



Open Space Strategy 2016-2025

Adopted 28 January 2016



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Table of contents

Executive summary	1
Background	1
Open space in Surf Coast Shire	1
Community preferences	1
Vision and guiding principles	2
Supply and demand assessment	2
Key actions	2
Introduction	3
Background	3
Key inputs	4
Planning Framework	5
Strategic alignment and influences	5
Council Plan influences	6
Open space in the Surf Coast Shire	7
What is open space?	7
Surf Coast Shire open space	7
Land management agencies	8
Community needs analysis	9
Community preferences	9
Emerging trends	15
Vision for Surf Coast	19
Guiding principles	20
Open space assessment	21
Planning considerations	21
Shire-wide assessment	27
Anglesea precinct	31
Deans Marsh - Moriac precinct	35
Jan Juc - Bellbrae - Bells Beach precinct	39
Lorne - Aireys Inlet precinct	43
Torquay precinct	47
Winchelsea precinct	51
Future directions	55
Action plan	59
Appendix	63
List of abbreviations	
ARI	average recurrence interval (for rainfall)
BBQ	barbecue
CAPEX	capital expenditure
CMA	catchment management authority
CoM	committee of management
CPI	consumer price index
DCP	development contributions plan
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DSS	desired standards of service
FY	financial year
G21	Geelong Region Alliance
GORCC	Great Ocean Road Coast Committee
LGA	local government area
QR	quick response

Executive summary

Background

The Open Space Strategy (2016-2025) sets the direction for open space planning and provision.

With the former Strategy developed in 2004, an updated Strategy was required to assist Council to:

- understand
 - community preferences and desires
- ensure
 - Council's public open spaces are well managed, well maintained and accessible
 - optimal open space outcomes are achieved in new land developments
- protect
 - green belts for landscape connectivity, biodiversity and amenity.

The area of influence of the Strategy is specifically related to Council-managed land only. However, better integration with management policies of key adjacent land managers is also sought through the process.

Identifying the community's needs, aspirations and expectations in regards to open space are considered paramount in the development of the Strategy. It quantifies the value of open space to the Surf Coast Shire community, and will become the lead document for the planning and development of open space within the Shire.

Open space in the Surf Coast Shire

Open space in the Surf Coast Shire includes parks for passive social and family recreation, sporting reserves for active sport and recreation, conservation and nature reserves and linear reserves and paths.

While there are almost 35,000ha of open space across the Shire, only 667ha (1.9% of the total open space) are under Council's control (ownership and/or management). Approximately 35% of the entire open space network managed by Council is Crown land, with the remaining 65% being Council-owned land.

Community preferences

A range of consultation activities were undertaken to ascertain community preferences. Common and repeated feedback and findings highlight key themes and issues for consideration. Key community drivers underpinning the Open Space Strategy include:

- the existing open space network is considered of high quality
- both the beach *and* bush are highly valued
- pedestrian and cycling connections are essential
- open space near to residential areas is important
- dogs in open space areas are both loved and loathed (clear community split).

Each preference is explained in more detail in the body of the Strategy.





Vision and guiding principles

The vision sets the desired scene for open space development. It reflects the community's aspirations and Council's corporate vision.

To continue to deliver high quality, connected and sustainable open spaces that will provide the community with environmental, social, health and economic benefits. This will further enhance the Surf Coast's reputation as a destination renowned for its diversity of outdoor recreation experiences.

The guiding principles describe the over-arching intentions for the provision and management of open space for the Surf Coast local government area. The guiding principles themes are listed below with additional detail included in the Strategy.

- quality planning
- partnerships
- accessible and connected
- attractive
- adaptable
- sustainable spaces
- protection and preservation
- adequately resourced.

Supply and demand assessment

The Strategy has concluded that the Shire has an abundance of Council-managed open space, with a provision rate of more than 23ha/1,000 residents. When only core open space areas (parklands and gardens and outdoor sports) are considered, this provision rate is reduced to 6.66ha/1,000 - still well in excess of the desired standard of service of 2.8ha/1,000 proposed in the Strategy.

However, it is important to note that at a planning precinct level, future shortfalls in both parklands and gardens and outdoor sport are predicted for Torquay. These shortfalls reflect the considerable population growth forecast in this area. Indeed, without additional open space land development, a combined shortfall (for parklands and gardens and outdoor sport) of almost 34ha is projected by 2036.

Key actions

A range of future directions and actions are presented to lead Council decision-making with regard to open space planning and provision. Key issues addressed include:

- to ensure the ongoing provision of a quality open space network, investigate options to increase resourcing for open space development and renewal (specifically consider opportunities for enhanced resourcing of natural areas)
- to avoid the current backlog of master plan recommendations, limit future master planning and focus efforts on precinct-level master planning
- ensure the sustainable use of open space by developing a clear policy for commercial and community use of Council-managed open space.



Introduction

Background

Open space is a highly valued asset by residents and visitors to the Surf Coast. Consultation conducted in this Strategy has highlighted the community's overriding satisfaction with the provision of quality open space opportunities. The Strategy includes actions designed to reflect community need and enhance further the quality of the network.

Open space is fundamental to people being able to participate in recreation and sporting activities. It also creates desirable neighbourhoods that lead to healthy and attractive places to live and visit. While the health status of the Surf Coast Shire community does not rely solely on Council, Council does have a responsibility to provide opportunities for residents to recreate and be physically active to improve health and prevent associated health risks.

The Shire performs very well with regard to health indicators compared with the Victorian average¹ and Council is justifiably proud of this outcome. However, rather than resting on this status, many of the actions contained within this Strategy aim to build upon these results and expand healthy outcomes for the Shire.

Health indicator	Surf Coast Shire	Victoria
People meeting physical activity guidelines	69.8%	63.9%
Prevalence of type 2 diabetes	2.4%	4.8%
Easy access to recreation and leisure facilities	78.3%	78.8%
Life expectancy	Men - 81.2 Women - 86.3 (2nd highest in Victoria)	Men - 80.3 Women - 84.4
Participation rate in organised sport	55.0%	41.0%
Visit green space more than once per week	74.7%	50.7%
Excellent or very good self-reported health	54.6%	46.6%
Fair or poor self-reported health	10%	15.9%
Rates of overweight and obesity	41%	49.8%
Reported low degree of psychological distress	65.2%	64.6%

Quality open space is also integral to environmental protection and can provide notable opportunities for economic development (especially in an area such as the Surf Coast that is so attractive to visitors).

Open space plays a major role in improving community health, both physical and mental, reducing crime, stimulating economic growth and even boosting property value. It can also establish a sense of ownership and belonging to local communities, with these attributes being known to improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities alike.

This Strategy has been developed giving thought to what we know about the Surf Coast's open space, our understanding of the local community's preferences to different open space types and functions and Council's (and the community's) capacity to deliver the required infrastructure to meet community needs and future demand.

The Strategy will have a ten-year implementation period (and an interim review in 2021).



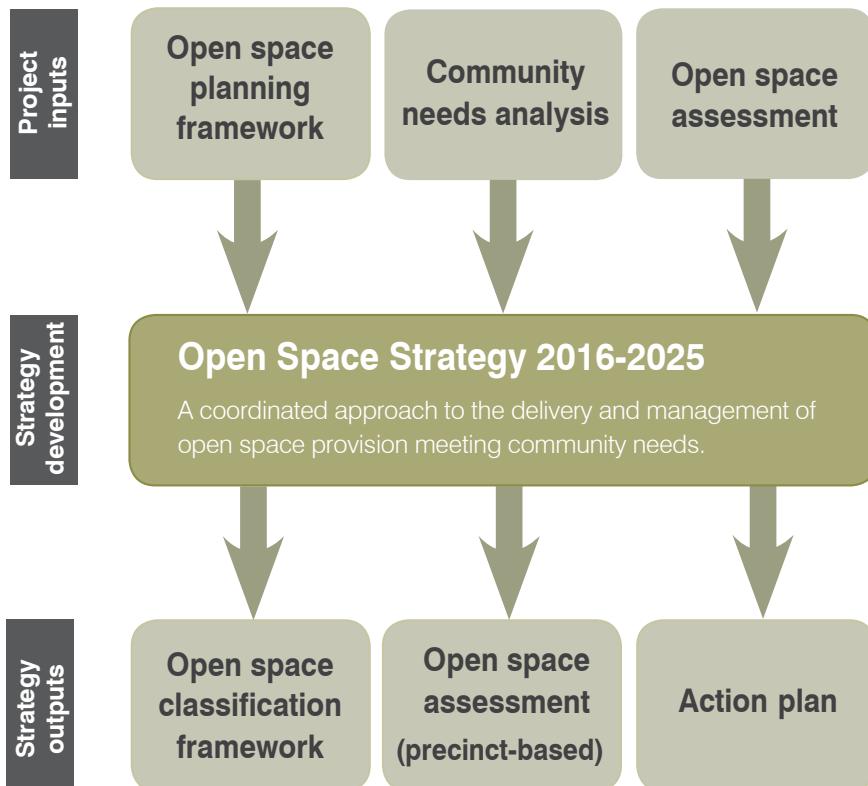
Key inputs

Three components have been considered as the key inputs to the development of the Open Space Strategy.



Strategy overview

The Open Space Strategy has been developed to deliver three key outputs - the open space classification framework, precinct-based open space assessment and action plan. The Strategy is supported by an Issues and Opportunities Paper that provides further detail regarding the Strategy's approach and background research.



Planning Framework

Strategic alignment and influences

Surf Coast Council's approach to open space planning is framed by the legislative and policy environment for Victoria, the G21 Region and the Surf Coast itself. The figure below demonstrates the influences of State and Commonwealth legislation and strategy and regional- and local-level planning on the development of the Open Space Strategy.





Council Plan influences

Council's Vision for the Shire as identified in the Council Plan 2013 - 2017 is:

"Working towards an engaged, innovative and sustainable community."

This vision is expressed further within five key themes. A number of objectives and associated strategies sit within these themes that, ultimately, assist to underpin (and validate) the Open Space Strategy.

THEME 1: ENVIRONMENT

Objective 1.1 - Preserve and enhance the natural environment

- 1.1.1 Review our Environmental Management Strategy
- 1.1.2 Improve pest, plant and animal management as a priority
- 1.1.3 Protect and enhance biodiversity in nature reserves

Objective 1.4 - Protect public open space and green belts

- 1.4.1 Review Surf Coast Shire Open Space Strategy

THEME 2: GOVERNANCE

Objective 2.2 - High performing accountable organisation

- 2.2.5 Collaborate effectively with State and Federal governments and regional stakeholders

Objective 2.4 - Transparency in decision making and access to information

- 2.4.3 Ensure information is available to the public, including pamphlets, letters outlining government planning and other processes and develop wider distribution channels
- 2.4.4 Proactive community consultation and communication on Council decisions and actions

Objective 2.5 - Enhanced community engagement

- 2.5.2 Establish a process for engagement with communities around contentious issues, particularly planning

THEME 3: COMMUNITIES

Objective 3.3 - Preservation of peaceful, safe and healthy environments

- 3.3.6 Annual monitoring and evaluation of the G21 Regional Health and Wellbeing Plan and Surf Coast Shire sub-plan

THEME 4: INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective 4.1 - Allocation of infrastructure according to need

- 4.1.1 Perform an infrastructure needs assessment to provide clarity to the community on how a fair distribution of infrastructure will be achieved
- 4.1.2 Utilisation of community demographics to determine future infrastructure needs
- 4.1.3 Identification of service needs for each community on a place-based approach

Objective 4.2 - Accessible and well maintained Council facilities

- 4.2.5 Undertake planning for future hockey facilities within the Shire

Objective 4.3 - Enhance key rural and coastal roads and transport options

- 4.3.5 Review/update current pathways/cycling strategy

THEME 5: DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

Objective 5.3 - Develop and grow sustainable year-round tourism

- 5.3.5 Maximise the benefits of all events for community and business

Objective 5.4 - Transparent and responsive land use and strategic planning

- 5.4.2 Utilise structure plans and planning processes to encourage a diversity of housing stock across the Shire.

New themes and objectives may be adopted with the development of a new Council Plan every four years.



Open space in the Surf Coast Shire

What is open space?

The definition and value of open space can be as varied as the communities it serves. At its most basic, Healthy Spaces and Places¹ defines parks and open space as follows:

'Parks and open space refers to land that has been reserved for the purpose of formal and informal sport and recreation, preservation of natural environments, provision of green space and/or urban stormwater management.'

Surf Coast Shire open space

The Surf Coast Shire is comprised of a number of diverse natural assets, from extensive beaches and coastline including the world famous Bells Beach and the heritage-listed Great Ocean Road, to rural areas and national parks. The Shire has two distinct areas: coast and hinterland.

The Shire's economy is largely based around tourism, with the Surf Coast being home to one of the five recognised Surf Cities in Australia². Historically, the Surf Coast's coastal towns and villages have evolved as holiday resorts with small permanent populations and large seasonal holiday populations. This has significantly shaped the type of open space provided in the Shire to date, and will potentially influence the future provision.

The Surf Coast's open space network provides opportunities for a range of active and passive opportunities, including parks and reserves, sporting facilities, conservation and natural areas, waterways and lakes and linear reserves and paths.

The Surf Coast Shire covers an area of approximately 1,552 km², with approximately 6.67km² of open space under Council's control (ownership and/or management). Approximately 35% of the entire open space network managed by Council is Crown land, with the remaining 65% being Council-owned land.



1 Healthy Spaces and Places, Design Principle - Parks and Open Space, 2009

2 Surf Coast Shire Visitor Insights, 2014



Land management agencies

In addition to Council, a number of land management agencies are responsible for the provision, management and maintenance of open space within the Shire. Broadly, these agencies, and the areas of open space under their control or ownership are provided in the table below. Interestingly, Council controls only a very small proportion of the open space network across the Shire.

Land management agency	Open space land area	Percentage of the Shire's total open space area	Percentage of the Shire's total area (155,200ha)
Surf Coast Shire Council	667ha	1.9%	0.43%
Crown Reserves <input type="checkbox"/> Parks Victoria (PV) <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Environment, Land and Water Planning (DELWP)	33,847ha	96.9%	21.8%
Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee (GORCC)	407ha	1.2%	0.26%
Barwon Region Water Corporation	9ha	0.03%	0.01%
Total open space	34,930ha		

Department of Environment, Land and Water Planning

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) manages areas of Crown land that include parks and reserves, State forests, waterways, coasts and marine environments. Management of these areas is controlled by DELWP and partner organisations including Parks Victoria, VicForests, water authorities, committees of management and boards.

Parks Victoria

Under the Parks Victoria Act 1998, Parks Victoria's responsibilities are to provide services to the State and its agencies for the management of parks, reserves and other public land. With the approval of the Minister, it may also provide land management services to the owner of any other land used for public purposes.

Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC)

GORCC is a Committee of Management (CoM) established under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. The CoM manages 37 kilometres of coastal Crown Land Reserves along the Great Ocean Road between Point Impossible (east of Torquay) and Cumberland River (south of Lorne). The GORCC-managed land comprises of all coastal land, with the exception of some areas, including Bells Beach and Point Addis and land managed by Parks Victoria.

Barwon Region Water Corporation

The Barwon Region Water Corporation is Victoria's largest regional urban water corporation. The Corporation provides water, recycled water and sewerage services. Open space responsibility of the Corporation falls within the Barwon River system and associated riparian lands.

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CMA)

The Corangamite CMA was established to ensure the protection, enhancement and sustainable development of land, water resources and biodiversity within a boundary stretching from Geelong to Ballarat and along the coast to Peterborough. The functions of the CMA (a referral body) are governed by the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* and *Water Act 1989*.

While Corangamite CMA does not physically manage land, it has a range of responsibilities relating to the management of water adjacent to Council-managed open space.



Community needs analysis

Community preferences

With almost 35,000ha of open space spread across the Shire, incorporating a stunning coastline, natural areas, manicured sports grounds and parks for play; residents and visitors appear to have access to a wide range of quality open space. However, in order to develop a framework for future decision-making, it is important that the community's expectations and preferences regarding open space use and provision are understood and considered.

Successful open spaces are those that have relevance to their audience and provide for the needs of the community. This can only be achieved through a comprehensive analysis of the community's preferences and participation. The following section provides a summary of the key findings established through a range of endeavours: consideration of recent planning work, community survey outcomes, written

responses to an Issues and Opportunities discussion paper, agency workshops and community drop-in sessions (to be conducted at draft stage).

Common and repeated feedback and findings highlight key themes and issues for consideration. Key community drivers underpinning the Open Space Strategy include:

- the existing open space network is considered of high quality
- both the beach and bush are highly valued
- pedestrian and cycling connections are essential
- open space near to residential areas is important
- dogs in open space areas are both loved and loathed (clear community split).





High quality existing open space

"I love the way the streetscapes have been developed using native trees and local species. The new subdivisions have some great landscaping that continues to be well maintained. Credit goes to all the gardeners."

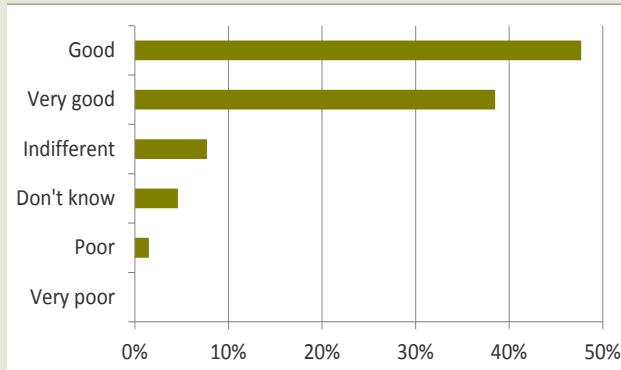
It is most common for community consultation (e.g. satisfaction surveys) to feature notable negativity toward the quality and supply of open space. Residents see and use their open space daily and generally choose to reflect on the issues

that nag at them. For example, uneven paths, unmown grass in parks, litter, poor state of toilets, lack of shade and lack of play opportunities and choice are responses regularly seen in surveys such as that undertaken in this Strategy. However, this is far from the case in the Surf Coast Shire.

Community survey respondents were glowing in their assessment of both the quality and supply of parks and sporting reserves. The results summarised below highlight these findings.

Parks (playgrounds, picnic areas etc)

How would you rate the overall quality of parks within the Shire?

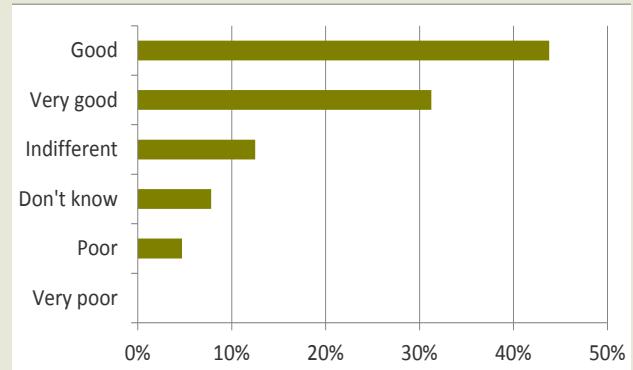


Do you believe there is currently an adequate number/supply of parks within the Shire?

- 70% Yes
- 21% No
- 9% Unsure

Sporting reserves and facilities

How would you rate the overall quality of sporting reserves and facilities within the Shire?



Do you believe there is currently an adequate number/supply of sporting reserves and facilities within the Shire?

- 73% Yes
- 17% No
- 10% Unsure

Barriers to open space use

Have you experienced any barriers to using open space within the Shire?

