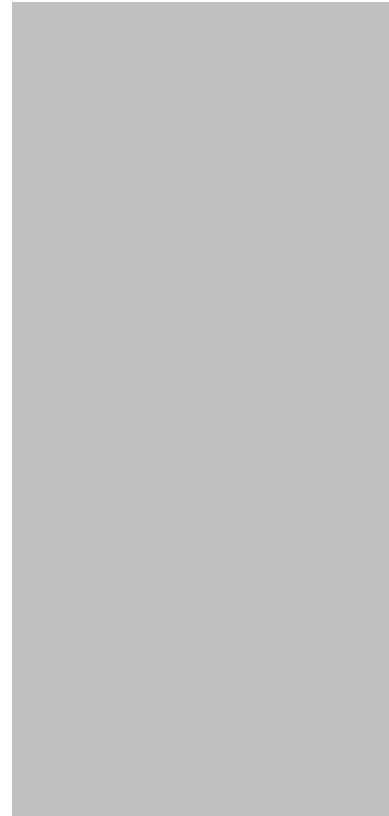




# Sorell Open Space Strategy

## FINAL REPORT



# Sorell Open Space Strategy

July 2020

**ERA Planning Pty Ltd trading as ERA Planning and Environment**

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## Executive Summary

The Sorell Open Space Strategy (the strategy) will sit alongside the Sorell Open Space Policy in guiding the delivery, maintenance and acquisition of open space and recreation areas in the Sorell municipality. Various state and local policies and strategies have been reviewed as part of preparing the strategy and have been key in informing open space benchmarks and priorities.

The Sorell municipality has undergone considerable change in the last 10-15 years and is projected to experience the second fastest growth rate in the state. The strategy assesses population growth, characteristics, and settlement patterns to inform decision-making on the provision of open space for the growing, diverse community.

A key component of developing the strategy was the community engagement phase, which provided the opportunity to understand what the community values in terms of open space, what is working well in the open space network, and which areas require improvement. Sections of the community expressed a current dissatisfaction in the quality, distribution, access to, and maintenance of existing public open space areas in the municipality but this was localised to certain areas. However on analysis of the open space provided across the municipality, it highlighted that some settlements were very well serviced with certain types of open space. For example Midway Point with its historical settlement pattern, included many pocket parks, and Southern Beaches was well serviced for coastal reserves and nature reserves. There was a broad appreciation of the natural values and coastal bushland character of the municipality, as well as an understanding of the changing needs of the growing population, particularly in the suburbs of Midway Point and Sorell.

The strategy concludes with a list of priority projects and recommendations (Appendix A) that aim to improve and strengthen the existing open space network, and to ensure the network is sufficient to support the current and changing needs of the community in future.

# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this project is to provide a comprehensive strategy for the provision of open space and recreation areas for the community of Sorell, and to help promote health and wellbeing and improved liveability for its residents.

The strategy will reflect the values of the community and establish an open space hierarchy including walkways, local parks, sub-regional parks and open space, and regional parks and facilities. The strategy will also identify suburbs where open space and walkways are deficient and where opportunities exist to implement improvements. These improvements will form part of the list of recommendations in Appendix A of the report.

## 1.1 Why open space?

What is Open Space and why is it important?

There are various definitions of Open Space that are relevant to the context of how the term is used. Within the Interim Planning Schemes, the term is used in the application of a Zone which includes zone purpose statements such as:

*To provide land for open space purposes including for passive recreation and natural or landscape amenity.*

*To encourage open space networks that are linked through the provision of walking and cycle trails.*

However these definitions don't necessarily tell us what open space is. The Heart Foundation Healthy Spaces and Places document states that:

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

This as a definition encompasses the open space approach and recognises in a broad sense the different types of open space that exist.

The need for an open space strategy has come about as a reflection of the rapid rate of population growth experienced and forecast for the municipality. The municipality is experiencing the second fastest population growth rate in the state, which could result in a population of just under 20,000 people by 2041 at a medium growth scenario (Department of Treasury and Finance, 2019), compared with about 14,400 in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 census. Critically, the changing population patterns in many areas of the municipality, such as the Southern Beaches which have experienced a gradual transition from a holiday shack location to a more permanent resident population, have significant implications for the open space requirements of the community. A more detailed demographic and dwelling occupation analysis is provided in section 4.

As our communities grow, and we see an increase in housing density in some areas of the municipality, the need for quality open spaces increases. In addition, the need to respond to the changing demographics of an area that is rapidly growing is critical to ensure the open space network meets the needs of the community and reflects their values.

## 1.2 Benefits of open space

It is important to firstly understand the benefits of open space for a community. Having access to open space for residential communities' results in a number of known benefits including the following:

### *Inherent benefits of open space*

The inherent benefits include the protection of biodiversity values in urban and peri-urban settings, improved access to clean air, and benefits from 'seeing' green space in the broader environment.

### *Physical benefits of open spaces*

The physical benefits of open space include encouraging physical activity, which in turn improves health outcomes through a reduction in diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer, obesity and injury. In addition, providing good quality open space provides safe areas for people to enjoy, including walking and cycling tracks, which in turn enable people to exercise and move around their communities without relying on the road network or experiencing conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Undertaking physical activity can also encourage less-tangible benefits, such as endurance, skill development, the ability to overcome challenges, and facilitating community engagement in an area.

The physical form of open space can encourage formalised recreational opportunities, such as at sports grounds or playgrounds, or informal activity, such as on walking and cycling trails or a large garden space to walk or run through.

### *Social benefits of open space*

Having access to open space can alleviate depression and anxiety and increase social interaction and integration (National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2009). Good quality open space can develop a stronger sense of civic pride in the community and has the potential to increase the value of real estate in the area due to the inherent value that communities place on access to good quality open space. All types of open space can provide these social and community benefits.

### *Educational benefits of open space*

Open space can provide interpretation opportunities, such as the history of an area or the natural values of a space. These spaces enable a community to connect and engage more deeply with their environment and understand their community in greater detail.

### *Economic Benefits of open space*

The provision of quality open space makes suburbs more attractive to live in and in turn desirable. This has economic benefits with people choosing to live in areas that are well designed and provide good social services including facilities around open space. Over periods of time, quality open space can lift the economic value of an area, including raising house values and transform communities.

## 1.3 Open space benchmarks

There are certain benchmarks that the provision of open space should meet. These include variety of open space types, which is considered further in section 7, and the desirable distances between residential areas and open space. There are several different perspectives on what these distances should be; however, the desirable distances used for the strategy have been informed by the recommendations of the Heart Foundation's *Healthy by Design, A guide to planning and designing environments for active living in Tasmania* (National Heart

Foundation of Australia, 2009) and the open space strategies of Glenorchy City Council and Kingborough Council. These distances from dwellings are as follows:

- 300 m to open space for recreation (suburban pocket parks);
- 400 m to open space for social/family recreation;
- 800 m to district-wide access ways and trails; and
- 1000 m to sporting facilities.

What this doesn't address is being able to access these open spaces without relying on cars or public transport. It is accepted that the closer to a park you are and the more accessible it is without reliance upon other forms of transport, the more likely it is that you will use it.

In addition to the provision of district-wide access ways and trails, connecting walkways should be provided within suburbs to enable people to safely walk through their community without relying on roads. While it is difficult to achieve this level of connectivity in established areas, there is opportunity for this to occur in new residential subdivisions – see section 2.4.

## 1.4 Contribution policy

In 2019, Council engaged ERA Planning and Environment to draft a new Public Open Space Policy (the policy). The need for this policy was highlighted by a number of Planning Appeal Tribunal decisions that detailed the requirement for guidance in the taking of public open space contributions. Specifically, these decisions highlighted that if demand for a public open space contribution in the form of land was not identified spatially, then Council may not be able to request it be provided. In addition, it highlighted that in the taking of public open space, either as land or cash-in-lieu, it was necessary for the Council to analyse the demand for that space brought about by the subdivision in the first instance. For example, a two lot subdivision may result in the construction of one additional dwelling, and therefore the demand on existing or proposed areas of public open space brought about by that subdivision is considerably less than, for example, a 200-lot subdivision.

These decisions have highlighted the requirement for councils to analyse the demand for the contribution in relation to the demand on open space, as well as provide a justification on when, and in what form, contributions are to be taken. The policy gives guidance on the circumstances where contributions should be taken, as well as the scale of the contributions, for example when a land contribution is to be taken as compared to a cash-in-lieu contribution.

In summary, the policy gives power to councils to take a land contribution through the subdivision process where the land has been identified through any policy or strategy. The policy requires that land taken for open space as part of a development contribution must meet the following criteria:

- Be well located in relation to the wider area where the subdivision is located;
- Be accessible and fit for purpose (i.e. not highly constrained) and does not duplicate nearby public open space;
- Provide for improved accessibility through the site or surrounding area;
- Provide improved connectivity to and between existing areas of open space;
- Be for land that will enhance the general amenity and urban character of the area; and
- By securing the land it will protect areas of locally significant natural/environmental or cultural value.

Cash-in-lieu contributions are to be taken where the taking of public open space land is determined to not meet the criteria. In that circumstance, the cash-in-lieu contributions will be taken in the following zones:

- General Residential
- Low Density Residential Zone
- Rural Living Zone
- Village Zone
- Local Business Zone
- General Business Zone.

The cash-in-lieu contribution can be up to 5 per cent, depending on demand, access to the existing public open space in the area, the size of the lots being subdivided, and the extent to which the lots can provide for their own recreational opportunities.

Critically, the cash-in-lieu contributions must be set aside within Council's funds for use for open space infrastructure. This may include purchase of land, construction of new walking tracks, and construction of specific infrastructure such as playgrounds or sporting facilities. It should not be used for general maintenance.

Separate to this, to provide for transparency, Council's financial reporting should distinguish between capital expenditure and maintenance costs for open space, to demonstrate to the community the extent of contributions made to Open space within the municipality and to provide for accountability.

The strategy forms an important part of the functionality of the Public Open Space Policy, as it provides an opportunity to identify sites that are suitable for public open space, and in turn gives Council the ability to require developers to provide this.

## 2 Community Engagement

### 2.1 Approach

The development of the draft Sorell Open Space Strategy began with a community engagement process to better understand what the community values in terms of open space, what parts of the existing open space network are working well, and what improvements are needed to support the community in future.

The public were made aware of this engagement process through the Sorell Council's website and Facebook page, emails sent to key stakeholder groups, posters displayed across the municipality and notices in the *Sorell Times*.

The engagement involved the following:

- Five community engagement sessions held across the municipality during November 2019;
- An online survey available through Council's website and Facebook page (open for responses from start of November until 20 December 2019);
- One-on-one sessions; and
- Written feedback.

The results of the community engagement have been compiled into a summary report, which is provided at Appendix B.



Figure 1 - Community engagement session, Primrose Sands (E. Riley)

## 2.2 Community engagement sessions

Of the five engagement sessions, the Dodges Ferry and Primrose Sands sessions were the most highly attended. The number of attendees at each session were as follows:

- Copping Session, 6 attendees;
- Dodges Ferry Session, over 40 attendees;
- Midway Point Session, 6 attendees;
- Sorell Memorial Hall session, 2 attendees;
- Primrose Sands session, 15-20 attendees.

Full details of the community engagement sessions can be found within the Community Engagement Summary Report.

However, each session involved robust and productive discussions and input on what community members value in terms of open space.

The main focus of discussion at Copping, Dodges Ferry and Primrose Sands was the protection and better management of natural values, including the extensive foreshore areas and native bushland. There was a general view that current maintenance and management practices did not adequately support or protect these natural values that the community so highly values. In addition, there was concern about the sale of public land and the desire to retain all public land.

The principal focus at the Midway Point session was improvements to existing open space in Midway Point, the provision of new open space facilities for the growing residential area at the northern end of Midway Point, and open space connections between Midway Point and Sorell. Several attendees raised that the current open space infrastructure across the municipality needs to incorporate facilities and play equipment for a broader age group, with a lack of play spaces for 0-3 year-olds being highlighted. A need for improved lighting and facilities at Pembroke Park was raised, particularly given the number of sports clubs that regularly use the grounds.

While the Sorell engagement session had the lowest attendance rate, several themes were raised. Notably, it was said that the suburb of Sorell lacked a strong sense of community and was often seen as a place to travel through, rather than visit. This was noted by the attendees as being the result of a lack of central public gathering space in their opinion (noting that St Georges Square is a central space that is located in Sorell); they considered this could be improved by street tree planting and allowing for more active street frontages in the local business precinct. The importance of acknowledging and protecting natural and cultural values across the municipality was highlighted, as well as ensuring new residential areas remain well connected to shops and areas of open space.

## 2.3 Surveys

During the community engagement sessions, a survey was provided and it was completed by those wanting to provide more detailed feedback during the sessions or afterwards. The survey was also made available online through Survey Monkey and accessed via Council's Facebook page, which was shared extensively. There were 69 responses to the online survey and 29 attendees completed the survey during the engagement sessions.

The survey was a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions, which allowed input about what people value in terms of open space, what they currently use, how they access it and what they see as opportunities for improvement.

The main themes raised in the surveys include the following:

- Improve connectivity;
- Improve facilities;
- Improve existing walkway and paths infrastructure;
- Improve playgrounds and parks; and
- Improve natural resource management.

There was a particularly strong response from residents of the Southern Beaches, however their interest weren't necessarily consistent with feedback received in other areas of the municipality.

## **2.4 Written submissions**

We informed the community that if they wished to provide additional comments on the Sorell Open Space Strategy, they should send them to the ERA enquiries email address. From mid-October to the end of February, we received four written submissions. One submission was from the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) and three were from individuals. An overview of these submissions is in the community engagement summary report at Appendix B.

## **2.5 One-on-one sessions**

ERA Planning & Environment met with three key stakeholder groups: PWS leases and licences division, PWS property services division and ranger in charge (Seven Mile Beach), and Southern Beaches Landcare and Coastcare.

The themes raised during the engagement sessions, surveys and one-on-one sessions are discussed in further detail in section 3 of the community engagement summary report at Appendix B.

### 3 Demographics

The Sorell municipality is the second fastest growing municipality<sup>1</sup> in the state at 1.15 per cent growth annually over the 2017 to 2042 projections. Under the medium growth scenario, this will result in a total population of 19,666 persons by 2042, which is an increase of 5,252 people from that recorded at the 2016 ABS census, as outlined in Table 1 below.

Supporting a growing population will put pressure on development of areas, not only in terms of ‘hard’ infrastructure, but also social infrastructure such as medical facilities, community facilities, schools and also open space provision – parks, walkways and sporting facilities.

