

Policy

Open Space Infrastructure

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Open Space Infrastructure Policy

1.0 Introduction

An Open Space Infrastructure Policy is a mechanism by which the current and future needs of open space within a community are able to be determined, thereby enabling the calculation of future monetary contributions for the provision and embellishment of open space to be accurate and reasonable. Thus, this Policy is an important basis from which revised Section 94 Contributions Plans for Open Space in Tweed Shire will be prepared.

2.0 Background

Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space was originally prepared early in 1993. Since then, several policy and strategic initiatives having a bearing on public open space planning and management have been undertaken by Council. The current Contributions Plan has also been amended a number of times, most recently in July 1999 to reflect changes in priorities in respect of open space acquisition and embellishment.

3.0 Methodology

This Policy was developed under the guidance of a Steering Committee within Council. This involved extensive research, analysis and review of relevant documents and statistical data, including Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data to determine future population projections, thus the future open space demand. Particular reference was made to the *Draft Tweed Open Space and Recreation Strategy* (1995) the *Tweed Shire Scenic Landscape Evaluation Study* (Catherine Brouwer 1995) and the *Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan* (1996). From this review, guiding principles and strategies relevant to Tweed Shire were identified from which policies were recommended for the future provision and management of public open space.

4.0 Review of Literature and Best Practice

To assist in identifying the varying needs of a community in relation to open space, and how to plan for these needs, recent open space strategies and best practice Section 94 Contributions Plans from other Councils were reviewed.

This analysis and review identified several underlying principles in relation to the process that this Infrastructure Policy follows. This process included:

- An assessment of the existing and likely future population of the Shire in order to establish a nexus between future population and future demand for open space;
- An assessment of existing open space provision identifying settings, catchments and hierarchies;
- Review of the basic standard by which open space provision can be determined; and

- Devising performance criteria against which land set aside or acquired by Council for future open space provision is assessed in order to maintain a high quality of open space to meet user needs.

5.0 Open Space Setting, Hierarchies and Catchments

The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a basis from which open space facilities can be classified according to setting, hierarchy and catchment. Five setting types have been proposed for the purposes of this draft Policy. These settings are established within a two level hierarchy of Shirewide and local open space. For local open space, five catchments are proposed for ease of management and calculation of contributions. However, prior to establishing a method to plan for future open space provision, the existing open space provision is summarised.

6.0 Existing Open Space Provision

Council's current *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space* identifies two setting types, namely casual and structured open space. An estimate of existing open space within Tweed Shire based on these setting types by locality has been provided. This establishes that the current supply of public open space is approximately 4.46ha per 1,000 population. However, embellishment of much of this open space is needed in order to bring the existing facilities to a higher level of quality to satisfy the community's needs. Current open space includes significant or major facilities for both casual and structured open space which meet Shirewide or regional needs.

7.0 Population Growth and Demand

Tweed Shire is the fastest growing area on the NSW North Coast and, as such, has a high level of demand for the future provision of good quality open space which satisfies the varying needs and demands of this demographically diverse community.

This Infrastructure Policy will focus on planning for the provision and upgrading of open space outside new release areas until 2006 and shire wide facilities until 2022. Whilst the supply of open space in these areas is sufficient, the quality and distribution in relation to existing and proposed residential areas needs improvement. It is concluded that embellishment of open space in many areas is required to best meet user demand.

8.0 Aim, Guiding Principles and Performance Standards for Future Open Space Provision

Once the existing situation has been determined and the future population growth and subsequent demand for open space is detailed, aims, guiding principles and performance standards for the future provision of open space are proposed, based on best practice and deficiencies in the current system. These will guide the future development of a comprehensive open space network within Tweed Shire based on a "qualitative" approach.

It is concluded that for local open space the basic quantitative standard of 2.83ha of open space per 1,000 population should be retained. However this quantitative requirement for local open space provision should incorporate a qualitative

requirement that any land acquired under this standard is to be of good quality and able to satisfy the performance criteria for location, design and level of embellishment set out for its specific proposed setting. Generally, additional land should only be acquired by Council where it is identified for open space in a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) or Development Control Plan (DCP) and where it is inappropriate to embellish existing open space in the locality.

For **Shirewide open space** it is concluded that a quantitative standard of 1.17ha per 1000 population should be set for future development. The scope for the acquisition of Shirewide open space should incorporate flexibility to allow opportunistic purchases of suitable land and/ or facilities. Demand for reflects the fact that Tweed Shire's population at 76,000 has now reached a threshold where Shirewide open space being higher order more intensively used sportsfields and casual open space is required to meet demand. Thus the total open space standard is recommended at 4.0 hectares per 1,000, reflecting the current overall supply of open space in the shire at 4.46 hectares per 1,000 population.

9.0 Funding and Management

Increasing demands and scarce financial resources require that management and maintenance of open space be subject to new innovative funding and management mechanisms, including sponsorship, community/user involvement in and responsibility for maintenance, advertising income generation, alternative revenue realising measures, and multi-use of open space facilities.

Open space land assets should be evaluated from the database with a view to identifying duplication or lands not likely to be effectively used as open space. This allows for open space land stocks to be rationalised if warranted, with local community support, and for some lands to be made available for alternative uses, if in the public interest. An unequivocal commitment should be made when accepting new open space for future annual maintenance funding, and establishment costs.

10.0 Conclusion

This Open Space Infrastructure Policy for Tweed Shire has been prepared following a review of existing open space provision, population growth and resulting demand for open space, and funding and management issues.

It is concluded that the overall supply of open space within Tweed Shire is adequate, but poorly or inadequately distributed or embellished. This Policy devises guiding principles and performance criteria for the future provision and embellishment of open space to meet local and Shirewide needs. This is to be achieved together with innovative funding mechanisms to ensure the on-going management and maintenance of a high quality open space network which satisfies the needs of this diverse community.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Recommendations for twenty two (22) specific Policies and Actions from the policy document are presented to implement this Open Space and Infrastructure Policy, as follows:

1. *The underlying principles derived from the strategies, plans, policies and manual reviewed should be utilised in the preparation and implementation of this Open Space Infrastructure Policy for the Tweed Shire.*
2. *The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum approach to open space planning should be adopted, with all open space classified by setting types, hierarchy and catchment, for this draft Infrastructure Policy.*
3. *A two-level hierarchy should be adopted in terms of the size of the catchment of users , namely a Shirewide level and a local level.*
4. *On a whole of Council basis, the inventory of open space assets should be completed, collated and kept up to date, as an essential management tool.*
5. *Council's policy for the provision and acceptance of additional public open space to cater for new development is based on the following:*
 - (a) *An overall standard for new open space provision of 4.0ha per 1,000 population should apply.*
 - (b) *For local open space provision the existing standard of 2.83ha per 1,000 resident population, being 1.7ha per 1,000 population for structured open space provision and 1.13ha per 1,000 population for casual open space provision should be retained as a guide when assessing the basic requirements for open space subject to the application of (d);*
 - (c) *For Shirewide open space provision, the standard should be set at 1.17ha per 1,000 population; and*
 - (d) *Both the general performance criteria (nominated in Table 5 of this document) and the specific performance criteria for each open space setting type (nominated in Tables 6-9) should be applied in the selection and approval of open space. This is to ensure that subdividers / developers locate and produce quality open space to most effectively meet the varied requirements of the community as new development takes place.*
6. *Where it is impractical or undesirable in Council's opinion for developers to provide additional local open space to satisfy new demand, contributions will be required towards the cost of upgrading/embellishing existing local open space on a catchment basis to meet such new demand.*
7. *Council will not generally accept areas of local open space over the maximum amount, ie. 2.83ha per 1,000 new population, unless it is satisfied that no additional maintenance responsibility, including fire management, weed control etc will result for Council and unless funding for long term maintenance is committed or assured.*
8. *All areas to be dedicated will not be accepted by Council unless embellished or rehabilitated to a minimum maintenance state at hand-over to the satisfaction of Council's Recreation Services Unit. This may include the land being drained, improved, topsoiled, turfed, provided with amenities, vehicular access, and with weed management and fire management measures in place.*
9. *Establishment costs for the initial two years in relation to new open space or embellishment of open space should be factored into Section 94 plans including consent conditions to ensure that the cost burden of establishing the asset above normal maintenance is shared by new development.*

10. *Contributions for Shirewide open space facilities including sportsfields, foreshores and bushland / environmental parks will be sought from the community on a Shirewide basis; such contributions will be directed towards costs of major sports facilities at Murwillumbah, Wommin Bay Road, and Arkinstall Park, the major foreshore parks along the Tweed Coast, the Bushland/Environmental Park areas and proposed Botanic Garden at Eviron, and Pottsville Environmental Park, to reflect the Shirewide use of such facilities.*
11. *Self-funding projects should be identified wherever possible to reduce the burden of recurrent/maintenance funding through sponsorships, advertising signs, community trusts, sporting groups, appropriate user fees, etc.*
12. *Alternative potential revenue generating activities, such as restaurants, function rooms and food and beverage outlets in certain parks should be pursued in conjunction with development of parks to cater for growth.*
13. *Local open space assets should be reviewed regularly as part of Council's management and budget process to identify lands not likely to be effectively used as open space and reallocate this land for alternative uses where in the public interest.*
14. *Council, in deciding to accept new open space or undertake embellishment work should make clear and unequivocal provision for its future maintenance irrespective of potential alternative revenue services.*
15. *In any proposal relating to the dedication of open space that includes drainage facilities where the primary function of the area is to provide drainage, and it is considered that the land has no significant recreational quality or potential use, such land will not be accepted as open space. Drainage facilities include facilities such as trunk drains, swales, overland paths, detention basins, water quality control ponds and the like. Land containing these drainage facilities should be located within drainage reserves or easements.*
16. *Multi-use of existing and future open space should be facilitated consistent with effective management of joint uses, such as with school sportsfields, to minimise conflict between recreation uses and increase availability of sportsfield facilities.*
17. *Important scenic backdrops, scenic features and scenic routes identified as being of high value in the Tweed Shire Scenic Landscape Evaluation Study (1995) should continue to be protected and managed through strategic planning assessment and development assessment of proposals on private and public land. This assessment should utilise the criteria established in this study.*
18. *The feasibility of establishing a regional green space management regime should be pursued in respect of the extensive areas of public and private lands set aside for existing or proposed water catchment protection, forestry, nature conservation and river foreshore protection, in the south-western part of Tweed Shire (eg. Clarrie Hall Dam Catchment, proposed Byrill Creek Water Supply Catchment, Mooball/Mebbin/Wollumbin and Nullum State Forests, Mt Warning National Park).*
19. *Preparation and assessment of Development Applications, Development Control Plans and rezoning submissions should take into account the recommendations of this draft Policy with regard to settings characteristics and design/ locational criteria.*
20. *Council's various Management Plans for Community Land as prepared and reviewed from time to time, and Estuary River and Foreshore Management Plans, should have regard for this Policy.*
21. *The Draft Tweed Open Space and Recreation Study (1995) be used as a resource document in the planning and management of open space settings.*

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22. *All Section 94 Contributions Plans relating to open space should be reviewed in the medium to long term to take account of these policies and integrated into one contribution plan for Shire public open space provision. This would enable a more consistent approach to the management, funding and provision of open space.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In January 1998, Tweed Shire Council engaged Gary Shiels & Associates Pty Ltd to review and amend the current *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space*. The first stage of this assignment involves developing an *Open Space Infrastructure Policy*, in accordance with Council's brief, which is to include:

- An identification of appropriate hierarchical levels of open space needs from local/ neighbourhood to Shirewide/regional;
- The possible multi-use of open space areas and any strategies for self/part funding and recognising establishment costs in new open space provision that may offset recurrent costs at the Shirewide level; and
- The identification of appropriate standards for the provision of future open space facilities, in particular the suitability of a needs-based approach to planning of open space in the Shire using performance standards, rather than numerical standards.

