

*Looking After  
our Community*

# DOCUMENT ON EXHIBITION

## Draft Recreation Strategy 2024

**Exhibition Period: 28 Days  
21 June – 19 July 2024**

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Mid-Western Regional Council

# DRAFT RECREATION STRATEGY 2024



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# 1. Introduction



## 1.1 Background

In response to the growing and changing Mid-Western Region, a new Recreation Strategy has been developed by Mid-Western Regional Council. The purpose of the Recreation Strategy is to provide direction to Council and the community on the planning and development of recreation opportunities and facilities over the next 10 years.

Mid-Western Regional Council aims to provide a diverse network of quality recreation assets that are fit-for-purpose and continue to meet the needs of the Mid-Western community. The strategy therefore demands that current recreation trends and contemporary best practice in recreation grounds and facilities planning and participation models are considered. For the purpose of the strategy, Recreation is to be considered as encompassing assets such as parks, sports fields and facilities, recreation reserves and facilities (including natural reserves and showgrounds).

The Mid-Western area is fortunate to possess an abundance of natural landscapes including mountains, bushland, and waterways where both residents and visitors alike take part in a range of outdoor activities such as cycling, bushwalking, horse riding, swimming and fishing. It also features numerous traditional sporting facilities such as ovals for all forms of football and cricket, along with netball courts, tennis courts and lawn bowls greens, which are managed and activated by hard-working community volunteers. This Recreation Strategy aims to identify ways to improve sport and active recreation facilities, programs and services and to support sport and recreation clubs who deliver physical activity opportunities. The end goal is to maximise people's participation in physical activity so that the Mid-Western community is active, connected and resilient.

Recognising the work completed in the 2013 Strategy, a new strategy provides Council with a chance to refocus its commitment to active and passive recreation and to respond to the trends that are impacting people's participation and their future needs. Council recognises that participation in physical activity helps to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, creates a strong sense of community and belonging and can also be beneficial for communities financially and economically through events and decreased use of fossil fuels.

Locally and globally there have been challenges that have impacted the way in which active and passive recreation has been delivered and the way it is perceived by the community. The impact of the bushfires and flooding coupled with COVID-19 has changed the way that people are participating in recreation and the way that recreation facilities are perceived as much more than pavilions / change facilities, but also as important community resources during emergencies.

## 1.2 Scope and Implementation

The 2024 recreation strategy consists of a comprehensive review and assessment of:

- emerging trends in recreation provision by local government authorities in Australia
- the beneficial outcomes of recreation participation and the links between recreation, community health and well-being and social capital and community development
- the findings and recommendations of other research and planning projects of relevance to recreation provision the Mid-Western Region which has been conducted over the past decade
- determinants of recreation needs in the Mid-Western Region including recreation and leisure determinants and trends; patterns of urban growth and the demographics of the Region
- the existing provision of recreation resources in the Region
- community recreation needs and aspirations, and
- the structure and staffing of recreation services delivery by Mid-Western Regional Council.

The strategy sets out four key themes and related actions that respond to the recreation objectives and identified needs and/or aspirations of the community. These are:

A. Informal recreation and physical activity

B. Active recreation facilities

C. Supporting sports clubs, groups and organised recreation

D. Management and planning

Council's Recreation Services department will be responsible for leading the implementation of the Recreation Strategy in collaboration with relevant internal and external stakeholders. The implementation framework is not intended to represent the level of importance of individual actions rather to provide Council and relevant stakeholders with a guide to assist with staged implementation in an order which is likely to maximise community benefit within realistic parameters. It is important to note that funding and timing of implementation will be subject to Council's financial capacity, competing demands, partnership opportunities and availability of external grants.

The prioritisation categories applied are:

- Short term- implementation within 2 to 3 years
- Medium term- implementation within 4 to 7 years
- Long term- implementation within 8 to 10 years

## 1.3 Community Consultation

Consultation is a critical component of the development of the Mid-Western Regional Councils Recreation Strategy. The extensive engagement period has provided the community's aspirations, whilst also ascertaining the management requirements for key stakeholders. Consultation occurred in two phases:

- Phase One- Stakeholder and community engagement. This being through Sports Advisory committee workshops and community survey
- Phase Two- public exhibition period on draft Recreation Strategy

Council appreciates the time, effort and resources that the community has contributed to this strategy.

## 2. Strategic Context



This 10 year Recreation Strategy forms the road map for the future provisions of sport, recreation, play and open space facilities across Mid-Western local government area. The strategy identifies gaps in provisions and addresses future demands and/or desires with regards to Recreation assets. The strategy, while seeking to anticipate future demand will need to be reviewed periodically as initiatives emerge and progress.

The 2024 Recreation Strategy aligns with relevant National, State and Regional plans and strategies including but not limited to:

- Sport 2030 – National Sport Plan - Australian Sports Commission - 2018
- The Value of Community Sport Infrastructure - Australian Sports Commission, KPMG, La Trobe University, 2018
- Office of Sport - Strategic Plan 2018-2022 NSW
- Towards 2040 - Mid-Western Region Community Plan
- Mid-Western Regional Council Supporting Strategies, Plan and Policies
  - Recreation Strategy July 2013
  - Asset Management Strategy 2022–26
  - Open Space & Recreational Asset Management Plan 2017
  - Walking and Cycling Strategic Plan 2024
  - Disability Inclusions Action Plan 2022- 26
  - Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex Masterplan
  - Flirtation Hill Mudgee Masterplan
  - Robertson Park Masterplan
  - Mudgee Showground Plan of Management
  - Generic Parks Plan of Management

The following commentary identifies how the recreation strategy aligns with the identified strategies and plans. The project alignment is noted in *italics* where appropriate.



## 2.1 Planning Framework

### Sport 2030 Strategic Priorities - Building A More Active Australia

- Drive movement for life and sport and physical activity participation for all Australians (targeted 'less active' groups are people over 65, people with a disability, ATSI people, CALD people, people from regional areas and low income people)

*The strategy aligns as continuing to build recreation resources for the community provides a more active community.*

- Ensure all Australian children have the skills, confidence and motivation to be active for life.

*The strategy directly contributes to this strategy through increased recreation resources, reduced barriers to sport and physical activity participation, including actively promoting incentives for participation*

- Coordinated investment in sport and recreation facilities to achieve sustainable outcomes, with a focus on universal design ensuring accessibility
- Achieving sporting excellence
- Strengthening Australia's sport industry

### The Value of Community Sport Infrastructure

Australian Sports Commission, KPMG, La Trobe University

- The report presents an assessment of the benefits of community sport infrastructure at a macroeconomic, Australia-wide level. It defines Community Sport Infrastructure as local, regional or state-level infrastructure which is operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitation of community sport activities.
- It presents an analysis of the benefits of the availability and use of community sports infrastructure i.e.
  - enable physical activity and by extension, support health and wellness in our communities.
  - provide a space for people from different walks of life to connect around common objectives.
  - supports employment and the economy; and
  - are a critical requirement for liveable regions, cities and neighbourhoods; and creates a framework for assessing the financial value of these benefits.
- Economic benefits are identified as:
  - Increased economic activity (value added).
  - Increased productivity (of physically active people).
  - Employment; and
  - Contribution of volunteers.
- Health benefits are identified as:
  - Personal health benefits (decrease in risk of chronic disease and reduction in severity of mental illness).
  - Health system benefits; and
  - Reduced risk of accidents (falls and drowning).
- Social benefits are identified as:

- Human capital uplift (improved educational and employment outcomes from increased skills, knowledge and experience derived from participation in sports and recreation at community facilities – this section calculates the benefit to individuals rather than to the economy via increased productivity); and
- Green space benefit (use of facilities for other purposes and non-user benefit).

