Supporting Our Plan

2018–2028

Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan

The City of Newcastle

Acknowledgment

City of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession. Council reiterates its commitment to addressing disadvantages and attaining justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

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Suter Planner Logo

The study has been guided by a reference group comprised of staff from City of Newcastle, the University of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Council. The analysis and plan has been undertaken by Suzanne Suter, Principal of Suter Planners, with mapping support from Carina Sidwell (Suter Planners).

Contents

Executive Summary

The Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan provides options for the future provision, location and design of outdoor exercise facilities in Newcastle.

The plan will assist to contribute to achieving broader Council directions included in the Newcastle Community Strategic Plan: Newcastle 2030 and the City of Newcastle Parkland and Recreation Strategy, as well as in other plans.

Newcastle currently has outdoor exercise facilities at four sites: Braye Park, Islington Park, Lambton Park, and Warabrook Park. Three of these sites are in the central west area, and there appears to be a lack of facilities in the eastern, central, southern and far western parts of Newcastle.

Whilst an additional six outdoor exercise sites have been proposed by Council, four of these are in the eastern areas, one is in the south and one is in the north. This still potentially leaves a gap in provision in the central and far western areas. The study has found that at least four sites should be considered to cater for the 'gap areas'.

If all four of the existing sites are retained and Council wishes to achieve all proposed six outdoor exercise sites, this will total ten sites. A further four sites in the central and far western areas would result in a total 14 sites across Newcastle.

Based on a projected 2026 population of 180,000, 14 sites would represent one outdoor exercise site per 12,857 people. A review of benchmarks in other Council areas suggests this is a high provision compared to other regional areas but similar to progressive metropolitan areas. The University of Newcastle suggests demand over time could justify additional sites (beyond 14) in the future and there should be some flexibility.

City of Newcastle includes higher density and coastal areas which attract visitors as well as residents, and this could justify a higher provision. A staged approach is recommended so that Council can assess the popularity and economic implications of outdoor exercise facilities and consider the University of Newcastle research findings over time.

The options in the Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan have given consideration to various research findings to ensure facilities are appropriately provided, located, designed and well-used.

Based on the research, 10 overriding principles have been developed as summarised below.

1. Provide an equitable spread of accessible facilities across Newcastle.

2. Locate equipment in visible and accessible regional and district sites.

3. Provide diverse types of equipment to support various age and fitness levels, including easy to use equipment to support older and less fit people.

4. Consider connected equipment pieces rather than single units, unless there is a benefit to connected single units along a trail.

5. Connect equipment to other recreation or sport facilities and trail networks.

6. Design equipment to be good quality, functional, safe and easy to maintain.

7. Provide quality settings and infrastructure.

8. Provide easy to follow instructions.

9. Promote outdoor exercise facilities.

10. Ensure inclusive opportunities are provided through applying universal design principles.

Site selection principles have also been provided to assist Council to locate future new outdoor exercise facilities (refer page 9).

In addition, strategies have been developed for three Themes including:

THEME 1:
Exercise Equipment Provision

THEME 2:
Design Strategies

THEME 3:
Connecting Communities to Outdoor Exercise

A summary of the strategies in each Theme is provided on the following page.

Priorities have also been identified and these relate to:

Facility Provision

Existing Equipment Enhancement

Diverse Exercise Equipment

Improved Signage

Activating Exercise Equipment

To achieve the Plan, directions should be included in Council budgeting, asset management plans and Development Contribution Plans. In addition, grant funding and partnership opportunities should be sought. A staged approach to implementation is suggested to enable Council to monitor the success of facilities and consider University of Newcastle research and changing needs and opportunities.

Introduction

1.1 About the Study

Across NSW and Australia there is an increasing commitment to supporting communities to be physically active, including through recreation facilities and the activation of parks and other open spaces. Increased physical activity combined with healthy eating will contribute to reducing obesity and health risks.

Outdoor exercise facilities that are appropriately located and designed can encourage communities to be more active and increase the use of a park or open space. Research has found that exercise outdoors is considered to be refreshing, gives a sense of wellbeing and reduces tension and depression, even more so than exercise indoors.

The City of Newcastle Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan will guide the future provision, location and design of outdoor exercise facilities across the City. The Plan aims to ensure outdoor exercise facilities will benefit the community, contribute to activating open spaces and best use available resources.

The Plan draws on research that has been undertaken over recent years to determine appropriate principles and best practice for outdoor exercise facilities.

The University of Newcastle is currently undertaking a major research project on 'scalable physical activity promotion in community parks' in collaboration with City of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Council. The research will evaluate outdoor exercise equipment and trails and has the potential to influence the design and implementation of outdoor fitness parks across Australia. The research will examine the effectiveness of the equipment on behaviour use and health outcomes for various segments of the population.

The University of Newcastle has participated in the Plan development and the research findings will guide future reviews of the Plan.

1.2 Definitions

The term 'outdoor exercise facilities' refers to equipment and structures that are located in publicly accessible to support outdoor exercise by the general public and are freely available and accessible.

Exercise refers to 'planned physical activity with bodily movements that are structured and repetitive, performed for the purpose of improving or maintaining physical fitness'.

Physical activity refers to 'any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure'.

The exercise and physical activity definitions are based on US National Institutes of Health (NIH) definitions and used by the Australian Department of Health.

Two types of equipment are defined in other studies and research, including:

Static equipment: equipment designed for exercise that has no moving parts such as bars and steps. This equipment can have greater strength building benefits.

Dynamic or mechanical equipment: equipment with moving parts activated by the weight of a user's body such as a bike or bench press. This equipment can have greater cardiovascular benefits.

Definitions relating to the number of exercise equipment provided are as follows:

Single unit: a standalone piece of equipment

Fitness station or hub: one area with a number of connected pieces of equipment (usually 6 or more pieces)

Cluster: Several areas each containing a few pieces of equipment, grouped in close proximity on one site

Trail: A number of exercise pieces or stations spread along a path, track or trail over a distance

1.3 Relevance to Other Planning

The City of Newcastle Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan with contribute to achieving elements of Council's strategic plans and is consistent with other Council planning.

Newcastle 2030

The Newcastle Community Strategic Plan (2013) Newcastle 2030 is Council's overriding strategic document that determines commitments and priorities. The vision is for Newcastle is to be a Smart, Liveable and Sustainable city. The strategic directions and objectives that are most relevant to the Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan are below.

The new Council, elected in 2017, has a strong vision to transform Newcastle into a smart city with City of Newcastle evolving into a smart organisation.
As such Council's capital works program is forecast to grow over the short term to allow for key new projects, such as Smart Moves Newcastle, City Change and the Solar Farm. The works program is anticipated to reduce between FY20 to FY22 to recognise the program level, over the short term, is extensive and would not be sustainable over a long term period. The program does begin to build again from FY23 onwards to reflect the effects of inflation on the works program and to return focus to increasing Council's expenditure on Asset Renewal.

Strategic Directions	Objectives
Vibrant and Activated Public Places A city of great public places and neighbourhoods promoting people's health, happiness and wellbeing	Public places that provide for diverse activity and strengthen our social connections Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared and celebrated Safe and activated places that are used by people day and night
Caring and Inclusive Community A thriving community where diversity is embraced, everyone is valued and has he opportunity to contribute and belong	A welcoming community that cares and looks after each other Active and healthy communities with physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing A creative, culturally rich and vibrant community

Parkland and Recreation Strategy

The City of Newcastle Parkland and Recreation Strategy (2014) provides a framework for open space and recreation and is therefore a key relevant document.

