ITEM 5 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - PREFERRED LOCATIONS FOR THE NORTHERN SUBURBS AND WOLLONGONG CITY CENTRE SKATE PARKS

Council has programmed the delivery of two new skate parks in Wollongong City Centre and the Northern Suburbs. To assist with the site selection process, Council has engaged specialist consultants Convic to provide site assessment reports for both skate park projects. These reports aim to provide a robust evidence-based assessment to support Council's decision-making regarding preferred locations.

MacCabe Park in Wollongong and WF Jackson Park in Thirroul have been determined as the preferred locations for these new skate parks. This report seeks Council approval to place these sites on public exhibition for a period of 21 days.

RECOMMENDATION

1 Endorse the following sites as the preferred skate park locations for public exhibition:

   a WF Jackson Park, Thirroul as the preferred location for the Northern Suburbs skate park.

   b MacCabe Park – Site 2 – as the preferred location for the Wollongong City Centre skate park.

2 Community and stakeholder feedback from the public exhibition period be reported back to Council for consideration prior to adoption of the preferred locations.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Mark Berriman, Manager Sport + Recreation
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

1 Wollongong City Centre - Site Selection Report
2 Northern Suburbs - Site Selection Report

BACKGROUND

A strategy to consider the implementation of skate parks to address the needs of the Wollongong community was revised and considered as part of the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2017-2021. Council resolved to adopt the Strategy on 26 June 2017 and as part of the Council report an attachment was provided named Review and Develop Skate Park Methodology Used to Rank Skatepark Development Across The LGA. This document identified Wollongong Central skate park, as well as a Northern Suburbs skate park, naming Thirroul as the preferred location. The document also recommends District and Regional scale skate facilities, prioritising Wollongong ahead of Thirroul in the implementation.

Subsequent versions of the Sports Ground Strategy and Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plans have been adopted. Fundamentally, the approach and scale of facilities have been based on the report presented in 2017 as the justification of size and, ultimately, cost estimates that were based on the delivery of the Berkeley skate park.

Currently there are six (6) skate parks located at Helensburgh, Berkeley, Dapto, Fairy Meadow and Unanderra, and the recently completed skate space at King George V Park, Port Kembla.

Council's Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 identifies the progression of planning and development of new skate parks in the Northern Suburbs and Wollongong City Centre as key actions, and these actions are included in the adopted Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Skateboarding is now an Olympic sport and with the trend toward greater professionalisation and skill progression, Council may also need to recalibrate its current approach to ensure opportunities exist for aspiring athletes while continuing to meet community recreation needs. This can be done by introducing an advanced element within a skate park or integration into a design of the Wollongong City Centre Skate Park. The Warrawong Planning Proposal submitted by the NSW State Government identifying an opportunity for an Olympic scale skate facility could also be considered.

Site Selection

Skate park consultant Convic was engaged by Council to prepare site selection reports for both projects. The aim of these reports is to provide Council with an evidence base for decision making and basis for future planning and design works.

It is important to note that there is no perfect site for these projects, all sites have strengths and weaknesses. Convic's site selection reports outline ten (10) key site assessment criteria, three of which are particularly pertinent to these projects:

1. Access and public transport
2. Natural surveillance (and in high trafficable locations)
3. Proximity to residential properties.

Wollongong City Centre

MacCabe Park plays a strategic role in supporting the liveability of Wollongong City Centre, particularly as the area experiences significant residential growth. Several major construction projects, such as new apartment developments along Keira Street and The Globe are underway nearby and this will increase demand for quality open space once completed.

MacCabe Park contains war monuments and commemoration areas, large buildings, and various infrastructure (e.g., car parking, public art, toilets, lighting and fencing) that create difficulties in the siting of a new skate park in the northern area of the park. Noting Council does not have a Master Plan for MacCabe Park and is identified for funding in 2026-2027, it is critical to ensure that placement of new infrastructure in the park does not limit or obstruct future improvements that cater for population growth and activation.

Convic has reviewed four (4) potential locations for a new facility within MacCabe Park (Attachment 1) which were:

- Site 1 - south of Nike public artwork and closer to the Youth Centre.
- Site 2 - area east of large landscape mound fronting Church Street.
- Site 3 - existing carpark located on corner of Ellen and Keira Streets.
- Site 4 - located mid-block fronting Keira Street.

Image: Site locations McCabe Park

The review finds that:

- Sites 1 and 2 scored highly and were recommended.
- Sites 3 and 4 were too small and do not provide adequate setbacks from residential properties.

It is recommended that **Site 2** is the preferred location based on the following considerations:

- The site has good natural surveillance along Church Street.
- Sufficient setback distances from residential properties and maintains space for commemoration activities associated with the war memorial.
- Maintains pedestrian movements through the park and can arguably work with a future Master Plan.
- This area is considered under-utilised with minimal conflict with infrastructure.

Apart from the points made above, the centre core of MacCabe Park should be kept available to connect significant residential developments into the park and continue through the park towards the mall via a central walkway, that includes tree planning and break-out spaces for other passive recreation. Site 2 allows for the majority of the park to be designed to meet a range of other uses for residents to enjoy what will become a main central iconic passive park that families will use for picnics, children's play, leisure and relaxation, as well as providing for a well-designed and appropriately sized skate facility.

Northern Suburbs

The site selection report (Attachment 2) considered four (4) potential locations at:

1. WF Jackson Park, Thirroul
2. Thomas Gibson Park Tennis Courts, Thirroul
3. MacCauley Park, Thirroul
4. Pinecourt Park, Austinmer

WF Jackson Park offers the most compelling case for a district-level skate park in the Northern Suburbs. Its central location in Thirroul, combined with high visibility along Lawrence Hargrave Drive, provides excellent natural surveillance which is critical for creating a safe and welcoming environment for women, families, and young people. The site's proximity to Thirroul train station and bus routes ensures equitable access for a wide demographic and supporting inclusive participation. These attributes, coupled with its ability to accommodate an 800m² facility, make WF Jackson Park uniquely positioned to deliver a family-friendly, female-friendly, and safe skate park that meets community expectations.

The review finds that:

- WF Jackson Park was recommended.
- Thomas Gibson Park, MacCauley and Pinecourt Parks did not score highly with proximity to residents, passive surveillance and proximity to public transport for some of the sites.

It is recommended that WF Jackson Park is the preferred location based on the following considerations:

- Central location and accessibility across the Northern Suburbs.
- Safety and high natural surveillance positioned on Lawrence Hargrave Drive.
- Family and female-friendly environment through accessibility, visibility and location of the existing park.
- This area is considered under-utilised with minimal conflict with infrastructure.
- Permissible activity under the 2022 Community Land Plan of Management (General Community Use).

Thomas Gibson Park Tennis Courts, MacCauley Park in Thirroul, and Pinecourt Park in Austinmer were assessed but found unsuitable for a district-level skate park due to significant limitations. Thomas Gibson Park's existing tennis infrastructure, and constrained layout and size, restrict opportunities for a district skate facility without displacing and impacting on current uses, including football, rugby league and

tennis. Bulli Showground has also been ruled out, whilst investigation and planning works are underway by Transport for NSW for the proposed Bulli Bypass project that is situated adjacent to the Showground. In addition, consideration of placement of a skate facility with the Bulli Masterplan Study Area would result in very poor passive surveillance.

MacCauley Park, while located in Thirroul, lacks strong natural surveillance in addition to its proximity to residential properties which also raises noise and amenity concerns. Pinecourt Park in Austinmer presents challenges with distance to nearest train station, approximately 1.5km, limited visibility at night, and proximity to existing residential homes. Collectively, these factors make all three sites less viable compared to WF Jackson Park, which offers excellent accessibility, visibility, and capacity to deliver a safe, inclusive, and well-integrated skate park that would be designed to provide a unique skate experience to complement the space and community expectations.

Image: Sites in Thirroul and Austinmer

PROPOSAL

Following a detailed review and assessment of potential locations, the preferred sites are:

- Wollongong City Centre – MacCabe Park (Site 2)
- Northern Suburbs – WF Jackson Park, Thirroul

Endorsement of these preferred sites by Council will enable public exhibition seeking community feedback. The findings of this community consultation will be used to assist in finalising the site selection process and reported for Council's future consideration.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Should Council determine to resolve to support the public exhibition of the preferred locations, this project will be communicated through the following methods:

- Written notification to neighbouring households and businesses.
- Project page on Council's engagement website.

- Notification to participants of previous engagement related to skate park projects.
- Notification to interested stakeholders including relevant community groups and nearby schools.
- E-newsletter to registered participants via Council's engagement website opting in to receive project notifications related to 'Wollongong and surrounds', 'Thirroul and surrounds' and 'Sports and Recreation'.
- Hard copy information available at our libraries.
- On-site signage.
- Face-to-face engagement opportunities.

Councils Engagement Team will then seek feedback from the community using the following methods:

- Online survey via Council's engagement website.
- Hard copy survey.
- In person.
- Phone calls.
- Emails.
- Letters.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Goal 4 'We have a healthy, respectful and inclusive City'. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2035	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Strategy	**Service**
4.2 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public spaces and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community	Parks and Sportsfields

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Whilst designs have not been developed, projects may require some removal or pruning of recently planted vegetation to accommodate construction and operation of the new skate facilities. Opportunities for landscaping will be considered through the design process whilst offset planting at 2:1 ratio may be pursued elsewhere in the city where high value trees must be removed.

A review of Environmental Factors will be prepared to support the construction projects and will provide an assessment of impacts.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Location is the most controversial aspect of a skate park and represents significant project risk in delaying delivery of the projects. Public exhibition of the preferred locations will help facilitate feedback from the community helping to finalise the site selection process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These projects are currently funded by developer contributions as part of the Wollongong City-Wide Development Contributions Plan (2024).

Council has also secured additional grant funding including:

- $300,000 from the NSW Government's Places to Play Program, and
- $300,000 from the Responsible Gambling Fund to complement funding for the Wollongong City Centre project.

Failure to deliver the Wollongong City Centre skate park in accordance with grant program timelines may require return of the funding and reduce Council's overall financial capacity to deliver the project in full.

Pending finalisation of the site selection process, project budgets will be reviewed and refined to ensure alignment with estimated project costs for construction in line with planned outcomes. Potential funding sources include:

- Review of the allocated s7.12 budget based on updated information.
- Capital revenue.
- External grant funding opportunities.

CONCLUSION

MacCabe Park, Wollongong, and WF Jackson Park, Thirroul, have been identified as the preferred sites for the delivery of new skate parks. Public exhibition of these preferred locations will enable community feedback on these locations which will be reported back to Council for consideration.

WOLLONGONG CITY SKATEPARK

SITE SELECTION REPORT

AUGUST 2024

CONVIC

PREPARED BY

CONVIC

FOR

wollongong
city of innovation

QUALITY INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME	Wollongong City Skatepark
PROJECT NO.	23077
PREPARED BY	Angus Thomas
REVIEWED BY	Bryce Hinton

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONVIC Pty Ltd. Acknowledge the contributions of all those who participated in the preparation of the Wollongong City Skatepark Site Selection report, including Wollongong City Council staff, specialised consultants and residents, community groups and other stakeholders who responded to the various opportunities for input and/or who provided advice and information where required.

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REVISION HISTORY

REVISION	REVISION DATE	DETAILS	AUTHORISED	
			NAME / POSITION	SIGNATURE
A	31.05.2024	Site Selection Report_Draft	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	
B	01.08.2024	Site Selection Report_Final	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	
C	22.08.2025	Site Selection Report_Final	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	

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01 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

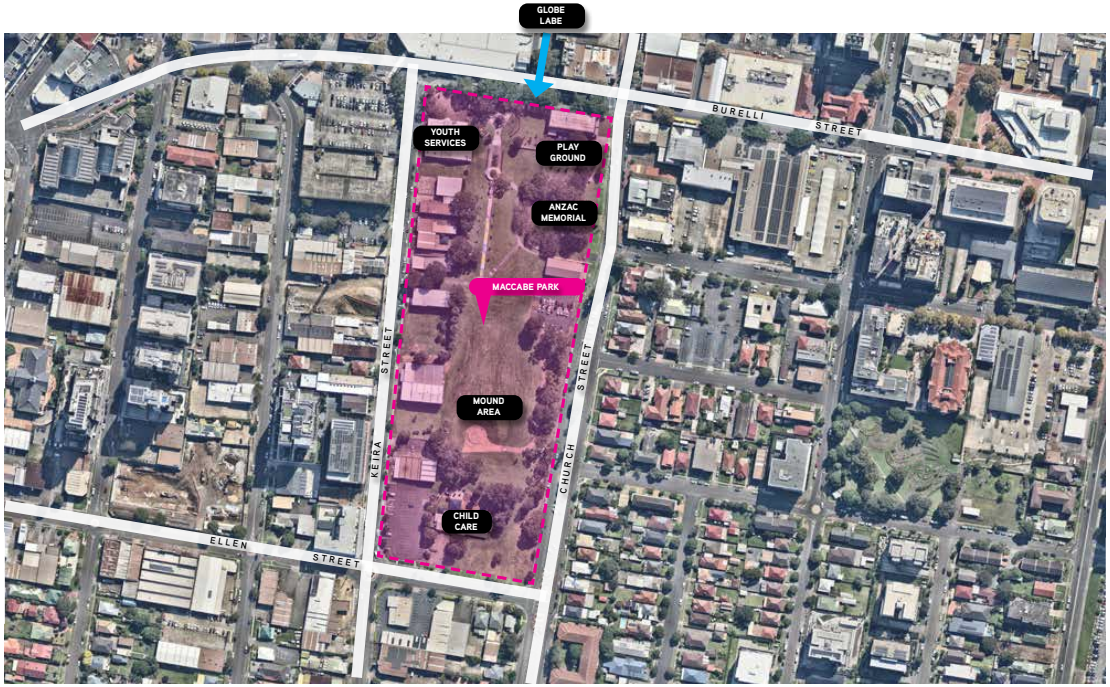
Wollongong City Council has programmed the construction of a new skatepark in Wollongong City Center. In April 2024 Council engaged CONVIC to undertake a site assessment of MacCabe park for its suitability of the proposed skatepark precinct.

SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE SITE:
The location of the skatepark or youth space is critical in ensuring the future success of this important community asset. In particular the site should have the ability to:

- Create a centralised social hub for young people.
- Allow users of different ages to interact with each other.
- Allow users of different abilities to learn from each other.
- Create strong links with existing Wollongong community facilities and amenities.
- Create a destination celebrating a unique Wollongong identity and
- Be a place that young people want to be within and enjoy.

It has been identified that the skatepark must cater for all ages, abilities and types of action sports including active, passive and social activities.

MacCabe parks presents an opportunity for the Wollongong City Council to develop a revitalised youth precinct and create a dynamic and activated community hub. Its central location within Wollongong connects with public transport, shopping precinct and city center offering. This location offers recreational and social opportunities for all members of the community, from day to day use to community centred activities and events. This report outlines the key criteria used to assess four proposed areas within MacCabe park provided to CONVIC by the Wollongong City Council, outlines our analysis of these sites, and makes a recommendation for the preferred location.



02 SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. PHYSICAL SITE CONDITIONS & TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This first broad criterion is based on the physicality of the sites and whether they can accommodate a facility of the required scale and type required by the Council. It also considers technical implications such as drainage and soil conditions. Questions asked at each site include;

- Is the proposed site able to cater for the various different applicable facility types defined previously? (ie: large enough to cater for events if we are looking for a district scale park)
- Is the proposed site free of existing land use implications, covenants, easements, service access requirements and/or underground/overhead power lines, water and gas?
- What are the implications of geotechnical conditions, ground water, drainage?
- What are the physical terrain implications of the site?

2. ACCESS/TRANSPORT

This second criterion looks at how easily accessible the site is for users, parents and those viewing the skatepark or events. Questions asked of each site on this criterion include;

- Are there pedestrian/footpath connections from transport nodes to the proposed site?
- Is there a safe drop off area or adequate car parking if applicable?

3. NATURAL SURVEILLANCE, SECURITY AND SAFETY

As the consideration is to create a public sporting facility with the main users being below the age of 18 it is crucial to ensure the facility is visually open and safe and easily accessed in the case of an emergency. Questions asked for this criterion include;

- Is the site visually prominent with good natural and passive surveillance for safety and for the promotion of the facility and skate activity?
- Is the site a short distance from police response calls and does it provide ease of police access on scheduled routes?
- Can the site provide adequate emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance?)
- Can vehicular access be restricted at the proposed site to prevent skating at night by car light if applicable?
- Can the proposed site provide safe entry to and from the site and safe setbacks from busy roads and intersections?
- Does the site provide a safe environment for all community members, specifically females?

4. PROXIMITY TO AMENITIES (WATER, TOILETS, SHADE, FOOD & DRINK)

An active public sporting facility such as a skatepark should have appropriate supporting amenities. This includes shade for viewing and resting, drink fountains and nearby toilets given users can spend many hours using a skatepark in a single session.
Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- Are associated amenities such as public telephone, toilets, water, shelter and shade existing and available or cost effective to install at the site?
- Is the site close to vendors selling food and drink and is there potential for seasonal, peak time and/or event day food and drink outlets?

5. IMPACT ON EXISTING FACILITIES, ADJOINING USES AND USERS

To assess the suitability of a site, one of the main considerations is what impact will a new facility have on the existing users and use of the space. This can be a contentious community issue and so the following questions have been asked for this criterion;

- Does the site facilitate minimal loss of green space?
- Does the site facilitate minimal impact on ecological systems eg. wetlands, foreshore and bush land?
- Does the site facilitate minimal loss of mature or significant trees?
- Does the site facilitate minimal impact on pedestrian or road network and access including existing desire lines?
- Will the location of a skate facility on the site substantially displace existing recreational or other site users?
- Are there any existing heritage items or indigenous people's claims for land title or cultural significance at the site?
- Is there a history of 'anti-social' activity of behaviour at the site?

6. DISTANCE FROM HOUSING & INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

Another major consideration for any new public sporting facility is the potential impact of noise and light to nearby housing. It is important that the new skate facility is located to minimise impact to surrounding residential areas.

We have undertaken approximate acoustic assessments of a number of existing skateparks to ascertain an appropriate distance from residential

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

areas and as a guide 50m is considered an acceptable distance for a purpose built skatepark. Please note that this is subject to a more detailed acoustic assessment as each location has different factors such as surrounding noise, landform, prevailing winds etc. This is also only for facilities and not incidental skate moments which, due to their scale and level of potential use, are not considered major creators of noise or loss of amenity.
Questions therefore include;

- Is the site location an adequate distance (minimum 50m) from residential dwellings to avoid potential noise and light intrusions?
- Has the site the capacity to place a skatepark in a location to maximise noise attenuation (eg: sunk into the ground or mounding/shrub planting)

7. EVENT SPACE OPPORTUNITIES
With centrally located facilities presenting the opportunity to become a major community activity node, not just for skating/BMX and scooter users but also community events, clinics and competitions; sites must be assessed for their suitability to play a broader role. Questions therefore include;

- Is the proposed site adjacent to like/complimentary activities to create a greater recreational experience?
- Does the site have the ability to cater for larger crowds and temporary infrastructure during peak use and events?

8. MAINTENANCE
Maintenance is important to ensure the park can be cleaned easily and regularly. Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- How readily accessible is the site to regular cleaning for existing council cleaning and maintenance team?

9. CONTEXT & AMENITY
The criteria is most applicable to the socialisation that occurs at skateparks and the importance of providing facilities that are where young people want to be and provide important amenity (sun protection, wind etc.)
The following questions will be asked for each of the sites regarding context and amenity;

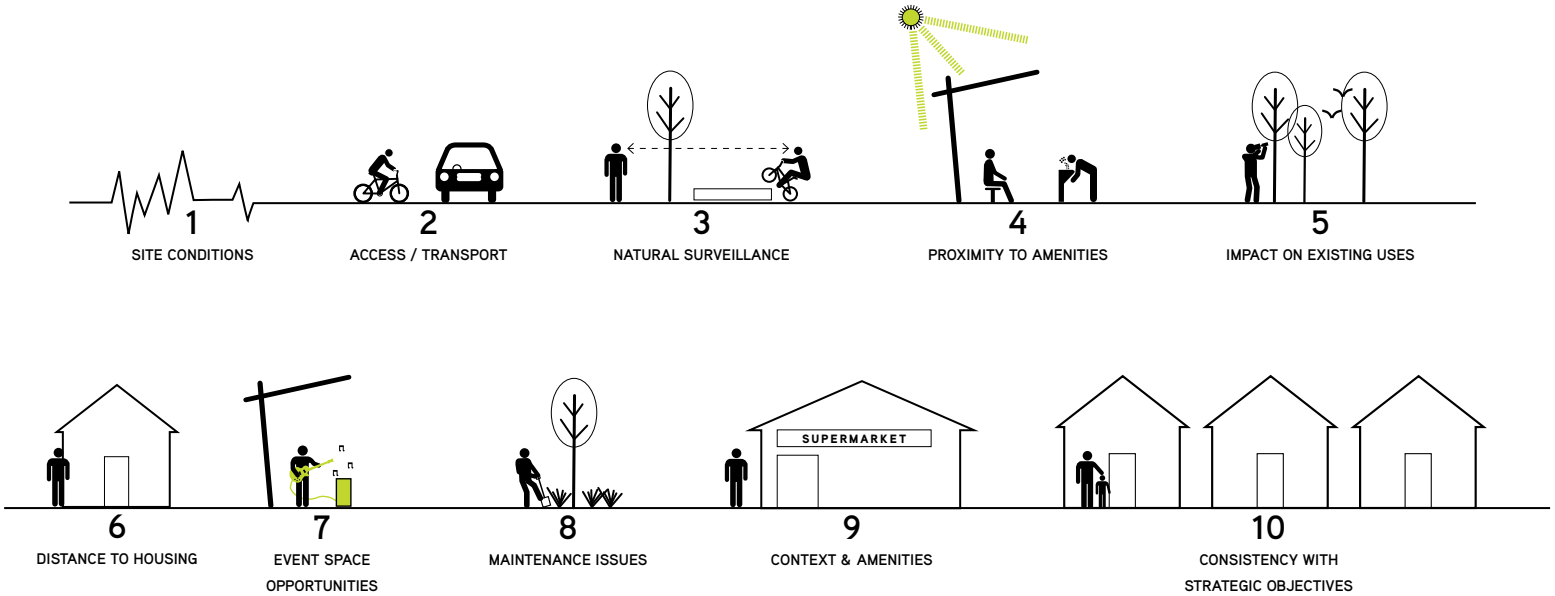
- Is the site location where young people want to be or adjacent to where they currently congregate?
- Is the site in close proximity to existing shopping centres, sports or recreation facilities or interested schools?
- Is the site within or adjacent to a major community hub or central area?

10. CONSISTENCY WITH STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Sites for consideration need to conform to local planning schemes, embody strategic planning and reflect the current land use zones. Therefore for this criterion the following questions needs to be asked;

- Is the location consistent with the strategic land use, master planning, planning schemes and zoning?

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

FACTORS IN LOCATING A YOUTH FACILITY



SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

In April 2024 CONVIC undertook pre-design community consultation in Wollongong for the proposed skatepark project. As part of this process the community were asked which style of skatepark they would like to see developed out of three options; street + plaza, bowl + transition or a combination (Street + Bowl). This event comprised of an in person workshop and online survey.

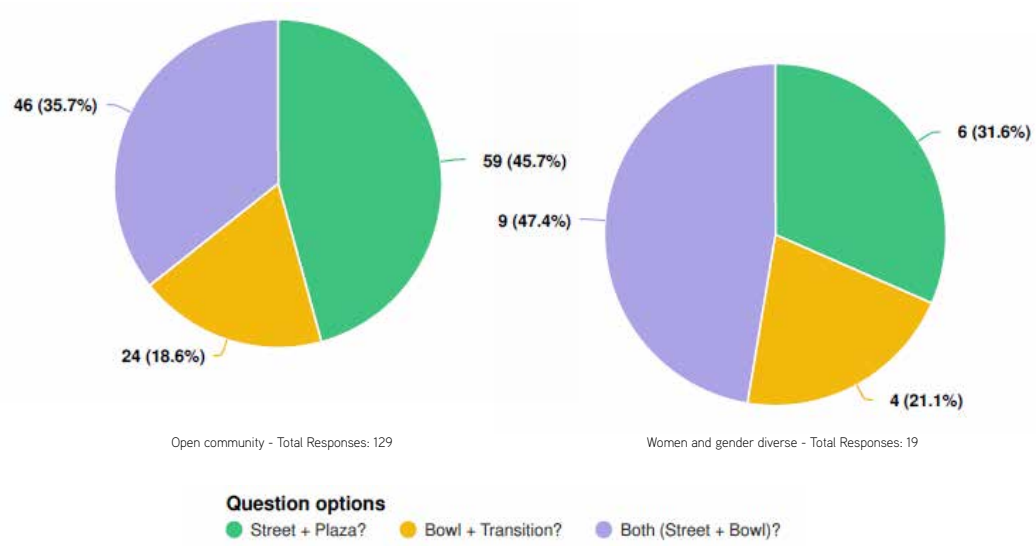
Findings from this question will influence site assessment investigations. Each style of skatepark favours specific site features, for example a street plaza requires flat open space where as a bowl requires underground drainage and favours level change. It is important to note that each style can develop to meet site constraints, however sometimes at a significant impact on budget, eg raising site levels for a bowl in a flat area.

In total there were 148 responses across both the open community and women only consultation. The key findings are as follows:

WOMEN AND GENDER DIVERSE - 19 PARTICIPANTS:
Combination was the standout preferred followed by street + plaza. Bowl + transition was favoured low with only 4 participants selecting this option.

OPEN COMMUNITY - 129 PARTICIPANTS:
Street + plaza was the standout preferred followed by a combination. Bowl + transition was favoured low with only 24 participants selecting this option.

