

PLANNING SCHEME POLICY

OPEN SPACE



Mackay Region
PLANNING SCHEME

Planning scheme policy – open space

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Amendment history

This planning scheme policy commenced on 24 July 2017 as part of the Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017. Amendments since this date are listed in the below table.

Version number	Amendment title	Summary of amendment	Date adopted and commenced
1.1	Planning scheme policy amendment 2	This amendment adds references to the Planning scheme policy – landscape and makes minor formatting changes.	Adopted 28 October 2020 Commenced 9 November 2020
1.0	Planning scheme administrative amendment 6, and Planning scheme policy administrative amendment 1	This amendment removed the planning scheme policies from Schedule 6 of the Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017 and placed them in individual PDFs on Council's website. This amendment introduced standardised formatting, introductory sections and explanatory information regarding intent and legislative relationship for this planning scheme policy. It also updated numbering and cross references.	Adopted 11 December 2019 Commenced 3 February 2020

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Application

This planning scheme policy supports the Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017 by providing information on: how to achieve compliance with assessment benchmarks; supporting information/studies required; and/or actions required under the development assessment process. This planning scheme policy has been made by Mackay Regional Council in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 3, Division 2 of the *Planning Act 2016*.

1.2 Relationship with planning scheme

Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017 refers to this planning scheme policy in assessment benchmarks in the following code/s or any other relevant part of the scheme:

- (a) Table 6.2.4.3.A – Emerging community zone
- (b) Table 9.4.1.3.A – General development requirements code
- (c) Table 9.4.3.3.A – Reconfiguring a lot code
- (d) Part 4 – Local government infrastructure plan (sets desired standards of service)

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this planning scheme policy is to:

- (i) Ensure a sufficient supply of functional and accessible public open space to meet the recreational and sport needs of the community;
- (ii) Set objectives and standards for provision of public open space for recreation and sport purposes (referred to as recreational open space) to satisfy assessment criteria in the planning scheme; and
- (iii) Ensure public assets meet required standards of service.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Planning scheme policy – landscape, including all supporting documents;
- The relevant code provisions of the Mackay Region Planning Scheme;
- Any other guidelines, plan or strategy applicable to open space provision and design as adopted by Council; and
- The Local Government Infrastructure Plan or equivalent in force.

This policy applies to developments that provide or are required to provide public open space that will be owned or controlled by Council. Provision of a recreation park will be determined by the development assessment process and relevant legislation.

1.4 Referenced documents

Planning scheme policy – landscape (including all supporting materials: referenced standards, standard drawings, lists and guidance material).

Planning scheme policy – cycle facilities and pathway design

1.5 Definition of open space

Open space is land provided as recreational or non-recreational open space within the Mackay Regional Council area.

Recreational open space is land that is provided and designed to meet the sport and recreation needs of the community. The land is predominantly zoned for Open space or Sport and recreation purposes. Recreational open space is provided through a range of park types, which include:

- Local recreation park;
- District recreation park;
- Regional recreation park;
- Sport park; and
- Linear park.

Non-recreational open space is not provided or designed for recreational use. Non-recreational open space can provide for the protection of natural areas (i.e. environmentally significant vegetation, wildlife habitat areas, waterways, and coastal wetlands), landscape or amenity value, stormwater management or environmental buffer zones.

Non-recreational open space can be located adjacent to recreational open space. The non-recreational open space shall not restrict the use, performance criteria and standards of adjacent recreational open space and avoid public safety risk impacts.

2 PLANNING AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES FOR RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The following planning and design objectives and principles apply to the provision of recreational open space:

Objective 1: Access and connectivity

Recreational open space is located and designed to ensure equitable access for residents and users.

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- Recreational open space is located within urban areas to maximise access for users and residents in accordance with performance criteria.
- The design of recreational open space incorporates measures to ensure entrance and access to parks for persons with mobility challenges.
- Recreational open space is located and designed to ensure connectivity to the road network, footpaths and cycle facilities.
- District, regional and sport parks connect to active transport options such as footpaths and cycle facilities.

