



QUALITY OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE TOOL (POST)

OBSERVERS' MANUAL

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this manual is to help you conduct environmental audits using the *Quality of Public Open Space Tool (POST)*. Please ensure that you have read the information contained in this manual **before** commencing any audits.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Because your personal health and safety is very important, you should make sure that you are well prepared, and have the following items with you when you are auditing:

- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Comfortable shoes for walking
- Water
- Money for a phone call or mobile phone

PREPARING FOR AUDITING

It is important that you are familiar with the POST. We will provide a half-day training seminar, but you should also practice using the form before you begin auditing. This will ensure that you know the order and content of all questions on the form.

To conduct the audits, you will need following items:

- Clipboard
- Blue biros
- Sufficient forms to complete the day's auditing
- Street directory to check the location and boundaries of each public open space (POS)
- List of all POS that you are auditing
- A plan of your route
- This manual

CONDUCTING THE AUDITS

It is important that each item on the form is completed carefully and correctly. You will therefore need to walk around and through each POS, and thoroughly assess the environment and facilities.

You are required to tick boxes for most items, and occasionally write your answers in the spaces provided. Please use **blue** ink when completing the forms.

Should you need to change an answer, cross out the incorrect answer, and tick your new choice. Please ensure that your answer is clear and easy to read. This will make data entry easier, and more accurate.

The sections below provide information and checklists that will help you interpret and answer questions in the POST:

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION:

The POST has provision to record the following details relating to each POS:

1. **REFERENCE NUMBER:**
2. **ADDRESS:**
3. **AREA:**
4. **POSTCODE:**
5. **GEOCODE:**
6. **YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT OF POS:**

This information will be gathered and recorded prior to auditing the POS.

The reference number will be determined by the study team. All other details will be obtained from data sets held by local or state government planning departments.

SECTION 1 – ACTIVITIES

7. **TYPE OF USAGE?** (TICK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)

Consider the type of activities that the POS was designed for:

Tick **Active-Formal** if the POS has facilities used for organized, formal sports (e.g. goal posts, soccer net, cricket pitch, scoreboards);

Tick **Active Informal** if the POS has facilities designed for unstructured, informal physical activity (e.g. walking paths, children's playground, or basketball hoops);

Tick **Passive** if the POS has no facilities designed for physical activity (e.g. the POS has seating only provided).

8. FOR WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES IS THE SPACE DESIGNED?

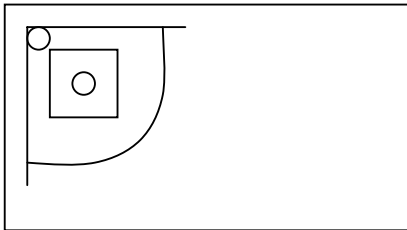
(TICK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)

Check to see what courts and/or goal posts are present in the POS, and tick the relevant sports on the list.

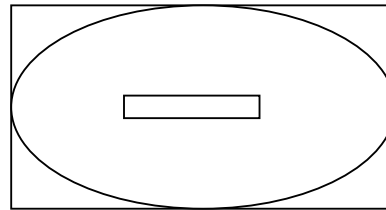
Also check signs within the POS and on clubrooms for lists of sports played there, and clubs that are affiliated with the POS.

The following diagrams provide a rough guide to the field markings for sports commonly played on ovals and playing fields:

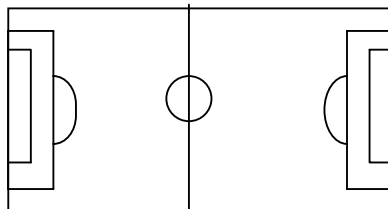
Baseball



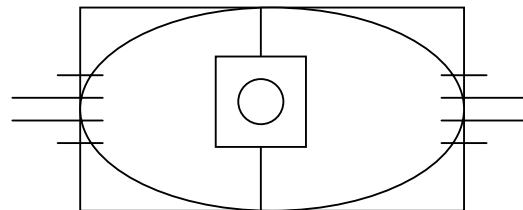
Cricket



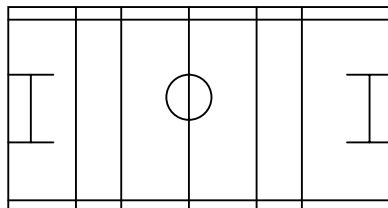
Soccer



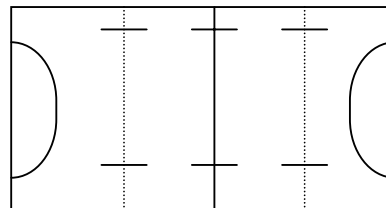
Football (Aussie Rules)



