



PLAY SPACE STRATEGY
Part One
2009-2014

Disclaimer

The information contained in this report is intended for the specific use of the within named party to which it is addressed ("the *communityvibe* client") only. All recommendations by communityvibe are based on information provided by or on behalf of the communityvibe client and communityvibe has relied on such information being correct at the time this report is prepared.

communityvibe shall take no responsibility for any loss or damage caused to the communityvibe client or to any third party whether direct or consequential as a result of or in any way arising from any unauthorised use of this report or any recommendations contained within.

Prepared By



communityvibe

5 Allison St
BENDIGO VIC 3550
Ph: 0438 433 555
E: wendy@communityvibe.com.au
www.communityvibe.org.au

In cooperation with



70 Bull Street
BENDIGO VIC 3550
Ph: 03 5444 0015
E: kla@netcon.net.au

Authors:
Wendy Holland
Karoline Klein
Shaun Quayle

Report Date:
January 2009

Acknowledgements

NAME

ORGANISATION

René Laan

City of Greater Bendigo

Tim Buykx

City of Greater Bendigo

Jan Boynton

City of Greater Bendigo

Mark Hands

City of Greater Bendigo

Paul Nicholson

City of Greater Bendigo

Mitch Kemp

City of Greater Bendigo

Maureen McMahon

City of Greater Bendigo

Maureen Tessier

City of Greater Bendigo

Roger Barbetti

City of Greater Bendigo

Orrin Hogan

City of Greater Bendigo

Jeremy Cowan

City of Greater Bendigo

Mark Powell

City of Greater Bendigo

Karen Larkins

City of Greater Bendigo

Barbara Champion

Playgrounds and Recreation

Association of Victoria

David Ronaldson

City of Ballarat

Brendan Gosstray

City of Greater Shepparton

Kathryn Cotter

City of Greater Geelong

Students and Teachers from

Surveyed Schools

Members of the community who

submitted written comments

Definitions

Accessible Play space – a play space that considers and responds to the needs of people with accessibility issues (not just focused on traditional play space equipment), e.g. people with disabilities, people with prams, people with walking frames, people with mobility scooters, etc.

Amenities – supporting infrastructure found within play spaces that help to promote a comfortable and accessible environment, e.g. landscaping, paths, lighting, fencing, open space for ball games, seating, shade structures, BBQs, etc.

Play – spontaneous activity freely chosen by people as a way of expressing themselves; exploring the world in which they live; socialising with others; challenging themselves and having fun.

Play equipment – equipment found in playgrounds such as swings, slides, climbing structures, etc, specifically designed for play.

Playground – a site such as a park, reserve, small block of land or land adjoining other recreational or community-based facilities, specifically designated for play and including playground equipment

Play space hierarchies – play spaces can be categorized into a hierarchy of three different tiers, depending on its purpose, size, catchment and the opportunities available. The hierarchy is as follows:

- Local – smallest play space, located close to homes, providing smaller range of play opportunities and amenities, with a catchment of 400m.
- District – medium sized play space, providing a range of play opportunities and amenities, services a number of neighbourhood areas, with a catchment of up to 2km.
- Regional – largest play space, providing a broad range of play opportunities and amenities, with a catchment of 10km or more.

Play opportunities – the provision of an environment that encourages people to play with others and interact with their surroundings. Such spaces may include traditional playground equipment, or alternatively, opportunities for play with naturally occurring features such as logs, rocks and water.

Play space - the entire site where play can occur, rather than just the site where play equipment or opportunities are located. A play space may include traditional play ground equipment or other natural features which can be used for play, such as logs, rocks, sand, water features, etc. It may also contain a range of amenities, e.g. seats, shelter, paths, shade, toilets, bins, etc.

Play value – an assessment of the quality of the play experiences and opportunities provided at a site.

Precinct – a designated area in the municipality, defined within specific boundaries (can contain one or more suburbs, e.g. Rural East).

Table of Contents

Part One

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2.0 INTRODUCTION	5
2.1 AIM OF THE STRATEGY	5
2.2 METHODOLOGY	5
2.3 SCOPE OF STUDY	6
2.4 DEFINITION OF PLAY SPACE	7
2.5 WHAT IS PLAY?	7
2.6 WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAY?	8
2.7 INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN PLAY SPACES.....	8
2.8 THE COST OF NOT PROVIDING PLAY OPPORTUNITIES IN A COMMUNITY	10
3.0 CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO POLICY CONTEXT	12
4.0 OUR COMMUNITY	14
5.0 VISION AND PRINCIPLES	15
5.1 OUR VISION.....	15
5.2 OUR PRINCIPLES	16
6.0 PLAY SPACES WITHIN THE CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO	17
6.1 MUNICIPAL WIDE OVERVIEW OF THE PROVISION OF PLAY SPACES	17
6.2 CURRENT TOWNSHIP / SUBURB DISTRIBUTION	19
6.3 OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED IN PLAY SPACES.....	20
6.4 PLAY SPACE AMENITY.....	21
6.5 UTILISATION OF PLAY SPACES AND CREATING PLAY VALUE	22
6.6 CREATION OF CHILD FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS	25
7.0 PLAY SPACE DESIGN MATRIX	26
8.0 APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIFFERENT AGES	29
9.0 PLANNING AND DESIGN	32
9.1 ADDING PLAY VALUE TO PLAY SPACES	32
9.2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANNING AND DESIGN OF PLAY SPACES	33
9.3 DEMAND FOR PLAY SPACES	33
9.4 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING AND DESIGN	34
9.5 CONNECTIVITY OF PLAY SPACES	34
9.6 ACCESSIBILITY	35
9.7 ACCESS TO AND WITHIN PLAY SPACES.....	37
9.8 FENCES.....	38
9.9 ART WORK IN PLAY SPACES.....	39
9.10 DOGS AND PLAY SPACES	40
9.11 SCHOOL-BASED PLAY SPACES	42
9.12 RATIONALISATION OF PLAY SPACES.....	42
9.13 POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT	43
9.14 EXTERNAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY SPACE DEVELOPMENT	44
9.15 DEVELOPER'S INVOLVEMENT IN PLAY SPACES.....	45
9.16 DESIGN GUIDELINES	45
9.17 PLAY PRECINCTS	45
10.0 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PLAY SPACES	46
10.1 MANAGEMENT	46
10.2 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING.....	46
10.3 MAINTENANCE AND CONDITION OF PLAY EQUIPMENT	46

10.4 MARKETING.....	48
11.0 PRIORITISING DEVELOPMENTS	49
12.0 PROPOSED DIRECTIONS AND WORKS	51
12.1 HIERARCHY CHANGES AND SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PLAY SPACES	51
12.2 AMENITIES.....	59
12.3 REPLACEMENT OF PLAY EQUIPMENT	59
12.4 INDICATIVE COSTINGS.....	60
12.4.1 <i>Indicative Costings for Individual Play Spaces</i>	60
12.4.2 <i>Indicative Costings – Totals</i>	64
12.4.3 <i>Prioritised Works for Financial Years 2009/10 - 2013/14</i>	66
12.4.4 <i>Methodology for Determining Play Space Costings</i>	69
13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	71

Part Two

Part Two is a separate document that should be read in conjunction with Part One. It contains Play Space Planning Guidelines; a written overview of each precinct; and maps of each Precinct – showing the existing situation and the proposed situation.

1.0 Executive Summary

Play offers people, particularly young people, the opportunity to maximise their potential. By taking part in freely chosen activities young people can develop emotionally, cognitively, socially and physically. Play provides opportunities for young people to explore their world; spend time with their friends; develop their strength and physical capacities; play make believe; explore risks; and most of all have fun.

Play can take place in a range of different locations and spaces. For the purpose of this report, play space refers to the entire site where play can occur, rather than just the site where play equipment or opportunities are located. A play space may include traditional play ground equipment or other natural features which can be used for play, such as logs, rocks, sand, water features, etc. It may also contain a range of amenities, e.g. seats, shelter, paths, shade, toilets, bins, etc.

The City of Greater Bendigo is committed to providing a child friendly environment and has been recognised as the first Child Friendly City in Australia by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). A key component of a child friendly city is the provision of well designed spaces that are attractive, exciting, welcoming and encouraging play.

The City of Greater Bendigo manages **115** different formal play spaces across the municipality, ranging from small local play spaces containing one swing set through to regional play spaces with extensive equipment and amenities, such as Lake Weeroona Playground. There are many other places outdoors where young people play that do not contain formal playground equipment, including sports ovals, bushland reserves, streets and backyards.

The quality of play spaces and the distribution of play spaces across the City of Greater Bendigo vary considerably. Some of the older more established areas in the municipality have a high number of play spaces per capita (compared with other areas newer areas of the municipality), although much of the equipment is nearing or past its lifespan. Growth areas within the municipality tend to contain newer equipment, but the number of play spaces is generally much lower in these areas. Six areas requiring improvement that unite the majority of play spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo at present are:

- improved amenities, particularly shade, seating and compacted paths;
- catering for a broad cross section of the community (including young people over 12 years of age and young people between 0-2 years of age);

- providing more natural looking settings with trees, landscaping, logs, boulders, etc
- utilising universal design principles to ensure that play spaces are accessible for people of all abilities
- providing variety and diversity of play opportunities across each precinct (an area of the municipality made up of one or more suburb, e.g. Rural East) and the municipality as a whole
- providing a greater range of play opportunities, including creative and social opportunities

Another critical factor that needs to be addressed is the improvement required to play value at the majority of sites. Play value refers to both the quality of the play opportunities available at a site as well as the play experiences available (i.e. opportunities for cognitive, social and physical play in an attractive and inviting setting which is different to other nearby play spaces). Ensuring that all play spaces offer play value is not easy, however, suggestions have been provided within this strategy to help improve play value, including the development of Design Guidelines. One very important consideration is the need to involve communities in the planning and design of new and redeveloped play spaces in their local area.

Three tiers of play spaces have been identified within the City of Greater Bendigo. Similar tiers are used by many Local Government Authorities throughout Australia to help classify play spaces. Each one of these tiers is important in its own right as it provides a framework for the types of facilities and opportunities that can be found in such a play space and consequently reflects on level of usage and resource requirements:

- Local play spaces are those located within walking distance of most homes in the urban areas of the municipality. These play spaces do not generally offer a broad range of opportunities due to their smaller size, however, they do offer an opportunity for local people to travel by foot or bicycle to the site and to interact with their local community. Across a precinct, however, there should be a broad range of play opportunities available in local play spaces.
- District play spaces offer a wider range of play opportunities and are generally located within a 15 minute bicycle ride or short car trip from most homes within the Bendigo urban boundary and in several other towns, e.g. Heathcote and Elmore. These sites are able to be accessed independently by older children.
- Regional play spaces are the largest of all and offer a wide variety of play opportunities and associated amenities. People tend to spend multiple hours at these sites and may even come from towns outside the municipality to enjoy the facilities and opportunities available.

It is the intent of this strategy that the majority of **built up** urban / township residential areas have access to a **local** play space within five minutes walking distance of homes, connected by cycling / walking paths. A five minute walk equates to a distance of approximately 400 metres (or a radial distance of 280 metres). It is also the intention that **district** play spaces, with a catchment of up to 2km, are dispersed throughout the larger towns in the municipality (Heathcote and Elmore) as well as through various areas within the Bendigo urban area. And finally it is the intention that five **regional** play spaces, with a catchment of 10km or more are located strategically throughout the Bendigo urban area. In summary, the Play Space Strategy recommends the development of **18** new play spaces across the municipality; most of which are local play spaces.

In order to achieve this equitable distribution of play spaces some new play spaces will need to be developed, some existing equipment will be relocated, some land will need to be purchased and some play spaces will be commissioned and the use of the land reviewed. There will also be partnerships required with a number of schools as well as developers. Recommendations have not been made purely on spatial distribution. Other factors such as housing density, areas of growth, socio economic statistics and demographic data have also been used to prioritise areas of need.

Some of the key issues identified in the strategy are:

Resources - It is recommended that existing resources (both human and financial) are reviewed in order to manage play space developments, consultations with the community and additional maintenance requirements.

Promotion - It is recommended that a promotional strategy be developed to ensure that local residents and visitors to the area are aware of play opportunities in the municipality. Potential tools for consideration are signs, brochures, information on COGB and external websites, etc.

Planning Scheme - It is recommended that a mechanism is explored through the COGB Planning Scheme to ensure that developers are required to provide or contribute to quality play opportunities that reflect Council's Play Space Planning Principles and Design Guidelines.

Dogs – Whilst the preferred option is not to permit dogs within 10 metres of recognised playgrounds within play spaces, it is recognised that the City of Greater Bendigo has recently adopted a policy that states that dogs must be under effective control of their owner at all times on public land. Therefore it is recommended that when the Domestic Animal Management Plan and its schedule are reviewed, that consideration be given to not allowing dogs within 10 metres of recognised playgrounds within play spaces.

Accessibility - It is recommended that the City of Greater Bendigo makes an ongoing commitment to removing barriers to accessibility in existing play spaces throughout the municipality wherever possible and ensuring that all new play spaces are developed with universal design principles and play opportunities for people of all abilities.

Fences - It is recommended that gated play spaces are only provided for regional play spaces.

Community Consultation - It is recommended that where possible, every major play space upgrade or new development involves community consultation (including consultation with young people). In the case of new developments where there is not an established residential area, it is recommended that Council staff assess and approve play space designs.

Implementation and Monitoring - It is recommended that a multi-disciplinary internal working group is established within City of Greater Bendigo, led by the Recreation Unit, to consider any play space upgrades and new developments. Furthermore, Council's Parks and Natural Environment staff also need to be consulted prior to any play space installation to ensure that issues such as ease of maintenance are taken into consideration. A key role of this working group is to identify relevant internal and external partners to assist with play space developments.

Purchasing Land and Decommissioning Poorly Located Play Space Sites – in order to achieve an equitable distribution of accessible play spaces in both existing and developing areas of the municipality that are well connected to cycling and walking tracks, it is necessary to review usage and on occasions decommission some play spaces. It will also be necessary to purchase land to develop new play spaces. If play spaces are to be decommissioned, it is imperative that a new play space is developed, offering better play value and opportunities, prior to the decommissioning of the site. Wherever possible, Council owned or Crown Land will be considered for development prior to purchasing of private land. It is also important that the community is informed of the reasons behind any proposed decommissioning, and able to participate in the design of the new space in their local area.

This strategy therefore sets out the principles, framework and design guidelines to assist the City of Greater Bendigo in determining its priorities so that residents of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to safely play in attractive, exciting and welcoming places.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Aim of the Strategy

City of Greater Bendigo (COGB) appointed *communityvibe*, in partnership with *Klein Landscape Architecture* to develop a Play Space Strategy. The aim of the Strategy is to provide a framework to assist COGB to make strategic decisions in terms of the development and provision of play opportunities for the residents of and visitors to the municipality.

This framework will assist the City of Greater Bendigo to:

- develop play spaces that provide for a wide variety of opportunities and experiences for users and their carers
- determine where play spaces should be developed (or in fact rationalised)
- set aside appropriate levels of funding in the capital works and maintenance programs to ensure that existing play spaces are maintained regularly according to Australian Standards
- ensure that there is sufficient funding available each year to upgrade or develop new play spaces as required.

2.2 Methodology

The project involved assessing and benchmarking the provision (both quality and quantity) of the existing play spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo against Design Guidelines produced as part of this strategy and against play spaces in other local government areas. It also involved linking the project to existing City of Greater Bendigo policies and directions and best practice initiatives. Another very important component was the engagement of existing and potential users of play facilities and their families / carers to ensure that recommendations reflect community needs.

Specific actions associated with the project were:

- Analysis of relevant reports and literature to gain an understanding of previous play space directions and issues
- Analysis of the demographics of the Greater Bendigo community to determine existing and future population characteristics.
- Analysis of local, state, national and international play trends which may impact on the future provision of play space opportunities in the municipality
- Analysis of existing play space opportunities in the City of Greater Bendigo, using spatial mapping. This also assisted in the identification of areas of oversupply and undersupply and potential physical barriers.