In addition, the Department of Treasury and Finance’s *2019 Population Projections* (Department of Treasury and Finance, 2019) projected that the proportion of the Tasmanian population aged 65 years and over (19 per cent in 2016-17) will increase under the medium growth series to 27.5 per cent by 2067. A similar outcome is projected under both the low series (27.8 per cent) and high series (27.9 per cent) by 2067. Due to this, access to a range of facilities, including age-responsive public open space infrastructure, is imperative to maintaining healthy, active communities. The population and median age structure of each suburb in the Sorell local government area (LGA) is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Population statistics for Sorell LGA**

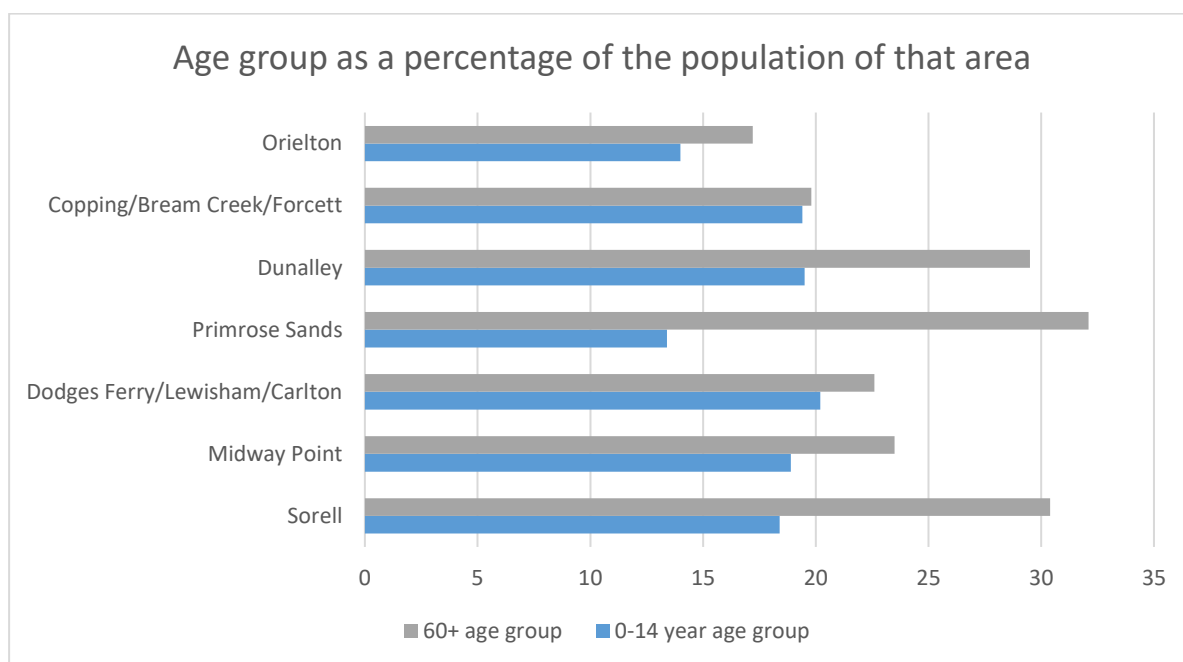
Population in 2016 census	Projected population 2017 – 2042 Sorell LGA
Sorell: 2907 (median age 43) Midway Point: 2859 (median age 39) Lewisham/Dodges Ferry/Carlton: 4,277 people (median age 42) Primrose Sands: 1050 (median age 52) Marion Bay: 72 (median age 44) Dunalley: 316 (median age 42) Copping/Bream Creek/Forcett: 1,271 (median age 42) Orielton: 355 (median age 40)	An increase of 4895 persons over the period to year 2042
<b>Total LGA population in 2016 census: 14,414 (median age 42)</b>	<b>Total LGA population predicted for 2042:</b> Low Series: 18,223 Medium Series: 19,666 High Series: 21,407

Source: ABS and Department of Treasury and Finance

<sup>1</sup> Brighton Municipality is the fastest growing municipal area at 1.18 per cent annually over the 2017 to 2042 projections.

It is also important to note that not every suburb is the same in terms of its population and age structure. For example, Dodges Ferry had a population of 2,467 at the 2016 ABS census, with a median age of 41 years. However, 21.1 per cent of its population was aged 0-14 years, which is the largest proportion of this age bracket in the municipality.

This highlights that it is necessary to understand the age structure and composition of each suburb, both current and future, to ensure that diverse open space infrastructure is provided that meets the needs of the community. As such, a suburb-centric approach has been employed in the development of the open space strategy and subsequent recommendations. The contrast in age structure is shown in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2 - Age group as a proportion of the population of that area (ABS data, graph F. Beasley)**

In addition to the population characteristics, it is important to identify the dwelling occupancy dynamics of each suburb. This will highlight areas in the municipality that are occupied by permanent residents and those that have a more transient population. This is particularly relevant in the Sorell municipality, as many areas have experienced a gradual shift from being a holiday 'shack' destination to supporting a more permanent population, which is one of the critical drivers to changing open space requirements.

It is relevant to note that where the term *unoccupied dwellings* is used, it has the meaning as defined by the ABS, which is structures built specifically for living purposes that are habitable, but were unoccupied on census night; they include vacant houses and holiday homes.

An overview of the population characteristics and distribution of permanent residents for each settlement in the municipality is discussed in further detail below. These statistics are from the 2016 ABS census.

### 3.1 Sorell

Sorell had a population of 2,907 people and a median age of 43 years; however, 18.4 per cent of its population were in the 0-14 year age bracket and 30.4 per cent were 60+, indicating an ageing population. In Sorell, 93.3 per cent of dwellings were occupied and 6.7 per cent were unoccupied, reflecting a mostly permanent

resident population. Sorell has a number of parcels of land which will be the subject of subdivision in the next five years, enabling the construction of up to 300 more houses.

### **3.2 Midway Point**

Midway Point had a population of 2,859 people and a median age of 39 years; however, 18.9 per cent of its population were in the 0-14 year age bracket and 23.5 per cent were 60+, indicating an ageing population. In Midway Point, 92.1 per cent of dwellings were occupied and 7.9 per cent were unoccupied, reflecting a mostly permanent resident population. The northern area of Midway Point has several large land parcels, which either currently form part of a subdivision application with Council or have subdivision potential. Accordingly, Midway Point will also experience some population growth; however, this will be limited to the Peninsula and the remaining large lots represent the end of the expansion of that suburb.

### **3.3 Lewisham/Dodges Ferry/Carlton**

The suburbs of Lewisham, Dodges Ferry and Carlton had a combined population of 4,277 and a median age of 42 years. A total of 20.2 per cent of the population were in the 0-14 years age bracket, which was the highest in the municipality, with the largest proportion of this age group being in Dodges Ferry. A total of 22.6 per cent of the population were aged 60+, with the highest proportion of this age group being in Lewisham.

Of the three settlements, Carlton had the lowest number of unoccupied dwellings at 17.2 per cent, and Lewisham and Dodges Ferry had 18.5 per cent and 24.2 per cent respectively. This indicates that while the permanent population of the area has grown over recent years, it still has a reasonable proportion of unoccupied dwellings which may be used as holiday houses. This also highlights a likely increase in population numbers during the peak summer months.

### **3.4 Primrose Sands**

Primrose Sands had a population of 1,050 people and a median age of 52 years, with 13.4 per cent of its population in the 0-14 year age bracket and 32.1 per cent aged 60+, representing the highest proportion of the population within this older age bracket in the municipality. Primrose Sands had an almost even split of unoccupied to occupied dwellings, with 49.9% per cent and 50.1 per cent respectively. Similar to other areas in the Southern Beaches, but arguably more pronounced, the number of unoccupied dwellings suggests holiday homes that would be in use during peak tourism seasons, such as the summer months. Given the split of occupied to unoccupied housing, it is not unreasonable to expect that the population could double during the summer months, with day visitation in addition to those staying overnight.

### **3.5 Marion Bay**

Marion Bay had a population of 72 people and a median age of 44 years. There is no visitation data for visitors to the beach, which would peak at different times of the year. However, it can be assumed that visitors to this area are going specifically for the beach, as opposed to visiting other types of facilities.

### **3.6 Dunalley**

Dunalley had a population of 316 and a median age of 42 years, with 19.5 per cent of its population in the 0-14 year age bracket and 29.5 per cent aged 60+. Dunalley had 70.6 per cent occupied dwellings and 29.4 per cent unoccupied. This suggests a population dominated by permanent residents, although some holiday houses remain.

### 3.7 Copping/Bream Creek/Forcett

The suburbs of Copping, Bream Creek and Forcett had a combined population of 1,271 people and a median age of 42 years. A total of 19.4 per cent of the population were in the 0-14 year age bracket, with the highest proportion of this age group being in Forcett. A total of 19.8 per cent of its population were aged 60+ years, with the highest proportion of this age group being in Bream Creek.

Of the three settlements, Forcett had the lowest number of unoccupied dwellings at 4.2 per cent, and Copping and Bream Creek had 9.9 per cent and 25.9 per cent respectively.

### 3.8 Orielton

Orielton had a population of 355 people and a median age of 40 years, with 14 per cent of its population in the 0-14 year age bracket and 17.2 per cent aged 60+. Orielton had a 100 per cent occupancy rate, the highest in the municipality and reflecting a permanent resident population.

## 4 Review of Relevant Strategic Documents

### 4.1 Sorell Council Strategic Plan 2019-2029

The *Sorell Council Strategic Plan 2019-2029* (the Plan) outlines Council's goals and objectives for a 10-year period and provides specifics in how Council will achieve and deliver upon the set objectives. The Plan is guided by a set of plans and strategies, as outlined in Appendix A of the Plan, including but not limited to the *Sorell Land Supply Strategy*, *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*, *State Planning Provisions within the Tasmanian Planning Scheme*, *Parks and Beaches Guide* and draft *Pembroke Park Master Plan*.

The objectives outlined in the Plan include the following:

- Objective 1 – To facilitate regional growth;
- Objective 2 – Responsible stewardship and a sustainable organisation;
- Objective 3 – To ensure a liveable and inclusive community; and
- Objective 4 – Increased community confidence in Council.

The Plan outlined several key deliverables which directly relate to the provision of open space infrastructure. Objective 3 specifically refers to promoting and implementing integrated open space networks to improve connectivity between townships; securing funding to develop Pembroke Park as a regional recreational facility; encouraging and supporting the local arts, cultural activities, programs and events; and supporting the development of appropriate public access to coastal assets and the natural environment. Objective 4 highlighted the need for Council to engage effectively with the community and encourage the building of community capacity to deliver local solutions to local issues.

Delivering the Sorell Open Space Strategy will be a mechanism in ensuring that Council meets the objectives outlined in the Plan.

### 4.2 Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035

The *Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035* (STRLUS) is a broad policy document which establishes a strategic framework to facilitate and manage change, growth, and development in Southern Tasmania for the period of 2010 to 2035. The STRLUS incorporates 10 strategic directions that are intended to guide the planning and decision-making process. Strategic directions relevant to open space planning include the following:

- SD6 Increasing responsiveness to our natural environment;
- SD8 Supporting strong and healthy communities; and
- SD10 Creating liveable communities.

The STRLUS also provides a suite of regional policies which sit underneath the strategic directions. The Recreation & Open Space regional policy refers to the *Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework* (Sport and Recreation Tasmania, 2010) for guidance on establishing an open space hierarchy and an open space classification system. The regional policy also identifies the need for good connectivity between open space areas and refers to the principles outlined in *Healthy by Design: A guide to planning and designing environments for active living in Tasmania* (National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2009) for guiding subdivision and development design parameters.

### 4.3 Healthy by Design, Heart Foundation 2009

*Healthy by Design – A guide to planning and designing environments for active living in Tasmania* was developed by the National Heart Foundation to provide a practical guide for designing environments for active living in Tasmania. The guide encourages forward open space planning to create well-connected networks for walking and cycling, facilitating the development of walkable neighbourhoods and ensuring that open space areas are safe, comfortable and convenient for the community to use. The importance of incorporating healthy living strategies into both council policy and the planning scheme was reinforced in the guide.

The benefits of active living in reducing our impact on climate change was highlighted, particularly in relation to providing adequate walking and cycling infrastructure. Providing infrastructure and facilities that make it easier for the community to reduce their reliance on private vehicles as the main mode of transport will greatly assist in reducing the output of greenhouse gas emissions.

The guide includes specific planning and design considerations for the provision of open space, including a maximum walking distance of 400 m from dwellings to a local public open space. Achieving these distances will ensure that open space is equitably distributed and will allow easy access for most people.

In the context of the Sorell municipality, this maximum distance is likely to be achievable within the denser urban areas, such as Sorell and Midway Point; however, it may not be appropriate for the peri-urban areas such as Dodies Ferry and Primrose Sands. In saying that, the Sorell municipality is uniquely placed in that it has access to extensive foreshore areas which provide a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities, but which aren't necessarily on land owned or managed by Council.

### 4.4 Southern Beaches Foreshore Access Management Strategy 2002

The *Southern Beaches Foreshore Access Management Strategy – Lewisham to Connelly's Marsh* was prepared jointly in 2002 by Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare, Sorell Council and PWS. The strategy is a comprehensive document that provides a detailed background on the natural and cultural values of the area and was developed to ensure the appropriate management of, and access to, the Southern Beaches coastal foreshore area.

The strategy assessed existing track and foreshore access in the Southern Beaches area and developed an informed and specific access strategy to guide safe coastal access for the community while ensuring that natural and cultural values are protected, enhanced and properly managed. The strategy is a valuable resource for raising awareness of the adverse effects of uncontrolled access on the coast and for connecting community and land managers (PWS and Sorell Council) in the implementation of an integrated foreshore access plan.

While it is acknowledged that the strategy was prepared in 2002, the content still holds relevance today and has the potential to be a valuable resource for guiding policy on pedestrian access to foreshore areas and improved land management practices in coastal foreshore areas. Reviewing and updating the policy will improve the applicability and usability of the document however it is acknowledged that it is unlikely that the same working group could be brought together to review it given the time that has passed.

#### 4.5 Draft Pembroke Park Master Plan, 2018



**Figure 3 - Excerpt from Pembroke Park Masterplan**

The draft Pembroke Park Master Plan was prepared by At Leisure Planners and Inspiring Place in February 2018 on behalf of Sorell Council. The master plan was informed by an analysis of strategic policies, demographics, sport and recreation trends including participation rates and sporting club memberships, and a review of the facilities at Pembroke Park. Consultation with clubs and groups indicated that membership of and participation in most sporting and recreational activities were growing, particularly as a result of the increase in young families in the area. (This sentiment was reinforced during the community engagement phase of the Sorell Open Space Strategy, which also highlighted that the facilities at Pembroke Park were not currently meeting the demand or needs of users and sporting clubs.)

In response to this analysis, the draft Pembroke Park Master Plan (Figure 3) incorporated an expanded sporting facility including multiple sports ovals/grounds, BMX jump course, tennis courts, environmental rehabilitation and walking trail through Miena Park, extended equestrian area, parking areas for 365 cars, and club rooms. A future residential area was incorporated into the northern side of the site, which is now zoned for general residential purposes.

The document highlighted that bringing the draft Pembroke Park Master Plan into fruition will depend heavily on funding. However, given the predicted population growth for the Sorell municipality, it is considered that there will be substantial demand for a sporting facility of this capacity in the future.

#### 4.6 Case studies

As part of the background research, two local open space strategies were reviewed to gain insight into the approach, priorities and challenges of two LGAs in the south of Tasmania. The open space strategies prepared by Kingborough Council and Glenorchy City Council were chosen due to the commonality between these LGAs in terms of population growth pressures and natural and cultural assets.

##### 4.6.1 Kingborough Open Space Strategy, 2019

The *Kingborough Open Space Strategy* was informed by research on population changes in the municipality, which is expected to grow to 41,000 residents by 2022, and on likely barriers to making changes or

improvements to the open space network. It is noted that the strategy was not informed by a community engagement phase.

Open space currently represents 8.74 per cent of Kingborough's total land area, with the main pressure on open space infrastructure being driven by a growing population and the development of new residential areas on the urban periphery. Similar to Sorell, Kingborough has an ageing population, as well as a mix of young adults, and families with young children thus necessitating an open space network that meets the diverse needs of the community.

The strategy established three guiding principles:

1. To establish an integrated and consistent open space policy and planning framework.
2. To have the capacity to manage an open space system that contributes to environmental sustainability.
3. To support an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity and community health and wellbeing.

The strategy also listed eight strategic directions and a strategy action plan with timeframes for implementing priority actions. Interestingly, the strategy established a set of benchmark standards in relation to the overall percentage of land within the Kingborough area that is to be dedicated to open space, which was 15 per cent including regional open space provision. In addition to this, the strategy also set benchmark requirements for accessibility, the number of open space types to be provided in each local area and the size of those spaces. In addition, the strategy identified clear requirements for access and linkages, with the benchmark being that every resident is to be within a three-minute walk (250 m) of continuous tracks and trails network, which link Kingborough's open spaces. While this is an admirable benchmark to set, it would be difficult to achieve in the context of the Sorell municipality due to the dispersed nature of settlements and the greater proportion of rural and peri-rural areas. Glenorchy Open Space Strategy, 2015

The *Glenorchy Open Space Strategy* sits under the Glenorchy Healthy Communities Plan and was intended to inform several other policy documents relating to the provision of open space infrastructure in the municipality.

