



# DUNGOG SHIRE OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN 2022

DRAFT REPORT - MARCH 2023



Coronation Park  
Photo Credit: OPG



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Dungog Shire Open Space and Recreation Plan (the Plan) is to provide a 10-year strategic vision to guide the planning and provision of Parks, Recreation and Sport. The Plan provides a framework that ensures:

**”** *Access to a range of places, activities and facilities which cater for diverse sport and recreation interests.*

The plan is underpinned by four guiding principles



These are explained further in Section 5.2.

The Plan aligns with a range of government strategies, State and local policies and guidelines whilst helping deliver existing Council Plans. The ABS Census data released in June 2022, recorded **9,872 residents** in Dungog Shire **in 2021**. The population of the Shire in **2031** is **forecast** to be **12,144 residents** representing an **increase of 2,788 additional residents**. However, recent trends reflecting increased migration to regional towns may impact local growth.

An extensive consultation process was undertaken including

- « community and user group surveys
- « drop-in sessions within key towns of Dungog Shire
- « workshops with sports clubs
- « Section 355 Committees (online and in-person hosted by Council Staff)
- « working group meetings with Council staff and other key identified stakeholders.

Dungog Shire residents have a strong interest in outdoor recreation activities such as walking, cycling water activities and mountain biking. Along with participation in a diverse range of organised sports, the shire’s residents value the opportunities for active living available in their townships.

Dungog Common, the Shire’s flagship outdoor recreation facility was the topmost frequently used facility. The majority of sports clubs experienced an increase in overall and female participation numbers since 2018. Township parks providing access to play spaces, active recreation and sport were seen as critical infrastructure by many.

Key themes from community engagement included:



Support for development of active transport (bikeway and pathway) networks and improving connectivity to surrounding nearby outdoor recreation opportunities such as National Parks and State Forests.



Opportunities to improve and increase outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism.



A desire to acknowledge and reflect local indigenous culture and local history in development of public spaces.



Improvement of the quality of sport infrastructure such as better drainage and irrigation of playing fields; and upgrading amenities and public toilets to be accessible and inclusive.



Addressing the lack of indoor court sports provision.



Ensuring townships have equal access to sport and recreation opportunities

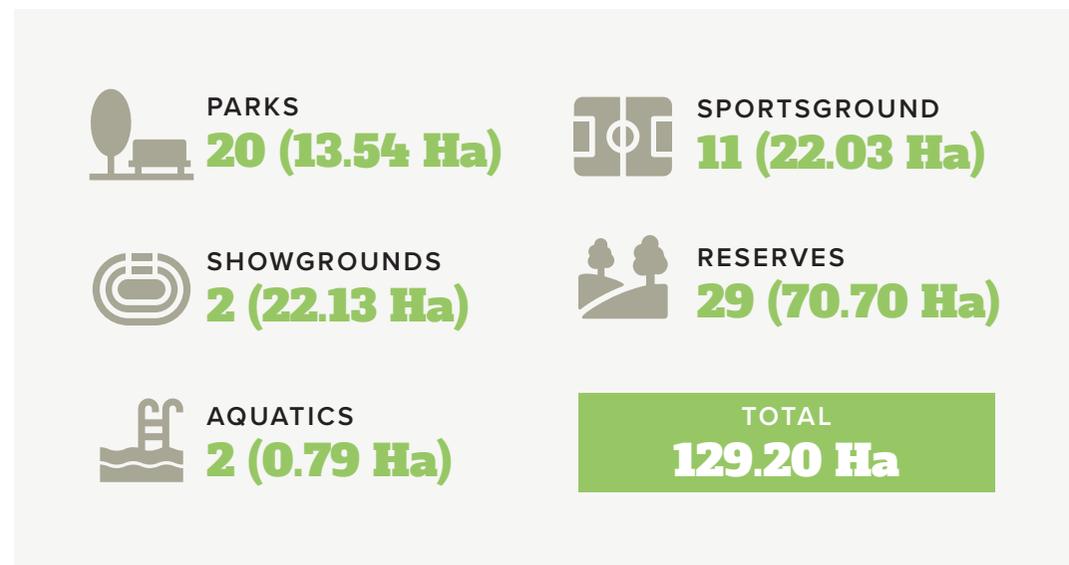


Importance of providing recreation for youth.

A detailed analysis of the existing Public Open Space network was undertaken to understand how well the network meets community needs.

The analysis demonstrated that Dungog Shire is currently served by 129.20 Ha of public open space (POS).

*Table 1: Summary of Parks, Sport and Recreation Provision (Council Controlled)*



In addition, Dungog Common provides **263 Ha of Crown Land** managed by a Crown Lands Management Committee.

## A GUIDING VISION FOR OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The plan proposes the following vision for parks, sport and recreation in the shire:

**Dungog Shire offers a variety of nature based, outdoor recreation and sporting opportunities to residents and visitors. Planning for the future will invest further to ensure continued access to a safe, diverse, resilient, connected and accessible network of opportunities. Partnerships with other levels of government and community groups will be needed to progress projects that expand the range and quality of opportunities in the shire.**



## A PLAN FOR ACTION

The Open Space and Recreation Plan proposes action across the following areas:



# 1. OVERVIEW

## 1.1. PURPOSE OF THE DUNGOG SHIRE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

This document provides a recommended vision for open space, sport and recreation across the Dungog Shire Local Government Area (LGA). It provides guiding principles and a provision framework for Dungog Shire Council's parks, sport and recreation provision. This report also provides action plans for key townships and a number of shire wide strategies important to plan implementation. Connectivity and active transport links were highlighted as a strategic issue and number of recommendations for the shire's active transport planning have been identified that improve access to parks sport and recreation.

Dungog Memorial Hall  
Photo Credit: OPG



## 1.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Dungog Shire Open Space and Recreation Plan are to:

- « Establish a vision and guiding principles for Council's parks, open spaces and sporting facilities.
- « Measure the adequacy of parkland, playground, sport and recreation provision to ensure adequate current and future supply.
- « Provide a clear planning framework to guide levels of parks, sport and recreation infrastructure development and service levels.
- « Identify priorities for investment that will address current needs, provision inequities and changing needs of the community over time.
- « Identify priorities for the active transport/ cycling network that improve connectivity with parks sport and recreation opportunities.
- « Identify opportunities to strengthen and enhance the role of Dungog Common as a key regional outdoor recreation destination.
- « Identify strategic partnerships to progress key opportunities for the development of new sport and recreation facilities and outdoor recreation opportunities.

## 1.3. STUDY SCOPE

The project scope incorporates consideration of:

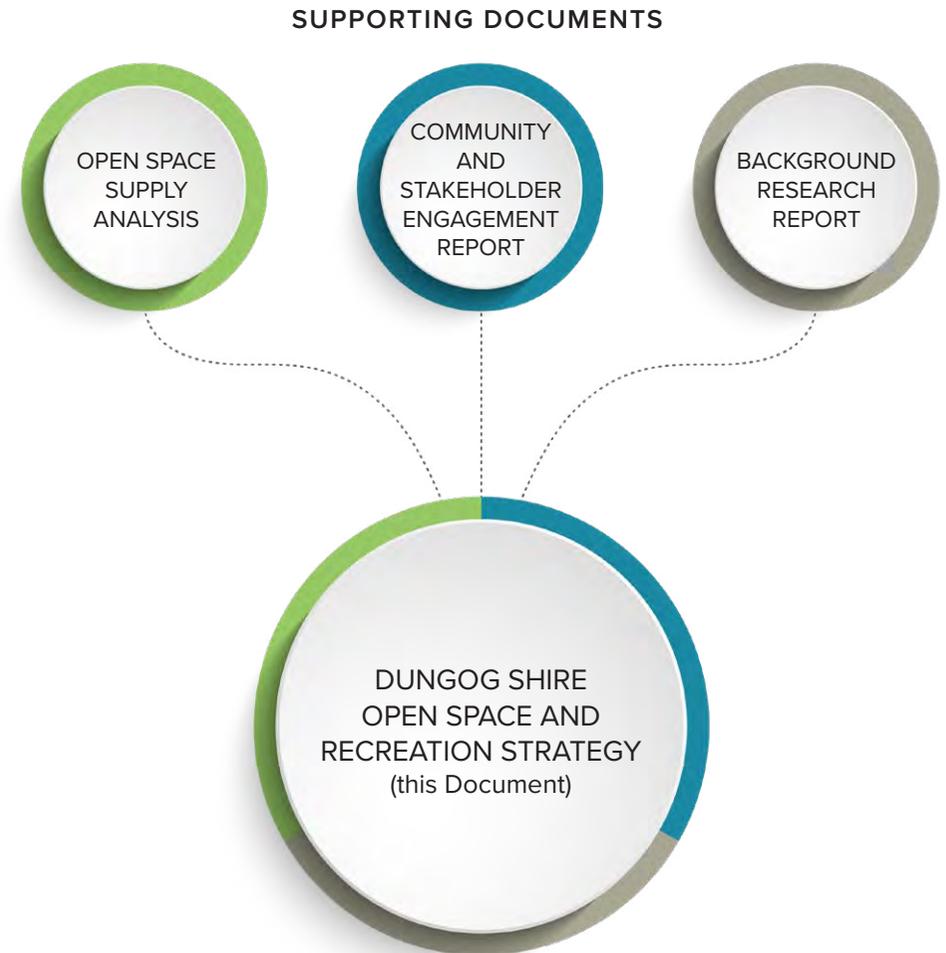
- « Council owned and managed land providing parks, sport and recreation opportunities.
- « Sport and recreation facilities including playgrounds, sport fields, outdoor courts and the amenities supporting organised sport.
- « Consideration of NSW National Parks, State Conservation areas, Crown land and privately owned and/or managed sport and recreation facilities, and their current and future role in the provision network.

## 1.4. METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

This report has been prepared based on background research, analysis of current provision within the Shire and engagement with the community, council staff and stakeholder groups. The study approach is as follows:



This report is part of a suite of documents that comprise the overall Dungog Shire Open Space and Recreation Plan which will contribute to councils' other plans and strategies.



## 2. ABOUT DUNGOG SHIRE

The Local Government Area of Dungog is part of the Hunter Region and the Lower Hunter Sub-Region and is bound by the Mid Coast Council region to the north-east, Singleton Shire to the west, Upper Hunter Shire to the north-west, and by Port Stephens Shire and the City of Maitland to the south.

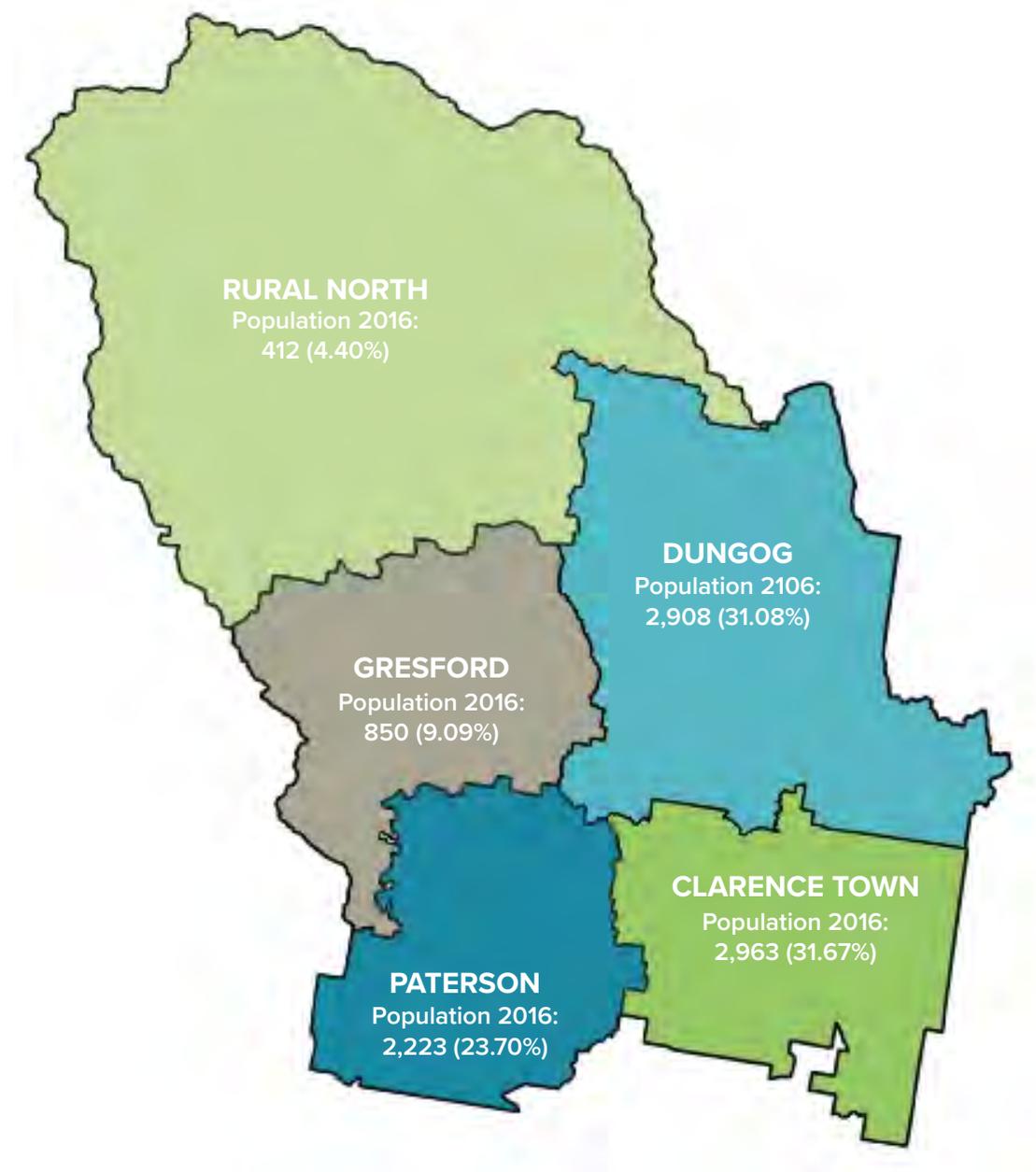
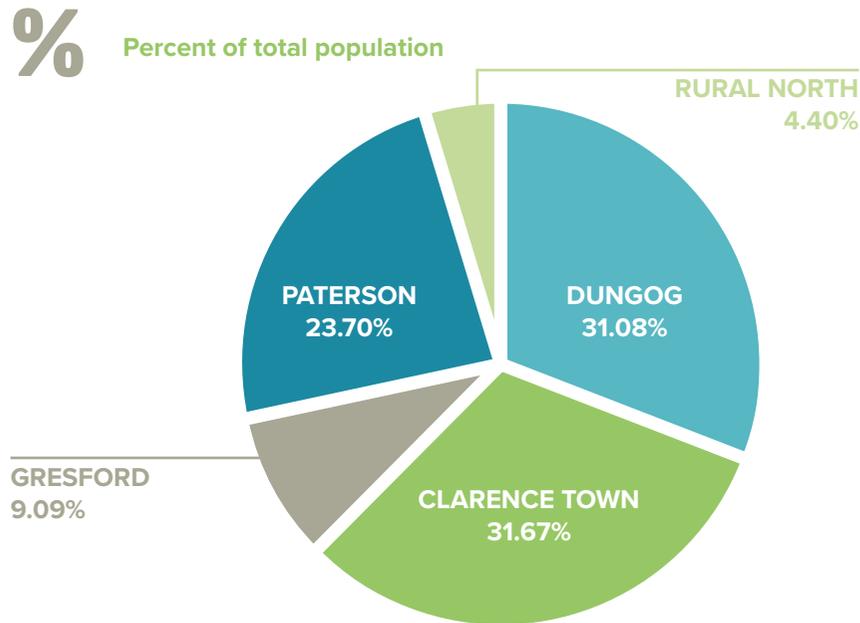
*Figure 1: Location of Dungog Shire with respect to surrounding LGAs*



Figure 2: Dungog Shire Planning Catchments Areas and Population

## 2.1. POPULATION OVERVIEW

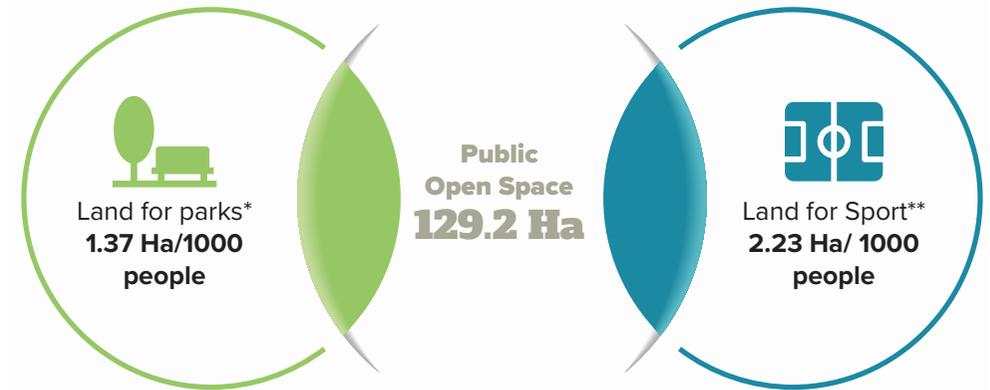
The Dungog Shire Local Government Area has four main towns: **Dungog; Clarence Town; Gresford and Paterson.** For analysis and planning purposes these four towns form the basis of planning catchments complemented by a fifth “rural” catchment in the north of Dungog Shire. The latest census data (2022 release) identifies a 2021 population of 9,872 and growth for the shire that is more significant than previously anticipated with the shire expected to grow at a rate of 2.3% per year to 12,144 residents by 2031, representing growth of 2,272 over the 10 years.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> <https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations>

## 2.2. OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION PROVISION

Dungog Shire is currently served by a range of parks, sporting areas and recreation facilities.



\* includes linear open spaces

\*\* includes planned; excludes Showgrounds and Reserves



Table 2: Existing provision in Dungog Shire LGA

| OPEN SPACE TYPE    | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA) | % OF TOTAL POS AREA | PROVISION RATE* AREA |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Parks              | 20           | 13.54           | 10.50 %             | 1.38 Ha/1000         |
| Sportsground       | 11           | 18.30           | 17 %                | 2.23 Ha/1000         |
| Showgrounds        | 2            | 22.13           | 17.1 %              | 1 per 4936 residents |
| Reserves           | 29           | 70.70           | 54.7 %              | 7.16 Ha/1000         |
| Aquatic Facilities | 2            | 0.79            | 0.6 %               | 1 per 4678 residents |
| Playgrounds        | 12           | NA              | NA                  | 1 per 823 residents  |
| <b>Total</b>       | -            | <b>129</b>      |                     | <b>13.09 Ha/1000</b> |

**Note:** above does not include Dungog Common 263 Ha. Which is managed by a Crown Lands Management Board.

Appendix 1 to this report provide a full list of parks sport and recreation facilities and explains the definitions used.

### 2.2.1. Parks and Sportsgrounds Supply Analysis Summary

The following table compares the area of public open space within each planning catchment against 2016 population.

