

process, which would also help satisfy the requirements for Section 94 planning.

The provision of both small and large local neighbourhood parks is considered to be an important aspect in neighbourhood design. Providing some variety in local neighbourhood park size and design contributes to their usability. The smaller parks often only provide children's play equipment, which is important in those newer neighbourhoods located on the urban fringe which attract young families. These neighbourhoods are usually characterised by a greater number of toddlers, simply because young families are often attracted to the lower cost of housing in these areas. However, larger local neighbourhood parks allow the space for Council to provide additional facilities should the community's needs warrant it or recreation trends change. This may occur in the case of a community which ages in situ. The recreational needs of the community may change as the parents age, and younger children move out of the family home. The flexibility offered with larger parks may reduce the need for Council to acquire additional land in established neighbourhoods for purpose built recreation facilities.

However, major variations in local park size can often be as a result of the results of individual negotiations between Council and private landholders during the lot reconfiguration and/or acquisition process. The provision of parkland is dependent on many factors, not the least being how much suitable land is actually available at the time of acquisition. In some cases a monetary contribution or construction of works within existing parkland is acquired in lieu of parkland, as this is seen as being more appropriate in the circumstances.

A policy outlining desired parkland characteristics could therefore be flexible enough to take into account the vagaries of the parkland acquisition process, as well as the tremendous variation in land characteristics from one locality to the next. A policy should therefore avoid being too prescriptive, but rather concentrate on the recreational, social and economic outcomes of park development that the Council wishes to achieve.

8 RECREATION NEEDS OF LIVERPOOL

Based on the changing demographic profile of Liverpool (see Section 4); outcomes of the community consultation program (see Section 5); existing provision (see Section 6) and recreation trends, benchmarks and standards (see Section 7), the following profile of individual sports and specific target groups in the Liverpool LGA has been developed. It highlights their existing and potential future sporting/recreational needs and implications for future planning.

It should be noted that the sporting facilities identified below are not intended as stand-alone provision and should be provided as multiuse developments with compatible sports and recreation activities in all cases. This will reduce the amount of land required and encourage more efficient and effective use of available resources.

As outlined later in this Strategy, particularly for sporting facilities, opportunities for increasing usage of sports fields through more flexible game times (week nights and Sundays rather than only Saturday); joint use of public and private school sports facilities; and increasing field quality to enable greater multiuse should also be investigated. It is imperative that these profiles are reviewed regularly in consultation community and sporting groups and other trend data.

8.1 Sports

8.1.1 Athletics

With 3 existing fields in the LGA, local groups expect participation in athletics to increase as the LGA grows. This is consistent with national trends towards non contact sports such as athletics which is also typically popular with children and youth. The 2000 Olympics has also resulted in a significant increase in athletics. Local clubs have significant memberships (370 participants at Liverpool Little Athletics) have indicated the need for better watering systems, improved track surfaces and improved toilet facilities at existing facilities. It is anticipated that the demand for one or two additional athletics field will be evident as the Liverpool LGA grows based on the

current provision of 1 field/ 51,169 residents.

8.1.2 Australian Rules Football

The LGA currently only accommodates 2 ovals suitable for this sport although local groups expect participation to increase (currently 105 members but expected to grow to 249 members by 2006). National trends highlight that Australian rules is the 6th most popular sport for 5-14 year olds with the majority of participants being male. As outlined in Section 7, team sports are likely to remain popular with children and teenagers and with the continued youthful age profile of the Liverpool LGA, the demand for 2-3 additional fields is expected. Increased use of the fields may be achieved through floodlighting with the local club indicating the need for improved floodlighting to enable night games and storage facilities. Appropriate locations throughout the LGA, possibly combined with an athletics field, should be considered.

8.1.3 Baseball/Softball

Baseball and softball are popular sports in Liverpool with 23 baseball/softball diamonds already provided at major facilities in the Eastern and Central Neighbourhoods. This is consistent with rates of provision in some comparable LGAs and higher than others (see Table 7.2) with local clubs expecting membership to remain stable. Again, based on national trends, baseball and softball are expected to remain popular particularly as they are non-contact sports suitable for both males and females. Both sports are popular with schools and this is likely to be reflected in school use of Council fields. At this stage, an additional complex should be investigated for provision in the Release neighbourhood.

8.1.4 Basketball

Indoor courts sports such as basketball are increasing in popularity both in Australia and in Liverpool. With a total 5 indoor courts (3 at the Whiteman Centre and 2 at the Wenden Centre) catering for basketball, netball etc, provision in Liverpool is comparable with other LGAs.

For Liverpool, the need for a public 18-hole golf course is evident particularly as the LGA grows. However, how this can be achieved as a viable development for Council needs extensive research by specialist consultants.

8.1.7 Hockey

With current provision of 2 synthetic fields and 7 grass fields in the LGA, increased participation in hockey is likely to be addressed through greater utilisation of the existing fields. Nationally, hockey has less than 1% participation rate for adults but as a non contact and non gender specific sport its popularity is likely to be retained.

8.1.8 Netball

With 49 courts provided in the LGA, primarily at Collimore Park and Liverpool Catholic Club, the need for additional courts as the LGA grows is evident. National trends highlight that netball is one of the most popular sports with 2% of adults (aged 18-24 years) and 9% of children participating. It is extremely popular with girls and women although increasing numbers of males are playing netball. Trends towards increasing participation in court sports due to reduced time commitments and greater flexibility for night/weekend games also suggests that netball will continue to be popular.

Local groups expect that membership will remain stable but as the LGA grows, it is evident that an additional netball complex will be required. There are also concerns over the inadequacy of the existing Collimore complex primarily related to inadequate car parking and lack of toilet facilities. Detailed review of the Collimore site is required to determine whether the existing facilities can be improved while plans for an additional future netball complex needs to be developed.

However, as the population increases, demand will also increase, as these sports are increasingly popular with adults and children. Their popularity is attributable to the trend towards more time efficient and flexible sports (similar to netball) and is attractive to both males and females.

As the existing courts at the Whiteman Centre are to be relocated, an appropriate location for these courts will need to be investigated. Four additional indoor courts to accommodate the expected demand as a result of population growth (based on 1 court/20,000 residents) should also be considered. In each case, provision as part of an integrated leisure facility, consistent with Council's existing successful Whiteman and Wenden Centres, would be appropriate.

Additional capacity may also be available in public and private high school auditoriums. However, given that most competition games courts, the capacity for only single games may be limited and use be primarily for training and/or casual games.

8.1.5 Cricket

Cricket is accommodated on 21 pitches throughout the LGA although only 3 are located in the Release Neighbourhood. Local groups expect membership to remain stable although national trends highlight that participation rates are lower than many other sports (eg only 1% of adults and 5% of children play cricket). Equally, concerns regarding skin cancer (cricket requires long periods in the sun) and trends towards less time consuming sports, suggest that cricket may remain stable in the LGA. Additional pitches should be accommodated in the Release Neighbourhood as part of multiuse fields but careful consultation with local clubs should be undertaken to monitor membership and demand.

8.1.6 Golf

Liverpool currently has 2 private 18-hole courses. Nationally, golf has one of the highest adult participation rates with 4% of adults active players. It is a high profile sport, which can be played at variable times to suit the needs of many time poor adults.

8.1.9 Oztag/Touch Football

One of the new sports to emerge in recent years, Oztag is already popular in Liverpool. There are currently 8 fields located in the Central and Eastern Neighbourhoods used for Oztag/Touch. The sport is also popular in Bankstown (23 fields) and reflects the trend towards non contact, non gender specific sports highlighted in Section 7. Nationally, it has an adult participation rate of more than 1% and is increasingly popular as part of school sport.

The local club has 1850 members and expect to grow significantly in the future. It has identified the need for improved fencing and watering of its grounds. Consideration should be given to providing an additional 4 fields in the Release neighbourhood to accommodate the demand for this growing sport.

8.1.10 Rugby League/Union

These high profile sports have 15 fields in the LGA with the majority located in the Central and Eastern Neighbourhoods. Provision is comparable with other LGAs (see Table 7.2) with national trends highlighting that participation rates are lower than many other sports (less than 1% for adults). The sport does not attract female participants and as a high contact sport has increasing disapproval from parents as a safe children's sport. Local clubs consider that membership may increase or remain stable with major needs for improved lighting, spectator seating and improved playing field surfaces. As the population grows, demand may become evident but it is likely to be less significant than several other sports. The future provision of pitches for rugby league/union needs to be considered in relation to this demand.

8.1.11 Soccer

Soccer is one of the largest sports in the Liverpool LGA with 55 fields and several major soccer clubs. This is consistent with trends in other comparable LGAs (see Table 7.2) and reflects the popularity of the sport, particularly in communities with

significant NESB populations. National trends highlight that 1% of adults and 11% of children play soccer with increasing female participation. As primarily a non-contact sport, it is also increasing popular with adults and children and as a school sport.

It is important to note that 50% of Liverpool's soccer fields are located in the Central Neighbourhood with few in the Release and Eastern Neighbourhoods. Local clubs have identified the need for better maintenance of existing fields, upgrading of field and security lighting and improved amenities. The need for additional fields is likely to be evident as Liverpool grows but given the existing dominance of this one type of sporting facility, care needs to be taken that other sports are given the opportunity to be developed in the LGA. The future distribution and demand for additional pitches should be considered in relation to participation trends and expressed demand.

8.1.12 Tennis

Nationally, tennis is the 3rd most popular participation sport adults while 8% of children also play. It is expected to remain popular for children and school sport as it is non-contact and popular with both males and females.

In Liverpool, there are 22 Council courts but many of these are in poor repair and are poorly utilised. The courts in McGirr Park in Miller, Meere Park in Lurnea and Woodward Park have recently closed, with the Kamps Creek courts no longer in use. There are no tennis courts in the Release Neighbourhood.

This data suggests that consideration should be given to providing tennis courts in the Release Neighbourhood to service the needs of residents. Research would suggest that the provision of 4 court complexes enables efficient management and encourages competition. It is also evident that Council needs to investigate further the current management and

quality of existing courts throughout the LGA.

8.1.13 Swimming

Liverpool currently has 3 outdoor swimming pools and 2 indoor pools, which are used extensively for competition, school and casual swimming. This rate of provision is consistent with other comparable LGAs and reflects the popularity of water sports in the hot Western Sydney climate.

Nationally, swimming is the most popular participation sport with 45% of adults aged 16-65 years being active participants. It is a popular sport with children as it is considered a safe sport with sound fitness benefits. Schools actively promote swimming both as part of their regular school curriculum eg learn to swim, lifesaving, general fitness and for sport eg swimming carnivals, triathlons etc. Swimming is expected to continue to remain popular with older residents more likely to be casual swimmers as part of their regular health programs. Swimming is also popular as part of the growing trend towards indoor multipurpose facilities.

Therefore it is likely that the demand for swimming facilities will be significant in the future. At least one swimming complex is required preferably in the Release Neighbourhood together with investigation of the feasibility of redeveloping the existing Holsworthy Pool to better service the Eastern Neighbourhood. As outlined in Section 8.1.4, these facilities should be developed as integrated leisure centres incorporating indoor courts and other dry facilities.

8.1.14 Other sports

Several other sports currently operate in the Liverpool LGA such as American football, archery, radio control car racing, shooting, lawn bowls and equestrian activities. In addition, there are many sports that do not have facilities in the LGA but nevertheless may in the future, approach Council for appropriate facilities. It is evident that the demand for different sports will constantly change and new sports will emerge in the future. Council needs to ensure that it is proactive in responding to changing community needs

and trends and that its resources are flexible and responsive.

8.2 Specific Target Groups

8.2.1 Aboriginal Residents

Liverpool LGA currently houses 1,914 indigenous residents. Many live in the Central Neighbourhood although this may change, as more housing becomes available in the Release Neighbourhood. For Aboriginal residents, key recreation issues are:

- Need for more family recreation – many Aboriginal families need access to recreation facilities which are family friendly. This includes the provision of a range of recreational resources in one location; ensuring that facilities are affordable; and providing facilities in close proximity to residents.
- Improved links to natural areas and bushland – featuring strongly in Aboriginal culture and tradition, the natural features of Liverpool need to be maintained and improved. Many Aboriginals value these existing areas eg Bents Basin State Recreation Area, Lake Gillawenna Reserve in Bankstown, Georges River, Elouera Nature Reserve and these resources to improve these areas need to be targeted.
- Links to aboriginal heritage and culture – this should include the provision of interpretative information; naming of important sites; signage etc. Provision of bush tucker areas and native community nurseries could be developed. Close liaison with local Aboriginal groups and Land Councils should be fostered to identify potential joint programs to jointly preserve and maintain natural areas.
- Provision of walking trails and support programs – a popular recreational activity that also has significant health benefits, more walking trails and support programs need to be developed in the LGA.
- Promotion of sporting and recreation involvement of Aboriginal residents – many

Aboriginals are keen on sport and links to ensure their participation is essential. This approach will help to lift self-esteem and assist in the reconciliation process. Discussions with other government agencies and key Aboriginal groups, such as the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation, to develop and fund this program should be a priority.

- WSRP should provide opportunities to further address the needs of the local Aboriginal community with provision for more bushland/natural areas; bush tucker areas; community nursery/indigenous species; and interpretative information on important Aboriginal cultural sites etc important components of any plans for this area.

8.2.2 Youth

In 1996 there were 17,675 residents aged 10-19 years living in the LGA. This represented some 15% of the total LGA population. The need for recreation facilities for the youth of Liverpool is high. The majority of the youth currently live in the Central and Eastern Neighbourhoods although the Release Neighbourhood is likely to exceed the population of the Eastern Neighbourhood. It should also be noted that the Western Neighbourhood has a high proportion of youth. Liverpool youth also have a diversity of cultural backgrounds with many born in non-English speaking countries.

