

*“to recognise, respect and resource play is to recognise, respect and value childhood”*



# playground strategy 2014 - 2024

# Executive Summary

The City of Burnside has prepared this Playground Strategy to guide the provision and management of public Playgrounds within the city.

This Strategy takes the approach that open space planning for children's use, should be aimed at providing for:

*A wide range of safe, fun and stimulating Playgrounds meeting the needs of local children, (as well as the wider population) and complementing the play opportunities available to them in their everyday lives.*

The terms 'Playground' and 'Playground' are both used throughout the Strategy. The term 'Playground' refers to spaces that are dominated by play equipment. The term 'Playground' implies looking beyond the traditional supply of play equipment and considering features both within and surrounding the play areas. While it is recognised that children's play can occur anywhere, this Strategy focuses on the provision of play opportunities within a defined space.

Playgrounds play an important role in the development of children through the provision of experiences that may not otherwise be available in their everyday life. Obvious benefits include a range of physical development like improved coordination, strength, balance and spatial awareness. Indirect benefits cover a wide range of social, cognitive and creative qualities that are very important on the development of the 'whole' person.

A number of challenges face the City of Burnside to ensure that provision of Playgrounds is appropriate for current and projected communities and their needs. Expectations change over time and residents do not necessarily need to be able to walk to a local Playground. The Playgrounds they use need to be safe, accessible, exciting and fun with additional elements including shade, seating and in some cases fencing.

The Strategy focuses on the play needs of children (0-12 years) and the subsequent needs of their parents and caregivers when visiting Playgrounds. The Strategy does not examine in detail the provision of facilities for young people, such as skate parks. However, it does acknowledge that young people over the age of 12 visit Playgrounds and look for play opportunities to be challenged.

Council is faced with the challenge of upgrading and developing all Playgrounds throughout the City to a high standard that offer various experiences at individual Playgrounds. This document is intended to guide Council in determining to what extent a Playground may be developed, what priorities exist, who they cater for, and what additional supporting infrastructure is appropriate and affordable.

***“The human need to play is a powerful one. When we ignore it, we feel there is something missing in our lives.”***

Leo Buscaglia



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## Executive Summary

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# Summary of Principles

Below is a summary of principles detailed throughout this Strategy.

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Context</b>	
1.1	Playground Development Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council adopts a holistic Playground development model that provides for active and explorative play plus addresses the needs of caregivers.</li> </ul>
1.2	Play Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The design of future Playgrounds take into account the key features for the age group to be catered for, relevant to the type of Playground being developed.</li> </ul>
1.3	Playground Hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council adopts a system of Playground hierarchy that will provide for the local, district and regional needs of the community.</li> <li>▪ Council considers locating a Playground within 500 metres of every resident.</li> </ul>
1.4	Design Guidelines for New Playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The design of future Playgrounds take into account the key design considerations relevant to the type of Playground being developed.</li> </ul>

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Provision</b>	
2.1	Play Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council plans to meet the changing demographics in an area and provide sufficient variation in Playground provision between sites.</li> </ul>
2.2	Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council addresses risk management where issues occur.</li> </ul>
2.3	Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council complies with Australian Playground Standards.</li> </ul>
2.4	Play/ Sport Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where possible Playgrounds should be linked to open space that allows for unstructured games and that a clear distinction is made between sport and play provision.</li> </ul>
2.5	Shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council's Shade Plan should incorporate a strategy that supports shade provision for all Playgrounds, preferably through tree planting.</li> </ul>
2.6	Access and Equity Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council ensures reasonable access to all Playground sites and a meaningful play experience is provided for children and carers.</li> </ul>
2.7	Opportunities for Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council considers the provision of youth spaces that encourage unstructured outdoor activity.</li> <li>▪ Council to consult with young people, in the design of any youth space development or upgrade.</li> </ul>
2.8	Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council encourages opportunities for the community to participate in the design process for planning of Playgrounds and associated amenities.</li> </ul>
2.9	Amalgamation and Upgrading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council considers the range of issues outlined in this Strategy before redeveloping existing play areas.</li> </ul>



<b>3.0</b>	<b>Management</b>	
3.1	Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council ensures a high level of Playground maintenance and a programme of regular safety reviews.</li> <li>▪ Council ensures all new Playground designs and proposed equipment provision minimise maintenance issues.</li> </ul>
3.2	Common Maintenance Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council considers the options for ground surfaces against the type of equipment and play activity being catered for.</li> <li>▪ Playground planning and design should consider graffiti and vandalism minimisation principles.</li> </ul>
3.3	Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council allocates sufficient funds each year for the upgrade of Playgrounds.</li> <li>▪ Council allocates sufficient funds each year for the maintenance of Playgrounds.</li> </ul>
3.4	Marketing/ Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council actively markets and promotes the network of Playgrounds to ensure maximum community access and use including age suitability and hierarchy.</li> </ul>



# ***PART I***

## ***BACKGROUND***



## *Purpose of the Strategy*

The Playground Strategy has been developed to provide a strategic direction for the future provision and management of Playgrounds in the City of Burnside.

The City of Burnside has a number of Playgrounds that are well maintained and are generally of good quality and value to the community. Council strives to provide a range of innovative play spaces and to reinvigorate existing Playgrounds and play opportunities.

The Playground Strategy provides strategic and specific directions that will guide the future provision and upgrade of Playgrounds. It includes broad directions through specific strategies and specific actions through the Playground Replacement Action Plan 2014-2024, and suggested priorities.

The Playground Strategy will assist the City of Burnside to increase the potential of its Playgrounds and broaden play opportunities over the next 10 years for children, youth and adults.

## *Why a Strategy is Needed*

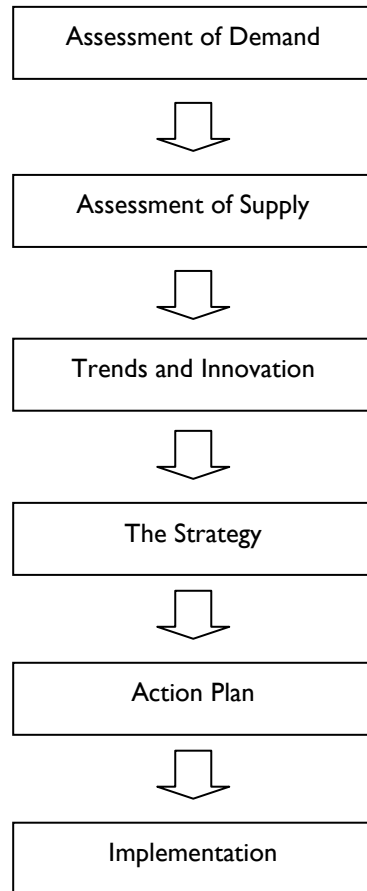
Before the implementation of the Playground Strategy in 2007, the City of Burnside's Playgrounds were managed by an asset replacement plan only, with no evident consideration to demand or need in particular areas. On this basis, it was identified that there was a need for Council to consider Playgrounds and Playgrounds in a holistic manner rather than reacting to individual approaches from the community to upgrade or provide new facilities in a piecemeal way.

## *The Strategy Focus*

The Playground Strategy is based on an assessment of the needs of the community, the adequacy of existing Playgrounds, and broader trends and innovations in Playground design. From this assessment, strategies are developed for Playground provision and management.



The Strategy components are outlined as follows:



Specific directions are provided for:

- A hierarchy framework
- Playground provision
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Design
- Accessibility
- Risk management

*“There’s no way that we can help children to learn to love and preserve this planet, if we don’t give them direct experiences with the miracles and blessings of nature.”*

Anita Olds





## Implementing the Strategy

The strategies and priorities identified will provide direction for the next ten years, 2014 - 2024. Strategies and actions should be reflected in ongoing works programs. A number of the suggested actions can be addressed within the existing budgets, including the annual funding allocated to Playground maintenance. Others, such as the upgrade, replacement or relocation of Playgrounds will require a commitment of capital funding. It is recommended that projects are submitted for capital funding each year based on priorities identified in the Playgrounds Strategy. Grant funding can also be sought to contribute to project development.

It is important to note that the Playgrounds Strategy does not commit Council to implementing all suggested actions. However, the Strategy will guide Council in improving Playgrounds and better servicing the community as resources become available.

## Vision

The Vision that underpins the provision of Playgrounds within this Playground Strategy is:

***“A range of play experiences that are accessible, safe and fun.”***

## Definitions

For the purpose of this Strategy, the following definitions apply.

Playgrounds are:

- Play environments that consist of infrastructure, complimentary facilities and landscapes.
- Built Playgrounds

Playgrounds are not:

- Supervised play environments that may include early childhood centres, BMX facilities, sports facilities for organised sports such as tennis courts, private indoor Playgrounds and schools. Whilst these play facilities may contribute to the services that are available for the community, access to these facilities are usually conditional.

Playgrounds are:

- Public spaces that encourage and facilitate play with or without equipment and infrastructure. A Playground can include a local park/ open space, a hard surface with rings for informal ball games or a natural setting.



## Demographic Analysis

The City of Burnside's Estimated Resident Population was 44,263 at the 2011 Census. In terms of projecting population trends, South Australian State Government projections suggest that within Burnside, population growth will grow by only 2.86% by 2031 due to limited land availability for residential development. The clearest implication from the 2012 analysis of Burnside's population is that there is likely to be a continuation of the trend towards an aging population.

The City of Burnside has relatively small proportions of younger children compared to the Adelaide Statistical Division as shown below:

### Proportion of Children Compared to Adelaide Statistical Division

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, CData, 2011

Age Group	City of Burnside	Adelaide Statistical Division
0-4 years	4%	6%
5-9 years	5.6%	5.7%
10-14 years	6.3%	6%

Projections indicate that it would be unlikely that there would be a substantial growth in the preschool aged children area, at least in the short term. It would be inappropriate to assume rapidly decreasing numbers of children will occur in Burnside.

The main reason for the smaller proportions of children is the large proportion of older people (>65) living in the City of Burnside (20.3% compared to 15.4% for the ASD). Burnside's fertility rate is 1.3 compared with a national average of 1.7.

It should be noted that with increasing numbers of households with both parents in the workforce, grandparents are tending to take on the role of carers and require local parks and Playgrounds to take grandchildren. Therefore, an aging population in Burnside may place greater importance on the design of play provision than initially thought. This may have an influence not so much on the type of play equipment to be provided, but developing appropriate supporting facilities to these areas such as seating with arm and back rests and located for shade and the supervision of children at play.



### Proportion of Young Adults Compared to Adelaide Statistical Division

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, CData, 2011

Age Group	City of Burnside	Adelaide Statistical Division
20-24 years	7%	7.1%
25-29 years	4.9%	7%
30-34 years	4.1%	6.4%

As at 2011, the City of Burnside had:

- 1700 0-4 year olds
- 2361 5-9 year olds
- 2644 10-14 year olds

Some areas have larger proportions of children and as a result are likely to have higher demand for Playgrounds. There are higher proportions of children (0-14 years) concentrated in the Kensington Park and Beulah Park area (18.6%) and the Dulwich and Rose Park area (17.6%).