Figure 1 is a Map showing Tweed Shire and its major features, boundaries and adjoining Local Government Areas (LGAs).

The Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan (1996) describes open space within the Shire as follows:

“Open space is an essential part of the Tweed Shire’s character, identity and structure. From the local parks to the World Heritage listed areas, open space provides recreation, conservation, education and scenic qualities essential to the residents and visitors of the Shire.”

Although Tweed Shire has a large amount of open space in both public and private ownership, a more holistic approach to the upgrading and management of open space is needed. The aim of which will be to establish a comprehensive regional network that is accessible and satisfies the varying lifecycle needs of communities within the Shire for recreational, scenic conservation and educational aspects of life.

This Policy relates to all public open space land within the Tweed Shire which is provided for or managed by Council. Specifically, this excludes Crown Land not managed by Council, Nature Reserves, National Parks, State Forests, private open space and agricultural land. It also excludes indoor recreational and community facilities such as indoor swimming pools, community centres etc. An appropriate definition of **open space** for the purposes of this draft Policy is as follows:

“Open space is all land which designated, reserved or managed by or on behalf of Council as public open space, for outdoor recreation, parkland, or conservation related purposes accessible to the public; such land includes land zoned Public Open Space 6(a) under a Local Environmental Plan.”

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In a broader sense, open space planning also concerns all lands which are vegetated (“green”) and which perform a visual or other open space related role in the landscape of the Shire. To this extent, **green space** can be defined as follows:

“Green space is an all embracing term which refers to all lands, public or private or waterway, which have no more than a small part of their area covered by buildings and which are managed primarily for aesthetic, conservation, recreational, cultural, forestry, or water catchment values, to retain these values.”

This Policy begins with a background, description of the methodology, and a review of relevant literature including research on best practice examples. A system of classification of open space based on the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum is then discussed, followed by a review of population growth and resultant demand for open space within Tweed Shire. A review of existing open space provision in the Shire is detailed from which aims, guiding principles and performance criteria for the future provision of open space together with strategies for funding and management of open space are proposed. The final section of the document is a conclusion. Under all relevant sections of this report, recommended policies for open space planning and management are set out.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space for Tweed Shire was originally prepared early in 1993, and adopted by Council on 1 July 1993. Also in 1993, generic Plans of Management for Sportsfields and Urban, Rural and Modified Parklands were prepared for Council and adopted under the Local Government Act 1993.

Since 1993, several policy and strategic initiatives having a bearing on public open space planning and management have been undertaken by Council and also the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC). These include the following:

- *The Tweed Shire Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy (TSORS)(1995), an ILAP project;*
- *Scenic/Landscape Evaluation Study for Tweed Shire (1995) prepared by Catherine Brouwer;*
- *Tweed Shire 2000 + Strategic Plan (adopted December 1996);*
- *Tweed Development Program (adopted December 1996); and*
- *Draft Plan of Management for Coastal Crown Lands in Tweed Shire (May 1997) prepared by DLWC under the Crown Lands Act 1989.*

Significant new areas of potential open space have been added to Council's land bank by acquisition or dedication. These include the following:

- *Crown land along the coastal strip east of the Coast Road from Fingal to Wooyung has been consolidated by DLWC into a single Reserve for public recreation and coastal environmental protection, and has been transferred to Council's care and control subject to agreement on maintenance, financing and other matters;*
- *Over several years, Council has acquired some 170ha of rural land between Stotts Creek Landfill and Quarry and the new Valley Cemetery at Eviron. Council is proposing a Master Plan for the future management and end-use of much of this land as a regional Botanic Garden;*
- *Council acquired the Piggabeen Sportsfield complex from Seagulls Rugby League Football Club early 1997;*
- *Council has acquired the "Stingrays" Sportsfield south of Bogangar/Cabarita from the Tweed-Byron Aboriginal Sports Corporation; and*
- *Significant areas of wetland forest, koala habitat and other areas of scenic/habitat value at Pottsville Waters and Koala Beach have been transferred to Council as a result of legal proceedings, development agreements, etc.*

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Section 94 Contribution Plan No. 5 Open Space has also been amended, most recently in March 1998, to reflect changes to works program priorities for open space, particularly sportsfields acquisition and upgrading.

Against this background, there is now a need to review the context and policies for the provision and upgrading of public open space, to best meet future demand for sustainably managed public open space. The resultant *Open Space Infrastructure Policy* for Tweed Shire therefore builds on the findings and recommendations of the *Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy* (1995), *the Tweed Shire Scenic Landscape Evaluation Study* (1995) and the *Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan* (1996).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

In accordance with Council's brief, the method for developing this Policy has involved the following:

- Meeting and liaising with Council's Steering Committee for the project;
- Obtaining and reviewing relevant documents, including "best practice" examples;
- Obtaining and assessing data on existing Council open space;
- Reviewing population growth projections and anticipated demand for additional open space;
- Identifying guiding principles and strategies which best relate to the provision, upgrading and management of open space within the Tweed Shire, having regard for recent best practice;
- Devising a catchment management basis of planning for the provision of open space; and
- Recommending policies for the planning and management of open space, as a basis for revision and integration into one document of all Section 94 Contributions Plans relating to open space.

4.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND BEST PRACTICE

4.1 General

The documents selected for review on the basis of relevance to the study were as follows:

- *Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan (1996);*
- *Tweed Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy (1995);*
- *Gold Coast City Recreation, Sport and Open Space Policy Plan (1995);*
- *Department of Urban Affairs and Planning Section 94 Contributions Plans Manual (2nd edition) (1997);*
- *Commonwealth Department of Housing and Regional Development; AMCORD - Australian Model Code for Residential Development (1995); and*
- Section 94 Contributions Plans from Hastings, Shellharbour, Lismore and Queanbeyan Councils.

Other documents used have been listed in the bibliography. The documents outlined above will now be discussed.

4.2 Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan

The *Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan* was adopted by Council in December 1996. The Plan outlines the policies and actions designed to achieve outcomes which have been developed between the private sector, the community and the three tiers of government and is intended to provide a broad overview of Council's intentions and directions for the future in relation to key issues including the provision of open space. The Plan outlines the current situation and expresses a number of desired outcomes for the future provision and management of open space within the Shire, including:

- Identifying land's suitability to accommodate the community's open space and recreation needs; and
- Ensuring sufficient open space is provided to meet the needs of the Tweed community and is maintained at a level and quality having regard to Council's financial constraints, and with a higher community contribution.

Shirewide strategic principles, policies and actions are discussed for open space which include:

- Managing regional open space in various ownerships as an entity;
- Developing performance based standards to assist in identifying good quality open space;
- Maintaining and enhancing public accessibility to open space;

- Recognising capital borrowing costs and establishment costs for initial maintenance and the financial liability of acquiring new open space assets over the life of the asset.
- Providing funding and management plans for the integrated management of open space and recreational facilities utilising “user pays” principles.

These principles provide a strong foundation from which to develop specific performance criteria relating to the provision of open space land of good quality both in new release areas and developed areas within the Shire.

4.3 Tweed Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy

The *Tweed Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy* was prepared in 1995 with the intention of identifying community open space and recreation demand and satisfying this demand by using a method more in line with community needs. This method includes the establishment of performance criteria based on the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). The underlying principle of the ROS is that a range of open space opportunities must be available to satisfy the range of needs within a community as a result of differences in age, ethnicity, household structure and other demographic characteristics. The principles of the ROS have been adopted as the basis of this Infrastructure Policy (refer Section 5.2).

4.4 Gold Coast City Recreation - Sport and Open Space Policy Plan

The *Gold Coast City Recreation, Sport and Open Space Policy Plan* (1995) is considered to have an important influence on the development of the *Tweed Shire Open Space Infrastructure Policy* due to the close physical and social relationship between the Gold Coast and Tweed Local Government Authorities (LGAs). The Plan commences with guiding principles which are designed to influence all decisions involving the provision and embellishment of open space. Some of these guiding principles relating to issues such as choice, equity, distribution, balance, access, management and administration, community involvement, integration and flexibility, have been adopted in this Infrastructure Policy.

The Plan then presents a strategic vision for the whole of the Gold Coast City and examines the existing and proposed level of provision of open space and recreation facilities. Overall issues, policies and implementation strategies are presented including the effective management, planning and administration of open space, balanced provision of quality open space, community involvement, tourist needs, funding, access, safety, and performance monitoring

4.5 Department of Urban Affairs and Planning - Section 94 Contributions Plans Manual

The *Section 94 Contributions Plans Manual* (2nd edition) was produced in 1997 and outlines the key principles and concepts under the Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979 which must be considered in the preparation of a Section 94 Contributions Plan. There are four key principles namely, nexus, reasonableness, apportionment and accountability. These are now discussed.

