



CREATING ACTIVE PARKS: A CASE STUDY OF CENTRAL WEST SYDNEY

BPlan Undergraduate Thesis
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ABSTRACT

The five Local Government Areas which make up Central West Sydney - Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta - have an array of facilities that cater for a diverse community. However, several aspects of the region need improvement and one of these is the state of open space. This thesis is concerned with how well the parks in this part of Sydney are designed and located to become 'Active Parks'. The primary rationale of the Active Park philosophy is to ensure that, no matter what the size and location of the park, its full potential as an active space for social, physical and recreational activity is realized. The main aims are to show how Active Parks can be created, how innovative design techniques and initiatives can assist in creating Active Parks, how well Active Park principles can be applied in Central West Sydney, and how Active Parks can create a healthier community. The methodology draws on available literature on open space and healthy planning, interviews with professionals from the Heart Foundation, Premier's Council for Active Living, Auburn and Fairfield City Councils, and case studies of selected parks in the Central West Sydney region.

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Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Problem Statement.....	2
1.2 Problem Setting	3
1.3 Objectives	6
1.4 Conceptual Context.....	6
1.5 Methodology/Operationalisation	7
1.6 Structure	10
Chapter 2: How to Create an Active Park	12
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 What is a Park?	13
2.3 What is an Active Park?	13
2.4 The Key Standards for Creating Active Parks.....	14
2.5 Provision of Information.....	27
2.6 Conclusion	28
Chapter 3: Benefits & Barriers to Creating Active Parks	29
3.1 Introduction.....	29
3.2 Benefits of Creating Active Parks.....	30
3.21 Health Benefits	30
3.22 Economic Benefits	31
3.23 Environmental Benefits	33
3.24 Social Benefits.....	34
3.3 Barriers to Creating Active Parks.....	36
3.31 General Barriers.....	36
3.32 Personal Barriers	38
3.4 Conclusion	40
Chapter 4: Demographic of Central West Sydney	42
4.1 Introduction.....	42
4.2 Demographic	43
4.3 Conclusion	45
Chapter 5: Case Studies of Central West Sydney	46
5.1 Introduction.....	46
5.2 Parks in Auburn	48
5.3 Parks in Bankstown	57
5.4 Parks in Fairfield	66
5.5 Parks in Holroyd	75
5.6 Parks in Parramatta.....	85
Chapter 6: Findings. Recommendations & Final Comments	95
6.1 Findings.....	95
6.2 Overall Findings.....	103
6.3 Limitations to Research	104
6.4 Recommendations	104
6.5 Final Comments	106
Bibliography	108
Appendix 1	112
Appendix 2	113



Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Creating Active Parks is an effective and innovative way of designing parks to encourage resident usage for physical, social and recreational activity. The primary rationale of the Active Park philosophy is to ensure that, no matter what the size and location of the park, its full potential as an active space for social, physical and recreational activity is realized. There are several key standards that need to be implemented and met to allow an Active Park to develop and they are accessibility, parking provisions, variety of facilities for physical activity, amenities, shading, cleanliness, graffiti, quality playing surfaces, surveillance and lighting.

There are many benefits associated with developing Active Parks and they can be clearly divided into four key areas being health benefits, economic benefits,

environmental benefits and social benefits. If an Active Park is created, all these benefits can be realised and can go a long way to creating a healthier and safer community.

However there are obvious barriers that could hinder the creation of an Active Park and they include; limited funding for local governments, the expensive cost of implementing the Active Park philosophy and over development combined with individuals perception of safety, accessibility issues, perceived time constraints and cultural issues can be detrimental to creating Active Parks.

Central West Sydney encompasses a large area of Sydney and is approximately 312km² (Planning, 2008) and is made of five primary Local Government Areas (LGA) including Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta. The region will be a primary focus of this thesis and several of the parks in the region will be used as case studies to assess how well they meet the standards for creating Active Parks that have been developed.

1.1 Problem Statement

Central West Sydney is a great place to grow up and raise a family. The five LGA's that make up Central West Sydney; Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta have an array of facilities that cater for a diverse community. However after further research it is apparent that several aspects of the Central West Sydney region could be improved and one of these is the state of open space

Therefore this thesis will look to use the parks in Central West Sydney as a case study, and will look at how well the parks in the region are designed and located to become "Active Parks" in which good accessibility and facilities are provided or added to encourage people in the surrounding LGA to utilise them for social, physical or recreational activity. The thesis will also look to provide a basis of how to create "Active Parks" based on the research compiled from available

literature, qualitative interviews from professionals and the case studies of the park in Central West Sydney.

1.2 Problem Setting

The local park provides an important contribution to the quality of life. Parks serve many beneficial purposes including; important spaces for recreation, socialization and relaxation. They are also safe and attractive play areas for children and are aesthetically pleasant backdrops to urban development in large cities (Bullock, 2008). So it is imperative that these parks are maintained and improved to continue to serve this function for the benefits of the local community and society as a whole. But as often is the case as indicated by Gowda in his research of local open spaces these oasis's of suburbia are often neglected and left to be destroyed becoming barren pieces of unusable green space in a modern day world that could so clearly utilise the local park for its obvious benefits (Gowda, 2007).

Background

There are two main reasons as to why the topic of "Creating Active Parks a Case Study of Central West Sydney" was studied and they are; to understand the correlation between creating Active Parks and improving health and the potential implication for Central West Sydney and secondly to understand the correlation between an individual's perception of safety, and the use of the park and the potential implications for Central West Sydney.

Health

Preventable diseases such as cardiovascular disease have become more important over the last decade because this affliction has resulted or contributed many deaths in NSW. Much of these deaths can be attributed to an increase sedentary lifestyle (Lee, 2009) and can easily be reversed if people are to

become more active (Veitch, 2007). In NSW cardiovascular disease was the most common cause of death in 2006 accounting for 37.5% or 16,245 of all deaths in NSW (Health, 2007a). In the Central West Sydney area cardiovascular disease accounted for approximately 1,406 deaths in 2006 (Health, 2007a). This statistic is on average 5% higher (Health, 2007a) than the NSW average, showing that cardiovascular disease is a major health concern in the region.

Cardiovascular disease is often the direct result of many related preventable diseases. The two main preventable diseases that often contribute to cardiovascular disease, and are a common occurrence in society today are diabetes (Association, 1999) and obesity (Health, 2007b). In NSW in 2006 there were 4,189 deaths where diabetes was the underlying or associated cause of death (Health, 2007b). While recent studies conducted by the NSW Department of Health estimate that 67% of Australian men and 52% of Australian women are overweight or obese (Department, 2008).

It is clear to see that such diseases are a plague on society and can easily be reversed by trying to make people more active. Studies undertaken by Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioral Sciences in Deakin University in Melbourne in 2008, has shown that well designed parks are a key resource in disease prevention (School of Health and Social Development Faculty of Health and University, 2008). Evidence collated by the research has shown that the availability of well designed and well located parks have a positive effect on a range of diseases including cardiovascular disease (School of Health and Social Development Faculty of Health and University, 2008). The thesis will aim through the evaluation of how well the parks in the Central West Sydney are implementing the Active Parks philosophy; divulge the potential impacts on the health of the population of the region.

Perception of Safety

Perception of safety in is another primary reason as to why this research was undertaken. Crime in all forms is a burden on society and often instills fears in residents and creates stereotypical images of areas that prevent the area moving forward and developing into a well functioning and happy society.

There is evidence through crime statistics that prove the residents in Central West Sydney have a right to fear for their safety due to the fact that a large amount of crime in all forms in all the LGA's in the region takes place on recreational premises. In 2007 the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics ((BOCSAR), 2007) show that the total number of recorded criminal offences that occur on recreational premises in Central West Sydney (Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta) is ranked third behind only residential premises and retail/wholesale premises in terms of assault both domestic and non domestic related, sexual offences, robbery, break and enter, motor vehicle theft, steal from motor vehicle, steal from person and malicious damage to property.

Over the last decade the NSW Police Service in conjunction with the NSW Department of Planning initiated a program called "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)". This program is based around the principle of designing the built environment in a way that reduces the opportunity for crime (Police, 2009). This is often achieved through improving both natural and mechanical surveillance, controlling access to certain premises, the proper management of public spaces and reinforcing community ownership of public and private land (Police, 2009).

The CPTED principle can be applied to all public places including public parks. Through this thesis and the study of the parks in Central West Sydney, there will be an aim to firstly observe how well the CPTED principles are applied to the

parks in the region and also provide an insight into the potential implications on safety for the region as well.

1.3 Objectives

This thesis has four main objectives that it will like to show, they are;

1. How Active Parks can be created.
2. How Innovative design techniques and initiatives can assist in creating Active Parks.
3. How Active Parks can create a healthier and safer community.
4. How well is the Active Parks philosophy being applied Central West Sydney region.

1.4 Conceptual Context

Preparing this thesis involved carrying out research from available literature that is aimed at healthy and open space planning. The literature came from a wide range sources including journals on healthy and open space planning released by the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), The Premiers Council on Active Living (PCAL), the Australian Heart Foundation, NSW Department of Health and the NSW Department of Planning (DOP) etc.

Literature was also obtained from on-line journals, as well as books and journals obtained from library research. The literature obtained centred around prominent authors around the open space or healthy planning field and include but not limited to; C.H Bullock, K Gowda, G Hugo, V Keogh, C Lee and A Boshoff etc. Literature was also obtained from journals and case studies from interstate and overseas including; Victoria, Queensland, USA, Canada and Europe.

With one of the objectives of the thesis being to observe how Active Parks can create a healthier community there was a need to analyse and research the

current health statistics particularly in NSW and the Central West Sydney region. To be able to do this there was an analysis of local demographic statistics with the use of ABS data. Moreover there was an analysis of local demographic data provided by all local councils in the Central West region including, Auburn Council, Bankstown Council, Fairfield Council, Holroyd Council and Parramatta Council

With another objective of the thesis being how Active Parks can create safer communities there was a need to look at several data resources to develop an insight into how modern planning techniques can lead to a potentially safer community. With this in mind the data sources that were looked at included crime statistics released by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics. There was also an analysis of several “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design” documents released by several State Government bodies including the Queensland Police Force, the NSW Police Force and the NSW Department of Planning.

1.5 Methodology/Operationalisation

The methodology undertaken to prepare this thesis involved a five step process;

1. Literature Review

The literature review provided a basis for the thesis in relation to the development and creation of Active Parks. With the review of current literature it will be possible to develop a sustainable theoretical context for the subject of Active Parks and associated subject areas i.e. urban design initiatives, healthier communities and safer communities.

2. Review of Existing Case Studies

The review of current case studies that have implemented elements of the Active Park philosophy was analysed and assessed including case studies from NSW, Victoria, Queensland, USA, Europe and Canada.

3. Conducting Qualitative Interviews

Research was undertaken to locate the appropriate professionals to interview. After researching the people best suited to be interviewed were contacted and dates were organised so the interviews can take place. The people that were chosen came from relevant organisations that worked around healthy planning or open space planning or work for the relevant local councils in Central West Sydney.

The people and organisations that were chosen to be interviewed included the Manager of Active Living from the Premiers Council on Active Living (PCAL), the Senior Manager from the Heart Foundation, the Sporting Facilities Co-ordinator at Fairfield Council and the Open Space and Recreation Co-ordinator from Auburn Council. The interviews that were undertaken were audio recorded so any relevant information could be recorded and used in the thesis. All direct referencing of the interviews in the thesis will be in the form of “quotations”. An overall summary of the interviews is found in appendix 1 at the end of the thesis, along with the sets of questions used and the consent form for the questions.

4. Analysis of Local Case Studies

After the interviews several parks around the Central West Sydney region were chosen to be used as case studies for the thesis. They were randomly chosen and came from all 5 LGA's represented in the region including Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta. The parks chosen were then analysed and assessed based on how good or bad the park works and what needs to be improved or added to transform the park into an Active Park based on the research conducted for the thesis.

The analysis was based on a criteria developed that has originated from both the research of the available literature that was analysed around healthy planning and open space planning and the professional opinions of the individuals that were interviewed to compile the thesis. The criteria is comprised of ten key standards that are used to assess how well the park meets the standards of an Active Park. The ten key standards are;

1. Accessibility
2. Parking Provisions for cars and bicycles
3. Availability of facilities for physical activity
4. Provision of Amenities
5. Shading
6. Cleanliness
7. Existence of Graffiti
8. Well maintained playing surfaces
9. Surveillance
10. Lighting

5. Compiling the Thesis

After the research of the literature, the interviews and the case studies of the parks in the region, the thesis format was compiled. The thesis is made up of six chapters, which are explained below.

After the thesis is finalised it was proof read and any amendments were made. Moreover proper formatting took place along with the inclusion of a contents page, appendix of all relevant tables or graphs referred to in the thesis and a bibliography of all the sources used.

1.6 Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction/Methodology

The introductory chapter of the thesis will provide a problem setting and a problem statement that will provide the background reasons as to why this thesis was undertaken. Secondly the objectives of the thesis will be outlined along with the data sources used for to gather the information for the thesis. Finally the methodology used to compile the thesis will be outlined followed by the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: How to Create an Active Park

This chapter of the thesis will look at what an “Active Park” actually is and how an Active Park can be developed based on the ten key standards for developing an Active park including; accessibility, parking provisions, availability of facilities for physical activity, provision of amenities, shading, cleanliness, existence of graffiti, well maintained playing surfaces, surveillance and lighting.

Chapter 3: Benefits & Barriers to Creating Active Parks

This chapter of the thesis will outline the benefits and limitations of developing an Active Park based on the research compiled by the thesis. The benefits will be divided into four sections which are; health benefits, economic benefits, environmental benefits and social benefits. The barriers will be separated into two sub categories which are general barriers and personal barriers.

Chapter 4: Demographic of Central West Sydney

This chapter will provide a general outline of the demographic of Central West Sydney, in an attempt to get a brief insight into what the region might require in

terms of park provisions. The demographic will encompass average income, age and cultural background of the residents.

Chapter 5: A Case Study of Central West Sydney

This chapter will involve putting the ten key standards of creating Active Parks to the test by carrying case studies of randomly selected parks in the region. There will be six parks from each LGA chosen totalling to thirty parks altogether. The case studies will analyse and assess how well these parks meet the standards that have been developed from previous chapters and will also try and provide a brief comment on each case study.

Chapter 6: Research findings, Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

The final chapter will provide an outline of the results that were obtained from the case studies. Following the research findings there will be certain recommendations provided in an attempt to solve any issues that have arisen from the analysis of the case studies. Finally there will be a section of concluding remarks to give an overall conclusion to the thesis.



Chapter 2: How to Create an Active Park

2.1 Introduction

There are several elements that need to be implemented for an Active Park to be created. All these elements need to work well together to transform a dull and inactive park to a park that welcomes people and encourages people to use the park for physical, social or recreational activity. There are ten key standards that make up an Active Park including; accessibility, parking provisions for cars and bicycles, variety of facilities for physical activity, amenities, shading, cleanliness, graffiti, quality playing surfaces, surveillance and lighting.

This chapter outlines the difference between a traditional park and an Active Park under the premise of this thesis. Following this using available literature and the opinions of the professionals interviewed, the ten standards of creating an Active Park will be outlined and explained. Finally the importance of information provision in promoting the use of the local parks will also be outlined and explained.

2.2 What is a Park?

The web dictionary defines a park as a piece of open land for recreational use in urban areas (Google, 2009). Under the premise of most local councils a park is generally divided into two main types, a local park and a neighbourhood park. A local park is generally smaller in size and has a limited range of facilities and will probably service residents within close walking distance (Council, 2004). A neighbourhood park are generally larger in size and has a wider range of facilities compared to a local park (Council, 2004).

