plan
Rural Villages Strategy (2016)
Cultural Plan (2017)
Kingscliff – Dreamtime Beach Coastal Zone Management Plan (2017)
Vegetation Vandalism on Public Land Policy (2016)

Defining open space

For the purpose of this strategy, public open space is defined as:

‘Land in public ownership set aside for the purpose of sport, recreation and leisure, cultural or nature conservation, amenity and urban stormwater management.’

Public open space may include:

- Parks (including foreshore reserves);
- Sports fields and courts;
- Natural areas such as bushland areas, coastal areas, some foreshore reserves, wetlands, salt marshes and estuaries;
- Open space corridors for tracks, trails and pathways;
- Civic open spaces including streetscapes; and
- Land reserved for infrastructure (e.g. drainage, road reserve or as a utility easement) where opportunities for recreation, the protection of biodiversity values and visual amenity are also provided.

The Open Space Strategy applies to public open space, sport and outdoor recreation facilities for which Tweed Shire Council has either ownership or care, control and management responsibility. The strategy does not apply to indoor sport or recreation facilities.

Whilst, the beaches and waterways of the Tweed Shire are a significant component of the open space network and provide a range of sport and recreation opportunities, their specific management is not discussed in this strategy. The management of these areas is addressed and regulated under the *Coastal Management Act 2016* and Tweed Shire Council's Coastal and Catchment Management Programs with the aim of protecting environmental, water-supply and the social, cultural and recreation values.

A number of other land management agencies are responsible for the provision, management and maintenance of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Tweed Shire. The key agencies include NSW Crown Lands, Tweed Byron Aboriginal Land Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service and public and private education institutions. The Open Space Strategy does not apply to open spaces managed by these agencies however, we acknowledge the possible use of these open spaces, sport and recreation facilities by the community and these have been taken into account in determining overall provision, level of community access and amenity.

The strategy does not apply to privately owned open space or commercially owned open space or indoor recreation facilities. However, these open spaces and the sport and recreation opportunities they provide have also been considered in the development of this strategy.

Throughout this document, public open space will be referred to as open space. Outdoor recreation facilities will be referred to as recreation facilities.

Our open spaces

Parks (includes foreshore reserves)

Parks and foreshore reserves provide for active and passive recreation, opportunities for social interaction, nature appreciation and provide amenity values. They are venues for walking, jogging, cycling, exercising, child's play, walking the dog, throwing a ball, picnicking, relaxing, observing nature and a range of cultural activities including markets, festivals, events and wedding celebrations. Some foreshores reserves provide important access to waterways for water based recreation activities.



Sports fields/courts

Sports fields and courts provide for structured sport, active recreation and opportunities for social interaction. They are venues for playing sport, training, competition, social sport and other active recreation activities such as skating, bike riding and outdoor fitness. Sports fields and courts include the playing surface or court surface and the surrounding area required to accommodate ancillary facilities such as cricket nets, car parking, toilets and clubhouses.



Natural areas

Natural areas are dedicated to protect and enhance areas of environmental and cultural significance and heritage e.g. biodiversity (flora and fauna), Aboriginal places of significance and areas of historic significance. They may include bushland reserves, riparian habitats, wetlands, salt marshes, estuaries, coastal areas, geological and natural features. These areas provide opportunities to appreciate and learn about natural and cultural heritage, provide opportunities for rest and contemplation, nature appreciation and may support nature based recreation activities.



Tracks, trails and pathways

Tracks, trails and pathways provide for active and passive recreation and opportunities for social interaction. They are often linear corridors alongside beaches, rivers and creeks and/or provide linkages to other open spaces. Tracks, trails and pathways provide venues for walking, jogging, cycling, horse riding and commuting.



Civic spaces and streetscapes

Civic spaces are community spaces in and around activity centres and community hubs, including civic forecourts and plazas which are accessible to the public to walk, socialise and for workers to have lunch. Civic spaces and streetscapes provide important opportunities for shade, provide amenity values and can embrace a town or village's character and identity.



Drainage reserves, road reserves and land for utilities

These open spaces are primarily provided for drainage, as road reserve and for utility purposes which may include telecommunication and electrical infrastructure. They are often constrained, but can provide opportunities for recreation, habitat for wildlife, opportunities for nature appreciation and can provide amenity values if well managed.



Undeveloped

Land identified as open space or zoned for public recreation but is undeveloped or protected to meet future open space needs.



Other: Beaches

Beaches are one of our greatest assets that support our way of life. Beaches provide for a wide range of recreation activities including swimming, surfing, body boarding, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, snorkelling, diving, fishing, wind and kite surfing, walking, horse riding, rest and relaxation and nature appreciation.



Waterways

Rivers and creeks support biodiversity, water quality, transportation, recreation and/or visual amenity. Waterways provide for a wide range of recreation activities including fishing, boating, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, nature appreciation and wildlife observation.



Benefits of open spaces

Open spaces and the sport, recreation and park facilities provided within them are extensively used by our local community and visitors from across the region, the border, Australia and overseas. Open spaces may provide the following benefits:

Health and wellbeing benefits

Open spaces can provide significant health and well-being benefits and have a positive impact on reducing the prevalence and severity of a variety of diseases including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, certain cancers and obesity, as well as mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety.

The benefits of open spaces are associated with:

- people participating in physical activity;
- fostering children's play, developing new skills and allowing children to use their imagination;
- providing places that appeal to the senses whilst bringing joy, excitement and pleasure to individuals and communities;
- the restorative and stress relieving effects of being exposed to and connecting with natural areas;
- promoting active transport, particularly walking and cycling;
- being outside in the fresh air and sunlight;
- providing quiet or secluded places away from noise, annoyances and overcrowding;
- creating cooler environments to reduce the health impacts of a warming urban environment; and
- spiritual renewal.

Social benefits

Participating in sport and recreation activities, as well as volunteering activities can help connect communities and provide opportunities for social interaction, learning and teaching.

The benefits of open spaces are associated with:

- facilitating opportunities for planned and spontaneous social interaction – usually free of charge;
- transforming places into vibrant community places, decreasing feelings of loneliness and isolation;
- fostering community pride and a strong sense of place;
- creating places that foster intergenerational relationships;
- promoting social development in children and engaging young people positively in the outdoor environment; and
- facilitating community capacity building, ownership and stewardship.

Environmental and cultural benefits

Protecting local biodiversity, Indigenous cultural heritage and remnants from early European settlements is fundamental to sustainability and provides important opportunities to promote respect for our natural and cultural heritage and can inspire responsible nature based recreation.

The benefits of open spaces are associated with:

- provision of habitat for local fauna;
- protecting and enhancing local biodiversity and maintaining green corridors;
- conserving Indigenous and European cultural heritage values;
- protecting scenic landscapes and seascapes;
- encouraging people's connection with nature and opportunities to learn about the natural environment;
- mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing the urban heat island effect i.e. through carbon storage, providing buffers to sea level rise, by encouraging active transport and the provision of shade; and
- providing land that supports sustainable water management through water storage, stormwater management and flood mitigation and improving water quality.

Economic benefits

Open spaces, sport and recreation activities can contribute significantly to economic prosperity. Quality open spaces not only attract residents to our shire, but visitors, tourists, tourism related businesses and investment.

The benefits of open spaces are associated with:

- reducing community health costs, by increasing levels of physical activity;
- enhancing the amenity and attractiveness of urban areas and the public domain which can attract new residents, new businesses and increase property values;
- providing places and landscapes of interest that encourage visitors, tourists and tourism related businesses to an area;
- providing places that accommodate special events, markets and festivals; and
- employment opportunities resulting from the use and enjoyment of open spaces.

Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The *Open Space Strategy 2019–2029* is the umbrella document which will provide direction for the planning, development, and management of Tweed Shire’s open spaces, sport and recreation facilities for the next 10 years.

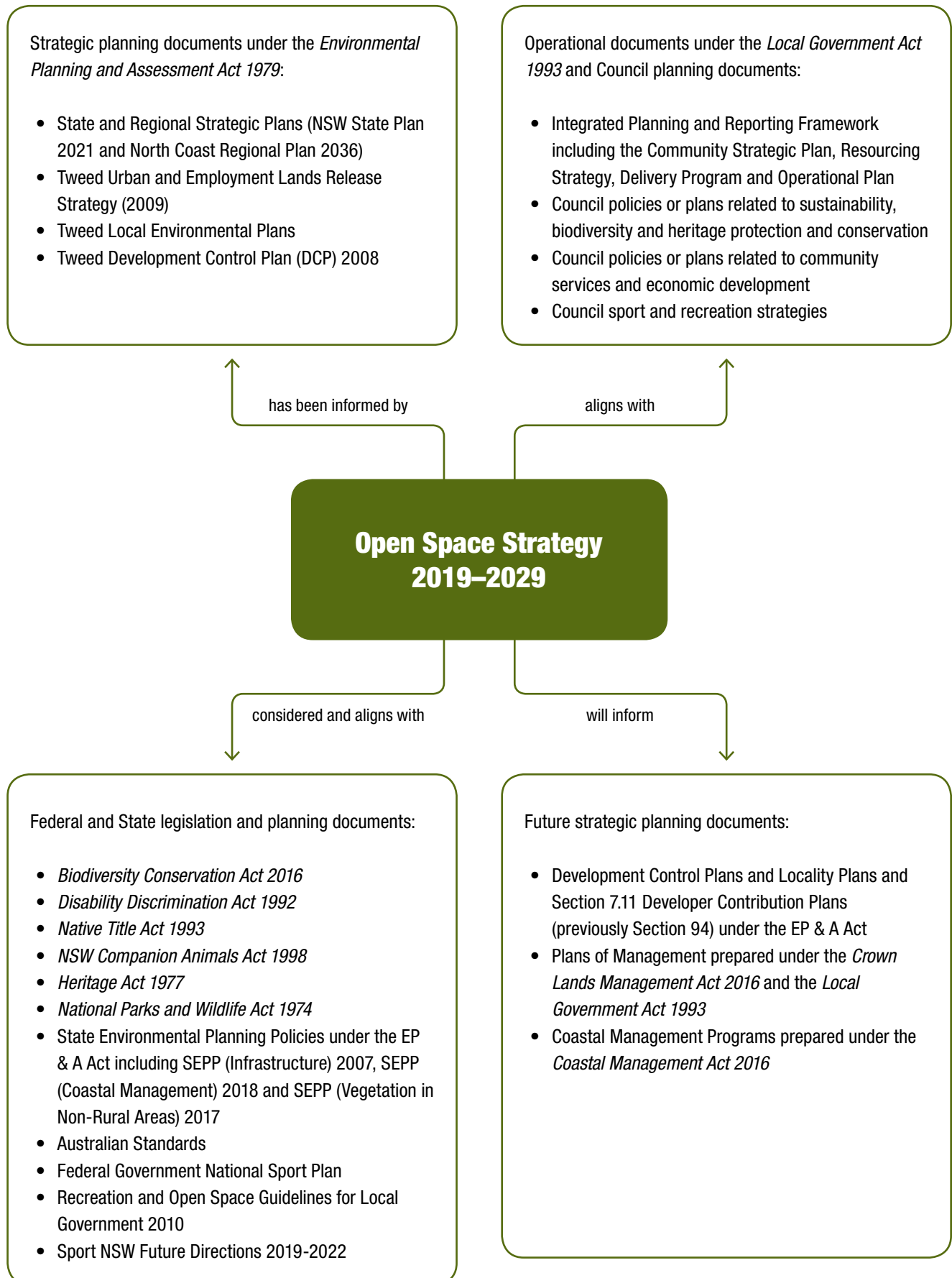
Given the importance of open spaces and sport and recreation to the Tweed Shire community and the significant pressures anticipated by residential growth and visitor use, it is a priority that a strategic and integrated approach to open space planning is undertaken. Without sound strategic planning and directions for open space there is a risk that decisions and allocation of resources are made in an ad hoc and ineffective manner.

Supporting this strategy, but presented as a separate document is the *Open Space Background Papers*, which contains the community engagement outcomes, and the research and analysis which informed the development of the strategy.

The Open Space Strategy seeks to:

- Align its vision and guiding principles with Council’s *Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027*, community priorities and objectives for the Tweed;
- Integrate open space, sport and recreation projects into a centralized strategic planning document;
- Inform Tweed Shire Council’s Planning Scheme, subsequent land use plans, more detailed open space master plans and concept plans relating to open spaces and sport and recreation facilities;
- Present the evidence base for open space decision-making and the allocation of resources, including open space contributions within the relevant Section 7.11 Developer Contribution Plans (previously section 94);
- Enable community participation in open space planning, design and decision making;
- Ensure a more equitable distribution of high quality and diverse open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the Shire;
- Present standards for the provision of open space to ensure all communities have access to open space;
- Respond to community needs and aspirations for open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- Acknowledge and respond to the open space needs of the predicted population and trends in sport, recreation and tourism;
- Recognise the constraints and key challenges likely to impact open space planning and management;
- Ensure the protection and enhancement of Tweed Shire’s natural and cultural heritage;
- Encourage the establishment of strategic alliances to better utilise and manage open space assets, sport and recreation facilities; and
- Demonstrate sustainable and responsible management of open space assets.

Strategic context and relevant legislation and policy



Methodology

This *Open Space Strategy 2019–2029* has been prepared following:

- An assessment of Tweed Shire’s progress and achievements in open space planning, development and management;
- A review of literature, best practice open space plans and strategies, Federal and State Governments and Tweed Shire Council’s key planning documents;
- Development of an internal working group and consultation with Council staff;
- Analysis of key issues and opportunities, including analysis of sport, recreation and tourism demands and trends;
- Development of demographic profiles for the Tweed Shire and its 14 profile areas, including a review of population forecasts to identify how the population is forecasted to change between 2016 and 2026;
- Benchmarking with other councils;
- Extensive community and stakeholder engagement and active involvement in prioritising open space projects;
- Review of secondary demand information including previous community consultation conducted for the Tweed Shire’s Sports Field Strategy, Rural Village Strategy and the Youth Strategy and Stage 1 of the Fingal Locality Plan;
- Site audits and analysis of the quantity, distribution and quality of open space across the Shire;
- Development and application of a new classification system, a review of the open space hierarchy and core service levels for public open space; and
- Mapping of all public open space managed by Tweed Shire Council.

Community engagement

The Open Space Strategy is the product of extensive consultation with residents, stakeholders, open space users and visitors. We listened and engaged the community to determine what needs to be done over the next decade to protect and enhance the open space network for future generations.

Each stage of community engagement was designed to inform the development of the strategy. Stage 1 of the community engagement process identified the community's needs, preferences and aspirations for Tweed Shire's open space network and its sport, recreation and park facilities. Stage 2 informed the adopted Open Space Strategy and Implementation Plan, which is the delivery plan for open space projects over the next 10 years.

The community engagement outcomes are presented as two documents: Community Consultation Report Stage 1, March 2016 and Community Consultation Report Stage 2, August 2018. The documents are presented in the Open Space Background Papers.

Consultation for the Open Space Strategy was delivered in two stages and included:

Stage 1

- **'Pop up' park** – Development of a 'pop up' park, which travelled to 10 community events across Tweed Shire including: Chillingham Markets, Pottsville Markets, Kingscliff Markets, Rotary Duck Race in Kingscliff, Kingscliff TAFE Orientation Day, Tweed City Shopping Centre, John Follent Park in Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah Farmers Market, Murwillumbah Agricultural Show and an event hosted by the Tweed Heads Canine Club. The 'pop up' park provided opportunities for engagement and comment from a broad range of interest groups.
- **Online and hard copy surveys** – Residents completed the following surveys: Open Space Survey, Youth Survey, Child Survey and Playground Survey. The Online Open Space and Playground Survey was available on the 'Have Your Say' page on Council's website for an extended period from November 2015 to January 2016. The surveys asked questions concerning the provision and management of parks and open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.

- **On-site surveys** – Playground surveys were distributed on-site in parks across the Shire including Knox Park (Murwillumbah), Jack Evans Boat Harbour (Tweed Heads), Faulks Park (Kingscliff), and Norries Headland Park (Cabarita).
- **Surveys to schools** – Over 2,000 hard copies of the Open Space Survey were sent to schools in Uki, Burringbar, Pottsville, Crabbes Creek, Crystal Creek, Chillingham, Stokers Siding and Bogangar.
- **Roundtable discussion** – Over 100 residents of Kingscliff participated in a community roundtable discussion on youth and family recreation opportunities in Kingscliff. The outcomes will inform the development of a Shire wide Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan.
- **Other promotions** – Posters, postcards and hard copies of the surveys were available at Council's Civic Centres, libraries and community centres.
- **Written submissions** – Community members who could not attend the 'pop up' park events were encouraged to provide written comment on specific open space issues or opportunities.
- **Councillor workshops** – Two councillor workshops were held to inform councillors of the process of developing the strategy, to participate in the process and report on its progress.
- **Internal working group** – An internal working group was established to guide and provide input into the strategy development process.
- **Tweed Link** - The Open Space Survey was promoted in the Tweed Link, which was delivered to over 40,000 households in the Tweed.

Community responses	Number
Open Space Survey	456
Playground Survey	158
Youth Survey	57
Child Survey	125
Comment postcards	88
Written submissions	3
Roundtable discussion	100
Councillor workshop	2
Internal working group meetings	4

Table 1: Summary of community engagement activities - Stage 1

Stage 2:

- **In-person Community Conversations** – Community Conversations were hosted between 22 October and 10 December 2018 in 15 locations across the Shire in addition to a Resident, Ratepayer, Environment & Industry Forum and 5 Youth Conversations at local high schools. The Community Conversations sought to inform and engage Tweed Shire residents and stakeholders on the draft strategy and to better understand the level of support for key open space projects identified within the local action plans. Users were asked to prioritise the open space projects for their local area as high, medium or low, with the opportunity to provide comment.
- **Online prioritisation tool** – The online prioritisation tool was designed to replicate the in-person Community Conversations to ensure consistency of experience and provide the opportunity for participants to be actively engaged in the open space decision making process. The prioritisation tool was a convenient alternative to attending an in-person event.
- **Online discussion forum (public)** – The online discussion forum was used to replicate the discussion at the in-person Community Conversations and could be accessed via Your Say Tweed. Users were encouraged to read their relevant local action plan and provide comment in a public discussion forum dedicated to that local area.
- **Online submission form (private)** – The community were able to comment on the draft strategy and the local action plans using a private online submission form that could be accessed via Your Say Tweed.
- **Quickpoll** – A Quickpoll survey offered the option to provide feedback on how satisfied users were with the draft strategy and could be accessed via Your Say Tweed.
- **Formal public exhibition period** – The draft strategy was publicly exhibited for an extended period from 4 September to 16 December at Tweed Heads Civic Centre, Murwillumbah Civic Centre, at Kingscliff Library and on Council's website.
- **Other promotions** – During the public exhibition period a marketing and communications campaign was implemented to raise awareness of the draft strategy, Community Conversations and the community engagement opportunities. Promotional activities included the distribution of flyers, postcards, posters, school newsletter inserts, Tweed Link articles, Your Say Tweed emails, media releases and social media.

- **Social media** – Social media consisted of a mix of free and paid for Facebook posts on the Tweed Shire Council Facebook page, and posts on Council's Twitter and Instagram. The key objective was to drive interest in the project, to promote registration for the Community Conversations, and to encourage participation in the online prioritisation tool.
- **Incentives** - The second phase of social media focused on promoting a competition to win a stay at Kingscliff North Holiday Park valued at \$560. The competition was used as an incentive where people could enter if they prioritised local open space projects and provided comment via the dedicated Your Say Tweed webpage.

Community responses	Number
15 Community Conversations	397
Stakeholder Forum	29
5 Youth Conversations	65
Online prioritisation tool	319
Online discussion forum (public)	198
Online submission form (private)	37
Quickpoll survey	90
Postal and email submissions	43

Table 2: Summary of community engagement activities – Stage 2

Consultation and community engagement activities conducted whilst the Open Space Strategy was in development have informed the development of the strategy including the Tweed Shire Council Cultural Plan (2018–2021), Draft Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program (2018–2028), draft Kingscliff Locality Plan, Tweed Shire's Access and Inclusion Plan (2018-2021) and Stage 1 of the Fingal Head Locality Plan.





A dense tropical forest scene featuring numerous tall palm trees with large, feathery fronds. The ground is covered in lush green vegetation, including ferns and moss-covered rocks. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day, with sunlight filtering through the canopy. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and natural.

SETTING THE SCENE

Demand and consultation outcomes

The Open Space Strategy is based on a sound understanding of the needs of our community, a review of population data and of proposed development for the Tweed and analysis of sport, recreation and tourism trends that are likely to influence future demand for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

We have also identified shifts occurring nationally and globally and the key influencing societal trends and issues that will have implications for open space planning, design and development. Over the next decade we will be presented with opportunities as well as challenges, many of which have been encapsulated within the Open Space Strategy to identify how they will be addressed in the future.

Community needs and aspirations

The community identified their preferences for particular open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and their key priorities for achieving a quality and diverse open space network.

Key findings

- Our community value the diversity of Tweed Shire's open space network and the range of sport and recreational facilities and activities provided.
- Walking and jogging are the most popular outdoor recreation activities, followed by surfing and swimming (at the beach, river or creek), walking the dog, using a playground, nature appreciation activities and bike riding for fitness and recreation.
- Enjoying nature and the outdoors, spending time with family and friends, rest and relaxation are the key reasons for using parks and open spaces.
- Participation in unstructured and passive recreation activities is more popular than structured sport activities across all age groups, except children.
- For children, playing in a park or playground, swimming, football, soccer and bike riding are the most popular activities. Parks, playgrounds and sports fields/courts are the most popular outdoor play spaces.
- Walking and jogging are the most popular activities for youth. Most young people visit parks and open spaces with their friends. The youth are satisfied with parks and the path network, and less satisfied with skate parks. For the young people who don't use open spaces, the main reason given was that the open spaces do not appeal to them.
- The key motivating factors for using parks and open spaces included 'enjoyment of nature and the outdoors', 'spending time with family and friends', 'for rest and relaxation', 'because they are free to use', 'to show visitors around the area' and 'to exercise'.
- Most residents visit parks and open spaces with their family (including children), with friends and either on their own or with their partner.
- A high proportion of residents feel safe using Tweed's parks and open spaces. Fear of crime or threatening behaviour is identified as the key reason for feeling unsafe.
- The community identified the need to protect and enhance what open spaces we already have, specifically in relation to upgrading ageing infrastructure, enhancing the appeal of existing open spaces, improving path connections, improving access to open spaces, and as a minimum, continue delivering the existing maintenance levels.
- The community recommends Council does a better job of promoting the benefits of open spaces to ensure people know where they are and what sport and recreation activities are available.
- Most residents drive to visit a larger playground that offers more play opportunities for children. Community priorities for playgrounds include 'the provision of more stimulating and challenging equipment', 'more trees for sun protection and grassed areas', 'the provision of park facilities such as seating, picnic tables, BBQ's and toilets adjacent to playgrounds. Other priorities include the provision of equipment for all ages and abilities and opportunities for nature play.
- The key features of parks enjoyed by the community include natural shade, picnic facilities with BBQ's, public toilets, high levels of maintenance, diversity of recreation activities, attractive spaces and family friendly spaces.
- Barriers to participating in sport and recreation include: lack of knowledge of open spaces and the opportunities available, perceived lack of safety in isolated locations, inadequate public transport (particularly in rural areas) and affordability.

Satisfaction levels

The community were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with Council's parks, playgrounds, sport facilities, natural areas, foreshore reserves and the path network in respect to quality, ease of access and maintenance levels.

- The community reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of parks and the path network (including cycleways, shared paths and footpaths). However, residents living along the Tweed Coast were more satisfied than the rest of the Shire.
- The community are satisfied with the level of access to foreshore reserves and parks.
- The community are satisfied with the level of maintenance and management of parks.
- The community reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of playgrounds, playground maintenance levels and the ability to access playgrounds. However, over half of respondents do not use the playground closest to their home, because it was boring, lacked facilities and the playground doesn't meet their child's needs. Most drive to get to a better playground.
- Almost half of the respondents were dog owners and are unsatisfied with the number of off leash dog areas where they live.

