Cred
CONSULTING

Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Needs Study

Ballina Shire Council

4 February 2022

> *Quality, accessible, future-focused, multi-purpose and economically valued social infrastructure should support a strong, healthy and prosperous nation and ongoing quality of life for all Australians.*
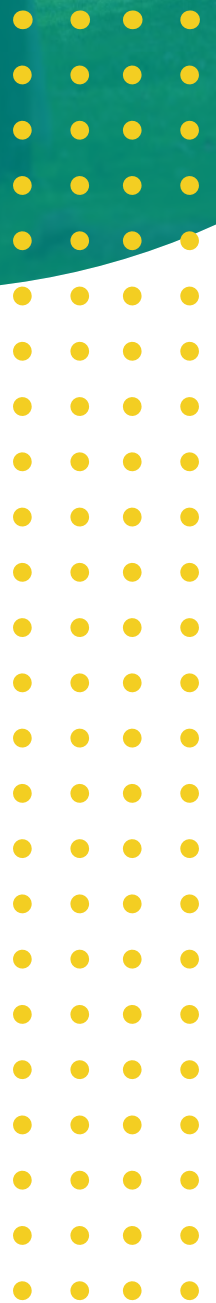>
> - Infrastructure Australia Plan, 2021

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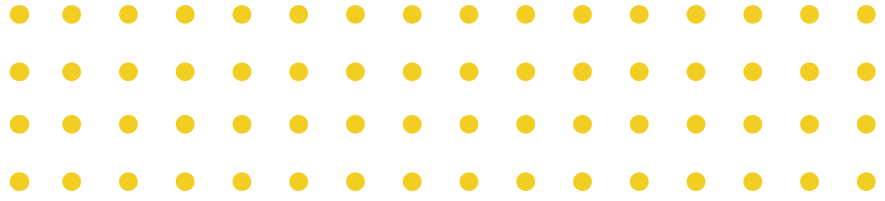
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Executive Summary

Background

This Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Needs Study provides a high-level summary of public open space and community facility needs for the purposes of informing a Community Facilities and Open Space Developer Contributions Plan for the Ballina Shire Local Government Area (LGA). This Needs Study considers public open space and community and cultural facility needs. Sports and recreation needs have been identified in the recent Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020.

Planning catchments

As well as identifying broad needs at the LGA level, needs have also been identified at a smaller planning catchments level. The planning catchments adopted for this study are:

- **Catchment 1** - Ballina includes the areas of Ballina (Island), West Ballina, East Ballina, Ballina (North) and Wardell-Rural South
- **Catchment 2** - Lennox head includes the areas of Lennox Head and Skennars Head
- **Catchment 3** - Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara includes the areas of Cumbalum-Tintenbar, Teven-Newrybar-Rural North. The only residential areas in this catchment are the two urban release areas of Kinvara and Cumbalum. Cumbalum Precinct A already has a Contributions Plan (GLN, 2015) while Kinvara has a VPA agreement in place.
- **Catchment 4** - Plateau includes the areas of Alstonville, Wollongbar-Mcleans Ridges.

Population growth

In 2016, the resident population of Ballina Shire LGA was 42,629 people. The Ballina population is currently characterised by family households and an ageing population, and will continue to be characterised by families and an ageing population to 2045 (with older residents particularly in Alstonville and parts of Ballina (e.g. Ballina East).

By 2045, the resident population is forecast to increase to 56,455 by 2045 (or +13,826 people). In the future Catchment Ballina 1 will remain the most populated catchment, however it is only forecast to grow by 8%. Catchment 2 (Lennox Head and Skennars Head) on the other hand is forecast to grow by 67% and Catchment 4 Cumbalum-Tintebar-Kinvara is forecast to grow by a significant 71%, it will continue to be the least populated of the four catchments. Catchment 4 Plateau is forecast is grow by 39% and will be the third most populous Catchment by 2045. Figure 1 below illustrates the forecast population growth of each catchment through to 2045.
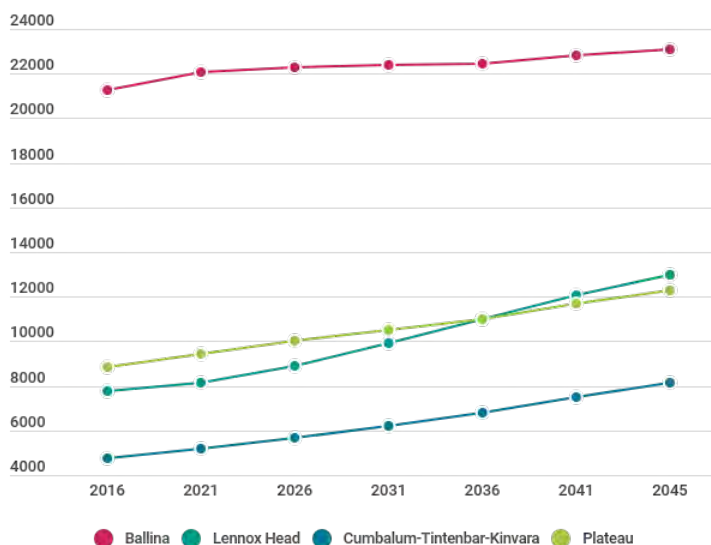
Catchment population growth

Figure 1 - Catchment population growth comparison

Current provision

Community facilities
- Across Ballina LGA, there are over 27 publicly accessible community spaces of which 21 are owned or managed by Ballina Shire Council or other government agencies (such as the State Government). This includes community halls, multipurpose surf clubs, seniors centres, youth spaces, meeting rooms, scout halls and other community spaces. Some of these spaces are undersized, ageing or single purpose.

Libraries
- Three libraries are located in Ballina LGA's in the three largest population settlements. Some smaller villages, like Wardell in the south, and the new urban release areas of Cumbalum and Kinvara are the furthest residential areas from a library.

Cultural facilities
- There are nine government owned or managed cultural spaces located within the Ballina LGA, six of which are located in Catchment 1 and clustered around Ballina Town Centre. Of these, only two are local spaces, while the rest are district of regional level. There are also a number of privately owned and managed cultural spaces in the LGA, such as RSL clubs (live music & performance) and galleries. There are no cultural facilities in Catchment 3, and no local level cultural facilities for participation in Catchments 2, 3, or 4.

Public open space
- Overall, the LGA is well serviced with in terms of the quantum of public open space, with new public open space planned as part of the existing Contributions Plans and negotiated VPAs.
- There is more than 700ha of public open space across the LGA, including 389ha+ of parks, and equating to 166m^2 per person.
- In addition, there is 1 district park and 4ha of playing fields and amenities planned at Cumbalum Precinct A (as per the Contributions Plan). In Kinvara, there is planned to be approx 2.9ha of district park space and 1.8ha of local parks distributed throughout the development to meet the standard of 400m walking distance to all residents. Kinvara also plans to deliver active open spaces including 1 playing field, 1 court a clubhouse and amenities of up to 10ha in size.

Sports and recreation facilities
- There are 29 sports parks for formal team sports; 6 lawn sports and golf courses; 3 BMX/skate parks; and 45 play spaces. Most residential areas are within 400m of a play space, with the exception of some parts of Ballina Island.
- While there are 43 indoor or outdoor code specific courts, there are no full size multipurpose courts located in any of the LGA's catchments. There is 1 planned upgrade of the existing basketball court at Swift Street/Webster Lane to a multi-use court. Netball courts in Ballina are used for multiple sports and recreational activities, and have requests for multiple line markings. There are 2 half courts.
- There is 1 outdoor exercise facility in Ballina but none in Catchments 2, 3, or 4.
- There are two indoor recreation facilities and two inland pools. There are currently no ocean pools.
- The LGA has beautiful natural areas including 38 bushland and nature reserves and 8 beaches.

Catchment 3
Population growth:
+3,381 people (2016-45)
Main centres:
Kinvara & Cumbalum

Catchment 2
Population growth:
+5,184 people (2016-45)
Main centres:
Lennox Head

Catchment 4
Population growth:
+3,464 people (2016-45)
Main centres:
Wollongbar & Alstonville

Catchment 1
Population growth:
+1,791 people (2016-45)
Main centres:
Ballina & Wardell

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

East Ballina

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District
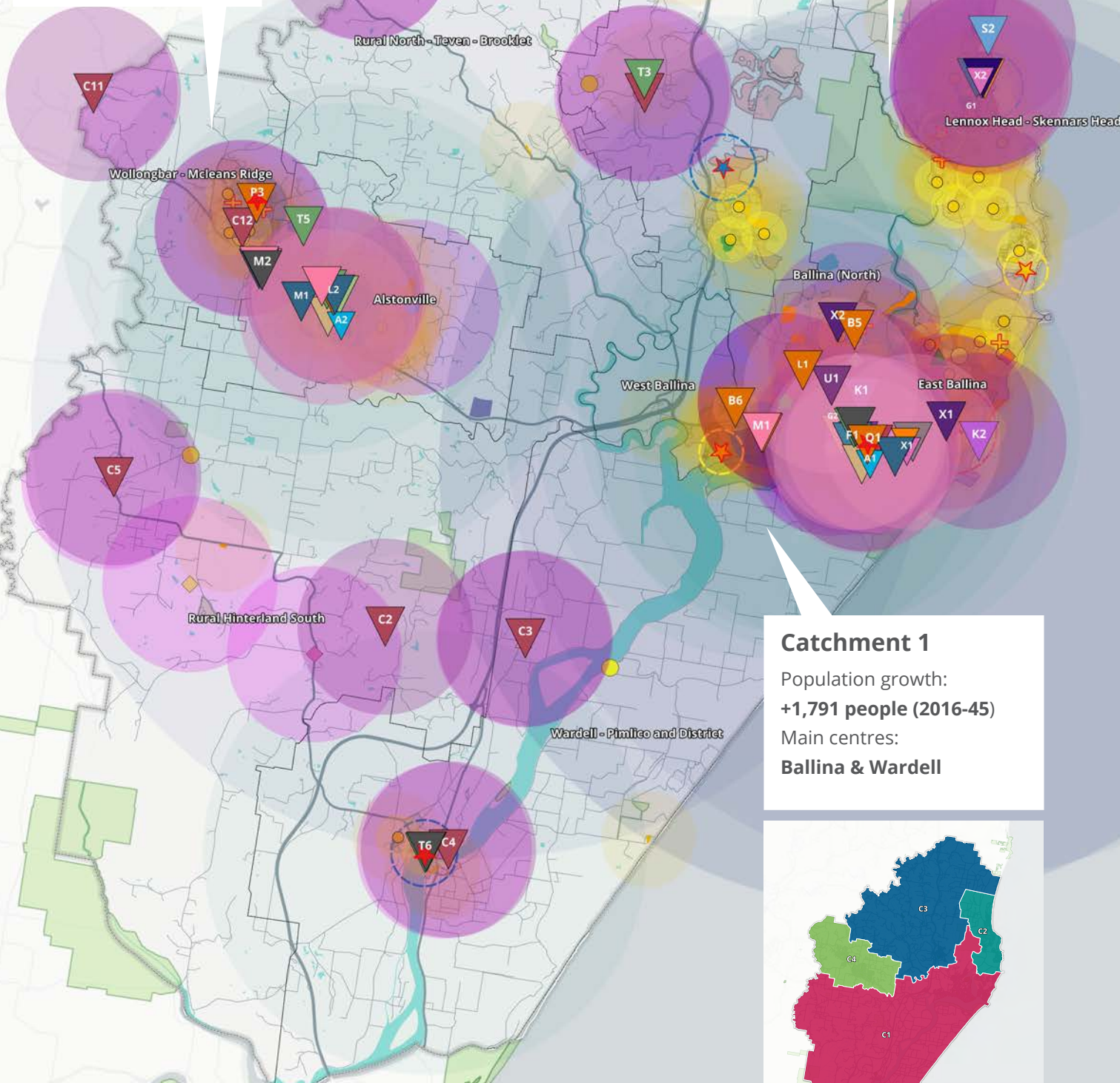
Figure 2 - All community facilities and public open space - heat map (see appendix for detailed maps and key)

Identified needs and strategic opportunities

The following open space and community facility needs have been identified through a range of indicators including:

- consultation with Council staff
- strategic context including needs or opportunities identified by Council in Strategic Plans and Place Strategies
- current and forecast demographic analysis
- best practice trends and precedents, and
- proximity and capacity benchmarking.

This needs analysis has identified some current and forecast gaps that could be addressed through a future Contributions Plan and other Council plans, including new quality local social infrastructure for growth areas, improved library facilities and technology, as well as embellishments to public open space and local halls to meet best practice trends and changing community needs and aspirations. High level needs include:
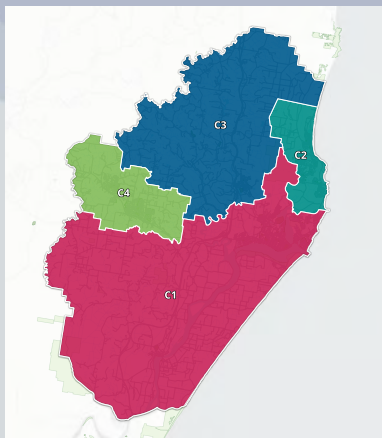
- **Strategic opportunities**: Respond to the recommendations for social infrastructure identified in Council's Strategic Place Plans, the Ballina Sport and Recreation Plan, and other strategic documents. This could include a co-located regional civic/performing arts centre in Ballina, as identified through Council's Community Strategic Plan and Place Strategy.
- **Multi-functional spaces, centrally located:** Best practice indicates a move toward co-located community facilities and public open space outcomes in centrally located sites that operate as a network and are linked by active transport/recreational links and public transport where possible.
- **An accessible community facilities network:** Council staff and the local community have identified opportunities to improve the universal access of some of the community spaces such as the historic halls and the Richmond Room in Ballina. Given that Ballina has an ageing population, it is also important that future embellishments and new social infrastructure are universally designed and physically accessible for older people and people with disability for health benefits and increased utilisation.
- **Upgrades and embellishments to local halls** including modern light weight and movable furniture, building repairs and improvements, acoustic treatments and technology upgrades.
- **Increased and improved library floor space:** This would include a move toward more modern multi-functional libraries co-located with community and cultural spaces and access to emerging technologies – with potential for a new high quality central library/community and cultural hub in Ballina.
- **Innovative ways to use public spaces and cultural places** such as creating outdoor galleries (e.g. Newtown Art Seat), or a multi-use pavilion in a park (e.g. Burwood Pavilion) etc. Priority areas would be in catchments 2 and 3 that have no local or district level cultural spaces.
- Based on the audit, there no co-working spaces located within Ballina LGA for creative professionals. The **demand for co-working** is expected to continue into the future with the mainstreaming of remote working since the pandemic. A Council-owned or managed co-working facility would be best located as part of or co-located with a library and community hub, near cafes, good public transport access and in a central location (Ballina or Lennox Head).
- **New and upgraded playgrounds**: The Playground Upgrade And Management Plan (Draft) 2021 has identified the opportunity to provide 10 new playgrounds, as well as upgrade in hierarchy of two local playgrounds to district parks,and one local park to a regional level playground.
- **New local social infrastructure in growth areas** including local multi-functional and quality parks/ village greens in all growth areas, aiming to ensure that all future residents in growth areas can walk to a quality local park with a range of recreational amenities for young to old within 800m of their homes.
- **New outdoor multipurpose courts and outdoor exercise equipment** within new and embellished district and high quality local parks.
- **Embellish and improve existing sportsfields** and sporting infrastructure to improve capacity, support increased female participation, and respond to participation trends and interests such as a higher demand for places for informal recreation such as walking, running, cycling and play, and our ageing population. (See separate actions identified through the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020).
- **Shared pathways and recreational links between public open space and community facilities.**

Adopted population benchmarks

Facility Type	Rate of Provision		Source
Central Library	Rates of Provision 1:100,000+	Approximate GFA (Ground Floor Area): 28m^2 per 1,000 people, plus 20% circulation space	State Library of New South Wales
District or Branch library (larger catchment)	Rates of Provision 1:35,000-65,000	Approximate GFA (Ground Floor Area): 35m^2 per 1,000 people, plus 20% circulation space	State Library of New South Wales
Community Floorspace	80m^2 per 1,000 people	All community spaces (inclusive of all subcategories*)	Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028 and City of Parramatta's Social Infrastructure Strategy (October 2020)
Number of community facilities	Integrated multipurpose community facility (District)	1 facility per 30 – 50,000 people Or 1 per catchment	Wollongong Social infrastructure 2018 Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017 (50,000)
	Local community space (a stand-alone facility)	1 facility per 10,000	Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017
	Target group seniors facility	Rate of provision - 1: 15,000 to 20,000 people aged 70+ years (Provided as part of multipurpose community spaces).	Growth Centre Commission
	Target group youth facility	Rate of provision - 1:3,000 young people aged 12 to 17 years	Growth Centre Commission
Cultural facilities	Cultural floorspace	20m^2 per 1,000 people	Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018- 2028 City of Ryde Development Contributions Plan
	Major civic/ performance space	1 regional facility per 150,000 to 200,000 people	Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategy, 2017
	District facility	1 per 60,000 people	City of Newcastle Benchmark
	Local facility	1 per 30,000 people Or 1 per catchment	Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029
Outdoor multi-purpose courts		1:10,000 people	Parks and Leisure Australia, 2021
Outdoor fitness station		1:10,000 people	Parks and Leisure Australia, 2021
Youth Precinct		Rate of provision - 1:3,000 young people aged 12 to 17 years	Growth Centre Commission
Open Space	Open space analysis applies 4 benchmark types: quantity (m^2), access and distribution, function and quality. See Chapter 9 for a more detailed explanation.		
Playgrounds	The Ballina Shire Council – Playground Upgrade And Management Plan was based on a multi-criteria assessment, as well as an analysis of hierarchy and proximity, rather than a traditional population based benchmark. However, the State of the Sector Report on Playgrounds (May 2014) found that the median provision by Local Government is currently around 1:1,000, based on a survey of 89 councils across Australia (including 34 from NSW). Chapter 10 applies this benchmark to the new population for interest and comparison purposes.		

Summary of needs, to inform the Contributions Plan

The following table provides a summary of community, cultural, public open space and recreational needs that can be linked to the demands of an increasing population and future participation trends and preferences of the future community. Sports facility needs have been identified through the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020, which will also inform the contributions plan.

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Community and cultural facilities			
A new multi-purpose library, community and cultural hub in Ballina Town Centre, incorporating: • A new contemporary and flexible central library (approx 2,000m^2) • Multi-purpose community hall (approx 800m^2) that can be used for a range of activities, including seniors groups and seniors day care • Gallery (400m^2) • Town square • Council administration building (increased size from current) • Meeting rooms • Performance space • In association with the development of cafes, and compatible retail uses • Accessible car parking • Storage space • Community kitchen • Study/co-working spaces Based on best practice precedents – approx. 3200m^2 in size.	Ballina, Catchment 1	This action is stated in the Ballina major regional centre strategy 2015 – 2035 Population benchmarking indicates that by 2045, there will be a total demand for 1,992m^2 of library floorspace in catchment 1. Council have identified a need for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre, which could form part of this community hub Benchmarking indicates that there will be a need for an additional seniors space by 2045 and demographics show that Catchment 1 has a very high and increasing proportion of people aged over 70. Best practice trends increasing demand for study spaces as part of community facilities and libraries, as well as access to co-working spaces	Long term
Alstonville Cultural Centre	Catchment 4	Ageing facility Small library size Need for larger, higher quality local halls Concept design completed - recoupment needed	Short
Aboriginal cultural centre	Catchment 1	One of the Ballina Cultural Plan's objectives is: With the Shire's Aboriginal community, promote understanding of local Aboriginal identity, culture and heritage. Council staff as part of the engagement for this project have identified the creation of an **Aboriginal Cultural Centre** as a potential project that could be included in the Ballina 'civic precinct' / community and cultural hub.	Long term

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Expanded library at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural centre	Catchment 2	Explore options so provide an expanded library space at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural Centre, aiming to expand the library to a minimum size of 900m^2 - an additional 365m^2 (based on population benchmarking through to 2045)	Long term
Audio visual upgrades at Lennox Head Community and Cultural centre	Catchment 2	Improve lighting, audio and staging requirements to host bigger events Install automatic tiered seating	Medium term
Library technology upgrades	All catchments	The role of libraries and their services is changing, with access to technology a future role, and important particularly for older people and lower income residents.	Ongoing
Provide more dedicated youth spaces in libraries, especially those servicing growth areas such as Catchment 3 (using Catchment 1's library).	Catchment 1 & 4	Urban release areas are likely to appeal to young families	Ongoing
Upgrades and repairs to Wigmore Hall (including accessibility upgrades as necessary)	Catchment 1	Council staff have identified that Wigmore Hall requires paint stripped, building repairs and a repaint. It also is in need of a new roof.	Short term
Upgrades, including accessibility assessment and upgrades, to local community halls and spaces that are under Council management. Potential candidates for future upgrades and improvements include Ballina CWA Hall, Newrybar Hall, Wardell District War Memorial Hall, Wollongbar Hall and Northlakes Community Centre	All catchments	Community halls are focal points for local communities in Ballina LGA. While many of the halls loved by the people who use them, they are also ageing and will need future upgrades to ensure they remain safe, useable and accessible to the local community. The Active Ageing Plan, 2015 identified the need to provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities (existing and future).	Ongoing
More spaces for creative community participation	Catchment 1 & 2	There are limited creative spaces for the community to participate in arts and cultural activities at a local level across the LGA. Catchment 3 (urban release areas) have no cultural facilities, and there are no provisions in the Contributions Plan or VPA. Through renewal of community assets, ensure that facility design caters for a range of uses, including arts and craft (wet areas, loading docks, extraction etc).	Ongoing
Open Space and Recreation Facilities			
Explore opportunities for local/informal BMX spaces	All catchments	Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020 identified this was one of the top sports in the LGA. Current facility isn't easily accessible for young people.	Ongoing

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
New and upgraded playgrounds	All catchments	As per the Playground Upgrade and Management Plan. In addition, benchmarking indicates that planning for additional playgrounds through to 2045, particularly in catchments 3 & 4.	Short term & long term
Ensure that the Kingsford Smith Reserve Master Plan delivers a major **outdoor event space** that can cater to Regional level events, festivals and celebrations	Catchment 1	As identified in the Place Strategy	Short term
Park embellishments to local and district parks to become higher quality multipurpose open space areas with improved facilities and active transport connections.[1]	All catchments	Best practice indicates that local and district parks should provide a range of spaces and things to do for a range of ages and abilities. While Council has a high quantum of open space, there is a need to embellish some spaces. *Note: May not apply to C3 – open space appears to align with modern open space planning principles (C3's growth is primarily through the development of urban release areas that are already covered by a VPA and Contributions Plan.*	Ongoing
1 outdoor fitness equipment	All catchments, with priority for catchment 2	Participation trends indicate a high demand and seniors equipment is becoming increasingly popular. Benchmarking indicates demand for an additional one station.	
1-2 outdoor multipurpose courts	Catchments 1 & 2	Participation trends indicate a high and increasing demand for informal multipurpose courts. An additional 1.4 courts are needed based on benchmarking.	

1 Based on guidelines in the Parks and Leisure Australia 'Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, 2012', a standard of 3ha per 1,000 people is considered an adequate provision to meets the needs of a community. Overall, the LGA has an average of 9ha per 1,00 people currently, and by 2045 will have an average of 7ha per person. Ballina Shire Council currently meets benchmarking standards for the provision of open space (quantity). However, a number of parks have low levels of embellishment, presenting opportunities to increase the utilisation of some spaces as well as the diversity of recreation options within the parks network for the community. This includes:

- Extending and augmenting the shared pathway network to increase the options available for high amenity active recreation;

- Providing embellishments and active infrastructure, such as exercise stations, bike storage, boat ramps and small watercraft storage at key locations in the open space network. (Carried over from the Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016).

1. Introduction

This section provides background to the project and the approach to the preparation the Ballina Shire Open Spaces and Community Facilities Needs Study, which will inform the Ballina Developer Contributions Plan. Contribution Plan and approach to the Needs Study.

1.1. Background & Scope

Ballina Shire Council (Council) has engaged GLN Planning to assist Council in their review of the Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan for Ballina Shire Local Government Area (LGA). GLN Planning engaged Cred Consulting to undertake a needs study for open space and community facilities[1], informed by a strategic context review and benchmarked demand based on growth. This report, the Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Needs Study (the Needs Study) aims to assist Council to plan for the equitable and sustainable provision of public open space and community facilities that support growth across the LGA. It provides:

- A review of Federal and State Government strategic context documents including 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan and Council's strategies and plans including the existing Ballina Shire Open Spaces and Community Facilities contributions Plan 2016, Ballina Shire Community Facilities and Open Space Needs Analysis Report 2004, Ballina Shire Community Facilities Strategy 2008, Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020, and the Ballina Shire Council Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (Draft) 2021.
- An analysis of the current and forecast population by LGA and planning catchment (smaller geographic and service areas, see Figure 3) and their community, cultural and recreational needs.
- An audit and mapping of existing public open space, playgrounds and community facilities, and a high level assessment (based on Council data) of condition, capacity and utilisation.
- Benchmarking demand for public open space, community facilities and playgrounds utilising industry recognised population and proximity benchmarks appropriate for a regional area.
- Consultation with internal Council stakeholders, and review of previous community consultation completed to inform Council plans and strategies such as Council's four locality-based strategic planning documents: Ballina Major Regional Centre Strategy 2035, Alstonville Strategic Plan 2037, Wollongbar Strategic Plan 2039, Wardell Strategic Plan 2035.
- Review of place based Contributions Plans and Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs), and inclusion of proposed future community facilities and open spaces: Cumbalum Precinct A and Kinvara (formerly known as Cumbalum Precinct B).

The Study Area

The Ballina Shire is locted in the Northern Rivers region of NSW, and approximately 180km south of Brisbane. The Shire is well know for its beaches, creeks, waterfalls and nature reserves. The Shire's main town and commercial centre is Ballina, which is supported by other small towns and centres including Lennox Head, Alstonville, Wollongbar and Wardell (see Figure 3). There are also a number of small villages and districts along the coast and in the hinterland.

The total area of the Ballina Shire is 485km^2 and some 93 percent is zoned rural or environmental protection. A large proportion of the remaining native vegetation is on private land.

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1 It should be noted that it does not include benchmarking or needs analysis for sports spaces such as sports fields, sports specific courts, or indoor recreation as this has been completed as part of the Council endorsed Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020 and was not part of this brief for this Study.

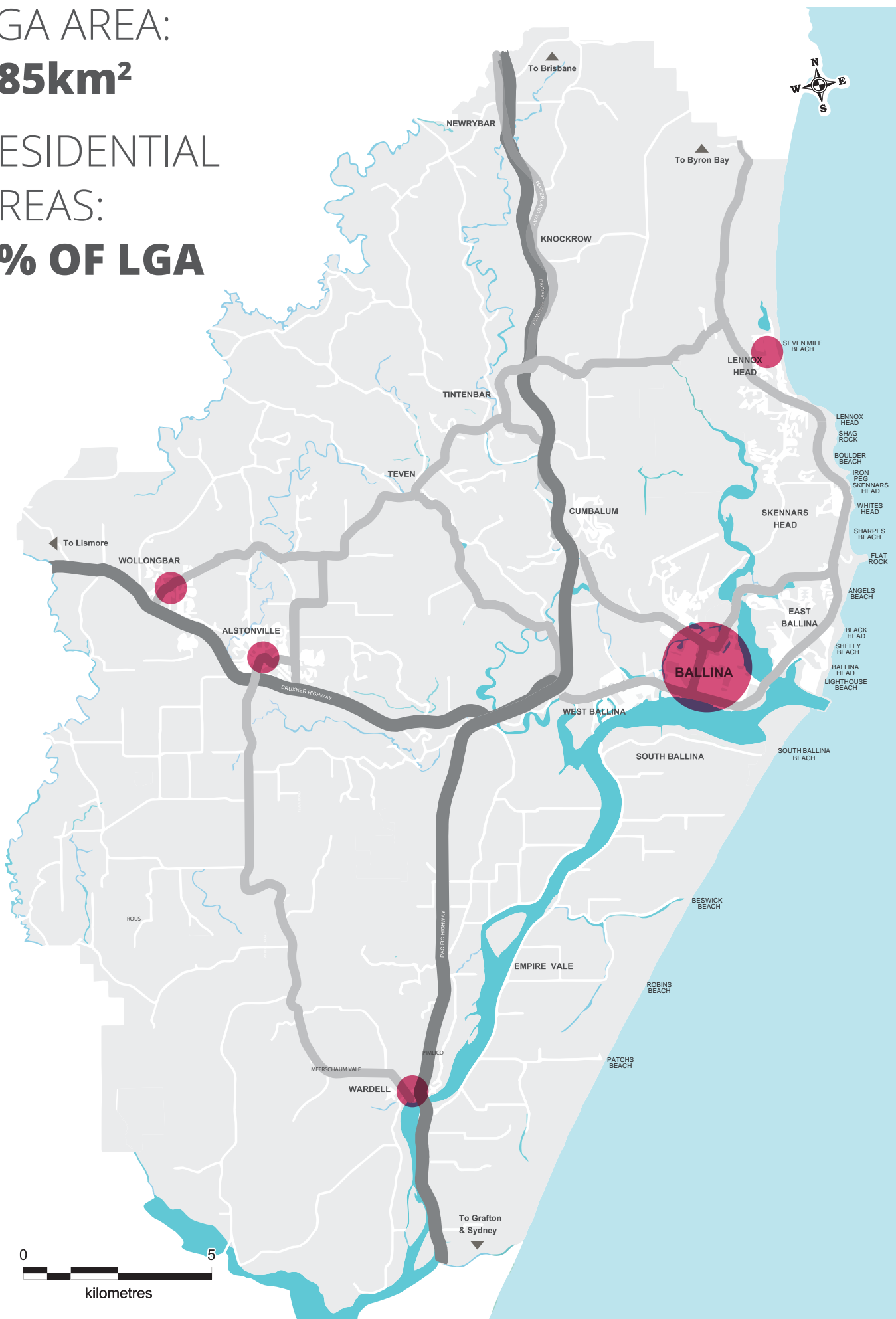# LGA AREA:
485km²

RESIDENTIAL AREAS:
7% OF LGA

Figure 3 - Study Area (Ballina Shire LGA) - towns & centres

(Source: Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027, Ballina Shire Council)

1.2. Definitions and inclusions

Figure 4 provides an overview of the typical types of assets and spaces that are included in the definition of "social infrastructure" for this purposes of this Study. This Study primarily focuses on community and cultural facilities and broader public open space needs. Sports and recreation needs have been identified in the recent Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020. The future contributions plan will consider and be inclusive of all four types of social infrastructure as defined below.

Social Infrastructure

Community facilities

Libraries
- ~ Central library
- ~ Branch library
- ~ Digital library
- ~ Pop-up and temporary tryouts
- ~ Mobile

Community spaces
- ~ Community hubs & centres
- ~ Town halls
- ~ Community halls/venues for hire
- ~ Meeting rooms
- ~ Function centres
- ~ Spaces for youth and seniors programs
- ~ Scout and guide halls

Community -based child care

Cultural facilities
- ~ Galleries
- ~ Museums
- ~ Performing arts centres
- ~ performance spaces
- ~ Theatres
- ~ Maker spaces
- ~ Co-working spaces
- ~ Men's sheds
- ~ Outdoor facilities and spaces used for culture and events
- ~ Artist residencies

Sports & Recreation
- ~ Indoor leisure centre (dry)/ Indoor courts
- ~ Indoor leisure centre (aquatic)
- ~ Outdoor Pools (harbour pools)
- ~ Outdoor multi-purpose courts
- ~ Playgrounds
- ~ Skate/BMX parks & youth plazas
- ~ Outdoor exercise facilities and exercise groups
- ~ Sports grounds including golf courses (covered in the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2020)

Open Space
- ~ Parks / passive recreation space
- ~ Urban/civic spaces
- ~ Sports space (needs are assessed separately in the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020)
- ~ Natural spaces (inc. environmental reserves)
- ~ Waterways and foreshores
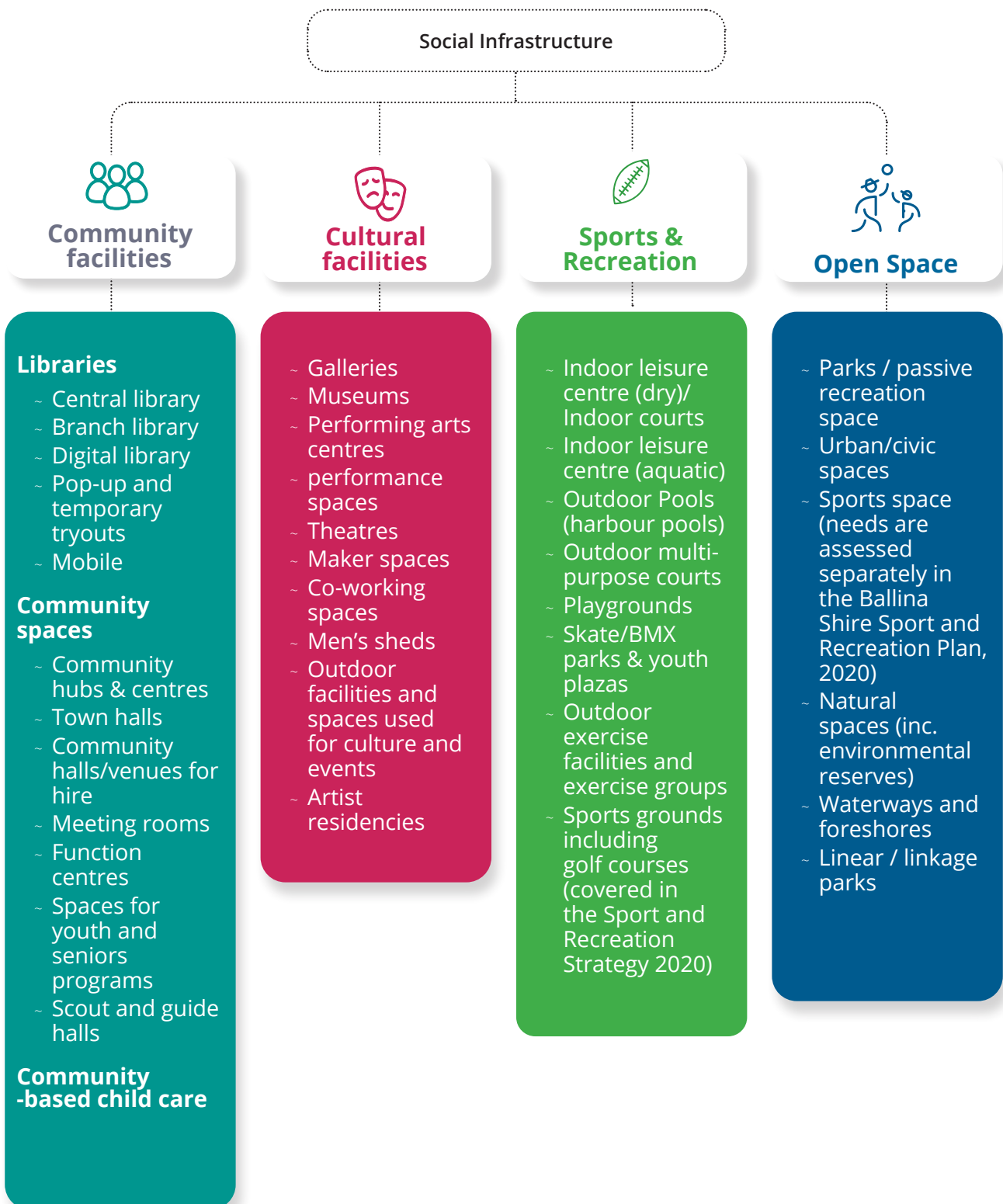- ~ Linear / linkage parks

Figure 4 - Definition of Social Infrastructure and Open Space

1.3. Planning catchments

This Study assesses social infrastructure needs for the Ballina Shire LGA as well as by planning catchment. A planning catchment approach is a useful planning tool to understand the number and distribution of social infrastructure needed based on an area or geographic boundaries.

