

# WHITSUNDAY REGIONAL SPORTS PRECINCT

MASTER PLAN | 2025



# WHITSUNDAY REGIONAL SPORTS PRECINCT

The Whitsunday Regional Sports Precinct is a critical component of the Proserpine to Airlie Beach growth corridor, providing a central regional sporting home with capacity for clubs to grow, attract sporting events and develop high quality facilities that will encourage participation and healthy, social lifestyles.

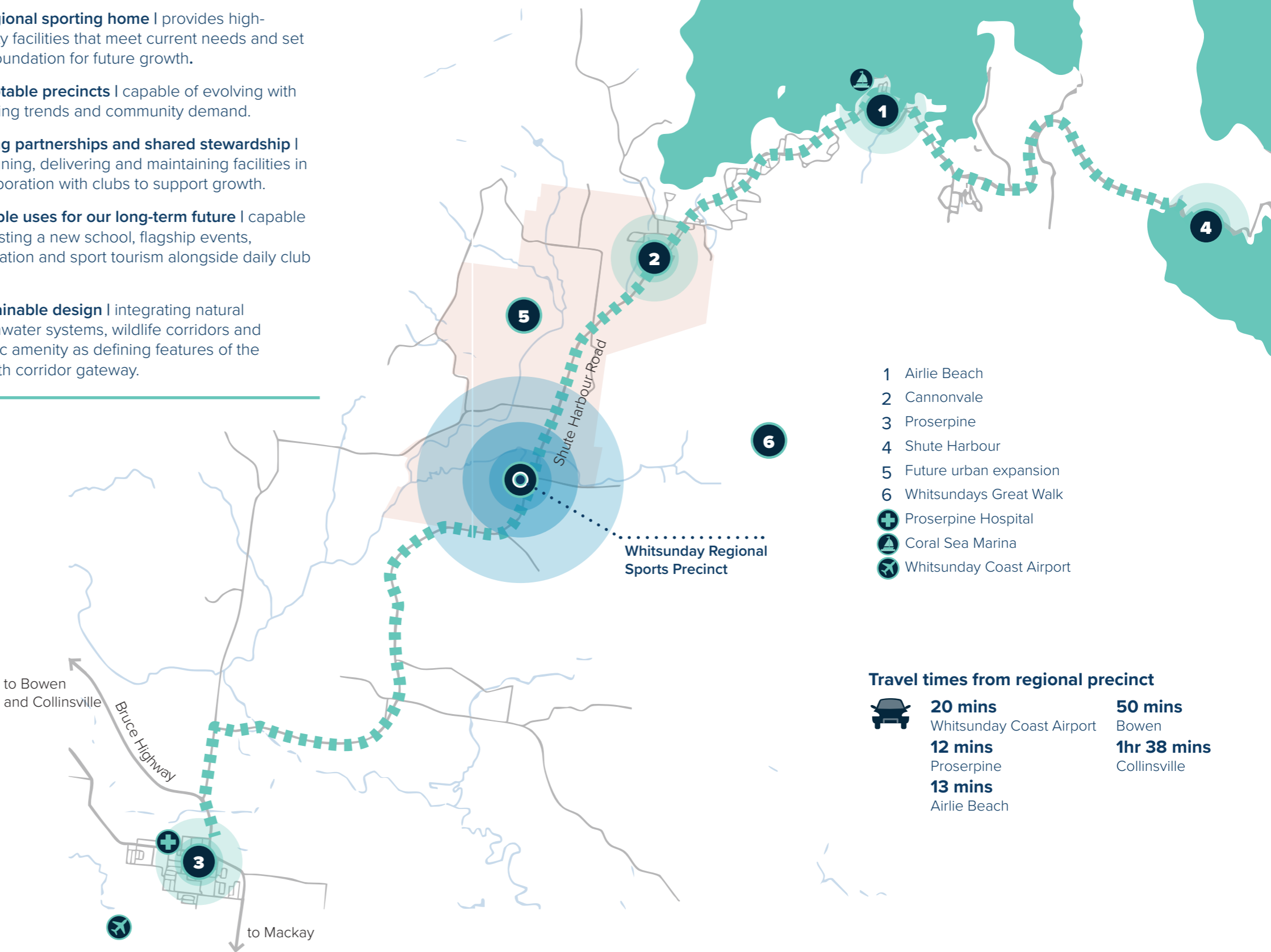
The Whitsunday Regional Sports Precinct is a 95ha site located adjoining Shute Harbour and Brandy Creek Road. The site was earmarked for a future sports park following its strategic purchase in 2010, due to its convenient location between Proserpine and Airlie Beach, and flat topography that is largely outside of flooded area.

