

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Toward a sustainable, active and vibrant Community

Final Report

May 2020



CLARE & GILBERT VALLEYS COUNCIL

A Vision for Open Space and Recreation in the Clare and Gilbert Valleys

An equitable and manageable supply of open space across all townships. Our parks, reserves and facilities will provide a range of both active and passive opportunities showcasing the unique aspects of the Region to current and future generations and tourists alike.



Mawson
TRAIL
NETWORK



Riverton via
the Mawson Trail
19km



Continue to
front of Oval



Rattler Rail Trail
19km

For camping
enquiries and
access to toilets
at this Oval,
please call
8849 2186 or
8849 2095

All distances quoted are approximate

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Glossary of Terms

The following text is used and referred to throughout the report and for the purpose of the strategy forms the basis of Council's understanding and definitions of the subject matter.

- **Leisure:** Whilst a universal meaning has never been agreed, leisure is traditionally seen as the time outside of work, sleep, chores and other daily duties and the time when an individual is free to choose an activity for intrinsic values and reasons.
- **Recreation:** Freely chosen activities usually occurring in leisure time which generate feelings of enjoyment, relaxation and satisfaction. It is also be defined as active or passive:
 - **Active Recreation:** Exertion through deliberate or incidental activity undertaken in a place designed for the specific purpose. Examples include tennis courts, ovals, linear parks and active play areas.
 - **Passive Recreation:** Low activity such as picnicking, relaxation and socialising.
- **Sport:** Is separated from recreation due to its structured and competitive nature governed by time and rules. However, it may also be unstructured and classed as recreation when undertaken informally such as kicking a ball or having a 'hit of tennis' with friends.
- **Physical Activity** is any form of bodily movement performed by our large muscle groups - going for a walk, cycling around the neighbourhood and mowing the lawn. Jogging and aerobics are more vigorous types of physical activityⁱ. Physical activity can also be:
 - **Deliberate:** Referring to an activity undertaken for the purpose of exercise, e.g. sporting activities, cycling, going for a walk or
 - **Incidental:** Referring to exercise that occurs while doing something else, e.g. walking or cycling to work, gardening, walking to the shops, or activity during social pursuits.
- **Open Space:** Community land under the care and control of Council, this may include parks, reserves, playgrounds, sporting fields, creek lines, riparian corridors, civic areas or vacant land. Private or education land may also be considered in an acquisition or shared use capacity, but this is generally outside of Councils' control and is therefore excluded although highlighted where appropriate.
- **Open Space Status:** Described in terms of its current operational use as:
 - **Embellished:** Open space that has been modified and/or designed for a specific purpose whether this be for recreation, sport, land management or other purposes such as water catchments or drainage reserves etc.
 - **Un-Embellished:** Open space that is either vacant land and cleared for a future purpose or remains in its natural form and untouched.
- **Open Space Hierarchy:** Open space is traditionally described as follows noting that this may be adapted for more rural and regional areas such as the Clare and Gilbert Valleys:
 - **Local** Open Space caters to residents within walking distance (approximately 500 metres). It is generally used passively and is therefore designed and managed accordingly.
 - **Neighbourhood** Open Space caters for broader catchments and is generally distributed within a 1-2 km radius of households. These areas are generally visited for purpose and can include playspaces for children aged up to 12 years.
 - **District** Open Space considers the wider community and areas that people deliberately visit for the purpose of a specific activity. They are generally used for multi-use activities and often contain sports fields, courts and other significant infrastructure to include play opportunities for all age ranges and in some instance's youth parks.
 - **Regional** Open Space caters to the broader community and areas where people will travel between 30 and 90 minutes (in SA) to visit.
 - **Ancillary** Open Space can include school reserves, cemeteries, road verges, creek lines, storm water channels and minor road networks that provide scope to incorporate features such as linear trails, revegetation and dedicated walking/cycling links.
 - **Linear** refers to off road linkages to key destinations within a community and are normally trails for shared use cycling and walking. In some instances, these can also be undeveloped and used by horses.

- **Open Space Settings:** This relates to the types of use within each land parcel and described in two categories of:
 - **Useable Open Space:** Open space that has both significant recreation value, i.e. as a park or garden, for sport or recreation, trails or civic uses, or moderate recreation value such as natural areas or land owned by council with other primary uses such as caravan parks or cemeteries that add to the overall open space fabric.
 - **Unusable Open Space:** Is classified as community land with minimal or no recreational value such as car parks, buildings or easements. This land may however have some aesthetic benefit, but for the purpose of the study is identified but not included in the open fabric.
- **Playspaces:** areas specifically designed for play either with equipment such as slides, rockers, swings and associated infrastructure, or alternatively and more commonly, designed with natural elements such as logs, trees, sand and water and termed 'nature play'. Both play and nature play can however occur in the natural environment and should be encouraged and supported as a valid form of play outside of a structured 'built' environment. Playspaces also align to a hierarchy similar to the open space classification of local, neighbourhood, district, regional and youth and should, but quite often do not, align with the open space classification and therefore cater for greater age ranges and provide a wider range of opportunity in line with its classification.
- **Public Realm:** refers to the physical and visual aspects of built form in an area and relates to structural elements that make up the environment. These can include movement corridors, streets, pedestrian ways, bikeways, bridges, plazas, squares, transportation hubs, gateways, parks, waterfronts, natural features, view corridors, landmarks and building interfaces.
- **Arts and Culture:** can also be considered a core component of leisure time activity and may incorporate aspects of chosen learning and education through activities such as painting, arts and crafts, learning a language etc.

Executive Summary

Background

The Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council (CGVC) is located 150 km north of Adelaide and has a number of valuable open space and recreation assets. With a stable population and a number of small townships spread throughout the region, the importance to plan and prioritise resource allocation for the future is needed. As such, Council has commissioned an open space, sport and recreation strategy that sets out a policy framework for Council, gains a clearer understanding of the community's needs, assesses current provision and supply of facilities and services, and provides a direction for the next 10 years.

The strategy is not meant to be prescriptive by way of every single action required for sport, recreation, leisure, open space and play, as the subject is broad and crosses all of council functions. Instead, the aim of the report is to guide current and future thinking, with a view of establishing a framework and some realistic priorities for the coming years.

The strategy is not a commitment by Council to fund projects but provides an indicative and prioritised plan of action to increase opportunities for the local community whilst capitalising on the region's natural assets for enhanced visitor experience.

Policy Framework

The benefits of leisure, recreation, sport, play and open space are well documented, and the report highlights these and the links with community wellbeing. It goes on to identify leisure as core to Council's provision of services and not 'nice to have' or superfluous to the community's needs.

Open space has many benefits including increasing levels of physical activity, reducing stress levels, enhancing mental health, adding value to properties, being a place for events and being good for the environment through biodiversity and active transport.

Play and understanding its importance has also developed considerably in recent years and the need to acknowledge different types of play and the needs of children through various ages, means playspaces need to be designed accordingly and not a 'one size fits all' approach.

Cognitive, social and physical play opportunities are highlighted and how these align with the needs of a child as they play and age. Play is therefore discussed in terms of a hierarchy and a development model proposed which considers five elements of a playspace as being:

- Play equipment
- Imaginative and creative area
- Unstructured area
- Special features and
- Adult/carer areas.

Generally speaking, the more components a playspace has, increases its classification and normal use. Local, neighbourhood, district and regional playspaces are highlighted with components and design elements within each.

Barriers to participation are evident across all communities and Council must ensure it acknowledges, identifies and attempts to implement strategies to remove them to enhance opportunities in quality time leisure activity and pursuits. These are discussed in the report to include things such as cost, ability, physical access, cultural background etc and Council must be aware of these if it is to make participation in leisure time activity as easy as possible for its residents.

Numerous trends also impact on the way people recreate and these invariably shift with time. Such trends include a shift toward more unstructured activity (outside of the club setting), whilst also acknowledging that in a community the size and location of the CGVC, sport still remains a pivotal component of our community's fabric and identity and must therefore be supported.

The role of Council in leisure delivery is also multi-faceted and the reports highlights five possibilities being:

- A direct service provider
- Owner custodian
- Advocate
- Initiator/Facilitator
- Information provider

The delivery of services is also three pronged in that Council can:

- Directly manage or deliver services (in house)
- Outsourced to community groups or
- Outsource to the private sector to manage facilities on its behalf.

Each of these offers advantages and disadvantages and each service or facility must be assessed in isolation rather than a blanket approach. Council currently uses all three management options but in the main outsources to community groups to manage and deliver its facilities and services through Recreation Ground Committees within its townships.

Understanding and implementing the above through a policy framework, will form a solid foundation on which Council can respond to issues as and when they arise, as well as being proactive in its strategic approach to the provision of quality leisure time activities and open space across the region.

Supply

Supply is discussed in terms of open space as the base level of provision, sport facilities and playspaces. Open space assumes:

- Total provision of community land either owned or under the care and control of Council
- Hectares per 1000 population
- Benchmarked against national and regional averages
- Considers useable and unusable space for leisure and recreation

Whilst the average provision of open space across the region is high compared with national averages (55.76 ha compared with 4 ha), this is misleading given the high proportion of unusable open space or land with no or little recreational value bringing the average down to 27.64. This is however still high compared with the regional average of approximately 16.8ha but recommendations are made to balance this in townships to an identified regional 9ha per 000.

The local community oval in each township is the primary land parcel for sport and recreation and is the focal point of the community. If nothing else, these areas should be viewed as the central meeting space for the small communities, and facilities and services developed and supported by Council including appropriate management arrangements and support of the oval committees.

Traditional sports of football, cricket, netball, bowls and tennis dominate provision of sport with the latter being particularly oversupplied in the region. A more consolidated approach for tennis facilities, particularly turf courts, would be beneficial to both the community and the clubs themselves. A lack of indoor courts also provides a challenge and partnerships with both public and private educational establishments may alleviate some of this pressure for Council.

Playspaces are also well supplied by way of numbers, but the lack of variety and standard approach to provision means children are not benefiting from the full spectrum of play opportunity. With over 60% of all playspaces over the age of 15 years, this provides Council with a good opportunity to replace with better planned and designed play opportunities that will benefit all age groups, their learning and development needs and of course offer a valuable recreation outlet for children, their carers and families.

Consultation

Participation in leisure activity is similar to national trends of walking, spending time with family and picnicking etc, but what is also evident is the place of sport in the community, in particular the local recreation grounds within townships. These form the heart of many communities and are a place where all forms of recreation and leisure are undertaken from playing sport, watching sport, socialising or providing groups a place to meet.

The need for Council to support all townships also came through very strongly from the community, with many seeing this as the main barrier to enhanced opportunities, i.e. lack of financial support outside of Clare.

The notion of increasing opportunities for trails and general walking and cycling networks was also supported as was the need to increase maintenance of open spaces, providing shade in parks and having access to facilities such as toilets and water as end of trip amenities.

A general lack of variety in playspaces is evident, with the preferred being the larger, albeit privately owned playspace at Sevenhill. The question of consolidation of playspaces was met with hesitation and should Council choose this option, noting that provision is currently good, then further consultation would be warranted.

The community also acknowledge the opportunity for tourism and the benefits this would bring to the region from enhancing the State trails network that bisects the Council area, through to promoting unique features such as the model railway (engineers) club and features at larger open spaces. A common suggested inclusion within such spaces was more public realm activities such as bocce, chess and areas where communities can meet and congregate.

Community organisation feedback is in line with the community in that many thought more assistance was required from Council to enhance the recreation grounds within townships. This may come in the form of direct financial assistance, whereby for some it was clarity around the terms of their lease and the roles and responsibilities of all parties.

Strategy

The final section of the report highlights:

- A vision for open space and public realm across the region
- Guiding principles
- Council wide strategies, and
- Local township strategies.

The vision is a realistic view of sport and leisure in the region given the relatively small population base combined with a large geographic area and states:

An equitable and manageable supply of open space across all townships. Our parks, reserves and facilities will provide a range of both active and passive opportunities showcasing the unique aspects of the Region to current and future generations and tourists alike.

Policy statements (guiding principles) are proposed from the understanding of leisure, recreation, open space, sport and play, and state:

Leisure and Wellbeing

- LW 1: Leisure is a basic human right and Council will work toward ensuring a range of active and passive opportunities are available to enhance the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.
- LW 2: Council will work towards removing barriers that reduce participation in quality leisure activities
- LW 3: Leisure is a valuable conduit for social development and capacity building and can be passive or active to include things such as arts, crafts and learning new skills
- LW 4: Local community organisations are core providers of programmes and services and will be supported accordingly.
- LW 5: Leisure has a positive economic impact on the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Region and Council will work with providers and businesses to support local and regional tourism opportunities
- LW 6: Local businesses and providers will be encouraged to promote and deliver opportunities to enhance local and regional tourism

Open Space

- OS 1: Our parks will be sustainable, viable and manageable within our resource allocations
- OS 2: Council will ensure open space is protected and preserved for current and future generations and aim to provide a minimum of 9ha of useable open space per 1000 residents in our main townships and residential areas. District and Regional facilities will be spread across the District to ensure an even supply and equitable access for all.
- OS 3: We will optimise use of open space through appropriate design and management to include active and passive uses
- OS 4: We will endeavour to provide open space within easy walking access for all residents where possible and practical. In smaller townships, open space should be consolidated to ensure a range of opportunities to include active, passive, structured and unstructured sport and recreation and be considered at a minimum district level classification.
- OS 5: Where needed, Council will partner with schools and other landowners to enhance access to useable open space.
- OS 6: Our public open spaces will be safe, clean and welcoming
- OS 7: We will design our parks and open space system to encourage a sense of place and public realm and design to protect and enhance the environmental, cultural and heritage values of our region
- OS 8: We will promote our parks and open spaces networks to ensure the community are aware of parks and open space in the CGVC
- OS 9: Council will ensure our main streets are tree lined and designed with pedestrians over motor vehicles to increase a sense of place and natural protection from the environments and safety for all users.

Sport and Recreation

- SR1: Sport plays a key role in the social fabric of the region and will be supported by Council as a key form of positive leisure time activity
- SR2: Where possible and practical, sports facilities will be multi use and designed in a manner to be shared and optimised by the community.
- SR3: Sports grounds should be used to their carrying capacity noting challenges with water management and maintenance
- SR4: Local community associations are be the backbone of delivery and supported by Council to service its townships
- SR5: Council will actively work with providers to collectively enhance the delivery of opportunities throughout the region.

Playspaces

- P1: Council understands the benefits of play and the need to provide different settings and opportunities in line with a child's development. This includes opportunities for cognitive physical and social development and the appropriate mix of opportunities within playspace settings across Council.
- P2: Council will ensure a range of opportunities are provided for all age groups, with higher classifications generally meeting a greater range of ages through differing equipment and design
- P3: Playspaces will offer a range of opportunities for children of all abilities and backgrounds
- P3: Council acknowledges the natural environment is equally if not more important as structured play equipment. Where possible, Council will design play into and use the natural form to promote play.
- P4: Council will embrace technology within its parks and where possible will include it to enhance play opportunities particularly in parks of a district and higher classification.
- P5: Playspaces will be designed in accordance with their settings and innovative design used to create unique opportunities for children and their families.
- P6: The local indigenous and Australian heritage will be promoted through play and the natural flora and fauna protected but promoted through interpretive signage, design and theming of playspaces.
- P7: Playspaces will encourage children to explore and will be designed in a manner that reduces but does not negate an element of risk. Equipment will be in line with national standards but will encourage children to learn in controlled environments.

The strategies are discussed in terms high (1-3), Medium (3-5) and low (5-10) year timeframes with a summary of strategies and costs being:

Area/Priority	H (1-3yrs)	M (3-5yrs)	L (5-10yrs)	Indicative Totals
Open Space	-	\$40k	\$60k	\$100k
Sport and Recreation	\$120k	\$80k	-	\$200k
Playspaces	\$65k	\$385k	\$25k	\$475k
Townships	\$295k	\$150k	\$260k	\$705k
Indicative Totals	\$480k	\$655k	\$345k	\$1.480m

Table 11: Open Space Strategies	
OS1	Adopt the open space classification system to include land status, hierarchy and settings and adopt as a benchmark the 9ha of useable open space per 1000 residents
OS2	In townships of 500 people or more, a minimum supply of open space should be a district level facility that includes playing fields, hard courts and passive areas such as BBQs and a playspace
OS3	Ensure key open spaces across the Council are linked through appropriate wayfinding and signage from townships
OS4	Develop a park identification strategy to name and theme key parks with local community / cultural / historical and/or indigenous names to provide a sense of place and acknowledgment
OS5	Within each township, highlight visitor information bays as the key entry statements to the towns and work with the community to theme
OS6	Cemeteries have a unique purpose but offer peaceful and tranquil open space areas for reflection and relaxation. Appropriate facilities should therefore be included such as historical signage, seating, shading and landscape design to create a sense of place and tranquillity.
OS7	Investigate internally, all land parcels classified as ancillary in the open space database with a view of determining an appropriate divestment strategy for disposal
OS8	Develop an open space reserves fund for development of existing open space with funds received from any divestment.
OS9	Ensure new development open space allocation is guided by this report and the classification system and framework adopted by council, e.g. 12.5% of useable open space with a recreational value over the inclusion of ancillary land
OS10	Work directly with private landowners to ensure optimal access and use of open space for both sport and recreation outside of their own uses.
OS11	Develop and brand a Clare and Gilbert Valleys Trails and Points of Interest Maps providing day hikes and bike rides to and from townships as start / end points. This will entail a comprehensive review of the trails network

Sport and Recreation Strategies	
SR1	View all Oval and Recreation Grounds Committees as service providers of Councils sport and leisure facilities and support and fund appropriately through formalised management agreements and budgets appropriate with their level of management and operation.
SR2	Review all management agreements with Recreation Grounds Committees with a view of rationalising administration and one organisation per oval / sports grounds or separate leases with individual 'standalone' clubs and groups
SR3	Undertake a carrying capacity assessment of each of Councils 13 sporting precincts (ovals) to determine current levels of use.
SR4	Develop a CGVC Sport and Recreation Network comprising representatives of all associations and sports grounds committees to formalise roles and responsibilities and develop standardised strategic and business plans
SR5	In conjunction with the above committees and as an outcome of findings of consultation in this strategy, prioritise capital works of each facility and sports precinct.
SR6	Establish formal links, lines of communication and partnerships with the school and private providers of sport to ensure they are informed and involved with the development of sport and their clubs/groups in the region
SR7	Bring all playspace maintenance and management in house and Council take over responsibility from oval committees
SR8	Enter into partnership discussions with local schools and educational establishments to formalise community use and access of sports halls and grounds.
SR9	Ensure each townships sports precincts are master planned in accordance with current and future needs and appropriately prioritised and costed. Design should include active and passive elements to ensure they become the focal point for the community
SR10	Undertake consultation and develop and design small youth recreation areas in townships with a population exceeding 300 people (Auburn, Riverton, Saddleworth, Tarlee and Watervale) ensuring good line of sight and passive surveillance.
SR11	Determine the future need of all sports by undertaking a facility assessment study in conjunction with SSO's and based against projected populations and identified need of individual sports
SR12	Undertake a court rationalisation assessment of all tennis facilities in the region with a view of determining need and future management of each site.
SR13	Capitalise the Rattler and Riesling Trails and develop a Cycle Tourism Strategy in conjunction with local businesses to make the region a Cycle Friendly destination

Playspace strategies make assumptions (where relevant) that to enhance a playspace or include additional equipment, a figure of between \$5k - \$10k per piece (swing, slide, rocker, fitness station etc) is to be expected with a budget of approximately \$475,000 identified over the next 10 years.

The report concludes highlighting that no one department or business area of Council is responsible for the implementation of these strategies as the subject matter crosses most if not all of Councils functions. Similarly, the community themselves must be on board and understand the role they play in the overall provision of services and together both they and Council need to work together to prioritise and collectively seek funding to implement the strategy.

An external Sport and Recreation Network is recommended, and this committee should comprise representatives from all Townships and their respective community committees to understand the bigger picture and more importantly to share resources, ideas and opportunities for a coordinated approach to planning for sport, recreation, play and open space across the region.

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Section One Background

Project purpose, approach and structure

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

1.1 Overview

The Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council (CGVC) is located approximately 150km north of the Adelaide in the Yorke and Mid North Region of the State. A prime wine growing and tourist destination, the Council was formed on the 1st July 1997 through the amalgamation of the District Council of Clare, the District Council of Riverton and the District Council of Saddleworth and Auburn, the Council area is now 189,303 ha in size with a total population of 9023ⁱⁱ

The Council area has a number of valuable open space and recreational assets including the Riesling and Rattler trails and a high number of recreational facilities servicing many small towns and villages. However, as with many regional communities, open space and recreation facilities are ageing, have high resourcing/maintenance needs and are largely run by volunteers with finite resources.

The importance of sport and recreation in these communities is however very evident as it forms the backbone of the social network and, in many instances, local ovals and clubrooms are the main spaces used for entertainment for townships and their residents. With limited funds to service the number of towns and villages however, a strategic approach is required to enable Council to focus its investments in the most effective manner.

Council has therefore commissioned this study to develop a regional open space and recreational strategy that has a broader focus than just organised sport and will guide its investments for localised sport, recreation and open space for current and future generations.

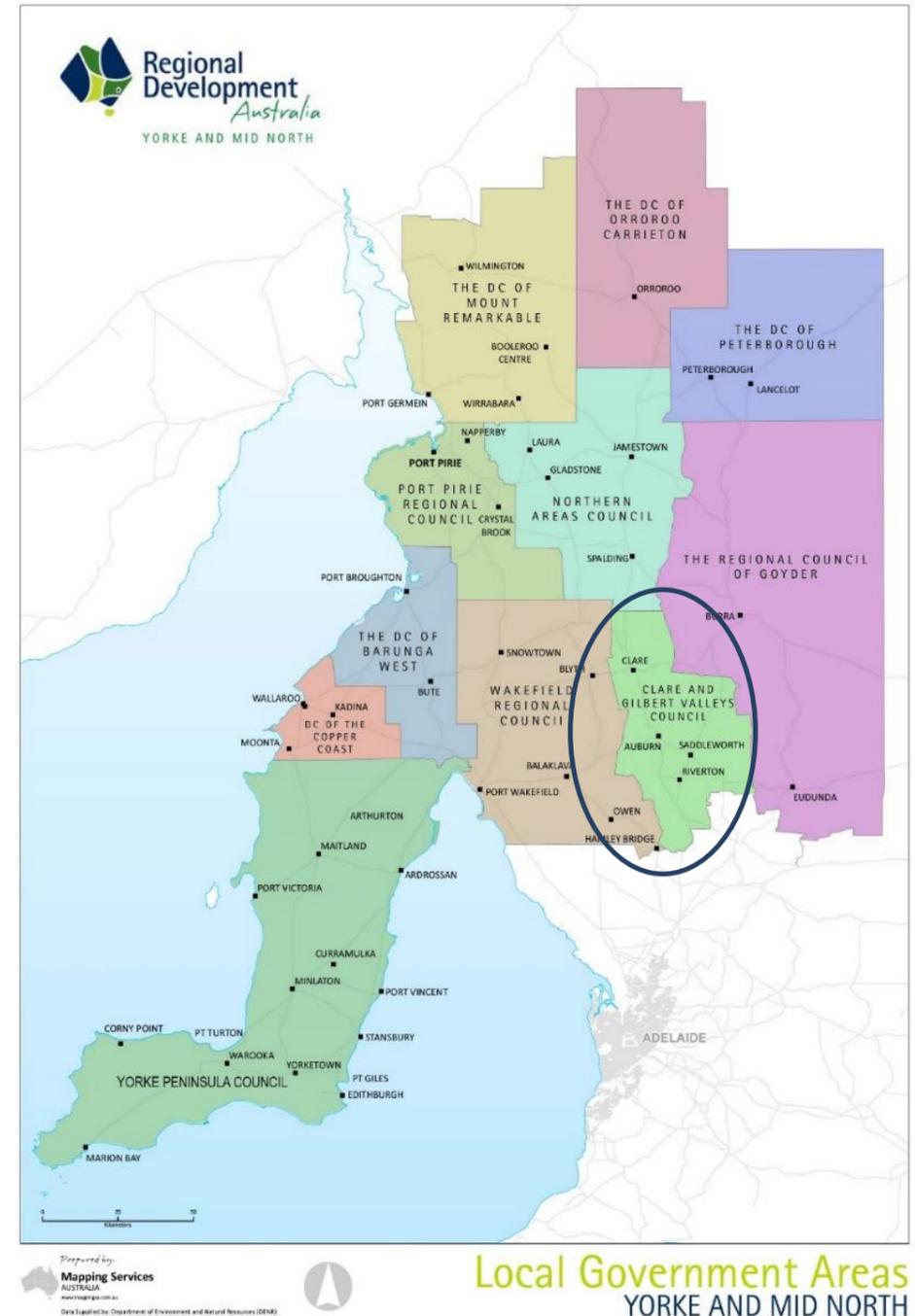


Figure 1: The Clare and Gilbert Valley Region

1.2 Project Aim and Approach

Given the background the outcome of this project is to:

Develop a coordinated and prioritised strategy for the management and design of open space to include recreation, sport, trail networks for walking/cycling and playgrounds and play spaces.

The strategy will act as a guide for prioritising projects and at this stage, is not a commitment to fund them but rather identify gaps and strategies for implementation over the next 10 years and in line with securing funding and support from a number of sources. Specific outcomes of the project are therefore to:

- *Audit existing recreational and open space facilities/infrastructure in the CGVC understanding their usage, quality and governance.*
- *Identify any shortfalls in provision of recreational and open space facilities /infrastructure based on demographic analysis.*
- *Provide direction for recreation and open space planning, management and provision within the CGVC area into the future.*
- *Outline a number of specific strategies and actions that will guide the Council in its long-term planning and decision-making.*
- *Identify opportunities for the development of new or enhancement of existing recreational and open space facilities/infrastructure.*
- *Identify opportunities for consolidation (if appropriate) of existing recreational and open space facilities/infrastructure to better serve the CGCV community.*
- *Identify opportunities for greater utilisation of existing recreational and open space facilities/infrastructure.*
- *Create priorities for Council investment, identifying potential costs of improvements to or consolidation of facilities/infrastructure and how best for Council to invest its limited funding.*

The structure of the report has therefore been divided into five sections to include key stages and understanding of the subject matter (Figure 2) and includes the development of a policy framework of understanding, localised needs, and the development of a 5-10 year strategy to enhance opportunity across the community in a realistic and sustainable manner.

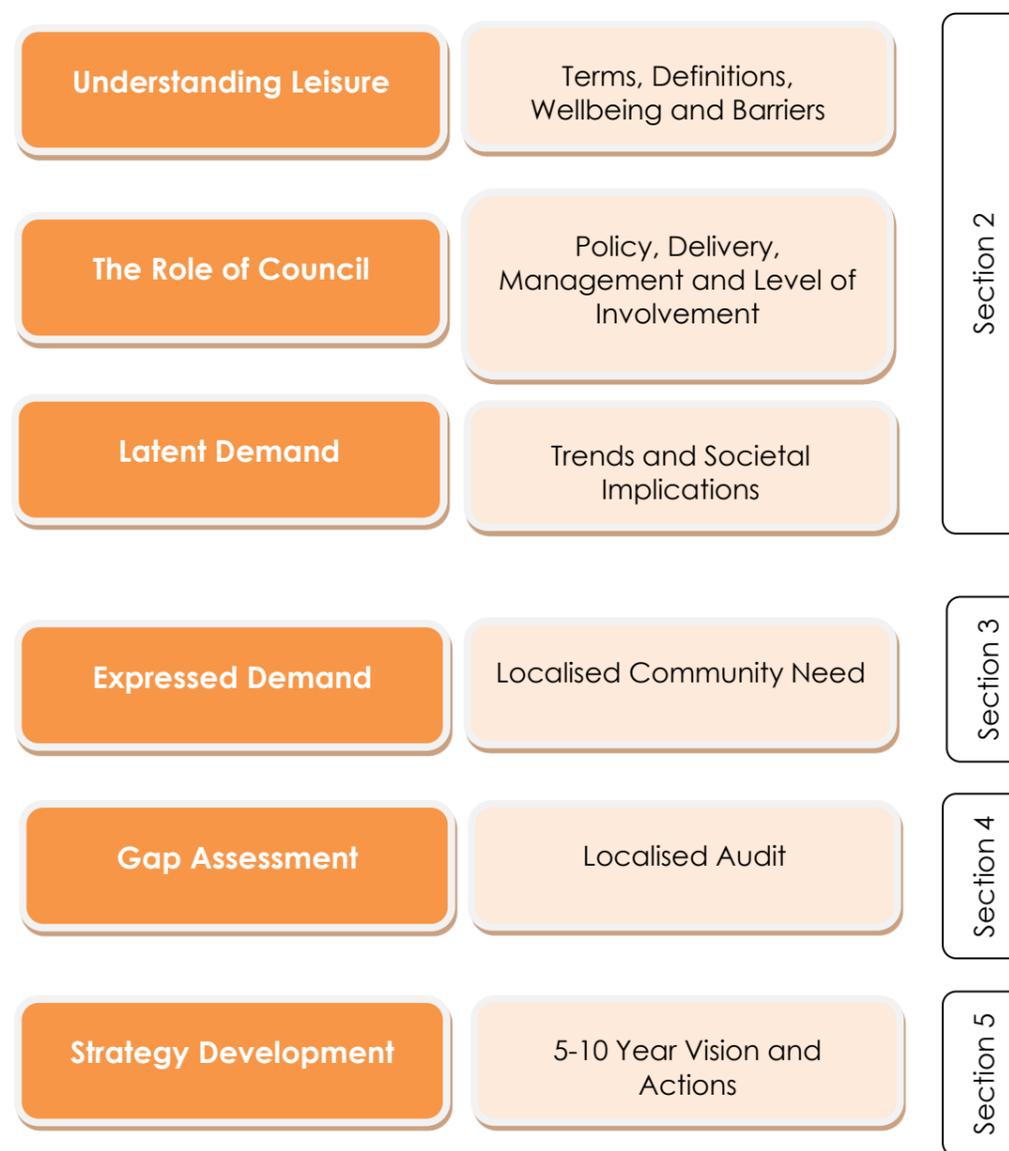


Figure 2: Report Structure



Section Two: A Policy Framework

Understanding the importance and role of Council regarding the provision of open space, leisure, sport, recreation and play.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.1 Overview

A policy framework for leisure, recreation, open space, sport and play is complex as it crosses most, if not all, of Councils departments and does not sit within one 'cost centre' of its operations. However, having a full appreciation and understanding of the subject matter will assist Council in its day to day and strategic decisions in relation to participation in quality leisure time opportunities. To this end, the policy framework for open space, leisure, recreation and sport is based initially on the terms and definitions highlighted in the glossary section of this report, with the following adding to its understanding and appreciation of the subject matter.

2.2 Wellbeing and Leisure

Associated with the appreciation of leisure (and recreation) is its link with individual wellbeing which Council has a clear role to promote within its community.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) refers to wellbeing as a 'dynamic culture consisting four areas of our own human consciousness, the natural, social, and man-made environments'ⁱⁱⁱ.

These environments are those in which our daily lives are enmeshed, and comprise several elements which, when combined, add to our overall sense of wellbeing, i.e. if any one of these 'affecters' is compromised, so is our sense of overall wellbeing. The affecters and how they relate to wellbeing are as follows:

Wellbeing Affecter	Aspects of life contributing to wellbeing
Family and Community	Support and nurture through family and networks
Health	Freedom from disability and illness
Education and Training	Realisation of personal potential through education
Work	Satisfying and rewarding work/sense of value
Economic Resources	Command over economic resources to enable consumption
Housing	Shelter, security and privacy through housing
Crime and Justice	Personal safety and protection from crime
Culture and Leisure	Time for and access to culture and leisure activities

Table 1: ABS Wellbeing Indicators

2.2.1 Leisure Benefits

As can be seen from the wellbeing framework, leisure (and culture) is identified as an important part of an individual's life in that it brings benefits to a person and society by of:

Intrinsic Value

People take part in leisure because it gives a sense of enjoyment i.e. for its own sake.

Community Networks

Leisure time participation (recreation) builds strong community networks and forms a sense of belonging.

Community Identity and Pride

Leisure and recreation build a City or Community's image and unites us when our talents are showcased to others.

Breaks Down Social Barriers

Leisure and recreation cross all cultures and can be used to express and celebrate the unique aspects of our community.

Community Spirit

Having choices and opportunities to take part in both active and passive recreation adds to the spirit of the community.

Crime Prevention

The recognition that good use of leisure time can replace otherwise anti-social behaviour.

Social Inclusion

Leisure and recreation can combat social isolation and are inclusive of specific target population groups in the community.

Mental Health

Quality leisure activities stimulate the mind and contribute to the mental wellbeing of the individual.

Physical Health

Participation in active recreation is beneficial for our physical health and can address major health issues such as obesity and coronary heart disease.

Provides Jobs

Leisure brings jobs to our community through commercial and public opportunities such as recreation centres, cafes and cinemas etc.

Economic Development

Leisure is a major contributor to the local economy through tourism, events and leisure businesses.

These benefits are of vital importance in enhancing the wellbeing of residents and leisure, recreation and sport will be viewed as key conduits to achieve many of its corporate and community aspirations and goals.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.3 Barriers to Participation

To assist Council in making an informed decision in relation to its role and the identified scope and benefits associated with leisure and recreation is the need to recognise barriers which may impact on participation in quality leisure and recreation opportunities. These should be assessed in terms of their own community and consideration and strategies adopted to address barriers associated with:

- Age
- Gender
- Social/Demographic group
- Cultural background
- Physical ability
- Cost/income
- Transport
- Availability of programmes and services
- Physical access
- Awareness
- Lack of time
- Localised barriers unique to specific communities



Amongst other things, barriers to participation in leisure include cost or a persons' ability to pay, age, ability, time, transport and cultural background. These aspects need to be understood and strategies employed to remove or alleviate barriers.

2.4 Trends

Understanding and appreciation of trends in both society and more specifically by the way people recreate, has both a direct and indirect impact on the way sport and recreation is managed and provided by local authorities. The following therefore is an overview of some modern trends and their impact on the provision of sport and recreation in Australian society.

Awareness: There is increasing recognition of the benefits of open space, sport and recreation in improving quality of life, health and wellbeing. This has led to higher expectations for facilities, programs and services that need to be provided.

Culture: Australia is a multi-cultural society and people recognise the value of celebrating diversity as well as requesting activities and facilities not traditionally catered for in mainstream recreation.

Longevity: Australia's ageing society is shifting the priorities in sport and recreation provision for many communities. The implications include the need to ensure physical access is addressed while considering the range of programs provided particularly for this age group.

Volunteers: Decreasing personal time has led to people now being less willing or able to volunteer. This is also the case with an ageing community that unlike their parents have the flexibility and often greater resources for travel and access to a range of leisure time activities. In turn this impacts on the long-term commitment to volunteering.

Litigation: Increased awareness of safety, public liability and child protection have added to the legal responsibilities and liabilities providers and community groups are subject to.

Youth: The need for children to undertake more physical activity is well documented with increasing rates of obesity. Likewise, the benefit of participation in quality leisure time activities and opportunities carries with it many additional social and personal benefits. Increasingly for this age cohort there is a preference for individual and unstructured / informal activities rather than team or group activities and therefore opportunity arises to consider appropriate design elements into the urban form to encourage good use of leisure time.

Work Patterns: Working hours extend outside the traditional 9-5 resulting in people seeking activities during times not traditionally catered for. The need for greater flexibility in the management and structure of sport and recreation is required including access to open space.

Public Realm: Consideration for the public realm and the significance placed on the spaces between buildings, streetscapes and public places have changed dramatically over time in response to developmental and lifestyle factors.

Technology: Greater access to technology, the internet and longer opening hours of shops and entertainment venues has seen these elements as key competitors to sport and recreation for people's time. Internet use and technology provide sport and recreation providers with opportunities to capitalise on new marketing and management tools for their organisations to retain and attract membership.

Community Sport: The administration of sporting clubs has become more complex with the increased emphasis on risk management and decline in volunteers. As a consequence, managers of sports facilities are looking strategically at the way they manage facilities to ensure optimal use to benefit both the lessee (shared costs) and the community (increased access and opportunity).

Climate: Climate change has impacted on sports fields and open space and required reconsideration of usage levels, maintenance and other sustainable management practices to balance risk with the need to provide sport and recreation. Modern irrigation methods are key issues when planning for sport and recreation, as is the need to consider synthetic surfaces to alleviate wear and tear on turf playing areas.

Infrastructure: Much existing sport and recreation infrastructure is the legacy of a surge in development witnessed in the mid to late 1970s – in many cases it is over 40 years old and nearing its useable life. Modern planning methods and demands on open space and sport now mean councils are taking stock of their facilities and looking at design and location to ensure optimal use and access.

Urban Development: An increasing population and housing density within our cities and town centres (and the appreciation that this will continue into the future) has resulted in a decrease in private and public open space. Trends acknowledge that higher value must be placed on public realm and greater investment made into quality spaces for use by people to spend time, connect with nature, interact and recreate.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.4.1 Mega Trends

In 2013, the CSIRO, in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission released a document entitled "The Future of Australian Sport: Megatrends Shaping the Sports Sector over Coming Decades"^{iv}. It identified six megatrends that it predicted will shape the sports sector into the future. While the document notes that there is some evidence that each megatrend is already being felt, the full impact of each megatrend will play out in coming decades. The impacts of these trends for the CGVC Strategy suggest that:

- Given the rise of non-organised sport and physical activity, people will require greater and more flexible times to access facilities – through summer and winter and for extended periods.
- Activities, challenges and non-mainstream pursuits are experiencing growth in Australia. Provisions and facilities need to be flexible to cater to alternative programmes and changes in demand.
- The design of infrastructure needs to support flexibility as wider age groups pursue recreation and communities look for more varied leisure time.
- Providing facilities that cater to sport, recreation and play are important in delivering health, social and economic benefits.
- Sport and recreation clubs of all levels will need to meet growing requirements to become financially sustainable through formal governance and commercial endeavours.
- Sports without high paying high-performance programmes may find it difficult to compete and will need to adopt creative recruitment and retention strategies to ensure sustainability.