Given the large geographical area of Ballina Shire, and public transport barriers in some areas, planning with a catchment approach is important to enable equitable access particularly in suburbs which are transport disadvantaged where access to social infrastructure as part of a local network of social infrastructure will be important.

The four planning catchments align with other Council planning strategies and are also based on the data available from abs.gov.au and profile.id.com.au. This ensures the maximum usage of information at catchment and small area level to deliver a highly detailed social infrastructure needs study. The planning catchments are detailed below and shown in Figure 3.

- **Catchment 1 - Ballina** includes the areas of Ballina (Island), West Ballina, East Ballina, Ballina (North) and Wardell-Rural South
- **Catchment 2 - Lennox head** includes the areas of Lennox Head and Skennars Head.
- **Catchment 3 - Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara** includes the areas of Cumbalum-Tintenbar, Teven-Newrybar-Rural North
- **Catchment 4 - Plateau** includes the areas of Alstonville, Wollongbar-Mcleans Ridges
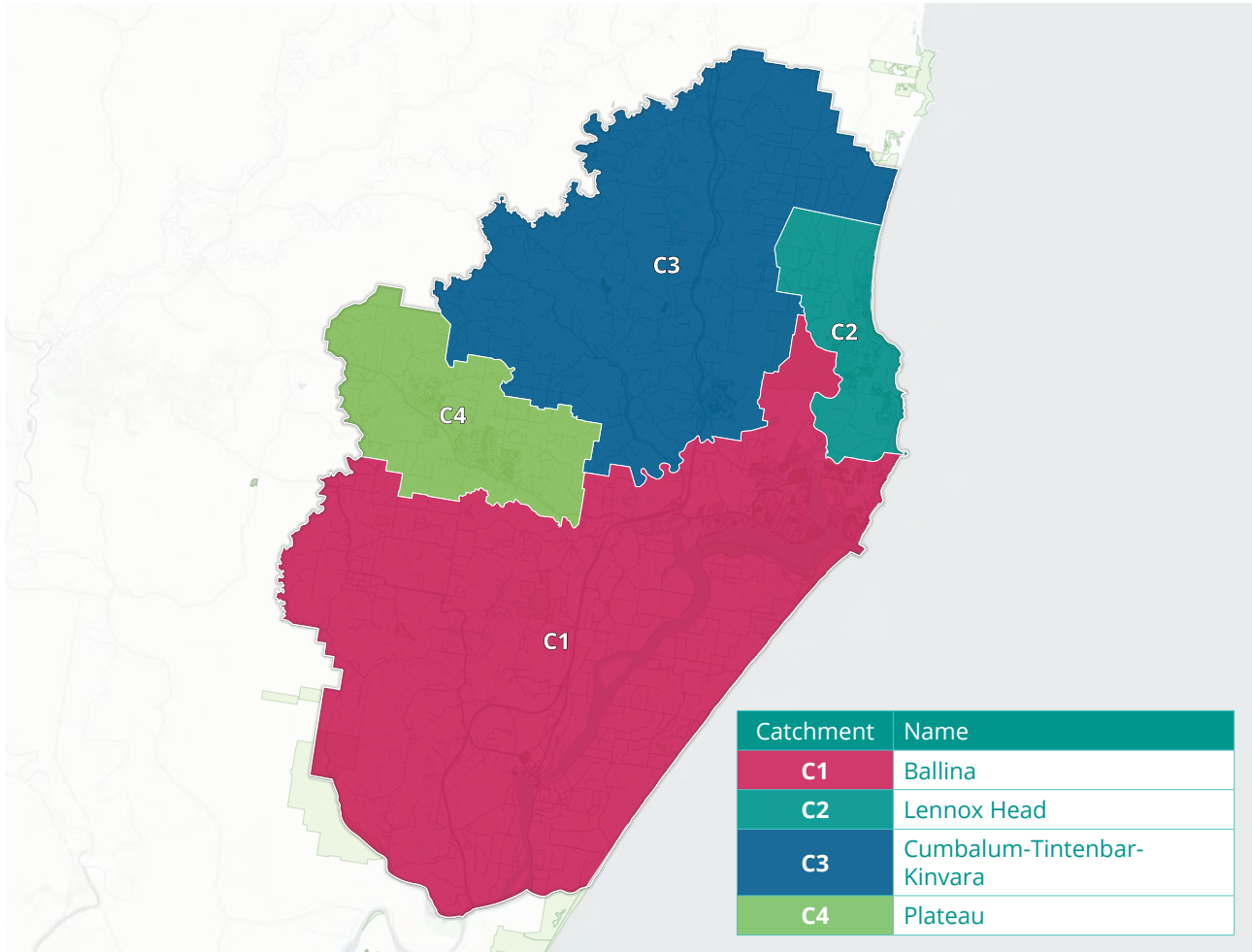

Catchment	Name
C1	Ballina
C2	Lennox Head
C3	Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara
C4	Plateau

Figure 5 - Ballina planning catchments

1.4. The role and benefits of open space and community facilities

Social infrastructure delivers many benefits to communities and places as detailed below.

Social benefits

Community facilities such as libraries, community centres, arts and cultural centres and other community facilities deliver significant social outcomes to individuals and groups and are the places where people can meet (formally and informally), participate in community programs, learn, attend community events, and create social capital. The availability of social infrastructure, both public and privately owned, enables the presence of social supports and essential community and cultural services that are necessary to help people thrive.

Open space and recreation facilities support participation in sport and recreation which also reduces the risk of health conditions and improves social and emotional health and wellbeing. Working and living close to green space is shown to have positive impacts on mental health. Access to green space is linked to increased physical activity, relaxation, social interaction, stress reduction and mental health benefits across all ages, socio-economic groups and genders. However, it is the quality and variety of green space that is important, rather than the number of spaces.

Productivity and economy benefits

Investment in social infrastructure also has economic benefits with libraries, work hubs, subsidised office spaces, early education and care (childcare) and artists studios providing spaces to learn, engage in or access the workforce and activating local economies.

Providing affordable start up, research and development and prototyping spaces encouraging the growth of innovation and provide employment opportunities for local residents that will in turn support the growth of the local economy and the increase reputation as a innovative, forward thinking precinct

Social infrastructure can also strengthen precinct distinctiveness and creativity in the public domain and support sector sustainability to increase access and create opportunities in new markets.

Liveability and place benefits

Liveable places are those that have great access to social infrastructure that enables life-long learning and creative expression; creates healthier communities; and bridges social and cultural networks and supports. Liveable places deliver higher rates of wellbeing and responding improved quality of life for workers and residents. Social infrastructure also enables 'place making,' creating spaces for people to meet, connect and participate in meaningful activities. Social infrastructure strengthens local and place identity and character and contribute to the local identity. Local stories and culture can be ingrained in the building fabric to assist in fostering community identity and ownership.

The co-location of varied community facilities and open and social spaces in one place can support social cohesion and appreciation of diversity through active mixing of people and groups, across the generational, cultural, income and education spectrum. In employment areas they have a key role as 'restorative spaces', ' gathering spaces' and 'break-out spaces'.

Sustainability and resilience benefits

Social infrastructure builds socially sustainable and resilient communities, whether a local neighbourhood, whole LGA or a working precinct. It encourages people to come together, share resources, access services, and meet each-other and, builds cohesion and capacity - the foundations of resilience. Access to social infrastructure helps to build healthy, strong and empowered communities that have more resources and support to draw on when dealing with chronic stresses and stresses.

The way we plan, design, manage and activate open space and community facilities affects how we connect to it and how we value our experience using it. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that open space and community facilities are more important than ever for supporting human connection and our mental, physical and social wellbeing. This includes for our most vulnerable communities. By providing high levels of amenity and quality of life, these facilities and the services they deliver attract people to live in an area and enable them to stay there through all stages of life.
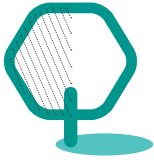
Health benefits

A growing and ageing population, technological advances and life-changing events (such as natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic) are changing we live and work, highlighting the value of social infrastructure such as open space and community facilities in supporting viable communities

Health and wellness is now at the forefront of people's lives and the social infrastructure that supports this has never been more important. Global experts say governments are now likely to focus more on making cities, regions and communities places that people feel safe, secure, healthy and connected.

> *Infrastructure Australia's recent Infrastructure Plan 2021 highlights the importance of social infrastructure that improves the builds quality of life for all Australians, and is resilient to shocks and emerging stresses.*

Making the case for social infrastructure

The United Nations makes the following case for public spaces and facilities to support equity across socio-economic, groups, gender, and age groups:

as the banner of urban civility

improves public health

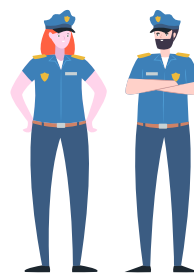enhance environmental sustainability

are tools for gender and age-friendly cities

promote income, investment and wealth creation

are our urban meeting places

enhances urban safety

increases transportation efficiency

offer ideal opportunities to generate citizen involvement, promote equity and social inclusion

make for great cities

(Data source: United Nations)

2. Strategic context

This section provides an overview of National, State and Local Government level strategic documents where they relate to the provision of social infrastructure. Overall, they indicate a need to plan for open space and community facilities that exist as part of a connected work, that are co-located and multipurpose, that can be accessed centrally and within a walkable distance, that increase the provision of cool, green spaces for everyone, and build more resilient, healthy and happy communities.

2.1. Summary of themes

- Access to high quality public recreational open space and community facilities is critical to social, economic and environmental sustainability. It also supports the direction of the Ballina LSPS's vision which 'is safe, with a connected community, a healthy environment and a thriving economy'.
- The NSW Government's Draft Public Spaces Charter states that public space should be accessible and activated, and have the amenity to support everyone to stay comfortably.
- The draft Greener Places Guide emphasises the importance of community access to recreation and exercise, supporting walking and cycling connections, and improving the resilience of our urban areas.
- The Regional Plan for libraries identifies a need for improved and multi-use library spaces that provide access to emerging technology.
- The Women in Sport Strategy acknowledges increased female participation, this aligns with the Ballina Sport and Recreation Plan which seeks to increase the number of females participating in sport and amenities to support this.
- Council's Community Strategic Plan identifies a desire from the community for a harbour pool, improved sport and recreation spaces in new areas, and services for older people.
- The Sport and Recreation Plan 2020 indicates that while Council has a high provision of sports and recreation spaces, there is a need for embellishments for many that are out of date, in average condition, and not multipurpose. It recommends a focus on the funding and delivery of facilities that respond to the needs of the current and future demand of the community.

2.2. Australian Government Strategies

2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan

The 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan is a practical and actionable roadmap for infrastructure reform. This is the first time the Australian Infrastructure Plan has included social infrastructure acknowledging the critical role these physical spaces and assets play in supporting the nation's wellbeing and making Australia a great place to live.

The Plan's vision for social infrastructure is:

" Quality, accessible, future-focused, multi-purpose and economically valued social infrastructure that supports a strong, healthy and prosperous nation and ongoing quality of life for all Australians."

The social infrastructure reform agenda includes:

- 1. Valuing social infrastructure - national consistency
- 2. Uniform access - healthy and prosperous communities
- 3. Embracing technology - optimised delivery
- 4. Education hubs - contemporary learning
- 5. Housing stock -addressing the shortfall (social housing)
- 6. Valuing our culture - enhancing liveability (arts and culture)
- 7. Co-location and precincts - driving better outcomes (collaborative partnerships to create shared, well-used facilities and enable the co-location of health, education and other social facilities in mixed-use precincts).

2.3. NSW Government strategies
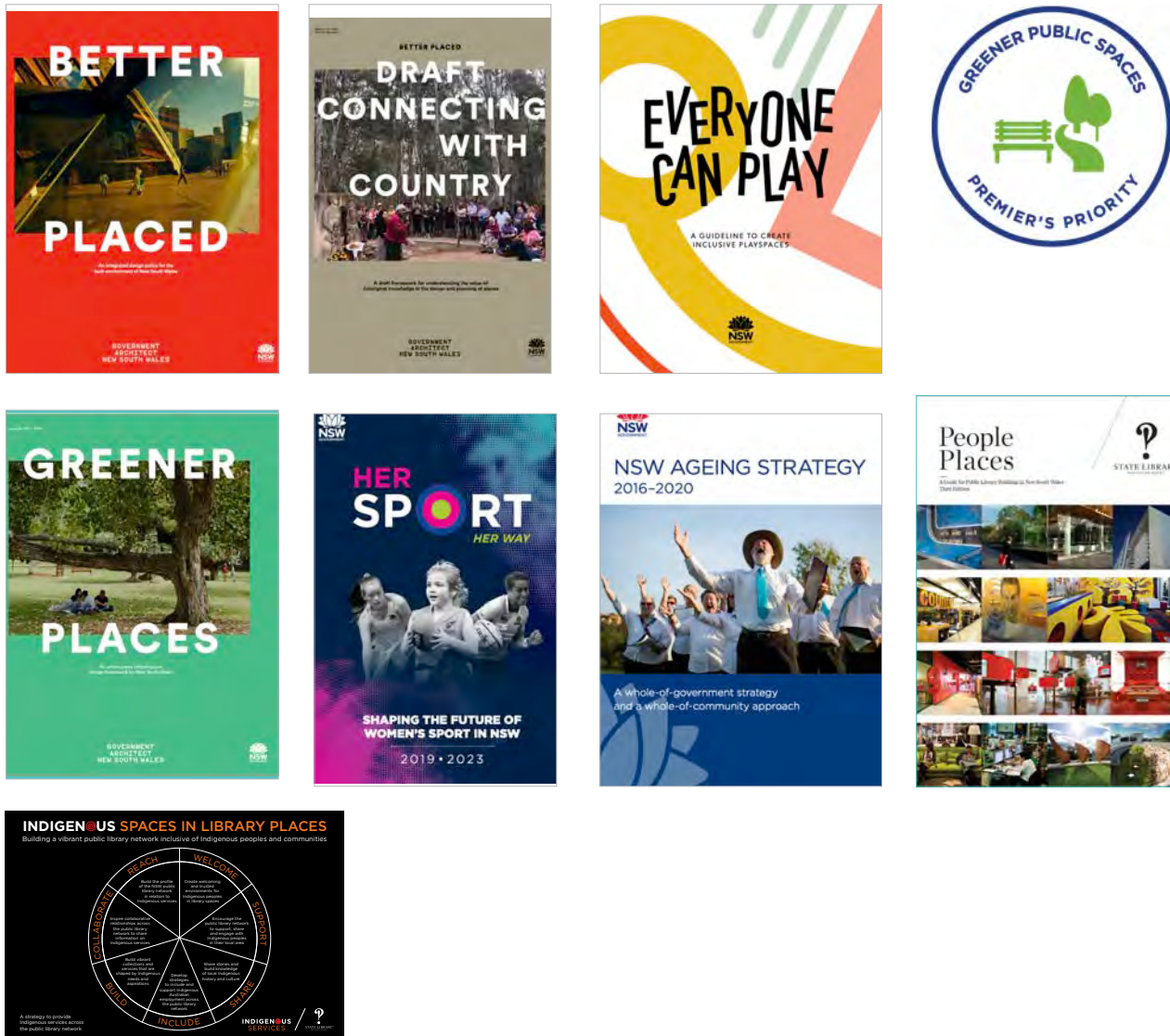
NSW Premier's priorities

The Premier priorities that will inform to inform the Open Space and Community Facilities Contribution Plan:

Greener Public Spaces aiming to increase the proportion of homes in urban areas within 10 minutes' walk of quality green, open, and public spaces by 10% by 2023.

Draft NSW Public Spaces Charter

The Draft NSW Public Spaces Charter has been developed by the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) to support the planning, design, management and activation of public spaces in NSW. The Charter defines public spaces as "all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive". It identifies ten principles for quality public space, developed through evidence-based research and discussions with a diverse range of public space experts. The Charter supports the delivery of the Premier's Priorities. The Charter acknowledges that public spaces - the streets we walk or cycle in, the plazas we socialise in, libraries we learn in, community halls we gather in and parks, playgrounds and sportsfields where we relax or play - are where public life happens.

Public space is important because it unlocks a broad range of benefits that enrich our lives. It connects us to our communities and the people we love, brings us closer to nature, makes us healthier and happier, provides places for celebration, contemplation and creativity and helps businesses to prosper and thrive.

Greener Places Design Guide, Government Architect NSW

The Draft Greener Places Design Guide framework provides information on how to design, plan, and implement green infrastructure in urban areas throughout NSW. The draft guide provides a consistent methodology to help State and local government, and industry create a network of green infrastructure. Greener Places explains green infrastructure, why we need it, and the benefits of providing it. The major components that make up the green infrastructure network fall into three categories:

- Open space for recreation: green infrastructure for people
- Urban tree canopy: green infrastructure for climate adaptation and resilience, and
- Bushland and waterways: green infrastructure for habitat and ecological health.

The Greener Places Design Guide recommends a performance-based approach to assessing open space for recreation demand based on six core criteria that can help guide performance outcomes. All criteria are subject to local precinct considerations:

- Accessibility and connectivity
- Distribution
- Size and shape
- Quantity
- Quality
- Diversity

Better placed, NSW Government Architect

Better Placed is an integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW and seeks to place good design at the centre of all development processes from project definition to concept design through to construction and maintenance. Better Placed is based around seven distinct objectives that together seek to create a 'well-designed built environment that is healthy, responsive, integrated, equitable and resilient':

- Better fit: contextual, local and of its place
- Better performance: sustainable, adaptable and durable
- Better for the community: inclusive, connected and diverse
- Better for people: safe, comfortable and liveable
- Better working: functional, efficient and fit for purpose
- Better value: creating and adding value, and
- Better look and feel: engaging, inviting and attractive.

Everyone Can Play

Everyone Can Play is a best practice resource for councils, community leaders, landscape architects and passionate local residents. It is a reference guide for creating world-class playspaces, designed to include everyone in the community. At the heart of Everyone Can Play is the declaration that play is for everyone – regardless of age, ability or cultural background.

The guide includes a strong focus on inclusive play spaces that invite people of all ages, abilities and cultures to come together to socialise and play. Inclusive play spaces are easy to access, easy to move around in, provide a range of play types and challenges, and are equipped with appropriate facilities in a comfortable environment – allowing people to stay as long as they choose.

The guide outlines design principles to ensure play spaces are universally designed, provide a range of play opportunities for people of all abilities and sizes and challenge people of all capabilities. The principles focus on addressing three questions:

- Can I get there?
- Can I play?
- Can I stay?

Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+

The Cultural Infrastructure Plan is the NSW Government's guide for the planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure, and highlights the increasing recognition of the important role of libraries as cultural and community hubs.

The Plan notes that: "the NSW Government recognises the opportunity for using libraries to increase cultural participation and is committed to assisting their continued development as technology and connectivity access points for communities. To support this evolving role, libraries must provide spaces that better facilitate face-to-face interactions, collaboration and innovation, learning and development for children and safe places for reflection. They must provide access to technology including media production studios."

Under "Strategic Priority 2. Access to space for community participation in culture", the Plan identifies the goal to increase access to cultural infrastructure for all people in NSW, including through the following action with State Library of NSW as the lead: 4.2 Support the continuing transition of libraries to community and cultural hubs, including the creation of spaces for children's learning and development.

People Places: A guide for public library buildings in NSW

The State Library of NSW works in partnership with the public library network and administers grants to libraries each year. It is governed by The Library Council of NSW and this body has a role in advising local authorities on matters of policy and administration relating to library services.

People Places: A guide for public library buildings in NSW aims to assist local councils in planning for the future needs of their communities. It includes a step by step guide to population and service based benchmarking, outlines current trends in public libraries and provides guidelines for developing and delivering library projects.

Indigenous Spaces in Library Places

The State Library of New South Wales has developed an online toolkit to provide guidance to the public library network, as a part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing services dedicated to the local Indigenous population. The toolkit contains helpful tips, guidelines and templates that can be downloaded from the website.

The toolkit provides a number of strategies, tools and case studies, with key strategies including:

- Create a visible Indigenous presence in the library spaces - for example through welcome or acknowledgement signs of the local Indigenous community
- Promote event programs and collections related to Australian Indigenous history and culture.
- Acknowledge and share successful stories and feedback from the Indigenous local population accessing the library.
- Liaise with the local Indigenous groups and associations regarding shared aspirations and programs — for example, Reconciliation groups and Land Councils.
- Explore collaborations with local council and other organisations involved with Indigenous peoples in the community.
- Collect, expose and share local and national resources on Australian Indigenous culture and history.
- Collaborate with local Indigenous peoples and communities to create and share stories — for example, collecting local histories relating to experiences of the Indigenous community, collecting ephemera, collaborating with Indigenous artists etc.
- Develop volunteer and/or other work experience or placement opportunities for Indigenous Australian students in public libraries.

Connecting to Country Framework

Connecting with Country is a framework for understanding the value of Aboriginal knowledge in the design and planning of places. It includes the Design objectives for NSW. Connecting with Country is informed largely by the experiences and knowledges of people who work on, and are from, Countries in and around the Sydney basin. As such, the principles and framework that follow reflect an emphasis on this part of NSW and we acknowledge that further work is required to determine the appropriateness of these principles and framework for the other Countries of NSW.

For local government, the intent of Connecting with Country is to help them respond to and advocate for community needs in local planning policies and projects. The ambition of the commitment to improving health and wellbeing of Country is to help realise three long-term strategic goals:

- Reduce the impacts of natural events such as fire, drought, and flooding through sustainable land and water use practices
- Value and respect Aboriginal cultural knowledge with Aboriginal people co-leading design and development of all NSW infrastructure projects, and
- Ensure Country is cared for appropriately and sensitive sites are protected by Aboriginal people having access to their homelands to continue their cultural practices.
- Connecting with Country provides statements for commitment and principles for action including:
- To help project teams fulfill their commitment to Country.
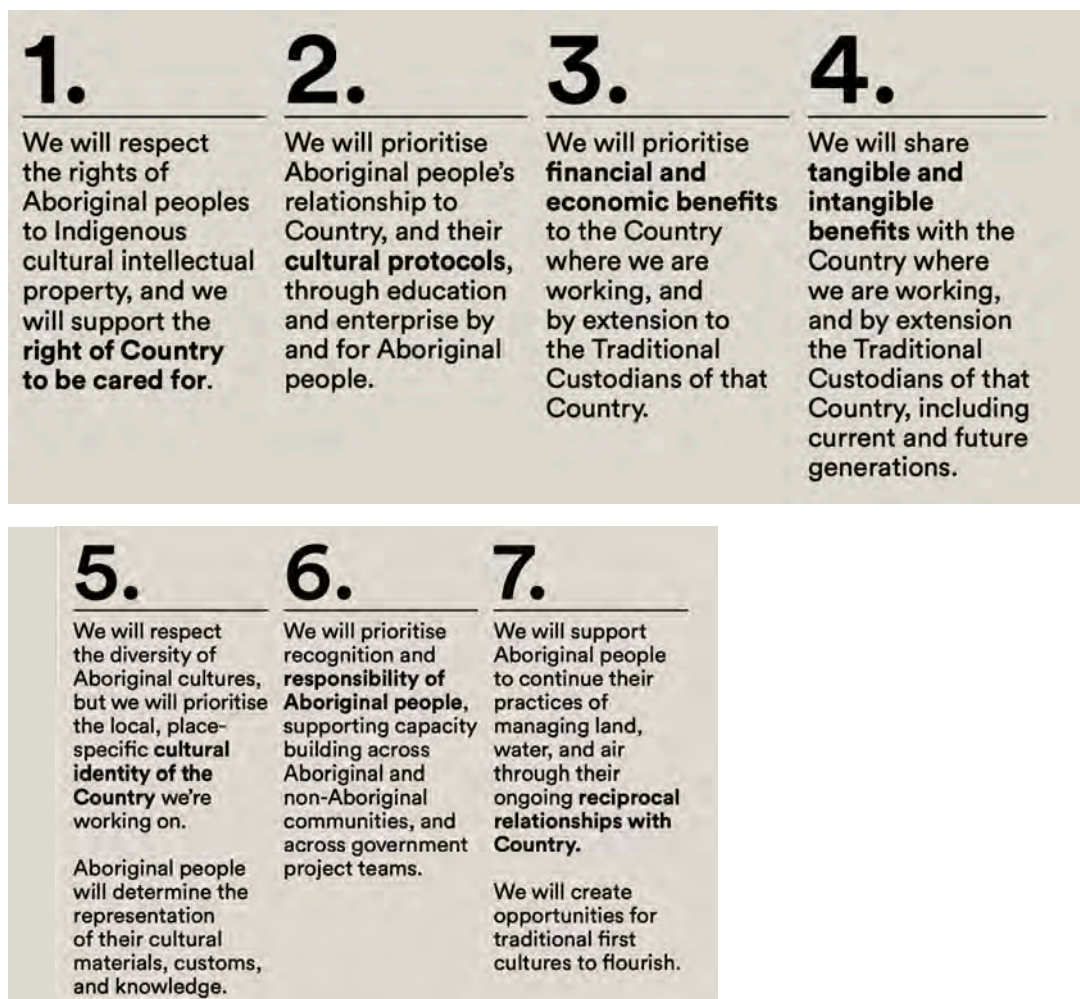- Implementing each the seven commitments.

Figure 6 - Commitments to connecting with Country (*source: Draft Connecting with Country, Government Architect NSW*)

NSW Ageing Strategy

The Strategy includes relevant priorities around health and wellbeing, getting around, and inclusive communities, acknowledging that NSW has an ageing population. Key social infrastructure needs include:

Limited transport options is a major barrier for older people to participate in social and recreational activities and in public spaces, including living in an isolated area, cost, physical barriers, poor- quality footpaths and a lack of accessible parking, and

Social isolation and loneliness are growing concerns and older people needs more public spaces and programs and services to connect with other and improve their health and wellbeing.

Joint Use of School Facilities and Land Policy, Department of Education

The Department of Education's Joint Use of School Facilities and Land Policy encourages shared use of school facilities (such as open space and sporting facilities), with significant investment in new, upgraded or maintained facilities.

Joint use' is where DPIE and other parties make significant investments (land and/or capital) in new facilities, upgrading facilities or maintaining facilities. The asset is typically shared between the school and the other parties over an extended period of time, or the lifetime of the asset. These projects are voluntary and intended to be of mutual benefit to all parties. DPIE recognises that all parties to a Joint Use Program Agreement must have mutually beneficial outcomes that meet their requirements in ways that build trust and openness.

Benefits of joint use agreements may include cost-sharing for maintenance of school grounds and buildings, and improved access to places to be physically active for families and individual community members.

Her Sport Strategy, Office of Sport

The Women in Sport Strategy focus areas include participation; places and spaces; leveraging investment; and leadership. 'Places and spaces' acknowledges that facilities influence participation. The Strategy encourages facility providers to apply a gender lens to the design of regionally significant facilities. Appropriate facilities are those that exhibit universal design principles, prioritise safety, have family friendly social spaces and are clean and easy to access.

Improving the quality of existing surfaces, lighting and amenities is identified as the minimal critical strategy to reduce immediate barriers for women and girls. Equitable allocation of playing spaces, training venues and other resources was also identified as a key need.

2.4. Ballina Shire Strategies and Plans

North Coast Regional Plan 2036

The North Coast Regional Plan 2036 is a 20 year blueprint for the future of the North Coast region. The document provides an overarching framework to guide more detailed land use plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions.

While a series of priorities are included, medium longer terms actions are identified to coincide with population growth and economic change. The vision is to 'create the best region in Australia to live, work and play thanks to its spectacular environment'. The plan will deliver the vision through the four goals:

- The most stunning environment in NSW
- A thriving, interconnected economy
- Vibrant and engaged communities, and
- Great housing choice and lifestyle options.

The Plan identifies Ballina as a strategic centre that provides new housing and employment opportunities. Tourism is identified as a key growth area with the support of major infrastructure i.e. the Ballina-Byron Gateway Airport.

In 2017, the NSW government provided a share of $1.5 billion in funding towards the upgrade of the Pacific Highway in 2016-2017, including more than $954 million towards the Woolgoolga to Ballina project. The government also gave $8.8 million funded by the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund for upgrades to Lismore, Ballina-Byron and Coffs Harbour airports, with an additional $9.5 million identified for potential further works to Ballina-Byron airport.

Ballina Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)

The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is Ballina's plan that will guide the land use planning vision for the next 20 years.

The LSPS themes, planning priorities and actions provide directions for the transition of Ballina to a Shire that 'is safe, with a connected community, a healthy environment and a thriving economy'. The plan places the community, the protection of the environment, job creation through tourism and employment lands, housing diversity and accessibility (through the airport and the pacific motorway) at the heart of the plan.

Planning priorities relevant to community facilities and open space include:

Review community infrastructure needs within the Shire's towns, villages and rural localities and incorporate requirements within the Open Space and Community Facilities Developer Contribution Plan.

Actions to support the priority that are relevant to community facilities and open space include:

- 1.1 Undertake a gap analysis of existing community facilities to establish whether the nature of facility meets community requirements. (Immediate)
- 1.2 Prepare community facility benchmarks and minimum standards for community facilities in existing and proposed urban areas, and rural localities. (Immediate)
- 1.3 Review Council's Community Facilities Strategy and prepare a new Community Facilities Strategic Plan. (Immediate)
- Review Council's Open Space and Community Facilities Developer Contributions Plan. (Immediate)

Ballina Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027

Our Community Our Future is Ballina Shire's Community Strategic Plan that identifies the community's priorities for the next ten years which will provide the framework for Council's goals, strategies and targets.

Vision

The Plan is based on engagement with community members of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds resulting in a vision of:

"The Ballina Shire is safe with a strong connected community, a healthy environment that is treasured and protected with a thriving economy".

The Community Strategic Plan is based on the social justice principles of:

- Equity: There is fairness in decision making and prioritisation and allocation of resources
- Access: All people have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life
- Participation: Everyone has the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decision which affect their lives
- Rights: Equal rights and opportunities for everyone to participate in community life.

Directions and actions

The CSP has four directions, with relevant actions listed below:

- Connected community
- There are services and facilities that suit our needs
- Prosperous economy
- We attract new businesses and visitors
- Improve liveability in the Ballina Shire
- Engaged Leadership
- Council's finances and assets are well managed
- Healthy environment
- Our built environment blends with the natural environment.

Some feedback and priorities from the community included:

"An ocean pool"

"Increase park/leisure space on all future housing developments"

"Show more concern for the elderly and the environment"

"Better public transport"

Specific opportunities relating to the provision of Social Infrastructure has been included in the needs summary chapter of this report.

Active Ageing Plan, 2015

The Active Ageing Plan, 2020 ensures and identifies directions and actions to assist people in the Ballina Local Government Area (LGA) as they age. The population of Ballina is ageing and will continue to age for example, 'In 2001 the median age of our residents was 41 years; in 2011 this had risen to 45 years'.

Relevant directions and actions include that impact open space and community facilities include:

- CC3.1 Provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities
- 1.5 Ensure that all newly constructed community facilities are accessible to older people and people with disabilities
- CC1.3 Monitor the built infrastructure and services delivered to the community to ensure relevant standards are being meet
- 2.3 When planning and designing community infrastructure Council will assess it in terms of its aged friendliness.

Richmond Tweed Regional Library Strategic Plan 2019-2029

In 2017, the four Local Government Areas of Lismore, Tweed, Ballina and Byron signed the RTRL Deed of Agreement, cementing the over 40 year relationship our councils have for joint library service provision in the region. It is one of the biggest regional library services in NSW, providing access to knowledge and information to more than 200,000 residents. Yearly visits to NSW public libraries up from 27 million in 2000 to over 35 million in 2017. Richmond Tweed Regional Library (RTRL) Strategic Plan was adopted in 2019 and provides an overarching strategy for the 11 branches, a Support Service & Family History Centre.

Throughout 2018 RTRL undertook comprehensive consultation to gain a broad understanding of community priorities and aspirations for the future direction and delivery of library services. Key priorities for future libraries in the region included:

- A space to learn and relax, to gather with shared interests along with more educational opportunities were important as were opportunities for community connections. You imagined libraries that are light and airy, connected and responsive to their environment. There was support for spaces for community use for sharing ideas, events, co-creation as well as quiet spaces;
- More variety of services and programs and activities and multi-use space e.g. for reading, studying, to meet people, for education classes, interest groups and activities for children;
- A place you can go to access the latest technology, learn about emerging technologies and utilise services they cannot access at home e.g. downloadable content, digital media, INTERNET access, computers and printing; and
- Residents expressed a very high level of support for hosting of activities such as book clubs, school holiday activities, literacy support programs with 86% of residents supportive or very supportive. Hosting other activities such as community information sessions was not as strongly supported.
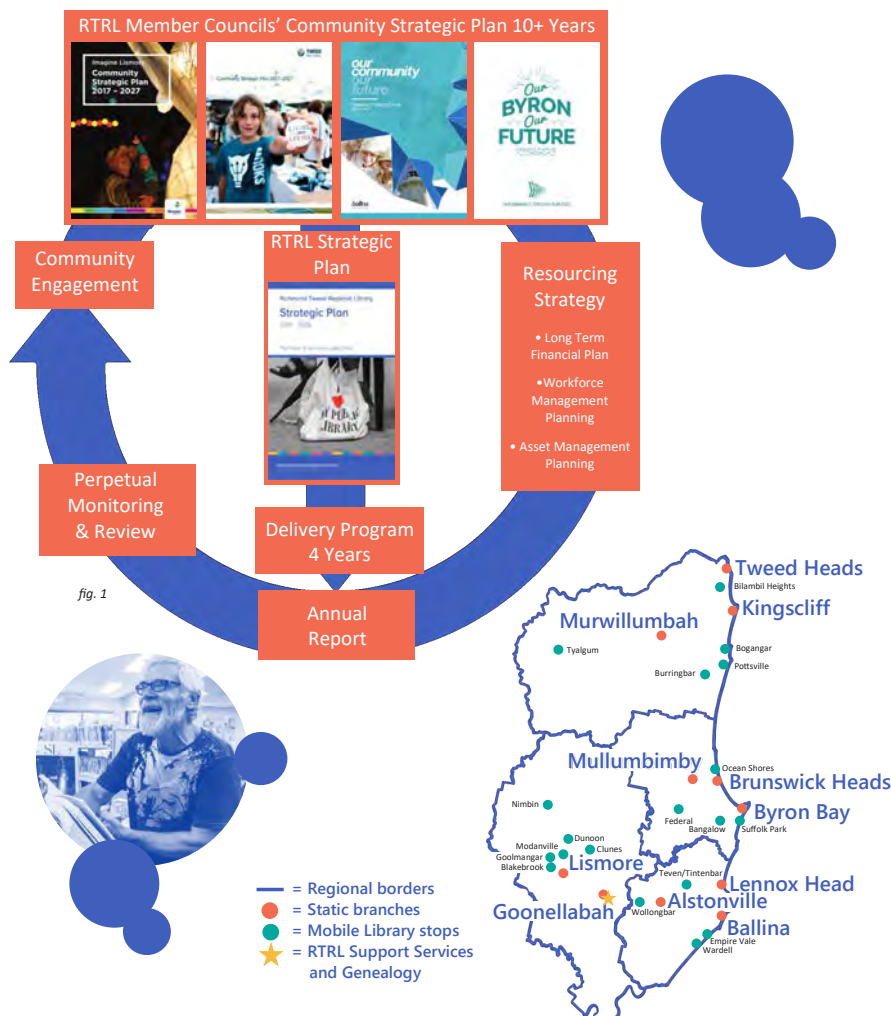

Figure 7 - RTRL strategic context and library locations (Source RTRL Strategic Plan)

Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020

The Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan assessed the current and future sport and active recreation needs of the Ballina Shire community.

