



**RESPONSE TO
ENOGGERA CREEK
SPORT AND RECREATION
PRECINCT PLAN**



The place to play softball

30 April 2021

Project Team
Enoggera Creek Sport and Recreation Precinct
Brisbane City Council
GPO Box 1434
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: communityfacilities@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Dear Council Members

On behalf of the Brisbane Softball Association (BSA), please find enclosed a response to the proposed Enoggera Creek Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan.

This submission provides Brisbane City Council (BCC) with detailed information in relation to:

- BSA's response to, and feedback on, the draft plan, including key considerations and preferred position;
- User requirements necessary to play softball safely and to meet the needs of the softball community;
- The history of the Brisbane Softball Association (BSA), softball and women's sport at Downey Park; and
- The opportunities the right facility could bring not only to the Brisbane and Queensland softball community but also, by extension to Brisbane City and surrounds.

As noted on the BCC website, the key project outcome for BCC, in partnership with the Australian Government, of the draft Enoggera Creek Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan is "to guide future investment, development and management of this sport and recreation precinct". I trust this submission clearly outlines the relevant considerations and concerns held by BSA as well as the significant improvements that could be achieved through amending the plan.

Fundamental to any planning process is the identification of the needs of all key stakeholders. It is only with proper consultation and engagement with affected stakeholders that the project goal can be realised and that all sporting and recreation community users can benefit from the spending of public funds.

Should you require any further information regarding this submission, I invite you to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely,



Dave Waller
President
Brisbane Softball Association



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brisbane Softball Association (BSA) have reviewed the draft Enoggera Creek Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan and hold significant concerns regarding the viability of softball should the draft plan be accepted in its current form.

In response to the draft plan, BSA does not agree to the relocation proposed and its preference would be to remain located at Downey Park in the current location.

BSA would like to retain its own facilities given the current infrastructure enables BSA to deliver a strong competition for its members.

In the current location, BSA has developed strong relationships with sporting stakeholders that are important when sharing Downey Park with other winter sports such as Hockey. Hockey operates in the winter, whilst softball operates in summer and both BSA and Brisbane Women's Hockey Association (BWhA) have a long-term collaborative relationship which includes sharing facilities and fields.

Further, BSA has strong relationships with Downey Park residents and the local community and it is important to note that the topography of Downey Park supports the provision of softball diamonds that are skinned, with lights and fencing.

The basis upon which BSA has formed this view has regard to the concerns identified below which are detailed further throughout this submission.

1. Lack of proper consultation across all sporting groups;
2. Draft plan will result in the loss of a historically significant facility;
3. Relocation that also requires co-location is untenable;
4. Downsizing of facility creates an unsustainable facility;
5. Slow-pitch softball is not currently offered by BSA and slow pitch diamonds should not be included;
6. Impact of the loss of facilities will be significant – from the massive reduction in the actual number of diamonds, the loss of skinned diamonds with lights and fencing through to the destruction of our clubhouse, grandstand, batting cage, bullpen and storage facilities;
7. Reduced access to parking;
8. Concerns held regarding compliance with the Brisbane City Plan 2014;
9. Impact on residents will be significant – from reduction in access to green space, need for lighting and fencing of diamonds to ensure safety for foot and vehicle traffic;
10. Missed opportunity – legacy planning is required where long term strategic benefits can be achieved if the right facility is built; and
11. Transition and timing concerns – further consultation is required.

Following a detailed analysis of the proposal, BSA has identified the changes from its current state to the proposed draft plan. Comments have been added to address the changes in Table 1 below.



Table 1: Analysis of Proposal - Current State versus Proposed State

	CURRENT POSITION: SOFTBALL AT DOWNEY PARK	PROPOSED POSITION: IMPACT OF DRAFT PLAN	COMMENT
Diamonds			
Total number of diamonds	16 (all fast pitch diamond size)	7 as drafted, in reality, 3 standard fast pitch diamonds	A reduction in facility size of over 80% and the loss of the first international diamond in Australia.
Number of skinned diamonds	2	Nil identified	Reduces facility to a Tier 3 facility (lowest standard).
Number of grassed diamonds	14	7 as drafted, in reality, 3 standard fast pitch diamonds	Fast pitch diamonds are a standard size. Outfields cannot be shared as this raises safety concerns.
Number of fast pitch diamonds	16	3 but one is shared	Outfields cannot be shared as this raises safety concerns.
Number of slow pitch diamonds	Nil	4 but outfields are shared	BSA does not play slow pitch softball. Safety concerns are held regarding shared outfields.
Number of fenced diamonds	2	None identified	Given the reduced physical footprint and safety concerns, all diamonds will need to be fenced.
Number of diamonds with lights	2	None identified	Reducing the capacity of a facility by over 80% will require all diamonds to have lights installed.
Key Facilities			
Grandstand	Yes	No	Historically significant building lost.
Clubhouse	Yes	Shared facility	Historically significant building lost.
Spectator seating	Yes	No	
Women's only facility	Yes	No	Loss of historically significant facility - reducing access to women's sport.
Batting cage	Yes	Shared facility	Softball and baseball have different pitch lengths .
Bull pen	Yes	No	Softball and baseball have different pitch requirements (distance and pitching mound). Bull pens cannot be shared.
Warm up areas	Yes	No	Requirement to share with baseball noted - impacts upon availability.
Storage facility	Yes	No	Anything proposed will be required to be shared with baseball.
Car parking	Available at Green Terrace car park, Green Terrace and Noble Street	Limited parking available at Finsbury Street and access off Edmondstone Street	Increased number of participants (two sports) - to share a facility with a reduced physical footprint and less car park availability.

	CURRENT POSITION: SOFTBALL AT DOWNEY PARK	PROPOSED POSITION: IMPACT OF DRAFT PLAN	COMMENT
Impact			
Ability to meet operational needs i.e. hold a summer season of softball	Yes	No	Reduced facility size will disrupt competition format and result in loss of members/participants.
Ability to hold State Championships	Yes	No	Reduces fundraising opportunities. Limits exposure/promotion of sport.
Ability to hold National Championships	Yes	No	Reduces fundraising opportunities. Limits exposure/promotion of sport.
Ability to provide for Schoolgirl Competitions	Yes	No	Reduces fundraising opportunities. Limits participation/potential.
Ability to provide training facility for State teams	Yes	No	Cannot be held without skinned diamonds and lights.
Ability to provide training facility for National/Olympic Squad members	Yes	No	Cannot be held without skinned diamonds and lights.
Residential concerns	None - Downey Park has been the home of softball for over 60 years and residents accept this.	Yes - particularly with respect to loss of green space (skinned diamonds), lack of access to green space (fenced facility), need for lights, car parking issues and safety of property and person.	

1. CURRENT STATE - SOFTBALL AT BSA

Downey Park has been the home of the Brisbane Softball Association for over 60 years with multiple generations of women, including multiple generations of families, having benefited from the facility during that time.

Historically, Brisbane City Council was a progressive council that was highly supportive of women's sport. Both women's individual and team sports found their spiritual home at Downey Park after it was 'dedicated to women's sport' in 1959. In 2004, after 45 years of continuous operation, the BCC listed Downey Park as a 'local heritage place', signifying the importance of the park to women's sport.

BSA currently services the softball community of Brisbane through the management of a high quality softball competition that is conducted during the summer period. The season commences in October and ends in March each year. There are currently nine clubs competing in the BSA summer competition with over 48 teams and 637 total participants. Ages of participants range from 4 year olds to 70+ year olds.

These numbers represent a 9% increase in participants from the 2019/20 season. A full outline of the BSA summer softball competition is available in **Appendix C**.

The Downey Park facility is also utilised heavily by Queensland Softball and Softball Australia as is the key training facility in Queensland.

It is a key breeding ground for successful softballers with 21 of the total 33 Softball Olympians who have represented Australia playing in the BSA summer competition.

1.1. Usage

In any typical week during the summer season, the two lit international softball diamonds (skinned) and indoor batting cages are used every weeknight by clubs, for BSA's U18 competition and for Brisbane, Queensland and Australian representative trainings. These two fields are in high demand and have high utilisation with general hours of use from 4-9pm every night, and all day Saturday and most Sundays.

The other 14 grass diamonds are utilised all day Saturday and as required on Sundays for club fixtures as well as utilised by various school competitions (such as QGSSA) throughout the year. A detailed list of the current infrastructure and usage is outlined in **Appendix C**.



2. BSA RESPONSE TO DRAFT PLAN

2.1. First preference

REMAIN AT DOWNEY PARK

BSA does not agree with the draft plan proposal and its preferred position is to remain located at Downey Park in the current location.

Over the past six decades, BSA volunteers have built the infrastructure currently available and would like to retain its own facilities given the current infrastructure enables BSA to meet the needs of its members.

In the current location, BSA has strong relationships with sporting stakeholders which is important when sharing Downey Park with other winter sports such as Hockey. Hockey operates in the winter, whilst Softball operates in Summer and both BSA and Brisbane Women's Hockey Association (BWHHA) have a long-term collaborative relationship which includes sharing facilities and fields.

Further, BSA has strong relationships with Downey Park residents and the local community and it is also important to note that the topography of Downey Park supports the provision of softball diamonds that are skinned, with lights and fencing.

2.2. Second preference

WHERE RELOCATION REQUIRED

Should BCC determine that BSA must relocate, BSA require full consideration of and adherence to the following factors:

- That BSA not be co-located with another summer sport such as Baseball.
- That slow pitch diamonds are removed from the plan and only fast pitch softball diamonds are included.
- That BSA be provided with a facility that, at a minimum, is commensurate with their current facility. High level user requirements are outlined in Section 3 - User Requirements.
- That BCC provide written assurance that the development of the 610 bay car park meets the requirements of the Brisbane City Plan 2014 before a decision is made to re-locate the entire association.
- That BCC have regard to the tangible commercial benefits that building the right softball facility would bring to Brisbane. Opportunity exists, where the right facility is planned and built, for Brisbane to become the place to play softball at a State, National and International Level, generating positive economic returns to the Brisbane community.
- Recognition that the draft plan results in the loss of a historically significant facility through the loss of the grandstand, clubhouse and international diamond; that this is of particular concern as it relates to women's sport; and that the plan in fact reduces access to sport for women in the area. Recompense for the loss is required through the provision of a facility of equivalency (at a minimum).
- That BCC provide a commitment to BSA, as a key stakeholder directly affected by the draft plan, to directly engage and consult with BSA in furtherance of the proposal. It is expected that BCC will directly consult with BSA in a timely manner regarding any transition planning.

3. USER REQUIREMENTS

In order to operate and run BSA for the nine clubs and 637 current participants, BSA require the following infrastructure:

- Minimum two skinned and fenced diamonds with lights that meet Tier 1 facility requirements
- A further six diamonds (at a minimum, with preference for two further skinned diamonds to enable hosting of significant state, national and international events). Only the provision of a total of eight diamonds that are not shared with another sport, will meet the current operational needs (noting this figure does not allow for growth of the sport)
- Grandstand facility
- Clubhouse facility
- Spectator seating
- Batting cages – three bay minimum
- Large storage shed
- Bullpen

Further details of user requirements which relate to Tier 1 Standard diamonds, are outlined in [Appendix A and E](#).



4. FEEDBACK ON PROCESS

4.1. Lack of consultation

BCC have made a number of public statements that they have appropriately consulted with sporting groups prior to the release of the draft plan. BCC has further claimed that BSA has indicated their agreement to the draft plan.

Both of these claims are denied.

BSA have had two interactions with BCC consultants since a review of Downey Park commenced in 2016. The first meeting occurred in March 2019 where consultants sought general information by way of a survey about softball at Downey Park. At no time were BSA provided with an opportunity to provide a position statement regarding any proposal to relocate. Further, no provision has been made in the consultation process for BSA to formally outline its user requirements.

The second meeting was held in November 2020, after the plan had been drafted. At no time was BSA provided with an opportunity to provide formal feedback or invited to submit their formal position. Further analysis of the BCC consultation process is outlined at **Appendix F**.

Evidence of the lack of consultation is clearly demonstrated by the draft itself:

- The plan provides for facilities that are not part of our current facility and would never have been requested, namely:
 - slow pitch softball diamonds; and
 - diamonds with shared outfields.
- The plan demonstrates a clear lack of understanding that fast pitch softball is played on a standard sized diamond having regard to the fact that:
 - the plan reflects two different sized diamonds, with the single use diamond being scaled larger on the plan than the shared diamond; and
 - the sharing of diamonds is proposed
 - a clearly unsafe practice not endorsed by BSA, Queensland Softball or Softball Australia (the governing bodies).





- The plan requires sharing facilities with baseball. Whilst baseball is also a 'diamond' sport they are clearly two different sports with some key differences. Proper consultation and relevant research would have identified those key differences that make each sport unique and their facility requirements distinctive such that co-location would only be achievable if a large physical footprint was available to construct such a precinct. Those key differences include:
 - There is no ability to share diamonds as they are different sizes;
 - Any shared batting cage would likely be compromised due to the differences in pitching distances;
 - Bull pens cannot be shared due to the differences in pitching distances and baseball's requirement for a pitching mound;
 - There is a clear difference between the facility requirements of an association (i.e. that provides a competition for and supports a variety of clubs) as against a single club.
- By way of example, BSA clubs are allocated training days at Downey Park therefore the facility is used every week day for training purposes and then every weekend for games during their summer season.
- In addition, the facility is also used year round for:
 - training of BSA representative teams in preparation for State Championships; and
 - training by Queensland State teams in preparation for National Championships; and
 - most recently the Queensland based players in the Aussie Spirit squad members have trained at Downey Park in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics.

Additionally, the draft plan itself demonstrates a clear lack of research, care and attention to detail. By way of example, the toilet amenities building that is situated in the East Precinct of the draft plan, at the top corner of park on the Noble Street side, has not been included in any of the drawings. This amenities facility has been in existence for over a decade and was upgraded in 2020.

Furthermore, the requirement to co-locate a hockey association and cricket club (suggesting hockey plays Saturday and cricket on Sunday) fails to understand the practical implications of such a proposal, namely the necessity for hockey goals to be removed after games on Saturday to allow cricket to play and that cricket pitches require three days ground preparation, without interference prior to a game.