These findings show that the community favour a street style skatepark with a low interest in bowl provision. Based on this the site analysis will use a street plaza facility as its case study for scale comparisons and site feature analysis.



SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SCALE COMPARISON

Its important to understand the size and objectives of the facility prior to undertaking a site assessment. For example a site may suit the delivery of a local sized skatepark but not a regional. In order to form a city centre destination facility, the Wollongong Skatepark should meet the requirements of a district facility classification or higher. The style of skatepark will be subject to community consultation, however as a starting point this facility will need to be in scale range of 1200-1500m2 to cater for its catchment and location.

A district level facility will reach a catchment of multiple small townships or suburbs within a local government area but will primarily service one larger community centre. A district level facility includes multiple zones within the skate area and allows for skill progression from a beginner to advanced level. A district facility should consider providing seating options and viewing areas for a family friendly space and floodlighting for night time use and safety.

The analysis of each site has been cross referenced to Bracken Ridge Skatepark to understand district level scale parameters, details of this facility as follows:

- Client: Brisbane City Council
- Size: 1040m2 Skate / 1690m2 Overall
- Style: Street + plaza
- Amenities: Lighting, shelters and spectator areas
- Completion: 2016

Bracken Ridge Skatepark, QLD

03

THE SITES

UNDERSTANDING THE SITES

Situated in the center of Wollongong City, MacCabe Park hosts a broad mix of development and uses. Within walking distance to Wollongong train station, bus stops and the city center, the site is easily accessible. Current built form, land use and activities take place on both public and private space.

Large expanses of open green space are utilised by the public for daily recreation with community events such as concerts and markets taking place throughout the year. Situated on the east edge, Wollongong Cenotaph hosts Anzac and remembrance day events. Wollongong Youth Centre and an older playground form points of youth congregation and recreation. Major public artwork, Nike, by Ken Unsworth forms an entry point at the north connecting with Globe Lane and adjacent mall.

Privately owned business and infrastructure are situated around the border of the precinct. Car parking is located on the east and south edges, with private business situated along the west and south. These business include child care, retail and office uses. Amongst the built form residential dwellings are located within the park and directly adjacent in neighbouring apartment complexes.

This dynamic mix of land use forms opportunities and constraints for the integration of a youth and family recreation space. Wollongong City Council have highlighted four potential areas within MacCabe park to be analysed for future recreation development:

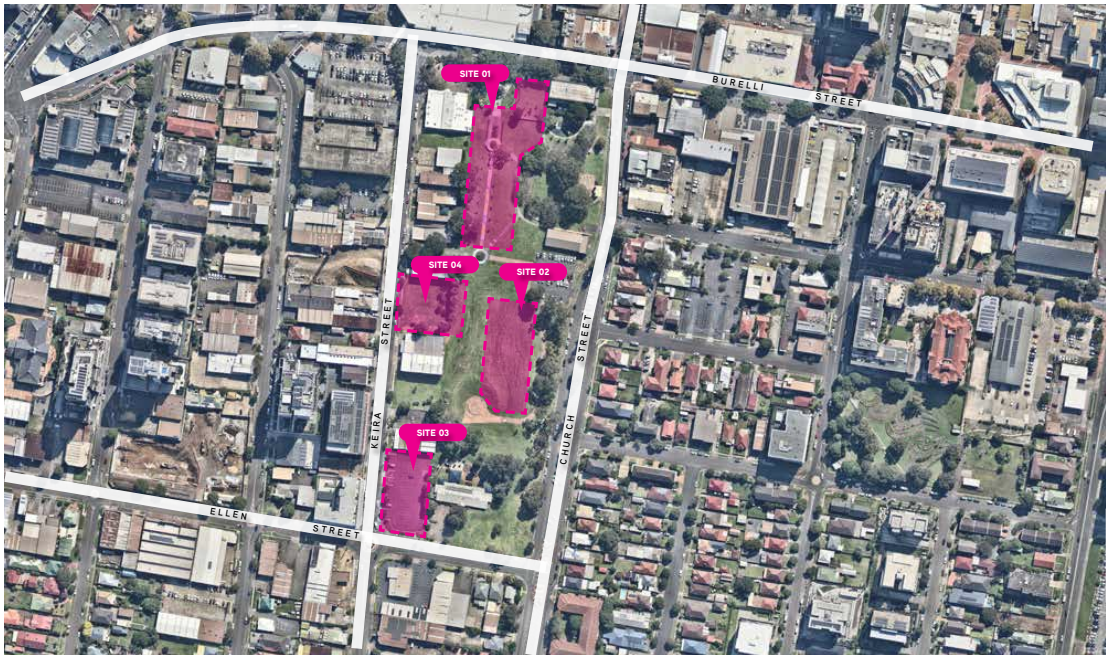
SITE 1: NORTH MACCABE PARK
Located adjacent Wollongong Youth Centre and closer to Burelli Street.

SITE 2: EAST MACCABE PARK
Located adjacent Chruch Street, this site is bordered by a central mound and existing trees.

SITE 3: SOUTH MACCABE PARK
Located on the corner of Ellen and Keira Streets, this site is an existing carpark bordered by a child care center.

SITE 4: WEST MACCABE PARK
Located adjacent Keira Street, this site is bordered by residential and private business development.

The following report analyses these areas amongst the constraints and opportunities created by their dynamic mix of land use and site features:



THE SITES

SITE 1: NORTH MACCABE PARK

Located at the northern end of MacCabe Park, this site forms an entry into the precinct. A short walk from Crown Street Mall and Burelli Street, this is an accessible location directly opposite Wollongong Youth Services.

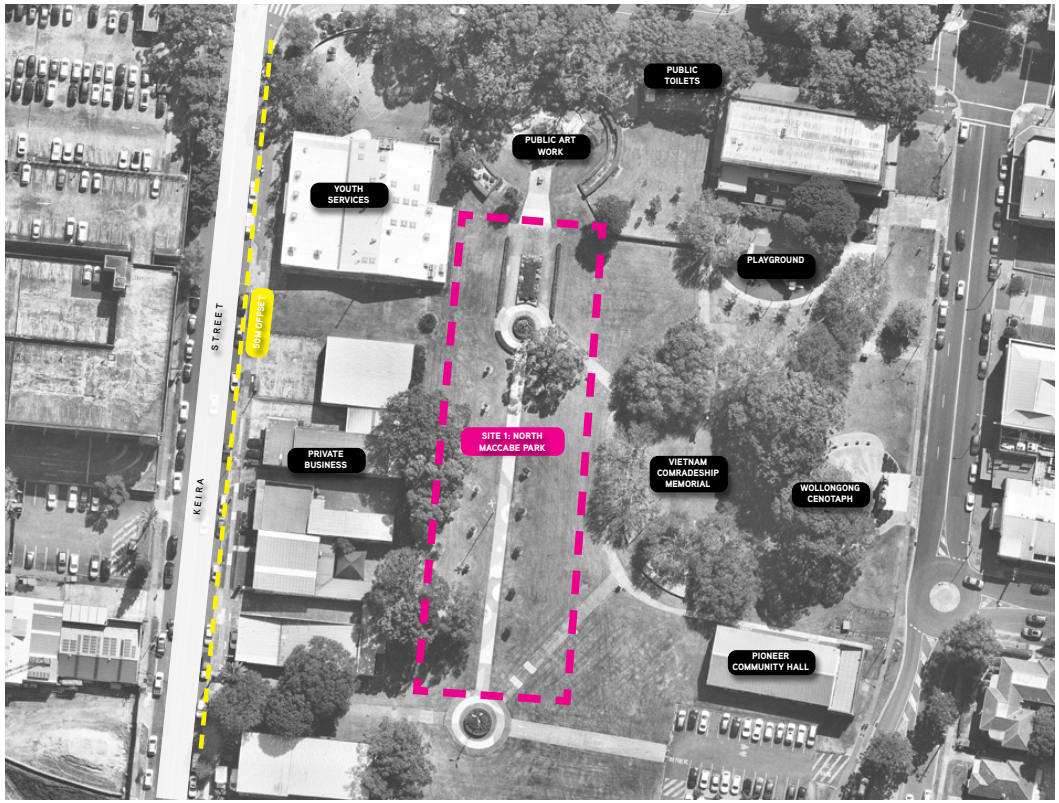
SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of open green space, formal raised garden beds, pedestrian footpaths and lighting infrastructure. The site terraces down from Burelli Street on the north end, and is otherwise relatively flat. The site is easily accessible from all adjacent edges with bus stops directly opposite on Burelli Street.

Vietnam Comradeship and Wollongong Cenotaph are situated east of the open green space. These areas hold sensitive land values, any proposed development must be sympathetic to these spaces and understand implications of integrating adjacent development.

Bordering the site are Wollongong Youth Centre to the north west and a public playground to the east. These nodes create opportunity to integrate with the existing youth space and infrastructure. Commercial buildings and mature trees form the west boundary, appropriate offsets to these spaces must be considered.

The site is a narrow footprint running north to south which deviates around 'Nike' by Ken Unsworth. Site features including light poles, trees, terracing and landscaping form tight constraints where some existing infrastructure of landscaping and pedestrian pathways will need to be relocated to allow for future development. This site presents an opportunity to improve and upgrade the northern entry.



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THE SITES

NORTH MACCABE PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a local/district facility	✔
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✔
Public transport access available	✔
Emergency vehicle access available	✔
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✔
Shelter/natural shade	✔
Designated seating and viewing areas	✔
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✔
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✔
Potential iconic destination facility	✔
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✔
Good natural surveillance	✔
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✔
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✔
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✔
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✔

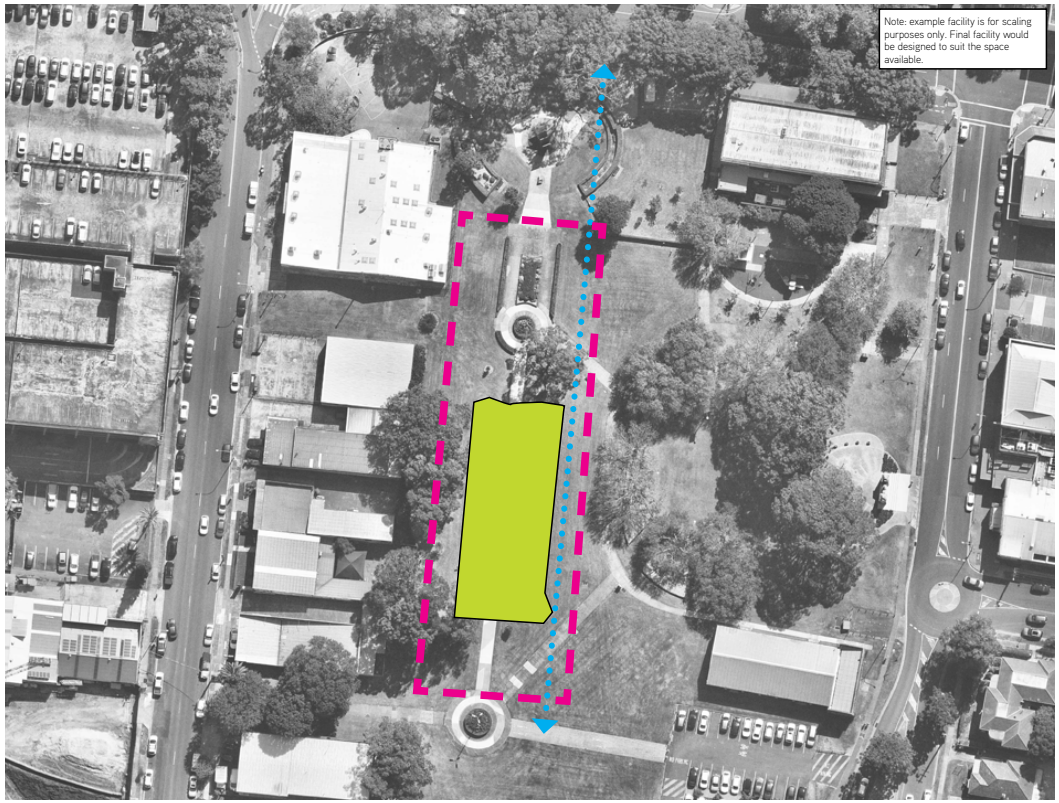
Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✔ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✘ Inability to provides for typology criteria

DISTRICT FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BRACKEN RIDGE SKATEPARK



Potential pedestrian path realignment

Indicative overlay of district facility - Bracken Ridge Skatepark, QLD (size 1100sqm)

