

Hensley Athletic Field

DRAFT

Plan of Management

June 2010

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1.0 PLAN OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE HENSLEY ATHLETIC FIELD

The Local Government Act 1993 provides councils with a specific approach to the classification and management of community land. Sections 35 and 36(l) of the Act require that all community land owned by councils be the subject of a plan of management. Community land is defined as land that should be kept for the use of the general community. Community land must not be sold and can be leased for no more than twenty-one years. In addition, it may only be leased or licensed for more than five years subject to public notification.

A portion of the Hensley Athletic Field is also Crown Land and its management is therefore subject to the Crown Lands Act 1989 (See Land Title Plan No 1). This plan of management has therefore been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the LGA 1993 and Crown Lands Act 1989.

The City of Botany Bay Council manages 64 parks, 11 of which are sports grounds. The Hensley Athletic Field is similar to Mascot Oval in that both are sports grounds in combined ownership, that being both Crown land and Council owned community land for which a plan of management is required. Although the Minister responsible for the administration of Crown land has not directed that a plan of management be prepared for the Hensley Athletic Field, this document will be referred to the Minister for information and adoption, if required.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

This plan of management provides a framework to guide the City of Botany Bay's decision making in relation to the Hensley Athletic Field. The plan reflects the needs of Council (as manager of the park), current and future users (hirers and spectators) and local residents (neighbours of the park).

The Plan is divided into two sections: the basis for management and the management strategies and performance criteria:

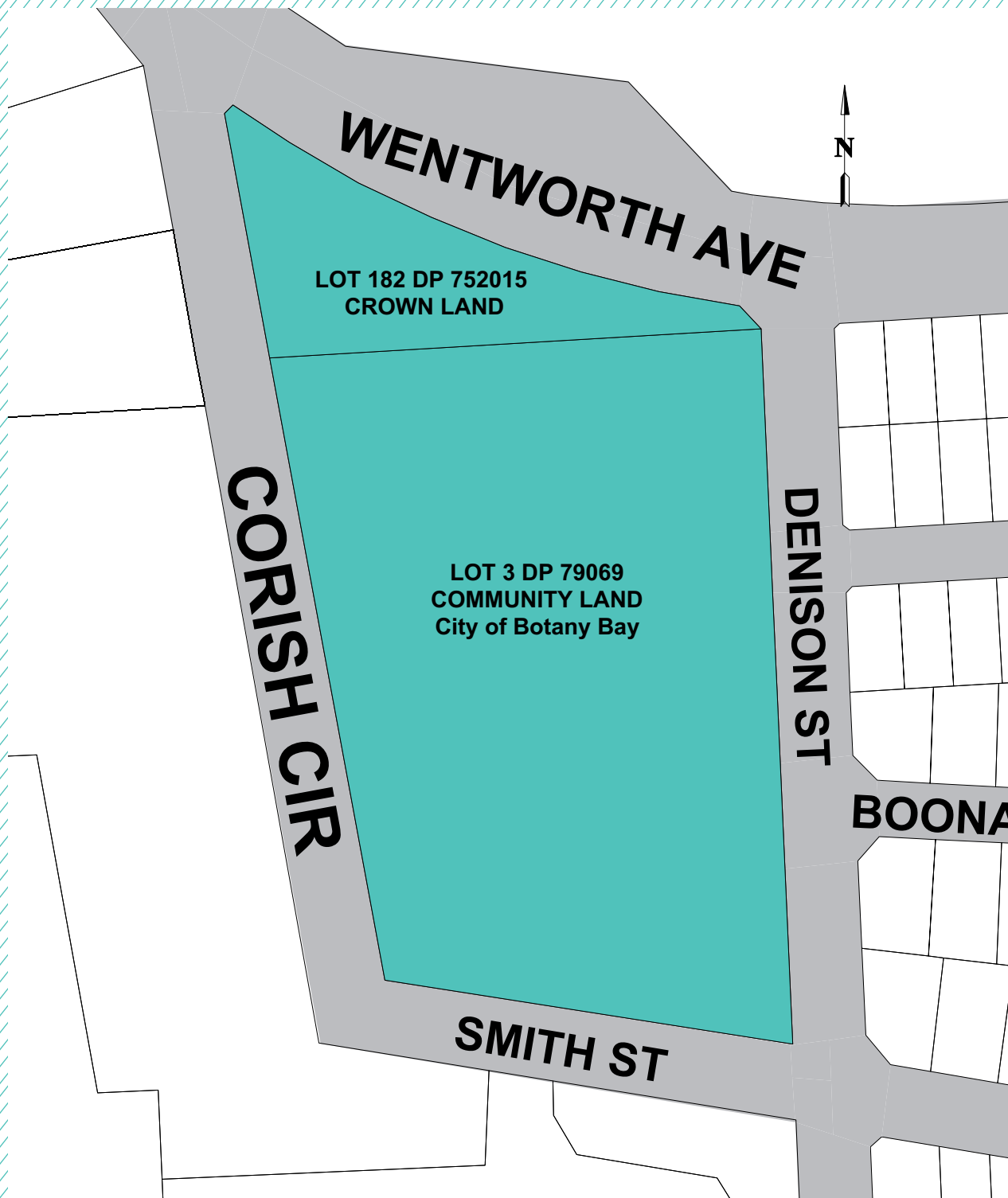
1. BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

This section reflects the long term policies of Council in relation to parks and open space areas and has a currency of 20-30 years to reflect the average life of capital infrastructure.

2. MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, ACTIONS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This section contains the medium term strategies and performance criteria that Council will adopt to achieve its long term policies and meet user demands. These strategies have a currency of 5-10 years.

Strategies then relate to a number of Actions and they are included in Section 3 titled 'Management Strategies, Actions & Performance Criteria'. The Actions indicate how the strategies will be implemented and performance reviewed. It is envisaged that Council will review the Action Plan annually. As the actions and monitoring program have financial implications, most Actions have a currency of 4-5 years.



Plan 1 Hensley Athletic Field - Land Title

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Botany Bay LGA has 64 parks, including small areas created by street closures. Of these, 48 are small parks or playgrounds and 11 are outdoor sports facilities. The open space settings also include 4 formal gardens and one area of regional parkland – Sir Joseph Banks Park.

Most of the parks serve the immediate area of the local community. The Hensley Athletic Field by its nature and the specialist facilities available is a district park serving the whole of the City of Botany Bay, with a regional catchment extending to communities outside its boundaries. Therefore, in the context of this document it is only termed a regional facility due to its extended catchment. The only similar site where a plan of management has been adopted is Mascot Oval and Mascot Park that have portions of land owned by Council and the Crown.

Much of this Plan of Management is based on existing Council policy including the City of Botany Bay Management Plan. In addition, information has been taken from Council's current plans of management and from recent reports and studies undertaken on open space management where those documents relate to regional facilities similar to the Hensley Athletic Field.

Development of this Plan of Management has identified the need for regular reviews of open space and on how those lands are used and managed.

2.1 VALUES

The values placed on the Hensley Athletic Field and other major sporting fields and parks are those attributes which people find most important or of high regard and would wish to see enhanced. In addition to these existing attributes there are other values that the community find important and subsequently need to be addressed. The intrinsic value of a regional sporting venue such as the Hensley Athletic Field is in offering a facility that satisfies the needs of the wider community.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Hensley Athletic Field's prime focus is to provide a range of specialist recreation opportunities relating to athletics and field sports. The running track and field events area provides specialist facilities and surfaces for athletics; the infield provides play and training opportunities for field sports such as soccer, rugby and league. Cricket practice nets are also available.