### Children with Disabilities

There is a need to provide accessible environments for children with a disability, including accessible Playgrounds. There is a relatively large number of children within the City of Burnside with some form of disability. The data is outlined below:

#### Potential Disability Numbers within the City of Burnside

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Disability, Australia, 2003

Age Group	Disability		Profound Core Activity Limitation	
	Percentage	Potential Number	Percentage	Potential Number
0-4 years	4.3%	78	2.8%	51
5-14 years	10.0%	49	4.9%	242



## Provision and Distribution

The City of Burnside currently has 38 Council owned and managed Playgrounds. The population of the City of Burnside in 2011 was 44,263. There are 6,705 children between the ages of 0-14 making up 15.9% of the population. That is one Playground for every 1,158 residents or one Playground for every 176 children between the ages of 0-14 years, which is a high ratio compared to broad planning benchmarks.

Playground benchmarks vary, but generally an accepted rate for the provision of Playgrounds within Australian Local Government (metropolitan) is locating a Playground within a specific distance from each resident. The accepted rate is to have Playground facilities located within a 500 metre radius of every resident. Figure 1.1 highlights the location of residences in relation to Playground facilities. The other industry measurement is a per head ratio that was developed through a study of metropolitan Councils in Victoria. The comparative statistics between authorities were similar with approximately 1 Playground per 1,300 head of population and 1 Playground per 300 head of children between the ages of 0-15 years.

This benchmark does not allow for Playground facilities that may be located within close proximity to a City of Burnside resident, but is located in a neighbouring local government area. An example of this situation is the Playground located at Ridge Park, Myrtle Bank. This Playground services many residents who live in Glen Osmond. There are a number of suburbs that are not serviced by Playgrounds in relation to the 500 metre benchmark. Suburbs such as St Georges, Glen Osmond and Toorak Gardens are lacking in Playgrounds, however this reflects the lack of open space in these areas. Parts of Stonyfell, Kensington Park and Kensington Gardens also lack Playgrounds.

Some parks have more than one Playground – the total number of parks with Playgrounds is 32. Throughout this Strategy, the number of Playgrounds (38) and the number of parks with Playgrounds (32) are both figures that have been used to apply to ratios of Provision.

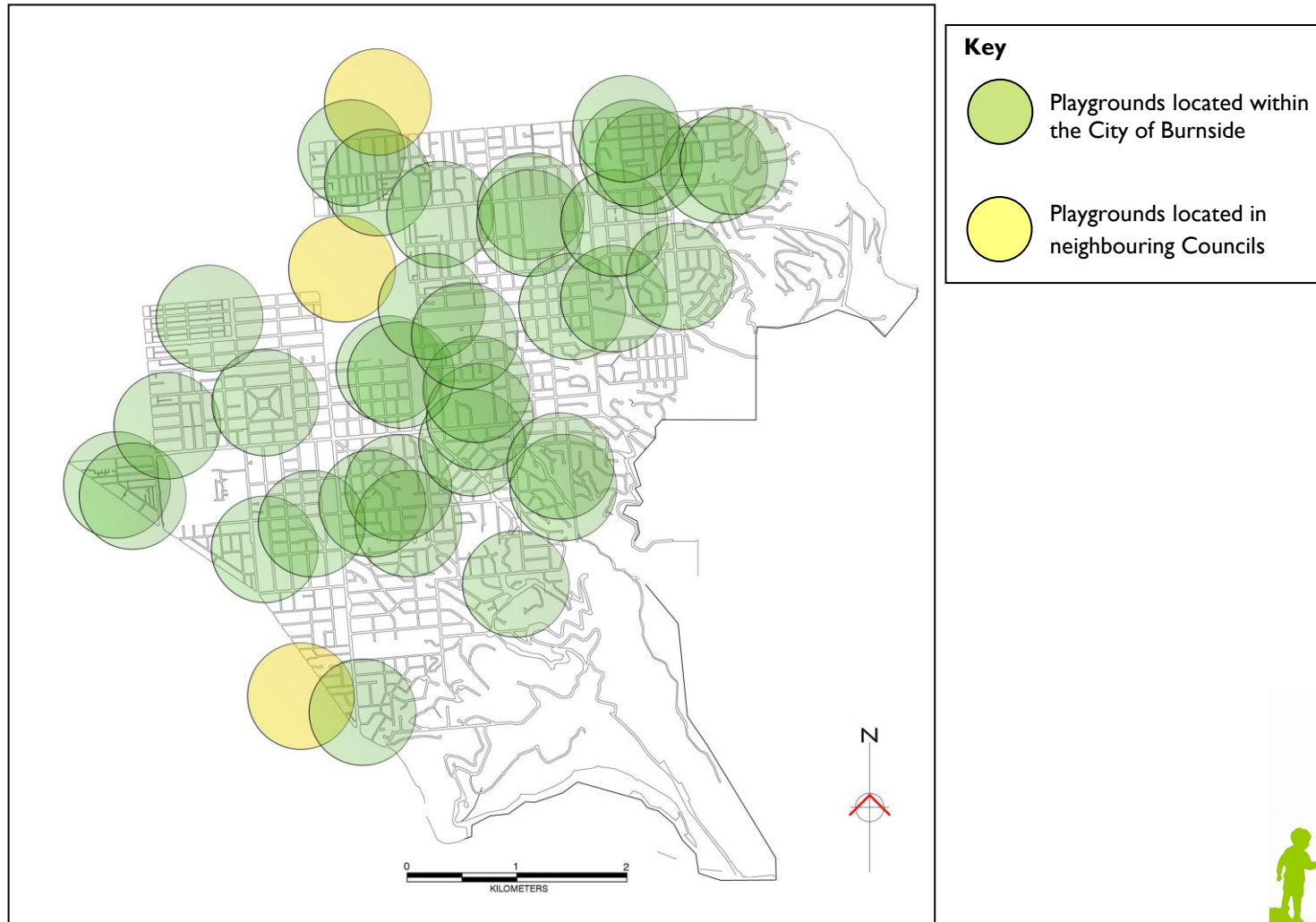
It should be noted that there are no subjective measures on the quality of the Playgrounds when using the above mentioned benchmarks. It is easy to install a swing and rocker and call that a Playground when they should be creative areas that provide a range of recreation opportunities for a wide cross section of the community – providing a balance of challenge and interest.



### Playground Upgrade Program

Since 2000, the City of Burnside has embarked on a Playground upgrade program. This program has been dictated by assessing the risk of a Playground and reacting to individual approaches. Between 2006/07 and 2012/13, eleven Playgrounds have been upgraded.

**Figure 1.1 The location of residences in relation to a 500 metre radius of Playground facilities in the City of Burnside**



### Overview of Other Local Government Regions

As previously mentioned, the accepted rate is to have Playground facilities located within a 500 metre radius of every resident with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory Local Government which requires that all Playgrounds must be located within 400 metres of every residence.

Closer to home, the City of Campbelltown requires that all Playgrounds are to be located within a radius of 500 metres of all residents in the City. Priority would also be given to installing or renewing Playgrounds on reserves that are also within walking distance of transport corridors and social infrastructure such as shopping centres, churches, schools and other child orientated institutions.

**Table I.1 Playground Provision Benchmarking**

Council	Total Population	Playgrounds	Ratio of Playgrounds per Total Population	Total Population of Children (0-14 years)	Ratio of Playgrounds per Population of Children
City of Burnside	44,000	38	1:1,158	6705	1:176
City of Unley	36,800	27	1:1,363	5,929	1:219
City of Campbelltown	48,000	57	1:842	8,056	1:141
City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters	36,600	27	1:1355	4,839	1:179
City of Onkaparinga	160,000	235	1:680	31,120	1:132
Industry Benchmark			1:1,300		1:300

Table I.1 indicates benchmarking against other Councils located in metropolitan Adelaide. The City of Burnside as well as many other Councils have ratios that better the national benchmark. This benchmark only measures against the number of Playground facilities, as there are no subjective measures on the quality of those facilities.



## City of Burnside Policies and Plans

The Be the Future of Burnside 2012-2025 Strategic Plan for the Burnside community provides an overarching vision for the provision of open space.

The following Desired Outcomes and Approaches are the main provisions in the Be the Future of Burnside that guide open space provision in Burnside:

Desired Outcome	Approach
1.4 A range of high quality sport and recreational opportunities and facilities that foster healthy lifestyle pursuits	1.4.1 Ensure public spaces meet the future needs of our community and provide for a variety of vibrant and inspirational opportunities, encouraging participation by the community 1.4.2 Create and facilitate access to diverse leisure, recreation and sporting facilities and programs that are safe for people of all ages and abilities
1.5 Sustainable, engaging and functional community public spaces and streetscapes	1.5.1 Ensure that an accessible network of public spaces exists that responds to the needs of the community
1.6 Fit for purpose and cost effective infrastructure that meets community needs	1.6.1 Determine the social, economic and environmental infrastructure needs of the community 1.6.2 Plan, maintain and deliver Council infrastructure and assets to the required level of service and condition that meets the needs of the community now and into the future

The City of Burnside’s Open Space Strategy is underpinned by the following principles as outlined in the Open Space Policy:

### 1. Preservation/ Conservation

Open Space should be retained and conserved in order to preserve Burnside’s natural and cultural heritage for the enjoyment and benefit of present and future generations.

### 2. Aesthetic and Amenity Value

Open Space should be valued for the sense of tranquillity it offers, for appreciation of nature, for visual relief in built-up areas, and as a source of inspiration and spiritual refreshment.



### 3. *Provision of Diversity and Quality*

The quality and range of open space settings, from playing fields to natural bushland, is the key to ensuring increased and more satisfying leisure opportunities, and enhanced amenity for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

### 4. *Equity of Access*

Ideally, open space and the benefits which derive from open space, should be evenly distributed and accessible to all. In terms of proximity, a small pocket park within 500 metres of each house has been the suggested goal.

### 5. *Community Involvement*

The City of Burnside acknowledges that public ownership of open space has been achieved through the foresight and generosity of Burnside's citizens, past and present, as well as strategic acquisitions by the Council. Council recognises that residents place a great deal of importance on retention of the current network of public open space, which is relatively accessible to the majority of residents. It also recognises that such open space is held for the benefit of the community, not as an asset for disposal. Accordingly the community should be involved in decisions regarding open space.

These principles are all relevant to Playground facility provision.

Burnside recognises community land as an important component of the urban environment, providing space for leisure and recreation activities. It is a requirement that Councils have a Community Land Management Plan (CLMP) for any community land that they own. A CLMP identifies an area of land as a community facility, and provides authority to control the future uses, development and maintenance of that land. It aims to balance the preservation of the unique features of the site with community needs for open space recreation facilities.

Burnside's CLMP establishes strategic approaches and clear objectives for the management and maintenance of Burnside's parks and reserves; clarifies direction, both to Council staff and the general public; and assists Council to assign priorities in budgeting and works programming. Community Land was grouped into categories or similar functions and generic CLMP's prepared for them. In many CLMP's, provision for Playgrounds was included.





