

Project **North Ocean Shores Sports Fields**

Subject **Needs and Standards Assessments (v.4)**

Our Ref 2376-1016

Date

29 October 2014

Project

Concept Design, Planning Proposal, Development Application and Detailed Design - Lot 5 Sports Field Shara Boulevard

Background

For more than a decade, Byron Shire Council has been investigating opportunities for the provision of additional sports fields in the north of the Shire. Currently, the communities of Ocean Shores, New Brighton, South Golden Beach and Billinudgel have only one under-sized field, located at New Brighton. That field is used mainly by the Shores United Soccer Club.

In October 2008, Council adopted the *Northern Shire Sporting Fields Strategy* (see Appendix A). This Strategy contains a Vision Statement and outlines a process for the delivery of appropriate facilities in the north of the Shire.

In accordance with this Strategy, Council has recently purchased land at the corner of Shara Boulevard and Brunswick Valley Way for the purpose of building sports fields and associated infrastructure.

That site is known as Lot 5 DP880917, and has an area of 7.5 hectares.

Community Needs

Demographics

Key data from the 2011 Census, relating to the Ocean Shores Census District (which includes Ocean Shores, New Brighton and South Golden Beach), is outlined below:

People	4,870	
Male	2,347	48.2%
Female	2,523	51.8%
0-14 years	985	20.2%
15-29 years	716	14.7%
30-44 years	976	20.1%
45-59 years	1183	24.3%
60 years and older	1009	20.7%

In relation to sporting facilities, the age demographics indicate a potentially active community.

Planning for the provision of active open space for communities has historically been based on a ratio of 1.62 hectares of land per 1,000 people. This is a somewhat crude measure, and contemporary planning relies more heavily on a more detailed understanding of community profile/ needs. Nevertheless, it offers a broad understanding of the quantum of active open space that is appropriate for a growing community.

Based on that crude measure, the Ocean Shores/ New Brighton/ South Golden Beach community would require approximately 8 ha of active open space.

Previous needs analysis

The need for additional sports facilities in the north of the Shire has been well known for over a decade.

In 2000, a feasibility assessment was undertaken examining the potential of two nominated sites in the north of the Shire for the provision of sports fields (Balanced Systems Planning Consultants, 2000). That report included information from reports prepared for Council's Section 94 Contributions plan, quantifying the sports fields needs of the population at that time. The following table is reproduced from that report:

General Standards for sporting field development

Sporting Facility	General Standard (1 field per '000 persons)	Need for Ocean Shores catchment (number of fields)
Soccer	1 per 3000 persons	> 2
Football	1 per 3000 persons	> 2
Hockey	1 per 3500 persons	2
Cricket	1 per 3000 persons	> 2
Tennis	1 per 1000 persons	7
Netball	1 per 1000 persons	7
Swimming Pool	1 per 20000 persons	< 1
Athletics Track	1 per 40000 persons	< 1
Baseball/ Softball	1 per 16000 person	< 1

Source: Comparative Feasibility Study of two Nominated Sites for Sporting Field Development at North Byron Shire
Balanced Systems Planning, June 2000

Analysis of the need for additional sporting fields is also set out in Section 3 of the 2008 Northern Shire Sporting Fields Strategy (see Appendix A). Recommendations that resulted from that analysis are outlined in the table below.

The table also notes subsequent actions by Council and progress regarding the strategy's recommendations.

Table 1 Recommendations and Actions from Northern Shire Sporting Fields Strategy (2008)

Sport	Recommended Actions		Subsequent Actions/ Progress
	Short Tem	Long Term	
Athletics	Council work with Department of Education to improve maintenance at the Mullumbimby High School field.	Any new sporting field that Council develop should include an integrated athletics track around the perimeter and basic athletics facilities.	The provision of comprehensive athletics facilities at Byron Regional Sports and Cultural Centre (Ewingsdale) has addressed the demand.
AFL	Investigate conversion of one field at Stan Thompson Fields, Brunswick Heads, to full-time AFL field.	AFL should be considered a candidate sports to be relocated to a new field.	It is now considered that AFL can share the fields at Stan Thompson Fields without conflict. In addition, two new AFL fields have been constructed at Byron Regional Sports and Cultural Centre (Ewingsdale).