### NSW Office of Sport Strategic Plan 2018-2022 – Priorities

- Places and spaces – well managed facilities that meet the needs of users and investors
- Sector performance – a strategically focussed and empowered NSW sport and active recreation sector
- Participation – more people in NSW participating in sport and active recreation
- High performance pathways – more NSW sporting success and NSW being a valued partner in Australia’s international success
- Our capability – The Office of Sport has the capability to make a valued contribution to the sector

## 2.4 Local Context

### Towards 2040 - Mid-Western Region Community Plan

- The Community Plan sets out a blueprint for growth of the Mid-Western Region to the year 2040. It is a future vision developed collaboratively between the community and Council and represents the aspirations of the people who live and work within the Mid-Western Region and strategies for achieving these goals.
- The Regional Plan outlines the goals and actions for the Central West and Orana Region to achieve a sustainable future. It applies to 19 local government areas including the Mid-Western Region, covering an area of 125,666 square kilometres. The vision for the Central West and Orana Region closely reflects the vision and priorities identified in the Towards 2040 Community Plan. There are direct linkages between the goals, strategies and actions in both plans for the next 20 years.

The consultation outcomes of the Community Plan clearly identify recreation initiatives as a priority for the community and is articulated through the themes

#### IMPORTANT PRIORITIES FOR THE REGION



- THEME 1- Looking After Our Community
  - Community Input- Embrace a healthy lifestyle and get involved in local sporting and physical activities

- Measure- An increase in community participation in sporting and recreational activities

### Mid- Western Regional Council – Recreation Strategy 2013

The 2013 Recreation Strategy was prepared by Mid-Western Regional Council. The purpose of the strategy was to reinforce the direction provided in the 2005 Strategy and continue to offer direction to Council and the community on the planning and development of recreation opportunities and facilities over the next 10.

The following provides commentary around actions undertaken and the current status of the 2013 Recreation Strategy recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
<p>That Council continue to support the Sports Council's, including the revival of the Rylstone/Kandos Sports Council in their role in the management and organisation of sport in the region.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3 sports Advisory groups in Mudgee, Gulgong and Rylstone/Kandoshave been maintained.</li> <li>■ Currently advisory groups meets in person two times per year.</li> <li>■ The purpose and conditions for these advisory committees are captured in a terms of reference document</li> </ul>
<p>That Council undertake the necessary consultation to relocate rugby union to Glen Willow and redevelop Jubilee Oval, the Rugby Clubhouse site and former netball courts for urban development in the short term.</p> <p>A longer term concept plan be prepared for the option to relocate hockey and softball from West End and Junior league from Cahill Park in the future.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Rugby Union new facilities at Glen Willow:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New club house, 4 change rooms, public amenities, kiosk and 2 premier standard playing fields (with enclosed perimeter security fencing). Completed in 2021</li> <li>○ The relocation also involved Council acquiring a parcel of land from Mudgee Rugby Union adjacent to Jubilee Oval. No decision has been reached for the purpose of this land.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Junior league new facilities at Glen Willow:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New club house, 2 change rooms, public amenities, kiosk and 2 full fields and 1 mod sized field</li> <li>○ Junior League handed over to Council their clubhouse at Cahill Park Mudgee. No decision has been made for the purpose of this building.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ The next phase of the recommendation is to undertake the appropriate investigation and consultation to determine what the future use of Jubilee Oval and West End are to be.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important to note that at the Mudgee Sports Advisory Recreation Strategy workshop the group indicated a preference to retain the open space facilities of Jubilee and Westend given their use for overflow for Glen Willow Sporting Complex</li> <li>○ The facility has also been utilised when Glen Willow Regional Sporting complex has been flooded with no access</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ There is currently no active softball program in Mudgee rather only demand for facilities is for local school events. Therefore this has not been captured in the Glen Willow masterplan</li> </ul>

<p>That Council develop a strategy for the on-going upgrade a maintenance of playgrounds at a rate of one within 400m of a dwelling.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Council has continued to maintain access to existing playgrounds within 400m of a dwelling. This has been validated through the capital upgrade program and general maintenance tasks.</li> <li>■ Important to note that there has been a shift of late for new subdivision to install minimal playground equipment and/or be placed in detention basins. A recommendation in the new strategy will be to review the strategic planning and prescribed expectations (through hierarchy system and expected inclusions/magnitude) for new open space provisions.</li> </ul>
<p>That consideration be given to the disposal of pocket parks that represent a duplication of space or are not contributing to the overall open space network.</p>	<p>In-progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No determination has been achieved on the disposal of pocket parks. Progress has been made on the construction of Regional Adventure Playgrounds across the region (Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos) to which once complete will open the discussion to consider pocket park disposal as part of a playscape strategy.</li> </ul>
<p>Developer contributions (via the Section 94 Plan) should be directed towards the provision of equipment or facilities and embellishment of facilities as a whole, rather than the provision of land.</p>	<p>In-progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In some instances provision of open space land continues to be applied as developer contribution.</li> <li>■ Further work is required in the new strategy on new subdivision open space provisions and specifications.</li> </ul>
<p>That Council, through organised sporting groups, the Sports Council's and Mudgee Regional Tourism Inc, investigate opportunities for the promotion of the region's sporting facilities for sports related tourism.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Council continue to resource a dedicated events team that investigates opportunities and supports sports tourism.</li> <li>■ The region has hosted numerous NRL games (including the Charity Shield and premiership games), A-League Football, Waratahs Rugby Union Trial games, Shute Shield Games, Mudgee Classic Cycle events, NSW Touch Country Championships, Junior NSW touch Championships all due to the premier regional facilities at Glen Willow.</li> </ul>

<p>That Council encourage participation of youth in decision making in regard to open space and recreation planning and management through the youth council.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Council involve youth in consultation of projects such as the recent Pump Track and upgrades to skate parks. This is completed through specific workshops and/or through Council Youth Council.</li> <li>■ Council’s Community Services are informed of any decision making with regards youth involvement.</li> </ul>
<p>The Council continue to develop shared pedestrian/cycleway networks throughout the towns including cycle warning signage on local roads adjacent to the urban areas.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Council continued to implement the endorsed Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan</li> <li>■ At the time of developing this strategy, a revised Walking and Cycling Plan current was in draft format. A thorough consultation program has been completed for this initiative.</li> <li>■ A new Walking and Cycle Plan is scheduled for implementation in 2024.</li> </ul>
<p>That Council focus on the maintenance and embellishment of the existing infrastructure and delivery of Stages 2 and 3 of the Glen Willow facility in conjunction with rationalization of duplicated facilities.</p>	<p>In-progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stage 2 Glen Willow Regional Sporting complex complete</li> <li>■ New strategy to continue focus on stages 3 and 4</li> </ul>
<p>That Council investigate opportunities which would facilitate access to swimming year round.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Feasibility study completed in 2019, including concepts and community consultation</li> <li>■ Engineer structural report on existing Mudgee pool completed in 2019</li> <li>■ Indoor Pool Business case completed 2023, including community consultation and concept design development</li> <li>■ New Recreation Strategy to focus on:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Council continuing to investigate funding opportunities for the construction of an indoor swimming pool and continue to consult with the community as required</li> <li>○ Developing aquatic strategy that considers all Councils Aquatic assets and future provisions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Mid- Western Regional Council – Open Space Asset Management 2017



The key elements of infrastructure asset management are:

- Providing a defined level of service and monitoring performance
- Managing the impact of growth through demand management and infrastructure investment
- Taking a lifecycle approach to developing cost-effective management strategies for the long-term that meet the defined level of service
- Identifying, assessing and appropriately controlling risks, and
- Having a long-term financial plan which identifies required, affordable expenditure and how it will be financed

The recreation strategy aligns with the asset management plan to ensure that open space and recreation infrastructure is consistently maintained throughout the life of the asset.

## 3. Influences on Recreation Participation



A range of factors that influence the recreational interests and activities of the community are pertinent to any potential future development within the Mid-Western region. These include the nature of the community in terms of size, age distribution, cultural mix and socio-economic status, trends in recreation provision and the aspirations and needs of the community.