2.3 What is an Active Park?

The primary rationale of the Active Park philosophy is to ensure that, no matter what the size and location of the park, its full potential as an active space for social, physical and recreational activity is realized. For the premise of this thesis an Active Park should be defined as a park that is easily accessible, safe, well designed, clean, has a variety of facilities and encourages residents to utilise it for physical or recreational activity. The Active Park philosophy does not differentiate between different park types, but it understands the local park would not be able to cope with the provision of as much facilities or equipment to that of a neighbourhood park. From the realms of this definition the criteria comprising of ten key standards for creating Active Parks is developed and explained below.

2.4 The Key Standards for Creating Active Parks

Through the research of available literature on open space planning and healthy planning, combined with the professional opinions of the individuals interviewed for the thesis a criteria was developed as to how to create an Active Park. This criteria is comprised of ten key standards and is known as the they include;

1. Accessibility

For a park to be truly active it is imperative that residents are provided with safe and easy access routes to walk and cycle to the park. Accessibility is a paramount factor because it determines whether a resident will make an effort to travel to the local park (Landcom, 2009). There are two main aspects of accessibility that need to be addressed when trying to determine the best way to provide access to the local park and they are safety and the ease of access.

Safety

Perception of safety is often cited as a personal barrier that restricts an individual's motivation or ability to exercise (Australia, 2008). All residents need to be provided with safe access routes if and when they decide to use the local park, because ensuring resident's safety will be a major determining factor for residents to decide to use the park.

Research conducted by the NSW Premiers Council for Active Living (PCAL) show that the maximum distance as to which a resident would choose to walk or cycle to a destination is 400-800m (Government, 2004). Moreover evidence provided by the manager of Active living from PCAL who was interviewed stated that "residents within that distance who choose to walk or cycle would use either the footpaths that connect the local streets or a designated cycle or foot path".

With this in mind it is imperative safety provisions are initiated for those residents who choose to walk or cycle.

In the first instance if a local resident is to access the local park using the footpath, there should be particular safety provisions put in place to ensure access to the local park via the footpath is done in a safe and healthy manner. This would involve; the provision of a wide, clear and continuous footpaths along both sides of the street, which will allow for safe and direct access to the destination, and separate walking or cycling pedestrians from motor vehicles on the street (Government, 2004). The optimum width of the footpath should be approximately 2m and should continue for a length of approximately 400m to provide residents within close proximity a safe access route to the park (Government, 2004).

This width and length will provide the optimum chance for a clear and direct route to the local park if residents choose to walk or cycle using the footpath as shown in pictures 2.1.



2.1: Example of footpath

Conversely if residents choose to walk or cycle to the park using a designated walking or cycling path, it is imperative to develop safety provisions to ensure residents using the path arrive at the park in a safe manner. This will involve; providing residents with a separate and clearly indicated cycle way or path that would separate them from motor vehicles on the street, and provide direct access to the destination (Government, 2004). The method of providing a cycle

way or path will not only benefit pedestrians who wish to use the local park but will provide residents with a safe and healthier method to travel to other key destinations in the local area as well (Foundation, 2004).

Designing the cycle way or path is a great initiative, but will not always guarantee pedestrians will use them. To encourage residents to utilise the cycle paths provided it becomes beneficial to design paths that are firstly well interconnected with other paths in the area to provide access from one destination to another ((RTA), 2009) that way it would assist local residents who need to travel to multiple destinations before or after using the local park.

Secondly it is also important to design paths that are highly visible to the public to allow for the best possible natural surveillance from surrounding residents and other cyclists or walkers who use that path. This will provide an increase perception of safety for the users of the cycle path and provide them with incentive to use it (Police, 2009).

Thirdly it also helps if the cycle ways are designed to be aesthetically pleasing to cycle or walk on. This could involve using innovative urban design or artistic techniques to make it pleasant to walk or cycle. This could also involve designing paths with maximum shade opportunities i.e. providing trees at certain distances to protect residents during harsh weather (Foundation, 2004). Another method is trying to design local walking or cycling paths that adjoin or pass significant local destinations such as a local waterway or nature reserves. This would make the ride more pleasant and encourage residents to use that path (Australia, 2008).

There are many great examples of innovative cycle ways that have been developed by incorporating the design standards and methods mentioned above. One innovative cycle way example was developed in Junee in rural NSW. Since the year 2000 Junee Shire Council gradually constructed and innovative and well connected cycle path network. The cycle path follows all the key principles in that

it is separated from the road network protecting pedestrians from oncoming traffic. Secondly it connects key destinations that are frequented by residents i.e. school, shops and the park. (Government, 2004). This can be seen through the following pictures.



2.2 Junee Cycleway (PCAL, 2000)

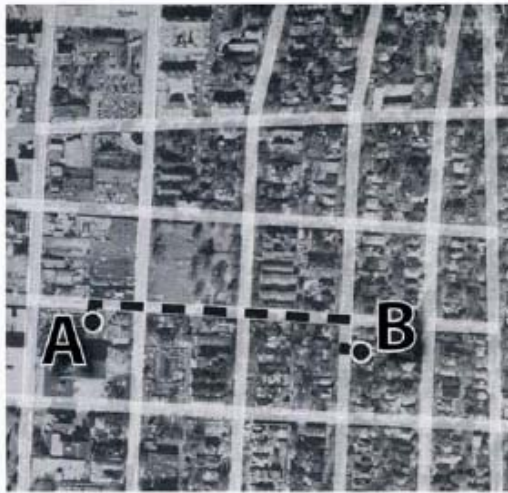


2.3 Junee Cycleway(PCAL, 2000)

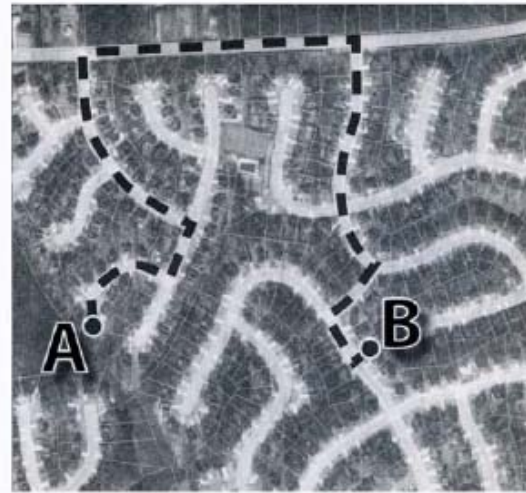
Ease of Access

The second determinant of accessibility is the ease of access. All destinations including local parks need to be within a suitable walking distance for local residents. Studies by the Australian Heart Foundation have shown that a suitable walking distance is approximately 400-800m or a 5-10 minute walk for local residents, this distance is considered to make the neighbourhood easier to access through walking which is termed a “Highly Walkable Neighbourhood” (Australia, 2008). The distance and time to walk to a destination is often the difference between residents choosing to cycle/walk or drive.

Shorter walking distances are often best supported by neighbourhoods that are designed with a traditional grid street design (Foundation, 2004). The grid street pattern carries with it several advantages; the first is that it provides a more direct route to all destinations than the non-grid street layout, allowing for more direct and shorter distances in travel (Government, 2004). Secondly the shorter distances of travel will be more convenient for walkers or cyclists and will encourage them to walk or cycle instead of drive. The following picture portrays the overall distance it would take to travel in a neighbourhood designed in a grid street pattern compared to a non grid pattern.



2.4 Grid Street Pattern(Australia, 2008)



2.5 Non-Grid Street Pattern (Australia, 2008)

2. Parking provisions for cars and bicycles

If a resident decides to cycle to the local park it becomes necessary to provide suitable bike locks or bike racks for the resident to lock up their bike and ensure it is kept safe while they are participating in physical or recreational activity at the park. By providing suitable facilities to secure a bike will entice residents to ride to the local park because they are of the knowledge that there are suitable facilities available where their bike can be secured (Government, 2004). There are many innovative ways in which bike locks can be provided and the following pictures show varying methods as to how suitable bike locks can be provided.



2.6 Example of Bike Locks 1



2.7 Example of Bike Lock 2 (Government 2004)

Moreover many parks have not been designed to be accessible by walking or cycling therefore many residents will choose to use their automobile to travel to the park. Even though it is preferable to walk or cycle to the park it is imperative that drivers are not discouraged from utilising the local park if they chose to drive to it. As a consequence a local park should be designed in a way that provides limited but adequate off street and on street parking for people who drive to the local park

3. Facilities for physical activity

For a park to become active there must be facilities provided for the residents to use them for physical or recreational activity. It is important there is a range of equipment and facilities provided that allow a diverse range of people to use the park (Australia, 2008).

It is fairly easy to understand that different age groups from infants to the elderly have a differing perspective on how to spend their time in the park. What works for one age group could not work for another. Therefore it becomes necessary for local councils to understand this and do their best to provide a range of facilities and equipment for all age groups that encompass their LGA.

Research conducted by Veitch into “Children’s Perceptions of the Use of Public Open Spaces for Active Free Play” shows that children’s use of public open space was influenced by a range of factors including the range of play equipment and facilities at the local park (Veitch, 2007). With this in mind, it becomes important to provide a range of play equipment that can be utilised by children including; jungle gyms, slides or swing sets as shown in pictures 2.8 & 2.9.



2.8 Jungle Gym (Kids, 2004)



2.9 Swing Set (Mosinee, 2005)

Studies conducted by Ketteridge and Boshoff in 2008 into the reasons why adolescents participate in physical activity has shown that there are a range of factors that influence why adolescents participate in physical activity including; the availability of supportive environments for them to be physically active (Boshoff, 2008). With this in mind it would be beneficial to provide such environments for the adolescent population to assist them in being physically active. This could involve designing parks with a range of facilities to support their needs to be physically active. As shown in pictures 2.10 & 2.11 a range of facilities could include skate board ramps and basketball hoops.



2.10 Basketball Courts (Township, 2009)



2.11 Skate Park (Rampage, 2009)

Recent research by kemperman into the heterogeneity of urban park usage shows that the older generation usually prefer the less sporting activities in the park (Kemperman, 2006). Knowing this it becomes necessary to provide a varied range of facilities to meet the needs of the older generation if and when they choose to use the park. Such facilities as shown in pictures 2.12 & 2.13 include,

evenly paved and shaded walking paths, stationary chess or checkers tables and even community gardens.



2.12 Chess Board in Park(England, 2005)



2.13 Walking/Cycling Path in Park (Idaho, 2009)

This is a general outline of what equipment or facilities should be provided to attract different age groups to the local park. The suggestions provided do not mean that facilities aimed at a particular age group can not be used by another. The main aim is to get the local residents to the park to enjoy the range of facilities and equipment provided making it an Active Park, encouraging physical activity and assisting in creating a healthier community.

There are many great examples around the world that meet the criteria of a park with a variety of facilities to cater for a varying population. One pertinent example is Dairy Creek Park in the city of Hillsboro in Oregon USA. Dairy Creek Park provides a range of facilities in the park that attempt to meet the needs of the population. The facilities include picnic tables for the elderly and families, jungle gyms for children and basketball courts, soccer fields for the older children and the adults as shown in pictures 2.14-2.16. This park is a primary example of how an Active Park can be created by providing the facilities for the residents to be physically active (Hillsboro, 2009b).



2.14 Basketball Courts (Hillsboro, 2009a)



2.15 Picnic Tables (Hillsboro, 2009a)



2.16 Jungle Gym (Hillsboro, 2009a)

4. Amenities

The Senior Manager from the Heart Foundation in his interview indicated that “the provision of amenities such as toilets, water fountains, garbage bins and seating is an important factor that will contribute to residents enjoying their stay in the park”. Ensuring the provision of well maintained and workable amenities such as toilets and water fountains can make the residents stay at the park more comfortable and ensure that they do not leave prematurely because such amenities are not provided.

Recent research by Roales-Nieto identified that one of the main influences on an individuals desire to be antilitter conscious is the availability of trash receptacles or garbage bins (Roales-Nieto, 2006). Therefore to keep the parks clean and encourage residents to keep their parks clean, it becomes beneficial to provide trash receptacles or garbage in the park. A great example of this is shown in pictures 2.17 & 2.18 where it can be seen that garbage bins are provided in key locations in the park to ensure that they are used effectively.



2.17 Garbage Bins near seating(Radio, 2006)



2.18 Garbage bins on walking path (Radio, 2006)

Seating is an important part of any local park. Providing seating at key locations in the local park such as under shade or near playground equipment will provide individuals with a place to rest if they wish to have a break or relax (Bullock, 2008). Seating will also be beneficial for parents of children or the elderly who need a place to relax while there children play or when they just need a break (Lee, 2009).

5. Shading

Shading is another important factor that needs to be addressed when creating an Active Park. The Manager of Active Living in his interview stated that “Designing a park to have appropriate shading both man made and natural at key locations in the park i.e. over play equipment, along walking/cycling paths or over areas of seating will be beneficial to the park users”. Shading can be man made and includes such things as gazebos, pergolas or shade cloths. Shading could also be natural this would involve placing play equipment or seating next to or adjacent to trees in the park to utilise the shade protection and reduce the harmful effect of ultra violet radiation (UV) (Greenwood, 1999).



2.19: Shade Cloth (Distributors, 2005)



2.20 Gazebo(Rancho, 2006)

6. Cleanliness

Parks always need to be clean. A park that is free from litter and rubbish on floors, play equipment, seating and amenities enhances the aesthetic values of the park (Dunn, 2001) and makes it a much more enjoyable place. The cleanliness of the park is a key factor in encouraging people to use the local park. Residents will be more willing to use a park if they recognise it is clean and well maintained and free from rubbish (Budruk, 2006).



2.21 Litter in Park



2.22 Clean Park (Locals, 2005)

7. Graffiti

The prevalence of graffiti in open space is a key reason that directly impacts on the visitor experience and subsequent visitation (Budruk, 2006). It is imperative that government bodies initiate programs or make provisions for the removal or the reduction in the occurrence of graffiti in the park. Graffiti is a key detractor in the aesthetic pleasantness of a local park and often creates a sense of unease

for visitors because the existence of graffiti impacts and reduces a resident's perception of safety (Recreation, 2005). Picture 2.23 & 2.24 below shows the impacts on the aesthetic nature of a park that is riddled with graffiti.



2.23 Graffiti on Table in Park ((SDPRC), 2005)



2.24 Graffiti on Toilets in park

8. Maintained surfaces

For safety for all users to the park, it is always important to maintain all surfaces that make up the park. This will ensure that there will be no detrimental impact to the users of the park and ensure their desire to be active is not hindered by uneven, cracked or slippery play surfaces (Mott, 1997). Picture 2.25 & 2.26 show a park with safe playing surfaces.



2.25: Safe Playground Surfaces Wet Pour



2.26 Safe Grass Surfaces

9. Surveillance both causal and permanent

Surveillance of the park is imperative to reassure residents that they are safe when they use the local park. Surveillance is a key directive of “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design” (CPTED) and it is an element that should be incorporated into the Active Park philosophy if the best usage of the park is to be ensured.

The design of the park to ensure the best surveillance can occur in several ways. The first is ensuring that parks are designed to face windows of adjoining houses or buildings to ensure the most appropriate form of natural surveillance from residents who adjoin a park. Secondly paths and play equipment along with amenities such as toilets can be designed in a way that provides the best style of surveillance for all users in the local park and from surrounding properties and individuals in the outer vicinity of the park (Government, 2007). A great example of parks designed with the best natural surveillance opportunities is shown in pictures 2.27 & 2.28.

The second option is always to go for the more technologically advanced forms of surveillance including CCTV or permanent street cameras that will provide surveillance of the park in more advanced manner (Police, 2009).



2.27: Surveillance from units



2.28 Surveillance from Units

10. Lighting

Lighting is another key element of the CPTED principle and one that should be incorporated into the Active Park philosophy if a park is to become a truly Active Park. Lighting becomes more of an issue during the later hours of the day if residents choose to use the park at night. Providing efficient and suitable lighting both at the park and on the access routes will be beneficial because it could; facilitate better natural surveillance from other users and surrounding properties, provide safe destinations to be physically active and deter criminal behaviour (Government, 2007).



