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VERSION NO.

DATE OF ISSUE

REVISION BY

APPROVED BY

1

11/03/2019

PM

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## 1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared to support the Planning Proposal with respect to 1a Little Alfred St, North Sydney. The proposal seeks an amendment to *North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 (NSLEP2013)* to enable additional permitted uses such as serviced apartments, a café, and co-working space. The proposal seeks to facilitate redevelopment of the site into an ‘inner-city urban lifestyle retreat’ with an executive and innovative style accommodation experience – aimed primarily at business executives or young individuals looking to network, working in the North Sydney or Sydney CBDs. Specifically, this Planning Proposal seeks to:

- allow ‘Serviced apartments’, ‘Office premises’ and ‘Boarding House’ as additional permissible uses on the site (NB: ‘Kiosk’ and ‘Recreation facility (indoor)’ uses are already permissible on the site under the existing RE2 zone);
- amend the Height of Buildings Map with a maximum height of 21m on the western portion of the site; and
- amend the Floor Space Ratio Map with a maximum FSR of 1.6:1 on the western portion of the site.

If approved, the proposed redevelopment of the site will result in the loss of two of the three tennis courts that currently exist. The proposal however does include the retention of an existing tennis court that will remain publicly accessible.

### 1.1 Scope of this Report

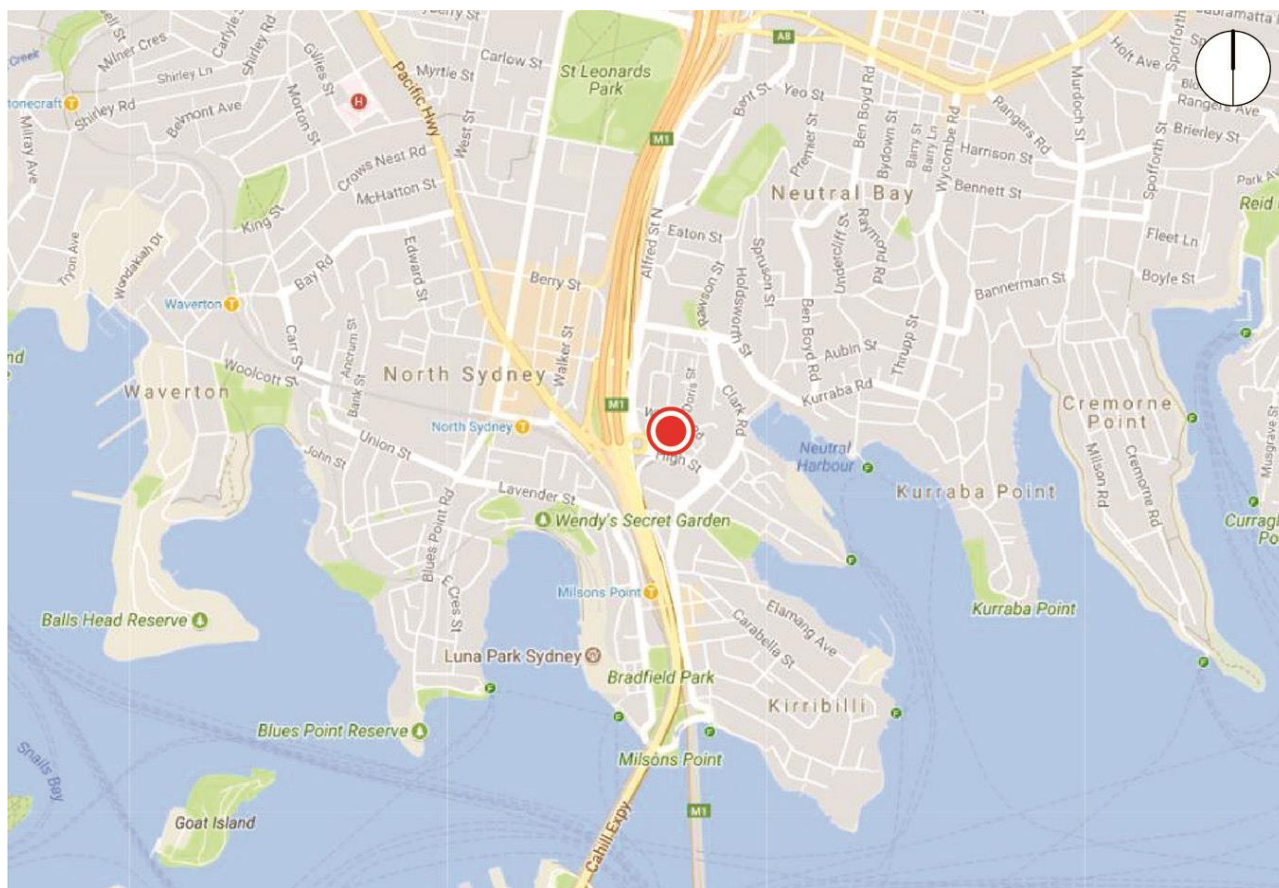
Ethos Urban has been engaged to undertake an assessment of the existing and future potential provision of recreational needs in the local area. To assess the recreational needs of the local area associated with this proposal, Ethos Urban has undertaken:

- a strategic policy review, including relevant State and local government policies that relate to recreational infrastructure provision in the local area;
- local needs context review, including demographic profile of North Sydney based on 2016 ABS Census data to determine requirements for recreational needs;
- a review of existing recreational infrastructure provision in the local area; and
- analysis of facility provision and demand.

## 2.0 Site Description

### 2.1 Site Location and Context

The site is located at 1a Little Alfred St, North Sydney (**Figure 1**). The site is located within the North Sydney Local Government Area, approximately 500m from North Sydney CBD, and 2km from Sydney CBD. The site is located within the centre of the block bound by Whaling Road, High Street, Pile Lane and Little Alfred Street. It is bordered by residential properties to the north, east and south and a park on the western boundary (see **Figure 2**).