- Establishment of a clear theoretical framework and hierarchy from which to operate and to guide future decision making.
- Internal stakeholder and community engagement to determine the existing and future play space needs of Greater Bendigo residents, using a variety of different methods.
- Engagement of City of Greater Bendigo staff, partners and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that initiatives identified are not only sustainable and are integrated across corporate and business planning processes, but reflect best practice in terms of management, maintenance and operation.
- Development of Design Guidelines to assist City of Greater Bendigo staff to ensure that play space amenities are appropriately considered and sited in play spaces.
- Development of an implementation plan which accurately reflects the needs of the community and City of Greater Bendigo, and is both realistic and achievable.
- Identification of indicative costings and potential funding sources.

2.3 Scope of Study

Although play spaces can include a range of different types of places, both in and outdoors, for the purposes of this Play Space Strategy, play spaces refer to those owned and controlled by City of Greater Bendigo:

- Areas of public open space containing playground equipment
- Areas of public open space without playground equipment
- Sports reserves containing playground equipment
- Sports reserves without playground equipment.

Open space areas such as bush land, conservation areas, roadside reserves, etc, although often used for play, have not been included. Pre-school and childcare centres, although owned in some instances by City of Greater Bendigo, have not been included, as these play spaces are generally not accessible to the broader community. Similarly, school playgrounds, although identified, have not been included as a key component of this report as they are not owned or managed by City of Greater Bendigo. However, all of these provide opportunities for partnerships with City of Greater Bendigo.

2.4 Definition of Play Space

The term 'play space' refers to the entire site where play can occur, rather than just the site where play equipment or opportunities are located. A play space includes landscaping, paths, lighting, fencing, open space for ball games, seating, shade structures, BBQs, etc as well as traditional play ground equipment or other items which can be used for play, such as logs, rocks, sand, water features, etc.

2.5 What is Play?

Play is spontaneous activity freely chosen by people as a way of expressing themselves; exploring the world in which they live; socialising with others; challenging themselves; and having fun.

The importance of play is recognised at an international level as being an invaluable component of children's lives and their development. Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child¹ states:

"That every child has the right 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".

There are three main types of play:

Type of Play	Components
Cognitive	imaginative play, sensory experiences, creating and manipulation of objects – mazes, cubby houses, etc
Social	undertaken with other children – imaginative games, role plays, hop scotch, snakes and ladders, giant chess sets, etc
Physical / active play	running, jumping, balancing, rolling, swinging, climbing, etc

¹ United Nations – cited on International Play Association website:
http://www.ipaworld.org/ipa/ipa_article31.html

2.6 What are the Benefits of Play?

According to the International Play Association², play is “one of the best means to ensure the maximum potential development of every individual and the communities in which they live. Play stimulates creativity and is essential to the emotional, cognitive and physical development of the whole child, regardless of their level of ability”.

Best Play, produced by three UK organisations (National Playing Fields Association, The Children’s Play Council and PLAYLINK³) identifies the benefits of play for children as:

- “Freedom, choice and control over their actions
- Test boundaries and explore risks
- Physical, social and intellectual experiences”.

These organisations also identify the benefits of play developed over time for children as:

- “Independence and self-esteem
- Social interaction and respect for others
- Supports well-being, healthy growth and development
- Increases knowledge and understanding
- Promotes creativity and capacity to learn”⁴

2.7 International Trends in Play Spaces

Play spaces are continually evolving and changing to meet the needs of the community. According to USA based Recreation Management⁵ and observations within the play industry, some of the trends currently impacting on play spaces at both a national and international level, are a growth in the following:

- play spaces designed and driven by landscape architects as opposed to standard off the shelf play equipment purchases
- partnerships between designers of play spaces and playground suppliers to produce more custom made or individualised equipment that reflects local needs
- using artists to help create a sense of place or to develop a prominent theme in play spaces through sculptures and other forms of art
- play spaces as part of a larger park master plan
- integrating plantings with play spaces so that the landscape becomes part of the play space and part of the overall experience

² International Play Association – website: <http://www.ipaworld.org/home.html>

³ The National Playing Fields Association, The Children’s Play Council and PLAYLINK – “Best Play” (2000)

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Klingensmith, Dawn in Recreation Management – “Play Hard: the latest in playground philosophy, design and components”: <http://www.recmanagement.com/200607fe02.php>

- including water features in play spaces (e.g. misters, sprayers, oscillating sprinklers, in-ground geysers, stationary water guns and cannons, sculptures that emit water, etc)
- interaction with nature
- promotion of dramatic play
- including educational or interpretive components within play spaces, e.g. cementing faux fossils into the bottom of a sandbox, etc.
- making playgrounds more physically challenging
- site specific design (i.e. working with the environment such as existing trees, slope of the site, etc) as opposed to an equipment-centric design approach
- designs incorporating multiple levels, intimate spaces, creative entry and exit points and imaginative interiors as opposed to flow through playground designs that soon lose the interest of young people
- incorporating electronic play components into the outdoor play space, e.g. a device that records voices and plays them back in a distorted manner or a device that answers children's questions in a similar manner to the Magic 8 Ball
- play spaces which incorporate natural materials, indigenous vegetation and pre-existing landforms with environmentally inspired structures, e.g. water features, low tree houses, tree stump climbs, rock gardens, boulders, etc as opposed to brightly coloured components that don't complement the surroundings.
- universally accessible play spaces which incorporate items such as ramps that go to the top of a structure, sand boxes raised to table height, swings with high backs, etc
- freestanding structures in play spaces and spinners
- scalable play features such as realistic rock structures, climbing walls, spatial net climbers, and geodesic or geometric climbers.
- sand and water tables
- play spaces that incorporate opportunities for ball games and running games as well as equipment based activities
- inclusion of portable objects or moveable natural materials in supervised outdoor play spaces to allow young people be creative and to manipulate their environment
- providing play opportunities for 0-2 year olds incorporating equipment such as short tunnels, sliding beads, mirrors, etc on a surface which allows infants to crawl, lie or roll
- development of skate parks within a broader youth hub incorporating performance space, half size basketball courts, meeting places and flexible space for other physical activities
- activities for young adults such as parcour, whereby people use existing fixed structures in the urban environment (e.g. fences, walls, seats, trees, etc) as part of an obstacle course
- providing supporting infrastructure such as toilets, seating, lighting, signage, viewing areas for carers, shade, drinking water, bicycle racks, as well as connections to walking and cycling paths
- involving communities in the design and management of play spaces
- urban sporting reserves being used for informal play

- employment of play workers in some parks in the UK
- fixed outdoor fitness equipment in parks or along linear trails which can be used by all age groups



Figure 1: Muddy's Playground, Cairns, QLD



Figure 2: Central Park, New York, USA.
Photo courtesy of Barbara Champion, PRAV

2.8 The Cost of Not Providing Play Opportunities in a Community

Whilst there is generally support for the provision of play opportunities within a local government area and recognition of the physical and mental benefits that play and physical activity can offer, e.g.:

- Improved balance and coordination, resulting in fewer falls
- Stronger muscles, joints and bones
- Improved motor skills
- Greater sense of achievement
- Higher energy and concentration levels
- Less likely to become overweight or obese
- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Improved body image
- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, colon cancer, heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure
- Less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety
- Reduced stress levels
- Reduction in incidence and severity of illness and disability
- Increased life expectancy;

the level of support is sometimes contested. But what is the cost of not providing such opportunities for physical activity? From a health perspective, physical inactivity “is estimated to cost the Australian community around \$10 billion nationally each year in direct health care costs; obesity is as high as \$5

billion”⁶. VicHealth estimates that physical inactivity is responsible for approximately 8,000 deaths nationally each year.⁷

Local play spaces that are accessible to neighbouring residents via foot or bicycle are key community assets where physical activity can occur (both as part of the journey and the destination), without having to pay fees, join a team or rely on a certain number of players to participate. Play spaces also provide opportunities for people in a community to meet, socialise and get to know their neighbours. Such interactions help to strengthen community bonds and friendships and create social capital – thereby reducing the potential for social isolation, loneliness, depression and associated mental health issues. If a community has been involved in the development of a play space, residents are more likely to develop a sense of ownership of the space and look after the site. The potential for vandalism and other anti-social behaviour is likely to be lessened where there is genuine community involvement and ownership. The value of play spaces to the general community is significant.



Figure 3: One possible cost of not providing play opportunities

Nature Deficit Disorder is a phenomena identified by Louv (2005)⁸ after ten years of researching children’s access to and participation in nature in the USA. He concluded that children are spending less time outdoors than previous generations of children, resulting in a wide variety of behavioural problems. Bagot (2005)⁹ also 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.

⁶ Australian Local Government Association, National Heart Foundation of Australia & Planning Institute of Australia – “Healthy Spaces and Places: Towards a National Planning Guide – Draft for Discussion Purposes From Scoping Stage” (2008)

⁷ VicHealth – “Physical Activity Fact Sheet” (2007)

⁸ Louv, Richard – “Last Child in the Woods” (2005)

⁹ Bagot, Kathleen (Monash University) – “The importance of green play spaces for children – aesthetic, athletic and academic” (2005)

3.0 City of Greater Bendigo Policy Context

A number of state and national documents influence the direction and development of play spaces in Australia, particularly from a safety perspective. A sample of relevant documents have been reviewed as part of the literature review, and included in the Appendix of this strategy. Two local strategies that should be read in conjunction with the Play Space Strategy are the **COGB's Open Space Strategy** and the **COGB's Cycling and Walking Strategy**. A number of the recommendations made in these reports are supported by the Play Space Strategy. Of particular relevance to this strategy is the Bendigo +25 – Greater Bendigo Community Plan, as it is this document that sets the strategic direction for developments within the municipality, including the development of community facilities such as play spaces.

Bendigo +25 – Greater Bendigo Community Plan (2005)¹⁰

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to develop a shared vision of what Greater Bendigo should be like in 25 years time.

Relevance:

This report identifies:

Vision:

“A progressive and vibrant provincial capital, Greater Bendigo draws life and inspiration from its heritage, the unique Box-Ironbark Forest, the land and its people. We value the diversity and creativity of our urban and rural communities. Greater Bendigo people, businesses and a growing city living its potential”.

Values:

- Creative leadership
- Encouraging new ideas
- Embracing diversity
- Working together

Actions of Relevance to the Play Space Strategy:

- Natural Environment – promote and enjoy our natural environment
- Welcoming Place – develop youth-friendly places and spaces, e.g. Skate Park, Hargreaves Mall
- Healthy Living - ensuring that health and lifestyle benefits are considered in all aspects of development of Greater Bendigo e.g.

¹⁰ City of Greater Bendigo – “Bendigo +25 – Greater Bendigo Community Plan” (2005)

provision of cycling and walking tracks; ensuring recreation and leisure activities are accessible to everybody; supporting the development of a diverse range of recreational activities e.g. skate parks, walking & cycling tracks; and increasing participation and improving physical, mental and social wellbeing through recreation and leisure

- Arts and Culture - creating an outstanding display of public art in the streets and parks.

4.0 Our Community

The City of Greater Bendigo has a population of 100,000, distributed across 19 specific population areas (ward precincts) in both urban and rural environments. Flora Hill – Quarry Hill – Spring Gully – Golden Gully is the most populated of these areas or suburbs, with East Bendigo the least populated. By 2021, the population is projected to increase to 118,792, according to *profile.id*¹¹, with the bulk of growth anticipated in outlying areas such as Strathfieldsaye, Maiden Gully and Huntly. It is important to consider the provision of sites for play spaces in Township Plans.

The highest number of young people from 0-18 years of age can be found in Kangaroo Flat – Big Hill. As an overall percentage of the population, the area with the highest percentage of young people is Strathfieldsaye-Junortoun. By 2021, the largest projected cohort in the community will be 15-19 year olds. Therefore it will be important to ensure that suitable play opportunities continue to be developed in Kangaroo Flat and that special consideration must be given to providing play opportunities for young people between 15-19 years of age.

There has been a growth in medium density housing in the City of Greater Bendigo in recent times; hence the quarter acre block of the past is no longer as common as it once was in the urban area. Although many homes in the municipality have a front or back yard that has the potential to be used for home based play, it is important to ensure that young people have the opportunity to access nearby play spaces, thereby enhancing the connectedness and liveability of each community.

Car ownership across the municipality varies with families in rural, outlying or more socio-economically advantaged areas more likely to own 2 or more cars. It is important to consider the provision of play spaces locally wherever possible to ensure that people without access to cars and those who choose or rely on alternative forms of transportation such as walking / cycling, can access play spaces within relatively close proximity to their homes.

¹¹ Profile.id – provider of demographic information for the City of Greater Bendigo.

5.0 Vision and Principles

5.1 Our Vision

To provide a broad range of high quality play opportunities and experiences which stimulate the imagination and can be enjoyed by the whole community, regardless of age or ability.

The City of Greater Bendigo recognises that there is value in providing a range of play opportunities from small local play spaces located within walking distance of people living in the urban areas of the municipality to medium sized play spaces which are accessible to people by bicycle or car, right through to regional play spaces which attract people from a much broader catchment, including from other nearby towns.

Local play spaces, located within walking distance of homes are particularly important, particularly given the decreasing size of house blocks; rising levels of childhood obesity; and increasing cost of fuel. Local play spaces can be easily accessed by young people (as well as other people in the neighbourhood such as older adults and people with disabilities) by foot or bicycle, hence promoting active transport and reducing the need for vehicular transport. Although the activities offered are not as extensive as those offered in district and regional play spaces, the activities are free of charge and can help to improve health and fitness levels, as well as providing creative outlets. Additionally, there is potential to meet with and play with other people in the neighbourhood which can result in strong community connections, independence and a sense of community belonging. Local play spaces are particularly important to people in the community who have limited transportation options. Smaller townships generally only contain local play spaces.

District play spaces are another key component of the overall provision of play spaces. Generally there will be fewer of these play spaces throughout the municipality, but their value lies in providing a wider range of play opportunities, usually located within a 15 minute cycling trip or a short car trip from most people's homes in the urban area. Hence they are relatively accessible, particularly for older children.

Regional play spaces are also very important in the play space mix. These spaces are generally fairly large and provide a broad mix of different play opportunities and experiences. As a result of the play opportunities and amenities available at these sites; there is a tendency for longer visits, family outings and family / community celebrations. Generally there are only a few regional play spaces in the community, but usage is high. The majority of people visiting regional play spaces will travel by car; however, the provision of networked non-road transport such as bicycle paths may encourage cycling or walking. Regional play spaces not only provide health and social benefits, but also provide economic benefits by attracting people from other areas.

5.2 Our Principles

Ten key play space principles have been developed to assist City of Greater Bendigo in its decision making regarding future play space developments, based on information received from school surveys, written submissions, key stakeholder interviews and the literature review. Each of these principles is explained in further detail in the following table.

Planning Principle	Description
Inclusive and accessible	Play spaces that can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages and all abilities and utilise universal design principles
Provision of a safe environment	Play spaces that meet Australian Safety Standards, Healthy By Design Guidelines and other relevant industry standards concerning safety.
Inviting, welcoming and stimulating	Play spaces that are attractive to both children and adults and through their design, create an inviting, welcoming and stimulating environment
Whole of park approach to planning	Play spaces that have been designed from a whole of park perspective incorporating landscaping, seats, paths, connections, shade, etc as well as the siting and type of play opportunities most appropriate to the site.
Diversity and Choice	Play spaces that provide a range of different and complimentary opportunities that meet the cognitive (imaginative play, sensory experiences, creating and manipulation of objects), social (undertaken with other children – imaginative games, role plays, etc) and physical / active play (running, jumping, balancing, rolling, swinging, etc) needs of the City of Greater Bendigo residents in each precinct and across the municipality.
Interaction with the Natural Environment	Play spaces that encourage people to interact with, appreciate and enjoy the natural environment
Appreciation of Heritage and Culture	Play spaces that protect and promote heritage and cultural components located on site such as natural features, e.g. historic trees, or man made features, e.g. poppet heads, historic buildings or indigenous sites of significance
Connectedness	Play spaces that are situated on well located sites close to homes and connected to walking / cycling tracks, public transport, roadways and other areas of open space
Sustainability	Play spaces that are constructed of environmentally friendly materials sourced locally where possible; are designed to minimise the impact on the environment; use environmentally friendly practices; and are relatively easy to maintain
Community strengthening and connectedness	Play spaces that involve local residents in their design; provide opportunities for spaces to reflect the local identity of an area through different materials, landscaping and art; and encourage maximum use by all people within the community

6.0 Play Spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo

6.1 Municipal Wide Overview of the Provision of Play Spaces

There are currently **115 public play grounds** in the City of Greater Bendigo, located in a variety of settings such as small stand alone parks, larger parks, recreation reserves, or adjacent to halls and lakes. Of these playgrounds, 89 are located within Bendigo and 26 are located in the surrounding townships. In addition, there are 25 playgrounds located on City of Greater Bendigo land at pre-schools, kindergartens and child-care centres throughout the municipality. Other providers of playgrounds include schools, some family restaurants / hotels, caravan parks / motels and privately owned indoor playground centres. Many family homes also feature a few pieces of playground equipment such as a trampoline, swing, slide or see saw for the enjoyment of young people and their carers.