- Nexus: The relationship between the expected types of development in the area and the demand created by those developments for additional public facilities. The link between the proposed development and the increased demand for public facilities may be demonstrated through causal nexus (what), spatial nexus (where) and temporal nexus (when).
- Reasonableness: A dedication or contribution must be reasonable having regard to the concepts of fairness, equity, sound judgement and moderation.
- Apportionment: A process which seeks to define the demands of all those who may benefit from the provision of a public facility to ensure that the contributing population only pays for its share of the total demand.
- Accountability: A basic requirement of Section 94 and may be displayed through an open decision making process, provision of plain English documents, maintenance of appropriate databases, and community involvement.

Information relevant to the preparation of a Contributions Plan may include the following:

- Local Policy Framework - Corporate Plan and Strategic Plan;
- Establishment of demand, nexus and apportionment - inventories of open space areas showing location, accessibility and current state of repair among other factors, recreation needs and demand studies, open space plans of management and community profiles incorporating demographic and census data; and
- Calculation of contribution - current capital costs, land values and estimation of likely recurrent costs.

This Infrastructure Policy incorporates the principles discussed above to provide a basis from which a revised *Section 94 Contributions Plan for Open Space* should be prepared.

4.6 AMCORD - Australian Model Code Of Residential Development (1995)

This document produced in 1995 by the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Regional Development in partnership with State and Local Government and Industry. AMCORD is a manual of best practice covering residential development planning and design issues in both greenfields and infill situations. AMCORD recognises the importance of recreational settings (qualitative) approach moving away from a standards based approach.

A series of performance criteria are set out, backed up by acceptable solutions for design, siting, sizing, facilities and management. For instance an acceptable solution for public safety and a clear relationship between public open space and adjoining land uses for surveillance and security, is that parks are to be located so that at least 50% of the perimeter length has a direct frontage to a public road.

4.7 Best Practice Examples of Section 94 Contributions Plans

Section 94 Contributions Plans from Hastings, Shellharbour, Lismore and Queanbeyan LGAs have been selected as best practice examples due to their similarity to the Tweed LGA in that they are areas of regional significance with substantial urban expansion and comprise both urban and rural areas within the LGA. The underlying principles of these Plans are discussed below.

Hastings

The *Hastings Section 94 Study and Contributions Plan* was adopted by Council in July 1993. Chapter 7 of the Plan includes a discussion on open space commencing with a review of existing supply of open space and recreation facilities. A hierarchy, comprising local, district and regional levels, is established and related to the current population so that existing service standards can be established. Future open space needs are forecast by relating expected population increases to current service standards. A contribution rate per dwelling is then established followed by a forward works program for open space embellishments.

The Plan makes reference to the Department of Planning *Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government* (1992) and *Section 94 Contributions Plans Manual* (1992). The importance of a needs based approach rather than the current numerical standard of 2.83ha per 1,000 population is highlighted with the argument that numerical standards are inadequate as they do not account for quality, function or characteristics of user groups or open space facilities.

The Plan discusses the strategy of obtaining a detailed inventory itemising location, area and type for each open space facility within the Municipality. These facilities are then classified into four catchments for which contributions are calculated by establishing the value of the land, embellishment and design costs and defining local, district and regional open space in order to identify potential users. The Plan makes provision for contributions for local and district facilities only as regional facilities are most often used by people from outside the Municipality and therefore should be funded by Council through general revenue and/or State Government grants.

The Hastings Plan provides a good example of process including derivation of catchments from which open space planning can be undertaken in terms of levels of use, amount of open space required, and funding and management of open space within each catchment. These principles have been adopted in this Policy.

Shellharbour

The *Council of Shellharbour Section 94 Contributions Management Plan Fourth Review* was adopted by Council in October 1997. Chapter 4 is relevant to open space provision and commences with an explanation of Council's levy method distinguishing between new urban areas, established urban areas, non-residential areas and open space embellishments. The Plan discusses 'municipal' or Shirewide open space by examining population growth, existing facilities, and the nexus between open space provision and current and future population.

The Plan then divides the area into eight precincts and discusses local level parkland within each precinct in terms of context, required facilities and services, nexus and contribution rates.

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The principle of differentiating between new and established urban areas, as evident in the Shellharbour Plan is relative to the Tweed Shire and, as such, this Policy adopts the process of planning for open space in established and new urban release areas in separate Section 94 Contributions Plans as these areas have different needs and demands.

Shellharbour Council has recently conducted a major review of their Section 94 Contribution Plan which has resulted in a lower contribution rate. This plan is to be put before Council for adoption in November 2000.

Lismore

The *Lismore City Council Section 94 Contributions Plan* was adopted by Council in July 1999. Part A details the open space contributions commencing with the establishment of a nexus between population growth and new residential development and the subsequent need for open space. The area is divided into four catchments and a simple hierarchy comprising city wide and local levels is introduced. Open space requirements are determined, taking into account several factors including usability (i.e. may be more desirable to embellish existing facilities rather than acquire new facilities), the role of Lismore as a regional recreation centre, the high proportion of young people in the area, demographics of different catchments within the area and topographical constraints.

Lismore Council has adopted the numerical standard of 3.0ha per 1,000 population. This is further divided into 2ha for active or structured open space, 0.5ha each for large scale district parks and local playground parks. On this basis, a works program is established which considers the timing, embellishment cost, total cost, percentage of total cost attributed to new development and a final amount levied on a city-wide scale and then for each of the four catchments. The Plan deals with urban bushland as a separate category of open space.

Lismore Plan endeavours to provide a high quality, useable open space network by recognising that embellishment of existing facilities rather than acquisition of new facilities may be more beneficial. This is considered relevant to the Tweed as it is revealed that the level of open space, particularly casual open space more than adequate for the existing and future population. Lismore, in differentiating its urban bushland as a separate category, also recognises the importance of this type of open space in increasing the visual and aesthetic values of green space within the urban area. As such, this Plan recognises bushland and environmental park as a separate open space classification in order to maintain its identity and plan for its future provision.

Queanbeyan

The *Queanbeyan Section 94 Contribution Plan Revised Edition No. 5* was adopted by Council in January 1998. Chapter 14 deals with open space contributions commencing with a discussion on the current standard of 15% of land area to be dedicated as open space in any broad acre subdivision. However, this numerical standard has been qualified by the following criteria:

- Dedicated land should provide a linkage between existing open space areas and zones;
- Some open space areas can be used for drainage works;

- Open space areas are to be good quality land;
- Percentage contribution may be smaller if it is demonstrated that it is in the community interest; and
- The area must be left in a manageable state.

Monetary contributions can be sought in all areas where a need is established and where a nexus between development and additional demand placed on existing and proposed open space can be demonstrated. Council's objective is to provide all areas within the city with reasonable access to a range of recreational opportunities based on community needs for provision of useable open space.

Time frames for completion of works are dependent on the amount collected and the rate of development within the various areas. 10% of all contributions for embellishment shall be spent on embellishment of existing and proposed major open space areas which benefit the community as a whole. The common standard of 2.83ha per 1,000 population is utilised.

The Queanbeyan Plan establishes the importance of a performance based system in order to ensure that lands acquired for open space are of high quality and provide linkages between facilities. This Policy for the Tweed establishes a comprehensive set of design/locational criteria for open space lands which is considered to be of vital importance in maintaining a high quality open space network within the Shire.

4.8 Summary

The review of the above documents has identified several underlying principles which will form the basis of this Policy paper. Firstly, an assessment of the existing population and demographics of the Shire must be undertaken with population projections for the future highlighted. This is used to establish a nexus between the future population and the future demand for open space and recreation facilities in particular localities.

The existing provision of open space should then be summarised in terms of location, area and type. This summary should identify a variety of settings and catchments within a hierarchy, for instance, local and Shirewide open space. Catchments within the Shire should then be identified in order to determine future local level acquisition and upgrading and to ensure ease of management.

Future provision of open space may incorporate a numerical standard such as 2.83ha per 1,000 population and may relate only to local open space provision. Specific provision should be made for Shirewide or Regional Open Space facilities. However, numerical standards must be accompanied by performance criteria which identify and satisfy needs and ensure that the future open space to be provided is of high quality and maintains links with other open space within the Shire or in adjoining LGAs.

This Policy utilises these principles in the development of a comprehensive, yet manageable document which will guide the provision of open space within the Tweed Shire to ensure a high quality open space network satisfying current and future populations.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

- 1. The underlying principles derived from the above strategies, plans, policies and manual should be utilised in the preparation of this Open Space Infrastructure Policy for the Tweed Shire.***

5.0 OPEN SPACE SETTINGS, HIERARCHIES AND CATCHMENTS

5.1 General

In the past, traditional methods of determining the open space needs of a population were based on numerical standards which usually involved provision of a fixed area of open space per 1,000 resident population. However, this method allows for little flexibility to meet the changing needs of modern populations in terms of population growth, age, housing density and growth in tourist numbers among other factors. Instead, a more flexible and adaptable system is required which recognises that the diversity of needs within a population change over the lifecycle of a community, and that a performance based approach to open space provision is desirable.

A "spectrum of open space and recreation opportunities" was formulated in the United States in the early 1980s (Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation and Open Space, Department of Planning 1992). Since then, many Councils in Australia have adopted the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) as the preferred method of open space provision. The principles of the ROS are discussed below.

5.2 Recreational Opportunity Spectrum and Open Space Settings

The basis of the ROS is that the recreational and open space needs of a community are more likely to be met if a range or "spectrum" of opportunities is provided through a range of open space settings, for example parklands, sportsfields, foreshores, bushland. The provision of a diverse range of recreational and open space opportunities allows for flexibility and change in community recreation patterns.

The ROS utilises a "setting-based approach" which enables easy classification and control of open space sites, thus enhancing user experience. This system better targets user needs by identifying potentials and constraints within the existing open space network and making best use of the available locations and resources to enable the provision of a consistently high quality open space network now and in the future.

5.3 Classification of Open Space Settings

For the purposes of this Policy open space settings are classified into the following categories with distinct characteristics (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1:
OPEN SPACE SETTING TYPES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS**

SETTING TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS
Sportsfields	Areas of structured open space for formal outdoor sporting activities characterised by a high level of maintenance (eg, tennis courts).
Parkland	Areas of casual or informal recreation for non-organised leisure pursuits such as local/neighbourhood playgrounds, parks and gardens, also characterised by a high level of maintenance.
Foreshores	Areas along coastlines, rivers and lakes used often heavily by Shire residents and tourists.
Bushland/ Environmental Park	Areas of regrowth and remnant vegetation ranging from remote natural areas to small pockets of urban bushland, usually characterised by a low level of maintenance.
Ancillary	Road sides, canals, drainage easements, kiosks, boat ramps, etc.