Changing demographic profiles on new release areas is also likely to further increase the concentration of youth in the Release Neighbourhoods. Once dominated by first home buyers starting their families, buyers in new release areas are more likely to be established families with at least one or more children already of primary school or early high school age. For the Release Neighbourhood this will result in a further concentration of youth in these new communities.

For youth, the key recreation issues are:

- Need for unstructured recreational activities which youth can easily access in their own community. The youth consultation highlighted the lack of youth-specific recreation facilities in the Release Neighbourhood while

national trends highlights the increasing move towards unstructured youth recreation.

- Transport and affordability are key barriers to youth participation in recreation.
- Need for safe recreation facilities with concerns about personal safety issues in their communities. This includes local parks, specific facilities, clubs etc.
- Provision of a range of appropriate recreational and sporting activities/facilities for youth. Consultation with youth highlighted that interests ranged widely with the most popular being watermarks, extreme sports, indoor recreation centres, swimming pools, BMX tracks, gym/aerobics and outdoor basketball courts. This is supported by national trends towards new or excitement informal recreation sports.

Organised sports are popular with youth and will continue to be in high demand. As highlighted by the large number of sporting bodies providing for youth, organised team sport is popular in Liverpool (see Section 5.2 and 5.3). National trends suggest that 60% of children aged 5-14 years participate in organised sport and with the its future large youth population, the demand for organised sports is likely to continue.

- Lack of specific sporting/recreation activities for key target groups. Aboriginal youth and youth with a disability have poor access to specific programs in the Liverpool LGA. These are now key target groups of the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation which is actively seeking to increase participation of these groups in sporting and recreational activities.

The WSRP could house youth-specific recreation activities such as BMX and cycle tracks; extreme sports such as abseiling, orienteering, rock climbing; camping etc. However, issues of transport to the area and affordability will similarly be important for this group.

- Safe and well-maintained facilities with many concerned that basic maintenance of facilities is not being achieved. Concerns about personal safety in parks is also a major issue together with problems of vandalism and drug-related issues.

8.2.4 Older Residents

With 11,481 residents aged over 65 years (2001) comprising 7.5% of the total LGAs population, older residents in Liverpool are proportionally fewer than in Western Sydney (9%) and Sydney (12%). However, the socio-demographic profile of this group indicates that many are significantly disadvantaged due to the high prevalence of low incomes; poor access to transport; and high levels of disability. By 2020, it is expected that this target group will grow significantly as the national trends towards an aging population impacts on the Liverpool age profile.

Older residents are concentrated in Central, CBD and Western Neighbourhoods with this trend likely to continue.

Key recreation issues for this group are:

- Need for large high-quality passive park – many older residents want to be able to access a high quality passive park in their community. Existing passive parks are the most popular recreation facilities for this group such as Chipping Norton Lakes and Ida Kennedy Reserve. But many travel outside the LGA to other top quality facilities with their families and/or for group outings due to the lack of local provision.
- Inclusion of appropriate infrastructure for older residents – issues of improved physical access, shade, personal safety etc are very important to older residents and recreation facilities need to address their needs. With national trends towards improved health and longevity of older people, provision of appropriate recreation infrastructure for this group will be important.
- Provision of more walking trails – Sweeney (1997) highlights that walking is one of the most popular

8.2.3 Families

Unlike many other communities in the Sydney metropolitan area, one family households with dependent children are the dominant household type in the Liverpool LGA. In 1996, almost one in two families in the LGA were one family households with dependent children (17,064 families). This pattern is likely to continue as the LGA grows, with housing in the new release areas targeting primarily families. However, it may reduce slightly as national trends towards lone person households (as a result of divorce, aging population etc) impact on Liverpool. Importantly weekly individual income in the LGA is low and in 1996 was \$34 below the Sydney average. In 1996, the majority of residents earned \$120-259 or \$300-599 per week.

As a result, there is a strong demand for recreation facilities that are family friendly. The outcomes of the consultation program (Section 5) highlights this demand with many groups recommending the provision of more family-oriented facilities. Equally, national trends suggest that there are strong moves towards multipurpose facilities that accommodate a range of sports and/or recreation activities providing opportunities for all members of the family in one location.

In detail, families need:

- Parks which provide activities for all age groups in the family ie children, youth, parents and grandparents. This may include quality children's playgrounds; walking/cycling/bridge paths and BMX tracks; picnic and BBQ areas; formal gardens and seating areas all in the one facility.
- Facilities such as indoor recreation centres; playing fields; outdoor basketball courts and youth facilities, which provide for a wide range of age groups in the one location.
- Affordable sport and recreation facilities with many concerned that hire and user costs are prohibitive. The consultation program strongly identified this issue.

adult recreation activities (31% of Australian residents in 1997) and for older residents, its popularity is even higher. For Liverpool, the provision of more walking trails and pathways will be important to address the recreation needs of older residents.

Many of the facilities outlined above could be provided in the WSRP but for many older residents, who lack access to transport and/or have limited mobility, quality passive parks and walking trails located closer to home will be of greater benefit.

8.2.5 Residents with a Disability

As the population ages, it is expected that the number of people with a disability will increase.

Key needs for this group are:

- Provision of fully accessible recreation facilities – as outlined below in Table 8.1, Council has recently identified key open space and recreation facilities as part of its Disability Action Plan where access improvements are required. This needs to be undertaken and further facilities audited and assessed. In addition, all new facilities need to meet Australian Standards guidelines.

- Development of recreation programs for people with a disability – specific recreation programs need to be developed in consultation with local groups which cater either for people with a disability or as integrated activities with other groups
- Recreation facilities need to be provided locally and/or with good transport access – for many people with a disability, transport and access are major barriers to recreation. Where facilities are distant and/or not accessible by public transport/accessible car parking, use will be limited. Local accessible facilities need to be provided for this target group.

8.2.6 NESB Residents

The Liverpool LGA has a very culturally diverse population. In 1996 it was estimated that 30% of residents were born in non-English speaking countries (35,694 residents). The most common languages spoken other than English is Italian, Arabic and Spanish although emerging new migrant groups include Vietnamese, Chinese, South Pacific Islander and

Table 8.1: Liverpool Open Space and Recreation Facilities Audited in Draft Disability Action Plan

Recreation Setting Parks and Reserves	Facility Audited
Sportsgrounds	Angle Park
	Apex Park
	Bigge Park
	Black Muscat Park
	Churches Pond Park
	Dunbar Park
	Grand Flaneur Beach
	Lady Woodward Park
	Lighthouse Park
	Liverpool Pioneers Memorial Park
	Mihailovic Reserve
	Australia Park
	Park Park
Aquatic and Leisure Centres	Dwyer Oval
	Ernie Smith Recreation Reserve
	Hammondville Park
	Jacqui Osmond Reserve
	William Leisure Centre
	Michael Wenden Aquatic and Recreation Centre
	Holsworthy Swimming Pool

Source: Liverpool City Council Draft Disability Action Plan, December 2001

Filipino. Many of these groups are now arrivals and lack proficient English skills with issues such as low incomes, poor transport access and lack of support networks being evident. Liverpool's population is likely to remain culturally diverse as many remain long term residents in the LGA. Changes in Australia's immigration policy however may impact on this current trend.

Key recreation needs and issues for NESB residents are:

- Need for recreation and sporting facilities/ programs which are culturally diverse. For example, the consultation outcomes highlighted the need for activities such as tai chi, table tennis, volleyball and outdoor basketball.
- Affordability and access are important with many groups having limited funds to expend on recreational activities and interested in using free public facilities.
- Lack of awareness of the range of recreational/sporting facilities available in the LGA and process to book/use facilities.
- Need for family friendly facilities as the family unit is culturally strong in many NESB communities and the demand for facilities, which cater for the whole family, is very strong.

9 EXISTING RECREATION MANAGEMENT

LCC is the major service provider of indoor and outdoor sporting and recreation facilities in the Liverpool LGA, in terms of construction, management and maintenance.

Council's major leisure facilities (sports centres, swimming centres and tennis centres) are typically managed on Council's behalf by professional leisure management companies, which seek to balance skilful commercial management with the social needs of the community.

Council's outdoor sporting and recreational facilities are maintained by Council, major sporting groups and contractors. This includes some 1034 ha of open space covering more than 80 playing fields, 40 district reserves and many local parks.

9.1 Recreation Organisational Structure

Council adopted a revised organisational structure on 13 March 2000. The new structure provides for four management groups, which have been designed to achieve full separation between strategic/program, support and action streams. Figure 9.1 shows an organisational chart for the provision and maintenance of recreation facilities and services in the LGA.

In relation to the planning and management of recreation opportunities, Recreation and Parks and Open Space Planning and Policy falls under Community Planning in the Community and Environmental Planning section. Contracts administration for Parks (including maintenance) and Recreation falls under the Operations Group. Figure 9.1 also highlights that to achieve the implementation of recreation policy, almost all sections of Council are involved. It is considered that this is one key factor that impedes the effective provision of recreation in the LGA.

Two working parties are also in place to promote communication between different recreation areas. The Sport and Recreation Working Party comprises of Council staff (6) and a Councillor (1) and

Figure 9.1 - Organisational Structure for Recreation

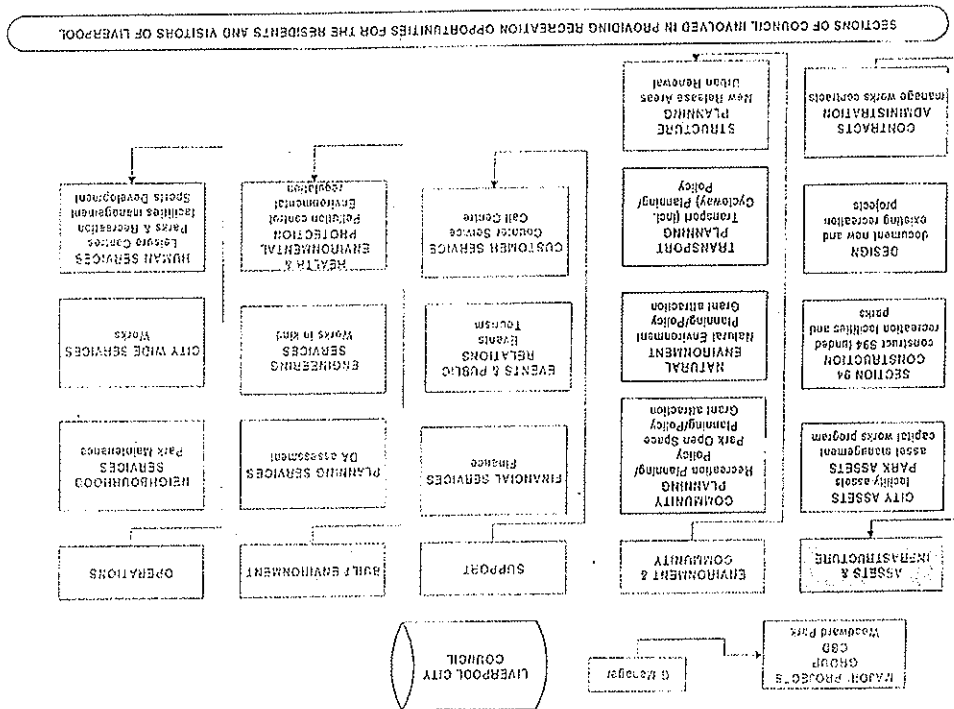


Table 9.1: Recreation and Leisure Expenses per capita 1996-97 to 1999-00 of Liverpool and Adjoining Councils

LGA	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Liverpool	43.94	40.94	49.16	46.99
Bankstown	50.22	25.33	34.14	48.00
Blue Mountains	38.85	39.44	49.64	39.30
Campbelltown	26.74	37.08	41.72	45.87
Fairfield	37.37	35.96	21.65	31.43
Parramatta	37.75	46.01	40.58	42.36
Large developing LGA on margin of a developed or regional urban centre in NSW (average)*	25.05	35.02	25.67	14.85
NSW (mean)	45.00	51.00	47.00	45.00

* classification used by DLG but includes different additional LGAs to those in this table
Source: NSW Department of Local Government (1999)

As the planning, development and maintenance of recreation facilities is dispersed over many Council departments, accurate figures on total expenditure by Council on recreation are not available. However, information provided by Council's Manager, Assets and Infrastructure indicates that Council expenditure on recreation in 2001/02 totalled \$7,529M comprising of \$3.5M on capital works and \$4,029M for maintenance. This is \$48.61 per capita based on the population as at 2001 and excludes administration and other costs absorbed in other Council budgets.

9.2.2 Section 94 Funding

Section 94 contributions are a significant component of Council's funding for recreation. As part of the overall planning and provision of recreation facilities in the LGA, Council collects Section 94 contributions from new development to fund the development of future capital works required to meet additional population needs. The *Liverpool Contribution Plan 2002* covers the whole LGA and collects funds for the development of community facilities, open space and recreation facilities, transport, drainage and streetscape.

For open space and recreation, Council collects funds for the following capital works:

- City-wide facilities including the proposed new recreation and entertainment facilities at Woodward Park, recouping the costs of the 1994-96 Whillam Centre extension which cost \$8.7M; land and pathways along Georges River costing \$4.1M; upgrade

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The planning, acquisition and development of these areas is a major challenge to Council and will require extensive resources to manage the process, deliver the outcomes and maintain the recreation facilities needed by these residents.