Community priorities for improving parks and open spaces

- **Shade and shelter:** Provide shade and shelter (natural or built) for protection from the elements, including shade over children's playgrounds, popular parks, seating and BBQ areas.
- **Park facilities:** Improve the provision of park facilities including rubbish bins (recycling bins), access to drinking water, working BBQ's, picnic tables and seating (including seating around playgrounds and seating for older people).
- **Public toilets:** Provide public toilets that are well maintained, safe, conveniently located and accessible for people with disabilities.
- **Park maintenance:** Provide well-maintained open spaces including regular mowing, emptying of rubbish bins, cleaning of public BBQs (particularly during the holiday periods) and the removal of graffiti.
- **Connectivity:** Provide a well maintained path network and provide pathways that are safe, convenient and connect key open spaces, townships and neighbouring suburbs. Provide additional paths in townships, other than coastal townships. Provide appropriate behavioural signage and line marking to reduce conflict between path users.
- **Children's play:** Provide quality playgrounds that provide for all ages and abilities, which stimulate and challenge the users. Consider installing natural play equipment, climbing frames and spider webs. Fenced playgrounds located close to roads and water bodies and for people with specific disabilities. Upgrade existing playgrounds and provide additional playgrounds in suburbs/townships that are undersupplied. Address anti-social behaviour in parks with playgrounds.
- **Environment conservation:** Protect flora and fauna and plant more native vegetation, protect water quality and manage weeds. Provide additional opportunities to appreciate and connect with nature.
- **Accessibility:** Improve access to open spaces, including bushland, foreshore areas and waterways. Provide bush trails for walking and cycling. Consider the needs of people with disabilities by applying the principles of universal design in open space planning, design and management.
- **Off leash dog areas and the management of dogs:** Provide more off leash dog exercise areas and dog parks that are fenced. The community identified the need for a new approach to the management of dogs in open spaces (including beaches), the need for additional enforcement of unleashed dogs, improved signage, and the banning of dogs in some open spaces.
- **Car parking:** Upgrade car parks at key open spaces and provide additional car parks that are conveniently located and close to other attractions and amenities.
- **Safety:** Identify opportunities to improve public safety in open spaces and consider lighting to improve safety at night.
- **Water park:** Integrate water features into key parks and provide a water park in the Shire.
- **Small or large parks:** The community prefer a mix of small local parks and playgrounds, as well as the larger parks and playgrounds that cater for all ages and abilities.

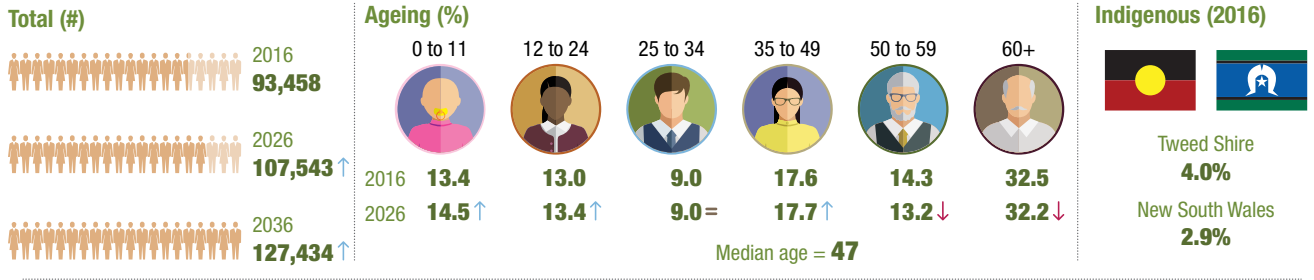
Implications for the provision of open space

- The popularity of unstructured and passive recreation activities reflects state and national participation trends and reinforces the need to provide an adequate quantity and quality of passive open space offering a diverse range of recreation activities.
- There is support for investment in nature based recreation activities (land and water based activities) such as walking, biking, swimming, canoeing, kayaking and opportunities to observe nature such as bird watching and wildlife observations.
- The Tweed's coast, rivers and creeks are recognised by the community as part of the open space network. There is demand for additional safe swimming areas and accessible viewing locations along Tweed's foreshores and improved access for people with disabilities.
- The community value the Tweed's bushland areas and support efforts to secure their protection and conservation.
- There is support for the development of a Tweed Shire Bike Plan to improve the provision of shared paths for better access to open spaces, to address the increased demand for walking and cycling, to improve connectivity within and between communities, to improve access for people with disabilities and to reduce the dependence on the motor vehicle to access sport and recreation.
- There is support for improving the planning, design and management of park infrastructure, public toilets and car parks.
- There are a significant number of neighbourhood playgrounds that are not meeting community needs. Playgrounds do not meet the needs of people with disabilities and there is demand for more accessible playgrounds.
- The community supports the provision of more off leash dog exercise areas across the Shire.
- Local markets and events in parks and open spaces are well attended and additional opportunities to activate open spaces through art and cultural activities will help meet the increase demand for family friendly spaces. There is a need to improve access to events in parks and open spaces for people with disabilities.
- There is demand for more picnic facilities, BBQ's, shade and diverse open spaces that appeal to people of all ages and abilities. Within open spaces the park infrastructure should be well connected by pathways.
- There is demand for facilities and programs to target the needs of older people such as improved seating, shade, outdoor gyms that are accessible for people with disabilities and safe places to walk and socialize.
- There is an increase in demand for additional facilities and programs for young people, including the provision of youth spaces to hang out together, skate parks and multi-courts, provisions for youth events and free Wifi.
- The demand for shade, both natural and built shade supports further investment in tree planting in streets and parks, combined with the provision of built shade structures over children's playgrounds.
- The approach to plan a mix of large regional and district playgrounds, as well as smaller, well distributed neighbourhood playgrounds is supported by the community.
- The inequitable distribution of quality and diverse open spaces, playgrounds and youth recreation facilities across different communities of the Shire was recognised, particularly by residents of Banora Point, Tweed Heads West and rural communities. This supports the need to plan a more equitable distribution of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the Shire.
- There is demand for quality and diverse parks and open spaces within walking or cycling distance from people's homes to reduce the community's reliance on the motor vehicle to access the open space network.
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles should be applied when master planning and concept planning for open spaces to ensure the essential features of safer places are integrated within our open space network.
- There is room to improve the quality of sports fields/ courts and extend their use to provide a range of passive recreation activities such as walking, biking, outdoor gyms, walking loops and playgrounds.

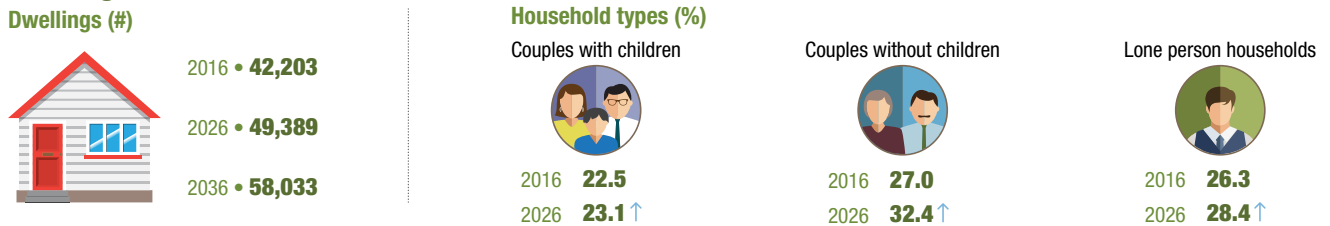
Population and density

The population growth and forecast development in the Tweed Shire is significant, and will have implications for the provision and use of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities. A snapshot in time of the existing population (Figure 1), the growing population and identification of urban growth areas is presented below (Figure 2). More detailed population information is presented in the Local Action Plans as an attachment to this strategy.

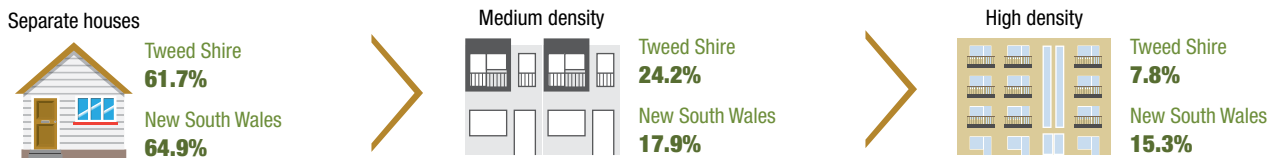
Tweed Shire Population¹



Housing

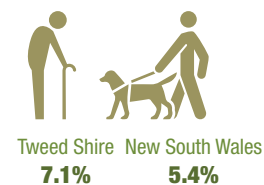


Dwelling summary (2016)

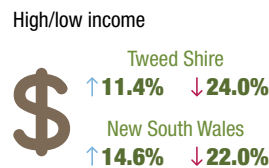
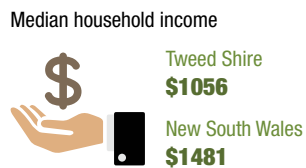


Economy

Needs assistance due to age or disability (2016)



Income (2016)



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage²

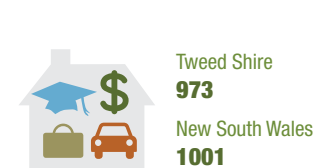


Figure 1: Population profile for the Tweed Shire

1 Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts. Population and household forecasts for 2016, 2026 and 2036. <https://profile.id.com.au/tweed>. Accessed June 2018.

2 Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA): The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) 2016. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage.

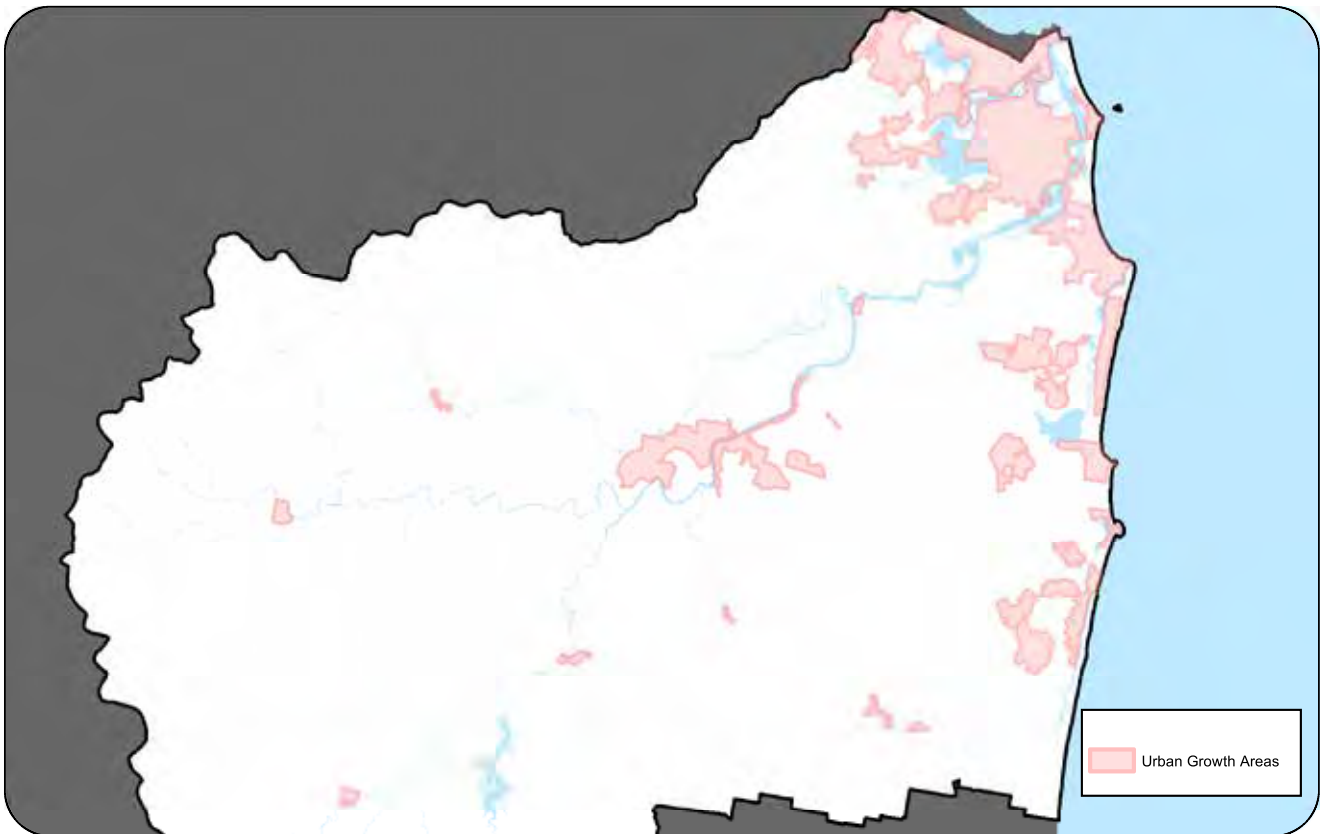


Figure 2: Urban growth areas identify both existing and proposed urban lands in the Tweed Shire.³

Implications for the provision of open space

- The projected rate of population growth for the Tweed Shire will result in an increase in demand for open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and will place additional pressure on the existing open space network. Managing the predicted growth and ensuring the lifestyle, character and amenity of the Tweed Shire is preserved and enhanced is of vital importance.
- The majority of population growth will be accommodated in the following urban growth areas: Cobaki, Bilambil and District, Mid Coast – Casuarina (Kings Forest), South Coast – Pottsville (Dunloe Park), Terranora (Area E) and North Coast – Kingscliff (West Kingscliff). Additional open space will be required in new communities.
- The Tweed Shire's proximity to Gold Coast City, where the population is expected to grow to 820,000 people in the next 20 years, will have a significant impact on Tweed Shire's open space network. A regional approach to open space, sport and recreation provision is required. The shortage of available land, usage of current facilities and continuing pressure for more and better facilities cannot be met by Tweed Shire Council alone.
- There is potential for further cross border collaboration with Gold Coast City Council to increase participation in sport and recreation within this region and offer high quality programs and facilities.

³ NSW Government Planning and Environment. North Coast Regional Plan 2036. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/North-Coast/Plan. Accessed June 2018.

- Quality urban design and the provision of parks and recreation facilities within walking distance is important in areas that experience increasing density and where residents do not have access to private open space (backyards). In areas with a higher proportion of medium and high density housing, providing a park or open space within walking distance of residents is critical to improving the liveability of those areas.
- A significant proportion of the Tweed Shire's population is over 60 years. The high proportion of households without children and lone person households is likely to reflect an ageing population. The aging and retirement of the baby boomers will have significant implications for open space planning. A commitment to 'age-friendly' and intergenerational planning and design will ensure open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are more accessible and inclusive of all ages. This should include the provision of safe places to walk and cycle (low impact physical activities), opportunities to spend time in nature, and the provision of park facilities that enable people to relax and socialise. Demand for group programs and activities such as community gardening, men sheds and group fitness is increasing.
- The open space network needs to be flexible and provide for diverse age groups. In areas where there are a significant number of families with dependents, open space planning and design should reflect their needs by providing age appropriate environments for children, youth and young adults. There is an increase in demand for facilities such as multi-courts, skate facilities, parkour, bike parks, paths for walking and riding, spaces for socialising and improving access to natural areas for nature based recreation.
- With a higher proportion of people with disabilities (compared to NSW) there is demand for accessible and inclusive open spaces, sport and recreation facilities. Profile areas with a higher proportion of people requiring assistance due to age or disability include Murwillumbah and District, Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads South - Banora Point and Tweed Heads West.
- Tweed Shire has a higher proportion of people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin compared to NSW. Sport and recreation plays a vital role in improving the health and well-being of Indigenous people and their communities. Actively supporting their participation will help break down barriers and build social capital.
- The Tweed Shire has a higher proportion of low income households and higher levels of disadvantage, compared to NSW. Areas with the highest level of disadvantage (a lower SEIFA Index compared to the Tweed Shire) include Murwillumbah and District, North West Tweed – Tyalgum, South West Tweed Uki, Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads South – Banora Point and Tweed Heads West.
- A more equitable distribution of quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the shire, with a focus on improving open spaces in lower socio economic areas can have a direct impact on people's lives and on the way they feel. Rundown, poorly maintained public spaces only worsen the sense of physical and social decline in an area. Regeneration projects that involve the local community can help to bring new life to underutilised and unattractive parks and open spaces.
- Access to free and affordable sport and recreation facilities and activities is important for low income households (especially for children and youth) to promote active living, improve health outcomes, help break generational poverty and to build safer and stronger communities. Open spaces can help to reduce the prevalence of social isolation in areas with higher levels of disadvantage, for older people and people with disabilities.
- Level of household income influences sport and recreation participation. Families with higher disposable incomes are more likely to spend money on sport and recreation membership fees and have access to vehicles for travel to participate in leisure.

Sport and recreation trends

General sport and recreation trends

- The latest AusPlay data for the period July 2016 to June 2017 shows that 58% of adults and 69% of children participated in sport-related activities.⁴
- Soccer (football) remains the most popular club-based sport in Australia for adults and children combined; although netball is more popular for girls (0-14).
- While sport remains an important form of activity throughout a person's life stages, non-sport related physical activity becomes more important as we age. There is an increased preference for low impact activities such as walking, cycling, opportunities to relax, connect with nature and socialise for people over 60 years.
- The top 10 physical activities Australian adults (both men and women) participate in include: walking (recreational), fitness/gym, athletics (includes jogging and running), swimming, cycling, soccer, bushwalking, golf, tennis and yoga.
- The top 5 physical activities for Australian women include: walking (recreational), fitness/gym, swimming, athletics (includes jogging and running) and cycling.
- The top 5 physical activities for Australian men include walking (recreational), fitness/gym, athletics (includes jogging and running), cycling and swimming.
- The top 5 club sports for Australian adults (both men and women) include: golf, soccer, tennis, cricket and netball. Golf is the highest ranking club sport overall for Australian adults.
- There is an increasing demand for modified sports such as 6-a-side soccer and shorter versions of traditional sport including T20 cricket.
- Changing work patterns and time pressure are key barriers to participation, as is poor health and injury as people age.
- Studies have shown that people with a disability, people born overseas, Indigenous Australians, older adults, women, and people with lower socio-economic status are least likely to participate in sport and physical recreation.⁵
- Declining volunteerism is impacting sport participation opportunities for the community. The ongoing provision of education and training opportunities, positive recognition, and other forms of support for sport volunteers, has been shown to dramatically improve volunteer recruitment and retention rates and contribute to the broader sustainability of Australian sport⁶.
- Associated with an emerging preference for participation in informal activities is an increasing demand for local, low cost participation opportunities. There is increasing demand for informal nature based recreation activities such as bushwalking, rogaining, cycling, orienteering and river based aquatic sports.
- The re-emergence of community gardening has reinvigorated interest in food production in open spaces and in the public domain. A trend that is likely to increase in higher density urban areas where there is less private open space.
- Research reveals that living within close proximity to green spaces is associated with reduced depression, anxiety and other health problems. The relationship has been shown to be strongest for people with low incomes and children. Research also demonstrates that people are more likely to engage in active lifestyles in attractive and accessible open spaces.
- Programming and activation of open spaces through activities such as group exercise, educational programs, trails and walkways has been shown to increase physical activity levels. Activation of open spaces can also help to target and engage specific community groups such as seniors, youth, mothers and babies and Indigenous communities.
- Technologies are increasingly used to keep active. The use of wearable technologies and apps for tracking activity such as adventures apps, trail maps, live cam and personal workout records are now common place. Other technologies such as QR codes on tracks, instructional and interpretative signage are making open spaces and the use of recreational facilities more accessible.

4 Australian Government. Australian Sports Commission. AusPlay Participation data for the sports sector. Summary of key findings October 2015 to September 2016 data. www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/653875/34648_AusPlay_summary_report_accessible_FINAL_updated_211216.pdf. Accessed November 2017

5 Vic Health. Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention (2015). www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/influencing-childrens-health-critical-windows-for-intervention. Accessed November 2017.

6 Clearing house for Sport. Sport Participation in Australia. www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/knowledge_base/sport_participation/community_participation/sport_participation_in_australia. Australian Government. Accessed November 2017.

Sport and recreation trends of children and young people

- 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 and an increasingly risk adverse culture.
- Australia has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity among developed countries. 1 in 4 Australian children (aged 2 to 17) were overweight or obese in 2014–15.⁷
- Regular physical activity during childhood and adolescence helps to regulate body weight and establish health promoting lifestyle behaviours that reduce risk factors associated with obesity and chronic diseases.
- 63% of Australian children aged 0 to 14 years are active at least once a week (outside of school hours). Only 25% of children are active at least three times a week. These findings highlight the critical role of sport and physical activity programs in increasing activity levels for children and young people.⁸
- Sport clubs are the primary avenue for children to be active (except for children aged 0 to 4). Boys are more likely to be active through club sport than girls.
- Age is a key determinate of child participation in organised physical activity, with participation peaking in the 9 to 11 age group before declining in the 12 to 14 age group.
- In 2017 children aged 9 to 11 years had the highest sport participation rates.
- The top 10 activities Australian children (boys and girls) participated in (outside of school hours) included: swimming, soccer, AFL, dancing (recreational), gymnastics, basketball, netball, tennis, athletics and cricket.
- The top 5 sport or physical activities for Australian girls are: swimming, dancing (recreational), netball, gymnastics and soccer.
- The top 5 sport or physical activities for Australian boys are: swimming, soccer, AFL, cricket and basketball.
- Research showed that more children are spending time on the internet, computers and games consoles than three years ago. However more children are also riding bikes, skateboarding and riding scooters.⁹

- Access to parks, ovals or other open space closer to home increases the likelihood that children and young people will use them. A five minute walk to a park, without having to cross a busy intersection, is considered ideal.

Trends in open space, sport and recreation facility planning

- There is a trend toward encouraging the co-location of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities close to other community assets such as community centres/halls, retail precincts and cultural precincts. This encourages integrated service provision and provides greater access to recreation and social opportunities for a broader audience.
- Across Councils, there is a shift to planning and designing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities that can be configured to meet a variety of different needs and uses. The benefits include shared use of infrastructure, a more efficient maintenance approach and enhanced ability to attract funding given the range of uses.
- Councils are increasingly adopting a hierarchal approach to facility and infrastructure provision which reflects different service levels, usage and standards of provision.
- There is growing evidence of effective public-private partnerships between developers, government and sports clubs to develop sports facilities, including the design of joint-use facilities at schools which allow educational use during daytime periods (weekdays) and community use during evenings and on weekends.
- There is an emergence of new playing surface technologies which allow Councils to maximise the use of existing assets (e.g. synthetic playing surfaces). Although this provides a year round surface, it is a relatively expensive option for grass replacement. The value of artificial turf needs to be weighted up with issues of high temperatures emanating from the surface, maintenance costs, change in types of injuries and the loss of the environmental benefits of the natural surface.

7 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Australian. www.myhealthycommunities.gov.au/our-reports/get-report-file/hc27/publication/AIHW_HC_Report_Overweight_and_Obesity_Report_December_2016. Accessed June 2018

8 Australian Government. Australian Sports Commission. [AusPlay Focus Children's Participation in Physical Activity Out of School Hours](http://AusPlay_Focus_Children's_Participation_in_Physical_Activity_Out_of_School_Hours). www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/669283/AusPlay_focus_Children_Participation_2.pdf. Accessed June 2018.

9 Australian Bureau of Statistics. 4901.0 - Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2012. www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mediareleasesbytitle/801D271AA0D36498CA2572440076A67E?OpenDocument. Accessed November 2017.