Similar to the *Kingborough Open Space Strategy*, the Glenorchy strategy established the following five guiding principles for the provision of open space:

1. Diversity of opportunity and open space experiences
2. Accessibility and inclusion
3. Equitable distribution
4. Fit-for-purpose and core service levels
5. Affordability and sustainability

Glenorchy Council has a higher residential density than the Sorell municipality. However, the Glenorchy strategy prescribes desirable distances between dwellings and types of open space that are still applicable to the urban settlements such as Sorell, Midway Point and Dodges Ferry, as follows:

- Open space for recreation: 300 m
- Social/family recreation: 400 m
- Accessway/trail: 800 m
- Sport facility: 1,000 m

Interestingly, the Glenorchy strategy identified the benefits of providing community horticulture or garden space and aimed to provide a community garden in all suburbs and ideally within 1,000 m of most residential properties. The Sorell community, particularly in the Southern Beaches area, have expressed that they place a high value on being able to access this type of community infrastructure locally, as it has the ability to foster a strong sense of place, community and connection to the area.

The Glenorchy Strategy does consider the costs of open space provision and makes the following recommendations in terms of ensuring its affordability:

- Minimise the number of single field/code sports grounds on reserves, enhance flexibility of use;
- Create fewer larger play spaces that serve a wider range of people;
- Aggregate social spaces to provide more functional spaces and a greater attraction and use of each;
- Develop sports reserves with a perimeter trail and social/family recreational space to enhance use for physical and social activity by a wide range of people;
- Dispose of reserves but only to enable the improvement of others;
- Provide water based activities in hubs where facilities can be used by a range of people;
- Ensure that financial public open space contributions are received so that funds are available for the acquisition and development of the public open space network.

Critically, this strategy provides some learnings for the Sorell Council, particularly in relation to the opportunity to enhance flexibility of use on grounds both in terms of different kinds of sports but also in terms of the opportunity for co-location of passive recreation and playground opportunities, with sporting facilities. In addition, there may be opportunities to dispose of some reserves to enable the improvement of others as well as continuing to ensure financial contributions are provided through subdivisions to provide ongoing funds.

## 5 Objectives and Principles

### 5.1 Objectives

The objectives of the strategy are specific to the provision of open space and recreation areas in the broader Sorell community and include the following:

- Identify existing parks and open space areas that form part of the current open space network and understand their management and governance status;
- Identify existing walkways and open space connections that are used by the community and understand their management and governance status;
- Identify where the provision of open space and associated walkway connections are inadequate for a growing community and provide recommendations for improvement of these facilities;
- Identify an open space hierarchy including local parks, sub-regional parks and regional parks;
- Identify where Council relies on Crown land in relation to the implementation of an open space strategy and work collaboratively with the Crown towards the establishment of leases over this land;
- Similarly in partnership with Crown encourage maintenance and upgrade where appropriate of Crown owned open spaces;
- Provide direction on the current and future needs of the community;
- Identify areas where Council-owned land may be able to be sold through the Local Government Act;
- Make recommendations regarding subsequent stages;
- Develop a list of recommendations for short-, medium- and long-term open space projects; and
- Provide clarity on open space contribution during the subdivision process.

### 5.2 Principles

The following principles are intended to guide the provision of open space and have been informed by research on strategic documents and input received during the community engagement phase and from Council staff.

#### 1. Connectivity

Open space is to be well connected with residential areas and key nodes, such as the local shops or public amenities. In addition to district trails and walkways, open space should be able to be reached without reliance upon cars or public transport. Ensuring that localised suburban walkways are provided for enables the spaces to remain connected. Improving signage and addressing missing links in the network will assist in improving connectivity.

#### 2. Affordability

The provision of open space must be affordable for Council not only to establish, but also to maintain in future so it remains of high quality and usable for the community. Some areas are underperforming, and while there is a desire in the community to retain these areas for their intrinsic value, this may limit Council's ability to provide for appropriate open space in an equitable fashion across the municipality.

### **3. Accessibility and Inclusion**

Open space must be provided in a way that is accessible to all members of the community, and inclusive for all age groups and abilities. This is particularly relevant for the Sorell municipality, as it currently has an ageing population, although some areas support a relatively high proportion of people in the younger age bracket. Demographics and population structure are discussed in section 3.

### **4. Proximity and Equitable distribution**

Open space must be provided spatially in a manner that enables all members of the community, be they permanent residents or holiday home owners, to access it easily. The intention should be, no matter where you live, particularly in residential nodes, that you will have access to open space that suits your needs.

### **5. Variety**

The types of open space provided should be varied to appeal to different sections of the community. In addition, larger areas of open space should provide variety within the one locality, so that one open space area may be attractive and usable for all members of the community.

### **6. Supporting Biodiversity**

Wherever possible, the opportunity to support biodiversity in areas of open space should be encouraged. In addition, some areas of open space may be recognised for their biodiversity values alone, and the investment in these areas may be in the form of rehabilitation and natural resource management.

### **7. Amenity and Experience**

Open space provided should be well considered and of high quality. The design of these spaces in terms of spatial layout must be well considered to be attractive to the community, comfortable to use, and encourage use into the future.

## 6 Character Statements

One of the unique aspects of the Sorell municipality is the variety of settlement types; the differences in *character* between these areas is important. This variation was clearly articulated during the community engagement sessions, and it was clear from the feedback that the community draws a strong connection between the character of their area and their sense of belonging to it. What this also highlights is that the community moves to different localities depending on their interests and what they value.

There is a need to provide equitable access to areas of open space and walkways, particularly for the more populated areas of the municipality. However, this strategy recognises the differences in character between suburbs and that these differences must inform the design, location and provision of open space facilities in an area.

To that end, character statements for the major settlements have been written, highlighting some of the critical characteristics and aspects of these settlements that are important for the community.

### 6.1 Sorell character statement

Sorell as a township was established in 1808 and has functioned as a small settlement, servicing a broader rural area to the south-east of Hobart. In recent times, it has been accessed by two causeways and a single highway through Midway Point.

The physical settlement pattern is characterised by wide main streets through Sorell, traditionally accommodating heavy vehicles that pass through the township. This may change in the future once the bypass proposed by Department of State Growth is constructed with only heavy transport heading North needing to traverse the main street. In reflection of the limited, although growing, population that lives in the township itself, there are limited areas of open space, but a significant regional facility in Pembroke Park services the broader south-east region as a location for a variety of sporting competitions and facilities.

However, with increasing population in Southern Tasmania and greater need for housing, the settlement is changing to becoming a commuter suburb of Hobart. Large tracts of land have recently been subdivided, there is rapid housing growth, often with young families, resulting in a greater need for a variety of open space and, importantly, good connections between these spaces.

### 6.2 Midway Point character statement

Midway Point was literally established as a small settlement midway between Sorell and Hobart. Since the construction of the vehicle causeways, it has grown to provide a range of housing stock and demonstrates the patterns of an established suburb. Today it represents a residential settlement which is similar in population as the township of Sorell itself.

Midway Point has a varied street settlement pattern, which appears to have grown organically over many years. It includes a number of small pocket parks and traditional footpath access ways. The settlement is surrounded by a coastal foreshore strip, but this area of land is inaccessible for most of that space. There is a substantial park at the centre of the suburb, but more open space is required to adequately service the community.

The community of Midway Point is close-knit, with many residents having lived there for decades. They enjoy a village atmosphere in their community, with the geographical nature of the peninsula seemingly encouraging the community feel that exists.

### 6.3 Lewisham/Dodges Ferry/Carlton character statement

The character of the Southern Beaches is defined by its natural environment, being extensive coastal foreshore areas, remnant native bushland, and unique and diverse flora and fauna. The area supports an engaged community who value the peri-rural lifestyle and place a high priority on supporting native flora and fauna communities and maintaining a close connection to wildlife and natural areas.

Having grown from a holiday shack location, the area is characterised by informal gravel paths, in places narrow streets, lower density housing, and considerable variety in housing stock. There is a strong commitment to maintaining these physical characteristics of the place.

The community at Southern Beaches is growing, with the local primary school at Dodges Ferry educating over 450 students and more people choosing to live in the area permanently instead of visiting there for a weekend or a holiday. There is however a large sector of the community that still visits the area to access holiday homes but still have requirements in relation to access to open space. The open space needs of the community are evolving and there is a lively, strong and growing commitment to maintaining the natural values, as well as a need to provide facilities that are fit for the community with a varied demographic. Facilities such as the boat ramp also encourage those from out of area to visit the municipality.

### 6.4 Primrose Sands character statement

Primrose Sands grew from a shack settlement focused around the coastline. While Lewisham, Dodges Ferry and Carlton are seeing increases in permanent population, this is less noticeable at Primrose Sands where shacks comprise half the housing stock.

The physical fabric of the Primrose area is low density housing, with considerable variation in housing stock. Traditional small shacks are located adjacent to more substantial modern housing. The street layout represents rural roads, often without footpaths but with good permeability in areas, with walking paths linking streets back towards the beach.

The shack characteristics of the community mean that during summer months the area can swell with increased attendance of shack owners, but also visitors to the area. The beach-based boat ramp also brings people from further afield to the area.

The community feel strongly about the retention of open space, particularly adjacent to the beach to the west where currently an informal arrangement exists. The community has also raised concerns about conflicts between residents and shack owners, and those that may visit the area for the day, with this being particularly noticeable during summer peak holiday periods.

### 6.5 Marion Bay character statement

Marion Bay was originally established as a small shack community, adjacent to a long stretch of shoreline on the south-east coast of Tasmania. PWS manages the foreshore. The settlement is small and remains a mixture of permanent residents and shack owners. To the west are large areas of agricultural land.

The area is frequented by visitors often, to enjoy the beach and to surf. In addition, the area is swamped by tourists during the New Year period when the Falls Music Festival occurs. This results in thousands of festival goers accessing the beach and surrounding area during a short period of time.

There is unlikely to be substantial growth in the Marion Bay area due to controls over subdivision, and servicing constraints.

Many in the community feel strongly about the protection of their natural environment and the impact of visitors on the fragile coastal foreshore. The area has no formalised open space but does have access to a long strip of coast line, as well as sheltered waterways.

## **6.6 Dunalley character statement**

Dunalley is the southernmost township in the municipality and was established in 1830 as a small military detachment. In 1842, land was offered for sale at Dunalley and thereafter it became established as a small fishing village. There is a swing bridge for road traffic between Dunalley and the Tasman Peninsula beyond; it critically enables boat traffic on the Denison Canal to move between Dunalley Bay and Blackman Bay.

The distance of the township from Sorell and other settlements results in a greater level of services than in other small towns. While the town only serves a population of just over 300 people, it has a bakery, several offices, a fishmonger, hotel, general store, cafes and restaurants. There is also a primary school, which serves the immediate township and other small settlements nearby.

The community is characterised by its fishing and aquaculture history and lifestyle, but also by nearby agriculture. Critically the township is also influenced by a significant bushfire in 2013 which had a devastating impact, from which the town is continuing to rebuild. It is well serviced by playgrounds, walkways and a golf course, and two tennis courts are currently under construction.

## **6.7 Copping/Bream Creek/Forcett character statement**

Copping is a small township on the Arthur Highway. It is surrounded on all sides by a mixture of agricultural land and native bushland, and its location is at the intersection to Marion Bay to the east. Along this road is Bream Creek with the housing in this area merging into the land at Copping.

Copping is a relatively traditional rural settlement, with basic services including a small shop and service station, a community hall and sports oval, and some other basic community facilities such as a church. Nearby to Copping is the Bream Creek showground, which hosts an agricultural show every year and a monthly farmers market.

Housing is clustered around roads with more substantial paddocks behind. Copping as a township is unlikely to grow beyond the existing settlement pattern.

Forcett demonstrates similar development patterns as Copping, being located on the Arthur Highway but closer to the Southern Beaches access roads. Forcett includes housing which supports the local agricultural activities in the area.

## **6.8 Orielton character statement**

Orielton historically was part of the agricultural land within the Sorell municipality and has been very productive. This area continues to have established agricultural businesses including vineyards, horticulture, cropping and grazing with some areas having access to the South East irrigation district. The spatial lot layout is a mixture of large lots, used for agriculture or left as bushland, and the relatively recent development of rural living subdivisions. On the lower slopes, closer to the Tasman Highway, the landscape is fairly sparse with open paddocks. To the east as you travel towards the mountains, this landscape changes to dry woodland landscapes with considerably fewer residents.

While the subdivision pattern in this rural living area has not yet been realised, with increasing numbers of people living in the area come increasing expectations and requirements for open space. The density of

development does not automatically necessitate the provision of specific areas for this use; however, providing connectivity around Orielson, and more broadly back to Sorell, would enable greater use of the existing open space within Sorell.

## **6.9 Other areas**

There exist large areas of agricultural land and bushland throughout the municipality which have varying levels of housing density and population characteristics. As is common in many areas of Tasmania, the expansion of Rural Living settlements continues. However, with the implementation of the South East Irrigation Scheme, investment in agricultural land is increasing in the municipality which, in some districts, is ensuring agricultural activities continue.

## 7 Open Space Classification and Review

There are several different forms of open space. A formalised and activity-based facility is one type, such as a cricket ground or BBQ and picnic facility. In contrast are passive open space areas, such as bushland and coastal foreshore reserves, which allow appreciation of and interaction with natural areas while prioritising the protection and conservation of inherent biodiversity values.




It is important to provide a diversity of open spaces, both at a broader level in the municipality and at a suburb level, to meet the needs of the community and to protect and support local flora and fauna communities. Open space areas should be equitably distributed wherever possible, fit for purpose for the community they serve, affordable and sustainable.

As part of the strategy, the different forms of open space have been assigned a hierarchy classification, as listed in Table 2 below (column 3). The intention of establishing a hierarchy is to detail the level of facilities and/or amenities provided for each type of open space and to establish the desirable distance between the open space type and residential areas. The hierarchy classifications have been derived from the *Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework* (Sport and Recreation, 2010).


It is acknowledged that the *Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy* refers to the open space classifications outlined in the *Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework 2010*. However, as part of the engagement process we employed the open space classifications identified in Table 2 below (shown as 'Open Space Type' in column 1), which we believe more accurately reflect the diversity of existing open space infrastructure in the Sorell municipality. To remain consistent with the information presented during the community engagement phase of the project, we have maintained these open space classifications (column 1); however, we have used the *Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework* open space hierarchy classification in column 3.




It needs to be noted that during the open space audit of Council-owned land, several land parcels did not appear to be managed as open space, did not necessarily form part of the greater open space network, and result from outdated data. These have been excluded from the open space review undertaken for this strategy, or Council's asset manager was advised of the discrepancies. However, undertaking a detailed audit of Council-owned land is one of this strategy's recommendations.