Note 1: Council has initiated the task of categorising and evaluating open space in accordance with the characteristics in Table 1 for future planning and management through Council's work program

Note 2: Does not include golf courses, indoor recreation facilities, swimming pools, racecourse or show grounds.

5.4 Hierarchies and Catchments

A characteristic of the open space settings is their catchment size both in terms of area and population. A hierarchy based on catchment size assists in identifying the user characteristics of facilities ie. local or tourist use, and the subsequent relationship between demand for and supply of facilities. It also simplifies calculation of contributions and identifies those areas which may be lacking in open space and those areas which may have an over supply. This Policy recognises two levels within a hierarchy applicable to the Tweed Shire. They are described as follows:

Shirewide Level:

This caters to a large area i.e. the whole Shire and in some cases further and provides for access by mobile adults and older children often relying on private vehicular or public transport. This level includes open space settings which have a high tourist usage. Examples include: Kingscliff Marine Parade Foreshore, Arkininstall Park sportsfields and Pottsville Environmental Park. There may be some overlap with Gold Coast City Council foreshores, major parks and sportsfields, for instance, Greenmount and Kirra Beaches. Shirewide facilities may be embellished to provide a multi-use setting with several different recreational opportunities available, thereby serving some local as well as Shirewide users.

Local Level:

This caters to the local area and includes the following:

- Small neighbourhood parks found within 400m walking distance which allow for easy access for young children and the elderly; and
- District level larger parks found within greater walking distance and may comprise both casual and structured open space.

For the purposes of evaluating the current features of the shire's open space distribution for this Policy, five catchments are identified (see Figure 2). The number of catchments has been reduced and rationalised from the 12 in the existing Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5. The catchments are based upon appropriate aggregations of neighbourhoods and localities including release areas, reflecting physical features and social facilities based on aggregations of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census Collection Districts (CCDs). This rationalisation of catchments assists in updating information as population growth occurs. However it is noted that there is overlapping of open space usage to varying degrees between neighbourhoods and catchments. To reflect this pattern of open space usage "averaging" of the collection and expenditure of contributions across catchments ensures more efficient management of open space planning.

The catchments with estimated year 2000 populations are as follows:

- **Catchment 1** - (39,100 population) Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads West, Tweed Heads South, Banora Point, Bilambil Heights, Bilambil/Piggabeen, Terranora, Cobaki Lakes, adjacent rural areas;
- **Catchment 2** - (12,300 population) Kingscliff, West Kingscliff, Fingal, Chinderah, Durambah, South Kingscliff, Kings Beach, Kings Forest, Bogangar/Cabarita, and adjacent rural areas such as Eviron;
- **Catchment 3** - (5,300 population) Tweed South Coast, , Hastings Point, Pottsville, Burringbar/Mooball, adjacent rural areas such as Round Mountain, Reserve Creek, Clothiers Creek, Sleepy Hollow and Wooyung;
- **Catchment 4** - (7,700 population) Murwillumbah urban area including West Murwillumbah, Bray Park and Condong; and
- **Catchment 5** - (10,300 population) Tweed Valley including rural north-west, rural south-west, Uki, Tyalgum, Wardrop Valley/Kielvale and Dulguigan/Carool.

5.5 Structured and Casual Open Space

Open space settings may also be classified according to the experience users gain from using the space. These classifications are known as "structured" such as sportsfields, and "casual" such as parkland, foreshores and bushland. These terms are used in the existing *Section 94 Contributions Plan No 5*. This Policy retains the categories of structured and casual open space but elaborates on these to include details of individual settings within these broader classifications. These settings relate to the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum and are discussed in Sections 5.2 and 5.3. Each open space setting can be positioned in the hierarchy thus determining its function as a

local or Shirewide facility (see Table 2). Some open space settings may have both a local and a Shirewide role within the hierarchy depending on location and accessibility.

**TABLE 2:
OPEN SPACE SETTINGS AND THEIR POSITION WITHIN THE HIERARCHY**

SETTING	LOCAL	SHIREWIDE
Sportsfields (structured)	✓	✓
Parkland (casual)	✓	✓
Foreshores (casual)	✓	✓
Bushland/Environmental Park (casual)	✓	✓
Ancillary (casual)	✓	x

These settings and hierarchies for a notional development are shown in Figure 3.

5.6 Summary

The primary focus of this Policy preparation was traditional parkland (casual open space) and sportsfield provision (structured open space) as recognised in the existing Section 94 Plan No. 5. However, research has revealed the importance of including other setting types such as foreshores and bushland/environmental park in the classification of open space in order to provide for a wider range of open space recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors of the Tweed Shire. This complements the notion of the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum which provides a basis from which open space facilities can be classified according to setting, hierarchy and catchment.

Setting types have been proposed for the purposes of this Policy and review of *Council's Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space*. These settings are established within a hierarchy, ie. local or Shirewide level. Prior to establishing a method for which future open space provision can be planned and contributions calculated, the existing provision of open space in relation to population must be investigated and a nexus between population growth and future demand for open space established.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

2. *The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum approach to open space planning should be adopted, with all public open space classified by setting types, hierarchy and catchment, for this Infrastructure Policy.*
3. *A two-level hierarchy of open space should be adopted in terms of the size of the catchment of users, namely a Shirewide level and a local level.*

6.0 EXISTING OPEN SPACE PROVISION

6.1 Existing Categories and Catchments

As previously indicated, Council's current *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space* describes open space facilities as belonging to one of the following two categories:

- **Structured:** This includes any land developed for the purposes of formal outdoor sporting pursuits, such as sportsfields, tennis courts etc, but does not include show grounds, swimming pools or racecourse.
- **Casual:** This is land developed for non-organised informal leisure activities and includes formal parks and gardens, playgrounds, parklands, foreshore and riverbank areas, bushland and natural areas.

The existing Plan relates only to areas outside urban release areas (which have their own plan), and nominates catchments for management of open space contributions but does not differentiate between levels of usage i.e. local or Shirewide. There are 4 catchments for structured open space and 7 catchments for casual open space.

6.2 Proposed Categories and Catchments

This Policy identifies two levels of usage for open space, namely **Shirewide** and **local**, the latter of which is divided into five catchments based on aggregate census collection districts (CCD) to allow ease of updating information as populations within the Shire increase (refer Sections 5.3 and 5.4).

6.3 Existing Open Space Provision by Catchment

Council's asset database on open space is currently being reviewed to correctly and effectively co-ordinate existing open space assets by locality, catchment, type, etc. as essential planning and management information. Therefore, an estimate of existing open space is provided, based on the catchment areas used in this Policy, the current *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 Open Space* and Council's advice concerning additional open space acquired since 1995 (see Table 3). Annexure 2 comprises maps showing existing public open space by catchment and category.

**TABLE 3:
EXISTING OPEN SPACE PROVISION BY CATCHMENT**

Catchment	Population 2000 [^]	Structured ¹ (ha)	Casual ² (ha)	Total (ha)	Structured/ 1000 pop'n	Casual/ 1000 pop'n	Total/ 1000 pop'n
1. Terranora/ TH/ Bil/ Cobaki	39,100	49.1	100.5	149.6	1.26	2.57	3.83
2. Kingscliff/ KF / KB	12,300	15.2	60.0	75.2	1.58	6.25	6.11
3. Tweed Coast south of Bogangar	6,300	17.2	44.2	61.4	1.91	7.02	9.75
4. M'bah Urban	7,700	20.9	25.6	46.5	2.71	3.32	6.03
5. Rural Hinterland	10,300	4.6	*	4.6	0.45	*	0.45
Total	75,700	105.6	230.3	337.3	1.39	3.04	4.46

Note ¹: Includes tennis courts, sports fields, equestrian grounds, but not swimming pools racecourse or showground

Note ²: Does not include bushland area.

[^] Estimate based on pro rata growth between 1996 Census and projected 2006 population

* Not relevant to rural areas

The current standard for provision of public open space for new residential development in *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5* is as follows:

- 1.13ha of casual open space per 1,000 population
- 1.7ha structured open space per 1,000 population
- Total - 2.83ha open space per 1,000 population

Based on the preliminary estimates given in Table 3, several initial conclusions can be drawn as follows:

- There is a more than adequate supply of casual open space in all catchments based on the current numerical standard of 1.13ha per 1,000 population for casual open space utilised in Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5;
- Catchments 1, 2 and 5 appear to have an undersupply of structured open space with an oversupply of casual open space. The overall supply of structured open space is somewhat less than the numerical standard of 1.7 ha per 1,000 population.
- The Murwillumbah Urban Catchment (No. 4) appears to contain an excess of both structured and casual open space.

The substantial oversupply of casual open space in all catchments suggests that generally, in the short term, no further casual open space is required in the Shire. The exception will be in new residential estate development where new parks are required to be appropriately located close to new greenfields developments. However embellishment and upgrading of the existing open space facilities is likely to be needed to bring them to a high quality in order to meet the demands of the community.

6.4 Maintaining an Open Space Inventory

Council's inventory of its public open space assets should be upgraded and kept up to date as an essential "whole of Council" database for more effective open space planning and management. For the purposes of future management and review of open space contributions, this inventory should include at least the following items for each open space facility:

- Identity Number (Council rate or asset number);
- Street;
- Suburb/Locality;
- Catchment;
- Area (m2);
- Primary Setting Type; and
- Degree of Embellishment.

Other items which may also assist Council divisions in management are:

- Name of open space facility;
- Title description;
- Postcode;
- Census Collection District;
- Secondary Setting Type;
- Improvements;
- Level of Maintenance; and
- Linkages to other Open Space.

6.5 Summary

The existing categories and catchments for the provision and management of open space have been elaborated to provide a basis from which a clear and simple inventory of existing open space facilities can be established. A preliminary estimate of existing open space provision is provided, utilising Council's existing categories of structured and casual open space but identifying open space in terms of proposed catchments. This revealed that there is more than adequate casual open space provided in the Shire with the Murwillumbah catchment also containing adequate supply of structured open space.