The six megatrends are summarised as.

1. **A Perfect Fit:** Individualised sport and fitness activities are on the rise with people fitting sport into their increasingly busy and time-fragmented lifestyles to achieve personal health objectives. Participation rates in aerobics, running, walking and gym memberships have all risen sharply over the past decade while participation rates for many organised sports have held constant or declined.
2. **From Extreme to Mainstream:** This captures the rise of lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports popular with younger generations. These sports typically involve complex, advanced skills and have some element of inherent danger and/or thrill-seeking. They are also characterised by a strong lifestyle element and participants often obtain cultural self-identity and self-expression through them.
3. **More than Sport:** The broader benefits of sport are being increasingly recognised by governments, business and communities. Sport can help achieve mental and physical health, crime prevention, social development and international cooperation objectives.
4. **Everybody's Game:** Australia and other countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) face an ageing population. This will change the types of sports we play and how we play

them. There are indications that Australians are embracing sport into their old age. To retain strong participation rates, sports of the future will need to cater for senior citizens. They will also need to cater for the changing cultural make-up of Australia.

5. **New Wealth, New Talent:** Population and income growth throughout Asia will create tougher competition and new opportunities for Australia both on the sports field and in the sports business environment.
6. **Tracksuits to Business Suits:** Market forces are likely to exert greater pressure on sport in the future. In some sports, elite athletes have had considerable pay rises and large sponsorship deals. Sports with higher salaries may draw athletes away from those with lower salaries. Loosely organised community sports associations are likely to be replaced by organisations with corporate structures and more formal governance systems in light of market pressures. The cost of participating in sport is also rising and this is a participation barrier for many people.



The Australian Sport Commission (Sport Australia) in conjunction with the CSIRO, identify some major trends in Australia to include unstructured activity remaining popular, acknowledging the business of sport, the dawning of new 'extreme' activities over traditional sport, the need for multipurpose facilities and our ageing society meaning people will stay active longer than in previous generations

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.4.2 Health and Physical Activity

Whilst health and physical activity is not a trend, the link between the good use of leisure time and a healthy lifestyle is well documented with the following being some key considerations linking the two:

- 92% of the burden of disease resulting from physical inactivity is borne by people aged 15 years and above – therefore it is imperative that participation is encouraged well into adulthood.
- The minimum level of physical activity recommended in order to prevent disease is based upon 5 x 30 minutes per week,
- World Health Organisation studies have shown that for developed nations, physically active individuals save between US\$500-\$1000 a year in overall healthcare costs
- Similarly, other evidence suggests that workplace physical activity programmes can reduce sick leave by an average of 12%, decrease healthcare costs by an average of 25%, and increase workplace productivity by an average of 15%.
- Of the Australian population aged 15 years and over, an estimated 60% (11.1 million people) reported that they had participated in sport and physical recreation at least once during the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Walking for exercise was the most popular physical recreational activity, with 19% of people aged 15 years and over walking for exercise at least once in the 12 months prior to interview. Females were more likely to walk for exercise than males (25% and 14% respectively). Fitness and gym were the next most popular activity (17%) again with more females than males participating (19% and 16% respectively).
- An estimated 5.2 million people aged 15 years and over (28%) reported that they were involved in organised sport and physical activity. This included 4.7 million people involved in playing roles (26% of persons aged 15 years and over), and 1.4 million people involved in non-playing roles (7.7%)
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that 14% of adult males and 25% of adult females participate in walking as a recreational or exercise activity; the percentage of the adult population who cycle, 8.5% (males) and 4% (females) is much less. Among children, age 5 to 14 years, the estimated participation rate of bike riding is 70% for boys and 57% for girls.

The link with and between leisure and physical activity is therefore evident and should be encouraged and promoted by Council to enhance the wellbeing of its community.

2.5 The Role of Council

Given the link with wellbeing, Council has a clear role in supplying and supporting quality leisure and recreation opportunities to the community, not as an 'additional' service, but as a core component of delivery. Delivery can however come in many forms and whilst direct service provision is an obvious choice, Council can 'provide' and 'promote' the good use of leisure time through:

1. Directly providing the service through the employment of staff
2. Supporting and encouraging third party providers
3. Managing and providing facilities for the public to access
4. Promoting what is on offer

These roles have been summarised and explained further in the following model which has been modified from the City of Onkaparinga in south Australia^v



Figure 3: The Role of Council in Leisure Provision

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.5.1 Management and Delivery Options

In addition to understanding its role and analysing its level of involvement in a project, service or facility, Council has several options when considering how services will be managed from in house to outsourcing either to the community or the private sector. This is ultimately a political decision, but a model (Figure 4) highlights the various management options commonly used by local authorities along with their likely financial contribution, the type of group undertaking management and the level of control Council has over the delivery of the service itself.

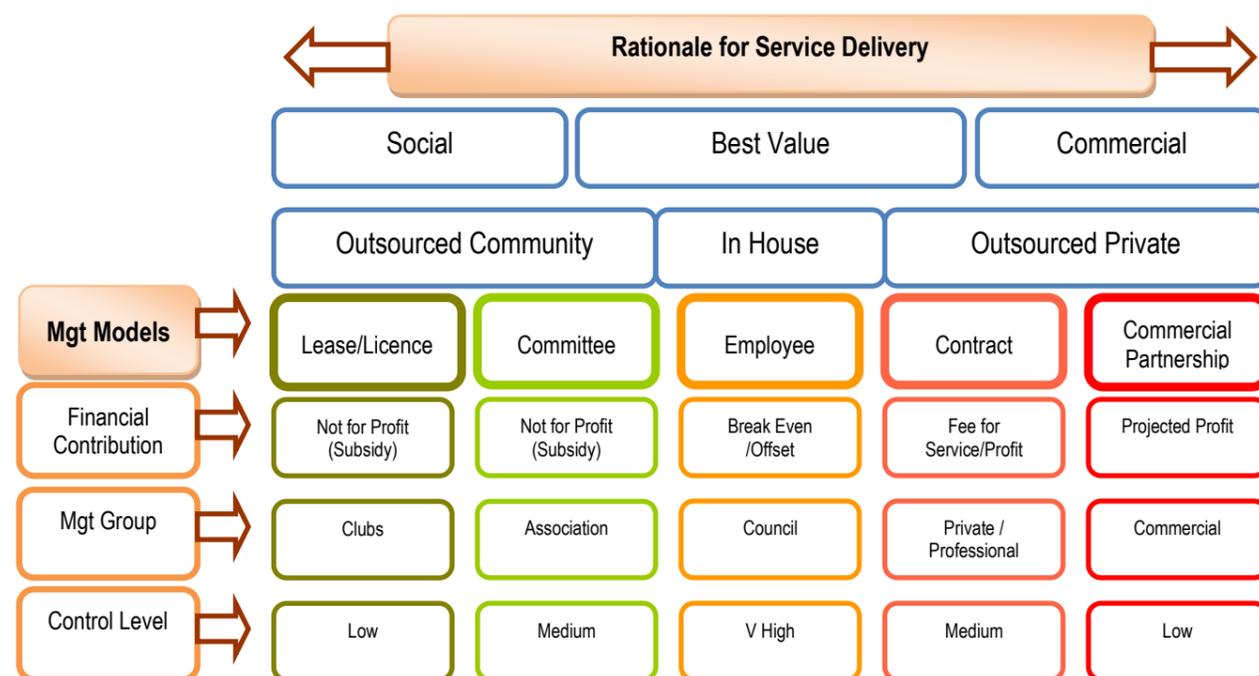


Figure 4: Management Options

Rationale for Service Delivery

Three options need considering when assessing the rationale for why a service is being delivered, namely:

- **Social:** if the intent of the facility or service is to primarily meet the needs of a community where there is a gap in provision or service, then the management option may reflect a more socially orientated approach. Whilst this ensures a collaborative input from stakeholders, these types of facilities or services are normally heavily subsidised by Council, e.g. parks, libraries, community houses and some recreation and aquatic centres etc.
- **Commercial:** These types of facility are normally based on a user pays model whereby the service is not deemed core to Councils delivery but may offer a broader service to the community. These arrangements could include private recreation facilities which complement overall services rather than meeting a gap in provision. Examples may include large scale centres with leisure pools; gymnasiums or facilities that have a large regional catchment.
- **Best Value:** A common approach to public facility management is the notion that facilities should primarily meet the needs of the intended user whilst being financially accountable. That is the facility should aim to become cost neutral or at the least the subsidy heavily reduced while still meeting a community need.

The notion of 'Best Value' stems from a statutory requirement of local government in the UK in the 90's and later in Australia in the early 2000's; its premise is still relevant today. As a replacement for Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT), or the Purchaser, Provider Split as it was commonly referred to in Australia which saw services tendered, competed and measured against financial outputs; Best Value (BV) attempts to balance provision against four key indicators of:

- Strategic Objectives: Why the service exists and what it seeks to achieve.
- Service Delivery Outcomes: how well the service is being operated in order to achieve the strategic objectives.
- Quality: the quality of the services delivered, explicitly reflecting users' experience of services, and
- Fair access: ease and equality of access to services.

In summary the Best Value approach assumes that services must be delivered and managed in a way that reflects the rationale for service delivery (social or commercial outcome) and the quality of service delivered in a manner that reflects the end users' needs.

Management Options

Given the thought process behind the rationale for the service delivery, several scenarios are available to include:

- **Lease or Licence**

Driven from more of the 'social' principle is to wholly offer a facility / site / service to an individual agency or group to utilise for its own activity or service. Effectively this passes the operational onus onto one group but also means some loss of control over the operational aspects of the facility /site for Council although terms can be written into lease agreements. Key considerations of this are:

- A legal agreement between two entities, i.e. the parties must be incorporated legal entities.
- The lessee has rights for a specific time in return for a rent.
- The owner has no (or little) control of policy and direction and forfeits all involvement in day-to-day management except in breach of terms.
- The lease is usually for a long period with an option for renewal; normally 21 years but with five-year options plus right of renewal.
- It is difficult for the lessor to withdraw from a lease without the approval of the lessee. Within the terms of the lease, the lessee has the freedom to manage the site / building as the lessee sees fit within the terms of the agreement.
- Once the lease has been signed, the terms cannot be changed without the consent of both parties except where expressly stated in the terms.
- This is not a strong option if Council wishes to include the service provider in services development or strategic growth of the whole service and can isolate groups to focus on their own needs rather than the general good of the community.
- A licence (or often referred to as a permit), allows for a specific use at a designated time and/or period. This is commonly used where the user does not require full access to a site or facility but determined a specific time and date which outside of this time can then be 'licensed' to other users for access.

Opportunity also exists to have an anchor tenant model and within the lease arrangement explicitly state the intent for sub lessees and their rights. This could include an agreed allocation of takings from centre/facility activities such as programming, bar, catering etc. and include rights for shared programmed use of the site and facilities.

- **Committee of Management**

Balancing more centrally but still to the left of a commercial venture is a Committee of Management which is a common model particularly for facilities and precincts whereby a number of groups are located. Section 41 of the Local Government Act of South Australia allows for individual committees to form and oversee specific facilities on its behalf, with other models including direct lease arrangements with incorporated associations to administer some council functions. Key aspects of management include:

- A legal agreement between Council and the Association is developed.
- Councils have little or no control over the day-to-day management
- Profits from the service are retained within the Community Association.
- Council usually underwrites the association by annual lease or licence.
- The individual Community Associations usually require some assistance with cash flow funding in the short term to enable them to function. Individual user groups may, over time, come to exert a high degree of influence over the operation of the centre.
- Some associations employ professional contract managers or groups and oversee their day-to-day management.
- Any profit made from the year-end stays within the Committee and is reinvested by the Board in local community provision (normally within the centre or community).

- **In House (Employment)**

Also termed 'Direct Service of Management' the benefits of in-house management are that the owner (Council) retains full control of all aspects of the business. In South Australia this is a common approach to managing recreation facilities whereby managers are employed by Council and normally sit within a 'provider' department such as community services or facility management.

- **Contract**

One of the more common approaches is an arrangement whereby a facility and/or service are outsourced to a third party (normally a commercial operator) for a fee for service arrangement for a given period of time. This is more common when recreation centres are considered whereby specific knowledge and experience is required to ensure optimal access and use of public facilities. Downfalls include some loss of control and additional management fees, however these can be negotiated and considered within a tight procurement and contractual process that identifies, roles, responsibilities and both social and commercial KPI's.

Commercial Partnership (CP)

A commercial partnership, or often termed a Public Private Partnership (PPP) is a process whereby the private sector and government enter into an agreement to construct, manage and deliver recreation services. Other terms for facilities that are built and transferred to Government are known as BOOT Schemes (Build, Own, Operate & Transfer), such agreements are normally undertaken when:

- A developer agrees to provide a service or facility in lieu of or to support a commercial venture or
- A commercial gain is envisaged that can fill gaps in an area of identified need.

This approach differs from the fully outsourcing approach as it implies that both parties are committed to, and work towards achieving common key strategic outcomes.

2.6 Open Space

Open space is the foundation for the majority of opportunities for sport, recreation and leisure and it is therefore important to understand this link and plan and manage land accordingly.

Parks and open space refer to land that has been reserved for the purpose of formal and informal sport and recreation, preservation of natural environments, provision of green space and/or urban storm water management. Parks and open space vary in size, form and the functions that they perform and therefore a strategic approach is needed in assessing the needs of a community and planning an open space network^{vi}.

However, in some cases a strategic assessment will identify a need to reorientate or rationalise existing open space to overcome past planning mistakes and to address access and maintenance issues. An open space network should therefore encourage more active lifestyles by offering a variety of safe and attractive spaces that are well distributed throughout a neighbourhood and are accessible and cater to the sporting and recreational needs of the community^{vii}

Preferably public open space should attempt to cater for multiple uses. For example, through landscaping and the addition of facilities, a sporting oval could be designed to cater for sportspeople, walkers, and children^{viii}. With low rates of participation by children, and especially by adults, in field based sports (ABS 2009) there has been a move away from allocating a high proportion of local open space to play fields, instead focusing on providing open space for informal recreational use close to where people live in combination with public access to school play fields.

2.6.1 Benefits of Open Space

Open space provides a range of benefits that can be categorised and summarised into benefits to the community, the economy and the environment (Figure 5) and plays an integral part of the way of life of the Clare and Gilbert Valleys, its residents and visitors to include social, economic and environmental benefits.

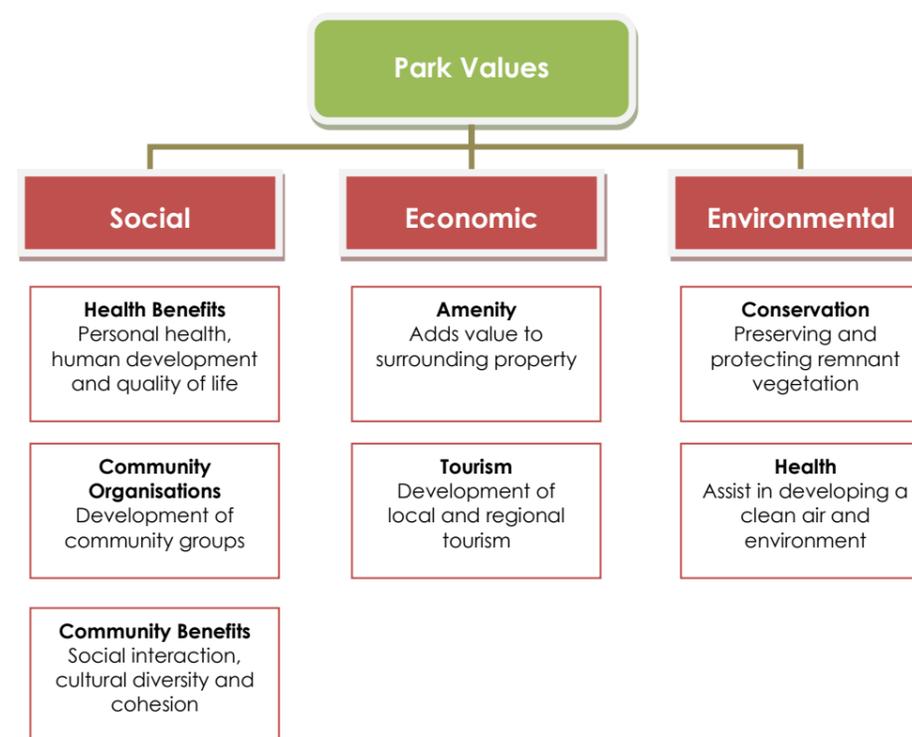


Figure 5: Values of Parks

Source: Modified from the Sydney Urban Parks Education and Research Group Model

Social Benefits

The Impact on Physical and Mental Health

Obesity, physical inactivity and mental health issues are major concerns in society. Access to good-quality, well-maintained public spaces can help to improve our physical and mental health by encouraging people to walk more, to play sport, or simply to enjoy a green and natural environment.

Parks are places for both structured and unstructured activity with research supporting that natural environments offer low cost preventative measures to combat public health issues and increase levels of physical activity in communities^{ix}

In Australia one in five people will experience depression and more than 6 million working days are lost as a result.^x Enhanced social outcomes encourage social interaction and development of social skills, improve social networks and social capital, increase community cohesion and pride, and create safer communities.

Promoting Neighbourliness and Social Inclusion

Open space near homes provides valuable places to socialise with neighbours and meet friends and family.

A Venue for Social Events

One of the benefits of high-quality public space is its potential as a venue for social events. Well managed festivals and other events can have a very positive effect on the urban environment, drawing the community together and bringing financial, social and environmental benefits.

A Place for Sport

Participation in sport creates a wide range of benefits for individuals and the communities. Sport and recreation can also enhance community identity and promote community integration. Individuals learn and share community values and attitudes and can gain a better understanding of other groups in society.^{xi}

The Benefits for Children and Young People

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to play, recreation and culture.^{xii} Play is crucial for many aspects of children's development, from the acquisition of social skills, experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills such as language and comprehension, and of course physical skills.

Nature Play

Open space areas within the urban landscape can offer a stimulating external environment in which to play resulting in healthier children more able to deal with managed risk. The challenges inherent in this kind of natural play space, with its differences in topography and varying forms of vegetation and rocks, encourage children's improved development.



Parks offer many social benefits particularly relating to mental and physical health. They are places for interaction, reflection, exertion and play and provide a free and valuable outlet for communities across the world to meet, integrate and socialise.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Economic Benefits

A high-quality public environment can have a significant impact on the economic life of urban centres big or small and is therefore an essential part of any successful open space strategy. Economic benefits include:

Good for Business

For retailers, a good-quality public environment can improve trading by attracting more people into an area. It has been shown that well-planned improvements to public spaces within town centres can boost commercial trading and generate significant private sector investment ^{xiii}

Positive impact on Property Prices

Many towns and cities are now seeing the redevelopment of high-quality public spaces aids regeneration of an area, with commercial property prices increasing. There is evidence that a well-planned, well-managed public space has a positive impact on the price of nearby domestic properties.

Being Close to Public Space Adds Economic Value

Small businesses choosing a new business location rank open space, parks and recreation as a number-one priority^{xiv}. Proximity to playgrounds also increases land values and where there are a high number of street trees, this also adds value to land values.^{xv}

By helping to increase the value of homes through open space, wider benefits in terms of increased rates for Council becomes evident and therefore supports the value of open space from an economic as well as social value.

Generates Local and Regional Tourism

Open space can generate local and regional tourism. If designed and managed appropriately, open space can be used for a multitude of activities and can offer great financial incentives to local communities through well planned events and secondary spend of visitors to the region which in turns boosts the local economy.



Open space provides and adds economic value to our towns and cities from businesses that establish in or near parks, events and activities that attract local and regional tourism, or the increased value of properties that are near to them.

Environmental Benefits

Value from Biodiversity and Nature

The significant increase in hard surfacing and the reduction in green spaces lead to higher temperatures in towns and cities than in the surrounding countryside. This is known as the 'heat island effect'.^{xvi}

Vegetation, whether in public spaces or private gardens, can help to redress this imbalance. It brings many important environmental benefits to urban areas, including the cooling of air and the absorption of atmospheric pollutants.^{xvii}

Trees Cool Air and Provide Shade

Studies show that the greatest influence on ecology is the proportion of green space, particularly trees near to or within them. The places with the greatest number of trees generally have better carbon-storage capacity and a lower level of surface water running off into drains (allowing sewers to cope better with water-flow and minimising flood problems). Temperatures are also generally cooler by up to 7°C where vegetation was 50 per cent compared to areas where the vegetation cover was only 15 per cent.^{xviii}

Movement in and Between Spaces

One of the fundamental functions of public space is that it allows us to move around on foot, by bicycle, by car, motorbike or public transport. Well-designed streets and public spaces encourage walking and cycling and have the power to make our environment a safer one by reducing vehicle speeds and use.

Good-quality public space encourages cycling

In Copenhagen, Denmark, measures were introduced to reduce traffic and make the city centre more pleasant. A six-fold increase in high-quality public spaces in the city led to a variety of social, environmental and economic benefits, including a 65 per cent rise in bicycle use since 1970. Use of public spaces generally has gone up too, demonstrating that if a city is furnished with well-planned, well-managed open spaces, people will use them— even in a relatively cold climate like Copenhagen's.^{xix}



Parks and green streets provide environmental benefits to our communities including shade, reducing temperatures associated with the urban island effect, encouraging non-motorised transport, and providing valuable habitats for wildlife in our urban environment.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.6.2 Open Space Classifications

A common approach to classify open space is a hierarchical network to ensure there is a diversity of experiences based on access and even spatial distribution (distance from the home). This is based on a principle that everybody should have access to well-maintained open space for passive purposes within walking distance of the home and for other more specialised activities people will tend to travel greater distances and generally stay longer and thereby may expect additional services and facilities.

'Catchments' therefore consider a maximum direct distance from the home to the reserve with local space being more frequent than say areas of specific interest and higher usage. However, there are other physical barriers such as train lines, main arterial roads, creeks and other 'obstacles' that can hinder access to open space that must be considered. That is, while a reserve maybe located within the nominated catchment, barriers pose restrictions and therefore Council may consider it appropriate to plan for and provide additional parcels of open space in such areas.

The proposed classification system is therefore discussed in terms of four main categories of Local, Neighbourhood, District and Regional with a subcategory of Ancillary open space. Each of these classifications has a core and advanced principle that guides design and management defined as follows:

Local Open Space

Local open space assumes space catering for the immediate community within walking distance (500 metre radius). This is based on a principle that the whole community will have access to open space for relaxation and/or informal low key activities and should therefore include the aged, infirm; people without transport, parents with young children and people with disabilities etc. all having equal access to green space within easy distance of their homes.

Local open space will have a predominant function of being passive and therefore designed accordingly. Such space may be used incidentally (e.g. walking through a park to the shops) or deliberately (e.g. to relax). Key design elements could therefore include:

Core Elements

- Passive area
- Low key planting
- Shade (natural)
- Seating (natural or bench)

Advanced Elements

- Minimal play equipment catering primarily for junior play opportunities (0-6) noting that not all local playspaces require equipment
- Minor irrigated areas

Neighbourhood Open Space

Neighbourhood level open space caters for broader catchments and is normally distributed within 1km of households and designed to meet the needs of the whole family. Such areas include additional play areas for senior play (6-12) and areas for informal sport and recreation such as kick-to-kick. These parks attract greater levels of use and encourage purpose visitation (longer stays) and can therefore include appropriate amenities such as toilets and areas for family picnics and social gatherings. Key elements include:

Core Elements

As per local plus

- Picnic areas (bench and shade)
- Informal irrigated active areas with passive elements for family recreation
- Playspace for junior and senior play 0-12
- Bins

Advanced Elements

- BBQ's
- Water fountains
- Community art or a special feature



Local open space like this parcel of land in Clare (above), is maintained to a base level of provision. If required (in an area of identified need or gap), it may also have junior play equipment and seating but is often just a small green space with some passive value.

Neighbourhood open space like Essington Reserve in Clare (below), have more facilities and higher levels of maintenance and often includes play equipment for older children and other facilities such as shade, seating and water and BBQ / picnic areas



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

District Open Space

District open space considers the wider community and areas that people deliberately choose to visit for the purpose of a specific activity:

Core Elements

As per the core and advanced design for neighbourhood parks with further uses dictated by need; i.e. all district parks should have the capacity to be used and developed for any of the above mentioned uses (sport, youth, dogs etc.) but design should be flexible to encourage as many multi use activities as possible whilst minimising conflicts between users.

Advanced

- Toilets: Due to longer visits by people from outside the 'neighbourhood'
- Fenced playspaces: To encourage a sense of safety
- Sports Fields: specific structured use of open space to include playing surfaces, sports lighting and clubrooms
- Youth Parks: multi use areas
- Dog exercise areas: Off leash and/or purpose-built parks
- Cultural/Civic: events and or ceremonies
- Environmental: specific areas of interest or 'wilderness'

Regional Open Space

Regional space assumes areas with the following key elements:

- Cultural: Areas that have a unique historical or cultural significance
- Foreshores and Beaches
- Environmental: Areas of natural significance or 'wilderness'
- Venues and Arenas: Areas of open space for specific events (sporting or other) that attract local and regional tourism

Ancillary Open Space

This relates to areas where the primary role is not recreational open space but where such areas are complementary and can serve as an addition to primary open space areas. This includes school reserves, cemeteries, road verges, creek lines, storm water channels as well as minor road networks that provide scope to incorporate open space features such as linear trails, revegetation opportunities and dedicated walking/cycling links.

These areas are significant and serve as supplementary greenlinks between existing parks and reserves and are particularly important in suburbs identified as deficient in open space.



District open space like Centennial Park in Auburn often has a specific recreation or sport purpose and offers opportunities for a wide range of users and age groups. This space is larger and designed and managed to a much higher level of maintenance and could include fenced playspaces, toilets and BBQ and end of trip facilities like car parking and bike racks etc.

Regional open space is land parcels which attract usage and visitation from a wider catchment and where people choose to visit for a specific reason. This could be sporting, cultural or for tourist reasons and therefore people tend to stay for much longer periods of time such as Winkler Park in Saddleworth



Ancillary open space may have uses other than recreation and could include easements, water catchments, or undeveloped or uncleared land such as this large parcel of land in Hilltown. Recreational value is minimal, but they can add to the overall open space aesthetics



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.7 Playspaces

Understanding playspace design and location is crucial to ensure an even and varied distribution of play for different ages.

2.7.1 The Importance of Play

The vital place of play in children's lives is uncontested. Play is the vehicle through which children experience and interpret the world (Webb-Williams, 2019). Children are born with an innate drive to play. It is a natural instinct which means that children are intrinsically motivated to play. Children not only want to play, they need to play. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities (Play England).

Moreover, play has been recognised as one of the most basic human rights by UNICEF. Article 31 in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (www.unicef.org), to which Australia is a signatory and a ratifying country, states "That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts^{xx}.

2.7.2 The Benefits of Play

Research shows that play has many benefits for children, including:

- increasing their self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-respect
- improving and maintaining their physical and mental health
- giving them the opportunity to socialise with other children
- allowing them to increase their confidence through developing new skills
- promoting their imagination, independence and creativity
- offering opportunities for all abilities and backgrounds to play together
- providing opportunities for developing social skills and learning
- building resilience through risk taking and challenge, problem solving, and dealing with new and novel situations
- providing opportunities to learn about the environment and wider community.

Evidence also supports wider benefits of play to include:

- parents feeling secure knowing their children are happy, safe and enjoying themselves
- families benefit from healthier, happier children
- play services are frequently seen as a focal point for communities
- offers opportunities for social interaction for the wider community and supports the development of a greater sense of community spirit and cohesion
- public outside spaces have an important role in the everyday lives of children and young people, especially as a place for meeting friends
- parks and other green spaces are popular with adults taking young children out to play and for older children to spend time together.



Play benefits are well researched and support the importance and role in child development and their growth as good and healthy citizens.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.7.3 Play Theory

It is also widely acknowledged and researched that play has a significant impact on the social, physical and mental development of the child. Play theory in general identifies three broad categories of play behaviour that apply across all ages but the way they are interpreted by each age group varies with some type of play assuming greater importance at particular stages of child development.

- **Cognitive Play** includes those activities that challenge the intellect of the child and can include games of strategy, exploration, observation or those that use and develop language. Council playgrounds can develop cognitive behaviour through natural areas for exploration and observation of living things; spaces and materials for outdoor games such as hopscotch and hide and seek and materials and tools for use in sand and water settings. Other concepts can include spaces for quiet activities such as reading, contemplation and nature observation of complex spaces or structures, which challenge the user's perceptual skills.
- **Social Play** can be found both by using existing physical equipment and through learning and exploring with friends in the natural environment. Whilst the latter have not been traditionally provided for in the public domain, councils are beginning to design playspaces through appropriate landscaping including sand, water, plants, trees and sculptures etc. to enhance natural play. Some small-group activities such as hopscotch, some ball games and the traditional rhyming and running games require small spaces, changes in level, possibly firm surfaces, semi-enclosure, objects as targets and focal points, and durable planting or other elements, which may be used in the course of a game.
- **Physical Play** is also often referred to as gross motor activity and can include running, hanging, climbing, experiencing height, agility/gymnastic activities, sliding, jumping, balancing, swinging, crawling, bouncing, spinning, rocking, ball games, skipping etc.

These activities are generally more 'active' and therefore adequate space is required in a suitable environment where other users will not be disturbed. Some of these activities are well provided for by traditional play equipment although others are more dependent upon the size and particular qualities of spaces or other elements.



Examples of Play Theory

Above: Cognitive play

Below: Social Play

Right: Physical Play



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.7.4 Planning for Different Needs

Given the broad categories of play theory, playspaces need to include a number of components to encourage cognitive, social, and physical elements. However, not all playspaces will include all of these as the hierarchy will offer differing play experiences and target different users. That is, playspaces can and should be designed for a number of ages to include:

- **Toddlers (ages 1-3):** Simple settings and small scaled and detailed environments with friendly surfaces and a familiar adult close by. These age groups cannot perceive danger and must be protected from hazards. Play areas for young children must be sited away from traffic.
- **Infants (ages 3-6):** The ages from three to six years cover a wide range of development in children. Co-ordination and physical skill development is relatively proficient by 5 years and children of this age need to practice and hone skills such as climbing, running, agility, skipping, and ball play.
- **Juniors (ages 6-12):** Older children may use play equipment as incidental props in their group games. For example, play structures may be used as part of obstacle courses, part of chasing and hiding games, as a lookout or a refuge; as a meeting and socialising place for after school activities or as a 'base' for group activities.
- **Teenagers (ages 13 +):** Areas for 'play' for teenagers needs to be carefully managed and monitored and in some instance's youth recreation requires a separate study to determine the broader needs of this group. While it is acknowledged young people will use open space for a number of uses including skateboarding, bike riding, unstructured sport or just 'hanging out' with friends etc., the location areas needs to be carefully managed to avoid potential conflicts of use with younger children and their carers while ensuring a sense of ownership by the young people.
- **Adults:** Adults should not be excluded from using playgrounds, and equipment needs to be designed and developed for use by this group, i.e. the provision of swing seats and rockers designed for use by adults is a way of encouraging adults to use park facilities with their children. Naturally, provision for adults at the exclusion of children is not the intention, but design standards now consider loadings and structural requirements to withstand use by adults.
- **Disabilities:** An inclusive playspace provides access to a variety of play experiences where everyone can engage and play together. This is not to say that every item of play equipment needs to be fully inclusive, but consideration should be given to access and inclusion in a number of playspaces across a Local Government Authority (LGA).



Planning for Play

It's important to understand the differing needs of various ages and circumstances when designing playspaces as these will change within relatively short periods of time and vary according to ability.

Top left: Toddlers
Middle left: Juniors
Bottom left: Adults

Top right: Infants
Middle right: Teenagers
Bottom right: Children with disabilities

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.7.5 Playspace Components

To better understand the hierarchy of playspaces, a 'playspace development model' has been developed that can be adopted as a guide for councils when planning and developing playspaces.^{xxi} The model (Figure 6) is widely recognised to illustrate the elementary factors required to establish an area specifically for play and includes five aspects of:

Play Equipment

Play equipment has historically been the dominant factor in playground provision. However, equipment should complement rather than replace the 'playspace' and should align with the intended user and classification of the park. Equipment suitable and interesting to a toddler will be vastly different from equipment for a 'junior child and generally speaking the more opportunities provided tends to increase the 'classification' of the playspace.

Imaginative and Creative Area

This is often the most neglected aspect of play provision and it requires sensitivity to develop possibilities. Some areas however, simply need to be left in their natural state whereby others can be designed using the natural environment to encourage exploration and imagination.

Nature play is becoming popular with many councils understanding and realising its importance and investing in such initiatives. In turn this encourages more children into the outdoors and away from some forms of technology that has negative impact on their physical development. As such, playspaces are being designed to encourage the use of the natural environment and to enhance cognitive, social and physical development.

Unstructured Area

This is an open space area that should not be confused with formal sport requirements and in essence will encourage activities to develop spontaneously among children. Traditionally these areas appeal to older children and are often used as a meeting place/socialising area or for informal ball games such as kick to kick, basketball, netball rings etc.

Adult/Family Area

Adults accompanying children to play areas require a comfortable area where they can passively monitor children whilst socialising with other carers or parents. The inclusion of items such as seating, shading, BBQ's, shelters, water etc., all of which may result in longer periods of use by families and increased presence increasing passive surveillance and safety.

Special Feature

This is an optional component which may be included in the playspace and although these are not essential, could include open air theatres, rotundas, water features, artwork or other natural or built features which would attract greater use, visitation and general interest.

Generally speaking, the more components of the playspace development model a playspace has, the higher its classification. A local playspace for example may be situated on a small block of land and include only a swing and a slide, whereby a regional playspace would generally include all components of the PDM and include bespoke play areas and unique opportunities that would attract visitation from far and wide.



Figure 6: Playspace Development Model

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

2.7.6 Playspace Design

Playspace design is largely reflected in their hierarchy in that the higher the level, the more components a space would have by way of equipment and complementary design elements. Whilst not prescriptive, the following provides an overview and the common elements within each.

Local Playspaces

This level of playspace is ideally located within a collector district area whereby walking to a destination up to 500 metres would be acceptable for most if not all ages and abilities. Local playspace primarily cater for younger children's needs (toddlers and juniors) and may also be used incidentally i.e. en-route to or from a destination such as shops, schools, or from public transport and in some instances as physical links to other open space systems. Alternatively, such playspaces may be used deliberately as a need for low impact play and exploration for young children under the guidance of adult supervision.

Components

While playspaces in a local setting will primarily be targeted at younger children (1-6) due to the proximity to the home and the understanding that older children (6-12) can and may travel greater distances either on foot or bike with their parents or carers; play opportunities should include aspects of cognitive, social and physical play and include approximately 3-5 pieces of play equipment as a suggestion. However not all local playspaces need to comprise formal play equipment areas and could include an imaginative (natural) play area to ensure provision is complemented and not duplicated within short distances of each playspace i.e. each should (where possible) offer its own setting with a different set of opportunities from the parks nearby. It is such that local playspaces include complementary components of:

- Play Equipment Area (3-5 pieces)
- Imaginative Creative Area (natural settings)

It must be noted that not all Local play spaces would include both of the above, but these elements developed in conjunction with similar parks nearby, i.e. planning should ensure playspaces are complemented and not duplicated within a close proximity to each other. Specific areas set aside for adults are not necessarily developed in local playspaces due to the age of the child requiring constant surveillance by the carer. However, playspaces and seating should have natural or formalised shading with the latter situated to ensure both active and passive surveillance by carers.



Local playspaces like this one in Rhynie (above) and Auburn (below), offer opportunities for toddlers and infants and generally include a limited (3-5) pieces of equipment



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Neighbourhood Playspace

Neighbourhood playspaces consider broader 'suburbs' and thus the need to provide for a more diverse range of opportunities and offer a wider range of opportunity for children primarily in the 4-12 age groups (infants and juniors) but should also include equipment for toddlers. When discussing neighbourhood playspaces, it is assumed that:

- People will travel further to use the park and therefore tend to do so deliberately rather than incidentally.
- Generally located within each suburb and therefore facilities such as toilets may not be required.
- Would be no more than approximately 1-2 kilometres from homes.

Components

Neighbourhood playspaces are designed to cater for the needs of more than one user group, and for more than one type of activity. Toddler, junior and senior play areas will be provided and sited around a picnic areas/shelters and tables. Neighbourhood playspaces might be set along an urban waterway or natural settings and key components can therefore include:

- Play Equipment Area (5 pieces +) for age groups 1-12 in secured areas and where possible away from main roads and
- Imaginative Creative Area (natural settings)
- Non-Structured Play Area
- Adult / Carer Area
- Bins



Neighbourhood playspaces such as this at the Stockport Recreation Ground and Marrabel, are larger in nature, often shaded and sometimes fenced. Equipment is targeted at all age ranges up to 12 and offer social, cognitive and physical play opportunities.

District Playspace

The third level in the hierarchy is the District Playspace. District Parks tend to serve wider catchments and are sited where special features (natural or manmade) such as a water body, a cluster of sporting facilities, civic areas, or historic site are located. In discussing this classification, it is assumed that visitors are offered greater recreation opportunities and therefore stay longer at the 'park'. As such, amenities such as water, car parking, toilets, barbecues and rubbish bins etc may all be warranted.

Other key aspects of District playspaces include a safe (normally fenced) play area for young children and areas where parents and carers can meet and socialise in a safe environment. Children's birthday parties are common occurrences in such parks and parents can prepare barbecues in areas with good surveillance of play equipment which has an additional safeguard of fencing to prevent children from leaving the playspace.

District level open space can also be used for specific activities such as youth recreation, sporting facilities, dog parks or adult exercise areas whereby the land parcel is designed to be used for a number of 'specific' activities normally identified in a separate recreation, leisure or open space strategy.