As experienced by many other Councils with large release areas, major deficiencies have been identified in the Section 94 planning and implementation process. Council officers and the consultants have identified the following issues in relation to existing Section 94 Plans:

- Insufficient funds to undertake identified embellishment works on parks due to poor costing of works in the initial plan
- Insufficient funds to purchase identified open space areas due to poor costing of land acquisition
- Provision of inappropriate sites for open space activities in new release areas due to poor planning of the release eg poor quality playing fields in detention basins; steep slopes unsuitable for recreation; poor soil quality requiring high cost embellishment etc
- Requirement for environmentally significant areas to be protected and purchased through Section 94, which are often unsuitable for recreation activities
- Major concerns over increasing salinity in the LGA with wet/dry basin resulting in poor quality open space areas
- Timing of provision and quality of open space/recreation is often well behind community demand/aspirations
- Location and capacity of District facilities may no longer be appropriate due to difficulty in acquiring appropriate sites, poor costing of facilities and increased population expected in the area.
- Few youth facilities to meet the needs of young people are planned for in the current Section 94 plans.
- Concern over the use of the 2.83 hectare per 1000 resident standard for open space in Council's existing Section 94 plan which as outlined in Sections 6.1 and 7 is not based on community need.

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These issues have been considered as part of the best practice guidelines (see Section 11) and recommended strategies (see Section 12) developed for this Strategy.

9.2.3 Leases, Licences and Hiring

Council leases out a number of facilities to the private sector and community groups. These include:

- Freeman Oval (Werriwa All Breeds Dog Training Club)
- Ernie Smith Reserve Hockey Complex (Moorebank/Liverpool District Hockey Club)
- Helles Park (Liverpool City Archers)
- Whillam Leisure Centre (Leisure Co.)
- Bigge Park Tennis Centre, Watlie Grove Tennis Centre, Voyager Park Tennis Centre, Craik Park Tennis Centre and Meere Park Tennis Centre (Sports Max/ Gibbons Thomson)

Maintenance of these facilities is the responsibility of the lessee, except for the Whillam Leisure Centre. None of these leases provide significant income to Council, with some charging a minimal fee (eg Helles Park and Freeman Oval), while for others any profits made are returned to the development of the facility (eg Whillam Leisure Centre and all tennis courts).

In terms of income derived from hiring of recreation facilities where groups pay hire fees to use grounds, it is estimated that Council receives \$70,000 per annum.

General principles that should be borne in mind when Council is considering future leases or licences of parks and reserves are that:

- The principles of public land and community land management limit any exclusive occupation or use by any person or group. Any such use or occupation must be agreed to according to various public notification and consultation processes under the Local Government Act and Crown Lands Act as applicable.
- The occupation by lease or licence will not significantly reduce the level of public access, or be for a significant period of time.

- Facilities and areas would preferably be licensed for a specific period of time during the day, week or year, allowing broader community access and multi-purpose use of the area or facility.
- The overall impact of any leased or licensed activity should provide a greater net benefit (recreational, social, environmental or financial) to Council and the community than the alienation of the area or facility from general public use.

9.2.4 Other sources

Council actively pursues a range of grant opportunities for recreation facilities and programs. However, most grant programs cover only capital works with matching funds/ contributions required from Council for implementation.

Council has recently received 6 grants for regeneration of bushland and signage at Cabramatta Creek from the Natural Heritage Trust, Southern Sydney Catchment Management Board, and Georges River Foreshore Improvement Program. However, there have been significant delays in undertaking the works due to the lack of staff to implement the grant funding. Council have also been successful in receiving grants for a community-based committee to undertake bush regeneration in Elouera Nature Reserve.

Equally, Council has a Physical Activity Officer jointly funded by Council and the Department of Health with program funds from Active Australia.

Other government agencies are also providing funds in the LGA for recreation facilities. Greening Australia are replanting in the WSRP while the Chipping Norton Lakes Authority are regenerating bushland in the reserves adjacent to the lakes. Tree planting is also being undertaken by various public schools.

9.3 Capital Works/Assets Program

LCC is currently implementing an asset management system for open space. An audit is being undertaken on the condition of its open space assets, with the view to

developing a priority program for repair and replacement of assets, and seeking funding for repair and replacement.

If an asset such as play equipment requires urgent repair, Council's Operation section attends to it. If the asset is in dangerous condition, it is removed until a decision is made whether to replace it. There is no forward priority program for capital works as yet. This Strategy will be used to help identify new assets required in future.

For the natural environment, Council currently has no capital works program in place. However, Council is seeking funds from DIPNR under the Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Program for a development strategy involving Bankstown LGA, Chipping Norton, Lakes Authority, Liverpool and Fairfield Councils to link the Georges River corridor and Cabramatta Creek. Within Liverpool, this will involve a development strategy for Cabramatta Creek to Hoxton Park Road and Brickmaker's Creek, including opportunities to link bushland with recreation facilities and cycleways.

LCC has adopted an environmental levy on residents that support a capital program for the restoration of bushland on either side of waterways in the LGA.

With regard to capital works, funding sources include Council's general revenue (including grants) and Section 94 funds. Table 9.2 provides a historical breakdown of capital expenditure on recreation assets for three financial years compared to Council's total asset expenditure. It highlights that over those three years, Council has spent \$9.6M on capital works for open space and recreation. This is an average of \$889,000 per annum of Council funds (8% of annual Council capital expenditure) and \$2.5M per annum of Section 94 funds (13% of annual \$94 capital expenditure). It is important to note that capital expenditure from \$94 funds includes the acquisition of open space, which has comprised a significant proportion of Council expenditure.

Table 9.2 Comparison of Total Recreation Capital Asset Expenditure 1999-00 to 2001-02

	Capital Expenditure Recreation (\$)	Total Council Capital Expenditure (\$)	Rec % of Total Expenditure	Capital Expenditure Recreation (\$)	Total Council Capital Expenditure (\$)	Rec % of Total Expenditure
1999/00	461,500	7,366,500	6	4,547,571	19,176,012	24
2000/01	1,174,000	8,335,000	14	0	7,041,331	0
2001/02	432,000	7,085,346	6	3,046,000	16,564,500	18
Total	2,067,500	22,786,846	9	7,593,571	44,811,843	17
Average Expenditure Per Annum	689,166	7,595,615	9	2,531,190	14,937,281	13

Source: Liverpool City Council

Capital expenditure for 2001/2002 included \$432,000 for Parks and Recreation Assets. Works included:

Parks, Reserves and Open Space

- Thomas Moore Park – Retaining wall reconstruction- \$20,000
- Chipping Norton Lakes – Fence reconstruction Stage 1- \$75,000
- Davy Robinson Reserve- Repair of Boat Ramp- \$20,000
- McMillan Park – Damaged bridge disposal- \$20,000
- Ascot Point – Access Road and Disabled Access Pontoons- \$30,000
- Casula Weaving Gardens – Stage 2- \$20,000

Aquatic Centres

- Holsworthy Pool- seasonal minor works- \$25,000

Sporting facilities

- Blamfield Oval- Boundary fence replacement- \$30,000
- Craig Park-floodlighting- \$132,000

In addition, an amenity building (soccer) at Hoxton Park Reserve is to be funded under Property and Buildings at a cost of \$390,000.

9.4 Maintenance Program

Maintenance works are undertaken by Council's Neighbourhood Services. This system involves staff crews working in and responsible for Liverpool's five (5) neighbourhoods – Western, Release, Central, CBD and Eastern (see Section 4.1). Work includes open space and

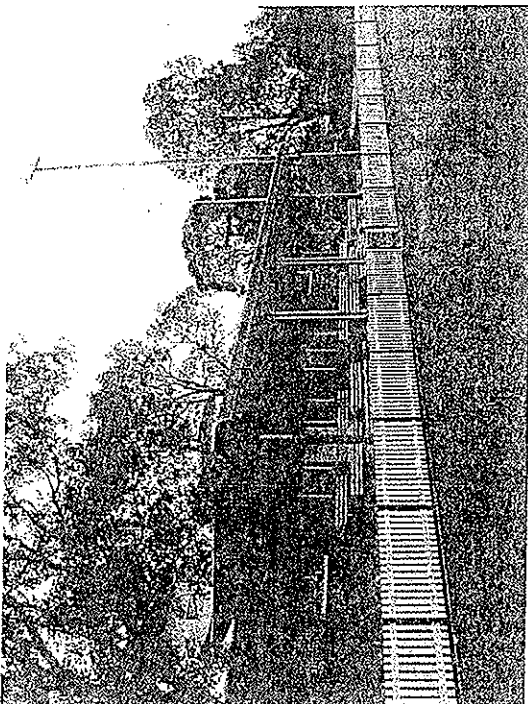
recreation facility maintenance together with other broad repairs such as vandalism; maintenance of local area traffic management systems; water cycle management etc.

With a total annual Neighbourhood Services budget of \$6.25M in 2001/02, Council officers estimate that \$4.029M per annum is used for the maintenance of open space and recreation facilities. This covers 36 Council staff; contract mowing; building maintenance, repair and utility costs; horticultural and consumable material purchase; plant costs and playground maintenance. This is a cost of \$26.99 per capita (based on 149,257 residents in 2000) or \$4,427 per hectare of non-regional open space.

Council currently has a hierarchical maintenance system with open space and recreation facilities graded in terms of the quality of maintenance required. These are:

- Level 1 – International Facility with no facilities yet in this category
- Level 2 – Regional Facility covering Hammondville Park, Rosedale Oval, Woodward Park and Chipping Norton Lakes
- Level 3 – District Facility with 40 reserves in this category
- Level 4 – Local Facility covering neighbourhood parks
- Level 5 – Neighbourhood Facility covering small parks and open spaces

Figure 9.2 Quality Maintenance at
Rosedale Oval



According to Council's parks maintenance program, regional parks (Level 2) such as Woodward Park and the Chipping Norton Lakes are maintained by Council staff or contractors seven days a week. Other parks are maintained on a weekly, two-weekly, three-weekly, four-weekly or eight-weekly basis. "Low usage" reserves (Level 5) are not currently on the maintenance program and maintenance is undertaken in response to resident request.

Some new parks in the Release Neighbourhood are maintained by the developer until they are handed over to Council. However, the existing system appears very poor with no clear guidelines from Council on handover requirements.

Many sporting facilities are also maintained by sporting clubs/groups such as Moorebank Sports Club and Liverpool Olympic Soccer Club. From the Sporting Group Survey and Neighbourhood workshops (see Section 5) the vast majority of clubs responding indicated that they fund or maintain the facilities that they

major trend with these programs operated by government, non-government agencies (eg YMCA and PCYC), community organisations and the private sector. Many require specific indoor facilities such as recreation centres, indoor gymnasiums and multipurpose facilities in which programs are offered while others may use outdoor facilities such as Council parks and footpaths (eg walking groups).

LCC has 34 multipurpose community centres distributed throughout Liverpool, some of which are used by individuals and community groups to pursue various recreational and leisure programs. Council's community centres are managed by:

- Section 355 Management Committees, with community-based booking clerks.
- Council, with bookings taken by Council's Administrative Centre-based customer service staff.
- Under licence to user groups or managers.

In addition, there are 145 non-Council facilities such as churches, schools and clubs which are also available for recreation programs. Important providers are licensed clubs, many of which provide indoor facilities and space for recreation programs. The Liverpool Catholic Club and John Edmondson Memorial Club are major clubs, which operate a range of recreation programs. Only a small number of private facilities are available for recreation programs such as the Lurnea Indoor Recreation Centre, Gym 53 and Ace Fitness Gym.

It is important to note that the majority of non-Council facilities are located in the CBD and Central Neighbourhoods with little provision in the Release and Eastern Neighbourhoods. A survey of these facilities by Council in 1998 identified that 22 non-Council facilities in the LGA are used for leisure/recreation programs (Liverpool City Council, *Snapshot of Non-Council Facilities*, August 1998).

The need for additional recreation programs to meet community demands is highlighted in Council's design brief for the new PCYC in Miller. Consultation with stakeholders identified the need for space for a wide range of recreation programs

including break dancing, dance classes, aerobics/exercise classes, martial arts, exercise classes and children's activities. Council's Social Plan also identified a range of recreation programs needed in the community (see Section 3.4.1) while consultation undertaken for this Strategy with key target groups also identified the need for more and targeted recreation programs (see Section 8.2).

It is evident that Council needs to address the lack of recreation programs for target groups in the community including:

- Aboriginal residents
- Youth
- Families
- Older residents
- Residents with a disability
- NESB residents

As in other communities, these can often be achieved through performance requirements at Council facilities (eg seniors swim classes at the Whitlam and Wendon Centres) and through partnerships with other government agencies, non-government organisations, community organisations and the private sector. Council's "Be Active in Liverpool" Project is a good example of the type of programs that should be undertaken. This physical activity project, jointly funded by LCC and Liverpool Health Service, aims to tackle the low levels of physical activity of residents in the Liverpool LGA.

Currently, information regarding recreation programs in the LGA is distributed by the individual providers with little coordination, needs identification or marketing. For target groups in the community, poor access to information about recreation programs is also a key barrier to participation. Council could play a key role in providing appropriate and accessible information about recreation programs. Some Council's are now taking a more proactive role in promoting local recreational activities in their communities.

10 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Based on the information provided in this report, it is evident that there are major issues to be addressed for recreation planning, implementation and management in Liverpool. In some cases, these issues may be evident for planning, implementation and/or management and require a holistic approach to addressing these concerns.

Many of these have been raised in earlier sections of this report but the key issues have been grouped together into the following major themes to assist in determining appropriate strategies. Sections 11 and 12 provide best practice guidelines and strategies to address the issues identified below.