Sport	Recommended Actions		Subsequent Actions/ Progress
	Short Tem	Long Term	
Basketball	Plans should be progressed for development of facilities at Water Lily Park, Ocean Shores.	There may be potential for development of additional courts on Council-owned land adjacent to Ocean Shores Public School.	Subsequent investigations indicate that land at Water Lily Park is very flood prone. Basketball Courts provided at Byron Regional Sports and Cultural Centre (Ewingsdale) appear to have satisfied demand in the Shire.
Cricket	Improvements should be made to existing facilities, including installation of lights at Stan Thompson Fields.	Mullumbimby Brunswick Cricket Club would benefit from the provision of a new field in the Northern Shire.	Updates to existing facilities, including installation of lighting on two fields at Brunswick Heads appears to have satisfied local demand.
Hockey	Investigate embellishment of the existing hockey field at Stan Thompson Fields, including provision of lights.	Hockey should be considered as a candidate sport for relocation to a new field in the Northern Shire.	Investigations indicated that there would be insufficient use of the Stan Thompson Fields to justify the required embellishment. A hockey field was provided at Byron Regional Sports and Cultural Centre (Ewingsdale), but it has not been used as it does not have a synthetic surface.
Netball	Plans should be progressed for development of facilities at Water Lily Park, Ocean Shores.	There may be potential for development of additional courts on Council-owned land adjacent to Ocean Shores Public School.	Subsequent investigations indicate that drainage at Water Lily Park is poor. Subsequent investigations also demonstrated that land adjacent to the Ocean Shore Public School has severe space restrictions due to neighbouring EEC land.
Rugby League and Touch Football	The sports of rugby league and touch football appear to have an adequate number of fields to meet their needs. However, the facilities would benefit from upgrading.		Ongoing improvements have been made to existing facilities.
Rugby Union	Council investigate the provision of lights to the Alby Lofts field, Brunswick Heads.		Lights have been provided as recommended.
Soccer	Shores United Soccer Club appears to be the club with the most pressing need for improved facilities. Council should undertake a comprehensive analysis of Crown Land adjacent to the existing Tom Kendall Oval at New Brighton to determine its suitability for use as a sporting field.		Analysis of Crown land indicated that it is not suitable for sporting fields use, due to a combination of environmental value and poor soil conditions. Subsequent assessments led to investigations into a number alternate sites, culminating in the purchase by Council of the Lot 5 at Shara Boulevard.

The information above indicates that soccer and netball remain the sports in most need of new fields/ facilities.

Consultation:

In commencing this project, a number of interviews and phone conversations were held with key sporting and community groups in the Ocean Shore/ New Brighton/ South Golden Beach locality.

The following table summarises the key findings from that consultation.

Table 2 Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder	Contact	Comments
Shores United Soccer Club	Marc Patten (President) 0405 619 076 marcpatten@hotmail.com Ted Kabbout 0427 804 480 tkabbout1@hotmail.com	▪ Currently have 17 teams, including juniors and seniors. ▪ Play and train at Tom Kendall Oval at New Brighton. ▪ Field is under-sized. ▪ Sub-surface is sand, so grass does not grow well on the field. ▪ Club does not have change rooms. ▪ Girls team do not play at this ground because there is nowhere to change. ▪ Senior team currently in track to be promoted to premier league, but existing field could not be used for home games as it doesn't meet required standards. ▪ Club needs: – Full-size field (i.e. FIFA compliant) – Change rooms / amenities – Lighting – Clubhouse/ canteen – Car parking.
Ocean Shores Netball	Janine Burger 0438 649 061 janine.burger@rfs.nsw.gov.au	▪ Currently have 15 teams. ▪ Home games are played at Mullumbimby. ▪ Previous court at Water Lily Park, Ocean Shores, abandoned due to flood prone nature of site (not clear whether this was a drainage problem rather than a flooding issue). ▪ Would ideally need 4 courts. ▪ Space between courts – 2m. ▪ Would like canteen, lights, change rooms/ amenities, spectator seating.
Ocean Shores Public School	Chris Hauritz Principal 6680 2766	▪ School would definitely use facilities at the site. ▪ Wish list: – Cross-country track – need 3kms, suggest that they could use fields linked with safe local streets in the area (i.e. New Brighton Road) – Use of soccer fields – Canteen & change rooms a necessity – Spectator areas and parking, including bus parking. ▪ School could also use the site for athletics carnival (although this is not a top priority). ▪ The possibility of a skate park was also suggested.