- 61% No barriers

Summary

Council has developed an open space network that the community considers to be of high quality, in suitable supply and with few barriers to participation and access.



Beach and bush both highly valued

It was to be expected that the Surf Coast's beaches would come through as the most important and highly valued open space type for the community. What was not predicted was the high regard the community also places on the bushland and other natural areas across the Shire.

Beaches and foreshores

At which open space do you recreate or play sport?

- 84% beach + 73% coastal reserves/foreshore

What is your favourite open space within the Shire?

- 29 respondents (out of 54) named a specific beach or simply noted 'beach'

What do you value about open space?

- views to the ocean/river (69%, 3rd highest response)



“Beautiful beaches and rockpool areas – fishing, walking, swimming and general invigoration”

“The beach, its beauty and the freedom I feel whilst there”

Interestingly, Council does not manage the bulk of the coastal or bushland areas. Methods by which Council can influence outcomes and ensure ongoing community (and visitor) access to these areas are discussed in a latter section of the Strategy.

Bushland

At which open space do you recreate or play sport?

- 73% bushwalking trails + 65% bushland

What is your favourite open space within the Shire?

- 20 respondents (out of 54) named a specific bushland area or simply noted 'bush' or 'bushland'

What do you value about open space?

- natural setting (89%, the highest response)
- interaction with natural environment (70%, 2nd highest response)

If you were in charge of the Council, what would be your top three open space projects that you would fund over the next 10 years?

- improved bushland maintenance/management/conservation (highest response).



“The quiet and beauty of the bush. It's nice to get away and be at one with nature”

“Bushland behind Fairhaven Beach because of the native plants and views, also because it is natural and not developed”



A connected network

Given the natural beauty of the Surf Coast Shire it is not surprising that walking is a common practice. People spend time outside enjoying walks along beaches, on the foreshore and headlands, through the parks network and throughout bushland areas.

If you were in charge of the Council, what would be your top three open space projects that you would fund over the next 10 years?

- improved pedestrian/cyclist connections (2nd highest response)
- development of green belts/corridors (3rd highest response)
- new/upgraded cycle and walking paths (4th highest response)

Most often, how do you get to open space within the Shire?

- 67% walk
- 7% cycle

What is your favourite open space within the Shire?

- 19 respondents (out of 52) provided answers specifically related to walking.

"The cliff top path from Sunnymead Beach to Urquhart Bluff. I like it because we can take the dogs, you do not see many other people, you have the sense of going somewhere and because it provides a long walk"

"I frequent the path from Jan Juc to Bells daily as it is safe and convenient"

"Lorne Beach - I can walk there alone or with friends"



Access to ‘nearby’ open space is key

“Jan Juc linear reserve. As it leads from my house to the beach”

“Deep Creek walk. I feel like I’m in the bush away from it all and it’s only a short distance from home”

“Sunnymead – it’s a beautiful unspoilt beach, dog friendly and close to my home”

Locals and visitors appreciate the ability to have quality open space opportunities in each of the individual towns. Many people tend to walk to their preferred open space location, visit on most (if not all) days and like to travel only short distances to reach open space.

What do you value about open space?

- they are close to my home (66%, 4th highest response)

Thinking about open space, on average, how often do you visit?

- 46% most days
- 31% daily

Most often, how do you get to open space within the Shire?

- 67% walk
- 7% cycle

How far are you willing to travel to get to open space?

- 50% less than 15 minutes.





Dogs in open space - a divided community

A clear divergence exists in community opinion regarding the presence of dogs in open spaces. Many dog owners are keen to see regulations relaxed yet others view the presence of dogs (particularly off-leash) in parks and on beaches as a recreation deterrent.

Dog ownership

- 53% of respondents were dog owners

Does your dog visit open space with you?

- 79% of dog owners take their dogs with them to open space
- Beach is by far the most frequented open space location

Have you experienced any barriers to using open space within the Shire?

- Highest barrier (equal) - I can't take my dog
- However, of eleven written comments, 7 note uncontrolled dogs as barriers to visiting to open space.

“All open space should be available to dogs with their owners”

“I would like some bush spaces where I could take my dogs. I wouldn’t mind if they had to be on a lead”

“Dogs not being on leash when they should be and owners not picking up after them. It’s disgusting”

“Too many people with out-of-control dogs. The dog laws are a mess (and so are the footpaths and beaches with dog poop)”



Emerging trends, issues and opportunities

Recreation participation patterns are changing. Factors such as a move away from organised sport, increased use of technology and increased time pressures have all had an impact on the industry. Understanding these trends is important for Council and clubs looking to develop strategies and facilities to encourage recreation and environmental activities.

Nationalisation and diversification of sport

- Growth in non-traditional sports (e.g. rugby league in Victoria and hockey in the Surf Coast Shire specifically)
- Modification of traditional sports (e.g. T20 cricket)

Road cycling, mountain biking and eco-tourism activities are all growing as non-traditional activities, while AFL 9's is a burgeoning modified sport. Changes are placing additional pressure on Council with regard to playing field capacity, facility flexibility and need to plan for additional demand.

Move towards indoor sport and recreation

- Anecdotally, a preference for participation indoors (e.g. basketball, netball and fitness)

Potentially, this move may be a result of a preference for activities in a controlled climate and/or greater mid-week opportunities (compared with outdoor activities).

Lengthening seasons

- Clear move toward year-round sport (lengthening seasons and providing 'off-season' alternatives)

This lengthening further impacts opportunities for recreation time choices and will place additional capacity and timing pressures on Council's sporting facilities.

Expectations of flexible hours

- With the amount of recreation time available decreasing, participants are seeking flexible hours

Walking, running and cycling are likely to continue to be popular forms of activity as participants can be flexible in when, where and how long they undertake the activity. This project has shown that the Shire is already delivering quality opportunities for these pursuits.

Sports precinct provision

- Acknowledged benefits of developing dedicated multi-use sports precincts (rather than single field facilities).

Large flexible-use sites provide opportunities for shared use of infrastructure and maintenance requirements and enhanced ability to attract funding given the range of users. Council currently has one large multi-field sports precinct (Banyul-Warr Fields) and a number of facilities providing two ovals (with or without additional tennis and netball facilities).

Move towards informal recreation

- Organised sport national participation rates declining

With outstanding natural areas for recreation, Surf Coast is well-placed to take advantage of this emerging trend.

Programming and activation

- Programming of physical activity is helping to activate open spaces and community infrastructure

Current Council projects include skate park activation (BBQ and Beats Program and Concrete Audio Youth Festival Program), community engagement in the strategic playground upgrade program, touch football competition and support for local 'active' events and activities in open space (e.g. Relay for Life, Park Run, Surf Coast Dog Walk, Winchelsea Pram Walk, trail runs, fun runs, mountain bike events, multi-sport events and community garden activities).

Population growth and continued visitation

- Surf Coast Shire's current population of 25,874 is expected to reach 44,786 by 2031, an increase of 57.7%.

In addition to the growth of the Shire, is the significant growth of nearby areas in the next 10-20 years, including Armstrong Creek to the north of Torquay with an additional 50,000 people.

The population of the G21 region currently exceeds 294,000 and is expected to reach over 400,000 by 2031.

Further to this, Melbourne's west is within 60 minutes driving time from the Shire's popular coastline and foreshore areas. This growth area will see an additional 175,000 people living within close proximity to the Surf Coast Shire and its natural assets including the coastline and open spaces.

In addition to the Shire's permanent residents, the population of the Surf Coast Shire increases from its usual population to over 85,000 during peak visitation periods¹.

Adding a similar number of day trippers to this means a significant number of people currently trying to access the coast and foreshore areas¹.

This rapid growth in populations, combined with associated development to accommodate it, can bring some benefits (eg. improvements to transport), however it often creates significant environmental, social and economic challenges and threatens the lifestyle and amenity of the Shire, a common reason residents choose to live on the coast². The same can be said for visitors.

Striking the right balance between development to accommodate growth and preservation of the Shire's current





lifestyle (including the natural landscape) is important.

Domestic day trippers to the Surf Coast Shire comprised approximately 54% of the 1,677,833 total visitors to the Shire in 2013¹.

The top activity listed by domestic day trippers to the Shire was going to the beach, with an estimated 506,000 people undertaking this activity within the Surf Coast in 2013¹.

Tourism and the visitor economy

- Worth almost \$1 billion annually, Surf Coast Shire's economy continues to experience strong growth

As a distinctly different economy, the surfing industry represents almost 27% of all jobs (more than 2,000) and 26.6% of all value add activity. Tourism also plays a vital role, with more than 1.8 million visitors directly expending over \$500m during 2014-15. Many of the Shire's key attractions relate strongly to open space and natural areas for recreation, sightseeing, events or relaxation. This includes the world famous (Council-managed) Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve. Quality open spaces can play a role in driving the visitor economy without increasing visitor numbers. Beautiful and inspiring natural places can influence visitors to stay longer, do more, spend more and return. This, in turn, provides economic benefits to the community and supports job creation and our Surf Coast lifestyle.

Strong population growth will see a need to create approximately 3,000 additional jobs by 2031 in a shire where some 87 per cent of all businesses employ four or less people. As tourism is one of the largest employers in Surf Coast, the ability of suitable open spaces to cater for sustainable tourism businesses is critical.

Commercial use of open space

- Increasing pressure for one-off events and regular (or fixed) ventures (e.g. surf schools, kiosks)

Council has recently experienced these demands. Feedback obtained throughout this project was mixed regarding the appropriateness of commercial ventures in open space areas. However, it was a clear expectation that Council undertakes a closely monitored approach (as opposed to carte blanche) that reflects the impacts of the venture on the area and acknowledges public access restrictions. Council is also required to implement Tour Operator Licences (Commercial) for Crown land that it is designated CoM for.

¹ Surf Coast Shire Visitor Insights 2014

² Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee Coastal Management Plan

Joint initiatives on education land

- Agreements that lead to maximisation of sport and recreation facility use and investment

Joint Use Agreements (between Council and the Department of Education and Training) exist with a number of education providers to ensure sustainable sport and recreation investment and provision. Council may look to play a more significant role in contributing to maintenance and renewal of education facilities where they are providing community recreation infrastructure that is not available anywhere else in the township (e.g. Lorne-Aireys Inlet P-12 College).

Impacts of technology

- Recreation providers now compete with non-physical activities (e.g. internet and computer games)

Increasing expectations of technology within recreation areas including WiFi access in key parks, promoting existing geocaching and by using QR codes on tracks and signage.

Streetscapes

Streetscapes are generally public land managed by private citizens that are increasingly becoming recognised as important in enhancing the liveability of cities and towns. No longer are they mostly for the movement of cars, streetscapes are now seen as being important components of the open space network and have a key role in climate change adaptation including the reduction of the urban heat island, the provision of shade, and environmentally appropriate management of stormwater.

Within the Surf Coast Shire, streetscapes are even more important in the older parts of some coastal townships. Many of the Shire's townships were established as holiday resort towns with low permanent populations and accordingly there was limited focus on the provision of footpaths and dedicated open space away from the foreshore. As these towns have grown, and with the projected ageing of the population in some towns, there is an increased need for such infrastructure. Given the high cost of purchasing private property to provide open spaces within these older parts of coastal townships, a more cost effective and environmentally appropriate solution may be to enhance existing residential streetscapes which would provide multiple benefits. This would also provide an opportunity for enhancing partnerships between Council and local residential communities to establish quality healthy and safe environments. It will also assist in meeting the community's preference for greater connectivity and walking routes.



Pedestrian and cyclists

As the Shire's population continues to grow and age, more people are seeking to use open space for walking and cycling. Increased usage combined with the natural terrain has the potential to increase conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. Council will need to consider proactively preparing for the increase in demand and use and what comes with this including managing numbers and possible conflicts between the user groups. Currently Council seeks as a minimum to meet minimum legal requirements for pathway infrastructure. Given the likely emerging increases Council may need to consider using in addition to minimum legal requirements a variety of other appropriate mechanisms to manage these including education, regulation and various design tools. The principles in this document, in particular the 'Accessible and connected' principle could be used as a guide to consider and resolve emerging issues relating to pedestrian and cyclist conflicts.

Environment protection and integration

- Integrating environmental protection values into more traditional active and passive recreation areas.

A number of Council's recreation-focused open spaces in urban areas contain natural assets (e.g. Spring Creek Recreation Reserve, Bellbrae Recreation Reserve, Ellimatta Recreation Reserve, Bambra Hall and Recreation Reserve). These have the potential to support limited biodiversity (particularly fauna) and to engage, inform and educate.

Edible landscapes

- Supporting urban agriculture (e.g. community gardens)
- Council recognises the benefits that edible landscapes can provide and has adopted an Edible Landscape Initiative.

Reduced resources

Resources available to manage open space reducing State Government has recently committed to review the municipal rate increases. This potentially represents a significant decrease in resources available to manage open spaces. In addition, approximately 35% of the open space managed by Council is Crown land for which Council receives limited funds from State Government for planning and management. Following the recent Auditor General's report on 'Oversight and Accountability of Committee's of Management', DELWP has committed to a series of actions to help improve governance, oversight and support for Committee's of Management. It is therefore timely that Council reviews its current and future role as Committee of Management for Crown land with open space functions.

Bushfire places of last resort

- A number of Council-managed open spaces are designated as Bushfire Places of Last Resort

These were previously known as Neighbourhood Safer Places. Council manages these places in accordance with the Surf Coast Shire Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan.

Climate change

- As our climate changes, the importance of green open spaces and vegetation become more vital

The Victorian Coastal Inundation Dataset has identified that rivers and coastal areas in towns such as Torquay, Aireys Inlet, Anglesea and Lorne are likely to be subject to sea level rises up to 0.8m above current levels by 2100. This would have a significant impact on open space in these towns.

Much of the Surf Coast Shire is already identified as being within a high fire risk area. Fire risk is expected to become worse in the future due to projected climate changes.

Council acknowledges the role that open space can play in heat island mitigation and in regulating major storm event impacts (amongst other climate change responses).

Nature Play

- Access to natural play areas is becoming increasingly important as urban development intensifies

The World Health Organisation now recognises the interdependence of human health and ecosystem health. The positive innate bond between human wellbeing and nature is supported by environmental health science¹. Childhood engagement with nature is the key to cementing this relationship for generations to come². In just one generation, there has been a dramatic shift in childhood activity from outdoors to indoors, driven by factors like computer technology, a significant reduction in the size of backyards and an increasingly risk-averse culture. The consequences include increasing rates of childhood obesity and behavioural disorders. Currently one in four Australian children aged 5 to 17 is overweight or obese³. In areas where there is a dedicated focus on nature play, such as South Australia, childhood obesity rates are starting to stabilise.

Providing such access is important as there is increasing evidence indicating engagement in outdoor play and more importantly, nature play has significant benefits for young children and their families⁴.

¹ Person, Deutsch L et al. *The Anthropocene: from global change to planetary stewardship*. (2011)

² Kolbert, *The sixth extinction: AN Unnatural history* (2014)

³ Building a stronger South Australia (SA Government)

⁴ VIC Health. *Influencing children's health: critical windows for*

Vision for Surf Coast

The vision sets the desired scene for open space development. It reflects the community's aspirations and Council's corporate vision. The vision for the open space network for the Surf Coast Shire is:

To continue to deliver high quality, connected and sustainable open spaces that will provide the community with environmental, social, health and economic benefits. This will further enhance the Surf Coast's reputation as a destination renowned for its diversity of outdoor recreation experiences.





Guiding principles

The guiding principles outlined below describe the over-arching intentions for the provision and management of open space for the Surf Coast Shire.

Quality planning

Council will ensure an evidence-based strategic approach to the provision of recreation and open space opportunities. Facilities will be fit-for-purpose. Once developed, adaptive management practices (i.e. regular audits) will be undertaken

As custodians of the environment, Council values the range of goods and services that ecosystems provide to the community and recognised the important role that healthy and resilient ecosystems play in the lives of present and future generations

Partnerships

Council will ensure that the community are provided with a range of opportunities to become involved in decision-making processes regarding open space provision. Council will work closely with other key land managers (GORCC, Parks Victoria, DELWP etc) to ensure an integrated approach to open space management

New infrastructure easements where the primary function is for drainage, telecommunications, pipelines etc are not considered open space. Encumbered open space that contains, for example, natural and cultural heritage values or fall within floodplains or areas of high fire risk, is not considered as part of the formal planning scheme requirements for open space. Both infrastructure easements and encumbered open space are to be designed in a manner that enhances the open space network and meets the open space principles in this Strategy

Accessible and connected

Council will strive to develop well-linked precincts that enhance opportunities for health and well being. Facilities will be safely and conveniently accessed by existing and new users through 'access for all and universal' design principles

Adequately resourced

Council will identify and allocate resources for the provision of recreation and open space opportunities in a strategic, efficient, effective, transparent and equitable manner in line with Council's capacity to fund

Attractive

Council will ensure that open space areas are designed and effectively maintained to a high quality to encourage the community to value them and to foster high levels of use

It should be noted that disabled access and appropriate safety standards will at all times be considered as per the relevant current Australian Standards in the planning and design of the Shire's open spaces and achieved, where feasible, recognising that this is not always possible given the difficult topographical and natural features of the Shire's landscapes.

Adaptable

Council will ensure that facilities offer a diversity of choices that reflect the varied needs of the community. Multi-use facilities will be developed that can respond to changing demographics and incorporate climate change requirements

Importantly, when considering specific open space areas, not all of these principles will necessarily apply, and, in fact, some may be mutually exclusive. In these situations, it may be necessary for Council to consider the accommodation of competing and/or conflicting users by means of time and/or spatial zoning, and, perhaps reservation of some areas for specific uses for safety or management purposes.

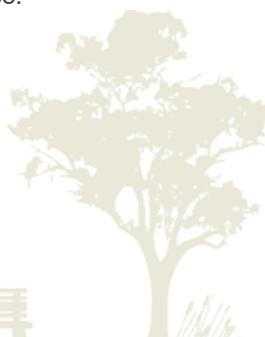
Sustainable spaces

Council will encourage and enable the sustainable use of open space within its social, cultural, environmental and economic capacity. Cultural landscapes and ecological processes are understood, protected and enhanced in open space managed by Council. Sustainability will be assessed and managed through regular audits and evaluation

As Council considers open space upgrades, development initiatives and ongoing maintenance practices, these guiding principles should be closely reflected upon as key drivers for decision-making. Any directions that potentially do not align with the principles should be carefully reviewed by Council's Open Space Planning Committee.