4.2. Loss of facilities

The draft Central Precinct Plan - 'Key Design Outcomes' states the key design outcome is 'providing additional playing field capacity'. At the most generous reading of the draft plan there are 7 diamonds provided for on the plan which is less than half of the number of diamonds currently provided at the BSA precinct at Downey Park. When officially sanctioned fast pitch diamond dimensions are overlayed into the area of Finsbury Park, the reality is that the BSA facility is reduced from 16 diamonds to just three useable diamonds - a downsizing of over 80%.

The key design outcome is not achieved and the statement is clearly false.

In addition to the concerns regarding the number of diamonds provided for, the draft plan is drawn to suggest that all diamonds are grassed, without fences and without the provision of lights. Bull pens are not identified on the plan for any diamond. There is no provision for warm up areas or batting cages (which, it is noted, are referred to as batting nets in the drawing key) nor are there storage facilities identified. Further, the plan does not provide for a grandstand or even spectator facilities.

Fast pitch softball at a sub-elite and elite level are played on standard sized diamonds. This standard diamond sizing is recommended worldwide.

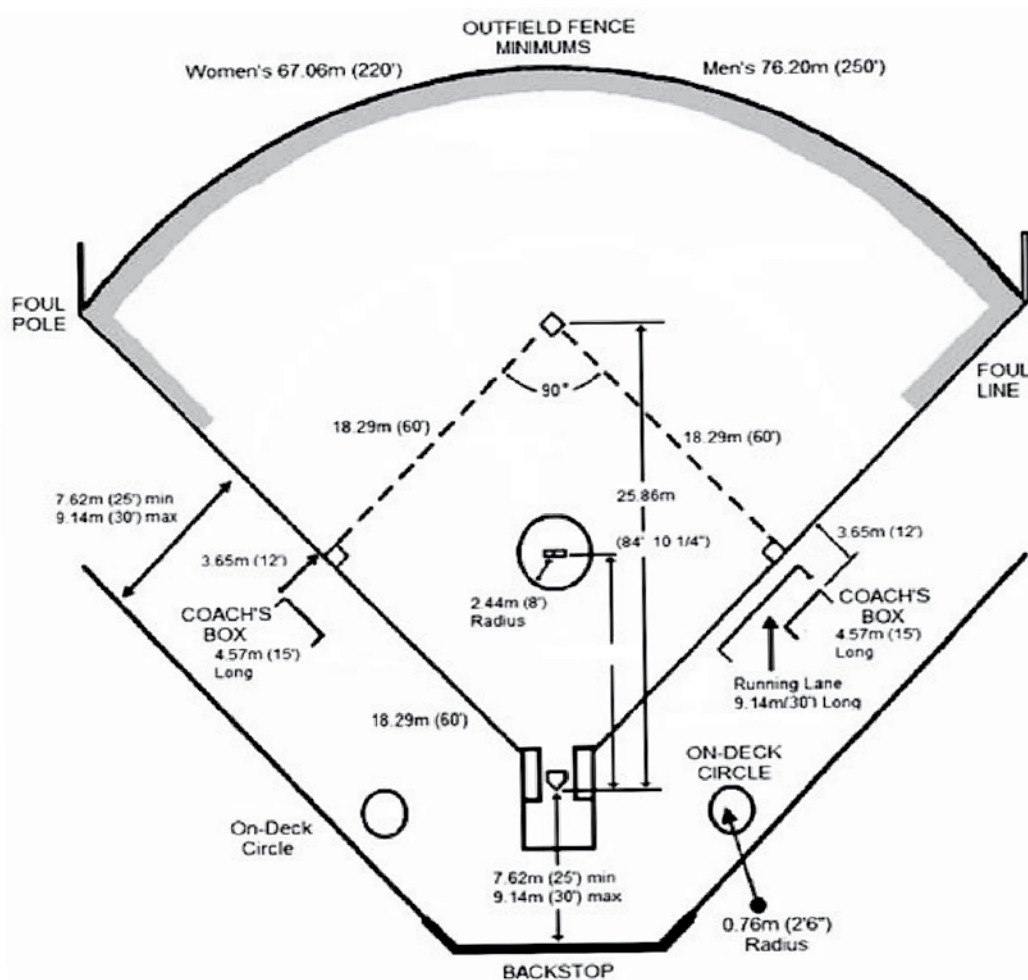


Image: Softball diamond dimensions as per softball's governing body, Softball Australia's "Softball Field Guidelines" document. Document available at: <https://www.softball.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Softball-Field-GuidelinesFINAL.pdf>

Furthermore, fast pitch diamonds are played on skinned diamonds made of 50% dolerite and 50% red brickies sand, otherwise referred to as “deco”. Information regarding requirements and construction of these diamonds can be found at: <https://nsw.softball.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/02/Facility-Management-Guide.pdf>

BSA currently have two permanent skinned diamonds with lights that are accessible all year round. These facilities ensure clubs can train on their allocated week night, that games can be scheduled and played during the evening and that representative training can occur even in the off season in the lead up to various championships.

Bullpens are the areas where a pitcher and catcher warm up can occur and training can be facilitated both during competition season or off season. Currently BSA have purpose built bullpens located at Diamond 1 for such a purpose. The current plans do not make provision for this.

As an Association BSA provides amenities for clubs to train. BSA also provides storage for those clubs within the clubhouse/grandstand facility. Clubs utilise this to store gear and equipment necessary to train and play. The plan requires provision to be made for storage facilities to meet both club storage requirements and BSA storage requirements.

Furthermore, BSA requires access to a large storage facility to house tools and machinery required to maintain the grounds, to mark the diamonds and administer a safe facility.

Both junior and senior games are attended by both players and supporters. Currently spectators at BSA have access to a grandstand for viewing of Diamond 1 with tiered seating available at 4 further diamonds. Provision for spectator seating is necessary to support our softball community.



Image: Proposed new location for BSA at Finsbury Park with only three marked fast pitch diamonds.

IMPACT ON BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION SUMMER SEASON

As indicated, in 2020/21 BSA provided a competition for 48 teams and 637 participants.

With the provision of only three diamonds, the draft plan results in an 80% reduction in our precinct. Even with the inclusion of lights on all three diamonds, based on BSA's current member participation figures, BSA's current competition needs would not be able to be met.

BSA have undertaken a competition comparison analysing fixtures played in both the 2020/21 and 2019/20 seasons and applied those game scheduling requirements to a three diamond facility without lights.

The result of that analysis demonstrates:

- There is no ability to run the U18 competition (currently held on Friday nights)
- BSA would require two full days to run an existing competition with no lights
- There is no ability for growth - even the addition of one team would mean the competition would need to move into a third day
- There is no ability to make allowances for feeder team requirements
- There is no ability to reschedule games that are affected by adverse weather events
- The impact of playing across two days will result in overburdening our volunteer resources

Furthermore, the ability to service each clubs training needs each weeknight is also made impossible without the provision of lights.



Image: Sixteen marked diamonds at Downey Park overlaid on to Finsbury Park precinct.

IMPACT ON SCHOOL SPORT

Currently BSA provide the Queensland Girls Secondary Sports Association (QGSSSA) with access to Downey Park to host its yearly interschool softball tournaments. With the provision of only 3 diamonds, QGSSSA would not be able to run their competition at BSA.

The closest facility options able to meet the needs of the school tournaments would be either Redcliffe or Redlands (Ormiston). These locations require significantly longer travel times, and as such, it is likely that they would not be preferred and that softball as a school sport would be abandoned. Such a result would again reduce access to sport for girls in the area.

Softball remains a vibrant sport where opportunities exist for players to play at school and for clubs and at State, National and International level. There are also clear pathways for players to apply for scholarships to attend USA Colleges plus there are pathways to playing professionally in overseas professional leagues.

Reducing the facility to a mere THREE diamonds, grassed and without lights is untenable.



4.3. Co-locating with another sport

The draft plan proposes to not only relocate BSA from Downey Park to Finsbury Park but also co-locate BSA with the Windsor Royals Baseball Club (WRBC).

Co-locating the sports of baseball and softball because, on the face, they appear to be similar sports illustrates a failure to undertake a requisite level of research and to understand the fundamental needs of each sport. A proper analysis would have identified that there are key differences that make co-location unworkable, particularly having regard to the physical footprint of Finsbury Park. Factors that are not considered by the draft plan include:

- The different facility requirements necessary to administer each sport, namely:
 - The diamond sizes are different;
 - Pitching lengths are different;
 - Baseball requires a pitching mound;
 - Bullpens have different sizes and requirements;
 - Fence heights are different;
 - The games are played for different lengths of time;
 - Scheduling differences (home and away v's permanent fixture ground v's games series);
- A consideration of the needs of an **association** against the needs of a single **club**.
 - BSA provides a premier softball competition for nine clubs across nine senior grades and four junior grades.
 - All softball fixtures are held at the one location – there are no 'away' games. Every week all players attend the same location.
 - As an Association, BSA not only manages the competition (draws, umpiring duties) but it also provides and maintains the training facilities for all clubs including batting cages. BSA also has responsibility for the maintenance of the grounds, provision of a canteen and bar, stakeholder engagement with Softball Queensland and other Associations through to the Leading Edge onsite store, interactions with residents and club engagement.
 - WRBC is a single club that has both junior and senior teams that train and play competitions at their ground. However, given game scheduling requirements, competitions are scheduled in a "home and away" style with finals being played as a "series".
 - It is noted that WRBC is currently utilised by the Queensland ABL team, the Brisbane Bandits.
- Co-location of sports that are both played in summer.
 - BSA currently share the grounds of Downey Park with the Brisbane Women's Hockey Association. Softball and hockey have built a strong working relationship over the past 60 years. This has been a successful partnership supported by linking a summer sport with a winter sport that are able to set up semi-permanent fields and diamonds for their respective sports within short transition periods.
 - The impact of co-locating and requiring that a facility is shared with a not only a baseball club but a club that currently has formal arrangements with a professional baseball league team will have a negatively impact on access to the facility for softballers.
 - No additional parking has been identified despite combining two summer sports into a single area. The draft plan therefore requires an increased number of participants (ie both softballers and baseballers) to attend this single venue which has two small points of entry combined with a reduced physical footprint.

- Loss of purpose built grandstands for both softball and baseball
 - The current plan will result in both softball and baseball losing their purpose built grandstands, clubhouses, batting cages and bull pens and instead require them to share a single facility. This decision fails to reflect an understanding of the usage levels of both facilities.
 - BSA's Dave Trotman Grandstand was funded by softball families and achieved through hours of unpaid work by volunteers following years of fundraising. It is the only venue in Queensland that offers a quality viewing experience for spectators and is a hugely practical asset that not only provides excellent viewing for spectators but also provides shelter from the summer heat or rain, in addition to its strong historical ties.
 - We defer to the WRBC to provide specific details of the impact this proposal will have upon their club and players. However we do note the baseball grandstand is used by the ABL team the Brisbane Bandits in the pro-league. Brisbane Bandits fixtures are ticketed events and are televised. The facility is entirely fenced to be able to manage paid attendance. It is understood that there are no other purpose built facilities for baseball in Queensland that can currently provide this facility to the Brisbane Bandits.

The draft plan identifies a single facility to be co-managed between BSA and WRBC. Of concern to BSA are the significant operational issues that will impact the management of the facility including:

- Management of facilities, responsibilities for groundskeeping, common areas.
- Management of use of lights and resultant costs
- Management of canteen and profit sharing model
- Management of bar (including licensing) and profit sharing model

4.4. Inclusion of slow-pitch diamonds

The draft plan provides for four slow pitch diamonds that include shared outfielders. BSA does not offer a slow pitch softball competition nor have our players requested such a competition be run.

The inclusion of slow pitch softball demonstrates a clear lack of research, understanding and consultation regarding the needs of the Brisbane softball community. Additionally, the overlapping of diamonds is concerning as it demonstrates a lack of regard for player welfare with the overlap creating a real and present risk of injury to players.

4.5. Reduced access to parking

The draft plan requires BSA to relocate to Finsbury Park where attendees (players, officials, spectators, volunteers) will have reduced access to easy and direct car parking. (It is noted that the draft plan does not provide specific figures for the "formalised car parking" noted at drawing key marked 13 of the Central Precinct Plan).

As noted previously, the draft plan reduces the size of the softball precinct by over 80% with an expectation that BSA are able to adequately accommodate the same number of attendees within the reduced physical footprint. In addition, the relocation also requires co-location with baseball thereby further increasing the number of attendees to a single, reduced sized facility with one point of entry via road, namely Finsbury Street and some access and car parking off Edmondstone Street (the further most point from the proposed shared clubhouse).

Currently attendees to Downey Park access a large formal carpark on Green Terrace with some parking available on Green Terrace itself and street parking is also available on Noble Street. This meets current needs and does not have a negative impact upon residents.



5. FURTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1. Loss of historically significant facility

The draft plan proposes to relocate BSA from Downey Park and move it to Finsbury Park.

The relocation of BSA will result in the loss of a facility with significant heritage value and historical significance with BCC's own website identifying Downey Park as being "dedicated to the advancement of women's sporting aspirations since the late 1940's". Refer to <https://heritage.brisbane.qld.gov.au/heritage-places/1809#statement-of-significance>

Research undertaken by BSA demonstrates that the 1970's lease agreements with BCC stipulated "the park remain an area for women's sport – providing security to develop grounds and infrastructure". Refer to 'A Women's Place... the story of Downey Park' by Jenkins, L: BCC, 1997.

Knowing that security has been provided by BCC and through the provision of a 20 year lease, significant fundraising efforts by the families of BSA resulted in substantial infrastructure being built at Downey Park. By way of example:

- The Downey Park softball grandstand and clubhouse was first opened in March 1980. It continues to provide exceptional spectator facilities to attendees to this day.
- Downey Park is the home of the first international softball diamond in Australia. It continues to be a high quality facility today utilised by both grassroots and elite athletes.
- In 2007 upgrades were made to the lights to ensure they met international standards
- Facility upgrades have continued including the batting cage (2010) and equipment shed (2020).

The Downey Park facility has been the home of Brisbane Softball for over 60 years with multiple generations of women, including multiple generations of families, having benefited from the facility during that time. The failure to recognise the historical significance of Downey Park and BSA in this redevelopment proposal, having regard to the importance Downey Park has in the context of women's sport in Queensland is a denigration of the sport. Further information regarding the history of BSA at Downey Park is outlined in **Appendix D**.