# ***PART 2***

## ***BRIEF CONTEXT***



Access to Playgrounds can be seen as a basic right for all children. The principle of the basic human right to play dates back to Jean-Rousseau's 1762 "Charter of Childhood" (Whitehead, 1922). The International Association for the Childs Right to Play declares:

**CHILDREN** are the foundation of the world's future.

**CHILDREN** have played at all times throughout history and in all cultures.

**PLAY**, along with the basic needs of nutrition, health, shelter and education, is vital to develop the potential of all children.

**PLAY** is communication and expression, combining thought and action; it gives satisfaction and a feeling of achievement.

**PLAY** is instinctive, voluntary, and spontaneous.

**PLAY** helps children develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially.

**PLAY** is a means of learning to live, not a mere passing of time

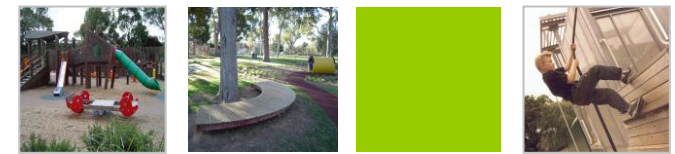
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international treaty that sets out universally accepted rights for children. It is a benchmark against which a nation's treatment of its children can be measured. It brings together one comprehensive code identifying the benefits and protection for children that up until now was scattered in a variety of other agreements, including the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1959.

The Convention was officially approved by the United Nations in 1989 and has been ratified by almost every country in the world. Ratification of the Convention is a commitment by members to comply with the articles of the Convention and thereby to protect and enhance the basic rights of children through their polices, programs and services.

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It states:

## Article 31 of the UN Convention

1. That it is the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. That member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.



***"All children both need and want to take risks in order to explore limits, venture into new experiences and develop their capacities, from a very young age and from their earliest play experiences."***

British Play Safety Forum



## What is Play?

Young children learn through play. As soon as they can move they use their bodies to express emotions and ideas. Through this play children learn discrimination and forms of effective behaviour. They use their bodies in intent exploration of their physical and social environment and gradually come to use language.

A definition of play is:

*“That creative state of mind that occurs in environments uncluttered by external demands. It may occur on an individual or collective basis, have elements of self-expression, exploration, learning and sharing. It is entered into by choice. This recognises that play happens anywhere, is facilitated by many environments and places and is not solely achieved through the provision of play equipment.”<sup>1</sup>*

Professor Scarfe, University of British Columbia says, “The spirit of play is vital to all humanity, the basis of most of the happiness of mankind, the means by which humanity advances creatively, scientifically, intellectually and socially. Not only is it vital to childhood but the spirit of play is vital to all mankind.”

Playgrounds can be amazing gathering places for people of all ages. The environment can be a living, growing space where local residents can meet and children can safely play and learn about the natural world. A safe play structure is a wonderful start to a new environment, “but the equipment you choose is only the beginning. The real soul of the Playground comes from what you add to the space surrounding the play structure.”<sup>2</sup>



***“The idea is to use the landscape as a playspace and nature as the play element.”***

Mark Francis, University of California

<sup>1</sup> R. Moore (1989)

<sup>2</sup> Rusty Keeler



Play can be usefully divided into three broad categories, which enable designers to select equipment and design a space that will provide a wide enough range of activity types for a variety of age groups.

These categories are:

### Physical

- *Flexibility:* Design decisions should allow for diverse activity, including games, solitary play, and play with natural elements or loose parts. Rather than building play structures that do one thing, best play is one that can be continually changed by the players; a stagnant place becomes an empty place.
- *Variety:* provide a variety of small spaces, changes in level, changes in surface, stairs, seats, plantings, colours, textures and overhead elements (with accessibility offered to all). More variety will also attract a wider age range. Children love the adventure and mystery of hiding places and play spaces should include natural elements such as sand, dirt, water, trees, mud holes and shallow ponds.
- *Accessibility:* A Playground should be easy to reach, either by foot, bicycle or public transport, and have a visible location for safety.

### Social

- *Wide range of ages:* Many play areas, especially Playgrounds, are designed for a narrow age range, constricting the learning and playing possibilities. It is more desirable to offer interconnected play environments with more diverse activities in order to attract a wider age range.

### Cognitive

- *Creativity:* Play areas need to allow children to create their own environment to allow for adventure and creative play. Adventure Playgrounds provide loose parts that allow a child to create its own environment.
- *Sense of accomplishment:* Activities should provide differing stages of difficulty so that children can choose goals that are attainable yet challenging.
- *Participation:* There is a need to involve children in the process of designing new play areas. Participation of children not only results in the most appropriate location and a better finished product, but also leads to a greater sense of local responsibility for overseeing and maintaining the site.



***“...but the equipment you choose is only the beginning. The real soul of the playspace comes from what you add to the space surrounding the play structure.”***

Rusty Keeler



# The Importance of Play

Apart from being fun, which, according to the philosopher Huizinga (1970) is its prime justification; play is one of the complex shapers of experience, intelligence, competence, values and creativity. The physical environment of play, especially the free adventure play of middle childhood, is an important part of the child's growth experiences, at least as important as the formal education process upon which society spends so much time and devotes so many resources.

Children need space away from their homes where they can socialise and spend time with their peers. Public space – which is different from a back yard or school ground – is important, as it is accessible to everyone in the community. The interactions that take place in public space provide a rich education for children about the world around them and the people who live in it.

Children enjoy playing – it makes them happy, gives them the opportunity to enjoy themselves, to burn energy, gain confidence, learn new skills, experience challenge and satisfaction, and to interact with other children.

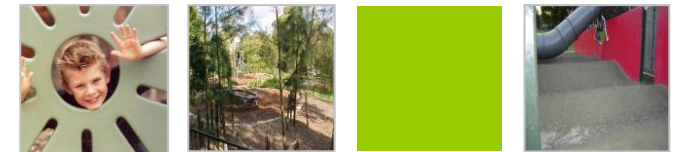
Children who are included socially have the best chance of becoming included as adults. Feeling included as a child through experiences acquired in your local community gives a sense of belonging and self-worth which later influences attitudes towards participation and citizenship.

The seven play objectives are:

- Extend the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it.
- Recognise the child's need to test boundaries and responds positively to that need.
- Manages the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm.
- Maximise the range of play opportunities.
- Foster independence and self-esteem.
- Foster children's respect for others and offers opportunities for social interaction.
- Foster the child's well-being, healthy growth and development, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn.

Children learn through play – learn about themselves, other people, roles, society and their environment. There are numerous benefits that a child attains through play. These include:

- Developmental benefits in social, intellectual, physical and emotional skills;
- Motor sensory stimulation, which enhances the natural learning process;
- Enhanced creative abilities and imagination; and
- Development of skills required for future growth and learning.



# Playground Evolution

Although children have been playing for as long as there have been children, the concept of a designated “Playground” is a relatively new idea.

Children’s play in the early of the 1900’s was not generally a designated event as it is today. Few formal Playgrounds existed when the majority of the world’s population lived in rural areas. A child’s experimental learning and skill development was achieved through daily contact with family, work and nature. Climbing trees, playing in puddles and running through paddocks, coupled with strong inter-generation relationships, challenged children to reach their potential and to determine their place among others. During the second half of the century there was a major shift in the world’s population from rural communities to urban centres.

Playgrounds have evolved as part of the Australian park landscape in the years since the Second World War. The demand for leisure facilities that accompanied the post war economic revival saw an increase in the provision of parks and park facilities.

In the early years, facilities were simple. The standard items of play equipment were simple and included a set of swings, a slippery slide and a see-saw. The 1960s and 70s saw the quality of play facilities improve as designers responded to the need for greater challenge and diversity. Among the more durable items from this era were the koppers-log structures, which promoted climbing and more adventurous play. Such facilities established a benchmark in Playground equipment. New Playgrounds are now designed to both capture children’s imagination and improve physical coordination through the introduction of adventure, challenge, excitement and colour. However, they must also comply with the strict Australian Standards on Playground equipment and design which have been put in place to minimise risk of injury to children.

Image 1.1 Glover Playground, South Terrace, 1928



***“The principle... ‘children being seen and heard in public spaces is one of the hallmarks of a vital city’ should be emblazoned on the front of every future regeneration strategy, design brief and public space policy, if people are really serious about liveability and social inclusion.”***

Ken Worpole



# *PART 3*

## *PLAY DESIGN*



# Playspace Development Model

Variety and diversity are essential requirements when planning for children's play, therefore it is important to ensure that a balance between the physical and experimental is achieved when designing Playgrounds.

The Elements of Play Model was developed by the South Australian Office for Recreation and Sport in order to illustrate the elementary factors required to establish an area specifically for children's play. It is advisable that a long-term approach to planning be established, otherwise resources may be spread too thinly on each project, thus resulting in superficial play experiences and facilities that are under-utilised.

When endeavouring to provide for play in public spaces the following four elements should be considered:

## 1. Active Play/ Equipment Based

Play equipment has historically been the dominant factor in Playground provision. However, play equipment should complement the remainder of the space rather than be the only play feature.

This element usually includes provision of predominantly equipment and other elements that allow for aerobic activity, strength, development of co-ordination and balance, gross/fine motor skills as well as encouraging social and sharing opportunities. It may also include informal sport elements such as goal posts or basketball ring and key or even exercise equipment, in particular when making allowances for older children, youth and adults.

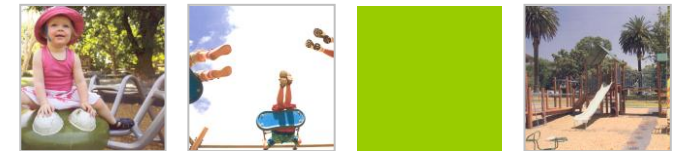
## 2. Open Space

Open spaces should offer areas for informal ball games and general running around and should not be confused with formal sport requirements. The essence of such a space is to encourage and allow activities to develop spontaneously among the children present at the time who then implement the parameters by which the play will be engaged.

## 3. Adult Supervision

Adults/ care-givers accompanying children to play areas require a comfortable area where they can oversee activities. Not only will this allow for safe supervision but the inclusion of such areas in Playgrounds may also result in longer periods of use by families or adult/ care-givers with young children.

The presence and involvement of carers in Playgrounds is just as important as the implementation of thoughtful and exciting design solutions when it comes to safety in the Playground.



*"The best play spaces exercise the body... and the mind."*

Kara Corridan





#### 4 Creative/Explorative Spaces

These elements encourage the child to explore, to develop a sense of wonder, to question, to engage in and interact with their natural or built environment. They also allow the child, on repeat visits, to recognise the dynamics and change within that space. The natural environment lends itself particularly well to this latter element of play provision.

This is often the most neglected aspect of play provision and it requires sensitivity to develop the possibilities for such an area. It is also the most difficult and challenging area of play provision. For these reasons, this element is the focus of this strategy; the development of spaces that encourage more interactive and explorative play.

In addition, an optional component which may be incorporated is:

##### A Special Features Area

This is an optional component that may be included in a Playground. Although these areas are not essential, such features as a roller-blade or skate-board ramp can discourage children from practising their skills in less acceptable locations. Other special feature items could include interactive public art, chess boards, a water feature, open air theatre or informal sporting facilities.