2.29 Lighting near Playground



2.30 Lighting over playing surfaces

2.5 Provision of Information

The provision of information was not found to be a key standard when developing the criteria creating Active Parks. However access to information is an important subsidiary factor that needs to be taken into consideration when looking at

creating Active Parks. The Open Space and Recreation Co-coordinator from Auburn Council along with Sporting Facilities Co-coordinator from Fairfield council indicated that there is an element of importance in providing residents with information into the availability or facilities available in the parks of the LGA.

By providing information on Council's website or at the Council chambers about the availability, location and facilities available in the local parks in the LGA, residents would have the opportunity to know about the parks in the LGA and the facilities available if they choose to use them.

2.6 Conclusion

As it can be seen there are many important elements that need to be implemented for a park to be transformed from a dull and inactive piece of open space to an active space. Incorporating elements such as; good accessibility, parking provisions for cars and bicycles, facilities for physical activity, amenities, shading, cleanliness, graffiti, quality playing surfaces, surveillance and lighting will assist in encouraging local residents use the parks in their LGA more often for physical, recreational or social activity.



Chapter 3: Benefits & Barriers to Creating Active Parks

3.1 Introduction

The creation of Active Parks carries with it several identifiable benefits and barriers. The benefits can be differentiated into four key areas including health benefits, economic benefits, environmental and social benefits. Each of these benefits are outlined and explained below. Moreover along with the benefits there are always obvious barriers. The barriers to creating Active Parks are explained below and are divided into two key areas which are general barriers and personal barriers.

3.2 Benefits of Creating Active Parks

There are several identifiable benefits associated with the creation of Active Parks. The benefits are divided into four key areas and they are health benefits, economic benefits, environmental and social benefits. Each of the four key areas has subsidiary elements which are explained in detail below.

3.21 Health Benefits

Physical Activity Makes People Healthier

The availability of Active Parks gives individuals the opportunity to be physically active. There is ample evidence that shows physical activity makes people healthier. A report from the U.S surgeon general in 1996 found that regular physical activity reduces the risk of premature death, coronary heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, obesity and non-insulin dependent diabetes (Sherer, 2005).

Research has also shown that regular physical activity assists in improving an individual's mental health, by reducing the impacts of depression and anxiety. A study was conducted in April 2008 for the British Journal of Sports Medicine, to test the potential health benefits of physical activity on mental health. The study looked at 3,000 individuals with medically proven mental health issues such as anxiety or depression and organised them to participate in varied physical activities such as gardening, housework, walking and sport. The results of the research showed that individuals that participated in sport showed the greatest improvement with a 33% reduction in distress and anxiety (Hamer, 2008).

Access to Parks Increases Frequency of Park Usage

There is strong evidence that better access to destinations for physical activity increases the frequency of park usage for individuals. Research carried out by

the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the USA into the creation of enhanced access to places for physical activity has shown that, there was an approximate 25.6% increase in people exercising three or more days a week when they were provided with better access to places for physical activity such as parks (Kahn, 2002).

A front runner in the understanding and developing methods of improving access to parks to increase the frequency of usage and exercise is the Greater City of Geelong in Victoria. The Greater City of Geelong have developed a Walkability Toolkit designed to assist developers during the development process to develop improved walking access to all destinations including parks to encourage walking amongst residents, to improve health and to reduce pollution by reducing the amount of cars on the street (Geelong, 2009).

3.22 Economic Benefits

Increased Property Values:

There is extensive evidence that shows suburbs with more green space such as parks, have an increase in property value. Reports outlined by Parks and Recreation USA in 2004 have shown through a GIS spatial analysis of several neighbourhoods in the USA that properties in close proximity to parks have a marketable increase in property value. The spatial analysis was conducted in Portland Oregon, Austin Texas, Dallas Texas and Indianapolis Indiana. All the studies showed a range of 2-22% increase in property values for properties that were within less than 1500 feet of a park (Nicholls, 2004).

Further evidence on the impacts of parks on property values is shown by the housing prices in the UK and USA after a park was constructed. After Price's Park was constructed in Liverpool in the UK housing prices in close proximity or adjacent to the park almost tripled within two years (Woolley, 2003). Moreover

after the construction of West Chicago Park in Chicago Illinois, housing prices adjacent to the park doubled in price (Woolley, 2003).

There is also evidence provided through Australian case studies that show property values near parks increase. Evidence shows that the Adelaide Parklands in South Australia have increased property values around the CBD by approximately 20% (Service, 2008). This shows that the development of suitable and accessible park land has the potential to increase property values for the benefits of the property owners and for the economy as a whole.

Property Values in Low-Income Urban Areas:

There is also strong evidence that has shown the availability of parks can lead to an increase in the property values in traditionally low-income areas. Research carried out by the USC Centre for Sustainable Cities have found that closer proximity to parks in traditionally low-income neighbourhoods tend to have a higher property value than properties further away from the parks. The study was conducted through a GIS spatial analysis on two traditionally low-income neighbourhoods in Los Angeles California and found that properties within 200-500 feet of a neighbourhood or local park sold for approximately 1.5% higher in expected sales price which equated to an additional \$3,440 in median housing price (Pincetl, 2003).

Effects on Commercial Property Values

The availability of parks not only has the potential to increase residential property values, but can also have a positive effect on the value of commercial property. Two case studies from the USA portray the positive effect of vibrant and superior parks on commercial property values. The first is Bryant Park in New York City. Bryant Park was notorious for being a hot spot for crime and drug dealing, which meant use of the park, was significantly reduced because residents feared for

their safety. In 1993 the park was refurbished and became a site for fashion shows, jazz festivals and outdoor cafes. After two years of the park reopening the leasing activity in neighbouring streets increased by 60% (Alexander, 1997).



3.1 Bryant Park Today



3.2: Bryant Park Today

Comparatively in Atlanta Georgia, where Centennial Olympic Park was built for the Summer Olympics in 1996 found that after the space was built, commercial property value in the surrounding area rose from \$2.00 per square foot to approximately \$150 per square foot (Alexander, 1997).

Provide Employment

Providing Active Parks has the potential to provide additional employment. To maintain the parks in terms of landscaping, cleanliness and general maintenance can generate employment. Employment that can be generated include jobs for landscapers, jobs for cleaners and parks officers. These will have significant economic benefits both for the individuals who are being paid and for the economy as a whole (Sherer, 2005).

3.23 Environmental Benefits

Reduces Pollution

Parks carry with them several environmental benefits and one of them is they provide a source to reduce pollution. Studies from the USA and Europe have shown that all trees including trees in many urban parks provide over their

lifetime ample amounts of oxygen to cleanse the atmosphere; they recycle thousands of dollars worth of water and control thousands of dollars of soil erosion (Nowak, 2008).

Provide a Source of clean air

Parks in urban environments provide a great source of clean and fresh air (District, 2009). By providing a place of clean air it gives residents a place to go and relax, provides a source of community pride, assists in preserving the natural environment and hence provides a place for residents to enjoy nature's beauty in a predominately urban environment (District, 2009).

3.24 Social Benefits

Reducing Crime

There are many social benefits associated with the availability of good parks in urban areas. There is documented evidence that the availability of parks assists in reducing many forms of crime in urban areas (F.E.Kuo, 2001). Evidence of this is seen in Fort Myers in Florida. Police in the city documented an approximate 28% drop in juvenile arrests after the city implemented a program known as "Success through Academics and Recreational Support" (STARS). The program concentrated on developing good recreational facilities such as parks in the middle of a low income neighbourhood to provide young people in the neighbourhood an outlet to be physically active and at the same time reduce stress (Sherer, 2005).

Further evidence is seen in Ontario Canada. In a neighbourhood in the southern part of Ontario, residents who are part of a large government housing complex decided to introduce a community garden into the park next to the housing lots in an attempt to alleviate crime that was prominent in the area. The garden was designed with CPTED principles to ensure maximum safety and reduction in

crime. After the garden was built there was a recorded 30% reduction in crime the following summer. Moreover residents were more willing to walk the streets later at night because their perception of safety had improved (Space, 2003).

Provides play opportunities for children

The importance of play is beneficial for all ages but it is especially important when it comes to children. Playing for children allows the mind to develop, it also allows children to learn how to communicate with other individuals and helps improve muscle strength, coordination, language, cognitive thinking and reasoning abilities (Sherer, 2005). Evidence provided by Parenting and Child Health has shown children who interact with other individuals through play have a greater chance of developing better social, physical and mental skills later in life. (Health, 2009).

Create a sense of community.

The availability of public parks also helps to create a sense of community and belonging (Association, 2009). By providing places where residents can interact and communicate with each other in a friendly non-threatening environment helps build stronger ties in the community and assists in developing a sense of ownership of the public facilities such as parks in the area (Woolley, 2003). Evidence is provided by a study conducted by the University of Missouri in St Louis. The study aimed to link the development of community ties and relationships with the availability of common urban green space. The study found that neighbourhoods in St Louis with better availability of green space had stronger community ties than neighbourhoods that did not have the same facilities available (Tranel, 2003).

3.3 Barriers to Creating Active Parks

There are several identifiable barriers associated with the creation of Active Parks. The barriers are divided into two key areas and they are general barriers and personal barriers. Each of the barriers has subsidiary elements which are explained in detail below.

3.31 General Barriers

Funding

Local Government funding has always been fairly limited, and as often is the case these funds have to be distributed accordingly in terms of need and importance (Association, 2004). Funds for Local Government is usually obtained in three main ways the first is through municipal rates 38.7% the second is through user charges 30.5% and the third is through grants and subsidies 12% (Association, 2004). As indicated by ALGA local councils are struggling to meet increasing demand for its services and must prioritise the distribution of funds.

There is statistics provided by the ALGA that show a large portion of government expenditure does go towards recreation and culture approximately 14.9% as of 2006. However as also shown by information gathered by the ALGA these funds are often very limited and leave most local councils stretched for funds unable to provide the optimum services required for their LGA. Therefore it is imperative that funding is increased to assist local councils meet the needs of a growing population, which includes improving and enhancing parks in their LGA to promote their optimum use and transform them into Active Parks (Association, 2003).

Cost

A common issue that was mentioned from the interviews used to compile this thesis is that the cost for providing facilities to create a useable and accessible park is often too expensive for local councils and is often a barrier to achieving Active Parks. The Senior Manager of the Heart Foundation in his interview stated that “cost of providing things such as suitable shade structures, play equipment such as basketball hoops or even tennis courts often are too expensive to cover and hence most councils can’t implement them”.

Moreover the Sporting Facilities Co-coordinator from Fairfield Council stated that the cost of hiring parks is often a deterrent for sport clubs to use parks in the LGA. She stated that “often the case is that most sporting clubs can not afford the costs associated with hiring parks for use and therefore they are deterred from using them”. Similarly the Open Space and Recreation Co-coordinator from Auburn Council stated that “cost for hiring park facilities often runs into the thousands and it often is a cost that most local sporting clubs find it hard too meet and have to rely on fund raising and other means”.

This is further compounded by the fact that to sporting clubs and other organisation can not hire parks and playing fields in all local Councils in the central west, more than ten times throughout the year without guaranteeing Council that they will provide a Public Liability Insurance Policy to the value of no less than \$10 million. It can be seen costs on both sides of the fence is detrimental and it is an obvious barrier that prevents the best use of the parks in the Local Government Areas (Council, 2004).

Over Development

There is no secret that residential, commercial, industrial and retail development in the suburbs of major cities is expanding, to cater for an ever growing

population and economy. Gobster shows through his studies of open space issues in Chicago Illinois that intensification and densification of neighbourhoods in developed cities has sacrificed valuable public open space, and replaced it with over developed neighbourhoods and concrete jungles (Gobster, 2001).

The NSW Metropolitan Strategy along with the supporting Subregional Strategies released by the Department of Planning place specific housing, commercial and industrial development targets to be reached in NSW by 2031 (Planning, 2008). This could lead to intensification and densification of many already developed neighbourhoods and suburbs in NSW, and could lead to a reduction in quality open space such as parks and recreation facilities. As indicated by Lemonides in his studies of obstacles to the provision of open space it is important that a balance is found between intensification of land uses and the provision of public open space to ensure a proper functioning and well balanced society (Lemonides, 1978).

3.32 Personal Barriers

Perception of Safety

If an individual does not feel safe doing something they will probably not do it. This applies to the use of the local and neighbourhood parks. Perception of safety is often the predominate factor that decides whether an individual chooses to use the park for physical or recreational activity (Cutts, 2009). As indicated by Eyler in her research of physical barriers for women and physical activity it is shown that most women between the ages of 18 and 50 state that fear of being attacked or harassed by homeless people is often a deterrent to use the park for physical or recreational activity (Eyler, 2002).

Further research conducted by Cutts and Darby into the barriers to park use for all age groups in Arizona has shown that perception of safety of an area and fear

of crime are the most cited reason for individuals to decide not to use the parks for physical and recreational activity (Cutts, 2009).

Accessibility

The second barrier is accessibility. As indicated by Arnold and Shinen by their research into constraints on park usage, accessibility is often cited as a barrier to the use of local parks (Arnold, 1998). Accessibility can be achieved as shown in the previous chapter by firstly providing suitable parks for residents to use; secondly it becomes important to provide suitable connections via footpaths or designated cycle paths to promote safe and direct access to the park in the local area (Government, 2004). Without having suitable access to proper functioning parks then the Active Park philosophy can not be achieved.

Time

The above mentioned personal barriers can be alleviated through creative design techniques as shown in chapter two. However there are some personal barriers that can not be amended through the implementation of innovative design techniques and one of them is time. As indicated by Henderson in his research of barriers to physical activity states that time constraints is constantly cited as a primary reason as to why people can not be physically active (Henderson, 2005). Sturm also indicates in his research it's not often the reality of time constraints but an individual's perception of time that predetermines the amount of physical activity they participate in (Sturm, 2004). Sturms research shows us that it becomes important to change people's perceptions and help them remove the mental barriers of perceived time constraints and develop methods to encourage them to be physically active.

Further evidence is provided by statistics collated by Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) for the ABS, which shows that in a survey conducted in 2007 more than

85% of respondents stated that lack of time due to family commitments and work commitments as a barrier to not being physically active (Australia, 2007).

Culture

The cultural background of an individual can be a personal barrier to the use of parks. Rishbeth shows in her research of cultural barriers to physical activity and neighbourhood inclusion in westernised countries that a person's cultural background and upbringing effects their perception and desire to exercise and be physically active. Rishbeth shows that people from different cultural backgrounds in westernised countries tend to have differing priorities to the traditional inhabitants of the country. It is often the case that people from cultural backgrounds prioritise raising a family, making a living and working to support family members overseas who are less fortunate than they are over being physically active and healthy (Rishbeth, 2001).

This is further supported through research carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) that show through their studies of cultural barriers to physical activity that individuals from non-English speaking backgrounds generally have a lower participation level in physical activity ((ABS), 2008). The reasons cited for this low priority is difficulty to speak host countries language, prioritising raising a family and making a living over leisure activities and placing a preference on education over physical activity.

3.4 Conclusion

As it can be seen there are both benefits and limitations to creating Active Parks. The benefits range from health benefits, economic benefits, environmental benefits and social benefits, each having their own subsidiary elements that portray the advantages of what can happen if the Active Park philosophy is implemented. Conversely as outlined in this chapter there are also obvious barriers to creating Active Parks. Barriers can be divided into two distinct areas

being general barriers and personal barriers. It is important that solutions are provided to the barriers mention to assist and promote the development of Active Parks in Australia and world wide.