10.1 Existing Open Space and Facilities

- **Poor recreation identity and variety** in the LGA with the majority of Council's 350 parks and reserves lacking strong recreational features, quality environments and variety of activities. Major recreational facilities exist at Woodward Park and Chipping Norton, but for the remainder of the LGA many of the facilities are relatively basic. Recreation infrastructure, which provides recreation identity and variety, could include facilities such as major parks for picnicking; high-quality exciting playgrounds; extensively landscaped passive parks; quality indoor/aquatic facilities; and multi-functional youth recreation centres.
- **Limited provision of informal recreational opportunities** such as walking/jogging trails, cycleways and multipurpose outdoor hardcourts, which are rated highly by the community and reflect the growing national and overseas trends towards unstructured recreation. Liverpool lacks an identifiable walking trail system and cycle network, which would increase resident mobility while also promoting fitness and healthy lifestyles.
- **Lack of structured youth recreation facilities, especially skate ramps.**

BMX tracks and half-court basketball courts with limited quantity and variety of facilities for both males and females. This is not only a planning issue but is also reflected in implementation when Council has experienced strong community concern over the proposed location of youth recreation facilities eg skateboard ramps. This also carries through to management issues of vandalism and personal safety problems as a result of being unable to develop well-located, safe and appropriate youth facilities. The new PCYC in Miller will go a long way towards satisfying youth needs in that neighbourhood.

- **Concentration of children's playgrounds and small parks** in some suburbs but gaps in other suburbs. This issue is common in many communities with planning approaches and demography of areas resulting in changed needs. The need to look at small parks, their role, utilisation, management and future potential is a significant issue for this Strategy.
- **Lack of designated areas for specialist recreation activities** is an important issue in many communities. Some recreational activities are not fully compatible with surrounding residential areas, environmentally sensitive areas and management/maintenance issues. For Liverpool this includes activities such as unleashed dog exercise areas (which are lacking in the Central, Release and Western neighbourhoods); facilities for BMX tracks (lacking in several areas); water-based activities (lacking on existing waterways) etc
- **Dual use drainage corridors** have poor visual and recreational amenity. Problems occur in the design, construction and management of dual use drainage corridors. This is particularly important as they are considered part of the open space and recreation network but yet lack any recreational focus and activity. Particularly with the emphasis on

floodlighting. Improved lighting increases the number of teams that can be accommodated on fields, and reduces wear and tear on field surfaces and conflict with other sports (such as gridiron and athletics at Craik Park). There have been requests for lighting at several sportsgrounds.

- **Seasonal allocation of sporting facilities doesn't encourage clubs to improve facilities.** Some clubs want to lease fields and clubhouses for a period longer than their seasonal allocation. This arrangement discourages clubs from funding improvements to the facilities, as their period of tenure of the facility is limited. There is a need for Council to work better with sporting bodies and community groups to provide and maintain recreation facilities. Many groups have identified that they are willing to work as partners with Council to improve facilities but there is no system in place to support this process. Currently, improvement works are undertaken on a reactive rather than proactive basis with sporting groups.
- **Provision of specific types of recreation facilities** should be based on community needs rather than the 'squeaky wheel' syndrome. This is a major issue in many communities and Liverpool is no exception. Needs-based planning and collaboration is required to ensure that specific facilities are built/allocated/used by those with the greatest needs. For example, the demand for playing fields and sportsgrounds in the LGA is high but yet the mechanisms for planning and allocating fields is restricted to the traditional sporting groups ie soccer, rugby league, little athletics and cricket. Planning and management processes to ensure that the right types of playing fields are built and allocated needs to be addressed. Similarly, family oriented recreational activities and youth recreational activities should be provided because of the significant demographic characteristics of the LGA ie one in four residents are aged under 15 years and 16% of residents are aged 15-24 years while 39% of families are two
- **Smart Growth** for Liverpool, better solutions to dual use drainage corridors for recreation need are likely to be developed. Consideration should also be given to Better Drainage guidelines (Land Systems EBC Pty Ltd 1993).
- **Recreation facilities in the LGA** experience high levels of vandalism although this is an issue for many communities. The need to establish strong guidelines that reduce vandalism and increase personal safety is a major issue for both Council and the community.
- **No progressive asset maintenance** program in place to renovate and replace existing aging recreation facilities eg playgrounds, cricket pitches, amenities etc. With many assets ageing, it is evident that replacement/improvement of sporting facilities, playgrounds etc is not occurring.

10.2 Sporting Bodies, Government Agencies, Community Groups and the Private Sector

- **Lack of appropriateness/ quality/ provision of some existing playing fields.** Several sporting clubs in Liverpool have indicated a desire to expand, but LCC does not have the sporting fields to accommodate them. This situation is exacerbated by clubs from outside Liverpool wanting to play on fields in Liverpool because they cannot get access to fields in their own areas. Most clubs want to play sport on Saturdays according to competitions organised by their peak sporting associations, with some playing on Sundays. This creates a peak demand for use of sporting fields on Saturdays. Fewer additional fields would be needed if competitions were spread out during the week, fields were more multiuse and playing surfaces of higher quality.
- **Use of sporting facilities is often limited by poor floodlighting.** Use of sporting grounds for training and competition can be extended with the installation of effective and powerful

parents with dependent children (1996 Census).

- Need for recreational opportunities that reflect the cultural diversity of the LGA and provide recreation settings, which are more culturally appropriate and/or address specific cultural needs. Many cultural groups are not accessing Council recreation facilities and programs, particularly new emerging migrant groups in the LGA.

- Many recreation facilities are not fully accessible for people with a disability or limited mobility. Council's Disability Action Plan has not been fully implemented for all existing recreation facilities and this must be addressed. Few sporting bodies cater for people with a disability as part of their sport while provision of facilities such as playgrounds for children with disabilities are non-existent.

10.3 Natural Environment

- Environmental protection has been given high priority by Council but this needs to be reflected in the planning, development and maintenance of the natural environment. Major difficulties are being experienced with maintaining riparian and environmental zones with high costs and technical issues resulting in poor quality outcomes. Difficulties in protecting bushland areas in the planning of new communities is a major issue of concern particularly in relation to acquisition costs and management requirements of environmentally sensitive areas.

- Staff and financial resourcing are key issues for Council's Natural Environment section. Council is relatively successful in attracting grant funding for bushland projects, but do not have the in-house staff to manage these projects. This is particularly important, as Council needs to better manage bushland and wetland reserves, especially in terms of weed management and revegetation projects.

demographic characteristics of the community. However, this needs to be balanced against the high costs of building new, upgrading old and maintaining recreation infrastructure. Opportunities for more innovative approaches to addressing this issue must be considered as part of this Strategy.

- Inequities exist between established areas and new release areas in terms of quality of facilities and maintenance. Generally, provision and maintenance in the newer established areas and new release areas is better due to the age of the equipment, new standards being implemented, and often large land developers. In older established areas and rural areas, provision and maintenance is often poor with old/no equipment, low standards of provision, and often limited maintenance.

- Regular maintenance of recreation infrastructure remains a significant issue. Management practices are being changed and new systems implemented but a major issue remains that the cost of maintenance is increasing while budget constraints remain in place. For example, Council officers indicate that approximately 10 new parks a year are being placed on Council's maintenance program each year but in real terms, Council's maintenance budget has not grown for maintenance of these additional parks.

- Compared to other recreational facilities, the poor quality of playing fields and sportsgrounds in the LGA is of concern. With organised sport a major recreational activity in the LGA, the demand for quality playing fields and sportsgrounds is significant. Fields require appropriate standards of maintenance together with strong working relationships with sporting groups. Opportunities to improve the current provision and management processes in the LGA need to be considered.

10.5 Future Needs

- Additional sporting facilities will be required to meet the needs of the future population. How these can be provided both financially and in terms of recreation best practice must be addressed. This must be done also in a framework of reducing the overall quantity of open space in the LGA while improving the overall quality of the facilities provided.
- High growth rate of the LGA is resulting in major planning, provision and maintenance issues. For example, an estimated 104 ha of new open space is planned for Hoxton Park Stage II while significant City-Wide facilities and upgrading of established areas is proposed. It is evident that systems need to be in place to ensure that these Section 94 works can be undertaken in time and on budget.
- Need to ensure that Liverpool's recreation facilities meet best practice guidelines. Issues of transport access, equity, security and safety, environmental sustainability, identity and integration must be addressed.
- Implementation of Section 94 works program is proving difficult with concern that the high quality results expected by both Council and the community are not being met.
- Guidelines for the planning and provision of recreation facilities in the LGA are poor with planned recreation facilities not achieving their desired outcomes. Issues of quality, size of open space, variety, safety, access etc are all issues that need to be considered for both existing and new recreation facilities.
- With the likely redevelopment of the Liverpool Showground an alternate venue for the Liverpool Show needs to be investigated.

11 WORKING TOWARDS RECREATION BEST PRACTICE

11.1 Recreation Planning Criteria

Many principles and elements relate to the planning, design and management of recreation facilities. The Office of Sport and Recreation in South Australia has developed the following 6 objectives for recreation strategies and these provide useful guidance on criteria, which need to be considered:

- **Equity and Social Justice**- when developing recreation and sport facilities and open spaces, consideration should be given to the needs of all sections of the community they intend to serve regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or ability.
- **Rational Distribution**- there should be a rational distribution of recreation and sport facilities based on a hierarchical structure which ensures that state and metropolitan facilities, regional facilities and local facilities complement each other with minimal duplication, thereby providing better services to the community.
- **Integration**- whenever possible, recreation and sport facilities and open spaces should be integrated with other community facilities. Preference should also be given to multiple use of recreation and sport facilities for compatible activities.
- **Access**- access to recreation and sport facilities by public and private transport should be maximised.
- **Future Provision**- adequate land in appropriate locations for recreation and sport facilities should be provided.
- **Conservation and Environmental Sustainability**- designing and locating recreation and sport facilities should take into account conservation of the environment and also ensure user safety.

In terms of best practice, a more holistic approach is being pursued by many professionals and practitioners seeking to

develop more effective, efficient and appropriate recreation provision. Many are moving towards Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles or *Triple bottom line* criteria that achieve social, environmental and economic benefits. ESD or sustainability is also an important component of Council's *Smart Growth Strategy*. Using this approach, key planning criteria for open space and recreation are:

- Transport access
- Equity
- Security and safety
- Environmental sustainability
- Identity
- Integration

11.2 Best Practice for Specific Recreation Facilities

For this Strategy, the following best practice guidelines have been identified based on research and industry best practice. These guidelines are consistent with those used in many other communities and also reflect the importance of liveability and quality infrastructure as identified in Council's vision for Liverpool.

11.2.1 Parks and Reserves

- Provide variety and local identity including a range of recreation and leisure experiences related to the needs of the community.
- Develop multipurpose recreation spaces, which provide for a range of lifestyle and cultural groups will be promoted. All large parks greater than 5,000m² will provide for activities which address these needs such as seating, shelters, children's play equipment, children's bike paths etc. They will also include space for specific youth recreation activities such as half basketball courts, skateboard ramps, "teen ragers" or "rage cages" (fenced multi-purpose courts), rollerblading, adventure playgrounds etc.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979; State Environmental Planning Policies 19 and 44; Bushfires Act 1949; Clean Waters Act 1979; National Park and Wildlife Act 1974 and Endangered Fauna (Interim Protection) Act 1991.

11.2.2 Youth Recreation Facilities

It is considered important also provide information on current best practice in the planning of new or improved youth recreation facilities. The consultants are aware that LCC, like many other Councils across Australia, is struggling with determining the appropriate type and location for youth facilities in a community. With perceived and sometimes real issues of personal safety and vandalism involved together with resident objections to the location of youth facilities, best practice guidelines are being developed by many Councils.

The consultants consider that current best practice in relation to the development of youth facilities is:

- Facilities are established in high profile open space, near community facilities or commercial areas where public surveillance by passing traffic and pedestrians is high. Street lighting in these types of locations is typically good and this will assist in reducing vandalism and gang behaviour.
- In new release areas, identify appropriate locations for youth facilities in the planning stage.
- Involve young people in the planning and design of youth facilities.
- Ensure good physical access to facilities by focussing on high profile areas which are typically more accessible. Links to safe public transport, pedestrian and bicycle routes is essential.
- Cater for a range of uses and diverse activities.
- Cater for a range of youth age groups eg easier skate facilities for younger children with more challenging facilities for older youth.

- Improve the perception of safety in public spaces.
- Promote gender equity in the provision and use of facilities.
- Provide venues for public entertainment (music, theatre) and opportunities for public communication.
- Ensure potential conflict-generating activities (eg. skateboarding) are physically separated from other uses, but visible.

11.2.3 Bicycle Facilities

There is considerable research available on the provision of bicycle facilities with many communities and governments in Australia and overseas actively involved in the development of comprehensive cycle networks. All states throughout Australia have adopted major policies and performance targets to ensure that there is a substantial increase in the number of cycle trips over the next 10 years.

In terms of best practice, the key focus for the bicycle strategies in Australia are:

- The development of comprehensive cycle networks and infrastructure which provide high quality links to key locations within the community.
- Focus on short, local trips with research highlighting that the majority of people are willing to undertake cycle trips of less than 5 kilometres.
- Provision of cycle facilities which are suitable for the key user groups and local traffic volumes. This includes the provision primarily of off-road routes for school links and where traffic volumes are significant.
- Development of cycle routes which focus on the needs of key potential users in the community such as children to school, youth transport, adult transport and adult recreation. Journeys to education facilities, public transport, work, local utility activities and health/recreation are the main determinants for cycle facilities.
- Linking of bicycle facilities to public transport locations such as major bus stops and railway stations. This strategy is very successful overseas in Europe, Asia and America with bicycles providing a key link to public transport nodes.
- Provision of appropriate end-of-trip facilities such as secure parking.
- Improving the quality of cycle facilities to ensure that user safety is high. Issues such as personal safety, lack of night lighting, poor maintenance and conflict between cyclists/ vehicles/ pedestrians are key issues, which must be addressed.

11.2.4 Children's playgrounds

Children's play requires its own special planning and design considerations. Playgrounds are purpose-built settings, which facilitate a range of play opportunities for children, their families, and their care-givers. As many children live in higher density residential areas, they are dependent on public playgrounds (outside schools) for all of their outdoor play experiences.