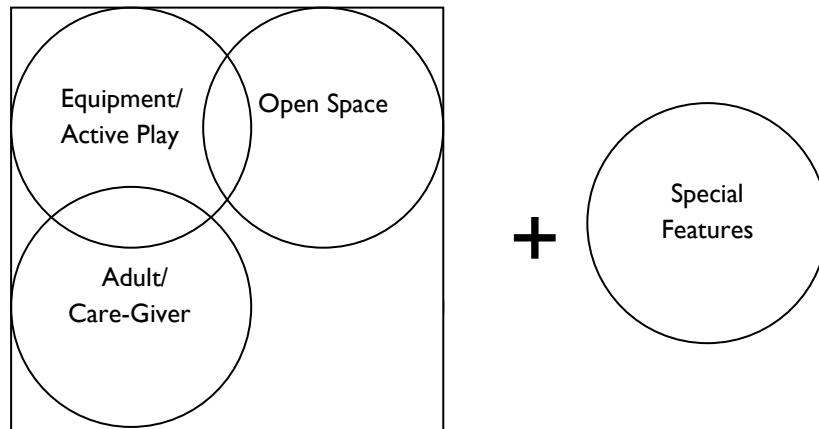


Figure 1.2 Elements of Play

The Playgrounds provided to date need not lose their reason for being, which is to encourage exploration and contribute to the holistic experience and development of the child within its cultural and physical environment. There is a need to provide for some spontaneity and unpredictability in an increasingly structured and urbanised world.

Playgrounds can be safe and secure and still be places of excitement, wonder and challenge. If suitably informed and familiar with the Australian Standards, designers can create Playgrounds that provide stimulating special places for children.

#### 1.1 Principle: Playground Development Model

**Council adopts a holistic Playground development model that provides for active and explorative play plus addresses the needs of caregivers.**

The following elements should be included within the design of Playgrounds:

- Equipment and active play elements that facilitate such activities as swinging, sliding, climbing, and spinning, all linked by path systems for running and informal cycling in order to accommodate and encourage the child's development.
- Open Space play to encourage running, chasing and playing informal ball games without the structure of formal sports to contribute to the development of the child's social and negotiating skills.
- Explorative / Creative play should be provided through landscape design, innovative and thoughtful plant selection and interactive elements, such as, sound, sand, water and the inclusion of engaging public art to encourage the child's intellectual and imaginative development.
- The provision for easy visual supervision and a degree of comfort and amenity for adult or caregivers appropriate to the hierarchy of the Playground.
- Integration of opportunities and amenities for children with disabilities that enable sensory experiences as well as physical access.



It can be difficult to categorise equipment and activities provided as suitable for a specific age range, as children of the same age vary greatly in their physical and cognitive abilities. However, some equipment can be considered appropriate for a general age group such as spring rockers for younger children and climbing walls and flying foxes for older children. Based on the four categories of play, each of the following general age groups can be catered for.

## **Toddlers (0-3 years)**

Public play areas can cater for this age group with very simple settings for:

- Crawling and walking in well maintained grass
- Running up and rolling down gentle slopes
- Swinging in very low baby swings
- Climbing up and down very low level changes
- Play in a small sand pit
- Hiding between very slow shrubs

## **Junior Children (3-6 years)**

Public play areas should provide opportunities for young children to practise and hone skills in:

- Crawling
- Running
- Agility skills
- Skipping and ball play

It should also provide settings for dramatic play where children can play in small groups with sand and water, and build cubbies.

## **Older Children (6-12 years)**

Playgrounds are likely to be used for activities such as:

- Fine tuning gymnastic skills, such as on agility items, turnover bars and chin up bars
- Swinging in pairs
- Extending physical challenge, such as hanging from one hand only, jumping further and from higher levels and climbing.

Older children also need spaces for:

- Ball games, including a grass area and hard court area
- Riding bicycles and skateboards

### **1.2 Principle: Play Facilities**

**The design of future Playgrounds take into account the key features for the age group to be catered for relevant to the type of Playground being developed. It must also recognise the demands and interactions of older aged groups and how they may co-exist.**



## Playground Hierarchy

The City of Burnside has 38 Playgrounds generally placed throughout the City.

Community Playgrounds are classified in several categories; each designed to meet the criteria outlined and are appropriate to subject age groups. Generally, the Playground classification relates to the size and hierarchy of the reserve in which the Playground is situated. For example, Playgrounds classified as local are generally in small, pocket parks as identified in the Council's Community Land Management Plans. Exceptions to this include larger reserves where there are more than one Playground, in which case there is usually one larger regional or neighbourhood Playground and a secondary local Playground (e.g. Langman Reserve). There are also several facility based Playgrounds within the city that are provided as secondary features of other Council facilities and do not appropriately fit into the hierarchical system such as the Playground at the Burnside Swimming Centre.

### Regional Playgrounds

Regional Playgrounds should be large well-developed Playgrounds with a diversity of play opportunities and play themes. They should feature support facilities including car parking, toilets, shelters, picnic settings, art elements, furniture, drinking fountains and barbeques. Located in central sites with pleasant surroundings preferably that exhibit a strong natural, social or cultural feature associated with the space.

They should be considered as destination sites capable of several return visits. Well known features that reflect something of the unique nature of the city can make this level of Playground attractive to large numbers of visitors.

Regional Playgrounds are likely to be visited by the community from across the city or adjacent local government areas as organised or planned trips. They may be used by large groups and as part of planned day trips but they also provide neighbourhood and local Playground functions. Average visits range from two hours to all day, with vehicle visits being the most common mode of transport to the sites. Wombat Waterhole at Hazelwood Park is a good example of a regional Playground.

Other common characteristics of regional Playgrounds are:

- Catchment zone approximately 10 kilometre radius.
- Provide play equipment and amenities similar to neighbourhood Playgrounds but being of greater variety and distinctly appropriate for the junior and older children age groups.
- Consider the needs and entitlements of visitors with disabilities or limited mobility.



### Neighbourhood Playground

Neighbourhood Playgrounds traditionally feature extensive play opportunities with a number of play elements. Some lower level support facilities such as picnic settings, shelters, art elements and seating can also be expected. They may also include existing toilets and barbeques. Attractive surroundings are important and often determine the site's status as a neighbourhood level Playground.

Such sites are capable of return visits and should be designed to provide diverse play opportunities that address creative and physical play.

Typically they are visited by people within the surrounding suburbs, that is, within a four kilometre radius. Visits are between one to three hours in duration. The most common modes of transport to these sites are a mix of vehicle, cycle and some pedestrian access.

Other common characteristics of neighbourhood Playgrounds are:

- Catchment zone approximately 4 kilometre radius – dependant on population density.
- Provide equipment / amenities appropriate for use by 15% of the older children age group in the catchment zone.
- Amenity guide – shade, paved pathways, shaded seats, drinking water, grassed open space area, fencing, lighting etc.
- Consider the needs and entitlements of visitors with disabilities or limited mobility

### Local Playground

An area intended for local play, often equipment based, but also recognising the opportunities provided by landscaping and planting, with some support facilities such as seating and shelters. Some attractive surroundings and space for ball games are also available.

They are visited by people who live nearby, usually by foot and for less than half an hour. They are also used by the local community and older children to interact with others informally. Sometimes others who visit nearby facilities will use these sites.

Other common characteristics of local Playgrounds are:

- Catchment zone approximately 500-metre radius i.e. walking distance for young children.
- Provide play equipment/ park amenities appropriate for the toddler and junior children age groups in the 500m radius catchment zone.

▪ Function guide –



- e.g. double seat junior swing, rockers, slide etc.
- Amenity guide – shade, paved pathways, shaded seats, drinking water, mounded grass, fencing, lighting etc.
- Consider the needs and entitlements of visitors with disabilities or limited mobility.

The following chart allocates a hierarchy level to each existing Playground in the City of Burnside, giving consideration to the potential of the Playground. This allocation can evolve over time, depending on community needs and available resources. As part of the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2013-2023, an age bracket was assigned to each Playground. The use of age classifications provides guidance for future redevelopments and assists the community in choosing the appropriate Playground for their needs. The age brackets are based on the types of activities offered at each Playground and their appropriateness to the abilities of each age bracket described in Part 4, *Play Facilities*.

Playground Hierarchy	Street Address	Suburb	Age Group
<b>Regional Playground</b>			
Hazelwood Park (Main)	Greenhill Road	Hazelwood Park	All Ages
Kensington Gardens Reserve (Burnside Adventure Park)	The Parade	Kensington Gardens	All Ages
Kensington Park Reserve	The Parade	Kensington Park	All Ages
Tusmore Park	Stirling Street	Tusmore	All Ages

Playground Hierarchy	Street Address	Suburb	Age Group
<b>Neighbourhood Playground</b>			
Bell Yett Reserve	Stonyfell Road	Wattle Park	6-12yrs
Bennett Reserve	Jackson Street	Magill	6-12yrs
Glenunga Reserve	L'Estrange Street	Glenunga	0-6yrs
J.B. Ware Reserve	Portrush Road	Glen Osmond	3-6yrs
Kensington Gardens Reserve (Eastern)	The Parade	Kensington Gardens	0-6yrs
Langman Recreation Reserve (South)	Waterfall Gully Road	Burnside	6-12yrs
Mellor Reserve	Howard Street	Beulah Park	0-6yrs
Miller Reserve	Hay Road	Linden Park	0-3yrs
Penfold Park (East)	The Parade	Magill	6-12yrs

### I.3 Principle: Playground Hierarchy

**Council adopt a system of Playground hierarchy that will provide for the local, neighbourhood and regional needs of the community:**

- Regional Playgrounds should be large spaces with specially designed Playgrounds featuring a diversity of play opportunities and with the relevant support services to meet the needs of large numbers of people arriving by car or public transport
- Neighbourhood Playgrounds should provide a range of play experiences and be supported by adequate support services
- Local Playgrounds should meet the needs of the immediate local community

**Council considers locating a local level Playground within 500 metres of every resident**



Playground Hierarchy	Street Address	Suburb	Age Group
<b>Local Playground</b>			
Albert Street Reserve	Albert Street	Rose Park	All Ages
Branson Reserve	Riesling Avenue	Wattle Park	3-6yrs
Brock Reserve	Dashwood Road	Beaumont	3-6yrs
Chapel Street Reserve	Chapel Street	Magill	3-6yrs
Constable Hyde Reserve	Tusmore Avenue	Leabrook	3-6yrs
Eastwood Community Centre	Glen Osmond Road	Eastwood	0-6yrs
Effie Ferguson Reserve	Hallet Road	Erindale	6-12yrs
Fergusson Square	Fergusson Square	Toorak Gardens	3-6yrs
Gardiner Reserve	Carunta Street	Wattle Park	All Ages
Glyde Reserve	Glyde Street	Beulah Park	0-3yrs
Kingsley Avenue Reserve	Kingsley Avenue	Glenunga	0-6yrs
Knightsbridge Reserve	Phillip Avenue	Leabrook	0-6yrs
Langman Recreation Reserve (North)	Windarra Ave	Burnside	All Ages
Main Street Reserve	Main Street	Eastwood	3-6yrs
Pepper Street Reserve	Pepper Street	Magill	All Ages
Penfold Park (West)	The Parade	Magill	0-3yrs
Tregenza Oval	Laurel Avenue	Linden Park	3-6yrs
Warland Reserve	Kings Avenue	Burnside	6-12yrs
Warrego Crescent Reserve	Warrego Crescent	Linden Park	All Ages
Webb Street Reserve	Webb Street	Rose Park	0-6yrs
W.H. Holmes Reserve	Park Avenue	Rosslyn Park	3-6yrs
Wood Park	Collingwood Avenue	Hazelwood Park	All Ages

Playground Hierarchy	Street Address	Suburb	Age Group
<b>Facility Playground</b>			
Civic Centre	Greenhill Road	Tusmore	0-3yrs
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre, North)	Greenhill Road	Hazelwood Park	0-6yrs
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre, West)	Greenhill Road	Hazelwood Park	6-12yrs



## Design Guidelines

A successful Playground is defined by the amount of usage it gets. Children come back time after time to a Playground that can sustain their interest – and this means designing play spaces to delight them. Similar sized equipment or a limited choice of activities will not meet their needs. Playgrounds should be designed with child-eyes. There are no recognised magic formulae to design environments for children.