The Site

**Figure 1** Site location

Source: Google & Ethos Urban

### 2.2 Site Description

The site is legally described as Lot 1051 DP812614 and has an area of approximately 1,829m<sup>2</sup> (see **Figure 2**). Existing development is illustrated at **Figure 3**, and comprises 3 tennis courts, 3 parking spaces, two resting huts, and bathrooms. Site access is provided via Little Alfred Street, at the western edge of the site. The three tennis courts are operational between the hours of 6am to 10pm, 7 days a week. Bookings and payments are made online via the website. An aerial photo of the site is shown at





 The Site

**Figure 2** Local site context

Source: Nearmap & Ethos Urban



Site entry and car park located on western boundary of the site



View from Court 1 looking west towards North Sydney CBD





*Existing players amenity hut, containing bathrooms and change facilities, located on northern boundary of the site*



*Existing players hut located on the southern boundary of the site*



*Looking south down Little Alfred Street towards entry to the site*



*Existing pedestrian access on site along southern boundary*



*Looking north from the site towards the rear boundaries of adjoining residences*



*Looking east from the site*

**Figure 3      Various views of the site**



### 3.0 Existing Recreation Infrastructure

This section outlines the existing recreational infrastructure within the North Sydney locality. The existing infrastructure surrounding the site (see **Figure 4**) comprises a range of playgrounds and small, medium and large scale public open spaces/facilities. The provision of recreational uses within an 800m radius of the site is diverse, consisting of sportsgrounds (recreational facilities), playgrounds, environmental facilities and registered clubs.

The key findings of this analysis are:

- there are no indoor facilities in the surrounding locality, the only Council owned facility being in Crows Nest;
- there is a high volume and variety of playgrounds in the surrounding area, including many of which within foreshore parks and reserves; and
- due to the location north of the Sydney Harbour, there is a plethora of foreshore walks and waterfront open spaces.

#### 3.1 Local Tennis Facilities

With respect to tennis facilities:

- there are 2 other tennis courts facilities located approximately 1km from the site – North Sydney and Neutral Bay;
- there are 2 Council owned tennis facilities within the LGA, comprising a total of 6 courts being Green Park, Cammeray and Primrose Park, Cremorne; and
- there are 4 privately operated tennis facilities within the LGA, comprising a total of 15 courts, being:
  - Little Alfred Street Tennis, North Sydney (the site)
  - Tennis World North Sydney
  - The Neutral Bay Club
  - Cammeray Tennis Club.



Source: Ethos Urban

## 4.0 Demographic Analysis

A summary of the key demographic statistics has been undertaken to understand the existing demographic and employment profile of residents within the North Sydney Local Government Area (LGA). Consideration of the following themes has been undertaken:

- age structure and ancestry;
- employment; and
- dwellings and household composition.

Where relevant comparison with the North District, as per the Greater Sydney Commission, has also been undertaken. The North District comprises the following Local Government Areas (LGAs); City of Ryde, Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches and Willoughby. Unless otherwise stated, data, graphs and tables have been adapted from Australia Bureau of Statistics Census 2016.

### 4.1 Age Structure and Ancestry

The total population within North Sydney LGA is 67,642 residents with a median age of 37 years old (ABS, 2016). The population age structure within North Sydney LGA follows a similar pattern when compared with the broader North District, with a few exceptions. It is noted there is a significantly lower representation of persons aged 19 and younger within North Sydney LGA, and a significantly higher representation of persons aged between 20 to 34 years old. **Table 1** shows the comparison breakdown of age groups between North Sydney LGA and the North District.

**Table 1 Age Structure 2016**

Demographics (2016)	North Sydney LGA	North District	Greater Sydney Statistical Area
Population	67,642	850,322	4,823,453
% of population aged 19 years and younger	15.36 %	24.45 %	24.64 %
% of population aged between 20 to 34	29.25 %	19.13 %	23.12 %
% of population aged between 34 to 49	24.78 %	22.35 %	21.10 %
% of population aged between 50 to 64	16.19 %	17.97 %	17.2 %
% of population aged between 65 to 79	11.22 %	11.29 %	10.17 %
% of population aged 80 and over	3.19 %	4.81 %	3.76 %
Median age	37	39	36

Source: ABS, 2016; Ethos Urban

### 4.2 Family Households

North Sydney's household structures vary greater from the North District, with a 16% lower proportion of the family households, represented as an almost 3% higher proportion of group households (house share) and 13% higher proportion of lone person households. **Table 2** shows the comparison breakdown of family household composition between North Sydney LGA and the North District.

**Table 2 Family households 2016**

Families (2016)	North Sydney LGA	North District	Greater Sydney Statistical Area
Number of occupied dwellings	30,065	300,034	1,623,874
%People in family households	57.92 %	73.94 %	73.63 %
%People in group households	6.71 %	3.74 %	4.73 %
%People as lone persons	35.36 %	22.32 %	21.64 %

Source: ABS, 2016; Ethos Urban

### 4.3 Labour Force

A higher than average proportion of North Sydney residents participate in the workforce, including a higher percentage of those employed within a white-collar occupation, when compared to both the North District and Greater Sydney Statistical Area. This represents a higher than average education level of North Sydney residents. **Table 3** shows the comparison breakdown of employment composition between North Sydney LGA the North District and Greater Sydney Statistical Area.

**Table 3 Labour force 2016**

Employment (2016)	North Sydney LGA	North District	Greater Sydney Statistical Area
Employed	40,437	428,983	2,272,727
Unemployment rate	3.71 %	4.44 %	6.04 %
Labour force participation rate	71.05 %	64.82 %	61.65 %
% employed in white collar occupations	90.31 %	83.47 %	73.21 %
% employed in blue collar occupations	7.97 %	14.84 %	24.84 %

Source: ABS, 2016; Ethos Urban

### 4.4 Dwellings & Household Income

38.5% more people live in flats, units or apartments than in the overall North District. Likely due to higher white-collar employment rates, North Sydney has a weekly household income almost 6% higher than the North District average, and 30% higher than the Greater Sydney Statistical Area. **Table 4** shows the comparison breakdown of dwelling type and household income composition between North Sydney LGA the North District and Greater Sydney Statistical Area.

**Table 4 Dwellings and Household Income 2016**

Dwellings (2016)	North Sydney LGA	North District	Greater Sydney Statistical Area
% as detached houses	10.98 %	53.59 %	56.91 %
% as semidetached houses	14.05 %	9.8 %	13.99 %
% as flats, units or apartments	74.44 %	35.92 %	28.1 %
% of dwellings owned outright	25.03 %	33.64 %	29.11 %
% of dwellings being purchased	21.53 %	33.02 %	33.25 %
% of dwellings being rented	50.84 %	29.96 %	34.07 %
Average house loan repayment (\$/month)	\$2,350.92	\$2,355.81	\$2,009.27
Average household rent (\$/week)	\$594.05	\$561.88	\$462.28
Average household income (\$/week)	\$2,716.18	\$2,565.98	\$2,074.85
Average no. of persons per household	2.0	2.7	2.78

Source: ABS, 2016; Ethos Urban

### 4.5 Travel to Work and Motor Vehicle Ownership

In North Sydney 54.3% of occupied private dwellings had one registered motor vehicle garaged or parked at their address. 21.6% had two registered motor vehicles and 4.5% had three or more registered motor vehicles. This results in the average motor vehicle ownership per dwelling rate being 1.2 per dwelling. This represents a lifestyle choice afforded to the residents of North Sydney, with over 71% of dwellings owning 1 or no motor vehicles, significantly higher than the rest of NSW. This is due to a high availability of alternative transportation within the locality.