<p>RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS:</p>

- | |
|--|
| <p>4. <i>On a whole of Council basis, the inventory of open space assets should be completed, collated and kept up to date, as an essential management tool.</i></p> |
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7.0 POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMAND

7.1 Population Growth Projections

Future residential growth in the Tweed Shire is expected to result in the creation of up to 850 residential lots per year (Tweed Development Program 1996). Between 2002 and 2022, the Shire's total population is projected to increase by 51,731 persons, that is, from 76,000 residents in 2002 to 127,731 residents in 2022. It is projected that between 2002 and 2022 most of this population growth will be concentrated in the urban release areas of South Tweed/Banora Point, West Kingscliff, Kings Forest/Kings Beach, Cobaki Lakes, Seabreeze Estate, Terranora Village and Kings Beach North. There will also be continued population growth as a result of infill development in established areas and new residential subdivision development outside release areas.

The projected residential population growth for the various catchments or sectors in the Shire are identified in the Table below:

**TABLE 4:
TWEED SHIRE POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY CATCHMENT**

Catchment	Population 1996 ¹	Population 2002 ²	Population 2012 ²	Population 2022 ²
1 Tweed Heads, South Tweed, Banora Point, Cobaki, Bilambil, Terranora	33,500	37,848	50,475	67,570
2 Kingscliff, Chinderah, Fingal, Cudgen, Duranbah, Kings Beach, Kings Forest, Bogangar/Cabarita, Eviron and adjacent rural areas	8,200	12,129	17,164	24,713
3 Tweed South Coast, Hastings Point, Pottsville, Koala Beach, Seabreeze, Estate, Wooyung, Burringbar, Mooball and adjacent rural areas	8,000	6,035	8,621	10,094
4 Murwillumbah, Condong, Bray Park	7,300	8,595	9,575	10,902
5 Rural Hinterland, including and west of Dulguigan, Kielvale, and Stokers Siding	9,900	11,393	12,692	14,452
TOTALS	66,900	76,000	98,527	127,731

¹ Figures obtained from ABS Census 1996 Population by place of enumeration.

² Estimate based on pro rata growth between 1996 Census and projected population at a rate of 2,200 additional persons per year.

7.2 Demand for Open Space

As a result of the population projections, the anticipated number of additional dwellings in the Tweed Shire for the period 2000-2006 is estimated at approximately 5,100. This is based on a continuation of the average residential take up rate of 850 lots per year as indicated in the *Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategy* (1996).

The tourist accommodation component must also be recognised. ABS Regional Statistics for NSW indicate that tourist guest rooms in Tweed Shire increased from 716 in 1989-90 to 822 in 1995-96, an increase of 106 guest rooms over this six year period. On this basis, it may be reasonably to predict that some 350 additional guest rooms will be provided between 1991 and 2011. However economic and market circumstances may dramatically affect the rate of tourist accommodation development, including the tourist accommodation component of Kings Beach.

This growth in population, together with a modest anticipated increase in tourist accommodation, will result in a significant increase in the demand for public open space within the Shire. However, based on Table 3, the amount of open space currently available provided per 1,000 population is adequate in supply for most catchments, but is often poorly distributed and embellished in relation to population centres and growth areas.

The implications of varied current demographic characteristics and the changing demographic cycle will mean multi-use and adaptability of open space is critical. Varied demographic profiles and changes do not affect the quantity of open space which should be provided per 1,000 population, but do affect the use characteristics and thus require planning for flexible open space facilities to cater for different needs.

For Shirewide open space, a longer term horizon is needed, perhaps 20 years to give sufficient flexibility to make provision for acquisition and development of Shirewide outdoor sporting and parkland/ recreation facilities as the opportunity arises.

7.3 Summary

This Policy will focus on planning for the provision and upgrading of open space until 2022. The supply of open space is sufficient in most areas in simplistic quantitative terms, however existing open space is often poorly distributed in relation to existing and proposed residential areas and is of inadequate quality. Therefore, embellishment of open space in all areas is generally required in order to meet the needs of growing and changing communities.

8.0 AIM, GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR FUTURE OPEN SPACE PROVISION

8.1 General

After consideration of the existing provision of open space within the Shire together with forecasts of future population growth and tourist activity, aims, guiding principles and performance criteria are now proposed to direct the future provision of open space.

8.2 Aim

The Tweed Shire Open Space Infrastructure Policy aims to guide Council and the community in the provision of a comprehensive open space network which is of high quality and which satisfies the needs and demands of the existing and future resident and tourist recreation patterns. This includes increasing choice, conserving areas of natural and cultural value, and providing for and encouraging a range of recreational opportunities and open space settings.

8.3 Performance Based System

The ability of an open space facility to perform the requirements of its predominant land use should be the basis for selection, supply and management of open space. Thus, performance standards are the key to forming a quality open space network that satisfies user needs both now and in the future rather than just a quantitative system. This system should allow for greater flexibility in planning with an ability to adapt to changes in demand to ensure that an open space facility can perform the required function.

8.4 Guiding Principles and General Performance Criteria

The following list of principles provide general performance criteria which relate to the general provision of open space and provide an "umbrella" for more specific criteria to be developed for each type of open space setting. The list has been derived from identification of the existing situation relating to open space provision within Tweed Shire and review of recent best practice documentation. These principles should influence all decisions involving the provision and embellishment of public open space including the allocation of resources to achieve desired outcomes.

Public open space should contribute to the following:

- A safe and accessible open space network that is sustainable;
- Open space facilities which are appropriate to their proposed use and manageable within Council's resources;
- Distribution of open space where it is needed according to community demand and projected population growth;

- Acknowledgment of the opportunities and constraints presented by the physical characteristics of the land;
- Recognition of the diverse demographic makeup of the Shire, including tourists, and hence the different demands for recreation and open space;
- Protection of the high quality visual and landscape resource of the Shire through careful monitoring and management;
- Maintenance and management of open space facilities to a high level of quality;
- Encouragement of community ownership and management of open space facilities;
- Ensuring linkages are provided between open space facilities within local areas, between catchments and throughout the Shire and beyond;
- Development of strategies for multi-use and self-funding of open space;
- Integration of drainage facilities and public open space;
- Recognition that high use facilities involve high capital costs but lower on-going maintenance costs;
- Ensuring that the type and level of open space proposed is compatible with the long term management of the environmental values of an area;
- Integration of open space provision within the planning framework to ensure consistency with other local and regional plans; and
- Allowance for flexibility and adaptability of open space to recognise changing life-cycle needs of communities.
- Opportunities for the incorporation of existing sites of natural or cultural value and linkage of habitats and wildlife corridors;
- A clear relationship between public open space and adjoining land uses established by appropriate treatment including alignment, building orientation, fencing, landscaping and issues of security and surveillance.

A performance based system for recreation and open space sites, regardless of the setting type, should incorporate the above guiding principles together with the following **general performance measures and issues** to be considered (see Table 5).

TABLE 5: GENERAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN PLANNING FOR OPEN SPACE FOR ALL SETTING TYPES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	CONSIDERATIONS
USAGE PATTERNS	Daytime; afternoon; evening; weekends.
USER CHARACTERISTICS	Young children; older children; adult/ elderly; visitor/tourist.
LOCATION	Walking distance; straight line distance.
SIZE	Minimum size of activity zone; minimum width of buffer zone to houses etc.; sporting fields ie. shape, size; conservation areas large enough to be ecologically sustainable.
PHYSICAL FEATURES	Appropriate number/quality of play equipment and furniture; seating for spectators; bicycle racks; walking tracks; interpretative signage; slope and drainage; ability to allow for extension; landscaping and planting; orientation e.g. for sportsfields; lighting and amenities.
LINKAGES	Connectivity to other open space and community facilities, schools, etc; links by walkway and/or cycleway to form network.
SERVICES	Maintenance schedule; utility services; proposed open space which is to be used primarily for water quality control and stormwater detention is to be dedicated as drainage reserve.
ACCESS AND SAFETY	Method of access e.g. vehicle, bicycle, foot; obstacles to child/elderly access e.g. water bodies, rail lines, busy roads; public transport access; overlooking by houses for casual supervision; compliance with Australian Standards for playground design; bushfire management; risk management.
CATCHMENT	Number of people or households served.

8.5 Specific Performance Criteria for Open Space Settings

For each open space setting type and level, **specific performance criteria** can now be established based on more detailed consideration of the general performance measures (see Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9).

**TABLE 6: SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR SPORTSFIELD PROVISION AND EMBELLISHMENT
WITHIN TWEED SHIRE**

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LOCAL LEVEL CRITERIA	SHIREWIDE LEVEL CRITERIA
USAGE PATTERNS	Predominately afternoon/evening and weekends; Multi-use during weekends should be encouraged to increase social and economic efficiency.	Predominately afternoon/evening and weekends although used extensively by schools and other bodies for large scale competition; Multi-use for casual recreation should be encouraged where consistent with intensive sporting activities.
LOCATION	Located central to community allowing safe and easy access; Within safe walking/cycling distance for older children and adults; Where possible locate within 1km of residences, and adjacent to school sportsfields.	May be located anywhere in the Shire; Location is determined by issues such as: existing high population areas, existing facilities that may be upgraded and access to roads and public transport.
SIZE	Basic standard of 1.7ha per 1,000 population; Minimum total area of 5 hectares with minimum dimensions of 210m by 170m. This allows for a minimum playing area as well as a minimum 40% increase in this area allowed for ancillary buildings, movement areas and safe play margins.	Size will be determined by the specific requirements of the sport provided for.
PHYSICAL FEATURES	Suitable topography, shape and orientation (preferably north-south); Should incorporate some flexibility to cater for future changes in use; Minimum characteristics: cleared, levelled, grassed; Benching to allow for informal spectator seating; Buffering to adjacent residences; Lighting, amenities required; Site to be above the 1 in 5 year flood level, higher for heavy use sites.	Sites should be above the 1 in 20 year flood level due to the frequency of use and quality of the facility.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LOCAL LEVEL CRITERIA	SHIREWIDE LEVEL CRITERIA
SERVICES	Regular garbage collection; Regular mowing regime; Toilets; Utility services i.e. water, electricity; Irrigation.	Regular garbage collection; Regular mowing regime; Toilets and change rooms; Utility services i.e. water, electricity; Further services required for peak use such as flood lighting, irrigation.
ACCESS AND SAFETY	Appropriate distribution and location of areas; Located to provide for safe access; Vehicle access and parking provided directly to the site.	Adequate distribution and highly accessible location is necessary; Located to provide for safe access; Facility should be considered to be a convenient point within the public transport network; Vehicle access and parking to be provided directly to the site.
CATCHMENT	Approximately 3,000-5,000 people.	Facilities to satisfy the needs of the whole Shire.
CURRENT EXAMPLE	Pottsville Oval	Murwillumbah Hockey Complex