Best practice approaches to provision of children's play opportunities are:

- Structured playgrounds should be considered as part of a whole spectrum of play opportunities available in any given area, and should complement other opportunities in the local area such as natural areas, creek corridors, skate facilities, grassed areas, and bike play areas.
- Every child should have access to a diverse range of play opportunities in their own residential area. Ideally, children's playgrounds should be located within 400 metres of 90% of dwellings (Queensland Urban Design Guidelines). Within their local area, there should be a wide range of activities and types of play provided for in a wide range of different settings. For example, in an area characterised by bushland and natural areas with few facilities, play areas should be supplemented with complex equipment, and paving for ball or toy vehicle activities. In urban settings,

children benefit from the provision of trees and planting, rocks, sand and other natural play materials.

- Play areas should cater for different types of play, such as developing physical / gross motor skills, social skills, and creative play.
- A hierarchy of regional, district and local children's playgrounds should be provided.
- Playgrounds should be designed with the developmental stages of children in mind, as children differ in physical size, skills, behaviour, play interests, and perception of hazards.
- Each playground should be designed with specific age groups in mind - toddlers under 3 years, juniors aged 3 to 7 years, seniors aged 8 to 12 years, and teenagers 13 years and over. Local neighbourhood parks should cater for more than one age group if large enough. Where a local play area can only accommodate one age group, the junior age group should be targeted as they benefit most from provision of playgrounds. District playgrounds should provide for more than one age group, with core groups being junior and senior, with toddlers and teenagers provided for where appropriate. Regional playgrounds should be designed for toddler, junior and senior children as a minimum.
- Play opportunities for teenagers
- should be equally distributed across neighbourhoods, and included in other recreation facilities, not necessarily with equipment for younger age groups. They should be located in places convenient for teenagers to access by public transport, and where teenagers perceive "the action is".
- Carers should be provided for in terms of seating, shade, and water close to the play area.
- New playgrounds should be designed to facilitate access by children with disabilities.
- Play equipment, surfaces and associated site features should be sited, designed and maintained in accordance with the following Australian Standards: AS 1924 Parts 1 and 2 1981 General Requirements, AS / NZS 4422 1996 Playground Surfacing, and AS / NZS 4456 1997 Installation and Operation.

11.2.5 Sportsgrounds

All sportsgrounds in Liverpool should meet the following best practice hierarchy for development and maintenance using a hierarchical classification system based on the level of competition for which the field is used ie Level 1/2 region or LGA; Level 2 district; and Level 4 localchildren's sport etc. This approach is used successfully in many other LGAs and enables differential treatment of Council's existing 80+ playing fields.

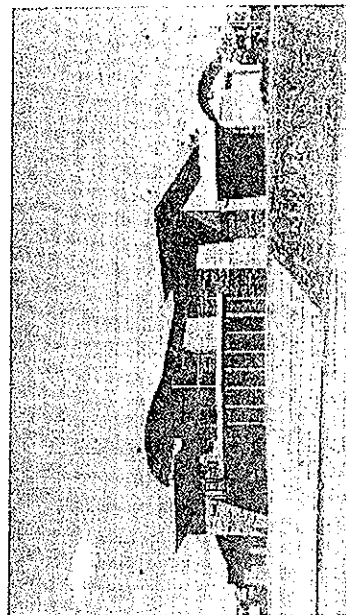


Figure 11.1 Quality Sportsground Facilities Need to be Provided

Table 11.1 Proposed Hierarchy of Sportsgrounds

Sportsground Hierarchy	Minimum Maintenance Standard	Minimum Asset Standard	Other Requirements
Level 1/2 Regional	Weekly mowing on contract	Irrigation to all fields with Grandstand amenities and kiosk with bicycle and pedestrian links Floodlighting to all fields Onsite car parking	Good access to public transport Bicycle and pedestrian links Multi-use encouraged
Level 3 District	Two weekly mowing cycle by Council	Irrigation to all fields with spectator seating with amenities, clubhouse and canteen Floodlighting to all fields Onsite car parking	Good access to public transport Bicycle and pedestrian links Multi-use encouraged
Level 4 Local	Two weekly mowing cycle by Council	Irrigation to main field Toilets and change rooms Floodlighting to main field Onsite car parking	Good access to public transport Bicycle and pedestrian links Multi-use encouraged

For Levels 1, 2 and 3, sportsgrounds should provide the following standard of amenity:

- At least two fields configured to allow multi-purpose use.
- Primarily flat and playable for more than 50% of the year
- High quality and well maintained sporting fields, including an irrigation system.
- Toilets, change rooms, clubroom and kiosk.
- Water bubblers / taps.
- Shade for players and spectators.
- Mounds or seating for spectators.
- Barbecues and picnic benches for social gatherings.
- Floodlighting to Australian standards for training and night games at fields located away from residential areas.
- Provision of ancillary facilities for the sports being played at each location, such as cricket practice nets and baseball dugouts.
- Pedestrian and cycle linkages with between sportsgrounds, other open

- Provision of a variety of recreation settings.
 - Using natural materials such as rocks instead of concrete and metals for water flow control structures where possible.
 - Providing space for passive recreation adjacent to any pond or wetland.
 - Attractive landscaping using suitable species for the water regime.
 - Erecting low-key signage with pictures and in community languages to warn users of the potential of inundation of accessible areas, and precautions to be taken during inundation.
- 11.2.8 Unteashed dog exercise areas
- Unleashed dog exercise areas ideally should:
- Comprise a large area with grass, trees and other elements of interest to dogs to avoid conflicts between dogs and to enable owners to play with their dogs.
 - Be separated from other park settings by low fences etc. to designate the unleashed area and separate it from other park users.
 - Be associated with a car parking area for dog owners that drive to the park.
 - Include units with plastic bags and dog waste bins that are emptied regularly, at entry points and throughout the area.
 - Harlock Jackson (1995) suggests other specific design considerations for unleashed dog exercise areas.

11.2.10 Facilities for people from culturally diverse backgrounds

The Liverpool LGA is a very culturally diverse community. Some specific strategies for increasing recreation participation amongst people from culturally diverse backgrounds are outlined below.

- Develop walking tracks that incorporate signage and information in key languages or with universally acceptable symbols.

- Develop facilities to cater for sports that appeal to different cultural groups.
 - Involve people from culturally diverse backgrounds in the planning and design of community facilities.
 - Provide or facilitate the provision of programs for specific groups, such as learn to swim programs for Islamic women during "women only" pool sessions.
 - Involve people from culturally diverse backgrounds in the planning and implementation of programs and activities.
 - Support the inclusion of recreation and sport as part of community cultural events.
 - Encourage other groups working with people from culturally diverse backgrounds to include recreation and sport in their programs where appropriate.
 - Provide cultural awareness and customer service training for staff.
 - Promote recreation and sport, including providing information about opportunities, through ethnic workers/community services sections of the Council.
 - Promote recreation and sport through community-based ethnic organisations.
 - Provide information about recreation and sport opportunities in appropriate community languages.
- 11.2.11 Aquatic centres**
- The principal objective of an aquatic centre must be to provide all pool patrons with a safe and enjoyable water experience. The following is a list of development, cultural and social, design and financial objectives:
- Site boundaries cannot be exceeded; centre designs must

- Design and fit-out must be easy to maintain and energy efficient.
 - Designs must create minimal environmental impact whilst satisfying the previous criteria.
 - The architecture must recognise and adopt best practice principles in design.
 - Centres must at least operationally break even, or strive to record an operating surplus.
 - Operational budgets must allow for required building, plant, fixtures and equipment maintenance and must reserve annual funds towards maintenance provision.
 - Established capital budgets must not be exceeded in design and construction.
 - Plant, services and fittings must be designed to minimise or eliminate operational shutdowns, as well as associated customer effects of closure.
 - Design layouts must optimise staffing numbers and be efficient to control patrons.
 - Components must be assessed against their capacity to generate usage and revenue.
 - Ongoing operating and maintenance costs must be minimised.
- 11.2.12 Walking trails**
- The demand for designated recreation trails and routes that cater for walkers have been steadily increasing as leisure time has become more available in the community.
- If the area is hot and dry, there should be efforts made to make the trail more pleasant by providing water and planting trees for shade and shelter.
 - Trails should be planned using CPTED guidelines
- Trees should be established or featured to improve the trail users' experience. The vegetation should provide habitat for birds and animals.
 - Trails should be established to take advantage of landforms. Viewing areas across hills and mountain ranges and attractive corridors along river valleys can all enrich the route for users of a trail system.
 - Consultation with the local community should be undertaken to identify the issues concerning the establishment of a trail.
 - Attractions (scenic, historical, physical challenge, etc) must be featured in or along a trail to provide interest for users.
 - Close access to public transport routes will increase the trail use.
 - Separation from vehicle traffic especially in busy urban areas will reduce risk.
 - Appropriate signage should be made indicating lengths, times and gradients of trail, trail direction, changes, interpretation, trail layout and maps, warnings to traffic and trail users of road and trail crossings.
 - The surface preparation should be able to withstand frequent use all year without being too hard. Asphalt can be a hard surface to walk on over extended periods.
 - Risks should be managed to minimise the potential for accidents and injury by users.
 - Consideration should be given to closures for certain local conditions and seasons eg. fire ban period, land management.
 - Where possible, loop walks and networks should be established to provide choice for walkers and use of existing tracks and minor roads.

- Provision for people with disabilities wherever possible, including ramps, handrails, adequate car parking.
- Rest stops incorporating benches or seats, drinking water, shelters, picnic areas and toilets may need to be considered particularly along well-used trails.
- Soil compaction by walkers can bring about water drainage problems.
- It is necessary to provide good horizontal vegetation clearance (over two metres) and vertical vegetation clearance (over three metres). Trees and shrubs should be pruned flush with the trunk.

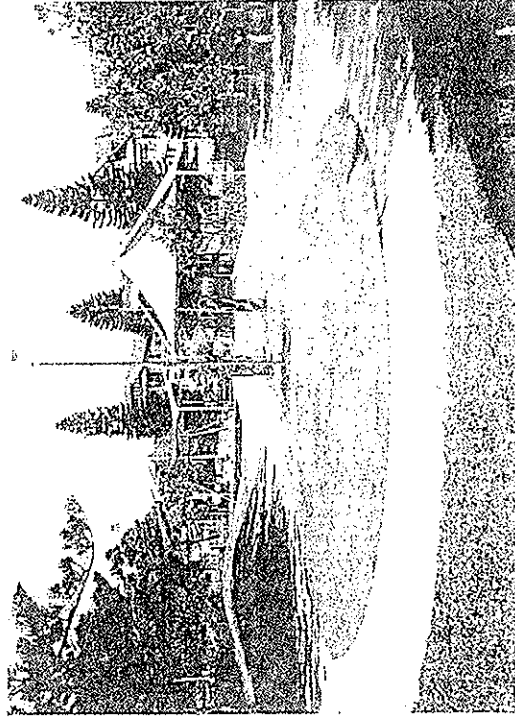
12 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Five key directions have been identified as the main focus of the Liverpool City-Wide Recreation Strategy 2020. These are consistent with Council's vision and strategic objectives outlined in Sections 2 and 3 and address the key recreation issues identified in Section 10.

These key directions are:

- Enhancing Existing Open Space and Recreation Facilities
- Addressing Future Needs
- Working with Sporting Bodies, Government Agencies, Community Groups and the Private Sector
- Improving Council Recreation Management
- Managing the Natural Environment

Strategies for each key direction, and the rationale for the strategies, are outlined below.



12.1 Key Directions and Strategies

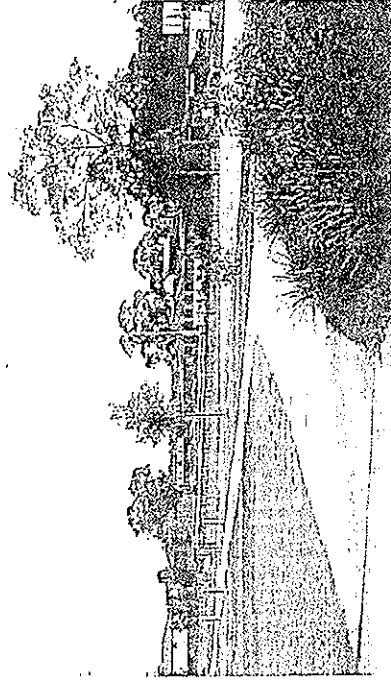
KEY DIRECTION: Enhancing Existing Open Space and Recreation Facilities

With over 1034 hectares of open space managed by Council, the need to ensure that existing open space and associated recreation facilities provide a range of quality leisure opportunities that meet the needs of all residents is essential. As with all communities, changing community needs and recreation trends result in the need to continually reassess the type of recreational opportunity provided and their distribution. Strategies to ensure that existing open space and recreation facilities are enhanced are:

STRATEGIES

- Develop high quality multipurpose open spaces which incorporate a range of unstructured recreation facilities suitable for all groups in the community
- Develop, adopt and implement a shared pathway strategy for the LGA which links with Council's existing local and regional cycleway and footpath network

- Identify and implement the provision of a range of unstructured youth recreation facilities
- Provide high quality children's playgrounds that meet the needs of the surrounding community and are based on best practice approach to provision.
- Identify and implement a hierarchy of sportsgrounds that is linked to competition levels and associated minimum best practice standards.
- Apply the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines and other proactive crime prevention approaches to all existing and future open spaces and recreation facilities.



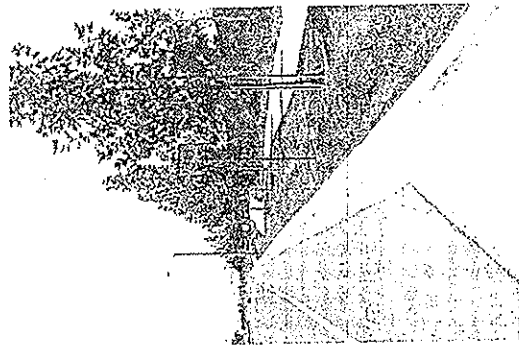
KEY DIRECTION: Addressing Future Needs

Liverpool is and will continue to be one of the largest and fastest growing LGAs in Australia. Its population is expected to reach 173,000 by 2006 and 230,000 by 2020 with much of this growth taking place in new communities on the City's edge. Additional growth is also planned through urban re-vitalisation programs in Liverpool's CBD, Central and Eastern Neighbourhoods.

