

**Sport and Recreation  
Tasmania**

# **Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework Main Report**



Prepared for Sport and Recreation Tasmania  
Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts  
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# SUMMARY

## Context

### Background

Open spaces contribute to the quality of life enjoyed by the Tasmanian community. Well-planned, designed and implemented open space planning policies aid in the delivery of a range of broader personal, social, economic and environmental objectives for the community.

In the absence of a state-wide approach to open space planning, there is a risk that approaches to open space planning at a state, regional and local level will continue to be ad hoc, lack consistency, not respond to emerging needs and fail to deliver the many benefits associated with good open space planning.

Climate change, the aging profile of the Tasmanian population, changing recreation participation levels and emerging activities, increased community expectations and changing work patterns are just some of the trends that will influence the need for, type and amount of open space required in the future.

Many of the open space plans prepared at the regional level (e.g. *Cradle Coast Open Space Plan 2009*, *Tamar Regional Valley Open Space System 2004*) and plans prepared for local councils share common values and strategic directions for improving the provision, development and management of open space. However, there is a need to develop clear and consistent policies and strategies that will help guide open space planning and provision in the future at a state, regional and local level.

The Tasmanian Government, through Sport and Recreation Tasmania, recognised this need and commissioned the preparation of an open space planning project for the state. This was considered timely given the current work being undertaken into strategic and statutory planning by the Regional Planning Initiatives for north-west, north and southern Tasmania.

The purpose of this project is to provide sound policy guidance and establish a framework for effective open space planning and provision at a state, regional and local level in Tasmania. In doing so, it is expected that this will help increase the capacity and commitment to better policy and practices in open space planning and allow for more effective integration of open space objectives within statutory and non-statutory planning tools.

The project was managed through a project steering committee consisting of representatives from Sport and Recreation Tasmania, each of the three Regional Planning Initiatives, and the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

#### D e f i n i n g   o p e n   s p a c e

An open space definition has been prepared which responds to the significant natural and cultural values of our Tasmanian landscape, and the physical, psychological and spiritual benefits that can be gained from engaging with these places. The definition also recognises the significant local, regional and state economic benefits that are associated with quality open space provision, such as tourism, recreation, events and attracting residential and other investors to an area.

Open space, in the context of this project, means:

Land and water settings maintained and managed for a range of environmental and social purposes and that are valued and may be used by the community, including:

- conservation of ecological processes (including ecosystem services such as clean water) native flora, wildlife habitat

- conservation of cultural heritage and aesthetic values

- sport, recreation and leisure functions – both passive and active, competitive and non-competitive and including open space user support facilities but excluding indoor facilities

- spaces to enhance the visual qualities and social character of urban and rural landscapes

- linear linkages, including trails, pathways, road reserves, riparian reserves, habitat corridors and beaches

- parks, playgrounds and other public spaces where the community can exercise, play, learn, and relax

- hazard management, including but not limited to flood control, bushfire hazard management, climate change and rising sea level.

## B e n e f i t s o f o p e n s p a c e

Open space is a valuable community asset, providing a range of personal, social, environmental and economic benefits, including:

opportunities for a diverse range of physical activities, including organised sports and informal recreation - usually free of charge

contributing to the 'livability' of towns and cities, including linear linkages for alternative transport (e.g. off-road cycling and walking routes), providing safe spaces to gather and socialise, and enhancing scenic quality

'green spaces' for relaxation, contemplation, and play opportunities for people to connect with, and learn about their local environment, contributing to psychological as well as physical well-being

conservation of natural and cultural values, such as native flora, wildlife habitat, cultural heritage and aesthetic values

contributing to the viability of local economies through encouraging capital investment

encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for physical activity, potentially reducing healthcare costs through lowering diseases associated with inactivity and stress (e.g. obesity, diabetes, heart disease and depression)

opportunities to engage with natural areas to undertake recreational activities (e.g. riparian reserves along waterways allow access for walking and fishing)

maintenance of utilitarian values, such as water storage, flood mitigation, and other environmental services (e.g. clean air and water)

the emerging function of contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation (e.g. through carbon storage, buffers to sea level rise, and by encouraging non-motorised transport etc).

## T r e n d s i n f l u e n c i n g o p e n s p a c e

The report refers to a range of national trends that influence or impact upon open space needs and provision, including:

increased economic development and affluence

increased community debt associated with financial borrowing regulations

population growth

changing work hours and employment structures

changing family structures

changing home and living styles

ageing population

more of a multi-cultural society

growing community-based cultural interests

growing levels of education

new, different, more accessible and affordable technology

greater policy focus on equity and access.

Whilst the majority of these changes have been positive in their impacts, changing work structures have dramatically impacted on volunteering and club activities. Further, significant pockets of disadvantage have emerged, particularly amongst newly-arrived immigrant groups, the aged, and residents in more remote rural communities that are progressively losing population and suffering the impacts of continuing drought.

#### Open space issues

The main issues and challenges associated with open space planning in Tasmania include:

lack of an agreed definition and policy on open space, to guide the planning and implementation of open space provision at a state, regional and local level

the limitations of the planning system in being able to deliver sustainable open space outcomes on the ground, given the range of factors involved in open space provision, management and maintenance, that are outside of the statutory planning framework

inconsistencies in the provision of open space across the state, including the methodologies used to determine need and the 'tools' associated with open space planning (e.g. classification and hierarchy systems, zoning, developer contributions, development standards, and application of needs analysis)

inadequacies in open space provision, in part stemming from the use of inappropriate application or quantitative 'rules' such as the provision under the *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*, which states that developers must transfer five per cent of subdivided land to council for open space purposes

the statutory process for councils to follow in the disposal of open space land are complex and time consuming

limited integration of open space planning considerations with broader land use planning objectives at the state, regional and local levels, further contributing to the inconsistencies, and gaps in provision evident at a local level

limited resources available to undertake open space planning at all levels of government

difficulties associated with the management of a diverse open space system, including differing management regimes, provision of facilities, maintenance schedules etc

past subdivision and planning has delivered isolated pockets of open space rather than focus on the creation of open space systems, easily accessible to the community, connected by trail and public transport networks where possible

limited capacity to create integrated, flexible and multi-use venues, which consolidate resource requirements and avoid duplication of services and amenities, and therefore reduce overall operating and maintenance costs

the limited or ad hoc response to changes in demographic, sport, recreation, and other societal trends when considering open space needs (the system should not be 'fixed')

the slow recognition of the need to apply contemporary planning practice and societal concerns into open space planning (e.g. climate change, social inclusion), moving away from the traditional model of sport and recreation facility provision (e.g. single purpose, single user facilities) to a state-wide system of built and natural environments, aimed at improving the quality of life for Tasmanians on a range of levels.

#### Stakeholder views

During the early stages of the study, regional forums were held with key stakeholders in Launceston, Devonport and Hobart. A state-wide forum was held in Launceston following release of the draft report. A final round of consultation with local government was held after public feedback on the draft report had been received and processed.

In addition to discussing the key issues presented above, the forums were important in identifying:

- the role and value of all open space as part of a comprehensive open space system

- the requirement for a consistent approach and guidelines for open space planning

- the need to rationalise the number of open space planning objectives

- support for planning and policy integration across different agencies and spheres of government

- the need for legislative change to achieve more effective open space planning outcomes

- the need for better planning tools to guide open space planning and provision

- the need for better resourcing and partnerships for the management and maintenance of open space

- that open space planning must be informed by community needs rather than standards of provision

that planning schemes and development control processes are not the only tools for improving open space planning and greater emphasis should be placed on achieving greater strategic planning, use of outline development plans and legislative change

the opportunity for greater co-ordination and information exchange about open space planning between different agencies.

## **Developing a state-wide open space policy and planning framework**

### **B e n e f i t s**

The preparation of a state-wide open space policy and planning framework will provide a range of benefits. These include:

the provision of a consistent definition, suite of objectives and policies to guide open space planning and management at a state, regional and local level

the provision of direct assistance with the creation of an open space system that better reflects the needs and aspirations of the Tasmanian community, and that has the capacity to be adapted to meet changing needs

guidance within the development of effective open space planning tools, including a consistent open space classification and hierarchy system, developer contribution policy, demand analysis policy, and requirements for the preparation of open space plans

greater recognition of open space as a legitimate land use across all levels of governance.

### **V i s i o n**

A vision for the Tasmanian open space system is:

Tasmania will have a diverse, comprehensive and sustainable open space system, providing health and well-being, environmental, sport and recreation, social, and economic benefits. The Tasmanian open space system will be developed and managed in response to the needs of the community and visitors, whilst respecting our unique environment.

Four principal objectives have been formulated to support this vision, along with 15 key policy statements for these objectives, as shown in Table A.

The report sets out 60 recommended strategies to achieve these objectives and policies. The strategies cover policy areas of planning and governance, land management, training and education, design, marketing and promotion.

<b>OBJECTIVE 1: To Establish an integrated and consistent open space policy and planning framework for Tasmania</b>
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will provide a strategic, 'whole-of-government' approach to open space planning and provision in Tasmania.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will incorporate open space policy guidance to aid integrated state, regional and local planning.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will foster consistency in the adoption of planning tools and processes to support effective open space planning.
<b>OBJECTIVE 2: To have the capacity to manage an open space system that contributes to environmental sustainability</b>
Policy 1. The Tasmanian open space system will protect and enhance ecological processes, biodiversity conservation and environmental services.
Policy 2. The Tasmanian open space system will protect and enhance cultural heritage, local character and aesthetic values.
Policy 3. The Tasmanian open space system will contribute directly and indirectly to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
Policy 4: The Tasmanian open space system will facilitate non-motorised transport (or 'active') transport, minimise emissions, and lower Tasmania's carbon footprint.
Policy 5: The Tasmanian open space system will be managed in a cooperative way, with the various land managers and the community working in partnership to achieve environmentally sustainable outcomes.
<b>OBJECTIVE 3: To support an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity and community health and well-being</b>
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space system will be developed and managed in collaboration with the Tasmanian community, and be based on demonstrated need.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space system will facilitate community health and well-being, including physical activity through good design, linkages, and quality facilities.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space system will be accessible and well-connected.
Policy 4: The Tasmanian open space system will be equitable, and respond to issues such as mobility impairment or disability, social isolation, economic and environmental disadvantage.
<b>OBJECTIVE 4: To manage an open space system that contributes to the Tasmanian economy</b>
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space system will be planned, developed and managed with consideration given to delivering a potential a range of economic benefits to the Tasmanian community.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space system will improve Tasmania's competitiveness as a destination for visitors, and as an attractive place to relocate and do business.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will support greater public and private investment in appropriate infrastructure and services that benefit access, use and management of Tasmania's open space values.

**Table A:** Objectives and policies

## **Implementation**

The key requirements for implementing a state-wide open space policy and planning framework are:

establishing clear and improved governance in relation to open space planning and provision

adopting a suite of planning tools to assist implementation of the state-wide open space policy and the planning framework

developing sufficient capacity and commitment to ensure effective and sustainable open space planning, provision and management.

### **Planning tools**

A range of planning tools have been developed to aid more effective open space planning within the state. These include:

preparing an audit of open space supply

adopting an open space hierarchy

adopting an open space classification system

improving the open space planning process

achieving consistency in planning scheme zoning provisions for open space in the future.

### **Open space hierarchy**

An open space hierarchy refers to the scale of the area served or the catchment from which the open space attracts users, as well as the 'status' of the facilities provided (e.g. national-level mountain bike course). A hierarchical classification of open space is an invaluable planning, management and information tool. From a planning perspective, the position which a facility occupies within a hierarchy provides an indication of the role it is expected to perform and thereby, the size of the site and the scale and quality of the amenities, services and other resources which could be expected to be provided. These factors will generally be different for each level of the hierarchy.

From a management point of view, the position of a resource in a hierarchy provides an indication of the maintenance inputs, which should be, or will need

to be allocated to it, and which activities might not be permitted to use it. This helps to ensure the limited resources are used effectively and efficiently, rather than spending scarce resources on all open space areas regardless of their importance and what role they serve in the overall open space system. The following hierarchy for open space was presented:

- Local
- District
- Sub-regional
- Regional
- State
- National

#### **Open space classification system**

Each 'parcel' of open space can be classified into different types that are generic in characteristics and functions, and are therefore, likely to require similar management responses. This process assists significantly in understanding what mix of open spaces exist within the current system, and where there are possible gaps or overlaps.

A proposed classification of open space types has been derived from a range of open space studies conducted over the past 15 years. The proposed categories are:

- Parks
- Outdoor Sports Venues
- Landscape and Amenity
- Linear and Linkage
- Foreshore and waterway
- Conservation and Heritage
- Utilities and Services
- Proposed Open Space.

For each category of open space, a brief outline is provided to:

- define the open space category
- the purpose of the open space
- amenities which may be provided.

The above classification system (or similar versions) has been applied within local council open space and recreation strategy plans for the City of Launceston, City of Burnie, City of Glenorchy and Municipality of Huon Valley.

