

Northern Beaches Council

SPORTSGROUNDS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS ANALYSIS

JULY 2017



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1. Introduction

In response to demands expressed by sporting organisations about a severe shortage of sportsgrounds and the need for new and improved facilities on the Northern Beaches, the Council engaged Otium Planning Group in October 2016 to undertake an independent analysis of current and projected needs to 2031. At the same time it commissioned consultants, Golf Business Advisory Services (GBAS) to conduct a golf market assessment in order to assist Council in reviewing the equitable use of its public golf course land.

The Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis report and Golf Market Assessment report were made available on Council's website for community input. The Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis outlined the findings of the research, current and projected sportsground needs, and a range of measures to address assessed shortfalls. Subsequently, in April 2017, Council prepared a Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper which summarised the scope and key findings of both the Sportsground Needs Analysis and Golf Market Assessment and put forward a number of actions to address sportsground needs. Council invited public feedback on the Discussion Paper in April 2017 via submissions, telephone and on-line surveys, community drop-in sessions and a Sports Forum.

Community submissions on the NBC Discussion Paper closed on 7th May 2017. Subsequently Otium Planning Group prepared a Draft Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis - the intent of which was to assist Northern Beaches Council in preparing its Sportsground Strategy by providing a framework for addressing current and future needs, key recommendations, and priorities between now and 2031. The Draft NBC Sportsground Strategy together with the Draft Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis was placed on public exhibition which ended on 2nd July 2017. Council arranged for external analysis of this feedback which will, together with the final Strategic Directions Analysis, inform the finalisation, by Northern Beaches Council, of its Sportsground Strategy.



2. Study Purpose and Approach

2.1 Study Scope and Objectives

The overall aim of Council's Sportsground Strategy is to:

Determine the adequacy of supply of sportsground facilities in the Northern Beaches LGA and identify and prioritise current and projected needs and actions over the next 15 years.

This Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis informs the preparation, by Northern Beaches Council, of its Sportsground Strategy.

The following sports are covered in the scope of the study:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| • Archery | • Gridiron | • Rugby Union |
| • Athletics | • Hockey | • Soccer (Football) |
| • Australian Football | • Netball | • Softball |
| • Baseball | • Oztag | • Touch Football |
| • Cricket | • Rugby League | • Ultimate Frisbee |

Specific objectives of the Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis, many of which were addressed in the Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis, included:

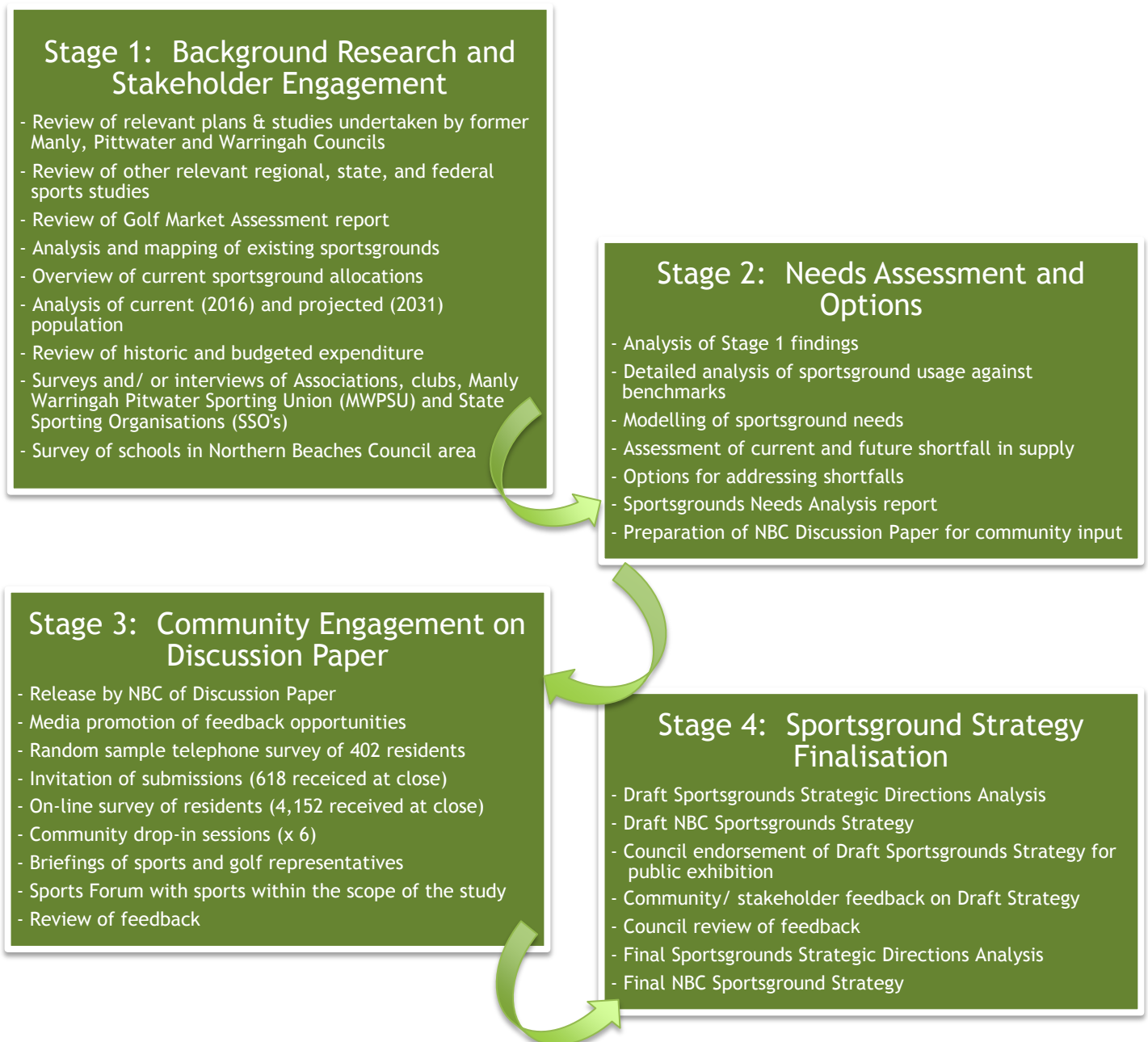
- Identify the extent of any current and future (2031) shortfall in sportsgrounds and facilities
- Clearly articulate the rationale for determining current and future sportsground needs
- Identify potential locations for future sportsgrounds
- Identify opportunities to improve the functionality and usage of existing sportsgrounds
- Investigate opportunities for partnerships in meeting current and future sportsground needs
- Identify policy changes that would improve the capacity to address demands
- Prepare a Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis report to facilitate the preparation, by Council, of a Discussion Paper both of which would be made available for stakeholder and community comment
- After closure of stakeholder and community input on Council's Discussion Paper, prepare a Draft Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis which:
 - Summarises current and future sportsground needs in Northern Beaches Council
 - Outlines the study objectives and approach
 - Identifies and prioritises improvements to existing sportsgrounds and ancillary facilities, including specific locations
 - Identifies the quantum of additional land required to meet projected sportsground needs to 2031 and realistic opportunities to secure that land
 - Recommends management or policy changes necessary to improve access to, or functionality of, sportsgrounds
 - Provides a framework for Council preparation of a Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy which would be open for public exhibition
- After closure of the public exhibition of Council's Draft Sportsground Strategy, prepare a final Sportsground Strategic Directions Analysis
- Inform NBC's final Sportsground Strategy

2.2 Study Approach

A 4-Stage approach was undertaken to prepare Council's Sportsground Strategy as illustrated at Figure 1. It should be noted that the study process was a collaborative one between Otium Planning Group and officers of Northern Beaches Council. Some tasks were undertaken by Council and others by the consultants. Otium Planning Group research, along with other inputs, has informed the preparation, by Northern Beaches Council, of its Sportsground Strategy.



Figure 1: Sportsground Strategic Directions Analysis Methodology





3. Key Findings of Needs Analysis

Detailed findings are contained in the Sportsground Needs Analysis report and the Discussion Paper. Key findings are summarised below.

3.1 Sport Participation in Northern Beaches

From information provided by local, regional and/or state sporting organisations, there are around 50,000 active playing members of sports within the scope of this study on the Northern Beaches. Some of these may be participants in more than one sport, or may play in fixtures outside of the Northern Beaches LGA. By far the highest participation numbers are in football (soccer). Active playing members in each sport are summarised in descending order in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Active playing members in sports with study scope

SPORT	ACTIVE MEMBERS
Football (Soccer)	17,648
Touch Football	6,526
Netball	5,633
Rugby Union	3,824
Six-A-Side Soccer	3,775
Rugby League	2,500
Cricket	2,249
Softball	2,213
Australian Football	1,346
Baseball	1,318
Hockey	1,265
Athletics	1,189
Oztag	700
Ultimate Frisbee	160
Touch Rugby League	150
Archery	78
Gridiron	75

The sports experiencing highest growth are Australian football, football (soccer), six-a-side soccer, junior cricket and touch football. Some sports on the Northern Beaches have had fairly static membership in recent years (i.e. rugby league, archery, baseball, netball, softball and hockey) however the absence of suitable facilities has inhibited membership growth in softball and hockey.

3.2 Background Research

As indicated in the Sportsground Needs Analysis Report (Feb 2017), a 2007 Inquiry into Sportsground Management in NSW recognised that there is a 'chronic shortage' of sporting venues in many local government areas and existing facilities are subjected to increasing user pressures. Previous research for the former Pittwater Council identified a shortage of playing fields to meet the needs of the existing community, but noted that there is limited potential to increase the number of playing fields. A report for the former Warringah Council found that despite the good supply of sportsgrounds, there are constant requests from sporting associations for additional fields (particularly for soccer, hockey, softball and cricket).

3.3 Current Provision

Council's inventory of booked sportsgrounds is distributed across 62 sites supplying a total playing area of 116.5Ha (actual field space) within a total land area of 203.3Ha. The current supply of sportsgrounds is constrained by a number of factors that impact on their functionality for sport, namely:

- A number of grounds are small, with no expansion capacity, and are suitable only for junior sport.



- While lighting is installed on many grounds, the level and/ or coverage of lighting is limited in some cases
- Some grounds are subject to flooding and/ or poor drainage and take longer periods to recover after rain events
- A number of grounds are situated on ex-landfill sites and are subject to subsidence and/ or have poor surfaces
- Some grounds are situated on sandy soil profiles with low nutrient and poor water holding capacity

Over the five financial years from 2010/ 11 to 2015/ 16 approximately \$17.7m of Council expenditure has been undertaken on improvements such as lighting, irrigation/ drainage, synthetic surfaces, field redevelopments, playing surface upgrades, car parking and amenities.

3.4 Benchmarking of Capacity

It is generally accepted that sportsground utilisation and facility condition have a direct and inseparable relationship. A number of turf management experts suggest that usage of more than 25 hours a week will contribute to a deterioration of playing surfaces. It is very common for playing fields in metropolitan Sydney to exceed 25 hours' usage per week and is recognised that not all use is equal. For example higher impact sports (greater numbers, game play and footwear), user types (adults v children) may result in higher or lower surface deterioration. Moreover it may be reasonable to accept some deterioration in surface condition over a season, so long as it can recover. Maintenance regimes play an important role in this context.

For these reasons, and to combat any possible overstatement of utilisation based on booking data, more conservative capacity benchmarks of 30 hours per week and 35 hours per week were adopted against which the current usage of grounds in Northern Beaches Council was measured.

As a whole, Council playing fields (based on booking data) are over booked in the winter season compared to the adopted benchmarks (78.7% are above in the 30-hour scenario and 75.4% are above the 35-hour scenario). Under the more conservative 35-hour scenario, 92 of the 122 fields are booked beyond the capacity benchmarks utilised for this research and 49 of these are booked more than 10 hours above the benchmark. Total booking hours are much lower in the summer season (3,584) than in winter (5,059).

3.5 Modelling of Future Sportsground Area Demands

Otium Planning Group utilised two models for estimating the current and future demand for sportsgrounds in the Northern Beaches - a 'participation based demand model' and an 'allocation based demand model'. Descriptions and workings of these models are outlined at Section 7 of the Sportsground Needs Analysis report available on Council's website.

In summary, the modelling identified a current (2016) **shortfall in actual playing area of approximately 24Ha**. In addition to the playing area, an allowance for ancillary space needs to be made (estimated at 70%) which results in a total land area required of approximately 40.9Ha.

By 2031 the population of Northern Beaches Council is projected to increase by an estimated 32,375 persons to a total of 294,907.¹ Modelling of demand to 2031 sees the shortfall in playing space increase to **41.4Ha** and the total land area required reaching approximately 70.3Ha.

