

Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan

Engagement Outcomes Report

Client: Hornsby Shire Council

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1 Executive summary

As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces. To cater for this long-term demand, Hornsby Shire Council (Council) has developed a draft master plan for a new regional-sized park at Westleigh.

The draft master plan was exhibited for eight weeks, between 21 April and 16 June 2021, inclusive. Public feedback was invited through a range of engagement channels (detailed in this report) during this time.

The feedback received has been analysed in the following chapters of this report. Below is a high-level overview of what was heard:

Support for mountain biking on site

The majority of submissions related to the proposed changes to the existing unsanctioned mountain bike tracks. Of these submissions, the vast majority did not agree with the proposed changes. These submissions were generally from the mountain biking community who both live within and outside of the Shire. However, it must also be noted that a small number of residents and others who did not identify themselves as part of the mountain biking community also provided feedback opposing the proposed changes. This strongly correlated to the feedback captured at the swing bys, where almost identical sentiments were heard. Submissions and swing by feedback that related to **opposing the proposed changes to Mountain Biking tracks** did so on the following basis:

- The **site is unique** and **valuable** through its provision of **"green/beginner"** graded tracks that are ideal for learning.
- There is a **variety of tracks** that offer a range of difficulties which assists riders to **progress their abilities** and hone their skills on the one site. The proposed **reduction of trails** would render them **too short for enjoyment**.
- Mountain biking provides **benefits to overall health**, wellbeing and mental health.

- It is a family sport, a **sport for all ages** and growing in **popularity**.
- Mountain biking fosters an appreciation for the natural environment and **contested the assertion that mountain biking has a detrimental impact on, or is not compatible with, the Endangered Ecological Communities**.
- Willingness to **volunteer time towards trail maintenance, and fear that the proposed changes would result in more unsanctioned tracks**.
- There are already **sufficient sports ground facilities** in the Shire, and an undersupply of mountain bike trails.
- The potential **economic benefits** of mountain biking to the wider community through tourism and supporting smaller businesses, especially if facilities on site such as a café or bike shop were to be included.
Many submissions from the mountain biking community also provided suggestions on the route for a new trail network.

Protection of the site's biodiversity

A significant number of submissions mentioned the ecological significance of the site. Some were supportive of the draft master plan's intent to protect the site's flora and fauna; others considered the proposed plan to be hampering efforts to protect its biodiversity or argued not enough was being done.

Some submissions requested the complete removal of mountain bike trails through the entire site, or from areas that had been identified as a valuable ecological community. These include the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF) and Duffys Forest that are Critically Endangered and Endangered Ecological Communities. In support of this argument, some submissions also referred to Westleigh being listed as a Priority Management Site for both STIF and Duffys Forest Endangered Ecological Community. Of particular note, was the obligation Council has in pertaining to **legislation and policies** regarding the **protection of high value biodiversity Critically Endangered Ecological Communities**, Threatened Species and the impact on the **powerful owl**.

Support for the reduction of mountain bike trails

In keeping with the protection of the sites biodiversity some submissions supported the proposed reduction of the mountain bike trails. This was mostly on **biodiversity and environmental grounds**.

Separation of tracks and trails

Perhaps the only aspect in the draft master plan that groups and individuals mostly agreed on was the need to **separate biking and walking paths**. Groups pointed to existing conflicts at both Westleigh and Hornsby Park (Old Mans Valley) and the 'friction' any shared paths causes. However, it should be noted that a few submissions were not opposed to these trails 'traversing'.

Road extension and new intersection for Sefton and Quarter Sessions Roads

Submissions expressed significant concern regarding the potential impacts of the proposed changes on traffic **congestion** and **volume of traffic** that would be generated. These concerns included:

- **safety** concerns (the bend at Sanctuary Gardens, its camber, the point where it narrows near the roundabout and the right of way not being clear)
- **parking** (overflow on surrounding streets)
- **rat-run** would only like the access road open during emergencies, and otherwise closed to through traffic to Quarter Sessions Road).

It should be mentioned that a smaller number of residents supported the proposed road extension and roundabout, citing the need for a second road exit. Survey responses expressed more support than written submissions.

Sports platforms

Many submissions, mostly from sporting groups, members of sporting clubs, individuals who play sports or have family or friends that are avid sports people **supported the proposed three sports platforms**. The basis of this support was generally the lack of available sporting facilities within the Shire. While most of these submissions specifically mentioned support

for synthetic surfaces and lighting, others expressed **concern about the environmental impacts of synthetic surfaces** and the impact on neighbours and the fauna that lighting would have from extended use. In contrast a small number of submissions questioned the need for multiple sports platforms on the site, preferring some of the area to be used for passive recreation.

Community facilities

This theme is one of the few that was supported from the vast majority of interest and stakeholder groups and residents Shire-wide. The inclusion of a **café and other potential facilities** such as a club house and or a **community venue** were recognised as being needed.

2 Background information

2.1 The site

In June 2016, Council purchased 36 hectares of land in Westleigh from Sydney Water.

The site is bounded to the north by Dog Pound Creek bushland (a BioBanking site), to the east by Waitara Creek bushland and to the west by Berowra Valley National Park.

Sydney Water, the previous owner of the land had earmarked the area for housing, however, Council's plans for the site are to provide for a range of recreational facilities and activities, sportsgrounds and the conservation of bushland.

2.2 Development of the draft master plan

The draft master plan details the types of suitable uses and activities that Council proposes to deliver within the park. The purpose of the plan is to ensure Council will ultimately provide a new park at Westleigh with a range of recreational opportunities to enable broad use by the community whilst protecting the biodiversity values associated with the bushland areas.

2.3 About the master plan

The draft master plan sets out a vision for Westleigh Park to offer a range of active and passive recreation opportunities to cater for the diverse needs and desires of the community. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- » community-based sport

- » opportunities for school and club athletics
- » cycling and mountain biking
- » informal exercising and walking
- » children's playground
- » bushwalking
- » passive recreation such as picnic areas, and
- » biodiversity protection and enhancement.

2.3.1 Sports platforms

The draft master plan proposes three sports facility platforms that have been designed to respect the existing bushland vegetation while providing for future improved road access.

Athletics track and support facilities

In the northern section of the previously cleared lands, a platform is proposed to provide a senior competition athletics track and an internal field area. This may be an all-weather elite athletics facility or a line marked grass track. Surrounding grassed areas are proposed to accommodate field events.

Central multipurpose sports field platform

A multipurpose sports field platform is proposed in the center of the site. This space could accommodate a synthetic surface or be developed as a natural turf sports surface. This field is intended for multiple sports and activities.

Southern multipurpose natural turf sports field platform – full senior size

The south of the site is the widest area where a sports field platform can be accommodated, whilst also protecting adjoining bushland. The draft master plan includes a multipurpose playing field platform with either two (2) full

competition size football fields or a full-size AFL field, with a full-size cricket ground during summer.

2.3.2 Improved access for traffic and car parking

As part of the draft master plan, the following access improvements have been proposed:

- » new access road (extension of Sefton Road to Quarter Sessions Road)
- » upgrade of the intersection between Sefton and Chilvers Roads
- » 350 car parking spaces.

The proposed traffic and parking plans allow for better traffic management than currently exists. Having two points of entry and exit will spread the peak traffic flow and provide greater public safety.

The extension to Sefton Road will also enhance traffic flow from Westleigh to the north.

2.3.3 Mountain bike trails

The unsanctioned mountain bike trails, some of which are through critically endangered ecological communities, have existed for many years and were originally built by the mountain biking community while the land was in Sydney Water's ownership.

Although the trails are unsanctioned, Council understands mountain biking remains popular within the community. Hence the draft master plan aims to balance the competing priorities for this area by modifying the trail network to reduce the extent of the trails in high value bushland areas, keeping trails to the edges and creating additional trails in less sensitive areas.

2.3.4 Critically Endangered Ecological Communities

The draft master plan has sought to strike a balance between activities on site and preserving the high value bushland.

Any residual impacts from the potential development and uses of the site will be subject to rigorous environmental assessment consistent with contemporary legislation. This may include the potential removal, relocation and upgrading of existing unsanctioned mountain bike trails away from environmentally sensitive areas.

Whilst considerable ecological survey work has been achieved to date, a vegetation management and habitat plan will be developed for the site to further identify avoidance and mitigation measures to reduce biodiversity impacts.

2.3.5 Funding

After Council purchased the site from Sydney Water in 2016, the NSW Government provided \$40 million in funding for Council to create Westleigh Park. This will fund the considerable amount of remediation that is needed, in addition to bulk earthworks, retaining walls, intersection upgrades and the creation of a new access road by extending Sefton Road through the Sydney Water site and connecting it to Quarter Sessions Road.

Additional funding from NSW Government has also been received to upgrade and build mountain bike trails in Hornsby Shire. If the community supports the retention of mountain biking at Westleigh Park, state government grant funding for mountain bike trails will be allocated to relocate some of the existing unsanctioned trails away from environmentally sensitive areas. Furthermore, a mountain biking and walking connection to Hornsby Park will also be created using the grant funding.

Once the draft master plan and detailed design are finalised, Council will then construct and deliver the landscape embellishment finishes for the park as funding becomes available.

3 About this report

Elton Consulting was engaged by Council to design and deliver a stakeholder and community engagement program to support the exhibition of the Westleigh Park draft master plan.

The master plan was exhibited by Council for eight weeks, from 21 April to 16 June 2021, inclusive. Initially the master plan was exhibited for six weeks and, in response to community feedback, was extended by another two weeks.

The program sought meaningful engagement with the wider community and key stakeholders to inform the further refinement of the master plan.

The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum is an internationally recognised standard for approaches to engagement. The spectrum was designed by IAP2 to assist with selecting the level of participation that defines the role of the community and stakeholders in the engagement process. Our engagement approach focused on the **Inform to Involve** end of the IAP2 engagement spectrum

Engagement objectives

The primary objectives of engagement were to:



- seek feedback on the draft master plan
- provide a mix of engagement tools and techniques to enable a wide range of views and opinions to be heard from across the community
- involve people who may not usually engage in public forums and engagement activities.

Additional survey work was undertaken to broaden the reach of the engagement process. These surveys targeted a statistically representative number of residents from the broader community.







4 Engagement overview

A broad and deep approach to promoting the public exhibition and capturing feedback was implemented. The table below provides a snapshot of the tools and techniques deployed, and the numbers of people engaged through the program of activities:

Tool/Technique	Description	Reach
Website 	<p>A dedicated project page on Council's website was established to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » clear and consistent information about the draft master plan » background documents » a channel for the submission of feedback » the promotion of engagement opportunities. 	Approx. 4,000 page views
Rates notice 	Promotion of the draft master plan's public exhibition was included in the Council rates notice mailed out to all property owners.	Approx. 42,000 residences

Tool/Technique	Description	Reach
Social media posts 	Social media stories were posted on Council's Facebook page promoting the exhibition and feedback channels. note that 4 posts were combined with promotion of the Hornsby Park consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 6 posts » 105,300 reached » 1,621 likes and reactions » 922 comments » 16,331 clicks
eNews 	Inclusion in Council's May and June edition of its eNewsletter	Approx. 29,000 email addresses per newsletter
Council Advisory Committee briefings 	<p>Briefings were given to the following Council Advisory Committees:</p> <p>Hornsby Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Consultative Committee (HATSICC), Bushland Management Advisory Committee (BMAC), Hornsby Shire Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC), and Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC).</p>	Attendance 16 people

Tool/Technique	Description	Reach
Survey 	An online survey was available for six weeks and was promoted through all Council communication channels.	1,878 total responses: » 1,273 completed responses » 605 partial responses
Stakeholder meetings 	Stakeholder groups identified by Council were invited to a meeting to learn more about the project and ask questions to help inform their submission.	6 x stakeholder meetings Attendance approx. 69
Postcards, information boards and posters 	A suite of collateral supported the project: » AO information boards at the swing bys. » Postcards that were available to the general public at swing bys.	» Various locations
Letterbox drop 	Two letters were distributed to residents surrounding the site informing them of: » the draft master plan and feedback channels	Approx. 1600 residences (x2) in Westleigh area

Tool/Technique	Description	Reach
	» Extension of the exhibition process.	
Advertising 	Advertisements were published in local and key community newspapers as well as on electronic display boards at the Hornsby Westfield.	4x newspapers
Swing bys 	Swing bys were held in Hornsby Mall and Ruddock Park. The mall was chosen on its busiest days (Thursday and Saturday) to capture the wider community and those who may not have had time to provide written submissions.	» 3x swing bys approx. 785 people in total
Written submissions 	Submissions were received from community groups, sporting organisations, residents and people who live outside the Shire.	» 293 submissions received

5 What we heard

This chapter provides a thematic analysis of the feedback that was received through written submissions, in person at swing by events and the online survey throughout the 8 week consultation and engagement period.

Swing bys

Three swing bys were held to provide information and answer questions the community had about the draft master plan.