Within North Sydney, almost 11% of the residents walked to work, 3 times higher than the average of NSW. A further 6% of residents within North worked from home, 1.2% higher than the average of NSW. This demonstrates an existing walkable town centre context, with less demand for private car ownership and use.

#### **4.6 Employment within North Sydney**

In 2018 the estimated number of workers in North Sydney was 60,000. Employment capacity targets of between 76,000 and 81,500 jobs by 2036 have been set for North Sydney as a major employment centre (North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018-2036).

#### **4.7 Cultural Diversity**

North Sydney is also becoming increasingly culturally diverse with over 35% of residents born overseas, including 29% who don't speak English at home (including Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Malaysian, South Korean and Filipino). The population will likely have a wider range interests in activities, due to sports preferences often being culturally influenced. Given this, there will likely be increasing demand for sports such as badminton, that have a high proportion of participants from Asian countries.

#### **4.8 Summary**

In summary:

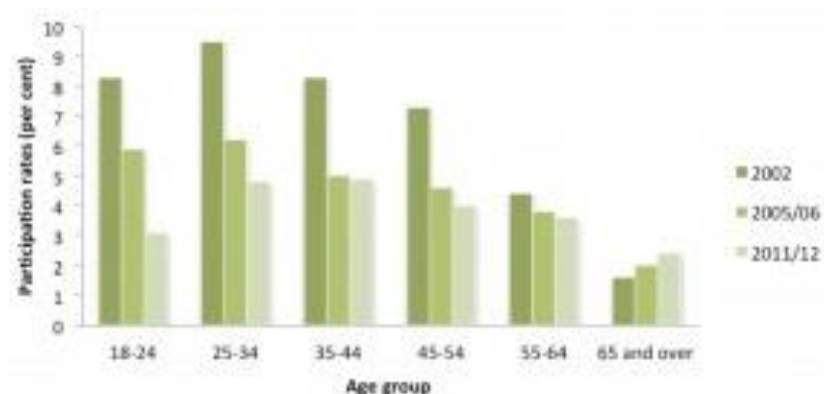
- the area has high employment, discretionary income and education levels, resulting in increased demand for high quality and diverse open spaces and recreational facilities;
- in 2018 the population between the ages of 25 to 39 years represented 37.2%, resulting in a residential population that is and will continue to be relatively active in the near future;
- the majority of residents (86.5%) live in medium or high-density residential accommodation. This implies that private open space is likely to be in a short supply, due to limited home-based recreation opportunities;
- the increasingly diverse population will likely demand a wider range interests in activities, due to sports preferences often being culturally and socially influenced; and
- with low private motor vehicle ownership, and an existing culture for walking to work, there will likely be a demand for recreational space within easily accessible locations, supported by public transportation.

## 5.0 Participation in Tennis

Tennis was traditionally is highly popular participation sport in Australia. ABS data (2012) indicates that fitness, cycling, swimming, tennis and running were amongst the top ten activities participated in by both men and women.

In recent years, its participation has fallen, along with many other organised sports. ABS data (**Figure 5**) illustrates that participation in tennis (indoor and outdoor) has steadily declined from about, on average, 7.5% of the Australian population in 2000 to 3% in 2013-2014.

It is understood that current participation rates in tennis (outside of a club organisation) has steadied at approximately 5% of the population. Participation rates are the highest amongst the 15-17-year-old age bracket at 9%. According to AusPlay data (2018), only 2.4% of the population (adults and children combined) participate in tennis as an organised club sport.



**Figure 5 Tennis participation in Australia by age (2002 – 2012)**

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation" surveys 2002, 2005/6, 2011/12

## 6.0 Policy and Documentation Review

This section reviews past current and future policies that apply to the site. These policies and strategic framework documents include recreational planning documents, infrastructure strategy, s.7.11 plans, social and placemaking strategies, and NSW Department of Planning and Environmental and Greater Sydney Commission policies. The following section identifies the key recreational drivers for this site, based on a review of the key state and local policies and strategies relevant to informing the assessment of recreational needs in the local area.

### 6.1 Social and Recreational Policies and Strategies

The following section includes a review of state and local policies, strategies and documents that articulate the desired recreational outcomes for the area. The following documents have been reviewed:

- North District Plan (Greater Sydney Commission 2018)
- North Sydney Recreation Needs Study (North Sydney Council, Leisure Planners 2015)
- North Sydney Open Space Provision Strategy (North Sydney Council 2009)
- North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 (North Sydney Council 2018)
- North Sydney Placebook – North Sydney Public Domain Strategy – Stage 1 (North Sydney Council 2018)
- North Sydney Community, Cultural and Recreational Facilities Policy
- North Sydney 94 Contributions Plan (North Sydney Council 2013)

**Table 5 Key relevant policy objectives of North District Plan (2018)**

Greater Sydney Commission	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	<p>The Greater Sydney Commission's North District Plan identifies the high-level vision for the District, including consideration of the District's extraordinary heritage and civic assets, environmental and recreational assets, vibrant centres, and the many infrastructure projects planned and underway, to realise the District as one of the most dynamic in the region. The Plan identifies a high-level vision for this District, noting that:</p> <p>Liveability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North District will be a fast-growing District over the next 20 years with demand for an additional 92,000 dwellings (noting that this is across: City of Ryde, Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches and Willoughby). This will be provided through urban renewal, land release and infill development. The focus of growth will be on well-connected walkable places that build on local strengths and deliver quality public places</li> </ul> <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An integrated approach to the green infrastructure of the District – waterways, bushland, urban tree canopy and open spaces – will improve sustainability. The Greater Sydney Green Grid will provide cool, green links and a network of high-quality open spaces to support walking, cycling and community access to open space.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>Key planning priorities that are relevant to the recreational needs of North Sydney include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increased use of public resources such as open space and community facilities</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased access to open space</i></li> <li>• <i>Planning Priority N3: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Action 9 - Deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future</i></li> <li>– <i>Action 10 - Optimise the use of available public land for social infrastructure</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Planning Priority N4 Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Action 11 - Deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places for people of all ages and abilities that support active, resilient and socially connected communities by: a. providing walkable places at a human scale with active street life b. prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport c. co-locating schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities d. promoting local access to healthy fresh food and supporting local fresh food production</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Planning Priority N20: Delivering high quality open space</i></li> </ul>