Implications for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities

- Council has the capacity to influence the conditions needed for good community health, that is, the natural, built and social environments in which we live, work and play. It is increasingly important to plan and design urban environments with accessible open spaces that encourage active travel and provide active and passive recreation opportunities for everyone.
- Tweed Shire is fortunate that a large proportion of land within its boundaries are natural areas which makes us well placed to provide for nature based recreation. Council's open space network has potential to provide more opportunities for passive through to active nature based experiences such as bird watching, bushwalking, mountain biking, swimming, canoeing, kayaking and other river based aquatic sports such as fishing and boating. The demand for more nature based recreation will require a managed approach to balance increased use and the impacts on natural areas.
- Extreme sports are increasing in popularity in the Tweed Shire, reinforcing general state and national trends. There is an increase in demand for purpose-built biking facilities such as urban bike parks (including BMX and pump tracks) and mountain bike trails.
- There is an increasing trend for commercial recreation activities in parks and open spaces such as personal training, surf schools, commercial markets, large scale festivals, events and filming events. Council has adopted an Events Strategy and a Commercial Recreation Activities on Public Open Space Policy to manage these activities in parks and open spaces. Whilst these activities increase the use of open spaces and stimulate the economy, it will be important to balance these complementary activities with the needs of other open space users and to ensure the protection of natural values and amenity.
- There are significant opportunities and demand for low cost activities and programming in parks and open spaces with capacity to work with community groups and the Northern NSW Local Health District to activate public open spaces in this way.
- Pathways, trails (including bushwalking trails) and the cycle network are part of the open space network. A greater emphasis should be placed on connecting open spaces to existing residential areas, key activity nodes, community facilities and other open spaces.
- Applying the principles of universal design to public open spaces, sport and recreation opportunities should be common practice in everything we do. There is an increased demand for access to play spaces, park facilities, foreshore areas, bushland areas and waterways for people of all abilities.
- For children and young people, there is a growing recognition of the importance of both structured (sport) and unstructured physical activity, as well as opportunities to socialise and spend time in nature. Engaging in outdoor play and more specifically nature play has significant benefits for young children and their families. Providing opportunities for creative play, sensory play and nature play are all critical and often missing in the more traditional playgrounds.
- Tweed Shire Council will continue to make provisions for community gardens and urban horticulture.
- The expectations of communities are growing regarding the standard of sport and recreation facility provision, programming and management. These growing expectations, which align with specific facility standards and requirements imposed by peak sporting bodies (such as sports field lighting and turf standards) places significant pressure on Council to provide state of the art facilities.
- Landform and topographic constraints and the rise in local land values will impact Council's capacity to acquire new land to address the undersupply of open space in some areas, particularly the large areas required for sports fields.
- This will also be a challenge in future urban growth areas where flat and flood immune areas are required and highly valued for residential development. There is significant opportunities to work with education institutions to meet the existing and future demand for high quality sport facilities.
- There is a significant number of ageing open space assets which require refurbishment and/or upgrading, which are now reaching the end of their useful life, including playgrounds, public toilets and sport facilities. A key issue for the Tweed Shire is that funds have not been put aside to adequately cover the depreciation of the assets to allow for asset renewal in open spaces.

Tourism trends

- It is estimated that the market for nature based recreation is increasing at six times the rate of tourism overall. People are looking for new experiences, more diverse experiences, combining business travel with holidays and looking to 'get back to nature'.
- In NSW the North Coast Region had the second highest proportion of international visitors who engaged in nature based recreation. The top two nature based activities were 'going to the beach' and 'visiting a National Park or State Park'.
- In NSW the North Coast Region had the second highest proportion of domestic overnight visitors who engaged in nature based recreation. The top two nature based activities being 'going to the beach' and 'bushwalking or rainforest walk'.¹⁰
- In the Tweed Shire, the number of domestic day visitors in the year ending September 2016 was 1.2 million. The coastal villages south of Tweed Heads to Pottsville hold the largest market share of visitors to the Tweed, followed by the Tweed Valley.
- For both the Tweed Coast and The Tweed Valley outdoor or nature based activities and sport are prominent activities undertaken by visitors, and will continue to be a key driver for domestic travel.
- Along the Tweed Coast, the holiday market is the strongest. The coast attracts a diverse range of visitors, predominantly families and couples and most visitors are from Queensland. There are further opportunities for growth in the holiday market along with attending special events, festivals and sport tourism.
- Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) is the strongest market in the Tweed Valley, followed by entertainment and special events. The Tweed Valley attracts predominantly families and most visitors are from Queensland.
- Surf tourism is a major contributor to the Tweed's economy. Whilst the exact figures are not available, the popularity of surfing beaches including Duranbah, Kingscliff and Cabarita beaches, and Tweed's close proximity to the Gold Coast's surf beaches continue to see the Tweed well placed to develop and promote surf tourism.
- There has been significant investment in rail trails around the world. In 2015 the NSW Government announced up to \$50 million for pilot rail trail projects, including the Tweed Valley Rail Trail, to boost tourist numbers in regional areas and the visitor economy.

Implications for the provision of open space

- Tweed Shire's economy is largely based around tourism. Many of the Shire's key attractions are its open spaces, specifically its natural areas providing for recreation, sightseeing, events (including sporting tourism) and relaxation. The Wollumbin/Mt Warning Caldera, World Heritage listed Gondwana Rainforest, the Tweed River and the stunning coastline contribute significantly to the Tweed being recognised as a tourist destination. In the Tweed Shire, there is significant potential to expand the economy through investment in other open spaces and nature based recreational activities such as bushwalking, mountain biking, canoeing and kayaking trails. These would further extend opportunities to attract tourism expenditure and as a consequence, generate significant employment opportunities for the local economy.
- Council has recently received Federal and State government funding for the Tweed Valley Rail Trail with significant potential for job creation and infrastructure investment in Tweed's rural villages. The 24 kilometres of rail trail following the disused rail corridor from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek will further develop the tourism industry and provide an alternate to the heavily visited coastal areas.
- There is potential to invest further in our high profile parks including Pottsville Environment Park, Clarrie Hall Dam and Jack Evans Boat Harbour to attract users from within and beyond the Tweed Shire. Our regional open spaces are characterised by their uniqueness and provide significant environmental, social, recreational, heritage, amenity and/or tourism value.
- Whilst tourism benefits the economy, there are significant issues and impacts associated with ecotourism particularly on the Tweed Coast and Tweed Coast estuaries. The use of these areas will require a managed approach to balance increased use and the impacts on natural areas and local amenity.

¹⁰ Destination NSW. Nature Based Tourism to NSW for year ending December 2015. <https://www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Nature-based-tourism-YE-Dec-15.pdf>. Accessed November 2017.

Biodiversity protection, environmental sustainability and impacts of forecast climate change

- Increasing housing density, loss of backyards (which often provide good habitat linkages for fauna in particular) and loss of open space to infrastructure makes it difficult to enhance biodiversity in urban areas. It is increasingly important to protect areas of environmental significance and provide habitat connectivity.
- Contemporary planning practice and growing awareness around environmental responsibility has resulted in an increased focus on ecological sustainability.
- Healthy, intact bushland and the trees that grow within urban areas (the urban forest) contribute significantly to reducing the impacts of climate change. One of the most important functions of the urban forest is shade and cooling.
- As sea levels rise and weather events, including rainfall and climatic conditions become less predictable and potentially more intensive, it is inevitable that our open space network and associated infrastructure will be impacted.
- There is a growing awareness of the role of the open space network in supporting flood mitigation, stormwater management and water recycling. Open spaces play an essential role in the principles of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).

Implications for the provision of open space

- Pressures on the local environment are significant. Our local urban population is growing faster than the state average, leading to increased threats to the environment such as habitat degradation and loss, the spread of invasive species and diseases, pollution, and our collective contribution to climate change. Protection of established green buffers and the active management of the Tweed Shire's natural areas of significance will help to ensure these areas are sustained for future generations.
- As environmental sustainability is everyone's responsibility, developing partnerships, sharing of knowledge, learning and supporting each other's efforts is essential to ensure finite resources are targeted to best effect.
- As facilities are developed and renewed consideration should be given to energy efficiency, water usage and incorporating environmentally sustainable features in the design of sport and recreation facilities. Making the best use of available resources, sustainable procurement practices and proactive maintenance programs are important initiatives to progress Council's environmental sustainability efforts.
- Planting additional trees in the urban landscape can help to reduce the impacts of climate change and the urban heat island effect.
- In the Tweed Shire many parks and related infrastructure is immediately adjacent to beaches and river foreshores. The potential loss or damage to these areas as a result of climate change impacts such as rising sea levels will have significant consequences for infrastructure, maintenance and the long term financial sustainability of open space assets.

Open space planning framework

The Open Space Planning Framework has been developed to assess the existing supply of open space and will guide the future provision of open space in the Tweed Shire. The framework will guide Council’s desired levels of service to ensure sufficient quantity and quality of open space is provided in existing and new communities. The application of this framework has informed the development of the priorities and actions contained within this strategy.

Over the next decade Tweed Shire will experience continued growth and demand for residential development, which will result in a significant amount of new open space being added to the network. The Open Space Planning Framework aims to ensure Tweed’s open space network responds to this growth and to the community’s desire for a high quality and diverse open space network.

The purpose of the Open Space Planning Framework is to:

- revise standards for the future provision and embellishment of open spaces;
- classify open spaces to identify the range of experiences and benefits provided;
- identify gaps or deficiencies in the existing supply of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities;
- provide guidance to Council staff, land owners and the development industry in relation to the provision of open spaces in new developments; and
- present consistent terminology to describe public open space across Council’s key planning documents.

There are three components to the Open Space Planning Framework and each component is essential in developing a well planned, designed and managed open space network (Table 2).

Open space provision standards	The provision standards relate to both the quantity of open space and its accessibility, which are traditionally the primary two measures used in open space planning. Open space quantity standards relate to the amount of open space required for the purpose of ‘passive’ and ‘active’ recreation. The accessibility standards guide the appropriate spatial distribution of open space in terms of the distance a resident is expected to travel to different open space types.
Open space classification system	The classification system identifies the core open space types and categorises them into a hierarchy. The classification system also defines the function of each open space, its benefit to the community, land characteristics and settlement type.
Open space design guidelines	As an action of this strategy, Council will develop Open Space Design Guidelines. The guidelines will inform the future planning, design and construction of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities.

Table 2: Components of the Open Space Planning Framework.

Defining ‘passive’ and ‘active’ open space

Council has reviewed the definitions of ‘passive’ and ‘active’ open space in response to changing recreation patterns and an increased demand for more diverse active recreation opportunities (Table 3). Research and consultation undertaken for this strategy indicates that as people age, they are engaging less in structured sporting activities, and there is an increasing preference for informal physical activities such as bike riding, skating, outdoor fitness and nature based recreation across all ages. These activities have traditionally fallen outside the definition of ‘active’ open space.

Passive open space	includes land set aside for passive recreation activities such as sitting and relaxing, nature appreciation, socialising, picnicking, walking and child’s play.
Active open space	includes land set aside for active recreation such as organised sport and informal sport, as well as other physical activities undertaken for the purpose of exercise and recreation such as bike riding, skating and outdoor fitness.

Table 3: Definitions of passive and active open space.

Application of the Open Space Planning Framework

Council's open space provision standards and open space classification system applies to public open space managed for the purpose of passive and/or active recreation. The provision standards apply to open space in urban and rural areas (Table 4).

The open space classification system applies to parks (including some foreshore parks) and to sports fields/courts. The accessibility standards for the different types of open space and the approximate catchment of people served is defined in Table 5.

The open space provision standards and open space hierarchy do not apply to natural areas, which includes land dedicated for environmental protection, such as riparian and habitat buffers, some foreshore reserves and habitat conservation areas. Plans and actions to protect, enhance and manage these areas sit within separate strategic planning documents and management frameworks. In new residential subdivisions these areas are dedicated in addition to public open space requirements to ensure the protection of existing natural and landscape values.

In new residential developments, cycleways are not included as public open space. The provision of cycleways is addressed as a component of transport planning within Tweed Shire Development Control Plan. However, the integration of tracks, trails and pathways within some public open space such as parks, sports fields and drainage reserves is encouraged to provide important links in the open space network.

Further, the open space provision standards do not apply to drainage reserves, land reserved for utilities or road reserves.

Open space provision standards

Quantity standards

Tweed Shire Council adopts the following quantity standards which apply to the provision of passive and active open space provided at a local, neighbourhood and district level (Table 4).

Open space	Provision standard
Passive open space	1.13 hectares per 1,000 population
Active open space	1.7 hectares per 1,000 population
Total	2.83 per hectares per 1,000 population

Table 4: Quantity standards for passive and active open space

In addition to the above quantity standards, regional open space contributions are also required from new residential developments. Regional open space may be provided within a new development or the developer may pay an open space contribution. The financial contribution is calculated as a levy charged per person, a proportion allocated for structured open space (active open space) and casual open space (passive open space). The levy is calculated in accordance with the Section 7.11 Contribution Plan No 26 - Shirewide Regional Open Space and applies to residential and tourist development.

Application of quantity standards

Tweed Shire Council considers quantity standards to be an appropriate starting point for identifying open space needs in existing areas and new residential developments. However, whilst the quantity standards will be used as a reference point, Council will also adopt a combination of a needs-based and demand-based approach, which identifies users' needs and preferences, population numbers, density, residential distribution, demographics (if available), and recreation trends to determine the development and embellishment of open spaces. In new residential developments Council will negotiate with developers to ensure a range of open spaces, sport and recreation experiences are provided.

A review of the provision standard for passive open space was undertaken as part of this strategy. This involved analysis of the existing supply of passive open space, gaps and/or deficiencies in supply, an assessment of community need, benchmarking with other Councils and a review of Council's capacity to manage open space within operational budgets. It has been determined that the quantity standard adopted by Council for passive open space is considered appropriate.

A review of the provision standard for active open space was conducted as part of developing Tweed Council's Sports Field Strategy (2014), where the standard was also considered appropriate.

Accessibility standards

Tweed Shire Council adopts the following accessibility standards for the provision of open space (Table 5).

Open space hierarchy	Accessibility standard	Minimum Area	Catchment served (Approximate only)
Passive open space e.g. Parks (including some foreshore parks)			
Local park	Not defined	0.25 hectares or 2,500m ²	Local parks should be provided for the purpose of linking the open space network and improving the amenity of local communities.
Neighbourhood park	Within 500m	0.5 hectares or 5,000m ²	Approximately 1 per 500 to 2,000 people or 1 per rural village with a population greater than 350 people. Provide within 400m in residential areas containing medium or high density housing.
District park	Within 3kms	2.0 hectares or 2,000m ²	Approximately 1 per 3,500 people.
Regional park	Not defined	Not defined	Demand for regional passive open space is generally based on the presence of significant natural or landscape features and/or potential for unique recreation opportunities.
Active open space e.g. Sports fields/courts or land that supports active recreation			
Local sports field/active open space	Within 5kms	4 hectares or 4,000m ²	Approximately 1 per residential development between 2,000 and 3,500 people.
District sport field/active open space	Within 5kms	6.5 hectares or 6,500m ²	Approximately 1 per residential developments greater than 3,500 people.
Regional sports field/active open space	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined. Demand for regional active open space is generally opportunistic (depending on available land) because of the amount of land required and level of embellishment.

Table 5: Accessibility standards and minimum areas for passive and active open space

Application of accessibility standards

The ability of residents to gain access to public open space within an easy walk from home is an important factor to improving community health and well-being. Council aims to ensure all residents are within 500m (a 5 to 10 minute walk) of an embellished open space that provides a range of recreation opportunities. For residents living in medium or high density housing this is reduced to 400m to compensate for the lack of private open space and to improve amenity. Natural and man-made barriers must be considered (such as waterways or major roads) to ensure access is not inhibited.

The accessibility standard for active open space is significantly different to that for passive open space. This is attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, it is widely accepted that residents are more likely to drive (in addition to walk or cycle) to participate in active recreation activities. The accessibility standard for active open space is indicative of what people are willing to travel to play a chosen activity. Secondly, people choose which sport they participate in, a decision not always influenced by what facilities are within close proximity and not all sports can be provided within a walkable or cycleable distance.

The provision of active open space, particularly sport field provision requires large areas of flat land. In the Tweed Shire, the varied topography and landform and the already built-up nature of some areas proves a challenge in providing enough active open space for sports fields. Council aims to ensure residents are within a 15-20 minutes of a district level sports field/active open space.

Whilst Council makes provision for local sports fields, strong emphasis is placed on the provision of district level facilities to apply best practice principles of joint use and co-location of sport and active recreation opportunities. This is highly relevant to sporting facilities where there are multiple user groups vying to make use of limited community land and financial resources. Further, this approach is more cost efficient for Council to maintain and manage active open space and related sport and recreation facilities over the long term.

Open space classification system

To assist with planning and assessing the quality of open space across the Shire, Council's open space network was audited and classified. The open space classification system provides a tool to assess the distribution and quality of Tweed Shire's open spaces by identifying its purpose, function, the diversity of experiences and community benefit, land characteristics and development patterns.

The process of classifying open space also assisted in identifying gaps in the provision of open space types and experiences. Table 6 defines Council's open space classification system.

Open space type	There are seven different open space types, which define the purpose of the open space. Some parcels have a dual purpose, for example, land that has been dedicated as a drainage reserve also function as a park by providing recreational amenity. The primary and secondary use of each open space was identified (where applicable).
Open space hierarchy	The open space hierarchy describes the access that the community has to different types of open space (how far they have to travel), its size, and the nature and scale of facilities provided.
Open space function	Most open spaces provide a range of functions. A park may provide opportunities for child's play, socialising, nature appreciation and serve as an event space. Identifying the function(s) of an open space enables Council to identify the key benefits the community derive from the open space and helps to identify what experiences are not being provided for.
Landscape setting	The setting describes the landscape or topography reflecting the characteristics of the open space and its visible features.
Settlement type	The settlement type defines the nature of the residential settlement and reflects the housing density in which the open space is located.

Table 6: Components of the open space classification system

Open space type

The open space type is influenced by its inherent natural and physical characteristics, along with its facilities and use. Defining the primary and secondary use of each open space assists to identify if there are any gaps in the provision of different types of open space.

Open space types include:

- parks (includes foreshore reserves);
- sports fields/courts;
- natural areas;
- tracks, trails or pathways;
- civic spaces and streetscapes;
- drainage reserves, road reserves and land for utilities; and
- undeveloped land.

Open space types are defined on page 9.

Open space hierarchy

Public open space has been classified into a hierarchy and may perform either a passive or active recreation role. Appendix 1 defines the open space hierarchy.

The position an open space sits within the open space hierarchy indicates the role it is expected to perform, its size, the catchment it serves, expected usage and length of stay, the desired standard of embellishment and level of maintenance required. Generally, the wider the catchment served by an open space, the more intensively developed and managed the space will be. It is also recognised that categories of open space can be nested within one another. For example an open space classified as district level because of its size and level of embellishment, may also act as a local or neighbourhood open space for nearby residents.

The open space hierarchy and the desired levels of service are important in defining open spaces and in meeting community needs. They also help to ensure that the development of open space is planned, designed and funded equitably across the Shire and available resources are used efficiently. The hierarchy applies to parks (including foreshore reserves), sports fields/courts and tracks, trails and pathways (Table 7).

A hierarchical approach is also adopted for other recreation facilities including playgrounds and off leash dog areas and will be developed for youth outdoor recreation facilities following the development of the proposed Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan (an action within this strategy) (Table 8).

Open space type	Hierarchy
Parks (including foreshore reserves)	Local, Neighbourhood, District and Regional
Sports fields/courts or other active open space	Local, District and Regional

Table 7: Open space type and hierarchy

Recreation facility	Hierarchy
Playgrounds	Neighbourhood, District and Regional
Off leash dog areas	Neighbourhood, District and Regional
Youth recreation facilities	To be defined when the Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan is developed (2019-2020)

Table 8: Recreation facility hierarchy

Open space function

Identifying the function of an open space enables Council to determine the range of experiences provided across the open space network, and at local level, how individual open spaces are used and the community benefit(s) provided. Open spaces may serve one or more functions, thus addressing a broader range of community needs.

Landscape setting

The landscape setting reflects the existing vegetation, the diversity of natural elements and other natural and scenic features of an open space. An understanding of the landscape character and topography can help determine the open space developments appropriate for each open space and should be used to guide more detailed planning for the site.

Settlement type

The planning and design of open space requires both an understanding of the Shire as a whole, and of the actual location or settlement type that a proposed open space sits within.

The settlement type helps to define factors such as population, housing type and densities and likely access to private open space and other open spaces, sport and recreation facilities. This assists in determining the quantity, distribution and types of open spaces that may be required.

Typically settlement types are categorised according to their geographic location. The Tweed Shire has 5 identified settlement types. Table 9 presents the range of open space functions, landscape settings and settlement types used to define Tweed Shire's open space network. Refer to Appendix 2 for definitions.

Open space function	Landscape setting	Settlement type
Outdoor sport/active recreation	Open grassed areas	Coastal village
Informal sport/games	Trees/planting	Inland village
Children play/youth activities	Managed turf	Towns (can also include coastal communities)
Social activities	Natural bushland	Major town
Markets and events	Foreshore	Regional centre
Rest and relaxation	Paved area	
Connectivity	Linear	
Visual amenity/nature appreciation	Scenic/views	
Nature conservation	Headland	
Historic/cultural conservation	Ridge/hills	
Community gardening	Sloping	
Dog off leash area	Ornamental gardens	
Tourist attraction		
Memorial/cemetery		
Access to waterway		
Drainage/storm water management		
Utility easement		
Other		

Table 9: The range of open space functions, landscape settings and settlement types use to define Tweed Shire's open space network.



Open space supply

The Tweed Shire offers a diverse network of open spaces that provide a range of sport, recreation and nature based experiences. Tweed's open space network brings great benefit to our community by enhancing the health and well-being of our residents, protecting and conserving natural and cultural heritage, and is a significant tourism asset to our local and regional economies.

Tweed Shire Council's open space network sits within a broader and highly significant landscape. Tweed Shire lies within a biogeographic region recognised as one of Australia's most diverse in terms of its natural terrain, its geology, topography, landscape and its ecology. Within the Tweed Shire is the Wollumbin/Mt Warning Caldera, five World Heritage listed National Parks forming part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia and extensive areas of subtropical rainforest. The Tweed region supports one of the highest concentrations of threatened species and endangered ecological communities in Australia.

Tweed Shire Council acknowledges the importance and significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage for the proper understanding of the historical occupation and use of the land within the Tweed Shire. The Aboriginal people of the Tweed Shire have a long and deep association with the land in which their ancestors have lived for many generations. There are many known and predictive Aboriginal cultural heritage sites surviving within Council managed open spaces.

Council manages an open space network comprising of over 1,500 hectares of public open space, comprising of 411 parks (including foreshore reserves), 38 sports fields/courts, over 1,100 hectares of natural area, approximately 300kms of pathways and 82 playgrounds. Almost 70 per cent of the Shire's open space is classified as natural area, primarily provided for the protection, conservation and restoration of our unique natural and cultural heritage. In addition, Council is responsible for the management of 37kms of coastline and a system of waterways, which include coastal creeks, the Tweed River estuary stretching 35kms, the Rous and Oxley Rivers, the Cobaki and Terranora Broadwater and the inland creek system. Collectively, these public open spaces contribute to protecting and enhancing the Tweed Shire's unique character and beauty and provide diverse recreation experiences for our community and visitors.

Open space audit

A detailed audit of Council managed open spaces and sport and recreation facilities was conducted to review both the quantity and quality of open space provided across the Tweed Shire.

Open space audits and assessments were conducted on a regional (shire-wide), district and local level. For more detailed planning the Tweed Shire was divided into 14 local profile areas. The planning areas align with those used for population forecasts and analysis (profile.id) (Figure 3).

The quantity of open space in each local profile area is presented in Tables 11, 12 and 13. The passive and active open space provision standards being 1.13 per 1,000 for passive open space and 1.7 per 1,000 for active open space were applied to each local profile area to determine any gaps in the provision of open space across the Shire (up to 2026).

Understanding the quality of open space is equally important as it influences whether the open space is fit for purpose, well used, provides benefit to the community and helps to inform Council's spending to improve open space assets.

Each open space is influenced and shaped by a range of factors including its size, form, use, location, design, adjoining use and history. The diversity of character and quality of open space enables Council to meet the diverse needs of our community. Appendix 3 presents the quality assessment criteria used to assess the quality of Councils passive and active open space. Where the quality of an open space was considered inadequate or where there was a gap in the provision of open space, actions for upgrading the open space or providing additional open space were included as action within the strategy.