THE SITES

THE SITES

SITE 2: EAST MACCABE PARK

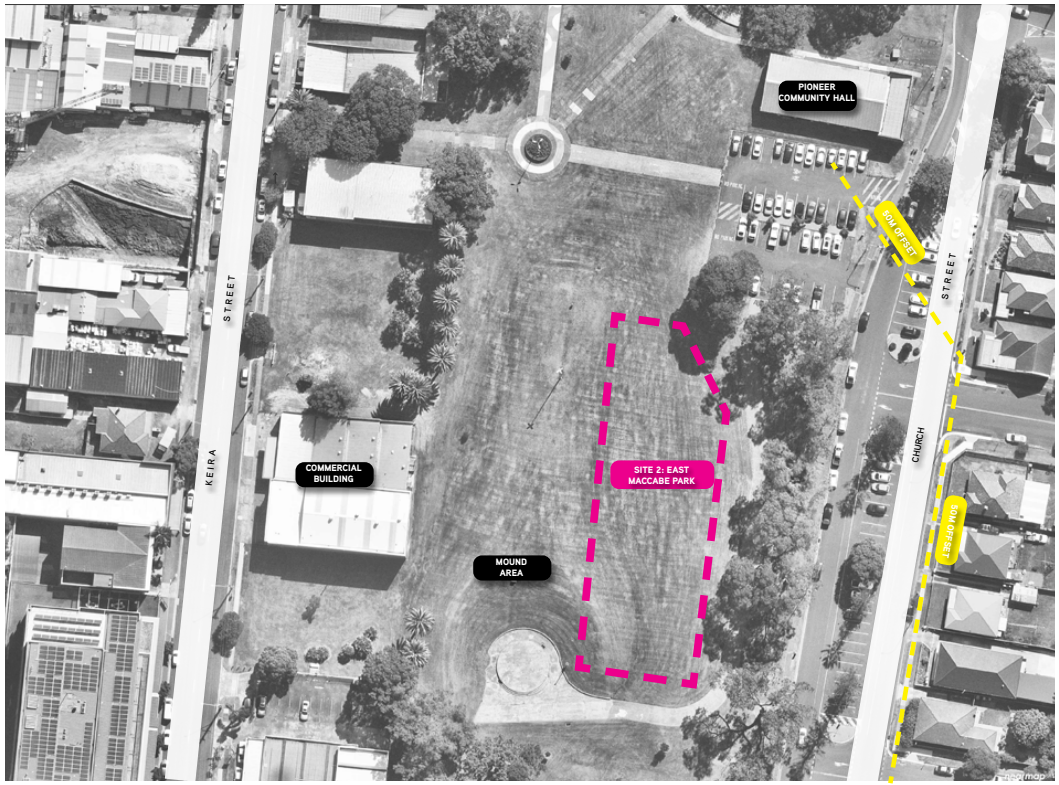
Located on the eastern extent of MacCabe Park, this site forms an open green space. Bordered by Church Street and mound area the site is central and in close proximity to train station and bus stops.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of open green space with mature eucalyptus trees forming a border on the east and a large mound on the west. The mound is significant to the south and tapers gradually to the north, this feature creates an interesting opportunity to integrate skatepark elements and spectating areas. However, understanding impact on CPTED principles is crucial with sight lines through the space obstructed by this feature.

During the inspection the site was dry and free of water pooling. However it was noted that this area is a low point and subject to flooding during heavy rain events. This creates the opportunity for a skatepark to capture water and mitigate drainage away from the area to prevent flooding and associated maintenance issues.

South of the site and mound is an amphitheatre event space. This area blocks sight lines and promotes poor CPTED principles. It is recommended a review of current activation and potential reuse of the space be considered.



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THE SITES

EAST MACCABE PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a district facility	✔
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✔
Public transport access available	✔
Emergency vehicle access available	✔
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✔
Shelter/natural shade	✔
Designated seating and viewing areas	✔
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✔
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✔
Potential iconic destination facility	✔
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✔
Good natural surveillance	✔
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✔
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✔
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✔
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✔

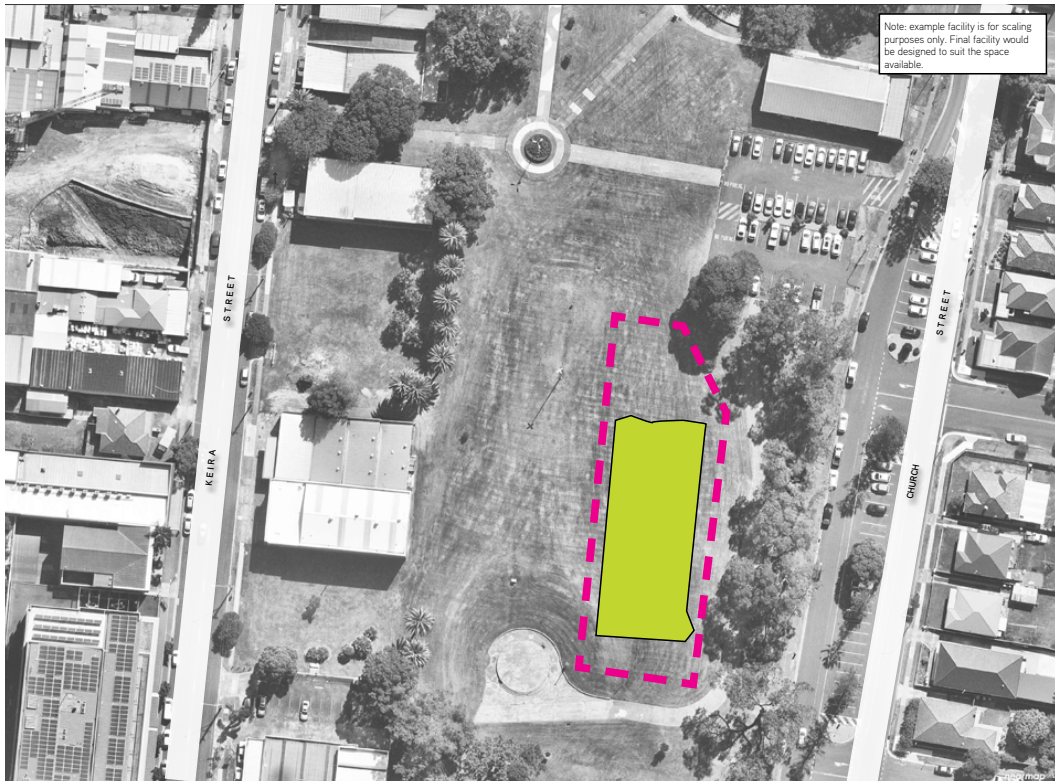
Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✔ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✘ Inability to provides for typology criteria

DISTRICT FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BRACKEN RIDGE SKATEPARK



Indicative overlay of district facility - Bracken Ridge Skatepark, QLD (size 1100sqm)

THE SITES

THE SITES

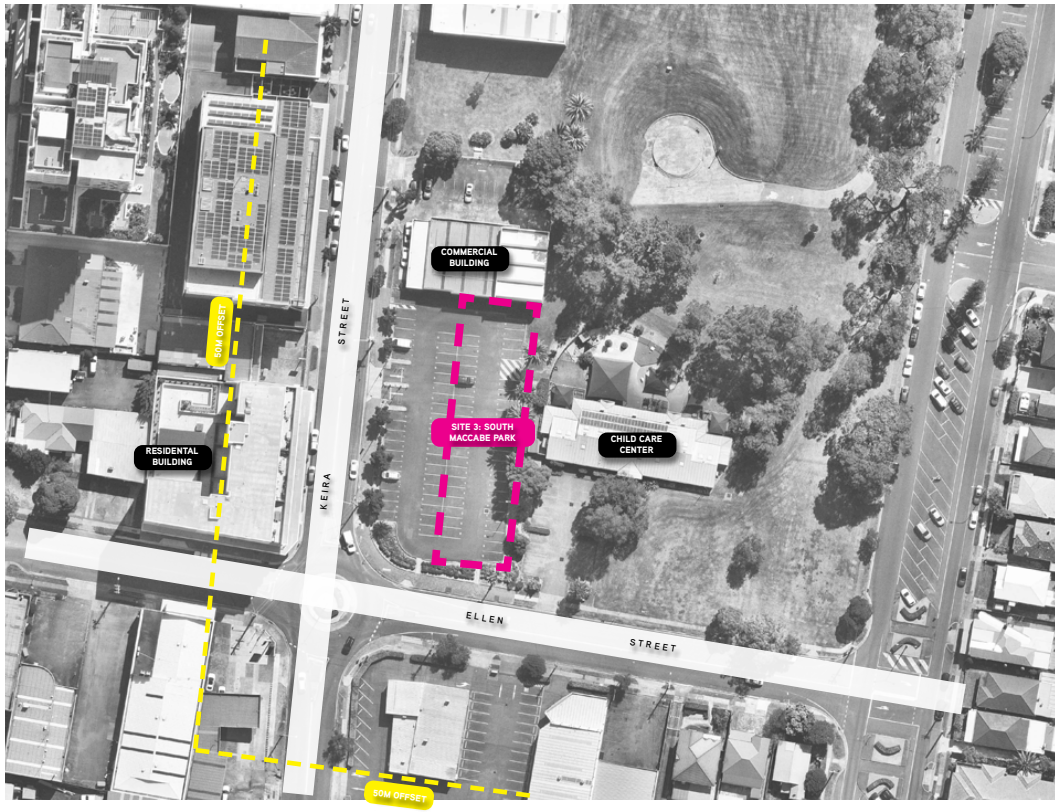
SITE 3: SOUTH MACCABE PARK

Located south of MacCabe Park, this site is a Council operated carpark with 78 spaces. The car park spaces are licensed from 6am to 5pm weekdays. Situated on the corner of Keira and Ellen Street the site is a short walk from bus stops and the city centre.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located in a prominent corner location and offers good opportunity for natural surveillance. The site consists of an open asphalt carpark where Council have proposed that 50% of the area could potentially be developed into recreation space. The site is flat with buildings and roads on all edges.

Bordering the site is child care center to the east and an retail space to the north. Adjacent Keira Street to the west is a residential apartment block, understanding offsets and noise levels will need further investigation for future development. Site features including light poles, trees and landscaping will form tight constraints to consider for future development. Development in this space would require the loss of approximately 42 car spaces and their associated revenue.



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THE SITES

SOUTH MACCABE PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a local/district facility	✗
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✗
Public transport access available	✓
Emergency vehicle access available	✓
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✓
Shelter/natural shade	✓
Designated seating and viewing areas	✗
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✗
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✗
Potential iconic destination facility	✗
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✓
Good natural surveillance	✓
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✗
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✓
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✓
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✓

Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✓ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✗ Inability to provides for typology criteria

DISTRICT FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BRACKEN RIDGE SKATEPARK

Indicative overlay of district facility - Bracken Ridge Skatepark, QLD (size 1100sqm)

THE SITES

THE SITES

SITE 4: WEST MACCABE PARK

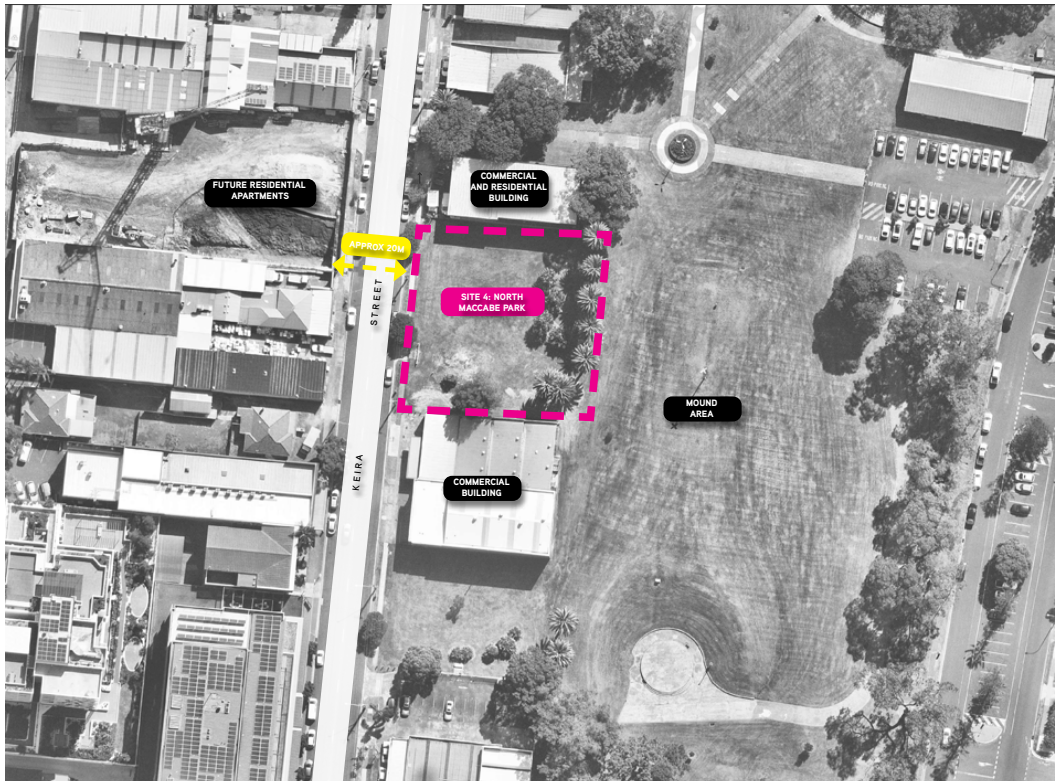
Located on the western extent of MacCabe Park, this site forms an empty block on the parks edge providing a street frontage. Bordered by Keira Street it is a short walk from the train station and bus stops.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of open green space with heritage listed canary island palm trees forming a border on the east. Although creating the opportunity to integrate with established vegetation, these palms constrain available development area. Furthermore, development within this site would require the removal of existing low level vegetation. The site is relatively flat and easily accessible from Keira Street, however is restricted from other edges due to bordering built form.