**Table 6 Key relevant policy objectives of North Sydney Recreation Needs Study**

<b>North Sydney Council, Leisure Planners</b>	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Determine the current supply of sport and recreation facilities and services, along with the current and projected demands</i></li> <li><i>engage stakeholders (including Local residents, workers, schools, sporting groups etc.) in order to produce a meaningful Study with a high level of acceptance</i></li> <li><i>provide directions on capital works priorities and actions, and ensure “best practice” planning and management of open space and recreation facilities</i></li> <li><i>ensure the best allocation of resources possible in the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities and services that meet the identified needs</i></li> <li><i>identify potential funding options for the provision and/or improvement of identified facilities and services</i></li> <li><i>encourage and facilitate partnerships with community and other public and private stakeholders for the planning, provision, development and management of open space and recreation facilities.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Key Findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a good range of recreation facilities in the North Sydney area, however maintaining an adequate supply; quality and diversity of opportunity will be an ongoing challenge.</li> <li>Tennis was one of the most supplied recreational opportunities in North Sydney LGA, with 18 tennis courts available in 2015. Tennis is not identified as having a significant level of demand for additional facilities.</li> <li>Tennis was identified as one of the most favoured and/or participated in sports for both those aged below and above 15 years.</li> <li>Higher income families are likely to have increased access to private recreation facilities such as swimming pools, tennis courts and gyms, water-based sports, and be members of private clubs. This includes money required to be spent on travel, sports equipment and membership fees.</li> <li>More affluent and educated residents are likely to have higher awareness of benefits associated with recreation and physical exercise. This is likely to result in increased motivation by these individuals to participate, as well as appreciate the provision of open space. This likewise influences higher demand for recreational facilities and spaces within the locality.</li> <li>While most schools in the LGA have some recreation facilities, it is noted that nearly all schools rely on access to Council owned grounds in order to fulfil their sporting and recreation needs.</li> <li>The following recreation facilities are currently not provided in the Council area: Athletics / track and field; Australian rules football; Baseball; Equestrian activities; BMX (track competition); MTB; Motor sports; Rock climbing; Shooting sports; Softball / tee ball; Triathlon; Cycle sports; Volleyball; Cricket (indoor); Hockey (indoor and competition outdoor); and Tenpin bowling. An assessment of the potential for provisions of these uses is included at <b>Section 0</b>. It is noted that majority of these recreational facilities are unable to be feasibly provided on the subject Site, due to the physical constraints and lack of commercial interest. Notwithstanding, it is noted that these uses are not necessarily required or desired by the local community.</li> <li>Online survey conducted as part of consultation for the Council's Recreational Needs Study, indicated results highlighting a demand for: additional sports fields (hockey, soccer, football and rugby touch), cycling, park-based activities (such as yoga, Pilates etc), outdoor fitness (equipment), and water-based recreation facilities. An assessment of the potential for provisions of these uses is included at <b>Section 0</b>.</li> <li>It is noted that facilities are additionally available in the neighbouring Councils of Mosman and Willoughby.</li> <li>The Study identifies opportunities for providing sport might include industrial areas, central activity centre developments (e.g. Willoughby Leisure Centre) brownfield sites, and importantly, car parks. The provision of these additional recreational facilities should be located in strategic locations, within proximity to future residents, employees and educational institutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Racquet sports are small footprint sports, and the potential to accommodate these in the North Sydney CBD should be investigated.</i></li> <li><i>Work with Tennis NSW and local providers to further investigate the state of tennis in North Sydney. This should include assessing the high demand for tennis and impact of the management on delivering opportunities, as well as opportunities to enhance service offer, pathways for juniors to high levels of competition, non-club and social competitions. Co-operatively develop different products, more sports development programs and utilise courts for workers and students.</i></li> <li><i>Provide sporting facilities within proximity to the St Leonards and North Sydney CBD.</i></li> <li><i>Seek to retain the range of current sports activities in the LGA and adopt a “no net loss” principle for sports land use.</i></li> <li><i>Provide additional green spaces in the North Sydney Area to provide for social gathering, play and events, sport and physical activities and horticulture, and to provide restorative benefits.</i></li> </ul>



**Table 7 Key relevant strategic visions and actions of Open Space Provision Strategy**

<b>North Sydney Open Space Provision Strategy 2009</b>	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To ensure new land provided for open space meets the needs of the population, providing useful and usable open spaces in areas of population growth and low open space provision, in an economically viable manner.</i></li> <li><i>establishes a series of principles for acquisition of open space within North Sydney, from which strategies for provision and priorities for acquisition can then be identified.</i></li> <li><i>Address deficiencies in the open space network, so that the existing and future recreation and open space needs of the community can be planned for and accommodated.</i> (It is noted that this open space provision strategy was completed prior to the most recent Recreational Needs Assessment).</li> </ul>
<b>Key Findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to Section 94 funds, opportunities to partner with neighbouring Councils and to work with developers to obtain contributions of open space should be discussed openly and early as a potentially mutually beneficial option.</li> <li>Within North Sydney, part of the inequality in open space provision is a result of the same areas generally being identified for further increases in density. As such, it is likely that shortage of open space within these areas will be compounded in the future.</li> <li>Open space provision must not be confined to the resident population. North Sydney has a large workforce whose members are likewise important users of open space and recreational facilities.</li> <li>The location of significant parks and recreation areas in adjoining Council areas must also be considered when assessing the distribution of parks and reserves in the LGA.</li> <li>Parks and reserves and facilities must serve a variety of functions in order to meet the needs of the current and future population.</li> <li>There is an inadequate diversity of recreation activity opportunities.</li> <li>Contextual appropriateness of open space provision must be considered. There is a need to ensure minimal negative impacts on surrounding land uses, and compatibility between open space uses and the uses of neighbouring land.</li> <li>Uses of new open space should be appropriate to the nature, sustainable capacity and characteristics of their surrounds.</li> <li><i>Civic spaces can provide a community focus in urban development, and their inclusion should be considered in conjunction with proposals for new retail and commercial development. The size, shape and character of the civic space, should have regard to its future role, and the intended area character that the space is expected to enhance.</i></li> </ul>

