

Bayside Bulletin, Friday June 4, 2004

Shortfall on parks

By Debbie White
Friday, 4 June 2004

Redland Shire Council has been urged to act quickly to redress a projected 100ha shortfall in sports and recreation parks.

Division 3 councillor Debra Henry wants immediate action to forestall the anticipated gap in urban public open space to cater for the outdoor recreational needs of the Shire's growing population.

Her comments came after the presentation of the Redland Shire Council Open Space Plan to the planning and policy committee meeting on Wednesday.

The plan, three years in the making, provides a framework for the planning and management of the Shire's recreation and sporting open space.

A table in the plan shows a slight deficit in the current total hectares of sports and recreational space for every 1000 residents in the Shire based on 2001 population data. While the standard stipulates there should be 4.3ha, there is a total 4.24ha for every 1000 people.

A council study shows that by 2016 there will be a 67.52ha shortfall in district sport land, and a 33.23ha shortfall in recreation parks, if no more local parks are provided for the projected population of 168,805 residents.

If additional local parks are not provided, a shortfall could be resolved through further developer parkland contributions and reclassification of "informal" open space to recreation parks, said the plan.

Cr Henry said if land needed to be purchased for public enjoyment it should be arranged sooner rather than later, as land prices would be substantially higher by 2016.

However providing and maintaining a healthy outdoor lifestyle does not come cheap. Basic financial estimates put the price of providing more open space for the public at about \$5.3 million over the next 12 years.

Chairman of the committee, John Burns, said most of the funding would come from a proposed increase in contribution rates to be paid by developers in future, an issue currently being considered by council.

To ensure enough recreation and sport land is allocated to keep pace with the expanding population the proposed action plan includes:

- * a regional park to be developed in Mt Cotton, very likely as part of the yet-to-be-developed Mt Cotton Village. Facilities to include a playground, flying fox, sporting fields and skatepark;
- * investigation of turning former quarries into recreational areas for extreme sports, trail biking and 4WD;
- * permanently closing the undeveloped part of Thorneside's Queens Esplanade road, where it runs from Beth Boyd Park along the waterfront to Mooroondu Point, and turning it into a local recreation park;

* a landscape master plan to be undertaken with the view of upgrading the council-owned Pinklands Sporting Complex to regional standards.

The council will consider the proposed plan at a general meeting next Wednesday.