Components

When discussing the playspace component of District level parks, it is assumed that the following components would be provided:

- Play Equipment Area for all age groups (often fenced or secured in areas of high safety concern such as main roads)
- Imaginative Creative Area (natural settings)
- Non-Structured Play Area
- Adult / Carer Area



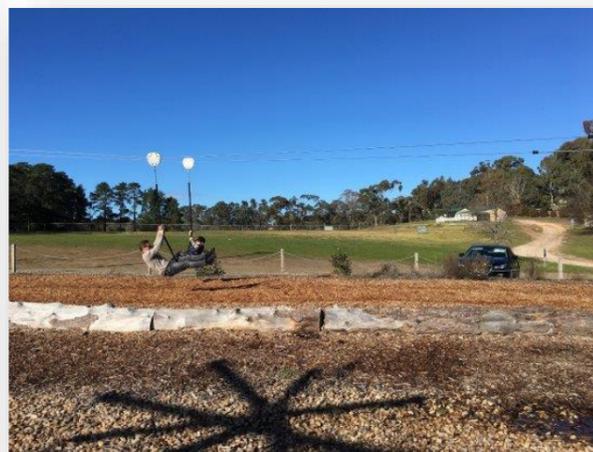
District playspaces attract longer visitation and include open spaces and in some instances youth recreation such as skateparks. Apex park in Clare is a good example but could include additional traditional play equipment to be a true 'district' classified playspace.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Regional Playspaces

Regional playspaces are similar to the District classification but with additional components that would attract both local and regional visitors. This may be in the form of an adventure playground, water park, or unique aspect such as additional space for larger community events such as carnivals and concerts.

Regional playspaces are often well landscaped and/or use the natural landscape to offer a unique experience and are often bespoke in design and aligned with a theme or an array of experiences and opportunities for the whole family.



The region does not have any regionally classified playspaces, with the closest being the playspace at Sevenhill which is a bespoke designed play area. With some additional elements, this could become a regional attraction and be a key destination for locals and visitors alike.

2.7.7 Additional Design Elements

While the highlighted playspace classifications align themselves with the Playspace Development Model, this does not consider other design concepts which should and could be included within all playspaces and parks. These will obviously vary from classification to classification and in some instances park to park but could include some or all of the following additional design elements which have been referenced from a number of industry sources.

Shade

Shade, particularly during the hotter summer months is vital. Natural shade through trees is highly desirable but due to the time it takes for growth in 'new' playspaces, built shade in the form of pergolas or shelters may be appropriate. Should natural shading be available, tree management and maintenance need to be considered due to the potential falling limbs and branches.

Fencing

Fencing is highly desirable in areas where adults use open space with children, especially for children's parties, barbecues and social gatherings. While fencing should not be a complete safeguard to children's safety and the ultimate onus on the parent or carer, fences do provide an additional safeguard in relation to forming a barrier between the child and physical dangers such as main roads, major waterways or steep embankments in natural settings.

Paths

Paths within playspaces and parks should be sited carefully to minimise their impact upon other uses of a park. For example, two paths criss-crossing a reserve will break it into four small spaces which may each be too small to be useful.

Busy paths, especially cycle paths, may intrude upon quiet spaces and disturb users. Paths open up otherwise inaccessible places, and the desirability of a path cutting through an area must first be carefully assessed. All path surfaces should be selected to blend visually into the surrounds. Path systems need to be considered for at least two purposes:

'Functional' paths

These have a main purpose of efficient circulation of people between two or more points. Such paths may have 'functional' convenience as their primary purpose, but the pleasure of users and the visual and functional impact on the landscape is important.

Paths also need to be well sited to ensure users are not forced out of their way and sometimes it may be valuable for Council to monitor patterns of use ('desire lines') before constructing a 'formal' route.

Recreational paths

These are not necessarily the quickest way between points but may be sited to pass through attractive or interesting areas, simply for the pleasure of the journey. They may be intended for walking or cycling, and the surfaces should be considered for their contribution to the recreation experiences of users.

For example, rough or bumpy dirt paths are increasingly rare in the suburban landscape, but children derive great pleasure from walking or riding along such paths, especially if they pass through varied terrain, over puddles, bridges and other features, and at times pass through overhanging vegetation or long grass. These opportunities are important as part of the recreation spectrum but should not be confused with the need to provide convenient access ways through the neighbourhoods.

Sofffall

Kidsafe has developed a series of information sheets pertaining to play design and management one of which pertains specifically to soffitfall. All playground equipment with a fall height 600mm or more must have an 'impact attenuating' surface beneath to minimise serious head or other injuries in the event of falls.

Whilst no one material has proven to be the best product for impact attenuating surfacing, consideration of factors such as environmental conditions, cost and personal preference may be applied when selecting a material. The two main types of playground surfacing products are loose fill and solid materials

Loose Fill

Loose fill includes products such as bark mulch, wood chips, wood fibre, rubber mulch, grape seed and sand and these products are generally less expensive than solid materials upon installation but require regular maintenance and top ups. Considering the cost of ongoing maintenance, solid materials may compare favourably over the lifespan of the surfacing.

Solid Fill

Solid Materials include products such as synthetic grass, rubber tiles and wet pour rubber. The impact attenuating qualities of solid materials varies according to the thickness of the layer and the composition of the material. Solid materials can work well in combination with loose fill products providing a fixed surface beneath heavy traffic areas such as under swings and at the run-out (base) of slides. This reduces both the ongoing costs and labour to replenish the loose fill, as required.

Whilst some studies support loose fill over solid with regards to safety when falling from height, the aesthetics of solid over loose combined with a perception of foreign objects finding their way into loose fill soffitfall, has led to an increased demand from the community to construct more playspaces with solid fill.

As stated however, there is no one answer for this and each playspace must be considered in isolation, but the more natural areas such as local playspaces and potentially components of nature play in larger developments may not warrant the cost or design impact of solid fill. Each will be unique and ultimately the choice of Council must be put down to a number of factors to include budget, aesthetics, playspaces type and ultimately and foremost, safety and adhering to national standards.

Nature Play

Nature play is making a resurgence as local authorities are recognising the importance of promoting play and offering children an opportunity to learn and grow through interaction with their natural environments. Traditionally this

has been difficult for some councils to embrace given the 'lack of standards for 'nature', but increasingly many are now introducing natural areas into playground designs to encourage cognitive, social and physical development of the child.

Many good examples are now emerging across Australia whereby the use of the landscape is enhanced to create natural areas such as creek beds, sand pits, tree logs and areas for exploration. Normally these are included in higher level playspace developments, but consideration should be given to lower, less well developed areas and the notion that a child will play where equipment is not present and therefore a local open space that is well designed and managed, can in itself be an excellent opportunity to promote and develop nature play.

Barbeques

Generally, barbeques are not considered appropriate for local playspaces, but they may be considered for higher levels if warranted through demand and certainly regional parks if the conditions are suitable. However, the installation of barbeques often requires an associated level of facility provision (tables, toilets, water, shelter, lighting, electricity supply, car parking etc.) and a commitment to maintenance and therefore it is recommended that these be kept to a minimum and supplied only in District or higher level parks.

Seating and Tables

Seating is an important way of encouraging adults to accompany their children to play, as well as providing for the elderly and others. Seating should be available in winter sun and under summer shade. More than one configuration of seating is valuable, to cater for more than one group at a time and to facilitate either solitude or interaction, depending upon the users wishes.

A variety of styles of seating is important:

- Formal seats with back and arm rests are valued by many older people;
- Caregivers need to be able to sit close to playing children and
- Edges to 'perch' on and to adapt to more than one purpose (such as walking and balancing on, as a table for sand play, as a marker or boundary in games etc) will be valued by both children and teenagers.

A diverse range of seating is thus more likely to satisfy the needs of a diverse range of users and should be available in all parks and playspaces (natural or manmade)

Picnic tables are not always necessary in a reserve and are recommended to be developed only in Neighbourhood playgrounds or higher classifications. They may however be useful if sited so adults can supervise children while seated and the shape and orientation considered both for the comfort of users and for ease of supervision. Hexagonal or octagonal shaped tables allow parents to change their position and to monitor children in any direction.

Ancillary Services

As with toilets, ancillary services such as, water, bike racks and formalised car parking for example, may all be considered important in destinations where people travel further to and therefore tend to stay longer.

2.7.8 Playspace Trends

Play and understanding its importance has developed considerably in recent years with many local authorities now developing strategies that not only assess playspaces as assets that need to be managed, but also their relevance in design and the changing needs of a child as they grow and develop. To this end, the traditional playspace equipment by way of slide, swings, and rockers whilst still important, are considered as only one component of the play spectrum. Other design elements are therefore being introduced to encourage an array of learning and development opportunities including the use of the natural environment (nature play), creative landscaping, and additional features that promote a sense of belonging and place to a park.

Playspaces are also considered not only as areas for children, but also the whole family and therefore now include aspects for adults and carers such as barbeques, shade and shelter and end of trip facilities such as water, bike racks, paths and trails, carparks and in some instances fencing to offer a sense of security when located near to main roads, traffic, waterways or when dogs may be present in open space areas.

Play standards have also come a long way with equipment now designed and developed to include and consider adult use and weight bearing to enable social interaction and play with and between children. Additionally, the introduction of fitness equipment is also becoming increasingly popular and offers a unique element to many parks and playspaces. They are often standalone areas separate from children's playspaces.

From a planning perspective, the notion of playspaces being developed in areas where young families are prevalent is now an outdated planning method as the needs of a child (and demographics generally) will change in relative short periods of time (2-3 years) whereas a playspace as an asset may last in excess of twenty years.

Modern trends in planning for playspaces are therefore now based on an even distribution of facilities to ensure access for all including grandparents, people with disabilities and carers and families. It also considers the playspace hierarchy as discussed earlier and design and distribution based on local through to regional each offering their own unique experiences.

Liability and risk is always a key factor in the provision of any service or facility that is available to the public, and whilst Councils have an obligation and duty of care, aspects such as the promotion of nature play has caused some concern in recent years due to the absence of standards for 'nature'. However, more innovative and proactive councils are working with their

respective insurers to ensure a range of opportunities can be provided and children and their parents protected from perceived risks whilst still enjoying and benefiting from the experience of play in a natural setting.

2.8 Summary

The benefits of leisure, recreation, sport, play and open space are well documented and should form the basis of any policy platform for Council. Leisure time activity is not a 'nice thing to have', but essential and core to the wellbeing of our community and can combat and tackle many of our challenges as well as meet a number of community goals and objectives.

Open space has many benefits including increasing levels of physical activity, reducing stress levels, enhancing mental health, adding value to properties, being a place for events and being good for the environment through biodiversity and active transport.

Play and understanding its importance has also developed considerably in recent years and the need to acknowledge different types of play and the needs of children through various ages, means playspaces need to be designed accordingly and not a 'one size fits all' approach taken.

Barriers to participation are evident across all communities and Council must ensure it acknowledges, identifies and attempts to implement strategies to remove them to enhance opportunities in quality time leisure activity.

Numerous trends are also evident that shift with time and again Council must be aware of these if it is to keep ahead of foreseen challenges and attempt to make participation in leisure time activity as easy as possible for its residents. Such trends include a shift toward more unstructured activity (outside of the club setting), whilst also acknowledging that in a community the size and location of the CGVC, sport still remains a pivotal component of our community's fabric and identity and must therefore be supported.

The way in which Council can support and enhance leisure opportunity is multi-faceted and includes options of direct management (in house), outsourced to community groups or alternatively outsourced to the private sector to manage facilities on its behalf.

Each of these offers both advantages and disadvantages and each service or facility must be assessed in isolation rather than a blanket approach. Assessing its options in this 'best value' approach, means that Council can assess why a facility or service is being delivered (the rationale behind it) and ultimately that the quality of the service is delivered in a manner that reflects the end users needs.

Understanding and implementing the above through a policy framework, will form a solid foundation on which Council can respond to issues as and when they arise, as well as be proactive in its strategic approach to the provision of quality leisure time activities and open space across the region.



Section Three: Localised Supply

Assessment and supply of facilities and services in the Clare
and Gilbert Valleys

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.1 Overview

The following provides an overview of the current provision of open space, sport and playspaces in the Clare and Gilbert Valleys. This information is used as an assessment of the council area in general and forms the basis of the strategy.

3.2 Open Space

In order to determine potential gaps and supply of open space and how it should be designed and managed, an appropriate amount or level of open space must be identified. In the 1970s the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) planning authority known as the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) determined that the 4 hectares of open space per 1000 population should be adopted that standard and this has generally been accepted as the benchmark since this time.

In regions such as the Clare and Gilbert Valleys however, it is accepted that the 4ha allocation may need to be greater due to more open areas and generally smaller communities; however, towns and cities in regional areas do not have their own standards.

Past planning studies undertaken by One Eighty Sport and Leisure Solutions in the region assessed an appropriate amount of open space, of which a comparative analysis was undertaken with the Adelaide Statistical Division (ASD) to gauge a mean level of supply^{xxii}.

In the study, the total provision of open space per 1000 residents was recorded for the inner (Councils immediately adjoining and including the City of Adelaide) and outer metropolitan Councils as being:

- Inner: 3ha per 000
- Outer: 14ha per 000
- Combined: 9ha per 000

The regional 'northern' context was then assessed with Table 2 below highlighting the mean supply of open space across the Councils of the Barossa, Gawler, Light and Mallala to be 16.8ha per 1000 people.

LGA	Useable Open Space	Population 2006	Ha of OS per 1000
Barossa	270.7	20,528	13.19
Gawler	178.3	18,862	9.45
Light	308.1	12,405	24.84
Mallala	245.8	7,892	31.14
BLLN Region	1002.8	59,687	16.8

Table 2: Regional Provision of Open Space

The above figures were based on useable open space as it was recognised that whilst regional communities have a higher than average allocation of open space, not all of this is useable or available for recreational use.

Approaching planning in this way will ensure that the allocation of open space is primarily for the recreational use of parks and reserves that are developed with the community in mind. To this end, and whilst a full audit of all 'open space' classified or used for recreation is considered within the context of this report, land that is excluded or outside of council's direct jurisdiction should not be considered in the open space framework.

For the purpose of this study therefore, these figures are used as a benchmarking purpose only, and to measure the provision of the CGVC against the lowest supply of 3ha through to the regional average of 16.8 ha per 000 and to establish a reasonable provision of useable open space for the CGVC.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.2.1 Open Space Provision

As discussed above and in the Glossary of Terms, open space in the CGVC has been divided into useable and unusable open space to differentiate from types of use particularly relating to recreation.

Significant recreation value is open space used directly for leisure, sport, recreation and public realm (civic uses) and highlights a good supply at 27.64ha per 1000 people. Moderate recreation value relates to land that may have another primary purpose but is and can be used for recreation or which may not be owned by Council and therefore restricting use and shows 37.35ha per 1000.

Unusable open space is that where the other uses are predominant such as easements or community land where buildings or car parks are constructed, and open space with no recreational value is largely those parcels that are undeveloped or vacant land parcels (Table 3).

For the purpose of the audit, the Council area was divided into 14 townships with the remaining areas grouped as 'regional'. The townships audited included:

1. Auburn
2. Clare
3. Hilltown
4. Manoora
5. Marrabel
6. Mintaro
7. Rhynie
8. Riverton
9. Saddleworth
10. Sevenhill
11. Stockport
12. Tarlee
13. Watervale
14. Waterloo and
15. Regional Areas (balance)

The overall provision of space was assessed and found that with a population of 9023^{xxiii} and a provision of 503.10 ha of open space, that for every 1000 residents there was approximately 55.76 ha of open space. This is much higher than all SA benchmarks but when this is broken down into usable open space (398.12 ha) a provision of 44.12 ha is assumed broken down into 27.64 significant recreation value and 37.35ha of moderate recreation value (Table 4).

Table 3: Open Space Value

Useable Open Space								Unusable Open Space		
Significant Rec. Value				Moderate Rec. Value				Minimal Rec. Value	No Rec. Value	
Settings/Description										
Park/Garden/Open Space	Sport/Recreation	Recreational Trail	Civic	School / Education	Natural/Uncleared	Caravan Park	Cemetery	Building/Car Park	Easement	Other Use (Non rec)
Total Open Space										503.10 ha
Township Population										7167
Balance of Population										1856
Total Population										9023
Hectares Per 000										55.76
Total Useable Open Space										398.12 ha
Hectares Per 000										44.12
Significant Rec Value Open Space										249.42 ha
Parks										81.36
Sport and Recreation										167.12
Trails										0.45
Civic										0.49
Total Hectares Per 000										27.64
Moderate Rec Value Open Space										148.70
Education										21.67
Natural/Uncleared										73.68
Caravan Parks										15.62
Cemetery										37.73
Total Hectares Per 000										37.35
Private Open Space										140.49ha

Table 4: Summary of Open Space Provision

3.2.2 Township Open Space

When assessing the distribution of open space across the Council area and including the total provision of all land (including private) versus useable open space and that considered to have significant recreational value, we see an uneven distribution across townships (Figure 7). Whilst this is to be expected given the lack of previous planning for open space, it provides Council with a guide as to where to focus regarding current and future management of open space.

From the findings, there is an abundance of community land (open space) across most townships which is generally due to low population numbers combined with the traditional and historical 'ovals' in most towns. The best supplied by way of total open space per 000 population as well as both useable and significant space, is Stockport at 173.28 ha (total), and closely followed by Marrabel with 158.32 ha of open space per 000. However, both of these towns have a considerable supply of private open space by way of a golf course and rodeo respectively which skews findings. The least supplied by way of total open space is Waterloo albeit the town has a very small population base of 82 people.

Taking private land out of the equation, Marrabel becomes the second least supplied by way of open space across the whole Council area and Stockport becomes the fifth least supplied. The town of Clare also has its open space provision halved and Sevenhill has no public land.

The inclusion or exclusion of private land, particularly if it has minimal access and use, is therefore extremely important when considering how to plan and manage open space, as the likes of a rodeo arena has a very limited capacity for other uses, whereby an oval at Sevenhill has multiple uses (Figure 8).

Regardless of inclusion or exclusion of private land, Rhynie has a low provision of open space per 1000 residents at only 6.84 ha and a 2.54 ha of significant open space per 1000 people. This can also be said of Hilltown that whilst has an overall provision of 58.16 ha per 000, only has 1.88 ha of significant recreational value open space.

Whilst Tarlee is also poorly supplied, its small population of 300 or so people have access to an oval and surrounds which may require more careful planning and design to ensure a range of activities are offered.

Figure 7: Hectares Open Space per 000 population by Township

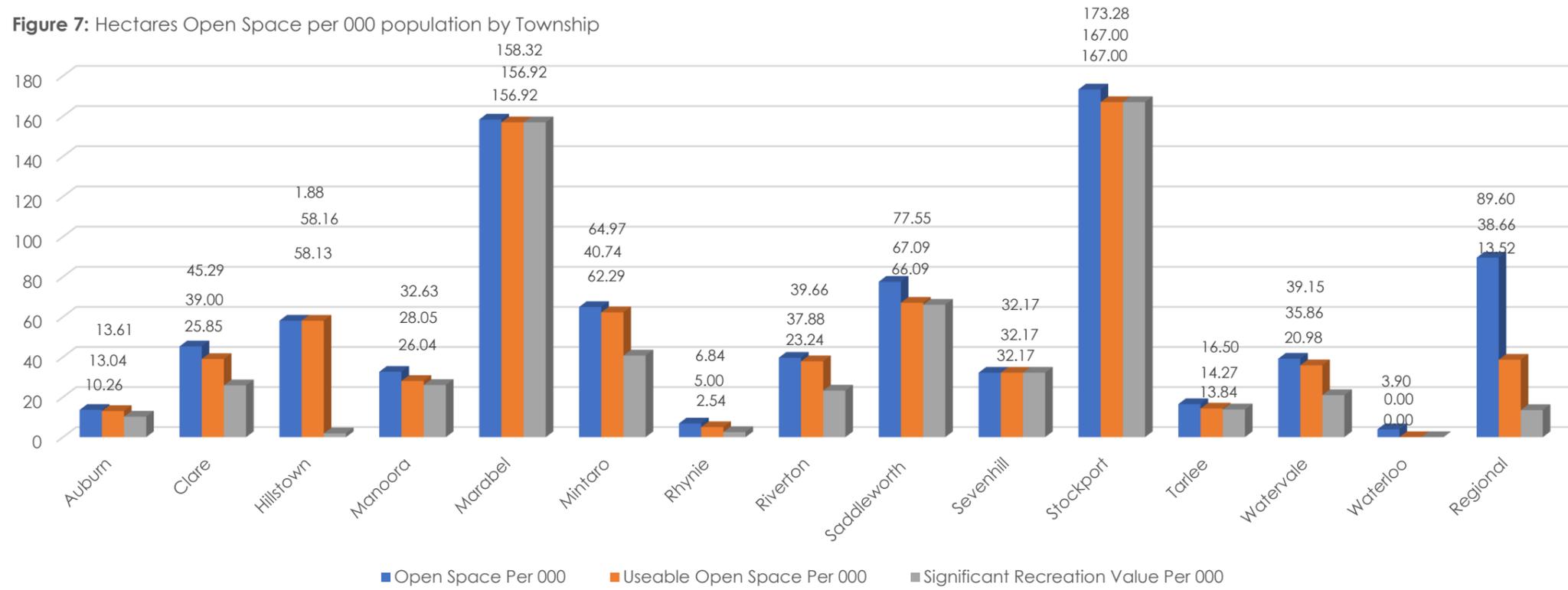
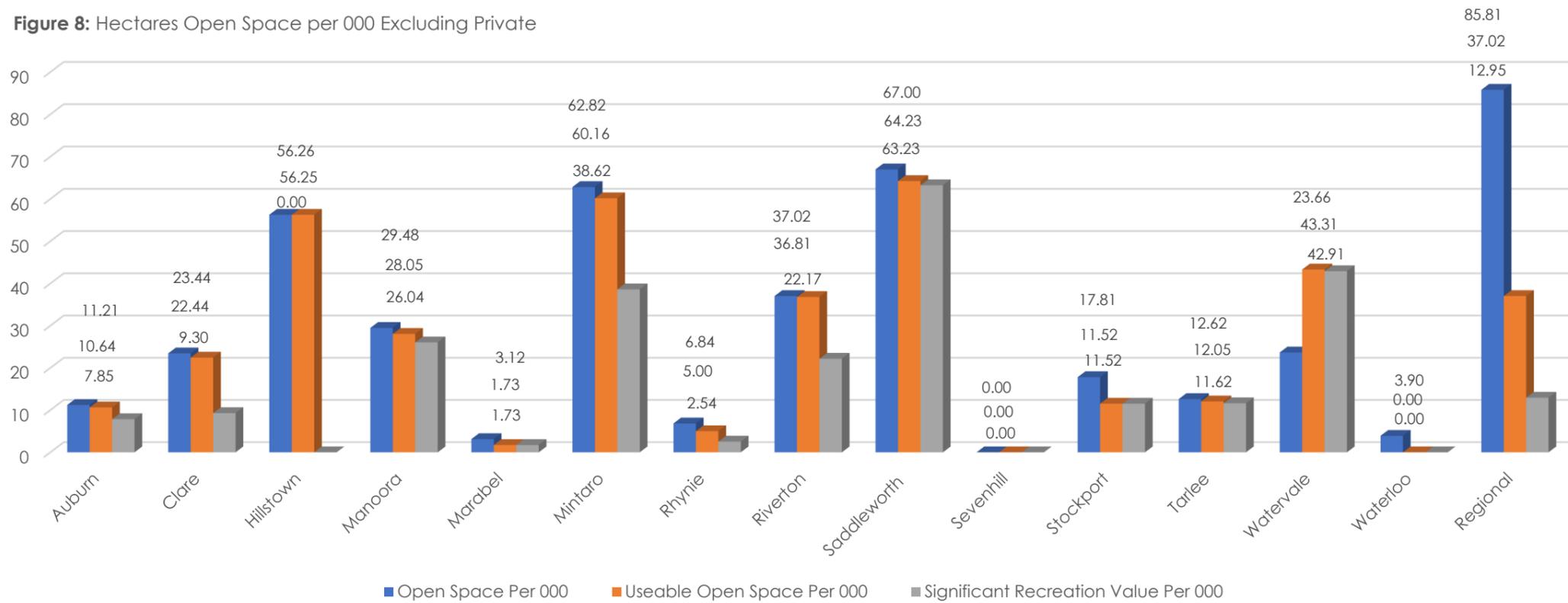


Figure 8: Hectares Open Space per 000 Excluding Private

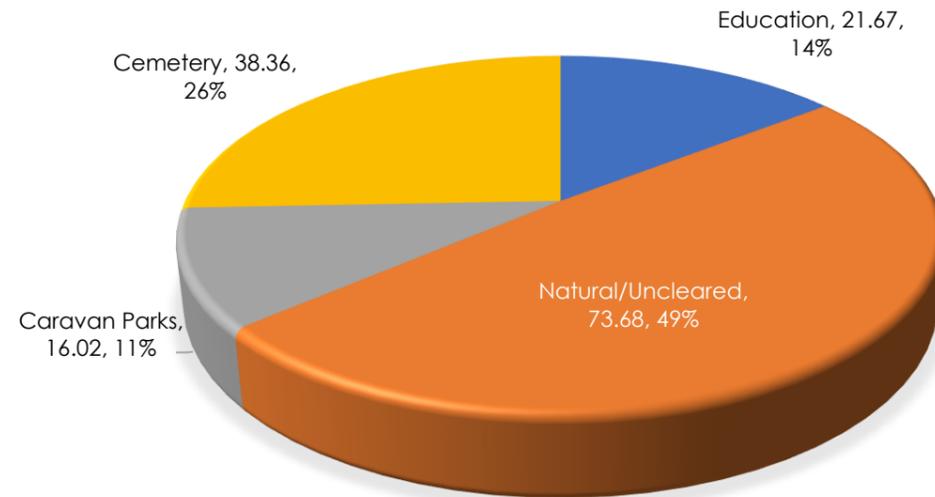


Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.2.3 Open Space Recreation Value

Of the 407.64 ha of open space deemed 'useable', 257.91 or 63.3% is significant and used for things such as sport, parks, trails and civic uses, with 150 ha (36.7%) having some moderate recreational value and used for educational purposes, natural areas, caravan parks and cemeteries.

Figure 9: Moderate Recreation Value



Uncleared Reserves such as Pinks Reserve in Clare adjacent to the Riesling Trail provide moderate recreational value for passive recreation or walking.



Schools such as the Clare High School have open spaces that could be jointly used by the community for sport and recreation

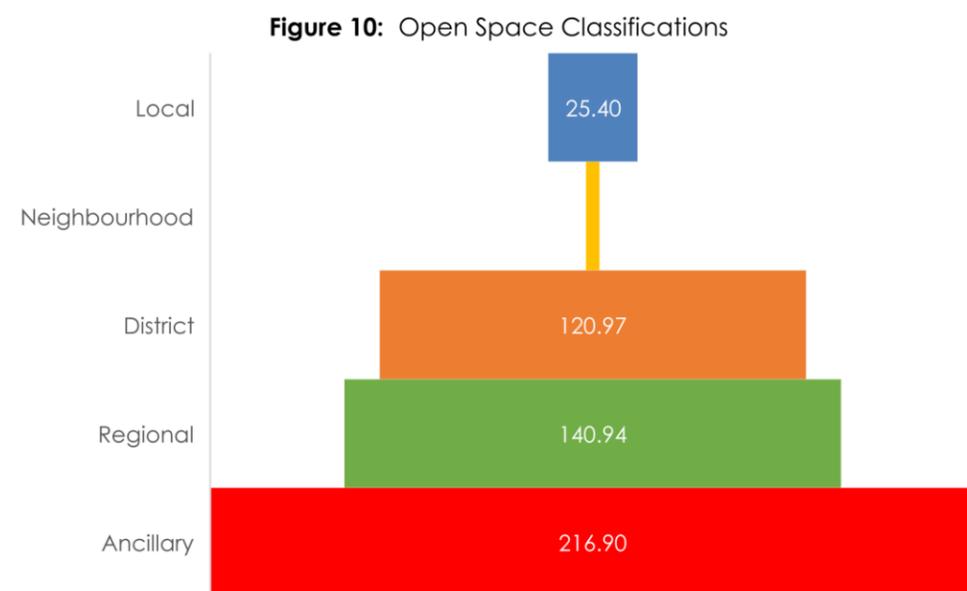


Cemeteries such as this one at Riverton form a valuable part of the open space fabric and can be places of reflection and tranquility.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.2.4 Open Space Ownership and Classification

On assessing the open space classifications across Council noting that this may be perceived as somewhat subjective, it is clear to see that the vast majority of community land is ancillary or undeveloped / natural tracts that have in most instances not been embellished or alternatively used for uses other than recreation. (Figure 10).



This accounts for almost half of all land (42%) with a quarter (24%) being classed as District and largely areas used for sporting ovals and facilities within each township. Approximately a third (28%) is classed as Regional or land used for the likes of golf courses, caravan parks, natural areas with defined trails or other private areas such as rodeos (Figure 11). These findings highlight the need for more passive, neighbourhood land parcels or to ensure larger land parcels are designed and managed appropriately to allow access to a range of opportunity other than just for sport and active recreation.

An additional factor is that almost a third of land (28%) the community has or may have access to for sport, recreation or leisure, is owned either privately or by other government agencies (Figure 12). This means that whilst the community may access such areas, Council has no control over their current or future use unless a partnership arrangement is entered into for formalised community access.

Figure 11: Classification Distribution

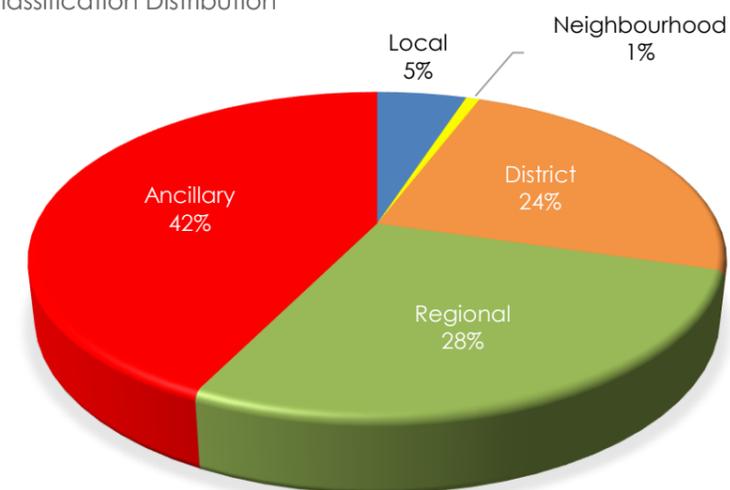
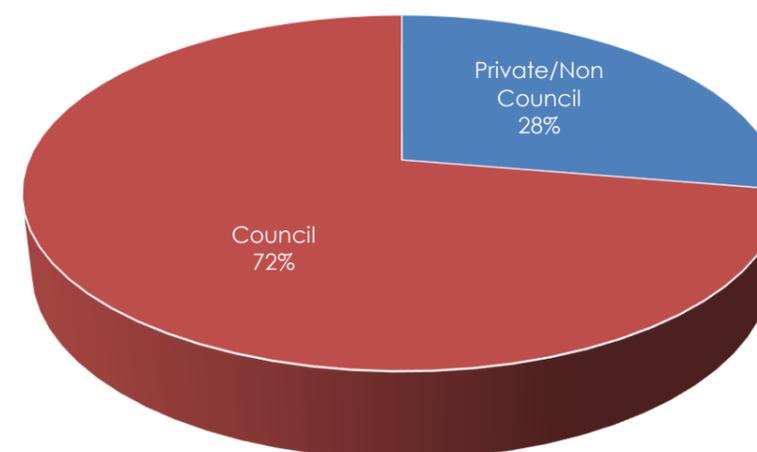


Figure 12: Open Space Ownership



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.3 Community Sport and Recreation

The provision of sport and recreation infrastructure in the CGVC is similar to many regional communities in that the local oval is the main focus of recreation and sport for each township. Traditional sports such as football, cricket, tennis, netball and bowls dominate provision, with many facilities being owned outright by sporting clubs and community associations.

There is a particularly high supply of tennis courts across the Council area with a total of 44 grass and hard courts counted as part of the audit. Half of these (22) are privately owned with the remainder being the responsibility of clubs or groups that lease from Council. This is also the case with netball courts which have traditionally been dual line marked over hard surfaced tennis courts and 21 counted. Most ovals are dual summer and winter use for cricket and football with all cricket pitches being hard covered wickets.

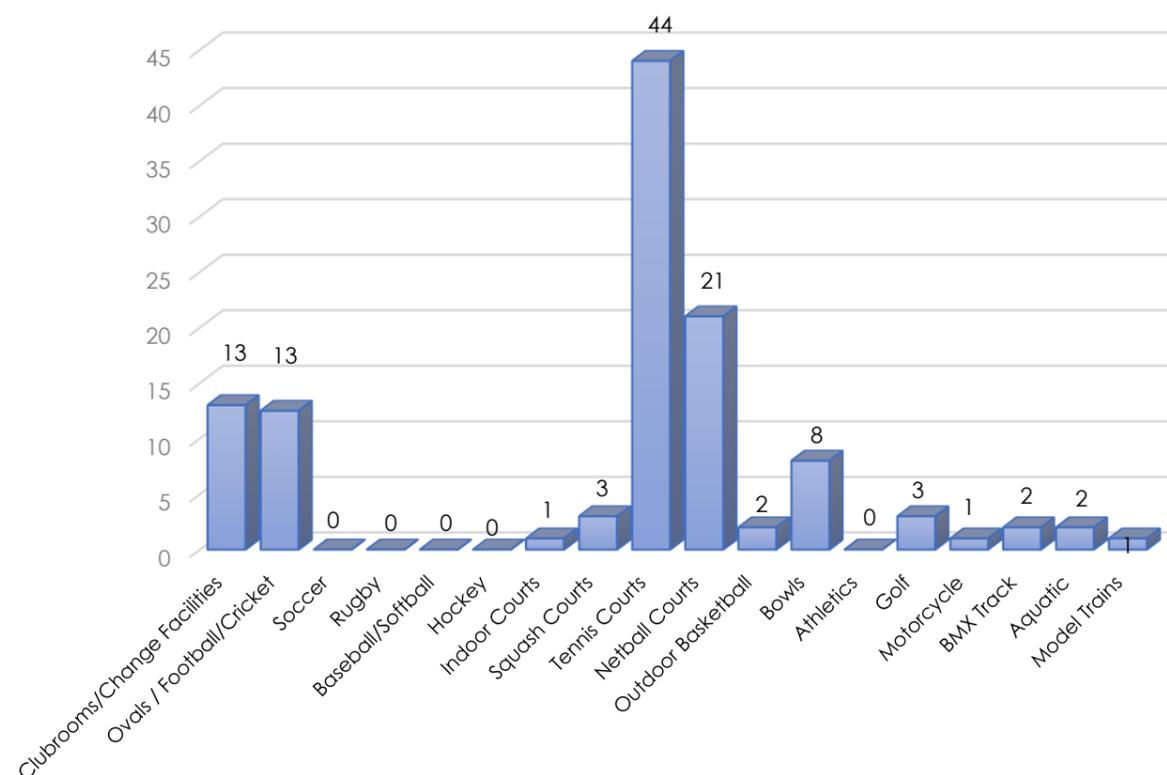


Figure 13: Council Wide Sports Provision

3.3.1 Facility Benchmarks

National benchmarks^{xxiv} for facility provision relating to the region are highlighted below and based upon facility provision for a population catchment, e.g. 1 oval for every 5000 residents etc.

Benchmarks show that for a population that of the CGVC of approximately 10,000, that it is heavily oversupplied by way of facility provision except for indoor courts, soccer pitches, rugby pitches and youth facilities.

Some private facilities and opportunities may exist with schools and the like and of course these figures are a guide only and based on metropolitan councils and does not take into consideration the geographical challenges facing remote and regional communities with a spread of townships across a region.

The challenge therefore is not only in the amount and supply of facilities, but ensuring that each township has access to services and facilities which are multiuse in nature and adaptable to the changing needs of the community

Athletics	Australian Rules Football	Baseball	Basketball	Cricket
250000	5000	35000	4000	8000
Hockey	Lawn Bowls	Netball	Swimming/50m outdoor pool	Tennis
75000	25000	3000	75000	1500
Rugby	Soccer	Indoor courts (Basketball)	Squash	Golf
6000	3500	5000	20000	30000
Skate / Youth Park				
5000				

Table 5: National Benchmarks for Sports Facility Provision

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.4 Aquatic Centres

Council has two aquatic centres both managed by the YMCA at the Valleys Recreation Centre, an outdoor 25 metre 7 lane pool with and indoor learn to swim (LTS) facility and a 25-metre outdoor pool located at the Riverton Oval Precinct. Whilst an operational assessment has not been undertaken as part of this study, it is common that such facilities cost local authorities significant operational funding and whilst it is not being suggested that such facilities should be profitable as they offer a valuable benefit to the community, many Councils are taking stock of their aquatic facilities across with a view of reducing operational costs and minimising the level of subsidy.

Strategies should therefore be developed to assess the best means of managing aquatic centres and potentially considering use and access with other leisure services such as caravan and tourist parks where pools are often required.



Council Aquatic Centres

3.5 Caravan and RV Parks

There are six Caravan parks at:

- Auburn Caravan Park
- Stockport Caravan and Tourist Park (Private)
- Clare Caravan Park (Discovery Holidays)
- Riverton Caravan Park
- Saddleworth Caravan Park
- Tarlee RV Site

All but the Clare caravan park are managed by Oval / Recreation Ground Committees with funds being retained to manage and operate the community facilities.



Council Caravan Parks

Top Left: Auburn
Bottom Left: Saddleworth

3.6 Playspaces

There are 24 playspaces across the Council, 3 of which are privately owned, these being:

- 1 Hilltown community playspace
- 2 Saddleworth Tennis Courts
- 3 Richardson Park Sevenhill

The Mintaro Maze may also be considered in the category of 'playspaces', but given this is a private and commercial enterprise, this is not included in the assessment.

When assessing this against the region to determine a benchmark and the mean of 1 playspace for every 632 people, or 1 for every 115 children aged 0-14, the CGVC is better supplied at 405 and 73 respectively (Table 6)

All townships have at least one playspace with Clare having eight (8). Some of these playspaces are managed and maintained by the Community Committees.