Table 3: Summary of public open space provision with each planning catchment (2016)<sup>3</sup>

| PLANNING CATCHMENT           | CATCHMENT POPULATION (2016) | PARKS               |                                       | SPORTSGROUNDS        |                                       | TOTAL PROVISION RATE AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
|                              |                             | TOTAL AREA OF PARKS | PROVISION RATE AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | TOTAL AREA FOR SPORT | PROVISION RATE AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE |   |
| Dungog                       | 2,908                       | 5.09                | 1.75                                  | 3.97                 | 1.37                                  | 3.12  |
| Clarence Town <sup>4</sup>   | 2,963                       | 3.63                | 1.22                                  | 6.67                 | 2.25                                  | 3.48  |
| Gresford                     | 850                         | 0.44                | 0.52                                  | 2.83                 | 3.33                                  | 3.85  |
| Paterson                     | 2,223                       | 4.26                | 1.92                                  | 7.58                 | 3.41                                  | 5.33  |
| Rural North                  | 412                         | 0.12                | 0.29                                  | 0.97                 | 2.34                                  | 2.64  |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>9,356</b>                | <b>13.54</b>        | <b>1.45</b>                           | <b>22.03</b>         | <b>2.35</b>                           | <b>3.80</b>                                 |
| <b>Townships<sup>5</sup></b> | <b>8,944</b>                | <b>13.42</b>        | <b>1.44</b>                           | <b>21.06</b>         | <b>2.25</b>                           | <b>3.69</b>                                 |

In reference to Table 2, the total public open space (parks and sporting areas) provision within each planning catchment is higher than the historical NSW planning benchmark of 2.83 ha/1000 people.

In addition to the parks for recreation and sporting areas the shire's townships have access to 22.13 Ha of Showgrounds and 70.7 Ha of Reserve land with a range of purposes:

**Note:** overall supply rates are slightly lower as this table uses 2016 population for the planning catchments.

<sup>2</sup> Includes the proposed new sports precinct in Clarence Town (3.72 Ha)

<sup>3</sup> ABS population data not available yet to small areas needed for catchment estimates.

<sup>4</sup> Includes proposed new sports precinct of 3.72 Ha)

<sup>5</sup> Excludes Rural North

### 2.2.2. Dungog Planning Catchment (Population-2016 Census: 2,908)

Dungog township has a well-established network of parks, sport and recreation facilities further complemented by the Regionally significant Dungog Common.

Table 4: Provision in Dungog Planning Catchment

| OPEN SPACE TYPE          | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA) | PROVISION RATE* AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | NO OF PUBLIC TOILETS (PT) AND AMENITIES (A) |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--|---|
| Parks                    | 10           | 5.09            | 1.75                                   | PT- 3                                       |
| Sportsground             | 2            | 3.97            | 1.37                                   | A- 1  |
| Showgrounds              | 1            | 8.74            | 1 per 2,908                            | PT-1  |
| Reserves                 | 11           | 50.74           | NA                                     | -   |
| Aquatic Facilities       | 1            | 0.39            | 1 per 2,908                            | A- 1  |
| Playgrounds              | 5            |                 | 1 per 581                              |   |
| <b>Total<sup>6</sup></b> |              | <b>68.93</b>    | <b>NA</b>                              | <b>PT-4 A-2</b>                             |

\*- provision can be expressed as number of residents per facility or Ha / 1000.

In addition, the regionally significant Dungog Common managed by a Crown Lands Committee provides 263 Ha of natural area with walking and riding trails.



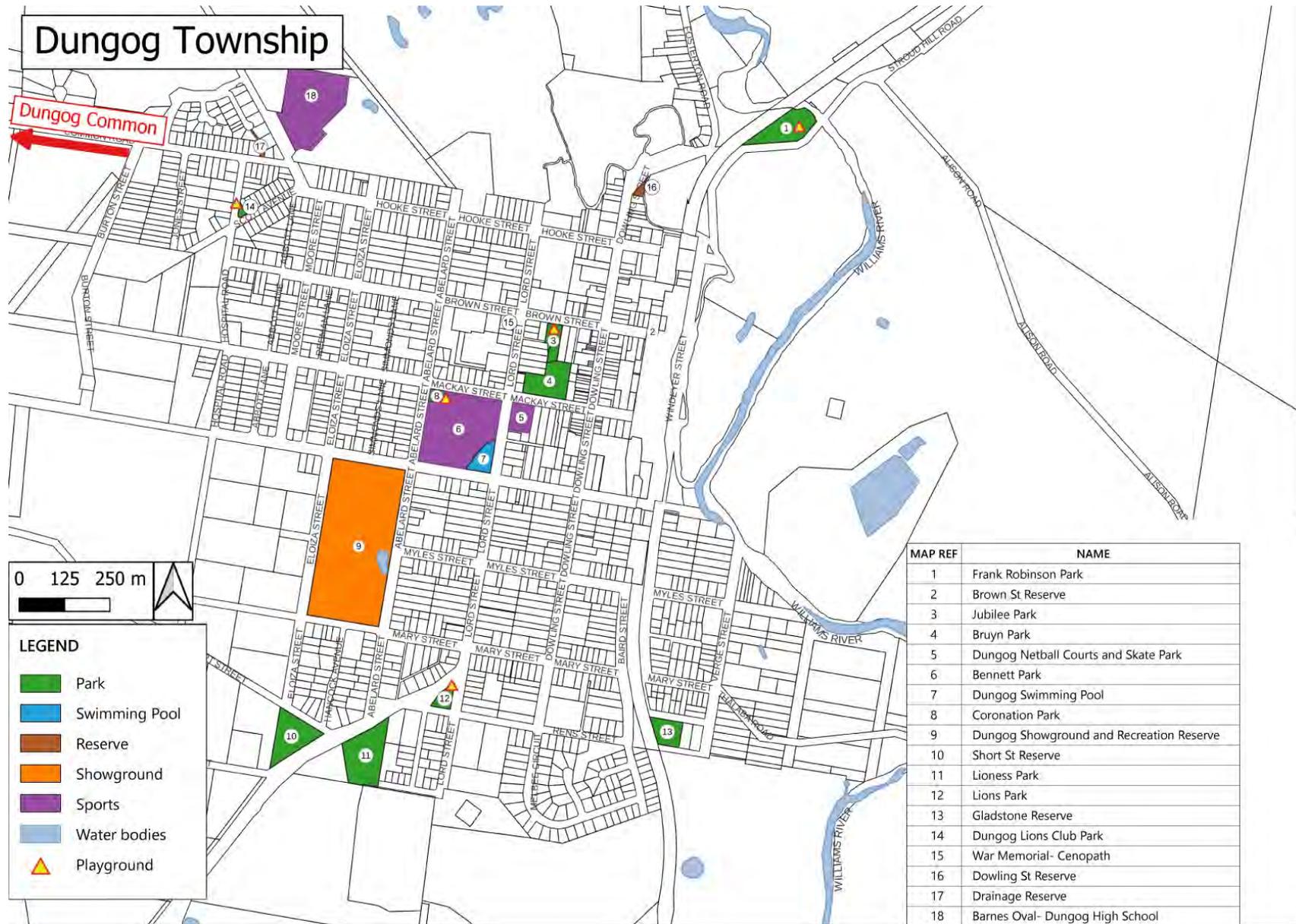
<sup>6</sup> Excludes Dungog Common which is a regional resource and managed externally.

The table below provides a snapshot of the current provision of sporting facilities within the township of Dungog.

Table 5: Current provision of sporting facilities in Dungog Township

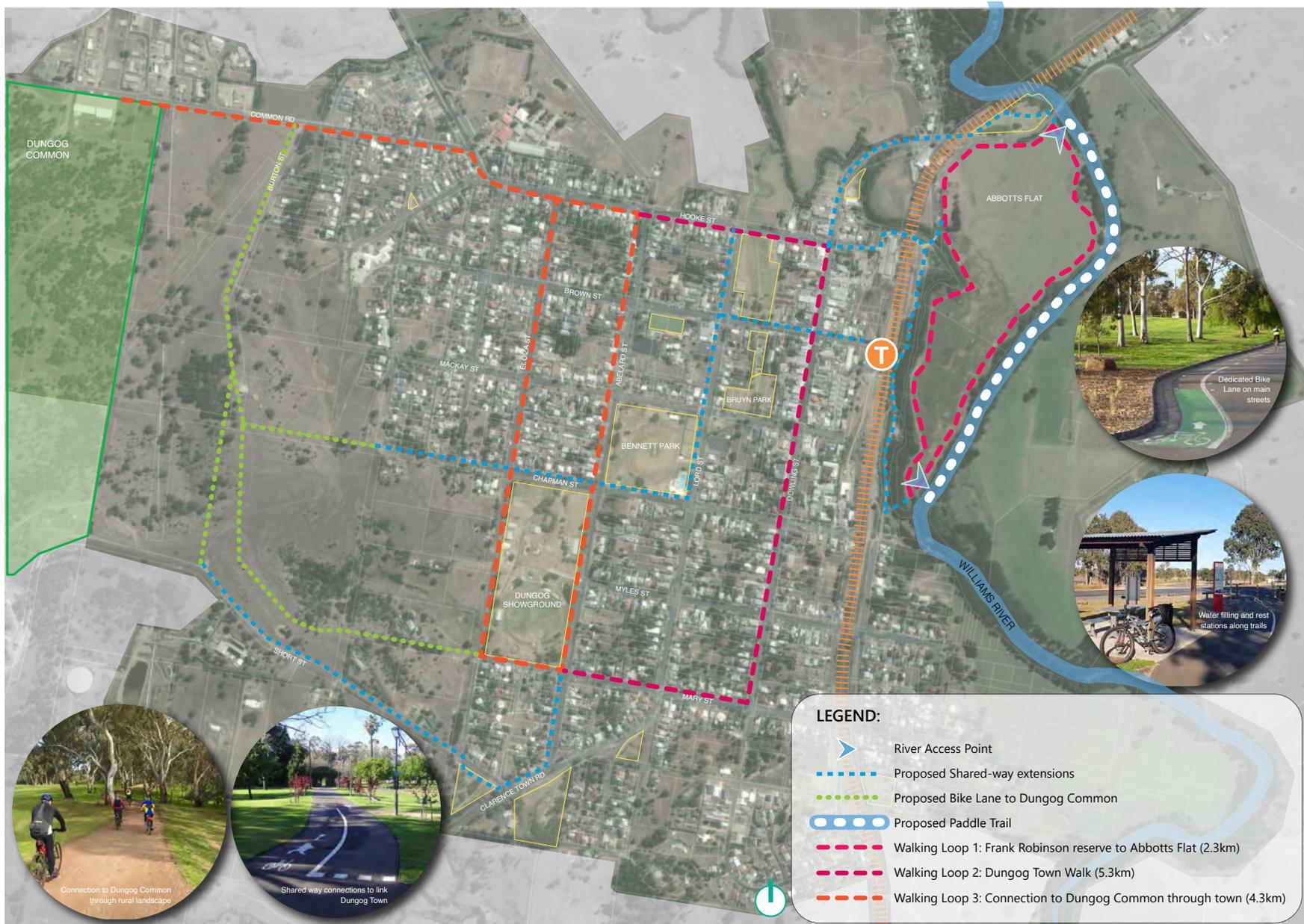
| NAME OF SPORTING FACILITY                 | KEY FEATURES  | PLAYGROUND (YES/NO) | PUBLIC TOILET- PT AMENITIES- A CLUBHOUSE- C | SEATING AND SHELTER (YES/NO) | MANAGED BY   |
|---|---|---------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| Bennett Park                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Cricket Pitch</li> <li>« 2 x Cricket Nets</li> <li>« 1 x Rugby League Field</li> <li>« 6 x Tennis Courts</li> </ul>  | No                  | A<br>C (Community Hall/Function)            | Yes                          | Sec 355 Committee, Sports Club and Council                         |
| Dungog Skate Park and Netball Courts      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Skate Park</li> <li>« 3 x Netball Courts</li> </ul>  |                     | No  | No                           | Council  |
| Bruyn Park                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Cricket Pitch (Junior)</li> </ul>  | No                  | PT  | No                           | Council  |
| Dungog Memorial Sport and Recreation Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 2 x Bowling Greens</li> </ul>  | No                  | C   | Yes                          | Bowling Club (Private)   |
| Dungog High School- Barnes Oval           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Soccer Field</li> <li>« 1 x enclosed multi-purpose Court (Basketball and Tennis)</li> </ul>  | No                  | A   | Yes                          | High School and Education NSW (access subject to school agreement) |
| Dungog & District Golf Club               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Golf Course</li> </ul>   | No                  | A   | No                           | Dungog & District Golf Club  |
| Dungog Swimming Pool                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x 33m Outdoor Swimming Pool (heated)</li> <li>« 1 x Toddler Pool</li> <li>« 1 x Diving Platform (decommissioned)</li> <li>« 1 x Slide (not operational)</li> </ul> | No                  | A   | Yes                          | Council facility managed by External Operator                      |

Figure 3: Provision in Dungog Township



### 2.2.2.1. Opportunities Mapping

Figure 4: Potential Opportunities in Dungog township



### 2.2.3. Clarence Town Planning Catchment (Population-2016 Census: 2,963)

Clarence Town is served by a diversity of opportunities including a recently upgraded sporting precinct and 2 riverside parklands with boat launching facilities.

Table 6: Provision in Clarence Town Planning Catchment

| OPEN SPACE TYPE | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA)         | PROVISION RATE* AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | NO OF PUBLIC TOILETS (PT) AND AMENITIES (A) |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Parks           | 3            | 3.63                    | 1.22                                   | PT- 4                                       |
| Sportsground    | 4            | 2.95<br>3.72 (proposed) | 1.00<br>(2.25 with proposed)           | A- 2  |
| Showground      | -            | -                       | -                                      | -   |
| Reserves        | 8            | 8.18                    | NA                                     | -   |
| Aquatics        | 1            | 0.40                    | 1 per 2,963                            | A-1   |
| Playgrounds     | 2            |                         | 1 per 1,482                            |   |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>-</b>     | <b>18.71</b>            | <b>NA</b>                              | <b>PT-4 A-3</b>                             |

Note: A future sporting precinct has been proposed for Clarence Town to accommodate growth as the existing sports precinct is landlocked. (see 41 on the map)



The table below provides a snapshot of the current provision of sporting facilities within the township of Clarence Town.

Table 7: Current provision of Sporting Facilities in Clarence Town Township

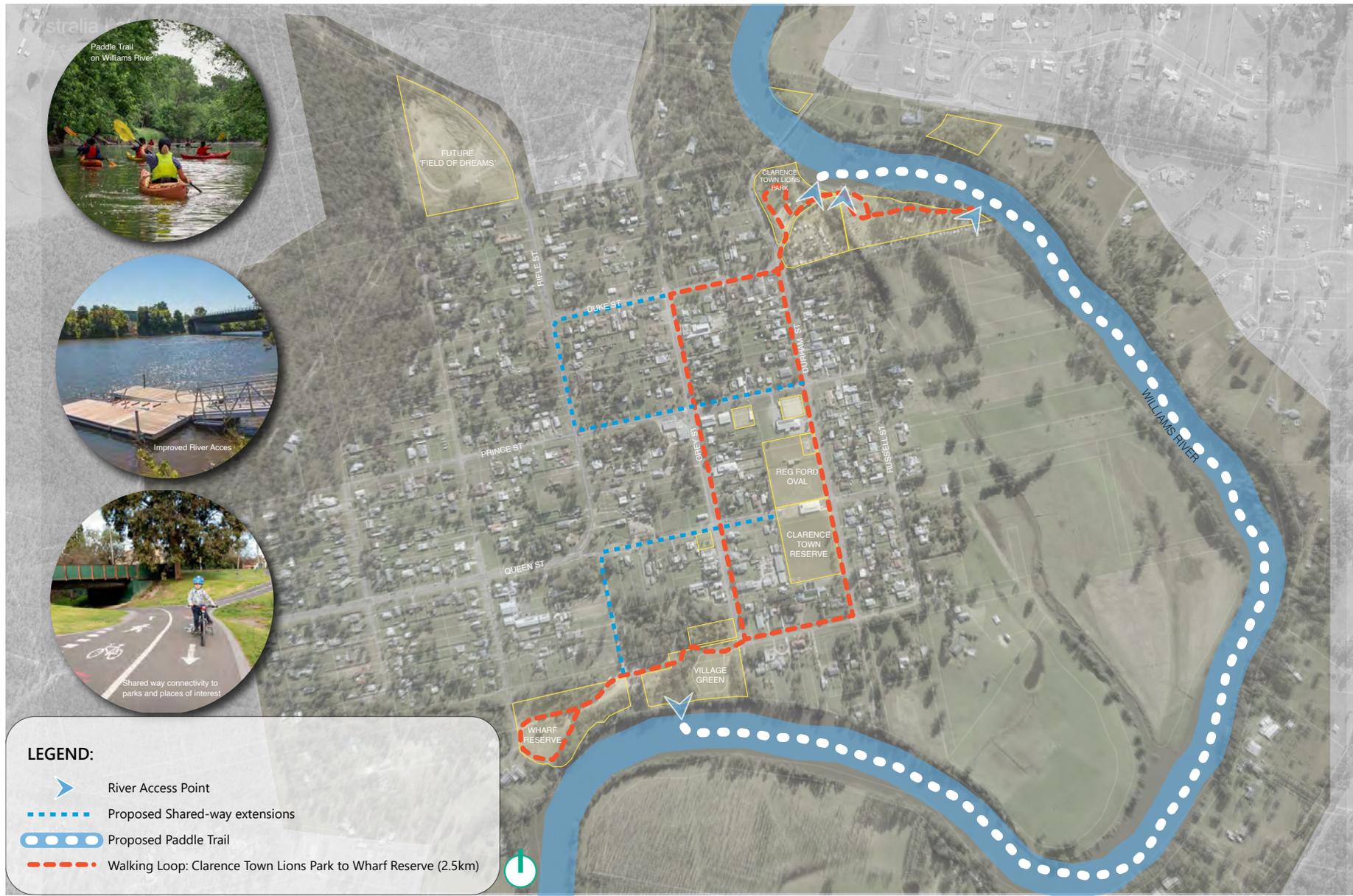
| NAME OF SPORTING FACILITY                       | KEY FEATURES  | PLAYGROUND (YES/NO) | PUBLIC TOILET- PT AMENITIES- A CLUBHOUSE- C | SEATING AND SHELTER (YES/NO) | MANAGED BY                                 |
|---|---|---------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| Clarence Town Park Reserve/ Sporting Facility   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ 1 x Cricket Pitch</li> <li>◀ 2 x Cricket Nets</li> <li>◀ 1 x Rugby League Field</li> </ul> | No                  | A   | Yes                          | Sec 355 Committee, Sports Club and Council |
| Reg Ford Sporting Complex                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ 1.5 x Soccer Field</li> <li>◀ 1 x Skate Park</li> </ul>                                    | No                  | A   | Yes                          | Sec 355 Committee, Sports Club and Council |
| Tennis Courts                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ 2 x Tennis Courts</li> </ul>   | No                  | PT  | Yes                          | Sports Club and Council                    |
| Clarence Town Bowling Sport and Recreation Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ 1 x Bowling Greens</li> </ul>  | No                  | C   | Yes                          | Bowling Club (Private)                     |
| Clarence Town Swimming Pool                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ 1 x 25m Outdoor Swimming Pool</li> <li>◀ 1 x Toddler Pool</li> </ul>                       | No                  | A   | Yes                          | External Operator                          |

Figure 5: Provision in Clarence Town Township



### 2.2.3.1. Opportunities Mapping

Figure 6: Potential Opportunities in Clarence Town township



## 2.2.4. Gresford Planning Catchment (Population-2016 Census: 850)

Gresford is comprised of two main settlement areas – Gresford and East Gresford. The majority of provision is within East Gresford with around 2 km to Gresford where the Primary School is located. Gresford has limited access to parks, sport or recreation facilities save those at the local school.