Protection and preservation

The current standard of the Council-managed open space network will at least be maintained, and where possible, improved. Council will ensure that there is no net loss of existing open space. Council will ensure that all additions to the network to meet planning scheme requirements are unencumbered and enhance the open space network



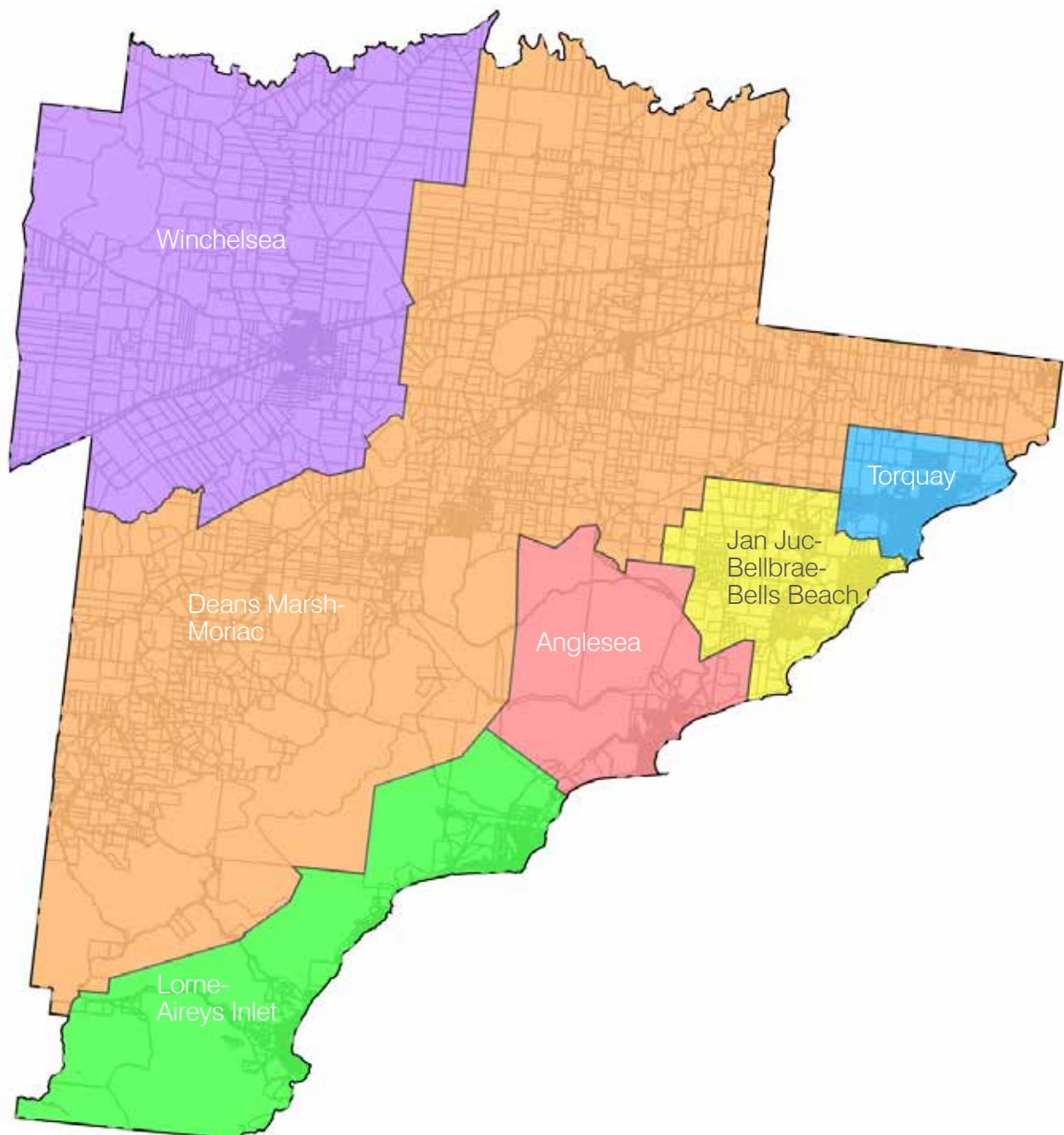
Open space assessment

Planning considerations

Planning precincts

There are six open space planning precincts that have been used throughout the open space assessment. The purpose of these catchments is to understand sub-regional pressures and to appreciate the individual nuances of each precinct (and township). Additionally, this approach assists to structure the findings and ensure that the Strategy is easy to navigate.

The planning precincts are aligned with those used for population forecasts and analysis (id consultants, 2015). However, it should be noted that the Old Torquay-Torquay West and Torquay North areas used in population considerations have been combined to form Torquay for the Open Space Strategy.





An open space classification for Surf Coast

This Strategy has assessed all open space land within the local government area under Council ownership or control. Additionally, the impact of land under alternate management (e.g. coastal land) on the Council-managed open space network has also been considered. To determine the current open space network function and capacity, the Strategy has identified a need to develop a revised naming convention for the classification of land according to its function and service.

The open space network has been classified into six open space typologies and the framework has been developed to classify open space based on land and activity use. The various open space typologies possess different values, functions and settings. Importantly, the hierarchy does not necessarily reflect (nor dictate) the importance or resource requirements for the various open space types. Resource allocation should continue to be a balance between asset maintenance strategies, community demand, legislative requirements and resource realities.

Classification	Hierarchy	Description
Parklands and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local • District/Precinct • Municipal • Regional/State/National 	Established for a range of structured and unstructured activities, community recreation, cultural (current) activities or wellbeing uses. Includes landscaped parklands, play grounds, pocket parks, passive spaces and community gardens
Outdoor sports		Sites predominately used for active recreation (training and competition) including grassed or synthetic playing fields and courts and equestrian areas
Linear open spaces and trails		Provides off-road pathways, trails and coastal foreshore (those reserved for social purposes) that primarily provide links to the broader open space network, community or activity hubs, residential areas and/or other areas of interest for pedestrians and cyclists. It includes unused road reserves and may also be established to ensure the effective functioning of natural processes and to protect flora and fauna corridors
Landscape and heritage		Open spaces focused on protecting the amenity and heritage values of an area. It includes remnant indigenous vegetation, places associated with creation stories, lighthouses, Aboriginal and European pathways, war memorials (Avenues of Honour, Great Ocean Road), water and camping reserves (Lake Modewarre, Rice Reserve, Dans Reserve), railway lines, worker camps (Stony Creek Nature reserve), indigenous and European fishing, memorials, art (Bells Beach mural). May include landscaped footpaths and road verges, central median strips, tree reserves, entrance statements containing planted trees, shrubs and grasses and lookouts
Civic spaces		Open spaces with predominantly hard surfaces such as civic areas or community hubs, primary commercial centres (main streets) and streetscapes. Established primarily to provide areas for family and community activities, gatherings and events. Includes civic events, passive use for workers, neighbourhood meeting spaces and other organised events
Environmental		Open spaces for protection, maintenance and improvement of ecological processes, values and assets and the mitigation of threats. Includes national parks and other Crown land and Council-owned freehold land. May include reserves for the protection of land-based biodiversity (including threatened flora and fauna species and communities); rivers, creeks, wetlands and estuaries; coastal crown land, coastal and marine parks



Desired standards of service

Background

Desired standards of service (DSS) are the level of open space that Council strives to provide as a minimum to all residents across the local government area. DSS are often categorised under four broad measures:

1. quantity of land for open space
2. access to open space
3. land characteristics
4. improvements.

The access and quantity standards are, traditionally, the two primary measures used to assess and plan for open space land demands. Land characteristics and the level of improvement provide additional information that should be used as a guide in developing open space. Recognising that it is equally important to provide a diverse range of open space opportunities must also be considered in this process.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to apply these standards for each different classification of open space as many of them are opportunistic, dependant on site-specific attributes (e.g. topographical or geographical) and/or are intrinsically linked to social or environmental descriptors. As such, it is commonplace that DSS are only set for core open space (parklands and gardens and outdoor sport).

Quantity standard

The quantity standard identifies the recommended minimum standards for the provision of land for open space.

It is important to note that there are no standards for the provision of parklands and gardens at a municipal or regional+ level.

Demand for land for these purposes should be based on the presence of significant physical features, or unique opportunities. Additionally, Surf Coast Shire currently has no parklands and gardens at this level. This was not raised as a concern by the community - with the beaches (and bushland) seemingly meeting the high-level 'open space' demands.

Accessibility standard

The accessibility standard is used to guide appropriate spatial distribution of open space in terms of the accessibility and distances of the park to its visitors.

The recommended spacing and distribution of open spaces will vary depending on the hierarchy, population to be serviced and predominant land uses. Whilst spatial distribution data has been provided, it is only a guide. It is hoped that all residents within more urban areas are within easy walking distance to a parklands and garden area, regardless of its hierarchy. Best practice¹ suggests no more than a five minute walk is preferred, this generally transcribes to 400m radius from a park. Natural and man-made constraints (such as rivers, major highways and so on) must also be considered.

The accessibility standard for outdoor sport is somewhat different to that of parklands and gardens. There is less rigidity to strive to meet the accessibility standards given a number of sport planning trends. Firstly, it is widely accepted by the sporting industry² that people will drive (as opposed to walking or cycling) to participate in the activity. Secondly, people choose which sport they participate in - a decision rarely influenced on what facilities are in close proximity to where they live. As long as a facility is available within reasonable driving distance (e.g. 15-25 minutes), people will travel to play their chosen sport. Therefore, having a diversity of choice of activity options (again within reason and based on the feasibility of success of that sport) is often more important. As such, sport provision, including accessibility needs to consider and reflect demand by the population. Additionally, outdoor sports parks require large, flat parcels of land, often resulting in any new sports park being located on the outskirts of urban areas.

¹ from Parks and Leisure Australia guidelines and local government preferences from across Australia (and abroad)

² a 2014 review of open space DSS for Queensland councils showed the most common accessibility standards for district level active open space to be 15-20 mins drive (5-15km)



It is worth noting that DSS are generally applied to residential areas with a high proportion of permanent residents. They may not be as applicable to all of the coastal townships along the Surf Coast that have historically developed as holiday villages with a low proportion of permanent residents.



Land characteristics standard

These standards are used as a base in determining the lowest quality land characteristics for each classification type. Importantly, a range of land types are required to provide diversity within the open space network. These recommended minimum levels of provision will ensure a realistic and achievable quality open space network that is generous in accordance with the proposed vision. Land character standards include consideration of:

- size of the park
- preferred shape of the park
- flood immunity
- road frontage
- topography and gradient
- adequate mitigation of bushfire risk (refer to Council's 'Landscaping your Surf Coast Garden for Bushfire' publication)
- avoids damage to cultural heritage
- avoids damage to biodiversity values
- other site features (creeks, outcrops etc).

Improvements standard

Improvements standards are very important in defining open spaces, and also important in making them attractive for people to use. Facility improvements include consideration of:

- activity options - play/recreation opportunities irrespective of the age and ability of users
- park furniture (e.g. tables, seats and bins)
- picnicking infrastructure
- public amenities (toilets and showers)
- sports infrastructure
- buildings
- signage
- landscaping
- car parking
- fencing
- lighting
- pathways.



Benchmarking

Gaining insight into the operations of other councils with similar environmental, social and economic challenges may demonstrate new or different ideas with regards to current and future open space provision. Seven councils, similar in nature to Surf Coast Council (coastal communities, many with extensive hinterland), were chosen for DSS land quantity comparison.

Council	Desired Standards of Service (ha/1,000 residents)		
	Active open space (e.g. outdoor sports)	Passive open space ¹ (e.g. parklands and gardens)	Total
Fraser Coast Regional Council (Qld)	1.5	0.85	2.35
Byron Shire Council (NSW)	1.62	1.21	2.83
Gosford City Council (NSW)	2	1.5	3.5
Lismore City Council (NSW)	2	2	4
Tweed Shire Council (NSW)	1.7	1.13	2.83
Wyong Shire Council (NSW)	1.36	1.65	3
Glenelg Shire Council (Vic)	1.5	2.5	4
Surf Coast Shire Council (proposed)	2	0.8	2.8

1 - it is important to note that not all councils benchmarked clearly articulate the open space types included in passive open space. Some appear to include linear open space and/or land for amenity purposes.

The proposed DSS aligns well with those councils considered in this comparative exercise.

From an outdoor sports perspective, Council is striving to achieve a provision rate slightly higher than the average for similar councils (yet far below existing provision). However, this DSS reflects the fact that AFL (a sport that requires a relatively large land area) is a popular sport in the Surf Coast Shire.

The DSS for parklands and gardens is significantly lower than the majority of other councils considered. This lower DSS is a result of the large tracts of coastal parkland available to the

community yet managed by GORCC. It is highly unusual for such a large proportion of key community recreation land to be managed by an agency other than council. Additionally, this DSS acknowledges the important role that the Shire's beaches play as important venues for unstructured and free recreation.

If Council was to achieve these levels of provision in new developments, if quality natural areas remain an option and the beaches and GORCC-managed facilities continue to be available, the community will have access to a quality open space network.





DSS - Open space types

This section provides a snapshot of the DSS for the core open space types within Surf Coast. DSS have been developed by incorporating (and building upon) the requirements included in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme (specifically Clause 56.05-2) and considering key documents such as Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas (2008).

It helps to inform the future improvement and upgrade of existing open space and the planning and delivery of future open space. Further influencing development considerations, is the need to provide a range of different recreation opportunities in smaller individual catchments (e.g. townships and precincts).

A more detailed description of the four classes of parklands and gardens and outdoor sports is provided in the Appendix.

Classification	Hierarchy	Size	Accessibility	Desired provision rate
Parklands and gardens	Local ¹	0.3ha-1.5ha (min. 1ha generally preferred, unless smaller is considered fit-for-purpose). Minimum width 50m	400m of at least 95%of dwellings Serves a local catchment	0.3ha/1,000 people
	District/ Precinct	1.5ha-4ha	2,000m of at least 95%of dwellings Aligned to planning precincts	0.5ha/1,000 people
	Municipal	4ha-10ha	2,000m+ Aligned to Council boundaries	n/a ²
	Regional/ State/National	10ha+	Aligned to G21 boundaries (e.g. includes neighbouring municipalities) and beyond	n/a ²
Outdoor sports	Local	0.5ha-4ha	400m of at least 95%of dwellings	2.0ha/1,000 people (total)
	District/ Precinct ¹	4ha-10ha (min. 8ha preferred)	1,000m of at least 95%of dwellings	
	Municipal	10ha+ May include specialised sporting infrastructure in smaller parcels	2,000m+	
	Regional/ State/National	10ha+	Aligned to G21 boundaries and beyond	

1 - Size and accessibility generally reflect Council's Planning Scheme Clause 56.05-2

2 - Council has determined that it will not set a desired standard of service for the provision of municipal or regional-level parklands and gardens. The provision of this form of open space is considered to be on a site- and time-specific basis (rather than from a planned approach).



Shire-wide assessment

Demand generation

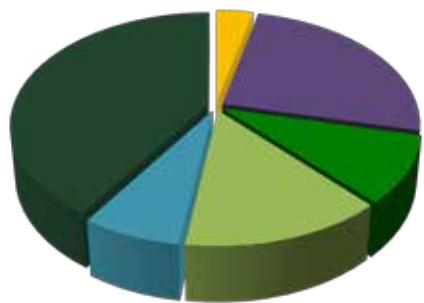
Demand for open space is generally based on permanent residential population. However, a number of social and geographical inputs also affect what on-ground demand is generated for open space, including:

- age and population distribution
- housing type and access to private open space
- housing density
- inputs such as natural and man-made geographic influences.

Additionally, the Surf Coast has a further influence from the large influx of visitors during peak times.

Current supply

All Council-managed open space sites were visited as part of the assessment. Due to the large area of the natural open spaces, only the main visitation areas of the key bushland and natural reserves were visited. A summary of the Surf Coast Shire's current open space network is presented in the table on the following page.



Council-managed open space

	Environmental - 272.8ha
	Parklands and gardens - 23.9ha
	Outdoor sports - 167.9ha
	Linear open space - 63.3ha
	Landscape and heritage - 93.1ha
	Civic spaces - 45.7ha

Planning Precinct	Predicted permanent population			
	2015	2026	2036	Change 2015-2036
Anglesea	2632	2789	2847	215
Deans Marsh-Moriac	4440	4640	4902	462
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	4785	5517	6374	1589
Lorne-Aireys Inlet	2552	2845	3076	524
Torquay	12218	17928	23352	11134
Winchelsea	2183	2663	3211	1028
TOTAL (Shire)	28810	36382	43762	14952

Source: id. consulting (2015)

Planning precinct	Crown land (CoM) (ha)	Total Council managed open space (ha)	% of network that is Crown land
Anglesea	54.74	75.34	72.66
Deans Marsh-Moriac	30.52	114.19	26.73
Jan Juc-Bellbrae-Bells Beach	31.93	78.47	40.69
Lorne-Aireys Inlet	19.97	127.71	15.64
Torquay	9.14	158.74	5.76
Winchelsea	49.45	112.29	44.04
TOTAL (Shire)	195.75	666.74	34.18

Overall, Surf Coast Shire has an abundance of open space (almost 35,000ha) available to residents and visitors. However, only 667ha of this land is managed by Council (and is the primary focus of this Strategy). Of this 667ha of open space, Council owns 65% and is Committee of Management for 35% (which is Crown land).

Even still, the Council-managed land alone reflects an open space provision rate of more than 23ha/1,000. Because the provision of linear open space, landscape and heritage open space, civic spaces and environmental open space are largely opportunistic and depend on the surrounding environment and land uses, open space planners tend to remove these open space types for analysis purposes¹. When only core open space areas (parklands and gardens and outdoor sports) are considered, this provision rate is reduced to 6.66ha/1,000 - still well in excess of the DSS.