3.6 Issues and Needs Expressed by Sports

The most common issues and concerns expressed by sports within the scope of the study were:

- Insufficient playing areas to meet competition and training needs
- Sports are turning away participants or modifying rules, playing times or access to fields to accommodate demand (these sports include football (soccer), touch football, cricket, Australian football, and six-a-side football (soccer))

¹ <http://forecast.id.com.au/northern-beaches>



- Unlit or inadequately lit playing areas restricting their availability or suitability for evening use
- Demand for additional or upgraded facilities requiring specialist surfaces
- Small grounds or single field only grounds are unsuitable for senior use and/ or unable to be expanded
- Fields not at size or standard that complies with sport requirements
- Poor playing surfaces from over use, subsidence, or poor drainage
- Cricket pitches intruding on playing fields during winter causing uneven surface levels
- Substantial growth in women's participation
- Inadequate provision of, or poor standard of, amenities/ change rooms (especially in those sports with high numbers of female participants or experiencing growth in female participation)
- Ground allocation process is not maximising usage
- Lack of storage areas (with some having to store equipment off site)
- Lack of car parking

In summary, the main issues and demands expressed by individual sports were as follows:

Table 2: Main issues and needs expressed by sports

SPORT	KEY ISSUES AND NEEDS EXPRESSED BY INDIVIDUAL SPORTS
Australian Football	Substantial growth in last 3 years with major increase in female participation. Insufficient grounds to meet demands and inadequate lighting. Demand for new ovals, reconfigure/ expand grounds (e.g. Balgowlah Oval), install lighting to some grounds especially for training (e.g. Frank Gray Oval, Mike Pawley Oval), upgrade lights (e.g. North Narrabeen Reserve, Balgowlah Oval), conversion of high use grounds to synthetic surface (e.g. Lionel Watts Reserve), and better amenities especially for female players.
Archery	Seeking security of tenure for playing venue.
Athletics	Competitions are held at Sydney Academy of Sport, Narrabeen which is heavily booked. Groups consider the track and throws area is in need of upgrading or an alternative synthetics athletics track provided elsewhere. Club grounds used for training have insufficient storage.
Baseball	Some grounds are small and/ or suffer damage from winter season use. Demand for upgraded lighting (e.g. North Narrabeen & Aquatic Reserve) and new or upgraded amenities facilities (e.g. North Narrabeen & Aquatic Reserve), batting cages and fences.
Cricket	Demand for additional grounds as existing supply is insufficient to cater for current number of teams and future growth. Only 48 grounds available for 68 junior games on weekends. Game times have been modified and undersized fields accessed to accommodate teams. Poor surface quality on some grounds. Inadequate number of turf practice nets and enclosed synthetic practice nets. Some nets poorly positioned or in poor condition. High growth in women's participation. Demand for improved amenities. Cricket NSW seeking to establish a Centre of Excellence (1 of 11 proposed for metropolitan Sydney).
Gridiron	No demands expressed.
Hockey	Poor grass cover or undersized fields (e.g. turf cricket pitch at Frank Gray Oval means field has to be narrower). Demand for a dedicated synthetic hockey surface on the northern beaches. This is a high priority for the state body which advised that, of the estimated 3,000 players in the wider North Sydney Beaches Hockey Association, less than one third play locally (on grass or multi-sport fields) while the balance travel in excess of 45 minutes across Sydney to train and compete on suitable synthetic surface facilities.
Netball	Abbott Road headquarters is the only competition venue in Northern Beaches. No expansion capacity at this venue. Street parking is very limited and the adjacent school is understood to have recently withdrawn access to the school grounds for parking. Three (3) of the 48 courts provided are unusable at present due to inadequate size or drainage issues. Training courts at other locations are mostly grass with no, or inadequate, lighting. Some courts were lost due to new busway at North Narrabeen. Demand for conversion of grass courts to hard surface and new/ upgraded lighting (e.g. Lionel Watts Reserve, Boondah Reserve, Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields).



SPORT		KEY ISSUES AND NEEDS EXPRESSED BY INDIVIDUAL SPORTS
Oztag		Main issues are related to costs and past difficulties with field lighting system resulting games being delayed or cancelled.
Rugby League		Grounds are overused and grass surfaces unable to cope with levels of use. Fields have been modified to accommodate juniors. While current playing fields accommodate current needs it is important to retain existing allocation to rugby league. Demand for suitable amenities blocks (Nolan & Beacon Hill Reserve) and upgraded amenities (Denzil Joyce field).
Rugby Union		Undulating playing fields, poor surface quality, inadequate lighting, and amenities blocks undersized and in poor condition (Denzil Joyce and Reub Hudson fields). Changerooms/ amenities/ public toilets in poor condition and need for upgraded lighting (North Narrabeen Reserve). Demand for additional field for Newport Rugby.
Six-a-Side (Soccer)	Football	Major growth in participation but unable to get sufficient ground allocation to meet demands. Players are being turned away. Currently use North Narrabeen Reserve and Brookvale Oval. Play in summer, mostly mid-week afternoons and evenings, but would like to play year round. 60% of members play six-a-side exclusively and no other form of soccer. Prefer natural grass rather than synthetic. Demand for additional fields, better lit grounds, and improved maintenance and irrigation of grounds.
Football (Soccer)		Second largest Association in NSW. Have modified competitions and restricted access to playing fields for training in order to meet demands. Demand for additional fields including synthetic fields (geographically dispersed) to take pressure off grass fields (e.g. Lionel Watts Reserve and Seaforth Oval). Synthetic surface at Cromer Park resulted in major increase in usage. Demand for improved playing surfaces, drainage/ irrigation of some grounds. Cricket pitches intrude on playing fields in some areas which creates a potential safety issue. Demand for installation of new lighting or upgraded lighting (e.g. Passmore Reserve, Nolan Reserve, Lionel Watts Reserve, Kitchener Reserve, LM Graham Reserve, and Tania Park). High women's participation. Some grounds have no amenities, and others have no female/ unisex change rooms.
Softball		Largest Association in NSW but cannot host state championships for over 15's as there are no full size fields in Northern Beaches. Grounds at softball's Abbott Road headquarters have overlapping diamonds which are 40% undersized, and also has inadequate lighting (only 2 poles for 2 diamonds). Softball has modified length of games to meet competition needs. Demand for additional full size playing fields. Inadequate amenities (especially for female sport), uneven playing surface, diamonds not enclosed at Abbott Road.
Touch Football		Unable to get sufficient ground allocation to meet demands for evening competitions. Turning away 20 teams at North Narrabeen Reserve and 30 teams at Nolan Reserve. Lost access to spillover fields at North Narrabeen Reserve to parking. Demand for access to additional fields. Would like to install lighting at Passmore Reserve. Nolan Reserve is subjected to flooding and residual water after rain events - need to improve drainage. Insufficient amenities at Nolan Reserve for number of players. Poorly located cricket pitches on some reserves which creates a potential safety issue.
Touch Rugby League		No demands expressed
Ultimate Frisbee		No demands expressed other than need for permanent line marking.

3.7 Golf Market Assessment

A market assessment of public and private golf course provision in the Northern Beaches was undertaken for Council by GBAS. Detailed findings are contained in the Golf Market Assessment report available on Council's website. A snapshot of the findings of this study is as follows:

- The Northern Beaches has a total of 13 golf courses, 8 of which allow public access on multiple days of the week. The remainder are accessible to members and their guests only.
- Seven (7) of the 13 clubs within the Northern Beaches Council area are situated on public land.
- Over the last decade there has been an overall decline in golf club membership of 13.2% across the wider Sydney metropolitan area. This equates to an average annual decline of 1.6%.
- Of the clubs in the Northern Beaches there has been an overall decline in membership over the last decade of 10%, representing an annual average decline of 1.2%.
- The 8 facilities that have a public element to them have experienced a 16% decline over the last decade representing an average annual decline of 1.9%.



- In lieu of insufficient member demand, this 'space' is being filled by public green fee demand. In recent times demand in this area has generally been flat, with no growth evident in rounds played or average green fee achieved.
- The market assessment concluded that:
 - The Northern Beaches has a high number of golf courses in total as well as a high number when assessed on a per head of population basis compared to other Sydney Local Government Areas and Sydney Planning Districts.
 - Whilst population has been growing, net club market member demand levels are slowly declining and demand is being fragmented across a number of golf courses on the Northern Beaches.
 - Whilst profits are currently being achieved at the clubs within the area of focus, they are not at a level that allows for sustained re-investment in facility infrastructure. For this to be achieved, most facilities firstly require more demand, then price growth, to materially grow profitability.
 - On the assumption that there is a sufficient mix of product to satisfy the level of golf demand that exists, and that this demand would and could be accommodated within a reduced supply pool, a reduction in supply may further assist the market to achieve greater sustainability.

It should be noted that the findings of the Golf Market Assessment were challenged by golfing organisations and many community members during feedback on the NBC Discussion Paper and Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy.



4. Options to Address Current and Projected Needs

Northern Beaches Council's Discussion Paper (April 2017) put forward a number of actions and indicative costings to address the current and projected shortfall in sportsfields. These comprised:

Action 1: Make better use of existing sportsgrounds to increase availability and resilience. Actions include:

- Improving capacity by installing and upgrading lighting, upgrading drainage, improving playing surface quality, reconfiguring sportsgrounds for multiuse, improving resource management
- Re-allocate fields to sports with highest growth and need for space and full allocation of all available sportsfield hours and working with schools or other institutions.

Action 2: Convert more existing sportsfields to synthetic to increase sustainable capacity.

- This action increases sustainable capacity of fields from 35 to 54 hours a week as they can be used for longer hours and in wet weather without negatively impacting on surface quality.

Create more sportsfields by:

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

Action 4: Converting existing open space to sportsfields e.g. golf courses.

Action 5: Acquiring additional land by purchasing Crown, private or other land.

Alternatively, Council could choose:

Action 6: Do nothing and accept the shortfall in supply.

Section 3 of the Discussion Paper noted Council's current capital works budget for sportsfields is approximately \$2 million per annum and elaborated on the rationale, implications and funding needs of each of the options.

Section 6 of the Discussion Paper outlined the indicative cost of the action options and proposed order of priority for investment to address the projected shortfall in sportsfields (refer Table 3).²

Table 3: Impact on shortfall, funding and cost implications of Actions

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

² Further analysis of the shortfall and potential measures to address has been undertaken at Section 7



5. Feedback on Discussion Paper

In early April, Northern Beaches Council undertook a comprehensive community engagement exercise to seek community and stakeholder feedback on the Discussion Paper. This comprised:

- Media promotion of feedback opportunities
- Telephone survey of 402 residents (Micromex Research)
- Invitation of submissions (618 received at close)
- On-line survey of residents (4,152 received at close)
- Community drop-in sessions (x6)
- Briefings of sports and golf representatives
- Sports Forum with sports within the scope of the study

In addition, a petition urging the retention of Warringah Golf Course as an 18 hole facility signed by 10,353 people was received after the the closing date for submissions of 7th May 2017. This is a very high level of community involvement and indicates a great deal of interest in the outcome of the project. Micromex Research, together with Northern Beaches Council, developed the telephone and on-line questionnaires. Some key points to emerge are outlined below, with a further summary at Appendix 1. Detailed analysis of community feedback from telephone surveys, on-line surveys, and written submissions were contained in separate reports and made available on the Northern Beaches Council website.

The protocols of the telephone survey of 402 residents undertaken by Micromex Research delivers a high level of confidence that responses would reflect the wider views of NBC residents.

Community feedback across the board indicates that residents are in favour of Council addressing the shortfall in sportsfields. Residents are most supportive of Action 1 (Make better use of existing sportsgrounds to increase availability and resilience) and Action 3 (Acquiring or securing additional private land as part of new housing developments).

Acquiring and embellishing additional land (Action 5) was by far the least favoured action among telephone survey respondents, with 73% not very supportive or not supportive at all. The Warringah Golf Club submission however was supportive of Council identifying suitable crown land and did not consider that the cost of its conversion to sportsgrounds was an undue imposition on current and future ratepayers.

Golfers and older adults in both the telephone survey and on-line survey were generally less supportive of converting a golf course to sportsfields and the general thread of written submissions was that golf course land should not be used before other actions/ options are explored and implemented, and then decide if golf course land is needed.

Telephone and on-line survey respondents were asked to indicate their preference for one of two options they would prefer Council to implement. The wording of these options was as follows:

Option A - Implementing Actions 1 - 4

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

OR...

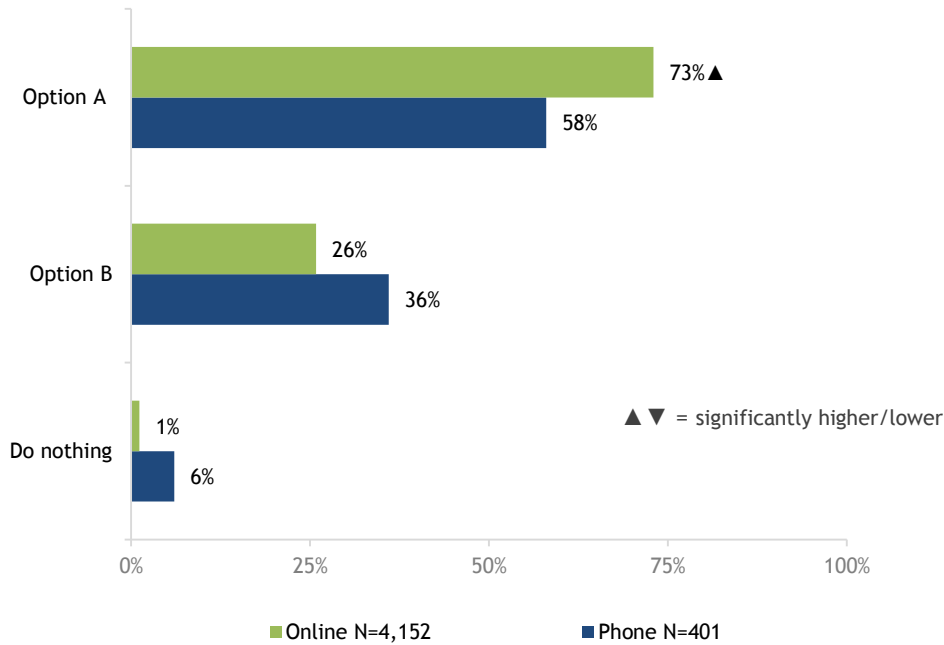
Option B - Implementing Actions 1 - 3 only

Makes better use of our existing sportsfields and new synthetics, 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.



The preference of the majority of telephone and on-line survey respondents for Council to implement was Option A. A graphic comparison of telephone vs on-line survey vs telephone respondents' preference option for Council to implement is illustrated at Figure 2.

Figure 2: Preferred implementation option (telephone vs online survey respondents)





6. Strategy Development

This section outlines the overall approach to preparing the recommendations of the Strategic Directions Analysis. This includes the consideration of an array of research and analysis information, development of a priority framework and the process of developing specific recommendations.

6.1 Inputs for Strategy Development

A comprehensive range of research and analysis inputs have been considered. This includes:

- *Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis Report*, Otium Planning Group (2016)
- *Golf Market Assessment Report*, Golf Business Advisory Services (2016)
- *Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper*, Northern Beaches Council (2017)
- Consultation from the Discussion Paper Exhibition
 - Community/ organisation feedback on the Discussion Paper
 - Sports Forum outcomes
 - Input from Council officers

Analysis of community submissions, telephone surveys, and on-line surveys in response to the Discussion Paper was undertaken by separate consultants commissioned by Council. Community and sports organisations' overall attitudes toward the proposed actions contained in the NBC Discussion Paper were taken into account in framing recommendations. Detailed analysis and/ or testing of the accuracy of the numerous assertions or suggestions contained in the various community feedback modes was not undertaken by Otium Planning Group in developing this report.

