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# NORTHERN BEACHES SPORTSGROUNDS AND GOLF COURSES DISCUSSION PAPER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to calls by sporting groups for more sportsgrounds on the northern beaches to meet demand, Northern Beaches Council commissioned a Golf Market Assessment (Golf Business Advisory Services, 2016) and a Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis (Otium Planning Group, 2016). The findings of those reports informed the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper, to which Council invited the community to comment in April-May 2017.

Council widely publicised the Discussion Paper through local media and emails to interested people, and promoted ways in which the community could comment on it over a period of 30 days. The general community could comment on the Discussion Paper via selection for a random telephone survey (Micromex Research, 2017); an online survey (Micromex Research, 2017); and by written submission through the Your Say Northern Beaches website, email, letters and hard copy feedback forms (Parkland Planners, 2017). Organised sporting groups and interested people participated through making a written submission and participating in the Sports Forum on 30 April 2017.

More than 5,000 active "submissions" were made in the submissions period. In addition to the comments received in April-May 2017 104 people provided comments to Council about provision of sportsgrounds prior to issuing the Discussion Paper for comment. Also, 10,373 people signed a Warringah Golf Club petition to not convert Warringah Golf Course to sportsfields, which was received after the close of submissions.

The majority of people and organisations support the need for more sportsfields on the Northern Beaches to meet an increasing demand for fields. However the support for the action(s) to achieve more sportsfields varied by the response method:

	Action	Random telephone survey n=402	Online survey n=4,152	Written submissions n=634	Sports Forum n=40 (approx)
1	Make better use of existing sportsgrounds	92% at least somewhat supportive Mean=4.09/5 <b>Rank =1</b>	96% at least somewhat supportive Mean=4.66/5 <b>Rank =1</b>	Support by approx. 21% of respondents <b>Rank 2</b>	Strong support
2	Convert more sportsfields to synthetic	62% at least somewhat supportive Mean=3.01/5 <b>Rank 4</b>	81% at least somewhat supportive Mean=3.71/5 <b>Rank 3</b>	Support by approx. 35% of respondents <b>Rank 1</b>	Strong support
3	Acquire and embellish additional private land as part of new housing developments	91% at least somewhat supportive Mean=4.13/5 <b>Rank =1</b>	97% at least somewhat supportive Mean=4.68/5 <b>Rank =1</b>	Support by approx. 7% of respondents <b>Rank 4</b>	Support
4	Convert existing open space to sportsfields e.g. golf courses	64% at least somewhat supportive Mean=3.08/5 <b>Rank 3</b>	73% at least somewhat supportive Mean=3.84/5 <b>Rank 4</b>	Support by approx. 9% of respondents but opposed by approx. 35% of respondents <b>Rank 3</b>	Support
5	Acquire and embellish additional land	27% at least somewhat supportive Mean=2.05/5 <b>Rank 5</b>	71% at least somewhat supportive Mean=3.72/5 <b>Rank 5</b>	Support by approx. 3% of respondents <b>Rank 5</b>	n/a
6	Do nothing and accept the shortfall	6% at least somewhat supportive <b>Rank 6</b>	1% at least somewhat supportive <b>Rank 6</b>	Support by < 1% of respondents <b>Rank 6</b>	n/a
	Option A: Actions 1-4	58% prefer Option A	73% prefer Option A	-	-
	Option B: Actions 1-3	36% prefer Option B	26% prefer Option B	-	-

The general community (the telephone survey and to a lesser extent the online survey respondents) favour Actions 1 and 3 most, ie, to:

- ☐ make better use of existing sportsgrounds
- ☐ acquire and embellish additional private land as part of new housing developments.

Among sporting groups and members of sporting groups in the telephone survey, online survey, written submissions and the Sports Forum, the highest ranked Actions are:

- ❑ Action 1 to make better use of existing sportsgrounds by using fields on school grounds, increasing the time available for use of fields by lighting and other means, improving field surfaces, and changing allocation of fields
- ❑ Action 3 to acquire and embellish additional private land as part of new housing developments.

Action 2 to convert grass fields to synthetic surface was ranked highest in the written submissions due to the high volume of submissions from hockey players and to a lesser extent football players.

There is some support for Action 4 to Convert existing open space to sportsfields, for example golf courses. However significant numbers of comments and submissions have demonstrated there is opposition by many in the community and by golf players and members of golf clubs to converting golf courses, particularly Warringah Golf Course, to sportsgrounds. The inclusion of the example of using golf courses for sportsfields in Action 4 has most likely reduced the level of support for Action 4 when, if golf courses had been considered separately, the support for converting existing open space to sportsfields may well have been higher.

Both online and phone survey participants indicated their preference for Option A – implementing actions 1 through 4 (73% online cf. 58% by phone). Option A was described as “including use of sportsfields, synthetic fields, new fields in land release areas, and converting all or part of a golf course to sportsfields. This means we are largely able to meet the shortfall and have enough sportsfields for our needs”. The reasons for online and phone survey participants preferring Option A were that they felt this was the best combination of actions to take. Option A included converting golf courses, which many residents felt were large amounts of land dedicated to too few golfers using large parcels of land, while players of other sports are crammed onto fields. Respondents believe Council should ‘convert golf courses to maximise grounds per sport’.

Option B was described as implementing actions 1 through 3 ie. *“makes better use of our existing fields, new synthetics, and new fields in land release areas, but does not include converting any golf course land to sportsfields. This means we will have a shortfall of supply, fields will be overused and we may not have enough space for everyone to play sport.”* Option B gained support (26% online cf. 36% by phone) mainly because they are ‘against the conversion of existing golf courses’ and the golf courses would not be affected.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

For many years major sporting organisations based on the northern beaches, have been calling for more sportsgrounds and new and improved sporting facilities to meet current and growing demand. Participation in sport by the Northern Beaches community (particularly by women, juniors and over 35s) continues to increase, which places increasing pressure on Council's more than 122 sportsfields and facilities across more than 62 locations.

The amalgamation of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils into Northern Beaches Council in May 2016 provided an opportunity to prepare a 15-year strategy with a single approach to the management and long term planning of sporting facilities on the Northern Beaches.

Major sporting organisations, which represent over 50,000 registered users of Northern Beaches sportsgrounds, have also advocated that Council investigate whether any of the seven public golf courses could be more equitably used for other sports. Council responded to the advocacy from these sporting groups by proposing to review the equitable use of Council's public golf course land and to incorporate this as part of the Strategy.

Council resolved on 27 September 2016 to conduct a review of golf courses as part of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy. Council engaged golf course feasibility consultants Golf Business Advisory Services to conduct a market assessment of golf courses on the Northern Beaches, which included consultation with the executive group of each participating golf club.

Council engaged sports planning consultants Otium Planning Group in October 2016 to conduct independent research and analysis of the supply of and demand for sports-grounds, and to consult with sporting clubs and other sportsground users, to prepare the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy to guide development of sportsgrounds and facilities for the next 15 years.

Council also resolved on 27 September 2016 to commence the community engagement process for the golf course review and the sportsgrounds strategy with a Discussion Paper. As such, the research findings and draft recommendations of the Northern Beaches Sports-grounds Needs Analysis (Otium Planning Group, December 2016) and the

Northern Beaches Council Golf Market Assessment (Golf Business Advisory Services, November 2016) have informed the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper (Northern Beaches Council, April 2017).



## 1.2 The proposal

The findings of the research to date supports the assertions of local sports groups and associations that there is a need for more sportsgrounds and new and improved facilities.

The Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper sets out six actions to address the shortfall of sportsgrounds on the Northern Beaches:



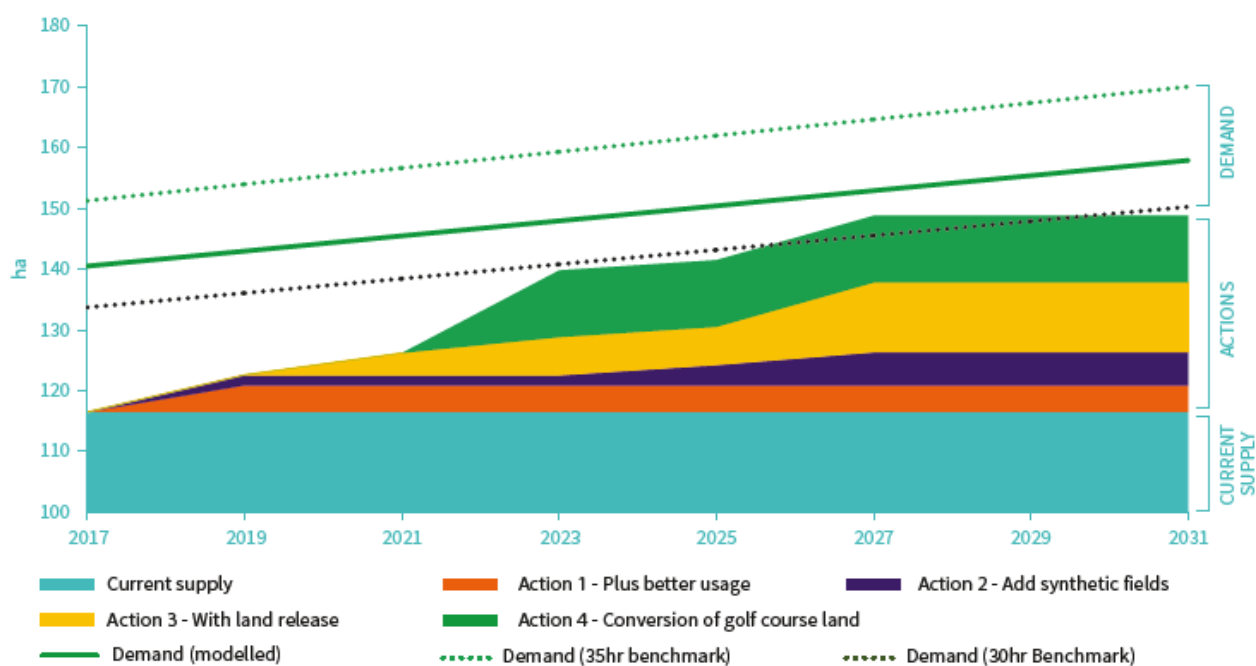
Table 1 Actions presented in the Discussion Paper

Action	Impact on shortfall (playing area)	Funding per hectare (estimate)	Cost to rates per household over 15 years (estimate)
1. Make better use of existing sportsgrounds	4.4 hectares	\$270 thousand	\$49 (\$3.25 pa)
2. Convert more sportsfields to synthetic	5.5 hectares	\$2.7-\$3 million	\$239 (\$15.93 pa)
3 Acquire and embellish additional private land as part of new housing developments	3.6 hectares (Warriewood)	\$4.75-\$5.25 million	\$0 (funded by new housing development)
	7.8 hectares (Ingleside)	\$6.5-\$7 million	\$0 (funded by new housing development)
4 Convert existing open space to sportsfields e.g. golf courses	11 hectares (example)	\$1.4-\$1.8 million	\$231 (\$15.40 pa)
5. Acquire and embellish additional land	11 hectares (example)	\$6.5-\$7 million	\$1,059 (\$70.60 pa)
6 Do nothing and accept the shortfall	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper, p. 6

The actions were modelled to assess their impact on the shortfall of supply over time, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Sportsfields supply and demand scenarios



Graph 1

Source: Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper, p. 7

Figure 1 shows and the Discussion Paper states that if all actions are implemented as soon as possible Council is able to substantially reduce the shortfall in supply by 2027.

Council states in the Discussion Paper that it will implement Actions 1 and 2, but these actions alone will not close the gap. Council will need to consider actions 3 or 4 if demand is to be met. Actions 5 and 6 were not considered viable.

If only Actions 1, 2 and 3 are implemented there will still be a significant shortfall in supply.

It was put forward that the choice for the community is to:

- ☐ reallocate existing Council-owned or Crown land currently used for golf to sports fields.
- ☐ buy more land, which has been identified as a higher cost option.
- ☐ do nothing, and accept the shortfall in supply and a lower standard of sportsfields.

Council embarked on a community engagement program in April 2017 to encourage the community to discuss and comment on the actions listed in the Discussion Paper.

Northern Beaches Council made the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper available on 8 April 2017 and invited the community to comment over 30 days until 7 May 2017.

Information was shared with the community and sporting group representatives who had the opportunity to ask questions of Council staff at a briefing of sporting associations and clubs (approx. 30 participants) and a briefing of golf clubs prior to issue of the Discussion Paper, and at six community drop-in sessions (approx. 40 participants) during the period for comments.