### 3.1 Demographic Profile and Implications

The socio-demographic characteristics of the region have significant implications to and impacts on recreation provision and need. To illustrate, refer to details outlined below:

- A community with a large population can support a far wider array of recreation facilities, programs and services than can a community with a small population.
- A population with large numbers in one or more of the child, family or ageing groups will have quite different needs to communities without these emphases.
- A multi-cultural community will have rather different interests and needs than will a homogeneous community.
- A wealthy, well-educated community will be able to provide and use a more diverse array of opportunities than many others.
- A population which is concentrated, is better able to access and support provision than would, for instance, a scattered rural community.
- Further, a community which has been established for a long period of time will have had the opportunity to develop a far wider array of opportunities than will new residential areas.

The following provides a snapshot of the demographics of the Mid-Western region. Sources include the ABS 2021 census and NSW Department of Planning and Environment Planning Portal 2021

- The Mid- Western region was estimated to have a population of 25,714 as at the 2021 census with 50.3% being male and 49.6 being female.
- The medium age of the Mid- Western region is 42 years old compared to NSW which is 39
- The Mid-Western region population forecast between 2021 and 2041 is expected to grow by an annual percentage rate of 0.77% compared to NSW which will see an annual growth rate of 0.95% in the same period.



- In terms of cultural diversity, the Mid-Western region has a predominately Australian English background which makes up more than 85% of the population.

The demographic profile indicates that there will be growth in the population over the next 10 years. Other noted population changes include that:

- By 2031 the Mid-Western Regional area will see no change in younger age groups however an increase in older age groups
- By 2036 the Mid-Western Regional area will see an increase in both younger and older age groups.

### 3.2 Participation Trends

Data from the Ausplay™ National Sport and Physical Activity Participation Report 2023 below provides an insight to active participation trends in Australia and highlights that informal and formal recreation is both wide and varied through popular activities undertaken.

The information below provide data on Australians aged 15+ in both sport and non-sport related activities. The full Ausplay™ 2023 report provides more detail and data on both males and female adults, male and female children and age cohorts. The full report can be accessed from the Ausport website.

#### Most popular sport-related activities 2022–23 (Australians aged 15+)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS			
Running/athletics	2,084,000	Swimming	2,245,000
Cycling	1,748,000	Running/athletics	1,640,000
Swimming	1,702,000	Cycling	1,063,000
Golf	1,020,000	Netball	573,000
Football/soccer	1,008,000	Tennis	516,000
Basketball	811,000	Football/soccer	360,000
Tennis	689,000	Basketball	299,000
Cricket	573,000	Surfing	278,000
Australian football	472,000	Golf	260,000
Surfing	463,000	Volleyball	214,000

#### What’s changed?

- Among adults 15+, Running/athletics is less popular in 2022-23 than it was in 2021-22 but has still grown in participant numbers since before COVID
- Swimming and Basketball are more popular activities in 2022-23 than in 2021-22.

#### Most popular non- sport-related activities 2022–23 (Australians aged 15+)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Males aged 15+		Females aged 15+	
Fitness/gym	3,861,000	Walking (recreational)	5,736,000
Walking (recreational)	3,662,000	Fitness/gym	4,473,000
Bushwalking	896,000	Yoga	1,211,000
Exergaming*	697,000	Bushwalking	1,296,000
Yoga	220,000	Pilates	1,053,000
Pilates	132,000	Exergaming*	679,000
		Dancing (recreational)	315,000

\*Virtual/technology-based/gaming exercise, for example, motion sensing console games, smart treadmills, online platforms such as Zwift.

**What's changed?**

- Among adults 15+, Walking is less popular in 2022-23 than it was in 2021-22 but has still grown in participant numbers since before COVID-19.
- Bushwalking, Pilates and Exergaming have continued to increase after becoming more popular during COVID-19.

### 3.3 Trends in Recreation Provision and Need

Changes within Australian society are influencing the way in which people allocate their time and resources between work, family life and leisure. Some of the more noticeable changes that are evident in Australia include:

- Changing employment structures, trading hours and work hours (e.g. Higher employment of women, increased part-time and casual employment, seven-day trading, continuing long term unemployment and under-employment within the community)
- Improved technology, which has allowed information to be more readily accessible to the wider community, including from private residences
- Growing recognition of the importance of the environment as an ecological, cultural, recreational, tourism, economic, educational and research resource
- The generally enhanced affluence of the overall community
- The provision of a far greater diversity of culturally and socially focused resources including a greater range of local and district parks, restaurants, book shops, amusement parlours, music outlets, and
- Growing recognition of the strong links between recreational involvement and health (e.g. Preventative health care, active healthy lifestyle programs).

Not surprisingly, these broad social, cultural and economic changes can often have far-reaching impacts on community recreation interests, involvement and attitudes toward what is provided for the community. Some of the trends are likely to influence future demands by the community for sporting and recreational facilities, programs and services within the region.

These demands or expectations are likely to include:

- A demand for a greater diversity of leisure opportunities (e.g. play facilities, youth programs, recreational trails, increased programs for older age groups)
- A greater emphasis on cultural, non-competitive and passive leisure opportunities (e.g. walking trails, community centres)
- Provision of high standards of facilities, quality programming, customer service and management (e.g. signs, brochure information, programming of facility times, car parking, safety, security and interpretation)
- Participation in a far broader array of activities (i.e. not tied to one sport or activity but a mix of activities to suit the lifestyle) and the ability to participate in activities of their choice, at times and locations, which are convenient to their individual lifestyle
- A trend towards more individual activities rather than organised team sports although still wanting to be part of a 'community'
- The desire for recreation facilities which can be used all year (e.g. indoor aquatic facilities, multi-purpose indoor centres)
- Higher levels of recreational participation across all age groups
- A desire for leisure opportunities, which are affordable by all groups across the community
- Expectations of equity and access availability for less mobile member of the community including children, young mothers, the aged and people with movement, sight, intellectual or other disabilities
- A desire for recreational trails which can be used for a variety of activities including walking, cycling, running, roller skating/blading and horse riding
- Growing interest in sustainable, low impact, low energy use and environmentally appropriate activities (e.g. kayaking, walking, mountain bike riding), and
- A desire for bushland preservation, the protection and/or re-establishing of wildlife corridors and interpretive trails, which can be accessed for recreational use.

## 4. Recreation Assets and Services



### 4.1 Service Snapshot

#### Service Description

- Council supports the active recreational, sporting and health pursuits of the community through the delivery and operation of sporting and recreational facilities and public open space across the region. This includes operating active parks, passive parks, reserves, playgrounds, showgrounds, skate parks, an Adventure Playground, a regional sports stadium and associated multiuse fields.
- Council provide seasonal operation of three community heated swimming pools and the provision of a water park.

#### Community Plan Alignment

- **1. Looking After Our Community**



## Core Business Activities

- Provide, manage and maintain safe playground equipment across the region
- Provide, manage and maintain open space for recreational activities
- Support relevant advisory committees and working groups
- Manage operational requirements for sporting grounds and showgrounds.
- Delivery of renewal, upgrade and expansion projects for parks and gardens infrastructure
- Develop, implement and review strategic documents and plans
- Undertake asset planning, analysis, management and reporting activities
- Provide off leash areas for dogs and dog parks throughout the region.
- Operate seasonal heated swimming pool facilities at Mudgee, Gulgong and Kandos
- Provide lifeguard services and operate a Water Park at the Mudgee Pool
- Undertake maintenance, capital upgrades, renewals and expansions at recreation facilities.
- Operational management of roadside vegetation and streetscapes in main towns.
- Operational management of street trees

## 4.2 Open Space Network

As it currently stands, Councils maintains over 76 recreation facilities including sportsground, pools, parks, and playgrounds. At a glance, Councils open space network comprises of the following provisions:

- Regional Parks – approx. 9.75 HA
- Neighbourhood Parks – approx. 52.62 HA
- Reserves – approx. 11.16 HA
- Sporting Grounds – approx. 80.32 HA
- Showgrounds – 2 facilities
- Swimming Pools – 3 facilities, 1 with a waterpark
- Playgrounds- 42 playgrounds
- Skate Parks- 4 skatepark facilities
- Tennis Courts – over 28 active tennis courts

### Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex

Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex is the regions premier sporting complex. It is a Council owned and managed facility catering for a variety of high profile sports and events.