The site is in a location where urban development is expected to expand to in the future. This makes it important to keep the site flexible for future uses, such as a school, Council depot and new recreation activities.

Council, in collaboration with consultant Ross Planning, undertook targeted engagement with over 40 sporting clubs and peak bodies to help shape the design of the sports park and understand broader aspirations for the regional sporting network. The Master Plan establishes a clear framework for the future, supporting investment opportunities, advocacy efforts, and pathways for club growth.

## OBJECTIVES

- **A regional sporting home** | provides high-quality facilities that meet current needs and set the foundation for future growth.
- **Adaptable precincts** | capable of evolving with sporting trends and community demand.
- **Strong partnerships and shared stewardship** | designing, delivering and maintaining facilities in collaboration with clubs to support growth.
- **Flexible uses for our long-term future** | capable of hosting a new school, flagship events, recreation and sport tourism alongside daily club use.
- **Sustainable design** | integrating natural stormwater systems, wildlife corridors and scenic amenity as defining features of the growth corridor gateway.



<sup>1</sup> Spatial Economics Moderate Growth Scenario

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The regional catchment supports a population of approximately 53,000, with the Airlie Beach–Proserpine corridor accommodating around 23,700 people. With a younger median age (38 years) than the Queensland average, the regional catchment includes a large base of active families and young people, strong visitor presence and a rapidly expanding senior population that will almost double by 2041.

National participation trends show a shift from formal sport to social, flexible and outdoor recreation, alongside rising expectations for modern facilities. Traditional sports are diversifying, and the Masters market is expanding. These trends highlight need for facilities that promote lifelong participation, supporting both competitive and social forms of activity.

Local clubs and peak bodies have aspirations for quality facilities that can provide a long-term regional home with capacity for growth and opportunities to host major carnivals and sport tourism events. Table 1 below identifies participation trends within mainstream sports included within the Masterplan.

Table 1 | Participation trends within mainstream sports included within the Whitsunday Regional Sports Precinct Masterplan.

SPORT	MEMBERSHIP (AIRLIE BEACH - PROSERPINE 2024)	PREFERRED PROVISION RATE (MEMBERS: FIELD/COURT)	SPORT PARTICIPATION TREND <sup>1</sup>	MASTER PLAN INCLUSIONS
Athletics	60	250	Steady	1 grass facility
BMX	60	N/A	Steady	1 sealed track
Cricket	250	50	Increasing	5 fields
Equestrian	65	N/A	Steady	4-5ha
Football (Soccer)	500	140	Increasing	6 grass and 1 synthetic field reflects expected growth and carnivals
Netball	300	60	Increasing	8 courts reflects expected growth and carnivals
Tennis	100 <sup>3</sup>	60	Steady	8 tennis courts 8 pickleball courts <sup>4</sup>
Touch football	220	40	Increasing	6 fields
Indoor court sport <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	1 court: 10,000-15,000 residents	Increasing	3 courts

1- Consideration of national, state and local participation trends  
2 - Current participation in sports such as basketball and volleyball is somewhat difficult to quantify with volleyball only played within the school system (and being popular in the local area) and basketball established as a largely junior training-based program with 60 participants. Industry best practice suggests a preferred provision rate of 1 community indoor court:10,000 to 15,000 residents in more rural and remote locations  
3 - Tennis Whitsunday has not sought members or regular fixtures in recent years given limited court access opportunities (and demand for training and social use)  
4 - Pickleball is recognised as the fastest growing formal sport across the globe. It is very poplar for older adults - the key growth age cohort for the Airlie Beach-Proserpine growth corridor



**OLYMPICS 2032**  
Unlocking new field capacity for the region will create opportunities for existing sports parks and the proposed new sports park to attract sport tourism, marquee events and professional training camps in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games — delivering strong tourism, economic and participation benefits.

The delivery of the Master Plan is well-timed, positioning Council to continue advocating for investment and attracting additional funding. To date, Council has secured \$15 million through the Federal Government’s Growing Regions Program to deliver Stage 1 of the Master Plan.