Although recreation opportunities for more passive type activities are limited, the site is capable of hosting special events such as band and marching displays, or indoor events in temporary structures, subject to adequate protection of the artificial surfaces.

Spectator and viewing areas, although limited, are available for both players and the viewing public.

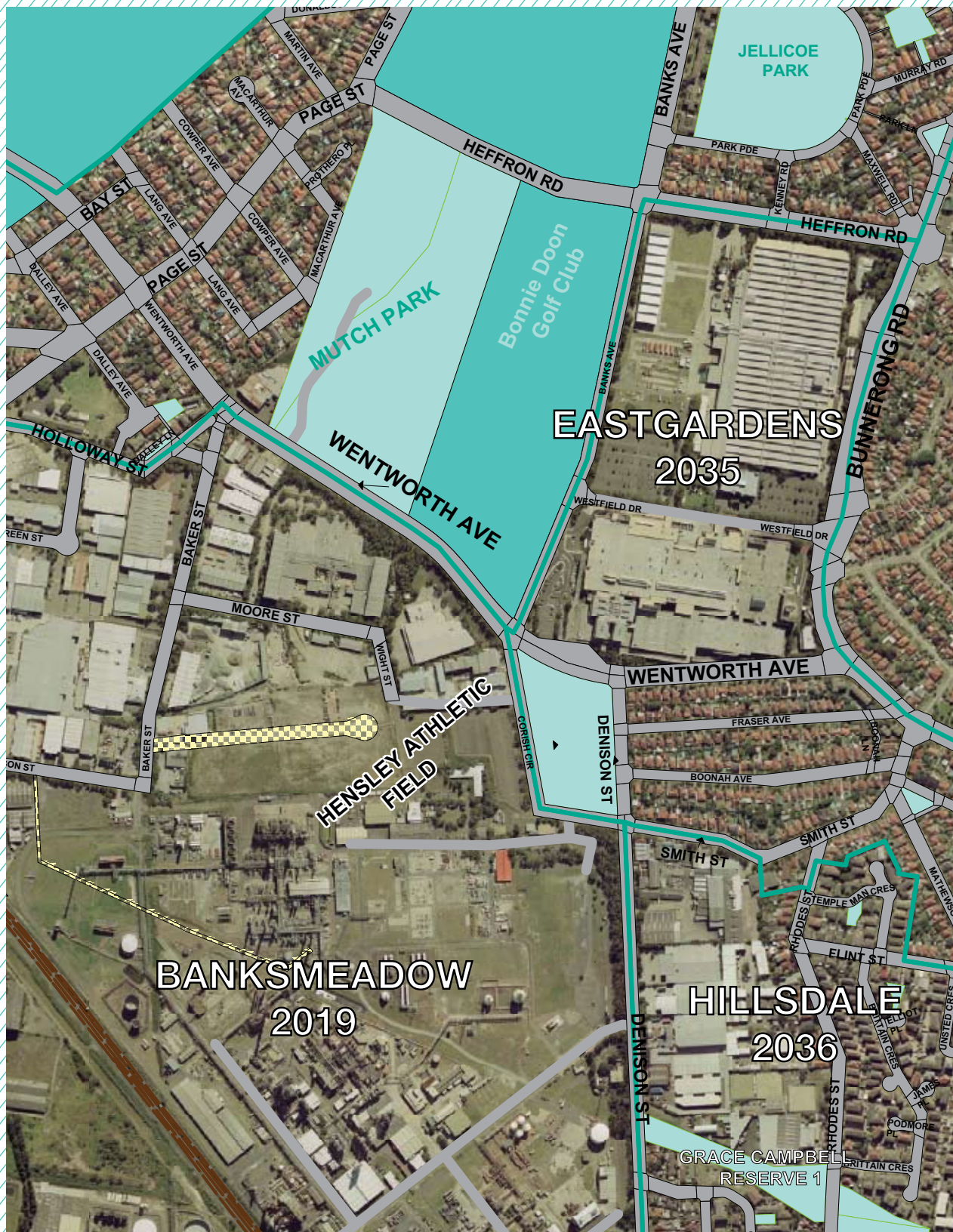
CHARACTER

Tree plantings around the boundary of the Hensley Athletic Field provide some visual respite from the hard urban environment. The nature of the infrastructure required for the active sporting activities at Hensley, its relatively small size, and the limited amount of surrounding areas suitable for soft landscaping somewhat limits its ability to ameliorate the impact of the surrounding roads and industry.

Intrinsic to this site is the need for infrastructure to facilitate major sporting and civic events. This necessitated the development of high quality synthetic surfaces and the refurbishment of the amenity buildings and the grandstand to support a variety of more active type activities and to enhance and increase the leisure and recreation opportunities available in the City.

LOCATION

Regional sporting fields are a meeting place for large groups to participate in organized recreation either as participants or spectators. They are best located so as to be easily accessible to large numbers of users of varying age. The Hensley Athletic Field was established in the 1970s on a site that had good road access and prior to the development of the nearby major regional shopping centre. The shopping centre is now the focus for public transport - bus and taxi, and Hensley benefits from the latter as no onsite car parking is available. The local road network on all boundaries provides a suitable buffer between the sporting areas and the residential properties along Denison Street and the southern extension of Corish Circle (See Location Plan No 2).



Plan 2 Hensley Athletic Field - Site Location

2.2 ROLE

The role of any park or reserve is the way in which that park contributes to the functions of the open space system. The role of the Hensley Athletic Field in the regional context can be separated into a number of functions which are:

- satisfying the organized, active recreation needs of both the local and regional community,
- providing visual relief from the hard urban landscape intrinsic to providing a better quality of life,
- a focus of excellence for sporting groups,
- improving the health of the community, and
- a link with other components of the open space system within the City of Botany Bay.

2.3 LAND MANAGEMENT GOALS

The production of this plan of management is closely linked with Council's overall mission statement as set out in the City of Botany Bay Management Plan.

"The City of Botany Bay is committed to improving the total environment to allow all community members who live, work, or use the facilities in the Council area to enjoy and benefit from the services provided."

To achieve this, the Council will:

"Provide quality parks, streetscapes and recreational facilities for the use of residents and visitors for sporting competition, visiting, playing and relaxation."

"Whilst providing these quality facilities, continually strive to improve our operations and service to all residents and visitors within our allocated resources."

The land management objectives developed for this sporting facility aim to be visionary and flexible enough to accommodate the dynamic nature of the City and are intended to guide Council's management of parks to protect and enhance the above values.

The following objectives were developed for the Hensley Athletic Field Plan of Management:

- To provide diversity of recreational opportunities while ensuring appropriate use of the facility.
- To ensure that the facility is equally available to all members of the public.
- To provide the local community with the opportunity to promote and foster a sense of identity and, consequently, develop the 'sense of place' in the park that reflect the aspirations, needs and character of that community.
- To improve the health and wellbeing of the community by providing and maintaining quality recreation facilities and by promoting and encouraging their use.
- To provide and maintain a high quality recreation facility based on community needs and within budget.
- To authorize by lease, licence, or casual use permit activities or uses only where they support the management strategies of the adopted Plan of Management.
- To ensure with leases and licences that the public's right of choice, access and equity is recognized and preserved.

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF CROWN LAND MANAGEMENT

This plan also takes into account the principles of Crown land management as set out in the Crown Lands Act, 1989, as the Hensley Athletic Field is partly located on Crown land.