Chapter 4: Demographic of Central West Sydney

4.1 Introduction

Before using Central West Sydney as a case study it is important to understand the needs of the region in terms of park provisions by understanding the characteristics of the population that makes up the region. By looking at the average age, income and cultural background of the residents it can be possible to envisage possible solutions to park issues that the LGA's might encounter.

4.2 Demographic

Central West Sydney encompasses five main Local Government Areas which are Auburn, Bankstown, Fairfield, Holroyd and Parramatta giving it a total area of approximately 312 km² (Planning, 2008) with Fairfield the largest in area being 102 km². The Central West area of Sydney has a very large population of approximately 657,321 people with Fairfield holding the largest population of approximately 179,931 people ((WSROC), 2008).



4.1 Central West Region (Planning, 2008)

One of the most telling statistics of the Central West Sydney area is the average weekly income. The five LGA's that make up Central West Sydney have a total working population of approximately 516,463 ((WSROC), 2008). Of the 516,463 workers, approximately 308,424 or 60% earn an average weekly income of below \$600.00 a week ((ABS), 2007) making this area of Sydney one of the poorest in the Sydney metro region. This statistic shows that with much of the working population earning such a low income, the provision of parks where residents can be physically, socially and recreationally active becomes more important.

Research carried out by Pearson Australia based on the social constructs of health and physical activity has identified that individuals earning a high income have a greater opportunities for physical activity compared to individuals on a low income (Australia, 2008a). Generally low income residents are less likely to have access to the more costly facilities for physical activity such as gyms or expensive training equipment (Health, 2009).

As it can be seen the majority of residents in the region of Central West Sydney do not earn such a high weekly income. So with regions like this, to encourage and promote physical, social and recreational activity it becomes important to provide low cost facilities for the residents such as parks with a variety of facilities for all residents to enjoy (Health, 2009).

The average age group of the Central West Sydney area is fairly diverse with all age groups predominately evenly represented including infants, children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Having such a mix of age groups means that there needs to be provisions made to meet the needs of all age groups that represent the region.

With this in mind it is imperative that all local councils in the Central West Sydney area do what they can when designing parks, to ensure that the needs of all age groups are met. This often means providing a variety of facilities in local parks to ensure the best usage possible (Australia, 2008b). For example providing jungle gyms for children, sandboxes for infants, basketball or tennis courts for the teenagers and adults and evenly paved and shaded walking paths for seniors. By providing such facilities encourages residents of all ages to use their local park knowing that there are facilities available to meet the physical or recreational activity needs.

Another important characteristic that must be considered when analysing the demographics of Central West Sydney is the number of residents that live in the

region from non-English speaking backgrounds. Of the total population in the area approximately 264,560 ((WSROC), 2008) residents come from a non-English speaking background, which represents 40.2% of the population. This statistic makes the Central West area of Sydney the most multi-cultural area in the Sydney metro region.

Research by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2006 has shown that ethnic minorities and people from non-English speaking backgrounds generally have a lower participation rate in physical activity ((ABS), 2008). This can be attributed to several barriers including difficulty in speaking the host countries language (Hugo, 2001) prioritising earning a living and raising a family over leisure activities (T, 2004) and placing a preference for education over physical activity (Keogh, 2002).

With this in mind this thesis will try and divulge through the case studies of the parks in Central West Sydney what has been done to try encourage residents from non-English speaking backgrounds to participate in physical activity in the parks of the region. The physical and recreational activity participation of residents from non English speaking background in the local park is imperative to achieve one of the ultimate goals of the Active Park ethos, which is to get all residents using the parks for physical, social or recreational activity.

4.3 Conclusion

The overall characteristics and demographic of Central West Sydney portray an area that could benefit from more appropriate facilities to cater for their diverse population. Creating Active Parks can assist in creating a healthier, happier and safer region for everyone.



Chapter 5: Case Studies of Central West Sydney

5.1 Introduction

The Central West Region of Sydney has an extensive amount of Public Open Space including 2,943 hectares (Planning, 2008) of regional open space and 1,974 hectares of local open space (Planning, 2008). With this vast amount of open space available to this region of Sydney there is the opportunity to utilise the space and improve it in a way that makes a better and healthier place to live. This chapter will use parks from Central West Sydney as case studies and test them for their abilities to be Active Parks based on the ten key standards that have been developed from the previous chapters. The ten standards of the

criteria that each park will be tested on include; accessibility, parking provisions, range of facilities for physical activity, amenities, shading, cleanliness, graffiti, playing surfaces, surveillance and lighting.

There are six parks that will be used in each of the five LGA's in Central West Sydney totalling to 30 parks to be used as case studies. The parks have been randomly chosen to give the best possible results based on the criteria that has been developed. Each of the ten standards under the criteria will be given a mark out of ten so the park can be given a total mark out of 100. Table 5.1 below explains the marking criteria for each standard.

Marking Criteria

Standard	Marking Criteria
Accessibility	Based on the parks ability to provide suitable and safe access routes i.e. via a footpath and/or a designated cycle path.
Parking Provisions	Based on the parks ability to provide suitable parking provisions i.e. car spaces and bike locks.
Facilities for physical Activity	Based on the variety of facilities provided for physical activity.
Amenities	Marks are allocated based on the amount, condition and appropriate location of the amenities.
Shading	Based on the provision of shading in the park both natural or man made and its location.
Cleanliness	Based on how litter free and clean the park is.
Graffiti	Based on the non presence of graffiti on any surfaces in the park.
Playing Surfaces	Based on the quality and safety of all playing surfaces in the park.
Surveillance	Based on how well surveillance is provided in the park either natural or mechanical.
Lighting	Based on how effective and appropriate the lighting is in the park particularly over playing surfaces.

Table 5.1

The total mark for the park will be out of 100 will be allocated as such; 50 or below is a fail, 51-60 will be below average, 61-70 will be average, 71-80 will be above average, 81-90 will be good and 91-100 will be excellent. These grading will estimate based on the observations of each case study how well the park is

meeting the criteria. After the assessment of the case studies is done there will be a brief comment section after every case study to outline both the positive and negative aspects of the park based on the criteria.

Prior to the beginning of each of the LGA's case studies there will be a brief section that identifies the quality of the information that each council in the central west provide to their residents in terms of park locations and facilities provided in each of those parks for the benefits and knowledge of the residents.

5.2 Parks in Auburn

Information Provision

Auburn Council does a really good job in providing information to the residents about the location and availability of parks in the LGA. The council website provides direct and concise information about the locations of every park in the LGA. They also provide the facilities available in the park as well. This is very beneficial to all residents in the LGA because they are able to access information about every park and can decide which park to visit based on accessibility and location.

Information is also provided at the front counter of the council chambers. The front counter of the chambers provides pamphlets that have information pertaining to the location of parks in their LGA.

Council also provides interpretative services to help people from non-English speaking backgrounds understand information that is provided to them. This is extremely beneficial to help multicultural residents understand what is going on in Council.

Park 1: Coleman Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Fairly good access via footpaths for walking pedestrians, however limited access provided via designated cycle way.
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited parking provided for both cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	3/10	Not a large range of facilities included only a soccer field
Amenities	6/10	Moderate amenities provided i.e. seating, bins toilets etc. However in fairly poor condition
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	9/10	Park was really clean relatively free from litter
Graffiti	9/10	No graffiti
Playing Surfaces	7/10	Fairly good but could be slightly improved
Surveillance	7/10	Surveillance pretty good but faces main road and provides limited surveillance from main road elevation
Lighting	7/10	Fairly good lighting over playing surfaces.
Total	57/100	

Table 5.21



5.1 Wide Footpath



5.2 Toilet Block



5.3 Seating and Garbage



5.4 Park with no shading

Comments:

Overall Coleman Park rates below average under the criteria. There are several aspects that need improvement if it is to become an Active Park. The most notable improvement is to the range of facilities provided for physical activity. Providing only a soccer field does not promote or encourage a variety of age groups to use the park. Secondly the lack of shading over playing surfaces and over seating is detrimental and does not help during harsh weather. Moreover amenities such as bins, seating and toilets are provided but they are in fairly poor

condition and could use an upgrade. Parking is another aspect that could be improved with limited parking for cars and no bike locks for bicycle riders.

However there are some aspects of the criteria in which the park has rated highly. Firstly the park is extremely clean with limited or no rubbish seen. Secondly there was no evidence of graffiti which improves the aesthetic nature of the park. The park is fairly well accessed via walking and cycling using the fairly wide and long footpaths adjacent to the park which is beneficial to walkers and cyclists.

Park 2: Grandin Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	8/10	Really good access provided for walkers and cyclists with a fairly wide and continuous footpath, along with a connected cycle path through the park.
Parking Provisions	5/10	Average with on street parking provided but no bike locks for bicycle riders
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Fairly good with the range of facilities provided considering the size. Includes walking/cycling path as well as a jungle gym for kids
Amenities	6/10	Amenities provided are okay. Includes seating and bins.
Shading	0/10	No shading anywhere
Cleanliness	9/10	Very good with very limited litter seen
Graffiti	10/10	No graffiti
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Playing surfaces in really good condition, a few dents in the playground surfaces though.
Surveillance	7/10	Fairly good surveillance from surrounding residential housing
Lighting	0/10	No lighting noticeable
Total	60/100	

Table 5.22



5.5 Wide Footpath



5.6 Path in Park



5.7 Seating and Bin



5.8 Jungle Gym

Comment: Grandin Park rated below average under the criteria. There are a few aspects that need a fairly large improvement including the provision of shading. There is no shading provided over key areas including play equipment and seating. Moreover lighting is also fairly poor and would not be beneficial for residents in the later hours of the day.

However there are several aspects in which the park did rate highly; the first was the non-existence of graffiti. The lack of graffiti improves the park aesthetically and makes it more inviting for residents. The variety of playing equipment is good considering the size of the park. There is a walking/cycling path and a jungle gym for kids. The playing surfaces and the plants that surround the park are in really good condition making the park feel more welcoming and allowing residents to feel more comfortable.

Park 3: Lidcombe Remembrance Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Fairly good access provided for walking and cycling via wide footpaths and a designated cycle way that runs through the park
Parking Provisions	5/10	Average parking with on street parking for cars provided but no bike locks.
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Good variety for size with jungle gyms for kids and cycle/walking path running through the park.
Amenities	7/10	Amenities fairly good. Seating, bins and toilets provided.
Shading	7/10	Fairly good natural and man made shading provided over seating and near play equipment
Cleanliness	9/10	Excellent
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively none seen
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Kept in really good condition
Surveillance	10/10	Park in the Lidcombe town centre with surveillance provided from surrounding shops, train station and passing pedestrians
Lighting	6/10	Limited lighting
Total	76/100	

Table 5.23



5.9 Walking Path in Park



5.10 Jungle Gym



5.11 Water Feature



5.12 Plants in Park

Comments: One of the most aesthetically pleasant parks studied. Great urban design techniques with water features in the centre of the park along with healthy green plants and palm trees give the park vibrancy. The park rated above average under the criteria. There were some really good aspects including the overall cleanliness of the park and the non-existence of graffiti. Moreover the casual surveillance provided is exceptional. Being in the town centre at Lidcombe

there is constant natural surveillance provided by the shops that surround the park, the adjacent train station and the people who constantly walk past. Playing surfaces are also in really good condition with the walking/cycling path, the grass as well as the playground being well maintained.

However there are some aspects of the park that could be improved including the provision of bike locks for bicycles to encourage cyclists to use the park. Moreover better lighting could help improve safety in the later hours of the day.

Park 4: Civic Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	6/10	Accessibility is okay. Provided by fairly wide and continuous footpath.
Parking Provisions	5/10	Average parking provisions, good on street for cars no bike locks for cyclists
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	For size of the park facilities are good. Include jungle gym and walking path.
Amenities	9/10	Great amenities for park size includes seating, toilets and bins and they are well maintained
Shading	9/10	Great natural shading provided via large canopy cover of trees and several man made gazebos over seating
Cleanliness	9/10	Extremely clean with limited or no litter
Graffiti	9/10	No graffiti
Playing Surfaces	6/10	Moderate but could be improved
Surveillance	9/10	Great surveillance provided from surrounding residential properties
Lighting	7/10	Fairly good lighting provided
Total	76/100	

Table 5.24



5.13 Jungle Gym



5.14 Walking Path



5.15 Surveillance from Housing



5.16 Natural Shading

Comments: A really well designed park that rated above average under the criteria. Goods aspects include the provision of amenities considering the size of the park. The park provides toilets, seating and garbage bins and at key locations i.e. adjacent to play equipment or along the walking path. The park makes good use of shading with a large amount of trees providing natural shading over seating and play equipment. There is also the availability of a small gazebo over some seating which could be beneficial. The park is extremely clean and is almost graffiti free encouraging residents to use the park. Surveillance is also really good with the surrounding residential properties providing good casual surveillance of the park.

There were not many negative aspects of the park that were identified under the criteria. However there could be better parking provisions for cyclists provided to encourage better use of the park. Moreover lighting around the park could be improved as well to assist residents using the park in the later afternoon hours.

Park 5: Friends Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	2/10	Poor access located at the end of a laneway, provides limited access via footpath or designated walking/cycling path
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited for both cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	6/10	For size of the park facilities provided are okay
Amenities	3/10	Limited seating, bins and no toilets
Shading	5/10	Okay for size of the park with gazebo over a seat
Cleanliness	8/10	Cleanliness very good little or no litter
Graffiti	8/10	Very good with only limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Well maintained
Surveillance	10/10	Extremely good surrounded by apartments that over look the park
Lighting	2/10	Poor and not good at night
Total	54/100	

Table 5.25



5.17 Jungle Gym



5.18 Small Pergola



5.19 Surveillance from RFB



5.20 Good grass surfaces

Comments: Friends Park rates below average based on the criteria. Firstly the park is located at the end of a laneway which makes access via a safe footpath extremely difficult and limits the opportunities for safe access of bicycles. Due to the fact it is located at the end of a laneway parking provisions for cars and bicycles are limited as well. There are limited amenities i.e. bins, seating etc which makes it fairly uncomfortable for users. Lighting is also another issue because during the later hours of the afternoon and at night the park will have limited visibility.

There are some good aspects to the park that should be mentioned. The first is surveillance for the park is exceptional. The park is surrounded by balconies of residential flat buildings on one side which assists in the natural surveillance of the park. Moreover the park is really clean and the surfaces are in good condition which improves the aesthetic nature of the park and can encourages resident usage.

Park 6: Guilfoyle Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility if fairly good with wide footpaths adjacent to park easy to walk and cycle
Parking Provisions	6/10	Average parking provisions. On street parking for cars okay but no bike locks for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	9/10	Excellent range of facilities for physical activity includes; jungle gym, cricket pitch, rugby field and basketball courts
Amenities	2/10	Limited amenities for size of the park and facilities provided
Shading	0/10	No shading provided
Cleanliness	9/10	Really clean, relatively no elements of litter
Graffiti	9/10	Very limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained and easy to play on
Surveillance	9/10	Really good surrounded by housing and units
Lighting	9/10	Lighting is also really good.
Total	69/100	

Table 5.26



5.21 Football Posts



5.22 Jungle Gym



5.23 Basketball Courts



5.24 No shading

Comments: Guilfoyle Park achieved an average rating but achieved some really good scores against much of the criteria, which shows that there are some really

positive aspects to this park. One aspect which is really exceptional is the variety of facilities for physical activity provided. There is a jungle gym, a cricket pitch a rugby field and basketball courts. The range of facilities can cater for a variety of demographics and age groups and help the park become an Active Park. The park is also very clean with limited or no litter and there is relatively no existence of graffiti which improves the aesthetics of the park. The playing surfaces are also well maintained and lighting is also provided which promotes safety. Surveillance is also very good with the park being surrounded by residential flat buildings and detached residential housing.

There are however several aspects of the park that could be improved. One aspect is the provision of shading over seating or playing surfaces to minimize the impact of harsh weather. Moreover for the size of the park and the facilities provided there could be a larger variety of amenities such as bins, seating and water fountains to help users keep hydrated and enjoy their stay in the park.