With good supervision, well-designed and appropriately used Playgrounds can help create positive physical and emotional development for children. Appropriately designed Playgrounds allow younger children to explore new methods of playing and to take qualified risks. Parents can help nurture positive physical and emotional development by observing, supervising, facilitating and complimenting, but not directly interfering unless there is a concern for safety.

In designing a Playground, the prime objective is to create a facility where children learn through play in an outdoor environment. To meet this objective, the Playground needs to promote markedly varied forms of play, from quiet focused activities to busy active play.

Furthermore, Playgrounds need to be places where children and carers feel safe and illegitimate users are discouraged. As with any public space ‘Crime Prevention through Environmental Design’ (CPTED) principles can be used to design and manage public space in ways that discourage criminal activity and increase community perceptions of their safety. For example, Playgrounds should be situated close to areas where most natural activity occurs such as entry and exit areas, pathways, roadways and nearby residences. Users of the Playground should be able to see clearly around themselves, as well as being aware of possible exits, should they feel threatened.

### Creative Design: The Detail of the Process

Designers should apply research, theory, experience and observation as a means to develop ideas and stimulate the design process. Designers should aim to combine:

- The social science of childhood;
- The natural science of the environment;
- Design theory and practice, and
- The full context of Playground design.



***“All children should be able to play safely outdoors wherever they live, in cities and in the countryside”***

The New charter for Children’s Play – Children’s Play Council



## Design Guidelines for New Playgrounds

The following should be considered in the design of any new Playground:

Design Considerations	Relevance		
	Regional	Neighbourhood	Local
Integrate unique geographic features into design such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximising the relationship between Playground settings and distance views</li> <li>Establishing visual links to surrounding features</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
Develop site specific theme for the Playground such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Themes relating to natural environment</li> <li>Themes relating to historic or cultural events/personalities</li> <li>Themes relating to previous land uses</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
Incorporate natural landforms in the design such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mounds</li> <li>Drainage channels</li> <li>Rock outcrops</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Include opportunity for active play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>play equipment</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Incorporate opportunity for creative/exploratory play and collaborative elements and interactive elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pumps</li> <li>sound tubes</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Establish links to adjacent open space to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas for informal ball games</li> <li>Running around</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Provide facilities for parents/carers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shade</li> <li>Seating</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Ensure ancillary facilities such as drinking fountains are appropriate to the designated level of hierarchy for the park or reserve	✓	✓	✓



***“They need a diverse, secure and supportive place, a safe haven. Once they have that, the play will come. And that play, you know, will be wonderful.”***

Robin Moore, North Carolina State University





Design Considerations	Relevance		
	Regional	Neighbourhood	Local
Considered site planting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To provide shade for carers and in the area of play activity</li> <li>▪ To shape and define spaces</li> <li>▪ With consideration for scent, texture and colour</li> <li>▪ To attract birds and wildlife</li> <li>▪ According to relevant master plans</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Provide linkages between activities and amenities (these are both physical – pathways and conceptual linkages i.e. a logical connection)	✓	✓	✓
Ensure the Playground is accessible to people with a disability and provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Paths</li> <li>▪ Surfaces</li> <li>▪ Play elements – braille, sound, tactile, aroma</li> <li>▪ Toilets</li> <li>▪ Car parking</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Include artwork into the design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To reflect the uniqueness of the site (theme)</li> <li>▪ To contribute to creative/ explorative play (e.g. huggable sculptures, sound sculptures, etc.)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All play equipment must comply with Australian Standards</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design should incorporate 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' principles</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓

#### I.4 Principle: Design Guidelines for New Playgrounds

The design of future Playgrounds take into account the key design considerations relevant to the type of Playground being developed.



# PART 4

## PLAY PROVISION



# Play Planning

Review of previous play provision suggests that in some instances there has been an ad hoc and re-active response to a need that has arisen rather than adopting a pro-active intent, guided by predictable and foreseeable development within contemporary urban communities. A consequence of this previous approach has been unplanned development that has established a cycle whereby previously provided poorly planned facilities require maintenance and replacement.

The public Playground aims to serve a neighbourhood of people from different generations and cultural backgrounds. Playgrounds provide public places of interaction for both children and adults to explore other cultures as well as develop local culture that nurtures the neighbourhood in return. As a consequence of their public place role, Playgrounds provide a valuable opportunity for the development of informal community networks and for the dissemination of community information. This community building function can play a valuable role in new development areas where these community networks are not pre-existing.

In the planning of provision for future play needs important questions need to be asked when reviewing existing Playgrounds such as:

- Why do current facilities exist?
- What were the demographics for the catchment area?
- What age group was it intended for?
- What external influences were evident at the time of design?

Then the logical question is;

- Does this demographic still exist and is the same level of play provision still relevant?

Playground provision should seek to avoid the anonymity of formulaic provision. Artwork should be integrated within Playgrounds, as an opportunity to express the creative culture of a community and broaden the scope for creativity by young children and generate greater involvement of the community.

## 2.1 Principle: Play Planning

**Council plans to meet the changing demographics in an area and provide sufficient variation in Playground provision between sites:**

- Ensuring that planned Playgrounds will meet the needs of the community mix of children's age groups
- Ensuring that there is minimal duplication of facilities within any local area
- Ensuring that Playground design and provision maximises local character and cultural references



# Risk Management

Children are risk-takers. Part of growing up means pushing their physical limits, and Playgrounds are one of the prime testing sites.

Under statutory and common law, Local Government authorities have legal obligations to the public. This 'duty of care' requires authorities to take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable risks of injury to visitors using areas they manage. The question of what is 'reasonable' and 'foreseeable' can be complex and technical. The scope of 'duty of care' depends upon the circumstances of a case.

## Play Equipment

In addition to the risks and the potential for litigation associated with poorly designed or manufactured equipment, the way in which children use equipment can also influence what is acceptable and what is not. Designers of Playgrounds and play equipment need to carefully consider how children will use the settings they produce. Children are extremely adaptable and will often improvise by using equipment in ways other than that for which it was intentionally designed. Children will also bring new materials to a playspace to create new and different play opportunities. These may be completely harmless whilst those responsible for improvising are still in command. However, once those children have left, the adaptations they have made may place others at risk.

It should be noted that in Australia, claims by injured persons could be brought up to three years from the date of an incident and in the case of an injured infant up to three years from their eighteenth birthday.

## Tree Management

Whilst the provision of mature trees near Playgrounds is encouraged to provide natural shade, they must be managed to reduce the risk of branches falling. Where large trees do exist around Playgrounds, the following approach is suggested:

- The stability of the tree and the risk of branches falling should be frequently assessed in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.
- At risk branches overhanging Playground equipment should be removed, unless there is significant impact on the tree.
- If branches cannot be removed and/ or there is still a risk of branches falling on or near the Playground, the equipment should be relocated.



## Fencing

Full or part fencing may be appropriate or necessary for some Playgrounds.

In general, Playgrounds should be considered for fencing if:

- The Playground is located close to a busy road and there is no fence around the reserve
- The Playground is close to a busy car park
- The Playground is near a permanent or potential water body (alternatively there could be a barrier around the water body)
- There is a need to separate the Playground from other activities, e.g. an active sports field
- There is demand for a dedicated enclosure for children and families, e.g. a Playground for toddlers where fencing and the subsequent safety of children is a desired feature.

Alternatives to fencing that should also be considered include:

- Planting to create borders and boundaries
- Landscaped mounds and level changes
- Bollards

An example of a Playground in the City of Burnside where an alternative to fencing has proven successful is JB Ware Reserve. Rather than using a fence to create a boundary between the play space and Portrush Road, a ha-ha wall (recessed retaining wall) defines the area and minimises access to the road. This not only protects children from being able to directly access Portrush Road, but it also enhances, defines and adds interest to the space.

## Dogs

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 states that no dogs are allowed at all within an enclosed playground.

By Law No. 5 also states that dogs may not come within 20 metres of all children's Playground or play equipment within the City unless tethered securely and under effective control.

### 2.2 Principle: Risk Management

**Council addresses risk management issues where they occur.**

- Including risks relating to tree management, dogs, fencing and Playground safety.



# Safety Standards

In acting reasonably, the Council has a duty to ensure that it manages its Playgrounds to the appropriate or relevant Australian Standards.

The current Australian Standards that need to be considered as part of Playground design include:

- AS/NZS4486.1:1997: *Playgrounds and Playground equipment – Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*
- AS4685.1: *General safety requirements and test methods*
- AS4685.2: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for swings*
- AS4685.3: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for slides*
- AS4685.4: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for runways*
- AS4685.5: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for carousels*
- AS4685.6: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for rocking equipment*
- AS4685.11: *Additional safety requirements for Spatial Network*
- AS/NZS4422:1996: *Playground surfacing – Specifications, requirements and test methods*
- AS 1428.1-5 2001 : *Design for Access and Mobility Parts 1-5*
- AS/NZS ISO 31000: *Risk management - Principles and guidelines*

Whilst Australian Standards for Playground Equipment are not mandatory (that is, not legislated) they are viewed as the minimum benchmark required for Playground equipment, design, compliance, installation, maintenance and inspection. In a litigation case they will be upheld as the minimum necessary requirements. It is, therefore, imperative that all Playground providers adhere to these guidelines.

The Australian Standards are not retrospective so any equipment produced before AS4685 (October 2004) should meet AS1924 or undergo third party testing as part of an annual inspection process. Local Government can reduce the risk of injuries in Playgrounds through ensuring a high standard of maintenance as well as good design.

The three major factors that contribute to ensuring a safe play experience are:

- Minimising excessive fall heights and other risks through equipment selection and Playground design
- Maximising ongoing inspection and maintenance of existing equipment, and
- Encouraging adults to engage in the space whilst children in their care are there.