The Vision is 'The City of Newcastle will provide, promote and support a range of facilities, events and programs aimed at:

Meeting the diverse parkland and recreational needs and interests of residents, visitors, students and workers;

Creating vibrant, activated and sustainable public places; and

Promoting health, happiness, community connections and wellbeing.'

The most relevant strategic objective is:

Equitable Provision and Development of Facilities

Quality parkland and recreation facilities that are diverse, accessible and responsive to changing needs and will provide positive experiences for current and future residents and visitors. A clear decision making framework is essential to guide development and sustainable provision.

The general focus of the plan is to improve and promote the provision of recreation facilities and to support an active and healthy community. Key actions are:

Action 1.16: Provide pathways, bicycle lanes, courts and fitness equipment to encourage informal and unstructured recreation participation.

Action 1.3: Continue to plan for the provision of a range of parkland recreation facilities for the future population within the Western Planning Corridor.

Background findings

2.1 Existing Provision in Newcastle

City of Newcastle currently provides outdoor exercise facilities at four locations:

- Braye Park, Waratah West (1 station)
- Islington Park, Islington (2 stations)
- Lambton Park, Lambton (currently 2 stations and 4 additional planned)
- Warabrook Wetlands Reserve, Warabrook (2 stations)

An analysis of the existing outdoor exercise facilities has been undertaken through site visits and aerials. A detailed analysis is provided in Appendix A and the main findings are below.

Braye Park

A basic facility with two pieces of static equipment located near a pathway away from other recreation facilities.

Islington Park

Two stations with static equipment that are well located on a popular pathway but are beginning to age.

Lambton Park

Two basic stations with single unit static equipment linked to sport and a pathway, located some distance apart but four new stations are proposed.

Warabrook Wetlands Reserve

Two stations with static equipment, where one is located near a path and the other is away from other facilities and lacks shade and shelter.

Overriding concerns at the existing sites are:

- Limited equipment pieces and variety
- A lack of shade and shelter
- A lack of readable signage to guide the use of equipment
- A lack of directional signage
- Disconnection from other recreation and sport facilities

The University of Newcastle also provides exercise equipment through four single units spread around two sports fields. However, access to this equipment to the public is difficult due to the location of the fields and the need to pay for car parking. As such, the University equipment is not considered in the assessment of provision.

As shown on Map 1 on the following page, three of the existing Newcastle outdoor exercise sites are located towards the western part of the Council area. The University of Newcastle facility is located nearby.

The central, eastern and far western areas are significantly lacking access to outdoor exercise facilities, with only one facility at Islington.

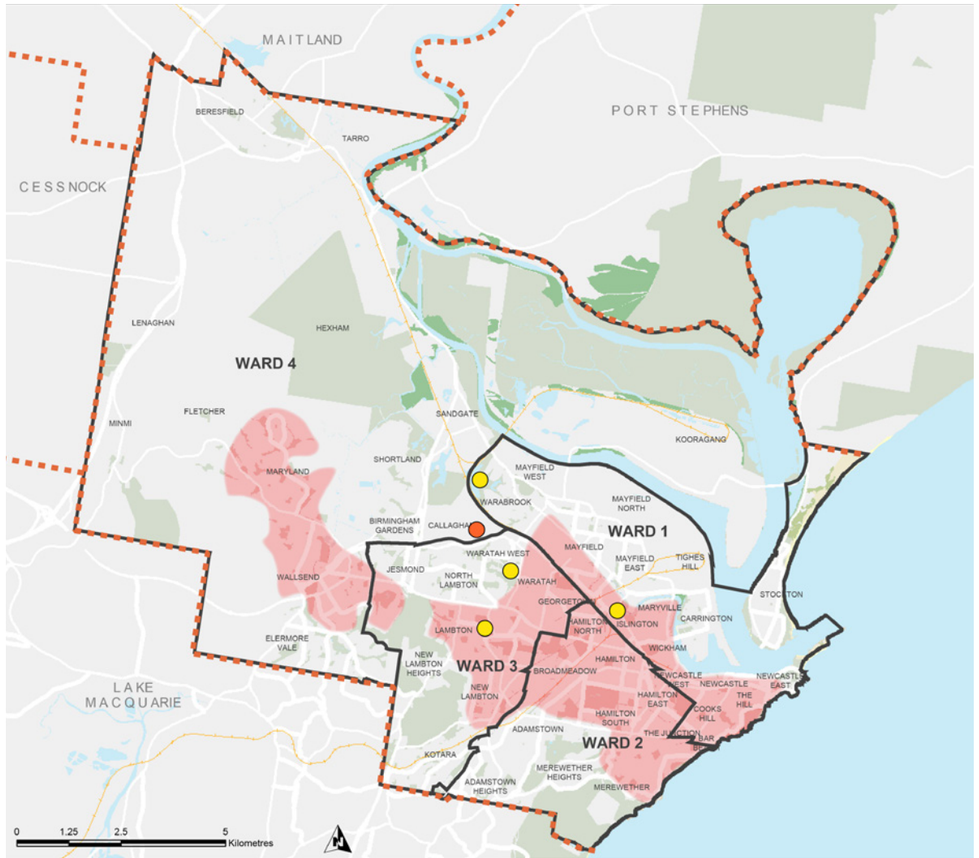
Suburbs with a larger population and/ or high density are listed below and shown on Map 1. These suburbs could have a greater need for outdoor exercise facilities due to the larger population size and higher demand for open space activity opportunities where the population is younger and backyard space is lacking.