Play spaces have been categorised according to a hierarchy, i.e. regional, district, local and other, based on the following criteria.

Hierarchy	Description	No. in COGB	Location
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest sized play space • Provides a broad range of play experiences for all ages and abilities • Generally provides for visits of several hours • Located in close proximity to open space suitable for ball games • Retain natural features and incorporate into design • Often designed by playground experts or landscape architects • Contain a wide variety of amenities such as toilets, paths, seats, shade (trees and / or shade sails), bins, lighting, drinking fountains, picnic tables, shelter, BBQs, car parking and connections to cycling / walking paths • May attract people from other towns • Has a catchment of 10km or more 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Weeroona in Bendigo • White Hills Botanical Gardens in White Hills* • Strathdale Park in Strathdale* • Eaglehawk Skate Park • Rosalind Park / Camp Hill in Bendigo* <p>*Classified by COGB as Regional Play Spaces, but realistically part way between Regional and District at present.</p>
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium sized play space • Provide a number of play opportunities • May contain several different items of play ground equipment for each age group • Service a number of neighbourhood areas • Generally located in close proximity to large open space areas suitable for ball games • Generally contain a range of amenities including seating, shade, car parking, paths, bins, drinking fountains • Has a catchment area of 500m-2km 	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooina Park in Golden Square • Danson Avenue in Kangaroo Flat • Garden Gully Reserve in Ironbark • Lake Neangar in Eaglehawk • New Chum Reserve in Ironbark • Quarry Hill Reserve in Quarry

Hierarchy	Description	No. in COGB	Location
			Hill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barrack Reserve in Heathcote Battunga Park in Strathfieldsaye Skateboard Park on Mclvor Road, Bendigo Truscott Reserve in North Bendigo Hargreaves St Mall in Bendigo (under construction)
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smallest sized play space Situated close to residential areas Provides basic play opportunities May contain basic play ground equipment May contain basic amenities such as seating and shade trees Has a catchment of approximately 400m or 5 minutes walking (which equates to a 280m radial distance for spatial mapping purposes) 	97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various sites throughout the municipality (refer to appendix for full list) – have included Lockwood South Recreation Reserve (originally classified as a Township Play Space)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play spaces that are located on City of Greater Bendigo owned land but not accessible to the general public at all times, e.g. Aquatic Centre play space and play spaces located at pre-schools, kindergarten and childcare centres 	2*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bendigo Aquatic Centre Brennan Park Aquatic Centre

* This excludes the 25 childcare / pre-school play spaces located throughout the municipality and school based play spaces.

In addition to the 115 play spaces in the COGB, there are 50 sporting reserves; over 20 heritage and formal gardens; 170 natural reserves; and 300 passive recreation reserves (of which some contain play spaces)¹².

¹² Greater Bendigo News – Winter Edition 2008 (No.17), pg 1

6.2 Current Township / Suburb Distribution

Play spaces are located in each of the key 19 precincts of the municipality, as demonstrated in the following table (↑ = higher percentage of play spaces than percentage of persons in that area; and ↓ = lower percentage of play spaces than percentage of persons in that area). Population projections for 2008 have been obtained from i.d. consulting pty ltd¹³, based on 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics data.

Area	Population	% of Population in Precinct	No. of Play Spaces	Ratio of Play Spaces per person	% of Total City Playgrounds in Each Area
Bendigo	6,347	6.4	8	793:1	6.9 ↑
Eaglehawk – Eaglehawk North – Sailors Gully	5,707	5.7	5	1,141:1	4.3 ↓
East Bendigo	2,237	2.2	2	1,119:1	1.7 ↓
Elmore – Rural North	3,350	3.3	10	335:1	8.7 ↑
Epsom – Ascot	3,224	3.2	6	537:1	5.2 ↑
Flora Hill – Quarry Hill – Spring Gully – Golden Gully	9,633	9.7	11	876:1	9.6 ↓
Golden Square	8,539	8.6	7	1,220:1	6.1 ↓
Heathcote & District	3,692	5.8	3	1,231:1	2.6 ↓
Huntly	2,064	3.7	1	2,064:1	0.9 ↓
Kangaroo Flat – Big Hill	9,581	9.6	15	639:1	13.0 ↑
Kennington	5,949	6.0	11	541:1	9.6 ↑
Long Gully – West Bendigo – Iron Bark	5,047	5.1	6	841:1	5.2 ↑
Maiden Gully	3,750	3.8	1	3,750:1	0.9 ↓
Marong – Rural West	3,737	3.7	3	1,246:1	2.6 ↓
North Bendigo – California Gully	8,045	8.1	5	1,609:1	4.3 ↓
Rural East	5,825	5.8	5	1165:1	4.3 ↓
Strathdale	5,789	5.8	10	579:1	8.7 ↑
Strathfieldsaye	4,203	4.2	5	841:1	4.3 ↑
White Hills-Jackass Flat	3,073	3.1	1	3,073:1	0.9 ↓
TOTAL	99,792		115		

NB: Whilst this table provides a ratio or provision per person, it does not provide information about usage, detailed spatial distribution, hierarchy / size of play spaces or quality of the play space opportunities available; hence cannot be used on its own as an assessment of over or undersupply of play spaces in a particular area.

¹³ City of Greater Bendigo Website:
<http://www.id.com.au/bendigo/forecastid/default.asp?id=134&pg=508&r=1>

6.3 Opportunities Provided in Play Spaces

Visual observations and discussions with key stakeholders reveal that existing play spaces in City of Greater Bendigo are primarily equipped with off the shelf play space equipment designed for 3-8 year olds. The majority of play spaces feature a “combination unit” which generally includes one or two slides, possibly some balancing apparatus and some climbing apparatus. There may also be a double swing and a few spring rockers. Some of the combination units feature a cubby house and some other equipment designed to encourage role plays or to encourage cognitive skills, such as steering wheels, tick tack toe, etc. Generally the play equipment is surrounded by a boxed in area containing soft fall. Some parks have sufficient space for young people to kick a ball around or play running games. One play space has a Liberty Swing designed for people with disabilities. Several play spaces have been designed with young adults / teenagers in mind such as skate parks.

Some notable gaps in the provision of play spaces in the City of Greater Bendigo are:

- The provision of play opportunities for 0-2 year olds
- The provision of play opportunities for young people older than 8 (particularly young people over 12 years of age)
- Lack of natural features (e.g. rocks, trees, logs, water, etc) in play spaces to encourage interaction with nature
- Lack of variety in the type of equipment provided in different parks
- Lack of opportunity for people of all abilities to access and utilise play equipment
- Lack of supporting amenities, e.g. seating, shade, paths, etc.
- Lack of opportunity for creative and adventurous activities



Figure 4: Different Type of Slide in Geelong.
Photo: Tim Buykx



Figure 5: Musical Play Equipment, Portugal.
Photo: Tim Buykx

6.4 Play Space Amenity

In order to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for young people, their carers and others, it is important to include suitable amenities in play spaces such as seating, shade (trees or shade structures) and paths and to consider other infrastructure such as landscaping, picnic tables, BBQs, drinking fountains, bins, shelters, lighting, toilets, fences and parking (depending upon the size, scale, target market and purpose of the space in question).

Visual observations and a review of the City of Greater Bendigo's Playground Inventory Report indicate that there is an overall lack of amenities in existing play spaces – particularly the most needed facilities, i.e. seating, shade and paths. The design guidelines produced as part of this strategy will assist City of Greater Bendigo officers to more effectively consider the type of amenities required for certain parks and the best positioning of such amenities.



Figure 6: BBQ, Muddy's, Cairns, QLD



Figure 7: Landscaping. Photo: PRAV.



Figure 8: Landscaping. Photo: Tim Buykx



Figure 9: Shade Sail in Hays Paddock Play Space in Melbourne. Photo: Tim Buykx

6.5 Utilisation of Play Spaces and Creating Play Value

Each play space has been assessed using anecdotal information from COGB staff to determine its current usage level, as demonstrated in the following table:

Usage	No.	Examples
Very High	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Weeroona in North Bendigo (Regional) • White Hills Botanical Gardens in White Hills (Regional) • Barrack Reserve in Heathcote (District) • Eaglehawk Skate Park in Eaglehawk (Regional) • Camp Hill Play Space in Bendigo (Regional)
High	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bendigo Aquatic Centre in Bendigo (Other) • Bright St in Eaglehawk (Local) • Canterbury Park in Eaglehawk (Local) • Cooina Park in Golden Square (District) • Garden Gully Reserve in Ironbark (District) • Hargreaves Mall in Bendigo (Local) • Lake Neangar in Eaglehawk (District) • Strathdale Park in Strathdale (Regional) • Truscott Reserve in Eaglehawk (District) • Battunga Park in Strathfieldsaye (District) • Strathfieldsaye Sports Club in Strathfieldsaye (Local)
Medium	39	<p>Refer to appendix for full list – the following is a sample:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ewing Park in Bendigo (Local) • Dr Catford Memorial Park in Eaglehawk (Local) • Michie St in Elmore (Local) • Collins Park in Epsom (Local) • Curtin St in Flora Hill (Local) • Akoonah Drv in Golden Square (Local) • Mia Mia Recreation Reserve in Mia Mia (Local) • Danson Ave in Kangaroo Flat (District) • Marnie Rd in Kennington (Local) • New Chum Reserve in Golden Square (District) • Malone Park in Marong (Local) • Nth Bendigo Recreation Complex in Nth Bendigo (Local) • Landale Drv in Strathdale (Local) • Saxby Park in Strathfieldsaye (Local)
Low	45	<p>Refer to appendix for full list – the following is a sample:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornish St in Bendigo (Local) • Gallway Drv in Eaglehawk (Local) • Lansell St in East Bendigo (Local) • Raywood Recreation Reserve in Raywood (Local) • Burvale Crt in Epsom (Local) • College Cres in Flora Hill (Local) • Allingham St in Golden Square (Local) • Redesdale Public Hall (Local) • Pennington Park in Huntly (Local) • Beverley St in Kangaroo Flat (Local) • Bolton Drv in Kennington (Local) • Derwent Drv in Long Gully (Local) • Maiden Gully Community Park (Local) • Lockwood Sth Recreation Reserve in Lockwood Sth (Local)

Usage	No.	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rose / Barker St in North Bendigo / California Gully (Local) • Emu Creek Recreation Reserve in Emu Creek (Local) • Amaroo Cres in Strathdale (Local)
Very Low	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barton Court in Spring Gully (Local) • Bren Street in Kennington (Local) • Harley St in Strathdale (Local) • Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens in Kangaroo Flat (Local) • Sherwood Drive in Flora Hill (Local) • St John Close in Kangaroo Flat (Local) • Timbertop Drive in Kennington (Local) • Campaspe St in Elmore (Local) • Sedgewick Hall in Sedgewick (Local) • Woodvale Recreation Reserve in Woodvale (Local) • Sebastian Recreation Reserve in Sebastian (Local)
Not Rated (mostly new play spaces / open space areas)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strand in Kennington (contains a cricket net only) • Banksia Gardens in Epsom • Acacia Gardens in Epsom • Byambee Rises in Kangaroo Flat (no playground equipment)



Figure 10: Water Features in Play Spaces in Portugal. Both Photos: Tim Buykx

According to best practice, well utilised play spaces and play spaces that offer a high degree of play value are generally those that:

- Are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, using universal design principles
- Are well designed and provide an inviting, welcoming and stimulating atmosphere
- Involve communities in the design of the play space
- Balance safety with risk taking opportunities
- Have been designed with the whole park and play precinct in mind and provide suitable amenities
- Offer a range of different opportunities for play and interaction in a space that is sufficient in size for its purpose and allow for change and evolution
- Provide opportunities for people to interact with the natural environment
- Promote and protect cultural, natural and heritage features
- Are well connected to homes via cycling / walking tracks, public transport and roads
- Are designed with sustainability in mind and are well cared for from a management and maintenance perspective
- Encourage interactions by the whole community and allow children of all ages to play together
- Are well promoted to the community, i.e. there is strong public awareness
- Provide opportunities for the purchase of food and beverages nearby, e.g. coffee (this was identified as an important contributor by some parents interviewed as part of the Strategy).

Underutilised play spaces, or play spaces that offer limited play value are generally those that:

- Only meet the needs of a limited number of people within the community and are unable to evolve or change with the community
- Look and feel tired, run down and boring
- Don't involve the local community in their design
- Are considered unsafe or at the other extreme, not sufficiently challenging
- Do not have sufficient amenities such as seating, shade or paths at the site
- Provide limited play opportunities and limited play value
- Do not enable opportunities to interact with the natural environment
- Are not well connected to homes via cycling / walking tracks, public transport and roads (i.e. are tucked away)
- Have a sense of being uncared for, e.g. rubbish, overgrown grass, graffiti, dog faeces, etc
- Do not allow opportunities for the community to interact
- Are not known by the general community
- Have too much interference from local neighbours

6.6 Creation of Child Friendly Environments

The City of Greater Bendigo is the first Child Friendly City in Australia to be recognised by the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). According to UNICEF, Child Friendly Cities aim to “provide safe and supportive environments that nurture children of all ages with opportunities for recreation, learning, social interaction, psychological development and cultural expression and to promote the highest quality of life for its young citizens.” Essentially it means that young people have the same rights as adults to fully participate in and enjoy the community in which they live – including access to areas of public open space.

It is important to recognise that there are other areas of the municipality which are considered to be ‘play spaces’. Young people in particular consider the urban area, including locations such as their local street and Hargreaves Mall, as a play space. Research shows that young people enjoy hanging around central locations within their local area as there is a greater likelihood that they will run into friends. Instead of identifying ways to remove young people from public spaces, we need to consider ways of making these places more attractive and child-friendly so that everyone can enjoy these spaces. The Mayor of London’s “*Supplementary Planning Guidance – Providing for Children and Young People’s Plan and Informal Recreation*” (2008)¹⁴, suggests that child friendly environments can be created by incorporating street landscaping that encourages incidental play opportunities (e.g. logs, boulders, changes of levels) and integrating art work in streetscapes. It states that “streets, pavements walkways and various forms of public open space have the potential to be treated as incidental spaces for play.”¹⁵



Figure 11: Fun Pathway – Geelong.
Photo: Tim Buykx



Play Space in Portugal. Photo: Tim Buykx

¹⁴ Mayor of London - “*Supplementary Planning Guidance – Providing for Children and Young People’s Plan and Informal Recreation*” (2008)

¹⁵ Mayor of London - “*Supplementary Planning Guidance – Providing for Children and Young People’s Plan and Informal Recreation*” (2008), pg 66

7.0 Play Space Design Matrix

A Play Space Design Matrix has been developed to show how the principles and design considerations can be used in practice across the three different play space hierarchies contained within the City of Greater Bendigo. This matrix recognises that it is not possible to provide every type of opportunity at each local play space, but rather opportunities are spread across each play space precinct. It also recognises that local play spaces will predominantly cater for people who may not have access to vehicles, such as parents with young children in prams, older adults, people with disabilities, etc as well as local community get togethers, e.g. picnics, etc. District and regional play spaces will cater for the whole community, but will have a greater focus on young people from 3-18 years of age from a play perspective.