5.3 Parks in Bankstown

Information Provision

Bankstown does a good job in providing information to the residents in the LGA about the parks in the area. The Council website provides an alphabetical list of all the parks in the LGA and their location as well as the facilities that they contain. Moreover the Council chambers provide pamphlets that contain information about location of the parks in the LGA as well. The information provided by the Council is extremely beneficial to the residents of Bankstown who wish to know about the location of the parks that are in close proximity to them.

Council also posts on their website the monthly sporting events they hold and where they are located. This is an extremely positive step because it provides

residents with the opportunity to participate in sporting events run by Council and also provides them with the ability to become part of the community.

Additionally Bankstown Council also provides interpretive services which provide residents from non-English speaking backgrounds the ability to understand information provided by Council, which in turn helps them feel part of the community.

Park 1: Oneil Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	8/10	Accessibility is fairly good with a wide and continuous footpath adjacent to the park and a cycle path that connects the footpath to the park is also provided
Parking Provisions	6/10	Parking for cars provided on street but no parking provisions for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	8/10	Variety of facilities provided including soccer field, walking/cycling path and jungle gym
Amenities	7/10	Fairly good with amenity provision, provide toilet, seating and garbage bins
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	7/10	Fairly clean with a few bits of litter scattered
Graffiti	8/10	Limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Well maintained playing surfaces
Surveillance	4/10	Park can not really be seen from adjoining properties
Lighting	6/10	Lighting provided is okay
Total	62/100	

Table 5.31



5.25 Wide Footpath



5.26 No Shading



5.27 Walking Path in Park



5.28 Jungle Gym

Comments: Oneil Park rated average against the criteria. There are both positive and negative aspects that could be identified. Firstly some of the positive aspects include the range of facilities provided for physical activity. Facilities include a jungle gym, walking path and soccer field, which caters for a diverse demographic. Secondly the playing surfaces are well maintained and can assist in encouraging visitors to the park. Moreover the park is really clean and there is limited or no graffiti present.

However there are some negative aspects that can also be identified the first is to do with shading. For such a large park there is no shading provided over playing surfaces or over seating which is a discouragement during harsh weather. Moreover surveillance is also an issue due to the fact that the parks and playing surfaces can not be clearly seen from surrounding residential properties because the park is surrounded by an elevated hill which blocks clear lines of site. This is detrimental and can effect an individual's perception of safety.

Park 2: Arthur Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility is good with access provided via wide and continuous footpath, as well as a providing the ability for bikes to access the park as well via the footpath as well
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited parking provisions for cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	8/10	Variety of facilities provided which is good for the size of the park. Includes; jungle gym, walking/cycling path and basketball court
Amenities	6/10	Amenities okay for size of park, provide seating and bins
Shading	3/10	Limited shading provided over some seating
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	6/10	Some aspects of graffiti present which detracts from pleasantness of the park
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained playing surfaces
Surveillance	6/10	Surveillance is okay but some sections of the park are blocked by fences which reduces surveillance
Lighting	7/10	Fairly good lighting provided
Total	63/100	

Table 5.32



5.29 Walking Path



5.30 Jungle Gym



5.31 Basketball Court



5.32 Shading over Seating

Comments: Arthur Park rated average against the criteria. There are both positive and negative aspects of the park. The positive aspects include the variety of facilities provided for physical activity. For the size of the park the facilities provided are really good including jungle gyms, walking paths and a basketball court. This could encourage a wide demographic to use the park. Also the playing surfaces at the park are well maintained and it is also really clean making it a more pleasant park to be in. Another positive that was identified was the clear link provided between the footpath and a walkway/cycle way in the park. The link allows an individual a means of a clear transition from the footpath to the park, which is an innovative urban design technique.

There are also some negative aspects that have been identified. The first is the lack of parking for both cars and bicycles in close proximity to the park. This could discourage people from using the park because there is limited place to park to lock up a bike. Moreover there were several examples of graffiti around the park, along the fences that surround the park and on the park sign. Graffiti detracts from the pleasantness of the park and can alter a users perception of safety.

Park 3: Mt Lewis Reserve

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Fairly good access is provided via the footpath which is long and unobstructed
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited Parking Provisions for Cars and Bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Fairly good range of facilities provided for size of the park; include jungle gym and walking/cycling path
Amenities	7/10	Fairly good amenities provided including seating, bins and toilets
Shading	2/10	Limited shading
Cleanliness	7/10	Fairly clean but some examples of litter on play equipment
Graffiti	8/10	Basically non existent but small examples on toilets
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained
Surveillance	6/10	Location of park is elevated and blocked by trees therefore reducing surveillance
Lighting	2/10	Fairly poor
Total	57/100	

Table 5.33



5.33 Jungle Gym



5.34 Walking Path



5.35 Shading over Seating



5.36 Wide Footpath

Comments: Mt Lewis Reserve rated below average in terms of the criteria. There are several negative aspects that could be identified including; the lack of parking provided for both cars and bicycles around the park. Secondly there was relatively no shading provided at the park which is fairly poor. Moreover surveillance can be a problem in the park due to the fact that the park is elevated above surrounding properties making surveillance from surrounding residential properties fairly hard. Also the park blocks a clear line of site from adjacent residential properties because it is surrounded by thick trees and large plants.

The lack of surveillance gives a sense of seclusion and can negatively impact an individual's perception of safety.

Conversely there are some positive aspects that can be identified. Firstly the playing surfaces are well maintained which helps improve the pleasantness of the park. Secondly there is relatively no evidence of graffiti which also helps improve the aesthetic nature of the park.

Park 4: Northcote Reserve

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility is fairly good. Park can be accessed via a long and unobstructed footpath
Parking Provisions	4/10	Limited parking for cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	8/10	Wide variety of facilities for physical activity including jungle gym, basketball hoops and walking path
Amenities	9/10	Excellent amenities provided including seating, bins, toilets and a BBQ
Shading	9/10	Shading is really well done both natural and man made.
Cleanliness	7/10	Fairly clean not much litter
Graffiti	8/10	Relatively graffiti free with few marking on toilet door
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained playing surfaces
Surveillance	8/10	Good natural surveillance provided from surrounding properties
Lighting	6/10	Lighting is okay but can improve
Total	75/100	

Table 5.34



5.37 Park Entrance



5.38 Walking Path



5.39 Shading over seating



5.40 Basketball and Jungle Gym

Comments: Northcote Reserve has rated above average against the criteria. The park has some really positive aspects that have been identified. The first positive that is obvious is the design of the entry way to the park. The archway entrance creates a sense of movement from one world to another and makes the park user more welcome. It is a great urban design technique that should be used more often. Secondly the great use of shading at the park is also a positive. Shading both man made and natural are provided in key locations at the park i.e. over seating and near play equipment. Moreover the amenities provided in the park are also a positive aspect. The park provides toilets, seating at key locations, garbage bins at key locations i.e. near play equipment and seating. There is also the availability of a BBQ which could be used which is beneficial and assists in creating a sense of belonging to the park.

There is not many overly negative aspects identified with the park, but there are certain aspects that can be improved. Firstly lighting is very restricted in the park and more could be provided. Secondly parking provisions are also lacking both for cars and bicycles. Perhaps installing bike racks could be beneficial to the park and bring a bit more people to it.

Park 5: Steven Folkes Reserve

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	6/10	Accessibility is okay and is provided via a long unobstructed footpath beneficial for walkers
Parking Provisions	7/10	Fairly good parking provisions provided for cars but no bike locks or bike racks for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	4/10	Limited facilities for physical activity considering the size of the park
Amenities	7/10	Fairly good amenities provided including seating, bins and toilets
Shading	0/10	No shading provided
Cleanliness	7/10	Fairly clean
Graffiti	6/10	Average with several examples of graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained surfaces
Surveillance	1/10	Park is secluded and therefore limits surveillance
Lighting	9/10	Lighting is good and provided over playing surfaces
Total	56/100	

Table 5.35



5.41 Good Playing Surfaces



5.42 Seating & Shading



5.43 Lighting



5.44 Graffiti

Comments: Steven Folkes Reserve rates below average when assessed against the criteria. There are several negative aspects that have been identified including; the lack of a variety of facilities for physical activity. The park only provides a football field but considering its size there is room for a bit more. Secondly shading is relatively non-existent over playing surfaces or seating which is detrimental to the users of the park during harsh weather. Moreover surveillance of the park is very poor. The park is secluded and there is no direct line of site from dwelling houses or adjacent walking paths making it fairly unsafe.

However there are certain aspects on which the park can be commended on. The first is the quality of the playing surfaces. The playing surfaces are well maintained ensuring there is no detrimental impact to the users of the park. Secondly the lighting provided for the park is fairly good. This allows for safe usage of the park during late afternoon hours or late at night.

Park 6: Baxter St Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility is good provided via wide and unobstructed footpath adjacent to park.
Parking Provisions	5/10	Limited parking provisions for cars and no parking for bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Considering size of the park a variety of facilities are provided including jungle gym and walking path
Amenities	7/10	Amenities are fairly good with seating and bins provided
Shading	4/10	Limited shading provided
Cleanliness	8/10	Cleanliness is really good with only small examples of litter
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no Graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Well maintained playing surfaces
Surveillance	9/10	Surrounded by residential housing making for really good natural surveillance
Lighting	2/10	Lighting is fairly poor
Total	67/100	

Table 5.36*5.45 Walking Path**5.46 Jungle Gym**5.47 Shading and play equipment**5.48 Surveillance from Housing*

Comments: Baxter St Park rated averagely when assessed against the criteria. There are both positive and negative aspects that can be identified with the park. The positive aspects of the park include firstly the cleanliness of the park. The park had relatively no litter and made the park seem more pristine, natural and more inviting. Secondly the playing surfaces were well maintained which allowed for safe usage of the facilities provided. Moreover considering the size of the park, it had a variety of facilities for physical activity including a walking path and a jungle gym. Surveillance was also a positive aspect, due to the fact it is

surrounded by residential houses, which increases casual surveillance of the park making it feel safer for residents and users.

There are several negative aspects which were observed as well. The first is that there is limited lighting provided in the park, which reduces safety for users if they choose to use the park in the late afternoon or at night. Moreover there is limited shading provided in the park which is not beneficial to residents who use the park in harsh weather.

5.4 Parks in Fairfield

Information Provision

Fairfield Council does an exceptional job in providing information to the residents who wish to know about the parks in the LGA. The council website provides a PDF document that lists all the parks in the LGA by suburb and in alphabetical order. Moreover the parks are divided between Local Parks and Neighborhood Parks and they also contain information about the facilities in each park. The Council chambers provide pamphlets that contain information about the location of parks in their LGA as well as parks that have been recently upgraded. This information is very beneficial to residents who wish to know about the location of the parks in their LGA.

Fairfield Council also provides interpreting services that assist residents from non-English speaking backgrounds obtain information from Council pertaining to any policies or information. This is very beneficial because it assists such residents in understanding Council processes and also helps residents from non-English speaking backgrounds integrate into the community.

Park 1: Oakdene Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility was good provided by a fairly wide and continuous footpath. Good for walkers but limited opportunity for cyclists
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking, provided only for cars on street, no provision for bike locks provided
Facilities for Physical Activity	4/10	For size of park there is limited range of facilities for physical activity. Only had a miniature jungle gym
Amenities	3/10	Limited amenities provided. Seating is exposed and amenities are in poor condition
Shading	6/10	There is good use of natural shading with the trees but limited shading over play areas or seating
Cleanliness	6/10	Park is relatively clean, but could be improved.
Graffiti	9/10	No graffiti
Playing Surfaces	7/10	Playing surfaces are in pretty good condition, but some sections are slippery or uneven
Surveillance	7/10	Fairly good surveillance provided but there are some sections blocked by large trees
Lighting	4/10	Limited lighting provided
Total	56/100	

Table 5.41



5.49 Jungle Gym



5.50 Seating



5.51 Playing Surfaces



5.52 Fenced boundaries

Comments: Oakdene Park was rated as being average against the criteria. There are some negative aspects that have been identified including; the amenities provided are very limited and are in poor condition. The seating and garbage bins are very run down and detract from the pleasantness of the park. Moreover the seating is exposed which does not help during harsh weather. Secondly the range of facilities provided is fairly limited. For the size of the park

providing only a swing set and a small slide for kids does not attract a variety of people to the park, more should be provided. Also there is limited parking for both cars and no bike locks provided for bicycles which is also detrimental for the park.

However there are also some positive aspects of the park that should be noted as well. Firstly there was relatively no graffiti seen, which helps with the aesthetic nature of the park. Playing surfaces are also in pretty good condition with only a few minor issues identified with some sections of the surfaces being a bit slippery and uneven. Surveillance is also pretty good with the natural surveillance provided from the surrounding residential properties, however sections of the park are bordered with fairly large trees which blocks the direct line of site from surrounding properties, making sections of the park secluded and unsafe.

Park 2: Nelson Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	9/10	Very good accessibility with connections to the park provided via a wide and unobstructed footpath as well as a direct path that connects the footpath to the park.
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking for both cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	For the size of the park the range of facilities is pretty good includes; jungle gym and walking path
Amenities	6/10	Amenities are okay includes seating and bins, but pretty poor condition
Shading	7/10	Shading is fairly good both natural and man made, but missing of key areas
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	9/10	No graffiti seen
Playing Surfaces	7/10	Fairly good condition but some sections of the walking path are cracked or uneven
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance is really good with park being surrounded by several residential flat buildings
Lighting	6/10	Okay but more could be implemented
Total	72/100	

Table 5.42



5.53 Wide footpath



5.54 Walking Path



5.55 Jungle gym & garbage bin



5.56 Surveillance from RFB

Comments: Nelson Park received an above average grade under the criteria. There are several positive aspects that have been identified from the park including; Accessibility to the park is very good. Access to the park is provided by both a long and continuous footpath adjacent to the park and the footpath directly links to the park to create a direct transition route from the footpath to the park. This is a good urban design example and provides a direct and safe access route to the park. Moreover for the size of the park the range of facilities provided is pretty good, includes a jungle gym and walking path allowing for a range of people to use the park.

The park has great natural surveillance also. It is surrounded by several residential flat buildings and walk up flats, and provides a direct line of natural surveillance from those buildings. This creates a good perception of safety and could assist with more people using the park.

However there are some aspects of the park that could be improved including; the parking which is fairly limited. There is limited parking provided for cars near the park and there is no bike locks provided for bicycles. The lack of parking could discourage residents from using the park. Moreover lighting is provided in the park but it is fairly limited and is not provided in key areas i.e. near play

equipment or along the walking path. Perhaps placing more lighting in those areas will assist with creating a safer park and bring more people to it.

Park 3: Fairfield Heights Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	9/10	Access is pretty good. Provided via wide, clear and unobstructed footpath that connects with the interlinks with the park
Parking Provisions	4/10	Limited parking for cars and bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	6/10	For size of park range of facilities if okay but there could be more
Amenities	5/10	Amenities provided are okay and include seats and bins but are exposed and need an upgrade
Shading	4/10	Limited shading provided
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	9/10	No Graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Surfaces are in good condition
Surveillance	9/10	Natural surveillance from surrounding properties is really good
Lighting	6/10	Lighting is provided but limited in key areas.
Total	70/100	

Table 5.43



5.57 Wide Footpath



5.58 Walking Path



5.59 Jungle Gym



5.60 Painted seats

Comments: Fairfield Heights Park rates averagely against the criteria with several positive and negative aspects identified. The positive aspects of the park include the accessibility. Access to the park is provided both via a long and continuous footpath which is beneficial to walker and cyclists. The footpath directly links with the paths in the park providing a direct transition from the street to the park, using good urban design techniques. The overall aesthetic nature of

the park is pretty good. The park is very clean and there is no graffiti seen, making it a pleasant place to be in. One interesting observation is the painted seating at the entrance to the park. The painted seats beautify the park and make residents feel more welcome when they enter.