Shire wide map

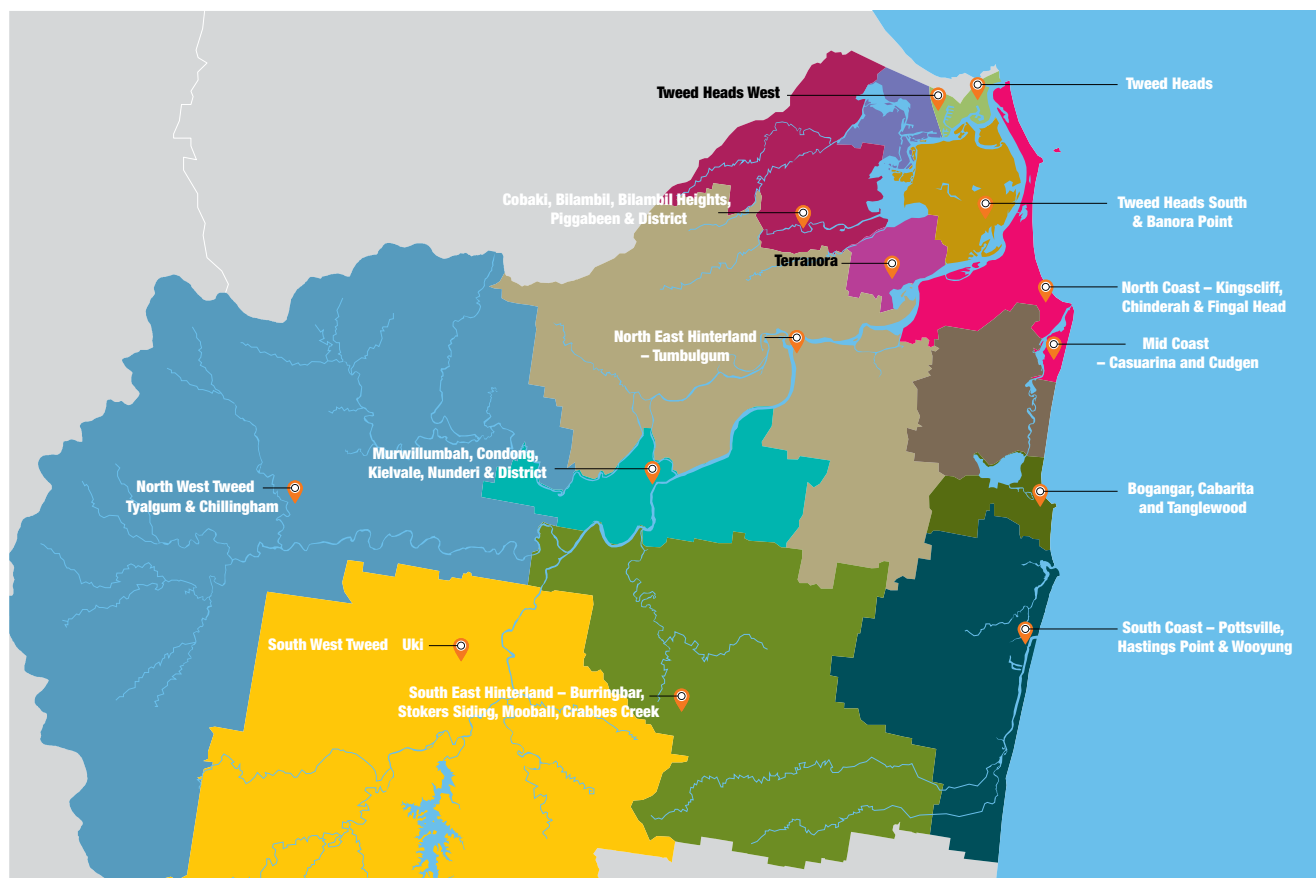


Figure 3: Tweed Shire Council's 14 local profile areas

What we have

An overview of Council owned and/or managed open space, sport and recreation facilities is presented in the following tables. Table 10 provides a snapshot of what we have and a map series presented in Appendix 4 shows their distribution across the Tweed Shire. Table 11 presents population figures and the quantity of open space across Tweed's 14 local profile areas.

With an understanding of the existing supply and demand for open space we are able to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. Table 12 and 13 presents the findings of the gap analysis. Council's adopted provision standards were used to assess the current provision of passive and active open space and the future demand for open space across the Shire (up to 2026). The gap analysis will guide a more equitable distribution of open space, sport and recreation facilities into the future.

Table 14 presents the existing supply of open space, and sport and recreation facilities and applies the open space hierarchy across local profile areas.

A summary of the outcomes of the open space audit follows the tables. More detailed assessments of the quantity and quality of open space and sport and recreation facilities was provided as a series of local actions plans, presented as separate documents in the Open Space *Background Papers*.

Open space, sport and recreation facilities	Area / quantity
Park (Passive open space)	304 hectares
Sports Field /Courts (active open space)	125 hectares
Natural Areas	1,127 hectares
Total Open Space	1,556 hectares
Playgrounds	82
Skate facilities	4
BMX	1 (no longer functional)
Multi-courts	10
Social tennis courts	12
Off leash dog areas	14 (10 park locations & 4 beach locations)
Beach (length)	37kms
Shared path	104kms
On-road cycleway	22kms
Footpath	177kms
Community gardens	1 (on Council managed land)
Boat ramps	11
Jetty/pontoon/wharf	15
Outdoor exercise equipment (locations)	2
Public Toilets	67

Table 10: Snapshot of Tweed Shire Council's open space network and its sport and recreation facilities.

Profile Area	Population (2016)	Total Open Space Area (ha)	Park (Passive Open Space ha)	Sports Field(Active Open Space ha)	Natural Area Total (ha)
Cabarita	3,339	83.79	6.11	7.62	70.06
Cobaki, Bilambil & District	4,449	80.72	3.47	19.37	57.88
Mid Coast Casuarina (& Cudgen)	3,923	126.08	13.36	15.13	97.59
Murwillumbah & District	10,504	76.71	38.95	22.23	15.53
North Coast (Kingscliff)	9,873	196.57	62.43	12.98	121.16
North East Hinterland (Tumbulgum)	2,924	18.24	4.26	1.85	12.13
North West (Tyalgum & Chillingham)	2,850	10.16	3.26	1.75	5.15
South Coast (Pottsville & Hastings Point)	8,257	673.31	19.79	12.29	641.23
South East Hinterland (Burringbar, Stokers Siding & Crabbes Creek)	3,224	17.55	4.67	Nil	12.88
South West (Uki)	2,213	30.95	24.38	2.11	4.56
Terranora	2,997	14.22	7.73	1.94	4.55
Tweed Heads	8,349	40.37	37.72	0.31	2.34
Tweed Heads South (Banora Point)	24,260	150.80	57.86	21.08	71.86
Tweed Heads West	6,282	36.33	19.94	6.03	10.36
Total:		1,556.26	304	124	1127.28

Table 11: Tweed Shire Council's population and open space by local profile area.

Profile Area	2016			2026	
	Park (Total passive open Space ha)	Demand (1.13 ha per 1,000 persons)	Gap (1.13 ha per 1,000 persons)	Demand (1.13 ha per 1,000 persons)	Gap (1.13 ha per 1,000 persons)
Cabarita	6.11	3.77	2.34+	3.93	2.18+
Cobaki, Bilambil & District	3.47	5.03	1.56-	9.79	6.32-
Mid Coast Casuarina (& Cudgen)	13.36	4.43	8.93+	7.37	5.99+
Murwillumbah & District	38.95	13.66	25.29+	13.2	25.75+
North Coast (Kingscliff)	64.43	11.16	51.27+	11.87	50.56+
North East Hinterland (Tumbulgum)	4.26	3.3	0.96+	3.14	1.12+
North West (Tyalgum & Chillingham)	3.26	3.22	0.04+	3.11	0.15+
South Coast (Pottsville & Hastings Point)	19.79	9.33	10.6+	10.26	9.53+
South East Hinterland (Burringbar, Stokers Siding & Crabbes Creek)	4.67	3.64	1.03+	3.65	1.02+
South West (Uki)	24.38	2.5	21.88+	2.57	21.81+
Terranora	7.73	3.39	4.34+	4.11	3.62+
Tweed Heads	37.72	7.43	30.29+	11.53	26.19+
Tweed Heads South (Banora Point)	57.86	27.41	30.45+	29.48	28.38+
Tweed Heads West	19.94	7.1	12.84+	7.5	12.44+

Table 12: Passive open space (park) demand and gap assessment for Tweed Shire Council's local profile areas.

Profile Area	2016			2026	
	Sports Field/ Courts (Total active open space)	Demand (1.7 ha per 1,000 persons)	Gap (1.7 ha per 1,000 persons)	Demand (1.7 ha per 1,000 persons)	Gap (1.7 ha per 1,000 persons)
Cabarita	7.62	5.68	1.94+	5.92	1.7+
Cobaki, Bilambil & District	19.37	7.56	11.81+	14.73	4.64+
Mid Coast Casuarina (& Cudgen)	15.13	6.7	8.43+	11.09	4.04+
Murwillumbah & District	22.23	17.86	4.37+	19.86	2.37+
North Coast (Kingscliff)	12.98	16.78	3.80-	17.85	4.87-
North East Hinterland (Tumbulgum)	1.85	4.97	3.12-	4.7	2.85-
North West (Tyalgum & Chillingham)	1.75	4.85	3.1-	4.68	2.93-
South Coast (Pottsville & Hastings Point)	12.29	14.04	1.75-	15.44	3.15-
South East Hinterland (Burringbar, Stokers Siding & Crabbes Creek)	Nil	5.48	5.48-	5.490	5.49-
South West (Uki)	2.11	3.76	1.65-	3.86	1.76-
Terranora	1.94	5.09	3.15-	6.19	4.25-
Tweed Heads	0.31	14.19	12.88-	17.35	17.04-
Tweed Heads South (Banora Point)	21.08	41.24	20.16-	44.35	23.27-
Tweed Heads West	6.03	10.68	4.65-	11.29	5.26-

Table 13: Active open space (sports field/court) demand and gap assessment for Tweed Shire Council's local profile areas.

Profile Area	Park Hierarchy	Quantity	Sport Field/ Court Hierarchy	Quantity	Playground Hierarchy	Quantity
Cabarita	Local	13	Local	2	Neighbourhood	2
	Neighbourhood	2	District	-	District	1
	District	2	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Mid Coast Casuarina	Local	16	Local	3	Neighbourhood	5
	Neighbourhood	2	District	1	District	1
	District	2	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Cobaki, Bilambil & District	Local	9	Local	2	Neighbourhood	3
	Neighbourhood	2	District	1	District	-
	District	-	Regional		Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Murwillumbah & District	Local	44	Local	10	Neighbourhood	12
	Neighbourhood	13	District	1	District	-
	District	1	Regional	-	Regional	1
	Regional	1				
North Coast Kingscliff	Local	25	Local	3	Neighbourhood	11
	Neighbourhood	16	District		District	4
	District	7	Regional	1	Regional	-
	Regional	2				
North East Hinterland (Tumbulgum)	Local	6	Local	1	Neighbourhood	1
	Neighbourhood	1	District	-	District	-
	District	-	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
North West (Tyalgum & Chillingham)	Local	6	Local	1	Neighbourhood	1
	Neighbourhood	1	District	-	District	-
	District	1	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				

Profile Area	Park Hierarchy	Quantity	Sport Field/ Court Hierarchy	Quantity	Playground Hierarchy	Quantity
South Coast (Pottsville & Hastings Point)	Local	37	Local	4	Neighbourhood	9
	Neighbourhood	8	District	-	District	2
	District	3	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	1				
South East Hinterland (Burringbar, Stokers Siding & Crabbes Creek)	Local	5	Local	-	Neighbourhood	3
	Neighbourhood	5	District	-	District	-
	District	-	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
South West (Uki)	Local	15	Local	1	Neighbourhood	1
	Neighbourhood	2	District	-	District	-
	District	2	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Terranora	Local	10	Local	1	Neighbourhood	4
	Neighbourhood	3	District	-	District	-
	District	-	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Tweed Heads	Local	34	Local	1	Neighbourhood	3
	Neighbourhood	6	District	-	District	1
	District	3	Regional	-	Regional	1
	Regional	1				
Tweed Heads South (Banora Point)	Local	61	Local	3	Neighbourhood	13
	Neighbourhood	16	District		District	1
	District	2	Regional	1	Regional	-
	Regional	-				
Tweed Heads West	Local	24	Local	-	Neighbourhood	2
	Neighbourhood	2	District	1	District	-
	District	-	Regional	-	Regional	-
	Regional	-				

Figure 14: Current open space supply by hierarchy for Tweed Shire Council's local profile areas.

TWEED SHIRE

Supply Analysis - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The Shire is well supplied with passive open space, which will continue to be the case until 2026. However the distribution, quality and diversity of passive open space and the park facilities provided differs between profile areas. High quality open spaces are provided along the Tweed Coast, with much of the passive open space being foreshore reserve providing for a variety of recreation, social and nature based experiences. The Tweed Coast also attracts most of Tweed Shire's visitors and tourists. Whilst Murwillumbah & District and Tweed Heads South and Banora Point have an oversupply of passive open space, however large areas are flood prone with associated constraints relating to drainage, often steep and with poor access.
- The Shire is well supplied with local parks.
- There are numerous profile areas that are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks particularly Cobaki, Bilambil & District (Bilambil Heights), parts of Tweed Heads South – Banora Point and Tweed Heads West and Murwillumbah & District.
- Profile areas undersupplied with district parks include Tweed Heads South – Banora Point, Tweed Heads West, Terranora, Cobaki – Bilambil & District.
- The Shire is well serviced by regional parks, however there are significant opportunities to improve their capacity to provide more diverse recreation activities, specifically Pottsville Environment Park, Clarrie Hall Dam and Jack Evans Boat Harbour.
- The Shire is undersupplied with active open space, which will continue to be the case until 2026. Profile areas in the north of the Shire are significantly undersupplied with sports fields including Terranora, Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads West and Tweed Heads South – Banora Point. There are opportunities to improve the quality and utilisation of existing sports fields by providing lighting, improving playing surface, improving clubhouse amenities and investigating shared use agreements with education institutions across numerous profile areas.
- Council manages large areas of bushland primarily for the protection and conservation of biodiversity. The bushland areas support and protect an exceptionally high diversity of plant and animal life and along the Tweed Coast the bushland reserves provide important green corridors between coastal towns and villages.
- The Tweed's ocean beaches, headlands, waterways, river foreshores and creeks are key recreational assets and provide a unique natural setting for nature based sport and recreation activities and social gatherings. There are opportunities to improve the management of these natural areas to balance recreation use and protection of natural and cultural heritage.
- The Shire is well supplied with natural areas, there is potential for the Tweed to be recognised as a premier nature based recreation destination by providing opportunities for bushwalking, mountain biking, kayaking and canoeing. At present, there are very few formalised trails for bush walking, horse riding and no mountain bike trails in Council managed open space.
- There is a need to improve access for people of all abilities to Council's open spaces and sport and recreation facilities.
- The NSW Coastal Cycleway is an integral part of the Shire's open space network connecting from South Coast – Pottsville to Tweed Heads, with important links to Banora Point and parts of Tweed Heads West. There are key missing links in Tweed Heads South and Tweed Heads West. Terranora and parts of Murwillumbah & District are poorly connected by pathways.
- The Tweed Valley Rail Trail following the disused rail corridor from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek will improve connections and opportunities for walking and cycling from Murwillumbah to Tweed's rural villages including Burringbar, Stokers Siding, Mooball and Crabbe's Creek.

TWEED SHIRE (continued)

Supply Analysis - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- There are opportunities to improve streetscaping and tree planting in numerous profile areas, including rural villages and along arterial roads along the Tweed Coast and heading north to Tweed Heads.
- There are numerous profile areas within the Shire undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. In some profile areas the existing playgrounds are poor quality and provide limited play value.
- Numerous youth recreation facilities are provided across the Shire including skate parks, skate facilities, multi-courts, sports facilities, outdoor fitness gyms and shared paths. In addition, there are significant opportunities for water based activities such as fishing, boating, surfing, SUP and swimming. The Shire's regional skate facility in Tweed Heads is in poor condition. There is demand for additional youth recreation facilities in Tweed Heads South and Banora, Tweed Heads West, North Coast Kingscliff, Mid Coast Casuarina, South Coast – Pottsville and Terranora.
- Profile areas without an off leash dog area include Mid Coat Casuarina and rural profile areas including North East Hinterland - Tumbulgum, North West - Tyalgum and South East Hinterland - Burringar.



BOGANGAR, CABARITA AND TANGLEWOOD

Area description

The area includes the localities of Bogangar, Cabarita Beach and Tanglewood. The area encompasses rural and residential area, one primary school, an existing village centre in Bogangar/Cabarita Beach, substantial areas of environmental significance including bushland, wetlands, the beach and coastal reserves.

Supply Analysis - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- The area north of Poinciana Ave is undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area is well supplied by a district park.
- The natural areas (including Cudgen Nature Reserve and Cudgen Lake) support an exceptionally high diversity of plant and animal life (including a significant koala population) and provide a unique setting for nature based recreation.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The existing streetscape and planting contributes to the visual identity and character of the area.
- The shared path and footpath links, including the NSW Coastal Cycleway are an integral part of Cabarita's open space system. There are no east-west shared path connections.
- There is an undersupply of neighbourhood playgrounds in the area north of Poinciana Ave.
- Whilst residents are within 3kms of a district park, the playground provided in the park is a neighbourhood playground, not a district playground.
- The area is well supplied with youth recreation facilities.
- There is one off leash area (beach location).



COBAKI, BILAMBIL, BILAMBIL HEIGHTS, PIGGABEEN & DISTRICT

Area description

The area includes the small rural village of Bilambil and the localities of Bilambil Heights, Cobaki and Piggabeen. The area is a growing residential and rural-residential area with one school, rural lands and areas of environmental significance. The area is bounded in the north and west by the Queensland border.

Supply Analysis - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently undersupplied with passive open space (parks) and well supplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Most residents are within 500m of an open space.
- The area is undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area has no district park.
- The bushland reserves adjacent to the Terranora Broadwater provide important green corridors through to Bilambil Creek that support and protect diverse plant and animal life.
- The Terranora Broadwater foreshore offers high scenic quality and is an important recreation area for local residents and visitors.
- The area is poorly connected by footpaths and shared paths.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The established residential areas of Bilambil Heights have varying levels of street tree planting, with minimal planting in some locations.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. The area is undersupplied with district playgrounds.
- There are no youth recreation facilities, beyond the sports fields/court.
- There is no dog off leash area.
- Insert a new point at teh end
- This area is forecast to undergo significant growth and population increases, predominantly within the Cobaki Urban Release Area. Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided in line with the relevant planning documents.

MID COAST – CASUARINA AND CUDGEN

Area description

The area includes the localities of Casuarina, Cudgen, Durambah and Kings Forest. The area contains two residential settlements in Cudgen and Casuarina, an existing town centre in Casuarina and resort style accommodation in Casuarina, two primary schools, rural lands, agricultural land, and substantial areas of environmental significance.

Supply Analysis - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- When the new neighbourhood park is developed in the Casuarina Town Centre, all residents will be within 500m of a neighbourhood park. In Cudgen, there is one neighbourhood park but access to the park is poor and the facilities are older in style.
- Casuarina is well supplied by district parks. Residents of Cudgen have access to a district park in Kingscliff (just outside the desired 3kms).
- The bushland areas provide important green corridors that support and protect an exceptionally high diversity of plant and animal life, including koala habitat.
- Casuarina's ocean beach, Cudgen Creek and Cudgen Nature Reserve provide a unique natural setting for nature based activities.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- In Casuarina, the existing streetscape and planting contributes to the visual identity and character of the area. Streetscaping in Cudgen is minimal.
- The shared path and footpath links, including the NSW Coastal Cycleway are an integral part of Casuarina's open space system. In Cudgen the shared-user path connects Cudgen and Kingscliff but does not extend to Cudgen Recreation Reserve.
- The area is well supplied with neighbourhood and district playgrounds.
- Youth recreation facilities include sports fields and shared paths, with the ability to access waterways for nature based activities. The closest skate park is at Cabarita (4kms), which is connected to Casuarina by shared path.
- There is no dog off leash area
- This area is forecast to undergo significant growth and population increases, predominantly within the Kings Forest Urban Release Area. Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided for this release in line with the relevant planning documents.

MURWILLUMBAH, CONDONG, KIELVALE, NUNDERI & DISTRICT

Area description

Murwillumbah and District includes the localities of Bray Park, Condong, Kielvale, Murwillumbah, North Arm, Nunderi and South Murwillumbah.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Large areas of open space, including the area's parks and sports fields are flood prone with associated constraints relating to drainage. Many sport facilities are located in flood prone areas which impact the quality of the sport facilities.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks. A significant number of the neighbourhood parks are difficult to access.
- Whilst there are no district parks, the area is well serviced by a regional park (Knox Park).
- The key bushland reserves are in the vicinity of Lions Lookout Reservoir and Chinnamans Garden Park and provide for nature appreciation, wildlife observations and environmental interpretation.
- The Tweed River is a valued recreational asset of great importance to the local community and to visitors. The river is also highly valued for its scenic, environmental, cultural and amenity values.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- There are existing gaps in the path network in Murwillumbah. South Murwillumbah is poorly connected by footpaths and shared paths and there are limited opportunities to walk along the river foreshore.
- The established residential areas of Murwillumbah have varying levels of street tree planting, with minimal planting in some locations. The revitalisation of Murwillumbah's Town Centre streetscape and additional tree planting along key arterial roads leading to Murwillumbah would help to improve the town's visual appeal.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. Many of the existing playgrounds are poor quality and provide limited play value. Playgrounds in newer residential areas are better quality. The area is well supplied with a regional playground (Knox Park).
- The area is well supplied with youth recreation facilities, however the existing BMX Park is not fit for purpose.
- There are two off leash areas.

NORTH COAST – KINGSCLIFF, CHINDERAH & FINGAL HEAD

Area description

North Coast - Kingscliff encompasses the localities of Chinderah, Fingal Head and Kingscliff. The area is a growing residential and tourist area, with remaining rural areas, some industrial land use and several schools.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- West Kingscliff and north-west of Cudgen Foreshore Park is undersupplied with neighbourhood parks. In the area north of McPhail Ave and the south end of Sand Street.
- The area is well supplied with district parks.
- The natural areas support and protect an exceptionally high diversity of plant and animal life.
- Kingscliff's ocean beaches and Cudgen Creek provide a unique natural setting for nature based activities.
- There are known and potential Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The shared path and footpath links, including the NSW Coastal Cycleway are an integral part of Kingscliff's open space system. There are existing gaps in the path network in an east-west direction and in Fingal Head.
- There is extensive streetscaping in Seaside City and Salt. The established residential areas of Kingscliff, Chinderah and Fingal have minimal street tree planting in some locations.
- West Kingscliff, north of McPhail Ave and between Wommin Bay Road and the south end of Fingal Road are undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. Generally the quality of playgrounds is good, excluding Chinderah and West Kingscliff.
- The area is well supplied with district playgrounds.
- Youth recreation facilities include sports fields, shared paths, a multi-court, skate elements, however there is no skate park. Young people also have access to beaches and waterways for nature based recreation.
- There is outdoor exercise equipment in Jack Bayliss Park.
- There are two off leash areas (beach locations).
- This area is forecast to undergo significant growth and population increases, predominantly within the West Kingscliff Urban Release Area, including West Kingscliff, Turnock St and North Kingscliff precincts. Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided for this release in line with the relevant planning documents.