It is expected that the classification system will be a more effective tool for local area planning given the diversity and multitude of open spaces being managed by local councils. However the classification system will support strategic open space planning within a region or metropolitan area. At the state level, it may have limited value for future planning given the diversity of land tenure types managed and maintained by the State Government. In this regard, land managers typically have other management tools to assist with future planning e.g. code of practice, generic management plans and policies covering land tenure types. However the classification provides the planning capacity for assessing consistency across the open space system.

### **Open space planning process**

It is critical that the planning and/or providing agencies are very clear about what they want to achieve through an open space planning process and about the needs and aspirations of those for whom they are providing. This planning tool proposes an open space planning process based on open space studies conducted over the last 15 years.

The stages of an open space planning process are:

1. Agree on the need for open space planning
2. Establish a Project Steering Team with representation from all key stakeholders
3. Define the provision purpose, principles and objectives
4. Review the policy context
5. Establish and implement a community consultation program

6. Evaluate the current and projected demographic characteristics
7. Establish an open space inventory
8. Apply the open space classification and hierarchy system to the inventory
9. Assess community and user needs
10. Assess trends in open space provision, use and need
11. Identify improvements to existing provision and *additional* provision ('Needs Analysis')
12. Identify sites for acquisition, reallocation and development
13. Proceed to acquisition and development

Although they are listed in a numbered sequence, it is possible to begin at a variety of points depending on the specific circumstances that apply. In some instances a reiterative process may need to be followed as the findings of later steps in the process may lead to or warrant a rethinking of earlier stages of the work.

These stages, or tasks, can be applied to a range of issues and contexts ranging across all open space types and across differing scales of development. The process outlined is generic in nature and may well need to be tailored to specific situations and tasks. Depending on the situation, some elements will almost certainly need to be given greater or lesser attention in light of the project scale, previous research and planning and the degree to which the desired outcomes are known. At the very least, the process can be used as a checklist of issues that may need attention and resolution.

### **Planning scheme zones**

The possible range of zones to be included as common elements in future Tasmanian planning schemes is currently being reviewed under the guidance of the Tasmanian Planning Commission. The study recommends that:

there should be one open space zone with planning provisions that clearly differentiates between the planning and development requirements for active use/developed or 'formal' sporting sites, compared to more passive/less developed, or 'natural' open spaces

other zones, such as the proposed Environmental Management Zone, should be used to identify land which is also deemed to be open space (e.g. riparian reserves) and should be managed for environmental values as a primary purpose, with appropriate recreational use as secondary purpose

improved 'checks and balances' should be introduced into legislation or statutory processes for the disposal of open space to give greater security to community concerns about the potential loss of open space e.g. classification of community land and operational land

the broader values and aspects of open space (e.g. contributing to health, well-being, livability, social inclusion) should be integrated within the subdivision approval process, the preparation of outline development plans, the intent and planning provisions of other zones, to support good design and better development outcomes related to community open space.

#### A c t i o n p l a n

An action plan has been prepared to guide the steps involved in the implementation process over the next two years. The focus is placed on those actions, which have priority and will need to be implemented so as to support the ongoing implementation of the recommended strategies for each of the policy objectives listed.

Table B sets out the recommended action, responsibility and proposed timing for the completion of the task.

No	Recommended action	Responsibility	Timing
1	Review and adoption of the open space policy and planning framework to help facilitate a commitment towards achieving a whole-of-government approach.	State Government - Tasmanian Planning Commission, DPAC and DEDTA (Sport and Recreation Tasmania)	6 months
2	The preparation of an Open Space Advisory Guidance Policy and to foster infusion within a range of existing government policies that are interrelated to achieving effective open space planning e.g. health, transport, social inclusion, environment, transport.	Tasmanian Planning Commission in association with all relevant government agencies	12 months
3	Integrate the open space policy and planning framework within the current preparation of the regional land use plans and common elements for planning schemes (e.g. common definition, zone and purpose statement).	Tasmanian Planning Commission, Regional Planning Teams and support of local councils	12 months
4	Promote the basic planning tools to aid more effective open space planning including: preparing an audit of open space supply; adopting an open space hierarchy; adopting an open space classification system; and improving the open space planning process.	State Government and local councils – facilitated by Sport and Recreation Tasmania	12 months
5	Support the implementation of core policy documents such as A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania, the Premier's Physical Activity Plan and Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing: Environments for Active Living, which are clearly linked with the need for achieving more effective open space planning.	State Government – DEDTA (Sport and Recreation Tasmania, PPAC), Department of Health and Human Services	Ongoing commitment
6	Undertake a review of the provisions of the <i>Local Government (Building &amp; Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993</i> and other relevant Acts to consider more effective powers for councils and other land managers in acquiring and managing open spaces that reflect best practice in open space provision.	State Government – Parliamentary Legislation Committee	18 months
7	Prepare regional and metropolitan open space strategy plans consistent with the open space policy and planning framework and the direction of the regional land use plans.	Partnership resourcing between State Government and local councils	Ongoing commitment

**Table B:** Implementation action plan

No	Recommended action	Responsibility	Timing
8	Support the commitment of land managing agencies and Councils in the preparation of open space management plans, local open space strategy plans and master plans consistent with progressing the open space policy and planning framework.	State Government (Sport and Recreation Tasmania), local councils	Ongoing commitment
9	Develop a case for increased funding and resourcing for land managers and Council to be directed towards open space planning, development and management based on the beneficial relationship between improving community access to open space and achieving more active, equitable and healthy communities.	Inter-agency working group involving all relevant agencies including land managing agencies	18 months
10	Incorporate climate change research and 'best practice' into open space planning, including strategies and actions that are intended to mitigate the predicted impacts of climate change (e.g. retention of native vegetation for carbon storage, minimising emissions), and those that are aimed at impact adaptation (e.g. the role of foreshore 'buffers' to sea level rise and storm surge).	State Government – DPAC Tasmanian Climate Change Office	18 months
11	Foster the development of an open space system that is well-connected to residential areas and other community destinations by a network of trails and public transport routes.	Local councils, State Government (e.g. guided by documents such as the <i>Trails Tasmania Strategy</i> , <i>Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy</i> , <i>Healthy by Design</i> , regional and local transport plans)	Ongoing

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**Table B:** Implementation action plan (cont)

# SECTION 1

## CONTEXT

### 1.1 Purpose of the project

#### 1.1.1 Background

Open spaces contribute to the quality of life enjoyed by the Tasmanian community. Well-planned, designed and implemented open space planning policies aid in the delivery of a range of broader personal, social, economic and environmental objectives for the community.

In the absence of a state-wide approach to open space planning, there is a risk that approaches to open space planning at a state, regional and local level will continue to be ad hoc, lack consistency, not respond to emerging needs and fail to deliver the many benefits associated with good open space planning.

Climate change, the aging profile of the Tasmanian population, changing recreation participation levels and emerging activities, increased community expectations and changing work patterns are just some of the trends that will influence the need for, type and amount of open space required in the future.

Many of the open space plans prepared at the regional level (e.g. *Cradle Coast Open Space Plan 2009*, *Tamar Regional Valley Open Space System 2004*) and plans prepared for local councils share common values and strategic directions for improving the provision, development and management of open space. However, there is a need to develop clear and consistent policies and strategies that will help guide open space planning and provision in the future at a state, regional and local level.

The Tasmanian Government, through Sport and Recreation Tasmania, recognised this need and commissioned the preparation of an open space planning project for the state. This is considered timely given the current work being undertaken into strategic and statutory planning by the Regional Planning Initiatives for north-west, north and southern Tasmania.

### **1.1.2 Purpose**

The purpose of the this project is to provide sound policy guidance and establish a framework for effective open space planning and provision at a state, regional and local level in Tasmania. In doing so, it is expected that this will help increase the capacity and commitment to better policy and practices in open space planning and allow for more effective integration of open space objectives within statutory and non-statutory planning tools.

The project is being managed through a project steering committee consisting of representatives from Sport and Recreation Tasmania, each of the three Regional Planning Initiatives, and the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Consultants Inspiring Place Pty Ltd and HM Leisure Planning Pty Ltd were engaged to undertake the project.

### **1.1.3 Key tasks**

The key project tasks include:

- reviewing the direction being taken in international, national and state open space planning

- preparing a background paper to set the basis for developing a state-wide approach to open space policy and planning in Tasmania

- running a workshop in each of the three regions to discuss the project and policy directions with a range of key stakeholders

- holding meetings with each of the three Regional Planning Initiative teams

- developing a draft open space policy and planning framework report

- running a state-wide workshop with key stakeholders to review the findings draft open space policy and planning framework report

- preparation of the final open space policy and planning framework report.

#### 1.1.4 Defining key words

Throughout the report, reference is made to a number of words that need defining in respect to the purpose of the project.

##### Meaning of open space

'Open space' has many differing definitions, embracing a range of land and water settings. These settings support both human and ecological functions, comprising a system of spaces and linkages accessible to, and valued by the community. In a broad sense, most definitions encompass a range of land use functions – commonly, sport, recreation, ecological and cultural conservation (including environmental services), and increasingly alternative transport linkages and trails, and climate change adaptation functions. Importantly, open space systems support community health and well-being through these functions.

Definitions of open space also differ in their emphasis. Some definitions focus on ecological processes, wildlife habitat conservation, and scenic preservation – others emphasise sport, recreation, and leisure functions. Most definitions agree that open space is 'undeveloped' land and water settings (e.g. rivers, lakes and bays), or areas free of 'intensive development', occurring in both urban and rural settings, and is 'open to the air'.

The classification of open space is applied primarily to public land and waterways, however, some policies and strategies encompass privately owned open space, including private golf courses or agricultural land over which public access may be permitted. In the Tasmanian context, private conservation reserves (e.g. including those owned by non-governmental organisations) are an example of privately owned land of significance to the community for open space purposes.

The following open space definition has been prepared in response to the Tasmanian context. The definition responds to the significant natural and cultural values of our Tasmanian landscape, and the physical, psychological and spiritual benefits that can be gained from engaging with these places. The definition also recognises the significant local, regional and state economic benefits that are associated with quality open space provision, such as tourism, recreation, events and attracting residential and other investors to an area.

Open space, in the context of this project, means:

Land and water settings maintained and managed for a range of environmental and social purposes and that are valued and may be used by the community, including:

conservation of ecological processes (including ecosystem services such as clean water) native flora, wildlife habitat

conservation of cultural heritage and aesthetic values

sport, recreation and leisure functions – both passive and active, competitive and non-competitive and including open space user support facilities but excluding indoor facilities

spaces to enhance the visual qualities and social character of urban and rural landscapes

linear linkages, including trails, pathways, road reserves, riparian reserves, habitat corridors and beaches

parks, playgrounds and other public spaces where the community can exercise, play, learn, and relax

hazard management, including but not limited to flood control, bushfire hazard management, climate change and rising sea level.

The open space planning policy will primarily focus on publically owned and accessible land and water areas, given the nature of the current planning system.

Land and water settings of open space value do not have to be zoned 'Open Space' in statutory planning schemes or other instruments to be considered part of the Tasmanian open space system. For example, forested areas, agricultural land and other landscapes can also contribute to an open space system.

#### Meaning of open space system

The 'open space system' for the purposes of this report refers to the total array of open space within Tasmania that may or may not be connected in a physical way, but share a common cause. This differs from the term 'open space network' which implies some connectivity or linkage between the open spaces. References to the 'open space planning framework' relates to the administrative management and planning of the open space system.

### Meaning of sustainability

'Sustainable' for the purposes of this report, means that the open space should be environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. This means that open space should be planned, designed, constructed and maintained to an appropriate standard, following appropriate environmental and cultural assessment processes to minimise impacts to the natural and cultural values of an area. The provision of open space should be guided by demonstrated need and have the potential to provide long term, ongoing benefits to the community. Resources and funding for open space must be sufficient to ensure ongoing management and maintenance into the future. The Tasmanian open space system should be exemplars of environmental, social and economic 'best practice'.

The above definition, whilst differing in its focus, is consistent with the use of the term 'sustainable development' within the objectives of the Resource Management and Planning System.

### Meaning of livability

The term 'livability' is used throughout this document, and can be defined in a variety of ways. To provide clarity, the following quotes from the international 'Making Cities Livable' movement and from the Victorian Transport Policy Group in Canada, have been adopted as an appropriate definition of 'livability' suitable for the context of this document:

The mission of the 'Making Cities Livable' movement is to:

*"...enhance the well-being of inhabitants of cities and towns, strengthen community, improve social and physical health, and increase civic engagement by reshaping the built environment of our cities, suburbs and towns<sup>1</sup>"*

The following quote from the Victorian Transport Policy Group, Canada, broadly summarises the meaning of the term 'livability', as used in this document:

*"Community livability refers to the environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents, employees, customers and visitors. This includes safety and health (traffic safety, personal security, public health), local environmental conditions (cleanliness, noise, dust, air quality, water quality), the quality of social interactions (neighborliness, fairness, respect, community identity and pride), opportunities for recreation and entertainment, aesthetics,*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.livablecities.org/about/mission.html> Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

*and existence of unique cultural and environmental resources (e.g., historic structures, mature trees, traditional architectural styles)...Livability is largely affected by conditions in the public realm, places where people naturally interact with each other and their community, including streets, parks, transportation terminals and other public facilities, and so is affected by public policy and planning decisions”.*<sup>2</sup>

#### Meaning of social inclusion

The document, ‘A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania’<sup>3</sup> describes the term ‘social inclusion’. The definition given in the Strategy is consistent with the intent of the term when used in the context of this document, and so has been adopted. Social inclusion means:

*“...a term used to describe how government, community, business, services and individuals can work together to make sure that all people have the best opportunities to enjoy life and do well in society. It is about making sure that no one is left out, or forgotten, in our community”*

Social inclusion responds to ‘social exclusion’ experienced by some of the people within our community, stemming from a range of disadvantages, or ‘barriers to inclusion’.