Council's strategic objective is to ensure that Liverpool is the major centre for South Western Sydney and that it will provide high quality local, district and regional recreational opportunities for its residents. To this end, Council must focus on addressing these future needs through an proactive, innovative and best practice approach to the planning, provision and management of open space and recreation facilities.

STRATEGIES

- Develop opportunities for the provision of a range of City-Wide open space and recreation facilities



KEY DIRECTION: Working with Sporting Bodies, Government Agencies, Community Groups and the Private Sector

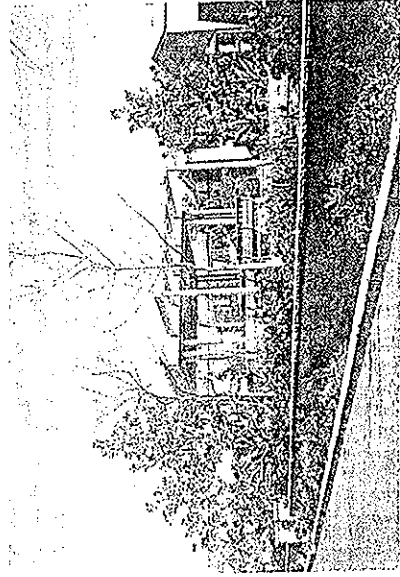
It is important to recognise that Council is not the only stakeholder involved in recreation in the LGA. Liverpool has a strong network of existing sporting bodies and community groups, which are actively involved in developing, managing and promoting recreation in the community. It also has a large school aged population (59 schools attended by more than 25,000 students) who actively use many Council sporting and recreation facilities as part of their weekly curriculum activities. Other government agencies and the private sector are also recreation providers with access to additional resources that could benefit the Liverpool community.

Liverpool residents value recreation and consider it an important component of Liverpool's lifestyle. The whole community, including youth, families, indigenous residents, older residents, residents with a disability and residents from non-English speaking backgrounds, need to have equal access to these recreation opportunities.

Council needs to develop an improved partnership approach to working with all these key groups to ensure that quality outcomes are achieved for the community.

STRATEGIES

- Develop joint development/management agreements with the NSW Department of Education and Training and private schools in the LGA on the use of existing and future public and private school facilities for active recreation.
- Develop partnerships with key sporting bodies for the development and management of Council sportsgrounds and recreation facilities
- Develop a joint planning approach to the development of the WSRP with DIPNR, NPWS and all Councils adjoining the regional facility to ensure that it provides a range of affordable and accessible recreation opportunities for Liverpool residents.
- Provide open space and recreation facilities which are fully accessible for people with a disability
- Improve the participation of Liverpool's 6 key target groups in recreation in the LGA (ie older residents, residents with a disability, youth, families, Aboriginal residents and residents from non-English speaking backgrounds).



KEY DIRECTION: Improving Council Recreation Management

To achieve quality outcomes in recreation, Council's management needs to be effective and efficient. Without good systems, policies, communication and resources, the implementation of these strategies will not be achieved. In March 2000, Council implemented a new organisational structure that provides for complete separation between strategic/program, support and action streams.

The success of this structure is yet to be evaluated but it is essential for it to achieve effective and efficient communication; implementation of key systems and policies; improved access to information; improved maintenance and improved financial management. In short, the structure must achieve quality outcomes in terms of the recreation planning, provision, management and maintenance.

STRATEGIES

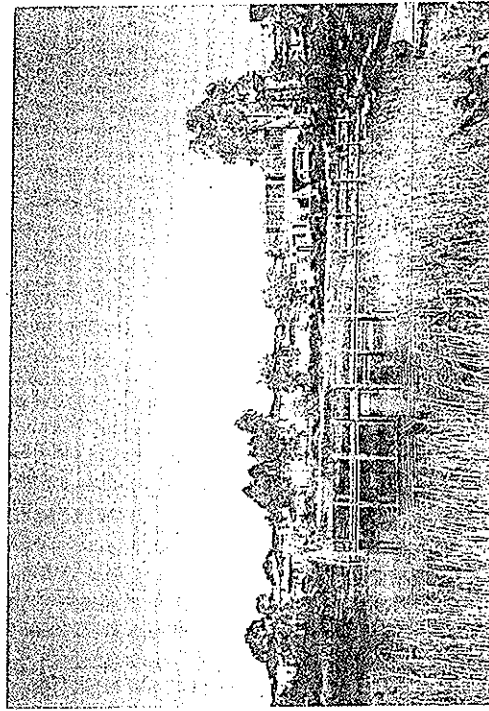
- Develop and implement improved systems and policies which focus on coordinating all recreation functions
- Ensure effective and efficient communication between all Council officers involved in planning, design, provision, management and maintenance of all open space and recreation facilities
- Review the existing Neighbourhood Services program to improve service outcomes for open space and recreation facilities
- Improve the financial viability and management of Council recreation assets while maintaining Council's equity of access obligations

KEY DIRECTION: Managing the Natural Environment

Liverpool is rich in natural assets including the Georges River, Chipping Norton Lakes, Western Sydney Regional Parklands, Leacock Regional Park, Gulguer Nature Reserve, Bents Basin State Recreation Area and Holsworthy Military Area. With extensive wetlands, woodlands and habitat/wildlife corridors the need to protect, manage and promote these areas in Liverpool is important. For the indigenous and broad communities of Liverpool, there are strong cultural ties with these natural assets. Council must ensure that the natural environment is well-managed for both existing and future generations.

STRATEGIES

- Develop, adopt and implement a Biodiversity Strategy for Liverpool.



12.2 Strategy Rationales

KEY DIRECTION: Enhancing Existing Open Space and Recreation Facilities

Develop high quality multipurpose open spaces, which incorporate a range of unstructured recreation facilities suitable for all groups in the community

Rationale: Current trends in recreation and sport participation continually emphasise the move towards unstructured activities. Uncommitted leisure time is increasing for some people (eg early retirees) and decreasing for others (eg time-poor working parents) resulting in many people being interested in undertaking recreational activities which can be done at any time with no organisation or commitment. The Liverpool community has strongly expressed its interest in these types of activities, which are also considered more affordable and family-friendly (see Section 5). Local youth and children have a high demand for this type of facility enabling them to be physically active without parental supervision.

Unstructured recreation facilities includes picnic/BBO areas; formal gardens; ponds/lakes; unleashed dog exercise areas; beaches/swimming areas; beach volleyball courts; boat ramps/jetties/fishing areas; children's playgrounds; multipurpose hardcourts, shared pathways, skateboard ramps etc.

Few of Council's existing parks contain a range of unstructured recreation facilities. Minilovic Reserve in Green Valley, with a children's playground and half-court basketball court, is an example of the type of multipurpose open space which should be available in all neighbourhoods.

Other recreational settings are also suitable for more multipurpose uses. Large bodies of water such as the Georges River, Chipping Norton Lake and lakes in Cecil Hills, Greenway Park and Watlie Grove are suitable for the development of unstructured recreational facilities. Facilities such as sportsgrounds, the grounds of indoor recreation centres and even car parks are also potential locations.

The lack of formal gardens has also been identified in the Liverpool community. Consultation feedback highlighted strongly that residents and many key target groups considered that formal gardens provide an excellent opportunity for unstructured recreation. This type of provision is evident in many other LGAs such as Auburn's Japanese Gardens, Mt Annan Botanical Gardens, Campbelltown's Koshigaya Gardens and Blacktown's Narragong Reserve. Some of these reserves are large multipurpose parks which include more formal gardens together with picnic/BBO areas; shared pathways and playgrounds. High quality landscaping and gardens are key features of these facilities.

The demand for unleashed dog exercise areas in the Liverpool LGA is also an example of unstructured recreational activities which residents have identified. This is consistent with national trends, with 'walking the dog' being one of the top 10 away-from-home social / leisure / recreational / sports activities undertaken by adults in Australia in 1991 (Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, 1991).

As a minimum, at least one designated unleashed dog exercise area is required in each neighbourhood. Potential conflict between dogs and other park users can be resolved through best practice planning and design measures outlined in a key reference *Public Open Space and Dogs: A Design and Management Guide for Open Space Professionals and Local Government* (Harlock and Jackson Pty Ltd, 1995).

Develop, adopt and implement a shared pathway strategy for the LGA which links with Council's existing local and regional cycleway and footpath network

Rationale: A key outcome of this study's community consultation program was the demand for walking and cycling tracks in the LGA (see Section 5). This is consistent with national and overseas trends towards unstructured recreation and the community's desire to participate in leisure activities if when the time is available. Walking and cycling are also popular activities for a range of lifecycle groups including children, youth, families, residents

To improve community cycling skills and provide further unstructured recreational activities, provision in parks of circuitous off-road cycle paths particularly for children/families is recommended. This is a growing and popular recreation facility in many parks throughout Australia eg Centennial Park, and Apex Park in Mona Vale.

In the Western neighbourhood, a shared pathway strategy should also consider opportunities for walking, cycling and equestrian trails.

Identify and implement provision of a range of unstructured youth recreation facilities

Rationale: With 15% of residents or some 18,000 residents aged 10-19 years, the need for recreation facilities specifically targeting youth is evident. High youth populations are evident in the Central and Eastern Neighbourhoods with the youth population in the Release Neighbourhood expected to also be high as the area grows. The Western Neighbourhood also has a high proportion of youth.

Current trends in the recreation provision for youth highlight the demand for unstructured recreational activities such as skate ramps, BMX tracks, shared pathways and half-court basketball courts. 'New' sports are highly attractive to youth such as mountain bike riding, street hockey, skateboarding, beach volleyball, climbing etc. The Youth Survey and feedback from the Liverpool Youth Council identified a wide range of recreational activities which Liverpool youth would like to see provided covering 19 different facilities (eg waterparks, extreme sports, indoor recreation centres, BMX tracks etc)

The provision of unstructured youth recreation facilities is limited in Liverpool with only 4 facilities provided. These are the outdoor hardcourts in Green Valley and Watlie Grove, the skateboard facility at Kelso Park in Moorebank and a BMX track at Powell Park, Cartwright.

This is not only a planning issue but also reflects the implementation issues involved in developing youth-specific facilities. Unfortunately, as is evident in other LGAs, there is often vocal community concern over the proposed location of youth

with a disability and older residents (see Table 7.1). A shared pathway is a very multipurpose facility, which can be used for activities including walking, cycling, jogging and rollerblading (if the path is sealed). The health and transport benefits of this type of facility are also well-documented with research highlighting increased physical activity and mobility.

Currently, there are only 11kms of shared walking and cycle paths in the LGA with much of this scattered and lacking any continuity. There is no identifiable local walking and cycle network and Council plans for provision lack direction and commitment. Council is currently developing the Georges River pathway which will eventually link Glenfield with Voyager Point along the Georges River. Regional links are being developed by the RTA with the Paramatta to Liverpool Cycleway/Railtrail (which links Liverpool CBD to the Fairfield and Parramatta LGAs) and proposed provision along the Western Sydney Orbital and Liverpool/Fairfield Bus Translinkway.

Further planning is required to provide attractive, continuous and safe shared local pathways to key facilities such as schools, recreation centres, sporting facilities and shopping areas. Provision within City-Wide facilities (eg Georges River, WSRP, Chipping Norton Lakes etc) and in each neighbourhood should be a priority (eg local schools in each neighbourhood, the PCYC being developed in the Central neighbourhood etc). For cycleways, connections to major regional routes should also be investigated. Consultation with key local stakeholders - ie schools, shops, interested residents, youth etc about the location of proposed facilities should be undertaken prior to development.

Provision in local open space and along creeklines should focus on link routes only where there is a high level of public safety and where access to a key destination is improved. Best practice highlights that there are significant public safety concerns for cyclists and pedestrians where off-road paths are located in areas with poor visual surveillance by others; poor night lighting and vegetation which obscures surveillance (see Section 11.2). Shared pathways are now being located running parallel /adjacent to local roads and/or fronting houses, shops and schools.

recreation facilities eg skateboard ramps. This also carries through to management issues of vandalism and personal safety problems as a result of being unable to develop well-located, safe and appropriate youth facilities. These implementation issues need to be proactively addressed with best practice guidelines used to ensure youth-specific facilities are provided (see Section 11.2).

The PCYC currently being developed in Miller will go a long way towards satisfying youth needs in the Central neighbourhood. However, consideration needs to be given to looking at this model for other areas of the City eg Edmondson Park and the provision of unstructured youth recreation facilities in all neighbourhoods.

Priority for youth facilities needs to be given to the Eastern and Release Neighbourhoods where youth populations are high and current provision low.

Provide high quality children's playgrounds that meet the needs of the surrounding community and is based on best practice approach to provision.

Rationale: Children's playgrounds are a key recreational setting in all communities. In the Liverpool LGA there are 110 children's playgrounds or one playground per 1,407 residents (2001 LGA population). This is higher than recognised standards (1 per 2000-4000 residents) but Liverpool has a very young population with one in four residents aged under 15 years (29,600 residents). This in itself highlights the importance of children's playgrounds as a key recreational resource for the community. This was also reinforced by the consultation feedback, which highlighted the need for family friendly recreation, which is financially, physically and culturally accessible.