Features include a 10,000 capacity stadium with a 1,000 seat undercover grandstand, canteen and bar, meeting spaces, coach boxes, change rooms and BBQ facilities. The stadium field boast 1,500 LUX lighting and self-draining fields.

The complex also includes an additional eleven (11) full size multi-use fields for both summer and winter competitions, netball courts, synthetic and turf cricket pitches, four additional amenities buildings, and event parking provisions.

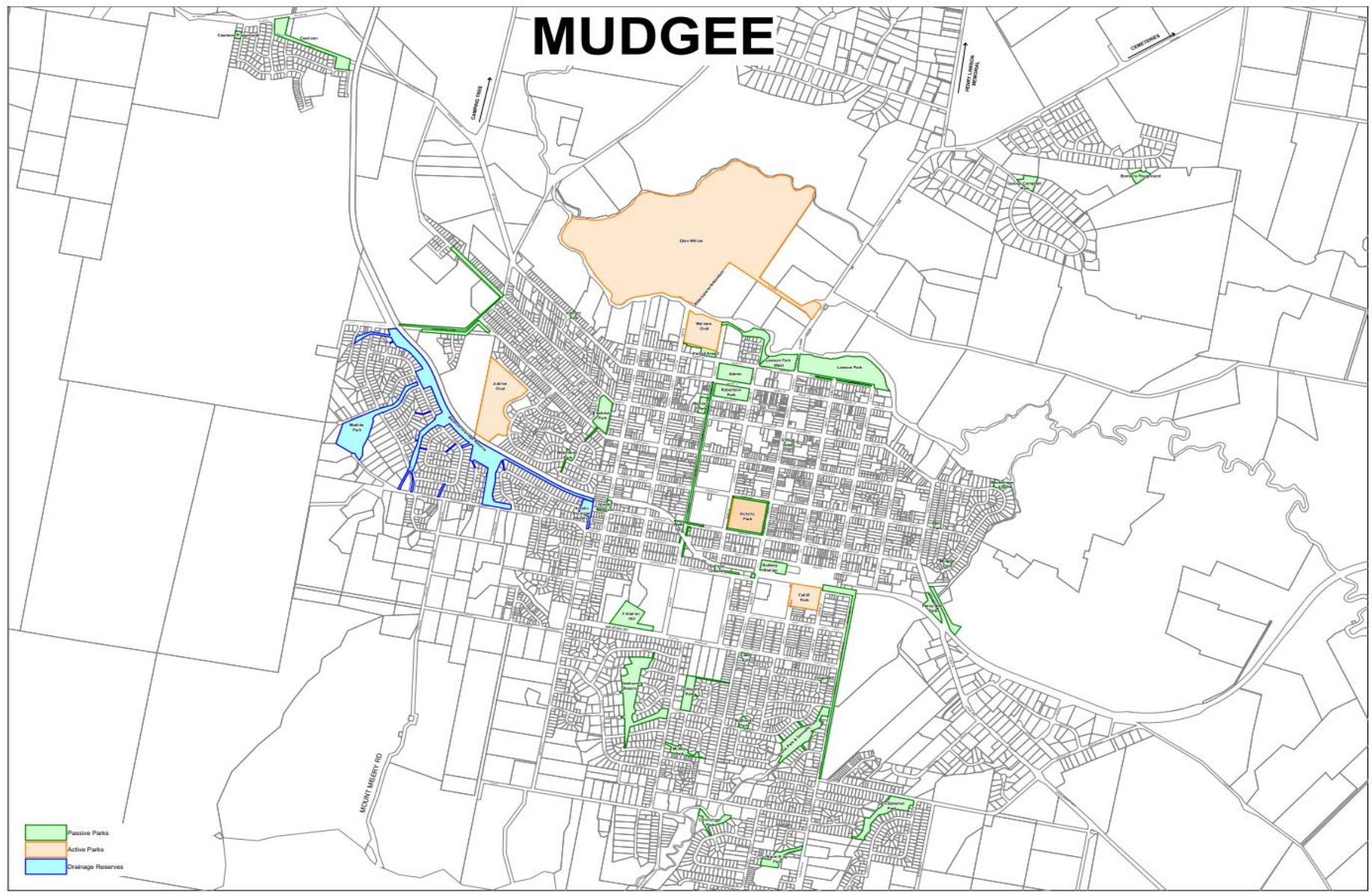
The Complex also provides an off-leash dog area, extensive walkway and cycleway network, passive recreation opportunities and pump track.

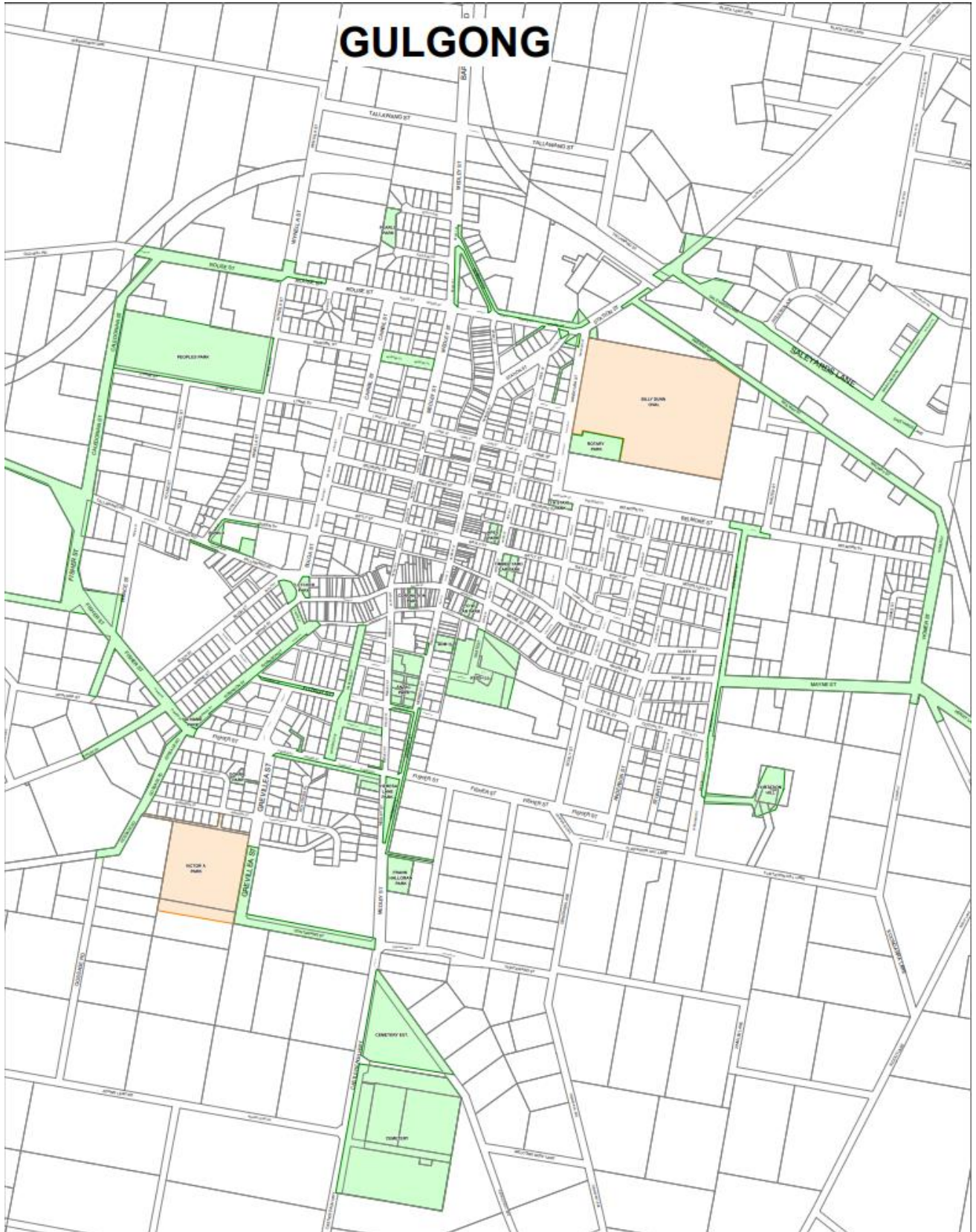
### Key Recreation Facilities

Other notable active and passive spaces include:

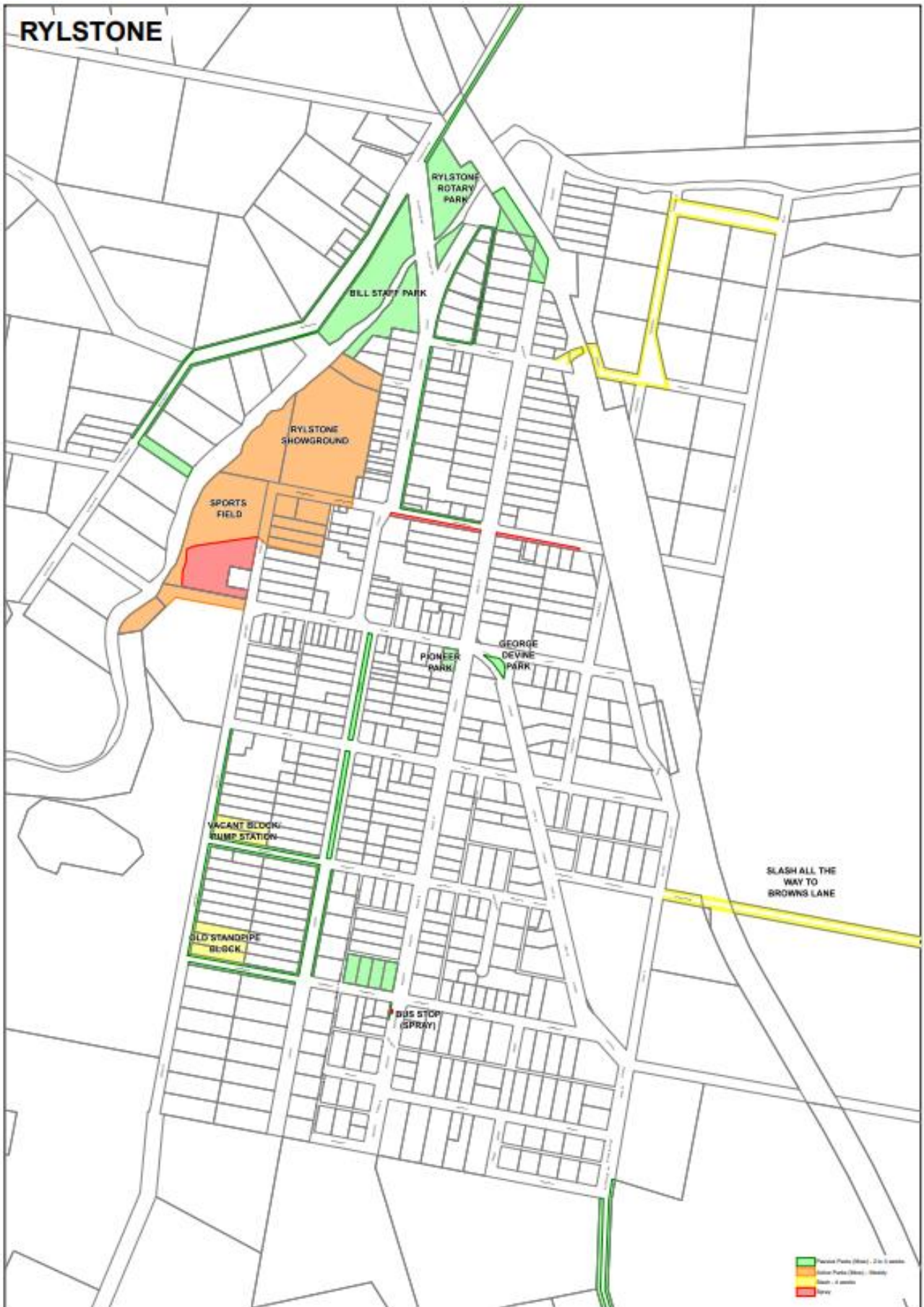
PRINCIPLE	DETAILS
Active	Victoria Park Mudgee Victoria Park Gulgong West End Sporting Complex/Jubilee Oval, Mudgee Billy Dunn Oval, Gulgong Waratah and Simpkins Park, Kandos Rylstone and Mudgee Showground
Passive	Gulgong Adventure Playground Rotary and Darton Park, Kandos Robertson Park, Mudgee Lawson Park, Mudgee Mudgee and Rylstone Common Flirtation Hill, Mudgee Flirtation Hill, Gulgong Peoples Park, Gulgong Riverwalks Mudgee and Rylstone