*“Social exclusion can occur when a person experiences a number of disadvantages all at once, making it very difficult for them to participate in their community – for example in work, in education or in joining a community group”*<sup>4</sup>.

### **1.3 Benefits of open space**

Open space is a valuable community asset, providing a range of personal, social, environmental and economic benefits, including:

opportunities for a diverse range of physical activities, including organised sports and informal recreation - usually free of charge

contributing to the ‘livability’ of towns and cities, including linear linkages for alternative transport (e.g. off-road cycling and walking routes), providing safe spaces to gather and socialise, and enhancing scenic quality

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm97.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Social Inclusion Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet, page 4, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Social Inclusion Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet, page 4, 2008.

'green spaces' for relaxation, contemplation, and play opportunities for people to connect with, and learn about their local environment, contributing to psychological as well as physical well-being

conservation of natural and cultural values, such as native flora, wildlife habitat, cultural heritage and aesthetic values

contributing to the viability of local economies through encouraging capital investment

encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for physical activity, potentially reducing healthcare costs through lowering diseases associated with inactivity and stress (e.g. obesity, diabetes, heart conditions and depression)

opportunities to engage with natural areas to undertake recreational activities (e.g. riparian reserves along waterways allow access for walking and fishing)

maintenance of utilitarian values, such as water storage, flood mitigation, and other environmental services (e.g. clean air and water)

the emerging function of contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation (e.g. through carbon storage, buffers to sea level rise, and by encouraging non-motorised transport etc).

#### **1.4 Trends influencing open space provision**

A diverse array of factors impacts on the provision of recreation, open space and wider community services. These factors or trends need to be understood so that open space planning processes are able to respond in the most effective manner.

Some of the key national trends that are impacting on open space needs and provision have been documented in detail by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and are outlined below<sup>5</sup>. It should be noted that some trends run counter to each other and many are not uniform in their impact. Many of these trends are evident or emerging within Tasmania, however some will be less influential than those occurring within larger cities. However the extent of these trends will influence the supply and demand for open space and hence

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<sup>5</sup> A list of selected papers drawn from the annual ABS publication, *Australian Social Trends*, is provided in the bibliography

place pressure on management resources to meet changing needs within the community.

**Economic development and affluence.** Economic development and enhanced personal and national affluence have provided governments at the national, state and local level with the financial resources to reserve and develop open space for a wide range of purposes. At the personal level, increased affluence has led to a broadening of leisure time and leisure interests, many of which use open space resources.

**Financial borrowing regulations.** At the same time as the above trend has been impacting on demand, relaxed financial borrowing regulations has meant that the level of personal debt in Australia is higher than ever before so that for some in the community there is a growing inability to acquire the housing, leisure and other service needs that are desired. Further, there is a widening gap between those on the top salaries and those on low or no incomes. This is leading to a growing group in the community who cannot afford basic services.

**Population growth.** A substantial rise in immigration and, for the first time in many years, a rise in the national birth rate has added to the growth of demand generated by greater affluence. In the larger state capital cities, outer fringe suburbs are growing by more than 6 000 residents a year generating high demand levels for playing fields, playgrounds, informal parklands and a diversity of indoor community and recreation resources.

**Changing work hours and employment structures.** Fewer and fewer people are working a traditional five-day, 40-hour week. With extended business and opening hours, more people are working odd shifts through the week or over weekends while there is a growing mass of casual and part time employees. These changes mean that there has been a spread of demand for recreation opportunities from a traditional weekend focus to a greater week day and week day evening focus.

**Family structures.** Extensive changes have occurred in family structures over the past 30 years and these have further changed the demands on recreation resources and open space. The traditional nuclear family has declined in importance and is now in a minority as extended families with mixed generations of children and adults, group households and in particular, lone person households have become more common. These changes have led to new patterns and levels of demand for recreation and open space resources and to a more diverse and extended period of demand.

**Changing home and living styles.** The impact of family changes has been added to by changing home styles and higher population densities. While one group in the community has moved toward ever-larger free-standing homes that offer extensive social and entertainment spaces –and as a consequence, a lesser reliance on public leisure resources-- other groups have moved into inner city flats and apartments or homes on small blocks of land. In some areas, larger houses are also being built on smaller urban lots leaving less outside private open space for its residents. Higher density residential areas increasingly rely on external leisure and recreation resources to offset the limited capacity of homes. Closely linked to changes in housing are changes in transport as more and more people seek to use public transport and bicycles for both recreational and commuting purposes. This latter trend has encouraged the provision of networks of bikeways serving local, district and regional communities.

**Population ageing.** The ageing of the overall Australian population has changed the nature of recreation activities in the community with a growth in the demand for non-competitive pursuits. The pattern of change has not been uniform with the middle to inner areas of most towns and cities having the greatest concentration of older residents. These are often the areas with the lowest levels of open space provision or that have open space developed in keeping with past provision strategies and needs. The measurable shortcomings of provision have led to programs to redevelop existing resources so they better meet needs, to the acquisition of former industrial sites for use as open space and to the development of linear links between spaces so that their contribution to meeting community needs are optimised.

Growing in parallel with ageing and greater personal wealth has been the recognition of the strong positive links between leisure and recreation involvement and health, community well-being, social cohesion and social capital. All have led to a greater acknowledgement of recreation as a key human activity and as a basic right of everyone in the community.

**Changing participation rates.** The participation rates of many traditional, structured sports has stalled in recent times, whereas there has been strong growth in the participation rates of less structured activities such as walking and cycling (which have grown in participation by 39 per cent and 57 per cent respectively in Tasmania between 2001 and 2008, ERASS 2008). These changes in participation trends are likely to be effected by many of the other societal trends identified, such as an ageing population, and cultural changes. A reduction in free time that many of us face is also a likely factor where the freedom of these less structured activities allows for more flexibility in when and where an individual can partake.

**A multi-cultural society.** The emergence of a multi-cultural society with literally millions of Australians now having non-Anglo Saxon and non-English speaking backgrounds. These changes have brought new uses to open space, with a growing demand for large group picnic spaces, outdoor settings for weddings, cultural markets and fairs and the boom in the use of retail streetscapes for restaurant and cafe activities.

**Community-based cultural interests.** A growth in community-based cultural interests and activities. This has led to extensive use of open space for markets, fairs and a range of festivals and events. These occur on a monthly, annual or one-off basis and are growing in local, regional and even national popularity and generate major regional economic as well as recreational benefits.

**Growing levels of education.** Growing levels of education in the community. Research shows that the higher the education level, the greater is the discretionary spending of the community and the greater the allocation to leisure and recreation. Research has also shown that as education increases, so does the level of interest in smaller group and individual activities, in cultural pursuits, travel and the arts. These changes have contributed to the decline in some traditional team sports and recreational activities and to a greater interest in natural areas, bush walking, conservation activities and the like.

**Technology.** Technology and the creation of new, different, more accessible, safer and affordable leisure opportunities. From the perspective of the use of open space resources, growing activities include mountain bike riding, bush-walking and hiking, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, diving, rock climbing and bouldering, camping, and parasailing, ski sailing and BASE jumping. All are making increasing demands on open space resources of an increasing size and, in many instances, require careful monitoring and management to ensure that they do not impact detrimentally on natural areas. Modern travel and information technology means that new overseas ideas and activities quickly become available in Australia and that Australians can access overseas resources. Improvements in technology are allowing rapid progression of some recreational activities (mountain bike riding is a good example), which will require a dynamic approach to ensure public open space planning keeps pace with community needs.

**Equity and access.** A greater focus on equity and access for all, including Federal legislation to protect the rights of people with a disability has led to the design, provision and management of leisure and recreation resources and of services and support facilities that are accessible to people of all abilities. Of

recent times, this focus has extended to people suffering from disadvantage and cultural minorities. The acknowledgement of these rights has led to important changes in the design of many leisure and recreation resources including open spaces.

In summary whilst the majority of these changes have been positive in their impacts, changing work structures have dramatically impacted on volunteering and club activities. Further, pockets of disadvantage have emerged, particularly amongst newly-arrived immigrant groups, the aged, and residents in more remote rural communities that are progressively losing population and suffering the impacts of continuing drought.

The broad socio-economic changes outlined above need to be reviewed and, as deemed appropriate, added to in any open space planning study. The implications to open space provision, programming and management should also be identified and discussed. Where there is uncertainty regarding the nature, extent and impacts of the changes, the listing can be used as an input to the planning processes and participants can be asked which of the changes they have identified locally, how important they have been, what their impacts have been on open space opportunities and what responses may be needed to ensure that the outcomes of the changes are *beneficial* rather than *detrimental* to the community.

### **1.5 Open space planning issues**

The main issues and challenges associated with open space planning in Tasmania include:

lack of an agreed definition and policy on open space, to guide the planning and implementation of open space provision at a state, regional and local level

the limitations of the planning system in being able to deliver sustainable open space outcomes on the ground, given the range of factors involved in open space provision, management and maintenance, that are outside of the statutory planning framework

inconsistencies in the provision of open space across the state, including the methodologies used to determine need and the 'tools' associated with open space planning (e.g. classification and hierarchy systems, zoning, developer contributions, development standards, and application of needs analysis)

inadequacies in open space provision stemming from the use of inappropriate application or quantitative 'rules' such as the provision under the *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*, which states that developers must transfer 5 per cent of subdivided land to council for open space purposes (see section 3.3.2)

the statutory process for councils to follow in the disposal of open space land are complex and time consuming

limited integration of open space planning considerations with broader land use planning objectives at the state, regional and local levels, further contributing to the inconsistencies, and gaps in provision evident at a local level

limited resources available to undertake open space planning at all levels of government

difficulties associated with the management of a diverse open space system, including differing management regimes, provision of facilities, maintenance schedules etc

past subdivision and planning has delivered isolated pockets of open space rather than focus on the creation of open space systems, easily accessible to the community, connected by trail and public transport networks where possible

limited capacity to create integrated, flexible and multi-use venues, which consolidate resource requirements and avoid duplication of services and amenities, and therefore overall operating and maintenance costs

variable quality of open space, and the difficulties of achieving a balance between quality and quantity

the reality and perception of anti-social behaviour associated with open space areas, and the need to improve design capacity in this area to ensure safety and security

the limited or ad hoc response to changes in demographic, sport, recreation, and other societal trends when considering open space needs (the system should not be 'fixed')

the slow recognition of the need to apply contemporary planning practice and societal concerns into open space planning (e.g. climate change, social inclusion), moving away from the traditional model of sport and recreation facility provision (e.g. single purpose, single user facilities) to a state-wide system of built and natural environments, aimed at improving the quality of life for Tasmanians on a range of levels.

## **1.6 Directions in open space policy**

A range of open space planning documents have been reviewed from within Australia, North America and Europe (these are listed in Section 2.3 when providing a context to the policy statements). Whilst the list of documents is by no means exhaustive, the research to date has provided a useful context from which to consider open space planning at an international, interstate, Tasmanian, regional and local government level. The majority of the documents reviewed fall into the 'plan' or 'strategy' categories - few state or regional 'open space policies' were identified as part of the desktop study. However, many documents incorporated policy elements – such as a vision, purpose, objectives, principles, policies and strategies that are of relevance to the current project.

Some of the documents reviewed emphasised ecological conservation and nature-based recreation, whilst others focused on more traditional sport, leisure and recreation facility provision. However, at a broad level, a range of common principles emerged.