Table 8: Provision rate in Gresford Planning Catchment

| OPEN SPACE TYPE | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA) | PROVISION RATE* AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | NO OF PUBLIC TOILETS (PT) AND AMENITIES (A) |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--|---|
| Parks           | 1            | 0.44            | 0.52                                   | PT- 1                                       |
| Sportsground    | 2            | 2.83            | 3.33                                   | A- 1  |
| Showground      | 1            | 13.39           | 1 per 850                              | PT- 1                                       |
| Reserves        | 3            | 2.04            | NA                                     |   |
| Aquatics        | 0            | -               | -                                      | -   |
| Playgrounds     | 2            |                 | 1 per 425                              |   |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>6</b>     | <b>18.71</b>    | <b>NA</b>                              | <b>PT- 2 A-1</b>                            |

Figure 7: Gresford and East Gresford



The table below provides a snapshot of the current provision of sporting facilities within the township of Gresford.

Table 9: Current provision of sporting facilities in Gresford Township

| NAME OF SPORTING FACILITY                | KEY FEATURES   | PLAYGROUND (YES/NO) | PUBLIC TOILET- PT AMENITIES- A CLUBHOUSE- C | SEATING AND SHELTER (YES/NO) | MANAGED BY              |
|--|--|---------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gresford Sporting Complex                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Cricket Pitch</li> <li>« 1 x Cricket Nets</li> <li>« 2 x Soccer Field (overlaid)</li> <li>« Field lighting</li> </ul>                                 | Yes                 | A   | Yes                          | Sports Club and Council |
| Gresford Showgrounds                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 2 x Tennis Courts</li> <li>« 1 x Skate Park</li> <li>« RV Camping area</li> <li>« Large arena</li> <li>« Equestrian sports and show facilities</li> </ul> | No                  | A   | Yes                          | Showground Committee    |
| Gresford Bowls Sport and Recreation Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« On Showgrounds Reserve</li> <li>« 1 x Bowling Greens</li> <li>« Clubhouse Facility</li> </ul>   | No                  | C   | Yes                          | Bowling Club (Private)  |

Figure 8: Provision in Gresford Township



### 2.2.4.1. Opportunities Mapping

Figure 9: Opportunities in Gresford township



## 2.2.5. Paterson Planning Catchment (Population-2016 Census: 2,223)

Paterson has good provision of parks and facilities with a major multi-user sports reserve, a popular riverside parkland with short stay RV camping and large play space.

Table 10: Provision in Paterson Planning Catchment

| OPEN SPACE TYPE | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA) | PROVISION RATE* AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | NO OF PUBLIC TOILETS (PT) AND AMENITIES (A) |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--|---|
| Parks           | 5            | 4.26            | 1.92                                   | PT- 2 A-1                                   |
| Sportsground    | 3            | 7.58            | 3.41                                   | A- 1  |
| Showground      | 0            | 0               | -                                      | -   |
| Reserves        | 4            | 3.57            | -NA                                    | 0   |
| Aquatics        | 0            | -               | -                                      | 0   |
| Playgrounds     | 3            |                 | 1 per 741                              |   |
| <b>Total</b>    |              | <b>15.41</b>    | -                                      | <b>PT- 2 A-2</b>                            |

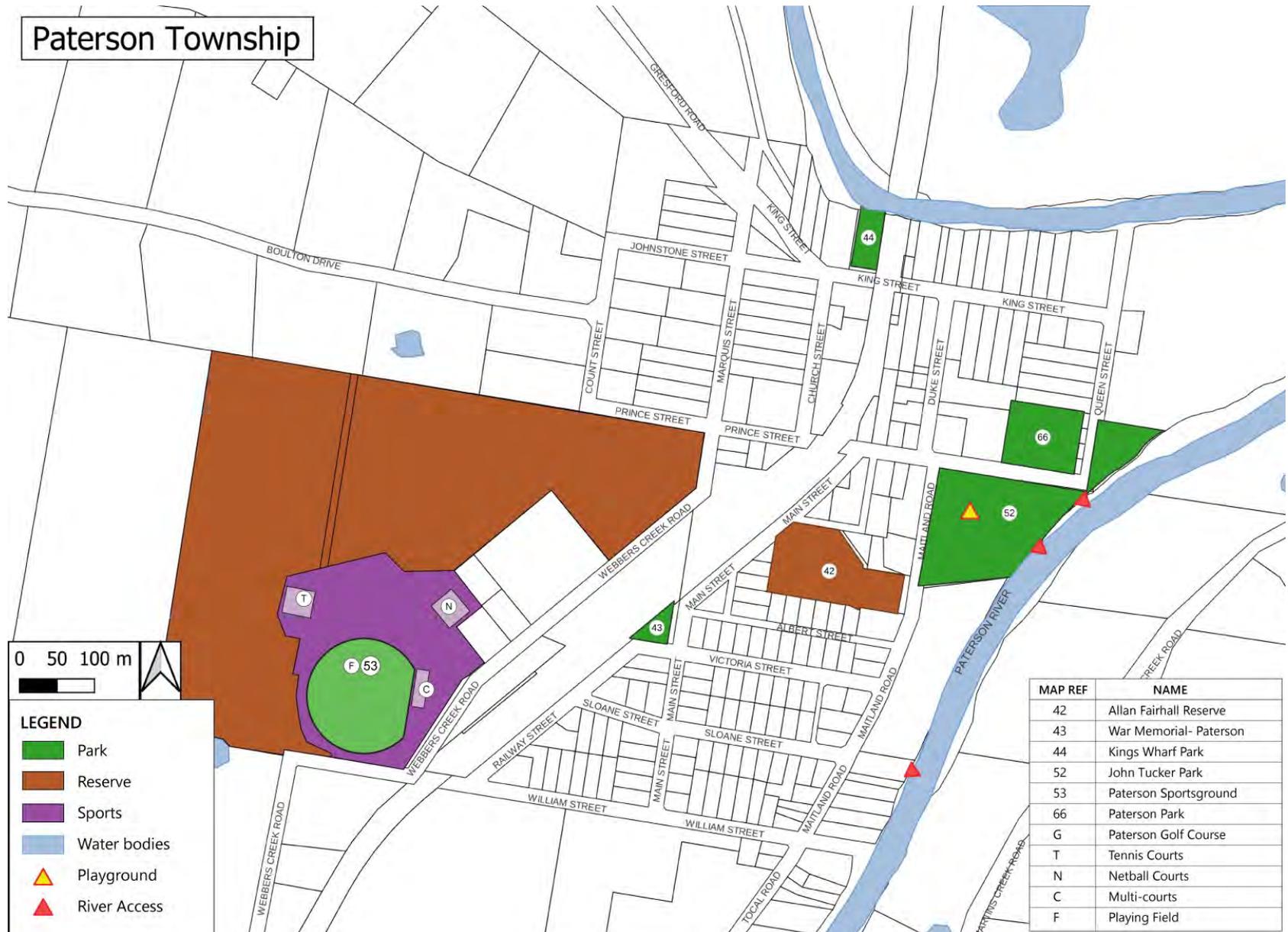


The table below provides a snapshot of the current provision of sporting facilities within the township of Paterson.

Table 11: Current provision of sporting facilities in Paterson Township.

| NAME OF SPORTING FACILITY                    | KEY FEATURES   | PLAYGROUND (YES/NO) | PUBLIC TOILET- PT AMENITIES- A CLUBHOUSE- C | SEATING AND SHELTER (YES/NO) | MANAGED BY                         |
|--|--|---------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Paterson Sportsground                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Cricket Pitch/ Oval</li> <li>« 1 x Rugby League/ Soccer Field (overlaid on oval)</li> <li>« 2 x Cricket Nets</li> <li>« 1 x Multi-use Sport Court</li> <li>« 2 x Tennis Courts</li> <li>« 2 x Netball Courts</li> </ul> | Yes                 | A   | Yes                          | Sports Club and Council            |
| Paterson Golf Club                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Golf Course</li> </ul>  | No                  | C   | Yes                          | Paterson Golf Club                 |
| Martins Creek Tennis Courts (decommissioned) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 2 x Tennis Courts</li> </ul>  | No                  | -   | No                           | Council                            |
| Vacy Sportsground and adjacent Park          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 x Cricket Pitch</li> <li>« 1 x Rugby League/ Soccer Field (overlaid)</li> <li>« 2 x Cricket Nets</li> </ul>   | Yes                 | PT and A                                    | Yes                          | Sports Club and Sec 355 Committee? |

Figure 10: Provision of POS in Paterson Township



### 2.2.5.1. Opportunities Mapping

Figure 11: Strategic planning opportunities in Paterson township

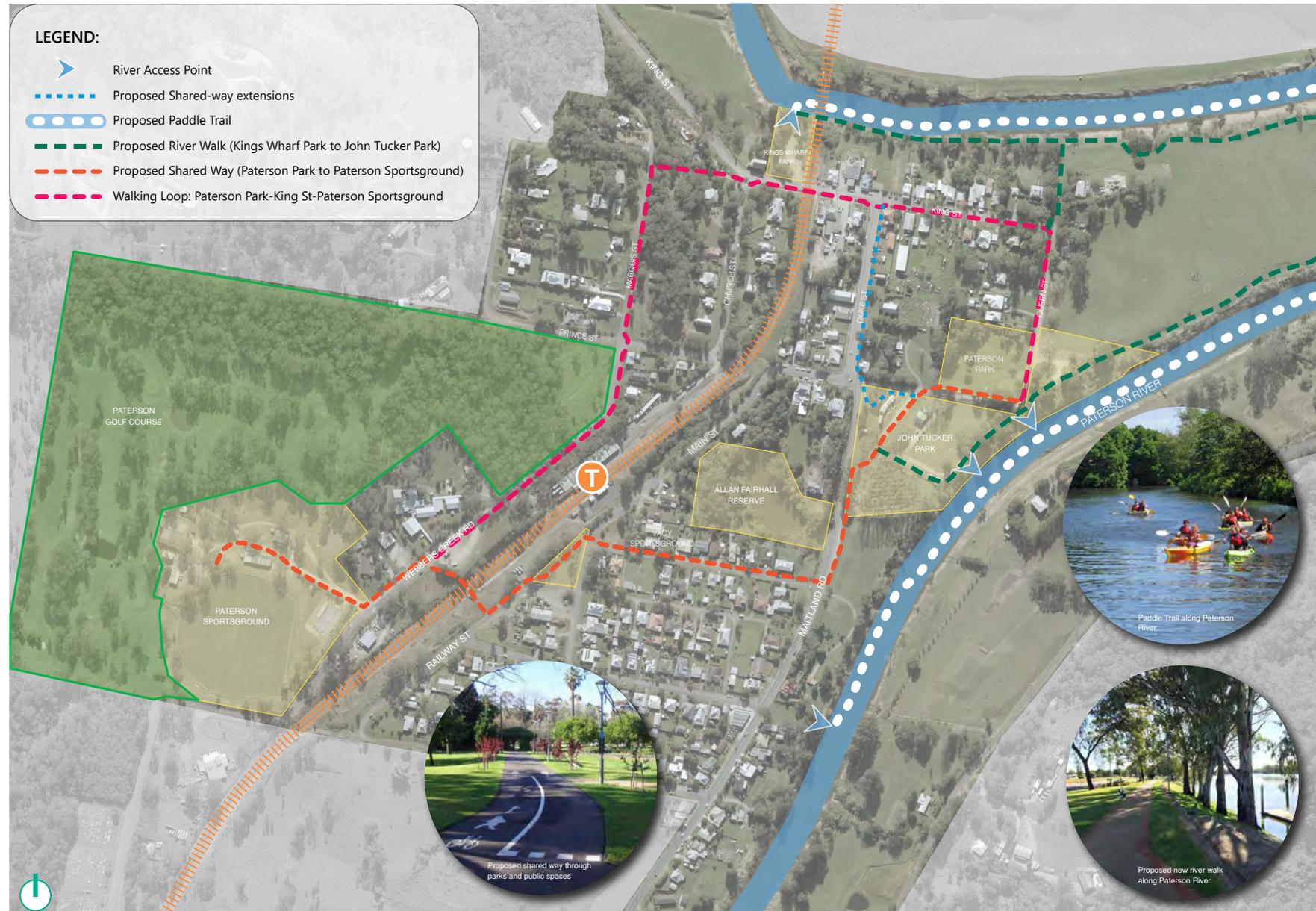


Figure 12: Provision of POS in Vacy Township



### 2.2.5.2. Opportunities Mapping

Figure 13: Strategic planning opportunities in Vacy township



## 2.2.6. Rural North (Population-2016 Census: 412)

The rural North is a large sparsely populated catchment with no major township. Provision in the catchment is minimal and growth over the next 10 years will be marginal.

Table 12: Provision in Rural North Planning Catchment

| OPEN SPACE TYPE | TOTAL NUMBER | TOTAL AREA (HA) | PROVISION RATE* AREA (HA)/ 1000 PEOPLE | NO OF PUBLIC TOILETS (PT) AND AMENITIES (A) |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--|---|
| Parks           | 1            | 0.12            | 0.29                                   |   |
| Sportsground    | 1            | 0.97            | 2.34                                   | A   |
| Showground      | 0            | 0               | -                                      |   |
| Reserves        | 3            | 6.17            | -NA                                    |   |
| Aquatics        | 0            | -               | -                                      |   |
| Playgrounds     | 0            |                 | 0                                      |   |
| <b>Total</b>    |              | <b>7.26</b>     | -                                      |   |



# 3.COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON PARKS, SPORT AND RECREATION



## 3.1. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

Extensive consultation was conducted between February 2022 to August 2022. This included:

- « Surveys and drop-in sessions within key towns of Dungog Shire with the community members.
- « Surveys, workshops (online and in-person) with Section 355 Committees, sport clubs, Council officers and elected councillors.
- « Other identified key stakeholders (Land Management Board, Ride Dungog, Land Care Groups, National Parks and Wildlife Services, Forestry Corporation of NSW, etc).

A detailed report on the community and stakeholder engagement is contained in the “Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report”.



## 3.2. COMMUNITY SURVEY AND DROP-IN SESSIONS

From the 203 responses to the community survey, additional feedback from drop in sessions and other discussions, the following key findings were identified:

- « More could be done to acknowledge and reflect Indigenous Culture and the history of Dungog Shire.
- « There is a need to improve the quality and accessibility of some public toilets and ensure that provision reflects contemporary standards.
- « A number of opportunities were identified to develop cycleways/ shared pathways to connect residents with opportunities. A key priority mentioned was connecting East Gresford and Gresford with a safe off-road bike path particularly for school children.
- « There are no indoor sport facilities in the shire, and this is limiting the growth of and participation in some sports.
- « There is strong interest in outdoor recreation (water activities, walking, mountain biking, etc) and this is seen as a strength of the shire that could be built on and expanded.
- « The diversity of play spaces is poor and the further development of a regional/destination play space catering for multi-generational play should be explored.
- « Provision of youth-friendly spaces and active recreation areas for young people is a priority. This could include outdoor courts, skate and BMX areas, pump tracks, MTB trails and river-based fishing and paddling opportunities.



### 3.3. USER GROUP SURVEY AND WORKSHOPS

From eight survey responses and three workshops (online and in-person), the following key findings from engagement with sporting and recreation/community groups were identified:

- « Female participation has increased since 2019 and this is placing pressure on amenities and playing areas.
- « The last few years has seen improved participation in adult groups (both male and female).
- « Investment in sporting fields should focus on improving current assets and making them more resilient. A program to improve drainage and irrigation of the playing surfaces would be effective..
- « The facilities and amenities supporting sport participation need to be improved or upgraded in some locations to ensure they are safe, accessible and cater for all participants.
- « The two showgrounds may be an underused resource and there may be opportunities to partner with the Management Committees to increase multiple use and community use outcomes, especially for sporting areas and active recreation.
- « Like groups everywhere, volunteer-based management models are finding it harder to recruit and retain members. The success of the council and committee partnerships which deliver sport and recreation spaces could be strengthened with improved agreements clarifying the respective responsibilities and the resourcing or assistance that council will provide.



### 3.4. OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The following additional key findings were identified:

- « The shire has a strong opportunity to improve and increase tourism by prioritising development of outdoor recreation infrastructure and opportunities at Dungog Common, the three rivers and surrounding State Forests and National Parks.
- « The planning and design of public parks and spaces should provide more opportunities for cultural and historical interpretation.
- « Shared-use arrangements with Department of Education (school) facilities should be explored further and agreements established to ensure continued community access and possible shared investment projects.
- « The shire could explore collaboration and partnership opportunities with National Parks and Wildlife Services and State Forestry Corporation to develop regional adventure trails and tracks.

## 4. STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES

There are a number of strategic planning issues which should be considered in this 10 year plan. These have emerged from the background research, analysis of current supply and the concerns of the community and stakeholders.

### 4.1. PROVISION OF LAND FOR PARKS AND SPORTING AREAS

While the shire's growth over the next 10 years is modest, there are pressures on existing land resources that support sport and active recreation. An additional 2,000 plus residents will see growth in the main townships, and as more families move into the shire demand for sporting land and recreation parks will increase.

The assessment of the future parks, open space and sports infrastructure needs within the scope of this Plan was informed by:

- « Current and projected population data
- « Current utilisation data and capacity of the facility types; and
- « Consultation with local residents, Council Staff, sporting clubs and user groups

The table below summarises and compares the provision of POS across Dungog Shire LGA for 2016, 2021 and 2031 population.

*Table 13: Summary of provision rate 2016 to 2031*

| YEAR | POPULATION LGA WIDE | TOTAL AREA FOR PARKS (HA) | TOTAL AREA FOR SPORT (HA) | PROVISION RATE FOR PARKS AREA (HA)/ 1,000 PEOPLE | PROVISION RATE FOR SPORT AREA (HA)/ 1,000 PEOPLE | TOTAL POS PROVISION RATE AREA (HA)/ 1,000 PEOPLE |
|------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| 2016 | 9,356               | 13.54                     | 18.30                     | 1.45   | 1.96   | 3.41*  |
| 2021 | 9,872               |                           |                           | 1.37   | 1.85   | 3.22*  |
| 2031 | 12,144              |                           |                           | 1.11   | 1.51   | 2.62*  |

*\*Exclusive of Dungog Common, Dungog Showground, Gresford Showground, linear open space corridors and waterways.*

In reference to the table above, the total POS provision rate in Dungog Shire for the population recorded in 2021 is higher than the historical NSW benchmark of 2.83 ha/1000 persons. The total POS provision rate is exclusive of the area of Dungog Common, Dungog Showground and Gresford Showground. In other words, when these additional spaces are considered the total provision rate in Dungog Shire will be higher than 2.83ha/1000 people even when future growth is considered. The exception maybe land for sport- but a future sport precinct is proposed for Clarence Town and this would meet shortfalls in this township.

The provision of public open space for future population in Dungog Shire should be planned based on the proposed Planning Framework (Section 5.3). As a general measure of supply to ensure sufficient capacity the following ratios based on existing provision and assessment of need are suggested:

- « Land for Parks 1.5 Ha per 1000
- « Land for sport 1.2 Ha per 1000



#### 4.1.1. Land for Sport

In Dungog, existing clubs have highlighted that they perceive a shortage of available fields, and some sports such as football (soccer) have no permanent “home” field relying on access to the high school field.