¹ However, the impact that these open space types have within individual planning precincts is discussed in the precinct level analyses



Current open space supply (Council-managed land)

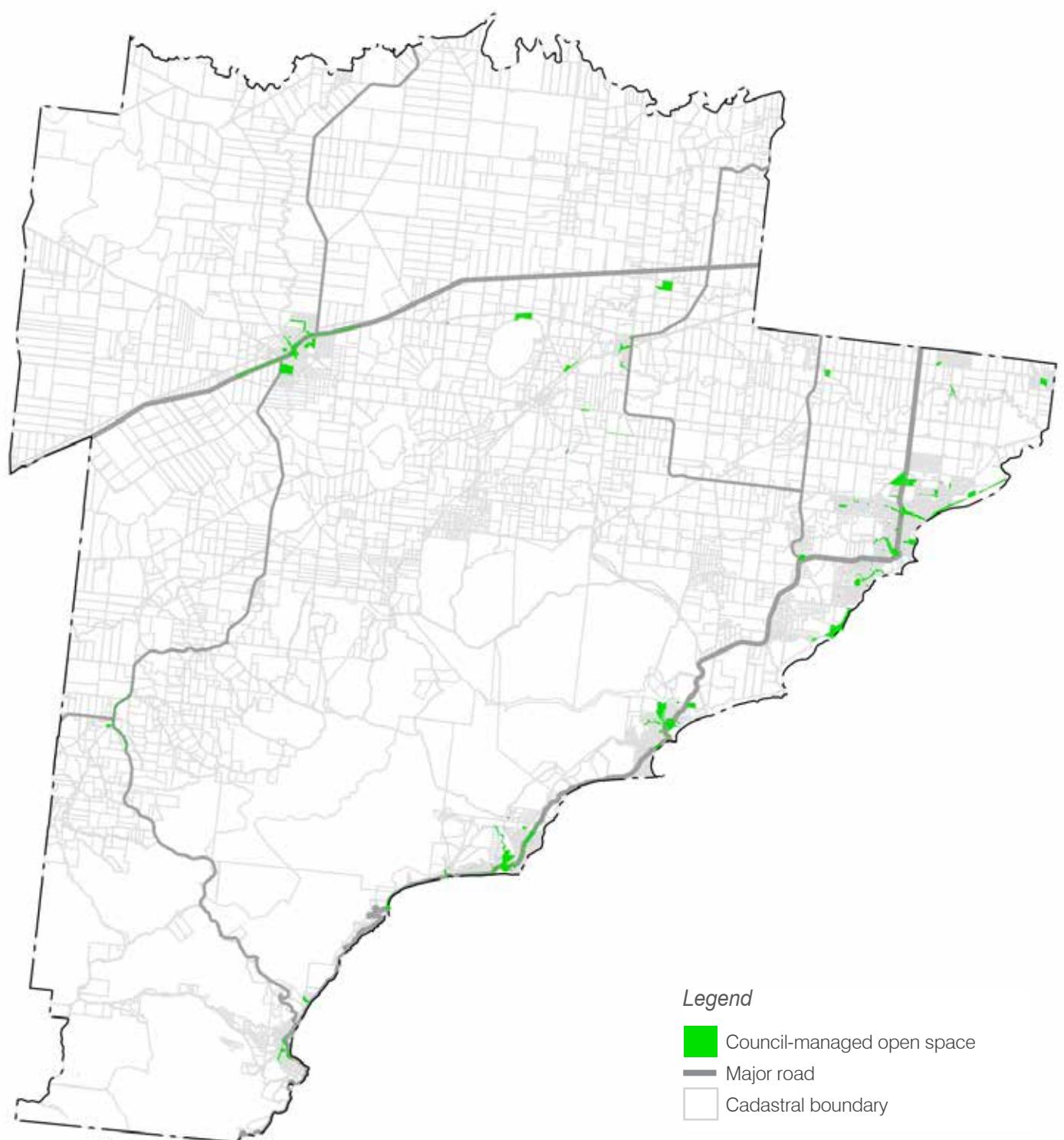
Classification	Hierarchy	Function	Provision (count)	Provision (ha)	Provision rate (ha/1,000 residents)	Proportion of Council-managed open space network (666.74ha) (%)
Parklands and gardens	• Local	Core	27	9.63	0.33	1.44
	• District/Precinct	Core	13	14.3	0.5	2.14
	• Municipal	Core	0	-	-	-
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Core	0	-	-	-
Outdoor sports	• Local	Core	7	12.45	0.43	1.87
	• District/Precinct	Core	19	121.17	4.21	18.17
	• Municipal	Core	1	21.47	0.75	3.22
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Core	2	12.85	0.45	1.93
Linear open spaces and trails	• Local	Non-core	87	41.83	1.45	6.27
	• District/Precinct	Non-core	2	9.78	0.34	1.47
	• Municipal	Non-core	0	-	-	-
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Non-core	1	11.64	0.4	1.75
Landscape and heritage	• Local	Non-core	1	3.8	0.13	0.57
	• District/Precinct	Non-core	7	89.06	3.09	13.36
	• Municipal	Non-core	0	-	-	-
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Non-core	1	0.26	0.01	0.04
Civic spaces	• Local	Non-core	0	-	-	-
	• District/Precinct	Non-core	24	41.91	1.45	6.29
	• Municipal	Non-core	1	3.81	0.13	0.57
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Non-core	0	-	-	-
	• Local	Non-core	33	101.27	3.52	15.19
	• District/Precinct	Non-core	9	76.85	2.67	11.53
	• Municipal	Non-core	2	37.65	1.31	5.65
	• Regional/State/Nat.	Non-core	2	57.01	1.98	8.55

1

'Core' open space is the land that Council can collect developer contributions for as open space. 'Non-core' open space is generally gained through alternate methods such as land swaps with land managers (e.g. becoming CoM for Crown land) or through bequeaths.



Map of current open space (Council-managed land)





Demand, gap assessment and analysis

The table below details the likely demand and gap assessment for Surf Coast Shire's (Council-managed) open space extrapolated out until 2036. This is calculated by multiplying the desired land standard for open space (0.8ha/1,000 for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha/1,000 for outdoor sports) by the projected population.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)	
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)
Parklands and gardens	23.93	23.05	0.88	29.11	-5.18	35.01	-11.08
Outdoor sports	167.93	57.62	110.31	72.76	95.17	87.52	80.41
Total core open space	191.86	80.67	111.19	101.87	89.99	122.53	69.33

Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply

Parklands and gardens

This analysis highlights that Council has sufficient supply of parklands and gardens to meet current need. Indeed, by 2036 only an additional 11ha is required to meet the DSS.

However, it is important to note that Council also maintains more than 63ha of linear open space and almost 46ha of civic spaces. These open space parcels can also offer recreation opportunities and, thus, function in a similar fashion to parklands and gardens.

With Torquay predicted to be the key precinct attracting population growth, this area should also be the focus of any additional parklands and gardens. With more than 11,000 new residents predicted for the Torquay precinct, a desired standard of service of 0.8ha of parklands and gardens would result in approximately 8.9ha of additional open space of this type. There is currently 6ha of future parkland and gardens open space planned for Torquay (six parks of 1ha each). This would leave a predicted shortfall for the whole Shire of approximately 5ha by 2036 (e.g. 11.08ha minus 6ha). If the proposed 14.5ha of linear open space in Torquay is developed with a range of quality recreation opportunities, than this should cover this potential shortfall.

Outdoor sports

Clearly, these results indicate a significant over-supply of land for outdoor sports across the Shire. In fact, current provision is more than 80ha in excess of predicted requirements by 2036.

These results, however, need to be reviewed under consideration. Firstly, these figures include 27ha for the Winchelsea Golf Club, 21ha for Lake Modewarre Reserve and approximately 18ha of land for equestrian purposes. While each of these land parcels provide sporting opportunities, they tend to be for 'specialised' sport rather than for field- and court-based sport generally considered outdoor sport. Additionally, the Surf Coast Shire is large geographically with most townships widespread. As a result, some over-supply of outdoor sports land is expected in order for residents to have suitable access to a range of opportunities within their township.

Looking forward, there appears little need for any additional outdoor sport land at a Shire-wide level. However, further interrogation at a precinct-level highlights that Torquay is likely to be significantly under-supplied by 2036 without additional development.



Anglesea precinct



Location

The Anglesea precinct is located midway along the coast between the Jan Juc - Bellbrae - Bells Beach precinct (to the north) and Lorne - Aireys Inlet precinct (to the south). Outside the Anglesea township, much of the precinct contains heavily vegetated ranges.

Population considerations

This precinct has a limited population base with little growth projected. Indeed, an overall increase of only 215 new residents is expected between 2015 and 2036. This increase will largely result from a growth in the 70 years and over age groups (where 312 new residents are predicted) and be largely offset by a reduction of 127 for those aged 50 to 69 years.

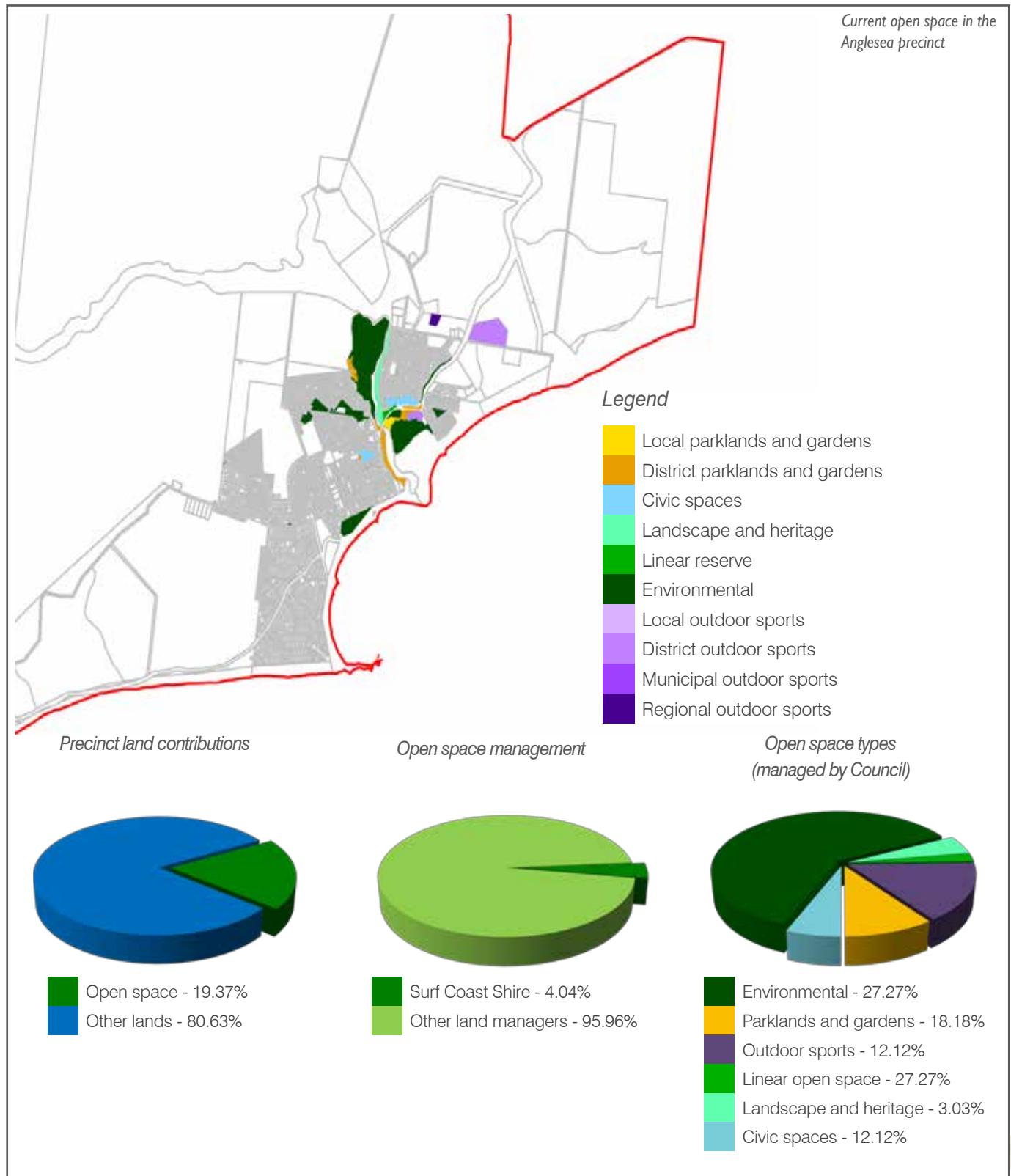
2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
2,632	2,789	2,847	215 (+8%)

Current supply

Despite the small population base, residents and visitors to Anglesea have access to a range of open space choices including core open space (outdoor sports facilities e.g. Ellimatta Recreation Reserve and parklands and gardens e.g. Coogoorah Park Recreation Reserve), environmental areas, linear open space and civic spaces¹. Additionally, residents and visitors to the precinct have access to quality beaches and GORCC-managed foreshore areas.

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (19.31ha)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	2	1.26	0.48	0.18	6.53	0.66
	District/precinct	4	6.22	2.36	1.86	32.21	3.24
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	6	7.48	2.84	2.04	38.74	3.90
Outdoor sports	Local	-	-	-	2.49	-	-
	District/precinct	3	10.58	4.02		54.79	5.51
	Municipal	-	-	-		-	-
	Regional+	1	1.24	0.47		6.42	3.52
	TOTAL	4	11.83	4.49		61.21	9.03
TOTAL		10	19.31	7.33	4.03	100	12.93

¹ Anglesea River Bank is designated as the bushfire place of last resort (during the passage of a bushfire)



Demand and gap assessment

Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8ha for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

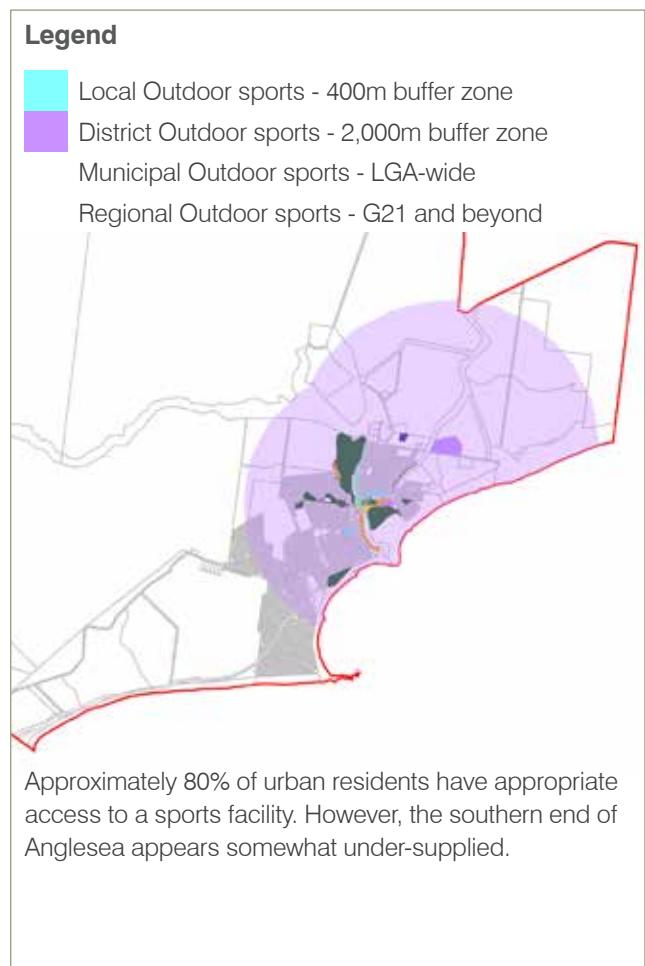
Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)	
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha) ¹
Parklands and gardens	7.48	2.11	5.37	2.23	5.25	2.28	5.2
Outdoor sports	11.83	5.26	6.57	5.58	6.25	5.69	6.14
Total core open space	19.31	7.37	11.94	7.81	11.5	7.97	11.34

Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply

1 - However, when projected sea level rises from climate change are included, the oversupply may be reduced.

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.



Given the breadth of the buffer, no municipal or regional level outdoor sports buffers have been indicated on the precinct accessibility maps



Analysis

The demand and gap assessment has shown an oversupply of core open space both now and into the future. Indeed, by 2036 an oversupply of more than 11ha will remain.

The Anglesea Structure Plan¹ notes the importance of reinforcing the township's status as a coastal settlement with limited capacity for growth. Given limited scope for future development, the Structure Plan notes that the lack of core open space in the western part of the township will be near to impossible to overcome. As such, it recommends a focus on maintaining and upgrading existing facilities and open space rather than looking to establish new infrastructure.

This direction is also reflected in the community survey results from this Strategy with respondents noting they are generally pleased with the existing quality of open space and that additional land is not required. Responses showed that locals enjoy access to beach, river and bush areas close to their homes. The playgrounds and sportsgrounds are also valued.

While the southern side of Anglesea appears somewhat lacking in open space, given the highly developed nature of this area, the topography and the oversupply across the wider precinct, no additional facilities are recommended.

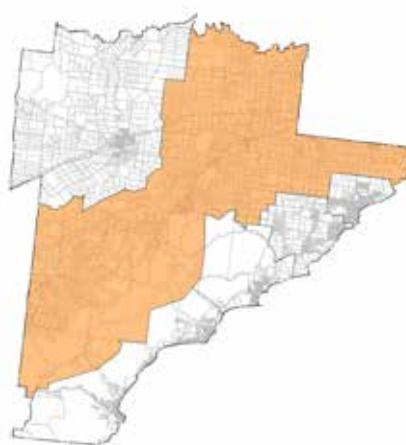
The future closure of the Alcoa site may present additional opportunities for open space and recreation activities within the Anglesea precinct. However, there is insufficient details relating to the closure and future of the land at the time of this Strategy for any decisions or recommendations to be made as a part of this document. It is considered that a separate process will be undertaken in relation to the site and its open space potential when the opportunity presents itself. Any decisions made in relation to the Alcoa land which may include open space opportunities for the Anglesea precinct should be subject to the guiding principles of this document (should its management be by Surf Coast Shire).

Council's open space focus in the Anglesea precinct should be on continued maintenance and infrastructure upgrades rather than provision of any new facilities.

¹ Surf Coast Shire, 2012



Deans Marsh - Moriac precinct



Location

The Deans Marsh - Moriac precinct is a large area (approximately half the area of the entire LGA) that runs the length of the Shire through the central spine. It is a largely rural area typified by forests and ranges toward the south and farming land in the central and northern sections.

Population considerations

Despite its large geographic area, this precinct has a population of just over 4,400 residents. Additionally, limited growth is projected for the precinct with less than 500 new residents expected between 2015 and 2036.

Significant ageing is predicted for the precinct. Indeed, most of the age cohorts for residents less than 60 years are actually predicted to decrease in total number by 2036. In contrast, the number of residents 70 years+ is expected to more than triple across this time span.

	2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
	4,440	4,640	4,902	462 (+10%)

Current supply

Interestingly, this precinct has access to a wide range of outdoor sports yet limited parkland and gardens. Given the rural nature of the precinct it is not surprising that there is a limited range of Council-managed open space types¹.

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (82.09ha)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	1	0.06	0.01	-0.29	0.07	0.03
	District/precinct	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	1	0.06	0.01	-0.79	0.07	0.03
Outdoor sports	Local	4	8.88	2.00	16.48	10.79	4.63
	District/precinct	6	51.68	11.64		62.96	26.94
	Municipal	1	21.47	4.84		26.15	11.19
	Regional+	-	-	-		-	-
	TOTAL	11	82.03	18.48		16.53	99.9 42.76
TOTAL		12	82.09	18.48		15.69	100 42.79

¹ Mount Moriac Recreation Reserve Oval 1 is designated as the bushfire place of last resort (during the passage of a bushfire)



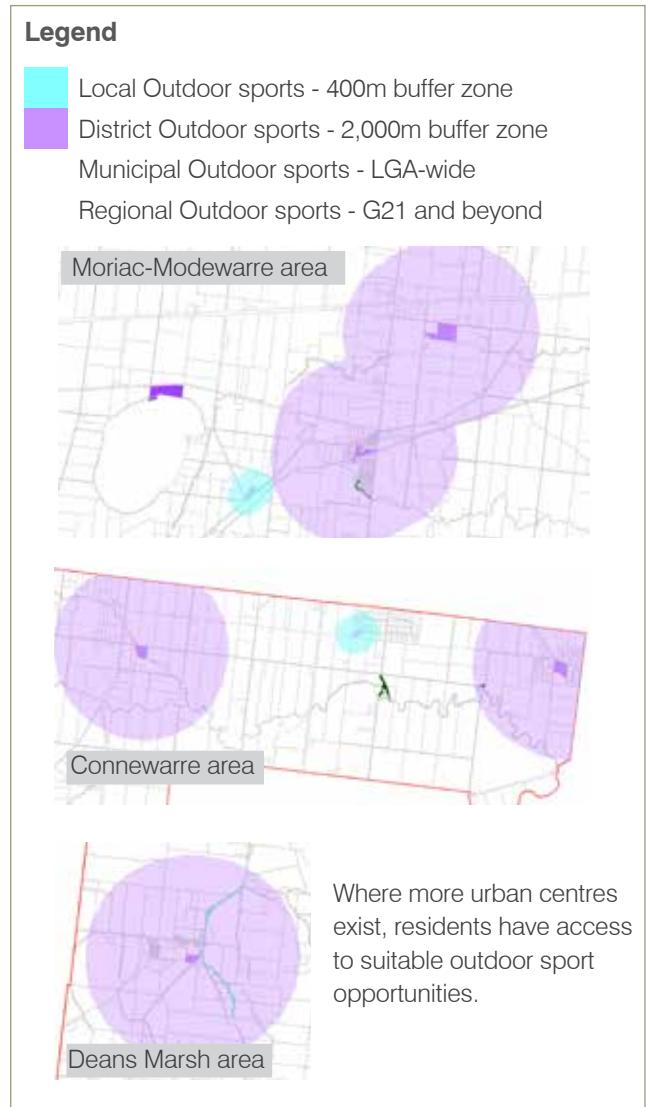
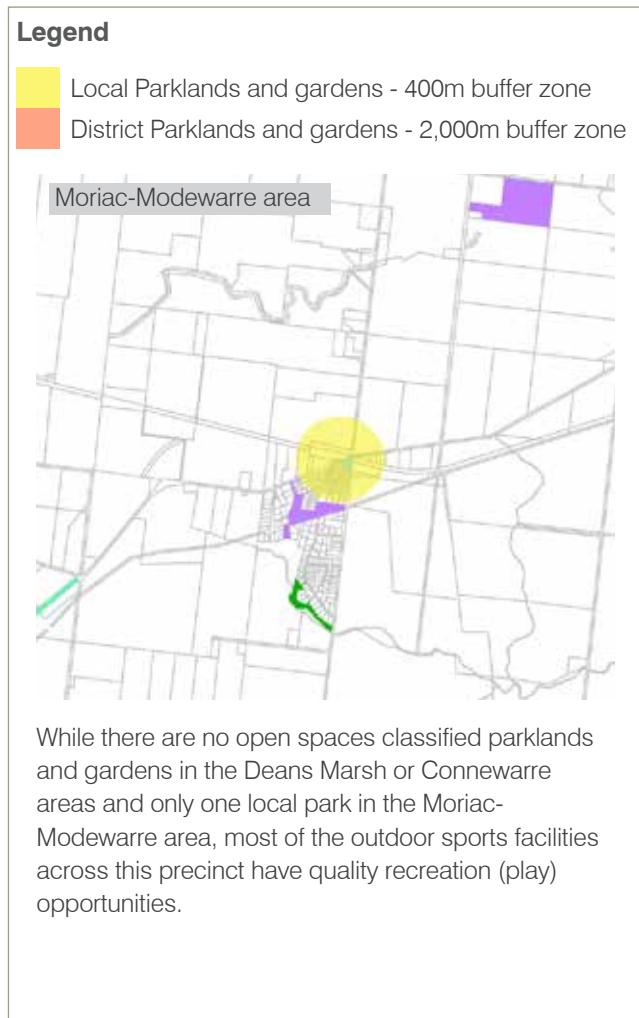
Demand and gap assessment

Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8ha for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)		Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	
Parklands and gardens	0.06	3.55	-3.49	3.71	-3.65	3.92	-3.86	
Outdoor sports	82.03	8.88	73.15	9.28	72.75	9.8	72.23	
Total core open space	82.09	12.43	69.66	12.99	69.1	13.72	68.37	

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.