Some of the obvious trends and common open space planning approaches included:

- a shift away from the use of quantitative rules, such as the five per cent developer contribution and population statistics as a means of determining the open space needs of a community – this shift responds to a recognition that standardised quantitative measures have not always resulted in open space outcomes that best reflects the diversity of community needs

- general agreement as to the types of planning tools used and/or recommended (e.g. development and implementation of an open space hierarchy and classification system, inventories, detailed needs and supply analysis)

- a shift away from a purely sport and recreation focus, to encompass a broader set of 'livability' objectives

increased use of detailed needs analysis in determining the provision of open space at a local level, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analysis (many plans emphasise the importance of setting open space requirements at the local level to ensure that local circumstances inform planning decisions)

the influence of the 'liveable cities' movement on open space planning at a broad level, such as the principles of 'healthy design', including safety and security, accessibility, diversity, equity and social interaction and connectedness

a recognition of the multi-functional capacities of open space, including its role in biodiversity conservation, sport and recreation facility provision, general well-being, contribution to local landscape and urban character, and connecting communities to each other and to their environment

an emphasis on accessibility and a well connected open space system (e.g. physical linkages, catering for differing levels of mobility, as well as socio-economic equality regarding open space provision)

greater recognition that larger and well-connected open spaces are more beneficial than isolated smaller open space in accommodating multi-use, allowing for more diverse use and contributing towards managed environmental values

acknowledgement of the potential role that open space can play in climate change impact mitigation, or adaptation (e.g. retention and revegetation of forests will aid in carbon storage, and coastal foreshore reserves may provide buffers against sea level rise)

a recognition that larger, well-connected open space systems have higher value, for both conservation and recreation

the need for quality design (e.g. master planning) to ensure the quality development of open space

the need for high quality management, use scheduling and regulation, supported by robust strategic planning

the need for regular monitoring and review, to ensure that open space networks meet the changing needs of local communities.

# **SECTION 2**

## **Developing an open space policy and planning framework**

### **2.1 Benefits of an open space policy and planning framework**

The preparation of a state-wide open space policy and planning framework will provide a range of benefits, these include:

the provision of a consistent definition, suite of objectives and policies to guide open space planning and management at a state, regional and local level

the provision of direct assistance with the creation of an open space system that better reflects the needs and aspirations of the Tasmanian community, and that has the capacity to be adapted to meet changing needs

guidance within the development of effective open space planning tools, including a consistent open space classification and hierarchy system, developer contribution policy, demand analysis policy, and requirements for the preparation of open space plans

the provision of greater recognition of open space as a legitimate land use across all levels of governance.

### **2.2 Vision and objectives**

#### **2.2.1 Vision statement**

A vision for the Tasmanian open space system is:

Tasmania will have a diverse, comprehensive and sustainable open space system, providing health and well-being, environmental, sport and recreation, social, and economic benefits. The open space system will be developed and managed in response to the needs of the Tasmanian community and visitors, whilst respecting our unique environment.

### 2.2.2 Objectives

A set of objectives have been identified to support the vision statement (see Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1).

CORE ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE
Governance and planning	To establish an integrated and consistent open space policy and planning framework for Tasmania.
Environmental sustainability	To have the capacity to manage an open space system that is environmentally sustainable.
Livability and equity	To support an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity, individual and community health and well-being.
Economic benefit	To manage an open space system that contributes directly and indirectly to the Tasmanian economy.

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**Table 2.1:** Objectives to support core elements of the vision statement

During April 2010, three regional forums were held with key stakeholders involved with open space planning and policy within the state. The background paper circulated prior to the forums listed seven possible objectives. The forum participants were asked to identify the desired outcomes for an open space policy and planning framework and then to suggest actions that could be taken to achieve each of the objectives. The results of these regional forums are provided in Attachment 1. As a consequence of these discussions, the objectives were refined to become the four objectives listed above.

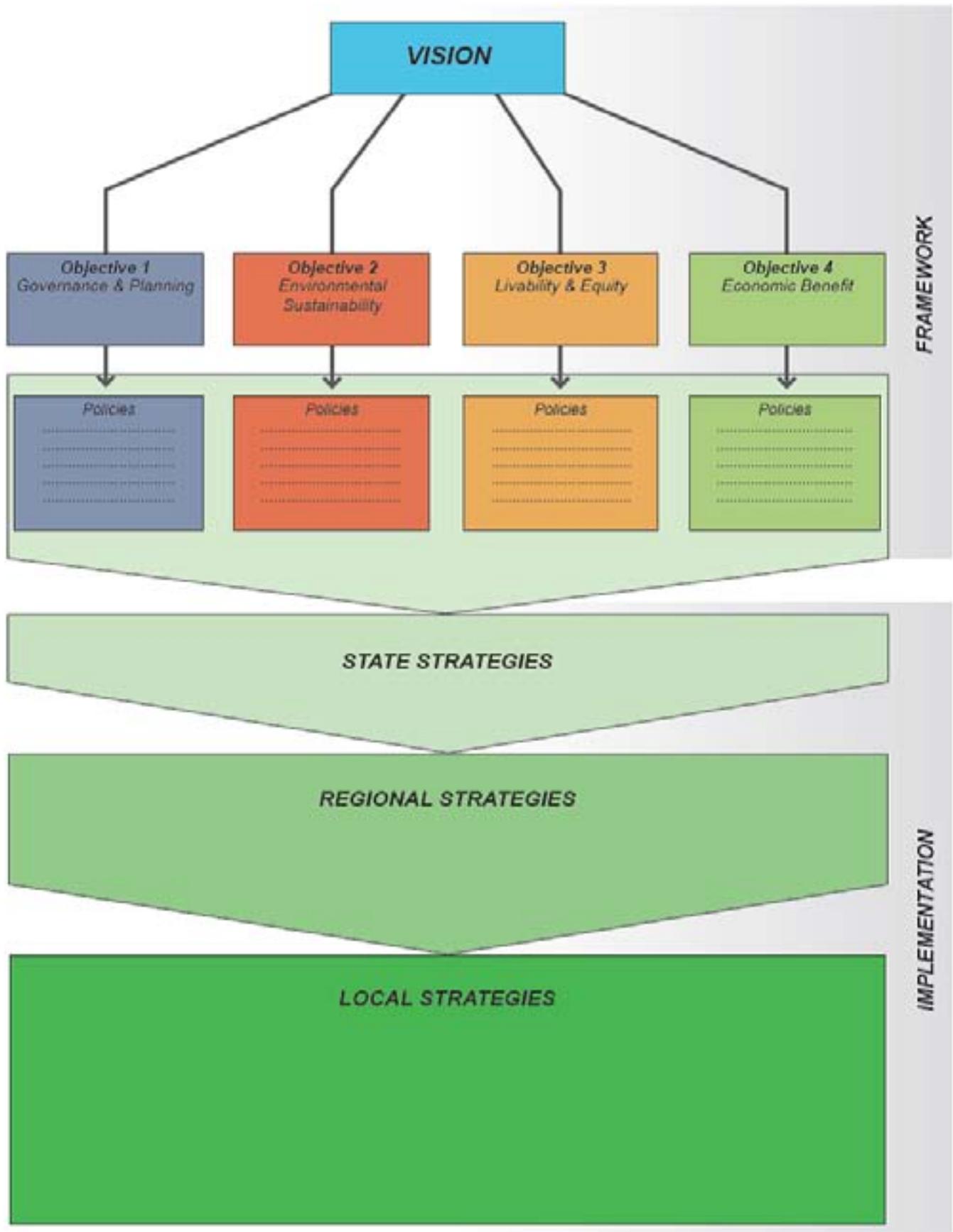


Figure 2.1. Proposed State-wide Open Space Planning Framework

## **2.3 Policies and strategies**

A set of policies have been formulated for each of the four objectives.

The key strategies to support these policies are also identified. A colour undertone has been used to distinguish between the different strategy areas of planning and governance, land management, training and education, design, marketing and promotion.

### **2.3.1 Governance and planning policies**

#### **C o n t e x t**

The planning, development and management of open space is not the imperative of just one government agency but rather cuts across many areas of government responsibility. For instance the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania, Hydro Tasmania and all local councils are managers of significant open space assets, many of which are accessed by the community. Open space areas are critical to sport, recreation and leisure pursuits being promoted by local councils and Sport and Recreation Tasmania. Open space areas make strong destinations for attracting visitors to the State. The Department of Health and Human Services recognises that access to open space areas is crucial to achieving better health outcomes. State and local government transport planners are looking at ways to provide or improve active transport options utilising where possible, available open space links. Local councils make important planning decisions about open space provision when assessing and approving subdivision applications and overall development plans.

Accordingly there are various mechanisms being used to aid open space planning including some guiding policy documents, management and master plans for open space areas and planning scheme controls. Management plans and master plans have been prepared for a relatively small number of open space areas by land managers, local councils or non-government agencies.

The State's Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS) established under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (LUPA) is the primary statutory planning instrument to guide and control land use planning decisions within the state. The system requires all local councils to further the objectives of the RMPS through the management of local planning schemes.

The objectives of the RMPS are to:

promote the sustainable development of natural and physical resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity

provide for the fair, orderly and sustainable use of air, land and water

encourage public involvement in resource management and planning

facilitate economic development in accordance with the objectives set out above

promote the sharing of responsibility for resource management and planning between the different spheres of government, the community and industry in the state.

A review of the LUPA began in 2008 leading to the *Draft Land Use Planning and Approvals Amendment (State and Regional Strategies) Act 2009*, which recommends a number of legislative changes, these included:

the establishment of the Tasmanian Planning Commission

supporting the preparation of regional land use planning strategies

allowing interim planning schemes that are consistent with, and likely to advance the objectives and outcomes of, the regional land use strategy for the area in which the scheme is to apply

to allow projects of regional significance if they are not prohibited under a planning scheme established as part of a regional strategy.

The best opportunity to establish an integrated and consistent approach to open space policy and planning framework for Tasmania is now. The Tasmanian Government is currently funding regional planning teams to prepare regional land use planning strategies and to develop regionally consistent elements for local planning schemes. There is also a Review Steering Committee administered through the Tasmanian Planning Commission that is collaborating with the regional planning teams and Councils regarding the common elements templates for planning schemes.

A 'whole-of-government' approach to open space across State Government agencies, between state agencies and regional bodies, and between councils and the other tiers of government would provide better planning outcomes for the community and the management of open spaces.

**Relevant policy reference documents:**

*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (LUPAA)*

*Draft LUPAA Amendment Act*

Draft Cradle Coast Land Use Framework Discussion Paper

North Plan: Towards a Regional Planning Strategy for Northern Tasmania

Southern Tasmania Regional Planning Project: Draft Background Papers

P o l i c i e s

The Tasmanian open space planning framework will:

1. Provide a strategic, 'whole-of-government' approach to open space planning and provision in Tasmania
2. Incorporate open space policy guidance to aid integrated state, regional and local planning
3. Foster consistency in the adoption of planning tools and processes to support effective open space planning.

## Recommended strategies

OBJECTIVE 1: To establish an integrated and consistent open space policy and planning framework for Tasmania.
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will provide a strategic, 'whole-of-government' approach to open space planning and provision in Tasmania.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
1.1 Adopt a Tasmanian government open space policy and planning framework – vision statement, objectives, policies and recommended strategies.
1.2 Ensure that the open space policy and planning framework is recognised and integrated with other related areas of State policies including (but not limited to) community health, transport, environmental management, social inclusion, education and community services.
1.3 Review existing mechanisms for cross-government partnerships, sharing of information and collaboration in the implementation of the open space policy and planning framework.
1.4 Ensure that future government policies, strategies and plans (e.g. transport, health, sport and recreation) are consistent with achieving the open space policy.
1.5 Revise the processes for managing crown land lease arrangements in relation to the open space policy and planning framework.
1.6 Investigate the opportunities under the provisions of the <i>Civil Liability Act 2002</i> or through amendments to the Act that will allow for better management of public liability risk issues across Tasmania's open space system.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will incorporate open space policy guidance to aid integrated state, regional and local planning.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
2.1 Ensure the policies within regional and metropolitan planning frameworks are consistent with the open space policy and planning framework.
2.2 Ensure that new planning schemes are consistent with achieving the open space policy and planning framework.
2.3 Support the preparation and implementation of regional open space strategy plans.
2.4 Support local councils in the preparation of municipal open space strategy plans and the preparation of plans (e.g. management plans and master plans) for the overall open space system or selected open space areas.
2.5 Develop an information bank of relevant research to assist open space planning and information sharing.
2.6 Facilitate good liaison processes with developers to achieve beneficial open space outcomes (i.e. social, economic and environmental) for the community.
2.7 Foster internal management processes within organisations that will allow greater capacity for working together towards achieving the intent of the open space policy and planning framework.
2.8 Foster the preparation of precinct structure plans or local development plans that will help guide the use and development of land including the provisions, development and management for future open space.
2.9 Review current legislation provisions relating to open space to ensure consistency of purpose in relation to the open space policy and planning framework, including processes for acquisition and disposal of open space.
2.10 Develop improved open space provision guidelines that relate to stratum developments and ongoing requirement for maintenance requirements.

OBJECTIVE 1: To establish an integrated and consistent open space policy and planning framework for Tasmania.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will incorporate open space policy guidance to aid integrated state, regional and local planning.
<i>Land management strategies</i>
2.11 Support land managers in the preparation of management plans for major open space areas within the state.
2.12 Encourage open space to be included within asset management plans.
<i>Training and education strategies</i>
2.13 Support training and skill development in open space planning and management.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will foster consistency in the adoption of planning tools and processes to support effective open space planning.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
3.1 Develop a common open space hierarchy and classification system that can be applied across the state.
3.2 Develop a consistent approach to the application of zones covering open space within planning schemes.
3.3 Develop guidelines for improving the assessment of open space needs in relation to five per cent developer contributions under the <i>Local Government Act</i> .
3.4 Consider the merits of reviewing other State planning legislation that would allow council to prepare and operate developer contribution plans for the provision, use, management and maintenance of open space.
3.5 Develop guidelines for achieving a more consistent and effective approach to open space planning processes.