NORTH EAST HINTERLAND - TUMBULGUM

Area description

North East Hinterland - Tumbulgum area encompasses the localities of Bungalora, Carool, Clothiers Creek, Dulguigan, Dungay, Duroby, Eviron, Farrants Hill, Glengarrie, Kynnumboon, North Tumbulgum, Reserve Creek, Stotts Creek, Tomewin, Tumbulgum, Tygalgah, Upper Duroby and Urliup. The area is a predominantly rural area which includes the small township of Tumbulgum and several schools.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Whilst undersupplied with active open space, much of the demand for sporting facilities is likely to be met within other urban profile areas, particular Murwillumbah & District.
- All residents living in the village of Tumbulgum are within 500m of an open space.
- The area is well supplied with a neighbourhood park.
- There is no district park as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- The Tweed River, Rous River and Stotts Island Nature Reserve provide a unique natural and scenic setting for nature based activities.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The shared path and footpath network links the river foreshore, however there are no east-west connections.
- There is minimal street tree planting in the village.
- The area is well supplied with a neighbourhood playground.
- There is no district playground as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- There are no other youth recreation facilities other than the sports field and a tennis court, which in poor condition.



NORTH WEST TWEED - TYALGUM & CHILLINGHAM

Area description

The North West Tweed - Tyalgum area encompasses the localities of Back Creek, Brays Creek, Chillingham, Crystal Creek, Eungella, Hopkins Creek, Limpinwood, Mebbin, Nobbys Creek, Numinbah, Pumpenbil, Tyalgum, Tyalgum Creek, Upper Crystal Creek and Zara.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields) which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Whilst undersupplied with active open space, much of the demand for sporting facilities is likely to be met by the sports facilities provided by the Tyalgum Reserve Trust (Bruce Bartrim Oval) and facilities within other urban profile areas, particular Murwillumbah & District.
- All residents living in the villages of Tyalgum and Chillingham are within 500m of an open space.
- The area is well supplied with neighbourhood parks.
- Whilst the population is less than 3,500 people, Tyalgum is well supplied by a district park.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The footpath network links the open spaces and the main streets of Tyalgum and Chillingham.
- The streetscapes contribute significantly to the village's amenity and character.
- Tyalgum is well supplied with a neighbourhood playground. Chillingham does not have a playground.
- The area is well supplied with a district playground in Tyalgum.
- Youth recreation facilities include the sports fields, a tennis court, skate elements and a social space.



SOUTH COAST – POTTSVILLE, HASTINGS POINT & WOYUNG

Area description

The area includes the localities of Pottsville, Hastings Point, Cudgera Creek, Round Mountain, Sleepy Hollow, and the Tweed Shire part of the locality of Wooyung. The area contains a number of separate residential estates distinguished by a series of green corridors, an existing village centre located in Pottsville and a small coastal village at Hastings Point, two primary schools, rural lands and agricultural land, and substantial areas of environmental significance.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and slightly undersupplied with active open space (sports fields) which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- There is limited development opportunity to expand any of the existing sports fields due to their proximity to environmentally sensitive lands.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- There is an oversupply of local parks located east of Overall Drive, Pottsville Waters.
- North Pottsville and a location in Pottsville Waters are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area is well supplied with district parks.
- The bushland areas support and protect an exceptionally high diversity of plant and animal life and provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience nature and learn about ecological communities. Pottsville Environment Park is a regional park and an important natural, cultural and recreational asset. The park's facilities are in poor condition.
- Cudgera and Mooball Creeks provide a unique setting for nature based recreation activities.
- Hastings Point Headland provides recreational and educational opportunities. Camping on Hastings Point Headland is an important use that attracts many visitors during holiday periods.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The shared paths and on road cycleways including the NSW Coastal Cycleway are an integral part of the South Coast's open space system. There are good east-west connections linking the area's key open spaces.
- The civic open spaces including Pottsville Memorial Oval and Phillip St Reserve will continue to be focal points for social, recreation and cultural activities.
- The streetscapes contribute significantly to the Pottsville's character. There is minimal street tree planting along Tweed Coast Rd and in Hastings Point village.
- North Pottsville and a location within Pottsville Waters are undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds.
- The area is well supplied with district playgrounds.
- Youth recreation facilities include sports fields, shared paths and a multi-court, with the ability to access waterways for nature based activities. There are no skate facilities.
- There is one off leash area (beach location).
- This area is forecast to undergo significant growth and population increases, predominantly within the Dunloe Park Urban Release Area. Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided for this release in line with the relevant planning documents.

SOUTH EAST HINTERLAND – BURRINGBAR, STOKERS SIDING, MOOBALL, CRABBES CREEK

Area description

The area includes the localities of Burringbar, Byangum, Crabbes Creek, Dunbible, Fernvale, Mooball, Palmvale, Stokers Siding, Upper Burringbar and Wardrop Valley. The area is predominantly rural and agricultural land, with three primary schools, the village of Burringbar, and the smaller villages of Crabbes Creek, Mooball and Stokers Siding, with a small residential estate at Dunbible.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area's currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields) which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Whilst undersupplied with active open space, much of the demand for sporting facilities is likely to be met by the sports facilities provided by the Burringbar Public Recreation Trust (Tom O'Connor Recreation Reserve) and facilities within other urban profile areas, particular South Coast – Pottsville and Murwillumbah & District.
- All residents living in the village centres of Burringbar, Mooball and Stokers Siding are within 500m of an open space. The only open space in Crabbes Creek in the area is adjacent to Crabbes Creek Community Hall.
- Burringbar, Mooball and Stokers Siding are well supplied with neighbourhood parks. Crabbes Creek is undersupplied.
- There is no district park in the area as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- The areas key bushland reserves are in the vicinity of Burringbar Creek and along the Tweed River at Dunbible, which provide minimal opportunities for walking and nature appreciation.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- There are existing gaps in the footpath network in the three villages.
- There is minimal streetscaping or landscaping in the rural villages of Burringbar, Mooball, Crabbes Creek or Stokers Siding. This includes both street trees and garden bed plantings.
- Burringbar and Crabbes Creek are undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. In Mooball and Stokers Siding the playgrounds are either in poor condition or provide minimal play value.
- There is no district playground as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- Youth recreation facilities include the sports field and tennis courts.
- Mooball is forecast to undergo growth and population increases (approximately 580 residents). Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided in line with the relevant planning documents.

SOUTH WEST TWEED - UKI

Area description

The South West Tweed - Uki area encompasses the localities of Byrill Creek, Cedar Creek, Chowan Creek, Commissioners Creek, Doon Doon, Dum Dum, Kunghur, Kunghur Creek, Midginbil, Mount Burrell, Mount Warning, Rowlands Creek, Smiths Creek, Terragon and Uki. The area is a predominantly rural area, with some rural-residential areas, including the small village of Uki and two schools.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Whilst undersupplied with active open space, much of the demand for sporting facilities is likely to be met by the sports facilities within other urban profile areas, particularly Murwillumbah & District.
- All residents living in the village centre are within 500m of an open space.
- The area is well supplied with a neighbourhood park, although it is not central to the village resulting in some residents having to walk more than 500m to access the park.
- There is a district park at Clarrie Hall Dam. The area is highly utilised for events, picnicking and low impact water based activities. There is potential for additional low impact nature based recreation activities in the park.
- Mt Nullum and the bushland reserves around Byrill Creek support a diversity of plant and animal life and are highly valued for their environmental, Aboriginal cultural and European heritage values. The areas could provide a unique setting for nature based recreation.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- There are existing gaps in the footpath network between the village's key open spaces and there are no pathways along the Tweed River.
- There is minimal streetscaping or landscaping in the rural village of Uki.
- The area is well supplied with a neighbourhood playground.
- There is no district playground as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- Youth recreation facilities include the sports field, tennis courts and water based activities.



TERRANORA

Area description

Terranora area encompasses the locality of Terranora only. Terranora is a rural and growing rural-residential and residential area with two schools.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields) which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- The area is undersupplied with quality neighbourhood parks.
- The area is undersupplied with a district park.
- The bushland reserves adjacent to the Terranora Broadwater provide important green corridors through to Bilambil Creek that support and protect a diverse plant and animal life. This area is not accessible for recreation.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The area is poorly connected by footpaths and shared paths. Connections within the drainage and utility reserve provide some opportunities for walking and cycling.
- The established residential areas of Terranora have varying levels of street tree planting, with minimal planting in some locations.
- The area is undersupplied with quality neighbourhood playgrounds. A number of the playgrounds are in poor condition and offer minimal play value.
- There is no district playground as the population is less than 3,500 people.
- Youth recreation facilities include the tennis courts only.
- There is one off leash area.
- This area is forecast to undergo significant growth and population increases, predominantly within the Area E Urban Release Area. Additional open spaces and recreation facilities will be provided for this release in line with the relevant planning documents.



TWEED HEADS

Area description

Tweeds Heads is bounded by the Queensland border, an established residential, commercial and tourist area, with some industrial land use and several schools. Housing is in transition from low to medium to a higher density.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields) which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Whilst all residents are within 5kms of a sports field, the area is significantly undersupplied with sports fields given the population of the area.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area is well supplied with district parks.
- There area is well supplied with a regional park at Jack Evans Boat Harbour, including “Goorimabah”.
- The Tweed River is a valued recreational asset of great importance to the local community and to visitors. The river is also highly valued for its scenic, environmental, cultural and amenity values. Durambah Beach is a popular surfing destination.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The area is well connected by a shared path along key arterial roads and along the Tweed River foreshore to Jack Evans Boat Harbour. The residential areas are poorly connected by footpaths and shared paths.
- The established residential areas of Tweed Heads have varying levels of street tree planting, with minimal planting in some locations. There is minimal street tree planting along the key arterial roads.
- The area is undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds.
- The area is has no district playground.
- Whilst residents have access to a regional park, the playground provided in the park is a neighbourhood playground, not a regional playground.
- Youth recreation facilities include sports fields, with opportunities for water based activities.
- There is outdoor exercise equipment in John Follent Park.
- There is one off leash area, which is not adequate given the population of the area.

TWEED HEADS SOUTH & BANORA POINT

Area description

The Tweed Heads South - Banora Point precinct encompasses Banora Point and Tweed Heads South. The precinct is a growing residential and tourist area, with significant industrial and commercial land use and retail centres, including Tweed City Shopping Centre and three shopping precincts located in Banora Point.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- Large areas of open space, including the area's parks and sports fields are flood prone with associated constraints relating to drainage. Many sport facilities are located in flood prone areas which impact the quality of the sport facilities.
- All residents are within 5kms of a sports field, however the area is significantly undersupplied given the population of the area, even with access to regional sports facilities at Arkinstall Park.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area is undersupplied with district parks.
- The Western Drainage System whilst primarily provided for stormwater management, provides pathways for walking and cycling and opportunities for nature appreciation. There are existing gaps in the path network.
- Lake Kimberley provides opportunities for walking, cycling and nature appreciation.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The area is well connected by shared paths along key arterial and sub-arterial roads only. There are significant gaps in the path network across the area.
- Landscaping is provided along key sub arterial roads in Banora Point, which improves visual amenity. Much of Tweed Heads South's retail and industrial areas have minimal street tree planting, including along Minjungbal Drive.
- The area is undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds and many of the existing playgrounds are older in style.
- The area is undersupplied with district playgrounds, given the population of the area.
- Youth recreation facilities include the regional sports fields, tennis courts and a regional skate park, which is in poor condition.
- There are two off leash areas.



TWEED HEADS WEST

Area description

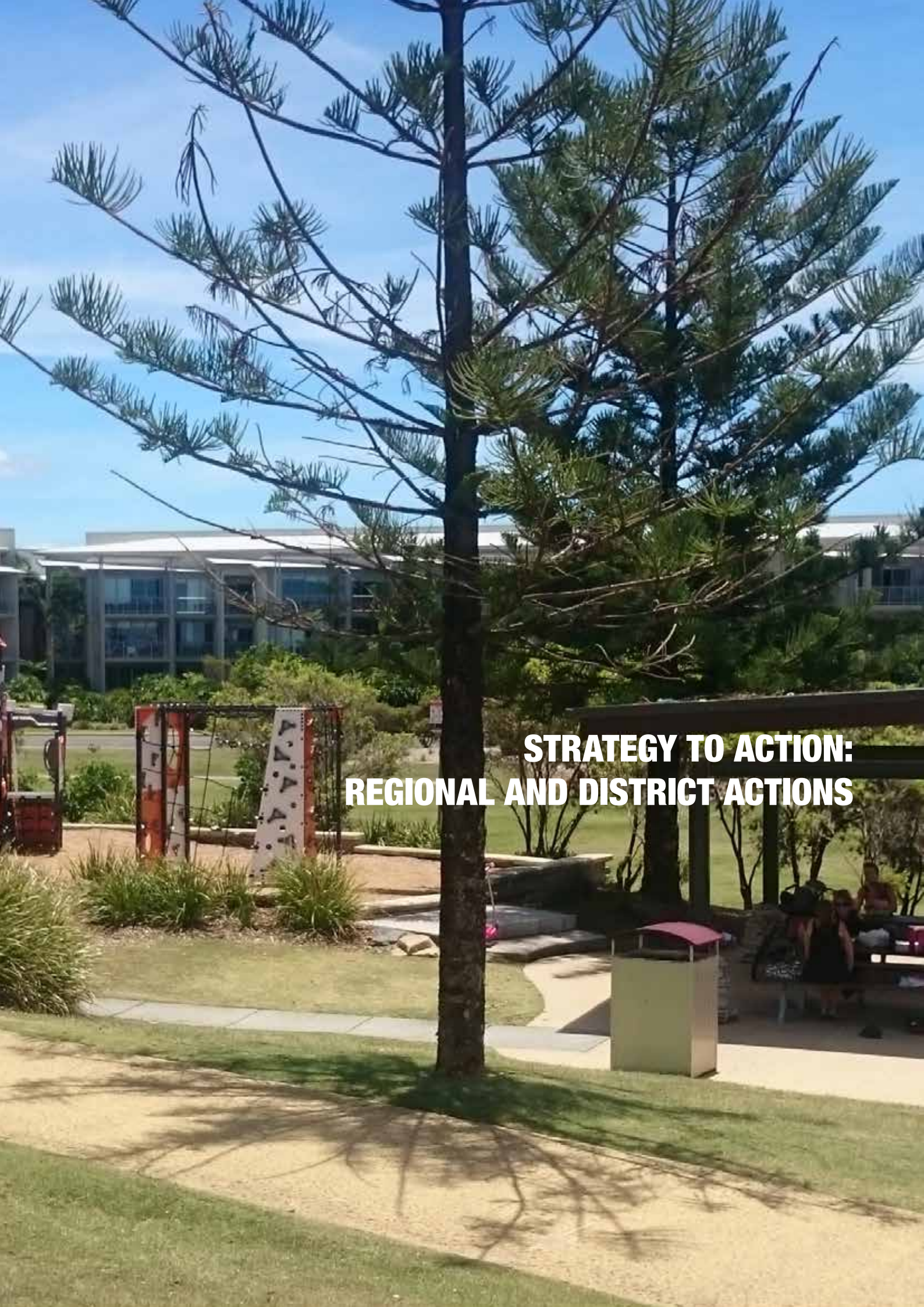
Tweed Heads West encompasses residential, environmental, rural and part of the Gold Coast Airport is located within the precinct. Tweed Heads West is bounded by the Queensland border in the north, the Pacific Highway in the east, Terranora Creek and the locality of Bilambil Heights in the south, Cobaki Creek, the Cobaki Broadwater and the locality of Cobaki Lakes in the west.

Supply overview - open space, sport and recreation facilities

Key Findings

- The area is currently well supplied with passive open space (parks) and undersupplied with active open space (sports fields), which will continue to be the case until 2026.
- All residents are within 5kms of a sports field, however there area is significantly undersupplied given the population of the area.
- All residents are within 500m of an open space.
- There are numerous locations within the area that are undersupplied with neighbourhood parks.
- The area is undersupplied with a district park.
- Cobaki Broadwater, Terranora Creek and the associated foreshore areas offer high scenic quality and are important recreation areas for local residents and visitors.
- In the area there are known, and potential, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- The area is poorly connected by footpaths and shared paths. There is a key missing shared path connection between Birds Bay Dve and Golan Dve.
- The established residential areas of Tweed Heads West have varying levels of street tree planting, with minimal planting in some locations.
- The area is undersupplied with neighbourhood playgrounds. There are only two playgrounds servicing the whole area. The existing playgrounds are either in poor condition or offer minimal play value.
- The area is undersupplied with a district playground.
- Youth recreation facilities include sports fields, with opportunities for water based recreation activities.
- There is one off leash area.





**STRATEGY TO ACTION:
REGIONAL AND DISTRICT ACTIONS**

Open space vision and guiding principles

Our vision

“The Tweed Shire is recognised for its diverse network of quality open spaces that meet the needs of a healthy and active community, whilst protecting our rich natural and cultural heritage for future generations.”

Guiding principles

To achieve this vision, the following guiding principles will guide the planning, design and management of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in the Tweed Shire.

Quality

- Open spaces are attractive and welcoming for everyone;
- High quality open spaces and public realm projects are delivered in new and existing communities.
- The character of each town or village is reflected in the design of open spaces; and
- Open spaces are well maintained to encourage use.

Diversity

- A range of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and activities is provided to enrich the diversity of community life;
- Reflect and celebrate cultural diversity;
- Design open spaces to be flexible with the capacity to adapt as needs change; and
- Plan multi-purpose spaces that are capable of delivering a range of benefits.

Health and well-being

- Encourage all people to live active and healthy lifestyles;
- Promote a sense of community, happiness and well-being;
- Ensure the safety of the community through good design of open spaces; and
- Support opportunities for social interactions and community connections.

Accessibility

- People of all ages, abilities, health, gender and cultural backgrounds feel welcome and can easily access the open space network;
- Open spaces are within walking distance of where people live; and
- Universal design principles are applied when planning and designing open spaces to improve access for everyone.

Equity

- Quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are equitably distributed and funded across the Shire.

Connectivity

- An open space network that is well connected by way of pathways, trails, streetscapes and natural corridors;
- Open spaces are connected to key community destinations; and
- Opportunities exist for people to connect with the natural environment.

Environment protection and conservation

- Protect and enhance local biodiversity and ecosystems;
- Strengthen and celebrate our diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage; and
- Encourage people to experience natural and cultural heritage without compromising biodiversity, heritage and scenic values.

Sustainability

- Adopt an evidence based strategic approach to the planning of open spaces;
- Invest in quality improvement to ensure environmental, social, cultural and economic values are enhanced for future generations;
- Incorporate sustainable design and maintenance practices;
- Mitigate the impacts of climate change;
- Build partnerships with others to ensure an integrated approach to open space management for better outcomes for the community and the environment; and
- Ensure sustainable financial management of the open space network.

Outcomes

What we will do

These are the five desired outcomes that we will strive to achieve over the next 10 years. Collectively the vision, guiding principles and outcomes will guide the priorities, strategies and actions of Council and its partners to deliver an open space network that is socially, environmentally, culturally and economically sustainable.

Outcome 1

Our open spaces are high quality and offer diverse sport and recreation opportunities for everyone to enjoy.

Priorities

- Protect and enhance the value and amenity of existing open spaces and ensure high quality open spaces in new communities.
- Create the right mix of open spaces to provide a diversity of sport and recreation experiences.

Outcome 2

Our open space network promotes physical activity, fosters good health and well-being and is safe.

Priorities

- Increase participation in sport and physical activity and build stronger communities.
- Improve the safety of our open spaces and sport and recreation facilities.

Outcome 3

Our open spaces are equitably distributed, well connected and accessible to everyone.

Priorities

- Ensure a fair and equitable distribution of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities across the Shire.
- Provide a well-connected open space network that improves access to open spaces and promotes active travel.
- More places and spaces in our communities are accessible to everyone.

Outcome 4

The Tweed Shire's natural and cultural heritage is protected and enhanced for future generations.

Priorities

- Protect and restore the significant biodiversity and ecological values of Tweed's natural areas.
- Ensure environmental sustainability and develop resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Protect and conserve Tweed Shire's cultural and European heritage.
- Protect and enhance Tweed Shire's highly valued scenic landscapes.

Outcome 5

The open space network is effectively managed and economically sustainable.

Priorities

- Ensure a robust planning and management system for open space assets.
- Plan for the strategic acquisition of land for open space purposes to accommodate a growing population.

Outcome 1

Our open spaces are high quality and offer diverse sport and recreation opportunities for everyone to enjoy.

What you said

- Parks and open spaces should be aesthetically pleasing and incorporate natural features including trees, landscaping and water landscapes.
- Improve the quantity and quality of park facilities including rubbish bins, drinking water fountains, BBQ's, picnic tables, seating and include seating suitable for older people.
- We value both the smaller local open spaces and the additional recreational opportunities provided by larger regional open spaces.
- Upgrade public toilets and provide new toilets in specific locations, improve their cleanliness, extend opening hours, improve safety, provide additional accessible toilets, provide toilets close to playgrounds, include showers in some public toilets, develop a public toilet map and consider environmentally sensitive toilets.
- Provide regular park maintenance including mowing, removal of graffiti, path maintenance, empty rubbish bins and clean BBQ's regularly.
- Improve the quantity and quality of children's playgrounds, provide a variety of equipment that appeals to children of all ages and abilities, provide shade, consider fencing some playgrounds, provide seating for parents/carers who are supervising and improve playground maintenance.
- Improve the quality of Tweed Heads South Skate Park and provide a skate park in Kingscliff.
- Provide additional off-leash dog exercise areas, improve Council's management of dogs, install dog waste bags and drinking bowls, install signage, provide spaces for dog training and prohibit dangerous dog breeds in public.
- Prohibit dogs on beaches.
- Provide additional car parking in parks and foreshore reserves to meet demand and continue to provide free parking.
- Improve the quantity and quality of open spaces in rural villages.
- Provide free camping for seniors and areas to cook food.
- Provide more diverse activities for young people.
- Encourage the use of sports fields for other activities, avoid exclusive use by sports clubs and encourage more family friendly spaces.

What we will do

Priorities

Protect and enhance the value and amenity of existing open spaces and ensure high quality open spaces in new communities.

- Sufficient quantity and quality of open space is critical in the planning and sustainability of communities to ensure community recreation and social needs are met and environmental values preserved. Over the next 10 years Council will invest in developing sound and consistent policy to inform open space development as new communities are planned and existing communities are regenerated. The delivery of open space is now built into planning at a regional, district, neighbourhood and local level.
- Council will invest in quality design and materials to create an open space network that people want to use, spaces that are welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, safe and accessible. We will design open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in accordance with best practice guidance. Progressive upgrades to the quality of existing open spaces across the Shire will be delivered over the next decade. Master planning and concept planning in consultation with the community will be a key mechanism by which we will improve the quality of open spaces, park infrastructure, sport and recreation facilities to ensure we meet community needs.
- Council will develop new Open Space Design Guidelines to ensure public realm design achieves a high standard. The guidelines aim to ensure that a high standard of maintainable open space provision is achieved throughout the Tweed Shire. The guidelines will apply to existing residential areas and new subdivisions and across the open space hierarchy, to our high profile destinations (e.g. coastal foreshore areas), as well as local and neighbourhood parks, small civic open spaces and residential streets.
- We will prioritise quality improvements in areas of high need, in areas identified as undersupplied with quality open spaces, including higher density areas such as Tweed Heads South & Banora Point, Tweed Heads West and Tweed Heads. We aim to improve the quality of Tweed's key recreation destinations along the creek, river and coastal foreshores and across the hierarchy of open space types – regional, district, neighbourhood and local open spaces. The quality of parks and open spaces in Tweed's rural villages will also be enhanced to better meet community needs and support increase visitation to rural villages.
- Our community value being able to access quality local and neighbourhood parks that are within walking or cycling distance of their homes. The Open Space Strategy's Implementation Plan includes specific actions to improve the quality and diversity of local and neighbourhood open spaces in Councils 14 local profile areas.
- We are committed to improving the appeal of open spaces for families, children and youth. Council will ensure more robust planning and an equitable approach is taken to providing high quality play experiences and spaces for socialising. Playgrounds and outdoor youth recreation facilities such as skate facilities, multi-courts and areas to ride a bike and learn new skills will be well located, planned and designed in consultation with young people, families and the broader community.
- We will continue to liaise closely with developers as early as possible in the subdivision process to achieve the best open space outcomes for new communities. We aim to satisfy demand by providing quality as well as quantity. We will ensure Council has the capacity to maintain any new open space assets acquired through the development process, so we can move toward a more sustainable portfolio of good quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and park infrastructure across the Shire.