Objective 2 - Co-location

The co-location of recreational open space with other community infrastructure is encouraged to promote shared use and improved access to community facilities.

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- Where possible, recreational open space should be co-located with other community infrastructure (such as schools, community centres, and libraries) and support connectivity and access between land uses.
- Co-location of district and regional recreational open space should also consider integration with retail and service precincts.

Objective 3: Safety

Location and design of open space promotes community safety

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- The location, layout and design of recreation open space and adjoining development must promote casual visual surveillance of publicly accessible areas. At least 50% of park boundaries have direct road frontage to maximise visual surveillance and community access to open space.
- The principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) are used in the design of recreational open space to promote personal safety and discourage anti-social behaviour and vandalism of open space assets.

Objective 4: Sense of place

The design of recreation open space incorporates natural and built landscape features and items of heritage or cultural significance in establishing a sense of place.

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- The location and design of open space retains natural and built landscape features. This includes retention of natural watercourses, wooded hillsides or ridges, remnant vegetation, signature trees, and wetlands and items of heritage or cultural significance.
- The design of open space includes consideration of view corridors and focal points to support navigation within open space.
- The location and design of open space encourage diversity of open space settings to create and confirm local character.
- Inclusion of natural and other features does not have a substantial impact on the intended function of the recreational open space.

Objective 5: Non-recreational open space

Non-recreational open space can co-exist adjacent to recreational open space.

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- The location and design of non-recreational open space does not restrict the use and meeting of performance criteria and standards of adjacent recreational open space.
- Land for non-recreational open space does not satisfy provision requirements for recreational open space.
- Non-recreational open space should be planned to compliment recreational open space and may provide use benefits such as providing connectivity or buffering between different land uses.

Objective 6: Lifecycle cost

Recreational open space is designed to minimise maintenance costs and using the most effective option based on the lifecycle cost of infrastructure.

This objective can be achieved through the following planning and design principles:

- Design of recreational open space minimises maintenance cost through choice of embellishment and materials, landscaping and treatment of play surfaces, and using the most effective development option based on the lifecycle cost of infrastructure.
- The focus on lifecycle cost does not detract from the requirement that a park should be designed and constructed to be fit for purpose for the type of recreational park provided.

3 STANDARDS FOR RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The standards for recreational open space ensure provision of suitable land and appropriate diversity of recreational opportunities within the local government area.

Provision of recreational open space is based on ***Desired Standards of Service*** as set out below:

- (a) A minimum of 75% of the resident population in the key urban areas of Mackay, Walkerston, Marian, Mirani and Sarina has access to a *recreational park opportunity* within a radius of 400 metres from residences. This means having access to a local, district or regional recreation park within 400 metres safe walking distance and includes consideration of access to recreational park opportunities created through co-location with community facilities and sports parks.
- (b) An overall average area of recreational parkland per 1,000 residents is required to meet the recreational and sporting needs of existing and future population.

Table 2 provides the desired service standards for recreational open space per type of recreational park.

Table 2: Desired Service Standards for recreational open space

Type	Rate of Provision (hectares per 1000 people)	Accessibility / Location	Minimum Land Size
Local park	1 hectare per 1,000	400 metres from residents	0.5 hectares
District park	1.5 hectares per 1,000	2 kilometres from residents	3 hectares
Sport park	2 hectares per 1,000 (land for sport)	District sport: 5 kilometres from residents	District Sport: 5-10 hectares
Linear park	N/A	Provided opportunistically to support walking/cycling with connectivity and access to recreation parks	N/A

Recreation parks in new urban development areas are centrally located and distributed to maximise access to residents within a 400 metre radius with due consideration of the access and safe walking distances to existing recreation parks.

Recreational open space opportunities in industrial areas are provided opportunistically with due consideration of the number of workers or visitors in the industrial area and the need for recreational open space within the park precinct and surrounding urban area.

3.1 Recreational open space design

The design of recreational open space responds to individual site conditions and achieves the planning and design objectives and principles for recreational open space and standards for open space for the applicable type of recreational park as detailed in this document. Recreational open space must also be designed in accordance with the Planning scheme policy – landscape.