5.2. Impact on residents

The draft plan moves Gold Crest Cricket Club from Finsbury Park to Downey Park and requires both BSA and WRBC to be co-located at Finsbury Park. The impact of this proposal on residents will be significant as identified below:

- There will be a considerable increase in the number of people attending Finsbury Street, Edmondstone Street and Munna Street, on a Saturday;
- The below table does not take into account spectator numbers and solely reflects the minimum number of attendees required to play each sport as per the current draft plan;

		CRICKET	SOFTBALL	BASEBALL
FACTORS	Number of players and required officials	12 players per side plus a coach, scorer, and umpire	9 per players per side plus a coach, scorer, and umpire	9 per players per side plus a coach, scorer, and umpire
	Number of fields/diamonds	2	3	2
	Number of games	2 games total per day	6 games/diamond/day	3 games/diamond/day
SUB-TOTAL			432	144
TOTAL		60 minimum	576 minimum	

- Reduced access to car parks;
- BSA provides training facilities for clubs that are utilised every night of the week;
- BSA provides training facilities throughout winter for representative teams;
- Diamonds will need to be skinned and made of dirt/deco composite – visually they will be impacted by the loss of green space;
- Diamonds will need lights to be erected to ensure training can be undertaken during week days and games can be held regularly on Friday and Saturday nights and occasionally mid week; and
- Diamonds will need to be fenced to ensure resident and property safety – there will be no access to green space.

TOPOGRAPHY CONSIDERATIONS

Consideration should also be given to the differences in topography between the two locations. Finsbury Park is located in a residential neighbourhood bordered by family homes. Downey Park is located in a semi industrial area where the site topography and grandstand location benefit the residents of Green Terrace as the diamonds are located in a natural amphitheatre, below street level with lights directed towards commercial areas. Due to the placement of the diamonds across the park, the risk to residents and their property is reduced, and noise pollution is minimised. At a minimum, safety measures such as fences and netting would need to be implemented at Finsbury Park to ensure residents and users of the pathways were protected.

Concerns are held by BSA that there may be significant flooding impacts and a resultant destruction and/or high maintenance cost for any softball facility located at Finsbury Park.



Image: Wade Krawczyk, resident of Finsbury Park demonstrates the levels of flooding in 2013.



Image: BCC Flood awareness map marks Finsbury Park flooding risk as “high likelihood”.

DOWNEY PARK RESIDENTS

As softball has been played at Downey Park for over 60 years, the large majority (if not all) of the residents of Downey Park have purchased property in the area with a clear understanding and awareness (particularly those on Green Terrace and Noble Street) that the sport of softball will be played every summer.

The relationship between residents and BSA is strong. There have been negligible negative comments directed to BSA with, at most, five complaints being received in the past five years. All of those complaints have been addressed and resolved successfully by BSA.

5.3. Missed opportunity – Legacy planning required

The draft plan demonstrates a clear lack of strategic, long term thinking with respect to the opportunities the redevelopment of the Enoggera Creek precinct might achieve. As has already been indicated, it is disappointing that sufficient research, consultation and engagement did not occur with key stakeholders that would have better informed the planning process.



One such opportunity that is not considered by the draft plan is the impact participating in and potentially hosting an Olympic Games can bring to a city.

Where BCC is already drafting a plan to spend significant funds in relocating BSA away from Downey Park, a cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken with respect to the proposed facility. Where long term financial opportunities can be derived by amending the plan and building a facility that could attract national and international tournaments to the city of Brisbane, these should be thoroughly investigated.

Softball is an Olympic sport that Australia has medaled at in every Olympics it has participated in. Queensland has the second highest participant level for players of softball in Australia however Queensland has never formally provided a State Softball Centre for the sport. Downey Park has always been the central location where State teams and Queensland based National players have trained.

Opportunity exists for the BCC to create a high performance softball facility, which is not only utilised every week by the Brisbane Softball

Association but where future Olympians (training for Los Angeles in 2028 and potentially Brisbane in 2032) can train, where national and international competitions can be held to support those training efforts, as well as the opportunity to potentially host a home Olympics (2032). Much has been made in the 2032 Olympic bid of the proximity of 'the Gabba' to the Central Business District (CBD). The same opportunities (i.e. ease of access to accommodation and public transport) exist in any redevelopment of Downey Park, particularly as they relate to upgrading of facilities which in turn will create future opportunities.

Planning for an Olympic legacy is key to ensuring that the benefits of hosting an Olympics are felt long after the final ceremony. As AOC President John Coates recently stated, "you get the benefit on the way through to the event and then afterwards, the planning should carry you through afterwards". Refer to Brisbane Times Article "An opportunity for Qld": SEQ must build legacy if Games bid successful, Olympic boss says", 10 March 2021 -

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/an-opportunity-for-qld-seq-must-build-legacy-if-games-bid-successful-olympics-boss-says-20210319-p57c7r.html>

A greater understanding of softball as a competitive sport is required to better inform the decision making process.



SOFTBALL AS AN OLYMPIC SPORT

Softball was granted Olympic status (without ever being a demonstration sport) in Atlanta in 1996 as a women-only medal sport.

Australia has competed and won medals at every Olympics where softball has been played. It returns to the Olympic arena this year as part of the 2021 Olympics hosted by Tokyo, Japan. Australia has consistently ranked in the top 10 internationally and is a strong contender for another medal in Tokyo.

Whilst the sport has been sidelined for the Paris 2024 Olympics, sports for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics are yet to be finalised. It is noted that the United States of America (USA) is ranked in the top two teams in the world and Southern California venues have already been identified. Given the strength and dominance of the USA team, it would be surprising if the sport of softball is not included in the 2028 Olympics.

The potential for Brisbane to host the 2032 Olympics is a further opportunity for the sport to be recognised and played at the Olympics. Planning foresight should be given to the opportunity that exists for softball to be played at an Olympic level in Brisbane and the myriad of additional competitions that would also result both in the lead up to the 2028 and 2032 Olympics and beyond.

LEAD UP EVENTS AND LONG TERM OPPORTUNITIES

In preparation for any Olympic event, countries will be looking to hone their skills in high quality competitions bringing the potential for international friendships series to be held. There would also be the opportunity to host qualifying competitions.

Even without the opportunity to play at a home Olympics, the sport offers other opportunities for international events to be held in Brisbane including World Championships for both U18 and Open men's and women's teams. New game structures are also being introduced that could be held in Brisbane if a facility existed that would meet the needs. For example, in the past two years Softball Australia has developed the Summer Slam competition that is televised on Foxtel and brings 6-8 teams from across Australia, with special international guests, to play a short form of the game over multiple days.

WHAT TYPE OF LEGACY FACILITY COULD BE ACHIEVED?

Softball Australia is the national governing body for softball in Australia. Field requirements are specified in their Softball Field Guidelines document that can be located at [Appendix A](#).

Softball Queensland is the governing body for the State and it recently undertook a facilities review. The State Facility Strategy 2019 document can be located at [Appendix B](#).

Facilities are graded using a tiered system, from Tier 1 (optimal) through to Tier 3. Whilst there is some level of flexibility in this tiered approach, the provisions identified provide a strong guide for what makes a high quality facility.

It is noted that in order to host National and International events, a Tier 1 grade facility is required. A Tier 1 facility is outlined in [Appendix E](#).



5.4. Compliance with Brisbane City Council (BCC) Planning Scheme

BSA hold significant concerns that necessary technical studies have not been conducted before preparing the draft plans and as a consequence the proposed 610 bay car park planned for Downey Park (that includes two synthetic hockey field on top) is in breach of numerous Codes within the Brisbane City Plan 2014 (City Plan). For example, it is proposed to construct a significant car park, which may or may not be enclosed, on a creek/waterway flood planning area 2 (FPA2) located in flood storage. Numerous provisions within the Flood overlay code of City Plan, for new development in FPA2, could be in conflict.

The effect of non-compliance with various Codes within City Plan for the planning and operational works stages of the proposed 610 bay car park would not only displace a softball precinct for a car park that may not or cannot be built, but also have adverse consequences for hockey given, without the car park, provision cannot be made for their two synthetic fields.

It is noted that a Right to Information (RTI) application was made on behalf of BSA for access to any reports in relation to consultation and technical studies (such as traffic and flood reports) undertaken to prepare the draft plans. These documents were made available on Tuesday the 27th April 2021. The information provided under the RTI related to:

- Summaries of consultation (typically being one to two pages in table format),
- A Master Plan containing an analysis of the then current usage of each park and sporting group with recommendations to inform the draft plan,
- A summary report of the Master Plan,
- A traffic study and an email between BCC staff in relation to how Council defines selected roads by way of classifications.



Of note is that in Section 7.6. - Downey Park and Victor Park (pages 75 to 77) of the 'Sport and Recreation Needs Analysis, Final Draft April 2019 (Needs Analysis)' there are no recommendations for the BSA to be re-located from Downey Park. In all options, upgrades only to existing softball facilities are recommended. Of further note is that the two synthetic hockey fields are proposed to be constructed over the existing hockey car park according to the Needs Analysis. No other information was released as part of the RTI specifically in relation to the proposed 610 bay car park and how flooding, fill and excavation, lighting and increased traffic will be addressed. Based on the recommendations in the Needs Analysis and considering that according to Council no technical studies have been undertaken, there is further uncertainty by BSA in how the Needs Analysis recommendations were significantly changed by Council to construct the 610 bay car park over existing softball facilities resulting in the re-location of the entire association.



The primary concerns BSA has with the proposed 610 bay car park, to be built within the flood planning area 2 (FPA2) are the potential conflicts with provisions in City Plan with some of these issues identified below:

- An adverse impact upon adjacent properties and established businesses through an increase in flood levels due to the compensatory earthworks (fill and excavation) that would be required in order to meet Q100 flood event levels. That is, the ground level car park will need to be significantly raised above natural ground level.
- Without access to flood report/s and plans for the proposed 610 bay car park, an assessment is unable to be made about these impacts. In the absence of this information, the extent of fill or excavation required and whether this is in excess of provision in the relevant Code/s, is not known.
- If the proposed 610 bay car park will be enclosed, thereby conflicting with this building being permitted development in FPA2.

Further impacts required to be considered include:

- Whether external lighting will meet planning requirements. It is likely that part of the proposed development will be elevated about the existing road alignment of Green Terrace due to the amount of fill required to meet Q100 flood event levels; and
- Whether increased traffic volume using the new car park and enhanced facilities will exceed the desired standards of service under the Local Government Infrastructure Plan within City Plan, so that major road upgrades would be required.

5.5. Transition and timing

The impact of the draft plan has resulted in a high level of apprehension and concern about the long term viability of our sport. To address the fear and uncertainty being felt by the softball community, BSA requests a comprehensive and structured consultation process be undertaken by BCC and the following factors be included in any further planning process and roll out of the final plan:

- Further direct consultation with BSA including an ability to provide feedback on the proposed diamonds, fencing, lighting, clubhouse and spectator seating through the provision of detailed plans.
- Provision of decision making timeframes.
- Provision of detailed information regarding the facilities that will be funded at the proposed alternate location and any potential cost impact upon BSA (noting BSA is as a not for profit community sporting group that does not hold financial reserves).

The assets that are currently utilised by BSA have been achieved over 60 years of grants, fundraising and maintenance activities. Any enforced transition to a new precinct will require, at a minimum, the provision of like for like facilities or recompense for lost assets.

- Transition planning consultation:
 - As BCC finalises plans and moves towards funding models and transition planning, BSA seek input into the proposed timings and be updated in relation to project completion dates.
 - Should BSA not be able to hold a summer season of competition as a result of the facilities not being available, recompense should be provided to BSA.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Like most community sporting organisations, Brisbane Softball Association (BSA) is a not for profit organisation, run solely by volunteers. Our volunteers are the backbone of our softball community and they are both passionate and committed to ensuring that we do everything we can to ensure our sport endures.

In addition to the many hours our volunteers have spent ensuring that our softball season runs smoothly, specialist training sessions are held, development squads are supported and all the work related to attendance by representative teams at State Championships - many hours of time has now been spent researching, drafting and collating this response to the draft Enoggera Precinct plan proposed by Brisbane City Council.

It has been a privilege to observe and be a part of our softball community as it unites in response to the draft plan that threatens to re-locate a historically significant facility that is softball at Downey Park.

I wish to acknowledge all the support that BSA has received during this process. From our national governing body Softball Australia, to our State governing body Softball Queensland, through to intrastate and interstate clubs and associations and of course, the current and former members of BSA and all the people that have played or supported softball at Downey Park over the past 60 years.



The greatest burden of the work in researching, drafting and collating this submission was borne by the sub-committee that we were required to establish to ensure a comprehensive submission could be delivered within the requisite timeframes. I wish to formally acknowledge the following personnel, in alphabetical order:

Kylie Bruce	STEALERS SOFTBALL CLUB
Jenny Covill	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Alana Cutmore	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Sandra Dangerfield	REDSOX SOFTBALL CLUB
Bernadette Dwyer	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Wayne Gaddes	PANTHERS SOFTBALL CLUB
Damien Gannon	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Ellen Hayworth	WILSTON GRANGE AND PANTHERS SOFTBALL CLUBS
Anna Herzog	WILSTON GRANGE SOFTBALL CLUB
Janelle Hicks	BRISBANE SOFTBALL UMPIRES ASSOCIATION
Paul Ireland	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Corrie Knight	REDSOX SOFTBALL CLUB
Leigh Martyn	PANTHERS SOFTBALL CLUB
Kylie Mercer-Smith	SAINTS SOFTBALL CLUB
Leigh Muller	BEARS SOFTBALL CLUB
Kim North	BEARS SOFTBALL CLUB
Tracey Pollock	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER
Ted Roffery-Mitchell	
Cathy Ross	PANTHERS SOFTBALL CLUB
Deb Silvester	BEARS SOFTBALL CLUB
Jess Torpey	BEARS SOFTBALL CLUB
Anne Vogler	PANTHER SOFTBALL CLUB
Binny Willis	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION LIFE MEMBER
Sharon Wood	BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBER



7. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines



Softball Field Guidelines

Updated: January 2015

SOFTBALL AUSTRALIA LIMITED

ACN 092 181 318
Level 1 | Suite 2 | 273 Wellington Street | Collingwood VIC 3066 | Australia
t: +61 3 9417 0022 | f: +61 3 9417 3399 | e: info@softball.org.au | w: www.softball.org.au



The place to play softball.

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Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Overview

In determining the dimensions of a softball field, you must first decide whether the field will be designed for fastpitch or slowpitch competitions. Fastpitch is played in sub-elite and elite international, national and state competition, as well as in many association and club competitions. Slowpitch, which is also played competitively, is very popular as a recreational or social sport.