Table 2 - Open Space Hierarchy Classification




OPEN SPACE TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS <sup>2</sup>	HIERARCHY CLASSIFICATION AND DESIRABLE DISTANCE FROM DWELLING	EXAMPLES	
Unmanaged open space areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential future park</li><li>• May not currently form part of the open space network</li><li>• Potential redevelopment site with adjoining light industry/bulk good sales.</li></ul>	N/A	141 Main Road Sorell, to the west of the second causeway.	 <p>Unmanaged land at 141 Main Rd, Sorell. Photo, Google images.</p>
Family recreation spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Play equipment</li><li>• BBQ facilities</li><li>• Public toilets</li><li>• Footpaths</li><li>• Boat access and jetty</li></ul>	Local: 400 m District: 800 m	District: Vancouver Park, Midway Point District: Dodges Ferry Boat Park  Local: Billy Kessarios Memorial Park, Midway Point and Pioneer Park.	 <p>Boat Park, Dodges Ferry. Photo, C. Lindus.</p>
Managed landscape open space areas  (Land is leased by the Council from the church)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ornamental gardens</li><li>• Formal garden</li><li>• Treed parkland</li><li>• Pathways</li><li>• Seating</li></ul>	Local: 300 m	Local: St Georges Square, Sorell	 <p>St Georges Square, Sorell. Photo, Sorell Council.</p>



<sup>2</sup> Not an exhaustive list

Formalised sporting areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cricket ground</li><li>Soccer field</li><li>Bowls club</li><li>Public toilets</li><li>Seating</li><li>Lighting</li><li>Club rooms</li></ul>	Sub-regional: 1,000 m	Sub-regional: Pembroke Park and Dunalley Skate Park/Shark Park	 <p>Pembroke Park, Sorell. Photo, Sorell Council</p>
Community event spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community hall</li><li>Open space for farmers markets</li></ul>	Local: 800 m District: 1,000 m Sub-regional: 1,000 m+	Local: Copping Hall, Dunalley Hall, Primrose Sands Hall  District: Sorell Memorial Hall & St Georges Square, Sorell  Sub-regional: Bream Creek Farmers Market, Bream Creek Showground	 <p>Copping Hall. Photo, Sorell Council.</p>
Dog parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dog bins</li><li>Fencing</li><li>Signage</li></ul>	Local: 300 m	Local: Sorell & Dodges Ferry dog parks	 <p>Sorell Dog Park. Photo, Australia 247</p>

Caravan parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Signage</li><li>• Dedicated RV parking area</li><li>• Lighting</li></ul>	Regional: 1,000 m+	Regional: RV Friendly Caravan Park, Sorell	 <p>Photo courtesy of cabinparkstasmania.com.au</p>
Urban trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bike paths</li><li>• Pedestrian walkways</li><li>• Signage</li><li>• Lighting</li></ul>	Local: 300 m District: 800 m	District: Orielton Lagoon Loop Trail, Local: Waterway Trail, Sorell Rivulet Local: Lagoon Park, Dodges Ferry Local: Dunalley Walking trail	 <p>Dunalley Walking Trail: Photo Sorell Council</p>
Nature trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimal formal structures</li><li>• Gravel pathways</li><li>• Conservation of native bushland areas</li><li>• Education signage</li><li>• Bike trail through bushland areas</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional, Regional Distance: N/A – locality dependent	Local: Samuel Thorne Reserve District, Lewisham Foreshore Trail	 <p>Lewisham Foreshore trail. Photo: C Lindus.</p>

<b>Foreshore trails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minimal formal structures or pathways</li><li>Conservation of foreshore areas</li><li>Education signage</li><li>Protection of wildlife habitat</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional Distance: N/A – locality dependent	Local: Lewisham Foreshore Walkway, Lewisham  Local: Foreshore Trail, Tiger Head Beach  District: Beach access, Carlton Beach	 <p>Beach Access, Carlton Beach. Photo C Lindus.</p>
<b>Coastal foreshore areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No formal facilities</li><li>Conservation of foreshore areas</li><li>Education signage</li><li>Protection of wildlife habitat</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional, Regional Distance: N/A – locality dependent	Carlton Beach	 <p>Carlton Beach: Photo C. Lindus.</p>
<b>Water-based recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Yacht clubs</li><li>Surf lifesaving clubs</li><li>Boat launching facilities</li><li>Jetties</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional, Regional, Distance: N/A – locality dependent	Midway Point Yacht Club; Lewisham Boat Ramp; Gypsy Bay Boat Ramp, Dodges Ferry Boat Ramp, Boomer Bay Boat ramp.	 <p>Lewisham Boat Ramp: Photo C. Lindus.</p>

Public art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sculptural art</li><li>• Public/community involvement</li></ul>	District: 800 m	Sculpture in Pioneers Park, Sorell; Whale sculpture, Spectacle Head	 <p>Whale Tail sculpture. Photo C. Lindus.</p>
Nature areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grassland</li><li>• Wetland</li><li>• Bushland areas</li><li>• Protection of wildlife habitat</li></ul>	District: 800 m Sub-Regional: 1,000 m	District: Jacks Flat & Blue Lagoon	 <p>Jacks Flat. Photo, Australia247.info</p>
Cultural heritage areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place of Aboriginal cultural significance</li><li>• Church/Cemetery</li><li>• Education signage</li><li>• Fencing</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional, Regional, State, National  Distance: N/A – locality dependent		 <p>St Georges Anglican Parish, Sorell. Photo, srtanglican.org.au</p>

Community gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community gardens</li><li>• Signage</li><li>• Seating</li><li>• Community education days</li></ul>	Local: 400 m	Local: Okines Community House, Dodges Ferry  Local: Midway Point Community House	 <p>Okines Community Garden. Photo, abc.net.au</p>
Flora and fauna conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No formal facilities</li><li>• Conservation of foreshore areas</li><li>• Education signage</li><li>• Protection of wildlife habitat</li></ul>	Local, District, Sub-Regional, Regional, State, National  Distance: N/A – locality dependent	Pitt Water Orielton Lagoon Ramsar Site	 <p>Orielton Lagoon area: Photo, Sorell Council.</p>

## 7.1 Review of Existing Open Space

The open space review forms the basis for determining how well the open space network is meeting the current and future needs of the community. It should be noted that the initial audit and the community engagement process identified some discrepancies between the areas shown as public open space, the land ownership details and the classification of the land. Where discrepancies were found, these were advised to Council's asset manager for rectification as required. The tables below provide a broad view of the diversity of open space types in the municipality and also highlight the need for continual maintenance of Council's asset management system.

To that end, the following review is not intended to be exhaustive of all parcels of Council land, but it highlights the main facilities in each community area. This provides guidance on what may be missing in the community and is also informed by the feedback received through the community engagement.

### 7.1.1 Sorell

Sorell as the main township of the municipality provides a range of open space and recreation opportunities. These are summarised below:

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Pembroke Park	Regional sporting facility	Sporting grounds, walking tracks, informal open space.  This area is covered by the draft Pembroke Park Master Plan, which demonstrates the intention to improve the facilities on offer and expand the types of sporting facilities available.
Miena Park	Local nature park	This area is adjacent to Pembroke park and has access to Orielton Lagoon. The site is currently managed grassland with some walking trails through it. While any investment would be beneficial, it would require careful consideration in relation to the adjoining waterway, which is classified as a RAMSAR Wetland. The redevelopment of this area has also been considered through the draft Pembroke Park Master Plan.
Pioneer Park	District family recreation space and walking trail	Pioneer Park provides a small playground, but also links into a walking trail that weaves through the municipality and links with the Sorell Rivulet walking trail. It is also adjacent to the Sorell Tennis Club and across the road from the Sorell Bowls Club.
Sorell Lagoon link	District walking trail	This new trail links Sorell to Midway Point, walking around Orielton Lagoon. The walking trail is in good condition, but there is minimal signage or wayfinding so it is not used to capacity.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
141 Main Road Sorell	Unmanaged Council land	This site includes three parcels of land, at the eastern end of the second causeway. While this land is currently unmanaged, it connects with the Lagoon link and represents an opportunity for facilities such as interpretation, wayfinding signage, and seating.
Dodges Court open space	Managed local park	This park is an open grassed area with minimal playground infrastructure. The park appears underutilised. The park is only likely to be used by the immediate local community; however, the equipment and facilities should be improved to encourage use by the surrounding residents.

The analysis of existing facilities in Sorell highlights a number of factors. There are minimal local suburban parks for an area growing so rapidly. The subdivision of land to the north of the Council chambers is lacking any open space and has minimal walkways to connect the street network. This results in a suburb of medium density housing that does not have open space within a 300 m walking distance and becomes reliant upon cars to access areas of public open space.

While the redevelopment of Pembroke Park will represent an opportunity for a playground, not just sporting facilities, the distance from this park and the need to cross the Tasman Highway may discourage people from using it.

There remains a large parcel of General Residential land to the north-east of the town centre, which is currently the subject of subdivision applications that could result in up to 300 lots. These subdivisions must provide for a local park of good quality. This parcel of land, while spatially close to the town centre, is still separated by the Tasman Highway and is serviced by poor pedestrian infrastructure. Safe walkway links from this residential land to the remainder of Sorell is imperative to ensuring that pedestrian connectivity through the subdivision by either walkways or footpaths is provided.

### 7.1.2 Midway Point

Midway Point is a residential suburb with minimal business or community facilities. The community that lives there relies on Sorell, Rosny or Hobart City for their more substantial shopping and service requirements, although there is a convenience store, bottle shop, service station, and a number of speciality shops.

The open space facilities in Midway Point are detailed below.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Vancouver Park	District Family recreation facility	<p>This park is centrally located on the peninsula and is well connected, with access provided off five separate streets. It provides play equipment, a public toilet, adult exercise equipment, and open space which can be used for ball sports or similar. There is also an area set aside for dog walking.</p> <p>The park is in good condition and appears well used.</p>
Midway Point Community House and facilities	Local Community facilities and garden	<p>This area has a community hall and neighbourhood house that are well used. There is also a well maintained community garden, and basketball hoops. The site is centrally located in the suburb and can be accessed via three separate street frontages.</p> <p>There is a reasonable area of grassland to the north of the basketball facility, which would represent an opportunity for investment in improved facilities to enable this site to become a hub of activity for all ages.</p>
Brady Street – Billy Kessarios Park	Local park	<p>This site is a linear park linking two streets and providing a more direct route to the foreshore and the Midway Point Yacht Club. The park, while small, is well designed with a path, some basic seating and facilities. It does, however, appear to be a through park, and as a local facility could benefit from investment.</p>
Midway Lagoon link	District walking trail	<p>This trail links Midway Point to Orielson Lagoon but also travels through the Midway Point suburb itself. The walking trail is in good condition, but there is minimal signage or wayfinding, so it is not used to capacity.</p>
Fenton Street Park	Local park	<p>This is a small local park with some basic equipment for toddlers. It links to an open grassed area, adjacent to the Tasman Highway. Its location, while enjoying pleasant views to the south, is disadvantaged by its proximity to the Highway. The grassed area adjacent to the park is also the subject of acquisition by State Growth to enable the construction of a duplicated highway.</p>
Sandpiper Drive	Local park	<p>This park is under construction and will be one of the local parks for the Sweetwater subdivision to the north of Midway Point. There will also be two pocket parks in this area. These will provide good facilities for the immediate suburb but are unlikely to attract people to the area more broadly.</p>

Midway Point is deficient in sporting facilities in particular. However, the proximity of the suburb to Sorell as a township ensures that residents have adequate access to facilities, which can be accessed via bike or foot due to the established trail network. The community engagement process at Midway Point also highlighted that the community there, while not relying on Sorell for their open space, are happy to use those areas of open space as well.

Midway Point is well serviced for local parks. This reflects a historic subdivision pattern where parks are often established in older suburbs. There is an opportunity, however, to invest in some of these parks to improve their facilities.

The road network of the suburb provides good connectivity, again reflecting a historic pattern of subdivision. Where cul-de-sacs are used, walkways are provided where possible. This approach must be continued. This network is further supported by the established lagoon link. However, as already highlighted, improved signage and wayfinding is necessary to support this asset.

The suburb of Midway Point has limited opportunities for further growth. However, the remaining large lot (CT 176809/3) is the subject of a subdivision application currently lodged with Council (Figure 4). This site must provide a parcel of open space that is of comparable size to that at Vancouver Park. Initial discussions regarding this development have identified an area of land that has existing significant vegetation. If this area of land is taken as a public open space contribution, the type of equipment to be provided at this site should be different to that at other local parks in the suburb and could represent an opportunity to provide for a nature based playground experience, which could also provide facilities for older children (11-18 age bracket).



*Figure 4 - Penna Road, Midway Point (CT 176809/3) (LISTmap)*

### 7.1.3 Lewisham/Dodges Ferry/Carlton

The Lewisham/Dodges Ferry/Carlton area has grown from a holiday home settlement to a mixture of holiday homes and permanent residents. The facilities in the area are varied, with an overview provided below.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Dodges Ferry Boat Park	District family recreation space, water-based recreation and nature open space area.	<p>This park is substantial in size and provides facilities for young children through to older primary school aged kids. The park is provided with toilets, BBQs and seating.</p> <p>The park is adjacent to the car parking area for the boat ramp. This co-location is ideal, providing open space and recreation opportunities in one area which can service a broad range of ages.</p>
Blue Lagoon	Local Nature area.	<p>This open space area is a wetland, adjacent to the Dodges Ferry Boat park. There are no formal facilities however the site take a critical role in the management of stormwater and inundation in the Dodges Ferry area, providing habitat to a variety of wetland species, and an area of open space that is highly valued by the local community.</p>
Dodges Ferry Recreation Park/Shark Park	Sub-regional managed sporting facility	<p>This site includes the local football oval for the Dodges Ferry Football Club and facilities such as change rooms and score boards. It is located next to the Dodges Ferry Primary School, Okines Community House, and the local skate park (see below).</p>
Dodges Ferry Recreation Park/Okines Community House	District park including a managed sporting facility, community garden, nature area and dog park	<p>This site is co-located with the Dodges Ferry Primary School and the local football oval. It includes a managed nature area surrounding an established skate park. The Okines Community House (located on Crown land) is adjacent to this site and includes a community garden. On the Rantons Road frontage, there is a small fenced dog park for community use.</p> <p>The co-location with other facilities is ideal; however, the bushland next to the recreation park needs significant weed management and rehabilitation in places. It is underused, and informal track construction from local residents risks incurring further damage to the natural values on site.</p>

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Lewisham Boat Ramp	District water-based recreation facility	The Lewisham Boat Ramp is used by the broader community outside the immediate Southern Beaches area. There is a car park, although this is poorly formed. The site is adjacent to a small park, over Lewisham Scenic Drive, which is very underutilised and has minimal playground equipment.
Lewisham – Carlton Beach Foreshore Trail	Local Foreshore trail	This trail links the Lewisham Boat Ramp, along the foreshore, to Dodges Ferry and Carlton Beach beyond. Much of this trail is located on Crown land and is in varying states of construction. It provides a much valued coastal link that is well used by the community.
Samuel Thorne Reserve	Nature area	This small local park contains natural and cultural values and is well used and appreciated by the community. Recent activities along the northern edge of the park appear to be degrading these values with rehabilitation works to be carried out. The park also provides a through link to the Lewisham to Carlton Beach foreshore trail.
230 Lewisham Scenic Drive	Local family recreation space	This is a small local park with some basic playground facilities. The park appears well used and is conveniently located, adjacent to Lewisham Scenic Drive and halfway between Lewisham Boat Ramp and the Dodges Ferry Recreation park.
Park Beach	District coastal foreshore area	This is a well valued surf beach which is visited by the local community and by those outside the municipality. It is supported by a surf lifesaving club, toilets, car parking and two open space parks to the north. The beach is close to 3km long, and at the eastern end links with the Carlton River.
Snake Hollow	Local park	This park is linear and is currently a nature reserve with a walking track linking Arlenar Street, Carlton Beach Road and Moomere Street. It has minimal other facilities.
13A Seventh Avenue	Local park	This park is located between Seventh Avenue, Fifth Avenue and Carlton Beach Road, with walkways from all of those roads to the site. The facility has no playground equipment but appears to be used as a sporting facility.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Walking trails	Local urban trails	The Southern Beaches area has established gravel and sealed walking trails that extend along Old Forcett Road, and parts of Lewisham Scenic Drive, Carlton Beach Road, and Carlton River Road, as well as smaller streets with footpaths. In general, pedestrian connectivity is good, with established walkways and minimal cul-de-sacs, reflecting a historic settlement pattern.
Jack Flats	Local nature park	This area has had considerable rehabilitation undertaken by the local community. It is used as a nature park and has no formal infrastructure.
Carlton Park Surf Life Saving Club	Local water-based facility	This surf lifesaving club is on the eastern end of Carlton Beach. It is used more by the local community than by visitors to the area and includes parking, toilet facilities, and established walkways to the beach.

The Southern Beaches area is broadly well serviced, with access to extensive coastal foreshore area and trails, and nature reserves. The community has an active group of volunteers working in Coastcare/Landcare, and this is reflected in the rehabilitation projects and education programs undertaken. Dodges Ferry is well serviced with district scale parks such as the Recreation Park and Boat Park.

Further to the east in the Southern Beaches, there are established nature reserves and foreshore access trails (Figure 5); however, in general, the Southern Beaches area has minimal local family parks. This reflects its previous holiday home character; however, as the permanent population grows and the number of young people increases, a greater variety of facilities is required, and further investment in local parks is recommended. Taking the lead from the community, investment in nature based facilities in strategic locations (such as Snake Hollow) would be appropriate and consistent with the character of the area.

During the community engagement, several individuals raised the desire for a community art space, to support the local arts community living in the Southern Beaches area.