Stakeholder	Contact	Comments
South Golden Beach Community Association	Kathy Norley 0429 803 561 6680 3561 kandm13@bigpond.com PO Box 11 New Brighton	- Association has been instrumental in lobbying for additional sporting facilities and supports current project. - Flooding is of significant concern and they require assurance that site works will not increase flood risks in the locality. - Support soccer club use of northern field. - Support car parking along Shara Boulevard. - Suggest inclusion of internal walking/ cycling track, potentially as BMX track.
New Brighton Village Association	Robert Crossley 0419 718 642 robertc@agtrix.com	- Association has been instrumental in lobbying for additional sporting facilities and supports current project. - Support soccer club use of northern field. - Support car parking along Shara Boulevard. - Suggest that slight reconfiguration of internal drainage line/ floodway could provide additional area for northern field.
Football Far North Coast	Steve Mackney 0438 215 593 soccergm@bigpond.net.au 5/32 Gumtree Dr Goonellebah NSW 2480	- Support proposal for soccer field to be used by Shores United. - Provided FIFA standards and indicated that field will need to meet these standards for Shores United to play Premier Division home games.
CONOS (Conservation of North Ocean Shores)	Val Scanlon	- Support the northern field/ facilities and accept that some vegetation will need to be removed to facilitate this. - Expect that Council will need to commit to compensatory plantings to offset the vegetation impacts. - Indicated that southern fields might be more problematic – given important flooding issues, presence of EEC and koala habitat, and access issues. - Suggest that rezoning and DA might best deal only with northern fields as a priority, allowing time to investigate resolution of the issues associated with southern field. - Highlighted that local flooding impacts are very important to the community.
Ocean Shores Community Association	Jan Mangleson 0431 477 445	- Note that zoning of site does not currently allow for its development for sports fields. - OSCA supports the prioritisation of an A-grade soccer field in the northern part of the site. They will also be interested in what is proposed for the next (southern) stage. - They support the tennis club in seeking upgraded facilities at Water Lily Park, including the dual use tennis/ netball courts.

Stakeholder	Contact	Comments
Ocean Shores Tennis Club	Gemma Eaton 0412 200 923 littleracquets@hotmail.com	▪ Current facilities at Water Lily Park are not adequate and do not meet the needs of the community or guidelines by Tennis Australia. ▪ The club would like: – A minimum of 4 tennis courts – Playing surface - Acrylic Australian Open blue courts – All fenced and lighting – A clubhouse including, change rooms, kiosk, office, meeting area, outdoor shaded area and equipment storeroom. – Courts to be available year round. Tennis has no off season. ▪ The club would prefer to see three additional courts and clubhouse upgraded in Waterlily Park. This would give them a total of five courts, satisfying their needs and making more room available at Shara Boulevard for soccer fields and netball. ▪ The club is very happy to share these facilities with netball, and see the additional courts being dual-use tennis/ netball facilities. ▪ They also note that Tennis Australia would offer funding up to 25% of the project costs.
Ocean Shores Basketball Association	Michelle Tree 6680 5072 0406 764 816	▪ Currently use the Ocean Shores Primary School auditorium for completion and training. Access is restricted for informal training. ▪ One outdoor court would be very useful for training purposes, both organised training and informal individual use. They would not, however, be able to use the outdoor court for competition. ▪ Would be happy to share space with other groups, but court could not be shared with netball as goals and court dimensions are different.