A softball field

Infield

The playing field is divided into fair territory¹ and foul territory². Fair territory is further divided into the infield³, and the outfield⁴, and the territory beyond the outfield fence.

The infield consists of the diamond and the adjacent space in which the infielders normally play. The outfield is the remaining space between the baselines and between the outfield fence and the infield. The infield is usually 'skinned' (dirt), while the outfield has grass in regulation competitions.

The infield is a square (called a diamond) with a base at each corner: home plate, 1st base, 2nd base and 3rd base. The distance for pitching is measured from the rear point of the home plate to the front edge of the pitchers plate, which is centred in a 1.8m (6ft) radius circle.

¹ Part of the playing field within and including the 1st and 3rd base foul lines, from home base to the extreme playing field fence

² Any part of the playing field that is not included in fair territory

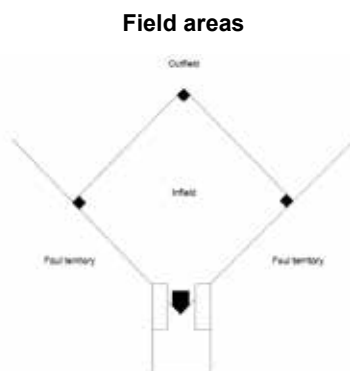
³ The diamond-shaped area in fair territory, formed by the 3 bases and home plate, is normally covered by defensive players (known as infielders)

⁴ The area outside the diamond but still within the foul lines, covered by defensive players (outfielders)

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Outfield

The outfield is the grass area beyond the infield which extends the entire width of the field and all the way to the outfield fence, if there is one. The outfield is in the shape of a quarter-circle and is between the two foul lines. The minimum distance from the apex of home plate to the boundary is 67.06m (220ft) for Women's Fastpitch Softball.



How to lay out a Diamond

This section serves as an example for laying out a diamond with 18.29m (60ft) bases and a 14.02m (46ft) pitching distance used in open and junior men's competitions (see [Softball field distances](#) for additional dimensions).

- 1 To determine the position of home plate, draw a line in the direction it is desired to lay the diamond. Drive a stake at the corner of home plate nearest the catcher. Fasten a cord to this stake and tie knots or otherwise mark the cord at 14.02m (46ft), 18.29m (60ft), 25.86m (84ft 10¼ in) marker and at 36.58m (120ft).
- 2 Place the cord (without stretching) along the direction line and place a stake at the 14.02m (46ft) marker – this will be the front line at the middle of the pitcher's plate. Along the same line, drive a stake at the 25.86m (84ft 10¼ in) marker. This will be the centre of 2nd base. For the 19.81m (65ft) base distance, this line will be 28.02m (91ft 11in).
- 3 Place the 36.58m (120ft) marker at the centre of second base and, taking hold of the cord at the 18.29m (60ft) marker, walk to the right of the direction line until the cord is taut and drive a stake at the 18.29m (60ft) marker – this will be the outside corner of 1st base and the cord will now form the lines to first and 2nd bases.
- 4 Again, holding the cord at the 18.29m (60ft) marker, walk across the field and in like manner, mark the outside corner of 3rd base. Home plate, first base, and third base are wholly inside the diamond.
- 5 To check the diamond, place the home plate end of the cord at the 1st base stake and the 36.58m (120ft) marker at 3rd base. The 18.29m (60ft) marker should now check at home plate and 2nd base.
- 6 In laying out a 19.81m (65 ft) base path diamond, follow the same procedure with the following substitute dimensions: 19.81m (65ft), 39.62m (130ft), and 28.02m (91ft 11 in).

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

- 7 A field is officially supposed to have a warning track between 15 and 12ft (5m and 4m) from the outfield fence. However, if the game is being played on a field larger than required, no warning track is required before the temporary outfield fencing.
- 8 Check all distances with a steel tape whenever possible.

Making the playing surface

How you make the actual playing surface of your softball field will depend on whether you have your own land to use or if you need to place your field on an already existing multi-sport field or a football field.

Before we discuss playing on a dirt infield versus an all grass infield, let's look at some diagrams of how you layout an actual softball field – keeping in mind the distances that we just looked at in the previous tables.

Playing field layout and dimensions

The following diagram (Diagram 1) shows the field layout and distances for a women's fastpitch game using a 13.11m (43ft) pitching distance, 18.29m (60ft) bases and no outfield fence. Please remember that the pitching rubber, the base and outfield fence (if you have one) distance all can change according to the previous chart and the age group and sex of the teams playing.

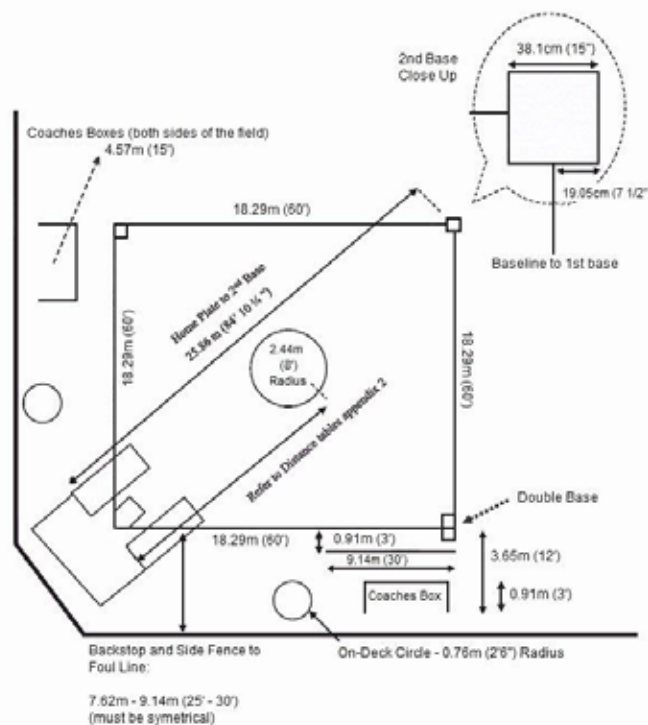


Diagram 1

What **will not change** about the following diagram, no matter who is playing on the field, are the distances that the playing field sits from the backstop. You might not be in a position to have a backstop 7.62m-9.14m (25-30ft) from home plate and the two foul lines – that's okay. But just know

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

that if the backstop is too close to home plate, balls that get past the catcher will rebound back too quickly. If the backstop is too far from home plate, you're going to spend a lot of time chasing after balls. You can still play softball under these conditions, it just becomes a little more challenging.

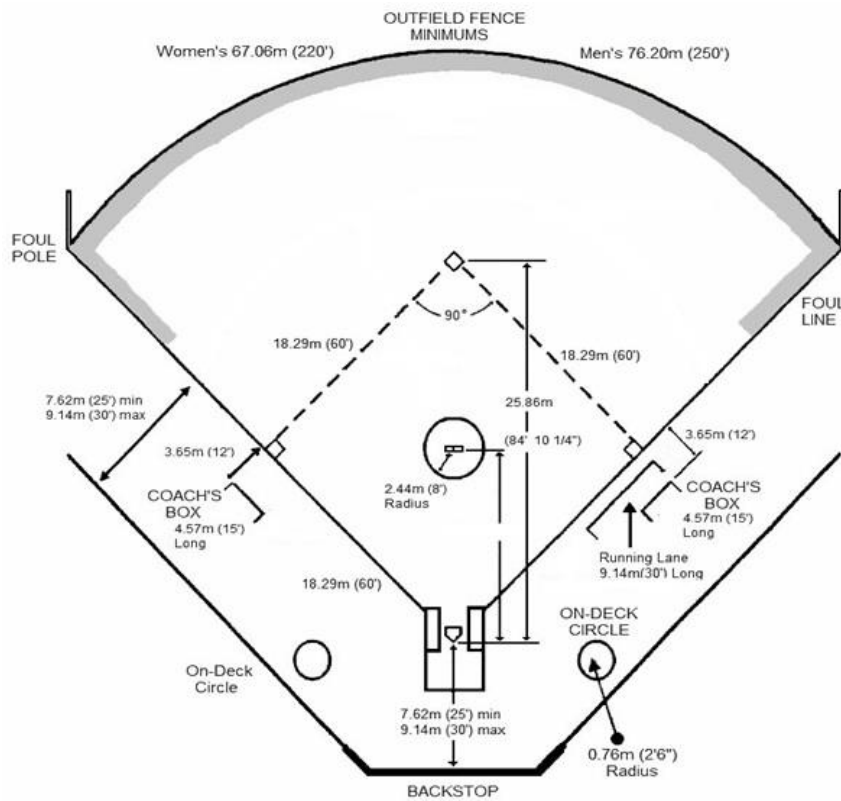


Diagram 2

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Skinning the infield

If you're lucky enough to have your own land to use then you will probably want to have an all dirt infield, and to do so means you're going to have to remove all the dirt from the infield area which is called 'skinning your infield'.

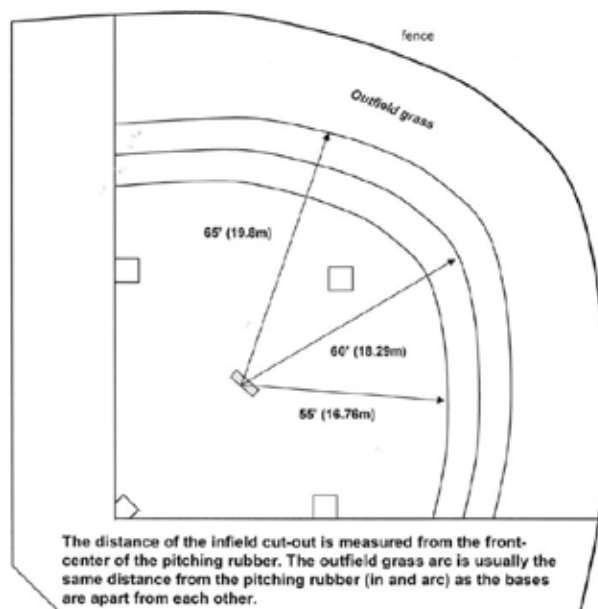


Diagram 3

Note: If you are using your softball field for both adults and children's games, which means you will be using different base distances, then your outfield grass arc should be at 19.8m (65ft) which is where it would go for the adults. The children won't care if the grass starts too far away. This is much better than being too close to the adult infielders.

Adding a sprinkler system

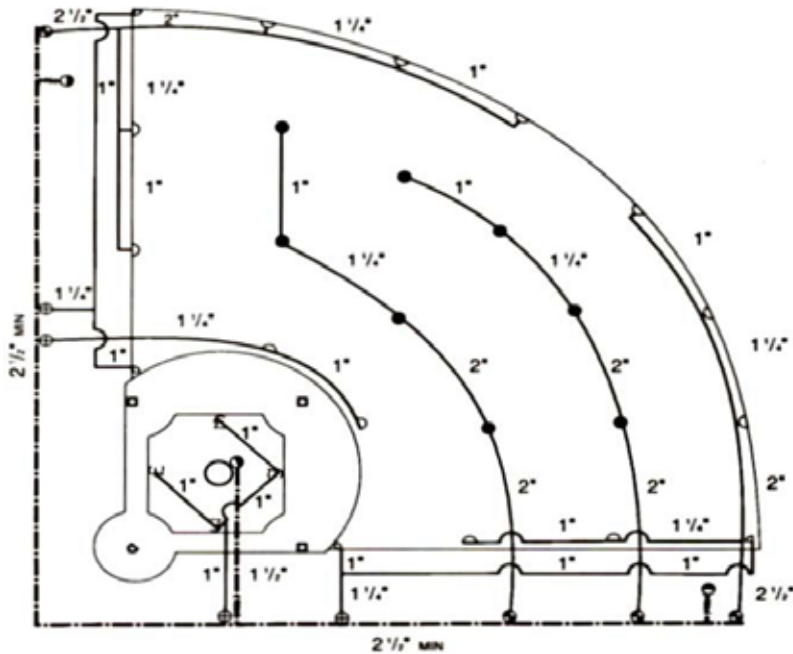
If you're really serious about making a good looking softball field and then keeping it in good condition, you're going to need to have a sprinkler system underneath both the outfield grass and the infield dirt. While this might not be possible for many of you reading this, that's understandable. If you can somehow provide a sprinkler system, you will really see the benefit in the form of a beautiful softball field.

The diagram below shows the typical layout for a softball field irrigation or sprinkler system. Most of the sprinkler heads will be placed in the outfield to water the grass, but there will be at least one head placed in the infield (usually just behind the pitching rubber) to allow a hose to be attached and the infield dirt watered. This watering of the infield dirt prevents it from drying out and then blowing off your field every time the wind blows.

When you place the sprinkler heads in the ground make sure that they lay below the surface when they aren't in use so that outfields won't trip over them. You want to make sure that your playing field is as safe for your teams as possible.

Irrigation layout

TYPICAL IRRIGATION LAYOUT



Legend:

- I40-36S-42 Pop-up Sprinkler
- I40-ADS-42 Pop-up Sprinkler
- ⊕ HBV-151EP 1 1/2" Electric Valve
- ⊕ HBV-101EP 1" Electric Valve
- ⊕ HV-151-RL 1 1/2" Quick-Coupling Valve
- PVC Mainline (per local code)
- PVC CL200 (size as noted)
- ⊕ I20-ADS-07-LA Rotor Pop-up
- ⊕ 1 1/2" Gate Valve

Notes:

1. Maximum circuit galonage - 62 GPM
2. Minimum mainline operating pressure at field - 65 psi
3. 8 controller stations required
4. Full-circle sprinklers require approximately twice the watering time as half-circle sprinklers and four times the watering time as quarter-circle sprinklers.
5. Check local codes for backflow requirements.

Diagram 4

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Softball field distances

International standard distances

The distances set out below are measured from the rear point of home plate to 1st base and the front edge of the pitchers plate.