Suburb Population and Density

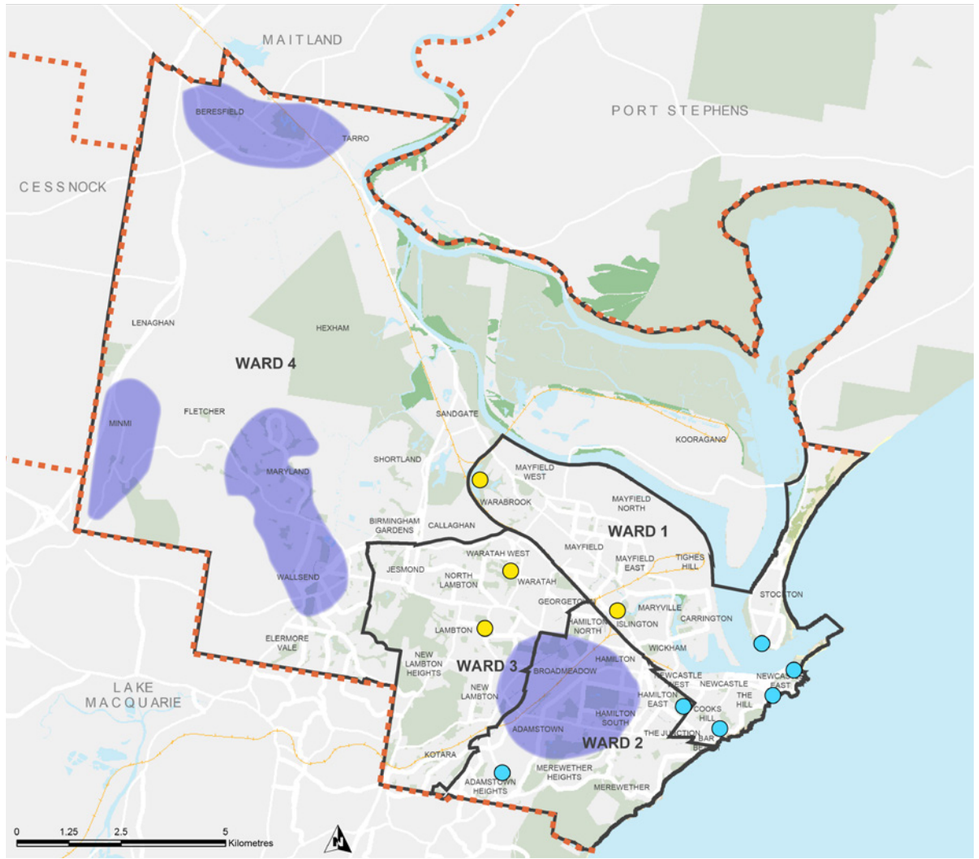
Suburb	Population (2016 ERP)	Density (people per ha)
Wallsend	12,878	8.97
Merewether	11,382	18.3
New Lambton	10,240	18.68
Mayfield	9,748	30.61
Maryland	7,919	15.00
Adamstown	6,226	20.70
Fletcher-Minmi	6,014	5.21
Elermore Vale	5,654	12.00
Hamilton South & Hamilton East	5,262	31.86
Lambton	5,013	17.78
Hamilton	4,314	29.35
Cooks Hill	3,848	52.07
North Lambton	3,549	26.61
The Hill	2,131	34.61
Georgetown	1,938	36.17

Source: City of Newcastle Community Profile 2016

Map 1: Existing Provision and Potential Higher Need Areas



Map 2: Existing and Proposed Provision and Potential Gaps



2.2 Proposed Provision in Newcastle

Council is already proposing an additional six outdoor exercise sites. Possible locations include:

- Camp Shortland, Newcastle (removable for Newcastle Supercars 500)
- South Newcastle Beach (Bathers Way)
- Nesca Park, Cooks Hill
- National Park, Newcastle West
- Griffith Park, Stockton
- Fernleigh Track, Adamstown Heights

These sites will be evaluated against the site selection principles detailed in section 3.2.

As shown on Map 2 on the following page, four of these sites are located in the eastern parts of Newcastle. This is due to the regional and district value of the coastline and a desire by Council to activate and improve some sites (particularly Camp Shortland and South Newcastle Beach) and support visitors as well as residents.

Even with the proposed and existing sites, there will still be a gap in provision in the central and far western areas as highlighted on Map 2.

Ideally facilities would also be considered in the following areas to address the potential gaps in provision:

- Adamstown (northern part), Broadmeadow or the eastern part of New Lambton
- Wallsend or Maryland
- Minmi (linked to future development)
- Beresfield or Tarro

Consideration should also be given to other potential sites identified through the Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan and community engagement. Other potential sites are included in Appendix C for investigation.

2.3 Benchmark Comparison

The existing provision of four outdoor exercise sites for a 2016 population of 155,416 represents one site per 38,854 people.

The Newcastle population is projected to increase to around 180,000 by 2026 and if no additional outdoor exercise facilities were provided, the ratio would be one site per 45,000 people.

However, if six outdoor exercise sites proposed by Council are achieved, there would be 10 exercise facility sites. This represents one site per 15,542 based on a 2016 population and one site per 18,000 people by 2026 (based on 180,000). This is a higher rate of provision compared to similar regional areas and metropolitan areas.

If four additional exercise facilities are provided to address the other gap areas, there would be 14 exercise facility sites. This would represent one site per 12,857 people, which is a relatively high provision that matches progressive metropolitan areas. However, the University of Newcastle believes that, in the future, there could be justification for more than 14 facilities and suggests Council consider University research findings to determine the future provision.

A benchmark comparison with other Councils across Australia as at 2016 is provided on the following page, with a particular focus on progressive regional and metropolitan areas.

As 14 outdoor exercise facility sites is a relatively high provision for a regional area, a staged approach to provision should be adopted to enable Council to consider future University of Newcastle research findings and monitor the demand before committing resources to new facilities.

Comparison of Outdoor Exercise Facilities Provision

Council Area	Current and Planned Provision (based on available data as at February 2018)	2016 Population	Benchmark (based on 2016 population)
City of Newcastle (NSW)	4 sites existing (excluding University of Newcastle) 6 sites planned	155,416	1: 38,854 current 1: 15,542 planned
City of Lake Macquarie (NSW)	4 sites (current and proposed) Other sites may be considered	197,373	1: 49,343
City of Wollongong (NSW)	4 sites	203,632	1: 50,908
City of Sydney (NSW)	10 existing and a further 7 planned (17 in total)	208,373	1: 20,837 current 1: 12,257 planned
City of Fairfield (NSW	13 sites	198,814	1: 15,293
City of Ryde (NSW)	5 sites and 1 planned (6 in total)	116,298	1: 23,260 current 1: 19,383 planned
City of Brisbane (QLD)	90 (across the City with particular concentration in inner City)	1,184,215	1: 13,158
City of Port Phillip (Vic)	5 plus one being developed in 2018	100,877	1: 20,175 current 1: 16,813 planned
City of Whittlesea (VIC)	3 full gyms, 2 trail facilities, 3 minor equipment (8 in total)	197,478	1: 24,685
City of Port Adelaide Enfield (SA)	6 (including 2 on ocean Esplanades)	121,247	1: 20,208
City of Campbelltown (SA)	5 (located at key reserves and linear open space)	50,159	1: 10,032
Mount Barker District (SA)	3 (located at regional and district reserves)	33,406	1:11,135
City of Charles Sturt (SA)	10 (some are very basic or are spread across more than one site)	111,170	1: 11,117
City of Darwin (NT)	5 sites (located at regional and district reserves)	78,792	1: 15,758

* Note that the planned benchmark will alter as the populations increase over time

2.4 Trends and Benefits

The main trends and benefits identified in research and previous studies are summarised below and further details are included in Appendix B.

Outdoor exercise equipment that is freely available at any time and affordable is of particular benefit to young and older people.

Outdoor exercise equipment is used by various generations including children, young people, middle aged and older adults.

Exercise in a natural surrounding with fresh air is found to increase the sense of fun and make exercise more efficient.

The main reasons for Local Councils providing outdoor exercise equipment are:

- Facilities are popular
- Increasing resident interest
- Community recreation benefits
- Development of family oriented spaces
- Connection to beach areas

Outdoor exercise equipment can provide opportunities for:

- Building muscular strength (usually through static equipment)
- Providing cardiovascular benefits (usually through dynamic equipment or movement along a trail between stations)
- Improving flexibility and mobility

Body weight leverage resistance equipment is good for people who are less fit including older adults. Low impact exercises and units that are designed to increase flexibility, balance, agility and motion tend to be more appealing to seniors.

There is an increasing focus on providing diverse types of outdoor exercise equipment including:

- Trails (equipment at key points along a path)
- Hubs, stations or clusters of equipment
- Static equipment (no moving parts)
- Dynamic or mechanical equipment (moving parts)

Clusters of outdoor exercise equipment along a trail should be considered as well as single pieces of equipment as this will broaden activity opportunities, create social spaces and increase the time spent at the station. Clusters of equipment work well at the beginning and end of a walk or run .

