

West Tamar Council



WINDSOR PARK STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS PLAN

2006



West Tamar Council

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1

The Windsor Park Strategic Directions Plan

1.1 Study Objectives

This report presents a Strategic Directions Plan for Windsor Park in West Tamar Council.

The Strategic Directions Plan has been prepared in response to the recommendation in Council's recreation strategy, *Sport and Recreation in West Tamar* (2002) that Council proceeds with the further development of the reserve as a multi-use sport and recreation venue. It also reflects the recommendations of the *West Tamar Strategic Opportunities Report* prepared by Dr Tony McCall of the University of Tasmania (2005) which argues that the recreation strategy "now needs urgent and timely implementation within a regional approach..." (p. 36).

The Strategic Directions Plan has three major objectives. These are:

1. To **provide a framework** for the effective and appropriate long term allocation of Council and community resources to Windsor Park
2. To **guide the development** of a diverse and sustainable mix of quality recreation and leisure opportunities at Windsor Park for the community, and
3. To **enhance community access** to Windsor Park, residents, and
4. To create greater efficiencies in the delivery of recreation opportunities in the Riverside / West Tamar Highway area by linking Windsor park to other venues and opportunities.

1.2 The Planning Rationale

The preparation of a Strategic Directions Plan to guide the future upgrading and development of Windsor Park is a direct outcome of Council's *Strategic Plan 2003-2008*, the recreation strategy, *Sport and Recreation in West Tamar*, (2002), the *West Tamar Sustainable Development Management Strategy* (2002) and the *West Tamar Strategic Opportunities Report* (2005). The future upgrading of the reserve will also contribute significantly to achieving the objectives and outcomes of these policy documents.

Council's *Strategic Plan 2003-2008*, has the following **vision**:

"To enhance the West Tamar as a desirable place to live and visit".

The **objective** for Community Services in the *Strategy Plan 2003-2008* is:

"To enhance the development of the community by identifying needs and providing support".

The two key **strategies** which the *Strategic Plan 2003-2008* indicates will be pursued to achieve this objective are:

"Continue promotion and support of activities which have a broad community benefit",
and

“Continue catering for the needs of different interest groups by providing, where appropriate, community based facilities and encouraging community use”.

The further development of Windsor Park will directly contribute to achieving the Council *vision* and the Community Services *objective* and *strategies*. The Park is a particularly attractive focus for action because:

There is already a significant investment on the site which can be added to through a staged program of works, as opposed to starting at a new site

The size of the reserve means that it can meet needs at the local, sub-regional and regional level

The size, shape and natural assets of the reserve means that it can meet a wide range of needs in the community without having to duplicate infrastructure at a number of smaller sites

The location of the reserve on the West Tamar Highway means that it is readily accessible from throughout the Council and the wider area

The reserve is well known in the community

The location of the reserve near schools means that co-development and use of wider community assets is possible, and

The location of the reserve adjacent to the Tamar River means that links can be made to regional trails and conservation areas.

The over-arching framework provided by the *West Tamar Sustainable Development Management Strategy* (2002) has a focus on:

Meeting community needs and maximising participation, health, quality of style and community well-being

Development of sporting and leisure facilities within existing parks and reserves

Giving priority for development to sites around town/urban to maximise efficiency and effectiveness

The need for coordination between State and local government, and

Recognition of the need for town and landscape planning which acknowledges the value of incidental, non-structured recreational involvement.

As with Council's *Strategic Plan*, Windsor Park offers the opportunity to further these principles.

The **goals** of the West Tamar “Strategy for Sport and Recreation” developed as part of the report, *Sport and Recreation in West Tamar*, (2002), were:

To increase lifelong participation

To realise the social, health and economic benefits of participation

To develop quality infrastructure, opportunities and services to support participation.

The **principles** underpinning these goals were *access, equity, diversity, choice, community benefit, lifelong involvement, health, enjoyment, quality and safety*.

The **primary outcomes** sought through the *Sport and Recreation in West Tamar* plan are:

- Adoption of a greater planning and coordination role by Council
- A move toward an integrated whole-of-community approach as opposed to a single facilities approach
- A focus on broad community needs
- Improved land management and programming
- Increased grants opportunities
- Support for community organisations which assist in achieving the principles of the Plan
- Improved education of and support for recreation clubs and committees
- Development of recreation-based business and economic opportunities, and
- Development of special events.

The forward planning and staged further development of Windsor Park will contribute significantly to achieving these outcomes because the reserve already plays such an important role in the recreation activities of the community.

Finally, the *West Tamar Strategic Opportunities Report (2005)*, argues that

“...recreation is a key economic and social well-being driver because it is linked to the needs and demands of creative people and has a range of advantages for the broader population and the Council’s bottom line. These include:

- Meeting fitness/health and exercise needs
- It is non-organised
- It is low cost
- It is outdoors
- It is long term investment that benefits generations
- It is provided close to home
- It is flexible around busy lifestyles.”

In reality, recreation offers far more advantages or *benefits* than those in this list : it can meet key social, psychological and inter-personal needs; it can be a means of self-expression; it can be indoor *and* outdoors; it can be intellectual, passive, competitive, demanding, non-challenging and relaxing; it can be a means of getting *away from* the home environment for a break, to re-energise and refresh or of *extending* the home setting; it can contribute to environmental well-being; it can be low cost but it can also be a major economic growth engine, and it can be pursued alone, in small groups, in large groups or by a whole nation.

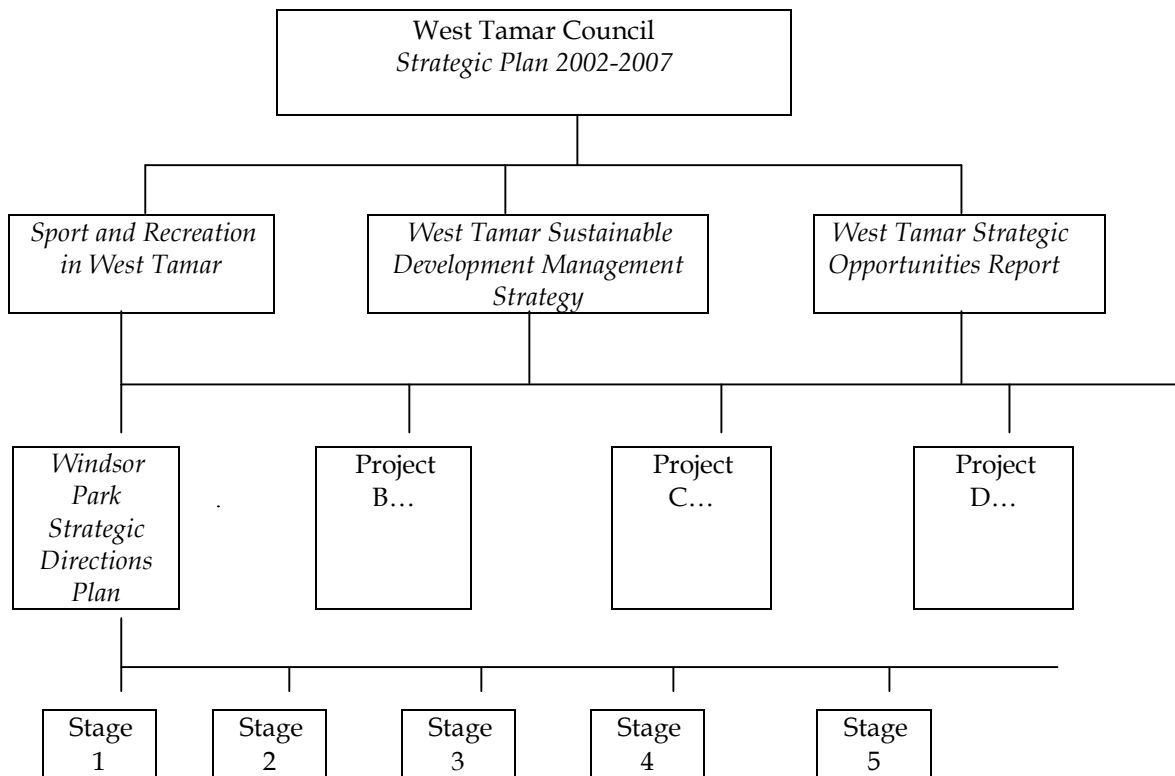
In the light of the above, it is evident that recreation provision is a major feature of any community and that the involvement of the community in recreational pursuits is a good measure of the personal, social, and economic well-being of a community. Advancing recreation opportunities is thus a very positive way of advancing community life. The further development of Windsor Park offers a concrete and tangible strategy for furthering the development and well-being of the West Tamar community. Success at Windsor Park will also provide the impetus for further development initiatives.

The relationship between the existing Council policies and the development of Windsor Park as one element of the on-ground outcomes is shown in the chart on the following page.

1.3 Further Development Drivers

In addition to the strategic and policy reasons for action at Windsor Park, there are a number of more concrete pressures emerging in the community. These are

1. The growing demands from Park users for a range of major and costly improvements to the existing facilities at the reserve, these being intended improve the quality of provision and enhance the ability to meet community expectations
2. Council recognition that the condition of many of the facilities at Windsor Park are not of an acceptable standard, have been developed in an ad hoc fashion over many years and consequently, not complying safety, access and building standard requirements, and
3. The growing need in the community for a wider range of recreation opportunities to be added to the predominant sports focus of the venue.



The past ad-hoc planning of the site, where control for development has not been effectively coordinated between the Council (the legal owner and advocate for the wider community) and the major user groups has led to the piecemeal development of the Park rather than it being developed as one, integrated site. The consequences of this are clearly illustrated by the poor siting of some facilities and the impact of this on effective use; by the traffic and parking problems which exist; water supply and sewerage problems; access difficulties; vandalism, and poor user safety. There is also a significant level of duplication and the reserve is generally unattractive to users other than sports people.

There is thus a strong need to refocus development according to wider community needs and to apply strong planning principles in order to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness of provision.

A range of wider issues have also led Council to see the need for preparation of a longer term Strategic Directions Plan. These are:

Population growth. The population of West Tamar Council and nearby areas in Launceston City Council continue to grow. As a consequence, further demands will be placed on the resources of Windsor Park and action is needed to meet these

Declining land availability. Existing and planned residential development has now taken up the majority of large land holdings in the urban areas of West Tamar. As a consequence, many new sporting and recreation needs will have to be met through the existing resources owned by Council. The cost of land acquisition heightens this need

Population ageing. Declining birth rates, increased community longevity and improved community health and wellbeing mean that the age of the Australian population is increasing. The ageing population is increasingly involving itself in a wide range of non-competitive but active recreation pursuits rather than team sports. New types and changed emphases of provision are required to meet these needs

Changing recreation interests in the community. The increasing age of the community, together with greater cultural diversity, greater community affluence, new technologies, and changed work hours and employment structures mean that Windsor Park will need to provide more diverse opportunities for the community if it is remain relevant to it

Expectations of provision quality. The community is increasingly expecting higher standards of recreation and leisure provision and competition and this is being driven by issues of safety, insurance and litigation. As such, improvements must be made to the standard and maintenance of recreation opportunities offered to the community

Integrated provision. Modern recreation provision seeks to achieve an integrated mix of opportunities so that as far as possible, family, leisure, social and sporting activities can be pursued in the one locality without the need to duplicate costly infrastructure and services. The wider the mix of opportunities provided, the greater the social, community and personal benefits that can be gained

Diversity of opportunity. The changing age, education, cultural background and leisure experiences of the community mean Councils are increasingly being required to provide a diverse mix of recreation opportunities if all sections of the community are to have their needs met. At present, Windsor Park does not effectively achieve this. Although the reserve quite effectively meets a range of sporting needs, for the majority of the population who do not play or attend sporting events, the reserve is largely irrelevant.

