



PLAN OF MANAGEMENT FOR VILLAGE PARKS

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Local Government Act, 1993 requires that Plans of Management be prepared for all Council owned community land. As many of the village parks are partially or wholly made up of Crown land the plan will also meet the plan of management requirements of the Crown Lands Act 1989.

The parks that are located in the rural areas of the Shire provide sports facilities and passive recreation areas for people of Singleton Shire's rural areas and villages. The parks also provide a service to the people of Singleton Township and for people outside the Shire. The parks provide facilities such as natural settings, tennis courts, netball courts, basketball courts, children's' play equipment, picnic facilities and buildings used for sports amenities, playgroups and club meetings.

Village parks with playing fields are included in the Sports Grounds plan of management and will not be dealt with in this plan.

This plan replaces the Plan of Management for Village Parks adopted by Council on 28 October 1996 and the Minister for Lands on 7 March 1997.

1.2 Aim

The aim is to provide a generic plan of management for Singleton Shire's village parks. The planning process is to promote community comment and the completed plan is to provide guidelines for the planning, development and care of the parks.

1.3 Corporate Goals

The corporate goals in the Singleton Shire Council 2000 Corporate Management Plan and Budget 2000 relating to the management of village parks are: -

- ☒ Facilitate the development and expansion of infrastructure and services essential for a successful tourism sector.
- ☒ To ensure Council's reliance on rating revenue is supplemented by other appropriate revenue streams.
- ☒ To ensure Council's financial services are provided to the level of best practice in the industry.
- ☒ To provide a planning system, policies and procedures which reflect the vision and values of the community and also take into account:
 - The physical infrastructure which is available to service the community; and
 - The preservation of heritage items.
- ☒ To ensure council recreation and sporting facilities are maintained to an agreed standard and service requirement.

- ☒ To implement planning strategies to secure high quality community facilities and services for the Shire, within Council's financial capacity.
- ☒ To support and encourage local voluntary community organisations associated with Council to achieve their objectives.
- ☒ To create a strong sense of community through an integrated community service network.
- ☒ to promote water conservation
- ☒ To manage the property assets of Council to achieve satisfactory returns on development projects.
- ☒ to maintain buildings and land to an agreed level of service.
- ☒ To ensure property is efficiently and effectively used in the best interests of the community.
- ☒ To provide a level of customer service which meets our customers needs.
- ☒ To continuously review our systems to ensure that resources are being used efficiently and effectively and customer information is being effectively managed.
- ☒ To provide good communication processes within the organisation.
- ☒ To ensure compliance with all relevant Occupational Health and Safety obligations.

1.3.1 Council's Charter

The Local Government Act prescribes a set of principles that are to guide a council in carrying out its functions. A Council may add other principles not inconsistent with those in Section 8 of the Act, which are as follows:

- ☒ To provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively.
- ☒ To exercise community leadership.
- ☒ To exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the principles of cultural diversity.
- ☒ To promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children.
- ☒ To properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

1.3.2 Mission Statement

The mission statement describes the purpose of Council. Achievement of the Council's mission is dependent upon it being properly formulated, and shared throughout the organisation.

“To provide quality services to the community in an efficient and friendly manner and encouraging environmentally responsible development”.

1.4 Community Land

The land covered by this plan is listed in the schedule of land in Section 5 of the plan.

A large proportion of the land that forms the village and rural parks is Crown land. See Section 5 for ownership details.

It is not envisaged that there will be many additional parcels of land dedicated as reserve or park in the village and rural areas of the Shire. However if created under Council ownership the community land may be included under this plan after resolution by Council. If Crown land the provisions of the Crown Lands Act 1989 must be met which would require a new plan.

1.4.1 Classification and Category of Land

All council owned/operated land (excluding Crown land) is required to be classified either 'Operational' or 'Community' under the Local Government Act 1993. 'Community' land must be categorised one of a number of set categories.

The non-crown land in this plan is classified as community land under the Local Government Act. All community land covered by this plan is categorised, under S36, as 'Park'.

1.4.2 Land Zoning under Singleton Local Environmental Plan 1996

See Section 5, Schedule of Land, for land zoning details under Singleton Local Environmental Plan 1996.

2 MANAGEMENT

2.1 Major Issues

From Council Officers observations and community feedback the following issues relevant to village parks were identified.

Park Maintenance Standards

Village park maintenance varies with the level of use and the location of the park. Various levels of maintenance are set, some with a high level of input from the local community. Maintenance levels for each site are shown in the table in Section 6.0. Definitions of the various levels are shown below: -

V Very High

Regular mowing, say every week in a good growing season. Grass edges treated by mechanical edging. Grass fertilized when required.

Automatic irrigation provided. Toilets, bins and paved areas to be cleaned out periodically (toilets generally daily). Landscape treatment – turf, trees and shrubs, paved footpaths, picnic shelters, BBQ, perennial and annual gardens.