The principles of Crown land management are:

- (a) that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land,
- (b) that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible,
- (c) that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged,
- (d) that, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged,
- (e) that, where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity, and
- (f) that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interest of the State consistent with the above principles.

2.5 HENSLEY ATHLETIC FIELD CHARACTERISTICS & RESOURCES

The Hensley Athletic Field is located at the corner of Wentworth Avenue and Denison Street, Eastgardens, with its main player and spectator entrance off Corish Circle. The northern portion of the site is Crown land. The City of Botany Bay was appointed the Trust Manager over the Hensley Athletic Field (R.97202) Reserve Trust on 23 March 1984. The gazetted purpose of the site is use for 'public recreation'. The Crown land portion is Lot 182 DP 752015. The remaining portion of the site is Council owned and community classified land Lot 3 DP 79069. This portion of the site was transferred to the Council on 28/3/1958. The approximate total land area of both portions is 26,625.9 square metres.

There are no restrictions over the Crown land portion other than it being a reserve under the Crown Lands Act and subject to the provisions of the Crown Lands Act. For Council's land there are two affectations upon it, a 20 metre-wide easement for underground electricity mains held by Sydney County Council (i.e. Energy Australia), and a caveat under which Council holds the lands for the purposes of a public park, public reserve and public recreation area and will not permit its use for any other purpose. It also provides that Council will not erect or permit to be erected on the land any building without first obtaining approval from the Cumberland County Council (i.e. NSW Department of Planning).

The land is zoned 6(a) Existing Recreation under the provisions of the Botany Local Environment Plan 1995.

Botany Bay has a long history in athletics. In fact, it was the traditional home of professional foot racing in Australia. The first 100yard handicap was held on St Patricks Day in 1884. The interest in running generated further interest in track and field events resulting in the establishment athletic and running clubs and ultimately the construction of the Hensley Athletic Field.

The early history of Hensley Athletic Field is linked to the history of the Randwick-Botany Harriers Athletic Club. Founded in 1907, Botany Harriers successfully supported amateur athletics and distance events. It had members selected to represent Australia in the British Empire Games of 1938. Steady growth continued and then in 1959 the club amalgamated with another based in Randwick-Kensington. In 1965 the new club secured a 21 year lease of land from Botany Council to


construct a track and clubhouse. Sand extraction had occurred on the site and some land filling had occurred. The first track of 7 lanes had a bitumen surface and was officially opened in October 1973. The track was subsequently resurfaced with a 3M urethane product called 'Tartan'. Although rarely used for many years a feature of Hensley when first built was its 200 metre straight of 9 lanes, the only one in Australia.

In 1982 the Club advised Council that it was financially unable to perform the obligations imposed upon it by the lease, requested the lease be terminated and the care, management and control be assumed by Council. Council agreed and also assumed liability for the Clubs existing debt to the 3m Company. At the time ICI Australia Operations Pty Ltd operated a bore at the site and made available its car park for large athletic meeting.

Since assuming control the Council has maintained and upgraded the facilities. However, the synthetic surface over the track and jump fan had a limited life. Due to extensive oxidization lanes 1, 2 & 3 were recoated in 2001/2002. Regular patching was required due to the age of the track and condition of its sub-base. By the late 2000's the track surface and base layer were at the end of their useful life and well overdue for replacement. Also, at several places around the track water has caused the base layer and surface to lift, tree roots were a problem along the Denison Street boundary, and a number of re-patched areas had not bonded to the base – all resulting in potential safety hazards. In addition, the high jump fan located in the Southern D Section was small which restricted the number of jump events during school carnivals. The seven lane track also placed limits on the number of participants for events when all lanes are required for short distance running.

In 1968 Randwick-Botany Little Athletics Centre was formed to cater specifically for children in the under-six to under-12 age groups. The Centre continues to use Hensley and has a current membership of 550.

Over more recent years the infield area, previously used for hockey, was redeveloped with a high quality turf surface irrigated by bore water. The bores and pumps were owned by Qenos Limited, formally ICI. Flood lights



were installed and the infield allocated and marked for soccer during the winter season. To maintain a playable surface the hours of use available for soccer were limited to approximately 20 hours each week. Training was not permitted.

The site was secured by a high chain mesh boundary fence, which was considered a bonus by school officials when holding large events. There is no off street parking available for cars and buses. However, the surrounding streets are able to accommodate approximately 150 vehicles. Although some problems have arisen over parking and noise impacting on the residential areas located to the east, potential conflicts are minimized by the existence of roads on all boundaries, the existing tree cover, and the large commercial sites nearby.

The E S Marks Field at Centennial Park became the preferred venue for senior athletes and large school carnivals, due to its size, range of field events able to be accommodated, extensive spectator terraces, and undercover seating for 1,000 persons. Then with the development in 1994 of larger and better equipped facilities at the Sydney International Athletic Centre, with seating for 5,000 undercover and 10,000 on banks, and further upgrading of these facilities associated with the 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games, most athletic events for professional and senior athletes and large carnivals moved to Sydney Olympic Park.

As an old but purpose built facility the Hensley Athletic Field remained a popular venue, particularly for Little Athletics and for School, District, and Zone carnivals. Despite the poor surface condition of the track and the more recent limits and restrictions placed on field events (javelin, hammer, shot put), participation rates were quite high compared to similar sized sporting fields in the City of Botany Bay and elsewhere in adjoining LGAs. Unfortunately none of the hirers record gate admissions and general entry by spectators. However, bookings over the 3 year period 2006 to 2008 indicated a slight increase in bookings.

Hensley field is named after Cecil "Chic" Hensley who was a prominent distance athlete of the 1940s and also an alderman and, later, Mayor of Botany

2.6 COUNCIL'S VISION & MISSION

The Council's vision and mission statements relate to the provision of quality parks, streetscapes and recreational facilities for the use of residents and visitors for sporting competition, visiting, playing and relaxation. Whilst providing these quality facilities, Council intends to continually strive to improve its operations and service to all residents and visitors. Obviously there are financial and external constraints that may limit Council's ability to achieve its goals.

Based on the above, the principal objective for future management of the Hensley Athletic Field is to build on the refurbishments now underway and work with current user groups and potential users to position Hensley as a high quality and well managed active recreation resource for the City of Botany Bay and the wider regional community that may have an interest in athletics and active field sports.

2.7 REFURBISHMENT PROGRAM

The Council in 2009 was successful with a grant application submitted to the Federal Government to fund the refurbishment of the Hensley Athletic Field and upgrade its associated facilities. The Council received funding of \$2,194,000 under the Community Infrastructure Program – Strategic Projects. Refurbishment of the track, with a 6 lane circuit and 8 lanes for 200 and 100 metre events, and the construction of new jump pits and throwing circles, located north of the track, commenced in late 2009 (See Concept Layout Plan No. 3)

Initially hockey was played on the infield at Hensley. Over more recent years the grass infield area had been developed for field team sports and allocated for soccer during the winter season. Concurrently with the track refurbishment the infield was converted to a 3rd generation synthetic surface, suitable for all football codes. Third generation synthetic surfaces, are a woven monofilament yarn, or similar, placed over a free draining base layer with the fibres in-filled with fine grained silica sand and topped with rubber granules. For the field and track 262 tonnes of granulated rubber was required. This equates to 57,640 used car tyres that were recycled to form the rubber shock pad, fibre infill, and running track.