Because of its position and size, Windsor Park offers excellent opportunities for the development of a range of social, play, educational and environmental activities in both outdoor and indoor settings. These opportunities should not be lost but rather, in the light of the foregoing points, will need to be exploited over the coming years

State government role. The State government is increasingly expecting local government to apply a more coordinated and planned process to the development

of recreation opportunities in order to justify applications for grants. Proposals which cannot demonstrate that they have grown out of a process of community needs assessments, demographic analyses and rational land use planning will increasingly be overlooked by Sport and Recreation Tasmania's state grants programs

Regional planning. The regional role played by Windsor Park and its capacity to play an even stronger role mean that efforts should be made to strengthen this capacity. At the same time however, action is needed to ensure that the reserve meets sub-regional and local community needs more effectively

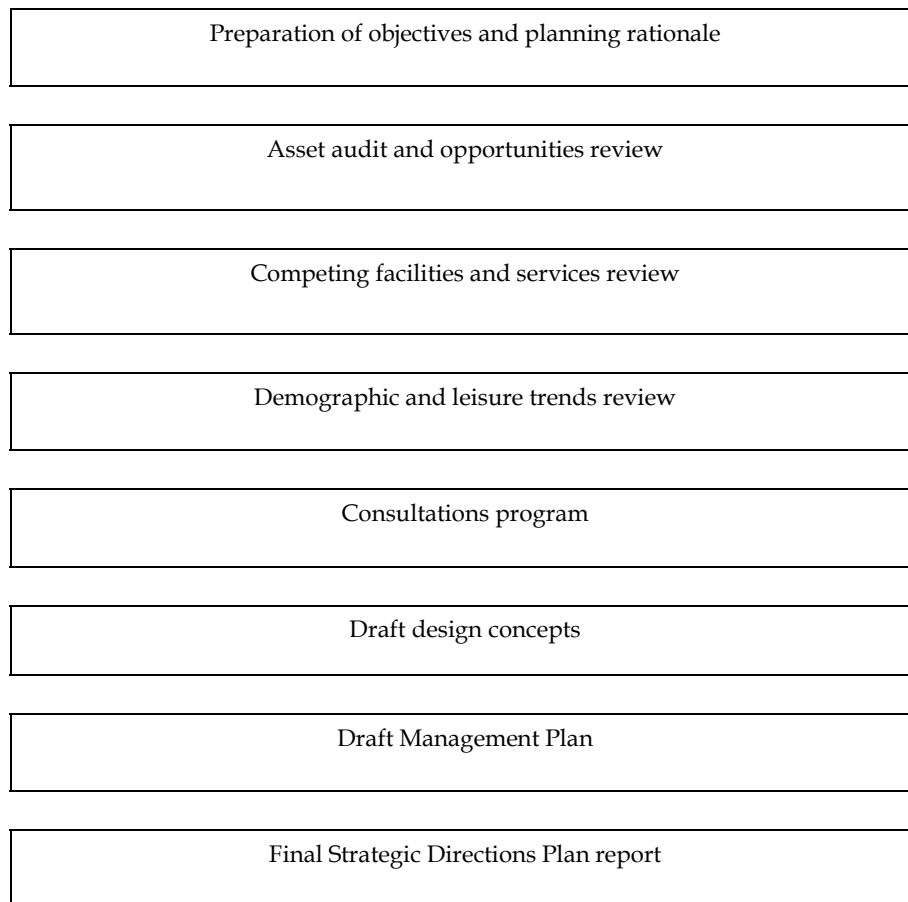
The involvement of Council with the Northern Tasmania Development and its Recreation Committee -which encourages municipal and regional recreation planning – highlights this need

Supporting sport. There is a recognised need to support more sports in West Tamar and across the wider Launceston region. Windsor Park is one of the few venues owned and managed by Council which has this capacity

Residents demands and Council's ability to fund them. Residents demands for services have increased as the population has become more interested in issues of health, quality of life and participation in activities. The community expects that rate increases will be kept to a minimum, but costs of providing services continue to increase. This means that local government is faced with growing challenges and growing resource problems in the planning of recreation services.

1.4 The Strategic Directions Planning Process

The following research components were undertaken in the preparation of the Windsor Park Strategic Directions Plan:



1.5 What Follows

Chapter 2 following, presents an overview of West Tamar and regional population characteristics and of a range of recent trends in recreation participation. It then assesses the implications of these to the actions which could be taken at Windsor Park.

Chapter 3 reviews the present assets of Windsor Park. This is followed by the findings of consultations with present users and the wider municipal and regional community regarding improvement needs, presently unmet needs and wider development opportunities at the reserve. This analysis is then used to prepare a 'design brief' to guide Council officers in developing a Strategic Directions Plan of the long term enhancement and further development of Windsor Park.

Finally, **Chapter 4** provides the Strategic Directions Plan for the future development, management and use of Windsor Park. This covers:

1. A statement of the Strategic Directions Plan objectives
2. A statement of the Strategic Directions Plan principles
3. A statement of the types of uses to be provided for the community at Windsor Park

4. A statement of the hierarchy of needs to be met
5. A listing of the priority recommendations for action, and
6. A recommended management structure and operational procedures for the reserve.

2

Influences on Community Need at Windsor Park

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents an overview of two key aspects of the West Tamar and wider regional community which need to be considered when determining future development of Windsor Park. These are the catchments served by the Park, the demographic characteristics of the community within the catchments, and recent trends in recreation participation. The Chapter assesses the implications of these to the initiatives which could or should be taken at Windsor Park.

2.2 The Catchments of Windsor Park

The large size of Windsor Park (21.66 hectares) means that it has a capacity to serve a range of markets and catchments depending on the ways in which it is developed. The Park serves a *regional* market for Launceston Football Club in the Northern Tasmanian Football League, the Riverside Soccer Club in the Northern Premier League and Riverside Cricket Club in the Northern Tasmanian Cricket Association. As the home of the Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer League and Launceston Little Athletics Club, the Park also serves a *regional* or at the least, a *sub-regional* market. As a venue for local school programs, informal play and dog walking by nearby residents, the Park serves a *local* market. As a reserve with internal walking and cycling trails and links to the Tamar foreshore trail, the Park could serve a *local, sub-regional and regional* role.

It is evident that the types of facilities provided in the Park and the types of users who are served will affect the catchments which are served. Ideally, the size and resources of Windsor Park mean that the opportunity should be taken to develop and manage the reserve so that it equitably serves all three catchment and market levels.

At present, it would appear that the resources of the Park make a greater contribution to meeting *regional* recreation and sporting needs than *sub-regional* or *local* needs although the standard of the facilities for each of the levels is below what is desirable.

Having a *regional* recreation asset in the Council area can bring significant benefits to the community. These include:

- Increased visits to the Council area with the linked purchase of services
- A greater mix of higher standard events being made available to the community
- The purchase of goods and services by major users
- Potentially greater access to government grants, and
- Council of prestige.

However, if West Tamar Council wishes to accept this role and enjoy the benefits which flow from it, it must also accept that the reserve has to be developed and maintained at a far higher standard than at present.

Given the principles embodied in Council's corporate planning documents and those recommended in Chapter 1 of this report, The hierarchy of the markets to be served clearly affects the size of the catchment population at each level. This issue is reviewed in the following section.

2.3 Demographics of the Windsor Park Area

2.3.1 The Size of the Markets Able to be Served by Windsor Park

Data reported in the *West Tamar Strategic Opportunities Report* (McCall, 2005) indicate that in 2003, West Tamar Council had a population of 20,673, up from 20,087 in 1999. This constituted a growth rate of 0.7 percent per annum, nearly *double* the northern Tasmanian growth rate (0.38% pa.) and well ahead of the total Tasmanian rate of only 0.3 percent per annum for the same period. Population growth in the Council has been substantial and continuous over recent years, with the total growing by more than 10 percent since the early 1990s. This growth will mean a continuing need for recreation opportunities amongst the community. As was indicated in Chapter 1, this will be difficult to meet in the face of growing land and development costs and as such it will more appropriate for Council to seek to optimise the development and use of its existing resources.

Just over 91 percent of the West Tamar population is classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as being within the Greater Launceston area while the remaining 8 percent is located in the far north of the municipality close to the mouth of the Tamar and Bass Strait. As such, the greater majority of the population is within easy access of Windsor Park.

Similarly, a significant proportion of the Greater Launceston population is reasonably accessible to West Tamar and Windsor Park. Those sections of Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands and West Tamar Councils which are classified as being part of Greater Launceston had a combined population of 97,586 at the 2001 Census. With an annual growth rate of 0.38 percent, this population should have now grown to 101,600 people.

It could thus be said that Windsor Park has a regional catchment of at least 101,000 people while for some major events the catchment could grow to include wider parts of the Northern Midlands, Meander Valley, Latrobe and Launceston Councils. With a market of this size, Council can feel comfortable that if it invests in the further development of the reserve it will attract a level and mix of use to justify that investment *provided that the reserve is promoted and managed in a manner which allows a wide range of users and different uses to gain equitable access to it. This will require a centralised, Council controlled access process wherein users are licenced to use the assets of the reserve for set times, days and weeks of the year so that the best and most equitable range of users can occur and where long term leases are progressively cancelled.*

At the *sub-regional* scale, Windsor Park could be expected to meet district sports needs, walking and cycling, social gatherings and family picnics and district school events. The catchment population served by these activities will be somewhat lower than that of the regional market. Given the distribution of the Council population, the 2001 Census data suggest that the sub-regional catchment will include the lower half of the Council area and the north-eastern section of Meander Valley, parts of Northern Midlands and the south-western section of Launceston. The total population in this area would be of the order of 30,000 – 40,000 people. This is again, a substantial market which would justify a significant level of high quality development at Windsor Park.

Finally, Windsor Park can be expected to meet *local* recreation needs: for junior sport, walking, cycling, picnics, children's play and local school activities. People are generally only prepared to travel several kilometres at the most for these activities and as such, the local catchment population could be expected to be no more than 5,000 – 7,000 residents. While far smaller than the regional population, this number is far greater than most of the small towns in the Council area and as such warrants the far greater development of local community facilities at Windsor Park.

One issue which will need attention given the different scales of the markets which Windsor Park can and presently serves is that of user conflict. A balance will need to be struck between

regional, sub-regional and local facilities and careful attention will need to be given to the management and scheduling of uses and users so that one level of competition and use does not grow to the detriment of the others. For instance, Council may need to eventually restrict the number of teams/clubs in the higher grades of some sports so that they do not dominate use to the detriment of lesser and more local grades. It may also need to develop regional *and* local trails and a number of *local* playgrounds. Similarly, it will to carefully balance the allocation of development resources across the different use levels.

2.3.2 The Age Distribution of the Population

The Bureau of Statistics data for West Tamar Council at the 2001 Census indicate that the Council has a somewhat different age distribution when compared with the remainder of the Greater Launceston area. Most noticeable are:

The balance in numbers between people in late childhood and teenage years and those in their 40s and 50s

The large number of young children

The substantial number of older residents, and

The significant drop in the number of residents in their 20s and early 30s.

These data reflect the popularity of the Council area amongst older residents with grown families, amongst retirees and amongst adults with young families. It also shows however, the loss of teenagers and younger adults as a result of the need to move in search of work and higher education. Regardless of the drop in this age group, there was still just over 3,000 adults aged from 20-34 years in the Council in 2001. There were also nearly 3,000 children aged less than 10 years and the same again in the 65 years plus group.

It is clearly evident that such an age distribution means a similar distribution in the types of recreation opportunities provided in the Council. This is not being achieved at present with Sport and Recreation Study evidence suggesting that the needs of children and older residents are being under provided for. As argued in Chapter 1, the size and other characteristics of Windsor makes it highly suitable for development to meet many of these needs.