	Local	District	Regional
Play Space Principles			
Inclusive and accessible	✓	✓	✓
Provision of a safe environment	✓	✓	✓
Inviting, welcoming and stimulating	✓	✓	✓
Whole of park approach to planning	✓	✓	✓
Diversity and Choice, e.g. variety of play experiences – cognitive, social, and physical / active play)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Interaction with the natural environment	✓	✓	✓
Appreciation of heritage and culture	Where present	Where present	Where present
Connectedness – to homes, walking / cycling tracks, public transport and roadways	✓	✓	✓
Sustainability – environmentally friendly practices and materials that can be sourced locally; easy to maintain	✓	✓	✓
Community strengthening and connectedness	✓	✓	✓
Type of Play Activity			
Cognitive play (role plays, drama)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Creative play (free, imaginative, manipulative)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Active play on play equipment (traditional play equipment, BMX, skating, bike riding)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Active ball or running games (half court basketball / netball, rebound walls, kick about area, cricket nets, bocce, chasey, Frisbee, etc)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Location			
Walking time	5 mins	10-20 mins	-
Driving time	1-2 minutes	Up to 5 minutes	15 mins
Distance to homes	400m – which equates to a 280m radial distance	500m to 2km	10km or more

	Local	District	Regional
Target User Groups			
Toddlers (0-2)	✓	To a lesser degree	To a lesser degree
Young children (3-5)	✓	To a lesser degree	✓
Mid range children (6-8)	✓	✓	✓
Older Children (9-12)	To a lesser degree	✓	✓
Young people (13-18)	To a lesser degree	✓	✓
Parents / carers	✓	✓	✓
Older adults	✓	✓	✓
People with disabilities	✓	✓	✓
Whole of community (social space)	✓	✓	To a lesser degree
Minimum Infrastructure			
Linked to walking / cycling paths	✓	✓	✓
Access to play space	✓	✓	✓
Compacted path within play space	✓	✓	✓
Natural shade	✓	✓	✓
Shade sails			Only where good passive surveillance is given
Shaded seating	✓	✓	✓
Picnic tables	some	✓	✓
Fence	Only as a barrier near a source of potential danger	Only as a barrier near a source of potential danger	✓
BBQ		some	✓
Shelter			✓
Bike racks			✓
Drinking fountain			✓
Landscaped areas	✓	✓	✓
Irrigated lawn			Some
Art work*	Some	Some	✓
Toilets – including family change and disabled			✓
Designated car parking (incl. Disabled car parking)			✓
Drainage (where required)	✓	✓	✓
Minimum Play Opportunities			
Swinging elements	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Sliding elements	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Spinning elements	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Balancing elements	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Climbing elements	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Creative play elements, e.g. cubby house	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Loose play material (sand, leaves,	As part of the local	✓	✓

	Local	District	Regional
branches, pebbles, etc)	precinct		
Natural play elements (boulders, trees, logs, water, etc)	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Sound / tactile / sensory elements	As part of the local precinct	some	✓
Ball games area	As part of the local precinct	✓	✓
Sand Pit		some	✓
Basketball or netball ring	As part of the local precinct	Some	✓
Play Value – what each play space should achieve			
Site is accessible	✓	✓	✓
Site provides a choice of different activities	✓	✓	✓
Site is complimentary to other sites in the precinct	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to master skills and challenges	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to enjoy physical activity and movement	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to experience sensory qualities of the outdoors	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to use the environment as part of the play experience	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to engage in social and imaginative play	✓	✓	✓
Opportunity for carers and older adults to enjoy watching others play in comfort	✓	✓	✓
Opportunities for people of all ages to meet and play together	✓	✓	✓

* The City's process for developing, managing and maintaining public Art is outlined in the 'Adopted Permanent Public Art Policy and Procedures' and the 'Draft Temporary Public Art Policy and Procedures'.



Figure 12: Sand Pit in Play Space. Photo: Tim Buykx

8.0 Appropriate Opportunities for Different Ages

It is difficult to provide suitable and interesting play opportunities for people of all ages in each play space. Some play spaces will focus on young people over 12 years of age, others will focus on 0-2 year olds, and others on 3-5, 6-8 or 9-12. The different development needs of these age groups are outlined in the following table adapted from information provided by the Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria¹⁶ (noting that it is a guide only):

Age	Physical Ability / Interests	Play Requirements
0-2	<u>0-12 months:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become upright and mobile Enjoy 1:1 interactions with adults Become aware of sensory stimuli sounds and movement Begin to sit, crawl, stand up Learn to clamber over low objects Copy adults actions Focus on simple events, e.g. wind in the trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babies and toddlers require play spaces that offer challenge and excitement that are suitable to their developmental level Toddlers need places clear of trip hazards so that they can run and move Careful layout of equipment is required as toddlers are unable to forecast consequences, e.g. that a swing will return Babies and toddlers learn through sensory exploration and place many things in their mouths – therefore grass or rubber are safer surfaces than bark or mulch Shade
	<u>12 months – 2 years:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More upright and active Imitate play / pretend animal play Throw, with little control Climbing in and through Filling, emptying and carrying Toppling, pulling and pushing Learning meaningful words Playing in sandpits Pushing trolleys and wheeling prams Collecting things 	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to establish autonomy, but want an adult close by May use aggression to solve problems Engage in parallel play with other children Often move as a group with other children Develop imitative role play Refining locomotor skills Enjoy physical play Use wheeled toys Enjoy manipulating small objects and filling containers Are interested in birds, insects, flowers and animals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level, grassy areas for running Some smooth pathways with non-abrasive surfacing Planting to provide sensory experiences Some gentle slopes Small sandpit Small swings climbing areas with soft fall Alcove areas landscaped into gardens for small groups to play Frequent perching areas for adults to sit with children, without intruding in their play
3-5	<u>3 year olds:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to interact and will engage in basic socio-dramatic play for short periods, with a focus on domestic play Enjoy climbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of levels and different ways of getting up and down A variety of surfacing materials Small areas for 2-4 children to play with sensory materials or imaginative play props

¹⁶ Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria – “Play Needs of Children”

Age	Physical Ability / Interests	Play Requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can manage a small slide • Enjoy sand and water • Can pour and fill • Enjoy hauling things around <p data-bbox="358 331 505 363"><u>4 year olds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can share and negotiate • Are inquisitive • Test adult limits • Direct most language to other children • Include violence in play • Show interest in natural science and how things work • Play more fantasy and abstract socio-dramatic play themes • Have basic ball skills • Can participate in group games and activities. <p data-bbox="358 747 505 779"><u>5 year olds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer cooperative play • Are physically poised and controlled • Like to test out skills and do stunts • Experience change in physical skills – girls develop precisions and boys develop speed and strength • Enjoy fact finding • Value group acceptance • Enjoy constructions and models that are realistic • Master ball games • Enjoy games with rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of climbing, sliding, swinging equipment on impact absorbing surfaces – in a reasonably large space, potentially with moveable equipment • Large grassed area for running and ball games • Smaller areas for groups of 3-6 children to work together on cooperative play projects and dramatic play • Low growing plants which create barriers, pathways and private spaces for small group play • Large sandpit • Access to water play • Views of the outside world • Space to ride bikes • Natural environments that provide cubby and camping play opportunities as well as attracting birds and insects • Gardens and animal enclosures
6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climb confidently – want to master new skills and are prepared to take risks • Manage ball games • Are energetic and active and can run or walk for long periods • Enjoy group activities that are able to be played cooperatively • Use adults as supporters rather than carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climbing equipment • Gymnastics type attachments, e.g. trapeze swings, horizontal ladders or Roman Rings • Staging area for dramatisations • Space for team games
8-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in competition, sport and energetic activity • Need flexible space to engage in both boisterous activity and quieter small or individual group experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging climbing equipment • Challenging gymnastics type equipment • Space for team games • Space for quiet activity
12-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested and skilled in a range of competitive, sporting and energetic activities • Enjoy taking part in unstructured activities in areas of open space or urban areas such as streets with their friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space to meet with friends • Challenging climbing equipment, e.g. rock climbing wall, ropes course • Space for team games, e.g. kicking a football • Space for informal sports

Age	Physical Ability / Interests	Play Requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like places to meet with their friends • Enjoy challenges and risk taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities, e.g. half court basketball / netball court, skate ramps, BMX jumps • Cycling tracks

As the demographics in a community change, it may be worth considering rotating equipment or items from other play spaces to meet the changing needs of users.



Figure 13: Creative element, Gold Coast, QLD



Figure 14: Risk taking element, Gold Coast



Figure 15: Skill development element, Gold Coast



Figure 16: Natural play element. Photo: PRAV

9.0 Planning and Design

9.1 Adding Play Value to Play Spaces

A major challenge for play spaces, particularly the smaller local spaces, is to ensure that the space offers 'play value'. Often these smaller spaces all look the same and are considered by young people as tired looking and boring. This can be changed by:

- utilising the play space principles, design matrix and design guidelines developed for this report;
- ensuring that a range of different opportunities is offered across each precinct (so that no two play spaces are identical within a precinct and that a broad range of play opportunities are encouraged, including creative play and use of natural materials);
- planning with and involving the local community in the design of the space; and
- using an inter-departmental planning group within Council.

The key factors identified earlier in this report that influence how well a play space is utilised and what level of play value it offers are sites that:

- Are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, using universal design principles
- Are well designed and provide an inviting, welcoming and stimulating atmosphere
- Involve communities in the design of the play space
- Balance safety with risk taking opportunities
- Have been designed with the whole park and play precinct in mind and provide suitable amenities
- Offer a range of different opportunities for play and interaction in a space that is sufficient in size for its purpose and allow for change and evolution
- Provide opportunities for people to interact with the natural environment
- Promote and protect cultural, natural and heritage features
- Are well connected to homes via cycling / walking tracks, public transport and roads
- Are designed with sustainability in mind and are well cared for from a management and maintenance perspective
- Encourage interactions by the whole community and allow children of all ages to play together
- Are well promoted to the community, i.e. there is strong public awareness
- Provide opportunities for the purchase of food and beverages nearby, e.g. coffee (this was identified as an important contributor by some parents interviewed as part of the Strategy).

9.2 Responsibility for Planning and Design of Play Spaces

In the past, the design of play spaces was primarily the responsibility of municipal engineers or service clubs. Often the play space was placed on to a piece of vacant land that was considered “out of the way” and that had limited potential for other uses. Sometimes these play spaces were constructed at the rear of residential properties, behind solid backyard fences where opportunities for casual surveillance was limited.

In recent times, the decision for planning and designing play spaces has rested with City of Greater Bendigo Recreation staff for local and district play spaces. Some advice and assistance was generally provided by the playground manufacturer in terms of appropriate types of equipment and the layout of the equipment. Occasionally City of Greater Bendigo staff involved local residents by allowing them to choose a colour scheme and some items of equipment. Some of the regional play spaces such as Lake Weeroona and Camp Hill in Rosalind Park, were designed by play space experts. New play spaces currently being developed by City of Greater Bendigo for the Hargreaves Mall and Wolstencroft Street Park Land have been designed by experienced playground experts and / or landscape architects. In other instances, play spaces and the equipment on them have been provided by developers, sometimes with little or no consultation with City of Greater Bendigo staff.

Given that this strategy is recommending a much greater focus on working with the community to develop play spaces, as well as the development, management and maintenance of additional play spaces throughout the municipality, there will be a need for additional human resources to manage this process.

9.3 Demand for Play Spaces

According to research conducted by Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria¹⁷, priority areas for play spaces are those that have:

- “A high percentage of young children
- A high percentage of people on low incomes (where people are more likely to be dependant upon local facilities and resources)
- A high concentration of medium or high density housing (and presumably a lack of private play space)”

The reports also states that local play spaces give priority to people with few options to go elsewhere to play, e.g. young children, older adults and people with disabilities. Other issues to consider are the existing supply or lack of play spaces in that particular precinct and the quality of play experiences offered within the precinct.

¹⁷ Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria – “Play Area Development Policy for Local Government” (2004)

Where City of Greater Bendigo is faced with competing priorities for playground developments, it needs to consider and respond to this information carefully, utilising the play space assessment tools developed as part of this Strategy.

9.4 Community Involvement in Planning and Design

Community involvement in play space design is important in terms of the community using a play space, providing public surveillance and having a sense of ownership over the site. Therefore it is suggested that where possible, every major play space upgrade or new development involves community consultation. It is recognised, however, that it is not possible to involve residents in the design of play spaces in new residential subdivisions that are developed prior to land sales occurring. In this instance, it is suggested that designs are continued to be influenced by and approved by City of Greater Bendigo staff, based on using the Design Guidelines and planning framework contained within this Strategy.

In the instance of a major upgrade or new play space development, residents within the affected radius should be invited by City of Greater Bendigo to attend a public meeting or workshop on site, coordinated by City of Greater Bendigo staff, to discuss the community's particular needs and issues. This meeting or workshop may involve discussions, drawings, model constructions, etc. It is important that the community is made aware of the parameters of their involvement, i.e. the play space must reflect the planning principles and planning framework contained within the Play Space Strategy. They must also be made aware of other key factors such as the available budget and any other issues that impact on the type of opportunities that can or cannot be permitted on the site. Once suggestions have been received, City of Greater Bendigo officers need to develop a sketch, concept plan or master plan and present this information back to the community group for feedback. Dependant upon the scale of the development, external professional assistance may be required for the development of a master plan. Once all feedback has been considered, the project will be referred to City of Greater Bendigo for action. ***It is vitally important that young people in the community are consulted as part of this activity.***

9.5 Connectivity of Play Spaces

To ensure that play spaces are used to their maximum capacity, they must be visible and connected to local neighbourhoods through footpaths, walking / cycling tracks, public transport and roadways. They should also be linked to other areas of open space through linear pathways, wherever possible. The spatial analysis undertaken indicates that there are many isolated pockets where play spaces exist that are not linked to the open space network, nor the walking and cycling network. In some instances, these play spaces are situated at the end of a small court where the majority of access is only provided to a small number of homes in that particular court or several surrounding courts or streets. Hence instead of a catchment that should

stretch to approximately 400 metres (for a local park), realistically the catchment is probably only between 100-200 metres.



Figure 17: Shared Cycling / Walking Paths through Muddy's Playground, Cairns, QLD

9.6 Accessibility

All people, regardless of their level of ability, have the same rights as other members of the community to use and enjoy play spaces. Meeting the needs of everyone in one particular play space is very difficult however, particularly in smaller play spaces. What is an accessible space for someone with vision, sensory or hearing impairments may not be accessible for someone with a physical impairment or intellectual or cognitive impairments.

According to The Department of Planning and Community Development's "*The Good Play Space Guide*"¹⁸, most equipment and amenities in play spaces have are designed to meet the needs of the 'average' person, whereas a shift to 'universal' design which focuses on products that are accessible to people of any age or ability, would make a significant difference to access.

Some municipalities such as the City of Greater Shepparton (COGS), have developed large regional All Abilities Play Spaces, which feature ramps and other structures that allow people with limited mobility or people in wheelchairs to move freely about the play space. The COGS also has plans to develop features and play items that provide visual, audio and tactile stimulation and interaction.

In the City of Greater Bendigo, there are very few play spaces that could be considered accessible and very few components within play spaces that are accessible, with the exception of the Liberty Swing at Strathdale Park in Strathdale. An unpublished document produced by City of Greater Bendigo

¹⁸ Department of Planning and Community Development – "The Good Play Space Guide" (2007), pg 12

officers, titled *“Our own Regional Accessible Play Space: 2006-2009”*¹⁹, identifies the need to develop a regional accessible play space within the City.

It is suggested that the City of Greater Bendigo makes an ongoing commitment to removing barriers to accessibility in existing play spaces throughout the municipality wherever possible and ensuring that all new play spaces are developed with universal design principles and play opportunities for people of all abilities. Therefore, significant funding may need to be directed to existing play spaces to improve their accessibility for all ages and abilities and to specifically “provide accessible play spaces that lead to social inclusion and participation in play by children with a disability”²⁰. The Department of Planning and Community’s *“The Good Play Space Guide”*²¹ suggests that it may in fact be more important to provide access in local play spaces as those are the ones that are close to the homes of people with varying abilities and therefore likely to be visited more often (providing these spaces have some degree of accessibility) with family or friends or even independently.

