

Newcastle City Council

Policy

Community Assets and Open Space Policy

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Relevant legislation/codes (reference to specific sections)	<i>Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)</i> <i>Disability Inclusion Act, 2014 (NSW)</i> LEP Practice Note PN16-001 <i>Classification and reclassification of public land through a local environmental plan</i>
Related policies/documents	Newcastle Community Strategic Plan Plans of Management Internal Review of Council Land Policy 2016 Asset Management Policy 2012.

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Related forms	N/A
Required on website	Yes
Authorisations	Functions authorised under this policy - Not required

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Part A Preliminary

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Community Assets and Open Space Policy is to provide Council with a framework and set of guiding principles for the consistent and integrated planning, acquisition, delivery, management and disposal of community assets and open space across the Newcastle local government area.
- 1.2 Through the development of the Newcastle Community Strategic Plan, the community expressed a strong need for a network of vibrant and activated places and spaces across the local government area (LGA). Sustainable investment in community facilities and open space is important for the health, wellbeing and economic development of our communities.
- 1.3 Council recognises the challenges and opportunities we face through the growth of the Newcastle LGA and is responding to this with a series of appropriate policy directions to improve the delivery of social infrastructure.
- 1.4 This policy seeks to provide Council and the community of Newcastle with the following community asset and open space outcomes:
 - 1.4.1 encourage social connections, community participation, promote health and well being.
 - 1.4.2 multi-purpose, functional, safe and innovative places and spaces that are equitably distributed across the local government area.
 - 1.4.3 management of community assets and open space from a quadruple bottom line perspective.
 - 1.4.4 diverse places and spaces that accommodate a range of uses that are responsive to changing trends, aspirations and community needs.
 - 1.4.5 timely delivery of community assets and open space that is integrated with other assets provided by Council and partner agencies.
 - 1.4.6 co-location of community assets and open space to maximise the opportunity for long community connections and economies of scale.
 - 1.4.7 open and transparent governance and management of community assets and open space that provides the community with clear accountability of Council's actions.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 **Catchment Area** means the surrounding population area served by a Community Asset or Open Space.
- 2.2 **Council** means Newcastle City Council.
- 2.3 **Community Assets** means community centres, public halls, surf clubs, libraries, cultural facilities, child care centres, senior citizens centres, youth centres, playgrounds, girl guide and scout halls, men's sheds, inland pools, amenities buildings and other sport and recreation facilities.
- 2.4 **District** means a number of neighbourhoods and may have a catchment extending beyond the local government area that hosts it. For community facilities, a district population catchment represents on average 20,000 people
- 2.5 **Land** means land owned by Council or under Council's care, control and management. Land is classified as Community Land or Operational Land as defined in the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).

- 2.6 **Local** means a neighbourhood that is located close to or within residential areas. For community facilities, a local population catchment represents on average 6,000-10,000 people
- 2.7 **Open Space** means parks, sportsgrounds and other natural areas including wetlands, bushland reserves, green corridors, watercourses, escarpment, foreshores and areas of cultural significance
- 2.8 **Regional** means the whole local government area and is likely to have a catchment extending beyond the local government that hosts it.
- 2.9 **Quadruple Bottom Line** is a globally adopted definition for sustainable development that was set by the Brundtland Commission at the United Nations in 1987. It refers to the need to ensure that development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 2.10 **Significant Community Benefit** refers to the concept that encompasses a wide range of social, economic, financial and environmental considerations. Both monetary and intangible values must be evaluated and compared when making decisions around community assets and open space. The need to make a qualitative assessment of these considerations and their impacts is recognised.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to Community Assets and Open Space owned and/or managed by the City of Newcastle. This policy does not apply to Council owned natural areas.

4 Principles

- 4.1 In the provision community assets and open space for the Newcastle community for guiding principles are to be applied Council commits itself to the following principles:
- 4.1.1 **Accessibility and co-location.** Community assets and open space that are accessible and inclusive for all community members regardless of their ability, age or income. The network of community assets and open space will be well connected and co-located with other facilities, services and land uses.
- 4.1.2 **Equity and opportunity.** Community assets and open space will support the diverse needs of all demographic groups with the community and will be planned and designed appropriately for these groups.
- 4.1.3 **Safety and security.** Community assets and open spaces will be safe and secure.
- 4.1.4 **Sense of place and wellbeing.** Social infrastructure increases wellbeing by encouraging and enhancing community networks of activity, and is provided to connect people and reflect local community identity.

Part B Application

5 Planning

- 5.1 Council endeavours to demonstrate good practice in the planning, provision and management of Community Assets and Open Space.
- 5.2 Council commits to having regard to the following hierarchy in the planning and delivery of Community Assets and Open Space across the local government area.
- 5.3 Planning Community Assets and Open Space by catchments of population and standards of provision will ensure the community has an equitable distribution and network of places and spaces across the local government area. Consideration will also be given to the socio-demographic profile of an area, service levels, local circumstances and current practice.
- 5.4 The following indicative hierarchy table shows the hierarchy of Community Assets and Open Space that Council will endeavour to provide.

Table 1: Indicative Hierarchy for Community Assets and Open Space.

Community Assets	Local Catchment Area	District Catchment Area	Regional Catchment Area
Open space	Parks < 2 hectares (ha) Outdoor sports area 5ha	Parks 2 to 5 ha Outdoor sports area 5 to 10ha	Parks > 5 ha Outdoor sports area >10 ha
Community facilities	Community Centre Floor area – 400 to 600 square metres (m ²)	Multipurpose Community Facility 600 to1000m ² Community Arts Centres	City Hall/Town Hall Performing Arts Centres Museums, Galleries
Libraries	Nil	Branch Library	City Library
Aquatic Centres	Nil	Outdoor aquatic centres	Indoor/outdoor recreation and aquatic centres

6 Management

Council commits to:

- 6.1 Engaging the community in the early stages of planning, design and delivery of Community Assets and Open Space.
- 6.2 Managing land in accordance with the adopted Plans of Management to ensure the protection of land that is of environmental, social or cultural significance.
- 6.3 Demonstrating good practice in the planning, provision and management of Community Assets and Open Space.
- 6.4 Transparency and accountability when acquiring, managing and disposing of land and facilities.

7 Acquisition and Disposal

- 7.1 Council (as custodian of Land) will maintain ownership and control of Land unless there is an identified community strategic benefit in disposing of the Land and facilities.
- 7.2 Land considered to be surplus will be assessed against criteria to determine the community, economic and environmental benefit for now and in the future.
- 7.3 Funds generated from the sale of Land that has been used for a community asset or open space will be held in trust in the Land and Property Reserve.