**TABLE 7: SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR PARKLAND PROVISION AND EMBELLISHMENT
WITHIN TWEED SHIRE**

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LOCAL LEVEL CRITERIA	DISTRICT LEVEL CRITERIA
USAGE PATTERNS	Predominately daytime/afternoon with extensive use on weekends.	Predominately daytime/afternoon with extensive use on weekends.
LOCATION	Located within easy and safe walking distance to homes for young children and the elderly ie no greater than 250m straight line distance or 400m, 5 minute walking distance; Located to allow for casual supervision from adjacent households and streets.	Appropriate to locate close to sporting fields, town centres or other attractive feature such as beach, creek, native bushland; Located as central as possible;
SIZE	Basic standard of 1.13ha per 1,000 resident population; Central activity zone minimum 400m ² contains all play equipment and play areas with 20m wide buffer to all residential boundaries.	Central activity zone of 3000m ² ; 30m buffer to all residential dwelling boundaries.
PHYSICAL FEATURES	Where possible locate away from potential dangers such as busy roads, electricity cables, railway lines and waterways; Site needs to be well drained with general surfaces either grassed or landscaped; Soft fall surfaces to be provided under all play equipment; Hard surfaces for ball games; Seating in shade for carers and supervisors; Avoid long narrow less useable strips which do not serve as useful walkway/cycleway linkages; Slopes should not be less than 10% for most of the site.	Variety of play equipment to stimulate interest and excitement; Soft fall surfaces under play equipment; kick about area; hard surface area; Seating in shade for carers and supervisors; well drained with slope less than 10% over at least 60% of site; landscaping and grassed areas; railings for the aged; water fountains; multi-use as drainage reserve may be appropriate.
ACCESS AND SAFETY	Provided within safe and easy access to bicycle/pedestrian networks; Vehicle access provided via the local street system, via more than one street where possible, and in directions that discourage through traffic; Should be designed to be as permeable as possible to provide short and direct access; 50% frontage to street for security and visibility.	Direct access to bicycle/pedestrian network; Good linkage to other open space within the district; Ease of access to the main road system; Permeable with short and direct access between parkland and housing; 50% of frontage to street for security and visibility.
CATCHMENT	Approximately 180-200 lots (based on 10 lots per hectare).	3,000-5,000 people; Preferably more than one supplied in each small town or suburb/ neighbourhood.
CURRENT EXAMPLE	Ducat Street Park, Tweed Heads.	Knox Park, Murwillumbah.

**TABLE 8: SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR FORESHORE PROVISION AND EMBELLISHMENT
WITHIN TWEED SHIRE**

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LOCAL LEVEL CRITERIA	SHIREWIDE LEVEL CRITERIA
USAGE PATTERNS	Predominately seasonal with summer being the highest use; Daytime and weekend use.	High proportion of tourist use as well as local teenagers, young adults and families; Predominately daytime and weekend usage; Seasonal usage likely to occur with highest use in summer.
LOCATION	Location is predetermined adjacent to beaches, rivers and lakes.	Location is predetermined as for local foreshores; Most popular location is adjacent to beaches.
SIZE	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
PHYSICAL FEATURES	Low key facilities such as: BBQ/picnic areas, minimal amenities, walking tracks and interpretative information.	Facilities are either water oriented providing recreation ancillary to the water body use, or land oriented providing use of the land; Facilities include: playgrounds, BBQ/picnic areas, landscaping, public amenities, marinas, promenades, boat ramps, seating etc.
SERVICES	Maintenance schedule may include rehabilitation and stabilisation of dunes and vegetation.	High level of maintenance which increases during peak tourist seasons; Regular garbage collection; Regular mowing; Beach and river edge reclamation and stabilisation.
ACCESS AND SAFETY	Predominant access is by vehicle, except near urban areas; Access to water body may be restricted to foot but may include 4WD and boat access; Cycle and pedestrian access should be provided through linkage to the regional cycleway/pedestrian network.	This setting should act as a high level access node during periods of high use; Public transport access; Cyclist and pedestrian access ways between elements and to any nearby urban area; Location of parking areas close to but not detracting from the quality of the area; Surf life saving and other emergency services; Bushfire amelioration measures.
CATCHMENT	Local resident population, occasionally tourist usage.	Facilities to satisfy the needs of the whole Shire.
CURRENT EXAMPLE	Ray Pascoe Park, Tweed Heads.	Faulks Park, Kingscliff.

**TABLE 9: SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
FOR BUSHLAND/ENVIRONMENTAL PARK PROVISION AND EMBELLISHMENT
WITHIN TWEED SHIRE**

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LOCAL LEVEL CRITERIA	SHIREWIDE LEVEL CRITERIA
USAGE PATTERNS	Predominately daytime/afternoon and weekends.	Predominately weekends; Often high level of tourist usage
LOCATION	Often located as ancillary open space within or at the edge of urban development.; Small urban bushland pockets; Larger, less accessible bushland areas.	Location is somewhat predetermined, these areas form greenbelts and serve as buffers between townships and boundaries to urban areas;
SIZE	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
PHYSICAL FEATURES	Regrowth and remnant vegetation; Rarely any facilities to encourage intrusion.	Regrowth and remnant vegetation; Some environmental parks may include picnic/BBQ facilities and basic amenities; Walking tracks and interpretative signage are also common.
SERVICES	Characterised by low levels of maintenance; Utility services often not available.	Characterised by low levels of maintenance; Utility services often not available.
ACCESS AND SAFETY	Relatively inaccessible; Access by foot or bicycle; No parking provided.	Access is usually by vehicle, however, for remote areas 4WD may be necessary; Safety measures are rarely available to these areas.
CATCHMENT	Local suburb/neighbourhoods: Small towns.	Facilities to satisfy the needs of the whole Shire.
CURRENT EXAMPLE	Remnant areas of bushland at Koala Beach.	Pottsville Environmental Park.

8.6 Basic Requirement for Public Open Space in New Development

The Tweed Shire Council *Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5* states, inter alia:

"that whilst the overall supply of existing open space is reasonable, distribution between localities and the relative provision of sportsfields (structured open space) is unsatisfactory."

This Policy confirms this situation (see Section 7.2). In the major release areas, land availability and pre-planning of open space networks generally enables provision of a range of open space settings to meet demand on a staged basis (for example, Cobaki Lakes, and Seabreeze Estate near Pottsville). The provision of open space is generally identified in a DCP for the release area.

However, outside urban release areas, opportunities for provision of additional open space, both structured and casual, are restricted by absence of land of suitable size, physical characteristics and location. Utilisation of many existing accessible public open space areas is poor due to the lack of improvements, and often poorly embellished open space exists in the locality.

Therefore, in most localities the provision of additional open space to meet needs of new residential or tourist development is most appropriately achieved by embellishment of existing under-developed open space areas. The consequences of this will be limited additional land transferred to Council's control, and utilisation of contribution to enable embellishment of existing open space stock.

No specific survey of users or potential users in the Tweed has been undertaken to identify the need for an alteration to the current standard for public open space provision for new development in Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5. This current standard is as follows:

- 2.83ha per 1,000 population for public open space, comprising:
 - 1.7ha per 1,000 population for structured open space; and
 - 1.13ha per 1,000 population for casual open space.

This standard should be retained as a basic standard for **local** parklands, sportsfields and local foreshores, subject to the performance criteria, but should not include identified **Shirewide** bushland/environmental parks, foreshores and sportsfield complexes.

For provision or upgrading of **Shirewide** facilities (sportsfields, major bushland/environmental parks and foreshores) all new development and populations will place demands on, and will benefit from such upgrading. A specific Shirewide contribution is proposed and Section 94 Contributions Plans for release areas will also need to be amended to accommodate appropriate contributions to Shirewide facilities likely to be used by new release area populations.

For residential development the proposed standard for provision of **Shirewide** open space is 1.17 ha per 1,000. Added to the above mentioned basic standard for provision

of **local** public open space, namely 2.83 ha per 1,000 population this gives a total standard for provision of public open space of 4.0 ha per 1,000 population. This total standard is considered appropriate and justified having regard for the following factors:

- this standard is similar to the existing supply of public open space in Tweed Shire, namely 4.46 ha per 1,000 population as indicated in section 6.3 of this report;
- the Shire's population (now 76,000) has reached a "threshold" where major or higher order facilities are used and required to meet demand, in addition to local facilities;
- there is overlapping of demand and use of major or higher order open space facilities with the Gold Coast City area particularly in the eastern urban areas of the shire; and
- other Local Government Authorities such as Lismore have adopted policies for provision of Shire or City wide facilities.

For tourist development the proposed standard of provision of **Shirewide** open space 0.467ha per 1,000 population (being 40% of the total Shirewide open space requirement, representing the shire-wide casual open space component) and the above mentioned standard for provision of passive **local** public open space, namely 1.13 ha per 1,000 population. This gives a total standard for provision of public open space for tourist development of 1.6ha per 1,000 population. This total standard is considered appropriate and justified having regard for the following:

- the demand for open space by tourists and visitors is orientated towards casual open space rather than structured open space.

8.7 Establishment Costs

Newly developed areas of open space inherently require more intensive treatment to ensure proper establishment of the asset, typically this period is 2 years. The additional expenditure required to facilitate the proper establishment of the open space asset is a once off cost directly associated with the start up cost of providing the asset. Therefore the cost is attributable to the provision of open space and should be recouped from Section 94 funding rather than Council's general fund. A reasonable method of calculating the establishment cost is by doubling the normal cost of maintenance to open space for the Shire for the typical establishment period of 2 years. The average cost of maintenance as at 1999-2000 was \$5,000/ha/pa for structured (active) open space and \$2,500/ha/pa for casual (passive) open space. Therefore the once only establishment cost over and above the normal maintenance costs to be applied section 94 Contribution plans for newly developed open space should be \$10,000/ha for structured open space and \$5,000/ha for casual open space.

8.8 Summary

The aim and guiding principles established in this Policy set the context for performance based criteria for open space provision and upgrading. These performance measures ensure a "qualitative" approach to open space planning, and are set out both as general

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performance measures and specific performance criteria for each type of open space setting (see Tables 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9)

The basic quantitative standard of 2.83ha per 1,000 new population should be retained, but this should apply only to local open space, with additional contributions from new communities towards identified Shirewide open space facilities. Dedication of additional local open space should only be accepted by Council where it is identified in a Development Control Plan (DCP) and where it is inappropriate to embellish existing open space in the locality.