### 2.3.2 Environmental sustainability policies

#### Context

This objective reflects the important role that open space can play in the conservation of our natural and cultural values. Open space can encompass a range of environmental values, including biodiversity conservation, habitat for rare and threatened species, and protection of environmental services (e.g. drinking water, slope stabilisation). Similarly, open space can encompass and conserve cultural heritage sites and artefacts, as well as areas of scenic quality. Understanding the environmental and cultural heritage values of an area designated as open space is highly important, and should form the basis for setting access, use and management priorities.

Managing land as open space can result in enhanced environmental quality. For example, the inclusion of underutilised semi-natural areas in the open space system may encourage increased visitation, leading to increased need

for quality facilities (e.g. rationalisation and formalisation of trails), and environmental management. Regular visitors may become involved in environmental management practices such as regeneration and weed control. Linear open spaces and linkages can also form part of a non-motorised transport network, proving an alternative to car-dependent travel, lowering our carbon footprint and emission of other pollutants.

Conservation, improved environmental management practices - including sustainable infrastructure and facility design, and provision of enhanced opportunities for non-motorised transport, will be increasingly important functions of the Tasmanian open space system.

This objective also responds to the need to ensure that the Tasmanian government and community have the capacity to manage our open space system to the standard required to ensure long-term sustainability. This will require a commitment to resource allocation (including factoring in longer-term maintenance requirements), training/skill development in open space planning and management, and a commitment to partnerships (including resource and knowledge sharing) between key land managers and stakeholders to 'grow' the capacity for sustainable management.

The box below lists some of the documents that are of relevance to the environmental management of our open space system. Some of these documents provide high-level policy guidance, while others (e.g. *Tasmanian Reserve Code of Practice*) provide detail on the management intent and requirements of the various types of reserves that make up our reserve system.

**Relevant state documents:**

Tasmanian Framework for Action on Climate Change  
 Climate Change Strategy for Tasmania  
 Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice  
 State Coastal Policy  
 Tasmanian Planning System, including the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*

P o l i c y   s t a t e m e n t s

The Tasmanian open space system will:

1. Protect and enhance ecological processes, including biodiversity conservation and environmental services
2. Protect and enhance cultural heritage, local character and aesthetic values

3. Contribute directly and indirectly to climate change mitigation and adaptation
4. Facilitate 'active' transport, minimising emissions, reducing car dependency and lowering Tasmania's carbon footprint
5. Be managed in a cooperative way, with the various land managers and the community working in partnership to achieve environmentally sustainable outcomes

Recommended strategies

OBJECTIVE 2: To have the capacity to manage an open space system that contributes to environmental sustainability
Policy 1. The Tasmanian open space system will protect and enhance ecological processes, biodiversity conservation and environmental services.
<i>Land management strategies</i>
1.1. Ensure that the environmental values of open space areas are understood, including the presence and location of rare, threatened or endangered communities and species are documented, and that management actions respond directly to these values.
1.2. Ensure that the level of use, extent of development and intended user groups are consistent with the environmental values of the open space area.
1.3. The management and maintenance of open space will be based on 'environmental best-practice', including minimal resource wastage (e.g. water and energy usage), and minimal impact on environmental services (e.g. water quality, storm water drainage).
1.4. Ensure that open space use does not impinge upon environmental management practices required to maintain biodiversity values, including environmental burns, weed management programs etc.
1.5. Explore the opportunities for the open space system to contribute to biodiversity conservation (e.g. linking 'green corridors', minimising habitat fragmentation, revegetation and weed management projects).
Policy 2. The Tasmanian open space system will protect and enhance cultural heritage, local character and aesthetic values.
<i>Land management strategies</i>
2.1. Ensure that the level of use, extent of development and intended user groups are consistent with the cultural heritage values of the open space.
2.2. Recognise the aesthetic value that open spaces can have (e.g. riparian reserves, forested skylines), and the contribution to a local landscape, as a significant value in addition to recreation, environmental and other values.
2.3. Explore the opportunities for the interpretation of open space, as a means of communicating the cultural heritage, as well as environmental values.

OBJECTIVE 2: To have the capacity to manage an open space system that contributes to environmental sustainability
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space system will protect and enhance cultural heritage, local character and aesthetic values.
<i>Design strategies</i>
2.4. Ensure that the design and development of open space is appropriate to the local character of the area, including the density and extent of development, type of facilities provided, and materials used.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space system will contribute directly and indirectly to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
3.1. Incorporate climate change research and 'best practice' into open space planning, including strategies and actions that are intended to mitigate the predicted impacts of climate change (e.g. retention of native vegetation for carbon storage, minimising emissions, and regulating local climate), and those that are aimed at impact adaptation (e.g. the role of foreshore 'buffers' to sea level rise and storm surge).
3.2. Ensure that the Tasmanian open space system has the capacity to respond and adapt to environmental changes brought about by climate change.
Policy 4: The Tasmanian open space system will facilitate non-motorised transport (or 'active') transport, minimising emissions, and lowering Tasmania's carbon footprint.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
4.1. Incorporate 'active', or 'sustainable' transport policy, strategies and guidelines into open space planning at all levels of government.
4.2. Ensure that the open space system is connected by a network of off-road transport routes, and trails facilitating non-motorised transport.
<i>Design strategies</i>
4.3. Further facilitate the non-motorised transport opportunities associated with open spaces through the installation of quality support facilities (e.g. end of trip facilities such as showers and toilets), including bike racks and lockers, safe road crossings and signage.
Policy 5: The Tasmanian open space system will be managed in a cooperative way, with the various land managers and the community working in partnership to achieve environmentally sustainable outcomes.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
5.1. Implement a consistent approach to the environmental management of our open space system across all levels of government.
5.2. Develop a state open space system that responds to the capacity of the government and the community to manage sustainably.
<i>Land Management Strategies</i>
5.3. Develop partnerships with local environmental groups to aid in the management and maintenance of open space areas.
5.4. Encourage knowledge-sharing between the various land managers, including specialists, to facilitate 'best practice' and innovative environmental planning, design and management practices.

### 2.3.3 Livability and social inclusion policies

#### C o n t e x t

This objective responds to the shift away from a traditional sport and recreation focus, to one that encompasses broader ‘quality of life’ or ‘livability’, social inclusion, spirituality, health and well-being, including physical activity and aesthetic purposes.

Open space can contribute to the ‘livability’ of places, including linear linkages for non-motorised transport, safe spaces to gather, socialise and learn. Open space can also provide areas for relaxation, contemplation and opportunities to connect people with their local environment. In our fast-paced culture, open spaces can act as ‘refuges’ within our busy cities and towns, contributing to psychological as well as physical well-being, connecting people and contributing to community pride.

There is a growing body of evidence supporting the link between parks and other open space areas, and health and well-being. Many government agencies and local councils are working to enhance community health and well-being through improved access to open space areas where the natural environment can be experienced through activities such as walking, mountain biking, and horse riding, as well as more passive pursuits such as relaxation, contemplation, and health disciplines such as tai chi.

A number of Tasmanian plans and strategies address the aspects of open space planning discussed above, including livability, health and well-being and physical activity. For example, the Premier’s Physical Activity Council was formed in June 2001 to address physical inactivity, and the associated health conditions prevalent in Tasmania. Formation of the council responds to the *Tasmania Together* Goal 4 to “develop an approach to health and well-being that focuses on preventing poor health and encouraging healthy lifestyles”. The *Tasmanian Physical Activity Plan* was developed to provide a framework to ensure all parts of government and the community can work together to make physical activity an integral component of community life.

Other documents provide practical guidance relating to the design and management of open spaces and other environments to facilitate safe physical activity and healthy lifestyles (e.g. *Healthy By Design*), and aim to address the in-equality of access and opportunity that exist in our community (e.g. *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania*).

**Relevant state documents:**

A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania

Trails Tasmania Strategy

Premier's Physical Activity Plan

Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing Environments for Active Living

Tasmanian Sport and Recreation Framework for People with a Disability

Designing Out Crime, Designing in People: A guide for safer design by Launceston City Council

Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy

**P o l i c y   s t a t e m e n t s**

The Tasmanian open space system will:

1. Be developed in collaboration with the Tasmanian community, and be based on demonstrated need
2. Facilitate health and well-being including physical activity through good design, linkages, and quality facilities
3. Be accessible and well-connected
4. Be equitable, and incorporate enhanced opportunities for people with mobility impairment or disability.

## Recommended strategies

OBJECTIVE 3: To support an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity and community health and well-being
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space system will be developed in collaboration with the Tasmanian community, and be based on demonstrated need.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
1.1. Integrate livability and social inclusion principles into Regional Land Use Frameworks, planning schemes and relevant documents.
1.2. Ensure that open space is equitably distributed, with a consistent level of quality, facilitating social inclusion and community pride.
1.3. Be flexible in order to adapt to changing community needs and user group profiles.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space system will facilitate community health and well-being, including physical activity through good design, linkages, and quality facilities.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
2.1. Endorse and implement 'livability' and physical activity guidelines, including the <i>Premier's Physical Activity Plan</i> , and <i>Healthy By Design</i> .
<i>Design strategies</i>
2.2. Accommodate multiple-use where possible, including shared-trails, to cater for a range of compatible user groups, and consolidating resource input.
2.3. Provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and other non-active (or passive recreational) pursuits, which connect people with their natural environments.
2.4. Discourage anti-social behaviour through design, passive surveillance and increased visitation.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space system will be accessible and well-connected.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
3.1. Develop an open space system that is well-connected to residential areas and other community destinations by a network of trails and public transport routes.
Policy 4: The Tasmanian open space system will be equitable, and incorporate enhanced opportunities for people with mobility impairment or disability.
<i>Design strategies</i>
4.1. Provide enhanced opportunities for people with mobility impairment or disability to access and experience open spaces.

### 2.3.4 Economic benefit policies

#### C o n t e x t

An environment rich in diversity and complexity provides options for sustainable economic activity. Open spaces (especially parks, waterways, beaches, sportsgrounds) are an important focus for sustaining the Tasmanian tourism and recreation industries, which contribute to the state, regional and local economies. For instance, nature based–tourism is now recognised as the fastest growing sector in global tourism with ‘global experience seekers’ now accounting for 60 per cent of the Australian inbound market.

Access to open space can provide an essential preventative component of health programs to confront the modern diseases of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stress, lung disease and cancer. Research has shown that exposure to natural environments can help people to cope with and recover from stress, illness and injury; provide a more positive outlook and greater life satisfaction and improve concentration and productivity. Others seek therapeutical benefits from their association with open space. Open space areas can help reduce the long term health costs for the community and individuals.

It is also being increasingly recognised that well-managed open space can contribute to future economies – carbon storage, identification of natural medicines, water management and environmental services.

Currently little information is available about the potential economic benefits of open space to the Tasmanian economy. However there is a range of information sources that suggest that the open space system is significant to the Tasmanian economy. For instance:

The Tasmanian Visitor Survey (TVS) shows that during 2009 some 281 600 interstate and overseas holiday visitors to Tasmania (60 per cent of total holiday visitors) visited a National Park and 166 100 holiday visitors (36 per cent of total holiday visitors) undertook a bushwalk of less than two hours duration.

The *Tasmanian Walking Tracks Strategy and Marketing Plan 1997* identified around 3 200 kilometres of walking trails on state-owned land alone, which could have an asset replacement value of \$100 million to \$150 million. The *Trails Tasmania Strategy* indicated that the recurrent investment in developing, managing and maintaining recreational trails within Tasmania is in the range of \$3.8 million to \$4 million.

Tasmanian local councils are typically allocating in the order of 10 per cent of the operating budget towards open space for development and management of sport and recreation.

Tourism Tasmania market research indicates that interstate caravanning and camping spend in 2008 was \$318 million, with this activity often being associated with accessibility to open space areas around the state.

Increased spend as a result of using or enjoying the many attributes of Tasmania's diverse open space system stimulates the development of infrastructure and demand for related goods and services. This in turn leads to the creation of jobs in many locations around the state.

A study into the economic benefits of sport and recreation in Tasmania is being conducted for Sport and Recreation Tasmania. Preliminary research indicates that sport and physical recreation expenditure is contributing \$819.3 million to the Tasmanian economy (3.6% of state gross product) and enables the employment of over 13 000 people<sup>6</sup>. The study will be completed in late 2010 and will help inform future government direction and investment in sport and recreation opportunities, infrastructure and services. The Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts is also preparing a State Economic Development Strategy as part of a whole-of-government strategy.

**Relevant state documents:**

A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania

Premier's Physical Activity Plan

Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing Environments for Active Living

Melbourne Communiqué, Healthy Parks Healthy People International Congress, Melbourne 2010

**P o l i c i e s**

The Tasmanian open space system will:

1. Be planned, developed and managed with consideration given to delivering a potential a range of economic benefits to the Tasmanian community
2. Improve the competitiveness of Tasmania as a destination for visitors to access and enjoy the diverse open space values

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Innovation Research Centre 2010. The Value of Sport and Physical Recreation to Tasmania, Research Report.