## 2.3 Principle: Safety Standards

### Council complies with Australian Playground Standards:

- AS/NZS4486.1:1997: *Playgrounds and Playground equipment – Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*
- AS46885.1: *General safety requirements and test methods*
- AS4685.2: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for swings*
- AS4685.3: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for slides*
- AS4685.4: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for runways*
- AS4685.5: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for carousels*
- AS4685.6: *Additional safety requirements and test methods for rocking equipment*
- AS4685.7: *Guidance on Installation, Inspection, Maintenance and Operation* (will replace AS/NZS4486.1:1997 when published)
- AS4685.8: *Additional safety requirements for climbing equipment* (not yet published)
- AS/NZS4422:1996: *Playground surfacing – Specifications, requirements and test methods*



## Play/Sport Association

Playgrounds are often adjacent to open space associated with informal sport elements, such as Australian Rules goalposts and basketball rings. The provision of sporting elements in this manner is entirely appropriate within the play context. The provision of only the scoring opportunity will focus the activity into an area where the designer deems it will not conflict with other intended adjacent uses.

The absence of other markings allows the children to determine the rules under which the play will be engaged. When in control of the parameters of play, children experience collaboration, negotiation and problem solving within a group. These are valuable experiences for personal development. This allows elements of sport to be 'played' in the true sense of the word without the imperative of winning.

In order to maximise the opportunities for play, where possible Playgrounds should be linked to other areas of play, including open grassed areas, natural areas and other structured recreation facilities (e.g. bike tracks or half-court basketball court). In addition other linkages such as cycle ways, linear parks and public transport routes should be considerations in the location of Playgrounds.

### 2.4 Principle: Play/ Sport Association

**Where possible, Playgrounds should be linked to open space that allows for unstructured games and that a clear distinction is made between sport and play provision:**

- Locate close to recreational facilities such as half courts and open grassed areas suitable for ball games etc.



## Nature Play

Other play opportunities within the City of Burnside exist outside the identified Playgrounds, in particular, natural area within reserves.

The term 'nature play' refers to a play space that provides children with access to range of opportunities that reflect the natural world such as loose parts (leaves, twigs, and logs), different surfaces and terrain (mounds, slopes), plants (sensory), water, mud, construction opportunities with natural elements (sand, sticks, fabric), areas for reflection (a rock near a pond or under a tree), areas for hiding (grasses, sunflowers), areas for imaginative play such as boats, decks, winding pathways, and areas to hide.

Natural areas such as creeks and trees within the City's reserves and parks provide informal play areas for a variety of abilities. Bagot (2005) identifies the value of natural environments over built environments to children's physical and mental health. She argues that natural based settings assist children to concentrate more effectively and to engage more effectively in both physical and creative play.

While specific areas have not been formally identified by the Council as 'nature play' areas, there is anecdotal evidence of creek beds in reserves such as Bell Yett Reserve and Kensington Gardens Reserve are being used by children to explore and build 'cubbies' from logs and branches.

A successful example of a large scale nature play space is the Rio Tinto Naturescape at Kings Park, WA. It is a place designed for children to connect with nature and learn to appreciate the unique Western Australian environment. It is a place to explore, climb rocks and ropes, wade through creeks, build cubbies and get dirty.

These types of play spaces require regular maintenance and monitoring to ensure they remain beneficial and safe.

Further investigation and community consultation is required before a nature play space within the City of Burnside is developed.





## Shade

On some occasions the nature of land development in Burnside has resulted in an absence of established trees within parks. The effects from excessive exposure to the sun are becoming one of the biggest health issues this country is likely to face. The provision of necessary shade by expensive shade structures does not bare comparison to the self-renewing, dynamic, habitat providing function of trees, yet in some cases, they may be necessary.

### SunSmart

As a commitment to children's health, the Cancer Council has developed the SunSmart program, which aims to ensure that all children are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UV rays of the sun. The program recognises the importance of encouraging and supporting communities in their efforts to promote sun protection throughout the year. The program is targeted to early childhood centres, primary and secondary schools. To become accredited, an early childhood centre or school must complete a questionnaire and develop a comprehensive SunSmart policy covering behaviour, curriculum and the environment.

SunSmart policies encourage:

- Wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors
- Using SPF30+ or higher sunscreen for skin protection
- Seeking shade wherever possible

### Position

If a Playground is intended by Council to foster outdoor activities, generate social linkages, and make provision for play, then it must also consider the associated facilities. The provision of shade is a fundamental community health issue that with a little foresight and planning can be addressed quickly and relatively cheaply now, whilst enhancing the general liveability of Burnside.

While there is no accreditation program for public Playgrounds, the provision of shade is a crucial issue for Playgrounds. The erection of shade covers is not always the most appropriate option, as this is both costly and not always in keeping with the environment in which Playgrounds maybe located. The provision of shade trees is a straightforward and positive approach that Council can undertake which is consistent with the philosophy of SunSmart and should be a high priority as part of any Playground provision. The position location and proximity of trees (for the provision of shade) must also recognise the potential risks that may arise and as such located to minimise long term risks.

#### 2.5 Principle: Shade

**Council's Shade Plan should incorporate a strategy that prioritises shade provision for all Playgrounds through tree planting:**

- Consider location of Playgrounds in relation to existing mature shade trees
- Consider strategic planting of tree on parks and reserve identified for future Playgrounds
- Consider advanced trees for those existing Playgrounds that lack appropriate shade
- Consider relationship between shade and seating for carers
- Council should include a section on SunSmart principles in any publications listing available Playgrounds
- Wherever possible, Council should utilise shade trees to meet SunSmart objectives and avoid building costly shade structures that have potential public risk factors.



# Access and Equity Issues

In the public domain, designers in Australia are required by law to provide access for all users. Playgrounds, being in the public domain, also come under this requirement, and providing play experiences for children of all abilities is a challenging goal for designers.

If a Playground is to be universally accessible in its final design, accessibility must be considered from the outset of the project, on four principal levels.

## Position

The first level begins with the choice for the Playground position. The choice of the site of the Playground can determine absolutely who will be able to use the facility. An ideal site is close to the main population areas, is fairly level, with limited environmental noise and pollution, has shade, but is well lit across all active areas of the site all day and is able to be surrounded by a perimeter barrier which is non-climbable. It is also one where it is possible to provide for all necessary attendant facilities to support family visits, such as close designated parking, a clear and accessible entrance, accessible toilets nearby and picnic facilities that include wheelchair tables.

## Physical/Accessible Design

The second consideration is physical accessibility which functions on two levels; on an overall organisational level, where the designer addresses the need for access to the ground and through all areas and activities within the ground; and on an activity based level that addresses the needs of children with disability for access to all the individual play activities themselves.

## Intellectual Accessible Design

The third consideration is intellectual accessibility. Addressing this level of accessibility principally means being aware of the intelligibility or ability of items, to provide levels of interest of a Playground as a whole as well as the intelligibility of any particular activity. Intellectual accessibility has to work closely with physical accessibility.

## Ease of Use/Comfort

The fourth level of consideration is the level of comfort. The need to address comfort within a Playground extends beyond the actual considerations for the play activities themselves. Considering comfort requires being mindful of minimising the effort required by children with special needs for functional tasks such as moving into, around and between Playground activities.

Addressing these four levels of consideration must be comprehensively incorporated into the design of a Playground to ensure every opportunity for social inclusion, individual control, movement and competence, has been recognised and supported.

## 2.6 Principle: Access and Equity Issues

**Council ensure reasonable access to all Playground sites and a meaningful play experience is provided for children and carers:**

This should be achieved by provision of:

- Pathways to the Playground that meet Australian Access Standards
- Location of car parking in relation to Playground
- Disabled parking in relation to the Playground
- Accessible path access around and through the site
- Heights and positioning of sensory elements and planting in relation to access pathways
- All access surface below and leading to equipment to facilitate easy access
- Auditory and tactile elements to ensure experiences for children with impaired vision.



## Opportunities for Youth

While this strategy focuses on the provision of Playgrounds for children, the City of Burnside recognises that the parameters as they exist now are sure to change. One of the most significant changes over time will be the transition of a high proportion of young children into young adults. Provision for that emerging demographic should be addressed now, to avoid ad hoc reactionary responses in the future. The Sport and Recreation Strategy 2013 - 2023 provides a more detailed outline of the recreational needs of the community, including youth.

Further to this is the realisation that the changing youth culture is tending toward youth being more mobile and independent at younger ages. It is not unusual for groups to select a central meeting place that is accessible by pushbikes. These spaces can be identified and developed in such a way as to suggest some adult intervention without necessarily trying to make full provision that may be inappropriate or unwanted.

In order to maximise the opportunities for youth, these spaces should be linked to other areas of activity including shopping precincts, public transport routes, skate facilities, natural areas, other structured recreation provision areas and linkages such as cycle ways and linear parks. It should be noted that at this age a degree of separation from overt adult supervision is desired and these issues should be regarded genuinely, but innovatively, in the allocation of space and its design.

There are a number of elements that Burnside can provide to initiate gathering places for youth. These include skate parks, BMX tracks, half courts, seating/shelter and new 'Playground' elements for teenagers.

The success of these elements depends heavily upon site criteria. To assist in a site's success as a youth friendly space the following are important:

- located near activity/transport nodes
- separated from but next to activity areas
- designed as safe locations.

There should always be community consultation and particularly consultation with youth, in the design of any youth space development or upgrade. The consultation should include:

- Design workshops
- Involvement in location selection
- Consideration of transport options
- Proximity to services
- Suitable balance between surveillance and secluded site surroundings
- Nearby residents and businesses

### 2.7 Principle: Opportunities for Youth

**Council consider the provision of youth spaces that encourage unstructured outdoor activity**

It is recommended that Council should consult with young people in the design of any youth space development or upgrade.



## Internal Processes/ Departmental Communication

It is important that Council has good internal consultation to ensure that maximum strategic advantage can be gained for Playgrounds:

- Continuing a realistic capital works funding
- Ensuring holistic play/sport/ open space planning
- Linking with cultural/ arts opportunities within Council

## Playground Design Process

Community consultation is an integral part of developing open space for public use and can assist in:

- Determining community aspirations
- Informing of proposed or desirable developments
- Expanding perceptions of what is possible
- Generating support for proposed developments
- Encouraging community discussion, debate and dissention
- Keeping the community informed

The extent of community consultation on any given project will vary depending upon factors including:

- The size of the development
- The location and purpose of the development
- Possible cultural implications
- Possible environmental implications (including heritage value)

The process should include some or all of the following steps:

- Notification of intention to develop
- Review of demographic information and population projections
- Public meeting – using placemaking principles
- Display of initial concept plans in public viewing area for predetermined time
- Provision for community comment
- Display of revised Concept Plans
- Preparation of Final Plans
- Have all consultation information available online through the Council's website and Engage Burnside portal

### 2.8 Principle: Community Involvement

**Council encourages opportunities for the community to participate in the design process for planning of Playgrounds and associated amenities:**

This should be achieved by:

- Informing the local community of intentions to develop Playgrounds
- Seeking feedback on community aspirations through public meetings
- Public display of concept plans and receive feedback
- Online information and ability to receive feedback electronically
- Display of final plans.