**Table 8 Key relevant strategic visions and actions of Community Strategic Plan 2018-2018**

<b>Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028</b>	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	The plan identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for its future and provides detailed strategies to facilitate achieving them. The plan is a high-level plan that council prepares in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting statutory requirements, and includes a Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Resourcing Strategy.
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore ways to increase open space and urban tree canopy cover, including creative use of existing infrastructure and increased access to community gardening</li> <li>Redevelopment of North Sydney Olympic Pool complex, into a community facility equipped to service the community for generations to come</li> <li>The community identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance public open space and increase access to and provision of recreation facilities to meet current and future needs, including through creative reuse of existing facilities (Direction 1)</li> <li>Increase community gardening opportunities (Direction 1)</li> <li>Improve our existing assets and infrastructure (Direction 2)</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>An increasing population means that the demand for open space and sporting and recreation facilities grows. Our challenge is to plan and manage the demand for active and passive recreation and leisure opportunities from our community and visitors with the limited land available.</i></li> <li><i>Investigation of creative use of existing infrastructure to increase open space has resulted in premier new facilities, that balance residential lifestyle with user needs.</i></li> <li><i>Encourage community gardening and rooftop and hard surface greening, incorporating native vegetation planting where possible</i></li> <li><i>Provide infrastructure to support physical activity, and promote physical activity</i></li> <li><i>Explore green public space over Warringah Freeway</i></li> </ul>

**Table 9 Key relevant delivery priorities of the North Sydney Public Domain Strategy – Stage 1**

North Sydney Public Domain Strategy – Stage 1	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	<p>The 'Place Book' has been prepared to guide the development of the public domain in the CBD of North Sydney. This document establishes a vision for the centre's public spaces, identifies short, medium and long term projects on both private and public land and puts in place an implementation plan to deliver change. The Place book will be used to align both private and public investment in the CBD around a common vision for its future. It will inform Council's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory and strategic planning decisions</li> <li>• future capital works programs</li> <li>• discussions with state agencies and the development industry.</li> </ul> <p>Stage 1, summarised in this 'Place Book', is an ideas phase that examines the potential of the North Sydney CBD public domain. It identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community expectations and ideas</li> <li>• opportunities to better align existing policies</li> <li>• a framework for future public domain upgrades</li> <li>• short-medium term projects that address known issues and mitigate the impacts of construction</li> <li>• longer term, place-specific projects and visionary, high-intervention opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>This project seeks to find both incremental achievable changes, along with major city shaping ideas that will set a new path for a lively, active, inviting and comfortable CBD for future generations.</p>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>Council's Strategy identifies a potential new park above Warringah Freeway subject to further investigations, located adjoining the western edge of North Sydney CBD (<b>Figure 6</b>). In exploring this provision of green public and recreational space over the Warringah Freeway, it provides Council the ability to deliver substantial recreational infrastructure in a more accessible location, and facilitate an improved recreational lifestyle, responding more appropriately to shifting user needs. At the early stages of this investigation there is further clarity of the specific intended recreational facilities seeking to be included within this new park, however it is recognised as one of the biggest and only opportunities for Council to deliver new, more efficient, accessible and inclusive recreational infrastructure, in line with their Recreational Needs Analysis (2015).</p>

**Figure 6 Potential 'Warringah Landbridge Park' under investigation**

Source: North Sydney Council 2019

**Table 10 Key relevant delivery priorities of North Sydney Community, Cultural & Recreational Facilities Policy**

<b>North Sydney Section 94A Contributions Plan</b>	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	The Policy identifies overseeing the ownership, management, purpose and funding levels and they deliver a mix of community services by North Sydney Council.
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>Relevant objectives of this policy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• b) provide or facilitate provision of high quality and appropriate services;</li> <li>• e) provide the major community facilities, which would not otherwise be available to the North Sydney community;</li> <li>• f) maximise the community's use of Council facilities;</li> <li>• k) maximise developer contribution, where appropriate, to the cost of new or expanded centre provision;</li> <li>• n) upgrade and enhance centres where appropriate, based on consultation with users and providers;</li> <li>• p) monitor, and assist where appropriate, the centres' financial and management performance through a range of strategies; and</li> <li>• q) facilitate and initiate new uses/services.</li> </ul>

**Table 11 Key relevant delivery priorities of North Sydney Section 94 Contributions Plan**

<b>North Sydney Section 94A Contributions Plan</b>	
<b>Purpose &amp; Vision</b>	The Contributions Plan identifies the public facilities and/or infrastructure for which Section 94A levies will be required from proponents of development applications on the applicable land. Levies paid to Council are applied towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public facilities, or towards recouping the cost of their provision.
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key identified priority works to recreational facilities to be provided to meet the expected future needs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upgrading works: multiple playgrounds, public toilets,</li> <li>- Drainage works</li> <li>- Bush Regeneration</li> <li>- New parks</li> <li>- Park capacity improvement program</li> <li>- Landscape design master planning</li> <li>- Conservation management plans</li> <li>- Community gardens</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To ensure that the additional population does not result in a decrease in the level of service provision, it is recognised in this that the remainder of the total amount of open space required will be achieved through increasing capacity of existing open spaces. Council can make improvements to open space, such as a new playground, seating, access pathways, bush clearing and regeneration, that increase the useability of open space for a range of users, and thus increase the capacity of open space to accommodate additional users.</li> </ul>