Items to be considered (depending on the hierarchy, precinct and purpose of the play space) to improve accessibility across the City’s play spaces are:

- Physical access, e.g. paths and ramps
- Supporting amenities, e.g. disabled toilets, tables which can be accessed by people in wheelchairs, seats with high backs and arm rests
- Choice of accessible activities e.g. those that encourage movement; creative and sensory play; different degrees of challenge and scale within the activity; artistic elements, natural elements; opportunities to manipulate the environment; and opportunities to take part in imaginative role plays. A raised sandpit is one example of an item within a play space that can be accessed by people with and without mobility issues
- Opportunities for children to join in with other people socially

¹⁹ City of Greater Bendigo – *“Our own Regional Accessible Play Space: 2006-2009”* – unpublished.

²⁰ Department of Planning and Community Development – *“The Good Play Space Guide”* (2007), pg 20

²¹ Department of Planning and Community Development – *“The Good Play Space Guide”* (2007), pg 18



Figure 18: Unisex accessible toilet sign, QLD



Figure 19: Ramp for access. Photo courtesy of Barbara Champion, PRAV



Figure 20: Sand area for wheelchairs.



Figure 21: Hammock at Hays Paddock. Both photos courtesy of Barbara Champion, PRAV.

9.7 Access to and within Play Spaces

It is not only important to provide good access to and from play spaces, but also access within the play space itself. Paths within play spaces allow people to safely and comfortably access play equipment or associated infrastructure such as seats. This is particularly important for people with mobility issues, parents / carers with prams and older adults. A significant number of play spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo do not have any paths at all.

The Department of Planning and Community Development's *"The Good Play Space Guide"*²² suggests that paths can be made from "concrete, asphalt, well-compacted gravel, timber sleepers or decking, stone, pavers or a host of other materials". The key point is that they should be "well formed, compacted, properly constructed and maintained."

²² The Department of Planning and Community Development – "The Good Play Space Guide" (2007), pg 58



Figure 22: Queen St Playground in Kangaroo Flat with no path

Ramps can also allow people with mobility issues to access areas of the play space that they would not otherwise be able to.

9.8 Fences

There is much debate about whether or not fencing should be included in play spaces. Some people argue that fences should not be provided because they encourage parents to neglect their parental supervision responsibilities or that fences act as a 'cage' for children, rather than letting them experience the spatial quality of the entire play space. Others will argue that a fence is necessary, especially where there are major hazards such as busy roads or waterways. Those responsible for multiple children, children with hearing difficulties, autistic children, children who do not know their own name, children who run off, or children who are easily distracted will not feel comfortable visiting play spaces without fences. Careful landscaping can sometimes remove the need to provide fencing in some areas, however, it is suggested that several fenced play spaces are provided within the City of Greater Bendigo to ensure maximum access to play spaces by children and their families.

Where fences are provided, it is important to ensure that the type of fence is both attractive and suitable for the specific play space. Its design should allow for passive surveillance by neighbours and others. Due to the high maintenance requirements of fences, it is suggested that gated play spaces are only provided for regional play spaces.



Figure 23: Fenced play space on the Gold Coast, QLD

9.9 Art Work in Play Spaces

Art work and sculpture can add to the experience of a play space, providing that the art work is relevant to the site and particularly if the community has been involved in the design / creation of the art work. Themed play spaces and play spaces of district or regional significance often tend to incorporate art work in their design, such as sculptures, mosaics, tiles, etc. Any art work included in play spaces needs to be vandal resistant and weather resistant. Sculptures are currently planned for Hargreaves Mall. For the City of Greater Bendigo it is suggested that only district or regional play spaces are considered for art works, unless a community wants to place a piece of art work in its local park to recognise an event or a person. The City's process for developing, managing and maintaining public art is outlined in the 'Adopted Permanent Public Art Policy and Procedures' and the 'Draft Temporary Public Art Policy and Procedures'.



Figure 24: Chalk Drawing Area, Gold Coast.



Figure 25: Sculpture, Central Park, New York, USA. Photo courtesy of Barbara Champion, PRAV



Figure 26: Wall, Muddy's Playground, Cairns, QLD.



Figure 27: Signage, Muddy's Playground, Cairns, QLD



Figure 28: Wooden Wombats, Wombat Bend
Photo: Tim Buykx



Figure 29: Snake Pattern, Wombat Bend.
Photo: Tim Buykx

9.10 Dogs and Play Spaces

At present, dogs are able to be off their leashes in all areas of City of Greater Bendigo managed land except for the following ten designated on-leash areas²³:

- Rosalind Park
- Lake Weeroona
- Kennington Reservoir
- White Hills Botanic Gardens
- Rotary Park, Strathdale
- Botanical Gardens, Kangaroo Flat
- Barrack Reserve, Heathcote
- Canterbury Gardens, Eaglehawk
- Coinda Park, Golden Square
- Lake Neangar and Lake Tom Thumb, Eaglehawk

Furthermore, dogs are not permitted into Hargreaves Mall or Crusoe and No. 7 Park unless authorised.

Research and feedback from the community indicates that dogs are a concern in many play spaces due to the fact that a number of children have a fear of

²³ City of Greater Bendigo – “Domestic Animal Management Plan” (2008)

dogs; the potential for children to be bitten by dogs; and the potential for dog excreta to be left in soft fall and sand pits. Erection of dog proof fences is becoming common in some areas such as Elmbridge Borough Council in Surrey in the UK where dog proof fences have been erected in 29 of its 31 play spaces²⁴. Other areas have erected signage to advise dog owners that dogs are not welcome in play spaces.

The City of Greater Bendigo's *Domestic Animal Management Plan* states that "to minimise risks, dogs will be required to be leashed within 10m of any publicly available children's play equipment (and) picnic area"²⁵. It also states that "it is not appropriate to ban dogs from playgrounds because many people like to take their dog with them to the playground and if dogs are prohibited they might be left tied up or wandering at large outside the exclusion area"²⁶. The notion that dogs should be excluded from such spaces is supported by the Play Space Strategy. It is recommended that when the Domestic Animal Management Plan and its associated Schedule are reviewed, that consideration be given to ensuring that all playgrounds and picnic areas within play spaces are adequately included in the Schedule.

It is recognised that dogs and their owners should be able to access certain areas of open space for exercise and interactions with others. Hence it is suggested that existing specified off-leash areas are maintained (with the exception of recognised play spaces) and that fenced off designated dog parks where owners can take their dogs to play and socialise with other dogs should be considered for development. The *Domestic Animal Management Plan* supports this suggestion.



Figure 30: Example of a Dog Sign on the Gold Coast, QLD

²⁴ Elmbridge Borough Council (UK) website:

<http://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/leisure/parks/playareas.htm>

²⁵ City of Greater Bendigo – "Domestic Animal Management Plan" (2008), pg 21

²⁶ Ibid, pg25

9.11 School-based Play Spaces

Play spaces can be relatively expensive assets to develop and maintain. Where possible and practical, City of Greater Bendigo should look at sharing the costs of developing and maintaining play spaces with other organisations to ensure best use of limited resources and to ensure that facilities are not unnecessarily duplicated. Schools are an obvious partner in the development of shared play spaces (providing the location meets certain criteria in terms of location, access, etc), with several examples already existing in the City of Greater Bendigo, e.g. Camp Hill Play Space and Dr Catford Playground at Eaglehawk Primary School. Although it's not possible, nor desirable to shift the development and management of play spaces to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (as there are quite often restrictions placed on public access times), the existence of school play spaces should be at least identified within the play assets available in each precinct as many children do use play spaces within school grounds after school and on weekends (providing that the site is accessible to the public after hours). The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development supports the concept of greater use of sharing school and community facilities and has recently produced a policy titled "*Schools as Community Facilities*"²⁷. This policy encourages schools to share their resources to develop facilities such as play spaces, libraries, performing arts spaces, recreation centres, libraries, etc., in partnership with the broader community.

9.12 Rationalisation of Play Spaces

Occasionally play spaces are assessed as being no longer required due to:

- Unsuitability of the existing site – possibly a safety issue;
- An over supply of play spaces in that area – possibly due to a high number of local play spaces already in existence or due to the development of a new district or regional play space in the area that includes the local population within its catchment
- Insufficient funding to replace the equipment – as is sometimes the case on public land when committees of management or sports clubs cannot afford to upgrade facilities
- Lack of usage – possibly due to a decline in the population in that area or a change in the demographics of that community

In such situations, it is imperative that:

- The community be notified prior to any works occurring and involved in decisions regarding the future use of the site if appropriate
- Wherever possible the site should remain as public open space, even if play space equipment is removed

²⁷ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – "Schools as Community Facilities – Policy Framework and Guidelines" (2005)

- If the site is to be decommissioned a better quality play opportunity is developed for the community, prior to the decommissioning of the existing play space – this space should be better located, provide better play opportunities and amenities and be well connected to housing, walking / cycling tracks, public transport and roadways
- Any salvageable play equipment (i.e. in good condition and not past the end of its lifespan) is relocated to another play space within the play precinct if possible
- Wherever possible that proceeds from the sale of any decommissioned land containing play spaces are directed to the City of Greater Bendigo's Open Space Reserve Fund to help support the development of other play spaces in the future.

9.13 Potential Opportunities for Development

The project team, key stakeholders and the general community have identified a number of potential play space opportunities which will greatly enhance the play experience of all members of the community. These ideas include:

- Establishment of an environmentally educational play space, incorporating solar panels, modified hydro electric demonstration models, wind turbines, interpretive panels etc
- A musical park
- A water park, providing a soft spongy surface with water jets, aqueducts, diversion gates, water wheels, etc
- A bicycle / tricycle track for young children to learn to or improve their riding, incorporating a sealed track, bridges, different surfaces, traffic lights, fuel bowsers, signs, etc
- A play space to recognise City of Greater Bendigo's international relationships with Maubisse in East Timor, Los Altos (USA), Tianshui (China) and Penzance (UK)
- A play space to recognise Bendigo's Chinese heritage, incorporating a dragon and other Chinese themes
- A play space to recognise Bendigo's close relationship with the Box Ironbark Forest and the bush
- Solar / energy efficient lighting (where possible) of one play space until 10pm at night so that families and young people have the opportunity to visit a play space after dinner
- Development of the urban environment and streets as a play space for young adults (although use of skate boards in the street would not be encouraged)
- Potential removal of play equipment from some local parks and replacement with landscaping, petanque pistes, BBQ facilities, small circular bike paths, art works / sculptures (perhaps using an artist in residence to work with local community members), informal games areas, kite flying area, community gardens, etc.



Figure 31: Children's Bicycle Play Space, Gold Coast, QLD



Figure 32: Pedal powered Monorail, Gold Coast, QLD



Figure 33: Water play, Muddy's, Cairns, QLD



Figure 34: Musical Play Space, Montpellier, France.

9.14 External Funding Opportunities for Play Space Development

Play space developments, particularly those that promote an increase in participation for traditionally disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities or people from low-socio economic backgrounds are often eligible for State and Federal Government Grants, particularly through organisations such as the Victorian State Government's Department of Planning and Community Development. Alternative sources of funding could also be investigated, e.g. philanthropic trusts, local businesses (such as Bendigo Bank, Bendigo Mining, Jimmy Possum, Parmalat, Tip Top, etc.) or trusts / enterprises (such as Strathfieldsaye and District Community Enterprise). Local service clubs and volunteer groups such as Men in Sheds should not be overlooked in the search for funding, labour or equipment.

9.15 Developer's Involvement in Play Spaces

It is also suggested that to enable the City of Greater Bendigo and the community to achieve the type of play spaces that complement others in each precinct, that the planning framework, principles and recommendations contained within this Strategy are communicated to developers via the City of Greater Bendigo's Planning Scheme.

9.16 Design Guidelines

A series of design guidelines have been developed as part of this strategy to assist City of Greater Bendigo to ensure maximum play value within play spaces (refer to Appendices). Specific design guidelines have been developed for topics such as seating, fencing, shade, etc.

When developing a new play space, it is important that COGB reviews the existing play opportunities provided within the relevant precinct (refer to precinct analysis within the Appendix) and consider where the gaps lie. The new play space should attempt to fill in the gaps and provide a play space that offers different, but complementary opportunities to other sites within the precinct.

9.17 Play Precincts

As part of this Strategy, the City of Greater Bendigo has been divided into 19 specific precincts (loosely based on suburb boundaries), in line with the existing 19 population areas identified by i.d. profile, a company contracted by City of Greater Bendigo to undertake demographic projections of the municipality. Within each precinct, there are a number of local play spaces. There may also possibly be a district play space and / or a regional play space. Each play space will be different in terms of the opportunities that it provides, but at the same time complementary to other play spaces in the precinct. It is not possible for one play space to provide every opportunity, however, across a precinct, there will be opportunities available for cognitive, social and physical play. It is therefore important that whole of park planning is adopted for every play space, although the degree to which this occurs will be dependant upon the hierarchy of the play space. There is an expectation that a regional play space, for example, would be the subject of a formal master plan and be designed by playground experts and / or landscape architects, with the possible addition of community artists. A smaller scale master plan may be appropriate for district play spaces and a more basic in-house site sketch is likely to be appropriate for local play spaces. The design principles developed as part of this Strategy regarding amenities should also form an invaluable component of play space design within the City of Greater Bendigo.

Detailed information about the play opportunities, demographics and play value of each precinct is contained within the Appendix.

10.0 Management and Maintenance of Play Spaces

10.1 Management

Day to day management of play spaces is undertaken by City's Recreation and Parks and Natural Environment staff. Landscape and Open Space staff are often involved in the design of play spaces, particularly the larger spaces. It is recommended that additional resources are allocated to help manage and maintain play spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo. Resources need to be directed towards community consultation in relation to play space design; management of contracts with external suppliers; and additional maintenance of play spaces. Furthermore, Council's Parks and Natural Environment staff also need to be consulted prior to any play space installation to ensure that issues such as ease of maintenance are taken into consideration.

10.2 Implementation and Monitoring

Responsibility for implementation of the Play Space Strategy will rest with the Recreation Unit, however, it is suggested that a multi-disciplinary internal working group is established within City of Greater Bendigo to consider any play space upgrades and new developments. This working group should comprise of a representative from each of the following units, in recognition of the fact that play spaces cross over many units within City of Greater Bendigo's structure:

- Recreation
- Parks and Natural Environment
- Landscape and Open Space
- Children's and Family Services
- Strategy

This working group should identify other relevant internal and external partners and meet twice yearly (or more frequently if required) to take responsibility for ensuring that the recommendations contained within this Strategy are reviewed regularly and acted upon as required. It may also be worthwhile to include a young person on this group from a youth based organisation.

10.3 Maintenance and Condition of Play Equipment

A large number of play spaces within the City of Greater Bendigo have been in existence for decades. Over time, due to low staffing levels and limited resources, some play spaces have deteriorated. Once equipment has deteriorated it is not always replaced due to budgetary constraints. This has created a situation whereby the play experience at some play spaces is limited due to few play opportunities available or a play space that looks tired and no longer enticing to potential users. Understandably, usage of these play spaces also decreases in line with the quality of the play equipment and opportunities on offer.

Parks and Natural Environment staff inspect facilities for vandalism and rubbish on a regular basis (i.e. minor inspections every fortnight and detailed half yearly inspections), with daily inspections occurring for the Lake Weeroona Playground. An external contractor was employed in 2006 to assess the physical condition of play spaces as they relate to recognised industry safety standards. Recommended works or upgrades identified by the external contractor are carried out by City of Greater Bendigo staff.

In order to provide the best possible experience for users of play spaces and to ensure that any play space equipment is in good, safe working order, it is imperative that regular inspections continue as per Australian Safety Standards and that any identified works are carried out as a matter of priority. Additional resources in the form of staff and budgetary allocations may be necessary in order to ensure that quality play opportunities and spaces are developed and appropriately maintained. Council's Parks and Environment staff also need to be consulted prior to any play space installation to ensure that issues such as ease of maintenance are taken into consideration.