Bordering the site are buildings on the north and south consisting of residential and commercial occupancy. These buildings close in the space and obstruct views into and out of the site. Furthermore, apartment block complexes, future residential development and other residential buildings are situated opposite the site on Kiera Street. The close proximity to residential dwellings will need to be considered for future development, particularly in regard to noise levels generated from skateparks.

The eastern end connects with open green space and the existing mound area creating the opportunity to integrate with flexible open space within the wider precinct.



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THE SITES

WEST MACCABE PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a district facility	✗
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✗
Public transport access available	✓
Emergency vehicle access available	✓
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✓
Shelter/natural shade	✓
Designated seating and viewing areas	✗
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✗
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✗
Potential iconic destination facility	✗
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✓
Good natural surveillance	✗
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✗
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✓
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✓
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✓

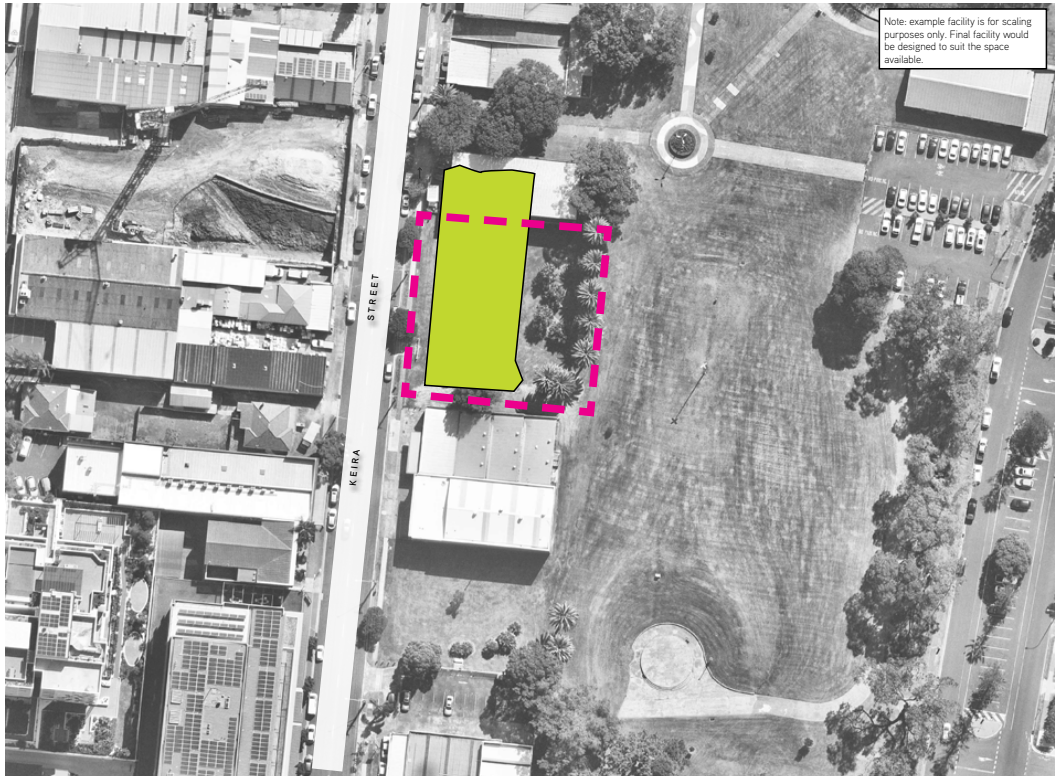
Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✓ Ability to provide for typology criteria

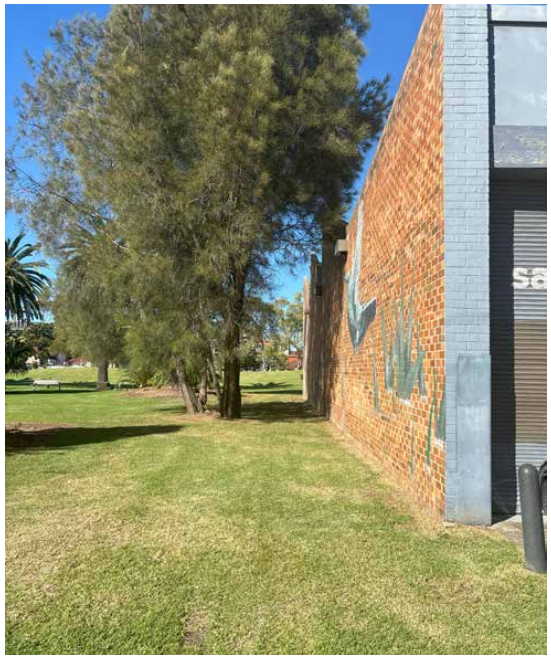
✗ Inability to provides for typology criteria

DISTRICT FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BRACKEN RIDGE SKATEPARK



Indicative overlay of district facility - Bracken Ridge Skatepark, QLD (size 1100sqm)

THE SITES



04

SITE SELECTION MATRIX

CRITERIA MATRIX RESULTS

The following table lists the criteria used for assessment and provides each item with a rating in relation to its importance for the future success of the proposed facility and the site assessment weighting (1 low importance weighting to 5 high importance weighting). The rating factor is multiplied by the weighting to give a total score. This is then used to calculate the total percentage outcome for each site, enabling direct comparison of different sites in an equal platform.

The total percentage outcomes are applied to the following rating system guide to rank each sites suitability. This ranking system is a comparative, rating one site against another. General percentages are used to clarify the following recommendations:

EXCELLENT - 80% < 100%
If a site achieves a score 70% or above it is seen as a suitable site for any size or type facility.

GOOD - 50% < 79%
A score between 50% and 79% is considered a potential site for consideration, however should not be favoured over a higher scoring site. This score indicates there are key criteria that are not met at the site, and these will need to be addressed within the design to create a successful outdoor youth facility, which may reduce the scope of active youth provision.

POOR - 0% < 49%
Any site scoring below 49% should not be considered for a outdoor youth facility. As every site is distinct to its particular context and situation, the above rating system should be used as a guide only.

SITE SELECTION MATRIX — **CONVIC**

PROJECT: 23077 Wollongong City Skatepark
COMPLETED BY: Angus Thomas
COUNCIL: Wollongong City Council
DATE CARRIED OUT: 23/04/2024

		ASSESSMENT OF CRITERIA (2 fully meets, 1 partially meets, 0 does not meet)				WEIGHTING MULITPLIED BY ASSESSMENT			
CONSIDERATION/CRITERIA	**Importance of Criteria (5 highest, 1 lowest)**	**Site 1: North**	**Site 2: East**	**Site 3: South**	**Site 4: West**	**Site 1: North**	**Site 2: East**	**Site 3: South**	**Site 4: West**
1. Physical site conditions & technical considerations									
Is the proposed site capable of catering to the various different applicable skatepark types defined as local, district, regional? (ie: large enough to cater for events if we are looking for a regional scale park)	5	2	2	0	0	10	10	0	0
Is the proposed site free of existing land use implications, covenants, easements, service access requirements and/or underground/overhead powerlines, water and gas?	4	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4
Is the site encumbered by the implications of geotechnical conditions, ground water, drainage?	4	2	1	2	2	8	4	8	8
2. Access/transport									
Is there access to public transport at the proposed site?	3	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	6
Are there pedestrian/footpath connections from transport nodes to the proposed site?	4	2	2	2	2	8	8	8	8
Is there a safe drop off area or adequate car parking if applicable?	4	2	2	1	2	8	8	4	8
3. Natural surveillance, security and safety									
Is the site visually prominent with good natural and passive surveillance for safety and for the promotion of the facility and activity?	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5
Is the site a short distance from police response calls and does it provide ease of police access on scheduled routes?	3	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	6
Can the site provide adequate emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance)?	5	2	2	2	2	10	10	10	10
Can vehicular access be restricted at the proposed site to prevent skating at night by car light if applicable?	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
Can the proposed site provide safe entry to and from the site and safe setbacks from busy roads and intersections.	4	2	2	1	1	8	8	4	4
4. Proximity to amenities (water, toilets, shade, food & drink)									
Are associated amenities such as public toilets, water, shelter and shade, existing and available or cost effective to install at the site?	5	2	1	1	1	10	5	5	5
Is the site close to shops selling food and drink and is there potential for seasonal, peak time and/or event day food and drink outlets?	3	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	6
5. Impact on existing facilities, adjoining uses and users									
Can the site facilitate minimal loss of green space?	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	8
Can the site facilitate minimal impact on existing ecological systems eg. wetlands, foreshore and bushland?	4	2	2	2	2	8	8	8	8
Can the site facilitate minimal loss of significant trees?	4	0	2	0	2	0	8	0	8
Can the site facilitate minimal impact on pedestrian or road network and access including existing desire lines?	5	2	2	2	2	10	10	10	10

SITE SELECTION MATRIX

Will the location of a skate facility on the site mitigate displacement of existing recreational or other site users?	3	1	0	1	1	3	0	3	3
Is the site encumbered by existing heritage items, native title claims or items of cultural significance?	5	2	2	2	2	10	10	10	10
Is there a history of 'anti-social' activity of behaviour at the site?	4	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4
6. Distance from housing & incompatible land use									
Is the site location an adequate distance (50m) from residential dwellings to mitigate potential noise and light intrusions?	5	2	2	0	0	10	10	0	0
Is the site sufficiently located away from adjacent or nearby incompatible land uses, other activities or services.	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5
Has the site the capacity to place a skatepark in a location to maximise noise attenuation (eg: sunk into the ground, solid fencing etc.)	3	1	2	0	0	3	6	0	0
7. Event space opportunities (multiplicity of use)									
Is the proposed site adjacent to other like/complimentary activities to create a greater recreational experience	4	2	1	1	1	8	4	4	4
Does the site have the ability to cater for larger crowds and temporary infrastructure during peak use and events?	3	1	2	0	0	3	6	0	0
8. Maintenance issues									
Is the site readily accessible for regular cleaning by cleaning and maintenance teams.	3	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	6
9. Context & Amenity									
Is the site location where young people want to be or adjacent to where they currently congregate?	5	2	1	1	1	10	5	5	5
Is the site in close proximity to existing shopping centres, sports or recreation facilities or interested schools?	5	2	2	2	2	10	10	10	10
Is the site within or adjacent to a major community hub or central activity area?	4	2	1	1	0	8	4	4	0
10. Consistency with Strategic Objectives									
Is the location consistent with the strategic land use, masterplanning, planning scheme and zoning.	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5
TOTAL	**242**	**48**	**46**	**35**	**39**	**194**	**183**	**141**	**157**
TOTAL PERCENTAGE		**83%**	**79%**	**60%**	**67%**	**80%**	**76%**	**58%**	**65%**

05 RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED SITE

To determine which site within MacCabe Park is best suited for the development of a district level skatepark, a summary of the site investigations and analysis has been provided below:

SUMMARY OF NORTH MACCABE PARK:
Existing landscaping and footpath networks will be impacted through the development of this site. However, this site is large enough to facilitate a district level skatepark with adequate setbacks to adjacent land uses. The site is open on all edges allowing views into and out promoting good natural surveillance and CPTED principles.

Adjacent sensitive land use of the Vietnam Comradeship and Anzac memorial must be understood for future development. Adequate setbacks and fundamental landscape architecture principles should integrate proposed development with a sympathetic setting.

The adjacent youth centre, playground and public toilets create the opportunity to integrate with existing youth space and infrastructure. In addition, the open nature of the site allows for a higher capacity and offers flexibility for bump in infrastructure during activation events.

SUMMARY OF EAST MACCABE PARK:
This site is large enough to host a district sized facility with adequate setbacks to adjacent land uses. The existing mound and mature tree lines creates the opportunity to tie in with existing landscape features. Furthermore, skatepark development presents the opportunity to mitigate existing flooding issues by controlling drainage and associated maintenance issues.

The adjacent mound obstructs views and hinders natural surveillance and CPTED principles, particularly at the southern end. Additionally, existing land use of community events such as markets and concerts will be disrupted by proposed development.

SUMMARY OF SOUTH MACCABE PARK:
This site does not provide sufficient space to host a district sized facility. Setbacks from the childcare center and residential apartments are no able to meet minimum recommended requirements (50m). Whilst the corner block location creates great natural surveillance and CPTED principles, the narrow corridor of available space limits design outcomes.