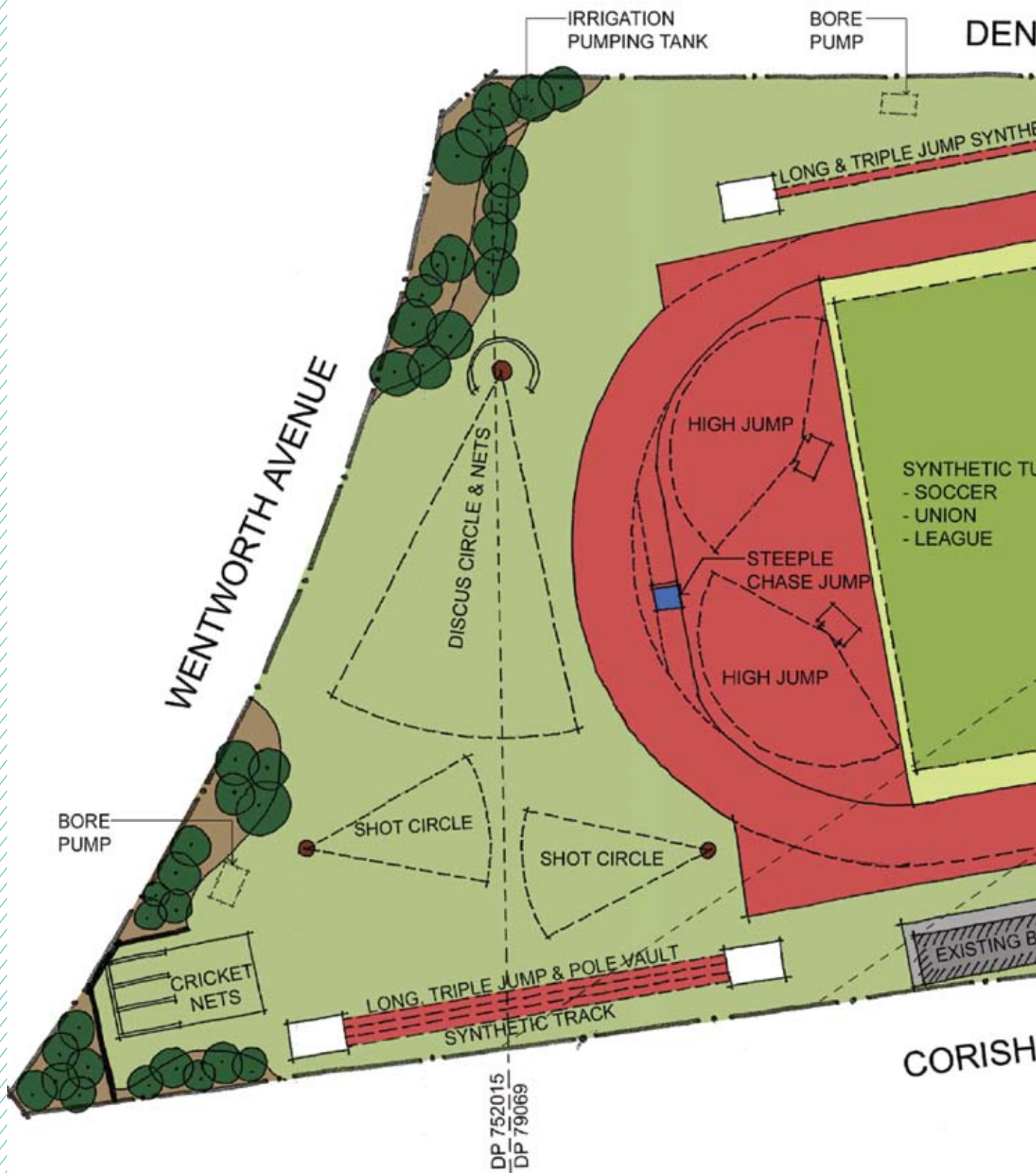
The works program also included the repair and upgrade of amenities to comply with relevant Australian Standards and the BCA. Works included the replacement and upgrade of sewer, drainage and electrical services, safety upgrades of the grandstand and new seating, upgrade of the kiosk, the provision of a Unisex toilet and shower, and general painting and repairs. Several street trees around the boundary of the site, predominately Casuarina species, were removed where suckers, roots and leaf drop were a concern. Replacement street tree planting occurred. The grant also provided funds to undertake minor landscape improvements on the site. Further landscaping will occur as and when funds become available.

Associated with the redevelopment of the Hensley Athletic Field, the topsoil was found to be contaminated with asbestos cement chips, a fact known to some in

the athletic fraternity who originally built the track at Hensley, but unknown to Council and its contractors, nor was it disclosed to Council or its contractors.

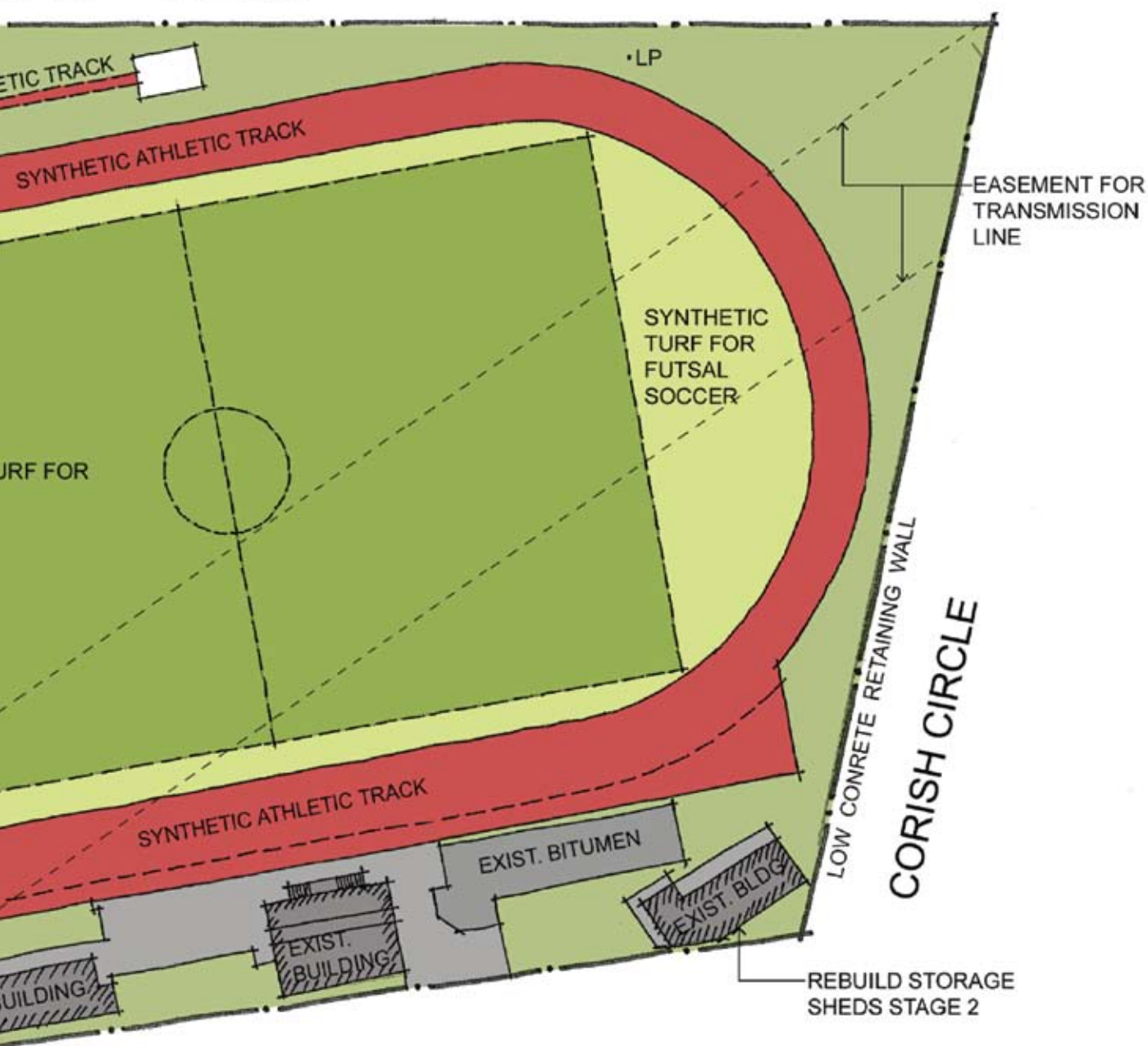
Once discovered the Council immediately had air monitors installed and commissioned external independent testing of the contaminated topsoil, which was eventually disposed of at a licenced tip site. Whilst stockpiled and during removal the air monitors indicated airborne fibre concentrations to be less than the detection limit.