# Amalgamation and Upgrading

It is important to recognise that Playground equipment has a lifespan of approximately 10-15 years and that current design approaches to Playground provision focuses on building upon the uniqueness of specific sites, landscape features and the communities' needs and aspirations.

Playground provision should not be undertaken in isolation from the planning of other community facilities. To avoid ad hoc provision, master planning for a 10-15 year period should form the basis of decisions regarding amalgamation, relocation, upgrading and closure of Playgrounds.

The following guidelines reflect current thinking on Playground provision by Local Government and should provide a basis on which to review the appropriateness of existing Playgrounds.

- It is recognised that not all of the criteria will be met in each instance; however, there should be at least 2-3 factors that determine the rationalisation or upgrade of a Playground. A dominant factor should be whether there is existing or potential demand for the Playground.
- The asset life of Playground equipment can range from 10 -15 years given an appropriate maintenance. Playground equipment should have regular condition inspections and audits as per Australian Standards which informs annual maintenance programs.

Checklist Questions	Yes	No
<b>Location Questions</b>		
Is location central and accessible, catering for surrounding residents?		
Is the site away from traffic areas?		
Is the site shady or has the potential for shade?		
Is the site near to areas for play/ sport activities?		
Is there another Playground located nearby (generally within 500 metres) to cater for local needs?		
<b>Condition Questions</b>		
Is the Playground safe?		
Is the quality of site vegetation good?		
Is the equipment within the recommended lifespan?		
<b>Demand Questions</b>		
Is there a need for a Playground according to local demographics?		
Is there demand from surrounds residents?		
Is there a demand for other recreation areas/facilities?		

## 2.9 Principle: Amalgamation and Upgrading

Council consider the range of issues outlined before redeveloping existing play areas.



# ***PART 5***

## ***PLAY MANAGEMENT***



# Maintenance

The ongoing maintenance of Playgrounds is essential to ensure safe play areas for children. Council should establish that its existing on-site play equipment meets current standards and is suitable for continued public use. Physical inspections must be undertaken on a regular basis to identify any maintenance required. Council should have in place a comprehensive Playground inspection process to ensure this occurs. This process includes the maintenance of an up-to-date register of all play equipment along with its location and maintenance and upgrade history, plus a system of actioning maintenance work. This includes appropriate softfall under and around equipment, removal of any rusted or splintered equipment or materials and replacement or upgrade of ageing equipment.

Many maintenance issues exist due to the type of Playground installed. Structures and equipment isolated from any context or landscaping create situations that require high maintenance. The idea that one structure requires less maintenance than another because of the material it is constructed from may not have a lot of substance and can also create false securities.

Landscaped Playgrounds that include play equipment as a component are an asset that grows over many years as trees mature. The maintenance applied to this kind of Playground not only keeps it safe but also contributes to a developing community asset that improves with time with mature vegetation.

Appropriate maintenance funding is required for this to occur, especially for regional and neighbourhood Playgrounds. Maintenance must be undertaken to ensure the safety of Playgrounds at all times.

## Minimising Maintenance

It is important that Council ensures sound design principles are considered when new Playgrounds are constructed to minimise future maintenance. The principles include simple design decisions such as locating a slide into the side of a slope so that it significantly reduces the fall height, therefore requiring less softfall material, which therefore requires less maintenance.

The regular raking and maintaining of loose softfall surfaces and maintenance of the required depths is an important but time-consuming task. This cost can be minimised through the judicious use of solid rubber compound surfaces (wetpour) under high scuff equipment such as swings, slides and spinning elements. Council can utilise a combination of both options within a single Playground by limiting wetpour to the immediate equipment setting and using loose softfall in the surrounding areas. Council maintenance staff should also be consulted as to landscape and drainage issues associated with proposed Playground siting and designs that could have an impact on future maintenance costs.

### 3.1 Principle: Maintenance

**Council ensures a high level of maintenance & review safety reviews for its Playgrounds:**

- Maintain formal system of maintenance:
  - Inventory/ Audit
  - Inspections (frequency varies with size of park and regularity of use)
- Maintain action management:
  - Replace dangerous and non complying equipment
  - Repair damaged or faulty equipment
  - Routinely inspect and maintain Playground environments and equipment
- Use a formal complaints handling and registration system
- Ensure priority is given to following key safety issues: fall height, undersurface, fall zones, guardrails, entrapment
- Continue to create reliable networks of information and to ensure that appropriate staff are trained and encouraged in the provision of high levels of safety and maintenance
- Allocate appropriate maintenance funding to Playgrounds, depending on their hierarchy classification.

**Council ensures all new Playground designs and proposed equipment provision minimise maintenance through sound design principles:**

- Relevant design principles include:
  - Relationship between equipment and topography to ensure appropriate softfall options are achieved
  - Drainage and land fall to ensure minimum wash-away and pooling problems are experienced
  - Orientation of site to ensure favourable growing conditions for Playground planting
- Consider whole of life costing comparisons between loose softfall and wetpour surfaces e.g. purchase price, installation price, maintenance costs, guarantees etc.



## Common Maintenance Problems

Without doubt the most common fault in Playgrounds is that of inappropriate ground surface underneath equipment from which children are likely to fall. In fact, one of the greatest causes of injuries in Playgrounds is falls onto hard surfaces.

Loose materials, such as bark chips can be installed above the ground with a suitable border and must conform to the requirements of AS/NZS 4422:1996. Wood chips are the most common form of softfall but need regular maintenance to ensure that material has not become compacted or eroded from areas where they are most needed.

Wetpour rubber compound surfaces whilst being more expensive to install do not need such maintenance. It also enables wheelchairs and pushers to be wheeled close to equipment, to provide access for people with a mobility disability or carers with young children in prams to supervise closely to toddlers at play.

Hard surfaces should be only used for the provision of access e.g. pathways, areas for some ball games, for wheeled toy areas or decorative purposes. Hard surfaces should not be used beneath equipment.

To determine the best solution for each application, a cost comparison should be made between provision of organic materials and wetpour rubber surfacing. This should include not only the initial supply and installation costs, but also ongoing maintenance over five to ten years. The general position on surface selection relates to the type of equipment being considered and the potential fall risk associated with that type of equipment. For example, the loose organic style surface can be safely used under stationary equipment such as a climbing structure and play platforms and decking. Whereas wetpour compound surfaces are ideal for high wear areas such as under dynamic equipment such as swings, slides, spinning elements, track slides and flying foxes. In recent years, the City of Burnside has embarked on a programme of installing wetpour rubber compound surfaces under dynamic equipment such as swings and the base of slides. This has greatly reduced the amount of ongoing maintenance as well as complying with the required fall zone requirements.





## Graffiti and Vandalism

Graffiti in public spaces can cause great concern to members of the public and those with responsibility for maintenance of these spaces. For many people, graffiti is a symbol of desecration and if left rather than removed, is indicative of neglect and lack of civic pride. Public facilities are often subjected to vandalism, especially where there is a lack of supervision or passive surveillance from nearby residences, passing pedestrians or motorists. Higher levels of local activity will act as a deterrent to vandalism as will CPTED principles, such as the siting of the Playground, selection of robust materials and sturdy equipment provision.

One of the strongest deterrents to vandalism and graffiti is community ownership. There is clear evidence that where the local community, including the young people within the neighbourhood have been meaningfully involved in the design process for new Playgrounds, vandalism is reduced. Council must also support the concept of a Playground being owned through prompt action in addressing vandalism or graffiti in Playgrounds to ensure they are not left in a damaged state that is likely to become even more of a target.

### 3.2 Principle: Common Maintenance Problems

#### Council considers the options for ground surfaces against the type of equipment and play activity being catered for:

- Organic materials are considered appropriate beneath elements that are stationary such as climbing structures, ladders, overhead apparatus, and multiple deck configurations
- Wetpour compound surfaces are considered most effective where severe scuffing and erosion are prevalent. This is most common, though not restricted to, areas under and around equipment with dynamic moving elements such as swings, the end of slides, spinning elements, track slides and flying foxes.

#### Playground planning and design should consider graffiti and vandalism minimisation principles:

- Playground designs should incorporate 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' (CPTED) principles.

These principles include:

- The location of Playgrounds should wherever possible allow for passive surveillance as a deterrent to vandals
- Lighting near Playgrounds be considered to deter vandals
- Involve the community and especially local youth in the consultation process associated with the location and design of new Playgrounds
- Where there has been vandalism, equipment should be removed or repaired immediately as these present a safety hazard.



## Budget Allocation

It is difficult to be accurate when making cost estimates, and care should be taken when relying on them for accurate forecasting, as in many cases it will be necessary to undertake the works in conjunction with other proposed works, such as the upgrading of the public amenities, paths or tennis courts, especially where upgrading to improve accessibility is under consideration.

The general public are often not aware of the costs of developing a new Playground. A small Playground consisting of basic play elements and organic softfall will cost from \$45,000 to \$75,000. A regional Playground can cost up to \$1,000,000.

Consideration should also be made for items other than the actual play equipment. As a general rule, only 50% of the budget should be allocated to the play equipment, with the remaining budget going towards associated landscaping, trees, seating, drinking fountains etc.

Whether or not the estimates need to cover design fees, maintenance periods, and other related matters also needs to be clarified.

Since the Playground Strategy was first adopted in 2007, 11 Playgrounds have been upgraded or replaced. Many of these included major redesigns, upgrades and relocations to ensure the Playgrounds reflected the principles outlined in this strategy. In the future, Council may see a fundamental shift in the upgrading and replacement of Playgrounds. Unless there is a significant change in community needs, many of these redesigned Playgrounds may only need minor works and incremental replacement of equipment as they reach the end of their useful life. Therefore, while the initial costs of establishing appropriately located and designed Playgrounds may be higher than a traditional Playground, ongoing costs may not necessarily be higher. For example, the play equipment and other amenities at Wombat Waterhole are expected to need replacement incrementally, with reviews of the suitability of play equipment over time.

### Management

Playgrounds come with inherent management requirements, the ongoing costs of which often exceed the cost of initial construction. The construction of a new Playground should therefore be viewed as a serious and ongoing commitment that needs recurrent funding, management and maintenance. Specific ongoing costs have not yet been realised and further development of recurrent expenditure associated with new and upgraded Playgrounds will be developed by Council.

### 3.3 Principle: Budget Allocation

**Council allocates sufficient funds each year for the upgrade of Playgrounds:**

Allocated funds be used not just to upgrade play equipment, but associated landscaping, trees, seating, drinking fountains etc.



## Marketing/ Promotion

In addition to ensuring an equitable provision of safe, challenging and enjoyable Playgrounds across the municipality, it is important to raise the awareness of residents to these valuable resources available to them. Councils across the country are preparing community directories and facility guides to ensure that residents are well informed as to the types of facilities available to them.

The Melbourne City Council has recently produced a pamphlet titled '20 Ways to Play'. It provides in an attractive format, details concerning facilities available, provision of shade, access, location references and other useful information. Councils are encouraged to develop information for residents and ratepayers on Playgrounds and their associated facilities.