Council has identified that the majority of its sporting facilities are aged and require significant investment in order to bring them up to community expectations and standards. A need has been identified to determine a direction for the Shire's sport and active recreation facilities regarding management practices, the servicing of local versus regional sport, facility planning and development prioritisation.

The Strategy identified that overall there are 45 sports facilities (approximately 232ha) that provide a variety of traditional and non-traditional sport and active recreation opportunities to the Shire's residents.

29	6	2	5	2	2
traditional sports parks	lawn sports and golf	aquatic facilities	hard to locate sports parks	indoor sport facilities	surf life saving clubs

Council's Open Space Strategy (2008) sets a desired standard of service for trunk sports park at 1.7ha/1,000 people. Just under half of the Shire's sport and active recreation facilities are considered trunk infrastructure. Based on the current population (43,457) and the desired standards of service of 1.7ha/1,000, the current provision rate equates to 2.79ha/1,000 people, a surplus of 1.09ha/1,000 people. Further, the projected population of the Shire to 2036 is 51,238. Based on the current provision of trunk sports and the desired standard of service of 1.7ha, the future provision rate is 2.36ha/1,000. This presents a surplus of 0.66ha/1,000 people.

Overall, with the exception of a small number of clubs, the needs of the sporting community are largely being met with the majority of sport and active recreation clubs stating that their current number of playing fields/ ovals/ courts were suitable to their needs.

Site audits also identified a number of sports parks, were not being used or leased by sporting clubs, despite the small number of clubs looking for a home ground.

Key recommendations and themes that emerged throughout the plan include:

- **Disability access** - there are limited sport and recreation facilities with disability access. Projects that seek to enhance the accessibility of existing facilities should be considered a high priority for implementation
- **Emerging female participation** - Female participation is increasing in sports including AFL, Football, Cricket and Rugby Union. Project that seek to increase female participants and the provision of female friendly facilities should be considered a high priority for implementation
- **Unisex, multi-purpose facilities** - Female participation has increased. This means that clubs and facilities need to create facilities that accommodate male and females. Specifically, all facilities should be used by a sport, rather than one gender
- **Regional vs Local** - The plan sets clear definitions for regional and local facilities. Regional draws people form across the region whilst Local draws people from the local area
- **Field Irrigation** - Key facilities are in need of being added to a Council program for the installation of irrigation
- **Allocation of primary and secondary users** - Some of the Shire's existing sites and facilities are either at-capacity, or over-capacity. In these instances, the allocation of primary and secondary site users need to be allocated, in order to protect the primary site user from season-creep and to avoid increased wear and tear on the field surface i.e. Hutley Drive Fields is the home of Football. Cricket is a secondary user.
- **Facility hierarchy** - Adhere to the proposed Sport facility hierarchy. This hierarchy is noted in the Ballina Shire Sport
- **Field booking system -** create a more comprehensive booking system for sporting clubs and groups to register for use of sporting fields and courts
- **User pays** - Council is required to take a more direct role in the management of its facilities to maximise utilisation and equitable use as well as to ensure facilities can be used flexibly and re purposed to meet the changing needs of the community

- **Preference for Ballina Shire clubs** - Council's policy needs to be updated in order to provide preference for local Ballina Shire clubs, whilst still allowing outside groups to utilise fields and facilities when available, and
- **Incorporated clubs and emerging activities** - The focus of the Plan and the ongoing provision of facilities for sport and active recreation, is on formal, organised sports, that are managed and operated by an incorporated club.

Council should focus on the funding and delivery of facilities that respond to the needs of the current and future demand of the community. Upgrades and infrastructure development of Sport and Recreation facilities should respond to the themes and key recommendations that are listed above.

Ballina Shire Open Space Strategy, 2008

The Ballina Shire Open Space Strategy 2008 found that there was:

- A good supply of open space exists in the Ballina Shire Council
- The open space that is available does not reflect the communities needs
- There is an over supply of local parks that are often limited by size, location and facilities.
- There is a suitable provision of district parks in some areas with deficiencies in other areas and future population growth will require the provision of additional parks

While the area of playing fields is generally adequate on a Shirewide basis, there are significant localised shortages in Ballina, Lennox Head and Wardell. Significant additional playing fields are required to cater for future growth and, in several districts, to address existing deficiencies.

Council presently requires no contribution from development towards regional recreation facilities. It is considered that as the population of Ballina grows there will be a need to provide additional higher order level facilities and to upgrade regional facilities to a higher embellishment standard.

The provision and funding of non-regional open space to satisfy the needs of future.

Ballina Shire Community Facilities Strategy, 2008

In 2008, Council adopted the Ballina Shire Community Facilities Strategy. It states that as the population of the shire increases there will be a need to provide more community facilities. New types of community facilities will also be required as the population grows and new thresholds are reached.

It also states that most of the core community facilities in Ballina Shire are owned or controlled by Council with the exception of childcare facilities that are increasingly being provided by private enterprise through government funding. A number of community facilities, especially community halls and life saving clubs are located on Crown Land for which Council is the Trustee. The Department of Lands is increasingly taking the view that community facilities are a Council responsibility and any use of Crown Land to establish such facilities requires a rental return on a commercial basis with some discount for community use.

It also states that there are also a number of community halls that are provided by other community organizations, such as halls under the School of Mechanics and Arts legislation, Scout Halls and RSL sub-branch halls. There is little effective difference between these facilities and those owned by Council, as they are available for community use and Council is frequently involved in funding or supporting applications for State government grants for maintenance or upgrading.

It also states that while the bulk of the community facilities in the shire have been established by the community and from Council's general revenue over a long period, the ongoing population growth makes it necessary for population generating developments to contribute to the funding of future community facilities to ensure that existing ratepayers are not subsidising services demanded by new development.

Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (Draft) 2021, Ballina Shire Council

The Playground Upgrade and Management Plan provides an action plan for upgraded and new playgrounds, as well as those that are identified for removal. This includes:

New playgrounds:

- Wollongbar District Park, Wollongbar (Under Construction)

- Riverview Park, Ballina
- Saunders Park, Ballina
- Cawarra Park, Ballina
- Faulks Reserve, West Ballina
- The Serpentine Park, East Ballina
- Ocean Breeze Reserve, Lennox Head
- Caloola Park, Lennox Head
- Aureus, Skennars Head
- Banyan Hill, Cumbalum

Playgrounds to be upgraded in the hierarchy

- Pop Denison Park, East Ballina
- Ross Park, Lennox Head
- Fitzroy Park, Wardell

Existing sites identified for playground removal (at the expiry of the current equipment's economic life):

- Edge Water Park, Ballina
- Jabiru Park, East Ballina
- Silkwood Park, Lennox Head
- Montwood Park, Lennox Head
- Killarney Park, Wollongbar
- Green Park, Wollongbar

Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016

The Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan 2016 determines the local infrastructure levy that applies and helps council meet the needs of open space and recreation facilities that require development, further work and maintenance.

A list of key open space and recreation items as well as community facilities are listed below:

Regional Parks

Provision of a major regional park facility at the Pop Denison Park, in accordance with the Pop Denison Park Master Plan.

Facilitate pop-up entrepreneurial activities such as personal training, recreation equipment and watercraft hire at key locations in the open space network

Provide for and facilitate opportunities for adventure-based recreation in appropriate locations. This might include: low impact mountain bike trails in appropriate natural areas in East Ballina; and water based adventure play equipment in Shaws Bay and/or North Creek and/or Richmond River.

Extending and augmenting the shared pathway network to increase the options available for high amenity active recreation; Providing embellishments and active infrastructure, such as exercise stations, bike storage, boat ramps and small watercraft storage at key locations in the open space network.

Facilitating the Kingsford Smith Park/Missingham Park/Commemoration Park/Spit Precinct as a major event space.

Local Parks

- Council will provide a local parks embellishment contribution that will apply across all new parks across the Shire except Cumbalum. This will include providing 1.5 playground equipment sets per 1,000 people.

District Parks

The following works were identified for funding under the plan because they are well located to serve surrounding district populations:

- Pop Denison Park, Ballina – implementation of master plan improvements and cycle path
- New Wollongbar district park - skate park
- Wardell foreshore open space improvements - boardwalk facilities and public art
- Playing Fields
- Ballina playing fields – improvements to existing facilities on various fields
- Lennox Head playing fields acquisition and works – expand Skennars Head playing fields
- Wollongbar sports fields acquisition and embellishment, including two rugby grounds and lighting; one cricket oval; six tennis courts and lighting; four netball courts; club house facilities; vehicular and pedestrian access, car and bus parking
- Recoupment of part of the cost of a recently provided synthetic hockey field.

Council plans to meet current and future multi-purpose community floor space needs by acquiring land, carrying out works and recouping costs in terms of the following:

- Wollongbar community centre building
- Lennox Head community centre
- Lennox Head community hall
- Wardell Memorial Hall improvements
- Libraries.

Community facilities

- Support local schools and educational establishments into becoming community hubs through: Working with Department of Education to seek to ensure that school-related infrastructure works (including the Ballina High School redevelopment) have the potential to cater to local needs and made accessible to the local community.
- Review the adequacy of community facilities for meeting the current and future needs of Ballina's community, including meeting spaces, low impact indoor recreation and performance spaces.
- Provide appropriate and affordable community facilities, incorporating meeting rooms/spaces, to meet the needs of local community and organisations; Facilitating the appropriate use of public land by community organisations that contribute to, and build the capacity of Ballina's community and cultural life.
- Identifying the most appropriate site/s for such facilities having regard for accessibility cost and complementarity
- Exploring opportunities for local educational establishments to cater for local needs for community facilities.
- Identify opportunities to expand and improve the gallery facilities to Museum and Gallery Industry standards
- Identifying, facilitating and/or establishing shared, affordable artist studio spaces where artists can produce work, engage with other artists and run create workshops (Art Space model)
- Establishing dedicated project space for the delivery of public programs independent from the existing art gallery exhibition spaces
- Indoor recreation spaces
- Provide an indoor sporting facility to meet the indoor sporting needs of the community through advancing the design and construction of a multipurpospe indoor sports facility at Ballina High School redevelopment.

Libraries

Council will meet the future demand for library services by:

- Recouping part of the cost of the recent extension of the Lennox Head Library
- Providing additional flexible library floor space over the life of the plan at the current rate of provision to address future needs.

2.5. Place Strategies

Alstonville Strategic Plan 2017-2037

The community's vision for Alstonville is:

- Ensuring that the village's character, sense of community and quiet lifestyle is maintained
- Providing new housing opportunities that are affordable and provide choice for people to meet changing life needs
- Enhancing village connectivity through the provision of walking paths, cycle ways and a town square
- Fostering employment opportunities
- Maintaining and enhancing our natural environment.

Key themes and drivers relevant to this Needs Study include:

- Friendly welcoming community
- Good access to local services and shops
- Potential to improve community connectedness and facilitate non car access between residential estates and village centre
- Address needs of an ageing population.

Ballina Major Regional Centre Strategy 2015-2035

The Ballina township is identified in the NSW Government's Far North Coast Regional Strategy as a developing major regional centre. The Strategy is focused on the addressing issues around housing density, housing affordability, urban design, an ageing population, economic development, healthy living, infrastructure, recreation opportunities, open space, natural assets and environmental management. The Strategy has six themes:

- Open space and healthy living
- Economic development
- Character, culture and amenity
- Community facilities and infrastructure
- Environment
- Housing.

Engagement for the Strategy identified the following community priorities:

- A desire for enhanced recreational opportunities associated with open space areas and the coast and waterways, through improved infrastructure and amenities
- A desire to see more life and activity in the Ballina CBD, through the provision of more casual meeting spaces, enhanced "street life" and the clustering of boutique retail uses and development a nightlife.
- A need to ensure that public facilities, beaches and waterways, commercial areas and pathway network are connected to and accessible by all members of the community and visitors.
- Improved public transport and parking options.

Strategic actions include:

- Embellish foreshore open space, incorporating improved shade, parking, play equipment, amenities and landscaping at key locations
- Facilitate the construction of an ocean pool at convenient, cost-effective and achievable location
- Accessibility of change rooms and public amenities at key location in the open space network.

Wollongbar Strategic Plan 2018 - 2039

The community's vision for Wollongbar is:

- Ensuring that the sense of community and wellbeing present in Wollongbar is maintained
- Ensuring that Wollongbar continues to grow so as to facilitate well planned housing choice and employment opportunities
- Ensuring the infrastructure such as footpaths, parks, as well as shops and services continue to be provided and enhanced.

Key themes and drivers relevant to this Needs Study include:

- Improve pedestrian and cycle pathway network
- Wollongbar Sports Fields complex
- Wollongbar District Park - proposed - district level park on the corner of Plateau Drive and Rifle Range Road including diverse infrastructure for all age groups
- Review Contributions Plan to ensure it supports community building to 2039
- Encourage the establishment of Wollongbar specific service and community groups.

Wardell Strategic Plan 2015-2035

The community's vision for Wardell is:

- Creation of a vibrant and beautiful riverside village whilst retaining small village atmosphere
- Encourage tourism centred on the river and based on arts and crafts themes
- Working towards better connecting our villages to make it more accessible
- Enhancing our village through village entry and street landscaping, building maintenance, and new buildings with special character
- Ensuring that future development is staged, progressive and affordable.

Key themes and drivers relevant to this Needs Study include:

- Opportunities or events and festivals, river tours, arts and crafts
- Boardwalk, walkways and footpaths to improve accessibility/connectivity within village
- Potential for a cycle route linking Wardell and Ballina
- Creation of a vibrant village centre which has community building benefits.

2.6. Existing contributions plans & VPAs

Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan 2016

The following summary are extracts from the Contributions Plan 2016:

This Plan enables Ballina Shire Council (Council) to levy section 94 contributions for certain public amenities and services where new development will or is likely to increase the demand for these facilities.

The public services and amenities required to meet demands of the expected future development, and which are levied for under this Plan, are as follows:

- Open space and recreation facilities generated by expected development throughout the Shire;
- Community facilities generated by expected development throughout the Shire; and
- Access and transport facilities generated by expected development in the Wollongbar
- Urban Expansion Area (WUEA).

The Plan sets out:

- The relationship between the expected future development in the Shire of Ballina and the public amenities and services required to meet the demands of that development;
- The formulas to be used for determining the contributions required for different categories of public amenities and services;
- The contribution rates for the anticipated types of development in the different areas of the Shire of Ballina;
- Maps showing the location of the public facilities proposed to be provided by the Council supported by a works schedule setting out an estimate of their cost; and
- The administrative and accounting arrangements applying to section 94 contributions that are required by this Plan.

A number of the needs identified in the 2016 Contributions Plan have been delivered. The ones that are not yet completed, are expected to carry over into the new Contributions Plan.

Cumbalum Urban Release Area Precinct A, Contributions Plan 2015

Cubmalum Precinct A (which is the area immediately to the north of the Ballina Heights Estate to Sandy Flat) has a contributions plan already prepared which includes provision for:

- 4 hectares of planning fields + amenities
- 1 hectare district park
- 1,000m^2 community hall

2.7. Existing VPAs

Cumbalum Precinct B Voluntary Planning Agreement 2012

Kinvara (formerly known as Cumbalum Precinct B, which includes the land to the north of Sandy Flat to Ross Lane) has a voluntary planning agreement in place which provides for (refer to page 24 onwards of attachment VPA). The precinct has an estimated lot yield of approximately 2145 lots. The VPA requires the provision of open spaces and community facility infrastructure as the development progresses in stages, based on the release of 'final lots' (being lots capable of accommodating dwellings).

In summary, the VPA provides for the following (including the dedication of land):

Active Open Space

Active Open Space infrastructure at a rate per 300 final lots:

- 1 playing field
- 1 court
- Clubhouse and amenities
- Car parking

Provided in a facility having a minimum area of 1.4 hectares, collocated to occupy a total area of 4 hectares, in a location adjacent to the Precinct A playing fields (which are to be built immediately to the south).

> *Therefore, 2145 lots divided by 300 = 7.15 Active open spaces (min 1.4 Ha each)*
>
> *Equal to a total of 100,100m^2 (10ha) of active open space.*
>
> *Note: However, the written text refers to 4ha.*

Passive Open Space

- **District parks** comprising 4,050m^2 per 300 final lots, embellished with walking paths, picnic shelters, BBQ facilities and play equipment

> *Therefore, 2145 lots divided by 300 = 7.15 District Parks of a size of 4,050m^2 (0.4ha*

- **Local parks** at a rate of 1 park, comprising a minimum area of 2100m^2 per 240 final lots, embellished with play equipment and located such that all dwellings will be within 400m of a local park.

> *Therefore, 2145 lots divided by 240 = 8.9 local parks of a size of 2,100m^2 (0.21ha).*
>
> *Equal to a total of 18,690m^2 (1.8ha) of local park spaces.*

Community Facilities

- Multi-purpose community halls are to be provided comprising a minimum of 250m^2 GFA per 880 final lots. Each hall is to include an auditorium of 170m^2, car parking and landscaping and are to be centrally located.

> *Therefore, 2145 lots divided by 880 = 2.44 x 250m^2*
>
> *= 609m^2 of total community facility floorspace*

3. Current and forecast population

This section provides an overview of the community profile of the existing population within the Ballina Shire LGA and regional NSW, and provides a forecast of the estimated future population utilising data from the 2016 ABS Census obtained from profile.id and atlas.id, and forecast.id.

3.1. Total population

In 2016, Ballina Shire had an estimated resident population (ERP) of 42,629 people. Ballina Shire is forecast to grow from 42,629 to 51,238 by 2036 and 56,455 by 2045 (an increase of 13,826 people)

A high proportion of Ballina Shire's forecast population growth will be in the age group of 70 years and over with 3,923 new residents in this age group or around 45% of the total forecast growth.

3.2. Population characteristics

In 2016, the Ballina Shire LGA had:

- A population density of 0.86 persons per hectare
- A median age of 48
- An average household size of 2.33 persons
- A median household income of $1,152 per week
- A SEIFA disadvantage index of 1,003
- 5.9% of residents were unemployed in 2016
- 3.3% of the population of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 6% of residents require assistance due to disability
- 24% of households do not have Internet connection
- 21.9% households are rented privately, and
- 9.9% of youth (aged 15-24) are disengaged (not employed or in education).

3.3. Age profile

As shown in Table 1 overall, the Ballina Shire was characterised by an ageing population with a higher proportion of people aged 50+ than Regional NSW, and NSW. Comparing the area to Regional NSW and NSW the Ballina LGA has:

- A lower proportion of children aged 0 to 4 years (5.9% compared to 6.6% and 6.3%).
- A lower proportion of children aged 5 to 11 years (5.0% compared to 5.9% and 6.2%)
- A higher proportion of young people aged 12 to 17 years (7.3% compared to 6.9% and 7.1%).
- A much lower proportion of young people aged 18 to 24 years 5.7% (compared to 8.0% and 9.0%)
- A much lower proportion of young workforce aged 25 to 34 years 8.6% (compared to 11.1% and 14.3%).
- A higher proportion of older workers and pre-retirees aged 50 to 59 years (14.7% compared to 13.8% and 12.8%).
- A higher proportion of older people and seniors 13.4% (compared to 11.4% and 8.9%).
- The median age of the area is 48 which is much higher than that of Regional NSW (43) and NSW (38).
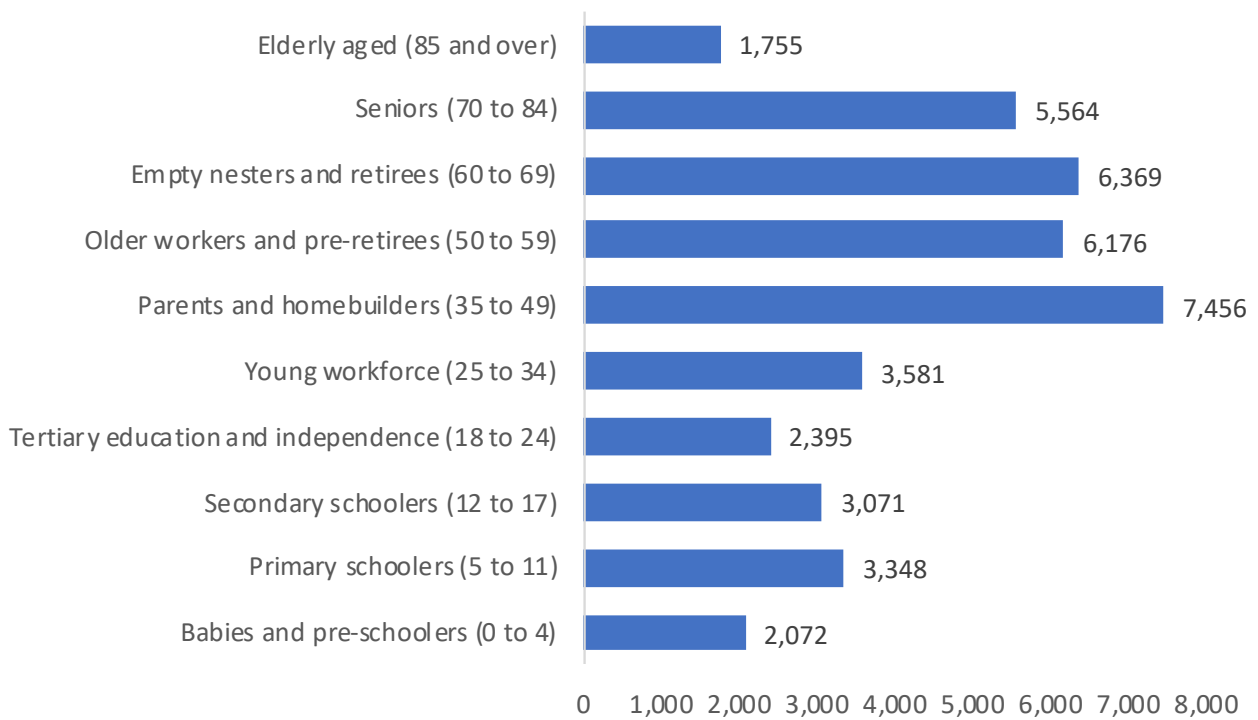
Figure 8 - Existing population age groups in Ballina Shire LGA (Data source: profile.id)

Ballina has a much higher proportion of people over 50 years compared to regional NSW. The LGA also has a lower proportion of people less than 25 years compared to Regional NSW.
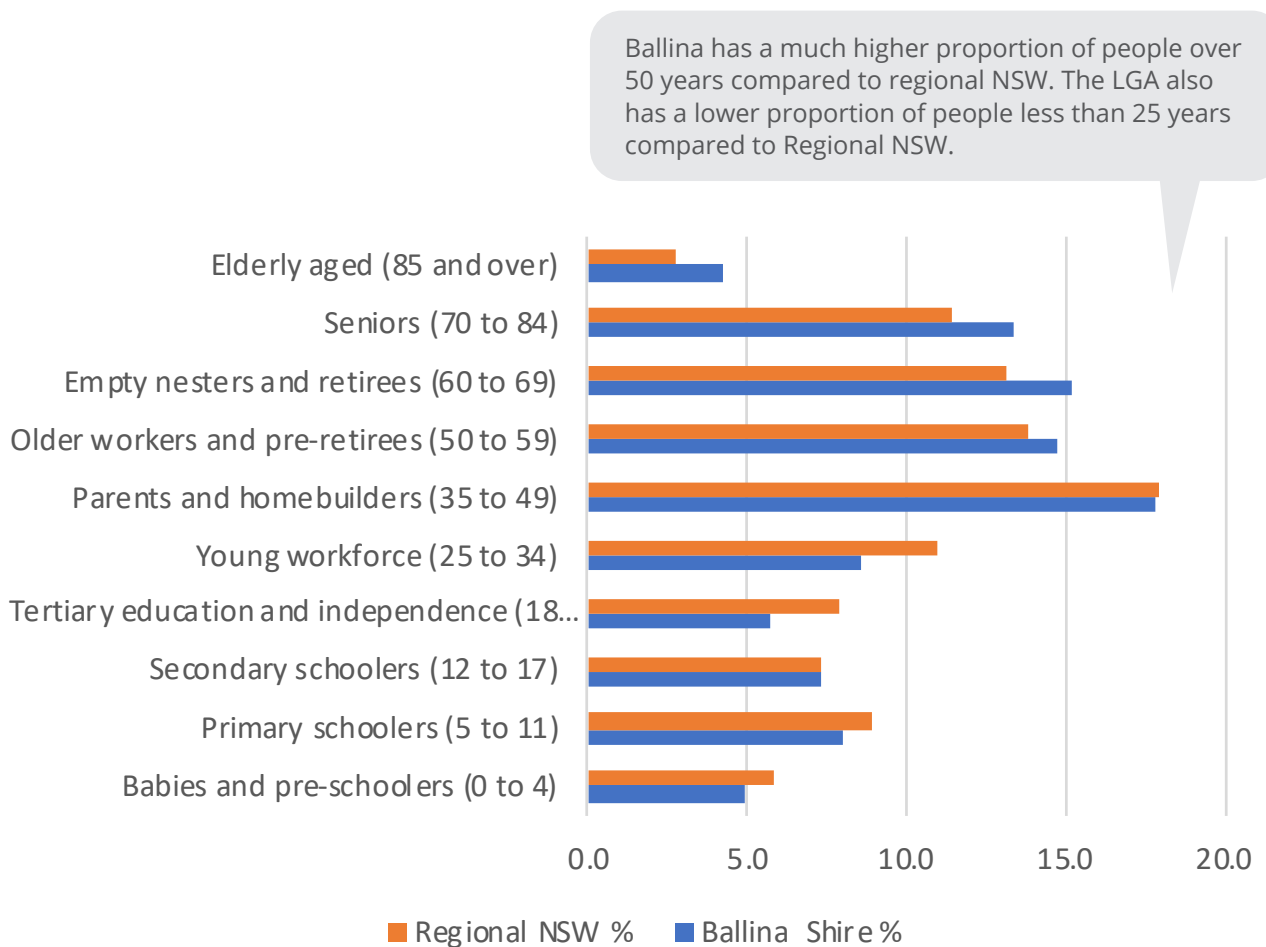

Regional NSW %   Ballina Shire %

Figure 9 - Existing population age groups in Ballina Shire LGA vs Regional NSW (Data source: profile.id)

3.4. Cultural diversity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

At 3.3% of the population Ballina LGA has a higher average population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island residents than NSW (2.9%), but lower than Regional NSW with a total of 5.5% of people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander. The highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people within the LGA was in the Wardell - Pimlico and District at 9.2% of the population, indicating an opportunity to increase visibility in public open space and community and cultural facilities.

Less cultural and linguistic diversity

As shown in Table 1, approximately 11% of the population in the Study Area were born overseas, a similar proportion compared to Regional NSW (11%) and a lower proportion compared to NSW (28%).

The Study Area has a lower proportion of residents who speak a language other than English (3.7%) compared to Regional NSW (5.8%) and NSW (25.1%).

3.5. Employment, education and youth

Income and wellbeing

Income

When compared to regional NSW, Ballina has a slightly lower median household income $1,152 compared to Regional NSW $1,162 and NSW $1,481.

SEIFA Index

Ballina's SEIFA disadvantage index score of 1,003 is slightly higher than both NSW (1,001.9) and Regional NSW 971.0).However, Ballina (Island) has a much lower SEIFA rating of 904.7 indicating much higher levels of disadvantage.

Education and Employment

Tertiary qualifications

Ballina Shire LGA is less educated than the other areas. 18.8% of people in Ballina have a tertiary qualification 23.4% are education across NSW and 14.5% of people in Regional NSW have tertiary qualifications.

Employment

The unemployment rate was lower in Ballina at 5.9% compared to 6.6% in

3.6. People aged 70+

Table 2 on page 39 shows that the largest proportion of people aged 70+ live in the Ballina (Island) area (2,054 people or 28.2%. This was followed by Alstonville which had 1,267 people aged 70+ (22.4%), East Ballina 829 aged 70+ people (14.8%) and East Ballina 829 aged people 70+ (14.8%). Areas that have a high proportion of 50+ people should have accessible and age friendly open space and community facilities.

Table 1 - Demographic indicators. Ballina Shire LGA, Regional NSW and NSW (source: https://atlas. id.com.au/ballina). Arrows indicate higher or lower (>2%) than the Regional NSW average.

Demographic indicators	Ballina Shire LGA		Regional NSW		NSW	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Population overview						
2016 ERP	42,993	-	2,643,536	-	7,732,858	
2011 ERP	40,747	-	2,512,935	-	7,218,529	
2016 Median Age	48	-	43	-	38	
Population Density	0.86	-	0.03	-	0.09	-
People with disability	2,518	6.0	165,296	6.3	402,048	5.1
ATSI	1,372	**3.3 ▼**	145,274	5.5	216,176	2.9
Age Overview						
0 to 4	2,079	5.0	155,360	5.9	464,970	6.2
5 to 11	3,329	7.9	235,635	8.9	659,414	8.8
12 to 17	3,065	7.3	194,070	7.3	528,495	7.1
18 to 24	2,400	**5.7 ▼**	211,134	8.0	671,382	9.0
25 to 34	3,592	**8.6 ▼**	293,536	11.1	1,067,524	14.3
35 to 49	7,425	17.7	476,805	18.0	1,495,329	20.0
50 to 59	6,162	14.7	365,903	13.8	953,426	12.8
60 to 69	6,440	**15.4 ▲**	345,367	13.0	798,540	10.7
70 to 84	5,632	**13.4 ▲**	301,291	11.4	661,484	8.9
85 and over	1,763	**4.2 ▲**	71,233	2.7	167,045	2.2
Cultural and linguistic diversity						
Born Overseas	4,607	11.0	298,398	11.3	2,066,127	27.7
Non-English speakers (Fluency)	127	0.3	22,701	0.9	336,329	4.5
LOTE	1,555	**3.7 ▼**	153,412	5.8	1,877,922	25.1
2016 % recent arrivals	475	**10.3 ▼**	44,641	14.9	424,595	20.5
Employment, education and youth						
2016 unemployment rate	1,097	5.9	79,051	6.6	225,684	5.9
University Qualifications	6,547	**18.7 ▲**	316,064	14.6	1,422,843	23.4
Disengaged youth (aged 15-24 not employed or in education	390	**9.9 ▼**	36,326	11.8	84,613	9.0
University Qualifications	6,550	**18.8 ▲**	311,936	14.5	1,424,713	23.4
SEIFA	1,003	-	971	-	1,001	-
Household - composition, structure, tenure						
2016 Average household size	2.33	-	2.41	-	2.61	
2016 median household income	1,152	-	1,166	-	1,481	-
Couples with children	4,055	**23.1 ▼**	267,930	25.4	875,264	32.5
Couples without children	5,062	28.8	285,009	27.0	670,870	24.2
Lone persons	4,598	26.2	269,364	25.5	620,783	22.4
Group households	555	3.2	32,214	3.1	109,004	4.2
Renting privately	3,851	21.9	227,732	21.6	701,815	25.3
(Households) Internet connection	13,274	**75.6 ▲**	771,036	73.1	2,171,135	78.2
High density dwellings	279	1.5	29,897	2.5	466,690	15.3
Separate Houses	12,760	**66.8 ▼**	965,443	80.2	1,986,588	64.9

Table 2 - People aged 70+ who live in Ballina per small area (source: 2016 ABS census data)

	Area	Population # of aged 70+	Population % of aged 70+	Total pop.
C1	Ballina			
	Ballina (Island)	2,054	28.2	7,278
	West Ballina	698	23.1	3,018
	East Ballina	829	14.8	5,598
	Ballina (North)	480	29.3	1,640
	East Ballina	829	14.8	5,598
	Wardell - Pimlico and District	251	12.8	1,968
	Total	5,141	20.5	25,100
C2	Lennox Head			
	Lennox Head - Skennars Head	797	10.6	7,529
	Total	797	10.6	7,529
C3	Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara			
	Cumbalum - Newry Corridor	276	9.5	2,907
	Rural North - Teven - Brooklet	151	8.8	1,711
	Total	427	9.15	4,618
C4	Plateau			
	Alstonville	1,267	22.4	5,657
	Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridges	348	12.3	2,833
	Total	1,615	17.35	8,490
	Ballina Shire	7,395	17.7	41,887
	Regional NSW	372,524	14.1	2,650,334
	New South Wales	828,529	11.1	7,469,044
	Australia	2,487,758	10.6	23,401,892

3.7. Future population forecast

This section provides an analysis of population forecasts for Ballina Shire LGA and at a planning catchment level using forecast.id population forecasts and internal calculations.

It should be noted that forecast.id provided forecast population data for the years 2016 to 2036, and the forecast population for 2041 and 2045 was calculated by Cred Consulting by calculating the average annual population growth across the planning catchments from 2016 to 2036, and extrapolating this data for the years 2041 and 2045.

Table 3 overpage shows the forecast population growth from 2016 to 2045 - an increase of approximately 13,826 people. Figure 12, also overpage, provides a population growth heat map - illustrating that the northern part of the catchment is (closest to Byron Bay and inclusive of the Cumbalum urban release area) will experience the largest amount of growth. The increase in population and dwellings will be accommodated largely in existing zoned residential release areas located at Cumbalum, Kinvara, Lennox Head, Skennars Head, Ballina Heights, West Ballina and Wollongbar[1].

Figure 10 shows the percentage of growth from 2016 to 2045 across the four catchments. Figure 11 shows the quantity of growth (number of people) across the catchments.

They indicate that now and in the future Ballina Catchment will be the most populated, however it is only forecast to grow by 8%. While Lennox Head is home to a relatively lower proportion of population in 2016, it is forecast to grow by 67% and will be the second most populous Catchment by 2045. Plateau Catchment is forecast is grow by 39% and will be the third most populous Catchment by 2045. Cumbalum-Tintebar-Kinvara Catchment is forecast to grow by a significant 71%, it will continue to be the least populated of the four catchments.

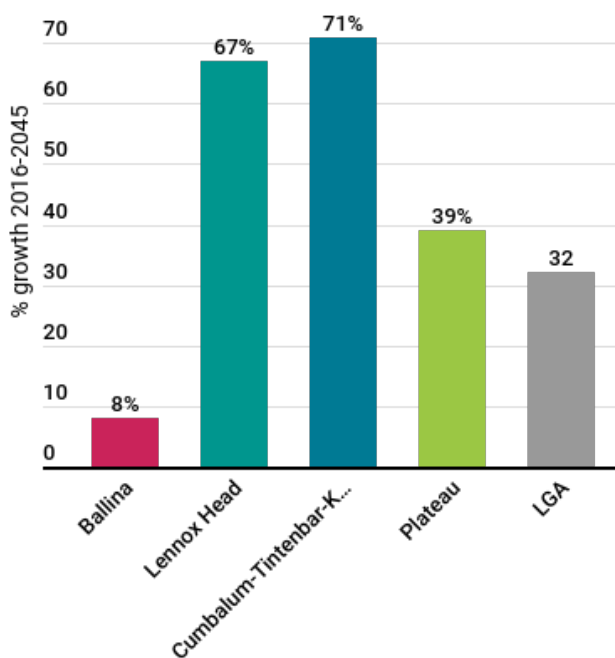

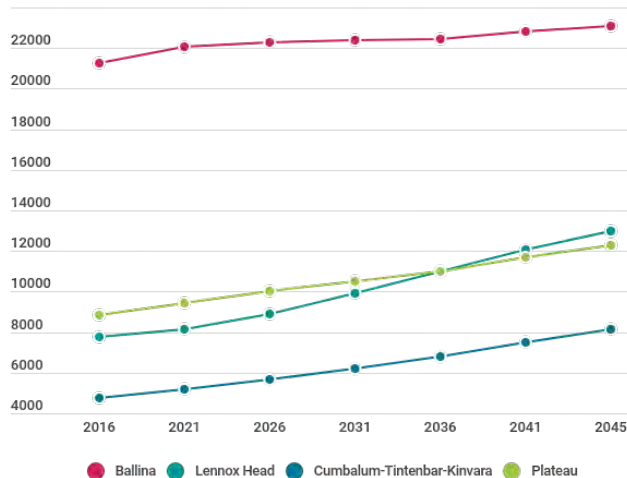Figure 10 - Population growth (%) by catchment and LGA

Figure 11 - Population growth (number of people) by catchment and LGA

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1   Ballina Shire Council – Living in Paradise Our Vision Our Future Local Strategic Planning Statement

C1 - Ballina

This Catchment had a population of 21,277 people in 2016 and this is forecast to increase to 23,074 by 2045. Of the smaller areas in this Catchment, Ballina North and Ballina Island will have the least population growth of all the catchments, with an additional +1,797 people.