Most playspaces are also 'off the shelf' equipment with few being bespoke or meeting most elements of the playspace development model. That is, most are traditional in nature and cater primarily for the 3-9-year-old child but offering little by way of creativity. The majority of playspaces are therefore classed as neighbourhood with only 2 district, these being Sander/Apex Park in Clare which has a youth component and Richardson Park in Sevenhill which is a privately owned playground.

65% (11) of the playspaces are over 15 years old and given such assets traditionally last approximately 20-25 years, this provides Council with an opportunity to strategically assess the current provision and design to ensure a range of opportunity and experience is provided, whilst being relevant to children and their carers.

The majority of playspaces have bark chip as softfall which whilst a cost-effective option, is a concern regarding foreign objects and removal /displacement from the playspaces. Whilst this provides a 'natural' element to the playspace, the aspect of 'nature play' within parks has not been captured and this too provides an opportunity for Council to assess its design and distribution of play opportunities. Opportunities for older children and youth are not prevalent amongst Councils playspaces and this too needs to be addressed in the development and assets replacement strategy for playspaces and open spaces.

Council	Total Population	Play spaces	Population per Playspace	Total Population of Children 0-14	Children 0-14 per Playspace
Adelaide Plains	8,982	5	1796	1,742	348
Wakefield	6,918	14	494	716	51
Light	15,219	15	1015	3,258	217
Northern Areas	4,606	8	576	839	105
Goyder	4,240	13	326	720	55
Clare and Gilbert Valley	9,023	23	392	1,668	73
Mean	8,165	13	628	1,491	115

Table 6: Playspace Benchmarking

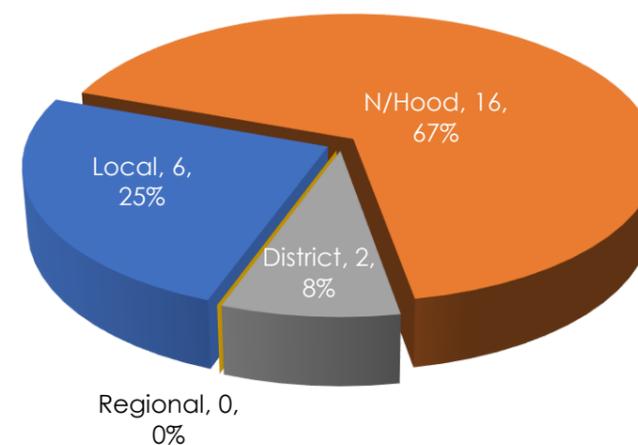


Figure 14: Playspace Classifications

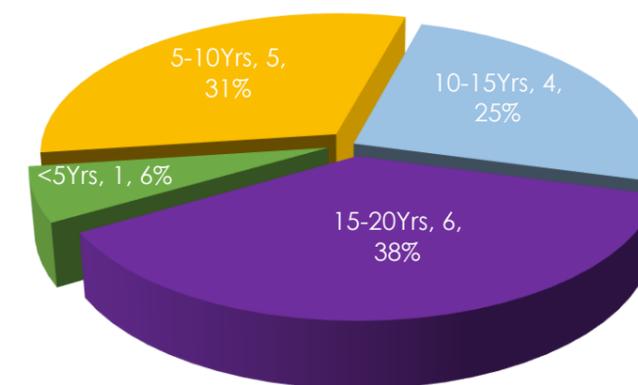


Figure 15 Playspace Age

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

3.7 Tourism and Trails

While tourism is not the focus of this strategy, it is important to acknowledge the vital role it plays in delivering a range of economic, social and environmental benefits to the region.

There have been a number of comprehensive plans and strategies prepared in relation to development and management of tourism in the Clare Valley with Council funding a Strategy in 2019 entitled 'Clare Valley Tourism Region Destination Situation Analysis'^{xv} which highlights visitation, market segmentation, experiences, access and infrastructure opportunities in the region to name a few.

One of the main aspects between sport, recreation, open space and tourism is the link with the trails network and more so the Mawson (Rattler), Riesling, Heysen and Lavendar Trails which run through the Council area (Figure 16).

Linking and promoting these to and with the local trails network will remain a key strategy of this report, as well as ensuring tourism opportunities are enhanced for visitor and resident experience whilst benefiting the community economically.

3.8 Golf Courses

The region is well supplied by way of golf courses with 4 18-hole facilities across the Council boundary at:

- Clare (private)
- Riverton
- Saddleworth (private) and
- Hamley Bridge (private)

Golf as a sport is currently undergoing a national facilities strategy to pave the way for changing community needs and competing pressures on open space. As such, Council should consider working with all golf providers to assess their current and future retention and growth plans with a view of alignment with the pending national facilities strategy.

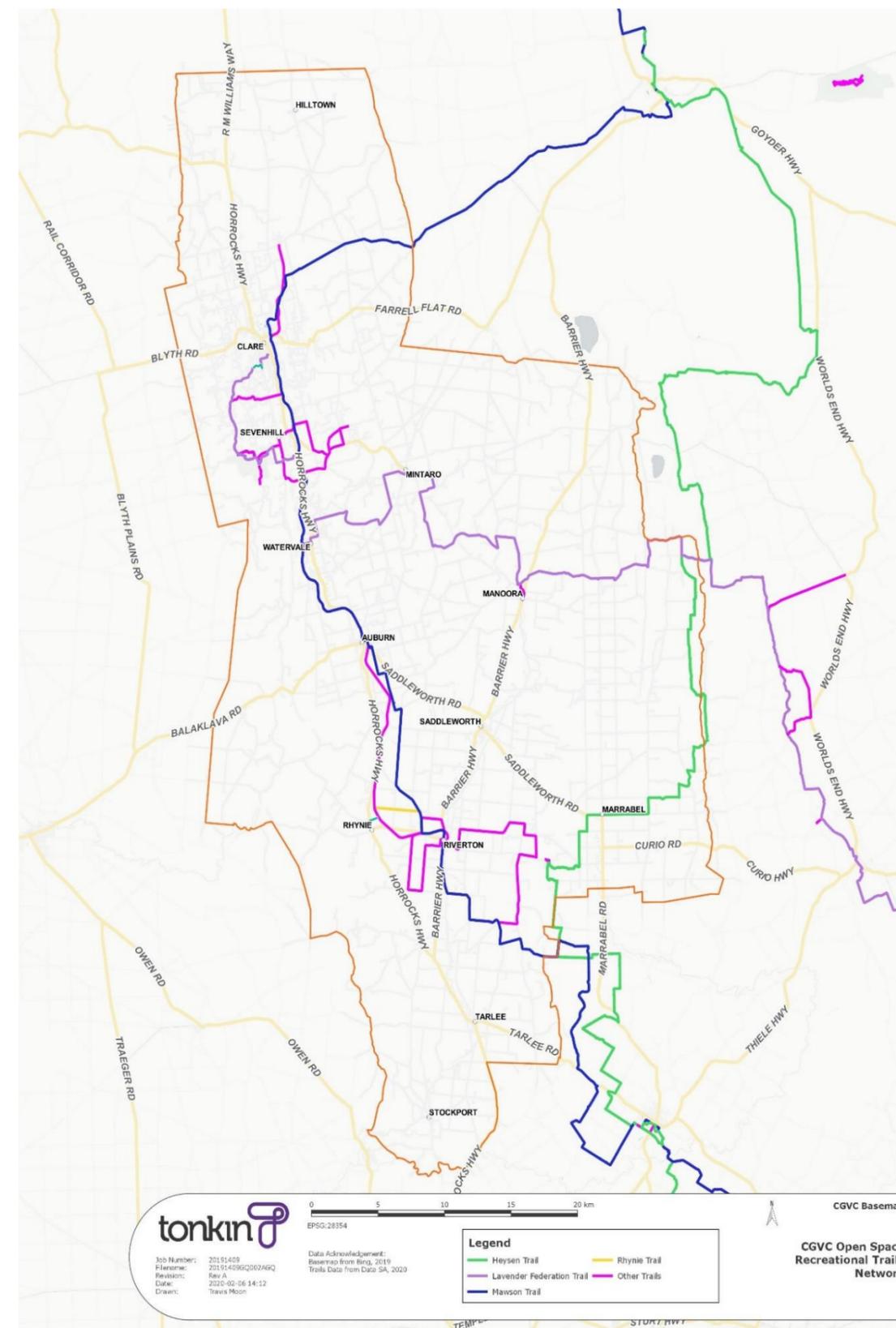


Figure 16: Regional Trails

3.9 Management

Council generally outsources its sporting and recreation facilities to both the private sector and community organisations, a breakdown of which is as follows:

Oval Management Committees

All of Councils sporting grounds are managed by community associations. Whilst leasing of facilities to clubs is not uncommon, the complete outsourcing to community associations to volunteers is. Council enters into management agreements with these not for profit committees, who are seen as 'lessee's or management groups of public facilities which receive some, albeit limited support from Council including:

- **Peak Body Funding:** \$6,000 Annually: Peak Bodies can choose to spend on the ovals or any other community project and need to acquit before the next financial year's allocation.
- **Community Asset Grants:** \$60,000 budget allocated with a maximum allocation of \$3,000 per applicant. Any community group may apply including clubs within associations.

These groups are almost fully self-sufficient and operate public facilities and open space on behalf of, and in most instances without significant support of Council. This includes oval maintenance, utilities, insurances and in some instances playspaces accessed by the broader community. What must be noted however, is that Council provides assistance to these groups in their establishment and/or lease negotiations, insurance and general day to day management and support through its StarClub Officer programme and therefore provides significant 'in kind' support.

Direct Leasing

In some instances, Council enters into a direct lease of land with community groups for the sole use of a facility/site. This is more common for such activities which find it difficult to share facilities due to the nature of their activity and include the likes of bowls, model engineers and motorsports clubs.

Recreation Centre

Council outsources its recreation centre (The Valleys Rec Centre), a one court facility with 3 multipurpose squash courts, flexible gym and aerobic, 25m outdoor pool and an indoor hydrotherapy pool to the YMCA. This is a fee for service commercial arrangement to a third-party operator.

Council Facilities

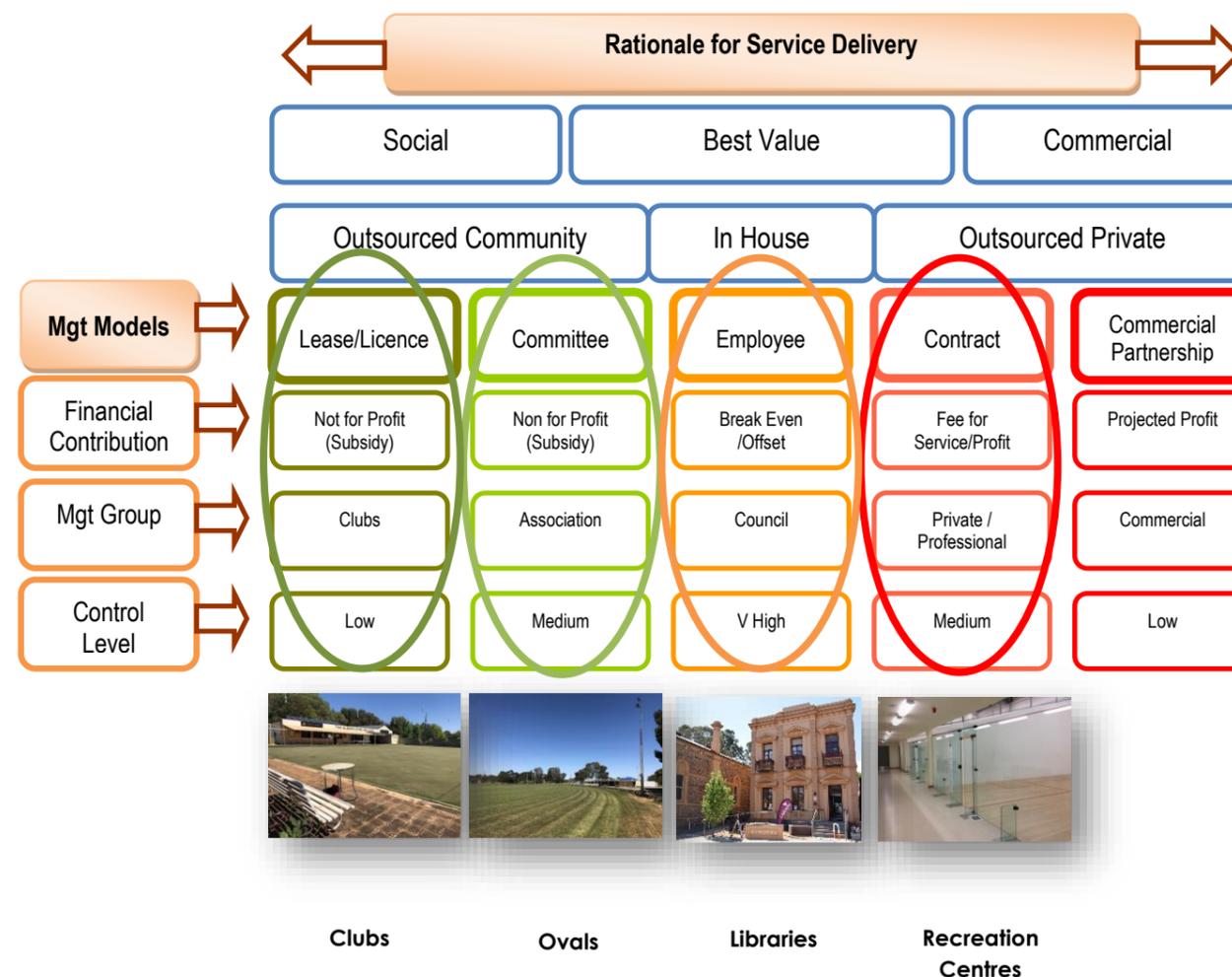
Some services with a leisure / recreation focus such as the Council library, are managed 'in house' by Council staff/employees.

Implications

When considering the various management models available to Council as highlighted in Figure 4, this shows that Council currently delivers its recreation and leisure services in a number of means which seem to be somewhat disjointed or may not be best suited to the community and its needs (Figure 17)

Each of the oval committees work with council to deliver what is effectively a community asset and therefore largely a responsibility of Council with minimal resources and assistance from Council (Table 6).

Figure 17: Operational Management Models



Town	Management Committee	Governance Structure	Arrangement with Council	Funding Sources
Auburn	Auburn Recreation Park Management Committee	Section 41 Committee	Council committee under Section 41 Local Govt Act	Income from Caravan Park, small allocation from Council - \$500 per year for admin., fundraising
Clare	Clare Oval Management Committee	Un clear, unincorporated	No formal arrangement	Ad hoc
Clare Showgrounds	Clare Agricultural and Horticultural Society	Incorporated Body	Privately owned	
Manoora	Manoora Centenary Park	Incorporated Body	Lease	Fundraising
Marrabel	No public oval			
Mintaro	Mortlock Park Committee, subcommittee of Mintaro Progress Association – Peak Body	Incorporated Body	Peak Body Partnership Agreement	Peak Body funding plus fundraising Pay for use of oval per year
	Min Man Sporting Club - Main users/ contributors	Incorporated Body	Lease under negotiation	
Rhynie	No public oval			
Riverton	Riverton Recreation Ground	Section 41 Committee	Council committee under Section 41 Local Govt Act	Income from Caravan Park, small allocation from Council - \$500 per year for admin., Fundraising
Saddleworth	Saddleworth Recreation Ground Committee – subcommittee of Saddleworth District Community Association – Peak Body	Incorporated Body	Peak Body Partnership Agreement	Peak Body funding plus fundraising Often apply for Community Asset Grants
Sevenhill	Private land			
Stockport	Stockport Community Association - Peak Body	Incorporated Body	Peak Body Partnership Agreement	Peak Body funding plus fundraising
Tarlee	Tarlee Hall and Community Services – Peak Body	Incorporated Body	Peak Body Partnership Agreement	Peak Body funding plus fundraising
Watervale	Watervale Community Association – Peak Body	Incorporated Body	Peak Body Partnership Agreement	Peak Body funding plus fundraising Grants, fundraising
	Watervale Cricket Club – main users / contributors	Incorporated Body		

Table 6: Oval Management Committees

3.10 Summary

It's clear to see that there is a good supply of open space across the Council area but much of this is undeveloped land with uses other than recreation. Given the tyranny of distance between townships and a low population base, it is imperative that open space is designed and managed in a manner that has multiple uses and meets both active and passive needs. This means giving consideration to more space for passive needs and where possible including more parks of a neighbourhood classification.

Whilst the average provision of open space across the region is high compared with national averages (56.31ha versus the nationally recognised 4ha), this is misleading given the high proportion of unusable open space or land with no or little recreational value bringing the average down to 28.58. This is however still high compared with the regional average of approximately 16.8ha.

The local community oval in each township is the primary land parcel for sport and recreation and is the focal point of the community. If nothing else, these areas should be viewed as the central meeting space for the small communities, and facilities and services developed and supported by Council including appropriate management arrangements and support of the oval committees.

Traditional sports of football, cricket, netball, bowls and tennis dominate provision with the latter being particularly oversupplied in the region. A more consolidated approach for tennis facilities, particularly turf courts, would be beneficial to both the community and the clubs themselves. A lack of indoor courts also provides a challenge and partnerships with both public and private organisations may alleviate some of this pressure for Council.

Playspaces are also well supplied by way of numbers, but the lack of variety and standard approach to provision means children are not benefiting from the full spectrum of play opportunity. With over 60% of all playspaces over the age of 15 years, this provides Council with a good opportunity to replace with better planned and designed play opportunities that will benefit all age groups, their learning and development needs and of course offer a valuable recreation outlet for children, their carers and families.



Section Four: Expressed Demand

What do our community think and want?

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

4.1 Overview

A key component of the strategy was the involvement of key stakeholders in the identification of localised needs and desires. Whilst consultation may highlight aspirational and visionary requests geared around an individual's or organisation's needs; understanding their concerns and demands will, when balanced against latent demands such as societal trends, participation in sport and recreation, modern planning and design, demographic shifts and other influencing factors outside the control of Council, paint a clear picture as to where its priorities should be focussed in the coming years.

The following is therefore a summary of findings from consultation with both residents as individuals and sporting and recreation clubs and organisations with an interest in the provision of services and infrastructure to support their leisure interests in the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council area.

4.2 Community Survey

The Community survey was open for a period of almost one month from Friday 4th October to Thursday 31st October 2019. The survey yielded 270 responses representing the opinions of 3% of the community (270/9023 = 2.99%) with findings summarised as follows:

4.2.1 Leisure Time Activities

The first section of the survey sought information on people's chosen or preferred leisure time activities. This question aimed at understanding people's interests in their leisure time and the activities (recreation) they preferred.

In line with national participation trends, unstructured activities are popular with walking being the preferred recreational activity (69.6%) followed closely by spending time with friends and family (68.9%) and picnicking (56.3%). Playing organised/structured sport was also popular (53.3%) with other passive pastimes such as reading, watching sport and relaxing also proving popular. These findings support the need for a good open space network that is connected, well designed and managed and offering safe walking routes, parks, gardens and of course structured areas for competitive sport.

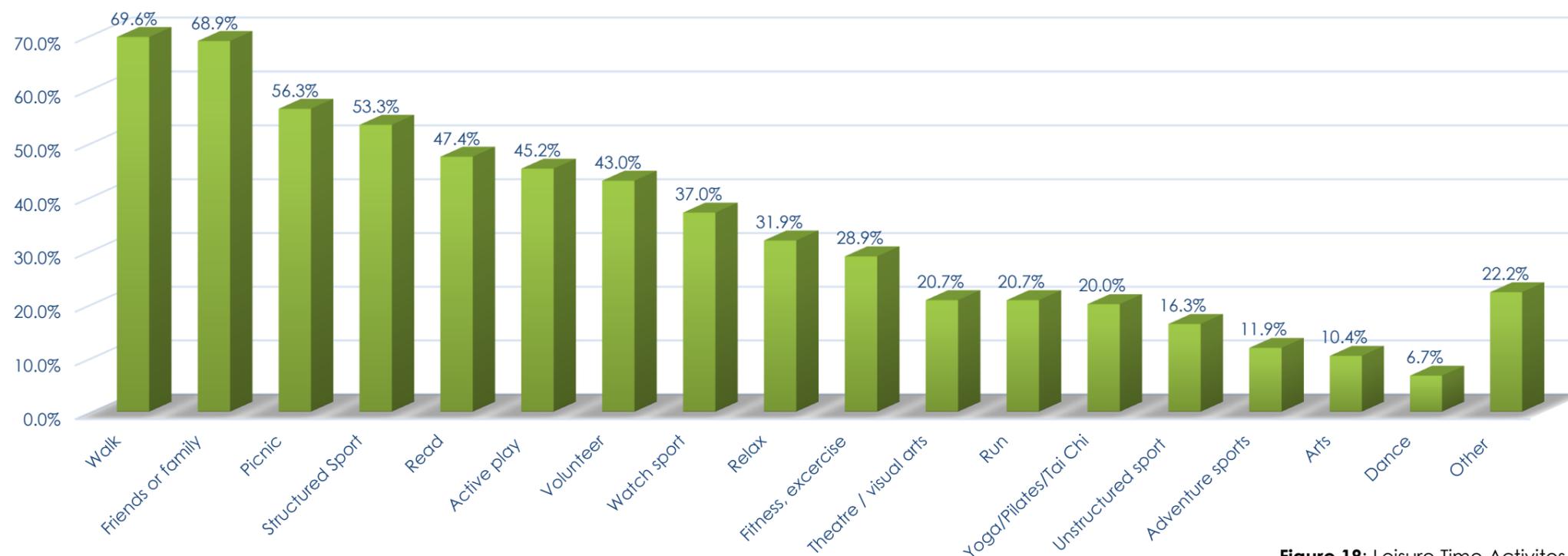


Figure 18: Leisure Time Activities

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Club Affiliation

This question provides an understanding of whether the respondent had a bias or interest towards a certain club or sport in the region. An overall response rate indicated that 75% were members of or affiliated with a club or group with over 70 different organisations/clubs/community groups mentioned with membership. In many cases respondents only listed an affiliation with a sport (e.g. tennis, cricket) rather than identifying the organisation they were affiliated with; however, the main responses were associated with the following clubs and groups.

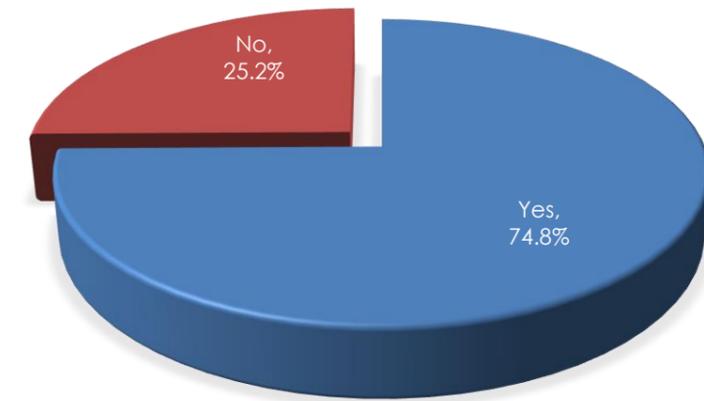


Figure 19: Affiliation with a Club or Sport

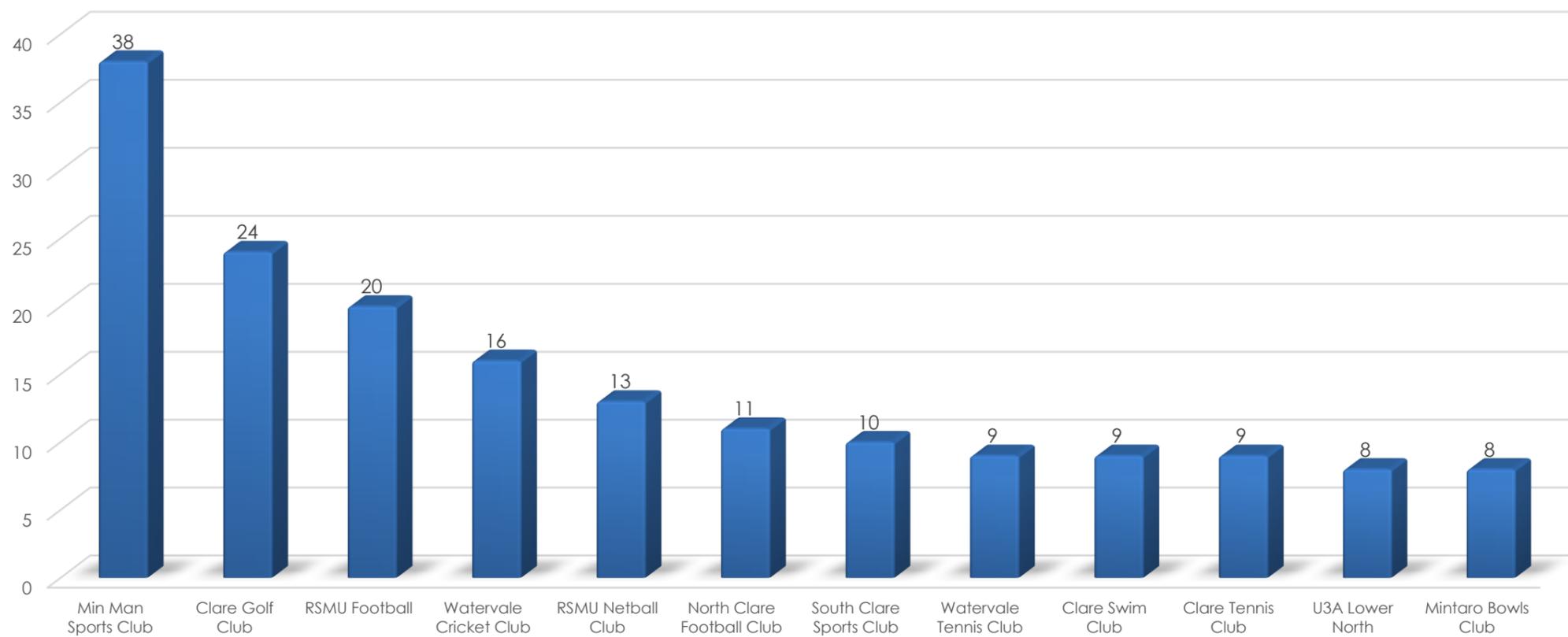
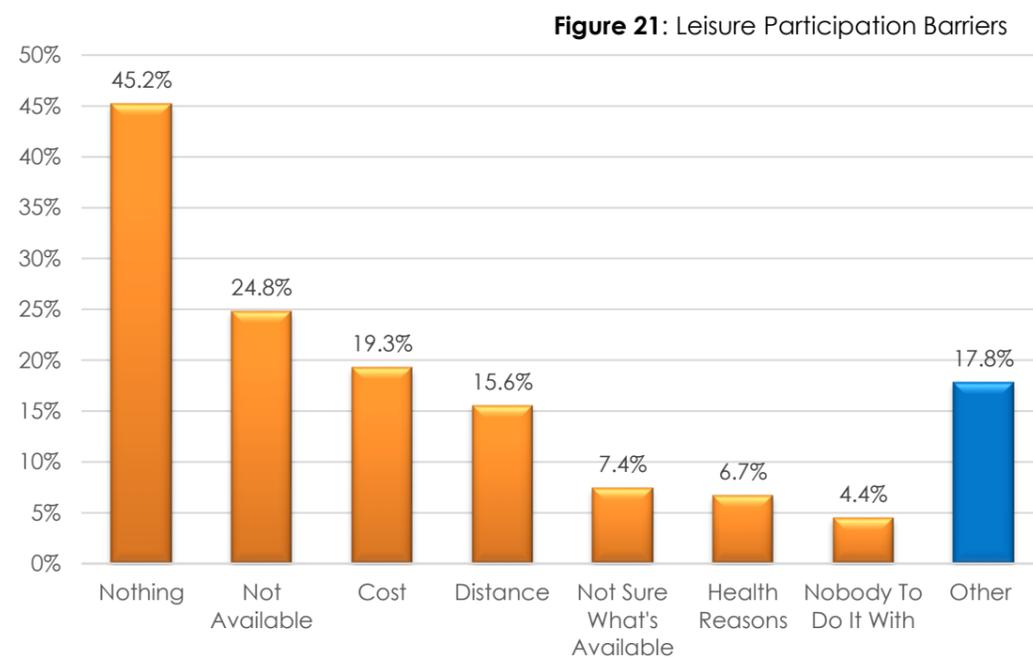


Figure 20: Club Association

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Barriers to Participation

This provides a better understanding of why people find it difficult to participate in their chosen or preferred activity whilst guiding strategies for council's consideration in alleviating them for their communities.



Comment: Respondents were offered a range of options to select from noting that 45% are satisfied with what is available with the current activities and they are not restricted from enjoying their activity of choice. However, for further 25%, they are unable to participate in their activity of choice as it is not available in the region and for a further 19%, the cost to participate is also a barrier.

Gaps in Provision

242 people answered the question with the most common response relating to new or improved/upgraded facilities across the region as a priority and not just focussed on Clare. There was a large number of responses relating to increasing the number of walking/cycling trails.

Whilst over 70 different organisations and activities were mentioned by respondents, there were still a number who suggested an increase in the number and variety of sporting/recreation opportunities particularly for children and young people.

Council Assistance

223 respondents answered this question with the common responses being:

- Greater **promotion and advertising** of what activities are available and not just focussing on Clare activities
- **Better facilities** being made available
- Broader **range of activities** available across the region
- Increased focus on **supporting smaller towns/villages** as current trend seems to be very much Clare focussed
- **Increased funding** being made available to community groups/sports clubs across the region
- More and **improved walking trails**
- **Increased options for youth** and young children such as playspaces, skate parks

Infrastructure Satisfaction

The community were asked their views and satisfaction levels of community sporting and recreation infrastructure. 35% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with another 39% indication their overall dissatisfaction. The remaining 26% were indifferent. These findings aren't conclusive but based on previous questions, it appears evident that this dissatisfaction may stem from the perception that the infrastructure is of a lower standard outside of the Clare township and the smaller townships are not as well resourced.

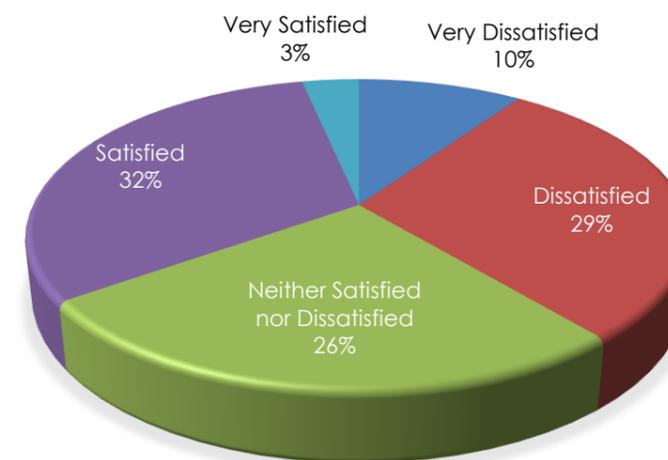
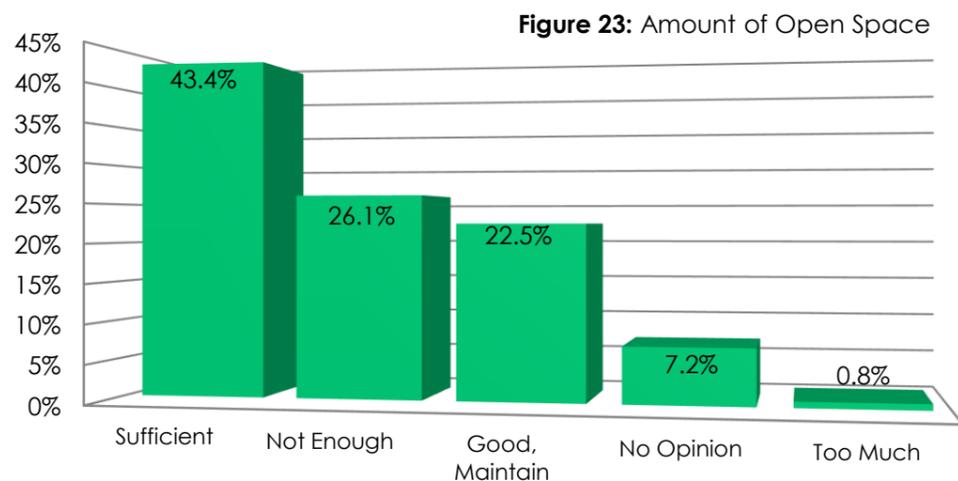


Figure 22: Leisure Facility Satisfaction

4.2.2 Open Space

A specific question in relation to the overall provision of open space was posed which aimed to better understand people's thoughts on the amount or quantity of public land for recreation.



Even though there is a positive response to the current amount of the public open space, parks and gardens with collectively 66% of respondents stating their approval, there was still 26% who feel that more open space and parks could be developed within the region.

Expectation versus Performance of Open Space

The survey asked participant what attributes they find important to them about open space. The survey then asked the participant the level of satisfaction they were currently getting from these open space attributes. Comparing these two aspects of 'expectation' (what they see as important) versus its actual 'performance', (what they are getting) shows areas that Council may be doing well in or alternatively areas that are in need of improving or addressing.

Areas whereby the gap was greater than 0.5 and therefore a concern for the management and design of open space are seen below with a general concern that most open space is not well maintained followed by not enough shade, lack of toilets and water and finally a perception of not feeling safe and having litter in parks and gardens.

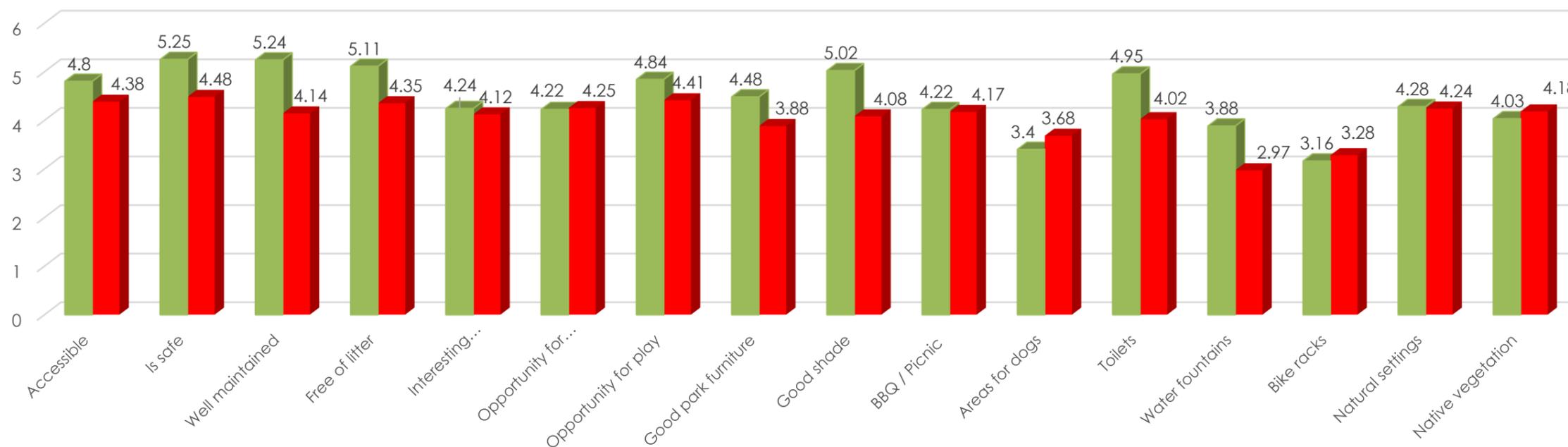
Rank	Area of Concern Not Being Met	Gap
1	Well Maintained	-1.10
2	Good Shade	-0.94
3	Have Toilets	-0.93
4	Has Water Fountains	-0.91
5	Is Safe	-0.77
6	Free of Litter	-0.76
Rank	Area of Need Being Exceeded	Gap
1	Areas for Dogs	+ 0.28
2	Native Vegetation	+ 0.15
3	Bike Racks	+ 0.12
4	Opportunity for Sport	+ 0.03

Areas whereby the community thought they were being well catered for in regard to open space design and management or those that received a positive ranking include areas for dogs, having native vegetation, bike racks and opportunities for structured sport.

Table 7: Open Space Expectation Gap

These findings highlight a number of areas for Councils consideration in relation to the future design and management of public open space within the community.

Figure 24: Expectation versus Performance of Open Space



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

4.2.3 Playspaces

This aspect of the survey sought feedback from those that used playspaces with children.

Playspace Use

The vast majority of respondents (almost 79%) stated they used playspaces as either a parent (54%) or grandparents (27%) as the most common carers of young children. A further 7% stated they used playgrounds with nephews or nieces and 4% stated they used them as an adult or on their own although this may relate to the associated open space rather than play equipment. Other uses accounted for teachers, friends (carer) and brothers and sisters.

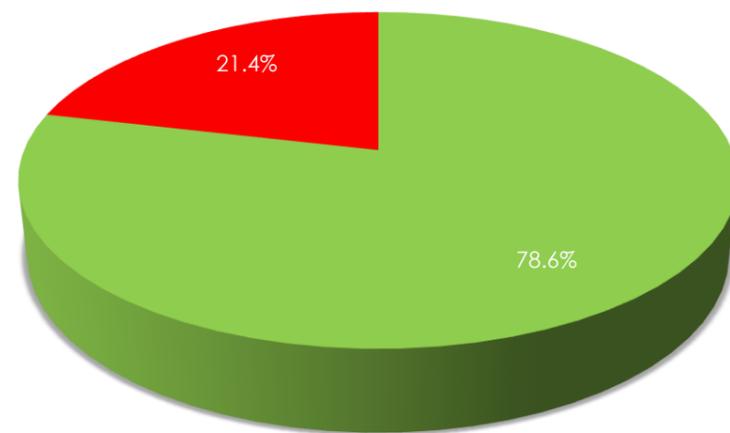


Figure 25: Use of Playspaces

Age of Children

Findings support that playspaces appeal to all age groups of children with the most popular range being 6 – 12 years with 62% of the users. This may mean that playspaces only currently meet the needs of this group and design considerations need to include all age ranges. Additionally, the drop off in use with older teenage) children could be both a barrier to access (availability as has been alluded to in the survey) or alternatively, or in addition to, the notion that older children tend to recreate without their parents and more so with friends. In either instance, the need to plan and design play for all age groups is of paramount importance.