However there are some aspects of the park that could be improved. The first aspect is the limited parking available for both cars and bicycles. Limited parking could be detrimental to the amount of residents who use the park. Moreover there is a lack of shading provided in key locations i.e. over play equipment and over seating. Finally the range of facilities provided for physical activity is okay but for the size of the park there could be more.

Park 4: Prospect View Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility to the park is okay and provided via wide and unobstructed footpath beneficial for walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking for both cars and bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	1/10	No variety of physical activity equipment
Amenities	5/10	Amenities are provided i.e. toilets, seating and bins but in extremely poor condition
Shading	1/10	Very limited shading provided
Cleanliness	6/10	Park is relatively clean but litter scattered near toilets and around the park
Graffiti	5/10	Large amounts of graffiti found on the toilets and on some seating
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Playing surfaces are in good condition
Surveillance	7/10	Surveillance is relatively okay from surrounding properties
Lighting	6/10	It is provided but it is limited
Total	50/100	

Table 5.44



5.61 No shading



5.62 Lighting



5.63 Graffiti



5.64 Toilet Block

Comments: Prospect View Park has ranked below average against the criteria. The negative aspects observed in the park far outweigh any positives. Firstly the prevalence of graffiti and litter around the park especially around the toilets detract from the aesthetic nature of the park and make the park feel unsafe. Moreover for the size of the park there is a very limited range of facilities for physical activity, only a soccer field is provided. The limited range will not attract a wide range of people to the park and make the park feel like a barren piece of space most days of the week. Moreover there is very limited shading provided over the playing surfaces, which is not beneficial to users during harsh weather. Parking is also very limited for both cars and bicycles, which could be detrimental for users who travel to the park this way and need somewhere to park or lock up their bike. Overall the park needs large improvements in many areas to make it feel like a park where people can come to and feel safe and participate in physical or recreational activity.

Park 5: Tasman Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility to the park is okay; provided via a wide and unobstructed footpath good for walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking provisions for both cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	5/10	Facilities provided okay for the size of the park
Amenities	4/10	Amenities provided but are limited includes seating and garbage bins
Shading	7/10	Good natural shading provided by the trees in the park
Cleanliness	6/10	Park is fairly clean but can be improved
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Surfaces are in good condition
Surveillance	9/10	Very good surveillance provided from surrounding properties
Lighting	3/10	Lighting is limited
Total	61/100	

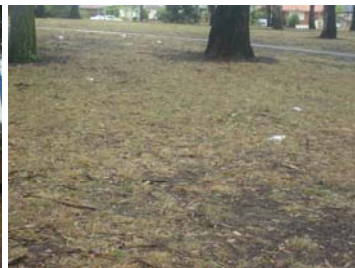
Table 5.45



5.65 Natural Shading



5.66 Jungle Gym



5.67 Litter and bad surfaces



5.68 Surveillance from Housing

Comments: Tasman Park marked averagely against the criteria. There are some positive and negative aspects identified through the observations. The positive aspects include the non existence of graffiti and overall cleanliness of the park making it an aesthetically pleasing park to be in. Secondly the natural surveillance provided by the surrounding residential properties is extremely beneficial and assist in improving perception of safety in the park. Moreover the good use of natural shading provided from the trees is also really beneficial to the users on days where there is harsh weather.

There are several negative aspects identified from the park as well. Firstly the limited parking provided for both cars and bicycles is not beneficial for residents who choose to cycle or drive to the park. Moreover for the size of the park itself it only provided a jungle gym for facilities to be physically active. This leaves large amounts of useless space in the park which could be filled with additional facilities for physical activity. Finally the lighting is fairly poor in the park and with the excessive shade provided from the trees, the parks looks very dark even during the day. This is detrimental to the safety of residents who choose to use the park at any time of the day.

Park 6: Cabra Vale Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility to the park is good and is provided via a wide and continuous footpath good for walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	6/10	Parking provisions are okay for cars but no bike locks for bicycle users
Facilities for Physical Activity	2/10	For the size of the park there is a very limited amount of facilities
Amenities	6/10	Amenities such as toilets, seating and bins are provided but are in poor condition
Shading	3/10	Limited shading provided
Cleanliness	0/10	Very unclean
Graffiti	8/10	No obvious examples of graffiti
Playing Surfaces	1/10	Very poor playing surfaces
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance is really good from surrounding residential and commercial properties
Lighting	6/10	Provided but limited in key locations.
Total	49/100	

Table 5.46



5.69 Muddy Surfaces



5.70 Litter



5.71 Walking Path



5.72 Surveillance from properties

Comments: Cabra Vale Park failed once assessed against the criteria. There is not much positives about the park that were identified except for the natural surveillance that is provided from the surrounding commercial and residential properties, and the accessibility to the park via the footpaths which is also beneficial.

However there are some overwhelmingly obvious negative aspects that have been identified including; the large amount of rubbish and litter on the surfaces of the park. This was an extreme detractor from the aesthetics of the park and does not encourage people to use them. Moreover the playing surfaces are extremely poor; they are not paved or even. The surfaces are extremely muddy and uneven and can be unsafe for users. Finally for the size of the park and the location in close proximity to large amounts of residential and commercial development, there are very limited facilities provided for physical activity. There is only a walking/cycling path that goes through the park. For the park to be more inviting to people perhaps more facilities could be added. Shading is also extremely limited which is not beneficial to users as well. Overall the park needs improvements in many areas if it is to be transformed into an attractive park for residents and users.

5.5 Parks in Holroyd

Information Provision:

Holroyd Council does a good job in providing residents in their LGA information about the availability and location of the parks in the LGA. The council website

provides residents with the list of parks in each suburb in the LGA. The web site lists the location and facilities available in each park. Moreover the council chambers provide residents with information pamphlets pertaining to the location of the parks in the LGA as well. The information is beneficial to all residents who wish to know the location of the closest park and the facilities they provide.

Council also provides an interpreter service which can assist residents from non-English speaking background to understand the information disseminated by the council. This is beneficial to these residents because it gives them the opportunity to understand what is going on within their LGA and assists them with better integrating into their neighborhood.

Park 1: King Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	6/10	Accessibility to the park is okay. However footpaths are not wide enough adjacent to the park which is detrimental to walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	5/10	Limited on street parking for cars but none provided for cyclists
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Variety of facilities for physical activity if okay and includes jungle gym and footy field
Amenities	9/10	Amenities are really good, include bins, seating, water fountains and toilets
Shading	0/10	No shading provided
Cleanliness	7/10	Park is relatively clean but there are certain aspects of litter near toilets
Graffiti	7/10	Limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Playing surfaces really good
Surveillance	8/10	Surveillance is really good, surrounded by residential flats and houses
Lighting	9/10	Excellent lighting provided over playing surfaces and near toilets
Total	66/100	

Table 5.51



5.73 Toilet Block



5.74 Jungle Gym and Ball



5.75 Bin



5.76 Water fountain

Comments: King Park rated average against the criteria. There were both positive and negative aspects that were identifiable. The most prominent positive aspect would have to be the range of amenities provided. The amenities include toilets, seating, bins and for the first time a water fountain to drink from. The amenities are in good condition and add to the aesthetics of the park. The playing surfaces are also in good condition which is beneficial. Moreover the natural surveillance of the park is really good with the park being surrounded by residential flats and houses allowing for a direct line of site to the park. Lighting was also a good feature of the park because it is provided over key locations in the park i.e. over playing surfaces and around the toilets. This is beneficial to residents because it will improve their perception of safety when they use the park during the later hours of the day. One aspect that really stood out was the colorful large sphere near the children's playground. The sphere will attract children to the playground and it is a great urban design technique.

There are also some notable negative aspects to the park as well. Firstly the access to the park could be detrimental to walkers and cyclists due to the fact that the footpaths adjacent to the park are not that wide and don't clearly separate walkers and cyclists from oncoming cars. Moreover shading was non-existent in the park, and being such a large space there should be elements provided over key areas i.e. over seating or the playground.

Park 2: Benaut St Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	2/10	Accessibility to the park is fairly poor, footpaths are in poor condition and are not beneficial for walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking provisions for cars and bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Facilities provided include a jungle gym and a walking path for the size of the park it is okay
Amenities	7/10	Amenities provided include seating and garbage bins
Shading	0/10	No shading provided
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean no litter anywhere
Graffiti	9/10	Very limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Playing surfaces in really good conditions
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance from surrounding residential housing is really good as well
Lighting	2/10	Limited lighting provided especially over key areas i.e. over play equipment
Total	57/100	

Table 5.52



5.77: Wide but uneven footpath



5.78 Jungle gym



5.79 No shading



5.80 Seating

Comments: Benaut St Park rated below average when assessed against the criteria. There were several positive and negative aspects that were identified. The first positive aspect that could be clearly identified would have to be the level of cleanliness and the lack of graffiti in the park. The cleanliness and lack of graffiti contribute to the pleasantness of the park and make it more inviting for residents. Moreover for the size of the park the variety of facilities available for physical activity are okay. The park provides a walking/cycling path as well as a jungle gym for kids. The amenities provided considering its size is also positive.

The park provides seating and bins. Seating is also provided in key location i.e. near play equipment which is beneficial to the elderly and parents who watch their children play on the jungle gym.

Conversely there are several notable negative aspects that were identified. The first being the lack of both natural and man made shading especially over key areas i.e. over seating or play equipment. Moreover there is limited parking provided for both cars and bikes. Finally lighting is fairly weak in the park as well and could be provided in key areas particularly near the playground to improve safety.

Park 3: Kippax Reserve

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	8/10	Accessibility to the park is pretty good and is provided by a wide, clear and unobstructed footpath.
Parking Provisions	5/10	Parking provided on street for cars but none provided for bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	5/10	Very limited range of facilities and only provide a small walking path, and jungle gym
Amenities	2/10	Limited amenities i.e. seating and garbage bin but in poor condition
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	0/10	Not clean litter on the grass and on playground surfaces
Graffiti	8/10	Limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	4/10	Walking paths fairly uneven and cracked and playground surfaces also cracked and uneven
Surveillance	3/10	Park is elevated above surrounding housing so natural surveillance is poor
Lighting	0/10	No lighting
Total	35/100	

Table 5.53



5.81 Walking Path



5.82 Wide footpath



5.83 Litter on floor



5.84 Jungle gym

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Kippax Reserve failed. There are several obvious negative aspects that were easily identifiable. The first being the park was very dirty with loose newspapers and food scraps scattered all over the park. Moreover there was no shading provided at all in the park especially when it could be used around the playground. The amenities provided were very minimal and included one seat and a bin. However they were in poor condition and could be upgraded. The lack of lighting is also another notable issue. The lack of lighting deters residents from using the park during the late afternoon and it can decrease an individuals perception of safety. Overall this park failed in most of the criteria and needs some improvements if it is to encourage residents to use it.

However small there were some positive aspects identified with the park. Accessibility to the park is provided via a long and unobstructed footpath which is beneficial to walkers and cyclists. The footpath directly links with the walking path in the park which provides a direct transition from the street to the park. Moreover there was relatively no graffiti which helps slightly improve the aesthetics of the park.

Park 4: Bathurst St Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility to the park is fairly good and is provided by a wide, ling and unobstructed footpath, beneficial to walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	7/10	Parking provisions for cars both on and off street but no bike locks
Facilities for Physical Activity	10/10	Wide variety of physical activity facilities including, jungle gym, tennis court, walking path and cricket pitch
Amenities	9/10	Amenities provided really good include toilets, seating and bins
Shading	3/10	Limited shading over seating but none over play areas
Cleanliness	7/10	Park is relatively clean with only few bits of litter
Graffiti	9/10	Limited graffiti
Playing Surfaces	6/10	Playing surfaces in fairly good condition
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance from surrounding shops and houses very beneficial
Lighting	9/10	Lighting is really good especially over playing surfaces
Total	76/100	

Table 5.54*5.85 Wide Footpath**5.86 Jungle Gym**5.87 Tennis Court*

Comment: Bathurst St Park was assessed as been above average against the criteria. There are many positive aspects that can be identified. The primary positive would have to be the range of facilities for physical activity that are provided in the park. There is a jungle gym for kids, walking paths, tennis court and a cricket pitch. With these wide variety of facilities the park it can attract a diverse demographic of people to participate in the park and be physically active. Secondly the amenities provided are really well maintained and are in optimum locations. The park provides seating, garbage bins and toilets all within close proximity to key play areas making it easier for the people using the park. The park is also very clean and relatively graffiti free which enhances the beauty of the park and makes it more inviting. Moreover lighting is used over key play

areas which are beneficial to the parks users in the later hours of the afternoon and night.

There were not many negative aspects that could be identified but some which stood out include; shading. There was very limited shading provided in key areas of the park i.e. over seating or play areas which could be detrimental to users during sunny days or harsher weather. A minor issue would also have to be the lack of parking provisions for bicycles. There was no bike locks provided at the park which could deter people from cycling to the park and encourage them to drive.

Park 5: Darling St Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	4/10	Access is provided at the end of a cul-de-sac which limited access via footpaths and not beneficial for walkers or cyclists
Parking Provisions	7/10	Parking provided for cars but none for bikes
Facilities for Physical Activity	4/10	Park provides a football field and a walking path, but for the size more should be included
Amenities	6/10	Amenities provided include seating, toilets, bins and water bubblers, but in bad condition
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	5/10	Some parts are clean and other are fairly dirty
Graffiti	3/10	Graffiti on seats and near toilets
Playing Surfaces	2/10	Playing surfaces in poor condition
Surveillance	2/10	Limited surveillance because park is secluded
Lighting	8/10	Lighting is good over key areas i.e. footy field
Total	41/100	

Table 5.55



5.88 Water Fountain



5.89 Football field



5.90 Graffiti on seating



5.91 Car Park

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Darling St Park failed. There are several noticeable aspects of the park that need to be improved to enhance the aesthetic quality and encourage people to use it. The first would be the lack of a variety of facilities for physical activity. For such a large park there is only a footy field that is in fairly poor condition. Moreover the park is accessed via a cul-de-sac which limits safe access via the footpath for both cyclists and walkers. The amenities provided are enough and include toilets, seating, bins and water fountains, but they are in poor condition and have graffiti on some of them. This is detrimental to the beauty of the park and can reduce the perception of safety of some users.

The park is also very secluded and there are no direct lines of site from residential housing in close proximity or adjoining paths. This is a safety element that needs to be addressed for residents to feel safer in the park, if they using it in by themselves or in the later hours of the day.

There is one positive aspect to the park that should be noted. The lighting provided over playing surfaces and at key locations such as the toilets does create an element of safety and is beneficial for people who use the parks at night.

Park 6: Kootingal St Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	8/10	Access is good and is provided via a long unobstructed footpath
Parking Provisions	3/10	Limited parking for cars and bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	For the size of the park facilities provided are good, include walking path and jungle gym
Amenities	3/10	Limited amenities
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	8/10	Very clean with limited litter
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti
Playing Surfaces	6/10	In fairly good condition but some section are uneven and slippery
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance from surrounding residential housing is really good
Lighting	7/10	For the size of the park lighting provided is good
Total	60/100	

Table 5.56



5.92 Wide Footpath



5.93 Walking Path



5.94 Jungle Gym



5.95 Lighting in Park

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Kootingal St Park was below average. There are some positive and negative aspects of the park that are worthy of noting. Firstly the positive aspects include access to the park is really good. The park can be accessed via long continuous footpaths that directly inter links with the walking path in the park. This is beneficial for walkers and cyclists providing a direct transition route from the street to the park. Considering the size of the park the range of facilities provided is really good and includes a walking path and a jungle gym. The park is also very clean with relatively no graffiti obvious. This makes the park more inviting to residents and enhances the parks

beauty. Surveillance from the surrounding dwellings is really good as well. The dwellings have a clear and unobstructed line of site to the park which increases perception of safety.