C 2 - Lennox Head

This Catchment had a population of 7,784 people in 2016 and this is forecast to increase to 12,968 by 2045. Of the smaller areas in this Catchment, Lennox Head smaller area will have the most population growth of an additional + 2,098 people.

C 3 - Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara

This Catchment had a population of 4,755 people in 2016 and this is forecast to increase to 8,136 by 2045. Of the smaller areas in this Catchment, Cumbalum-Tintenbar will have the most population growth of an additional + 1,863 people. The Cumbalum Ridge development will contribute the major share of the anticipated population growth in this catchment.

C 4 - Plateau

This Catchment had a population of 8,813 people in 2016 and this is forecast to increase to 12,277 by 2045. Of the smaller areas in this Catchment, Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridges will have the largest population growth of an additional + 1,773 people.

Table 3 - Forecast population by Planning Catchment (Source: Profile Id 2016-2036, Cred Consulting 2041 & 2045)

	Catchment	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2045	Change from 2016 to 2045
	Ballina								
C1	Ballina (Island)	7,110	7,426	7,528	7,589	7,655	7,798	7,914	+804
	West Ballina	3,082	3,171	3,247	3,266	3,252	3,296	3,332	+250
	East Ballina	5,674	5,726	5,615	5,552	5,548	5,518	5,493	-181
	Ballina (North)	1,695	2,098	2,293	2,303	2,320	2,509	2,672	+977
	Wardell - Rural South	3,716	3,661	3,611	3,657	3,680	3,670	3,663	-53
	Sub-Total	**21,277**	**22,082**	**22,294**	**22,367**	**22,455**	**22,791**	**23,074**	**+1,797**
	Lennox Head								
C2	Lennox Head	6,515	6,809	7,210	7,866	8,613	9,238	9,769	+3,254
	Skennars Head	1,269	1,315	1,682	2,054	2,401	2,816	3,199	+1,930
	Sub-Total	**7,784**	**8,124**	**8,892**	**9,920**	**11,014**	**12,054**	**12,968**	**+5,184**
	Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara								
C3	Cumbalum - Tintenbar	2,364	2,769	3,191	3,694	4,227	4888	5,491	+3,127
	Teven - Newrybar - Rural North	2,391	2,436	2,493	2,519	2,563	2,608	2,645	+254
	Sub-Total	**4,755**	**5,205**	**5,684**	**6,213**	**6,790**	**7,496**	**8,136**	**+3,381**
	Plateau								
C4	Alstonville	5,825	5,939	6,060	6,160	6,217	6,320	6,404	+579
	Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridges	2,988	3,491	3,943	4,354	4,761	5,350	5,873	+2,885
	Sub-Total	**8,813**	**9,430**	**10,003**	**10,514**	**10,978**	**11,670**	**12,277**	**+3,464**
LGA	**Total**	**42,629**	**44,841**	**46,876**	**49,013**	**51,238**	**54,011**	**56,455**	**+13,826**

Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara

+2,035 people

+3,230 people

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridges

+1,773 people

Alstonville

+392 people

Ballina (North)
+977 people

East Ballina
- 181 people

West Ballina
+250 people

Ballina (Island)
+804 people
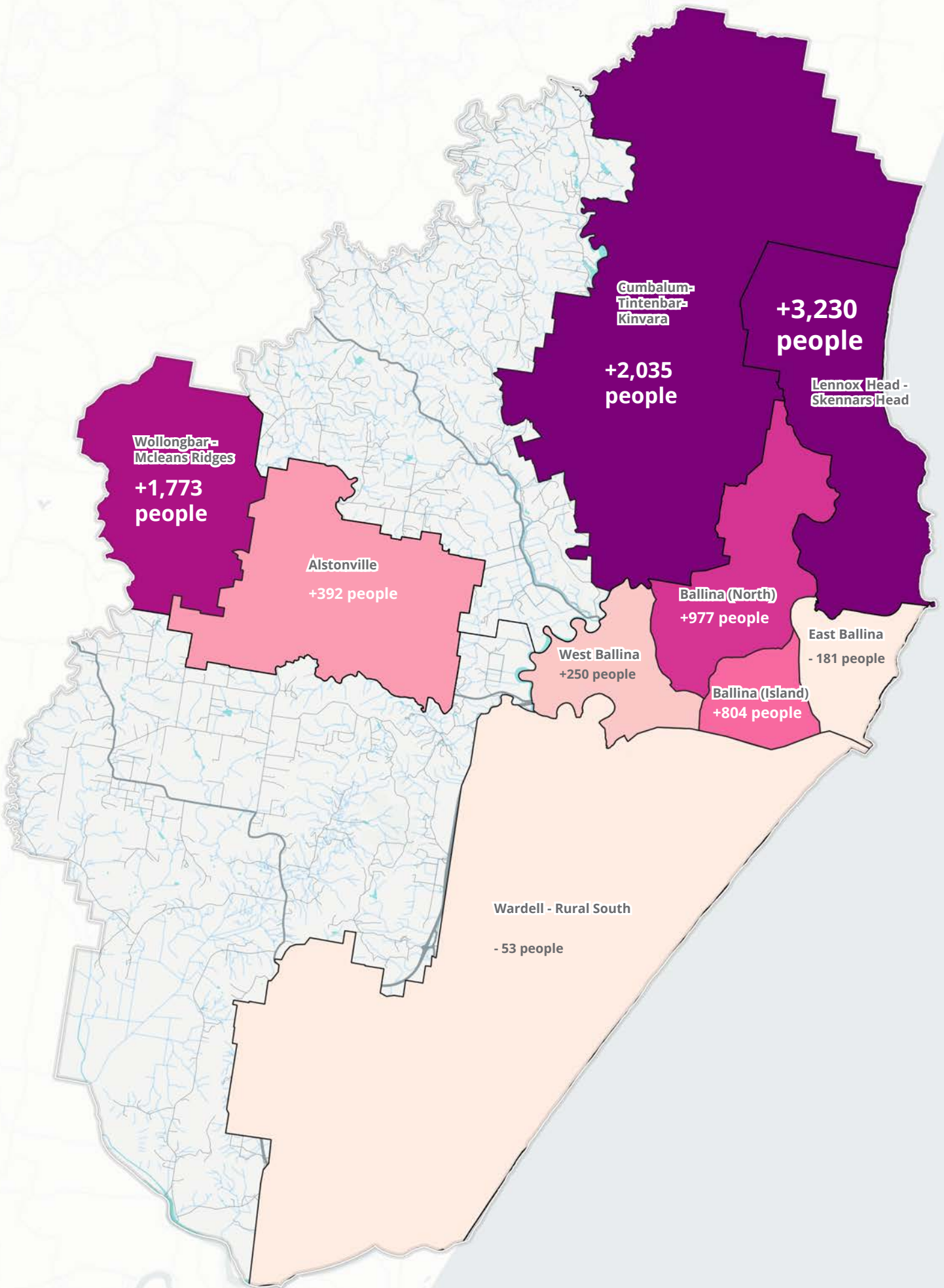
Wardell - Rural South

- 53 people

Figure 12 - Population growth (number of people) heat map

Forecast population characteristics to 2036

The service age profile of the Ballina Shire LGA is based on forecast.id's projected future population growth charts. The table below simulates the population changes in 5, 10, and 20 years from the 2016 population data gathered by the ABS census. Understanding how the population will grow and where the growth areas is essential to understand increasing demand for Open space and community facilities. The table shows that the total population of the Ballina Shire Council will grow from 42,629 to 51,328 by 2036. This represents a total increase of 8,669 people. The largest increase in population will occur in the Seniors (70 to 84) age group.

There will be growth in the number of residents across all age groups, however, between 2016 and 2046 the highest growth by number will be in the service age groups of:

- Seniors 70 - 84 years +3,244 or 17.1%
- Parents and homebuilders aged 35 to 4 years +1,743 or 18.3%, and
- Elderly aged 85 years and over + 679, or 4.7%.
- Majority of growth will occur in the Cumbalum Urban Release Area, Ballina Heights, EPIC Estate, Skennars Head Expansion Area and Wollongbar.
- Demographics moving to the Shire will be mostly retirees, reflecting the trend of the Shire towards and older population.

Table 4 - Projected demographic indicators: Service Age (source: forcast.id)

Ballina Shire Council - Total persons	2016		Change between 2016 and 2021		2021		Change between 2021 and 2026		2026		Change between 2026 and 2036		2036	
Age group (years)	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	2,244	5.3	215	9.6	2,459	5.5	28	1.1	2,487	5.3	168.0	6.8	2,655	5.2
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	3,485	8.2	320	9.2	3,805	8.5	219	5.8	4,024	8.6	311.0	7.7	4,335	8.5
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	3,152	7.4	-140	-4.4	3,012	6.7	291	9.7	3,303	7.0	340.0	10.3	3,643	7.1
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	2,557	6.0	127	5.0	2,684	6.0	-106	-3.9	2,578	5.5	324.0	12.6	2,902	5.7
Young workforce (25 to 34)	3,869	9.1	17	0.4	3,886	8.7	31	0.8	3,917	8.4	219.0	5.6	4,136	8.1
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	7,621	17.9	478	6.3	8,099	18.1	418	5.2	8,517	18.2	847.0	9.9	9,364	18.3
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	6,215	14.6	-242	-3.9	5,973	13.3	-41	-0.7	5,932	12.7	492.0	8.3	6,424	12.5
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	6,251	14.7	286	4.6	6,537	14.6	25	0.4	6,562	14.0	58.0	0.9	6,620	12.9
Seniors (70 to 84)	5,503	12.9	1250	22.7	6,753	15.1	969	14.3	7,722	16.5	1025.0	13.3	8,747	17.1
Elderly aged (85 and over)	1,733	4.1	-102	-5.9	1,631	3.6	202	12.4	1,833	3.9	579.0	31.6	2,412	4.7
Total persons	42,629	100.0	2211	5.2	44,840	100.0	2035	4.5	46,875	100.0	4363.0	9.3	51,238	100.0

3.8. What needs does this indicate?

Demographic characteristic/indicator	What does this indicate?
Increased population	With an increase of an additional 13,826 residents forecast between 2016 to 2045, Ballina 's Social Infrastructure will need to cater to increased usage and be flexible enough to respond to changing community expectations and preferences for the way they use community, cultural and recreation facilities and open spaces.
First Nations People	At 3.3% of the population Ballina LGA has a higher average population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island residents than NSW (2.9%). Regional NSW has a higher average population than Ballina with a total of 5.5% of people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander. Despite this, the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people was recorded for the Wardell - Pimlico and District at 9.2% .
	As such, it is important for programs and services to reflect the multicultural heritage of the local area, in particular the local Indigenous culture. There is much to learn from First Nations peoples and cultures and increased visibility in future Social Infrastructure is a priority. Social infrastructure could reflect our First Nations culture by including interpretive signage, naming and public art and spaces that are appropriate for gathering, storytelling and cultural activities.
A higher proportion of older workers and pre-retirees	With an aging population, accessible paths, disability parking, parks and accessible amenities will be a priority. Places to sit and rest with access to shade and drinking fountains along recreation paths may also be a priority for the future.
Median age is 48 and higher number of old people	With 17.7% of the population aged over 70, Ballina LGA has higher number of old people compared to Regional NSW (14.1%), NSW (11.1) and Australia (10.6%). Within the LGA, Catchment 1 - Ballina has highest number of people aged over 70 with 20.5%.
	Planning for social infrastructure to support the needs of older people within Ballina should include universal design, clear wayfinding and signage, places to participate in social groups and to keep fit, healthy and engaged (eg community gardens, makerspaces) and places to learn new skills and to access new technologies. Inclusive and accessible design of facilities is important for seniors, including providing accessible facilities located near public transport and accessible parking spaces.
Young People	Young people are much more likely to use the Internet to connect with the arts: in 2013, 80% of young people participated in the arts online with 41% participating creatively online[1]. Community and cultural facilities (and some 'smart' public spaces) can provide access to spaces where young people can learn and develop their creative skills, including providing access to digital and new technology resources.
Young families	Lennox Head-Skennars Head is the suburb with the highest number of families (couples or single parents) with children 15 years old in the LGA, followed by East Ballina and Alstonville. This indicates that community, cultural and recreation facilities and spaces may need to have more of a family focus in these areas.

1 Australia Council for the Arts National Participation Survey 2017-2018

Demographic characteristic/indicator	What does this indicate?
People with disability	Universal access is an increasingly important issue, so everyone regardless of age, cultural background or physical ability can collectively enjoy activities. The Ballina LGA has a similar proportion of people in need of daily assistance due to disability (6.0%) compared to Regional NSW (6.3%). However, in some suburbs across the LGA, including Ballina Island (11.9%), Alstonville (7.9%) and West Ballina (7.0%), there are higher proportions of people in need of assistance due to disability. *As explained earlier in this section, the 6.0% figure only represents people who need daily assistance – the highest level of daily needs – and it is broadly acknowledged that up to 20% of populations experience some level of disability. This is likely to be a significant portion of the Ballina community. It is also acknowledged that accessibility issues are a concern for a far broader population cohort than people with disability statistics alone indicate, such as families and those in caring roles. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that Social Infrastructure are universally accessible throughout Ballina Shire's facilities, including: • Accessible parking and 'drop-off zones' – provide designated parking spaces for people with disability and maintain a continuous path of travel from the parking space to the facility • Fit outs – change facilities and hearing loops should incorporated in assets • Accessible toilets – avoid locking accessible bathrooms while the facility is in use by members of the public and ensure accessible bathrooms can be reached via a continuous path of travel (Australian Human Rights Commission 2016) • Community, cultural and sports and recreation facilities with disability access. Additionally, it is important that access to facilities, services and programs in Ballina are welcoming and inclusive to all, as access enables inclusion. Ballina can support higher levels of access and inclusion through further understanding the diversity of disability within the Inner West community and reflecting this diversity through a range of spaces, programs and services, as well as through advocacy and promotion.

4. Social infrastructure trends

Across NSW, there are increasing challenges to providing and governing the quality and appropriate provision of social infrastructure that is needed. This includes time lags between planning and delivery in growth areas, declining service coordination, increasing and competing government budget pressures, and spatial inequalities. There are existing and emerging mega trends across all social infrastructure types that can drive successful outcomes for the Ballina Shire and shape a new vision to ensure that the community has equitable and sustainable access to the essential social infrastructure across all planning catchments.

4.1. All social infrastructure trends

A networked approach

Increasingly, social infrastructure is being planned to operate as part of a network of public facilities, including public recreational open space, streets and services that work together are multi-functional spaces to meet a broad range of community needs across a neighbourhood, catchment, or a region.

In geographically dispersed areas such as Ballina, the approach is for the provision of district public facilities in larger strategic centres, with smaller satellite local public facilities in local centres, providing spaces for outreach services.

This network approach has become clearer during the 2020 Pandemic, with facilities, services and programs that support living local – local services, community support, small groups and individualised services – in high demand. A networked approach also enables services to work together through greater social connection to each other and their communities, and the delivery of outreach services across a local government area.

For example, health services provided at the local level have been particularly important to tackling the spread of COVID-19, with Covid-19 testing being delivered from local libraries and community halls.
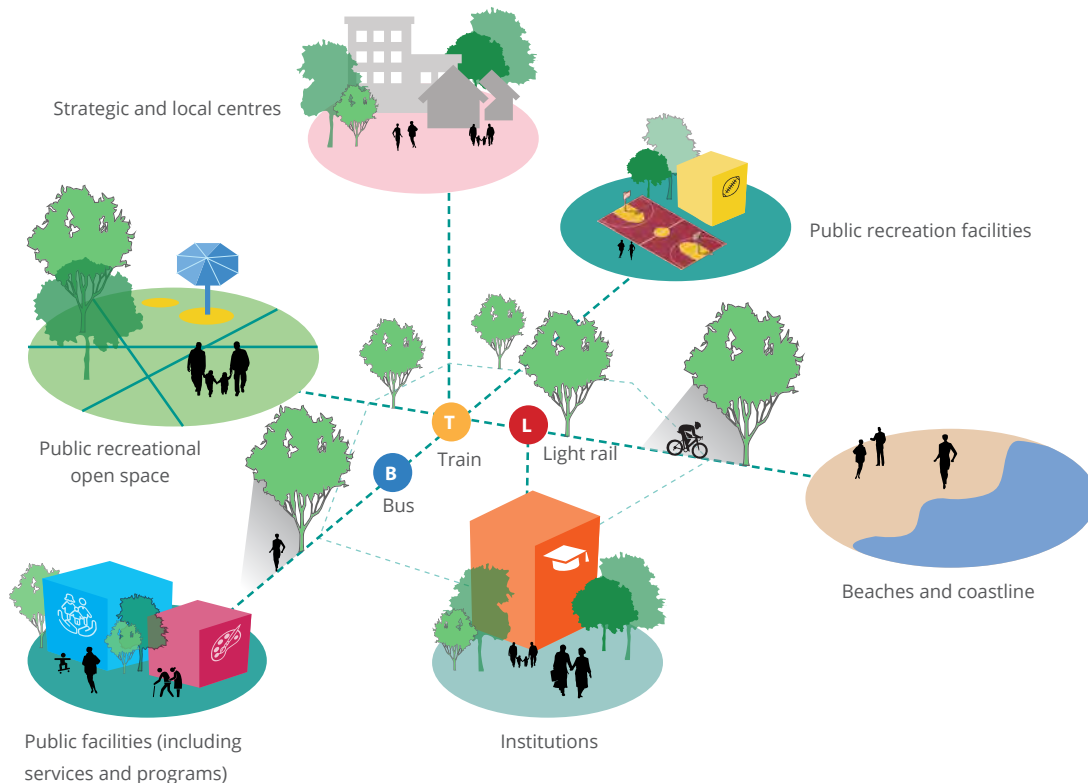

Figure 13 - Network of social infrastructure (Source: Cred Consulting)

Co-located services within community hubs

The term co-located community hub refers to the integration of community facilities and services in one location or building to provide better access to a wider range of services (or a "one stop shop" for users) as well as a more cost effective way of delivering and operating these services. Integrating and co-locating social infrastructure within community hubs helps to achieve key gathering points within a community with a variety of offerings. This approach improves efficiency through encouraging compatible uses, supporting partnerships and resource sharing between different service providers, and increasing the overall flexibility and activity of the given area. Community hubs provide opportunities to attract a range of users, increase access to services and allow for the coordination of supporting services like public transport.

Multipurpose, shared, and flexible design

Multipurpose and flexible social infrastructure has been a trend for some time, particularly for new buildings. Multipurpose and flexibly designed spaces support a range of different services and programs being delivered at once, and for the space to change over time responding to changing needs. The demand for multipurpose spaces will be accelerated with retrofitting of existing infrastructure to accommodate a range of essential activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that community facilities can quickly adapt to the health, educational and social needs of our communities. We have seen how community centres can become food banks, testing centres, and emergency evacuation/support centres.

Third places

Public libraries play a profoundly important cultural, economic and social role within our neighbourhoods, cities and communities. They play an essential role in building social capital and connecting communities, including through providing inclusive and free spaces and programs where people of all backgrounds can meet and have shared experiences. They also provide access to technology and learning opportunities.

"Libraries offer people a 'third place', separate from home or work, and are anchors of community life, facilitating creative interactions between people." - Ray Oldenberg

Environmentally sustainable development

Community and cultural facilities offers opportunities for local government to lead by example, demonstrate new sustainable materials and technologies and deliver leading practice projects with an educational role. Environmentally sustainable social infrastructure typically has lower operating costs and is therefore more financially viable and sustainable to operate.

Revenue streams

Community and cultural facilities often operate on a not-for-profit basis with income generation approaches ranging from hiring spaces, to fund raising, to receiving grant funding. To enhance the cost- effectiveness and sustainability of community infrastructure, many facilities rely on rental income to fund operations but even then, there is usually a gap between income and expenses, including maintenance costs. Increasingly within community infrastructure, operations of assets like community facilities, rely on complementary revenue methods that generate reliable and increased sources of income in order to improve financial viability and sustainability (e.g. cafe, user pays model, leased to organisations).

Public Private Partnerships & cross sector collaboration

Public Private Partnerships allow governments and the private sector to work together and share resources to plan for, deliver and manage major projects. This usually involves governments providing incentives for the private sector to deliver a public asset or service. To be successful, these partnerships require shared vision, early commitment and comprehensive planning. Public Private Partnerships usually have the public interest at heart and can deliver increased value for money (for example, joint use agreements of school sports and performing arts facilities).

4.2. Library trends

Over the past decades, libraries across the globe have been expanding their roles beyond "just books" to become community and cultural hubs, providing vital public spaces and access to essential resources, services and information that support the liveability and productivity of our cities, neighbourhoods and communities.

Today, libraries are some of the top visited and trusted public institutions in Australia. As spaces where people of all ages and backgrounds are welcome, public libraries help to build social capital by providing a free place where people can meet (formally and informally), participate in community programs, learn, attend events, and feel connected to their community and place.

> **"No other agency in society has the breadth of role, the user range and diversity and the potential impact [as the public library]. In an age of specialisation and community silos, public libraries are unique"**
>
> - Dr Alan Bundy, former President of the Australian Library and Information Association

Building social capital

Libraries play an important role in building social capital and connecting communities, including through providing inclusive and free spaces and programs where people of all backgrounds can meet and have shared experiences.

Libraries that foster social capital are particularly important in new and growing residential growth areas where there may be limited spaces that provide opportunity for the incidental connections that support a sense of belonging.

Libraries can also support social connections for those experiencing social isolation, by providing a free and safe public space and programs to interact with other people and if required access services and resources to get support. They can contribute towards creating a sense of community and connection by providing places where people can meet and stay such as comfortable lounge rooms and multipurpose rooms, as well as sharing and celebrating local stories and bringing people together.

Providing access to technology resources

Most libraries help to bridge the 'digital divide' by offering free public access to computers and WiFi, as well as computer literacy programs. By helping to equalise computer and internet access, libraries can have a significant impact on local communities, and particularly for people without access to the internet at home and people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Access to such technology resources is vital for people of all ages to access information, study, apply for jobs and develop skills.

Many libraries today also offer public access to emerging and specialised technology programs and resources such as 3D printers and scanners, virtual reality and coding clubs for young people. Providing public access to and education around these emerging technologies is important to develop skills that will be increasingly important in future jobs.

Cultivating culture and creativity

Libraries are increasingly co-located with arts and cultural facilities and services, such as art galleries, theatres and function centres. Through its Cultural Infrastructure Strategy, the NSW Government recognises the opportunity for using libraries to increase cultural participation and has committed to assisting their continued development as community and cultural hubs and access points for communities.

Libraries support local culture and creativity in a range of ways including through organising exhibitions and displays; hosting workshops, programs and events; and providing access to creative technology, equipment or software. There is also an increasing trend towards providing makerspaces within libraries where people can come to create and produce their own work. There is also a trend for libraries to host residency programs for writers and other artists, providing space and access to collections in exchange for public workshops.

5. Social Infrastructure - LGA Summary

This section provides a snapshot of the social infrastructure within this project scope, across Ballina Shire.

5.1. Summary of overall provision

This Study's scope includes libraries, community facilities, cultural facilities, open space, as well as some recreation types that weren't considered as part of the 2020 Sports and Recreation Plan.

As shown in the heat map in Figure 13, social infrastructure in the Ballina Shire is concentrated in local centres across the LGA with a high concentration in Ballina, the LGA's strategic centre.

There are:

- 25 community spaces of which 21 are owned or managed by Ballina Shire Council or other government agencies. This includes community halls, function spaces, seniors centres, youth spaces, meeting rooms, scout halls and other community spaces.
- Three libraries located in Ballina LGA's 3 largest population settlements. Some smaller villages, like Wardell in the south, and the new urban release areas of Cumbalum and Kinvara are the furthest residential areas from a library.
- There are nine government owned or managed cultural spaces located within the Ballina LGA, six of which are located in Catchment 1 - clustered around Ballina Town Centre. Of these, only two are local spaces, while the rest are district of regional level. There are also a number of privately owned and managed cultural spaces in the LGA, such as RSL clubs (live music & performance) and galleries. There are no cultural facilities in Catchment 3, and no local cultural facilities for participation in Catchments 2, 3, or 4.
- There is more than 700ha of public open space across the LGA, including 389ha+ of parks, and equating to 166m^2 per person. Much of Council's parks are made up of smaller local parks (162 of the total 176 parks), with more than 50% of these local parks being less than 0.3ha in size.
- There are 29 sports parks for formal team sports; 6 lawn sports and golf courses; 3 BMX/skate parks; and 45 playgrounds. Most residential areas are within 400m of a playground, with the exception of some parts of Ballina Island.
- While there are 43 indoor or outdoor code specific courts, there are no multipurpose courts located in any of the LGA's catchments and there is 1 outdoor exercise facility in Ballina but none in Catchments 2, 3, or 4.
- There are two indoor recreation facilities and two inland pools. There are currently no ocean pools.
- The LGA has beautiful natural areas including 38 bushland and nature reserves and 8 beaches.

Figure 14 - Categories of social infrastructure

Catchment 3

Population growth:

+3,381 people (2016-45)

Main centres:

Kinvara & Cumbalum

Catchment 2

Population growth:

+5,184 people (2016-45)

Main centres:

Lennox Head

Catchment 4

Population growth:

+3,464 people (2016-45)

Main centres:

Wollongbar & Alstonville

Catchment 1

Population growth:

+1,791 people (2016-45)

Main centres:

Ballina & Wardell

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

East Ballina
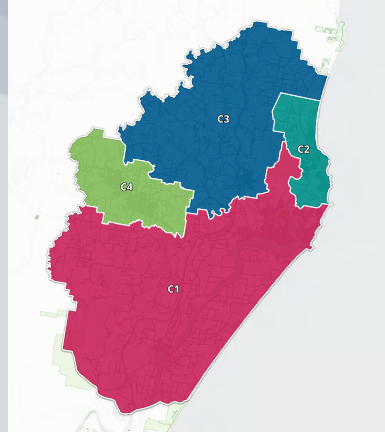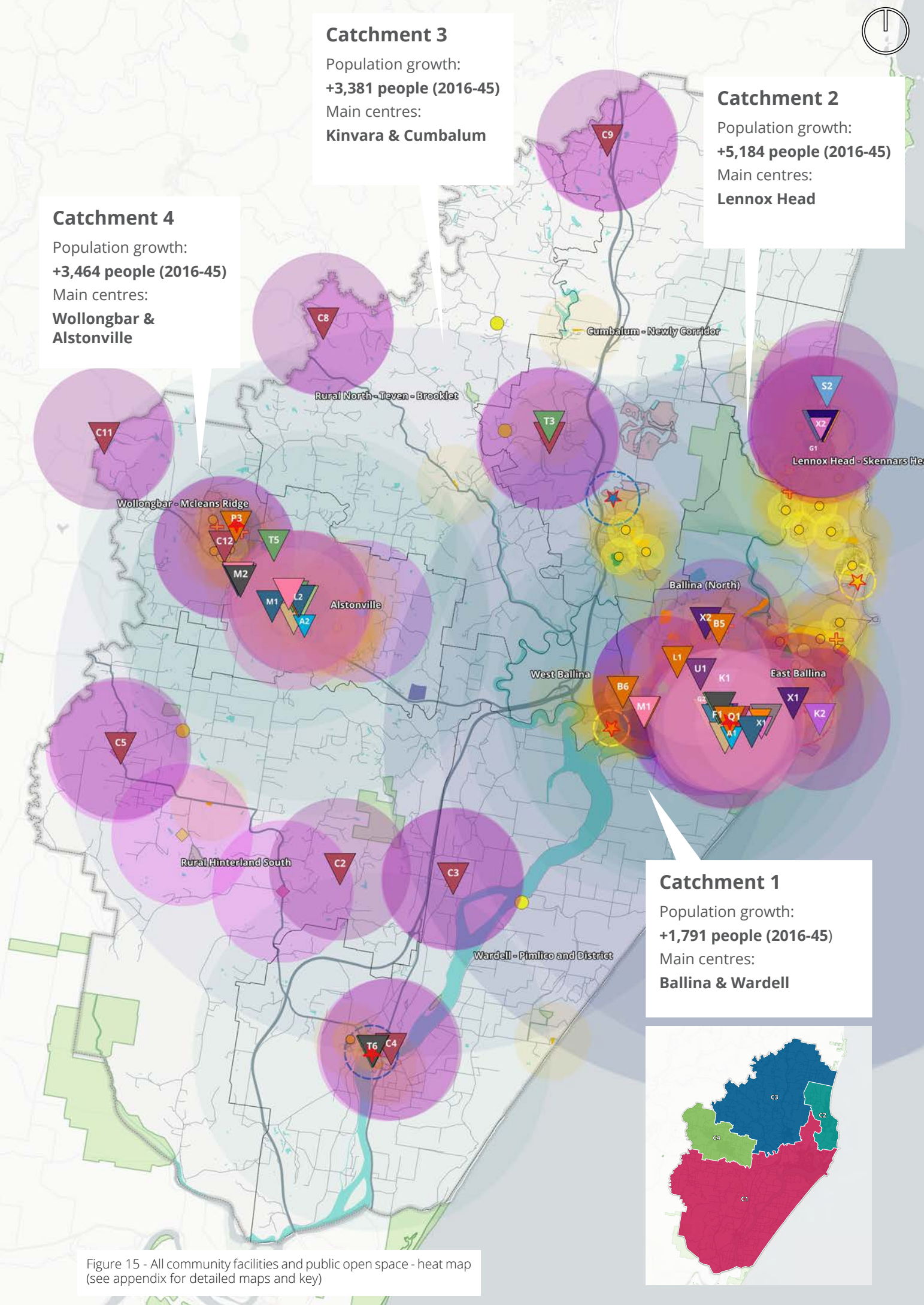
Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

Figure 15 - All community facilities and public open space - heat map
(see appendix for detailed maps and key)

5.2. What we have overall

	3 **Libraries**	1 Central 2 Branch Mobile and online library services 1 toy library
	2 **Multipurpose community hubs / civic centres**	2 district managed by Council
	14 **Community centres and halls**	2 district and 10 local that are government owned or managed, 1 non-government owned hall
	1 **Senior Citizen Centre**	1 Council owned and leased to a community organisation
	1 **Youth centre**	1 Council owned and leased to a community organisation
	2 **Scout and guide halls**	1 government owned (State Government) 1 non-government owned
	4 **Function Centres (surf clubs, RSL's)**	2 council owned (Surf clubs) 2 privately owned
	Meeting rooms	4 Council owned and managed

700+ ha

Council managed open spaces

166m²

per person Council managed reserves and open space

	Natural spaces	Ballina LGA is home to a variety of natural spaces such as bushlands, waterfalls, wetlands and the foreshore.
	38 **Bushland and nature reserves**	308.9Ha of Bushland and reserves managed by Council
	8 **Beaches** **0** **Ocean baths**	Ballina is home to 8 beaches - 4 of which are patrolled beaches.
	176 **Council managed Parks**	4 Regional Parks 10 District Parks 162Local Parks

In addition to the above, there are a number of national parks located in the LGA, such as:

- Ballina Nature Reserve - 721ha
- Lennox Head Aboriginal Area - 0.3ha
- Richmond River Nature Reserve - 256ha
- Uralba Nature Reserve - 288ha
- Tuckean Nature Reserve - 919ha (partial).

	29 **Sports parks**	• AFL • Athletics • Baseball and softball • Cricket • Cricket nets • Croquet	• Football (Senior) • Football (Junior) • Touch Football • Hockey • Oztag and Touch Football • Rugby League • Rugby Union
	4 **BMX/ Skate parks**	• 1 Mountain bike facility • 3 skate and BMX facilities	
	45 **Play spaces**	• 45 existing playgrounds	
	2 **Outdoor exercise facilities**	• 2 existing facilities	
	2 **Surf clubs**	• 2 surf clubs owned by Council but managed by Council appointed service providers/ SLSC	
	2 **aquatic facilities**	• 2 inland pools • 1 ocean pool being investigated by a community ocean pool committee	
	2 **Indoor recreation centres**		
	6 **Lawn sports and golf**		
	0 **Outdoor multi-purpose courts**	• 2+ planned full size outdoor multipurpose courts • 2 half courts and basketball hoops, plus 1 planned • 3 Hit-up walls • 43 other courts in the LGA (code specific or indoors)	

6. Libraries

This section provides an audit and mapping of existing libraries located within the Ballina Shire.

Libraries

Libraries
- ~ Central library
- ~ Branch library
- ~ Digital library
- ~ Pop-up and temporary tryouts
- ~ Mobile

"We have recognised that the key challenges for RTRL for the future are; connecting community, supporting our communities to navigate the digital environment and acquire new skills and literacies, providing access to information and ideas in current and emerging formats, remaining adaptive in a rapidly changing environment, optimising mutually beneficial partnering to support the management of community expectations and library usage, advocating for a sustainable funding model across all levels of Government, managing the expansion of the online branch, mobile library service provision and building maintenance and development."

- RTRL Committee Chairperson - Councillor Nathan Willis

6.1. Definition

Libraries are defined as spaces for the community to access resources such as technology, the Internet, printers, photo-copiers and scanners and books, as well as programs and classes such as computer skills, English conversation or homework help.

The role of the traditional public library is shifting alongside the mainstreaming of digital resources, programs and technology. Libraries are increasingly seen as community spaces, where connections are built and where people can learn, find information, use technology and access a broad range of lifelong learning programs.

For the purposes of this report, the types of library floor spaces have been defined in accordance with contemporary approaches to library service delivery:

- **Central library:** Striking and symbolic building architecture, centrally/prominently located for maximum impact, typically flanked by other civic institutions. A central library could blur the traditional concept of a library to include a range of social and cultural uses including a cafe, public "living spaces", theatres, maker spaces, recording studios, reading and learning rooms, meeting spaces etc.
- **Branch library:** A branch library is a service point that is an auxiliary facility. It has a permanent collection of books, permanent paid staff present during all hours of opening, it offers a broad range of public library services and a regular schedule of public service hours. Branch libraries may be stand-alone, or co-located with other types of community facilities.
- **Digital library:** Digital library services present an opportunity to not only reach people in their homes but at a point of access that suits their needs. They provide access to invaluable sources of reference and service in addition to collections of digital works, e-learning and digitised rare books, maps, films and audio books that would be difficult to find in physical form. This approach ensures services and collections are readily inclusive and economically available for various community use.
- **Pop-up and temporary tryouts:** Pop-up services and temporary try outs fit under the outreach service model, as locations, scope and purpose will vary over time.

6.2. What we have

Audit

There are 3 libraries located within the Ballina Shire Council LGA. The central library is located in Ballina, and supported by Alstonville and Lennox Head branch libraries (see Figure 16)

- **Ballina Library** is the central library in the LGA. It is located in Catchment 1 in the heart of Ballina Town Centre, on the banks of the Richmond River. It built in 1992, and if reflective of the architectural trends at this time. This is reflected in it's exterior architecture and limited connectivity, or use of adjoining public space. The library is located within the same building as the Richmond Room, which is currently used as a hall to accommodate various functions and meetings
- **Lennox Head Library** was built in 2010, and forms part of the Lennox Head Cultural Centre. This is a modern library space.
- **Alstonville Library** is located within the Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Cultural Centre (ALECC), which was built in 1980 - making it the oldest library of the three. Council is advanced in their plans to upgrade this facility to the Alstonville Cultural Centre and deliver a new 2-storey library (4.5 million), along with a large multi-functional hall (650m^2) that can be used for dance & conferences and a single court space. The upgrade also includes accessibility improvements and internal elevator.