A review of the existing land for sport and future provision plans which include a new precinct in in Clarence Town has identified that underutilisation of, or poor access to, some spaces may be an issue impacting available field hours for sporting clubs. The main identified supply issue for sporting land appears to be in Dungog.

It is critical for council to balance overall land supply for sport with demand and capacity to maintain assets. A preferred approach sees good utilisation of resources and management strategies to ensure access, rather than expansion of the asset base and low levels of use but increased maintenance costs.

Strategies that could be considered are:

- « Negotiating a formal agreement with schools and Education NSW for shared investment to upgrade the sports fields and guarantee use for community sport clubs.
- « Engaging with the Showgrounds Committees to review master planning and the potential to develop an agreement for shared investment to create more permanent field sport use, acknowledging that there will be periods of other use for the show etc. which need to be quarantined in an annual calendar.
- « Investigate if upgrading playing surfaces to a higher standard will enable increased use hours.



#### 4.1.2. Land for Parks

For recreation parks, the supply of opportunities can be diverse and is usually based on a hierarchy of opportunities from local (walk to) opportunities to shire wide destination parks. The local access is an issue in Gresford which is around 2 km from East Gresford where parkland and sport opportunities exist.

Options to address this include:

- « Negotiation with the Gresford Primary School and Education NSW for potential community access to a playground and open space area.
- « Review available land within road and river reserves to identify opportunities for a recreation node or linear park.
- « Acquisition of a small parcel of land (minimum 5000 m2 if possible) to create a local park.



Clarence Town Reserve (Sportsground)  
Photo Credit: OPG

## 4.2. SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The shire has a reasonable supply of sport and recreation facilities including two pools. Additional built facilities need careful consideration around the operational cost, level of use and sustainability of funding. A feasibility study confirming a sustainable option exists for ongoing operation should be a prerequisite for any proposed new facility.

One area of provision that emerged clearly in community and stakeholder engagement was the lack of indoor sports facilities in the shire. It is a challenge to develop a sustainable model for a public facility when the population is dispersed across several townships and the development of a partnership or shared provision strategy is likely to be the most feasible option. Council would be unable to support a new facility without evidence of feasibility and a business plan.

An options and feasibility study is recommended to investigate in more detail the potential development of an indoor sports facility. This would consider:

- « The level of demand for a facility
- « The number of user groups and likely utilisation
- « Potential design and configuration
- « Potential for a more integrated sport and community facility that supports multiple uses and community events
- « Possible partners in provision
- « Potential locations
- « Potential capital funding sources
- « Projected operating cost and revenue strategies
- « Management options and recommended management model and business plan

## 4.3. OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM

One of the strengths of Dungog Shire is the wealth of natural area resources to support outdoor recreation and the continuing development of an outdoor/adventure tourism industry. The shire offers:

- « Expanding trails network at the Common
- « Potential longer distance land trails
- « Three rivers with strong potential for paddle trail development and multiple public lands providing access points
- « Multiple forest and national park reserves with camping, trails and free/wild-swimming areas
- « A number of developed river access points for boats
- « Proximity to a major airport
- « High level of appeal in the greater region with multiple tourism attractors
- « Potential camping and accommodation expansion sites

The development of basic infrastructure to support outdoor recreation such as trails and river-based activity can be a modest investment and coupled with a supportive environment for the development of tourism operators and services, a multi-benefit strategy could see the local economy strengthened and expanded. This investment also has a significant return for the community with new and expanded recreation opportunities provided that encourage greater activity and improves physical, social and mental health.

*A more detailed investigation is recommended around the full range of opportunities and the development of a series of staged and prioritised projects as part of a shire wide **Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Development Strategy.***

## 4.4. DUNGOG COMMON

Dungog Common Recreation Reserve Land Manager Board (DCRRLMB) is appointed by the Minister for Lands and is responsible for the care, control and management of the Dungog Common on behalf of the people of NSW.<sup>7</sup> The Government has reached an agreement with the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to resolve all of their outstanding Aboriginal Land Claims on the Dungog Common (the Common). This Agreement has two key parts:

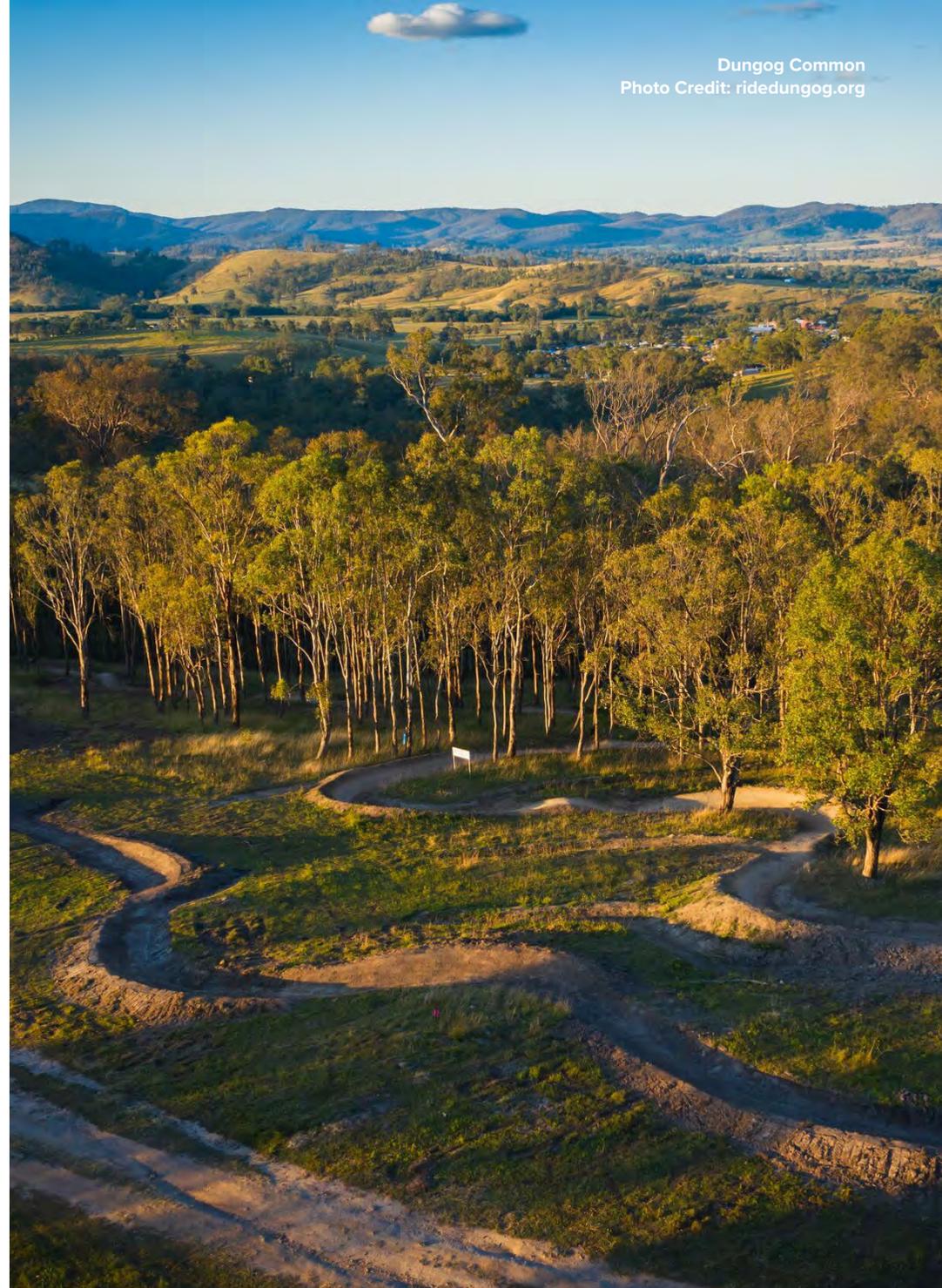
1. The land which forms the Common will be transferred to Karuah LALC
2. The community will continue to have access to and use the Common now and into the future.<sup>8</sup>

In light of the ongoing land transfer of the Common to LALC, this plan recognises the importance of Dungog Common within the public open space network and recommends the following for Dungog Common:

1. Assist the Board in developing the Masterplan and Vegetation Management Plan for the Common
2. Assist the Board in developing the Plan of Management
3. Assist the Board in development of the Heritage and Aboriginal Culture Study for the Common.
4. In partnership and collaboration with the Board and LALC, explore the following opportunities:
  - Horse riding trail and tracks within the land adjoining Dungog Common (private land between the Common, Short St and Eloiza St)
  - Investigate shared way connectivity linking Dungog town, Common and Dungog Showground
  - Explore collaboration and partnership opportunities with National Parks and Wildlife Services and State Forestry Corporation to develop adventure trails and tracks from Common to these potential locations
  - Work in collaboration with Ride Dungog to fund and delivery the connectivity network from Dungog Town to the Common

<sup>7</sup> *Dungog Common, 'FAQs-Dungog Common', April 2022*

<sup>8</sup> *NSW Government, Dept of Planning, Industry and Environment, 'Dungog Common Information Sheet', May 2021*



## 4.5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF PARKS, SPORT AND RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Dungog Shire is managing around 130 Ha of parks and sporting areas and maintaining a large asset base of sport and recreation facilities. The provision of parks sport and recreation opportunities is part of the essential services provided by council, but growing costs, aging assets, and increasing population mean that Dungog, like many local governments, is under pressure to ensure the best return for the community is achieved with the available resources.

Council has already implemented several community partnerships which see local community groups (such as sports clubs) assist with management or maintenance of some facilities or sporting spaces. Council also has provided both financial and in-kind support to Management Committees and other groups who have direct responsibility for management of areas such as the Showgrounds or Dungog Common.

These community partnerships are essential strategies to stretch available resources and ensure the community has access to parks, sport and recreation. However, this reliance on community groups and volunteers means that additional strategies are needed to support community groups to remain vibrant and effective in their roles. Issues such as declining volunteerism, financial stress and ageing committee members are common.

Additional partnerships can be developed and new projects that look for financially sustainable solutions to provision challenges should be supported. Development of support strategies for community partners and resourcing the implementation of this plan will be a challenge for Council without a dedicated role to pursue actions, secure funding and establish projects and partnerships.

The following Sustainability Strategies should be considered:

- « Review the overall open space sites being managed as park and identify any sites that are surplus to need, not required for future park or sport use, or are not fit for purpose. These sites should be disposed of or converted to other uses with less maintenance cost. In some cases, land that may be required in the future, could be leased or used for agistment until demand arises.
- « External grant funding that supports renewal and upgrading sporting areas to be more resilient or enables more multiple use, should be pursued to increase the return on investment for the community.
- « Develop a club support program to help sporting clubs and community groups develop skills and capacity needed to manage their areas and to access other support and funding that helps them remain viable.
- « Employ a dedicated Sport and Recreation Officer to drive the implementation of this plan, seek external funding and develop partnerships to solve provision issues. The role would also be key in supporting local groups and committees to remain viable and in securing external grant funds for projects.



Dungog Shire Information Centre forecourt  
Photo Credit: OPG

## 4.6. AQUATIC FACILITIES IN DUNGOG SHIRE

### Existing provision

Dungog Shire Council currently owns two aquatic facilities in Dungog and Clarence Town townships respectively. These facilities provide important recreational swimming, lap swimming and water safety/ learn-to -swim opportunities for the Shire residents.



The facility is located on the corner of Lord St and Chapman St overlooking Bennett Park, and includes:

- « 33 m outdoor pool
- « Showers and toilets
- « Toddlers pool
- « Diving platform (currently decommissioned)
- « Grassed area with shaded seating and tables
- « Slide (currently non-operational)



The facility is located along Durham St overlooking Clarence Town Reserve Park, and includes:

- « 25 m outdoor pool
- « Toddlers pool
- « Grassed area with shaded seating and tables
- « Showers and toilets

### The Benefits of Aquatic Facilities

There are a multitude of health, social and economic benefits that are attributable to the availability of an aquatic facility, including the opportunities they provide for children and adults to learn essential swimming and water safety skills, the contribution to healthier lifestyles and, importantly, the avenues they provide for social connections.

A recent report by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Royal Life Saving (RLS) found that the aquatic industry contributes \$9.1 billion annually in health, social and economic benefits to Australia. Another joint report by RLS and Swinburne University of Technology found that aquatic facilities and their programs play a critical role in creating social connections and reducing social isolation for at-risk community members.<sup>9</sup>

### Challenges for Aquatic Facility Provision

Changes in population and demographics along with the limited local government resources are affecting the lifecycle of aquatic facilities across NSW<sup>10</sup>. This problem is an even greater challenge for ageing aquatic infrastructure within regional areas where 58% of the Australian public pools are located.

The highest costs associated with operating and managing aquatic leisure centres usually come down to three key areas:

1. Staff and labour costs: 50-75% of operating cost
2. Energy Costs: 15-20% of operating cost
3. Facility Maintenance and Asset Management: 10-15% of operating cost

Due to the high spread of operating hours and public safety requirements, staff and labour costs are usually management's major concern. The combined operational expenditure on swimming facilities and the ever-increasing costs of replacing them places a tremendous strain on local governments to make this vital community infrastructure available. While there are state and federal government funding schemes, many councils cannot secure funding or receive amounts that provide minimal contributions towards the total project. Consequently, councils must invariably generate, on average, 60-70% of the upfront capital costs of most aquatic facility developments as well as all ongoing maintenance costs.<sup>11</sup>

### Aquatic facility trends for a successful facility

Over the past decade, there has been a greater emphasis on the development of a variety of water spaces within aquatic centres. The components that contribute to successful aquatic facilities are:



**One-stop-shop:** A large range of activity areas at one site to maximise use/ help share the costs.



**Reduce operating losses:** A mix of community and commercial activities are needed at the one site; however, the location also needs to be right to make this viable.



**Programmable spaces:** Programs and memberships to keep users coming back.



**Community/ social hub:** Offer quality food, beverage, social and entertainment spaces. This could also provide a range of other services like community and cultural services, health and allied services and/ or commercial precincts.

### Key directions for the future of aquatic facilities in the Shire:

The existing Dungog and Clarence Town aquatic facilities provide a range of benefits for existing and future communities. A comprehensive aquatic facilities study is proposed to strategically plan for these facilities. This study will require balanced consideration of current needs, emerging trends, asset condition and infrastructure lifecycle, operations, financial modelling, sustainability, co-location opportunities, potential facility development opportunities as well as the capital cost implications.

<sup>9</sup> Royal Life Saving Australia, 2022, 'The State of Aquatic Facility Infrastructure in Australia', page 15, accessed at [https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/69385/RLS\\_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf](https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/69385/RLS_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Royal Life Saving Australia, 2022, 'The State of Aquatic Facility Infrastructure in Australia', page 13, accessed at [https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/69385/RLS\\_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf](https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/69385/RLS_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Royal Life Saving Australia, 2022, 'The State of Aquatic Facility Infrastructure in Australia', page 13, accessed at [https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/69385/RLS\\_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf](https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/69385/RLS_AquaticInfrastructureReport2022.pdf)

## 5. DUNGOG SHIRE BIKE PLAN – ACTIVE TRANSPORT REVIEW

Dungog Shire has undertaken multiple studies to guide the improvement and future development of the cycling and pedestrian network across the Shire. Development and delivery of a connected and accessible pathway and cycling network is considered an important strategy in providing active recreation opportunities for the shire.

A review of the following documents was undertaken to consolidate priority recommendations:

- ◀ Dungog Shire Bike Plan 2008 and 2011.
- ◀ Dungog Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2010.
- ◀ Ride Dungog, 2021, Dungog Active Transport Plan.
- ◀ Ride Dungog, 2021, Dungog Shire Active Transport Plan.
- ◀ Dungog Shire – Open Space and Recreation Plan 2022, Draft Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report.
- ◀ Ride Dungog, 2021, Strategic Plan.

In addition, a combination of desktop analysis and site visits have identified priorities within each township based on an assessment of:



The demand for shared paths to link residential areas and key destinations within the town, including any priority destinations/ areas such as schools and sporting fields.



Any safety concerns around certain street intersections, including specific locations and where upgrades could be undertaken to make spaces more bike friendly.



The key locations, if any, for parking and end of trip facilities and the location of these based on high traffic/ gathering spaces.



The demand for 'Learn to Ride' facilities and skill development opportunities. (Ideally, these will be in towns with highest tourism/ attractions).



The demand for child and youth-focused opportunities.



Access to and connectivity with tourism destinations and attractions. Including opportunities for complementary infrastructure that strengthens outdoor recreation based tourism.

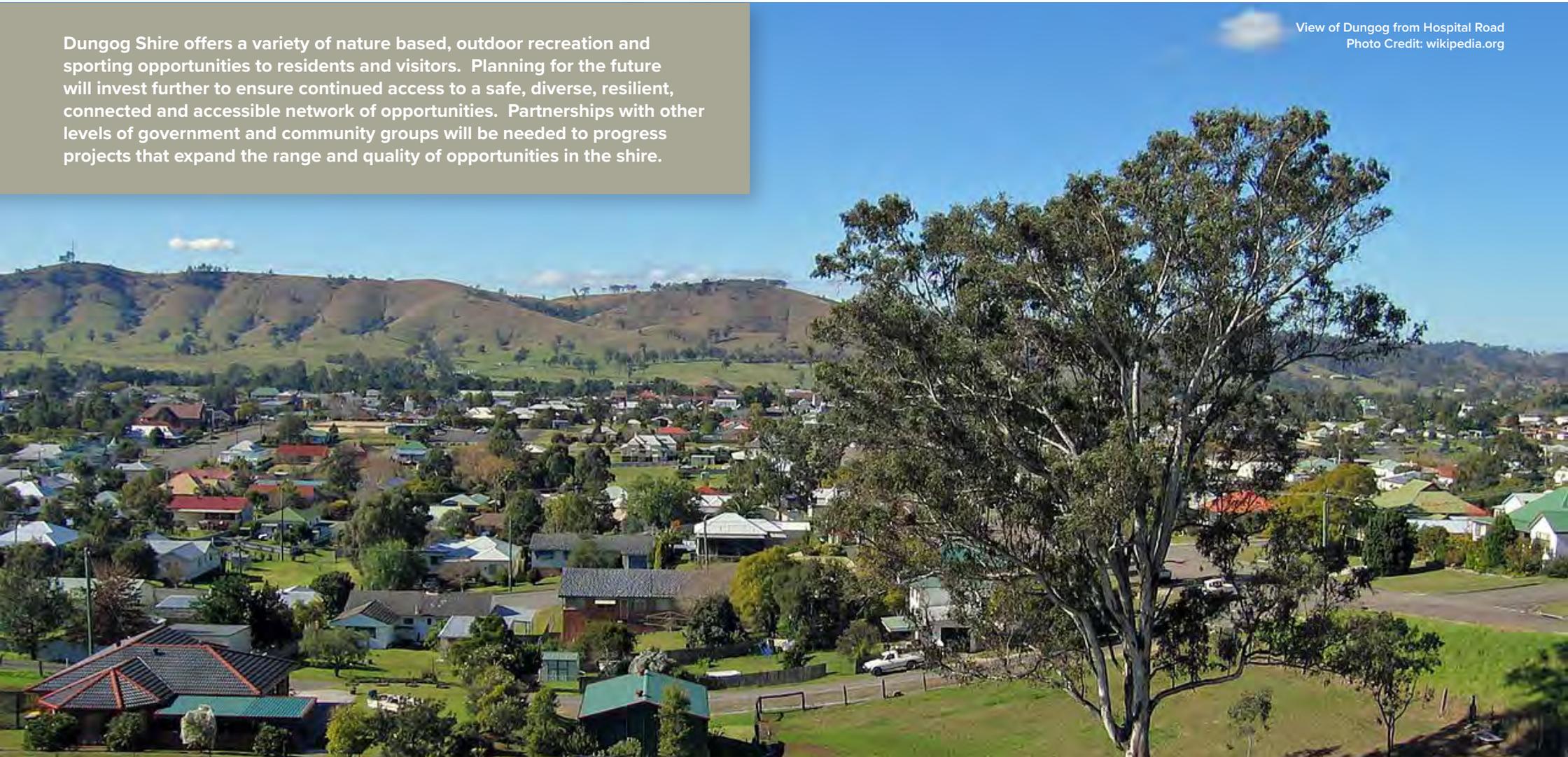
Active transport recommendations have been integrated into the Township Action Plans detailed in Section 7.

