

NATURAL TURF ALLIANCE

DEDICATED TO A SUSTAINABLE AND GREENER FUTURE FOR OUR PARKS AND OVALS

ABOUT US

Natural Turf Alliance Inc (NTA) was established in 2022 as an independent Association of Community Groups committed to preserving and developing natural grass open spaces including sporting fields.

Our Association includes 15 active community groups and growing. A core focus is engaging with local councils and sporting groups in relation to best practice natural turf construction and maintenance.

We are keen to work with greenkeepers and other natural turf specialists to educate local councils, sporting clubs and communities on best practice natural turf construction and maintenance.

"There is significant discontent and concern about the increasing number of synthetic sports fields being installed in community parks.

We are opposed to the installation of synthetic sports fields in local community parks due to demonstrated health and environmental impacts.

There is now strong evidence that properly designed and maintained natural turf playing fields can provide beyond fifty (50) hours of playing capacity per week whilst keeping open spaces available for the broader community. "



EXPLORE CAMPAIGNS

Visit our website and explore our successful community-based campaigns to maintain quality natural turf fields



ACCESS OUR LIBRARY

Access our resources library full of documents and scientific papers relating to synthetic and natural turf,



ASK FOR SUPPORT

Ask us for support with your campaign to educate councils and clubs on best practice natural turf construction and maintenance

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UPDATE - SYNTHETIC TURF STUDY IN PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

In December 2021, the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment published a comprehensive review of the use of synthetic turf in public open spaces.

The report noted :

- Best practice natural turf design and maintenance has the potential to improve the capacity of existing natural turf fields to support increased sporting use.
- Lack of available information on best practice construction and maintenance of natural turf fields influences and constrains council decision making.
- Information about recent innovations and best practice for natural turf are not well known or commonly used.
- Advances in technology are enabling more targeted maintenance and management of natural turf to reduce energy consumption and costs and maintain capacity

Following the publication of this report, the Hon. Rob Stokes MP, (then) Minister for Planning and Public Spaces requested the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer provide expert advice on the use of synthetic turf in public open space in NSW.

We have been advised that the Chief Scientist's report has been completed, however it currently is being reviewed by the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Anthony Roberts. There has been no further information on when the report will be released to the public.

To download both reports, go to <https://naturalturfalliance.org/document-library/> and click on 'Synthetic Fields'

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CASE STUDY - BOB CAMPBELL OVAL GREENWICH NSW

At a Lane Cove Council Extraordinary Meeting on 2nd August 2021, 33 speakers representing a broad cross-section of the community spoke about Lane Cove Council's plans to install a synthetic surface at Bob Campbell Oval; all but two speakers asked the Lane Cove Council not to proceed with the synthetic oval.

The Lane Cove Council Councillors voted 4 in favour and 4 against the proposal. The Council Mayor used her casting vote to give the Lane Cove Council the go-ahead to convert the oval into a synthetic turf oval.

Local residents commenced a community-based campaign 'Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Oval) to raise awareness of the environmental, health and safety concerns associated with synthetic fields. The community group was successful in seeing new councillors supportive of natural turf fields elected at the Local Government Elections in December 2021.

Following the Local Government Election, a special meeting of Lane Cove Councillors in January 2022 voted 8 to 1 not to proceed with the synthetic turf plan. Instead, the decision was made to install a natural turf surface.

The improved natural surface will ensure a fantastic, durable and safe pitch for the Greenwich Sports Club as well as preserving our wonderful open space and surrounding environment for the whole community. A new masterplan for BCO will be developed in consultation with the community.

For further information on this campaign, visit <https://naturalturfalliance.org/bob-campbell-oval-greenwich/> and <https://www.naturalgrassbco.com/>

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit <https://naturalturfalliance.org/document-library/> to view and download useful and informative documents in relation to the use of natural and synthetic turf within our parks and ovals.

Some useful online links:

PEER (Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility) – Artificial Turf

<https://peer.org/areas-of-work/public-health/artificial-turf/>

TURI (Toxics Use Reduction Institute) – Athletic Playing Fields

https://www.turi.org/Our_Work/Community/Athletic_Playing_Fields

Synthetic Turf Research @ Penn State

<https://plantscience.psu.edu/research/centers/ssrc/research/synthetic-turf-research-penn-state>

Hunter Water – Turf Sporting Field Guidelines

<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/home-and-business/information-for-business/best-practice-guidelines>

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