**Table 5 - Council owned and/or managed libraries**

	Name	Hierarchy	Size (m²)*	Ownership	Location
C1	Ballina Public Library & toy library	Central	790m^2	Council	Co-located with the Richmond Room and the Ballina Visitor Information Centre
C2	Lennox Head Public Library	Branch	530m^2	Council	Located within the Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre
C4	Alstonville Branch Public Library	Branch	Existing: 140m^2 Proposed: 737m^2	Council	Located within the Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC)
	Total existing		1,460m^2		
	Total future		2,057m^2		

Proximity

The location of Ballina's 3 libraries are located within the LGA's 3 largest population settlements. Figure 16 highlights that some smaller villages, like Wardell in the south, and the new urban release areas of Cumbalum and Kinvara are likely to be the furthest residential areas from a library.

Ballina's Libraries

C2
Lennox Head Public Library
(Branch)
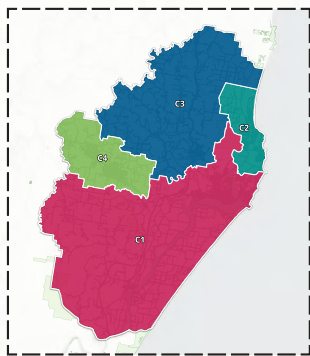
C4
Alstonville Branch Public Library
(Branch) & future upgrade

C1
Ballina Public Library
(Central) & toy library

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

ven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

Ballina (Island)

East Ballina

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District
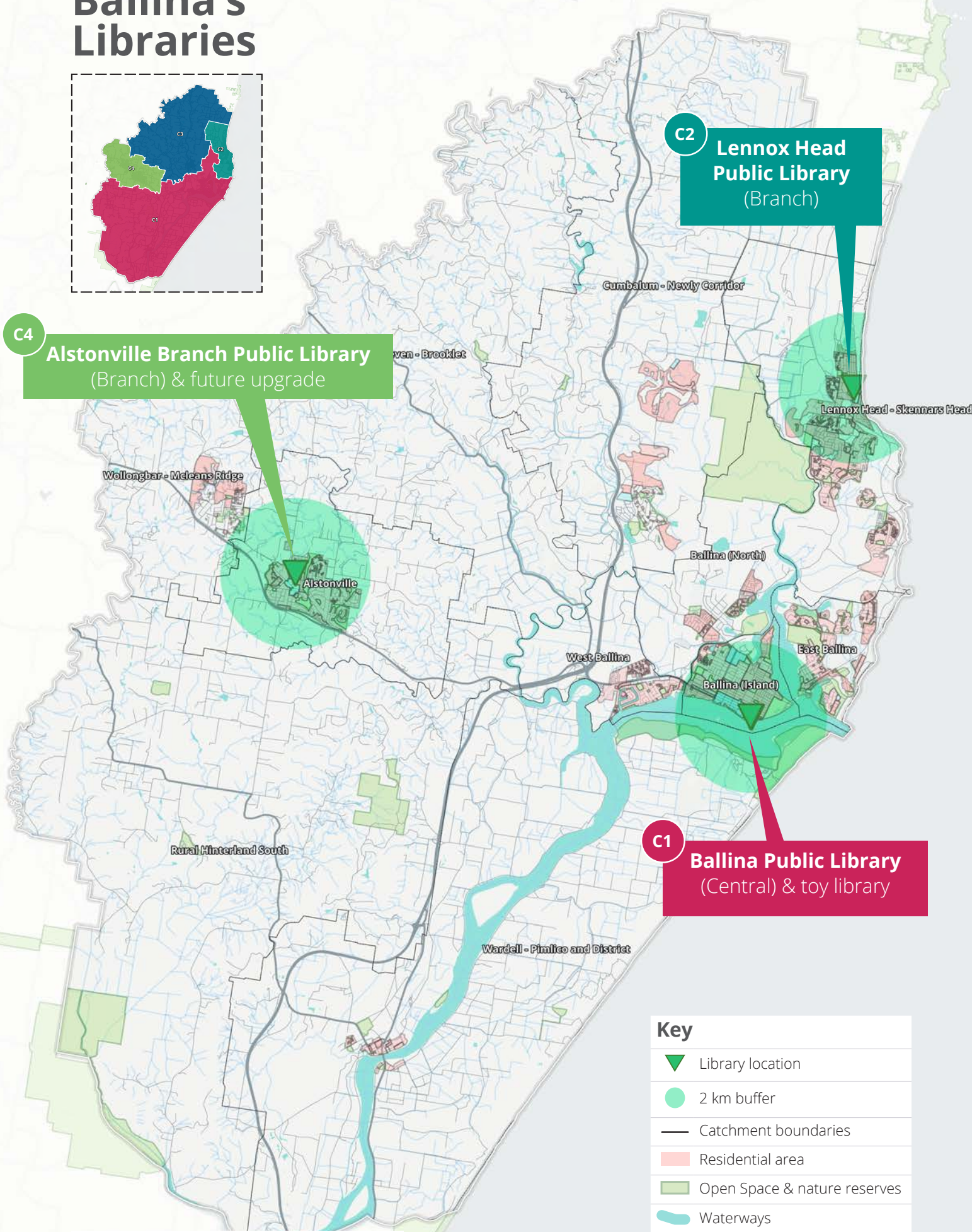
Key

▼	Library location
●	2 km buffer
─	Catchment boundaries
▪	Residential area
▪	Open Space & nature reserves
～	Waterways
─	Major roads
═	LGA boundary

Figure 16 - Ballina libraries locations

6.3. Strengths and challenges

As part of the research for this Needs Assessment, Cred Consulting conducted a telephone interview with the Manager of Facilities and Services to identify the strengths and challenges of Ballina's libraries. The findings from this discussion have informed the summary of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities below.

Ballina Public Library

Strengths
- A big facility with recently upgraded interior, a delivery dock and a storage space.
- The library is used as a book transfer station, a space to use wifi and read newspapers.
- Co-located with a visitor information centre.

Weaknesses
- Lack of connection between indoor and outdoor spaces
- Unwelcoming exterior

Opportunities
- The facility is scheduled for painting soon
- Visitor information centre staff co-location

Lennox Head Public Library

Strengths
- 10-year old modern facility with spaces for toddlers and a reading room
- Large and well utilised by the community

Weaknesses

Opportunities
- Opportunities to staff share across co-located facilities

Alstonville Branch Public Library

Strengths
- Exist as part of Alstonville Cultural Centre. (Former Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre)

Weaknesses
- It is an ageing facility and needs amenities, new roof and exterior upgrades.
- Runoff area might not meet current standards.

Opportunities
- A new 2-storey library (4.5 million) and community hall (3 million) of 650m² is being planned with accessibility improvements and internal elevator.
- It will also have a multi-function hall which will be used for dance & conferences and a single court space.
- The facility is expected to become a social hub for all ages.

6.4. Benchmarking

The *State Library of New South Wales People Places Guidelines* (revised April 2019) provides a well developed floorspace calculator tool that has been used in this Needs Study to understand population based supply and demand for library floor space.

These provision standards —summarised in the table below—have been widely adopted amongst most NSW councils and applied to Ballina's current and forecast population to determine the current rate of provision and future demand for libraries.

Rates of provision

Public libraries have several well-developed provision standards. These standards, or benchmarks, include those outlined by the State Library of New South Wales People Places Guidelines (revised April 2019) as well as the Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Public Libraries, developed by the Australian Public Library Alliance. The revised People Places, A guide for public library buildings in NSW benchmarks has been used for consistency with other NSW councils.

Facility Type	Rate of Provision		Source
Central Library	Rates of Provision 1:100,000+	Approximate GFA (Ground Floor Area) 28m^2 per 1,000 people, plus 20% circulation space	State Library of New South Wales
District or Branch library (larger catchment)	Rates of Provision 1:35,000-65,000	Approximate GFA (Ground Floor Area) 35m^2 per 1,000 people, plus 20% circulation space	State Library of New South Wales

Population based benchmarking

Number of facilities population benchmarking

Table 6 indicates that Ballina meets current and future demand in terms of number of flagship and branch libraries. However, as shown overpage, Ballina's libraries do not meet benchmark provision in terms of floor space (size).

Table 6 - Number of facilities population benchmarking

Type	Current Provision	Demand (number of libraries)				Gap in Provision (number of libraries)			
		2016	2021	2036	2045	2016	2021	2036	2045
Population		42,629	46,873	51,237	56,455				
Central library	1	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	Meets demand	Meets demand	Meets demand	Meets demand
Branch library	2	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.9	Meets demand	Meets demand	Meets demand	Meets demand

Ballina Public Library (Source: Ballina Shire Council)

Floorspace population benchmarking

Table 7 uses the State Library NSW floorspace calculator to arrive at current and future demands and gaps provision of library floorspace. The final column in the table identifies the demand for library floorspace that will be generated by population growth between 2016 to 2045.

For the purposes of this benchmarking exercise: Ballina Library was designated as the central library (for the purposes of the floorspace calculator), Catchment 3's population was allocated to catchment 1 (their closest library), and the new Alstonville Library (and its increased floorspace) is assumed to be delivered by 2045.

The benchmarking assessment indicates that:

- Currently, there is a total of 1,460m^2 of library floorspace, distributed across 3 libraries in the LGA.
- Once the new library in Alstonville is delivered (replacing the smaller, old library), the total library floorspace in the LGA will increase to 2,057m^2
- Based on the population benchmarking tool, the current population of 42,629 people generates a demand for 2,892m^2 of library floorspace, resulting in an under benchmark provision of 1,432m^2 of library floorspace across the LGA.
- By 2045, based on the population benchmarking tool, The LGA will have an estimated population of 56,455 people who a demand for 3,734m^2 of library floorspace. This results in an under benchmark provision of 1,677m^2 of library floorspace.
- New residents between 2016-2045 (13,826 people) alone generate a demand for 842m^2 of library floorspace.
- All catchments have an existing undersupply of library floorspace:
  - Combined catchments 1 & 3 do not meet current and future demands for library floor space. This catchment has the highest existing and future deficit of library floorspace - with a gap of 957m^2 in 2016, increasing to a gap of 1,202m^2 by 2045
  - Catchment 2 has an existing undersupply of 7m^2 of library floorspace, increasing to a gap of 365m^2 by 2045
  - Catchment 4 has an existing undersupply of 468m^2 of library floorspace, which will reduce to a gap of only 110m^2 in 2045 through the delivery of a new and expanded library as part of the Alstonville Cultural Centre.

Table 7 - Application of library provision standards to Ballina's library network and population

	Catchment	Year	Population	Provision	Demand*	Floor space benchmarked gap (provision-demand)	Demand generated by additional population 2016 to 2045 only
C1	Ballina (Island), West Ballina, East Ballina, Ballina North, Wardell-Rural South	2016	21,277	790m^2	1,747m^2	-957m^2	245m^2
		2045	23,074		1,992m^2	-1,202m^2	
C2	Lennox Head, Skennars Head	2016	7,784	530m^2	537m^2	-7m^2	358m^2
		2045	12,968		895m^2	-365m^2	
C3*	Cumbalum-Tintenbar-Kinvara	2016	4,755	0m^2	*(*Included in C1)*		
		2045	8,136				
C4	Alstonville, Wollongbar-Mcleans Ridges	2016	8,813	140m^2	608m^2	-468m^2	239m^2
		2045	12,277	737m^2	847m^2	-110m^2	
LGA Total		**2016**	**42,629**	**1,460m^2**	**2,892m^2**	**-1,432m^2**	**842m^2**
		2045	**56,455**	**2,057m^2**	**3,734m^2**	**-1,677m^2**	

*Calculated using the NSW library floorspace calculator

6.5. Summary of Needs

1.1.1. Identified needs for consideration in the contributions plan

- **Additional library floorspace:** Overall in the LGA, there is an existing below benchmark provision of library floorspace (a gap of 1,432m^2). This will increase to a gap of 1,677m^2 by 2045.
  - New residents to the LGA (+13,826 people) between 2016-2045 will generate a demand for an additional 842m^2 of library floorspace.
  - Catchment 1 (also servicing catchment 3's population) will have the largest existing and future gap of library floorspace of all the catchments. Once the Alstonville library has been delivered, it will also be the catchment with the oldest library building.
- **Provision of a new and expanded library in Ballina as part of a multi-purpose community and cultural hub**: Action B3.2 in the Ballina major regional centre strategy 2015 – 2035 identifies the following action: *'Create a civic centre precinct incorporating features such as a town square, Council administration, gallery, library, meeting rooms and performance space in association with the development of cafes and compatible retail uses.'*
  - This action reflects the infrastructure delivery trend towards larger multi-purpose and co-located facilities in central locations. It also reflects the trend to include commercial tenancies as part of community infrastructure to help offset the cost of their delivery and maintenance. Best practice facility design also has the ability to activate town centres and adjoining public spaces.
  - Creates the opportunity for redevelopment and consolidation of a number of Council owned assets in Ballina, and for Council to demonstrate best practice building standards (e.g. Green Star) and to achieve a number of strategic goals set out in the Ballina MRCS such as providing more spaces for innovation, culture, and re-orientating towards the Richmond River.
  - The RTRL Strategic Plan identifies a couple of goals that relate to having flexible and programmable spaces *'Opportunities to make, create and experiment together in a safe environment; flexible & adaptable interiors that are fit for purpose.*
- **Upgrades to library technology:** The RTRL Strategic Plan identified a number of goals relating to technology including: *Having technology to meet customer expectations which is able to deliver a range of services to the community such as printing, wi-fi and self-service; Overcoming distance by using digital technology.*
  - Contemporary approaches to library provision is around flexible spaces to access technology, co-learn and co-work and there may be opportunities to meet this demand based on growth through embellishments to existing library facilities to move them more toward contemporary library services.
  - Community engagement carried out as part of the RTRL Strategic Plan identified the desire for more places to learn and relax, multi-use spaces for reading, studying, to meet people, for education classes, interest groups and activities for children.
  - Library managers have indicated there is a need to plan for technology advancements in the next 20 years, such as VR, smart tables, recording studio and green screens as well as innovations in the library service space.
- **Provide more dedicated youth spaces in libraries**, especially those servicing growth areas such as Catchment 3 (using Catchment 1's library).
  - Urban release areas are likely to appeal to young families

1.1.1. Other identified needs

- **Continue Popup library service**, particularly in urban release areas or villages without a library in close proximity, and poor public transport access.
  - Some smaller villages, like Wardell in the south, and the new urban release areas of Cumbalum and Kinvara are likely to be the furthest residential areas from a library.
- **Explore options so provide an expanded library space at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural Centre**, aiming to expand the library to a minimum size of 900m^2 - an additional 365m^2 (based on population benchmarking through to 2045)

6.6. Case studies

CASE STUDY: CO-LOCATED LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

Albury Library Museum, Albury

Size: 3,000m2

Opened to the public in 2007, Albury LibraryMuseum is Australia's first purpose-built library and museum under one roof. It serves a population catchment of 50,000 people.

The Albury LibraryMuseum functions as a public library, research and technology centre, social history museum and community meeting place, providing integrated spaces, services and management across the Library and Museum. One of the benefits of this model is the potential for audience development realised with a large increase in usage.

The LibraryMuseum is a superb showcase for national and international touring exhibitions, and for works from the AlburyCity Collection housed in the permanent exhibition, Crossing Place. Crossing Place is also the starting point for many of the educational programs offered by the LibraryMuseum, including resources for schoolteachers, an audio tour and guided tours for members of the public.

The LibraryMuseum is characterised by a striking design that provides an urban marker within the Albury town centre. The LibraryMuseum was developed as part of a masterplan that combines cultural buildings with a new public square and landscaping, providing access via pathways to the neighbouring Albury Art Gallery and Entertainment Centre.

Following redevelopment of Albury's previous library, library loans increased by 50%, attracting 11,000 new memberships in its first 12 months. It welcomes around 220,000 visitors per year.

CASE STUDY: RE-THINKING LIBRARY DESIGN

Marrickville library and pavilion, inner west

Size: 3,600m2

Marrickville Library and Pavilion is a 3,600m² purpose-built library and event space spread over three storeys.

The building integrates contemporary design and technology with the original, conserved heritage elements of the main hospital building. It is uncompromising with regards to sustainability, with recycled elements wherever possible and clever design features that reduce energy consumption.

Due to an increase in library shelving space over 20,000 new books will be added to the current collection taking the collection to 85,000 books. For the first time, there will be a robotic collection available to borrow.

The entire second floor is dedicated to the Council's historic art book collection that until recently has not been easily accessible to the public due to space issues.

The Library offers 1,200m² of landscaped outdoor garden and a 100m² children's playground, small study rooms, a technology teaching area, printing facilities, Wi-Fi connectivity throughout the building, 26 public computers, a local cafe with indoor and outdoor seating, and underground car parking.

The Pavilion is a 120m² large, bookable event room fitted with conference facilities and a commercial catering kitchen, suitable for seminars and meetings, conferences, private dinners, cocktail parties and weddings.
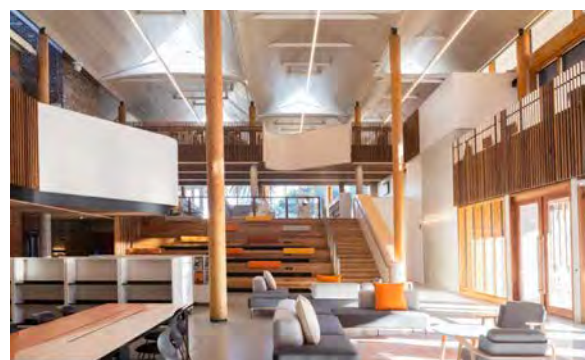
CASE STUDY: CO-LOCATED LIBRARY AND YOUTH SERVICE

Bentleigh Library and Youth Hub

Bentleigh Library is a new community centre that integrates Council's Youth Services and will provide new multipurpose spaces that can be adapted to deliver a range of programs and events for young people, adults, and families through to senior citizens.

As a place away from home and school, libraries can act as a place of refuge for young people, whether it be to socialise and meet with friends or to be by themselves. The integration of youth services and libraries increases spaces of value to young people, spaces for public programs and expands independent study areas.

The new Bentleigh Library and Youth Hub will feature:

- flexible programming spaces
- independent study areas
- expanded area to browse book collections
- a pedestrian plaza and play space at the entrance to the building
- support services and programs for youth
- a teen lounge
- a light-filled courtyard
- improved amenities
- a 'Changing Places' facility for people with disabilities and their carers to use
- children's reading nooks
- a fully equipped training room, and
- a recording and editing suite.

CASE STUDY: CO-LOCATED LIBRARY, COMMUNITY CENTRE AND THEATRE

Bankstown Learning And Knowledge Centre

Size: 7,235m2 over three levels

The Bankstown Learning and Knowledge

Centre is a public library and community centre completed in 2014, encompassing a series of indoor and outdoor public spaces and connected community facilities, to create a civic centre at the heart of Bankstown.

Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre provides an integrated and flexible space containing a new library over three levels, 300-hundred seat theatre, four new multipurpose rooms, and a new café. The 300-seat theatre hosts touring performances as well as local community showcases and initiatives, such as Bankstown Poetry Slam.

The library is also adjacent to Paul Keating Park, which is a popular community park with a range of programs, events and festivals. The project also includes public domain improvements for the adjacent Paul Keating Park, a water feature, new native landscaping, off-street parking for 64 cars and an all-weather bus drop-off zone for seniors. The modernised facilities and surrounding public space provides visitors with a platform to exchange ideas, interact spontaneously and participate in new community programs.

Environmental initiatives include a geothermal heat exchanger, thermal labyrinth, high performance facade, greenwall bio-filter, rainwater collection and recycling.

7. Community facilities

This chapter provides an audit of government owned or managed community facilities include community hubs & centres, community halls/venues for hire, meeting rooms, function centres, spaces for youth and seniors programs, and scout and guide halls.

Community facilities

- ~ Community hubs & centres
- ~ Community halls/ venues for hire
- ~ Meeting rooms
- ~ Function centres
- ~ Spaces for youth and seniors programs
- ~ Scout and guide halls

7.1. Definition

Community spaces refer to assets (or areas within a community asset) that are available to the general public for hire. These spaces can be stand-alone, co-located within one building, or form part of a precinct, which is a well-connected collection of buildings and uses. Community spaces can be owned and operated by a variety of providers including Council, schools, not-for-profit or private organisations. For the purposes of this report, the main types of community spaces are defined as follows:

- **Multipurpose community hubs:** Purpose-built, larger buildings that integrate a range of different spaces and functions such as a library, community hall, meeting rooms, arts and cultural space or early education and health care services. Community hubs are always staffed and may have a reception desk.

- **Community centres:** Typically buildings that include a range of flexible community spaces (eg a hall, a meeting room, a lounge area) for delivery of community programs and services. These can be managed by Council or leased to service organisations. Community centres are always staffed (part-time or full-time).

- **Community halls/venues:** Generally smaller stand-alone buildings with spaces that can be hired by the community for activities, events and programs. These are typically unstaffed.

- **Meeting rooms:** Can vary in size (eg small rooms for around six to 10 people and larger meeting rooms for around 40 to 50 people). These spaces are equipped for small meetings, education and training, such as English conversation, or for quiet study or collaboration. They are ususally located within larger community facilities or libraries.

- **Function centres:** Are large staffed venues that can offer a full service for functions and events such as weddings and cultural or corporate events. An example is the privately owned Le Montage function centre

- **Space for youth and seniors:** Historically 'youth centres' and 'Senior Citizen's centres' have been dedicated spaces for the exclusive use by those demographic groups. However, contemporary delivery is moving towards delivery of these programs in multi-functional spaces that can be used by all members of the community.

- **Scout and guide halls:** A Scout or Guide hall is a building owned or rented and used as a meeting place by those groups. Some are privately owned, while others are Council owned. Often, they are also available for general hire by the community.

Hierarchy

Community and cultural facilities generally operate at three levels of provision: local, district and regional. The different scales of infrastructure service different sized catchments. Catchments refer to both geographical areas and the size of the population serviced. For example, a primary school is intended to serve the local population, usually within walking distance. However, a university will cater for a much wider population.

LGA wide level or sub-regional facilities

Usually serve populations of one LGA or around 100,000 people. This can include major civic centres, purpose built performance venues and central libraries.

District (or village or catchment level) facilities

Are more specialised and operate on a geographic planning catchment area, usually for about 30,000 to 50,000 people. District level facilities would usually have a staff presence and could include: multipurpose community centres; including a district or branch library; community arts spaces. They service a catchment of 5 to 15km and a travel time of 15 to 30minute drive or cycle.

Local level (or satellite) facilities

Are focused on neighbourhood or village needs and are usually planned to serve a catchment of about 5,000 to 20,000 people within a catchment of 1km to 5km or a 5 to 15minute walk or drive.

7.2. What we have overall

Audit - Existing facilities

Across Ballina LGA, there are 27 publicly accessible community spaces of which 21 are owned or managed by Ballina Shire Council or other government agencies (such as State Government). The types of community spaces–their hierarchy and ownership–are summarised in Table 8 below.

Table 8 - Government owned or managed community facilities and spaces in Ballina

Facility type		Government owned			Privately owned	
		District	Local	m2	District	Local
	Multipurpose community hubs / civic centres	2	0	**2,153**	0	0
	Community centre / hall	3	10	**4,082**	0	2
	Senior Citizen Centre	0	1	**582**	0	0
	Youth centres	1	0	**275**	0	0
	Scout and guide halls	0	1	**200**	0	1
	Function Centres (surf clubs, RSL's)	2	0	**590**	2	0
	Stand alone meeting rooms	n/a	15 as part of other community spaces		n/a	0
	TOTAL	8	13	**7,810**	2	3

Multipurpose community hubs

There are 2 community hubs located within the LGA – Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC) and Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre. Council owns both assets. It manages the Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre, while the ALEC is leased to a community association.

The ALEC has a planned upgrade and expansion, and will be renamed to the Alstonville Cultural Centre.

The Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre was built in 2010 and had a number of recent maintenance works completed. This facility can host conferences with up to 500 participants in the auditorium and has 4 meeting room spaces that can combine into 1 larger space. It is also home to the Lennox Head Library.

Community Centres and Halls

Council and State Government owns and manages 14 community centres and halls located within the LGA, including facilities that are leased or licensed to community organisations. In addition, there are also facilities such as meeting rooms and halls provided in Registered Services Clubs such as (RSL clubs, bowling clubs, golf clubs), as well as in church run facilities, and non-government owned or Scout/Guide halls (available for casual hire by non-affiliated groups), however these non-government owned facilities are typically not considered as part of a benchmarking process.

Tintenbar School has recently received funding for an upgrade - including a 'state-of-the-art' hall. Unclear in whether this hall will be publicly available through a join-use agreement or for exclusive school use.

Government owned or managed facilities are detailed in Table 9. Non-government owned facilities include:

- The Ballina Corps Salvation Army church hall
- Alstonville Scout Hall

Meeting rooms

There are approximately 15 Government-owned meeting rooms for hire, as part of the larger multipurpose facilities. Non-Council-owned meeting spaces are also available across the LGA in RSLs, cafés and sporting facilities.

Youth spaces

Council owns the B-Space Youth Facility, which is leased to Social Futures - a regionally based social services provider. B-Space is a non profit creative hub for young people where they can try new activities, be creative and have access to mentoring opportunities.

Seniors centres

Council owns Wigmore Hall Seniors Centre, which is the home of a recreational group for older people The hall is used for playing cards, morning teas, folk and line dancing, singing, bowls, tai chi.

Scout and Guide halls

There is 1 operational scout hall located within the LGA - located at Lennox Head Scout Hall, which is owned by State government.

Visitor Information Centre

There is 1 visitor information centre, located next to the Ballina Library.

Ballina Shire Council has one administrative centre - the Ballina Shire Council Customer Service Centre (Crown land managed by Council). Council has identified that this office space is inadequate to accommodate growing needs.

Function Centres

There are two Council-owned surf clubs located within the LGA which are both available for hire as a function centre venue. Ballina Surf Club has three function rooms available - the Jullum, the Gawandii, and the Dirrawong rooms have been designed to ensure their place as one of Ballina's premier venues for celebrations and business events including weddings, birthday parties, expos and conferences.

The Lennox Head Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club is available as a 'venue only' hire for functions including weddings, birthday parties and anniversaries, Christmas parties and conferences. It has capacity to seat up to 80 people

In addition to Government-owned community facilities, there are a number of privately owned facilities that cater to functions and conferences. These include:

- Ballina Byron Islander Resort and Conference Centre
- Ballina Jockey Club, and
- Ballina RSL - Riverside Function centre.

Proposed facilities

Catchment 3 contains two urban release areas: Cubmalum Precinct A and Kinvara (formerly known as Cumbalum Precinct B). The Contributions Plans and VPA agreements for these areas mandate the provision of future community facilities:

- Cumbalum Precinct A: 1,000m^2 community hall
  - Anticipated to be delivered by 2026
- Kinvara: Community halls are to be provided comprising a minimum of 250m^2 GFA per 880 final lots. Each hall is to include an auditorium of 170m^2, car parking and landscaping and are to be centrally located.
  - Therefore we can assume: 2145 total lots divided by 880 lots = 2.4 community centres
  - 2.4 community centres at a rate of 250m^2 minimum = 609m^2 total community facility floorspace
  - Anticipated that only 300 lots will be delivered by 2036, therefore the future community floorspace provision for Kinvara is not relevant to this study's benchmarking process.

7.3. What does Government own or manage?

Table 9 and Figure 17 provide a summary of government owned or managed community facilities in Ballina LGA.

Overall, there are 21 Government Owned or managed community spaces in the LGA. Of those:

- 6 are owned by State Government (managed by or leased to community based associations)
- 15 are owned by Council
  - Ten of the 15 facilities are leased to community associations, services and NGO's to manage
  - Four are directly managed by Council (Richmond Room, Ballina Shire Council Customer Service Centre, Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre)

Catchment 1 has the highest number of community facilities, while the other 3 catchments have 3-4 facilities each. This is reflective of Catchment 1 including Ballina CBD (the major centre of the LGA) and largest concentration of people.

Council owns and manages many other buildings in the LGA, however this report only addresses community facilities that have publicly accessible/hireable floorspace. Examples of the facilities not addressed in this report include: Ballina Shire Council Customer Service Centre and Ballina Surf Club, Building B.

Community facilities

Government owned or managed

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

East Ballina

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District
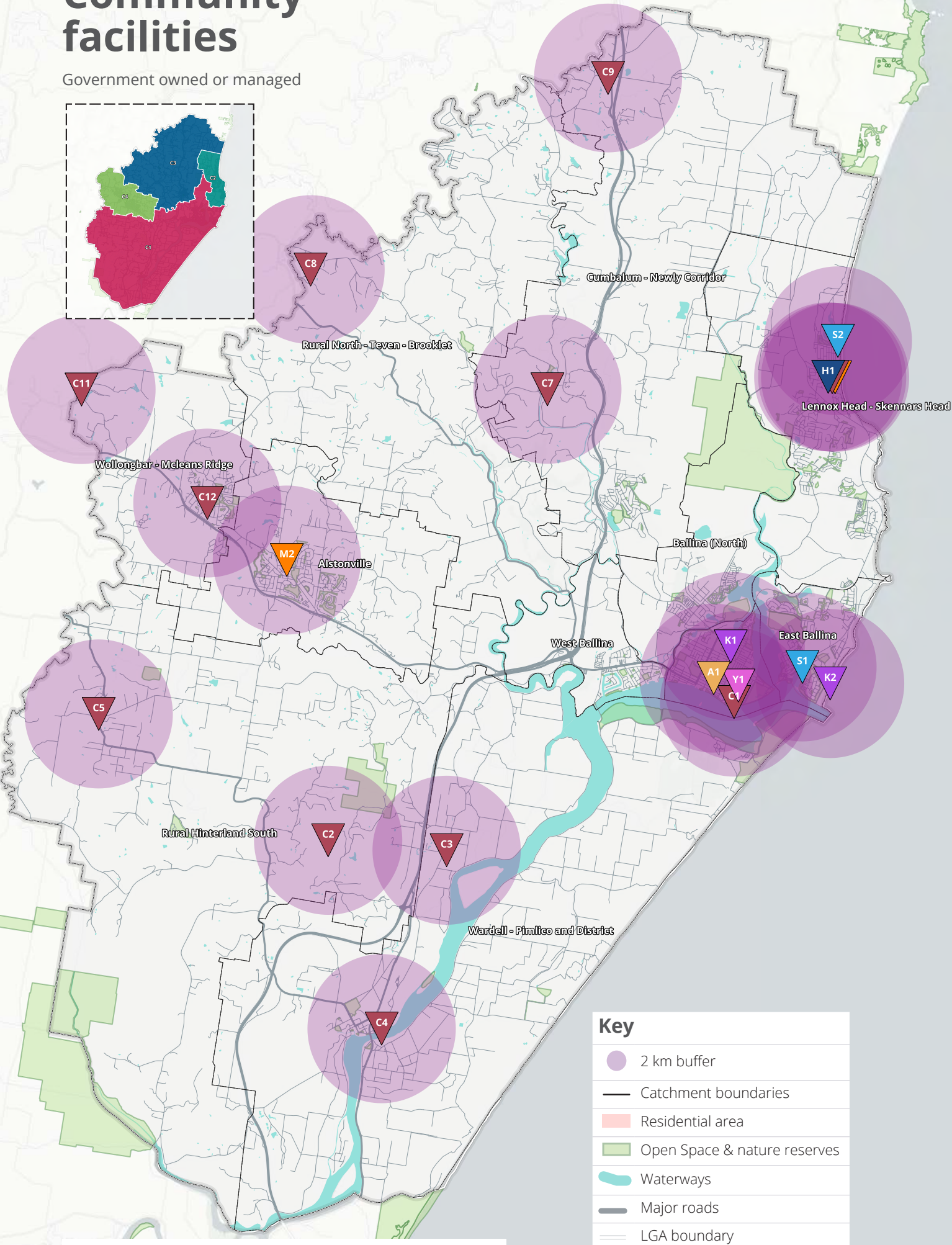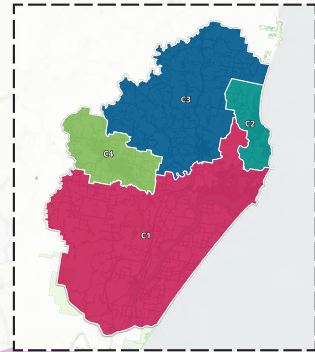
Key

- 2 km buffer
- Catchment boundaries
- Residential area
- Open Space & nature reserves
- Waterways
- Major roads
- LGA boundary

Figure 17 - Government owned or managed community facilities audit

Table 9 - Audit of government-owned or managed community spaces

	Facility Name	Map Ref.	Type	Hierarchy	Size (m²)	Asset ownership	Land ownership	Mgmt.
C1	Richmond Room (at Ballina Library)	C1	Community hall	Local	295	Council	Crown Land Managed by Council	Council
	Kentwell Community Centre	K1	Community Centre	Local	893	Council	Community Land	Leased to community based NGOs
	Meerschaum Vale Hall	C2	Community hall	Local	222	State	Crown, direct lease to community group	Managed by community based association
	Northlakes Community Centre	K2	Community Centre	Local	225	Council	Community Land	Council
	Pimlico Hall	C3	Community hall	District	223	Council	Operational Land	Leased
	Wardell and District War Memorial Hall	C4	Community hall	Local	447	Council	Community Land	Leased
	Rous Mill Hall	C5	Community hall	Local	320	State	Freehold title	Managed by community based association
	'B-Space' Ballina	Y1	Youth centre	District	275	Council	Community Land	Leased
	Wigmore Hall	A1	Seniors Centre	Local	582	Council	Community Land	Leased
	Ballina Surf Club (function space)	S1	Surf Club	District	414.5	Council	Crown Land Managed by Council	Combination
C2	Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre	M1	Multi-purpose community hub	District	2,037*	Council	Crown Land Managed by Council	Council
	Lennox CWA Hall	C6	Community hall	Local	105	Council	Crown Land Managed by Council	Council
	Lennox Head Scout Hall	H1	Scout Hall	Local	200	State	Crown	Lease with Crown
	Lennox Head Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club (function space)	S2	Surf Club	District	175	Council	Crown Land Managed by Council	Leased
C3	Tintenbar Hall	C7	Community hall	Local	350	State	Freehold title	Managed by community based association
	Pearces Creek Hall	C8	Community hall	Local	190	State	Freehold title	Managed by community based association
	Newrybar Community Hall	C9	Community hall	Local	200	Council	Community Land	Leased
	New community hall delivered as part of the Cumbalum urban release area	C10	*Proposed Community Hall*	District	tbc	Council	tbc	tbc
C4	Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC)	M2	Multi-purpose community hub	District	Current: 1,753m²** Proposed: 2643m	Council	Operational Land	Leased
	McLeans Ridges Hall	C11	Community hall	Local	170	State	Freehold title	Managed by community based association
	Wollongbar Community Hall	C12	Community hall	Local	260	Council	Community Land	Leased

*The Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre is a total size of 2,037m2 comprising library (530 sqm), meeting rooms (200 sqm), auditorium (580 sqm), storage (53 sqm), foyer (186 sqm), administration area (100 sqm), amenities/toilets&kitchen (160 sqm) and children's activity room (123 sqm). Includes CWA Hall of 105 sqm (included in total area)

** ALEC total area = 1753 m2, comprising Sports hall (813 sqm), performance hall (438.3 sqm), 2 meeting rooms (30.4 sqm combined area), foyer and amenities (256.6 sqm) and existing library (140 sqm).

Council owned community facilities

There are 15 council owned community facilities in Ballina LGA. These range in age, quality and size.