Location and date	People engaged
Hornsby Mall – Saturday 1 May	Approx. 250 people
Hornsby Mall – Thursday 13 May	Approx. 170 people
Ruddock Park, Westleigh – Saturday 15 May	Approx. 365 people

Written submissions and online survey

Submissions and surveys were accepted during the eight-week period.

Online survey results
Total of 1,878 survey responses have informed this report.

It should be noted that online survey questions were not compulsory, resulting in all questions having a different number of respondents.

Written Submissions
293 written submissions were received, and analysed.

Written submissions raised multiple ideas and opinions which were analysed through a coding process.

This resulted in a total of 1427 coded responses, which were then grouped into themes. These themes are outlined in this chapter.

Total coded responses across all themes
1,427 coded responses were tallied across all submissions.

5.1 Mountain biking onsite

- Of the 1427 tallied responses within written submissions, there was 824 mentions (58 percent) about mountain biking on site. Within these:
- 85 percent argued for retention on site. These arguments are outlined below.
- 8 per cent were against its retention, mostly due to environmental grounds. These are also outlined below.

- The remaining 7 per cent were neutral.

In regard to the survey, illustrated in **Figure 1**, participants were asked what activity they would like to participate in at Westleigh Park, **ranking 1-6, with 1=most preferred**. Of the 1,411 responses, 61 percent ranked their first preference for cycling and mountain biking, reflecting the responses from the submissions.

The popularity of mountain biking at Westleigh Park was further emphasised within the online survey when participants were asked if they were aware that the mountain bike trails existed at Westleigh Park. Almost three quarters (69 percent) of the 1,231 respondents have used the existing unsanctioned mountain bike trails within Westleigh Park, 24 percent have never used them, and 6 percent used them more than 12 months ago.

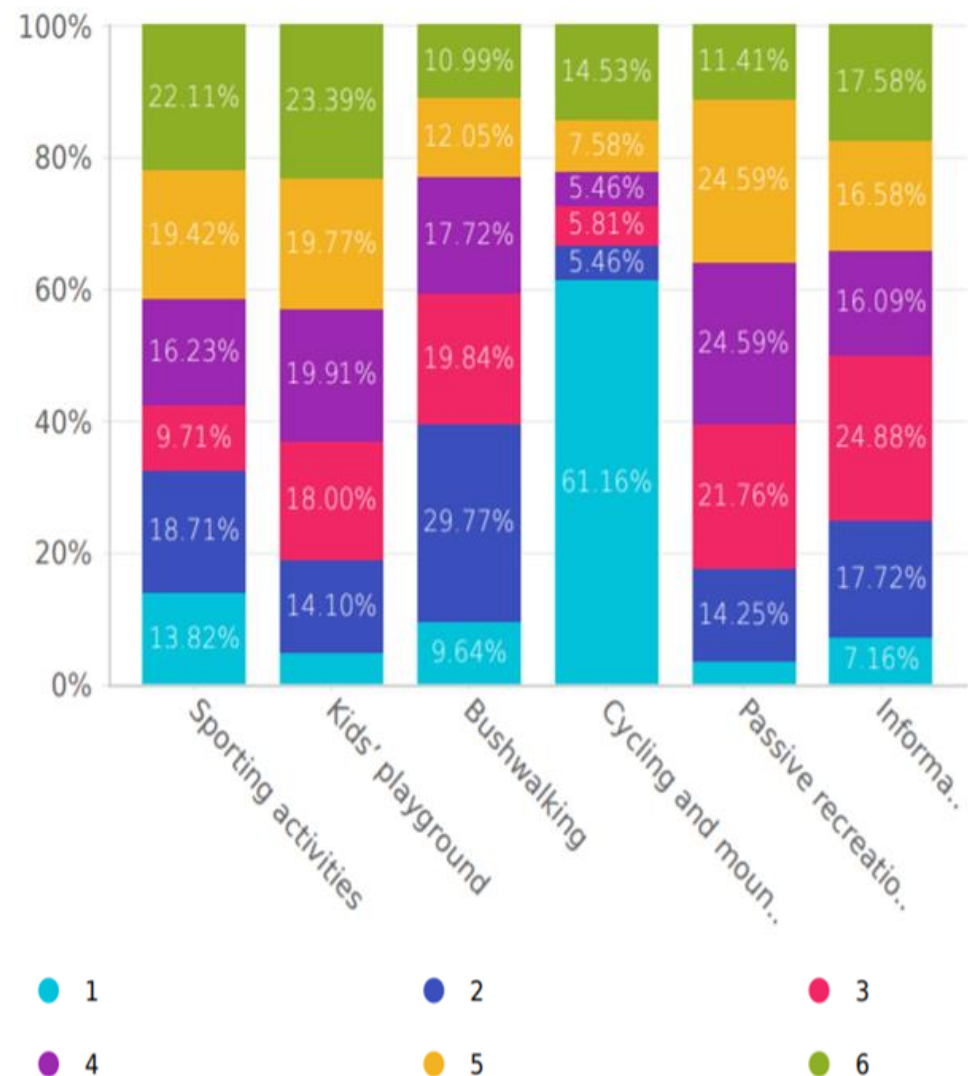
The strong association with mountain biking in the park was also reflected in the only open-ended question of the survey. Respondents were asked *what additional features/attractions/activities, if any, would they like to see at*

Westleigh Park that are not included in the draft master plan. The strongest preference was for the retention of the mountain bike trails, with just under half of all responses for this question advocating for the retention or improvement of mountain bike trails. This also included an increase in easy (green) trails, particularly those suitable for all ages and abilities, such as a pump track where beginners could improve. Reference was also made to the link to Old Man's Valley and to extend the H2O bike trails, as well as the inclusion of a bike wash station. In addition to mountain biking, there was reference to a paved bike track including criterium racing.

Many written submissions from the mountain biking community also provided suggestions on the route for a new mountain bike trail network.

Many written submissions from the mountain biking community also provided suggestions on the route for a new mountain bike trail network. A petition was also established to keep the trail network and consult with the mountain biking community. This petition can be found in the appendices.

Figure 1 levels of support for activities at Westleigh Park



5.2 Opposition to proposed mountain bike trail changes

As stated earlier, the majority of responses that mentioned mountain biking outlined a number of reasons why they believed the proposed changes are not suitable. These reasons have been thematically analysed and appear below.

5.2.1 Proposed trails too short

Many submissions argued the reduction of trails as proposed would render them too short for enjoyment, and the alternative trail network did not offer enough route connections for enjoyable riding.

Any change to the current layout would significantly damage the attraction of these trails.

Making it any smaller is pointless, people won't *[won't]* be driving there for such a small amount of trail.

It will destroy the network to shorten the trails as proposed in the masterplan.

5.2.2 Importance of green beginner trails

Respondents also argued the site is valuable through its provision of "green/beginner" graded tracks that are 'ideal for learning'. The majority of submissions that related to this theme placed high value on the green trails. Feedback captured through the swing bys and submissions reflected similar messages of family connections and connection to nature via spending time on the green trails in Westleigh Park.

Skill progression for both young and less experienced riders was a key benefit of the green trails, heard in both the swing bys and the written submissions. A sizeable number of submissions mentioned the importance of current trails providing a valuable opportunity to learn to ride.

As I understand it the 'green' trails at the top of the park are most likely to be impacted by redevelopment which is really disappointing

as I spend most of my time there mastering the basics of the sport. Whilst there are fire tracks in my local area, they are not the same experience as they are wider, flatter and less of a challenge.

...much of the riding we do is with our families and their friends who are less advanced or social riders. This is why the Westleigh mountain bike trails are so important. There are very few facilities like Westleigh that cater so well for beginners and social riders.

It is very common for riders, both kids and adults, to learn to ride on the threatened areas of H2O and then transition to OMV *[Old Mans Valley]* as their skills improve. If the changes to H2O occur then the ability of people to learn to ride safely will be reduced and there will be no facilities for families to ride safely.

It's also been a great place to bring others who want to try mountain bike riding for the first time.

In planning the new park, we would like to see as much of these easier trails stay for us and the many other families that often use them.

The proposed trail plan removes much of the clever and thoughtful constructed existing trail construction. Trails that suit beginners and young riders, the green routes. The current trails can be easily accessed without having to ride along harder trails and they form one big loop. The splitting of green trails into 2 separate sections ruins the continuous riding experience. There are very few locations you can ride as a beginner that include trails like Sin City, 3 Amigos and Tranquilizer. For beginners and experienced riders alike, they are great trails that are fun to ride. The numerous turns and berms make it fun and enjoyable to ride as well as creating a trail long enough to ride without having to loop often. The shorter loops currently shown in the draft will harm that riding experience.

5.2.3 Skills progression

The design and layout of the current trails was considered a unique attractor to the site in the written submissions. Responses argued the current site has

a variety of tracks that offer a range of difficulty which was argued allowed riders to progress their abilities and hone their skills.

Kids can start MTB [*Mountain Biking*] here and go forward to become state champions.

Unlike OMV [*Old Man's Valley*] which consists of largely smoother trails, the single track blue & black trails at Westleigh are on rocky terrain and allow mountain bikers to develop riding skills in this terrain.

There is great progression from the green to the blue and black trails. We love doing some of the blue runs together and then I can branch out and do the black runs. Particularly mosquito coast which is one of my favourites! Another great trail that is listed to be greatly impacted is tetanus shot which is one of the best progression trails. It's tight and technical but also has features more experienced riders can have a lot of fun on, all with b lines for beginners.

They provided a great variety and development from easier trails for beginners which transitioned through more technical trails as skills progressed.

We have found the long-established Westleigh trails to be a great mix, as we develop our bike skills and fitness levels. The existing trails provide a great range of progression, with no other trails in the area providing this entry level development experience.

5.2.4 Wellbeing and health benefits of mountain biking

The mental and physical benefits of mountain biking in Westleigh Park was also raised in the feedback. Respondents noted that mountain biking has become a social form of physical exercise, some discovering it later in life in an attempt to become healthier, particularly during COVID 19 lock down.

My family and I are fortunate to live in Westleigh and we have all enjoyed the health benefits of riding the local trails.

The physical and mental benefits of riding away from built up areas and in bushland have become far more well known since COVID has interrupted our lives

Being in the bush is really important for my mental health as it is the only time I get to unwind from work and family duties.

Riding in the bush is what keeps my mental health in tact [*sic*] and connects me deeply to nature.

Exercise and riding a bike is also great for mental health and just as important as your physical health.

5.2.5 Family connections through mountain biking

Respondents also referenced mountain biking being a family activity, a sport for all ages. Many of these were writing on behalf of their family (parents and young children).

The green trails are fun for adults but also very child friendly, my kids love the place. We will often take a group of their friends. It great to see families with kids of all ages using the trails, getting exercise and enjoying the beautiful woodland environment.

I'm writing on behalf of my family as avid MTB [Mountain Bike] riders, my two sons and wife enjoy ridding the H2O trails and the current closure affects not only us but many other families [*sic*] like mine.

The local mountain bike community is mostly made up of family's in the Hornsby Shire area and the existing trail system is a safe and secure area where they can participate in their chosen activity across all levels.

Why is there no consideration for local activities for youth who dislike organised ball/team sports, are too old for kiddy [*sic*] playgrounds but too young to have a licence to travel to fun locations. I see Many teenagers (in fact all ages...) using the

mountain bike tracks at the park - great for physical activity, socialising and keeping out of trouble, and suitable for these pandemic times. So why does the Masterplan aim to reduce the options and scale of this popular activity rather than increase it? (popular since there are so few places to ride a bike around here...especially in an interesting highly active fashion)

5.2.6 **Fostering an appreciation for the natural environment through mountain biking**

Respondents also outlined mountain biking as being a way to learn about nature. Several submissions referred to how the mountain biking community as a whole respects nature and are generally misunderstood when it comes to the community's relationship with nature.

I believe the more my kids see nature, the more they'll respect and appreciate it.

As a parent, I can testify to how important these trails have been in our family to grow our children's appreciation of the bushland.

MTB riders like being in the bush, and it's to the advantage of bushland interest to have more people who are involved and familiar.

Children who grow up exploring, playing in, bushwalking through, and riding mountain bikes through bushland are far more likely to become the environmental stewards of our future. They are more likely to care about environmental issues such as deforestation, climate change, water, and air pollution, they will recycle more and waste less, and they will instil similar values in their own children.

5.2.7 **Trail maintenance and volunteering**

Some respondents discussed appreciation for the natural environment and willingness to volunteer time towards trail maintenance.

Please strongly consider keeping the trail as is and engage with the local bike association to formalise a process of volunteer support for upkeep (of the trails). I'd argue that there would be many willing parents keen to volunteer their time to preserve this trail and allow continuation of a great MTB park for the community.

I would be willing to volunteer in future to maintain trails and remove Non-Native species around the trail under Council guidance.

If volunteering to maintain the trails would change the outcome I would gladly do it and I'm sure my kids would enjoy tagging along learning about bush regeneration and ecology.