Example:- Burdekin Park

H High

Regular mowing, say every two weeks in a good growing season.

Grass edges treated by spraying and occasionally by mechanical trimming when required. Grass areas fertilized annually.

Some type of irrigation will be provided. Toilets, bins and BBQ's will be cleaned periodically (toilets generally every day or two). Landscape treatment – turf, trees and shrubs, paved footpaths, picnic shelters, BBQ, some perennial gardens.

Example:- Townhead Park

S Standard

Regular mowing, say every three weeks in a good growing season.

Grass edges treated by spraying when required.

Generally these areas are not irrigated.

Landscape treatment – limited to earthworks, grasses, trees, picnic shelters, wood BBQ's, playgrounds and shrubs (no gardens). Toilets and bins will be cleaned periodically (generally weekly).

Examples:- McNamara Reserve, Jim Johnstone Reserve (Warkworth Oval).

L Low

Maintenance generally by users with occasional mowing or clean up by Council. Grass edges not treated. Site not irrigated. Landscape treatment generally trees or pasture.

Examples:- Ingar Park, Jerry's Plains Pony Club.

U Utility

No or minimal mowing due to site not being used as a park, or located in an isolated area with little use, or too steep to mow.

Grass cover would typically be grazed.

Grass edges are not treated.

Site not irrigated.

Landscape treatment – generally bushland, pasture or site with steep gradients e.g. some areas Singleton Heights gully parks. Where possible areas too steep to mow will be revegetated with shrub/tree cover where bushfires are not likely to be of concern to neighbouring residences.

Examples:- Belford Resting Place, Howes Valley Reserve.

P Playing Field

Mow weekly in a good growing season when being used. Fertilize annually, aerated annually.

Treated for broadleaf weeds annually.

At a minimum will have some irrigation outlets. May have automatic irrigation.

Maybe top dressed to correct surface irregularities if required.

Example:- Howe Park Oval.

C Cycleway

Off road cycleways will be checked annually and repairs made within budgetary limits.

Grass edges will be sprayed. When required edges will be trimmed mechanically if grass/soil build up is excessive.

Cycleways cleaning/sweeping will only be carried out if a hazard exists, for example broken glass on cycleway.

Example:- Bridgman Road cycleway.

Level of Park Use

The level of use of village parks varies with location and facilities provided. Overall it has been widely recognised as an issue that the parks are generally under utilised. Especially sporting facilities eg. tennis court. The low use affects the viability of maintaining these facilities. There are exceptions to this low level of use for example Broke Village Fair.

Lack of use of village sporting facilities was also identified as an issue in the Sports Grounds Plans of Management.

This low level of use calls into question the value of keeping some sites if they provide little and or no recreation, environmental or aesthetic values. The cost of maintenance of these sites is also an issue.

Another issue is that some parks are used so little that Council should consider disposing of these sites. These sites are Warkworth Picnic Ground Belford Resting Place, Wollombi Rest Area, Milbrodale Reserve (next to school) and Bulga Stock Reserve. Council needs to review whether these sites should remain as reserve.

Tennis Court Operation and Use

As mentioned above the low level of use and low user fees for tennis courts has meant low income. The result is that a number of community user organisations are having difficulty raising enough fees from court hire to continually maintain the courts to a high standard.

Playgrounds

Village parks at Broke, Warkworth(2), Jerry's Plains and Ravensworth have children's play equipment. There is also play equipment at Bulga Recreation Ground and Broke Recreation Ground, which are covered in the Sports Grounds and Riverside Parks Plan of Management. McTaggart Park at Broke, Bulga and Jerry's Plains have good quality large play systems that provide good play value. The other equipment is old, has limited play value and is approaching the end of its working life. Improvement of these playgrounds is an issue.

Bushfire Sheds and Community Halls

Bushfire sheds are located on McTaggart Reserve at Broke and Howes Valley Reserve. These sheds provide an important service function and provide a community focus on the parks. Using additional village parks to site possible future bushfire sheds has been identified as a issue.

The location of a community hall at Jerry's Plans Recreation Ground has been suggested by the hall committee. The existing hall on Pagan Street is in very poor condition and needs to be replaced.

Toilet Facilities

The lack of toilets and poor quality of some of the existing toilets (drop pits) has been identified as an issue. In the past five years new toilets have been constructed at McTaggart Reserve and McNamara Reserve and old drop pit toilets demolished. Drop pits still exist at Warkworth Picnic Ground, Broke Reserve and Jerry's Plains Pony Club and Stanhope.

Other Building Maintenance

Maintenance of the various park buildings such as picnic shelters, toilets, amenity buildings for sport and meetings is an issue. A number of the buildings are very old, for example Stanhope Park Tennis Court building (an old school house). A lot of maintenance, especially smaller items such as painting is carried out by users.