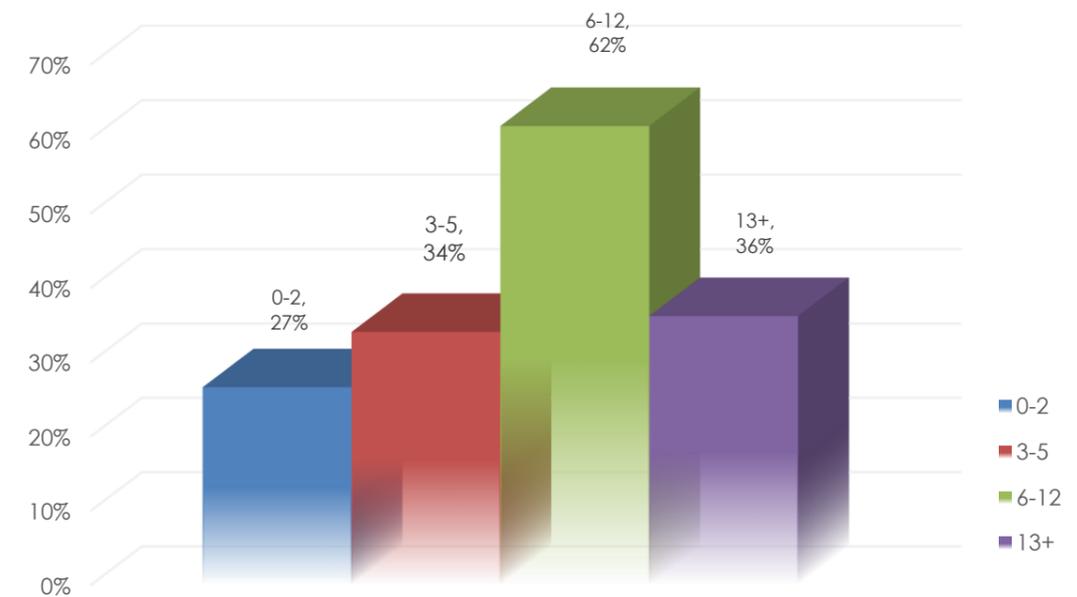


Figure 26: Age of Children Using Playspaces

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Expectation versus Performance of Playspaces

As with the similar question for open space, this question looked at areas of perceived importance over what was actually being received or viewed by the community.

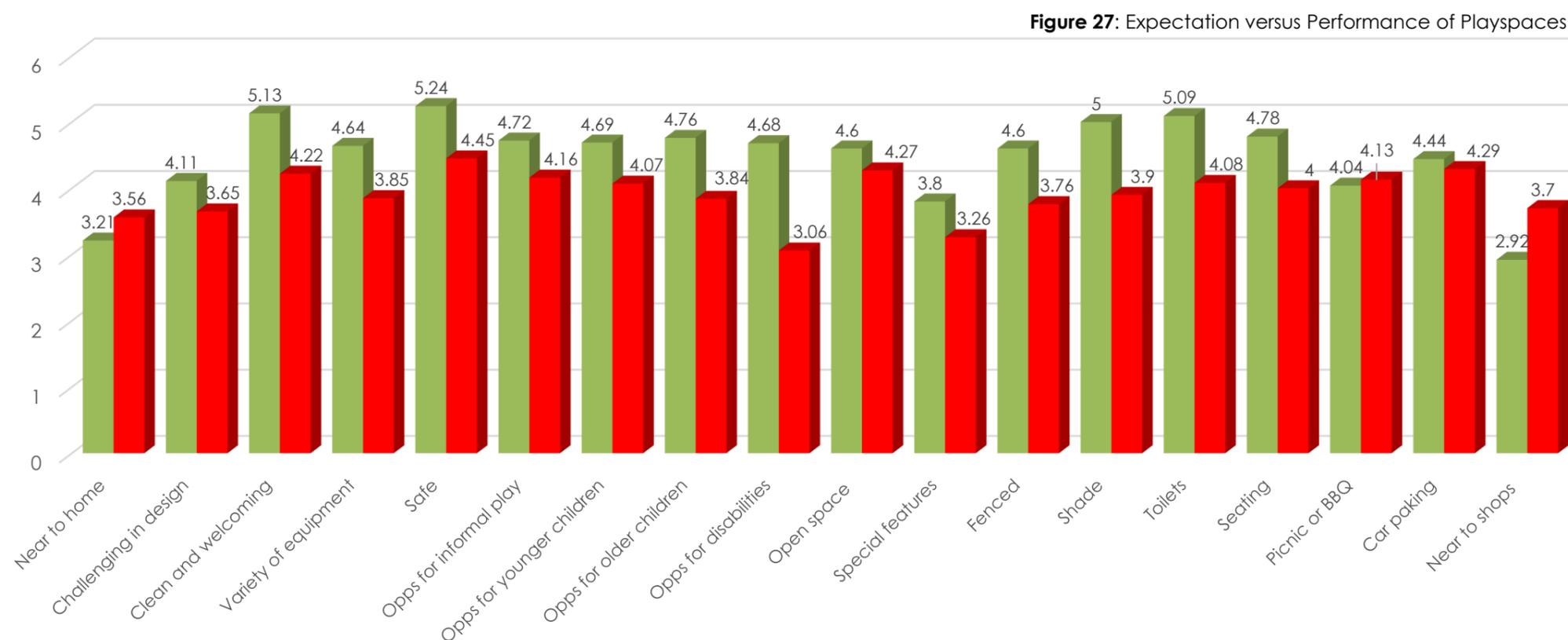
There seems to be a bigger divide in expectation versus perception of playspaces over open spaces with 12 of the 18-criterion having a 0.5 or greater dissatisfaction gap and only 3 of the 18 exceeding expectations. For the purpose of importance therefore, a 0.75 gap is considered whilst acknowledging the overall dissatisfaction of the full 12 criterion expressed as a concern by the community.

Areas whereby the community thought they were being well catered for in regard to playspaces or those that received a positive ranking near to shops, near to their home, and having picnic and BBQ areas

These findings generally highlight a high dissatisfaction of playspaces across the Council area.

Rank	Area of Concern Not Being Met	Gap
1	Opportunities for children with disabilities	-1.62
2	Shade	-1.10
3	Access to toilets	-1.01
4	Opportunities for older children	-0.92
5	Clean and welcoming	-0.91
6	Fenced	-0.84
=7	Variety of equipment	-0.79
=7	Safety of equipment	-0.79
9	Seating	-0.78
Rank	Area of Need Being Exceeded	Gap
1	Near to shops	+ 0.78
2	Near to home	+ 0.35
3	Picnic and BBQ areas	+ 0.09

Table 8: Playspace Expectation Gap



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Favourite Playspaces

202 of the 270 respondents answered this question and it was evident from the range of responses that some were uncertain on what constitutes a playspace. The favourite playspace was noted as being Richardson Park Sevenhill as this was mentioned 67 times (33%). Other favoured playspaces are located at Mintaro, Watervale, Riverton and Melrose Park.



The common theme with the popularity of the Richardson Park playspace is due to its range and variety of challenging nature play and adventure activities suitable for all ages, access to seating, toilets and picnic facilities and its proximity to the Riesling Trail and nearby café are an added bonus.

Consolidation of Playspaces

A notion often considered is the consolidation of the number of playspaces (should there already be a good supply based on benchmarking), over fewer but better quality playspaces that have a range of opportunities and design,

Opinions were divided on whether to support the consolidation of playspaces for better quality ones with the yes (26%) and no (25%) being very close while the maybe (34%) was the highest score. As there is no definitive response to this question it will require further consideration before any decision is made and potentially the rationale and benefits clearly articulated to the community.

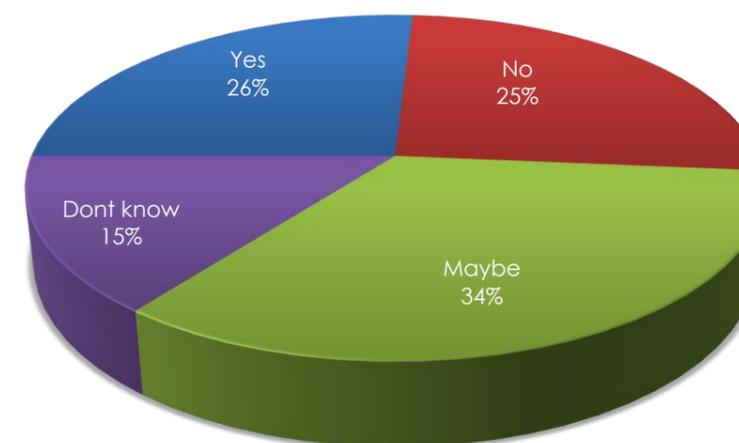


Figure 28: Support for the Consolidation of Playspaces

4.2.4 Other Comments

There were some common themes identified in the 140 additional comments that were received. The most common was for Council to recognise that the focus should not always be on Clare as the other towns and villages (Watervale and Riverton in particular) also need to be considered for new and upgraded facilities (note the location of respondents in Figure 28)

There was a general sense that facility upgrades should be a priority, and this would include increasing and improving the play spaces to more nature play/adventure type activity. It is important to consider the development of more child and youth related activities to address the growing concern of kids not being active. Council could consider supporting local sporting clubs more as they are providing a great community service, but they need more financial and administrative support.

4.2.5 Respondent Profile

The final questions addressed the demographic aspects of the respondents seeking data on their gender, age and place of residence and if this provides a picture of the people who responded to the survey.

The majority of responses were from women but a relative spread across age cohorts with the 35 – 44 age group (26%) being the largest response category followed by the 65 years and over with 21%. The younger age cohort under 25 only had two responses from a total pool of 219 highlighting this survey did not capture any valuable information relating to that age category.

This can also be said for the under 20 cohort and therefore a need to target focus on this demographic to ensure their thoughts and aspirations are captured moving forwards. This is particularly the case for young people aged 13-18 given the highlighted concern of a lack of opportunities for this cohort in the Council area.

While the responses were received from a cross section of residents throughout the region covering every township/village except for Tarlee, the 3 towns of Clare(37%), Watervale (16%) and Riverton (13%) shared the most responses which is to be expected given they are the larger population areas.

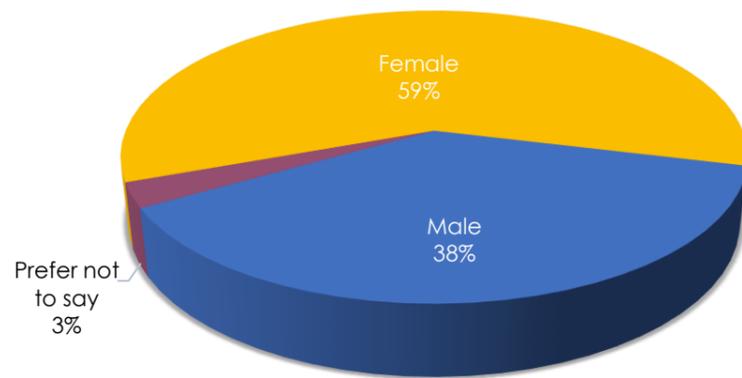


Figure 29: Gender of Respondant

Figure 30: Age of Respondant

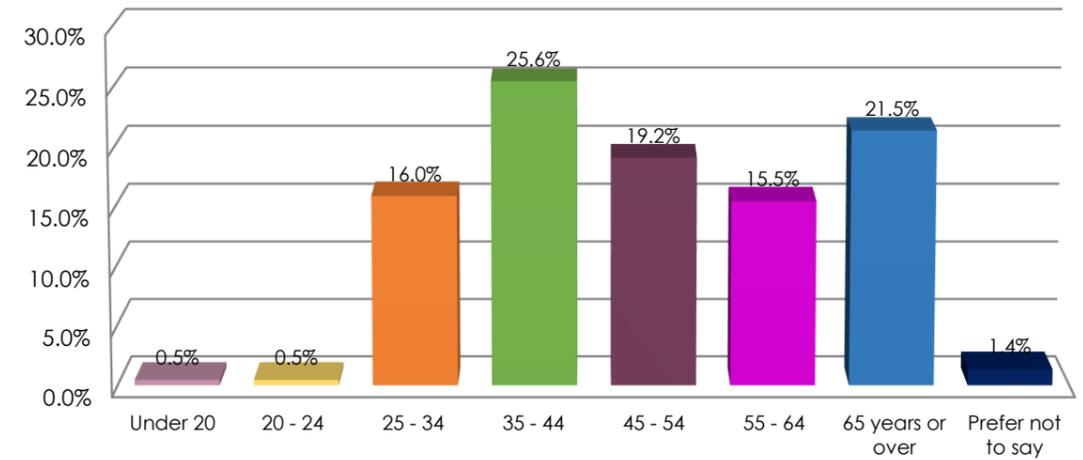
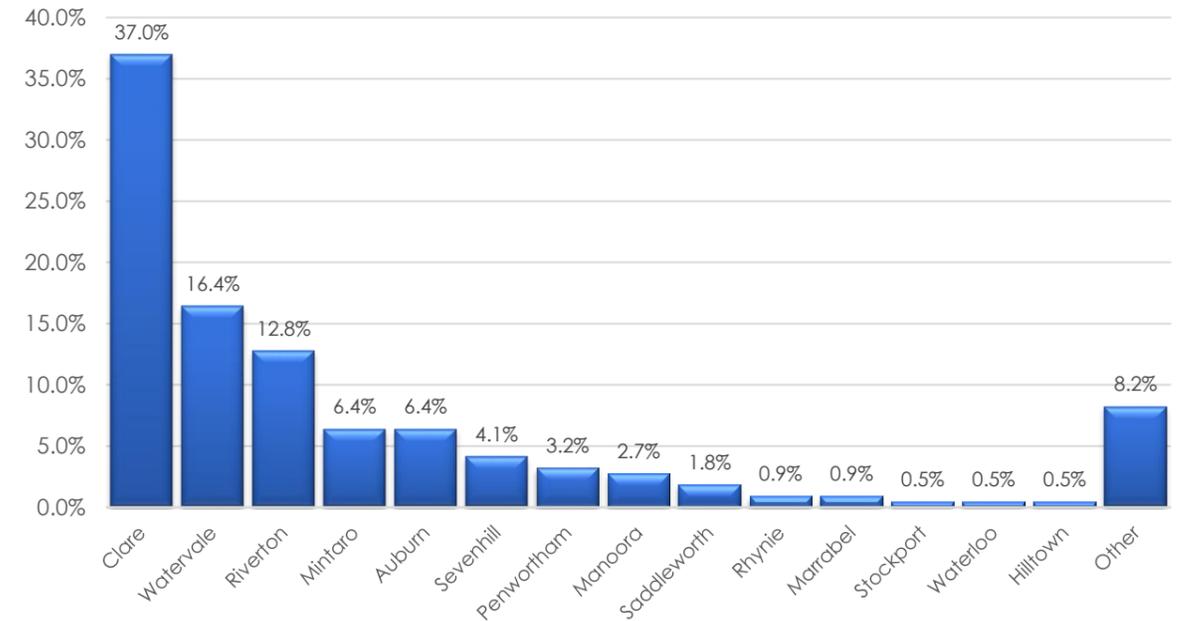


Figure 31: Location of Respondant



4.3 Community Workshops

Two workshops were held in Clare on Thursday 24th October 2019 in the morning and evening. The morning session was attended by 5 people plus 3 council staff and the consultant, with the evening session also attended by 5 people, 1 Council staff member and the consultant. Some attendees represented clubs or groups, whereby others were members of the public with an interest in the strategy. Groups represented included:

- Model Engineers
- Tennis
- Hockey
- Riesling Trail
- Auburn Community Development Committee
- Tourism

Grouped discussions and findings from these sessions were as follows:

- Open Space
 - Clare generally has a good provision of open space and given its location is 'blessed'
 - Good community spirit with the groups that look after the spaces in Clare
 - Wayfinding and signage needs improving
 - Need to link open spaces to trails networks and map accordingly
 - Need to plan our towns for people and places (every town has a DPTI Road running through the middle making them dangerous for locals)
 - Open space areas need better maintenance
 - Pinks Reserve is an ideal area for enhancement and inclusion of special features including nature play
 - New development open space contributions and management needs better consideration
 - Need to consider public realm and street trees
 - Inchiquin Lake and Melrose Park needs to be better utilised
 - Can the Clare racecourse be considered for other use?

- Leisure and Recreation
 - Activities for more casual use would be good such as petanque /boules in parks and open spaces. Felt that one in Clare would be ideal
 - Youth recreation needs supporting further and encouraging BMX tracks and youth parks in particular)
 - Adult play equipment is needed in parks along with more fitness stations
 - Nature play should be encouraged and built into their design
 - A need for more water fountains in parks
 - Cycle tourism needs to be capitalised upon given the trails network throughout the region.
 - Volunteers run Clare and need supporting and acknowledging
 - More playspaces like Sevenhill are needed
- Sport
 - Felt that there are too many lawn tennis courts and this needs to be looked at as a separate study
 - Cost of utilities is restrictive for clubs
 - Maintenance of sports areas is a challenge particularly for irrigating
 - The Clare oval facility is old and in need of upgrading
 - Clare Hockey Club currently use the Clare High School (grass) facility
 - Hockey feels there are a lack of facilities for their sport in the are but acknowledge the cost and feasibility of synthetic pitches
- Model Railway
 - The model railway at Melrose Park is a major asset to the town
 - The lease and tenure are being renegotiated but it is felt that many do not know what their agreements are, and this therefore needs clarifying
 - There is a lack of storage at the site particularly for the trains as members make them and can't take them away
 - Council supports the club as a venue, but it is felt additional support is needed
 - Toilets are insufficient when large events are being held at the site
 - The whole site needs master planning

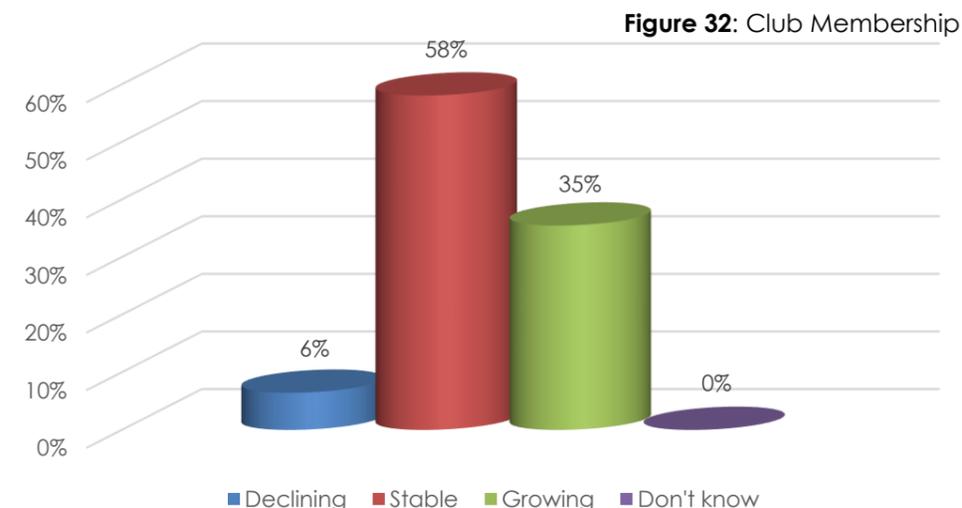
4.4 Community Organisation Survey

A total of 31 surveys were completed, 5 of which were duplicates from organisations and were therefore included in 26 actual organisation responses from the following clubs, Associations or community organisations

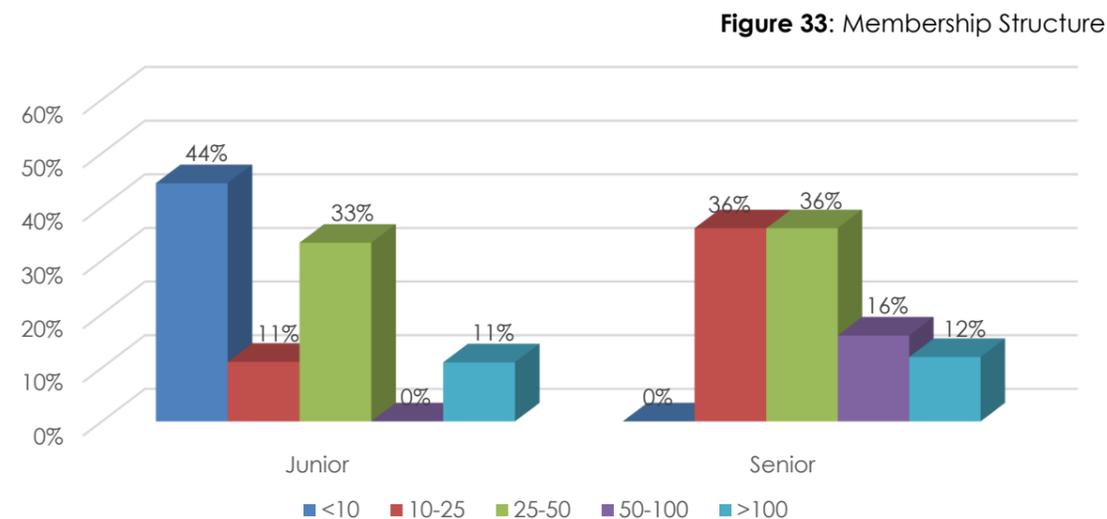
1. Mid North Little Athletics Centre
2. 1st Clare Scout Group
3. Riverton Lawn Tennis Club
4. Clare Valley Dressage Club
5. Mintaro Manoora Sporting Club Inc
6. Clare Hockey Club
7. Richardson Park Incorporated
8. RSMU Football Club
9. Scholz Park Museum
10. CV Model Engineers
11. Clare Regional History Collection
12. Hamley Bridge Golf Club
13. Mintaro Tennis Club
14. Watervale Bowling Club
15. Auburn Mintaro Cricket Club
16. Stanley cricket association
17. Riverton Recreation Ground
18. Clare Motorcycle club
19. Mintaro Bowling Club
20. Mintaro Progress Association
21. Watervale Community Association Inc
22. Clare Golf Club
23. Auburn Bowling Club
24. Clare Rodeo
25. Manoora Centenary Park
26. Mortlock Park - Mintaro Progress

4.4.1 Membership Overview

The following questions were aimed at providing an overview of the club and its membership.



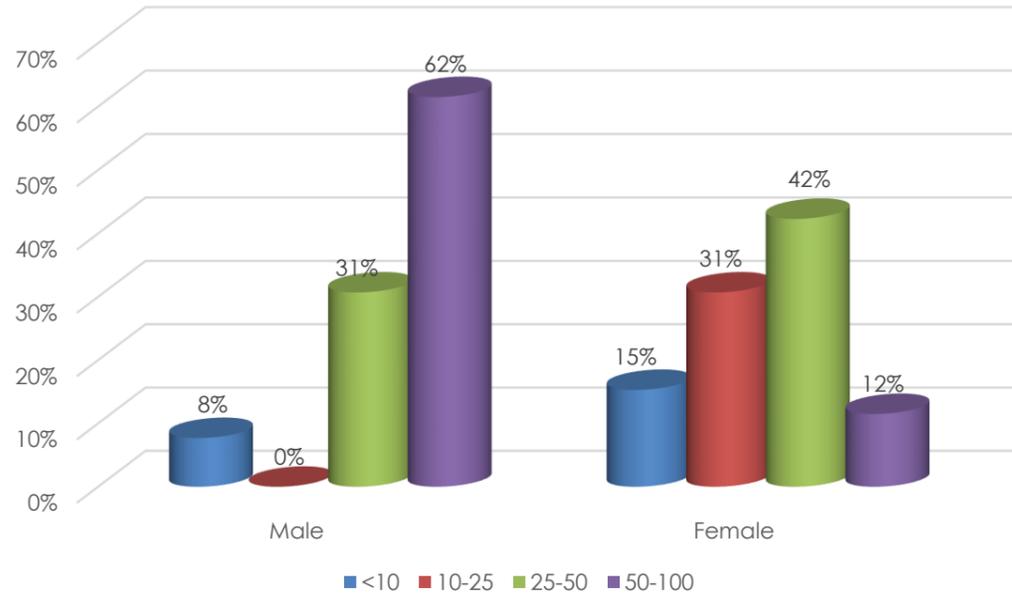
A positive picture is painted given only two (6%) of the organisations have indicated membership is declining and all others either stable (58%) or growing (35%).



Of those organisations that have junior members, 44% (8) had less than 10 and only 2 had a large membership base of over 100 (11%). These were Mintaro Manoora (MinMan) Sporting Club and the Stanley Cricket Association

Organisations with senior members were more evenly spread however with 72% having between 10-50 members which compared with similar metro clubs is not large but must be recognised that most are drawing from small rural townships or villages. Three organisations did however have large membership base of over 100 seniors to include the MinMan Sporting Club, The Stanley Cricket Association, and the Clare Golf Club.

Figure 34: Membership Gender

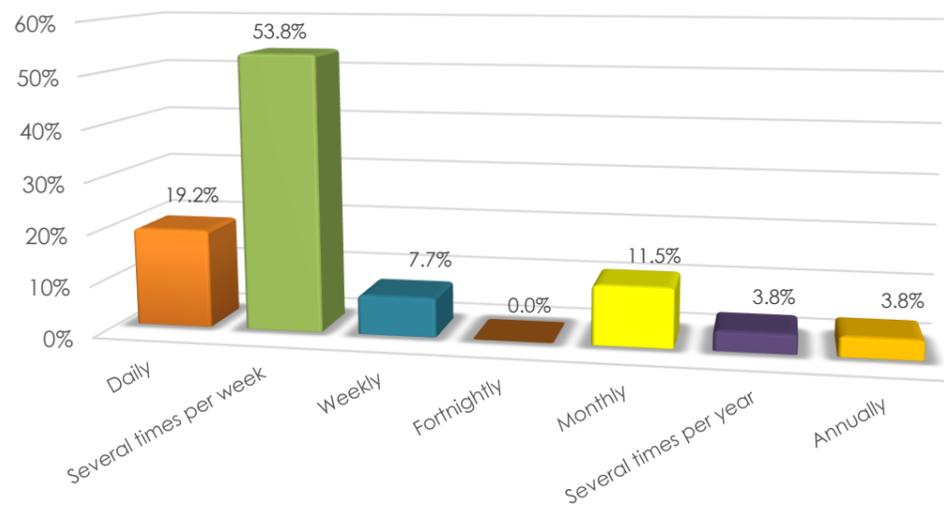


Males were the dominant with 62% of organisations having between 50 and 100 members while only 12% had between 50 and 100 female members.

4.4.2 Facilities

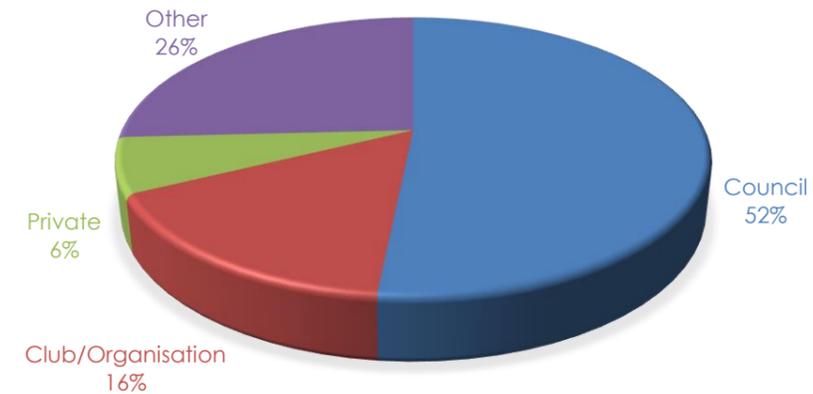
These questions were aimed at gaining a better understanding of the current and future needs for club facilities.

Figure 35: Facility Frequency of Use



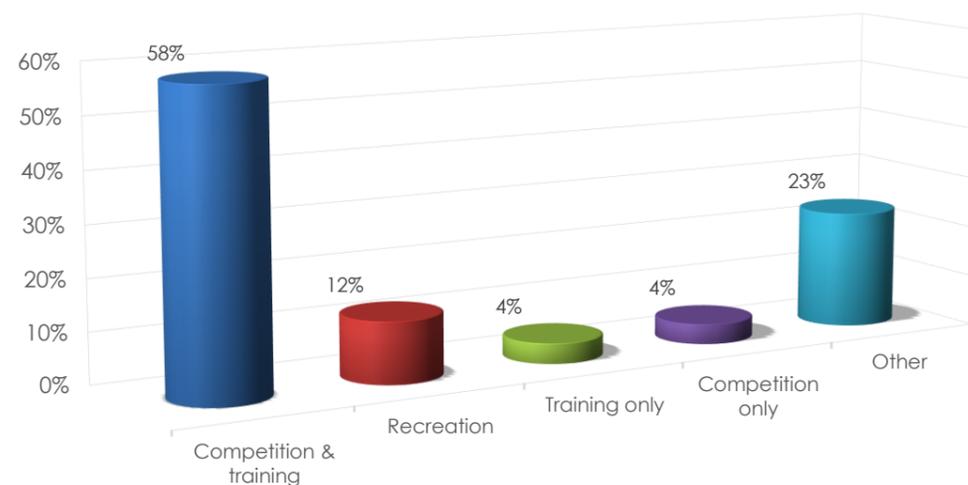
Facility use sought a better understanding of how many times a week facilities were used to assist in ensuring optimal use. The highest usage is several times per week with 54% stating they did so and a further 19% stating daily and almost 8% weekly. The one organisation that used their facility annually was the Clare Rodeo with the Clare Hockey Club stating they only used their facility several times a year. Monthly use was from the Clare Valley Dressage Club, the Scholz Park Museum and the Watervale Community Association

Figure 36: Facility Ownership



The majority of the facilities (52%) are Council owned with only 16% of organisations owning their own facility. Terms of use relates to the management agreement / arrangement which ranges from a stated \$0 - \$1200 per annum with the terms of the lease being from a hire as needs basis through to 99-year lease and some unknown. This would suggest that many organisations are not clear as to the terms of their leases given the changes to the Local Government Act allowing a maximum of 42 years and others stating Section 41 Committees.

Figure 37: Facility Use



While facilities are used for a range of activities including competition, training and recreation, the overwhelming use is for a combination of competition and training for 58% of the organisations.

Infrastructure Requirements

These questions were aimed at better understanding clubs and groups priorities for the coming years which whilst may be visionary for some, do assist in developing strategies and priorities for community infrastructure planning, design and management.

Requirements in the Coming Years

Answers to this question were obviously varied according to the club and the nature of their activity and status of their facilities. Groups were asked to provide an overview of their short, medium and long-term priorities which are shown on the following pages.

Resources to Meeting Needs

Community organisations generally have limited financial resources but some organisations in the Council area have assets that have been bequeathed to the community recreation organisations which is quite unique. Some organisations are therefore 'financial' but would require assistance for large scale projects such as major infrastructure development for club rooms, change facilities and to a lesser extent sports surface upgrades and services such as lighting and irrigation.

Table 9: Club Requirements and Needs

Organisation	Short	Medium	Long	Specific Improvements
Mid North Little Athletics Centre	Toilets/Changerooms, long jump pits that meet competition standard, storage shed for new high jump mat. Access for all participants and volunteers including disabled and elderly	Sun safe shaded area for participants and spectators	A new athletics facility with proper running track etc.	Toilets/Changerooms, long jump pits that meet competition standard, storage shed for new high jump mat. Access for all participants and volunteers including disabled and elderly, sun safe shaded area for participants and spectators
1st Clare Scout Group		Hoping on new site build to commence early 2020		Traffic management at oval entrance, reducing vehicle speed.
Riverton Lawn Tennis Club		Water provisions		Water provisions to water lawn courts
Clare Valley Dressage Club	Permanent storage for our equipment on site	Permanent clubrooms		New yards for safe horses. Upgrade to toilet facilities, irrigated grass to ensure the oval doesn't return to weeds after it is re-sown.
Mintaro Manooora Sporting Club Inc		Changeroom & lighting upgrades	Clubroom upgrades	Changeroom, lighting & clubroom upgrades
Clare Hockey Club		Toilets / changing rooms		Toilets / changing rooms. This year the sub-surface irrigation at the high school grounds showed signs or several leaks
Richardson Park Incorporated		Roadways, entrance, parking, oval fence and water tanks	New toilet facilities	The entrance from College Road; rainwater storage tanks for toilets; major upgrade to roadways around the oval including parking area.
RSMU Football Club	Training and competition	Training and competition	Training and competition	New roof, new wet areas, new multi gender change rooms
Scholz Park Museum	Regular maintenance. Replace wheelwright shop walls.	Establish a toilet facility on site & ongoing maintenance.	Ongoing maintenance.	Installation of a toilet for use by visitors & volunteers (Not a public toilet). Replacement of East & West wheelwright shop walls. Maintenance to termite damaged infrastructure. Improvements to our small "catering" area in the back room.
CV Model Engineers	extension of shed area to accommodate extra trains	review of track and upgrade park areas	replace toilet areas upgrade facilities	increase building size for storage, establish workshop, expand club room and canteen. new toilet areas
Clare Regional History Collection	regain access	will revert to using several times per week - open to public and volunteer collection activities	Using at least several times per week - Open to public and volunteer collection activities	Access! Then a lift and some other adjustments (extra stair rails) to assist elderly volunteers and visitors. We are prepared to do the legwork to fund the lift with a contribution from Council of \$30,000 - \$50,000.
Hamley Bridge Golf Club	Rain and Machinery maintenance	Upgrade of toilet facilities	Machinery replacement	Toilet facilities and golf course improvements
Mintaro Tennis Club		New club rooms ??	Resurface the 3 courts (definite)	Nothing at moment but in the future the courts will need maintenance & the clubrooms will need some care or knocked down & rebuilt
Watervale Bowling Club	Upgrade of bowling green	upgrade of toilets	upgrade of clubrooms	Disabled access and toilet facilities and kitchen
Auburn Mintaro Cricket Club				
Stanley Cricket Association	Both male and female change rooms	Lighting suitable to host high level competition	Turf wickets	Change room and function room built
Riverton Recreation Ground	Public toilets	Better change facilities,	Complete new building	Public toilets / disabled toilet Kitchen and facilities Change rooms Storage Roof
Clare Motorcycle Club	Completion and upgrading of facilities suitable for conducting state events	Viewing, catering facilities and dust suppression	Relocation of clubhouse to track for a 'true home'	Re surfacing of car park, shelters for viewing areas, own water supply and electricity

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Organisation	Short	Medium	Long	Specific Improvements
Mintaro Bowling Cub	Upgrade Exterior Overhead Lighting	Upgrade bar, reverse cycle air-conditioning	Laser levelling of green, machinery upgrade, temprite upgrade	Replacement of exterior Light Poles as required by Council, a very costly exercise for our club
Mintaro Progress Association	maintenance only - facility complete	maintenance only	maintenance - possible equipment replacement/upgrade	yet to be considered
Watervale Community Association Inc	Looking for financial assistance to complete our "shovel ready project". This has been my main goal for the past 10yrs. Our commitment is to give the town back it's community space.		WCA has \$250,000 State government commitment \$121,644 Backing from SACA Local school backing 3 local sporting clubs Locals support in-kind support for many aspects of the project	We are desperate to have a community centre again. We have no ability to fundraise or hold town functions as we have no facilities. Towns need a community space especially in the last few years as drought grips our state. Sometimes it's nice to be able to join a community gathering to talk and express what's going on and to have people smile and maybe briefly forgot about the tough things in life.
Clare Golf Club	Upgrade of the Green Keepers shed	Upgrade of irrigation system.	Upgrade of irrigation system.	as before
Auburn Bowling Club	Bowls Competitions and Training and Club Social Events	Bowls Competitions and Training and Club Social Events	Bowls Competitions and Training and Club Social Events	Upgraded Kitchen and Bar Facilities Given the ageing demographic and changing background and attitudes of newer members we may need to install a synthetic green in the near future
Clare Rodeo	Lighting	toilets	hope to help upgrade arena	Toilets, lighting and grounds (arena).
Manoora Centenary Park	New light towers oval, Outdoor Catering upgrade, Extended storeroom inc Cool room, roadway upgrades	Build unisex change room adjoined function centre, Stand-alone elevated football timekeepers Box	Purchase adjacent land water storage/ car parking / third court. Older Kids playground, netball light upgrade, solar/battery array	Changeroom upgrade, lighting upgrade, outdoor community catering area
Mortlock Park - Mintaro Progress			ongoing sport	Clubrooms/ kitchen and Change room upgrade to ensure safety and inclusion of all players

4.5 Summary

Community leisure time activity is similar to national trends of walking, spending time with family and picnicking etc, but what is also evident is the place of sport in the community, in particular the local recreation grounds within townships. These form the heart of many communities and are a place where all forms of recreation and leisure are undertaken from playing sport, watching sport, socialising or providing groups a place to meet.

The need for Council to support all townships also came through very strongly from the community, with many seeing this as the main barrier to enhanced opportunities, i.e. lack of financial support outside of Clare.

The notion of increasing opportunities for trails and general walking and cycling networks was also supported as was the need to increase maintenance of open spaces, providing shade in parks and having access to facilities such as toilets and water as end of trip amenities.

A general lack of variety in playspaces is evident, with the preferred being the larger, albeit privately owned playspace at Sevenhill. The question of consolidation of playspaces was met with hesitation and should Council choose this option, noting that provision is currently good, then further consultation would be warranted.

The community also acknowledge the opportunity for tourism and the benefits this would bring to the region from enhancing the State trails network that bisects the Council area, through to promoting unique features such as the model railway (engineers) club and features at larger open spaces. A common suggested inclusion within such spaces was more public realm activities such as bocce, chess and areas where communities can meet and congregate.

Community organisation feedback is in line with the community in that many thought more assistance was required from Council to enhance the recreation grounds within townships. This may come in the form of direct financial assistance, whereby for some it was clarity around the terms of their lease and the roles and responsibilities of all parties.