## 7.0 Recreational Land and Uses

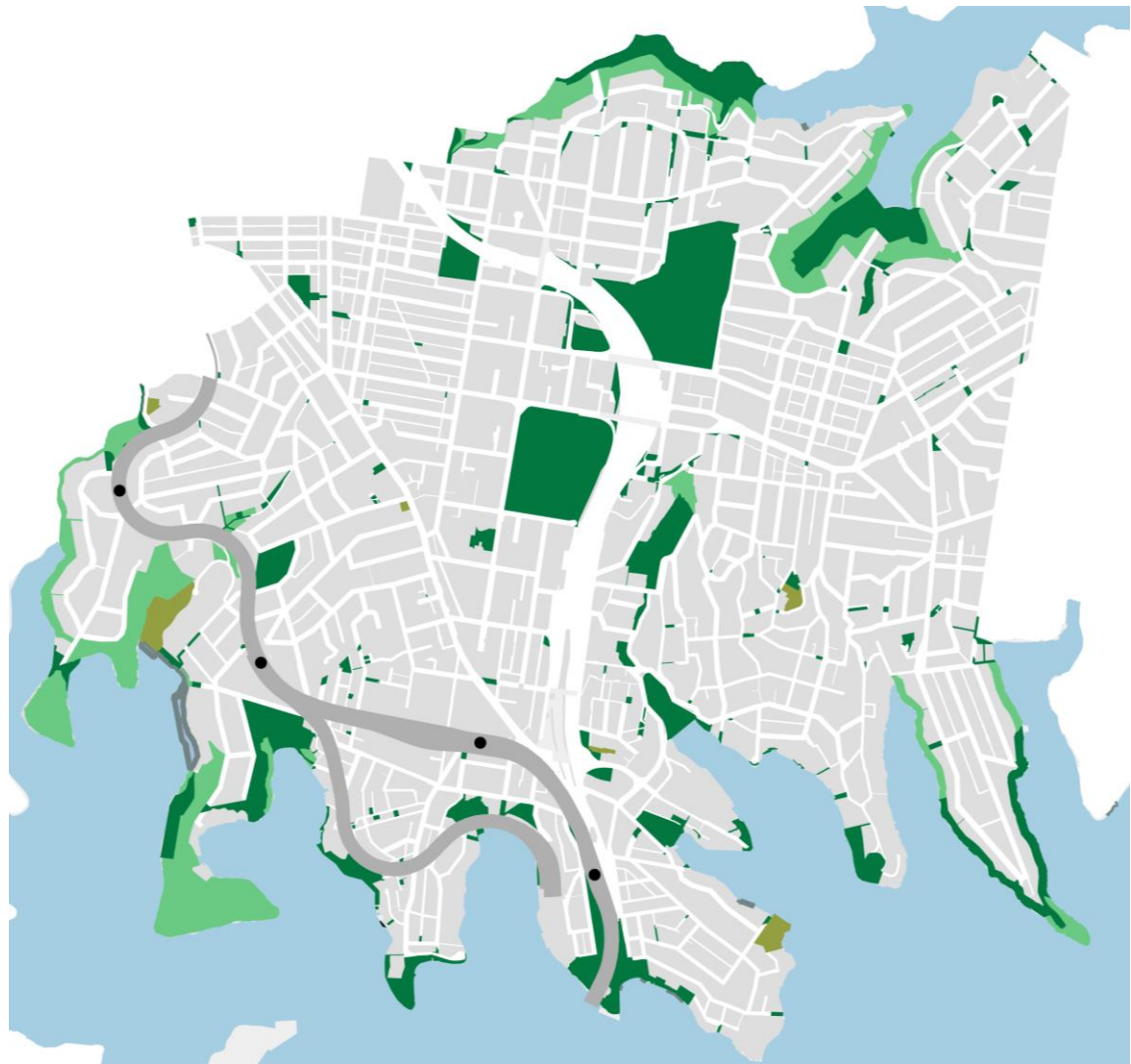
### 7.1 Recreation Zoned Land

The site represents a very small portion of RE1 and RE2 zoned land within North Sydney LGA. The site is the smallest private recreation site (by area) within the LGA.

As the proposal does not seek to amend the land use zoning of the site, there is no numeric loss of land zoned RE2 – Private Recreation. All currently permissible uses on the site will remain permissible in the future.



**Figure 7** Land zones for environmental, open space and recreation under NSLEP 2013





## 7.2 The RE2 Private Recreation Zone

The North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 (NSLEP 2013) details the objectives and key controls for development in the LGA. Of particular relevance to this study are the permissible uses under the current RE2 Private Recreation Zone.

**Table 12** below assess the potential future delivery of permissible uses under the current zoning. While all permissible uses under the RE2 Private Recreation zone were considered, not all are suitable for the site (e.g. sports stadium). **Table 12**, considers the above outlined implications of the planning proposal, and comments on those that could reasonably be considered on site and discusses the potential for these uses to be accommodated within the site.

Recreational uses currently not provided within the Council area include Athletics / track and field; Australian rules football; Equestrian activities; BMX (track competition); MTB; Motor sports; Rock climbing; Shooting sports; Softball / tee ball; Triathlon; Cycle sports; Volleyball; Cricket (indoor); Hockey (indoor and competition outdoor); and Tenpin bowling.

An online survey conducted as part of consultation for the Council's Recreational Needs Study, indicated a demand for additional sports fields (hockey, soccer, football and rugby touch), cycling, park-based activities (such as yoga, pilates etc), outdoor fitness (equipment), and water-based recreation facilities. These potential uses are included within **Table 12** below to assess the feasibility of these uses to be provided on site.

It is noted that due to Clause 6.7 of the NSLEP 2013, restricts the development of the above permissible uses within the RE2 zone to the most restrictive development standards of the adjoining R2 and R3 residential zones. As such, regardless of the potential for alternative recreational uses on site, any future development on the site will be highly restricted by the adjoining development standards and therefore are unviable for future redevelopment opportunities.

**Table 12 Assessment of Potential loss of Permissible Recreational Uses under NSLEP 2013**

Permissible uses of RE2 Zone	Standard Definition	Comments
<b>Building identification signs;</b>	Will continue to remain permissible with consent.	
<b>Business identification signs;</b>		
<b>Community facilities;</b>	<p><b>community facility</b> means a building or place:</p> <p>(a) owned or controlled by a public authority or non-profit community organisation, and</p> <p>(b) used for the physical, social, cultural or intellectual development or welfare of the community,</p> <p>but does not include an educational establishment, hospital, retail premises, place of public worship or residential accommodation.</p>	<p>There is increasing pressure of government agencies to provide versatile community facilities that are multi-use and sustainable, economically, environmentally and socially. However, the site size, location, surrounding context and lack of available parking, result in the site being unsuitable for such community facility uses.</p> <p>Any community facility physically capable on site, would not be spacious enough and will be limited to a few potential community uses.</p>
<b>Environmental facilities;</b>	<b>environmental facility</b> means a building or place that provides for the recreational use or scientific study of natural systems, and includes walking tracks, seating, shelters, board walks, observation decks, bird hides or the like, and associated display structures.	The site is not suitable for any such environmental facilities as the site does not comprise any natural features such as vegetation, fauna, biodiversity and views, and is not physically large enough to provide walking tracks.
<b>Kiosks;</b>	<b>kiosk</b> means premises that are used for the purposes of selling food, light refreshments and other small convenience items such as newspapers, films and the like.	A Kiosk (café) is proposed as part of the concept plan for the site.