Division	Age group	Bases	Pitching	Outfield fence	Ball size
Adult					
Fastpitch	Men	18.29m (60ft)	14.02m (46ft)	76.20m (250ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Fastpitch	Women	18.29m (60ft)	13.11m (43ft)	67.06m (220ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Slowpitch	Men	19.81m (65ft)	15.24m (50ft)	91.44m (300ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Slowpitch	Women	19.81m (65ft)	15.24m (50ft)	83.82m (275ft)	27.9cm (11in)
Slowpitch	Co-ed	19.81m (65ft)	15.24m (50ft)	83.82m (275ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Division	Age group	Bases	Pitching	Outfield fence	Ball size
Youth					
Fastpitch	Jr Women (19 under)	18.29m (60ft)	13.11m (43ft)	67.06m (220ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Fastpitch	Jr. Men (19 under)	18.29m (60ft)	14.02m (46ft)	76.20m (250ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Fastpitch	Jr. Women (16 under)	18.29m (60ft)	12.19m (40ft)	67.06m (220ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Fastpitch	Jr Men (16 under)	18.29m (60ft)	14.02m (46ft)	76.20m (250ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Slowpitch	Jr Women (19 under)	19.81m (65ft)	15.24m (50ft)	80.77m (265 ft)	27.9cm (11in)
Slowpitch	Jr Men (19 under)	19.81m (65ft)	15.24m (50ft)	91.44m (300ft)	30.5cm (12in)
Slowpitch	Jr Women (16 under)	19.81m (65ft)	14.02m (46ft)	80.77m (265ft)	27.9cm (11in)
Slowpitch	Jr Men (16 under)	19.81m (65ft)	14.02m (46ft)	91.44m (300ft)	30.5cm (12in)

School age programs (suggested distances)

Now, for those of you that will possibly be using this field for school-aged programs, while the ISF does not currently offer World Championships in age groups below 16 years of age (or a Junior. Boys' World Cup), we do encourage younger aged children to learn to play softball. The following table shows the suggested distances and ball sizes for young children.

Age	Pitching	Bases	Ball size
6 and under	T-ball	7.6m (25ft)	tennis ball
8 and under	T-ball	13.7m (45ft)	22.8cm (9in) or tennis ball
10 and under	10.66m (35ft)	16.76m (55ft)	27.94cm (11in)
12 and under	10.656m (35ft)	18.28m (60ft)	30.48cm (12in)
14 and under	2.19m (40ft)	18.28m (60ft)	30.48cm (12in)

The minimum length of the baselines varies depending on the classification of play as follows:

Fastpitch baselines	18.29m (60ft)
Slowpitch baselines	18.29m (60ft) or 19.81m (65ft) or more depending on the association and level of play
Wheelchair baselines	15.24m (50ft)

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Specific components of a softball field

Although softball field dimensions may differ depending on the game being played, the components of a softball field remain the same:

- Backstop*
- Bases (1st, 2nd & 3rd)
- Batter's boxes
- Coach's boxes (1st & 3rd)*
- Foul lines (1st & 3rd)*
- Home plate
- Pitching circle
- Pitching rubber

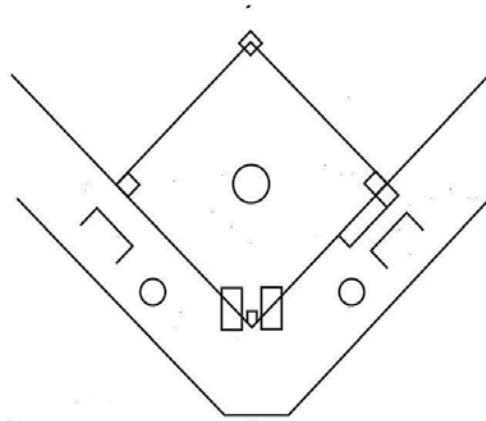


Diagram 5

Backstop

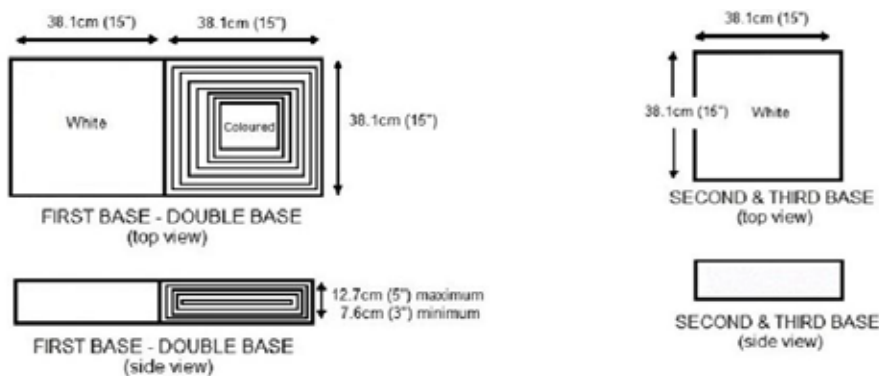
The backstop is the area behind home plate.

Dimensions: Between 7.62m and 9.14m (25ft and 30ft) behind home plate depending on the type of division that is playing.

Bases

At one corner of the diamond is the home plate with bases at each of the remaining corners.

The bases are numbered counter clockwise as 1st base, 2nd base and 3rd base and usually securely fastened to the ground. In ISF Championships, a contrast coloured 'double base' or 'safety base' is required.



Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

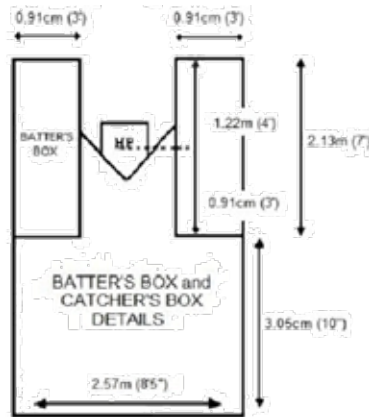
Baselines distances vary depending on the classification of play. Refer to [Softball field distances](#).

Batter's and catcher's box

The batter's boxes are the rectangular area beside home plate where the batter must stand to hit the pitch.

Dimensions: **Batter's box**
0.91m (3') x 2.13m (7')

Catcher's box
2.57m (8' 5") x 3.05m (10')



Coach's boxes

The coach's boxes are located in foul territory outside both baselines.

Dimensions: Two boxes located behind a line 5m (15ft) long located 3m (12ft) from each baseline.

Diamond

The diamond is the area on the infield between the bases on each corner.

Dimensions: Refer to [Softball field distances](#).

Foul lines

The field is defined by foul lines that meet at a right angle at home plate. A fence running between the baselines defines the limits of the field; this fence is equidistant from home plate at all points (whenever possible, the field should be enclosed by a fence to avoid confusing ground rules).

Dimensions: Length of the foul line is determined by the field dimensions (refer to [Softball field distances](#)).

Appendix A. Softball Australia – Softball Field Guidelines

Home plate

The home plate is the 5-sided piece of whitened rubber that the batter stands beside while at bat and the area the pitch needs to pass over to be judged a strike pitching circle.

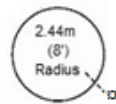
<i>Dimensions:</i>	1	43.2cm (17in)
	2	21.6cm (8.5in)
	3	30.5cm (12in)



Pitching circle

In fastpitch, the skinned circle (pitching circle) is around the pitching rubber.

<i>Dimensions:</i>	2.44m (8') radius
--------------------	-------------------



Pitching rubber (plate)

Near the centre of the diamond is the pitching rubber.

<i>Dimensions:</i>	Width of 61.0cm (24in)
	Depth of 15.2cm (6in)



Appendix B. Softball Queensland – State Facility Strategy 2019



State Facility Strategy
2019



recreation
open space
and sport
specialists

The Queensland Government provided funding to Softball Queensland through the Get Planning Spaces Program to improve the quality of evidence-based decision making and strategic planning for sport and recreation across Queensland.



Version control:

This report has been prepared by:

ROSS Planning Pty Ltd
ABN 32 508 029 959
Upper floor, 63 Bay Terrace
Wynnum QLD 4178

PO Box 5660
Manly QLD 4179

Telephone: (07) 3901 0730
Fax: (07) 3893 0593

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Executive summary

The Softball Queensland State Facility Strategy provides all stakeholders in the softball community with a clear direction for future facility planning and development. It provides an analysis of existing provision and demand, compliance with facility standard expectations, projects future needs and highlights key facility gaps and opportunities.

The Strategy provides a snapshot of facility requirements in order to ensure a hierarchy of facilities across the State with the capacity to host all levels of softball. Importantly, there is no expectation for every association to be looking to develop high-level facilities in order to host events. The focus for associations should be on providing for local players with a quality range of softball products at a functional venue and aiming to assist with the day-to-day operations of each association - not necessarily meeting the hosting criteria of State and National level tournaments.

One of the key considerations highlighted in the Strategy is the current oversupply of diamonds at an association operational level. Softball Queensland has previously undertaken significant consultation and research on softball delivery models to determine a preferred players per diamond ratio and when applying this model, not a single association is currently under-supplied to meet local demand. To put this into perspective, the player per diamond ratio is currently more than three times what is recommended.

Further, the Strategy identified the clear differences in softball delivery between individual associations. What separates softball from other sports is that each association is allowed to undertake training and fixture delivery models of their choice. Without the need of the traditional "home-and-away" scheduling handed down from the peak body, each association conduct their own activities. This allows venues the freedom to train and conduct competition on a flexible basis with some opting for weekday training and weekend games, while others prefer to train and compete during the week with limited activity on the weekend. Lastly, some venues are able to play under lights while others are limited to hosting weekend competitions during the daylight hours. As a result, consultation was conducted with all associations to gain a greater understanding of individual needs.

Observations from site inspections and interviews uncovered a common theme. Playing facilities at each venue (diamonds, dugouts, backnets and fencing) were generally of a high or suitable standard. This is verified by survey results indicating that 85% of associations rated their own facilities as suitable or exceeds needs. In contrast, inspections at the venues highlighted a gap in the delivery of key ancillary features. This included unsuitable clubhouses, canteens, amenities, storage, and spectator facilities.

Given that funding facility development will inevitably fall upon local associations, councils and the Queensland State Government, it has been essential that the Strategy represents realistic and achievable outcomes. In order to meet the current and future demands of softball, a state-wide focus on upgrade of ancillary features has been proposed. These upgrades are a reflection of venues that no longer offer fit-for-purpose facilities to patrons, in particular, spectators.

To guide development and future operations of each association, the Strategy includes a hierarchy that identifies the requirements for an association-, state- and national/international-level venue. It is important to note that these benchmarks should only be considered as a guide with ultimate facility development reflective of the day-to-day association activity, availability of land and access to necessary funding and resources.



Appendix B. Softball Queensland – State Facility Strategy 2019



State-wide implementation			
Action	Priority	Lead	SQ's role
Ensure that the State Facility Strategy becomes a standing item for the Softball Queensland AGM and Conference. Discuss key outcomes and identify future actions of note (e.g. upgrades to the ancillary facilities)	Short-term and ongoing	SQ	Strategic direction
Communicate and endorse the facility hierarchy and their preferred facility requirements to softball, Council and State Government stakeholders	Short-term and ongoing	SQ	Strategic direction
Encourage associations to focus on ancillary facilities rather than playing facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – shaded seating areas for groups – permanent shade structures between diamonds – easily accessible toilets – retain shade trees where possible <input type="checkbox"/> Clubhouses/canteens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – seek functional spaces such as small canteens/servery, officials' areas and covered outdoor areas <input type="checkbox"/> Storage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – investigate opportunities to incorporate additional storage within clubhouse/canteen upgrades <input type="checkbox"/> Signage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – liaise with councils to improve directional signage from the local street network – construct attractive site entry signage – construct informative signage identifying diamond layout 	Short-term and ongoing	SQ Associations	Strategic direction
Prepare a simple facility development plan template that associations can complete to guide facility planning and development. Encourage the associations to use the State Facility Strategy as a guiding tool and for facility planning to become a standing agenda item at association committee meetings	Short-term	SQ	Provider
Continue to support associations seeking grants to achieve facility priorities identified in the State Facility Strategy (e.g. letters of support, providing references to preferred facility construction contractors, reviewing construction quotes, reviewing grant applications)	Short-term and ongoing	SQ Association committees	Partner Strategic direction
Encourage association committees to prepare facility renewal plans (and appropriate budgets) in association with landlords	Short-term and ongoing	SQ Association committees	Partner Strategic direction



3 Background

Introduction and purpose

Softball Queensland (SQ) acknowledge that the development of quality softball facilities across Queensland is critically important to the long-term sustainability and growth of the game. For this reason, in late 2018, ROSS Planning was engaged to prepare a State Facility Strategy. The Strategy will ensure Softball Queensland can provide clear leadership regarding the future development of facilities. This includes providing high quality advice to Government to optimise return on investment, community benefits and the delivery of whole-of-sport outcomes.

This long-term strategy for facilities will assist both the sport and government make decisions regarding the priority of potential facility developments considering:

- compliance with facility standard expectations
- current usage levels (and understanding capacity).

It is important to note, that the vast majority of softball associations are based at council-managed facilities. As such, development of the Strategy has included close consultation with council officers.

Ultimately, the Strategy will assist Softball Queensland and the member associations to continue to deliver a quality product by addressing facility requirements and aligning with the organisation's 2019 ambition:

Softball Queensland set out to provide leadership for the development and delivery of softball in Queensland ensuring growth in participation and increased enjoyment by everyone through appropriate standards of administration and behaviour and enhancing relationships between all stakeholders

Approach

The methodology used in the development of this Strategy has been broken down into seven stages. The figure below shows the sequential development of the project. In reality, a number of stages were undertaken concurrently. The information gathered and generated throughout this process provides the various outputs required to produce a robust quality Strategy.





Delivery of softball in Queensland

There are two key pathways for softball participation in Queensland - association-based system and school-based system. Additionally, a number of associations conduct alternate programs including holiday clinics and slow-pitch.

Association-based delivery

The association-based system provides a softball competition structure for more than 6,500 registered players/participants across Queensland. For the vast majority of associations, participation is based on a traditional 'club-based' model. However, unlike many traditional sports, associations can 'share' players between each association (a popular option for alternating summer/winter seasons). Clubs converge on a central association facility to compete in weekly fixtures (unlike a 'home-and-away' approach undertaken in sports such as the various football codes and cricket). Unlike these traditional sports, the majority of clubs also conduct training at the association venue. It is the association facilities that are the focus of this Strategy.

Clear representative pathways exist for both junior and senior players in the association-based system through competitions such as Open State Championships, the State Age Championships and National Championships. Facility requirements for these carnivals are detailed in the following sections.

School-based delivery

Softball continues to be a sport delivered in both the public and private school systems. Participants have the opportunity to compete in a range of programs endorsed by Softball Queensland with the aim of supporting the delivery of softball throughout schools. In recent years, more than 60 programs were delivered in schools throughout Queensland on behalf of Softball Queensland.

From a representative perspective, opportunity exists for students aged to 19 years to represent school sport districts, regions and potentially Queensland.