## 6. VISION AND FRAMEWORK

### 6.1. VISION

Dungog Shire offers a variety of nature based, outdoor recreation and sporting opportunities to residents and visitors. Planning for the future will invest further to ensure continued access to a safe, diverse, resilient, connected and accessible network of opportunities. Partnerships with other levels of government and community groups will be needed to progress projects that expand the range and quality of opportunities in the shire.

View of Dungog from Hospital Road  
Photo Credit: wikipedia.org



## 6.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The planning and provision of public open space will be guided by six guiding principles.

Table 14: Guiding Principles for the Dungog Shire Open Space and Recreation Plan

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE   | HOW THIS INFLUENCES THE PLAN  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>A Country First approach</b></p> <p>Social, environmental and cultural values should be protected while encouraging multiple use outcomes that maximise community benefit.</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Acknowledge the rich culture, heritage and history of the Shire and public spaces in the planning and management of public open space.</li> <li>« Protect the valuable natural assets of the surrounding National Parks and State Forests and the shire's rivers, while encouraging greater understanding of the environmental, cultural and social value of these areas.</li> <li>« Ensure the public open space network reflects and enhances the local character of the various townships and acknowledges the history of the landscape.</li> <li>« Ensure that multiple use solutions protect primary values of public spaces while increasing recreation opportunities in a sustainable way.</li> <li>« Add value to public spaces and places by including interpretive information telling the story of the site and the landscape.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>A Focus on Equity and Inclusion</b></p> <p>Parks, Recreation and Sporting areas will be provided equitably, be accessible and inclusive.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Ensure residents in the main townships have access to local park opportunities within acceptable distances (e.g. within 10 minutes' walk).</li> <li>« Ensure public open spaces, sport and recreation facilities are distributed equitably and according to an agreed level of service.</li> <li>« Provide a diverse range of recreation opportunities in each township and across the shire and ensure that inclusive design informs development of public spaces and places.</li> <li>« Public open space planning should recognise diverse demographic and community groups and plan for versatile and flexible design that can adapt to changing needs and multiple users.</li> <li>« Improve connectivity to parks and recreation opportunities through ensuring adequate street frontage for public open space and pathways, trails and walkable streetscapes that connect residents to public parks.</li> <li>« Ensure that there are accessible public amenities provided at major parks and destination areas.</li> <li>« Ensure all sporting precincts are serviced with inclusive and accessible public amenities and change facilities.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Fit for Purpose and Diverse Opportunities</b></p> <p>The Parks, Sport and Recreation network will provide a diversity of opportunities and landscape settings.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Plan for a variety of landscape settings within the parks network that supports a range of outdoor recreation opportunities.</li> <li>« The parks network will provide for the diverse cultures, interests, needs and abilities of the community.</li> <li>« Ensure that any new land for parks, sport or recreation is fit for purpose and efficient to develop and maintain.</li> <li>« Ensure design of new and improvements to existing parks and sporting areas encourages multiple use.</li> <li>« Provide a hierarchy of opportunity from locally accessible to district/township level and shire wide destination spaces.</li> <li>« Recognise that investment in high quality, well-maintained spaces and accessible infrastructure attracts visitors as well as improves opportunities for residents.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Sustainability and Resilience</b></p> <p>Provision of Parks and Sporting Areas should be sustainable and adaptable to change, reflecting the needs, resources and capabilities of the community and council</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Parks, sport and recreation facilities in the Shire will aim to incorporate best practices in environmentally sustainable design and enable efficient ongoing asset management.</li> <li>« Planning and provision should consider the need to respond to emerging activity trends as well as building resilience to climate change impacts</li> <li>« Public Open Spaces should be located and designed to be resilient to the impacts of a changing climate while providing for multiple use open spaces</li> </ul>   |

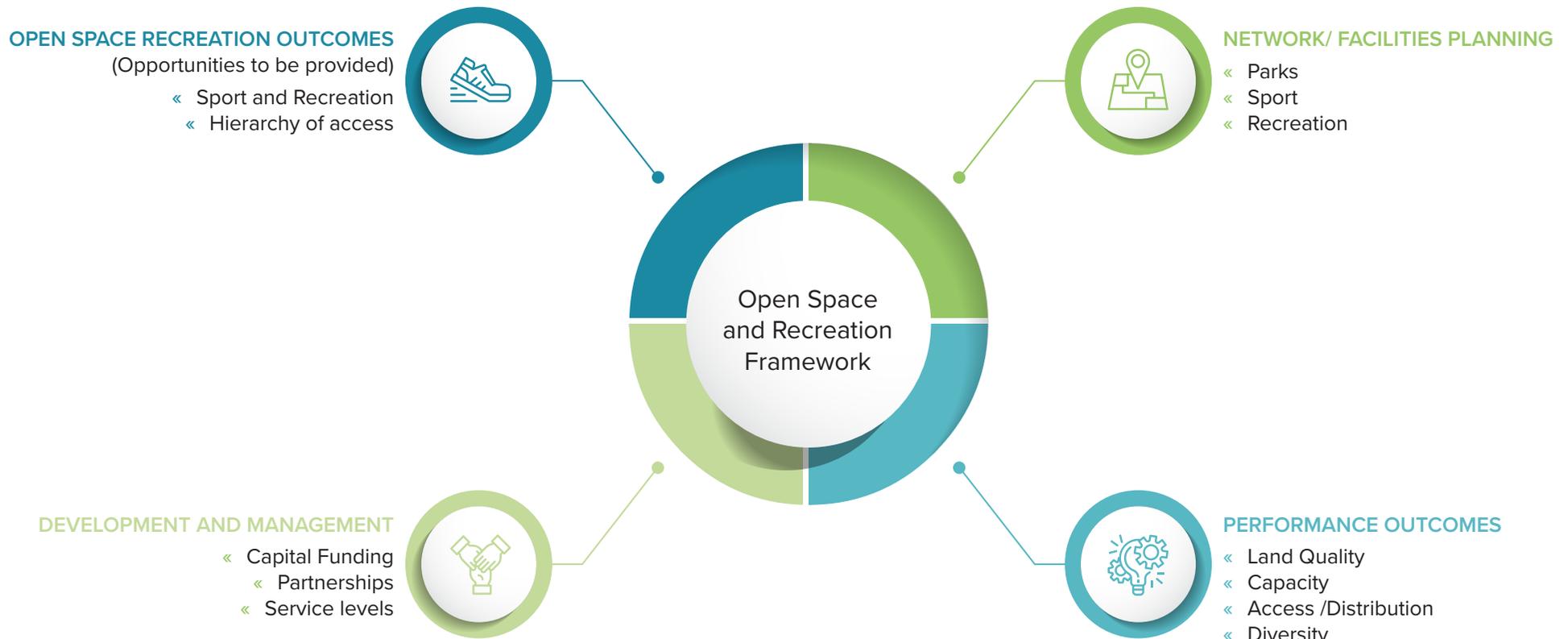
### 6.3. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Contemporary planning for public open space has evolved substantially from past approaches focused primarily on population standards to ensuring efficient provision that allows for flexibility, adaptability and capacity building. Considered planning and fit-for-purpose provision mean that a performance-based approach can define the desired outcomes that inform performance measures which ensure that parks, sport and recreation facilities meet current and future needs of the population.

The Draft Greener Places Design Guide (GANSW) proposes a performance-based approach. It explains that:

*“The aim of the performance-based approach is to allow innovation in planning, more efficient use of land for recreation, and a focus on the quality of the outcomes rather than just the quantity.”*

Figure 14: The Sport and Recreation Planning Framework



### 6.3.1. Open Space and Recreation Desired Outcomes

The desired outcomes for Open Space and Recreation are informed by the Guiding Principles. They offer a high-level statement of the opportunities that should be available for the Dungog Shire and its communities.



Local (walk or ride to) access to parks for **recreation and play**



Access to **field sport and court sport opportunities** within each of township catchments



Access to **Aquatic Facilities** within a reasonable drive time (30 minutes)



Township access to **youth outdoor recreation spaces**



Township access to parks supporting **picnics, BBQs, extended stays** and outdoor activity



Township access to larger public outdoor spaces for **community celebrations and events**



Access to **natural areas** such as bushland or riparian forests at township and shire wide levels



**Safe cycling, walking and running** opportunities within each township



Shire level **outdoor recreation opportunities** such as trail networks, camping, river based recreation



Shire level / premier **field sport (competition) facility**



Access to an **indoor court sport facility** within the shire



Shire level **outdoor events space** such as a showgrounds



Shire level **opportunities for other sports** such as equestrian, mountain biking, shooting or motor sports.

### 6.3.2. Network and Facilities Planning

Network and facilities planning looks to ensure that the land and infrastructure is available to provide for the desired opportunities. It also recognises that there are multiple areas of demand (such as more than one field sport) and that sufficient land developed in a range of configurations is required to meet community needs.

The use of a hierarchy in a planning framework recognises the different levels of provision and investment that is needed to deliver the range and diversity of parks, sport and recreation opportunities envisaged in the Desired Outcomes.

The public open space network forms the foundation for provision by delivering parks and sporting areas across the following hierarchy:

- « **Local** is close to residential area and can generally be accessed within walking distance. A local park provides for recreation facilities for daily use such as a playground, walking pathways/loops, kick-a-bout area, etc.
- « **Township** services a whole township and may be “drive to” providing more extensive and extended stay opportunities- this could also be classed as “district” access.
- « **Shire Wide-Regional** access is a major destination servicing the whole shire or providing a shire level opportunity. This can also be considered a “regional” opportunity.

Planning for the Public Open Space Network offers the following guidance to ensure a “fit for purpose” network:

| POS CLASSIFICATION        | AREA     | DESCRIPTION   |
|---------------------------|----------|---|
| Local Park                | 0.5-2 Ha | <p>Predominantly parks and other public open spaces which are locally accessible (within safe walking distance). These spaces are designed/ developed for mostly walk/ride to access and provide for local outdoor recreation, play, socialising, urban greening, and connectivity.</p> <p>Local parks can also be provided as local recreation nodes within larger open space areas such as sporting fields, foreshore reserves or environmental open space.</p> <p>Where standalone local parks are planned, large centrally located parks with at least 50% road frontage is highly desirable. The preference is for them to be greater than 0.5 Ha, however in regional areas like Dungog Shire the size of local parks may vary from 0.1ha up to 2ha subject to multiple use outcomes.</p> |
| Township or District Park | 2-4 Ha   | <p>District parks service multiple neighbourhoods or the whole township. They can provide destination play spaces; longer stay picnic areas; active recreation such as trails, outdoor fitness, youth spaces, informal fields, public sport courts; and nature-based recreation opportunities.</p> <p>These are designed for ride-to and drive-to, access and are provided as larger standalone parks or large developed recreation areas located in other open space areas such as larger sports precincts, larger environmental reserves, or riverside- linear open space.</p> <p>District level parks also supply local needs for the surrounding residences. The desired area for a District Park is 2 Ha or greater</p>  |

| POS CLASSIFICATION      | AREA     | DESCRIPTION  |
|-------------------------|----------|--|
| Sport Precinct          | 3-5 + Ha | <p>These are typically multiple use sporting grounds with sports fields, outdoor courts and built facilities (amenities) supporting formal and organised use. Often these spaces are coupled with an area of public open space that provides for general recreation.</p> <p>Sport precincts service a whole township or shire wide demand. They are developed to accommodate formal sport and community event use with parking, toilets, water and club amenities. Larger sport and active recreation spaces can also serve as a major event and community function spaces. The desired area for District Sport is 5 Ha or more – but in some smaller communities a smaller area of land or two smaller precincts may be sufficient.</p> |
| Shire Wide/<br>Regional | > 5 Ha   | <p>These are high-level opportunities servicing the wider Dungog Shire community. They are often destinations for visitors to the council area and accommodate long stays requiring substantial supportive infrastructure on-site or off-site.</p> <p>Regional Parks can include major recreation destinations, major event spaces, competition sporting facilities and key outdoor, nature-based or heritage-focused recreation destinations.</p> <p>Regional parks are planned on a site-by-site basis, and no minimum size is defined. However, they need to accommodate multiple activities and large numbers of people over extended stays and therefore often need to be 5 Ha or larger.</p>                                       |
| Linear Open Space       | N/ A     | <p>Linear open spaces are open space corridors of linear design that connect parks, open spaces, reserves and other types of open space areas. That are often focused on riverine/ riparian corridors and have role in providing trail/ path based recreation as well as ideal settings for picnics and outdoor recreation. They can protect riparian vegetation and be a buffer for other land uses.</p> <p>Linear open spaces are a crucial part of the green grid and can be important in providing for active transport (pathways, bike lanes, shared ways, etc).</p> <p>While no minimum size is recommended- a minimum width of 20 m or more allows for multiple use.</p>  |

## Sporting and Other Facilities Provision

Providing for sporting facilities aims for the following provision:

Table 15: Desired Range of Sporting and Other Facilities Provision

| ELEMENT      | TOWNSHIP/ DISTRICT  | SHIRE WIDE  |
|--------------|---|---|
| Field Sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« At least 1 multiple use rectangular field per 1000 residents (supporting all codes)</li> <li>« At least 1 oval field (or as an overlay) per 1000 and 2 practice nets.</li> <li>« Toilets</li> <li>« Male and female change facilities</li> <li>« Small kiosk facility</li> <li>« Drinking water</li> <li>« Irrigation if possible</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 higher-level rectangular field with lighting and competition support facilities. Supported by additional field space/ warm-up area.</li> <li>« 1 competition level oval with competition support facilities</li> </ul>   |
| Court Sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« At least two tennis courts with lights.</li> <li>« At least two outdoor courts supporting netball and basketball-</li> <li>« Supported with toilets</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 competition facility supporting netball with at least 3+ courts, change facilities, kiosk and lighting.</li> <li>« 1 competition facility supporting tennis with at least 6 courts, lights, change and kiosk.</li> <li>« 1 indoor court sport competition facility with 2 courts and change, toilets, kiosk and spectator capacity.</li> </ul> |
| Youth Space  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 1 outdoor youth space providing for active recreation and socialising. Should be close to amenities, shade and water.</li> <li>« Skate Park/ pump track/ etc.</li> </ul>   |   |
| Green sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Bowls green and support facilities if supported by population</li> </ul>   |   |

| ELEMENT            | TOWNSHIP/ DISTRICT   | SHIRE WIDE  |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Aquatic            |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 25 m pool able to support short course competition, recreational swimming and aquatic programs. Provided within 30 minutes' drive</li> </ul> |
| Equestrian         |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Equestrian sport precinct supporting competition and events</li> <li>« Supported with shelters, yards, amenities and kiosk</li> </ul>        |
| Outdoor Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Access to walking, riding and running trails that are off-road.</li> <li>« Access to river based recreation/ river access points</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Access to extended land or river trails</li> <li>« Access to large natural areas</li> </ul>  |
| Other sports       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Access to shared use spaces as demand emerges</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Special use facilities (e.g. MTB, shooting, motorsport, golf) developed as demand, support and opportunity emerge.</li> </ul>                |

### 6.3.3. Performance Criteria for Sport and Recreation Provision

The table below summarises the performance criteria for provision in the Shire:

Table 16: Key Performance Criteria

| ANALYSIS CRITERIA                     | DESCRIPTION AND MEASURES  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Distribution</b>                   | <p>The distribution of parks and sporting facilities provides for equitable levels of access across the shire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« All townships have local opportunities providing parks, active open space areas, picnic facilities and sporting fields and courts.</li> <li>« Youth spaces provided within each township.</li> <li>« Travel times should not exceed <b>10 minutes safe walking</b> or cycling for locally accessible opportunities such as parks and play spaces.</li> <li>« Shire wide opportunities should generally be within <b>30 minutes' drive</b> time.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Accessibility and connectivity</b> | <p>Parks, sport and recreation facilities should be accessible to all and inclusive in design. Access includes both physical and visual access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Public playgrounds to be accessible and inclusive with parking, pathways, play equipment and supporting amenities designed for those with access challenges.</li> <li>« All sporting areas should have public amenities that cater to all genders and abilities.</li> <li>« Destination parks and picnic areas should have pathway networks, parking, facilities and amenities that are accessible and inclusive.</li> <li>« Footpath access and entry to parks should provide ramps and visible access points</li> <li>« Parks and sporting areas should have at least 50% of boundary adjacent to public road</li> <li>« Linear open space should have at least 25% road frontage with minimum frontage areas of 15 m</li> </ul> <p>Parks, sport and recreation facilities should be connected to the local active transport network and the wider open space network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Pathways, trails and footpaths should provide a network connecting local parks and recreation opportunities to surrounding residential areas</li> <li>« Sporting areas should consider safe cycling access for youth and have safe routes from nearby schools. End of trip facilities should include bicycle racks and water points.</li> <li>« Parks and sporting areas should be connected to the wider open space/ green space network where possible and linear open space connectors should support active transport links</li> <li>« Linear open space should be a minimum of 20 m from top of any creek, drain or river bank to allow for pathways, trails and recreation use.</li> </ul> |

| ANALYSIS CRITERIA | DESCRIPTION AND MEASURES  |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Quality</b>    | <p>Quality of provision is critical to a sustainable network that meets needs. The quality of land acquired/dedicated for parks and sporting areas impacts on the cost of development and maintenance as well as the ability to reconfigure the site in response to changing community needs.</p> <p>Land that is acceptable for Parks and sporting areas should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Be free of hazards and constraints to community use such as contaminated land, high voltage transmission lines and adjacent noxious industry.</li> <li>« Consider CPTED principles; should have good road frontage, legible access point/s and visibility from surrounding residents and traffic.</li> <li>« Consider adjacent uses and be adequately buffered from incompatible uses. Solutions may include vegetation corridors, planted mounds and fencing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Main use area free of regular flooding (i.e. above 10% AEP<sup>12</sup>) with at least 10% of total area above 2% AEP levels. No more than 10 % of the site to be impacted by Constructed drains or stormwater treatment mechanisms. Detention and retention basins generally not suitable for parkland.</li> <li>« Slope should be no greater than 1:20 for main use area and no more than 1:6 for remainder</li> <li>« Multiple Use open space solutions may be considered in some circumstances (e.g. infill development) providing all other performance criteria concerning safe and functional space can be met.</li> <li>« Good visibility from surrounding residents. Narrow linear shapes not preferred.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« 75% of site useable and free of hazards to support sport and recreation activity, facilities and access.</li> <li>« Main use area free of regular flooding (i.e. above 10% AEP) with at least 10% of total area above 2% AEP levels. Constructed drains or detention basins are not suitable for sport park.</li> <li>« Slope should be no more than 1:50 for sport playing surfaces, Variable topography for remainder.</li> <li>« Suitable soil and sub-soil profile with ability to develop level and sustainable turf surface with associated drainage and irrigation (as appropriate).</li> <li>« Minimum sizes apply and no boundary should be less than 150m.</li> </ul> |