Permissible uses of RE2 Zone	Standard Definition	Comments
<b>Recreation areas;</b>	<p><b>recreation area</b> means a place used for outdoor recreation that is normally open to the public, and includes:</p> <p>(a) a children's playground, or</p> <p>(b) an area used for community sporting activities, or</p> <p>(c) a public park, reserve or garden or the like, and any ancillary buildings, but does not include a recreation facility (indoor), recreation facility (major) or recreation facility (outdoor).</p> <p>Community sporting facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hockey</li> <li>• Soccer</li> <li>• Football</li> <li>• Netball</li> <li>• Rugby touch</li> <li>• Cricket</li> <li>• Softball</li> <li>• Cycling</li> </ul>	<p>The site is currently not publicly accessible and is located adjacent to a small existing public park. This park can feasibly be made suitable for use for the purposes of park-based activities (such as yoga, pilates etc), outdoor fitness (equipment), should Council wish to respond to the findings of their Recreational Needs Study (2015).</p> <p>The Planning Proposal will facilitate increased surveillance of the public park, increasing its attractiveness for such uses.</p> <p>It is noted that Council evaluated the site for possible purchase in 2010 and determined that the it was not in Council's interest to purchase.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, if the site were to be purchased by Council for provision of open space, the site would provide limited public benefit, as it does not provide open space in a location where it is currently lacking.</p> <p>Regardless the site characteristics result in an unsuitable site for a 'recreational area', including community sporting activities or public park.</p>
<b>Recreation facilities (indoor);</b>	<p><b>recreation facility (indoor)</b> means a building or place used predominantly for indoor recreation, whether or not operated for the purposes of gain, including a squash court, indoor swimming pool, gymnasium, table tennis centre, health studio, bowling alley, ice rink or any other building or place of a like character used for indoor recreation, but does not include an entertainment facility, a recreation facility (major) or a registered club.</p> <p>Recreation facilities (indoor) includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rock climbing</li> <li>• Indoor shooting range</li> <li>• Ten pin bowling</li> </ul>	<p>The small site size, its location, surrounding context and lack of available parking, result in the site being unsuitable for many indoor recreational uses such as swimming pools, bowling alley, ice rink, rock climbing etc.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, as the site is in private ownership, there is no guarantee that any of these uses can be delivered in the future.</p> <p>The concept plan seeks to deliver suitable recreational facilities permissible on site, such as a health/ wellbeing centre.</p>
<b>Recreation facilities (outdoor);</b>	<p><b>recreation facility (outdoor)</b> means a building or place (other than a recreation area) used predominantly for outdoor recreation, whether or not operated for the purposes of gain, including a golf course, golf driving range, mini-golf centre, tennis court, paint-ball centre, lawn bowling green, outdoor swimming pool, equestrian centre, skate board ramp, go-kart track, rifle range, water-ski centre or any other building or place of a like character used for outdoor recreation (including any ancillary buildings), but does not include an entertainment facility or a recreation facility (major).</p>	<p>The small site size, its location, surrounding context and lack of available parking, result in the Site being unsuitable for many other outdoor recreational uses such as swimming pools, mini-golf, paint-ball, rifle range, water-ski, golf club, bowling etc.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, as the site is in private ownership, there is no guarantee that any of these uses can be delivered.</p> <p>The proposal does include the retention of an existing tennis court that will remain publically accessible.</p>

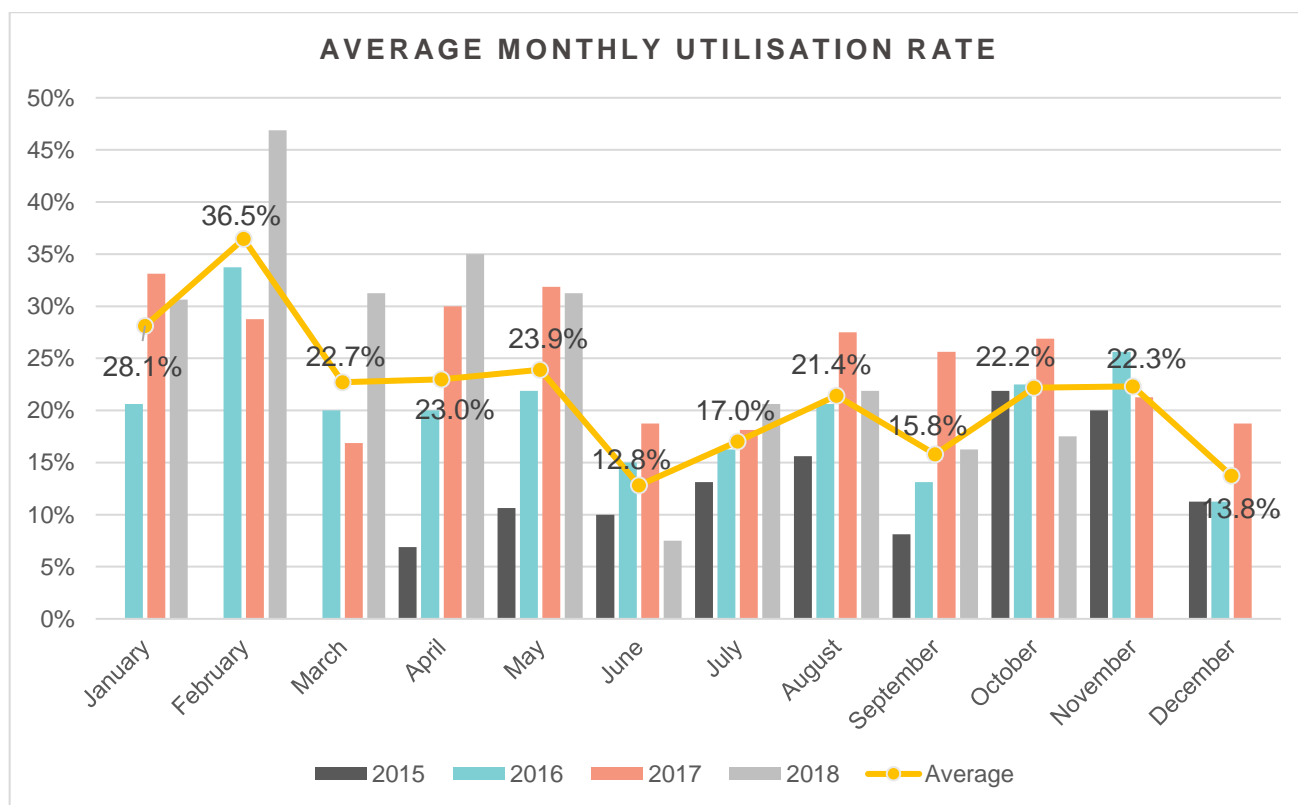
Permissible uses of RE2 Zone	Standard Definition	Comments
<b>Registered clubs;</b>	<b>registered club</b> means a club that holds a club licence under the Liquor Act 2007.	<p>The site size, location, surrounding context and lack of available parking, result in the site being unsuitable for use as a registered club.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, there are 2 existing registered clubs located within 500m from the site, and another 2 located approximately 1km from the site. Therefore, it is unlikely to be a future demand for additional registered clubs within the locality.</p>
<b>Roads</b>	Will continue to remain permissible with consent.	