Outdoor exercise equipment is often linked to other recreation or sporting facilities (play, sport). If exercise equipment is near playgrounds, children will use the equipment and become accustomed to exercising outdoors in public at an early age.

Dynamic and mechanical equipment is more likely to be used by a wider range of people. Relevant research findings are:

- Simple stretch equipment is less well used by people who have a low intensity of physical activity (Sibson et al, 2017)
- Dynamic and mechanical equipment provides opportunities to increase the heart rate and obtain a cardiovascular workout (Caldwell 2010)

Dynamic and mechanical equipment is likely to require greater maintenance than static equipment. The City of Sydney Park Fitness Equipment Plan 2015 highlights that extreme weather conditions and salt-laden wind in exposed harbour locations may impact on the lifespan and maintenance requirements for dynamic equipment.

There is evidence of social interaction when using exercise equipment including with friends and family.

New technology is being developed that will support people to use outdoor exercise equipment such as the eCoFit app (a guide on facility provision and how to use exercise equipment).

People can feel embarrassed to use exercise equipment or lack the confidence to do so. This highlights the need for information and activity demonstrations to increase awareness and people's sense of comfort, as well as good instructions.

People will drive or cycle to outdoor exercise facilities. However, local facilities are also provided, particularly in higher

2.5 Good Practice

Good practices drawn from research and previous studies are summarised below and further details are included in Appendix B.

Key factors for the success of outdoor exercise facilities include:

- Location (access, safe, visible)
- Safety (including good passive surveillance)
- Variety of equipment and physical activity types
- Close to other facilities and amenities
- Targeted marketing

Outdoor exercise equipment should cater for advanced to beginner skills, different levels of fitness and adults of all ages.

Outdoor exercise equipment should be good quality, durable and functional.

The design of outdoor exercise equipment should:

- Allow for different levels of intensity to match the objectives of individuals
- Enable increases in load for weight bearing exercises
- Support adults of all ages and fitness levels
- Be accessible (particularly for older adults)

To increase the use and popularity of outdoor exercise equipment:

- The equipment should be unique and interesting (to draw people to the equipment and sustain use)
- Diverse exercise equipment choices should be provided
- The surface should be level and accessible
- There should be a path link (active pedestrian route)

Outdoor exercise equipment should be linked to quality and appealing settings and infrastructure including:

- Instruction signage
- Sun shade and appealing landscape
- Toilets, seating and bins

Outdoor exercise equipment should be connected to recreation and sports facilities and spaces to achieve active spaces. Walking, running and cycling are popular activities and outdoor exercise equipment can be linked to path networks to connect to these activities. A connection to playgrounds can create popular family oriented spaces.

It is important for outdoor exercise equipment and surrounds to be well maintained. Minimising the number of moving parts will assist to manage maintenance requirements.

Detailed information on how to use equipment should be provided. Instruction signage increases knowledge of the correct and effective use of the equipment.

Community events and free fitness classes that increase the awareness and use of outdoor exercise equipment should be considered, e.g. group exercise classes provided free to the community.

Outdoor exercise facilities should be promoted to raise awareness and encourage use, including through facility launches and activity events and demonstrations.

New technology including Smart Parks and 'apps' such as the eCoFit app (a guide on facility provision and how to use exercise equipment) and exercise apps such as KRUNK.

Outdoor exercise facility principles

3.1 Strategic Principles

Based on the research and analysis, 10 outdoor exercise facility principles are recommended for Newcastle.

1. Provide an equitable spread of outdoor exercise facilities across Newcastle, taking population size and density into consideration.

2. Locate outdoor exercise equipment in visible and accessible sites, generally within regional and district open spaces. Local and smaller parks are not suggested unless they are high profile and well used (as the focus should be on benefiting as many people as possible).

3. Provide diverse types of outdoor exercise equipment to support a range of adult age groups and levels of fitness (Exercise Hubs, Clusters, Trails, mechanical and static). This includes easy to use outdoor exercise equipment to support older and less fit people.

4. Provide connected equipment pieces and single units options to broaden activity and social opportunities, unless there is a benefit to connected single units along a trail.

5. Connect outdoor exercise equipment to other recreation or sport facilities and trail networks. However, avoid sites that are at capacity or where the exercise equipment will impact on other users.

6. Design outdoor exercise equipment to be good quality, functional, safe and easy to maintain.

7. Provide quality settings and infrastructure around outdoor exercise equipment, including shade and appealing landscapes.

8. Provide easy to follow instructions to ensure the correct use of outdoor exercise equipment.

9. Promote outdoor exercise equipment through signage, community activities and Council promotions to raise community awareness.

10. Ensure inclusive opportunities are provided through applying universal design principles.

3.2 Site Selection Principles

The following principles are provided to assist Council to identify and assess parks and reserves that could incorporate outdoor exercise equipment. This includes using the principles to confirm that facilities proposed by Council are appropriately located.

Suburb Population and Density

Focus	Principles (site assessment criteria)
Hierarchy	The park or reserve site should be regional or district level.
Site Profile	There should be good existing community awareness and use of the site or potential to create a higher use site.
Site Catchment	Exercise facilities should be at least 500m from another exercise facility site, unless there is a linear connection between the sites or there is high demand.
Site Capacity	The site should have the capacity to support additional activities and users. The potential impact of exercise equipment on high use sites should be considered.
Vehicle Access	The site should have easy road access for motor vehicles, and adequate and inclusive on-site or street parking.
People Access	The site should prove inclusive access for pedestrians and cyclists, including through existing or potential pathway networks.
Connections	There should be potential to connect the outdoor exercise equipment to other recreation and sport facilities (children's play spaces, picnic areas, sports amenity or sports field).
Path Links	There should be potential to link exercise equipment to pathways to ensure inclusive access, attract pedestrians and enable exercise equipment trails where appropriate.
Visibility	The site and the equipment location should be visible, with good passive surveillance.
Land Space	There should be an open area of land within the site large enough for outdoor exercise equipment (at least 300 m2).
Infrastructure	The site should include or have the potential to include inclusive seating and shelter and ideally have inclusive access to toilets. In addition, existing site infrastructure should be compatible, e.g. shade trees not impacting on floodlights or court surfaces.
Landscape	The site should include or have the potential for shade and landscaping.