An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) was prepared to guide construction of the infield to enable works to proceed. Any remaining contaminated waste below the topsoil layer has now been adequately covered by the synthetic sports field surface. Another EMP will be required for the outer grounds as trenching, landscaping and other penetration of the surface layer will occur from time to time.



Plan 3 Hensley Athletic Field - Concept Layout Plan

ISON STREET



2.8 HENSLEY SWOT ANALYSIS

When preparing the grant application in 2009 a SWOT analysis occurred. It is reproduced in this Plan of Management to assist with ongoing reviews and monitoring. Changes will occur over time in regard to the community's expectations over its open space resources. With regular reviews the Council will be able to take a more pro-active stance in managing the Hensley Athletic Field.

STRENGTHS

- Location – adjacent to a major shopping centre.
- Adjoins public transport hub.
- Field isolated by streets – no residential neighbours, no conflict with lights or noise.
- Existing infrastructure – long term history of athletics use.
- Development potential.
- Multi-use – soccer and athletics.
- Limited similar facilities in South East Region of Sydney.
- Bore water available.

WEAKNESSES

- Traffic congestion and no on-site parking.
- Only two major tenants.
- Public health and safety – track condition, lack of accessible facilities.
- Lack of grant funding and internal resources of Council.
- Seven (7) lane track – lack of capacity for schools and carnivals.
- Aged infrastructure.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Sponsorship/partnership – shopping centre and local industries.
- Multi-use facilities.
- Premier location in South East Region of Sydney.
- Exposure to major roads.
- Improvement to existing facilities – general refurbishment, canteen, toilets, track and field.
- Training venue for senior athletes and veterans.
- Health and fitness benefits for school children and youth.

THREATS

- Adequate funding for asset renewal.
- Safety issues – track surface, lack of shade, grandstand safety rails.
- Accessible facilities – non-compliance with BCA and other relevant Australian Standards.
- Quality facilities at E S Marks Field – Centennial Parklands.
- International standard facilities at Homebush Bay.
- Possibility of new athletic facility in the region – due to current poor condition of Hensley Field.

2.9 REGIONAL SPORTS GROUNDS

Refurbishment works funded by the grant offered from the Australian Government under its Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program – Strategic Projects reflected the regional nature of the activities occurring at the Hensley Athletic Field and its regional catchment as an athletic venue, matters highlighted in the grant application.

Botany Bay forms part of the 'South Subregion' an area regarded as a key economic driver and lifestyle area of the Greater Metropolitan Region of Sydney. Open space is a key feature of the region and forms a component of the planning assessments currently underway to implement the metropolitan strategy and the more local planning studies required for each Council in the region.

In 2005 the then known NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) published the summary reports of studies completed over 2 years on recreation demand and opportunities for Sydney. This project was the most comprehensive undertaken in recent years and the outcomes provide an opportunity for all park agencies to build on the regional approach. For Southern Sydney, among the highest recreation demands expressed or identified through the research and consultations program was:

- participation in sport – particularly more and better-used sports fields;

However, in regard to the general findings, the more important statement from the study was:

"Yet what was an adequate level of provision in the past is now rapidly becoming inadequate. It is evident that changes in the size, age, cultural mix, family characteristics and socio-economic aspects of the Southern Sydney population are already affecting recreation demands and needs".

Acknowledging the differences between individual council areas in the region, the Study concluded that the overall challenges facing the region were:

- the demand for recreation resources, which is beginning to outstrip supply; and
- the level of use of open space resources such as playing fields, which is threatening to become unsustainable.

With the benefit of the above reports, together with other relevant local studies, the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) commissioned a study which had as its main purposes.... *"to review the provision, use and management of sports fields in the Southern Sydney Region and, on the basis of this review, to provide recommendations that help to ensure that the Region's outdoor sporting facility needs, both now and into the future, are adequately met"* (*"Review of Sporting Fields Management in the Southern Sydney Region – July 2008"*).

The study indicates the overall provision of sports space in the Region is less than the traditional planning standard (0.91 ha per thousand people compared to the 1.21 ha/1,000 standard). There is also an uneven distribution of facilities between LGAs.

Apart from the quantity of sports space being lower than traditional standards and the uneven distribution of sports grounds throughout the Region, the other key issue identified was the concerns and problems raised by the main users of sports grounds (sports clubs and schools) that identified a range of concerns with sports facility adequacy including both quality and quantity issues.

Although the study outcomes and recommendations relate more to the Regional context than to any specific LGA, in relation to the Botany Bay LGA there were a number of outcomes that are of interest. Not in any order of priority those relevant to this Plan of Management are:

- winter season club sport participants are the major users of Council grounds.
- the use of Council sports grounds is generally at very high levels and, in many cases, well above Council Officer estimates of physical carrying capacity.
- the substantial growth in sports participation in recent years is expected to continue over the next 5 years.
- most sports associations are actively developing their sport with school based promotions, expanding into new areas, and introducing game variations and innovations.

- the demand for outdoor sports facilities, over the next 25 years, will decrease in most parts of the Region due to ageing of the population, but this will not be the case in and around Sydney City.
- school use of Council grounds will remain high due to the lack of school sports facilities.
- the demand for outdoor sports facilities has begun to outstrip supply.
- levels of sports field use are becoming unsustainable in terms of the carrying capacity of facilities.
- sports clubs and schools report that they are often constrained in their activities by one or more supply issues particularly the perceived shortage of fields, access to fields, poor quality amenities, insufficient floodlighting and spectator facilities and/or travel distances to available facilities.
- the current shortfall in playing fields is most apparent with respect to AFL, Touch and soccer.
- based on population forecasts to 2031, there will be significant future demands for additional outdoor sports facilities (in the form of new facilities and/or extended or refurbished facilities) in the Sydney City and surrounding areas.

The SSROC study contained a number of recommendations. Those that relate to sports facilities in the Botany Bay LGA are:

- review and identify opportunities to convert grass fields to third generation synthetic surfaces (potentially suitable for soccer, rugby, touch and AFL).
- adopt more strategic and equitable facility allocation processes (involving use monitoring and consultations rather than 'precedence only' approaches).
- implement regional benchmarking of sports facility use (with standardised or compatible booking software) and initiate regional approaches to issues identified in the benchmarking (equity of access to facilities x sport x gender; variations in user fees and levels of use x council; ground capacity used x council, etc).