6.2 Priority Framework

The Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis Report and the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper, identified a range of possible options to address the capacity and quality of sportsgrounds within the LGA. In order to formulate specific recommendations related to these options, a priority framework was developed in consultation with Council officers. The major components of this framework are outlined below:

1. General Guiding Factors

- Timing factors which included
 - Council budgeting processes and current forward works programs
 - Approval and construction timeframes for land to be secured through development
 - Planning timeframes required to investigate, justify and negotiate outcomes
 - 5 year timeframe cohorts linked to population projections and short, medium and long term supply targets
- Measures and options identified in the Needs Analysis and Discussion Paper
- Overall attitudes toward the proposed actions contained in the NBC Discussion Paper
 - Based on external summaries of telephone surveys, on-line surveys and community submissions.
- Key themes from Sports Forum

2. Proposed Facility Hierarchy (refer Appendix 2)

- A facility hierarchy was developed to categorise Council's sportsgrounds in order to assess the appropriateness of specific recommendations
- The hierarchy categories comprise:



- Local Facilities (A & B) - which are typically single field sportsgrounds
- District Facilities - which are typically multi-field sportsgrounds servicing a number of sports
- Regional Facilities (A & B) - which are either multi-field sportsgrounds servicing a regional catchment or high profile/ elite facilities
- A description of the proposed draft hierarchy is attached at Appendix 2 and the application of the hierarchy to existing and future sportsgrounds is shown at Appendix 3.

3. Priority Criteria

- In assigning time frames to recommendations for existing grounds, discussions with Council officers took into account:
 - The extent to which additional usage capacity is generated
 - Unsatisfactory quality of grounds/ facilities
 - Budget capacity

6.3 Process for Developing Recommendations

In compiling the Strategic Directions recommendations, the impact on the shortfall of sportsfields identified in the Sportsground Needs Analysis and NBC Discussion Paper was estimated (refer Section 8.5 for further detail). This enabled an ongoing assessment of forecast supply against demand as recommendations were developed to determine the net impact on the shortfall. The process used to formulate Strategy recommendations incorporated the range of research and analysis outlined at Section 6.1 and applied the priority framework outlined at Section 6.2.

The approach and structure taken to this task was based on the actions outlined in Council's Discussion Paper and informed by findings of the community consultation process.

ACTION 1 (MAKE BETTER USE OF EXISTING SPORTSGROUNDS) AND ACTION 3 (ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL LAND AS PART OF NEW LAND RELEASES)

- These actions were the most strongly supported in surveys and written submissions and accordingly are a key focus of the Strategy development. This involved an extensive site by site assessment of all NBC sportsgrounds and several recommendations for improvement are included in the recommendations of this Strategic Directions Analysis. The Strategy incorporates the provision of sportsfield land from new developments as part of Council's S94 Plan, however the timing of these developments is subject to other factors.

ACTION 4 (CONVERT EXISTING GOVERNMENT OWNED OPEN SPACE TO SPORTSFIELDS, E.G ALL OR PART OF A GOLF COURSE)

- While not supported by golfers (and older adults), it is evident that Actions 1, 2 and 3 alone will not be sufficient to address the projected shortfall in sportsgrounds. The Strategic Directions Analysis proposes that in the first 5-year cohort of recommendations, planning be undertaken to investigate the most appropriate golf course location to convert to sportsgrounds, and that redevelopment occur in the second 5-year cohort.

ACTION 2 (CONVERT EXISTING SPORTSFIELDS TO A SYNTHETIC SURFACE)

- Opinion was somewhat divided in relation to this Action. The proposed conversion of playing fields to synthetic surfaces contained in Council's existing capital works program has been factored into recommendations together with their estimated contribution to addressing the projected sportsground shortfall. Consideration of an additional surface in the third 5-year cohort of recommendations has been proposed.

ACTION 5 (ACQUIRE AND EMBELLISH ADDITIONAL LAND FOR SPORTSFIELDS)

- This action was poorly supported in the stratified sample of telephone survey respondents (72% opposed). Although more strongly supported in the 'opt-in' on line survey it was nevertheless ranked the second lowest of all options by on-line survey respondents. Accordingly, given this feedback and the high cost of implementing Action 5 as calculated by Council, no consideration was given in the Strategy to purchasing land for sportsfields.



7. Feedback on Draft Sportsgrounds Strategy

Public exhibition of the Draft NBC Sportsground Strategy and Draft Sportsgrounds Strategic Directions Analysis closed on 2nd July 2017. Feedback was analysed by Parkland Planners. A separate report summarising public submissions has been prepared by Parkland Planners and is available on Council's website. A high level snapshot of key points shows:

- A total of 780 submissions were received, the vast majority of which (742) were via Council's Your Say Northern Beaches web page.
- Of the 742 submissions received on the Your Say Northern Beaches website, the proponents indicated an involvement with 17 sports, translating to 1,170 members of these sports (ie some were involved in more than one sport). The majority were golfers (324 members, 28% of respondents), hockey players (219 members, 19% of respondents), or football players (155 members, 13% of respondents)
- About 55% of individual submissions were not supportive of the recommendations of the Draft Strategy while 45% were supportive.
- The highest frequency of respondents indicating they were "Not at All Supportive" of the strategy related to the proposed conversion of Warringah Golf Course to sportsgrounds and a park, and conversion of other golf courses to sports grounds.
- The highest number of "supportive" responses related to the development of synthetic hockey fields.
- On the whole, respondents were supportive of the Draft Strategy if it did not involve the conversion of Warringah Golf Course to sportsgrounds/park.
- Most people opposing conversion of golf courses to sports grounds preferred other options, particularly acquiring additional land and/or using Crown land instead of golf course land.
- 14 sporting groups lodged submissions:
 - State, national and local golf organisations expressed their strong opposition to recommendations to convert golf course land to sports grounds, and/ or the process for determining recommendations and seeking/ considering public input, and/ or other elements of the Draft Strategy.
 - Other sporting organisations were generally supportive of the direction of the Draft Sportsground Strategy with individual sports noting their specific needs. It should be noted that the MWPSU advised that it "...supports that all alternatives to increase supply and improve capacity are to be explored and implemented where feasible, prior to proceeding with the conversion of Warringah Golf Course."

In order to meet the time frame for completion of this study, Otium Planning Group has not undertaken a detailed analysis of public feedback. It is for Northern Beaches Council to determine its response to public submissions in finalising the Sportsgrounds Strategy.



8. Recommendations and Supply Modelling

The following sections detail all recommendations developed through preparation of the strategy and the cumulative impact on the supply and demand position. Draft Strategy recommendations have been categorised as follows:

1. *'Planning and/or management'* actions required to investigate and/ or facilitate further opportunities to increase capacity or quality of facilities
2. Actions that *'Increase Capacity'* and reduce the need for additional land through a range of improvements and upgrades eg securing new land, increasing available playing space, lighting presently unlit fields (This includes works in approved budgets)
3. *'Service level'* actions which address ground/ facility quality issues to ensure sustainability and optimum use, and are in accordance with the hierarchy ranking of the ground. These actions may improve capacity eg drainage that reduces down time, or upgraded lighting that may enable greater use.

Recommendations have been assigned the following time frames:

- Short Term 2017 - 2021
- Medium Term 2022 - 2026
- Long Term 2027 - 2031

This report does not suggest that Council should be responsible for the implementation and funding of all recommendations in this Strategy. External funding such as state/ federal government grants, available mechanisms for developer contributions, and/ or partnerships with education and/ or sporting bodies should be sought where possible. Further, priorities may change over time subject to changes in demand or funding opportunities.

8.1 Guiding Principles

In order to guide the implementation of recommendations, the following guiding principles are suggested:

1. Priority Principles - prioritise initiatives that represent best value, that is, initiatives which:
 - Provide a strong cost benefit ratio
 - Involve low or no capital costs whilst increasing access/ use (e.g. planning and management changes)
 - Increase sportsground capacity, and enhance viability of existing facilities through improved surfaces, lighting, drainage and design
 - Maximise carrying capacity at existing sportsgrounds which optimises investment
 - Match uses/ activities with the characteristics of sportsgrounds and other users



2. Funding Principles

- Seek external funding contributions where possible (government, sport or private sector)
- Focus funding priorities on improving sportsground facilities for conducting sport, as opposed to contributing towards club based social facilities
- Plan collaboratively for turf and synthetic ground replacements and whole of life costs
- Should users wish to have higher quality of facility than Council can afford, or is considered a low priority, they may contribute to the capital cost of the upgrade works

3. Equity Principles

- Ensure infrastructure is more female-friendly and family orientated, consisting of factors and attributes such as:
 - Buildings and surrounding areas that offer supporting amenities and resources
 - Unisex change facilities that cater for the needs of both males and females
 - Inviting community spaces
 - Safety (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design - CPTED)
 - Easily accessible facilities
 - Adequate lighting in and around the facility
 - Ensure the following principles from Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan are reflected in planning:
 - Everyone can participate
 - Access and inclusion is everyone's business
 - Social Justice Principles inform decision making - Access, Equity, Rights and Participation
- Provide for diverse populations and lifestyles: age, ability, cultural backgrounds and demand for new sport formats and schedules
- Prioritise access to sportsgrounds for community based sport



8.2 Short Term Recommendations (2017 - 2021)

8.2.1 Planning and Management Recommendations (General)

ITEM	RECOMMENDATION
1. Allocation Process	Review sportsground allocation processes to: • Ensure maximum use is effectively balanced against equity of access principles • Establish a range of pricing strategies (e.g. link cost of use to field booking hours, facility type etc) • Establish appropriate summer and winter usage benchmarks for each field Undertake regular monitoring/ audits of actual and booked use and associated impacts. Analyse and amend policies and reallocate areas where necessary to maximise use.
2. Demand Management	Liaise with the Northern Beaches sports sector to assess the opportunity to manage demand which could mitigate pressure on existing facilities by: • Encouraging greater use of small sided fields • Utilising technology such as roll out cricket pitches • Adopting uniform practices for season overlaps • Ceasing blanket/ historic bookings of fields • Introducing an on-line booking system • Investigating alternative fee structures including charging for grounds based on hours booked • Encouraging use of remote training locations where possible • More evenly distributing training and competition times, draws and schedules • Sharing clubhouses among multiple sports
3. Golf Course Analysis	Undertake a detailed analysis of public golf courses to assess the most suitable location(s) for conversion to sportsfields. This analysis should incorporate consideration of: • Potential useable land area • Topography • Accessibility • Traffic and car parking considerations • Environmental and engineering considerations • Neighbouring resident considerations • Planning and development constraints • Capital and operational cost considerations
4. Pittwater Golf Centre	Investigate the conversion of the existing driving range to sportsfields and identify a suitable site for its relocation (eg existing golf course)



ITEM	RECOMMENDATION
5. Multi-Use Synthetic Surfaces	Apply the following criteria to assess potential sites for conversion to, or provision of, additional synthetic surfaces beyond 2021. <u>Primary Selection Criteria</u> 1. Size of site • Is the site large enough to accommodate required facilities, parking and future expansion? 2. Accessibility • Is the site easily accessible by car and public transport? 3. Topography • Is the site relatively flat, not flood prone, have stable soil conditions, and not have a previous landfill history? 4. Catchment Population • Is the site well located to service the intended catchment population? 5. Land Ownership • Is the site owned or controlled by Council or does the site need to be purchased <u>Secondary Selection Criteria</u> 6. Planning/ Zoning • Is the site capable of complying with planning requirements? 7. Site Services • Are services on site or nearby? ○ Electrical ○ Water ○ Sewer ○ Storm water 8. Impact on Current Users • Will the development impact on or displace current site users? 9. Neighbourhood Impacts • Is the site likely to exacerbate neighbourhood impacts i.e. noise, traffic, lighting and amenity. 10. Expansion Capacity • Does the site have capacity for future expansion of synthetic fields?
6. Policy Review	Review pre-season management of sportsgrounds including the current Jan-March restriction on no 'high impact' activities at some locations to enable pre-season and other sports use. Implement a pre-season management plan for all sportsgrounds based on the review.
7. Synthetic Hockey Surface Feasibility Study	Liaise with Hockey NSW and local hockey associations to undertake a feasibility study into the potential funding, location, scale, management and viability of developing dedicated wet-surface synthetic hockey fields.



ITEM	RECOMMENDATION
8. Use of School Sites	Investigate opportunities for joint use/ development, or greater use, of school grounds for community and school use. • In the first instance, focus on schools with larger playing fields. • Enter into a MoU with the department of Education regarding suitable joint use projects • Seek partnerships with both public and non-government schools
9. New Technology	Consider and evaluate new technology options including: • Emerging roll out synthetic cricket pitch technology • Booking software to maximise efficiency • Remote access control to buildings on sportsfields
10. Cricket Fields Reconfiguration	Liaise with NBC cricket associations to identify opportunities for reconfiguration of grounds to accommodate additional junior cricket facilities (based on Cricket NSW guidelines) without adversely impacting on shared use with other codes.
11. Sydney Academy of Sport	Advocate for upgrading of track and field area as part of master planning to address quality/ safety concerns of athletics groups. Seek potential use of playing fields for training.
12. Dog Park Strategy	As part of the forthcoming Dog Park Strategy, review the appropriateness of providing dog parks (including off leash) at sports field locations.
13. Detailed Review of Strategy #1	By the end of 2021 complete a detailed review of Strategy progress and reassess the appropriateness and priority of unimplemented recommendations to 2026 and 2031.

8.2.2 Planning and Management Recommendations (Specific Reserves)

RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Aquatic Reserve	Field 1	Keeping in mind the constraints of the site as a former landfill, investigate the potential to improve drainage and surface quality.
2. Ararat Reserve	All	Revisit the Sunday booking agreement with Eurofest in order to potentially extend usage and amend as agreed. Investigate the potential to improve drainage and surface quality.
3. Balgowlah Oval	All	Investigate either: (1) Potential for reconfiguration/ reshaping of field and realignment of golf hole(s) to expand area/ capacity, or (2) Incorporation of expanded playing fields into potential conversion of Balgowlah Golf Course to playing fields (refer recommendation 8.2.1 (3)). Assess the functionality of the amenities block and need for more storage.
4. Bantry Reserve	All	Review current Council agreement in order to allow for full allocation/ use of the reserve, and amend as agreed. Assess the functionality of the amenities block and need for more storage.
5. Beverley Job Park	Netball area	Investigate converting the former netball area to lit, multi-use hardcourts.



RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
6. Brookvale Park	All	Undertake a review and develop a short, medium, long term facility upgrade and management plan. Seek funding and management partners.
7. Cromer Park	Field 1	At the expiration of the current lease, review lease terms with MWFA in order to facilitate options for improved access.
	Field 2	Prepare and implement a Management Plan to maximise the use of the new synthetic surface.
8. Forestville Park	All	Review the agreement with Forestville Rugby League to maximise the use of fields 1 and 2 and amend as agreed.
9. Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields	All	Review the existing MOU to ensure the facility is used to its maximum potential.
10. John Fisher Park Sports Complex	Softball, Netball, Reub Hudson/ Denzil Joyce, Fields 3-5	Prepare a Master Plan which incorporates: • Investigation of best use of all sportsgrounds and facilities particularly in regard to softball and conversion of existing space for other uses (if softball is able to be relocated) • Investigation of options to address car parking demands, particularly for netball (including potential conversion of existing courts, or decentralisation of netball competitions, or rescheduling of competitions times) • Investigation of field and lighting levels, reconfigurations and reallocations • Assessment of the functionality of amenities and storage and upgrade where necessary • Review field layouts to maximise functionality and usage • Rectification of playing surfaces
11. John Fisher Park (Fields 3, 4 & 5)	Fields 3-5, Abbott Rd	Reduce level of use on these fields as soon as practicable. Other development subject to outcome of John Fisher Park Sports Complex master plan (refer recommendation 10 above)
12. Killarney Heights Oval	All	Assess and functionality of the amenities block and storage.
13. Kitchener Park	All	Provide input into State Government plans for commuter parking to ensure adequate parking for user groups at this location.
14. LM Graham Reserve	All	Plan for future expansion and upgrading of northern amenities building to cater for sport and recreation needs, removal of the southern amenities building, and returning of this area to public open space.
15. Manly Oval	All	Assess the functionality of amenities, scoreboard, pavilion, other buildings and entry. Identify any necessary improvements needed to drainage and irrigation and determine the most appropriate solution.
16. Nolan Reserve	All	Investigate lighting upgrade and options to improve drainage in order to reduce field down time.



RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
17. North Narrabeen Reserve	All fields	Prepare a Master Plan which considers: • Review of field layouts to maximise opportunities for shared use • Review of lighting layout and levels in accordance with most appropriate layout and ensure compliance with standards of competition • Investigation of installing 90 degree parking along Walsh St & formalising the current overflow parking area • Investigation of installing a playing field on the existing market area • Upgrading of drainage/ irrigation • Adequacy of amenities
18. Passmore Reserve	All	Investigate the need for drainage improvements
19. Terrey Hills Oval	Whole area	Review existing agreement with rugby union to investigate opportunities for shared use of amenities and storage, or alternatively, review other options to service multiple user groups.
		Investigate reconfiguration and upgrading of cricket nets and hard courts to enhance utilisation of available space.
20. Waldon Road Reserve	All	Review agreement with Wakehurst Rugby Union to maximise multi-use of the Reserve and amend as agreed.
21. Warriewood Valley Sportsground	All	Investigate the need for, and feasibility of, drainage improvements

8.2.3 Recommendations to Increase Capacity

RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Careel Bay	Mini Fields	Convert to full size field (incorporating minis) in order to expand the capacity of the area. Include cricket pitch if no impact on playing area. Install drainage.
2. Cricket Fields Reconfiguration	All	Subject to the outcome of the investigation at 8.2.1 (10) undertake reconfiguration of identified grounds where feasible to accommodate additional cricket facilities.
3. Cromer Park	Field 2	Proceed with planned installation of synthetic surface
4. Forestville Park	Field 1	Following the outcome of negotiations with Forestville Rugby League at 8.2.2 (9) pursue greater use of Field 1 and upgrade lighting to 100 lux. Monitor future intensity of use to determine if drainage improvements are necessary.
	Field 2	Undertake ground improvements to improve utilisation of Field 2 including field expansion, lighting to 100 lux, drainage and irrigation.



RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
5. Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields	All	Modify the design and/ or management of the cricket practice nets to facilitate greater use of synthetic field. If unsuccessful, investigate the relocation of cricket practice nets. Upgrade drainage on natural turf fields.
6. John Fisher Park	Frank Gray Oval	Install competition level lighting (100 lux) and monitor impact on surface quality for hockey.
7. John Fisher Park	Mike Pawley Oval	Install competition level lighting (100 lux) and monitor impact on surface quality for hockey.
8. Lionel Watts Reserve	Fields 3 and 4	Proceed with installation of synthetic surface.
9. Narrabeen Sports High	Synthetic field	Review the allocation and booking process and current fee structure to ensure full utilisation during peak periods.
10. North Narrabeen Reserve	Field 7	Subject to outcome of the Master Plan at 8.2.2 (18) proceed with the development of a playing field at this location.
11. Passmore Reserve	Fields 1 and 2	Install competition standard lighting to 100 lux.
12. School sites	n/a	Upgrade identified school facilities to cater for training and competition (Phase 1), including those agreed with the Department of Education (refer recommendation 8.2.1 (8)).
13. Tristram Reserve	Fields 1 and 2	Install training level lighting to 100 lux and upgrade drainage as required.
14. Warriewood Valley Land Release	Future Expansion Site (Acquisition)	Continue with action to acquire land through s94 plan and implement development of sportsfields.

8.2.4 Service Level Recommendations

RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Allambie Heights Oval	All	Undertake irrigation and drainage improvements in order to improve field resilience. Assess the functionality of amenities/ storage and upgrade if considered necessary.
2. Aquatic Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.2.2 (1) undertake improvements to drainage if feasible.



RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
3. Beacon Hill Reserve	Field 2	Install irrigation to improve field resilience.
	Field 1	Upgrade lighting to 100 lux
	Amenities	Assess the functionality of the amenities block and upgrade if considered necessary.
4. Boondah Reserve	New Land	Develop up to 5 hard surface lit netball courts once land has been acquired as part of S94 Plan.
	Field 2	Upgrade lighting to 100 lux
5. Condoover Street Reserve	All	Utilise as a non-sport specific training space. Investigate low cost improvement to car park and low cost relocatable amenities.
6. County Road Reserve	All	Investigate options for long term tenure with RMS.
7. Cromer Park	Amenities (Field 2-5)	Proceed with upgrade of amenities subject to review of capacity after installation of synthetic surface.
8. Dee Why Park	All	Investigation the potential for additional mini fields
9. Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields	Netball area	Proceed with conversion of grass courts to 5 hardcourts and install lighting.
10. James Morgan Reserve	All	Assess the functionality of the amenities block and upgrade if considered necessary.
11. John Fisher Park	Fields 3-5, Softball, Netball, Reub Hudson/ Denzil Joyce	Implement recommendations of the master plan undertaken at 8.2.2 (11).
12. Killarney Heights Oval	All	Install pathways linking amenities and fields, and upgrade amenities if required.
13. LM Graham Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of planning investigations at 8.2.2 (15), remove the southern amenities building and convert the area to public open space, and expand & upgrade the northern amenities building.
14. Nolan Reserve (District Park)	All fields	Proceed with amenities upgrade.
15. North Narrabeen Reserve	Fields 3 & 4	Upgrade lighting to 100 lux subject to outcome of Master Plan at 8.2.2 (18).



RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
16. Seaforth Oval	All	Reconfigure grounds to amend cricket layout and re-orientate football fields.
	All	Upgrade surface quality
17. St Matthews Farm Reserve	n/a	Implement existing master plan improvements including field rectification and reconfiguration (including provision of new field), and upgrading of lighting to 100 lux.
18. Waldon Road Reserve	All	Following amendment of agreement with Wakehurst Rugby Union pursue greater use of playing field and possible upgrading of irrigation.
19. Warriewood Valley Sportsground	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.2.2 (22) undertake drainage improvements.



8.3 Medium Term Recommendations (2022 - 2026)

8.3.1 Planning and Management Recommendations

RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Dee Why Park	All	Investigate the potential for reconfiguration and potential additional mini fields, and need for lighting upgrade.
		Assess the functionality of the amenities block and need for upgrading.
2. Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields	All	Investigate the need for upgrading of lighting/ drainage.
3. Miller Reserve (District Park)	All Fields	Review utilisation and consider installing drainage system to improve field recovery times.
		Include in assessment of sites for potential synthetic surfaces (refer recommendation 5 at 8.2.1)
		Assess the functionality of the amenities block and upgrade if considered necessary.
		Investigate repositioning of light towers to enable greater utilisation of field area.
4. Narrabeen Sports High School	n/a	Liaise with DoE, Cricket NSW and Baseball NSW to evaluate the schools' proposal for a potential indoor training facility for these sports.
5. Tania Park	All	Investigate the feasibility of installing to 100 lux.
6. Detailed Review of Strategy #2	n/a	By the end of 2026 complete a second detailed review of Strategy progress and reassess the appropriateness and priority of unimplemented recommendations.

8.3.2 Recommendations to Increase Capacity

RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Dedicated Synthetic Hockey Surface	n/a	Pending the outcome of feasibility investigation at refer recommendation 8.2.1 (7) develop new synthetic hockey surfaces in partnership with hockey organisations and external funding agencies.
2. Ingleside Land Release - south	n/a	Develop stage 1 fields in accordance for proposed timing for development and provision of land



RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
3. Cricket Fields Reconfiguration	All	Subject to the outcome of the investigation at 8.2.1 (10) continue to undertake reconfiguration of identified grounds where feasible to accommodate additional cricket facilities.
4. Golf Course Conversion	n/a	Develop new sportsgrounds on a golf course site(s) subject to outcome of investigation at recommendation 8.2.1 (3) and 8.2.2 (4). Incorporate shared use for summer/ winter sports and informal recreation opportunities as primary planning principles.
	n/a	In master planning the redevelopment of a golf course for sports fields include consideration of relocating softball from Abbott Rd Softball Grounds to enable compliant full size diamonds, cricket fields, and access to playing fields for touch.
5. North Narrabeen Golf Driving Range	All	Subject to outcome of investigation at 8.2.1 (4) develop new sportsgrounds on the golf driving range. Incorporate shared use for summer/ winter sports and informal recreation opportunities as primary planning principles.
6. School sites	n/a	Continue to upgrade identified school facilities to cater for training and competition (Phase 2), including those agreed with the Department of Education (refer recommendation 8.2.1 (8)).

8.3.3 Service Level Recommendations

RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Aquatic Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigations at 8.2.2 (1) upgrade drainage if feasible.
2. Ararat Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigations at 8.2.2 (2) upgrade drainage and surface quality if warranted.
3. Bantry Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigations at 8.2.2 (4) upgrade amenities if warranted.
4. Beacon Hill Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigations at 8.2.4 (3) upgrade drainage if feasible.
5. Beverley Job Park	Lower fields	Pending the outcome of investigations at 8.2.2 (5) convert the former netball area to outdoor multi-use hard courts and upgrade lighting if warranted.
6. Boondah Reserve	All	Reconfigure fields to maximise use and upgrade lighting to 100 lux.
7. Brookvale Park	All	Pending the outcome of the investigation at 8.2.2 (6) progressively undertake upgrading works identified to improve capacity and any other works.
8. County Road Reserve	All	Consider installation of low cost relocatable amenities
9. Dee Why Park	All	Pending the outcome of the investigation at 8.3.1 (2) proceed with field/ lighting/ amenities upgrade if warranted.



RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
10. Forestville War Memorial Playing Fields	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.3.1 (3) proceed with lighting/ drainage upgrade.
11. John Fisher Park	Mike Pawley Oval	Assess the functionality of the amenities block and upgrade if considered necessary.
12. John Fisher Park	Fields 3-5, Softball, Netball, Reub Hudson/ Denzil Joyce	Continue to implement recommendations of the master plan undertaken at 8.2.2 (10).
13. Keirle Park	All	Consider establishment of cricket nets in south west corner.
14. Manly Oval	All	Based on the outcome of investigations at 8.2.2 (15), proceed with improvements identified.
15. Newport Oval	All	Investigate adequacy or drainage and lighting and upgrade if necessary.
16. Nolan Reserve	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.2.2 (16) proceed with lighting and drainage upgrade.
17. North Narrabeen Reserve	All	Subject to outcome of the Master Plan at 8.2.2 (17) proceed with recommended improvements (eg lighting, upgraded amenities building between rugby union and baseball fields)
18. Passmore Reserve (District Park)	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.2.2 (18) upgrade drainage if warranted.
19. Tania Park	All	Install drainage to improve field resilience and functionality.
20. Terrey Hills Oval	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.2.2 (19) implement upgrades to amenities, cricket nets and hard courts.
21. Wyatt Reserve	All	Assess the functionality of the amenities block and storage areas - upgrade if considered necessary.



8.4 Long Term Recommendations (2027 - 2031)

8.4.1 Planning and Management Recommendations

RESERVE NAME/ LOCATION	FIELD/ FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Detailed Review of Strategy	n/a	By the end of 2031 review the Strategy in its entirety.

8.4.2 Recommendations to Increase Capacity

RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Cricket Fields Reconfiguration	All	Subject to the outcome of the investigation at 8.2.1 (10) continue to undertake reconfiguration of identified grounds where feasible to accommodate additional cricket facilities.
2. Ingleside Land Release - north	n/a	Develop stage 2 fields in accordance for proposed timing for development and provision of land
3. Multi-Use Synthetic Surfaces	n/a	Subject to the outcome of the investigation in 8.2.1 (5) install synthetic surface(s).
4. School sites	n/a	Continue to upgrade identified school facilities to cater for training and competition (Phase 3), including those agreed with the Department of Education (refer recommendation 8.2.1 (8)).
5. Tania Park	All	Pending the outcome of investigation at 8.3.1 (6) install lighting if determined to be feasible and still required to meet demands.

8.4.3 Service Level Recommendations

RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Belrose Oval	All	Consider additional lighting to achieve 100 lux across the entire field and assess functionality of amenities.
2. Boondah Reserve	Field 2	Assess the functionality of the amenities block and upgrade if considered necessary.
	All	Upgrade drainage and irrigation in order to improve resilience of fields.



