

<b>ITEM 8.5</b>	<b>NORTHERN BEACHES SPORTSGROUNDS STRATEGY AND GOLF COURSES REVIEW</b>
<b>REPORTING MANAGER</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE MANAGER PARKS &amp; RESERVES</b>
<b>TRIM FILE REF</b>	<b>2016/306102</b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>NIL</b>

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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#### PURPOSE

To conduct an analysis of the usage of golf courses as part of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy, including how to best use the land currently occupied by Warringah Golf Course for recreational purposes, and to not proceed with the proposed District Park tender process until the outcomes of the Strategy and Review have been considered by Council.

#### SUMMARY

Major sporting groups including the Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union (Sporting Union) have approached Council calling for new and improved sportsgrounds and facilities. The Northern Beaches community enjoys its sport and participation continues to increase, particularly from women, putting Council's sportsfields under increasing pressure.

Council has recently commenced work on a long term sports facility plan, the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy, to guide development of sportsgrounds and facilities for the next 15 years.

The Sporting Union, the Manly Warringah Football Association, AFL and Cricket have advocated that Council review whether any of the seven Council golf courses could be more equitably used for sporting fields. These sporting groups represent almost all of the 45,000 registered users of the Northern Beaches sportsgrounds.

In response to the advocacy from these major sporting groups it is proposed to also review the equitable use of Council's public golf course land and incorporate this as part of the Strategy.

It is considered that the views of the whole Northern Beaches community should be sought prior to making major decisions on Council-owned open space at this time, in particular the best use of the land currently occupied by Warringah Golf Course for recreational purposes. As such, it is proposed to not proceed with the tender process to lease land occupied by the Warringah Golf Course, North Manly Bowling and Recreation Club, and Warringah Recreation Centre until Council considers the outcomes of the Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review.

The review of golf courses and the Sportsgrounds Strategy will include comprehensive community engagement, with the first step the development of a discussion paper in November 2016. It is planned that recommendations and a draft Sportsgrounds Strategy will be brought back to Council for consideration in early 2017.

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#### RECOMMENDATION OF DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

That Council:

- A. Note that sporting groups have approached Council advocating for more sporting fields, suggesting some of Council's golf course land could be converted to sporting fields.
  - B. Conduct a review of golf courses as part of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy,
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including how to best use the land currently occupied by Warringah Golf Course for recreational purposes for the Northern Beaches community.

- C. Commence the community engagement process for the review and Strategy with a discussion paper in November 2016.
  - D. Not proceed with the tender process to lease land occupied by the Warringah Golf Course, North Manly Bowling and Recreation Club, and Warringah Recreation Centre until the completion of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review.
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**REPORT**

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**BACKGROUND**

Major sporting organisations including the Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union (Sporting Union) have recently approached Council about the need for new and improved sportsgrounds and facilities on the Northern Beaches and a coordinated approach to planning and management of sports facilities. The Northern Beaches community enjoys its sport and participation continues to increase, particularly from women, putting Council's sportsfields under increasing pressure.

As reported to the Council meeting 23 August 2016 Council in conjunction with Clubs, Associations and the Sporting Union has already begun work on a long term sports facility plan - the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy. This Strategy will guide development of sportsgrounds and facilities on the Northern Beaches for the next 15 years.

There are more than 150 sportsfields and facilities across over 55 locations on the Northern Beaches. However, the Sporting Union, Manly Warringah Football Association, AFL and Cricket have called on Council to also investigate the use of recreational and golf course land for sportsfields as their increasing needs are not being met. These four major sporting groups represent almost all of the 45,000 registered users of the Northern Beaches sportsgrounds. This excludes volunteers, non-playing members and spectators.

Football (soccer) on the Northern Beaches has experienced significant growth in recent years, particularly female players. Registrations have increased from 15,000 to 18,000 participants over the past five years and female participation has increased by 25% over the past ten years, with over 4500 players in 2016. Cricket on the Northern Beaches has experienced a 46% increase in junior teams over the last four years, with over 1700 junior players in 2015.

There are currently 13 golf courses on the Northern Beaches, six private and seven public. Research undertaken by the former Pittwater and Warringah Council's supported investigation into sportsfields and golf courses. The former Pittwater Council's Public Space and Recreation Strategy (2014) indicated that the current supply of sportsfields was insufficient and recommended investigation into more equitable use of golf courses. The former Warringah Council's Recreation Strategy (2009) reported that golf courses accounted for 4% of Warringah's open space where as only 2% of land was used for other active sports and recommended a review of golf provision and demand.