Vandalism needs to continue to be dealt with as soon as possible so that play spaces do not get the appearance of being run down, uncared spaces of little importance to the City of Greater Bendigo and the community, thereby potentially attracting undesirable uses, e.g. dumping of rubbish, etc. Play space users also need to be aware of how and where to report acts of vandalism to the City of Greater Bendigo.



Figure 35: Sign at playground on the Gold Coast, QLD, advising people how to notify Gold Coast City Council staff of maintenance / vandalism issues

10.4 Marketing

Only limited information about play spaces is publicly available, as the following table shows:

Publication	Reference to Play Spaces
City of Greater Bendigo Easy Reference Guide to Services 2008-09	List of top 10 play spaces available in the municipality
City of Greater Bendigo Website	List of play spaces available in the recreation section of the website
Official Visitors Guide to Bendigo	Mentions that there are over 100 playgrounds and states that a new playground has opened in Rosalind Park, however, the map in the centre of the publication lacks a playground icon in its legend.
O'Keefe Rail Trail brochure	Mentions that there is a playground in Axedale.
Eaglehawk Visitor Guide	Does not make any mention of play opportunities in Canterbury Park or at Lake Neangar.
Experience Bendigo Outdoors City Map	Identifies the location of 13 of the 84 city-based play spaces, but needs to be updated in its next print run to incorporate the new play space in Rosalind Park.
Rosalind Park Discovery Walk	No reference to the new playground in Rosalind Park (as the brochure was produced before the playground was developed).
Bendigo Walks	Some playgrounds are mentioned, but there are some notable exceptions, e.g. Strathdale Park and Rosalind Park.

The development of a specific play space brochure available for download from City of Greater Bendigo's website and also as a hard copy brochure available from key locations such as City of Greater Bendigo offices, libraries, childcare centres, pre-schools, maternal and child health centres, Visitor Information Centre, etc would help to increase both awareness and usage of play spaces available in the municipality. Other promotional opportunities such as a website called Playground Finder (<http://www.playgroundfinder.com>) should also be considered.



Figure 36: Sand as a natural and creative play element for children

11.0 Prioritising Developments

In order to prioritise play space developments, consideration needs to be given to:

- Socio economic status of the precinct
- Housing density
- Geographical gaps in the provision of play spaces
- Projected growth rate of the precinct
- Number of young people in the precinct
- Level of amenities provided
- Play value
- Equipment replacement schedule.

A key component of this plan is to address amenities (e.g. shade, seating and paths) as a priority and ensure that any equipment in a play space is fun, safe and interesting (i.e. provides play value and is not past its useful lifespan). It is proposed that shade and seating is addressed in the first year of this plan and that the development of paths occurs in year two to five. Replacement of equipment that is beyond its reasonable life will also occur annually. Other works proposed, e.g. upgrading of play spaces and development of new spaces will occur throughout the five years. However, in order to prioritise the upgrades and developments between precincts, a Play Space Assessment Tool has been developed. This tool will ensure that developments are prioritised for areas most in need:

Play Space Assessment Tool

Rating	Details	Score
Socio Economic Status	Less than 1000 on the SEIFA Scale (Source: SEIFA)	/2
Medium to High Density Housing	Medium to High Density Housing higher than the average rate for the municipality – 10.6% (Source: profile.i.d. – COGB website)	/2
Gap in play space provision	Less than one play space per 800 residents in the precinct (Source: Table in 6.2 of this Strategy)	/2
Population growth	Percentage of population in precinct projected to be higher in 2018 than it is in 2008 (Source: profile.i.d. – COGB website)	/2
Number of Young People	Greater than 25% of the population is made up of young people under the age of 18 (Source: profile.i.d. – COGB website)	/2
TOTAL		/10

Using this scenario, the precincts with the highest score will become the priority areas for development:

Precinct	Socio Eco Status (<1,000)	Housing Density (>10.6%)	Gap in Spatial Distribution (>800:1)	Projected Increased Percentage of Population (2008 – 2018)	Projected Percentage of Young People in Precinct in 2018 (>25.0%)	Score
Bendigo	971.8	19.0	793:1	6.4 – 5.6	20.8	4
Eaglehawk – Eaglehawk North – Sailors Gully	937.7	9.6	1,141:1	5.7 – 5.5	24.5	4
East Bendigo	995.5	17.2	1,119:1	2.2 – 2.3	19.5	8
Elmore – Rural North	985.9	1.4	335:1	3.3 – 3.1	22.3	2
Epsom – Ascot	1025.0	0.8	537:1	3.2 – 4.0	27.1	4
Flora Hill – Quarry Hill – Spring Gully – Golden Gully	1003.9	19.9	876:1	9.7 – 8.6	21.2	4
Golden Square	966.9	10.7	1,220:1	8.6 – 8.6	21.6	8
Heathcote & District	967.9	6.4	1,231:1	3.7 – 3.4	16.5	4
Huntly	1025.0	0.8	2,064:1	2.1 – 2.5	23.6	4
Kangaroo Flat – Big Hill	948.4	10.8	639:1	9.6 – 9.6	22.0	6
Kennington	1007.7	22.9	541:1	6.0 – 5.2	18.5	2
Long Gully – West Bendigo – Iron Bark	879.9	11.7	841:1	5.1 – 4.3	22.9	6
Maiden Gully	1074.0	0.2	3,750:1	3.8 – 4.8	30.6	6
Marong – Rural West	1051.9	0.2	1,246:1	3.7 – 3.8	23.9	4
North Bendigo – California Gully	904.5	9.0	1,609:1	8.1 – 7.2	21.5	4
Rural East	1096.4	0.2	1,165:1	5.8 – 6.7	25.6	6
Strathdale	1039.8	8.5	579:1	5.8 – 5.2	21.9	0
Strathfieldsaye	1096.4	1.6	841:1	4.2 – 5.7	31.3	6
White Hills-Jackass Flat	963.4	9.6	3,073:1	3.1 – 3.8	27.6	8

12.0 Proposed Directions and Works

12.1 Hierarchy Changes and Suggested Number of Play Spaces

In order to ensure an equitable spatial distribution of play spaces across the municipality, it is recommended that the following changes occur to the hierarchy, resulting in an increase of **18** play spaces. Some of these play spaces will be installed in partnership with other organisations such as developers and schools:

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
Regional	5	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lake Weeroona play space is upgraded, but not extended beyond its existing fence line Cooinda Park / Rotary Park is upgraded from district play space to regional play space Eaglehawk Skate Park is retained as a regional play space, but is joined by Canterbury Park / Lake Neangar to form a larger regional play space Strathdale Park remains as a regional play space White Hills Botanic Gardens play space is redeveloped Rosalind Park / Camp Hill is reclassified as a district play space 	<p><u>Bendigo</u> Lake Weeroona</p> <p><u>Eaglehawk</u> Eaglehawk Skate Park / Canterbury Park / Lake Neangar</p> <p><u>Golden Square / Kangaroo Flat</u> Cooinda Park / Rotary Park</p> <p><u>Strathdale</u> Strathdale Park</p> <p><u>White Hills</u> White Hills Botanical Gardens</p>
District	11	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Danson Avenue, Garden Gully Reserve, New Chum Reserve, Quarry Hill, Barrack Reserve, Hargreaves Mall, Truscott Reserve and Mclvor Rd Skate Park are retained as district play spaces Battunga Park is reclassified as a local play space 	<p><u>Bendigo</u> Rosalind Park / Camp Hill Hargreaves Mall</p> <p><u>East Bendigo</u> Skateboard Park on Mclvor Road</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new district play space is developed at Strathfieldsaye Recreation Reserve Spring Gully is reclassified as a district play space A district play space to be developed at Maiden Gully Queen St Playground in Kangaroo Flat to be developed as a district play space 	<p><u>Flora Hill-Quarry Hill-Spring Gully-Golden Gully</u> Quarry Hill Reserve Spring Gully Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>Heathcote & District</u> Barrack Reserve</p> <p><u>Kangaroo Flat</u> Danson Avenue Queen St</p> <p><u>Long Gully</u> Garden Gully Reserve New Chum Reserve</p> <p><u>Maiden Gully</u> New Recreation Reserve (when developed)</p> <p><u>North Bendigo-California Gully</u> Truscott Reserve</p> <p><u>Strathfieldsaye</u> New Recreation Reserve in Strathfieldsaye</p>
Local	97	113	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review use of 5 local play spaces (Barton Cres in Flora Hill; College Cres in Flora Hill; Beverley St in Kangaroo Flat; The Strand in Kennington; and Sibley Place in Strathdale) and 1 block of vacant land owned by Council (Michelle Drive in Maiden Gully – does not contain play equipment and its use should be reviewed and a more suitable play space site in the area, identified and 	<p><u>Bendigo (4)</u> Cornish St – decommission this Crown Land site and leave as public open space without formal play equipment – equipment to be relocated to North Bendigo Recreation Reserve directly across the road Ewing Park – retain King St – retain Londonderry Reserve – retain and further develop as a shared community / school play space with Girton Grammar Hustlers Reef – develop as natural play space</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
			<p>purchased)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of 7 vacant blocks of privately owned land on which to develop new local play spaces (Bendigo-Pyramid Rd in Raywood; Tobin Cres in Epsom; Race St in Flora Hill; Stephenson St in Huntly; Bray St in Long Gully; Belac St in Maiden Gully; and Michelle Drv in Maiden Gully) • Development of shared school / community play spaces at 6 sites - play spaces already exist on these sites (Girton Grammar; Eaglehawk Secondary College in Eaglehawk; Eaglehawk North Primary School in Eaglehawk; Holy Rosary PS in Heathcote; North Bendigo PS in Nth Bendigo; St Francis of the Fields) • Redevelopment of 4 blocks of Council / Crown land into natural play spaces - with boulders, logs, seating, etc (Hustlers Reef in Bendigo; Market Reserve in East Bendigo; Holly St Reserve in Golden Square; and Hastings Drv in Maiden Gully) • Development of new local play spaces on 9 parcels of Council / Crown owned land (Wolstoncroft St in Flora Hill; Sterry St in Golden Square; Epsom Recreation Reserve in Huntly; Kennington Oval in Kennington; Excell St in Long Gully; Settlers Place Reserve in Maiden Gully; Green St in Nth Bendigo; Spring Gully Creek Reserve – using equipment from College Cres; Montgomery Reserve in White Hills) 	<p><u>Eaglehawk (4)</u> Dr Catford – retain Gallway Drive – retain Eaglehawk Sec College – consider joint school / community play space Eaglehawk Nth PS – consider joint school / community play space</p> <p><u>East Bendigo (2)</u> Lansell St – retain Market Reserve – develop as natural play space</p> <p><u>Elmore – Rural North (10)</u> Campaspe River – retain as non equipment play space Campaspe Run – retain Elmore Oval / Rec Reserve – retain Elmore Skate Park - retain Elmore Tennis Club – retain Michie St – retain Goornong Rec Reserve – retain Raywood Recreation Reserve – decommission site Bendigo – Pyramid Road – purchase land for development of new play space. Relocate equipment from Raywood Recreation Reserve to this central location Sebastian Rec Reserve – retain Woodvale Rec Reserve – retain</p> <p><u>Epsom-Ascot (7)</u> Acacia Gardens – retain Banksia Gardens – retain Burvale Crt – retain Collins Park – retain</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of one play space from recreation reserve into a more central location (Raywood Recreation Reserve) • Consideration be given to installing 7 new local play spaces in partnership with developers (Hesse St in Flora Hill; Queen St East in Kangaroo Flat; Golf Links Rd in Maiden Gully; Maiden Gully Rd in Maiden Gully; Thomas Drv in Marong; Mclvor Forest Drive in Rural East; and Edwards Rd in Jackass Flat) • Reclassification of 2 sites from a local play space to a district play space (Spring Gully Recreation Reserve in Spring Gully and Queen St in Kangaroo Flat) • Decommissioning of 2 sites as play space and leaving it as open space (Cornish St in Bendigo and Raywood Recreation Reserve in Raywood) 	<p>Tobin Cres area – purchase private land and develop new local play space Melbury Crt – retain Peake Crt – retain</p> <p><u>Flora Hill-Quarry Hill-Spring Gully-Golden Gully (11)</u> Barton Crt – review use and if appropriate relocate equipment to nearby Sherwood Drive College Cres – review use and if appropriate relocate equipment to nearby Spring Gully Creek Reserve Curtin St – retain Kenfig Crt / Sherman Cres – retain Kunzea Crt – retain Palmerston Square – retain Progress Reserve – retain Sherwood Drv – retain Somerville St – retain Spring Gully Creek Reserve – develop a new local play space Wolstoncroft St – develop a new local play space Race St / Neale St – purchase land to develop a new local play space Consideration be given to Developer installing new local play space in Hesse St residential development area in partnership with COGB</p> <p><u>Golden Square (8)</u> Acoonah Drv – retain Alamein Crt – retain Allingham Reserve – retain Dick Turner Reserve – retain Maxwell Drive – retain Seaton Grv – retain Holly St Reserve – develop as a natural play space</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
				<p>Sterry St – develop a new local play space on Crown Land parcel</p> <p><u>Heathcote & District (3)</u> Mia Mia Rec Reserve – retain Redesdale Public Hall – retain Holy Rosary PS – consider joint school / community play space</p> <p><u>Huntly (3)</u> Pennington Park – retain Develop a new play space at the new Epsom Recreation Reserve Stephenson St / Midland Hwy / Pasley St / Gungurru Rd and bush section – purchase land to develop a new local play space</p> <p><u>Kangaroo Flat (13)</u> Allingham St – retain Beverley St – review use and if appropriate relocate equipment to Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens Byambee Rises – retain as natural play space Chifley Ave / Menzies Crt – retain Crusoe Rd – retain Graemer Crt – retain Howell Cres – retain Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens – retain Magellan Cres – retain Osborn Ave – retain St Johns Close – retain William Drv – retain Windsor Crt / Olympic Pde – retain Consideration given to Developer installing new play space in partnership with COGB at Queen St East (Morrison St / Wesley St / Calder Hwy and Symes St section)</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
				<p><u>Kennington (10)</u> Bolton Drv – retain Bren St – retain Hakea St – retain Marnie Rd – retain Ross St – retain Summit Drv – retain <i>The Strand – review use</i> Timbertop Drv – retain Vickers Crt – retain Warranwah Drv – retain <i>Kennington Oval – develop new local play space</i></p> <p><u>Long Gully (6)</u> Bundaleer Park – retain Casley St – retain Derwent Drv – retain Havilah Rd – retain <i>Bray St / Havilah Rd – purchase land to develop a new local play space</i> <i>Excell St / Gundry St / Eaglehawk Rd section –develop a new local play space on Crown Land parcel</i></p> <p><u>Maiden Gully (7)</u> Maiden Gully Community Park – retain <i>Michelle Drv / Stephen Crt block (not a play space) – decommission and purchase land at Michelle Drv / Patricia Crt section – develop as a new local play space</i> <i>Settlers Place Reserve / Carolyn Way – develop as a new local play space</i> <i>Hastings Drv / Bedarra Crt Recreation Reserve – develop as a natural play space</i></p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
				<p>Purchase private land in Belac St to develop a new local play space Consideration be given to Developers installing 2 local play spaces in Maiden Gully north of the highway on Golf Links Rd and Maiden Gully Rd</p> <p><u>Marong-Rural West (4)</u> Lockwood Sth Rec Reserve – retain Malone Park – retain Marong Community Hall – retain Consideration be given to Developers, in partnership with COGB, installing a play space in Thomas Drive in Marong</p> <p><u>North Bendigo-California Gully (6)</u> Bright St – retain Nth Bendigo Rec Reserve – retain Prouses Rd – retain Rose / Barker St – retain Green St / McCoy St / Loudon St – develop play space on Crown Land parcel North Bendigo PS – consider joint school / community play space</p> <p><u>Rural East Precinct (5)</u> Axedale Public Hall & Skate Park – retain Emu Creek Rec Reserve – retain Mclvor Forest Drive – Consideration be given to Developers installing a play space in partnership with COGB Mandurang Public Hall – retain Sedgwick Hall – retain</p> <p><u>Strathdale (8)</u> Amaroo Cres – retain</p>

Hierarchy	Existing No. in COGB	Proposed No. in COGB	Proposed Changes	Suggested Play Spaces in each Hierarchy
				<p>Cliff Ave – retain Harley St – retain Herbert Ave – retain Lendale Drv – retain Lloyd St – retain Nabilla Cres – retain Sherpa Crt – retain Sibley Place – review use and if appropriate relocate equipment to Strathdale Park</p> <p><u>Strathfieldsaye (6)</u> Battunga Park – retain Clydebank Crt / Bassett Drv – retain Saxby Park – retain Strathfieldsaye Sports Club – retain Sunset Drv – retain St Francis of the Fields – consider joint school / community play space</p> <p><u>White Hills (2)</u> Montgomery Reserve – develop a new local play space on this site Consideration be given to Developers, in partnership with COGB installing a play space in Edwards Rd in the developing area of Jackass Flat</p>
Other	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bendigo Aquatic Centre Brennan Park Aquatic Centre
TOTAL	115	132		

12.2 Amenities

In the first year of the Strategy, it is proposed that the major focus is on planting trees to improve shade and overall appearance of play spaces, as well as installing seats into play spaces. The development of compacted paths will follow in years 2 to 5.