SUMMARY OF WEST MACCABE PARK:
This site does not provide sufficient space to host a district sized facility. Whilst connections can be made into the open green space of central MacCabe Park, existing heritage listed palm trees would be compromised. The adjacent built form obstructs views and hinders natural surveillance and CPTED principles. Additionally, the location of neighboring residential dwellings are in close proximity and recommended setbacks (50m minimum) for noise levels will not be achievable.

RECOMMENDED SITES
All four sites within MacCabe Park have constraints, however north and east MacCabe Park provide the most opportunity to develop an iconic and unique facility. Particularly in regard to available land sizes and adjacent land use, both north and east MacCabe Park shows exciting potential to develop areas with an integrated district sized youth space.

Existing path networks and amphitheater may be compromised at each location, however they both open the opportunity to re-design and form connections through an upgraded precinct. Integrating a skatepark into either of these prominent locations will celebrate Wollongong City's Youth culture and form an iconic destination facility for the wider community.

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NORTHERN SUBURBS SKATEPARK

SITE SELECTION REPORT_REV C

AUGUST 2025

CONVIC

PREPARED BY

CONVIC

FOR

wollongong
city of innovation

QUALITY INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME	Northern Suburbs Skatepark
PROJECT NO.	23077
PREPARED BY	Angus Thomas
REVIEWED BY	Bryce Hinton

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONVIC Pty Ltd. Acknowledge the contributions of all those who participated in the preparation of the Northern Suburbs Skatepark Site Selection report, including Wollongong City Council staff, specialised consultants and residents, community groups and other stakeholders who responded to the various opportunities for input and/or who provided advice and information where required.

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REVISION HISTORY

REVISION	REVISION DATE	DETAILS	AUTHORISED	
			NAME / POSITION	SIGNATURE
A	17.06.2024	Site Selection Report _Draft	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	
B	20.08.2024	Site Selection Report	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	
C	22.08.2025	Site Selection Report	Bryce Hinton / Design Manager	

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01 INTRODUCTION

SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE SITE

Wollongong City Council is planning for the delivery of a new skatepark in the northern suburbs. The new skatepark will service local residents in the northern suburbs of Wollongong and fill infrastructure gaps for alternative recreation within the local government area. Convic have been engaged by Wollongong City Council to assist with site selection of the new skatepark. This report outlines the key criteria used to assess a number of sites provided to Convic by the Wollongong City Council, outlines our analysis of these sites, and makes a recommendation for the preferred location of the Northern Suburbs Skatepark.

The location of a skatepark or youth space is critical to ensure the future success of this important community asset. In particular the site should have the ability to:

- Create a centralised social hub for young people.
- Allow users of different ages to interact with each other.
- Allow users of different abilities to learn from each other.
- Create strong links with existing community facilities and amenities.
- Create a destination celebrating a unique identity and
- Be a place that young people want to be within and enjoy.

It has been identified that the skatepark must cater for all ages, abilities and types of action sports including active, passive and social activities.

The Northern Suburbs Skatepark site will present an opportunity for the Wollongong City Council to develop a revitalised youth precinct and create a dynamic and activated community hub. It will offer recreational and social opportunities for all members of the community, from day to day use to community centred activities and events.

02 SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. PHYSICAL SITE CONDITIONS & TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This first broad criterion is based on the physicality of the sites and whether they can accommodate a facility of the required scale and type required by the Council. It also considers technical implications such as drainage and soil conditions. Questions asked at each site include;

- Is the proposed site able to cater for the various different applicable facility types defined previously? (ie: large enough to cater for events if we are looking for a local scale park)
- Is the proposed site free of existing land use implications, covenants, easements, service access requirements and/or underground/overhead power lines, water and gas?
- What are the implications of geotechnical conditions, ground water, drainage?
- What are the physical terrain implications of the site?

2. ACCESS/TRANSPORT

This second criterion looks at how easily accessible the site is for users, parents and those viewing the skatepark or events. Questions asked of each site on this criterion include;

- Are there pedestrian/footpath connections from transport nodes to the proposed site?
- Is there a safe drop off area or adequate car parking if applicable?

3. NATURAL SURVEILLANCE, SECURITY AND SAFETY

As the consideration is to create a public sporting facility with the main users being below the age of 18 it is crucial to ensure the facility is visually open and safe and easily accessed in the case of an emergency. Questions asked for this criterion include;

- Is the site visually prominent with good natural and passive surveillance for safety and for the promotion of the facility and skate activity?
- Is the site a short distance from police response calls and does it provide ease of police access on scheduled routes?
- Can the site provide adequate emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance?)
- Can vehicular access be restricted at the proposed site to prevent skating at night by car light if applicable?
- Can the proposed site provide safe entry to and from the site and safe setbacks from busy roads and intersections?
- Does the site provide a safe environment for all community members, specifically females?

4. PROXIMITY TO AMENITIES (WATER, TOILETS, SHADE, FOOD & DRINK)

An active public sporting facility such as a skatepark should have appropriate supporting amenities. This includes shade for viewing and resting, drink fountains and nearby toilets given users can spend many hours using a skatepark in a single session.
Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- Are associated amenities such as public telephone, toilets, water, shelter and shade existing and available or cost effective to install at the site?
- Is the site close to vendors selling food and drink and is there potential for seasonal, peak time and/or event day food and drink outlets?

5. IMPACT ON EXISTING FACILITIES, ADJOINING USES AND USERS

To assess the suitability of a site, one of the main considerations is what impact will a new facility have on the existing users and use of the space. This can be a contentious community issue and so the following questions have been asked for this criterion;

- Does the site facilitate minimal loss of green space?
- Does the site facilitate minimal impact on ecological systems eg. wetlands, foreshore and bush land?
- Does the site facilitate minimal loss of mature or significant trees?
- Does the site facilitate minimal impact on pedestrian or road network and access including existing desire lines?
- Will the location of a skate facility on the site substantially displace existing recreational or other site users?
- Are there any existing heritage items or indigenous people's claims for land title or cultural significance at the site?
- Is there a history of 'anti-social' activity of behaviour at the site?

6. DISTANCE FROM HOUSING & INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

Another major consideration for any new public sporting facility is the potential impact of noise and light to nearby housing. It is important that the new skate facility is located to minimise impact to surrounding residential areas.

We have undertaken approximate acoustic assessments of a number of existing skateparks to ascertain an appropriate distance from residential

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

areas and as a guide 50m is considered an acceptable distance for a purpose built skatepark. Please note that this is subject to a more detailed acoustic assessment as each location has different factors such as surrounding noise, landform, prevailing winds etc. This is also only for facilities and not incidental skate moments which, due to their scale and level of potential use, are not considered major creators of noise or loss of amenity.
Questions therefore include;

- Is the site location an adequate distance (minimum 50m) from residential dwellings and incompatible land uses to avoid potential noise and light intrusions?
- Has the site the capacity to place a skatepark in a location to maximise noise attenuation (eg: sunk into the ground or mounding/shrub planting)

7. EVENT SPACE OPPORTUNITIES
With centrally located facilities presenting the opportunity to become a major community activity node, not just for skating/BMX and scooter users but also community events, clinics and competitions; sites must be assessed for their suitability to play a broader role. Questions therefore include;

- Is the proposed site adjacent to like/complimentary activities to create a greater recreational experience?
- Does the site have the ability to cater for larger crowds and temporary infrastructure during peak use and events?

8. MAINTENANCE
Maintenance is important to ensure the park can be cleaned easily and regularly. Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- How readily accessible is the site to regular cleaning for existing council cleaning and maintenance team?

9. CONTEXT & AMENITY
The criteria is most applicable to the socialisation that occurs at skateparks and the importance of providing facilities that are where young people want to be and provide important amenity (sun protection, wind etc.)
The following questions will be asked for each of the sites regarding context and amenity;

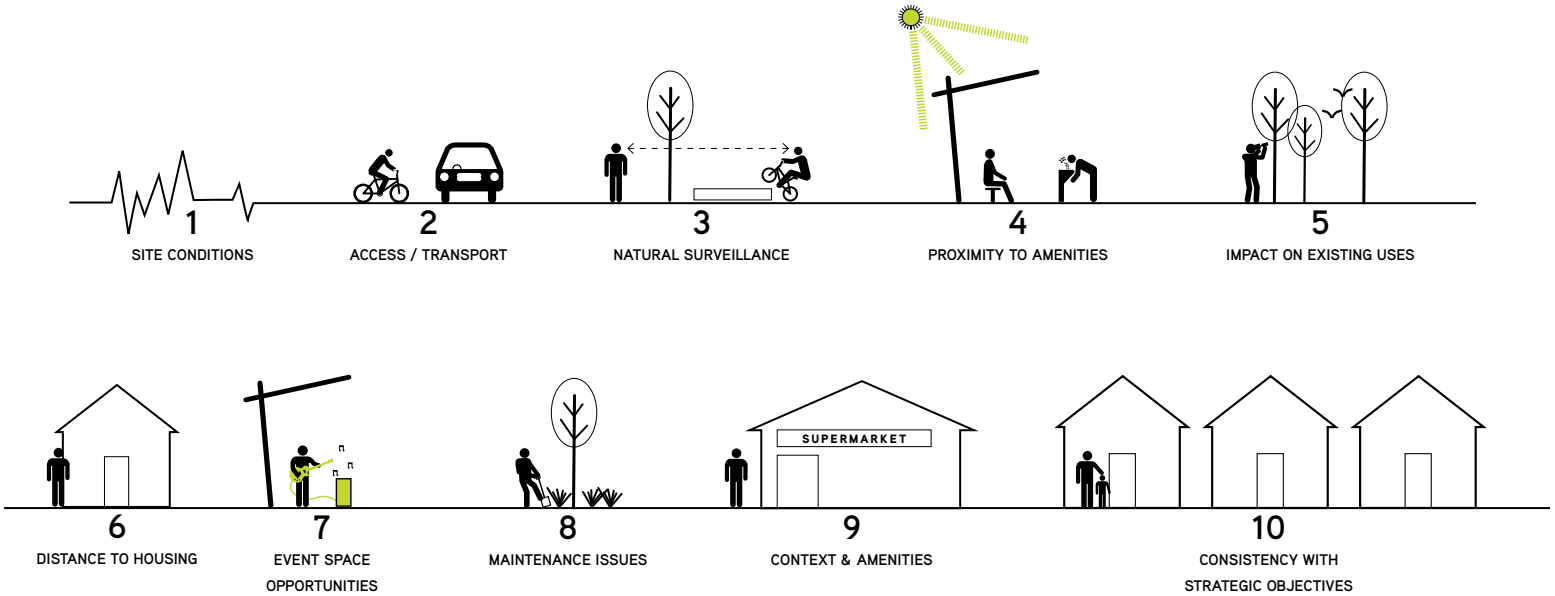
- Is the site location where young people want to be or adjacent to where they currently congregate?
- Is the site in close proximity to existing shopping centres, sports or recreation facilities or interested schools?
- Is the site within or adjacent to a major community hub or central area?

10. CONSISTENCY WITH STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Sites for consideration need to conform to local planning schemes, embody strategic planning and reflect the current land use zones. Therefore for this criterion the following questions needs to be asked;

- Is the location consistent with the strategic land use, master planning, planning schemes and zoning?

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

FACTORS IN LOCATING A YOUTH FACILITY



SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

SCALE COMPARISON

Its important to understand the size and objectives of the facility prior to undertaking a site assessment. For example a site may suit the delivery of a local sized skatepark but not a regional. In order to form an iconic destination facility, the Northern Suburbs Skatepark should meet the minimum requirements of a local facility classification. The style of skatepark will be subject to community consultation, however as a starting point this skate facility and associated space will need to be in scale range of 600-1000m2 to cater for its catchment and location.

A local level facility is designed to cater to a smaller town or community catchment. The function of a local facility aims to provide the essential features for users to learn the basics of skateboarding and progress from beginner to intermediate with less focus on advanced features. This facility should provide basic shade and supporting infrastructure.

The analysis of each site has been cross referenced to Blackman Park Skatepark to understand local level scale parameters, details of this facility as follows:

- Client: Lane Cove Council (Sydney)
- Size: 630m2 Skate / 850m2 Overall
- Style: Transition
- Completion: 2024
- Design and build CONVIC

Blackman Park Skatepark, NSW

03

THE SITES

UNDERSTANDING THE SITES

The proposed sites consist of a mix of open green space and existing recreation infrastructure; presenting a number of opportunities and constraints for future recreation development.

Wollongong City Council have highlighted four sites to be analysed for future recreation development, these sites include:

SITE 1: WF JACKSON PARK
Located on Lawrence Hargrave Drive adjacent shopping precinct.

SITE 2: THOMAS GIBSON PARK
Located adjacent Thirroul Train Station and car parking.

SITE 3: MCCAULEY PARK
Located adjacent residential housing and the Scouts building.

SITE 4: PINECOURT PARK
Located adjacent residential housing and the Headlands Hotel, Austinmer.