Analysis

The demand and gap assessment has shown an under-supply of parklands and gardens both currently and into the future. In contrast, the precinct is significantly over-supplied in outdoor sport open space given that it is home to some of the Shire's largest outdoor sports facilities (Mount Moriac Recreation Reserve, Lake Modewarre Reserve and Connewarre Recreation Reserve).

A further interrogation of results indicates that while the provision of parklands and gardens may be limited, opportunity exists for suitable recreation pursuits at facilities such as Deans Marsh Recreation Reserve, Newling Reserve, Modewarre Hall and Recreation Reserve and Connewarre Recreation Reserve that are all classified outdoor sport given their primary function. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that as a largely rural area, many of the residents of this precinct currently live on large blocks potentially with access to a greater range of recreation pursuits than the average 1ha park.

The Deans Marsh Structure Plan 2021¹ notes that the local community would prefer that the recreation facilities remained centralised in the existing hub at the Recreation Reserve and that the focus should be on continued maintenance at the site rather than the establishment of any new facilities or open spaces. The outcomes of the Open Space Strategy support this direction.

The Moriac Structure Plan² outlines that Council (and the community) have progressed well with the master plans developed for Newling Reserve and Mount Moriac Recreation Reserve. The one community survey respondent from this precinct notes the quality of the multi-field sports complex at the Recreation Reserve.

Looking ahead, there appears little need for the addition of any core open space within the Deans Marsh - Moriac precinct.

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- 1 *Surf Coast Council, 2008*
 2 *Surf Coast Council, 2010*



Jan Juc - Bellbrae - Bells Beach precinct



Location

The Jan Juc - Bellbrae - Bells Beach precinct is a coastal location situated between Torquay and Anglesea. This precinct would be largely serviced by Torquay directly to the north.

Population considerations

While this precinct has the second largest population base of the Shire's six precincts, a large proportion of the population is located at the northern end of the precinct in Jan Juc. Moderate population growth is predicted for the precinct with more than 1,500 new residents projected by 2036. A high proportion of this growth will be associated with the precinct ageing. The proportion of residents 60 years+ is predicted to increase from 18.5% in 2015 to 28.0% in 2036.

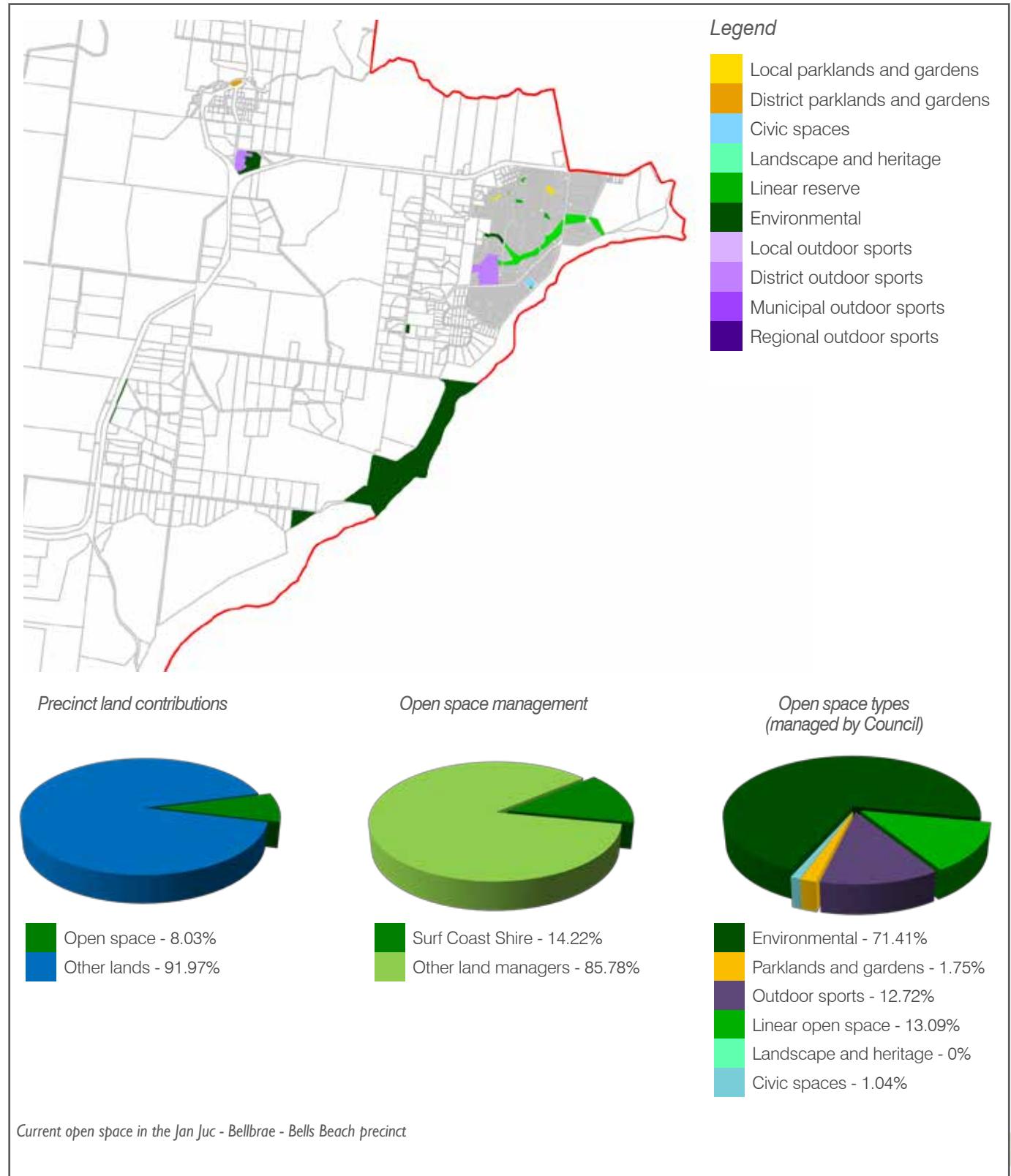
	2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
	4,785	5,517	6,374	1,589 (+33%)

Current supply

Despite the moderate population base, this precinct provides limited core open space opportunities¹. While the precinct has quality outdoor sports facilities at Jan Juc and Bellbrae, it has very few parklands and gardens. However, the precinct is supported by a quality coastline (including world famous Bells Beach), environmental areas and quality linear trails and is also located adjoining the Torquay precinct and the wide range of facilities available there.

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (11.34ha)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	2	0.79	0.17	-0.13	6.97	0.41
	District/precinct	1	0.58	0.12	-0.38	5.11	0.3
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	3	1.37	0.29	-0.51	12.08	0.71
Outdoor sports	Local	-	-	-	0.08	-	-
	District/precinct	2	9.97	2.08		87.92	5.2
	Municipal	-	-	-		-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-		-	-
	TOTAL	1	9.97	2.08	0.08	87.92	5.2
TOTAL		5	11.34	2.37	-0.43	100	5.91

¹ Bob Pettitt Reserve is designated as the bushfire place of last resort (during the passage of a bushfire)



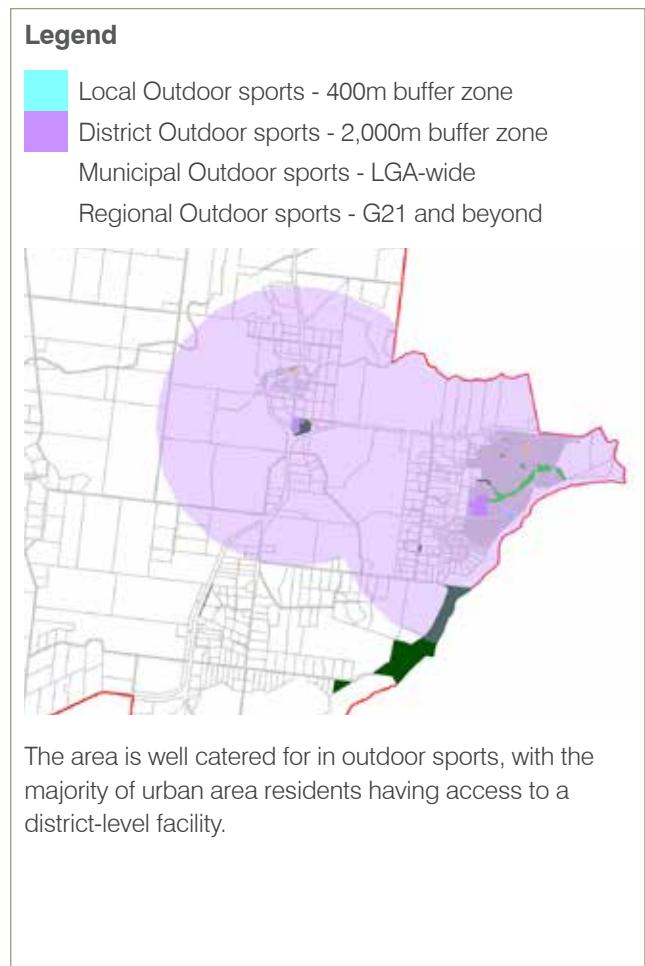
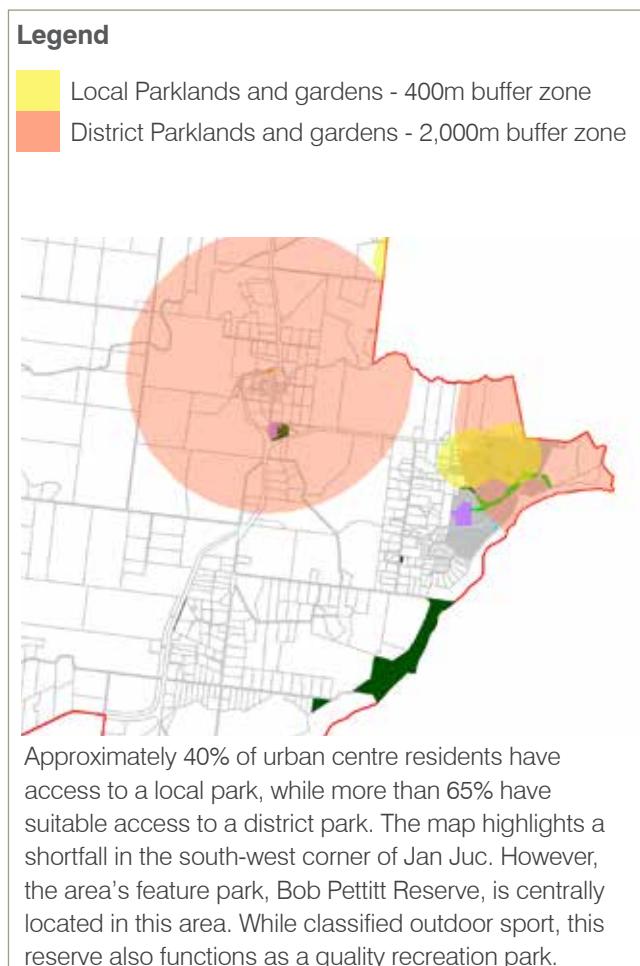
Demand and gap assessment

Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8 for parklands and gardens and 2.0 for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)		Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	
Parklands and gardens	1.37	3.83	-2.46	4.41	-3.04	5.1	-3.73	
Outdoor sports	9.97	9.57	0.4	11.03	-1.06	12.75	-2.78	
Total core open space	11.34	13.4	-2.06	15.44	-4.1	17.85	-6.51	

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.





Analysis

Community survey respondents from the Jan Juc - Bellbrae - Bells Beach precinct note they regularly walk along the beach and in bush settings to enjoy the views and to relax and unwind. Jan Juc residents also note that they are pleased with Bob Pettitt Reserve and adjoining Jan Juc Creek Recreation Reserve and that recreation is also regularly undertaken in nearby Torquay.

The demand and gap assessment has highlighted an overall slight under-supply of core open space both now and through until 2036 (without additional land development). While the current provision for outdoor sport is appropriate, by 2036 a deficit of almost 3ha is predicted. For parklands and gardens, a shortfall of almost 2.5ha is current and expands to almost 4ha by 2036.

However, it is important to recognise that two key open space areas in this precinct also provide quality recreation opportunities that align well with those available within parklands and gardens - Bob Pettitt Reserve (classified outdoor sport) and Jan Juc Recreation Reserve and Playground (classified linear open spaces and trails). Together, these two facilities make up for the apparent shortfall in parklands and gardens in the Jan Juc area beyond the timeframes considered in this Strategy.

The Strategy does not recommend additional development of outdoor sport to meet the predicted shortfalls. The development of a small one or two field facility is not a preferred delivery model and is unlikely to attract significant use. Further, it is important to consider the pull that surf sports have in this precinct and the impact this has on a likely move away from traditional sports (and hence a reduction in demand for open space of this type).



Lorne - Aireys Inlet precinct



Location

While Lorne and Aireys Inlet are two separate towns, given their individual limited population bases they have been combined by id consultants as one planning unit for population prediction purposes. This planning precinct is located along the southern coastal boundary of the Shire.

Population considerations

This precinct is typified by a limited population with minimal population increases projected. Much of the predicted growth will result from significant ageing - with the proportion of residents aged 60 years and above rising from 32.3% (in 2015) to 38.5% (in 2036).

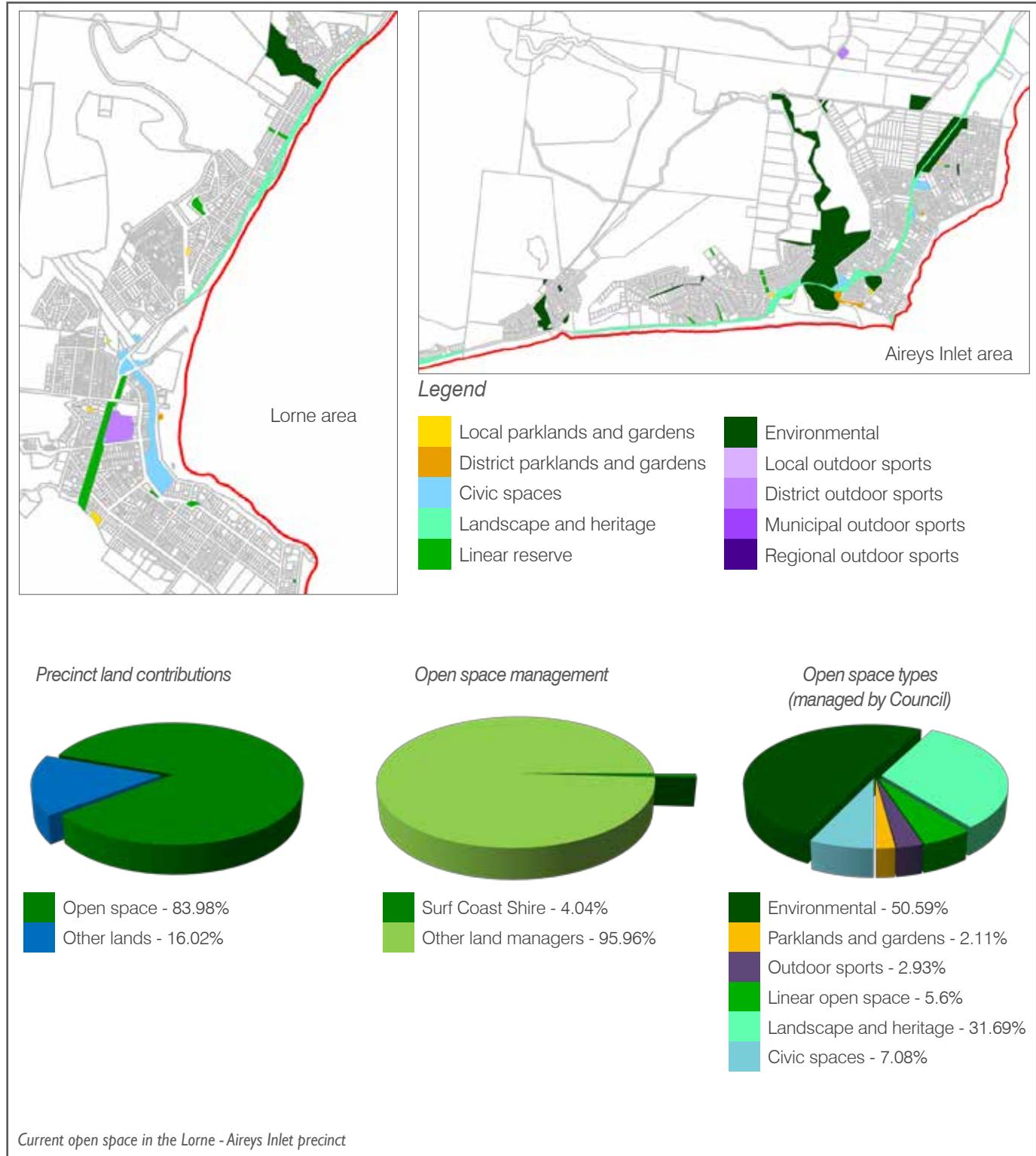
	2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
	2,552	2,845	3,076	524 (+21%)

Current supply

Despite a limited population base across these two towns, there are a number of parklands and gardens open spaces in this precinct¹. In contrast, only two outdoor sport open spaces are available. It is also important to note that the area is well-known for quality linear and environmental open spaces and is highly regarded for quality beaches and natural areas.