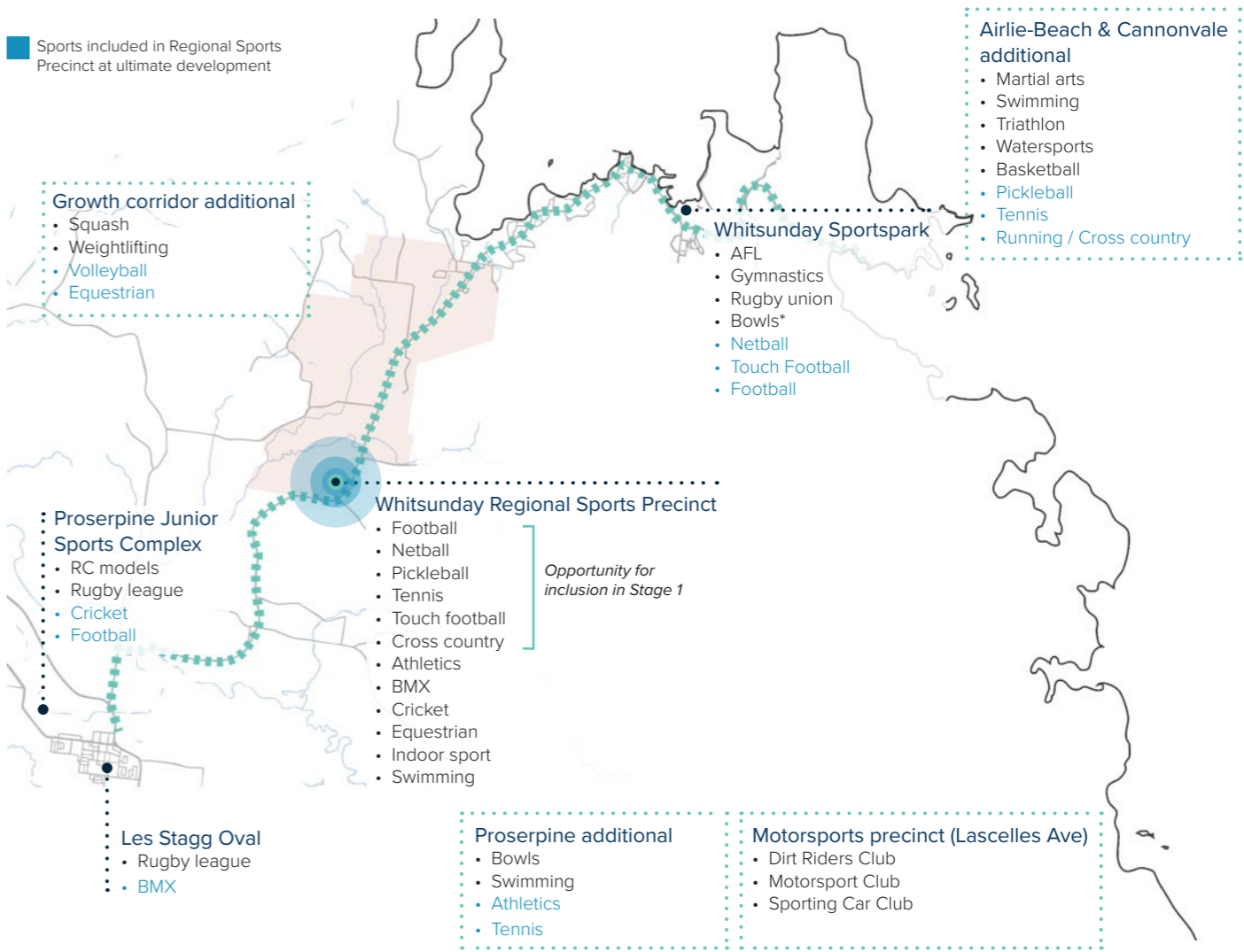


Figure 1 | Proserpine - Airlie Beach sporting network and long-term inclusions in Whitsunday Regional Sports Precinct.

# VISION AND GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The Whitsunday Regional Sports Precinct will be a high-quality, multi-sport destination that supports local participation and attracts state and national-level competitions. It will offer modern, adaptable facilities and amenities that enhance player, official and spectator experiences, while providing the flexibility to host major sporting, community and entertainment events.

Designed for daily use and lifelong activity, the Precinct will also integrate education and Council infrastructure, creating a vibrant regional hub for sport, recreation and community life.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- **Adaptable** | Smart, flexible design that grows with community needs and future sport trends
- **Quality and value for money** | Durable, high-performing facilities that deliver lasting benefit within available resources.
- **Partnership-driven** | Created and managed collaboratively with clubs, community and stakeholders, ensuring financial sustainability for clubs to grow.
- **Accessible and connected** | Easy to reach, move through and enjoy - linking roads, paths, trails and signage for all users.
- **Sustainable** | Designed to work with the environment through efficient energy, water, habitat preservation and landscape systems, reducing operational costs.
- **Wide-range appeal** | Welcoming spaces for all ages and abilities, encouraging play, recreation and lifelong activity.