- ‘Quality’ for some people means a good level of maintenance. Effective open space maintenance is essential to maximise the benefits of the open space network, as well as to ensure a project performs to the design intent. We will develop maintenance service levels, which will be our standards for maintaining the quality of the open space network. Service levels will be consistent with the new open space classification system including the open space hierarchy. We will continue to provide a high level of maintenance for open spaces located adjacent to waterways, regional and district open spaces. These areas are highly valued by the community and support a high intensity of uses by residents, workers and visitors. Where possible, we will plan and design open spaces with minimisation of maintenance costs in mind (where practical) so we can sustain our levels of service over the long term.
- Council experiences increasing demand for the use of open spaces for other uses such as car parking or traffic management, for accommodating utilities and low cost housing. We will protect the quality of existing open space by restricting the conversion of open space to other uses, limiting encroachment from other uses and we will monitor the impact of commercial uses on the quality of parks and open spaces.
- Community participation will underpin our future planning of open spaces. We will provide regular opportunities for our community to have a voice on open space decisions that affect them. This will help ensure community needs are met, to achieve high quality open space outcomes and to increase the appeal and use of the open space network. When developing open spaces the level of community engagement will be appropriate to the size and scope of the project. A mix of consultation methods and tools of engagement will be implemented to enable the community to have their say.

Strategies and actions

Invest in open space planning and design to deliver better outcomes for everyone

Develop a Shire-wide Play Space Action Plan to ensure high quality and diverse play opportunities for children aged 2–12 years.

Develop a Shire-wide Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan to identify the needs of young people and to improve the quality, and diversity of outdoor youth recreational facilities.

Develop a Shire-wide Public Toilet Strategy to improve the quality, siting and distribution of public toilets across the Shire.

Review the Sports Field Strategy (2014) to incorporate the provision of sport and active recreation facilities.

Develop an Open Space Car Park Improvement Program to improve the standard and availability of car parking facilities adjacent to Council’s regional, district and foreshore open spaces.

Develop guidelines for dogs in public open spaces to guide the planning of quality and diverse off-leash areas. Include provisions for fencing regional and district off-leash areas.

Develop Signage Design Standards and an Open Space Signage Implementation Plan to guide the planning, specification and design of signs in Tweed’s parks and open spaces (including environmental and cultural heritage interpretative signage and wayfinding signage).

Develop and adopt a Community Gardens Policy and a template for developing a Community Garden Management Plan for groups wishing to establish a new community garden.

Develop Open Space Design Guidelines to guide the development of high quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in existing and new communities (including guidelines for playgrounds and youth recreation facilities).

Develop open space master plans or concept plans when upgrading existing and developing new parks and sports fields.

Upgrade existing and develop new regional and district parks and open spaces

Adopt the draft Plan of Management for the Jack Evans Boat Harbour Precinct (Tweed Heads).

Develop a master plan for 'Goorimabah' including an upgrade of the regional playground in Jack Evans Boat Harbour (Tweed Heads), provide inclusive play elements, integrate nature play and cultural heritage values.

Develop a staged Pottsville Open Space Master Plan to improve Pottsville's key open spaces including Pottsville Environment Park, Pottsville Memorial Oval, Anzac Park, Phillip St Reserve, Ambrose Brown Park and Hardy Park North.

Develop a plan of management for Clarrie Hall Dam (Doon Doon).

Implement a staged master plan for Kingscliff Sport and Recreation Complex (Kingscliff).

Review the master plan for the district sports field at Depot Rd (Kings Forest), in accordance with the development of the Open Space Master Plan and Landscape Concept Plan for Kings Forest Urban Release Area.

Develop a concept plan for a new district park and playground in Pioneer Park (Tweed Heads West).

Develop a concept plan for a new district park and playground in Amaroo Park (Banora Point).

Develop a concept plan for the upgrade of the playground at Recreation Ground (Tweed Heads) to a district level.

Develop a concept plan for the upgrade of the skate park in Tweed Heads South to a regional multi-purpose family and youth recreation precinct. The concept plan is to be informed by the Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan, Stage 2 of the Arkinstall Park Master Plan and master planning associated with the neighbouring community facilities.

Develop a concept plan for a multi-purpose family and youth recreation precinct in Kingscliff, to be informed by the Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan.

Provide a new regional off-leash dog area in Banora Point (fenced).

Provide a new district off-leash dog area in Murwillumbah (fenced).

Upgrade open spaces in Tweed's rural villages

Develop open space concept plans in consultation with rural communities to upgrade parks and open spaces in the following rural villages: Burringbar, Stokers Siding, Mooball, Crabbes Creek and Chillingham.

Develop a Rural Social Tennis Court Program to review the provision of Council managed social tennis courts in the following rural villages: Bilambil, Chillingham, Tumbulgum, Tyalgum and Cudgen. Consider the conversion of low use tennis courts to multi-purpose courts or other uses.

Upgrade existing and develop new neighbourhood parks and open spaces

Upgrade local and neighbourhood open spaces in accordance with the actions for each local profile area.

Replace and upgrade neighbourhood playgrounds in accordance with the actions for each local profile area.

Preserve the quality and integrity of existing open spaces

Protect existing open spaces by restricting its conversion to other uses such as accommodating utilities or infrastructure that does not relate to or impedes open space values, sport and recreational activities.

Develop a management procedure to identify and address where private property owners have encroached onto public open spaces, particularly onto parks, foreshore reserves and bushland reserves.

Manage and monitor the frequency, duration and usage impacts of commercial activity and community events on the quality of open space, the community's enjoyment of open spaces and impacts on environmental and cultural values.

Ensure high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in new communities

Review the Tweed Development Control Plan, Section A5 Subdivision Manual and Development Design Specification – D14 Landscaping Public Open Space (includes streetscapes) and the relevant Section 7.11 Developer Contribution Plans (previously section 94) to reflect the vision, guiding principles and outcomes of the Open Space Strategy.

Encourage greater collaboration with developers early on in the subdivision process to achieve quality open space outcomes and the full range of community benefits.

Continue to require developers of new subdivisions to prepare an Open Space Master Plan and Landscape Concept Plan, to be endorsed by Council prior to the subdivision approval.

Advocate for new district parks, playgrounds and outdoor youth recreation facilities in the following subdivisions: Cobaki, Kings Forest, West Kingscliff, Dunloe Park, Bilambil Heights and Area E Urban Release Areas.

Open space contributions should not be land that has encumbrances and should be cost effective to maintain.

Proactively manage open space assets to maintain quality

Develop an Open Space Maintenance Service Level Manual for open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and park infrastructure (including car parks, public toilets and pathways). Service levels should be developed in accordance with the revised open space hierarchy.

Conduct condition assessments of all pathways, including pathways located within parks and open spaces every 5 years to inform Council's Footpath Rehabilitation Program.

Ensure the community has input into open space planning, design and management

Encourage stakeholders and the broader community across all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds to positively contribute to open space development projects. This may require targeting consultations to encourage minority groups to participate.

When upgrading existing or developing new parks and open spaces the level of community engagement should be appropriate to the size and scope of the project and in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy (2018).

Investigate other volunteering initiatives to help promote active involvement in the management of open spaces.

Priorities

Create the right mix of open spaces to provide a diversity of sport and recreation experiences.

- Council will focus on creating the right mix of open spaces, sport and recreation experiences to reflect community need, changing demographics and contemporary leisure patterns. We aim to provide a range of open spaces that meet the needs of children, young people, older people, people with disabilities and Aboriginal people across all profile areas within the Shire. In residential areas we aim to provide for sport, recreation, play, social interaction, rest and relaxation, nature appreciation and dog walking. New open spaces, outdoor gyms, off-leash areas, community gardens, pathways, tracks and trails and street trees will be added to the open space network.

- We will adopt a multi-use approach to open space planning to help maximise open space benefits, achieve the best outcomes from the land available and to ensure cost effective open space development and maintenance. This will include the provision of regional and district sports fields that can accommodate multiple sports, providing active open spaces that can also accommodate passive uses and maximising the use of linear drainage reserves for walking, cycling and nature appreciation. We will also partner with schools to utilise their open space and sport and recreation facilities outside school hours for community use (including outdoor multi-purpose courts and playgrounds).

- As part of assessing our current supply of open space, we have classified open spaces by type, function, landscape setting and where it sits in the open space hierarchy to identify what open spaces we have and to be clearer on what open spaces and recreation experiences we are not currently providing for. To improve the diversity of Tweed’s open space network we will look to enable spaces to perform better, consider changing the existing use of some open spaces to create new opportunities and we will work in partnerships with developers to achieve greater diversity.
- Our community want to see more diverse opportunities for child’s play (including nature play and water play) and youth recreation facilities that meet the needs of a broader audience, rather than just providing skate parks. Consultation for this strategy revealed requests for more skate facilities, basketball courts or multi-purpose courts, parkour facilities, bike dirt jumps, bike parks, fitness equipment and safe spaces to just hang out with family and friends.
- The Tweed has a substantial amount of natural open space and there is a clear desire among the community for additional infrastructure enabling access to natural areas for active and passive recreation. There is an increasing demand to access Tweed’s bushland areas, foreshore reserves and waterways for recreation. The Tweed Shire has significant potential to be recognised as a premier nature based recreation destination. At present, there are very few formalised trails for bush walking, horse riding and no mountain bike trails in Council managed open space. In addition to the proposed Tweed Valley Rail Trail, we will investigate opportunities to develop an Integrated Recreation Trail Network to identify suitable locations for nature based recreation, including canoe and kayak trails.
- Council’s draft Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program (2018-2028) includes a Recreational Use Strategy. The program aims to provide for more diverse active and passive recreational activities including boating, fishing, swimming, improving access for people with disabilities, picnicking, nature appreciation, as well as walking and cycling connections along the river foreshore (where practical).

Strategies and actions

Adopt a multi use approach to maximise diversity and increase use of open spaces

When upgrading existing or developing new sports fields, investigate opportunities for walking and cycling circuits around the periphery, outdoor gyms, the co-location of youth recreation facilities, playgrounds and dog off-leash areas (where appropriate) to appeal to a broader range of users.

Continue to support and expand the shared management model of sports fields and ancillary facilities, where there are several clubs or sports codes sharing one sports field.

Partner with schools to investigate shared use of school sport and recreation facilities, where school facilities are made available for community use outside of school hours.

Prioritise investment in regional and district open spaces that are more adaptable, are typically better suited to cater for multiple users and provide a diverse range of active and passive activities.

Invest in open space planning and design to deliver better outcomes for everyone

When upgrading open spaces, consider opportunities to change existing use, add different functions and integrate different landscape settings to improve the diversity of the open space network and to meet community demand.

When a developer of a new residential subdivision prepares an Open Space and Landscape Master Plan ensure different open space types, functions and landscape settings are well defined, demonstrating the provision of a diverse open space network.

Develop the Tweed Valley Rail Trail from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek to create a shared use rail trail.

Support the development a multi-agency task force including land managers, recreation and tourism industry groups and community representatives to investigate the development of an Integrated Recreational Trail Network. The project will consider the development of nature-based trails for walking, mountain biking, horse riding, canoeing and kayaking.

Investigate the demand and feasibility of Clarrie Hall Dam (Doon Doon) for low-impact nature based activities and investigate the use of Mt Nullum and Mt Burrell for low-impact nature based activities.

Identify funding sources available through Federal and State government programs and/or private partnerships for the funding of nature based recreation and tourism.

Provide more inclusive play spaces for children, parents and carers with disabilities in a range of settings and offer more diverse play experiences such as sensory and tactile play spaces.

When developing the Outdoor Youth Recreation Action Plan aim to increase the diversity of youth recreation facilities across the Shire. Consider skate park facilities, urban bike facilities (such as a pump track), BMX or bike skills park, multi-purpose courts, hang out spaces, a range of seating, shade, parkour facilities and access to WiFi and public toilets.

Review the demand and the feasibility study conducted for the proposed Regional Botanical Garden in the Shire (2005).

Determine the demand and feasibility of providing road cycling facilities in the Tweed Shire, as part of the review of the Sports Field Strategy (2014)

Review the provision of off-leash dog areas in parks and on beaches and the associated park infrastructure (such as dog waste bins, bags and drinking water) to diversify the open space network and to meet growing demand.

When upgrading existing or developing new open spaces, consider providing opportunities to observe and appreciate nature.

Consider the provision of WiFi when developing master plans or concept plans for regional and civic open spaces.

Encourage and facilitate a diverse range of community events in parks and open spaces, events of regional, national and international importance in accordance with Tweed Shire Council's Event Strategy (2016-2020). Ensure parks and open spaces suitable to host events have adequate infrastructure to support the intended level of use.

Outcome 2

Our open space network promotes physical activity, fosters good health and wellbeing and is safe.

What you said

- Provide a mix of open spaces, recreation, sports and play facilities to encourage physical activity across all neighbourhoods.
- Provide more outdoor exercise gyms to improve health and well-being. Cluster the equipment to provide social interaction opportunities.
- Provide more spaces for neighbours to meet up and socialise.
- Provide bike parks and areas to learn to ride a bike.
- Provide free programs and activities in parks for families.
- Provide opportunities for nature play, including water play.
- Children like to play in a park or playground, swim, play football, soccer and ride a bike. Playgrounds, sports fields, waterways and jetties were their favourite outdoor areas or facilities.
- Youth use parks and open spaces to exercise, rest and relax and hang out with friends. They would like to see more youth spaces, cultural facilities (dance, arts, and theatre), BMX tracks and skate parks.
- Some young people feel youth specific places are not safe, often poorly maintained and not activated.
- When the community felt unsafe using public open spaces, fear of crime or threatening behaviour, poor lighting, and not enough people around were the main reasons.
- Provide more shade and shelter in parks, over seating, picnic tables and children's playgrounds, with a preference for natural shade.
- Consider fencing water bodies to improve safety for children.
- Provide lighting to improve safety and to increase the use of parks and open spaces in the evenings.

What we will do

Priorities

Increase participation in sport and physical activity and build stronger communities.

- Less than a third of Australians are getting enough physical activity to benefit their health. We aim to create new opportunities for residents' of the Tweed Shire to make physical activity a part of their daily lives. Providing walkable and connected communities, co-locating open spaces with community facilities, designing high quality streets and providing appropriate facilities and infrastructure to enable sport and physical activity are key priorities of Council. We will partner with sporting clubs, community groups, recreation and environment groups to enable those who want to be active and encourage those who are inactive to become active.
- We aim to develop an open space network that enables all people to engage in regular physical activity. With a significant proportion of our population over 60 years, Council will plan and design age-friendly and inclusive open spaces that encourage physical activity independently and with others. Council aims to address some of the barriers to participation by supporting and encouraging free or low cost physical activities and programs and providing appropriate infrastructure that supports the use of open spaces by older people, such as seating, public toilets, outdoor gyms, dog parks and pathways for walking and cycling.
- Council aims to encourage children and youth to accumulate the 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity required daily. We will build on the existing provision of sports fields, courts, skate facilities and bike paths to encourage young people to be physically active. We will work with young people when planning and designing open spaces with the aim of increasing the appeal of open spaces, increasing participation, providing social spaces to hang out with family and friends and providing safe places for respite and to rejuvenate.
- Council aims to increase awareness of what the open space network has to offer. We will promote the range of unique open spaces, their values, facilities and the activities that take place within them to increase community participation and engagement. A range of promotion initiatives will be implemented to reach the broader community.
- Council understands the benefits of building a strong social community. We will plan and design open spaces to improve opportunities for people to socialise and connect. This can help promote social cohesion and create a sense of belonging in a community. Our parks and open spaces provide important venues for social activities and cultural celebrations and allow people to meet on neutral ground in both planned and unplanned ways. We will continue to provide park facilities that support the gathering of friends and families and the meeting of groups through common interests (such as a walking group or gardening group).
- In new communities Council will encourage the co-location of open spaces and recreational facilities with community assets such as community centres, libraries and community halls. Council will encourage a mix of land use and activities and avoid single use open space facilities. Co-locating community assets and open space assets in this way broadens the appeal of the community facilities provided, increases awareness of open spaces and makes participation in sport and recreation more convenient for a broader audience.
- Council will invest in creative place making and cultural programming to increase the use of open spaces, to promote health and well-being and strengthen communities. Activation activities may include community events, commercial activities, active living programs, markets and festivals, public art opportunities and the interpretation of environmental and cultural values. Our focus will be on activating regional and district open spaces, river and coastal foreshores and underutilised open spaces.

Strategies and actions

Establish regional and local partnerships to increase participation

Review the role of the Tweed Shire Sports Advisory Committee to address broad-based sport and recreation issues and opportunities, facilitate effective policy and service provision regarding sport and recreation within the Shire.

Provide support to sporting clubs to develop club development plans, assist with grant applications and enable increased player participation and development. Partner with sports clubs to encourage active participation by youth, girls and women, people with disabilities and residents on low incomes.

Continue to work with the North Coast Academy of Sport, participate in the North Coast Parks Forum and partner with the Sports Advisory Committee to encourage participation in sport and recreation at all levels, respond to participation trends, and ensure the sustainability of sport and recreation in the Tweed Shire and the region over the long term.

Work in partnership with community health services and other agencies such as Northern NSW Local Health District and social services to encourage activities or programs in parks and open spaces that support community health (e.g. green prescription programmes, Heart Foundation walking groups).

Work in partnership with commercial providers to encourage activities or programming in open spaces that increase community participation in physical activity (e.g. yoga classes and fitness classes in parks).

Assist environmental groups such as Landcare and Dunecare to get more volunteers involved in environmental projects that also promote community health and mental wellbeing.

Support the growing movement for community gardening and the community health benefits it provides.

Encourage active transport and increased participation in walking and cycling (e.g. through the provision of footpaths, shared user paths and cycleways and participation in State and National events that promote active transport).

Enliven and activate parks and open spaces to encourage participation and community connections

Ensure parks and open spaces are designed to maximise social exchange and interactions. Provide park furniture, pathways, lighting, shade and co-locate open spaces with key community facilities to create safe, accessible and comfortable open spaces for interaction.

Develop a 'pop up' place making program, a temporary low cost program of innovative place making opportunities to promote healthy and active living, community connections to open spaces and social connections.

Consider place making opportunities to activate the following regional and coastal destinations: Pottsville Environment Park (Pottsville), Clarrie Hall Dam (Doon Doon), Knox Park (Murwillumbah), Jack Evans Boat Harbour (Tweed Heads), Rowan Robinson Park (Kingscliff) and Salt Central Park (Kingscliff).

Consider place making opportunities to activate the following underutilised open spaces: Ebenezer Park (Tweed Heads), Recreation Ground (Tweed Heads) and Budd Park (Murwillumbah).

Integrate public art in parks and open spaces, in consultation with the Public Art Reference Group to reinforce a local sense of place and support community arts and culture.

Undertake a public awareness program to raise awareness of Council's open space network, including sport and recreation facilities and activation programs. This may include creating an interactive mapping tool with the latest information, exploring technological applications (e.g. mobile applications) and social media to increase participation, Tweed Link feature articles and updating information on Council's website.

Priorities

Improve the safety of our open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.

- Council wants people to be safe and feel safe using our parks and open spaces. We will design open spaces to provide good levels of natural surveillance, clear sightlines with well-defined entrances and boundaries, and minimise conflict between different user groups. We will be guided by the 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' principles to promote community safety and prevent vandalism and graffiti in parks and open spaces. We will locate facilities that have a higher potential for vandalism or crime risk such as public toilets, playgrounds and youth recreational spaces in prominent and visible locations.
- Open spaces, playgrounds and youth recreational facilities should be safe for children and young people. We aim to find the balance between providing opportunities to make spaces interesting and challenging for young people while managing unacceptable risks associated with public safety.
- We acknowledge the importance of providing shade in parks and open spaces to reduce exposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation from the sun and the effects of heat stress. It is our preference for natural shade provided by trees rather than built structures. However, we aim to provide built shade structures in our highly utilised open spaces, in regional and district open spaces and open spaces along river and coastal foreshores. In new residential developments, developers will be required to provide built shade over playgrounds and sheltered picnic areas in addition to planting appropriate species of shade trees to provide future shade.
- We will continue to implement a regime of regular maintenance, ongoing audits and monitoring of service levels to ensure the safety of our open space assets. The installation of regulatory signage will inform users of potential safety risks and call on users to take responsibility to ensure the safety messages are adhered to.

Strategies and actions

Plan and design safer open spaces

Design, construct and maintain sport and recreation facilities, park infrastructure and playgrounds to meet relevant Australian Standards and safety codes.

Implement 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' principles to discourage crime and support community safety in public open spaces.

When required conduct community safety audits to improve safety in 'at risk' parks and open spaces in consultation with NSW Police and local community representatives.

Conduct lighting audits to improve safety in 'at risk' parks and open spaces and to increase the use of regional open spaces outside of daylight hours including Jack Evans Boat Harbour (Tweed Heads), Kingscliff Foreshore (Kingscliff), and Knox Park (Murwillumbah).

Develop a Shade Policy to guide the provision of natural shade and the installation of built shade structures in open spaces and over recreation facilities.

Conduct audits of regional and district open spaces to determine the extent of natural and built shade provided. Implement a tree planting program to provide additional natural shade in parks and open spaces.

Provide access to drinking water in regional, district and neighbourhood parks and sports fields to reduce the impact of heat stress on communities.

Review the Graffiti Vandalism Management Policy and implement creative strategies to deter vandalism and graffiti in parks and open spaces.

Develop an education program to promote responsible dog ownership and compliance with regulatory and advisory signage.

Outcome 3

Our open spaces are equitably distributed, well connected and accessible to everyone.

What you said

- Improve access to open spaces and playgrounds.
- Ensure access to diverse open spaces for people with disabilities.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections to parks, sports fields, playgrounds and youth facilities.
- Improve access to natural areas including bushland areas, foreshore reserves and Tweed's beaches, creeks and rivers (Tweed and Oxley Rivers specifically mentioned).
- Improve access to natural areas for viewing opportunities.
- Provide more trails for walking and cycling. Allow walkers and mountain bikers to access natural areas.
- Access to open spaces should be free and programming in parks should be affordable.
- Improve access to local parks to ensure they are within walking distance.
- Provide an 'all accessible' playground.
- Community feedback suggests a relatively high level of satisfaction with the community's ability to access open spaces, particularly parks and foreshore reserves.
- The community value local parks but also value having access to larger open spaces within a reasonable driving distance that offer something for everyone.
- Improve the provision of public toilets that are accessible for people with disabilities.
- Prohibit vehicle access onto open spaces.
- There is no public transport to and from small villages so we can't access youth facilities.
- Council should partner with NPWS to promote the use of fire trails for walking and biking. The gates at the entrance to fire trails stop people and vehicles from accessing them.

What we will do

Priorities

Ensure a fair and equitable distribution of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the Shire.