Strategic Plan

4.1 THEME 1: Exercise Equipment Provision

Topic	Strategies	Rationale
Facility Provision	1.1 Consider provision of at least 14 exercise equipment sites strategically located across Newcastle , including: - 4 existing sites (refer 1.3) - 6 proposed sites subject to site assessment - at least 4 other sites (in order to address gap areas, refer 1.4) A staged approach is suggested, with an initial focus on higher profile existing and proposed sites and other potential sites listed in Appendix C (using the Site Selection Principles in Section 3.2 to determine the best sites).	14 sites is equivalent to 1: 12,857 people, which is a very good provision compared to other Council areas. However, this allows for the existing and proposed sites, as well as 4 sites across the gap areas. It also reflects the visitor focus in Newcastle. A staged approach to provision is suggested to enable Council to assess the popularity of facilities and determine whether all facilities are justified.
Existing Equipment Enhancement	1.2 Maintain, replace and enhance existing exercise equipment to provide quality and safe facilities that support diverse age groups and levels of fitness. This includes adding some new and unique equipment to broaden the scope of facilities at some existing sites such as Lambton Park.	The existing outdoor exercise equipment needs to be maintained and enhanced to ensure the equipment is appealing, safe and used by communities. Diverse and unique equipment is lacking at existing facilities.
Equipment Removal	1.3 Review usage of the Braye Park outdoor exercise equipment and consider relocation at the end of its life. If Braye Park undergoes major redesign and upgrade in the future, include new outdoor exercise equipment linked to other recreation facilities as part of a quality recreation destination.	Whilst Braye Park is well located and has the potential to be a quality recreation destination, it is currently poorly designed and has quality and design issues. The existing exercise equipment is basic, ageing and poorly located.
Addressing Gap Areas	1.4 Consider establishing at least four new exercise equipment facilities including within the following gap areas: - Adamstown (northern part) or New Lambton - Wallsend or Maryland - Minmi (linked to future development) - Beresfield or Tarro	Although there are four existing exercise facilities and six new facilities proposed by Council, the central and far western areas will not be well serviced by these facilities.
Site Selection	1.5 Assess the suitability of sites for outdoor exercise equipment (including new sites proposed by Council) using the Site Selection Principles provided on the previous page.	Appropriately locating outdoor exercise equipment will increase the potential use and value of the facilities and ensure Council resources are well spent.

4.2 THEME 2: Design Strategies

Topic	Strategies	Rationale
Diverse Exercise Equipment	2.1 Increase the scope, diversity and uniqueness of outdoor exercise equipment including: - Investigate options for a greater diversity of equipment that reflects unique and modern design approaches - Include equipment that is appealing and easy to use for ageing and older adults, smaller women and youth and people with lower levels of fitness - Consider some modern and dynamic mechanical exercise equipment (with moving parts)to support cardiovascular activity, flexibility and mobility - Incorporate equipment and exercises that require cardiovascular activities (a run/fast walk , skip or jumps around or near the equipment) - Review the style and design of equipment on an ongoing basis to reflect University of Newcastle research findings	Existing outdoor exercise equipment in Newcastle lacks diversity and uniqueness. Static equipment can be difficult for older people, smaller women and less fit people, and innovative design that supports these groups is required to benefit a greater range of people in the community. Given a main aim of exercise equipment is to increase physical activity, equipment that targets all levels of fitness should be provided.
Exercise Trails	2.2 Establish some unique outdoor exercise trails that encourage a mix of strength building, mobility, flexibility and cardiovascular activities. This could include providing clusters of equipment located along well-used trails.	An exercise trail that is well designed, unique, good quality and linked to an existing busy trail should have the potential to attract good use and broaden activity opportunities.
Quality Settings	2.3 Improve the quality of settings around outdoor exercise equipment including: - Trees and shade (generally natural) around the equipment - Appealing turf and landscape - Shelters and shaded seating nearby - Access to drinking water - Links to other recreation or sport facilities (play, picnic, amenities)	Quality settings and particularly shade, seating and landscapes are likely to encourage people to stop at and use exercise equipment. Connecting outdoor exercise equipment to other recreation or sport facilities will contribute to achieving recreation destinations and increased facility use.
Universal Design and Access	2.4 Adopt universal design principles to ensure outdoor exercise facilities are accessible to all young people and adults, including older adults and people with a disability. This includes: - Pathway links to equipment - Equipment pieces accessible to older adults and people with a disability - Accessible surfaces under equipment - Usable equipment gradients and heights for different ages and sizes - Flexible and diverse equipment designed to be usable by all young people and adults	Opportunities for all young people and adults, including older adults and people with a disability, to participate in outdoor exercise and have equitable access to facilities should be considered.

4.3 THEME 3: Connecting Communities to Outdoor Exercise

Topic	Strategies	Rationale
Promotion and Awareness	3.1 Promote the location and benefits of outdoor exercise equipment to communities through: - Mapping and facility information - Council's web site and media outlets - Launches of new outdoor exercise facilities through a site event - Targeted information sent to interest groups	If the community is made aware of health and fitness related facilities, they are more likely to consider using the facilities.
Improved Signage	3.2 Establish clear and readable signage at outdoor exercise sites and stations, including: - Clear directional signage and maps within open spaces and street connections to promote the location of exercise equipment - Clear mapping of exercise equipment trails to show the location and distance of each exercise station - Clear and readable instructional signage with good size visuals and print, showing how to use each equipment piece	Directional signage in open space is lacking for existing exercise facilities and instruction signage is difficult to read, particularly for ageing and older adults who could have failing eye sight. Good directional signage will contribute to a greater community awareness of facilities. Clear and readable instruction signage will encourage the correct use of equipment and increase the safety of users.
Activating Exercise Equipment	3.3 Facilitate and support organised fitness and community activities linked to outdoor exercise equipment. This includes supporting and promoting: - 'Come and try' and demonstration activities with a qualified fitness instructor - Organised park events and competitions involving exercise equipment - New technology such as the eCoFit app, KRUNK app and Smart Parks	There is evidence that organised community activities linked to outdoor exercise equipment will increase the ongoing use of the equipment by the community (due to a greater awareness and sense of comfort).
Broader Exercise Opportunities	3.4 Subject to demand and feasibility, consider other outdoor exercise opportunities at key locations in the City of Newcastle such as parkour and outdoor recreation courts.	Other outdoor exercise opportunities will help cater for diverse community needs, and the community has requested parkour spaces and outdoor courts in particular.
Partnerships	3.5 Establish promotion and activity partnerships with organisations that have an interest in encouraging a healthy and active community and who could either hold events and promotions linked to outdoor exercise equipment or provide research information. This could include the Heart Foundation, active ageing groups, community fitness groups, disability groups with a health focus, corporate fitness, wellness programs and NSW Health.	Council may not have the resources to be a direct provider of activities linked to outdoor exercise equipment, and as such partnerships with other interested groups in the community who could provide or promote activities should be considered. Research undertaken by the University of Newcastle will assist Council to understand community needs and ensure the best approach to providing, designing and locating outdoor exercise facilities.
Review	3.6 Review the use and effectiveness of outdoor exercise equipment in Newcastle on an ongoing basis and modify the approach to future provision as appropriate. The review will involve the University of Newcastle as part of its outdoor exercise facility research project.	The suitability and success of existing facilities and changing needs and opportunities should be considered when planning for new facilities, with the aim to achieve well used and valued facilities. The University of Newcastle is undertaking a major research project and findings should be considered as part of facility review.

Achieving the strategies

5.1 The Priorities

Recommended outdoor exercise facility priorities are outlined below.