Opportunities for the general community to provide feedback on the Discussion Paper as part of the community engagement program included:

- ☐ **random telephone survey** of 402 residents conducted by Micromex Research (May 2017)
- ☐ **online survey** conducted by Micromex Research (May 2017)
- ☐ **written submissions**, including online feedback to the Your Say Northern Beaches website, emails and letters (Parkland Planners, 2017).

Sporting clubs and associations were given the opportunity to provide feedback to Council in a **Sports Forum** held on 30 April 2017. Several sporting clubs and associations also made a written submission.

The outcomes of the community engagement on the Discussion Paper will inform the further preparation of the Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy, which will be presented to Council on 30 May 2017 to approve its public exhibition for further comment by the community in June-July 2017. It is expected the draft final Sportsgrounds Strategy will be presented to Council on 25 July 2017.

### 1.3 Purpose of this report

This report summarises the outcomes of the community engagement processes undertaken to gauge community views on the Discussion Paper, which will inform the further preparation of the Draft Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Strategy.

This community engagement report will accompany a staff report and the Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy which will be presented to Council on 30 May 2017.

## 1.4 Opportunities to comment

Council promoted and facilitated numerous opportunities for the community through the media and active participation to view and comment on the Discussion Paper throughout the community engagement period. Such opportunities included:

Table 2 Timeline of community and stakeholder engagement

Date	Methods of community engagement
	<b>Peninsula Living Magazine April edition double page</b> <b>Pittwater Life</b>
Thur 6/4	<b>Briefing of sporting associations and clubs by Administrator</b>
Fri 7/4	<b>Briefing of golf clubs by Administrator</b> <b>Issue of media release <a href="https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/media-release/20170407-community-called-help-tackle-sportsfield-shortage">https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/media-release/20170407-community-called-help-tackle-sportsfield-shortage</a></b>
Sat 8/4	<b>PUBLIC COMMENT BEGINS / YOUR SAY PAGE GOES LIVE</b> <b>Background information, answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), and an online feedback form at 'Your Say Northern Beaches'</b> <b><a href="http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/sportsgroundreview">http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/sportsgroundreview</a></b> <b>A Message from the Administrator and a full-page fact sheet published in the Northern Beaches News in the <i>Manly Daily</i>.</b> <b>Feature article published in the <i>Manly Daily</i>.</b>
Tues 11/4	<b>Drop-in information session from 6-8pm at Forest Community Arts Centre, Forestville</b>
Wed 12/4	<b>Online survey live on Council's website</b> <b>Bulk email sent to 60,000 Northern Beaches What's On registered members</b> <b>Email to 384 residents who registered interest in project</b>
Sat 15/4	<b>A Message from the Administrator and a reminder about the drop-in sessions and written submissions published in Northern Beaches News in <i>Manly Daily</i>.</b>
Thur 20/4	<b>Drop-in information session from 6-8pm at Avalon Recreation Centre</b>
Fri 21/4	<b>Drop-in information session from 9-11am at Beaches Market, Pittwater Rugby Park, Warriewood</b> <b>Bulk email sent to 13,246 residents registered for Your Say Northern Beaches project updates</b>
Wed 26/4	<b>Random telephone survey begins.</b> <b>Drop-in information session from 6-8pm at Seaforth Community and Sporting Pavilion</b>
Thur 27/4	<b>Drop-in information session from 6-8pm at Curl Curl Sports Centre</b>

Date	Methods of community engagement
Sat 29/4	<b>Drop-in information session from 9-11am at the Coastal Environment Centre, North Narrabeen</b>
Sun 30/4	<b>Sports Forum for sporting associations and clubs</b>
Tues 2/5	<b>Email sent to 60,000 people registered to receive Northern Beaches eNews</b>
Sun 7/5	<b>ONLINE SURVEY AND YOUR SAY COMMENTS CLOSE</b>

Appendix A sets out some of the elements of Council's notification and promotion in the media to invite community comment on the Discussion Paper.

## 1.5 Scope of this report

This report presents the outcomes of community engagement in 2016-2017 about the need for more sportsgrounds in the Northern Beaches local government area.

The sports within the scope of the Discussion Paper are:

Archery	Cricket	Netball	Soccer (football)	Ultimate Frisbee
Athletics	Golf	Oztag	Soccer (6 a side)	Other field sports
Australian football	Gridiron	Rugby league	Softball	
Baseball	Hockey	Rugby union	Touch football	

## 1.6 Contents of this report

The remainder of this report sets out the outcomes of the community engagement conducted by Council in April-May 2017 in response to the call for comments on the Discussion Paper.

Appendix A shows media notification and promotion materials.

Appendix B comprises *Sportsgrounds Strategy Research – Online Report with Comparisons to Telephone Survey and Random Telephone Survey Report* (Micromex Research, May 2017)

Appendix C comprises the *Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper: Written Submissions Report* (Parkland Planners, May 2017)

Appendix D contains the discussion at the Sports Forum on 30 April 2017.

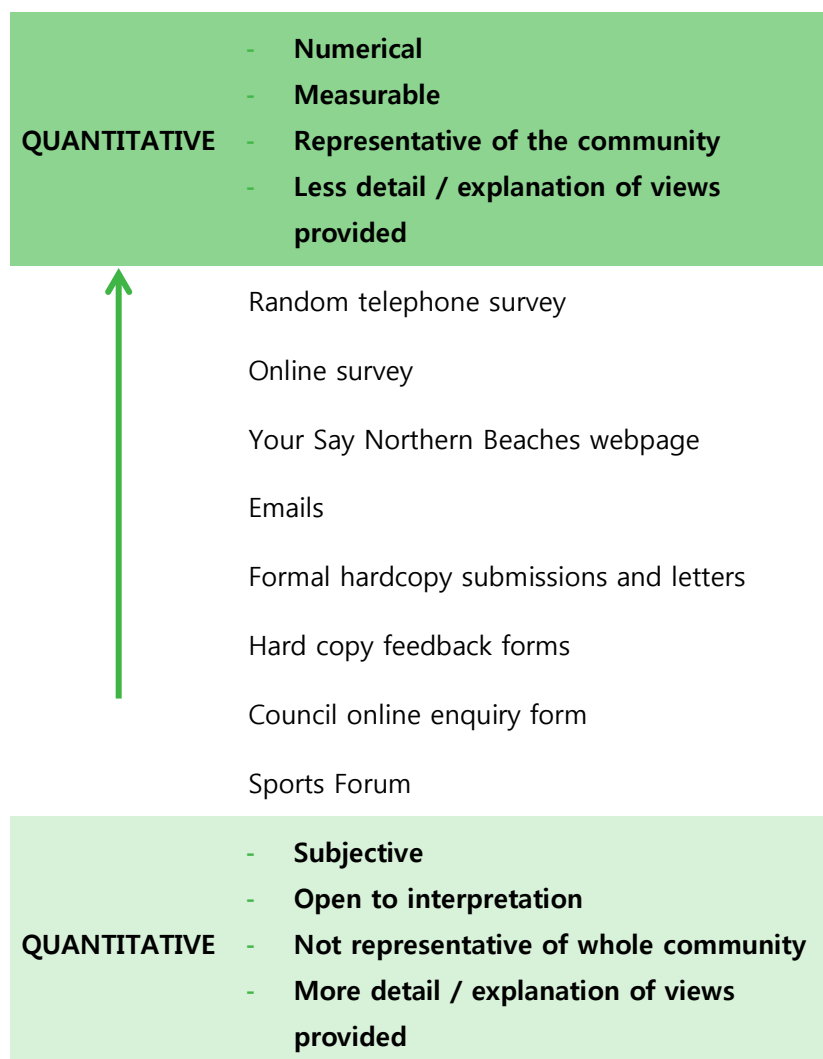
# 2 OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## 2.1 Approach to community engagement

The approach taken by Northern Beaches Council to community engagement about the Discussion Paper may be described as “mixed methods research”. In other words, Council used a range of quantitative and qualitative methods to engage the community. Together, the information collected using all methods presents a useful body of research to assist Council in determining the community’s attitudes to several actions Council could take to improve the provision of sportsgrounds on the northern beaches.

This approach is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Methods used in community engagement for the Discussion Paper



In analysing and reporting the community feedback the random telephone survey is most reflective of the demographic profile of the Northern Beaches, followed in descending order by the online survey, the written submissions and the Sports Forum.

Notwithstanding, contributions by the community and sporting organisations via written submissions and participation in the Sports Forum are extremely valuable and have been used to validate sport needs and to assist Council in developing detailed strategies and actions for the Sportsgrounds Strategy.

## 2.2 Sources of feedback

The Discussion Paper was available for comment for four weeks between Saturday 8 April and Sunday 7 May 2017. During that time more than 5,000 active responses were received on the Discussion Paper. Community feedback was received by Council as follows.

**Table 3 Sources of feedback to the Discussion Paper**

Method	No. responses/participants
Random telephone survey	402
Online survey	4,152
Respondents to Your Say Northern Beaches webpage	572
Emails	41
Formal hardcopy submissions and letters	11
Hard copy feedback forms	9
Council online enquiry form	1
Sports Forum participants	40 (approx)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,228</b>

In addition to the comments received in April-May 2017 listed above:

- ❑ 104 people provided comments to Council about provision of sportsgrounds prior to issuing the Discussion Paper for comment. These comments are detailed in the Written Submissions Report (Parkland Planners, 2017). The content of these comments are similar to those made in response to the Discussion Paper.
- ❑ 10,373 people signed a Warringah Golf Club petition to not convert Warringah Golf Course to sportsfields, which was received after the close of submissions.

## 2.3 Outcomes of community engagement

### 2.3.1 Introduction

The outcomes of the community engagement are reported below in general, and by each of the six actions (or combinations of actions) that Council was seeking community input on.

The detailed outcomes of the community engagement methods used by Council (random telephone survey, online survey, Your Say and other written submissions, and the Sports Forum) are in Appendices B to E.

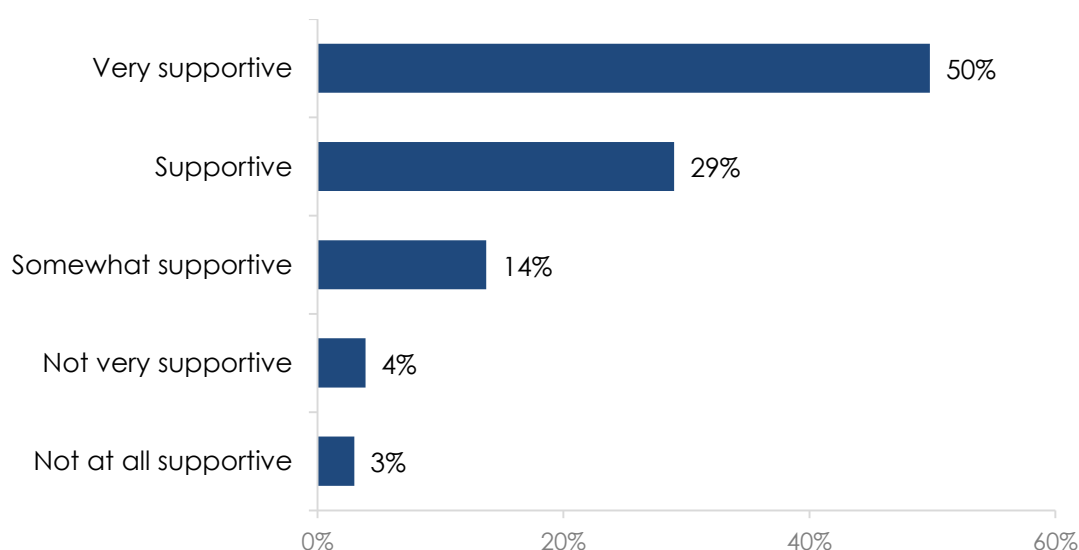
### 2.3.2 General views

#### Telephone survey

*Source: Micromex Research (2017)*

Overall, 93% of residents were at least 'somewhat supportive' of Council addressing the issue of shortfall in sportsfield availability.

Q1. Overall, how supportive are you of Council addressing the shortfall in sportsfields to ensure there are enough fields for everyone to play sport?