<sup>12</sup> AEP- Annual exceedance probability. A 1% AEP is a 1 in 100 year chance of flooding and 10% is a 1 in 10 year chance.

| ANALYSIS CRITERIA            | DESCRIPTION AND MEASURES   |
|------------------------------|--|
|                              | <p>Quality of park development and the standard of ongoing maintenance is critical to attracting use and activating the open space network. Community expectations regarding embellishments often change, and this shift in demand should be considered and the provision framework updated over time. Key considerations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Suitable quality land is cheaper to develop and maintain</li> <li>« Poor quality land often means that there are non-functional areas that need to be maintained yet do not return a community benefit.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Quantity and capacity</b> | <p>The ability of parks, sport and recreation facilities network to meet current and future needs requires sufficient land, developed to an appropriate standard and capacity to accommodate growth. Successful provision requires not just a certain number of parks or sporting areas it also requires those facilities to have enough capacity for the demand. Measuring capacity should only consider the functional/useable area of a given park or sporting area.</p> <p>Broad capacity measures recommended are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« The ratio of functional park area to population within a township catchment should not be less than 1.5 Ha per 1000 residents</li> <li>« The ratio of functional sporting land to population within a township should not be less than 1.2 Ha per 1000 residents</li> <li>« Additional parkland for destination and shire wide opportunities is required but no capacity metric is proposed.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Diversity</b>             | <p>The diversity of landscape settings, recreation opportunities and facilities creates a richer environment for recreation and encourages use. Diversity supports different ages, cultures and abilities and assists parks to become unique destinations.</p> <p>Measuring performance on diversity should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Play spaces cater to different age groups and abilities.</li> <li>« Different types of play are provided including: nature play; active play; imaginative play and collaborative play.</li> <li>« Parks and public spaces offer a range of landscape settings.</li> <li>« Parks and public spaces recognise local culture and history.</li> <li>« Residents should have access to diverse opportunities including: active spaces for exercise and sport; family spaces for picnics and play; quiet spaces; spaces to connect with nature; formal sport facilities; aquatic activities; outdoor-nature based recreation; spaces for community events and celebration.</li> </ul> |

### 6.3.4. Development and Management

Development and management of parks, sport and recreation facilities requires:



#### DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Ensuring that sufficient land of suitable quality is provided and that facilities are developed in a timely manner to meet current and emerging needs.

##### Objectives:

1. Provision within in each township meets a defined minimum level of service and upgrades are programmed to resolve any shortfalls.
2. Sporting precincts and larger (destination) parks are master planned to guide ongoing investment
3. Feasibility studies are undertaken for proposed new built facilities to ensure there is sufficient need and a sustainable business case for operation.
4. 10 year forward investment plans are prepared to ensure that development of new parks, sport and recreation facilities meets emerging need from growing populations.
5. Preparation of forward works plans, master plans and feasibility studies will support the development of funding partnerships to deliver projects.
6. Co-location, shared and multiple use, should be incorporated into all planning.



#### MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS

Maintaining assets to an acceptable standard and in an affordable way. Balanced with strategies to ensure community access and community benefit. In addition management needs to plan for replacement and refurbishment as assets age and community needs change.

##### Objectives

1. Parks and recreation facilities are managed to maximise community access and benefit.
2. Management is financially sustainable and efficient use of existing resources is essential.
3. Development of partnerships with the community to manage sporting and other facilities can expand the opportunities available and return to the community.
4. Leases, use and management agreements should consider equity of access and ensure that potential users are not excluded.
5. Maintenance of parks and facilities should be based on an agreed level of service.

# 7.IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This plan has focused on the next 10 years and implementation reflects this timeframe as well as noting the longer-term implications of some of the actions proposed.

*It should be noted that the ability to action some recommendations relies on the development of partnerships with others to secure funding or deliver outcomes. Further, priorities of actions may shift in response to opportunities that emerge and can progress a particular project earlier than expected.*

The plan should be seen as a flexible document and be reviewed on an annual basis with actions and priorities updated accordingly.

## 7.1. RECOMMENDED APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION

1. Following community review of the Draft Plan, the Actions and Recommendations should be updated for preparation of the final plan.
2. The Final Plan should be adopted by Council
3. Establish a Sport and Recreation Implementation Team comprised of key internal staff to coordinate the plans implementation across council departments.
4. The above team to agree on incorporation of the actions into council's operational plan where appropriate.
5. Pursue the proposed employment of a Sport and Recreation Officer to work with community groups and other stakeholders to implement the plan.
6. The Action Plan should be reviewed each year.
7. Organisational, planning and policy actions should be implemented to enable the Planning Catchment Recommendations to be planned further and implemented.
8. Consider the establishment of local advisory groups in each planning catchment to assist with establishing partnerships and seeking external funding.

**The detailed Action Plan is contained in Appendix One.**

# APPENDIX 1: IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

This plan makes a series of recommendations regarding parks, sport and recreation within Dungog Shire. The recommendations include:

- « LGA wide recommendations concerning planning, policy and strategy:
- « Planning Catchment recommendations specific to the four main planning catchments based around the main townships of
  - Dungog
  - Clarence Town
  - Gresford
  - Paterson

## Priority Rating

The following priority has been applied to the recommendations.

**H – High:** Commence within four years

**M – Medium:** Commence within eight years

**L – Low:** Commence within ten years

**O – Ongoing:** Continually undertake action

The table below summarises the recommended actions: overarching/LGA-wide and for each Planning Catchment.

Table 17: Recommended Actions to deliver the Plan

| ID  | CATEGORY            | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|---|---------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>1. OVERARCHING/ LGA WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS</b> |                     |  |   |                    |
| 1   | <b>Partnerships</b> | Establish partnerships with local groups to recognise the Indigenous culture and local history in the shire's public spaces.<br>This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« park naming,</li> <li>« public art</li> <li>« signage</li> <li>« interpretive features and storytelling</li> <li>« wayfinding.</li> </ul>   | One of the key findings of the Community and Stakeholder Consultation is the need to recognise the rich culture and Indigenous history of Dungog Shire in planning and designing of parks.<br><br>Adding culture, history and local stories can enrich outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and appeal to visitors to spend more time in the shire.   | <b>M</b>           |
| 2   |                     | In collaboration with Ride Dungog, Forestry Corporation NSW and National Parks & Wildlife Services, Hunter Water and Dept of Planning and Environment NSW, identify sites to expand the tracks and trail network within Dungog Shire LGA.<br><br>The track and trail network will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Utilise existing fire trails and horse trails within NPWS and FCNSW. Potential locations to undertake feasibility assessment include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Columbey National Park</li> <li>• Uffington State Forest</li> <li>• Chichester Dam</li> </ul> </li> <li>« Establish multi-use pathway connection between Dungog Common and other outdoor recreation destinations</li> <li>« Expand connectivity between sites within Dungog and to the Common.</li> </ul> | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified a desire to Improve and expand outdoor recreation opportunities in Dungog Shire.<br><br><b>Opportunity Analysis</b> identified the potential to expand tracks and trails offer with a regional outdoor recreation network within NPWS and FCNSW.<br><br><b>Background and trends research</b> provided evidence that expanded trails opportunities would boost the tourism economy. | <b>H</b>           |

| ID | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|----------|--|---|--------------------|
| 3  |          | <p>Establish a formal partnership agreement with the Department of Education and individual schools to secure community access to school sport and recreation facilities that are not used outside of school hours and could help meet needs in township communities.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Strengthen shared-use arrangements for sportsgrounds</li> <li>« Potential for a joint provision of an indoor sports centre with Dungog High School</li> <li>« Potential for community access to covered sporting spaces at other schools.</li> <li>« Community access to school outdoor play spaces.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation</b> identified a gap in provision of indoor sport and recreation facilities supporting indoor sport, indoor events, emergency assembly areas, access to sport in wet weather, etc.</p> <p><b>Supply Analysis</b><br/>The Supply Analysis indicated a gap in the provision of indoor sports courts and recreation facilities.</p> <p><b>Development and operation cost</b> is a key challenge in addressing the need for indoor sports facilities and a shared provision approach is thought to be more sustainable- but should be investigated in a feasibility study.</p> <p><b>In some smaller communities-</b> there are no local park opportunities and access to the school play space and outdoor field would be more efficient than acquiring and developing additional land.</p> | M                  |

| ID | CATEGORY   | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 4  | Funding    | <p>In collaboration with community-based management groups such as S. 355 Committees, investigate how council can provide additional support to assist with funding and grant applications.</p> <p>This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Assistance with information on the range of funding opportunities</li> <li>« Supporting the preparation of applications</li> <li>« Training and skill development programs to improve the capability within community based organisations.</li> <li>« Creating a funding pool so council can assist with seed funding or planning work needed to comply with grant requirements.</li> <li>« Having a dedicated Sport and Recreation role within council (see Management -recommendation 5).</li> </ul> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br/>The Consultation findings identified a need for resources to assist community groups in preparing quality grant funding applications.</p> <p><b>Council resourcing</b> is currently limited and additional support for clubs and groups could improve more effective targeting of grants and the success rate. (see Management - recommendation 5).</p>  | H                  |
| 5  | Management | <p>Investigate potential opportunities to employ a Sport and Recreation Officer for the shire.</p> <p>This role would be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« ensure implementation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.</li> <li>« work with the various community groups, clubs and state agencies to secure more partnerships and funding.</li> <li>« Review and resolve management and access issues across the sport and recreation asset network.</li> <li>« work on key projects such as an indoor sports centre, establishing river based trails, and master planning new precincts.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> made it clear that lack of resources and especially a dedicated resource with the required skill set is a key limitation in progressing a number of projects.</p> <p>There may be some <b>partnership opportunities</b> for the appointment of a Sport and Recreation Officer as a full time or dual role. The role would be able to improve the level of support to community groups and ensure they remain viable.</p> <p>In addition, having a <b>dedicated resource</b> to search and secure grant funding will probably return more investment into the shire than the cost of the salary.</p> | H                  |

| ID | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|----------|---|--|--------------------|
| 6  |          | <p>Undertake a pool services and aquatic facilities review for Dungog and Clarence Town Swimming Pools.</p> <p>This study should consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« current asset condition</li> <li>« longer term provision options</li> <li>« changing community needs for facility and program offers</li> <li>« sustainable operating models</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified some areas of dissatisfaction with current pool operations and desire for additional programs and extended opening hours.</p> <p>Pools are expensive and the smaller population of Dungog means that the <b>current model requires significant subsidy</b>.</p> <p>A <b>longer term provision plan</b> is needed to ensure investment is targeted and that an acceptable level of service is provided to the c=shire's communities.</p> | L                  |
| 7  |          | <p>Prepare a Public Amenities Plan that identifies the condition of existing buildings and identifies the priorities for upgrading or provision of new buildings. The strategy would consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« a level of service definition to guide provision</li> <li>« priority upgrades where amenities are not compliant with legislation</li> <li>« the removal of "stranded assets" no longer required</li> <li>« opportunities for more efficient provision</li> <li>« facility design and minimum service for sporting areas.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Supply Analysis</b> identified low provision of accessible public toilets, some ageing assets and poor condition.</p> <p>In addition, provision of appropriate change and toilet facilities to service sporting areas was raised in <b>community feedback</b>.</p> <p>Preparing a strategy will help <b>prioritise investment</b> and ensure any longer-term asset renewal is aligned with service levels and planned provision.</p>   | M                  |
| 8  |          | <p>Undertake review of 'Dungog Parking Strategy'</p>  | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b> identified the need to revisit the Dungog Parking Strategy to ensure parking for caravans and RVs is accommodated within the key towns of the Shire and enables visitors to access key destinations.</p>  | L                  |

| ID | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|----------|--|---|--------------------|
| 9  |          | <p>In collaboration with community-based management groups (Sec 355 Committees), develop an agreed framework for management and maintenance activities and resourcing.</p> <p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Agreement on the respective responsibilities of the Management Committee and Council</li> <li>« Specification of the type and frequency of maintenance activities undertaken by the respective parties.</li> <li>« Level and type of contribution from council (e.g. cash, in-kind etc)</li> <li>« Use and access rights and equity provisions to ensure any emerging user groups have fair access</li> <li>« Site master plans and agreed priorities for investment.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> indicated a high reliance on local volunteer groups and Sec 355 Committees to manage and maintain sporting and event spaces.</p> <p><b>Issues reported</b> include concerns around declining volunteerism, lack of clarity on roles, perceived in equity in regard to the level of support provided by council to various groups and poor strategic planning for development/ investment.</p>   | O                  |
| 10 | Planning | <p>Seek state government support to prepare an Outdoor Recreation and Nature Based Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« A Paddle Trail Strategy for the shire.</li> <li>« Better integration and leveraging of the State Forests and National Parks camping and trails opportunities</li> <li>« Expansion of multi-use trails</li> <li>« Identify the potential market and the supporting services needed to create a strong adventure tourism product for the shire.</li> <li>« Identify state, community and industry partners</li> <li>« Unique Outdoor Events such as multi-sport/ multi-trail races.</li> <li>« Review management frameworks and funding mechanisms to maintain infrastructure.</li> <li>« Development of a prioritised action plan over 10-15 years.</li> </ul> | <p>A <b>strategic opportunities analysis</b> has identified that with three rivers and multiple public lands providing access points, there is strong potential to develop paddle trails and river based outdoor recreation for residents and to attract tourism.</p> <p>With multiple outdoor and nature-based opportunities the shire has the <b>potential to become a key destination</b> in the region and to attract day trips from nearby markets (such Hunter wine district) and more overnight stays from domestic and inbound.</p> | M                  |

| ID | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|----------|---|--|--------------------|
| 11 |          | <p>Undertake a Feasibility and Options study for an Indoor Sport and Recreation Centre in Dungog. This should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Potential joint provision with Education NSW or other partner such as the Showgrounds</li> <li>« Potential use and demand</li> <li>« Management models</li> <li>« Operational funding model</li> <li>« Capital funding options</li> <li>« Preferred facility design and inclusions.</li> <li>« Location options</li> </ul> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> indicated a lack of indoor sport and recreation facilities is a key issue for the community.</p> <p><b>Strategic analysis</b> has identified that it is unlikely a facility could be supported unless it is a joint project with Education NSW or other key partner.</p> <p><b>Consideration of sport and recreation supply</b> confirms that provision of a 2 court indoor centre for sport, recreation and community events is desirable if it can be provided in a financially sustainable way.</p> | H-M                |
| 12 |          | <p>Prepare a sports field and courts improvement plan. This would focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Ensuring minimum service levels in each township</li> <li>« Identifying upgrades that improve resilience and multiple use</li> <li>« Using the plan to secure external funding for the upgrades.</li> <li>« Partnering with sporting groups and state organisations to assess current provision and required upgrades.</li> </ul>                                      | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> indicated some concerns regarding the quality of playing fields and issues such as drainage. Similarly upgrading court provision and surfaces was identified.</p> <p>Preparing the plan will allow for an objective assessment and allow the shire to support projects based on priorities in delivering equity of provision and safe sporting areas.</p>  | L                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                     | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>2. DUNGOG PLANNING CATCHMENT- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b> |                              |   |   |                    |
| 13   | <b>Parks and Playgrounds</b> | <p>In collaboration and partnership with Land Care Group and Ride Dungog, investigate opportunities for Abbots Flat to become a conservation and recreation precinct.</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Shared way connectivity to Frank Robinson Park and Dungog town</li> <li>« Nature play</li> <li>« River access for paddle trails</li> <li>« A walking and running loop around the perimeter</li> </ul> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified ongoing ecological restoration and riparian zone restoration works done at Frank Robinson Park and Abbots Flat by the Land Care Group would be complemented by lower impact uses such as a trail around the perimeter and river access points.</p> | H                  |
| 14   |                              | <p>Consider the following in the development of a master plan for the new Central Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« A multi-generational playground;</li> <li>« Youth friendly spaces; and</li> </ul> <p>Connectivity to surrounding streets, key parks and destination places.</p>  | <p><b>Supply Analysis</b><br/>Supply analysis identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« low provision of District Parks</li> <li>« limited provision of youth-friendly spaces;</li> </ul> <p>Potential for more diversity in play and a second destination play space that was multi-generational</p>    | H                  |
| 15   |                              | <p>Deliver the masterplan for Central Park along with the repurposing of the old bus depot for community use and as potential for a built facility (indoor sport and recreation)</p>  | <p><b>Supply Analysis</b><br/>Supply analysis identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« low provision of District Parks</li> <li>« gap in indoor sport and recreation</li> </ul>   | M                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                        | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|---------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 16   | <b>Active Transport Network</b> | Investigate implementation of the Active Transport priority recommendations noted below.  | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br/>The Consultation findings identified disconnected and low provision of pathways and footpaths, safe pedestrian crossings with existing footpaths being narrow and not accessible.</p> <p><b>Supply Analysis</b><br/>The Supply Analysis indicated a gap in provision of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to major parks and open spaces</p> | O                  |
| 16.1 |                                 | Implement shared trail loop to encourage future park run along riparian vegetation. Key locations include:<br>a) Frank Robinson Park- Abbots Flat<br>b) The Swimming Hole (Southern tip of Abbots Flat)   |   | H                  |
| 16.2 |                                 | Strengthen/formalise cycle connections to Dungog Common (denoted by *), linking the township to this regional destination. Key linkages include:<br>a) Short Street to Burton Street (red dash)<br>b) Extension of Mary Street through the open space parcel to Burton Street (yellow dash)<br>c) Short Street to Common Road (green dash) [Utilise Burton Street as a formal connector to Common]<br>d) Chapman Street to Burton Street (via Hospital Road) (blue dash)<br><i>NOTE: Locations are indicative – dependant on land ownership and accessibility restrictions.</i><br><i>Figure 15: Indicative locations of cycleway connections</i> |   | H                  |
|      |                                 |   |   |                    |