RESERVE NAME/LOCATION	FIELD/FACILITY DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION
3. Brookvale Park	All	Continue to progressively upgrade works identified at 8.2.2 (6).
4. Collaroy Plateau Park	All	Upgrade drainage to improve field resilience
5. Forestville Park	All	Continue to implement improvements identified at 8.2.2 (8).
6. John Fisher Park	Fields 3-5, Softball, Netball, Reub Hudson/Denzil Joyce	Continue to implement any outstanding recommendations of the master plan undertaken at 8.2.2 (10).
7. Manly Oval	All	Continue to proceed with improvements identified at 8.2.2 (15).
8. North Narrabeen Reserve	All	Continue to implement recommended improvements identified at 8.2.2 (17).
9. Waldon Road Reserve	All	Assess the functionality of amenities and upgrade as required.
10. Wyatt Reserve	All	Install irrigation and drainage to improve field resilience.



8.5 Supply and Demand Model

This section models the impact on the supply and demand position over the three 5-year cohorts. This is based on the assumption that all capacity increasing recommendations identified in the section above are implemented.

Through the *Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis*, a shortfall in the current supply of sportsground playing surface was identified as 24Ha. This was forecast to grow (without any action to address supply) to 41.4Ha by 2031. As noted in Section 6.2, three 5-year cohorts were developed to provide a structure for undertaking recommendations and actions. By applying these cohorts to the identified gaps (in the 'do nothing scenario') and linking them to population growth, the following supply targets were identified.

Table 4: Supply Shortfall (Ha)

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Initial Shortfall	24.0	-	-	-
Additional Shortfall from Population Growth	-	5.3	5.9	6.2
Cumulative Shortfall (if no action taken)	24.0	29.3	35.2	41.4

As noted previously, a key part of developing and assessing recommendations for the strategy was to identify those recommendations that could assist in closing the forecast supply gap. Where recommendations were identified as having the potential to increase the capacity and/ or supply of sportsgrounds a method to quantify the resulting impact needed to be developed. To this end, a range of assumptions were established and applied to relevant recommendations as follows:

- **Action 1 Make better use of existing sportsgrounds to increase availability and resilience**
 - Lighting installation or upgrades
 - An allowance was made for the additional hours of use for unlit or partly lit areas
 - Reconfiguration
 - Allowance made for additional playing area created or potential hours of use
 - Reallocation of fields
 - An allowance was made for 'under-allocated' areas to be used to their maximum capacity
 - For school sites, an allowance was made based on the estimated number hours of additional use per potential field
- **Action 2 Convert more existing sportsfields to synthetic to increase sustainable capacity**
 - New multi-use synthetic surfaces
 - For known sites, an allowance was made for the additional hours and intensity of use compared to current allocations
 - For sites yet to be determined, a generic allowance was made for the difference between a natural turf field capacity and a synthetic surface
- **Action 3 Acquiring or securing additional private land as part of new housing developments**
 - For land acquired from known developments, an estimate of 'yield' in playing space developed was allowed (based on Council's Discussion Paper)
- **Action 4 Converting existing open space to sportsfields (eg all or part of a golf course)**
 - For potential golf course development, a generic 'yield' estimate of playing space of 11Ha was allowed (based on Council's Discussion Paper)
 - For other sites, an allowance was made based on the number hours of additional use per potential field



Based on the recommendations to increase capacity outlined at Sections 8.2.3, 8.3.2 and 8.4.2 and the assumptions outlined above, a supply and demand model was developed. The results of this model are illustrated Table 5.

Table 5: Supply and Demand Model Summary (Ha)

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Cumulative Supply Gap (do nothing)	24.0	29.3	35.2	41.4
Additional Supply per Period (from recommendations)	0.0	16.7	16.2	6.5
Cumulative Additional Supply	0.0	16.7	32.9	39.4
Cumulative Net Result (Shortfall)	(24.0)	(12.7)	(2.3)	(2.0)

This shows that with full implementation of all capacity-increasing recommendations, it is possible to address most of the assessed shortfall in the overall supply of sportsgrounds. However, it should be noted that this assumes all actions are implemented and that the entire supply system is being used at capacity.

To assist with further analysis, the modelling has been broken down to describe the impact on supply by 'Action' type over the three time periods within the time frame of Strategy recommendations. This is outlined at Table 6.

Table 6: Supply Increase by 'Action' Type - 2016 - 2021 (Ha)

	2021	2026	2031	Total
Action 1 Make better use of existing sportsgrounds to increase availability and resilience	8.0	2.6	0.0	10.6
Action 2 Convert more existing sportsfields to synthetic to increase sustainable capacity	4.0	0.0	1.3	5.4
Action 3 Acquiring or securing additional private land as part of new housing developments	3.6	2.6	5.2	11.4
Action 4 Converting existing open space to sportsfields eg all or part of a golf course	1.0	11.0	0.0	12.0
Total	16.7*	16.2	6.5	39.4

**Difference is due to rounding*

This shows that there is a significant contribution to addressing the projected shortfall by all actions.

In the first 5-year period, Action 1 contributes almost half of the projected increase. This includes increasing the capacity of existing sportsgrounds and improving and utilising school facilities³. Additional capacity is also provided through Action 2 (4Ha) and Action 3 (3.6Ha) during this period.

In the second 5-year period, the majority of the projected increase comes from Action 4 based on the assumption that up to 11Ha can be gained through the conversion of golf course space (to be determined). This is supplemented by an assumed increase relating to access and use of school facilities (Action 1, 2.6Ha) and land acquired through development (Action 3, 2.6Ha).

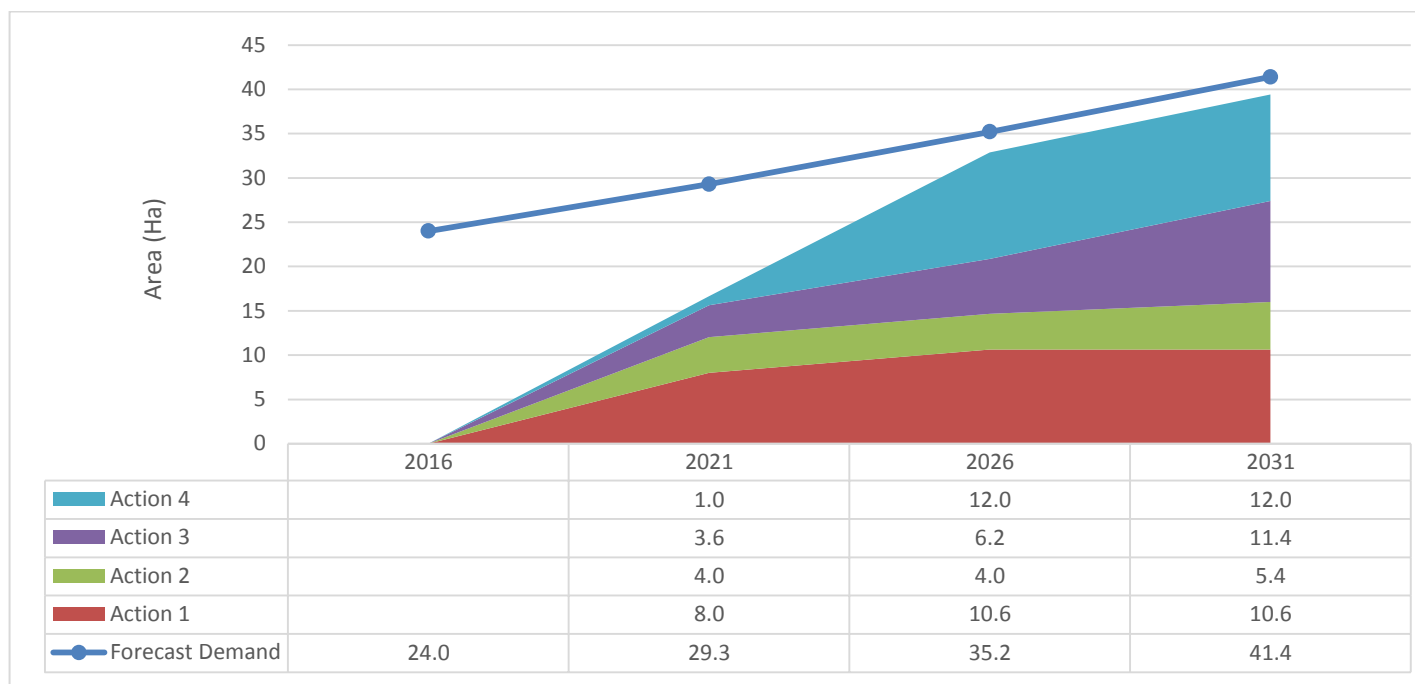
The third 5-year period, by and large, keeps pace with projected demand from population growth through the acquisition of additional land from development (Action 3, 5.2Ha) and the installation of an additional synthetic sportsfield (Action 2, 1.3Ha).

Figure 3 below further demonstrates the potential impact on supply by each action and the cumulative impact of all actions compared to the forecast demand gap over the three time periods.

³ Subject to discussion/negotiation with schools



Figure 3: Demand and Supply Model (Cumulative)



This graphically demonstrates the impact of each action over the three time periods and illustrates the extent to which the forecast gap can be closed with all actions employed as per the recommendations. Ongoing monitoring of the demand, supply and use of sportsgrounds will be necessary to manage the continued review and implementation of the recommendations.

The recommendations of this Strategic Directions Analysis suggest a major review of recommendations in 2021 and 2026.



9. Appendix 1: Summary of Feedback on Discussion Paper

In early April, Northern Beaches Council undertook a comprehensive community engagement exercise to seek community and stakeholder feedback on the Discussion Paper. This comprised:

- Media promotion of feedback opportunities
- Telephone survey of 402 residents (Micromex Research)
- Invitation of submissions (618 received at close)
- On-line survey of residents (4,152 received at close)
- Community drop-in sessions (x6)
- Briefings of sports and golf representatives
- Sports Forum with sports within the scope of the study

This is a very high level of community involvement and indicates a great deal of interest in the outcome of the project.

9.1 Survey Responses

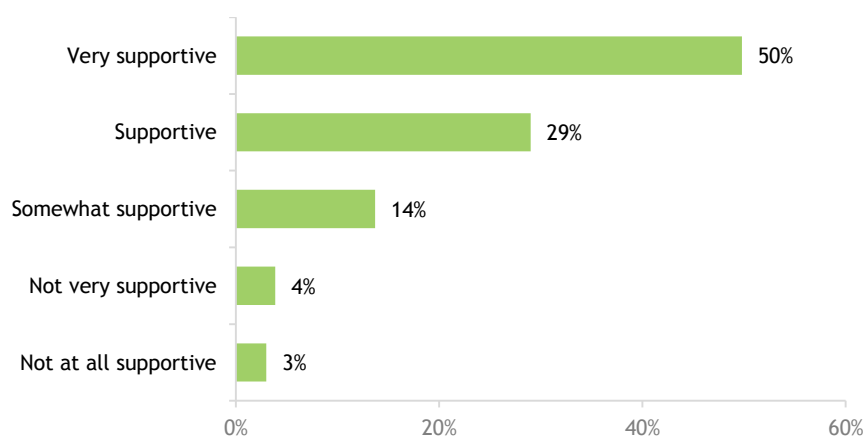
9.1.1 Telephone Survey

Micromex Research conducted 402 interviews during the period 26th April to 1st May 2017. The survey sample was weighted by age, gender and Council area to reflect the 2011 ABS community profile of Northern Beaches Council. The summary of survey findings notes that “...the sample size of 402 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.9% at 95% confidence. This means that if the survey was replicated with a new universe of N=402 residents, that 19 times out of 20 we would expect to see the same results, i.e. +/- 4.9% at 95%.”⁴ Micromex Research, together with Northern Beaches Council, developed the questionnaire. A full copy of the survey analysis is available on Council’s website.

Residents were asked to indicate their level of support for Council addressing the shortfall in sportsfields, their level of support for the Actions contained in the Discussion Paper, and their preferred option. The following summary of responses is derived directly from the May 2017 Micromex Research report on the results of the survey.

Residents were in favour of Council addressing the shortfall in sportsfields, with 50% being very supportive and 29% supportive (refer Figure 4). Those aged 65 and over, and golf club members were, from a relative perspective, significantly less supportive.

Figure 4: Level of support toward addressing the shortfall in sportsfields (Telephone Survey)

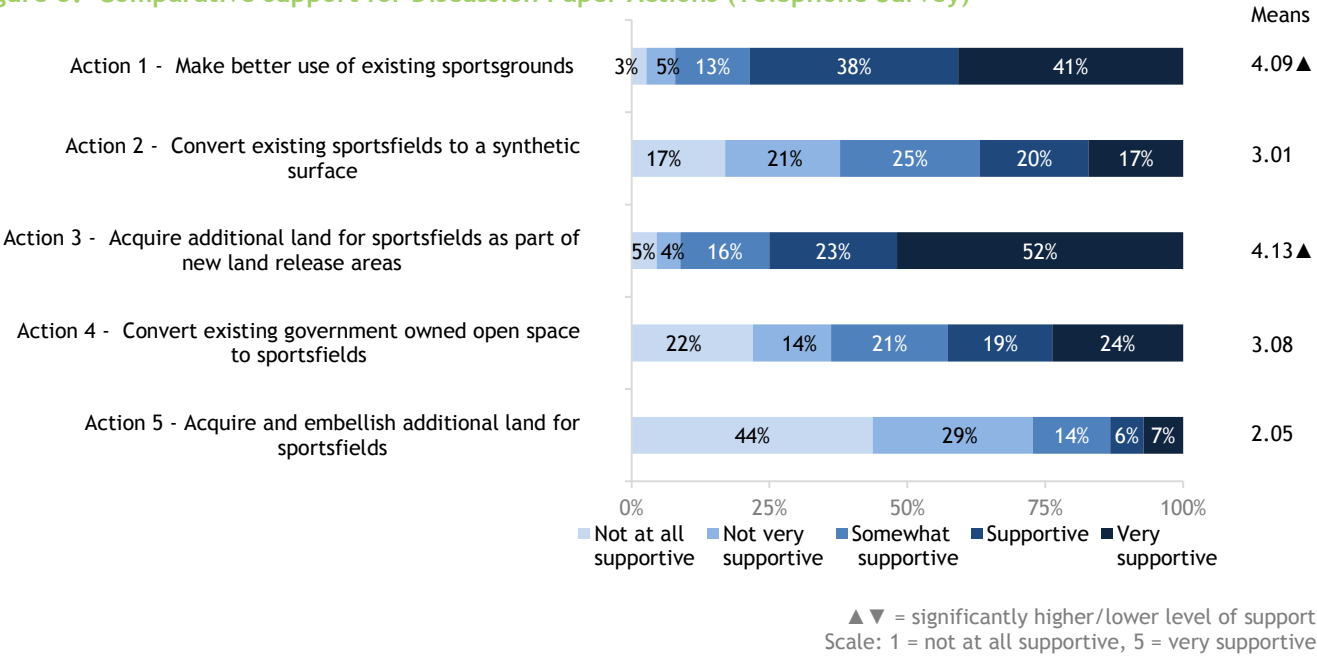


⁴ The telephone survey protocol means there is a high level of confidence that telephone survey respondents’ responses would reflect the wider views of NBC residents



Acquiring additional land as part of new land releases (Action 3) and making better use of existing grounds (Action 1) were the Actions with the highest levels of support (refer Figure 5).