They are a group of dedicated people willing to work with council to help improve the bushland and under council guidance take on stewardship for the ongoing maintenance of the trails.

5.2.8 **Mountain bike riding being under catered for in comparison to other sports**

A small number of respondents also pointed out the number of sports grounds in the Shire, in comparison to a perceived under supply of mountain bike trails.

We already have a large number of sporting fields across the area including for specialised sports such as Hockey, Archery, Tennis, Netball and synthetic soccer fields and whilst those sports would like more (I'm a Pennant Hills Soccer Coach), mountain biking has no other options at present so rather than reduce trails they should in fact be expanded and improved to a higher standard to properly cater for the need.

Why do we need yet more sports fields in this area when there are so many existing fields? What is the basis of this decision?

Overall, the Westleigh Park Masterplan makes unjustified assumptions about the need for fields in the Project Objectives which skews the final recommendations, and the mountain bike track survey is erroneous and inappropriately constrained to the proposed fields skewing its recommendations. The resulting

proposal is biased to sports fields which are already in plentiful supply across the shire.

5.2.9 Unsanctioned trails

Respondents identified the destructive nature of having unsanctioned and illegal bike trail throughout the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest and the Critically Endangered Ecological Communities. Some argued the reduction in mountain bike trails would result in more unsanctioned trails being built.

The existing mountain bikes trails are clearly unsanctioned. Creating and riding on these tracks built on land which does not belong to those creating same does not justify having them later made legal because the riders insist upon it.

If the trails are reduced from the current layout, we would probably seek other trails to ride on. In my opinion reducing the current H2O trails will only encourage illegal trail building.

By keeping the tracks as they are, we will also help the ecosystem by avoiding the creation of new illegal tracks in sensible areas of the park.

I fear that if we don't retain or enhance the trails at Westleigh in future, we may be promoting the illegal and uncontrolled development of unsanctioned trails in the area, which is unnecessary given the opportunity for development of the current facilities. Unsanctioned trail development would be an undesirable outcome for all parties involved.

Removing parts of trails unfortunately is likely to result in illegal tracks being formed and that would definitely cause damage to the bushland.

The online survey indicated that 72 per cent of 1,228 participants knew that the mountain bike trails in Westleigh Park were not designed or managed by Council.

Image 2 Westleigh Park Unsanctioned mountain bike trail network

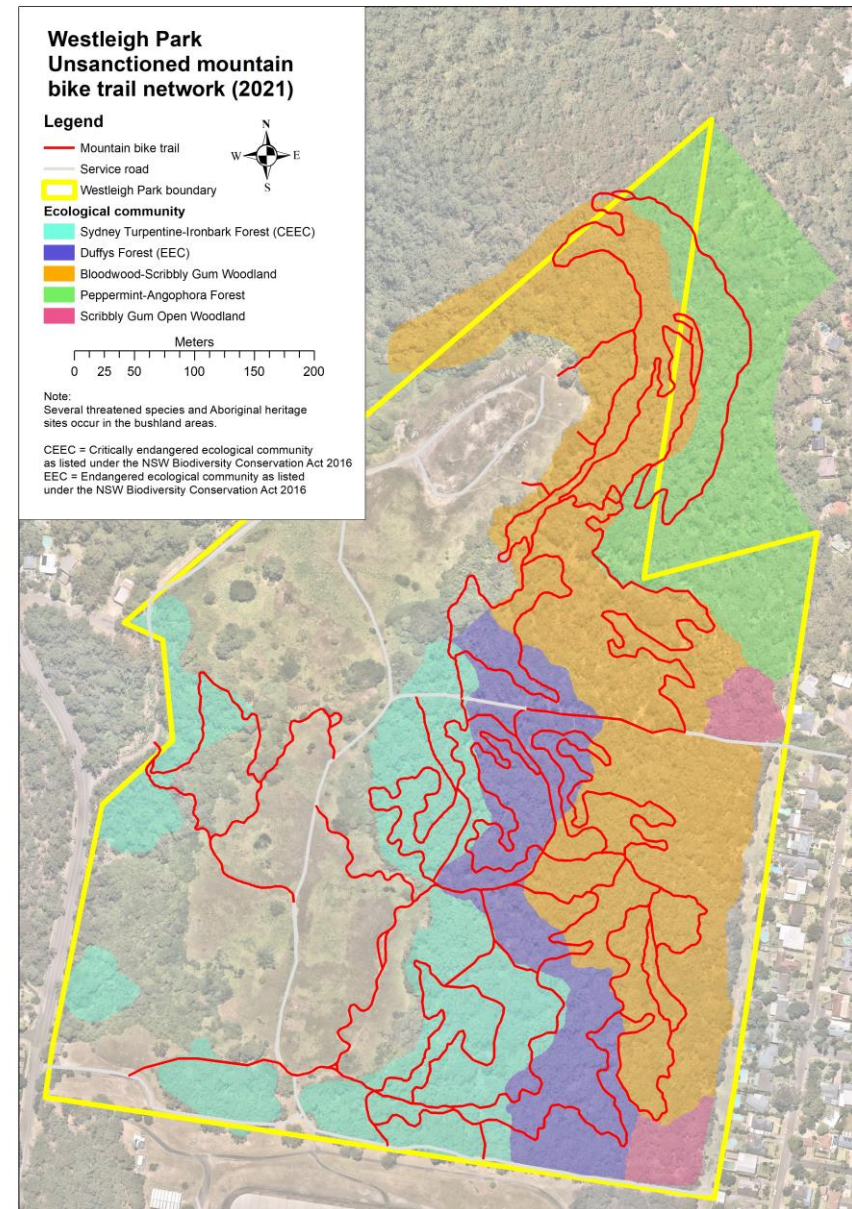
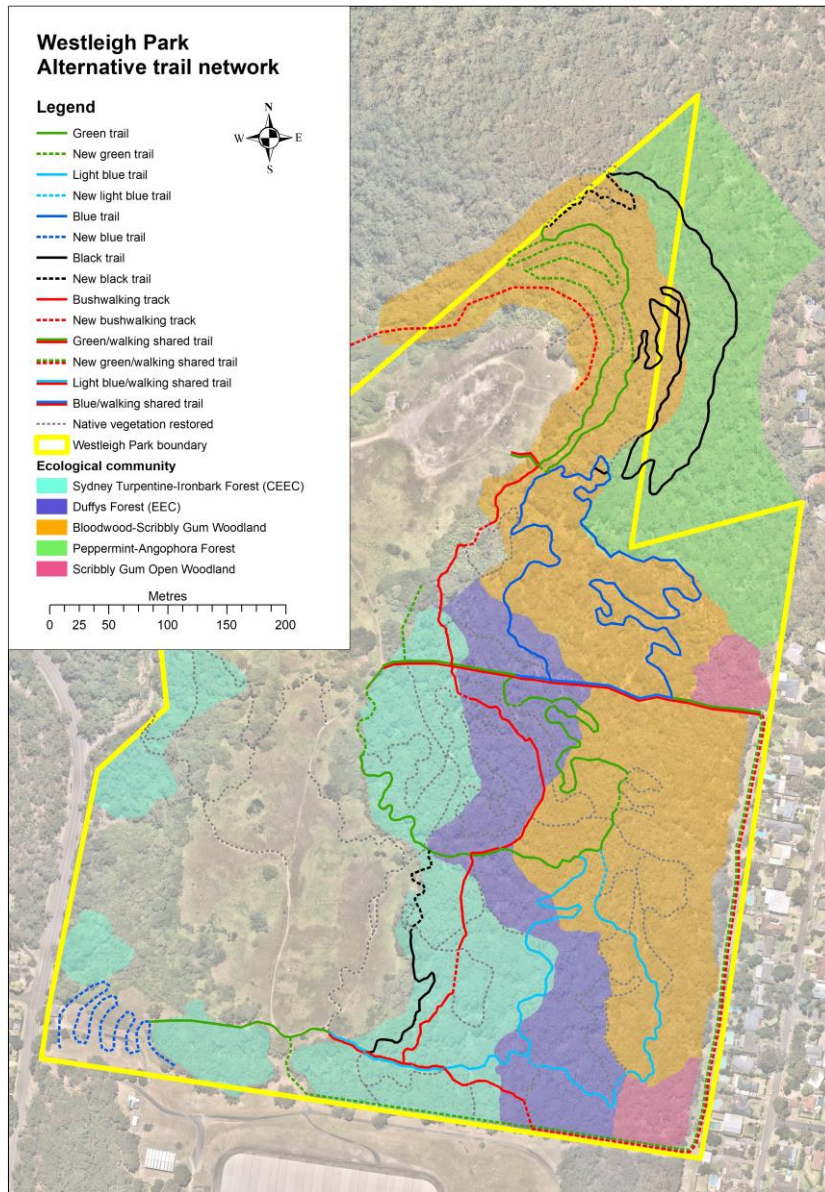


Image 2 Westleigh Park Alternative trail network



5.2.10 Economic benefits of mountain bike riding

A handful of respondents suggested mountain biking could contribute to the local tourism economy, especially if facilities on site such as a café or bike shop were to be included.

There is a significant amenity and economic benefit to Council taking ownership of the development and maintenance of world class mountain biking facilities. Westleigh could be such a destination, bringing in economic opportunities and improving the liveability of the area for kids and adults alike.

These are the nearest MTB trails to Sydney. There is a lot of potential to make the most out of this commercial opportunity because at the moment people are travelling to Olympic Park for flat or out to Parramatta or the Central Coast.

It has been proven that mountain biking plays a beneficial role in community health, quality of life & local economic development.

5.3 Impact of mountain bike riding on biodiversity

This issue was divisive. Those that participate in mountain bike riding challenged the assertion that it is more detrimental to the environment than bushwalking. Respondents in the mountain biking community also contested the evidence-based assertion that mountain biking has had a detrimental impact on the Endangered Ecological Communities, such as the Blue Gum Forest and Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest.

The bushland at Westleigh is thriving with the existing trail network. This area was a dumping ground and over the 6 or more years that I've been riding there it has improved from the care of the MTB enthusiasts who have maintained the area. There's a false dichotomy of MTB vs conservation - MTB riders want conservation of bushland as well.

I have read and heard from different interested community groups who in part use environmental concerns to argue against mountain biking. Interestingly none seem to be able to provide any supporting evidence as to how mountain biking threatens certain species of trees or affects the wildlife generally. Having ridden H2o for many years I have not observed the trails altering the landscape at all, in fact in periods of rain when we do not ride, the vegetation quickly begins to over grow the area.

Referring to the turpentine forest: What is the evidence it is being further damaged (than it already was from previous use and dumping)? The bike tracks are narrow defined paths through the forest. They have been there for years and the forest remains intact. And a bike path is a great way to enjoy the natural beauty of the forest, noting the current restrictions on riding in national parks.

There is an overwhelming bank of evidence right across Australia, that shows that building sustainable mountain biking trails in critically endangered bushland, is absolutely possible and does not harm the health of these areas. I suggest that the Council look to other successful projects to understand this better.

I cannot accept the council's opinion that site is critically endangered, nor that the tracks are a significant threat to the bushland. The trails have been there for 20 years. How is developing the site for three sporting fields and carparks and bringing in 1000s of people a week to site not more of a threat?

There are countless examples of MTB tracks built through EECs and other similar environments, such as the Thredbo Valley Trail.

The environmental degradation caused by mountain biking is generally equivalent or less than that caused by hiking

"Studies have shown that there is no more damage to the environment if you are mountain biking rather than bush walking

Make the studies more evidence based, show us why bushwalking has less of an impact, count the people who use the site etc

In contrast to the feedback heard from the mountain biking community, other written submissions highlighted the negative impacts of mountain bike riding on the environment.

We consider that the number of mountain bike tracks should be minimised. They should also be kept out of threatened bush communities completely and located well away from any threatened plants.

Unauthorised mountain bike track construction and use is already damaging otherwise good quality bushland.

The bush has been chopped up and damaged by the MT Bikers, with illegal tracks everywhere, where once was dense bush and shrubs is now eroded areas of mud, exposed soil and rocks causing erosion and infiltration of weed species. So its great to see plans for closing off and redirecting tracks from critical parts to other areas and having them managed correctly.

MTBs are effectively a small motor bike and cause significant damage to the environment

Council should take immediate action on sections of the MBT that have been identified in the TrailScapes report as being unsustainable, uncompliant, dangerous and as damaging the environment.

MTB have been using the tracks at night illegally which impacts much of the native wildlife who are active.

The MTB trails fragment the bushland making the less available for the fauna and flora.