The Richmond Room, Ballina

C1

Strengths

- Good location for wedding receptions and conferences near the river, air conditioned.
- Upgraded in the last 12 months. Nice big hall space. Backs onto the ballina library - door that connects the two facilities

Weaknesses

- Limited natural light
- No accessible bathroom
- Older style furniture

Opportunities

- Accessibility and amenities could be upgraded (e.g. accessible bathroom)
- Improved audio system (microphone and speakers)
- Modern, ergonomic and safe furniture and storage spaces

Northlakes Community Centre

C1

Strengths

- Recently upgraded small residential area hall built in 80s or 90s.
- Brick and tile building.
- Money is allocated for interior upgrades.
- Well used by the community e.g. sewing groups
- Also used by St Andrews Aged Care (as day activity space) and Tweed, Byron & Ballina Community Transport.

Weaknesses

- Location - north west side of Ballina

Opportunities

- Potential for increased use by diability and aged care services

Kentwell Community Centre

C1

Strengths

- 2 interview rooms, 2 meeting rooms
- used by community groups. has leased spaces e.g. CPL? Byron bus service, daycare

Weaknesses

- Challenge - community facility, but predominately leased to community services and groups.
- Need for general community facilities

Opportunities

- Areas behind leased areas - outside where people go - antisocial behaviour (drug taking and vandalism) = improved security
- Land area is large

Wigmore Hall

C1

Strengths

- Senior cits hall - nice sized hall (dancing etc.) And well utilised, kitchen, popular hall for the older gen
- Middle of town - good location
- Girl guides hall lease to community e.G. Yoga classes. Senior cits also lease out
- Girl guides and the shire concert band practice space
- Seperate leased space

Weaknesses

- Limited use outside of the senior citizens group
- Need for major external repairs. Wigmore hall is a timber building and it requires paint stripped, building repairs and a repaint. It also is in need of a new roof. Council is seeking funding for these works next financial year.

Opportunities

Ballina Surf Club

C1

Strengths

- A six to ten year facility in a good location overlooking the water and has a cafe/restaurant on site.
- The facility has three good meeting rooms that are well utilised. Two of which are large rooms that open to a single room used for wakes and conferences. The third room is separate.
- The building is in good condition and the audio visual equipment is recently upgraded.

Weaknesses

- Poor acoustics
- Room for increased utilisation
- Regular maintenance required on audio and visual equipments due to the impact of coastal conditions

Opportunities

- First floor (accessible to public) comprises 414.5 sqm functions rooms, toilets etc and 191 sqm cafe lease. Council have indicated that the acoustics can be improved.

Wardell District War Memorial Hall

C1

Strengths
- Well equipped for local level role

Weaknesses
- Ageing facility

Opportunities
- Upgrade to public space around the hall

'B-Space' - Ballina Youth Service

C1

Strengths
- Relatively recent major renovations were completed in 2013

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Ballina CWA Hall

C1

Strengths
- Located within attractive river side public reserve.

Weaknesses
- Ageing facility
- No airconditioning

Opportunities
- Take better advantage of river side location.

Lennox Head Cultural Centre

C2

Strengths

- 2.5 Million upgrade in past 12 months, only just over 10yrs old
- New stage being built with installation of mechanical hoist to improve disability access
- Auditorium, green room, 3 small meeting rooms that can join
- Fantastic space with good acoustics
- Childrens play, foyer, small kitchen

Weaknesses

- Underutilised due to covid, but no other issues
- Insufficient lighting, audio and size of the stage to host big events - large events require external professional audio visual equipment to be brought in which adds to costs
- Manual seating arrangement impacts on costs and WH&S

Opportunities

- Marketing could be improved to maximise useage 6am - midnight.
- Improve lighting, audio and staging requirements to host bigger events
- Install automatic tiered seating

Lennox CWA Hall

C2

Strengths

- Co-located as part of the Lennox Head Cultural Centre
- Air conditioned

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Lennox Head-Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club

C2

Strengths

- Solar panels
- Utilises surrounding public space
- Popular beach kiosk hub

Weaknesses

- Dilapidated but usable

Opportunities

- Investigate the feasibility of installing a permanent community shade structure at Lennox Head Main Beach for use by surfing clubs as part of the future master plan and design (Source: Sports Plan)

Newrybar Community Hall

C3

Strengths
- Heritage style hall.
- Community group manages it well - available for general community hire
- Already on a 7 year painting program

Weaknesses
- Not under council direct management - leased to a community group

Opportunities
- Key community hub suitable for broad range of potential uses

Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC)

C4

Strengths
- Exist as part of Alstonville Cultural Centre. (Former Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre)

Weaknesses
- It is an ageing facility and needs amenities, new roof and exterior upgrades.
- Runoff area might not meet current standards.

Opportunities
- A new 2-storey library (4.5 million) and community hall (3 million) of 650m^2 is being planned with accessibility improvements and internal elevator.
- Future multi-function hall that will be used for theatre, dance and conferences and single multipurpose indoor sports court (refurbishment of existing facilities).
- The facility is expected to become a social hub for all ages.

Wollongbar Community Hall

C4

Strengths
- Undergoing upgrade works on exterior
- Well utilised, well loved by the community. Next to an oval.
- Single garage. Preschool behind the hall.
- Leased to community group. But sub let to others. Available for general community hire

Weaknesses
- Ageing facility

Opportunities
- Making sure it is utilised to the maximum amount

State owned community facilities

There are 6 state owned halls in Ballina LGA. These halls form an important part of the social infrastructure network, and have been included here to allow a 'full picture' of spaces that are available to the community. Council does not have responsibility for maintenance or improvements to these community facilities. Some halls like, Tintenbar Hall, Pearces Creek Hall and Meeschum Vale Hall are well maintained kept. While others, like Rouse Mill Hall, are Ageing and appear to have lower levels of maintenance and community care.

Meeschaum Vale Hall

Rouse Mill Hall

Lennox Head Scout Hall

Tintenbar Hall

Pearces Creek Hall

McLeans Ridges Hall

Utilisation

This section summarises community facility utilisation data using information provided by Council. Ballina Shire Council managed facility utilisation rates are based on an assumption of 8.30am-9.30pm.

Utilisation gives an insight into how often community spaces are used by the community. Well-utilised and in-demand facilities indicate that the space is functional, well-located and has the amenity to meet the community's needs. Facilities that have low utilisation could indicate that the space may not meet a community need e.g. no longer fit for purpose, small size or in a difficult to access location or difficult to hire. Some best practices for high utilisation include, staffing the centres, provision of multi-purpose spaces to enable a variety of programs, good accessibility and affordable services.

Utilisation data was provided by Ballina Shire Council in November 2021.

Table 10 - Audit of government-owned or managed community spaces

	Category	Community spaces	Managed by	Staffing	Utilisation
C1	Community hall	Richmond Room (at Ballina Library)	Council		35-40%
	Community Centre	Kentwell Community Centre	Council		36%
	Community hall	Meerschaum Vale Hall	Managed by community based association		3 regular monthly ,4-6 bookings / yr
	Community Centre	Northlakes Community Centre	Leased		28%
	Community hall	Pimlico Hall	Leased		n/a
	Community hall	Wardell and District War Memorial Hall	Leased		n/a
	Community hall	Rous Mill Hall	Managed by community based association		20+hrs/week
	Youth centre	'B-Space' Ballina	Leased		n/a
	Seniors Centre	Wigmore Hall	Leased		exclusive use
	Surf Club	Ballina Surf Club	Combination		n/a
	Surf Club	Ballina Surf Club Building B	Leased		n/a
C2	Multi-purpose community hub	Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre	Council	Staffed	15-20%
	Community hall	Lennox CWA Hall	Leased		n/a
	Scout Hall	Lennox Head Scout Hall	Lease with Crown		n/a
	Surf Club	Lennox Head Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club	Leased		n/a
C3	Community hall	Tintenbar Hall	Managed by community based association		8-20hrs/week
	Community hall	Pearces Creek Hall	Managed by community based association		6-12 bookings/ yr
	Community hall	Newrybar Community Hall	Leased		10-15hrs/week
C4	Multi-purpose community hub	Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC)	Leased	Staffed	n/a
	Community hall	McLeans Ridges Hall	Managed by community based association		22+hrs/week
	Community hall	Wollongbar Community Hall	Leased		10-15hrs/week

In February 2022, Council noted the following Covid impacts:

- Ballina Surf Club – Jullum, Gawandii and Dirrawong – average 20% (Q2 21/22 report)
- Lennox Head CWA Hall – 17% (Q2 21/22 report)
- BISC Meeting Rooms 1, 2 and 3 – average 5% (Q2 21/22 report)

Facility bookings

This section summarises community facility booking type data using information provided by Ballina Shire Council in November 2021.

Table 11 - Audit of government-owned or managed community spaces

	Category	Community spaces	Types of bookings
C1	Community hall	Richmond Room (at Ballina Library)	Well used on a regular basis by local community groups such as Lions, Rotary, Bunjum, Bullinah and Red Cross Blood Bank. Also used for weddings, wakes, business meetings, Electoral Commission pre-polling, library reading groups, dancing (physical culture and Line Dancing) – as well as Dementia/Health workshops.
	Community Centre	Kentwell Community Centre	Well used by NDIS providers, business meetings, cancer and other support groups, Church groups, construction meetings and non-for profit organisations. Smaller rooms are used by Corrective Services on a daily basis as well as Department of Communities and Justice.
	Community hall	Meerschaum Vale Hall	Monthly committee meetings, local Writers' Group monthly meeting, Garden Club monthly meetings, community information sessions, weddings, birthday parties, dances, training or workshops, voting polls, fundraising events.
	Community Centre	Northlakes Community Centre	Art and craft groups including sewing, photography, cancer support groups, yoga, dance, meditation, training, small gatherings and birthday parties.
	Community hall	Pimlico Hall	n/a
	Community hall	Wardell and District War Memorial Hall	Used by small groups of Knit and Knat. Alcoholics Anonymous, Community Dinner and Yoga. The hall is also used for Aboriginal Wakes when required. It is used once a year for school function. council presentation and Xmas light up and Bush dance. The hall is also used for federal state and local election and progress association meeting.
	Community hall	Rous Mill Hall	Dancing Classes twice a week, Physical Culture class weekly, Yoga/ Pilates once a week, Tibouchina club provide weekly entertainment and lunch for people over 65 years, Weddings, Wakes, music nights, meditation classes, birthday and Christmas parties and workshops.
	Youth centre	'B-Space' Ballina	n/a
	Seniors Centre	Wigmore Hall	The hall is not hired out. All activities are by Senior citizen Club members. The hall is used most days usually with multiple activities spread through the day. At present Fridays and Sundays are only used occasionally
	Surf Club	Ballina Surf Club	Weddings, wakes, celebrations (birthdays, baby showers, naming ceremonies), conferences, business meetings, NDIS and non-for-profit meetings, yoga, meditation, workshops and training, filming and movie production (movie sets/ change rooms), business launches, team building workshops, art and craft workshops.
	Surf Club	Ballina Surf Club Building B	n/a

C2	Multi-purpose community hub	Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre	• Auditorium: Conferences, filming and movie productions, live events including music and theatre, live streaming, dance concerts, exhibitions, workshops. Cancer and mental health support groups. Drama productions. Australia Day event. • Meeting Rooms - 1,2,3 and 4 : Health care provision, testing clinics, dance classes, yoga and meditation, training and workshops. • Interview Room: Health care provision, consultations, mediation, health clinics and testing, interviews. • Children's Area: Children Playgroup
	Community hall	Lennox CWA Hall	Art and craft, sewing, community groups and meetings, yoga and dance, tai chi.
	Scout Hall	Lennox Head Scout Hall	n/a
	Surf Club	Lennox Head Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club	n/a
C3	Community hall	Tintenbar Hall	n/a
	Community hall	Pearces Creek Hall	Weddings, Birthday Parties Private Family Dinner (Christmas in July), , Brainstorm Theatre Education Rehearsals, Orchid Society Dinner, Art Exhibitions, Photoshoots,
	Community hall	Newrybar Community Hall	Weddings, wakes, workshops. Tibuchina group has started using.
C4	Multi-purpose community hub	Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre (ALEC)	• Multipurpose Hall: Filming and movie production. Community groups, dance classes, conferences, meetings, gymnastics, physical culture, youth groups and workshops. • Commercial Kitchen: Commercial kitchen used for retail or in conjunction with a meeting in the multipurpose hall. • Interview Room: Language classes, mediation, interviews, business meetings. • Sports Hall: Art and craft exhibitions, community shows and exhibitions, filming and movie production, school and local sport – basketball and futsal.
	Community hall	McLeans Ridges Hall	n/a
	Community hall	Wollongbar Community Hall	n/a

7.4. Population based benchmarking

Provision standards

Floorspace population benchmarks are used to give an indication of the number and size of community assets that would ideally be provided if opportunity exists, feasibility is demonstrated, funding is available and the local context and site opportunities and limitations, as well as the broader provision close by, are taken into account.

Unlike library provision standards, community facility provision standards vary from Council to Council across NSW. The standards adopted for the purposes of this Needs Assessment have been summarised in the table below and applied to Ballina's current and forecast population to determine the current rate of provision and future demand for libraries.

The first benchmark gives an indication of the total amount of floorspace required to meet current and future community needs, and the second gives an indication of the optimal number of community centres to support the population.

It is important to note that benchmarking processes are not without limitation. Benchmarks take an historic approach to assumptions of future demand in calculating the quantum of community assets required. The output of benchmarking is a numeric expression of demand, that enables the comparison of like for like infrastructure across time and geography.

Rates of provision

Benchmark type	Facility Type	Rate of Provision	Source
Floorspace	All community spaces (inclusive of all subcategories*)	$80m^2$ of community facility floor space per 1,000 people	Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028 and City of Parramatta's Social Infrastructure Strategy (October 2020)
Number of facilities	Integrated multipurpose community facility (District)	1 facility per 30 – 50,000 people Or 1 per catchment	Wollongong Social infrastructure 2018 Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017 (50,000)
	Local community space (a stand-alone facility)	1 facility per 10,000	Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017
	Target group seniors facility	Rate of provision - 1: 15,000 to 20,000 people aged 70+ years *(Provided as part of multipurpose community spaces and moving away from stand alone or age specific use only).*	Growth Centre Commission
	Target group youth facility	Rate of provision - 1:3,000 young people aged 12 to 17 years	Growth Centre Commission

*inclusive of all types of community floorspace that is government owned or managed: multipurpose community hubs/civic centres, community centres, community halls/venues for hire, meeting rooms, function centres and youth spaces and seniors centres. Excludes private facilities, or facilities that are leased and only available to affiliate members.

Floorspace population benchmarking

80m2 of community floorspace per 1,000 people

Table 12 provides a summary of community floorspace provision in the LGA and by catchment, as well as changes over time through to 2045.

Overall

- There is a current supply of 7,810m^2 of community floorspace in the LGA.
- A 1,000m^2 multi-purpose community hall is proposed to be delivered Cumbalum Precinct B. It is anticipated to be completed by 2026, resulting in increased floorspace in Catchment 3 in line with population growth.
- Benchmarking shows that there is currently an above benchmark provision of community floorspace in all catchments (in 2016)
- By 2045, there will still be an average above benchmark provision of community space in the LGA.
- New residents alone (+13,826 between 2016-2045) will generate a demand for 1,106m^2 of community floorspace. However, eve with this growth, the current and planned provision is adequate to cater to community needs (in terms of quantum of floor space. Quality, function and access will need to be considered in addition to benchmarking, to ensure that community spaces in the LGA remain functional, attractive and respond to evolving community needs)

By planning catchments

- By 2045, even with population growth, all catchments will remain above benchmark provision of community floorspace

Table 12 - Application of community floorspace provision standards

	Year	Population	Provision	Demand (80m^2 per 1,000 people)	Gap (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045
C1	2016	21,277	4,002	1,702	no gap	144
	2045	23,074		1,846	no gap	
C2	2016	7,784	1,838	623	no gap	415
	2045	12,968		1,037	no gap	
C3	2016	4,755	740	380	no gap	270
	2045	8,136	1,740	651	no gap	
C4	2016	8,813	1,230	705	no gap	277
	2045	12,277		982	no gap	
LGA	2016	42,629	7,810	3,410m^2	no gap	1,106m^2
	2045	56,455	8,810	4,516m^2	no gap	

Number of facilities population benchmarking

The *number of facilities benchmark* provides a measure of the number of facilities provided in the LGA and catchment, relative to the population size.

The following pages provide the results from the application of the following four benchmarks:

- 1 district community facility per 20,000-30,000 people[1]
- 1 local community facility per 10,000 people
- 1 seniors centre per 15,000-20,000 people aged 70+ years
- 1 youth space per 30,000 young people aged 13 to 19 years

1 district community facility per 30,000 people

Table 13 provides a summary of district community facility provision in the LGA and by catchment, and changes over time through to 2045.

Overall

- Currently, there are 4 district level multi-purpose community spaces located in Ballina LGA (excluding the seniors and youth centre, and surf club function spaces). In addition, the Cumberlum Development Contributions Plan identified the future delivery of 1 district community facility (anticipated for completion by 2026).
- **The new population between 2016 to 2045 generate a demand for between 0.46-0.69 district level community facilities.** However the community floorspace demands of Catchment 3 are largely taken care of by existing Contributions Plans and VPA agreements (that will deliver new community centres in the future).
- The LGA does not have a current or future gap in the provision of district level community floorspace. However this benchmark does not consider functionality, flexibility, quality or access, which are also important consideration in planning a future network of community spaces.

By planning catchments

- Currently, all catchments are meeting multi-purpose community facility benchmarks, except for catchment 3, however, by 2026 the new district community facility in catchment 3 will meet this gap.

Table 13 - Number of district community spaces benchmarking

	Year	Population	District Facilities Provision	Demand * (1:20-30,000 people)		Gap* (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045*
C1	2016	21,277	2	0.71	1.06	no gap	0.06-0.09
	2045	23,074		0.77	1.15	no gap	
C2	2016	7,784	1	0.26	0.39	no gap	0.17-0.26
	2045	12,968		0.43	0.65	no gap	
C3	2016	4,755	0	0.16	*0.24*	0.16 to 0.24	0.11-0.17
	2045	8,136	1	*0.27*	*0.41*	no gap	
C4	2016	8,813	1	0.29	0.44	no gap	0.12-0.17
	2045	12,277		0.41	0.61	no gap	
LGA	**2016**	**42,629**	**4**	**1.42**	**2.13**	no gap	**0.46-0.69**
	2045	**56,455**	**5**	**1.88**	**2.83**	no gap	

*Both the low and high range of the benchmark have been applied

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1   The community facility benchmarks exclude function centres as well as age group only spaces, such as the senior centre and youth centre. The age group specific spaces have their own benchmarks.

1 local community facility per 10,000 people

Table 14 provides a summary of local level community facility provision in the LGA and by catchment, and changes over time through to 2045.

Currently, there are 12 local level community spaces located in Ballina LGA (excluding seniors, youth centres, meeting rooms and function spaces)

The additional population between 2016-2045 will generate a demand for 1.38 centres. However, the delivery of a new community space in Cumbalum as per the contributions plan, would meet this gap.

Overall

- The application of the 1 local community facility per 10,000 people benchmark to the LGA population indicates that there is an existing demand for 4.26, and no current gap
- By 2045, the demand will increase to 5.65 centres, with the number of facilities still meeting benchmarks standards in the future. However this benchmark does not consider functionality, flexibility, quality or access, which are also important consideration in planning a future network of community spaces.
- The additional community between 2016 - 2045 will generate a demand for 1.38 local community spaces, however this demand can be serviced by the existing network.

By planning catchments

- Currently, all catchments are meeting local community facility benchmarks
- However by 2045, catchment 2 will be 0.3 facilities below benchmark.

Table 14 - Number of local community spaces benchmarking

	Year	Population	Local Facilities Provision	Demand (1:10,000 people)	Gap (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045
C1	2016	21,277	5	2.13	no gap	0.18
	2045	23,074		2.31	no gap	
C2	2016	7,784	1	0.78	no gap	0.52
	2045	12,968		1.30	**-0.30**	
C3	2016	4,755	3	0.48	no gap	0.34
	2045	8,136		0.81	no gap	
C4	2016	8,813	2	0.88	no gap	0.35
	2045	12,277		1.23	no gap	
LGA	**2016**	**42,629**	**11**	4.26	No gap	**1.38**
	2045	**56,455**	**11**	5.65	No gap	

1 seniors centre per 15,000-20,000 people aged 70+ years

Table 15 provides a summary of seniors centre provision in the LGA and by catchment, and changes over time through to 2045.

Overall

- There is 1 seniors centre located in Ballina LGA

By planning catchments

- Currently, all catchments are meeting local community facility benchmarks
- 1 seniors centre is sufficient to meet the needs of the LGA population both now and into the future.

Table 15 - Number of seniors centres benchmarking

	Year	Population aged 70+ years	% of pop	Local Facilities Provision	Demand (1:15,000 people)	Gap (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045
C1	2016	5141	20.5	1	0.34	no gap	0.07
	2045	6195			0.41	no gap	
C2	2016	797	10.6	0	0.05	-0.05	0.01
	2045	881			0.06	**-0.06**	
C3	2016	427	9.15	0	0.03	-0.03	0.00
	2045	466			0.03	-0.03	
C4	2016	1267	22.4	0	0.08	-0.08	0.02
	2045	1551			0.10	-0.10	
LGA	**2016**	7395	17.7%	**1**	0.49	no gap	**0.09**
	2045	**8704**			0.58	no gap	

1 youth space per 30,000 young people aged 13 to 19 years

There is 1 youth space located in Ballina LGA. The application of the benchmark to the LGA population indicates that there is an existing demand for 1 space and therefore no existing gap. By 2045, the demand will increase to 2.4 centres. The additional population between 2016-2045 will generate a demand for 0.4 centres.

Table 16 - Number of youth spaces benchmarking

	Year	Population aged 12-17yrs	% of pop	Local Facilities Provision	Demand (1:30,000 people)	Gap (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045
LGA	**2016**	3152	7.4%	**1**	0.11	no gap	0.02
	2036	3643	7.1%		0.12	no gap	
	2045	3902			0.13	no gap	

7.5. Summary of Needs

Identified needs for consideration in the Contributions Plan

Ballina has a diverse network of community spaces across the LGA. Benchmarking indicates that there is sufficient quantum of community facilities in terms of floorspace (m^2) as well as number of facilities. Therefore, the needs below mainly focus on upgrading access and quality of these spaces, rather than creating additional ones.

- **Provision of a new multi-purpose community and cultural hub**: Action B3.2 in the Ballina major regional centre strategy 2015 – 2035 identifies the following action: *'Create a civic centre precinct incorporating features such as a town square, Council administration, gallery, library, meeting rooms and performance space in association with the development of cafes and compatible retail uses.'*
  - This action reflects the infrastructure delivery trend towards larger multi-purpose and co-located facilities in central locations.
  - Creates the opportunity for redevelopment and consolidation of a number of Council owned assets in Ballina, and for Council to demonstrate best practice building standards (e.g. Green Star) and to achieve a number of strategic goals set out in the Ballina MRCS such as providing more spaces for innovation, culture, and re-orientating towards the Richmond River.
- **Delivery of the Alstonville Cultural Centre:** The new Alstonville Cultural Centre will deliver a multi-purpose community spaces in a catchment where previously, historic community halls are the only type of space available.
- **An accessible community spaces network:** Council staff and the local community have identified opportunities to improve the universal access of some of the community spaces such as the historic halls and the Richmond Room in Ballina.
- **Upgrades and embellishments to local halls**: Council staff have identified a number of improvements to the community space network, including:
  - All venues need easy-to-move tables – on wheels preferably. Only the Ballina Indoor Sports Centre has new, modern easy to move tables on wheels. Staff and hirers move tables and chairs – impact on resources and WH&S.
  - Improved security and safety in the Kentwell Community Centre
  - Improved acoustics in the Ballina Surf Club (function space)
  - Wigmore Hall is in need of major external repairs, including exterior paint and a new roof
  - Richmond Room – provision of an accessible bathroom and an improved audio system (microphone and speakers) as well as internal furnishings such as tables (on wheels) and chairs and an improved storage system to allow for easy and safe access

Other identified needs
  - **Ensure that the network of community spaces across the LGA remain appropriate and flexible in response to changing community needs**
  - **Increase the utilisation of community halls through marketing and promotion.**

7.6. Community Facilities Case Studies

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY HUB

Shellharbour Civic Centre, NSW

In 2017, Shellharbour City Council completed the construction of their new regional community and cultural heart. The Civic Centre is a total of 14,000m^2 and cost $58 million. It incorporates the following elements:

- A plaza
- Public library (approx 2,000m^2)
- A 350-seat auditorium and museum space
- Community rooms
- Commercial kitchen
- Av equipment
- A cafe
- Local council chambers, offices and service centre,
- 170 Car parking spaces for staff and public use.

(Source: Design Inc)

CASE STUDY: CO-LOCATED AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL HALL

Blackman Park Scout Hall, Blackman Park, Sydney

Blackman Park Scout Hall is a 1,200m^2 multi-functional community and sporting facility co-located with sports fields including synthetic surfaces, as well as senior's exercise area, playground and BBQ area, and natural areas with walking paths.

The building is designed to have a simple, flexible shell that can also serve a variety of sporting and community uses. The large and small halls are available for hire for various community or family events and celebrations, while the facility also caters for sporting events through its change rooms, storage spaces and canteen. It also features solar panels and a solar hot water system to assist with the ongoing maintenance costs of the facility.

The sports uses include:

- Change rooms and toilets
- Sports storage sheds divided by code
- Referee room
- Canteen, and
- Covered viewing terrace.

Community uses include:

- Large hall
- Small hall
- Meeting room
- Kitchen and storage, and
- Toilets

(Source: Aja.com.au)

CASE STUDY: CO-LOCATED AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL HALL

Berala Community Centre, Sydney

Berala Community Centre is a 600m^2 (not including outdoor spaces) multi-purpose centre designed to encourage people to meet, socialise and learn new skills and recreate. The centre is staffed Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm and, like AC4C, has a diverse range of spaces available for hire including:

- Activity/training room (capacity for 30 people)
- A multi-functional room for around 20 people that can be divided into 2 rooms for up to 10 people
- Main hall for up to 144 people that can also divide, and is frequently used for table tennis, and
- Outdoor patio and outdoor veranda.
- The centre is a living room for the community, it has spaces for students to drop in an study, tennis table facilities for the community to use when the hall is not booked, access to technology and easy to move furniture to allow quick set-ups for meetings and programs. Each room also has a kitchenette and storages

(Source: Cred)

CASE STUDY: MARKETING TO IMPROVE UTILISATION

Home Is Where The Hall Is Regional Arts Victoria

Between 2011-2019, Home Is Where The Hall Is has seen hundreds of community led projects occur in the stunning community halls of regional Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Early years of the program saw all sorts of activity including bake offs, dance competitions, photography exhibitions and film nights, and the most recent year of the program saw Bollywood dancing, a mad hatters tea party, house concerts and kinder ballet.

Halls are special places, and the past eight years have demonstrated just how much these spaces mean to the diverse communities of Regional Australia. Halls hold memories. They build partnerships. They are the places we gather, mourn, celebrate, share and connect. This project reflected in a very public way the ability for physical places to positively impact our sense of community and communality.

8. Cultural facilities

This section provides an audit and mapping of existing cultural facilities located within the Ballina Shire.

Cultural facilities

- ~ Galleries
- ~ Museums
- ~ Performing arts centres
- ~ performance spaces
- ~ Theatres
- ~ Maker spaces
- ~ Co-working spaces
- ~ Men's sheds
- ~ Outdoor facilities and spaces used for culture and events
- ~ Artist residencies

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines cultural facilities as:

- **Performance and exhibition spaces**: Spaces for audiences and spectatorship, usually purpose-built in order to facilitate cultural activities and events. This includes major performing arts venues, live music venues (such as hotels, bars, cafes and clubs), museums, art galleries, art centres, heritage and discovery centres, comedy clubs, arena entertainment venues and drama and dance theatres.

- **Community and participation spaces:** Incorporating spaces such as libraries, town halls and government agencies focused on a more general community benefit, as well as those spaces, such as clubs and co-working spaces, serving specific communities (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009). This includes: maker spaces, First Nations-led Keeping Places and multipurpose community centres that offer arts workshop spaces, or support creative hobby groups and arts organisations.

- **Commercial and enterprise spaces:** Commercial or social enterprises primarily focused on the operation, creation, production, reproduction and distribution of cultural goods and services. This includes creative businesses (eg advertising, architectural, fashion design, photographic services), artists, creative manufacturing (such as glass, jewelery, ceramics), creative publishing, creative digital media, music recording studios, film and video production, post production and distribution, cinemas, radio, television, web broadcasting and creative retailing (commercial art gallery, art or craft supplies retailing, music instruments retailing, book and record stores, antique goods, performing arts companies).

- **Festival, event and public spaces:** Spaces in the public realm, non-Council-owned spaces accessible to the public and spaces, such as shopfronts or small retail spaces, used for temporary events and festivals. This includes parks, gardens, halls, market spaces, non-Council-owned public spaces, public art, pop-ups, and 'unusual' spaces such as rooftops, backyards and cafes.

- **Practice, education and development spaces:** Spaces used to provide opportunities for learning, rehearsal or the formation of cultural skills. This category is diverse, ranging from schools to rehearsal facilities and artist-run initiatives focused on supporting artist development and the development of new work. This includes rehearsal rooms, writers' rooms, artist studios, studio and workshop spaces, relevant education providers (including art, theatre, dance, music and film schools), co-working spaces, not-for-profit artist-run centres or galleries, digital media arts production spaces (film, video, music, gaming), not-for-profit arts organisations and peak bodies, First Nations artist-led initiatives and cultural venues.

8.1. Cultural facilities

Audit

There are 9 government owned or managed cultural spaces located within the Ballina LGA, 6 of which are located in catchment 1 - clustered around Ballina Town Centre. Of these, only 2 are local spaces, while the rest are district of regional level.

There are also a number of privately owned and managed cultural spaces in the LGA, such as RSL clubs (live music & performance) and galleries.

Table 17 - Summary of Government-owned or managed cultural facilities

	Name	Map Ref.	Type	Hierarchy	Size (m²)
C1	Ignite Studios (NRCG)	D1	Cultural hub	District	208
	Northern Rivers Community Gallery	F1	Gallery	District	472
	Ballina Community Men's Shed	I1	Men's Shed	Local	495
	Ballina Naval and Maritime Museum	M1	Museum	District	1,200
	Ballina Players Theatre	M2	Theatre	District	489
	Missingham Bridge Amphitheatre Park	O1	Amphitheatre	District	na
C2	Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre - Auditorium	Q1	Auditorium	Regional	580
C3	-	Q2	-	-	
C4	Crawford House	U1	Museum	District	220
	Alstonville Cultural Centre - theatre section	V1	Theatre	Local	438
	Alstonville Showgrounds	T6	Showground	Regional	n/a

Theatre & Performance

Ballina LGA has 1 theatre - the Ballina Players Theatre. This facility is located on community land and leased to Ballina Players - a community-based amateur theatre group and an incorporated association. There are no other theatres in the LGA. It is not available for general hire. The Lennox Head Cultural Centre, which is owned by Council, can seat up to 550 people in the auditorium is used for live performances, concerts, balls, comedy, New Auditorium 2film screenings, seminars, lectures, conferences, exhibition events, weddings, gala dinners and hybrid events. The proposed Alstonville Cultural Centre contains a theatre, and will also be owned and managed by Council. The Ballina RSL and also has an auditorium available for hire.

Museums

There are two museums located in the LGA - the Ballina Naval and Maritime Museum and the Crawford House Museum. The Maritime Museum is located on Crown land managed by Council and leased to not for profit organisation. There are no other museums located in the LGA. Crawford House is located on community land and leased to the Alstonville Plateau Historical Society. It is only open to the public 2 days a week, and 'aims to collect, preserve, display and provide documents and photographs of an historical nature of the Alstonville Plateau and Ballina Shire'.

Gallery

There is 1 public gallery located in the LGA - the Northern Rivers Community Gallery (NRGC). This facility is located on Crown land managed by Council and operated by Council. There are also a number of commercial galleries in and around Ballina Town Centre such as the Creative Artisans Gallery and Sea Silks Gallery.

Showgrounds

There are no publicly owned showgrounds in the LGA. The Alstonville Showgrounds is the only showgrounds

within the LGA and is owned by The Alstonville Agricultural Society Inc. They host a range of agricultural focused events such as Horse & Cattle Events, Working Dog Trials and annual shows with fireworks.

Creative and artist spaces

Ignite Studios is an extension of the Northern Rivers Community Gallery and Ballina Shire's creative space offering for subsidised artist studios and event spaces. Currently, there are no vacancies[1] - indicating a strong demand for creative space in the LGA. It is managed and operated by Council. The Lennox Arts Collective is a non-government owned or managed collective of 8 artists who work together to exhibit their work in their main street gallery in Lennox Head.

Men's shed

There is 1 Men's Shed located in the LGA - the Ballina Community Men's Shed, which is located on Council's operational land and leased to the community group.

Aboriginal Cultural spaces

The shire's Aboriginal community includes Bundjalung families who are the traditional custodians of the Ballina Shire area. Aboriginal families in the Ballina Shire live predominantly in Ballina and at Cabbage Tree Island. Custodianship of the Ballina Shire area by Aboriginal people dates back thousands of years.

Ballina Shire is rich in Bundjalung cultural heritage sites and history. Management of Aboriginal Heritage matters in the shire is overseen by JALI Local Aboriginal Land Council and is supported by the National Parks and Wildlife Act (1974) and the NSW Heritage Act (1977) which provide legal protection for Aboriginal sites and relics in NSW, including sites yet to be recorded.[2]

Public art

While not part of this scope, public art and sculptures are also important cultural assets that require ongoing maintenance and for collections to be expanded over time. Ballina LGA is home to the iconic Big Prawn.
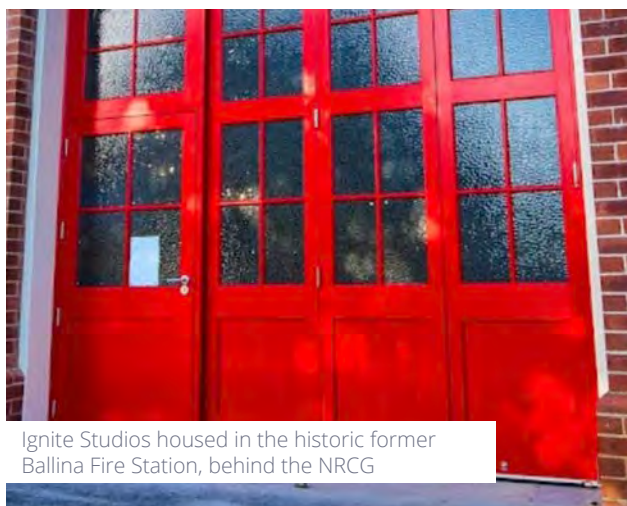
Event ready public spaces

Missingham Bridge Amphitheatre Park in Ballina has an outdoor amphitheatre which accommodates varied outdoor community events. A number of parks in the LGA are used for markets and community events. Alstonville, Lennox Head and Ballina hold regular community markets.