| ID   | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|----------|--|-----------|--------------------|
| 16.3 |          | Implement painted, on-road bike lane (Figure 2) connecting residential areas to key destinations including Dungog Common and Bennett Park. Key streets include:<br>a) Common Road (Dungog Common to Hooke Street)<br>b) Hooke Street (Common Road to Dowling Street)<br>c) Lord Street (Hook Street to Chapman Street)<br>d) Dowling Street (along Dowling Street to Frank Robinson Park- Abbots Flat loop)<br>e) Abelard Street (Hooke Street to Clarence Town Road)<br>f) Brown Street (Lord Street to Dungog Train Station)<br>g) Chapman Street (Lord Street to Hospital Road)<br>h) Mary Street (Dowling Street to Eloiza Street)<br>i) Eloiza Street (Hooke Street to Mar Street)<br>j) Short Street (Clarence Town Road to Burton Street)<br><i>Figure 16: Example of on-road bike lane</i> |           | H                  |
|      |          |   |           |                    |
|      |          | <i>Source: AP-G88-17_Cycling_Aspects_of_Austrroads_Guides.pdf   Austrroads</i>   |           |                    |
| 16.4 |          | Upgrade intersections to be bicycle friendly and improve cycle safety (ground markings, signage and refuge islands). Key intersections include:<br>a) Dowling Street (Hooke Street to Mary Street intersections)<br>b) Chapman Street & Lord Street<br>c) Brown Street & Lord Street<br>d) Mackay Street & Lord Street<br>e) Hooke Street & Lord Street<br>f) Eloiza Street (Hooke Street to Chapman Street intersections)   |           | M                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                      | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|-------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 16.5 |                               | Implement bicycle parking / end of trip facilities (bike racks, water refill, seating) in key locations. Key locations include:<br>a) Jubilee Park<br>b) Dungog Swimming Pool / Bennet Park<br>c) Dungog Showground<br>d) Frank Robinson Memorial Park<br>e) Train Station<br>f) Key locations along Dowling Street  |   | M                  |
| 16.6 |                               | Investigate demand for and potential development of a 'Learn to Ride' facility that support education around safe riding behaviour. Key locations to consider could include:<br>a) Jubilee Park (near Dungog Shire Library)<br>b) The new Central Park<br>c) Dungog Common   |   | L                  |
| 16.7 |                               | Formalised pedestrian, running and cycle loops within Dungog, including signage, distance markers and route maps. (See Figure 3)<br>a) 5km loop<br>b) 10km loop  |   | L                  |
| 17   | <b>River Based Recreation</b> | As part of implementing additional outdoor recreation opportunities and in line with the proposed Nature Based Tourism Strategy investigate the potential for a number of river access points to facilitate river-based recreation and paddle trails around Gresford. Key access points to be investigated are:<br>« Frank Robinson Park<br>« Abbotts Flat | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>The Consultation findings indicated the need in upgrading and expanding river access infrastructure such as boat ramps, jetty, etc.<br><b>Supply Analysis</b><br>The Supply Analysis identified the opportunity to upgrade existing river access infrastructure to support river recreation opportunities in Dungog Shire. | M                  |
| 18   | <b>Youth Recreation</b>       | Provide additional Youth recreation opportunities and MTB oriented skills development by developing a pump track or skills circuits. This should be part of a park precinct and located in town. The following could be considered:<br>« Bruyn Park/ Jubilee Park<br>« The new Central Park  | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>identified the need for a pump track/ learn-to-ride facilities in Dungog town to increase awareness and provide a facility for tourists to refresh their riding skills<br><br>In addition, it improves opportunities for youth and encourages active recreation and MTB skills development.                                | H-M                |

| ID | CATEGORY                 | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|--------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| 19 | <b>Sports facilities</b> | <b>Dungog Netball Courts and Skate Park:</b><br>Improve integration and amenity at the netball courts and skate park with additional recreation facilities like seating, shade and trees.  | <b>Feedback</b> from community users and site analysis indicated a need for improvement  | M                  |
| 20 |                          | <b>Dungog Showground</b><br>In collaboration with Dungog Showground Committee, develop an activation plan for Dungog Showground. The plan will consider utilisation showground precinct for:<br>« Sport training<br>« Hosting major events<br>« Retrofitting of existing buildings for indoor recreation purposes<br>« Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the surrounding public open space network<br><br>Formalise and organise spaces for RV parks, camping areas within the showground premises to improve outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors | <b>Supply Analysis</b><br>The Supply Analysis report identified potential year around activation of showgrounds for community use. The report also noted the underutilisation of existing assets within the Showground precinct.<br><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>The Consultation findings identified a gap in provision of indoor recreation facilities in Dungog Shire | L                  |
| 21 |                          | <b>Tennis Courts</b><br>In consultation with the community and user groups, investigate multiple line marking for three of the six tennis courts at Bennett Park to support multi-use.   | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>The Consultation findings identified the need for additional basketball courts.   | L                  |

| ID | CATEGORY | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|----------|--|---|--------------------|
| 22 |          | <p><b>Bennett Park:</b><br/>In collaboration with Bennett Park User Groups, investigate opportunities to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upgrade field drainage and irrigation</li> <li>2. Improve building amenities to modern standards and female friendly</li> </ol> <p>Develop a concept layout to define pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to recreation facilities within the precinct</p> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br/>The Consultation findings identified the need to upgrade recreation facilities and infrastructure in Bennett Park</p>  | M                  |
| 23 |          | <p><b>Bruyn Park:</b><br/>Repurpose Bruyn Park as a training field</p>   | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br/>The Consultation findings identified the need to improve the usability of Bruyn Park and potentially support Bennett Park sportsgrounds for training purposes.</p> | M                  |

### 3. CLARENCE TOWN PLANNING CATCHMENT- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

|    |                              |  |  |   |
|----|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 24 | <b>Parks and Playgrounds</b> | <p>Plan for at least one additional park and play space with a minimum area of 0.5 Ha and a minimum 50% of road frontage within the Clarence Town Township. This could be located within the proposed new sports precinct ('Field of Dreams') or existing riverside Wharf Reserve where housing growth is occurring. This sited should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« A multi-generational playground;</li> <li>« Youth friendly spaces;</li> <li>« Connectivity to surrounding streets, key parks and destination places.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified under provision of local parks, multi-generational playgrounds and the need to provide for youth friendly spaces.</p> | L |
| 25 |                              | <p>Investigate opportunities for additional youth facilities such as a skills track or pump track within the proposed new sports precinct or Wharf Reserve.</p>  | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified the need to provide for of youth-friendly spaces to potentially minimise vandalism</p>                                | M |

| ID   | CATEGORY                        | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|---------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 26   |                                 | <p>Amend the concept plans for Village Green to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« relocate playground along Grey St.</li> <li>« Investigate a potential off-leash dog area at Village Green.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br/>indicated the need to improve the quality of Wharf reserve and Village Green to improve and expand recreation opportunities in Clarence Town.</p> <p><b>Supply Analysis</b> indicated underutilisation of Wharf Reserve and Village Green and the potential to develop them into a good quality destination recreation precinct.</p>   | H                  |
| 27   | <b>Active Transport network</b> | <p>Investigate implementation of the Active Transport recommendations noted below:</p>   | <p><b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings</b> identified poor connectivity for active transport and concerns over safety.</p> <p>In addition, walking and running are very popular recreation/fitness activities and providing safer routes with distance markers will enhance opportunities.</p> <p><b>Supply Analysis</b> indicated a gap in provision of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to major parks and open spaces.</p> | O                  |
| 27.1 |                                 | <p>Implement painted, on-road bike lane connecting residential areas to key destinations including Clarence Town Public School, Sporting Complex and Skate Park. Key streets include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Queen Street (Sheriff St to Durham Street) – on both sides of the road</li> <li>b) Rifle St (Queen St to Earl St)</li> <li>c) Durham Street* (King St to Lions Pk)</li> <li>d) Grey Street (Earl Street to King Street)</li> <li>e) Limeburners Creek Road* (Yoke Way to Durham St)</li> </ol> <p><i>*Will require clear signage / safe visibility</i></p> |   | H                  |
| 27.2 |                                 | <p>Upgrade key intersections to be more bicycle friendly and improve cycle safety (e.g. ground markings and signage) consider refuge islands the busiest crossings (e.g. Queen and Marshall streets). Key intersections include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Marshall Street (Terrace) &amp; Queen Street</li> <li>b) Rifle Street &amp; Queen Street sweeping bend</li> <li>c) Duke Street &amp; Rifle St</li> <li>d) Grey Street &amp; Queen Street</li> </ol>   |   | M                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                 | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|--------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| 27.3 |                          | Implement bicycle parking / end of trip facilities (bike racks, water refill, seating) in key locations. Key locations include:<br>a) Lions Park<br>b) Swimming Pool<br>c) Skate Park   |  | M-L                |
| 27.4 |                          | Implement the 4 km town walking and running loop using trail and distance markers and pathways where needed. Include the connection between the Village Green and Wharf Reserve and add lops at Wharf reserve and Bridge Reserve. (as shown below)  |   | H                  |
| 28   | <b>Sports facilities</b> | <b>Clarence Town Sports Precinct/ Reg Ford Oval:</b><br>« Investigate opportunities to improve the playing surface of the fields and drainage.<br>« Undertake a concept masterplan for the whole precinct including the tennis and bowls club -to guide longer term investment, improve connectivity, enhance the amenity of the youth space and allow for more diverse uses. | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>indicated the need to upgrade playing surfaces for improved draining and irrigation system.<br><b>Site analysis</b> indicates that an overall master plan for the site would help resolve key priorities for further investment in the site. The plan should be prepared with the local community and user groups guidance. | H-M                |
| 29   |                          | <b>Field of Dreams</b> (at Clarence Rd intersection with Earl St):<br>Undertake a feasibility study and masterplan development of the concept design for the 'Field of dreams' sports precinct  | <b>Population growth</b> indicated the possible need for additional sporting spaces after 2031.  | M-L                |

| ID   | CATEGORY                    | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|--|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>4. GRESFORD PLANNING CATCHMENT- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b> |                             |  |   |                    |
| 30   | <b>Parks and Playground</b> | Investigate options to provide anew local park and playground in Gresford. Ideally near the river and while 0.5 Ha is preferred, a minimum size of 2-3000m2 would be sufficient.<br><br>The recommended options for investigation are:<br>« Developing a node within the road reserve at the end of Church St and adjacent to the Bridge and along the river Reserve.<br>« Converting the unused Road Reserve land "Glebe Rd" which connects to Church St or swapping/ selling this land for a more suitable site.<br>« Consider acquisition of a small parcel of vacant land. | <b>Supply Analysis</b><br>The Supply Analysis identified no provision of local park in Gresford.                        | H                  |
| 31   |                             | In the short term investigate/ negotiate with the primary school to formalise community access to the outdoor play area (out of school hours) so that Gresford residents have somewhere within walking distance  | The lack of a local park could be resolved through increased community use of the public assets at the school.          | H                  |
| 32   |                             | Investigate opportunity for a larger play space catering to a range of ages and providing picnic and BBQ facilities- In Orana Park or as a riverside opportunity developed in partnership with the showgrounds committee.  | <b>Supply Analysis</b><br>Suggests that a multi-generational playground could be needed in the longer term in Gresford. | L                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                        | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|---------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 33   | <b>Active Transport network</b> | Investigate implementation of the Active Transport recommendations noted below:   | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b> identified a key concern regarding safe access to the school for children in East Gresford and the need for wider active transport planning to connect community facilities and provide for recreation.   | O                  |
| 33.1 |                                 | Collaborate with the state government to investigate, plan and implement a solution to provide safe walking and cycling links along: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Durham Rd between the primary school and Park St. (Highest Priority)</li> <li>« Park Street from the northern end of the township to the sports oval.</li> <li>« Singleton- Lostock Rd between Glebe Rd and Short St</li> </ul>   |   | H                  |
| 33.2 |                                 | Upgrade intersections to be bicycle friendly and improve cycle safety (ground markings, signage and refuge islands). Key intersections include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Singleton Road &amp; Durham Road</li> <li>« Durham Road &amp; Park Street</li> </ul>   |   | H-M                |
| 33.3 |                                 | Implement bicycle parking facilities (bike racks, water refill, seating) in key locations. Key locations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« East Gresford Showground-skate Park</li> <li>« Gresford Sporting Complex</li> </ul>  |   | L                  |
| 34   | <b>River Based Recreation</b>   | As part of implementing additional outdoor recreation opportunities and in line with the proposed Nature Based Tourism Strategy investigate the potential for a number of river access points to facilitate river based recreation and paddle trails around Gresford. Key access points to be investigated are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« The end of Church St - Paterson River with trail to link to a second access at Glendonbrook Rd Bridge.</li> <li>« Bingleburra Rd Bridge – Allyn River linking to the Showgrounds and Clements Rd Bridge (and possibly a stop at Camp on Allyn)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note- the above subject to a review of in stream conditions and suitability for a paddle trail. However river access for swimming, fishing and paddle sports is still desirable at the end of Church St and the Showgrounds.</i></p> | <b>Opportunities analysis</b> identified there are opportunities for additional outdoor recreation infrastructure to provide activities for residents and visitors.<br><br><b>Community feedback</b> indicated that outdoor recreation activities are increasingly popular and new activities are being sought out. | M-L                |

| ID | CATEGORY                 | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|----|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 35 | <b>Sports facilities</b> | In collaboration with Gresford Showground Committee, investigate opportunities to develop a concept layout and an activation plan for Gresford Showground. The plan should consider a range of improvements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Sport training on the arena</li> <li>« Pedestrian and vehicle circulation and provision of potential walking tracks</li> <li>« Improved amenities and use of the courts considering potential multi-use of the tennis courts</li> <li>« River access and riverside picnic and play</li> <li>« A more formalised and organised RV camping area</li> <li>« Enhancing the youth /skate precinct</li> <li>« Connectivity and integration with Orana Park</li> </ul> | <b>Opportunity analysis</b> identified potential year around activation of showgrounds for community use.<br><br><b>Community feedback</b> indicated that the showgrounds were a central resource that could be better utilised.  | M                  |
| 36 |                          | <b>Gresford Sporting Complex:</b> Investigate opportunities to upgrade infrastructure in the following order: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New amenities building inclusive of toilets, storage facility and seating.</li> <li>2. Playing surface upgrade inclusive of improved drainage and irrigation</li> <li>3. Formalise car park provision</li> </ol>  | <b>Community and Stakeholder feedback</b> identified the need to upgrade sporting infrastructure and amenity within the Gresford Sporting Complex.<br><br><b>Supply Analysis</b> Has identified that the facility should be improved to support community use and be accessible and functional. | M                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                        | RECOMMENDED ACTION   | RATIONALE   | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|--|---------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>5. PATERSON PLANNING CATCHMENT- RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b> |                                 |  |   |                    |
| 37   | <b>Parks and Playground</b>     | Undertake site feasibility to investigate conversion of discontinued tennis courts (at the locations below) to local parks.<br>« 2 x tennis courts at Martins Creek  | <b>Supply Analysis</b> identified unused tennis courts at Martins Creek with a potential to be transformed into a local park or other active recreation use   | M                  |
| 38   | <b>River Based Recreation</b>   | As part of implementing additional outdoor recreation opportunities and in line with the proposed Nature Based Tourism Strategy, investigate the potential for a number of river access points to facilitate more river based recreation and paddle trails. Key access points to be investigated are:<br>« Gresford Rd-Paterson River Bridge north of Vacy.<br>« Dungog Rd Bridge – Paterson River West of Martins Creek.<br>« Kings Wharf Park- Paterson.<br>« John Tucker Park- Paterson.<br>« Local swimming access Sloane St – Paterson.<br>« Paterson Rd Bridge- Paterson River | <b>Opportunities analysis</b> identified there are opportunities for additional outdoor recreation infrastructure to provide activities for residents and visitors.<br><b>Community feedback</b> indicated that outdoor recreation activities are increasingly popular and new activities are being sought out.   | M-L                |
| 39   | <b>Active Transport Network</b> | Adopt and implement the Bike Plan priority recommendations noted below:  | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>The Consultation findings identified disconnected and low provision of pathways and footpaths, safe pedestrian crossings with existing footpaths being narrow and not accessible.<br><b>Supply Analysis</b><br>The Supply Analysis indicated a gap in provision of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to major parks and open spaces. | O                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                                     | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|--|---|--|--------------------|
| 39.1 | <b>Paterson pathways/ shared way network</b> | Implement painted, on-road bike lane (Figure 2) connecting residential areas to key destinations including Paterson Public School and John Tucker Park. Key streets include:<br>a) Railway Crossing (Webbers Creek Road to Railway Street)*<br>b) Prince Street (Main Street to Queen Street)<br>c) Maitland Road/Duke Street (Prince Street to King Street)<br><i>*Reduce division created by railway line</i> |  | H                  |
| 39.2 |  | Upgrade intersections to be bicycle friendly and improve cycle safety (ground markings, signage and refuge islands). Key intersections include:<br>a) Gresford Road & King Street<br>b) Maitland Road & Tocal Road<br>c) Prince Street & Duke Street*<br><i>*Clear signage, road marking and vehicle speed reduction measures required</i><br><i>Figure 17: Example of cycle speed hump bypass.</i>             |              | M                  |
| 39.3 |  | Implement bicycle parking / end of trip facilities (bike racks, water refill, seating) in key locations. Key locations include:<br>a) Sporting Field<br>b) Train Station<br>c) Supermarket<br>d) John Tucker Park   | <i>Sourced J. Hondrakis via AP-G88-17_Cyling_Aspects_of_Austroroads_Guides.pdf   Austroroads</i> | L                  |

| ID   | CATEGORY                             | RECOMMENDED ACTION  | RATIONALE  | PRIORITY (H/M/L/O) |
|------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| 39.4 | Vacy pathways/<br>shared way network | Implement shared paths (a physically separated bike path) connecting residential areas to key destinations including Vacy Public School and General Store. Key streets include:<br>a) Gresford Road (Summer Hill Road to Lennoxton Road)<br>Vacy Bridge (improve infrastructure)  |  | H                  |
| 39.5 |                                      | Upgrade intersections to be bicycle friendly and improve cycle safety (ground markings, signage and refuge islands). Key intersections include:<br>a) Gresford Road / Summer Hill Road<br>b) Gresford Road / Lennoxton Road<br>Vacy Bridge  |  | M                  |
| 39.6 |                                      | Implement bicycle parking facilities at the park along Gresford Rd.   |  | L                  |
| 40   | Sport facilities                     | <b>Paterson Sporting Precinct</b><br>In collaboration with Sports Clubs and Sec 355 Committees, investigate opportunities to develop a concept layout, inclusive of:<br>« Improved wayfinding<br>« Rationalise vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access network<br>« Defined entrance to the precinct<br><br>Organise/ formalise car parking | <b>Supply Analysis</b> identified poor connectivity within the precinct with no wayfinding.                                      | M                  |
| 41   |                                      | <b>Vacy Sporting Precinct</b><br>In collaboration with Sports Clubs and Sec 355 Committee, investigate opportunities to upgrade Vacy Sportsground facilities in the following priority order:<br><b>1.</b> New fence installation<br><b>2.</b> Shelter for seating<br>Upgrade field drainage and irrigation<br>Upgrade field lighting   | <b>Community and Stakeholder Consultation findings:</b><br>Identified the need to upgrade sport infrastructure at Gresford Oval. | H                  |

Paterson Sportsground, Paterson  
Photo Credit: OPG



# APPENDIX 2 OVERVIEW OF FUNDING OPTIONS

## Potential Funding Sources

This section will set out a range of mechanisms for delivery, including developer contributions, third-party partnerships; state and federal funding etc.