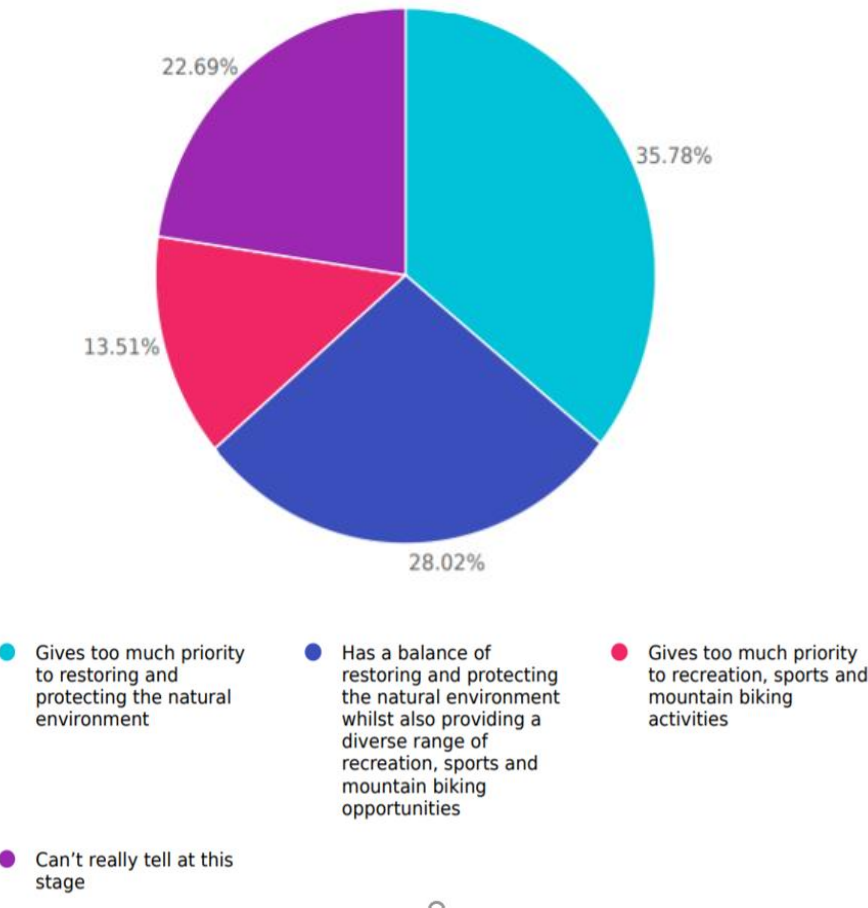
Soil cannot easily be replaced on trails and where soil disappears it leaves ruts that make travel and water drainage more difficult, prompting further impacts such as trail widening.

These trails cut in and out of the bushland, splintering it into different fragments. Such fragmentation very adversely affects both the flora and fauna.

The survey asked respondents if there was too much priority on restoring and protecting the natural environment or too much priority on active recreation. Thirty-six (36) percent of respondents nominated too much priority on restoring and protecting the natural environment and 14 percent nominated active recreation receiving greater priority.

However, just over a quarter (28 percent) of the 1,199 respondents identified the proposed changes as having a good balance and just under a quarter (23 percent) couldn't really tell at this stage, as seen in Figure 2.

Figure 3 Proposed master plan’s balance of passive and active recreation



5.3.1 Protection and conservation of bushland and existing biodiversity

Approximately 10 percent of the 1,427 tallied responses mentioned the ecological significance of the site. Some of these submissions reminded Council of its legislative obligation to protect the biodiversity of the site.

We are excited that the proposal is giving consideration towards protecting rare species and areas of valuable biodiversity throughout the proposed development.

BMAC notes the presence of high conservation value vegetation on site and recommends that the principles of avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset be applied

It is very positive that the plan provides the ability to treat threatening weed sources adjacent to endangered ecological communities and other native bushland and maintains a better environmental outcome for the community.

These are environmentally sensitive heritage listed bushland sites and the proposed master plan will have an ongoing and significant impact on the Berowra Valley environment for decades to come.

The current plan for development of the Sydney Water site will clearly result in the destruction of the natural environment which, as a resident, I know is a haven for wildlife and birds.

The bushland around Waitara Creek and Dog Pound Creek needs protection. It supports species listed as vulnerable. Increased public use in the surrounding area might lead to littering and general degradation. Note that Sydney’s birdwatchers are increasingly being drawn to this area due to its importance.

- Indigenous native plants should be selected and maintained, including edible bushfoods, plants ideal for weaving, beneficial insect-attracting and mosquito-repelling plants, as well as aquatic plants that can be used to filter the water bodies proposed (particularly at the Hornsby site). Water-filtering plants in all areas with water will promote better environmental and sustainability. These suggestions would have the additional benefit of encouraging

native birds and animals to return to the area (micro-animals as well).

SEPP19 applies to this site as HSC is named on Schedule 1 of the policy as being an area to which the SEPP code applies. SEPP 19 Interpretation Clause 4 (2) notes the policy applies to bushland zoned or reserved for open space purposes where “disturbing bushland is a reference to causing change in the natural ecology of the bushland resulting in the destruction or degradation of that land.”

In the survey, 59 percent of respondents were very aware of the ecological significance of the surrounding bushland. Only 11 percent of participants were unaware of the high environmental value of the bushland on the site.

5.3.2 Support for the reduction or removal of mountain bike tracks

Some respondents requested the complete removal of mountain bike trails throughout the entire site, and others specifically referred to the trails being removed from the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF), Duffys Forest and Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEEC) rather than the whole site. A few respondents also referred to Westleigh being listed as a Priority Management Site for both STIF and Duffys Forest Ecological Community.

The mountain bike riding area also contains several threatened species, and all tracks and trails need to be moved well clear of them. I would advocate for all mountain bike trails to be removed from these vegetation communities so that they can be protected

Completely opposed to Council constructing mountain bike trails on the site

We support the complete removal of mountain bike trails and walking tracks from the STIF.

We support the complete removal of mountain bike trails and walking tracks from the Duffys Forest plant community.

The need, both legal and environmental, to manage these trails and protect the forest became urgent in 2019 when STIF was listed as critically endangered in NSW. Like the Blue Gum Diatreme Forest in OMV, we are talking potential extinction.

I request the removal of all tracks and trails from the STIF and Duffys Forest plan communities.

upports the removal of mountain bike trails in the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF) and Duffys Forest as these are endangered ecological communities.

5.4 Separation of walking and mountain bike paths

In both the feedback received through submissions, as well as via the swing bys, separation of walking and mountain bike trails was noted. The feedback placed importance on safety, particularly for bushwalkers. There was minimal feedback received that supported shared paths for both mountain bike riding and bushwalkers.

There is a bushwalking trail planned through the middle of the mountain bike trails which will cause issues with collision and confusion for walkers and riders.

Please keep walking trails completely separate from MTB trails for the safety of both user groups.

Sharing with mountain bikes is not often successful as they are fast, rarely slow down to pass and never sound bells. Being in the bush is meant to be relaxing, time to potter around and listen, observe, and smell the scents. This is not possible when on the alert for bikes all the time.

MBTing and walking don't mix well. Dangerous.

Rather have no shared paths.

The area is building up and the bushwalking tracks should be a sacred spot without the worry about mountain bikes.

The bikes only cater towards one demographic. They are taking over spaces that are not meant for them.

Image 3 Walking Westleigh Park



5.5 Link between Hornsby and Westleigh Parks

Again, this issue was divisive – at swing bys the community were very supportive of the link, yet the written submissions told a completely different story. This division is also reflected in the online survey results where 56 per cent of participants said they would be very likely to use a cycling and walking track between Hornsby Park and Westleigh Park.

Those that were supportive of the link, appeared to be mainly from the mountain biking community or members of the wider community. Those who were unsupportive seemed to be generally neighbours, or those that had raised environmental considerations in their response. A petition was also initiated and can be found in the appendices.

Good to add a bike and walking link from HP to WP.

Love the idea of the link, looking forward to running on the link.

The link is a very good idea.

Understand the compromise having the link between HP and WP going on road and through the bush.

What is needed sooner than later is the link between Old Man's Valley and Westleigh. This was promised by Matt Kean the local State Member at the last election and needs to be fast-tracked so that riders can enjoy the benefits of a longer, challenging workout.

Also love the proposed link track to Hornsby Quarry Park . . . looks amazing! Well done.

Those that stated their objections to the link did so mainly on environmental grounds.

It would compromise the safety of walkers and other nature lovers at each end of the very popular Blue Gum Walk, at Rosemead Road and at the Ginger Meggs Park end.

This is something I highly object to. The northern section would use a disused maintenance trail. The description on the map does not include the word 'disused'. It is heavily overgrown with weeds and is ideal habitat for Powerful Owls. The connection would cross through high quality Blue Gum Diatreme Forest to Rosemead Road, use roads to Ginger Meggs Park, use the fire trail on the Blue Gum Walk for a few hundred metres, then exploit a disused and overgrown Sydney Water sewer road near the creek near the border of Blue Gum Diatreme Forest and Blackbutt Gully Forest.

This should not be considered due to it crossing through Bluegum Diatreme Forest as well as traversing the Saving Our Species 'Blue Gum High Forest Priority Management Site' and 'Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest Priority Management Site', both of which were endorsed in December 2019. Additionally, the two disused fire trails would be opened up and hence reducing the dense privacy for Powerful Owls that this area provides.

I object to the link because it disturbs habitat, particularly for powerful owls, crosses special management areas, would damage the Blue Gum Diatreme Forest and would compromise the safety of walkers at the Rosemead track head.

A handful of submissions also raised the potential issue of it being a shared path and causing conflict between users.

The proposed shared pedestrian/bike connection between Westleigh and Old man Valley would be unsafe as families and small children would be sharing the path with bike riders with the risk of collision and serious injury.

Consequently, I have a number of reservations with the proposed Link Track connecting Hornsby and Westleigh. This proposed track would need to be some 3 metres wide and could be a safety hazard for walkers (particularly near the Rosemead Track head), as it would be a bike speedway.

The proposed link track is a concern for the safety and enjoyment of walkers on the Blue Gum Walk at the Ginger Meggs end. The proposed connection shares several hundred metres with this extremely popular walk

5.6 Traffic concerns and impacts

Aside from mountain bike trails on the site, traffic impacts and concerns stemming from road changes were very prominent throughout the swing bys as well as in the written submissions. Approximately 6 percent of the 1,427 tallied responses raised some type of concern. These are detailed below. It should be noted that many of these submissions mentioned they were nearby residents.

5.6.1 Sefton and Quarter Sessions Roads – extension and roundabout

Concern centred around the impacts additional traffic would have on the local community. These include the local road network becoming further congested, and a rat run for through traffic.

Duffy Ave and Quarter Sessions Road cannot cope with more traffic volume and many of us are very concerned we will be 'cut-off' by the projected traffic volume from the people using the huge sporting fields and car parks. Residents on the northern peninsular will have

to navigate two extra roundabouts on Quarter Sessions Road to leave or enter Westleigh. When leaving our homes the vehicles turning right at the roundabout at Sefton Road extension or Warrigal Drive to enter Westleigh Park have the right of way over the residents just trying to drive out of the suburb.

That is a significant amount of traffic on Sefton with 50per cent of the traffic to Westleigh Park being routed from there; that is 373 in and out traffic during a WINTER weekday and 927 in and out traffic during a WINTER weekend. That is A LOT OF traffic compared to right now.

Increased traffic volume, especially around Quarter Sessions Road and Sefton Road, is a major concern.

In my opinion most incoming traffic will be via Sefton Road as it will be designated the quickest route by GPS and because of the location of car parks within the park itself. This would place a disproportionate volume of the traffic on Sefton Road which will have a big impact on the residents of Thornleigh. The backing up of cars leaving the park at the intersection of Sefton and Chilvers could also lead to alternate routes being taken via Gilgandra and Larool Crescent for example.

The improvement of the intersection at Duffy Avenue, Chilvers Road and The Esplanade, whilst enhancing its safety, will inevitably add to the flow of traffic through it.

Very concerned about traffic impacts

Concern about opening up Sefton Road with increased traffic and noise

The traffic generation from Sefton Road will not be suitable for the area

Turning left from Warrigal Road onto Quarter Sessions Road, is already so hard. The increased traffic will make it impossible.

The Sanctuary' will be impacted by traffic, the road will be a rat-run + cars will fill our streets

The roundabout at the end of Sefton Road and Koorungal currently has no impacts but the traffic congestion impacts are already terrible, particularly with the industrial area bringing trucks in.

Quarter Sessions Road roundabout will be dangerous, people speed along there

As a resident of Wild Ash Grove who has two young children I am extremely concerned by the traffic and noise impacts of the proposal. This includes access in and around our estate, levels of traffic being introduced into what is currently a back street, the amount of setback on properties facing Sefton Road and most concerning, a proposed bike track on what I understand is private property - namely right through Wild Ash Way.

A handful of submissions raised concerns about the methodology of the traffic study.

The traffic analysis obtained by Council is seriously flawed and so provides no assurance to Westleigh residents that the projected traffic levels can be handled without major disruption and inconvenience to local residents.

There are significant reasons to question the thoroughness, rigor and quality assurance of the report. Some of the photo overlays show the proposed park area incorrectly such as including the entire reservoir area. The traffic analysis is fundamentally flawed, resulting in unsupported conclusions. The traffic report is based on 2017 traffic measurements and makes traffic growth extrapolations based on approx. 3per cent annual compound growth. As such, it neglects the effect of North Connex.