All pathways within a park must be designed in accordance with the Planning scheme policy – cycle facilities and pathway design.

Requirements for applications involving the development of open space are detailed in the Planning scheme policy – landscape and the MRC Guidance document for landscape documentation. Applications for development that require provision of open space may require a Site Analysis of the existing site and a Statement of Landscape Intent to be submitted with a Reconfiguring a Lot or Material change of Use development application. A Landscape Plan for proposed open space is required to be submitted with an Operational Works application. The landscaping plan illustrates the design and construction of landscape treatments and is to be accompanied by an Open Space Maintenance Plan where the asset is to be handed to Council.

3.2 Land suitability criteria for recreational open space

The following land is unsuitable for recreational open space:

1. Contaminated land;
2. Land within 100 metres of High voltage power transmission corridors;
3. Land within 50 metres of a major transport corridor, including railways and arterial roads, proposed as local recreation park;
4. Land that is subject to inundation at 18% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) or greater;
5. Land that is less than 40 metres wide, unless used as a linear park;
6. Land used as non-recreational open space;
7. Wetlands and estuarine systems;
8. Land adjacent to noxious industries or potentially hazardous industrial activity;
9. Land with slopes greater than 1:5;
10. Land that has been stripped of topsoil and vegetation or used for construction staging that has not been remediated;
11. Land constrained by easements that preclude the use of the land for recreational use; and
12. Land not suitable for formal sporting activities or related built infrastructure being:
 - a. Below 18% AEP for fields; and
 - b. Below 1% AEP for built facilities.

Land must be suitable and fit for purpose to be used for recreational open space by providing:

- A graded site through appropriate earthworks that facilitate safe movement, convenient and accessible circulation and appropriate water management regimes;
- A grassed surface;
- Fencing or bollards to adjoining residential blocks to balance the need for casual surveillance with the need for residential privacy;
- Essential infrastructure connections such as water, sewer and electricity; and
- Retention of shade trees and other vegetation appropriate to the intended purpose.

3.3 RECREATIONAL PARK REQUIREMENTS

3.3.1 Local recreation park

Purpose

Local recreation parks provide short stay (less than 3 hours) outdoor recreation opportunities within walking distance of residences and workers in employment centres.

Table 3: Performance Standard for local recreation park

Preferred Size	Service catchment	Provision Rate
Minimum = 0.5 hectares Minimum width = 40 metres	Residents within a radius of 400 metres	Overall average of 1 hectares per 1000 population
Performance criteria		
<p>A local recreation park achieves the following performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct street frontage to a minimum 50% of the park's boundary to promote casual visual surveillance and public access; • A minimum size of 0.35 hectares of local park can be provided, if the local park is adjacent and integrated into the design of a linear park; • A minimum area of 1,000m² as open grassed area to encourage informal active recreation. This area should be level and free draining (minimum size: 20 metres x 50 metres); • A vehicular barrier with maintenance access along the park's road frontages; • Allotment layout around a park uses CPTED design principles to create allotment frontages to the park or overlooking the park and avoid multiple side or rear boundaries adjacent to the park; • Sufficient embellishment to enable safe community access and recreational use through the provision of adequate lighting, pathways, drinking water, shade, seating, play and landscape features; • Embellishments and/or infrastructure supporting recreational opportunities are located and clustered in areas with high level of public exposure to ensure access and attract users to the park; and • Water, sewerage and power supply connection along the primary street frontage. 		
Embellishments		
<p>Minimum requirements for local recreation park embellishment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access into the park on the primary road frontage via a concrete path with kerbside ramp; • Pathway connection of the park access to a shaded area with bench seating; • Street and amenity trees to achieve 50% shade coverage of all paths within and associated with the park's road frontages; • Safety lighting on boundary of park; • A tap with bubbler; • A play area for children; • Playground equipment based upon consideration of adequate existing playground equipment within the park precinct within an 800m distance of residences and in accordance with current equipment guidelines and standards as approved by Council; • A garbage bin for disposal of litter and regular waste collection; and • Park name signage in accordance with Council standards. 		
Non-recreational open space provision and multiple uses		

The location of non-recreational open space adjacent to local recreation parks may occur:

- Where the design of the non-recreational open space compliments the landscaping and aesthetics of the adjacent local recreation park area and does not pose any risk to recreational park users;
- Where slopes greater than 1:5 occur, such slopes shall be landscaped to be safe and avoid the need for regular mowing;
- Where multiple use of the open space does not compromise recreational amenity or compliance with the performance criteria of a recreation park; and
- Where multiple use elements are aesthetically complimentary to recreational open space and contribute to appropriate landscape settings.