**Figure 5 - Foreshore access trail (C. Lindus)**

#### 7.1.4 Primrose Sands

While often considered part of Southern Beaches, Primrose Sands is some distance away from the other areas and has very different characteristics and fewer permanent residents. In turn, the facilities, both in terms of open space, but also other social and community infrastructure (shops, health facilities and so forth) are fairly minimal.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Primrose Beach	District coastal foreshore area	The beach at Primrose Sands represents the most significant parcel of open space and it is in the ownership of the Crown. It is accessed at various locations along the foreshore, including from Petrel Street to the west, and from Primrose Sands Road itself.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Primrose Beach Boat Ramp	Local water-based facility	This beach boat launching facility is located at the western end of Primrose Beach and Council has a lease over the Crown land in this location. It is used by locals but also visitors to the area during the summer months. Conflicts do occur regarding usage of the area, as it provides a location for vehicles to access the beach, which can result in environmental impacts.
3 Esplanade, Primrose Sands	Local community facility and park	This site includes a volunteer TFS station, toilet and some basic facilities, such as a BBQ and seating area. There is no play equipment, but the site has direct access to the beach beyond.
Primrose Sands Community Centre	Local community centre and family recreation facility.	This centre provides an indoor basketball court which doubles as a community hall, and a neighbourhood house type facility. There are outdoor playground facilities, including play equipment for toddlers, a small bike pump track, skate facility, a basketball hoop, and outdoor seating areas.  There is a public toilet at this site also.
Gypsy Bay Boat Ramp and Jetty	District water-based recreation facility	The Gypsy Bay Boat Ramp and Jetty is used by the local community. It is well constructed and maintained. There is a small car park nearby to support the boat ramp, and Council has recently received an application for a public toilet at that site.
Coastal Foreshore Trails	Local coastal foreshore trails	The community has developed in a linear fashion behind the coastal area of Primrose Sands. There is Crown land between these properties and the beach itself, and there are trails throughout these dunes and along this foreshore that are used by the local community.  These are in various states of construction and some have Crown leases but many do not.

Primrose Sands represents a community in transition from a small holiday home settlement, to a more established and active community with an increasing permanent population. The area includes large swathes of coastal foreshore open space and foreshore trails, but minimal local parks. The area is well connected via the street network as well as walkways. However, an audit of these walkways is recommended to rationalise them and ensure they are safe for public use and environmental impacts are minimised.

### 7.1.5 Marion Bay

Marion Bay is a small coastal settlement with a low permanent population. It does, however, have influxes of visitors to the area at key times during the year (for example during the Falls Festival) and also visitors to the area to enjoy the beach.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Marion Bay Beach	District coastal foreshore area	The beach at Marion Bay is Crown Land and used by the local community but also by visitors to the area, especially during the Falls Music Festival over the new year period. There is a small car park in the area and a toilet at the site, a viewing platform and stepped wooden walkway

Marion Bay Beach has very few open space facilities. However, there is also a very low permanent population, so the demand for facilities is not as high as it is elsewhere in the municipality.

The community engagement process did highlight concerns with impacts to the natural environment along the foreshore and illegal vehicle access. It also highlighted a desire to see improved walking and cycling infrastructure, so there was less reliance on walking along the sides of the road in the area.

### 7.1.6 Dunalley

Dunalley is a coastal community which has an established permanent population and fewer holiday homes. The community is something of a meeting point for more remote areas in the Sorell municipality, and also for people living further south on the Tasman Peninsula. It provides basic shopping facilities, a number of cafes, a local school, and some small offices for businesses like real estate agencies.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Dunalley Skate Park	Local family recreation area	Dunalley has an established skate park, adjacent to a playground, and overlooking the coastal foreshore area. It has a toilet, established parking and modern facilities.
Dunalley Football Club	Local sporting facility	This site includes a football oval and some basic supporting facilities such as a change room and toilet. While it is maintained, it is not used to its maximum extent.
Dunalley Neighbourhood House	Local community facility	This facility provides support including computer access, social support but also importantly provides a community garden and some small scale children's playground equipment.
Walking trails	Local urban and foreshore trails	The community of Dunalley is well serviced by walking trails that link the local primary school with the skate park, along the foreshore area and beside the canal to the remaining housing and shops. The trail is well constructed and along this trail there is community information, car parking and basic facilities, such as seating and interpretation signage. There are shelters and BBQ facilities along the canal section of the walk.

Dunalley Boat Ramp and Boomer Bay Boat Ramp providing district based water recreational facilities. There are toilets alongside the Canal and a Unisex public toilet at Boomer Bay. In addition, part of the waterfront at Dunalley has the inclusion of a particular purpose zone to enable the construction of a marina at Dunalley. It is understood this process is progressing to the lodgement of a development application in the future.

Dunalley as a community was devastated during the 2013 fires. Much of the open space now provided for has come about following that event and so is modern and fit for purpose. The town is well connected with walking trails and footpaths. There is also a local golf club and a proposal for a tennis court in the same area.

At this stage, ensuring that the facilities are maintained and are of good quality is the main priority for this community.

#### 7.1.7 Copping/Bream Creek/Forcett

These communities are adjacent to the Tasman Highway and represent small rural hamlets. They have minimal facilities but also low population levels.

Location	Hierarchy and Type	Facilities and Quality
Copping Hall and football oval	Local sporting facility and community facility	This site accommodates one of the oldest community halls in the municipality, next to an oval. The oval isn't frequently used but does provide a recreation facility for formal sports, as well as for passive recreation. The site includes parking.

Copping Anglican Burial Ground	Local cultural heritage facility	This site is a cemetery accessed off Dransfields Road. While it is unlikely to be used for active or passive recreation, it continues to provide a community facility that should be retained.
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These small settlements have minimal areas of open space. This is counterbalanced by the fact that some of the properties are substantial farming properties and arguably the need for open space is less. However, there is opportunity to co-locate a local park with the Copping football oval, for example, to encourage greater use of that site and provide for facilities for all ages groups to enjoy. There are a number of facilities that are not in the management of Council, including the Bream Creek Showground which is managed by the local show committee. This is used for show and market purposes but is in effect a small oval that can also be used for passive recreation when formal activities are not occurring. The engagement process highlighted broad support for community gardens, particularly to foster community connection and provide an activity for young families living in the area.

#### 7.1.8 Orielson

Orielson as a settlement is transitioning from an agricultural area to a Rural Living area in places. This transition is slow, with subdivision of land and subsequent development progressing at relatively low levels. The area has a completely permanent population, without the dominance of young families that can be found in other areas of the municipality.

The area has no formal public open space. Given the low population levels and the larger lots, this is considered acceptable. However, providing an option for connectivity between Orielson and Sorell to the south, where there are more facilities, and within Orielson itself, is important. Providing walking trails or bridle ways within the Orielson area is recommended and would be of benefit to that community in terms of accessibility. The costs associated with this would be borne in part by the Council, but also by those that develop the lots in this area. A walkway strategy, that identifies the location for a future walkway or bridleway, would enable land to be taken as a contribution when lots are subdivided in the area. If lots are subdivided that do not incorporate identified open space parcels, then a public open space contribution should be recouped at the subdivision stage. Both of these approaches would assist in establishing these walkway and bridleway links, through to Sorell, and reduce the cost impost on Council.

## 8 Climate Change and Bushfire Resilience

The nature of the changing climate across the world requires government authorities to consider the impacts of climate change on their policies, strategies and development of their communities. As part of the engagement process, the community raised the changing climate and bushfire resilience as a key area of concern and one that was relevant for consideration as part of the open space strategy.

The *Sorell Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan* (Green et al., 2012) was drafted in 2012. It was driven by the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority and was part of the Regional Climate Change Project. For Sorell, the plan lists the key climate risks as:

- The temperature of very hot days to increase by up to 3°C.
- There will be extended heatwaves and more extreme temperatures, which are likely to enhance the occurrence and intensity of bushfire.
- Rainfall is trending towards heavier events interspersed by longer dry periods.
- Rainfall volume in a 200-year average recurrence interval event to increase by up to 30 per cent.
- Coastal inundation to increase.
- The current 100-year storm tide event (0.9 to 1.4m above average sea level) may become a 50-year event by 2030, and a 2 to 6-year event by 2090.

This results in a number of vulnerabilities for the Sorell municipality, but of particular relevance to the Open Space Strategy are:

- Impacts on the coastal environment (beaches, dunes, saltmarsh, Ramsar wetlands);
- Bushfire impacts; and
- Inundation and degradation of low-lying road, property and stormwater assets in relation to sea level rise and storm surge.

For open space planning, this represents both risks and opportunities. Risks include the loss of existing open space areas that may not have been designed or located to account for the changing climate (for example low-lying coastal locations). However, for the most part, the nature of open space areas means that there are many opportunities to provide resilience for a community if well considered and well designed.

Private land and Council owned land is all subject to the fire abatement process which is undertaken annually by Council.

### 8.1 Increase in temperatures and extended heatwaves

Evidence highlights the benefits of maintaining green spaces to assist in cooling urban areas. Open space areas provide an excellent opportunity to increase the greening of the Sorell municipality to provide for shade, but also to assist in decreasing temperatures, particularly in built-up urban areas.

Providing shade structures and trees in family recreation spaces, including BBQ and picnic facilities and formalised sporting areas, will improve comfort and usability of existing open space facilities over the long term and reduce sun exposure for open space users.

## 8.2 Increased intensity of rainfall

The changing nature of rainfall events sees greater rain falling in a shorter period of time, which can result in localised flooding and significant increases in run-off leading to pollution risks for the municipal waterways. Well-designed open space areas can include rain gardens, incorporate water-sensitive urban design principles, and include treatment systems that not only manage increased stormwater levels, but also treat the stormwater before it enters the waterways. Areas with identified inundation risks may provide opportunity as an open space area with stormwater management characteristics, thus reducing the risk to surrounding houses and providing greater control over the discharge from these areas into the broader environment.

## 8.3 Coastal inundation and Erosion

As a result of climate change, there is an increased likelihood of coastal inundation but also recession through storm surge and the need to provide for coastal refuge areas. Knowing this, any new open space areas along the coast must be of adequate depth to not only be usable now, but usable into the future with any anticipated loss of coastline. The construction of tracks, walkways and stairs must be cognisant of these risks and the potential damage to infrastructure and the coastal environment.

In considering both existing and future open space areas, the opportunities to provide for climate resilience should remain front of mind both in the design of open space, but also their retention or acquisition.

## 8.4 Longer bushfire seasons

Many parts of the Sorell municipality are closely connected to large areas of managed and unmanaged bushland, and the municipality has experienced firsthand the impacts of bushfire with the Dunalley bushfires in 2013. With the likelihood of longer and hotter summer seasons and drier winters, the potential for more regular and intense bushfire seasons increases. The risks associated with bushfires include increases in maintenance and replacement costs of infrastructure as well as broader community disruption.

The open space network represents an opportunity for refuge, for both the community and native wildlife during a bushfire event. Open space areas, when well-located and of adequate size, can provide bushfire refuges for communities that might otherwise be cut off. In addition, much of the municipality's population is located on the coast with ready access to beaches, which provides safe refuges that also double as open space areas.

Proper management of bushland areas can help build resilience and protection for both the community and native wildlife in the event of a bushfire.

## 9 Biodiversity, Natural and Cultural Values

The Sorell municipality has diversity of natural and cultural values. While the area grew from the farming activities of the 1800s, and parts of the municipality are still focused on agriculture, large tracts of bushland and significant sections of coastal foreshore still retain high biodiversity and cultural values and are also highly valued by the community.

There are a number of significant vegetation communities that are found in the area, including *Eucalyptus globulus*, and *Eucalyptus tenuiramis* forest types. The area also boasts two significant wetland reserves, one of which is an internationally significant Ramsar Wetland (Orielson Lagoon, adjacent to Midway Point). While these natural values are not recognised by all in the community, their retention is critical as they provide important habitat and refuge for animals and are a defining character of the municipality.

There are known Aboriginal cultural heritage sites in the municipality; however, many of these sites have not been studied nor are they widely recognised. Prior to any works, an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values Assessment will be required to ensure significant sites remain untouched and proper considerations are given under relevant legislation. However, in addition to protecting cultural values, there is also a wonderful opportunity in the community to introduce some education and interpretation options in open space areas.

## 10 Recommendations and Conclusion

Sorell municipality, as a growing community, and a community in transition, has changing open space and recreation needs. The municipality also has complex characteristics with different sections of the community valuing different things.

Conducting a thorough audit of the existing areas of open space in the municipality and investing in the improvement and adaptability of these existing areas will provide the highest value for the community with the least amount of cost for Council. Some of the community as part of this review, (see comments in executive summary) have expressed a current dissatisfaction with the quality, distribution, access to, and maintenance of existing public open space in the municipality. It has been clear that the community values natural areas and the coastal bushland character of the area, but it also expects provision of built infrastructure to support its changing population.

To support the move towards improved infrastructure and increased investment in open space in the municipality, community dialogue is required around how this is funded, and what is realistic to be retained by the Council as public space.

However, the recommendations provide direction to Council for the implementation of a strategy that should provide open space and recreation areas that meet the needs of a changing community, that reflect the community characteristics and that can be implemented in a staged manner as funds become available. For a complete list of recommendations and priority projects, please see Appendix A of this study.

## 11 References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016). Census statistical areas: Sorell, Midway Point, Lewisham, Dodges Ferry, Carlton, Primrose Sands, Marion Bay, Dunalley, Copping, Bream Creek, Forcett, Orielton. Viewed October 2019.
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- Sport and Recreation Tasmania (2010). *Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework*. Prepared by Inspiring Place Pty Ltd and HM Leisure Planning Pty Ltd. Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts. Government of Tasmania.

## Appendix A      Priority Projects and Recommendations

**Priority Projects and Recommendations**

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
High level, municipal-wide recommendations						
Whole municipality	Implement walkway upgrades, signage and provision of information.	Resourcing	<p>Develop a wayfinding strategy and provide better signage across the municipality, which will improve access to and awareness of existing open space facilities including walkways, cycle routes, park facilities as well as improving connectivity between areas.</p> <p>A consistent signage strategy should be undertaken that can be branded for the whole municipality, is recognisable and easy to understand. Signage should be provided on all walkways and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name of the trail the user is on;</li> <li>• The distance to key features;</li> <li>• The type of trail it is (multi-use, suitable for dogs etc).</li> </ul> <p>In some areas, information signage should be provided with interpretation about key sites and features.</p>	High	Walkways and urban and coastal trails	Council
Whole municipality	Develop online mapping and information on tracks, trails, dog walking and facilities at existing open spaces.	Internal resourcing	Information mapping should be available online and in hard copy form for the community to learn about the walking trails available and the connectivity of these with existing open space. Ensure there is consistency with the signage branding previously mentioned.	High	All types of open space	Council
Whole municipality	Provide shade structures in existing open space areas with a focus on family recreation spaces.	Cost	Improve comfort and usability of existing open space facilities. Improve community resilience to climate change and likelihood of longer and hotter summers while also reducing sun exposure of open space users.	High	Family recreation spaces, formalised sporting areas, community gardens	Council
Whole municipality	Formalise the process for land transfers at subdivision stage, particularly timing of transfer to Council of open space and road assets.	Internal resourcing	<p>Clearer process of land transfer and land tenure.</p> <p>Reduce complexities with land ownership and maintenance responsibility particularly where roads have not been transferred appropriately.</p>	High and ongoing	All types of open space	Council
Whole municipality	Provide ongoing maintenance of existing and future facilities, including surfacing of walkways (where	Cost	Continually update maintenance regime. Recognition that as the municipality grows, so too does the open space,	High and ongoing	All types of open space	Council