A 3rd generation playing surface for field sports has now been installed at Hensley. However, Botany Bay undertakes no pro-active monitoring of ground usage. Clubs throughout the region are known to book more grounds than are needed to protect the playing surface and to stop the entry of other clubs into competitions – i.e. 'demand management'. There is a need to demonstrate more fairness in the allocation process. The SSROC study also confirms that Regional councils are moving away from licences and leases in order to improve equity of access to facilities.

Botany Bay also operates at the lowest level of booking technology which makes it difficult to gather and analyze statistics. Monitoring the data flow and generating useful reports will be difficult and time consuming. With the disparate range of facility bookings systems the potential for regular regional reviews and benchmarking of structured sports facility use is limited. Council could consider the purchase of appropriate software, which could also be used for pool and court hire, assist with benchmarking, and the monitoring of actual use.

In summary, the management of open space lands in Botany Bay can be improved. Networking with neighbouring Councils, Government agencies, and with State sporting code representatives will assist and appropriate Actions now appear Section 3.

2.10 PLANS OF MANAGEMENT

The refurbishment program and management changes envisaged following the upgrade of the site prompted the need to prepare a Draft Plan of Management for the Hensley Athletic Field.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, community land is required to be used and managed in accordance with a plan of management applying to the land. The plan must also authorize any leases or licences that may apply for all or part of the site. Pending the adoption of a plan of management for community land, the nature and use of the land must not be changed. The Act also requires the plan of management must identify, inter alia, the following:

- (a) the category of the land,
- (b) the objectives and performance targets of the plan with respect to the land,
- (c) the means by which the council proposes to achieve the plan's objectives and performance targets,
- (d) the manner in which the council proposes to assess its performance with respect to the plan's objectives and performance targets.

For the purposes of categorization, the land can be categorized as one or more of the following:

- (a) a natural area,
- (b) a sportsground,
- (c) a park,
- (d) an area of cultural significance,
- (e) general community use.

The category proposed for the Hensley Athletic Field is '**sportsground**'. The Act then states that the core objectives for management of community land categorized as sportsground are:

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organized and informal sporting activities and games, and
- (b) to ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.

Although the Council has not been directed by the Minister for Lands to prepare a Plan of Management in accordance with the Crown Lands Act 1989, the preparation of an appropriate plan should satisfy its needs. The Department of Lands has been advised of Council's success with the grant application. The refurbishment works now implemented are in accordance with the gazetted purpose of the land – Public Recreation.

2.11 GENERAL ISSUES

In preparing this Plan of Management a number of more general issues were considered and where appropriate they are addressed in Section 3.

RECREATION USAGE

The primary role of Hensley Athletic Field is to provide specialist facilities for a variety of user groups involved in active recreation. The Field prior to refurbishment was underutilized due to the poor surface condition of the track and limitations placed upon the usage of the natural turf playing surface. The health benefits of parks are generally not acknowledged and supported by governments. A few extra dollars supporting leisure and recreation opportunities may save many millions now spent in the health care industry. Hensley could therefore be promoted and managed to support and encourage participation in 'healthy' programs and activities.

ACCESS

Although the surrounds are relatively safe and easily accessible to pedestrians who are able to take advantage of the existing roads and pathways, the volume of traffic, large trucks, and speed of vehicles in Wentworth Avenue and Denison Street can be of concern to park visitors. Vehicular parking is currently limited to kerb-side parking in surrounding streets. As a consequence large events can on occasions be disruptive to local residents. Areas for bus or coach parking are not identified in Corish Circle. Access to the site for emergency and service vehicles needs to be identified.

The provision of on-site car parking is viewed as an alienation of public space and not ancillary to the recreation use of the area. However, as Hensley cannot accommodate parking the Council should investigate alternate parking layouts and shared use of car parks located in nearby commercial and industrial sites. Lighting around the site needs to be investigated.

The reference to access is not to be limited to vehicles and parking. Council also needs to ensure equitable access to sport, leisure and recreation opportunities regardless of the age, gender, sexual preference,

mobility, ethnicity or economic capacity of the community.

Access by disabled users is an issue which must be considered, and opportunities to provide convenient circulation routes and access to amenities need to be identified and their feasibility and practicality investigated. User friendly signage needs to be available.

LEASES AND LICENCES

A licence is generally a written agreement allocating a specific group the right to use a venue for a set period of one or more years, and usually for the season during which the particular activity is pursued. The licence fee is designed to engender respect for the venue and to contribute towards various costs incurred by Council in maintaining the venue. While licences may require the licence holder to undertake certain tasks – such as cleaning and paying for power – they generally do not include responsibility for major development or maintenance works.

By comparison with a licence, a lease gives the specific group the exclusive rights of access for its own purposes, for up to 21 years. It also confers full management and operational responsibilities onto the lease holder together with a range of conditions, the most important of these relating to paying for development, maintenance and care of the asset being leased.

However contention over licences and leases has emerged because the objectives of Councils, who own the asset, and the licence and lease holders which use the asset, are often very deferent. Conflicts also arise over fees to be paid and the degree of exclusivity which they enjoy. To benefit the wider community fees should reflect a contribution towards the true cost of maintaining the asset and its capital cost. As for Hensley, unless the Council is incapable of managing an asset due to financial constraints or priority issues, Council should only issue short term licences or permits in order to free up capacity for wider, and at times, the more appropriate use of the site.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

There will be a need to undertake further development and upgrading works. The expected lifespan of synthetic surfaces is approximately 10 years and when replaced products in use or favored at the time may have changed. Building codes and Australian Standards are also subject to regular reviews and public facilities need to reflect those changes. Although the amenities buildings and grandstand have been upgraded and refurbished asset renewal or replacement is to be authorized with this plan of management. New and upgraded storage will be required for sporting equipment, small plant and maintenance equipment. An upgrading of flood lighting may be necessary within the life of this plan.

MANAGEMENT

Although playing 'seasons' have been in place for many years, Councils are regularly pressured, mainly by soccer clubs, to extend the winter season at either end. The extensions required, and often demanded, are for pre-season training and competition games and for additional training and competition games at the end of the season. In the main, this demand is about Clubs registering more junior players / teams than the grounds are able to accommodate. Most Councils have defined the playing seasons. For the purpose of this Plan of Management the seasons are those previously adopted by Council in its Management Plan:

Winter Season – first weekend of April to last weekend of August.

Summer Season – first weekend of September to last weekend of March.

In regard to ground hire, Council's policy is that all games and finals beyond the seasonal dates, listed above, will be subject to the availability of grounds and charged at Casual Hire rates.

FEES & CHARGES

Fees and charges will need to be established on the basis of the standard of facility, program and service on offer, maintenance costs, utility services available,

and the financial capacity of users and user types. Fees and charges should also reflect the replacement or amortized cost of specialist facilities relative to the specific needs of the hirer. In regard to the latter Council and user groups needs to be aware that all synthetic surfaces have a limited life.

EFFECT OF USE ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

Hensley Athletic Field has residential properties to its east. Any impact that usage has on neighbouring residents is an important issue that needs to be considered. The needs of the users of Hensley Athletic Field and those living adjacent must be taken into consideration to develop guidelines for management that best suit both groups. Residents concerns are to be acknowledged and acted upon where appropriate. Residents are to be encouraged to approach Council in the event of excessive noise, light spill, parking problems and/or anti-social activities to enable Council to liaise with the sporting association to encourage self regulation and thereby prevent further disturbances.

SAFETY

One of the most prevalent issues regarding community land is that of safety. Many of the problems regarding vandalism and safety stem from the inability to access the site, poor signage and inadequate lighting. Adjacent residents and the local community need to be consulted as to their preference for or against additional lighting.