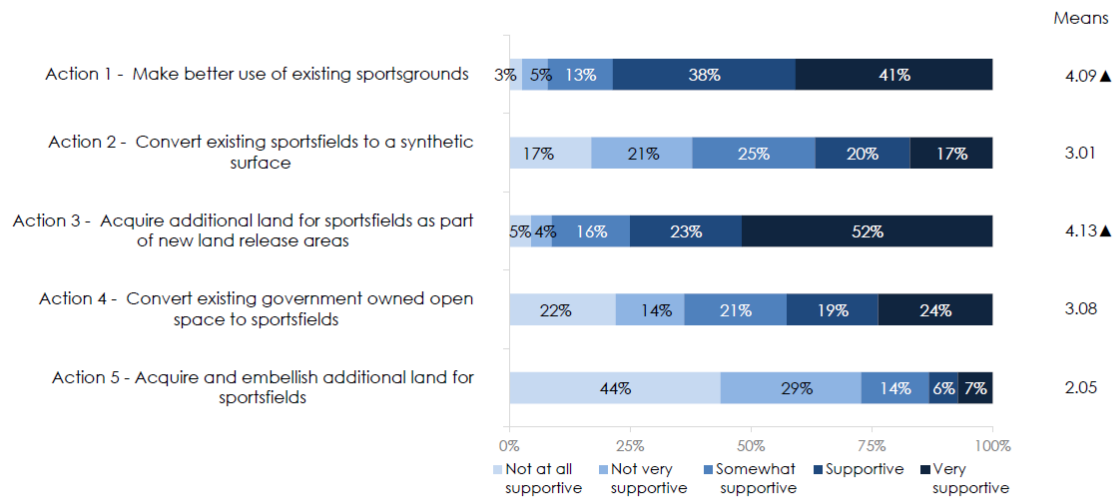
Ultimately residents see this as an important issue and support Council actively planning to address the current and future needs of the whole community, and not just one sporting group.

Acquiring additional land as part of new land releases and making better use of existing grounds were the actions with the highest levels of support:



# Summary of Support for Proposed Actions

Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?



Base: Overall N = 402

▲▼ = significantly higher/lower level of support  
Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive

1. **The majority of the community, 58%, preferred Option A** – implementing Actions 1 – 4 – “including use of sportsfields, synthetic fields, new fields in land release areas, and converting all or part of a golf course to sportsfields. This means we are largely able to meet the shortfall and have enough sportsfields for our needs”.

The reasons for preferring Option A were that they felt this was the best combination of actions to take, and included converting golf courses, which many residents felt were large amounts of land dedicated to one sport only, with a minority user base.

2. **36% supported Option B** – implementing actions 1 – 3 “makes better use of our existing fields, new synthetics, and new fields in land release areas, but does not include converting any golf course land to sportsfields. This means we will have a shortfall of supply, fields will be overused and we may not have enough space for everyone to play sport.”

Those who selected Option B did so essentially because the golf courses would not be affected.

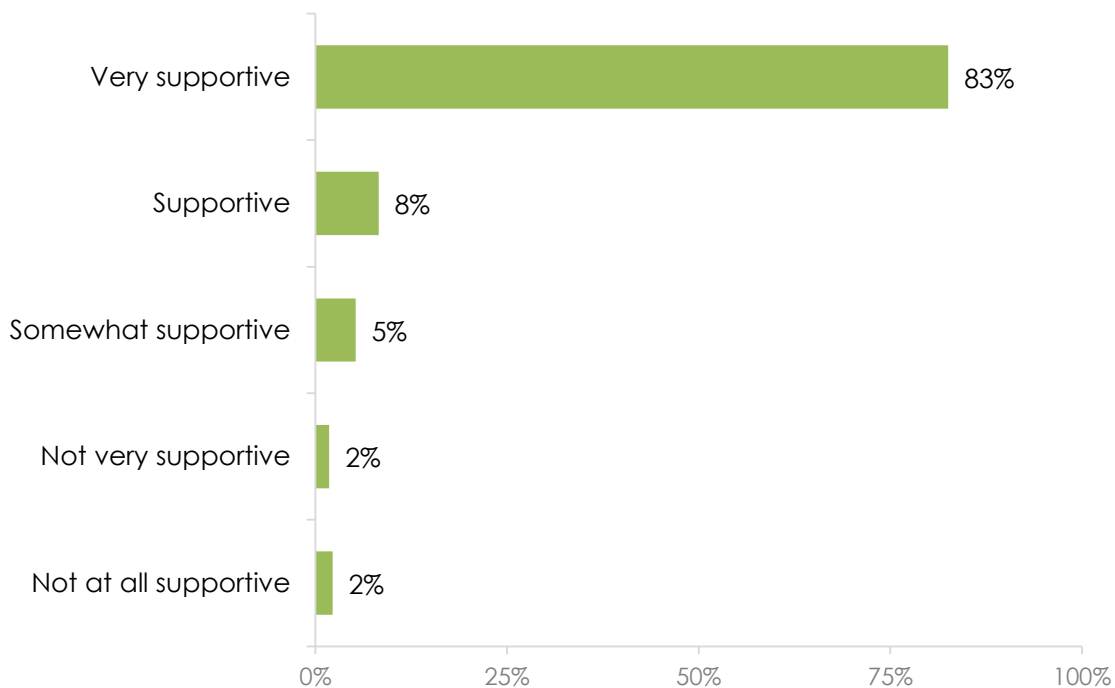
## Online survey

4,152 responses were received to the online survey.

Opt-in residents who completed the survey online were more likely to be male, a ratepayer, and a member of a sporting group or golf club.

Overall there was majority support for addressing the sportsgrounds shortfall, with residents who completed the online survey offering significantly stronger levels of support than did those by phone.

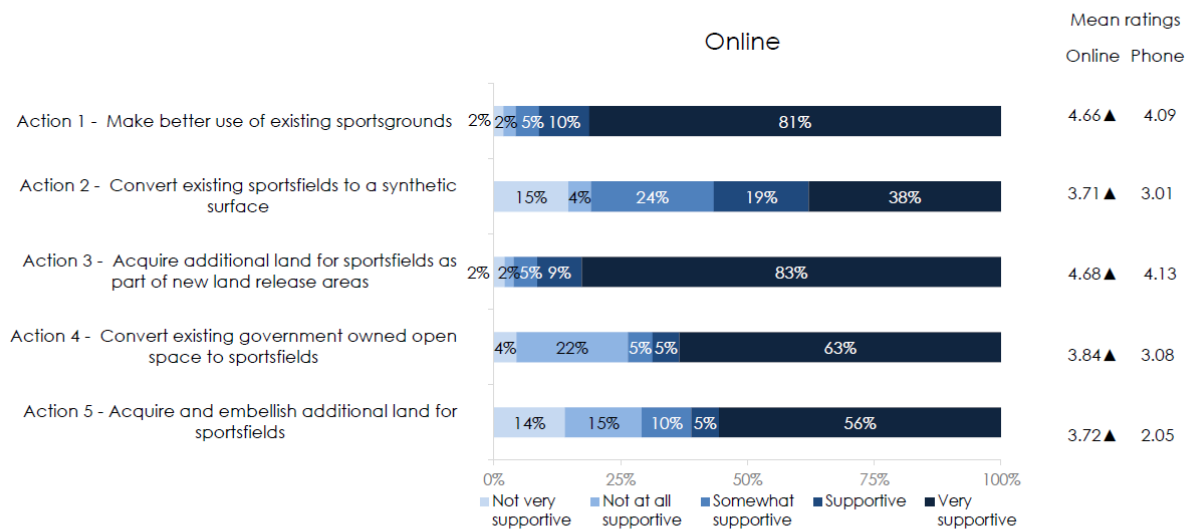
*Q1. Overall, how supportive are you of Council addressing the shortfall in sportsfields to ensure there are enough fields for everyone to play sport?*



All five actions were accorded significantly stronger levels of support from online participants, however, similarly to the phone survey, the online results had a predilection for Action 3 - Acquire additional land for sportsfields as part of new land release areas, and Action 1 - Make better use of existing sportsgrounds.

# Summary of Support for Proposed Actions

Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?



Base: Online N = 4,152, Phone N=402

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = very supportive  
▲ = significantly higher than phone

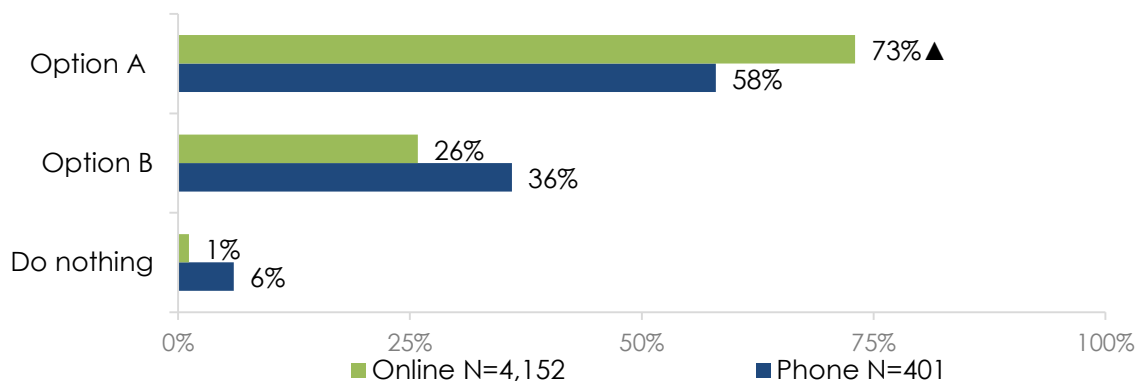
## Option A – implementing actions 1 – 4

*Including use of sportsfields, synthetic fields, new fields in land release areas, and converting all or part of a golf course to sportsfields. This means we are largely able to meet the shortfall and have enough sportsfields for our needs.*

## Option B – implementing actions 1 – 3

*Makes better use of our existing fields, new synthetics, and new fields in land release areas, but does not include converting any golf course land to sportsfields. This means we will have a shortfall of supply, fields will be overused and we may not have enough space for everyone to play sport*

Q3a. Which option would you prefer Council implement?



Both online and phone survey participants indicated their preference for Option A – implementing actions 1 through 4 (73% online cf. 58% by phone). The main reasons given for selecting this option were residents felt it was the 'best option', and they believe Council should 'convert golf courses to maximise grounds per sport' – the sentiment here is that they feel there are too few golfers using large parcels of land, while other sports are crammed onto fields. Those who preferred Option B – implementing actions 1 through 3 (26% online cf. 36% by phone) did so mainly because they are 'against the conversion of existing golf courses'.

## Written submissions

Respondents recognised that increasing development and population on the Northern Beaches has resulted in overuse of existing sportsgrounds and the need for more sportsgrounds, especially for children's sport. The opposing view is that existing sportsgrounds are not used all the time and so more sportsgrounds are not needed.

The highest ranking of the six actions by the written submissions is to convert sportsgrounds to synthetic surfaces, which reflects the high proportion of submissions from hockey, more than any other sport. The strong opposition to using golf courses in general and Warringah Golf Course in particular for sportsgrounds also reflects the high number of golf players who made a submission.

Actions 1-4 are supported by people who generally see the need for more sportsgrounds. The main "threads" of this view are:

- ☐ requests for more synthetic fields, particularly for hockey (Action 2)
- ☐ existing sportsgrounds should be improved (Action 1)
- ☐ golf courses (particularly Warringah Golf Course) should not be used for sports fields.

Including golf courses in Action 4 - Convert existing open space to sportsfields instead of separating golf courses from other existing open space has resulted in the strong opposition to using golf courses for sportgrounds obscuring support for using other existing open space for sportsgrounds.

**The interpretation of all written submissions as a whole points towards golf course land should not be used before other actions/options are explored and implemented. In other words, Council should take the "easy wins" first by improving existing sportsgrounds, converting existing fields to synthetic, and exploring opportunities for additional sites for sportsgrounds, and then decide if golf course land is needed.**

Several people raised the point that Council appears to be concerned about providing more sportsgrounds, but there is concern about loss of existing baseball diamonds at Aquatic Reserve.

