



USE AND MANAGEMENT OF SPORTING FIELDS POLICY AND CORPORATE PRACTICE

Policy

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Purpose

To assist sporting field users and managers in the sustainable management of sport fields under the care, control and management of Mosman Council.

Objectives

1. Provide access and playing surfaces for users for appropriate age and competition levels
2. Give priority to established user groups based in the Mosman Local Government Area (LGA)
3. Identify priority use of individual sport fields
4. Identify the season for winter and summer
5. Recognise Council and allocated users are to exchange appropriate contact details to ensure effective level of communication
6. Recognise the requirements and costs of maintenance and partially recoup via appropriate fee structures for hire

Scope

Applies to all users (hirers) and managers of sport fields in the Mosman LGA. Main user groups are sporting clubs and local schools and include but are not limited to:

- Mosman Netball Club
- Mosman Football Club
- Mosman Little Athletics
- Mosman Rugby Club
- Mosman Cricket Club
- Mosman Swans AFL
- Mosman High School
- Mosman Public School
- Queenwood School

Exemptions

This policy does not apply to landscaped areas or associated amenity buildings surrounding the sport fields.

Definitions

Non-Structured Sport Fields: Includes park and reserve areas predominantly used for passive recreation but when required are adapted to facilitate low level competition, training or trial matches. Users are required to inspect playing surface prior to use.

Playing Surface: Surface of a sports field that is used for organised/ active sport and is usually defined by line markings and goal posts.

Structured Sport Fields: Are Council managed land specifically designed and managed for organised and active recreational sport. It includes the term playing surface which represents the surface where competitive sport is played and is identified by marked lines or fencing.

Summer Season: This generally is the season conducted between the first weekend in October and conclude in the last weekend in March. Bookings for regular summer season use of sporting fields close 31 July.

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Winter Season: This generally is the season conducted between the first weekend in April and the last weekend of August of any year. Bookings for regular winter season use of sporting fields close 31 January.

Sport Fields in Mosman

Sport fields in Mosman are classified by Council as Structured and Non-Structured and include all sport fields managed by Council including those sport fields located on land owned by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) at Georges Heights, Cross Street and Middle Head.

Sport fields under the care, control and management of Council include:

Structured:

- Allan Border Oval
- Rawson Oval
- Georges Heights Oval (owned by SHFT)
- Middle Head Oval (owned by SHFT)
- Balmoral East Oval
- Balmoral West Oval
- Drill Hall Netball Courts (owned by SHFT)

Non-Structured:

- Reid Park
- Spit West Reserve

Legal and Policy Requirements

The following legislation and planning instruments contain provisions relating to the use and management of sporting fields:

- *Crown Lands Act 1989*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act*
- SHFT Management Plan - Mosman No.8 - George's Heights
- SHFT Management Plan - Mosman No.7 - Middle Head
- SHFT Management Plan - Mosman No.6 - Mosman Drill Hall
- MOSPLAN
- Balmoral Reserves Plan of Management
- The Spit Reserves Plan of Management
- Rawson Park Plan of Management
- Mosman Park Plan of Management

Priority Use of Sport Fields

The priority use of sport fields was adopted by Council on 2 July 2013 (EP/52) and is detailed in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 outlines priority use of sport fields over the winter and summer seasons allocating priority use of each sports field managed by Council to each sporting code. It also lists compatible sports for each of the sports fields.

Priority use allows Council to prepare each sports field playing surface to meet the requirements of the priority sporting user group including compatible use. It does not provide for exclusive use of sporting fields and all sports fields will be available for casual use by other sporting codes and the

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general public subject to availability and assessment of the proposed activity on the playing surface by Council staff.

Implementation of priority use achieves the following:

- Increases the ability of Council to deliver playing surfaces suitable for the level of competition
- Provides more regular use of sporting fields to particular user groups enabling them to become more familiar with sport fields and associated facilities
- Ensures the best use of available resources by tailoring maintenance works
- Makes users more accountable for the amount of use and effect on the playing surfaces
- Reduces and better manages incompatible use of sport fields between summer and winter seasons

Booking Guidelines and Requirements

Season Bookings

The following approach is applied by Council staff, users groups and contractors based on priority use of sport fields:

- Seasonal bookings for priority user groups have priority over casual hirers
- Priority is to be given to schools and user organisations based within Mosman
- All booking requests must be made in writing and include payment for hire of the facility
- Consideration will be given to future bookings and the impact additional, occasional or casual bookings may have on the quality of playing surface for future users
- Summer season booking requests need to be submitted by 31 July each year
- Winter season booking requests need to be submitted by 31 January each year
- Users of sporting fields are not entitled to exclusive use or occupation of adjoining facilities such as car parks, grandstands or change facilities unless otherwise agreed with Council
- Any fees or charges associated with the use of adjoining facilities are payable by the hirer or the participants in the activity e.g. car parking fees and adjoining facilities hire fees
- The display of advertising material on sporting fields or surrounding areas is not permitted without the prior approval of Council
- Seasonal draws must be provided to Council once confirmed by sporting associations to allow possible bookings by other user groups if a sport field is not required (*i.e.* away games)
- Where overlap arises, individual circumstances will be negotiated between the clubs. The season for winter users will start when the last summer sport home fixture is played (allowing time for maintenance and season changeover). The identified priority user has priority over the sport field if they require use for finals.

It is acknowledged by all sporting user groups and Council that there is the potential for “season creep and overlap”. Turnaround time for maintenance mid-season could be limited as a result and also impacted by poor weather. Accordingly, Cricket, Rugby and Football are to play the maximum amount of first round and last round home games away to maximise turnaround period.