THE SITES

SITE 1: WF JACKSON PARK

Located on Lawrence Hargrave Drive, this site is situated in the centre of Thirroul. A short walk from the Thirroul District Community Centre & Library and train station, this is an accessible location within the main village retail and commercial strip.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of open green space, trees, pedestrian footpaths and seating infrastructure. Falling west to east the site is on a particularly steep slope. Bordered by Lawrence Hargrave Drive, train line and shopping precinct the site is constrained on all edges. Large existing trees create the opportunity to tie in with natural shade and celebrate the large Moreton Bay Fig tree.

The site is easily accessible from the east and south edges with bus stops directly opposite on Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Open to Lawrence Hargrave Drive this active edge creates strong passive surveillance and offers a site that provides opportunity to address CPTED principles to create a safe and inviting public space for youth. Thirroul shopping precinct, consisting of a supermarket and public toilets, creates opportunity to integrate with the existing retail and commercial infrastructure.

The site is a relatively narrow footprint consisting of large mature trees on edge interfaces and new central tree planting, of which some will need to be removed to allow for sufficient skatepark development area. Lawrence Hargrave Drive is a busy traffic route and appropriate buffers must be considered for future development to create a safe environment or all users.

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THE SITES

EXISTING SKATEPARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a local facility	✔
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✘
Public transport access available	✔
Emergency vehicle access available	✔
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✘
Shelter/natural shade	✔
Designated seating and viewing areas	✔
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✔
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✔
Potential iconic destination facility	✔
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✔
Good natural surveillance	✔
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✔
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✔
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✔
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✔

Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✔ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✘ Inability to provides for typology criteria

LOCAL FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BLACKMAN PARK SKATEPARK

Indicative overlay of local level facility - Blackman Skatepark, NSW (size 650sqm)

THE SITES

THE SITES

SITE 2: THOMAS GIBSON PARK

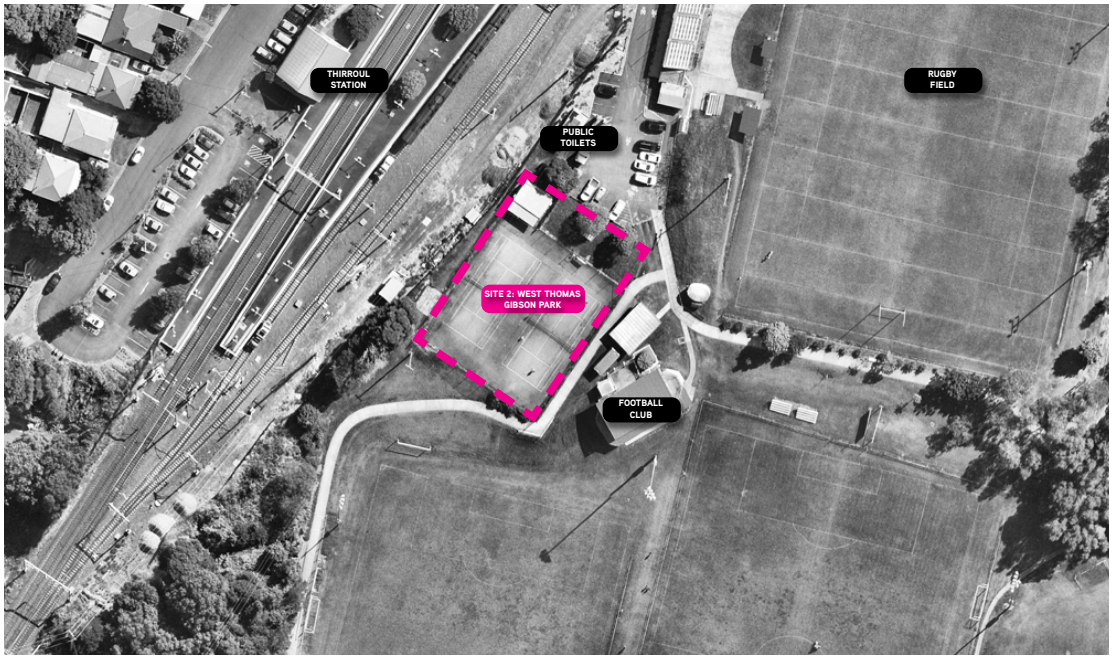
Located on the western extent of Thomas Gibson Park, this site is on existing tennis courts and green space. Adjacent oval car parking and the Thirroul Train Station, the site it is a short walk from the town centre.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of two tennis courts bordered by sports fencing and a club house. The site is flat and easily accessible. The courts hardstand creates a firm open base for future development, however the tight boundary restricts available area.

The site is easily accessible from Thirroul Train Station and oval car parking on the east. These open edges create sight lines from relatively active areas and while offering some form of passive surveillance, the site does not offer the same opportunities as other sites to provide a safe public space for youth. Bordered by sporting ovals the site offers strong opportunity to integrate with existing recreation infrastructure and congregation, however the close proximity to the southern club storage, amenities and grandstand will need to be considered for future development.

The limited available area will restrict outcomes of a local level facility. Steep level change to the south and loss of tennis courts or the opportunity for repurposing for other active recreation program such as basketball.



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THE SITES

THOMAS GIBSON PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

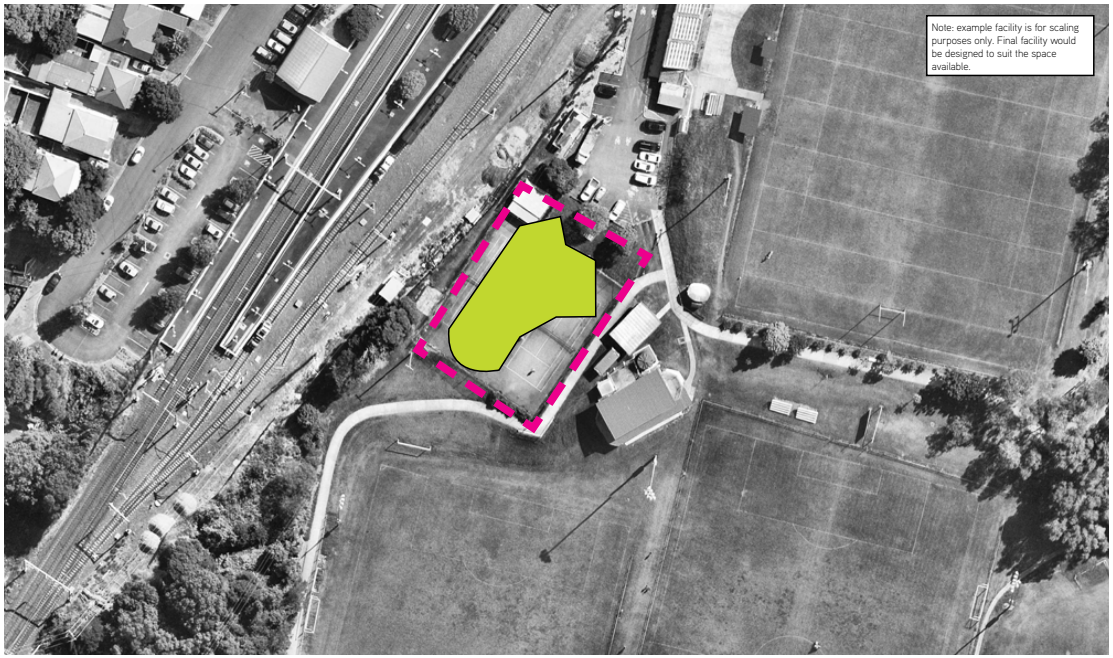
Appropriate size to cater for a local/district facility	✗
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✗
Public transport access available	✓
Emergency vehicle access available	✓
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✓
Shelter/natural shade	✗
Designated seating and viewing areas	✗
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✓
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✗
Potential iconic destination facility	✗
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✓
Good natural surveillance	✓
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✓
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✓
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✓
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✓

Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✓ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✗ Inability to provides for typology criteria



LOCAL FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BLACKMAN PARK SKATEPARK

Indicative overlay of local level facility - Blackman Skatepark, NSW (size 650sqm)

THE SITES

THE SITES

SITE 3: MCCAULEY PARK

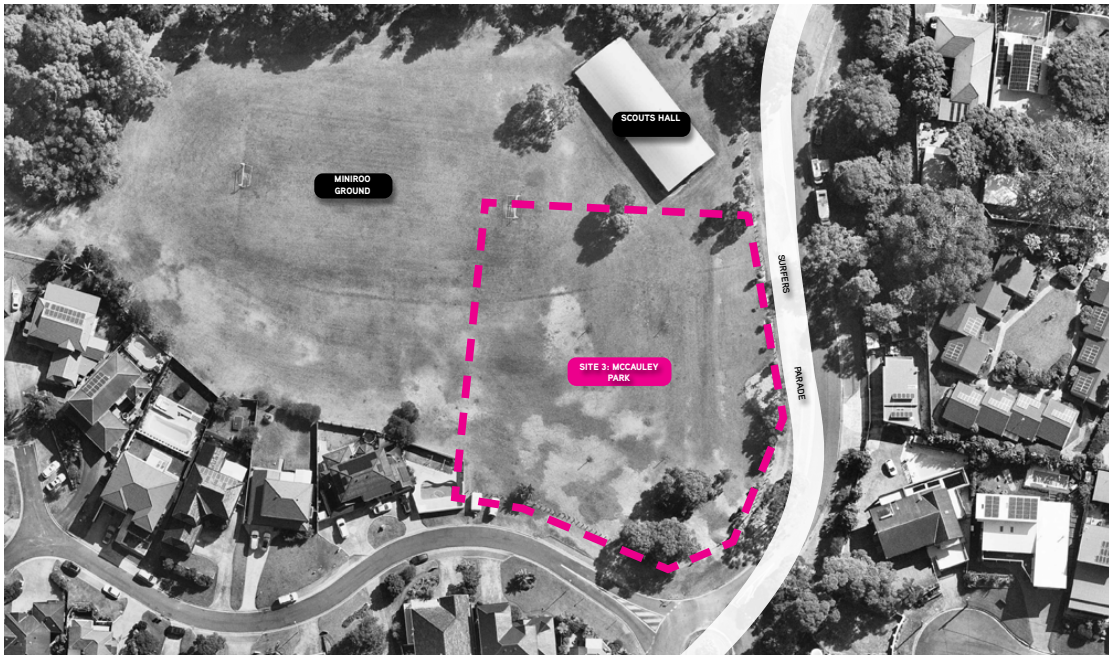
Located on the eastern extent of McCauley Park, this site is an open reserve adjacent to residential dwellings and bordered by Surfers Parade.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of an open green space, turf netball courts, a junior soccer field and Thirroul Scout Hall. The site is flat and baron with minimal existing trees. The open space presents ample space for a local to district sized facility.

The site has car parking along Surfers Parade however is disconnected from public transport and the town centre. The western end connects with open green space creating an opportunity for integration with the wider precinct and future development. Bordered by inactive edges of residential housing and quiet back streets the site promotes poor passive surveillance and CPTED principles and the close proximity to residential properties has the potential risk to cause ongoing problems. In addition the site is currently utilised for netball training. An alternative location is currently being considered however at the time of the site assessment this had not been finalised.

The site is considered very 'back of house' and is not a space in which young adults and teens would want to inhabit. This, combined with existing infrastructure targeting the younger demographics should be considered when planning future development.



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THE SITES

MCCAULEY PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a local/district facility	✔
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✔
Public transport access available	✘
Emergency vehicle access available	✔
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✔
Shelter/natural shade	✘
Designated seating and viewing areas	✘
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✘
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✘
Potential iconic destination facility	✘
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✔
Good natural surveillance	✘
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✘
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✘
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✘
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✘

Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✔ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✘ Inability to provides for typology criteria

LOCAL FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BLACKMAN PARK SKATEPARK

Indicative overlay of local level facility - Blackman Skatepark, NSW (size 650sqm)

THE SITES

SITE 4: PINECOURT PARK

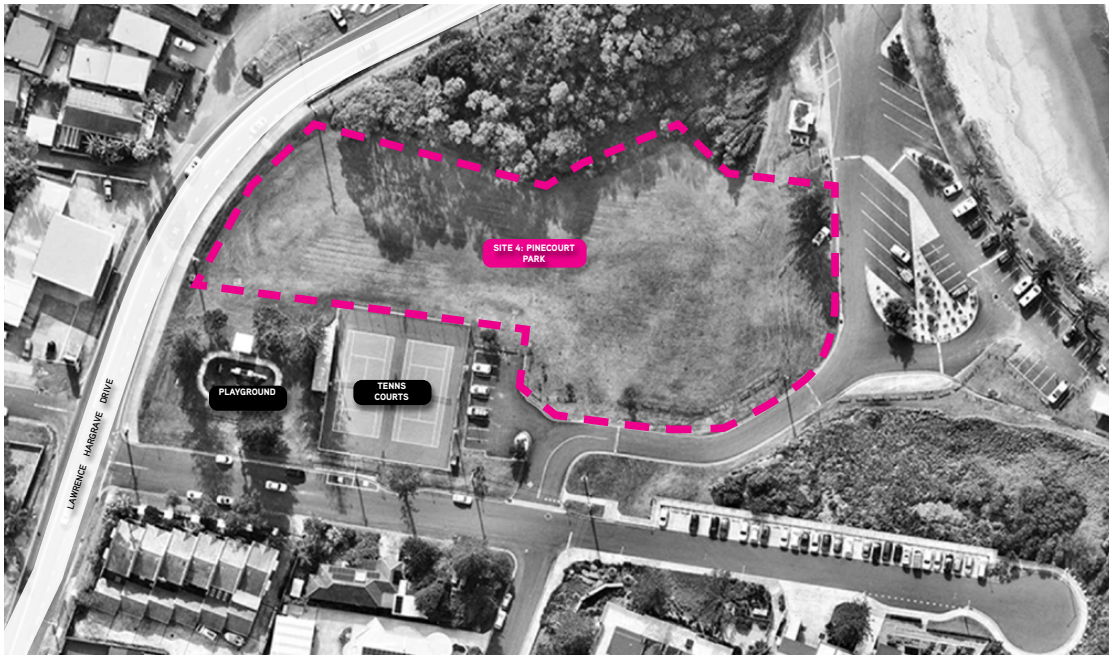
Located on Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Austinmer, this site is an open reserve adjacent to residential dwellings and Austiminer Beach. Assessment of this site is based on a feasibility site assessment report prepared by Wollongong City Council.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of an open green space, tennis courts, playground and small walking trails. The center of the site is flat and open with large trees to the north. The open space presents ample space for a local to district sized facility.