2.3.3 Other Influential Population Characteristics

Several other demographic characteristics of the West Tamar Council population warrant noting in terms of their relevance to recreation and sports development in the Council and at Windsor Park in particular. These are:

Families with dependent children accounted for 30 percent of all households in 2001. Some 32 percent of families were couples without children and another 5 percent had non-dependent children. This signals a strong need for recreation facilities and programs which are attractive to children, parents and 'independent' adults.

Just on 9 percent of households had only one parent. As such, consideration may need to be given to facilities and programs which are not too expensive, where provision is made for multi-use so parents can use one part of a venue while their children use another and which are accessible by people without cars

Lone person households: 21 percent of all West Tamar households are lone persons. Given the age distribution of the population, it can be assumed that many of these people will be aged. Promotion and programming initiatives will therefore be needed at Windsor Park --and throughout the Council

Some 94 percent of the population speaks English at home so it is unlikely that special facilities or programs will be needed for non-Anglo Saxon groups at Windsor Park unless Council determines to add a significant tourism component to the development of the reserve. The NTD Regional Recreation Committee program, "Open Boundaries, Fairer Playing Fields" (2003), identified a need for appropriate recreation activities for new migrants in the local area, mainly those from African backgrounds. Soccer was identified as a priority activity and continuing work is being conducted on this issue through the Migrant Resource Centre. This program produced excellent resources to assist in considering migrant needs

Nearly 50 percent of the population was either unemployed or not in the workforce in 2001. This again suggests a need for cheap, accessible recreation opportunities and perhaps, for opportunities which are available through the day as well as in the evenings

The Council population is generally well-educated and in professional and associate professional occupations. This generally means that they will know about their recreational preferences and *expectations* as to the quality and availability of what is provided.

These demographic characteristics mean that recreation provision throughout West Tamar Council and in the context of this report, at Windsor Park, will need to be accessible –in terms of both physical and cost accessibility – diverse in terms of what is offered and of a good standard. These attributes have been used as a guide to the development opportunities to be considered for the Park. Significantly, they concur with and are supported by the policy objectives of Council as detailed in the previous Chapter.

2.4 Broad Societal Trends and the Recreation Provision Implications

Changes within Australian society are influencing the way in which people allocate their time and resources between work, family life, leisure, and concern for the environment. These broader social, cultural and economic changes have far-reaching impacts on community recreation interests, involvement and attitudes toward what is provided for the community and these are likely to influence future demands by the community for open space, sporting and recreational facilities, programs and services in West Tamar and greater Launceston.

Table 2.1 indicates examples of the potential implications and responses resulting from broad societal changes and lists some specific implications to Windsor Park. These have been taken into consideration in identifying development opportunities for Windsor Park.

| Trend | Implications and Provision Responses |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
|-------|--------------------------------------|

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Changes in the make-up of the community including greater cultural diversity and the ageing of the population</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some significant falls in involvement in team sports • Significant increases in non-competitive, active pursuits • Some sports fields are being changed to support more informal, community-focused uses • Development of linear trails, these often being provided in association with the preservation of historic rail routes and the regeneration of creek lines and waterways <p>Comment: The size and history of use of Windsor Park mean that it will always be used for outdoor sports and that <i>additional</i> provision could be needed. Yet the changing nature of recreation participation suggests the need for flexible fields in the form of open grassed areas that can be used by a variety of groups for different activities</p> <p>This trend also means that <i>other</i> opportunities should be offered by the reserve: eg: social facilities, walking, nature study, cycling, indoor community and sports activities, play</p> |
| <p>Changing employment structures, trading hours and work hours eg: Higher employment of women, increased part-time and casual employment, seven day trading, continuing long term unemployment and under-employment within the community</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced demand for team sports competitions and long seasonal rosters • Greater use of open space across a wider period of the day, evening, week and year <p>Comment: These changes have been critical to the change from weekend to evening sport and from long term club involvement to 'play and play' involvement. There will be a need for more management and programming inputs –as many people no longer have the time to volunteer. Indoor and synthetic surface facilities which support evening and/or all year use will be increasingly important</p> |

Table 2.1: Key social changes and implications to recreation provision at Windsor Park

| Trend | Implications and Provision Responses |
|---|--|
| Improved technology, which has allowed information to become more readily accessible across the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community is more aware of the recreation facilities and opportunities available to it • There has been a rapid growth in home-based leisure entertainment with this contributing to the fall in participation in traditional sport and recreation activities. • People are more knowledgeable and more demanding as consumers, but also more educated about what they want from recreation service and facility providers <p>Comment: It cannot be expected that the community will use Windsor Park unless it is of a high quality and is well marketed and programmed.</p> |
| Growing recognition of the importance of the environment as an ecological, cultural, recreational, tourism, economic, educational and research resource | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The protection of natural and heritage open space areas • Community pressure on agencies to manage natural and cultural resources on a sustainable basis <p>Comment: Windsor Park has high value natural resources and offers access to other important environmental resources along the Tamar River.</p> <p>The success of 'trail race park' highlights community demand for access to the Tamar River and natural areas with walking/cycling tracks, picnic areas and informal play areas</p> |
| The generally enhanced affluence of the overall community but continuing levels of low income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purchase of equipment which can sometimes be detrimental to the natural environment (eg: four wheel drive vehicles, gold detectors) • Affluence in association with education has offered the capacity to do more toward protecting natural, open space resources, has alerted people to the benefits of leisure participation and has given the community to buy or pay for a wider range of opportunities <p>Comment: At Windsor Park, greater community affluence means that residents can afford a wider range of quality facilities, programs and support services</p> <p>However, there are still discrepancies between affluent and non-affluent members of the community and informal and unstructured opportunities cater well for economically disadvantaged groups in the community</p> |
| The provision of a greater diversity of culturally and socially focused resources including a greater range of local and district parks, restaurants, book shops, amusement parlours, music outlets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduced demand on open space for recreation purposes for sports but increased demands for informal outdoor and <i>indoor</i> recreation venues <p>Comment: At present, there are few non-traditional out-door or <i>indoor</i> recreation opportunities at Windsor Park. The provision of informal and community-focused indoor and outdoor facilities would greatly diversify the opportunities</p> |

Table 2.1 continued: Key social changes and implications to recreation provision at Windsor Park

| Trend | Implications and Provision Responses |
|---|--|
| Growing recognition of the strong links between recreation involvement and health (eg: Preventative health care, active healthy lifestyle programs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased government initiatives and programs to support recreation participation as a means of improving community health <p>Comment: The recreation opportunities presently available at Windsor Park have a strong focus on strength, skill and fitness as expressed through sporting competitions. However, the growing focus on increasing community participation in physical activity suggest that there alternatives to traditional sport should be provided in addition to these opportunities</p> |
| Increased use of municipal and regional planning frameworks by local and state government. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual sport and recreation facilities are increasingly being provided in association with other facilities to ensure that there is less duplication <p>Comment. Windsor Park should be developed as part of a wider program of community services and facilities in the Riverside and greater Launceston area.</p> |

Table 2.1 continued: Key social changes and implications to recreation provision at Windsor Park

2.5 Conclusion

It is evident from the foregoing material that a wide range of factors can be expected to influence the way in which the community would like to use Windsor Park in the future and the way in which Council should seek to develop, manage and program it. These issues have been taken into consideration in preparing the Strategic Directions Plan recommendations presented in the final Chapter of this report. The trends and issues should also be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that new issues and changing needs are effectively responded to.

3

Windsor Park: Assets, Shortcomings and Needs

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents a range of material collected through a survey of users of the reserve; interviews with key user groups, local members of parliament, representatives of local schools, and relevant regional sporting bodies; a professional assessment of disability access, and a detailed Council survey regarding the assets, short-comings of, and opportunities presented by, Windsor Park.

3.2 Windsor Park: the Assets

Windsor Park is located at 432 West Tamar Road, Riverside, in the southern part of West Tamar Council. The reserve stretches from West Tamar Road in the south-west to the Tamar River coastal reserve in the north-east.

A Property Information Sheet from the Valuer General's office of the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment indicates that Windsor Park is Property Is 2233836 and has a total area of 21.66 hectares *not including* a drainage easement which runs through part of the property and three former house blocks.

A copy of a survey plan of the property prepared for Council in 2003 shows the approximate dimensions in 2003. The aerial photograph on the following page, while somewhat dated with regard to the surrounding land uses, shows the extent of development of the reserve.

The aerial photograph indicates that the north-western two-thirds of the reserve has been developed for recreational use with a strong focus on sports fields. The developed facilities in the reserve numbered and are:

1. Oval, used for Australian Rules Football and Little Athletics
2. Dual change rooms and toilets associated with the sports oval
3. Launceston Football Club social clubrooms
4. Sealed carparking associated with 1. - 3.
5. Long jump and triple jump pit on the western fence line between the football and cricket buildings of
6. Oval perimeter parking and vehicular access road to cricket club building
7. Clubroom shared by Launceston Little Athletics Club and Riverside Cricket Club
8. Cricket oval with turf wickets
9. Main soccer field (9a) and training field (9b)
10. Soccer Club change/toilet building
11. Soccer Club gravel carpark
12. Grassed area of approximately 100 by 250 metres used for junior soccer and cricket grounds with an Astroturf wicket between the main soccer ground and second access road

13. Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer Association toilet block and kiosk which services the grassed area in 12.
14. Newly-formed grass sports training area
15. Small children's playground
16. Informal grassed/lawn areas
17. Access roads: the more easterly road is sealed as far as the Council works depot
18. Reserve depot and workshop
19. Creek.

By comparison with the more westerly section of the reserve, the north-easterly one-third of the reserve is lower-lying with the section beyond the soccer club rooms being subject to inundation by the Tamar River at times of very high tides. It is often wet underfoot and cannot support sports use although it has previously been used for horse agistment. The majority of this area is vegetated by high reeds and would need boardwalks, levees and other works to make it fully accessible. A small levee does exist but it is not very high and appears quite degraded.

Even the south-easterly section of the reserve is lower -lying and the aerial photograph shows that as a result it has had little development and has been used as a fill dump by Council. The newly-formed grass sports training area required extensive fill to achieve a useful level area and this is still undergoing development.

A creek enters the reserve immediately to the east of the eastern entrance and flows in a north-easterly direction. It runs parallel with the property boundary for 300 m. before exiting the Park.

The reserve is immediately adjacent to the Launceston Christian school on its north-western boundary, and St Anthony's school on its south-eastern boundary. The Riverside Primary and High Schools are within one kilometre along the West Tamar Highway.

Windsor Park is home to or regularly used by Launceston Football Club, a competitor in the Tasmanian Football League (NTFL), Riverside Cricket Club, affiliated with the Northern Tasmanian Cricket Association (NTCA); Auskick, conducted by AFL Tasmania; Launceston Little Athletics Club; Riverside Olympic Soccer Club, Northern Tasmania Christian Soccer League; All Stars Junior Soccer; Launceston Christian School, and Riverside High School.

Windsor Park also attracts considerable school use, hire for special events and sports carnivals and informal use from the community.