Assessment of the existing provision of children's playgrounds in the LGA (see Section 6.2) highlights that their distribution is very uneven with concentrations in some suburbs, such as Wallie Grove, but gaps in others such as in Central neighbourhood, and throughout the Release neighbourhood. Children's playgrounds also lack diversity with many having very standard play equipment, poor landscaping and little associated furniture such as seats for carers. There are also no accessible

areas where a potential under-supply has been identified (ie in the Central and Release neighbourhoods). It will be important in this process to ensure that there are community benefits to this approach and that it is not just a process of Council reducing maintenance costs.

Identify and implement a hierarchy of sportsgrounds which is linked to competition levels and associated minimum best practice standards.

The sportsgrounds in Liverpool are a key component of Council's existing recreation facilities. Both the consultation feedback and inspection by Council staff and the consultants highlight however that there is a significant lack of quality playing surfaces and associated facilities in many of the sportsgrounds. Issues such as lack of field irrigation, drainage problems, poor playing surface and limited floodlighting are common. In the Sporting/Recreational Group survey undertaken for this study (see Section 5), the majority of groups indicated that their facilities require improvement or replacement. Council's Sporting and Recreation Working Party has also identified this as a key issue.

To ensure that quality outcomes are achieved efficiently and effectively, best practice recommends that a more structured approach be taken to the development and maintenance of sportsgrounds. Other Councils, such as Bankstown, Fairfield and Parramatta, have adopted hierarchical structures for sportsgrounds which classify the facility based on specific criteria, such as the level of competition played ie Level 1/2 region or LGA; Level 2 district; and Level 4 local/children's sport etc. This is fully outlined in Section 11.2.5 and should be applied to all sportsgrounds in the LGA.

Apply the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines and other proactive crime prevention approaches to all existing and future open spaces and recreation facilities.

Rationale: Recreational facilities and open spaces in the Liverpool LGA experience significant levels of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. It has been identified as significant issue for the community. This is reflected in both the

consultation results for the Social Plan and the Youth Survey (which identified this as an issue for young people). The need to implement effective measures to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour and increase personal safety is a high priority for both Council and the community.

Recognition of community concern for this issue is reflected in Council's Crime Prevention Plan for Liverpool which has CPTED as key priority. Key priorities for this plan were identified through a community consultation process. It is also reflected in the NSW Government's changes to the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 which now requires Councils to assess for and minimise crime risk in the development application process. Guidelines had been produced to assist Planners in this, in addition to this, DIPNR and the NSW Police Service have developed a training course designed for Planners and Designers amongst others to provide them with the skills and knowledge to be able to apply CPTED principles in their work. A significant number of Council Staff including Planners and Designers have already received CPTED training, however, the application of this training needs to be ensured.

A proactive strategy needs to be developed to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour and improve community safety in all existing open spaces and recreational facilities in the LGA. This may include actions such as legal graffiti walls, graffiti removal program, non-storage of valuables in sporting facilities, on-site caretakers, removal of unsafe public toilets etc. A Safety Audit can highlight the key issues for each facility with proactive recommendations to be developed and implemented.

In addition to this, CPTED principles need to be applied in the planning, design and management of all future open spaces and recreational facilities.

KEY DIRECTION: Addressing Future Needs

Develop opportunities for the provision of a range of City-Wide open space and recreation facilities which support Liverpool's role as a major regional centre for South Western Sydney.

Rationale: As the major regional centre for South-Western Sydney, there is a significant demand for recreation infrastructure, which provides for both Liverpool residents and others from surrounding LGAs.

Existing regional facilities in the LGA include the Whillam Centre, Rosedale Oval, Hammondville Park, Woodward Park, Helles Park (radio-control car racing track), Warwick Farm Racecourse, Chipping Norton Lakes, Bents Basin Recreation Area, Gulguer Nature Reserve and Leacock Regional Park.

Plans for the development of additional regional facilities in Liverpool include the Woodward Park proposal currently being considered by Council; the development of WSRP for primarily (although not exclusively) passive regional recreation activities; and an integrated cultural and recreation precinct along the Georges River. These are major developments, which will ensure that Liverpool plays a strong regional recreation role. They will require extensive resourcing in the planning, design, development and management stages of each project.

For Woodward Park, consideration should be given to ensuring that any new facilities are as accessible as possible to the broad community. If any of the facilities at the Whillam Centre are affected by the proposed development, provision needs to be made to accommodate users in the short and longer term. In particular, indoor facilities for local basketball, netball and other indoor sports and recreation activities need to be investigated. There is also concern that the long-term viability of the Whillam Centre may suffer as it is reduced to primarily a stand-alone aquatic facility. The Whillam Centre, as one of the first successful integrated aquatic and indoor recreation centres, had many community and management benefits including increased flexibility, attraction of a range of users, greater programming opportunity and greater income generation. With a visitation of 1.2 million people per annum and the identification by the community of the Whillam and Wenden Centres as the best recreation facilities in the LGA (see Section 5) it is important that this type of recreation facility is maintained.

The WSRP will also be a major regional facility for Liverpool residents. Consultation feedback on potential roles for the WSRP highlighted the community's preference towards informal, affordable, family-oriented activities in the park providing picnic areas, walking/cycling trails, environmental camps/education etc. Many are concerned that the park is poorly accessed by public transport and could be unaffordable for residents of the LGA. These issues need to be carefully considered as more detailed plans are developed for the area.

The development of a cultural/recreation precinct along the Georges River provides an exciting opportunity to make one of Liverpool's key natural assets (ie the Georges River) an accessible focal point for the community. Located within walking distance of the CBD and potential redevelopment areas such as Moorebank, the Georges River is highly accessible to a large existing and future population. The CBD currently has 13,000 workers with growth expected to reach 30,000 workers by 2021. Moorebank has been targeted by Council as a new employment area while there is potential for further residential development in both areas. The Georges River is highly transport accessible and is highly valued by the Liverpool community (see Section 5.4).

In addition to the facilities currently proposed, possible recreational opportunities include a formal riverside park; fishing facilities; boating/canoe access; major children's playground; multipurpose hardcourts; passive lunch areas for CBD workforce; and associated commercial facilities such as cafes, kiosks, bicycle hire, bait/tackle sales etc. Opportunities for other passive activities which cater for Liverpool's culturally diverse population may include facilities for bocce, tai chi, outdoor chess, volleyball etc.

This study has also identified the need for an 18 hole public golf course in the LGA. A detailed feasibility study is needed to investigate potential locations at Moorebank Technology Park, the Glenfield tip site and/or WSRP.

Assist In addressing the future needs of established areas by developing and implementing a City-wide program for open space and recreation facilities based on best practice guidelines

Rationale: This strategy seeks to address the impact of changing community needs and recreation trends on existing open space and recreation facilities and to integrate new best practice approaches which focus on quality recreation opportunities rather than quantity of provision. It also seeks to increase the capacity of key open space and recreation facilities by making them more multipurpose.

There is considerable evidence both from the local community and national trends that recreation should focus on quality outcomes and addressing existing and future community needs. Traditional approaches based on provision standards and hierarchies of provision do not reflect the true needs of the community. It is evident that the vast majority of Liverpool residents want access to unstructured, informal and passive recreation but this is primarily ignored by traditional recreation planning that continues to provide open space and recreation facilities based on quantitative rather than qualitative outcomes.

Consultation feedback again supports this trend with facilities in high demand by the community being indoor recreation centres; quality children's playgrounds; quality passive parks; water-based activities; and walking/cycling facilities (see Section 5). Most groups focused on the need for improved local parks with transport and access being major barriers for recreation participation. Local sporting groups primarily identified the need for additional sportsgrounds.

Other Council surveys identify similar findings with Council's Social Plan (1999), Resident Survey (1999) and Satisfaction Survey (2000) all highlighting the community's focus on quality local parks and playgrounds. The Resident Survey highlighted that local parks/ cycleways/ walkways rated as the most used leisure facility in the LGA (69% of responses) with the other reports highlight resident concerns with the need for improved local parks and playgrounds. Issues of poor

transport and access to facilities (culturally, financial and physically) are constant themes in many Council reports.

With many of the established areas undergoing some demographic change (primarily aging of the community) consistent with national trends and potential population growth as a result of redevelopment, the need to increase the capacity and multipurpose nature of existing local open space and recreational facilities is the most efficient and effective approach to meeting existing and future community needs.

To address these needs, it is considered essential that LCC focus on improving local parks with emphasis on improving open spaces firstly for each Neighbourhood and then suburb. This approach does not reflect traditional hierarchical approach to recreation planning (eg some major Council regional parks such as Leacock Regional Park and Chipping Norton Lakes have been identified as key neighbourhood and/or suburb parks) but reflects the reality of addressing community needs for high quality locally accessible parks and increasing local capacity.

In consultation with the local community, each of the parks listed in Table 12.1 should be upgraded to provide high quality multipurpose spaces, incorporating a range of appropriate and diverse facilities, as outlined in earlier strategies.

Important to this strategy is also the evaluation of existing dual use drainage corridors, which comprise a significant proportion of all open space in the LGA. This is particularly important as drainage corridors are considered part of the open space and recreation network but yet many lack any recreational focus and activity. With the emphasis on *Smart Growth* for Liverpool, better solutions to dual use drainage corridors need to be developed. Opportunities for land swaps, land rationalisation, improvement of playing surfaces etc need to be considered. Examples of poor dual use drainage corridors are Barbara Long Reserve (Central), Gandagara Park (Central) and Military Reserve (Central).

Implement best practice guidelines and indicative provision for open space and recreation facilities particularly in new release areas

Rationale: There is a need to ensure that Liverpool's future recreation facilities meet best practice guidelines with high quality outcomes achieved. Issues of transport access, equity, security and safety; environmental sustainability, identity and integration must be addressed. Section 11 of this Strategy provides detailed best practice guidelines for the planning, development and management of open space and recreation facilities, which should be adopted as Council policy.

Similarly, indicative future open space and recreation facility needs have been determined to address the LGA's population demands by 2020. Outlined in detail in Section 8, these needs should be used to further develop detailed plans for the provision of facilities particularly in the Release Neighbourhood. Provision of sports facilities to meet the likely future needs of different sports in the LGA will enable more informed planning of more appropriate facilities.

Provide accessible high quality integrated indoor recreation and aquatic facilities for all residents

Rationale: Liverpool currently has 3 outdoor swimming pools and 2 indoor pools which are used extensively for competition, school and casual swimming. This rate of provision is consistent with other comparable LGAs and reflects the popularity of water sports in the hot Western Sydney climate.

As outlined in Section 7.1, swimming is the most popular adult participation sports and is equally popular with children. Schools actively promote swimming both as part of their regular school curriculum eg learn to swim, lifesaving, general fitness and for sport eg swimming carnivals, triathlons etc.

The Whillam Centre and Wenden Centre are successful models of integrated recreation facilities and this model should be provided in other neighbourhoods of the LGA to service the needs of residents. The continued success of both these existing centres also needs to be considered in light of the possible redevelopment of

Woodward Park and the relationship between the Wenden Centre and the development of the PCYC at Miller.

However, it is evident that, based on Liverpool's expected population by 2020, at least one swimming complex is required preferably in the Release Neighbourhood. In addition, the feasibility of redeveloping the existing Holsworthy Pool to better service the Eastern Neighbourhood should be considered.

KEY DIRECTION: Working with Sporting Bodies, Government Agencies, Community Groups and the Private Sector

Develop joint development/management agreements with the NSW Department of Education and Training and private schools in the LGA on the use of existing and future public and private school facilities for active recreation.

Rationale: Although Council has some 39 sportsgrounds in the LGA, the need for additional facilities is evident particularly as the population continues to grow. However, resources need to be used efficiently and effectively and potential partnerships with other key stakeholders developed. Currently there are 59 public and private schools in the LGA many of which are using Council facilities as part of their weekly school curriculum eg sportsgrounds, tennis courts, swimming pools etc. There are no fees for local schools to use these facilities with Council policies recognising the importance of access to quality recreational areas for local school children.

Table 12.1 Proposed Key Neighbourhood and Suburb Parks

Neighbourhood	Key Neighbourhood Park	Suburb	Key Suburb Park
Eastern	Chipping Lakes	Chipping Norton Hammondville Holsworthy Moorebank Pleasure Point Voyager Point Wattle Grove	Chipping Norton Lakes Childs Park Hammondville Park Harris Creek Reserve and proposed Kokoda site Kelsa Park and proposed Boral site Pleasure Point Reserve Voyager Park Cameron Park
CBD		FL Liverpool CBD Ashcroft/Pritchard Busby Cartwright Casula Heckenberg Liverpool (part) Lurnea Miller Prestons (east of Bernara Road) Saddler Warwick Farm	Lighthouse Park Gard Park Bradshaw Park Fassell Park Leacock Regional Park and Jardine Park Collimore Park (after relocation of site) Phillip Park Bradshaw Park Ash Road Wheat Park Hart Park and Hargrave Park
Release	Proposed New Park	Cecil Hills Cecil Park Donlam Court Edmondson Park Green Valley Hinchbrook Hoxton Horningsea Park Ingleburn Prestons (west of Bernara Road) West Hoxton Proposed South Hoxton	Cecil Hills Lake Western Sydney Regional Park To be determined as part of Masterplanning process Ida Kennedy Reserve Hoxton Park Reserve First Avenue Reserve plus Wheat Place Park to service Horningsea Park To be determined with Edmondson Park Bradwood 2 Reserve Greenway Park Entry park/wetland
Western	Not required	Austral Buggery's Creek Bingley Greendale Kemps Creek Luddenham Russmore	Craig Park Only local Park required Bingley Recreation Reserve Not required as no identifiable village centre Bill Anderson Reserve Not required as Sales Park located in Penrith LGA Not required as Russmore Park located in Camden LGA

active users of Council recreation facilities. However, many public and private schools have recreation resources, which could be more fully utilised by the public particularly outside of school hours ie nights and weekends. With a high demand for active recreation facilities, school sportsgrounds and auditoriums could be used by community-based organisations for organised sports and recreation programs.