## 4.2 Township Open Space and Precinct Maps











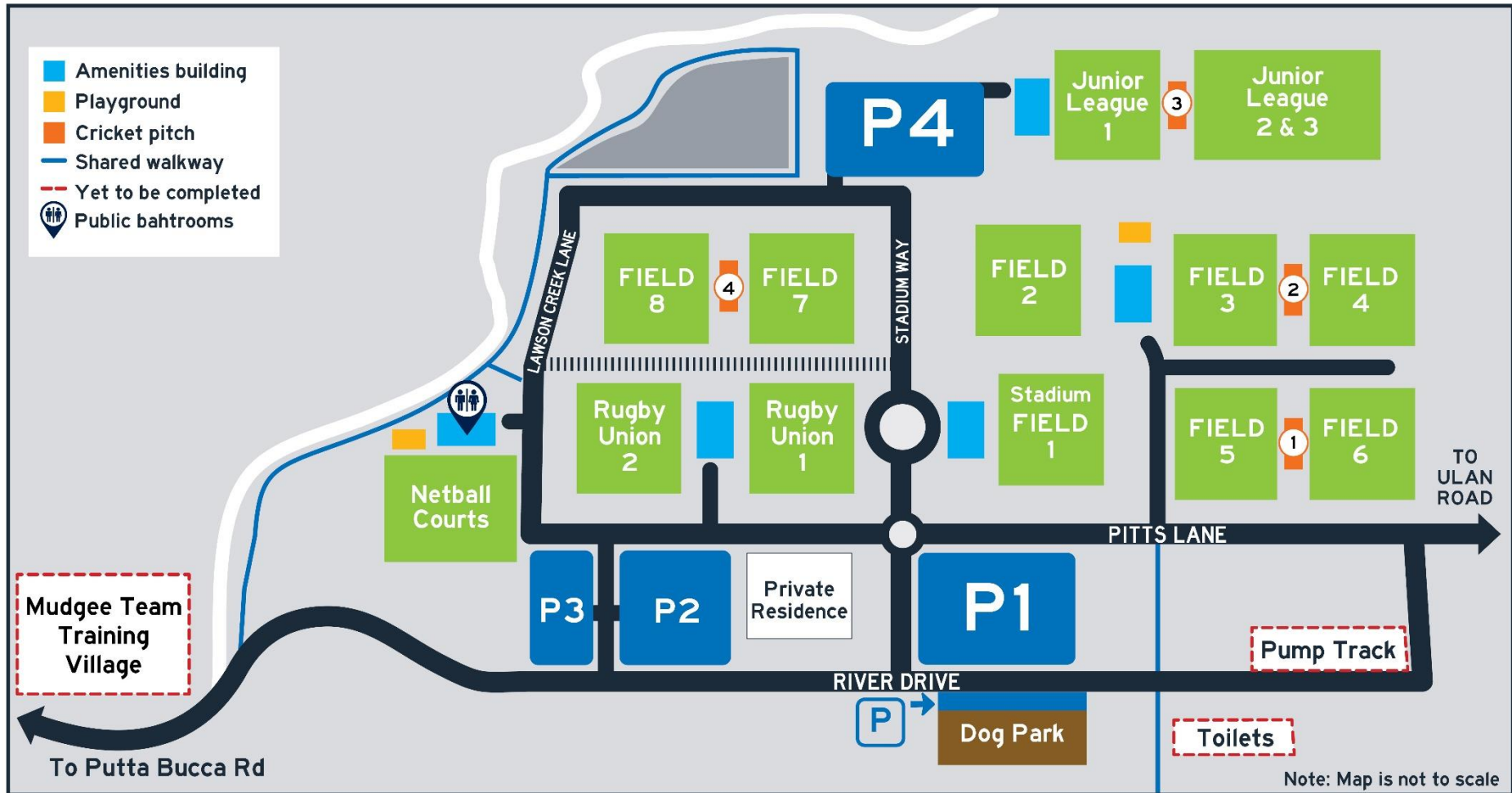
# Welcome to Mudgee Showground



# Welcome to Billy Dunn Sporting Complex



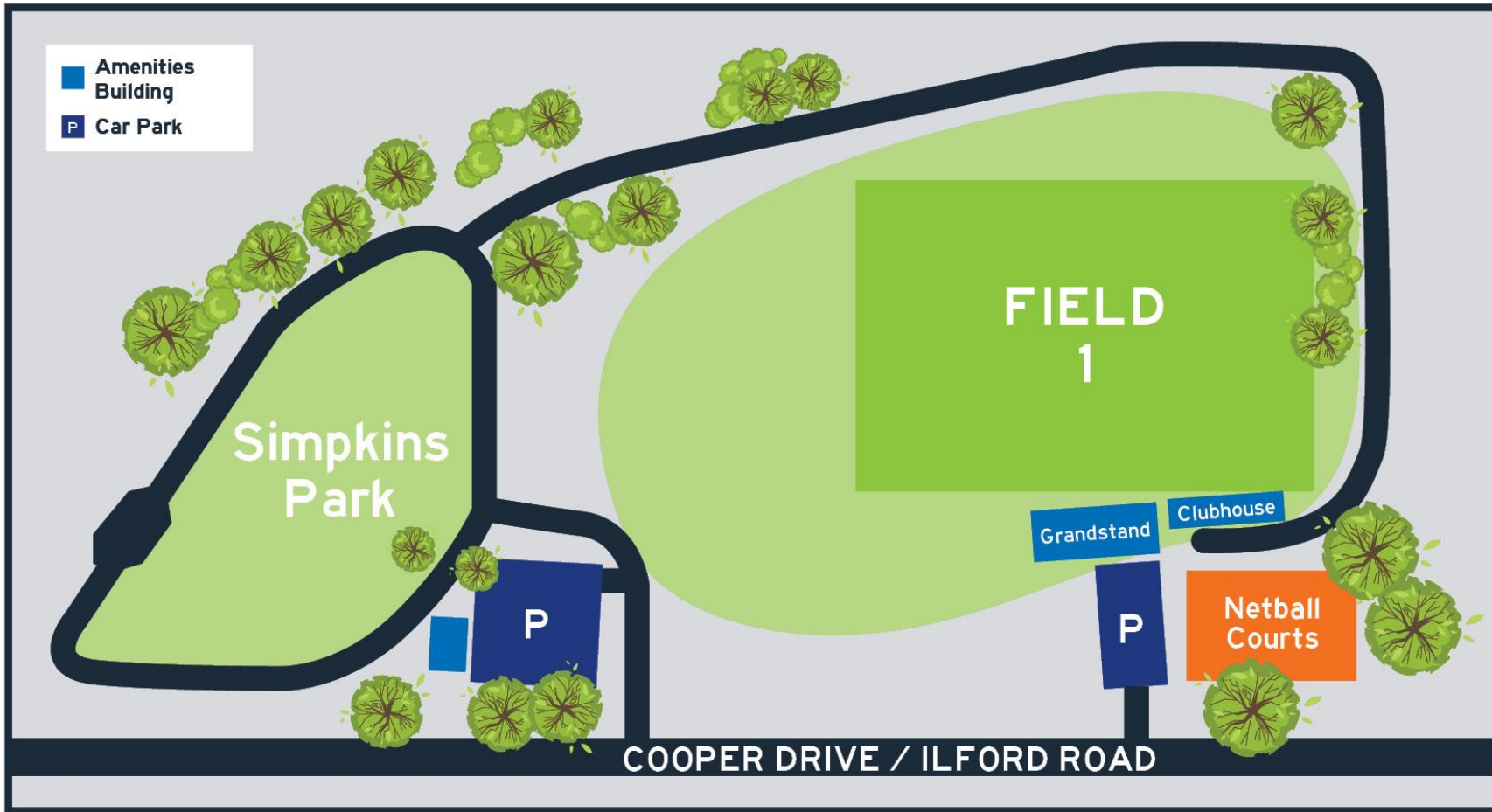
# Welcome to Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex



# Welcome to Rylstone Showground



# Welcome to Waratah Park Sporting Complex



## 5. Community Recreation Aspirations



Understanding the interests, aspirations and recreation needs of the community is an important input to identifying the most appropriate mix of opportunities to plan for and provide.

However, it must be recognised that the current opinions of the community cannot alone dictate what should be planned or provided in terms of recreation opportunities. Due attention must be given also to the provision established by past generations, to the implications of population growth and change, to trends in social processes and to trends in recreation activities and interests. In fact, there is considerable evidence across Australian communities which shows that where recreation opportunities are provided directly in response to community demands, the long-term outcomes are often well less than desired. Provision is all too often of a lesser quality than it should be, there is over-provision due to fads and those sections of the community which have a limited capacity to identify and articulate their needs miss out.

This section presents the findings of a program of consultations with the community designed to identify community recreation needs and attitudes. The findings are evaluated along with the outcomes of the other research presented to guide the determination of the mix of actions which are finally recommended to Council. At times the final recommendations will concur with the views of the community. In others, however, the strategy team have determined that, taken on balance, there are other needs and priorities which have to be addressed ahead of the desires of some sectors or members of the community.

### 5.1 Consultation Program

The extensive engagement period has provided the community's aspirations, whilst also ascertaining the management requirements for key stakeholder. Consultation occurred in two phases:

- Phase One- Stakeholder and community engagement. This being through Sports Advisory committee workshops and community survey
- Phase Two- public exhibition period on draft Recreation Strategy

The aim of the consultation activities was to seek community input with respect to:



- Building a profile of the community's recreation behaviour and facility use
- Measure community feedback on the quality and accessibility of recreation assets
- Identify key areas of opportunity to improve provisions of recreation assets
- Better understand the community's expectation with recreation asset provisions

## Stakeholder Engagement

Workshops and surveys undertaken:

- Mudgee, Gulgong and Rylstone/Kandos Sports Advisory Groups
- Mudgee PCYC Venue Manager
- Mid-Western Regional Council- Sport and Recreation department
- Mid-Western Regional Council- Acting Manager Community and Cultural Services

Submissions received from sporting clubs, associations, and organised recreation groups included:

- Mudgee Triathlon Club
- Mudgee Bushwalking & Bike Riding Club
- Gulgong Senior Rugby League
- Gulgong District Cricket Association
- Gulgong Community and Fitness Centre
- Mudgee Little Athletics Club
- Mudgee Region Mountain Bike Club Inc
- Mudgee Senior Cricket Association
- Mudgee Basketball Association
- Mudgee Netball Association
- Mudgee Gulgong Wolves Football Club
- Mudgee Touch Football Association
- Mudgee District Hockey Association

## Community Engagement

Council invited Mid-Western residents to share their valuable insights into shaping the future priorities for the community with respects to recreation provisions.