Section Five: Strategy Development

Where Now?

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.1 Strategy Overview

Given the challenges and identified issues within this report, the strategic response to future provision is discussed in terms of:

- A vision for open space and public realm across the region;
- Guiding principles;
- Council wide strategies, and
- Local township strategies.

These are discussed in terms of open space, recreation and sport and public realm.

5.2A Vision for Sport, Recreation, Play and Open Space

This vision will provide the future desire and direction for the provision, management and maintenance of the spaces that council is responsible for.

An equitable and manageable supply of open space across all townships, our parks, reserves and facilities will provide a range of both active and passive opportunities showcasing the unique aspects of the Region to current and future generations and tourists alike.

5.3 Policy Statements and Principles

From the understanding of leisure, recreation, open space, sport and play, the following policy statements are recommended to Council in its current and future management facilities and services that add to the wellbeing of the community through participation in quality leisure time activities:

5.3.1 Leisure and Wellbeing

- LW 1: Leisure is a basic human right and Council will work toward ensuring a range of active and passive opportunities are available to enhance the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.
- LW 2: Council will work towards removing barriers that reduce participation in quality leisure activities
- LW 3: Leisure is a valuable conduit for social development and capacity building and can be passive or active to include things such as arts, crafts and learning new skills
- LW 4: Local community organisations are core providers of programmes and services and will be supported accordingly.
- LW 5: Leisure has a positive economic impact on the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Region and Council will work with providers and businesses to support local and regional tourism opportunities
- LW 6: Local businesses and providers will be encouraged to promote and deliver opportunities to enhance local and regional tourism

5.3.2 Open Space

- OS 1: Our parks will be sustainable, viable and manageable within our resource allocations
- OS 2: Council will ensure open space is protected and preserved for current and future generations and aim to provide a minimum of 9ha of useable open space per 1000 residents in our main townships and residential areas. District and Regional facilities will be spread across the District to ensure an even supply and equitable access for all.
- OS 3: We will optimise use of open space through appropriate design and management to include active and passive uses
- OS 4: We will endeavour to provide open space within easy walking access for all residents where possible and practical. In smaller townships, open space should be consolidated to ensure a range of opportunities to include active, passive, structured and unstructured sport and recreation and be considered at a minimum district level classification.
- OS 5: Where needed, Council will partner with schools and other landowners to enhance access to useable open space.
- OS 6: Our public open spaces will be safe, clean and welcoming
- OS 7: We will design our parks and open space system to encourage a sense of place and public realm and design to protect and enhance the environmental, cultural and heritage values of our region
- OS 8: We will promote our parks and open spaces networks to ensure the community are aware of parks and open space in the CGVC
- OS 9: Council will ensure our main streets are tree lined and designed with pedestrians over motor vehicles to increase a sense of place and natural protection from the environments and safety for all users.

5.3.3 Sport and Recreation

- SR1: Sport plays a key role in the social fabric of the region and will be supported by Council as a key form of positive leisure time activity
- SR2: Where possible and practical, sports facilities will be multi use and designed in a manner to be shared and optimised by the community.
- SR3: Sports grounds should be used to their carrying capacity noting challenges with water management and maintenance
- SR4: Local community associations are the backbone of delivery and supported by Council to service its townships
- SR5: Council will actively work with providers to collectively enhance the delivery of opportunities throughout the region.

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.3.4 Playspaces

- P1: Council understands the benefits of play and the need to provide different settings and opportunities in line with a child's development. This includes opportunities for cognitive physical and social development and the appropriate mix of opportunities within playspace settings across Council.
- P2: Council will ensure a range of opportunities are provided for all age groups, with higher classifications generally meeting a greater range of ages through differing equipment and design
- P3: Playspaces will offer a range of opportunities for children of all abilities and backgrounds
- P3: Council acknowledges the natural environment is equally if not more important as structured play equipment. Where possible, Council will design play into and use the natural form to promote play.
- P4: Council will embrace technology within its parks and where possible will include it to enhance play opportunities particularly in parks of a district and higher classification.
- P5: Playspaces will be designed in accordance with their settings and innovative design used to create unique opportunities for children and their families.
- P6: The local indigenous and Australian heritage will be promoted through play and the natural flora and fauna protected but promoted through interpretive signage, design and theming of playspaces.
- P7: Playspaces will encourage children to explore and will be designed in a manner that reduces but does not negate an element of risk. Equipment will be in line with national standards but will encourage children to learn in controlled environments.

5.4 Council Wide Strategies

Working from the Guiding Principles, a number of strategies have been developed at a Council wide level to be applied across the region. The initial focus of each of these is the establishment of broad-based provision of sport, recreation, open space and playspaces, noting that further consultation and alignment will be required with the community as and when Council chooses to implement.

The strategies are suggestions only and do not form the basis of a commitment from Council to implement, but rather provide a focus on what is deemed important over the coming years to enhance sport, recreation and leisure opportunities for residents and visitors to the region.

Priorities for all strategies are discussed in terms of a ten year timeframe as follows:

High	1-3 Years
Medium	3-5 Years
Low	5-10 Years

Table 10: Priorities

5.4.1 Open Space Strategies

Table 11: Open Space Strategies		H	M	L	Comment	Budget Implication
OS1	Adopt the open space classification system to include land status, hierarchy and settings and adopt as a benchmark the 9ha of useable open space per 1000 residents				Develop a strategy and design schedule	-
OS2	In townships of 500 people or more, a minimum supply of open space should be a district level facility that includes playing fields, hard courts and passive areas such as BBQs and a playspace					-
OS3	Ensure key open spaces across the Council are linked through appropriate wayfinding and signage from townships				Overarching strategy and design template required	\$40-\$60k
OS4	Develop a park identification strategy to name and theme key parks with local community / cultural / historical and/or indigenous names to provide a sense of place and acknowledgment				In consultation with the local community	-
OS5	Within each township, highlight visitor information bays as the key entry statements to the towns and work with the community to theme				Highlighted in localised strategies where relevant	-
OS6	Cemeteries have a unique purpose but offer peaceful and tranquil open space areas for reflection and relaxation. Appropriate facilities should therefore be included such as historical signage, seating, shading and landscape design to create a sense of place and tranquillity.				Highlighted in localised strategies where relevant	-
OS7	Investigate internally, all land parcels classified as ancillary in the open space database with a view of determining an appropriate divestment strategy for disposal				Highlighted in localised strategies where relevant	-
OS8	Develop an open space reserves fund for development of existing open space with funds received from any divestment.					-
OS9	Ensure new development open space allocation is guided by this report and the classification system and framework adopted by council, e.g. 12.5% of useable open space with a recreational value over the inclusion of ancillary land				Ongoing policy implementation	-
OS10	Work directly with private landowners to ensure optimal access and use of open space for both sport and recreation outside of their own uses.					-
OS11	Develop and brand a Clare and Gilbert Valleys Trails and Points of Interest Maps providing day hikes and bike rides to and from townships as start / end points. This will entail a comprehensive review of the trails network				Capitalise on Mawson and State trail initiative and localise and brand	\$40k
Estimated Budget						\$80 - \$100k

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.4.2 Sport and Recreation Strategies

Table 12: Sport and Recreation Strategies		H	M	L	Comment	Budget Implication
SR1	View all Oval and Recreation Grounds Committees as service providers of Councils sport and leisure facilities and support and fund appropriately through formalised management agreements and budgets appropriate with their level of management and operation.				Oval committees need appropriate resourcing to manage public space and facilities and maintenance levels require standardising. This will be different for each but needs an equitable approach understood by all.	Ongoing increased operational
SR2	Review all management agreements with Recreation Grounds Committees with a view of rationalising administration and one organisation per oval / sports grounds or separate leases with individual 'standalone' clubs and groups				A need to standardise structures to ensure channels of communications and roles and responsibilities are clear	-
SR3	Undertake a carrying capacity assessment of each of Councils 13 sporting precincts (ovals) to determine current levels of use.				Under or over supply assessment required to ensure optimal use	\$10-\$20k
SR4	Develop a CGVC Sport and Recreation Network comprising representatives of all associations and sports grounds committees to formalise roles and responsibilities and develop standardised strategic and business plans				A need to professionalise the way Councils public facilities are being managed and delivered and ensure Oval Committees are appropriately trained and resourced.	-
SR5	In conjunction with the above committees and as an outcome of findings of consultation in this strategy, prioritise capital works of each facility and sports precinct.				Will provide a more detailed needs assessment and ensure appropriate budget allocations and grant support from Council.	-
SR6	Establish formal links, lines of communication and partnerships with the school and private providers of sport to ensure they are informed and involved with the development of sport and their clubs/groups in the region				These groups should be viewed in the same light as those that lease or hire facilities from Council and included in any proposed network for the development of sport and recreation	
SR7	Bring all playspace maintenance and management in house and Council take over responsibility from oval committees				Concern regarding the exposed risk to both the community and Council should any incidents occur	Ongoing operational
SR8	Enter into partnership discussions with local schools and educational establishments to formalise community use and access of sports halls and grounds.				Indoor court space is a particular focus	-
SR9	Ensure each townships sports precinct are master planned in accordance with current and future needs and appropriately prioritised and costed. Design should include active and passive elements to ensure they become the focal point for the community				Minor plans required in consultation with each oval committee to include basic concepts, costing and timeframes (say \$5-10k each for high level standardised plans)	\$75-100k
SR10	Undertake consultation and develop and design small youth recreation areas in townships with a population exceeding 300 people (Auburn, Riverton, Saddleworth, Tarlee and Watervale) ensuring good line of sight and passive surveillance.				Youth areas are not necessarily skate parks but areas this cohort can meet and recreate and therefore need to be designed in conjunction with local young people in each township.	Cost inc Playspace Strategies
SR11	Determine the future need of all sports by undertaking a facility assessment study in conjunction with State Sporting Organisations (SSO's) and based against projected populations and identified need of individual sports				This should be no more than an expansion of the facility benchmarks discussed in this study	\$10k
SR12	Undertake a court rationalisation assessment of all tennis facilities in the region with a view of determining need and future management of each site.				Oversupply of courts means there is an opportunity for other uses or divestment and reinvestment to other sporting and recreational needs	\$20k
SR13	Capitalise the Rattler and Riesling Trails and develop a Cycle Tourism Strategy in conjunction with local businesses to make the region a Cycle Friendly destination					\$40-\$50k
Estimated Budget						\$155-\$200k

5.4.3 Playspace Strategies

The following provides an overview of the existing playspaces with Table 13 below summarising the proposed actions to playspaces noting that further consultation will be required as and when changes are proposed.

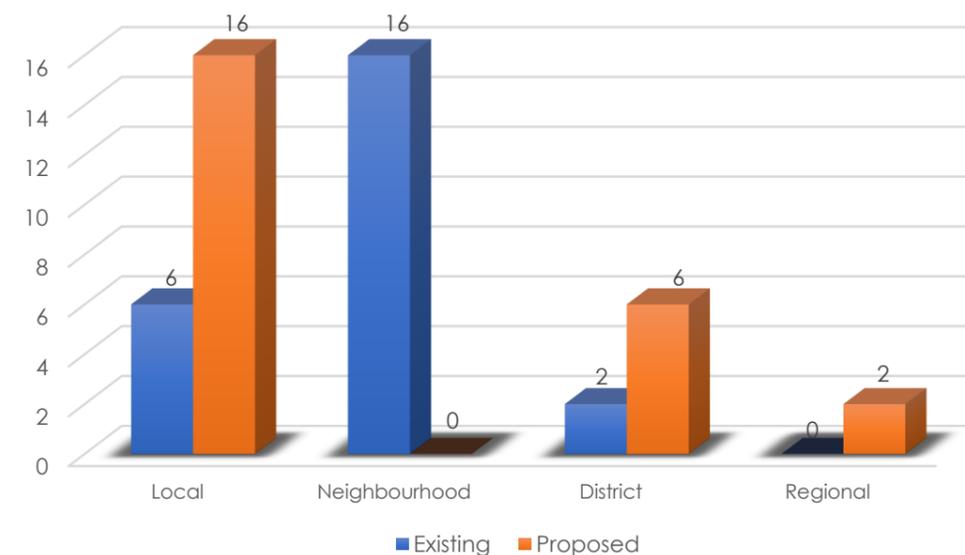
In addition to the traditional hierarchy of play and, given the tyranny of distance and population spread across a large land area, the traditional 'local' classification playspace will include Neighbourhood aspects and therefore a Local park meeting the needs of a broader catchment or age ranges, i.e. 0-9 as opposed to the traditional 0-6. The Neighbourhood classification will therefore not exist for playspaces in the CGVC and new allocations are highlighted in Figure 35

Table 14 on the following page provides a snapshot of recommendations along with priorities which are based on the life stage of the asset combined with identified areas of need (gaps) or those that are deemed oversupplied and therefore justified for enhancement or removal.

Costs for each action are based on 2019 market estimates and make an assumption (where relevant) that to enhance a playspace or include additional equipment, a figure of between \$5k - \$10k per piece (swing, slide, rocker, fitness station etc) is to be expected with a budget of approximately \$475,000 identified.

These figures can obviously vary depending on the type of upgrade, the amount of equipment being erected, and landscaping and furniture being used, but the rationale behind this includes the notion that existing playspaces are already established and enhancement includes upgrades and improvements to the equipment only.

Figure 38: Playspace Existing and Future Provision



Remove	R	remove and do not replace
Replace	RP	remove equipment and replace with same classification
Remove and Replace	R&R	remove equipment and replace with different classification
Enhance	E	add equipment to meet current or a higher classification*
Maintain	M	keep as is and maintain to the current level

Table 13: Proposed Recommendations

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Table 14: Playspace Strategies																	
Map #	Suburb and Site	Current Classification				Recommendation					Future Classifications			Comment	Priority and \$ Estimate		
		L	N	D	R	R	RP	R&R	E	M	L	D	R		H	M	L
Auburn																	
1	Centennial Park													Enhance and include youth component (consider location)		50k	
8	Recreation Ground													Minor upgrades and shade			10k
Clare																	
17	Sanders/Apex Park													Playspace and youth park maintained			
20	Maynard/Pioneer Park													Minor upgrades required		5k	
24	Melrose Park													Include nature play areas and link with model train club making this a regional open space		100k	
35	Hentschke Park													Maintain as is			
40	Nat Dunstan Memorial													Maintain as is			
42	Lions Park													Maintain as is			
65	Catford Gardens													Caravan Park. Enhance to meet wider age groups			10k
?	Clare Valley Child Centre													Not accessible to the broader community			
Hilltown																	
8	Tennis Courts													Work with committee to install and assist with upkeep (grant?)		25k	
Manoora																	
79	Recreation Ground													Work with committee to upgrade to NH (grant?)		10k	
Marrabel																	
83	Marrabel Park													Maintain as is			

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Map #	Suburb and Site	Current Classification				Recommendation					Future Classifications			Comment	Priority and \$ Estimate		
		L	N	D	R	R	RP	R&R	E	M	L	D	R		H	M	L
Mintaro																	
89	Torr Park													Enhance to district due to the significance of its location		20k	
91	Recreation Ground													Old equipment that needs replacing	15k		
Rhynie																	
96	Recreation Park													Remove and upgrade	25k		
Riverton																	
106	Recreation Park													Maintain as is			
Saddleworth																	
135	Recreation Ground													Needs shade and youth component		50k	
146	Tennis Court Precinct													Grant assistance to develop			\$5k
Sevenhill																	
149	Richardson Park													Grant / partnership to upgrade and include Nature Play		\$50K	
Stockport																	
154	Recreation Park													Maintain playspace as is but enhance youth opportunities		25k	
Tarlee																	
161	Recreation Park													Work with the community on the development / formalising the BMX track and upgrade the playspace	\$25k		
Waterloo																	
-	Community Space													Maintain as is			
Watervale																	
171	Recreation Ground													Upgrade to district and include youth		50K	
Estimated Budget															\$65k	\$385k	\$25k
															\$475k		

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5 Local Strategies

The Local Strategies relate to each of the 13 townships and highlight specific actions for each. Where strategies have already been identified for playspaces, the suggested financial implication is indicated as a reference back to the previous section, i.e. PS \$

There is a significant amount of policy and project work identified with the regional and local strategies and it is reasonable to expect that this will be undertaken over a number of years.

The implementation of these specific local level strategies have been prioritised and costed with the latter based on an indicative notion to progress and/or implement the strategy. That is many actions require further planning and design work which are costed, but the outcomes of these plans are unknown at this stage and therefore costs associated with their implementation have not been included.

While this strategic plan is prepared with 10-year timeframe in mind, it would be appropriate that regular reviews are undertaken and realignments made in accordance with the political, social and economic climate of the day, and of course the changing needs and demands of the community.

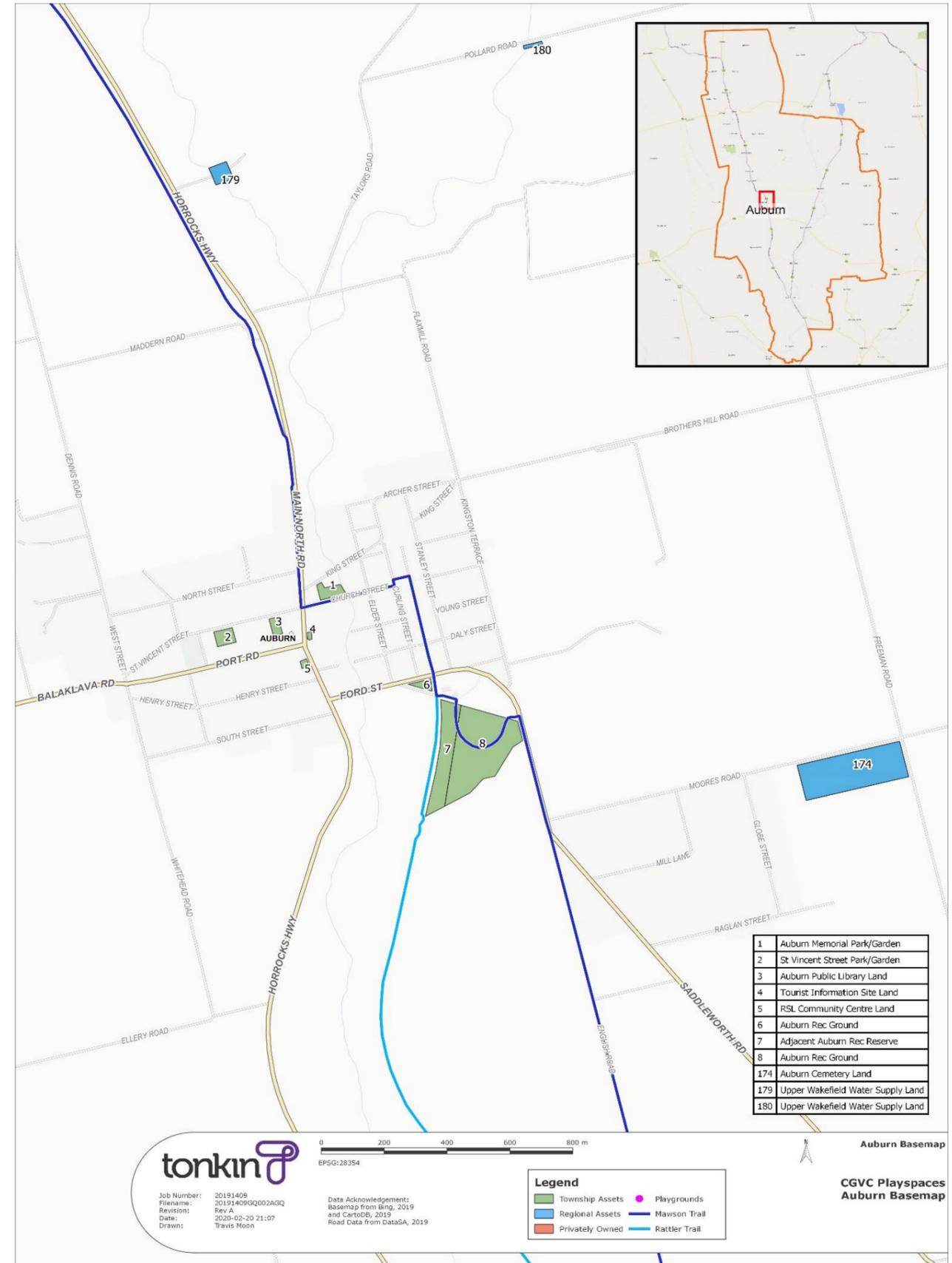
Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.1 Auburn

The township is one of the most picturesque in the region and has a significant historical value that could be capitalised upon for local and regional tourism including the Riesling Trail which runs straight through the heart of the township. Entry statements and visitor information is crucial in achieving this and a trail network would benefit the town

The Centenary Park is a tranquil setting but with careful design could include some youth elements if required. The Recreation Grounds are well kept, and Council could work more closely with the Committee to enhance opportunity and use of the site. Open space allocation is sufficient, and no acquisition / disposal is required

Population		661	
OS Per 000 (ha)		13.61 ha	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		13.04 ha	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
A1	Maintain Centenary Park as the main recreational land in the town and include a youth component which is sensitively designed into the park	M	PS \$
A2	Minor upgrades to the recreation grounds playspace to meet 'local' classification (0-9)	M	PS \$
A3	Enhance the Visitor Information Bay in the main street as a focal point for the township	H	\$25k
A4	Establish a historical wayfinding trail / strategy highlighting the history of the township from the TIC on St Vincent Street and link Cemetery from the Mawson (Rattler/Riesling) Trail	M	\$10k
A5	Minor enhancements to the cemetery to include signage and additional seating / shade and landscaping	L	\$25k
A6	Work with the Auburn Bowling Club and Rec Grounds Committee to determine need for synthetic green and future use of lawn tennis courts.	H	-
Table 15: Auburn Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$60k



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.2 Clare

As the main township in the region and as such the focal point for business, facilities and services for the community, Clare is well supplied by way of facilities and open space.

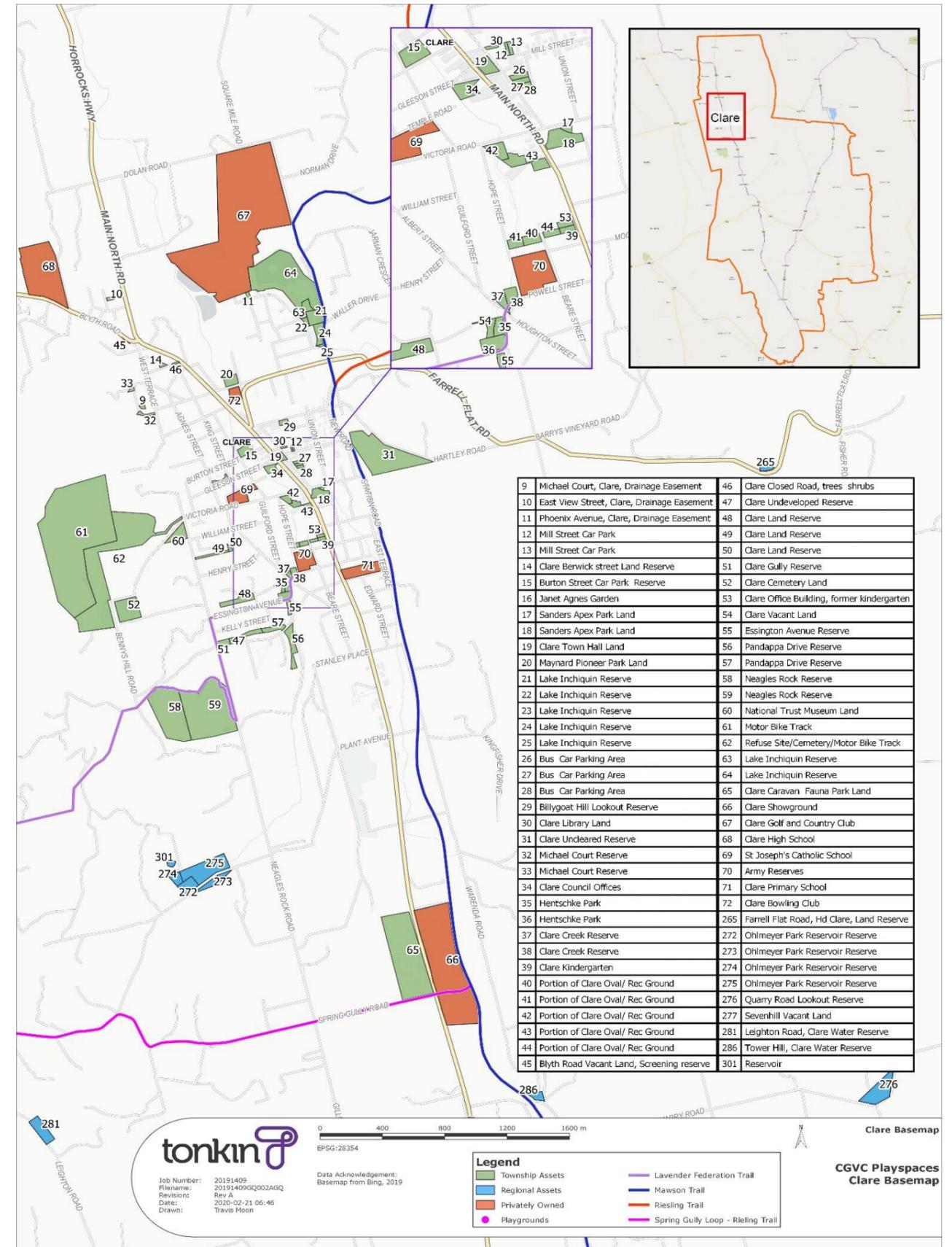
With approximately 33 ha of ancillary space, Council could consider some divestment and/or reclassification of 'community land' that has little or no recreational value. Additionally, some parcels of land that are currently being used for recreation, could be enhanced for increased recreational use and value such as Melrose Park and Inchiquin Lake which could have significant regional value, particularly with the model railway which is unique to the region.

Unstructured and passive elements could also be included in parks to include the likes of bocce, meeting areas, seating and shade, to encourage and develop a sense of place. Similarly the local and regional trails network could be showcased more and capitalise on cycle / tourism potential for the region and the likes of Neagles Rock and the Riesling Trail further enhanced and promoted.

The Clare Oval is undergoing a master plan implementation and has a multi-tiered governance structure to include the YMCA as the management group for the Valleys Recreation Centre, the Clare Oval Committee for the oval, the Clare Oval Redevelopment Group comprising council staff and representatives from groups, and individual clubs with direct leases and management agreements with Council. This structure is cumbersome and confusing and could be streamlined to ensure better management and provision of services to the broader community.

Land to the west of the town is used for the high impact activity of motor cross and such uses need to be located away from residential areas due to the obvious environmental impacts. Given the unique nature of this sport and its location in the town, there is opportunity to work with the club to encourage state and regional events and capitalise on tourism visitation and secondary spend in the town. This can also be said with the likes of the rodeo, showgrounds and the Clare Oval as the largest facility in the region.

The trails opportunities in the town are significant with the Mawson and Riesling Trails being connected with the Lavender and Spring Gully Loop Trails. Further promotion and development of these would add significant value to the leisure and tourist opportunities in the town.



Population		3160	
OS Per 000 (ha)		45.29 ha	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		39.00 ha	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
C1	Determine need and potential divestment strategy for land parcels 32,33, 48,49,50 and 60	H	-
C2	Establish walking trails and associated infrastructure on land parcel 31, (Pinks Reserve) and link with wayfinding to the township	L	\$25-\$50k
C3	Master Plan Melrose Park / Inchiquin Lake Reserves as a regional destination and include passive and unstructured active elements such as bocce, chess tables and public realm facilities	H	\$40k
C4	Implement the master plan for Melrose Park focussing funding on unstructured passive elements and park infrastructure such as toilets and amenities	M	TBC + PS\$
	Minor upgrades to Pioneer Park and Catford Gardens Playspaces (see playspace strategies)	M	PS \$
C5	Restructure and formalise one central management committee for the Clare Oval with representation from key stakeholders and Council.	H	-
C6	Formalise agreement with schools and educational establishments to access and use facilities outside of school, particularly indoor courts.	M	-
C7	Liaise with the Clare Show Society for site access and use for sport outside of their own use and develop a master plan for the site to include the needs of all users.	H	-
C8	Hockey and athletics have an expressed demand for facilities and therefore a needs assessment is required to determine location, use and needs. This could possibly occur within the Clare showgrounds pending the outcome of C7.	M	\$10-\$20k
C9	Work with the Clare Motorcycle Club to determine future needs and support its applications for facility development and enhancement of its site to cater for state and regional events including ancillary services such as car parking, entry and site management.	L	TBC
C10	Enhance facilities, wayfinding, landscaping and interpretive signage within the Cemetery and to the local trails network generally	L	\$25-\$50k
C11	Work with the Clare Regional History Group to ascertain their needs and promote the historical value of Clare and the region	L	TBC
C12	Liaise with the Model Engineers' Group and enhance base facilities (toilets, storage, club rooms etc) at their site to capitalise on this unique aspect of the town. A full consideration should be given to their needs in the development of a master plan for the site (C3) but Council assistance requested	M	TBC
Table 16: Clare Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$100 - \$160k+



The largest of the townships, Clare is central for facilities and services with opportunity for shared use sports facilities, partnerships with educational institutions and the promotion of local and regional tourism to boost the local economy whilst offering greater opportunities for residents

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.3 Hilltown

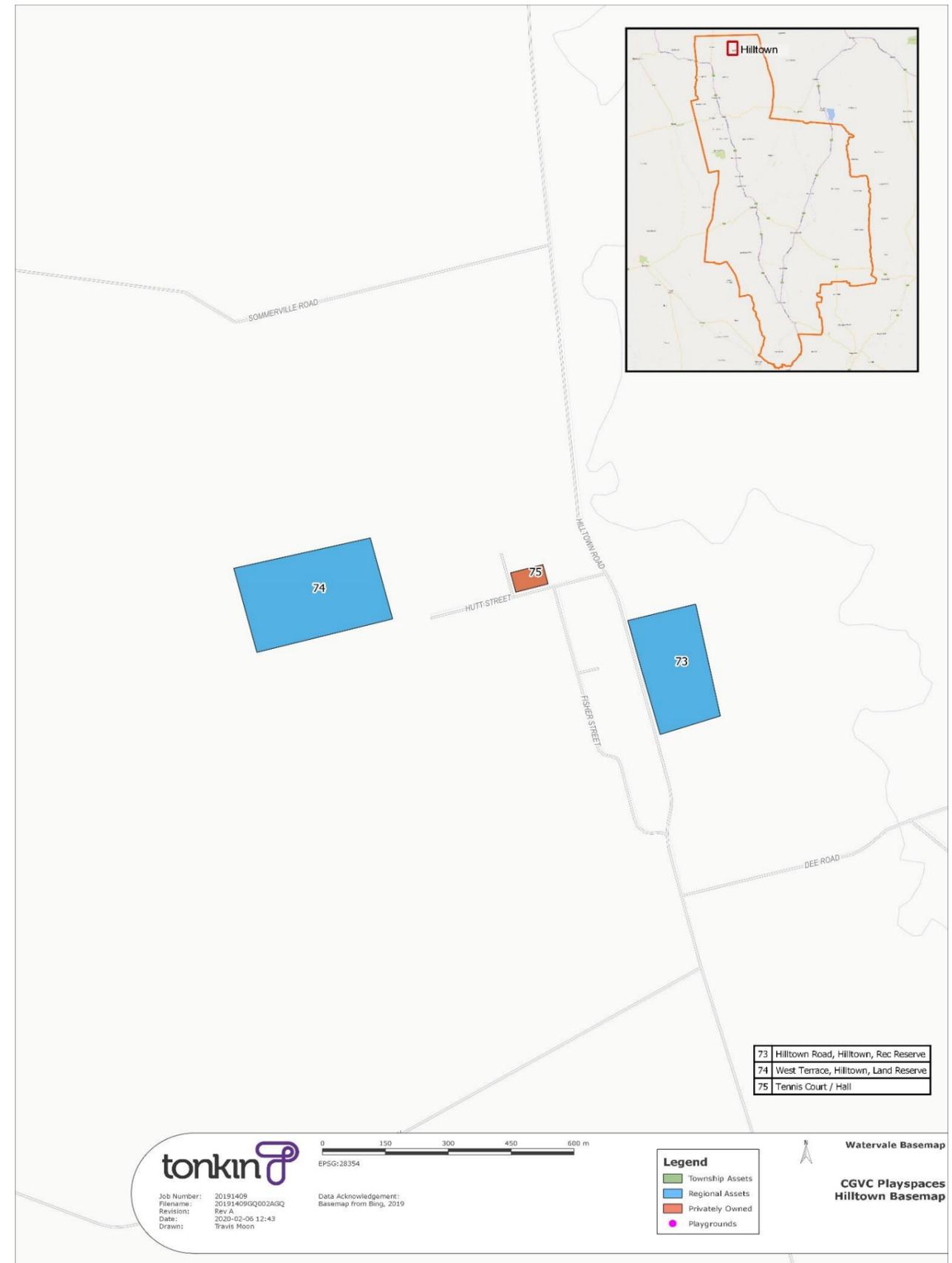
The township is one of the most remote in the region being 15km north of the Clare on the boundary of the Council, with only memorial hall, tennis courts and small playspace located on private land controlled by the townships community group.

Crown community land under Councils care and control exists to the west and south east of the township, but this is unembellished with little recreational value and not viable to develop for such a small community. It is therefore suggested that Council consider assisting the Progress Association to develop a base level of open space and facilities to cater for the small, but important community

Population		208	
OS Per 000 (ha)		58.16 ha	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		58.13 ha	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
H1	Develop the surrounds of the tennis court as a community open space with a new neighbourhood playground	M	\$25k + PS \$
H2	Approach the Crown to consider the divestment of land parcels 73 and 74 and consider an allocation toward the development of site 75	H	-
Table 17: Hilltown Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$25k



The Memorial Hall and Tennis courts are the only recreational spaces in the town, along with an old playspace installed by the recreation committee. Other community land exists but this is undeveloped and unembellished.



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.4 Manoora

The third smallest township by way of population with only 149 residents, open space provision is good albeit isolated from the main road. The Manoora Centenary Park Committee manage the main 4ha oval site to the north which includes an oval, 2 netball / tennis courts (1 of which is also a basketball court) and a covered playspace.

Other community land exists on parcels 76 and 77, but this is the town Memorial Hall. Land parcel 80 is part of a stormwater system and the CFS are located on land parcel 78 which is leased. All of these land parcels are ancillary with no recreational value.

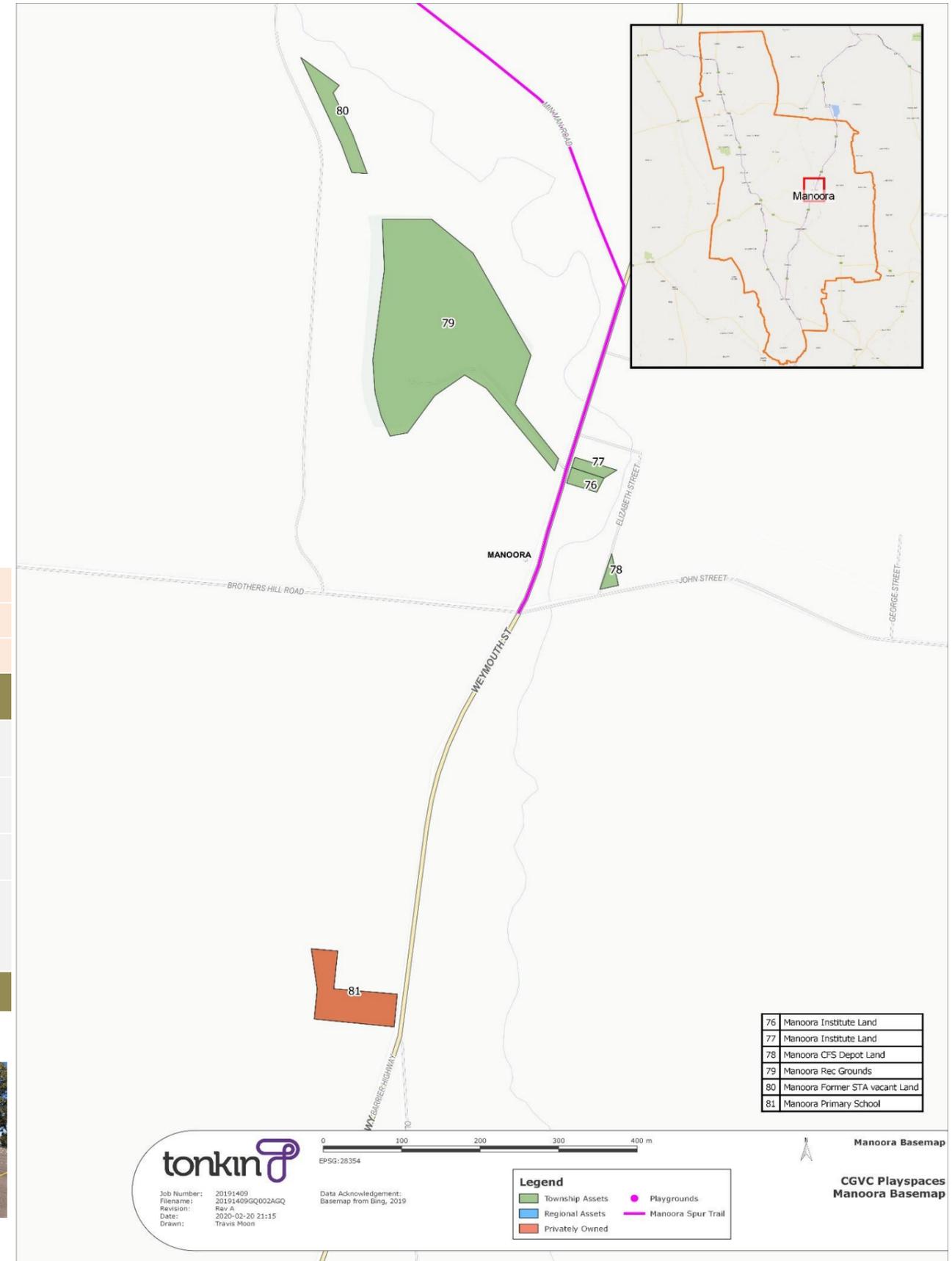
The Centenary Oval Committee manage the site almost fully self-funded and have used the assistance of federal government grants and Council loans (with interest) to fund the likes of piped irrigation from private dams to the site.