In addition, as outlined in Strategy 4, there is a lack of unstructured recreation activities for young people.

There are many best practice examples of where community/school partnerships are working well. Pritwater Council, North Narrabeen Public School and Narrabeen Sports High School have recently constructed a community/school indoor basketball stadium on the school site, and sporting fields for school and community use are being developed. Lane Cove Public School has community/school tennis courts. Lake Munmorah High School has a flora and fauna zone. The ACT has many examples of joint community/school facilities.

Initial discussion with the DET Liverpool District Superintendent as part of this study indicates that this strategy should involve active dialogue with local principals to ensure a thorough understanding of the issues and opportunities involved.

To facilitate this, Council, Department of Education and Training and private schools need to work together to develop joint development/management agreements on the increased utilisation of those resources. Focus may be on agreements involving existing sporting clubs, which need additional grounds/facilities as these groups have existing management structures in place to work cooperatively with the school communities.

Agreements may be developed which provide benefits for school communities such as increased maintenance of their fields, increased surveillance of school facilities, improved equipment, larger sports auditoriums etc. For Council and the broader community, the use of school facilities will provide more localised organised sport opportunities, reduced land acquisition/development costs and closer links within local communities.

Council should be proactive in developing dialogue and agreements with the DET and private schools for both existing and future schools as a high priority.

Develop partnerships with key sporting bodies for the development and management of Council sportsgrounds and recreation facilities

Rationale: The current seasonal allocation of sporting facilities does not encourage clubs to improve facilities. Some clubs want to leave fields and clubhouses for a period longer than their seasonal allocation. This arrangement discourages clubs from funding improvements to the facilities, as their period of tenure of the facility is limited. Council needs to work better with sporting bodies and community groups to provide and maintain recreation facilities. Many groups have identified that they are willing to work as partners with Council to improve facilities but there is no system in place to support this process. Works are undertaken on a reactive rather than proactive basis with sporting groups.

However, Council needs to exercise caution regarding the length of any leases or licences to provide some flexibility in meeting the needs of other sporting clubs and new emerging sports. Plans of Management need to be developed for individual sportsgrounds for long-term licences in return for financial investment by key sporting bodies.

Develop a joint planning approach to the development of the WSRP with DIPNR, NPWS and all Councils adjoining the regional facility to ensure that it provides a range of affordable and accessible recreation opportunities for Liverpool residents

Rationale: DIPNR is keen to work with stakeholders such as LCC and other local and State government agencies to plan for future development of the WSRP. The park has the potential to provide a wide range of affordable and accessible recreation opportunities for residents of the South West and to meet the needs of local Liverpool residents. The preparation of a Development Control Plan (DCP) which provides a more detailed direction for potential uses and conservation of the area is a key priority of DIPNR.

LCC should play a key role in establishing and promoting a stakeholder liaison committee to develop the DCP and Masterplan for the development of the park. This will ensure that Liverpool residents have access to high quality regional open spaces in their local area and add further to the liveability of the LGA.

For many people with a disability, transport and access are major barriers to recreation. Where facilities are distant and/or not accessible by public transport/accessible car parking, use will be limited. Local accessible facilities need to be provided for this target group.

Improve the participation of Liverpool's 6 key target groups in recreation in the LGA (ie older residents, residents with a disability, youth, Aboriginal residents, residents from non-English speaking backgrounds and families)

Rationale: There is a need for recreational opportunities that meet the needs of key target groups in the community. Many of the specific strategies in this document will address the needs of these groups. However, recreation programs/resources and equity of access measures are required to encourage participation and monitor progress.

With 30% of Liverpool's residents born in countries where English is not the first language, recreation settings need to be more culturally appropriate and/or address specific cultural needs. The community consultation feedback highlighted that many cultural groups are not accessing Council recreation facilities and programs, particularly new emerging migrant groups in the LGA. Currently Council's recreation facilities do not reflect this cultural diversity with little evidence of recreation activities popular in other cultures such as bocce, tai chi, table tennis, volleyball, outdoor basketball etc. Issues such as affordability and access need to be addressed for these groups with more attention given to ensuring that migrant groups have information about recreation facilities and activities (eg Council's website, information through Migrant Networks etc).

Equally, LGA community networks representing older residents and residents with a disability considered that many of the recreation facilities in the LGA are not fully accessible and/or not attractive for older residents. It is important to recognise that the proportion of older residents in the LGA is likely to increase (reflecting national demographic trends) and that many are significantly disadvantaged with low incomes, poor transport access and high levels of disability. Most currently live in the Central,

As part of the consultation program for this strategy, residents and community groups were asked about their ideas for the WSRP. The community strongly support the development of the park for passive recreation and the provision of unstructured recreation facilities such as walking trails, cycle paths, BMX tracks, playgrounds, seating and picnic areas. There was also a strong preference towards conservation of the area and providing an environmental focus for the park with interpretative shelters, bush tucker gardens, botanic gardens, environmental education etc. The opportunity to provide outdoor activities for children and youth also was recommended with an education centre for school groups, local camping and outdoor adventure centre. Many saw the opportunity to develop natural water features as part of the park eg lakes, dams, creeks. Key concerns of residents however was the need to make the park affordable and accessible by public transport.

Provide open space and recreation facilities that are fully accessible for people with a disability

Rationale: With the number of people with a disability likely to increase as the population ages and the implications of government legislation requiring that the needs of people with a disability are met, it is imperative that Council ensure that all open space and recreation facilities are fully accessible. As yet, Council's Disability Action Plan has not been fully implemented and the majority of Council parks and recreation facilities remain unaudited.

Access to appropriate programs, sports and facilities for people with a disability is limited in the LGA (see Sections 5 and 6) with specific actions required to address these needs. Few sporting bodies cater for people with a disability as part of their sport while provision of facilities such as a playground for children with a disability is non-existent.

Programs need to be developed in consultation with local groups which cater specifically for people with a disability eg recreation groups for young disabled and their carers or as integrated activities with other groups/sports eg modified sports for children with a disability.

CBD and Western neighbourhoods and this is expected to continue. Programs are required in Council facilities which provide affordable access and specifically targeted for older residents/residents with a disability eg entry concessions, Seniors Gentle Exercise, recreation programs for people with a disability etc. Development of these programs with relevant community groups and government agencies is required.

With 15% of residents aged 10-19 years, the need for recreation facilities and programs for youth is evident. This is likely to be maintained as the profile of people moving into new release areas has moved more towards older families with school age children rather than couples starting their families. Again programs and pricing structures need to be established for Council recreation facilities to ensure that youth participation in a wide range of recreation opportunities is promoted. The participation of Aboriginal youth and youth with a disability also needs to be encouraged.

Families are the dominant type of household in the Liverpool LGA and feedback from the consultation program highlighted the need to provide appropriate recreation opportunities for this major target group. Again affordability and access are important considerations for this target group with programs and equity of access measures required to encourage participation by families in recreation. Family concession rates, special recreation events for families etc are examples of actions which will increase family participation.

Other strategies targeting families included in this strategy are the provision of high quality multipurpose passive parks and provision of integrated recreation facilities which provide for a wide range of age groups in one location (eg indoor recreation and aquatic facilities).

Aboriginal residents also need support to ensure participation in recreation. Consultation with key aboriginal groups highlighted the need for support programs such as seniors walking groups and youth sports to encourage participation. Again, the development of programs with existing community groups and government agencies is recommended to ensure programs are appropriate and coordinated.

Increased recognition and preservation of Aboriginal culture in recreation facilities and open space is also required.

Council's "Be Active in Liverpool" Project is a good example of the type of programs this Strategy is recommending. This physical activity project, jointly funded by LCO and Liverpool Health Service, aims to tackle the low levels of physical activity of residents in the Liverpool LGA.

KEY DIRECTION: Improving Council Recreation Management

Develop and implement improved systems and policies which focus on coordinating all recreation functions

Rationale: Council does not have a comprehensive and up-to-date parks assets and settings inventory database. As highlighted by this study, there is no central system in place to record, map and update information regarding Council's existing recreation facilities and this is essential for good management, planning and maintenance.

Ensure effective and efficient communication between all Council officers involved in planning, design, provision, management and maintenance of all open space and recreation facilities

Rationale: Planning, development and management of recreation facilities is spread across various Council departments with few systems in place to ensure good management. Communication and coordination are essential in achieving quality recreation facilities. Improvements are needed and may include the development of an expanded internal management group comprising of a wider range of Council staff involved in recreation or the development of a specific recreation team. An internal review is required to assess the merits of these organisational structures and recommend appropriate improvements.

In addition the implementation of this Strategy needs to be driven by a broad-based working group within Council. It is considered that the existing Sport and Recreation Working Party currently comprising of 6 Council officers and one Councillor could be given the responsibility.

working party to review existing practices and develop service standards needs to be established.

Improve the financial viability and management of Council recreation assets while also maintaining Council's equity of access obligations

Rationale: Appropriate policies and actions need to be developed to improve the financial viability and management of Council's recreation facilities. Many could be improved by reviewing the existing facility pricing policy, developing sporting group partnerships, gaining sponsorship for facilities/programs, working cooperatively with the private sector etc.

In addition, specific facilities such as Council's tennis courts are currently poorly managed. Urgent action is required to address the management issues related to these facilities and to develop an action plan to improve their quality and utilisation.

As has been highlighted throughout this Strategy, affordable recreation is a key need of the Liverpool community and this Strategy needs to be consistent with Council's equity of access obligations to particular target groups. The Whilliam and Wenden Centres already have concession pricing policies in place but these need to be extended to other Council recreation facilities. Equally, increased recreation participation by key target groups may be best achieved through specific programs eg Seniors classes, Tai chi etc. This Strategy needs to be addressed as part of the best practice requirements for the proposed Woodward Park redevelopment.

KEY DIRECTION: Managing the Natural Environment

Develop, adopt and implement a Biodiversity Strategy for Liverpool.

Rationale: Environmental protection has been given high priority by Council but this needs to be reflected in the planning, development and maintenance of the natural environment. Major difficulties are being experienced with maintaining riparian and environmental zones with high maintenance costs and technical issues resulting in poor quality outcomes.

This would facilitate a holistic approach to its implementation with direction being provided by those already actively involved in recreation operational and planning issues.

Review the existing Neighbourhood Services program to improve service outcomes for open space and recreation facilities

Rationale: Feedback from the community consultation program highlighted the community's concern about the quality of maintenance of open space and recreation facilities in the LGA (see Section 5). This has also been identified in Council's Social Plan 1999-2003 and Community Satisfaction Measurement Survey 2000 (see Section 3.4). The Community Satisfaction Survey highlighted that the quality of maintenance of Council's parks/gardens was considered low by residents although the majority rated it of high priority. Some Council staff have also identified the lack of quality service outcomes and in particular, the lack of work specifications for open space maintenance. Council's Sport and Recreation Working Party have also identified maintenance as a key area of concern and is considering a range of actions to improve service outcomes.

Council has recently implemented a new Neighbourhood Services program that undertakes its maintenance program both on a scheduled and reactive basis (ie responds to maintenance issues identified by residents). However, the quality of maintenance of open space and recreation facilities remains a major concern and is likely to be compounded as additional parks are added to the open space inventory in the Release Neighbourhood.

This is particularly important for playing fields and sportsgrounds where the quality of maintenance has a major impact on sporting activities. With organised sport an important recreational activity in the LGA, the demand for quality playing fields and sportsgrounds is significant. Fields require appropriate standards of maintenance together with strong working relationships with sporting groups. Stencards needs to be set and quality maintenance work practices implemented to ensure that residents can enjoy the open space and recreational assets of the LGA. An internal

Difficulties in protecting bushland areas in the planning of new communities is a major issue of concern particularly in relation to acquisition costs and management of environmentally sensitive areas.

Staffing levels and financial resourcing are key issues for Council's Natural Environment section. Council is relatively successful in attracting grant funding for bushland projects, but does not have the necessary number of in-house staff to manage these projects. This is particularly important for Council's bushland and wetland reserves as basic capital works such as weed management and revegetation projects cannot occur unless resources are available.

There is also a need for new approaches to maintaining natural areas. Best practice for maintaining and improving natural areas include:

- designating "no go" and "no mow" zones for maintenance
- fencing of some areas to avoid informal access
- interpretation and education
- stormwater and fire management
- revegetating and regenerating selected areas
- acquiring suitable sites
- placing appropriate planning controls in identified areas
- developing co-operative arrangements with various government and private landowners community involvement in regeneration works
- landscaping with native species
- initiating demonstration areas
- designating areas for appropriate recreational access for walking, cycling, and motorbikes.

Wildlife corridors need to be developed and maintained. As the native habitat of Liverpool has become increasingly fragmented and larger areas of bushland more isolated from each other, it has become increasingly important to maintain or re-establish vegetation links between these areas of core habitat. Such links, or wildlife corridors, are crucial to facilitate and encourage fauna movements.

Appropriate means of encouraging community involvement in restoring natural resources also needs to be addressed. This

12.3 Implementation Program

The Implementation Program outlined in Table 12.2 provides a program for Council to implement the recommended strategies based on an Implementation Program of specific actions. These actions have been developed in consultation with Council staff with priority/time frame based on the urgency of implementing the action and the opportunity to undertake the action. The opportunity to implement is affected by many issues such as capital funding, land availability, staff resources etc.

The following priorities/time frames are recommended for implementation of specific actions:

- High – within 1-2 years
- Medium – within 3-4 years
- Low – within 5+ years
- Ongoing – requires constant attention

The responsibility for implementing these actions should be allocated to the specific work programs of appropriate Council officers. Successful completion or review should be undertaken annually to reflect changed circumstances.

Mechanisms to regularly monitor and review both the Implementation Plan and Strategy should also be established to ensure that both reflect the changing recreational environment. As a guide, monitoring targets should be set for annual reporting with a full review of the Strategy at 3-5 year intervals.

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