Quality multi-sport facility



Functional clubhouses



Quality field lighting



Court sports precinct



Inviting walk/cycle connections



Attractive play and picnic node

# PRECINCTS

## FOOTBALL AND CRICKET FIELD SUB-PRECINCT

A large, flexible field area with multiple full-size lit grass fields and small-sided junior spaces. A central synthetic lit football field will provide a premier, all-weather surface supporting multiple sports and events.

## TOUCH AND CRICKET FIELD SUB-PRECINCT

Includes six lit touch fields to support local growth and carnivals, and two overlaid cricket fields, bringing the Precinct total to five cricket fields — enabling regional tournaments.

## INDOOR SPORT AND POOL SUB-PRECINCT

Provision for an Olympic-size swimming pool with spectator seating and a three-court indoor sports facility to be integrated with the adjoining school precinct. The complex would cater for basketball, volleyball, and other indoor sports, with flexibility for wet-weather training.

## BMX SUB-PRECINCT

An all-weather BMX track north of the cane rail corridor, suitable for State-level events. Supported by a clubhouse, parking and ample spectator and club spaces, ensuring resilience during high rainfall and reduced maintenance demands.

## EQUESTRIAN SUB-PRECINCT

A central home for local equestrian groups, featuring a covered arena, outdoor arenas, stables, yards, cross-country course, clubhouse and float parking. Designed to also host community events and exhibitions.

## ATHLETICS SUB-PRECINCT

Located within the proposed school site, featuring an 8-lane grass track, throwing and jumping facilities, and a clubhouse. Will support shared school and community use and connect to cross-country loops across the Precinct.

## RECREATION ELEMENTS

Complementing formal sport, a central play and picnic node and walk/cycle network will connect courts, ovals and clubhouses, extending into a scenic loop along Brandy Creek, also catering for cross country course.

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

A new intersection at Shute Harbour and Brandy Creek roads will form the main entry, with sealed internal roads and a single fenced cane rail crossing. A connection to Plemenuk Road will provide secondary access.

## FUTURE FACILITIES

Land on the western side of the site will be reserved for a future P–12 school. Land on the north eastern side will be reserved for a Council Depot investigation area, integrated into the sports park with high quality landscaping and design. Areas outside of Stage 1 will continue to be leased for cane.



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|---|--|
| ① Intersection development and Precinct entry | ⑩ Landscaping across the Precinct                  |
| ② Lit court sports sub-precinct               | ⑪ Cross Country courses (3km, 2km & 1km circuit)   |
| ③ Lit football and cricket field sub-precinct | ⑫ Equestrian sub-precinct                          |
| ④ Play and picnic node                        | ⑬ Brandy Creek fauna corridor and scenic loop path |
| ⑤ Lit touch and cricket field sub-precinct    | ⑭ Indoor sport sub-precinct                        |
| ⑥ Shute Harbour Road green gateway            | ⑮ Olympic size pool                                |
| ⑦ Network of sealed walk/cycle paths          | ⑯ Athletics sub-precinct                           |
| ⑧ BMX sub-precinct                            | ⑰ P-12 school site investigation area              |
| ⑨ Council depot investigation area            | ⑱ Plemenuk Rd upgrades (and intersection upgrade)  |



## SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

Stage 1 focuses on sports with the greatest demand for new facilities, supported by a \$15 million Federal Government grant on a matched funding basis. Stage 1 is planned for delivery by end of 2027.

Extents of stage 1 are indicative, with exact inclusions subject to detailed design, approvals, cost refinement and procurement. The intersection upgrades required to create a safe entrance to the Regional Sport Precinct from Shute Harbour Road will also be constructed as part of Stage 1.

Given resourcing and demand constraints, further delivery will occur in stages, guided by user needs and grant funding availability. The staging framework remains flexible to respond to evolving priorities and funding opportunities.

### PROPOSED COURT PRECINCT

- ① Hard surface netball courts and grass courts lit
- ② Hard court tennis courts lit
- ③ Hard court pickleball courts lit
- ④ Shared central clubhouse
- ⑤ Shared storage
- ⑥ Path connections
- ⑦ Spectator seating
- ⑧ Car parking - sealed gravel (with temporary lighting)

### PROPOSED FIELD PRECINCT

- ⑨ Rectangular fields (with cricket oval overlays) lit
- ⑩ Standalone rectangular field lit
- ⑪ Shared central clubhouse
- ⑫ Shared storage
- ⑬ Path connections
- ⑭ Spectator seating
- ⑮ Car parking - sealed gravel (with temporary lighting)

### OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS

- ⑮ Shute Harbour Road green gateway
- ⑯ Cane rail fencing along the eastern side of the corridor
- ⑰ Sealed internal road connections