Community Halls

In addition, a number of villages have historic public halls as their focal point for locality based cultural activities. Community Halls have been included in the previous chapter's analysis, but are acknowledged as an important part of the cultural space network in the LGA as well.
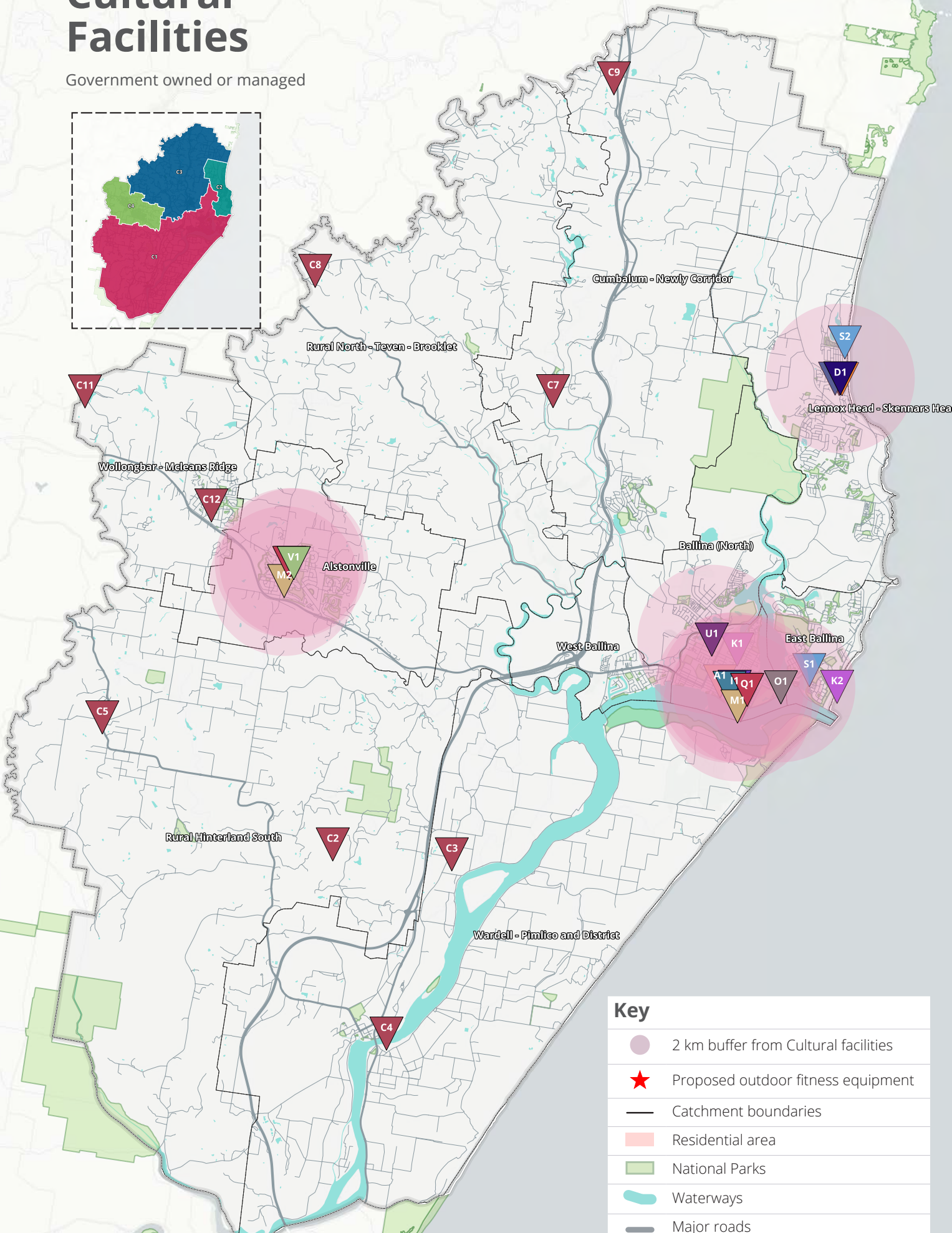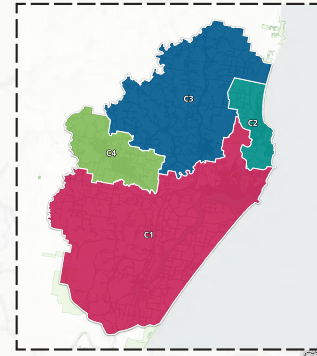
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1   Creative Spaces website (accessed 2 November 2021)

2   Ballina Shire Council website (accessed 2 November 2021)

Ignite Studios housed in the historic former Ballina Fire Station, behind the NRCG

Ballina Players Theatre

Cultural Facilities

Government owned or managed

Figure 18 - Government owned or managed community facilities audit

Key

- **2 km buffer from Cultural facilities**
- ★ Proposed outdoor fitness equipment
- Catchment boundaries
- Residential area
- National Parks
- Waterways
- Major roads
- LGA boundary

Benchmarking

The benchmarks to determine current and future demands for cultural space have been applied to government owned or managed Social Infrastructure only. The primary reason for this is that non-Council-owned Social Infrastructure are subject to market pressures and the will or circumstances of the owner which are subject to change at any time. In essence, non-Council-owned spaces cannot be relied on into the future. However, it is acknowledged that there are a number of spaces that are owned and managed by privately organisations that make significant and valuable contributions to the cultural asset network.

With Council-owned cultural assets, there is much more certainty that they will remain available for community use in the long term, or will be replaced with an equivalent or better facility (ie no negative impact to community access to community spaces).

Community and cultural facilities strategies adopted by various councils in NSW outline the benchmarks below to calculate the amount of cultural floorspace and number of facilities required to meet increasing demands due to population growth.

While showgrounds are an important event space, they are not included as a 'cultural facility' for the purposes of benchmarking

Rates of provision

Table 19 - Cultural facility benchmarks

Facility Type	Rate of Provision	Source
Cultural floorspace	20m^2 per 1,000 people	Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018- 2028 City of Ryde Development Contributions Plan
Major civic/ performance space	1 regional facility per 150,000 to 200,000 people	Shoalhaven Community Infrastructure Strategy, 2017
District facility	1 per 60,000 people	City of Newcastle Benchmark
Local facility	1 per 30,000 people Or 1 per catchment	Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029

20m2 of community floorspace per 1,000 people

Table 18 provides a summary of government owned or managed cultural floorspace provision in the LGA and by catchment, and changes over time through to 2045. Overall, there is a current supply of 4,102m² of cultural floorspace in the LGA.

Overall

- That there is currently an above benchmark provision of cultural floorspace across the LGA. By 2045, even with population growth, the LGA as a whole will remain above benchmark provision.
- **The total new population between 2016 to 2045 generate a demand for 277m² of cultural floorspace.**

By Catchment

- At a catchment level, Catchment 1, 2, and 4 are currently above benchmark provision for quantum of cultural floorspace and will remain above benchmark through to 2045.
- Catchment 3 is the only catchment that is below benchmark provision for cultural floorspace currently and through to 2045. Catchment 3 includes major urban release areas which have provisions for community spaces, but not cultural spaces.

Table 18 - Application of cultural space provision standards to Ballina's asset network

	Year	Population	Provision	Demand (20m² per 1,000 people)	Gap (provision-demand)	Increase in demand from 2016 to 2045
C1	2016	21,277	2,864	426	no gap	36
C1	2045	23,074	2,864	461	no gap	36
C2	2016	7,784	580	156	no gap	104
C2	2045	12,968	580	259	no gap	104
C3	2016	4,755	0	95	**- 95**	68
C3	2045	8,136	0	*163*	**-163**	68
C4	2016	8,813	658	176	no gap	69
C4	2045	12,277	658	246	no gap	69
LGA	**2016**	**42,629**	**4,102**	**853**	**no gap**	**277**
LGA	**2045**	**56,455**	**4,102**	**1,129**	**no gap**	**277**

Note: excludes showgrounds.

1 major civic/performance space (Regional)

Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre provides Ballina LGA's major civic and performance space. Benchmarking indicates that no new regional cultural facilities are needed.

1 district cultural facility per 60,000 people (District)

There are 5 district level cultural spaces located in Ballina LGA. The application of this benchmark indicates that no new regional cultural facilities are needed.

1 local cultural facility per 30,000 people

There are only 2 local level community spaces located in Ballina LGA. The application of the benchmark to the LGA population indicates that this is meeting current and future needs, however given the geography and dispersed 'village; nature of communities in the LGA, perhaps 1 local facility per catchment could be considered more appropriate. One of them - the men's shed is target towards senior males, and therefore may be inaccessible to young women and girls.

Catchments without access to a local cultural space are catchments 2 and 3.

8.2. Summary of Needs

8.2.1 Identified needs for consideration in the contributions plan

- **Provision of a new multi-purpose community and cultural hub**: Action B3.2 in the Ballina major regional centre strategy 2015 – 2035 identifies the following action: *'Create a civic centre precinct incorporating features such as a town square, Council administration, gallery, library, meeting rooms and performance space in association with the development of cafes and compatible retail uses.'*
  - New and expanded gallery space that includes dedicated project space for the delivery of public programs independent from the existing art gallery exhibition spaces
  - New performance space
  - This action reflects the infrastructure delivery trend towards larger multi-purpose and co-located facilities in central locations.
  - Creates the opportunity for redevelopment and consolidation of a number of Council owned assets in Ballina, and for Council to demonstrate best practice building standards (e.g. Green Star) and to achieve a number of strategic goals set out in the Ballina MRCS such as providing more spaces for innovation, culture, and re-orientating towards the Richmond River.
- **Innovative ways to use public spaces and cultural places**, such as creating outdoor galleries (e.g. Newtown Art Seat), or a multi-use pavilion in a park (e.g. Burwood Pavilion) etc. Priority areas would be in catchments 2 and 3 that have no local or district level cultural spaces.
- **Increase the functionality of the Lennox Head Cultural Centre for hosting larger events** though automatic tired seating, permanent stage (in the process) and lighting, audio and staging upgrade.
- Based on the audit, there no co-working spaces located within Ballina LGA for creative professionals. The **demand for co-working** is expected to continue into the future with the mainstreaming of remote working since the pandemic. A Council-owned or managed co-working facility would be best located as part of or co-located with a library and community hub, near cafes, good public transport access and in a central location (Ballina or Lennox Head).
- Engagement with the Acting Regional Library Manager of Richmond Tweed Regional Library identified the global trend of fast-paced **library technology advancements** and that this 20 year plan will need to have consideration and allowances for this. While most of these technology considerations are covered in the earlier libraries chapter, a few items fall into the 'cultural infrastructure' category, such as podcasting and recording facilities, and VR and projection experiences and technology.

8.2.2 Other identified needs

- **New local level cultural spaces in Catchment 3, provided as part of community centres:** Catchment 3 is the only catchment that is below benchmark provision for cultural floorspace currently and through to 2045. Catchment 3 includes major urban release areas which have provisions for community spaces, but not cultural spaces.
- One of the Ballina Cultural Plan's 6 objectives is: With the Shire's Aboriginal community, promote understanding of local Aboriginal identity, culture and heritage. Council staff as part of the engagement for this project have identified the creation of an **Aboriginal Cultural Centre** as a potential project that could be included in the Ballina 'civic precinct' / community and cultural hub.
- Ensure that the Kingsford Smith Reserve Master Plan delivers a major **outdoor event space** that can cater to Regional level events, festivals and celebrations

CASE STUDY: CREATIVE SPACES AS PART OF LIBRARIES

Whitlam Library, Cabramatta Sydney

Whitlam Library is an example of how the boundaries of the traditional library can be pushed to deliver services that actively respond to community needs. Within the footprint of a 3,000m^2 library, recent renovations and creative re-use of spaces has seen the inclusion of 'the workery,' 'Studio 2166' and a VR technology space. These editions provide space for the community to make best use of the library's resources to develop business ideas, get creative in the studio to produce music and video, as well as learn and trial the very latest in technology. Access to these resources is important, particularly in areas of socio-economic disadvantage where residents may not be able to access their own VR technology, recording equipment or be able to rent office space. In addition the library has also extended it's opening hours to midnight, enabling students who may not have a dedicated quiet study space in their own home to be able to stay at the library into the evening.

Whitlam Library green screen

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY HUB

Juanita Neilson Community Centre, City Of Sydney

Community Hall - 142m^2; Community room 1 - 142m^2; Community room 2 - 44m^2

Juanita Neilson Community Centre offers a range of adult fitness classes at the centre's gym, as well as many recreational, social and creative learning programs for all age groups. Facilities at the Centre include:

Community gym

Offers an affordable and fully equipped community gym for residents, workers and visitors of the local area, and an outreach program.

Free co-working space

Provides an opportunity for startups and local small businesses to share a space and communicate with other like-minded people to generate ideas and support each other in their business development.

Community programs

Offers adult fitness classes, recreational, social and creative learning programs for all age groups.

Outdoor play area

(Source: City of Sydney)

9. Public open space

This section provides an audit and mapping of existing public open space located within the Ballina Shire.

Public open Space

~ Parks / passive recreation space
~ Urban/civic spaces
~ Natural spaces (inc. environmental reserves)
~ Waterways and foreshores
~ Linear / linkage parks
~ Community gardens

9.1. Open Space definition and hierarchies

This section provides a high level supply and demand analysis of the public recreational open space provision in Ballina Shire LGA. Public open space typically has a range of sport and recreational uses within it including:

- **Parks** - typically places for informal, social recreation activities.
- **Natural** - includes large natural open spaces or bushland reserves within the LGA such as Ballina Nature Reserve.
- **Sports spaces** - typically places for active sports such as organised cricket, hockey, tennis etc. (subject of the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020)
- **Beaches and waterways** - coastal location and beaches are important and unique places for recreation within the LGA.
- **Civic and urban spaces** - typically hard paved and places for social events and interaction such as Wheeler Place.
- **Linear / linkage parks** - typically recreation paths linking along a waterway or a connection between two recreation destinations
- **Community gardens** - a piece of land where gardeners work collectively to cultivate a garden (often food crops) for shared benefit. They can either be part of a park or colocated with a community centre and managed by a community group.

Hierarchy

Table 20 provides an overview of the public recreational open space hierarchies used for the purposes of this Needs Assessment. These definitions are based on contemporary approaches to open space planning including NSW Government Architect's Open Space for Recreation Guide (not finalised), and the 2012 NSW Department of Planning Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government, 2012.

Table 20 - Open space hierarchy

Catchment	Description	Typical Scale	Catchment from home
Regional	Any large or unique area with good links to public transport that attract visitations from the whole of Ballina Shire LGA, including tourists.	10+ ha	10km
District	Serving more than one suburb. Are generally large or significant areas that attract visitors from surrounding suburbs and offer a more diverse range of activities. Can cater for a wide cross section of community interests, including informal recreation and sporting opportunities.	1-5ha	5km
Local	Serving residents within a suburb. Open space that provides facilities for visitors within a walking distance for short stays. Open space areas that are positioned and designed to attract residents living within a 400m radius.	0.3 – 1ha	400m

9.2. What we have

Ballina LGA overall has a strong provision of open space and natural areas for the community to enjoy.

700+ ha

Council managed open spaces

389+ ha

Parks

166m^2

per person Council managed reserves and open space
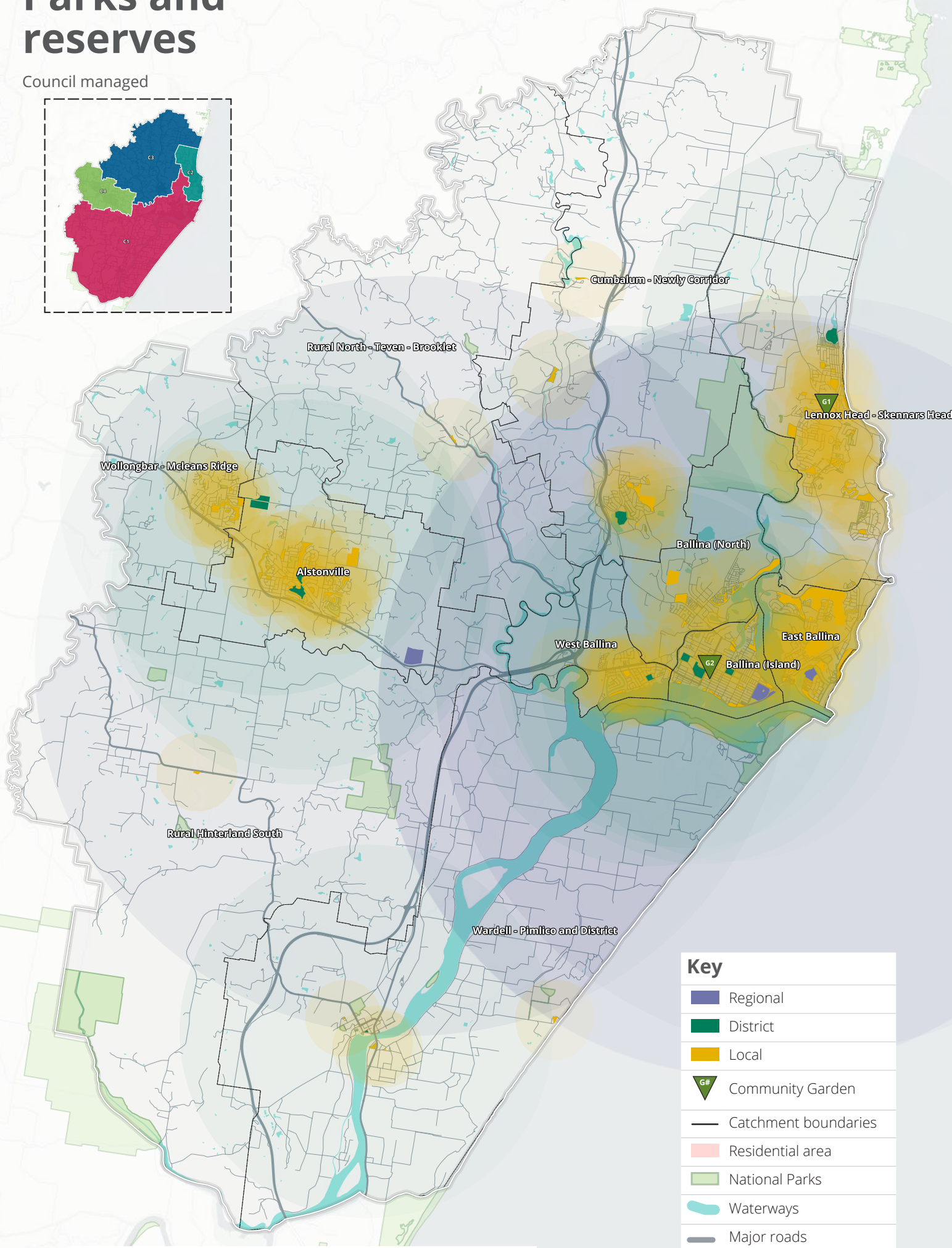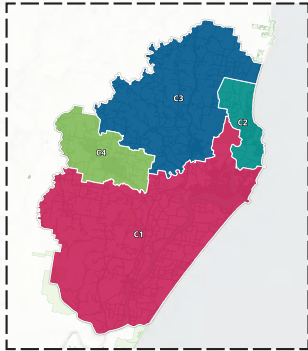
	Natural spaces	Ballina LGA is home to a variety of natural spaces such as bushlands, waterfalls, wetlands and the foreshore.
	38 **Bushland and nature reserves**	308.9Ha of Bushland and reserves managed by Council
	8 **Beaches** **0** **Ocean baths**	Ballina is home to 8 beaches - 4 of which are patrolled beaches.
	160 **Council managed Parks**	4 Regional Parks 10 District Parks 146 Local Parks
	2 **Community gardens**	

In addition to the above, there are a number of national parks located in the LGA, such as:

- Ballina Nature Reserve - 721ha
- Lennox Head Aboriginal Area - 0.3ha
- Richmond River Nature Reserve - 256ha
- Uralba Nature Reserve - 288ha
- Tuckean Nature Reserve - 919ha (partial).

Parks and reserves

Council managed

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

G1

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

East Ballina

G2

Ballina (Island)

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

Key

◼	Regional
◼	District
◼	Local
▽ G#	Community Garden
—	Catchment boundaries
◼	Residential area
◼	National Parks
◼	Waterways
—	Major roads
—	LGA boundary

Figure 19 - Open Space in Ballina Shire (Source: LEP Land Zone layers)

9.3. Approach to open space analysis

Based on current approaches to open space and recreation planning this section breaks down open space analysis according to:
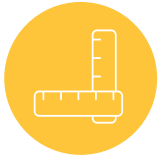
Quantity
- How much open space do we have now?
- How much open space is there per person?
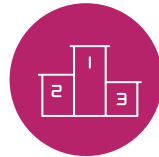- How will this change as the population grows?

Size, shape and function
- How do different parks service different open space needs?
- Are there diverse types of open space available to cater for different activities and functions?

Accessibility, connectivity and distribution
- Are all residents located within reasonable distances to a range of park hierarchies?

Quality *
- What are resident's experience of open space and recreation facilities?
- Does the quality of open space and recreation facilities vary?
- Are there needs for improvements to increase capacity?

Data used in this analysis

This report chapter focuses on Council managed open space (to inform a development contributions plan), although it is acknowledged that national parks and environmental protection areas also form an important part of Ballina residents access to open space and recreation opportunities.

Council managed open space includes all parks and reserves within the Ballina LGA, and these areas have been calculated based an excel audit provided by Council and then analysed in GIS.

*Please note that the scope of this study does not include an assessment the quality of open spaces - however this is an important consideration in addition to the high level benchmarking process outlined above.

Size and hierarchy

Hierarchy and size gives an indication of the scale of open space within the LGA. Hierarchy can range from regional open spaces that are unlimited in size and service the whole of the LGA.

Typically, larger parks can offer more facilities and therefore recreation opportunities - whereas small open spaces are constrained in number of facilities and types of uses on offer.

Overall

- 92% (162) of the total number of parks in the LGA are local level parks, and only 2.3% (4) are regional level parks.
- There is a total of 728ha of open space (including bushland and nature reserves) located in Ballina LGA. Of that, 389ha are Council owned or managed park spaces.

Planning catchments

The graphs and tables below show that:

- Catchments 1 & 3 don't have a regional level park, and 1 district park each
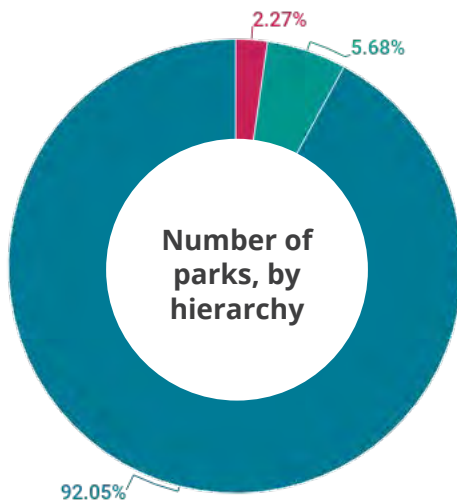- There are a high number of local level parks in catchment 1

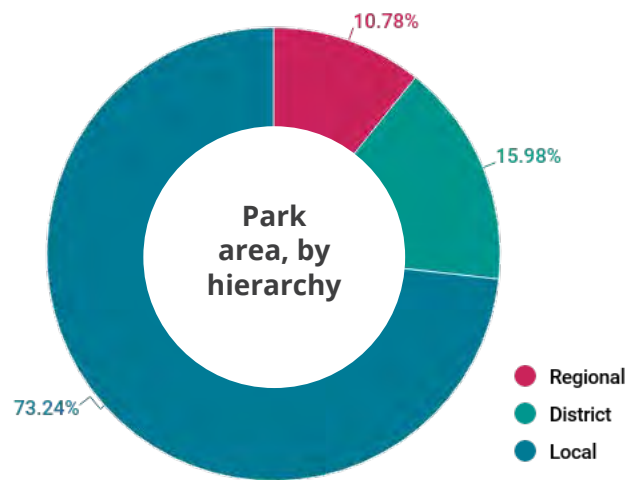Figure 20 - LGA open space hierarchy (by number of parks)

Figure 21 - Area of open spaces, by hierarchy (size in Ha)

Table 21 - Number of parks, by hierarchy

	Regional	District	Local
C1	3	5	86
C2	0	1	33
C3	0	1	11
C4	1	3	32
LGA	4	10	162

Table 22 - Area of park space (ha), by hierarchy

	Regional	District	Local
C1	23.15	17.85	168.89
C2	0.00	10.01	40.89
C3	0.00	8.60	24.35
C4	18.76	25.67	50.62
LGA	41.91	62.13	284.75

9.4. Benchmarking analysis

Proximity

The following pages contain a series of maps that provide an indicative proximity analysis of parks by hierarchy. The catchment areas are 'heat mapped' meaning that the more overlapping catchment areas there are, the darker the colour becomes (indicating that those residents have a choice of parks to go to). Key findings have been summarised below.

Regional Parks (10km catchment)

Figure 22 illustrates the distribution of Regional Parks in the LGA. These are: Missingham Park, Pop Denison Park, Duck Creek Mountain Bike Park, Kingsford Smith Park.

Three of the four regional parks are located in Catchment 1, and 1 (Duck Creek Mountain Bike Park) is located on the south eastern edge of Catchment 4.

While Wardell is further than 10km to a regional park, given the small population, this proximity gap is considered to be acceptable.

District parks (5km catchment)

Figure 23 illustrates the distribution of District Parks in the LGA. There are a total of 10 district parks, 3 of which are passive parks, and 7 which are sports parks.

Local parks (400m catchment)

Figure 24 illustrates the distribution of local parks in the LGA. There are over 160 local parks which are a mix of passive open space, nature reserves and sports parks.

It also shows that most residential areas are within a 400m catchment of a local park.

Over half of these local parks are smaller than 0.3ha.

*Note - the future plans for Cumbalum/Banyan Hill include the provision of open space and other amenities that are yet to be reflected in LEP zoning maps, however existing master plans indicate that all residental houses will be within 400m of an open space. As these urban release areas develop, it will be important for Council to ensure that this standard of provision is upheld.

Regional parks
(10km catchment)

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Ballina (North)

Alstonville

West Ballina

East Ballina

Ballina (Island)

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

Key

Regional

Catchment boundaries

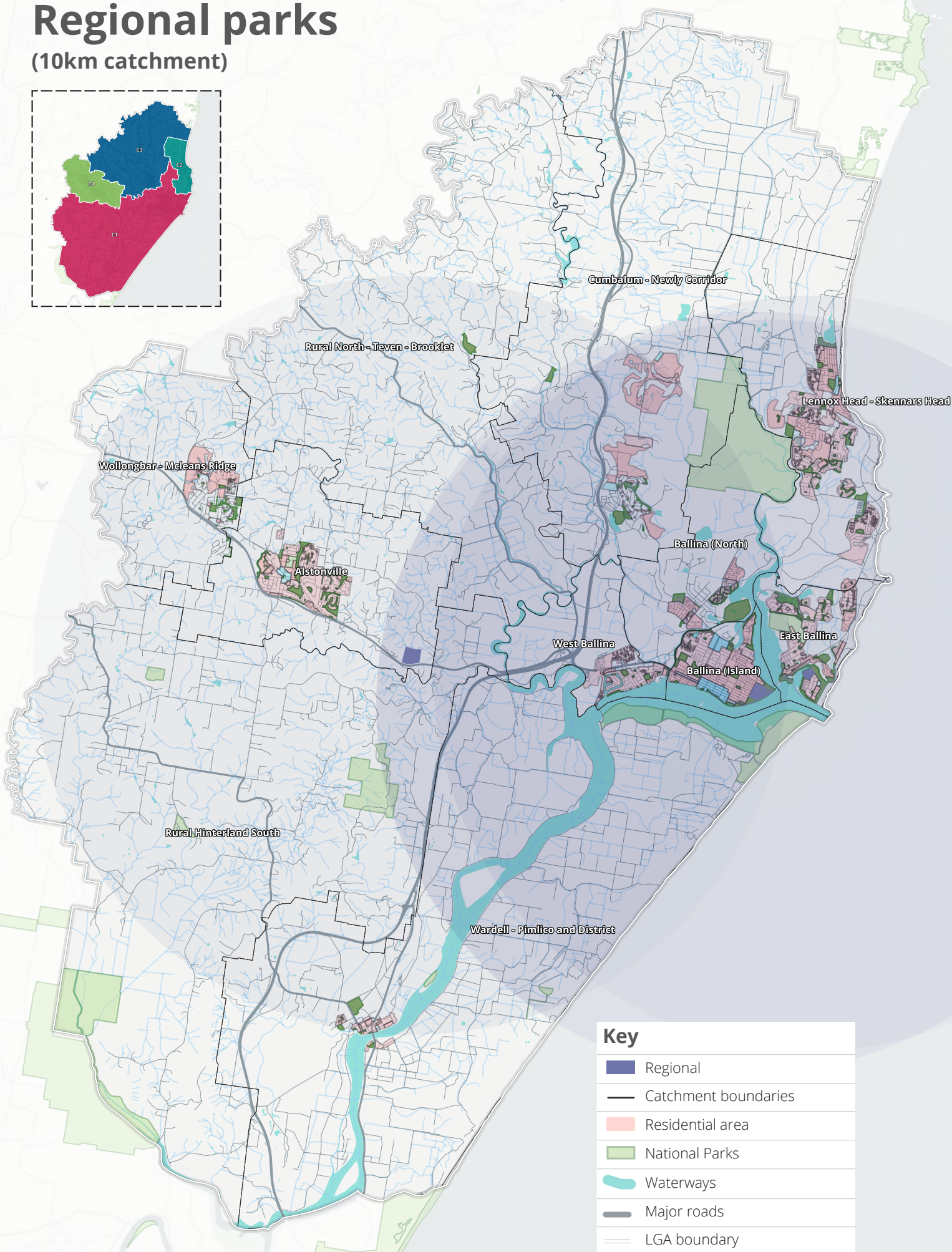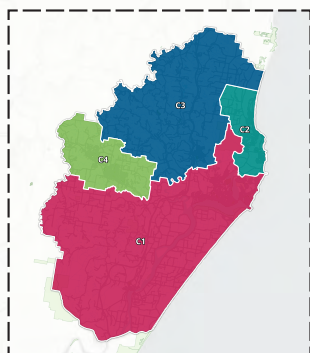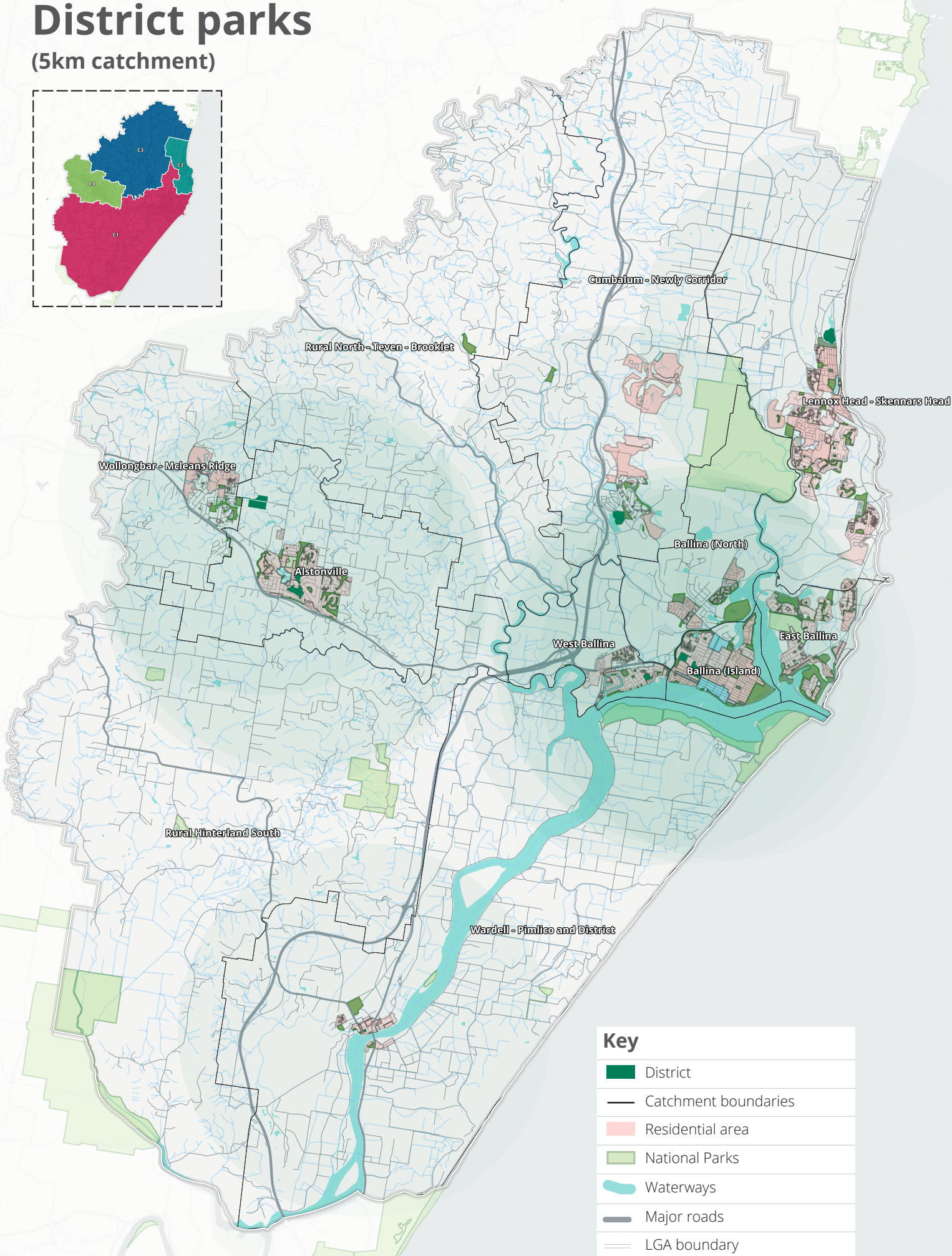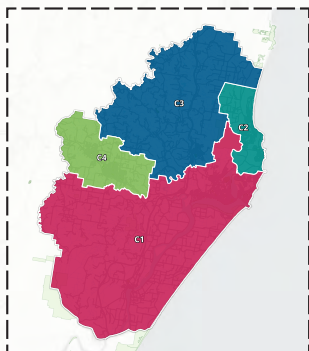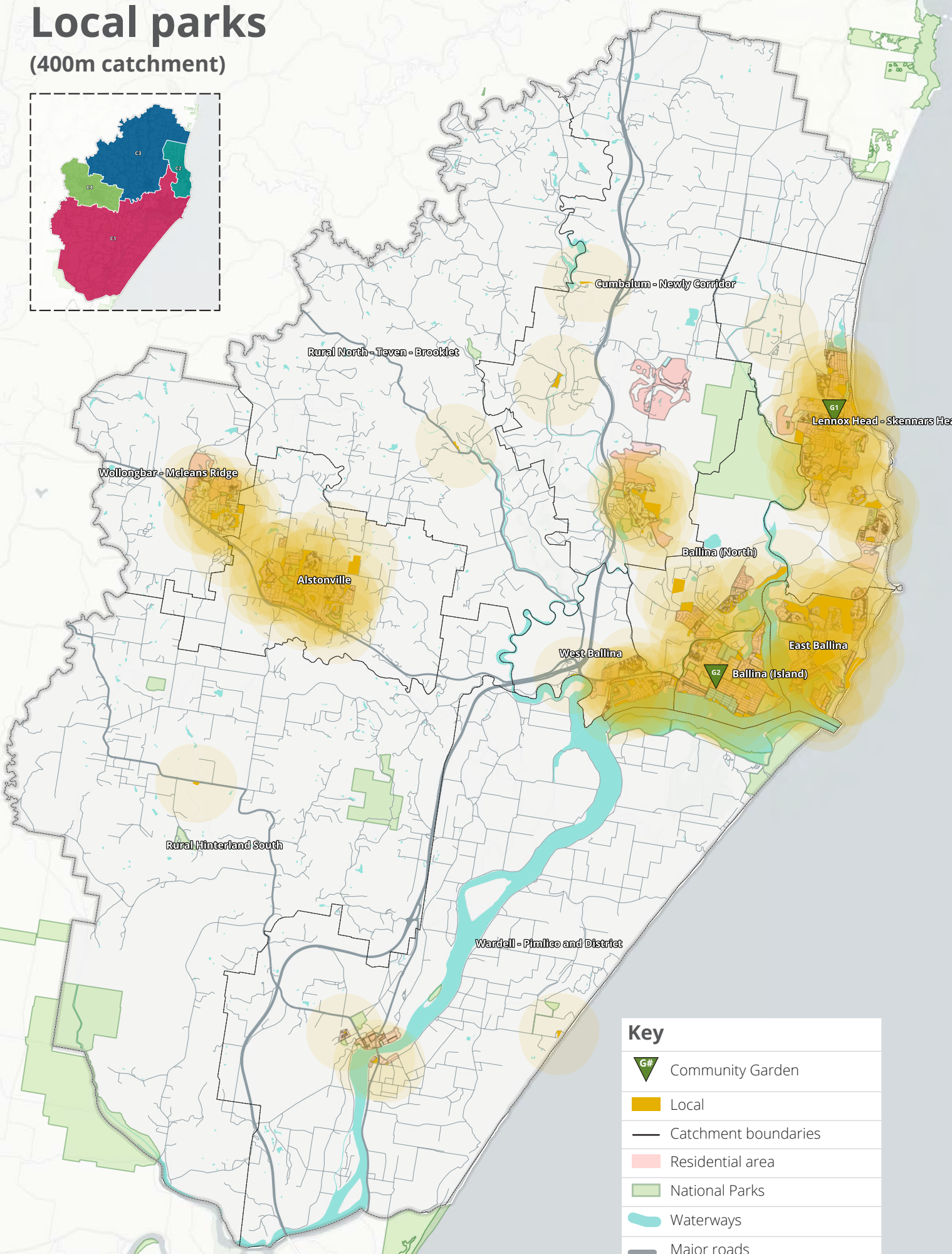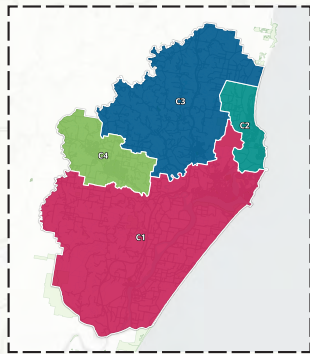Residential area

National Parks

Waterways

Major roads

LGA boundary

Figure 22 - Regional Parks (10km catchment) proximity map

District parks

(5km catchment)

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Ballina (North)

Alstonville

West Ballina

East Ballina

Ballina (Island)

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

Key

■	District
—	Catchment boundaries
■	Residential area
■	National Parks
■	Waterways
—	Major roads
—	LGA boundary

Figure 23 - District Parks (5km catchment) proximity map

Local parks
(400m catchment)

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Lennox Head - Skennars Hea

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

East Ballina

Ballina (Island)

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

Key

- **G#** Community Garden
- Local
- Catchment boundaries
- Residential area
- National Parks
- Waterways
- Major roads
- LGA boundary

Figure 24 - Local Parks (400m catchment) proximity map

Quantity of open space

Provision per person

Table 24 shows that there is currently, there is 708ha of council managed open space (reserves and parks) in the LGA, equivalent to 166m^2 per person.