The traffic analysis obtained by Council is seriously flawed and so provides no assurance to Westleigh residents that the projected traffic levels can be handled without major disruption and inconvenience to local residents

There is no community plain English traffic plan to show residents the impact once the facility is up and running, especially for residents along Quarter Sessions Road and Sefton Road.

5.6.2 Road safety impacts

Safety considerations were also cited in submissions and were mentioned frequently at the swing bys. Many raised concerns about children's safety, and impacts on nearby residents as traffic and congestion increased. Concerns were also raised regarding the number of so-called hoons and dangerous drivers that may be attracted to the area once the development has occurred.

How will kids get from the West side to the east side across Quarter Sessions Road. My adult family and myself attempted it and decided it was a 'take your life in your hands event. A pedestrian refuge is required at the north and south ends of Quarter Sessions near the new roundabout.

The curve of Sefton Rd in Sanctuary Gardens is also dangerous. Some form of traffic calming will be required to avoid drivers unfamiliar with the area getting themselves into trouble

Sefton Rd has an almost 90deg bend in Sanctuary Gardens just before where the Sydney Water property starts. It also has a reverse camber (i.e. slopes the wrong way) Drivers not familiar with this road often drive at excessive speed up the hill. If this became a major access road to the park, that could prove to be far more dangerous.

Sefton Rd is extremely narrow immediately adjacent to the Koorungal / Sefton roundabout. Even with the volume of traffic that it is currently supporting, it is extremely dangerous as right of way is not clear and there is barely enough space for two cars to pass each other as there are usually cars parked on the street due to local businesses.

5.6.3 Road and congestion suggestions

A handful agreed in principle that road upgrades are needed and more so if Westleigh Park was going to be developed. These responses offered suggestions to amend what has been proposed.

Need to improve the other access road and move the roundabout further south.

Roundabout at Quarter Sessions Road and Warragul Road needs to move.

Understand the need for Sefton Road access but concerned it will become a rat run. Would like to see the extension of Sefton Road be not so direct so people are not encouraged to use it as a short cut eg. go through a carpark to make it more windy and less direct.

The Sefton Road access should be available for general use and provide an additional evacuation route for Quarter Sessions Road residents.

I don't want Sefton road being extended and going near the reservoir. Would prefer south access road to come in from further east on Sefton road using the eastern maintenance trail through the bush pocket.

If this is to happen there needs to be a set of traffic lights at the junction of Sefton Road and Chilvers Road.

This designated exit road needs to be **in addition** to the proposed Sefton Road extension as per the plan. However the Warrigal Road roundabout entry and as an alternate entry route as currently depicted in the plan is not practical. More discussion and consultation is required for this very important issue.

5.6.4 No through access

Submissions also argued for a no through access of the site. This would prevent the worry residents have of a 'rat run' being created.

We do not want a permanent thoroughfare which would likely become a "rat-run" with traffic that would inconvenience residents.

We propose that the new sports fields incorporate a second access road that can be opened to traffic in an emergency.

Under no circumstances should there be a through link through the site where cars can drive in one entrance and out the other entrance.

If Sefton Road has to be extended, then it should be gated so it can't be used except for sporting uses or emergencies or remove the connection to Quarter Sessions Road.

Suggestion to have two means of entry and exit to the park for traffic.

A designated emergency exit road is **URGENTLY** required for this end of Quarter Sessions Rd, one that is NOT used as a through road but rather be gated so we can get through during an emergency. The designated emergency exit road must be at Warrigal Drive. Such a road would also cut the response time for the Westleigh RFS should they be called to neighbouring suburbs.

5.6.5 Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Emergency Access

A small number of submissions and feedback at swing bys expressed concerns about the road changes impacting the Westleigh RFS's access. Some submissions suggested the extension of Sefton Road should only be used in times of emergency.

We are concerned the RFS' access will be impaired.

The RFS training area will be dramatically reduced.

The RFS use the street for training and volunteer parking. Increased traffic may mean they are unable to exist quickly and safely.

Westleigh Park should be designed with disaster response and recovery in mind. The area could serve as a resource to help the community recover by facilitating community meetings, place to distribute aid, centre to coordinate recovery etc.

Consideration should be given to improving the parking for Westleigh Rural Fire Brigade. They simply don't have enough now.

The Westleigh fire fighters provide critical emergency services to the community and utilise the end of Warrigal Drive for training. We ask that the needs of the fire station be addressed to ensure the continuity of services and operations to minimise any impact to the fire fighters as they access the fire station and conduct training.

As a resident of Sefton Rd, I would be comfortable if an emergency exit was constructed between Quarter Sessions Road and Sefton Road. This access would be gated and secured and only opened in emergency situations such as threatening bushfires.

In case of emergency, increased traffic in the area would cause major congestions and potential grid lock on Quarter Sessions Road and Duffy Avenue.

Not completely sure, where the extension for Sefton Road is but support the extension in principle.

We note that there is pressure from Sefton Rd residents to disallow access via Sefton Road into and out of Westleigh Park. However, if the Sefton Road link does not go ahead, we will be against the development.

Sefton Road would be the primary entrance to the park and I agree that is lovely straight piece of road which lends itself perfectly to a grand entry, especially with the upgrade of the Sefton Road and Chilvers Road intersection.

However, the survey results provide a stark contrast. When participants were asked if they supported the extension of Sefton Road, the vast majority, 68 percent, responded they did, as shown in Figure 3 below.

5.6.6 Support for the road and traffic changes

A sizeable number of people at swing bys, but only a few tallied responses, supported the proposed road and access changes.

I applaud the creation of a secondary through road connection from Hornsby side to Westleigh to ease pressure and reliance on Duffy Avenue.

Agree that a second access road is needed, support this occurring at Sefton Road.

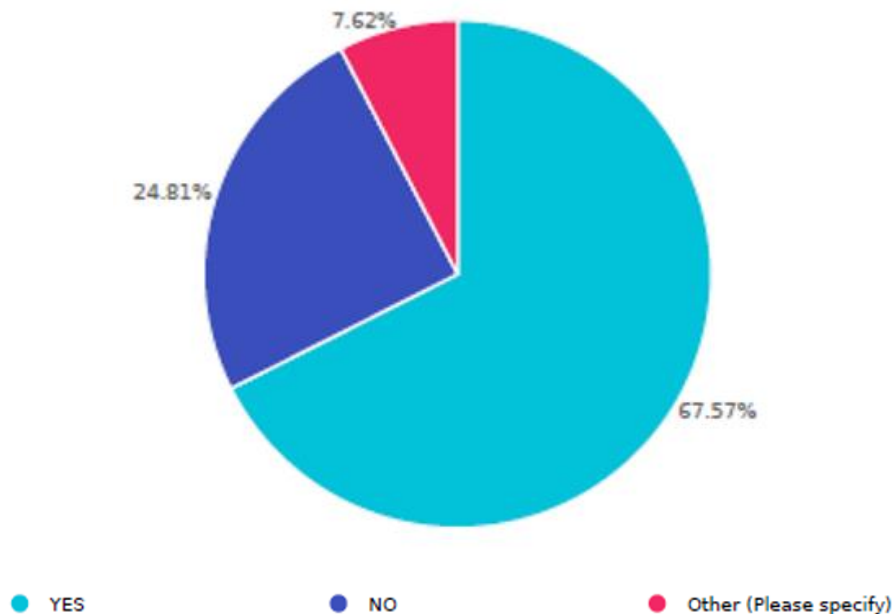
Sefton Road extension is a big positive for Quarter Sessions Road residents.

Sefton Rd link important to alleviate current traffic congestion and deal with increased traffic from sport fields.

Support but need parking restriction on Quarter Session Road.

Extending Sefton Road will be good for emergencies.

Figure 3 Do you support the proposal to extend Sefton Road to Quarter Road?



5.6.7 Car parking

Parking was raised across 2 per cent of the 1,427 tallied themes. Many worried that the proposal would cause overflow into neighbouring streets from the proposed park, from not enough car parking spaces provided onsite.

At busy times, residents won't be able to park outside their homes.

Overflow parking from major events would also be a problem as people would park in front of our houses.

Do not allow overflow parking onto the streets, have enough onsite parking

We request that street parking projections are not included in the WP parking forecasts. Suggestion to plan for all parking to be within WP boundaries and not on streets. This may require greater carparking on site or multi-storey car parks

On-site parking must be sufficient in number (at least 500 to 1000 as opposed to the proposed 360) and be appropriate in size (cater for cars with trailers).

350 is not enough

Parking restrictions on street need to be policed, enforced

Road impacts - there will be overflow of parking into Sanctuary Road

5.6.8 Access

Making the park as accessible as possible was argued strongly in a handful of submissions. This was not heard as strongly at the swing bys. Ensuring that there were other ways of accessing the site other than by car was valued highly in a number of submissions that felt the draft master plan failed to address this issue.

Active transport is not mentioned in the masterplan but would lessen the impacts of traffic and congestion and promote a healthy lifestyle. This will also enable fairer access to the park, not just to those who have access to a private vehicle.

Ensure the site can be accessed by coaches and public buses with sufficient wayfinding

There is no travel plan to the facility for anything other than cars, we need to see a broader integrated cycle/walking plan

Though some submissions expressed more focus should be placed on active and public transport options to the park, the results from the online survey showed that the majority of people (67 percent) would still opt to arrive by car. However, 56 percent said they would cycle to the park, highlighting the importance of safe road cycling options to and from the park.

5.7 Amenities – community space, café and playground

A significant number of people at swing bys as well as in some submissions, canvassed the need for community facilities. The most frequently mentioned facilities were a community hall and café. A smaller number of submissions, particularly from sporting groups, discussed the need for club and change rooms that cater for a diverse array of people as well as uses.

Is there a community centre in Westleigh Park?

Add an art and cultural centre for those who don't participate in MTB or sports

Need an arts hub, sport is OK but we have enough areas catered for that

Need to provide community facilities on site, eg. a community hall

Would like to see some cafes on site

Suggestion to include more amenities or leave room for them in the future- make the plans flexible

Community Centre needed at Westleigh

A multi-roomed community hall that can be booked for many to use

I would like to see a facility that enables indoor activities like dance, ballet, functions etc. As well as activity for local community groups the local community halls are often booked out for groups wanting to use it and the ability for yoga, administration for sporting groups. In particular I would like to see a facility that can get constant usage and drive business and revenue from the site

Additional space for the improved development of both the RFS and SES (in combination with land they already have) – both crucial organisations to the ongoing safety of our suburb

We do not have a designated community space. Such a hall could include designated space for groups such as historical society, or Indigenous representation for the significant sites in our area, or for

other local groups to meet. The environmental and indigenous significance of the area needs to be embraced and preserved.

I would like a Function centre in the facility that could cater for indoor meetings, futsal, possibility of yoga classes or a gym and a Cafe, I think a cafe with the right surrounding facilities would do well and would be very pleasant to sit out attracting riders, Walkers and any of the sporting groups during the week and on weekends.

Image 4 Playground Westleigh Park



5.8 Sports fields

The introduction of three new playing fields was mentioned in approximately 11 percent of the 1,427 tallied responses. From these references, 75 per cent favourably mentioned the prospect of better quality and more facilities for growing local clubs. 25 percent did not see the need for three new fields. A handful of submissions from the mountain biking community felt that too much attention and focus was being put on new playing fields. This tension also played out at the Ruddock Park swing by.

5.8.1 Support for playing fields

Of the responses that mentioned sports fields, three quarters were positive. A large number of these submissions were associated with sporting clubs, representing a wide variety of codes (including football, soccer and cricket). They referenced growing numbers of members and need for amenities to support participants.

Understands the need for more sporting fields.

There is a recognised need for more sporting fields in the Hornsby area (30per cent shortfall for football).

There is a desire for more local fields, saving local players' families from travelling long distances.

I support sports developments, including synthetic field at Westleigh

I see the three sports facilities as a need to the community when one sees the very poorly planned mass of multi-story home units that have been built in the Hornsby shire. People have to be able to participate in sport somewhere.

Support the playing fields although I would prefer that there was room for a Pump track in the flat open section of the Park.

5.8.2 Support for an athletics track

A small number of people at the swing bys and several submissions made it clear that an athletics tracks is needed in the Shire.

Athletics track important.

Athletic track a must.

The inclusion of a year-round, all-weather athletics facility at Westleigh would be a fantastic addition to the Hornsby Shire, letting more children and adults participate in sport all year round. All they need is a pair of runners and they are off!

the athletic track which Little A's would use every Saturday in summer and be such an improvement on the Pennant Hills Park facility.

Need a proper athletics track at Hornsby and Westleigh (Foxglove is not up to standard and not enough shade).