Figure 5: Comparative support for Discussion Paper Actions (Telephone Survey)



Residents were less supportive of Action 2 (Converting existing fields to a synthetic surface) with 37% being supportive or very supportive and 38% not very supportive or not supportive at all. Support for Action 4 (Convert existing government owned open space to sportsfields, i.e. all or part of a golf course) was ostensibly balanced. Non-ratepayers were significantly more supportive, as were those aged 18-49, however, residents aged 50 and over expressed significantly less support, as did golf club members. Acquiring and embellishing additional land (Action 5) was the least appealing of the actions to residents, with 73% not very supportive or not supportive at all.

Telephone survey respondents were asked to indicate their preference for one of two options they would prefer Council to implement. The wording of these options was as follows:

Option A - Implementing Actions 1 - 4

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

OR

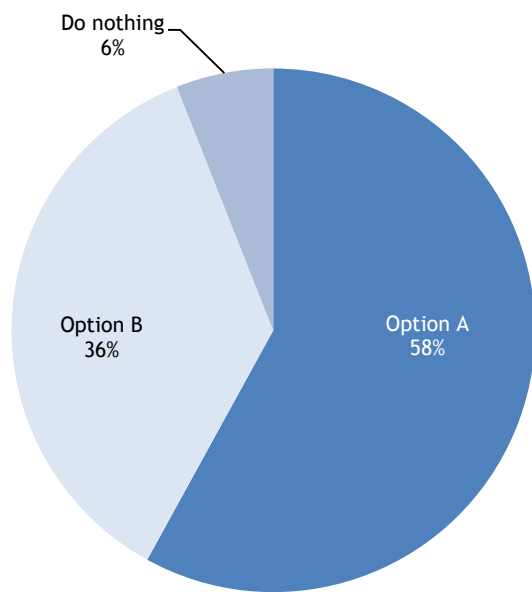
Option B - Implementing Actions 1 - 3 only

Makes better use of our existing sportsfields and new synthetics, 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.

The preference of the majority of residents for Council to implement was Option A (refer Figure 6).



Figure 6: Preferred implementation option for Council (telephone survey)



The main reasons expressed in support of Option A were as follows:

- Best combination of solutions 25%
- Converting golf courses is efficient 23%
- Important to have sportsfields for everyone 19%
- Other 12%

36% of residents preferred Option B. The main reasons expressed in support of Option B were as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Don't want to lose any golf courses | 29% |
| • Utilise what is available | 6% |
| • Older members of the community enjoy the golf courses | 5% |
| • Best option | 4% |
| • Golf courses are an important green space | 4% |
| • Other | 19% |

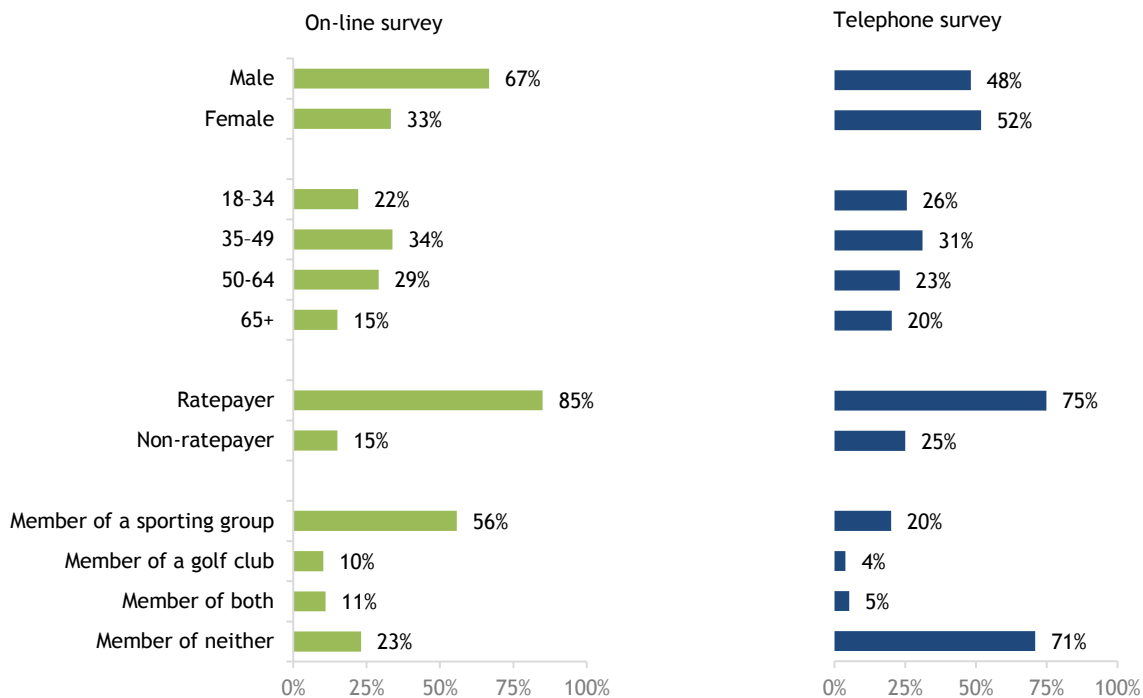
9.1.2 On-Line Survey

Northern Beaches Council made available a link to an on-line survey on its website during the period 12th April to 7th May 2017 to enable residents to provide feedback on the Discussion Paper. 4,152 surveys were completed. The on-line survey was analysed by Micromex Research. A full copy of their analysis report is available on Council's website.

Compared to the telephone survey, opt-in on-line survey respondents were more likely to be male, and a member of a sporting or golf club (refer Figure 7).

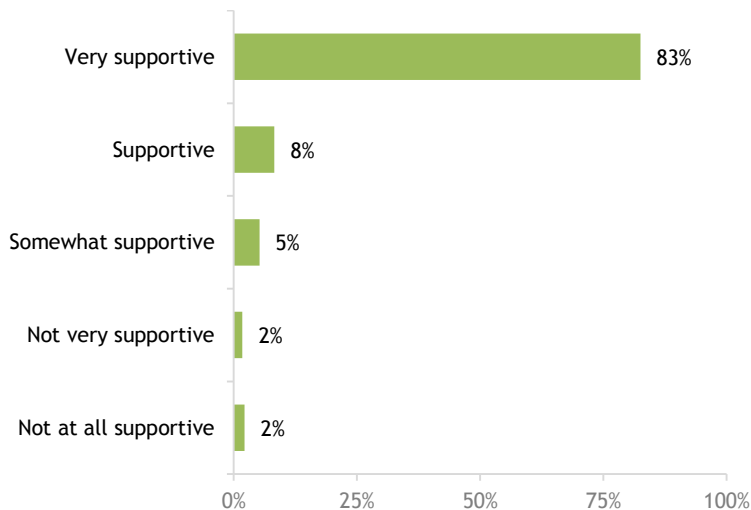


Figure 7: Comparison of opt-in on-line survey vs telephone survey composition



On-line survey respondents had significantly stronger levels of support for addressing the sportsgrounds shortfall compared to the telephone survey, with 83% being very supportive and 8% supportive (refer Figure 8).

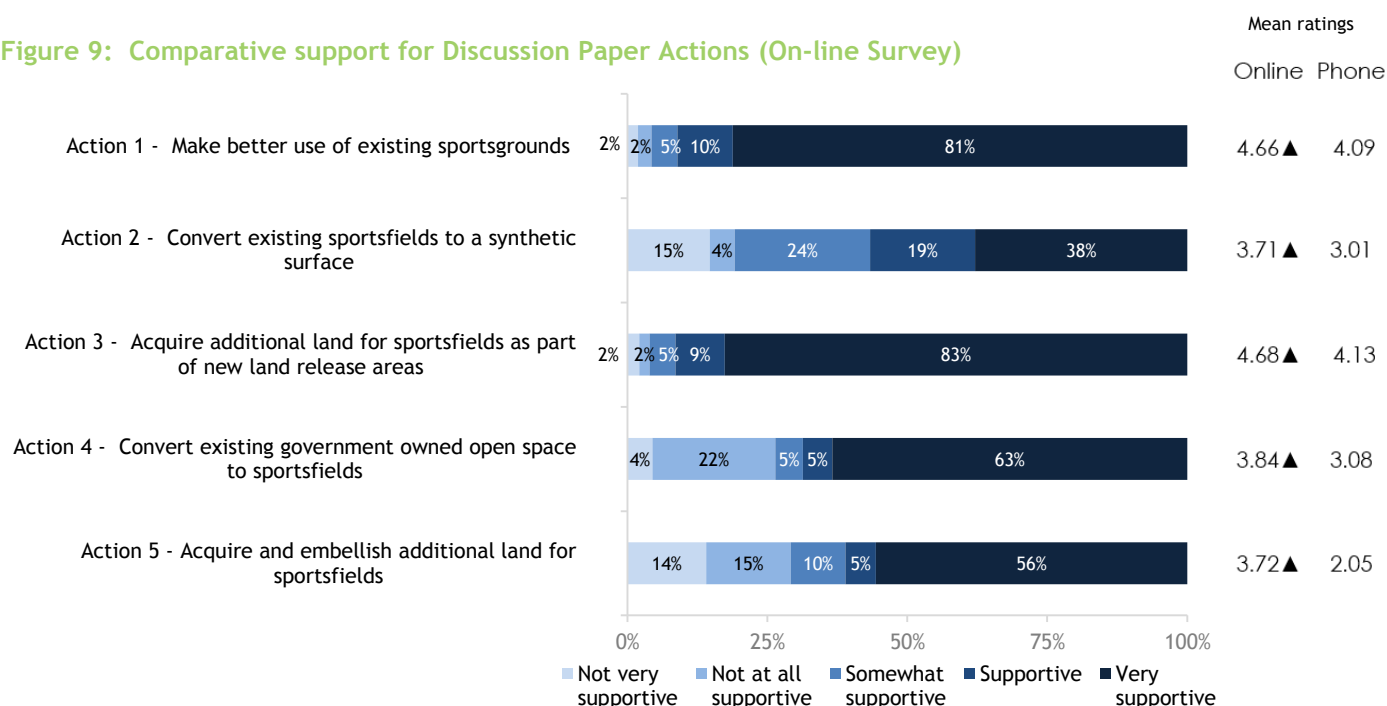
Figure 8: Level of support toward addressing the shortfall in sportsfields (On-line Survey)



All 5 Discussion Paper actions had significantly stronger levels of support among on-line participants compared to the telephone survey, however, as with the telephone survey, on-line survey respondents had a stronger preference for Action 3 (Acquiring additional land as part of new land releases) and Action 1 (Making better use of existing grounds) (refer Figure 9).



Figure 9: Comparative support for Discussion Paper Actions (On-line Survey)



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

As per the telephone survey, the on-line survey asked respondents to indicate their preference for one of two options they would prefer Council to implement. The wording of these options was as follows:

Option A - Implementing Actions 1 - 4

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

OR

Option B - Implementing Actions 1 - 3 only

Makes better use of our existing fields and new synthetics, 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.

There was a much stronger preference for Option A (73%) among opt-in on-line survey respondents compared to the telephone survey (58%). The main reasons expressed in support of Option A were as follows:

• Best option	18%
• Convert golf courses to maximise grounds per sport	17%
• Fairer use of community resources	8%
• Also need to acquire new land	6%
• Addresses the shortage	5%
• Need more sporting facilities	3%
• Synthetic is better for all purpose	3%
• Increase sports participation	3%
• Helping build a better future	2%
• This is a start, but won't fix the problem, will need to find more solutions	2%
• Caters for the growing population	2%
• Other	6%

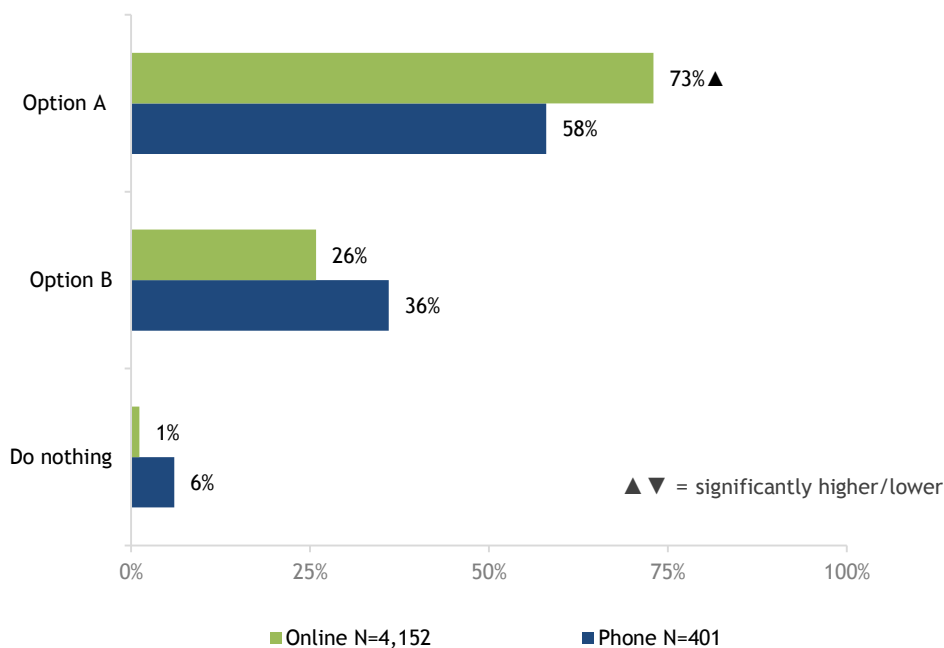


Only 26% of on-line survey residents preferred Option B, compared to 36% of telephone respondents. The main reasons expressed in support of Option B were as follows:

• Against the conversion of existing golf courses	12%
• Need to better utilise, upgrade and maintain the existing facilities/ fields	3%
• Best option	3%
• The removal of golf courses will impact our environment and health	2%
• Golf is the most appropriate sport for the aging population	2%
• Against the removal of Warringah Golf Course	1%
• More information and options are required	1%
• Consider using other open public land	1%
• Other	4%

A graphic comparison of on-line survey vs telephone respondents' preference option for Council to implement is illustrated at Figure 10.