12.3 Replacement of Play Equipment

As equipment nears the end of its lifespan (usually around 18 years, dependant upon usage levels, wear and tear, etc.), it will need to be replaced. Information obtained from the Playground Audit indicates that the following spaces will need equipment replacements during the five year period of this report (subject to the condition of the equipment):

Bendigo Aquatic Centre	Spring Gully	Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens	Summit Drv	Harley St
King St	Maxwell Drive	Osborn St	Vickers Crt	Herbert Ave
Dr Catford Memorial Park	Barrack Reserve	St Johns Close	Warranwah Drv	Landale Drv
Barton Crt	Mia Mia Rec Reserve	Windsor Crt	Malone Park	Lloyd St
College Cres	Redesdale Public Hall	Bolton Drv	Marong Community Hall	Nabilla Cres
Kenfig Crt	Allingham St	Bren St	North Bendigo Rec. Res.	Sherpa Crt
Kunzea Crt	Crusoe Rd	Brennan Park Swimming Pool	Rose / Barker St	Strathfieldsaye Sports Club
Palmerston Square	Danson Ave	Hakea St	Amaroo Cres	Sunset Drv
Quarry Hill Reserve	Graemer Cres	Ross St	Cliff Ave	

As this equipment is replaced, strong consideration needs to be given to ensuring that any new equipment or features installed at these sites:

- complement but does not duplicate other items within the specific precinct
- have been selected in consultation with the local community
- reflect the demographics of that particular area
- complement the natural environment
- provide opportunities for cognitive, social and physical / active play.

12.4 Indicative Costings

12.4.1 Indicative Costings for Individual Play Spaces

The following table list the findings of each of the analysed play precincts. The works identified in this section have been sourced from the detailed analysis of each precinct, as contained within the Appendix. These works are not identified in priority order. Refer to 13.0 for recommendations.

Precinct	Works Required	Indicative Costings
Bendigo	Develop Hustlers Reef as a natural local play space area incorporating seats, shade and paths. Play opportunities may include boulders, logs, etc.	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Redevelop Londonderry Reserve in partnership with Girton Grammar as a shared school community play space	\$ 20,000 - \$ 35,000
	Upgrade Lake Weeroona play space to include more play opportunities, but do not extend beyond existing fence line	\$ 100,000
	Replace equipment at Bendigo Aquatic Centre and King St subject to condition	\$ 30,000 - \$ 40,000
	Install path in King St	\$ 1,750 - \$ 2,600
Eaglehawk	Develop a regional linear play space between Lake Neangar and Canterbury Park, designed by a landscape architect / playground designer	\$ 500,000 - \$ 750,000
	Develop a local play space in partnership with Eaglehawk Secondary College, subject to Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning approval.	\$ 20,000 - \$ 40,000
	Develop a local play space in partnership with Eaglehawk North Primary School, subject to Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning approval.	\$ 20,000 - \$ 40,000
	Replace equipment in Dr Catford Memorial Park, subject to condition	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Install additional shade at Eaglehawk Skate Park (shade structure)	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Improve landscaping at Gallway Drive	\$ 1,500 - \$ 2,000
East Bendigo	Path, shade and seats to be installed at Lansell St	\$ 4,750 - \$ 8,400
	Redevelop Market Reserve as a passive open space area containing some natural play opportunities as well as seats, shade and paths	\$ 20,000 - \$ 35,000
Elmore-Rural North	Relocate Raywood Play Space to a central location within the township – purchase land to do so	\$ 125,000 - \$ 140,000
	Seats required at Elmore Recreation Reserve, Goornong Recreation Reserve, Sebastian Recreation Reserve and Woodvale Recreation Reserve	\$ 8,000 - \$ 9,600

Precinct	Works Required	Indicative Costings
	Michie St Play Space requires trees and landscaping	\$ 2,500 - \$ 3,400
	Compacted paths required through all play spaces in this precinct	\$ 15,750 - \$ 23,400
Epsom-Ascot	Shade required in Melbury Crt	\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,400
	Paths require sealing and seating required in Burvale Crt	\$ 3,750 - \$ 5,000
	Purchase land in Tobin Cres area and develop a new local play space – consider youth play opportunities, eg skate park	\$120,000-\$140,000
Flora Hill-Quarry Hill-Spring Gully-Golden Gully	Review usage of Barton Crt and College Cres	- \$ 160,000 (if sold)
	Develop new local play space at Spring Gully Creek	\$20,000 - \$30,000
	Develop a new local play space at Wolstoncroft Reserve	\$30,000 - \$50,000
	Install seat at Spring Gully Creek site.	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,400
	Purchase land around Race St / Neale St to develop a new local play space	\$ 120,000 - \$ 140,000
	Seat, shade and path required in Sherwood Drv	\$ 4,750 - \$ 8,400
	Shade required in Somerville St, Kenfig Crt, Kunzea Crt, Progress Reserve	\$ 4,000 - \$ 5,600
	Compacted paths required in Spring Gully Creek, Curtin St, Kenfig Crt, Kunzea St, Progress Reserve, Quarry Hill Reserve, Sherwood Drv and Somerville St	\$ 14,000 – \$ 20,800
	Replace some items of equipment at Kenfig Crt, Kunzea Crt, Palmerston Square, Quarry Hill Reserve and Spring Gully	\$ 75,000 - \$ 100,000
	Consider developing a new local play space at Hesse St in partnership with developers	\$20,000 - \$30,000
Golden Square	Install seats at Alamein Crt, Maxwell Drv and Seaton Grv	\$ 6,000- \$ 7,200
	Shade required at Alamein Crt and Seaton Grv	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,800
	Compacted paths required at Akoonah Drv, Alamein Crt, Cooinda Park, Dick Turner Reserve, Maxwell Drv and Seaton Drv	\$ 12,250 - \$ 18,200
	Develop Cooinda Park as a linear regional play space connected to Rotary Park in Kangaroo Flat.	\$ 500,000 - \$ 750,00
	Replace equipment in Maxwell Drv, subject to condition.	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Further develop Holly St Reserve as a natural local play space	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Develop a new local play space on Crown Land in Sterry St	\$ 25,000 - \$ 35,000
Heathcote	Replace some items of equipment in Barrack Reserve, Mia Mia and Redesdale Public Hall, subject to condition	\$ 45,000 – 60,000
	Develop a shared play space in partnership with Holy Rosary PS	\$ 25,000 - \$ 35,000
Huntly	Purchase land and develop a new local play space in the Stephenson St area	\$ 125,000 – 140,000
Kangaroo Flat	Review usage of Beverley St site	- \$ 80,000 (if sold)

Precinct	Works Required	Indicative Costings
	Redevelop Cooinda Park / Rotary Park as a linear regional play space	\$ 500,000 - \$ 750,000
	Replace some items of play equipment in Allingham St, Crusoe Rd, Danson Ave, Graemer Cres, Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens, Osborn St, St Johns Close and Windsor Crt	\$ 120,000 - \$ 160,000
	Consider developing a new local play space in partnership with developers around Queen St East area	\$ 25,000 - \$ 35,000
	Seats required in Crusoe Rd, Howell Cres, Queen St and Williams Drv	\$ 8,000 – \$ 9,600
	Shade required in Graemer Crt, Magellan Cres, Queen St, St Johns Close and Williams Drv	\$ 5,000 - \$ 7,000
	Compacted paths required in all spaces other than Kangaroo Flat Botanical Gardens	\$ 24,500 - \$ 36,400
Kennington	Review usage of The Strand and develop a play space at Kennington Oval if appropriate	- \$ 80,000 (if sold)
	Develop a new local play space at Kennington Oval	\$ 25,000 - \$ 40,000
	Replace some items of play equipment in Bolton Drv, Bren St, Brennan Park Swimming Pool, Hakea St, Ross St, Summit Drv, Vickers Crt and Warranwah Drv, subject to condition.	\$ 120,000 - \$ 160,000
	Install seats at Bolton Drv, Bren St, Hakea St, Summit Drv and Timbertop Drv	\$ 10,000 - \$ 12,000
	Shade required at Bren St and Marnie Rd	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,800
	Compacted paths required at Bolton Drv, Hakea St, Marnie Rd, Ross St, Summit Drv and Warranwah Drv	\$ 10,500 – \$ 15,660
Long Gully	Upgrade equipment and improve play value at Havilah Rd	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Purchase land in Bray St / Havilah Rd area and develop as a local play space	\$ 125,000 - \$ 140,000
	Develop a new local play space on Crown Land in Excell St	\$ 25,000 - \$ 35,000
	Install seats at Bundaleer Park, Casley St, Garden Gully Reserve and Havilah Rd	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,800
	Shade required at Derwent Drv and Garden Gully	\$ 5,250 - \$ 7,800
	Compacted paths required at Bundaleer Park, Casley St and Havilah Rd	\$ 5,250 - \$ 7,800
Maiden Gully	Upgrade Maiden Gully Community Park	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Review usage of vacant Council owned land on corner of Michelle Drive and Stephen Crt and use this money to purchase a more strategically located piece of land in this general area on which to develop a local play space (e.g. around Michelle Drv and Patricia Crt)	- \$ 80,000 (if sold)
	Upgrade Settlers Place Reserve in Carolyn Way as a new local play space and picnic area	\$ 30,000 - \$ 45,000
	Upgrade Hastings Drv / Bedarra Crt Recreation Reserve to provide additional natural play opportunities	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000
	Purchase private land in Belac St to develop a new local play space	\$125,000 - \$140,000
	Consider developing a new local play space in partnership with developers in Maiden Gully Rd	\$30,000 - \$45,000
	Consider developing a new local play space in partnership with developers in Golf Links Rd	\$30,000 - \$45,000
Marong-Rural	Replace some items of play equipment at Malone Park and Marong Community Hall	\$ 15,000 - \$ 20,000

Precinct	Works Required	Indicative Costings
West		
	Compact path required at Lockwood South Recreation Reserve	
	Consider developing a play space in partnership with developers in Thomas Crt	\$25,000 - \$30,000
North Bendigo-California Gully	Shade required at North Bendigo Recreation Reserve and Prouse's Rd	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,800
	Compacted paths required at North Bendigo Recreation Reserve, Prouse's Rd and Rose / Barker St	\$ 5,250 - \$ 7,800
	Replace some items of play space equipment at North Bendigo Recreation Reserve and Rose / Barker St	\$ 30,000 - \$ 40,000
	Develop a shared community / school play space with Bendigo North Primary School, subject to Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning approval.	\$20,000 – \$40,000
	Develop a new local play space on Crown Land at Green St	\$ 25,000 - \$ 35,000
Rural East Precinct	Install seats at Emu Creek Recreation Reserve, Mandurang Public Hall, Sedgwick Hall	\$ 6,000 - \$ 7,200
	Compacted paths required at Emu Creek Recreation Reserve, Mandurang Public Hall, Mandurang South Recreation Reserve and Sedgwick Hall	\$ 7,000 - \$ 10,400
	Consider developing a new local play space in partnership with developers in the Mclvor Forest Drive area	\$20,000 - \$30,000
Strathdale	Review usage of Sibley Place	- \$ 80,000 (if sold)
	Replace some items of play space equipment at: Amaroo Cres, Cliff Ave, Harley St, Herbert Ave, Landale Drv, Lloyd St, Nabilla Cres, Sherpa Crt, Strathdale Park, subject to condition	\$ 135,00 - \$ 180,00
	Install seats at Harley St,	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,400
	Shade required at Sherpa Crt	\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,400
	Compacted paths required at Cliff Ave, Harley St, Herbert Ave, Landale Drv, Lloyd St, Nabilla Cres and Sherpa Crt	\$ 12,500 - \$ 18,200
Strathfieldsaye	Install seat at Clydebank Crt / Bassett Drv	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,400
	Shade required at Strathfieldsaye Sports Club and Sunset Drv	\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,800
	Compacted paths required at Clydebank Crt / Bassett Drv, Strathfieldsaye Sports Club and Saxby Park	\$ 7,000 - \$ 10,400
	Replace play equipment at Strathfieldsaye Sports Club and Sunset Drv, subject to condition	\$ 30,000 - \$ 40,000
	Develop a new district play space at the new Recreation Reserve	\$ 125,000 - \$ 175,000
	Develop a shared school / community play space at St Francis of the Fields PS, subject to Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning approval.	\$ 20,000 - \$ 40,000
White Hills	Redevelop play opportunities at White Hills Botanic Gardens	\$1,000,000 - \$ 1,500,000

Precinct	Works Required	Indicative Costings
	Develop new local play space on Council owned land at Montgomery Reserve	\$ 25,000 - \$ 40,000
	Consider developing a new local play space in Edwards Rd, Jackass Flat in partnership with developers	\$ 25,000 - \$ 40,000

NB: The indicative costings in the table above are based on the assumption that certain play spaces may be sold once a review of their usage has been undertaken. However, the review may indicate that the play space should remain. This will alter the indicative costings.

12.4.2 Indicative Costings – Totals

The following table lists expected costs for the implementation of the recommendations in the play strategy for a 5 year period. All figures are estimates only. They have been based on average works prices and comparable larger play ground projects. In order to reflect the preliminary character of the anticipated costs, a lower and a higher end of potential costs is being presented.

Costs are based on today's prices. No adjustments for inflationary price rises have been made.

	PLAY SPACE TYPE	Number of play spaces	Lower estimate per play space	Upper estimate per play space	Total lower range	Total upper range
1.0	LOCAL PLAY SPACE: INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE					
1.1	Shade trees upgrade (5 – 7 trees)	85	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,400	\$ 85,000	\$ 119,000
1.2	Seats additional	29	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 58,000	~ \$ 70,000
1.3	Seats replacement	34	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 68,000	~ \$ 82,000
1.4	Play equipment replacement cost	47	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 705,000	\$ 940,000
1.5	Landscaping	50	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 100,000
1.6	Access path 50 – 75 m	66	\$ 1,750	\$ 2,600	\$ 115,000	~ \$ 172,000
2.0	LOCAL PLAY SPACE (NEW + REDEVELOPMENT)					
2.1	Play spaces - redevelopment	3	\$ 20,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 105,000
2.2	Play spaces in cooperation with schools	6	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 180,000
2.3	Play spaces new	13	\$ 30,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 390,000	\$ 520,000
2.4	Play spaces in new subdivisions (consider)	7	\$ 30,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 210,000	\$ 280,000

	PLAY SPACE TYPE	Number of play spaces	Lower estimate per play space	Upper estimate per play space	Total lower range	Total upper range
2.5	Natural play spaces	4	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 120,000
3.0	DISTRICT PLAY SPACE					
3.1	Comprehensive upgrade (Queen St + Spring Gully)	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 300,000
3.2	New district play space – Strathfieldsaye + Maiden Gully	2	\$ 125,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 350,000
4.0	REGIONAL PLAY SPACE					
4.1	Redevelop Botanic Gardens in White Hills: Water Play and Children’s Garden	1	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,500,000
4.2	Cooinda Park/Gate Way Park precinct	1	\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000
4.3	Canterbury Gardens/Lake Neangar precincts	1	\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000
4.4	Lake Weeroona upgrade (not beyond fence)	1	\$ 100,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 150,000
5.0	ADDITIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES					
5.1	Staff / Contractors (\$ 130,000 per annum)	5 years			\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000
6.0	LAND ACQUISITION					
	7 blocks	7	80,000	100,000	\$ 560,000	\$ 700,000
7.0	SALE OF PROPERTIES (subject to review of usage)					
	Up to 5 blocks	5	\$ 80,000	\$ 100,000	- \$ 400,000	- \$ 500,000
8.0	CONTINGENCY ALLOWANCE				\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000
			5 YEAR TOTALS:		\$ 5,526,000	\$ 7,214,000

12.4.3 Prioritised Works for Financial Years 2009/10 - 2013/14

(based on lower estimate figures).