Pre-season and Out-of-season Bookings

Use of sporting fields for pre-season training outside of allocation times will require written Council consent and must be obtained by completing a separate booking application which will be subject to fees and charges applicable to such use. Council reserves the right to refuse such bookings, taking into account current usage levels and playing surface condition.

Any additional preparation or maintenance costs associated with pre-season or out-of-season booking requests at any facility will be allocated to the hirer. An estimate of additional costs will be provided with the booking confirmation.

Council Maintenance and Service Description

In providing sporting fields to specific user groups and the community, Council will prepare and maintain sporting fields within allocated budgets and meet the priority use associated with the seasonal allocated user.

Scheduled activities in meeting the purpose associated with the priority use of the sport field and compatible alternate seasonal use are to include but are not limited to:

- Sporting field mowing and playing surface preparation
- Line-marking maintenance by Council suitable to the level of competition
- Changeover activities associated with the allocated use are to be undertaken by Council prior to the commencement of the season and are to include but may not be limited to the following:
 - Erection and dismantling of fixed goal posts and other infrastructure
 - Covering and uncovering of cricket pitches
 - Playing service renewal activities such as topdressing, grass replacement, fertilising and decompaction/aeration
- Unscheduled and reactive works to rectify defects and availability for use. Responsiveness will be determined by available funding, resource availability and risk assessment.

User Group Communication

Council and allocated users are to ensure appropriate contact details are exchanged to ensure effective level of communication. Council will notify allocated users of any disruption to scheduled use at the earliest convenience. Council will consult and liaise with allocated users to minimise cancellation of scheduled use and to identify alternative sites where practicable to assist with completion of scheduled use. User groups are to ensure adequate information exchange with member clubs ensuring feedback is communicated to all members on a regular basis.

Council and user groups will hold bi-annual Sporting Field User Group meetings. All user groups are invited to attend these meetings and have input into discussion. At these meetings operational issues such as administration, sport field maintenance, seasonal bookings and the use and care of adjoining facilities and programmed capital projects are discussed. Minutes of these meetings along with sporting field user satisfaction surveys are distributed to all user groups.

Oval Upgrade and Capital Improvements

Oval upgrades and capital improvements are subject to funding and resource availability and priorities in the Open Space Asset Management Plan. In the past various user groups have provided additional support to Council to assist with the development and completion of capital upgrade projects. Council will continue to consider sources of external funding including offers of support for suitable projects from user groups and through various grant opportunities. These will be reported to Council where required.

Permitted developments and capital improvements are identified in plans of management for public reserve areas which include Council sporting fields. As Georges Heights and Middle Head Ovals are owned by SHFT, improvements to these ovals and facilities are subject to Plans of Management adopted by SHFT. Council has and will continue to provide input and recommendations to SHFT regarding the use of sporting facilities at these locations based on community needs and priorities. User groups are also able take up an active role with the SHFT in support of the development of these facilities.

User Fees and Charges

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The hire fees are set out in Council’s Schedule of Fees and Charges in accordance with the Pricing Policy which is subject to annual review. Please refer to Council’s current Schedule of Fees and Charges for relevant hire fees.

Information/Glossary

- Pricing Policy – (Oval and Facilities Charges for Use)
- Special Events Management Policy
- School Activities on Reserves Policy
- Mosman Council - Conditions of Ovals Hire
- Open Space Asset Management Plan

Review

Every four years unless otherwise directed by Council or the Executive Team.

Contact

Enquiries should be directed to the Manager Environment and Open Space 9978 4025.

Amendments

Date	Amendment	Reference

Appendix 1 - Priority Use of Sport Fields

Sport Field	Sport Field Category	Competition Level	Priority Use of Sport Field	Compatible Use Examples
Allan Border Oval	Structured Sub-Regional	Sydney Metropolitan (Semi-professional competition)	Summer Season Cricket – Sydney 1 st Grade	Winter Season Nil / Very low impact on wicket square Junior Sports / AFL / Football School use / Triathlon Training / Kennel Club Women's and Junior Football
Rawson Oval	Structured Sub-Regional	District Competition	Winter Season Rugby	Summer Season Cricket Senior - Lower Grade School use
Georges Heights Oval	Structured Local A	District Lower Grade and Junior	Winter Season Football – Low Grade	Summer / Winter Season Cricket – Low Grade and Junior Summer Football School use
Middle Head Oval	Structured Local A	District Competition	Winter Season Jnr AFL Football	Summer Sports – Schools use Summer Football Cricket Training (Possible Nets)
Balmoral Oval East	Structured Local A	District Lower Grade and Junior	Winter Season Football Summer Jnr Athletics – North end	Summer Cricket – Low Grade and Junior School use
Balmoral Oval West	Structured Local A	District Lower Grade and Junior	Winter Season Rugby – Low Grade Summer Season Jnr Athletics – North end	Summer Cricket – Low Grade and Junior Schools use
Balmoral Oval Turf Wicket	Structured Local A	District Lower Grade and Junior	Summer Season Cricket – Senior Lower Grade	Winter Season Very low impact on wicket square
Drill Hall Netball	Structured Sub-Regional	Training New Facility	Netball - Training	Compatible Hard Surface Sports
Spit West Reserve	Non-Structured Local B	Sub Junior	Balance / Summer / Winter Passive Recreation	Sub Junior Sports – Football / Cricket
Reid Park	Non-Structured Local B	Sub Junior	Balance / Summer / Winter Passive Recreation	Sub Junior Sports - Cricket