School softball training and matches are undertaken at both individual schools (where facilities exist) and at association facilities.





Understanding facility demand

State-wide participation

In 2018, there were 20 associations operating under the Softball Queensland 'banner'. Additional participation in Softball Queensland programs includes registration in the South East Queensland Masters competition and standalone programs such as 'Ozpitch'. Considered together, Softball Queensland was the peak body for 6,566 players and 2,382 non-playing members in 2018.

It is recognised that participation in softball is greater than this with a number of associations conducting social softball competitions (with players not necessarily registered with Softball Queensland). Additionally, there are many school students playing weekly school competitions that are not members of affiliated associations.

The Australian Sports Commission's AusPlay survey results for 2018 indicate that more than 28,000 children and 47,000 adults, for a total of 75,000 participants were involved in organised softball Australia-wide. While child participation has increased since 2017 to 24,300 (a 20% increase), adult participation has fallen from 57,000 (17% decrease). Interestingly, Softball Australia 2018 membership data indicated membership as being 26,711. This means that roughly 65% of softball participants are not registering as a Softball Australia member (and/or over-reporting in the AusPlay survey). While there will be some cross-overs in the data sets making direct comparison difficult (e.g. 15 year old players are considered juniors in the Softball Queensland registration but would be included as adults in the AusPlay survey), there are clearly considerable numbers of juniors and seniors participating in softball (that are not registered with Softball Queensland).



Participation trends

Between 2014 and 2018, participation in Softball Queensland-affiliated competitions has remained steady, decreasing only slightly from 7,110 to 6,566 (a decrease of 7.65%). In terms of raw numbers (rather than proportions) the largest participation increases achieved between 2014 and 2018 are listed below:

<input type="checkbox"/> Hervey Bay Softball Association	197
<input type="checkbox"/> Redlands Softball Association	84
<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Coast Softball Association	47.

It should be noted that the Softball Queensland Masters competition attracted an additional 403 participants in 2018 compared to 2014. It is also important to recognise that population projections alone are not necessarily the key determinant of a strong growing association. While significant population increases have been achieved in areas such as the Gold Coast, marked population changes have not been observed in Redlands, or Hervey Bay. In these instances, factors such as quality facilities, programs and competitions may be leading to participation increases. Finally, it is worth noting that increases at Hervey Bay may also be due to a result of a recent move from a number of Bundaberg clubs to the Hervey Bay Association.

The largest registration decreases are attributed to:

<input type="checkbox"/> Brisbane Softball Association	- 289
<input type="checkbox"/> Redcliffe Softball Association	- 223
<input type="checkbox"/> Bundaberg Softball Association	- 215
<input type="checkbox"/> Mount Isa Softball Association	- 197.

Here again, the decrease observed at Bundaberg can be attributed to clubs moving to play at Hervey Bay.

Clearly, meeting the needs of growing associations and understanding whether facility issues may have attributed to losses in decreasing associations is a key component of the Strategy.





Facility hierarchy

A tiered approach to facility hierarchy has been established to assist Softball Queensland, councils and associations in determining current and future facility requirements. Importantly, these tiers need to be considered with a sense of 'flexibility'. The manner in which associations conduct training and fixtures, amount of school use accommodated, availability of field lighting and field sharing all impact the facilities required for each association to operate. Regardless, the provision of facility tiers (and ancillary inclusions) can be used as an indicative guide for facility development decision-makers.

Tier 1 - International/National

A facility capable of hosting the highest level one-off feature matches and tournaments. These facilities meet the expectations of both the International Softball Federation and Softball Australia.

It is important to note that these facilities are also appropriate for all levels of softball below the international/national tier. They may be used for regular weekly club and school training and fixtures and host regional and state-level tournaments.

International/National facility			
On-field facility requirements	Off-field facility requirements	Functionality	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> lighting (650 lux infield, 450 lux outfield) on at least 1 diamond <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 76.2m to outfield fence (males) and 67.06m (females) for fastpitch <input type="checkbox"/> skinned infield <input type="checkbox"/> backstop fencing (7m-9m), side fencing (1.2m-2m) and outfield fencing (1.2m-2m) <input type="checkbox"/> dirt warning track for side and outfield fencing <input type="checkbox"/> 2 enclosed dugouts (minimum 9m x 1.2m) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 bullpens <input type="checkbox"/> 2 batting cages <input type="checkbox"/> 2 foul poles (minimum 4.57m high) <input type="checkbox"/> suitable scoreboard <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 1 diamond (and 2 practice diamonds), 4 diamonds for tournaments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> suitable spectator seating (preferably with cover) <input type="checkbox"/> practice field <input type="checkbox"/> minimum of 2 changerooms (4 where combined mens' and womens' events are conducted) <input type="checkbox"/> umpire's changeroom and meeting room <input type="checkbox"/> separate amenities suitable to meet spectator, player and official requirements <input type="checkbox"/> technical office area <input type="checkbox"/> statistician's room <input type="checkbox"/> statistician's area to the side of home plate <input type="checkbox"/> drug testing area (meeting room and private bathroom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> International 'friendlies' <input type="checkbox"/> Underage World Cup <input type="checkbox"/> National Softball Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Redlands



Appendix B. Softball Queensland – State Facility Strategy 2019



Tier 2 - State

A facility capable of hosting regular state-levels events in addition to regular association functions.

State facility			
On-field facility requirements	Off-field facility requirements	Functionality	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> lighting for open age competition (650 lux infield, 450 lux outfield) <input type="checkbox"/> lighting for under age competition (530 lux infield, 320 lux outfield) <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 76.2m to outfield fence (males) and 67.06m (females) <input type="checkbox"/> skinned infield <input type="checkbox"/> backstop fencing (7m-9m) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 enclosed dugouts <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 4 diamonds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> minimum of 2 changerooms (4 where combined mens' and womens' events are conducted) <input type="checkbox"/> umpire's changeroom <input type="checkbox"/> amenities suitable to meet spectator requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Softball Queensland State Championships <input type="checkbox"/> Queensland School Sport Primary and Secondary State Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Caboolture <input type="checkbox"/> Far North Queensland <input type="checkbox"/> Hervey Bay <input type="checkbox"/> Ipswich <input type="checkbox"/> Mackay <input type="checkbox"/> Redcliffe <input type="checkbox"/> Toowoomba

Tier 3 - Association

A facility capable of hosting regular association training and competitions (and association-conducted tournaments). It is also important to note that Association-level facilities may be able to host state-level tournaments through temporary facility upgrades. For instance, portable toilets, moveable shade structures and seating can all add to the experience of patrons. For players, temporary home-run fencing and dugouts can bring association-level diamonds up to a higher-level.

Association facility			
On-field facility requirements	Off-field facility requirements	Functionality	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> unlit OR lighting (250 lux infield, 150 lux outfield) <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 76.2m outfield (males) and 67.06m (females) <input type="checkbox"/> skinned infield, skinned running tracks, skinned bases or full grass <input type="checkbox"/> backstop fencing <input type="checkbox"/> player seating for each diamond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> amenities suitable to meet player, official and spectator requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> weekly association fixtures and irregular carnivals <input type="checkbox"/> potential for regular school fixtures <input type="checkbox"/> club, school and representative training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mount Isa <input type="checkbox"/> Townsville <input type="checkbox"/> Wynnum

Appendix A includes a tier classification for each of the existing associations





Events and facility requirements

Softball Australia, Softball Queensland, School Sport Australia and Queensland School Sport offer a range of higher-level championships and tournaments. Building upon the on- and off-field facility requirements detailed in the previous section for each tier level, this section provides a summary of the preferred diamond numbers for each of the events.

National-level (Softball Australia)	
Event	Diamond requirements (for matches)
<input type="checkbox"/> U14 Girls' Regional Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U14 Boys' Regional Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U16 Girls' National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U16 Boys' National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U18 Women's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U18 Men's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U23 Women's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U23 Men's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Open Women's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Open Men's National Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 diamonds
National-level (School Sport Australia)	
Event	Diamond requirements (for matches)
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 years and under (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> 17 years and under (boys and girls)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 diamonds
State-level (Softball Australia)	
Event	Diamond requirements (for matches)
<input type="checkbox"/> U14 Girls' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U14 Boys' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U16 Girls' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U16 Boys' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U18 Women's State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> U18 Men's State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Open Women's State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Open Men's State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Softball Queensland Masters	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> Murri Women's Tournament	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 diamonds
State-level (School Sport)	
Event	Diamond requirements (for matches)
<input type="checkbox"/> 10-12 years Girls' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> 10-12 years Boys' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> 13-19 years Girls' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 diamonds
<input type="checkbox"/> 13-19 years Boys' State Championship	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 diamonds

While most associations have enough diamonds to host many of these events, for higher-level tournaments the quality of the diamonds and ancillary facilities is a key consideration.

Both Softball Queensland and Queensland School Sport are committed to sharing these events at quality facilities spread across the State. However, the desire to host events should not be the driving factor behind associations looking for facility upgrades. Rather, growth in player numbers at association level and the resulting demand for additional quality facilities should be the primary consideration.

Importantly, quality off-diamond experiences are also required for patrons attending events and tournaments. Facilities such as open areas for visiting teams to set-up tents, ample overflow car parking, entertainment and food/beverage options, shaded areas near diamonds and appropriate amenities are all important elements of hosting successful tournaments. Merely having the required number of diamonds will not guarantee patron satisfaction.



Appendix C. Brisbane Softball Association Summer Competition

In the 2020/21 season, BSA supported and provided services for:

- Nine clubs, of which eight clubs are based at Downey Park;
 - Bears Softball
 - Panthers Softball
 - Redsox Softball
 - Albany Creek & Samford District Softball
 - Saints Softball
 - Devils Softball
 - Wilston Grange Softball
 - Stealers Softball
 - Cougars Softball (Redcliffe)
- Our competition is also supported by the services of the Brisbane Softball Umpires Association (BSUA). BSUA provide formally qualified umpires for both junior and senior games. They also provide a pathway for accreditation through their Red Shirt program and mentor their umpires as they progress through the levels;
- 29 Senior Women's Teams and 19 Junior Teams, providing competitions across all levels of skills and experience;

		NUMBER OF TEAMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PLAYERS
SENIOR TEAMS	A1	4	35
	A2	4	38
	A3	5	55
	B1	4	48
	B2	4	45
	C1	4	49
	C2	4	58
	SUB TOTAL	29	328
JUNIOR TEAMS	U18	5	49
	U16	4	45
	U14	4	45
	U12	6	62
	Swing Into Softball/T-ball	n/a	18
	SUB TOTAL	19	219
TOTAL		48 teams	547 player participants

- Each team is supported by a number of officials such as coaches, scorers and managers. In season 2020/21 the total number of officials was 90.
- The total number of registered participants for season 2020/21 was 637. It is noted this was a 9% increase in participants from the 2019/20 season. As a direct result of the high quality competition on offer at Downey Park, participants travel from Hervey Bay, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast to play each week.

INFRASTRUCTURE USE AND AVAILABILITY

BSA facilities are utilised on an almost daily basis during the summer season, as follows:

WEEKDAY	MAIN USER	OTHER USERS
Monday	Saints Softball training	Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played
Tuesday	Panthers Softball training	Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played
Wednesday	BSA - for representative trainings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSA team training for U14, U16, U18, Open women State Championships • Queensland Heat State team training • Aussie Spirit Queensland players, Olympic training 	Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played
Thursday	Bears Softball training	Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played
Friday	BSA - U18 competition, held fortnightly	A1/A2 games may be scheduled in the draw Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played
Saturday	BSA - game day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencing with Juniors arriving from 7am with first game time 8am. • Senior games are held from 12pm with last game either 4pm or 6pm depending on scheduling needs 	
Sunday	BSA - for representative trainings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSA team training for U14, U16, U18, Open women State Championships 	Due to weekend weather conditions, make up games may be played Trainings are held in the lead up to State Championships which are held as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U14 – April • U16 – September • U18 – October • Open Women – October Facilities may also be used for Queensland State team trainings in the lead up to National Championships held as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U23 - December • U14 / U16 / U18 – January • Open Women – January

BSA currently utilises the following operational infrastructure, necessary to run a full competition:

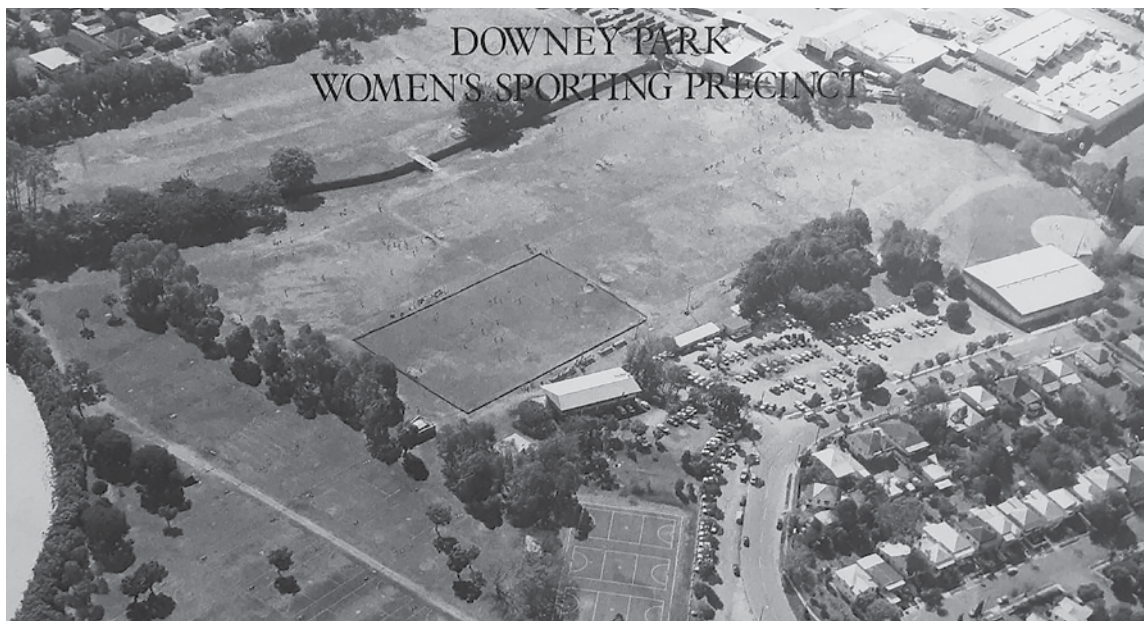
KEY INFRASTRUCTURE	
Diamonds	<p>Two skinned fast pitch diamonds with lights:</p> <p>DIAMOND 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enclosed, covered, lockable dugouts • bullpens • fully fenced • padded backstop • warm up area behind or beside diamond • spectator seating <p>DIAMOND 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanent fencing to half diamond • temporary dugouts • warm up areas • spectator seating <p>DIAMONDS 3 - 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 grassed fast pitch diamonds • semi permanent backstops • temporary dugouts • spectator seating available at diamonds 4, 6, 15/16
Club House	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board room • Large meeting room • Reception • Office • Toilet amenities • Canteen • Bar • Retail space • BSA related storage facilities • Storage facilities for clubs • Representative storage and office space • Umpires room
Grandstand	Fully covered and waterproof with individual tiered seating
Batting Cages	Three bays - fully enclosed and lockable
Storage Shed	Large multi bay fully enclosed and lockable storage shed that securely holds all temporary dugout equipment plus tools and equipment for maintenance activities



Appendix D. A Brief History – Brisbane Softball at Downey Park

Historically, Brisbane City Council was a progressive council that was highly supportive of women's sport. Both women's individual and team sports found their spiritual home at Downey Park after it was 'dedicated to women's sport in 1959. In 2004, after 45 years of continuous operation, the BCC listed Downey Park as a 'local heritage place', signifying the importance of the park to women's sport.