3.3 Windsor Park Strengths and Shortcomings

Windsor Park has a number of important strengths. These are:

There is already a significant investment at the site which can be added to through a staged program of works, as opposed to starting at a new site

The size of the reserve means that it can meet needs at the local, sub-regional and regional level

The size, shape and natural assets of the reserve means that it can meet a wide range of needs in the community without having to duplicate infrastructure as would be the case if a number of smaller sites were developed. It also means that the reserve has the capacity to service the needs of the growing municipal population

The location of the reserve on the West Tamar Highway means that it is readily accessible from throughout West Tamar Council and the Greater Launceston area. However, local access is hampered by the different elevation of dual carriageways of the highway

The reserve is well known in the community because of the long history of use and the nature of the user groups

The location of the reserve near schools means that co-development and use of wider community assets is possible

The size of the reserve offers the opportunity to develop new forms of leisure provision which will strengthen the sense of community in the Council

The proximity of the reserve to a proposed aged care centre means that both formal and informal recreation provision would be attractive to the residents of such a centre

The creek running through the reserve could be developed to provide a wetlands area to act as a natural filtering project for runoff of the residential areas. Further, water retention systems could be used to collect runoff and rainwater for reuse for parkland irrigation

The Tamar Valley Open Space Strategy prepared in 2004 for Northern Tasmania Development categorised Windsor Park as a significant open space which was equivalent in importance to venues such as Trevallyn, Trail Race Park, Tamar Island and Supply river, and

The location of the reserve adjacent to the Tamar River means that links can be made to regional trails and conservation areas.

Yet the Park also has a number of shortcomings which will need to be addressed over the coming years. These include:

The need to adopt and implement a range of standard design and development principles including designing out crime principles, environmental management, wetland and fauna/flora protocols, ecological design sustainability principles etc

The reserve is hidden behind the housing along its perimeter on the West Tamar Highway

Local access is hampered by the different elevation of the dual carriageways of the highway. Safe Highway crossing points to the reserve have yet to be fully developed

The sections of the reserve toward the River are subject to occasional flooding, to water logging and potentially, to salting. This limits the northward extension of sports fields

Signposting at the reserve does not do justice to the mix of possible uses

The entrances to the reserve and internal traffic management are poor and generate significant safety issues

Internal trails and links to regional trails have not been developed

The opportunities offered by the Tamar River and the associated wetlands have not been exploited. Similarly, the potential to link with volunteer land care groups and to rehabilitate the area for conservation and public use has yet to be initiated. As part of this, the potential exists to develop a 'friends of Windsor Park' group to assist in natural resource management including planting of trees, wildlife protection and monitoring etc

3.4 User Needs

The program of interviews with Windsor Park users, wider community agencies and Members of Parliament identified a diverse list of development needs and opportunities. These have been brought together as one list below in order to avoid duplication. Understandably, some of the actions suggested differed quite significantly between users.

It is stressed that the issues as listed are those of the various user groups and do not necessarily represent the views of the authors of this report, Council officers or the West Tamar Council.

Football Ground and Associated Facilities:

| |
|---|
| Upgrading of oval surface |
| Provision of grandstand and scoreboard |
| Traffic calming and parking |
| Development of a multi-purpose building with kitchen, canteen, gymnasium, storage and grandstand to be shared by a range of users |
| Relocation of playground to a site which is more accessible to main user groups |
| Upgrading of general facilities. |
| Relocation of long jump pit to a more central and accessible site |
| Provision of grandstand and scoreboard |
| Upgrading of general facilities. |
| More pedestrian access points to the main oval |

Cricket

| |
|--|
| Provision of parking around ground perimeter |
| Development of more appropriate vehicular access in place of the present road around the football oval |
| Fencing realignment |
| Upgrading of main ground and improvements to training area |
| Construction of an indoor practice wicket |

Soccer

| |
|--|
| Extension of main ground car park and the development of more appropriate car parking for the multi-use junior soccer and cricket area; enforcement of car parking regulations |
| Construction of toilet/ change facilities for junior soccer |
| Construction of public toilets, especially in junior competition area |
| Construction of a practice playing field for shared use with junior teams |
| Installation of lighting for winter practice |
| Professional alignment and levelling of playing fields |

New development initiatives:

| |
|--|
| Development of further playing fields |
| Provision of tennis courts |
| Storage additions for cricket and little athletics |
| Perimeter and internal walking/ cycling trails and links to regional trails, schools etc |
| Alternate schools access road through the Park |
| Environmental education centre/activities |

3.5 Professional Assessments

Several professional assessments of Windsor Park have been carried out and are summarised below:

3.5.1 Disability Access Assessment, Andrew Hurst (2004)

This 25 page report identified dozens of major and minor non-compliant situations regarding disability access to each building on Windsor Park. Key amongst these were:

Main oval and associated buildings:

- No accessible toilet block on site; existing toilets too small
- Inappropriate slopes from kiosk to sports ground
- No defined disability parking or signs
- Many door entrances and light switches in club/change buildings do not meet current building and safety standards

Cricket facilities:

- Internal Cricket Club hallways have very poor access
- Cricket Club toilet is only accessed via a step
- No accessible toilet block on site
- No defined disability parking or signs at any building
- Many door entrances and light switches do not meet standards

Soccer facilities:

- Poor pathways to soccer facilities
- Traffic access and user safety re car parking for the Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer Association
- No seating within 60 metres of the Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer Association facilities.

The Hurst report indicates that extensive action is needed if people with disabilities are to gain access to Windsor Park. Council must direct that any redevelopment works must comply with all current building and disability standards. It should also establish a program of works and responsibilities for them and set a time line by which compliance must be achieved.

3.5.2 Professional and Councillor Assets and Opportunities Assessment

A number of inspections of Windsor Park by Council's independent recreation planning advisor, Council officer and Councillors identified a range of actions which it was considered were needed to enhance the capacity of the reserve to meet community needs. These are detailed in Table 3.1 following.

Table 3.1: Development issues and action opportunities, Windsor Park

| Football Ground and Associated Facilities: | Discussion |
|--|---|
| Upgrading of oval surface | <p>The Football Oval sits on a poor subsurface and this makes it very difficult to maintain a good surface cover. Drainage problems are caused by the poor sub-surface ‘mounding’ that does not allow for adequate drainage of the ground. It is compounded by inadequate drainage both on the ground and from the ground which are made worse by the collection of runoff from upland areas. Heavy use of the ground during extremely wet periods makes the drainage problem worse. The ground is regularly closed for training when it becomes water logged and is at times almost in an unsafe condition to allow games to proceed. Winter is a period of dormancy for grass so that therefore any damage to the playing surface will remain until spring. It is necessary to moderate the use of the ground according to the ground condition <i>which may necessitate moving training off the main surface</i>. This would not only protect the playing surface but would also reduce overall maintenance costs. There are several options for the redevelopment of the playing surface – naturally these options are in a scale from AFL standard (high cost) to basic standard (low cost). It is unlikely that Council would see it as appropriate to redevelop the surface to an AFL standard due to the high cost and to avoid duplicating an Aurora standard surface in Launceston. It is likely that Council will aim to provide a facility that is adequate to the level of community use and appropriate to the ability of the council and community to afford. This will naturally take account of other funding issues and priorities relating to the wider Windsor park complex – and the total budget of Council at that time.</p> <p>No matter what level of upgrading occurs, any playing surface will require careful management to maximise its quality and to minimise costly damage.</p> <p>Arguably, the most effective, but costly strategy would be to totally redevelop the playing surface into what is called a sand profile surface that would resolve drainage issues in all but extreme situations. This is an expensive option (up to \$500,000, plus additional maintenance costs that would be required). An alternate concept, which would cost of the order of \$200 – 250,000, would be to undertake placing a grid of closely spaced trenches that would drain water from the existing surface in a much more efficient manner and thereby reducing the ponding and subsequent saturation of the ground that currently exists.</p> <p>Decisions on which strategy to pursue in redeveloping the playing surface of the oval thus need to be made in the context of a number of wider issues. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The financial capacity of Council and others who may be able to contribute to the cost of the works (2) The priority of these works in relation to other works required for the greater Windsor park development. (as a cost/benefit analysis for wider community outcomes) (3) Whether the ground will be capable of sustaining a high standard of use regardless of the proposed upgrading works |

| Football Ground and Associated Facilities: | Discussion |
|---|--|
| Upgrading of oval surface (cont) | <p>(4) Whether the remainder of the football oval infrastructure and service areas are capable of being upgraded to, or could physically accommodate, the facilities and facility standards needed for NTFL level competition. These include traffic management and parking, access by emergency services, development of larger/new clubrooms and proposals for a grandstand</p> <p>(5) Whether there is an alternate venue which might be better suited to meeting elite football competition, training, club and spectator needs, and</p> <p>(6) The impact of any expenditures on the football oval on Council's capacity to undertake other projects designed to upgrade and diversify the recreation opportunities provided at the reserve.</p> <p>These issues will all need detailed consideration before final decisions are made on which strategy to follow.</p> |
| Upgrading of football ground perimeter fencing | Launceston Football Club needs to have a fenced reserve to enable the collection of entry fees. The existing entry arrangement needs review particularly considering the safety of people entering and exiting the area. The access needs of cricket and little athletics warrant particular attention as do those of the wider community access who make informal use of the entire facility |
| Upgrading of lighting | Lighting needs to be improved for training use of the ground. However, consideration should be given to taking major training off the main ground to protect it from overuse. There is no need to upgrade lighting to match standard as there is adequate lighting for matches at Prospect Vale Park and Churchill park. (also considering access to Aurora stadium etc). |
| Provision of grandstand and scoreboard | Launceston Football Club has proposed the construction of a grandstand and scoreboard to meet club, competition and spectator needs. If carefully designed and sited, such a facility could serve football and cricket needs. However, it is understood that the NTFL does not have a set policy on the standard of facilities required by NTFL clubs. There are no guidelines/standards for football ground Therefore there is the potential for discussion and interpretation as to what would constitute an appropriate development for the LFC in the current NTFL competition. Discussions with AFL Tasmania have indicated that a grandstand is not considered a priority for the ground. Their policy is to provide the best ground available for the highest level of football first. That suggests that Aurora Stadium and Youngtown ovals would be made available for football finals. AFL Tasmania indicated a view that the focus at Windsor Park should be on the upgrading of the ground. With only a small number of spectators at home games, needs are adequately catered for by perimeter carparking and the existing LFC clubrooms, |

| Football Ground and Associated Facilities: | Discussion |
|--|--|
| Upgrading of general facilities | <p>The existing Launceston Football Club change rooms requires upgrading while there is also a need for new change rooms for visitors and umpires.</p> <p>There is a need for works to be undertaken on the building to ensure that place of assembly, food preparation and handling, bar facility and Building Code of Australia guidelines are met. There is a need to upgrade the accommodation for visiting teams and umpires. Consideration should also be given to the needs of events and festivals including access to toilets, change rooms and an “event centre” (eg: Launceston Football Club clubrooms). This would increase wider community use of the facilities and grounds.</p> <p>There is a need for better support and service facilities for little athletics or for enhanced access for littler athletics to the football facilities. The latter option would be more attractive from a financial perspective and, by avoiding facility duplication, would better meet the objectives and principles underpinning this Strategic Directions Plan.</p> |
| Traffic management | <p>Traffic is a significant issues at Windsor park as a result of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Dangerous approaches along West Tamar Road and the lack of turn in and turn out filter lanes on the Highway (2) The provision of two access and egress roads to the reserve (3) Severely limited parking in the vicinity of the football change rooms (4) Use of the reserve grounds for school parking, bus parking and a student drop-off area for parents (5) The current position and use of the perimeter road around the oval to access the cricket clubrooms and Little Athletics facilities, although this has been partially controlled by the installation of a barrier gate (6) Inadequate and poorly defined parking for parents of Little Athletics participants (7) Limited controls over traffic access to the reserve via the south-eastern (soccer) entrance road and the need for further calming along this road (8) The fact that the south-eastern (soccer access road is only sealed for half its length (9) The positioning of parking for the Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer Association and junior cricket programs on the opposite side of the access road to the playing fields, and (10) Insufficient parking at the Soccer Club building. <p>Long term action to acquire properties along West Tamar Highway and to integrate these with the reserve would help alleviate some of the traffic management issues while also helping to resolve space constraints in that area of the reserve.</p> |