3. Support greater public and private investment in appropriate infrastructure and services that benefit from Tasmania's open space values

#### Recommended strategies

OBJECTIVE 4: To manage an open space system that contributes to the Tasmanian Economy.
Policy 1: The Tasmanian open space system will be planned, developed and managed with consideration given to delivering a potential a range of economic benefits to the Tasmanian community.
<i>Planning and governance strategies</i>
1.1 Support ongoing research into the broader economic benefits of open space to the Tasmanian economy.
1.2 Recognise the potential for open space to be an essential preventative component for improving public health and reducing health costs to the community.
1.3 Recognise the potential for open space to support affordable housing outcomes and contribute to the economic value of livable areas.
1.4 Recognise the potential for open space to contribute towards carbon offset schemes.
1.5 Raise greater community awareness regarding the wide ranging benefits of open space.
Policy 2: The Tasmanian open space system will improve Tasmania's competitiveness as a destination for visitors to access and enjoy the diverse open space values.
<i>Marketing and promotion strategies</i>
2.1 Market and promote the distinctiveness of Tasmania's open space system as part of the Tasmanian visitor experience.
2.2 Recognise the potential of open spaces to support events.
2.3 Improve access to information about Tasmania's open space system for residents and visitors including publications, websites, promotions, guidebooks, better mapping, signage, media etc.
2.4 Monitor visitor feedback about the quality of experience given the overall condition, facilities, services and management of the open space system.

OBJECTIVE 4: To manage an open space system that contributes to the Tasmanian economy.
Policy 3: The Tasmanian open space planning framework will support greater public and private investment in appropriate infrastructure and services that benefit access, use and management of Tasmania's open space system.
<i>Design strategies</i>
3.1 Support appropriate product development and provision of facilities within open space areas that are sustainable and will service the needs of visitors and the community.
<i>Land management strategies</i>
3.2 Explore the opportunities for users to contribute towards the ongoing commitment for sustainable management of the open space areas and facilities being used.
3.3 Foster and support the potential for contributions from commercial users of the open space system to assist with sustainable management of the open space areas and facilities being used.
3.4 Investigate the capacity for building greater volunteer involvement and support, including community trails partnerships.

# **SECTION 3**

## **Implementation of the open space policy and planning framework**

The key requirements for implementing a state-wide open space policy and planning framework are considered to be:

establishing clear and improved governance in relation to open space planning and provision (Section 3.1)

adopting an suite of planning tools to assist implementation of the state-wide open space policy and the planning framework (Section 3.2)

developing sufficient capacity and commitment to ensure effective and sustainable open space planning, provision and management (Section 3.3).

### **3.1 Establishing a governance framework**

A framework for implementing open space policy and planning is required at the state, regional and local governance levels.

Table 3.1 below summarises the potential open space planning framework elements that may be relevant to each level of government. It indicates that there will be differing levels of detail relevant to each level of governance. It also indicates that local planning schemes will still provide the statutory mechanism for the implementation of the state-wide open space policy and planning framework.

It will be important to ensure that the vision, objectives and guiding policies of taking a state-wide approach to open space policy are applied at the state, regional and local levels. There are various options for how a state-wide open space policy may be presented:

as a State Government planning policy similar in status to existing government state policies as the *Tasmanian Coastal Policy 1996*, *State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land 2009* and the *State Policy on Water Quality Management 1997*

Governance	Nature of policy	Core policy elements
State level	<p>State Government Planning Advisory Guidance Policy on Open Space in the short to medium term.</p> <p>State Government planning policy that is integrated within a broader policy framework including environmental sustainability, health, active transport, sport and recreation, social inclusion, liveability in the long term.</p>	<p>Common definition for open space</p> <p>Vision, objectives and guiding policies for open space planning and provision in Tasmania</p> <p>Strategies to achieve policies</p> <p>Common system of open space hierarchy and classification</p>
Regional level	Regional Open Space Policy and Guidelines	<p>Interpretation and application of the state open space vision, objectives and guiding policy statements applied as part of the regional strategic land use frameworks</p> <p>Additional open space policies of relevance at the regional level</p> <p>Regional open space delivery mechanisms including hierarchy, classification system, assessment of regional needs and priorities and agreement on common planning tools (e.g. definition, zones and overlays)</p> <p>Regional open space provision based on identification and assessment of regional trends, needs and priorities</p> <p>Open space policy would be considered in the preparation of regional management plans for public owned lands and waterways</p>

**Table 3.1.** Example of open space governance framework

Governance	Nature of policy	Core policy elements
Local level	local council Open Space Policy and Guidelines	<p>Interpretation and application of the state vision, objectives and guiding policy statements</p> <p>Local open space planning and provision should be consistent with regional open space planning directions</p> <p>Local open space provision based on identification and assessment of local community trends, gaps, needs and priorities</p> <p>Open space policy would be integrated with other council policies in their Strategic Plan, settlement plans and planning schemes</p> <p>Open space policy would be considered in the preparation of management plans and master plans for public owned lands</p> <p>Open space policy would be considered in the assessment of development applications – open space provisions incorporated into planning schemes through zones, overlays and other planning tools</p> <p>Open space policy would be regularly reviewed to ensure that existing open space resources were continuing to function in a useful and effective manner</p>

**Table 3.1.** Example of open space governance framework (continued)

as a State Government planning policy that is integrated within a broader policy framework including environmental sustainability, health, active transport, sport and recreation, social inclusion, livability

as a State Government Planning Advisory Guidance Policy.

The following quote is an extract from the Tasmanian Planning Commission's website in relation to state policies.

*"State Policies represent the government's overarching position on certain policy matters and may contain matters relating to one or more of the following: sustainable development of natural and physical resources; land use planning; land management; environmental management; environment protection; and any other matter that may be prescribed. It must seek to further the objectives set out in Schedule 1 of the State Policies and Projects Act 1993; and may be made only where there is, in the opinion of the Minister, a matter of State significance to be dealt with in the State Policy; and must seek to ensure that a consistent and co-ordinated approach is maintained throughout the State with respect to the matters contained in the State Policy; and must incorporate the minimum amount of regulation necessary to obtain its objectives"*<sup>7</sup>.

*"The Tasmanian Planning Commission is required to prepare a report on a draft State Policy or a draft amendment to a State Policy that has been submitted to it by the Minister. Such a report is prepared after the Commission has assessed the draft State Policy by placing the draft on public exhibition, inviting representations and conducting a hearing (if required). Once a State Policy has been reviewed by the Commission and a report forwarded to the Minister, it must be approved by both Houses of Parliament before taking effect. It then is administered by the appropriate agency and the Commission's involvement in it ceases."*<sup>8</sup>

The preferred option is the second one where open space policy is interwoven with related broader government policies environmental sustainability, health, sport and recreation, active transport, social inclusion, livability etc rather than as a stand-alone planning policy. Whilst planning schemes will remain core statutory tools for open space, they also have many limitations in respect to achieving an integrated approach to open space outcomes.

It is recognised that this recommended policy approach will take more time and resources but it does offer scope for dealing with open space in a more holistic way in the long term. However in the short to medium term, it is

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.planning.tas.gov.au/stpol>

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

important that there be improved guidance on open space policy and planning, and accordingly option three – that being the preparation of a State Government Planning Advisory Guidance Policy – can play an active role. As the name suggests, this may not have the statutory standing of a State Planning Policy, but will help engender a clearer direction for improving open space planning within the state.

#### R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

Re-shape the open space policy outlined in this document into a template that is consistent with the suite of existing government 'Advisory Guidance Policies'. The final Open Space Advisory Guidance Policy should be integrated with the range of existing government policies that are relevant to open space planning (e.g. health, transport, social inclusion, environment and transport).

### **3.2 Adopting tools to assist open space planning**

A range of planning tools can be used to aid more effective open space planning within the state. Some of the basic planning tools include:

- preparing an audit of open space supply
- adopting an open space hierarchy
- adopting an open space classification system
- improving the open space planning process
- achieving consistency in planning scheme zoning provisions for open space in the future.

These tools are briefly discussed below with more detail provided within attachments to the report.

#### **3.2.1 Audit of open space supply**

Fundamental to open space planning is an assessment of the supply of open space to help determine the potential and capability.

A comprehensive audit of open space assets can generally be expected to include the following information:

- ownership, address and name

location

component land holdings/titles, for identification purposes and to ensure that a venue on multiple titles is only counted once

area in hectares

open space hierarchy and category (refer to 3.2.2 and 3.2.3)

land cover e.g. maintained grass, play facilities, sporting field(s); native bushland/forest; exotic species

current uses and users

physical characteristics: slope, drainage, soils, geology, climate, aspect, shape, quality

land use zoning

provision and/or location of services: water, power, sewerage, roads (sealed/unsealed)

any planned and/or approved additions /deletions to the asset, changes of uses, access, zoning

rights of way, roads

easements

land capability and ability to accommodate the uses it supports or is intended to support

catchments which the venue serves, or is intended to serve, including any accessibility constraints

the quality/condition of the various components: lawns, playing fields, equipment vegetation, aesthetics (as rated by both professional assessors and users)

safety (in terms of view lines, "escape points", lighting)

occupational health and safety issues e.g. path width/condition/location, tree overhang/health, trip points, safety fences, advisory signage

buildings/amenities: those that support uses of the open space and those that are stand-alone e.g. football change rooms, weather shelters, toilets versus indoor sports hall.

In addition to the above, an inventory should record information on the programs and activities at each venue, user clubs, use hours per week or per season, groups and other agencies which provide user opportunities, and the services which support and facilitate the use of the venue. It may also record user opinions and priorities for action.

Finally, the inventory should include information as to when it was last updated and who recorded the assessments so that currency and accuracy can be checked.

#### R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

Undertake comprehensive audits of open space assets within each local government area, and regional audits for assets managed by State Government agencies, to support effective open space planning.

Audits should include the elements outlined above, to ensure a level of consistency is achieved across the state.

### **3.2.2 Open space hierarchy**

An open space hierarchy refers to the scale of the area served or the catchment from which the open space attracts users, as well as the 'status' of the facilities provided (e.g. national-level mountain bike course).

A hierarchical classification of open space is an invaluable planning, management and information tool. From a planning perspective, the position which a facility occupies within a hierarchy provides an indication of the role it is expected to perform and thereby, the size of the site and the scale and quality of the amenities, services and other resources which could be expected to be provided. These factors will generally be different for each level of the hierarchy.

From a management point of view, the position of a resource in a hierarchy provides an indication of the maintenance inputs, which should be, or will need to be allocated to it, and which activities might not be permitted to use it. This helps to ensure the limited resources are used effectively and efficiently, rather than spending scarce resources on all open space areas regardless of their importance and what role they serve in the overall open space system.

It is common to find the following categories of open space used within regional and local open space plans. Table 3.3 provides an example of an open space hierarchy.

Local

District

Sub-regional

Regional

State

National

Open space	Description
Local	<p>Local open spaces predominantly or totally serve small rural localities, small townships, and neighbourhoods within settlements and urban areas because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they are generally small in size and do not have the capacity to serve a broad catchment and therefore cater to small localised catchment areas e.g. a neighbourhood, local town;</li> <li>they provide opportunities similar to those available at a number of other locations and thus do not attract people from far away; and/or</li> <li>they have been designed and sited in a way, to ensures good access from nearby areas, and possibly, to discourage access and use from wider areas so that local users do not feel a loss of identity and community.</li> </ul>
District	<p>District open spaces serve substantial and often well-defined geographical districts or precincts within a municipal area. Their characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally larger size than local areas;</li> <li>more specialised uses;</li> <li>greater concentration of facilities and wider opportunities for experiences;</li> <li>relative isolation from other similar assets (e.g. in rural towns); and/or</li> <li>less frequent level of provision due to, generally, land requirements, higher cost of provision and for some types of open space, the size of catchment needed to ensure viability.</li> </ul>
Sub-regional	<p>Sub-Regional open spaces are those which serve the community living across a municipal area. They are classified as Sub-Regional because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>depending on their nature, they are used by individuals, groups or teams which are drawn from across the whole municipal area;</li> <li>they are provided by councils for residents of that council whilst other councils provide their own venues for their residents;</li> <li>they are often the only resource of their type in the council area;</li> <li>their land requirements, higher cost of provision and for some types of open space, the size of catchment needed to ensure viability, means that no more than one or two venues can be provided by a council; and/or</li> <li>they have been sited so as to be accessible to the whole council community.</li> </ul>
Regional	<p>Regional open spaces are those, which serve the needs of the residents of the broad geographical area such as southern Tasmania, and may provide facilities for multiple municipal areas. They are classified as regional for one or more of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they are larger than other facilities of the same type;</li> <li>they need a substantial user market to remain financially and operationally viable;</li> <li>they support a wide mix of uses and/or high specialisation of use;</li> <li>they are generally of high quality;</li> <li>they are generally costly to provide;</li> <li>they are unique to the region;</li> <li>they have environmental, heritage, amenity or other special significance; and/or</li> <li>there is a low frequency of provision or natural occurrence.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.3** Proposed open space hierarchy

Open space	Description
State	<p>State level open spaces have characteristics similar to regional venues but serve the whole state because their characteristics are generally considered to be more marked or significant than those of the regional venues.</p> <p>The location of state level open spaces are typically determined in partnership between council and the State Government in response to a variety of factors (physical, social or economic), if it is a nature-based resource, because it is unique, because it is one of few occurrences or because it is the best of that type of resource in the state.</p>
National	<p>National level open spaces have characteristics similar to state and regional areas but serve the whole country (as well, perhaps, as overseas visitors) because their characteristics are generally considered to be more marked or significant than those of the state and regional areas.</p>

**Table 3.3** Proposed open space hierarchy (continued)

## R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

Adopt the open space hierarchy outlined above as the standard for the state.