Theme	Strategy	Priorities		
THEME 1 **Exercise Equipment Provision**	1.1 Facility Provision	Consider provision of up to 6 of the outdoor exercise facility sites currently proposed by Council, with a particular focus on sites that are either high profile or will contribute to the activation of key sites including: - Camp Shortland, Newcastle - South Newcastle Beach (Bathers Way	High	Government grant funding University of Newcastle for design ideas
	1.2 Existing Equipment Enhancement	Maintain, replace and enhance existing exercise equipment, with particular priority given to: - Islington Park, Islington: upgrade and replace equipment, improve instruction signage - Lambton Park, Lambton: increase equipment scope and uniqueness including through diverse equipment stations, and improve directional and instruction signage	Medium to High	Government grant funding University of Newcastle for design ideas Communities (contributions to site improvements)
THEME 2 **Design Strategies**	2.1 Diverse Exercise Equipment	Increase the scope, diversity and uniqueness of outdoor exercise equipment, with a particular focus on higher profile existing and proposed sites, including: - Islington Park, Islington - Lambton Park, Lambton - Camp Shortland, Newcastle - South Newcastle Beach (Bathers Way) - Fernleigh Track, Adamstown Heights	Medium	Government grant funding University of Newcastle for design ideas
THEME 3 **Connecting Communities to Outdoor Exercise**	3.2 Improved Signage	Establish clear and readable signage at outdoor exercise sites and stations, with particular priority given to improved instruction signage.	High	Government grant funding
	3.3 Activating Exercise Equipment	Facilitate and support organised fitness and community activities linked to outdoor exercise facilities.	Medium	Government grant funding Health and community organisations

5.2 Implementation Considerations

Staged Approach

Whilst the Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan provides options for 14 sites, the need for these and additional facilities should be assessed on an ongoing basis, taking University of Newcastle and other community engagement and research findings into consideration.

The best approach to implementation will therefore be to stage the provision, focusing on the high profile sites or where facilities will contribute to activating high profile sites as recommended in The Priorities. The appropriateness of establishing other outdoor exercise facilities can then be assessed on an ongoing basis according to demand and resource availability.

Management Implications

The development of new outdoor exercise equipment and improvements to existing facilities will require an injection of capital funding. Whilst grant funding through the NSW Office of Sport and other government departments can be sought, it is likely that the greater allocation of funds will need to come from Council. Some funding could be achieved through Development Contributions.

Additional and improved facilities will also have an ongoing maintenance and operational implication that will require appropriate funding and people resources.

The recommended strategies should be reflected in appropriate Council planning and works budgets to enable implementation. This includes Council's asset management plans, works budgets and Development Contribution Plans.

Ongoing Assessment

Continual assessment of the use and popularity of outdoor exercise facilities should be undertaken to ensure existing equipment is appropriate and sites are suitable. This can be through observations and community engagement. In addition, there should be ongoing consideration of new equipment designs and the potential to cater for a greater range of people in the community.

The University of Newcastle research project can inform Council of changing needs, trends and demands. This research should be used to guide the design and location of future outdoor exercise facilities. This is another reason for staging the provision of facilities, so that the future facilities can benefit from this research and better reflect community needs and modern approaches to provision.

Partnerships

A key recommendation is to better connect communities to outdoor exercise equipment through demonstrations and other organised events and activities. To achieve this, opportunities to connect to health and community organisations with an interest in communities being physically active should be pursued.

In addition, the partnership with the University of Newcastle established by Councils in the region should be continued to obtain up to date research findings and enable relevant University staff to contribute ideas to the future design and location of outdoor exercise facilities as appropriate.

Appendices

APPENDIX A
Existing Newcastle Exercise Facilities Analysis

Braye Park, Waratah West

Analysis	Findings
Site and Facility Information	- One location next to park internal roadway
Location Profile	- Located towards the western suburbs - The park has a lower profile due to its design
Link to Other Recreation and Sport Facilities	- Poorly located within the reserve away from other recreation facilities (near roadway
Equipment Type and Suitability	- Basic static equipment - Two pieces of equipment - Disconnected from other recreation facilities
Connections and Infrastructure	- Connected to path within park - Disconnected from amenities - Shady space - Rubber matting under equipment

Islington Park, Islington

Analysis	Findings
Site and Facility Information	- Two stations/ locations within grassed recreation area
Location Profile	- Park is in central location within Newcastle - Main road connections - Facility 1: located nearer to play along pathway - Facility 2: located closer to Pacific Highway along pathway - Facility 2 is some distance from facility 1 and it is difficult to see the next facility
Link to Other Recreation and Sport Facilities	- Connection to recreation area but located away from the playground and sports field - Could consider another exercise station nearer to play (ideally more dynamic)
Equipment Type and Suitability	- Facility 1: 3 pieces of equipment (2 basic metal bars, 1 metal, wood and plastic) - Facility 2: 3 pieces of equipment (2 basic bars, 1 with moving part) - Mainly static equipment pieces
Connections and Infrastructure	- Connected to path within park along the waterway - Shelters and other infrastructure linked to playground - Rubber matting under equipment - Some shade from nearby trees - Equipment is becoming worn and evidence of rust due to good use and age - Instruction signage relatively good - zwLack of directional signage between 2 facility stations and to other facilities

Lambton Park, Lambton

Analysis	Findings
Site and Facility Information	- Two stations/ locations - Four more proposed
Location Profile	- Park is centrally located with link to central and western suburbs - Key sportsground that is high profile - Distributor roads nearby
Link to Other Recreation and Sport Facilities	- Good connection to sport and recreation spaces - Spread of stations is not ideal due to distance between stations and lack of equipment at each station
Equipment Type and Suitability	- Basic static equipment (wooden and metal benches and bars) - Each station only has one piece of exercise equipment (resulting in a lack of activity opportunities)
Connections and Infrastructure	- Path connections - Rubber matting under equipment - Other infrastructure provided within the park - Limited shade around existing exercise stations - Lack of instructional signage - Lack of directions signage to other stations within the park

Warabrook Wetlands Reserve

Analysis	Findings
Site and Facility Information	- Two stations/ locations, with one nearer to play
Location Profile	- Smaller catchment due to Hunter River and Newcastle University nearby - Whilst the park is large it is accessed through local residential streets
Link to Other Recreation and Sport Facilities	- Appealing park with treed recreation area and link to wetland water body - Facility 1: exercise station location is near play and waterway - Facility 2: location is in open area away from other facilities (but can see the other station and play space)
Equipment Type and Suitability	- Relatively new equipment in good condition - Youth focus with high bars and steps (requiring strength and height) - Static equipment but a number of pieces and a good range - Facility 1: combined exercise pieces with 6 activity opportunities - Facility 2: 3 structures with 7 exercise opportunities
Connections and Infrastructure	- Rubber matting under equipment - Facility 2 is located in an open area away from other facilities - Facility 2 is lacking a path connection and lacks shade and shelter - Small print on instructional signage

APPENDIX A
Existing Newcastle Exercise Facilities Analysis

University of Newcastle, Callaghan

Analysis	Findings
Site and Facility Information	- Eight equipment pieces spread across university playing fields
Location Profile	- The University is located towards north and western suburbs - Need to drive through the university to access the fields and car parking fee applies. Therefore not easily accessible to general public
Link to Other Recreation and Sport Facilities	- Connected to sports fields (each equipment piece is located in the corners of 2 sports fields)
Equipment Type and Suitability	- Separated single units of equipment around the playing fields - Static equipment
Connections and Infrastructure	- Some equipment pieces are located away from amenities and amenities may not be available to the general public - Bark chip surface under equipment - Generally good shade

APPENDIX B
Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan Research

Ellie Caldwell, Lets Get Physical: Planning for Sydney's Outdoor Gyms 2010

The benefits of outdoor physical activity are:

- Physical health – reduced weight and blood pressure
- Emotional – reduced depression and stress
- Behaviour – increased environmental responsibility

The main reasons for Local Councils providing outdoor exercise are:

- Facilities are popular
- Increasing resident interest
- Community recreation benefits
- Development of family oriented spaces
- Connection to beach areas

Exercise equipment is often linked to other recreation or sporting facilities. Based on 60 outdoor exercise facilities provided at the time:

- 78% were near other sporting facilities
- 68% were adjacent to pedestrian routes
- 42% were near children's play

Values of outdoor exercise equipment in fresh air include refreshing, invigorating, increased sense of wellbeing, increased Vitamin D and increased variety.