Diagram 1: Example - Local recreation park design



Diagram 2: Example - Local recreation park, linear park and non-recreational open space



3.3.2 District recreation park

Purpose

District recreation parks provide outdoor recreation opportunities and encourage extended stay (longer than 3 hours) through the provision of additional seating and picnic facilities, larger active play areas, public toilet and car parking facilities. District recreation parks include foreshore parkland that meet the requirements of a district recreation park. The catchment for district recreation parks is within a 2 kilometre radius of residences. District recreation parks fulfil the purpose of a local park within a 400 metre radius of residences.

Table 4: Performance Standard for district recreation park

Preferred Size	Service catchment	Provision Rate
Minimum area = 3.0 hectares Minimum width = 50 metres	Residents within 2 kilometre travel radius	Overall average of 1.5 hectares per 1,000 population
Performance criteria		
<p>A district recreation park achieves the following performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct street frontage to a minimum 50% of the park's boundary to promote casual visual surveillance and public access; • Road frontage to a collector street or higher order road; 		

- A minimum area of 3,000m² as open grassed to encourage informal active recreation. This area should be level, of a regular shape and free draining (minimum size: 40 metres x 75 metres), to accommodate larger group activities;
- A vehicular barrier with maintenance access along the park's road frontages;
- Allotment layout around a park uses CPTED design principles to create allotment frontages to the park or overlooking the park and avoid multiple side or rear boundaries adjacent to the park;
- Sufficient embellishment to enable safe community access and recreational use through the provision of adequate lighting, pathways, drinking water, shade, seating, play and landscape features;
- Embellishments and/or infrastructure supporting recreational opportunities are located and clustered in areas with high level of public exposure to ensure access and attract users to the park;
- Water, sewerage and power supply connection along the primary street frontage;
- Provision of opportunities for informal recreation and organized social interactions in an outdoor setting;
- Where possible, co-location with other community facilities and local centres is encouraged;
- Connectivity to active transport networks through footpaths and cycle facilities external to the district park and within walking distance of a public transport stop; and
- Provision of safe on-site parking.

Embellishments

Minimum requirements for district recreation park embellishment include:

- Access into the park on the primary road frontage via a concrete path with kerbside ramp;
- Pathway connection of the park access to a shaded area with bench seating, and internal pathways connect to recreational facilities and amenities;
- Street and amenity trees to achieve 50% shade coverage of all paths within and associated with the park's road frontages;
- Safety lighting on boundary of park;
- A drinking fountain;
- Playground equipment is provided for all ages, including a play area for children as a formal playground;
- Formal picnic area with picnic tables and electric barbeques (including switchboard);
- Natural shade or shade structures for play spaces, seating and tables;
- Lighting to picnic areas and amenities;
- Garbage bins for disposal of litter and regular waste collection;
- Park name and way finding signage in accordance with Council standards; and
- Provision of public toilet facilities.

Non-recreational open space provision and multiple uses

The location of non-recreational open space adjacent to district recreation parks may occur:

- Where the design of the non-recreational open space compliments the landscaping and aesthetics of the adjacent district recreation park area and does not pose any risk to recreational park users;
- Where slopes greater than 1:5 occur, such slopes shall be landscaped to be safe and avoid the need for regular mowing;
- Where multiple use of the open space does not compromise recreational amenity or compliance with the performance criteria of a recreation park; and

- Where multiple use elements are aesthetically complimentary to recreational open space and contribute to appropriate landscape settings.