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (6.44ha)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	7	1.00	0.39	0.09	15.53	0.52
	District/precinct	4	1.7	0.67	0.17	26.4	0.89
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	11	2.7	1.06	0.26	41.93	1.41
Outdoor sports	Local	-	-	-	-0.53	-	-
	District/precinct	2	3.74	1.47		58.07	1.95
	Municipal	-	-	-		-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-		-	-
	TOTAL	2	3.74	1.47		58.07	1.95
TOTAL		13	6.44	2.53	-0.27	100	3.36

¹ Lorne Foreshore is designated as the bushfire place of last resort (during the passage of a bushfire)



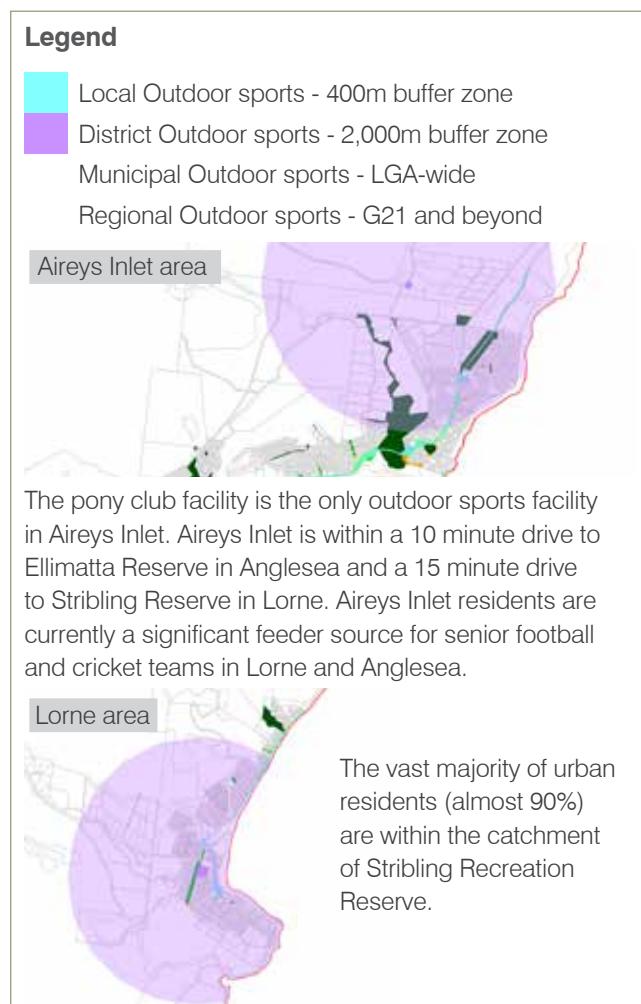
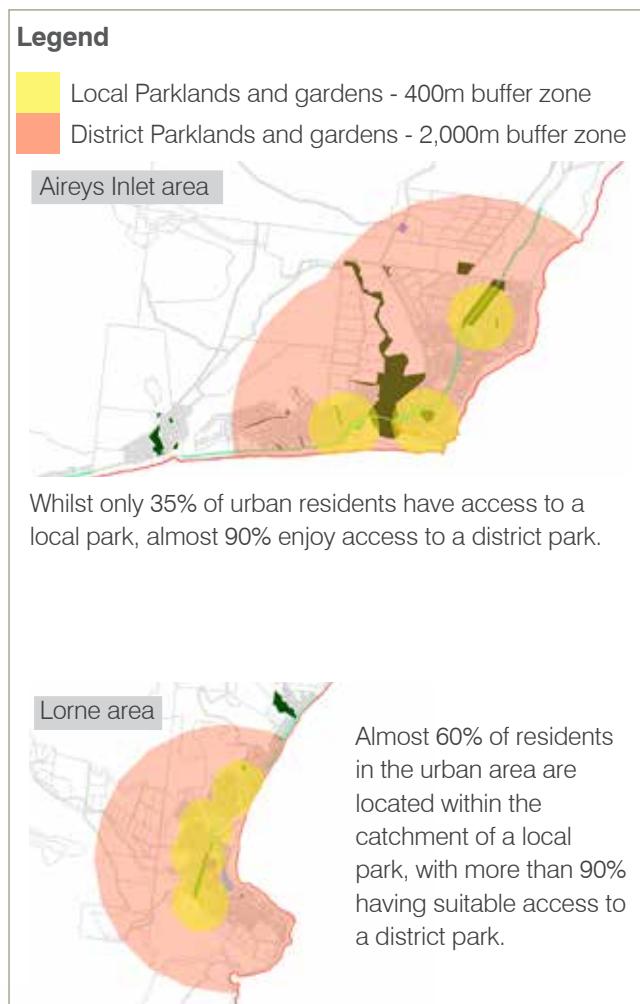
Demand and gap assessment

Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8 for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)		Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	
Parklands and gardens	2.7	2.04	0.66	2.28	0.42	2.46	0.24	
Outdoor sports	3.74	5.1	-1.36	5.69	-1.95	6.15	-2.41	
Total core open space	6.44	7.14	-0.7	7.97	-1.53	8.61	-2.17	

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.





Analysis

The demand and gap assessment has shown generally appropriate supply of both parklands and gardens and outdoor sports in the Lorne - Aireys Inlet precinct to meet current demand. The results do, however, identify a slight shortfall in land for outdoor sports of approximately 2ha by 2036. Given that Lorne residents have access to Stribling Recreation Reserve, it can be extrapolated that this deficit relates primarily to Aireys Inlet.

Reflective of the demand and gap assessment findings, the Aireys Inlet Recreation Infrastructure Strategy¹ identified the need for a single field multi-sport facility. However, with slightly more than 400 youth currently aged 5 to 19 across the entire Aireys Inlet - Lorne precinct (and limited growth expected) and with playing fields available in both nearby Lorne and Anglesea, this recommendation appears somewhat hard to defend. The recently released *Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan* November 2015 resolved to not progress the development of an active recreation space in the Painkalac valley but investigate the opportunity for enhancement of

the primary school oval for recreational use and continue to facilitate the sharing of sports facilities in Lorne, Anglesea, Bellbrae and Torquay.

The community survey highlights the importance of natural areas for Aireys Inlet residents (rather than developed facilities such as outdoor sports venues). Indeed, most respondents enjoy walking to nearby natural areas such as beaches and national parks given the quality of views and opportunities to relax and unwind. Interestingly, responses note mixed perceptions regarding whether additional open space is required to accommodate growth.

Similarly, Lorne residents note their enjoyment of regular walks along the beach and also highlight the need for enhanced walking and cycling opportunities throughout the town. Respondents note that there is currently enough open space to meet future needs.

Continued maintenance and facility upgrade should be the key open space direction for Council in the Aireys Inlet - Lorne precinct. Any requests for future additional land development for open space purposes should carefully consider demand.

¹ Coomes Consulting Group & @leisure, 2008



Torquay precinct



Location

The precinct boundaries used in this Strategy have been taken from those developed by id consultants in demographic profiling and population forecasts. However, given their small area and the fact that from an open space planning perspective they function as one precinct, the Old Torquay - Torquay West planning area and Torquay North planning area have been combined to form the Torquay precinct.

The Torquay planning precinct is a coastal area located toward the north-east corner of the Shire. This precinct is based around Torquay township - the main commercial and administrative centre of the Shire.

Population considerations

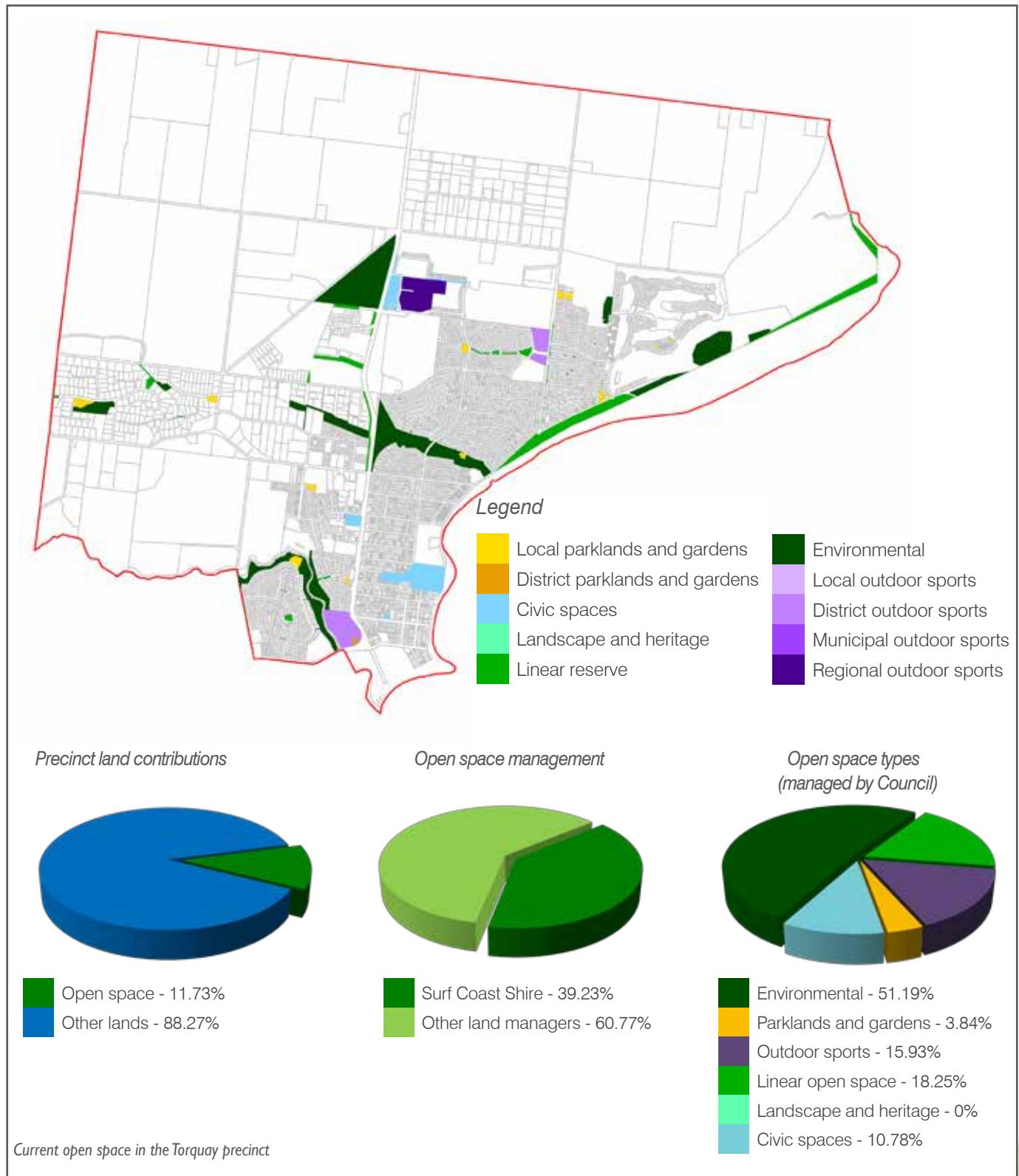
Currently, more than 42% of the Shire's population is based in this precinct. Additionally, of the almost 15,000 new residents predicted in the Shire by 2036, more than 11,000 are expected to reside in the Torquay precinct (with the precinct accounting for 53.4% of the predicted 2036 Shire population). While many young families will move to the area, further aging is also expected with the proportion of residents aged 60 years+ increasing from 20.1% (in 2015) to 25.4% (in 2036).

	2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
	12,218	17,928	23,352	11,134 (+91%)

Current supply

As a long-established community, residents and visitors to the Torquay precinct have access to a wide range of core open space opportunities - from small local parks through to well-established regional open spaces, from single field sporting venues through to the only regional-level multi-field sporting complex in the LGA. In addition, this area has vast tracts of environmental open space and linear open spaces that link residential areas, community hubs, parks and sporting facilities. Finally, this precinct includes nationally-renowned beaches and beach-side open spaces (largely managed by GORCC).

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (31.39ha)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	13	5.8	0.47	0.17	18.48	3.02
	District/precinct	1	0.3	0.02	-0.48	0.96	0.16
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	14	6.1	0.49	-0.31	19.43	3.18
Outdoor sports	Local	-	-	-	0.07	-	-
	District/precinct	3	13.68	1.12		43.58	7.13
	Municipal	-	-	-		-	-
	Regional+	1	11.61	0.95		37	6.05
	TOTAL	4	25.29	2.07		80.58	13.18
TOTAL		18	31.39	2.57	-0.23	100	16.36



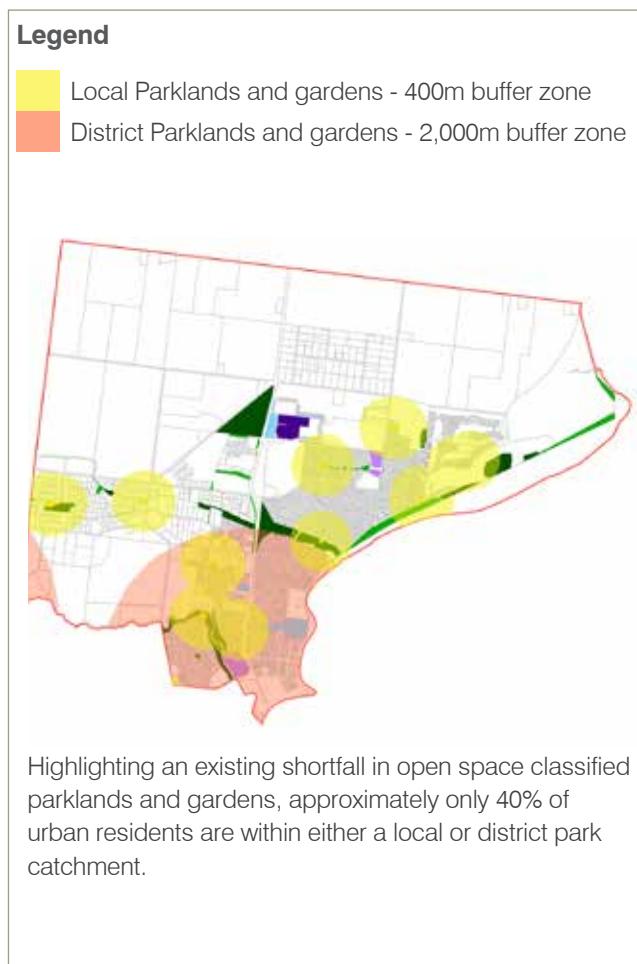
Demand and gap assessment

Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8 for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)		Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	
Parklands and gardens	6.1	9.77	-3.67	14.34	-8.24	18.68	-12.58	
Outdoor sports	25.29	24.44	0.85	35.86	-10.57	46.70	-21.41	
Total core open space	31.39	34.21	-2.82	50.2	-18.81	65.38	-33.99	

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.





Analysis

The Torquay precinct is currently well-supplied with outdoor sports area yet slightly under-supplied (3.67ha) in parklands and gardens. However, it is important to consider that this analysis includes land area for Banyul-Warri Fields being completely developed where, in fact, additional fields are due to be developed in 2015/16. With significant growth predicted for this precinct, notable open space shortfalls are expected for the precinct without the addition of further facilities. While the extent of the under-supply in parklands and gardens is likely to be covered by parkland development associated with residential expansion, meeting expected demand for outdoor sports will require the development of one or two large multi-sport facilities.

The Sustainable Futures Plan Torquay - Jan Juc 2040 (2014) clearly articulates the importance of all new developments providing suitable open space areas and new multi-purpose recreation hubs. This concept was mirrored in the community survey undertaken in this Strategy where Torquay residents noted the importance of additional open space to meet the needs of a growing community. Additionally, residents highlight that the existing open space network is of a very high quality especially natural areas such as Taylor Park (GORCC-managed) and the beaches.

The Torquay Jan Juc Development Contributions Plan¹ articulates the proposed future open space in line with residential development. In terms of outdoor sports, the Contributions Plan includes the development of a precinct with two AFL fields, three soccer fields (including one synthetic) and four netball courts. At the time of writing, only the second AFL field and third soccer field are yet to be constructed. From a parklands and gardens perspective, six local parks are forecast (one hectare each) with an additional 14.5ha of linear open space. Of all of these local park and linear open space works only 0.2ha of linear have been developed.

It appears that the proposed park and linear open space development noted in the Contributions Plan will cover much of the projected deficit in parklands and gardens. Additionally, the precinct includes vast tracts of quality linear open space, environmental open space, civic spaces and GORCC-managed beachside reserves ensuring the recreation needs of residents (and visitors) are well met. In contrast, the expected 21ha shortfall in outdoor sport land

will require future acquisition. The additional AFL field and soccer field to be developed at Banyul-Warri Fields have already been factored into the assessment and further highlight demand. Another consideration is that the scale of this shortfall may prove to be slightly larger than true demand given the popularity of surf sports for the precinct. Regardless, at least one new multi-sport facility will be required by 2026. Council may look to develop a facility that targets those sports that are currently not well catered for within the Shire (e.g. hockey, rugby league, rugby union, touch football, softball, baseball etc) rather than to develop yet another traditional cricket, AFL and netball facility. Ideally, this new site would be at least 15ha and potentially established within or on the outskirts of the long-term residential area noted in the Contributions Plan.

The Spring Creek Urban Growth area is an area where future open space will be required (provided) for future residents, but the precise form has yet to be determined and will be done through a separate process - the Spring Creek Precinct Structure Plan project.



¹ SGS Economics and Planning, 2011



Winchelsea precinct



Location

The Winchelsea planning precinct is located in the far north-west corner of the Shire. The small town of Winchelsea is the major service centre for the surrounding rural community. The Barwon River flows from the southern to northern boundaries of this precinct and is a key feature of the Winchelsea township.

Population considerations

While the precinct is currently the smallest precinct by population, significant population growth is predicted. This increase is likely to be from people of all ages moving to the precinct. While the area is already significantly older than the Shire as a whole (28.2% of residents 60 years and above compared with 23.1%) further aging is not expected, yet it is for the Shire. In 2036, the 60 years+ population predictions are 30.6% for the precinct and 29.0% for the Shire).