Fitness trails give a cardiovascular and muscle strength workout. Each station along a trail should have a purpose and should each include 2-3 exercise pieces.

Modern equipment includes moving parts. It increases the heart rate and ensures correct muscular strength activity. A combination of muscular strength and cardiovascular exercise is a good outcome.

Exercise equipment near play makes children accustomed to exercise outdoors.

Best practice principles include:

- Install high quality equipment with a variety of static and mechanical equipment choices (diverse exercise opportunities)
- Need high quality construction and durable material choice
- Design equipment to encourage a range of advanced and beginner skills
- Mechanical equipment increases heart rate and provides a cardiovascular workout and is therefore more popular
- Along paths, increase visual awareness that the equipment is part of a fitness trail
- Trails are an attraction to walkers and joggers. Place exercise equipment on active pedestrian routes
- Need a level surface under outdoor exercise equipment
- Aim for good passive surveillance of the equipment

Susan Furber, Hayden Pomroy, Samantha Grego and Karen Tavener-Smith, People's experiences of using outdoor gym equipment in parks, Health Promotion Journal, 2014

Interviews of 54 park users found that:

- 72.2% were 18-44 years of age
- 57.4% of those interviewed used outdoor exercise equipment in a park
- 71% of those who used equipment visited a park more since outdoor exercise equipment was installed
- 64.5% of those who use equipment socialised while using the equipment
- The exercise equipment provided an opportunity to improve cardio respiratory fitness and muscle strength

Allison Abel, Fitness: The Outdoor Gym: Benefits & Best Practices, Greenfields Outdoor Fitness, Recreation Management Journal, 2018

Units should be clustered together or there should be several pods rather than individual units spaced out along a trail.

Clusters of equipment create social spaces, encouraging users to exercise with friends and family and also encourages people to spend more time at the station.

There is a risk of vandalism when units are isolated.

Walkers or joggers will lose momentum if they stop at units. A cluster of exercise equipment immediately before or after a trail run or walk is the best approach.

Advancement of technology has given birth to a largely sedentary lifestyle and those suffering from its effects are unable to perform exercises on static equipment (pull ups, dips and push ups). Therefore body weight leverage resistance equipment is good for these users.

Entry to intermediate users require less challenging exercise opportunities.

Low impact exercises and units designed to increase flexibility, balance and agility and a range of motion are more appealing to seniors.

Should include equipment that is designed for maximum accessibility.

Equipment should be placed in a visible area with high people traffic volumes.

Leonie Neville, Ashleigh Scott, The impact of outdoor gyms on park use and physical activity, NSW Health, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District March 2013 (presentation)

There is little evidence that outdoor gyms can increase park use and physical activity in the long term.

To facilitate the use of exercise equipment consider:

- Pleasant surroundings
- Social opportunities
- Access and proximity to other facilities
- Features and amenities
- Condition and maintenance
- Aesthetics and safety

Key factors for the success of outdoor existing facilities include:

- Location
- Safety
- Social and environmental support
- Targeted marketing
- Variety of physical activity types
- Community consultation and engagement

Exercise equipment should be designed for adults of all ages and fitness levels.

Include instructional signage to ensure the correct use of equipment.

Provide for graded exercise and modifications.

The location of exercise facilities should be:

- Accessible
- In a safe and visible area
- Close to other facilities and amenities

There should be a variety of equipment suitable for the target group.

APPENDIX B
Outdoor Exercise Facility Plan Research

Jennifer L. Copeland, Cheryl Currie and Ali Walker, University of Lethbridge, Outdoor fitness equipment in public parks: Is it an effective physical activity intervention?, WellSpring June 1, 2017

The study involved observing two active parks in Lethbridge, Alberta for 100 hours across three seasons (spring, summer, and autumn). More than 1,000 people visited the two active parks during the observation period. Walking and running were the most common types of physical activity observed. Less than 3% of adults were observed using the fitness equipment.

The study also involved interviewing 140 individuals by talking to people in the parks and going door-to-door in neighbourhoods with active parks. Most people interviewed (86%) were aware of fitness equipment in the park.

Most residents noted the equipment was rarely used by others. Those interviewed spoke about "the potential" the equipment had to improve health, increase physical activity, and enhance a sense of community in their neighbourhood. Many also appreciated that it was freely accessible.

The study found that the installation of park fitness equipment in smaller cities is not likely to be an effective intervention without additional efforts. Strategies to increase use include:

- Better marketing
- Provide durable and functional equipment
- Cater for different levels of fitness
- Ensure the environment around the equipment supports public use (proper drainage and upkeep of the equipment)
- To reach people who are not already regular exercisers, provide workout suggestions for the equipment, e.g. via posters on-site and online.
- Drop-in fitness classes at exercise stations can increase use
- Consider community launch of new facilities and publicised free classes
- Community-based organizations and Primary Care Networks should be encouraged to take advantage of outdoor fitness equipment as a novel and low-cost idea for their programming

Don't just install equipment and expect people to use it. Need a program of promotion, information and activities.

Geoff Bates, Ellie McCoy, Rebecca Murphy, Natalia Kornyk & Dominic Suckley, Evaluating the provision of outdoor gym equipment Uptake and impact in Sefton Merseyside, Centre for Public Health Liverpool, John Moores University, 2014

162 participants provided useable data through online and onsite surveys across 10 outdoor gyms in Sefton in 2013.

Average time of use is 19 minutes and 22 minutes for those who use at least once a week.

Over one half of the respondents found the equipment had a positive impact on health.

70% said outdoor gyms were more beneficial for health than indoor exercise.

80% said outdoor gyms were more enjoyable than indoor exercise.

The survey respondents suggested:

- Being embarrassed or lacking confidence is a constraint to facility use
- Need to increase community awareness of the social benefit of exercising with friends and family
- Need to increase information on how to use equipment (to increase use)
- Should increase the amount and quality of information aimed at people with different levels of fitness experience

Recommendations include:

- Actively promote outdoor gyms
- Increase and improve instructions on the use of outdoor exercise gyms
- Enable group exercise classes at outdoor exercise gyms
- Ensure locations and equipment are well maintained
- Monitor the use of equipment and public perceptions
- Invest in activities and facilities
- Link outdoor exercise gyms to other recreation facilities

City of Sydney Park Fitness Equipment Plan, 2015

The benefits of physical activity are:

- Revitalisation
- Positive engagement
- Reduced tension, anger and depression
- Increased self esteem

Outdoor fitness equipment provides a variety of benefits to users and the community including:

- Improved physical and psychological health (Chow 2013)
- Greater social capital (Chow 2013)
- Greater level of activity within parks and public open space, which increases passive surveillance and discourages antisocial behaviour and vandalism
- Enabling more effective exercise, as natural surroundings and fresh air in an outdoor environment help make exercise more fun and more effective (Thompson Coon 2011)
- Improved agility, balance, coordination and muscular and bone strength
- Expansion of the benefits associated with physical activity to a wider audience
- Relieving the pressure placed on park infrastructure and furniture not intended for physical activity

Best practice design for outdoor fitness equipment is based on three general principles.