| Football Ground and Associated Facilities: | Discussion |
|---|---|
| Realignment of main entrance | The opportunity should be taken to realign the reserve entrances to attract and encourage wider community use. Consideration should be given to in and out gateways as part of this process as this could help to address traffic safety issues. |
| Relocation of playground to a more suitable site | The present position of the playground is not ideal as it is hidden behind the houses which front West Tamar Road. While this location is reasonable for casual visitors to the Park, a site further to the east would be more suitable. For people using the Park in association with football, cricket or Little Athletics, the playground is very poorly located with regard to supervision and access across the road around the oval. In the longer term, the development of two play facilities should be pursued with one associated with the football and/or cricket club buildings and another with more informal community facilities to the south-east of the soccer access road. In addition, the diversity of equipment offered by the existing facility is very narrow and upgrading and diversification is essential regardless of location. |
| Relocation of long jump pit to a more central / accessible site | This is not a major issue although the facility is presently 'hidden away' behind trees and at a lower level. Relocation to a site adjacent to either of the football or cricket ovals would be more appropriate |
| Shade provision | Shade provision is needed for little athletics participants and supporters |
| Cricket Ground and Associated Facilities: | |
| Cricket ground | The main cricket oval requires upgrading to fix drainage issues and there is a need to maintain access to nets and the synthetic and grass pitches |
| Cricket ground fencing | The Cricket Club has proposed that the ground be fenced. Discussions with the NTCA have led Council to understand that permanent fencing is not required for the Club to remain in the current A grade competition. Council should assess other alternatives for holding sponsor signs, to mark the ground, to secure the ground from vandalism and inappropriate use, and to create an appropriate playing arena. This would maintain a flexible approach to seasonal use of the playing area for a variety of user groups |
| Club facilities | The Cricket Club change and club room facilities need upgrading. There is no apparent need for a grandstand however seating (possibly portable) would be beneficial. The capacity exists to develop a multi-purpose facility shared with soccer, with one side of the building facing the cricket oval and one side facing the soccer grounds. A similar arrangement could be made with Little Athletics on the present Cricket Club building site. These and other club facilities including indoor practice nets could be developed as part of a wider multi-purpose indoor venue |
| Provision of parking around the cricket ground perimeter | It has been proposed that parking be provided around the perimeter of the cricket ground. However, it would seem that this is not a proposal which should be given a high priority as it would generate similar traffic access, management and control issues as is faced by the football oval. Provision of enhanced viewing areas and improved carparking, either between the football and cricket ovals or in the vicinity of the works depot would seem a more appropriate solution. |

| Cricket Ground and Associated Facilities: | Discussion |
|--|--|
| Development of more appropriate vehicular access in place of the present road around the football oval | This issue is directly linked to that above. As noted with regard to the perimeter access road around the football oval, this is unsafe and needs to be changed. It would be more appropriate to provide access for cricket and Little Athletics participants via the more easterly access road into the reserve |
| Storage for cricket and little athletics | <p>The storage capabilities for the cricket and little athletics clubs is inadequate and poorly located. The cricket club uses a run down section of the “visitors change rooms” to store training equipment. This part of the building is in dire need of replacement or at least radical improvement as it is not weather proof and difficult to access.</p> <p>The building used by Little Athletics and the cricket club for its ground maintenance needs could be used by one of the clubs if an alternative storage facility was able to be provided to the other.</p> |
| Soccer: | |
| Upgrading of main ground and improvements to training ground | Upgrading the main ground through leveling, drainage (due to proximity to the River) has been undertaken and top dressing will be completed within 12 months. Training ground improvements are warranted due to their low-lying position. The 2 nd pitch is not adequate for use due to low maintenance inputs. Upgrading of this pitch would allow it to accommodate more matches and training in winter. |
| Extension and upgrading of car parking for both Riverside Olympic Soccer Club and Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer League | Action to extend and seal the soccer car parks is warranted. However, this should be held over pending decisions on other proposals for the layout of facilities at Windsor Park presented in this report. There is a major safety issue for children crossing the internal access road from the car park on the eastern side. |
| Upgrading of Riverside Olympic Soccer Club clubrooms | <p>The Riverside Olympic Soccer Club clubrooms are of a poor standard and are not adequate to cater for visiting teams, referees and women’s teams and require additional change room and toilet areas. Some works may be needed to ensure compliance with health and safety standards. A recent audit has identified significant issues with the electrical works undertaken by the Club</p> <p>Any comprehensive redevelopment should await final decisions regarding the positioning of playing fields and the overall Windsor Park layout. It should only be supported by Council where multi-purpose and shared use can be catered for. A joint facility with the Cricket Club is one option.</p> |

| Soccer: | Discussion |
|--|---|
| Construction of toilet/ change facilities for junior soccer | While it is certain that the Christian Soccer League should have access to quality club, change and toilet facilities, their provision in the vicinity of the existing service building would constitute another example of multiple, duplicate provision in the reserve. It would also 'lock in' the existing layout of uses and as alternate proposals for the distribution of the playing field spaces are proposed later in this report, permanent provision should not be made until final layouts are agreed to. However, substantially upgraded temporary facilities are warranted. An alternate strategy would be to move the LCSA to another venue (ie: the Launceston Christian School grounds) in a partnership arrangement with the school. |
| Development of more appropriate car parking for multi-use junior soccer and cricket area | The car park which presently serves the junior soccer grounds to the east -and <i>across</i> – the access road into the main soccer facilities. As such, children and parents must cross the access road to reach the playing fields. This issue should be resolved before the beginning of the next soccer season as it presents a major risk to junior players. A short term strategy is to develop alternate car parking adjacent to the playing fields. Alternately, diverting the access road to the east of the car park may warrant consideration. In the longer term, and as detailed later in this Chapter, the redevelopment and relocation of the main soccer support facilities could see the access road being terminated in the vicinity of the present works depot. |
| Installation of lighting for winter practice | The installation of lighting for winter practice would be beneficial although this would need to be balanced against the danger of over-using the playing surfaces. |
| Shade provision | Shade provision is needed for junior soccer players |
| New Development Initiatives | |
| Further playing fields and activity areas | <p>As a major sports venue in the Council area, the opportunity to provide further playing fields should be ensured. A new playing-field area, suitable for some forms of sports training or for junior games, is presently being developed in the eastern section of the reserve and this will allow some additional use.</p> <p>Additional grounds could also be developed on land further toward the north-east of the reserve although issues of drainage and landfill could restrict the extent of development. If further field sports areas are developed, they should take the form of the existing junior soccer area where the playing field layout is not fixed and hence the uses and users can be flexible.</p> <p>A wide mix of outdoor sports warrant consideration in addition to those which are already provided for. These are discussed in detail in Appendix 2 and include skate/BMX, touch, softball/baseball, archery, rugby union/league, and orienteering. All these could not be accommodated at the reserve and it is imperative that prior to providing for new sports, an assessment is made of existing resources in the district, market growth and needs and the opportunities for sharing resources between, for example, school and community venues.</p> |

| New Development Initiatives | Discussion |
|--|---|
| Further playing fields and activity areas (cont) | <p>AFL Tasmania has identified the need for additional fields, but these can be flexible playing spaces rather than traditional football ovals. The NTCA has requested continuing support for turf and AstroTurf wickets, with some form of centralized booking system to allow them to roster games at these venues due to a lack of available grounds in the greater Launceston area.</p> <p>It should be noted that there is considerable provision of sports grounds (mainly school ovals) in close proximity to Windsor Park and that there is significant potential to coordinate an access arrangement with the four schools to maximise both the quality and sharing of resources.</p> |
| Indoor training facility | <p>It has been proposed that an indoor training facility be developed for use by Launceston Football Club. While this would be beneficial to Club programs, a sole-user initiative would be contrary to the objectives and principles established for this Strategic Directions Plan. The indoor training needs of football could be met quite effectively through the multi-purpose building proposed in the next paragraph. For either or both proposals, further market research and preparation of a business case would be needed. Other potential user groups, other co-located facilities, management structures, capital and operational costs and the resultant user fees would need to be evaluated. There would be major insurance and risk issues if such a facility was not professionally staffed whenever it was open for public use</p> |
| Multi-purpose community activities venue | <p>A multi-purpose community centre could be developed with multi-purpose meeting, social and youth activities areas; arts/craft facilities; health and fitness gymnasium; health and fitness centre; indoor sports courts; squash; sports club meeting/committee/storage /training areas; aged care and family support programs; creche; support kitchen/canteen, and grandstand to be shared by a range of users. Some of the specific indoor sports which might be provided for are discussed in detail in Appendix 2 and include tennis, volleyball, martial arts, handball, basketball, netball, gymnastics and indoor soccer.</p> <p>Such provision would reflect modern trends in leisure provision, would contribute to meeting Council's strategic, community services and sport and recreation objectives and would meet many needs in the Riverside and the wider West Tamar communities. Riverside does not have a strong social centre and a community centre at Windsor Park would help to provide this and to meet important social and community needs.</p> <p>Several issues which would need to be resolved in relation to such a development include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The mix of facilities and programs to be provided, based on an assessment of existing provision elsewhere in the region, the scale of the markets to be provided for, and the financial viability of each element (2) Where on the reserve the facility could be located. If it were built in association with the existing football support facilities, it is probable that site space constraints would be a significant issue. Too close an association with one sporting club could also restrict community use because of club time and space needs. It could also restrict funding opportunities. (3) How the development would be funded, and (4) How the development would be managed and programmed. Management should be independent of any club or group and have a permanent presence at the building during opening hours. |

| New Provision Initiatives | Discussion |
|--|--|
| Multi-purpose community activities venue (cont) | As with the provision of additional playing fields, any new indoor facility initiatives will need to be tested through a full feasibility and market needs study before Council decided to proceed. Such an analysis must include consideration of the availability and capacity of other similar facilities in the district, including school facilities so that wasteful duplication is avoided. Consideration should also be given to the co-operative management of use of other facilities in the local area such as school playing fields, the indoor stadium and gymnasium at Riverside High School and other similar public and commercial resources eg: the new Christian Centre being built opposite Tailrace Park |
| Tennis courts | Proposals to relocate Riverside Tennis Club to Windsor Park warrant consideration. However, to establish the basis for a club which is viable over the longer term, 6- 8 courts and associated support facilities would be required. The space required for this initiative would thus be considerable, and would be <i>fixed</i> . This would restrict the capacity for the development of more flexible field sports places and is therefore most probably inappropriate. Further, it is understood that a regional tennis centre is to be developed elsewhere in the Launceston area. At present, it appears that the Riverside courts are sufficient for club needs (provided that surface upgrading occurs), especially considering the availability of courts at Trevallyn and the likelihood that the proposed regional tennis centre will be available for events and will also have a significant impact on participation numbers at Riverside. |
| Perimeter and internal walking/ cycling trails and links to regional trails, schools etc | The size of Windsor Park gives it a perimeter length of over 2 kilometres. This makes it suitable for a number of walking and cycling trails to be developed. These can be developed as internal loops of varying sizes; as trails linking to the various focus points in the reserve; as links to future regional initiatives along the Tamar River shoreline, and as links to local schools and housing areas. |
| Alternate schools access road | It has been proposed that the reserve could be used to provide an alternate access road to local schools as a safer alternative to using West Tamar Highway. However, construction of a road running east-west through the reserve would divide the Park in two and would bring with it a range of safety, access, vandalism and management issues. A far more effective and environmentally-friendly strategy would be to that any trails and pathways in and through the reserve provide good quality, safe links between local schools and student homes |
| Environmental education centre/activities | The environmental quality of the northern sections of Windsor Park makes it highly suitable for the development of a range of environmental education activities and facilities to expand on those provided through local schools and other agencies along the River. These initiatives could be linked with both built, indoor facilities and with the system of trails discussed above. |
| Additional playgrounds | As a regional reserve, a strong case can be put for the development of a regional playground at Windsor Park. However, before taking action on such an initiative, Council should review the existing provision of higher order play facilities, including those at Tail Race Park, and review the Launceston City Council proposals for a regional-standard playground at Heritage Park |

| New Provision Initiatives | Discussion |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Informal parklands | There is a need and opportunity to develop sections of the Park for a range of informal passive and active recreational pursuits. At present, the only developed informal areas are those surrounding the playing fields. Provision could be made for a wide range of activities including picnics, social gatherings, outdoor events and shows, dog exercising/training, skate activities, BMX /mountain bike pursuits, community gardens and the like. Needs assessments in the local and regional community would need to be conducted before action was taken. |

3.6 Conclusion

This Chapter has provided a detailed review of the present assets and shortcomings of Windsor Park. It has also detailed a range of opportunities for improving the existing assets and uses of the reserve and for adding new resources.