The site also has challenges associated with Wi-Fi, internet and 3G phone connection which causes issues associated with electronic fund transfers and a cashless society when patrons wish to use the facility. The club has expressed some immediate needs and the long-term potential to purchase adjacent land for an additional court and water retention.

Population		149	
OS Per 000 (ha)		32.63	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		28.05	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
MN1	Consider adjacent land purchase to the south of the club to use as water detention and oval irrigation.	M	TBC
MN2	Enhancement of the local oval lights, outdoor catering areas and storage areas plus road upgrades	H	100k
MN3	Minor upgrades to playspace to meet new local classification	M	PS \$
MN4	Enter into capital works agreements and potential interest free loans to the community committee for improvements to the site and for the continued support and development of the Min-Man sports events	M	TBC
Table 18: Manoora Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$100k+



The town open space is largely the sports oval comprising local playspace, netball, tennis and basketball courts and an oval for football



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.5 Marrabel

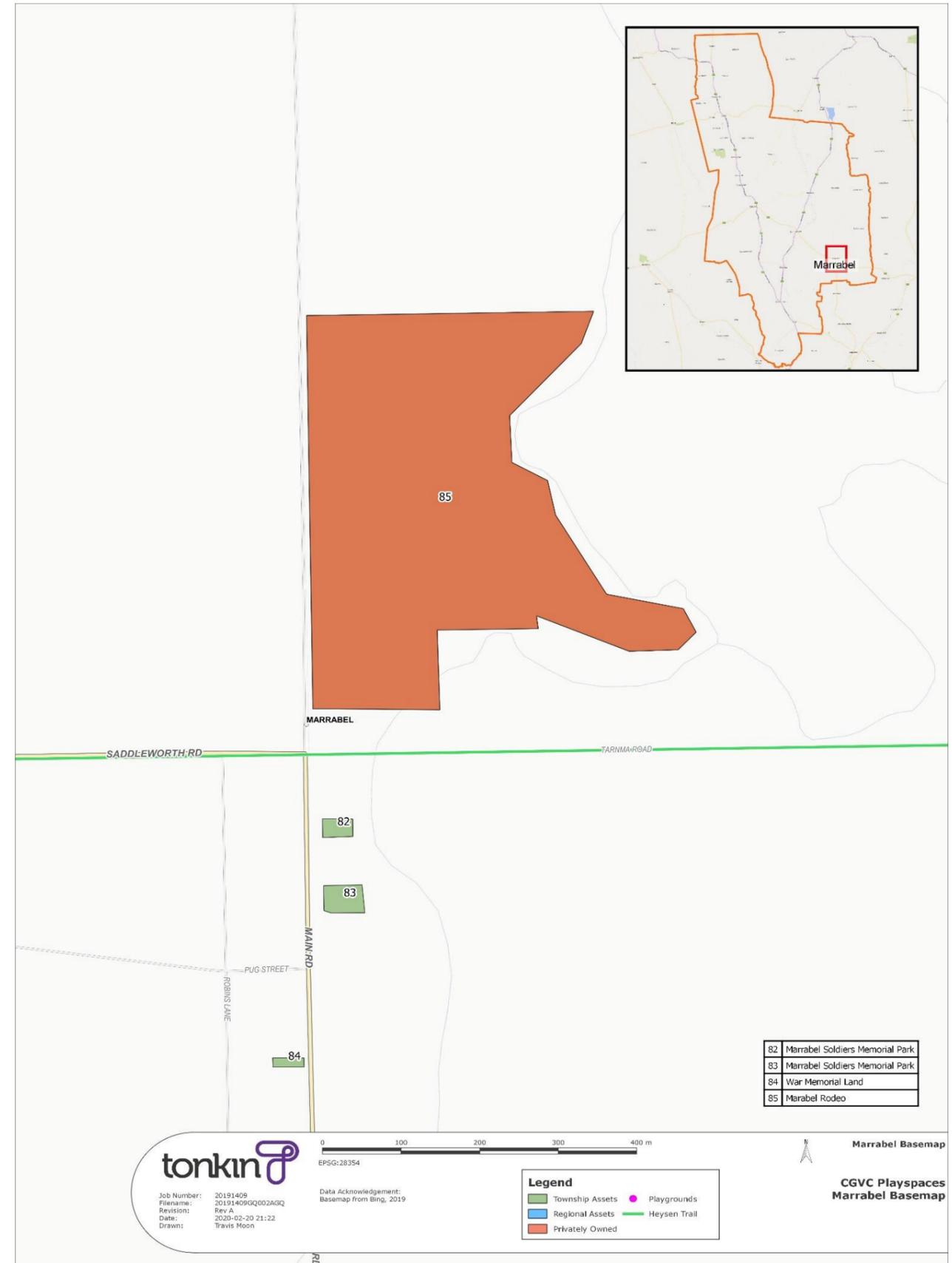
The smallest population and township is Marrabel and whilst open space provision seems to be well supplied at 156.92 of useable open space per thousand population, the majority of land is privately owned by the Rodeo Association (85) which if excluded would bring the benchmark down to 3.13 or 1.73 ha of useable open space per 000.

This does not mean however that further open space is warranted at this stage as the community is very small, but Council should consider the use and design of the existing community land to ensure both active and passive opportunities are designed into this valuable community asset.

Population		104	
OS Per 000 (ha)		158.32	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		156.92	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
MB1	Monitor township and keep open channels of communication with the Progress Association regarding current and future opportunities.	H	-
MB2	Work closely with the Rodeo Club to promote regional tourism and secondary spend in the community.	M	-
Table 19: Marrabel Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$0



The rodeo land is privately owned and accounts for most of the open space in Marrabel, but the existing small but well-designed Memorial Park offers active and passive opportunities



82	Marrabel Soldiers Memorial Park
83	Marrabel Soldiers Memorial Park
84	War Memorial Land
85	Marrabel Rodeo

Marrabel Basemap
CGVC Playspaces
Marrabel Basemap

tonkin

Job Number: 20191409
 Filename: 201914090002AGQ
 Revision: Rev A
 Date: 2020-02-20 21:22
 Drawn: Travis Moon

Data Acknowledgement:
 Basemap from Bing, 2019

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Legend

- Township Assets
- Regional Assets
- Privately Owned
- Playgrounds
- Heysen Trail

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.7 Rhynie

One of the least supplied by way of open space with a small population base, the only land parcel with significant value is the lay by bay Kirk Family Trust/ Baker Family site. Large rural blocks are however common in the town and these will add to the overall sense of open space and the way people recreate. The one community land parcel is however in need of upgrading and this should meet the needs of residents and travellers stopping at the towns rest point.

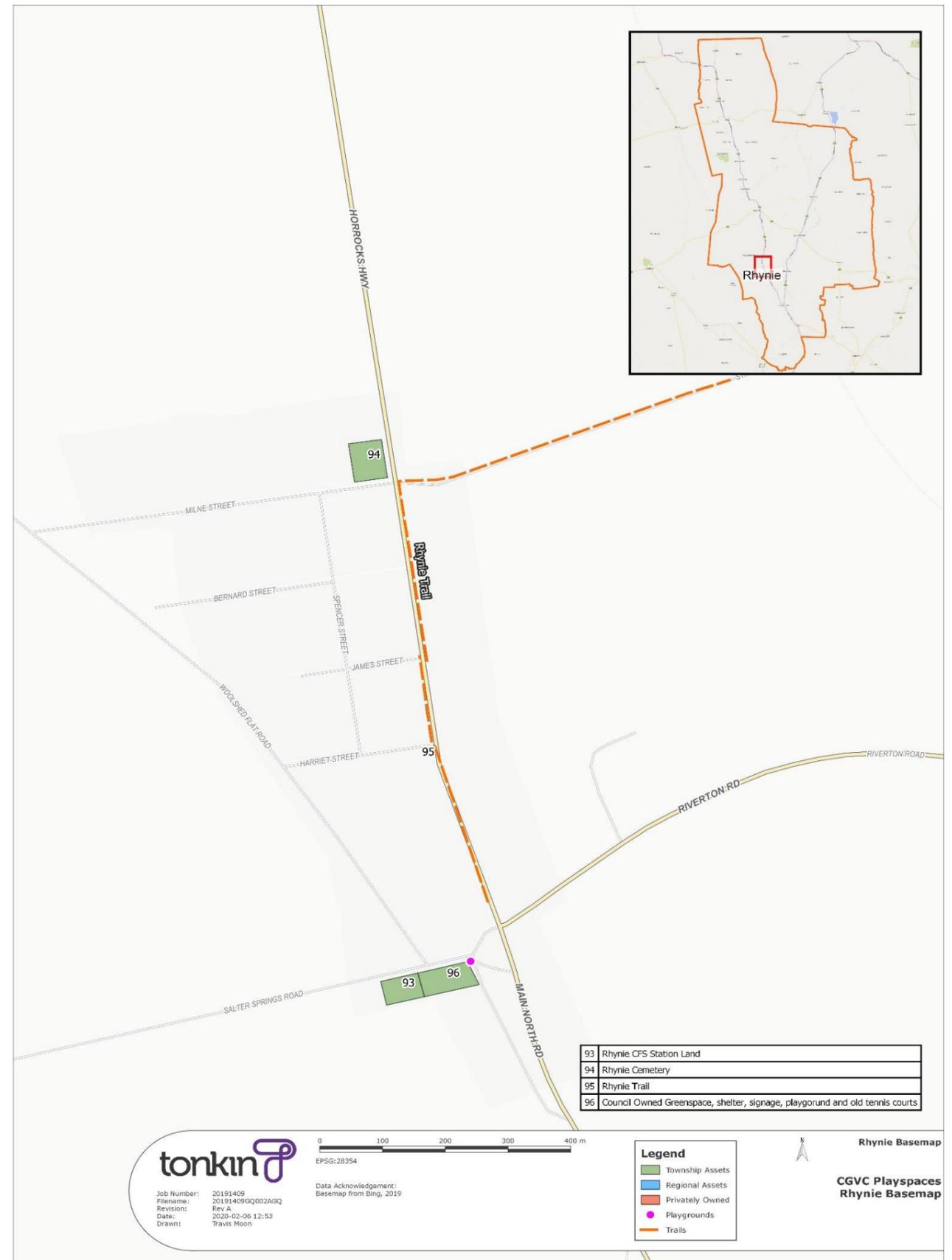
The cemetery to the north also has some recreational value and again could be enhanced as a place of historic significance and some passive elements, albeit its location adjacent to the main road may hinder this opportunity somewhat.

The Rhynie trail links with the Rattler Trail and this could be promoted more widely at a starting point for day hikes / loops to and from the town.

Population		138
OS Per 000 (ha)		6.84
UOS Per 000 (ha)		5.00
Strategy Opportunities		
RY1	Upgrade the whole park to include landscaping, interpretive signage, seating, shade and playspace	H \$25k + PS \$
RY2	Minor landscaping and signage within the cemetery	L \$10k
Table 21: Rhynie Estimated budget minus playspace improvements		\$35k +



A small town, Rhynie is poorly supplied by way of public open space meaning the one and only land parcel alongside the main road, needs to be well designed for community and visitor use.



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

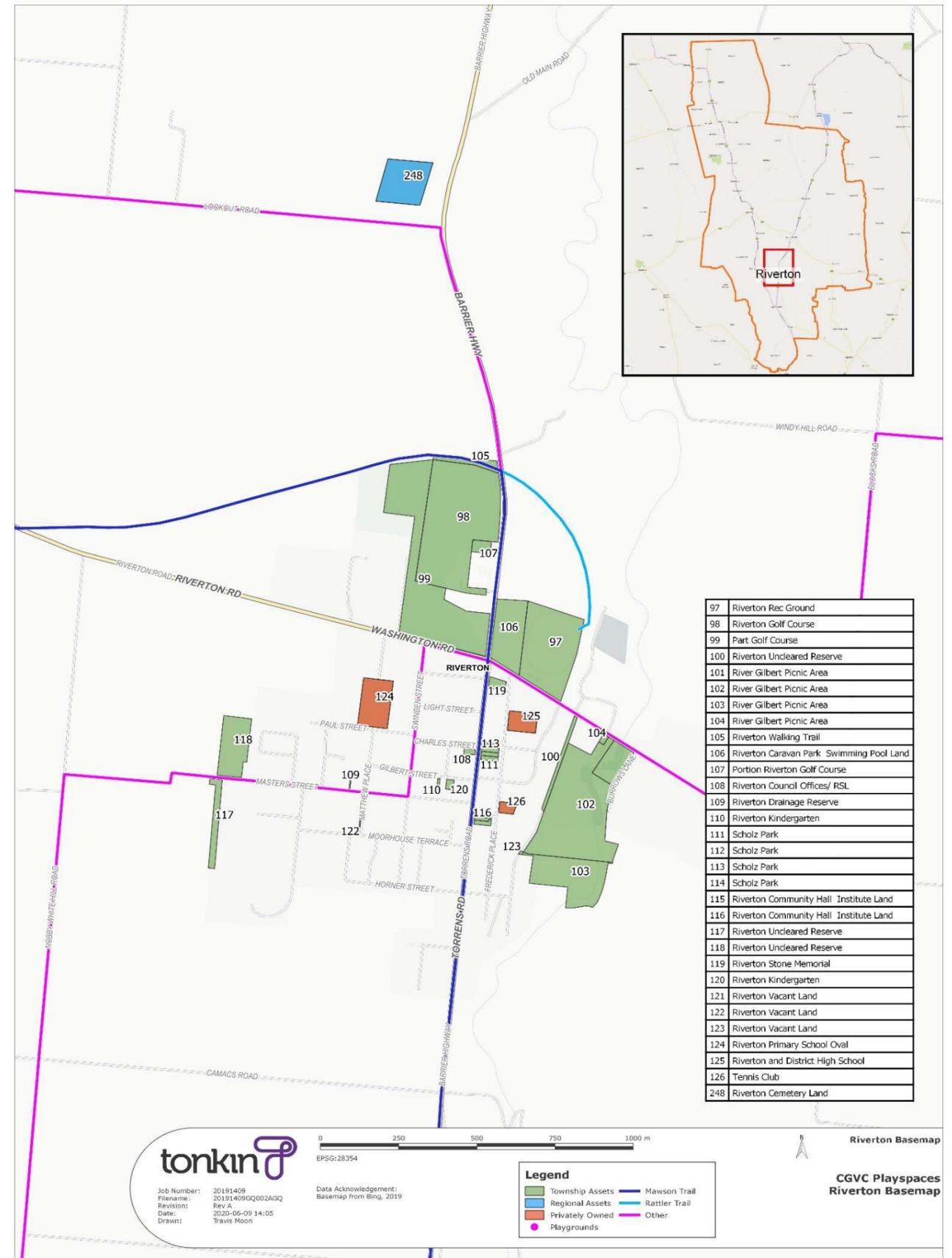
5.5.8 Riverton

The second largest town in the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Region, Riverton also has a good supply of open space used for active and passive recreation. A main sports oval managed by the Recreation Grounds Committee has recently undergone planning and design work for a new centralised facility, and Council has approached the Football Club to consider taking on the lease of this facility. In consulting with the club, they do not feel ready or willing and a better option would be the centralised management agreement with the one entity to oversee the whole site as discussed in the open space strategy 1 and 2 (SR1 and SR2)

The caravan park is managed by the Recreation Grounds Committee and has a new playspace and a pool attached (106) which is managed by the YMCA. The town also has a golf course owned by council (98/99) and a number of private sporting grounds including 3 hard and 4 lawn tennis courts (126), 2 bowling greens (125) and an oval at the Riverton Primary School.

The Rattler Trail also runs through the township and this is connected by a local trails network, and to the east is a natural setting and picnic areas along a creek line (The Duck Ponds) which offers a valuable passive and unstructured recreational experience (102, 103 and 104).

The Scholz Museum and car park is also located in the town and provides visitors with a unique example of past history and experience of the town itself.



Population			1036
OS Per 000 (ha)			39.66
UOS Per 000 (ha)			37.88
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
R1	As a matter of priority, assist the Riverton Recreation Grounds Committee in the development of their new multi-use clubroom and enter into a management agreement with the committee for the facility. Ensure the facility is optimally designed and managed for a number of community uses other than sport	H	\$TBC + Grants
R2	Work with the recreation grounds committee to develop new public toilets at the site and/or ensure the new facility has accessible toilets outside of structured sporting use.	H	-
R3	Work with the tennis club to ascertain their needs and agree to involve in a tennis facilities study to determine needs for courts across the council area. Assist with grant applications as necessary.	L	-
R4	Assess options for the future use of the pool and consider including as a leisure facility within the caravan park	M	-
R5	Consider the development of a new nature play area at the Duck Ponds (104)	L	\$50 - \$100k+
R6	Long term use identified for the uncleared reserve (118) in the west of the town as a potential district community park. Undertake further assessment for need	M	\$10-\$20k
R7	As part of the trails review (OS 11) Undertake a comprehensive audit of the trails network with a view of enhancing links and connections to key sites including wayfinding	M	\$OS11
Table 22: Riverton Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$10-\$120k



As the second largest township in the region, Riverton has a good range of leisure, recreation and sporting opportunity

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.9 Saddleworth

For a small community, Saddleworth has many valuable recreational, leisure, sporting and natural assets including an oval with a small uncovered playspace, some on site caravan parks and private tennis and bowls facilities in the centre of the township.

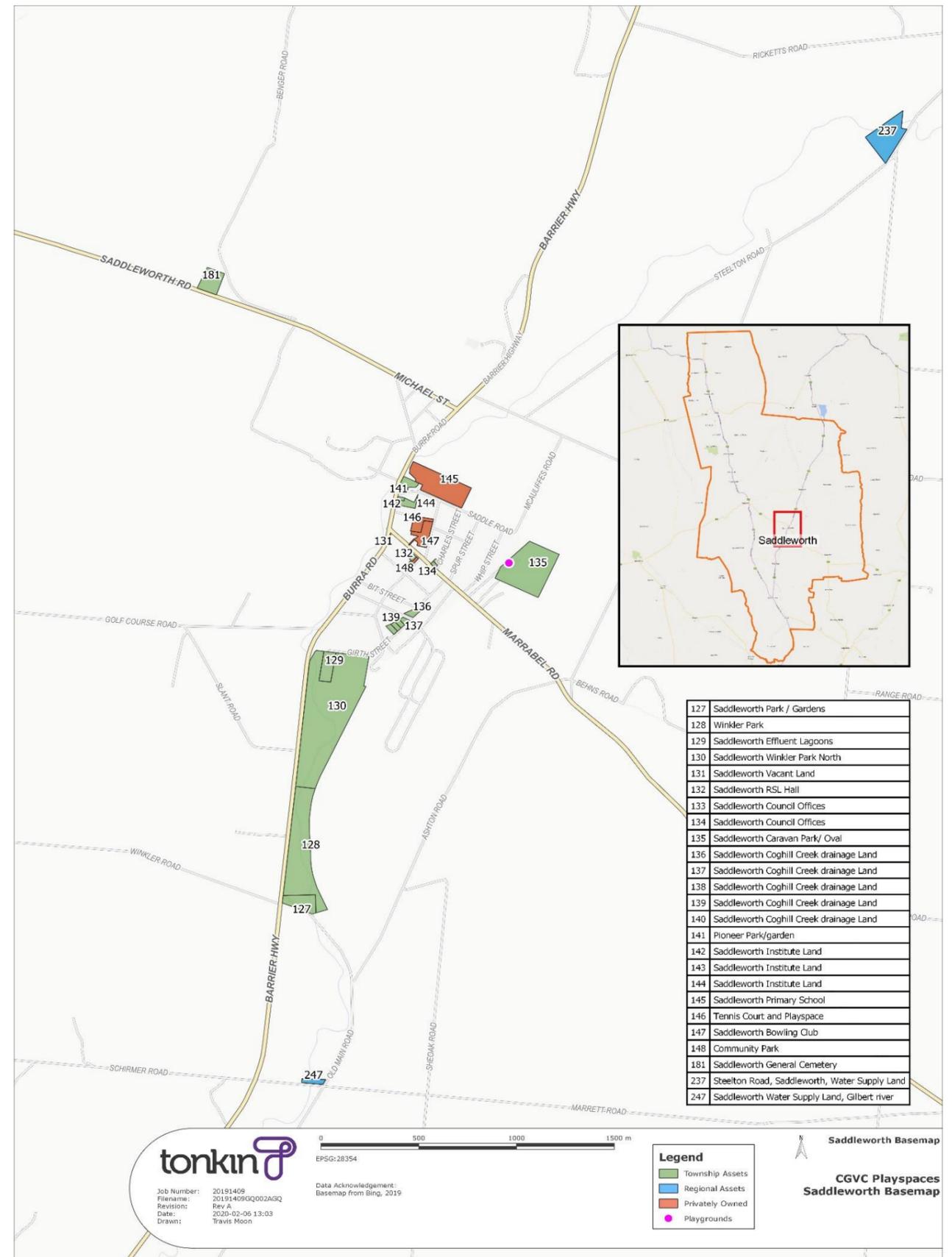
The latter is currently being redeveloped by the clubs with a new bowls club room been developed and a playspace that is being replaced. The site seems a little disjointed and could benefit from careful planning and configuration, but the assets themselves seem well maintained and used.

To the north of the town is a school oval which could be accessed through an appropriate joint use agreement if required, and to the south is a vast tract of natural embellished land with walking trails and historical significance at Winkler Park.

Population		470
OS Per 000 (ha)		67.00
UOS Per 000 (ha)		64.23
Strategy Opportunities		Priority Budget
SA1	Cover the playspace at the recreation grounds	M PS \$
SA2	Assist the Tennis / Bowls club in the development of their new playspace through potential grant	L PS \$
SA3	Monitor and maintain Winkler Park and consider enhanced visitor experiences through picnic areas, distance markers an additional interpretive signage or park apps.	M \$50k
SA6	Link the township to the Cemetery through wayfinding and undertake minor landscape enhancements and interpretive signage at the Cemetery	L \$25k
Table 23: Saddleworth Estimated budget minus playspace improvements		\$75k



The township is well supplied by way of open space and facilities with Winkler Park and the Recreation Grounds providing ample open space for passive and active opportunities.



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.10 Sevenhill

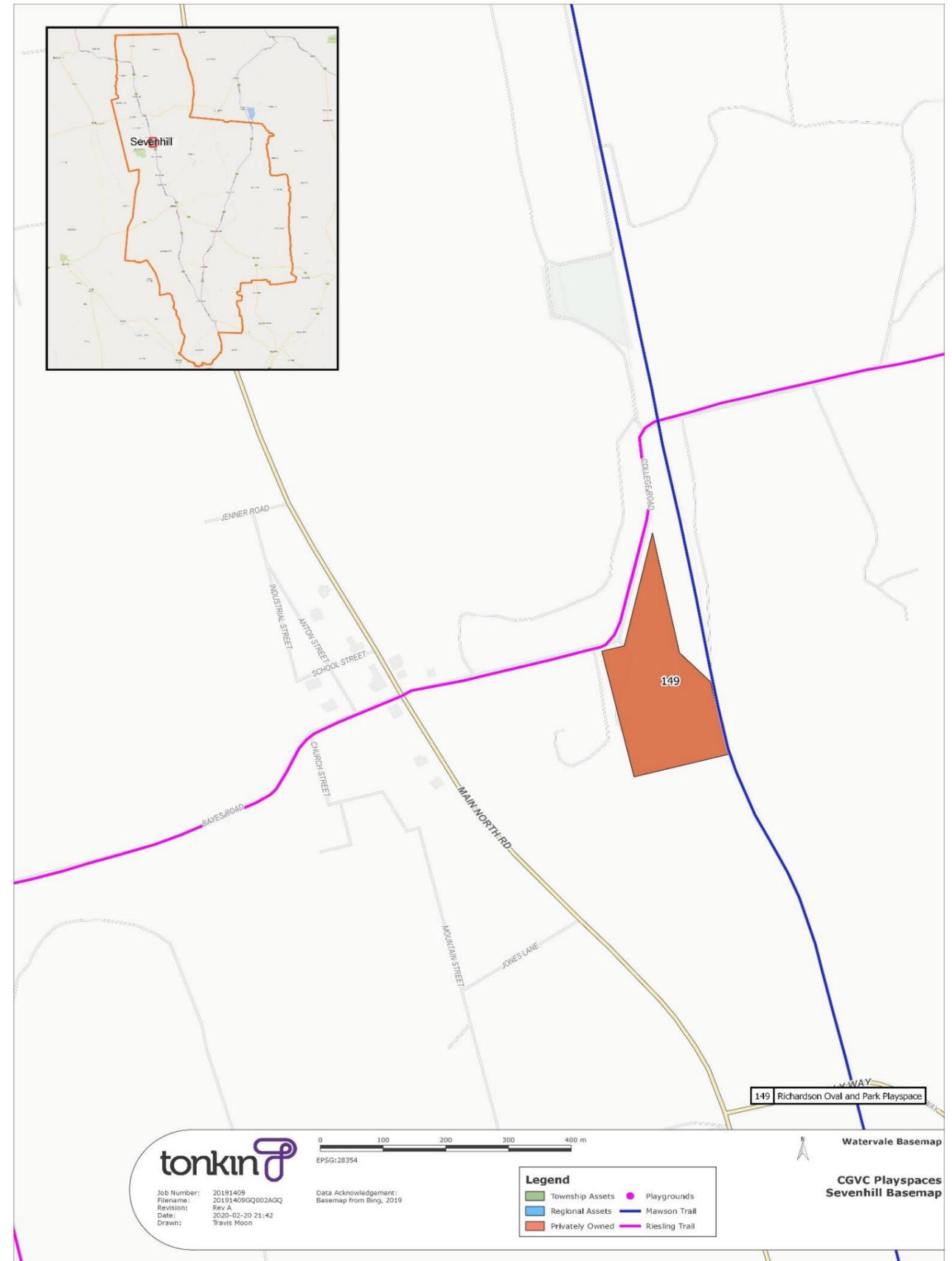
A well-known township due to the Monastery and wines, Sevenhill does not have any land classified as community but has a private oval and space with significant value. The playspace itself is almost that of a regional classification and given its location and tourist potential, should be enhanced to capitalise on the economic benefits to the region.

The Riesling Trail bisects the township and the links to the wineries and Richardson Oval should be capitalised upon further.

Population		120	
OS Per 000 (ha)		32.17	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		32.17	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
SH1	Enter into a partnership agreement with the Richardson Park Committee regarding the enhancement of the playspace to become a regional destination	M	PS \$
SH2	Assist the committee with the improvements of public toilets at the oval precinct.	H	\$50k
SH3	In conjunction with strategy OS11, establish, confirm and enhance links with the Riesling Trail	M	\$OS11
Table 24: Sevenhill Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$50k



With no public open space but a private land parcel of district classification and a playspace almost that of regional classification; Council could partner with the Richardson Park Committee to enhance local and regional visitor experience.



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.11 Stockport

A relatively isolated community in the south west of Council, the overall provision of open space is good, but this is skewed by the inclusion of the private golf course which is of course a purpose built and single use facility. Without the golf course, the overall provision of space drops to 17.81 per 000, which is of course still well above the benchmark of 9ha's.

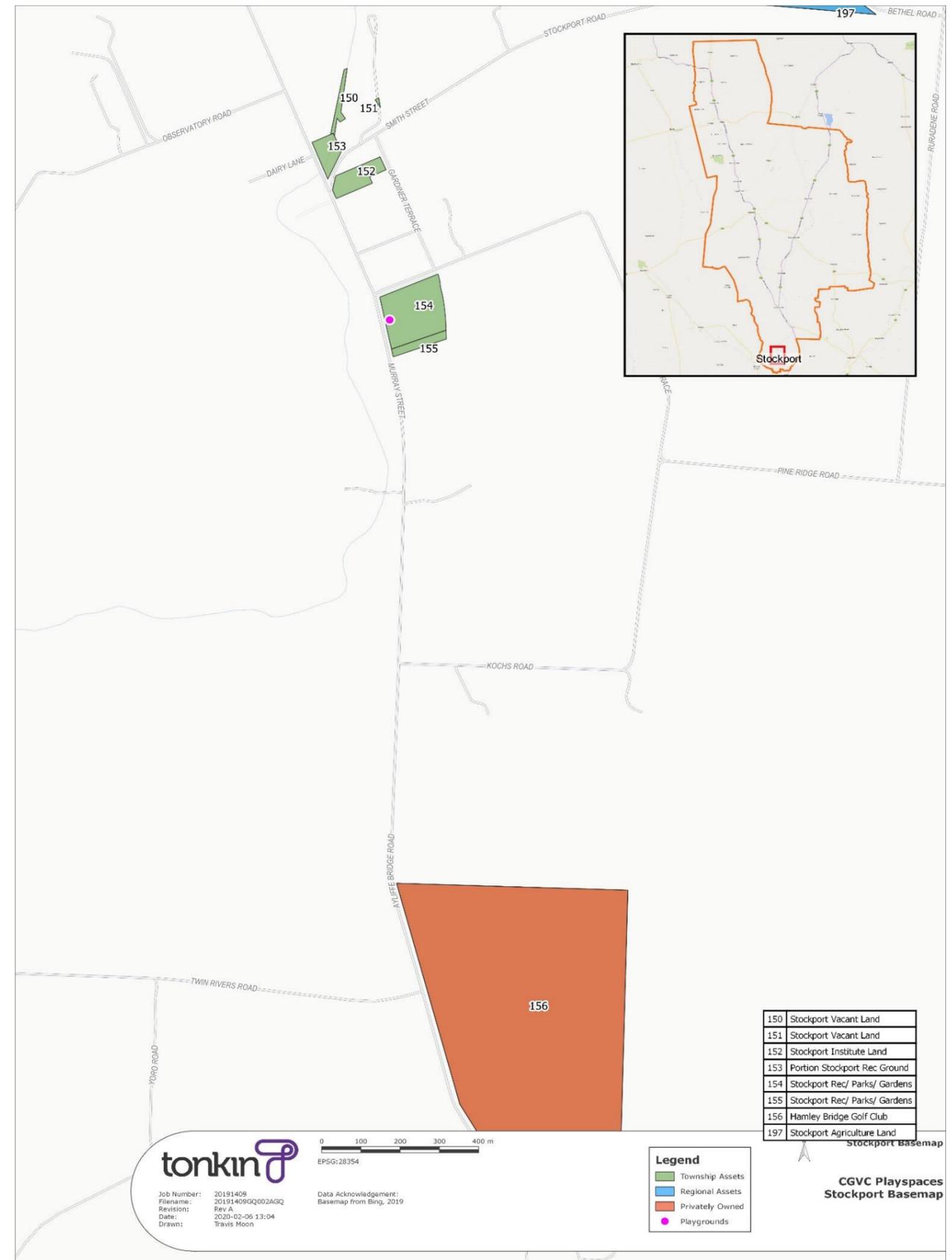
The oval is set in the Soldiers Memorial Precinct and comprises a relatively new and covered playspace, oval with an unused and unsafe cricket pitch, and gardens and parklands for the community.

A BMX track has also been installed by the community and council could therefore partner with the oval committee to establish a more formal playspace for young people at the site.

Population		223	
OS Per 000 (ha)		173.28	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		167.00	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
S1	Consult with the community to confirm the need for a youth facility at the sports precinct	M	\$25k
S2	Repair the oval to include the removal of the hard wicket pitch	H	\$10k
Table 25: Stockport Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$35k



The township is well supplied by way of open space but the oval could be enhanced to offer more opportunities for structured or casual sport



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.12 Tarlee

A popular township for travellers to stop and rest, the main parcel of open space is the community oval which serves district and regional events, a playspace and RV parking. The site also has a BMX facility that local children and the committee have started to establish, and Council could therefore partner with the group to formalise the facilities for this age group.

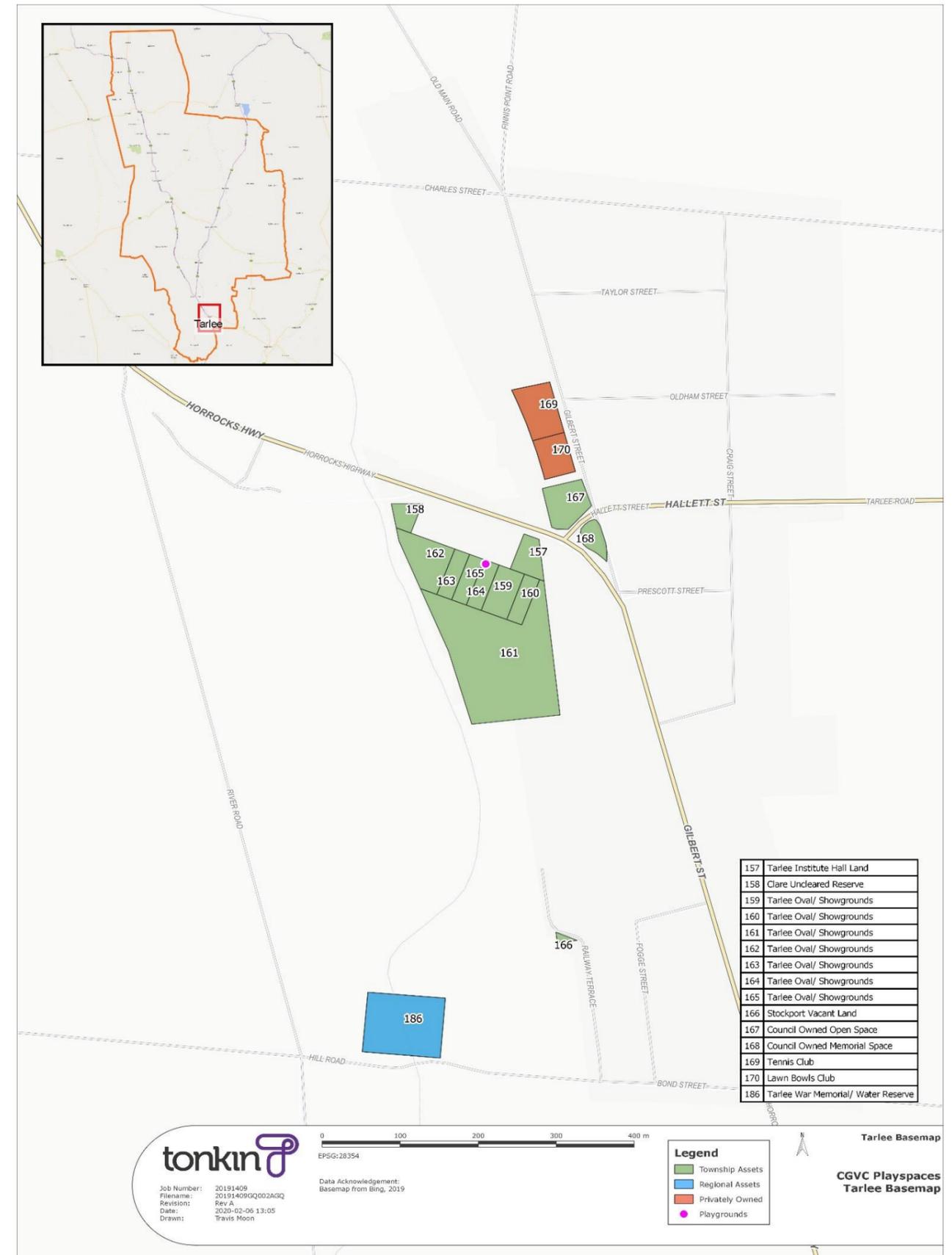
A memorial parcel of land (168) offers a tranquil setting and a vacant block (167) heading out of town provides some opportunity for further use but is not required at this stage.

The town also has a private bowls and tennis club and the local school has a covered outdoor court and junior oval. Whilst there is no need at this stage, this provides a partnership opportunity for Council and the community should the need arise.