- We will implement a new Open Space Planning Framework to ensure residents living in residential areas have access to high quality and diverse open spaces. The framework defines the quantity (the minimum amount of open space required), accessibility (how far resident's should be expected to travel to an open space) and the quality of public open space (expected level of embellishment and maintenance). The framework applies to all new residential areas, but has been applied to our existing residential areas as a benchmark for assessing open space supply. We have not relied on standards alone, we have listened to what the community needs, researched sport and recreation trends, audited the existing open spaces and developed population profiles to be sure open spaces are equitably distributed across the Shire and community needs are met.
- The ability of residents to gain access to open space within an easy walk from their home is highly valued by the Tweed community, as is access to larger more diverse district and regional open spaces. We aim to ensure residents in existing and new residential areas are within 500m (a 5 to 10 minute walk) of a neighbourhood park (an embellished open space with a children's playground), within 3kms of a district level park, and within 15 to 20 minutes of a local or district level sports field (active open space). In areas of medium and high density housing we aim to provide a neighbourhood park within 400m of residents.
- We have audited the existing open space network, our sport and recreation facilities and identified gaps in provision. Some areas are undersupplied with open space and in other areas, while there is an adequate supply of open space, it is poorly distributed, not of a high quality and/or doesn't provide diverse recreational experiences. Over the next decade we aim to address the undersupply of quality and diverse open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.
- We will prioritise open space improvements in medium and higher density areas, areas of socio economic disadvantage and areas that have not seen significant capital investment over the last 10 years. Priority areas include Tweed Heads South – Banora Point, Tweed Heads West, Tweed Heads, established areas of Murwillumbah, Bilambil Heights and Tweed's rural villages. Whilst we aim to address these gaps to ensure fairness and equity, there will be some instances where this will not be possible given the difficult topography, natural landscape features, past development patterns and the resultant lack of open space 'fit for purpose'. In terms of specific recreation facilities we aim to provide a more equitable distribution of playgrounds, youth recreation facilities, outdoor gyms, off-leash dog areas and pathways and trails.
- We will use the gap analysis identified in this strategy and in the Sports Field Strategy (2014) to guide future land acquisition and investigate shared use agreements to address gaps in open space and recreation provision. Where required, we may need to seek additional land to increase the size of existing open spaces or acquire new open space to ensure residents are within the recommended distance thresholds. We will develop acquisition criteria and prioritise the acquisition of active open space in the north of the Shire in accordance with the Sports Field Strategy. We will investigate opportunities to partner with the NSW Department of Education and other education institutions to improve broader community access to their open space and recreation facilities outside of school hours.

Strategies and actions

Address the gaps in the provision of high quality and diverse open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the Shire

In future urban residential subdivisions residents will be within 500m (a 5 to 10 minute walk) of an embellished park, which should include the provision of a children's play space; within 3km of a district park, and within 5km of either a local or district level sports field. In areas of medium and high density housing we aim to provide a neighbourhood park within 400m.

In future rural subdivisions a neighbourhood park will be provided in a central location within a rural village.

Aim to address the gaps in the provision of recreation facilities not adequately provided in some profile areas, including district level parks and playgrounds, off-road trails, outdoor gyms and youth recreation facilities (where possible).

In future urban residential subdivisions provide at least one off-leash dog area where the population is greater than 3,500 people.

Prioritise the acquisition of land for sports fields in areas identified in the Sports Field Strategy (2014) and the *Open Space Strategy 2019-2029* as being undersupplied and poorly placed to meet future demand.

Investigate shared use agreements with schools to improve access to open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities on education land outside of school hours, in urban and rural areas.

Identify opportunities to partner with other land managers including Crown Lands, NSW Transport (NSW Railways), NPWS and Tweed Byron Aboriginal Land Council to address gaps in the provision of open spaces in some profile areas.

Priorities

Provide a well-connected open space network to improve access to open spaces and promote active travel.

- We have looked at how people get around by foot, bicycle, public transport and car to identify opportunities to improve connections between open spaces, residential areas and key community destinations (such as schools, community centres, halls, activity centres and public transport nodes). We aim to make our parks and open spaces easier to get to and more integrated physically and visually with the built environment.
- We have a vision to create a linked open space network to improve connectivity and accessibility. In new residential developments we will ensure connectivity is an integral part of the urban design process. This includes connectivity within the subject development and between developments (where possible). We will aim to create open space corridors utilising existing and future parks, sports fields, foreshore reserves, bushland corridors and drainage reserves (collectively referred to as greenways), waterways including creeks, rivers and beaches (referred to as blueways) and the path network, including footpaths, shared paths, cycle paths, road reserves and trails. Additional tree planting, landscaping and park amenities such as bench seats and drinking fountains along key routes will also improve connectivity, wayfinding and the amenity of the open space network.
- Whilst drainage areas such as drainage swales and drainage basins are not typically classified as open space, they are an important part of the open space network. We support the application of Water Sensitive Urban Design principles where usable spaces with opportunities for passive surveillance, connections for walking and cycling and improvements to local amenity can be achieved. The successful integration of drainage corridors will require collaboration and negotiation with developers, designers and enhanced coordination within Council units, specifically Roads and Stormwater and Parks & Active Communities. Investment in design up front will ensure public safety and risks are managed, unsightly utilities or functional infrastructure is softened or screened, sensitive areas are protected and maintenance requirements are well planned and adequately funded.
- We will review Council's Bike Plan (1999) to provide a more strategic approach to delivering cycling infrastructure including shared paths, on-road cycleways, end-of-trip facilities, signage and path lighting across the Shire. The plan will include renewed actions for a connected bicycle network, to improve links to existing routes, to ensure a more equitable distribution of pathways across the Shire and to make cycling more accessible for people of all ages and abilities.
- As part of developing this strategy we identified gaps in the shared-user path to access parks and open spaces which will be considered in the next review of the Bike Plan.

- We will continue to implement and review the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) to target infrastructure treatments that improve path connectivity, pedestrian safety and equity of access. The PAMP delivers a schedule of works to improve footpaths, shared paths and the provision of other pedestrian facilities. As part of developing this strategy we identified walking gaps to access parks and open spaces which will be considered in the next review of the PAMP.
- Council currently provides very few off-road trails. Moving forward we have committed to partnering with the State and Federal government to build the Tweed Valley Rail Trail as a key open space corridor connecting Murwillumbah to Tweed's rural villages. We will also improve local connections from the rail trail to the rural village centres and central open spaces. In new residential developments, we will adopt a stronger focus early on in the development process to deliver perimeter trails for walking and cycling loops in local neighbourhoods and we will investigate the potential to incorporate trails in ecological setbacks and through drainage reserves. We also propose to support the Integrated Recreational Trails Project to improve the future provision of trails for walking and mountain biking, access to waterways and water-based trails for canoeing and kayaking.

Strategies and actions

Create a connected open space network of greenways, blueways and incorporate the street network

Ensure provisions in Tweed's Development Control Plan require a developer to prepare an Open Space Master Plan and Landscape Concept Plan at the development application stage. The master plan should demonstrate the integration of the open space network (including waterways) with the transport network, the movement network (including pedestrian path and cycling connections) and the drainage system.

In new residential developments ensure the provision of smaller local parks as open space contributions to improve connectivity, linkages and access.

When upgrading existing or developing new parks and open spaces provide internal pathways that connect to the local path network.

Encourage the inclusion of walking and cycling loops around the periphery of new residential developments and around district and regional open spaces.

Ensure all land classified as coastal protection under any environmental planning instrument is to be dedicated as public open space, with provisions for direct pedestrian access to foreshore areas.

Continue to implement Council's Waterways Program, a program of improving access to Tweed's rivers, creeks and other waterways, including signage, maps and other associated amenities such as boat ramps, pontoons, jetties, canoe/kayak launching facilities, boardwalks and viewing platforms.

Investigate opportunities to use areas identified as ecological setbacks and bushland asset protection zones for walking, cycling and nature appreciation.

Establish an internal working group to address the design and maintenance challenges and financial implications associated with the integration of stormwater with parks, sports fields, linear paths and trails. Develop design criteria (to be included in the Open Space Design Guidelines) to maximise the visual and recreational amenity of these areas.

Apply Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles to integrate drainage reserves with other open space for stormwater management, active transport connections and other passive recreation opportunities.

Review the Tweed Shire Council Bike Plan (1999) to address the gaps in the network and provide important links to key open spaces. The review should consider the provision of cycling support facilities including signage, line marking and end-of-trip facilities.

Review the Tweed Shire Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) to ensure the future provision of safe, accessible and connected pedestrian infrastructure.

Create a connected open space network of greenways, blueways (waterways) and incorporate the street network (continued)

Partner with State and Federal Governments to deliver the Tweed Valley Rail Trail between Murwillumbah and Crabbes Creek.

Improve connections from the Tweed Valley Rail Trail to village centres and key open spaces in Tweed's rural villages located along the trail.

Identify opportunities for new land and water based trails and improved local and regional connections as part of the proposed Integrated Recreational Trails Project.

Enhance streetscapes along pathways that link key open spaces, activity centres and community facilities to delineate connections.

Priorities

More places and spaces in our communities are accessible to everyone.

- We will plan and design more inclusive parks and open spaces where all members of the community are treated with respect and feel welcome, including people with disabilities, older and younger people, the Aboriginal community and people from low socio economic backgrounds.
- We will apply the principles of Inclusion and Universal Design when planning and designing open spaces (including streetscapes). We will prioritise access improvements in key recreation destinations along our creek, river and coastal foreshores, regional and district open spaces and in open spaces where there are existing accessible features. We will design open spaces to ensure accessible features are grouped together and an accessible continuous path of travel is provided that connects the recreational and park facilities within key open spaces.
- In each profile area we have made recommendations for access improvements to park infrastructure such as seating, picnic tables and BBQ's, signage, car parks, public toilets, pathways and recreational facilities such as playgrounds and sports fields. We will also provide additional opportunities for everyone to experience natural and cultural heritage, and improve pedestrian access to foreshores and waterways for viewing, nature appreciation and water based recreational activities including swimming, fishing and boating. A recent access audit of Council's foreshores and waterways identified a number of barriers that we aim to address.
- We will assess and rate all of our playgrounds and play spaces against Universal Design principles to ensure we cater better for people of all abilities. The NSW Government has developed the Everyone Can Play Guidelines to create more inclusive play spaces. We will implement these guidelines to progressively incorporate accessible and inclusive elements into new and existing playgrounds (where practicable).
- The cost of participating in sport and recreation is generally increasing and is identified by the community as a barrier to participation. We aim to provide access to free and/or low cost opportunities in open spaces and to enable participation in sport and recreational activities. We will also support accessible and inclusive programming in parks and open spaces as part of our open space activation program.

Strategies and actions

Our parks and open space are more welcoming and inclusive

Apply the Principles of Inclusion and Universal Design and comply with relevant Australian Standards when upgrading existing or developing new open spaces, outdoor recreational facilities and park infrastructure.

Review the Access and Inclusion Policy (2014) and the Access and Inclusion Plan (2018-2021) in accordance with mandatory requirements of the Disability Inclusion Act (2014).

Conduct disability access audits of existing regional and district open spaces and implement recommendations from the completed audits.

Consult with the Tweed Shire Equal Access Advisory Committee when upgrading existing or developing new regional and district open spaces.

Implement the recommendations of Council's Access to Foreshores and Waterways Project to improve public access to the Shire's waterways and foreshores for viewing, nature appreciation and water based recreational activities.

When upgrading or developing new public toilets, incorporate the recommendations from Council's Public Toilet Access Audit to upgrade designated accessible toilet facilities.

Develop an accessibility checklist (to be included in the Open Space Design Guidelines) for Council and developers to ensure existing and new open spaces, outdoor recreation facilities and park infrastructure are more inclusive and accessible.

Provide staff and policy makers with training and awareness in the Principles of Inclusion and Universal Design.

Develop a program to progressively upgrade non-compliant designated accessible car spaces and kerbed ramps in parks and open spaces in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.

Provide information in accessible formats for residents and visitors about inclusive opportunities in Council parks and open spaces.

Continue to ensure that the Council's user fees are affordable and encourage participation in sport and recreation.

Outcome 4

The Tweed Shire's natural and cultural heritage is protected and enhanced for future generations.

What you said

- Conserve large areas of natural bushland for future generations and protect natural areas from being developed.
- Protect native flora and fauna and their habitats.
- Plant native vegetation and improve the management of natural areas.
- Increase spending on the conservation of bushland, consistent with other open spaces specifically sports fields.
- Protect water quality.
- Protect cultural heritage including art and heritage sites and provide interpretative information.
- Address environmental vandalism, including tree vandalism.
- Improve management of feral and domestic animals.
- Restore undergrowth as habitat for small birds.
- Manage weeds to protect the amenity of our open spaces; remove the Giant Devil's Fig weed.
- Improve management of insects including midges.
- Promote and encourage volunteer programs such as Dune Care.
- Implement community education programs to promote the values of the Tweed's natural areas.
- Natural areas provide important opportunities for nature appreciation.
- Improve access to waterways, foreshores, bushland and provide walking trails in bushland.
- Improve access to viewing areas and provide quiet areas for reflection in natural areas.
- Improve boat and kayak launching facilities for water-based recreation.
- Address farmers fencing off areas.
- Trees improve the amenity of our local neighbourhoods.
- Prevent development other than marine related activities along coastal foreshores.
- Prohibit vehicles on beaches.
- Prohibit dogs on beaches.
- Green space (trees, plants and grass) and natural shade provided by trees is highly valued by the community.
- Provide seating and natural shade along foreshore reserves.
- Consider planting trees in clusters.
- The lack of shade is a barrier to using open spaces for people suffering from skin cancer.

What we will do

Priorities

Protect and restore the significant biodiversity and ecological values of Tweed's natural open space.

- Population and development pressures and our collective contribution to climate change pose a fundamental threat to our natural open spaces. Almost 70 per cent of Council managed open space is managed by Council's Sustainability & Environment Unit primarily for the protection, conservation and restoration of our unique natural heritage and its rich biodiversity. Priority areas are the protection and management of threatened species, bushland, wetland and coastal management, weed and pest management and the protection of natural watercourses and adjoining riparian land.
- We will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders to address the environmental challenges of our time. Challenges such as habitat loss and fragmentation, declining native fauna populations, spread of invasive species, erosion and sedimentation, altered fire regimes and climate change require a coordinated and collaborative approach. Council will continue to play a leadership role and will partner with all levels of government, land management agencies, (including the NPWS, Crown Lands and Tweed Byron Aboriginal Land Council), neighbouring Local Government Area's, private land holders, community groups, volunteer groups and the broader community to protect natural assets, improve service delivery and increase engagement in biodiversity protection.
- Whilst existing legislation and regulations help protect and conserve our natural areas, Council is committed to strategic land use planning and policy development to protect and enhance our natural assets. We will apply development controls, use voluntary land management agreements and develop a strategic biodiversity offset framework to counterbalance the significant impact of development on local biodiversity. We will develop a Generic Plan of Management for Community Land Categorised as Natural Area to identify management objectives and outcomes for Tweed Shire's natural areas and continue to develop and implement management plans for key bushland reserves, waterways and the coast. Where applicable, we will propose Wildlife Protection Areas as a management policy for the protection of native animals and their habitats.
- We aim to retain and restore habitats in patches of a size and configuration that ensure existing plant and animal communities are more resilient, enabling survival in the long term. We will work in partnership with stakeholders to develop regional priorities for enhancing key vegetation corridors and habitat linkages. On a local level, we will continue to protect and manage established green buffers between Tweed's coastal villages and along waterway corridors to reduce fragmentation of habitats. We will also retain and restore small remnants of native vegetation within new and existing parks and open spaces to support native species and provide habitat for local fauna.
- We will continue to support and promote volunteerism and environmental stewardship to achieve the protection and conservation of local flora and fauna, to promote engagement in environmental protection and ecological sustainability. We will also engage community, residents and businesses to increase their awareness of biodiversity values by delivering community environmental awareness programs, providing advice on management activities, installing interpretative and regulatory signage and participating in environmental education events such as World Environment Day.
- The protection, restoration and maintenance of natural areas require significant financial investment, beyond what is currently available. Many of Council's natural resource management programs and initiatives are opportunistic and are heavily dependent on funding assistance from State and Federal governments, through grants and incentives. Council will continue to sustain funding for natural resource management programs, identify opportunities to increase investment and facilitate innovative partnerships to fund programs into the future.
- We aim to protect, conserve and manage parks, foreshore reserves and sports fields to avoid impact on areas of environmental significance. Where parks and sports fields are located adjacent to natural areas, the relevant sections of Council will work collaboratively to facilitate community use of open spaces for sporting and recreation purposes, and to support the in perpetuity protection of environmental values. In open spaces where threatened species are at risk, due to the use of the area for sport or recreation, we will investigate mitigation measures such as signage, fencing and where applicable place conditions on development and events.

- There is a clear desire among the community for additional infrastructure and increased ability to access natural areas for active and passive recreation including our bushland areas, foreshore reserves and waterways. However, access and recreational use must be balanced with amenity and the need to protect the ecological values of these areas. Our aim is to ensure that the level of use, extent of development and intended user groups are consistent with the environmental values of the open space. We aim to avoid adverse impacts on environmental values and ensure recreational activities do not impinge on environmental management practices.
- We have develop the Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program (2018-2028) which includes a Recreational Use Strategy. The strategy aims to provide for various recreational activities, address conflicts between users and address impacts on environmental, cultural and amenity values. We will investigate the allocation of character/usage zones to promote active and passive recreational use away from fragile natural areas. For this approach to be successful, we need to ensure the provision of sufficient infrastructure to cater for the higher concentration of users in particular zones such as boating and non-motorised craft (canoe and kayak) infrastructure, car parking, public toilets, picnic areas and viewing locations. We will also improve walking and cycling connections along the river foreshore (where practical).
- Walking dogs on beaches is a popular recreational activity in the Shire. Dogs on beaches raise safety concerns for other beach users and for wildlife, including threatened species and migratory species. Council will develop guidelines for the management of dogs in parks and beaches and, in consultation with the community, designate particular beaches for this activity, as well as horse riding. We will educate dog owners and horse riders about the biodiversity values and potential impacts of these activities in natural areas and provide additional enforcement to ensure compliance.
- Many of the coastal access paths were developed in an ad-hoc manner and are often unauthorised. We will work with the local community and environment groups to manage public access, with the aim of reducing erosion and degradation of these fragile environments.

Strategies and actions

Conserve and/or manage biodiversity values and ecological integrity

Finalise mapping of vegetation communities. The information will be used to inform the development of vegetation protection overlays for the Tweed Shire, identifying ecologically significant areas for protection and management.

Complete the review and apply Environmental Zones to land managed by Tweed Shire Council to protect land that is of important environmental value.

Ensure a regional approach by working with State Government, private land owners, neighbouring Local Government Areas and the Tweed Byron Aboriginal Land Council to protect linkages and biodiversity corridors and ensure cross boundary management of ecologically significant areas and ecosystems.

Continue to investigate strategic land acquisition to protect additional habitat of high ecological value and to improve habitat and wildlife connectivity.

Develop a strategic biodiversity offset framework to counterbalance the significant impact of development on native vegetation.

Finalise and adopt the Draft Generic Plan of Management for Community Land Categorised as Natural Area.

Review the Tweed Vegetation Management Strategy.

Deliver and monitor the Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (2015).

Conserve and/or manage biodiversity values and ecological integrity (continued)

Continue to deliver relevant actions of the threatened species recovery programs such as the Glossy Black Cockatoo Plan of Management and the NSW Recovery Plan for the Bush-stone Curlew.

Implement the Wildlife Protection Area Policy and enforce declared Wildlife Protection Areas to reduce the impact of domestic animals on native fauna.

Retain and manage established green buffers between Tweed's coastal villages and along waterway corridors to protect biodiversity values and improve habitat connectivity.

Develop management plans for operational lands with significant conservation values including Clarrie Hall Dam (Doon Doon), Mount Nullum and Byrill Creek.

As part of the staged Pottsville Open Space Master Plan review management options for Pottsville Environment Park (Pottsville).

Implement development controls to prevent the degradation of biodiversity, ecological values and water quality in accordance with the Tweed LEP, the Biodiversity Development Control Plan (Section A19 Biodiversity and Habitat Management) and Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management.

Develop the Tweed Shire Coastal Management Program for the ongoing protection and management of Tweed's coastline.

Implement the draft Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program (2018-2028).

Implement the Coastal Zone Management Programs: Cobaki Broadwater and Terranora Broadwater and the Tweed Coast Estuaries.

Continue to deliver water quality, riparian restoration and erosion control programs and studies.

Deliver comprehensive weed and pest management, bushfire management and bush regeneration programs

Implement and monitor programs that target high priority weed species in accordance with the Biosecurity Act 2015 and the North Coast Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017-2022.

Implement and monitor pest management programs to manage nuisance insects including mosquitoes, biting midges, Pandanus Planthopper and invasive animals including foxes, wild dogs and cats.

Implement and monitor bush fire management programs in accordance with the Rural Fires Act 1997 and the Far North Coast Bush Fire Risk Management Plan.

Implement and monitor bush regeneration projects. Management actions will focus on habitat restoration, drainage, weed management and establishing native communities. Continue to work with stakeholders and private land holders to increase ecological diversity and resilience.

Maximise funding streams and investigate new funding mechanisms for natural resource management programs and initiatives. Provide assistance to community and environment groups to apply for grant funding.

Increase the community's awareness of local biodiversity and ecological values

Promote biodiversity and conservation action through public education programs, educational resources and events such as My Local Native Garden Planting Guide, Environment and Sustainability eNewsletter and World Environment Day. Implement other public awareness activities on natural resource management actions such as illegal dumping, encroachment and pollution.

Provide opportunities for environmental interpretation in our parks and open spaces to promote better understanding and protection of biodiversity values and ecological processes. Integrate environmental interpretation into development planning to enrich people's understanding and appreciation of natural heritage.

Develop an interpretative plan for Pottsville Environment Park (Pottsville) and Pottsville Wetland to provide opportunities to showcase the environmental and conservation values.

Deliver environmental education to increase the community's awareness and compliance with laws and policies that protect natural heritage.

Include information on natural areas when publishing open space network maps and on Council's website.

Ensure nature-based recreation and tourism activities do not compromise environmental values

Explore opportunities for low impact nature-based recreation and tourism activities on Council managed land. When proposing locations for nature based recreation activities ensure the natural and cultural heritage values and environmental impacts are well understood and the management actions respond directly to protect biodiversity values.

Convene a multi-agency task force including land managers, recreation and tourism industry groups and community representatives to progress the development of an Integrated Recreational Trails Project.

Identify and promote opportunities to use areas identified as ecological setbacks and bushland asset protection zones for walking, cycling and nature appreciation.

Implement the Recreation Use Strategy developed as part of Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program (2020-2030) to guide the future recreational use of the Tweed estuary and the protection of estuarine values.

Develop and implement a Waterways Asset Management Plan to improve management of waterways infrastructure including boating facilities (e.g. boat ramps, pontoons, jetties and wharfs), fishing facilities, viewing platforms and boardwalks.

Collaborate with Roads and Maritime Services on the development of their Tweed Estuary Boating Plan.

Where parks and sports fields are located adjacent to natural areas, Parks & Active Communities and Sustainability & the Environment Units will work collaboratively to facilitate community use of open spaces for sporting and recreation purposes, and to support the in perpetuity protection of environmental values. Implement mitigation measures such as signage, fencing and where applicable place conditions on development and events to avoid impact where threatened species are at risk.

Minimise the potential impacts of sports field lighting proximal to known or predicted locations of threatened species and/or their habitat.

Continue to develop and implement community education to encourage responsible pet ownership.

Improve management of public beach and waterway access points to reduce erosion.

Priorities

Ensure environmental sustainability and develop resilience to the impacts of climate change.

