

Open Space & Recreation Strategic Reference Group

Directions Paper

July 2017

NORTHERN BEACHES
COUNCIL

Purpose of this paper

This paper presents an overview of the Open Space and Recreation Strategic Reference Group and the contributions made to the future direction of the Council and the community through its active participation in key open space, sport and recreation strategic planning projects.

Background

Following the formation of the new Northern Beaches Council in May 2016, eleven Strategic Reference Groups (SRGs) were formed across key areas of council's operation, including open space and recreation. The role of these SRGs was to provide a contribution to the strategic directions of the new Council, including input into development of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and future plans and strategies. SRG members were recruited via an expression of interest process, and represent a cross-section of the community and bring expertise to their area of appointment. Each group also included at least two former Councillors as Chair and Deputy Chair.

Open Space and Recreation Strategic Reference Group

The Open Space and Recreation Strategic Reference Group consisted of 18 members, listed in Appendix 1. The terms of reference for this SRG were to:

- Provide input to the Vision, Priorities and Objectives for the Northern Beaches Draft Community Strategic Plan.
- Consider all aspects of open space from environmental, playgrounds, sporting grounds, foreshores, beaches, reserves and parklands.
- Incorporate active, passive, indoor and outdoor recreation.
- Advise on technology enhancing experiences.
- Advise on quality of, and access to, existing and new assets.
- Advocate for community places and inclusive spaces.
- Refer and advise on opportunities for funding and grants.
- Recognise the diversity of recreational and sporting activities to ensure equity within the CSP.

The Open Space and Recreation SRG met five times from September 2016 to June 2017.

Prior to the formation of the Northern Beaches Council, open spaces, sport and recreation were planned and managed in varying ways by the former Councils. Also, in developing the CSP it was re-confirmed that open spaces, sport and recreation are of key importance to our community.

The priority strategic focus for this Open Space and Recreation SRG has been to work with Council, to put in place a single strategic approach to the management and long term planning of open spaces, sport and recreation – and that this reflects the current needs and future aspirations of our community.

Community Strategic Plan - Goals and Strategies Relevant to the Open Space and Recreation SRG

Extensive community engagement in 2016/17, involving over two thousand community members, was instrumental in developing the first Community Strategic Plan (CSP) for the Northern Beaches. This included several sessions with each SRG. Table 1 presents the goals and underlying strategies from the draft CSP most relevant to the Open Space and Recreation SRG. These have been developed from the issues and considerations put forward by our community and SRGs during the first two stages of CSP engagement, and are now in the draft CSP for Stage 3 engagement.

Table 1: DRAFT CSP Goals and Strategies Most Relevant to the Open Space and Recreation Reference Group

SOCIAL			
Places for People	Goal	9	Our community is healthy, active and enjoys a broad range of creative, sporting and recreational opportunities
	Strategy	9a	Provide well-maintained and safe spaces that equitably support active and passive recreation
		9b	Foster partnerships with government agencies, community and sporting groups to facilitate and promote healthy and active living
		9c	Encourage a broad range of activities that enable social interaction, stimulate wellbeing, and support people at each stage of their lives
Community and Belonging	Goal	11	Our community feels safe and supported
	Strategy	11c	Promote health and wellbeing through fair access to information, health and support services
ECONOMY			
Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	Goal	17	Our community can safely and efficiently travel within and beyond Northern Beaches
	Strategy	17b	Facilitate and promote safe cycling and walking networks as convenient transport options
ENVIRONMENT			
Protection of the Environment	Goal	5	Our environment and community are resilient to natural hazards and climate change
	Strategy	5a	Ensure integrated land use planning balances the environmental, social and economic needs of present and future generations.

GOVERNANCE			
Partnerships and Participation	Goal	21	Our community is actively engaged in decision making processes
	Strategy	21b	Enable community members to participate in decision making by providing a broad range of engagement opportunities
	Goal	22	Our Council builds and maintains strong partnerships and advocates effectively on behalf of the community
	Strategy	22a	Develop partnerships to deliver facilities and targeted services and programs to meet community needs
		22c	Advocate regionally and at NSW and Federal Government levels on behalf of the community

Future Directions

The Open Space and Recreation SRG has contributed to the future directions of the Council and the community through its active participation in discussions and workshops about key strategic planning projects including:

- Sportsgrounds Strategy** - in response to approaches from the local sports sector Council's current open space, sport and recreation planning priority is an integrated Northern Beaches Sportsground Strategy to guide the development of sportsgrounds and facilities for the next 15 years. The SRG provided a critical assessment of and contributed significantly to Council's Discussion paper which outlined options to address a shortfall in sportsfields and for improvements to sportsgrounds and facilities across the Northern Beaches. In April-June 2017 there was extensive community engagement on this paper. This valuable feedback will be a key input to Council's final Sportsgrounds Strategy and 15 year plan. <http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/sportsgroundreview>
- Open Space and Recreation Planning Framework** - this project includes developing a forward open space and recreation planning program and framework following consideration of the planning documents, strategies and plans of management of the three former Councils and an audit of assets. The SRG contributed significantly to Council's forward open space planning program particularly in regard to the need for integrated planning for recreation in its broadest sense; trails; sports not included in the Sportsgrounds Strategy; and accessibility.
- Connecting Through Walking and Cycling Project** and **Connecting Through Play Project** - the SRG contributed ideas to these projects particularly in regard to the future location of and design of playgrounds. Implementation of these projects will begin in 2017/18. <http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/ConnectingNorthernBeaches>
- Community Strategic Plan** - the SRG contributed a range of ideas that were considered for the Draft Community Strategic Plan. The draft CSP is on exhibition until November 2017, and will commence in 2018. <http://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/communitystrategicplan2>

These have been substantial achievements for the SRG, providing valuable ideas for integrating open space and recreation across the Northern Beaches, and how it interacts with the CSP.

Table 2 outlines how this body of work links with the relevant goals and strategies of the draft CSP i.e. those most relevant to the Open Space and Recreation SRG. These are outlined in full in table 1.

Table 2: Open Space and Recreation SRG strategic outcomes – Links to Draft CSP

SRG Strategic contributions and workshops	Relevant draft CSP goals and strategies			
	Places for People	Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	Protection of the Environment	Partnerships and Participation
Sportsgrounds Strategy	Goal 9 Strategy 9b, 9c		Goal 5 Strategy 5a	Goal 22 Strategy 22a, 22c Goal 21 Strategy 21b
Open Space and Recreation Planning Framework	Goal 9 Strategy 9b, 9c	Goal 17 Strategy 17b	Goal 5 Strategy 5a	Goal 22 Strategy 22a, 22c Goal 21 Strategy 21b
Connecting Through Walking and Cycling Project and Connecting Through Play Project	Goal 9 Strategy 9b, 9c	Goal 17 Strategy 17b	Goal 5 Strategy 5a	Goal 22 Strategy 22a, 22c Goal 21 Strategy 21b
Community Strategic Plan	Goal 9 Strategy 9b, 9c	Goal 17 Strategy 17b	Goal 5 Strategy 5a	Goal 22 Strategy 22a, 22c Goal 21 Strategy 21b

Council's planning focus beginning in 2017/18 will be on a long term integrated Open Space and Recreation Strategy to guide the development of open spaces and facilities - a companion piece to the Sportsgrounds Strategy.

Appendix 1

Open Space and Recreation Strategic Reference Group Members

Jean Hay (Chair)	<i>Implementation Advisory Group</i>
Duncan Kerr	<i>Local Representation Committee - Social</i>
Bob Giltinan	<i>Local Representation Committee - Social</i>
Stephen Beatty	<i>Manly Warringah District Cricket Club</i>
Jim Buda	<i>Manly Warringah Cycle Club</i>
James Channon	<i>Tennis Northern Beaches</i>
Lynne Czinner	<i>Warriewood Residents Association</i>
Caroline Ghatt	<i>Resident – Frenchs Forest Ward</i>
Marissa Gidall	<i>Resident – Pittwater Ward</i>
Brent Manieri	<i>Surf Life Saving NSW / Surf Life Saving Services</i>
Lisa Matthews	<i>Manly Rugby Football Club</i>
Steve McInnes	<i>Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches Inc.</i>
Antony Pecar	<i>Northern Beaches Cricket Council</i>
Paul Smith	<i>Resident – Narrabeen Ward</i>
Chris Stead	<i>Resident – Pittwater Ward</i>
Wayne Stevenson	<i>Resident – Frenchs Forest Ward</i>
Matthew Ward	<i>Resident – Curl Curl Ward</i>
Julie Whitfield	<i>Resident – Narrabeen Ward</i>