Population		302	
OS Per 000 (ha)		16.50	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		14.27	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
T1	Formalise the youth recreation area at the central oval and work with the recreation grounds committee to establish	H	\$25k
Table 26: Tarlee Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$TBC



Small parcels of land offer some recreational value to residents, but the central oval is the main area for sport and recreation. An informal BMX track has been built and this provides an opportunity for Council to formalise and work with the community to enhance opportunities for young people in the township



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.13 Waterloo

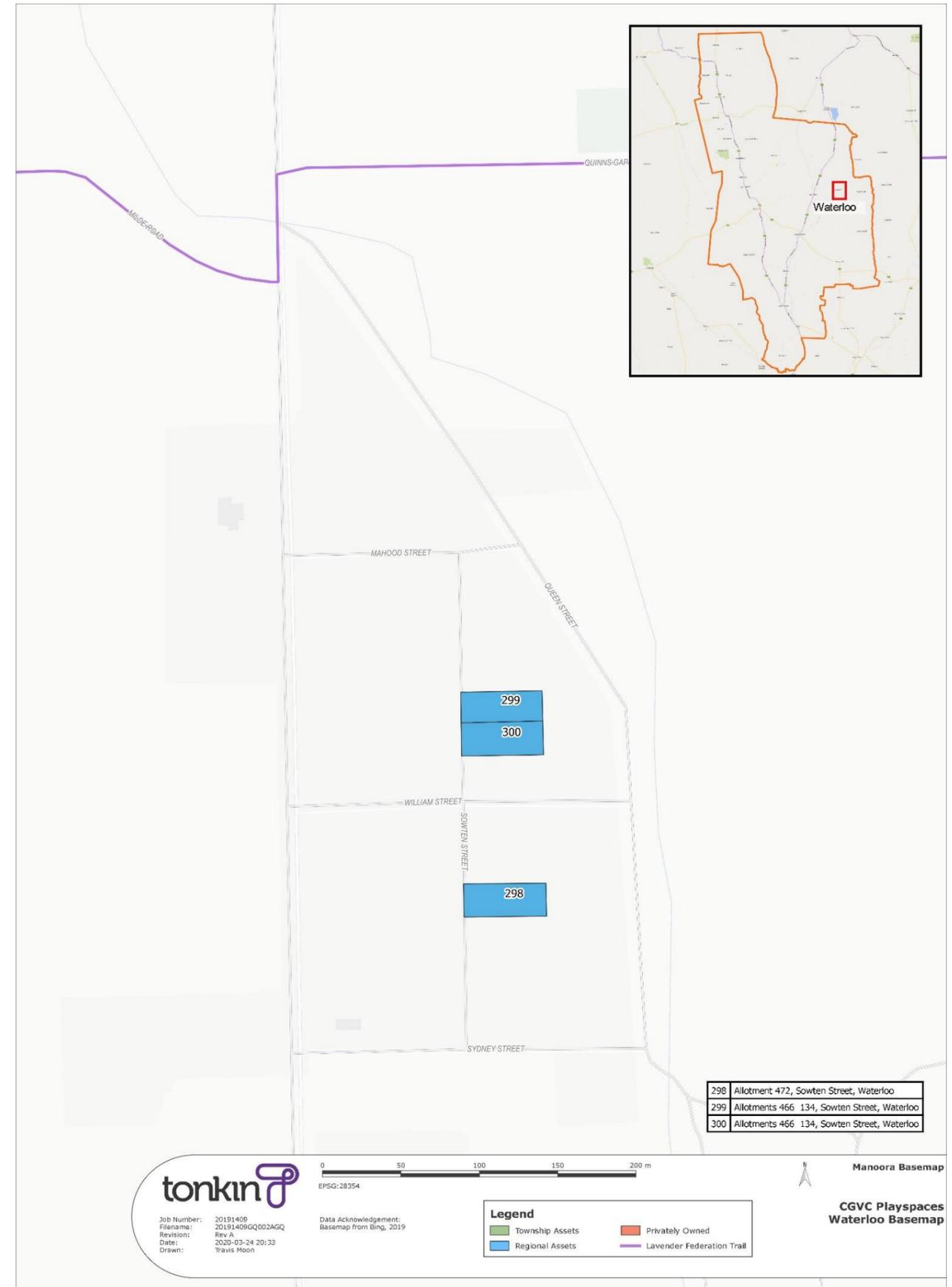
Waterloo is a small hamlet with only 82 residents and three parcels of community land totalling 0.32 ha. All land parcels are owned by the community and have been used for various recreational activities over the years including basketball and tennis. Behind the Soldiers War memorial Hall is a single hard court that is well fenced but in poor condition. There has been a basketball ring installed at one end where the bitumen is in better conditions. In 2012 the Waterloo Peak Body developed a park as a public area for the community adjacent to the local hall. In 2014 the tree lined open space was named Tom Kruse Park.

Tom Kruse Park consists of a small fenced community playground. It includes a reasonable size information shelter surrounded by artificial turf, which includes Information signage and a bronze bust of Tom Kruse. The Council relocated a public toilet unit to support the community in developing this space and for convenience for visitors and locals. The playground and shelter area have ample tables and seating. Potential camping facilities could be explored and upgrading of the court would further improve the sporting. A BBQ would also enhance the area.

Population		82	
OS Per 000 (ha)		3.90	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		0	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
WL1	Support Waterloo Peak Body to continue to develop Tom Kruse Park to meet the needs of locals and visitors.	H	-
WL2	Improve lighting throughout the waterloo township including Tom Kruse Park.		
WL3	Support Waterloo Peak Body to develop camping opportunities for walkers to the lavender trail and Hysen trails.	H	-
Table 27: Waterloo Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$TBC



There is no formal open space with recreational value in the township although there are three land parcels that are undeveloped with opportunity to be used as community parks if required.



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.14 Watervale

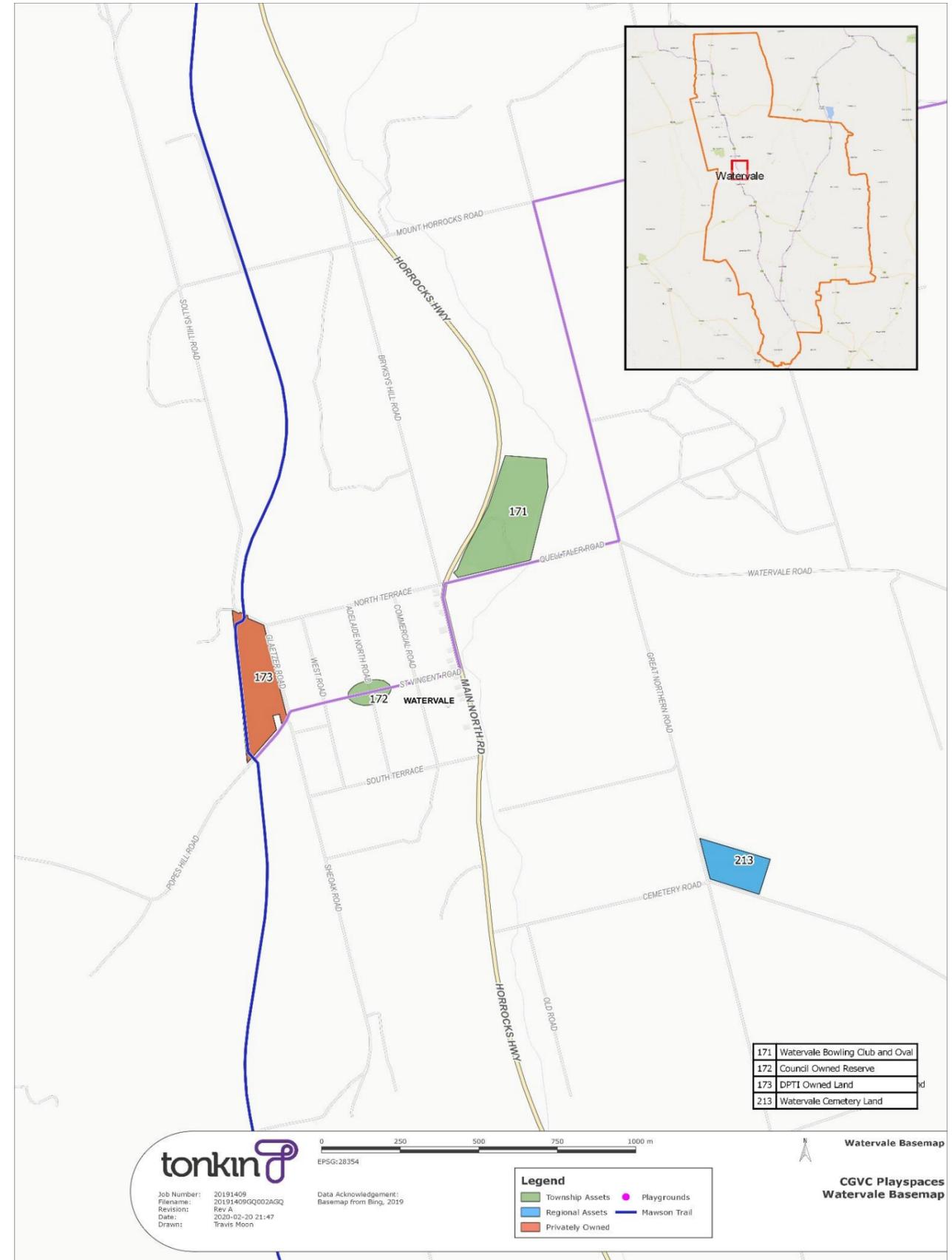
Watervale is a small but extremely involved community by way of sport and recreation management and coordination. The town committee (Watervale Community Association) has divested local assets to assist in the development of the central oval precinct (171) which is home to cricket, tennis and bowls. The group has also raised significant funds through grants for bore water extraction for oval irrigation and is now seeking assistance to develop a centralised new clubroom which would also act as the central facility for the whole town.

Minor parcels of ancillary land (172) are evident in the town and these provide Council with an opportunity for divestment to assist in any development of the central precinct. A private land parcel also exists to the west of the town which is natural and undeveloped and has the Riesling Trail running adjacent. This provides an excellent opportunity for camping or stop offs and could be explored further.

Population		326
OS Per 000 (ha)		39.15
UOS Per 000 (ha)		35.86
Strategy Opportunities		Priority Budget
WV1	Assist the oval committee in their grant bid and direct funding for the oval precinct and ensure any proposed facility is designed in a manner that is accessible to the broader community.	H \$TBC + Grants
WV2	Work with the Community Association and SACA on the development of a turf wicket at the precinct to enhance its regional cricket viability	H \$TBC + SACA Grants
WV3	Assist the bowls club in the resurfacing of its green through a grant process	M \$ Grant
WV4	Consider the divestment of part or all of land parcel 172 to offset any development of the sports precinct.	H -
WV5	Upgrade the local playspace to a District classification and Council take control of maintenance	M PS \$
Table 27: Watervale Estimated budget minus playspace improvements		\$TBC



Watervale has a proactive Community Association that wishes to enhance the Central Precinct with the development of a new facility. This would be used as the main community facility for the small town and would add value to it as a key sporting destination. Some opportunity for land divestment to offset the cost is available in the town



Open Space and Recreation Strategy

5.5.15 Regional Ancillary

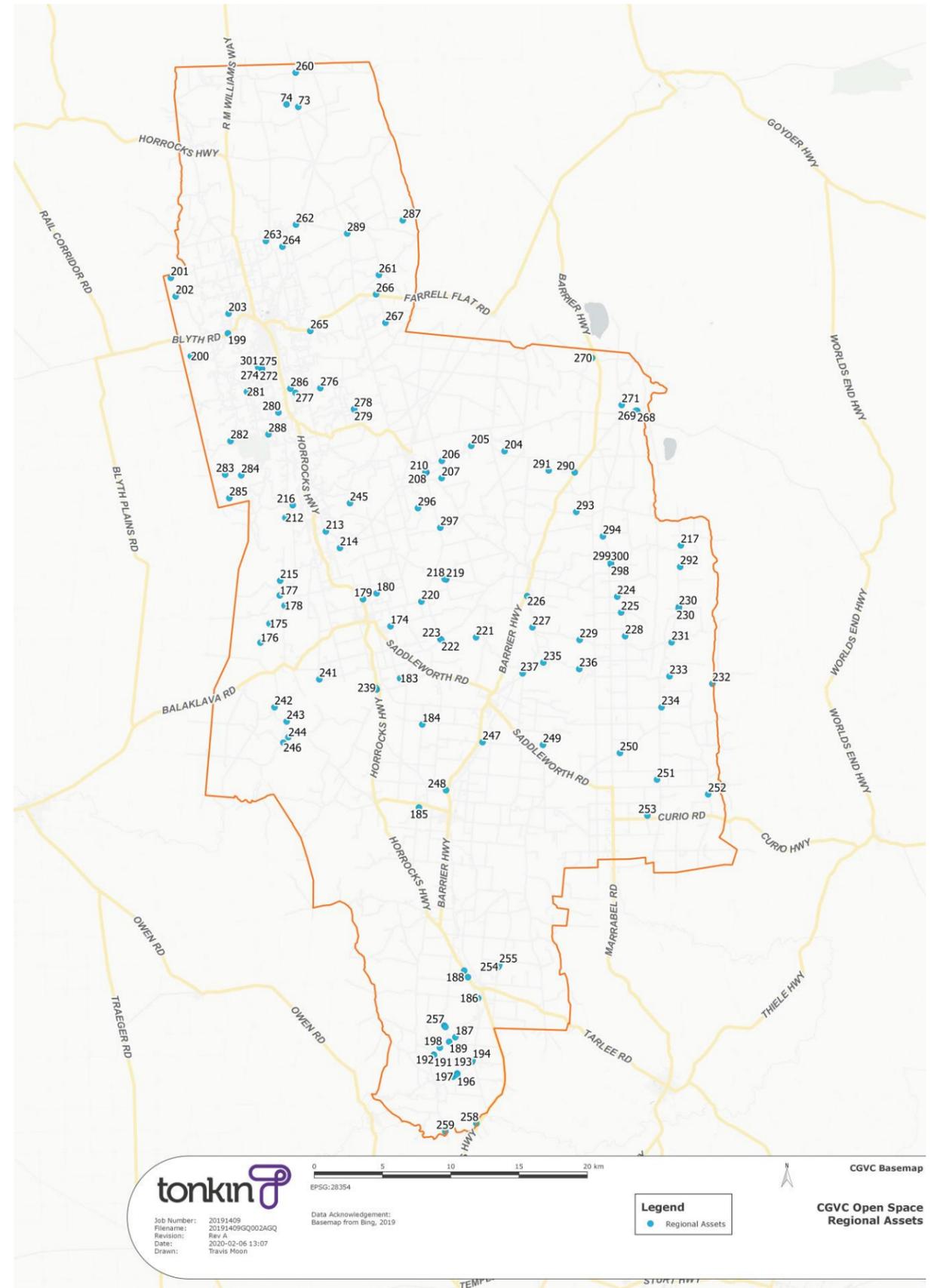
There are 127 land parcels accounting for 166 ha of open space which is over a third (33.3%) of all open space classified as community land. Most of this land is on the outskirts of the townships and is either unembellished or used for other purposes such as water supplies, water reserves, natural land, vacant land etc.

Whilst it is not a strategy to dispose or re classify land for its own sake; it is highly unlikely that any urban growth will be occurring in these areas in the foreseeable future and it may therefore be in the interest of Council to systematically assess each land parcel with a view of assigning a future use or choosing to dispose accordingly and if possible reinvest in valuable community spaces within the townships themselves.

Population (balance outside townships)		1938	
OS Per 000 (ha)		85.98	
UOS Per 000 (ha)		37.02	
Strategy Opportunities		Priority	Budget
RA	Undertake a complete assessment of all 127 ancillary land parcels with a view of rationalisation	M	-
Table 28: Regional Estimated budget minus playspace improvements			\$0



Ancillary, undeveloped and unembellished land with no recreational value of other identified uses, should be earmarked for future use or rationalised and funds reinvested into quality open spaces within the main townships



5.6 Summary

It is evident that open space, sport and recreation play a major role in the lives of residents of the Clare and Gilbert Valley and that in townships, particularly the smaller communities where the local oval is the main source of leisure, open space and venue for events, socialising and meeting.

The Community Oval Committees are to be commended in the way they operate with limited resources and it is felt that they are significantly under resourced and should be considered in the same light as any management group that provides services on behalf of Council.

These organisations are pivotal in the overall delivery of leisure services and in most instances, are managing community land which is ultimately the responsibility of Council. Should these committees not exist, then Council would be required to manage and maintain open space and facilities but very likely at a much higher cost and labour intense manner.

The policy framework identified in this report should therefore be considered as a guide for how Council provides and outsources facilities and services and more importantly when this occurs to ensure the best means of delivery and service to the community.

Open space is also in abundance across the Council region, but many are parcels of undeveloped or unembellished land with little if no recreational value. Whilst disposal is not a favoured strategy as once land is divested it is difficult to regain if needed, there is scope to rationalise and invest in higher quality spaces that the community can access and benefit from within townships themselves. Much of this land is in areas outside of townships and therefore Council should consider this as a key action of the open space and recreation strategy.

Playspace provision is very traditional by nature in that equipment forms the key focus of Councils playgrounds. Consideration should however be given to the differing needs of children and the role play can have in their physical, cognitive and social development. Play design therefore needs to be based on distribution and access to a wide range of opportunities for children of all ages and abilities and of course their carers or parents.

Finally, is the notion of the Clare Valley and Region as a major destination not just for local and regional visitors, but also international tourists that holiday in South Australia and to take advantage of its climate, food, culture and lifestyle. The Region is steeped in such opportunities and with assets and infrastructure such as the wine industry and the State Trails network, tourism is an opportunity to be capitalised upon and in the process enhance opportunities for local residents.

The implementation of the strategy is a long-term vision and provides Council with a direction and some prioritised actions and strategies for the next 10 years. The strategy is not prescriptive but does provide a framework for strategic and operational decision making in relation to the provision and support of sport, recreation and open space in the region.

Whilst the proposed budgets are indicative, noting that many strategies involve further assessment, work or consultation to develop a cost around their implementation, a number of actions have been identified that will enhance the overall provision and experience of community open space, sport, recreation and play across the region. The following provides an indicative summary of these noting that large scale existing projects such as the Clare Oval and Watervale Recreation Grounds Redevelopment etc., are not included in these high-end budget estimates.

Area/Priority	H (1-3yrs)	M (3-5yrs)	L (5-10yrs)	Indicative Totals
Open Space	-	\$40k	\$60k	\$100k
Sport and Recreation	\$120k	\$80k	-	\$200k
Playspaces	\$65k	\$385k	\$25k	\$475k
Townships	\$295k	\$150k	\$260k	\$705k
Indicative Totals	\$480k	\$655k	\$345k	\$1.480m

Table 29: Budget and Priority Summary

No one department or business area of Council is responsible for the implementation of these strategies as the subject matter crosses most if not all of Councils functions, but the implementation of the strategy needs to be coordinated by one central point. Councils Star Club Officer may be the best suited to undertake this task as this person works directly with the community and can therefore be the conduit between the two.

The community themselves must also be on board and understand the role they play in the overall provision of services and together both Council and the community need to continue to work together to prioritise and collectively seek funding to support the implementation of this strategy in a professional, strategic and proactive manner.

An external Sport and Recreation Network is therefore recommended, and this committee should comprise representatives from all Townships and their respective community committees to understand the bigger picture and more importantly to share resources, ideas and opportunities for a coordinated approach to planning for sport, recreation, play and open space across the region.

Appendices

Stakeholder Feedback

Community Organisations with a direct role or management agreement for sport, leisure, recreation, or open space in the region, were invited to provide a response to this report. A brief survey was developed, and groups invited to complete. 15 responses were initially received with 1 duplicated and 2 partially completed with little information and therefore 3 surveys were not included in the final assessment of feedback.

The 3 written responses were largely in relation to corrections within the report which have been included and amended where appropriate and therefore a list of groups and Associations responding to the draft being as follows:

Survey Responses

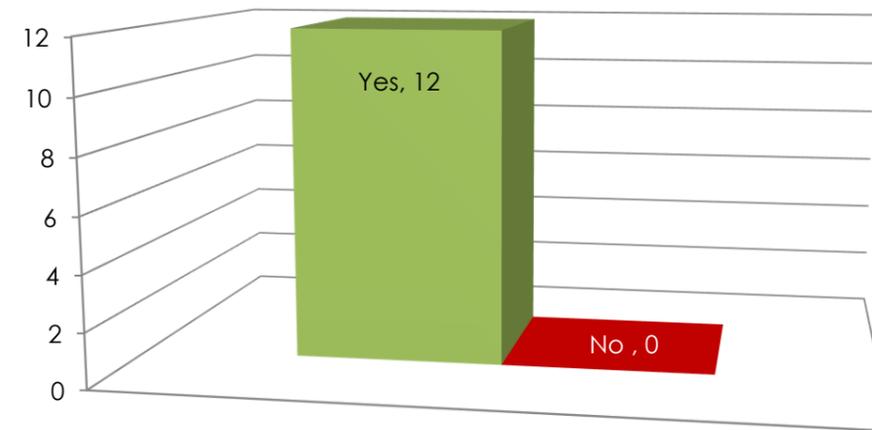
- 1 Auburn Community Development Committee Inc.
- 2 Riverton Recreation Ground Committee
- 3 Mortlock Park subcommittee - Mintaro progress
- 4 Richardson Park INC.
- 5 Riverton Community Management Committee - Rattler Trail Committee
- 6 Richardson Park
- 7 Clare Motorcycle Club
- 8 Watervale Bowling Club
- 9 Manoora Centenary Park
- 10 Employment Directions
- 11 The Valleys Lifestyle Centre
- 12 Waterloo Peak Body

Written Responses

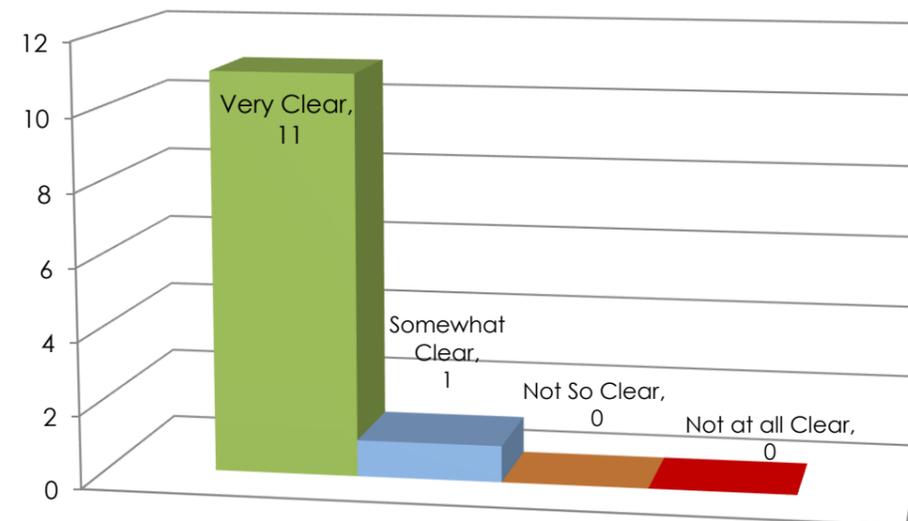
- 13 Saddleworth District Community Association
- 14 Mortlock Park and Mintaro Progress Association
- 15 Auburn Community Development Committee

Several questions were posed in relation to each section of the report with the following highlighting the responses from the 12 organisations:

Q1: Are the definitions and glossary clear and understandable?



Q2: Thoughts of the Policy Framework



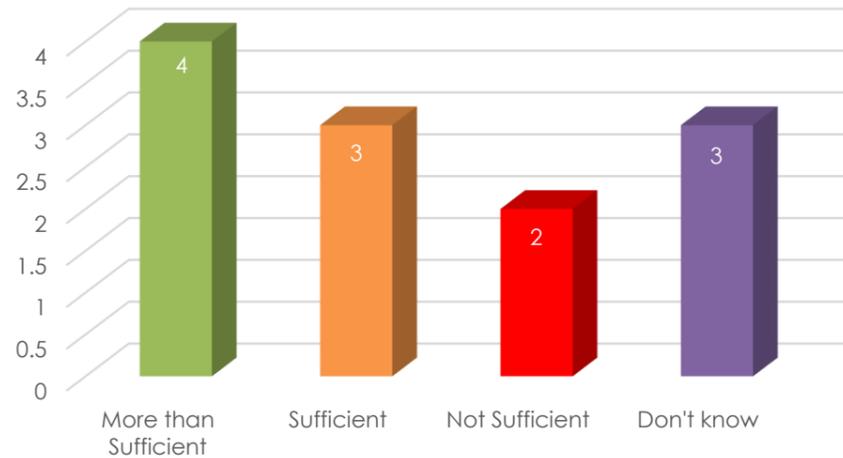
Question 3 asked for suggestions regarding the policy framework with only 1 response stating that it would be 'fantastic to see community gardens'

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

incorporated in leisure and recreation spaces.' This has been noted and feedback provided to Council staff to consider in each township and in further consultation with community groups and organisations.

Question 4 looked at the proposed 9 hectares of land per 1000 population with 7 of the 12 stating it was sufficient and 3 not sure with 2 thinking it should be higher.

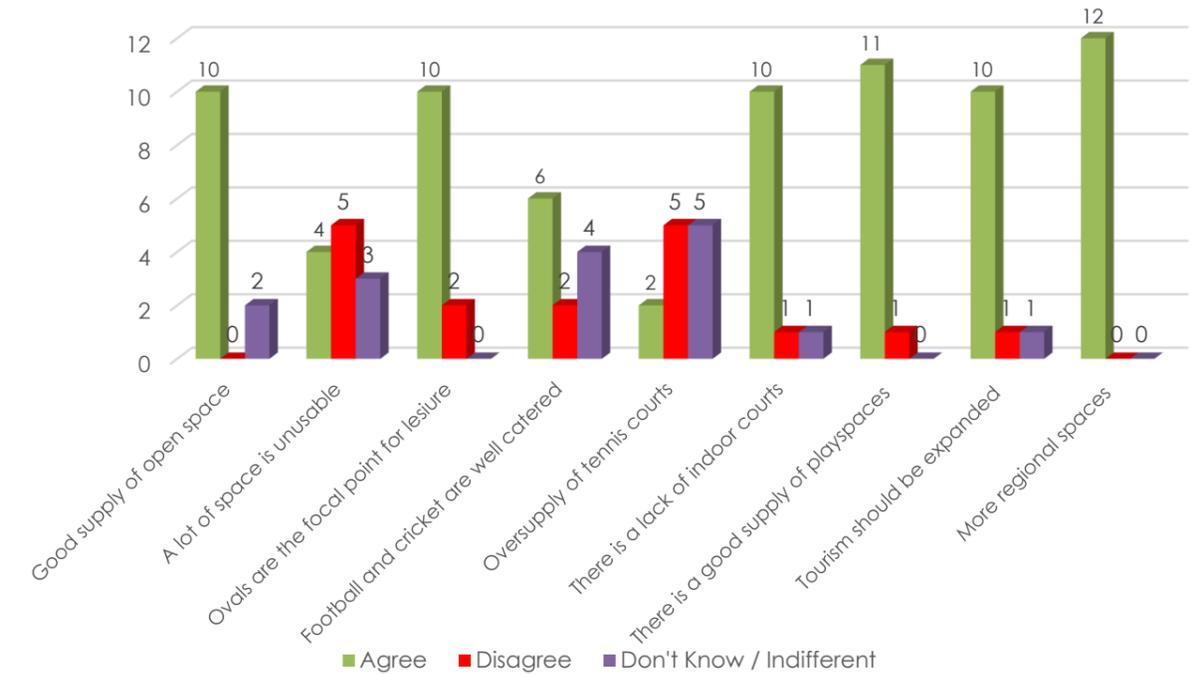
Q4: Thoughts re 9ha of useable Open Space per 1000



Question 5 asked groups whether they supported or otherwise the key findings in the report. All statements were supported except for space being 'unusable' and an over supply of tennis courts. The former was directed at much of the open space being outside of townships and undeveloped reserves and ancillary space within them which may not be seen by the community as 'open space'. This may further highlight the importance of the existing community spaces within townships.

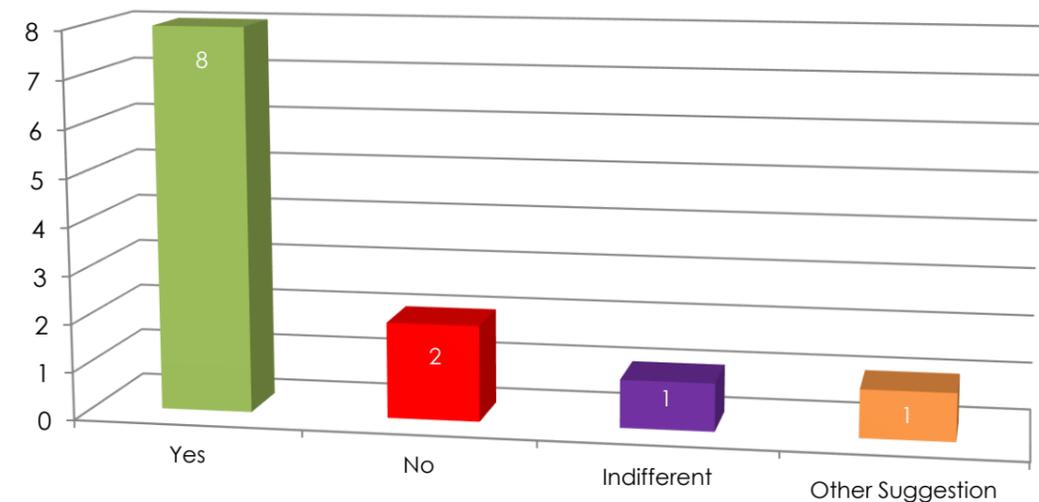
Tennis courts and the sport itself may be viewed as good opportunities for free or low-cost unstructured sport and should therefore be assessed in conjunction with further community consultation.

Q5: Report Findings Statements



Question 6 asked for comment on the proposed vision with the majority supporting it. Those that didn't stated that in theory it is good, but there is a concern of equity of provision in smaller townships outside over main centres such as the Clare centre.

Q6: Support for the Proposed Vision



Questions 7-10 were qualitative in nature and asked for suggestions or comments in relation to the suggested Council wide principles for leisure, open space, sport, and play with the following being summarised comments:

Leisure and Wellbeing:

- LW3 is a valuable guiding principle "Leisure is a valuable conduit for social development and capacity building and can be passive or active to include things such as arts, crafts and learning new skills" This is especially important as members of the population age and maybe cannot access leisure that has a predominant physical aspect. Learning new skills in a social setting with some physical activity has good support for enhancing mental health and reducing the impact of dementia.
- LW5 and 6 are also valuable guiding principles with the proviso that there is a balance between the provision of services for the local community and tourists.
- Excellent range of principals with varied focus
- The council has struggled to provide increased support to volunteer groups running recreational ovals outside of Clare to provide quality facilities. Oval irrigation costs and building upgrades and development should be encouraged and financially backed by Council.

Open Space:

- It is particularly important that OS 2 District and Regional facilities will be spread across the District to ensure an even supply and equitable access for all. " has been included as people are more likely to engage in physical activity/recreation if it is easy to reach and interesting.
- Lack of workforce to keep areas neat and tidy. Design is an area were overspend can occur. Too often designs are over the top and really don't suit CGVC environment.
- I agree. A rural community needs to have attractive, well-resourced open spaces which reflect the environment, culture and heritage of the region.
- I like OS 9 where pedestrians are prioritised over vehicles
- The use of local school grounds is a fantastic idea however they won't be used if the grounds are covered in duck poo. For example, the Clare High school oval would be a fantastic open space but whenever I have attended this space the ground is covered with poo. I'm unsure what the best way to improve this is, it's just an observation and consideration if you are going to encourage people to use these open spaces. If you are going to encourage community members to use spaces such as schools will there be access to public toilets? Also, with open spaces, it would be nice to see public toilets and drinking fountains places along the Riesling trail.

Sport and Recreation:

- Very broad but OK as guiding principles. How "support" is interpreted/operationalised will influence the effectiveness of the principle.
- All good. SR4 - how much support - again Clare will be the recipient of most funding.
- I agree.
- Excellent; show of support
- Most local sports grounds could use upgrading particularly gathering spaces. Upgrades to undercover areas would be fantastic especially for winter sports on cold rainy days and summer sports for those watching to seek shade from the sun

Playspaces:

- Appropriate and wide-reaching. Council acknowledges the natural environment is equally if not more important as (should be "than" rather than "as") structured play equipment.
- All good. Timeframe? A lot to achieve.
- I agree.
- Excellent
- This would be fantastic to see as the current playspaces are all very similar and don't promote large ranges of skill development and creativity.
- Unsure what technological use will be embraced but feel this is a waste of money unless it's around lighting. Love the inclusion of including Ngadjuri ties and links. Would be good if it was referenced as Ngadjuri.

Questions 11-13 were directed specifically at each section of the Council wide strategies with an overwhelming support of all with the exception of open space where the majority were indifferent. Specific comments in relation to each area were as follows with responses provided where appropriate.

- *Walking is the most participated recreational activity, yet there is no specific strategy to support this activity. The Rattler and Riesling Trails are used extensively by walkers as well as other walking sites within some towns. I think SR13 needs to be broadened to include walkers and given a higher priority.*

Response:

SR13: A trails strategy is currently being undertaken by Council

- *OS9- difficult to understand. Would recommend that OS 3 be made a higher priority (from L to H or M) and OS11 from M to H*

Response:

- *OS9 refers to ensuring any land contributed by legislation by developers, is useable for recreation or leisure and not land that has no value to the community*
- *OS3 and 11: To be considered in the Trails strategy*

- *The rural community of CGVC needs to have more than 9ha per 1000 residents. A strategy about walking trails in and around township should be included. Walking is the most participated recreational activity and needs to be a planned activity.*

Response:

SR13: This is higher than all national averages and in par with suggested neighbouring Councils. The reality is that provision will be much higher, but this is a benchmark for useable open space for recreation and leisure purposes.

- *Signage should be a higher priority than low. Visitors won't realise we have reservoirs or most of the walking trails unless they are well researched or been recommended by a friend. It would also be nice to see the standard of the visitor information bays updated, at the moment why stop when you can just google? They aren't attractive spaces.*

Response:

SR13: A trails strategy is currently being undertaken by Council

- *I feel these high outcomes could be achieved in a month not 3 years. Also given how much open space per person there is. Is it really a high priority???*

- *SR11- Unsure what SSO means?*

Response:

State Sporting Organisation. The Peak bodies for sport and recreation. Now amended in the final report

- *SR10 urgently needed.*

- *SR13 The Riesling and Rattler trails could also be enhanced as walking trails either as a 2 day end to end walk from Riverton to Clare or reverse or day walks Riverton to Auburn , Auburn to Clare. The distances are achievable for average walkers. Overall, the strategies seem to provide a framework for a more equitable distribution of sport and recreation facilities and ongoing maintenance and management*

Response:

SR13: A trails strategy is currently being undertaken by Council

- *Walking needs to be included in this strategy and should be included as part of RS13*

Response:

Implied throughout regarding pedestrian friendly areas, trails and accessible open space. A separate strategy would be required for active transport such as walking and cycling.

- *Riverton recreational park has a recommendation to replace the playspace however comment states "maintain as is" that's conflicting information? Similarly, Saddleworth recreation ground and Waterloo have similar conflicting information.*

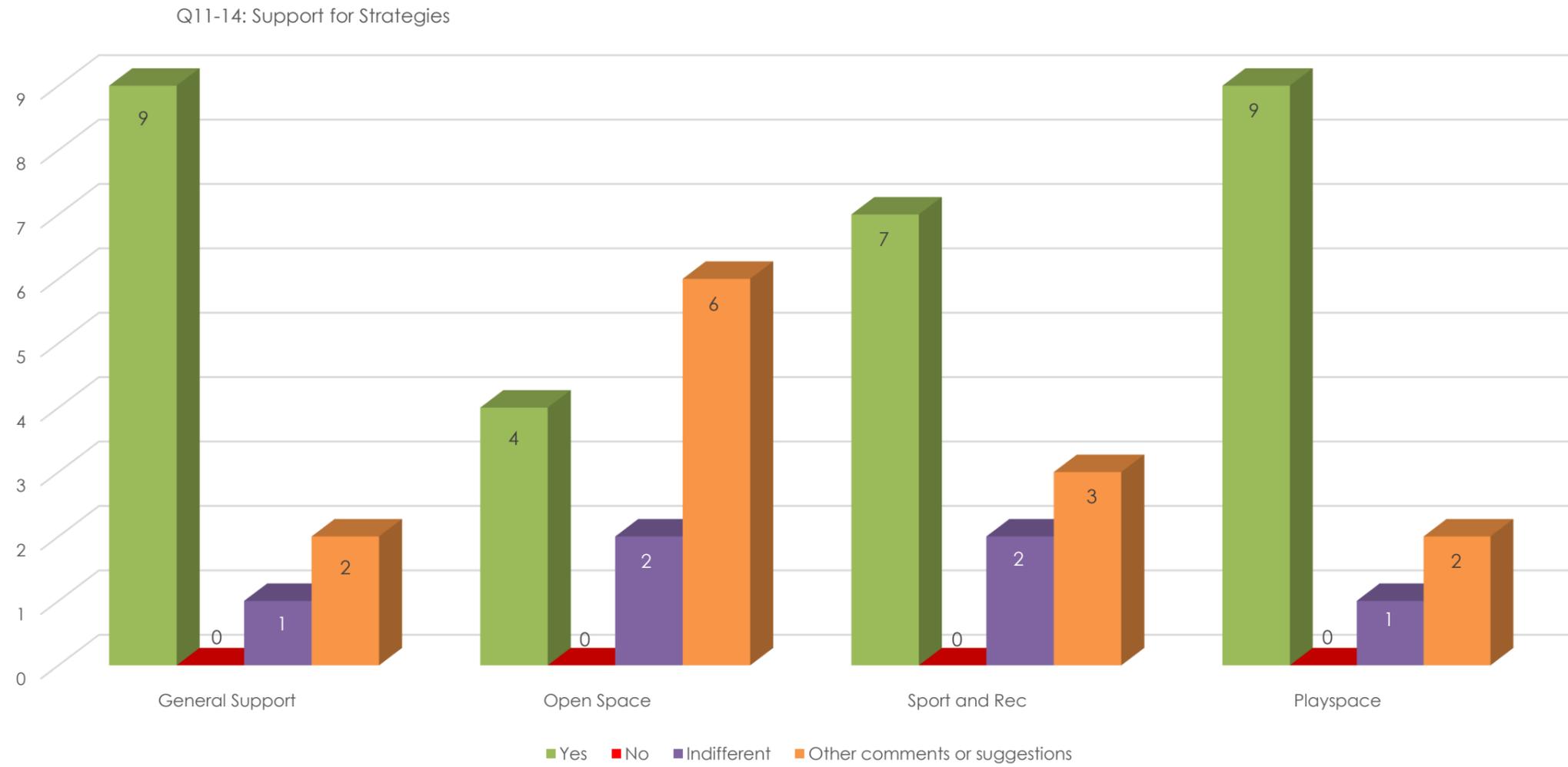
Response:

Errors corrected

- *Whilst I have no objections to this strategy. It is strange that \$1.2 million of council's money for a project development is not even listed on the strategy.*

Response:

The strategy is high level with indicative costs. Additional funding will be required for a number of the identified strategies which at this stage are unknown. The strategy is meant to identify gaps and opportunities and prioritise for Council and where necessary include in its fiscal planning and external grant sourcing.



Questions 15 asked for comments in relation to the specific township strategies with the following being a summary of these:

- *Auburn: A1 Make the addition of a youth component to Centenary Park a high rather than medium priority. I'm unsure of the rationale for linking the Cemetery to Mawson/Rattler trails is important to consider and provide each township with good open space, recreation space and play space.*
- *Yes this seems reasonable but I do not have a detailed knowledge of many of the communities to adequately comment*
- *Some aspects need to be corrected particularly in relation to Waterloo*

Response:

Changed and amended where identified

- *The glossary doesn't outline what is required under a park and uses park in the term open space.*

Response:

Highlighted and discussed in section 2.6.2 (open space classifications)

Formal written responses have, where appropriate, been included in the final report

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