As well as appropriate brochures and online information, signage in parks and reserves should be provided for all Playgrounds to assist residents and visitors find the Playground of their choice. These signs should be of high quality and consistent style across the Council.

There is sometimes a need to name Playgrounds to create a sense of character or recognition and identify and individuality for each Playground. This will result in better recollection of individual Playgrounds as they become easier to identify and distinguish between. It will also contribute to the marketability of Playgrounds and community ownership.

Appropriate funding needs to be allocated for specific brochures to be produced showing the location of Playgrounds within Burnside, as well as providing additional information on complementary facilities associated with Playgrounds such as toilets, drinking fountains, accessibility and shade.

### 3.4 Principle: Marketing Promotion

**Council actively markets and promotes the network of Playgrounds to ensure maximum community access and use:**

- Prepare a Playground location and play features brochure for public distribution
- Ensure high quality consistent signage is provided for all Playgrounds to assist residents and visitors to find the Playground of their choice
- Include a searchable listing of Playgrounds and their features on the Council web page
- Name Playgrounds to reflect character and individuality.



# ***PART 6***

## ***REFERENCES***



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# Playground Replacement Action Plan 2014-2024



## The Priorities

All the Actions in the Playground Replacement Actions Plan are important as they improve the quality, safety, appeal and value of Playgrounds across the City of Burnside. However, Council will not have the resources to undertake all improvements immediately and a priority listing will assist Council to plan its budget allocation over time. The Playground Strategy could require 10 years or longer to fully implement, at which time many Playgrounds will require upgrading again.

Priorities have been determined using the following assessment criteria:

1. Safety and risk management, with items that raise safety issues being the number one priority, such as tree management, damaged equipment, raised edges and the need for fencing near roads and creek lines. Council engaged an independent consultant to audit all Playgrounds in 2013. This audit identified as issues relating to risk. Most of the issues identified will be undertaken as routine maintenance, however, Playgrounds with issues that cannot be addressed this easily have been given higher priority for replacement.
2. The hierarchy level of the Playground, with higher priority generally being given to Regional and Neighbourhood Playgrounds on the basis that these Playgrounds should draw from a wider catchment and benefit a larger number of people in the community.
3. Accessibility, with the need to provide equitable access to children with a disability at a number of Playgrounds, in line with *Disability Discrimination Act, 1992* and the Design for Access and Mobility Australian Standard.
4. The need to address gaps in provision, such as a lack of innovative Playgrounds or Playgrounds for age groups that are currently not well catered for.
5. The value and use of the park or reserve in which the Playground is located, with higher priority generally being given to parks and reserves that attract or have the potential to attract large numbers of users.

## Action Plan for Specific Playgrounds

A summary of the directions for specific Playgrounds is provided below, highlighting the focus and priority of the action.

The priority timeframe is as follows:

Priority	Timing
High	Less than 3 years
Medium	3-6 years
Low	7-10 years

Table 1.2 Details all of Council's Playgrounds (in alphabetical order) with the priority listing in accordance with the above criteria.





Table 1.2 Playground Schedule with Upgrade Priority Listing

Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Albert Street Reserve	✓				✓			✓	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2003</li> <li>Trees require maintenance pruning</li> <li>New seating required</li> </ul>
Bell Yett Reserve	✓	✓						✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibly relocate new Playground</li> <li>Should be addressed as part of an overall plan for the reserve</li> <li>Does not meet standards of Neighbourhood Playground</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit showed that vertical rails on slide platform failed head entrapment test</li> </ul>
Bennett Reserve				✓					Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape upgraded in 2007/08</li> </ul>
Branson Reserve				✓					Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape upgraded in 2007/08</li> </ul>
Brock Reserve				✓	✓				High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>New seating required</li> </ul>
Chapel Street Reserve				✓				✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground relocated in 2013 after establishment of Community Garden</li> <li>Opportunities for further planting around Playground</li> </ul>
Civic Centre									N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be installed 2014</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Constable Hyde Reserve	✓	✓				✓	✓		High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified head entrapment and inadequate fall zones</li> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>Should be addressed as part of an overall plan for the reserve</li> </ul>
Eastwood Community Centre				✓				✓	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tight restrictions on play space available</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in Playground design</li> </ul>
Effie Ferguson Reserve				✓		✓			Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2006</li> <li>May require formal shade structure</li> </ul>
Fergusson Square				✓	✓	✓			Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment last replaced in 2003</li> <li>Shade trees planted in 2012 should be monitored to ensure effectiveness</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Gardiner Reserve			✓				✓	✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in Playground design</li> <li>One swing set only</li> <li>Removal possible after community consultation- Enough surrounding Playground to not effect 500mm radius</li> </ul>
Glenunga Reserve	✓								High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2007</li> <li>Playground to be expanded as part of Glenunga Hub redevelopment 2014/15</li> </ul>
Glyde Street Reserve				✓					Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2005</li> </ul>
Hazelwood Park (Wombat Waterhole Play Space)				✓	✓				Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wombat Waterhole developed 2010</li> <li>Regular maintenance required to ensure play space remains of high quality and appeal</li> </ul>
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre – North)	✓				✓			✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located within Swimming Pool</li> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>Not part of 2014 pool upgrade scope</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre - West)				✓	✓			✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located within Swimming Pool</li> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>Not part of 2014 pool upgrade scope</li> </ul>
Holmes Reserve				✓	✓	✓			Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2003</li> <li>Requires additional shade (preferably from mature trees to suit environment)</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> </ul>
Kensington Gardens Reserve (Burnside Adventure Park)				✓	✓	✓			Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape replaced in 2005</li> <li>Flying Fox installed and rubber surfacing replaced and extended 2013</li> <li>Timber elements in poor condition</li> </ul>
Kensington Gardens Reserve (North)				✓	✓			✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2005</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> </ul>
Kensington Park Reserve		✓		✓			✓	✓	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground expanded 2010</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Kingsley Avenue Reserve				✓	✓	✓		✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocated as part on Reserve master plan upgrade in 2012</li> <li>Shade tree planted should be monitored to ensure effectiveness</li> <li>Design does not reflect Playground Strategy principles</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in Playground design</li> </ul>
Knightsbridge Reserve				✓	✓				Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape upgraded in 2007/08</li> </ul>
Langman Recreational Reserve (Main Playground- South)				✓	✓			✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground Replaced 2012</li> <li>Further planting and landscaping possible</li> </ul>
Langman Recreational Reserve (Minor Playground- North)				✓	✓				Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See saw and edging replaced 2013</li> </ul>
Main Street Reserve				✓	✓				Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2006</li> </ul>
Mellor Reserve				✓	✓				Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground replaced 2011-12</li> </ul>
Miller Reserve	✓	✓			✓			✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape to be upgraded in 2014</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Penfold Park (East)				✓				✓	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground replaced in 2009</li> <li>Play equipment orientated-possibility to add landscape features and interactive elements</li> </ul>
Penfold Park (West)				✓		✓			Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Last replaced in 2004</li> <li>Play equipment orientated-possibility to add landscape features, interactive elements and special feature to bring to standard of Neighbourhood Playground</li> </ul>
Pepper Street Reserve			✓		✓			✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One swing set only</li> <li>Removal possible after community consultation- Enough surrounding Playground to not effect 500mm radius</li> </ul>
Trogenza Oval				✓	✓			✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment not inspiring</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape to be upgraded in 2014</li> </ul>
Tusmore Park	✓			✓	✓	✓			Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2006</li> </ul>
JB Ware Reserve				✓	✓			✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape upgraded in 2007/08</li> </ul>



Playground	Play Equipment				Other Items				Priority	Comments
	Upgrade	Relocate	Remove	Replace	Tree Management	Shade	Risk*	Appeal/ Access		
Warland Reserve				✓	✓		✓	✓	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment and Playground design</li> </ul>
Warrego Crescent Reserve				✓	✓	✓			Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment replaced in 2001</li> <li>May require formal shade structure</li> <li>December 2013 Playground Audit identified some risks in play equipment</li> </ul>
Webb Street Reserve				✓	✓			✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and surrounding landscape upgraded in 2007/08</li> </ul>
Wood Park				✓				✓	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play equipment and shade structure replaced in 2013</li> </ul>



## The Priorities

All Playgrounds have been classified into the three priority upgrades – high (less than 3 years), medium (3-6 years) and low (7-10 years). An approximate budget range has also been allocated towards each Playground. The budget range has been set for each Playground hierarchy – local, neighbourhood and regional and adjusted as to whether the works will be a full upgrade or replacement works.

All Playgrounds have been listed in the respective priority classification is alphabetical order only. The order in which the Playgrounds will be upgraded year to year will be decided annually as part of the budget deliberation.

**Table 1.3 Priority Upgrades – High (less than 3 years)**

Reserve Name	Playground Hierarchy	Approximate Cost
Bell Yet Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Brock Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Constable Hyde Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Gardiner Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre – North)	Facility	\$45,000-\$85,000
Hazelwood Park (Swimming Centre - West)	Facility	\$45,000-\$85,000
Miller Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Pepper Street Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Tregenza Oval	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Warland Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$600,000-\$985,000</b>

**Table 1.4 Priority Upgrades – Medium (3 – 6 years)**

Reserve Name	Playground Hierarchy	Approximate Cost
Albert Street	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Eastwood Community Centre	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Fergusson Square	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Glyde Street Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Holmes Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Kensington Park Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Kensington Gardens Reserve (Burnside Adventure Park)	Regional	\$45,000-\$85,000
Penfold Park (West)	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Penfold Park (East)	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Warrego Crescent Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$600,000-\$985,000</b>





**Table 1.5 Priority Upgrades – Low (7 – 10 years)**

Reserve Name	Playground Hierarchy	Approximate Cost
Bennet Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Branson Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Chapel Street Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Effie Fergusson Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Hazelwood Park (Wombat Waterhole)	Regional	\$95,000-\$130,000
JB Ware Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$45,000-\$85,000
Kensington Gardens Reserve (North)	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Kingsley Avenue Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Knightsbridge Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Langman Reserve (North)	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Langman Reserve (South)	Neighbourhood	\$95,000-\$130,000
Main Street Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Mellor Reserve	Neighbourhood	\$45,000-\$85,000
Tusmore Park	Regional	\$95,000-\$130,000
Webb Street Reserve	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
Wood Park	Local	\$45,000-\$85,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$825,000-\$1,140,000</b>

**Table 1.6 Summary of Costs**

Priority	Years	Approximate Cost
High	Less than 3 years	\$600,000-\$985,000
Medium	3-6 years	\$600,000-\$985,000
Low	7-10 years	\$825,000-\$1,140,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$2,025,000-\$3,110,000</b>

It should be noted that the approximate costings do not allow for just the supply and installation of Playground equipment. The budget also allows for additional items to enhance the play experience such as fencing, shade sails, seating, landscaping etc. In the past three years (2010/11-2012/13), the City of Burnside has contributed approximately \$500,000 towards the upgrade of Playgrounds and their surrounds as well as \$365,000 being sourced from Grant funding (Wombat Waterhole Play Space).





*[Playground replacement action plan 2014-2024]*