Figure 10: Preferred implementation option (telephone vs online survey respondents)



9.2 Written Submissions

9.2.1 Individuals and Organisations

Over 600 written, email or NBC 'your say' website submissions were received - the latter accounting for about 90% of all submissions. Most respondents identified that they were involved in either hockey, soccer, golf or touch. Northern Beaches Council engaged Parkland Planners to review and summarise these submissions. The following is a precis of their summary analysis. Their report is available on Council's website.

Some submissions queried the data on player numbers for golf vs field sports and/ or expressed the view that the argument for more sportsgrounds is a perceived bias against golf. Those expressing support for more sportsgrounds noted that sporting facilities/ fields:

- Are part of the active culture and proud sporting tradition of the Northern Beaches.
- Promote physical and mental health to address the concern about obesity, and
- Are being overused due to increasing population and there is a need for additional sportsgrounds, especially for children's sport



The opposing view was expressed that existing sportsfields are not used all the time so more grounds are not required.

The key views expressed in relation to facility issues and needs of specific sports were as follows:

AFL:	Growing sport, and will require multiple grounds across the northern beaches.
Archery:	More archery facilities across the northern beaches is desired.
Athletics:	Only one synthetic track which is at NSW Academy of Sport. Few other facilities for athletics which are in poor condition for competition. More and improved athletics tracks are needed.
Baseball:	Few fields for baseball on the northern beaches. Baseball is an Olympic sport. Development of baseball on the northern beaches requires more and improved baseball fields. There was also a concern about loss of existing baseball diamonds at Aquatic Reserve.
Cricket:	Junior cricket numbers are increasing. Players have to play shortened game formats to enable everyone to play. Junior cricket requires an additional 5 large grounds and 3 smaller grounds for current needs, as well as training facilities (practice nets, indoor facilities).
Hockey	Currently share grass fields with AFL at Curl Curl. Synthetic hockey fields needed for juniors to learn skills required to transition to seniors, and minimise travel to play on synthetic fields (closest at North Turramurra, Ryde, Pennant Hills, Cintra Park Concord, Sydney Olympic Park).
Netball:	Parking is an issue at North Curl Curl.
Rugby Union:	Would welcome synthetic fields.
Football (Soccer):	High and increasing player numbers, so more grounds (particularly for training) are needed to address the shortfall. Poor quality of grounds. Lighting and better drainage are requested.
Softball:	Lack of and sub-standard facilities for softball at Curl Curl.
Touch	Turning away players because insufficient fields are allocated

Actions 1-4 were supported by people who generally see the need for more sportsgrounds with a strong push for more synthetic fields, especially by hockey players. A number of submissions expressed the view that golf courses (particularly Warringah) should not be used for sportsfields. Others, who play both golf and field sports, saw the need for using golf course land for sporting fields.

However, the general thread of written submissions was that golf course land should not be used before other actions/ options are explored and implemented, and then decide if golf course land is needed.

An overview of written submission views and suggestions in relation to the Actions contained in the NBC Discussion Paper is as follows:

ACTION 1: MAKE BETTER USE OF EXISTING SPORTSGROUNDS

The main comments were as follows (the number of mentions for each heading are shown in brackets):

1. Increase times during which fields can be used (27)
 - Install/improve lighting
 - Install/improve lighting to enable training and games in the evening (especially Frank Grey, Abbott Road, Tristram Reserve, Balgowlah Oval, Passmore Reserve, David Thomas Reserve, Miller Reserve, Nolan Reserve)
 - Use existing fields more throughout the week
 - Split weekend matches between Saturdays and Sundays ie. play more on Sundays
 - Use existing fields more often, particularly on weekdays
 - Play cricket matches throughout the day on Saturdays, starting at 7:30am and finishing at 7:30pm
 - Review wet weather policy
 - Allow play after light rain
 - Use fields in school holidays
2. Improve field quality (17)
 - Improve drainage to reduce the impact of rain on fields



- Install rainwater tanks on all fields to water fields
 - Complete the drainage system at Bantry Oval
 - Better maintenance of existing fields
 - Improve aeration and fertilising
3. Better field allocations (15)
- Reduce game time for over 35's soccer players because they are not as fit as younger players schedule additional matches
 - Increase use of underused fields eg Sydney Academy of Sport, Brookvale Oval
 - Restrict out-of-area bookings
 - Change allocation of fields between sports to better reflect player numbers
 - Club allocation of fields is not always desirable. Use an online field booking system for transparency
 - Sporting groups relinquish "home grounds", particularly for younger age groups, so all grounds are multi-use
 - Dual/ multi-use of currently single-use fields e.g. Sydney Academy of Sport
 - Hold more games at fewer grounds for more efficient refereeing
4. Provide multi-use facilities (10)
- Designate dual/multi-use grounds instead of single use grounds
 - Install multi-use goalposts for rugby union, rugby league and soccer
 - Upgrade synthetic cricket pitches with multiple crease markings to support junior participation
5. Reconfigure grounds (8)
- Smaller playing fields for football (soccer)
 - Cover cricket wickets better in winter
 - Move cricket wickets
 - Change field markings to fit in more junior fields such as at Terrey Hills Oval
 - Increase the usable playing surface at Frenchs Forest Showground/ Lionel Watts Reserve
 - Expand the area of sportsfields by removing carparking so people can park in local streets
 - Use unused space at sportsgrounds for netball courts
6. Restrict field use (5)
- Cap the number of players
 - Have juniors train and play matches only after school/ mid-week evenings leaving weekends free for others
 - Play fewer junior games per season
 - Don't play "make up" games for wet weather
 - Increase the size of teams so more players can use the field at one time
7. Improve player and spectator amenities (4)
- Clubhouses/ toilets/ shelter
 - Provide amenities and change rooms for women and girls
8. Provide better training facilities (2)
- Batting cages for baseball
 - Cricket nets

A few submissions expressed opposition to improving existing sportsgrounds arguing that damage to playing surfaces would not be fixed by improvements to grounds or opposing lighting.

ACTION 2: CONVERT EXISTING SPORTSFIELDS TO A SYNTHETIC SURFACE

Some 137 submissions expressed the need for synthetic hockey fields while other submissions expressed support for synthetic surfaces (60). Submissions in response to this action 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 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

Numerous existing venues were suggested as possible sites for additional synthetic fields. In addition, consideration should also be given to previously developed sites such as depots and roof tops (e.g. car parks, North Narrabeen Reserve Park and Ride, new carpark at Warringah Mall).

A small number of submissions were opposed to synthetic surfaces because they are too hot to use in summer, are expensive, have environmental concerns (synthetic rubber materials), or are not considered desirable in some specific locations.

ACTION 3: ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL LAND AS PART OF NEW LAND RELEASES

There was support for requiring developers to provide fields in new developments such as Ingleside, but developer contributions should be spent on the development and not elsewhere. Some felt a higher percentage of land in new developments for sporting fields and other open space should be required. Some commented that the opportunity to develop more sportsfields in Warriewood Valley was missed and that a centralised sporting facility for Warriewood and Ingleside is needed.

ACTION 4: CONVERT EXISTING GOVERNMENT OWNED OPEN SPACE TO SPORTSFIELDS E.G ALL OR PART OF A GOLF COURSE

There were several suggestions about the conversion of open space to sportsfields including:

- Golf courses
- Use public and private school facilities on weekends to ease the burden on Council sportsfields. Council could provide synthetic surface, maintenance etc. in return. Use of several schools grounds was suggested.
- Change the market space at North Narrabeen back to playing fields
- Use land at Long Reef (Griffith Park) west of the tennis courts
- Use land adjacent to existing fields at Seaforth Oval and Bantry Bay Oval
- Abbott Road - use the old bowling space and near the old Scout hall
- Convert Pittwater Golf Centre golf driving range (zoned for open space, level, could fit 4 playing fields, has carparking/ amenities, located on Pittwater Road, on bus route, was once used for playing fields, one or more public golf courses could become a new driving range)
- Use car parks, Council depot, or roads for netball/ basketball courts e.g. Parkway Hotel carpark
- Move netball from Curl Curl to Warriewood
- Convert bowling greens to netball courts

There were mixed views about the conversion of golf course land to sportsfields. Those in support of this action made the following points:

- Use all or part of an 18 hole golf course or convert a full 9 hole course
 - Warringah Golf Course
 - Mona Vale (fields closer to Pittwater residents, however the lease has recently been renewed)
 - Palm Beach (lease income is only 1/3 that of Warringah Golf Course, fields closer to Pittwater residents, flat land, parking available)
 - Balgowlah (create a new sporting precinct of fields and supporting infrastructure using material from the Northern Beaches Tunnel)
- There are more field sport players than golf players
- Golf takes up a lot of public land
- The ratio of golf courses to population is higher on the northern beaches than elsewhere
- There are sufficient full and half sized golf courses
- Golf is declining in popularity



- Golf courses are struggling financially
- Golf courses exclude the rest of the community from using them
- Warringah Golf Course has environmental impacts including 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

Those opposed to this action expressed the following points:

- Preserve the golf courses for an aging population and a future increase in golfers
- Sports grounds are not used during the week so why do golf courses need to be used for sportsfields
- 'Robbing Peter to pay Paul' ie. converting golf courses to sports fields is wrong
- Reduction of an 18 hole to a 9 hole golf course is not financially viable and/ or competitions cannot be held at 9 hole golf courses

There were 121 submissions specifically opposing the conversion of Warringah Golf Course to sportsfields. In approximate numerical order of mention the following points were made:

1. High levels of use
 - It is one of the busiest courses in Sydney
 - High number of rounds played and used all day from dawn to dusk
 - Caters for social players and social golf is increasing in popularity
 - Other local clubs could not absorb Warringah members so Warringah members would either have to give up golf or take up bowls
2. Flat topography
 - Seniors like to play on a flat course
3. Affordable
 - Low membership cost is affordable
4. Accessible to all
 - Public course therefore it is accessible to all
 - Accessible by public transport
5. Impacts of sportsground use on residents, sportsground users and others
 - Traffic and parking issues for residents and sportsground users
 - Impacts of noise and sportsground lighting on residents
6. Sportsgrounds at Warringah Golf Course won't meet needs in northern end of 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 re-routed between any playing fields which would be unsafe for children
7. Environmental considerations
 - Removal of several hundred trees would have impacts on drainage, wildlife, air quality, views and visual amenity
 - Peaceful and quiet
 - Green buffer incorporates two creeks and riparian areas
8. History
 - 80 year history as a golf course
9. Capital Cost
 - High cost of converting WGC to sports fields



10. Flood liable

- The southern end is flood liable
- Low areas would require filling, levelling and drainage
- The irrigation system would require replacement

11. Financially viable

- Financially viable
- 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

12. Good facilities and services

- Quality coaching
- Quality facilities and clubhouse

13. Caters for children

- Children can learn to play golf at WGC
- Children can play golf at WGC without restrictions imposed by other golf clubs

14. Utilities

- High voltage underground power cables cross the golf course

ACTION 5: ACQUIRE AND EMBELLISH ADDITIONAL LAND FOR SPORTSFIELDS

Some submissions supported the acquisition of additional land because:

- The population is growing, and the shortfall in sporting fields is not meeting needs
- Transport infrastructure such as bus interchanges are taking open space for roads and carparking

Several sites or general areas were suggested as possible candidates for acquisition. A few submissions outlined alternatives to the acquisition of land eg use of Crown land, partnership with Sydney Academy of Sport. A few submissions opposed the acquisition of land for new sportsgrounds because of concerns about clearing of bushland or cost.

9.2.2 State Sporting Organisations

Some State Sporting Organisations provided feedback on the Discussion Paper in the form of written submissions or via the NBC 'your say' website. The main issues raised were as follows

AFL:	AFL NSW/ ACT indicated they are experiencing facility issues on the Northern Beaches that are, or will, hamper their growth. Current undersupply of grounds and some sub-standard grounds are closed for training or on game days. Specific suggestions for lighting of grounds at John Fisher Park and Balgowlah Oval (Action 1) and installation of synthetic surfaces (Action 2) at Lionel Watts Reserve. Indicated their enthusiastic support for Action 4 (Conversion of existing open space to sports fields) and would contribute to a tier 2 AFL ground as part of any new sports precinct.
Cricket:	Cricket NSW offered some high level responses to the Discussion Paper actions. In relation to Action 1 they suggested upgrading existing (and installing new) lighting to a minimum of 200 lux to allow junior cricket to be played under lights; upgrade drainage to reduce the impact and likelihood of rain effected matches; upgrade existing synthetic pitches with multiple crease markings; and establish partnerships with schools or other institutions to better utilise land or sportsfields. They recognise and support the significant benefits of synthetic sportsfields (Action 2). Cricket NSW endorses the consideration of Action 4 as a reduction in the number of golf courses could enhance the sustainability of existing courses through greater utilisation and deliver efficiency of finite resources.
Hockey	Local hockey facilities are confined to natural grass pitches located at Frank Gray Reserve in Curl Curl and the substantial growth in other sports in recent years means that other facilities are not available. The fields at Frank Gray Reserve can only be used for junior and social competitions, are currently at capacity, have an uneven surface, and are subject to flooding and frequent closure during extended rainfall. The absence of competition standard synthetic surface hockey fields on the Northern Beaches means that local players are often forced to travel in excess of 45 minutes by car for training and games on a weekly basis to



play at synthetic fields across Sydney. This results in local players playing “second fiddle” to other clubs’ facilities and allocated late or inappropriate training times, or players giving up as the sport is deemed “too difficult” to participate in (particularly among adult females).