- 1. Functional activities - find exercises that mimic day-to-day or naturally occurring movements that involve large muscle groups and multiple joints
- 2. Intensity – match the intensity of the workout to the fitness level and objectives of the participant
- 3. Increasing load – find ways to use the equipment provided, as well as external equipment such as ropes, resistance bands and suspension training devices, to provide participants with a variety of body weight and weighted exercises

Static equipment provides the following opportunities:

- Functionality - a variety of exercises can be performed using one piece of equipment for greater overall fitness
- Customisation - it can have other items, such as ropes and resistance bands, attached to it
- Flexibility - it provides a flexible facility for those who are less mobile or with limited strength
- Cost effective - it can be cheaper than dynamic equipment. This allows more equipment to be installed for the same amount of money
- Robust - it has minimal moving parts and is more suited to shoreline installations where the equipment can be subject to salt, sand and wind-exposure
- Low maintenance - it has minimal or no maintenance requirements
- It is suited to CrossFit exercising, which is rapidly growing in popularity

Dynamic equipment provides the following opportunities:

- Aerobic - it offers a greater selection of equipment for aerobic exercise than static equipment

- Fitness level – most dynamic equipment does not require an existing level of fitness, making it readily accessible to new and lower fitness level users

- Accessibility – many dynamic equipment suppliers offer a range of all abilities equipment

- Innovation – some dynamic equipment suppliers offer a green energy range (converting human energy into usable electricity)

- Familiarity - It mimics well-known indoor fitness equipment, such as treadmills and cross trainers

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The strategic objectives of the Plan are as follows:

- 1. Increase provision of outdoor fitness equipment so all members of the community are within a 10-minute walking distance (800 metre radius)

- 2. Encourage greater participation in physical activity to help all members of the community reach their recommended levels of physical activity.

- 3. Prioritise installation of outdoor fitness equipment to ensure areas with greatest walking distance from existing outdoor fitness equipment are provided for in the next five years

- 4. Engage the community to ensure outdoor fitness equipment facilities meet the needs of the community and promote greater social inclusion

Ruth Sibson Edith Cowan University, Pascal Scherrer, Southern Cross University, pascal.scherrer@scu.edu.au, Maria M. Ryan, Edith Cowan University, I think it adds value, but I don't use it': use, perceptions and attitudes of outdoor exercise equipment in an urban public park

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The research is based on 400 self-completed questionnaires of park visitors. It examined people's use, perception and attitudes of a stretch station circuit installed in an urban public park in a suburb of Perth, WA.

The data highlights equipment is positively perceived by existing park users (seen to add value to the park) and is considered to be a 'good investment' by the local government authority. Users of the equipment enjoy it and want more installed.

There appears to be little perceived benefit in terms of the stretch station's contribution to the physical activity levels of park users, particularly for a key target group (those people who engage in little leisure-time physical activity).

Hsueh-wen Chow,1, Andrew J. Mowen,2 and Guan-lin Wu1, Paul B. Tchounwou, Academic Editor, Who Is Using Outdoor Fitness Equipment and How? The Case of Xihu Park, 2017

Outdoor fitness equipment (OFE) placed in public parks has the potential to encourage physical activity.

Based on onsite and video observations of OFE usage, a park in Xihu Park in Tainan located in southern Taiwan attracted considerable use, particularly in the early morning and late afternoon. In peak-hours approximately 12 users per hour used the OFE, with the majority being females and seniors.

The triple arm stretch and air walker were the most popular stations. However, most OFE users interacted with less than three of the available six OFE stations.

Users spent an average of less than nine minutes on all OFE stations combined.

While OFE equipment was well-used in the urban park, it appears users did not interact with OFE at rates to produce a sufficient bout or level of physical activity during their park visit.

Jennifer L. Copeland, Cheryl Currie, Ali Walker, Erin Mason, Taura Willoughby and Ashley Amson, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, University of Lethbridge, Outdoor Fitness Equipment in Urban Parks: Public Use, Perceived Benefit and Suggested Enhancements

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The study examined public use and perceptions of park fitness equipment in a small urban centre.

Of the 1,013 adults observed across 106 hours in active parks, only 2.7% used the equipment and most were male.

Activity intensity was higher among users of the equipment compared to other parks users.

Of 139 residents interviewed, 22.3% reported regular park fitness equipment use.

Residents viewed the accessibility of the equipment as beneficial for community health, sense of community, and families.

Improved advertising, lighting, equipment, instructions, ground materials, maintenance, and onsite trainers were suggested to increase public use.

APPENDIX C
Potential Site Options for Investigation

Potential sites for outdoor exercise equipment identified through the Outdoor Exercise Facilities Plan and related community engagement are listed below for investigation by Council. These sites and other sites proposed by Council should be assessed using the Site Selection Principles in Section 3.2 of this report to determine the best provision and spread of outdoor exercise facilities to meet community needs.

The sites are listed in alphabetical order and are not in any order of priority. The sites have been identified due to their higher profile, link to other recreation facilities, a gap in provision and/or expressed community interest.

Carrington Foreshore, Carrington
Dangar Park, Mayfield East
Dixon Park, Merewether
Empire Park, Bar Beach
Foreshore Park, Newcastle
Grange Avenue Reserve, Maryland
Gregson Park, Adamstown
Jesmond Park, Jesmond
Stephenson Park, Mayfield West
Wallsend Park, Wallsend

The above sites are identified for future assessment by Council in accordance with site suitability and community demand, and some may not be appropriate.

The provision of outdoor exercise equipment could also be considered at other sites identified by Council over time and subject to site assessment, demand and feasibility.

Outdoor exercise equipment may not be appropriate at all of the above sites or other sites proposed by Council, and an oversupply of facilities should be avoided. As such care should be taken in determining the appropriate provision and location of facilities and a sound assessment using the Site Selection Principles in Section 3.2 should be undertaken prior to the establishment of any new facilities.

How our community can get involved

We have been involving community in decision making, and providing effective communications to ensure we have an informed community for many years.

Stay connected
You can find out about our news and events through a variety of communication channels by visiting newcastle.nsw.gov.au or calling 02 4974 2000 for hard copy options.

Our community has helped shape the future of Newcastle in the following areas:

- Arts, entertainment and culture
- Beaches, parks and recreation
- Budgets and rates
- Building and planning
- Environmental / water / waste
- Roads and traffic
- Tourism and economy

You can actively get involved, or see how your input has influenced our decision making by visiting our Have Your Say page **newcastle.nsw.gov.au/YourSay**

Thank you

City of Newcastle prepared this plan on behalf of the Newcastle community and would like to thank:

Community members who participated in community engagement processes, providing valuable input into the development of this Plan.

Callaghan College Wallsend Campus, San Clemente High School Mayfield and Hunter School of Performing Arts for enabling Council to engage with your students.

Councillors, Council staff and community members who attended and participated in Ward based workshops hosted during June and July 2017.

Government agencies, community organisations, local businesses and Council staff who attended our Better Together Stakeholders Workshop in November 2017.

Councillors for their ongoing commitment to supporting the preparation of the Plan and to achieving the long-term objectives for Newcastle.

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