Conclusion

The assessment undertaken over the past few years indicated that soccer remains the priority for new facilities. As highlighted by the representatives of Shores United, the required facilities are:

- Full-size field (i.e. FIFA compliant);
- Change rooms/ amenities;
- Lighting;
- Clubhouse/ canteen; and
- Car parking.

Netball facilities are also a priority, as none currently exist in the local area. The Ocean Shores Netball Club expressed a desire for a minimum of 4 netball courts. Netball could be accommodated at Water Lily Park, subject to upgrades there (including drainage improvements).

Council's 2008 strategy also identified hockey as a candidate sport for new fields, and it appears that the needs of that sport have not been met at the Byron Regional Sports and Cultural Centre (Ewingsdale). Notwithstanding this, the local community have not expressed a strong demand for additional hockey facilities in the consultation undertaken for the current project.

Secondary priorities would include a cross-country track that could be used by the Ocean Shores Public School. Potentially, this could also be used by the general public as a bike trail, linking to existing cycleways in the locality.

Standards

Based on the needs assessment and Council's Northern Shire Sporting Fields Strategy, the candidate sports to considered for the new fields at Shara Boulevard are soccer and netball.

Soccer:

Field size for soccer is set by FIFA in their document *Laws of the Game*. The required dimensions are:

Length:	min	90 m
	max	120 m
Width	min	45 m
	max	90 m

Football Far North Coast has advised that the standard required for the Premier League Division is a minimum of 100 metres x 50 metres.

The FIFA rules do not contain guidance in relation to separation distances between and from fields. The ACT Government's *Urban Design Standards for Urban Infrastructure: Sportsground Design* (2013) suggest the following offsets:

- Behind goal posts: 30 m to adjacent residential boundaries and 40 m to roads;
- Side boundaries: 20 m to adjacent residential boundaries and 40 m to roads.

The subject site adjoins vacant land and therefore the offset distances to residential properties are not directly relevant.

The ACT guidelines also suggest that separation distances between adjacent fields should not be less than 10 m and distance to general obstructions (e.g. light poles, fence, etc.) should be 5 m.

Notwithstanding these guidelines, both Shores United and Football Far North Coast are of the view that 3 m separation from sidelines and 5 m from goal lines will be adequate.

The ACT guidelines also require that fields are orientated north/ south along the direction of play, between true north and 15 degrees east of north.

Other useful design standards are outlined in a paper titled '*Establishing Performance Guidelines for Sports Fields in Australia*', prepared by the Sports Turf Institute in 2011. The following table summarises the key criteria.

Table 3 Useful Sports Fields Design Criteria

Component	Suggested Criteria
Surface gradient	Maximum gradient in any direction of 1:70 for most sports and levels of sport. Up to 1:50 could be used for lower grade.
Surface evenness	<100 mm variation under a 5 m string line. <20 mm over a 3m straight edge (premier/ first grade). <30 mm over a 3 m straight edge (lower club standard).
Smoothness/ Trip index	No tufty grass plants >15 mm above turf canopy. No divots deeper than 20 mm.
Ground cover	In the high wear areas of the ground, total turf cover to be >98% at start of the season; >85% mid-season. No bare patches >200 mm diameter at start of the season; < 10 bare areas >200 mm diameter mid-season.
Weed content	<10% grass weeds; <2% broad leaf weeds (premier/ first grade). <20% grass weeds; <5% broad leaf weeds (lower club standard).
Rooting depth	Effective rooting depth >125 mm.
Soil drainage status	Surface not squelchy 1 hour after rainfall (premier/ first grade). Surface not squelchy 6 hours after rainfall (lower grades).

Source: 'Establishing Performance Guidelines for Sports Fields in Australia' (Sports Turf Institute, 2011)



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