### 3.2.3 Open space classification system

Once an audit of the open space system have been compiled, each 'parcel' of open space should then be classified into different types that are generic in characteristics and functions, and are therefore, likely to require similar management responses. This process assists significantly in understanding what mix of open spaces exist within the current system, and where there are possible gaps or overlaps.

Classification systems differ in their complexity of categorisation ranging from systems with multiple categories and sub-categories, to ones with fewer and broader open space types<sup>9</sup>. Given limited planning resources, the most appropriate open space classification system is likely to be one that encompasses the broad diversity of open space types relevant to the Tasmanian context, without unnecessary complexity or time consuming classification criteria. The system should be realistic, and compatible with the capacity of agencies to use effectively, supporting the planning, development, management and maintenance of open space. The development of a consistent classification for all levels of governance allows for the preparation of generic plans of management for each of these open space types to assist

<sup>9</sup> The draft Cradle Coast Open Space Plan 2009 proposes classification of the regional open space using the approach of determining the settlement type (rural, low density and town/residential); primary function or purpose of a space (17 functions); landscape setting or form of an open space (13 settings); and catchment (neighbourhood, sub-regional and regional). The Tamar Valley Regional Open Space System 2004 used 8 more broader types of open space type and this has been adopted in the Launceston City Council in the *City of Launceston Open Space Strategy 2007*.

with future decision making until such time as any management plans or master plans are specifically needed for individual open space areas.

A proposed classification of open space types has been derived from a range of open space studies conducted over the past 15 years and is listed in Attachment 2. The proposed categories are:

- Parks
- Outdoor Sports Venues
- Landscape and Amenity
- Linear and Linkage
- Foreshore and waterway
- Conservation and Heritage
- Utilities and Services
- Proposed Open Space.

For each category of open space, a brief outline is provided to:

- define the open space category
- the purpose of the open space
- amenities which may be provided.

The above classification system (or similar versions) has been applied within local council open space and recreation strategy plans for the City of Launceston, City of Burnie, City of Glenorchy and Municipality of Huon Valley.

It is expected that the classification system will be a more effective tool for local area planning given the diversity and multitude of open spaces being managed by local councils. However the classification system will support strategic open space planning within a region or metropolitan area. At the state level, it may have limited value for future planning given the diversity of land tenure types managed and maintained by the State Government. In this regard, land managers typically have other management tools to assist with future planning e.g. code of practice, generic management plans and policies covering land tenure types. However the classification provides the planning capacity for assessing consistency across the open space system.

## Recommendations

Adopt the open space classification system outlined above as the standard for the state.

### 3.2.4 Open space planning process

It is critical that the planning and/or providing agencies are very clear about what they want to achieve through an open space planning process and about the needs and aspirations of those for whom they are providing.

This planning tool proposes an open space planning process based on open space studies conducted over the last 15 years.

The stages of an open space planning process are:

1. Agree on the need for open space planning
2. Establish a project steering team with representation from all key stakeholders
3. Define the provision purpose, principles and objectives
4. Review the policy context
5. Establish and implement a community consultation program
6. Evaluate the current and projected demographic characteristics
7. Establish an open space inventory
8. Apply the open space classification and hierarchy system to the inventory
9. Assess community and user needs
10. Assess trends in open space provision, use and need
11. Identify improvements to existing provision and *additional* provision ('Needs Analysis')
12. Identify sites for acquisition, reallocation and development
13. Proceed to acquisition and development

Information on each of these stages is provided in Attachment 3.

Although they are listed in a numbered sequence, it is possible to begin at a variety of points depending on the specific circumstances that apply. In some instances a reiterative process may need to be followed as the findings of later steps in the process may lead to or warrant a rethinking of earlier stages of the work.

These stages, or tasks, can be applied to a range of issues and contexts ranging across all open space types and across differing scales of development. The process outlined in Attachment 3 is generic in nature and may well need to be tailored to specific situations and tasks. Depending on the situation, some elements will almost certainly need to be given greater or lesser attention in light of the project scale, previous research and planning and the degree to which the desired outcomes are known. At the very least, the process can be used as a checklist of issues that may need attention and resolution.

Some of the steps recommended above may seem self-evident. Yet often, agencies proceed to the preparation of plans without thoroughly thinking through how the process will be managed and what they specifically want to achieve from it. Some other issues may need to be addressed in some situations, for example:

Defining the geographic area that is to the subject of the planning process e.g. whether it is one open space site, *all of one type* of open space; *all open space* within one Council; all open space within one Council *plus* venues in adjoining Councils that compete with or complement those being planned, or one or all of public, Crown and private open space

Determining the source(s) and levels of budget available or needed to undertake a study

Deciding who will undertake the planning study

Deciding on the timeframe for the study.

The importance of the process lies in the fact that it identifies an orderly and systematic approach to open space planning. This provides a counter to the all-too-common ad hoc approach, wherein problematic issues are “resolved” through reactive responses rather than by being worked through and resolved in the context of an understanding of wider provision issues, needs, community aspiration and social priorities.

## Recommendations

Adopt the open space planning process outlined above, and in Attachment 3, as a common 'tool' to facilitate a more orderly and consistent approach to open space planning in the state.

### 3.2.5 Planning scheme zones

The possible range of zones to be included as common elements in future Tasmanian planning schemes is currently being reviewed under the guidance of the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

Over the years there has been varying opinions as to the merits and consequences of whether the planning scheme should have a multiple zones across different broad land uses or fewer and more general zones. Some of the older planning schemes often treated open space under provisions dealing with reservations rather than as a zone. Some schemes attempted to differentiate by land tenure by having a public open space zone and a private recreation zone. Many schemes opted for a single open space zone regardless of land tenure of the land zoned. In more recent schemes, in line with the adoption of controls such as performance standards and acceptable solutions, the provisions for open space have often been embraced within the planning directions for residential and environmental management zones.

The community has raised concern about the need for security about the retention of land for open space use and that without some form of open space zoning there is the risk of sale or inappropriate development occurring. There are provisions within the *Local Government Act 1993* for the disposal of public land but the regional stakeholder forums indicated the provisions have shortcomings in relation to meeting community expectations of disposing of land zoned as open space.

One way of responding to this concern, is to adopt similar measures to that of the NSW *Local Government Act (Community Land Management) 1993* which requires Council owned land to be classified as either 'Operational Land' or 'Community Land'. Community Land cannot be sold, must have a Plan of Management prepared for it, and cannot be leased by any party for a period exceeding 21 years. The Act designates what should be classified as 'Community Land' and broad principals relating to the use and development of community land, those being:

- to provide services and facilities on an equitable and efficient basis

- achieve environmental management of community land

safeguard the longer term value of open spaces

improved management of public assets

allowing for community involvement in the management of open space.

This would allow councils to have clearer pathways for acquiring, disposing and managing land depending on the assessed values as open space. Most councils have inherited open space land from past subdivisions and development, some of which contributes little to the open space system and could be relinquished to provide funds for acquisition or management of more suitable open space to meet community or environmental needs.

In light of the work undertaken for this study, it is proposed that:

recreation and open space should be integrated into one zone as they are inexplicitly related

sports venues and facilities should be included within this zone but with planning provisions that clearly differs between the planning and development requirements to be met for active use/developed as compared to more passive/less developed use of open space

other zones such as an Environmental Management Zone should be used to identify land which is also deemed to be open space (e.g. riparian reserves) and should be managed for environmental values as a primary purpose and appropriate recreational use as secondary purpose

the broader values and aspects of open space (e.g. contributing to health, well-being, livability, social inclusion) should be also integrated within the subdivision approval process, preparation of outline development plans and planning directives for other zones (e.g. residential) to support good design and better development outcomes related to community open space

improved 'checks and balances' be introduced into legislation or statutory processes for the disposal of open space to give greater security to community concerns about the potential loss of open space e.g. classification of community land and operational land

the proposed policy framework (vision statement, objectives and strategies) should be considered in the drafting of provisions for open space within the common elements for planning schemes.

#### R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

As part of the common key elements templates for future Tasmanian planning schemes it is recommended that:

there should be one open space zone with planning provisions that clearly differentiates between the planning and development requirements for active use/developed or 'formal' sporting site, compared to more passive/less developed, or 'natural open space

other zones, such as the proposed Environmental Management Zone, should be used to identify land which is also deemed to be open space (e.g. riparian reserves) and should be managed for environmental values as a primary purpose, with appropriate recreational use as secondary purpose

improved 'checks and balances' be introduced into legislation or statutory processes for the disposal of open space

the broader values and aspects of open space (e.g. contributing to health, well-being, livability, social inclusion) should be integrated within the subdivision approval process, the preparation of outline development plans, the intent and planning provisions of other zones, to support good design and better development outcomes related to community open space.

### **3.3 Developing resource capacity to more effectively manage open space**

The capacity and resources that are available for agencies to plan, design, develop, manage and maintain open space influences the provision and quality of the overall open space system. The implementation of the open space planning policy and framework for Tasmania will need to consider capacity and resources in relation to:

recognising open space as a legitimate and important land use, central to the Tasmanian way of life, incorporating social, environmental and economic values

demonstrating a commitment to addressing resource limitations that currently limit effective open space planning, development and management across all levels of government

encouraging a high standard of professional capacity among planners and land managers to carry out effective open space planning and management roles.

### **3.3.1 Legitimate and integral land use**

There is greater awareness of open space being a legitimate land use through the policy work being undertaken within government in such areas as environmental sustainability, social inclusion, regional planning, active transport and community health. Reports such as *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania*, the *Premier's Physical Activity Plan* and *Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing: Environments for Active Living the Healthy by Design* are all facilitating better awareness of the importance of open space areas to future planning and the need for understanding the inter-relationships between desired community outcomes and land use planning.

The current government commitment to regional land use plans and the development of common planning scheme elements provides the opportunity to achieve better and more integrated policy to guide planning decisions in the future. This is crucial as the planning scheme remains as one of the most powerful tools to guide and manage the overall open space planning system across the state.

#### **R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s**

Integrate the open space policy and planning framework as detailed in this document, within Regional Land Use Plans, currently under preparation, and within the common key elements templates for future planning schemes (e.g. common definition, zone and purpose statement).

### **3.3.2 Increased resource commitment**

There are a range of opportunities available for acquiring and funding for the acquisition and management of open space including:

increasing the budget and resources available for acquisition and management of open space

council's can adopt a public open space contributions policy or legislation could be introduced to allow for Development Contributions Plan

improving partnerships arrangements with other support agencies and stakeholders

seeking increased funding from users of open space

fostering open space contributions and access negotiation options with land owners

exploring sponsorship opportunities.

#### I n c r e a s e d   b u d g e t   a l l o c a t i o n s

Governments and agencies may increase the budget allocation towards open space acquisition and management, although this is often difficult given other competing priorities for funding allocation. There is now greater awareness of the beneficial relationship between improving community access to open space and achieving more active and healthy communities. A similar awareness is growing for the contribution that open space can offer towards improving social inclusion within the community. These present a stronger position to present to governments a case for increasing the funding commitment for acquisition, development and management of open space.

It may be possible to negotiate the sale of some open space that has limited value for open space or operational uses, subject to following the statutory processes required under the *Local Government (Building & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*. However this is considered to be a time consuming and difficult process to follow under current legislation. The option of classifying all land as either 'Operational Land' or 'Community Land' as occurs in NSW, may allow for better planning processes to deal with disposal of land not deemed to have good open space values.

#### R e v i e w i n g   d e v e l o p e r   c o n t r i b u t i o n s

Open space has traditionally been provided on the basis of:

developer contributions of five per cent of new subdivisions

use of now-discredited "standards" e.g. four or more hectares of open space per 1 000 residents

as resident pressure and demands on councils or state governments, and in some instances, through the direct acquisition of particular parcels of open space by councils and state governments in recognition of their importance to a particular sport, community, region or to habitat and environmental protection.

Although much of the open space resources obtained through these processes make an invaluable contribution to meeting needs, they have often led to less than optimal outcomes because they generally do not achieve the best mix, diversity, size or distribution of provision. In the light of these failings, planners are increasingly using a research-based approach to assessing open space provision needs.

