

PURPOSE

Wollongong City Council (Council) maintains various forms of sporting fields on behalf of the community. As our region's population grows, so too does the demand for the use of Council's Sportsfields.

This policy has been developed to ensure Sportsfields are managed in a way that is sustainable, equitable and in the interest of the broader community.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Maximise opportunities for bookings and utilisation of Council's limited Sportsfields
2. Enable equity of access to Sportsfields to existing and emerging sporting groups and for events.
3. Ensure Council continues to meet the growing and emerging needs of our community.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

This Policy contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 "We have a healthy community in a liveable city". It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objective 5.4 "Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community".

DEFINITIONS

Sportsfields	The term 'Sportsfields' where stated in this Policy refers to all Council owned or managed land on which primarily sports are played
Shared Use	The term 'Shared Use' where stated in this Policy refers to the equitable use of Councils sportsfields by more than one sporting club, association or user group.
Shared Access	The term 'Shared Access' where stated in this Policy refers to the Licences provision of access to Councils sportsfields to other sporting clubs, associations or user groups.
Licence	The term 'licence' where stated in this policy refers to a printed document that gives official permission from Wollongong City Council to a specific person, sporting group, association, operator or company to occupy Council owned or managed land. A licence may be issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Crown Lands Act 1989.

POLICY

Management of the use of sportsfields and associated facilities within the Wollongong Local Government Area is regulated by the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Crown Lands Act 1989* and is subject to Council's Plans of Management.

All sporting clubs and associations are required to abide by the Terms and Conditions for the Use of Councils Parks and Playing Fields

Shared Use of Sportsfields

1. Access to and licencing of Council owned or managed Sportsfields is on a non-exclusive basis.
2. Licenced Sportsfields are to be made available for other sporting agencies and user groups, including for events, when not required for the immediate use of the licensee.
3. It is a requirement that shared access to licensed facilities shall be provided by the licensee, noting that the licensee may charge a reasonable fee to cover the costs of the use by the sporting club or user group. In the event that this fee cannot be agreed upon by both parties, Council will mediate, which will require the licensee to provide a demonstrated basis for proposed fees.
4. Where regular access to a licensed sportsfield is required by more than one sporting club within the same code and affordable access is not negotiated then, upon renewal, the licence may be issued to the sport's peak association with the interests of those clubs protected within the agreement.
5. Sporting clubs and associations must ensure their constitution does not prevent the sharing of sportsfields.
6. Access to all Council and licensed sportsgrounds be provided equitably following consultation between the Council Officers and the relevant sporting club/association or user groups.
7. In seeking access to sport fields and or licensed facilities all sporting clubs and associations must provide details of membership, club history, usage patterns and proposed future use of fields.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*
- *Crown Lands Act 1989.*
- Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009
- Wollongong City Council Community Land Plan of Management 2022

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Property & Recreation is the Division responsible for the administration and review of this Policy. Specifically, Property Services are responsible for the review, management and issuing of licences under this Policy and mediation between stakeholders where required. Recreation Services are responsible for the Management of bookings at non-licenced sportsfields and referring shared use requests at licenced sportsfields to licensees.

RELATED POLICIES

- Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027
- Leases and Licences of Council Owned and Managed Land, Buildings and Public Roads

- Community and Sporting Group Rentals Council Policy
- Legal Costs Payable by Lessees and Licensees of Council Premises other than Retail Premises Council Policy

RELATED PROCEDURES

Terms and Conditions for the Use of Councils Parks and Playing Fields

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property & Recreation
Date adopted by Council	17 October 2022
Date/s of previous adoptions	14/03/2016, 25/02/2013, 31/01/2005
Date of next review	October 2024