The dedication of Downey Park to women's participation in various sports allowed for the playing of netball, hockey, athletics, cricket and softball, providing a security to those respective sporting bodies to build infrastructure through the support of their army of volunteers and public entities.



One of the key proponents of the sporting precinct was Lady Mayoress Mrs Jessie Groom, who formed the Women's Amateur Sports Appeal Committee in 1957 to co-ordinate the harmonious activities of female sport throughout summer and winter seasons. The organisation was disbanded when leadership roles were established for the respective sports.



In late 1960 an application was made to BCC to formalise the use of Downey Park for Brisbane Softball. Permission was granted and a lease was agreed to and in late 1961 volunteers had their first working bee to erect backstops in readiness for the season ahead. Minutes of the association's meeting at this time reflect the passion and excitement related to this new formalised venture, with a permanent home now legally guaranteed after a number of years of playing at parks across Newstead, Newmarket and Wilston areas.

In 1965, the Brisbane Women's Softball Association was formed under the leadership of Audrey McLaughlin (AM). In honour of Audrey's commitment to the development of softball in Brisbane and Queensland and her significant achievements, our international diamond is named in her honour.

Downey Park has been considered the home of softball for girls and women of every calibre since this time, with participation rates reaching their peak in the late 80s/early 90s.

As participation continued to grow, plans were made to establish a headquarters for Queensland softball that included an international standard diamond, lights and spectator facilities. To achieve this grand vision the Queensland Softball Headquarters Ltd was formed and was based at Downey Park.

Unique fundraising activities were required to bring this vision to life. They included the sale of life time grandstand membership seats that cost \$250 per seat, a loan of \$60,000 that was secured through 30 softball families providing a guarantor to the bank. Government grants plus a further \$160,000 loan secured the finance to commence the project.

In March 1980, after thousands of hours of hard labour by hundreds of volunteers, the first international diamond in Australia was formally opened at the Australian Championships that included a Mini World Series tournament.



With the support of the BCC, further infrastructure projects have continued to add value to the precinct. Those projects have included the provision of lights on Diamond 2, upgrading lights on Diamond 1 to an international standard as standards changed, enclosed batting cages were constructed and an equipment shed was erected as recently as 2019.



Image: Equipment shed



Image: Diamond 2 lights

TIES TO OLYMPIC PROGRAM

As previously noted, BSA has supported the Olympic program since softball was made an Olympic sport in 1996. BSA has conducted countless Australian softball camps and supported the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) program as well as the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) program.

The Australian softball team has competed in all 4 Olympic Games and won a medal in every Olympic Games they have participated in. At present, of the total 33 Olympians who have represented Australia in softball, 21 have participated in the BSA competition. The current Aussie Spirit squad includes 5 players who participated in the 2020/21 BSA competition with a further 4 players having played at Downey Park at various times in past seasons in preparation for this momentous career achievement.

Those current BSA participants are Chelsea Forkin (registered BSA representative), Stacey Porter, Janice Blackman, Tamiaka Whitefield and Justine Smethurst. Previous BSA participants in the squad are Kaia Parnaby, Jade Wall, Ellen Roberts and Taylah Tsitsikronis. BSA is further represented in the support staff of the Aussie Spirit team with the appointment of Kym Tollenare as a Daily Training Environment (DTE) Coach.

MEN'S TEAMS AT DOWNEY PARK

Whilst there have been numerous applications made for men to play at Downey Park, permission has only been granted on two occasions. Those exemptions were for the Australian Masters Games 1991 and the World Masters Games 1994 where both men and women competed.

LONGEVITY OF BSA CLUBS

Brisbane Softball Association continues to support all clubs that play at Downey Park. Those teams have a long and enduring history with the Association.



BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION AWARDS

BSA end of season awards also reflect the history of the association and all awards are named in recognition of the value those players, supporters and volunteers have contributed to softball at Downey Park.

JUNIOR AWARDS

CAROL VELLNAGEL U12 MVP AWARD

Carol has spent over 50 years participating in various capacities in softball. Carol was a member of the Rebels Softball Club for 16 years before joining Redsox Softball Club where she has been a member for over 23 years and is also a Life member.

Carol has demonstrated her commitment and passion for softball for decades, culminating in a being awarded a Softball Queensland Service Award (Silver) and Softball Australia Service Award.

Carol is a former BSA Secretary and has also undertaken various club management roles. She loves watching the junior players learn the game and develop their skills.

JANNITA DUNN MEMORIAL U12 SPIRIT AWARD

Jannita Dunn nee Tallis is the mother of Tyleisha, Jordan, Bronita and Tayla Dunn. She was a loving Mother devoting her life to watching her children play the sport they love. Jannita would always go and thank the coaches for having her girls in their team after each training and game day. Jannita always loved the kids in the team that weren't necessarily the best players with the most skill but the ones who gave 100% and always looked well presented, uniform tucked in etc. Unfortunately we lost Jannita to breast cancer in 2009, her fight was second to none and her legacy lives on through her daughters, whom you will always see around the grounds to this day.

LEIGH MULLER U14 MVP AWARD

Leigh is passionate about softball and has been a major contributor to softball in Brisbane for decades.

Leigh was a Queensland Representative player (number 152) for 8 years – from 1975 through until 1982. She was awarded the vice captaincy on two occasions in 1976 and 1978.

Leigh has been appointed as Queensland Assistant Coach for the 1977 and 1984 Under 16 Girls Team and for the 2007 and 2008 Under 23 Women's Queensland Team.

In 2009 she was appointed head coach of the Queensland Maroon Women's Team at the Southern Cross Challenge.

In addition to her coaching appointments, Leigh has also been appointed a selector of the 1983/84 Under 19 Women's Team; the 1977/78–1981/82 and 1983/84 Under 16 Girls Team and the 2009 Qld Maroon Women's Team (Southern Cross Challenge).

Leigh was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2000.

Leigh is a lifelong member of Bears Softball Club. She continues to coach Bears junior players and also continues to play each week at Downey Park.





Image: Dave Trotman marking diamond

DAVE TROTMAN U16 MVP AWARD

The U16 Dave Trotman Award is named after a man who was a tireless worker for the Brisbane Softball Association. He was BSA Treasurer until he passed away suddenly in 2020 having held this position for over 20 years.

He was always there to support or lend a hand when needed and as such was granted Life membership of Brisbane Softball Association. Dave's involvement at BSA covered many roles, including BSA Board member, Men's Committee Chairperson, Building and Grounds committee, and Representative Team Manager.

Dave started his involvement in softball at the club level as an active member of Springwood Softball and his contribution as a coach, committee member and past President was recognised with Life Membership at that club also.

SENIOR MOST VALUABLE PLAYERS AWARDS

A1 – JUNE SPICE AWARD

In 1989 we celebrated the inaugural June Spice Medal Night. This award night has been the catalyst for celebrating the achievements and performances of players within the Brisbane Softball Association.

The Awards Night of Celebration as it is coined now, is the culmination of ideas and dreams of a very committed and passionate group of softball supporters.

The June Spice medal has been appropriately named after a lady who began her interest in softball in 1946. June Spice devoted 30 years to softball as a state player, scorer, Brisbane selector, Manager of Queensland and Brisbane teams and was on Brisbane Management for some 15 years. In 1967 she was elected a life member of Brisbane Softball Association.

A2 – DAPHNE HASS AWARD

Daphne Hass played and administered the game of softball for some 54 years. She represented Queensland from 1947 – 1952. At the club level she was a foundation member of Bears Softball Club along with her three sisters Bernice, Sybil and June.

After retiring from competitive softball she became President of Bears. Here she was awarded a Life Membership after seeing out her 40th year with the Club before moving on to the administration scene of Brisbane. Within three years Daphne had moved through the administrative ranks and was elected President of Brisbane Softball Association in 1983. During this time she served on numerous committees.

Daphne received a Brisbane Life membership in 1991 and a Softball Australia Award in 1992. In 1993 she was awarded an Order of Australia and in 2000 received an Australian Sports Medal, along with her brother Doug.

She retired as President of BSA in June 2000 after 16 years in the position. Since 1983 Daphne has been an active member of the Qld Women's Amateur Sports Council and was awarded a Life Membership in 1994. Daphne rates her 54 years of involvement in softball as a most satisfying and rewarding time.

A3 – KIM COOPER/MICHELLE WALLER AWARD (PREVIOUSLY CALLED FAY SMALLWOOD AWARD – RETIRED IN 2019)

Kim Cooper

Kim started her softball career in NSW resulting in being selected in the U16 (1981) and U19 (1982) teams. After moving to Queensland she went on to represent Queensland in the U19 and Open Women's teams.

- 1996/97 June Spice Medalist
- 1998 Debuted with the Australian Open Women's
- 1994 Represented Australia at the World Championships
- 1996 Represented Australia at Atlanta Olympic Games
- 2003 inducted into Softball Qld Hall of Fame
- 2004 inducted into Softball Australia Hall of Fame

Kim represented Brisbane, as a player, in the Open Women's teams and is now a coach for the Junior Representative teams. Kim is a member of Bears Softball Club and only recently retired from playing.

Michelle Waller

Michelle started her softball career in Mt Isa before moving to Brisbane joining Jaguars Softball Club

She represented Brisbane, as a player, in U14, U16, U18 divisions. She then went on to be the A1 June Spice Medalist in 1989/90 and 1991/92 seasons.

Michelle was selected in the U18 Australian squad before moving to USA in 1993. Whilst in the USA she represented Barton College and Wichita State University and was selected in multiple All Conference and All American teams. Michelle also broadened her softball experience and coached for a number of teams.

Returning to Australia 2008, Michelle joined Saints Softball Club in 2010 where she has been a player, coach and committee member as well as taking on the role of BSA Coaching/Team Co-ordinator. As a senior player Michelle won the 2011/12 and 2012/13 Fay Smallwood Award.

At BSA level, she has been a Representative coach since 2012, a Development/Representative committee member since 2014 and a Regional Academy Coach.

At SQI level, she has been Assistant coach for U17s and U23s; U15 head coach for Regional Academy; U15 Mentor Coach.

Fay Smallwood

Fay Smallwood has had a long association with Brisbane Softball Association both as a player and administrator. As a player she represented Australia in South Africa in 1967, Japan in 1970 and was a Reserve for the inaugural World Championship Team in 1965.

She represented Queensland from 1962-1970, was Captain in 1969 and Vice Captain in 1970. She was also a Brisbane representative from 1960-1970. She has been a Queensland and Brisbane selector and umpire and served 20+ years on Brisbane Committees.

She has been appropriately rewarded for her achievements through a Qld Softball Association Service Award and made Life Member for Brisbane in 1987. She was inducted into the inaugural Qld Softball Hall of Fame in 2000.



B1 – AUDREY MCLAUGHLIN AWARD

Audrey McLaughlin is a legend in her own right. She attended the first World Championships as Assistant Coach in 1965 which Australia won against the USA. She represented Queensland in the Open Women's team in the 1950s before moving into coaching and selecting at the State and National level.

Audrey was the inaugural President of the Brisbane Softball Association in 1965 and went on to hold this position until 1972. She is a BSA, QSA and SAI life member and an SAI and ISF Hall of Fame recipient. She also holds an Order of Australia medal.

B2 – ERIC TREWIN AWARD

Eric Trewin was a part of BSA for many decades commencing as a selector for Brisbane A & B Grades from 1965-1979. During this time he was also the BSA Registrar from 1965-1970 (during which time the 1974 floods occurred and he had to regroup after all records were lost) and Vice President from 1968-1978.

He was awarded a Life Membership in 1977 and retired from BSA duties in 1979. Even after his retirement you would still see his cheerful happy face at the park to watch his daughters and grand daughters play softball until his passing on the 22nd March 2006. He was a gentleman and tireless worker.

C1 – HAZEL MONTGOMERY AWARD

Hazel Montgomery was the Treasurer for BSA from 1974-1976 before taking on the Presidency for 6 years from 1978-1984. Many have described Hazel as an honest and tenacious woman who had a total love for the game. She was known to have called a spade a spade and if she truly believed in something she would drive hard to see it come to fruition. She was great fun to be around with a wicked sense of humour and although considered a tough cookie on the outside, she was a softy underneath this exterior.

C2 – BINNY WILLIS/CHRIS MORRIS AWARD

Binny Willis

The Binny Willis Trophy was named after a lady that held the BSA Presidency for 5 years from 2000-2005. She is extremely passionate about the game of softball and a great social person. She was known to listen carefully to the Clubs concerns and ideas. She was considered a tough nut but was really a softy inside. She was a Qld level umpire and Australian Softball Association board member.

Chris Morris

As a teenager, Chris started her softball career with Goldwings where she played as high as A3. Chris went on to play in the Nightball league and World Masters Games held at Downey Park.

Her coaching career started after Goldwings merged with Devils as the player/coach of the B1 side. She has held many roles on the Devils committee including Club Captain and President.

In 1990 Chris received a Softball Qld service award. Then in 2003 she received a Softball Australia service award.

Chris is passionate about the game. She is always fair but when it comes to a final, she plays to win.