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
	appropriate), linking existing tracks and trails.		and this results in further demands on staff time and resourcing to maintain all of these areas.			
Whole municipality	Appoint a part-time community engagement/NRM officer.	Cost – may require grant funding.	Facilitate community engagement. Re-establish regular environmental care meetings with Landcare groups and volunteers. Develop land management strategy for Council-owned land containing significant biodiversity values. Engaging an NRM facilitator to work with groups and landowners to develop applications and implement projects that address climate change risk themes is raised in the <i>Sorell Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan</i> .	High - Medium	N/A	Council and local community groups
Whole municipality	Provide information and education boards within existing public open space areas.	Cost of signage and preparation of information	Education about natural values, water cycles etc. and encouragement of community awareness on key issues. Work with local community groups and in particular local Indigenous groups to identify opportunities for interpretation.	High - Medium	All types of open space	Council
Whole municipality	At a municipal-wide level, map the ‘missing links’ and review the existing paths in the provision of multi-use trails and paths.  Where possible, start discussions with Crown Land Services to work towards the provision of these walkways. Use this mapping work as a guide to identifying areas to be acquired through public open space contributions during the subdivision stage, to fill these missing links.	Resourcing	Better wayfinding and public use of existing open space and trails.  Increased use of trails could reduce reliance on vehicles.  The potential gains of implementing this recommendation are considered to far outweigh the potential cost of implementation.	High to Medium	Walking trails, both urban and coastal	Council and Crown
Whole municipality	Develop and implement a community resilience strategy.	Cost	Improve adaptability and response to changing climate conditions.  Potentially reduce future costs associated with flooding, inundation, bushfire and drought.  Create community safe places for bushfire and flooding events, which in some instances can also be used as open space areas.  Engaging an NRM facilitator to work with groups and landowners to develop applications and implement	Medium	N/A	Council and local community groups

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
			projects that address climate change risk themes is raised in the <i>Sorell Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan</i> .			
Whole municipality	Conduct an audit of Council-owned land.	Internal resourcing	Review Council's asset register.  Conversely some are on the register but have been sold, with some land being transferred but not updated in the Land Titles Office.	Medium	All types of open space	Council
Whole municipality	Audit leases and State/Crown land.	Resourcing at both Council and Crown level	Reduce the number of redundant leases and establish clear process for ongoing lease agreements. This is particularly critical for potential new leases for foreshore areas in the Southern Beaches.	Medium	All types of open space	Council and Crown
Suburb-specific improvements						
Lewisham	Provide better signage and wayfinding for the Lewisham Foreshore Trail (Crown land), through Richards Avenue and connecting into the public reserve/dog park and 'Shark Park' at Dodges Ferry.	Involves Crown land	Better pedestrian connectivity between Lewisham and larger recreation spaces at Dodges Ferry. Work on establishing a lease agreement with the Crown, particularly for ongoing maintenance.	Medium	Coastal foreshore walking trails	Council and Crown
Lewisham	Improve existing footpaths along Lewisham Scenic Drive to connect with Old Forcett Road.	Cost	Improved usability, pedestrian safety and connectivity with Dodges Ferry to achieve an all-accessible path along this road.	Medium - Low	Urban walking trails	Council
Lewisham	Upgrade pocket park at corner of Lewisham Scenic Drive and Elizabeth Street (east of Lewisham Boat Ramp).  A portion of the site is classified (and zoned) as a road reservation for John Street. This appears to be a historic layover from the original subdivision and could be resolved or better utilised.	Crown land (Council currently has a lease over the titles)	Pocket park with close proximity to other open space facilities (namely the Lewisham Boat Ramp).  Opportunity to improve car parking and basic facilities, such as a toilet, rubbish facilities and a small playground.	Medium to low	Water-based recreational facility and local park	Council and Crown
Dodges Ferry	Building on previous work undertaken, draft a master plan for the land at 530 Old Forcett Road with an aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve accessibility to the public reserve/dog park including links into 'Shark Park' to the south;</li> <li>Undertake a Natural Values Assessment with a view to</li> </ul>	Sewer attenuation buffer  Existing native vegetation and threatened species located in the south-west corner of the	Better use of existing areas of public open space  Opportunity for public education/info boards and engagement.  Community ownership of public assets will encourage better land management and the potential for	Medium	Regional park	Council and local community groups

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
	rehabilitating the bushland through coordination with Landcare groups to undertake weed management and replanting; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values Assessment to identify significant sites;</li> <li>Use information about the site to inform the establishment of improved connectivity by including walking and cycling tracks;</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to provide nature-based playground experiences on the site.</li> </ul>	site must be protected  There may be sites of Aboriginal significance and any master-planning for this site must undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage assessment as part of this exercise.	engagement with Landcare groups to assist with management of invasive weeds.			
Dodges Ferry	Upgrade the existing skate park facility at 'Shark Park' including improved public shelter and clear connection point to the pedestrian trail heading west out to the foreshore area. Improve passive surveillance of this area.	Cost	Public art on the shelter; improved safety. Ambience and community ownership of space.	Medium	Local recreational facility	Council
Carlton	Develop a park plan for Snake Hollow to work towards improved investment and usability of the park.		Provide for improved signage and basic infrastructure to increase usability of the park and its role as a connecting area of open space for the community.	High	Local park	Council
Carlton	Conduct an audit of formal and informal pedestrian access points/pathways at Carlton Beach.	Mixed land ownership: Council, the Crown and private	Better management of the foreshore areas and protection of natural values.  Reduced maintenance of assets by reducing number of access points.  Sale of redundant land parcels.	Medium to low	Coastal foreshore walkways	Council and Crown
Carlton	Improve signage to walkway at Carlton Beach Road and provide picnic facilities.	Cost	Improved usage and safety of existing public park infrastructure.	Medium	Local park	Council
Primrose Sands	Undertake a park plan for the Council-owned land at Frogmouth Lane, in conjunction with the Crown. Formalise parking in this area, some basic facilities including seating and tables, and improved signage. Consideration should be given to the provision of a	Resourcing at both the Crown and Council	This provides a public facility for the end of the beach, which has high visitation both by locals and visitors. Formalising this area will reduce impacts on the coastal environment. Formalising a lease agreement with the Crown would provide clarity regarding management responsibilities.	High	Local park and coastal reserve	Council and Crown

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
	toilet to service the community and boat owners who use this area.					
Connellys Marsh	Retain the land owned by the Council at Beach Road. Investigate opportunities for investment including seating and tables, and the provision of a public toilet. Consider the benefits of retention of this site in relation to its role as a bushfire escape point.	Resourcing	The site is currently vacant bushland but is large enough to be a usable community space, and potentially also to provide a refuge location in times of bushfire.	Low	Local park	Council
Sorell	Three parcels of unmanaged land adjoining the foreshore area adjacent to Orielson Lagoon could partially form part of the greater open space network and be formalised in some way, such as by providing education signage, picnic facilities and ensuring the area is connected to the lagoon loop walking/cycling trail.	Resourcing  Plans for road improvements in this area	The site is well located adjacent to the foreshore trail from Sorell to Midway Point. Investment in this site could include interpretation, information about the trail, seating and basic facilities, such as dog poo bags and rubbish bins. It is noted that in the event of a foreshore trail being established through Crown land this maybe unnecessary, and it may be necessary to utilise only part of these sites for Open Space.	High	Local park and part of the foreshore trail	Council
Sorell	Plan for shared pathways from future residential release areas to the town centre.	Mixed land ownership	Better connectivity between future residential land and centres.  Clear direction on subdivision requirements and overall pedestrian pathway network.	High	Urban walkways	Council and developers
Sorell	Ensure new subdivision areas provide connectivity throughout the subdivision, and to adjoining residential land.	Mixed land ownership	Better connectivity between future residential land and centres.  Clear direction on subdivision requirements and overall pedestrian pathway network.	High	Local parks and urban walkways	Council and developers
Sorell	Ensure future subdivisions on residential land over 10ha in size provide a parcel of land, at least 6,000m <sup>2</sup> in area, as a public park. This park must be connected by walkways through the subdivision, but also connect to adjacent residential land.	Development pressure	This approach puts the onus of development of public open space onto the developer and ensures Council can obtain open space in critical parcels of land for future community use.	High	Local and district parks	Developers
Sorell	Continue to work towards the implementation of the draft Pembroke Park Master Plan.	Costs	Improved regional sporting facility which will encourage greater participation at a local level, but also provide a facility suitable for the hosting of regional competitions. This has economic benefits for the broader community.	High	Regional park	Council

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
Midway Point	Ensure future subdivisions on residential land over 10ha in size provide a parcel of land of at least 6,000m <sup>2</sup> in area as a public park or provide a network of pocket parks. This park must be connected by walkways through the subdivision, but also connect to adjacent residential land. The park must provide an alternative open space offering to Vancouver Park on the Midway peninsula.	Development pressure	This approach puts the onus of development of public open space onto the developer and ensures Council can obtain open space in critical parcels of land for future community use.	High	Local and district parks	Developers
Orielton	Establish a walkways strategy for Orielton linking back to the Tasman Highway. When subdivisions of rural residential land occur involving land identified in the strategy, take a public open space contribution consistent with this. Where it represents more than a 5% contribution, acquire this land at the appropriate land value to facilitate these links.	Mixed land ownership Working with the Crown in terms of walkways along the highway	As development occurs in the area it is important to ensure that opportunities to take public open space in the form of walkways are implemented for future recreational opportunities.	Medium	Walkways and trails	Council and developers
Long-term projects						
Whole municipality	Develop and implement a long-term municipal cycleway strategy.	Working with the Crown to facilitate the provision of a cycle path on certain areas along the Arthur Highway Acquisition of land may be required Cost	Identify a long-term preferred cycle path for the municipality. Wherever possible, this path should be located away from major highways, and if this is not possible, provided in the form of a separated pathway. This cycle path should work to link Midway Point to Sorell; Sorell to Lewisham, Dodges Ferry and Carlton; and Primrose Sands through to Dunalley. Provision of a path like this represents an opportunity for the safe movement of cyclists, both locals and visitors, as well as a tourism attraction in its own right.	Medium	Walkway and Cycleway infrastructure	Council and Crown
Southern Beaches	Invest in implementing and updating (where necessary) previous strategies, including those prepared by community and Landcare groups such as:	Resourcing constraints and working with other groups in its implementation	This work would build on the previous investment of time in these strategies to ensure that the documents remain up to date and applicable.	Medium	Nature-based parks and coastal areas	Council and community groups

AREA	RECOMMENDATION	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY LEVEL	TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Southern Beaches Foreshore Access Management Strategy;</i> and</li> <li>• <i>Samuel Thorne Reserve Activity Plan</i> June 2019.</li> <li>• <i>Dodges Ferry Recreation Reserve Management Plan 2015;</i></li> <li>• <i>Dodges Ferry Recreation Reserve Fire Management Plan.</i></li> </ul>					
Southern Beaches Area	Establish a local art trail (Southern Beaches area)	Resourcing constraints within Council	Work with the local community groups and in conjunction with the tracks and trails strategy to establish and implement an art trail that utilises existing sites, and provides opportunities for local artists to establish work in key locations on the trail network.	Medium	Walkways and trails	Council and local community groups
Whole Municipality	Prepare a tracks and trails strategy	Resourcing constraints within Council	This work would expand on the Open Space Strategy and provide clear guidance for the future location of tracks and trails, expanding on what is existing within the Municipality.	Medium to Low	Walkways and Trails	Council and Crown
Whole municipality	Develop a public toilet strategy.	Cost Some areas are not serviced with reticulated services so there will be ongoing costs associated with onsite wastewater management	Undertake an analysis of the provision of public toilets in the municipality and whether they are appropriately located for the way communities use their open space.	Low	Community facilities	Council
Whole Municipality	Prepare a play space and playground strategy	Resourcing constraints within Council	This work would expand on the Open Space Strategy and Council's own asset register but also provide an opportunity to identify areas where play equipment is inappropriate or not adequately servicing the community.	Low	Family recreation spaces	Council
Whole Municipality	Audit the open space areas accessible to dogs.	Resourcing constraints within Council.	This work would consolidate existing Dog management policies, but also ensure that those areas accessible to dogs, have adequate facilities including waste facilities. This would also enable consideration of the proximity of dog parks, to other types of open space, and whether conflicts between them could arise.	Low	Dog Parks	Council.

## Appendix B Report

## Community Engagement Summary



# Sorell Open Space Strategy

## Community Engagement Summary Report

27 March 2020

**ERA Planning Pty Ltd trading as ERA Planning and Environment**

ABN 67 141 991 004

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# 1 Overview

ERA Planning & Environment was appointed by Sorell Council in August 2019 to develop a comprehensive strategy for the provision of open space and recreation areas for the community of Sorell. In developing this strategy, it is important that it reflect the values and needs of the existing community, while also ensuring that the future needs of the growing community are properly planned for in relation to the provision of, and access to, open space. This helps us understand the existing open space network, what the community values in terms of open space, as well as where improvements can be made in either hard infrastructure or in the rehabilitation of open space areas.

The project has involved consultation with the community and key stakeholders across three phases which included five community engagement sessions, an online survey and one-on-one sessions with key stakeholders. Written submissions were also received throughout the engagement process.

## 1.1 Engagement process

The development of the draft Sorell Open Space Strategy began with a community engagement process to better understand what the community values in terms of open space, what parts of the existing open space network are working well and what improvements are needed to support the community into the future.

The public were made aware of this engagement process through the Sorell Council's website and Facebook page, emails sent to key stakeholder groups, posters displayed across the municipality and notices in the Sorell Times.

The engagement process involved the following:

- Five community engagement sessions held across the municipality through November 2019;
- An online survey available through Council's website and Facebook page (open for responses from the start of November until 20 December 2019);
- One-on-one sessions; and
- Written feedback.

The results of the survey have been reviewed and are summarised in section 3 of the report.

## 2 Community engagement sessions

The community engagement sessions followed the format of an information briefing, followed by questions and answers and discussion about open space in the municipality. Attendance at these sessions was varied and highlighted the different levels of engagement with open space across the municipality, as well as the differences in community character in the broader Sorell area. The sessions were held in the following locations:

### *Copping Community Hall*

The first session was held at the Copping Community Hall on Wednesday 13 November. Six members of the community attended with much of the discussion focused on the Marion Bay area.

### *Okines House, Dodges Ferry*

This session was held on Saturday 16 November and had the highest attendance with over 40 community members attending. Attendees were passionate and committed to the provision of open space in the community and the protection and management of natural and cultural values. Their focus was primarily the Southern Beaches area with a particular interest in Dodges Ferry.

### *Midway Point Neighbourhood House*

This session was held on Monday 18 November at the local Neighbourhood house. Six community members attended. Their focus was the Midway Point area, but also the links with the open space network and facilities in Sorell which are commonly used by the broader community.

### *Sorell Memorial Hall*

This session was held on Tuesday 19 November and had the lowest attendance with only two people present. The focus of discussion was current park management practices and signage, and access issues to open space areas. The attendees reinforced the need for good permeability in new subdivision areas as well as connectivity between existing open space areas. There were few comments about the town of Sorell other than that the township didn't have a strong sense of community. There were comments about the Pawleena dam, and a scenic drive through Nugent was suggested as a tourist opportunity for the area, with pull-over facilities and picnic areas.

### *Primrose Sands Community Hall*

This session was held on Tuesday 26 November and was well attended with about 15-20 people present. Their focus was the Southern Beaches area, but particularly the Primrose Sands area.

### 2.1 Key themes and actions

A wide range of perspectives, comments and suggestions were made during the community engagement sessions. Input received during the engagement sessions has been reviewed and collated, and comments provided on local area maps have been consolidated based on the locality. A copy of each map is available at Appendix A.

Table 1 below is a summary of the key themes identified during the community engagement phase and how the draft Sorell Open Space Strategy will respond to these issues. This table focuses only on the key issues identified during the engagement phase and is not an exhaustive list of all matters raised. It is important to note that there

were many positive comments made on the open space network and facilities more broadly which are not reflected in the table below.