	PLAY SPACE TYPE	Number of play spaces	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total - lower range
1.0	LOCAL PLAY SPACE: INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE							
1.1	Shade trees upgrade (5 – 7 trees)	85	\$ 60,000	\$ 25,000				\$ 85,000
1.2	Seats additional	29	\$ 58,000					\$ 58,000
1.3	Seats replacement	34	\$ 13,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 68,000
1.4	Play equipment replacement cost	47	\$ 145,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 705,000
1.5	Landscaping	50	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 75,000
1.6	Access path 50 – 75 m	66	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 115,000
2.0	LOCAL PLAY SPACE (NEW + REDEVELOPMENT)							
2.1	Play spaces - redevelopment	3	\$ 40,000	\$ 20,000				\$ 60,000
2.2	Play spaces in cooperation with schools	6	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 120,000
2.3	Play spaces new	13	\$ 60,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 390,000
2.4	Play spaces in new subdivisions (consider)	7		\$ 90,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 210,000
2.5	Natural play spaces	4	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000		\$ 80,000
3.0	DISTRICT PLAY SPACE							
3.1	Comprehensive upgrade : Queen St and Spring Gully Reserve	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000				\$ 200,000
3.2	New district play space: Maiden Gully + Strathfieldsaye	2		\$ 250,000				\$ 250,000

	PLAY SPACE TYPE	Number of play spaces	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total - lower range
4.0	REGIONAL PLAY SPACE							
4.1	Redevelop Botanic Gardens in White Hills: Water Play and Children's Garden	1	\$ 500,000		\$ 500,000			\$ 1,000,000
4.2	Cooinda Park/Gate Way Park precinct	1				\$ 500,000		\$ 500,000
4.3	Canterbury Gardens/Lake Neangar precincts	1					\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
4.4	Lake Weeroona upgrade (but not beyond existing fence line)	1		100,000				100,000
5.0	ADDITIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES							
5.1	Staff / Contractors		\$ 130,000	\$130,000	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000	\$ 650,000
6.0	LAND ACQUISITION							
	7 parcels @ \$ 80,000	7		\$ 80,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 560,000
7.0	SALE OF PROPERTIES (subject to review of usage)							
	Up to 5 play spaces	5	-\$ 160,000	-\$ 160,000	-\$ 80,000			-\$ 400,000
8.0	CONTINGENCY ALLOWANCE		\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 200,000
	5 YEAR TOTALS:		\$ 1,064,000	\$ 1,057,000	\$ 933,000	\$ 1,011,000	\$ 1,181,000	\$ 5,526,000

The following factors have been taken into account to develop the prioritised works list as below:

Generally budgets have been allocated with the objective to spread costs evenly over the 5 year period.

Item 1.1 – Shade trees: High priority was given to the planting of trees for shade, as they are a low cost item, but very important in regards to public health and safety. They also require 3 – 5 years to mature to a stage where effective shade will be provided.

Item 1.2 – Additional seats:

A similar approach has been taken to the provision of seats, which can easily be installed and thus add to the amenity of a large number of local play spaces.

Items 1.3 – 1.6- Seat and equipment replacement, landscaping and access path:

The costs for these items have been evenly allocated over the five year period, as these items are of an ongoing nature.

Item 2.1 – Redevelopment of play spaces:

Due to their location in high priority areas and a relatively simple planning process, these redevelopment projects should be commenced soon.

Items 2.2 – 2.5: These budget items have been evenly distributed over the years. Allocation of budgets within a year should be done in accordance with chapter 10.00 “Prioritising Developments”.

Item 3.0: The required upgrade of the four district play spaces can be achieved within the first 2 years, thus allowing funds to be allocated to the remaining major projects White Hills Botanic Gardens and Canterbury Gardens/Lake Neangar.

Item 4.1: The major project of the construction of a water play space/ children’s garden requires some lead time for substantial planning and design. This fact has overridden the high priority of the construction of play spaces within the Jackass Flat/ White Hills area. Therefore the development of the Montgomery Reserve should be undertaken as early as possible.

Items 6 + 7: Where possible, the sale of some blocks should be undertaken prior to the purchase of new blocks.

12.4.4 Methodology for Determining Play Space Costings

For the purpose of this Strategy, the following indicative costings for specific works have been identified. These costs have been prepared on average prices and an estimate of required surfaces, plantings, refurbishing and other structures. Prices may significantly vary from the estimated sum depending on the site conditions, existing infrastructure on site, final design and tender results. This schedule is intended as a guideline only for funding purposes. All indicative costs include GST.

Area	Details	Indicative Costings
Paths		
Path – Granitic sand	1.5 m wide.	\$ 35.00/ lin.m (linear meter of path 1.5 m wide)
Path – Concrete	1.5 m wide.	\$ 85.00/ lin.m
Path – Asphalt surface. As shared path in high usage areas, incl. Double sided timber edge	2.5 m wide asphalt surfaces require an edge restraint (header course or timber edge)	\$ 140.00/ lin.m
Trees:	Semi-advanced, incl. establishment costs (watering, pruning, replacement): \$ 200.00 per tree. Suggest 5 trees per play space	\$ 1,000
Park Seats	Aluminium slats, with back and arm rests, incl. concrete pad	\$ 2,000
Picnic table	Accessible, incl. concrete pad	\$ 3,500
Fence	Simple wire mesh fence, 1 m high:	\$ 100.00 / m
BBQ		\$ 5,000 +
Shelter		\$ 15,000 +
Bike racks	Simple hoop, double sided (= 2 parks) incl. installation costs	\$ 350
Drinking Fountain	Incl. Installation but not piping to nearest water tap.	\$ 1,000

Area	Details	Indicative Costings
Landscape areas	Minimum of 40 sq.m = 2 beds x 2 m x 10 m. Likely to be much larger per playground.	\$ 35.00/ sq.m or minimum of \$ 1,400 if there is no existing planting.
Irrigated Lawn	Difficult to estimate in regards to irrigation costs	\$ 15/ sq.m
Toilets		\$ 80,000
Drainage	Depends on site	\$ 500 – \$ 2,000
Sandpit		\$ 1,000
Basketball/Netball hoops	Incl. Foundations + installation	\$ 1,800 per post

Indicative costings have also been developed to upgrade a typical local, district or regional play space. These figures are to be used as a guide for funding purposes only.

Hierarchy of Play Space	Indicative Upgrade / Development Cost
Local	\$15,000 each for upgrade
District	\$50,000-\$150,000 each for upgrade
Regional	\$100,000-\$300,000 for upgrade \$500,000-\$1,000,000 each for new development

13.0 Recommendations

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
	POLICY / OPERATIONAL				
1	Adopt Play Space Strategy Principles and Planning Guidelines	Strategy	2008/09	-	-
2	Develop a promotional strategy and relevant materials / actions to ensure that the community is aware of play opportunities in the municipality	Recreation	2009/10	-	\$20,000
3	Explore a mechanism through the COGB Planning Scheme to ensure that developers are required to provide quality play opportunities that reflect Council's play planning principles and design guidelines contained within the Play Space Strategy	Strategy	2009/10	-	-
4	Review existing resources (both human and financial) in order to manage play space developments, consultations and additional maintenance requirements	Recreation	2009/10	-	\$650,000
5	Review the schedule contained within the Domestic Animal Management Plan to ensure consideration is given to not permitting dogs within 10 metres of recognised playgrounds within play spaces	Environmental Health & Local Laws	2009/10	-	-
6	Install gated play spaces only in regional play spaces as required.	Parks and Natural Environment	Ongoing	-	-
7	Use universal design principles when developing any new play space or upgrading existing play spaces to provide opportunities for people of all abilities to use and enjoy play spaces.	Recreation	Ongoing	-	-
8	Establish an internal working party, led by the Recreation Unit and comprising of representatives of the Recreation, Landscape and Open Space	Recreation	2008/09	-	-

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
	Design, Parks and Natural Environment, Family and Children's Services and Strategy Units to oversee play space developments and issues. The role of this working party is also to identify other internal and external partners. Where play spaces are developed in new developments without existing housing, this group should assess play space plans.				
9	Consult with the community prior to upgrading play spaces or developing new play spaces, according to the guidelines set out in the Play Space Strategy.	Recreation	Ongoing	-	-
-	Sub-total				\$670,000
-	WORKS				
10	Plant 5-7 shade trees in 60 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2009/10	Community Conservation organisations	\$60,000
11	Install 29 new seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2009/10	Men in Shed's Program	\$58,000
12	Replace 7 seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2009/10	Men in Shed's Program	\$13,000
13	Replace play equipment in 10 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment Recreation	2009/10	-	\$145,000
14	Improve landscaping in 10 local play spaces	Landscape and Open Space	2009/10	-	\$15,000
15	Construct 50-75m access paths in 14 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2009/10	-	\$23,000
16	Redevelop 2 local play spaces	Recreation	2009/10	-	\$40,000
17	Develop a shared community school play space within an existing school	Recreation	2009/10	-	\$20,000
18	Develop 2 new play spaces on Council / Crown Land	Recreation	2009/10	DSE Community	\$60,000
19	Develop 1 new natural play spaces	Landscape and Open	2009/10	Community	\$20,000

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
		Space			
20	Upgrade Spring Gully Recreation Reserve Play Space to a district level play space	Recreation	2009/10	Spring Gully Recreation Reserve Users Spring Gully community Department of Planning and Community Development	\$100,000
21	Complete Stage 1 of White Hills Botanic Garden Play Space redevelopment	Landscape and Open Space	2009/10	Friends of Botanic Gardens White Hills community Department of Planning and Community Development Service Clubs Private enterprise	\$500,000
22	Review the usage 2 parcels of land	Recreation	2009/10	-	-\$160,000 (if sold)
-	Contingency allowance	Recreation	2009/10	-	\$40,000
-	Sub-total				\$934,000
23	Plant 5-7 shade trees in 25 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2010/11	Community Conservation organisations	\$25,000
24	Replace 7 seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2010/11	Men in Shed's Program	\$14,000
25	Replace play equipment in 10 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2010/11	-	\$140,000
26	Improve landscaping in 10 local play spaces	Landscape and Open Space	2010/11	-	\$15,000
27	Construct 50-75m access paths in 13 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2010/11	-	\$23,000
28	Redevelop 1 local play space	Recreation	2010/11	Community	\$20,000
29	Develop a shared community school play space with an existing school	Recreation	2010/11	School	\$20,000

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
30	Develop 5 new play spaces on Council / Crown Land	Recreation	2010/11	DSE Community	\$150,000
31	Develop 3 new play spaces in sub-divisions	Recreation	2010/11	Developers	\$90,000
32	Develop 1 new natural play space	Recreation	2010/11	Community	\$20,000
33	Upgrade Queen St Play Space to a district level play space	Recreation	2010/11	Kangaroo Flat community Kangaroo Flat Community House Department of Planning and Community Development	\$100,000
34	Develop a new district level play space at the new Strathfieldsaye Recreation Reserve and the new Maiden Gully Recreation Reserve	Recreation	2010/11	Strathfieldsaye & Maiden Gully Recreation Reserve users Strathfieldsaye & Maiden Gully community Strathfieldsaye and District Community Enterprise Group Department of Planning and Community Development	\$250,000
35	Upgrade Lake Weeroona (but do not extend beyond existing fence line)	Recreation	2010/11	Community Department of Planning and Community Development	\$100,000
36	Buy 1 parcel of land	Valuations	2010/11	-	\$80,000
37	Review the usage of 2 parcels of land	Recreation	2010/11	-	-\$160,000 (if sold)
-	Contingency allowance	Recreation	2010/11	-	\$40,000
-	Sub-total				\$927,000
38	Replace 7 seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2011/12	Men in Shed's Program	\$15,000
39	Replace play equipment in 9 local play spaces	Recreation	2011/12	-	\$140,000
40	Improve landscaping in 10 local play spaces	Landscape and Open	2011/12	-	\$15,000

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
		Space			
41	Construct 50-75m access paths in 13 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2011/12	-	\$23,000
42	Develop a shared community school play space at a school	Recreation	2011/12	School	\$20,000
43	Develop 2 new play spaces on Council / Crown Land	Recreation	2011/12	DSE Community	\$60,000
44	Develop 1 new play space in a sub-division	Recreation	2011/12	Developers	\$30,000
45	Develop 1 new natural play space	Landscape and Open Space	2011/12	Community	\$20,000
46	Complete Stage 2 of White Hills Botanic Garden Play Space redevelopment	Recreation	2011/12	Friends of Botanic Gardens White Hills community Department of Planning and Community Development Service Clubs Private enterprise	\$500,000
47	Buy 2 parcels of land	Valuations	2011/12		\$160,000
48	Review the usage of 1 parcel of land	Recreation	2011/12		-\$80,000 (if sold)
-	Contingency allowance	Recreation	2011/12		\$40,000
-	Sub-total				\$943,000
49	Replace 7 seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2012/13	Men in Shed's Program	\$13,000
50	Replace play equipment in 9 local play spaces	Recreation	2012/13	-	\$140,000
51	Improve landscaping in 10 local play spaces	Landscape and Open Space	2012/13	-	\$15,000
52	Construct 50-75m access paths in 13 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2012/13	-	\$23,000

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
53	Develop a shared community school play with a school	Recreation	2012/13	School	\$20,000
54	Develop 2 new play spaces on Council / Crown Land	Recreation	2012/13	DSE Community	\$60,000
55	Develop 1 new play space in a sub-division	Recreation	2012/13	Developers	\$30,000
56	Develop 1 new natural play space	Landscape and Open Space	2012/13	Community	\$20,000
57	Develop a regional play space at Cooina Park / Gateway Park in Kangaroo Flat	Recreation	2012/13	Golden Square community Kangaroo Flat community Kangaroo Flat Rotary Club Department of Planning and Community Development	\$500,000
58	Buy 2 parcels of land	Valuations	2012/13		\$160,000
-	Contingency allowance	Recreation	2012/13		\$40,000
-	Sub-total				\$1,021,000
59	Replace 6 seats in local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2013/14	Men in Shed's Program	\$13,000
60	Replace play equipment in 9 local play spaces	Recreation	2013/14	-	\$140,000
61	Improve landscaping in 10 local play spaces	Landscape and Open Space	2013/14	-	\$15,000
62	Construct access paths in 13 local play spaces	Parks and Natural Environment	2013/14	-	\$23,000
63	Develop 2 shared community school play spaces with schools	Recreation	2013/14	Schools	\$40,000
64	Develop 2 new play spaces on Council / Crown Land	Recreation	2013/14	DSE Community	\$60,000
65	Develop 2 new play spaces in sub-divisions	Recreation	2013/14	Developers	\$60,000
66	Develop a regional play space at Canterbury	Recreation	2013/14	Eaglehawk community	\$500,000

NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE CoGB MANAGER	TIMELINES	EXTERNAL PARTNERS	INDICATIVE COST
	Gardens / Lake Neangar area			YMCA Service clubs Department of Planning and Community Development	
67	Buy 2 parcels of land	Valuations	2013/14	-	\$160,000
-	Contingency allowance	Recreation	2013/14	-	\$40,000
-	Sub-total				\$1,051,000
-	TOTAL				\$5,546,000

NB: The total includes an amount of \$20,000 for promotion – this amount was not included in earlier financial tables of capital and staffing costs.