The principle policies for implementation therefore flow from this section of the report, as follows:

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

5. **Council's policy for the provision and acceptance of additional public open space to cater for new development is based on the following:**
 - a) **An overall standard for new open space provision of 4.0ha per 1,000 population should apply.**
 - b) **For local open space provision the existing standard of 2.83ha per 1,000 resident population, being 1.7ha per 1,000 population for structured open space provision and 1.13ha per 1,000 population for casual open space provision should be retained as a guide when assessing the basic requirements for open space subject to the application of (d);**
 - c) **For Shirewide open space provision, the standard should be set at 1.17ha per 1,000 population; and**
 - d) **Both the general performance criteria (nominated in Table 5 of this document) and the specific performance criteria for each open space setting type (nominated in Tables 6-9) should be applied in the selection and approval of open space. This is to ensure that subdividers/developers locate and produce quality open space to most effectively meet the varied requirements of the community as new development takes place**
6. **Where it is impractical or undesirable in Council's opinion for developers to provide additional local open space to satisfy new demand, contributions will be required towards the cost of upgrading/embellishing existing local open space on a catchment basis to meet such new demand.**
7. **Council will not generally accept areas of local open space over the maximum amount, ie. 2.83ha per 1,000 new population, unless it is satisfied that no additional maintenance responsibility, including fire management, weed control etc will result for Council, unless funding for long term maintenance is committed or assured.**
8. **All areas to be dedicated will not be accepted by Council unless embellished or rehabilitated to a minimum maintenance state to the satisfaction of Council's Recreation Services Unit This may include the land being drained, improved, topsoiled, turfed, provided with amenities, vehicular access, and with weed management and fire management measures in place.**
8. **Establishment costs for the initial two years in relation to new open space or embellishment of open space should be factored into Section 94 plans including consent conditions to ensure that the cost burden of establishing the asset above normal maintenance costs is shared by new development.**
10. **Contributions for Shirewide open space facilities including sportsfields, foreshores and bushland/environmental parks will be sought from the community on a Shirewide basis; such contributions will be directed towards costs of major sports facilities at Murwillumbah, Wommin Bay Road, and Arkinstall Park, the major foreshore parks along the Tweed Coast, the Bushland/Environmental Park areas and proposed Botanic Garden at Eviron, to reflect the Shirewide use of such facilities.**

9.0 FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT

9.1 General

The funding and management of existing and future open space is critical to ensure cost efficient allocation of limited and competing financial resources. This issue has a bearing on the policies:

- for acceptance of future open space; and
- for embellishment of existing open space.

Public open space is managed under the umbrella of Plans of Management prepared under the Local Government Act 1993 (for Community land) or the Crown Lands Act 1989 (for Crown land).

9.2 Expenditure on Open Space from Contributions

Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 allowed for a total works program of \$2.67 million in both structured and casual open space (this Plan did not include open space provision in urban release areas subject to other Section 94 Contributions Plans). However, by the June quarter 2000, only \$1.18 million had been received as open space contributions under this Plan since the coming into effect of Section 94 Contributions Plan No. 5 in July 1993. This \$1.18 million in contributions received comprised \$787,400 expended on open space acquisition or embellishment and a balance of \$394,400 in the reserve fund for Section 94 Contribution Plan No.5 (data supplied by Council's Finance Unit). This lower than anticipated collection of contributions appears to have been due to the following factors:

- the rate of population growth has not been sustained at the growth rates predicted in the early 1990s;
- a proportion of open space has been provided "in kind" by dedication of land and therefore does not comprise monetary contributions; and
- there is a "lag" of up to several years between the granting of consents for subdivision and the payment of contributions when new lots are actually created, so that contributions received under Section 94 Contribution Plan No.5 nominated in development consents issued since 1993 will continue to accrue for some years.

9.3 Capital Funding

This report has identified the nature of the upgrading program for public open space to respond to community needs and population growth.

The provision of additional public open space and funding of capital works to upgrade or embellish open space is available by a number of means and sources:

- Dedication of open space by developers in new residential subdivisions or other residential development creating additional demand for open space in accordance with Council's Contributions Plans;
- General Council expenditure allocations from rate revenue and other general income;
- Grants from State or Federal Government for specific projects (eg Tweed Coast Bicentennial Park at Pottsville) and NSW Department of Sport and Recreation Capital Assistance Grants for sporting facilities and Regional Sports Facility Grants;
- Monetary contributions by developers for provision or embellishment of open space in accordance with Council's Contributions Plans;
- Land transferred to Council by land owners for other reasons such as rezoning agreements, provision of Works-in-Kind, etc; and
- Land transferred to Council by State or Federal Government (eg Coastal Crown lands from Fingal to Wooyung recently transferred to Council management).

The future acceptance of open space by Council and the choice of land to be acquired or embellished should be assessed in terms of the criteria in this Policy. Council's ability to maintain additional or embellished open space is a key factor.

9.4 Recurrent Funding

Recurrent funding for the maintenance and upkeep of existing open space is available principally through Council's rate income and untied grants to the maintenance program provided by the Recreation Services Unit.

However, Council's ability to maintain open space in a sustainable manner to satisfy community expectations is increasingly difficult in an environment of overall fiscal tightening, resulting in budgetary cutbacks and consequent decreases in frequency or type of maintenance. In recent years, whilst open space land stocks have increased significantly, the actual Council budget allocation for open space asset maintenance has increased by relatively small amounts as detailed below.

**TABLE 10:
OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE BUDGET BY FINANCIAL YEAR 1995-2000**

<i>Financial Year</i>	Open Space Budget	% Increase on Previous Year
1995-1996	\$220,000	-
1996-1997	\$226,000	2.7%
1997-1998	\$243,000	7.0%
1998-1999	\$250,000	2.8%
1999-2000	\$260,000	4%

In recent years, the income stream from Caravan Parks available to Council for open space management and maintenance has decreased in real terms.

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Council, in deciding to accept new open space or undertake embellishment work should make clear and unequivocal provision for its future maintenance irrespective of potential alternative revenue services. Such committed annual maintenance funding should be equivalent to at least 15% of the capital works cost of providing/upgrading the open space facility.

The Tweed Shire Strategic Plan 2000+ indicates the following strategic principles for Shirewide infrastructure.

“Infrastructure Finance

20. *Incorporate into Council’s Developer Contribution Plans, both existing and in the future, borrowing costs for capital, i.e. foreshadowed and retrospective, and possibly include a maintenance component for a specified period where maintenance costs are excessive.*

21. *In asset management, include Council’s explicit consideration of the consequences and financial liabilities of acquiring new assets. This assessment will include the costs over the life of the asset and the impact on rates to maintain the assets at the most cost effective level.”*

(Tweed Strategic Plan 2000+)

The current average cost of maintaining open space across the Shire, based on information supplied by Council’s Recreation Services Unit, has been calculated as follows:

- Casual open space - \$2,500 per hectare, and
- Structured open space - \$5,000 per hectare

This rate is an average and does not represent the different levels of maintenance applied to different areas of open space. For example some parks are maintained daily such as Knox Park and Chris Cunningham Park and others are only slashed quarterly.

Other options for recurrent funding must be increasingly relied on, including the following:

- Fees and charges (user-pays) for events or organised /team use;
- Sponsorship;
- Advertising sign income;
- Rental income from restaurants, kiosks etc. in parks; and
- Self funding/maintenance by user/community groups.

All income from ground rentals for major sportsfields is currently directed to a fund available to clubs and sporting groups for minor capital works expenditure such as irrigation, lighting, etc.

9.5 Community Involvement

Effective public and user group/stakeholder involvement in management of open space is essential and is being achieved mainly through local sporting groups, local community groups and formal bodies such as the Tweed Shire Sports Advisory Group, Tweed River Management Committee, Tweed Coastal Creek Estuaries Management Committee and Tweed Dune Care Advisory Committee. As Council increasingly seeks to rely on user funding and self-management of parks by users, local stakeholder management groups will need to be enhanced. However, it should be noted that undue expectations should not be placed on the likelihood of community or volunteer effort making a significant impact on overall open space management. Community and volunteer efforts require significant levels of ongoing servicing, co-ordination and support by Council.

9.6 Multi-Use

Many areas of open space have multiple uses, for instance, sportsfields have adjacent BBQ, picnic, playground or bushland areas. Sportsfields, particularly the less intensively developed sportsfields can be used for community events, markets etc.

Sportsfields now will tend to be more intensively used by a variety of sporting uses, compatible with the maintenance regimes, to maximise the availability of this community resource. Changes in working hours will also allow a higher level of weekday usage of sportsfields. High impact recreation activities particularly need to be catered for in multi-use of sportsfield facilities, releasing other sportsfields for alternative uses or other sports. High impact recreation areas are likely to involve high capital costs of embellishment but lower maintenance costs relative to levels of usage.

Whilst use of some open space areas for drainage and stormwater management is an appropriate element of multi-use, the areas with drainage facilities such as trunk drains, overland paths, detention basins, water quality control ponds and the like should be dedicated as drainage reserves and not as public recreation reserves.

Development of associated child-minding facilities could, for instance, create opportunities for adults to make more use of recreation facilities and sportsfields. In particular, there is much potential for existing and future school sportsgrounds to be integrated with adjoining public open space in joint management.

9.7 Shirewide Use

By reason of location, accessibility, type and size of facilities and management, some open space attracts use by people and user groups from a wide area of the Shire, well beyond a "local" or "neighbourhood" catchment. As noted in Section 8.6 of this Policy, the Shire's population has now reached a threshold whereby higher order major recreation facilities are used and required to meet demand in addition to local open space. This includes some overlap in usage with higher order Gold Coast open space and recreation facilities.

Parkland and foreshore areas attracting Shirewide use include Kingscliff Marine Parade Park, and the foreshore park at Cabarita. Council's works program and Sportsfield

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management is being directed at designating Sportsfield areas for shire wide use for specific sports, namely: Murwillumbah hockey fields, Arkinstall Park, and the Wommin Bay Road sportsfields at Kingscliff.