**Table 1 – Key themes and response**

Theme	Response
<b>Accessibility</b> – General improvements to pedestrian walkways and cycle routes needed across the municipality.	Improvements to accessibility can be achieved by: providing improved wayfinding signage; including maps and information on Council's website; collaboration with the Crown regarding foreshore trails; and continuing to update Council's asset database.
<b>Protection of biodiversity</b> – Areas containing sensitive flora and fauna must be acknowledged and protected.	This is acknowledged in the draft strategy. Any site recommended for works of any kind will require a natural values assessment to identify significant values.  The strategy establishes a set of key guiding principles for the provision of open space, with the preservation and enhancement of existing natural values taking priority.
Issues with <b>management of tracks</b> , particularly along foreshore areas which are used regularly by a diverse range of users in the community (e.g. young, elderly, cyclists, families, dog walkers, horse riders).	The Crown is working towards formalising agreements for some of the foreshore tracks. Council should work closely with the Crown to identify preferred tracks and begin a prioritised program to roll out infrastructure improvements for tracks in the area.
<b>4WD and vehicle access to foreshore areas</b> resulting in impacts to native flora and fauna, particularly shorebird nesting areas. Particularly an issue at Marion Bay and Primrose Sands.	Access to the foreshore in some of these areas remains the responsibility of the Crown. However, there is an opportunity for Council to work with the Crown to install signage, improve parking in areas to provide an alternative place for people to park, and install barriers where necessary to discourage people taking vehicles into sensitive areas.
<b>Formalising key pedestrian access points</b> to foreshore areas has had a significant positive impact on protecting the foreshore area. Marion Bay track and viewing platform is an example.	This requires ongoing work with the Crown which, in many instances, has responsibility for these access points. Critically, Council must ensure that any new sites identified do not inadvertently result in further pressures on Crown land and the requirement for the construction of new tracks.
<b>Aboriginal cultural heritage</b> should underline projects for open space areas. Protect and educate on important cultural values of the area.	Interpretation signage along walking tracks and key areas. This requires working closely with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation and the local Aboriginal community.

Theme	Response
<b>Dog</b> access, management and owner education is an ongoing issue at many foreshore areas across the municipality (Marion Bay and Lewisham were raised as key areas).	Education through online maps and information material can be provided. At critical times of the year (particularly around nesting seasons), increasing inspections and issuing infringement notices to enforce these regulations is necessary. This requires close work with the Crown which is responsible for some of these parcels of land.
A <b>collaborative approach</b> between the community, private landowners and other stakeholders should be encouraged.	There are existing resources in certain sectors of the community, particularly around natural resource management. Having a part-time project officer to work with the community could enable better collaboration in this area and improve outcomes.
Potential across the municipality to <b>improve connectivity</b> between areas which will support safety of pedestrians and cyclists and encourage better connection between key areas.	Require walkways and good permeability/connectivity at subdivision stage.  Look at ways that existing walkways can be consolidated and improved upon to increase usability.
Safety concerns along key road corridors due to <b>inconsistent pathways and lack of wayfinding</b> .	Improve wayfinding across the municipality through the introduction of consistent signage. Include signage for trail types, distances and destinations, and incorporate maps at key nodes.  Multi-media approach to signage and wayfinding, for example provide maps on Council's website for key walking and cycling trails.  Prioritise connectivity – wayfinding and strengthening existing networks.
Pressures on boat ramps and <b>water facilities</b> , including parking.	Improve parking and the provision of facilities at key boat ramps. This includes boat ramps at Lewisham and Boomer Bay.
Resurgence of younger families and more permanent residents in the municipality, <b>requiring different forms of open space facilities</b> . The municipality needs improved facilities for younger children and persons of all abilities, particularly in areas with greater population growth pressures.	This is noted. Across the municipality, there are different requirements in relation to the types of open space. At the subdivision stage, local parks must be provided which are linked throughout the suburb, to lead to more substantial parks. On a suburb-by-suburb basis, an audit of the types of facilities available should be undertaken to ensure a variety of facility types are provided.
<b>Impacts</b> on residents and natural values of foreshore areas <b>during high tourism season</b> . This includes pressure on car parking, additional 4WD	Implement improved signage to inform visitors to the area of appropriate parking and access points. Work with the Crown to increase patrols of popular visited areas to educate the community around expectations.

Theme	Response
and unauthorised vehicles accessing foreshore areas.	
Resolve the ' <b>missing links</b> ' in the network, particularly footpaths and opportunities for cycleways.	Identify the localised missing links and characterise those as being for pedestrian or cycling use. Identify a long-term municipal cycle route.
Council to <b>facilitate local growers' markets</b> in appropriate locations. Fitzroy Street/Civic Park in Sorell was suggested as an example.	This can be considered by Council's Community Development section.
Additional <b>park and ride facilities for bicycles</b> at key nodes.	Park and Ride facilities have been established at Sorell and are being explored at Midway Point, although these are focused on vehicle parking for bus catching. Consideration of improved facilities in major community nodes.
<b>Improved facilities for dog owners</b> , such as designated areas, dog play structures and re-used water dog wash stations.	There are a number of dog parks in the municipality. An audit of the facilities provided should be conducted with the intention to provide consistency of infrastructure in these facilities (such as access to drinking water, dog waste bags and bins), as well as installing some dog play equipment.
Provide more opportunities for <b>adult interaction points</b> , such as pump tracks, outdoor exercise facilities.	Investigate co-location of adult interaction facilities at major community parks.
More <b>shade structures</b> and public huts at playground areas, BBQ facilities and outdoor exercise spaces to encourage year-round use.	Shade structures and BBQ areas should be provided in regional and suburb-scale parks.
Additional <b>water fountains</b> needed close to open space areas.	In some instances, these cannot be provided due to lack of reticulated water infrastructure. This can be considered in key locations where access to water is available.
Desire to see more <b>community sheds</b> in various locations around the municipality.	There are existing community sheds and community houses in Midway Point and Sorell. There may be opportunities to provide additional community facilities in the Southern Beaches area and elsewhere, although this does not represent a critical facility in the Sorell Open Space Strategy.

Theme	Response
A <b>community-based arts facility</b> needed in the Southern Beaches to support the local arts community.	This is beyond the scope of what the Council can provide in terms of facilities. However, there may be an opportunity to work with the community to provide public land for future investment.
Better <b>lighting</b> at larger facilities such as Pembroke Park.	Lighting in sub-regional and regional facilities should meet basic Australian standards and implement crime prevention through environmental design measures.
Improved <b>access to foreshore</b> area at Midway Point.	Continue to work with the Crown to provide access to the foreshore. Implement improved wayfinding to the area so people understand how they can get there.
<b>Safety</b> of pedestrians and cyclists is a concern due to lack of infrastructure such as consistent pathways, signage and lighting.	This issue can be resolved through a range of means including a long-term municipal cycle strategy and wayfinding measures.

### 3 Surveys

During the community engagement sessions, a survey was provided, and it was completed by those wanting to provide more detailed feedback during the sessions. The survey was also made available online through Survey Monkey and accessed via Council's Facebook page which was shared extensively. There were 69 responses to the online survey and 29 attendees completed the survey during the engagement sessions.

The survey was a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions which allowed extensive input about what people value in terms of open space, what they currently use, how they access it and what they see as opportunities for improvement. A copy of the survey can be found at Appendix A.

Key stats:

- 93% of respondents use an area of public open space close to their home.
- 88% of respondents also use open space facilities more than 1 km from their home.
- 90% of respondents said they walked to the areas of public open space, with driving being the second highest option at 76%.
- 72% of respondents are not satisfied with the size and quality of existing open space facilities in the municipality.
- Of the respondents, 42% were in the 50-69 age bracket, 34% were in the 30-49 age bracket, 16% in the 69+ age bracket, 7% in the 15-29 age bracket and 1% were 15 years and under.
- 59% of the respondents felt that there was an inadequate amount of public open space in their area.
- The majority of those who completed the survey felt that several public open space areas in the municipality would benefit from rehabilitation works, in particular weed management, habitat management and/or protection and coastal stabilisation works.

**Table 2 – Areas for improvement identified in responses to the survey**

Theme	Response
<b>Improve connectivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reclaim walkways that have been fenced over;</li> <li>• Provide cycle paths that separate cyclists from the road, and that join up townships;</li> <li>• Provide walking tracks that are suitable for dogs which enable people to get from one place to another while still avoiding no-go areas;</li> <li>• Complete walkway loops around Southern Beaches;</li> </ul>	<p>There is a strong community sentiment that connectivity is poor between open space areas and the municipality more generally. This will therefore be a focus of the strategy.</p> <p>There will be a broader recommendation regarding a municipal cycleway. This will be a long-term priority but will address some of the concerns highlighted.</p> <p>Ongoing work with the Crown is required, particularly around formalising foreshore links.</p>

Theme	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link up the walking tracks and footpaths particularly around the Southern Beaches to enable people to get around safely;</li> <li>• Provide cycling paths between Dodges Ferry and Sorell;</li> <li>• Link up all pedestrian access ways and public spaces and reclaim those that aren't in use or have been fenced over;</li> <li>• Provide more foreshore links;</li> <li>• Improve access to state forests;</li> <li>• Provide more walking trails that are dog friendly;</li> <li>• Form a track from the western edge of Midway Point to the Scout Hall opened up to the foreshore.</li> </ul> <p>There were 21 comments about improving the walkways and access ways and connectivity in the municipality. Of those, eight comments were about improving cycling infrastructure.</p>	<p>Implement a wayfinding strategy, with a focus on consistent signage, as well as providing for online resources about walkways and trails.</p>
<p><b>Improve facilities, for example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public toilets at Primrose Sands beach;</li> <li>• Improve and establish more areas of native habitat;</li> <li>• Public toilets at the Lewisham boat ramp;</li> <li>• More BBQs and public seating;</li> <li>• More shade structures at family recreation spaces and BBQ facilities;</li> <li>• More recycling options;</li> <li>• More dog parks;</li> <li>• Provide fencing;</li> <li>• Provide drinking fountains.</li> </ul>	<p>Public toilets are provided at Kelleve Showgrounds, Dunalley Canal, Vancouver Park, Primrose Sands, Marion Bay, Imlay Street, Park Beach, Boomer Bay, Carlton Beach, Dunalley Recreation, Boat Park (Dodges Ferry), and Pioneer Park.</p> <p>There are no public toilets in Lewisham. In Primrose Sands, the toilet facilities are near the community centre, not near the area where people access the beach and launch boats.</p> <p>A broader public toilet strategy is required to ensure the placement of new toilets is strategic and assists in responding to community needs.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for community groups to work with Council, particularly in relation to rehabilitation of vegetation.</p> <p>Look at investment in dog parks across the municipality and continue to work with the Crown regarding dog control on foreshore areas.</p>

Theme	Response
	Provide shade structures in existing open space areas with a focus on family recreation spaces which will assist in improving comfort and useability of existing open space facilities.
<b>Improve existing walkway and paths infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to use gravel paths in Southern Beaches instead of concrete;</li> <li>Improve the quality of the paths so they are all accessible as some areas are difficult for prams and the elderly.</li> </ul>	Feedback about the types of walkways should inform the character statements for the strategy to ensure the quality of facilities is consistent with community expectations.
<b>Playgrounds and parks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a space for disc golf course;</li> <li>Provide a bike track for kids with traffic lights;</li> <li>Provide more parks on the eastern side of Sorell to provide for the growth in housing in this area;</li> <li>Provide off-leash areas for dog exercise and have 'on-leash' on Carlton Beach all year round;</li> <li>Provide more play areas suitable for toddlers including water play and sand pits;</li> <li>Provide baby swings and play equipment;</li> <li>Provide badminton courts and indoor sports facilities;</li> <li>Provide all ages and abilities play/exercise equipment;</li> <li>Provide more grassed areas for children to play away from the water in Carlton;</li> <li>Provide a park area at Boomer Bay/Marion Bay/Bream Creek.</li> </ul>	<p>Consider the types of playgrounds provided and encourage developers to provide a range of equipment suitable for all ages from babies and toddlers to adults.</p> <p>Consider the existing playgrounds and park infrastructure and identify areas where greater variation in playground infrastructure can be provided with existing facilities.</p>
<b>Natural resource management:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement weed control in Council land;</li> <li>Provide more bushland reserves;</li> </ul>	Establish a working group at Council to work closely with community members to implement natural resource management projects including weed management and rehabilitation and replanting.

Theme	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve animal habitat and restrict vehicles on the beach;</li> <li>• Should not lose any open space;</li> <li>• Need to slow development in the area to ensure natural values are retained.</li> </ul>	<p>Before commencing the legislative process for the sale of public land, there should be community engagement to seek the views of the community, and explain the intent of any sale of assets.</p>
<p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At either end of the beach at Primrose Sands, improvements need to be made with particular focus on the north-western end as it represents the only flat access point to the beach.</li> <li>• No selling of public land should be allowed.</li> <li>• Need sensible spacing between open space parcels and ensure they're linked with walkways.</li> </ul>	<p>The spatial location of the open space area at the north-western end of Primrose Sands beach indicates that it would be well placed to be developed as an open space area. While the community may like to see the area formalised as a park, the inclusion of basic facilities such as seating, tables, a toilet and carparking should be considered.</p> <p>Selling of public land is unlikely to be stopped entirely. In addition, the appropriate sale of public land is required to provide funds to re-invest in other locations. However, before any sale of public land, consideration against this strategy, as well as consideration of the anticipated population growth in that area, is necessary. Fundamentally, the strategy aims to guide sensible spacing between open space parcels linked by walkways.</p>

As part of the survey, the community was given the opportunity to identify areas where maintenance of Council's open space could be improved. This highlighted the following concerns:

- A desire to see the areas of open space linked through a series of walkways and networks. This would require negotiating pathways with land owners and reclaiming land (this was raised twice).
- Better attention paid to local wildlife and their safety and endangered nesting birds and plants (this was raised five times).
- Improve the play equipment at Pembroke Park as it currently isn't safe for children.
- Improve wheelchair access and provide disabled toilets (two comments).
- Dog park at Sorell needs irrigation as the ground there is very hard and unsafe for dogs to use.
- Eliminate illegal entry to Thomas Thorn Park.
- Fencing around toddler friendly play equipment is required.
- More accessible land for recreation is required.
- Provide more kid friendly parks at Dodges Ferry which are safe for young children. Consider a water play area and upgrade of the Boat Park (raised twice).
- Provide more trees to block the wind and more places where dogs can get a drink.
- Improve the dog exercise areas at Dodges Ferry.

- The open space areas aren't big enough and there are too many facilities.
- Policing of illegal dog activities.
- Provide security cameras.
- Need greater frequency of public open space and recreation facilities.
- Need better rubbish bins as some are constantly overflowing, particularly in areas at Southern Beaches.
- Need improved access for horse riding activities and better access to state forests.
- Susans Bay parking and access needs improvement with bins and BBQs.
- Improvement to the coastal paths is necessary and improved shelter at the Boat Park.
- Provide kayak launching facilities at Carlton River and provide an area to park vehicles and gain easy access to the water.
- The old tip should be cleared of weeds and provide improved paths for prams.
- Need better shade for the Boat Park.

### 3.1 Community values – Key themes based on postcode

One of the key objectives of the community engagement phase was to develop a stronger understanding of what the community values in terms of their open space network. There were several key themes that came across in responses to the survey, as well as during the engagement sessions, with a particularly strong response from residents of the Southern Beaches. The key themes raised in the survey responses as detailed in Table 2 have informed the key priorities and settlement character statements in the draft Sorell Open Space Strategy document.

Table 3 – Key themes in response to question 3 of survey – “what do you value in terms of open space?”