Councils are able to exercise statutory discretion for developer contributions towards open space for development applications under the provisions of the *Local Government (Building & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*, *Land Use Planning & Approvals Act 1993* and planning scheme powers.

Councils can adopt a public open space contribution policy with the purpose to:

- establish guidelines that will assist the council in determining the appropriateness of levying a public open space contribution on residential subdivisions

- establish parameters for determining whether a contribution should be taken in the form of land or cash in lieu payment

- specify requirements for the holding and disposal of monies derived from cash in lieu contributions<sup>10</sup>.

Many Tasmanian councils apply the five per cent<sup>11</sup> (or a contribution not exceeding one twentieth of the value of all new lots created by the subdivision) or may seek a cash contribution in lieu of the land that would be taken as a public open space requirement. Increasingly many councils are facing difficulty to justify the taking of the five per cent land contribution knowing that there is limited capacity to manage and maintain such land on a sustainable basis. There are several limitations with the existing arrangement, including:

<sup>10</sup> Sourced from the Waratah Wynyard Public Open Space Contribution Policy on [http://www.warwyn.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Public\\_Open\\_Space\\_Contribution\\_Policy\\_\\_\\_Development.pdf](http://www.warwyn.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Public_Open_Space_Contribution_Policy___Development.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Some councils may impose a % of land for other purposes (e.g. drainage). e.g. Launceston City Council may require 7% of land for drainage lines.

the five per cent was an arbitrary 'levy' measure introduced into planning controls and whilst serving a interim role is not considered to be current best practice for determining open space requirements

the five per cent of land being offered by the developer is often not assessed in relation to open space planning process and community needs but by judgement on a case by case basis

the five per cent contribution does not necessarily relate to the quantity or quality of open space that may be needed by the community within the area (e.g. substantial difference in open space need between greenfield sites and infill higher density residential development)

the five per cent contribution may be taken as cash-in-lieu but this is often based on the valuation of unimproved land rather than as developed land, and consequently the contribution often falls well short of required funding for open space facilities

it represents the maximum land requirement that can be taken and thus council's may be required to purchase additional land to achieve more effective open space areas

it may not necessarily meet a wide range of open space needs within the community including activities, experiences and facilities (e.g. indoor facilities)

the focus on assessing open space as subdivisions are submitted limits the capacity of councils to fully assess the contribution within a municipal, metropolitan and regional assessment perspective (in the absence of strategic open space plans).

Many previous studies that make an assessment of current open space areas have generally found that some areas have limited open space value, are limited by many factors (e.g. gradient, easements, drainage, poor access) and suffer from limited management resources available to councils.

It is recommended that the provisions of the *Local Government (Building & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993* be reviewed to consider more effective powers for acquiring and managing open space that reflect current best practice in open space provision. One option is to assess the merits of introducing legislation that would clarify and extend the role of Development Contributions Plans as is the case in NSW. These plans may include developer contributions for an array of services including road works,

community services and facilities, regional waste management, bushfire services, parking, sports grounds and facilities and open space. For instance the Open Space Contributions Plan contains procedures for administration, assessment and settlement of contributions and accountability, as well as a schedule of the specific rates for contribution. The plan also sets out the methodology for determining the contribution rates and how these may vary spatially (or in some areas not be applied) in reference to meeting open space needs.

#### Partnership arrangements

Improved community access to private land for open space use may also be achieved through other mechanisms such as leases, covenants and agreements. These agreements may cover an entire parcel of land, or an alternative is for a council or other agency to lease a proportion of private land for open space purposes. The lease could be subject to provisions restricting use and access, requiring management actions and assigning responsibility for maintenance costs and liability for injury.

Where land has been identified as having 'conservation value' there may be the option to use covenants and agreements. For instance the Protected Areas on Private Land Program funded under the National Heritage Trust, encourages private landowners to negotiate agreements with government regarding the management of land for the protection of ecological values using Conservation Covenants, Private Reserves or Management Agreements.

Many land managing agencies have recognised the important contribution that volunteer programs can offer to assist with management of open spaces.

Often the commonalities found with successful partnership models are:

- strong representation within the partnership from the land management agency/s

- the responsibilities of the various partners being set out in a formal document, generally in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

- a committee of management model representing various government agencies, interest groups and local stakeholders

- volunteer involvement is a significant factor in the ongoing management of the open space, particularly in protected areas and long distance trails

funding/resource commitment made by the key partners (e.g. the land managers or lead agency)

public liability insurance is generally provided by the land manager, or lead agency, and covers volunteers (incorporated 'friends' groups can also obtain public liability insurance)

appointment of liaison roles, with the specific role of co-ordination and liaison between the partners, as well as managing the open space day to day

specific details of the governance/partnership model is tailored by the individual context of the specific open space context (e.g. one size does not fit all).

These common elements reflect, at a broad level, the 'success factors' identified elsewhere for successful tourism-protected area partnerships<sup>12</sup>. The key success factors therein identified and considered to be of relevance to the current project included:

involvement and support of the land managing agency

communication, trust and commitment between and within the partnership

supporting legislation (or policy)

adequate financial and organisational support for the partnership.

#### U s e r   c o n t r i b u t i o n s

There are some limited examples of user fee contributions being directed towards open space management. An example is the entry fees to Tasmanian National Parks and more specifically the user fee applying to bushwalkers on the Overland Track where funds are specifically directed towards management works and not into consolidated revenue. Councils also apply ground fees for use and management of sporting venues and user fees are requested for use of aquatic centres and indoor sports facilities.

Whilst there may be some capacity for introducing fees for some activities – for example use of developed camping sites on crown or council owned land or charging vehicle parking fees at some open space venues – there are clearly

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<sup>12</sup> Moore, S.A., Weiler, B., Croy, G., Laing, J., Lee, D., Lockwood, M, Pfueller, S. and Wegner, A. (under review) *Tourism-Protected Area Partnerships in Australia: Designing and Managing for Success. Technical Report*, Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, The Gold Coast, Queensland. Submitted December 2008, Pg 45.

limitations for greater application to the whole open space system. In many instances the setting of user fees would be considered inconsistent with other policies (e.g. social inclusion, equity, accessibility), against community expectations and difficult and unviable to collect.

#### Other contributions and arrangements for open space

Land can be donated or bequeathed to council for the creation of a reserve – the agreement for sale could include provision for the land to be declared a reserve, entering into a management agreement or imposing a restrictive covenant that restricts the use of the land. This option would normally require a formal survey plan, application for a development permit for subdivision, registration of the amended title documents and contracts for transfer of the land. This may be an effective way to achieve the creation of the recreation trails network rather than waiting for new subdivision or building land acquisition funds to secure sections of the trails.

In some situations land managers have negotiated access arrangements with private land owners to secure rights of access for public access. These arrangements may include specified conditions relating to time of access, closure during emergency situations, public liability and maintenance responsibilities.

Private land owners have the capacity to also contribute towards open space provision through the development of facilities that cater for recreational activities accessible to the general public or club use. Examples include private golf courses, motorised recreation vehicle courses, horse riding venues, radio-controlled planes, mountain bike riding event courses.

#### Recommendations

Pursue the following opportunities for acquiring and funding the acquisition and management of open space:

- increase the budget and resources available for acquisition and management of open space

- undertake a review of the provisions of the *Local Government (Building & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993* and other relevant Acts to consider more effective powers for council's and other land managers in acquiring and managing open spaces, that reflect best practice in open space provision

improve partnerships arrangements with support agencies and stakeholders, including volunteer programs and sponsorship opportunities

seek increased funding from users of open space where appropriate and consistent with other policy outcomes (e.g. social inclusion, equity, accessibility)

foster open space contributions and access arrangements with private land owners.

### **3.3.3 Developing professional capacity**

Unlike other larger states, Tasmanian councils and State Government agencies have generally small numbers of staff with professional training in recreation planning and more specifically in open space planning processes. The limited budget resources means that only a few of the councils have Recreation Officers on their staff, thus leaving assessment of open space requirements to staff with skills often covering community services, works, planning and infrastructure. Whilst the integration of these skills is beneficial, the outcomes can vary significantly due to the level of training, experience and assessment processes in place.

The above situation is not likely to change in the short term given the budgetary constraints being faced by all agencies, however there is scope in the medium to long term to improve the capacity for achieving more effective open space planning. These opportunities include:

adoption and integration of the proposed open space policy and planning framework into state, regional and local planning mechanisms (refer to Section 3.1)

adoption of the basic planning tools to aid more effective open space planning processes (refer to Section 3.2)

increased access to professional training and skill development programs in open space planning

shifting priorities for land managers and councils to have staff positions and internal processes that better deliver more effective open space planning outcomes for their organisations and community.

Sport and Recreation Tasmania have recently initiated actions to improve professional capacity. For example, the recent launch of the Linton Kerber Memorial Scholarship aimed for sport and recreational professional

development, and the recreation planning skills course currently underway, led by HM Leisure Planning in Victoria.

#### R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

Support the following opportunities for improving the capacity to achieve more effective open space planning within Tasmania:

adopt and integrate the proposed open space policy and planning framework as detailed in this document, into state, regional and local planning mechanisms

adopt the basic planning tools described in this document to aid more effective open space planning and management

increase access to professional training and skill development programs

shift priorities for land managers and councils to enable staff positions and internal processes that better deliver more effective open space planning outcomes for their organisations and community.

### **3.4 ACTION PLAN**

#### **3.4.1 Initiating actions for all strategies**

Attachment 4 identifies an initiating action (first step of implementation) for each of the recommended strategies listed in Section 2.3.

#### **3.4.2 Priorities for two year action Plan**

An action plan has been prepared to guide the steps involved in the implementation process over the next two years. The focus is placed on those actions that have priority, and will need to be acted on so as to support the ongoing implementation of the open space policy and planning framework.

Table 3.4 sets out the recommended priority actions, responsibility and proposed timing for the completion of the task.

No	Recommended action	Responsibility	Timing
1	Review and adoption of the open space policy and planning framework to help facilitate a commitment towards achieving a whole-of-government approach.	State Government - Tasmanian Planning Commission, DPAC and DEDTA (Sport and Recreation Tasmania)	6 months
2	The preparation of an Open Space Advisory Guidance Policy and to foster infusion within a range of existing government policies that are interrelated to achieving effective open space planning e.g. health, transport, social inclusion, environment, transport.	Tasmanian Planning Commission in association with all relevant government agencies	12 months
3	Integrate the open space policy and planning framework within the current preparation of the regional land use plans and common elements for planning schemes (e.g. common definition, zone and purpose statement).	Tasmanian Planning Commission, Regional Planning Teams and support of local councils	12 months
4	Promote the basic planning tools to aid more effective open space planning including: preparing an audit of open space supply; adopting an open space hierarchy; adopting an open space classification system; and improving the open space planning process.	State Government and local councils – facilitated by Sport and Recreation Tasmania	12 months
5	Support the implementation of core policy documents such as A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania, the State Physical Activity Plan and Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing: Environments for Active Living, which are clearly linked with the need for achieving more effective open space planning.	State Government – DEDTA (Sport and Recreation Tasmania, PPAC), Department of Health and Human Services	Ongoing commitment
6	Undertake a review of the provisions of the <i>Local Government (Building &amp; Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993</i> and other relevant Acts to consider more effective powers for councils and other land managers in acquiring and managing open spaces that reflect best practice in open space provision.	State Government – Parliamentary Legislation Committee	18 months
7	Prepare regional and metropolitan open space strategy plans consistent with the open space policy and planning framework and the direction of the regional land use plans.	Partnership resourcing between State Government and local councils	Ongoing commitment

**Table 3.4:** Implementation action plan

No	Recommended action	Responsibility	Timing
8	Support the commitment of land managing agencies and councils in the preparation of open space management plans, local open space strategy plans and master plans consistent with progressing the open space policy and planning framework.	State Government (Sport and Recreation Tasmania), local councils	Ongoing commitment
9	Develop a case for increased funding and resourcing for land managers and council to be directed towards open space planning, development and management based on the beneficial relationship between improving community access to open space and achieving more active, equitable and healthy communities.	Inter-agency working group involving all relevant agencies including land managing agencies	18 months
10	Incorporate climate change research and 'best practice' into open space planning, including strategies and actions that are intended to mitigate the predicted impacts of climate change (e.g. retention of native vegetation for carbon storage, minimising emissions), and those that are aimed at impact adaptation (e.g. the role of foreshore 'buffers' to sea level rise and storm surge).	State Government – DPAC Tasmanian Climate Change Office	18 months
11	Foster the development of an open space system that is well-connected to residential areas and other community destinations by a network of trails and public transport routes.	Local councils, State Government (e.g. guided by documents such as the <i>Trails Tasmania Strategy</i> , <i>Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy</i> , <i>Healthy by Design</i> , regional and local transport plans)	Ongoing

**Table 3.4:** Implementation action plan (cont)

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# Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework

## About this document:

The Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework is made up of three documents:

- Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework: **Summary**
- Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework: **Main Report**
- Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework: **Attachments**

The Tasmanian Open Space Policy and Planning Framework was prepared by Inspiring Place Pty Ltd with HM Leisure Planning Pty Ltd.

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