However there are some negative aspects that have been identified and are worthy of noting. The first would have to be the lack of shading in the park especially over play equipment. Moreover the parking provisions are fairly poor as well with limited parking provided for cars and no bike locks provided for residents who choose to cycle to the park.

5.6 Parks in Parramatta

Information Provision:

Parramatta Council does a really good job in providing residents with information about the location of parks in the LGA. On the council website the parks in the LGA are listed in alphabetical order. Each park has a picture attached to it to show the facilities available in the park. The coordinates of the parks are also provided in accordance with the UBD street directory which is beneficial for residents who wish to locate the park. The council chambers also provide pamphlets about the location of parks in their LGA as well. The information provided by Parramatta Council is very effective and gives residents the opportunity to know the locations of every park in the LGA if they wish to use them.

Additionally Council provides an interpretation service which assists residents from non-English speaking backgrounds understand the information disseminated by the Council. This service is beneficial to these residents because it gives them the opportunity and ability to understand what is going on in their LGA.

Park 1: Granville Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	9/10	Access to the park is pretty good via a wide and long footpath good for cyclists and walkers
Parking Provisions	7/10	Parking for cars provided on and off street however no bike locks for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	5/10	For the size of the park there is only a cricket pitch and a walking path, could use more
Amenities	6/10	Amenities such as seating, bins and toilets provided but in poor condition
Shading	2/10	Limited shading
Cleanliness	4/10	Park is not really clean, there is litter in most sections of the park, however walking path is clean
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti
Playing Surfaces	6/10	Surfaces are okay but could be improved
Surveillance	10/10	Excellent surveillance from surrounding dwellings and adjacent walking path
Lighting	9/10	Lighting over playing surfaces is good
Total	67/100	

Table 5.61



5.96 Wet Playing Surfaces



5.97 No Shading



5.98 Walking Path



5.99 Cricket Pitch

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Granville Park was deemed average. There are both positive and negative aspects to the park that have been identified. Firstly the positive aspects of the park include accessibility. Access to the park is provided via a long a wide footpath that is safe for walkers and cyclists. The footpath directly link with the walking/cycling path in the park which gives users a direct transition into the park from the street. The park did not have any graffiti noticeable which is beneficial to the overall aesthetics of the park and peoples perception of safety. Moreover the surveillance provided from

adjoining dwellings is also beneficial. The dwelling houses surrounding the park are provided with a direct line of site to the park increasing surveillance and assisting in improving user's perception of safety.

There are also several negative aspects that were identified and they include; the lack of shading provided over key areas in the park especially over playing surfaces or over seating. The range of physical activity equipment is also limited considering the size of the park. There is only a cricket pitch provided when there a large amount of open space available to place more facilities in. The lack of facilities will not attract as many people to the park, which is detrimental to it becoming an active space.

Park 2: Guildford Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility is pretty good. Park can be accessed via a long and unobstructed footpath, which is beneficial to walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited parking provided for cars and no bike locks provided
Facilities for Physical Activity	8/10	Range of facilities provided are really good and include a jungle gym, soccer field and basketball court
Amenities	3/10	Amenities provided include toilet, seating and bins but are in poor condition
Shading	0/10	No shading provided
Cleanliness	4/10	Park has some bad litter problems especially around the soccer field and basketball court
Graffiti	10/10	No graffiti
Playing Surfaces	3/10	Playing surfaces are also in bad condition
Surveillance	2/10	Natural surveillance not possible
Lighting	8/10	Lighting is good over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and toilets
Total	47/100	

Table 5.62



5.100 Wide Footpath



5.101 No shading



5.102 Jungle gym



5.103 Bad Surveillance

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Guildford Park failed. There are several negative aspects that have been identified and they include; the amenities provided. The amenities available include toilets, seating and bins but they are in really poor condition and need upgrading. The seating is exposed and has been damaged which is not beneficial to the users of the park. Secondly there is no shading provided over any area in the park especially over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and seating. This would be detrimental to users during harsher weather. Playing surfaces are also in fairly poor condition. The soccer field is muddy and slippery and is unsafe to use. The playground and basketball surfaces are cracked and uneven and could be detrimental to users. Finally natural surveillance is not possible in the park, due to the fact that the park is facing the back of industrial warehouses with no windows on one side, a large concrete wall for a road over bridge on another and a train line on the other side. This does not allow a direct line of site into the park and as it could effect the users perception of safety.

Conversely there were some positive aspects identified with the park as well. Firstly it would have to be the range of facilities provided for physical activity. The park includes a soccer field, a jungle gym and a basketball court. The range of facilities can attract a wide range of users to the park which is beneficial. Moreover the lighting provided in the park is also pretty good. Lighting is provided over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and toilets. This is beneficial to ensure safety of park users during the late afternoon hours or at night.

Park 3: Bright Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Accessibility to the park is pretty good and is provided via a long continuous footpath that is beneficial to walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	2/10	Limited parking for cars and none provided for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	For size of the park the range of facilities provided is pretty good and include a jungle gym and walking path
Amenities	2/10	Limited amenities
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	4/10	A lot of graffiti on the fences bordering the park and on some seating
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Surfaces in really good condition
Surveillance	6/10	Surveillance is okay but some lines of site blocked by fencing and trees
Lighting	0/10	No lighting
Total	46/100	

Table 5.63



5.104 Walking Path



5.105 Seating & Bins



5.106 No shading



5.107 Graffiti on fence boundary

Comment: When assessed against the criteria Bright Park failed. There are several negative aspects of the park that have been identified including; the poor quality of amenities provided in the park. The seating and bins provided are limited and are in poor condition, which detracts from the beauty of the park. Secondly the lack of shading was also identified as an issue. The lack of shading over key areas i.e. over play areas and seating could have a negative effect on the users of the park, if and when they decide to use the park during harsh weather. Moreover there were several examples of graffiti in the park that

detracted from the aesthetics of the park and could reduce the perception of safety of residents. Finally the lack of lighting also impacts the safety of the park. The lack of lighting over key areas i.e. over play equipment could help improve and alleviate any safety issues residents might have if they choose to use the park later in the day.

There were several positive aspects identified with the park as well. The first being the overall cleanliness of the park, the absence of litter and garbage improves the beauty of the park and makes it more inviting to residents. Moreover the playing surfaces are in really good condition, this helps with reducing any safety issues that might arise with unsafe playing surfaces and makes the park more usable and inviting for residents.

Park 4: Harry Gapes Reserve

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	4/10	Accessibility to the park is fairly unsafe. Footpath is not wide enough and no clear and unobstructed path to the park for walkers and cyclists
Parking Provisions	5/10	Parking provisions provided for cars but none for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	2/10	For size of the park the range of facilities provided are minimal and include a cricket pitch and walking/cycling path
Amenities	7/10	Amenities are fairly good and include seating, toilets and bins.
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti observed
Playing Surfaces	8/10	Playing surfaces are in good condition
Surveillance	3/10	Surveillance is lacking because park is fenced off and no direct line of site
Lighting	7/10	Lighting provided is good, but slightly lacking over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and toilets
Total	54/100	

Table 5.64



5.108 Walking Path



5.109 No Shading



5.110 Fenced boundary



5.111 Toilet Block

Comment: When assessed against the criteria Harry Gapes Reserve was graded as below average. There were a range of positive and negative aspects that were identified as part of the assessment. The negative aspects include the lack of facilities for physical activity. The park facilities include a cricket pitch and a walking path. Considering the size of the park the range of facilities are limited and will not attract a diverse range of people to the park. There was also a lack of shading which is detrimental to the users of the park during harsh weather. Surveillance of the park is fairly poor as well. The borders of the park are fenced off with no direct line of site from the surrounding dwellings into the park. This could decrease the perception of safety for residents and could reduce the level of usage of the park.

Conversely there are some positive aspects that have been identified with the park as well. Firstly the park is very clean, and relatively graffiti free. This improves the aesthetics of the park and makes it more inviting for residents. Moreover the playing surfaces are in really good condition, which enhances the beauty of the park and eliminates any safety concerns that might arise from unsafe playing surfaces.

Park 5: John Irving Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	7/10	Access to the park is pretty good and is provided through a wide footpath. However few visual barriers along the way
Parking Provisions	6/10	Parking provided on street for cars but no bike locks
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Being such a small park the facilities provided are good and include a jungle gym
Amenities	5/10	Amenities provided are okay and include a seat and a bin but are in pretty bad condition
Shading	0/10	No shading
Cleanliness	9/10	Park is very clean
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Surfaces are really good
Surveillance	9/10	Surveillance from surrounding residential housing good as well
Lighting	3/10	Lighting is very limited
Total	64/100	

Table 5.65



5.112 Jungle Gym



5.113 Seating



5.114 Good grass



5.115 Surveillance from houses

Comment: When assessed against the criteria John Irving Park was deemed to be average. There were a few positive and negative aspects that were identified. Firstly the positive aspects include the level of cleanliness and lack of graffiti in the park. The park was very clean with relatively no rubbish on the floors or play equipment and there was no graffiti to be seen. This contributes positively to the beauty of the park and makes it more inviting to residents. Secondly the playing surfaces in the park were in really good condition. The good surfaces enhance the beauty of the park and make it more enticing for the residents to use.

Moreover the natural surveillance of the park provided by the surrounding dwellings is really good. There is a direct line of site from most dwellings into the park making it a safer park to be in.

However there were some negative aspects that were identified with the park as well. The most obvious negative would be the lack of shading present in the park. There is no man made or natural shelter provided in the park, especially over key areas i.e. over playground or seating. Secondly the lack of lighting in the park especially over key areas is also detrimental. The lack of lighting can reduce the perception of safety of residents and could lead to them not using the park during in the afternoons or during the later hours of the day.

Park 6: Noller Park

Criteria	Grade /10	Comment
Accessibility	8/10	Accessibility to the park is really good and is provided via wide and continuous footpaths adjacent to the park
Parking Provisions	5/10	Parking is provided on street for cars but no provisions for bicycles
Facilities for Physical Activity	7/10	Considering that the park is a small one, the range of facilities provided are good and include a jungle gym and walking path
Amenities	6/10	The amenities provided are okay and include seating and bins but could use more
Shading	2/10	Limited natural shading provided but no shading over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and seating
Cleanliness	8/10	Park is really clean
Graffiti	9/10	Relatively no graffiti
Playing Surfaces	9/10	Surfaces in good condition
Surveillance	10/10	Surveillance is really good as well. Provided by surrounding residential flats and dwellings
Lighting	2/10	Limited lighting
Total	66/100	

Table 5.66



5.116 Jungle gym



5.117 Walking Path



5.118 Surveillance from RFB



5.119 *Wide footpath*

Comments: When assessed against the criteria Noller Park was deemed to be average. There were both positive and negative aspects identified. Firstly the positive aspects identified include; the accessibility to the park. Access to the park is provided by a long, wide and unobstructed footpath. This allows walkers and cyclists to have a clear and safe access to the park which is beneficial. Moreover the footpath directly links to the walking/cycling path in the park creating a direct transition from the street to the park. This is a great urban design technique and is also a good method of safe access for users. The park is also very clean and relatively graffiti free which enhances the beauty of the park and makes it more appealing to users. Moreover the natural surveillance provided from surrounding residential flat buildings and dwelling houses is exceptional. There is a direct line of site enhances the safety of park users and encourages better use of the park.

However there were some negative aspects identified with the park as well. Firstly the lack of shading over key areas such as seating and play equipment is an aspect that needs to be improved to assist users of the park during harsh weather. Secondly the lack of lighting in the park is another aspect that needs to be improved. The lack of lighting over play equipment or in key areas in the park make the park feel unsafe and will not help users during late afternoon or at night.



Chapter 6: Findings. Recommendations & Final Comments

6.1 Findings

Accessibility: The results for accessibility was fairly one sided with 26 parks scoring 5/10 or higher and only four parks scoring 4/10 or below. This result shows that the majority of the parks have adequate provisions when it comes to providing safe access routes to the parks. The majority of the parks studied had a wide, clear and continuous footpath which separates pedestrians from oncoming traffic making it beneficial to walk and cycle on.

There were three parks that achieved the highest score of 9/10 due to the fact that the accessibility routes to the park were really good. The parks that received such a score include Nelson Park, Granville Park and Fairfield Heights Park. These parks mentioned were able to provide wide clear and unobstructed footpaths on both sides of the street allowing of the safe access to the park for walkers and cyclists. Moreover these parks also were able to provide a smooth transition from the footpath to the park by connecting bicycle/walking paths to the park. This is a great design technique and allows a direct and unobstructed movement from the street to the park.

Conversely there was one park, Benaut Street Park that achieved the lowest score of two due to the fact that the accessibility routes provided were unsafe. The footpaths adjacent to the park were obstructed by power lines and trees which made a direct line of site impossible. Moreover the footpath was uneven and cracked which does not make it safe for walkers or cyclists. Finally unlike the parks that rated highly this park does not provide a clear connection from the footpath to the park which also did not work in its favor.

Parking Provisions: Results obtained for this standard of parking provisions was fairly divided, with 16 parks scoring 5/10 or higher and 14 parks scoring 4/10 or lower. These results showed that the majority of the parks studied provided adequate on street and off street parking for cars but very rarely were there bike locks or provisions made for bike users to lock up their bikes.

These findings are justified by the fact that the highest score achieved under this criteria was 7/10. This mark was achieved by four parks which were; Bathurst St Park, Darling St Park, Granville Park and Steven Folkes Reserve. These parks received such a grading because firstly they provided more than adequate on street and off street parking for cars and they also provided some areas of the park in which a bike can be locked up. But the parking provisions for bikes were very limited in these parks along with the majority of the parks studied.

There were six parks that were studied that received the lowest grading of 2/10. These parks were Coleman Park, Friends Park, Arthur Park, Mt Lewis Reserve, Bright Park and Guildford Park. These parks received such a grading because the provision for parking for both cars and bicycles was very limited. All these parks mentioned did not provide avenues for either cars or bikes to be secured so residents could use the park. This is not beneficial to people who choose to drive or cycle to the park because the limited parking could deter them from using the park facilities.

Facilities for Physical Activity: The results obtained for this standard was fairly one sided with 23 parks achieving a score of 5/10 or higher and only 7 receiving a grade of 4/10 or lower. These results show that the majority of the parks studied did manage to provide a varied range of facilities to meet the needs of a wide range of users in terms of physical activity.

There two parks that were studied that deserved a mention for the positive aspects in terms providing a range of facilities for physical activity and they are; Bathurst Street Park and Guilfoyle Park. Firstly Bathurst Street Park provides a variety of facilities that can cater for a diverse range of people. The facilities provided include a jungle gym, tennis court, cricket pitch and a walking path. All these facilities are in working order and are why the park scored a 10/10 under this criteria. Similarly Guilfoyle Park provides a variety of facilities that has the potential to attract a wide demographic to the park. The facilities provided include; a jungle gum, cricket pitch, rugby field, basketball courts and netball courts. Much like Bathurst Street Park all the facilities are in working order and are the reason why the park scored a 9/10 under this criteria.

Conversely there were several parks that rated fairly poorly under this standard, due to the fact that the range of facilities provided were minimal and there was opportunity for more. Three parks received a grade of 2/10 or lower when assessed for the range of facilities provided and they were; Prospect View Park,

Cabra Vale Park and Harry Gapes Reserve. These parks mentioned provided a very minimal range of facilities. The lack of facilities is detrimental because these parks will not attract a wide variety of users compared to the parks that rated highly.

Amenities: The results obtained when the case studies were assessed for the amenities they provide were fairly one sided with 22 of the parks receiving a grade of 5/10 or higher and only 8 parks receiving a grade of 4/10 or lower. This overall result shows that the majority of the parks studied provide a suitable amount of amenities in fairly good condition.