WHAT DO YOU VALUE IN TERMS OF OPEN SPACE?	
Sorell, Orielton, Pawleena, Nugent, Wattle Hill	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate facilities for <b>dogs</b></li> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b> (all abilities) and <b>maintenance</b></li> <li>• Areas of <b>shelter</b> (wind, sun, rain)</li> <li>• Community and family <b>gathering areas</b> (BBQs, toilets, seating, water fountains)</li> <li>• <b>Exercise and play equipment</b> and facilities for all age groups (children, teenagers, adults and seniors)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual and acoustic <b>amenity</b></li> <li>• Spaces that encourage and support <b>wildlife</b></li> <li>• <b>Diversity</b> in landscape treatment (trees, shrubs, grass)</li> <li>• <b>Safety</b></li> <li>• <b>Viewing platforms</b> to engage with wildlife and natural areas (e.g. Orielton Lagoon)</li> <li>• <b>Multi-use tracks</b> for walking/running/cycling/dog walking</li> </ul>
Southern Beaches (Dodges Ferry, Primrose Sands, Forcett, Connellys Marsh, Carlton River, Lewisham and Carlton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open laneways, pocket reserves, green corridors and open space areas that <b>support and protect local wildlife and aid in the regeneration of native flora and fauna</b> to ensure ongoing ecological diversity. Incorporate natural boundaries instead of fenced areas.</li> <li>• <b>Quiet spaces</b> in nature for all ages to <b>explore, reflect and learn</b>; natural play</li> <li>• <b>Permeability/walkability</b> of the local area, including links with beach reserves while also protecting the sensitive foreshore area and providing well-connected spaces</li> <li>• Facilities, infrastructure, <b>exercise and play equipment</b> with good design and longevity while encouraging responsible recreation and engagement with natural areas for all age groups (children, teenagers, adults and seniors)</li> <li>• The area’s visual and emotional <b>connection</b> and integration <b>with the natural environment</b> (bushland, coastal areas, rivers) and maintaining the ‘undeveloped’ character of the area, including lack of hard surface pathways and roads. Preservation of wilderness areas is important and opportunities for the community to be involved in taking care of the natural environment is important.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local history, <b>information, education, interpretation signage</b></li> <li>• <b>Clean air and water</b></li> <li>• <b>Multi-use tracks</b> for walking/running/cycling/dog walking, including walking tracks in bushland areas, pedestrian only pathways. Many of these are along coastal foreshore areas.</li> <li>• <b>Safe walking and cycling infrastructure</b> which facilitate <b>longer distance travel</b> (e.g. Dodges Ferry to Sorell) and that are <b>accessible for all abilities</b></li> <li>• Protecting and enhancing the inherent value in the natural assets and ‘open’ landscape (bushland, coastal areas, rivers)</li> <li>• Recreation-specific zones</li> <li>• <b>Separate on-leash/off-leash areas for dogs</b>, limiting off-leash areas within the coastal foreshore and provide adequate rubbish facilities near dog parks</li> <li>• <b>Car parking</b> near beaches</li> </ul>

- The character and inherent value of the **untouched bushland areas define the Southern Beaches' sense of place and establish the community's connection to place.** The ability of open space to 'anchor' a community to an area and define their sense of place.
- Support natural systems such as leaving areas unconcreted to allow infiltration and precipitation to the ground water system
- Community and family **gathering areas** (BBQs, toilets, seating, water fountains, rubbish facilities)
- **Environmentally sustainable development** and protection of greenbelt land to create areas of refuge for vulnerable endemic flora and fauna
- **Limit the use of street lights** to reduce light emissions and provide opportunity for community engagement with the night sky and phenomena such as the Aurora

## Midway Point and Penna

- **Accessibility** (all abilities)
- Open space areas that **support and protect local wildlife**

## Dunalley and Boomer Bay

- **Shade**
- Bushland walking spaces and 'natural' pathways
- **Accessibility** (all abilities) and connectivity
- **Natural areas** (grasses and trees) that provide habitat without human interference
- **Exercise and play equipment** and facilities for all age groups (children, teenagers, adults and seniors)

## Bream Creek, Marion Bay

No survey response data

## Outside Municipality

Inclusion of mixed recreation facilities

## 4 Written submissions

During the stakeholder engagement process, we informed the community that if they wished to provide additional comments on the Sorell Open Space Strategy, they should send them to the ERA enquiries email address. From mid-October to the end of February, we received four submissions through this pathway. One submission was from the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS). Comments in that submission have been incorporated in section 5 of this report.

Feedback Received	Response
The native bushland in the Dodges Ferry area is of critical importance to some of its residents. It provides habitat for native flora and fauna. To develop or sell this land for short-term gain is something that will make the community poorer and we will never be able to recover this land again. Also, would like to see improved walking trails along the coastal reserve from Dodges Ferry boat ramp, around Tiger Head, to Blue Lagoon then Red Ochre Beach. Council is urged to value and preserve undeveloped bush and beach areas.	The interest in the bushland and its values at Dodges Ferry has been raised consistently throughout the engagement process. This will be reflected further in the recommendations and the character statements.
Shocked about the intention to sell some of Sorell's public spaces, but relieved that this process has been halted. Concerned that the consultation process sought feedback on the long-term planning, but this information resides in Council and it appears that there is no database of this information for each specific parcel of land. Council must improve its record keeping system so that this knowledge is retained. The community of Sorell values clean beaches, native vegetation remnants, and internationally significant wetlands and these shouldn't be destroyed because those responsible for managing them aren't aware of their value. There are concerns about some of the lots put up for sale, particularly considering that some of them are unsuitable to be built upon. The significant features that exist on different parcels of land appear to be misunderstood by the Council. This is particularly relevant in relation to the location of fire assets in bushfire prone areas, and placing other infrastructure such as a skate park in these areas. There is a history of inappropriate activities on	<p>The Sorell Council has extensive information regarding the municipality and continues to strive to improve its record keeping system.</p> <p>The purpose of the engagement was to continue to understand what the community values given the rapid growth of the community and the changing demographics. Information about future development areas has been provided and is available for consideration by the community.</p> <p>Previous decision-making by Council does not inform future decision-making and the purpose of the strategy is to provide a sound basis for decision-making in the future.</p>

Council land such as the Pony Club at Recreation Park, which then left the site without rehabilitation.	
Interest in the project as a member of the Coal River Valley Sustainable Living Group. This group has developed a walking trail along Brinktop Road with a loop through remnant native bushland near the top of Brinktop Hill on an area that was Crown land. There is a small narrow strip of land owned by the Sorell Council that runs between the reserve and the road and would make a natural extension to the reserve. This land could be managed as part of the reserve and available to walkers with management of weeds and fire etc. It would be ideal for Sorell and Clarence Councils to collaborate to make it possible for the Brinktop land to be treated as a continuous unit for the enjoyment by residents from both municipalities.	The parcel of land at the top of Brinktop Road was not identified during the broader engagement process as being of significance to the community. There is merit in co-locating parks both from a biodiversity perspective, but also from a usability perspective. However, this site does not represent a key priority at this time.

## 5 One-on-one stakeholder engagement sessions

### 5.1 Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service – Leases and licences

Large sections of the foreshore area of the Sorell municipality is under the ownership of the Crown. In some instances, there is a formal agreement between the Crown and Council regarding leasing and managing those areas. In other instances, individuals have leases over Crown reserves for the use of coastal infrastructure such as boat sheds or jetties.

To gain a better understanding of the PWS processes, ERA met with staff from the Leases and Licences section of PWS. This meeting highlighted a number of key factors:

- The Crown has limited resources to undertake maintenance and works on Crown land across the state;
- The Crown's preference is for Council to take a licence over certain parcels of land. This won't necessarily involve a cost to Council, rather it reflects the formalisation of the use of these areas and the subsequent maintenance and public liability;
- The historical arrangement has been that the 7 Mile Beach PWS office has been responsible for maintenance of these areas, but they have limited resources;
- PWS would like the opportunity to review the strategy to better understand any ramifications for their land (the addition or removal of areas is subject to agreement);
- There are benefits from holding a roundtable discussion with the region to ensure the expectations are well understood.

Following the meeting, a list of the sites where the Council has agreements with the Crown were provided. Five of these sites were marine infrastructure such as jetties, pontoons or a boat ramp. Two of the sites are for signs and a whale viewing lookout, one for the Carlton Beach Surf Club, and two for infrastructure purposes such as landfill storage and stormwater outfall. The remaining 11 were a mixture of public walking tracks, steps and ramps, car parks and general public recreation areas.

Thirteen of these sites are located in the Southern Beaches. Three sites are in Sorell, two are in Dunalley, one is at Copping, one at Midway Point and one at Boomer Bay.

### 5.2 Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service – Property services and Ranger in Charge (Seven Mile Beach)

Following from the meeting with PWS' Leases and Licences section, a further meeting was held with staff from the Seven Mile Beach PWS office and PWS Property Section.

This meeting discussed in further detail the operational challenges associated with the use of Crown land and undertaking compliance proceedings as required. This PWS office has responsibility for the management of unallocated Crown land and reserves and so it undertakes management over large tracts of land. This discussion highlighted the different categories of reserves and the expectations around the use of those reserves. This will inform what some of these areas can be used for in the event of them forming part of the Sorell Open Space Strategy. Specifically:

<i>National Park:</i>	A large area of land containing a representative or outstanding sample of major natural regions, features or scenery.
<i>State Reserves:</i>	Areas of land containing any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Significant natural landscapes;</li> <li>(b) Natural features;</li> <li>(c) Sites, objects or places of significance to Aboriginal people.</li> </ul>
<i>Nature Reserves:</i>	Areas of land that contain natural values that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Contribute to the natural biological diversity or geological diversity of the area of land, or both; and</li> <li>(b) Are unique, important or have representative value.</li> </ul>
<i>Game Reserve:</i>	An area of land containing natural values that are unique, important or have representative value particularly with respect to game species.
<i>Conservation Area:</i>	An area of land predominantly in a natural state.
<i>Nature Recreation Area:</i>	An area of land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Predominantly in a natural state; or</li> <li>(b) Containing sensitive natural sites of significance for recreation.</li> </ul>
<i>Regional Reserve:</i>	An area of land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) With high mineral potential or prospectivity; and</li> <li>(b) Predominantly in a natural state.</li> </ul>
<i>Historic Site:</i>	An area of land of significance for historic cultural heritage.
<i>Private Sanctuary:</i>	An area of land that has significant natural or cultural values, or both.
<i>Private Nature Reserves</i>	Areas of land that contain natural values that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) contribute to the natural biological diversity or geological diversity of the area of land, or both; and</li> <li>(b) are unique, important or have representative value.</li> </ul>

Within the Sorell municipality, there are examples of nature reserves, private reserves, private nature reserves with conservation covenants, and conservation areas. In addition, there are also a number of informal reserves which extend over large sections of the coastline and which are currently critical to the access to the coast, particularly in areas along the Southern Beaches.

PWS staff also indicated their concerns about the extent of illegal works that have occurred in Crown reserves and are taking a more proactive stance in requiring these works to be removed (such as stairs or pathways) or requiring them to formalise a lease agreement with the Crown for those structures to remain. For any recommendations, clear agreements will be necessary. It is important that the strategy is also reviewed by operational PWS staff to ensure consistency in approach.

Following the meeting, PWS officers made contact to elaborate further on what was discussed and, in particular, the issue around the complexity of vehicles using Primrose Beach boat ramp to access the beach for unauthorised driving. Council has a licence over this parcel of land but does not inhibit unauthorised access, and PWS has very limited regulatory powers to address vehicles using the beach inappropriately. On-the-spot fines cannot be issued which limits the effectiveness of enforcement patrols. PWS has previously raised the issue that

this access point should be closed, but Council – and the community more broadly – prefer to keep it open, which results in a reliance upon enforcement onsite.

PWS is only able to patrol the site infrequently, and when the site is used the most (often summer public holidays), staff resources are at their lowest and may be deployed to more critical duties such as fire-fighting. PWS would like to see the broader strategy address this issue and assist in developing some options for management of vehicles on beaches generally, and Primrose Sands beach in particular.

### 5.3 Southern Beaches Landcare & Coastcare

The Southern Beaches Landcare & Coastcare group (SBLCC) is an active community body that has been engaged in the care and management of open space areas across the municipality for a number of years. The SBLCC has a depth of knowledge on the condition of many open space areas, nature reserves and foreshore areas in the municipality and has expressed a strong interest in being involved in the ongoing management of Sorell's open space areas.

This meeting discussed in detail the key concerns of SBLCC with regards to the current management of open space areas in the municipality, and provided suggestions on how the management practices could be improved to support natural values and increase community involvement in better land management practices. The meeting highlighted the following:

- The community represents a large resource base that Council can use to facilitate ongoing management of open space areas in the municipality which could improve community ownership and civic pride. Community engagement and education days were suggested as a way to facilitate this.
- It was reaffirmed that the natural environment, including remnant vegetation on public and private land, is a highly valued asset in the community, particularly in the Southern Beaches area.
- An 'education rather than instruction' approach has proved successful in guiding community behaviours in open space areas, such as minimising disturbance and degradation of sensitive natural areas.
- Several examples were provided where areas of open space were currently being cared for and managed by SBLCC volunteers. Community sentiment around these projects was broadly positive.
- There was a belief that previous infrastructure works in the municipality haven't incorporated sufficient assessment on natural values before works took place, resulting in the disturbance or loss of natural and cultural values.
- Current issues with compliance in relation to inappropriate development haven't been adequately addressed and are resulting in detrimental impacts on natural and cultural values in the municipality, with Samuel Thorne Reserve in Lewisham as an example.

The SBLCC representatives said that the current level of communication between Council and community groups such as SBLCC was lacking, and that Council could benefit from investing in the inherent social capital available in the community. They suggested this could be achieved by reinstating regular environmental care meetings and appointing a part-time Natural Resource Management officer in Council to facilitate community liaison.

During the meeting, the following comments were made specifically in relation to the Sorell Open Space Strategy:

- Council's asset register should be reviewed to incorporate Jacks Flat, Snake Hollow, Louhrah Street Reserve and other Council reserves/open space areas;
- Council should adopt the weed management strategy prepared by SBLCC to help support better land management procedures;
- Funding should be allocated to SBLCC to support a review and update of the Southern Beaches Foreshore Access Management Strategy prepared in March 2002;
- A signage and education policy should be developed to facilitate better management of roadside vegetation and implement slashing/weeding practices into strategy to ensure native vegetation is better managed and reduce reliance on pesticides;
- Key vegetation conservation areas should be mapped internally within Council to avoid mismanagement of these areas;
- Permeability should be maintained through residential areas to coast;
- Specific classifications should be provided for the different reserves and public open space areas, and a management plan should be implemented which responds to the specific reserve type;
- There should be acknowledgement of Snake Hollow Reserve as a community asset and seating and signage should be improved;
- The draft Action Plan prepared by SBLCC for Blue Lagoon Reserve should be implemented;
- In relation to Samuel Thorne Reserve, Lewisham, compliance issues relating to adjoining development is resulting in detrimental impacts to natural and cultural values – a new activity management plan for the reserve is required to protect these inherent values and minimise the extent of impact resulting from inappropriate development and vehicular access;
- Improved signage is required at Park Beach to protect natural values – there is strong community ownership and value of this space;
- Improved fire management practices are required at Recreation Park – detailed work on this has been done already, but this hasn't been recognised or adopted by Council.

## Appendix A    Example survey



## Open Space Strategy Survey

**Council have engaged ERA Planning & Environment to undertake an Open Space Strategy to understand how the community uses their public open space facilities, and to identify localities where improvements to open space could be made.**

**By completing the following survey, you will be assisting Council in guiding the future of open space in the Sorell Municipality.**

**If you would like further information on the project, please visit Council's website - [www.sorell.tas.gov.au/open-space-strategy](http://www.sorell.tas.gov.au/open-space-strategy)**

1. What is your postcode?

2. What is your age bracket?

- ☐ 0 – 14 years
- ☐ 15 – 29 years
- ☐ 30 – 49 years
- ☐ 50 – 69 years
- ☐ 69 +

3. What do you value in terms of open space?

4. Do you currently use public open space facilities close to your home?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. If yes, where and/or what facilities do you use?

Please note: these can include anything from a local park to a nature reserve.

6. Do you currently use public open space facilities in your local area (i.e. more than 1 km from your home)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. If yes, where and/or what facilities do you use?

8. How do you access the public open space? Please select all that apply.

☐ Car

☐ Walking

☐ Cycling

☐ Public Transport

☐ Other

9. Are you satisfied with the size and quality of these facilities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. If you answered 'no' to question 9, what built improvements could be made to these facilities?  
Please select all that apply.

☐ Toilets

☐ BBQ facilities

☐ Seating

☐ Shade structures

☐ Dog bags

☐ Bins

☐ Sporting facilities

☐ Lighting

☐ Pathway Upgrades

☐ Signage

☐ General maintenance

☐ Parking

☐ Other (please specify)

11. Are you satisfied with the availability of public open space in your suburb?

☐ Yes

☐ No

12. What kind of open space improvements would you like to see in the future?

13. Can you identify any areas that would benefit from rehabilitation works?

If yes, please provide location.

☐ No

☐ Yes

Location

14. If you answered yes to question 13, what type of rehabilitation would you like to see? Please select all that apply.

☐ Weed management

☐ Rehabilitation works

☐ Coastal stabilisation works

☐ Replanting

☐ Habitat management and/or protection

Other (please describe)

15. If you would like to stay informed with the progress of the Open Space Strategy please provide your email.



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