While the reserve meets a number of sporting needs at present, site inspections indicate that there is scope for improving the services provided to existing users.

The wider analyses of leisure trends, community demographics and emerging community needs has indicated that there is considerable scope for the development of a range of further outdoor *and* indoor facilities, programs and services at Windsor Park. These would serve local, sub-regional and regional markets and would make a major contribution to community development, health and well-being in the West Tamar community.

The following Chapter presents the recommended Windsor Park Strategic Directions Plan. This has been derived from the materials presented in the previous three Chapters.

4

The Windsor Park Strategic Directions Plan

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the Strategic Directions Plan to guide the future development and management of Windsor Park. The Strategic Directions Plan comprises:

3. A statement of the Strategic Directions Plan **objectives**
4. A statement of the Strategic Directions Plan **principles**
3. A statement of the **types of uses** to be provided for the community at Windsor Park
4. A statement of the **hierarchy** of needs to be met
5. A listing of the priority **recommendations for action**, and
6. A recommended **management structures** and **operational procedures** for the reserve.

4.2 Strategic Directions Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Windsor Park Strategic Directions Plan have been adopted from West Tamar Council's *Strategic Plan 2003-2008*. They are to:

"Continue promotion and support of activities which have a broad community benefit",
and

"Continue catering for the needs of different interest groups by providing, where appropriate, community based facilities and encouraging community use".

4.3 Planning Principles

The following planning principles will be used to guide decisions on the recommended actions at Windsor Park. These are in keeping with modern recreation planning practise and have been drawn from the Council policy documents reviewed in Chapter 1. The principles are listed below. In future, development proposals which are contrary to these principles should be rejected.

Access for all: All new provision will be designed and managed to ensure access for people of all ages, abilities and interests. The design and management of existing resources will be progressively changed to permit access for all and to ensure compliance with State and federal design and building requirements

Design flexibility: All new provision will be designed to support a range of uses on a seasonal, annual or longer time frame

Meeting community needs: Provision initiatives will only be taken where they meet demonstrated community needs

Diversity of opportunity and choice: The array of opportunities and setting provided at the reserve will create a diversity of opportunity and choice across all ages, abilities and other community characteristics

Provision of support services: Council will ensure that appropriate services and support facilities will be provided at the reserve

Provision of good quality and safe recreation opportunities: All resources developed at Windsor Park will comply with all relevant Australian health and safety standards

Lifelong participation: Provision will seek to enhance opportunities for lifelong participation in recreation and leisure activities

Shared use: All new assets on the reserve will be provided on a shared use basis while existing resources with exclusive use rights will be progressively moved to a shared basis

Shared resourcing: Depending on the nature and mix of uses and users, opportunities for the shared resourcing of development initiatives will be sought by Council

Shared management: The management of all assets at Windsor Park will be shared between Council and key user groups to ensure that equity and diversity of opportunity are optimised and that efficient and effective use of the resource is achieved

Coordination of action: All facility, program/activity and servicing initiatives on the reserve will be coordinated by Council to ensure that the actions are timely and that the optimum outcomes are achieved

Affordability and sustainability: All development/provision proposals will be assessed on the basis of their affordability (from both a capital and operational perspective) and their sustainability

Regional, sub-regional and local context: All development/provision proposals will be assessed on the basis of their contribution to the *regional, sub-regional* and *local* mix of sporting, recreation and leisure opportunities

Opportunities for enhancing the personal, social, health, environmental and economic benefits gained by the community: All development/provision proposals will be assessed on the basis of their contribution to enhancing the personal, social, health, environmental and economic benefits gained by the community, whether they are users of the reserve or not

Enhancing environmental quality: All development/provision proposals will be assessed on the basis of their contribution to protecting and enhancing local and sub-regional environmental quality

Compliance with regional planning and development policies: All development/provision proposals will be assessed on the basis of their contribution to achieving wider regional development policies and their compliance with regional development strategies (eg: those embodied in the Tamar Natural Resource Strategy; the Tamar 2020 Strategy; Northern Tasmania Development, West Tamar Council State Government partnerships)

Provision monitoring and review: The performance and use of all development/provision initiatives will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of the community are being met and that resources developed on the reserve are being used in the effective and sustainable manner

Promotion of opportunity: The resources provided in the reserve will be widely promoted in the community to ensure that optimum use is achieved.

4.4 Community Uses of Windsor Park

This Strategic Directions Plan directs that Windsor Park will be developed to offer six different activity types to the West Tamar and wider regional community. These are:

Sporting activities: Existing sporting activities at Windsor Park will be enhanced through the further development and upgrading of playing facilities, support facilities and services infrastructure. Provision will also be made for a range of new sporting activities to be pursued at the reserve including potentially, touch football, softball, baseball, archery, rugby, orienteering, croquet, bocce, and petanque (See Appendix 2).

A detailed feasibility assessment will be undertaken to determine the viability of providing indoor sports through a multi-purpose indoor community leisure and activities centre. Activities could be expected to include indoor soccer, carpet bowls, volleyball, netball, basketball, badminton, table tennis, indoor climbing and martial arts. Such a building should also be designed to replace existing sports club change, support and management spaces where appropriate.

Active, non-competitive recreation pursuits: Windsor Park will be developed to offer a variety of non-competitive, active recreational opportunities. These will include cycling, walking, play, informal sports, training, dog exercising, kite flying, skate/BMX facilities, community gardens, and other related pursuits.

Provision for indoor non-competitive activities will also be assessed including a youth activities centre, health and fitness facilities, aerobics, and a range of personal health and well-being pursuits

Social and community opportunities: Windsor Park will be developed to offer as range of non-competitive but active recreational opportunities. These will include picnic facilities, and outdoor lawn areas for social activities and community events, indoor and outdoor music performance spaces, and indoor and outdoor arts and craft activity areas.

Environmental awareness and management: The natural areas of Windsor Park will be protected, enhanced and developed in a manner which allows their appreciation and use for environmental, educational and related activities. The benefits which could be provided through an environmental education centre will be assessed.

Transport link: Path and cycleways in Windsor Park will be developed to contribute to local and regional non-motorised transport and recreational opportunities. Special attention will be given to developing pathways which provide safe linkage between homes, shops, schools and other community infrastructure. Regional transport and recreational links will be developed through extensions of the Tamar River coastal trail.

Community building and support programs and services: The Riverside area lacks a distinct community focus. The potential for an indoor community activities centre at Windsor Park to provide such a focus will be assessed. The range of community support and development opportunities could be expected to include multi-purpose spaces for social activities, sports meeting and committee rooms, youth, family and aged support services and programs, café facilities.

4.5 The Hierarchy of Needs to be Met

The size, capacity, location and development potential of Windsor Park mean that it will be developed and managed to meet community needs at three levels. These are:

Local needs: Facilities and programs will be provided which are attractive and accessible to the local Riverside community. These will be of a scale and standard which will not attract *sub-regional* or *regional* use. This provision is expected to include play facilities, informal sports facilities/areas, local trails connecting to schools, shops and homes, junior sports, and indoor facilities for local community activities.

Sub-regional needs: Facilities and programs will be provided which are attractive and accessible to the sub-regional community, including all of West Tamar Council and nearby areas of greater Launceston. These will be of a scale and standard which will attract and support competitive and non-competitive uses including a range of indoor and outdoor sports, walking/cycling trails, social venues, and picnic facilities.

Regional needs: High standard facilities and programs will be provided which are capable of meeting regional across the greater Launceston district and beyond as deemed appropriate. These facilities and programs will include those for sports, trails, and potentially, cultural and community events.

Action will be taken to ensure a balance between the three levels of need and that needs at one level do not dominate use to the detriment of other levels of need.

4.6 Management

4.6.1 Current Practice

The management of Windsor Park has been fraught with difficulties over recent years. This has been due largely to a policy vacuum with regard to the Park and the lack of a strategic development plan and management plan for the reserve. As a consequence, user groups and clubs have seen it as their right to determine the patterns and programs of use or to demand that certain actions are taken on their behalf by Council.

Similarly, there is no clear Council policy statement which specifies the position of the reserve within the wider context of Council development and works projects.

As a consequence of the above, there has been conflict between Council and various user groups and between user groups themselves. Individual groups have established their own action plans and objectives, facilities have been developed or used in a manner which does not comply with disability access and building code regulations and over and/or inappropriate uses have occurred.

Such a situation means that the optimal outcomes for the community have not been achieved. Council owns Windsor Park and under the law, all developments on it. It is also the agency which will ultimately be responsible with regard to legal issues.

4.6.2 The Need for Change

Given the above, a process needs to be put in place wherein Council and its officers have final decision making authority in relation to the development and use of the reserve assets. This

process should be extended to all other sport and recreation assets on Council land or on land for which Council is the designated management authority.

If this does not occur, Council's ability to develop Windsor Park and to facilitate community use in the most effective, efficient and beneficial manner will be severely compromised. Its ability to achieve its corporate objectives with regard to sport and recreation will also be severely hampered. Further, its ability to attract State and other development funding will be reduced.

It is therefore recommended that Council takes action to:

1. Endorse officer responsibility for the day-to-day and long term management of Windsor Park within a more rigorous management regime
2. Develop a system of user group *licenses* which permit designated users to make specific types of use of each Park facility at specific times of the day, week and year
3. Prepare and pro-actively implement a set of use regulations to guide the scale, nature and conditions of use
4. Prepare schedules of use times, access rights and fees for use which ensure equity of opportunity for all user groups and the wider community
5. Prepare detailed statements relating to asset maintenance specifications, standards and responsibilities
6. Promote the availability of the Park and its facilities to other users, and
7. Determine the scope and scale of developments to be taken or to be refused approval within the context of this strategic directions plan and their priorities.

With regard to item 3., regulations can be expected to include when playing fields are to be closed to use due to weather or other conditions, equipment standards, the position and content of signage, frequency of use, involvement of commercial bodies, alcohol sales, sub-letting etc. Penalties for the breach of conditions will also be prepared

With regard to item 5., Council will specify the maintenance and operational tasks clubs and other users will be responsible for, what roles Council will fulfil and the cost of them.

Council will ensure that its officers have the authority to make final and binding decisions on these issues following an agreed process of consultation and discussion. This process should entail:

- a. A 2 month notification period every three years during which time current or potential user clubs and the community will be provided with information regarding development proposals or will be invited to prepare proposals for action
- b. Officer and Councillor review of development proposals in the light of their contribution to achieving the objectives of this Strategic Directions Plan; feasibility analyses as appropriate; funding resources and capacities; availability for wider use
- c. Determination of action and relevant management and access arrangements
- d. Review and review through further consultations with community and Windsor Park users/intending users, and
- e. Determination and publication of actions to be taken.

It should be noted that change-management is potentially the most significant issue to resolve in implementing the development plan for Windsor Park. Many individuals and user groups

may exhibit negativity, cynicism and change-resistant behaviours if they feel that their 'control' or authority at the site is being challenged, or if their needs are not being met. Council will need to be aware of this, while assisting the community and user groups with identifying the advantages and benefits of change.