Rugby Union



Hockey



SECTION 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

9 IS THE POS ON THE BEACH/RIVER FORESHORE?

If the boundary of the park adjoins the river or beach foreshore, then tick YES.

If there is a road, railway line, or other barrier between the POS and the river/beach foreshore, tick NO.

10 ARE THERE WATER FEATURES WITHIN THE POS?

Water features are things such as lakes, ponds, fountains, and streams. Tick YES if any or all of these features are present.

Also tick YES if the structure of a water feature is there, but is presently without water.

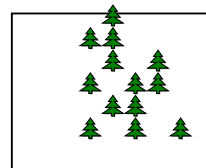
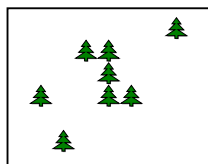
16 WHERE ARE THE TREES PLACED? (TICK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)

Tick **PERIMETER ALL SIDES** when trees are located along **all** sides of the POS.

Tick **PERIMETER SOME SIDES** when trees are placed in a row along at least one side, but not all sides of the POS.

Tick **RANDOM PLACEMENT THROUGHOUT** when the placement of trees in the POS appears 'natural', or without any apparent pattern, or with a pattern, but spread throughout the POS.

Examples of Random Placement:



18 A) ARE THERE WALKING PATHS OR CYCLEWAYS WITHIN OR AROUND THE POS? (TICK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)

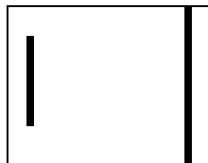
Check all paths **within** and **around** the POS.

Only tick 'designated dual-use path/s' if signage or markings on the path indicate that cycling is permitted.

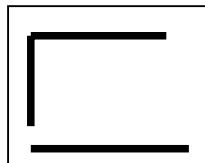
19 DESCRIBE THE PLACEMENT OF PATHS (TICK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)

The following diagrams provide examples of placement options provided:

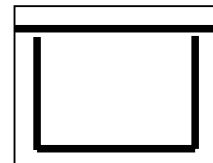
Perimeter:



Some Sides

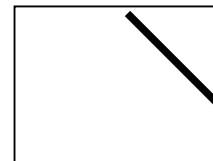
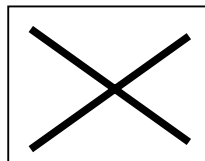


Some Sides

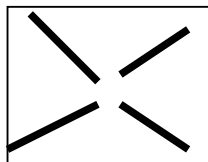


All Sides

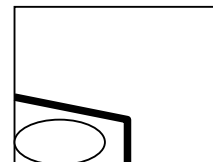
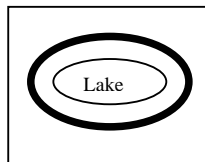
Diagonal:



Radial:



Path Around Water Feature:



20 IS THERE EVIDENCE THAT THE GRASS IS WATERED?

Tick YES if the grass is green and well tended. In winter, check to see if there are reticulation pumps or pipes, or sprinklers evident. If not, tick NO.

23 IS GRAFFITI PRESENT?

Check the following areas carefully for evidence of graffiti:

- play equipment (including the underside of slides and cubby houses)
- rubbish bins
- BBQ's, tables, seats
- buildings (ensure that you walk right around to check the rear doors and walls).

24 IS VANDALISM EVIDENT?

Carefully check all natural and built features for signs of deliberate damage (e.g.: broken windows, broken glass).

SECTION 3 – AMENITIES

26 IS CHILDREN'S PLAY EQUIPMENT PRESENT?

Tick YES if equipment is located within the POS.

Tick YES if play equipment is located on school grounds adjacent to the POS, provided that the grounds are clearly accessible to the public, and able to be reached without crossing a road or other barrier.