In response to the advocacy from these major sporting groups it is proposed to also review the equitable use of Council's golf course land and incorporate this as part of the Strategy. It is planned that this review will be undertaken in conjunction with the executive group of each participating golf course. The findings of this review will be integrated with the Sportsgrounds Strategy, which will be developed with comprehensive community input.

**DISTRICT PARK AND THE WARRINGAH GOLF CLUB**

District Park is one of the Northern Beaches most significant open spaces. District Park comprises approximately 62 hectares of public open space in Manly Vale and North Manly. The park includes four sportsgrounds, (David Thomas, Miller, Passmore and Nolan Reserves), and the Warringah Golf Course. The golf course occupies 30 hectares of the park. Built facilities in the park include several amenities buildings, the Warringah Recreation Centre, a child care centre, two bowling clubs, a rifle club and a skate park.

In 2015 the former Warringah Council completed a detailed review of the District Park Plan of Management and adopted a new Plan of Management. In keeping with this Plan of Management, Warringah intended to invite tenders for a 20 year lease of District Park land which consisted of three leased areas - the Warringah Golf Course, North Manly Bowling and Recreation Club, and the Warringah Recreation Centre. These leases are due to expire in August 2017. The lease from September 2017 was proposed to include the entire land area of the golf course, bowls club, and

the recreation centre as a single leased and managed area, as well as the design, construction, and centralised management and operation of a new Sports and Community Building on the site of the North Manly Bowling and Recreation Club.

It is considered that the views of the whole Northern Beaches community should be sought prior to making major decisions on Council open space at this time, in particular the best use of the land currently occupied by Warringah Golf Course for recreational purposes. District Park is of significance to all residents of the Northern Beaches.

As such, it is proposed to not proceed with the tender process to lease land occupied by the Warringah Golf Course, North Manly Bowling and Recreation Club, and Warringah Recreation Centre until the completion of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The review of golf courses and the Sportsgrounds Strategy will include comprehensive community engagement, with the first step development of a discussion paper in November 2016. It is planned that recommendations and a draft Sportsgrounds Strategy will be brought back to Council for consideration in early 2017.

The outcomes of the review and the Strategy may necessitate a review of Plans of Management including for District Park.

### **CONSULTATION**

Council's Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) of former Councillors have been consulted on the approaches from the sporting groups for Council to review its golf courses and provide more sporting fields. The IAG supported the review and engagement of the Northern Beaches community prior to deciding on the future of District Park.

It is planned there will be comprehensive consultation with sports clubs, associations, state sporting organisations, schools, the broader community, golf clubs in the process of undertaking the Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review. Community engagement activities will include (but not be limited to):

- Interviews with every Northern Beaches sports code that utilises sportsgrounds and facilities.
- Interviews with representatives from the executive of each participating golf course.
- Community consultation and project updates on the Strategy and the Review including via the online "Your Say" project page throughout the project.
- Sports Forum and community drop in sessions.

### **TIMING**

The planned timing for the Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review includes:

- Commence community engagement including with golf, sports codes October 2016
- Discussion paper to inform Sportsgrounds Strategy and Golf Courses Review for community consultation, November 2016
- Report to Council with recommendations arising from community engagement for the future of District Park and requesting approval to exhibit the Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy, March 2017
- Public exhibition of Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy, April 2017

- Report to Council requesting adoption of the Final Sportsgrounds Strategy, May 2017

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Sportsgrounds Strategy aims to provide a financially sustainable plan to bridge the gaps between identified supply and demand for sportsgrounds and facilities.

**SOCIAL IMPACT**

The Sportsgrounds Strategy is essential for successful, sustainable planning and management of our sports facilities to create more opportunities to be active, to encourage participation in sport and physical activity, and to strengthen our local sport and recreation sector.

The Sportsgrounds Strategy will consider the changing nature of sports participation, sports trends and local and regional demographics. The Northern Beaches demographics point to a growing population, an increasing proportion of older people, and in the former Warringah a higher than average rate of participation in recreation. In addition the Sportsgrounds Strategy will also consider a broader recreation planning context and be informed by the adjoining Councils and the sport and recreation planning of agencies including the Greater Sydney Commission.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The Sportsgrounds Strategy will identify opportunities to complement and enhance the environmental, natural and built values of the Northern Beaches open spaces and sportsgrounds, including consideration of opportunities for adaptive reuse. A sustainable and environmentally responsible approach to sport and recreation planning and development will be adopted.