## 8.0 Existing Utilisation of Facilities

The three existing tennis courts on site are operated by an online booking system via a website. Since the operation of this website (April 2015), the booking system database provides overall information regarding the usage/bookings for the courts. This information is illustrated in **Figure 8**. These calculations include the use of all three tennis courts. The courts are open 16 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Although it is unknown exactly why utilisation increased significantly from 2015 to 2018 in some months, one possible explanation is that utilisation was unexpectedly low in 2015 as the courts in their current ownership and online operation was unknown to many of the current users. As users learned about the re-opening and online booking service of the courts, it is predicted that usage gradually increased through word of mouth (as indicated in **Figure 8**).

As illustrated below, the courts are severely underutilised, with the maximum average utilisation being 47%. The highest average utilised month from 2015 to 2018 has been February at 36.5%, with the lowest average month being just 12.8%. On average this equates to the full utilisation of one of the three tennis courts. The Proponent and neighbours have noted that when none of the courts are in use, the site attracts anti-social behaviour within the car park, causing concern for surrounding residences.



**Figure 8** Average monthly utilisation of the existing tennis courts

Source: Ethos Urban



## 9.0 Impact of Loss of Tennis Courts

Tennis is one of the most supplied recreational opportunities in North Sydney LGA, with 21 tennis courts available in 2019. More generally, there is a good supply of passive recreational facilities within the North Sydney LGA, particularly benefitting from harbour front foreshore area. However, maintaining an adequate supply, quality and diversity of facilities is an ongoing challenge for Council.

Tennis was traditionally is highly popular organised sport in Australia. It remains a popular participation activity for both men and women. In recent years however, its participation rates have fallen, along with many other organised sports. Participation rates are the highest amongst the 15-17-year-old age bracket. This age group is substantially under represented within the North Sydney LGA, when compared to other parts of the greater Sydney. Being an estimated, inner city area, the locality is not expected to undergo a substantial population boom in the future that will see a dramatic rise in this younger demographic.

An online survey conducted as part of consultation for the Council's Recreational Needs Study, indicated a demand for additional sports fields (hockey, soccer, football and rugby touch), cycling, park-based activities (such as yoga, pilates etc), outdoor fitness (equipment), and water-based recreation facilities. Tennis was not identified as having a significantly high level of demand for additional facilities, when compared with these other more in demand activities.

The redevelopment of the site will result in a small overall reduction in the availability of tennis facilities within the North Sydney LGA. However, the existing utilisation data illustrates that the existing courts are utilised only 20% - 25% of the time (on average over the past 3 years). The ongoing public availability of one court on-site, enhanced with other recreation facilities, will ensure that existing demand will continue to be catered for.

The site is within private ownership resulting in an inherent requirement for revenue generation and financial viability as a business to ensure its long-term survival. As such there is no guarantee that the facility will remain operational given the current lack of utilisation.

The site is not considered to be suited to the long-term provision of tennis courts or other outdoor recreation facilities for the following reasons:

- its proximity to residential properties and the potential for amenity and noise impacts particularly during evenings and weekends;
- site-specific characteristics such as a narrow width, poor site through access and surrounding topography result in land that is not suited to a large portion of permissible recreational uses;
- being bounded by residential properties on three sides there is no opportunity to expand the site's existing facilities; and
- the site provides very limited on-site parking, further restricting the potential to intensify or provide alternative high turnover recreation uses.

## 10.0 Recreational Benefits of the Proposal

The proposal will ensure the retention of 1 tennis court, which will benefit from continued public access (subject to a booking fee). This represents a key public benefit, as the site is in private ownership, and its continued operation and public access cannot be guaranteed. Thus, the proposal aims to ensure the ongoing operation and public access to the court. Utilisation analysis demonstrates that this 1 tennis court will likely meet the existing demand for the tennis courts.

In addition to the tennis court, the proposal also seeks to facilitate other recreational uses on the site, including yoga, gym, pilates etc. In its recreational needs analysis, Council identified a challenge in delivering increased diversity of recreational activity. The proposal will facilitate diversity in the recreational offer on site, and as such the proposal will deliver improved recreational benefits.

## 11.0 Conclusion

In assessing the acceptability of the loss of the tennis courts and potential recreation uses on site, it is important to simultaneously consider the implications of the site's private ownership. As such, any provision of recreational facilities on the site is dependent on the private desires of its owner, with no obligation to the public.

Impacts on the recreational needs of the community have been assessed and are concluded to be of minimal in that:

- tennis, whilst a popular recreation activity, is a sport in decline. The North Sydney LGA is under represented in the younger age bracket – where tennis remains more popular;
- existing tennis facilities within the North Sydney LGA can cater for the existing and future demand;
- the current facility is underutilised with one tennis court being able to cater for the local demand;
- the proposal:
  - retains a tennis courts to meet outdoor sporting opportunities;
  - will improve the amenity of the local area; and
  - provides additional recreational, visitor and co-working opportunities in close proximity to existing facilities and services; and
- assessment of the site's size, topography and surrounding uses determine that it is not ideal to support alternative recreation facilities. This is a particularly crucial consideration with an increasing population and a requirement and current best practice approach to co-locate and facilitate multi-purpose facilities, government owned and able to be operated and maintained more efficiently; and
- Council strategies, in particular the North Sydney CBD Strategy, presents a higher value, albeit long term, opportunity to cater to the recreation needs of the local residents, employees and visitors.