Future Village Parks

A park or community area serves most villages in the Shire. The only discussion of an additional village park that has been raised by the community is at Camberwell. However feedback from the Camberwell community in September 2000 was against developing a local park.

No other village parks are envisaged in the future.

2.2 Objectives

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as a park under the Local Government Act, 1993 (S36G) are:-

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and
- (b) to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and
- (c) to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

Additional objectives of this Plan of Management are to:-

- (a) Develop various possible levels of maintenance for the parks so as to select an appropriate level of service at an acceptable cost.
- (b) Develop recreation facilities suitable for the village parks.
- (c) Protect and enhance the scenic amenity of the parks.
- (d) Protect the environment of the parks especially in relation to vegetation.
- (e) Ensure that the community can contribute to the operation and development of village parks and the implementation of the plan.

- (f) Provide a planning document that can be updated as additional land is dedicated as dedicated Council Village Park.

2.3 Values and Functions

The primary value of the village parks is the recreation function they provide to the village communities and the rest of the Shire for sporting and passive recreation, for example picnics.

The parks provide a community focus especially when they provide facilities for social gatherings, for example sports facilities such as tennis courts or social functions at the bushfire sheds.

Generally the village parks have value to the local and Shire community only. Occasionally regional or state significance applies due to special events, for example the Broke Village Fair.

The parks with bushfire sheds also provide fire fighting and safety functions.

3 MANAGEMENT POLICY

The major issues identified in Section 2.1 combined with the corporate goals and the objectives set out in Section 2.2 have been used to define the management policy set out below.

3.1 Park Maintenance

That park grounds maintenance be kept at standards acceptable to the community within council's financial constraints. Community user group self help for maintenance at village parks be encouraged.

That the level of service set out in section 6.0 'Schedule of Maintenance Standards' be adopted.

3.2 Level of Park Use

That Council encourage the use of village parks to improve utilisation and income and long term viability of facilities.

That Council consider selling or returning to the Crown some sites that are poorly utilized. Sites to be considered are Reserves 104, 111, 112, 121 & 153.

3.3 Tennis Court Operation and Use

That Council work with community user groups to facilitate operation and plan for long term court and facility maintenance.

3.4 Playgrounds

That Council's strategy of playground improvement and rationalisation be implemented on a progressive basis.

That the village park playgrounds be maintained to Australian Standards.

3.5 Bush Fire Brigade Sheds and Community Halls

That the construction and operation of bushfire sheds and community halls be permitted on village parks.

3.6 Toilet Facilities

That substandard pit toilets be replaced as required and as funds allow.

3.7 Other Building Maintenance

That the construction and operation of picnic shelters, picnic and BBQ facilities, amenities, sports facilities such as tennis courts, netball courts, basketball courts, flood lights, car parking and amenity buildings and the like be permitted.

That village park buildings and facilities be maintained to a standard acceptable to the community within Council's financial constraints.

3.8 Future Village Parks

That proposed future village parks be considered on their merits with regard to benefit to the village community and the Shire at large. Also the cost to Council and the community to develop and maintain the park be considered.

When additional village parkland is dedicated to Council (not a crown reserve) the land is to come under this plan of management by resolution of Council. If Crown Land, Plan be altered under Section 115 of Crown Lands Act.

The term of this plan will be continuous until replaced by a new Plan of Management.

3.9 Leases, Licences and Other Estates

This Plan of Management authorises the leasing or licensing of any other estate over the land covered by this plan for the purpose of fairs, circus, trade shows, displays, filming, carnivals, training, sport, markets and the like.

3.10 Threatened Species Laws

Singleton Council recognises that it has responsibilities under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act) and the Fisheries Management Act 1994 (FM Act) to manage land in accordance with these Acts.

At the time of preparation the land covered under this plan had not been declared as 'critical habitat' under the TSC Act or the FM Act.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) are currently preparing a number of recovery plans and threat abatement plans, which are in various stages of production. If the land covered by this plan of management is directly affected by a recovery plan or threat abatement plan adopted under the TSC Act, where applicable, the land will be managed in accordance with the recommendations of that plan. Copies of any finalised recovery or threat abatement plans are available from the NPWS web site (<http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au>) or by writing to the Central Directorate Threatened Species Unit, P O Box 1967 Hurstville, NSW 2220. See Threatened Species Information and Environmental Guidelines 2000 for more detailed information and the status of these plans.

In reference to the Fisheries Management Act 1994, Wollombi Brook runs through a number of these parks and at the time of preparation it was not directly affected by a recovery plan or threat abatement plan under this Act.