Diagram 3: Example - District recreation park design



3.3.3 Regional recreation park

Purpose

Regional recreation parks serve the region's population and offer long stay destination parks that benefit from the provision of large sized land and the presence of unique regional natural or built features or combination of recreational facilities. Regional recreation parks can accommodate community gatherings and events. Regional recreation parks fulfil the purpose of a local park within a 400 metre radius of residences.

Table 5: Performance Standard for regional recreation park

Preferred Size	Service catchment	Provision Rate
Minimum area = 10 hectares, or size related to unique features or natural assets	Residents within 10 kilometre travel radius or larger	None

Performance criteria

A regional recreation park achieves the following performance criteria:

- Direct street frontage to a minimum 50% of the park's boundary to promote casual visual surveillance and public access;
- Road frontage to a collector street or higher order road;
- Development in accordance with a master plan, which provides areas for active and passive recreation, picnic facilities, organized social interactions in an outdoor setting, adequate lighting and features and facilities unique to the location;
- A vehicular barrier with maintenance access along the park's road frontages;
- Allotment layout around a park uses CPTED design principles to create allotment frontages to the park or overlooking the park and avoid multiple side or rear boundaries adjacent to the park;
- Water, sewerage and power supply connection along the primary street frontage;
- Connectivity to active transport networks through footpaths and cycle facilities external to the regional park, and within walking distance of a public transport stop; and
- Provision of safe on-site parking.

Embellishments

The requirements for embellishments of regional recreation parks include the embellishments for a district park, are site-specific and based on the master plan for the regional park.

Non-recreational open space provision and multiple use

The location of non-recreational open space adjacent to regional recreation parks may occur:

- Where the design of the non-recreational open space compliments the landscaping and aesthetics of the adjacent regional recreation park area and does not pose any risk to recreational park users;
- Where slopes greater than 1:5 occur, such slopes shall be landscaped to be safe and avoid the need for regular mowing;
- Where multiple use of the open space does not compromise recreational amenity or compliance with the performance criteria of a recreation park; and
- Where multiple use elements are aesthetically complimentary to recreational open space and contribute to appropriate landscape settings.

3.3.4 Sport park

Purpose

Sport parks provide opportunities for formal sporting activities, including sports fields or built sports facilities such as courts, within driving distance of residents. When providing new recreational open space for sporting needs, consideration shall be given to existing sport parks' contribution in meeting the needs of the future population within the catchment and co-locating multiple sporting codes in one location.

Table 6: Performance Standard for sport park

Preferred Size	Service catchment	Provision Rate
District Sport Park: 5-10 hectares Regional Sports Park: 15-20 hectares	District Sport: Residents within 5 kilometre radius	Overall average of sport park land of 2 hectares per 1,000 population (land for sport)

Minimum dimension on any side = 150 metres		
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Performance criteria

A sport park achieves the following performance criteria:

- Land intended for sport facilities should be of a shape that maximises its useability. A square or circular shape, as opposed to a narrow linear shape, is desirable;
- Direct street frontage to a minimum 50% of the sport park's boundary to promote casual visual surveillance and public access;
- Road frontage to a collector street or higher order road;
- Connection to active transport networks through footpaths and cycle facilities external to the park, and within walking distance of a public transport stop;
- Where possible, sport parks are developed as a precinct, providing for more than one sporting code, to benefit from efficiencies in the use of land and shared infrastructure;
- Sporting fields and/or courts are designed to regulation standards for the respective sport including orientation, dimensions, installations/facilities, safety buffers and lighting. Surfaces are safe and suitably graded for their intended purpose with adequate provision for spectators;
- Dimensions, access and buffers consider maintenance needs and service corridors;
- Amenities are provided above 1% AEP, including club facilities, change rooms for participants in sports activities and toilet facilities for spectators;
- Playing fields and surfaces should not be subject to regular inundation and generally achieve immunity of 18% AEP or greater;
- The design of sport parks considers the impact of traffic, noise and light impacts of sporting activity on sensitive land uses and provide vegetation and informal open space buffers to minimise such impacts; and
- Provision of sufficient parking in support of the specific sporting code through a combination of on-site and roadside spaces.