The site has car parking at the eastern beach carpark however is disconnected from public transport and town centres. The southern edge connects with tennis courts and playground creating an opportunity for integration with the wider precinct and future development. Open to Lawrence Hargrave Drive this active edge creates strong passive surveillance and offers a site that provides opportunity to address CPTED principles to create a safe and inviting public space for youth.

It is understood that asbestos was previously found and capped on-site, further investigation and remediation would be required for future development. It is also noted that know Aboriginal heritage sites are nearby, a due diligence assessment is required for future development.



1:1000 @ A3 0m 10m 20m 50m

THE SITES

MCCAULEY PARK - SCALE ASSESSMENT

KEY SKATE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Appropriate size to cater for a local/district facility	✔
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events	✔
Public transport access available	✘
Emergency vehicle access available	✔
Adequate car parking/drop off available	✔
Shelter/natural shade	✘
Designated seating and viewing areas	✘
Toilets (or in close proximity)	✘
Rubbish bins/drinking Fountains	✔
Potential iconic destination facility	✔
Appropriate entry and safety signage	✔
Good natural surveillance	✔
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	✔
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	✘
Proximity to youth interest areas (recreation spaces, schools)	✘
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?	✘

Essential for facility to function properly

Preferable for facility to function properly

✔ Ability to provide for typology criteria

✘ Inability to provides for typology criteria

LOCAL FACILITY SCALE COMPARISON - BLACKMAN PARK SKATEPARK

Indicative overlay of local level facility - Blackman Skatepark, NSW (size 650sqm)

THE SITES

04

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

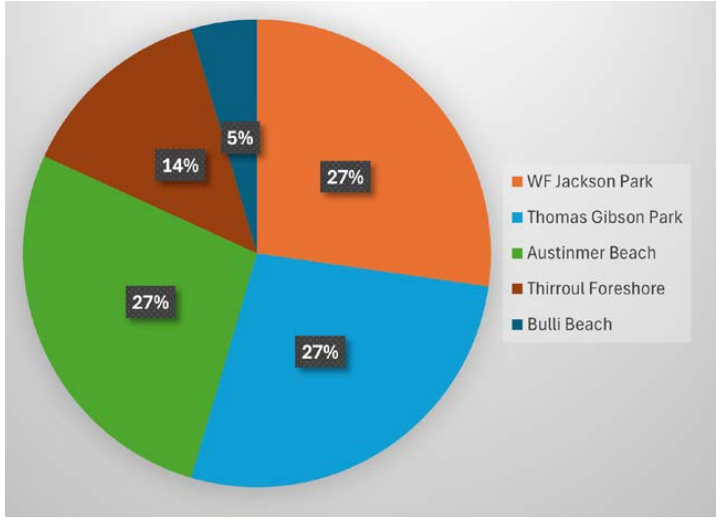
COMMUNITY RESPONSE

In April 2024 CONVIC undertook pre-design community consultation in Thirroul for the skatepark project design. As part of this process the community were asked their thoughts on a proposed site. The attendees were presented with three options; WF Jackson, Thomas Gibson Park and 'Other', also asking for an explanation for their choice.

In total there were 22 written responses with open discussions during the creative workshop component. The results saw a mix of sites and reasons why, standout findings are as follows:

- WF Jackson Park and Thomas Gibson Park were evenly selected.
- Austinmer Beach was a standout 'Other' suggestion.
- WF Jackson Park was favoured for its central location.
- Thomas Gibson Park was favoured for its connection with the sporting precinct.
- Austinmer Beach was suggested for having open space in an iconic foreshore location.

With an even mix of preferred sites identified by the community there appears to be no standout trend. These findings should be considered when weighing in on site assessment matrix findings.



Findings from pre-design consultation questionnaire - Total Responses: 22

05

SITE SELECTION MATRIX

CRITERIA MATRIX RESULTS

The following table lists the criteria used for assessment and provides each item with a rating in relation to its importance for the future success of the proposed facility and the site assessment weighting (1 low importance weighting to 5 high importance weighting). The rating factor is multiplied by the weighting to give a total score. This is then used to calculate the total percentage outcome for each site, enabling direct comparison of different sites in an equal platform.

The total percentage outcomes are applied to the following rating system guide to rank each sites suitability. This ranking system is a comparative, rating one site against another. General percentages are used to clarify the following recommendations:

EXCELLENT - 80% < 100%
If a site achieves a score 70% or above it is seen as a suitable site for any size or type facility.

GOOD - 50% < 79%
A score between 50% and 79% is considered a potential site for consideration, however should not be favoured over a higher scoring site. This score indicates there are key criteria that are not met at the site, and these will need to be addressed within the design to create a successful outdoor youth facility, which may reduce the scope of active youth provision.

POOR - 0% < 49%
Any site scoring below 49% should not be considered for a outdoor youth facility. As every site is distinct to its particular context and situation, the above rating system should be used as a guide only.

SITE SELECTION MATRIX — CONVIC

PROJECT: 23077 Northern Suburbs Skatepark
COMPLETED BY: Angus Thomas
COUNCIL: Wollongong City Council
DATE CARRIED OUT: 22/04/2024

		ASSESSMENT OF CRITERIA (2 fully meets, 1 partially meets, 0 does not meet)				WEIGHTING MULITPLIED BY ASSESSMENT			
CONSIDERATION/CRITERIA	**Importance of Criteria (5 highest, 1 lowest)**	**Site 1: WF Jackson Park**	**Site 2: Thomas Gibson Park**	**Site 3: McCauley Park**	**Site 4: Pinecourt Park**	**Site 1: WF Jackson Park**	**Site 2: Thomas Gibson Park**	**Site 3: McCauley Park**	**Site 3: Pinecourt Park**
1. Physical site conditions & technical considerations									
Is the proposed site capable of catering to the various different applicable skatepark types defined as local, district, regional? (ie: large enough to cater for events if we are looking for a regional scale park)	5	1	0	2	2	5	0	10	10
Is the proposed site free of existing land use implications, covenants, easements, service access requirements and/or underground/overhead powerlines, water and gas?	4	2	1	2	0	8	4	8	0
Is the site encumbered by the implications of geotechnical conditions, ground water, drainage?	4	2	2	2	0	8	8	8	0
2. Access/transport									
Is there access to public transport at the proposed site?	3	2	2	0	0	6	6	0	0
Are there pedestrian/footpath connections from transport nodes to the proposed site?	4	2	2	2	1	8	8	8	2
Is there a safe drop off area or adequate car parking if applicable?	4	1	1	2	2	4	4	8	2
3. Natural surveillance, security and safety									
Is the site visually prominent with good natural and passive surveillance for safety and for the promotion of the facility and activity?	5	2	2	0	2	10	10	0	4
Is the site a short distance from police response calls and does it provide ease of police access on scheduled routes?	3	2	1	1	2	6	3	3	4
Can the site provide adequate emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance)?	5	2	2	2	2	10	10	10	4
Can vehicular access be restricted at the proposed site to prevent skating at night by car light if applicable?	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	4
Can the proposed site provide safe entry to and from the site and safe setbacks from busy roads and intersections.	4	1	2	2	2	4	8	8	2
4. Proximity to amenities (water, toilets, shade, food & drink)									
Are associated amenities such as public toilets, water, shelter and shade, existing and available or cost effective to install at the site?	5	2	2	0	2	10	10	0	4
Is the site close to shops selling food and drink and is there potential for seasonal, peak time and/or event day food and drink outlets?	3	2	0	0	1	6	0	0	2
5. Impact on existing facilities, adjoining uses and users									
Can the site facilitate minimal loss of green space?	4	1	2	2	2	4	8	8	2

SITE SELECTION MATRIX

Can the site facilitate minimal impact on existing ecological systems eg. wetlands, foreshore and bushland?	4	2	2	2	1	8	8	8	2
Can the site facilitate minimal loss of significant trees?	4	2	2	2	2	8	8	8	4
Can the site facilitate minimal impact on pedestrian or road network and access including existing desire lines?	5	2	1	2	2	10	5	10	4
Will the location of a skate facility on the site mitigate displacement of existing recreational or other site users?	3	2	0	1	2	6	0	3	4
Is the site encumbered by existing heritage items, native title claims or items of cultural significance?	5	2	2	2	1	10	10	10	2
Is there a history of 'anti-social' activity of behaviour at the site?	4	2	1	2	2	8	4	8	4
6. Distance from housing & incompatible land use									
Is the site location an adequate distance (50m) from residential dwellings to mitigate potential noise and light intrusions?	5	2	2	0	2	10	10	0	4
Is the site sufficiently located away from adjacent or nearby incompatible land uses, other activities or services.	5	2	0	1	2	10	0	5	4
Has the site the capacity to place a skatepark in a location to maximise noise attenuation (eg: sunk into the ground, solid fencing etc.)	3	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	2
7. Event space opportunities (multiplicity of use)									
Is the proposed site adjacent to other like/complimentary activities to create a greater recreational experience	4	1	2	1	2	4	8	4	2
Does the site have the ability to cater for larger crowds and temporary infrastructure during peak use and events?	3	1	0	2	2	3	0	6	2
8. Maintenance issues									
Is the site readily accessible for regular cleaning by cleaning and maintenance teams.	3	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	4
9. Context & Amenity									
Is the site location where young people want to be or adjacent to where they currently congregate?	5	2	2	1	0	10	10	5	0
Is the site in close proximity to existing shopping centres, sports or recreation facilities or interested schools?	5	2	1	0	0	10	5	0	0
Is the site within or adjacent to a major community hub or central activity area?	4	2	2	1	0	8	8	4	0
10. Consistency with Strategic Objectives									
Is the location consistent with the strategic land use, masterplanning, planning scheme and zoning.	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	1
TOTAL	**242**	**52**	**40**	**38**	**43**	**210**	**167**	**154**	**79**
TOTAL PERCENTAGE		**90%**	**69%**	**66%**	**74%**	**87%**	**69%**	**64%**	**33%**

06 RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED SITE

To determine which site within the Northern Suburbs is best suited for the development of a local level skatepark, a summary of the site investigations and analysis has been provided below:

SUMMARY OF WF JACKSON PARK:
Existing trees and landscaping may be impacted through the development of this site. However, this site is large enough to facilitate a local level skatepark with adequate setbacks to adjacent land uses. The adjacent shopping centre and public toilets create the opportunity to integrate with existing infrastructure. Lawrence Hargrave Drive promotes excellent natural surveillance and CPTED principles, and its town centre location shows promise for an iconic central facility.

SUMMARY OF THOMAS GIBSON PARK:
This site does not provide sufficient space to host a local sized facility. Whilst connections can be made into the wider sporting precinct, the adjacent soccer club, carpark and train line constrain available development area.

SUMMARY OF MCCAULEY PARK:
This site is large enough to facilitate a local to district level skatepark and other future recreation development. However, the location is disconnected to Thirroul's town centre and promotes poor CPTED principles. Neighboring residential dwellings are in close proximity and noise levels from the facility may not most likely not be in line with state legislation.

SUMMARY OF PINECOURT PARK:
This site is large enough to facilitate a local to district level skatepark and other future recreation development. However, the location is disconnected to the town centres with limited public transport connections. The site is also identified as having contamination issues with further investigation required.

RECOMMENDED SITE
All four investigated sites have constraints, however WF Jackson Park provides the most opportunity to develop an iconic and unique facility that will encourage use by a wide range of demographics. Particularly in regard to location and available land size, WF Jackson Park is situated within the heart of Thirroul. Although existing landscaping and trees may be compromised, it presents the opportunity to create an iconic destination forming connections to Lawrence Hargrave Drive and Thirroul town center. This central location will create a space where young people want to be ensuring the success of investment by Wollongong City Council.

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