- « **Regional Growth Fund:** The NSW Government is enabling regional communities to attract investment, generate jobs, grow local economies and improve lifestyles through once in a lifetime funding under the Regional Growth Fund. Since its creation in 2017, the Regional Growth Fund has invested in thousands of projects to improve amenity, activate economic growth, and respond to emerging regional needs. The NSW Government has already committed close to \$2 billion in funds for over 2,700 projects. This record investment in our regions is supporting local businesses, improving the lifestyles of regional communities and helping them build resilience as they continue to tackle the hardest time
- « **Regional Recovery Package:** The NSW Government is investing \$200 million into the growth and recovery of regional communities from COVID-19 through a Regional Recovery Package. The aim of the package, which forms part of the Government's \$2.8 billion COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, is to create new jobs, increase community engagement, boost tourism by supporting events, shows and festivals in regional NSW, provide housing for health care workers in the regions, as well as give young people more opportunities to access programs and activities.
- « **NSW Landcare Program:** The NSW Landcare Program is a collaborative initiative of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW empowering Landcarers to take action on local problems and deliver outcomes that address local and regional issues.
  - **Landcare small grants program:** The Landcare small grants program launch is future-proofing damaged riverbanks by making grants available to eligible Landcare groups in regional NSW to support riverbank and stream restoration, on farm erosion works and tree planting.

- **“Working Together” Aboriginal Communities Engagement Program:** This initiative within the NSW Landcare Program will increase opportunities to consciously develop stronger connections and partnerships between Landcare groups and Aboriginal Communities.

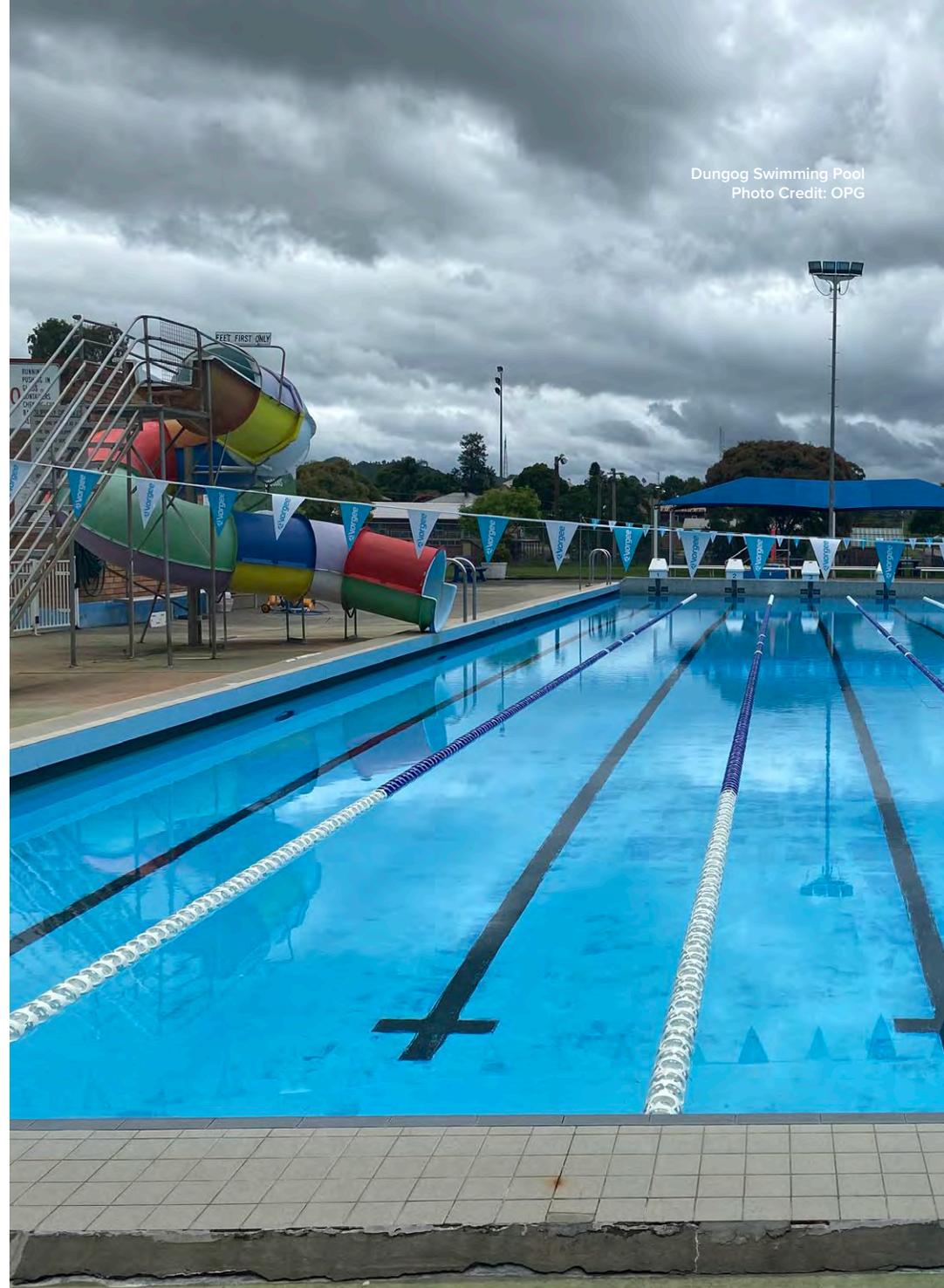
### Aboriginal Action Plan 2021-22

The Working Together Aboriginal Action Plan 2021-22 has been developed under the guidance and endorsement of the Steering Committee who meets regularly to oversee the implementation of the Working Together Program. The plan builds on the previous Aboriginal Action Plan 2020-21 and continues to incorporate actions and deliverables across five (5) key theme areas:

- Recognition
- Representation & Inclusion
- Relationships & Collaboration
- Awareness & Education
- Resourcing

- « **NSW Transport Access Program (TAP):** The upgrade and new wharves are being delivered as a part of the NSW Government's Transport Access Program-an initiative to deliver modern, safe and accessible transport infrastructure across the State. The TAP aims at providing the following benefits:
  - Improved customer amenities such as protection from the wind, rain and sun, seating and waiting areas
  - Improved safety for customers
  - Improved access for mobility impaired customers and customers with prams
  - Quicker and more efficient boarding and disembarking
  - Increased wharf capacity for future growth
  - More efficient interchanges with other modes of transport, both public and private and better way finding signage
- « **Low-cost Loans Initiative (LCLI):** Offered by the NSW Government, this program assists councils with the cost of new infrastructure by funding 50% of the interest paid on borrowings related to infrastructure. Loans may be taken out through TCorp (the central borrowing and financing authority for the state) or another financial institution of Council's choice. The loans must be used for infrastructure that enables new housing supply.

- « **Grant Funding:** A range of grants and funds from the State and Commonwealth governments are available for community facilities and programs, with funds for hard and/or soft infrastructure. Eligibility criteria varies by grant/fund.
- « **Office of Sport- Multi-Sport Community Facility Fund:** The NSW Government has committed \$200 million to the Multi-Sport Community Facility Fund, recognising the critical role local sport infrastructure plays in keeping communities healthy, active and connected. The primary objectives of the Fund are to increase the number and type of multi-sport facilities, improve the standard of existing multi-sport facilities, increase the utilisation of sport facilities, support the equitable provision of, and access to multi-sport facilities to grow sport participation for women and girls, provide inclusive and accessible multi-sport facilities that support sport participation for people with disability, First Nations peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- « **Partnerships and funding with State Sporting Organisations –** Some state and national sporting organisations provide funding that supports facility projects. Direct discussions and partnership opportunities are recommended.
- « **Council revenue:** This refers to ordinary rates revenue that is collected by local government on an annual basis, including the Storm Water Management Service Charge, rental income, user charges & fees, the City Development Fund, and other levies. Council may use its revenue to construct new or upgrade facilities. This requires a strong and stable financial reserve in order to forward plan new facilities; a Capital Works Program is developed for each financial year which sets out the forward year’s budget and anticipated capital expenditures.
- « **Sale of surplus land:** The sale and eventual redevelopment of land can fund projects at other sites, or at the site of sale via a VPA.
- « **Developer Contributions:** Under the EP&A Act, development contributions funds can be used for construction of new facilities or major modification/ extension of a current facility.
  - S7.11: Charged where there is a demonstrated link between the development and the infrastructure to be funded. Section 7.11 funds can only be used for the specific purpose identified in Council’s contributions plans.



Dungog Swimming Pool  
Photo Credit: OPG

# APPENDIX 3: MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE LEVELS

## Draft Management and Maintenance Service Framework

This section of the report is designed to allow the development of service standards for maintenance based on the proposed hierarchy of parks for recreation. It is focused only on those formally developed recreation parks or areas of other open space that have been developed for community recreation use.

The draft framework below is offered for Council to review and modify as needed.

The framework does not cover:

- « Natural Areas and Bushlands
- « Formal Sporting Fields and Precincts
- « Buffers, verges, waterways and other linear open space areas

## Park Types and Service Levels

While the service level is generally associated with the park's hierarchy, there are circumstances where higher use profiles or increased visibility of a park may mitigate for a higher level of service.

The general levels of service for maintenance are:

- A. Major Destination Parks
- B. Township parks
- C. Local parks

Within these three main service levels, some variation may occur to accommodate those parks that are highly popular or very visible and require an enhanced maintenance regime. In some cases, a park may have the level of use and profile that would require its maintenance to be at a higher level (e.g. a District Park requiring an A level of service). Similarly, a park may have lower use periods or only be popular in the summer, in this case, the lower end of the set service level may apply for certain periods in the year.

This Draft Service Level Framework is a recommendation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan and it will still need to be finalised with staff and adopted into forward budget and operational planning. This means that it may take some years for all parks to be transferred to the new service level framework.

The development of the Service Level Framework needs to consider the ongoing maintenance done by volunteer groups and 355 Committees. It is crucial that this framework is developed in collaboration with all partners involved in the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces in Dungog Shire.



Jubilee Park Playground, Dungog  
Photo Credit: OPG

Draft Maintenance Service Level Framework (To be reviewed and updated by Council Operations and Maintenance Team)

| SERVICE LEVEL | INSPECTION<br>Frequency by Council Staff | SECURITY  | MOWING  | OTHER VEGETATION  | WASTE COLLECTION   | PLAYGROUND INSPECTION  | BBQ CLEANING              | PUBLIC AMENITIES  | LIGHTS AND IRRIGATION                       | BUILDING MAINTENANCE   |
|---------------|--|---|---|---|--|--|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>A</b>      | Daily to Weekly                          | Volunteers or Council Staff- Village Green                          | Weekly to Fortnightly (summer)<br>Fortnightly to every three weeks (winter) | Major work undertaken in Winter<br>As needed during summer months | Daily in peak use periods during summer<br>As required in conjunction with organised special events<br>Daily to every few days in winter                                       | Visual Check as part of site inspections<br>Quarterly formal play equipment inspection | Two to three times a week | Daily or twice daily as needed in peak periods.<br>As required in conjunction with organised special events     | On-demand maintenance<br>Annual Inspections | Formal Annual inspections<br>Incidental inspections<br>Identified Maintenance programs |
| <b>B</b>      | Weekly to Fortnightly                    | Council Rangers weekly to fortnightly or higher in peak use periods | Fortnightly to Monthly (Summer)<br>Every three to six weeks (winter)        | Major work undertaken in Winter<br>As needed during summer months | 2-3 times a week during peak use times summer (eg weekends, school holidays)<br>As required in conjunction with organised special events<br>Every few days to weekly in winter | Visual Check as part of site inspections<br>Quarterly formal play equipment inspection | Twice a week to weekly    | 4-7 times per week as needed for level of site use.<br>As required in conjunction with organised special events | On-demand maintenance<br>Annual inspections | Formal Annual Inspections<br>Incidental inspections<br>Identified Maintenance programs |
| <b>C</b>      | Monthly                                  | On Demand   | Monthly to every eight weeks or as needed                                   | As needed   | Weekly to fortnightly dependant on park use  | Visual Check as part of site inspections<br>Quarterly formal play equipment inspection | Weekly                    | 2-5 times per week or daily as needed for peak periods.   | On-demand Annual inspections                | Formal Annual Inspections<br>Incidental inspections<br>Identified Maintenance programs |

# APPENDIX 4: INVENTORY OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES IN DUNGOG SHIRE

Table 18: Current parks and open spaces in Dungog Shire

| SITE NAME                                 | SUBURB        | AREA   | CLASSIFICATION | PRIMARY USE              |
|---|---------------|--------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Lions Park                                | Dungog        | 0.24   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Frank Robinson Park                       | Dungog        | 1.05   | District Park  | Park                     |
| War Memorial - Cenotaph                   | Dungog        | 0.01   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Netball Courts and Skate Park             | Dungog        | 0.46   | Local Park     | Sport                    |
| Reserve                                   | Dungog        | 0.08   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Pilchers Reserve                          | Wallingara    | 30.21  | District Park  | Reserve                  |
| Dungog Lions Club Park                    | Dungog        | 0.05   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Maxwells Creek Reserve                    | Wirragulla    | 1.09   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Main Creek Reserve                        | Main Creek    | 0.53   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Reserve (un-named)                        | Dungog        | 0.05   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Drainage Reserve                          | Dungog        | 0.05   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Lioness Park                              | Dungog        | 1.53   | District Park  | Park                     |
| Coronation Park                           | Dungog        | 0.14   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Bennett Park (inclusive of Tennis Courts) | Dungog        | 3.51   | District Sport | Sport                    |
| Dave Sands Memorial                       | Bendolba      | 0.06   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Phillips Creek Reserve                    | Stroud Hill   | 0.11   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Bandon Grove Park                         | Bandon Grove  | 0.70   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Gladstone Street Reserve                  | Dungog        | 0.53   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Jubilee Park                              | Dungog        | 0.35   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Dungog Common <sup>10</sup>               | Dungog        | 264 Ha | Regional       | CL Board managed reserve |
| Bruyn Park                                | Dungog        | 0.96   | Local Park     | Park                     |
| Dungog Showground & Recreation Reserve    | Dungog        | 8.74   | Regional       | Showground               |
| Short Street Reserve                      | Dungog        | 1.12   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Main Creek Reserve                        | Main Creek    | 16.44  | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Dungog Swimming Pool                      | Dungog        | 0.39   | Local Park     | Pool                     |
| Glen Martin Reserve                       | Glen Martin   | 0.67   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |
| Wetlands - Clarence Town                  | Clarence Town | 0.18   | Local Park     | Reserve                  |

| SITE NAME                           | SUBURB        | AREA | CLASSIFICATION | PRIMARY USE |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------|----------------|-------------|
| Wetlands - Clarence Town            | Clarence Town | 0.18 | Local Park     | Reserve     |
| Clarence Town War Memorial          | Clarence Town | 0.01 | Local Park     | Reserve     |
| Clarence Town Park Reserve          | Clarence Town | 1.53 | District Sport | Sport       |
| Reg Ford Sporting Complex           | Clarence Town | 1.22 | District Sport | Sport       |
| Clarence Town Tennis Courts         | Clarence Town | 0.20 | Local Park     | Sport       |
| War Memorial Playground             | Clarence Town | 0.04 | Local Park     | Park        |
| Clarence Town Lions Park            | Clarence Town | 1.20 | District Park  | Park        |
| Reserve                             | Wallarobba    | 1.13 | Local Park     | Reserve     |
| Public Reserve                      | Clarence Town | 0.56 | Local Park     | Park        |
| Bridge Reserve                      | Clarence Town | 2.61 | District Park  | Reserve     |
| Pony Club Ground                    | Clarence Town | 0.83 | Local Park     | Park        |
| Wharf Reserve                       | Clarence Town | 2.94 | District Park  | Reserve     |
| Proposed Clarence Town Sportsground | Clarence Town | 3.72 | District Sport | Sport       |
| Clarence Town Swimming Pool         | Clarence Town | 0.40 | Local          | Pool        |
| Williams River Holiday Park         | Clarence Town | 1.04 | District Park  | Park        |
| Clarence Town Reserve               | Clarence Town | 0.46 | Local Park     | Reserve     |
| Gresford Sporting Complex           | East Gresford | 2.83 | District Sport | Sport       |
| Gresford Pound Reserve              | Gresford      | 1.20 | Local Park     | Reserve     |
| Reserve                             | Gresford      | 0.51 | Local Park     | Reserve     |

<sup>10</sup> Dungog Common is included in the Current Supply table as it is a major destination and recreation resource for the township.

| SITE NAME   | SUBURB        | AREA  | CLASSIFICATION | PRIMARY USE                 |
|---|---------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Paterson River Pound Crossing Reserve                             | Gresford      | 0.34  | Local Park     | Reserve                     |
| Gresford School Of Arts Hall, Sports (bowls) Club and Showgrounds | East Gresford | 13.39 | Regional       | Showground and sporting use |
| Orana Park  | East Gresford | 0.44  | Local Park     | Park                        |
| Allan Fairhall Reserve  | Paterson      | 1.37  | Local Park     | Reserve                     |
| War Memorial - Paterson   | Paterson      | 0.15  | Local Park     | Park                        |
| Kings Wharf Park  | Paterson      | 0.28  | Local Park     | Park                        |
| Reserve   | Paterson      | 0.17  | Local Park     | Reserve                     |
| Martins Creek Tennis Courts                                       | Martins Creek | 0.36  | Local Park     | Sport                       |
| Skipline Park   | Martins Creek | 0.17  | Local Park     | Park                        |
| Vacy Sportsground   | Vacy          | 1.81  | District Sport | Sport                       |
| Webbers Creek Reserve   | Paterson      | 0.68  | Local Park     | Reserve                     |
| Reserve   | Vacy          | 1.35  | Local Park     | Reserve                     |
| Vacy Memorial Green   | Vacy          | 0.17  | Local Park     | Park                        |
| John Tucker Park  | Paterson      | 3.50  | District Park  | Park                        |
| Paterson Sportsground   | Paterson      | 5.41  | District Sport | Sport                       |



John Tucker Park, Paterson  
Photo Credit: OPG

# APPENDIX 5: DEFINITIONS OF OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGIES

The table below provides brief definitions of the open space typologies outlined in table 2:

| OPEN SPACE TYPE  | DESCRIPTION  |
|------------------|--|
| Parks            | These include all “general recreation” parkland that provides play, picnic and outdoor recreation opportunities. Most local to district level parks are typically owned, maintained and looked after by local Councils.  |
| Sportsground     | These are formal sporting facilities, including field (both rectangular and circular) and court sports. Sportsgrounds are also referred to as Sports fields and classified as ‘active recreation’.   |
| Showgrounds      | These are lands used to present organised agricultural exhibitions or cultural events to the public. Showgrounds are mostly equipped with ancillary facilities and storage for livestock. They are often managed by committees in partnership with local Councils.   |
| Reserves         | <p>Reserves can be broadly classified into two types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Nature Reserves: These are natural areas and riparian corridors (e.g. adjacent to watercourses) with the protection of habitat or ecological values as the main function. Reserves often have secondary recreation uses or can be access points to watercourses. Nature Reserves can be managed by local, State or Federal Government subject to land zoning. In Dungog Shire, the zoning of Reserves is split between RE1 and; C1 and C3. RE1 and C3 nature reserves are managed by the Council, whereas C1 is managed by National Parks and Wildlife Services.<br/><b>NOTE: RE1: Public Recreation, C1: National Parks and Nature Reserves and C3: Environmental Management.</b></li> <li>« Road Reserves: A road reserve can be defined as the area contained within the statutory width of a road, inclusive of roadways, shoulders and sidewalks and all other areas within the road reserve boundary. Most local road reserves are managed by local Councils, whereas all Regional Roads and their reserves in NSW are managed by Transport for NSW (TfNSW).</li> </ul> |
| Aquatic Facility | A public swimming pool defined as a community or public venue that provides an indoor or outdoor swimming pool and other complementing facilities like toilets with change rooms, toddler pool and/or water play, etc.   |



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