## Sports Forum

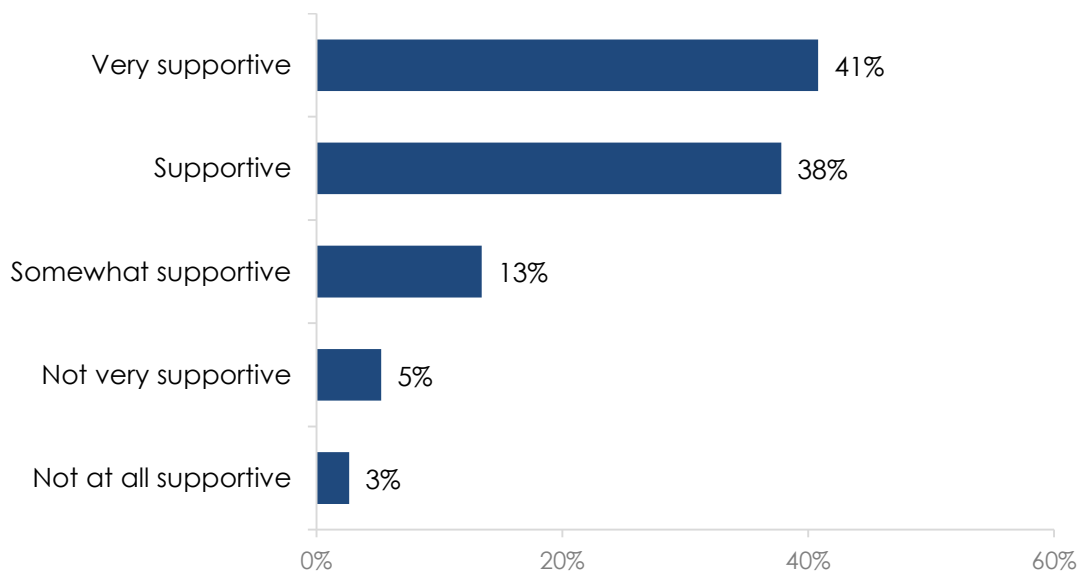
The premise of the Sports Forum was to seek input from relevant sports associations, clubs and State Sporting Organisations on practical solutions to address the shortfall in sportsfields which can be considered in the Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy.

### 2.3.3 Action 1 Make better use of existing sports fields

#### Telephone survey

**Action 1: Make better use of existing sportsgrounds** – such as additional lighting, improved drainage, and reallocation of fields from one sport to another. This action could provide approximately 4.4 hectares of the identified shortfall at an estimated cost of \$270,000 per hectare. This equates to \$3.25 per annum per household over 15 years.

Residents were supportive of Council making better use of existing sportsgrounds, with 92% being at least 'somewhat supportive'.



Mean rating of Action 1 = 4.09.

Above mean support from:

- ❑ Members of sporting groups (4.28)
- ❑ 18-34 years (4.21)
- ❑ 35-49 years (4.19)
- ❑ Non-ratepayers (4.16)

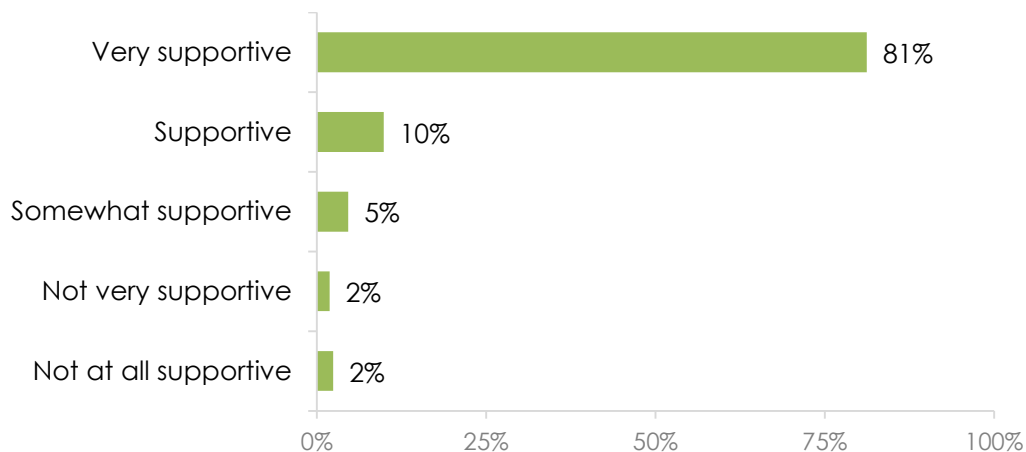
- ❑ Member of a golf club and sporting group (4.15)
- ❑ Member of golf club (4.13)
- ❑ Males (4.13).

## Online survey

**We would like to understand your overall support for each of the following actions.**

**Action 1: Make better use of existing sportsgrounds** – such as additional lighting, improved drainage, and reallocation of fields from one sport to another. This action could provide approximately 4.4 hectares of the identified shortfall at an estimated cost of \$270,000 per hectare. This equates to \$3.25 per annum per household over 15 years.

*Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?*



Mean rating of Action 1 = 4.66

Above mean support from:

- ❑ 18-34 years (4.85)
- ❑ Member of a sporting group (4.69)
- ❑ Males (4.69)

## Written submissions

### Support Action 1

Support improving existing sports fields in general (23). Improvements are listed below in approximate order of mentions:

- ❑ Using fields at public and private educational facilities (37) attracted strong support.

- ❑ Increase times during which fields can be used (27), particularly installing/improving lighting (18), using existing fields more throughout the week (6), reviewing the wet weather policy (2) and using fields in school holidays (1).
- ❑ Improve field quality (17) by improving drainage (14), improve aeration and fertilising (2) and better maintenance of existing fields (1)
- ❑ Better field allocations (15) particularly reducing the game time for over 35s soccer players because they are not as fit as younger players (4) and additional matches can be scheduled, increasing use of underused fields (4), restricting out-of-area bookings (2), changing allocation of fields between sports to better reflect player numbers (1), using an online field booking system for transparency (1), sporting groups relinquishing "home grounds" so all grounds are multi-use (1), dual/multi-use of currently single-use fields (1), and holding more games at fewer grounds for more efficient refereeing (1).
- ❑ Provide multi-use facilities (10) such as designating dual/multi-use grounds (7) instead of single use grounds; installing multi-use goalposts for rugby union, rugby league and soccer (2); and upgrade synthetic cricket pitches with multiple crease markings (1).
- ❑ Reconfigure grounds (8) by smaller playing fields for soccer (2), covering cricket wickets better in winter (1), moving cricket wickets (1), changing field markings to fit in more junior fields (1), increasing the usable playing surface at Frenchs Forest Showground/Lionel Watts Reserve (1), expanding the area of sportsfields by removing carparking (1), and using unused space at sportsgrounds for netball courts (1).
- ❑ Restricting field use (5) by capping the number of players (1), juniors playing matches only after school/mid-week evenings (1) leaving weekends free for others, juniors playing less games per season (1), not playing "makeup" games for wet weather (1), and increasing the size of teams so more players can use the field at one time (1).
- ❑ Better player and spectator amenities (4) particularly clubhouses (2), toilets (2), shelter (1), amenities and change rooms for women and girls (1), canteens and storage (1).
- ❑ Provide training facilities (2): batting cages for baseball (2) and cricket nets (1).

## Opposition to Action 1

- ❑ Damage to playing surfaces won't be fixed by improvements to grounds (2)
- ❑ Oppose lighting of John Fisher Park (1)
- ❑ Opposition to Council management of club-managed single use field (1)

## Sports Forum

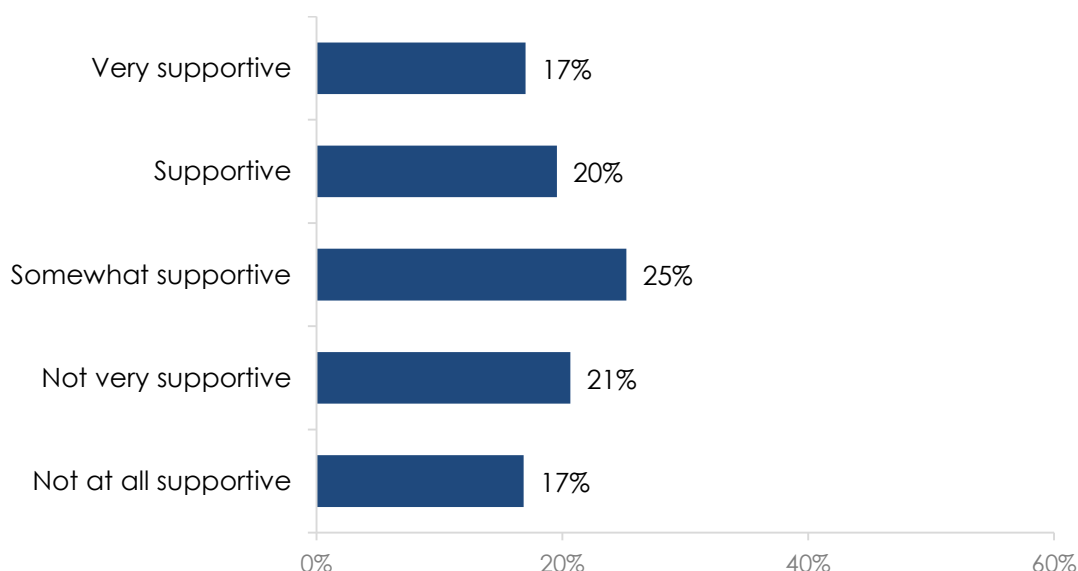
Workshop discussion focused on ways to better use existing sportsgrounds.

### 2.3.4 Action 2: Convert grass fields to synthetic surface

#### Telephone survey

**Action 2: Convert existing sportsfields to a synthetic surface** – this will increase the capacity of each field as synthetic fields can be used for longer hours and are more durable in wet weather. This action could provide approximately 5.5 hectares of the identified shortfall at an estimated cost of around \$3m per hectare. This equates to around \$15.90 per annum per household over 15 years.

**Residents were less supportive of Council converting existing fields to a synthetic surface, with 62% being at least 'somewhat supportive'.**



Mean rating of Action 2 = 3.01.

Above mean support from:

- ☐ Members of golf club and sporting group (4.07)
- ☐ Member of golf club (3.49)
- ☐ Member of sporting group (3.20)
- ☐ Non-ratepayer (3.16)
- ☐ 35-49 years (3.15)
- ☐ 18-34 years (3.05)
- ☐ Male (3.05).

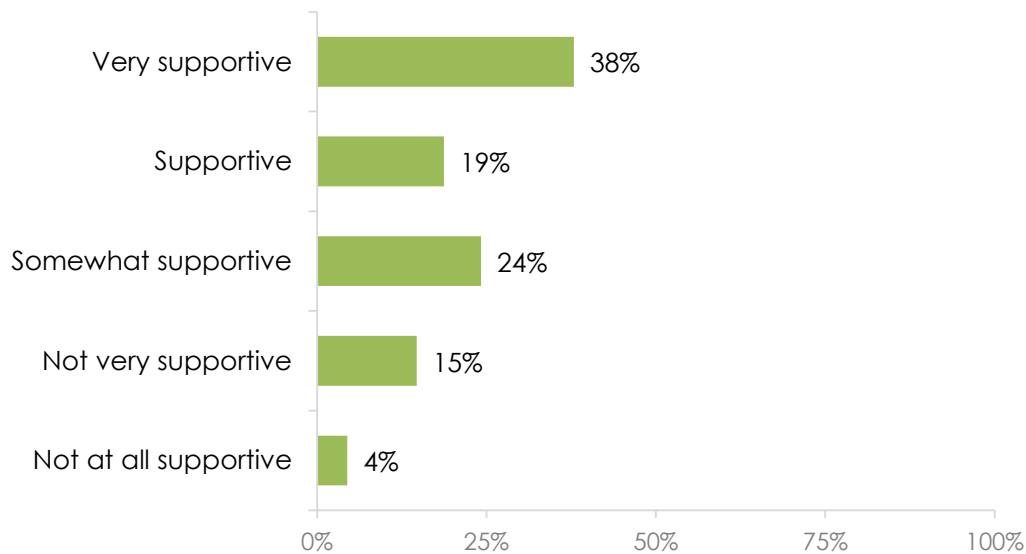


## Online survey

**We would like to understand your overall support for each of the following actions.**

**Action 2: Convert existing sportsfields to a synthetic surface** – this will increase the capacity of each field as synthetic fields can be used for longer hours and are more durable in wet weather. This action could provide approximately 5.5 hectares of the identified shortfall at an estimated cost of around \$3m per hectare. This equates to around \$15.90 per annum per household over 15 years.

*Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?*



Mean rating of Action 2 = 3.71

Above mean support from:

- ☐ Member of sporting group and golf club (3.86)
- ☐ 35-49 years (3.84)
- ☐ Member of golf club (3.82)
- ☐ Female (3.80)
- ☐ Member of a sporting group (3.73)
- ☐ 18-34 years (3.73)

## Written submissions

### Support for converting grass fields to synthetic surfaces

General support (43) for synthetic surfaces, mostly for hockey (137), multi-purpose synthetic fields (9) such as Melwood Oval, football (8), athletics, and netball.

It is recognised that synthetic fields:

- ☐ provide a level and consistent playing surface
- ☐ are the preferred surface for hockey
- ☐ increase the capacity of sportsground space ie. greater use can be made of the space compared to grass fields
- ☐ reduce maintenance costs
- ☐ are undergoing improvements in technology
- ☐ have environmental impacts (such as rubber crumbs being spread) but such impacts are being better addressed.

Criteria for converting existing fields to synthetic fields are fields currently used for hockey, flood liable fields e.g. Nolan Reserve, and those accessible by public transport.

Numerous existing sportsgrounds were suggested for conversion to a synthetic surface.

Suggestions for additional sites for synthetic fields are previously developed flat sites such as depots (1), land in Garden Street in Warriewood (1), rooftops of carparks and buildings (4), a multi-use synthetic field at Abbott Road for netball and other sports (1), school fields for which it is difficult to maintain grass cover (1), and at Manly Vale Bowling Club (1).

### Opposition to synthetic surfaces

Synthetic surfaces are not supported by some because they are too hot to use in summer in general (1) particularly for cricket (1), are expensive (1), and use synthetic rubber materials which spread to bushland and creeks (1).

Synthetic surfaces are not desired in John Fisher Park for environmental reasons (1) and Bantry Bay Reserve because it is used for rugby union (1).

## Sports Forum

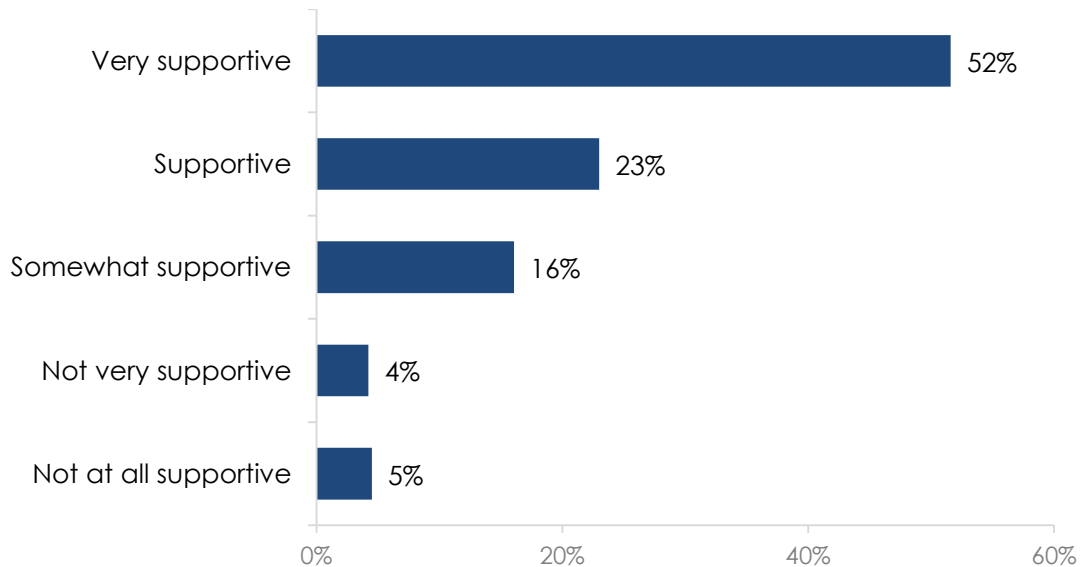
Support for converting some existing grass fields to synthetic surface.

### 2.3.5 Action 3: Acquiring or securing additional private land as part of new housing developments

#### Telephone survey

**Action 3: Acquire additional land for sportsfields as part of new land release areas in Warriewood and Ingleside** – this action could provide approximately 11 hectares of the identified shortfall and would be funded by the new housing developments.

There was strong support for acquiring additional land as part of new land release areas, with 91% being at least 'somewhat supportive'



Mean rating of Action 3 = 4.13.

Above mean support from:

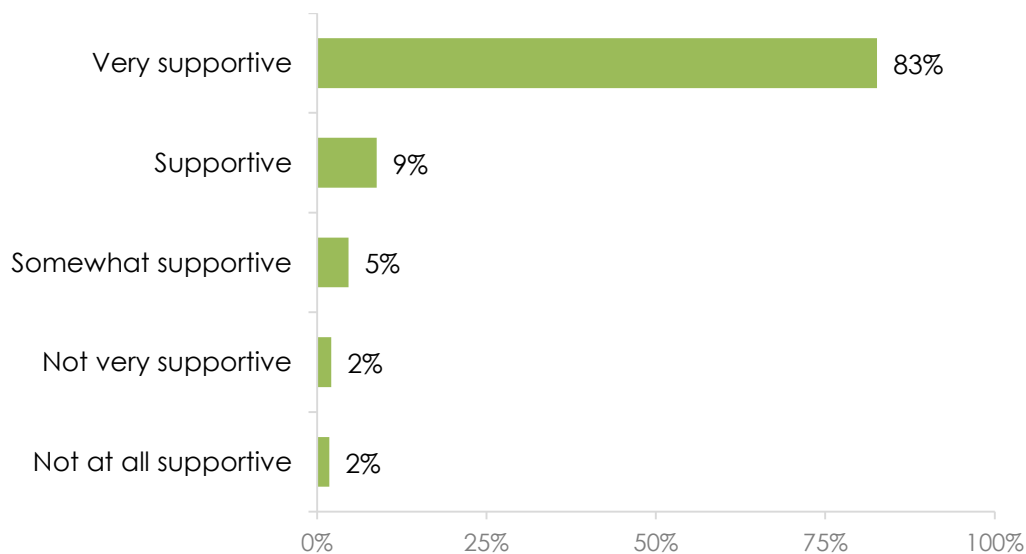
- ❑ Members of golf club and sporting club (4.86)
- ❑ 50-64 years (4.34)
- ❑ Members of golf club (4.33)
- ❑ 65 years and over (4.27)
- ❑ 35-49 years (4.23)
- ❑ Male (4.22)
- ❑ Member of sporting group (4.12)
- ❑ Ratepayer (4.16).

## Online survey

We would like to understand your overall support for each of the following actions.

**Action 3: Acquire additional land for sportsfields as part of new land release areas in Warriewood and Ingleside** – this action could provide approximately 11 hectares of the identified shortfall and would be funded by the new housing developments.

*Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?*



Mean rating of Action 3 = 4.68.

Above mean support from:

- ☐ Member of sporting group and golf club (4.82)
- ☐ 18-34 years (4.80)
- ☐ Member of golf club (4.75)
- ☐ 50-64 years (4.74)
- ☐ 65 years and over (4.74)
- ☐ Male (4.73)

## Written submissions

### Support for using land in new housing developments

Support for using land in new housing developments included:

- ☐ Recognition of a missed opportunity to develop more sportsfields in Warriewood Valley (7)
- ☐ Support for requiring developers to provide sportsgrounds in new developments such as Ingleside and Warriewood (26)
- ☐ Use already cleared land for sportsfields in Ingleside, not riparian or bushland areas (2)
- ☐ Require a higher percentage of land in new developments for sportsfields/open space (1)
- ☐ NSW Government to set aside 50% of the 70 hectares at Ingleside for sportsfields (1)
- ☐ Don't spend developer contributions elsewhere than the development (1)
- ☐ Provide a centralised sporting facility for Warriewood and Ingleside (1).

### Opposition to using land in new housing developments

- ☐ This action depends on land owners wanting to sell, so it will be a long time before land in new housing developments is available for sportsgrounds (1)
- ☐ Don't buy private land in new housing developments (1).

## Sports Forum

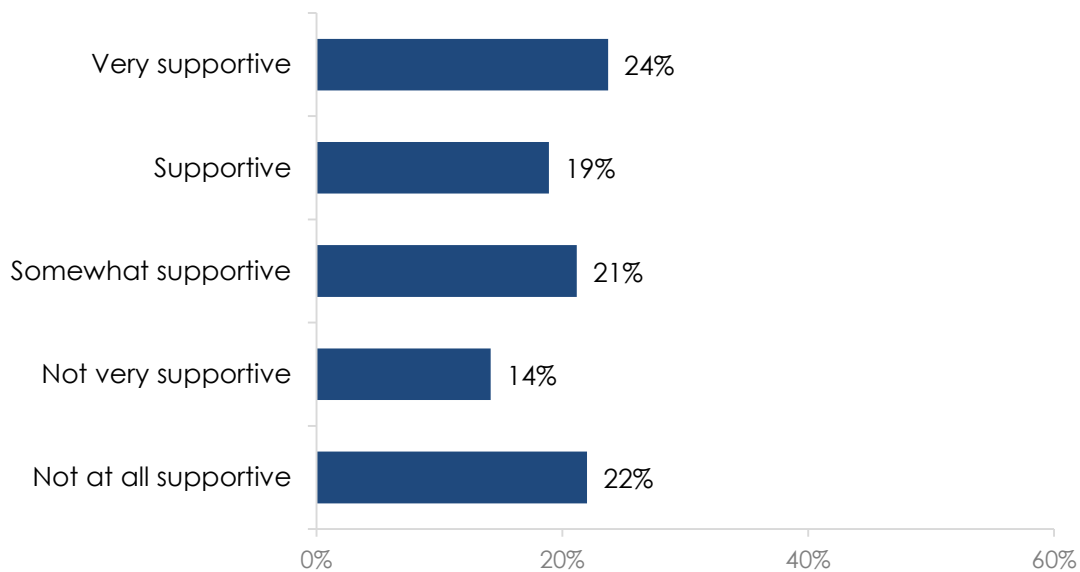
Support for some land in new developments being reserved for sportsgrounds.

### 2.3.6 Action 4 Convert existing open space to sportsfields e.g. golf courses

## Telephone survey

**Action 4: Convert existing government owned open space to sportsfields, e.g. all or part of a golf course** – Council's research identified we have 13 golf courses, seven on public land, and have double the supply of courses per capita compared to the average across Sydney. This action could provide approximately 11 hectares of the identified shortfall of \$1.4m to \$1.8m per hectare. This equates to around \$15.40 per annum per household over 15 years.

Support for this action was ostensibly balanced. Non-ratepayers were significantly more supportive, as were those aged 18-49, however, residents aged 50+ expressed significantly less support, as did golf club members.



Mean rating of Action 4 = 3.08.

Above mean support from:

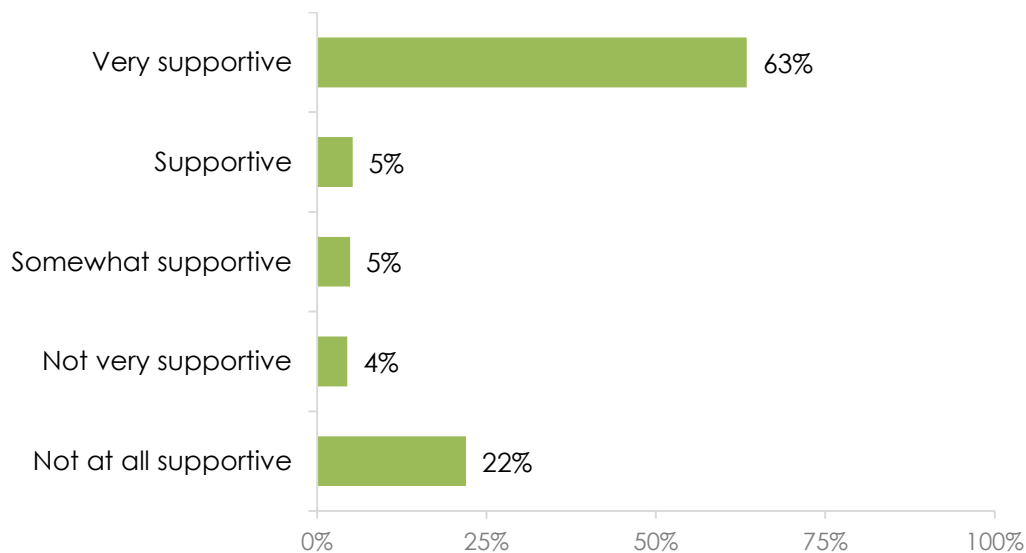
- ☐ 18-34 years (3.79)
- ☐ Non-ratepayers (3.75)
- ☐ 35-49 years (3.38)
- ☐ Member of sporting group (3.23)
- ☐ Member of neither sporting group or golf club (3.14)
- ☐ Females (3.10).