5.8.3 Synthetic vs natural turf playing surface

The surfaces of the three sports platforms were a subject of much conversation, and was discussed in a small, but statistically significant number of submissions. It was a divisive issue which is outlined below. Sporting clubs, organisations and participants were, for the majority, supportive of the synthetic surfaces that have been proposed.

The presence of two synthetic fields in precinct two is a fantastic edition to WP and is well supported. When synthetic fields are delivered in the correct manner, through professional design and construction methodologists that are site suitable, their sue can be significantly maximised.

I Support the synthetic football field proposal. Synthetic fields will have greater summer usage and ability to play in all weather conditions.

As a mother of two children who play soccerit is an exciting time to plan for a synthetic field that will allow for play even during inclement weather (currently we have games cancelled when it rains on Friday) and in summer when fields are taken over by cricket clubs.

I support sports developments, including synthetic field at Westleigh
Synthetic fields are necessary.

Can see the benefit of synthetic fields.

Those comments that stated objections, did so mostly on the basis of environmental reasons.

Concerned about synthetic surfaces – not good for waste at end of life and not proven for wear and tear plus not good to play on – hot and skin burns.

We object to the Precinct 2 Sports field being synthetically surfaced. There is an environmental risk of plastics, micro-plastics and chemicals ending up in adjacent creek catchments and ultimately in the ocean. It is now widely recognised that there is a growing problem of micro-plastic pollution in the ocean. Synthetic turf can be even more toxic if recycled tyre crumbs are used as infill. The ground covered by synthetic turf becomes sterile and there is no food or habitat for birds and other wildlife.

This site is particularly unsuitable for synthetic turf as it is exposed to the full sun and bushfires. Synthetic turf can get extremely hot and be unsafe for players. Synthetic turf can also burn in a bushfire and produce toxic fumes – not something we want to contemplate.

Synthetic turf should not be used on sporting fields as it sheds micro plastics, heavy metals and carcinogens into the environment, deprives local fauna on feeding sites, burns in severe bushfire conditions and produces toxic gases, is not sustainable.

5.9 Objections against sports fields

Whilst sporting groups and many of those who have family participating in sports were very supportive of the proposed sporting fields, just under one quarter of responses that mentioned the sporting fields raised concerns. Reasons included lighting impacts, noise impacts, environmental impacts, congestion impacts and other uses not being possible on site.

There are a lot of sporting fields and barbeque grounds all over the area already but there are only two bike parks that we cherish and suited for all ages.

Why does all open space need to almost be playing fields and roads for cars (looking at your master plan) it's all mainstream or nothing!

The surrounds of the proposed sporting fields have been recognised as of great biodiversity value.

Noise from sporting activities is often very loud and is likely to affect fauna the way it does people, we get stressed or move away. We

would like noise reduced as much as possible allowing fauna to continue to flourish.

5.9.1 Sport fields impacts on neighbours

The majority of feedback on this theme was received at the swing bys, and dominated by the impact the sports fields would have on adjoining neighbours – in particular lighting and noise. Other concerns were also raised such as vandalism and the need for security.

Graffiti and vandalism will increase in the area

Lighting and hours of usage will have an impact on local residents and biodiversity.

Sports lighting is an issue.

Concern about noise and lights from sportsground use.

Concerned about whistle noises during the day.

There may be a significant difference in impacts on local residents depending on the intensity and design of the option chosen by Council. As you would be aware, the existing background noise levels in this bushy suburb would be very low and the intermittent acoustic impacts from "bursts" of noise from sporting events could be an issue. In addition to the design and sheer number of fields, The provision, location and design of any stadium seating in the masterplan would impact acoustic levels. Impact from flood lighting will also vary, it being noted that the southern field is quite elevated in comparison to the adjacent land to the west.

A large sporting facility risks alienating residents.

5.9.2 Support for lighting on the sports fields

Submissions were received from individuals as well as sporting clubs and organisations in support of lighting. Some responses advocated for lighting, on the grounds of extended playing and training time, and the positive flow on effect in accommodating future growth of sports in the area.

I support use of floodlights to allow for training and night matches. strongly supports the inclusion of floodlighting at all three precincts at Westleigh. Adequate lighting for football fields is now an essential element in the ongoing viability of any venue.

Include the provision of floodlighting to 300lux pitch / 200lux outfield to accommodate night matches and training.

Adding floodlights will allow for evening training and night matches also. This development would support 2,900 local football players and many more users informally.

5.9.3 Objections against lighting on the sports fields

In contrast to the swing bys, which raised the impact of lighting on residential neighbours, submissions that raised concerns about lighting did so in regards to its detrimental impact on the native flora and fauna, in particular the Powerful Owl.

The night lights on the three precincts.... will dominate this area and, with the possible addition of sport lighting at Hornsby Park, the eastern side of Berowra Valley will be brilliantly lit in the early part of the night

The bright lights will also have an adverse effect on the feeding and breeding of native fauna

All lighting on site must conform with the "Light Pollution Guidelines" (Australian Government, 2020) as the sports fields are embedded in bushland and adjacent to the Dog Pound Creek Biobanking site.

Night lights on the sports field will disturb the prey and the Power Owls, reducing feeding opportunities for the owls.

Night lights are known to disrupt animal behaviours such as feeding, reproduction and would likely disperse nocturnal animals from their habitat thus, ideally, the lights should only be illuminated for as short a time as possible, produce the least damaging wavelengths

for fauna and be directed on to the playing surface and not spill over the general area.

Many of the local nocturnal fauna become active at dusk and early dark, the exact time of evening sport activities. The adjacent Dog Pound/Larool Creek Powerful Owl pair become active at this time

5.9.4 Road cycling/criterium

A handful of people at the swing bys requested that road cycling/criterion, potentially around the athletics track, be included in the draft master plan. Similarly, a very small number of submissions raised this. However, at stakeholder meetings it was discussed in significant detail.

Road cycling tracks for both racing and general.

Very disappointed that the original WWBA proposal for cycling has not been included. There are no facilities like that on the northern side of Sydney.

Is there a cycling criterion track proposed?

The criterium track if designed well could potentially have many uses.

Cycle criterium track around the perimeter as there are no off road training facilities in Northern Sydney.

Ring the athletics track with a velodrome of medium banking at 500m in length.

Add a road cycling/walking track.

Image 5 Open space and bike track at Westleigh Park

5.10 Recognition of Indigenous history on site

A small number of submissions raised this issue and were mainly concerned with ensuring Indigenous culture was appropriately celebrated and interpreted on site, as well as suggestions about how to best conduct ongoing engagement.

Dual/new naming opportunities for sites, walking trails and cycleways within the Hornsby and Westleigh sites, in accordance with Council's Aboriginal dual naming policy (currently in draft) which involves a consultation process with the HATSIC Committee, local Traditional Owners and language holders.

The efforts for Indigenous consultation on this project are positive and should be made transparent throughout the planning, construction and ongoing phases of the project. There could be

provisions for an educational infographic series placed throughout the development or along newly defined walking trails.

Local Aboriginal peoples, Cultural values, Heritage, and sites need to be at the forefront of any Council policy and planning discussions, documents, and decisions

Any information about local Cultural Heritage (including Aboriginal knowledges and languages) should be obtained directly from the local Traditional Owners, namely (a) Awabakal & GuriNgai Pty Ltd and (b) Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation, in the form of paid consultancy arrangements, and the content being approved and used with their consent.

5.11 General support for the draft master plan

At the swing by held in Hornsby Mall, respondents were generally very supportive of the proposed master plan for Westleigh Park. Those who attended the Ruddock Park swing by mostly raised areas of concerns. Most respondents realised that, in principle, the site does need to be developed and was purchased with the intent to become a sporting facility for the area. A significant proportion of residents do not want to see much change in the area, if any, as they value the current peace and tranquillity. Those written responses that were explicitly supportive of the proposed draft master plan expressed excitement.

It's fantastic that Hornsby Council are making a significant investment into 2 new parks in the LGA.

As a resident of Westleigh, I am very excited by the facilities being proposed and am very keen to see this development go ahead and provide a diverse recreation area for the community. I believe a multi-sport facility with ample active and passive recreation area will serve our community well in providing much needed additional sporting grounds and park area.

I believe this could be of great benefit to the Westleigh/Thornleigh community and the broader Hornsby area.

Done right & in collaboration - we have this once in a lifetime opportunity to put this community project and our fabulous Westleigh recreation park and bushland environment on the map with "world class" credentials. Westleigh is the best place to live in this city, but we realize that we cannot have it all to ourselves. Please don't allow an imbalance of priorities hinder this opportunity to share & enhance our rare amenities!

I am a resident of Asquith and am looking forward to the additional outdoor space that will be developed for residents and visitors.

I applaud Council's decision to utilise the pace for much needed playing fields and bike tracks.

It's been a long time coming. But it looks like it has been well worth the wait. The Draft Plan embraces many of the ideas presented back then as an "Earth Park".

I hope I will see it come to fruition soon. Certainly, a major recreation space such as this is needed, and needed now.

Great. Important for the area.

Good proposal.

We are excited about the proposal of a number of both passive and active recreational activities in the area.

Really like the proposal for WP. Happy with everything being proposed.

Like the vision for Westleigh.

Excellent proposal.

Kudos to the Council for what we are proposing, looks great.

This is fantastic.

100 per cent support the project, it is a huge plus for the community. I could not support this project more.

Commends Council on planning for a future WP which provides a range of options for physical activity, including sports fields, cycling, walking paths and a children's playground.

Fantastic opportunity the site provides in supplying an essential multi-purpose sports facility in the southern area of the Shire that will see continued increasing demand on sporting facilities as the population of the area grows.

The proposal for Westleigh Park will provide welcome infrastructure to provide much needed facilities for our families who are all local residents. The lack of grounds is an existing problem and is getting progressively worse.

The online survey showed that the majority of respondents are supportive of the current plan, with 59 percent indicating that based on what they currently know about the redevelopment of the Westleigh Park site, they would be very likely to visit in the future for recreation.

5.12 Project financials

Although only a very small number of submissions canvassed project financials, they did so to offer support in raising additional funding to deliver the proposed master plan:

Could help to raise funds to run the facility.

Willing to provide support and access to funding.

Proposed contributing financially directly and indirectly to this project.

5.13 Sustainability on site

A very small number of submissions suggested ways the plan could make Westleigh Park more sustainable.

Materials used within the site need to have a life cycle assessment, be carbon neutral and sustainable.

Applying a 'green wash' to the project planning so that all aspects are viewed, and decisions made through the prism of resource and environmental sustainability.

The master plan should contribute and allow space to have sustainable approaches through the collection of all road and roof water for re-use in irrigation, and provision of solar and wind generation for power.

5.13.1 PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), contamination and asbestos

The mention of PFAS, contamination and asbestos were only recorded in a few submissions. References were made to existing PFAS contamination as a result of local fire-fighting training and asbestos from the rubbish tip that once existed on the site.

It is my understanding there may be PFAS, asbestos and other unnamed contaminants in the soil in the construction area, PFAS are of major concern are because they don't fully degrade and move easily through air and water, can quickly travel long distances, and accumulate in sediment, soil, and plants.

I am very concerned that the strategy seems to be to bury it under huge amounts of concrete and then top it with synthetic grass on which to play sport.

The presence of PFAS in the soil is a serious concern and site remediation needs to be addressed as a priority, irrespective of prioritisation of what facilities may be constructed subsequently.

Airborne asbestos particles are also a risk to the water in the reservoir. The reservoir is covered but is not sealed to the extent necessary to exclude airborne asbestos particles.

5.14 Complaints about community engagement process

Comments and issues were raised by some residents, local community groups and from the mountain bike community about the consultation process across all feedback channels. Many of these submissions argued the community had not been adequately consulted, or for long enough.

Community suggestions for how this land could be developed and what features should be included in the overall concept were not canvassed among residents of Westleigh. Instead, we have been presented with a *fait accompli* handed down to us by HSC, reducing Westleigh residents to the role of passive commentators on the DMP rather than active participants in its conceptual development.

HSC has not actively engaged with this community, especially when peoples' lives have been totally dislocated, and their daily concerns distracted, by the turmoil of the corona virus in the last 18 months. Communication about this massive project has been scant.

Also, two limited meetings in the Hornsby Mall and one in Ruddock Park do not in my mind represent serious consultation with rate payers when considering the Quarry development and, for us, Westleigh Park – the combined value of which amounts to some \$200 million dollars!

The two week "extension" for community consultation granted by Council is totally tokenistic and of no benefit.

5.15 Other issues:

Other issues that were raised by a statistically very small number (less than one percent) but should be noted include:

- » timeframes for the project itself
- » universal access for all abilities
- » design suggestions for children's playgrounds
- » use of sustainable materials
- » Sydney Water ownership of the land
- » layout and design of the playing fields
- » construction impacts
- » use of the word 'park' instead of 'reserve'
- » monitoring and auditing of flora and fauna
- » pet and exotic animal free space
- » rename Westleigh Park
- » future recognition of the Scar Tree
- » recognition of the Indigenous rock shelter with artefacts on the western side.