Hockey indicated that there is a need for a facility with 3 floodlit, synthetic ‘wet surface’ fields on the Northern Beaches. There is a potential for non-Council funding sources to develop the facility. Hockey would want to manage the facility and would require security of tenure. Synthetic hockey fields could be shared with other sports such as touch football, Oz tag or gridiron. The retention of the grass fields at Frank Gray Reserve is regarded by hockey as important in order to cater for social hockey.

9.2.3 Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union (MWPSU)

The Manly Warringah Pittwater Sporting Union acknowledged the extensive work done by many in producing the reports contained in the Discussion Paper. They are in support of all 5 actions and encourage Council to pursue these with haste.

In particular, they mentioned the need for more sportsgrounds in Terrey Hills, Ingleside & Warriwood and suggested a number of locations for conversion of playing fields to synthetic including Careel Bay fields, North Narrabeen Reserve, Cromer 2, and Lionel Watts Reserve. They also identified opportunities for sports grounds including land that is currently used for markets and parking at North Narrabeen Reserve; land currently used for golf driving range at North Narrabeen Reserve; and Stirgess Reserve at Curl Curl which was a sportsground until 2008 and could serve as both active sportsground and passive reserve through the allocation process.

9.2.4 Submissions Prior to Release of Discussion Paper

Prior to the release by Council of the Northern Beaches Sportsgrounds and Golf Courses Discussion Paper, some 104 submissions were received by Council which related to the report to Council on 27 September 2017 and general media coverage. These submissions raised very similar issues to those received later on the Discussion Paper (refer section 9.2.1). The general flavour of the earlier submissions was that, while supportive of the need to address the shortfall in sportsgrounds, they were generally opposed to the closure of golf courses as a means of doing so.

9.3 Warringah Golf Club

9.3.1 Warringah Golf Club - Formal Submission

Warringah Golf Club (WGC) submitted a detailed submission which has been summarised by Parkland Planners. A copy of their analysis of this, and other, community submissions is available on Council’s website. WGC acknowledged and supported the identified need for the current undersupply and condition of local sports fields to be addressed.

WGC indicated its support for Actions 1 to 3⁵ in the Discussion Paper which, in their view, are in the public interest, but opposed Action 45 above for the following reasons:

- Taking away 9 holes from Warringah Golf Course to create playing fields and associated infrastructure is not the solution to the shortage of playing fields in the northern beaches.
- Golf is Australia’s second highest participation sport.
- WGC is a highly used and in-demand golf course, being available and used 7 days a week and 52 weeks a year by all age groups and both sexes. More than 70% of players are over 50 years of age.
- North Manly and Manly Vale is already a high density and congested sportsfield precinct bordered by busy roads and Warringah Mall. Increased traffic generated by additional sporting fields will result in further traffic chaos in the area.
- In their view the need for sports fields is in the northern, not the southern, section of Northern Beaches LGA and locating sportsfields on Warringah Golf Course will not address the inadequacy and need for sports fields in the high growth areas of the LGA.
- WGC has a competitive pricing structure.

⁵ Action 1 (Make better use of existing sportsgrounds), Action 2 (Convert existing sportsfields to a synthetic surface) and Action 3 (Acquire additional land as part of new land releases).



Regarding Action 5 in the Discussion Paper (Acquire and embellish additional land for sportsfields) WGC questioned that community, private or other land is not affordable to acquire for sportsfields. They asserted that Crown land is available in the north and north-western areas of Northern Beaches LGA; that Council should indicate which Crown lands are available; and determine the estimated cost of converting that land to sportsgrounds. Their submission indicated that \$70.60 per annum per household is not an undue imposition on current and future ratepayers to contribute to intergenerational provision of sporting facilities.

WGC did not support Action 6 (Do nothing) because it acknowledges the need for additional sporting fields.

WGC pointed out that, in their view, there were a number of shortcomings in the Discussion Paper, Sportsgrounds Needs Analysis, and/ or the Golf Market Assessment. For example in WGC's view:

- There were selective quotations and use of data which biased against golf
- The Discussion Paper did not accurately express the views of sporting bodies about the future use of golf courses for sport
- The benefits of golf and comparative rates of participation with other sports were not highlighted
- 85% of WGC members are aged 50 years and over and the growth in this cohort was not taken into account in determining the future needs of golfers on the Northern Beaches. They asserted that compromising 9 holes of Warringah Golf Course or closure of a viable golf club solves one problem without considering the consequences on a valued segment of the northern beaches community.
- The Golf Market Assessment refers to private and public golf course data, however, the private golf market is out of reach to the majority of the northern beaches community.
- The Discussion Paper should have quoted the number of public rounds and formal social golf groups, not just membership numbers
- Discussion paper should have mentioned the \$6 million contribution that WGC was willing to make toward community facilities in District Park.
- The conclusion of the Golf Market Assessment that reduced supply will assist sustainability of existing golf courses is not, in the opinion of WGC, soundly based and each of the four public 18 hole golf courses at Wakehurst, Long Reef, Mona Vale and Warringah have limited capacity to take on additional members.
- Council should have included a traffic study in the information provided, or alerted the community to the potential impacts that converting golf course land to sports fields will have on the surrounding precinct and on the wider northern beaches road system.

9.3.2 Warringah Golf Club - Petition

Warringah Golf Club submitted a covering letter and a petition to Council on Wednesday 17th May 2017, ten days after the closing date for submissions of 7 May 2017. The covering letter claimed that 10,373 people signed the petition as follows:

"We the undersigned are concerned citizens urging our leaders to keep Warringah Golf Course an 18 hole course for the community."

There were 1,368 claimed online signatories, and, without the resources to manually count several thousand signatures, it is assumed that the remainder (9,005 people) signed the hard copy petition.

9.4 Sports Forum

A Sports Forum with sports within the scope of the Sportsgrounds Strategy was held on 30th April 2017 to discuss opportunities for improving existing grounds and management practices. Two workshop topics considered the following topics:

- Upgrading existing sportsgrounds to improve usage capacity
- Changing management practices of Council or sports to improve capacity of grounds

Workshop participants were asked to consider the following specific questions:



IMPROVING EXISTING SPORTSGROUNDS

1. What sportsgrounds should be upgraded to improve their usage capacity?
2. What type of upgrading is needed to improve the usage capacity of that ground?
3. What should be the criteria for assessing priorities for upgrading grounds?
4. What criteria should determine the location of future additional synthetic surfaces?
5. How can sports contribute to Council's capital program?

23 reserves were suggested to be upgraded via improvements such as new/ upgraded lighting, irrigation, drainage, new/ upgraded amenities, or reconfiguration. The reserves most frequently mentioned were Lionel Watts, North Narrabeen, Passmore, Frank Gray, Mike Pawley, Forestville, Nolan, and Seaforth.

The main suggestions for assessing priorities for upgrading included addressing over-used fields first, geographic distribution, population distribution, maximising participant benefit (especially multi-sports), and maximising impact on shortfall. Suggested criteria for the location of synthetic surfaces included impact on residents, capacity for multi-use, proximity to transport, access to parking and support amenities, addressing poor quality/ high use fields, and distribution throughout the LGA.

In relation to sports contributing to Council's capital works program, some attendees commented that sports already make a contribution. Other suggestions included supporting external grant applications, partnerships with Council, security of tenure in return for contribution, in-kind support, and setting a contribution percentage.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

1. What management practices can Council change or adopt to enable better usage of sportsgrounds? (eg seasonal allocations, wet weather, pre-season processes, agreement with schools)
2. How can sports change their competition or training practices to enable better usage of sportsgrounds?

There were several suggestions about new or improved management practices that Council could adopt. These included among other things, change or adopt included master planning of reserves, introduction of on-line booking systems, better use of technology for control of lighting and gate entry, lighting standards at different grounds (ie for competition or training), reduce 'blanket' bookings over whole areas, more transparent and equitable allocation process, dual or portable goal posts, engaging turf expert advice on fields, facilitating use of school sporting facilities, more flexible wet weather procedures or allow more decision-making on closures by sports, and consistent approach to pre-season access.

Workshop attendees offered a number of suggestions as to how sports could change their competition or training practices to improve sportsground usage. These included use of school grounds or remote locations where possible for training, shared use of fields and clubhouses, reduced field sizes, better integration of competition draws between sports, rotate training location to preserve fields, more use of well-lit fields for competition, and more training and competition on Mondays and Fridays. Space for training was raised as a key concern especially at season change over times.

Inputs from the Sports Forum discussion on these questions were considered in developing the Strategy and recommendations.

10. Appendix 2: Proposed Sportsground Hierarchy

Facilities	Regional Sportsground A	Regional Sportsground B	District	Local Sportsground A	Local Sportsground B
Example	Brookvale Oval, Brookvale	Cromer Park, Cromer	Lionel Watts Reserve, Frenchs Forest	Millers Reserve, Manly Vale	Condoover Street, Nth. Balgowlah
Description	Typically, single or dual field catering for high level competition of selected sports with spectator facilities	Typically, multi-field facility catering for training and competition for one or more sports	Typically, multi-field facility catering for training and competition for one or more sports	Typically, single field with no expansion opportunity, but capable of accommodating club training and competition	Typically, small and/or constrained area with limited capability for training, pre-season or spill over space
User Community	Use at regional, state & national level	Use at state and regional level, high level of participation and competition	Use at sub-regional and district level, high level of participation and competition	Use at district, local and junior level	Use at local and junior level
Types of Use	Training and competition. Night competition by agreement. Dedicated sporting or event use, with appropriate community access as applicable	Training and competition. Night competition by agreement. Dedicated sporting event use, with appropriate community access as applicable	Training and daylight competition. Night competition by agreement. Shared use with general community when not in use by sport	Training and daylight competition. Night competition by agreement. Shared use with general community	Daylight spill over competition and training. Shared use with general community
Amenities	Change rooms, toilets, kiosks, officials room, meeting room, function rooms, scoreboard, fencing, ticket box	Change rooms, toilets, officials room, meeting room, kiosk, storage areas for training and club equipment	Change rooms, toilets, kiosk, storage areas for training and club equipment	Toilets, storage areas for essential equipment	Nil
Other Facilities	Undercover or formalised seating e.g. Grandstand Pavilion, Barbeques, Picnic table, bench seats, State park signage, scoreboard	Some undercover or formalised seating Picnic table, bench seats, Regional park signage, scoreboard	Covered seating optional with spectator mounds Picnic table, barbeque, bench seats, standard routed timber sign	Informal spectator seating areas or sideline viewing Bench seats, minimum signage (name and conditions)	Bench seats, minimum signage (name and conditions)
Transport & Access	Formal parking, arterial road support with public transport option	Formal parking, sub arterial or collector road support	Designated car park, Collector road support	Usually on street and off street parking. Collector and local road support	Parking on street only, Local road support
Grounds Maintenance	High level with partnership agreement or operator maintained	High level with club partnership agreement	Moderate level with seasonal club partnership agreement	Low level Council maintenance with seasonal club partnership agreement	Low level Council maintenance, with possible club supplement
Sports lighting	To relevant Australian Standard (Television/Video)	To relevant Australian Standard for semi-professional competition	To relevant Australian Standard for competition	Generally to relevant Australian Standard for training	Nil

11. Appendix 3: Proposed Hierarchy Rating of Reserves

1. Existing Reserves

Name of Reserve	Proposed Hierarchy	Name of Reserve	Proposed Hierarchy
Allambie Heights Oval	Local A	John Fisher Park Netball Courts (Grass)	District
Aquatic Reserve	District	John Fisher Park Old Reub Hudson Oval	District
Ararat Reserve	Local A	John Fisher Park Reub Hudson Oval /Denzil Joyce	District
Balgowlah Oval	Local A	John Fisher Park Weldon Oval	District
Bantry Reserve	Local A	Keirle Park	Local A
Beacon Hill Reserve	District	Killarney Heights Oval	Local A
Belrose Oval	Local A	Kitchener Park	District
Beverley Job Park	Local A	Lake Park Oval Reserve	Local A
Boondah Reserve - Playing fields	District	Lionel Watts Reserve	District
Boondah Reserve - Grass Courts	Local A	LM Graham Reserve	Local A
Brookvale Oval	Regional	Macfarlane Reserve	Local B
Collaroy Plateau Park	Local A	Manly Oval	Regional
Condoover Street Reserve	Local B	Manly West Park	Local B
County Road Reserve	Local B	Miller Reserve	District
Cromer Park	Regional B	Narrabeen Sports High (Turf)	Local A
David Thomas Reserve	District	Narrabeen Sports High (Synthetic)	District
Dee Why Park	Local A	Newport Oval	Local A
Forestville Playing Fields	District	Nolan Reserve	District
Forestville Park	Local A	North Narrabeen	District
Foremorial Courts	Local A	Passmore Reserve	Local A
Griffith Park	Local A	Porter Reserve	Local A
Harbord Park	Local A	Richard Healy Playing Field	Local B
Hews Reserve	Local A	Seaforth Oval	Local A
Careel Bay	District	St Matthews Farm Reserve	Local A
Hitchcock Park	Local A	Tania Park	Local A
James Morgan Reserve	Local A	Terrey Hills Oval	Local A
John Fisher ParkAbbott Rd 3,4,5	District	Tristram Reserve	Local A
John Fisher Park (Abbott Rd Softball Ground)	District	Truman Reserve	Local B
John Fisher Park (Adams Street Reserve)	District	Waldon Road Reserve	Local A
John Fisher Park (Denzil Joyce Oval)	District	Warriewood Valley Sportsground	District
John Fisher Park (Frank Gray)	District	Progress Park	Local B
John Fisher Park (Mike Pawley Oval)	District	Wyatt Reserve	Local A
John Fisher Park (Netball Courts - Hardcourts)	District		



2. Future Land Reserves

Name of Reserve	Proposed Hierarchy
Ingleside Land release south	Local A
Ingleside Land release north	District