4.6.3 Managing New Indoor Facilities at Windsor Park

All new and redeveloped indoor facilities provided at Windsor Park must be designed and managed as multi-use spaces. If, as recommended in this Strategic Directions Plan, a feasibility study into the development of a new multi-purpose centre shows that this is feasible from both market need and financial perspectives, and if such a facility is developed, Council will appoint full time professional staff to management, program, schedule the use of and promote the facility.

4.7 Recommended Priorities for Action

The chart on the following page is a draft list of recommended priorities for action which have been identified through the review of the material presented in the previous Chapters of this report. These may need to be further refined and ordered in the light of Council and other funding sources. A brief explanation of the proposal, and an indicative timeframe and cost are provided for each priority. The general layout for the Park is shown on the accompanying plan.

| Recommended Action | Notes | Commencement Date | Indicative Cost |
|---|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Adopt this report as the policy framework to guide the future development and management of Windsor Park | Formal adoption of this report will ensure that all action proposals for Windsor Park will be developed in keeping with objectives and principles which further Council's overarching corporate objectives | Immediate | Nil |
| 2. Endorse the further development of Windsor Park as Council's top sport and recreation development priority | This action will ensure that priority action is given to the further development of Windsor Park ahead of other venues | Immediate | Nil |
| 3. Confirm Council as the agency responsible for the long term planning and management of the reserve and for day-to-day operational issues | This action will ensure that Council and its officers are given the authority to manage the use of Windsor Park in keeping with Council's overarching corporate objectives and in the interests of all residents | Immediate | Nil |
| 4. Endorse the proposed general layout of the reserve indicated on the accompanying plan | The proposed general layout of the reserve provides a "footprint" to control and guide future development and to ensure that inappropriate development does not occur and compromise future initiatives. The conceptual layout will be refined through the recommended feasibility studies | Immediate | Nil |
| 5. Undertake further tree and shrub planting | Further tree and shrub planting should be undertaken within the general development footprint recommended in 3. This will ensure that later initiatives occur | Immediate and continuing | Allow \$5,000 - 10,000 pa. |

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|
| | within a developed as opposed to a 'green-fields' environment | | |
| 6. Undertake temporary revisions to road access and parking for soccer and cricket | Urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of cricket, little athletics and soccer club users. Formal (even if temporary) <i>pathway</i> and <i>road</i> works should be undertaken to provide safe access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The cricket pavilion via a road off the soccer access road in the vicinity of the Council works shed. Vehicular access via the football oval should be closed b. Soccer. Divert the access road to the east of the car park (or relocate car park to the vicinity of the Council works depot) and install speed humps and/or other road calming devices on the access road | Immediate | Allow \$40,000 |
| 7. Proceed with the upgrading of the football oval playing surface | Football and little athletics use of the main oval is hampered by the poor condition of the ground. In the case of football, this hampers the capacity of the facility to fulfil its regional role. | As soon as resources permit | \$200,000 - \$300,000 depending on scope of works |

| Recommended Action | Notes | Commencement Date | Indicative Cost |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|
| 8. Research / design works to improve traffic access to and egress from the Park, and car and bus parking | Vehicular access to / egress from the reserve is a major problem and safety issue. Provision of slip lanes and car and bus parking need resolution. | Immediate and continuing | To be determined |
| 9. Develop paths/trails throughout the Park | A series of gravel pathways for walking and cycling should be developed. These should provide short and long loops <i>within</i> the Park, provide safe access <i>through</i> the Park for residents travelling to schools, community venues, shops/commercial services, and <i>between</i> residential areas. | 2 – 4 years and continuing | Allow \$20,000 pa. |
| 10. Upgrade and relocate play facilities and develop picnic facilities, barbecues, shelters and associated parking, landscaping etc | Provide upgraded play facilities and a 2nd set at a more accessible location in association picnic facilities, barbecues, shelters and associated parking in order to diversifying local and sub-regional use by the community | 2 – 4 years | Allow \$300,000 |
| 11. Assist the Launceston Football Club in the process of upgrading its facilities | The Launceston Football Club facilities are in need of redevelopment. The extent of works will depend on funding inputs from the Club and assistance from external bodies such as the NTFL. | 3 – 6 years | To be determined |
| 12. Upgrade soccer and cricket playing fields | There is a need to further upgrade the soccer and cricket playing fields to optimise the benefits provided and to ensure the facilities can accommodate the demands made on them | 3 – 5 years | To be determined by scope of works needed |
| 13. Commission a feasibility study into the development of an indoor /outdoor multi-purpose community leisure centre on the reserve. | A feasibility study will be needed to determine markets, facilities, design, siting, capital and operational costs of such a venue. The study should assess the capacity to incorporate existing sports pavilions (eg: soccer, cricket) and other community support and service facilities; address traffic and parking needs, and recommend a preferred management and operational structure. Consideration should be given to the relationship between a new facility and needs in Riverside and Legana. Dependent on the feasibility study outcomes, proceed to design development, fund raising and construction. | 4 – 6 years | Allow \$50,000 and 6 months for feasibility Construction cost est. \$6 – 7 m. (at 2006 prices) dependent on components, staging and year of works |
| 14. Develop further playing fields | The development of further multi-user playing fields will be important to diversifying sporting use of the reserve. A detailed assessment of the capacity to use nearby school facilities will be an important part of a demand and supply assessment designed to identify the required spaces and the initial sports designated to use them | 5 – 7 years | Allow \$10,000 for supply and demand assessment. Capital costs to be identified by the research (est. \$500,000) |
| 15. Major progress | Review and revise this program and the | 7 years | Allow |

| | | | |
|--------|--|--|----------|
| review | wide range of further needs have been identified for possible action in the course of this report. Conduct a community consultations and review program as part of this process. | | \$10,000 |
|--------|--|--|----------|

The foregoing priority actions chart has limited the number of recommended actions although even these could be expected to cost of the order of \$7 - 8 m. at 2006 prices.

A number of other proposals which were identified through the needs assessment and consultations program have not been endorsed for action either because the assessment of needs and priorities has indicated that they do not further the broad objectives or principles of the Strategic Directions Plan, will only make a limited contribution to meeting wide community sport and recreation needs and needs at the local, sub-regional and regional level or are likely to be more effectively addressed at other venues in West Tamar Council or in the wider Launceston region.

Appendix 1:

Trends in Open Space Planning, Development and Management

The following trends have been identified over recent years as affecting open space planning, development and management:

A community recognition of the inherent value of a diversity of open space types and consequent action to provide and protect representative samples of each

The emergence of professional open space managers and planning processes (e.g. strategies, policies, mater plans, strategic asset management, risk assessments)

The emergence of open space and 'green' issues as a stronger political force, often opposing development or loss of open space values

The dramatic growth in natural resource-based recreation activities ranging from conservation and habit study to bushwalking and rockclimbing, canoeing, abseiling and bouldering

The continuing popularity of outdoor sports in the Australian community and amongst educators as a means of combating poor community health and obesity

A dramatic growth in some junior sports, most notably in southern Australia, soccer

The recognition of the links between recreation and health and a consequent substantial growth in the demand for trail based activities such as walking, jogging and cycling

The need for enhanced urban and rural landuse planning with a consequent increase in the use of open space as a means of defining urban areas (whether in the form of canals, golf course, green 'wedges' etc) and of providing buffers between what could otherwise be conflicting uses

A greater emphasis on cultural, non-competitive and passive leisure opportunities, many of which may occur in open spaces

The demand for provision of high standards of facilities, quality programming, customer service and management involved with open spaces (e.g. signs, brochure information, programming of facility times, car parking, safety, security and interpretation)

Participation in a far broader array of activities (e.g. not tied to one sport or activity but a mix of activities to suit the lifestyle) and the ability to participate in activities of their choice, at times and locations, which are convenient to their individual lifestyle

A trend towards more individual activities rather than organised team sports although still wanting to be part of a 'community'

The desire for recreation facilities, which can be used all year (e.g. bike paths, walking trails)

Growing interest in sustainable, low impact, low energy use and environmentally-appropriate activities (e.g. kayaking, walking, mountain bike riding)

A stronger desire for bushland preservation, the protection and/or re-establishing of wildlife corridors and interpretive trails, which can be accessed for recreational use

The recognition that it is possible to achieve the multi-use of a range of open space types eg: water management, forestry and conservation in association with various recreation uses; conservation and landscape initiatives; amenity and recreational uses and finally, mixed recreational uses

Continued under-servicing of many open space sites (e.g. seats, lights, paths, signs, toilets), especially for casual users, and

Continuing high use of sporting facilities by traditional field sports but *under*-use of some types of venues eg: for traditional activities such as lawn bowls, croquet and to a lesser extent, tennis.

Appendix 2:

Discussion of Sports Opportunities for Consideration at Windsor Park

The following background notes have been prepared by members of the Windsor Park planning team. They review the present position of a range of sports which may warrant consideration for new or expanded provision at Windsor Park.

- **Skate boarding / BMX / In line skating**
 - Skate facilities (encompassing skate boarding, BMX freestyle and in-line skating) have become more popular and accepted recreation developments across northern Tasmania.
 - There are significantly large parks at Royal Park and Ravenswood in Launceston. Royal park contains a bowl and half pipe lip ramp, while Ravenswood contains a large vert ramp.
 - Smaller parks are located at Torrens St (Rocherlea), Perth, Evandale, Longford and Beaconsfield.
 - Council could consider the provision of skate facilities for the Riverside area – depending on demographics and demand. It is likely that a smaller sized facility would be adequate considering the availability of other structures.
 - The recreation trails for Windsor park could potentially accommodate some level of in-line skating if made from a suitable material – however in-line skating numbers are generally low due to the lack of suitable trails in the wider Launceston area.

Sports grounds

- **Australian Rules Football.**
 - Current stable participation for the LFC.
 - High rates (substantial recent growth) for Auskick. It will be interesting to see (over time) if this is simply a reflection of a new product and successful marketing. It will also be interesting to see if there is a transfer from this to junior/senior club memberships.
 - No matter whether the LFC remains in the NTFL or moves to a remodelled NTFA – there will remain a need to keep a football ground at Windsor Park.
 - Council has been pressured to also upgrade the Bridgenorth football ground for the current team in the NTFA competition. If Council adopted a ‘best ground’ policy like AFL Tasmania, then it could offer NTFA games at Windsor park (provided that there was a surface upgrade suitable for extra games). This would offer Windsor park as the West Tamar’s best ground. However, access arrangements to the LFC clubrooms would have to be improved to allow this to occur.
 - It will be interesting to look at demographic changes in the municipality over time. The growth of ‘creative professionals’, commuters and the ageing of the population may have an impact on football numbers. However many members do not necessarily reside in West Tamar.
 - AFL Tasmania have requested flexible ground space for conducting Auskick. It was noted that this did not need to be a traditional football oval – as portable ground markers and goal posts are used. This enables a variety of uses from the grassed playing surfaces.