6 Stakeholder meetings

The purpose of these meetings was to assist stakeholders and their members to draft their submissions, by presenting a high-level overview of the draft master plan, and answering any questions

As it was not a formal feedback channel, comprehensive notes were not taken. However, a comments were themed and key point listed below to understand the areas the stakeholders were most interested in or where they had queries

6.1.1 HATSICC – 29 April 2021

Information about the master plan was presented as an agenda item at a scheduled meeting.

Aboriginal heritage

- » Appropriate interpretation of the scar tree.
- » Appropriate celebration and interpretation of other existing aboriginal heritage items.
- » Request for ongoing consultation and input.

6.1.2 Council Advisory Committee –6 May 2021

Access road

- » Ownership of land that the proposed road will travel through.

Sustainability

- » Question about harvesting water on site.

Sporting fields

- » Surface – turf or synthetic, and environmental impact of synthetic.
- » Whether lighting will be included.

Aboriginal heritage

- » Appropriate interpretation of the scar tree.
- » Appropriate celebration and interpretation of other existing Aboriginal heritage items.
- » Request for ongoing consultation and input.

Shared paths and endangered areas

- » Need to minimise conflict between user groups.
- » Clarified that paths were not in high value ecological areas.
- » Curious about what measures will be in place to keep Mtn Bikes out of the EEC into the future.

Proposed link between Hornsby and Westleigh Parks

- » Concern about preserving Blue Gum High forest.

6.1.3 Environment Groups – 10 May 2021

Bushland

- » Concern about mountain biking in Blue Gum High Forest, and comments that it shouldn't occur in those areas.
- » Concern about weeds being spread by mountain bikers, particularly along the proposed link between Hornsby and Westleigh Parks.

Mountain bike tracks

- » Questioned the accuracy of the percentage decrease of the mountain bike tracks.

- » Questioned how the creation of more unsanctioned tracks would be prevented.
- » Enquired if Council knew the proportion of mountain bikers who are not local residents.

Shared paths

- » Expressed the view that shared paths between walkers and the mountain biking community create conflict between the users and are dangerous to walkers.

Proposed link between Hornsby and Westleigh Parks

- » Request that a REF is completed as soon as possible.
- » Concern about impacts to the Powerful Owl.
- » Questioned the accuracy of some of the information provided.
- » Preservation of the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest is of paramount importance.
- » Not supportive of the link being used by mountain biking community as it will increase the numbers of people using the fire trail and have negative impacts in the flora and fauna.
- » Curious about investigation into other routes for the link

Documentation

- » Asked for further background documents to be available on the Westleigh Park master plan website.

Aboriginal heritage

- » Expressed the view that this was important to the site and needed to be recognised, celebrated and interpreted accordingly.

6.1.4 Mountain Biking Groups –11 May 2021

Collaboration to redesign proposed tracks

- » Significant interest in being actively involved in designing the tracks.
- » Request to walk around the site to assist in the detailed design of the track to ensure that the current experience and the elements that make it popular and valued by the mountain biking community are maintained.

Conflict between mountain biking and bushwalking communities

- » Concern that the mountain biking community is being unfairly treated.
- » Feeling that the bushwalking community is getting preferential treatment.
- » Confusion around walking trails being allowed in the biobanking site when mountain biking is not allowed (tracks have been excised from the biobanking site).

NPWS management of other EEC tracks and impacts on EEC

- » Assertion that the NPWS allows mountain biking through high value/EEC bushland so a precedent has been set and would like Council to take that into account.
- » Challenged that mountain biking doesn't impact EEC negatively.
- » Would like to see reports that document what flora and fauna exists on site.
- » Request for the assessment of the impact of the current tracks on the environment.

Bushfire reduction

- » Questions related to how frequently this will be undertaken in the future and its impact on the environment in comparison to mountain biking.

Link between Hornsby and Westleigh Park

- » Asked questions about the proposed route and if alternatives were investigated.
- » Concerned about tracks adjacent to neighbours and impact on them.

Petition

- » Request that a petition be circulated and signed by the mountain biking community is considered as part of the consultation process.

6.1.5 Sporting groups – 18 May 2021

Support for the draft master plan

- » Overall support from the attendees was expressed.

Surface and lay out of the proposed fields

- » Merits of synthetic surfaces and questions about use of rubber.
- » Number of fields and orientation and dimensions of fields.
- » Sought confirmation that cricket has been included on platforms (not identified on the drawings).

Car parking

- » Enquiry about number of parking spaces and research into adequacy.

Children's playground

- » Significant support for inclusion.

Access road

- » Enquiries about its access, direction and capacity.

Sporting clubhouse/amenities

- » Expressed a need for clubs using facilities and amenities for meetings, general use and functions

6.1.6 Bushwalking Groups – 20 May 2021

Conflict between mountain biking and bushwalking

- » Concern about steep areas and speed of mountain bikers.
- » Need a code of conduct.

Protection of EEC

- » Support the reduction of mountain bike trails.
- » It would be preferable to protect Blue Gum track from trails.

6.1.7 Westleigh Progress associations and representatives from Sefton Road – 20 May 2021

Traffic congestion and Sefton Road impacts

- » Overwhelming concern about traffic congestion and impact on Sefton Road.
- » Congestion is already getting worse, this will exacerbate it.
- » Concerned about conglomeration of fields and impact – such as Meadowbank.
- » Concern that local streets will be overloading the local streets with traffic that will be generated by operation of the park.

Benefit to neighbours to balance the negative impacts

- » Nothing in the draft master plan that offsets the impact of the sporting fields and provides benefits to locals.
- » Needs a community building for locals.
- » No gain for the impost of congestion, and sports activities that cater to those who live outside Westleigh.

No through access – emergency only

- » Need for an emergency exit.
- » Through road should only be open during emergencies.
- » As congestion gets worse, the need for an emergency exit egress.

Fire Brigade facility

- » A facility that would benefit the state-wide fire service.
- » Important asset to the local area
- » Needs its own new facilities

Extension of the consultation period

- » Not enough people know about the draft master plan and consultation.
- » Request for consultation period to be extended.

Safety

- » Sporting grounds will attract vandals and anti-social behaviour.

Sydney Water agreement to use of land for road

- » Questions about the risk of the road traversing through land owned by Sydney Water.
- » Risk that Sydney Water will not agree/approve of proposed land uses.

6.1.8 Westleigh Water Board Alliance – 25 May 2021

No through access except for emergencies

- » Under no circumstances should there be a link through the site where cars can drive in one entrance and out the other entrance.
- » Discussion as to engineering mechanisms to “cut” the through link yet have it in place for emergencies, such as:
 - > boom gates, and
 - > restricting access by cars to either the north or south of site. Cars would not be able to drive through the site looking for car parking.

Traffic congestion

- » Traffic calming needed on roads.
- » Concern about overflow parking on surrounding streets.

Inclusion of cycling tracks (including Criterium)

- » The north west needs cycling facilities.
- » A Criterium track could fit into the eastern edge
- » Could be multi use tracks for all types of cycling including mountain biking.
- » Would need to be separated from cars when in use.
- » Could provide an income during race meetings.
- » Could be used by community when not in use for cycling.

Amenities – community centre/clubhouse

- » Westleigh is in need of community hub/ facility.

- » Needs to be double the size of the brick pit – could provide income generating opportunities.
- » Needs a café on site.
- » Soccer club needs a club house and somewhere to display trophies.
- » Needs to be a home ground for a club – unlike Morrison Bay. Needs to be community owned and run.

Facilities – learn to swim centre

- » There is currently a shortage of learn to swim facilities in Hornsby Shire.
- » Could provide a revenue stream.

Support for the mountain biking on site

- » Consider it a great site for mountain biking and encouraged Council to work with mountain biking community.

Contamination

- » Requested information about contamination onsite as they are receiving requests from the community to understand what it is.

Appendices



A5 Postcard



As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces.

To cater for this long-term demand, Council has been drafting master plans for two exciting regional sized parks that will provide a huge range of activities for generations to come.

HORNSBY PARK

We are creating a leisure and nature destination of regional proportions. The site's historical significance to the area, the dramatic quarry walls, the lake and the ecologically endangered bushland mean this is no ordinary park – it is unique to Hornsby.

Council is seeking the community's feedback on the draft master plan and park delivery priorities. Have your say by visiting our website hornsbypark.com.au or scan the QR code.

WESTLEIGH PARK

Will be a regional sized, multi-purpose sports and recreational destination delivered over a number of stages. It will be large enough to provide a number of sportsgrounds for a range of activities, as well as informal exercise areas, playgrounds, bushland experiences and mountain bike trails.

A draft master plan has been developed and Council is seeking the community's feedback. Visit: hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

MEET THE TEAM

Find out more, meet the team, and ask your questions at our Swing-Bys:

Hornsby Mall
Saturday 1 May
Thursday 13 May
11am – 2pm

Ruddock Park,
Westleigh
Saturday 15 May
11am – 2pm



A2 Poster

HAVE YOUR SAY

HORNSBY AND WESTLEIGH PARKS' DRAFT MASTER PLANS





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www.hornsbypark.com.au

Westleigh survey landing page



Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan

Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan

As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces. To cater for this long-term demand, Council has developed a [draft master plan](#) for a new regional sized park at Westleigh and is now seeking the community's feedback.

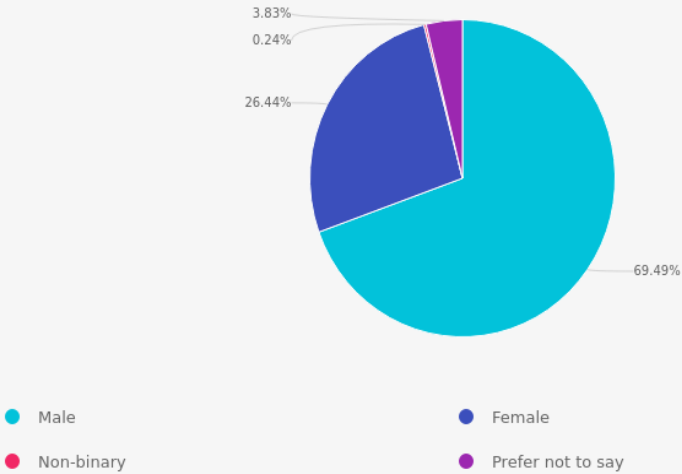
This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.



Westleigh survey demographics

What gender do you identify with?

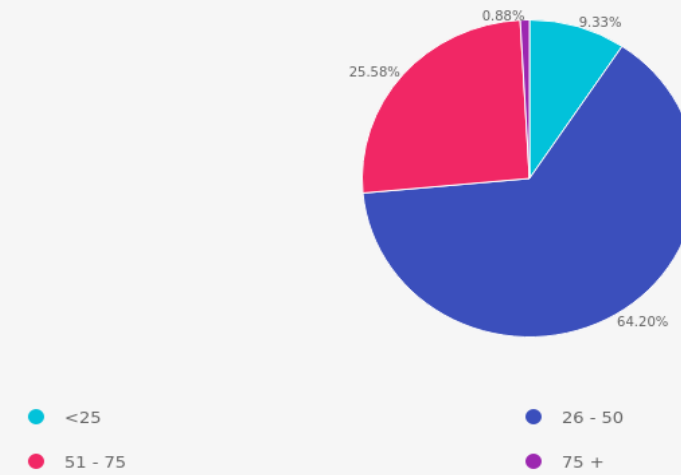
Answered: 1252 Skipped: 626



Choices	Response percent	Response count
Male	69.49%	870
Female	26.44%	331
Non-binary	0.24%	3
Prefer not to say	3.83%	48

What is your age bracket?

Answered: 1243 Skipped: 635



Choices	Response percent	Response count
<25	9.33%	116
26 - 50	64.20%	798
51 - 75	25.58%	318
75 +	0.88%	11

A0 Boards

WESTLEIGH PARK A NEW PARK



WESTLEIGH PARK DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Council has developed a draft master plan for the new park at Westleigh and is now seeking the community's feedback.

Westleigh Park will be a regional sized multi-purpose sports and recreational destination. It will be large enough to provide a number of sportsfields to cater for a range of sporting codes, as well as informal exercise areas, playgrounds and bushland experiences.

Westleigh Park will not be a single-purpose facility – rather, it will offer a range of active and passive recreation opportunities to cater for the diverse needs of the community.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- » Community-based sport
- » Opportunities for school and club athletics
- » Cycling and mountain biking
- » Informal exercising and walking
- » Children's playground
- » Bushwalking
- » Passive recreation such as picnic areas.



hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

WESTLEIGH PARK A NEW PARK



RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The draft master plan proposes three sports facility platforms that have been designed to work within the constraints of the existing bushland vegetation and the future provision of improved road access.

SOUTHERN MULTI-PURPOSE NATURAL TURF SPORTSFIELD PLATFORM – FULL SENIOR SIZE

The south of the site provides the widest area where a playing field platform can be accommodated, taking into consideration the protection of the adjoining bushland. The draft master plan illustrates a multi-purpose playing field platform which accommodates either two (2) full competition size football fields or a full-size AFL field, with a full-size cricket ground during summer.