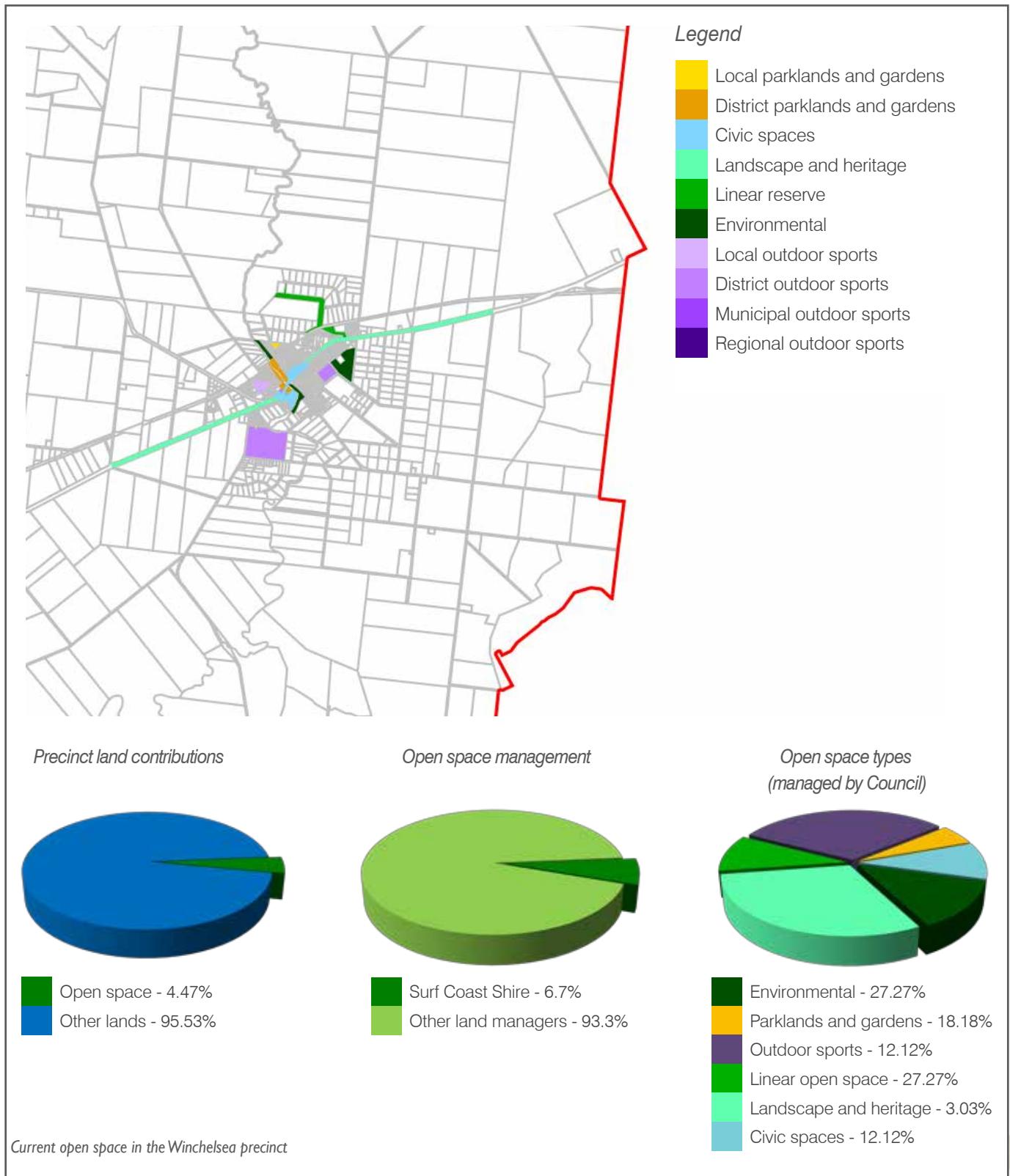
	2015	2026	2036	Change from 2015 to 2036
	2,183	2,663	3,211	1,028 (+47%)

Current supply

Despite the limited population base, a range of open space opportunities are available to residents in the Winchelsea precinct. The precinct includes both local and district level parklands and gardens and outdoor sports. Additionally, residents have access to quality environmental areas and the Barwon River.

Classification	Applicable hierarchy	Count	Total ha	Provision rate (ha) per 1,000 people	Gap desired standard of service (ha:1,000)	Percentage of total core open space (%)	
						Precinct (41.28)	Surf Coast LGA (191.86ha)
Parklands and gardens	Local	2	0.71	0.33	0.03	1.72	0.37
	District/precinct	3	5.5	2.52	2.02	13.32	2.87
	Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Regional+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	5	6.21	2.85	2.05	15.04	3.24
Outdoor sports	Local	3	3.57	1.64	14.07	8.65	1.86
	District/precinct	3	31.5	14.43		76.31	16.42
	Municipal						
	Regional+						
	TOTAL	7	35.07	16.07		84.96	18.28
TOTAL		12	41.28	18.92	16.12	100	21.52





Demand and gap assessment

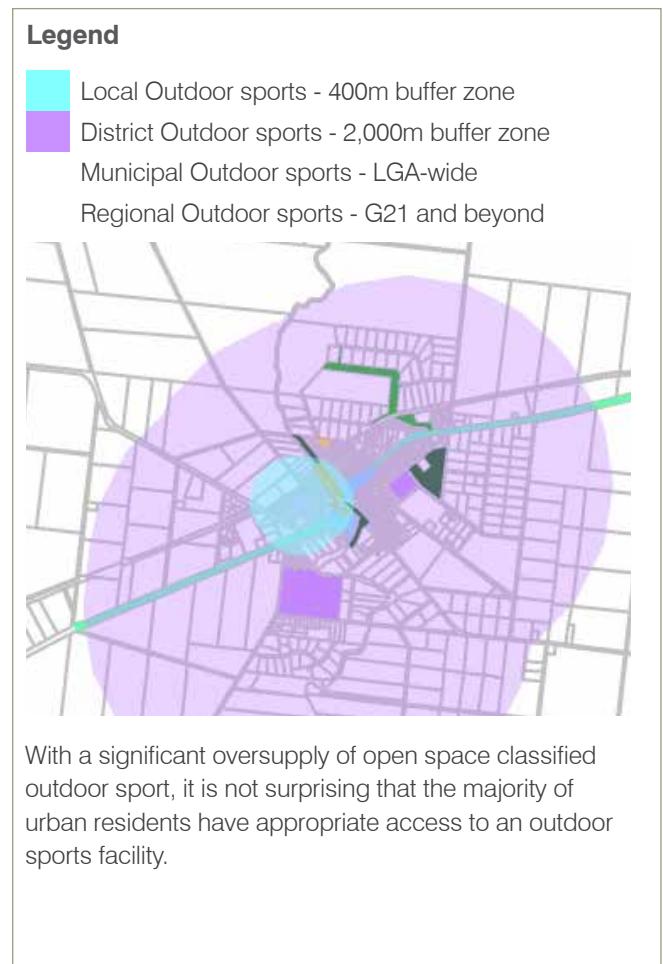
Using the desired standard of service for land supply of 2.8ha/1,000 (being 0.8ha for parklands and gardens and 2.0ha for outdoor sports), the likely demand for open space and any gaps in the current and future provision are detailed in the table below. This demand assessment is based on the land standard and population projections only.

Classification	Current supply (ha)	Current (2015)		Future (2026)		Future (2036)	
		Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)	Demand (ha)	Gap (ha)
Parklands and gardens	6.21	1.75	4.46	2.13	4.08	2.57	3.64
Outdoor sports	35.07	4.37	30.70	5.33	29.74	5.33	29.74
Total core open space	41.28	6.12	35.16	7.46	33.82	7.9	33.38

Note: Positive numbers reflect an over-supply, while negative numbers indicate an under-supply

Open space accessibility

The maps below indicate accessibility to the current open space network based on the desired accessibility distances prescribed in the Desired Standards of Service.





Analysis

Despite predicted population growth, the Winchelsea precinct is well supplied for both parklands and gardens and outdoor sport through until 2036 and beyond. It is important to acknowledge that 27ha of the 35ha of outdoor sports land is the Winchelsea Golf Club. However, even if this land parcel is removed from the analysis, the provision of outdoor sports land remains above projected requirements beyond 2036.

Growing Winchelsea¹ identifies that a key focus for the local community is securing land to accommodate the future extension of Eastern Reserve to the south (through Council acquisition) to allow for the development of a second full-size oval. Further, the document notes that the provision of passive open space (parklands and gardens) meets community demands well. This outcome was reiterated in the results of the community survey conducted in association with this Strategy that identified that Winchelsea residents are generally pleased with the range of open space opportunities available. Locals enjoy recreating along the river given its natural setting and the quality of the views. However, the provision of a play area within Eastern Reserve would be valued.

Another environmental open space, the 12.2 ha Winchelsea Common, contains nationally significant basalt plains grassland communities and until recently also housed the Winchelsea Gun Club and Winchelsea Fun Kart Club. The Gun Club shooting range was active from the 1950s to December 2012 and resulted in high levels of contamination. The Winchelsea Common remains closed to public access due to high levels of contaminants present on-site in the form of lead shot, clay targets and plastic cartridges. These items contain lead, antimony and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons which can be toxic to humans if ingested. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has requested the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) prepare a Clean-Up Plan for the site. This Clean-Up Plan will define which parts of the site can be accessed by the community after the clean-up has occurred. This is determined by EPA in regard to their requirements under legislation.

Whilst the outcomes of the demand and gap assessment do not support a need to acquire and develop a second field at Eastern Reserve at this stage, Council has previously committed to this project. A second field was recommended in a 2007 master plan with Council committing to the future acquisition in 2013. The timing of the acquisition will require further investigation.



Future directions

This section does not attempt to tease out all of the directions highlighted within the Strategy and carried through into the action plan. Rather, it discusses a small number of the key fundamental issues and future directions that have surfaced throughout the consultation and community needs analysis undertaken in the Strategy.

Council resources

The current practice of delivering a high quality open space network has been identified through facility assessments conducted in the Strategy and is well-recognised and well-regarded by the community. However, maintaining this level of improvements and maintenance whilst also looking for opportunities for facility upgrades requires significant resourcing.

Council currently allocates approximately \$800k each year for renewal of open space. Of this, roughly 90% is directed toward formal recreation areas whilst the remaining 10% is used for natural areas. Combined, these totals reflect less than 9% of Council's entire renewal budget. Over the next 10 financial years, Council proposes an annual budget average of approximately \$940k for capital works in open space areas. Again, much of this (more than 96%) is to be used for formal recreation purposes (including approximately \$127k for playground development) and combined reflect less than 6% of Council's capital budget allocations¹. This breakdown is highlighted in the adjoining table.

Council obtains funding for open space using a number of mechanisms, the two most common being contributions of cash or land as a planning permit condition when subdividing land or via contributions identified within a development contributions plan (DCP). In the two townships designated for urban growth, Winchelsea and Torquay/Jan Juc, the planning scheme specifies a contribution of up to 10% of developable

land within the subdivision. In other areas of the Shire the contribution is up to 5%, consistent with the Subdivision Act 1988.

In Torquay/Jan Juc development, contributions are collected via a Development Contributions Plan Overlay for infrastructure including "unique" open space projects such as those that serve a district function e.g. sporting fields. Local open spaces are generally delivered via the subdivision mechanism. The contributions are collected through a DCP Overlay in the Planning Scheme. At Winchelsea, a development contributions plan has recently been prepared but delivery may be via Section 173 agreements. It should be noted that a DCP only covers a portion of the cost of the infrastructure, not full cost recovery, with the remainder being funded via State and Federal grants, general rate revenue or a combination of both. The development contributions in the Torquay/Jan Juc DCP cover 40% of the cost of the infrastructure, with 60% needing to come from other sources.

The Strategy has also identified the value that the community places on continued access to quality environmental areas (bushland). Whilst it is acknowledged that a large proportion of the environmental areas enjoyed are not maintained by Council (e.g. Parks Victoria and GORCC lands), Council does currently manage almost 273ha of environmental open space. This is more than 80ha larger than the combined contribution of parklands and gardens and outdoor sport. Clearly, these two highly maintained core open space types require more significant resourcing. However, the small proportion of resources directed toward environmental (natural) area does not appear to reflect the importance that the community places on these asset types.

¹ These figures are Council contributions from general rate revenue only. They do not include grants, DCP and reserve contributions.



The table below presents a comparison of resource allocation for like councils. While it is difficult to guarantee that the elements included in each item are congruent, they do provide an over-arching picture for comparative purposes.

Council	Renewal budget				Capital budget			
	Recreation (% of recreation and nature total)	Nature (% of recreation and nature total)	Total	Proportion of Council's total renewal budget	Recreation (% of recreation and nature total)	Nature (% of recreation and nature total)	Total	Proportion of Council's total capital budget
Surf Coast Shire ¹	700,000 (90%)	80,000 (10%)	780,000	8.6%	730,000 (78%)	210,000 (22%)	940,000	5.9%
Bass Coast Shire (Vic) ²	not available	not available	not available	not available	1,200,000 (33%)	2,400,000 (67%)	3,600,000	29.5%
Tweed Shire (NSW) ³	7,400,000 (73%)	2,700,000 (27%)	10,100,000	16.2%	3,300,000 (100%)	0 (0%)	3,300,000	6.3%
Fraser Coast Regional (Qld) ⁴	9,000,000 (86%)	1,500,000 (14%)	10,500,000	14.4%	7,300,000 (93%)	550,000 (7%)	7,850,000	14.5%

1 - Renewal figures are FY15/16. Capital figures are average of next 10 years as budgeted

2 - Renewal and capital figures are FY14/15. Natural areas figures include foreshore reserves

3 - Renewal and capital figures are allocated FY15/16

4 - Renewal and capital figures are allocated FY15/16.
Capital figures for recreation are inflated by a one-off \$5m allocation to a feature project

These figures suggest that Council's resource allocation toward open space areas (both renewal and capital) is somewhat limited. Generally, the other councils investigated allocate a larger proportion of both total renewal and capital budgets toward open space development than Surf Coast Shire does. While it is acknowledged that Council has achieved quality on-ground outcomes with these limited budgets, maintaining this standard is likely to be difficult. Additionally, achieving key proposed developments from master plans will also be difficult with such a limited capital budget allocation.

Given, the high regard the community hold for open space, a target of 10% of total renewal and 8% for total capital budgets would be preferred (including an individual allocation for precinct planning). However, it is recognised that with budget resources stretched, additional funds may be difficult to allocate. As an alternative, an allocation may be set aside for attracting funding (matching open space and recreation

grants). Many state and federal grants require council to also contribute or to match funds. If a separate budget allocation was available that could only be used as Council contribution toward attracting funding for open space development, Council may achieve more significant projects (such as the large numbers unactioned in existing master plans). An indicative annual allocation of \$500k for this purpose would allow Council officers to seek suitable grant opportunities and to target key projects. Where grants are not successful, these funds could be absorbed into Council's wider budget or be rolled over to top-up the budget item in the following year.

Further, it is important to consider the breakdown of Council's resource allocations between formal recreation and natural areas. Given the community's clear preference for quality bushland experiences (as opposed to formal parks and playgrounds) it would appear that the proportion of resources allocated for natural areas is limited. While it is recognised that a wider range of improvements may be required for formal recreation areas (play nodes, maintained turf and irrigation, covered seating, bike racks etc) additional allocation for natural areas will further enhance the sustainability of these facilities.

The table above does not give a clear direction for comparable breakdowns of spending in the two grouped areas of open space (recreation and natural). However, it would appear that Council has a limited allocation for renewal in natural areas, while the overall limited allocation for capital projects in open space results in a small allocation for natural area projects.

Master planning

Council has undertaken many master plans for open space areas in recent years. In a number of cases, these have resulted in limited on-ground change. Indeed, Council staff recently tallied the remaining capital recommendations in these master plans and noted in excess of \$40m worth of outstanding projects. Clearly, this is beyond Council's (and the community's) resource realities in the short to medium (and likely long) term. Ideally, Council should not move to undertake new master planning processes until the short- and medium-term recommendations from previous plans have either been completed or, if no longer considered relevant, have been removed from consideration. Council officers should consider reviewing the \$40m worth of projects currently 'sitting' within master plans and re-prioritise valid actions whilst not implementing those that no longer meet Council and community demand. Evaluating existing master plan recommendations against the guiding principles included in this Strategy will be one method to assist to reassess priorities.

Looking forward, master plans should only be developed for district/precinct level facilities and above. Simple concept plans could be developed in-house for local-level facilities where new improvements are proposed. Master plans should include significant community consultation and, most importantly, should reflect resource realities - there is no point in lifting community expectations beyond a sensible (and achievable) level. Priority should be given to the master planning of the new outdoor sports venue(s) required in the Torquay area.

To avoid the current situation of a large backlog of proposed (and unactioned) projects within master plans, Council should look to only undertake one new master plan and one master plan review each year. Council currently uses a complex decision matrix to prioritise facilities requiring master plans. This is a relatively new process and should be trialled over the coming years. After five years, the matrix (and the wider process used to determine the priority list for facility master plans) should be reviewed. It is important that the decision-making process is rigorous and yet retains enough flexibility to meet changing Council and community (and funding partner) directions and preferences. Potentially a more simplistic approach may be suitable to achieve the same ranking lists for facility priorities for master planning.

If enhanced resources (and potential increases in grant subsidies) can be achieved as outlined in the previous resourcing discussion, Council may catch up on key projects and then be in a position to undertake short-term (high priority) works identified in future master plans.

Tenure

Council is proposing to undertake a separate body of work in the future that will consider the likely financial environment Council will find itself working within as a result of the outcomes from rate capping. As such, it is likely to include a review of fees and charges across the Shire. With regard to community use of open space, this review should ensure the following considerations are included:

- the development of tenure arrangements with community groups recognises the significant resource and outlays undertaken by Council
- community service obligations are clearly articulated
- acknowledge the contribution many of the not-for-profit community organisations make toward facility maintenance and development
- acknowledge the social benefits, and positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of our communities that many of the not-for-profit community organisations and clubs provide.
- open dialogue with the many community groups and clubs throughout the Shire
- the current and future role of Council as Committee of Management for Crown land designated for open space purposes.

It is recognised that there will be different tenure requirements relating to different uses and different facilities. For example those relating to commercial activities such as surf schools and those that are competition-based sports (i.e football, netball, cricket).

Clearly, this review will require careful consideration and significant consultation to ensure financial and facility sustainability.

Community and commercial use of open space

The Surf Coast is widely acknowledged as one of the more desirable places in Australia to live, work and play. This places the community land in high demand for the community uses it is intended for. However, Council receives increasing numbers of proposals for community uses and commercial activity on community land. Council's intention will be to continue to balance usage demand with the preservation of environmental, economic and social values. Ongoing referral to the Open Space Planning Committee will continue.

Requests for *community* use of open space (e.g. developing a community garden) will be assessed by Council against a range of considerations:



- consistency - is the proposed use consistent with the intended purpose of the open space?
- impact - will the proposal unnecessarily impact (encroach, disturb) existing uses?
- incrementalism - is there potential for the site to grow beyond the original request and hence further impact the open space and surrounding uses?
- exclusivity - will the proposal restrict or exclude open public access?

Clearly, it is also important that Council can articulate the framework and principles for making decisions about the allocation and use of community land for *commercial activities*. This will ensure that community use remains paramount, while allowing for the operation of commercial activities in circumstances that are complementary to the land's primary purpose and also provide a benefit to the community.

A range of principles will guide Council in the development of a suitable policy framework. These include:

- community use takes precedence
- alignment with Council's vision
- extent of achieving Open Space Strategy principles
- compliance with Planning Scheme and legal requirements
- community benefit
 - will the proposed use promote the primary purpose of the open space, contribute to tourism?
 - can it be operated elsewhere other than on community land?
 - will it service the needs of users of the land?
- limited adverse impacts
 - considerations include: noise and other pollution; visual impacts; flora and fauna impacts; access and parking; safety; degradation of the open space; community's desire and tolerance for the activity
- permit-based approval - limit exclusive use or ongoing rights
 - preference for diversity and competition. Potential for market dominance will be taken into account.

Council may consider a framework that articulates a set of event frequencies and preferred event sizes for each of its key individual sites.

Key partnerships

While this Strategy focuses on Council-managed open space, it is evident that the community views open space as an entire network that includes land managed by other agencies. For example, there is little differentiation from the community's perspective, whether foreshore reserves are managed by Council or GORCC or whether natural areas are controlled by Parks Victoria or Council. This highlights the importance of regular and open liaison with other open space land managers (particularly Parks Victoria and GORCC). This will help to alleviate any unnecessary sensitivity surrounding land management and resourcing and will acknowledge the key roles that Council, GORCC and Parks Victoria all play in the delivery of quality open space for residents and visitors.