- **Soccer grounds**

- The Northern Tasmanian Municipal Organisation – Regional Soccer Strategy recommended 3 or 4 soccer centres in the greater Launceston area. All councils of the northern region have endorsed the strategy – however only the Meander Valley Council has actively progressed the recommendations by improving Prospect Vale Park.
 - These centres were recommended to be ‘high grade, multi-pitch complexes. It is expected that this would consist of one ‘regional standard’ facility. At present, this could include Prospect vale park and the NTCA complex. Prospect Vale Park has two quality pitches, night match level lighting and suitable clubroom facilities (being upgraded now). The NTCA has flexible space to accommodate two or more pitches, high standard club room facilities, stands and suitable lighting (perhaps not match standard).
 - The strategy noted that Aurora Stadium offers a national/international standard facility should it be required.
 - The strategy included Riverside (Windsor park) as one of the (municipal level) multi-pitch centres. Considering the existence of Aurora Stadium, Prospect Vale Park and the NTCA complex – Riverside will only require consolidation as a municipal level facility.
 - This suggests upgrading the main pitch and 2nd pitch to a suitable standard, appropriate training spaces and upgrading of the club rooms to better accommodate referees, visiting teams and women’s teams.
 - Local participation rates have expanded in junior soccer through the Northern Tasmanian Junior Soccer Association (centralised games at Churchill Park) and the Northern Tasmanian Christian Soccer League (based at Windsor Park). The recommendation is for increased grounds to accommodate Riverside Olympic training and the NTCSL games at Windsor park – although there has been a suggestion to find an alternative home for the NTCSL through school fields nearby.
 - Senior soccer numbers have remained somewhat stable for the past few years – with some growth in women’s soccer. Riverside Olympic has a strong geographical position to draw members and is likely to remain a stable and viable club in the northern and state rosters.
- **Cricket**
 - Riverside Cricket Club is based at Windsor Park and plays in local and regional competitions. The existing ground is suitable for the needs of the Club although the turf wicket demands a high level of maintenance to keep it at the level that is required. Because of the turf wicket and the fact that the ground is a smaller ground, it is not suited to Australian rules at a senior level. However, it may be able to be developed to allow training for junior levels of Australian Rules and/or soccer.
- **Touch football**
 - The Launceston Touch Football Association has relocated from Royal Park to Prospect Vale Park. It would appear that no further touch football facilities are required in the wider Launceston area.
- **Softball/ baseball**
 - Although originally suggested as moving to Windsor park from Ogilvie Park, Softball have relocated to the new Churchill park complex with junior soccer as the winter tenant.
 - Churchill Park contains an international standard diamond and 2nd state level diamond – therefore it is not necessary to duplicate any softball or baseball facilities at Windsor Park.
- **Croquet/ Lawn Bowls/ Bocce/Petanque**
 - Lawn bowls memberships have been declining for some time in the greater Launceston area. This has seen the amalgamations to develop the North Launceston Bowls club and the West Launceston community club.

- Discussions with the Riverside Bowls club suggests they are happy with their premises – provided with upgrading work via a State Sport and Recreation Tasmania grant.
 - There would appear to be no further need to develop new lawn bowls greens in the Riverside area – considering that Trevallyn Bowls Club is also nearby.
 - The Launceston Croquet club has suggested growth in membership, while other clubs have remained relatively stable. There appears to be no new demands for either croquet or bocce – although predictions of further population increases in the proportion of older adults should incorporate a regular review of suitable activities (ie: lawn bowls, croquet etc).
 - Petanque is a French form of bocce and is growing in popularity around Australia although participant numbers are small. There are no known facilities in West Tamar and most venues in Tasmania are regional in nature
- **Archery**
 - Paringa Archers operate an outdoor archery range at the Trevallyn State Reserve. The club has approached both local and state government to develop an indoor archery range – but at this stage no suitable land or facilities have been available. It would appear that the club would require assistance to develop an indoor centre – either state or local government grants (or in kind assistance).
 - Paringa archers would prefer to have one site for both their indoor and outdoor activities, however they may be potential hirers of an indoor space that could accommodate archery. Further investigations would be necessary to determine their ability to pay for hire, their demand on the facility and the feasibility of supporting this activity at Windsor Park.
- **Rugby union/ Rugby league**
 - Royal park currently houses rugby fields. With touch football being relocated to Prospect Park – the small rosters there seem to be adequate for demand.
- **Orienteering**
 - The Esk Valley Orienteering Club (EVOC) operates orienteering activities for the wider northern Tasmanian region.
 - EVOC have agreements with many land holders/managers to operate orienteering events. EVOC arrange for mapping of the specific site – noting go/no go areas in accordance with the land managers requests. Events can remain fresh for competitors by rotating frequently through different sites.
 - EVOC have requested that Windsor park be considered for a parkland orienteering site – suitable for school based courses, novice courses and mid week (twilight – urban) short courses. This may only require mapping - of which EVOC members would prepare the orienteering-specific map with some financial assistance from Council.
 - Schools nearby have supported this request.

Indoor sport halls (General)

- The 1994 Tamar Region Indoor Facilities Study.
 - Recommended for greater coordination between local and state government regarding indoor facility provision and programming in the region.
 - Recommended that nearly all indoor facilities were under-utilised for major periods – especially day time. It was evident that increased marketing, promotion and programming would assist in increasing use of what exists rather than promoting the need for additional facilities.
 - Increased demand for indoor opportunities that provide security in programming and protection from inclement weather.

Indoor and outdoor Sports courts

- **Netball**

- Currently the Northern Tasmanian Netball Association conducts netball rosters at the Hobblers Bridge Netball Centre and the Silverdome (indoor, mid week rosters). Both venues are suitable for conducting state and national championships.
 - Although the NTNA recommended the roofing of two courts at Hobblers Bridge in 1994, the proposal was unsuccessful and there is debate that the Silverdome is adequate for indoor netball needs.
 - Newstead College has an indoor netball court, and St. Patricks College has recently built an indoor centre capable of holding basketball and netball.
 - The NTNA rosters are centralised at Hobblers bridge. At this point in time there appears to be no call for further netball courts to be built for competition purposes in any venues in close proximity to Launceston (ie: Windsor Park).
 - It is not considered necessary to provide indoor netball facilities in competition with the existing facilities in Launceston.
 - Council should consider positive strategies for fostering recreation opportunities for women, as generally women have lower rates of participation than men.
 - Council should consider the need for outdoor netball courts in the Riverside / Legana areas for informal play, but this is not necessary for Windsor park unless strong evidence suggests that it is specifically required at this particular location..
 - Alternatively, Considering the success of half court basketball courts in Tasmania and across Australia (for informal play), there could be a case to look at the need for a netball half court somewhere in the Riverside area.
 - Council could also consider the need/demand for indoor training and informal use of an indoor area for netball.
- **Tennis**
 - Indoor tennis is suitably catered for by the Launceston Indoor Sports Arena (LISA).
 - Riverside Tennis Club has suggested the need for additional courts at their existing complex, in addition to upgrading of their synthetic grass mats. There is debate that the membership base of the club may not warrant the additional courts in relation to the proposed development of a regional tennis centre in Launceston (proposed Elphin Sports Complex).
 - In addition, the Trevallyn Tennis Club have under-utilised courts (anecdotal evidence of low membership) – that could be used under an agreement with the Riverside tennis club for special tournaments.
 - At present the northern tennis rosters may not be sufficient to require additional courts at Riverside - however the club would need to justify this through appropriate participation data.
 - It is likely that major tournaments can be directed towards the regional tennis centre – it will be a significant business objective of Tennis Tasmania, the state government and Launceston City Council to focus tennis activities there to justify the capital expenditure.
 - In this case, the existing courts (with upgrading) may be adequate. However, suitable space for further development could be discussed with the Riverside Golf Club (adjacent to the tennis courts) – who have suggested that space may become available. In addition – the Council may have future plans to expand their council offices – which may support a relocation of tennis to another location.
 - Certainly there is scope to house tennis at Windsor Park – however the current demands for sports fields suggest that Windsor Park may not accommodate all users should they wish to relocate there.
 - **Volleyball**
 - Indoor Volleyball is adequately catered for at Launceston College.

- Beach Volleyball is currently made available through the Launceston Indoor Sports Arena (two outdoor courts). The social rosters here appear well subscribed – there would need to be sufficient additional evidence to support additional courts in the greater Launceston area, especially in competition with LISA.
- **Martial arts**
 - Martial arts generally requires suitable mats and training facilities – with appropriate storage space or a purpose built centre that can remain.
 - Judo is currently housed at the Riverside community complex – although they have to dismantle their equipment and storage is a problem. A request has been for a purpose built facility – but their low membership is unlikely to assist them in paying for a full-time lease on a facility. Sharing therefore suggests dismantling their equipment and finding adequate storage.
 - Existing halls and gyms around Launceston would appear adequate at present – unless strong evidence is found to the contrary.
- **Handball**
 - As with half-court basketball courts, any additional play spaces for young people would generally assist as a recreational opportunity in addition to other opportunities held at Windsor park.
 - This could include handball courts or rebound walls in conjunction with half court basketball or flexible concrete areas.
- **Basketball**
 - Basketball participation has declined in Tasmania: from 4.1% in 2001 to 3.0% in 2004 (2004 Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey, Australian Sports Commission).
 - Currently basketball rosters are centralised through the Elphin Sports Centre. There are an abundance of additional indoor courts at the University, St Patricks College, the Silverdome, Newstead College, Launceston College, Summerhill community centre etc.
 - The Riverside Community Complex (Riverside High School) has one indoor basketball court. At present this appears adequate in the area for training and social activities.
 - Council should consider ensuring that appropriate community access is maintained through the Riverside Community Centre.
- **Indoor soccer (futsal)**
 - Indoor Soccer rosters are conducted through the Launceston Indoor Sports Arena.
 - Recently, Futsal has been introduced to Tasmania via Soccer Tasmania – as the international brand of indoor soccer. This roster has begun at the Elphin Sports Centre.
 - It is not expected that further indoor rosters (facilities) are required.

Gymnasiums / fitness centres and commercial activities.

- It is not expected that Council should accommodate commercial gymnasiums, fitness centres etc at the Windsor Park site. There may be strong arguments to suggest that market forces should dictate commercial business interests without intervention or assistance from Council. However, considering the valuable economic and community benefits from increased commercial service provision in the West Tamar area – compatible activities could be considered where Council incentives can assist to secure appropriate businesses. For example, there is a potential to attract one of the existing commercial gymnasium operators in the greater Launceston area, or a personal fitness trainer (with his/her own fitness gym) to the site in accordance with requests for this service by user groups. Benefits would include local investment and business flow-on effects, local as opposed to Launceston-based provision, and

additional services being offered on-site for existing user groups. Commercial lease conditions would apply.

- The West Tamar Strategic Opportunities Report recognises the importance of encouraging community enterprises. Perhaps with West Tamar's unique recreational opportunities associated with the natural environment and River access this provides an opportunity, for example, for water-based tourism.
- Traditionally, sports fields have considerable down time during the day – in between occasional use by schools. In the case of Windsor Park, unless significantly more school use (sharing) can be encouraged, there still remains an opportunity to enhance daytime use by encouraging commercial activity that is compatible with the intended outcomes for the site.
- The high proportion of 'creative professionals' in the area suggests the growth of active, participatory recreation opportunities as opposed to passive, institutionalised forms.
- Public versus commercial centres.
 - The Longford Sports Centre is owned and operated by the Northern Midlands Council. This centre contains two indoor basketball courts, squash courts and a gymnasium (free weights and weight machines).
 - This is a potential model for consideration by Council. However may face questions regarding competitive neutrality should it compete directly with commercial businesses in the wider Launceston area. The Council may need to justify how this service differs from existing commercial operations (market share, product etc), or that its services were not being subsidised and how Council provision provides community benefits not available locally from another provider.

Commercial leases

- There may be opportunities to include commercial leases in a new Windsor Park complex although these should demonstrate a benefit to the development and operation for the complex. These may include:
 - Fitness services, gymnasiums (described above)
 - Management of multi-purpose / function centre.
 - Commercial kiosk, coffee shop etc (versus Council or user group operation as at the Churchill Park centre).
 - Dining/eating and function facility with 2nd storey views over the Tamar River.
 - Child care centre (day time)
 - Adult education centre/TAFE (day and night activities) – using recreation as the base.
 - Indoor rock climbing.
 - Mountain bike park (paying venture) with bike hire (nearby trails).