The risk of injury to users of the site can be minimized by ensuring the facilities are regularly inspected and maintained to a high standard.

The presence of contaminated waste materials on site and the potential of imported soil or fill also being contaminated needs to be well managed. An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be required for the outer grounds as trenching, landscaping and other penetration of the surface layer will occur from time to time.

IDENTITY

For some time there has been confusion in the community over the correct name for the site – Hensley Field, Hensley Athletic Field, Hensley Athletic Centre, Botany Athletic Centre. Although mostly irrelevant to user groups a review of the name could be considered during the life of this Plan.

GUIDELINES FOR CHANGE

The Plan of Management should aim to have guidelines developed which address the following issues:

- That any further development be of a high quality and consideration given to replacing the existing buildings to provided facilities with more flexible floor plans to allow for changing needs and as there is little existing architectural style evident.
- Where possible the costs of future development to be off-set by entrepreneurial activities such as sponsorship of facilities, programs and activities, offering advertising and naming rights, leases or licence rentals, and by actively pursuing government grants and other sources of external funding.
- That future development is based on fulfilling the identified needs of the existing user groups after assessing the impacts of further development of the Hensley Athletic Field on the local community.
- That parking needs be assessed and consideration given to changes in layout of Corish Circle, provision of bus or coach bays, access for disabled persons, lighting, and improved pedestrian crossings.
- That the Hensley Athletic Field be promoted and managed as a major venue for School and Little Athletics and field sport events.
- That the site be available for community, school and local sporting groups, and for special occasions and civic events as far as they are compatible with the synthetic surfaces and priority availability for athletics and field sport.
- That ongoing development of the site occur to reflect the changing leisure and recreation needs of the community, to update and improve amenities for

spectators and players, and to ensure that the community with adaptive facilities can benefit from special or civic events and changes in recreation needs.

- That leases and/or licences of the Hensley Athletic Field be granted to generate additional income to support the recurrent and capital costs incurred with managing this community facility.

2.12 ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

This Plan of Management does not remove any requirement for Development Applications or environmental assessments under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979) when necessary.

However, with this Plan the Botany Bay City Council retains the right to:

- Carry out works of a minor nature in line with the overall management strategies of this Plan of Management where reasonable and appropriate, and where they are permissible in the 6(a) Zone. This would include such works as the provision of roads, play equipment, park furniture, temporary or permanent shade shelters and umbrellas, barbeques, temporary staging and enclosures for events, ticketing facilities, viewing platforms, sign boards, floodlighting, litter bins, supplementary tree and shrub planting, repairs and maintenance works for buildings and associated facilities, install drains, pipes and other utility services.
- Stage or hold temporary events permitted under State or Local Government legislation.
- Enter into a lease, licence, or casual use agreement for land or buildings with an appropriate individual or body to allow for any activities in line with the overall management strategies of this Plan of Management where reasonable and appropriate. This might include leases with sporting organizations, commercial food outlets, and sponsors, or any other use permitted in the zone applicable to this site.
- Permit the site to be used for emergency purposes, including training, when the need arises.

These works and access to the site, will still require the approval of the General Manager or his nominee.

Although the northern portion of the site is Crown land, the area is under the care, control and management of the City of Botany Bay. This Plan aims to provide guidelines for the future use, development,

management and maintenance of the Hensley Athletic Field which will be adopted by Council and supported by the Department of Lands.

Staff are allocated to the ground according to the maintenance requirements which may vary seasonally. Over time, as the recreation needs of the community change, the current number and structure of staff and the funding levels for maintenance are also likely to change.

3.0 MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, ACTIONS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

This section details in table format the roles and objectives established for the Hensley Athletic Field. Opportunities on how those objectives may be implemented are termed Actions. The priority of an item has been assessed and an indication on when implementation may occur is also recorded.

The listing of **Priority & Timing** is the indicative priority and timing as a guide to implementation and review of each Action of the Plan of Management.

URGENT

(a priority that should start and be completed within the next year)

HIGH

(very important and to be started and be completed within the next 2-3 years)

MODERATE

(important and to be started and be completed within the next 4 -10 years)

ONGOING

(requiring continuous action, commencing immediately or requiring immediate action when the relevant situation arises.

The **Timing** allocated to each **Action** is based on a combination of notional priority and of being able to achieve results with the available resources. Should there be available additional resources, beyond that provided in the Council's Management Plan & Budget, reviews of this Plan of Management will reflect those changes. The **Actions** do not commit Council to allocate resources. However, when reviewing the Plan of Management the Council should indicate why there is a need to change priorities.

3.1 RECREATION & LEISURE

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
To provide diversity of recreational opportunities while ensuring appropriate use of the facility.	Encourage the use of Hensley Athletic Field for a wide range of sporting uses which are compatible with the management objectives and the function of the site.	List developed of appropriate activities as identified by the user groups, Council staff and the community. Appropriate information listed on Council's website.	Urgent then Ongoing Ongoing
	Support and encourage the use of Hensley Athletic Field by community clubs, schools, and Little Athletics.	Increase in bookings and number of participants.	Ongoing
	Support and encourage the use of Hensley Athletic Field for special events, Civic functions, and non-sporting activities permissible under this Plan.	Bookings received and activities held.	Ongoing
	Provide appropriate ancillary facilities for sporting and non-sporting use.	User satisfaction.	Ongoing

3.2 LEASES & LICENCES

Consider the issue of short term leases and/or licences of the Hensley Athletic Field to generate additional income to support the recurrent and capital costs incurred with managing this community facility, or where external management skills and expertise are required.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESSMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
To authorize by lease, licence or casual use permit activities or uses only where they support the management strategies of this Plan of Management.	Authorize leases, licences, permits, or casual use agreements.	Appropriate lease, licence or permit agreements in place.	Urgent then Ongoing
	Review and monitor leases and licences to market and ensure clauses and conditions encourage and support a mutually beneficial partnership between the lessor and the lessee.	Regular market reviews.	High then Ongoing
	Develop guidelines and conditions of use to manage signage that may be required by user groups.	Guidelines available.	High then Ongoing
To ensure that the public's right of choice, access and equity is recognized and preserved.	A public competition process for commercial activities to ensure Council gains the best tenant and most advantageous financial return.	Activities consistent with the gazetted and accepted public purpose – "public recreation".	Ongoing

3.3 OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Build on the recent refurbishments and work with current user groups and potential users to position Hensley as a high quality and well managed active recreation resource for the City of Botany Bay and the wider regional community that may have an interest in athletics and active field sports.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESSMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
To ensure that the facility is equally available to all members of the public.	Promote the site and facilities available and ensure access is available to all within the community.	Site and facilities promoted.	Ongoing
		No impediments in place to restrict access.	Urgent then Ongoing
To provide the local community with the opportunity to promote and foster a sense of identity and, consequently, develop the 'sense of place' in the park that reflect the aspirations, needs and character of that community.	Prepare a landscape master plan for the site and surrounding streets.	Implementation of master plan.	High
	Identify the site consistent with Council's City Identity Program.	Colour pallet established.	Urgent
		Park signage installed.	Urgent
		Street signage installed.	Urgent
	Review storage requirements for equipment and machinery.	Adequate storage available.	High
	Promote opportunities for community art to be displayed or installed at Hensley Athletic Field.	Community art displayed or installed.	Moderate