CENTRAL MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTSFIELD PLATFORM

A second multi-purpose field platform is proposed in the centre of the site. The available space through this area could accommodate a turf surface or alternatively, a synthetic surface to meet demand. This field is intended for multiple sports and activities.

ATHLETICS TRACK AND SUPPORT FACILITIES

To the north in the narrowest section of the previously cleared lands, a third platform is proposed which can support a senior competition athletics track and internal field area. It could accommodate an all-weather elite athletics facility or alternatively be developed as a line marked grass track. Surrounding grassed areas are proposed to accommodate field events to supplement the centre grassed field.

Along with organised sports, the park could also cater for unstructured recreation such as cycling, mountain biking, dog walking and bushwalking. The new park will be linked to Ruddock Park with improved shared pathways to Berowra Valley National Park by existing and improved connections.



Westleigh Park will also connect to Hornsby Park on the completion of the initial stage of the Hornsby Park embellishments. It will offer another experience to visitors of either park, moving through the Shire on foot or bike.

hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

WESTLEIGH PARK



A STAGED APPROACH

The draft master plan promotes a vision for Westleigh Park that provides a large range of activities for the whole community.

After Council acquired the site, the NSW Government provided \$40 million to creating the park. The cost to deliver the full scope of works in the draft master plan and maintain the park for ongoing use exceeds the grant funding allocation. This means the park will be delivered in stages as further funding becomes available, and to ensure there is adequate funding to maintain the park for ongoing use. The proposed staging is:

CAR PARKING AND IMPROVED ACCESS FOR TRAFFIC

As part of the draft master plan, the following access improvements have been proposed:

- » New access road (extension of Sefton Road to Quarter Sessions Road)
- » Intersection upgrade (Sefton and Chilvers Road) and
- » 350 car parking spaces.

The proposed traffic and parking plans allow for better management than currently exists. Having two points of entry and exit will spread the peak traffic flow and provide greater public safety.

The proposed extension to Sefton Road will also enhance traffic flow from Westleigh to the north, while improvements to the intersection at Sefton Road/Chilvers Road will be part of the proposed works in Stage 3.



Proposed southern platform

hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

WESTLEIGH PARK

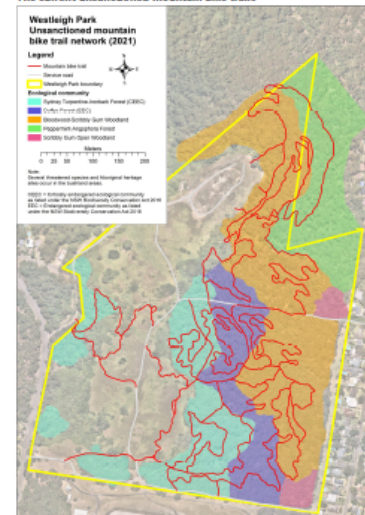
A NEW PARK



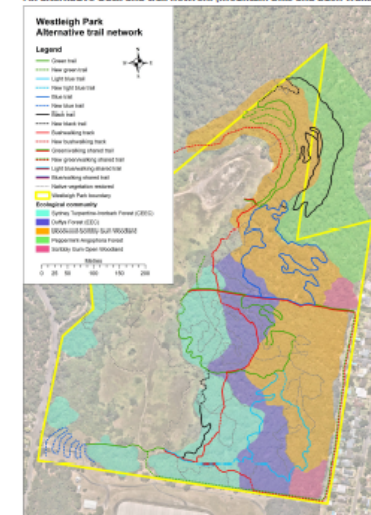
A NEW TRAIL AND TRACK NETWORK

The draft master plan considers alternative tracks and trails for a variety of users.

The current unsanctioned mountain bike trails



An alternative track and trail network (mountain bike and bush walking)



TRACKS AND TRAILS

Currently there are existing unsanctioned mountain bike trails on site (above left). The draft master plan (above right) identifies an alternative track and trail network that relocates trails outside and to the edges of high value biodiversity areas. The aim of this is to reduce the impact on the critically endangered communities and threatened species, while allowing mountain biking and bush walking.

FEEDBACK

Council is seeking feedback on the draft master plan to best understand the community's priorities. To have your say, visit hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark



hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

DL Rates Notice

HAVE YOUR SAY | HORNSBY AND WESTLEIGH PARKS' DRAFT MASTER PLANS



As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces.

To cater for this long-term demand, ideas have been prepared for how two exciting regional sized parks could be developed to provide a huge range of activities for generations to come.

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WESTLEIGH PARK

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A draft master plan has been developed and Council is seeking the community's feedback. Visit: hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark



e-News

HAVE YOUR SAY

As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces.

To cater for this long-term demand, ideas have been prepared for how two exciting regional sized parks could be developed to provide a huge range of activities for generations to come.

HORNSBY PARK

We are creating a leisure and nature destination of regional proportions. The site's historical significance to the area, the dramatic quarry walls, the lake and the ecologically endangered bushland mean this is no ordinary park – it is unique to Hornsby.

[View the Exhibition](#)



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[View the Exhibition](#)



MEET THE TEAM

Find out more, meet the team and ask your questions at our Swing-By in Hornsby Mall: **Thursday 13 May, 11am-2pm**


Or Swing-By and meet the team at Ruddock Park, Westleigh: **Saturday 15 May, 11am-2pm**

Media article – Council

Newslocal > Hornsby Advocate

Hornsby Park: Canopy walk part of \$130M park revamp

A \$130m proposal to transform a former quarry into Sydney's latest tourist attraction can be revealed. SEE THE STUNNING IMAGES.



Nicole Pierre

[Follow](#)

@NPierre08

less than 2 min read

May 7, 2021 - 8:20AM

Hornsby Advocate

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comments

The draft masterplan for the \$130 million redevelopment of Hornsby Park includes an incredible canopy walk, mountain biking trails, climbing facilities, sports grounds and family picnic areas.

Hornsby Park is set to undergo a mega transformation to become one of Sydney's biggest tourist and family destinations.

The draft masterplan for the park's \$130 million revamp has recently been revealed by Hornsby Council.

An incredible canopy walk stretching across the site has been proposed along with mountain biking trails, climbing facilities, sports fields and family picnic areas.

The 59-hectare park and bushland is to be developed into a "landmark recreation destination" for locals, the wider Sydney community and tourists, according to the masterplan.

The quarry void nestled among bushland is currently an abandoned large quarry yet it has been partially filled to make way for the park's development.

Ecotourism accommodation, water activities and impressive lawns for open air events have also been proposed.

Hornsby Shire mayor Philip Ruddock said: "This 50-hectare park is going to be the recreational jewel of the entire region, attracting people from all over Sydney and further afield.

"Like many people, I grew up listening to the explosions at the quarry and I'm thrilled that I will be able to stand among the trees and flowers of the park that will take its place."

The quarry is currently abandoned

It will house an impressive amphitheatre for open air events and concerts

While \$50 million in NSW Government funding has been provided for the park's transformation, there is still a significant \$85 million shortfall.

When asked on how it will be funded, a Hornsby Council spokeswoman said a portion is expected to come from grants and developer contributions.

"Council will vigorously pursue every funding opportunity to deliver the community's vision for Hornsby Park. We expect this will include grants and developer contributions," the council spokeswoman said.

"There's also the potential for private sector involvement to deliver some aspects of the master plan proposals, particularly the adventure recreation and ecotourism accommodation options."

Concept designs for the quarry void

Hornsby Park draft masterplan

Council has had approval to deliver earthworks that is expected to start later this year.

The park's proposed features including recreation facilities and sports fields will require separate approval processes and will be delivered in stages with stage one expected to open in 2024.

Hornsby Quarry was a hard rock quarry operational from the early 1900s and was in use until the late 1990s before it was acquired

More Coverage
[Hills set to be treasure trove for our](#)

Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan

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Advertorial – Council

Hornsby Advocate, 7 May 2021

Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Post, 9 May 2021

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Post - Issue 9, May, 2021

Have your say

We value your input on local community issues and have several important projects coming up. Please have your say and get involved.



As Hornsby Shire's population grows, so too does the need for a wide variety of open and green spaces. To cater for this long-term demand, ideas have been prepared for how two exciting regionally sized parks could be developed to provide a huge range of activities for generations to come.

Hornsby Park

We are creating a leisure and nature destination of regional proportions. The site's historical significance to the area, the dramatic quarry walls, lake, the ecologically and endangered bushland mean this is no ordinary park – it is unique to Hornsby. Council is seeking the community's feedback on the draft master plan and park delivery priorities.

Have your say by visiting our website hornsbypark.com.au or scan the QR code.



Westleigh Park

Will be a regional sized, multi-purpose sports and recreational destination delivered over a number of stages. It will be large enough to provide a number of sportsgrounds for a range of activities, as well as informal exercise areas, playgrounds, bushland experiences and mountain bike trails. A draft master plan has been developed and Council is seeking the community's feedback.

Visit: hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark

Delivery Program and Operational Plan

2021-2022 Delivery Program including the Operational Plan 2021/22

Outlines the Services, Key Initiatives and Capital Projects Council has planned to move towards the community vision in the Community Strategic Plan. The Annual Budget and other financial details including Council's resourcing information, information on rating and domestic waste management are also included.

Fees and Charges 2021/22

Outlines what Council will charge in 2021/22 for services and facilities it provides.

On Public Exhibition until **Monday 17 May**
hornsby.nsw.gov.au/yoursay

Draft Community Engagement Policy and Plan

Outlines Council's commitment to building open, transparent and active relationships with the community, and provides a guide for staff and consultants in the deliverance of best-practice community and stakeholder engagement with high-quality outcomes.

On Public Exhibition until **Friday 28 May**
hornsby.nsw.gov.au/yoursay

Petition


change.org

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Petition detailsCommentsUpdates

Protect rare bushland in Berowra Valley



702 have signed. Let's get to 1,000!

First name

Last name

Email

Sydney, 2000Australia

☒ Display my name and comment on this petition

Sign this petition

Bob Hughes started this petition to Hornsby Shire Councillors (Hornsby Shire Council) and 1 other

Significant damage is being caused to rare bushland in Berowra Valley by mountain bike trails. Local conservation groups are asking you to sign to support the closure of these trails by Hornsby Council.

Critically Endangered Ecological Communities, Biobanking Sites, areas of heritage as well as areas containing Threatened Species are currently under threat. Hornsby Council is considering sanctioning mountain bike trails in rare bushland.

A special type of Critically Endangered Ecological Community, Sydney Blue Gum Diatreme Forest, occurs nowhere else on earth and grows in the rich soils of the volcanic diatreme from Hornsby Quarry to Westleigh. The Critically Endangered Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest and endangered Duffy's Forest are also present, and all are threatened by mountain bike trails. These plant communities form part of a Priority Management Site established under the Biodiversity Conservation Act and are included in the NSW Government Biodiversity Values Map.

Mountain bike trails belong elsewhere, not in this precious bush between Hornsby and Westleigh. Please help us save our fast-disappearing natural heritage.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspeciesapp/ManagementSite.aspx?SiteID=2746>
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/profile.aspx?id=10094>
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10789>
<https://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/council/noticeboard/your-say>

Start a petition of your own

This petition starter stood up and took action. Will you do the same?

Start a petition

Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan

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Petition

Keep Westleigh H2O MTB trail network and do proper consultation with the MTB community



 started this petition to Hornsby Shire Council (Councillors for Hornsby Shire Council) and [2 others](#)

Hornsby Shire Council has released their Westleigh Park DRAFT Masterplan which jeopardises the future of the H2O MOUNTAIN BIKE Trails. The masterplan also details proposed sporting fields development on this site.

However, **there appears to significant *trail loss of high value to the community in terms of the access to our bushland*, and loss of opportunity provided to young riders and beginner cyclists at H2O... there is also poor thought out issues**

3,128 have signed. Let's get to 5,000!

At 5,000 signatures, this petition is more likely to get picked up by local news!

signed this petition

signed this petition

Sydney, 2000

Australia

☒ Display my name and comment on this petition

Sign this petition

By signing, you accept Change.org's [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), and agree to receive occasional emails about campaigns on Change.org. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Letter to Residents



4 June 2021

The Owner/Occupier

Dear Resident

Extension to the public exhibition of Westleigh Park's draft master plan

I'm writing to update you about the draft master plan for Westleigh Park.

Council has received representations from various quarters seeking an extension to the public exhibition period.

To ensure all interested community members have an opportunity to provide their feedback the public exhibition period has been extended to **16 June 2021**.

Please make sure to let us know your thoughts and suggestions before the end of the exhibition period by putting your submissions in writing or completing the online survey.

You can find out more about the draft master plan and have your say by visiting our website : <https://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/westleighpark>

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Minter".

R Minter
Manager, Major Projects
Infrastructure and Major Projects

TRIM Reference: F2016/00296-003