Summary of findings following the online survey are detailed below:

- 310 survey responses were received
- Majority of survey respondents indicated the need for an indoor aquatic centre (56%) and indoor sports complex (63%).
- 34% of respondents indicated a need for more public toilets in recreation spaces

- 24% of respondents indicated a need for more pathway lighting in recreation spaces
- 16% of respondents indicated a need for more water stations in recreation spaces
- Some call for covered equestrian centre (5%).
- Traditional forms of recreation assets continue to be the most preferred
- Community generally satisfied with quality, maintenance and accessibility of recreation assets.

## 5.2 Analysis of Supply and Demand

Given the relatively small population base, Mid-Western is generally well provided for in terms of the range of recreation facilities and opportunities available. The majority of facilities are concentrated in the township of Mudgee given it's the regions main population area. There is, however, a concentration of facilities in other townships of Gulgong, Kandos and Rylstone.

The Region is well provided for in terms of both total area of open space and the actual number of parks/open space provisions. These include recreation reserves, parks and sportsgrounds managed by Council, as well as National Parkes/nature reserves and school facilities.

Although there were some concerns raised, it is to be concluded that all traditional sports are generally provided for, both in terms of the amount of open space, the availability and standard of service.

Throughout the research phase there has been no demand or call for more active sports fields which indicates that the supply of facilities is adequate. Feedback indicates that there is a need to maintain and improve the active and passive spaces already established. This is similar to provisions of playgrounds and other recreation assets; findings dictate preference for facility upgrades and expansion rather than additional facilities.

The demand for all year-round swimming access and indoor sports complex have been identified as the major shortfalls in facility provisions.

## 5.3 Stakeholder Aspiration Themes

A number of themes were apparent from the above stakeholder inputs which include, but are not limited to:

- Majority of stakeholders indicated the need for an indoor aquatic centre and an indoor sports centre.
- Focus on enhancing and upgrade existing facilities rather than seeking additional assets
- An increase in the frequency / locations of toilets, water bubblers / drinks stations at sportsgrounds, trails and reserves
- A desire to retain open space at Cahill Park, Westend Sporting Complex and Jubilee Oval
- Complete stages 3 and 4 of Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex
- Increase car park lighting at the Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex and Waratah Park
- Increase wayfinding and interpretation signage throughout reserves in the region
- Develop a masterplan for Victoria Park Mudgee, Billy Dun Oval and Waratah park

## 6. Building Capacity for Recreation Management

As part of the review of Councils recreation management portfolio four main actions have been identified.

- The need to develop guiding principles to assist with future decision making
- The need to review the hierarchy of recreational assets and associated service levels to guide future planning and infrastructure provision,
- The need for input into specifications for any new residential development to ensure adequate provision of recreation spaces, and
- The need to review the resource capacity of the Recreation Services department to enable the strategy to be enacted.

### 6.1 Guiding Principles

The following recreation planning principles are to underpin Councils approach in future Recreation management, development, and investment decisions.

PRINCIPLE	DETAILS
Reflecting Community Need	All initiatives should reflect the long-term needs and aspirations of Council and wider community.
Reflecting the projected demographics	Any new recreation initiatives in the region should reflect the short- and long-term demographic characteristics of the population and the implications of these characteristics to provision.
Diversity of opportunity	Provision should (where practical) ensure that a diversity of activities is made available for all age groups in the major town centres and wider community and for all forms of leisure, health, wellbeing, and social need.
Design flexibility	All new provision of recreation facilities, programs/activities and support services will be designed in a manner which allows them to support a range of uses on a seasonal, annual or longer time frame and which allows longer term physical changes and additions.
Co-location and integration	Any proposed provision where economical should seek to achieve the co- location of an array of community, and where appropriate, commercial, service facilities and programs and should make provision for future additions to the mix of opportunities that can be provided.
Centrality of location	Any development where practical should be sited and designed so that it occupies a prominent location within the township or LGA

Access for all	Any new development or initiative should be designed, programmed and managed so that it is physically accessible to people of all abilities, so that it offers a diversity of competitive, non-competitive, social, casual and community opportunities for participation by people of all abilities, and so that its pricing structures do not disadvantage any individual or group in the community. The design and management of existing/ retained resources will be progressively changed to permit access for all.
Operational and financial viability	Any recreation venue/facility must (where possible) offer a mix of facilities, programs and services which are sustainable, and which do not put undue pressures on Council's capacity to meet its other commitments across the Council.
Contributing to the economic and social strength of the MWRC and wider Region	Any proposals should strengthen the economic and social wellbeing of the MWRC and wider region where practical.
Coordination of action	All recreation facility, program/activity and service provision initiatives will be coordinated by Council to ensure that the actions are timely and that the optimum outcomes are achieved.
Enhancing environmental quality	All development opportunities will be assessed on the basis of their contribution to protecting and enhancing local and sub-regional environmental quality.
Provision monitoring and review	Provision should be made for the performance and use of all development initiatives to be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of the community are being met and that the resources are used in the most effective and sustainable manner.
Promotion of opportunity	The resources provided should be widely promoted in the community to ensure that optimum use is achieved.

## 6.2 Parks and Reserves Function and Hierarchy Classifications

In order to deliver agreed recreation strategy outcomes contained within this report the Recreation Services department has developed a hierarchical classification framework for parks and reserves which will inform appropriate servicing decisions based on the form, function and catchment of a reserve.

The three functions of public open space (parks and reserves) are as described in the following table.

FUNCTION	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Recreation Spaces</b>	To provide a setting for informal play and physical activity, relaxation and social interaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recreation spaces enhance physical and mental health through activity that provides relaxation, amusement, or stimulation.</li> <li>■ Recreation spaces can be accessed by all to play, socialise, exercise, celebrate or participate in other activities that provide personal satisfaction or intrinsic reward.</li> <li>■ Recreation spaces include gardens and open parklands, community gardens, corridor links, amenity spaces, community use facilities, civic commons or squares.</li> </ul>
<b>Sport Spaces</b>	To provide a setting for formal structured sporting activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sport spaces provide a venue for formal structured sporting activities such as team competitions, physical skill development and training.</li> <li>■ Sport spaces are designed to accommodate playing surface, buffer zones and infrastructure requirements of specific or general sporting activity.</li> <li>■ Players and spectators attend with the express purpose of engaging in organised sporting activity, training or competition or watching the game.</li> <li>■ Most sport spaces can also be accessed by community members for informal sport and recreation.</li> </ul>
<b>Nature Spaces</b>	To provide a setting where people can enjoy nearby nature and protect local biodiversity and natural area values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Nature spaces provide opportunity for low impact recreational activities, such as walking, cycling, picnicking, playing, watching or exploring natural features.</li> <li>■ Nature spaces may include bushland, coastal areas, wetlands and riparian habitats, and geological and natural features. Sites are managed to enable recreational access while protecting local ecological and biodiversity values</li> </ul>

There are four parks and reserves hierarchy classifications as described in the following table.