## Online survey

**We would like to understand your overall support for each of the following actions.**

**Action 4: Convert existing government owned open space to sportsfields, i.e. all or part of a golf course** – Council's research identified we have 13 golf courses, seven on public land, and have double the supply of courses per capita compared to the average across Sydney. This action could provide approximately 11 hectares of the identified shortfall of \$1.4m to \$1.8m per hectare. This equates to around \$15.40 per annum per household over 15 years.

Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?



Mean rating of Action 4 = 3.84.

Above mean support from:

- ☐ 18-34 years (4.64)
- ☐ Member of a sporting group (4.28)
- ☐ 35-49 years (3.96)
- ☐ Male (3.95).

## Written submissions

### Support for converting existing open space to sportsgrounds

The most frequently mentioned suggestions for conversions/better use of public open space to sporting facilities are:

- ☐ Use golf course land (51)
- ☐ Pittwater Golf Centre golf driving range (11)
- ☐ Relocate the North Narrabeen Markets to a hard surface and reinstate the sportsfields (7)

Some people who play both golf and field sport see the need for using golf course land for sportsfields.

General reasons for supporting conversion of golf course land to sports fields are that there are more field sport players than golf players, golf takes up a lot of public land, the ratio of golf courses by population is higher on the northern beaches than elsewhere, there are sufficient full and half sized golf courses, golf is declining in

popularity/participation, golf courses are struggling financially, and golf courses exclude the rest of the community from using them.

Reasons for supporting conversion of Warringah Golf Course to sportsgrounds were the environmental impacts of the golf course: fairways too close to creeks and lagoon and don't comply with EPA requirements; dominant vegetation is grass and tall trees with little ground cover and mid-storey resulting in unbalanced biodiversity.

Support for using all or part of an 18 hole course or all of a 9 hole course for sportsgrounds as highest for Warringah Golf Course (18) for sportsfields/public parkland (2), followed by Balgowlah (all) (6), Bayview (3), Palm Beach (3), Mona Vale (part) (2), Manly (2), and Avalon (1).

## Opposition to use of golf courses for sportsgrounds

### General opposition to use of golf courses for sportsgrounds

52 people were opposed to use of golf courses for sportsgrounds in general.

Numerous people support the need for more sportsfields, but not at the expense of golf courses (10). One person was pleased that the Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union favours retaining Warringah Golf Course (1).

General reasons for opposing use of golf courses for sportsgrounds are:

- ☐ to preserve the golf courses for an aging population and a future increase in golfers (8)
- ☐ sports grounds are not used during the week so why do golf courses need to be used for sportsfields (4)
- ☐ 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' ie. converting golf courses to sports fields is wrong (4)
- ☐ reduction of an 18 hole to a 9 hole golf course is not financially viable (2)
- ☐ taking a sport from one age group for another age group is wrong (1)
- ☐ competitions can't be held at 9 hole golf courses (1)
- ☐ conversion of a golf course to sportsgrounds will create a gap in the distribution of sportsgrounds between Manly and Pittwater (1).

### Opposition to use of Warringah Golf Course for sportsgrounds (121)

Many people are opposed to converting Warringah Golf Course to sportsgrounds for the reasons listed below in approximate order of mention:



- ❑ High levels of use: it is one of the busiest courses in Sydney, high number of rounds played, used all day from dawn to dusk, caters for social players and social golf is increasing in popularity, and other local clubs could not absorb Warringah members so Warringah members would either have to give up golf or take up bowls.
- ❑ Flat topography: seniors like to play on a flat course
- ❑ Affordable cost to play: low membership cost is affordable
- ❑ Accessible to all because it is a public course, and is on public transport routes
- ❑ Impacts of sportsground use on residents, sportsground users and others including traffic and parking, noise from sportsfields, and sportsground lighting.
- ❑ Sportsgrounds at Warringah Golf Course won't meet needs in the northern end of the LGA. Fields are needed at the northern end of the peninsula so don't use Warringah Golf Course.
- ❑ It is surrounded by playing fields which are often empty during the week
- ❑ Only 3-4 playing fields could be created
- ❑ Manly Creek would have to rerouted between any playing fields which would be unsafe for children
- ❑ Environmental considerations: removal of several hundred trees would have impacts on drainage, wildlife, air quality, views and visual amenity.
- ❑ It is peaceful and quiet, and a green buffer, incorporating two creeks and riparian areas
- ❑ 80 year history as a golf course
- ❑ High cost of converting WGC to sports fields
- ❑ The southern end is flood liable. Low areas would require filling, levelling and drainage.
- ❑ The irrigation system would require replacement
- ❑ The club is financially viable, and WGC pays more than its share of lease payments to Council
- ❑ Maintenance of the golf course is by the golf club at no cost to Council/ratepayers
- ❑ Good facilities and services, including coaching, facilities and clubhouse
- ❑ Caters for children learn to play golf, and playing golf without restrictions imposed by other golf clubs
- ❑ High voltage underground power cables cross the golf course.

In addition to the above comments, 10,373 people signed a petition co-ordinated by Warringah Golf Club to not convert Warringah Golf Course to sportsfields.

## Variations to converting public open space for sporting facilities

Using roads/private land for sports courts (4) and Council-owned land at Warriewood (1) were suggested.

### Sports Forum

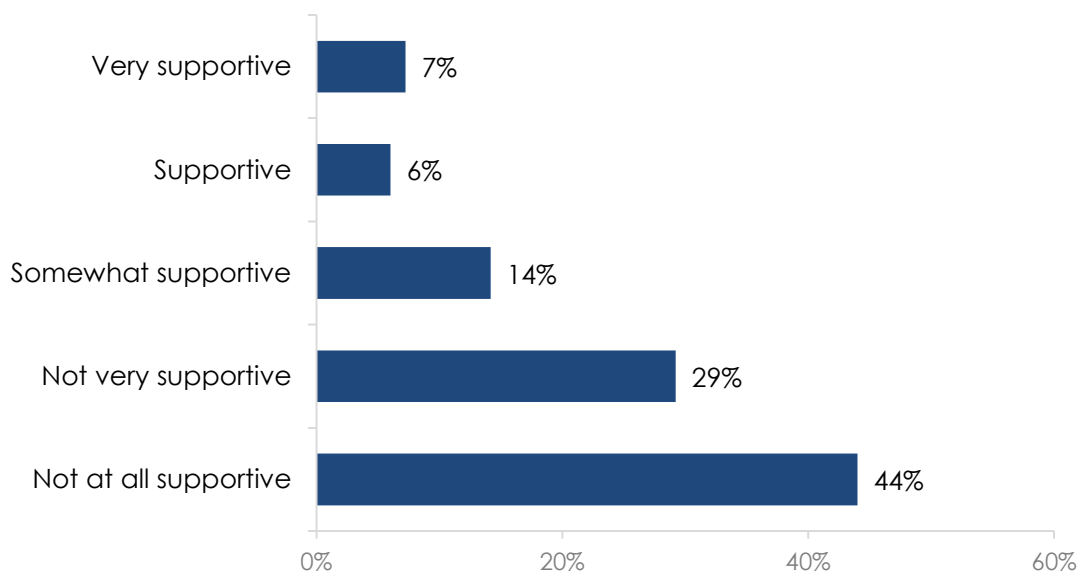
Some discussion arose regarding additional land for sportsfields.

## 2.3.7 Action 5: Acquire and embellish additional land

### Telephone survey

**Action 5: Acquire and embellish additional land for sportsfields** – due to lack of availability of suitable land and the significant cost to ratepayers, this is not considered a viable option. However, for the basis of comparison, the purchase of private land to meet 11ha of the shortfall would require an estimated \$6.5m to \$7m per hectare. This investment equates to around \$70.60 per annum per household over 15 years.

Acquiring and embellishing additional land was the least appealing of the actions to residents, with only 27% being at least 'somewhat supportive'.



Mean rating of Action 5 = 2.05.

Above mean support from:

- ❑ Members of sporting group and golf club (2.71)
- ❑ 18-34 years (2.34)

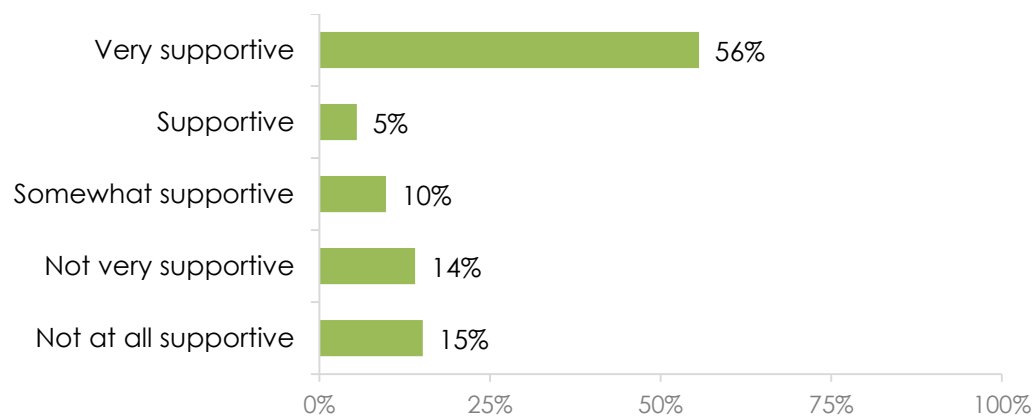
- ❑ Non-ratepayers (2.22)
- ❑ Members of sporting group (2.10)
- ❑ Males (2.10).

## Online survey

**We would like to understand your overall support for each of the following actions.**

**Action 5: Acquire and embellish additional land for sportsfields** – due to lack of availability of suitable land and the significant cost to ratepayers, this is not considered a viable option. However, for the basis of comparison, the purchase of private land to meet 11ha of the shortfall would require an estimated \$6.5m to \$7m per hectare. This investment equates to around \$70.60 per annum per household over 15 years.

*Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with this action?*



Mean rating of Action 5 = 3.72.

Above mean support from:

- ❑ 18-34 years (4.45)
- ❑ Member of sporting group and golf club (4.0)
- ❑ Male (3.90)
- ❑ Member of golf club (3.89)
- ❑ Member of neither sporting group or golf club (3.83).

## Written submissions

### Support for acquisition of new sites

17 people support acquisition of new sites in general. Reasons for supporting Council acquiring new sites are the population is growing and the shortfall in sportsfields is not meeting needs, and transport infrastructure such as bus interchanges are taking open space for roads and carparking.

Alternatives to Council acquiring new sites from the State government are using Crown land (4), leasing land from the state rather than acquiring land (3), public private/partnership between Council and Sydney Academy of Sport (2), using Section 94 contributions for conversion of available Crown land to sportsgrounds (1), the State government assisting Council to increase open space (1), and local businesses could contribute to the cost (1).

Locations of greatest need for acquiring land for more sportsgrounds are the northern end of Northern Beaches LGA (10), areas in which children live and where there is the most need, and currently underserviced areas.

Numerous specific sites for acquiring land were suggested, particularly bushland, and Belrose and Kimbriki waste management centres.

### Variations to acquisition of land for new sportsgrounds

Requests were made for indoor facilities such as gyms for training to take the pressure off playing fields.

Suggestions for other ways of providing sportsgrounds than using land included a floating pitch in the harbour and using the roofs of buildings.

Requests for land at Belrose for a netball complex, and for land in a central location (e.g. Frenchs Forest) for a regional sportsfield complex.

### Opposition to acquiring land for new sportsfields

Acquisition of land for new sportsgrounds was not supported because:

- ☐ bushland would be cleared for sportsfields (4). Private land with no environmental values is preferred for new sportsfields (1)
- ☐ High cost to ratepayers of acquiring new land (1). Don't buy private land using ratepayers funds (1).

## Sports Forum

Not applicable

### 2.3.8 Action 6: Do nothing and accept the shortfall

#### Telephone survey

Minimal support indicated by:

- ☐ I'm not supportive of the groups as they are (2% of respondents)
- ☐ Sportsfields don't seem to be overused (2%)
- ☐ Other reason (2%)

#### Online survey

Not applicable

#### Written submissions

Two comments opposed doing nothing, stating that would be unacceptable.