4. PRIORITIES & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Target	Action	Responsible Officer	Completion	Performance Measure
Village Park grounds maintenance	Building & Equipment Maintenance/Mowing/Cleaning.	Manager – Parks & Facilities (MP&F)/ User Groups	Ongoing	Carried out per adopted standards. Neat & Safe Village Parks
Level of village park use	Provide suitable facility & encourage park use.	MP & F/User Groups	Ongoing	Use levels maintained or increased.
	Review the need to retain unused reserves	MP & F/ Council	December 2001	Review completed.
Tennis Court operation & maintenance	Co-ordinate & plan long term operation & maintenance.	MP & F/User Groups	Ongoing	Long term quality & viability of facilities maintained.
Play Equipment	Construction in line with adopted strategy.	MP & F	As funds allow	Good quality safe play equipment.
	Maintenance in line with Australian standards.	MP & F	Ongoing	Reduced costs.
Bushfire Brigade Sheds	Allow construction of bushfire sheds & community halls.	Fire Control Officer/ MP & F	As need arises & funds permit	Provision of sheds where most needed.
Toilet Facilities	Upgrade toilets where required.	MP & F	As required & funds permit.	Improved quality of toilet facilities.

Building maintenance	Conduct regular maintenance where required.	MP & F, Council's Building Maintenance Officer, User Groups	Ongoing	Safe well maintained buildings.
Future Village Parks	Access sites if required. Access cost/benefits.	Community Groups, MP & F, Council, Department of Land & Water Conservation	As required	Adequate parks for village communities.

5. SCHEDULE OF LAND

Listed below are the parcels of land covered by this Plan of Management and their zoning under the Singleton Local Environmental Plan, 1996.

Reserve No	Reserve Name	Locality	Lot/Deposited Plan	Owner	Zoning
100	McNamara Reserve	Wollombi Rd, Broke	Pt Section 29	Crown	6(a) Public Open Space & Recreation
101	McTaggart	Wollombi Rd, Broke	Pt Section 29	Crown	6(a)
102	Broke Reserve	Herbert St, Broke	Pt Lot 5 Sec 37, closed road, Lot unnumbered DP 755229	Council	1(a) Rural Zone
104	Wollombi Rest Park (undeveloped)	Wollombi Rd, 10km Sth Broke	DP 755217	Crown	1(a)
111	Bulga Stock Reserve (undeveloped)	Putty Road, Bulga	DP 753821	Crown	6(a)
112	Milbrodale Reserve	Putty Road (next to school)	Lot 82 DP 755240	Crown	1(a)
113	Howes Valley Reserve	Putty Road, Howes Valley	Por 6, Por 20, Por 68	Crown	1(a)
121	Warkworth Picnic Ground	Simpson Street, Warkworth	Public Road Lot 1 DP 759053, Lot 2 DP 759053	Council Crown	1(a)
130	Jerry's Plains Tennis Courts	Wambo Street Jerry's Plains	Sec 89	Crown	1(a)
131	Jerry's Plains Pony Club	Jerry's Plains	Sec 203	Council	
142	Ravensworth Park	Hebden Road, Ravensworth	Lots 4-7 & 21 DP 38725	Council	1(a)
152	Ingar Park	Mirannie Road, Reedy Creek	Lot 7001 DP 752475	Crown	1(a)
153	Belford Resting Place (land locked by freeway)	Lindsay Street, Belford	Pt Lot 2 Sec 4 DP 758078	Crown	1(a)
160	Stanhope Park (Tennis Court)	Glendon Road, Stanhope	Lot 1 DP 69007	Crown	1(a)

6. SCHEDULE OF MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Level of Care	
V	Very High
H	High
S	Standard
L	Low
U	Utility
P	Playing Field
C	Cycleway

Reserve No	Reserve Name	Locality	Site	Level of Care
100	McNamara Reserve	Wollombi Rd, Broke	Creek banks Remainder	U S
101	McTaggart	Wollombi Rd, Broke	Creek banks Remainder	U S
102	Broke Reserve	Herbert St, Broke	Creek banks Remainder	U S
104	Wollombi Rest Park (undeveloped)	Wollombi Rd, 10km Sth Broke	Whole	U
111	Bulga Stock Reserve (undeveloped)	Putty Road, Bulga	Whole	U
112	Milbrodale Reserve	Putty Road (next to school)	Whole	U
113	Howes Valley Reserve	Putty Road, Howes Valley	Whole	U
121	Warkworth Picnic Ground	Simpson Street, Warkworth	Whole	L
130	Jerry's Plains Tennis Courts	Wambo Street Jerry's Plains	Whole	S
131	Jerry's Plains Pony Club	Jerry's Plains	Whole	L
142	Ravensworth Park	Hebden Road, Ravensworth	Whole	L
152	Ingar Park	Mirannie Road, Reedy Creek	Whole	L
153	Belford Resting Place (now under freeway)	Lindsay Street, Belford	Whole	U
160	Stanhope Park (Tennis Court)	Glendon Road, Stanhope	Whole	L