HIERARCHY CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION
<b>Local Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Characteristically a small sized park that services the needs of the immediate residents in nearby streets.</li> <li>■ Will usually comprise a high proportion of Recreation Space and may include some Nature Space.</li> <li>■ There is usually no provision for Sports Space.</li> <li>■ Catchment area is contained to 400 meters or a 5-minute walk. Size is generally under 1 hectare.</li> <li>■ Facilities/activities may include children’s play area, dog walking, picnics and BBQs, friends and family gatherings, relaxation and rest opportunities, casual sporting activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbourhood Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Characteristically a small to medium sized park that services the needs of a community of residents.</li> <li>■ Will usually comprise a high proportion of Recreation Space and may include minor areas of Sport Space, for training and/or junior sports, and some Nature Space.</li> <li>■ Catchment area is contained to 800 meters or a 10-minute walk.</li> <li>■ Size is generally between 1 and 5 hectares.</li> <li>■ Facilities/activities may include children’s play area, dog walking, picnics and BBQs, friends and family gatherings, relaxation and rest opportunities, casual sporting activity.</li> </ul>
<b>District Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Characteristically a small to medium sized park that services the needs of a community of residents.</li> <li>■ Will usually comprise a high proportion of Recreation Space and may include minor areas of Sport Space, for training and/or junior sports, and some Nature Space.</li> <li>■ Catchment area is contained to 800 meters or a 10-minute walk.</li> <li>■ Size is generally between 1 and 5 hectares.</li> <li>■ Facilities/activities may include children’s play area, dog walking, picnics and BBQs, friends and family gatherings, relaxation and rest opportunities, casual sporting activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Characteristically a large sized park that accommodates important sports and recreation areas in conjunction with significant conservation and/or natural features.</li> </ul>

- Will usually comprise substantial Sports Space and Recreation Space facilities and significant areas of Nature Space which may comprise bushland, wetlands and/or other natural features.
  - Catchment area covers broader geographical or social regions and visits from outside the district is highly likely with users driving or utilizing public transport to access the park.
  - Size is generally 20+ hectares.
  - Facilities/activities may consist of areas large enough to accommodate a variety of concurrent uses that may include structured sports, children's play areas, dog walking, picnics and BBQs, friends and family gatherings, relaxation and rest opportunities, casual sporting activity, bush walking and environmental conservation activities.
-

## 7. Action Plan



The Action Plan provided details the individual actions within the relevant themes and prioritised by the community during engagement activities. The plan describes the key actions to be achieved and the desired timeframe to achieve the action.

The prioritisation categories applied are:

- Short term- implementation within 2 to 3 years
- Medium term- implementation within 4 to 7 years
- Long term- implementation within 8 to 10 years

### A. Informal Recreation and Physical Activity

ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE
<p>Develop and implement a Playspace Strategy that sets Councils long-term plan to achieve a comprehensive playground network that meets the current and future recreation needs of residents.</p> <p>Strategy to incorporate plan for accessible options for disabilities at selected location and review capacity to adequately maintain current supply.</p>	Short-term
<p>Address key considerations/issues with playground and open space provisions in new residential subdivisions, including the location, design, and development of play space facilities.</p>	Short-term
<p>Develop and implement a passive and active wayfinding/interpretative signage strategy for key recreation facilities.</p>	Short-term
<p>Investigate financing options and grant opportunities to enact the Robertson Park masterplan</p>	Medium-term
<p>Investigate feasibility of installing water drinking stations at high traffic locations throughout the region.</p>	Medium-term



<p>Determine the feasibility of constructing an Adventure playground and splash pad/water play for the township of Mudgee. Study to focus on selecting a potential suitable location, facility provisions and total costs for a regional adventure park facility.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Monitor implementation of Councils Walking and Cycle Strategic Plan. Ensure that appropriate and safe connections are available to key recreation facilities and sporting complexes.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Review and plan opportunities to increase provisions for leisure and passive recreation along the Cudgegong River open space network in Mudgee and Rylstone.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Develop a public convenience strategy, identifying where public toilets are to be provided in parks.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Develop a marketing and communication strategy to promote Councils informal and passive recreation.</p>	<p>Long-term</p>

**B. Active Recreation Facilities**

ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE
<p>Undertake a feasibility study to determine the current and future need of indoor sports courts. Study to consider at the types and level of current use, future growth and demand, concept planning, costs, locations, and potential business models.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Continue to investigate financing options and grant opportunities for a Regional Indoor Swimming complex. Noting that a preliminary business case has been developed and Council has provided in principle support for an indoor pool at the current pool site in Mudgee at Lawson Park, Mudgee.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Develop an Aquatic Facility Strategy for all Council’s public swimming complexes. Strategy to contain a range of key recommendations and site-specific actions and guides the planning and decision making for Councils swimming pools and splash park.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>

Continue to enhance lighting along the Mudgee riverwalk and Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex walkways and cycleways to support safe active recreation	Short-term
Endorse retaining existing facilities at Cahill Park, Jubilee Oval and Westend Sporting Complex to maintain flexibility in future sport and recreation facility provisions for a minimum of 5 to 10 years.	Short-term
Review and endorse a prioritised irrigation plan for sport fields and open spaces during episodes of drought.	Short-term
Investigate the installation of sportsground drainage system at Billy Dun Oval, Gulgong and Victoria Park, Mudgee.	Medium- term
Investigate the feasibility of increasing availability of outdoor basketball courts (including half-courts) and all ages outdoor multi-sports complex	Medium- term
Consider suitable locations for additional cricket nets throughout the region.	Medium-term
Continue to enhance facilities on offer at the Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex Pump Track, including additional play space and activities.	Long-term
Monitor and support opportunities for youth spaces, such as upgrades to skateparks and BMX facilities at all regional recreation hubs.	Long-term
Investigate opportunities for mountain bike trails and facility development.	Long-term

### C. Supporting Sports Clubs, Associations and Organised Recreation

ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE
<i>Billy Dun Sporting Complex-</i>	
Construct suitable sports lighting at sportsground 2 at Billy Dun Sporting complex.	Short-term
Upgrade netball court surface and consider multipurpose provisions- allowing more than one sports on the existing courts	Medium- term
Upgrade/enhance ageing changerooms and storage shed provisions	Medium-term

<i>Waratah Park Sporting Complex-</i>	
Upgrade netball courts to multi-purpose provisions	Medium-term
Expand car park provisions and include appropriate carpark lighting	Medium- term
Investigate feasibility of constructing a clubhouse and meeting room building	Long-term
<i>Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex-</i>	
Increase car park lighting throughout the entire complex	Short-term
Investigate the feasibility of expanding the soccer/touch building to allow for separate all-year access to both sports	Medium-term
Investigate and implement flood mitigation strategies	Medium- term
Construct changeroom and toilet facilities at fields 7 and 8	Long-term
Continue to refine stage 3 and 4 masterplan provisions and investigate financing options and grant opportunities. Stages to include synthetic athletics track and multi-purpose synthetic field complex.	Long-term
Continue to investigate financing options and grant opportunities for covering the Mudgee Showground Equestrian Arena	Medium-term
Upgrade all sportsground lighting to LED technology. LED technology to increase lighting quality, reliability, produce energy efficiency and cost savings to the program.	Long-term
Continue to work with NSW Tennis and local Tennis Clubs on specific court plans and providing recommendations on future provisions.	On-going
Continue to offer sport related grants through Councils community grants program.	On-going

## D. Management and Planning

ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE
Develop masterplans for all regional sporting complexes. Sites include Victoria Park- Mudgee, Billy Dun Oval- Gulgong and Waratah Park- Kandos.	Short-term
Develop masterplans for Mudgee and Rylstone showground	Short-term
Update and continue to review the Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex masterplan.	Short-term
Review staff capacity within the Recreation Services department to support enacting the new Recreation Strategy.	Short-term
Continue to review and/or develop individual and generic Plans of Management for larger public reserves.	Long-term
Continue to undertake asset management functions, ensuring that Council demonstrate responsive management of assets, compliance with regulatory authorities and long-term financial planning (communicating funding needed to provide required service levels).	On-going
Council to maintain being a signatory to the NSW Public Space Charter.	On-going