Embellishments

Minimum requirements for sport park embellishment include:

- Access into the park on the primary road frontage via a concrete path with kerbside ramp and meeting the access requirements of sporting codes;
- Internal pathways connecting to sports fields and amenities;
- Street and amenity trees to achieve shade coverage of paths within and associated with the park's road frontages;
- Safety lighting on boundary of park;
- A drinking fountain;
- Facilities and amenities that meet the requirements of the respective sporting codes, including club facilities, change room to participants and toilet facilities for spectators;
- Level open grassed areas appropriate to the sporting codes (Level 1:200),
- Lighting as required, including to sports fields, courts and parking areas;
- Provision for spectators can incorporate formal seating or mounding (maximum 1 in 5 slope) or open grassed areas. Where practical, spectator areas should be shaded by built structures and/or shade trees;
- Measures to mitigate the impact of light and noise on surrounding sensitive uses include the use of vegetation buffers, acoustic barriers and mounding;
- Road access that includes access for service vehicles;
- Garbage bins for disposal of litter and regular waste collection; and
- Park name and way finding signage in accordance with Council standards.

Non-recreational open space provision and multiple use

The location of non-recreational open space adjacent to sport parks may occur:

- Where design of the non-recreational open space compliments the landscaping and aesthetics of the adjacent sport park area and does not pose any risk to the users of the sport park area;
- Where slopes greater than 1:5 occur, such slopes shall be landscaped to be safe and avoid the need for regular mowing;
- Where multiple use of the open space does not compromise recreational amenity or compliance with the performance criteria of a recreation park;
- Where multiple use elements are aesthetically complimentary to recreational open space and contribute to appropriate landscape settings; and
- Where appropriate additional buffers are provided between the sports park and non-recreational open space and other uses.

Diagram 4: Example – District sport park design



3.3.5 Linear park

Purpose

Linear parks provide a recreational purpose by enabling walking and cycling. Linear parks support connectivity to key destinations (i.e. schools, libraries, retail and employment opportunities) and open spaces using footpaths and cycle facilities. Linear parks are particularly encouraged along riparian corridors that offer amenity to pedestrians and cyclists.

Table 7: Performance Standard for linear park

Preferred Size	Catchment	Provision Rate
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Minimum width = 15 metres	N/A	N/A
Performance criteria		
<p>A linear park achieves the following performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct street frontage of 30% of boundary with no section to be less than 40 metres to promote casual visual surveillance and public access; • Road frontage to a linear corridor can be achieved through connection to multiple road sections; • Sufficient width (minimum 15 metres), or 15 metres from top of bank if located adjacent to a waterway corridor, and access for maintenance vehicles to linear corridor; • Connection to the pedestrian and cycling network and public transport; and • Design that promotes public and casual surveillance of the linear corridor, including allotments that front onto the linear park. 		
Embellishment		
<p>Minimum requirements for linear park embellishment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access into the park on the primary road frontage via a concrete path with kerbside ramp; • Concrete footpath along the length of the park; • Pathways that meet Council's design standard for cycling and walking paths; • Way finding signage at entry points; • Seating at intervals of 500 metres; • Lighting at entry points and roadway interfaces; • Boundary treatments to prevent vehicle access, but allow access for park maintenance; and • Information and warning signage to mitigate any risks of the use of the linear park. 		
Non-recreational open space provision and multiple use		
<p>The location of non-recreational open space adjacent to linear parks may occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the design of the non-recreational open space compliments the landscaping and aesthetics of the adjacent linear park area and does not pose any risk to recreational park users; • Where slopes greater than 1:5 occur, such slopes shall be landscaped to be safe and avoid the need for regular mowing; • Where multiple use of the open space does not compromise recreational amenity or compliance with the performance criteria of a recreation park, and • Where multiple use elements are aesthetically complimentary to recreational open space and contribute to appropriate landscape settings. 		
Diagram 5: Example – Linear park design		

Linear Park

- 1) Pathway
- 2) Wayfinding sign