32 ARE THERE PARKING FACILITIES SERVING THE POS?

Take care to check all sides of the POS.

Tick YES (and count) if there are marked parking bays adjacent to/alongside park (or clearly identified as serving the POS).

Do not include POS verges as parking facilities, unless signs or markings indicate the space is to be used for POS parking.

35 IS THERE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT WITHIN 1 BLOCK OF THE POS?

Tick YES if bus, train, or ferry stops are located no further than 1 block away from the POS.

36 IS THERE SEATING PRESENT?

This question refers to seating within the park. Do not include seating at public transport stops.

39 ARE DOG LITTER BAGS PROVIDED?

Tick YES or NO. Tally up the number of litter bag locations you see as you walk around the POS (Question 41 requires you to record the total number of locations for bags).

41 ARE THERE TAPS OR OTHER WATER SOURCES ACCESSIBLE FOR DOGS?

Take care to check around playground areas, buildings such as club rooms and toilets, and near the perimeter of POS.

Do not include drinking fountains intended for human use.

42 ARE THERE DRINKING FOUNTAINS PRESENT?

Take care to check around playground areas, buildings, and near perimeter of POS.

SECTION 4 – SAFETY

45 HOW VISIBLE ARE SURROUNDING ROADS?

Stand in the centre of the POS and survey the roads that border the POS.

- Tick option 1 if road/s are **clearly** visible;
- Tick option 2 if no roads are clearly visible, but at least one road is **partly** visible;
- Tick option 3 if no roads can be seen.

Clearly visible means that there are no trees, buildings, parked cars, or buildings between the POS and the road.

46 A) HOW VISIBLE ARE SURROUNDING HOUSES?

Stand in the centre of the POS and look at houses that are located on surrounding roads or that front or back onto the POS. Can you clearly see windows, back yards, or front yards of houses overlooking the POS?

Tick **clearly** visible if there are no trees, buildings, parked cars, or buildings obscuring the view of the houses from the POS.

Tick **partly** visible if trees, buildings, parked cars etc obscure the view of the houses from the POS.

Tick **houses cannot be seen** if there no windows, back yards or front yards are visible from the POS.

Refer to the following photographs for clarification:

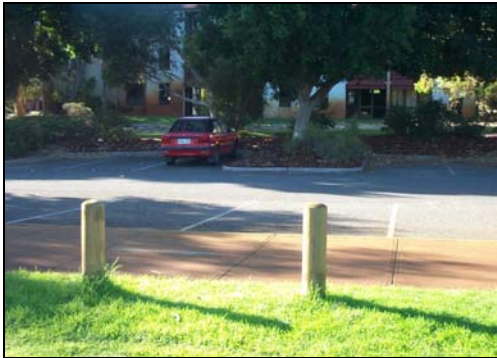
Houses **Clearly** Visible (back yards)



Houses **Clearly** Visible (front yards)



Houses **Partly** Visible



Houses **Partly** Visible



Houses **Not** Visible



Houses **Not** Visible



46 c) ARE THERE OTHER AREAS OF THE POS WHERE YOU ARE UNABLE TO CLEARLY SEE SURROUNDING HOUSES?

Tick YES if there are areas of the POS where your visibility of surrounding houses is obscured in any way.

47 ARE ALL ROADS SURROUNDING THE POS MINOR ROADS OR CUL-DE-SACS?

Cul-de-sacs include 'no through roads' or terminating roads.

Minor local roads allow only 1 lane of traffic in each direction.

Major local roads allow 2 lanes of traffic in each direction.

48 A) DOES THE MAJOR ROAD/S HAVE A ZEBRA CROSSING?

Tick YES if a zebra crossing is visible from the POS entrance nearest the major road.

B) DOES THE MAJOR ROAD/S HAVE A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WITH SIGNALS?

Tick YES if a crossing with signals is visible from the POS entrance nearest the major road.

49 IS POS SUITABLE FOR CASUAL BALL SPORTS?

Consider the following in determining how suitable the POS is for ball sports:

- is there sufficient open space?
- is the ground level?
- are there any apparent hazards to the participants or surrounding features (e.g. garden beds, steep slopes)?