Catchment 1 has the highest provision rate of open space per person, while Catchment 3 has the lowest.

Table 24 - Provision of Council managed open space (m2) per person (including reserves)

	LGA	C1	C2	C3	C4
	707.52 ha	437.25 ha	138.92 ha	36.14 ha	95.21 ha
2016	166m^2	206m^2	178m^2	76m^2	108m^2
2026	151m^2	196m^2	156m^2	64m^2	95m^2
2036	138m^2	195m^2	126m^2	53m^2	87m^2
2045	125m^2	189m^2	60m^2	44m^2	78m^2

Population benchmarking - Public recreational open space per 1,000 people

Based on guidelines in the Parks and Leisure Australia 'Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, 2012', a standard of 3ha per 1,000 people is considered an adequate provision to meets the needs of a community.

Overall, the LGA has an average of 9ha per 1,000 people currently, and by 2045 will have an average of 7ha per person. This benchmark indicates that there is enough quantum of open space to cater for existing and future populations.

All catchments are also above benchmark provision for open space. The Catchment with highest provision per 1,000 people is catchment 4, and by 2045 Catchment 1 will have the highest provision per 1,000 people.

Table 23 - Council managed park - ha provision per 1000 people Cs (excluding reserves)

	LGA	C1	C2	C3	C4
	388.79	209.89	50.90	32.95	95.05
2016	9.1	9.9	6.5	6.9	10.8
2026	8.3	9.4	5.7	5.8	9.5
2036	7.6	9.3	4.6	4.9	8.7
2045	6.9	9.1	3.9	4.0	7.7
Additional population demand	2.2	0.8	2.6	2.9	3.0

9.5. Summary of Needs

1.1.1. Identified needs for consideration in the contributions plan

- **Ballina Shire Council currently meets benchmarking standards for the provision of open space (quantity)**. However, a number of parks have low levels of embellishment, presenting opportunities to increase the utilisation of some spaces as well as the diversity of recreation options within the parks network for the community.
- **Park embellishments to local and district parks** to become higher quality multipurpose open space areas with improved facilities and active transport connections: Best practice indicates that local and district parks should provide a range of spaces and things to do for a range of ages and abilities.
- Extending and augmenting the **shared pathway network** to increase the options available for high amenity active recreation; Providing embellishments and active infrastructure, such as exercise stations, bike storage, boat ramps and small watercraft storage at key locations in the open space network. (Carried over from the Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016)

10. Sports and Recreation facilities

Council has recently completed the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020 which provides a comprehensive needs analysis and action plan for sports spaces including sportsfields, sportsgrounds, golf courses and indoor leisure centres. This chapter provides an overall summary of all sports and recreation facilities, and benchmarking for informal outdoor recreation facilities including outdoor multipurpose courts, outdoor exercise facilities, and playgrounds - which were not considered as part of the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Plan, 2020.

Sports & Recreation

This chapter
  ~ Outdoor exercise facilities
  ~ Outdoor Pools (harbour pools)
  ~ Outdoor multi-purpose courts
  ~ Playgrounds

Covered in the Sports and Recreation Strategy 2020
  ~ Sports fields
  ~ Sports grounds
  ~ Golf courses
  ~ Skate/BMX parks & youth plazas
  ~ Indoor leisure centre (dry)/Indoor courts
  ~ Indoor leisure centre (aquatic)

10.1. Sports and recreation definition

Council has recently completed a Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan in 2020. This chapter provides a high level summary of that report, as well as additional analysis for playgrounds, outdoor multi-purpose courts and outdoor exercise equipment.

Recreation is defined as:

Recreation includes a broad range of passive and active leisure activities that we participate in for fun, relaxation, health and wellbeing and to connect to our families and communities. This includes casual activities like going for a walk or a picnic with friends as well as fitness activities and social, organised, competition and elite sporting activities.

It is important to approach recreation planning as a spectrum ranging from passive recreation such as visiting the beach or enjoying nature, through to personal fitness and wellbeing such as using outdoor fitness station equipment though to organised, representative and elite sport. The figure below shows the diverse spectrum of recreation activities that take place in Ballina Shire.

Recreation facilities are defined as:

Recreation facilities are the built infrastructure that supports recreation activities, such as: sports fields, outdoor courts, play spaces, surf clubs, inland pools, ocean baths, indoor sports recreation centres, outdoor fitness stations, recreation trails, golf courses, lawn bowling clubs and community gardens.

Figure 25 overpage illustrates the whole spectrum of recreation.

The Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020 did not cover playgrounds or outdoor exercise facilities - so these types of recreation have been audited in this chapter.

The end of this chapter provides a summary of needs from the Sports and Recreation Facilities Plan in combination with new findings from the playground, outdoor fitness stations and outdoor multi-purpose courts.

Figure 25 - Recreation spectrum

This chapter addresses a couple of recreation types that were not included in the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020, including:

- Outdoor exercise facilities
- Outdoor Pools (harbour pools)
- Outdoor multi-purpose courts
- Playgrounds

10.2. What we have overall

Ballina LGA overall has a strong provision of open space and natural areas for the community to enjoy. The following summary is based on the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020.

	29 **Sports parks**	• AFL • Athletics • Baseball and softball • Cricket • Cricket nets • Croquet	• Football (Senior) • Football (Junior) • Touch Football • Hockey • Oztag and Touch Football • Rugby League • Rugby Union
	4 **BMX/ Skate parks**	• 1 Mountain bike facility • 3 skate and BMX facilities	
	45 **Playgrounds**	• 45 existing playgrounds	
	2 **Outdoor exercise facilities**	• 2 existing facilities	
	2 **Surf clubs**	• 2 surf clubs owned by Council but managed by Council appointed service providers/ SLSC	
	2 **aquatic facilities**	• 2 inland pools • 1 ocean pool being investigated by a community ocean pool committee	
	2 **Indoor recreation centres**		
	6 **Lawn sports and golf**		
	0 **Outdoor multi-purpose courts**	• 2+ planned full size outdoor multipurpose courts • 2 half courts and basketball hoops, plus 1 planned • 3 Hit-up walls • 43 other courts in the LGA (code specific or indoors)	

10.3. Playgrounds

This section provides a summary of the approach and recommendations for playground provision in Ballina LGA in the Ballina Shire Council – Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (draft) 2021. The needs assessment was based on a criteria assessment, as well as an analysis of hierarchy and proximity.

Current provision

Council currently manages 45 playgrounds for the benefit of the community.

Provision standards

The Playground Upgrade and Management Plan evaluated the current provision of playgrounds for Ballina Shire using against a holistic set of evaluation criteria:

- What are the demographics of the local government area?
- Do they currently use existing playgrounds?
- Is there suitable natural shade or is artificial shade structures required?
- Have there been formal requests for a playground?
- How far would people travel to the playground?
- How would they get there?
- Are they coming to the area to use other facilities?
- What other facilities are available at or near the site?
- Are budget resources available to construct it?
- Are there site condition or planning constraints?
- What impact will there be to maintenance budgets and resources?
- Are there risks or hazards to accessing and using the site?
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) considerations?

The Plan also identified playground hierarchy (local, district and regional), and made recommendations for new and upgraded playground, as well as removal of equipment that had reached its end of life warranty.

Recommendations from the Plan

The Plan recommended the provision of 10 new playgrounds, and the removal of 6 existing playgrounds and upgrade of 3. This equates to a net gain of 4 new playgrounds in the LGA. The draft Plan identifies:

	Existing playgrounds	New playgrounds	Playgrounds to be upgrade in hierarchy	Playgrounds to be removed	Net gain/loss
C1	18	6	2	2	+4
C2	*12*	3 *(1 nature based play)*	1	2	+1
C3	4	0	0	0	0
C4	11	1	0	2	-1
Total	**45**	**10**	**3**	**6**	**4**

Benchmarking

While the *Ballina Shire Council – Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (draft) 2021* did not adopt a population benchmark, it is useful for the purposes of a Contributions Plan to understand what new public facilities can be attributed to the demands of future additional population.

The Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016 adopted a benchmark of 1.5 playgrounds equipment sets per 1,000 people. However, the State of the Sector Report on Playgrounds (May 2014) found that the median provision by Local Government is currently around 1:1,000, based on a survey of 89 councils across Australia (including 34 from NSW).

Table 25 applied the benchmark of 1 playground per 1,000 people to Ballina Shire's current and forecast population, which results in the following estimated future demand for playgrounds by catchment:

- **Catchment 1 (+1,797 additional population 2016-2045): below benchmark demand of 1 playground by 2045**
- **Catchment 2 (+5,184 additional population 2016-2045): meets benchmarks through to 2045**
- **Catchment 3 (+3,381 additional population 2016-2045): below benchmark demand of 1 playground currently, increasing to a below benchmark demand of 4 playgrounds by 2045**
- **Catchment 4 (+3,464 additional population 2016-2045): demand for an additional 2.3 playgrounds by 2045**

Note: the provision of new or upgraded regional playgrounds are likely to cater to the population demands of other catchments, especially when those regional playgrounds are located in Ballina as people are willing to travel.

Table 25 - Playgrounds population benchmark

	Supply (No. of)		Population forecast				Total demand (1:15,000 people)				Gap			
	2016	future	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045
C1	18	22	21,277	22,294	22,455	23,074	21.3	22.3	22.5	22.0	-3.3	-0.3	-0.5	-1.1
C2	12	13	7,784	8,892	11,014	12,968	7.8	8.9	11.0	13.0	4.2	4.1	2.0	0.0
C3	4	4	4,755	5,684	6,790	8,136	4.8	5.7	6.8	8.1	-0.8	-1.7	-2.8	-4.1
C4	11	10	8,136	10,003	10,978	12,277	8.8	10.0	11.0	12.3	2.2	0.0	-1.0	-2.3
LGA	45	49	41,952	46,873	51,237	56,455	42.6	46.9	51.2	55.4	2.4	2.1	-2.2	-7.5

Playgrounds
(Existing, proposed and removal)

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

Alstonville

Ballina (North)

West Ballina

Ballina (Island)

East Ballina

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

🟡	Local (500m catchment)
🔵	District (750m catchment)
🔴	Regional (1km catchment)
☆	Local (Proposed)
☆	District (Proposed)
★	Regional (Proposed)
✛	Playground for removal

Figure 26 - Playground locations and hierarchy (Information source: Playground Upgrade and Management Plan\)

10.4. Outdoor multipurpose courts

Multipurpose outdoor courts provide space for informal and social sport, and are increasingly popular in particular in areas with young populations and high cultural diversity. Multipurpose outdoor courts should be designed for safety including lighting for use at night. They should provide for a range of sports popular in the local area which may include futsal, basketball, netball, volleyball and tennis. Providing courts in a cluster (e.g. 4 courts) can support use by schools and for social/low level competitions or training. Grouping courts (e.g. minimum 2 courts together) enables better sharing of space, with enough space and hoops/goals for a number of groups of people to play at once. Consideration should also be given to creating a space that is welcoming for different groups including children and families as well as women and girls, rather than becoming a space dominated by one group (for example through signage, use of colour, or using non-competition standard makings to highlight the informality of the space).

Outdoor courts may be single-purpose marked for one sport only, multi-purpose and provide a space for multiple sports, half or full size depending on their need and purpose. They are important for both competitive and social sport. Outdoor courts can cater for a variety of sports including: Badminton, basketball, handball, 5-a-side football, netball, tennis, volleyball.

Audit

There are currently no full size multi-purpose outdoor courts located in the Ballina LGA.

While they can't be included in the benchmarking analysis below, there are a number of outdoor courts that are being informally used for multiple types of recreation:

- Ballina netball courts: used for many different things and there are requests to line mark for uses such as pickleball. Council have identified the opportunity for a potential for upgrade to provide multi-use courts.

- Kays Lane, Wollongbar – Basketball Court (Sometimes also referred to as the Kays Lane skate park): used for many different activities. Council have indicate this court is in need of some upgrade works
- The Wollongbar Sports grounds: has 4 netball courts that are used for many different activities and a synthetic surfaced tennis hit up wall
- Lumley Park in Alstonville is being considered for design processes to provide multi-use court facilities
- Swift St/Webster Lane, Ballina: Council are planning to upgrade the basketball court to a multi use court.
- In addition, Council have indicated that there is a high demand for multipurpose outdoor courts in Lennox Head

Benchmarking

Parks and Leisure Australia, 2021 identified a standard of provision for full size outdoor multi-purpose courts of 1:10,000 people.

Benchmarking indicates that overall, by 2045 there will be a gap of 5.6 outdoor multi-purpose courts. The new population between 2016 to 2045 (+13,826 people) will generate a demand for 1.4 outdoor multipurpose courts.

Table 26 - Outdoor multi-purpose courts (full size)

	Supply (No. of)	Population forecast				Total demand (1:15,000 people)				Gap			
	2015	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045
C1	0	21,277	22,294	22,455	23,074	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3
C2	0	7,784	8,892	11,014	12,968	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.3
C3	0	4,755	5,684	6,790	8,136	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8
C4	0	8,136	10,003	10,978	12,277	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2
LGA	0	41,952	46,873	51,237	56,455	4.3	4.7	5.1	5.6	4.3	4.7	5.1	5.6

10.5. Half courts and basketball hoops

Hoops and half courts are popular for informal sport particularly for young adults. Outdoor courts are mostly used for social and informal games with some training/practice use.

Audit

There is 1 existing multi-use half court in Porter Park in West Ballina with line markings.

There is an additional:

- 1 basketball hoop in Westlands Park, West Ballina
- 1 basketball hoop / half court in Whiting Way, North Ballina
- 1 basketball half court in the new Wollongbar District Park

Benchmarking

There are no benchmarks for half courts, however these still play an important role in the recreation network.

10.6. Hit-up walls

Audit

There are two hit-up walls in Ballina LHA:

- 1 double sided hit up wall at Ballina tennis courts
- 1 hit up wall at Wardell tennis courts at Fitzroy Park
- 1 hit up wall at Wollongbar tennis courts

Benchmarking

There are no benchmarks for hit-up walls.

Figure 27 - Whiting Way basketball hoop

Figure 28 - Kays Lane basketball court

Outdoor Courts

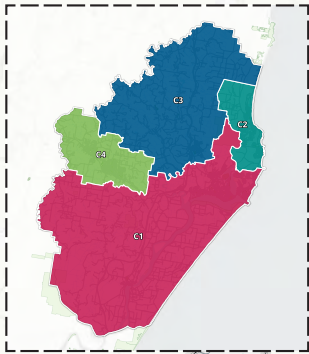## Multi-use courts, Basketball hoops, half-courts & hit-up walls

Cumbalum - Newly Corridor

Rural North - Teven - Brooklet

Lennox Head - Skennars Head

T3

Wollongbar - Mcleans Ridge

B7

T5

H2

N3 B3 Alstonville

Ballina (North)

B5

B2

West Ballina

B6

B1

East Ballina

T1

B2

N1

Rural Hinterland South

Wardell - Pimlico and District

T6
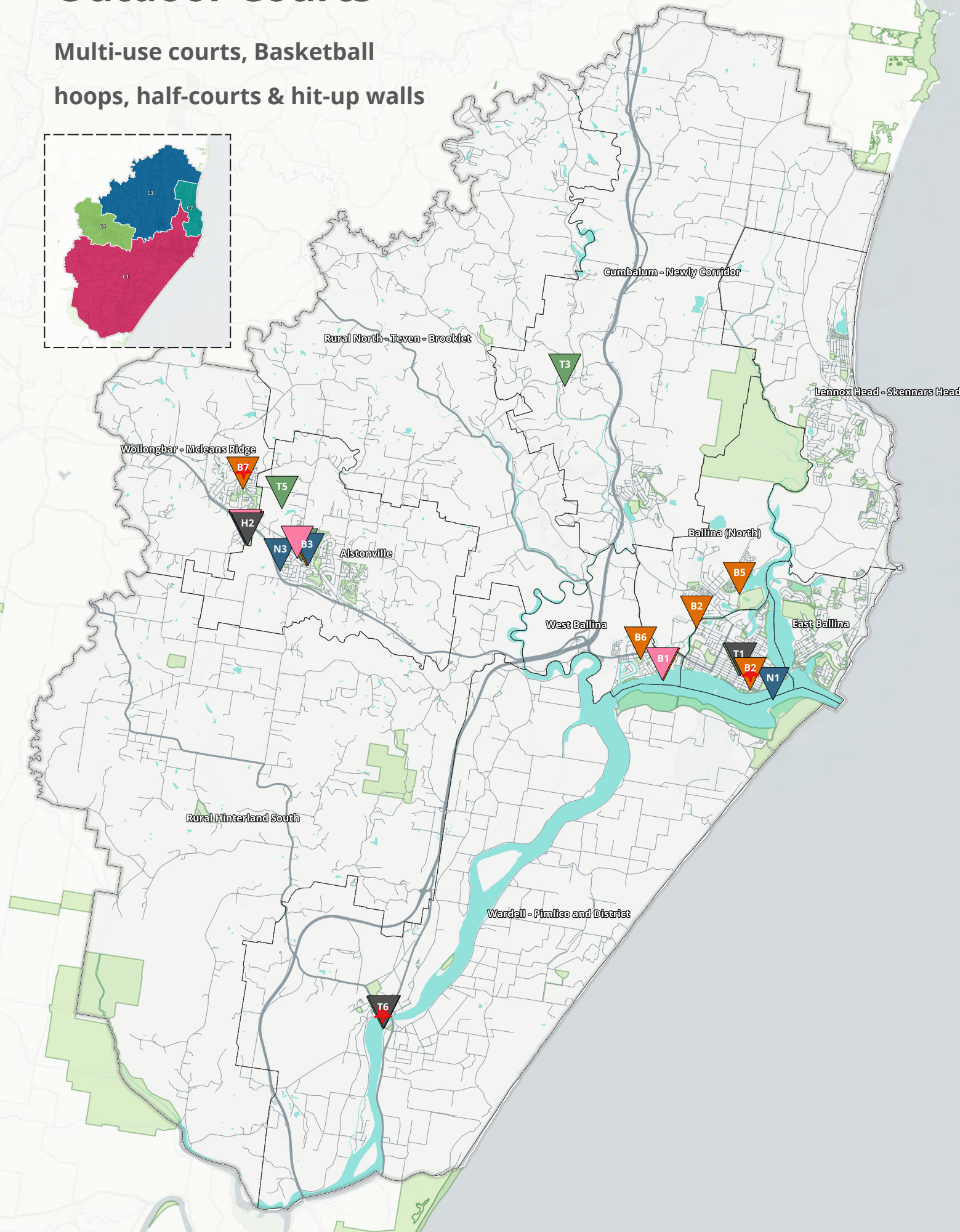
Figure 30 - Outdoor Courts

Key

▼ (orange)	Outdoor fitness equipment
★ (red)	Proposed outdoor fitness equipment
—	Catchment boundaries
(pink box)	Residential area
(green box)	National Parks
(teal shape)	Waterways
—	Major roads
=	LGA boundary

Labels

B#	Baketball Court
H#	Hit-up wall
N#	Netball Courts
M#	Multipurpose Courts
T#	Tennis Courts

Facilities

Existing

B1	Porter Park
B2	Swift Street
B3	Ballina Indoor Sports Centre
B4	Alstonville Leisure and Entertainment Centre
B5	Kays Lane Reserve
B6	Whiting way
B7	Westlands Park
B8	Wollongbar District Park
H1	Ballina Tennis Courts
H2	Wollongbar Sportsgrounds
H2	Fitzroy Park
N1	Porter Park
N2	Kays Lane Reserve
N3	Wollongbar Sportsgrounds
N4	Lumely Park
T1	Ballina Tennis Courts
T2	Wardell Tennis Courts
T3	Tintenbar Recreation Ground
T4	Alstonville Tennis Club
T5	Wollongbar Sportsgrounds
T6	Fitzroy Park

Facilities

Proposed/Planned

P1	Swift Street
P2	Fitzroy Park
P3	Wollongbar District Park

10.7. Youth Precincts

Youth precincts are purpose built recreation facilities and public spaces that are designed for and with young people. You precincts often include the following features:

- **Physical spaces** – skate, court sports (basketball, netball, futsal), climbing walls, biking, field sports, outdoor ping pong,pools, water play,
- **Social Spaces** – spaces that encourage social interaction, event, performance, art and music.

Audit
- Catchment 1 - Missingham Park, Ballina Skate and BMX
- Catchment 2 - Williams Reserve, Lennox Head Skate and BMX

Identified needs

The Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020 acknowledged that there is an identified need for the development of a skate park in the Alstonville/Wollongbar area and that Council has completed construction of a new skate park as part of the Wollongbar District Park.

The Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016 recommends providing for and facilitate opportunities for adventure-based recreation in appropriate locations. This might include: low impact mountain bike trails in appropriate natural areas in East Ballina; and water based adventure play equipment in Shaws Bay and/or North Creek and/or Richmond River.

10.8. Ocean pools

The Ballina **Major Regional Centre Strategy identified an objective to** 'facilitate the construction of an ocean pool at a convenient, cost-effective and achievable location' through helping the community navigate approval pathways and identifying grant funding opportunities.

There are no population benchmarks available for ocean pools.

10.9. Outdoor fitness stations

Outdoor fitness stations comprise of one or more fitness equipment, and are located in an outdoor environment, generally in a park setting, along walking paths or in other community activity points such as sporting precincts. Outdoor fitness stations are also free and accessible to the whole community.

Best practice is to provide a mix of static and dynamic equipment for a range of users made of robust materials to handle exposed locations. They should provide for aerobic, anaerobic, stability and flexibility exercises. Where possible, duplicates should be provided of equipment that is likely to be popular. Signage, shade, seating and drinking fountains should be provided and charging stations could be included. Stations should be located in active areas eg pedestrian routes with good passive surveillance.

Audit

Ballina LGA currently has 2 outdoor exercise facilities: one at Commemoration Park, in Ballina and 1 at the new Wollongbar District Park.

Benchmarking

Parks and Leisure Australia, 2021 identified a standard of provision for outdoor fitness stations of 1:15,000 people.

This indicates that overall, by 2045 there will be a gap of 1.8 outdoor fitness stations. The catchments with the greatest need will be catchment 2 (Lennox Head / Skennars Head).

The new population between 2016 to 2045 (+13,826 people) will generate a demand for 1 outdoor fitness station.

Table 27 - Outdoor fitness stations population benchmark

	Supply (No. of)	Population forecast				Total demand (1:15,000 people)				Gap			
	2016	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045	2016	2026	2036	2045
C1	1	21,277	22,294	22,455	23,074	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5
C2	0	7,784	8,892	11,014	12,968	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9
C3	0	4,755	5,684	6,790	8,136	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
C4	1	8,136	10,003	10,978	12,277	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	no gap	no gap	no gap	no gap
LGA	2	41,952	46,873	51,237	56,455	2.8	3.1	3.4	3.8	0.8	1.1	1.4	1.8

10.10. Summary of Needs

1.1.1. Identified needs for consideration in the contributions plan

The gap analysis of sports facilities is taken from the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020, the Ballina Shire Council Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (draft) 2021 and the current development contributions plan. There are over 100 actions for sports and recreation contained within the Sports and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020 - the key projects have been included below, however for further detail on the gaps and recommendations for individual sports fields, please refer to the Plans. The gap analysis of outdoor fitness stations, multipurpose courts is based on benchmarking and And the gap analysis for playground is based on the Ballina Shire Playground Upgrade and Management Plan as well as benchmarking.

- Extending and augmenting the **shared pathway network** to increase the options available for high amenity active recreation; Providing embellishments and active infrastructure, such as exercise stations, bike storage, boat ramps and small watercraft storage at key locations in the open space network. (Carried over from the Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016)
- **New and upgraded playgrounds**: the Ballina Shire Council Playground Upgrade and Management Plan identifies the need for upgrade of 3, and removal of 6 existing playgrounds, and 10 new playgrounds across the LGA. Importantly, the plan proposed a new local level nature play based playground designed and built for the site adjacent to the community garden area and other park infrastructure in Ocean Breeze Reserve, Lennox Head. Benchmarking indicates that catchments 3 has a below benchmark demand of playground spaces, and by 2036, catchment 4 will be below benchmark provision as well.
- **Up to 6 outdoor multi-purpose courts:**
  - Upgrade to existing single use courts: 1 x Kay's lane Basketball court. Wollongbar, 1 x Swift St/ Webster Lane, Ballina, 2 x Ballina netball courts
  - New courts: Lumley Park in Alstonville and Fitzroy Park in Wardell are being considered for design processes to provide multi-use court facilities. Investigate opportunities for provision in Lennox Head where there is high demand.
- Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016 recommends providing for and facilitate opportunities for **adventure-based recreation** in appropriate locations. This might include: low impact mountain bike trails in appropriate natural areas in East Ballina; and water based adventure play equipment in Shaws Bay and/or North Creek and/or Richmond River.
- **1-2 outdoor fitness stations:** Based on population benchmarking, Catchment 2 (Lennox head) will have the largest gap in provision and should be priortised. Following that, a second location in Ballina could be considered to cater to the older population in this area.

1.1.1. Other identified needs

- The Ballina **Major Regional Centre Strategy identified an objective to** 'facilitate the construction of an ocean pool at a convenient, cost-effective and achievable location' through helping the community navigate approval pathways and identifying grant funding opportunities.
- **Improving the provision of accessible playgrounds:** Many of Council's playgrounds, such as Fawcett Park and Missingham Park, already provide inclusive play equipment and high quality access. Improving the provision of accessible and inclusive playgrounds should continue to be carried out as the playgrounds upgrade program rolls out or master planning projects are undertaken.

10.11. Case studies

CASE STUDY: OUTDOOR FITNESS STATION

Brisbane River Outdoor Fitness station circuit, Queensland

More than 170 of Brisbane City Council parks have exercise equipment installed in them as part of Council's commitment to providing opportunities for residents to exercise and get fit outside for free.

In 2015, Council installed a series of outdoor fitness stations along the southern bank of the Brisbane River between Orleigh Park and Davies Park. These provide points of interest and opportunity for exercise along an important water-side active transport trail.

Each fitness station in the circuit is different, with some including simple, static equipment for chin-ups, sit-ups and step-ups as well as a larger area with interactive and movable equipment with cardio and resistance, particularly popular amongst older residents. Many pieces of equipment have instructions for use.
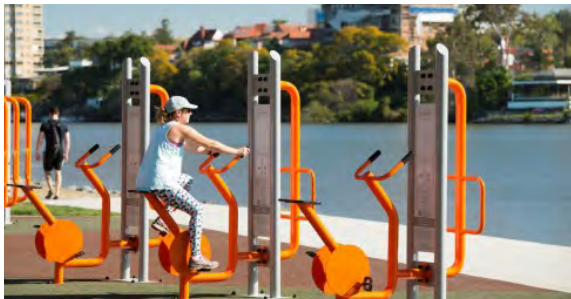
CASE STUDY: OUTDOOR FITENSS STATION

Wallsend Active Hub

Federal Park in Wallsend will be transformed into a vibrant hub of activity under a new $1.5 million project. Concept designs for the Wallsend Active Hub include an expanded play space, bike track, multi-sports courts and climbing wall

City of Newcastle identified the need to provide additional active recreation spaces in Wallsend in order to address the need for informal sporting facilities in the City's western corridor. Wallsend Active Hub will become an asset for Newcastle's western suburbs and is expected to attract families from outside the area, who will enjoy the mix of informal recreational spaces.

11.   Recommendations for needs to be considered in the Contributions Plan

11.1. Summary of needs, to inform the Contributions Plan

The following table provides a summary of community, cultural, public open space and recreational needs that can be linked to the demands of an increasing population and future participation trends and preferences of the future community. Sports facility needs have been identified through the Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020.

It should be noted that Based on guidelines in the Parks and Leisure Australia 'Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, 2012', a standard of 3ha per 1,000 people is considered an adequate provision to meets the needs of a community. Overall, the LGA has an average of 9ha per 1,00 people currently, and by 2045 will have an average of 7ha per person. Ballina Shire Council currently meets benchmarking standards for the provision of open space (quantity). However, a number of parks have low levels of embellishment, presenting opportunities to increase the utilisation of some spaces as well as the diversity of recreation options within the parks network for the community. This includes:

- Extending and augmenting the shared pathway network to increase the options available for high amenity active recreation;
- Providing embellishments and active infrastructure, such as exercise stations, bike storage, boat ramps and small watercraft storage at key locations in the open space network. (Carried over from the Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Facilities Contributions Plan, 2016).

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Community and cultural facilities			
A new multi-purpose library, community and cultural hub in Ballina Town Centre, incorporating: • A new contemporary and flexible central library (approx 2,000m^2) • Multi-purpose community hall (approx 800m^2) that can be used for a range of activities, including seniors groups and seniors day care • Gallery (400m^2) • Town square • Council administration building (increased size from current) • Meeting rooms • Performance space • In association with the development of cafes, and compatible retail uses • Accessible car parking • Storage space • Community kitchen • Study/co-working space Based on best practice precedents – approx. 3200m^2 in size.	Ballina, Catchment 1	• This action is stated in the Ballina major regional centre strategy 2015 – 2035 • Population benchmarking indicates that by 2045, there will be a total demand for 1,992m^2 of library floorspace in catchment 1. • Council have identified a need for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre, which could form part of this community hub • Benchmarking indicates that there will be a need for an additional seniors space by 2045 and demographics show that Catchment 1 has a very high and increasing proportion of people aged over 70. • Best practice trends increasing demand for study spaces as part of community facilities and libraries, as well as access to co-working spaces	Long term

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Alstonville Cultural Centre	Catchment 4	• Ageing facility • Small library size • Need for larger, higher quality local halls • Concept design completed - recoupment needed	Short
Aboriginal cultural centre	Catchment 1	• One of the Ballina Cultural Plan's 6 objectives is: With the Shire's Aboriginal community, promote understanding of local Aboriginal identity, culture and heritage. Council staff as part of the engagement for this project have identified the creation of an **Aboriginal Cultural Centre** as a potential project that could be included in the Ballina 'civic precinct' / community and cultural hub.	Long term
Expanded library at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural centre	Catchment 2	• Explore options so provide an expanded library space at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural Centre, aiming to expand the library to a minimum size of 900m^2 - an additional 365m^2 (based on population benchmarking through to 2045)	Long term
Audio visual upgrades at Lennox Head Community and Cultural centre	Catchment 2	• Improved lighting, audio and staging requirements to host bigger events • Install automatic tiered seating	Medium term
Library technology upgrades	All catchments	• The role of libraries and their services is changing, with access to technology a future role, and important particularly for older people and lower income residents.	Ongoing
Provide more dedicated youth spaces in libraries, especially those servicing growth areas such as Catchment 3 (using Catchment 1's library).	Catchment 1 & 4	• Urban release areas are likely to appeal to young families	Ongoing
Upgrades and repairs to Wigmore Hall (including accessibility upgrades as necessary)	Catchment 1	• Council staff have identified that Wigmore Hall requires paint stripped, building repairs and a repaint. It also is in need of a new roof.	Short term

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Upgrades, including accessibility assessment and upgrades, to local community halls and spaces that are under Council management. Potential candidates for future upgrades and improvements include Ballina CWA Hall, Newrybar Hall, Wardell District War Memorial Hall, Wollongbar Hall and Northlakes Community Centre	All catchments	• Community halls are focal points for local communities in Ballina LGA. While many of the halls loved by the people who use them, they are also ageing and will need future upgrades to ensure they remain safe, useable and accessible to the local community. • The Active Ageing Plan, 2015 identified the need to provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities (existing and future).	Ongoing
More spaces for creative community participation	Catchment 1 & 2	• There are limited creative spaces for the community to participate in arts and cultural activities at a local level across the LGA. • Catchment 3 (urban release areas) have no cultural facilities, and there are no provisions in the Contributions Plan or VPA. • Through renewal of community assets, ensure that facility design caters for a range of uses, including arts and craft (wet areas, loading docks, extraction etc).	Ongoing

Identified need	Location	Rationale	Timing
Open Space and Recreation Facilities			
New and upgraded playgrounds	All catchments	As per the Playground Upgrade and Management Plan. In addition, benchmarking indicates that planning for additional playgrounds through to 2045, particularly in catchments 3 & 4.	Short term & long term
Ensure that the Kingsford Smith Reserve Master Plan delivers a major **outdoor event space** that can cater to Regional level events, festivals and celebrations	Catchment 1	As identified in the Place Strategy	Short term
Park embellishments to local and district parks to become higher quality multipurpose open space areas with improved facilities and active transport connections.	All catchments	Best practice indicates that local and district parks should provide a range of spaces and things to do for a range of ages and abilities. While Council has a high quantum of open space, there is a need to embellish some spaces. *Note: May not apply to C3 – open space appears to align with modern open space planning principles (C3's growth is primarily through the development of urban release areas that are already covered by a VPA and Contributions Plan.*	Ongoing
1 outdoor fitness equipment	All catchments, with priority for catchment 2	Participation trends indicate a high demand and seniors equipment is becoming increasingly popular. Benchmarking indicates demand for an additional one station.	Medium
1-2 outdoor multipurpose courts	Catchments 1 & 2	Participation trends indicate a high and increasing demand for informal multipurpose courts. An additional 1.4 courts are needed based on benchmarking.	Short