## Sports Forum

Not applicable

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# REFERENCES

Golf Business Advisory Services (2016) *Northern Beaches Council Golf Market Assessment*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, November.

Micromex Research (2017) *Sportsgrounds Strategy Research – Random Telephone Survey*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, May.

Micromex Research (2017) *Sportsgrounds Strategy Research – Online Results with Comparisons to Telephone Survey*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, May.

Micromex Research (2017) *Sportsgrounds Strategy Research – Online Report with Comparisons to Telephone Survey and Random Telephone Survey Report*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, May.

Northern Beaches Council (2017) *Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper*. April.

Otium Planning Group (2016) *Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, December.

Parkland Planners (2017) *Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper: Written Submissions Report*. Prepared for Northern Beaches Council, May.

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# A PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON DISCUSSION PAPER

# NORTHERN BEACHES NEWS



## A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

In August last year, I agreed to a request from the Sporting Union, representing most of the sports active on the Northern Beaches, to review the perceived shortage of sportsgrounds and the use of Council owned golf courses.

Today, I am releasing that review for public comment and debate. Of course the debate kicked off last year when I deferred going to tender for the 20-year lease of Warringah Golf Course. It prompted an emotional response from club members and many of the golfers who use and love the course.

Dozens of letters were written to the Manly Daily. Unfortunately, the review had just started and there was little concrete information to inform what is a very important issue facing the whole community. This report now provides that information. The report is clear about many things:

- Sporting groups were right. We have a serious shortfall in fields.
- Most of the current fields are deteriorating from overuse.
- We have around half or less the number of fields per head compared to some similar councils.
- The current shortfall will get much larger over the next 15 years.
- Sporting groups are saying no to thousands of kids and adults wanting to play.
- This figure is increasing, as more females want to participate.
- We have double the number of golf courses compared to the rest of Sydney

We can improve this situation through a range of efficiency measures, including artificial grass on more fields, installing more lighting for training and smarter use of some fields, but this will not go anywhere near to closing the gap.

We will benefit from new fields as Warriewood and Ingleside are developed, but again, not enough to close the gap.

One approach is to just put this in the too hard basket and say "bad luck" to those who can't find a place to compete or train, "bad luck" about the serious problem of growing childhood obesity.

The current shortage leads to current practices in some sports, where female teams lose their Sunday field allocation if the weather cancels the boy's Saturday game - and it is shifted to the Sunday.

While we have half the number of playing fields per head as other comparable areas, we have double the number of golf courses compared to the Sydney average.

When you make your submission, please read the report and deal with the issues logically, respectfully and fairly. This is a big decision that affects the whole community.

**Dick Persson AM**  
dick.persson@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

## WHAT'S ON?

### WALTER GORS PARK OPENING

Tue 11 Apr, 11am - 2pm  
Howard Ave, Dee Why

Celebrate your new backyard with kid's activities, face painting, lawn games, giveaways and a sausage sizzle.

Free

## HAVE YOUR SAY

### INTEGRATION OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION (DA) SERVICE

Council is currently working to integrate and streamline how the Capital Development Application service is delivered.

A number of documents are currently on exhibition which will standardise how DAs are accepted, processed and determined.

Details are available at  
[yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)

## COUNCIL NOTICES

### NORTHERN BEACHES DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PANEL MEETING

WED 12 APR, 6PM, CIVIC CENTRE, CIVIC DRIVE DEE WHY

#### Item 3.1

21 - 23 Brookvale Avenue, Brookvale - Demolition work and construction of a residential flat building

#### Item 3.2

187 Warringah Road, Beacon Hill - Demolition works and the construction of a boarding house

#### Item 3.3

28 Carew Street, Dee Why - Alterations and additions and construction of an attached secondary dwelling and workshop/storeroom

#### Item 3.4

632 and 634 Warringah Road, Forestville - Demolition works and construction of a service station with associated underground tanks, carparking, landscaping and signage

Requests to address the public hearing regarding an item listed on the agenda must be made before the hearing. Contact the Panel Coordinator on 9942 2340 by 4pm Wednesday 12 April 2017. Copies of the agenda can be viewed online at [council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au) or obtained at the Dee Why Customer Service Centre.

### DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

89 - 90 NORTH STEYNE AND  
90 - 92 WHISTLER STREET MANLY

Council is in receipt of amended plans and reports for Application No. 56/2017 Lot A in Deposited Plan 430074 known as 89 North Steyne, Lot B in Deposited Plan 430074 known as 90 North Steyne, Strata Plan 39801 known as 90 Whistler Street and Strata Plan 10633 known as 92 Whistler Street, Manly.

Demolition of existing structures, construction of a residential flat building and strata title subdivision.

The applicant is Made Property Group Pty Ltd. The proposal is not designated development.

@beachescouncil

MANLY DAILY, Saturday, April 8, 2017  
CLOSING DATE: 12 APRIL 2017



## HAVE YOUR SAY ON OUR SPORTSGROUNDS

Our sportsfields are overused and there is not enough space for everyone to play.

Participation in sport is increasing, especially women, juniors and over 35's competitions, putting even more pressure on our limited grounds.

In response to calls from sporting groups for more sportsgrounds Council has looked at the facts and identified potential actions to resolve the shortage.

We need your feedback - read more and have your say on the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper.

### FACTS

#### Sportsfields

- 122 sportsfields covering 116.5 ha
- Half the area of sportsfields per capita compared to some other similar size Sydney councils
- 50,000 members from 17 sports
- A 24 ha shortfall (around 25 sportsfields) based on the current supply and demand which will increase to 41 ha by 2031 if no action is taken
- Sports participation is increasing, with average increases of 10% across all major sports over the past three years
- Many surfaces are worn out as Council seeks to allow as many people to play as possible, leading to overuse
- All this means hundreds (if not thousands) of kids and adults are being turned away by sports that would love to have them play

#### Golf Courses

- Seven public and six private golf courses covering 453 ha
- Double the supply of courses per capita compared to Sydney-wide
- 4,000 public members a decrease of 16% over the last decade
- 6,000 private members a decrease of 10% over the last decade
- Study by Golf Business Advisory Services states that a reduction in golf courses may assist to achieve greater sustainability.

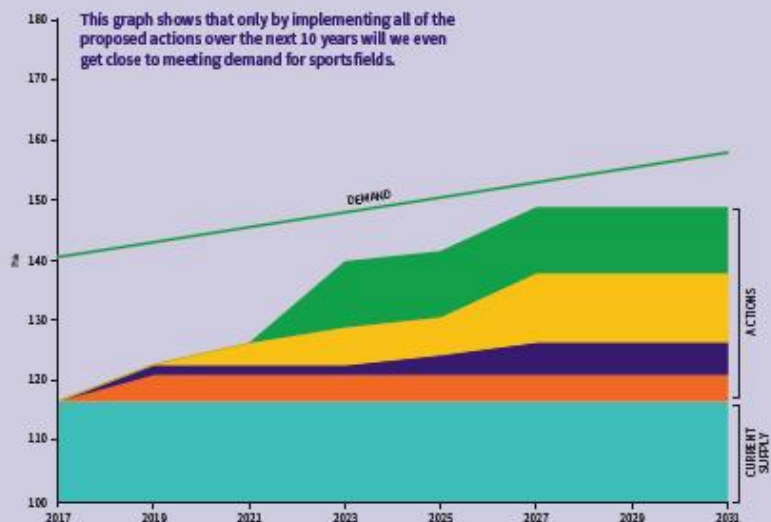
### THE ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORTSGROUNDS

Land is limited on the Northern Beaches.

There are a range of potential actions Council could take to address the shortfall of supply. These actions have been modelled over time in the following graph.

- **Action 1** - Better use of existing fields (\$270,000/ha)
- **Action 2** - Convert more fields to synthetic (\$3 million/ha)
- **Action 3** - Buy private land in land release areas (funded by development)
- **Action 4** - Convert existing open space eg golf course land (\$1.8 million/ha)
- **Action 5** - Buy private property using ratepayer funds (\$7 million+/ha). Not modelled as cost prohibitive

The alternative is to do nothing, meaning a shortfall of supply, deteriorating playing surfaces and ultimately not enough fields for everyone to play.



Visit [yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au) to see the full Discussion Paper, find out about our drop in sessions and make a submission. Submissions close Sunday 7 May.



# Golf course under threat once more

Council dusts off proposal to provide more sporting grounds

**Robbie Patterson**

**WARRINGAH** Golf Course could be facing the prospect of bulldozers again after Northern Beaches Council reneged on a promise to let elected councillors decide its fate.

A 15-year strategy on whether to replace golf courses with sport fields will be finalised in July.

The stance comes despite former premier Mike Baird asking the council in November to rule out any decision before elections.

The council has just released its long-awaited review of sports grounds,

which showed a shortfall of 25 playing fields – equivalent to 24ha – based on demands.

The figure is set to almost double in 15 years if no action is taken.

The northern beaches has 13 golf courses. Per capita, that is double the rate of the entire Sydney region.

Golf clubs have had a combined decline in membership of 10 per cent in the past decade.

The review was conducted with two independent planning groups, each specialising in golf courses or sport and leisure.

Council administrator Dick Persson defended the decision to put the strategy out before a council was elected. "A strategy does not lock anyone in. It just means if a new council doesn't want it, they change it," he said.

Mr Persson said it was important to let the public have its say on the review before a strategy was formed.

The report says 1000 players were turned away from six-a-side football last year and sport participation had increased 10 per cent in three years. Six solutions have been suggested.

## Six solutions



- » Make better use of existing sports grounds (\$270k) – gives 4.4ha
- » Convert some fields to synthetic (\$3m) gives 5.5ha
- » Acquire land as part of housing developments (\$4.7-7m) gives up to 12ha
- » Convert golf courses (\$1.4m) gives 11ha
- » Acquire land (\$7m) gives 11 ha
- » Do nothing
- » Read more at [yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au).
- » Submissions close May 7.



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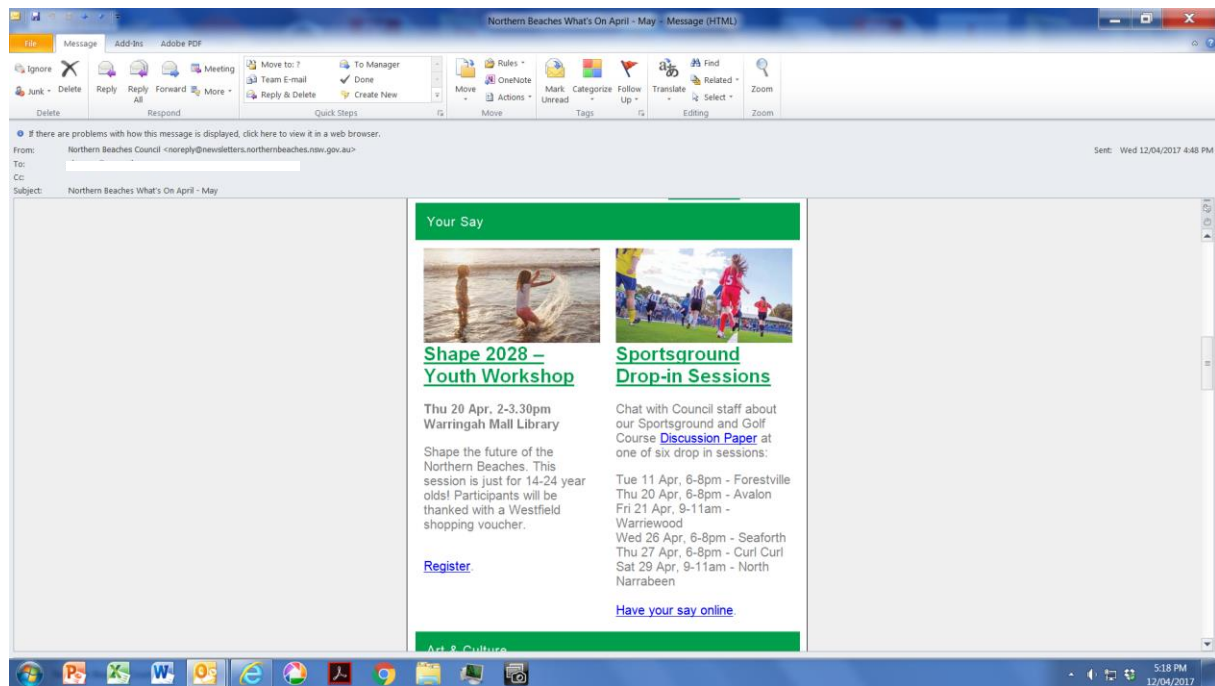
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Council's Media Release included:

<https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/media-release/20170407-community-called-help-tackle-sportsfield-shortage>

Other media coverage included: <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/manly-daily/warringah-golf-club-president-criticises-councils-sports-ground-report-as-onesided/news-story/1f94b15b364b85a0acae9328ddc237d8>





# NORTHERN BEACHES NEWS



## A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Last week, Council launched a Discussion Paper about the future of Northern Beaches Council sportsfields and golf courses and I outlined some of the issues requesting people read the Discussion Paper on Council's website before participating in a public debate. Sadly there was little evidence that some of the contributors on social media have bothered to.