Ideally, this partnership approach will allow the formation of a set of shared open space recommendations and actions. Directions that are derived in partnership will garner greater support from higher levels of government, ensure widespread buy-in and ultimately deliver quality outcomes for the community.



Action plan

Implementation of the actions outlined in this Open Space Strategy will require strong leadership, appropriate resourcing and a commitment from Council to making some difficult decisions. Council should consider conducting a review of the Strategy within five years with a new Plan developed in ten years.

Priorities have been determined by considering the outcomes of consultation, research and inspections undertaken throughout the development of the Strategy. This work has helped to create a clear picture of current and desired future

open space provision. The prioritisation of actions reflects those steps required to systematically move toward these desired directions and to ensure alignment with the guiding principles presented in the Strategy. Priorities are assigned for each action and have been cross-referenced with strategies from the Council Plan 2013-2017. A high priority recommendation should be undertaken as soon as resources allow while medium (in the next 5 years) and low priorities (5 years and beyond) are not as urgent (but remain important for future provision). A number of ongoing actions have also been included.

Action No.	Action	Rationale	Priority	Council Plan ref.
Policies				
1	Develop a policy for commercial and community use of Council-owned and Crown land open space (in close collaboration with GORCC, Parks Victoria, DELWP and other open space land managers). Include consideration of commercial activities such as tour operators	To protect the long-term quality of the open space, ensure community benefit and limit unnecessary impacts To ensure management in accord with key legislation (Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, Retail Leases Act 2003)	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 5.3
2	Develop a management procedure that private use and works are not to encroach onto Council-managed open space. Establish a rolling program to remedy existing encroachment. Develop a process to confirm applications adjacent to open space do not encroach before final signoff. Develop a fencing policy for the management of open space	To protect the quality and integrity of open space To comply with various legislative obligations	High (1-2 yrs)	1.4, 4.1
3	Council and GORCC to develop a formal agreement regarding how to work closely together to manage the frequency, duration and impact from commercial uses held in the Surf Coast Shire. Consider the need to conduct visitation counts and usage impacts	To limit the impact and hindrances to residents and visitors that can be created from community and commercial uses	Medium (2-5 yrs)	5.3
4	Develop a policy for the management of non-open space infrastructure on Council-managed open space (e.g. substations and telecommunications towers)	To ensure clear lines of governance and appropriate management of Council assets	Medium (2-5 yrs)	1.4, 4.1, 4.2
5	Develop a Domestic Animals in Open Space Policy, including the investigation of a fenced off-leash dog park	To address the existing community divide regarding the impact of dogs and other domestic animals in open space	Medium (2-5 yrs)	1.1, 1.4, 4.1, 4.2, 5.4
6	Develop a policy on how and where Council will enable nature play on Council managed open space	To align with the Council Plan, the Council Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Early Years and Youth Strategy	Medium (2-5 yrs)	1.1, 1.4
7	Establish a policy and implementation plan for how, where and when Council will manage streetscapes for multiple benefits, in particular open space to assist with climate change adaptation and increased connectivity. This will include the development of a design guideline manual for the streetscapes, including consideration of precinct specific requirements.	To provide Council with an increased ability to meet objectives in its Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Medium (2-5yrs)	1.1, 1.4, 2.4.4, 2.5, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3, 5.4

Action No.	Action	Rationale	Priority	Council Plan ref.
8	Ensure recommendations from key G21 documents (e.g. tennis and soccer strategies) are included in Council's operational planning processes	To align Council planning and practices with wider contexts and preferences	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2
Management and operational processes				
9	Implement a formal Memorandum of Understanding with external land management agencies. Ideally, this will include the development of a shared design guideline manual (and consider issues such as connections, signage, limiting impacts on surrounding uses, community engagement, universal design and meeting DDA requirements, ensuring general amenity etc)	To formalise future planning with a unified vision that meets community need	High (1-2 yrs)	1.1, 1.2, 3.3
10	Review the appropriateness and extent of Council's future role as CoM for open space that is Crown land. If Council continues in this role, streamline Crown land consent processes with DELWP for open space that Council is CoM for	To ensure suitable governance and resource allocation To comply with various legislative obligations	High (1-2 yrs)	2.6
11	Incorporate climate change implications into future open space planning, design and management	To continue to plan for climate change impacts	High (1-2 yrs)	1.4, 2.1, 5.4
12	Review and allocate land managers for the open space classification system outlined in the Strategy	To ensure suitable governance and resource allocation	High (1-2 yrs)	2.2
13	Work with external land management agencies to establish uniform policies and consistent approaches regarding facility maintenance and management opportunities	To expand upon procedures that are resource efficient (e.g. using the same contractors for maintenance) and set sustainable practices (e.g. frequency of barbecues and amenities servicing)	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 4.2
14	Investigate the feasibility of nature play in Council-managed open space	To ensure innovative and sustainable practices in natural environments	Medium (2-5 yrs)	1.1, 1.5, 4.2
15	The Open Space Planning Committee will review, prioritise and update actions from this Strategy as part of developing its annual workplan	To ensure a strategic approach to the implementation of this Strategy	Ongoing	5.4
16	The Open Space Planning Committee to facilitate a review and develop environmental requirements for the receipt of future areas of open space, including the potential use of the planning scheme	To ensure legal compliance and that new parcels of open space added to the network are fit-for-purpose	Ongoing	5.4
17	Retain current proportion of net developable area in residential areas being allocated to open space as per the schedule 52.01 in the Planning Scheme	To ensure adequate quantity of open space in our new residential developments	Ongoing	4.2, 5.4
18	Review the Land Management System annually to ensure currency with Council's Asset Management System. Transfer the Land Management System from a paper to electronic format	To ensure ongoing quality data capture	Ongoing	1.4
19	Undertake the Design Functionality Audit of Council-managed open space at least every five years	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4

Action No.	Action	Rationale	Priority	Council Plan ref.
Management and operational processes (cont.)				
20	Undertake the Design Functionality Inspection of Council-managed open space at least biennially	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
21	Undertake an audit of open space assets at a maximum of every three years	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
22	Undertake an audit/inspection of environmental and heritage assets at a maximum of three years and use this information to manage the open space network	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
23	Undertake an audit/inspection of outdoor sports surfaces on an annual basis	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
Partnerships, funding and budgets				
24	Incorporate the directions from the Strategy into wider operational planning. Ensure resource allocations reflect the maintenance and upgrade requirements necessary to sustain the quality open space network developed. (Review current divisions of expenditure for open space including funds allocated for playgrounds, pathways and environmental areas)	To ensure adequate resources are available for continued provision and success To ensure that the funding is being allocated proportionately to the appropriate areas	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
25	Consider establishing a dedicated annual CAPEX and new initiatives budget for open space	To continue to provide a high quality Council-managed open space network	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
26	Consider establishing a dedicated budget item for open space-related grant funding submissions	To maximise use of Council resources	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
27	As resources allow, apply for State and Federal Government funding. Develop a database and design portfolio of shovel-ready projects that have the potential to be funded (e.g. business cases, designs and community needs analyses)	To be in the best position to take advantage of available funding opportunities	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
28	Pursue partnership projects with community groups and other levels of government. Develop a database of identified partnership projects	To ensure opportunities are explored to extend resource contributions	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
29	Investigate the establishment of a G21 Open Space Network (that meets at least annually)	To ensure a strategic regional approach to open space provision	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 5.4
30	Council to work closely with CMA to identify key natural assets as identified by Council in its open space database for use in relevant projects	To ensure opportunities are explored to extend resource contributions	Ongoing	1.1, 1.5, 4.2
31	Work closely with other land management agencies to educate and empower its communities to take responsibility for protecting and enhancing the Shire's natural assets	To ensure a strategic approach to open space provision	Ongoing	1.1, 1.5, 4.2
32	Ensure that the Open Space Reserve Fund continues to be allocated to projects providing a long-term strategic benefit	To ensure a sustainable and effective approach to resource allocation and to meet legislative responsibilities	Ongoing	2.3, 4.1

Action No.	Action	Rationale	Priority	Council Plan ref.
Recreation, environment and parks planning and delivery				
33	The primary focus of open space planning within the Shire is to be on a precinct basis. The development of precinct plans will be determined through a needs assessment and prioritisation. Based on current resourcing levels, Council will undertake one precinct master plan each year	To ensure a suitable suite of opportunities are available to residents and visitors To reflect the community's desire for a wide range of 'nearby', recreation opportunities	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
34	The Open Space Strategy is to be the lead document for open space decision-making. Planning Scheme references to the Open Space Strategy should be updated to the 2016-2025 version. Additionally, key directions should be incorporated at the next review of the Planning Scheme. When documents such as the Playground Strategy and Pathway Strategy (etc) are due for review, Open Space Strategy guiding principles and actions should be considered as key inputs	To ensure appropriate resource allocation and future development that reflects community need	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
35	Review and renew existing master plans via an annual desktop assessment. The focus will be on master plans that have high risk, opportunity and complexity. Based on current resources, Council will conduct one new and one review master plan process at a district/precinct level or above annually. Review and prioritise the implementation of outstanding master plan actions in accordance with the principles and goals of this Strategy	To ensure appropriate resource allocation and future development that reflects community need To enable easy integration of key directions into Council funding and governance processes To meet legislative requirements	High (1-2 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
36	Include relevant Crown Land (Reserves) Act, Coastal Management Act including the Victorian Coastal Strategy and Western Regional Coastal Plan requirements into new master plans and obtain endorsement from DELWP for the life of the plan	To ensure future planning aligns with legislative requirements	High (1-2 yrs)	5.4
37	Investigate and prioritise suitable unused road reserves and Crown land to be transferred to open space network	To enhance connectivity to and between existing open spaces as part of precinct plans	Medium (2-5 yrs)	1.4, 4.2, 5.4
38	Promote the outdoor recreation and eco-tourism experiences available in the Shire in accordance with the Open Space Strategy Principles in this document	To take advantage of the Shire's natural assets	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 4.2, 5.4
39	Ensure appropriate signage at key open space areas that articulates facility management	To inform users in case of a need to report vandalism or other facility issues	Medium (2-5 yrs)	4.1, 4.2
40	Investigate providing WiFi in key open spaces and continued promotion of existing geocaching	To embrace technology within the open space network	Low (5 yrs+)	4.1
41	Use the gap analysis in this Strategy to guide land acquisition and banking considerations	To ensure future planning aligns with community demand	Ongoing	4.1, 4.2, 5.4

Appendix

Desired standards of service

Parklands and gardens - local

Local parklands and gardens provide a range of recreation opportunities for local residents. These parks contain limited infrastructure, yet offer local community benefits. They are intended to offer residents a complementary open space to their backyards and generally cater for short visits by small groups.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	0.3ha/1,000 population
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	400m
Land characteristics	Size	0.3ha-1.5ha (min. 1ha generally preferred, unless smaller is considered fit-for-purpose). Minimum width 50m
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular (or round) with the sides no greater than 2:1
	Road frontage	50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the area of the park (i.e. a maximum of 20% of the land may have a greater grade than 1:10)
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI (average recurrence interval) for play infrastructure 20 year ARI for remainder
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Mix of 3 activity options
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Pathways	Internal path (not necessarily a loop) that links to wider network
	Landscaping	Park trees
	Park furniture	Bike rack, small park sign, water bubbler, bench seats, shaded picnic table, rubbish bin



Parklands and gardens - district/precinct

District parklands and gardens are larger sized parks providing a range of facilities and activity spaces for recreation. These parks have facilities to cater for large groups and are appealing to a wide range of users. District passive recreation parks can service several suburbs depending on population density, and are well known destinations for those people living within their catchment. Ideally, district passive recreation parks are located near social infrastructure such as schools, community centres and halls.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	0.5ha/1,000 population
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	400m-2,000m Aligned to planning precincts
Land characteristics	Size	1.5ha-3ha. Minimum width 50m
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular (or round) with the sides no greater than 2:1
	Road frontage	50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Maximum grade of 1:10 for 80% of the area of the park (i.e. a maximum of 20% of the land may have a greater grade than 1:10)
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for play node infrastructure 20 year ARI for remainder
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Mix of 6-10 activity options
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Off-street car parking
	Buildings	Amenity block
	Landscaping	Park trees, irrigated garden beds
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, water bubblers, bench seats, shaded picnic tables and shelter, rubbish bins, barbecues



Parklands and gardens - municipal

Like district/precinct level parklands and gardens, municipal parklands and gardens are large and significant land parcels. These venues will be attractive to large groups, will be considered destination parks and may attract visitation from across the Council area. Users may be expected to stay in the park for several hours.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	n/a
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	2,000m+ Aligned to Council boundaries
Land characteristics	Size	3ha-10ha. Minimum width 100m
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular (or round) with the sides no greater than 3:1
	Road frontage	30-50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Average grade of 1:20 for main use areas, 1:50 for kick-about area, variable topography for remainder
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for play node infrastructure and main use areas 20 year ARI for kick-about 5 year ARI for remainder
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Mix of 10-12 activity options dispersed across well defined nodes of activity. Activity options to attract a range of age cohorts
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal road <input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Off-street car parking
	Buildings	Amenity block
	Landscaping	Park trees, irrigated garden beds, potential for irrigated kick-about space
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, small park sign, directional sign, water bubblers, bench seats, shaded picnic tables and shelters, rubbish bins, large picnic nodes with barbecues and additional shelters





Parklands and gardens - regional/state/national

These open spaces are major recreation parks that offer a wide variety of opportunities to a broad cross-section of the Council's population and visitors. They are large, embellished for recreation, are well known amongst residents and are major destinations. Indeed, parks of this nature are also likely to draw visitors from outside the Council area.

People are usually content spending several hours in these parks. Regional recreation parks offer unique experiences. They are often used to host large community events such as carols in the park, Australia Day celebrations and other festivals. Regional passive parks offer exciting and no cost activities for residents and visitors.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	n/a
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	Aligned to G21 boundaries (e.g. includes neighbouring municipalities and beyond)
Land characteristics	Size	10ha+
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular (or round) with the sides no greater than 3:1
	Road frontage	30-50% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Average grade of 1:20 for main use areas, 1:50 for kick-about area, variable topography for remainder
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for play node infrastructure and main use areas 20 year ARI for kick-about 5 year ARI for remainder
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Mix of 12 or more activity options dispersed across well defined nodes of activity. Activity options to attract a range of age cohorts
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal road <input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Off-street car parking
	Buildings	Amenity blocks, potential for environmental education centre, commercial coffee shop
	Landscaping	Park trees, irrigated garden beds, potential for irrigated kick-about space
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, small park sign, directional sign, water bubblers, bench seats, shaded picnic tables and shelters, rubbish bins, large picnic nodes with barbecues and additional shelters



Outdoor sports - local

These sports facilities are generally small and offer a limited range of active recreation pursuits. The facilities and any playing field will be basic and receive minimum standard maintenance.

Given their limited usefulness, the development of future local-level outdoor sports facilities is not encouraged.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	2ha/1,000 people (for all outdoor sports hierarchy combined)
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	400m
Land characteristics	Size	0.5ha-2ha
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular. Fields and courts to be aligned north-south (where possible)
	Road frontage	Minimum 25% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Minimum 1:80 for all playing surfaces
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for infrastructure (pavilions, lighting) 50 year ARI for playing fields
Improvements	Recreation activity area	A passive recreation node may be incorporated. If so, it should be in clear sight of key gathering areas for sport spectators
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Buildings	Amenity building (only if demand is shown)
	Landscaping	Shade trees
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, park sign, water bubblers, bench seats, rubbish bins





Outdoor sports - district

District outdoor sports provide the vast majority of the venues for the community's formal training and club fixtures. A range of sports are catered for in these multi-use facilities including both field and court sports. Supporting facilities provided at district outdoor sports venues allow clubs to effectively operate and include amenities, pavilion, storage, lighting and car parking.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	2ha/1,000 people (for all outdoor sports hierarchy combined)
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	400m-2,000m
Land characteristics	Size	1.5ha-3ha
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular. Fields and courts to be aligned north-south
	Road frontage	Minimum 25% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage
	Gradient	Minimum 1:80 for all playing surfaces
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for infrastructure (pavilions, lighting) 50 year ARI for playing fields
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Passive recreation node located in clear sight of key gathering areas for sport spectators
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Internal road system <input type="checkbox"/> Car parking
	Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Pavilion <input type="checkbox"/> Amenities and storage (ideally included within the pavilion)
	Landscaping	Shade trees
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, water bubblers, bench seats, rubbish bins



Outdoor sports - municipal

Municipal outdoor sports venues are large facilities providing a range of quality active recreation experiences across a range of sports. Additionally, these open space types may include specialised sporting facilities such as those required for shooting sports and motor sports.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	2ha/1,000 people (for all outdoor sports hierarchy combined)
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	2,000m+
Land characteristics	Size	3ha-10ha (although may include smaller parcels providing specialised sporting infrastructure)
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular. Fields and courts to be aligned north-south. Specialised facilities may require alternate shaped land (e.g. long thin ranges and overshoot areas required for some shooting disciplines)
	Road frontage	Minimum 25% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage (specialised facilities may be an exception)
	Gradient	Minimum 1:80 for all playing surfaces
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for infrastructure (pavilions, lighting) 50 year ARI for playing fields
Improvements	Recreation activity area	Passive recreation node located in clear sight of key gathering areas for sport spectators
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Internal road system <input type="checkbox"/> Car parking
	Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Pavilion <input type="checkbox"/> Amenities and storage (ideally included within the pavilion)
	Landscaping	Shade trees
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, water bubblers, bench seats, rubbish bins



Outdoor sports - regional/state/national

Regional outdoor sports are large parks providing a greater number of fields/ovals and multi-purpose courts for formal sporting purposes. Facilities include a range of training and competition infrastructure as well as supporting facilities such as pavilions, amenities, car parking, lighting and passive recreation nodes.

The level and quality of infrastructure at regional outdoor sports venues enable clubs (or associations) to host higher-level competitions and/or multi-day carnivals.

The playing fields and courts provide free, unrestricted access to the public when formal sport is not being undertaken. Public access may also include special and community events being hosted at these larger facilities including exhibitions, shows and festivals.

DSS	Description	Standard
Quantity	Based on a hectare/1,000 people measurement	2ha/1,000 people (for all outdoor sports hierarchy combined)
Accessibility	Distance between urban residents and open space (metres)	Aligned to G21 boundaries
Land characteristics	Size	10ha+ (although may include smaller parcels providing specialised sporting infrastructure)
	Shape	Broadly square to rectangular. Fields and courts to be aligned north-south. Specialised facilities may require alternate shaped land
	Road frontage	Minimum 25% of the park perimeter to have direct road frontage (specialised facilities may be an exception)
	Gradient	Minimum 1:80 for all playing surfaces
	Flood immunity	100 year ARI for infrastructure (pavilions, lighting) 50 year ARI for playing fields
Improvements	Recreation activity area	At least one passive recreation node located in clear sight of key gathering areas for sport spectators
	Fencing	Bollard (or post and rail) fencing to perimeter
	Vehicular and pedestrian movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal path loops that link to wider network <input type="checkbox"/> Internal road system <input type="checkbox"/> Car parking
	Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Pavilion (potentially multiple depending on facility layout) <input type="checkbox"/> Amenities and storage (ideally included within the pavilion)
	Landscaping	Shade trees
	Park furniture	Park lighting, bike rack, large park sign, water bubblers, bench seats, rubbish bins





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