DIAMOND AND GRANDSTAND MEMORIALS

In addition to the recognition of longstanding volunteers through the naming of awards, BSA's appreciation for our volunteers is also memorialised through the naming of our key facilities at Downey Park:

- Audrey McLaughlin Diamond – the first international diamond in Australia named after BSA's inaugural President.
- Daphne Hass Dugout
- Deb McColm Dugout
- Dave Trotman Grandstand

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS

In the past 60 years, BSA players and officials have achieved great success with BSA hosting major events such as:



EVENT	HOSTED
Queensland State Championships	28 times
Australian Championships	27 times
National Fastpitch League games	75 games
International tournaments	11 times

BSA is very proud of the significant contribution it has made to both State and National teams across all age divisions. Those representative players have been fostered through a strong junior development program including access to some of the best coaches in Australia.

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

STATE AND NATIONAL TEAMS	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
U14/15 Girls State Regional Academy Squad	2		7	4	6	6	7	7		8		4					7	10
U14/15 Girls State Regional Academy Officials			6	6	7	3	2										2	2
U16/17 Girls State Squad		6											2	1	6	7	6	15
U16/17 Girls State Team		4	6	6	4	4		2	2	4	5	4	2	6	6	5	9	5
U16/17 Girls State Officials		3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	1	
U18/19 Women's State Squad		8												1	11	6	10	11
U18/19 Women's State Team		5	3	5	4	3	3	6	5	6	6	6	5	8	8	6	6	3
U18/19 Women's State Officials		2	3	3	1	2	3	4	4	4	5	3	2	2	2	1	1	1
U23 Women's State Squad																12	14	
U23 Women's State Team		5	6	5	5	6	7						5	7	9	8		13
U23 Women's State Officials		3	3	3	3	3	3						1	2	2	2	3	2
Qld Heat Squad		9	8	9			2	5	6	2				2	15	17	17	
Qld Heat Team		5	5	5	4	6	8	7	5	7	11	8	12	11	12	13		16
Qld Heat Officials		4	4	2	1	1	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	5
U14/15 Aussie Diamonds		3	3											4				
U14/15 Aussie Diamonds Officials			1															
U16/17 Aussie Diamonds		4	2															2
U18/19 Aussie Junior Spirit		2	3		1			2		4		2	2	9			4	
Aussie Spirit Squad								1	4					11	9	8	8	8
Aussie Spirit Team		3	5	3	4	2	2	4		3	4		7	8	8			
Aussie Spirit Officials			3	3		1	1				2							
Australian All Star Team					2													
Australian Olympic Team	1													6			7	

We congratulate our players and officials for their ongoing commitment to the sport of softball.



The place to play softball

Appendix E. Tier 1 Facility Requirements

As identified in the Softball Queensland Facility Review 2019, Tier 1 facilities require the following:

Tier 1 - International/National

A facility capable of hosting the highest level one-off feature matches and tournaments. These facilities meet the expectations of both the International Softball Federation and Softball Australia.

It is important to note that these facilities are also appropriate for all levels of softball below the international/national tier. They may be used for regular weekly club and school training and fixtures and host regional and state-level tournaments.

International/National facility			
On-field facility requirements	Off-field facility requirements	Functionality	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> lighting (650 lux infield, 450 lux outfield) on at least 1 diamond <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 76.2m to outfield fence (males) and 67.06m (females) for fastpitch <input type="checkbox"/> skinned infield <input type="checkbox"/> backstop fencing (7m-9m), side fencing (1.2m-2m) and outfield fencing (1.2m-2m) <input type="checkbox"/> dirt warning track for side and outfield fencing <input type="checkbox"/> 2 enclosed dugouts (minimum 9m x 1.2m) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 bullpens <input type="checkbox"/> 2 batting cages <input type="checkbox"/> 2 foul poles (minimum 4.57m high) <input type="checkbox"/> suitable scoreboard <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 1 diamond (and 2 practice diamonds), 4 diamonds for tournaments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> suitable spectator seating (preferably with cover) <input type="checkbox"/> practice field <input type="checkbox"/> minimum of 2 changerooms (4 where combined mens' and womens' events are conducted) <input type="checkbox"/> umpire's changeroom and meeting room <input type="checkbox"/> separate amenities suitable to meet spectator, player and official requirements <input type="checkbox"/> technical office area <input type="checkbox"/> statistician's room <input type="checkbox"/> statistician's area to the side of home plate <input type="checkbox"/> drug testing area (meeting room and private bathroom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> International 'friendlies' <input type="checkbox"/> Underage World Cup <input type="checkbox"/> National Softball Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Redlands



WHAT EVENTS COULD BE HOSTED?

The types of annual events that could be hosted with a facility upgrade include:

- **State level events:**
 - U14 Girls or Boys State Championships
 - U16 Girls or Boys State Championships
 - U18 Women or Men's State Championships
 - Open Women's State Championships
Please note: access to six diamonds preferred
 - Open Men's State Championships
Please note: access to six diamonds preferred
 - Murri Womens Tournament
 - Masters type events
 - 10 - 12yo School Sport – Girls or Boys State Championships
 - 13 - 19yo School Sport – Girls or Boys State Championships
- **National events:**
 - U14 girls or boys National Championships
 - U16 girls or boys National Championships
 - U18 Women's or Men's National Championships
 - U23 Women or Men National Championships
 - Open Women's National Championships
 - Open Men's National Championships
 - 10 - 12yo School Sport Australia
Schoolgirls and Schoolboys Nationals
 - 13 - 19yo School Sport Australia
Schoolgirls and Schoolboys Nationals
 - Summer Slam
- **International Events:**
 - Olympics Brisbane 2032
 - World Cup Events
 - Invitational events including:
 - lead up events to Olympics 2028 and 2032 and beyond
 - lead up events to World Cup Championships
 - Qualifying series for entry to Olympics or World Cups
 - International Friendship series

EXAMPLE OF TIER 1 SOFTBALL FACILITY

Blacktown International Sportspark is the only facility in Australia where major international softball events are hosted. It is the location of choice (through lack of options) by Softball Australia for hosting these events.

Blacktown International Sportspark (BIS) was built in 1999 in preparation for the Sydney Olympics. New South Wales (NSW) Softball Association - the peak body for the administration of softball in NSW is based at Blacktown. Of significance, no NSW softball association uses these facilities on a regular basis. It's main function is to host tournaments held over varying lengths of time. It is noted there has been a change of practice by Olympic host nations regarding building bespoke facilities for a one off event, with a focus on ensuring these assets create a legacy that can be used post the event.

In 2019/2020 – Blacktown International Sportspark (softball) hosted:

- Australia Pacific Cup with teams from Australia, Japan, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand and Chinese Taipei competing
- Softball Summer slam series
- Softball Open Men's National Champions, U18 Mens and Women's National championships
- U14 Boys' Regional Championship
- U18 Men's State Championships
- NSW PSSA 2019 National Championships
- Sydney West Schools Zone
- U12 Boys State Championship
- Blue Blaze Tournaments
- NSW Open Women's State Championships
- State League Finals

Over the years, the facility has also hosted:

- National School softball championships eg 10-12 years and 13-19years
- National Championships – U14, U16, U18, U23, Open (male and female)
- Olympic training camps

BIS is owned by the Blacktown City council and is managed by Blacktown Venue Management Ltd. It is a large park that provides facilities for sports such as soccer, cricket, AFL, athletics, softball, baseball and now houses an aquatic centre.

Of significance, the facility is approximately 40 kilometres from Sydney CBD with limited accommodation options within the vicinity of the precinct





Appendix F. An Analysis of Brisbane City Council Consultation

A review and analysis of BCC documents provided following a Right to Information request reveal that limited stakeholder engagement has occurred and flawed decisions have been made due to a lack of in-depth and accurate information being identified and considered.

EARLY ENGAGEMENT

Between October and December 2018, BCC commenced an 'early engagement' process, setting up Information Kiosks at Northey Street City Farm and at 50 McCook Park, the current home of Newmarket Football (soccer) club. They undertook a six week online campaign using Facebook and BCC website tools.

Feedback from those that participated in this process is reflective of the small pool of stakeholders that engaged in this 'early engagement' process and the targeted locations this engagement took place.

In November 2018, BCC sought invitations from consultants for the preparation of a Master Plan for the Enoggera Creek Sport and Recreation Precinct. This document states "In 2016, Council commenced an internal sports park study surrounding Downey Park in response to a Landfill Remediation project. Given the long history of sporting use along the Enoggera Creek corridor, the study realised the need to expand the planning footprint to include additional sport and recreation clubs beyond Downey Park to achieve a coordinated plan of all sport and active recreation sites".

It is clear from these documents, that the BCC has been engaged in a review process of sporting bodies, particularly those situated at Downey Park, since at least 2016.

In these past five years of planning, BSA, a sporting body that is significantly affected by the draft plan, have been invited to engage in a process on one occasion where notably, relocation information was not sought. The second engagement occurred after decisions had been made to draft a plan that required BSA to relocate.

CONSULTANT REPORTS

Consultant group Lat27 provided a short report on 2 April 2019 that details their engagement with various non-sporting bodies that include stakeholders such as Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Homezone, Northey Street City Farm and Gamblers Anonymous.

The key issue identified was lack of parking however, again, this is reflective of the user groups that were consulted.

CLUB IMPACT ANALYSIS

Consultant group Alliance Planning provided BCC with a report that appears to outline the impact on clubs across various scenarios. This analysis report is undated.

No information is provided within the document regarding the consultation process undertaken to inform this analysis.

The relocation of BSA is based on an ill informed view that seven shared use diamonds are a workable option for the sport of softball. They are not. This fundamental flaw in the analysis ultimately results in softball being provided with a shared facility that does not meet its needs.

Whilst it is accepted that a potential benefit of relocating is the availability of diamonds year round, the flawed planning and drawbacks of the current draft plan ultimately result in a facility being provided that does not meet the needs of its users.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT

Consultant group Alliance Planning and Lat27 compiled a Situational Analysis Report (SAR) - undated.

The SAR would appear to be a key decision making document used by BCC in drafting the proposed plan. Errors contained in this document will flow through the whole project.

Given the following statements, it would appear BCC accepts that:

“Downey Park is identified in the planning scheme as a Local Heritage Place. Brisbane City Council’s heritage citation states that Downey Park was developed in 1931 and was the first only women’s sports reserve in the city”. (page 14)

“The master plan will need to recognise and continue to protect the heritage values of Downey Park”. (page 14)

“Flooding plays a significant role in the every-day life of Enoggera Creek Sports and Recreation Precinct, with the area 90% inundated in major events through to the regular King Tide activity”. (page 11)

The draft plan however does not protect those heritage values, including that Downey Park is a recognised women’s only sporting precinct nor is there any evidence provided to reassure stakeholders about the mitigation of the impact of floods in the area.



EVIDENCE OF FAILURE TO PROPERLY CONSULT AND UNDERTAKE COMPLETE RESEARCH

Despite the statement on page 17 that “during extensive consultation with the surrounding community including sporting associations ..”, this document evidences a clear failure to properly consult with key stakeholders, to undertake full and complete research and accurately reflect the current facilities available and usage. The inaccuracies and misrepresentations are evidenced in the document itself as identified below:

Page 20 – Photos are used to describe the use at Downey Park as “Grass sports fields used by the Brisbane Women’s Hockey Association and the Saints Softball Club”.

This statement is inaccurate. Saints Softball Club is but one of 9 clubs that use the facility managed by Brisbane Softball Association.

Page 45 – Provision is made for ‘General Information’ regarding each park under analysis. Despite its size and use by four separate sporting organisations, various carparks servicing those stakeholders, no comments are made regarding Downey Park.

At a minimum the facilities available, including the toilets on Noble Street, should have been identified. A clear consequence of the failure to undertake proper research includes that an amenities block has been entirely missed in this document and all resulting plans, despite a new amenity being built that was opened in March 2021.

Page 47 – In the “Sports Analysis” the following statements (as they relate to softball) are made regarding existing fields:

- One men’s fast softball pitch grass diamond (76.02m outfield)
- Fourteen softball diamonds (grass) - various sizes incl. juniors, fast pitch and slow pitch

These statements are inaccurate and erroneous.

BSA offer fast pitch softball (not fast softball pitch) to juniors and women only. BSA have never offered a regular slow pitch softball competition.

BSA do not offer men’s softball at Downey Park. There is no provision made for a men’s diamond, grassed or otherwise.

The analysis fails to recognise the second skinned, partially fenced and lighted permanent diamond.



Page 59 – Table 1.2 “outlines the existing number of car parking spaces at the various sport and recreational facilities located within the precinct. The data was sourced from the Brisbane City Council “Condition Audit Summary” document”.

This table is misleading. The table states the number of available car parks as follows:

- Brisbane Softball Association – 10 car parks
- Brisbane Women’s Hockey Association – 10 car parks
- Table Tennis – 80 car parks
- Downey Park Netball – 7 car parks

Table Tennis is the only organisation that has car parks available for their use only under their building.

A large established carpark that has provision for approximately 140 car parks exists off Noble Street (i.e. it is not on-street parking).

To infer that softball, netball and hockey users only utilise on-street parking to access their sporting precincts is inaccurate and will lead to poorly informed decisions.

ENGAGEMENT WITH BRISBANE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

In March 2019, the BSA Secretary and Treasurer attended a meeting with two representatives from the consultancy group Alliance Planning. The purpose of this meeting was to complete a survey that was a high level review of softball at Downey Park.

No information was sought regarding BSA’s view on relocating, whether BSA would be amenable to such a proposal and what would be the key considerations from BSA’s perspective if they were required to relocate.

It is further noted that no formal minutes of this meeting were provided by BCC representatives. BSA’s position was not requested. As members of the BSA Board of Management, the Secretary and Treasurer were not authorised to provide a formal position. Any formal position of BSA would have been required to be approved by a formal meeting of the Board. As this was not requested, no such resolution has been passed by BSA’s Board of Management.

DRAFT PLAN

In November 2020, sporting groups including BSA were invited to view the draft plan. Limited appointment times were provided as a result not all BSA Board members could attend. A copy of the draft plan was not provided, no photos of the staged plans were permitted and in fact attendees were advised that there were not to disclose this information outside their management committees.

Importantly, there was no opportunity to provide formal feedback. Any verbal feedback that was provided on the day - clear examples of concerns raised were the provision of shared diamonds and slow pitch diamonds - was not incorporated into the plan prior to its release for public consultation in March 2021.