Bushland/environmental park/foreshore areas have potential for Shirewide use, including the following:

- Coastal Environmental Parks such as the Pottsville Environmental Park;
- Tweed Coast foreshore areas within the new single Crown land reserve now to be managed by Council; and
- Proposed Botanic Garden at Eviron and related Council owned land acquired for other purposes in the Eviron/Stotts Creek area.

In the south-western hinterland of the Shire, the system of extensive Council and State Government land-holdings is managed for existing or potential water catchments, forestry, nature conservation or river foreshore protection. These areas have the potential for integrated management for limited recreation and conservation as a shire-wide resource as foreshadowed in Tweed Shire 2000+ Strategic Plan.

It should be noted that the Jack Evans Boatharbour and Duranbah Beach open space at Tweed Heads is being developed and managed as a separate entity through the Jack Evans Boatharbour Trust and Plan of Management.

9.8 Catchment Area Based Management

The use of open space reflects a spatial or physical nexus related in general to users in the catchment of an open space area.

For major sporting facilities, the most accessible foreshore areas or environmental parks, the catchment area from which users are drawn tends to be Shirewide.

For local sportsfields, smaller or less accessible parklands, foreshore areas and other setting types, the area from which users are drawn tends to be much more localised, for instance within the residential neighbourhood, often walking distance or perhaps within the district or nearby suburbs/localities.

For the purposes of management of open space development through a Section 94 Contribution Plan, the designation of appropriate catchments will facilitate allocation of expenditure and works for upgrading open space in order to reflect the extent and distribution of users.

The existing *Section 94 Contribution Plan No. 5 Open Space* indicates four catchments for structured open space and 7 catchments for casual open space for contributions management. The casual open space catchments exclude rural areas since contributions are currently not sought for provision or upgrading of casual open space in respect of rural area development. There are no "Shirewide" catchments for contributions identified in the current *Section 94 Contributions Plan*.

Thus the identification of future open space provision or upgrading in a works program should reflect the range of localities and catchments across the shire where significant growth is likely to take place, and ensure provision of new facilities to adequately and equitably serve demand within all localities experiencing growth.

However for ease of collection and management of contributions funds and the expenditure program, collection and management should be aggregated across all catchments of the shire, with the schedule of works in the Plan and Council's accounting system enabling the tracking of and accountability for contributions relative to localities where contributions have been collected.

9.9 Management of Green Space Generally

Much of the rural and urban landscape of Tweed Shire, including both private and public land, forms an important scenic landscape resource requiring appropriate consideration and management as land use changes are proposed. The Tweed Shire Scenic Landscape Evaluation Study (1995) by Catherine Brouwer documents this resource and recommends procedures for consideration of scenic landscapes in development assessment. These factors and the scenic resources folio in the study should be applied in the process of planning and managing public open space, particularly in areas of high scenic/landscape sensitivity.

9.10 Summary

This section has reviewed the main issues in the vital area of funding and management of open space. Increasing demands and scarce financial resources require that management and maintenance of open space be subject to new innovative funding and management mechanisms, including sponsorship, community/user involvement in and responsibility for maintenance, advertising income generation, alternative revenue realising measures, and multi-use of open space facilities.

Evaluation of the public open space database may indicate duplication of local open space lands which, when evaluated against the design and locational criteria, are not likely to be utilised effectively for public open space. Such land resources could be reallocated for alternative uses with local community support. An unequivocal commitment should be made when accepting new open space for future annual maintenance funding.

This Open Space Infrastructure Policy should be implemented by way of acting on the various policies and actions as recommended.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

11. *Self-funding projects should be identified wherever possible to reduce the burden of recurrent/maintenance funding through sponsorships, advertising signs, community trusts, sporting groups, appropriate user fees, etc.*
12. *Alternative potential revenue generating activities, such as restaurants, function rooms and food and beverage outlets in certain parks should be pursued in conjunction with development of parks to cater for growth.*
13. *Local open space assets should be reviewed regularly as part of Council's management and budget process to identify lands not likely to be effectively used as open space and reallocate this land for alternative uses where in the public interest.*
14. *Council, in deciding to accept new open space or undertake embellishment work should make clear and unequivocal provision for its future maintenance irrespective of potential alternative revenue services.*
15. *In any proposal relating to the dedication of open space that includes drainage facilities where the primary function of the area is to provide drainage, and it is considered that the land has no significant recreational quality or potential use, such land will not be accepted as open space. Drainage facilities include facilities such as trunk drains, swales, overland paths, detention basins, water quality control ponds and the like. Land containing these drainage facilities should be located within drainage reserves or easements*
16. *Multi-use of existing and future open space should be facilitated consistent with effective management of joint uses, such as with school sportsfields, to minimise conflict between recreation uses and increase availability of sportsfield facilities.*
17. *Important scenic backdrops, scenic features and scenic routes identified as being of high value in the Tweed Shire Scenic Landscape Evaluation Study (1995) should continue to be protected and managed through strategic planning assessment and development assessment of proposals on private and public land, utilising the criteria established in the study.*
18. *The feasibility of establishing a regional green space management regime should be pursued in respect of the extensive areas of public and private lands set aside for existing or proposed water catchment protection, forestry, nature conservation and river foreshore protection, in the south-western part of Tweed Shire (e.g. Clarrie Hall Dam Catchment, proposed Byrrill Creek Water Supply Catchment, Mooball/Mebbin/Wollumbin and Nullum State Forests, Mt Warning National Park .*
19. *Preparation and assessment of Development Applications, Development Control Plans and rezoning submissions should take into account the recommendations of this Policy with regard to settings characteristics and design/locational criteria.*
20. *Council's various management Plans for community land as prepared and reviewed from time to time, and Estuary River and Foreshore Management Plans also have regard for this Policy.*
21. *The Draft Tweed Open Space and Recreation Study (1995) be used as a resource document in the planning and management of open space settings.*

22. All Section 94 Contributions Plans relating to open space should be reviewed in the medium to long term to take account of these policies.

10.0 CONCLUSION

This Open Space Infrastructure Policy for Tweed Shire has been prepared following a review of existing open space settings and hierarchies, population growth and resulting demand for open space, and funding and management issues.

The aim of the Policy is to guide Council and the community in the provision of a comprehensive open space network which is of a high quality to satisfy future needs. This includes conserving areas of high natural and cultural value and encouraging a range of recreational/open space opportunities and settings.

A performance based system for open space provision is recommended, with general and specific criteria for the location, design and sizing of various open space settings. A setting-based approach indicates Tweed Shire's open space involves the following setting types:

- Sportsfields;
- Parklands;
- Foreshores;
- Bushland/Environmental Park; and
- Ancillary open space.

A hierarchy of two levels for open space based on catchment size, namely a Shirewide level and a local level, is appropriate for Tweed Shire.

A review of existing open space suggests that the overall supply of open space is adequate, but poorly or inadequately distributed or embellished in relation to the Shire's open space users. An adequate inventory for all Council open space assets should be established and kept up to date on a whole of Council basis as an essential tool for future strategic planning of open space provision.

The Policy identifies significant and increasing difficulties in Council's ability to adequately maintain and embellish open space in a sustainable manner to meet demand. A response to this issue requires innovative funding and management measures, and careful assessment of open space in terms of its sustainability and future maintenance requirements, before acceptance by Council together with a preparedness to rationalise and reallocate open space lands where justified.

An overall standard of 4.0ha of public open space per 1,000 population is recommended to reflect existing provision. Of this amount, the current standard of 2.83ha of public open space per 1,000 resident population should be retained for **local open space** provision in new development, whilst the need for specific **shire-wide open space facilities** should be recognised by a new standard of 1.17ha per 1,000 population for shire-wide open space provision and upgrading. Importantly all open space to be dedicated or provided is to be subject to the various performance criteria for open space location and design nominated within this policy.

Finally, this Policy is the basis for the revision of Council's Section 94 Contributions Plan No 5 – Open Space and the integration and incorporation of the other contributions plans for provision of open space in urban release areas into one document.

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DEFINITIONS

- Acceptable:** Something which complies with recognised performance standards and does not jeopardise environmental values of the resource.
- Bushland:** Land on which there is vegetation which is either a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land or, if altered, is still representative of the structure and floristics of the natural vegetation.
- Capital Funding:** Funding of a one-off nature designed to meet the cost of providing infrastructure but does not include recurrent funding.
- Casual Open Space:** Land developed for the purposes of non-organised, informal outdoor leisure activities.
- Catchment:** An area identified by aggregate Census Collection Districts (CCDs) for the purposes of calculating existing open space and future management of open space contributions.
- Conservation:** The management of natural and cultural resources so that they yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present and future generations.
- Development:** Any change from the existing state which involves construction, building, provision of services or removal of vegetation.
- Embellishment:** Improvement or upgrading of open space to achieve a high level of quality and user satisfaction.
- Green Space:** An all embracing term which refers to all land, public and private, or water areas which have no more than a small part of their area covered by buildings and which are managed primarily for aesthetic, recreational, cultural, environmental, forestry, or water catchment values to retain these values.
- Hierarchy:** A mechanism by which open space can be classified according to level of use e.g. local use or Shirewide use.
- Management:** The art of balancing resources and priorities to achieve the purposes of this policy document.
- Open Space:** For the purposes of this policy, open space is defined as land which is designated, reserved or managed by or on behalf of Council for public open space for outdoor recreation, parkland and conservation related purposes accessible to the public. Such land includes land zoned Public Open Space 6(a) in an LEP.
- Recreation:** Those activities which people choose to do in their free time for enjoyment, relaxation or personal development.
- Recreational Opportunity Spectrum:** A means by which to provide a range or "spectrum" of opportunities to users of public open space.

Recurrent

Funding: Funding which is repeated on a regular basis such as rent or maintenance, generally not recoverable through Section 94 contributions.

Setting: The primary use or characteristic of a piece of open space eg. Sportsfield, parkland, foreshore

Significance: A measure of the importance of a particular value with respect to similar values elsewhere, based on assessments made by professionally accepted organisations. Five levels of significance are commonly used namely, international, national, state, regional and local.

Structured Open Space:

Land developed for the purposes of formal outdoor sporting pursuit.

Tourist: A visitor to the Shire who spends a night or more away from their normal dwelling place.

Values: Those aspects or qualities of an area which give it worth, desirability or utility for conservation or human use.

Visitor: A person who visits any part of the Shire for leisure or recreation related purposes. Visitors can be divided into day visitors or overnight visitors (defined as tourists).