3.4 HEALTHY PARK – HEALTHY PEOPLE

Improve the health and wellbeing of the community with the provision and the maintenance of quality recreation facilities and by promoting and encouraging their use.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
To improve the health and wellbeing of the community by providing and maintaining quality recreation facilities and by promoting and encouraging their use.	Promote the availability of the synthetic surfaces to encourage greater use of the facilities year round.	Increase in bookings, for both the Summer and Winter seasons.	Urgent then Ongoing
	Provide and or promote opportunities for non structured activities, such as walking, running, mothers groups, older adults, special populations, etc.	Bookings received and activities held.	High then Ongoing
	Provide the users of the site with safe and convenient access to the park, and when using facilities.	Works implemented relating to pram ramps, crossings, bus bays, disabled parking spaces, ambulance access, and signage, etc. Footpath lighting installed in Corish Circle.	High then Ongoing Moderate
	Provide bike racks and or storage facilities to encourage alternate travel routes to the Field.	Facilities available.	High
	Consult with potential user groups, local doctors, home & aged care providers to consider programs for 'health' reasons at Hensley.	Regular consultation	High then Ongoing

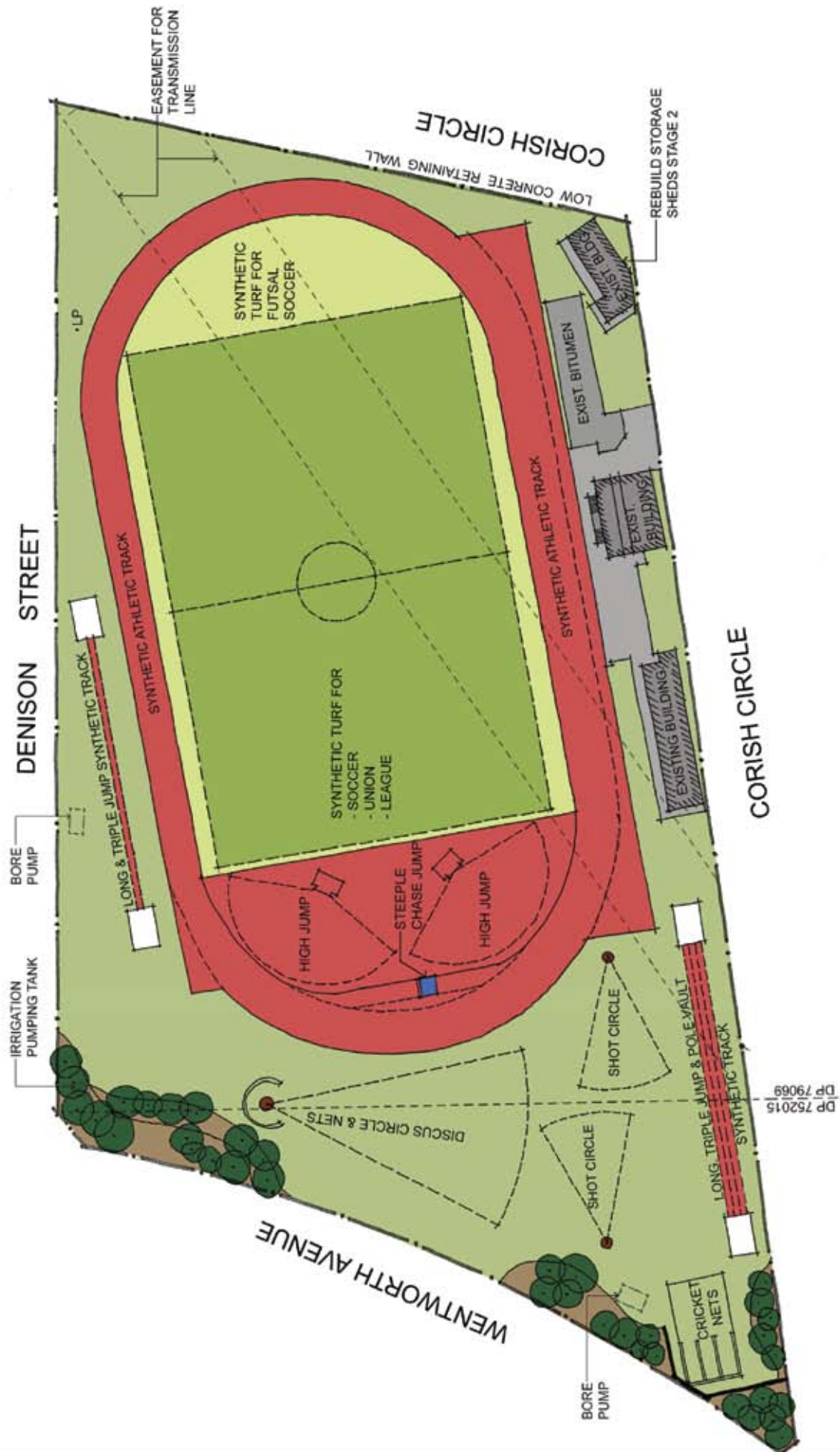
OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
	Provide adequate and appropriate facilities for seating, shade, drinking fountains, etc	Facilities available.	Ongoing
	Provide user friendly signage and conditions of use that support and encourage use of the Field.	Signage installed, including tactile indicators for the vision impaired. Condition of use available and implemented.	Urgent then Ongoing Urgent then Ongoing
	Initiate programs to promote shared use or concessions when also using Council's pool, golf course, squash courts, tennis courts, etc.	Programs available.	High then Ongoing
	Ban the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products at the Field and promote the site as a smoke free zone.	Bans implemented. On site promotion, and signage installed.	Urgent Ongoing

3.5 ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

Manage the facility and continually strive to improve skills, procedures and service to all park users, residents and visitors within the allocated resources available.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
To provide and maintain a high quality recreation facility based on community needs and within budget.	Establish an integrated management system for Hensley Athletic Field and other like major active recreation facilities in the City.	Systems and procedures established and implemented.	High
	Prepare appropriate policy statements relating to general administration and the future management of the Field.	Clearly defined goals and areas of responsibility established.	High
	Regular maintenance of the site to provide a high quality recreation facility.	Program prepared and implemented. Quality standards maintained.	Urgent then Ongoing Ongoing
	Facilitate community involvement in the planning and development of initiatives for the Field.	Hensley Task Force or similar group established.	Ongoing
	Assess the appropriateness of the current park name relative to the recreation activities occurring.	Naming reassessed and referred to Geographical Names Board if necessary.	Moderate
	Prepare an asset register for the Field.	Asset register available.	High then Ongoing
	Review and update the Environmental Management Plan (EMS) for the site.	Reviewed EMS available	High then Ongoing

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	MANNER OF ASSESSMENT	PRIORITY & TIMING
	Develop a register and repository of all reports, plans and studies relating to the Field.	Register available.	High then Ongoing
	Develop comprehensive conditions relating to the casual use or seasonal hire of the Field.	User satisfaction.	Urgent then Ongoing
	Develop a structure of fees & charges which relate to the facilities available and opportunities to fund recurrent expenditure requirements, ongoing improvements, and asset renewal.	Annual review of fees and charges. Fees and Charges adopted and included in Council's annual Management Plan. Sinking Fund Established.	Ongoing Ongoing Urgent then Ongoing
	Remove graffiti and repair damaged or worn items as soon as they are identified.	Safe and well presented facilities. Measures implemented to reduce levels of vandalism and any anti-social activities.	Ongoing High
	Plan for changing user needs and ensure that the costs to the community are minimized.	User and community satisfaction.	High then Ongoing
	Review this Plan of Management	Annual review of the priorities and timing allocated to each Action in the PoM. Major review of the PoM.	Ongoing Moderate



Plan 3 Hensley Athletic Field - Concept Layout Plan