Just to reiterate some of the key findings:

- We have a serious shortage of sportsfields that is getting larger and will reach over 40 sportsfields by 2031 unless we take action
- The sportsfields are already seriously overused at well over the 35 hours per week recommended to keep them in reasonable condition
- The review showed we have around half the sportsfields per head compared to a number of comparable councils
- The review showed we have more than double the number of golf courses per head compared to the rest of Sydney
- The fact that many sportsfields are 'empty' during the week does not mean they are underused. Fields need some time to recover, schools book them during the week and sports groups have access to them for training after 4pm
- Many sports are rejecting hundreds of kids and adults wanting to play a sport due to a shortage of fields
- The review confirmed golf is declining and has been doing so for over 10 years.

The Paper identifies and costs lots of possible actions, including more synthetic grass, more lighting to provide more training opportunities and more efficient use of existing fields.

It also concludes that without the conversion of some current Council land from golf to other sports there will be a continuing shortfall, even after adopting many other actions.

To those claiming I have gone back, or "reneged" on my commitment to leave the final decision to the elected Council, I have not!

This is too serious an issue to put on the backburner. After hearing the community views I will put a draft strategy out for comment. I will then adopt a final strategy for the next 15 years.

Council is planning to get on with field improvements and synthetic fields as soon as possible. However there will be no action taken to implement any of the controversial elements. The Strategy will set the path forward to address the shortfall in fields and it will be a matter for the incoming Council to determine whether to proceed when they return in September this year.

They will have a well-argued and costed set of options, along with my recommendation, to guide their decision making and address this serious issue for the community.

With this in mind, I look forward to receiving your submission on this important Discussion Paper.

**Dick Persson AM**  
dick.persson@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

@beachescouncil

## HAVE YOUR SAY

### YOUR SAY OPEN FOR COMMENT

Council believes in strong community consultation and has a number of items open for feedback at [yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)

- Ocean Street Narrabeen - Proposal to Name a Reserve Closes Mon 17 Apr
- Freshwater Coastal Open Space Master Plan Closes Mon 17 Apr
- Walk Manly Closes Wed 19 Apr
- Alcohol Free Zones Closes Sun 30 Apr
- Affordable Housing Policy Closes Sun 30 Apr
- Pittwater Waterway Review Discussion Paper Closes Sun 14 May

[yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au). For more information visit one of our drop-in sessions:

- Thu 20 Apr, 6 - 8pm  
Avalon Recreation Centre  
59 Old Barrenjoey Rd, Avalon
- Fri 21 Apr, 9 - 11am  
Beaches Market, Pittwater Rugby Park, Pittwater Rd, Warriewood
- Wed 26 Apr, 6 - 8pm  
Seaforth Community and Sporting Pavilion, Wakehurst Parkway
- Thu 27 Apr, 6 - 8pm  
Curl Curl Sports Centre  
Abbott Rd, North Curl Curl
- Sat 29 Apr, 9 - 11am  
Coastal Environment Centre  
Pelican Path, North Narrabeen

Submissions close Sunday 7 May.

### SHAPE 2028 Online Survey

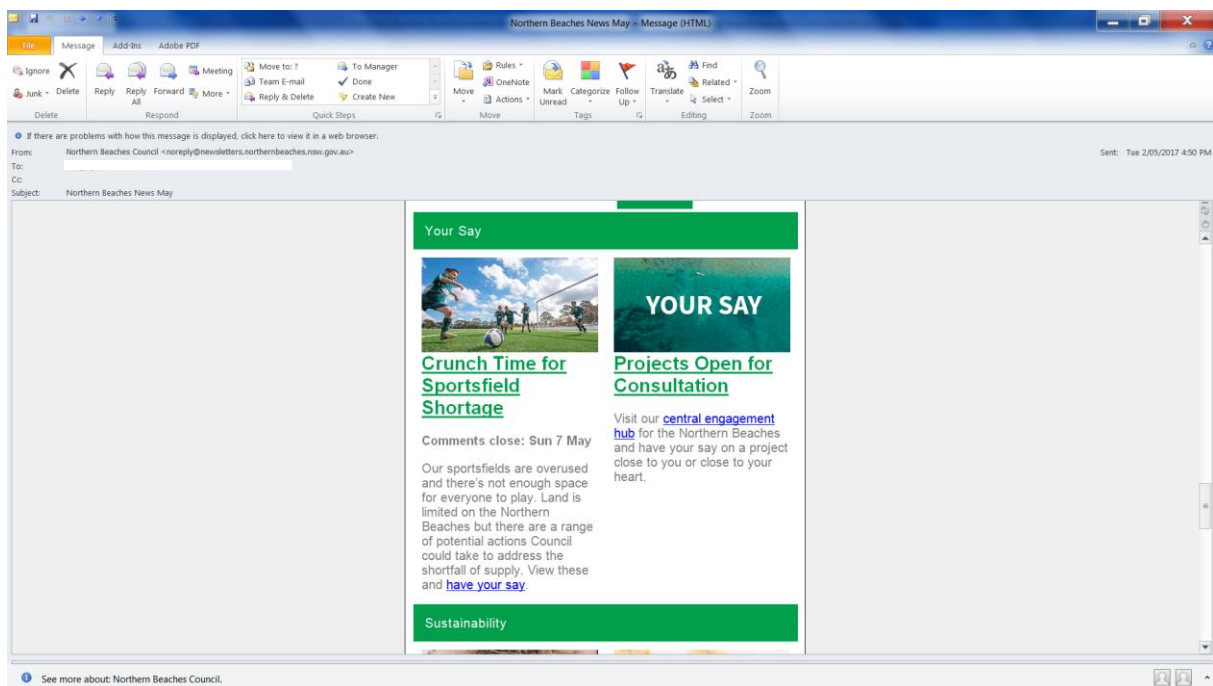
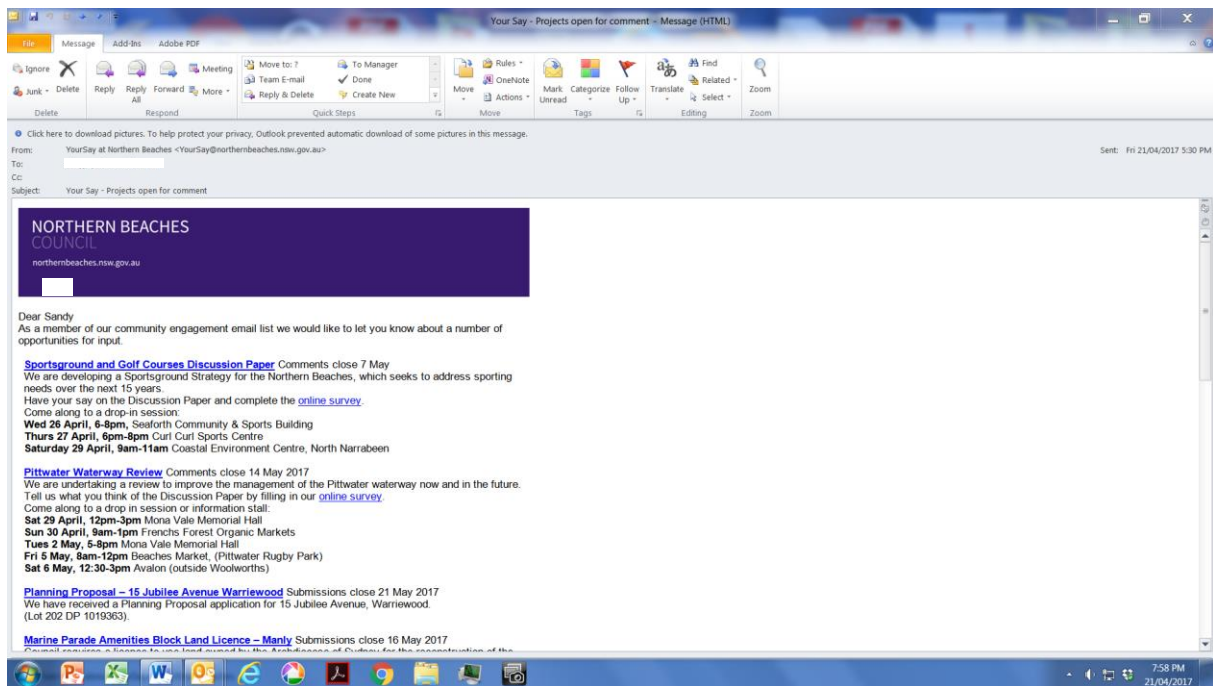
Your Community Strategic Plan will help guide local decision-making and community participation over the next decade. Share your thoughts on our draft vision, goals and strategies through our online survey at [yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au).

Submissions close Sunday 30 April.

### SPORTSGROUNDS AND GOLF COURSES DISCUSSION PAPER

As part of the Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper it has been identified that there is half the number of sportsfields on the Northern Beaches than some other comparable council areas and double the golf courses.

To see the Discussion Paper or make a submission visit



# B RANDOM TELEPHONE AND ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Refer to separate *Sportsgrounds Strategy Research – Online Report with Comparisons to Telephone Survey and Random Telephone Survey Report*. (Micromex Research, May 2017)



# C WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS REPORT

Refer to separate Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper:  
Written Submissions Report by Parkland Planners (May 2017)

# D SPORTS FORUM OUTCOMES

Northern Beaches Council held a Sports Forum for local and State sporting groups on 30 April 2017 at Forestville RSL Club to discuss ways in which the provision of sportsgrounds on the Northern Beaches could be improved to meet user needs.

Representatives of groups which attended the Sports Forum were from a range of sports within the scope of the Discussion Paper:

- ☐ Football NSW
- ☐ National Rugby League
- ☐ Wakehurst Little Athletics
- ☐ Rugby Union
- ☐ NSW Rugby Union
- ☐ Manly Rugby Union
- ☐ Manly Warringah Netball Assoc.
- ☐ Northern Beaches Touch
- ☐ Touch Rugby League Manly
- ☐ Wakehurst Little Athletics
- ☐ Manly Warringah Softball Association
- ☐ Manly Warringah District Baseball
- ☐ Cricket NSW
- ☐ Netball NSW
- ☐ Sport NSW
- ☐ Office of Sport
- ☐ Manly Warringah Little Athletics
- ☐ Northern Beaches OzTag
- ☐ Northern Beaches Cricket Council
  
- ☐ Manly Warringah District Junior Rugby Football
- ☐ Pittwater SuperTouch
- ☐ Hockey NSW
- ☐ Manly Warringah Football Association

- ❑ Manly Warringah District Hockey Club
- ❑ Northern Beaches Junior AFL Association
- ❑ AFL NSW
- ❑ Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union



Representatives from Cricket NSW, Netball NSW and Football NSW made presentations on their state level initiatives to grow and cater for their sports.

Forum participants were asked to provide comments on two main aspects of sportsground provision on the northern beaches.

Workshop Series One:

- ❑ Ideas on projects and priorities for Council's capital program to improve capacity and quality of sportsgrounds
- ❑ Criteria for additional synthetic surfaces and priorities
- ❑ What can sports contribute to Council's capital program

Workshop Series Two:

- ❑ Ideas on how Council can better manage use of sportsfields to enhance capacity e.g. are there improvements that can be made to the seasonal allocations, wet weather, pre-season processes, agreements with schools etc.
- ❑ How can sports make better use of sportsfields e.g. changing traditional training and competition scheduling.

Table leaders recorded the comments made by forum participants in each table, and comments were reported back to the group at the forum.

Comments made at the forum were compiled by Council.