- Our open space network has a vital role to play in achieving ecological sustainability and developing resilience to climate change. In addition to the strategies and actions to protect and manage natural and cultural heritage, our parks and open spaces assist in mitigating and managing climate change impacts by absorbing and storing carbon from the atmosphere, facilitating active transport, providing shade to help mitigate the urban heat island effect, improving air and water quality and mitigating the intensity of flood events through stormwater absorption.
- We will advance the Environmental Sustainability Prioritisation Strategy (2015-2020) by planning and designing more resilient buildings and landscapes. The design stage provides the best opportunity to improve the ongoing environmental sustainability of open spaces. We will incorporate environmentally sustainable design principles in open space planning, design and management. We will invest in sustainable products, renewable energy and implement maintenance strategies to extend the life of ageing open space infrastructure. Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles should also be incorporated in landscape development including the use of locally occurring native plants and drought-resistant plants (wherever practical).
- Our parks and open spaces, related infrastructure and service provision have the potential to be affected by the impacts of climate change, resulting from more frequent and extreme weather patterns, more severe storm surges, sea level rise and coastal erosion. When we plan, design and construct parks and open spaces we will use the most up to date climate modelling, account for climate risks by locating park infrastructure further inland outside coastal and estuarine hazard areas, using hardy plants in foreshore parks and plan for flood resiliency such as investing in durable materials that can withstand heavy rain events.
- We will develop an Urban Street Tree Planting Program to increase the tree canopy in our urban areas. Protecting significant trees, improving canopy cover, ensuring the right tree is planted in the right place and making provisions for community horticulture are key priorities. Priority locations for street tree planting will include arterial roads, along shared paths, in civic spaces, urban residential streets, in parks, foreshore reserves and over playgrounds. The provision of natural shade is highly valued by the community, to improve user comfort, safety and amenity. All future open space improvement projects will enhance opportunities for natural shade from trees.
- This new approach will require a change in Council's focus, from a reactive approach where resources are expended in managing risk, replacing vandalised trees or based on community requests, to a more proactive asset management approach with a focus on broader management and maintenance of the urban forest – on a life cycle basis, similar to the way Council manages its built assets. The program will require additional financial investment, so we will investigate external funding and community volunteer partnership opportunities. A more holistic approach to tree planting across the Shire's urban landscape will maximise the capacity of Tweed's urban forest to deliver ecological, economic, social and aesthetic benefits to both present and future generations. We will also aim to develop a greater public knowledge of the benefits of street trees.
- We aim to manage water more efficiently in parks and open spaces. Water is critically important for the management of the open space network and to service the facilities that are located within them, particularly sports fields (and the related amenities), public toilets and for the irrigation of newly developed parks. However, potable water is costly. The availability of recycled water is improving and its use (along with stormwater) should be investigated further to service both irrigation and public toilet facilities. We will continue to put in place actions to reduce water demand in open spaces including the use of recycled water, moisture retention technology and centrally controlled watering systems to reduce waste.

Strategies and actions

Plan, design and manage a network of sustainable open spaces

Integrate Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles in the planning, design, construction and management of all new and upgraded open spaces and recreational facilities. Implement the following adaptation and mitigation strategies:

- Be resource efficient in design to avoid/reduce/reuse existing resources, minimise energy and water use and reduce emissions. Include energy and water efficient fittings and appliances e.g. in sport field amenity blocks, public toilets, sport field lighting, park lighting.
- Invest in renewable energy sources where possible e.g. solar power lighting.
- Consider water conservation through rain water harvesting and the use of recycled water e.g. for the irrigation of sport fields (where practical and feasible).
- Implement service level efficiencies.
- Consider the environmental properties of materials e.g. the use of recycled materials and non-toxic materials in park and playground design.
- Incorporate natural features in parks and open space design.
- Maximise natural solutions for shade e.g. (use of hardy native species) to protect users from extreme weather conditions.
- Include lightly coloured and heat reflective surfaces.
- Consider permeable pavements in car parks, sports courts and pathways.
- Consider regular and adequate maintenance and fuel efficiency of equipment and vehicles.
- Encourage and enable walking and cycling.
- Open space planning decisions should reflect community need and the priorities in the Open Space Strategy.

Integrate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles into the planning and design of open spaces to help manage flood risk, protect waterways and habitats.

Plan and adapt open space assets to withstand the impact of changing climatic conditions such as sea level rise, coastal and river bank erosion, floods, extreme temperatures, drought and bush fire. When planning new or upgrading existing parks and open spaces include an assessment of the potential climate change risk to open space assets.

Manage the open space system in a collaborative way, with state and regional stakeholders, neighbouring LGA's, various land managers/owners, developers and community working together to achieve sustainability outcomes and address climate change e.g. participation in the Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment for the North Coast, Coastal Flood Study and Border Ranges Alliance.

Maximise funding streams that help build our open space system's resilience to climate change e.g. funding programs that protect river and coastal foreshores and funding programs for street tree planting.

Increase awareness of the role of open spaces in the mitigation and adaptation to climate change, particularly in urban areas.

Increase the extent of the tree canopy to create an urban forest

Review existing tree coverage and the provision of natural shade in highly utilised parks and open spaces, and over playgrounds.

Develop and monitor an Urban Street Tree Planting Program to increase tree planting where there are limited trees or where trees are in decline and require replacing. Priority locations include along arterial roads, shared paths, in civic spaces, in urban residential streets with minimal tree coverage, in highly utilised parks, foreshore reserves and over playgrounds.

Maximise opportunities to create habitat nesting places for birds and mammals by making artificial hollows or enlarging old ones in older or dead trees. This approach will be considered in context of Council's risk management framework for trees on public land.

Record, categorise and monitor veteran trees in the Tweed Shire. Protect with a Tree Preservation Order where appropriate, to ensure veteran trees in addition to mature trees are protected with due regard to environmental, social and economic impacts.

Integrate the objectives of the proposed Urban Street Tree Planting Program with Council's structure planning, master planning and infrastructure delivery programs to maximise opportunities for street tree planting.

Review the Tweed DCP Section A5 – Subdivision Manual and the Development Design Specification D14 Landscaping to reflect best practice landscaping and street tree management. Investigate opportunities to review the design of streets, where appropriate, to widen verges to create more space for street trees.

Monitor the compliance of consent conditions around the planting and protection of street trees.

When upgrading existing or developing new parks and open spaces and in new residential developments, select local indigenous plantings to enhance ecological values and reflect original landscape character (in accordance with Council's plant selection guidelines for landscaping public open space and the Native Species Planting Guide).

Ensure the protection of remnant indigenous vegetation (including single remnant mature indigenous trees) within new residential developments in accordance with the relevant planning documents.

Select tree species that will reach maturity and provide adequate shade without compromising other assets and property in the immediate vicinity. Utilise, where appropriate, root barriers and other technologies to prevent damage to infrastructure.

Continue to implement a routine pruning and maintenance program to provide regular maintenance of Tweed Shire's street trees.

Increase community's awareness and knowledge of Tweed Shire's urban forest, its ecological processes, the benefits it provides and their role in its management. Use events such as National Tree Day, Living for the Future Home Expo and World Environment Day as opportunities to build community capacity.

Replace vandalised trees (where practical) and increase the community's awareness of vegetation vandalism.

Priorities

Protect and conserve Tweed Shire's cultural heritage.

- We aim to improve the protection and management of cultural heritage in open spaces. In the context of the open space network, cultural heritage includes built structures, such as public buildings, archaeological sites, monuments and memorials sometimes located in public parks, as well as landscapes, social, ceremonial or spiritual associations with places. Cultural heritage includes Aboriginal cultural heritage, European heritage and other artifacts and attributes that are inherited from past generations. We aim to ensure open space planning, design and management reflects and protects contemporary and historical Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural values (where appropriate) and features.
- Council's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Plan (ACHMP) provides the framework for the identification and protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) across the Tweed Shire. The plan provides clear pathways for Council, other land managers and developers to ensure we meet our obligations under the law and to enable cultural heritage to be properly managed. We will consult with the local Aboriginal community through the Tweed Aboriginal Advisory Committee and the Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council to promote awareness and assist in the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- We know that many known and predicted Aboriginal cultural items, places and landscapes are embodied within the open space network. We aim to respect its presence in the landscape, and consider carefully how to minimise impact and manage the land where it is situated. We will take a precautionary approach prior to commencing any open space improvement works and ensure the pathways detailed in the ACHMP are followed. Our future approach will be more systematic and we will flag areas likely to contain heritage as early in the planning process as possible.
- In 2018 Council adopted its first Reconciliation Action Plan (2018-2020). In accordance with this plan we acknowledge and respect the Tweed Aboriginal community's right to speak for its country and to care for its traditional country in accordance with its laws, customs and traditions. We will partner with Traditional Custodians to facilitate the conservation of their heritage, to build collective knowledge of Tweed's natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage and support the participation of Aboriginal people in open space planning, design and management. We will consider a Pilot Indigenous Ranger Program to build capacity of Aboriginal people to manage Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and help protect country.
- In consultation with the Aboriginal community and heritage groups, we will promote awareness in the community of Tweed Shire's cultural heritage. When conducting open space improvement works, we will consider integrating interpretation to enrich people's understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage (where appropriate).

Strategies and actions

Implement the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) 2017.

Develop Aboriginal Cultural Heritage assessment procedures for internal works and development assessment.

Deliver training to key Council staff on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, cultural awareness and the implementation and use of the ACHMP.

Develop standard conditions of consent to ensure the protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

Prior to upgrading existing or developing new parks and open spaces check the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS), the Heritage Schedule of the applicable Local Environmental Plan, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Mapping and follow the requirements of the applicable LEP, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan and the NPW Act.

Prior to upgrading existing or developing new open spaces, in an area of Aboriginal Place of Heritage Significance (in accordance with the applicable Local Environmental Plan and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan) consult with the Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council, to ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage is valued, protected, and respected.

Improve the planning and management of cultural heritage and increase awareness in the community (continued)

Partner with Traditional Custodians to facilitate the conservation of their heritage, to build collective knowledge of Tweed's natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage and support the participation of Aboriginal people in open space planning and management. Consider the establishment on a Pilot Indigenous Ranger Program.

Maximise funding streams for projects that encourage the management and conservation of cultural heritage in open spaces e.g. Heritage Near Me incentives program and environmental trust.

When upgrading existing or developing new parks and open spaces, identify opportunities for cultural heritage interpretation (where appropriate) and the integration of historic or cultural features in consultation with the Aboriginal community, TSC Heritage Advisor, Tweed Shire's Museum staff and heritage/historical groups.

Continue to liaise with the Heritage Advisor service on the development and design of new parks and open spaces within Heritage Conservation Areas.

Maintain and keep current Council's significant tree register.

Priorities

Protect and enhance Tweed Shire's highly valued scenic landscapes.

- We aim to identify, protect and enhance wherever possible the scenic qualities and the diverse landscape characteristics of the Tweed Shire. Tweed's landscape tells a rich and complex story of evolution including the region's geological morphology, biodiversity and cultural development, and are central to the Tweed's identity and sense of place. The Wollumbin/Mt Warning Caldera, officially recognised as of national iconic significance through the Australian National Landscapes program, the Tweed River, the stunning coastline and World-Heritage listed Gondwana Rainforest contribute significantly to the Tweed being recognised not just as a tourist destination, but as a sample of outstanding scenic and biodiversity value. Whilst not necessarily as dramatic on a physical scale, the rural hills and valleys, coastal forests, estuaries, creeks and eclectic townships and villages also contribute to the overall landscape character of the Tweed. It is therefore of paramount importance that we protect our open spaces, preserve or enhance their scenic qualities and provide vantage points to view the significant vistas of the Tweed's landscapes.
- The draft Scenic Landscape Strategy provides the framework for identifying and protecting the Tweed's significant and highly valued scenic landscapes and for incorporating visual impact assessment and mitigation measures into planning and development proposals. As part of the process we have drawn on the experiences and knowledge of local communities and visitors to develop an understanding of the landscape qualities and vantage points that are valued and central to the identity of the Tweed. We will apply the assessment methodology and scenic management principles and mitigation measures developed as part of the Scenic Landscape Strategy to the planning, design and management of our open space network.
- Future planning and development of parks and open spaces will take into account visual amenity, local character, aesthetic qualities and environmental impacts. We will identify potential viewing locations, provide appropriate viewing infrastructure and interpretative information in key locations in order to increase access to, enjoyment and awareness of the Tweed's scenic landscapes, for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike.

Strategies and actions

Apply measures to protect valued scenic landscapes, viewing locations and viewsheds within the open space network

Pending adoption of the Draft Scenic Landscape Strategy, apply the landscape character and visual impact assessment methodology and scenic management principles, as they relate to land classified as public open space.

Identify highly valued scenic landscapes, viewing locations, viewsheds and important features within the open space network. Where possible, apply measures to protect and enhance the visual quality and viewing experiences to and from these lands, such as, but not limited to:

- Improving access to and visibility of scenic attractions through landscaped space and vegetation management;
- Designing and siting park facilities and amenities such as lookouts and viewing platforms to maximise views;
- Providing interpretive information to increase awareness of highly valued landscapes; and
- Manage vegetation to protect significant viewsheds.

Ensure future development and open space design is sympathetic to the scenic qualities and environmental attributes of the landscape, such as topography and vegetation of the local area, and provides opportunities for residents and visitors to appreciate scenic views e.g. open space dedications on significant ridgelines, hillsides, river and creek corridors and coastal foreshores.

Where proposed development results in a change of use on land classified as public open space undertake a land suitability and visual impact assessment to protect and enhance scenic values or mitigate against adverse impacts as conditions of consent. Examples include built infrastructure located within open spaces such as public utilities, telecommunications services, and other land use activities that may impact on scenic values of the subject land and/or significant viewsheds from other locations.

Outcome 5

Our open space network is well managed and financially sustainable.

What you said

- Provide more parks in areas that are undersupplied to ensure equity of provision of open space.
- Improve park maintenance in some areas.
- Encourage negotiations with authorities such as National Parks and Wildlife Service to provide additional opportunities to access the region's natural areas.

What we will do

Priorities

Ensure a robust planning and management framework for open space assets.

- Council seeks to maintain an attractive, accessible and sustainable open space network that meets the needs of current and future generations. We have acknowledge that open space planning and design must implement ecologically sustainable development principles and we have committed to a more strategic approach to open space planning and development. But, the efficient management of open space assets is vital to financial sustainability. This means maintaining safe assets, ensuring viable levels of service that extends the life of the asset and sufficiently resourcing open space assets.
- A significant gap in Council's existing open space asset management framework is funding the renewal of open space assets. This has led to an overall decline in many assets to the point where there are many assets requiring substantial refurbishment or complete replacement. Another aspect of this issue is that funds have not been put aside to adequately cover the depreciation of the open space assets. To ensure a more sustainable approach to open space asset management Council will investigate the development of a reserve to fund open space asset renewal or replacement and depreciation.
- There is a strong desire and need to develop a clear framework to ensure a coordinated approach to the provision, use and maintenance of public open space within the Tweed Shire. Council's current approach to open space asset management is currently under review. The review aims to identify the gaps in current asset knowledge and service delivery, to identify improvements in strategic and operational processes and to develop a new framework for the future management of open space assets across the asset lifecycle. The review will be undertaken in accordance with Tweed Shire's Community Strategic Plan, the existing Asset Management Policy and the Asset Management Strategy 2010.
- It is expected that the review process will inform a revision of Council's Open Space Asset Management Plan (OSAMP). The OSAMP is the key planning document that currently guides Council's operations, maintenance, renewal and upgrade of all open space assets. Essential components of the OSAMP is the open space hierarchy, levels of service, the lifecycle management plan, performance monitoring, demand management, risk management and continuous improvement in open asset management practices. A review of the OSAMP will ensure a more robust and sustainable approach to open space asset management moving forward.

- As part of the Strategy's development a review of the open space provision standards and the open space hierarchy was conducted with the aim of achieving sustainable levels of development. Collectively these are referred to as levels of service and they are the standards that ensure open spaces are accessible and "fit-for-purpose". Generally, the standard and scale of open space assets as well as levels of maintenance, increase as the size and the catchment the open space serves increases. Hence the service levels are different for local, neighbourhood, district and regional catchments. The levels of service have been reviewed in the context of community needs, whilst at the same time, ensuring provision is sustainable and can be maintained within operational budgets in the long term. The established levels of service should inform the future review of Council's Open Space Maintenance Service Level Manual and Council's OSAMP.
- Whilst Council allocates substantial resources to the development and maintenance of open space assets, this will need to be reviewed. In addition to growing community expectations for higher quality open spaces, over the past decade Council has acquired significant amounts of open space, sport and recreation facilities through new residential developments and as a result of State Government funding to upgrade sport and recreation facilities. Adequate funds are required to ensure the future life cycle costs are managed, valued and depreciated in accordance with appropriate best practice in asset management.
- As part of developing this strategy, a demand and supply assessment was conducted. The review has identified that some areas within the Shire are undersupplied with open space or diverse sport and recreation facilities. In some established areas where opportunities arise the acquisition of open space may be desirable. In other areas, where there is an oversupply of open space or the open space provided is of low community value, the disposal of open space may be desirable. Council will develop a framework and methodology for the acquisition and disposal of open space with the aim of getting the best outcomes from Council's open space network. The strategy recommends that this process is undertaken to address the undersupply of open space in some areas and to achieve open space improvements in areas where the quality and diversity of open space does not meet community need. The disposal and acquisition of open space should be investigated together, not in isolation of each other.
- Whilst the disposal of open space can be very controversial, Council will commit to returning the revenue raised from the sale of land to the open space network. Where open space sites of low community value have been assessed and the site is deemed as surplus and to be divested, an alternative open space site will be developed or embellished in the same local profile area. The disposal of public open space will only be considered in cases where such disposal is demonstrably beneficial to the open space network and a transparent assessment criteria is developed for the disposal of a site or sites and a report adopted by Council. Sites of low community and/or environmental value will be assessed further to establish if they have potential to perform another open space function before they are considered for disposal. Council will consult the community affected by the disposal of public open space consistent with the processes detailed in the *Local Government Act 1993*. It is proposed that funds derived from the disposal of public open space be transferred to and held in an Open Space Acquisition Reserve or similar to assist the purchase, development or improvement of the open space network.

Strategies and actions

Ensure the long term sustainability of open space assets

All future open space planning, design and management decisions should be informed by the *Open Space Strategy 2019–2029*, Open Space Design Guidelines, the Sports Field Strategy (2014) and the desired levels of service for the embellishment of core open space.

Review the Open Space Asset Management Plan. Implement a Total Life Cycle Asset Management System to ensure that assets provide their required levels of services in the most cost effective manner.

Ensure Council's inventory of open space assets is kept up to date, as an essential management tool.

Review Council's Parks and Asset Creation Handover Process. Develop a framework for the implementation, handover and ongoing maintenance of new assets acquired through the subdivision process, as an essential tool for forward planning and resource allocation.

Identify opportunities to reduce costs and/or increase income and efficiencies of the management of Crown Land.

Establish an Open Space Asset Management Reserve to provide an ongoing funding mechanism for open space asset renewals and replacements. In the absence of committed annual budget contributions to this fund, consideration will be given to the transferring of any surplus funds from the overall open space budget at the end of each financial year, to this reserve.

Investigate opportunities to supplement general revenue and developer contributions to fund open space asset renewals. For example allowing cafes in parks where revenue generated is reinvested into the open space network.

Plan for the strategic acquisition and disposal of open space to improve open space and community outcomes.

Develop a framework and methodology for the acquisition and disposal of open space.

Identify open spaces of low community and/or environmental value. Assess the open spaces to establish if they have potential to perform another open space function before they are considered for disposal.

Develop an Open Space Acquisition Reserve or similar to assist the purchase, development or improvement of the open space network.

Develop strong partnerships to deliver open space, sport and recreation opportunities cost effectively.

Ensure Council's priorities align with NSW State Government priorities and strategies. Identify State and Federal Government grant opportunities and align these with open space development priorities, progressing identified projects to a 'shovel ready' status in readiness for grant applications.

Continue to encourage sporting clubs to develop business plans ensuring clubs are sustainable and planning for the future.

Continue to accrue the Sports Fields Assets Reserve Fund from the sport field licence fee, and utilise for sports field asset renewal/upgrade program, and encourage contributing clubs to utilise the funds to carry out asset renewal/upgrades on Council sports field assets and use the funds as leverage for grants.

Develop a lease system for sports fields where there is a sole tenant and encourage greater responsibility on the tenant for asset maintenance/renewal.

Continue to collaborate with other Local Government Areas to share information and explore partnering opportunities through the North Coast Sports and Recreation Forum.

Investigate further cross border collaboration with Gold Coast City Council to better coordinate open space facility planning between the two councils.

Investigate opportunities with the NSW Department of Education and other education institutions for shared use of school facilities, particularly where there is an identified under supply of open space.

Adopt a coordinated approach to achieve the desired natural resource management outcomes across the region. This can only be achieved by partnerships and/or collaboration with other groups, agencies and stakeholders.

Encourage opportunities for community involvement in the maintenance and management of open space.

Establish cross departmental processes to ensure effective implementation of the *Open Space Strategy 2019-2029*.

Conduct customer satisfaction surveys to ensure Council is directing its limited resources in the most cost-effective way to the open space services that the community values.



IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY



Implementing the strategy

The *Open Space Strategy 2019-2029* and Implementation Plan identifies the strategic actions and key open space infrastructure that will enable Council to achieve its vision and outcomes for the shire's open space network and respond to the community's needs and desires identified during the community engagement process.

The Implementation Plan is in two sections:

Section 1 includes regional and district actions; and

Section 2 includes local actions for Council's 14 local profile areas.

Regional and district actions, including strategic directions and major projects that will impact on the broader shire were prioritised by Council. This is to ensure we develop an open space network that offers diversity and equity in the full range of functions and settings across the Shire.

The local actions were prioritised by local communities during Stage 2 of the community engagement process held between 4 September and 16 December 2018. The key aim of the community prioritisation process was to ensure local residents had input into open space decision making for their local area and to address the needs and desires of each local community.

The community prioritisation process enabled Council to address the following key challenges:

- Delivering actions that align with community needs and aspirations that are realistic to achieve and enable council to achieve its vision and outcomes.
- Limited financial resources, staffing resources and time to implement all the projects;
- More local actions were proposed than Council can implement;

With community's priorities identified for each local profile area, the Open Space Prioritisation Matrix was developed. The matrix contains a set of criteria to consolidate and prioritise the local actions across the Shire's 14 local profile areas. The criteria was developed with consideration of the following:

- Community priorities and needs;
- Population and future growth;
- The open space findings presented in the local action plans;
- Open space provision standards;
- Asset management and risk management;
- Alignment with Council's strategic documents and priorities; and
- Alignment with the vision, guiding principles and outcomes of the *Open Space Strategy 2019-2029*.

Each matrix criteria was defined and weighted. Each action was evaluated and scored against the criteria. The total score determined the ranking of the local actions in the Implementation Plan. An overview of the matrix criteria and weighting is presented in Appendix 5.

The Implementation Plan identifies the priority allocated to each open space action including indicative timeframes, the project description, the Council Unit or Units who will lead the project, other partners and the status of funding for the project.

Funding

Implementation of the strategy will require a commitment of funding and resources as well as the establishment of partnerships and attainment of grant funding to be achieved.

Funding opportunities include:

- Council revenue – operational and capital budgets. Priorities and actions will need to align with Council's annual budgets, Council's Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan;
- Developer contributions in accordance with Section 7.11 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* which can be monetary contributions, land dedication or agreed embellishments/works of material public benefit in lieu, in accordance with adopted Section 7.11 Plans;
- Government grants and subsidies which can be related to sport and recreation, health promotion, arts and culture, biodiversity, tree management, streetscape initiatives, climate change or infrastructure development;
- Community grants;
- Landowner and partnership agreements. For example, facility sharing with NSW Department of Education, private land agreements for biodiversity conservation or voluntary planning agreements; and
- Philanthropic sources.

The implementation of actions within the strategy will also be influenced by:

- The availability of State and Federal Government grants and subsidies;
- The prescriptive nature of various grants and subsidies and aligning the grant funding directive with the strategy's recommendations and outcomes;
- The availability and capacity of staff;
- Council's capacity annually to fund the desired levels of service, considering both capital investment and ongoing operational and maintenance demands; and
- Council's wider budgetary priorities.

Accordingly, as work programs and budgets are developed, some prioritised actions may be delayed or others brought forward. Some actions may be reconsidered as circumstances change, new information is uncovered and experience is gained following implementation.

It will also be necessary to allocate additional maintenance funding and resources to respond to new open spaces, sport and recreation facilities when obtained through residential developments and State and Federal Government grants.

Monitoring and reporting

The adopted Open Space Strategy (2019-2029) and Implementation Plan will be reviewed in-line with the Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, including the budgeting cycle.

The Open Space Strategy is a long term planning document with a 10 year horizon. Monitoring and reviewing its implementation is essential for the strategy's success. The Implementation Plan will be reviewed annually and include a status report on the strategy's progress, achievements and challenges. It is recommended that a full review of the strategic priorities and the desired levels of service is undertaken every four years.

Ongoing communication with residents and community organisations on the strategy and its implementation is recommended. Key to measuring the success of the implementation of the Open Space Strategy will be the community's satisfaction with parks and open spaces. This will be measured by undertaking customer satisfaction surveys on a regular basis over the strategy's 10 year life span.

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