There were four parks that rated highly in terms of the amenities provided due to the fact that the amenities such as seating, rubbish bins, toilets and water fountains were located in key locations in the park i.e. near play equipment or playgrounds or under shading and were in good condition. The four parks that received the highest score of 9/10 were; Civic Park, Northcote Reserve, King Park and Bathurst St Park. All these parks provided good quality amenities in key locations.

Conversely there were three parks that received the lowest score of 2/10. These parks received such a score because the amenities provided were minimal, not in key locations and were in bad condition. The parks were; Guilfoyle Park, Kippax Reserve and Bright Park. These park's amenities were very limited and some seating and garbage bins were old and needed an upgrade. The poor quality of the amenities detracts from the pleasantness of the park and does not encourage residents to use them.

Shading: The results that were obtained when the case studies were assessed against the shading standard were uneven with 23 parks receiving a score of 4/10 or lower and only 7 parks receiving a score of 5/10 or higher. This standard

was where the majority of the case studies fared the worst, due to the fact that many of the parks provided limited or no shading whatsoever.

From the 23 parks that received a score of 4/10 or lower an overwhelming 14 of them received a score of 0/10. The primary reason as to why a score of 0/10 was obtained was due to the fact that the 14 parks provided no shading at all be it natural or man made. The lack of shading is detrimental to all users of the park especially in times of harsh weather i.e. heat or heavy rain. It is important that provisions or policies are initiated to increase the level of shade in the parks.

On the other hand there were two parks that received the highest score of 9/10 and they were Civic Park and Northcote Reserve. Both these parks were able to utilise both man made and natural shading and provide it over key areas in the park i.e. over seating, along walking paths or over playground equipment. The good use of shading makes the stay in the park more pleasant and provides a shady place to relax for everyone when using the park.

Cleanliness: When the case studies were assessed for the standard of cleanliness the results obtained were one sided with 26 parks achieving a score of 5/10 or higher and only 4 parks receiving a score of 4/10 or lower. The one sided results presents a positive picture in terms of cleanliness for the case studies, showing that a large number of the parks are well maintained and free from litter.

Many parks rated very high in terms of cleanliness with 12 parks receiving the highest score of 9/10. The parks received this grade because all surfaces of the parks were free from litter and other rubbish especially in key areas i.e. near play equipment, on grass and near toilets. The overall level of cleanliness adds to the beauty of the park and makes it a more inviting place to be.

Conversely there were two parks that received the lowest possible score of 0/10 and they were Cabra Vale Park and Kippax Reserve. These parks received such a grade due to the fact that they were extremely dirty. Both parks had garbage bins overflowing allowing the rubbish to be blown on the park surfaces by the wind. Secondly the amount of litter near play equipment or on grass surfaces was exorbitant and would not allow for a pleasant stay in the park. Moreover the large amount of rubbish in both parks was letting off a distinctly poor odor which will not attract many people to the park.

Graffiti: When the case studies were assessed against the standard of graffiti the results obtained were one sided with 28 parks receiving a score of 5/10 or higher and only 2 parks receiving a score of 4/10 or lower. The overwhelmingly one sided results show that the majority of the parks studied had limited graffiti in any area of the park, which meant that the overall beauty of the parks could be maintained and users can have an increased perception safety.

From the 28 parks that received a grade of 5/10 or higher an amazing 18 received a score of 9/10 or 10/10. These large numbers show that the presence and occurrence of graffiti is under control in the majority of the parks studied.

However the two parks that did not receive a score higher than 4/10 were Bright Park and Grandin Park. Both these parks had an excessive graffiti problem with a lot of it on play equipment, seating and toilets. The presence of graffiti in these parks made the park feel unsafe and detracted from the overall natural beauty of it.

Surfaces: The results obtained after the case studies were assessed against this standard was once again one sided, with 26 parks receiving a mark of 5/10 or higher and only 4 receiving a mark of 4/10 or below. The results portray a positive picture and shows that the majority of the case studies receiving a grade

of 5 or higher mean that the parks are providing residents with well maintained and safe playing surfaces.

From the 26 parks that received a grade of 5/10 or higher 13 parks received the highest score of 9/10. A score of 9/10 shows that the parks provide safe and well maintained playing surfaces for the users to enjoy in the park. Moreover maintaining surfaces enhances the beauty of the park and makes it a more pleasant place to be.

On the other hand of the four parks that received a score of 4/10 or lower three parks received a score lower than 2/10. These parks are Cabra Vale Park, Darling St Park and Guildford Park. These three parks had really poor playing surfaces. The grass was very fairly muddy and is not pleasant and could be unsafe. Moreover the parks concrete surfaces are cracked and uneven making it unsafe to walk ride on. It is important for both safety and aesthetics that the surfaces of the parks are maintained in good condition.

Surveillance: The results obtained after the case studies were assessed against this standard were one sided with 24 parks receiving a score of 5/10 or higher and 6 parks receiving a score of 4/10 or below. The overall marks show that many of the parks studied are designed and located to enable maximum surveillance from surrounding premises and other users.

From the 24 parks that received a mark of 5/10 or higher four received the highest score of 10/10 and they were; Lidcombe Remembrance Park, Friends Park, Granville Park and Noller Park. All these parks were located and designed to allow for the maximum possible natural surveillance from the surrounding residential or commercial premises. All the parks faced countless windows or balconies from surrounding premises allowing for the best possible natural surveillance. Moreover these parks also were able to locate and design facilities within the park to allow for the best natural surveillance from other park users.

The optimum natural surveillance increases perception of safety and allows users to feel more comfortable when using the park.

Conversely there were three parks that received a score of 2/10 or lower and they were Steven Folkes Reserve, Darling St Park and Guildford Park. The issues that arose from these parks are that the location of the park was not at all beneficial to allow for proper surveillance of the park. All these parks were secluded set away from the street and surrounding properties or faced the large walls of adjoining factories. This results in a lack of natural surveillance because it does not allow for a direct line of site from surrounding properties into the park. Moreover the overall design of the parks does not allow for the surveillance of the park from other users. These negative elements can reduce the perception of safety of the park users.

Lighting: When the case studies were assessed against the standard of lighting the results obtained were fairly uneven with 19 parks receiving a score of 5/10 or higher and 11 receiving a score of 4/10 or below. The overall results show that the majority of the parks studied do attempt to provide adequate lighting in the parks especially over key areas i.e. playing surfaces and toilets.

From the 19 parks that received a score of 5/10 or higher five received the highest score of 9/10 and they were; Guilfoyle Park, Steven Folkes Reserve, King Park, Bathurst St Park and Granville Park. All these parks were able to place suitable and efficient lighting in key areas of the park i.e. over playing surface or near toilet blocks. The provision of good lighting allows for residents to feel safer if and when they choose to use the park and its facilities during the late hours of the day.

Moreover from the 11 parks that received a score of 4/10 or below three parks received the lowest score of 0/10 and they were Grandin Park, Kippax Reserve and Bright Park. It was obvious that there was no provision of lighting at all in

these parks which is detrimental to users if and when they choose to use the park during the late hours of the afternoon or at night.

Information Provision: Overall every Local Council in the Central West Sydney region does a pretty good job of providing residents with information in relation to the location and facilities provided in their parks. All of the Councils provide clear information on their website pertaining to the location and facilities provided in the parks located in their LGA. Often the parks are listed in alphabetical order or listed by suburb to ensure easy navigation and allow people to quickly obtain the information they want.

Moreover the majority of the Councils provide interpretive services to assist residents from non-English speaking backgrounds obtain information about what is happening within Council that could be affecting them.

6.2 Overall Findings

When all the results were collated the overall average score was 60.3/100. The LGA which received the highest and most promising results was the Auburn LGA, with the total of all the park results added up equaling 392. While the LGA which received the lowest score once all the case study results were added was the Holroyd LGA with a total score of 335.

There were four parks that received a score of 75/100 or higher and they were; Lidcombe Remembrance Park with 76/100, Civic Park with a score of 76/100, Bathurst St Park with 76/100 and finally Northcote Reserve with 75/100. All these parks marked fairly highly on all the ten standards. Each of them had a lot more positive aspects than negative and out of the thirty case studies these four showed the greatest potential of becoming Active Parks under the foundation of this study.

Conversely there were five parks that failed when assessed against the criteria meaning they received a score of 49/100 or below and they are Cabra Vale Park with a score of 49/100, Guildford Park with a score of 47/100, Bright Park with a score of 46/100, Darling St Park with a score of 41/100 and Kippax Reserve with a score of 35/100. All these parks did not rate highly against much of the standards they were assessed against and need a lot more work to become Active Parks under the premise of this study.

6.3 Limitations to Research

The method to which this research was conducted does have certain limitations. Firstly the Central West Sydney region is extremely large in area with many parks. Therefore thirty parks will not necessarily provide an overall impression of the ability of the parks in the region to be Active Parks.

Choosing thirty parks at random could mean that more bad parks than good parks could have been chosen as case studies or vice versa, which could provide one sided results and not provide a definite conclusion as to the ability of the parks to meet the Active Park philosophy.

Moreover the time of day and year that the photos were taken could have influenced some of the results as well. Due to the fact that some parks provide additional facilities in parks during winter/autumn seasons than summer/spring season which is when the photos were taken and the case studies assessed.

6.4 Recommendations

Knowing the limitations to the research it would be inappropriate to provide possible recommendations for the entire Central West Sydney region. However it is possible to acknowledge from the case studies some overwhelming issues that have arisen from the case study research and provide some viable recommendations.

The first real issue that has arisen from the large majority of parks studied is the lack of bike locks or suitable areas in the parks studied to lock up a bike. Therefore it would be a realistic solution for the local councils in the region to implement policies or make provisions that will aim at providing cost effective and suitable bike locks or bike racks in the parks of the region to assist users who ride to the park and stay. The RTA in the publishing of the NSW Bicycle Guidelines has shown a possible solution. The guidelines are aimed at promoting cycling amongst pedestrians by improving bicycle parking at key public transport interchanges. The guidelines provide a solution as to how many parking facilities are needed based on usage (Authority, 2008).

This method could be transplanted to the parks in the Central West Sydney region. Each Local Council in the region can implement similar Bicycle Guidelines for the parks in the region and provide bike parking facilities as needed in each park based on usage and location.

The lack of shading was a consistent issue with the overwhelming majority of the parks studied. Overall there was a lack of man made or natural shading utilised in the parks studied. The lack of shading is detrimental to the users of the park especially children who enjoy the park facilities. With this known it is important that shading either natural or man made is increased. Providing shade structures over key areas in the park i.e. over playing surfaces and over seating can reduce the impact of harsh weather on users.

The NSW State Government and subsidiary organizations does provide funding to Local Governments to assist in improving the Local Parks in their LGA. But as indicated by the individuals interviewed from Fairfield and Auburn Council along with the evidence obtained from literature studied this funding is usually minimal and does not allow the Councils to provide the optimum solutions possible. Therefore it is important that the State Government increase the amount of

funding or grants to assist local Councils in providing the best possible open space for their residents.

Finally some of the Local Councils in the region to have certain programs that attempt to encourage greater resident usage of the parks and promote healthy living, with one prominent example being the “Sport a Month” program implemented by Bankstown Council. Moreover Fairfield Council has a program in place that aims at upgrading and designing their parks to better assist in encouraging resident usage of the parks and is known as “The Parks Improvement Program”. These programs mentioned are innovative and can assist in encouraging more resident usage of the parks and therefore turning them into Active Parks.

However there is no evidence of information sharing between the Local Councils. There could be several advantages with the development of cooperative agreements between all the Councils in the Central West aimed at designing parks better in an attempt to encourage better resident usage and encourage healthy living and safer communities.

6.5 Final Comments

Creating Active Parks is a great way to promote healthy living and also create a safer community. By being able to utilise a park no matter its size to its full potential goes a long way to encouraging people to use the park. This thesis has shown that to develop an Active Park it takes ten key standards accessibility, parking provisions for cars and bikes, a variety of facilities for physical activity, appropriate amenities, shading, cleanliness, no graffiti, good playing surfaces, proper surveillance and lighting. If all these standards can be implemented efficiently and effectively an Active Park will be created and will go a long way to encouraging local residents to use the park for physical, social or recreational activity.

As shown through this thesis creating an Active Park carries with it its benefits including, health benefits, economic benefits, environmental benefits and social benefits. By implementing the Active Park philosophy these advantages could be realised and will benefit the entire community in the long run.

However as also shown creating an Active Park is not always possible due to the many barriers both general and personal that exist. Having barriers such as limited funding for local governments, the expensive cost of implementing the Active Park philosophy and over development combined with individuals perception of safety, accessibility issues, perceived time constraints and cultural issues can be detrimental to creating Active Parks. There needs to be provisions implemented from all levels of Government to assist with limiting these barriers and aid the development of Active Parks.

Central West Sydney provided some fairly promising results with many parks that were studied passing when assessed against the criteria developed. However there were some issues that were identified including lack of shading and no parking provisions being made for bicycle users. However as shown there are certain limitations to this research and the results obtained do not necessarily provide an overall result that will apply to the entire Central West Sydney region.

Overall carrying out this research has allowed an impression of how well Central West Sydney is going in providing Active Parks in their region. Moreover this thesis was able to develop a concise and effective criteria that could be implemented in the hope of developing Active Parks in which everyone can use the parks effectively for physical, social or recreational activity which hopefully will lead to a healthier and safer community in the end.

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Appendix 1**Summary of Interviews**

Interview Details	Position of Interviewee	Organisation	Comments & Key Points
Date: 21.8.09 Time: 10.30am	Senior Manager	Heart Foundation	Interview went fairly smoothly and interviewee was willing to answer question. Given some good points on funding, design techniques for parks, and recent innovative programs.
Date: 21.8.09 Time: 11.30am	Manager	Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL)	Interview went well and interviewee was willing to answer questions. Given some good points on park maintenance costs, design techniques, good programs interstate as well as ideas on shading.
Date: 11.9.09 Time: 11.00am	Open Space & Recreation coordinator	Auburn Council	Interview went fairly well all questions were answered. Interview went a bit off topic sometimes. But gave some good points in relation to multicultural services, issues with park maintenance costs and funding, as well as providing names of some popular parks in the LGA.
Date: 17.9.09 Time: 11.00am	Sporting Facilities coordinator	Fairfield City Council	Interview went fairly well. All questions were answered however interview seemed a bit fast. Provided some key comments in relation to funding and park maintenance cost as well as multicultural services provided. Moreover provided the names of some popular parks and provided information about the "Parks improvement Program".

Appendix 2

Questions used for Interviews for Auburn and Fairfield Councils

1. What has Council been doing to try encourage the use of their local parks?
2. Is there any innovative programs initiated by Council that was aimed at getting residents to use the parks
3. If so how well has the program worked?
4. Do you find residents respond to such programs once they are initiated?
5. What do you see as the main barriers as to why residents don't use particular parks in the LGA?
6. Is there particular local parks in the area that seem to be more popular than others? Why?
7. What do you believe needs to be done to help encourage local residents to use their local parks more frequently?
8. Is funding an issue that prevents local parks from being maintained and improved for public use?
9. How well do Section.94 contributions work in helping improve the quality of the local parks in the area?

Questions Used for Interviews with Heart Foundation and PCAL

1. What do you see as the main barrier for residents not using their local parks more frequently?
2. What in your opinion should Local Councils be doing to help restore local parks for resident usage?
3. To your knowledge have there been any innovative programs initiated to allow better use of public parks?
4. What are the perceived benefits of local parks that work well in a local area
5. What facilities do you think many local parks are lacking that would help provide encouragement for resident usage?
6. To what extent do you believe the State Government should get involved in areas such as improving the quality of local parks?
7. Is funding an issue at both Local and State Government levels?